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MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING

Held on Monday 3 March 2025

Released to the public on 6 March 2025

**LIVE STREAMING OF THE COUNCIL MEETING WAS MADE AVAILABLE ON
COUNCIL'S INTERNET SITE.**




ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF TRADITIONAL OWNERS AND ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER COMMUNITIES IN DAREBIN

Darebin City Council acknowledges the Wurundjeri Woi-Wurrung people as the Traditional Owners and custodians of the land 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.



English

These are the Minutes for the Council Meeting. For assistance with any of the items in the minutes, please telephone 8470 8888.

Arabic

هذه هي محاضر اجتماع المجلس. للحصول على المساعدة في أي من البنود في المحاضر، يرجى الاتصال بالهاتف 8470 8888.

Chinese

这些是市议会会议纪要。如需协助了解任何纪要项目，请致电8470 8888。

Greek

Αυτά είναι τα Πρακτικά της συνεδρίασης του Δημοτικού Συμβουλίου. Για βοήθεια με οποιαδήποτε θέματα στα πρακτικά, παρακαλείσθε να καλέσετε το 8470 8888.

Hindi

ये काउंसिल की बैठक का सारांश है। सारांश के किसी भी आइटम में सहायता के लिए, कृपया 8470 8888 पर टेलीफोन करें।

Italian

Questo è il verbale della riunione del Comune. Per assistenza con qualsiasi punto del verbale, si prega di chiamare il numero 8470 8888.

Macedonian

Ова е Записникот од состанокот на Општинскиот одбор. За помош во врска со која и да било точка од записникот, ве молиме телефонирајте на 8470 8888.

Nepali

यी परिषद्को बैठकका माइन्युटहरू हुन्। माइन्युटका कुनै पनि वस्तुसम्बन्धी सहायताका लागि कृपया 8470 8888 मा कल गर्नुहोस्।

Punjabi

ਇਹ ਕੌਂਸਲ ਦੀ ਮੀਟਿੰਗ ਵਾਸਤੇ ਸੰਖੇਪ ਸਾਰਾਂਸ਼ ਹੈ। ਸੰਖੇਪ ਸਾਰਾਂਸ਼ ਵਿਚਲੀਆਂ ਕਿਸੇ ਵੀ ਆਈਟਮਾਂ ਸੰਬੰਧੀ ਸਹਾਇਤਾ ਵਾਸਤੇ, ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ 8470 8888 ਨੂੰ ਟੈਲੀਫੋਨ ਕਰੋ।

Somali

Kuwaani waa qodobadii lagaga wada hadlay Fadhiga Golaha. Caawimada mid kasta oo ka mid ah qodobada laga wada hadlay, fadlan la xiriir 8470 8888.

Spanish

Estas son las Actas de la Reunión del Concejo. Para recibir ayuda acerca de algún tema de las actas, llame al teléfono 8470 8888.

Urdu

یہ کاؤنسل کی میٹنگ کی روداد کے نقاط ہیں۔ روداد کے کسی بھی حصے کے بارے میں مدد کے لیے براہ مہربانی 8470 8888 پر فون کریں۔

Vietnamese

Đây là những Biên bản Hội đồng Thành phố. Muốn có người trợ giúp mình về bất kỳ mục nào trong biên bản họp, xin quý vị gọi điện thoại số 8470 8888.

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MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY MEETING DAREBIN CITY COUNCIL ON MONDAY 3 MARCH 2025

THE MEETING OPENED AT 6.02PM

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

1. OPENING OF MEETING AND MEMBERSHIP

Councillors

Cr. Kristine Olaris OAM (Mayor)
Cr. Emily Dimitriadis (Deputy Mayor)
Cr. Matt Arturi
Cr. Connie Boglis OAM
Cr. Gaetano Greco
Cr. Ruth Jelley
Cr. Julie O'Brien
Cr. Alexandra Sangster
Cr. Vasilios Tsalkos

Council Officers

Michael Tudball - Interim Chief Executive Officer
Caroline Buisson - General Manager Customer and Corporate
Nina Cullen - General Manager Community
Enna Giampiccolo - Executive Manager, Governance, Risk, Communications & Engage
Rachel Ollivier - General Manager Infrastructure, Operations and Finance
Vanessa Petrie - General Manager City Sustainability and Strategy
Felicity Walsh - Governance Specialist
Jody Brodribb - Coordinator Governance Services

Municipal Monitors

June Anstee
Ross Mallard

2. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF TRADITIONAL OWNERS

The Chairperson, Mayor Olaris OAM, opened the meeting with the following statement:

I would like to start by acknowledging the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people, the Traditional Owners of this land. I recognise their continuing connection to land, water and culture and pay my respects to Elders past and present.

3. APOLOGIES

Nil

4. DISCLOSURES OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Cr. Dimitriadis declared a potential general conflict of interest in 'Item 8 Petitions'.

5. CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETINGS

Recommendation

That the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Council held on 24 February 2025 be confirmed as a correct record of business transacted.

Motion

MOVED: Cr. Tsalkos
SECONDED: Cr. Arturi

That the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Council held on 24 February 2025 be confirmed as a correct record of business transacted **noting an amendment to correct the PQT response provided to Angela Denton at that meeting.**

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

Council Resolution

MINUTE NO. 25-033

MOVED: Cr. Tsalkos
SECONDED: Cr. Arturi

That the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Council held on 24 February 2025 be confirmed as a correct record of business transacted noting an amendment to correct the PQT response provided to Angela Denton at that meeting

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

6. COUNCIL'S OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY RESPONSIBILITIES

The Chairperson, Mayor Olaris, made the following statement:

Council has an occupational health and safety responsibility to ensure anyone attending tonight's meeting, feels safe both physical and emotionally.

It's great to see everyone here this evening. I would like to remind everyone in attendance to be respectful of each other, and as outlined in our Governance Rules, please note the following:

- *Silence must be preserved by the gallery at all times during a Meeting (other than by a person in the gallery who is invited to address the Meeting).*
- *A Councillor or any other person who addresses a Meeting must do so in a courteous and respectful manner and must take direction from the Chairperson whenever called on to do so.*
- *Anyone attending a Meeting must not utter any offensive, indecent, insulting, or objectionable words, including words that are racist, sexist or homophobic, or interject or gesticulate offensively in the Council Chamber.*
- *If anyone engages in conduct that is improper or disorderly, the Chairperson may direct that person to cease their conduct and the person must comply with that direction.*

7. QUESTION AND SUBMISSION TIME

The following questions submitted for Public Question Time were responded to:

- **Szandra Li**
 1. To what extent is Council aware of the weight of evidence supporting the correlation between car dependency and bankruptcy on a City level, i.e., that it is practically impossible for revenue to keep up with the long term costs of maintaining car infrastructure as required by a car dependent city and population?
 2. Does Council have any current plans to reduce car dependency in favor of an increase in the quantity and quality of public transit in more car dependent and less accessible suburban neighbourhoods?

Response From General Manager City Sustainability & Strategy

1. Thank you for your questions, Szandra.

Maintaining assets and infrastructure is a challenge facing all local governments. Our current Transport Strategy seeks to plan well as our city grows, and increase the role of sustainable transport. Early work has started on the next Land Use and Transport Strategy, and this work will continue to consider all aspects of providing and maintaining a transport system into the future.

2. Our current Transport Strategy has actions for improved and expanded public transport networks. We continue to work with our State Government partners to seek improvements to public transport services they control.

- **Linda Ho**

1. There are claims that there was community Consultation. Darebin is a highly multilingual and multicultural area. I have not seen much information provided in other languages and I do not know how many non English literate community members would know what is going on. How can the state and council claim there has been extensive community consultation when I have not seen or heard much directed to NESB citizens?
2. Preston is a very small area. There are 2 public high Schools, 1 private high school campus, 10 primary schools, 10 child care/early learning centres, 7 medical centres which are at capacity and with long wait lists. How is the area meant to accommodate for an extra 15000 dwellings which could mean up to an extra 40000 plus people? The roads are already bottle necked and there has been a lot of development over the last decade and there are more cars than ever. How is Preston meant to cope with this overcrowding?
3. How is Preston Market being protected? Will it remain?

Response From General Manager City Sustainability & Strategy

1. The State Government's Department of Transport and Planning is updating planning controls for Preston Activity Centre and was responsible for the community consultation on draft plans. They are best placed to answer questions about how this was run.

What I can share is that, prior to the State Government's work, Council conducted two rounds of community consultation for its Preston Central Activity Centre Structure Plan. This included two rounds of community consultation, including workshops with CALD and First Nations community members, and translations into 12 languages.

2. Council has consistently advocated to the State Government that the Activity Centre Program needs to support new and upgraded local infrastructure to meet the needs of the growing population.

The State Government will create a new way for developers to contribute funds for infrastructure, including transport, schools, open spaces, community and health facilities. These will be collected from 1 January 2027.

There is a municipal wide and a Preston Market Precinct Development Contributions Plan in place to help Council fund local infrastructure such as paths, roads and community facilities.

3. The state government finalised planning controls for Preston Market in 2023. Strong planning protections are in place for the market, including a heritage overlay, to ensure the market is substantially retained in its current form and place.

- **Victoria Thieberger**

1. Regarding the proposed extra development of Preston, what promises has the state government given the council regarding extra train and tram services, extra primary and secondary school places, and extra GPs? If no extra services are promised, why has the council agreed to the development?
2. What percentage will be social housing - or is it all for the profit of the developers?

Response From General Manager City Sustainability & Strategy

1. Thanks for the question, Victoria. This question is similar to that asked by Linda Ho.

To summarise - the State Government will create a new way for developers to contribute funds for infrastructure, including transport, schools, open spaces, community and health facilities. These will be collected from 1 January 2027.

2. Council's endorsed principles and priorities includes that the plan for Preston Central must include social and affordable housing. Only a summary of plans has been released so far. The plan does not yet include any details about new social housing on public land nor social housing on private land.

- **Zoe Bunworth**

1. I would like to know how the Council plans to manage the increased need for maintenance of existing and for providing new amenities for the community in Preston as the expectation due to the density increase will also increase use of roads/doctors/schools etc. how do you propose to maintain the current atmosphere and living standards?
2. I also want to ask why the council seems to have dropped the movement for the state to acquire the Preston market as it is a huge boon for the area and will be even more needed as the population increases in density. We will never ever be able to build another market, please I implore you to keep the one we have, as it is.

Response From General Manager City Sustainability & Strategy

1. Thanks for the question, Zoe. This question is similar to the one asked by Linda and Victoria.

In summary, Council has advocated to the State Government that the Activity Centre Program needs to support new and upgraded local infrastructure to meet the needs of the growing population.

2. The state government finalised planning controls for Preston Market in 2023. Strong planning protections are in place for the market, including a heritage overlay, to ensure the market is substantially retained in its current form and place.

An independent planning panel found these controls will facilitate a thriving and ongoing market operation.

