City of DAREBIN

the place to live

AGENDA OF THE ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING

To be held on Tuesday 25 August 2026 at 6:00 PM

This Council Meeting will be held at Council Chamber, 350 High Street, Preston.

This meeting will be a scheduled hybrid meeting, at which both councillors and members of the public may participate either in person or virtually.

This meeting will also be livestreamed and may be accessed from Councils website www.darebin.vic.gov.au.

Persons wishing to observe the meeting in person, submit a Question or make a Submission, are required to register by 12pm on the day before the meeting.

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 future leaders.

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, παρακαλείστε 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 ਟੈਲੀਫ਼ੋਨ 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 کا ایجنڈا ہے۔ایجنڈے کے کسی بھی حصے کے بارے میں مدد کے لیے براہ مہربانی 8470 8888 پر فون کریں۔

Vietnamese
Đây là những Biên bản Họp 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.

Table of Contents

Item Number		Page Number
1.	**OPENING OF MEETING AND MEMBERSHIP**	**1**
2.	**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF TRADITIONAL OWNERS**	**1**
3.	**APOLOGIES**	**1**
4.	**DISCLOSURES OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**	**1**
5.	**CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETINGS**	**1**
6.	**COUNCIL'S OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY RESPONSIBILITIES**	**1**
7.	**QUESTION AND SUBMISSION TIME**	**2**
8.	**PETITIONS**	**3**
9.	**CONSIDERATION OF REPORTS**	**4**
9.1	CR GAETANO GRECO MEMORIAL	4
9.2	SHARED MICROMOBILITY EVALUATION	43
9.3	2025-26 Q4 PERFORMANCE REPORT (NON-FINANCIAL) ENDING 30 JUNE 2026	71
9.4	GELLIBRAND CRESCENT KINDERGARTEN EXPANSION	134
9.5	PROJECT AND INITIATIVE BUDGET ADJUSTMENTS	142
9.6	MAYER PARK SPORTS GROUND FUNDING	153
9.7	MERRI COMMON AND SURROUNDS OPEN SPACE IMPROVEMENT PROJECT - PROJECT UPDATE	158
9.8	DAREBIN'S ADVISORY COMMITTEES	178
9.9	CT202544 CONTRACT AWARD FOR THE REDEVELOPMENT OF PITCHER PARK RESERVE	271
9.10	GOVERNANCE REPORT - AUGUST 2026	279
10.	**ITEMS TO BE TABLED**	**365**
11.	**NOTICES OF MOTION**	**366**
11.1	CLIMATE COMPENSATION FUND – PROTECT DAREBIN RATEPAYERS, SERVICES AND INFRASTRUCTURE	366
11.2	61 JOHNSON STREET, RESERVOIR, PLANNING APPLICATION	369
12.	**URGENT BUSINESS**	**371**
13.	**CONSIDERATION OF REPORTS CONSIDERED CONFIDENTIAL**	**372**
14.	**CLOSE OF MEETING**	**372**

Agenda

1. OPENING OF MEETING AND MEMBERSHIP

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

2. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF TRADITIONAL OWNERS

3. APOLOGIES

4. DISCLOSURES OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

5. CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETINGS

Recommendation

That the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Council held on 28 July 2026 be confirmed as a correct record of business transacted.

6. COUNCIL'S OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY RESPONSIBILITIES

7. QUESTION AND SUBMISSION TIME

Members of the public can lodge questions for Council to answer or make a Comment or Submission prior to a specific item listed on the Agenda of an Ordinary Council meeting.

QUESTIONS

Members of the public wishing to ask questions at an Ordinary Council meeting must submit their question(s) by 12 noon on the day before the meeting. Up to three (3) questions may be submitted.

Questions not lodged by 12 noon on the day before the Council Meeting will not be accepted, and **no questions will be taken from the floor on the night of the Council Meeting**.

In accordance with the Council Governance Rules 2020, the Chairperson may disallow a question if it:

a) relates to a matter outside the duties, functions or powers of Council;

b) is defamatory, indecent, abusive, offensive, irrelevant, trivial or objectionable in language or substance;

c) may lead to a breach of Council's statutory obligations;

d) relates to a Notice of Motion, Petition or item of urgent business;

e) deals with a subject matter already answered;

f) is aimed at embarrassing a Councillor or an Officer; or

g) deals with a matter that should be, or has been, considered as a confidential matter or relates to any matter in respect of which Council may close the Meeting to the public under section 66 of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

No questions directed at an individual Councillor or Officer will be allowed.

SUBMISSIONS

Members of the public wishing to make a 2-minute verbal submission on a report listed on the Council Meeting Agenda (unless not permitted pursuant to the Councils Governance Rules) must register online by 12 noon on the day before the meeting and must be in attendance (in person or virtual) at the meeting to make their submission.

The person making the submission must clearly state their name and their suburb. The name of the submitter will be recorded in the Minutes, as an official record.

No member of the public can make a submission to a Notice of Motion, Petition (unless originator of petition) or item of Urgent Business presented at a Council meeting.

HOW TO REGISTER TO ATTEND THE MEETING, SUBMIT YOUR QUESTION OR MAKE A SUBMISSION

Members of the public who wish to observe the meeting in person, ask a question, or make a submission to an agenda item, at an Ordinary Council Meeting are required to register by 12 noon on the day before the meeting in one of the following ways:

(a) online at darebin.vic.gov.au;

(b) by calling the customer service team on 8470 8888, or

(c) by mail to PO Box 91, Preston 3072

Council meetings can be viewed at the 'Watch Council and Planning Committee' meetings page via Council's website.

Agenda's will be available for viewing on Council's website at the 'Meeting Agendas and Minutes' page up to 6 days prior to the date of the meeting.

8. PETITIONS

9. CONSIDERATION OF REPORTS

9.1 CR GAETANO GRECO MEMORIAL

Author: General Manager Community Life

Reviewed By: Chief Executive Officer

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides information and options for Council to consider, for the naming of a place to recognise and honour former Cr Gaetano Greco. The family's preferred way to recognise Cr Greco is to rename the Reservoir Library 'The Gaetano Greco Reservoir Library'. Other options previously presented were not preferred.

This report provides options on how to progress the potential renaming of Reservoir Library, as 'The Gaetano Greco Reservoir Library'.

Officer Recommendation

That Council:

(1) Notes that Council has received a petition and notice of motion seeking Council provide an appropriate form of memorial to recognise the late Cr Gaetano Greco for his service to community whilst a councillor for 16 years.

(2) Notes that in line with Council resolution of 24 November 2025, Council sought consultation with the family of Cr Greco on what they would consider as appropriate recognition for Cr Greco's service in Darebin.

(3) Notes the family indicated that its strong preference is to have the Reservoir library named after Cr Greco.

(4) Notes that Council can progress the recognition of former Cr Greco at Reservoir library by either of two pathways:

   a. Commemorative recognition with an internal memorial plaque.

   b. Formal naming of the library through a statutory naming process under the *Naming Rules for Places in Victoria* so as to rename the Reservoir Library with the new name of 'The Gaetano Greco Reservoir Library'.

(5) Advises its preferred option of (4)(a) or (4)(b), or if there is no action.

(6) In the event that Option 4(b) is selected:

   a. Endorses the Chief Executive Officer, or their nominated delegate, to submit a formal naming process to Geographic Names Victoria, in accordance with the Naming Rules for Places in Victoria, after April 2027, for the following:

      i. To commence a formal naming process for the library located at 23 Edwardes Street, Reservoir.

      ii. The proposed name 'The Gaetano Greco Reservoir Library' as the preferred name for the purposes of public consultation.

b. Subject to Geographic Names Victoria supporting the formal naming process, authorises the Chief Executive Officer to:

   i. undertake public consultation regarding the proposed name;

   ii. prepare and publish consultation materials setting out the proposed name and the reasons for the proposal;

   iii. consult with affected stakeholders and the broader community;

   iv. receive and consider submissions;

   v. make any administrative arrangements necessary to conduct the consultation process; and

   vi. report the outcomes of the consultation to Council for consideration before any final decision is made.

(7) Notes that no final decision on the naming of the library will be made until the results of the public consultation process have been presented to Council and considered.

(8) Approves that the budget of 2027-2028 incorporates a project that allows Council to meet a naming memorial project to recognise Cr Greco, estimated to be in the order of $40,000.

BACKGROUND / KEY INFORMATION

Cr Gaetano Greco served as a Councillor at Darebin Council for 16 years, and held the position of Mayor in 2013-2014, and Deputy Mayor 2020-2021-2016-2017 and 2012-2013. Council has previously been briefed on a range of options that could be considered to honour Cr Greco, and as part of this was provided details of memorials that had been established for other longstanding Councillors in different Local Government Areas (Council meeting 24 November 2025, Attachment A).

Council resolved at its November 2025 meeting, to consult with the family of Cr Greco to learn what they would consider as appropriate recognition for Cr Greco's service. The Mayor, Cr Villella, and General Manager Community met with family in April 2026. The family indicated a strong preference to have the Reservoir Library named in his honour. The rationale being the location, the strong alignment with the community work of Cr Greco, the alignment with his values and the central importance of education for community. The other options that had been presented to Council or raised by Council were not preferred opportunities for recognition.

Previous Council Resolution

At its meeting held on 24 November 2025 Council resolved:

That Council:

(1) Notes the various options to honour Cr Greco, and that one of the listed options is subject to legislation and Council policy.

(2) Notes that a petition was tabled at its Council Meeting on 25 August 2025 and referred to the Chief Executive Officer for consideration and response.

(3) Nominates the Mayor and Cr Villella to lead the consultation with Cr Greco's family, together with an officer nominated by the Chief Executive Officer.

(4) Requests that this matter be returned to Council in March 2026 for formal consideration and endorsement of an approach, once consultation with Cr Greco's family has taken place.

ALIGNMENT TO 2041 DAREBIN COMMUNITY VISION

Pillar 2: Respectful and Inclusive

ALIGNMENT TO OUR DAREBIN PLAN 2025-29

Strategic Direction 6: Decision Making, Community Engagement and Transparency - A City that is well-managed, transparent and trusted by its community and partners, with clear and respectful communication that builds confidence in Council's decisions.

DISCUSSION

Council has the authority and is responsible for naming its libraries. Darebin's Place and Road Naming Policy notes that Council, as a naming authority, is responsible for geographic place names within the municipality and is required to comply with the Naming Rules when considering naming proposals.

The following information in this briefing is informed by advice received from Geographic Names Victoria (GNV), the Geographic Place Names Act 1998 and Council's Place and Road Naming Policy.

The Reservoir Library is part of a larger building, the Reservoir Learning and Community Centre. Together with the library this centre has 2 floors, a meeting / function room that is bookable by community groups or individuals, the Youth Services music rooms and space called and identified as Decibels, it houses the local Reservoir Maternal and Child Health Service, it has a Customer Service Centre and customer front facing desk space, and it has a small number of offices and spaces useable by other service providers.

At this point in time neither the Reservoir Library nor the Reservoir Community Learning Centre are registered as a place in the geographic names system.

A key question has been whether naming the library component within the Reservoir Community and Learning Centre triggers the statutory naming requirements administered by Geographic Names Victoria. Historically, Council's understanding has been that naming rooms or spaces within a facility may not trigger statutory naming requirements, whereas naming an entire facility generally would. Given the library is a significant public-facing component of the RCLC, advice was sought from GNV to clarify the appropriate process. GNV has advised the library can be statutorily named, even though it is part of a larger facility. GNV has also advised, once a name is incorporated into signage or wayfinding, the name would need to be formally registered and would therefore trigger the GNV naming process.

It appears that Council could have 2 pathways available for Council to consider memorialising Cr Greco at the Reservoir Library.

1. Commemorative recognition at the library, which could be achieved through an internal memorial plaque, and other interpretative materials, to identify Councillor Greco's legacy and association with the library. This pathway does not result in a registered place name.
2. Official registration naming of the library, which would require compliance with the Naming Rules for Places in Victoria and completion of the statutory process.

Pathway 1 - The first pathway to honour Cr Greco is through internal commemorative plaque naming and interpretative signage. This could include community engagement predominantly at the inform level, an opportunity for a commemorative event, and any other form of acknowledgement, or communication, that Council considers appropriate.

This option would be able to be implemented relatively quickly, at a chosen date in the future, and would provide a clearly visible, significant, and Council approved approach for the Darebin Reservoir Library.

This is a pathway that provides what is characterised as commemorative recognition, it does not involve a formal statutory naming process, it does not involve a formal renaming. This pathway is appropriate if there is no external signage, this option provides a commemorative memorial honouring Cr Greco's contributions to community.

The cost of this option would include community engagement and communication, mounting of a plaque, a possible recognition event. It is anticipated the cost of this option would be approximately $40,000. Funding for this option would need to be identified, it is not currently in the 2026-2027 approved budget. Depending on timing, it could be included and approved as part of the development of Council's 2027-2028 budget.

Pathway 2 - The second pathway is to officially name the library 'The Gaetano Greco Reservoir Library' through the statutory registration of place names process.

Where a proposed name commemorates a deceased person, the Naming Rules generally require the person to have been deceased for at least two years. As Cr Greco passed in 2025, this would see the process commence after April 2027. The process cannot start earlier unless a formal exemption is sought and approved. This is not proposed because the work required to prepare an exemption is material, the grounds for exemption unclear and timeframe would most likely end up similar to the normal process.

The formal process would broadly comprise the following stages:

- Council resolution to investigate the naming proposal.
- Assessment against the Naming Rules, including memorial naming requirements.
- Preparation of a formal naming proposal, including supporting evidence and rationale.
- Community consultation in accordance with the Naming Rules.
- Council consideration of consultation outcomes, including any objections, and meeting GNV requirements for responding to community consultation.
- Council consideration to proceed
- Submission to the Registrar of Geographic Names.
- Registration of the name in VICNAMES if approved.
- Implementation, including signage, wayfinding, communications and system updates.

A naming proposal would typically take several months to complete due to proposal preparation, consultation requirements, Council decision-making processes and Registrar assessment timeframes. The process has been known to take up to two years.

At this stage, it is anticipated that the primary costs associated with the proposal would relate to consultation activities, internal and external signage replacement, wayfinding and associated system updates. The statutory naming process itself is not expected to incur significant external costs.

There will be reasonable staff time necessary as part of the naming application work. Costings are envisaged to be in the order of $40,000 and staff time. This budget could be considered as part of Council budget decision making for 2027-2028.

If Council seeks to formally rename the Reservoir Library, GNV has recently advised a suitable process may be to first have the Reservoir Community Learning Centre formally recognised through the legacy naming process (given it was opened prior to 2016), with the library then able to be considered separately as a named sub-feature within the complex.
This approach would provide certainty for Council, community, users of the centre, and other stakeholders that benefit from place naming certainty. Council will be briefed on the steps involved in this comprehensive approach.

CONSIDERATION OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT (2020) PRINCIPLES

Financial Management

The project is modest, if supported, and it can be considered as part of future budget adjustments or allocations.

Community Engagement

Either recognition option will require community consultation. Community consultation for the statutory renaming option will be determined in line with the GNV processes and involve a range of elements to reach community.

Other Principles for consideration

Overarching Governance Principles and Supporting Principles

(a) Council decisions are to be made and actions taken in accordance with the relevant law;
(c) Council information must be understandable and accessible to members of the municipal community;

COUNCIL POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

Environmental Sustainability Considerations (including Climate Emergency)

Not specific to this briefing

Equity, Inclusion, Wellbeing and Human Rights Considerations:

Council's Place and Road Naming policy includes a commitment that:

- 75% of new naming requests for places, features and public roads should honour significant women.
- This aligns with broader State objectives around improving gender representation in place naming.
- This does not prohibit naming the library after Cr Greco.

IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

Officers will implement the actions required pending Council decision making

RELATED DOCUMENTS

Nil.

DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST

Section 130 of the *Local Government Act 2020* requires members of Council staff and persons engaged under contract to provide advice to Council to disclose any conflicts of interest in a matter to which the advice relates.
The Officer reviewing this report, having made enquiries with relevant members of staff, reports that no disclosable interests have been raised in relation to this report.

Attachments

- DAREBIN COUNCIL MEMORIAL TO COUNCILLOR GAETANO GRECO (**Appendix A**) ⇩

9.7 DAREBIN COUNCIL MEMORIAL TO COUNCILLOR GAETANO GRECO

Author: Head of Economic Development & Activation

Reviewed By: Chief Executive Officer

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

After the passing of Cr. Gaetano Greco in April 2025, members of the Darebin community called for public acknowledgement of his contribution to the City of Darebin as a long time Councillor and former Mayor. Council paid tribute and honoured Cr. Greco's work at the May Council meeting and at a large community event held at Northcote Town Hall in July.

At the September Council meeting, Cr Villela tabled a Notice of Motion for Darebin (Attachment A) to further recognise Cr Greco's commitment, legacy and tireless advocacy for inter-culturalism and social justice related issues with a permanent memorial to him, along with a petition signed by close to 500 people calling for the Intercultural Centre to be renamed in his honour. The motion was carried unanimously with the action of council receiving a report at the 24 November 2025 Council meeting on options for a permanent memorial honouring Cr Gaetano Greco's legacy. This report outlines the options proposed for Council to honour Cr. Greco.

Officer Recommendation

That Council:

1. Notes the various options to honour Cr. Greco, and that one of the options is subject to legislation and Council policy.
2. Nominates one or more Councillor/s to lead the consultation with Cr. Greco's family.
3. Notes that a petition was tabled at its Council Meeting on 25 August 2025 and referred to the Chief executive Officer for consideration and response.

BACKGROUND / KEY INFORMATION

Cr. Gaetano Greco served as a Darebin Councillor from 2008 until his passing in 2025, serving as Mayor of Darebin from 2013-2014. Cr. Greco was a community-focused leader who was a tireless advocate for social justice, community well-being and inclusive justice and provided a voice for under-represented groups across the municipality.

After Cr. Greco's passing, Council received several calls for a commemoration by Council acknowledging his work including a Notice of Motion (Attachment A) and a petition to rename the InterCultural Centre in at the September 2025 Council Meeting.

Darebin Council is not alone in facing this type of decision. A precedent paper (Attachment B) has been prepared to highlight how other Victorian councils have chosen to acknowledge and pay tribute to Councillors who have passed.

This report acknowledges the sensitive nature of this matter, particularly in relation to Cr Greco's friends and family. While all Council decisions reflect the collective governance of the elected Council during each term, it is recognised that not all decisions are universally supported within the community. The report should therefore be considered with awareness of the diverse perspectives held by community members.

Any decision made should be subject to consultation and consideration by Cr Greco's family.

Previous Council Resolution

At its meeting held on the 22nd of September 2025, Council agreed to a NoM and resolved:

'That Council receives a report at the 24 November 2025 Council meeting on options for a permanent memorial honouring Cr Gaetano Greco's legacy. Options should include, but not be limited to the following:

- *a. Naming the Intercultural Centre after Cr Greco in response to the petition tabled at the Council meeting on Monday 25 August 2025.*
- *b. Commissioning an artist to design and create a suitable monument to be placed in front of a key Reservoir landmark Gaetano fought hard to protect, such as the Reservoir Library or Edwardes Lake.*
- *c. Naming a reserve or park in Reservoir in Cr Greco's honour'*

ALIGNMENT TO 2041 DAREBIN COMMUNITY VISION

Pillar 2: Respectful and Inclusive

DISCUSSION

1. Renaming of the InterCultural Centre in Cr Greco's honour

The Darebin InterCultural Centre provides a space where residents can explore, support and celebrate cultural diversity, and connect with each other and the broader community. It also serves as an access point to support services for ethnic communities and for recently arrived migrants. The current InterCultural Centre was opened in March 2023 with the vision of achieving a greater understanding of culture beyond storytelling of migration, and incorporate intersectionality within cultural identity - language, age, faith, sexuality, gender, etc.

In investigating the feasibility to rename the InterCultural Centre, consideration needs to be given to Council's Place and Road Naming Policy (Appendix C). This guides Council in exercising its powers as a naming authority under the *Geographic Place Names Act 1998* (the Act) to name or rename roads, features and localities within the City of Darebin. It does this in accordance with the Naming Rules for Places in Victoria: Statutory requirements for naming roads, features and localities 2022 (the Naming Rules).

The Act lists a number of principles, including rules regarding using commemorative names. Specifically, Principle I – Using commemorative names states:

> *Commemorative names of a deceased person should be applied **no less than two years posthumously**. If a naming authority wishes to name within two years it is required to seek an exemption.*

There are also several requirements in the Act surrounding how commemorative names can be applied to ensure that emergency and postal services are not delayed because of the inconsistent application of a name.

In order to apply for an exemption, Council would need to apply to Geographic Names Victoria, identifying clearly which requirement of the naming rules is being departed from and prepare comprehensive documentation to support this including:

- A detailed biography of the person emphasising their achievements
- Evidence of community support
- Consent from relevant parties (family/descendants)
- Ensure the proposal conforms with all naming rule requirements

They must also be able to demonstrate why there are exceptional circumstances to apply for an exemption. The Act sets a high bar for exemptions.

The renaming of a building could be an appropriate tribute to recognise Cr. Greco's contribution to Darebin in social justice areas. If Council wishes to pursue this option, they could revisit it in two years' time given the requirements of The Act.

2. Installing and naming a park bench adjacent to the Migration Public Artwork in Cr Greco's honour.

Given the acknowledgment of Cr Greco's considerable work with Darebin's migrant population, a significant recognition could be the installation of a park bench at the site of the Migration Public Artwork. It is further proposed that this option include a significant planting around it with a mature tree to be planted potentially by Cr. Greco's family. This would provide a space for community members to sit and reflect on the themes of migration and the contributions Cr Greco made in this area.

The cost of the Council installing a park bench has been priced at approx. $10,000, plus the plaque and planting costs, and it would require a lead time of approximately 6 months. A decision on budget allocation for this project would be required in due course.

This option is recommended for consideration as a fitting tribute to the way Cr. Greco gave support and a voice for cultural diversity within Darebin. It could include a plaque to recognise and acknowledge Cr Greco.

3. Installing a park bench at an alternative location within North West Ward.

Like Option 4, this option is recommended for consideration as a fitting tribute to Cr. Greco's legacy. It too could include a plaque to pay tribute to Cr Greco. This option would place a memorial site within the Ward Cr Greco represented. It also is a fitting tribute to the way Cr. Greco gave support and a voice for cultural diversity within Darebin.

4. Renaming a Darebin Community Award in Cr Greco's honour.

The Darebin Community Awards are an annual celebration that recognise and honour individuals, groups, and organisations who make outstanding contributions to the Darebin community. The event showcases the achievements of those who strengthen community connections, champion diversity and inclusion, and reflect the values of equity, respect, and active citizenship. Renaming an award for a set period of time, suggested 15 years, would be an appropriate and lasting way to formally acknowledge Cr. Greco's contribution to Darebin.

There are several awards that could be considered to be renamed after Cr Greco, such as:

- Community Group of the Year
- Lifetime Achievement Award
- CALD Elder Community Leader of the Year
- CALD Emerging Community Leader

Alternately a new award dedicated to the Arts could be established in Cr. Greco's honour.

5. Nominating Cr. Greco for a lifetime achievement award.

An additional option to consider with a memorial is to make a determination that Cr. Greco receives a lifetime achievement award.

OPTIONS SUMMARY:

Option	Pros	Cons
1. Renaming the InterCultural Centre NOT RECOMMENDED	An inclusive tribute to Cr Greco that recognises is Authentic, service recognition, tone, cultural, accessibility, connection to place, enduring message, maintenance, future context,	It is not possible to immediately rename a building. A wait of 2 years is required to rename a Council building.
2. Installing a park bench next to the Migration Public Artwork RECOMMENDED TO CONSIDER	An inclusive and authentic tribute to Cr Greco that would be an enduring recognition of his connection to place and service to Darebin's migrant community.	$10,000 budget required to implement and 6 month install timeframe. Low ongoing maintenance costs.
3. Installing a park bench within North West Ward RECOMMENDED TO CONSIDER	An inclusive and authentic tribute to Cr Greco that would be an enduring recognition of his connection to place and service to Darebin.	$10,000 budget required to implement and 6 month install timeframe. Location to be determined. Low ongoing maintenance costs.
4. Renaming a Darebin Community Award or a new award category RECOMMENDED TO CONSIDER	An annual commemoration of Cr Greco that would have a great reach across the community, with a suggested lifespan of 25 years No cost involved.	An honorary rather than a physical tribute.
5. Nominate Cr. Greco for a lifetime achievement award RECOMMENDED TO CONSIDER	An authentic tribute to Cr. Greco's service which would recognise all forms of his time in office and work achieved.	

CONSIDERATION OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT (2020) PRINCIPLES

Financial Management

Where known expected costs have been outlined in the options summary above. Once a decision is made on which option is going to be pursued more accurate costs will be obtained.

Community Engagement

This Report will recommends that Council will nominate one or more Councillor/s to lead the consultation with Cr. Greco's family.

Once a decision is made on which option is going to be pursued a communication plan will be developed.

Overarching Governance Principles and Supporting Principles

(a) Council decisions are to be made and actions taken in accordance with the relevant law;

Public Transparency Principles

(c) Council information must be understandable and accessible to members of the municipal community;

Service Performance Principles

(a) services should be provided in an equitable manner and be responsive to the diverse needs of the municipal community;

COUNCIL POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

Environmental Sustainability Considerations (including Climate Emergency)

There are no sustainability factors for consideration.

Equity, Inclusion, Wellbeing and Human Rights Considerations:

On decision of which option to progress the appropriate Equity impact assessment (EIA) / Gender impact assessment (GIA) reviews will be undertaken.

Economic Development and Cultural Considerations

All known economic development and creative culture implications have been outlined within the options of this report.

Operational Impacts

The recommended options carry minor operational impacts.

Legal and Risk Implications

All known legal and risks implications have been outlined within the options of this report.

Attachments

- Notice of Motion Darebin Council Memorial to Cr. Gaetano Greco (**Appendix A**)
- Victorian Councils tributes precedence report (**Appendix B**)
- Darebin's place and road naming policy (**Appendix C**)

DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST

Section 130 of the *Local Government Act 2020* requires members of Council staff and persons engaged under contract to provide advice to Council to disclose any conflicts of interest in a matter to which the advice relates.

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

24 NOV 2025

Notice of Motion No. 22/24-28 Title: Darebin Council Permanent Memorial for Cr Gaetano Greco

Councillor: Cr Angela Villella Date

Notice of Motion:

That Council:

1. Recognises that many community members are keen for Cr Greco's dedication and service to the Darebin community, be honoured by way of a permanent memorial to be erected in Darebin which would be seen as fitting

and appropriate by the community, as demonstrated by the petition signed by close to 500 people.

2. Notes that Cr Greco was a highly respected Councillor and former Mayor. This was evidenced by the outpouring of community sympathy at his passing and the high attendance at his Celebration of Life ceremony.

3. Notes that Darebin is one of the most diverse Local Governments in Victoria, with 32% of households using a language other than English at home and with 31% of residents born overseas, the largest group being born in

Italy. As a Councillor for the LaTrobe Ward and then the North West Ward of Darebin, as well as a proud member of our community from an Italian background, Cr Greco, will be the first person to be commemorated from a

CALD background. Cr Gaetano understood the challenges and aspirations of our immigrant community. He gave the people a voice and they in turn showed their respect and support by voting for him, with ever increasing

votes – the latest being over 65%, and being the only Councillor elected on first preferences in the last two elections.

4. Acknowledge Cr Greco's commitment, legacy and tireless advocacy of inter-culturalism and social justice issues which contributed to Darebin's commitment to fostering inclusivity, such as, establishing the Darebin

Intercultural Centre, the successful Darebin Home Makers Festival, and fought for action on Edwards Lake and Preston Market, just to name a few.

5. Receives a report at the 24 November 2025 Council meeting on options for a permanent memorial honouring Cr Gaetano Greco's legacy. Options should include, but not be limited to the following:

a. Naming the Intercultural Centre after Cr Greco in response to the petition tabled at the Council meeting on Monday the 29th of August 2025.

b. Commissioning an artist to design and create a suitable monument to be placed in front of a key Reservoir landmark Gaetano fought hard to protect, such as the Reservoir Library or Edwards Lake.

c. Naming a reserve or park in Reservoir in Cr Greco's honour.

Rationale:

The residents of Reservoir, and wider Darebin, deserve to honour a Councillor that served them with distinction. Cr Gaetano Greco would be the first councillor from an immigrant family to be honoured this way – which is long

overdue. A commemorative gesture ensures Cr Greco's contributions to our community over his 16 years as a Councillor are remembered, celebrated, and acknowledged as an integral part of Darebin's history and identity.

Attachment: Precedence Paper – Victorian Council Tributes

Precedence Paper – Victorian Council Tributes.

Purpose

- This attachment provides an overview of how other Victorian councils have formally recognised the service and legacy of councillors who have passed away.
- Victorian councils examined include Maribyrnong City Council, Northern Grampians Shire Council and the City of Greater Bendigo.
- This information is provided to support City of Darebin's consideration of appropriate recognition for Cr Gaetano (Gaetano) Greco, who served the Darebin community from 2008 to 2025, including as Mayor in 2013–2014.

Context

- Councils across Victoria employ a range of approaches to honour the contributions of past councillors.
- Tributes or permanent memorials are typically designed to be inclusive to ensure that members of the community can reflect on the individual's civic legacy.
- As the examples used in this attachment demonstrate, Councils often allow a period of contemplation including consultation with the councillor's family and community ensures that any decision aligns with the individual's contributions and the Council's values. before determining a permanent form of recognition.

Maribyrnong City Council, Cr Sarah Carter (passed 2024)

- Maribyrnong City Council implemented a suite of permanent and inclusive tributes in honour of the late Cr Sarah Carter, former Mayor and Councillor for 16 years.
- Display of Mayoral Robes: Cr Carter's mayoral robes and portrait are permanently displayed in the Council Chamber.
- Civic Awards: a new 'Sarah Carter' Gender Equity category in the annual Civic Awards recognising her advocacy in this space.
- Commemorative Seat: A contemplative seat and plaque were installed in a public space of local significance.

City of Greater Bendigo, Cr Rod Fyffe OAM (passed 2024)

- The City of Greater Bendigo formally acknowledged the distinguished service of Cr Rod Fyffe OAM, who served as a councillor for 38 years.
- Community Tributes: The city hosted public commemorations and published tributes in recognition of his leadership.
- Future Memorial Under Consideration: While a permanent memorial has not yet been finalised, Council has indicated an enduring recognition is under development.

Attachment: Precedence Paper – Victorian Council Tributes

Northern Grampians Shire Council, Cr Tony Driscoll (passed 2022)

- Northern Grampians Shire Council, in partnership with the local community, established a dedicated civic space at Lord Nelson Park to honour former Mayor Tony Driscoll who served as a Councillor for 10 years.
- Naming of Public Space: A new social space in St Arnaud was named in his honour, recognising his leadership and dedication to the community.
- Community Partnership: The memorial was shaped with community input, ensuring inclusivity and local ownership.

Lessons from other Councils Approaches

- Symbolic Presence: Permanent features such as plaques, seats, or displays (such as an outfit) within civic buildings are common.
- Legacy Programs: Civic awards or scholarships can be used to commemorate a Councillor and reflect their values.
- Period of engagement: Councils often allow a period of reflection before determining the form of a permanent memorial, ensuring the decision is informed and considerate and in consultation with the family.
- Council is under no obligation to make an immediate decision. Given the personal and community significance of this matter, it is important that any action be approached thoughtfully, allowing careful consideration of all perspectives.

24 NOV 2025

City of DAREBIN

the place to live

Place and Road Naming Policy

April 2023

Document Control

Document Name	Place and Road Naming Policy
Document Objective ID	
Responsible Officer	Manager Property and Asset Strategy
Department	Property & Asset Strategy
Adopted by Council	
Version	1.1
Review Date	April 2023

Contents

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF TRADITIONAL OWNERS AND ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER COMMUNITIES IN DAREBIN 1
1. PURPOSE 2
2. BACKGROUND 2
3. SCOPE 2
4. DEFINITIONS 3
5. LEGISLATION, REGULATIONS AND POLICIES 3
6. POLICY 4
7. PRINCIPLES OF THE NAMING RULES 5
8. COUNCIL'S POLICY OBJECTIVES 6
8.1 City of Darebin Council Plan 7
8.2 Towards Equality – Darebin's Equity, Inclusion and Human rights Framework 7
8.3 Statement of Commitment to Traditional Owners and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People 2019 7
8.4 Gender Equity and Preventing Violence Against Women Action Plan 7
8.5 The Welcoming Cities Standard 8
8.6 Breathing Space – The Darebin Open Space Strategy 8
9. COUNCIL'S PLACE AND ROAD NAMING PRIORITIES 8
10. RECOGNITION AND USE OF ABORIGINAL LANGUAGES IN NAMING 10
11. PROCESS FOR NAMING A PLACE 10
12. PROACTIVE PLACE NAMING PROPOSALS 12
12.1 Council both proposes the name and the place 12
12.2 Council proposes the name and seeks suggestion on the place 12
12.3 Council seeks name for a road, feature or locality 12
12.4 Council seeks suggestions first on the name, then on the place 13
13. DEVELOPING AN ABORIGINAL LANGUAGE NAMING PROPOSAL 13
14. ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS 13
15. ROADS 13
15.1 Naming roads in new residential or commercial subdivisions 13
15.2 Unnamed Right of Way as a Street Address 14
15.3 Naming Private Roads 14
16. FEATURES 15
17. LOCALITY 15
18. DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY 15
19. RELATED DOCUMENTS 16
APPENDIX A – REQUEST TO NAME OR RE-NAME A ROAD OR PLACE WITHIN THE CITY OF DAREBIN (ONLINE FORM) 17
APPENDIX B – NAMING FLOWCHART 19
APPENDIX C – TRADITIONAL OWNER LANGUAGE NAMING FLOWCHART 20

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 and waters we now call Darebin and pays respect to their Elders, past, present and emerging.

Council also 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 communities and the right to self-determination in the spirit of mutual understanding and respect.

1. Purpose

This Place and Road Naming Policy is to guide Council in exercising its powers as a naming authority under the Geographic Place Names Act 1998 (the Act) to name or rename roads, features and localities within the City of Darebin in accordance with the Naming Rules for Places in Victoria: Statutory requirements for naming roads, features and localities 2022 (the Naming Rules)

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that:

(a) Council acts according to the Naming Rules when receiving requests to name or rename publicly owned roads, features or localities within the City of Darebin; and

(b) Submitters of place name requests are aware of the process and principles by which Council will investigate and determine their applications.

2. Background

Under the Act, Council is a naming authority, and as such, is responsible for naming public geographic features, localities and public roads in the municipal district.

When considering naming requests, Council is required to comply with the principles and processes outlined in the Naming Rules and make application for the registration of all new or altered names to the Registrar of Geographic Names (the Registrar). If approved, the Registrar of Geographic Names will arrange for gazettal of the name and its inclusion in the Register of Geographic Names (VICNAMES) for official mapping and other purposes. The Registrar has the authority under the Act, to reject any proposal, if it does not satisfy the Naming Rules.

The Act defines place as "any geographic place or building that is, or is likely to be, of public or historical interest and includes, but is not restricted to:

(a) township, area, park, garden, reserve of land, suburb and locality;

(b) topographical feature, including undersea feature;

(c) street, road, transport station, government school, government hospital and government nursing home;

The Naming Rules reference several of the resolutions of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographic Names, the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and the Victorian Aboriginal Affairs Framework.

When making application for registration of a name, Council should include details of how the proposed name complies with these resolutions, goals and the Victorian Aboriginal Affairs Framework, as applicable.

3. Scope

This policy applies to all requests to name or rename publicly owned roads, features or localities in the City of Darebin for which Council is the naming authority as detailed in the Naming Rules. Victorian Government authorities such as VicRoads, Parks Victoria and the Department of Education are determined to be the naming authority for public features or roads that they own or maintain.

Those places of wider than local affiliation, and therefore of regional, state and national significance, will be handled centrally by a State place naming advisory committee who will seek the input from affected communities and Council.

Council facilities (such as buildings and playgrounds) are subject to the Naming Rules.

Even though the principles and values are shared between this policy and Council's Monuments and Memorials Policy, they both will operate independently.

4. Definitions

the Act	*Geographic Place Names Act 1998*
Naming Rules	The abbreviated name for *Naming rules for places in Victoria – Statutory requirements for naming roads, features and localities – 2022*. This document is known as 'Guidelines' under the *Geographic Place Names Act 1998*.
Principles	Principles within the Naming Rules to which naming proposals must comply.
Naming Authorities	Councils, government departments or authorities and private organisations are considered to be naming authorities when they are responsible for a particular feature or road within their jurisdiction. This may apply even when they may not be the owners and/or responsible for the maintenance of the feature or road e.g. Crown Land Committees of Management or leased/licensed facilities with maintenance obligations. Traditional Owner Groups may also progress and manage the naming process in some circumstances.
GNV	Geographic Names Victoria
Geographic place	Defined by law to cover features, localities and roads.
Features	Including mountains, watercourses, buildings, structures, parks and reserves.
Locality	Where there are officially recognised boundaries including suburbs, towns, cities and regions.
Road	Including laneways, bridges, streets, highways, fire tracks, bike path, and walking tracks.
Geographic name	The name registered in VICNAMES as the name for that place.
Immediate community	Broadly includes people who live and work within the area and owners of properties or businesses; in particular, residents, ratepayers and businesses within the immediate area directly affected by the proposal.
Extended community	Includes residents, ratepayers and businesses surrounding the area directly affected by the proposal; in particular, any visitor groups to the area such as shoppers, tourists, recreational or dining visitors; government (neighbouring councils) or non-government organisations with an interest in or who service the area.
Petition	A petition is a request signed by people seeking to change a name, submitting a naming proposal or appealing a naming authority's decision. The printed name and property address for each signatory must be included.
RAPs – Registered Aboriginal Parties	Registered Aboriginal Parties (RAPs) are organisations that represent the Traditional Owners and hold decision-making responsibilities under the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006* for the protection, management and preservation of Aboriginal cultural heritage in a specified geographical area.
Registrar	Registrar of Geographic Names Victoria appointed under section 7 of the Act.
Traditional Owners	The primary guardians, keepers and knowledge holders of Aboriginal cultural heritage, including language. Under the *Aboriginal Heritage Act* 2006, Traditional Owners may be appointed as Registered Aboriginal Parties (RAPs).

5. Legislation, Regulations and Policies

Primarily the naming of geographic places is governed by the following legislation:

- *Geographic Place Names Act 1998*
- *Naming rules for places in Victoria – Statutory requirements for naming roads, features and localities – 2022*

Other legislation, regulations and policies relevant to geographic place and road naming are:

- AS/NZs4819:2011 Rural and urban addressing
- *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006*
- *Aboriginal Heritage Regulations 2007*
- Victorian Aboriginal Affairs Framework 2018-2023
- Darebin's Statement of Commitment to Traditional Owners and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People 2019
- *Equal Opportunity Act 2010*
- *Local Government Act 2020*
- *Road Management Act 2004*
- *Subdivision (Procedures) Regulations 2011*
- *Survey Co-ordination Act 1958*
- Gender Equity and Preventing Violence Against Women Action Plan 2019-2023
- Darebin's Towards Equality Framework
- The Welcoming Cities Standard
- *Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*
- United Nations Group of Experts on Geographic Names (UNGEGN) Resolutions (see 1.3.1 of the Naming Rules for the applicable resolutions)
- United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

6. Policy

Council, as a naming authority under the Naming Rules, is responsible for geographic place names in the municipal district and is required to abide by the Naming Rules, which is set out as step-by-step guidelines and information on naming or changing boundaries of roads, features and localities in Victoria. The term "naming" as used in the Naming Rules refers to both a new name and renaming.

Place names are an important part of Darebin's cultural, historical and geographic environment. The naming of new places and the preservation of existing ones contributes to a sense of belonging and reflects the cultural values of communities both of today and of Darebin's rich past. Place names are therefore of major social importance. Council must bear the responsibility for taking care of the place name heritage and making sure that place naming is conducted in a way that preserves Darebin's cultural heritage whilst being true to its Council Plan 2021-2025 Vision of an equitable, vibrant and connected community.

This policy is to ensure that Council follows the Naming Rules when investigating and determining naming applications, so that there is transparency and consistency in its decision making and application of this policy.

Council will not promote the process of a competition for the purposes of undertaking naming of any road, feature or locality within the municipality, however Council may seek community engagement to obtain a bank of names for its consideration for future naming opportunities (Name Bank). A competition is where the public is invited to nominate a name for a road, feature or locality, and the accepted nominations are used in a voting poll to determine the preferred name.

This policy also acknowledges that Darebin City Council has a long-standing commitment to serve and respond to the diverse needs of its community. This is articulated in the Council Plan 2021-2025 which places a strong emphasis on equity, diversity and inclusion throughout all aspects of Council business as stated in Towards Equality - Darebin City Council's Equity, Inclusion and Human Rights Framework 2019-2029.

7. Principles of the Naming Rules

Council will abide by the Principles of the Naming Rules when assessing and determining all naming applications. A summary of the Principles in the Naming Rules are as follows:

A. **Ensuring public safety** - Geographic names and boundaries must not risk public and operational safety for emergency response; or, cause confusion for transport, communication and mail services. Many emergency services and other public services (such as mail) are determined by locality boundaries or road extents, and proposals must ensure that operations will not be adversely affected.

B. **Recognising the public interest** - To preserve our cultural heritage names should be enduring. When naming or adjusting the geographic boundary of a place, naming authorities must consider the long-term benefits and short-term effects on the wider community. Changes may affect current and future residents, emergency response zones and addresses, property owners, businesses and visitors.

   A proposal will only be registered if the long-term benefits to the community can be shown to outweigh any private or corporate interests, or short-term effects.

C. **Linking the name to place** - Names should have a link to place to ensure the preservation of our cultural heritage. Naming authorities play an important role in recognising and promoting our cultural heritage, as do surveyors, developers and the general public in suggesting names.

   Place names should be relevant to the local area with preference given to unofficial names used by the immediate community. If named after a person (refer to Principle I - Using commemorative names), that person should be held in strong regard by the community.

   Names that link the name to the place could relate to Traditional Owner culture and occupation of the land (Refer to Principle E). Other examples include local flora and fauna, Australian war contributions (refer to ANZAC Commemorative naming project), past exploration and settlement, local geography and geology, significant events, the cultural diversity of past and current inhabitants, or patterns of land usage and industrial/mineral/agricultural production.

D. **Ensuring names are not duplicated** - To protect our communities proposed names must not duplicate another name within a locality or the distances listed below, irrespective of council boundaries. Duplicates are considered to be two (or more) names within close proximity, or names that are identical or have similar spelling or pronunciation. Examples of names that are similar and considered to be both duplicates and not duplicates are provided in APPENDIX B of the naming rules.