- **David Taylor**

1. In the agenda papers for the previous Council meeting it was stated that: "In 2023, VAGO made a recommendation to councils to undertake a review and assessment of all grants and funding arrangements." Yet In May 2022, VAGO published a report entitled: Fraud Control Over Local Government Grants. It recommended that All Victorian Councils "evaluate the benefits of recurring grants and require recipients to seek future funding through existing competitive grant programs." Is this 2022 VAGO recommendation the one upon which Darebin has relied in relation to the DCMC MOU issue?

2. If Darebin is relying on this 2022 VAGO recommendation, and given the elapse of nearly three years, have the recommended evaluations taken place, have they been made public and have all recipients of recurring grants been notified accordingly?
3. As it would appear that VAGO recommendations are not legally binding on Councils, what is their exact status for Darebin?

Response From General Manager Infrastructure, Operations & Finance

1. The reference to the VAGO report was to explain the context and background and I can confirm the year VAGO published the report was 2022. However, in regards to what Council has relied on, it is the more recent work outlined in the report to the 24 February Council meeting that is the latest advice. Council will consider a further report in August 2025 following additional work.
2. Following the VAGO recommendation Banyule City Council (in partnership with Darebin) engaged an external consultant to undertake an independent audit relating to DCMC. This report identified a range of risks and was shared directly with DCMC and was tabled confidentially and accepted at the Council meeting held on 23 October 2023. Since then we have done further work to address risks and understand how obligations apply in these circumstances. The report to 24 February provides an update on the latest advice and understanding.

In regards to recurring grants, following the VAGO recommendations, Darebin took the opportunity to review its grant framework to ensure community grants were well designed, mitigated fraud related risks and were operating as intended. The review found that there were no major concerns but a number of improvement opportunities to ensure best practice when delivering on the grant framework. It was not necessary to update community grant recipients and improvements were incorporated into the community grant round when it was advertised.

3. The VAGO recommendations are not legally binding, however some risks identified relate to compliance with legislation and so in some cases, Council must address risks identified.

Council took the opportunity to review the VAGO audit and do a self-assessment to identify any relevant to Darebin and to consider action.

• Jess Barry

1. Planning application D/546/2024 64 Thackeray Road RESERVOIR VIC 3073 we would like an update as to our objections & an update on the heritage status of the house (we request an independent heritage assessment & protective overlay applied to the Californian Bungalow at this address) time is of the essence, as we have observed the owner/developers allowing the garden to die, heard an alarm going off repeatedly & someone entering the house and smashing things. We don't want to lose this house to deliberate negligence.
2. The State Government Activity Centre changes to planning in Darebin, are the council able to guarantee:
 - (1) a minimum mandated amount of social and/or affordable housing? None is currently mandated
 - (2) more information on non-compliant builds being 'deemed to comply'?

(3) a plan/overlay to protect our heritage shops and houses from destruction? The Preston Market included

(4) Adequate infrastructure & green space to offset the addition of 15,000 additional dwellings.

Response From General Manager City Sustainability & Strategy

1. Thank you for the question. An officer from the Statutory Planning team will call you in next 24 hours to discuss your objection, and the heritage status of the dwellings, and whether they have been previously considered for heritage protection.
2. Council is advocating to State Government that the plan for Preston Central include social and affordable housing. Only a summary of plans have been released so far. The State Government will create a new way for developers to contribute funds for infrastructure, including transport, schools, open spaces, community and health facilities. These will be collected from 1 January 2027.

• **Chris Erlandsen**

1. My understanding is that the Open Space Levy that Council collects from developers is currently redistributed to offset the massive debt from the NARC rebuild. Can the community be assured that the Open Space Levy in future collected from development in Preston Activity Centre, including the Preston Market Precinct be spent specifically in Central Preston?
2. Will Council make a clear statement regarding the future status of Preston Oval?

Response From General Manager City Sustainability & Strategy

1. There was a contribution from the Open Space Levy in 22/23 of 17% of the construction costs of NARC. There is no ongoing contribution. A key purpose of the open space levy is to support improvements in recreational facilities and it is normal for any recreation facility to be part funded by the OSL.

Council doesn't specifically allocate levy to particular regions, but the levy does generally contribute to improvements across Darebin City. Council allocates expenditure of the open space reserve through its long term and annual capital works and budget process.

2. Preston City Oval is a regional level sports ground and is also available for passive public open space that serves Preston Activity Centre and surrounds.

Council currently doesn't have plans for major change at Preston City Oval, although we are working through how to best address and prevent persistent vandalism.

• **Frank Crupi**

1. I live in the catchment area. So far my neighbours and I have not been consulted, we have very little detailed information on the planning controls and how they will impact our properties. Will Council demand that the state government stops the changes being Gazetted later this month so the community has a chance to have a real say before they are implemented?

2. Why has the state government been so secretive about the details of these new Planning controls and has the Council publicly challenged them?
3. Why has the Council not bothered to inform the community about the proposed planning controls and helped residents to fight back against some of these changes, in the same way it helped the community fight back to save Preston Market.

Response From General Manager City Sustainability & Strategy

1. The state government is updating planning controls for Preston Activity Centre and conducted community consultation on draft plans. They are best placed to answer questions about how this was run.

On 14 August 2024, Council resolved to advocate for inclusive and transparent engagement by the state government in its Activity Centre Program.

2. We have limited information about the State Government's plans announced in the media over the past week. We are working to understand what it means for Darebin, and will continue to keep the community informed as more information becomes available.
3. This is a State Government process, and Council is working on a range of measures outlined in the Preston Central Activity Centre report – included in tonight's agenda - to promote inclusive and transparent engagement.

EXTENSION OF PUBLIC QUESTION TIME – 6.33PM

Council Resolution

MOVED: Cr. G Greco
SECONDED: Cr. Jelley

That Public Question time be extended for 30 minutes.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

- **Frank Mitchell**

1. Under Item 9.2 (7) in the undisclosed draft MoU, Council refers to a desire for “communal public open space”, can this be elaborated upon in terms of site specificity and how the council is classifying communal public open space?
2. The enormity of the proposed population and dwelling increases will place even greater pressure on the already under-resourced public open space and community infrastructure assets. How does Council propose to use the additional funds made available through the mechanisms mentioned in Item 9.2 (5d) given the numerous calls from the community for public acquisition of the centrally located Preston Market site?
3. Do you think that the City of Darebin has been asked to bear a disproportionate burden in the number of dwellings compared with other municipalities as a response to dealing with over 2 decades of neglect by State and Federal governments in maintaining sufficient quantities of dwellings in our capital cities?

Response From General Manager City Sustainability & Strategy

1. 'Communal open space' is referred to in the officers' report (Item 9.2) about Council's proposed floor area ratio in Preston Central.

A floor area ratio provides flexibility in building form to encourage developers to provide communal open spaces on private land. This is open space for use of residents within a development.

2. The State Government will create a new way for developers to contribute funds for infrastructure, including transport, schools, open spaces, community and health facilities. These will be collected from 1 January 2027. We don't have details yet to know how this will work.

There is a municipal wide and a Preston Market Precinct Development Contributions Plan in place to help Council fund local infrastructure such as paths, roads and community facilities.

3. The technical officer submission at Appendix D of Item 9.2 notes the higher housing target for Preston Activity Centre compared to other pilot centers and asked the State Government to ensure the dwelling target is appropriate for the local context and infrastructure capability.

In its announcement last week the state government reduced the heights within the outer catchment area, but has not released an updated housing target for the centre.

- **George Kanjere**

1. Does Darebin Council agree with the cleavage of planning regulations between the proposed VPA activity centre and the planning overlay for Preston Market, even though in the Council's own vision for Preston these areas are intimately linked?
2. Preston already has a lack of public open space, and the VPA activity centre plan does not have any adequate plan to address this – does Darebin Council take responsibility for the exacerbation of this problem that will be the outcome of the current VPA activity centre plan?
3. The Preston community is largely unaware of the VPA activity centre plans, and those that are have strong concerns about the shallow, superficial consultation which is being used to justify going ahead with

the massive intensification of the Preston precinct - what does council plan to do to ensure that the community is aware of the VPA activity centre plans, and how can we as residents have input into the planning of the activity centres?

Response From General Manager City Sustainability & Strategy

1. It is common for a strategic redevelopment precinct to be planned separately to other established areas. Council has asked that the State's planning controls consider the interface between the commercial core and the Preston Market.
2. The Preston Central area is identified as an open space gap area in Council's Open Space Strategy (Breathing Space).

Council recently endorsed a planning scheme amendment to enable up to a 5% contribution for subdivisions, and has requested approval from the Minister for Planning. Council is also reviewing the open space strategy to support pursuing an open space levy higher than 5%.

The State Government will create a new way for developers to contribute funds for infrastructure, including transport, schools, open spaces, community and health facilities.

These will be collected from 1 January 2027 in Preston Central.

The planning controls for Preston Market Precinct require 3700 square metres new open space along with financial contributions in the Preston Market precinct.

3. The officer's report at Item 9.2 sets out recommendations for ongoing engagement and advocacy with the State Government, to support the best outcome for Preston and the community.

6.39pm - Cr Tsalksos left the meeting

6.41pm – Cr Tsalksos returned to the meeting.

- **Susanne Newton**

1. Will Council make it clear what percentage of housing in the Preston Activity Centre should be social and affordable housing? If not, why not?
2. How will Council advocate for and ensure the local community and council can have a genuine voice in the development of the new activity centres when so many planning powers are being removed from local government by state government?
3. How will Council push for state government to fund the needed infrastructure and services for a massively growing population with so many thousands of new apartments being built in one area?

Response From General Manager City Sustainability & Strategy

1. The State Government is preparing the plan and planning controls for Preston Central through its Activity Centre Program. Council is advocating for Preston Central to include social and affordable housing. Only a summary of the State's plans has been released. Details about social and affordable housing have not been released yet.
2. The officer's report at Item 9.2 sets out recommendations for ongoing engagement and advocacy with the State Government, to support the best outcome for Preston and the community.
3. Through our engagement and advocacy with the State, Council has highlighted the need for new and upgraded local infrastructure to meet the needs of the growing population. The State Government will create a new way for developers to contribute funds for infrastructure, including transport, schools, open spaces, community and health facilities. These will be collected from 1 January 2027.

There is a municipal wide and a Preston Market Precinct Development Contributions Plan in place to help Council fund local infrastructure such as paths, roads and community facilities.

6.42pm - Cr O'Brien left the meeting

- **Geert Hendrix**

1. Can Council provide an itemised overview of all expenditures towards the budget provided in 2024, for the execution of a feasibility study for the master planning at 2 Wingrove Street? When will this be concluded and will a report be made publicly available?

2. Multiple spaces at 2 Wingrove Street remain under-utilised, 2024 EOI approvals remain stuck with slow town planning processes, can council provide an update on when they expect to finalise the town planning applications and if and when a new EOI will be opened for spaces in shed 1D that remained un-licensed during the previous EOI process for 2 Wingrove St.
3. What is the latest of the promised transparency report about 2 Wingrove Street period 2022-2024? When can the community receive this?

Response From General Manager Infrastructure, Operations & Finance

1. The feasibility study is in progress and expected to be completed by end of this financial year. The results will be shared with Council and the community upon completion.

The budget allocated for 2024-25 was \$40,000. We publish annual financial reports every year, but we don't generally publish expenditure details for every project. I can confirm a contractor has been engaged and is currently undertaking building condition assessments. Geotechnical and planning feasibility is also being looked at. We are expecting the project budget to be tight and are managing budget closely.
2. We would strongly encourage the applicants to reach out to the planning team directly to enquire as to the status of their individual application. I'm sorry but Council is unable to disclose the status of individual planning applications.

Council is preparing to run an Expression of Interest for a range of properties across the City of Darebin including at 2 Wingrove Street, it is currently scheduled for consideration by Council in April and promotion in May
3. I understand one of our officers reached out to you earlier today and clarified that your question relates to the decision made at the Council Meeting on 12 February 2024 to make public all confidential decisions made during that Council term which concerned 2 Wingrove Street.

The relevant confidential decision was made public at the Council meeting on 27 May 2024 and can be found on our website in the Council meeting agenda.

6.44pm – Cr O'Brien returned to the meeting.

• **Miranda Sharp**

I am a member of the Alphington Commons; a community-led coalition of 1600 locals committed to the future of 2 Wingrove Street Alphington. It is our view that the three options before council for decision (Agenda 9.8) are unsatisfactory and fall short of meaningful community engagement. Today, we have submitted a proposal to all Councillors proposing the establishment of a Community Advisory Group to facilitate a community lens all the way through the Masterplanning process. It is proposed this group be established now, and presents a value-for money solution to ensuring community voice is heard in placemaking.

My question is whether Council will consider this proposal?

Response From General Manager Infrastructure, Operations & Finance

1. Thanks Miranda, we've taken your question as feedback and I can confirm that Council will consider this matter tonight.

- **John Nugent**

Mayor, Council has advised they have recognized that extra lighting around the new Keon Park Station.

Mayor Could you please advise me when the lighting will go through Donath West Reserve for the safety of the general public who walk in the park at night.

Response From General Manager Infrastructure, Operations & Finance

This is a matter for Council to consider when it considers its budget. There will be an opportunity to make a submission through the budget consultation and I encourage any interested residents to participate. That said, Council has a tight budget and many more requests for improvements than it can fund. Council's long term plans at this site are guided by the masterplan and this doesn't include any plans to extend the pathways or lighting at Donath West.

Correction to PQT from Angela Denton at 24 February 2025 Council Meeting

At the Council meeting held on 24 February 2025, Angela Denton asked the following question:

3. Do parking compliance patrols typically operate on a Sunday evening?

At the time, the response to the questions was that parking patrols are conducted on Sunday evenings.

Parking patrols are not conducted on Sunday evenings and this information has been updated and provided to Angela.

8. PETITIONS

Cr Dimitriadis disclosed a conflict of interest in relation to the petition to be tabled due to proximity of the location to her place of residence and left the meeting at 6.50pm.

8.1 TABLING OF PETITION – SAFETY REVIEW OF GILLIES ST (SOUTH) FAIRFIELD

Council Resolution

MINUTE NO. 25-034

MOVED: Cr. Boglis OAM
SECONDED: Cr. Tsalkos

That the petition:

Our purpose and request:

We request the City of Darebin conduct a safety review in Gillies St Fairfield (south section) between Heidelberg Rd and Railway Place to eliminate the threats posed by the excessive speed and high volume of rat-running, non-resident traffic in our "sign posted local residents only" street.

As an integral part of this safety review, we request comprehensive consultation with Gillies St (south) residents on a range of safety measures.

Background:

Northbound rat-running has been an increasing problem for at least 10 years and residents have made repeated requests to Council without any tangible result.

The new bike lane and loss of the dedicated LH turn lane into Station St at Heidelberg Rd have significantly increased excessive speeds and high traffic volumes.

In 2024 the City again recognised the safety threats and consulted with the community on risk mitigation solutions during the "your street, your say" process. However, the resulting Council-approved Railway Place One Way project has been cancelled because of incomplete consultation, disappointingly with no other recommended solution. This is unacceptable to the signatories of this petition.

We request the Council exercise its Duty of Care to residents and undertake this review and consultation as a-necessary first step in restoring residential safety and amenity.

In detail:

We respectfully request that

- the City of Darebin provide an Options Paper and Questionnaire to Gillies St (south) residents only, canvassing a range of actions*
- the options paper includes pros and cons for each measure*
- the options paper contains a background and context section*
- the questionnaire be of 5-point Likert type ranging from "Strongly Disagree" to "Strongly Agree" for each option*
- the Council fix a timeline for the consultations and the decision notification to residents*
- only if the preferred options directly involve traffic interventions in neighbouring streets should residents of those streets be consulted.*

The City has recognised the safety risk and so a "no change" decision after consultation will be unacceptable to the petitioners.

The options for consultation should include, but not be restricted to:

- 1. Alternatives to entirely remove rat-running traffic and greatly improve safety and amenity through road design:*
 - No right turn out at northern end*
 - No left turn in at southern end*
 - Closure of street at northern end*
 - Closure of street at southern end*
- 2. Alternatives to reduce rat-running traffic and possibly improve safety if drivers obey laws (realistically driver behaviour cannot be effectively monitored or enforced):*
 - No turn in at southern end 3pm to 6pm*
 - No right turn out at northern end 3pm to 6pm*
 - Chicanes*
 - Speed humps*

be tabled and referred to the CEO for consideration and response.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

6.55pm - Cr Dimitriadis returned to the meeting.

9. CONSIDERATION OF REPORTS

9.1 RESERVOIR LEISURE CENTRE SCOPING STUDY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Through the 2023-24 Budget process, Council requested officers undertake a Reservoir Leisure Centre (RLC) Scoping Study. This report shares the outcomes of the RLC Scoping Study, the community consultation and engagement, and next steps.

The study has considered options to deliver positive impacts for the community now and into the future, while being cognisant of financial pressures currently facing Council.

The RLC Scoping Study brings together the findings from previous consultation and engagement, studies and reports, and provides information and evidence to support Council decision-making.

RLC is an important and valued community facility that serves many Darebin community members. RLC will be at the end of its life in around 10-15 years (currently identified as 2039, but there is some level of risk as this date nears). It is essential that Council plans for beyond this timeframe and, as such, Council progressed this scoping study.

Council-only funding options are limited and bringing forward the RLC redevelopment creates significant budget pressures for Council. These are outlined in the RLC Scoping Study report (Confidential **Appendix A**) and in the Financial Management section (below).

It's worth noting the condition of RLC is not diminishing current usage. RLC's positive indicators, e.g. new memberships and participation, are trending up, while negative indicators, e.g. cancelled and expired memberships, are trending down. RLC key performance indicators can be found in **Appendix B**.

Officer Recommendation

That Council:

- (1) Notes the outcomes of the RLC Scoping Study report and the recommended next steps.
- (2) Endorses the release of the RLC Scoping Study (Confidential **Appendix A**) to our community.

Motion

MOVED: Cr. Tsalkos
SECONDED: Cr. Arturi

That Council:

- (1) Notes the outcomes of the RLC Scoping Study report and the recommended next steps.
- (2) Endorses the release of the RLC Scoping Study (Confidential **Appendix A**) to our community

- (3) Notes that as per the Council Resolution on 16 December 2024, the Mayor, on behalf of Council, wrote to the Federal and State Governments seeking funding support, in partnership with Darebin City Council, on 2 January 2025.

Cr Greco proposed to the mover and seconder that point (4) be added as follows, which was not accepted.

- (4) Notes the \$15m grant from the Federal Government's Priority Community Infrastructure Program and the \$10m interests free loan provided by Victorian State Government's Community Sports Infrastructure Loan Scheme towards the facelift Glen Eira's memorial pool and seeks responses from the Federal Member for Cooper, Ged Kearney and State Member for Preston Nathan Lambert regarding Council's recent request for funding which could be made through these funding sources.

Amendment

MOVED: Cr. G Greco
SECONDED: -

That Council:

- (1) Notes the outcomes of the RLC Scoping Study report and the recommended next steps.
- (2) Endorses the release of the RLC Scoping Study (Confidential Appendix A) to our community.
- (3) Notes that as per the Council Resolution on 16 December 2024, the Mayor, on behalf of Council, wrote to the Federal and State Governments seeking funding support, in partnership with Darebin City Council, on 2 January 2025.
- (4) Notes the \$15m grant from the Federal Government's Priority Community Infrastructure Program and the \$10m interests free loan provided by Victorian State Government's Community Sports Infrastructure Loan Scheme towards the facelift Glen Eira's memorial pool and seeks responses from the Federal Member for Cooper, Ged Kearney and State Member for Preston Nathan Lambert regarding Council's recent request for funding which could be made through these funding sources.

TO AMENDMENT LAPSED FOR WANT OF A SECONDER

Substantive Motion

MOVED: Cr. Tsalkos
SECONDED: Cr. Arturi

That Council:

- (1) Notes the outcomes of the RLC Scoping Study report and the recommended next steps.
- (2) Endorses the release of the RLC Scoping Study (Confidential Appendix A) to our community.
- (3) Notes that as per the Council Resolution on 16 December 2024, the Mayor, on behalf of Council, wrote to the Federal and State Governments seeking funding support, in partnership with Darebin City Council, on 2 January 2025.

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

Council Resolution

MINUTE NO. 25-035

MOVED: Cr. Tsalkos

SECONDED: Cr. Arturi

That Council:

- (1) Notes the outcomes of the RLC Scoping Study report and the recommended next steps.
- (2) Endorses the release of the RLC Scoping Study (Confidential Appendix A) to our community.
- (3) Notes that as per the Council Resolution on 16 December 2024, the Mayor, on behalf of Council, wrote to the Federal and State Governments seeking funding support, in partnership with Darebin City Council, on 2 January 2025.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

9.2 PRESTON CENTRAL - ACTIVITY CENTRE PROGRAM SUBMISSIONS

The following people each made a 2-minute submission in relation to this item:

- Chris Erlandsen
- Carmel Davies

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides an update for Council on the Activity Centre Program and recommends Council continues its engagement with the State Government to achieve the best outcomes for the High Street Activity Centre and community.

On 18 December 2023 Council endorsed its draft Preston Central Structure Plan, with planning controls, to start its own planning scheme amendment. This decision followed extensive community engagement and technical work. The fast-tracked State-led amendment through the Activity Centre Program will replace Council's amendment.

On 27 September and 4 October 2024 officer-led submissions were made under delegation to provide feedback to the State Government on their draft Activity Centre Plan for the Centre. These submissions are included as **Appendix C** and **D**.

A Standing Advisory Committee has reviewed the draft planning controls and consultation feedback.

On 23 February 2025, the Minister for Planning released updated plans for the centre via a factsheet with a summary of controls including boundaries and heights. Further key details about the planning controls are still to be released. The Minister for Planning will gazette the new planning controls for the Centre by the end of March, including the walkable catchment zone.

Officers are recommending Council note the officer submissions, write to the Minister for Planning and continue pursuing the Memorandum of Understanding between Council and the State Government. This approach is likely to benefit Central Preston and the soon to be announced 25 additional activity centres for planning control changes.