   Duplication is not allowed within the same locality or for metropolitan urban areas, within a 5 kilometre radius (metropolitan Melbourne and Geelong, city centres and surrounding suburbs.

E. **Recognition and use of Traditional Owner languages** - Traditional Owner languages are often based on location; languages are deeply rooted to the land and offer an ideal opportunity to connect a name to a place. The use of Traditional Owner languages enables the wider community to be educated about Traditional Owner history and shared culture.

   The use of Traditional Owner languages in the naming of roads, features and localities is encouraged, and is subject to agreement from the relevant Traditional Owner group(s).

F. **Names must not discriminate or be offensive** - Place names must not discriminate or cause offense. Refer to *the Equal Opportunity Act 2010* for further information on what constitutes discrimination.

G. **Gender Equality -** Gender equality in the naming of roads, features and localities is encouraged. When developing a naming proposal consideration should be given to gender equality.

   Gender equality is when people of all genders have equal rights, responsibilities, and opportunities. Everyone is affected by gender inequality - women, men, trans and gender diverse people, children, and families. It impacts people of all ages and backgrounds.

H. **Dual names** - Dual names may only be assigned to geographic features. Dual names cannot be assigned to roads or localities.

   Dual names with Traditional Owner place names are encouraged as a transitional step toward the adoption of the Traditional Owner name.

   Australian states and territories use dual names as a way of recognising the names given to places by different enduring cultural and language groups.

   In Victoria, the approach to giving simultaneous and joint recognition of Traditional Owners and non-Traditional Owner cultures through naming is to form a dual name with two distinct name parts, usually one part of non-Traditional Owner language origin and the other of Traditional Owner language origin.

I. **Using commemorative names** - Naming often commemorates an event, person or place. Examples include recognising Traditional Owners, cultural events or following a theme such as Australian war contributions (refer to the ANZAC Commemorative naming webpage).

   The names of people who are still alive must be avoided because community attitudes and opinions can change over time.

   Commemorative names of a deceased person should be applied no less than two years posthumously. If a naming authority wishes to name within two years it is required to seek an exemption.

   When considering a commemorative name there are several other points that need to be considered. These are found in the Naming Rules.

J. **Using commercial and business names** - For similar reasons to those outlined in Principle (I) on the naming rules, Using Commemorative Names, naming authorities should not name places after commercial businesses; trade names; estate names (which are solely commercial in nature); or not-for-profit organisations.

K. **Language** - The use of names from Australian English, Aboriginal names and names from other languages need to be given careful consideration. See the Naming Rules for further points.

L. **Directional names to be avoided** - Cardinal directions (north, south, east and west) must be avoided. A proposed name that uses a cardinal direction to distinguish itself from another similar name is considered a duplicate name. In these instances, a different name must be chosen to allow for a clear distinction between two or more roads, features or localities.

M. **Assigning extent to a road, feature or locality** - When a proposal to name a road, feature or locality is being developed, the naming authority must clearly define the area and/or extent to which the name will apply.

As noted above these Principles are in summary form. For further explanation of the principles, to which any application will be assessed by, go to the Naming Rules.

8. Council's Policy Objectives

As Council is required to abide by the Principles of the Naming Rules it is also required to abide by its own policies and commitments.

Council has identified the opportunity to use place and road naming as a way of furthering its policy objectives in a range of areas. This will be guided by but not limited to:

- City of Darebin Council Plan 2021-2025
- Towards Equality – Darebin's Equity, Inclusion and Human Rights Framework 2019-2029;
- Statement of Commitment to Traditional Owners and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People 2019:
- Gender Equity and Preventing Violence Against Women Action Plan 2019-2023:

- The Welcoming Cities Standard; and
- Breathing Space – The Darebin Open Space Strategy 2019-2029.

8.1 City of Darebin Council Plan

Darebin Council Plan 2021-2025 identifies the priorities of the community for the future and guides the decision making of Council. In particular, Strategic Direction 1: Vibrant, Respectful and Connected – gives clear direction on what is to be considered in naming via the following strategic objectives:

- We will help to build an inclusive and empowered community, where social cohesion and community harmony are fostered;
- We will embrace diversity and ensure everyone is included in our society, and no one is left behind - by combating discrimination, and championing equity, inclusivity and diversity;
- We will prioritise and respect the voices and aspirations of Traditional Owners and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in Darebin.

8.2 Towards Equality – Darebin's Equity, Inclusion and Human rights Framework

The goals of the Towards Equality Framework are operationalised and applied through the Equity Impact Assessment. This naming policy is a practical way of addressing inequality and promoting inclusion, social justice and human rights by increasing the recognition and visibility of people, cultures and history that have had no voice, e.g. Aboriginal culture and history.

The Equity Impact Assessment will be applied to any naming process to ensure, equity, inclusion, human rights and wellbeing values are being addressed.

8.3 Statement of Commitment to Traditional Owners and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People 2019

The Statement of Commitment affirms Council's commitment to Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Traditional Owners and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities of Darebin and strengthening the journey to reconciliation.

8.4 Gender Equity and Preventing Violence Against Women Action Plan

The Gender Equity and Preventing Violence Against Women Action Plan has several actions across two action areas that can be realised through this naming policy. The two action areas are, *Safe, inclusive and respectful communities* and *Women's participation in community life*. Two of the key actions are:

- Embed gender equity principles into Council's policies, practices, planning and service delivery; and
- Support initiatives that seek to promote gender equity with particular focus on groups of women who experience compounding forms of discrimination, including:
  - Aboriginal women
  - Women with disabilities
  - Women from migrant, refugee and asylum seeker backgrounds.
  - LGBTIQ+ women

In support of these principles and initiatives, Darebin will name at least 75% of all new naming requests for places, features and public roads after significant women.

8.5 The Welcoming Cities Standard

Council is committed to achieving the Welcoming Cities Standard and is working toward the principles and criteria across the six categories of the Standard. Areas of alignment to this policy include:

- Welcoming Cities recognise the importance of cultural diversity and inclusion and seek to advance and institutionalise that work through collaboration across council, the local community and other government agencies.
- Welcoming Cities facilitate relationships between migrant and receiving communities that address racism and promote social cohesion.
- Welcoming Cities value public spaces and facilities that enhance liveability, social cohesion and inclusion of all residents.

8.6 Breathing Space – The Darebin Open Space Strategy

One of the key directions in Darebin's Open Space Strategy is to meet the community's open space needs. There are three specific actions under this direction that relate to this naming policy. They are:

A2.1 Naming at least 50% of new public open spaces, bridges, waterways and wetlands, and including infrastructure in those open spaces such as sporting grounds, pavilions, show courts, walking trails and roads for significant Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, figures, symbols or items, with particular attention to Wurundjeri Woi-Wurrung people as the Traditional Owners;

A3.2 Name at least 25% of new public open spaces for significant members, figures, symbols, items or terms of CALD communities; and

A4.7 Achieve gender parity in the naming of open spaces as quickly as possible over the course of this strategy (and beyond) through naming at least 80% of new public open spaces (and renaming existing spaces where appropriate) for significant women.

9. Council's Place and Road Naming Priorities

Council is committed to addressing inequity and social justice and through naming opportunities seeks to visibly recognise the cultural diversity and heritage of the Darebin community, and to recognise significant contributions to the Darebin Community. Priority will be given to balance opportunities across all naming projects as shown in the Naming Priorities table below, in order of priority:

Primary Priority

Names reflecting Wurundjeri Language, Names and First Nations heritage, in consultation with the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Heritage Corporation to address the lack of recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as First Peoples of Australia and demonstrate Council's support of its objectives in Statement of Commitment to Traditional Owners and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People 2019.

Secondary Priority

Names reflecting our migrant and culturally diverse communities and their cultural heritage by equally prioritising the naming of major public roads, secondary and subdivisional roads, laneways, buildings and pavilions and pedestrian bridges to reflect migration history and rich contribution of multicultural and multifaith communities to community life.

Priority

Names of significant women to address the lack of recognition of women and demonstrate Council's commitment to gender equity. Where naming proposals are in respect of individuals, at

least 75% of all those naming proposals will be for significant women with consideration of intersectionality with other Naming Priorities.

Names associated with diversity, equity, social justice or community leadership within our community (People with a Disability, LGBTQIA+ OR leader for diversity, equity, social justice or disadvantage) to reflect Council's strong commitment to diversity, equity and social justice.

Other Priorities

Names reflecting the settlement and heritage of the Darebin community, for example ANZAC commemorative names, the cultural history of Darebin, and historical land use.

Unofficial names where a name is in common usage within the community but has not been registered with GEO Names and where Council considers that the name should become official.

The Implementation of Naming Priorities

The application and implementation of priorities will vary across the categories of naming activities, as outlined in the table below. Particular regard has been given to prioritise significant naming opportunities for the primary naming priority, with consideration to the impact that a high volume of less impactful naming consultation requests would have on the resources of the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Corporation.

NAMING PRIORITIES				
	Names reflecting Wurundjeri Language, Names and First Nations heritage, in consultation with the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Heritage Corporation	Names reflecting our migrant and culturally diverse communities and their cultural heritage	Names associated with diversity, equity, social justice or community leadership within our community	Other Priorities
	Where naming in respect of individuals, at least 75% will be for significant women with consideration to intersectionality with other Naming Priorities			
Major Roads & Bridges	Equal Priority	Equal Priority		
Secondary & Subdivisional Roads		Equal Priority	Equal Priority	Equal Priority (allowing for themes), eg flora and fauna, historical and cultural heritage
Laneways		Equal Priority	Equal Priority	
Buildings / Pavilions / Pedestrian Bridges	Equal Priority	Equal Priority	Equal OR Priority for intersectionality	
Open Space	As per Breathing Space Strategy	As per Breathing Space Strategy	As per Breathing Space Strategy	

10. Recognition and use of Aboriginal languages in naming

The Aboriginal community in Victoria includes the descendants of Victoria's various Traditional Owner groups, who, at the time of colonisation in 1835, maintained complex societies with languages, laws and customs, and a connection to their land. Traditional Owners today continue to assert their identity and connection to their Country and are a key stakeholder in the naming process. The use of Aboriginal languages to name roads, features and localities has played, and continues to play, a significant role in promoting Traditional Owners' relationships with Victorian landscapes.

Further information is outlined in the relevant sections (specifically, Section 2 General Principles (Principle E and Principle K), Section 4 Features and Section 7 Consultation) of the naming rules and Section 12 of this policy.

Traditional Owners can, in certain circumstances, be the naming authority or manage and progress the naming process.

Further information is outlined in the relevant sections (specifically, section 1.5.2 Traditional Owners as Naming Authorities and section 6.1.3 Traditional Owners, Traditional Owner Group(s) and Registered Aboriginal Parties (RAPs) of the naming rules.

The Domains and Objectives in the Victorian Aboriginal Affairs Framework (VAAF) inform the Naming Rules.

The use of Traditional Owner language in the naming of roads, features and localities supports the following VAAF Goals:

- Goal 18 Aboriginal land, water and cultural rights are realised.
- Goal 19 Aboriginal culture and language are supported and celebrated.

More specifically, Objectives 18.1 and 19.1 of the Domain, Culture and Country, are:

- Objective 18.1 Increase the recognition and enjoyment of Aboriginal land, water and cultural heritage rights.
- Objective 19.1 Support the preservation, promotion and practice of culture and language.

In addition, this policy and Council's Open Space Strategy support and promote the use of Traditional Owner language for place and road naming.

11. Process for naming a place

The Naming Rules provide that anyone (including the Council itself) may submit a request to name or rename a road, feature or locality to Council. Such a request must be made via the Naming Application form at Appendix A. An electronic version of this form is available on Council's website.

The word "naming" in this policy and in the Naming Rules includes "renaming".

Council will begin investigating and determining place name applications after one of the following occurs:

a. Council/council officer identifies a need to assign or amend the name of a place or places;

b. A member of the general public, a community interest group, an organization or a Traditional Owner Group (as applicable) submits a written request to amend a name or change the name of a road, feature or locality, including a locality's boundaries.

The process for naming places is as follows:

Step 1	Council receives a naming request from an external source, or a request is initiated from Council. The request must be via the Request to name or re-name a road or place within the City of Darebin form.
Step 2	A Council officer checks all necessary information has been provided by the party proposing the name. If insufficient, a request for additional information within 30 days will be made. Council officer also checks compliance with the Naming Rules.
Step 3	A report is prepared for Council to consider the request.
Step 4	Council formally considers the naming request at a Council meeting. At this point Council decides to either proceed to the public consultation stage, or not to proceed. If Council does not choose to proceed to public consultation, then the proposal is considered to be declined at this point.
Step 5	If approved by Council, public consultation (including submissions and objections) occurs for at least 30 days, with immediate and extended communities. This consultation period must abide by Council's Community Engagement Policy and Section 7 of the Naming Rules.
Step 6	Compile and analyse all feedback (including submissions or objections) from the public consultation and include this in a report to Council for determination as per the advice provided in Sections 7 and 8 of the Naming Rules
Step 7	Council formally considers the naming proposal and either endorses the naming proposal or not. If Council does not endorse the proposal, then it is considered to be declined at this point.
Step 8	Any party who responded to the naming proposal, during the consultation period, must be advised of Council's decision. Council must write to objectors and submitters, when they're identified, informing them of the outcome of the naming proposal as per Section 8 of the Naming Rules. Council must also respond to all submissions. Objectors must be advised that they have 30 days to object directly to the Office of Geographic Names from the later of the date of the notification to the objector or the date of application to Geographic Names for registration of the name by Council.
Step 9	If Council endorses the naming proposal, an application is lodged with GNV for consideration and final approval by the Registrar of Geographic Names as per Section 10 and 11 of the Naming Rules. All submissions and objections, and responses to them are included in the application.
Step 10	If compliant the Registrar gazettes the name as per Section 12 of the Naming Rules
Step 11	GNV registers the name in VICNAMES and sends out notification as per Section 13 of the Naming Rules
Step 12	Council installs signage and updates the history behind the name in VICNAMES as per Section 13 of the Naming Rules.

A flowchart of the Naming Process is provided in Appendix B.

Property Services is responsible for the implementation and monitoring of this policy ensuring legislative compliance and will work collaboratively across council with other relevant departments to undertake the naming process in accordance with the Naming Rules.

12. Proactive place naming proposals

As well as being responsive to naming proposals, Council shall, from time to time, undertake a proactive place naming program, where it shall first declare its intention to name a place in accordance with its Naming Priorities, and then subsequently identify a suitable location. Alternatively, it may identify a particular name to be applied, either to an identified location or not. While this process can only be formally commenced by Council resolution, it may arise as a result of an approach by a member of the community or advice from a Council officer.

Depending on Council's initial resolution, there are four different processes for naming places under the proactive program. They are as follows:

12.1 Council both proposes the name and the place

Step 1	The process is as in Section 9 of this policy and begins with Step 1.

12.2 Council proposes the name and seeks suggestion on the place

Step 1	Prior to a Council resolution proposing a name, a Council officer should ensure all necessary information has been provided and check compliance with the Naming Rules.
Step 2	After the resolution proposing a name, conduct public consultation for at least 30 days, seeking community suggestions on places that could be named using the proposed name. This consultation period must abide by Council's Community Engagement Policy and Section 7 of the Naming Rules.
Step 3	After analysing the feedback prepare a Council report for its consideration and then follow the process as in Section 9 of this policy, beginning with Step 3. It is noted that the community must be re-consulted on the final determined name.

12.3 Council seeks name for a road, feature or locality

Step 1	Council determines a place and seeks suggestions to name the place in accordance with its Naming Priorities. (As per the Naming Rules Section 7.2.6)
Step 2	Advertise Council is seeking a name for a place.
Step 3	Multiple names are received.
Step 4	Council shortlists after checking for compliance.
Step 5	Multiple names from shortlist sent to the community for re-consultation.
Step 6	Community indicates preference on a number of names or community informed the name with the most votes will be chosen.
Step 7	Naming authority selects the name with the most votes.
Step 8	Naming authority re-consults on the final preferred name (if community not informed that the name with the most votes will be chosen).
Step 9	Follow the process as in Section 9 of this policy, beginning with Step 6.

12.4 Council seeks suggestions first on the name, then on the place

Step 1	Council determines to name places in accordance with Council's Naming Priorities. This process is similar to the one for Council seeking a name for a road, feature or locality (3).

An example of Council being proactive in place naming as part of its celebration of International Womens' Day, Council determines to name five streets in recognition of women who have made a significant contribution to the City of Darebin. It resolves to commence the naming process by calling for community suggestions for suitable women.

13. Developing an Aboriginal language naming proposal

Consultation is a key component in the process of naming roads, features and localities. There is a specific process that must be used when proposing to use a name from an Aboriginal language. Refer to the principles of the Naming Rules as well as Section 7.3 for the specific process to follow when developing an Aboriginal language naming proposal.

Traditional Owner Groups may elect to manage and progress the naming process.

Consultation should begin well before a report is put to Council for an Aboriginal language name to allow the Traditional Owners sufficient time to consider the proposed name(s) in a way that is culturally appropriate and acceptable for them.

Council will provide categories of names that are applicable to the type of place to be proposed to be named in accordance with Council's Naming Priorities, as a guideline for the names to be proposed.

See Appendix C for the flowchart for the process of Traditional Owner naming.

While there is a diverse range of Aboriginal organisations in Darebin, naming proposals should be directed to the Wurundjeri Woi-Wurrung people as the Traditional Owners. The broader Aboriginal community may provide feedback at the relevant time in this process.

14. Additional considerations

Where it is inappropriate to name a place after a person, institution or enterprise, Council may determine that it is appropriate to place a plaque or other commemorative work in a prominent position on that place to recognise the contribution of that person, institution or enterprise. This principle will be governed by Council's Monuments and Memorials Policy.

There are additional statutory requirements contained within the Naming Rules, which are not listed in this policy, that are mandatory for Council to follow when considering specific types of place name applications. Specifically, there are requirements to be met when investigating and determining applications to name, create or amend localities, roads and features.

15. Roads

A road is considered to be any public or private land-based thoroughfare or course navigable by vehicle or foot. It can be used for assigning addresses or allowing access between points or to a feature. Examples of roads include alleyways, streets, highways, fire tracks, bike paths and walking tracks.

Council must ensure that a naming proposal for a road conforms to all relevant principles outlined in Section 2 of the Naming Rules as well as the requirements outlined in Section 3, specifically Sections 3.2.1 – 3.2.5.

15.1 Naming roads in new residential or commercial subdivisions

Surveyors and Developers are required to consult with Property Services when selecting names for roads in new subdivisions; this is part of the subdivision certification process. Property Services can suggest themes for road names that should be applied when naming these roads and provide names that fit within these themes for any Name Bank that may be developed.

Property Services will work collaboratively with the Surveyor and Developer to develop road names that are compliant with the Naming Rules and this policy. Developers will be encouraged to select names from Council's Name Bank.

In these circumstances, developers applying for subdivision permits may submit suggested road names (in accordance with the Naming Rules and this policy) and relevant documentation to support the proposed names with their permit application for Property Services' consideration. Supporting documentation and an explanation for the suggested names must be provided.

Statutory Planning is required to provide Property Services with a copy of the plan of subdivision illustrating the location of the proposed road/s together with the suggested road name/s so compliance with this policy and the Naming Rules can be checked.

Before issuing a statement of compliance for a certified plan of subdivision that creates a public road, Statutory Planning must ensure that the delineated road is not named unless it is compliant with the Naming Rules and this policy in accordance with the advice of Property Services. All such plans require certification and a statement of compliance to be issued by Council before registration with Land Use Victoria. Upon registration of the plan, the name(s) will be registered with GEO Names. See Section 3.8 of the Naming Rules for further information.

GEO Names recommends that roads and buildings in complex sites (as defined in 3.9.4 of the Naming Rules), for example caravan parks be named and that Council is consulted on the proposed name(s). Housing Estates are not named under the Naming Rules.

15.2 Unnamed Right of Way as a Street Address

Proposed developments can result in the dwelling's primary point of access and egress be from an unnamed right of way. Council's preference is not to name unnamed laneways and rights of way, however in these circumstances, if a planning permit application proposes this, Statutory Planning is required to inform Property Services who will investigate the possibility of naming the laneway with a recognisable street address. Developers may submit suggested names for consideration.

Rights of way will only be named when the development for which the naming is related, is complete.

When an unmade right of way would be utilised by a new development at a greater capacity than currently generated by the property, the unmade right of way will be required to be constructed at the developer's cost as a condition of the planning permit. All developers will be informed that naming the right of way does not infer any obligation on Council to improve, upgrade or maintain the road beyond the level of service that preceded the naming of the right of way. Nor does it require Council to provide services e.g. rubbish collection may have to be from the closest main street and there is no assurance that street lighting will be provided, as rights of way in most instances are less than 3 metres in width.

Council will also consider naming proposals of constructed rights of way where they have been experiencing location issues (i.e. causes confusion and/or a risk of delay to an emergency vehicle).

15.3 Naming Private Roads

Large private developments such as nursing homes, large multi-unit developments and shopping-centres can create private internal road systems that require naming. Developers are responsible for the naming of private roads in such developments. The owner of the private road or the complex is advised to consult with Council. Owners must ensure that the road names conform to the principles and requirements outlined in the Naming Rules and this policy. The owner must submit their proposal to Council with a plan/map for naming the roads within the property. Council will check the proposal conforms and, if suitable, will send the proposal to the Registrar of Geographic Names for endorsement.

Council is not responsible for these roads.

To enable the community to distinguish the road from a public road, it is preferred that any signage that is erected follows Darebin's Signage Strategy with a minor variation to include the words "private road" in brackets below the road name. All costs associated with the installation of signage for private roads are to be borne by the owner of the road.

16. Features

A feature is considered to be a unique geographical place or attribute that is easily distinguished within the landscape. For example, a feature can be a mountain, watercourse, building, prominent structure or park.

A list of features included in VICNAMES and the relevant naming authorities can be found on the Geographic Names website.

Council must ensure that a naming proposal conforms to all relevant principles outlined in Section 2 of the Naming Rules, as well as the requirements outlined in Section 4, specifically Sections 4.2.1–4.2.4.

17. Locality

A locality is a geographical area that has identifiable community and/or landscape characteristics. In urban areas, a locality is commonly referred to as a 'suburb'.

Every locality should have a unique and unambiguous name. It must have recognised and registered boundaries and not overlap with other localities. A locality provides an official reference area for addressing purposes.

A named neighbourhood is not a locality because it does not have officially recognised and registered boundaries; therefore, a neighbourhood name cannot be used for addressing purposes.

A named residential estate is not recognised as a locality name.

Council must ensure that a naming proposal conforms to all relevant principles outlined in Section 2 of the Naming Rules, as well as the requirements outlined in Section 5, specifically Sections 5.2.1–5.2.7.

18. Delegation of authority

Section 10 of the Naming Rules allows for naming to occur by delegation of authority:

- the naming of localities, important public features and major roads are required to be resolved by Council at an Ordinary Council Meeting;
- the Chief Executive Officer, has delegated authority to reject a naming application and decline to present to Council for their consideration any proposal that the Chief Executive Officer has assessed as:
  - being non-compliant with principle (D) Ensuring Names are Not Duplicated and/or principle (F) Names Must Discriminate or be Offensive, of the Naming Rules; or
  - being substantially similar to an application which has already been decided upon by Council.
- the Manager, City Development has delegated authority to approve new names on plans of subdivision on behalf of Council.

19. Related documents

Geographic Place Names Act 1998

Naming Rules for Places in Victoria: Statutory requirements for naming roads, features and localities 2016

AS/NZs4819:2011 Rural and urban addressing

Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006

Aboriginal Heritage Regulations 2007

Victorian Aboriginal Affairs Framework 2018-2-23

Darebin's Statement of Commitment to Traditional Owners and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People 2019

Equal Opportunity Act 2010

Local Government Act 2020

Road Management Act 2004

Subdivision (Procedures) Regulations 2011

Survey Co-ordination Act 1958

Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006

United Nations Group of Experts on Geographic Names (UNGEGN) Resolutions (see 1.3.1 of the Naming Rules for the applicable resolutions)

United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

City of Darebin Council Plan 2021-2025

Towards Equality – Darebin's Equity, Inclusion and Human Rights Framework 2019-2029;

Breathing Space – The Darebin Open Space Strategy 2019-2029; and

Gender Equity and Preventing Violence Against Women Action Plan 2019-2023

The Welcoming Cities Standard

24 NOV 2025

Appendix A – Request to name or re-name a road or place within the City of Darebin (online form)

Request to name or re-name a road or place within the City of Darebin Application

Do you want to name/rename a:

- Major Road
- Bridge
- Secondary or Subdivisional Road
- Laneway
- Building / Pavilion / Pedestrian Bridge
- Open Space

Existing Name of road/place (if applicable): _____

Provide location / address details: _____

The proposal

Proposed Name _____

Reason for proposal?
Please tell us about the origin / justification of the proposed name

Background / History of the proposed name?
Please tell us about the origin /justification of the proposed name

Which of Council's Naming Priorities does the proposed name support:

- Primary Priority - Names reflecting Wurundjeri Language, Names and First Nations heritage, in consultation with the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Heritage Corporation
- Secondary Priority - Names reflecting our migrant and culturally diverse communities and their cultural heritage
- Names of significant women to address the lack of recognition of women and demonstrate Council's commitment to gender equity.
- Names associated with diversity, equity, social justice or community leadership within our community (People with a Disability, LGBTQIA+ OR leader for diversity, equity, social justice or disadvantage)
- Names reflecting the settlement and heritage of the Darebin community, for example ANZAC commemorative names, the cultural history of Darebin, and historical land use.

- ○ Unofficial names where a name is in common usage within the community but has not been registered with GEO Names and where Council considers that the name should become official.
- ○ None of the above

Does the proposed name align to Council's priorities for the road / lane / bridge / building / space proposed to be named, as shown in section 9 of the Place and Road Naming Policy?

- ○ Yes
- ○ No

If the name relates to an individual, have you obtained:

- ☐ Family members consent
- ☐ Other

Supporting Documentation

Please upload site plan and/or map of location proposed for naming

Please upload history and background of the proposed name including source material, references and photographs or images

Applicant Details

First Name _____

Last Name _____

Contact Number _____

Email _____

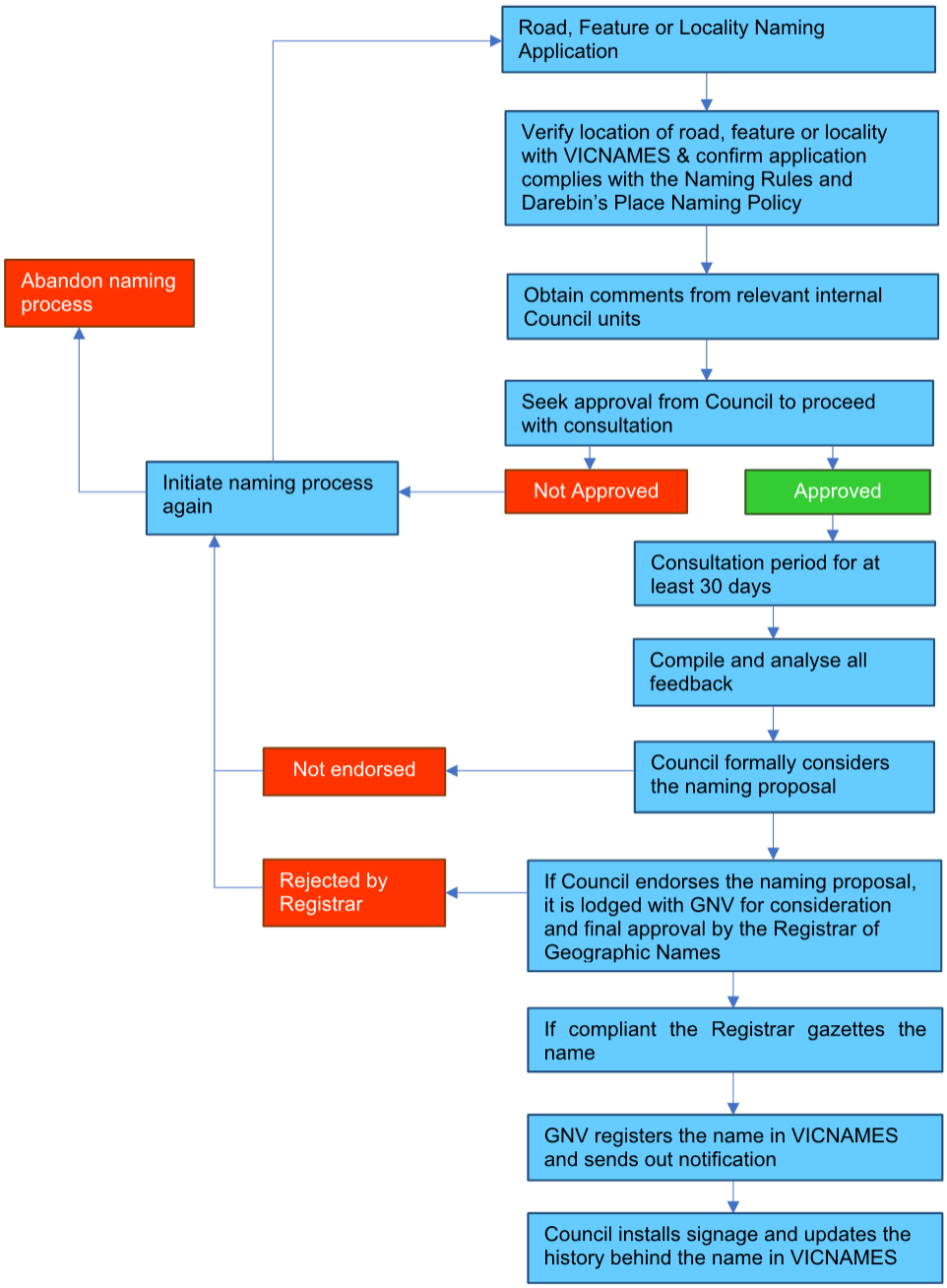
Preferred method of contact

- ○ Phone
- ○ Email
- ○ Either

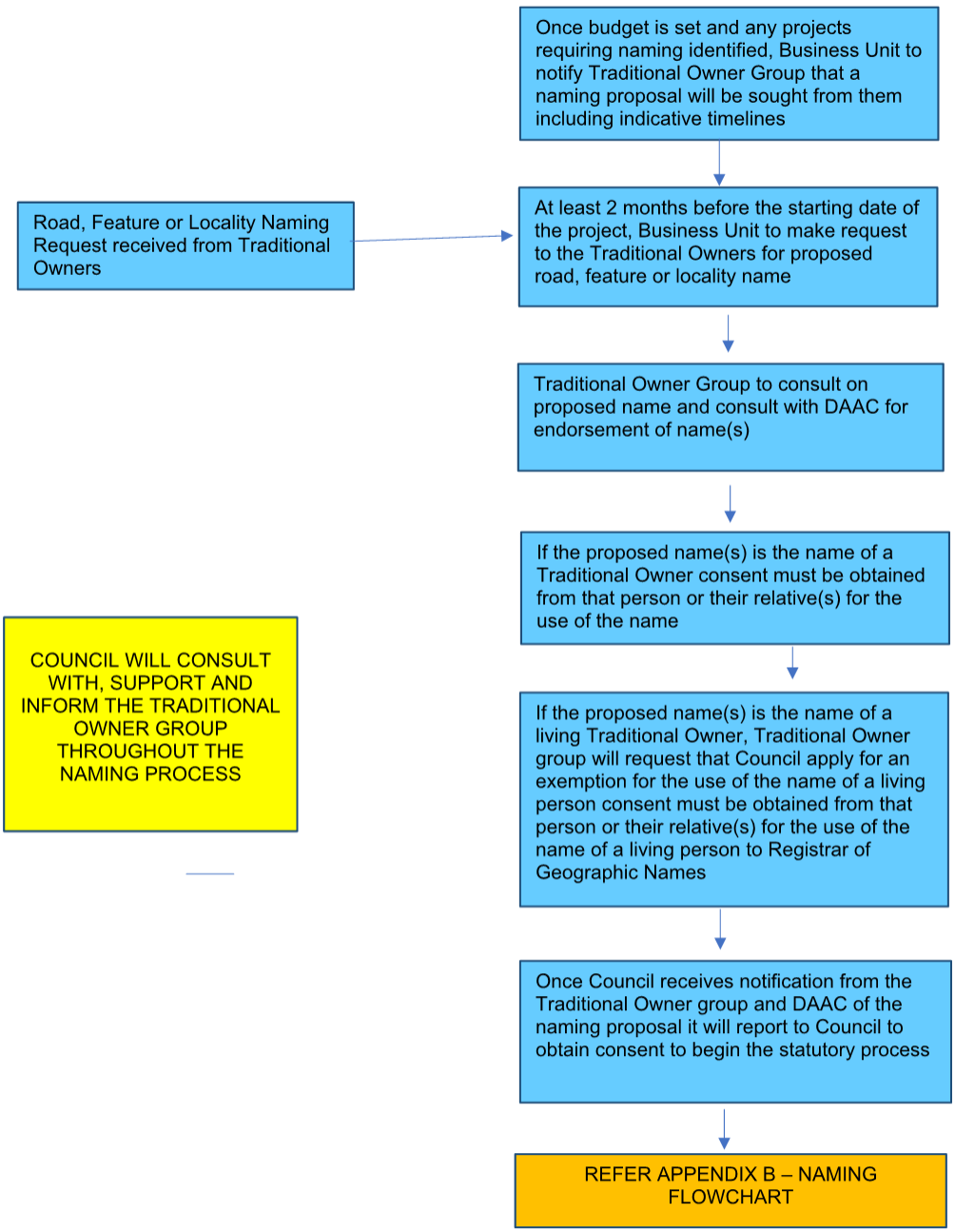
The collection and handling of personal information is in accordance with Darebin Council's Privacy Policy.

You can also collect the policy in person from Council's Customer Service Centres.

Appendix B – Naming Flowchart



Appendix C – Traditional Owner language Naming Flowchart



9.2 SHARED MICROMOBILITY EVALUATION

Author: Transport Project Officer

Reviewed By: Chief Executive Officer

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Shared micromobility has emerged as a growing transport mode in many cities, with the Victorian Government permanently legalising e-scooters and introducing a regulatory framework for shared hire schemes.

The Darebin six-month shared micromobility trial has been completed and evaluated against criteria including transport outcomes, community feedback, safety, parking management and broader mobility impacts (**Appendix A**).

Key learnings include:

- The trial identified transport benefits, including improved public transport connections, access after dark, and evidence that some users substituted car trips with shared micromobility.
- Safety outcomes were generally positive, with no reported fatalities, injuries or collisions during the trial, although reports of footpath riding and non-helmet use were received.
- Accessibility and parking remained the primary community concerns, despite the designated parking model.
- Virtual parking arrangements demonstrated limitations in managing parking outcomes, contributing to mis-parked devices and the majority of parking complaints.
- Community feedback received through Council channels was predominantly negative (93%), with concerns focused on accessibility, visual clutter and parking management.

It is recommended that Council conclude the Darebin Shared Micromobility Trial and uses the learnings to inform development of the forthcoming Integrated Transport Strategy.

Officer Recommendation

That Council:

(1) Notes the learnings from the Darebin Shared Micromobility Trial, set out in this report.

(2) Continues to monitor what Australian and international cities do with facilitating micromobility.

(3) Concludes the Darebin Shared Micromobility Trial and uses the learnings to inform development of the future Integrated Transport Strategy.

BACKGROUND / KEY INFORMATION

The six-month shared micromobility trial started on 3 February 2026 with up 180 e-bikes and 60 e-scooters operating in Northcote, Fairfield and Alphington.

The trial connected with neighbouring Council schemes to enable cross-municipal e-bike travel. (The City of Yarra recently withdrew from shared micromobility.)
Safety and accessibility were the primary concerns for the community leading up to the trial.

To manage the impacts of improperly parked devices, a fully designated parking model was developed and adopted that required all trips to start and end at approved locations. The parking network consisted of:

- 20 physical bays in activity centres and train stations, enforced through GPS, end-of-trip photo auditing and Bluetooth.
- Approximately 280 virtual parking locations, enforced through GPS and end-of-trip photo auditing (with no line-marking).

Figure 1 An example of a physical bay (left) and virtual bay (right)

Previous Council Resolution

At its meeting held on 22 July 2024, Council resolved:

That Council requests that the rollout of shared micro-mobility in Darebin is staged, with an initial area in Fairfield, Alphington and Northcote serviced by June 2025, given the expansion of the rollout from the neighbouring City of Yarra and that learnings from this area inform the municipal-wide rollout, by June 2026 subject to future budget consideration.

ALIGNMENT TO 2041 DAREBIN COMMUNITY VISION

Pillar 3: Sustainable, Green and Liveable

ALIGNMENT TO OUR DAREBIN PLAN 2025-29

Strategic Direction 2: Equity, Diversity and Inclusion - A City where our rich diversity is celebrated, everyone can thrive and belong, and our services, programs, places and spaces are equitable, responsive, inclusive and accessible to all.

Strategic Direction 4:Climate Leadership & Response - A City that's a climate leader, drives opportunities for achieving zero emissions, adapts by transforming how we provide services, open spaces & infrastructure & works with community to build resilience

DISCUSSION

The below discussion provides an overview of some of the key findings during the trial. Further information on the below topics is available in **Appendix A.**

Travel behaviour and user profile

Trip data and rider surveys (82 responses) were used to understand travel behaviour. Trip data shows:

- 1,889 people signed up to use shared e-scooters and e-bikes in Darebin.
- There were 14,725 trips with an average of 98 trips per day.
- Riders travelled at least 31,658km and saved approximately 1.16 tonnes of carbon emissions.
- Usage peaks at night (7pm-7am)
- 51% of trips by first-time users.
- Average trip distance of 2.15km.
- Approximately 1 in 2 trips start or end at a public transport stop
- 60% of all trips start and end in Darebin. 19% ended in another municipality. 21% started in another municipality.

Appendix B provides a heatmap of shared micromobility trips in Q2 2026, in Darebin and the adjoining area of the City of Yarra.

The survey asked riders to confirm how they would have made their trip if micromobility was not available:

- 37% replaced a car trip (private vehicle or rideshare)
- 28% replaced public transport trips
- 21% replaced walking trips.

Regarding trip purpose:

- 57% used it to connect with public transport
- 31% used it to commute to work
- 22% used it for shopping or errands.

Rider feedback indicates that the positive aspects of the service are convenience, flexibility and ease of use, referenced by 67% of respondents. Additional benefits commonly noted include providing a more reliable alternative to public transport, saving time compared with walking, and improving connectivity to public transport services.

Parking management

Virtual parking technology relies on end-of-trip photo checks and GPS positioning, both of which are affected by local infrastructure and environmental conditions. During the trial, parking outcomes at virtual parking locations, including nature strips, were not consistently achieved, with results influenced by both the technology controls and user compliance.

Officers conducted 279 site inspections, identifying obstructions (for example a device blocking a footpath) at 15% of physical bays and 18% of virtual bays. Untidy parking including non-compliant, toppled or misplaced devices was observed at 30% of all bays.

Across the trial, 151 parking complaints were referred to the operator, with 138 complaints (91%) relating to virtual bays, predominantly located on nature strips in residential areas. Physical bays in activity centres and at train stations attracted fewer complaints (9% of all parking complaints), aligning with the Victorian Government’s preferred approach to micromobility parking management.

Community feedback

Council received feedback from 151 individual community members, with 93% (140 of the 151) classified as negative. Sixty seven per cent of the negative feedback comments were submitted in the first month of the trial. In total at least 362 negative feedback items were received from the 140 community members.

Negative feedback commonly referenced one or more themes raised at the following frequencies:

- Accessibility concerns - improperly parked devices and blocked footpaths: 55% (77 of 140)
- Visual impacts - toppled devices, clutter: 38% (52 of 140)
- Parking management - need for improved controls: 34% (47 of 140)
- Nature strip impacts - access and property maintenance issues: 19% (26 of 140)
- Launch and deployment issues: 16% (23 of 140)
- Consultation concerns: 13% (18 of 140)
- Riding-related safety concerns: 11% (15 of 140).

Positive feedback highlighted themes such as improved access to public transport, reduced car dependence, and improved perceptions of safety after dark.

Safety technology

The Victorian Government regulations for shared micromobility include the following elements:

Feature	Description
Speed limiting	Limits e-scooter speed to a maximum of 20 km/h and e-bikes 25km/h
Impairment deterrence	Cognitive reaction tests used to deter riding under the influence
Designated parking enforcement	Restricts parking to approved, designated areas
Helmet-attachment requirement	Helmet Availability
AI footpath-riding detection	Uses AI to detect illegal footpath riding and slows the device to walking pace
State regulation (2025)	Victorian Government regulation formalised these requirements in late 2025 and enabled PSOs to issue fines.

Officers worked with Victoria Police to monitor safety and received no reports of fatalities, injuries or collisions throughout the trial. Community members provided nine reports of non-helmet use, seven reports of footpath riding and one report of tandem riding. Footpath detection technology sounds an alert to users and slows devices down in busy areas but is unable prevent it entirely.

Options

Officers consider there are three options available to Council:

Option	Description	Considerations	Total Cost
A (Recommended) – Conclude trial and consolidate learnings	Council concludes the shared micromobility trial and uses the learnings to inform development of the forthcoming Integrated Transport Strategy.	The trial demonstrated transport connectivity benefits; however, accessibility, parking management and visual clutter remained recurring community concerns. Officers consider a more refined parking management approach is required before any future micromobility operation is considered. Concluding the trial enables Council to consider the role of micromobility could play holistically alongside all transport modes through developing the Integrated Transport Strategy.	$0
B – Retain existing trial area for 12 months	Retain the current trial area to obtain a full 12-month dataset and continue monitoring travel patterns. Targeted parking upgrades would be delivered at priority locations.	Provides an additional 6 months of data, and access for existing users. Accessibility concerns, parking issues and community complaints are likely to continue without refining parking. The six-month trial has already identified the key benefits and challenges associated with the current operating model.	$9,000 for parking upgrades for 20 new bays, plus officer time
C – Expand into new areas	Expand the service into additional parts of the municipality that have poor public transport access	May provide greater benefits in areas with fewer transport options. Additional infrastructure investment and operational oversight would be required while parking and accessibility challenges identified through the trial remain unresolved.	$18,000–$22,500 for 40–50 new bays, plus officer time

CONSIDERATION OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT (2020) PRINCIPLES

Financial Management

$50,000 was allocated through the operating project budget to implement the trial.

Officers have undertaken a review of the shared micromobility trial to assess planned and actual expenditure, as well as revenue received.