Officer Recommendation

That Council:

- (1) Continues to support the intent of the Victorian Government's Housing Statement and Activity Centre Program to update planning controls to ensure that more good quality homes can be built in Preston Central, as per Council's own Draft Preston Central Activity Centre Plan.
- (2) Welcomes the opportunity to continue partnering with the State Government to improve planning and investment into the Preston Central Activity Centre.
- (3) Notes that at the 14 August 2024 Special Council meeting, Council resolved on its advocacy principles and outcomes for the Central Preston Activity Centre (Minute No. 24-129).
- (4) Notes the following officer submissions made to the State's engagement process for the Activity Centre Program for Preston (High Street) Activity Centre:

- a. 27 September 2024 submission in response to the State's calls for public submissions at **Attachment C**
 - b. 4 October 2024 technical submission made in response to the Department of Transport and Planning's request for Darebin Council feedback on its draft Activity Centre Controls, at **Attachment D**.
- (5) Writes to the Minister for Planning to seek a meeting, and to share Council's endorsed principles and outcomes for the Central Preston Activity Centre and community, including:
- a. That the Activity Centre Program ensures more good quality homes, including social and affordable housing, can be built in Central Preston.
 - b. Community consultation is central to the State's ongoing Activity Centre Program, and that the new catchment area zone should be reviewed in consultation with councils and the community 18 months following its introduction to ensure outcomes are actively monitored.
 - c. Planning controls to be released to Councils as soon as possible and be generally consistent with Council's draft Preston Central Structure Plan including its vision and principles and mandatory Floor Area Ratio approach as per C218dare.
 - d. Value capture mechanisms and infrastructure contributions are built into planning controls, which ensures investment is directed to the local area in addition to Council's current Development Contributions Plan.
 - e. Built form controls that promote environmental sustainability and net zero communities, and planning provisions informed by transport assessments that enable public transport, active and sustainable transport use.
- (6) Writes to the relevant State Members of Parliament to share Council's priorities.
- (7) Requests the CEO continues:
- a. negotiations to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding between the State Government and Council to continue to ensure the best outcomes are achieved for the Preston Central Activity Centre and community, including State funding to support the creation of a well-connected, vibrant, safe and economical viable centre.
 - b. to lead Council's advocacy in order to achieve Council's endorsed principles and outcomes for the Central Preston Activity Centre and community.

Motion

MOVED: Cr. G Greco
SECONDED: -

That Council

- (1) Continues to support the intent of the Victorian Government's Housing Statement and Activity Centre Program to update planning controls to ensure that more good quality homes can be built in Preston Central. **However, Council expresses serious reservations about how the state government's planning controls currently lack details and alignment with as per Council's own Draft Preston Central Activity Centre Plan, endorsed 18 December 2023.**

- (2) Welcomes the opportunity to continue partnering with the State Government to improve planning and investment into the Preston Central Activity Centre **with the objective of achieving Council's own Draft Preston Central Activity Centre Plan.**
- (3) Notes that at the 14 August 2024 Special Council meeting, Council resolved on its advocacy principles and outcomes for the Central Preston Activity Centre (Minute No. 24-129).
- (4) Notes the following officer submissions made to the State's engagement process for the Activity Centre Program for Preston (High Street) Activity Centre:
 - a. 27 September 2024 submission in response to the State's calls for public submissions at **Attachment C**
 - b. 4 October 2024 technical submission made in response to the Department of Transport and Planning's request for Darebin Council feedback on its draft Activity Centre Controls, at **Attachment D.**
- (5) Writes to the Minister for Planning to **urgently seek a meeting to request a deferment of the gazettement of planning controls to a later date to allow Council and affected residents to have an opportunity to see the details of the new planning controls before they are implemented and for allowing** and to share Council's endorsed principles and outcomes for the Central Preston Activity Centre and community, including:
 - a. That the Activity Centre Program ensures more good quality homes, including social and affordable housing, can be built in Central Preston.
 - b. Community consultation is central to the State's ongoing Activity Centre Program, and that the new catchment area zone **immediately** should be reviewed in consultation with councils and the community **in line with Council's own Draft Preston Central Activity Centre Plan, (endorsed 18 December 2023) prior to the State Government's new planning controls being gazetted** 18 months following its introduction to ensure outcomes are actively monitored.
 - c. Planning controls to be released to Councils as soon as possible and be generally consistent with Council's draft Preston Central Structure Plan including its vision and principles and mandatory Floor Area Ratio approach as per C218dare.
 - d. Value capture mechanisms and infrastructure contributions are built into planning controls, which ensures investment is directed to the local area in addition to Council's current Development Contributions Plan.
 - e. Built form controls that promote environmental sustainability and net zero communities, and planning provisions informed by transport assessments that enable public transport, active and sustainable transport use.
 - f. **Adequate provisions for public open space is appropriately funded and provided for as part of the state government's activity Centre Program for Preston (High Street) Activity Centre.**
- (6) Writes to the relevant State Members of Parliament to:
 - a. Share Council's priorities **and serious concerns, as described by Council officers in Attachment C**
 - b. **Request they also call on the state government to defer early gazettement, (scheduled for late March) of the new planning controls to allow Council and residents in the catchment areas to be properly consulted on the actual details of the proposed planning controls.**
- (7) Requests the CEO continues:

- a. negotiations to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding between the State Government and Council to continue to ensure the best outcomes are achieved for the Preston Central Activity Centre and community, including State funding to support the creation of a well-connected, vibrant, safe and economical viable centre
 - b. to lead Council's advocacy in order to achieve Council's endorsed principles and outcomes for the Central Preston Activity Centre and community.
- (8) **Writes to all residents in the 800-meter catchment area to inform them of Council's priorities and the planning implications regarding the state government's intension to gazette (by the end of March 2025) new planning controls for the Preston (High Street) Activity Centre.**
- (9) **Council report back to Council on a broader communications campaign but in the interim issues a media release to reflecting the main points of this motion.**

THE MOTION LAPSED FOR WANT OF A SECONDER

Motion

MOVED: Cr. Boglis OAM
SECONDED: Cr. Jelley

That Council:

- (1) Continues to support the intent of the Victorian Government's Housing Statement and Activity Centre Program to update planning controls to ensure that more good quality homes can be built in Preston Central, as per Council's own Draft Preston Central Activity Centre Plan.
- (2) Welcomes the opportunity to continue partnering with the State Government to improve planning and investment into the Preston Central Activity Centre.
- (3) Notes that at the 14 August 2024 Special Council meeting, Council resolved on its advocacy principles and outcomes for the Central Preston Activity Centre (Minute No. 24-129).
- (4) Notes the following officer submissions made to the State's engagement process for the Activity Centre Program for Preston (High Street) Activity Centre:
 - a. 27 September 2024 submission in response to the State's calls for public submissions at **Attachment C**
 - b. 4 October 2024 technical submission made in response to the Department of Transport and Planning's request for Darebin Council feedback on its draft Activity Centre Controls, at **Attachment D**.
- (5) Writes to the Minister for Planning to seek a meeting, and to share Council's endorsed principles and outcomes for the Central Preston Activity Centre and community, including:
 - a. That the Activity Centre Program ensures more good quality homes, including social and affordable housing, can be built in Central Preston.
 - b. Community consultation is central to the State's ongoing Activity Centre Program, and that the new catchment area zone should be reviewed in consultation with councils and the community 18 months following its introduction to ensure outcomes are actively monitored.

- c. Planning controls to be released to Councils as soon as possible and be generally consistent with Council's draft Preston Central Structure Plan including its vision and principles and mandatory Floor Area Ratio approach as per C218dare.
 - d. Value capture mechanisms and infrastructure contributions are built into planning controls, which ensures investment is directed to the local area in addition to Council's current Development Contributions Plan.
 - e. Built form controls that promote environmental sustainability and net zero communities, and planning provisions informed by transport assessments that enable public transport, active and sustainable transport use.
- (6) Writes to the relevant State Members of Parliament to share Council's priorities.
- (7) Requests the CEO continues:
- a. negotiations to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding between the State Government and Council to continue to ensure the best outcomes are achieved for the Preston Central Activity Centre and community, including State funding to support the creation of a well-connected, vibrant, safe and economical viable centre.
 - b. to lead Council's advocacy in order to achieve Council's endorsed principles and outcomes for the Central Preston Activity Centre and community.

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

Council Resolution

MINUTE NO. 25-036

MOVED: Cr. Boglis OAM
SECONDED: Cr. Jelley

That Council:

- (1) Continues to support the intent of the Victorian Government's Housing Statement and Activity Centre Program to update planning controls to ensure that more good quality homes can be built in Preston Central, as per Council's own Draft Preston Central Activity Centre Plan.
- (2) Welcomes the opportunity to continue partnering with the State Government to improve planning and investment into the Preston Central Activity Centre.
- (3) Notes that at the 14 August 2024 Special Council meeting, Council resolved on its advocacy principles and outcomes for the Central Preston Activity Centre (Minute No. 24-129).
- (4) Notes the following officer submissions made to the State's engagement process for the Activity Centre Program for Preston (High Street) Activity Centre:
 - a. 27 September 2024 submission in response to the State's calls for public submissions at **Attachment C**
 - b. 4 October 2024 technical submission made in response to the Department of Transport and Planning's request for Darebin Council feedback on its draft Activity Centre Controls, at **Attachment D**.
- (5) Writes to the Minister for Planning to seek a meeting, and to share Council's endorsed principles and outcomes for the Central Preston Activity Centre and community, including:

- a. That the Activity Centre Program ensures more good quality homes, including social and affordable housing, can be built in Central Preston.
 - b. Community consultation is central to the State's ongoing Activity Centre Program, and that the new catchment area zone should be reviewed in consultation with councils and the community 18 months following its introduction to ensure outcomes are actively monitored.
 - c. Planning controls to be released to Councils as soon as possible and be generally consistent with Council's draft Preston Central Structure Plan including its vision and principles and mandatory Floor Area Ratio approach as per C218dare.
 - d. Value capture mechanisms and infrastructure contributions are built into planning controls, which ensures investment is directed to the local area in addition to Council's current Development Contributions Plan.
 - e. Built form controls that promote environmental sustainability and net zero communities, and planning provisions informed by transport assessments that enable public transport, active and sustainable transport use.
- (6) Writes to the relevant State Members of Parliament to share Council's priorities.
- (7) Requests the CEO continues:
- a. negotiations to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding between the State Government and Council to continue to ensure the best outcomes are achieved for the Preston Central Activity Centre and community, including State funding to support the creation of a well-connected, vibrant, safe and economical viable centre.
 - b. to lead Council's advocacy in order to achieve Council's endorsed principles and outcomes for the Central Preston Activity Centre and community.

CARRIED

For: Crs Arturi, Boglis OAM, Dimitriadis, Jelley, O'Brien, Sangster, Tsalkos and Olaris OAM
Abstained: Cr Greco

7.29pm – Cr Boglis OAM left the meeting and returned at 7.30pm.

7.31pm – Cr Sangster left the meeting and returned at 7.33pm.

7.33pm – Cr O'Brien left the meeting and returned at 7.36pm

9.3 HIGH STREET STREETSCAPE IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report:

- Seeks support from Council to start the preliminary phase of community engagement in March for the High Street Streetscape Improvements Project
- Provides an update to Council on the High Street Preston streetscape improvements project.

High Street Preston - from Bell St to Murray Rd - has been identified as a priority through Council's annual road rehabilitation program. A full road reconstruction is required, which includes replacing kerbs and digging out the old road base and stabilising or replacing it.

Preston Central is also forecast to cater for significant growth in housing to 2041 which will change the way the street is used.

Officers are recommending the 'build-back-better' approach for this maintenance project. This will improve resource efficiency, reduce disruption for the community and provide opportunities to access grant funding.

Officers have collected transport data and existing conditions of High Street. The next stage of the project is to seek input from the community on their priorities for the future of High Street. This will be the first of two planned rounds of community consultation on this project.

Officer Recommendation

That Council endorses the first stage of community engagement on the High Street Streetscape Improvement Project to start from March 2025.

Motion

MOVED: Cr. Jelley
SECONDED: Cr. Sangster

That Council:

- (1) Endorses the first stage of community engagement on the High Street Streetscape Improvement Project to start from March 2025.
- (2) **Undertakes measures to reach Darebin's diverse community through consultation, including increasing the proportion of apartment residents engaged in community consultation.**

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

Council Resolution

MINUTE NO. 25-037

MOVED: Cr. Jelley
SECONDED: Cr. Sangster

That Council:

- (1) Endorses the first stage of community engagement on the High Street Streetscape Improvement Project to start from March 2025.
- (2) Undertakes measures to reach Darebin's diverse community through consultation, including increasing the proportion of apartment residents engaged in community consultation.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

9.4 SAFER LOCAL ROADS AND STREETS PROGRAM GRANT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report:

- Describes a \$2 million road safety funding opportunity from the State Government, and
- Recommends Council submits all projects - that meet the funding criteria – to the State Government so they can be assessed for funding.

The Transport Accident Commission (TAC) is partnering with the Department of Transport and Planning (DTP) to offer \$2 million to every Victorian Council through the Safe Local Roads and Streets Program (Program). The Program aims to:

- Transform the road network by implementing proven Safe System infrastructure delivered at the lowest practical cost to eliminate - as far as practicable - the risk of fatal and serious injuries on local roads
- Enhance or build Safe System capacity and capability in Local Government and other community-based organisations interested in road safety.

The Victorian Government's Road Safety Strategy 2021-2030 aims to halve deaths by 2030 and put the State on a strong path to eliminate all road deaths by 2050.

The State Government's Road Trauma data 2015-21 shows that the number of people killed or seriously injured on Darebin's roads is worse compared to other metropolitan Councils.

Officers recommend that all eligible projects are put forward because State Government Program administrators will select the list of projects to be funded. This approach helps ensure that Council will be allocated the full \$2 million.

Council will have 18 months to complete the design and construction of the successful projects.

Officer Recommendation

That Council:

- (1) Endorses the following projects to be submitted to the State Government for funding consideration as part of Victorian Safer Local Roads and Streets Program:
 - a. Wombat/priority crossings on:
 - i. Bracken Ave at Harold St, Thornbury
 - ii. Bracken Ave at Hutton St, Thornbury
 - iii. Bracken Ave at Rennie St, Thornbury
 - iv. Bracken Ave at Smith St, Thornbury
 - v. Clarendon St at St David St, Thornbury
 - vi. Cramer St, Preston, west of Park Ave
 - vii. Gooch St near Jones Reserve, Thornbury
 - viii. Mansfield St near Olver Reserve, Thornbury
 - ix. Matisi St south of Theobald St, Thornbury

- x. Separation St near Sparks Avenue, Fairfield
 - b. Raised pedestrian thresholds on:
 - i. Aberdeen St at Dumbarton St, Reservoir
 - ii. Clapham St at Hutton St, Thornbury
 - iii. Dundee St at Greenock St, Reservoir
 - iv. Greenock St at Aberdeen St, Reservoir
 - v. Hartington St at Arthurton Rd, Northcote
 - vi. McIntosh St at Westbourne Grove, Northcote
 - vii. Western side of Powell Street at Robinson Rd, Reservoir
 - viii. Both access points to car parks on the western side of Robinson Road between Wild Street and Powell Street
 - ix. Steane St at McColl St, Reservoir
 - c. Raised intersections at:
 - i. Jones St and Collins St, Thornbury
 - ii. Separation St and Perry St, Fairfield
 - iii. Railway Pde and Gillies Street, Fairfield
 - iv. Tyler St and Laurel St, Preston West
 - d. Roundabout pedestrian crossings at:
 - i. Newcastle St/Collins St, Thornbury
 - ii. Newcastle St/Pender St, Thornbury
 - e. 30 km/h speed zone in Northcote, Fairfield and Alphington area.
- (2) Notes that the Program Administrators, consisting of the Department of Transport and Planning and the Transport Accident Commission, will select the final list of projects to be funded by the Safer Local Roads and Streets Program.
- (3) Endorses capital delivery of the projects that are approved by the State Government Program Administrators to receive funding through the Safer Local Roads and Streets Program.
- (4) Authorises the CEO to accept minor design changes to the projects - listed at point 1 - that are recommended by the State Government Program Administrators.

Motion

MOVED: Cr. Boglis OAM
SECONDED: Cr. Jelley

That Council:

- (1) Endorses the following projects to be submitted to the State Government for funding consideration as part of Victorian Safer Local Roads and Streets Program:
- a. Wombat/priority crossings on:
 - i. Bracken Ave at Harold St, Thornbury
 - ii. Bracken Ave at Hutton St, Thornbury
 - iii. Bracken Ave at Rennie St, Thornbury

- iv. Bracken Ave at Smith St, Thornbury
 - v. Clarendon St at St David St, Thornbury
 - vi. Cramer St, Preston, west of Park Ave
 - vii. Gooch St near Jones Reserve, Thornbury
 - viii. Mansfield St near Olver Reserve, Thornbury
 - ix. Matisi St south of Theobald St, Thornbury
 - x. Separation St near Sparks Avenue, Fairfield
 - b. Raised pedestrian thresholds on:
 - i. Aberdeen St at Dumbarton St, Reservoir
 - ii. Clapham St at Hutton St, Thornbury
 - iii. Dundee St at Greenock St, Reservoir
 - iv. Greenock St at Aberdeen St, Reservoir
 - v. Hartington St at Arthurton Rd, Northcote
 - vi. McIntosh St at Westbourne Grove, Northcote
 - vii. Western side of Powell Street at Robinson Rd, Reservoir
 - viii. Both access points to car parks on the western side of Robinson Road between Wild Street and Powell Street
 - ix. Steane St at McColl St, Reservoir
 - c. Raised intersections at:
 - i. Jones St and Collins St, Thornbury
 - ii. Separation St and Perry St, Fairfield
 - iii. Railway Pde and Gillies Street, Fairfield
 - iv. Tyler St and Laurel St, Preston West
 - d. Roundabout pedestrian crossings at:
 - i. Newcastle St/Collins St, Thornbury
 - ii. Newcastle St/Pender St, Thornbury
 - e. 30 km/h speed zone in Northcote, Fairfield and Alphington area.
- (2) Notes that the Program Administrators, consisting of the Department of Transport and Planning and the Transport Accident Commission, will select the final list of projects to be funded by the Safer Local Roads and Streets Program.
- (3) **Requests the CEO to provide advice, through the 2025-26 budget development process, for accelerating delivery of safety treatments at Gilbert Road/Henty Street intersection, Gilbert Road/Edwardes Street & Spring Street by May and Taunton.**
- (4) Endorses capital delivery of the projects that are approved by the State Government Program Administrators to receive funding through the Safer Local Roads and Streets Program.
- (5) Authorises the CEO to accept minor design changes to the projects - listed at point 1 - that are recommended by the State Government Program Administrators.

Cr Greco proposed an amendment to add points (6) and (7) to the motion as follows which was accepted by the mover and seconder:

- (6) Consistent with our strategic objectives as per our current Council Plan to deliver equitable and accessible infrastructure to provide opportunities for our community to live well, council will give due consideration to prioritising road safety projects in Preston and Reservoir given approximately 80% of the above nominated road safety projects are in Northcote, Thornbury or Fairfield.
- (7) Receives a report as part of the 2025-2026 budget process of potential road safety treatments and improvements across the Preston and Reservoir area

THE AMENDED MOTION THEN READ AS FOLLOWS:

Amended Motion

MOVED: Cr. Boglis OAM

SECONDED: Cr. Jelley

That Council:

- (1) Endorses the following projects to be submitted to the State Government for funding consideration as part of Victorian Safer Local Roads and Streets Program:
 - a. Wombat/priority crossings on:
 - i. Bracken Ave at Harold St, Thornbury
 - ii. Bracken Ave at Hutton St, Thornbury
 - iii. Bracken Ave at Rennie St, Thornbury
 - iv. Bracken Ave at Smith St, Thornbury
 - v. Clarendon St at St David St, Thornbury
 - vi. Cramer St, Preston, west of Park Ave
 - vii. Gooch St near Jones Reserve, Thornbury
 - viii. Mansfield St near Olver Reserve, Thornbury
 - ix. Matisi St south of Theobald St, Thornbury
 - x. Separation St near Sparks Avenue, Fairfield
 - b. Raised pedestrian thresholds on:
 - i. Aberdeen St at Dumbarton St, Reservoir
 - ii. Clapham St at Hutton St, Thornbury
 - iii. Dundee St at Greenock St, Reservoir
 - iv. Greenock St at Aberdeen St, Reservoir
 - v. Hartington St at Artherton Rd, Northcote
 - vi. McIntosh St at Westbourne Grove, Northcote
 - vii. Western side of Powell Street at Robinson Rd, Reservoir
 - viii. Both access points to car parks on the western side of Robinson Road between Wild Street and Powell Street
 - ix. Steane St at McColl St, Reservoir
 - c. Raised intersections at:
 - i. Jones St and Collins St, Thornbury
 - ii. Separation St and Perry St, Fairfield

- iii. Railway Pde and Gillies Street, Fairfield
 - iv. Tyler St and Laurel St, Preston West
 - d. Roundabout pedestrian crossings at:
 - i. Newcastle St/Collins St, Thornbury
 - ii. Newcastle St/Pender St, Thornbury
 - e. 30 km/h speed zone in Northcote, Fairfield and Alphington area.
- (2) Notes that the Program Administrators, consisting of the Department of Transport and Planning and the Transport Accident Commission, will select the final list of projects to be funded by the Safer Local Roads and Streets Program.
- (3) Requests the CEO to provide advice, through the 2025-26 budget development process, for accelerating delivery of safety treatments at Gilbert Road/Henty Street intersection, Gilbert Road/Edwardes Street & Spring Street by May and Taunton.
- (4) Endorses capital delivery of the projects that are approved by the State Government Program Administrators to receive funding through the Safer Local Roads and Streets Program.
- (5) Authorises the CEO to accept minor design changes to the projects - listed at point 1 - that are recommended by the State Government Program Administrators
- (6) Consistent with our strategic objectives as per our current Council Plan to deliver equitable and accessible infrastructure to provide opportunities for our community to live well, council will give due consideration to prioritising road safety projects in Preston and Reservoir given approximately 80% of the above nominated road safety projects are in Northcote, Thornbury or Fairfield.
- (7) Receives a report as part of the 2025-2026 budget process of potential road safety treatments and improvements across the Preston and Reservoir area.