Pre-Trial

Pre-trial costs primarily related to project planning, contract establishment and initial set-up. This included:

- A Transport Officer working three days per week over six months dedicated to the project (Funded by the $50,000 operating project budget).
- Additional senior officer oversight delivered within existing resources (approximately 20 days). The complexity of establishing the trial also required more senior officer time than originally estimated.
- Legal costs to establish the operator agreement. Legal review was considered required to ensure an appropriate contractual framework. (Additional budget was required.)
- The operator contributed to the physical parking bay installations. No Council funds were used.

During the Trial

During the trial period, operational oversight continued to be delivered within existing resources. This included:

- An average of two days per week of lead officer time.
- Approximately 13 days of senior officer oversight, and support from other officers from other departments.

These internal resource allocations represent a notable component of Council's operational contribution to the trial.

Revenue

Revenue from the operator was generated through a flat fee of $100 per day, equating to $36,500.00 annually or $18,250.00 for the six-month trial duration. No additional fees were charged during the pre-trial phase.

Overall, the financial review indicates that while the trial generated modest revenue, it also required significant officer time and some unanticipated costs to ensure appropriate governance, contract management, operational oversight and customer experience.

Community Engagement

Community feedback was invited through multiple channels, including Council's website, Darebin Community News, social media, e-newsletters, Customer Service requests, phone calls and direct emails to the project team. Feedback was accepted up to 29 July 2026. Traders located next to proposed physical parking bays were consulted prior to installation.

Other Principles for consideration

Overarching Governance Principles and Supporting Principles

(c) the economic, social and environmental sustainability of the municipal district, including mitigation and planning for climate change risks, is to be promoted;

Public Transparency Principles

(a) Council decision making processes must be transparent except when the Council is dealing with information that is confidential by virtue of this Act or any other Act;

Strategic Planning Principles

(b) strategic planning must address the Community Vision;

Service Performance Principles

(a) services should be provided in an equitable manner and be responsive to the diverse needs of the municipal community;

COUNCIL POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

Environmental Sustainability Considerations (including Climate Emergency)

The trial was endorsed as part of the Climate Emergency Plan to support Darebin's move towards zero emissions transport (Action 2.4.1).

Equity, Inclusion, Wellbeing and Human Rights Considerations:

An Equity Impact Assessment was completed for the trial. The project was considered by the Darebin Disability Advisory Committee on two occasions, and also by the Darebin Disability Employment Network.

Demographic data on Darebin users is limited due to privacy constraints; however, a 2025 survey by the operator indicates that 34% of shared micromobility users identify as women and approximately 600 people nationally access the discount program for low-income earners.

Feedback received through the Equity Impact Assessment and consultation identified opportunities to promote the discount program and improve awareness of the service. Feedback also highlighted a preference for marked parking bays to minimise access impacts, improved perceptions of safety for women travelling after dark, and potential mobility benefits for older adults, people with disabilities and others unable to drive, consistent with peer-reviewed research.

Economic Development and Cultural Considerations

Rider survey results suggest shared micromobility may support access to local businesses, with 77% of survey respondents reporting that they visited a local business as part of their trip. However, the trial did not undertake a detailed assessment of economic impacts.

Operational Impacts
The officer time required to deliver the trial placed pressure on other transport priorities and services.

If Council resolves to conclude the trial, the parking infrastructure installed to support the trial will be removed.

Legal and Risk Implications

The Victorian Government legislation – *Transport Legislation Amendment Bill 2023* provided local governments the power to permit (or deny) shared micromobility services (e-scooters or e-bikes) in their municipality.

IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

25 August 2026	Council decision
Subject to Council decision:	
September 2026	Removal of parking infrastructure
February 2027 (at latest)	Table Integrated Transport scoping paper for Council consideration
2026-2028	Consider trial learnings in development of Darebin Transport Strategy

Attachments

- Darebin Shared Micromobility Trial Evaluation (**Appendix A**) ⇩
- Micromobility Heatmap (Darebin trial boundary in yellow) (**Appendix B**) ⇩

DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST

Section 130 of the *Local Government Act 2020* requires members of Council staff and persons engaged under contract to provide advice to Council to disclose any conflicts of interest in a matter to which the advice relates.

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

City of DAREBIN
the place to live
Darebin Shared Micromobility
Trial Evaluation
August 2026
1

Purpose of the evaluation

The purpose of this evaluation is to present the outcomes of the six-month shared micromobility trial in Darebin.

The trial commenced on February 3, 2026, making up to 180 shared e-bikes and 60 shared e-scooters available for hire in Northcote, Fairfield and Alphington. The trial included a fully designated parking model, requiring all trips to start and end at one of approximately 300 approved parking locations.

E-bike users could travel to the City of Yarra and onward to other municipalities where shared e-bikes operate. E-scooter users were contained to Darebin.

A framework presented to Council in March 2026 sought to evaluate the trial against the following criteria. These areas are expanded on in the relevant sections of this report:

- Transport outcomes (trip data, heatmap analysis and rider surveys)
- Community feedback (volume of general feedback, parking issues, operational complaints)
- Parking management (site inspections, compliance scores, operational issues)
- Safety (reports of crashes, injuries and unsafe riding)
- Broad transport outcomes (collaboration with other councils, trip data, policy context)
- Operator performance (complaint handling, rider discipline, parking compliance).

Two types of parking bay were evaluated during the trial and are described below.

Physical bays

- Found at train stations and activity centres
- Keep vehicles organised in busy areas
- A maximum of 5, 7 or 9 vehicles
- Enforced through GPS, line-marking, Bluetooth and AI

Virtual bays

- Found on kerb outstands and near intersections in residential areas
- Keep footpath clear and avoid loss of carparking for residents
- A maximum of 2-3 vehicles
- Enforced through GPS and AI with no visible line-marking

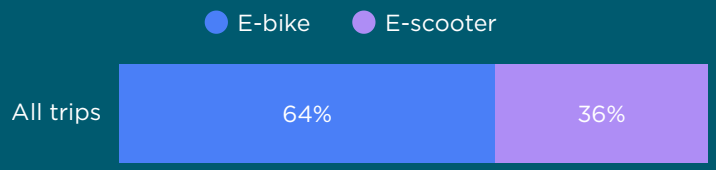
Physical bays can be seen in blue on the map below. Virtual bays can be seen in green. No-go zones are marked in red.

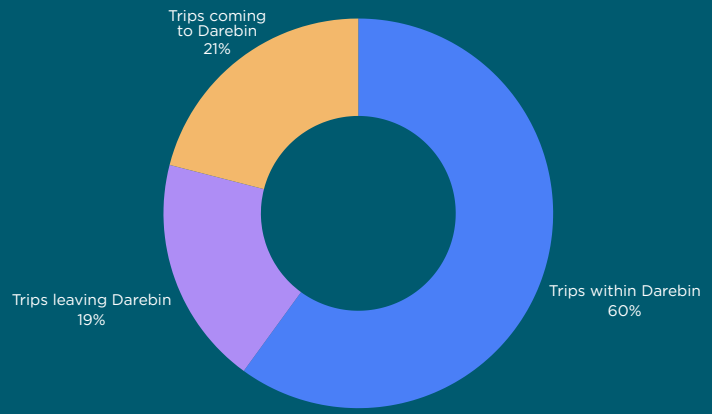
Travel behaviour

Overview

Transport outcomes of shared micromobility were evaluated through analysis of trip data provided by the operator and heatmaps from public micromobility dashboard RideReport. In the first five months of the trial:

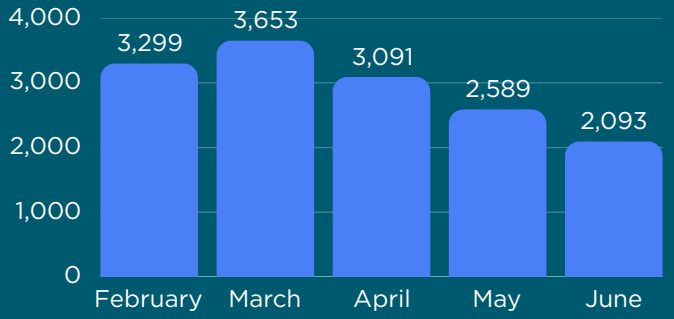
- 1,889 people signed up to use shared e-scooters and e-bikes in Darebin.
- There were 14,725 trips with an average of 98 trips per day.
- 51% of trips by first-time users, 49% were pre-existing users of the service.
- Average trip distance of 2.15km.
- Average trip duration was 12.5 minutes.
- A total of 31,658km travelled.
- 60% of all trips started and ended in Darebin.
- 19% of trips ended in another municipality.
- 21% of trips started in another municipality.
- E-bikes accounted for 64% of all trips.
- E-scooters accounted for 36% of all trips.





Trip numbers peaked in March at 3,653 and declined to 2,093 in June. Usage across wider Melbourne decreased by approximately 20% over the same time frame, consistent with typical seasonal usage patterns.

Darebin shared micromobility trips by month



3

Travel behaviour

Trip start points

The fully designated parking model enables trip start and ends to be linked to specific locations. Popular trip start and end points assist in identifying connections to public transport, local business and key attractions.

Trip start points can indicate where there is demand for shared micromobility. The most popular places to start a trip were as follows and are mapped on the following page:

1. High x Bastings St: 231 trips
- High Street activity centre
- 30 metres to nearest PT connection (bus)

2. Fairfield Station: 206 trips
- At train station entrance
- On Strategic Cycling Corridor

3. Westgarth x High St: 205 trips
- Westgarth activity centre
- On Strategic Cycling Corridor
- 63 metres to nearest PT connection (bus)

4. Welcome to Thornbury: 158 trips
- At northern border of trial area
- 98 metres to nearest PT connection

5. Westgarth Station: 143 trips
- Opposite train station entrance
- On Strategic Cycling Corridor

6. High x Lawry: 137 trips
- High Street activity centre
- 33 metres to nearest PT connection (tram)

7. Timmins x Union: 127 trips
- Westgarth activity centre

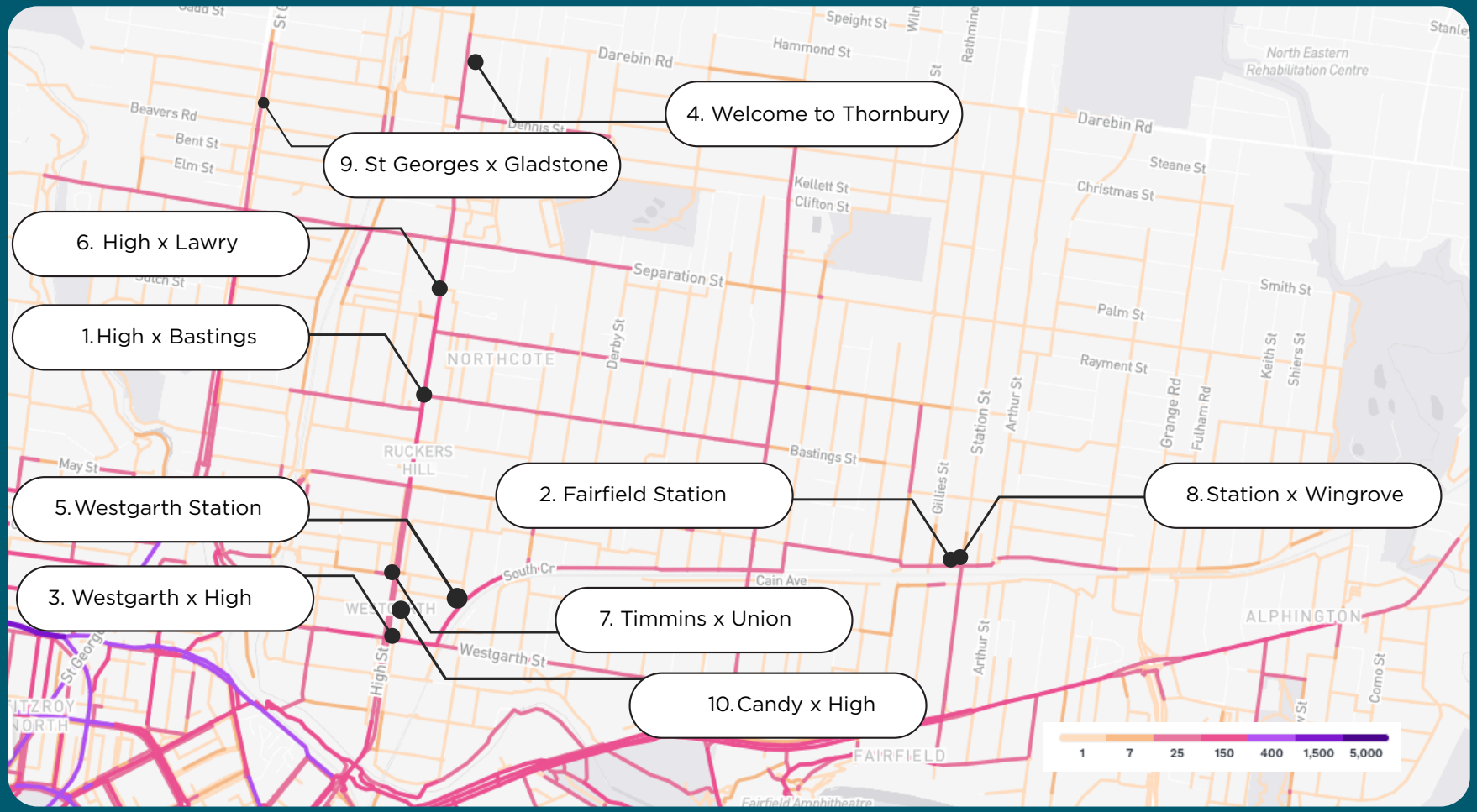
8. Station x Wingrove: 125 trips
- Fairfield activity centre
- On Strategic Cycling Corridor
- 63 metres to nearest PT connection (bus)
- 98 metres to Fairfield train station

9. St Georges x Gladstone: 106 trips
- At northern border of trial area
- Adjacent to tram stop
- On Strategic Cycling Corridor

10. Candy x High: 104 trips
- Westgarth activity centre
- 75 metres to nearest PT connectin (tram)

Travel behaviour

Top 10 trip start points



Ten most popular trip start points from the Darebin Shared Micromobility trial, overlaid with heatmap data from Q2, 2026.

5

Travel behaviour

Trip end points

Trip end points indicate where people choose to travel to using shared micromobility. The most popular places to end a trip were as follows and are mapped on the following page:

1. Fairfield Station: 132 trips
- At train station entrance
- On Strategic Cycling Corridor

2. Welcome to Thornbury: 123 trips
- At northern border of trial area
- 98 metres to nearest PT connection

3. High x Bastings St: 113 trips
- High Street activity centre
- 30 metres to nearest PT connection (bus)

4. Little High x Urquhart: 85 trips
- Southern border of trial area (for e-scooters)
- 43 metres to nearest PT connection (tram)

5. Station x Wingrove: 77 trips
- Fairfield activity centre
- On Strategic Cycling Corridor
- 63 metres to nearest PT connection (bus)
- 98 metres to Fairfield train statiom

6. South Crescent x Wastell: 68 trips
- Adjacent to Dennis Station
- On Strategic Cycling Corridor

7. St Georges x Gladstone central median: 63 trips
- At northern border of trial area
- Adjacent to tram stop
- On Strategic Cycling Corridor
- On St Georges Road bike shared path

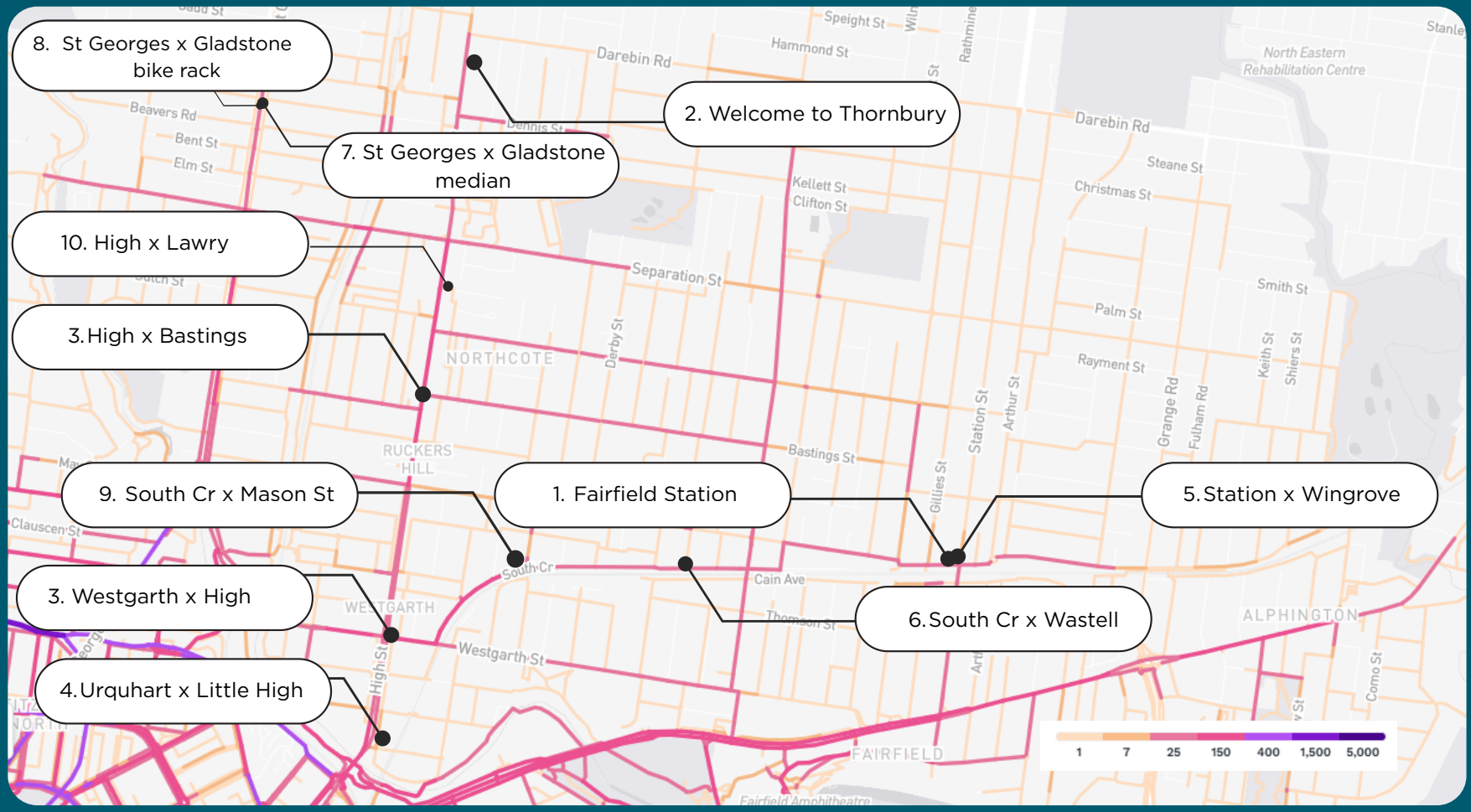
8. St Georges x Gladstone: 63 trips
- At northern border of trial area
- Adjacent to tram stop
- On Strategic Cycling Corridor

9. South Crescent x Mason St: 63 trips
- On Strategic Cycling Corridor

10. High x Lawry: 60 trips
- High Street activity centre
- 33 metres to nearest PT connection (tram)

Travel behaviour

Top 10 trip end points



Ten most popular trip end points from the Darebin Shared Micromobility trial, overlaid with heatmap data from Q2, 2026.

7

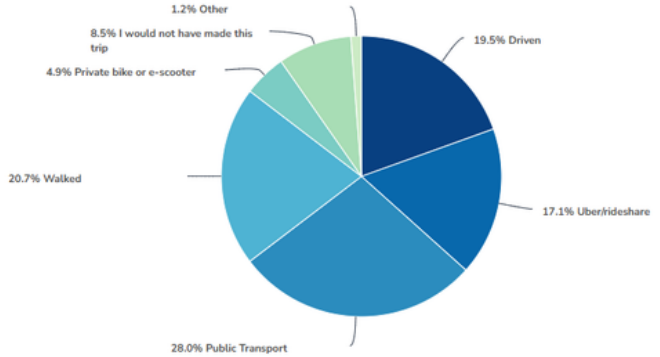
Travel behaviour

Rider survey

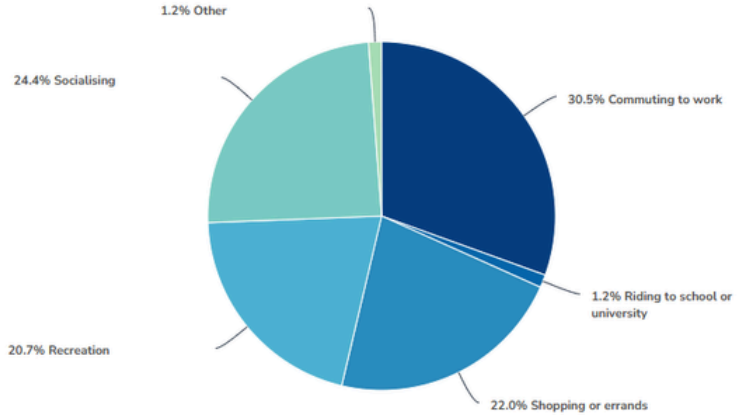
To support analysis of travel behaviour, rider surveys were undertaken in partnership with the operator Lime. Ride credits were offered by Lime as an incentive. Council made no financial contribution. The survey was designed to investigate how and why people use shared micromobility in Darebin.

Questions were intended to understand trip purpose, mode shift and potential economic impacts. Responses were collected up until July 29, 2026. The survey generated 82 responses from people who had used the service. The results are presented in the following graphs.

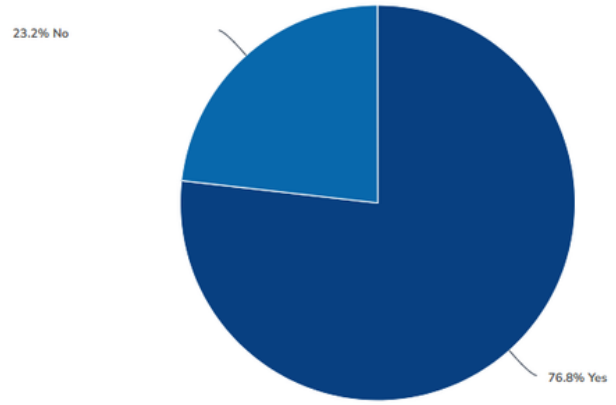
2. If a shared e-scooter or e-bike was not available, how would you have made the trip?



1. Consider your last trip. What was its main purpose?



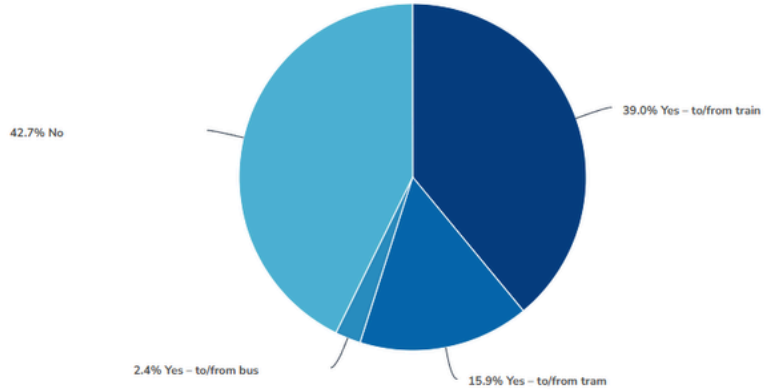
3. Did you visit a local business as part of the trip?



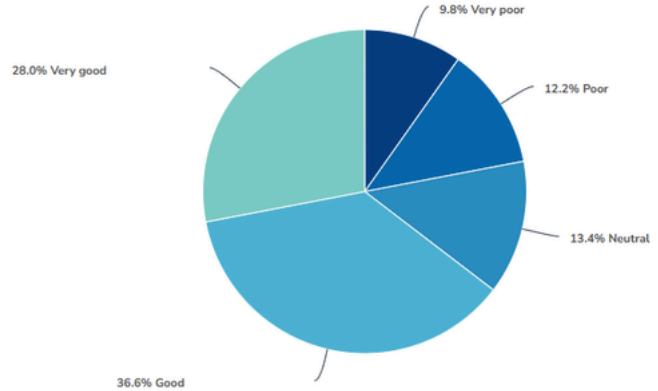
8

Travel behaviour

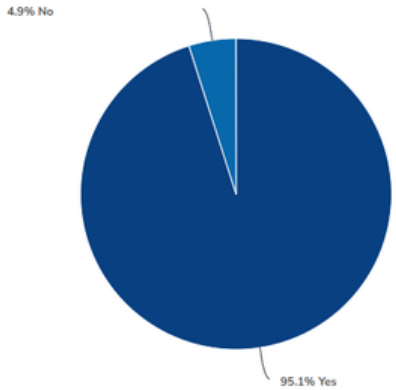
4. Did you use the e-scooter or e-bike to connect with public transport?



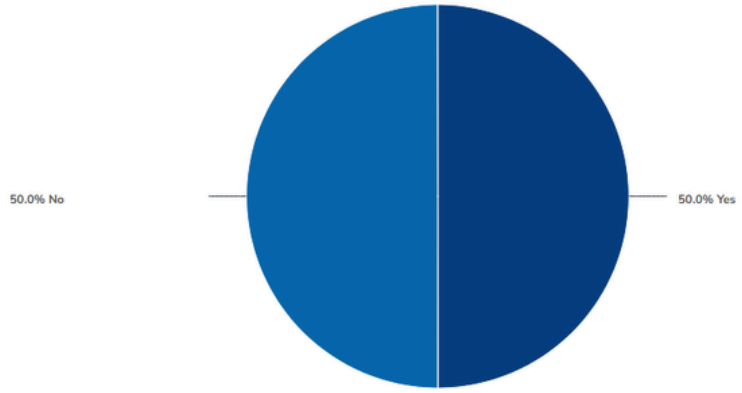
6. How would you rate your experience using shared e-bikes or e-scooters in Darebin?



5. Do you live in Darebin?



7. Do you think there are enough parking locations?



9

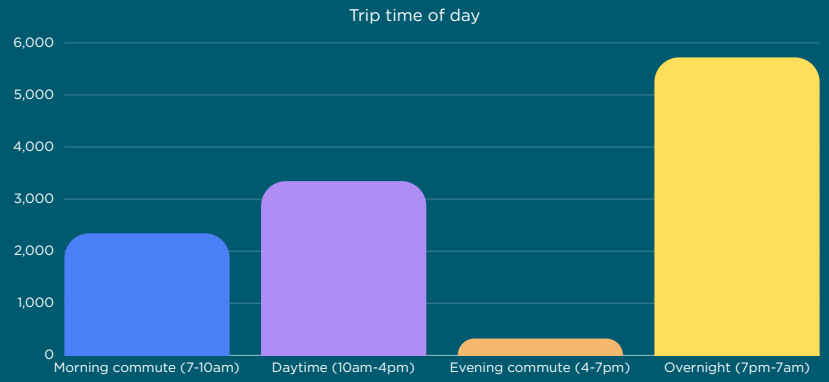
Travel behaviour

Survey participants were asked what they liked most about the service. Responses most commonly referred to the convenience and ease of use (67% of responses). Other themes referenced in responses include:

- A more flexible alternative to public transport (16%)
- First- and last-mile connectivity (12%)
- Reduced reliance on cars (12%)

Trip time of day

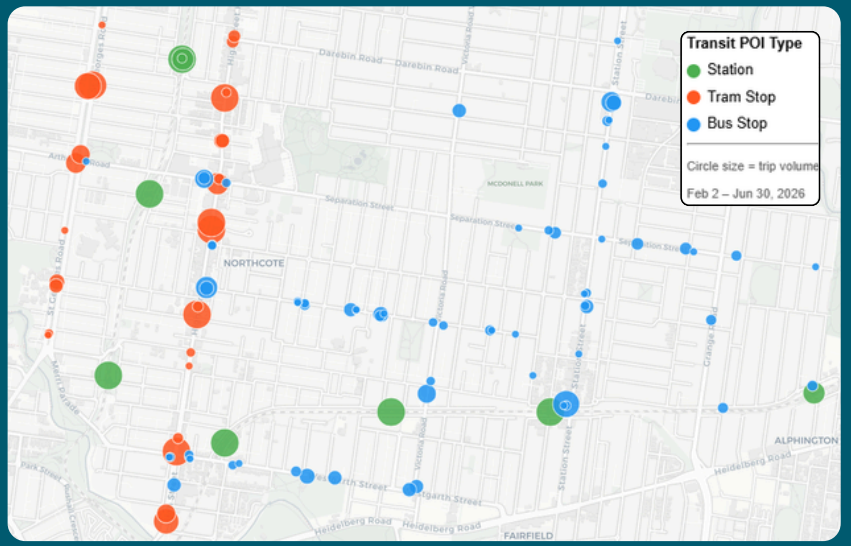
Analysis of trip numbers during different segments of the day shows highest levels of usage at night. This suggests, in addition to commuting and daytime use, shared micromobility can support the nighttime economy and address a gap where public transport services are more limited.



Public transport integration

Analysis of trip start and ends shows that from February to June; 44-47% of trips started and ended at a public transport connection. This is supported by rider survey results (58% of respondents connected with public transport) and aligns with evidence on shared micromobility as a first- and last-mile transport option.

The map below illustrates integration with public transport, with larger circles representing higher volumes of trip start and ends.



10

Community feedback

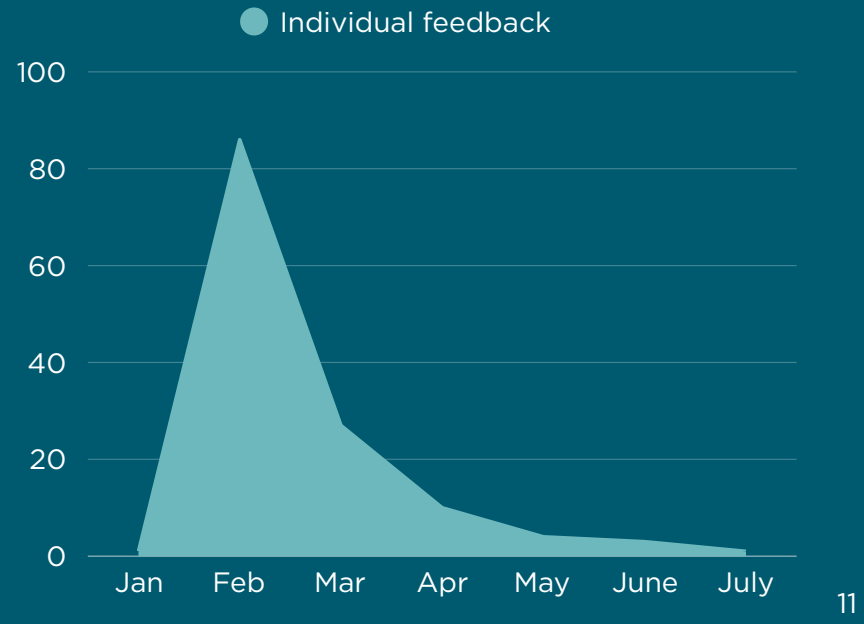
The community was invited to provide feedback through Council's website, Darebin Community News, social media and e-newsletters. Feedback was collected through Customer Service requests, phone calls and direct emails to the project team up until July 29, 2026.

Council received feedback from 151 individual community members throughout the trial. Ninety-three percent of feedback was negative. Seven percent was positive.

Of the 140 people to provide negative feedback:

- 32 people lodged a second enquiry
- 9 people lodged 5 or more
- 4 people lodged 10 or more
- 2 people lodged 60 or more

Amounting to 362 negative feedback items overall. 67% of negative feedback was provided within the first month of the trial.

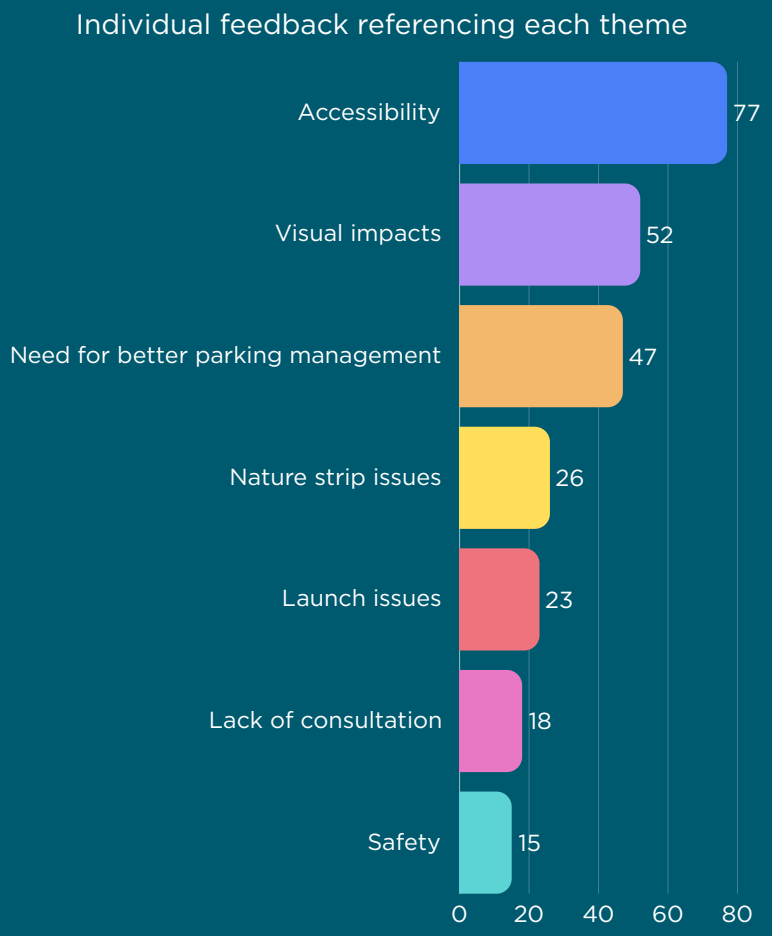


11

Community feedback

Negative feedback items contained references to one or more themes, raised at the following frequencies:

- Accessibility concerns referencing improperly parked vehicles and blocked footpaths: 55% of all submissions (77 of 140).
- Concerns referencing visual impacts (for e.g. toppled devices or street clutter): 38% of all submissions (52 of 140).
- A need for improved parking management was expressed in 34% of all submissions (47 of 140).
- Concerns about access and property maintenance due to nature strip parking were expressed in 19% of all submissions (26 of 140).
- Launch and deployment issues were referenced in 16% of all submissions (23 of 140).
- A perceived lack of consultation was expressed in 13% of all submissions (18 of 140)
- Safety concerns relating to the way vehicles are ridden were raised in 11% of submissions (15 of 135).



12

Community feedback

Themes expressed in the eleven individual positive feedback items include:

- Improved access to public transport
- Reduced dependence on cars
- Requests to expand the trial area
- Improved perceptions of safety after dark
- Environmental benefits

Operational complaints

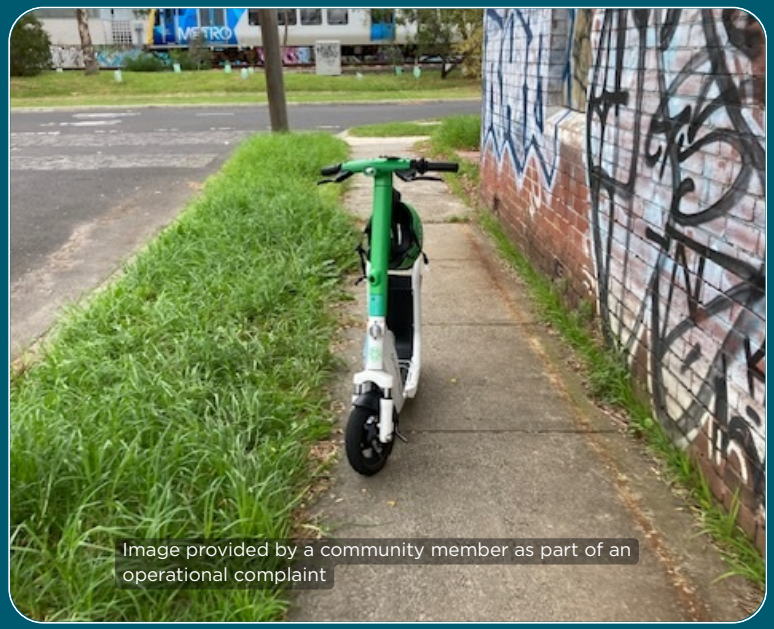
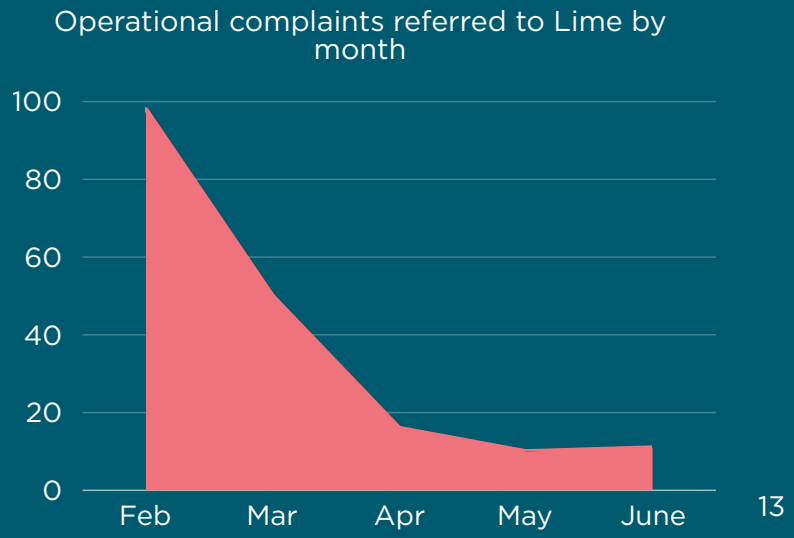


Image provided by a community member as part of an operational complaint

Negative feedback items that contained references to vehicles parked at specific locations were referred to Lime for action and categorised as operational complaints. Not all feedback items contained operational complaints. The approach allowed for general feedback on the trial to be distinguished from operational issues that may persist over time.

Of 194 operational complaints referred to Lime in the first five months, 50% (98) were lodged within the first month of the trial. Operational complaint volumes ranged from seven to 16 per month from April - June, an average of three per week.



Community feedback

Of 194 operational complaints, 27 related to deployment issues following launch and 16 were requests to update the parking network. Of those relating to improper parking at specific locations 138 (91%) relate to virtual parking bays, while 13 (9%) relate to physical parking bays with line-marking.

Consultation with community groups

The project team consulted with the disability community three times regarding the trial:

- With the Darebin Disability Advisory Committee during planning for the trial on March 4, 2025
- With the Darebin Disability Advisory Committee during the trial on June 9, 2026.
- With the Darebin Disability Employee Network on July 9, 2026.

From these meetings the following feedback was provided:

- A preference for on-street parking bays to minimise accessibility impacts.
- Greater efforts should be made to promote Lime Access discount program for low-income earners and seated e-scooters for accessibility.
- Evidence provided on how shared micromobility can improve transport options for people with disability, people from lower socio-economic backgrounds, and recently arrived migrants.
- The importance of continuing to address concerns around footpath access.
- The consultation process could have included demographic information collection to enable analysis by gender, disability and age to understand benefits of and barriers to participation in the program.

Parking compliance

Accessibility

Two types of parking bay were tested during the trial (virtual and physical), enabling officers to compare how each design performed in real-world conditions. This helped determine which bay type, location, and surrounding street infrastructure were most effective in encouraging positive parking behaviour.

Officers conducted 279 site inspections to study parking obstructions. A photo was taken of each bay as it was found and scored with a 1 or 0 to indicate a pass or fail, based on the following criteria:

Is a parked vehicle protruding onto the footpath or otherwise impeding the path of travel for pedestrians or vehicles? (N = 1, Y = 0)

Note: Vehicles not causing obstructions but toppled over or inappropriately parked are addressed under "Parking tidiness."

Inspection results were monitored across the first four months to assess whether parking behaviour improved as:

- Lime's end-of-trip AI photo system improved
- Refinements were made to virtual parking locations
- Users became accustomed to the fully mandatory parking model.

No measurable improvement in accessibility was recorded over time.

Virtual bay obstructions

Obstructions were found at 18% of virtual bays inspected. Virtual bays rely on GPS and AI image analysis for parking compliance. The trial demonstrated that these technologies lack the accuracy to contain parking to precise areas such as nature strips and kerb outstands.

Many virtual bays were located on nature strips, and vehicles were commonly found on adjacent footpaths. It is assumed that some users prefer to park on hard surfaces or footpaths to prevent their vehicle falling over, contributing to the frequency of obstructions.

15

Parking compliance

Physical bay obstructions

Obstructions were found at 15% of physical bays inspected, with vehicles most commonly found parked outside the line-markings in surrounding street space. At physical bays located on street away from footpaths, very few instances of footpath obstructions were recorded.

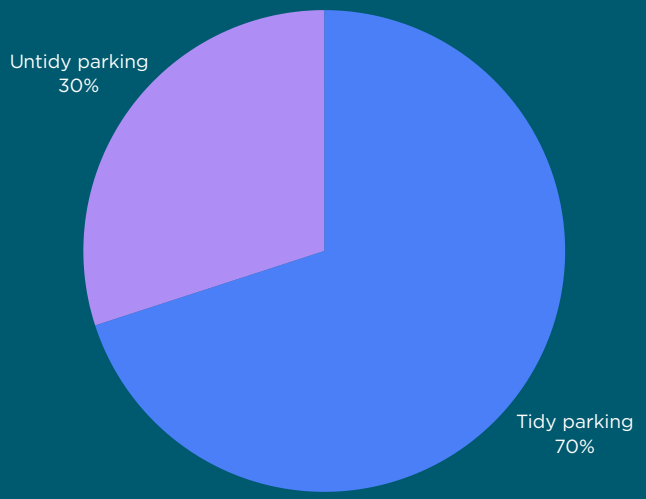
Parking tidiness

In addition to accessibility concerns, the community highlighted the visual impact of parked e-scooters and e-bikes as an issue. Feedback and operational complaints frequently referred to abandoned vehicles, reduced amenity, and visual clutter. To assess how the two parking bay types contribute to these problems, officers reviewed site inspection photos to assess parking tidiness.

All non-compliant parking was graded as untidy, in addition to vehicles that were:

- Toppled over
- Leaning against an object or structure
- Parked outside the line-markings of a physical bay

Untidy parking was recorded at 30% of bays inspected. There was no significant difference between parking untidiness at virtual bays (30%) compared to physical bays (32%).

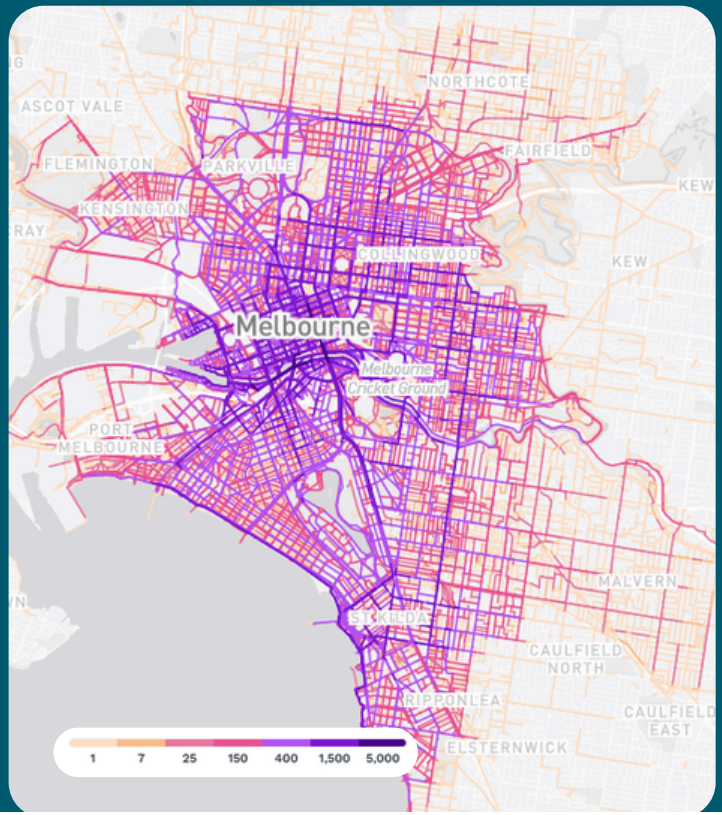


16

Broad transport outcomes

Shared micromobility in Melbourne

Shared micromobility trials began in inner Melbourne in 2022 in the City of Melbourne, City of Port Phillip and the City of Yarra, and now include the City of Darebin and City of Stonnington. There were 1.4 million shared micromobility trips recorded across greater Melbourne in 2025.



The table below includes the status of shared micromobility in each municipality as of August 2026.

LGA	Vehicles	Status
City of Melbourne	E-bikes only. E-scooters withdrawn August 2024	Trial ongoing
City of Yarra	Nil	Operations ceased August 2026.
City of Stonnington	E-bikes only	Undertaking joint procurement with City of Port Phillip
City of Port Phillip	E-bikes and e-scooters	Undertaking joint procurement with City of Stonnington
City of Merri-bek	Nil	Deferred plans to introduce shared micromobility until greater certainty in neighbouring councils.

17

Broad transport outcomes

State Government policy context

After permanently legalising e-scooters in October 2024, in 2026 the Victorian Government introduced pre-approval safety requirements for e-scooter operators to support councils with shared micromobility schemes.

The Victorian Government now requires all shared hire e-scooter operators to gain approval by the Department of Transport and Planning to operate in Victoria. The requirement provides a number of benefits to the community:

- Improving safety for riders, pedestrians and other road users.
- Enhancing the management of e-scooter shared hire schemes.
- Assisting local councils in establishing e-scooter shared hire schemes by assisting in the regulation and selection of operators.

Operators currently approved to provide e-scooter shared hire services in Victoria are:

- Neuron Mobility
- Lime

To complement its pre-approval scheme, the Victorian Government has introduced best practice guidance for councils with shared micromobility.

It includes guidance on:

- Parking management
- Operator insurance requirements
- Fleet sizes
- Fee structures
- Data collecting and sharing
- Rider surveys
- Complaint handling

The Department of Transport and Planning has also developed a sample agreement to provide Councils with a template set of terms to help manage shared micromobility schemes. The website can be found at the following address:

https://www.vic.gov.au/shared-hire-schemes

Safety

State Government regulations require all e-scooters to be equipped with technology to:

- Detect in real-time when the device is being ridden on the footpath and alert, slow or stop the vehicle.
- Restrict users ending trips outside a designated zone.
- Detect when a helmet is attached to the device.
- Prompt users to complete cognitive reaction tests to deter riding inder the influence of alcohol.

Darebin was among the first cities globally to feature these technologies across 100% of it's e-scooter fleet.

Safety issues relating to the way shared e-bikes and e-scooters are ridden were evaluated through information sharing with Victoria Police and reports from the community.

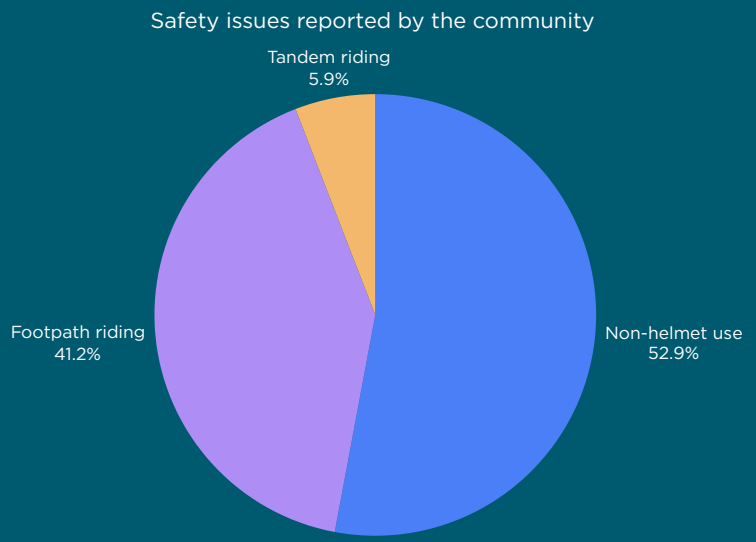
During the trial, Council received no reports of fatalities, injuries or collisions relating to shared e-bikes and e-scooters.

Victoria Police has reported no safety incidents relating to shared e-bikes and e-scooters in Darebin.

Lime has reported no safety incidents relating to shared e-bikes and e-scooters in Darebin.

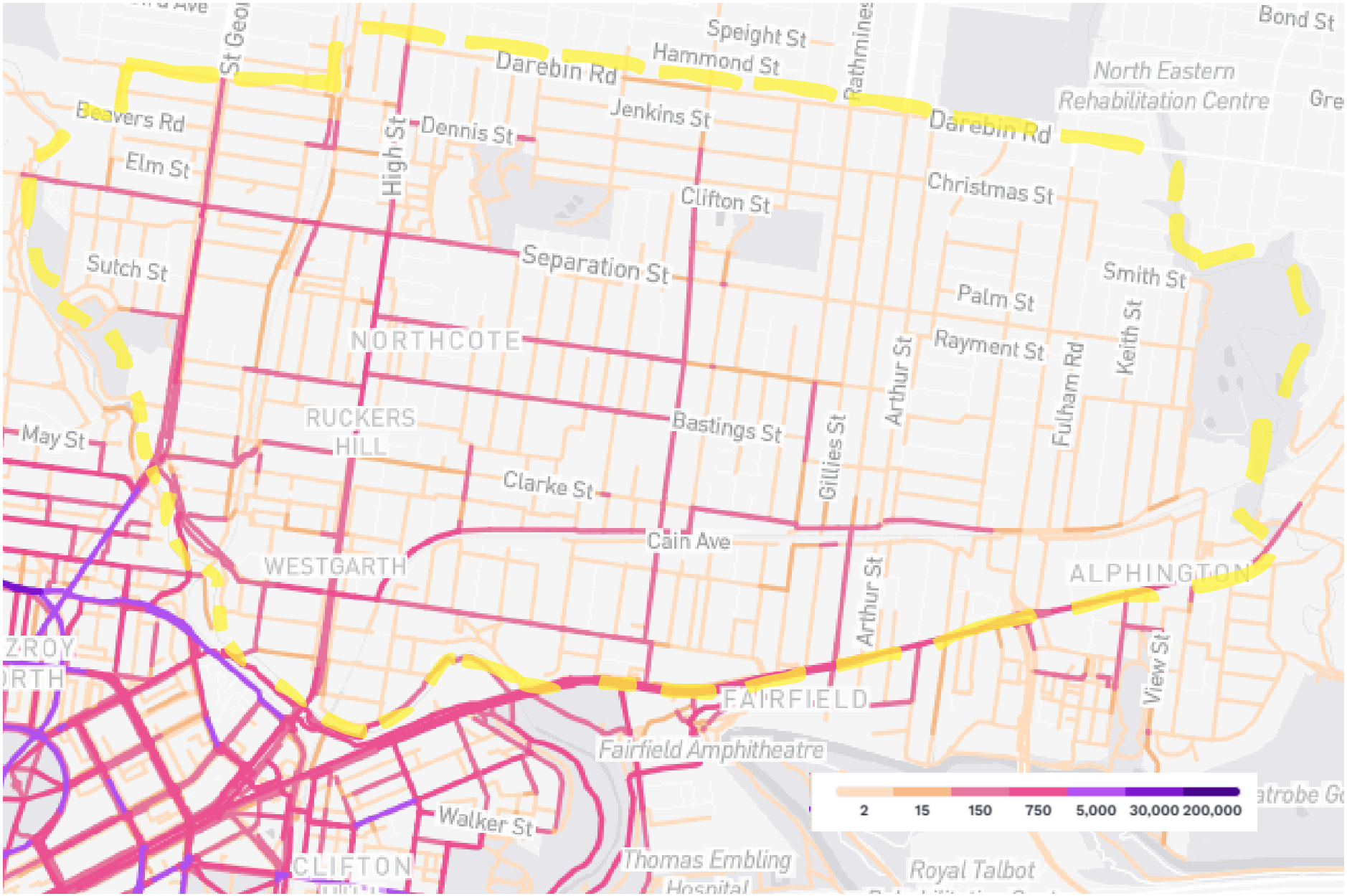
Community members reported instances of non-compliant riding as follows:

- Reports of non-helmet use: 9 reports
- Reports of footpath riding: 7 reports
- Reports of tandem riding: 1 report



Safety reports were shared with Victoria Police and Lime as appropriate.

Darebin shared micromobility trips Q2, 2026



9.3 2025-26 Q4 PERFORMANCE REPORT (NON-FINANCIAL) ENDING 30 JUNE 2026

Author: Corporate Strategy & Performance Lead

Reviewed By: Chief Executive Officer

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to present the 2025-26 Q4 Performance Report (non-financial) for the period ending 30 June 2026 to Council for noting. The Q4 Performance Report (non-financial) includes 2025-26 Our Darebin Action Plan (ODAP) progress, Customer Experience Performance, Service Performance and Strategic Indicator Performance (**Appendix A**).

The *2025-26 Our Darebin Action Plan* outlines Council's performance in delivering the year one actions that contribute to achieving the Initiatives set out in the *Our Darebin Plan 2025–29*. At the end of the fourth quarter, out of the 94 actions, 73 actions (78%) are Completed, 18 actions (19%) are Work Continuing, 1 action (1%) is Deferred, and 2 actions (2%) are Discontinued. Results and detailed commentary for all actions is provided in **Appendix A.**

The following graphic provides a snapshot of non-financial performance for the financial year ending 30 June 2026. The Strategic Indicator results are interim, with data pending for 5 indicators. There are 4 financial indicators dependent on the finalisation of the financial statements and 1 indicator that is dependent on the receipt of third-party Council emissions data. Final Strategic Indicator results will be published in the 2025-26 Annual Report which is scheduled to be presented to Council in October 2025.

Officer Recommendation

That Council notes the Q4 Performance Report (non-financial) at **Appendix A**.

BACKGROUND / KEY INFORMATION

The 2025-26 Q4 Performance Report (**Appendix A**) provides an update on the delivery of the Our Darebin Action Plan together with performance results for the Strategic Indicators from the Our Darebin Plan 2025-29, Customer Experience measures and Service Performance metrics across key services.

The inclusion of these measures strengthens transparency and supports community trust by providing a clear view of Council's performance. Over time, trend data, complemented by detailed commentary, offers valuable insights into progress, outcomes, and areas for improvement. This enables the community to better understand how Darebin is tracking against its strategic priorities and delivering services to meet community needs.

Previous Council Resolution

At its meeting held on 26 May 2026, Council resolved:

'That Council :

(1) Notes the Q3 Performance Report (non-financial) at Appendix A.

(2) Defers action '6.4.2.1 Update the Social and Sustainable Procurement Policy to strengthen how well it helps achieve best value for community balancing financial, social and sustainability objectives' and reschedule in the context of Council's policy review project.

ALIGNMENT TO 2041 DAREBIN COMMUNITY VISION

Pillar 4: Collaborative, Transparent and Responsible

ALIGNMENT TO OUR DAREBIN PLAN 2025-29

Strategic Direction 6: Decision Making, Community Engagement and Transparency - A City that is well-managed, transparent and trusted by its community and partners, with clear and respectful communication that builds confidence in Council's decisions.

DISCUSSION

Our Darebin Action Plan (ODAP)

At the end of Q4, 78% of actions were completed, with detailed progress updates and status information for each action provided in **Appendix A**. This represents an improvement on previous years, with 69% of actions completed in 2024-25 and 64% completed in 2023-24, across a comparable number of actions.

The table below presents a comparative breakdown of performance across the year for the 2025-26 ODAP.

Status	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Completed	4 (4%)	6 (6%)	11 (12%)	73 (78%)
Work Continuing	-	-	-	18 (19%)
Deferred	-	-	-	1 (1%)
Discontinued	-	2 (2%)	2 (2%)	2 (2%)
On Target	83 (89%)	77 (82%)	72 (77%)	-
Off Target	3 (3%)	8 (9%)	9 (9%)	-
Not Started	4 (4%)	1 (1%)	-	-
Total	**94**	**94**	**94**	**94**

There are 18 Work Continuing actions. The majority are included in the adopted 2026-27 ODAP or capital works program and will continue to be reported to Council quarterly.

Strategic Indicator Performance

The Q4 Performance Report includes interim annual results for the Strategic Indicators. Results are pending for 5 indicators. There are 4 are financial indicators dependent on the finalisation of the financial statements and 1 indicator that is dependent on the receipt of third-party Council emissions data.

Final results will be published in the 2025-26 Annual Report, that is scheduled to be presented to Council in October.

In summary:

Strategic Direction	On Target	Off Target	Result Pending	Total
Aboriginal Culture & Knowledge	5	-	-	**5**
Equity & Diversity	4	-	-	**4**
Health & Wellbeing	6	-	-	**6**
Climate Leadership & Response	4	1	1	**6**
Vibrant Places & Economy	8	1	-	**9**
Decision-making, Community Engagement & Transparency	3	-	4	**7**
Total	**30 (81%)**	**2 (5%)**	**5 (14%)**	**37**

Customer Experience Performance

Q4 maintained strong demand levels, with 22,050 service requests received, consistent with volumes recorded throughout the year. Encouragingly, 73% of requests were actioned on time, making Q4 the strongest quarter for service performance and reflecting improved responsiveness compared with earlier quarters.

Complaint volumes increased to 550 in Q4, considerably higher than the previous quarter. This increase can be primarily attributed protective industrial action that impacted waste services with some other hot topics for the quarter.

Overall, Q4 delivered the year's best timeliness result of the year while maintaining service levels in a high-volume operating environment.

Implementation of the newly endorsed Customer Experience Strategy is now underway to improve the way we work to deliver simpler, faster and easier experiences for the Darebin community.

Service Performance

At the end of Q4, 86% of service performance indicators across the eight key services have achieved the annual target and/or expected trend. **Appendix A** provides a detailed progress update for each indicator and its status.

CONSIDERATION OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT (2020) PRINCIPLES

Financial Management

There are no direct financial management considerations related to the 2025-26 Q4 Performance Report

Community Engagement

The 2025-26 Annual Report will be presented to Council in October. Final 2025-26 Strategic Indicator results will be included in the Annual Report.

The Q4 Performance report will be published on Council's website.

Other Principles for consideration

Overarching Governance Principles and Supporting Principles

(i) the transparency of Council decisions, actions and information is to be ensured.

Public Transparency Principles

(b) Council information must be publicly available unless (i) the information is confidential by virtue of this Act or any other Act; or (ii) public availability of the information would be contrary to the public interest;

Strategic Planning Principles

(a) an integrated approach to planning, monitoring and performance reporting is to be adopted;

(e) strategic planning must provide for ongoing monitoring of progress and regular reviews to identify and address changing circumstances;

Service Performance Principles

(d) a Council should seek to continuously improve service delivery to the municipal community in response to performance monitoring;

COUNCIL POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

Environmental Sustainability Considerations (including Climate Emergency)

There are no environmental sustainability considerations related to the 2025-26 Q4 Performance Report.

Equity, Inclusion, Wellbeing and Human Rights Considerations:

This report is based on performance across multiple areas. Equity, Inclusion, Wellbeing and Human Rights considerations are applied within individual actions, projects and service areas, rather than this report.

Economic Development and Cultural Considerations

This report is based on performance across multiple areas. Economic Development and Cultural Considerations are applied within individual actions, projects and service areas, rather than this report.

Operational Impacts

Operational impacts are considered when understanding performance trends.

Legal and Risk Implications

Reporting progress toward the Our Darebin Action Plan fulfils Council's legislative obligations in accordance with the principles of the *Local Government Act 2020* and its accountability to the community.

IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

2025-26 Q4 Performance Report will be published on Council's public website.

Attachments

- Appendix A - 2025-26 Q4 Performance Report (non-financial) (**Appendix A**) ⇩

DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST

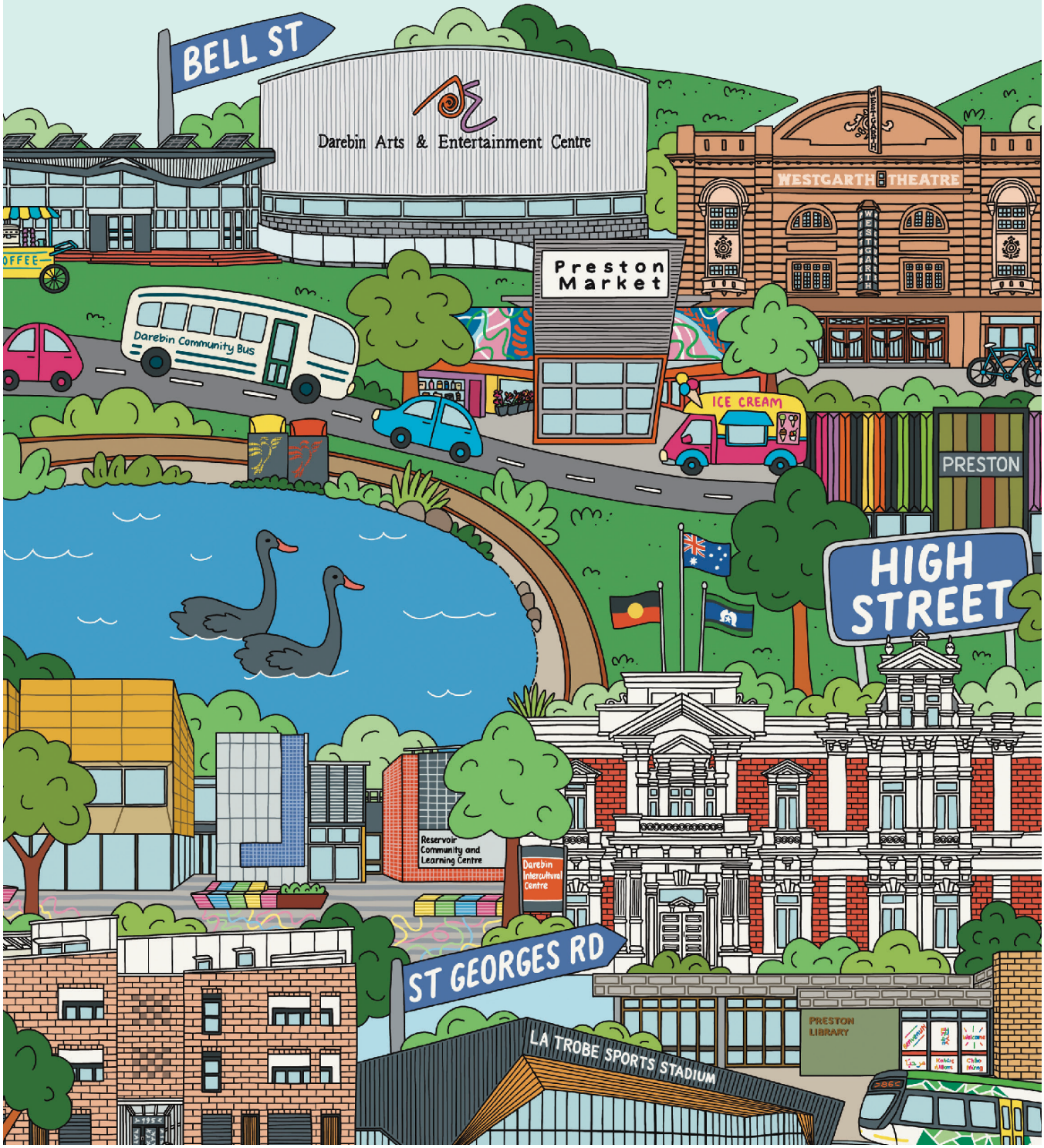
Section 130 of the *Local Government Act 2020* requires members of Council staff and persons engaged under contract to provide advice to Council to disclose any conflicts of interest in a matter to which the advice relates.

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

City of DAREBIN

the pla to live

Quarter Four
Performance Report 2025-26



Translation Page

English

This is Darebin Councils quarterly performance report. It provides information on the progress of Our Darebin Annual Actions, customer experience and service performance. If you would like to know more or require language support services, please contact Customer Service on (03) 8470 8888.

Arabic

هذا هو تقرير الأداء الفصلي لمجالس داربين. ويوفر معلومات حول التقدم المحرز في إجراءات داربين السنوية وتجربة العملاء وأداء الخدمة. إذا كنت ترغب في معرفة المزيد أو تحتاج إلى خدمات دعم الترجمة الشفهية، فيرجى الاتصال بخدمة العملاء على 8888 8470 (03).

Chinese Simplified

这是戴瑞宾市议会的季度绩效报告。本报告提供了关于**“我**们的戴瑞宾年度行动计划”**最新**进展、客户体验和服务表现的信息。如需了解更多详情，或需要语言协助服务，请致电客户服务中心：(03) 8470 8888

Greek

Αυτή είναι η τριμηνιαία έκθεση απόδοσης του Δήμου Darebin. Παρέχει πληροφορίες σχετικά με την πρόοδο των Ετήσιων Δράσεών μας «Our Darebin», την εμπειρία των πελατών και την απόδοση των υπηρεσιών. Αν θέλετε να μάθετε περισσότερα ή χρειάζεστε υπηρεσίες υποστήριξης για διαφορετική γλώσσα , παρακαλούμε επικοινωνήστε με την Εξυπηρέτηση Πελατών στο (03) 8470 8888.

Hindi

यह डारेबिन काउंसिल की तिमाही प्रदर्शन रिपोर्ट है। यह हमारी डारेबिन वार्षिक कार्रवाइयों की प्रगति, ग्राहक अनुभव और सेवा प्रदर्शन के बारे में जानकारी प्रदान करती है। यदि आप अधिक जानना चाहते हैं या भाषा के संबंध में सहायता सेवाओं की आवश्यकता है, तो कृपया ग्राहक सेवा से *(03) 8470 8888* पर संपर्क करें।

Italian

Questo è il rapporto trimestrale sulle prestazioni del Comune di Darebin. Fornisce informazioni sui progressi delle nostre azioni annuali di Darebin, sull'esperienza del cliente e sulle prestazioni del servizio. Per ulteriori informazioni o per richiedere assistenza linguistica, contattate il Servizio Clienti al numero (03) 8470 8888.

Macedonian

Ова тримесечен извештај за постигнувањата на Општината Даребин. Во него се даваат информации за годишните активности на нашиот Даребин, за искуствата на корисниците и за постигнувањата на службите. Ако сакате да дознаете повеќе или ви требаат јазични услуги, ве молиме јавете се на Службата за потрошувачи на (03) 8470 8888.

Nepali

यो डारेबिन काउन्सिलको त्रैमासिक कार्यसम्पादन प्रतिवेदन हो। यसले हाम्रो डारेबिन वार्षिक गतिविधिहरूको प्रगति, सेवाग्रही अनुभव र सेवा कार्यसम्पादनको बारेमा जानकारी प्रदान गर्दछ। यदि तपाईं थप जान्न चाहनुहुन्छ वा भाषा सहयोग सेवाहरू आवश्यक छ भने, कृपया *(03) 8470 8888* मा ग्राहक सेवालाई सम्पर्क गर्नुहोस्।

Punjabi

ਇਹ *ਡੈਰਾਬਿਨ ਕੌਂਸਿਲ* ਦੀ ਤਿਮਾਹੀ ਕਾਰਗੁਜ਼ਾਰੀ ਰਿਪੋਰਟ ਹੈ। ਇਹ *ਡੈਰਾਬਿਨ ਵਿੱਚ ਸਾਡੀਆਂ ਸਾਲ ਦੇ ਦੌਰਾਨ ਕੀਤੀਆਂ* ਕਾਰਵਾਈਆਂ *ਵਿੱਚ ਹੋਈ ਤਰੱਕੀ*, ਗਾਹਕਾਂ *ਦੇ ਤਜ਼ਰਬੇ* ਅਤੇ ਸੇਵਾ *ਪ੍ਰਦਾਨ ਕਰਨ ਦੇ* ਪ੍ਰਦਰਸ਼ਨ ਬਾਰੇ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਪ੍ਰਦਾਨ ਕਰ*ਦੀ* ਹੈ। ਜੇ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਵਧੇਰੇ ਜਾਣਨਾ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਹੋ ਜਾਂ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਸਹਾਇਤਾ ਸੇਵਾਵਾਂ ਦੀ ਲੋੜ ਹੈ, ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ (03) 8470 8888 'ਤੇ ਗਾਹਕ ਸੇਵਾ ਨਾਲ ਸੰਪਰਕ ਕਰੋ।

Translation Page continued

Somali

Tani waa warbixinta Golaha Darebin ee afar biloodlaha ah. Waxayna bixisaa macluumaad ku saabsan horumarka Ficiladayada Sanadlaha ah ee Darebin, waaya-aragnimada macmiilaha iyo waxqabadka adeegyada. Haddii aad jeclaan lahayd inaad ogaato ama u baahan tahay adeegyada kaalmada luqada, fadlan la xiriir Adeega Macmiilaha (03) 8470 8888.

Spanish

Este es el informe trimestral de desempeño del Concejo Municipal de Darebin. Incluye información sobre el progreso de las Acciones Anuales de Our Darebin, la experiencia de los clientes y el desempeño de los servicios. Si desea obtener más información o necesita servicios de apoyo lingüístico, póngase en contacto con el Servicio de atención al cliente, en el (03) 8470 8888.

Urdu

یہ ڈیئرین کاؤنسل کی سہ ماہی پرفارمنس رپورٹ ہے۔ یہ 'ہمارے ڈیئرین کے سالانہ ایکشنز' میں پیش رفت، صارفین کے تجربے اور سروس کی انجام دہی کے متعلق معلومات دیتی ہے۔ اگر آپ مزید معلومات لینا چاہتے ہیں یا آپ کو اپنی زبان میں مدد کی ضرورت ہے تو براہ مہربانی (03) 8470 8888 پر کسٹمر سروس سے رابطہ کریں۔

Vietnamese

Đây là bản báo cáo hiệu quả hoạt động hàng quý của Hội đồng Thành phố Darebin. Bản báo cáo này trình bày thông tin về tiến độ thực hiện các Kế hoạch Hành động Thường niên Darebin Chúng ta, trải nghiệm khách hàng và hiệu quả dịch vụ. Nếu muốn biết thêm thông tin hoặc cần dịch vụ hỗ trợ ngôn ngữ, vui lòng gọi điện cho Bộ phận Dịch vụ Khách hàng theo số (03) 8470 8888.

Acknowledgement of Country

Darebin City Council acknowledges the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people as the Traditional Owners and custodians of the land and waters we now call Darebin and affirms that Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people have lived on this land for millennia, practising their customs and ceremonies of celebration, initiation and renewal.

Council acknowledges that Elders past, present and emerging are central to the cohesion, intergenerational wellbeing and ongoing self-determination of Aboriginal communities. They have played and continue to play a pivotal role in maintaining and transmitting culture, history and language. Council respects and recognises Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities' values, living culture and practices, including their continuing spiritual connection to the land and waters and their right to self-determination. Council also recognises the diversity within Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities have had and continue to play a unique role in the life of the Darebin municipality. Council recognises and values this ongoing contribution and its significant value for our city and Australian society more broadly.

Extract from Darebin City Council's Statement of commitment to Traditional Owners and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people 2019.

Contents

CEO's message (TBC) **6**

Our Darebin Action Plan Progress **8**

Customer Experience Performance 10

Service Performance 11

Strategic Indicator Performance 12

Appendices **14**

Appendix A : Our Darebin Plan Progress Comments 15

Strategic Direction One Aboriginal Culture & Knowledge 15

Strategic Direction Two Equity, Diversity and Inclusion 19

Strategic Direction Three Health and Wellbeing 24

Strategic Direction Four Climate Leadership and Response 33

Strategic Direction Five Vibrant Places and Economy 40

Strategic Direction Six Decision-making, Community Engagement and Transparency 46

Appendix B : Our Services Performance 54

CEO's message

I am pleased to share Darebin City Council's Quarterly Performance Report for the fourth and final quarter of 2025-26.

Guided by the Our Darebin Plan 2025-29, this quarter, we have continued to deliver health, equity and wellbeing initiatives across our city. Through our important partnerships we delivered a vaping harm prevention campaign in schools, initiated talks with a local Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (ACCHO) to prevent gambling related harm and continued planning for the final year of the Free from Violence program.

Community participation remained strong with our Get Active in Darebin's autumn program delivering 22 free sessions to almost 1500 participants.

We share our residents' love of Darebin and want to ensure that it remains a vibrant, safe and connected place to live. In June we began installing safer speeds of 40km/h across Springthorpe and Thornbury alongside ongoing street lighting renewals and feasibility work for local shared user paths. Through our Your Street Your Say consultations we have continued incorporating community feedback for street development to meet the needs of our community.

Our commitment to strong customer experience is delivering good results. Q4 achieved the year's best timeliness result for the year. This demonstrates improved responsiveness, while maintaining strong demand levels, with 22,050 service requests received. Looking ahead, our new Customer Experience Strategy will build on this momentum by making every interaction simpler and faster.

Sustainability and climate resilience remain an important focus. Work is continuing on the staged approach of integrating the UN Sustainable Development Goals into the planning and reporting of the Our Darebin Plan 2025-29. Year 2 delivery of the Climate Emergency Plan (2024-2030) is now complete with key successes including a heat health program supporting more than 500 residents at risk of extreme heat, the electrification of 10 Council sites and ongoing delivery of the Darebin Energy Upgrades Program.

We also completed the Tree Planting Program 2026, with 1,310 park and street trees planted. A total of 1060 trees were planted to replace those lost last year, with an additional 250 canopy trees through the 2025-26 special operations budget.

This quarter also celebrated significant milestones in inclusion and social justice. Council officially adopted the Cultural Diversity and Inclusion Plan and the LGBTIQA+ Action Plan, as well as lodging our new four-year Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP). Darebin Zero continues to support people sleeping rough, and nine local services are working together to support Darebin's most vulnerable, with seven people housed in the April to June period.

Our commitment to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members continues, including recent discussions on Aboriginal career pathways and how Darebin can support Aboriginal employment initiatives. This quarter saw Darebin staff gather to acknowledge National Sorry Day and Council buildings were lit in purple for both National Sorry Day and National Reconciliation Week.

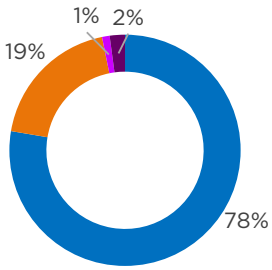
Advanced final preparations and Elder consultations for the Truth-Telling display and garden at Bundoora Park Farm continue – to be officially opened during Wurundjeri Week 2026.

As we close out 2025-2026, I extend my thanks to our staff and community partners for their dedication, professionalism and care. This year's achievements reflect a shared commitment to building a city that is equitable, sustainable, and thriving for everyone who calls Darebin home.

Anne Howard
Chief Executive Officer

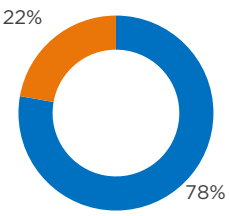
Quarterly Performance Summary

Our Darebin Action Plan Progress



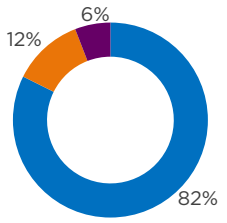
Overall performance for the quarter remains positive, with the majority of the annual actions completed by 30 June. Out of the 94 actions, 73 (78%) are completed, reflecting continued delivery against planned commitments. Work is continuing across Eighteen actions (19%), while two actions (2%) are discontinued and 1 (1%) is deferred. As we move into 2026-27, focus will remain on actively supporting the Work Continuing actions to deliver the commitments from 2025-26 Our Darebin Action Plan.

Strategic Direction 1 Aboriginal Culture & Knowledge



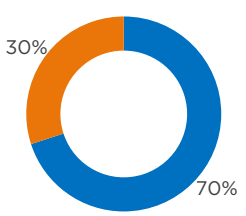
- The Aboriginal Employment Network continues to gather bi-monthly, with strong membership participation across all sectors in the community. The network continues to grow, with recent discussion on Aboriginal career pathways and how Darebin can support Aboriginal employment initiatives.
- National Sorry Day was recognised and acknowledged with an internal staff event on the 26 May. Darebin's Council buildings were lit with purple lighting for both National Sorry Day and National Reconciliation Week.
- Partnership agreement has been signed with Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation. The partnership agreement foreshadows treaty negotiations.
- Final preparations are underway for the Truth Telling display and garden at Bundoora Park Farm, including consultation with Elders. The display will be officially launched and opened to the community during Wurundjeri Week 2026.

Strategic Direction 2 Equity & Diversity



- The Cultural Diversity and Inclusion Plan and LGBTIQA+ Action Plan was adopted by Council on 24 March 2026.
- Council's new four-year GEAP has been lodged with the Commission for Gender Equality in the Public Sector on 1 May 2026.
- Darebin Zero continues to identify and support people sleeping rough in Darebin. Nine local services work together to provide comprehensive support to some of Darebin's most vulnerable community members. Through these coordination efforts, seven people were housed in the April to June period.
- The Maryborough Avenue Kindergarten Expansion project has been completed. The project was completed ahead of schedule and within budget.

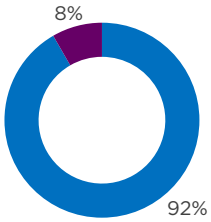
Strategic Direction 3 Health & Wellbeing



- The Free From Violence program has continued to be delivered and planning has commenced for the final year of the project.
- Through Get Active in Darebin's Autumn program, 22 free programs for 1487 participants were delivered to increase opportunities for our community to engage in physical activities. Activities included Active Adults Aqua, Aboriginal Women-only Water Sessions, Tai Chi, Boccia, Girls Soccer Clinic, Walking Futsal, Gentle Pilates, Come N Try Ice Skating and Chair Yoga.
- Construction of KP Hardiman Pavilion is complete. The new pavilion design delivered a modern, functional, safe, welcoming, environmentally sustainable facility tailored to meet the needs and improve experience of women and girls. An official opening was held on 7 November 2025.

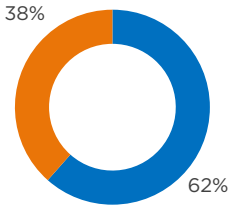
Completed Work continuing Deferred Discontinued

Strategic Direction 4
Climate Leadership & Response



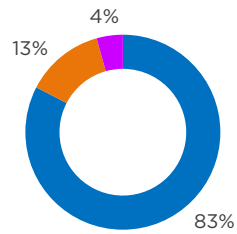
- The Darebin Tree Planting Program for 2026 is now complete with 1310 park and street trees planted. 1060 trees were planted to replace those lost last year. The 2025-26 special operations budget enabled an additional 250 new trees which were planted to increase overall canopy cover.
- Year 2 delivery of the Climate Emergency Plan (2024-2030) is complete, with development of the next three-year action plan commencing in mid-2026. Key achievements include a heat health program supporting more than 500 residents at risk of extreme heat impacts; electrification of 10 Council sites; delivery of the Darebin Energy Upgrades Program, resulting in 415 registrations, 130 energy upgrades and support for 30 low-income households; supporting the Greening Our Business tool; installation of a misting garden at SPAN Community House; and delivery of programs and campaigns to build climate resilience and reduce emissions.
- Darebin Energy Upgrade Program was launched on 8 February 2026 and the delivery is underway.

Strategic Direction 5
Vibrant Places & Economy



- Council received State Government approval and started installing safer speeds of 40km/h in the Springthorpe and Thornbury areas from June. These safer speed changes will take a few months to complete. A street lighting renewal project in the Springthorpe Estate has been completed. A shared path near BT Connor Reserve with lighting has been constructed with a 50% grant funding contribution from the Federal Government. A raised safety platform has been installed on McFadzean Avenue.
- Community and stakeholder consultation for the proposed Melbourne Water Pipe Track Shared User Path in Reservoir was completed in April, and a draft feasibility study has been developed.
- Community consultation on draft concept plans for 20 locations in the Your Street Your Say Group C area closed in March. Community feedback has been used with technical design standards to finalise the plans in May.

Strategic Direction 6
Decision Making, Community Engagement & Transparency



- The Customer Experience Strategy 2026-30 was adopted by Council on 28 April 2026. The associated Year 1 Action Plan was endorsed by ELT on 20 May 2026.
- Cyber risks are continuously monitored and appropriately actioned and reported to the Audit and Risk Committee.
- The desktop mapping of Our Darebin Plan 2025-29 Initiatives to UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) and the staged approach to integrating SDG alignment into planning and reporting has been developed. Actions in the 2026-27 Our Darebin Action Plan have been mapped to the SDG framework. A news article has been published on the website promoting the alignment and how Darebin's work at a local level contributes to the global agenda.
- The 2026-27 budget was developed and adopted using the adopted 10-year Financial Plan as the foundation.

Health & Wellbeing Quarter Focus

Health and wellbeing initiatives continue to be embedded across the Our Darebin Plan, supporting positive outcomes for the community. During this quarter, Council progressed work with partners to finalise and prepare for the delivery of an educational and informational vaping harm prevention campaign in schools. Council also engaged with a local Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (ACCHO) in Darebin and commenced planning for the delivery of activities focused on preventing gambling related harm. These initiatives support the Plan's aim to achieve positive health outcomes for multicultural communities, young people, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in Darebin.

Completed Work continuing Deferred Discontinued

Customer Experience Performance

Metric	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Full Year
Service requests – Total volume	21,354	22,352	21,451	22,050	87,207
Service requests – Actioned on time	71%	71%	68%	73%	71%
Complaints – Total volume (not including missed bins – reported separately)	349	402	447	550	1,748
Complaints – Avg days to action	8 days	10 days	9 days	9 days	9 days
Complaints as a % of total service requests	1.6%	1.8%	2%	2.5%	2%
Most frequent requests raised by the community	Dumped rubbish removal Missed bin, courtesy collection Illegal parking report Traffic fine appeal or extension Abandoned vehicle report	Missed bin, courtesy collection Dumped rubbish removal Illegal parking report Traffic fine appeal or extension Damaged rubbish bin	Missed bin, courtesy collection Dumped rubbish removal Illegal parking report Traffic fine appeal or extension Damaged rubbish bin	Missed bin, courtesy collection Illegal parking report Dumped rubbish removal Damaged rubbish bin Abandoned vehicle report	Missed bin, courtesy collection Dumped rubbish removal Illegal parking report Traffic fine appeal or extension Abandoned vehicle report

Quarter comment

Q4 maintained strong demand levels, with 22,050 service requests received, consistent with volumes recorded throughout the year. Encouragingly, 73% of requests were actioned on time, making Q4 the strongest quarter for service performance and reflecting improved responsiveness compared with earlier quarters. Complaint volumes increased to 550 in Q4 which was considerably higher than the prior quarter. This can be primarily attributed to protective industrial action that impacted waste services along with some other hot topics for the quarter.

Overall, Q4 delivered the year's best timeliness result while maintaining service levels in a high-volume operating environment.

The newly endorsed Customer Experience Strategy is now underway. Together, we're improving the way we work to deliver simpler, faster and easier experiences for our community.

On Target Off Target

Service Performance

The services we deliver help to shape and influence the lives of our community. At the end of quarter, we'll let you know how we went against these eight services. If you'd like to know about service delivery over the year go to Appendix B.

Service	Measure	Yearly Target/ Desired Trend	2025-26 Actual	Status
Aged Care	Number of Clients Supported	> 3,500	9,725	●
	Number of Seniors Clubs supported	≥ 25	52	●
	Number of Events	> 16	66	●
	Number of Event attendees	> 160	1,423	●
City Amenity	Compliance to scheduled cleansing of Activity centres	> 80%	88%	●
	Number of requests for graffiti removal from council assets	Decreasing	718	●
	Reported graffiti removed within timeframe	>90%	92.9%	●
	Kilometres of streets swept	> 42,000 Km	41,780 Km	●
Families, Youth & Children	Total number of vaccines administered	≥ 20,000	21,632	●
	Number of young people attending Youth Services' programs and events	Stabilised	7,600	●
	Number of community members attending Intercultural Centre programs and activities	> 4,800	4,792	●
	Kindergarten places created through Kindergarten Expansion Program	Increasing	38	●
Leisure & Recreation	Number of Sporting Attendance	Increasing	2,522,338	●
Libraries & Learning	Number of library item loans & downloads	Increasing	1,197,738	●
	Number of libraries & lifelong learning visits	Increasing	652,689	●
	Number of Community program sessions	Increasing	2,741	●
	Number of Community program attendance	Increasing	59,931	●
	Number of technology usage sessions	Increasing	140,609	●
Parks & Open Space	Number of new trees planted to support tree canopy growth	> 700	1310 (250 new)	●
	Percentage of scheduled playground safety inspections completed	= 100%	100%	●
Planning & Development	Number of standard planning permit applications received	> 540	790	●
	Number of VicSmart applications received	> 96	215	●
	Average Grade of Service for planning phone enquiries	> 70	87%	●
Waste Management	Kerbside missed bins (per 10,000 bins collected)	< 20	18	●
	Percentage of kerbside collection waste diverted from landfill	≥ 56%	51.70%	●
	Percentage of Hard Rubbish collected that is recycled	≥ 25%	16.53%	●
	Number of hard rubbish bookings	> 30,000	21,569	●

● On Target ● Off Target

Strategic Indicator Performance

Strategic Indicators measure Council's progress against the Strategic Objectives in the Our Darebin Plan and are reported annually. If you would like to see the commentary for each indicator, go to the beginning of each Strategic Direction in Appendix A.