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

Council Resolution

MINUTE NO. 25-038

MOVED: Cr. Boglis OAM
SECONDED: Cr. Jelley

That Council:

- (1) Endorses the following projects to be submitted to the State Government for funding consideration as part of Victorian Safer Local Roads and Streets Program:
- a. Wombat/priority crossings on:
 - i. Bracken Ave at Harold St, Thornbury
 - ii. Bracken Ave at Hutton St, Thornbury
 - iii. Bracken Ave at Rennie St, Thornbury
 - iv. Bracken Ave at Smith St, Thornbury
 - v. Clarendon St at St David St, Thornbury
 - vi. Cramer St, Preston, west of Park Ave
 - vii. Gooch St near Jones Reserve, Thornbury
 - viii. Mansfield St near Olver Reserve, Thornbury

- ix. Matisi St south of Theobald St, Thornbury
 - x. Separation St near Sparks Avenue, Fairfield
 - b. Raised pedestrian thresholds on:
 - i. Aberdeen St at Dumbarton St, Reservoir
 - ii. Clapham St at Hutton St, Thornbury
 - iii. Dundee St at Greenock St, Reservoir
 - iv. Greenock St at Aberdeen St, Reservoir
 - v. Hartington St at Arthurton Rd, Northcote
 - vi. McIntosh St at Westbourne Grove, Northcote
 - vii. Western side of Powell Street at Robinson Rd, Reservoir
 - viii. Both access points to car parks on the western side of Robinson Road between Wild Street and Powell Street
 - ix. Steane St at McColl St, Reservoir
 - c. Raised intersections at:
 - i. Jones St and Collins St, Thornbury
 - ii. Separation St and Perry St, Fairfield
 - iii. Railway Pde and Gillies Street, Fairfield
 - iv. Tyler St and Laurel St, Preston West
 - d. Roundabout pedestrian crossings at:
 - i. Newcastle St/Collins St, Thornbury
 - ii. Newcastle St/Pender St, Thornbury
 - e. 30 km/h speed zone in Northcote, Fairfield and Alphington area.
- (2) Notes that the Program Administrators, consisting of the Department of Transport and Planning and the Transport Accident Commission, will select the final list of projects to be funded by the Safer Local Roads and Streets Program.
 - (3) Requests the CEO to provide advice, through the 2025-26 budget development process, for accelerating delivery of safety treatments at Gilbert Road/Henty Street intersection, Gilbert Road/Edwardes Street & Spring Street by May and Taunton.
 - (4) Endorses capital delivery of the projects that are approved by the State Government Program Administrators to receive funding through the Safer Local Roads and Streets Program.
 - (5) Authorises the CEO to accept minor design changes to the projects - listed at point 1 - that are recommended by the State Government Program Administrators
 - (6) Consistent with our strategic objectives as per our current Council Plan to deliver equitable and accessible infrastructure to provide opportunities for our community to live well, council will give due consideration to prioritising road safety projects in Preston and Reservoir given approximately 80% of the above nominated road safety projects are in Northcote, Thornbury or Fairfield.
 - (7) Receives a report as part of the 2025-2026 budget process of potential road safety treatments and improvements across the Preston and Reservoir area

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

9.5 DRAFT BUDGET PARAMETERS & KEY BUDGET ENVELOPES - DEVELOPMENT OF THE 10 YEAR FINANCE PLAN

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report recommends parameters and key budget envelopes to Council for the purposes of development of the draft 2025-26 budget and Long-Term Financial Plan (LTFP). These parameters are the key assumptions that would be used in financial modelling and planning such as assumptions about various inflation rates and level of borrowings. This recommendation is based on assessed of current external economic environment and Council's financial position.

At its Ordinary Council meeting on December 16, 2024, Council noted draft budget parameters and key budget envelopes and requested additional financial modelling for infrastructure projects to inform its decisions.

Council sought feedback from the Audit and Risk Committee ("Committee") on the initial draft budget parameters at the Committee meeting on December 18, 2024, and informed the Committee of its decision to seek additional modelling. The Committee met at a special meeting in February 2025 to provide feedback on both matters.

On February 7, 2025, the Committee reviewed updated budget parameters and initial financial modelling results. The consultant and officers jointly presented an independent assessment of these elements. Committee feedback and officer responses are noted below.

Since December 2024, several updates have been made to the recommended draft budget parameters and key budget envelopes. These updates incorporate:

- Results of Council's 2024-25 mid-year financial performance review,
- The announcement by the State Government of the applicable rate cap, and
- Consideration of multiple scenarios to ensure long-term financial sustainability.

Council is continuing to develop its draft budget (2025-26 and four year) and this is based on the recommended parameters and envelopes outlined in this report. When Council finalises its decision, the draft budget would in turn be adjusted to reflect any adjustments if relevant.

Summary of Key Assumptions

- Recommended capital envelope of \$131M over 4 years and operating project envelopes of \$8.8M over 4 years.
- A minimum cash balance of \$44M is recommended considering the level of risk.
- Digital transformation implementation over 5 years commencing 2024/25 for \$36.44M.
- Includes an inbuilt permanent savings target \$9.7M (per annum) from 2025/26 to 2028/29 to be operationalised. This forms part of \$39.3M savings over 10 years included the LTFP.
- Recommended budget parameters in Appendix B
- No new borrowings have been assumed.

- Priorities for capital works and operating projects will continue to be developed in consultation with Council - within the recommended envelopes.

Officer Recommendation

That Council:

- (1) Notes that as part of preparing the draft 2025-26 budget and draft Long Term Financial Plan, Council officers have conducted a review of assumptions, parameters and principles based on assessment of the current external economic environment and to recommend parameters for use in identifying the affordable and financially sustainable budget envelopes.
- (2) Notes the outcome of an independent review and assessment undertaken of Managements financial modelling, assumptions & financially sustainable budget envelopes. **Appendix A**
- (3) Notes in response to feedback received (**Appendix E**) from the Audit & Risk Committee at its meeting on 7th Feb 2025, management undertook a further review of the following escalation factors:
 - a. Employee costs
 - b. Corporate insurances
 - c. Utilities
 - d. Other expenses
 - e. Depreciation
- (4) Adopts recommended budget parameters (**Appendix B**) & key budget envelopes (**Appendix C**) to use as the basis for developing the new Long Term Financial Plan (2025/26 – 2034/35).
- (5) Notes results of the financial modelling undertaken to allow Council to consider options as it develops its draft Budget (**Appendix D**):
 - a. Inclusion of redevelopment of a large Council facility within the next 8 years,
 - b. Inclusion of redevelopment of an additional medium Council facility or an increase in investment in other infrastructure assets within the next 4 years,
 - c. Inclusion of redevelopment of an additional small council facility within the next 4 years.
- (6) Notes that next steps in the process of developing the detailed draft Budget and draft Long Term Financial Plan as noted in this paper.

Motion

MOVED: Cr. Arturi
SECONDED: Cr. Boglis OAM

That Council:

- (1) Notes that as part of preparing the draft 2025-26 budget and draft Long Term Financial Plan, Council officers have conducted a review of assumptions, parameters and principles based on assessment of the current external economic environment and to recommend parameters for use in identifying the affordable and financially sustainable budget envelopes.

- (2) Notes the outcome of an independent review and assessment undertaken of Managements financial modelling, assumptions & financially sustainable budget envelopes. **Appendix A**
- (3) Notes in response to feedback received (**Appendix E**) from the Audit & Risk Committee at its meeting on 7th Feb 2025, management undertook a further review of the following escalation factors:
 - a. Employee costs
 - b. Corporate insurances
 - c. Utilities
 - d. Other expenses
 - e. Depreciation
- (4) Adopts recommended budget parameters (**Appendix B**) & key budget envelopes (**Appendix C**) to use as the basis for developing the new Long Term Financial Plan (2025/26 – 2034/35) **with the following amendments:**
 - a. **A minimum cash balance set at \$42M**
 - b. **That the capital works program budget over the four years from 25-26 be increased by \$2M (once off) reflecting the reduced minimum cash balance and noting that the specific timing and proposed capital works projects will be further considered in the budget development process and shared with community as part of the draft budget in April 2025.**
- (5) Notes results of the financial modelling undertaken to allow Council to consider options as it develops its draft Budget (**Appendix D**):
 - a. Inclusion of redevelopment of a large Council facility within the next 8 years,
 - b. Inclusion of redevelopment of an additional medium Council facility or an increase in investment in other infrastructure assets within the next 4 years,
 - c. Inclusion of redevelopment of an additional small council facility within the next 4 years.
- (6) Notes that next steps in the process of developing the detailed draft Budget and draft Long Term Financial Plan as noted in this paper.

Cr Greco proposed the following amendment to the motion as follows which was not accepted by the mover and seconder:

- (6) Writes to the Federal Member for Cooper, Ged Kearney MP and the State Member for Preston Nathan Lambert MP, to advise them of the financial modelling and that without state and federal funding, Council cannot go ahead with the inclusion of a development of a large council facility like the Reservoir Leisure Centre within the next 8 years.
- (7) Notes that next steps in the process of developing the detailed draft Budget and draft Long Term Financial Plan as noted in this paper.

Amendment

MOVED: Cr. G Greco

SECONDED: Cr. Jelley

That Council:

- (1) Notes that as part of preparing the draft 2025-26 budget and draft Long Term Financial Plan, Council officers have conducted a review of assumptions, parameters and principles based on assessment of the current external economic environment and to recommend parameters for use in identifying the affordable and financially sustainable budget envelopes.
- (2) Notes the outcome of an independent review and assessment undertaken of Managements financial modelling, assumptions & financially sustainable budget envelopes. **Appendix A**
- (3) Notes in response to feedback received (Appendix E) from the Audit & Risk Committee at its meeting on 7th Feb 2025, management undertook a further review of the following escalation factors:
 - a. Employee costs
 - b. Corporate insurances
 - c. Utilities
 - d. Other expenses
 - e. Depreciation
- (4) Adopts recommended budget parameters (**Appendix B**) & key budget envelopes (**Appendix C**) to use as the basis for developing the new Long Term Financial Plan (2025/26 – 2034/35) with the following amendments:
 - a. A minimum cash balance set at \$42M
 - b. That the capital works program budget over the four years from 25-26 be increased by \$2M (once off) reflecting the reduced minimum cash balance and noting that the specific timing and proposed capital works projects will be further considered in the budget development process and shared with community as part of the draft budget in April 2025.
- (5) Notes results of the financial modelling undertaken to allow Council to consider options as it develops its draft Budget (**Appendix D**):
 - a. Inclusion of redevelopment of a large Council facility within the next 8 years,
 - b. Inclusion of redevelopment of an additional medium Council facility or an increase in investment in other infrastructure assets within the next 4 years,
 - c. Inclusion of redevelopment of an additional small council facility within the next 4 years.
- (6) Writes to the Federal Member for Cooper, Ged Kearney MP and the State Member for Preston Nathan Lambert MP, to advise them of the financial modelling and that without state and federal funding, Council cannot go ahead with the inclusion of a development of a large council facility like the Reservoir Leisure Centre within the next 8 years.
- (7) Notes that next steps in the process of developing the detailed draft Budget and draft Long Term Financial Plan as noted in this paper.