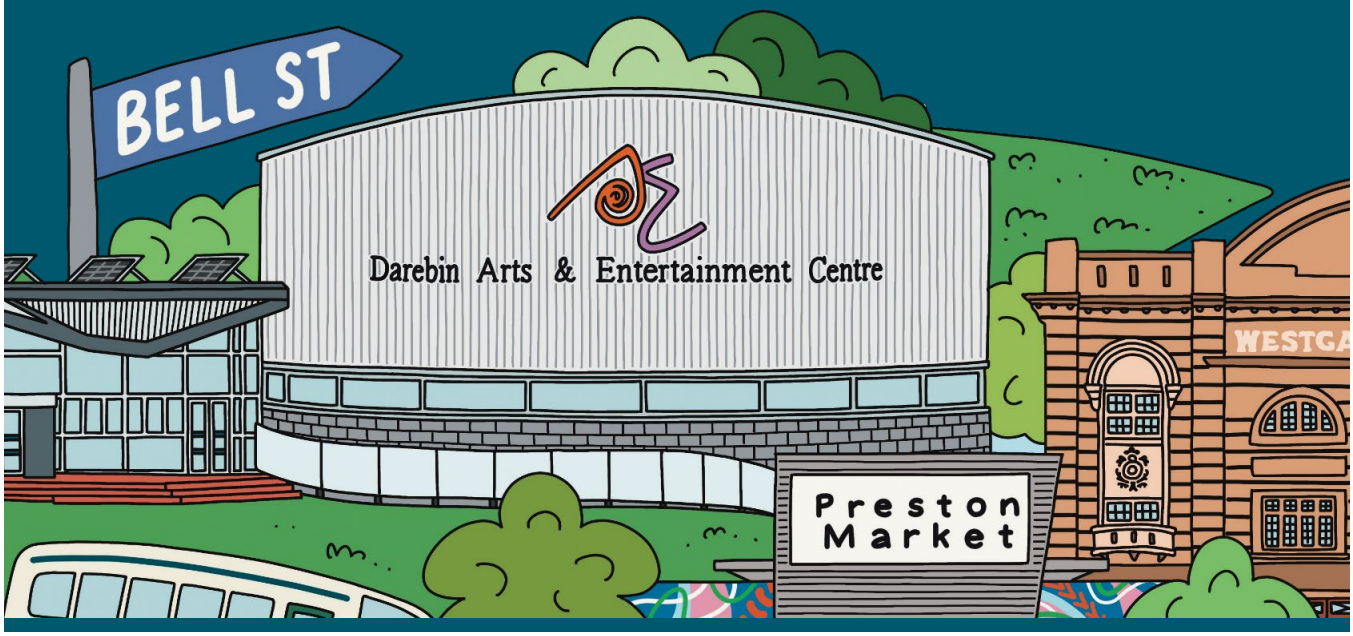
Strategic Direction	Strategic Indicator	Yearly Target/ Desired Trend	2025-26 Actual	Status
Aboriginal Culture and Knowledge	Number of community engagement sessions targeting Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander community on Council strategies, plans and projects.	Increase or maintain	21	●
	Number of community education sessions on Aboriginal culture including Treaty.	Increase or maintain	2	●
	Number of working relationships (partnerships) with Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations.	Increase or maintain	26	●
	Number of Aboriginal community organisations supported through the community grants program.	Increase or maintain	12	●
	Number of Aboriginal cultural community events and festivals.	Increase or maintain	9	●
Equity, diversity and Inclusion	Number of community-led festivals and events, including culturally diverse events across Darebin.	Increase or maintain	30	●
	Community satisfaction with Council's support of diversity, inclusion and fairness.	7.3 – 7.8	8.0	●
	Community satisfaction with Council's support of diversity, inclusion and fairness of people from multi-lingual households.	6.5-7.3	7.9	●
	Number of Council plans, policies and programs that apply the Equity Impact Assessment (including the legally mandated Gender Impact Assessment) to their planning process, in line with the Towards Equality Framework and Gender Equality Act 2020	Increase or maintain	31	●
Health and Wellbeing	Number of health promotion opportunities and educational resources distributed to the community for priority health concerns.	Increase or maintain	1	●
	Number of participants in Darebin sport and recreation activities across the community, in particular, for people and communities who are at risk of discrimination and disadvantage.	Increase	2,522,338	●
	Percentage of participants reporting increased levels of social connection from community led initiatives.	Increase or maintain	90%	●
	Number of gender inclusive infrastructure projects delivered per year.	2 or more	2	●
	City-wide perceptions of safety – Day.	7.8 - 10	8.3	●
	City-wide perceptions of safety – Night.	6.5 - 7.3	6.6	●
Climate Leadership and Response	Emissions in Council operations.	Decrease	Result pending	
	Number of new trees planted to support tree canopy growth.	Increase or maintain	250	●
	Percentage of participants demonstrated increased knowledge and practices in climate change.	Increase or maintain	95%	●
	Number of climate actions and programs delivered annually.	Increase or maintain	60	●
	Number of landfill tonnes (t) per ratepayer.	Decrease	288	●
	Percentage of kerbside collection waste diverted from landfill.	Increase	51.70%	●

● On Target ● Off Target

Strategic Direction	Strategic Indicator	Yearly Target/ Desired Trend	2025-26 Actual	Status
Vibrant Places and Economy	Satisfaction with industry and business programs that support the growth of our local economy.	Increase or maintain	68%	●
	Spend data across Darebin.	Increase or maintain	$275M	●
	Number of active planning scheme amendments and strategic planning projects underway.	>3	7	●
	Casualty (fatal and serious injury) crashes per Darebin resident on Darebin local roads.	Decrease by 10% each year	0.05%	●
	Proportion of transport journeys within Darebin that are made using active and sustainable transport.	Increase or maintain	33%	●
	Number of missed bins annually. (per 10,000 bins)	Decrease	24	●
	Number of dumped rubbish reports.	Decrease	5957	●
	Number of requests for graffiti removal from council assets.	Decrease	370	●
	Number of community reports of shopping areas needing street cleaning.	Decrease	74	●
Decision-making, Community Engagement and Transparency	Decisions made at meetings closed to the public	7% or less	5.39%	●
	Community satisfaction with council decisions.	60% or more	72%	●
	Community satisfaction with engagement.	70% or more	71%	●
	Procurement expenditure with Darebin businesses and suppliers.	Increase	Result pending	
	Victorian Auditor General's Office adjusted underlying result.	Increase	Result pending	
	Victorian Auditor General's Office asset renewal.	Increase	Result pending	
	Victorian Auditor General's Office capital replacement.	Increase	Result pending	

● On Target ● Off Target

Appendices



Strategic Direction One

Aboriginal Culture & Knowledge

A city that celebrates Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture, values, knowledge and traditions, respects the right for self-determination and takes deliberate action toward Truth-telling.

Strategic indicators that deliver on the strategic objective	Target / Desired Trend	2025-26	Comment	Status
Number of community engagement sessions targeting Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander community on Council strategies, plans and projects.	Increase or maintain	21	20+ Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations/services and groups participated in Balit marra project engagement. One dedicated workshop was held with the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation regarding 2 Wingrove Street project.	On Target
Number of community education sessions on Aboriginal culture including Treaty.	Increase or maintain	2	Council delivered two Treaty sessions in 2025-26, at the Intercultural Centre and the Libraries, to inform the community about what Treaty means and the impact of Treaty. Sessions were also offered to staff to inform them of state government policy changes.	On Target
Number of working relationships (partnerships) with Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations.	Increase or maintain	26	An intensive community engagement process was undertaken with 26 Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations and Groups in Darebin. The engagement helped to inform the Balit marra Strong mob Action Plan development.	On Target
Number of Aboriginal community organisations supported through the community grants program.	Increase or maintain	12	Project delivery by grant recipients is underway. There has been a 20% increase in applications since 2024-25.	On Target
Number of Aboriginal cultural community events and festivals.	Increase or maintain	9	Council delivered and supported 9 events across Council for the 2025-26 financial year.	On Target

On Target Off Target

Initiative	Action	Comment	Progress	Status
1.1.1 Support the Victorian Treaty.	Council formally release a position of support on the Statewide Treaty and deliver community education events on the Statewide Treaty, in collaboration with First Peoples' Assembly.	Council has delivered community education events to support understanding of the Statewide Treaty. The events were run by the First People's Assembly.	95%	
1.1.2 Continue to support Treaty through Truth-Telling in Darebin, progressing self-determination, justice and equality for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.	Complete stage one of Truth Telling project, opening a Truth-Telling display in Bundoora Park Farm to the public.	Final preparations are underway for the Truth Telling display and garden at Bundoora Park Farm, including consultation with Elders. The display will be officially launched and opened to the community during Wurundjeri Week 2026.	100%	
1.1.3 Finalise Darebin's Aboriginal Action Plan 2025-2029 and deliver actions in the plan.	Finalise the Aboriginal Action Plan and deliver year 1 activities.	This action has been carried forward to 2026-27. Balit marra (strong mob), the Aboriginal Action Plan, is now scheduled to be delivered in 2027.	80%	
1.1.4 Develop a partnership agreement with the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation, including entering into Treaty negotiations.	Undertake internal planning and research to determine best approach to develop a partnership agreement.	Partnership agreement has been signed with Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation. The partnership agreement foreshadows treaty negotiations.	100%	
1.1.5 Deliver a community grants stream for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community groups and not-for-profit organisations to help resource community projects and programs.	Continue the Aboriginal grants program.	The current round of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander grants closed on the 9 May 2026 for projects that will be delivered in the 2026-27 financial year. Grants applicants have been evaluated and successful applicants will soon be notified.	100%	

Completed Work continuing Deferred Discontinued

Initiative	Action	Comment	Progress	Status
1.2.1 Celebrate and commemorate days of significance in the national calendar of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.	Continue to celebrate Aboriginal Days of Significance.	National Sorry Day was recognised and acknowledged with an internal staff event on the 26 May. Darebin's Council buildings were lit with purple lighting for both National Sorry Day and National Reconciliation Week.	100%	●
1.3.1 Develop a culturally competent organisation to deliver Aboriginal culturally safe Council services and programs.	Complete an organisational Aboriginal Cultural Safety Audit and identify priority areas for action in year 1.	Recommendations from the Aboriginal Cultural Safety Assessment have been endorsed by the Executive Leadership Team. Priority areas for action have been identified and focus on transformation at three levels: behavioural, structural and systemic. An implementation road map sets out the short-, medium- and long-term actions the organisation will take towards embedding culturally informed practices across its operations and fostering a more inclusive working environment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.	100%	●

● Completed ● Work continuing ● Deferred ● Discontinued

Initiative	Action	Comment	Progress	Status
1.3.2 Continue to foster economic opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander People through employment networks and partnerships with businesses and organisations in Darebin.	Continue to facilitate the Aboriginal Employment Network that facilitates connection and collaboration between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses and employment service providers to grow the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce.	The Aboriginal Employment Network continues to gather bi-monthly, with strong membership participation across all sectors in the community. The network continues to grow, with recent discussion on Aboriginal career pathways and how Darebin can support Aboriginal employment initiatives. As a result of the Darebin Aboriginal Cultural Safety Assessment report (June 2026), in 2026-27 we will continue efforts to strengthen and identify future initiatives to progress cultural safety for Aboriginal employees at Darebin.	100%	
1.3.2 Continue to foster economic opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander People through employment networks and partnerships with businesses and organisations in Darebin.	Continue to create incentives for local jobs to be available to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people through Council's procurement practices.	Council is continuing to work with external providers who have a focus on employment creation for communities at risk of discrimination and disadvantage. In addition, the review of the current Procurement Policy is in progress and is now expected to be completed in 2026-27. Until then, the current policy will apply.	100%	

Completed Work continuing Deferred Discontinued

Strategic Direction Two

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

A City where our rich diversity is celebrated, everyone can thrive and belong, and our services, programs, places and spaces are equitable, responsive, inclusive and accessible to all.

Strategic indicators that deliver on the strategic objective	Target / Desired Trend	2025-26	Comments	Status
Number of community-led festivals and events, including culturally diverse events across Darebin.	Increase or maintain	30	30 Community Events were delivered across the municipality.	On Target
Community satisfaction with Council's support of diversity, inclusion and fairness.	7.3 – 7.8	8.0	The average rating for this indicator from respondents to the Annual Community Survey is 8.0. This is above the target (7.3-7.8) and a 7% increase from the previous year. Satisfaction is highest among 18–34-year-olds (8.3) and lowest among 45–59-year-olds (7.7). Satisfaction is 0.1 point lower for women, than men, and for CALD households, then English-speaking households.	On Target
Community satisfaction with Council's support of diversity, inclusion and fairness of people from multi-lingual households.	6.5-7.3	7.9	The average rating for this indicator from multi-lingual household respondents to the Annual Community Survey is 7.9. This is above the target (6.5-7.3) and a 5% increase from the previous year.	On Target
Number of Council plans, policies and programs that apply the Equity Impact Assessment (including the legally mandated Gender Impact Assessment) to their planning process, in line with the Towards Equality Framework and Gender Equality Act 2020	Increase or maintain	31	31 Equity Impact Assessments were completed in 2025-26. This exceeds the target of 21.	On Target

On Target Off Target

Initiative	Action	Comment	Progress	Status
2.1.1 Develop and implement a refreshed Disability Access and Inclusion Plan.	Develop a refreshed Darebin Disability Access and Inclusion Plan, including an annual action plan.	This action has been carried forward to 2026-27. The existing Disability Access and Inclusion Plan continues to provide direction for Council's work in the interim.	30%	
2.1.2 Finalise and implement the Cultural Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan.	Continue to develop the Darebin Cultural Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan and implement year one activities.	The Cultural Diversity and Inclusion Plan was adopted by Council on 24 March 2026.	100%	
2.1.3 Finalise and implement the LGBTIQA+ Action Plan.	Continue to develop the LGBTIQA+ Action Plan and implement year one activities.	The LGBTIQA+ Action Plan was adopted by Council on 24 March 2026.	100%	
2.1.3 Finalise and implement the LGBTIQA+ Action Plan.	Construct a rainbow pedestrian crossing in Preston.	Design options have been developed. This project has been carried forward to 2026-27.	50%	
2.1.4 Establish a Council-wide framework to integrate positive equity, gender equality, wellbeing and climate outcomes into projects and services, having regard to the Sustainable Development Goals.	Develop a decision-making assessment and reporting tool and pilot it on 4 projects.	Council discontinued this action on 24 February 2026 due to this approach already being in place via reports to Council, and that there is other work underway that will strengthen outcomes.	0%	
2.1.5 Deliver the Gender Equality Action Plan.	Deliver second Progress Report on the Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP) and develop new four-year GEAP by May 2026.	Council's new four-year GEAP has been lodged with the Commission for Gender Equality in the Public Sector on 1 May 2026.	100%	
2.2.1 Grow community capacity and provide resources to enable local people to deliver local community-run events and social activities.	Provide opportunities for community-led programming and partnerships through Council venues such as libraries.	The Truth-Telling launch event is planned in August where we are partnering with Wurundjeri. This will be held at Bundoora Park.	100%	

Completed Work continuing Deferred Discontinued

Initiative	Action	Comment	Progress	Status
2.2.1 Grow community capacity and provide resources to enable local people to deliver local community-run events and social activities.	Continue to provide lifelong learning opportunities to grow community capacity and resilience.	From April to June, 358 community program sessions were delivered with 16,920 attendances across Darebin Libraries, Bundoora Park Farm, Recreation and Leisure, and Reservoir Leisure Centre. This has resulted in a total of 1,595 community program sessions delivered and 60,033 attendances for the year. Sessions include adult, children and youth programs.	100%	●
2.2.1 Grow community capacity and provide resources to enable local people to deliver local community-run events and social activities.	Waive Council's permit fees and provide half-day traffic controllers to support up to 20 community street parties.	A total of 22 parties were supported by the 2025-26 street party program.	100%	●
2.2.2 Work in partnership to deliver initiatives to support people experiencing homelessness.	Deliver Darebin Zero: Ending Homelessness Together project with housing, health and community sector partners.	Darebin Zero continues to identify and support people sleeping rough in Darebin. Nine local services work together to provide comprehensive support to some of Darebin's most vulnerable community members. Through these coordination efforts, seven people were housed in the April to June period.	100%	●
2.2.2 Work in partnership to deliver initiatives to support people experiencing homelessness.	Deliver the Darebin Assertive Community Outreach (DACO) program to support people experiencing homelessness.	The Darebin Assertive Community Outreach program has continued to provide outreach and case management to vulnerable community members.	100%	●
2.2.3 Work in partnership to deliver community development activities and place-based projects that respond to local community issues and needs.	Identify and scope place-based projects based on community needs and commence implementing year 1 activities.	The tender to deliver place-based projects was advertised February 2026 and the contract has been awarded. Activities will commence in July.	100%	●

● Completed ● Work continuing ● Deferred ● Discontinued

Initiative	Action	Comment	Progress	Status
2.3.1 Deliver the Darebin Family, Youth and Children Strategy.	Develop an initial 2-year Action Plan to accompany the Family, Youth and Children Strategy.	The Collective Action Plan and governance framework to implement the Families, Youth and Children Strategy have been completed and are scheduled to be presented at Council Meeting in July for endorsement.	100%	
2.3.2 Expand community kindergarten facilities to enable access to three- and four-year-old kindergarten.	Expand Maryborough kindergarten to create additional kindergarten places.	The Maryborough Avenue Kindergarten Expansion project has been completed. The project was completed ahead of schedule and within budget.	100%	
2.3.2 Expand community kindergarten facilities to enable access to three- and four-year-old kindergarten.	Continue to plan and scope opportunities to expand kindergarten facilities.	Council continues to work in partnership with State Government to expand kindergarten capacity in areas of high unmet demand, with multiple sites currently being investigated. On 28 April, Council resolved to revisit feasibility investigations at JS Grey Reserve Kindergarten in 2026-27, to see if a viable expansion option can be found.	100%	
2.3.3 Deliver Age Friendly Darebin.	Complete Council response and actions to recommendations from the Age Friendly Darebin Report.	A summary of Council responses and actions to recommendations from the Age Friendly Darebin Report has been completed. This summary reflects that recommendations across Council have been implemented.	100%	

Completed Work continuing Deferred Discontinued

Initiative	Action	Comment	Progress	Status
2.3.4 Deliver Aged Care Reforms.	Complete a feasibility project to help council understand options when the Australian Government reforms are implemented.	Throughout 2025-26, feasibility activities were undertaken to understand the sustainability and future viability of Council's role as a Commonwealth Home Support Programme (CHSP) provider under evolving aged care reforms. This work included service reviews, business systems improvement initiatives, workforce planning, and participation in sector networks. The June 2026 Senate inquiry recommendations to extend CHSP funding until July 2030 provided greater clarity regarding Council's potential ongoing role. Council will continue monitoring reform developments and implementing continuous improvement initiatives to support future service sustainability and readiness.	100%	●

● Completed ● Work continuing ● Deferred ● Discontinued

Strategic Direction Three

Health and Wellbeing

A City where everyone in the community can access the opportunities, infrastructure and services they need to be physically and mentally safe and healthy.

Strategic indicators that deliver on the strategic objective	Target / Desired Trend	2025-26	Comments	Status
Number of health promotion opportunities and educational resources distributed to the community for priority health concerns.	Increase or maintain	1	Council has distributed 200 vaping prevention posters across 18 schools. Additionally, Council is developing 1,300 parent-focused brochures containing key messages and a call to action to help children say no to or quit vaping. These brochures are currently being translated into Darebin's top 12 languages—with 100 copies per language—and will soon be available across all Darebin customer service centres and 18 schools.	●
Number of participants in Darebin sport and recreation activities across the community, in particular, for people and communities who are at risk of discrimination and disadvantage.	Increase	2,522,338	This measure combines sporting and recreational facility visits (RLC, NARC, golf courses and stadiums), Get Active participation, sports clubs winter registrations and casual sportsground booking participation.	●
Percentage of participants reporting increased levels of social connection from community led initiatives.	Increase or maintain	90%	A number of community-led events were held throughout the year resulting 90% of participants reporting an increased sense of being part of the community.	●
Number of gender inclusive infrastructure projects delivered per year.	2 or more	2	Two projects have been delivered in 2025-26- KP Hardiman Redevelopment and John Hall - Female friendly facility upgrades.	●
City-wide perceptions of safety – Day.	7.8 - 10	8.3	Overall, there is an increase in perceptions of safety during the day from 8.2 in 2025 to 8.3 in 2026 reported by respondents to the Annual Community Survey.	●
City-wide perceptions of safety – Night.	6.5 - 7.3	6.6	Overall, there is an increase in perceptions of safety at night from 6.4 in 2025 to 6.6 in 2026 reported be respondents to the Annual Community Survey.	●

● On Target ● Off Target

Initiative	Action	Comment	Progress	Status
3.1.1 Establish and deliver a Darebin Health and Wellbeing forum that brings together key partners to seek funding and enhance advocacy, projects, programs and services that respond to Darebin's health and wellbeing priorities.	Establish a forum with founding partner organisations.	The Darebin Health and Wellbeing Forum was held on 24 February 2026 at the Darebin Intercultural Centre. In attendance were representatives from 17 organisations from different sectors including community health organisations, mental health service providers and education providers. Discussions focused on identifying ways in which stakeholders can strengthen collaboration to address health and wellbeing priorities. Participants also provided input to help design the Darebin Mental Health and Wellbeing Forum.	100%	
3.1.2 Work in partnership with health agencies and organisations, including culturally specific organisations (Aboriginal Community-Controlled organisations and others) to develop health promotion responses and distribute key messages and educational materials related to Darebin's key modifiable health risks. This includes encouraging mental health, sexual and reproductive health, harm reduction for alcohol and substance use, and nutritious food choices.	Develop an information and education campaign for one priority modifiable health risk, in partnership with the Health and Wellbeing and other networks.	Council in partnership with Reservoir Views Primary School, Northcote High School, Charles La Trobe P-12 College inclusive of the Pavilion and La Trobe Campuses, developed and distributed 200 vaping prevention posters across 18 schools. Additionally, Council partnered with 3KND to air 76 radio messages, raising awareness about the health risks of vaping and connecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to quitting support services.	60%	

Completed Work continuing Deferred Discontinued

Initiative	Action	Comment	Progress	Status
3.1.3 Continue to deliver community programs and services to support and strengthen Darebin's diverse communities in partnership with Neighbourhood Houses.	Deliver community programs and services in partnership with Neighbourhood Houses.	Council has supported neighbourhood houses so they can deliver programs and services that strengthen community connection and reduce social isolation. These partnerships help ensure residents have welcoming, accessible places to meet, learn, and feel supported.	80%	
3.1.4 Support activities, events and programs that promote social connection and address loneliness for Darebin's diverse community.	Continue to support activities and programs such as food relief, health care, legal support and other initiatives that emerge from community need during the year.	East Preston Community Centre continued to support activities and programs that responded to identified community needs. In partnership with stakeholders including DIVRS, Your Community Health, Bridge Darebin, Fitzroy Legal, La Trobe University and Services Victoria, the centre delivered a range of free services and supports. These included fortnightly fresh food parcels, frozen and freshly cooked meals, weekly health checks, social engagement opportunities, legal assistance, support with government forms, mental health and wellbeing support and advice, digital literacy assistance, financial support, NDIS and Aged Care information, and one-on-one consultations with various service providers on site.	75%	
3.2.1 Support the community's access to mental health and wellbeing programs and services to respond to diverse experiences and needs.	Develop a forum for service providers and people with living and lived experience to map mental health and wellbeing activities, programs and services available in Darebin to identify future opportunities and support needs.	Council held a Mental Health Forum on 23 April at the Darebin Arts Centre.	75%	

Completed Work continuing Deferred Discontinued

Initiative	Action	Comment	Progress	Status
3.2.1 Support the community's access to mental health and wellbeing programs and services to respond to diverse experiences and needs.	Research available mental health and wellbeing activities, programs and services and identify opportunities for access and inclusion improvements for future programs.	Council finalised the mapping of local mental health and wellbeing services and published a report to guide future wellbeing initiatives.	100%	●
3.2.1 Support the community's access to mental health and wellbeing programs and services to respond to diverse experiences and needs.	Deliver the Surround Project to provide 'safeTALKs' mental health training for young people, allies and youth workers and deliver a youth-led, wellbeing focused, Queer formal event for local LGBTIQA+ young people.	The Darebin Youth Services Queer Formal was held in September 2025 as part of the Surround Project funded through the Victorian Government's HEY Grants. The event brought together 66 young people from across Darebin to celebrate identity, social connection and inclusion. It was co-designed with 6 young people from the Darebin Queer Collective and delivered in partnership with 10 young people from Darebin Amplify Committee, local youth services and Darebin Libraries. Attendees rated the event 4.5 out of 5 and reported feeling more connected, supported and aware of local services. The Surround Project also delivered safeTALK training for 11 young people, building mental health literacy and safety planning skills.	100%	●
3.2.2 Deliver the Electronic Gaming Machine Policy and Action Plan.	Deliver key actions and priorities in the Electronic Gaming Machine Policy and Action Plan.	Implementation of the Electronic Gaming Machine Policy and Action Plan 2023-27 continued this quarter.	100%	●

● Completed ● Work continuing ● Deferred ● Discontinued

Initiative	Action	Comment	Progress	Status
3.3.1 Deliver the Free From Violence project and develop sustainable ongoing commitment to embed gender equality and family violence prevention practices into programs and services.	Deliver the Free From Violence project.	The Free From Violence program has continued to be delivered and planning has commenced for the final year of the project.	100%	●
3.4.1 Implement and promote sport and leisure activities, including tailored activities and events for people and communities who are at risk of discrimination and disadvantage.	Deliver and promote programs to increase opportunities to engage in physical activities.	Through Get Active in Darebin's Autumn program, 22 free programs for 1487 participants were delivered to increase opportunities for our community to engage in physical activities. Activities included Active Adults Aqua, Aboriginal Women-only Water Sessions, Tai Chi, Boccia, Girls Soccer Clinic, Walking Futsal, Gentle Pilates, Come N Try Ice Skating and Chair Yoga.	100%	●

● Completed ● Work continuing ● Deferred ● Discontinued

Initiative	Action	Comment	Progress	Status
3.4.2 Extend community access to Darebin Libraries branches.	Launch and promote Extra Access at Preston Library.	Extra Access was successfully launched at Preston Library on 1 July 2025. The service enables inducted library members to access the library outside of normal operating hours for up to 21 additional hours per week. An engagement campaign throughout the year has promoted the service and increased membership and usage. The campaign has included social media campaign and video, eNews articles, promotion in the library What's On brochure and Darebin Community News. This has resulted in a regular and steady increase each month, with a total of 307 Extra Access members, delivery of 110 induction sessions, and 2,216 visits during Extra Access hours.	100%	●
3.4.3 Continue activities to support redevelopment of Reservoir Leisure Centre.	Develop a business case including concept design plans for the Reservoir Leisure Centre redevelopment.	The consultancy contract to develop the business case has been awarded, and an inception meeting held to confirm deliverables, timelines and key project milestones. As part of this next phase, the Project Control Group (PCG) will be re-established to provide structured oversight, including guidance on project governance, strategic direction, and Council decision touchpoints throughout delivery. Several project activities will extend beyond June and have been carried forward to 2026–27.	35%	●

● Completed ● Work continuing ● Deferred ● Discontinued

Initiative	Action	Comment	Progress	Status
3.4.3 Continue activities to support redevelopment of Reservoir Leisure Centre.	Prepare an Advocacy and Funding Plan for Reservoir Leisure Centre.	The development of the Advocacy and Funding Plan is on hold and will commence after the business case is endorsed.	35%	
3.4.3 Continue activities to support redevelopment of Reservoir Leisure Centre.	Commence updating the change facilities at Reservoir Leisure Centre.	The Reservoir Leisure Centre Change Room Renewal Project (Hot Water Services) continues to progress, with the design phase advancing to further develop the preferred hot water system concept. As part of a multi-year delivery program, the project remains in its early stages, with completion of the design phase expected during the first half of 2026-27.	40%	
3.4.4 Maintain, renew, upgrade and/or expand parks, recreation and sporting infrastructure to offer opportunities for connection and health, and public toilets to support gender inclusion.	Commence design to upgrade and renew sporting infrastructure to support gender-inclusion at JC Donath Pavilion.	Council approved a major scope expansion in December to include additional change rooms. A concept design has been developed, and the design direction will be presented to Council in July for resolution. The project is a multi-year project.	30%	
3.4.4 Maintain, renew, upgrade and/or expand parks, recreation and sporting infrastructure to offer opportunities for connection and health, and public toilets to support gender inclusion.	Renew play space at DR Atkinson Reserve.	Renewal of the DR Atkinson Reserve play space is complete, and is open for use.	100%	

Completed Work continuing Deferred Discontinued

Initiative	Action	Comment	Progress	Status
3.4.4 Maintain, renew, upgrade and/or expand parks, recreation and sporting infrastructure to offer opportunities for connection and health, and public toilets to support gender inclusion.	Renovate sportsground at Pitcher Park.	The Pitcher Park Resurfacing Project is a multi-year project and is in progress. In 2025-26 the following milestones were achieved: submission of an external grant application, completion of technical investigations, and finalisation of tender-ready documentation. The project is currently in the evaluation phase, with stakeholder consultation confirming strong support for the proposed scope and delivery strategy.	50%	
3.4.4 Maintain, renew, upgrade and/or expand parks, recreation and sporting infrastructure to offer opportunities for connection and health, and public toilets to support gender inclusion.	Renew irrigation and turf at Johnson Park.	Irrigation renewal works have been completed at Johnson Park. The works included installation of a new irrigation system and renewal of the turf in the eastern half of the park.	100%	
3.4.4 Maintain, renew, upgrade and/or expand parks, recreation and sporting infrastructure to offer opportunities for connection and health, and public toilets to support gender inclusion.	Complete the construction of KP Hardiman Pavilion.	Construction of KP Hardiman Pavilion is complete. The new pavilion design delivered a modern, functional, safe, welcoming, environmentally sustainable facility tailored to meet the needs and improve experience of women and girls. An official opening was held on 7 November 2025.	100%	

Completed Work continuing Deferred Discontinued

Initiative	Action	Comment	Progress	Status
3.4.4 Maintain, renew, upgrade and/or expand parks, recreation and sporting infrastructure to offer opportunities for connection and health, and public toilets to support gender inclusion.	Commence the design work to replace Bill Lawry Pavilion.	Structural and heritage investigations are complete. Treatments to stabilise the structure have been effective (although this will be closely monitored) and further work is needed to consider how to reflect the 1926 grandstand's heritage significance in future design. Given the life of the current pavilion can now be safely extended, redevelopment is now anticipated in approximately 5 years.	35%	

Completed Work continuing Deferred Discontinued

Strategic Direction Four

Climate Leadership and Response

A City that is a climate leader, drives opportunities for achieving zero emissions, adapts by transforming how we provide services, open spaces and infrastructure, and works with our community to build ongoing resilience.

Strategic indicators that deliver on the strategic objective	Target / Desired Trend	2025-26	Comments	Status
Emissions in Council operations.	Decrease	Result pending		
Number of new trees planted to support tree canopy growth.	Increase or maintain	250	The 2025-26 special operations budget enabled 250 new trees to be planted to increase overall canopy cover.	
Percentage of participants demonstrated increased knowledge and practices in climate change.	Increase or maintain	95%	The yearly average is 95% of responding participants in our climate and circularity events and programs have increased their knowledge/skills or have received direct interventions to help them be climate resilient or apply circular practice.	
Number of climate actions and programs delivered annually.	Increase or maintain	60	60 Climate Emergency Plan actions are Completed, active or started.	
Number of landfill tonnes (t) per ratepayer.	Decrease	288	The increase in landfill tonnes per ratepayer reflects higher residual waste volumes and ongoing waste sector challenges affecting resource recovery, consistent with trends experienced at other disposal facilities.	
Percentage of kerbside collection waste diverted from landfill.	Increase	51.70%	The percentage of waste diverted from landfill remained stable, reflecting consistent residential waste trends. Ongoing contamination of waste has constrained further improvements.	

On Target Off Target

Initiative	Action	Comment	Progress	Status
4.1.1 Build strong relationships with the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to embed cultural knowledge into how we manage our natural resources and Country and grow our staff and community's cultural awareness.	Develop Aboriginal cultural training on climate, men's and women's business and caring for Country and begin delivering it to Council officers whose roles relate to land management and/or the natural environment by 2025.	Council discontinued this action on 24 February 2026 recognising that cultural awareness training is currently offered and that further training will be considered through the Balit marra, Council's partnership agreement with Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation and the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Whole of Country Plan (2025-35)	20%	
4.1.2 Protect and manage creek corridors and waterways through partnerships with Traditional Owners, community groups, other government bodies and the Environment Protection Authority Victoria.	Continue to protect and manage creek corridors, waterways and biodiversity throughout Darebin directly and in partnership.	Council strengthened its partnership with the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung and supported the self-determination of the Narrap Team through ongoing on-Country activities along the Darebin Creek Corridor and at Cherry Street Reserve. Long-term waterway management was strengthened through new 10-year agreements with the Darebin Creek and Merri Creek Management Committees. Five ecological burns were completed by Council and partners, while the Narrap Team delivered Darebin's first cultural burn. Community participation grew through planting days, working bees, weeding events, Bioblitzes, citizen science programs and biodiversity activities.	100%	

Completed Work continuing Deferred Discontinued

Initiative	Action	Comment	Progress	Status
4.1.3 Maintain green spaces, connection to nature, tree canopy and biodiversity prioritising locations with lower tree canopy coverage.	Maintain and increase the number of trees in public places including streets and parks, prioritising the principal pedestrian network, locations with currently lower numbers of trees and parts of the city where the community experiences higher levels of disadvantage.	The Darebin Tree Planting Program for 2026 is now complete with 1310 park and street trees planted. 1060 trees were planted to replace those lost last year. The 2025-26 special operations budget enabled an additional 250 new trees which were planted to increase overall canopy cover.	100%	●
4.2.1 Deliver the Climate Emergency Plan and prepare a new three-year action plan by 2027.	Deliver the Climate Emergency Plan and develop a new three-year action plan - starting in 2026.	Year 2 delivery of the Climate Emergency Plan (2024-2030) is complete, with development of the next three-year action plan commencing in mid-2026. Key achievements include a heat health program supporting more than 500 residents at risk of extreme heat impacts; electrification of 10 Council sites; delivery of the Darebin Energy Upgrades Program, resulting in 415 registrations, 130 energy upgrades and support for 30 low-income households; supporting the Greening Our Business tool; installation of a misting garden at SPAN Community House; and delivery of programs and campaigns to build climate resilience and reduce emissions.	100%	●

● Completed ● Work continuing ● Deferred ● Discontinued

Initiative	Action	Comment	Progress	Status
4.2.2 Support the community to divert waste from landfill, through Council residential waste services.	Assess service options for introducing the new glass recycling service in line with Victorian Government direction including ways to improve recycling.	A range of waste reform options have been developed and discussed with councillors, incorporating analysis of service delivery models, cost implications, regulatory requirements, and environmental outcomes. Council when adopting its Budget decided to work towards implementation in 2027-28 and take more time to consider options and consult community.	100%	●
4.2.2 Support the community to divert waste from landfill, through Council residential waste services.	Continue to provide recycling services to residents and support the community to recycle better by sharing clear information on how to use the services.	The recycling service continues to support residents in improving recycling behaviours, with trials and audits demonstrating measurable positive outcomes, including reduced contamination and better source separation. To improve recycling further targeted education programs have been prepared and will continue in 2026-27.	100%	●
4.2.3 Progressively transition to highly efficient and climate resilient buildings by implementing Council's Environmentally Sustainable Design policy for new builds, asset renewals and equipment replacement.	Renew and replace air conditioning equipment at East Preston Community Centre and hot water system at Reservoir Leisure Centre.	All works are complete with gas supply now removed from East Preston Community Centre making it fully electric. Reservoir Leisure Centre is being reported separately via a dedicated action (see above item 3.4.3).	100%	●
4.2.4 Deliver an Energy Support Program, including electrification support, that prioritises low-income households.	Develop Energy Support Program by September 2025 and commence delivery.	Darebin Energy Upgrade Program was launched on 8 February 2026 and the delivery is underway.	100%	●

● Completed ● Work continuing ● Deferred ● Discontinued

Initiative	Action	Comment	Progress	Status
4.3.1 Continue to respond to changing flood risk through community education, management of Darebin's local drainage network and through Council's statutory roles under the Planning and Environment Act and Building Act.	Support the Victoria State Emergency Service and Melbourne Water to share information with our community about flood preparedness and changing risk.	In May 2026, Council officers participated in a joint site tour with Victoria SES of key flood-prone locations across Darebin, strengthening a shared understanding of local flood risks, mitigation measures and response arrangements. The tour highlighted that Victoria SES is actively using the updated flood modelling and mapping to inform community engagement activities, including targeted door-knocking with Melbourne Water. In June 2026, Council received draft SES Local Flood Guides that includes the new mapping and is currently reviewing them to ensure local information is accurate and relevant to the Darebin community before they are finalised.	100%	
4.3.1 Continue to respond to changing flood risk through community education, management of Darebin's local drainage network and through Council's statutory roles under the Planning and Environment Act and Building Act.	Deliver capital works to progressively increase the capacity of the drainage network and reduce flood risk in targeted locations.	The drainage improvement capital works program is largely complete, with majority of drainage projects delivered and achieving the intended outcomes of increasing drainage capacity and reducing flood risk in priority areas. A small number of construction works will be carried forward due to pipe procurement lead times and ongoing supply constraints. Completion of the remaining works is anticipated in early 2026–27.	100%	

Completed Work continuing Deferred Discontinued

Initiative	Action	Comment	Progress	Status
4.4.2 Respond to the impacts of climate change on the health and wellbeing of Darebin's diverse community.	Deliver a comprehensive heat health program to support residents most at risk of severe heat impacts including: developing a communications campaign to raise awareness of heat health risk; expand the reach of Keep Cool in Darebin campaign; and support at least 5 community organisations to build capacity around heat health.	Over two years, Council's Heat Health Program supported more than 500 residents vulnerable to heat stress, providing 300 fans, 120 cooling neckties, 200 spray bottles, 100 water bottles, hydration support, energy efficiency advice, translated resources and Keep Cool maps. The program focused on renters, low-income households, people over 65 with chronic illness or disability, and people experiencing homelessness, with 89% of participants from Preston and East Reservoir. Outcomes included 100% of fan recipients reported improved health and wellbeing during heatwaves, 87% slept better, 80% felt more comfortable at home, 89% increased their understanding of heat-related health risks, and 43% planned further actions to protect their health.	100%	●

● Completed ● Work continuing ● Deferred ● Discontinued

Initiative	Action	Comment	Progress	Status
4.4.3: Develop a coordinated, accessible and inclusive response to climate impacts.	Support community connectedness and preparedness through emergency management planning to ensure Darebin residents know what to do during unexpected shocks and where to go to get help during extreme events.	Climate impacts on the community have been included in Darebin's Emergency Management Plan. Community has been supported through Council's Keep Warm in winter and Keep Cool in summer campaigns, providing residents with information on how to stay safe during hot days and extended heat waves. The heat health program supports residents most at risk of severe heat impacts through coordination with Your Community Health, DIVRS, Reservoir Neighbourhood House, Merri Outreach Support Service and Have Home Safe. 139 staff were briefed on how to support their clients to stay cool and safe over summer. Council's Community Service Officers have been briefed to help their clients and themselves to stay safe during extreme heat and cold.	100%	●

● Completed ● Work continuing ● Deferred ● Discontinued

Strategic Direction Five

Vibrant Places and Economy

A City that is liveable with vibrant places and spaces, safe streets and a thriving local economy.

Strategic indicators that deliver on the strategic objective	Target / Desired Trend	2025-26	Comments	Status
Satisfaction with industry and business programs that support the growth of our local economy.	Increase or maintain	68%	Darebin businesses generally report high satisfaction, though it is actively tempered by operational friction, slow timelines, and inconsistent communication.	On Target
Spend data across Darebin.	Increase or maintain	$275M	As at May 2026, total local spend is up 4.7% year-on-year, with online spend growth sitting at 10.5%, prompting businesses to focus on digital and online presence to benefit from consumer behaviour. This is higher than the metro average increase of 3.4%.	On Target
Number of active planning scheme amendments and strategic planning projects underway.	>3	7	Six active strategic projects and amendments currently underway including; housing strategy implementation, open space strategy review, community infrastructure planning, planning scheme review, Preston market feasibility study and a fix-up planning scheme amendment.	On Target
Casualty (fatal and serious injury) crashes per Darebin resident on Darebin local roads.	Decrease by 10% each year	0.05%	There has been an increase in serious and fatal crashes on Darebin managed roads by a total of 7, which even when factored against the population increase leads to a small increase in the measured rate.	Off Target
Proportion of transport journeys within Darebin that are made using active and sustainable transport.	Increase or maintain	33%	The most recent and reliable data is from VISTA for the 2024-25 financial year showed that 33.1% of journeys were undertaken using active and sustainable modes.	On Target
Number of missed bins annually. (per 10,000 bins)	Decrease	24	Remained stable during the year, demonstrating reliable collection services and effective issue management. Continued focus on service improvements and operational efficiencies will support progress towards reducing missed bin incidents.	On Target

On Target Off Target

Strategic indicators that deliver on the strategic objective	Target / Desired Trend	2025-26	Comments	Status
Number of dumped rubbish reports.	Decrease	5957	Decreased during the year, reflecting stable residential waste trends, ongoing community education, proactive waste management and enforcement activities, and the use of booked hard waste collection services.	●
Number of requests for graffiti removal from council assets.	Decrease	370	Targeted graffiti, bill poster and sticker removal programs have been introduced across key retail activity centres and regional parks to help maintain clean, welcoming and attractive public spaces.	●
Number of community reports of shopping areas needing street cleaning.	Decrease	74	Council is refining and enhancing service levels within existing resources while strengthening relationships with Trader Associations and improving responsiveness to requests for additional support. To provide greater clarity and consistency, Council has developed a service level document outlining the cleansing services it delivers.	●

● On Target ● Off Target

Initiative	Action	Comment	Progress	Status
5.1.1 Finalise and implement the Housing Strategy including design controls, planning scheme updates and roadmap for increasing social and affordable housing in Darebin.	Adopt the finalised Darebin Housing Strategy Part 1 (Growth & Need) and Part 2 (Character & Design) and prepare part 4 (Planning Scheme Amendment) to update residential zones and policy in the Darebin Planning Scheme.	Council adopted the Darebin Housing Strategy Part 1 (Growth & Need) and Part 2 (Character & Design) in August 2025. Work is underway to implement the strategy through preparing new planning controls (zones and overlays) and housing policy for residential areas across Darebin. Recent design work considers substantial change areas and the new state-wide Mid-Rise Planning controls. Further engagement with the community is planned prior to finalising the draft planning controls and will be considered by Council for engagement in early 2027. A planning scheme amendment will be ready in mid-2027.	85%	
5.1.3 Review and update the Open Space Strategy and seek a higher Open Space Levy through a planning scheme amendment.	Undertake research to inform Council's advocacy position and future strategy work.	Data gathering and analysis of open spaces and engagement with Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Corporation to inform a new Open Space Strategy is well progressed. Further work is identified through the 2026-27 budget to inform updates to the Open Space Strategy. A draft strategy is now expected to be ready by mid-late 2027.	100%	

Completed Work continuing Deferred Discontinued

Initiative	Action	Comment	Progress	Status
5.2.1 Maintain and improve the transport network, including pedestrian crossings, bike infrastructure, speed reductions and other road safety treatments to make Darebin's streets safer for everyone.	Design and construct priority transport safety infrastructure.	Council received State Government approval and started installing safer speeds of 40km/h in the Springthorpe and Thornbury areas from June. These safer speed changes will take a few months to complete. A street lighting renewal project in the Springthorpe Estate has been completed. A shared path near BT Connor Reserve with lighting has been constructed with a 50% grant funding contribution from the Federal Government. A raised safety platform has been installed on McFadzean Avenue. Many other road safety projects are in the final stages of procurement and will be constructed in 2026-27.	100%	●
5.2.1 Maintain and improve the transport network, including pedestrian crossings, bike infrastructure, speed reductions and other road safety treatments to make Darebin's streets safer for everyone.	Deliver a detailed Feasibility Study for the proposed Melbourne Water Pipe Track Shared User Path between Elizabeth Street and the Mernda Rail line in Reservoir.	Community and stakeholder consultation for the proposed Melbourne Water Pipe Track Shared User Path in Reservoir was completed in April, and a draft feasibility study has been developed.	100%	●
5.2.1 Maintain and improve the transport network, including pedestrian crossings, bike infrastructure, speed reductions and other road safety treatments to make Darebin's streets safer for everyone.	Commence the replacement of Kendall-Harding Bridge, in partnership with Merri-bek Council.	Designs for the Kendall-Harding Bridge replacement have been completed and endorsed by Council in December 2025. As the Project Manager for the project, Merri-bek Council has commenced procurement for the construction phase. The project is expected to be completed in FY2026-27.	100%	●

● Completed ● Work continuing ● Deferred ● Discontinued

Initiative	Action	Comment	Progress	Status
5.2.2 Engage the community to identify safety, accessibility and amenity concerns to inform improvements to the transport network.	Continue engaging the local community to review and update the priorities for transport safety and access infrastructure projects.	Community consultation on draft concept plans for 20 locations in the Your Street Your Say Group C area closed in March. Community feedback has been used with technical design standards to finalise the plans in May. This final Your Street Your Say area concludes a city-wide transport safety assessment.	100%	
5.3.1 Continue to proactively protect Preston Market's social, cultural and historical value for generations to come through advocacy, community and stakeholder engagement, support of the Preston Market Traders and participating in future planning decisions including the development plan and planning permit decisions.	Respond proactively to a state referral on a Development Plan to ensure future development protects the market's significance and operations, while consulting and supporting traders and considering feasibility options for the Market's future.	There is currently no state referral on a Development Plan for the Preston Market Precinct. The Preston Market Feasibility Study is nearing completion.	50%	
5.3.2 Develop and deliver the High Street Preston Streetscape Upgrades.	Finalise community engagement for preferred concept design and develop functional layout and detail design for the project.	Community engagement has been completed. Council endorsed the Final Concept Design for High Street Streetscape Upgrade in November 2025. Functional design is being finalised. The detailed design and authority approval process will continue in 2026-27.	100%	
5.3.3 Collaborate with local community and Traders Associations to develop shared visions for Darebin's key activity centres (Reservoir, Preston, Northcote and Fairfield).	Develop Place Vision and Action Plans for Reservoir, Fairfield and Northcote to guide social and economic revitalisation and activation of activity centres.	A consultant has been appointed, and stakeholder engagement will take place over the next three months.	50%	

Completed Work continuing Deferred Discontinued

Initiative	Action	Comment	Progress	Status
5.3.4 Revitalise the Active Space program to address increasing shopfront vacancies in main street destinations.	Review the Active Space Program model and undertake a pilot project.	Pilot locations for the Active Space Program have been identified, and Council is collaborating with the Preston Central Business Association to deliver the initial projects.	50%	
5.4.2 Deliver a new Festivals and Events Framework to guide a refreshed annual program, with celebrations delivered across the municipality, within the northern, central and southern suburbs.	Develop a new Festivals and Events Framework to guide a refreshed annual events program tailored to meet community aspirations.	Community engagement on the Festivals and Events Framework is in progress including an online survey and three community pop-up engagements in early July. Targeted engagement with key stakeholders is continuing until the end of July.	70%	
5.5.1 Deliver good standards of cleaning and maintenance of public places profiting high use parks, play spaces and civic areas.	Establish the new City Amenity team and share service performance results as part of Council's quarterly performance reports.	The City Amenity team has been established, and service performance indicators have been determined for the quarterly council performance report. As a new team, the focus is now on increasing efficiency and enhancing processes to create more value for the community.	100%	
5.5.1 Deliver good standards of cleaning and maintenance of public places profiting high use parks, play spaces and civic areas.	Renew footpaths across the City based on condition assessments.	Council's footpath renewal works program has been completed for this financial year.	100%	

Completed Work continuing Deferred Discontinued

Strategic Direction Six

Decision-making, Community Engagement and Transparency

A City that is well-managed, transparent and trusted by its community and partners, with clear and respectful communication that builds confidence in Council's decisions.

Strategic indicators that deliver on the strategic objective	Target / Desired Trend	2025-26	Comment	Status
Decisions made at meetings closed to the public	7% or less	5.39%	In 2026, Council saw more confidential items resolved by council than is normal due to a number of contract related decisions. However full year result remains under target.	●
Community satisfaction with council decisions.	60% or more	72%	Satisfaction with Council making decisions in the interests of the community was 72% as reported by respondents to the Annual Community Survey. This is a 6% increase from 2025.	●
Community satisfaction with engagement.	70% or more	71%	Satisfaction with the opportunities offered by Council to engage or be consulted with on Council decisions was 71% as reported by respondents to the Annual community Survey. This is a 6% increase from 2025.	●
Procurement expenditure with Darebin businesses and suppliers.	Increase	Result pending		
Victorian Auditor General's Office adjusted underlying result.	Increase	Result pending		
Victorian Auditor General's Office asset renewal.	Increase	Result pending		
Victorian Auditor General's Office capital replacement.	Increase	Result pending		

● On Target ● Off Target

Initiative	Action	Comment	Progress	Status
6.1.1 Develop and deliver strategic advocacy priorities.	Develop a 4-year advocacy framework including a one-year advocacy statement based on organisational strategic priorities.	Darebin's one-year advocacy statement was endorsed by Council at February Council meeting.	100%	●
6.1.2 Develop a Partnership Framework.	Review existing partnerships and Community Grant Program.	Partnership and community grant review was completed, and the new program is ready to launch on 1 July.	100%	●
6.1.3 Improve community engagement by delivering the community engagement continuous improvement program.	Implement year 1 actions from the community engagement continuous improvement program.	Year one actions of the Community Engagement Improvement Plan have been implemented, and work has commenced on year two actions.	100%	●
6.1.3 Improve community engagement by delivering the community engagement continuous improvement program.	Implement actions to progress engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members.	Various events have been acknowledged over the last quarter including Sorry Day, Anniversary of the Apology and NAIDOC Week. Promotion of these events and how the community can get involved have been undertaken. Darebin contributed to the Walk for Truth event with a powerful event at the Aborigines Advancement League in Thornbury.	100%	●
6.2.1 Deliver a Digital Darebin Program to upgrade our IT Systems.	Conduct a procurement process to select an IT partner to support us to upgrade our core systems.	The open market technology tender closed in May 2026, and the program is now in the evaluation phase. Preparation work is continuing to ensure Council is ready for implementation once a partner is selected.	100%	●

● Completed ● Work continuing ● Deferred ● Discontinued

Initiative	Action	Comment	Progress	Status
6.2.1 Deliver a Digital Darebin Program to upgrade our IT Systems.	Deliver a new facilities and event booking system.	The project is well underway, and the scheduled go-live date is March 2027. The project timelines have been extended to take into account the impact on business-as-usual activities and ability to free up resources to dedicate to the project.	65%	
6.2.1 Deliver a Digital Darebin Program to upgrade our IT Systems.	Upgrade our technology in meeting rooms to make it easier for community members and staff to conduct hybrid meetings.	Meeting room technology upgrades have been completed. Minor adjustments/ reconfiguring will be required as office renovations progress and meeting rooms are updated..	100%	
6.2.2 Develop and implement a Customer Experience Strategy.	Adopt the Customer Experience Strategy and associated action plan.	The Customer Experience Strategy 2026-30 was adopted by Council on 28 April 2026. The associated Year 1 Action Plan was endorsed by ELT on 20 May 2026.	100%	
6.3.1 Develop and implement a good governance continuous improvement plan.	Adopt a good governance action plan and commence implementation.	The Action Plan was adopted by Council on 24 February 2026 and was submitted to the Minister shortly after. Implementation of the plan is on target and ongoing	100%	
6.3.2 Take good care of community data to help Council make informed decisions and protect privacy.	Develop data governance framework to set the foundations for insight driven decision making.	The Data Governance Framework has been developed. It identifies the key data domains, owners, stewards and custodians and elaborate their roles.	100%	
6.3.3 Take relevant action to protect Council systems and community data based on industry best practice and ongoing monitoring.	Continuously monitor cyber risk and take action appropriately.	Cyber risks are continuously monitored and appropriately actioned, and reported to the Audit and Risk Committee.	100%	

Completed Work continuing Deferred Discontinued

Initiative	Action	Comment	Progress	Status
6.3.4 Explore, understand and identify Darebin's response to adopting the UN Sustainable Development Goals.	Map how Our Darebin Plan initiatives align with the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and develop a clear, staged approach to integrate SDG alignment into planning, evaluation, and reporting. This will include identifying resource needs, timelines, and budget to support effective implementation and continuous improvement.	The desktop mapping of Our Darebin Plan 2025-29 Initiatives to UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) and the staged approach to integrating SDG alignment into planning and reporting has been developed. Actions in the 2026-27 Our Darebin Action Plan have been mapped to the SDG framework. A news article has been published on the website promoting the alignment and how Darebin's work at a local level contributes to the global agenda.	100%	●
6.4.1 Review the 10-year Financial Plan to ensure financial sustainability now and in the future.	Assess financial and risk indicators and consider whether a substantive review of the Long Term Financial Plan is necessary as part of the annual budget process.	The 2026-27 budget was developed and adopted using the adopted 10-year Financial Plan as the foundation. Financial modelling was updated for the 10 years ahead, but no substantive review of the Long-Term Financial Plan was considered necessary.	100%	●
6.4.2 Deliver good value for community through Council's procurement of new suppliers and management of contracts.	Update the Social and Sustainable Procurement Policy to strengthen how well it helps achieve best value for community balancing financial, social and sustainability objectives.	Council deferred this action by resolution on 26 May 2026. Development of the Social and Sustainable Procurement Policy has been carried forward to 2026-27.	35%	●

● Completed ● Work continuing ● Deferred ● Discontinued

Initiative	Action	Comment	Progress	Status
6.4.3 Regularly review the Workforce Plan to make sure we are resourced to deliver the Council Plan.	Review existing Workforce Plan 2021-2025 and commence development of a new Darebin Workforce Plan 2026-2029.	The Workforce Plan for 2021-25 has been reviewed and endorsed by the Executive Leadership Team. Development of the Strategic Workforce Plan (SWP) for 2026-29 has commenced. Finalisation of the four-year SWP is planned for release in the second quarter of 2026-27.	100%	
6.4.4 Obtain and improve the quality of data on community assets and use this to inform infrastructure renewal and maintenance plans, including the next update of the Asset Plan.	Survey the condition of assets and buildings, incorporating renewal, maintenance and fit-for-purpose data needs into the inspection program.	In 2025-26 drainage asset class condition assessment has been completed for the next 'tranche' of drainage assets. Fit for purpose data has been collected for a wide range of community use buildings.	100%	
6.4.5 Implement a range of financial sustainability measures to reduce costs and improve revenue to fund community services and infrastructure.	Identify opportunities to invest in technology and assets to reduce costs and improve revenue.	The draft parking modernisation Project Plan and Business Case has been presented internally to consider future options.	70%	
6.4.5 Implement a range of financial sustainability measures to reduce costs and improve revenue to fund community services and infrastructure.	Investigate options for a voluntary levy for developers to contribute to regional drainage and water sensitive urban design initiatives.	Options were investigated however it was found that there were not options that would achieve the intended objectives. Therefore, the investigation was closed and will not proceed to implementation.	100%	

Completed Work continuing Deferred Discontinued

Initiative	Action	Comment	Progress	Status
6.5.1 Regularly offer available council properties for use by community and commercial organisations through a fair and accessible process.	Offer available Council properties via an EOI process, evaluate applications and establish leases or licences with tenant organisations.	The EOI process has been completed, with Council resolutions providing direction for 14 EOI sites across two tranches. A number of new leases and licenses have been established with others close to execution. This has helped make better use of buildings and support a range of organisations to provide services for the community.	100%	●
6.5.1 Regularly offer available council properties for use by community and commercial organisations through a fair and accessible process.	Undertake community engagement for the pre-master-planning of 2 Wingrove Street site.	Round 1 community consultation was completed on 24 November 2025 for the pre-master-planning of 2 Wingrove Street site, and outcomes were reported to Council. Next steps include geotechnical investigations and vision development with the Community Reference Group in 2026.	100%	●

● Completed ● Work continuing ● Deferred ● Discontinued

Initiative	Action	Comment	Progress	Status
6.5.2 Progressively review opportunities to enable better use of facilities, such as shared use, relocation or consolidation, when they are due for renewal.	Identify facilities due for renewal and assess opportunities as part of the annual budget development process.	Council used its annual budget process to identify opportunities to optimise asset renewal and investment. End of life assets were reviewed to determine whether works could be grouped for more cost-effective delivery, asset life could be extended, or assets were still located where they best met community needs. Renewal projects also incorporated access and inclusion improvements, including gender-neutral facilities. Where appliances reached end of life, gas-powered assets were replaced with electric alternatives, reducing carbon emissions and supporting Council's transition to a more sustainable and energy-efficient asset base.	100%	●
6.5.3 Assess Council property holdings to ensure they are suitable for current and future service provision, considering opportunities for private use and reinvestment.	Undertake initial assessment of currently unused and/or surplus properties and consider divestment options for any sites identified.	Assessment of a number of underutilised and surplus properties has been completed, identifying several sites that may be suitable for divestment to maximise community benefit and optimise Council's property portfolio. These opportunities will be presented to Council for consideration during 2026-27, supporting a strategic approach to asset management and ensuring property assets continue to deliver the greatest value for the community.	100%	●

● Completed ● Work continuing ● Deferred ● Discontinued

Initiative	Action	Comment	Progress	Status
6.5.4 Undertake substantial work to redevelop one major Council owned site within Preston to revitalise the local area, improve amenity and access to community spaces.	Undertake a development feasibility study to inform the development strategy and program for one major Council owned site.	A consultant has been identified for this work, and the study is anticipated to be completed by September 2026. Following this, a report will be presented to Council to consider the next steps.	45%	

Completed Work continuing Deferred Discontinued

Service Performance

Aged Care

Support, advocacy and information for older residents, people with disability, and carers. Helping people live independently through social connection, community access and home support.

Quarter comments

Aged Care services continued to provide strong support in Q4, achieving all annual targets. A total of 3,688 clients received services throughout the financial year, exceeding the annual target. Community engagement remained strong, with 52 seniors' clubs supported this quarter, including recipients of the Older and Active Community Grant. Seven events were delivered in Q4, attracting 198 attendees and contributing to a total of 66 events held across the year. Overall, service delivery and participation remained strong, ensuring successful end-of-year performance.

Indicator	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	2025-26	Trends/ Target	Status
Number of clients supported	2,454	2,410	2,379	2482	9,725	> 3,500	●
Number of senior Clubs supported	26	26	47	52	52	≥ 25	●
Number of events	10	38	11	7	66	> 16	●
Number of events attendees	135	961	129	198	1,423	> 160	●

City Amenity

The City Amenity service supports a clean, safe and welcoming Darebin through graffiti removal, cleaning, street sweeping and dumped rubbish management. These services protect local spaces, enhance community pride, and ensure our city remains safe and enjoyable for everyone.

Quarter comments

City Amenity services continued to support clean, safe and welcoming public spaces across Darebin in Q4. Scheduled cleansing targets were achieved, with 95% of bins and furniture high-pressure cleaned. A contractor-led graffiti, sticker and bill poster blitz was completed across nine major retail activity centres, six regional parks and nine additional park sites. Graffiti removal performance was slightly below target this quarter, with 87.7% of reported graffiti requests completed within required timeframes; however, all issues were addressed directly with the contractor. Street sweeping reached 12,794 kilometres during the quarter, with machine downtime and operational pressures affecting overall performance.

Indicator	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	2025-26	Trends/ Target	Status
Compliance to scheduled cleansing of Activity centres	88%	88%	93%	83%	88%	>80%	●
Number of requests for graffiti removal from Council assets	191	174	207	146	718	Decreasing	●
Reported graffiti removed within timeframe	99.0%	90.2%	94.7%	87.7%	92.9%	>90%	●
Kilometres of street swept	9,426 Km	9,500 Km	10,060 Km	12,794 Km	41,780 Km	>42,000 KM	●

● On Target ● Off Target

Families, Youth & Children

Services and programs for children, young people and their families including immunisations, maternal and child health services, family and parenting programs, playgroups, toy library, childcare and kindergarten registration system, resourcing and support, and youth programs.

Quarter comments

Families, Youth and Children services continued to support community wellbeing throughout Q4. Vaccination activity increased significantly during the peak service delivery period, with 9,830 vaccines administered, supported by the commercial influenza program, MMR campaign, outreach to EMCH clients and strong attendance at public sessions. Youth Services maintained strong engagement, with 1,936 young people participating in programs and events across multiple locations. Attendance at Intercultural Centre programs remained strong at 1,614 participants, supported by core programs including IC Nights. No new kindergarten places were created this quarter, with planning and advocacy for future infrastructure projects continuing.

Indicator	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	2025-26	Trends/ Target	Status
Total number of vaccines administered	4,983	3,570	3,249	9,830	21,632	>20,000	●
Number of young people attending Youth Services' programs and events	2,529	1,834	1,301	1,936	1,936	Stabilised	●
Number of community members attending intercultural centre programs and activities	1,196	349	1,633	1,614	4,792	>4,800	●
Kindergarten places created through Kindergarten Expansion Program	-	38	-	-	38	Increasing	●

Leisure & Recreation

Effective planning, operation and maintenance of Darebin's recreation and sporting facilities. Programs and policies that support and encourage an active Darebin community.

Quarter comments

Leisure and Recreation services continued to record strong community participation in Q4, with 671,759 attendances. Participation remained strong across the Reservoir Leisure Centre, Northcote Aquatic and Recreation Centre, golf courses and stadiums, supported by Get Active programs, casual bookings, seasonal sporting activity and Football Victoria participation. The continued increase in attendance reflects strong community demand for accessible recreation opportunities and highlights the important role these services play in supporting physical activity, health and wellbeing across Darebin.

Indicator	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	2025-26	Trends/ Target	Status
Number of Sporting Attendance	572,251	624,454	653,874	671,759	2,522,338	Increasing	●

● On Target ● Off Target

Libraries & Learning

Darebin's digital and physical library branches and services at Fairfield, Northcote, Preston and Reservoir and services delivered at Bundoora Park Farm.

Quarter comments

Libraries and Learning services continued to experience strong community engagement in Q4. Physical and digital loans, downloads and streaming reached 366,280, reflecting continued demand for library collections and digital resources. Visitation to Darebin Libraries branches and Bundoora Park Farm totalled 166,470. A total of 1,595 community program sessions were delivered across libraries, Bundoora Park Farm, Recreation and Leisure and RLC sites, attracting 16,920 attendees. Technology access remained well utilised, with 36,996 computer, laptop and Wi-Fi sessions, highlighting the ongoing role of libraries as important community hubs for learning, connection and digital inclusion.

Indicator	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	2025-26	Trends/ Target	Status
Number of library item loans & downloads	293,341	235,893	302,224	366,280	1,197,738	Increasing	●
Number of libraries & lifelong learning visits	175,697	156,124	154,398	166,470	652,689	Increasing	●
Number of Community program sessions	392	391	363	1,595	2,741	Increasing	●
Number of Community program attendance	15,041	16,585	11,385	16,920	59,931	Increasing	●
Number of technology usage sessions	35,203	33,616	34,794	36,996	140,609	Increasing	●

Parks & Open Space

Our Parks and Natural Space services are crucial to supporting Darebin's natural eco-system, our plants and animals, and the health and wellbeing of our community. They work to develop our spaces to be more climate resilient, safer and accessible for the community, and maintained to a high standard.

Quarter comments

Parks and Open Space services continued to maintain safe, accessible and well-managed open spaces throughout Q4. All scheduled playground safety inspections were completed on time, achieving full compliance across the municipality. Council planted 1310 park and street trees as part of its annual tree planting program. 1060 trees were planted to replace those lost last year and 250 new trees were planted.

Indicator	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	2025-26	Trends/ Target	Status
Number of new trees planted to support tree canopy growth	-	-	-	1310	1310 (250 new)	>700	●
Percentage of scheduled playground safety inspections completed	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	= 100%	●

● On Target ● Off Target

Planning & Development

Guiding infrastructure investment and land use planning to provide for the housing, employment, and community infrastructure needs of the municipality over the long term. Assessment of new development to ensure it is well-designed, safe, accessible, respects local character, and is environmentally responsive.

Quarter comments

Planning and Development activity remained steady in Q4, with 179 standard planning permit applications received, an increase from the previous quarter. VicSmart application volumes remained consistent, with 63 applications received during the quarter. Customer service performance continued to exceed targets, with an average planning phone enquiry service grade of 89% against the 70% target. Monthly results remained strong at 88% in April, 89% in May and 90% in June. The service remained focused on delivering timely assessments, quality development outcomes and responsive customer service for the community and development sector.

Indicator	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	2025-26	Trends/ Target	Status
Number of standard planning permit applications received	200	239	172	179	790	>540	●
Number of VicSmart applications	40	47	65	63	215	>96	●
Average Grade of Service for planning phone enquiries	86%	87%	86%	89%	87%	>70%	●

Waste Management

Waste Services are central to support Darebin's Climate Leadership and Response, driving waste collection, diversion, reduction and education programs that support a healthier, more sustainable city. Through initiatives like recycling, food and organics, hard rubbish collection, and the Resource Recovery Centre, we deliver positive waste outcomes for our community.

Quarter comments

Waste Management services continued to provide reliable waste and recovery services throughout Q4. Kerbside missed bin rates remained below target at 17 per 10,000 bins collected, with further improvements expected as the telematics system becomes fully operational. Diversion from landfill remained strong at 53.95%, supported by ongoing FOGO collections. Hard rubbish recycling reached 20.18%, reflecting continued recovery of recyclable materials and supporting landfill diversion outcomes, with opportunities for further improvement being explored through service reviews and contractor performance monitoring. Hard rubbish demand remained steady, with 4,324 bookings recorded during the quarter.

Indicator	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	2025-26	Trends/ Target	Status
Number of kerbside missed bins (per 10,000 bins)	17	19	17	17	18	<20	●
Percentage of kerbside collection waste diverted from landfill	44.59%	54.10%	55.50%	53.95%	51.70%	≥ 56.00%	●
Percentage of hard rubbish collected that is recycled	1%	26.50%	19.41%	20.18%	16.53%	≥ 25.00%	●
Number of hard rubbish bookings	8,369	4,769	4,107	4,324	21,569	> 30,000	●

● On Target ● Off Target

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9.4 GELLIBRAND CRESCENT KINDERGARTEN EXPANSION

Author: Manager Children, Youth & Families
Manager Assets & Capital

Reviewed By: Chief Executive Officer

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

At its meeting held on 16 December 2024, Council endorsed *the addition of the Gellibrand Cresecent Kindergarten to (*Council's) *Kindergarten Expansion Program to be progressed to the design stage in 2024- 25, with the aim of commencing construction in 2025-26 (subject to confirmation through the annual budget process) for completion by January 2027.*

Since then, officers have been negotiating with the Department of Education (DE) to add Gellibrand Crescent Kindergarten to the DE and Council Building Blocks Partnership Agreement (BBPA) project pipeline, as per that Council resolution.

Negotiations with DE were unexpectedly protracted, occurring over 2025 and early 2026. Given the delay and the uncertainty this created for Council regarding DE's intent to co-invest, the project was not included within the capital projects budget envelope in the 2026-27 budget whilst Council waited for DE to provide advice on its position.

DE advised Council in April 2026 that they were supportive of exploring a one-room expansion creating 40 additional places after further analysis of forecast unmet demand in the area (i.e. not the two room, 47 licenced places option presented to Council in 2024).

On adoption of Council's 2026-27 Budget papers, Council resolved that "*a report [be provided to Council] before the end of August 2026 to enable Council to partner with the State Government to expand Gellibrand Crescent Kindergarten*".

This paper responds to this request by providing for Council's consideration, an updated concept plan and cost estimate for the expansion project, as well as a proposed financial approach to meet Council's partnership allocation. If approved, this approach would enable Council to partner with the State Government through its BBPA to deliver the expansion project.

Officer Recommendation

That Council:

(1) Notes the current proposed expansion option for Gellibrand Crescent Kindergarten is for 40 additional places (which is seven fewer places than the option endorsed in December 2024).

(2) Note that 40 additional places will provide a significant capacity upgrade and increase in new kindergarten places in Darebin in one the areas of greatest immediate need.

(3) Approves that the 40 additional places expansion option for Gellibrand Crescent Kindergarten be progressed to the detailed design stage in 2026-27, with the aim of commencing construction in 2027-28 for completion by January 2029;

(4) Acknowledges that it will be required to allocate funding to meet its contribution to the Gellibrand Crescent Kindergarten expansion project, and that to meet this commitment it recommended that the source of funding come from unallocated funds held in the 'Capital Works Program Savings – Unallocated' account, with formal approval of transfer of funds to occur through a separate item in this meeting agenda.

(5) Notes that the current expansion option for Gellibrand Crescent Kindergarten is based on preliminary concept planning and cost estimates, and that the final scope, design and project cost will be confirmed through subsequent detailed design and project development phases;

(6) Requests the Chief Executive Officer, subject to Council approving the Capital Works Budget allocation, to negotiate with the Department of Education to include Gellibrand Crescent Kindergarten in the Building Blocks Partnership project pipeline and seek in-principle agreement between Council and the State Government regarding the co-funding arrangements and delivery timeframe for the expansion.

BACKGROUND / KEY INFORMATION

The Kindergarten Expansion Program (KEP) is a long-term capital works program aimed at expanding kindergarten capacity to meet demand created by population growth and the State Government's Best Start, Best Life early years reforms. The KEP was a strategic objective in the 2021-25 Council Plan, which has been carried forward into the 2025-29 Council Plan as Initiative 2.3.2: '*Expand community kindergarten facilities to enable access to three- and four-year-old kindergarten'.*

The impact of the State Government reforms to increase 3 year old and 4 year old kindergarten hours and opportunities is that the demand for kindergarten places in Darebin is forecast to grow significantly.

Council's collaboration with the Victorian Government enables Council and the Victorian Government to work together on a range of projects to deliver increased kindergarten capacity including Council-led expansion projects, State Government-led Kindergartens on School Sites (KOSS), and State Government Early Learning Victoria Centres (ELVCs). Over the life of the Agreement, Council and DE will consider the value of specific projects to be added to the BBPA pipeline to meet unmet demand across Darebin.

Council's commitment to supporting the expansion of kindergarten infrastructure is guided by the Early Years Infrastructure Planning Framework 2021-2041, which was adopted by Council in 2022.

Council endorsed at its meeting on 23 October 2023, the first tranche of projects in the KEP as part of its BBPA with State Government. Since that time Council has completed these expansion projects and has conducted further feasibility assessments to determine the next tranche of potential projects.

Ultimately, two options – Blake Street Kindergarten and Gellibrand Crescent Kindergarten – were recommended by officers to "be progressed to the design stage". These recommended options were endorsed by Council on 16 December 2024.

Council was notified by DE that the proposed option at Blake Street Kindergarten was not supported due to updated forecast unmet demand figures.

Engagement and advocacy regarding the Gellibrand Crecent option was unexpectedly protracted, occurring over 2025 and early 2026. Council was ultimately advised by DE that a one-room expansion creating 40 additional places (i.e. less capacity than the preferred option, could potentially be supported after further analysis of forecast unmet demand in the area.

In response to the revised parameters from DE (i.e. 'one room expansion'), updated concept plans and cost plans have been drafted.

Previous Council Resolution

At its meeting held on 16 December 2024, Council resolved:

'That Council:

3. *…Notes the outcomes of the feasibility assessment on the potential for expansion at JS Grey Reserve Kindergarten, Gellibrand Crescent Kindergarten, Blake Street Kindergarten, Thornbury Kindergarten and Clyde Street Kindergarten.*
4. *Endorses the addition of the following sites to the Kindergarten Expansion Program to be progressed to the design stage:*
    a. *Gellibrand Crescent Kindergarten expansion – design to be progressed in 2024-25, with the aim of commencing construction in 2025-26 (subject to confirmation through the annual budget process) for completion by January 2027*
5. *Notes the proposed expansions at Gellibrand Crescent Kindergarten and Blake Street Kindergarten are based on initial feasibility work only, and the feasibility, cost and size of the expansions achievable at each site will need to be confirmed through the design stage.*
6. *Requests the Chief Executive Officer to negotiate with the Department of Education to add Gellibrand Crescent Kindergarten and Blake Street Kindergarten to the Building Blocks Partnership Agreement project pipeline to confirm in-principle agreement between Council and the State Government to co-fund expansion at these two sites…'*

At its meeting held on 24 November 2025, Council resolved:

'That Council:
2. *…Notes that Council is waiting for agreement from the Department of Education (DE) to add the expansion of Gellibrand Crescent Kindergarten to the Building Blocks Partnership (BBP) project pipeline…'*

At its meeting held on *30 June 2026*, Council resolved [in relation to item 5.4 Adoption of 2026-27 Budget and Subsequent Three Financial Years and Associated Documents]:

'That Council:
… Calls for a report before the end of August 2026 to enable Council to partner with the State Government to expand Gellibrand Crescent Kindergarten…'

ALIGNMENT TO 2041 DAREBIN COMMUNITY VISION

Pillar 1: Vibrant, Healthy and Connected

ALIGNMENT TO OUR DAREBIN PLAN 2025-29

Strategic Direction 2: Equity, Diversity and Inclusion - A City where our rich diversity is celebrated, everyone can thrive and belong, and our services, programs, places and spaces are equitable, responsive, inclusive and accessible to all.

Initiative: 2.3.2 Expand community kindergarten facilities to enable access to three- and four-year-old kindergarten.

DISCUSSION

The one additional room expansion option at Gellibrand Crescent Kindergarten (providing an additional 40 licensed places) is supported and has been identified by DE, Council officers and the service provider as a viable option. Council's assessment and updated concept plan is at **Appendix A**. This approach is expected to deliver a range of significant community benefits, most notably securing a total of 70 licensed kindergarten places within a sessional kindergarten model in an area forecast to experience high levels of unmet demand. This recommendation is supported for the following reasons:

Response to unmet demand

Darebin's updated Kindergarten Infrastructure and Services Plan (KISP) identifies Reservoir North-West as an area of significant projected unmet demand for kindergarten places throughout 2026 and 2027. The proposed expansion directly responds to this forecast demand by increasing local kindergarten capacity and improving access to early years services for families within the catchment, helping to meet current and future community needs

Ensures viability of service

The addition of an additional room supports the longer-term viability of the service, as single room kindergartens will struggle to achieve the required staffing ratios, licensed capacity, and group utilisation that is needed to remain viable when 4-year-old kindergarten doubles to 30 hours a week (beginning from 2034) as part of the Best Start, Best Life reform roll-out. KISP unmet demand estimates assume no closures. Within this context the proposed project secures long-term the 70 licensed places (i.e. allows the 30 current places to be maintained and adds an additional 40).

Equity and choice

The proposed expansion contributes to equity and choice for local families due to Gellibrand Crescent being the only existing sessional kindergarten service in this locality following the closure of the Kookaburra Kindergarten in 2022. Reservoir North-West is an area of relative socio-economic disadvantage compared to the Darebin average, which further reinforces the need to ensure access to sessional kindergarten due to Long Day Care services being unaffordable for some families.

Uplift of facility

The proposed expansion presents a significant opportunity to improve the overall quality, functionality and longevity of the Gellibrand Crescent Kindergarten facility. While the primary objective is to increase kindergarten capacity, the project would also address a range of existing building condition issues, including the remediation of areas affected by historical water ingress, replacement of extensive single-glazed windows, and refurbishment of ageing internal spaces.

The works would enhance the comfort, accessibility and amenity of the facility for children, families and staff, while improving energy efficiency and reducing ongoing maintenance requirements.

Council's co funding contribution

Council's estimated contribution to the proposed kindergarten expansion would be **$1,510,000**. Taking into account the **$470,000** in project funding carried forward from the 2025-26 Capital Works Program, Council would be required to commit an additional **$1,040,000** to deliver the project.

It is proposed that the additional Council contribution be funded from the Unallocated Capital Works Program budget. This budget has sufficient funds within this budget allocation. Funding the Gellibrand Crescent Kindergarten expansion would not require any other capital projects or programs to be deferred, reduced or removed from the current Capital Works Program.

This approach would enable Council to leverage significant Victorian Government investment through the Building Blocks Partnership while delivering additional kindergarten capacity in an area of demonstrated unmet demand.

CONSIDERATION OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT (2020) PRINCIPLES

Financial Management

Council had previously identified a contribution to the Gellibrand Crescent partnership project within its forward Capital Works Program. However, ongoing uncertainty regarding the project's future and delivery timeframe required Council to review and re-prioritise its capital investment planning during development of the 2026–27 Budget. As a result, the allocation was removed to support a balanced and achievable Capital Works Program, while preserving flexibility to reconsider funding should the project proceed with greater certainty

The viability of kindergarten infrastructure projects relies on a co-investment arrangement between Council and the Victorian Government through the BBPA. Funding is based on the standard Building Blocks Capacity Building Grant rate of approximately $45,455 per additional licensed kindergarten place created, consistent with funding previously secured for similar projects in Darebin.

The proposed expansion seeks to maximise available State Government investment by allocating Council funding to leverage the greatest possible contribution through the BBPA. The cost plan has been developed using a conservative approach and includes appropriate contingencies to manage project risks and cost uncertainties.

In addition to increasing kindergarten capacity to meet growing demand, the expansion will improve the quality and functionality of the facility, supporting contemporary service delivery and reducing future maintenance and renewal costs through the provision of modern, fit-for-purpose infrastructure

Community Engagement

Community and stakeholder engagement was undertaken on, which the *Early Years Infrastructure Planning Framework 2021-2041*provides the overarching framework under which the proposed kindergarten expansion projects are delivered. Targeted engagement with committee members and staff of services included within the KEP is undertaken during the planning, design and construction phases of those projects.

Engagement with local communities for the State Government-led projects is the responsibility of the State Government. Officers provide support to this engagement where required.

Other Principles for consideration

The KEP seeks to deliver equitable access to kindergarten programs for current and future generations of three- and four-year-old children in line with governance principles and service performance principles.

Overarching Governance Principles and Supporting Principles

(b) priority is to be given to achieving the best outcomes for the municipal community, including future generations;

Public Transparency Principles

(a) Council decision making processes must be transparent except when the Council is dealing with information that is confidential by virtue of this Act or any other Act;

Strategic Planning Principles

(b) strategic planning must address the Community Vision;

Service Performance Principles

(a) services should be provided in an equitable manner and be responsive to the diverse needs of the municipal community;

COUNCIL POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

Environmental Sustainability Considerations (including Climate Emergency)

Environmental sustainability considerations are considered within design and delivery of all kindergarten expansion projects, in line with the Early Years Infrastructure Planning Framework principles and the Environmentally Sustainable Design Building Policy.

Equity, Inclusion, Wellbeing and Human Rights Considerations:

An Equity Impact Assessment was undertaken during the development of the Early Years Infrastructure Planning Framework, which is guiding this program of work. The principles within the Framework have been used throughout the planning and delivery of this program to date, with a particular focus on addressing equity and inclusion through application of the principles of Equity, Access, Diversity & Inclusion, and Choice. The local context section of the KISP draws on the Early Years Infrastructure Planning Framework to integrate equity considerations in kindergarten infrastructure planning.

Economic Development and Cultural Considerations

Economic development considerations are addressed through the procurement process for design and construction through application of the Social and Sustainable Procurement Policy.

Operational Impacts

Officers from Children, Youth and Families are working closely with colleagues in Assets and Capital and relevant operational teams, particularly Facilities Management and Parks

Operations, to ensure operational and maintenance considerations are appropriately considered in the planning and design of the expansion projects.

Legal and Risk Implications

The legal and risk issues for each proposed or potential project are assessed as projects progress through the planning and design process.

IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

- Council meeting to endorse proposed expansion option (August 2026)
- Negotiate and confirm Building Blocks Partnership investment agreement with the Department of Education via 'Building Blocks – Capacity Building Grant process (September 2026)
- Detailed design (October 2026 – July 2027)
- Request for Tender – construction (July – December 2027)
- Seek Council endorsement of selected contractor (December 2027)
- Construction (March 2028- December 2028)
- Kindergarten service opens Term 1 2029 (late January 2029)

RELATED DOCUMENTS

- Darebin Early Years Infrastructure Planning Framework 2021- 2041
- Darebin Kindergarten Infrastructure and Services Plan (KISP)

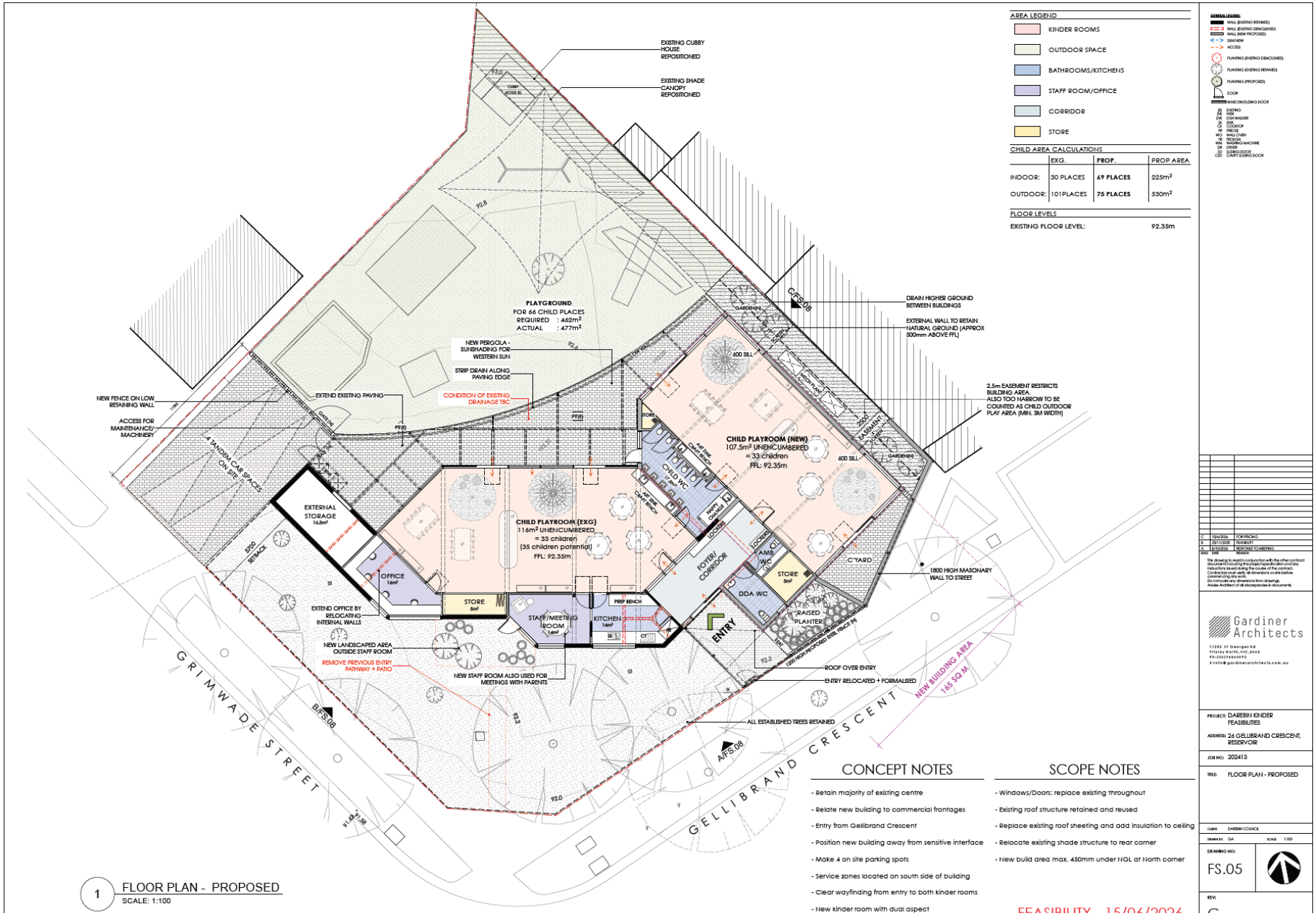
Attachments

- Gellibrand Kindergarten Concept Plan (**Appendix A**) ⇩

DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST

Section 130 of the *Local Government Act 2020* requires members of Council staff and persons engaged under contract to provide advice to Council to disclose any conflicts of interest in a matter to which the advice relates.