LOST

For: Crs Greco, Jelley, O'Brien and Sangster

Against: Crs Arturi, Boglis, Dimitriadis, Tsalkos and Olaris

Substantive Motion

MOVED: Cr. Arturi

SECONDED: Cr. Boglis OAM

That Council:

- (1) Notes that as part of preparing the draft 2025-26 budget and draft Long Term Financial Plan, Council officers have conducted a review of assumptions, parameters and principles based on assessment of the current external economic environment and to recommend parameters for use in identifying the affordable and financially sustainable budget envelopes.
- (2) Notes the outcome of an independent review and assessment undertaken of Managements financial modelling, assumptions & financially sustainable budget envelopes. **Appendix A**
- (3) Notes in response to feedback received (**Appendix E**) from the Audit & Risk Committee at its meeting on 7th Feb 2025, management undertook a further review of the following escalation factors:
 - a. Employee costs
 - b. Corporate insurances
 - c. Utilities
 - d. Other expenses
 - e. Depreciation
- (4) Adopts recommended budget parameters (**Appendix B**) & key budget envelopes (**Appendix C**) to use as the basis for developing the new Long Term Financial Plan (2025/26 – 2034/35) with the following amendments:
 - a. A minimum cash balance set at \$42M
 - b. That the capital works program budget over the four years from 25-26 be increased by \$2M (once off) reflecting the reduced minimum cash balance and noting that the specific timing and proposed capital works projects will be further considered in the budget development process and shared with community as part of the draft budget in April 2025.
- (5) Notes results of the financial modelling undertaken to allow Council to consider options as it develops its draft Budget (**Appendix D**):
 - a. Inclusion of redevelopment of a large Council facility within the next 8 years,
 - b. Inclusion of redevelopment of an additional medium Council facility or an increase in investment in other infrastructure assets within the next 4 years,
 - c. Inclusion of redevelopment of an additional small council facility within the next 4 years.
- (6) Notes that next steps in the process of developing the detailed draft Budget and draft Long Term Financial Plan as noted in this paper.

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

Council Resolution

MINUTE NO. 25-039

MOVED: Cr. Arturi
SECONDED: Cr. Boglis OAM

That Council:

- (1) Notes that as part of preparing the draft 2025-26 budget and draft Long Term Financial Plan, Council officers have conducted a review of assumptions, parameters and principles based on assessment of the current external economic environment and to recommend parameters for use in identifying the affordable and financially sustainable budget envelopes.
- (2) Notes the outcome of an independent review and assessment undertaken of Managements financial modelling, assumptions & financially sustainable budget envelopes. **Appendix A**
- (3) Notes in response to feedback received (**Appendix E**) from the Audit & Risk Committee at its meeting on 7th Feb 2025, management undertook a further review of the following escalation factors:
 - a. Employee costs
 - b. Corporate insurances
 - c. Utilities
 - d. Other expenses
 - e. Depreciation
- (4) Adopts recommended budget parameters (**Appendix B**) & key budget envelopes (**Appendix C**) to use as the basis for developing the new Long Term Financial Plan (2025/26 – 2034/35) with the following amendments:
 - a. A minimum cash balance set at \$42M
 - b. That the capital works program budget over the four years from 25-26 be increased by \$2M (once off) reflecting the reduced minimum cash balance and noting that the specific timing and proposed capital works projects will be further considered in the budget development process and shared with community as part of the draft budget in April 2025.
- (5) Notes results of the financial modelling undertaken to allow Council to consider options as it develops its draft Budget (**Appendix D**):
 - a. Inclusion of redevelopment of a large Council facility within the next 8 years,
 - b. Inclusion of redevelopment of an additional medium Council facility or an increase in investment in other infrastructure assets within the next 4 years,
 - c. Inclusion of redevelopment of an additional small council facility within the next 4 years.
- (6) Notes that next steps in the process of developing the detailed draft Budget and draft Long Term Financial Plan as noted in this paper.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

9.6

HARD RUBBISH SERVICE REVIEW

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

At the 16 December 2024 meeting, Council called for a report *“to immediately review the changes made to the Council’s winter bulk hard waste annual collection service and booked collection in spring, as soon as practical and before the proposed rollout of the new trial at a 2025 Ordinary Council meeting.”*

In February 2024, Council endorsed a 2-year trial booked hard waste collection for residents that receive Council’s kerbside waste service on the following basis *“1 booked collection of 2m³ per year, with 1 additional booked collection of 2m³ for people experiencing financial hardship, and extra collections available for all other residents at cost.”*

Implementation of this decision has started; Council has entered a contract in 2024, provided 1 blanket collection service in 2024 and the contractor has started preparing for a 2 year trial of a booked collection service from 1 July 2025 including sourcing equipment and staff. In its decision of February 2024, Council requested *“that a report be brought to Council, within 8 months of the 2-year trial finishing, that presents a service evaluation and recommendations for the ongoing hard waste service.”*

This report outlines three service options for consideration.

1. A booked hard waste service allowing residents to schedule collections at their convenience, with one free collection per household, a second free collection for households experiencing financial hardship, and unlimited additional collections available on a fee-for-service basis.
2. A blanket hard waste collection once per year, free for all households, supplemented by a booked collection available to 2,000 households. Previously, this supplementary service was offered on a first-come, first-served basis but could be targeted to priority groups (e.g., concession card holders).
3. A booked hard waste service similar to Option 1, but with two free collections per household for all households, plus unlimited additional collections available on a fee-for service basis.

All the options above are feasible, although they do have different advantages and disadvantages which are set out in the discussion section of this report.

A key complication with changing the service option at this time is the risks and potential costs that arise from changing the contract that is on foot. Breaking or renegotiating this contract presents financial and legal risks. Risks and costs associated with changing this contract could be avoided by waiting until after the trial to consider the best long term service approach. The contract allows for Council to make a different decision at the end of the 2 year trial period.

Costs of this service, including any costs associated with changing the contract would be passed on to residents via the waste charge which is set on a cost recovery basis.

The hard waste service is a highly valued service for the Darebin community. Community consultation results relating to the hard rubbish service (Appendix B) indicate a similar level of preference between booked and blanket collection services amongst residents. There is not a clear consensus about the preferred model and there are genuinely different preferences amongst different households. However, experience from other councils suggest that overall satisfaction with hard waste collection remains high, regardless of the model implemented.

Recent community consultation to help develop the Council Plan has highlighted cost-of-living pressures as a current challenge for community.

Noting that all options in this report are feasible and could be implemented, considering potential costs of changing a contract on foot, officers recommend proceeding to trial and then considering the best long term service model when the trial is complete. The contract allows Council to change the service model at the end of the two year trial without penalty. To enable consideration of this, officers recommend Council call for a report on the trial following the first 12 months rather than after the end of the current 2 year trial.

Officer Recommendation

That Council:

- (1) Notes that the hard waste service is highly valued by community and that there are different preferences among households about which is the best service model – a blanket approach or a booked collection approach.
- (2) Notes that Council decided in February 2024 to trial a booked collection service for 2 years, that Council entered a contract for this, and that changing this contract at this time would bring risks and potentially costs.
- (3) Proceed to trial a booked collection service from 1 July 2025 (for two years) on the basis established in the contract: *“1 booked collection of 2m³ per year, with 1 additional booked collection of 2m³ for people experiencing financial hardship, and extra collections available for all other residents at cost.”*
- (4) Calls for a report to be presented to Council on the outcomes of the first 12 months of the trial and providing service options for the period after the trial. This report should be no later than 6 months before the end of the 2 year trial period.

Motion

MOVED: Cr. O'Brien
SECONDED: Cr. Tsalkos

That Council:

- (1) Notes that the hard waste service is highly valued by community and that there are different preferences among households about which is the best service model – a blanket approach or a booked collection approach.
- (2) Notes that Council decided in February 2024 to trial a booked collection service for 2 years, that Council entered a contract for this, and that changing this contract at this time would bring risks and potentially costs.
- (3) Proceed to trial a booked collection service from 1 July 2025 (for two years) on the basis established in the contract: *“1 booked collection of 2m³ per year, with 1 additional booked collection of 2m³ for people experiencing financial hardship, and extra collections available for all other residents at cost.”*
- (4) Calls for a report to be presented to Council on the outcomes of the first 12 months of the trial and providing service options for the period after the trial. This report should be no later than 6 months before the end of the 2 year trial period **and should include community feedback on their experiences of Year 1 of the trial.**

8.19pm – Cr Boglis left the meeting and returned at 8.21pm.

Council Resolution

MINUTE NO. 25-040

MOVED: Cr. O'Brien

SECONDED: Cr. Tsalkos

That Council:

- (1) Notes that the hard waste service is highly valued by community and that there are different preferences among households about which is the best service model – a blanket approach or a booked collection approach.
- (2) Notes that Council decided in February 2024 to trial a booked collection service for 2 years, that Council entered a contract for this, and that changing this contract at this time would bring risks and potentially costs.
- (3) Proceed to trial a booked collection service from 1 July 2025 (for two years) on the basis established in the contract: *"1 booked collection of 2m³ per year, with 1 additional booked collection of 2m³ for people experiencing financial hardship, and extra collections available for all other residents at cost."*
- (4) Calls for a report to be presented to Council on the outcomes of the first 12 months of the trial and providing service options for the period after the trial. This report should be no later than 6 months before the end of the 2 year trial period and should include community feedback on their experiences of Year 1 of the trial.

CARRIED

For: Crs Arturi, Boglis OAM, Dimitriadis, Jelley, O'Brien, Sangster, Tsalkos and Olaris OAM

Against: Cr Greco

9.7

**MERRI COMMON AND SURROUNDS PROGRAM -
COMMUNITY CONSULTATION AND PROJECT UPDATE****EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This report provides an update on the Merri Common and Surrounds Open Space Improvement Project and seeks Council's approval to initiate community engagement on the draft concept designs in March 2025.

In October 2023, the Council received \$1,500,000 in grant funding from the Victorian Government's Better Parks and Playgrounds Program for the Merri Common and Surrounds Open Space Improvement Project which includes the enhancement of four existing public spaces in Northcote – Merri Common, Caddayes Corner, Peters Reserve and Green Memorial Reserve.

In June 2024, the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Change (DEECA) and Council signed the first Funding Agreement which secures \$715,000 in grant funding and \$60,000 in-kind contributions for project management. This Funding is for the design, planning and community consultation at all four spaces and the construction at Caddayes Corner, Peters Reserve and Green Memorial Reserve. The balance of the grant funding is for the construction at Merri Common and will be subject to a separate funding agreement once the proposed works are approved by the landowner, VicTrack, and lessee, Metro Trains Melbourne.