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


AREA LEGEND
KINDER ROOMS
OUTDOOR SPACE
BATHROOMS/KITCHENS
STAFF ROOM/OFFICE
CORRIDOR
STORE
CHILD AREA CALCULATIONS
EXG. PROP. PROP AREA
INDOOR: 30 PLACES 69 PLACES 225m²
OUTDOOR: 101PLACES 75 PLACES 530m²
FLOOR LEVELS
EXISTING FLOOR LEVEL: 92.35m
EXISTING CUBBY HOUSE REPOSITIONED
EXISTING SHADE CANOPY REPOSITIONED
PLAYGROUND
FOR 66 CHILD PLACES
REQUIRED : 462m²
ACTUAL : 477m²
NEW PERGOLA - SUNSHADING FOR WESTERN SUN
STRIP DRAIN ALONG PAVING EDGE
CONDITION OF EXISTING DRAINAGE TBC
EXTEND EXISTING PAVING
NEW FENCE ON LOW RETAINING WALL
ACCESS FOR MAINTENANCE/ MACHINERY
4 TANDEM CAR SPACES ON SITE
EXTERNAL STORAGE 16.8m²
5700 SETBACK
CHILD PLAYROOM (EXG)
116m² UNENCUMBERED
= 33 children
(35 children potential)
FFL: 92.35m
CHILD PLAYROOM (NEW)
107.5m² UNENCUMBERED
= 33 children
FFL: 92.35m
OFFICE 16m²
STORE 6m²
STAFF/MEETING ROOM 14m²
KITCHEN 14m²
PREP BENCH
EXTEND OFFICE BY RELOCATING INTERNAL WALLS
NEW LANDSCAPED AREA OUTSIDE STAFF ROOM
REMOVE PREVIOUS ENTRY PATHWAY + PATIO
NEW STAFF ROOM ALSO USED FOR MEETINGS WITH PARENTS
DRAIN HIGHER GROUND BETWEEN BUILDINGS
EXTERNAL WALL TO RETAIN NATURAL GROUND (APPROX 500mm ABOVE FFL)
2.5m EASEMENT RESTRICTS BUILDING AREA. ALSO TOO NARROW TO BE COUNTED AS CHILD OUTDOOR PLAY AREA (MIN. 3M WIDTH)
600 SILL
LOCKERS
AMB WC
DDA WC
STORE 6m²
FOYER/ CORRIDOR
ENTRY
RAISED PLANTER
C'YARD
1800 HIGH MASONRY WALL TO STREET
1200 HIGH PROPOSED STEEL FENCE IN
ROOF OVER ENTRY
ENTRY RELOCATED + FORMALISED
ALL ESTABLISHED TREES RETAINED
NEW BUILDING AREA 145 SQ M
GRIMWADE STREET
GELLIBRAND CRESCENT
B/FS.08
A/FS.08
C/FS.08
1 FLOOR PLAN - PROPOSED
SCALE: 1:100
CONCEPT NOTES
- Retain majority of existing centre
- Relate new building to commercial frontages
- Entry from Gellibrand Crescent
- Position new building away from sensitive interface
- Make 4 on site parking spots
- Service zones located on south side of building
- Clear wayfinding from entry to both kinder rooms
- New kinder room with dual aspect
SCOPE NOTES
- Windows/Doors: replace existing throughout
- Existing roof structure retained and reused
- Replace existing roof sheeting and add insulation to ceiling
- Relocate existing shade structure to rear corner
- New build area max. 450mm under NGL at North corner
FEASIBILITY 15/04/2026
Gardiner Architects
PROJECT: DAREBIN KINDER FEASIBILITIES
ADDRESS: 26 GELLIBRAND CRESCENT, RESERVOIR
JOB NO: 202413
TITLE: FLOOR PLAN - PROPOSED
CLIENT: DAREBIN COUNCIL
DRAWN BY: GA
SCALE: 1:100
DRAWING NO: FS.05
REV: C

9.5 PROJECT AND INITIATIVE BUDGET ADJUSTMENTS

Author: Project Performance & Reporting Officer
Coordinator Development and Capital Delivery

Reviewed By: Chief Executive Officer

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Every year Council delivers capital works projects, operating projects and other initiatives to support community, reform policy, renew and improve a wide range of community assets such as drainage, buildings, roads, footpaths, cycle lanes, parks, and more.

Occasionally, it becomes necessary to revisit initial project budget allocations to ensure projects remain aligned with their intended scope and objectives. In keeping with Council's commitment to transparency and responsible financial stewardship, any recommended adjustments to project budgets are outlined in Table 1, Table 2 and Table 3 of this report.

To support transparent and effective financial management, Council maintains two unallocated project accounts within its financial system:

- Unallocated Capital Works Program Account
- Unallocated Operating Projects and Special Initiatives Program Account

A key purpose of quarantining these funds is to enable Council to respond should projects encounter budget challenges or unplanned needs or to consider time critical initiatives that may arise outside of the annual budget cycle.

One project that warrants specific mention in this budget adjustment cycle is the proposal to allocated funding for the Gellibrand Crescent Kindergarten Expansion Project. A separate report about this project is being provided to this Council meeting, however the budget allocation decision is proposed in this report so that all project budget adjustments are considered through a single governance process, supporting sound financial management, transparency and informed decision-making by Council.

If Council approves all the recommended adjustments in Table 1(Attachment A), 2 and 3 the balance of funds will be as follows:

- Unallocated Capital Works Program Account: **$341,243**
- Unallocated Operating Projects and Special Initiatives Program Account: **$79,445**

Officer Recommendation

That Council:

(1) Approves the Project Budget adjustments for FY25-26 for the Capital Works Projects as per Table 1 (Attachment A) of this report.

(2) Approves the Project Budget adjustments for FY26-27 for the Capital Works Projects as per Table 2 of this report.

(3) Approves the Project Budget adjustments for FY26-27 for the Operating Projects as per Table 3 of this report.

BACKGROUND / KEY INFORMATION

Council's adopted 2025-26 budget included an Operating Projects Program budget of $2.4M and a Capital Works Program budget of $38.5 million (comprising 179 individual projects).

Council's adopted 2026-27 budget includes an Operating Projects Program budget of $2.7M and a Capital Works Program budget of $27.61million (comprising 209 individual projects).

This report seeks Council endorsement to reserve identified project savings for the purposes of reallocating them to other projects if necessary, and, where appropriate, to authorise additional expenditure. This approach reinforces good project management practice, sound financial management and the organisation's dedication to open governance. It ensures transparency with community.

Previous Council Resolution

This report has become a standing item at Council's regular meetings. Each report stands alone and previous resolutions are not relevant to this report.

ALIGNMENT TO 2041 DAREBIN COMMUNITY VISION

Pillar 4: Collaborative, Transparent and Responsible

ALIGNMENT TO OUR DAREBIN PLAN 2025-29

Strategic Direction 6: Decision Making, Community Engagement and Transparency - A City that is well-managed, transparent and trusted by its community and partners, with clear and respectful communication that builds confidence in Council's decisions.

DISCUSSION

The following project budget adjustments are presented for Council consideration and transparency to the community. Amounts are presented as exclusive of GST as per Council's adopted budget and financial reporting.

Table 1: Project Budgets requiring adjustment - Capital Works Program 2025-26

As part of Council's end-of-financial-year processes, it is necessary to reconcile project budgets and expenditure and consider any budget adjustments required.

All project budgets have been reconciled as at end of financial year. A number of projects have savings and there are several where expenditure was above budget. It is recommended that Council endorse all these adjustments as showing in **Attachment A -** Capital Works Budget Adjustments – FY 25-26.

Balance of unallocated Capital Works Program account 25-26 (Table 1) Attachment A

The balance of unallocated Capital works Program account would be **$1,464,893** up from the balance at end June 2026 of **$359,701.**

Table 2: Project Budgets requiring adjustment - Capital Works Program 2026-27

Transfer From (funding source)	Transfer to (receiving project budget account)	Reason for adjustment	Amount (ex GST)
Decking Renewal - Northeast Community Hub	Unallocated Capital Works Program funds	The project was completed in the 2025/26 financial year. The project was originally planned across two financial years, with funding split accordingly; however, the works were able to be delivered earlier than anticipated and completed within a single year's budget.	$25,000 (savings)
Fitout - Theatre seating bank renewal - Northcote Town Hall	Unallocated Capital Works Program funds	It has been identified that this work can reasonably wait and that the budget is not sufficient to enable renewal in an efficient and practical way. There is a larger budget scheduled for year three in the CW budget and it is recommended that the works be undertaken in future.	$50,000 (savings)
Unallocated Capital Works Program funds	Lakeview Tennis Court Lighting Upgrade - (CW-196863)	Updated pricing was obtained in July 2026, resulting in a higher project cost than originally estimated.	$14,650 (increased costs)
Unallocated Capital Works Program funds	New budget: Sport field safety improvements	This is for safety upgrades to a number of synthetic cricket pitches where winter sport is played over them.	$144,000 (increased costs)
Unallocated Capital Works Program funds	New budget: Three-year-old Kindergarten - Gellibrand Crescent Expansion (CW-196867)	This project would deliver a proposed one-room expansion at Gellibrand Crescent Kindergarten, creating an additional 40 licensed kindergarten places to support growing community demand and the Victorian Government's Best Start, Best Life reforms. This Council Meeting agenda includes a separate Officer Report that further details this project and the funding commitment required.	$1,040,000 (additional partnership contribution)
Heavy Vehicle replacement Program	Unallocated Capital Works Account	This fully offsets expenditure that was procured to 2025-26 to enable replacement of a vehicle in early 2026-27 (shown in **Appendix A** in the last row). It is effectively a timing adjustment in the multi-year plant replacement program.	$330,000 (reduced program budget)

Balance of unallocated Capital Works Program account (Table 2) 2026-27

The balance of the unallocated Capital works Program account would be **$341,243** down from the balance at end of FY25-26 of **$1,464,893.**

Table 3: Operating Projects and Special Initiatives budget adjustments

Transfer From (funding source)	Transfer to (receiving account)	Reason for adjustment	Amount
Unallocated Capital Works Program funds	Open Space Strategy Update (OP-811206)	The original budget was based on high-level assumptions and does not fully reflect the project's delivery requirements. Following discussions with Wurundjeri, the cost of the required Aboriginal Cultural Values Assessment has exceeded the allocated budget. Additional funding is therefore sought to support this assessment, which is critical to informing the Open Space Strategy and meeting Council's commitment under the Partnership Agreement with the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation.	$55,555 (increased costs)

Balance of unallocated Operating Projects and Special Initiatives Program account

The balance after the above transfers of the Unallocated Operating Projects and Special Initiatives Program fund would be **$79,445** down from the end of June balance of **$135,000.**

CONSIDERATION OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT (2020) PRINCIPLES

Financial Management

This report contributes to financial management principles by recording the allocation and movement of project funds that may impact on the budget, current and future.

Given the favourable financial result, there are no material risks associated with this adjustment.

Community Engagement

Community engagement was a critical part of developing the 2025-26 Budget. This report aims to transparently report progress and challenges with implementation of the Budget to ensure accountability with community.

Other Principles for consideration

Overarching Governance Principles and Supporting Principles
(i) the transparency of Council decisions, actions and information is to be ensured.
(g) the ongoing financial viability of the Council is to be ensured;

Public Transparency Principles

(a) Council decision making processes must be transparent except when the Council is dealing with information that is confidential by virtue of this Act or any other Act;

Strategic Planning Principles

(a) an integrated approach to planning, monitoring and performance reporting is to be adopted;
(c) Strategic planning must take into account the resources needed for effective implementation;
(d) strategic planning must identify and address the risks to effective implementation;
(e) strategic planning must provide for ongoing monitoring of progress and regular reviews to identify and address changing circumstances;

Service Performance Principles

(a) services should be provided in an equitable manner and be responsive to the diverse needs of the municipal community;
(c) quality and costs standards for services set by the Council should provide good value to the municipal community;

COUNCIL POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

Environmental Sustainability Considerations (including Climate Emergency)

Projects address Council's ESD policy in planning, design and construction phases.

Equity, Inclusion, Wellbeing and Human Rights Considerations:

An Equity and Gender Impact Assessment are applied to individual projects during the planning and design development stage.

Some renewal projects given their scope and nature do not require an EIA/GIA. Although compliance with federal and state anti-discrimination legislation, accessibility standards and NCA standards are applicable.

Economic Development and Cultural Considerations

Construction projects generally contribute to employment and local economic development opportunities.

Operational Impacts

None identified at this point.

Legal and Risk Implications

This report enables management of project budget and timeline risk. There are no legal risks associated with this report.

IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

Implementation of Council's decision will be undertaken by the responsible officers within Council. Project partners and stakeholders will be notified of Council's decision where relevant by the Project Sponsor or Project Manager.

RELATED DOCUMENTS

- 2041 Darebin Community Vision

- Our Darebin Plan 2025-29
- 2026-27 Council Plan Action Plan
- Annual Budget 2026-27
- Financial Plan 2025-26 to 2034-35
- 2025-26 Annual Report

Attachments

- Capital Works Budget Adjustments - FY25-26 (**Appendix A**) ⇩

DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST

Section 130 of the *Local Government Act 2020* requires members of Council staff and persons engaged under contract to provide advice to Council to disclose any conflicts of interest in a matter to which the advice relates.

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

Capital Works Program End of Financial Year 25-26
Budget Adjustment Requests

As at 30-June-2026

Transfer From	Transfer To (receiving project budget account)	Reason for adjustment	Amount (ex GST)
BRP-Reservoir Leisure Centre Essential Equipment & Infrastructure Replacement	Unallocated Capital Works Account	Project completed	$235,876 (Savings)
Road Resurfacing Program	Unallocated Capital Works Account	Project completed	$140,730 (Savings)
Contaminated Land Management Design & Construction projects	Unallocated Capital Works Account	Project completed	$87,260 (Savings)
Transport-Design-Priority projects identified in the Your Street Your Say Program	Unallocated Capital Works Account	Project completed	$75,231 (Savings)
Road Rehabilitation -Wilmoth Street from Darebin to Christmas	Unallocated Capital Works Account	Project completed	$72,004 (Savings)
Drainage Design - 130 Tyler Street	Unallocated Capital Works Account	Project completed	$56,800 (Savings)
Darebin Libraries Collection - Audiovisual	Unallocated Capital Works Account	Project completed	$53,010 (Savings)
Drainage Design - 295 Mansfield Street	Unallocated Capital Works Account	Project completed	$50,000 (Savings)
Road Rehabilitation -Wilmoth from Speight to Clarandon	Unallocated Capital Works Account	Project completed	$48,814 (Savings)
BRP-DRRC Walking floor renewal program	Unallocated Capital Works Account	Project Discontinued.	$45,000 (Savings)
Minor Infrastructure Projects	Unallocated Capital Works Account	Project completed	$44,067 (Savings)
Right of Way rehabilitation -Rear 36 - 114 Beavers Rd	Unallocated Capital Works Account	Project completed	$42,828 (Savings)
BT Connor Reserve Shared Path - 50% grant funded	Unallocated Capital Works Account	Project completed	$41,699 (Savings)
Road Rehabilitation - Knox St & Corben St Intersection, Reservoir	Unallocated Capital Works Account	Project completed	$38,216 (Savings)
Bundoora Park Golf Course Irrigation System Renewal	Unallocated Capital Works Account	Project completed	$37,140 (Savings)
Maryborough Avenue Kindergarten Expansion	Unallocated Capital Works Account	Project completed	$34,985 (Savings)
Waste Services - Green and Red Bin Replacement Program	Unallocated Capital Works Account	Project completed	$31,590 (Savings)
Playspace Renewal - Shoalhaven, Walsh and Whitby Reserves	Unallocated Capital Works Account	Project completed	$30,691 (Savings)
Youth Services- Asset & Equipment Renewal	Unallocated Capital Works Account	Project completed	$30,214 (Savings)
Transport-Design-Design Pedestrian Operated Signal and Raised Shared Path Crossing Cheddar Road at Crookston Road	Unallocated Capital Works Account	Project completed	$30,000 (Savings)
Upgrade of street lighting to improve safety	Unallocated Capital Works Account	Project completed	$29,317 (Savings)
BRP-DRRC access & road network renewal program	Unallocated Capital Works Account	Project completed	$26,803 (Savings)
Park Asset Renewal Program	Unallocated Capital Works Account	Project completed	$25,465 (Savings)
Car park lighting projects	Unallocated Capital Works Account	Project completed	$25,000 (Savings)
Sportsground Renovation - CH Sullivan West	Unallocated Capital Works Account	Project completed	$23,018 (Savings)
KP Hardiman Pavilion Redevelopment	Unallocated Capital Works Account	Project completed	$21,501 (Savings)
IT Infrastructure Renewal - Council Chamber Technology	Unallocated Capital Works Account	Project completed	$18,925 (Savings)
Traffic Speed control infrastructure renewal	Unallocated Capital Works Account	Project completed	$18,605 (Savings)
BRP-Reservoir Leisure Centre Plantroom Renewal	Unallocated Capital Works Account	Project completed	$16,712 (Savings)

Capital Works Program End of Financial Year 25-26
Budget Adjustment Requests

As at 30-June-2026

Transfer From	Transfer To (receiving project budget account)	Reason for adjustment	Amount (ex GST)
Safe Travel - Keon Park Children's Hub - construction	Unallocated Capital Works Account	Project completed	$16,378 (Savings)
Transport-Construct-Quick Wins YSYS	Unallocated Capital Works Account	Project completed	$15,550 (Savings)
Traffic signal renewal	Unallocated Capital Works Account	Project completed	$15,004 (Savings)
H Swain Reserve Renewal - Train and playspace surface	Unallocated Capital Works Account	Project completed	$14,972 (Savings)
BRP-2 Wingrove Street - Switchboard renewal	Unallocated Capital Works Account	Project completed	$14,870 (Savings)
BRP-Darebin Arts Centre - Stormwater renewal	Unallocated Capital Works Account	Project completed	$13,172 (Savings)
BRP-Reservoir Community & Learning Centre - Security System Renewal	Unallocated Capital Works Account	Project completed	$11,080 (Savings)
Edwardes Lake Park - Surface renewal	Unallocated Capital Works Account	Project completed	$10,025 (Savings)
BRP-Preston Council Precinct - Air conditioning renewal	Unallocated Capital Works Account	Project completed	$9,988 (Savings)
BRP-Cranross Tennis Court Resurfacing	Unallocated Capital Works Account	Project completed	$9,921 (Savings)
Road Rehabilitation - Design Edwardes St	Unallocated Capital Works Account	Project completed	$9,635 (Savings)
Pitcher Park upgrades sealing of the carpark	Unallocated Capital Works Account	Project completed	$8,741 (Savings)
BRP-Fairfield Civic Centre - Renewal & upgrade to A/C Units	Unallocated Capital Works Account	Project completed	$7,262 (Savings)
Design and construct accessible parking bays	Unallocated Capital Works Account	Project completed	$6,651 (Savings)
Feasibility study to improve safety for people using Murphy and Symons Streets, Reservoir at school pick-up and drop-off time	Unallocated Capital Works Account	Project completed	$6,500 (Savings)
BRP-Proactive Asbestos removal - Various Kindergarten & Childcare Buildings	Unallocated Capital Works Account	Project completed	$6,102 (Savings)
BRP-Keon Park Children's Hub - Security system renewal	Unallocated Capital Works Account	Project completed	$5,393 (Savings)
Darebin Libraries Northcote Library Meeting Room AV Renewal	Unallocated Capital Works Account	Project completed	$5,305 (Savings)
Asset Gap Fill - Various locations	Unallocated Capital Works Account	Project completed	$4,515 (Savings)
BRP-John Cain Memorial Park - NCFC Pavilion - Airconditioning Renewal	Unallocated Capital Works Account	Project completed	$4,395 (Savings)
Drainage upgrades - Hartington St Stage 2	Unallocated Capital Works Account	Project completed	$4,278 (Savings)
Northcote Plaza carpark - Renewal of subsided section	Unallocated Capital Works Account	Project completed	$3,385 (Savings)
Commission, construction and installation of Migration Artwork	Unallocated Capital Works Account	Project completed	$2,799 (Savings)
BRP-Building Automation upgrade	Unallocated Capital Works Account	Project completed	$1,705 (Savings)
BRP-East Reservoir Neighbourhood House - Security system renewal	Unallocated Capital Works Account	Project completed	$1,624 (Savings)
Darebin Libraries Collection - Fiction	Unallocated Capital Works Account	Project completed	$1,474 (Savings)
BRP-Darebin International Sports Stadium Security System Renewal	Unallocated Capital Works Account	Project completed	$1,414 (Savings)
Workplace office accommodation	Unallocated Capital Works Account	Project completed	$1,385 (Savings)

Capital Works Program End of Financial Year 25-26
Budget Adjustment Requests

As at 30-June-2026

Transfer From	Transfer To (receiving project budget account)	Reason for adjustment	Amount (ex GST)
Project Management Fee Pool Balance	Unallocated Capital Works Account	Project completed	$1,281 (Savings)
BRP-Bundoora Park Farm Heritage Village Toilet Switchboard Upgrade	Unallocated Capital Works Account	Project completed	$868 (Savings)
BRP-Darebin Arts Centre - Fire Panel renewal	Unallocated Capital Works Account	Project completed	$850 (Savings)
Timber retaining wall reinstatement - Edwardes Street	Unallocated Capital Works Account	Project completed	$789 (Savings)
IT Infrastructure Renewal - Meeting Room Technology	Unallocated Capital Works Account	Project completed	$707 (Savings)
BRP-Northcote Library Security System Renewal	Unallocated Capital Works Account	Project completed	$436 (Savings)
Darebin Libraries Collection - Community Languages	Unallocated Capital Works Account	Project completed	$425 (Savings)
DR Atkinson Playground Renewal	Unallocated Capital Works Account	Project completed	$115 (Savings)
Darebin Libraries Collection - Non Fiction	Unallocated Capital Works Account	Project completed	$62 (Savings)
BRP-Darebin North-East Community Hub - Security system renewal	Unallocated Capital Works Account	Project completed	$22 (Savings)
Darebin Libraries Customer Technology Renewal	Unallocated Capital Works Account	Project completed	$22 (Savings)
RRP-Road Design & Construction - Hickford St. / Darebin Blvd Intersection - Preston	Unallocated Capital Works Account	Project completed	$12 (Savings)
Signage Renewal - Edwardes Lake Park	Unallocated Capital Works Account	Project completed	$6 (Savings)
BRP-Darebin Arts Centre - Security system renewal	Unallocated Capital Works Account	Project completed	$3 (Savings)
Unallocated Capital Works Account	Safety Net Program - Northcote Golf Course 7th hole	Adjustment made to align the project budget with final project management fee reconciliation completed at financial year-end.	$137 (increased costs)
Unallocated Capital Works Account	BRP-2 Wingrove Street - Precinct Renewal Works		$217 (increased costs)
Unallocated Capital Works Account	BRP-Bundoora Park Farm Visitor Centre Security System Renewal		$296 (increased costs)
Unallocated Capital Works Account	BRP-East Preston Community Centre - Appliance renewal		$326 (increased costs)
Unallocated Capital Works Account	Street Furniture renewal (Including bins)		$399 (increased costs)
Unallocated Capital Works Account	BRP-Clyde Street Community Centre - Security system renewal		$543 (increased costs)
Unallocated Capital Works Account	BRP-Darebin North-East Community Hub - Decking Renewal		$544 (increased costs)
Unallocated Capital Works Account	BRP-Leinster Grove - Security system renewal		$544 (increased costs)
Unallocated Capital Works Account	Drainage Design - Stage 2 Investigation Gilbert Road/ Knox Street		$638 (increased costs)
Unallocated Capital Works Account	Retaining Wall Construction - Clyde St Kindergarten		$899 (increased costs)
Unallocated Capital Works Account	New additional renewals not included by Asset Strategy		$1,039 (increased costs)
Unallocated Capital Works Account	BRP-Darebin International Sports Centre - Renewal & Upgrade of AirCon Units		$1,418 (increased costs)
Unallocated Capital Works Account	Road Access infrastructure renewal		$1,505 (increased costs)
Unallocated Capital Works Account	Drainage Design - 16 and 18 Clements Grove Drainage upgrade		$1,568 (increased costs)
Unallocated Capital Works Account	Drainage Design - 40 Malpas Drainage		$1,568 (increased costs)

Capital Works Program End of Financial Year 25-26
Budget Adjustment Requests

As at 30-June-2026

Transfer From	Transfer To (receiving project budget account)	Reason for adjustment	Amount (ex GST)
Unallocated Capital Works Account	Drainage Design - 59 Flag Street, Kingsbury		$1,598 (increased costs)
Unallocated Capital Works Account	Arts Venues Asset & Equipment Renewal		$1,649 (increased costs)
Unallocated Capital Works Account	Woolhouse Reserve - Playground Renewal		$2,213 (increased costs)
Unallocated Capital Works Account	Minor Kerb & Chanel renewals program		$2,314 (increased costs)
Unallocated Capital Works Account	Roundabout renewal program		$2,878 (increased costs)
Unallocated Capital Works Account	BRP-Hot Water Boiler unit renewal (Various Locations)		$2,925 (increased costs)
Unallocated Capital Works Account	Boat Covers & Electric Motor - Small Parks Boat		$3,010 (increased costs)
Unallocated Capital Works Account	BRP-Mains Electrical supply capacity upgrade - JE Moore Park	Budget adjustment required due to unexpected post-project expenditure associated with meter supply. Additional costs were incurred after project completion to meet authority meter supply requirements, which were not identified or included in the original project budget.	$3,030 (increased costs)
Unallocated Capital Works Account	Duck Pond viewing platform renewal - Darebin Parklands	Adjustment made to align the project budget with final project management fee reconciliation completed at financial year-end.	$3,258 (increased costs)
Unallocated Capital Works Account	Drainage Repairs and Upgrades Program		$4,073 (increased costs)
Unallocated Capital Works Account	BRP-Mains Electrical supply capacity upgrade - Crisp Park	Budget adjustment required due to unexpected post-project expenditure associated with meter supply. Additional costs were incurred after project completion to meet meter supply requirements, which were not identified or included in the original project budget.	$4,480 (increased costs)
Unallocated Capital Works Account	BRP-Mains Electrical supply capacity upgrade - A H Capp		$5,919 (increased costs)
Unallocated Capital Works Account	Irrigation & Turf Renewal - Johnson Park	Additional construction expenditure was incurred to deliver the full project scope and meet the approved project objectives.	$6,935 (increased costs)
Unallocated Capital Works Account	BRP-Emergency Lighting and Fire Extinguisher Renewals	Additional construction expenditure was incurred to deliver the full project scope and meet the approved project objectives.	$6,987 (increased costs)
Unallocated Capital Works Account	Solar lighting in the carpark at BT Connor Reserve, Reservoir to improve safety of users, in particular women and girls who are in danger of attack and sexual violence	Adjustment made to align the project budget with final project management fee reconciliation completed at financial year-end.	$7,025 (increased costs)
Unallocated Capital Works Account	Light plant & machinery replacement program	Adjustment is required to accommodate increased costs, driven by the need to place orders and make advance payments for replacement plant and machinery.	$7,195 (increased costs)
Unallocated Capital Works Account	Jacka Street (North Side)	Adjustment made to align the project budget with final project management fee reconciliation completed at financial year-end.	$7,285 (increased costs)
Unallocated Capital Works Account	Open Space Path Network renewal program		$15,402 (increased costs)

Capital Works Program End of Financial Year 25-26
Budget Adjustment Requests

As at 30-June-2026

Transfer From	Transfer To (receiving project budget account)	Reason for adjustment	Amount (ex GST)
Unallocated Capital Works Account	Darebin Libraries Collection - Digital	Accounting corrections still required to transfer journals to the appropriate ledger accounts.	$17,698 (increased costs)
Unallocated Capital Works Account	Footpath renewal Program	Additional construction expenditure was incurred to deliver the full project scope and meet the approved project objectives.	$20,105 (increased costs)
Unallocated Capital Works Account	Soil Contamination-Darebin Park Lands	Additional construction expenditure was incurred to deliver the full project scope and meet the approved project objectives.	$21,392 (increased costs)
Unallocated Capital Works Account	Speed cushion replacement program	Accounting corrections still required to transfer journals to the appropriate ledger accounts.	$22,782 (increased costs)
Unallocated Capital Works Account	BRP-Essential Reactive Capital Renewal Program	Adjustment made to align the project budget with final project management fee reconciliation completed at financial year-end.	$33,495 (increased costs)
Unallocated Capital Works Account	Heavy Vehicle replacement Program	Adjustment is required to accommodate increased costs, driven by the need to place orders and make advance payments for replacement vehicles with extended manufacturing and delivery lead times to support fleet renewal and service continuity.	$330,143 (increased costs)

9.6 MAYER PARK SPORTS GROUND FUNDING

Author: Manager Natural & Civic Spaces
Principal Recreation Planner
Senior Coordinator Recreation & Leisure

Reviewed By: Chief Executive Officer

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Council has committed $75,000 in 2026-27 for the design of sportsground improvements at Mayer Park and currently plans $2.5 million in 2028-29 for delivery of the works as outlined in the current four-year capital works program budget.

In June 2026, the Victorian Government announced a $500,000 funding commitment for upgrades at Mayer Park. To access this funding, Council must submit an application to Sport and Recreation Victoria.

This report seeks Council authorisation to submit that application. Officers recommend directing the funding towards sportsground renewal works rather than pavilion improvements or designs, as the playing surface is the site's highest priority need. Tenant clubs support this approach, which would maximise investment in improving playability and user experience. Council has an ongoing commitment to look after the pavilion in good condition, and the building currently has around 30 years of life remaining.

Officer Recommendation

That Council:

(1) Endorses the submission of a grant application to Sport and Recreation Victoria for upgrades to Mayer Park, with the scope of the grant application to be focused on sports ground renovation.

(2) Authorises the Chief Executive Officer to:

(a) Submit a grant application to Sport and Recreation Victoria to seek funding of a $500,000 contribution for design and construction of the Mayer Park Sportsground Renovation.

(b) Confirm as part of the funding application that Council will commit $75,000 for design and $2,000,000 for construction in its Capital Works Program with timing to align to the agreed project timeline.

(c) Negotiate a funding agreement, including, if necessary, any adjustments to scope to reach agreement with Sport and Recreation Victoria on the basis that the project retains a primary focus on sportsground renovation and where Council's funding contribution remains within Council's current four-year Capital Works Program.

(d) Execute a funding agreement and any other required documents to secure the grant funding.

BACKGROUND / KEY INFORMATION

Mayer Park in Thornbury is a district-level sports facility used by Darebin United Football Club in winter and Northcote Cricket Club in summer. The reserve accommodates two soccer pitches or one cricket oval and includes a pavilion with player and official amenities.

The project has been allocated funding through the Victorian Government's 2026-27 Local Community Sport and Recreation Funded Projects program.

To secure the funding, Council must enter into a Funding Agreement with the Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions (DJSIR) by September 2026 and submit a project application detailing the proposed scope, budget, delivery timeline and stakeholder engagement. Officers have commenced engagement with key stakeholders and Sport and Recreation Victoria (SRV) to support the application process.

The facility is home to Darebin United Football Club (286 participants, including women's, girls' teams) and Northcote Cricket Club (89 participants), which is working to establish women's and girls' teams.

Previous Council Resolution

This matter is not the subject of a previous Council resolution.

ALIGNMENT TO 2041 DAREBIN COMMUNITY VISION

Pillar 1: Vibrant, Healthy and Connected

ALIGNMENT TO OUR DAREBIN PLAN 2025-29

Strategic Direction 3: Health and Wellbeing - A City where everyone in the community can access the opportunities, infrastructure and services they need to be physically and mentally safe and healthy.

DISCUSSION

Project need

There is a clear need for sports ground renovation at Mayer Park, and the funding opportunity is clearly aligned with Council’s assessment of priorities. Council has committed funding towards design of

$75K for design in the 2026-27 financial year and $2.5M for construction in 2028-29

- A Council 2025 condition assessment rated the sportsground as needing renovation and in very poor condition. In 2026, ongoing waterlogging and pooling have rendered the ground frequently unusable, limiting basic use and negatively impacting participant experience.
- The ground renovation project is a high advocacy priority in Football Victoria's Facilities Strategy 2025-2035 and is supported by Cricket Victoria.

Council’s assessment is that the pavilion has 30 years life and therefore Council does not have currently plans for major works at this pavilion. Council has an ongoing commitment to looking after this pavilion in good condition through its maintenance programs. The tenant clubs currently clean the pavilion.

Recommended focus for grant application

To address the highest priority need at Mayer Park, officers recommend that the grant funding be directed towards the sportsground renovation project.

The proposed application scope includes:

- Development of a sportsground renovation design package, including:
    - Regrading the playing surface and installing a sand-based profile to improve drainage.
    - Installing subsurface drainage infrastructure to improve playability, reduce wear and address waterlogging.
    - Assessing improvements to the cricket wicket table.
    - Instating and testing irrigation infrastructure.
    - Installing a new turf playing surface.
- Tendering and construction of the approved sportsground upgrade.
- Alignment with Football Victoria and Cricket Victoria facility guidelines, and relevant Sport and Recreation Victoria Female Friendly Sport Infrastructure and Universal Design Guidelines.

The Victorian Government's funding announcement provides *"up to $500,000 to support the delivery of a surface upgrades at Mayer Park and planning for a pavilion".*

Officers propose that the grant application focus on sportsground renovation works and not pavilion planning or design. This approach would maximise investment in addressing the poor condition and performance of the playing surface, which has been identified as the site's most pressing priority. Council generally plans for renewal of facilities at their end of life and the current expected lifetime of the pavilion is 30+ years.

Tenant clubs have been consulted and support the sportsground renovation works as the priority. Sport and Recreation Victoria have also been consulted and has not raised concerns. However, formal approval of a scope variation will be required from the relevant Minister.

It is recommended that Council authorise the Chief Executive Officer to negotiate and approve any required amendments to the funding scope, if needed, to enable agreement to be reached with the Victorian Government and to accommodate any particular Victorian Government requirements, so long as the primary focus of the grant is the sports ground improvements, and the Council's contribution remains within its adopted budget.

CONSIDERATION OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT (2020) PRINCIPLES

Financial Management

Council has allocated a budget of $2.5 million for renovation of the sports grounds in 2028-29, and $75K in the 2026-27 year for design. This budget is based on a cost estimate which is subject to revisions as design and tendering progresses.

Should Council apply and be successful, the grant funding would contribute towards this project and would offset current Council budget allocations by up to $500K.

In entering into a funding agreement with State Government, Council would commit to delivering both design and construction phases of this project, acknowledging it will

financially commit to budget for construction and underwrite risks associated with price changes to secure the full grant funding.

Community Engagement

Engagement and Communications Plans will be developed to support the project which will include key external stakeholders:

- Darebin United Soccer Club
- Northcote Cricket Club
- Sport and Recreation Victoria
- Football Victoria
- Cricket Victoria
- Casual users of Mayer Park

Other Principles for consideration

Overarching Governance Principles and Supporting Principles

(b) priority is to be given to achieving the best outcomes for the municipal community, including future generations;

(g) the ongoing financial viability of the Council is to be ensured;

Public Transparency Principles

(a) Council decision making processes must be transparent except when the Council is dealing with information that is confidential by virtue of this Act or any other Act;

Strategic Planning Principles

(c) Strategic planning must take into account the resources needed for effective implementation;

(d) strategic planning must identify and address the risks to effective implementation;

Service Performance Principles

(a) services should be provided in an equitable manner and be responsive to the diverse needs of the municipal community;

(b) services should be accessible to the members of the municipal community for whom the services are intended;

COUNCIL POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

Environmental Sustainability Considerations (including Climate Emergency)

The project will address Council's ESD policy in planning, design and construction phases.

Equity, Inclusion, Wellbeing and Human Rights Considerations:

Project planning phase will include an Equity and Gender Impact Assessment.

Economic Development and Cultural Considerations

Sporting facility design and construction projects generally contribute to employment and local economic development opportunities.

Operational Impacts

This resolution will not have operational impacts.

The tenant sporting clubs would face operational impacts from the project and officers would work with clubs on alternative ground allocations and scheduling during the proposed works period.

Legal and Risk Implications

A funding agreement is required to be executed with the State Government to access the State Government funding, which includes acknowledgement guidelines and requirements that Council will need to abide by.

IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

Pending Council's decision, to secure the funding, the following steps are required:

- Confirm scope variation to remove pavilion design works to design and construction of the Mayer Park Sportsground Renovation.
- Prepare and submit a funding application, including a project plan, project scope, delivery timeline and cost estimate, demonstrating project viability.
- Execute a funding agreement.

Officers will continue to deliver the planning and design phase of this project as per the 2026-27 Capital Works Program regardless of the council decision.

Attachments

Nil

DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST

Section 130 of the *Local Government Act 2020* requires members of Council staff and persons engaged under contract to provide advice to Council to disclose any conflicts of interest in a matter to which the advice relates.

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

9.7 MERRI COMMON AND SURROUNDS OPEN SPACE IMPROVEMENT PROJECT - PROJECT UPDATE

Author: Capital Project Manager

Reviewed By: Chief Executive Officer

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Following Council's resolution at its April 2026 meeting, the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA) has provided a formal response (attached at **Appendix A**) which:

- Clarifies that it is requesting that Council maintain and fund maintenance of Merri Common Reserve and Caddayes Corner under a lease from the Victorian Government,
- Proposes an alternative delivery model for delivery of the capital works, whereby VicTrack would undertake many of the works, and Council would play a supporting role particularly with respect to delivery and procurement of the play and fitness equipment, and
- Makes clear that the scope of improvements at Peters Reserve is expected to be reduced to enable works at Merri Common to be undertaken as price escalation current prices.

The key decision for Council is whether to agree to the State Government's request to assume responsibility for the maintenance assets at Merri Common Reserve. The primary consideration is the balance between the ongoing operational costs to Council and the opportunity to secure significant State Government-funded open space improvements for the community.

If Council agrees to maintain this site the estimated annual maintenance cost is approximately $45,000. A lease agreement is proposed. The State Government hasn’t indicated a particular term however Council officers would recommend Council propose a 10-year term.

If Council decides not to assume maintenance responsibilities, it will be a matter for the State Government to decide whether to maintain the area and proceed with the project. It is not clear what approach the State Government would take.

The proposal for an alternative delivery model for the capital works has been assessed and could achieve the project outcomes. Council could agree to it as a practical pathway forward to deliver the project. There are some project risks that this approach would reduce:

- VicTrack would resolve contamination risks in the course of delivering project works.
- Fewer approvals would be required as VicTrack would be delivering works on their own land. This would also reduce project delay risks and expedite the delivery schedule.

Officer Recommendation

That Council:

(1) Notes the recent correspondence from the State Government seeking that Council maintain and fund maintenance of an area of Merri Common and Caddayes Corner; assume ownership of new assets at these sites to be funded through the Better Parks and Playgrounds Grant; and which proposes an alternative delivery model for the construction of the improvements at this site.

(2) Provides direction to officers regarding how to progress with the Merri Common and Surrounds program.

(3) Notes that officers will continue to work with relevant Victorian departments and agencies to progress the Merri Common and Surrounds program in line with Council's direction and will update the *Your Say Darebin* webpage with relevant information to ensure the community remains informed about the project's progress.

Background

In 2022, the Victorian Government announced funding through the Better Parks and Playgrounds Program to support open space improvements at Merri Common Reserve.

Merri Common is located on State-owned land within an active rail corridor and is managed by Metro Trains Melbourne on behalf of VicTrack. While the land is neither owned nor managed by Council, Council was identified as the sole grant recipient and delivery agency responsible for implementing the funded works.

At its meeting on 23 October 2023, Council resolved to support the delivery of a broader precinct-based open space improvement program encompassing Merri Common, Caddayes Corner, Peters Reserve and Green Memorial Reserve. This approach was intended to maximise community benefit and improve connectivity, accessibility and amenity across the precinct. Green Memorial Reserve was subsequently removed from scope following consultation and recommendation with the Wurundjeri Woi-Wurrung Council.

Council's support for delivering works at Merri Common was originally accepted on the basis that all assets constructed at the site would remain the responsibility of the relevant landowner.

Since project commencement, significant resources have been deployed to support project delivery, including community engagement, site investigations, concept and detailed design development, project management, stakeholder coordination, approvals processes and grant administration activities. Project implementation has been delayed by complex approval processes and unresolved maintenance responsibilities.

The concept designs endorsed through community engagement period are provided as **Appendix B**. The scope of works is expected to be revised to reflect recent cost inflation and the need to revise what can be delivered within the project budget.

Previous Council Resolution

At its meeting held on the 28 July, 2026, Council resolved the following:

***That** Council:*

(1) Notes that a formal response has not yet been received from the Victorian Government about the clarifications Council's sought following its resolution of 28 April 2026.

(2) Notes that direction from Council will be sought via a future report to be presented after the State Government has provided the required clarifications and information.

(3) Notes that ongoing delays are impacting the project delivery timeframe, are likely to result in higher costs for construction, and it is likely that the project scope will need to be reduced to remain within the available funding.

(4) Notes that officers will continue to work with relevant Victorian departments and agencies to progress the Merri Common and Surrounds project in line with Council's directions.

At its meeting held on the 28 April, 2026, Council resolved the following:

***That** Council:*

(1) Notes the recent letter from that the State Government that has advised that neither DEECA nor the Department of Transport and Planning are intending to maintain the grant funded improvements on Merri Common and Caddayes Corner and has asked that Council assume maintenance responsibility for these.

(2) Notes that this is contrary to the basis on which the grant was applied for and the expressed understanding of this project.

(3) Notes that ongoing delays with relevant State landowners in are impacting the project delivery timeframe and are resulting in associated financial risks which, if they continue, may affect project scope, deliverables and Council's reputation.

(4) Seek clarification on whether the State Government is still open to a fee-for-service model for Council to maintain Merri Common, and

a) if the State Government is open to this, authorises the Chief Executive Officer to proceed in line with Council's resolution of 15 December 2025,

b) if the State Government is not open to this, seeks clarification from the State Government about the nature of the proposed agreement and the particular maintenance activities and risks they are proposing Council undertake, and notes that this will be Reported to a future Council meeting for decision

(5) Notes that officers will continue to work with relevant Victorian departments and agencies to progress the Merri Common and Surrounds project in line with Council's direction, and will update the Your Say Darebin webpage with relevant information to ensure the community remains informed about the project's progress.

At its meeting held on the 15 December, 2026, Council resolved the following:

***That** Council:*

(1) Thanks the community and stakeholders for their valuable contributions and feedback about the Merri Common and Surrounds Program.

(2) Adopts the draft concept designs for Merri Common, Caddayes Corner, and Peters Reserve, as presented in Appendix A, which include a range of new elements and adjustments following consideration of community feedback.

(3) Notes that the landowner of Merri Common and Caddayes Corner (VicTrack) is still considering the draft concept designs and may request changes to the designs prior to providing approval.

(4) Authorises the Chief Executive Officer to incorporate any changes to draft concept designs required by the landowner of Merri Common and Caddayes Corner on the basis that they are achievable within the current project budget.

(5) Authorises the Chief Executive Officer to proceed with delivery of improvements at Council's sites in advance of progressing improvements of State Government owned sites, subject to approval of the grant provider (DEECA).

(6) Notes that the State Government has asked Council if it would consider maintaining Merri Common on a fee-for-service basis, noting that this has not yet been put as a formal request.