Significant progress has been made to date, including the completion of the Project Plan, draft Concept Designs, Community Engagement Plan, and due diligence assessments on land contamination, flora and fauna, statutory planning, flood risk, and heritage.

The next step is to inform the community about the secured funding and proposed improvements at Merri Common, Caddayes Corner, Peters Reserve, and Green Memorial Reserve, and to gather feedback on the draft concept designs.

Officer Recommendation**That Council:**

- (1) Notes that Council has secured \$715, 000 from the Victorian Government's Better Parks and Playground program for Stage 1 of the Merri Common and surrounds open space improvements (**Appendix A - Funding Agreement**).
- (2) Notes the progress on the Merri Common and Surrounds, Open Space Improvement Project since the execution of the Funding Agreement.
- (3) Approves the commencement of community consultation for the draft Concept Plans for the Merri Common and Surrounds Open Space Improvement Project in 2025. (Appendix B - Draft Concept Plans).
- (4) Authorises the CEO (or delegate) to make editorial changes, corrections, formatting and design necessary to the draft Concept Designs and the Community Engagement Plan at the request of the landowner prior to community engagement.
- (5) Authorises the CEO to complete the State 2 grant application on behalf of the Council for construction works at Merri Common Reserve, pending approval from the landowner, VicTrack.

Motion

MOVED: Cr. E Dimitriadis (Deputy Mayor)

SECONDED: Cr. O'Brien

That Council:

- (1) Notes that Council has secured \$715, 000 from the Victorian Government's Better Parks and Playground program for Stage 1 of the Merri Common and surrounds open space improvements (**Appendix A - Funding Agreement**).
- (2) Notes the progress on the Merri Common and Surrounds, Open Space Improvement Project since the execution of the Funding Agreement.
- (3) Approves the commencement of community consultation for the draft Concept Plans for the Merri Common and Surrounds Open Space Improvement Project in 2025 **and requests the species lists for new plantings be included in the landscape architect drawings for consultation** (Appendix B - Draft Concept Plans).
- (4) Authorises the CEO (or delegate) to make editorial changes, corrections, formatting and design necessary to the draft Concept Designs and the Community Engagement Plan at the request of the landowner prior to community engagement.
- (5) Authorises the CEO to complete the State 2 grant application on behalf of the Council for construction works at Merri Common Reserve, pending approval from the landowner, VicTrack.

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

Council Resolution

MINUTE NO. 25-041

MOVED: Cr. E Dimitriadis (Deputy Mayor)

SECONDED: Cr. O'Brien

That Council:

- (1) Notes that Council has secured \$715, 000 from the Victorian Government's Better Parks and Playground program for Stage 1 of the Merri Common and surrounds open space improvements (**Appendix A - Funding Agreement**).
- (2) Notes the progress on the Merri Common and Surrounds, Open Space Improvement Project since the execution of the Funding Agreement.
- (3) Approves the commencement of community consultation for the draft Concept Plans for the Merri Common and Surrounds Open Space Improvement Project in 2025 and requests the species lists for new plantings be included in the landscape architect drawings for consultation (**Appendix B - Draft Concept Plans**).
- (4) Authorises the CEO (or delegate) to make editorial changes, corrections, formatting and design necessary to the draft Concept Designs and the Community Engagement Plan at the request of the landowner prior to community engagement.
- (5) Authorises the CEO to complete the State 2 grant application on behalf of the Council for construction works at Merri Common Reserve, pending approval from the landowner, VicTrack.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

9.8 2 WINGROVE STREET ALPHINGTON - RESPONSE TO NOTICE OF MOTION

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

At its meeting held on 16 December 2024, Council called for “a report at the 24 February 2025 Council meeting to include broader community consultation as part of stage one of master planning for the site at 2 Wingrove St Alphington.”

This report outlines three options for the first stage of community consultation on the Project.

Background

In June 2024, Council allocated \$40,000 for the 2024-25 year for stage one of work towards a Masterplan for 2 Wingrove Street which would set out Council’s long term vision and plans for the site. The authorised work included

- a preliminary feasibility study on the condition of buildings on site, the geotechnical conditions on the site and
- preparing an Expression of Interest (EOI) process to identify if there is interest from a private sector or community sector to partner with Council to redevelop the site.

Community consultation was planned to follow in a future year and therefore the 2024-25 budget and plan didn’t include provision for consultation.

2 Wingrove Street’s history as a landfill site and Council depot means that not all types of development or uses will be possible at the site. Gaining a better understanding of this is an essential preliminary step in planning for the future of the site. The site is also zoned public use zone which restricts the types of uses at the site.

The preliminary feasibility is on track to be finalised this financial year. A report to Council to consider initiation of the expression of interest process is scheduled for April 2025.

Options for community consultation

Option 1: Undertake community consultation in 2024/2025. Council could conduct a consultation process to understand community aspirations for the site. The main consideration is that would not be possible to share full information with community on this timeline about any issues or constraints arising from the geotechnical and building condition feasibility studies in progress and nor would it be possible to share opportunities or considerations arising from whether or not there is an organisation keen to partner with Council. It is a short lead time for consultation which would constrain the ability to reach audiences.

The Council engagement team will be focused over this time on other scheduled work and therefore the consultation work would need to be outsourced to a consultant to deliver on this timeframe.

Generally, it would also be recommended that further consultation also be undertaken at a later stage of the project when constraints and opportunities can be shared with community – if Council decided to do this, it would increase the total project consultation budget required overall. Estimated Budget \$40,000.

Option 2: Undertake ‘inform’ level community engagement in 2024/2025 and then ‘consult’ level engagement in 2025/2026. This option would allow Council to start engagement with

the community in 2025 and pave the way for future meaningful consultations and engagements throughout the Project lifecycle.

The 2024/2025 work would be largely undertaken in-house through production of Project Bulletins, with some external support (Budget \$15,000 for 2024/2025), with future year's budget to be considered through the budget development process.

Option 3 (no budget implications for 2024-25): Undertake consultation in 2025/2026, with brief updates provided to stakeholders in 2024/2025 through Council website updates, with future year's budget to be considered through the budget development process.

Council Resolution

That Council:

- (1) Notes that stage one of work towards a Masterplan for 2 Wingrove Street Alphington (**"the Project"**), is in progress and includes a preliminary feasibility study on the condition of buildings on site, the geotechnical conditions on the site and work to run an Expression of Interest (EOI process).
- (2) Notes that the 2024/2025 operating budget currently does not include any allowance for community consultation for the Project.
- (3) Authorises Council Officers to proceed with Option _____ with respect to community consultation for the Project, and authorises any additional expenditure associated with this.

Motion

MOVED: Cr. E Dimitriadis (Deputy Mayor)
SECONDED: Cr. Boglis OAM

That Council:

- (1) Notes that stage one of work towards a Masterplan for 2 Wingrove Street Alphington (**"the Project"**), is in progress and includes a preliminary feasibility study on the condition of buildings on site, the geotechnical conditions on the site and work to run an Expression of Interest (EOI process).
- (2) Notes that the 2024/2025 operating budget currently does not include any allowance for community consultation for the Project.
- (3) Authorises Council Officers to proceed with Option 1 with respect to community consultation for the Project, **and informs the community of the current project status, indicative timelines, upcoming milestones and future consultation rounds** and authorises any additional expenditure associated with this.
- (4) **Receives a briefing to consider the process, implications and the cost of Council creating a Community Reference Group with Terms of Reference that reflect community representation at all stages of the Masterplanning Process, beginning with the feasibility study.**

WITH LEAVE OF THE CHAIRPERSON, THE MOTION WAS SPLIT INTO PART TO BE VOTED ON AS FOLLOWS:

Council Resolution**MINUTE NO. 25-042****MOVED: Cr. E Dimitriadis (Deputy Mayor)****SECONDED: Cr. Boglis OAM****That Council:**

- (1) Notes that stage one of work towards a Masterplan for 2 Wingrove Street Alphington (**"the Project"**), is in progress and includes a preliminary feasibility study on the condition of buildings on site, the geotechnical conditions on the site and work to run an Expression of Interest (EOI process).
- (2) Notes that the 2024/2025 operating budget currently does not include any allowance for community consultation for the Project.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**Council Resolution****MINUTE NO. 25-043****MOVED: Cr. E Dimitriadis (Deputy Mayor)****SECONDED: Cr. Boglis OAM****That Council:**

- (3) Authorises Council Officers to proceed with Option 1 with respect to community consultation for the Project, and informs the community of the current project status, indicative timelines, upcoming milestones and future consultation rounds and authorises any additional expenditure associated with this.

CARRIED**For:** Crs Arturi, Boglis OAM, Dimitriadis, Greco, Tsalkos, Olaris OAM**Against:** Crs Jelley, O'Brien and Sangster**Council Resolution****MINUTE NO. 25-044****MOVED: Cr. E Dimitriadis (Deputy Mayor)****SECONDED: Cr. Boglis OAM****That Council:**

- (4) Receives a briefing to consider the process, implications and the cost of Council creating a Community Reference Group with Terms of Reference that reflect community representation at all stages of the Masterplanning Process, beginning with the feasibility study.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

9.9

JEMENA ALPHINGTON COMMUNITY BATTERY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides information to Council about “*about locating the community battery as a first priority, at the south-eastern end of Pitcher Park near the corner of Keith Street and Parklands Avenue Alphington. If this site is not supported by those impacted, provide options for alternative locations in Alphington for immediate installation*” as requested by Council at its meeting on 28 January 2025.

Jemena initially approached Council officers in June 2023, following their receipt of a grant for the placement of a neighbourhood battery within Alphington. Jemena was seeking a lease for Council-owned land within Alphington on which to place the proposed battery. Negotiations to date have been protracted due to several locations being explored and issues/limitations being identified as part of the process.

Both Jemena and Council are working together to explore the feasibility of a battery being installed at the south-eastern corner of Pitcher Park (**‘Proposed Location’**).

Council Resolution**MINUTE NO. 25-045****MOVED: Cr. E Dimitriadis (Deputy Mayor)****SECONDED: Cr. Sangster****That Council:**

- (1) Notes that correspondence has been sent to Jemena reaffirming Council’s commitment to negotiate a lease in Alphington
- (2) Notes that Jemena is planning on commencing a community consultation process on the installation of a battery at the south-eastern corner of Pitcher Park in late February.
- (3) Requests a report by May 2025 on the outcomes of Jemena’s community consultation process and options for a lease at either the first priority location or alternative locations.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

10. ITEMS TO BE TABLED

Nil

11. NOTICES OF MOTION

Nil

12. URGENT BUSINESS

Nil

13. CONSIDERATION OF REPORTS CONSIDERED CONFIDENTIAL

Nil

14. CLOSE OF MEETING

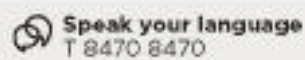
The meeting closed at 8.55pm.

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If you are deaf, or have
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impairment, contact
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