(7) Agrees in principle to maintain Merri Common on a fee-for-service basis, and authorises the Chief Executive Officer explore, negotiate and execute a maintenance agreement with the Victorian State Government for Merri Common subject to the following conditions, or any others the CEO requires:

a. Maintenance costs are fully funded by the State Government.

b. Council would not undertake management of any land contamination issues at the site, nor would liabilities transfer to Council relating to this.

c. Any special requirements relating to working in the rail corridor, including permitting or specialist training requirements are factored into the cost model.

At its meeting held on the 3 March, 2025 Council resolved the following:

***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.

At its meeting held on the 23 October, 2023 Council resolved the following:

***That** Council:*

(1) Directs the CEO (or delegate) to apply for a grant from the Better Parks and Playground program for 'Option A' as outlined in this report to make open space improvements to Merri Common Reserve, Caddayes Corner, Peters Reserve and Green Memorial Reserve, with the additional option of a small-scale bike track for young children at Merri Common Reserve, subject to community feedback and on the basis that the State Government would retain ownership and maintenance responsibility for any improvements on its land.

(2) Delegates to the CEO (or delegate) to finalise the grant application and any necessary grant agreements, including making moderate adjustments to the project budget breakdown or project delivery scope, subject to these being largely consistent with Option A as outlined in this report.

(3) Notes that should the grant application be successful, the CEO (or delegate), would progress with implementation, in line with the CEO's normal delegations from Council.

(4) Note that officers will communicate Council's decision to VicTrack, the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action and the Merri Common Stationeers.

ALIGNMENT TO 2041 DAREBIN COMMUNITY VISION

Strategic Direction 3: Climate, Green and Sustainable

Discussion

Three options for Council consideration are set out below. Each option provides both an outline and assessment of the proposed approach to maintenance, asset ownership and project delivery.

The key issue for Council to consider is if it will fund and undertake the management and maintenance responsibility for the assets delivered at Merri Common and Caddayes Corner as requested by the State Government.

If Council agrees to the State Government's proposal, the mechanisms proposed by the State Government have been assessed as suitable for achieving the project goals, including the proposal for a lease, for new asset ownership to be with Council, and the alternative works delivery model. If Council agrees to the proposal, it is recommended it do so on the basis of:

- A lease term of 10 years;
- A peppercorn rental agreement;
- That the resolution of any contaminated land management issues that may arise remain the responsibility of the landowner; and
- Council's role in project delivery would continue to be funded by the grant.

Options Summary	Benefits	Risks and costs
Option 1 Council Accepts Ongoing Maintenance Responsibility, and agrees to the Alternative delivery model, including the establishment of: A lease agreement for ongoing maintenance of Merri Common and Caddayes Corner. Modification to the funding agreement to reflect that Council's role in delivery would be reduced.	• Secures delivery of the project. Provides certainty to the community, stakeholders and funding partners. • Delivers improvements and play equipment at Merri common and the intended community, environmental and recreational benefits. • The alternative delivery model reduces some project risks for council including contaminated land management risks and risks associated with delays in securing necessary approvals and permits.	• Creates an ongoing maintenance and asset management obligation for Council. Approximately $45,000 per year plus CPI. • For any assets that reach end of life during the lease term, Council would need to decide whether to renew these or decommission them. • Council would become 'owner' of assets above ground such as benches or play equipment. At end of lease Council may have an obligation to remove these (unless otherwise agreed by the landowner, or unless another lease is established with similar terms).

Options Summary	Benefits	Risks and costs
Option 2 Council Declines Ongoing Maintenance Responsibility and reconfirms its willingness to proceed with the project on the basis that the land owner's undertake maintenance on their own land Council would write to the State Government to express its ongoing commitment to the project, should the State wish to proceed.	• Council would retain $45,000 per year plus CPI which could be used for delivery of other community services.	• It would be up to the State Government to decide whether to proceed or not. • It is not clear if the project would go ahead as no State Government department or agency has confirmed that it has available maintenance funds for the proposed improvements. If the project did not go ahead, the intended community, environmental and recreational benefits would not go ahead. • If the project did not go ahead, a number of community stakeholders would be disappointed.
Option 3 Council resolves to maintain Merri Common and Caddayes Corner and seeks to remain the primary delivery partner (as per the current funding agreement). (Not recommended)	Noting that this is no longer the preferred delivery model of the State Government (including the funding body), and it is not clear if the State would agree to this, if this approach was ultimately agreed to by the State Government it would: • Deliver improvements and play equipment at Merri common and the intended community, environmental and recreational benefits. • Council would retain more directly control over how to manage the delivery including as relates to the scope of improvements and community communications.	The key risk is that this is no longer the preferred delivery model of the State Government (including the funding body), and it is not clear that all the State agencies involved would be prepared to agree to this. If the State Government ultimately did agree, it is likely that there would further delays while agreement is sought and various approvals are secured. Delays would result in further cost inflation and a high risk of reduced scope of improvement works. This option would also have the same risks as option 1: • Creates an ongoing maintenance and asset management obligation for Council. Approximately $45,000 per year plus CPI. • For any assets that reach end of life during the Lease term, Council would need to decide whether to renew these or decommission them. • Council would become 'owner' of assets above ground such as benches or play equipment. At end of lease Council may have an obligation to remove these (unless otherwise agreed by the landowner).

Request for Council to Maintain a Portion of State Government Land and Assume Ownership of New Assets

The State Government is proposing that Council enter into a lease agreement with VicTrack for a portion of Merri Common and Caddayes Corner (**see Appendix C**).

The lease is proposed to contain standard clauses for matters such as public liability and maintenance. It is understood the lease would:

- Outline the roles and responsibilities of agencies, including minimum maintenance standards, which are generally below Council's standards for maintenance of public open spaces.
- Provide a clear agreement as to the term of the lease and arrangements at the end of the leasing period.
- Be on a peppercorn rent basis.
- Enable approval and permit requirements for maintenance activities to be minimised, making operational management reasonably straight forward.

The State Government has also proposed that Council would become owner of assets that are created by the project. This is understood to apply to assets such as play equipment, benches and bin cages, but would not include vegetation or trees. In practical terms this means:

- Council would have control about decisions at the end of life of assets including whether to renew the asset or to remove it.
- Council would be responsible for replacement of assets including if damaged by vandalism. It would ensure assets are covered by insurance and any other normal responsibilities as owner.
- At the end of the lease term, unless otherwise agreed by the State Government, Council may be required to remove assets and return the area to its previous state.

Proposal for an Alternative Delivery Model Involving VicTrack Delivering the core components of Capital Works

Under the proposed model, VicTrack would deliver the majority of works and manage approvals, land access and environmental matters. Council would undertake some aspects of delivery, particularly relating to play equipment and community communication.

Assessment of this approach is that it can achieve the project outcomes sought and that Council could agree to it as a practical pathway forward to deliver the project. Some project risks would also be reduced:

- VicTrack would resolve unknown contamination risks in the course of delivering the project.
- Fewer approvals would be needed as VicTrack would be delivering works on their own land. This would also reduce project delay risks.

To implement this, the funding agreement between DEECA and Council would be amended to reflect the changes to Council's role in delivery of the project.

Impact on Scope and Timeline

Project delays and escalating construction costs have reduced the purchasing capacity of the available grant funding. Consistent with the original intent of the grant, Merri Common and Caddayes Corner remain the priority locations for development.

As a result, the Peters Reserve component will require scope reductions once delivery costs are confirmed. While the extent of any changes are not yet known, there is a possibility that the available budget may no longer accommodate replacement of the Peters Reserve playspace.

Further clarification has been sought from DEECA and VicTrack regarding the final scope of works, including the inclusion of specific elements such as the drinking fountain and nature-based playspace.

Under the proposed model, works at Merri Common are expected to commence before Christmas 2026 and be completed by mid-2027. Construction is anticipated to take approximately six months. There remains a risk of further delays which could further reduce the scope of improvement works.

CONSIDERATION OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT (2020) PRINCIPLES

Financial Management

The maintenance cost estimate for the assets at Council's typical service standard is approximately $45,000 per annum, plus CPI. The proposal is that this site would be leased to Council on a peppercorn rent basis and therefore no rental costs have been included in the following estimates. Over a ten year period, it is estimated to total approximately $542,000.

Year	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Cost Estimate	$45,000	$46,500	$49,900	$51,600	$53,400	$55,300	$57,000	$59,000	$61,300	$63,450

The assets delivered through the project are fully funded by the State Government, with no Council capital contribution required for project delivery. If the assets are to be renewed at end of life, based on current assumptions, the replacement value may be $1.1 million in around 15 years. Council may need to incorporate depreciation of assets it owns on State Government land to comply with accounting standards, which would be a non-cash item in its accounts.

COUNCIL POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

Operational Impacts

The proposed alternative delivery model would transfer the core delivery responsibility to VicTrack and reduce some project risks particularly associated with approvals and contaminated land.

Legal and Risk Implications

The is a funding agreement in place with DEECA. If Council agrees to the alternative delivery model **(option 1)**, this funding agreement will need to be amended to reflect the change in Council's role.

If Council agrees to maintain these sites, a lease agreement would need to be established with VicTrack. Additional agreements may also be required to define matters such as maintenance standards, access arrangements, maintenance responsibilities, risk allocation, and reporting requirements. It is therefore recommended that Council authorise the Chief Executive Officer to negotiate and execute any lease, maintenance, access, or other associated agreements necessary to give effect to Council's decision.

Form of words for decision and conditions

Depending on Council's direction in relation to this matter, to address risk, several conditions would be recommended. A form of words that could be used to for each option is set out below.

Option 1 -
If Council wishes to proceed with Option 1, it is recommended that Council included some conditions. Below is a form of words that could be used as the basis of a motion for decision:

2. *Agrees to maintain Merri Common Reserve and Caddayes Corner, as identified in **Appendix C**, excluding the Indigenous Garden, on the basis of:*
    a. *A term of up to 10 years*
    b. *A peppercorn rental agreement*
    c. *The landowner retaining responsibility for the assessment, remediation or management of contaminated land beyond routine maintenance obligations.*
3. *Agrees to take on asset ownership for new assets created at Merri Common Caddayes Corner not including: underground infrastructure, vegetation and trees, or drainage infrastructure.*
4. *Agrees to an alternative delivery model, whereby VicTrack plays a primary project delivery role and Council support of some project delivery requirement, on the basis that:*
    a. *Council's project delivery, project management and communications activities continue to be funded through the project grant.*
    b. *The State Government facilitates all approvals required for project delivery.*
    c. *The roles, responsibilities and governance arrangements of all parties are clearly defined and agreed.*
5. *Notes that Council remains willing to deliver the works as originally agreed.*
6. *Authorises the Chief Executive Officer (or delegate) to negotiate, finalise and execute all agreements and arrangements necessary to facilitate project delivery, and to require any additional terms and conditions necessary to protect Council's interests, including:*
    a. *funding agreements and/or variations;*
    b. *project delivery arrangements;*
    c. *maintenance, management and service agreements;*
    d. *lease and licence agreements; and*

Option 2 –

If Council wishes to proceed with Option 2, a form of words that could be used as the basis of a motion for decision are:

2. *Does not agree to maintain improvements at Merri Common Reserve and Caddayes Corner*
3. *Council remains committed to the project and willing to deliver the works as originally agreed.*
4. *Seeks direction from the State Government as to whether it wishes to proceed.*

5. *Authorises the Chief Executive Officer or delegate to negotiate, finalise and execute all agreements and arrangements necessary to facilitate project delivery or project closure by the State Government, including but not limited to amending or exiting any existing agreements subject to ensure Council's project delivery costs to date have been covered.*

If Council is considering Option 3, a form of words that could be used as the basis of a motion for decision are

2. *Agrees to maintain Merri Common Reserve and Caddayes Corner, as identified in **Appendix C**, excluding the Indigenous Garden, on the basis of:*
    a. *A term of up to 10 years*
    b. *A peppercorn rental agreement*
    c. *The landowner retaining responsibility for the assessment, remediation or management of contaminated land beyond routine maintenance obligations.*
3. *Agrees to take on asset ownership for new assets created by the Merri Common and Surrounds project not including: underground infrastructure, vegetation and trees, or drainage infrastructure.*
4. *Council re-confirms its commitment to deliver the works as originally agreed.*
5. *Authorises the Chief Executive Officer (or delegate) to negotiate, finalise and execute all agreements and arrangements necessary to facilitate project delivery, and to require any additional terms and conditions necessary to protect Council's interests, including:*
    a. *funding agreements and/or variations;*
    b. *project delivery arrangements ;*
    c. *maintenance, management and service agreements;*
    d. *lease and licence agreements; and*

Community engagement and communications

The project has been publicly announced and is supported by a significant State Government funding commitment. There is a strong community expectation that the project will proceed and be delivered within a reasonable timeframe.

While the factors contributing to current delays have largely been outside Council's direct control, prolonged uncertainty regarding project delivery increases the risk of community frustration and stakeholder dissatisfaction.

Attachments

- Response to Council Enquiry Regarding Maintenance at Merri Common and Surrounds (**Appendix A**) ⇩
- Council Endorsed Concept Designs Following Community Consultation Process (**Appendix B**) ⇩
- Proposed Leased Area - Merri Common Reserve (**Appendix C**) ⇩

DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST

Section 130 of the *Local Government Act 2020* requires members of Council staff and persons engaged under contract to provide advice to Council to disclose any conflicts of interest in a matter to which the advice relates.

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

OFFICIAL

Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action

Ms Anne Howard
Chief Executive Officer
City of Darebin
PO Box 91
PRESTON VIC 3072

Dear Ms Howard

MERRI COMMON AND SURROUNDS OPEN SPACE IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

I write with reference to the letter of 25 June 2026, from The Hon. Enver Erdogan MLC, Minister for Environment, regarding the aforementioned project.

Following ongoing and productive discussions between officers of City of Darebin (Council), VicTrack and the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA), I am now in a position to provide further detail on the alternative proposed model for delivery and ongoing management of the Merri Common and Surrounds Open Space Improvement Project (the project) as communicated through Minister Erdogan's letter.

As you are aware, the project delivers on a $1.5 million commitment made by the former Minister for Environment, The Hon. Steve Dimopoulos MP, under the Better Parks and Playgrounds program. Through a series of agreement variations at the behest of Council, the project now seeks to deliver enhancements and improvements across three key sites being Merri Common, Caddayes Corner and Peters Reserve with Council having been provided $688,750 for stage 1 works following signing of a funding agreement in June 2024.

The project has experienced extensive delays and works have not progressed at any of the three sites; the primary barriers to delivery remain project scope and responsibility for ongoing maintenance and liability for the Merri Common and Caddayes Corner sites. However, I appreciate that Council remains committed to the project and the important benefit it will deliver to the community.

Through recent engagements between Council, DEECA and VicTrack, there has been in-principle agreement reached, subject to the Council's formal approval, on an alternative model for delivery of the project. This would see the project works delivered through partnership between VicTrack and Council, with Council assuming ongoing management of the site under agreement upon completion. I understand Council is willing to consider this proposal subject to clarification on several matters that are to be formally considered at Council's ordinary meeting later this month. In response to these matters I advise as follows:

Project delivery

- Project scope will be finalised based on the agreed alternative project delivery model, which reduces the interface with MTM, subject to budget, but will include enhancements and improvements across Merri Common and Caddayes Corner (with Peters Reserve to be dealt with separately as detailed later in this letter).
- As landowner, VicTrack will work with the Department of Transport and Planning (DTP) and Metro Trains Melbourne (MTM) to seek the excision of the proposed works site from the MTM lease. This will enable Council to deliver the proposed assets in an efficient and cost-effective manner and their ongoing maintenance.
- It may take some time to enable the formal excision and transfer of the site, so VicTrack will work with MTM to provide an access deed, which will enable initial works to commence.

VICTORIA State Government

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- VicTrack supports the reduced scope of works that incorporates the majority of, but not all, infrastructure proposed through Council's plan. This support is subject to Council accepting ongoing management and maintenance of the site including infrastructure under the Agreement following project delivery.
- We acknowledge that the project site extends across VicTrack's land and into open space owned by the City of Darebin. Therefore, a collaborative approach will be required on the management of this site.
- VicTrack will not be able to procure or install some of the proposed assets, such as playground equipment, however this will be managed through the partnership approach to project completion.

Agreement

- Following the completion of the works, it is proposed that Council will enter into a lease with VicTrack for the agreed area.
- The lease will contain standard clauses for matters such as public liability and maintenance which would mirror clauses contained in existing Agreements held between Council and VicTrack.
- Given the community benefit, VicTrack proposes a peppercorn rent for the sites similar to other community leases that VicTrack has in place with local governments for public open space.

Maintenance

- Ongoing maintenance of the site under the Agreement to Council would be the responsibility of Council as well as the ownership of the assets and any improvements.
- Minimum maintenance standards will be outlined in the license and/or lease and will align with requirements in existing agreements between Council and VicTrack for the management of VicTrack owned-open space in Darebin.

It is acknowledged that Council has placed progression of the project at Peters Reserve on hold pending the outcome of negotiations regarding delivery at Merri Common and Caddayes Corner. Once final costs for project delivery for Merri Common and Caddayes Corner are known, DEECA will re-engage with Council on Council's proposal for Peters Reserve subject to the remaining funding envelope.

I trust the further detail provided through this letter provides Council with the necessary information to inform a positive outcome later this month. Should Council support the proposal, it is anticipated final design and delivery details will be agreed at officer level between the State and Council, with a resultant variation to the current funding agreement between DEECA and Council.

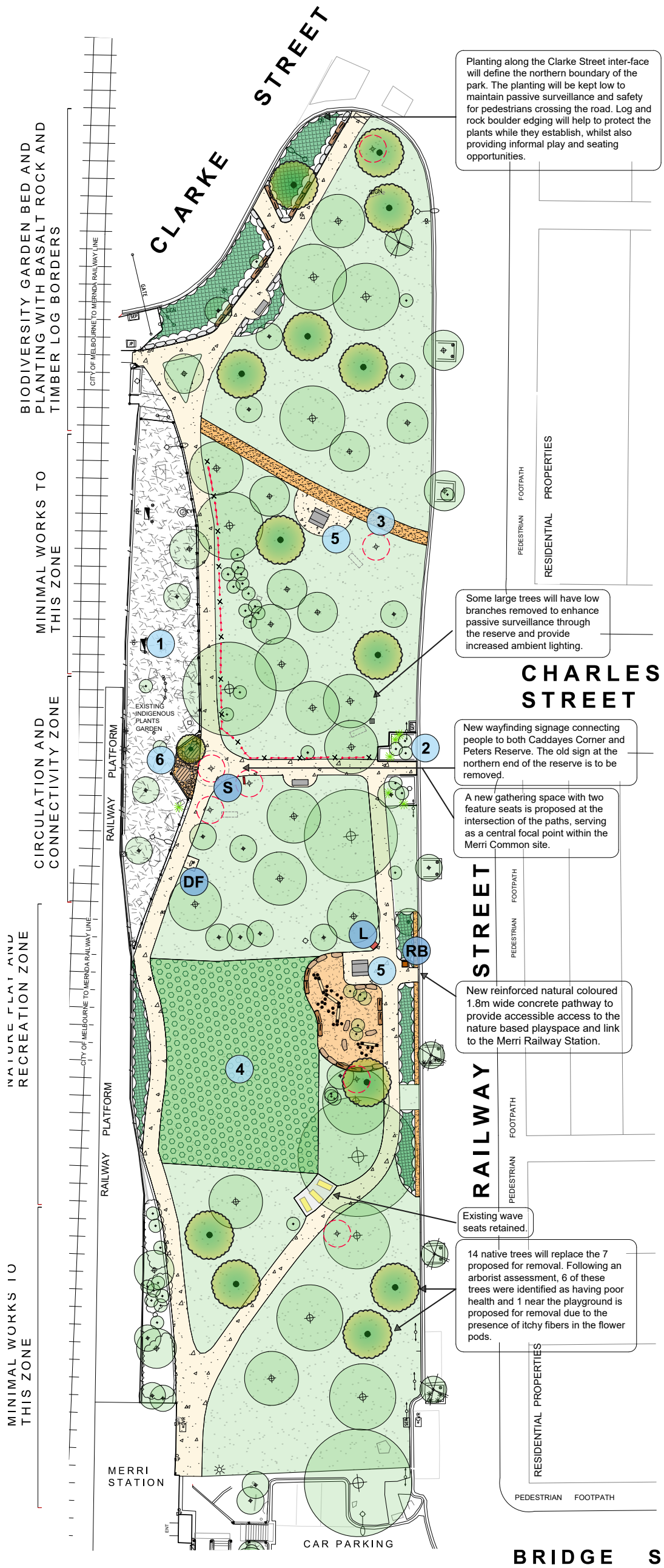
If there is any further information or clarification you believe necessary to support Council's decision later this month.

I look forward to supporting Council and VicTrack on the delivery of this important community project and realising Council's vision for the Merri Common and Surrounds Project.

Yours sincerely

21 / 07 / 2026

OFFICIAL



LEGEND

SURFACE TREATMENTS

Concrete pedestrian path to replace existing, 1.8m wide path.

Compacted gravel path, to replace existing 1.8m wide path.

Proposed feature paving, crushed rock and slate.

Proposed 1.8m wide concrete pedestrian path.

Proposed nature based play space mulch surface.

EDGING & FENCING

Existing bluestone garden edging,to be retained.

Existing bollard and chain fence to be retained.

Proposed log and rock garden edging.

PROPOSED FURNITURE

New wheelchair and pram accessible picnic table on a new concrete pad.

Bench seat with armrest on a new concrete pad.

New feature circular bench seats with a tree in the centre of one seat. These will create a focal point and gathering space.

RB Rubbish bin.

DF Drinking fountain including a dog bowl and garden tap connection.

L Community library stand.

S Wayfinding signage.

SOFT WORKS

Existing lawn area to be retained.

Existing tree to be retained.

1 Existing Merri Stationeer's Indigenous Garden to be retained.

Proposed native species tree.

4 Proposed instant turf with fresh topsoil.

Proposed garden bed with native and low height planting.

DEMOLITION

Existing seven trees to be removed.

Existing picnic seat to be removed.

Existing central pedestrian path intersection to be removed.

SIGN Existing sign to be removed.

Existing chain and bollard fence removed, to the east and north edge of the new path.

REFINED CONCEPT PLAN - JULY 2025

MERRI COMMON - 36A BRIDGE STREET, NORTHCOTE

DAREBIN CITY COUNCIL

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SCALE 1:200 (B1 SHEET) 0 2 4 6 8 10M

Drawn: SP/AL
Date: 31.07.2025
Project No.:24-023
Cad File:
Drawing No.: Sheet 1 of x

N

PLANTING

Allocasuarina verticillata

Acacia implexa

Lomandra longifolia 'Tanika'

Einadia nutans

Senna artemisioides

Rhagodia candolleana

Rhagodia spinescens

TYPICAL GARDEN BED

INFRASTRUCTURE AND NATURE PLAY ELEMENTS

CIRCULAR BENCH SEATING WITH PLANTING

TIMBER SEAT WITH A BACK REST AND ARMRESTS

TIMBER PICNIC TABLE

RUBBISH BIN

DRINKING FOUNTAIN, DOG BOWL AND TAP CONNECTION

COMMUNITY LIBRARY STAND

WAYFINDING SIGNAGE

COMPACTED TOPPINGS PATHWAY

CONCRETE PATHWAY

MUDSTONE ROCKS

TIMBER STEPPING LOGS

TIMBER LOGS

RAISED TIMBER BALANCING LOGS

CARVED ANIMAL MOTIFS

CARVED ANIMAL MOTIFS

TIMBER TOTEM POLES AND STEPPING LOGS

PALETTE OF MATERIALS

MERRI COMMEN, NORTHCOTE *Images are for illustrative purposes only

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LEGEND

SURFACE TREATMENTS

Existing lawn area to be retained.

Spread softfall wood mulch over the leaf litter beneath the two Gum trees.

Existing concrete pathway to be retained.

New reinforced concrete pathway connection through the east of the site over an existing earthen track.

New softfall mulch surface for new gym area.

Existing service pits to be retained.

EDGING & FENCING

Existing timber bollards to be enhanced with new a chain connected barrier between each bollard.

New recycled plastic bollards with a chain connected between each bollard.

New garden bed with Green Mongrel recycled plastic garden edge.

FURNITURE

One new wheelchair and pram accessible large picnic table fixed to an existing concrete slab.

One new seat with a backrest and armrests, fixed to an existing concrete slab.

New gym apparatus.

New wayfinding signage to connect the community to Merri Common and Peters Reserve.

Existing rubbish bin to be retained.

SOFT WORKS

New low shrub and tufting planting.

Five new evergreen trees.

Existing evergreen trees to be retained.

DEMOLITION

Existing picnic tables to be removed.

REFINED CONCEPT PLAN - JULY 2025

CADDAYES CORNER - 92 CLARKE STREET, NORTHCOTE

DAREBIN CITY COUNCIL

SCALE 1:150 (A1 SHEET)

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Drawn: AL/SP
Date: 31.07.2025
Project No.: 24-023
Cad File:
Drawing No.: Sheet 2 of X

PLANTING

Allocasuarina verticillata

Acacia implexa

Acacia pycnantha

Lomandra longifolia 'Tanika'

Einadia nutans

Senna artemisioides

Rhagodia candolleana

Rhagodia spinescens

TYPICAL GARDEN BED

TYPICAL GARDEN BED

INFRASTRUCTURE

GYM APPARATUS

TIMBER SEAT WITH A BACK REST AND ARM-RESTS

TIMBER PICNIC TABLE

CHAIN AND RECYCLED PLASTIC BOLLARD FENCE

WAYFINDING SIGNAGE

CONCRETE PATHWAY TO MATCH EXISTING

PALETTE OF MATERIALS

CADDAYES CORNER, NORTHCOTE *Images are for illustrative purposes only

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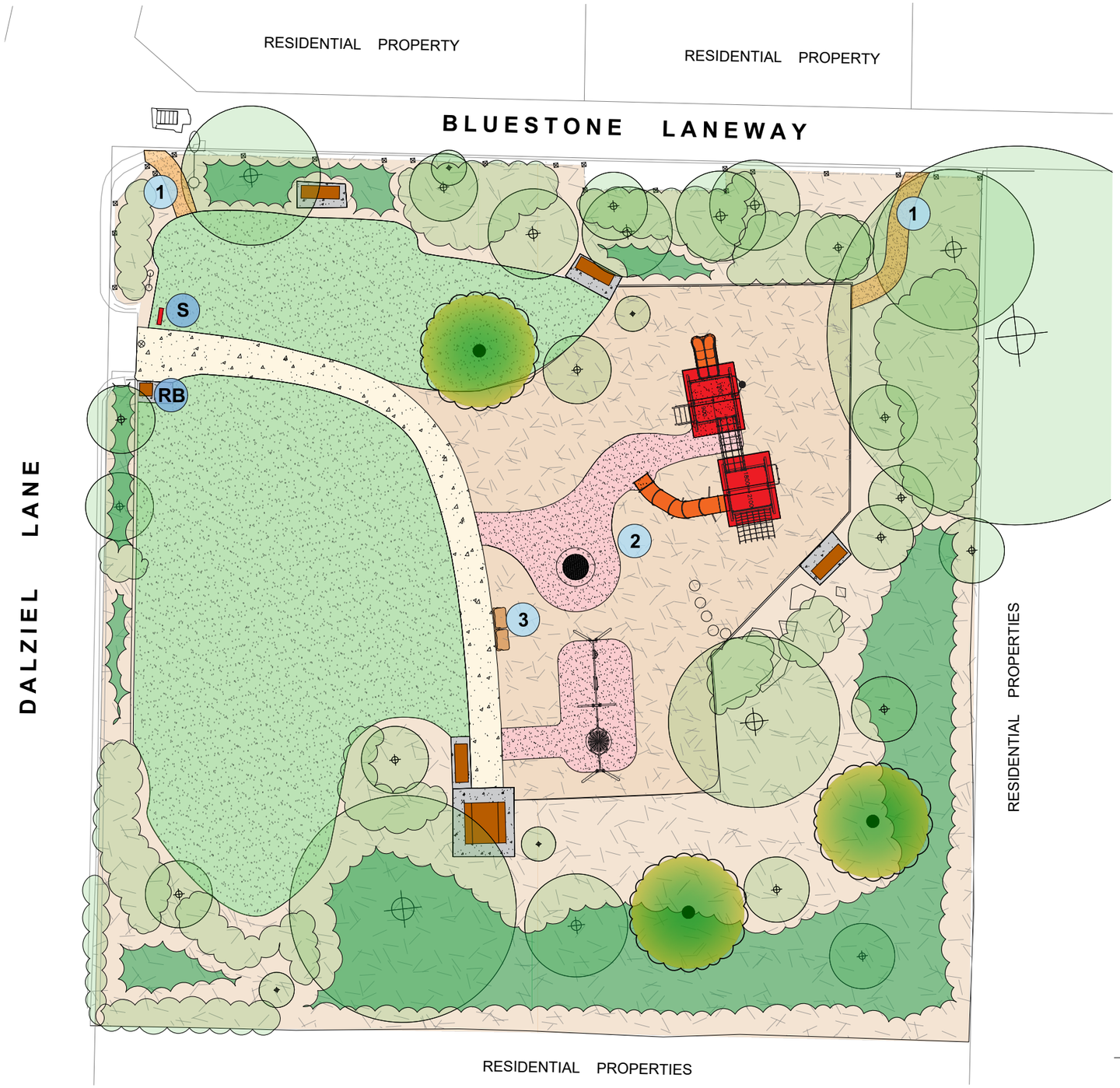

LEGEND

SURFACE TREATMENTS

New reinforced concrete pathway to replace existing granitic sand path

1 — New compacted toppings pathway as secondary access point

2 — New playspace with various softfall surfaces, including pram/wheelchair accessible surfaces, trampoline round and three-piece swing set

3 — New mudstone rocks to serve as a natural seating area

FURNITURE

Four existing seats and existing picnic table to be refurbished. This to include sanding, cleaning and painting

RB — Existing rubbish bin to be retained

S — New signage providing details regarding dog etiquette requirements near playspace.

SOFTWORKS

Existing lawn areas to be replaced with fresh topsoil and instant turf

Existing shrub and tufting planting to be retained

New shrubs and native/indigenous planting

Existing tree to be retained

One tree to be removed. This tree is listed for removal following an external arborist report which has identified that this tree is in poor health. The tree will be replaced with an Indigenous tree

Three new evergreen indigenous or native trees

REFINED CONCEPT PLAN
PETERS RESERVE - 14 DALZIEL LANE, NORTHCOTE
DAREBIN CITY COUNCIL

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0 1 2 3 4 5 10M
SCALE 1:100 (A1 SHEET)

Drawn: AL/SP
Date: 29.07.2025
Project No.: 24-023
Cad File:
Drawing No.: Sheet 2 of 2

N

PLANTING

Banksia marginata

Eucalyptus leucoxylon
'Euky Dwarf'

Acacia cognata

Lomandra longifolia
'Tanika'

Poa labillardieri

Dianella longifolia

Rhagodia candolleana

Rhagodia spinescens

TYPICAL GARDEN BED

TYPICAL GARDEN BED

PLAY APPARATUS

PLAY UNIT

TRAMPOLINE

COMMUNITY SWING SET

SEATING AND PATH

MUDSTONE ROCK INFORMAL SEATING

TIMBER PICNIC TABLE

CONCRETE PATHWAY

PALETTE OF MATERIALS

PETERS RESERVE, NORTHCOTE *Images are for illustrative purposes only

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165.78 m
387.30 m
Sat Apr 25 2026
Nearmap

9.8 DAREBIN'S ADVISORY COMMITTEES

Author: Coordinator Partnerships

Reviewed By: Chief Executive Officer

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Following a robust review of Council's Advisory Committee structure this report proposes the establishment of seven community advisory committees to provide strategic advice and valuable community input into Council decision-making. Five committees are proposed to provide advice about community-facing Strategic Directions of the Our Darebin Plan 2025-29, while two committees are proposed with specific focus on the Interfaith, and Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) communities, respectively.

This report outlines governance arrangements for the new committees. It is proposed that Common Terms of Reference (ToR) will apply consistently across the five Council Plan-aligned advisory committees (**Appendix A**) and Special ToR will outline the purpose and scope of the Interfaith and CALD committees (**Appendices B** and **C**) given the particular focus of these committees.

This report also identifies next steps to ensure the advisory committees operate effectively and support the safety, inclusion and participation of all members.

Officer Recommendation

That Council:

(1) Endorses the establishment, effective 1 September 2026, of the following four Advisory Committees aligned to the Strategic Directions of the Darebin Council Plan 2025-2029:

   a. **Equity, Diversity and Inclusion** Advisory Committee

   b. **Health and Wellbeing** Advisory Committee

   c. **Climate Leadership and Response** Advisory Committee

   d. **Vibrant Places and Economy** Advisory Committee.

(2) Notes that the Darebin Aboriginal Advisory Committee (DAAC) was established at the Council meeting on 28 April 2026.

(3) Adopts the Common Terms of Reference, attached at **Appendix A**, for the five Advisory Committees in points (1) and (2) of this resolution.

(4) Endorses the establishment, effective 1 September 2026 of the following committees:

   e. **Interfaith** Advisory Committee

   f. **Culturally and Linguistically Diverse** Advisory Committee

(5) Adopts the Special Terms of Reference for the Interfaith and CALD committees at **Appendices B** and **C**.

(6) Endorses the continuation of the current Councillor representatives to the DAAC until the annual Councillor appointment process following the election of the Mayor in November 2026 and agrees that Councillor-appointments to other committees will be determined at the time committee memberships are considered.

BACKGROUND / KEY INFORMATION

A review of Council's Advisory Committee model was undertaken during 2025–26 with the following objectives:

- Ensure stronger alignment between advisory committees and Council priorities, including the Council Plan 2025-29 and Darebin 2041 Community Vision.
- Clarify the purpose, role and value of advisory committees.
- Increase the impact of committee advice on Council decision-making.
- Strengthen transparency, accountability and trust in Council's engagement processes.
- Improve the effectiveness and efficiency of committee operations**.**

Proposed Advisory Committee model

Officers recommend an advisory committee model comprising seven advisory committees. Five committees are aligned to the Strategic Directions of the Our Darebin Council Plan 2025-29, while two committees provide a specific community focus. The Interfaith and CALD committees are proposed in response to feedback received from advisory committee members during the April 2026 engagement sessions, and to reflect ongoing community needs.

1. **Darebin Aboriginal Advisory Committee** (already endorsed)
2. **Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Advisory Committee**
3. **Health and Wellbeing Advisory Committee**
4. **Climate Leadership and Response Advisory Committee**
5. **Vibrant Places and Economy Advisory Committee**
6. **Interfaith Advisory Committee**
7. **Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Advisory Committee**

Previous Council Resolution

The recommendations in this report have been informed by a number of Council resolutions between December 2024 to April 2026. **Appendix D** summarises each resolution and notes the respective actions taken.

ALIGNMENT TO 2041 DAREBIN COMMUNITY VISION

Pillar 4: Collaborative, Transparent and Responsible

ALIGNMENT TO OUR DAREBIN PLAN 2025-29

Strategic Direction 6: Decision Making, Community Engagement and Transparency - A City that is well-managed, transparent and trusted by its community and partners, with clear and respectful communication that builds confidence in Council's decisions.

DISCUSSION

Darebin Advisory Committees and Groups Framework

In response to Council's April 2026 resolution, and in developing the seven-committee model, officers have developed a Darebin Advisory Committees and Groups Framework (**Appendix E**). The framework will guide officers, under delegation from the CEO, in determining the most appropriate mechanism for advisory, engagement, collaboration and partnership activities.

The framework promotes consistency, clarity of purpose, appropriate governance arrangements and effective use of Council resources when establishing or supporting community and stakeholder groups.

The framework distinguishes between a range of engagement mechanisms, including:

- Advisory Committees
- Stakeholder Reference Groups
- Panels
- Working Groups and Taskforces
- Alliances
- Networks

While advisory committees provide strategic advice across Council Plan themes and create opportunities for intersectional discussion and engagement, their broad membership may not always provide the depth of lived experience or specialist expertise required for particular issues, action plans or reform initiatives. In these instances, more targeted engagement mechanisms may be appropriate.

Officers have identified opportunities to establish stakeholder reference groups aligned to key action plans and strategic priorities, including:

- LGBTIQA+ Reference Group
- Disability Reference Group
- Gender Equality Reference Group
- Positive Ageing Reference Group (aligned with Aged Care reforms)

The framework may also be used to support the establishment of other engagement mechanisms where required, including groups focused on community safety, mental health and other emerging priorities. This approach enables Council to seek targeted advice and lived-experience input on specific issues where appropriate, without requiring the establishment of a permanent advisory committee.

Opportunities have also been identified regarding a number of previous advisory committees that may be more effectively supported through alternative engagement mechanisms under the proposed framework.

Advisory Committee Member Feedback

Feedback received during the April 2026 Councillor and advisory committee member engagement sessions reinforced the value of lived experience, specialist knowledge and strong community connections in informing Council decision-making.

Participants highlighted that many community issues intersect across multiple areas of Council's work and are best addressed through integrated and collaborative approaches. There was also recognition that different issues require different forms of engagement and that advisory committees are only one mechanism through which Council can seek community and stakeholder input.

Participants identified the ongoing importance of engagement mechanisms such as advisory committees, stakeholder reference groups, taskforces, alliances and networks. These insights have informed the proposed model, which combines broader Council Plan-aligned advisory committees with fit-for-purpose engagement mechanisms where more specialised, targeted or project-specific input is required. A summary of key themes raised through these sessions is provided in **Appendix F**.

Terms of Reference

The proposed Common ToR have been updated following Council consideration in April 2026 to strengthen consistency, representation and governance arrangements across the proposed advisory committee structure. Key updates include:

- Changing the committee name to the Darebin Aboriginal Advisory Committee (DAAC), replacing the proposed Aboriginal Culture and Knowledge Advisory Committee.
- Incorporating a requirement that advisory committee membership comprise a minimum of 50 per cent women.
- Providing an honorarium for individual advisory committee members, with the exception of DAAC members who will continue to receive sitting fees in recognition of the unique role of the committee.
- Minor governance and operational updates to improve clarity and consistency.

In addition, proposed Special ToR have been prepared for the Interfaith Advisory Committee and the CALD Advisory Committee reflecting their specific purpose, membership and operating requirements.

The Common and Special ToR provide for committee members to review and provide advice to Council on their committee at the first committee meeting and annually thereafter. This review process will provide an opportunity for members to identify any issues relating to committee purpose, membership, accessibility, participation or operation and ensure the committees remain responsive to community needs. It will also support the continuous improvement of the advisory committee model during its initial implementation phase.

Darebin Aboriginal Advisory Committee

The CEO has met with Uncle Alan Brown, former Co-Chair of the Darebin Aboriginal Advisory Committee, to discuss an appropriate approach to recognising the contribution of previous committee members and transitioning to the new committee arrangements. This approach seeks to acknowledge the significant contribution of former members while supporting a respectful and culturally appropriate expression of interest process for new committee members.

DAAC Councillor Representation

Under the previous DAAC model, the Mayor served as Chair and the Deputy Mayor acted as proxy representative.

Ordinarily, Councillor representatives to advisory committees are appointed following the annual election of the Mayor. To support the timely establishment of the DAAC ahead of the November 2026 Council meeting, officers recommend that Council endorse the continuation of the current Councillor representatives until the annual appointment process is completed.

Review approach

Officers propose undertaking an early review of each advisory committee within 6 months of the committee's establishment to assess the effectiveness of the new arrangements, including member participation, representation, committee operations, governance processes and alignment with the intended purpose. This review will provide an opportunity to identify any emerging risks, implementation challenges and opportunities for improvement.

Insights from the review will be used to refine processes and support the ongoing effectiveness of the advisory committee model, ensuring committees are well placed to provide strategic advice and meaningful community input into Council decision-making.

CONSIDERATION OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT (2020) PRINCIPLES

Financial Management

Sitting Fees and Honorariums

DAAC members will receive sitting fees to recognise the cultural knowledge, expertise and lived experience contributed by members, including advice on matters relating to Aboriginal culture, heritage, Country, environmental management and Council policy development. The payment of sitting fees also reflects Council's commitment to reconciliation and the meaningful participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in decision-making processes.

The proposed Common and Special ToR also provide for individual members of the other advisory committees to receive an honorarium for attendance at committee meetings. The honorarium is intended to recognise the time, expertise and contribution of community members participating in Council's formal advisory structures.

The honorarium provision applies only to advisory committees established by Council and does not extend to other engagement mechanisms established under the Advisory Committees and Groups Framework, including stakeholder reference groups, panels, networks, alliances, working groups or taskforces.

Community Engagement

Engagement undertaken as part of the review

The advisory committee review has been informed by a range of engagement and consultation activities undertaken throughout 2025-26. These activities gathered input from current advisory committee members, Councillors, community representatives and Council officers regarding the effectiveness of the existing advisory committee model and opportunities for improvement.

Engagement activities included:

- Tailored workshops with members of the Darebin Aboriginal Advisory Committee (DAAC) and an Aboriginal consultant.
- Councillor workshops.
- Internal officer review and analysis.
- Engagement with existing advisory committee members.
- Internal consultation on the proposed model.
- Two Councillor and community member sessions held on 15 and 16 April 2026.

The Councillor and community member sessions held on 15 and 16 April 2026 provided a dedicated opportunity for advisory committee members to directly present their views to Councillors regarding the role, value and future of advisory committees. These sessions were an important input into the development of the proposed advisory committee model. A summary of key themes raised through these sessions is provided in **Appendix F**.

Establishment, Recruitment and Ongoing Participation

Should Council endorse the proposed advisory committee structure and Common and Speecial ToR, officers will develop a detailed recruitment and engagement approach to support the establishment of the committees and maximise community participation.

Expression of Interest process

A structured Expression of Interest (EOI) process will be undertaken for each advisory committee. The process will be designed to attract a diverse pool of applicants with a range of lived experiences, community connections, skills and perspectives relevant to the purpose of each committee.

Assessment and selection processes will be guided by the membership criteria outlined in the relevant Terms of Reference and seek to achieve balanced representation across the community while ensuring committees have the knowledge and experience required to effectively fulfil their advisory role.

Key considerations will include:

- **Reach and representation**
  Officers will implement a targeted recruitment and communications approach designed to reach community members who may not typically access Council communications or participate in Council engagement processes. Particular attention will be given to engaging communities that have historically been underrepresented in Council advisory structures, including culturally and linguistically diverse communities.

  This approach will utilise a range of communication channels and community partnerships, including community organisations, service providers, faith groups, cultural networks, neighbourhood houses and other trusted intermediaries to promote opportunities for participation.

- **Accessibility and inclusion**
  Information regarding advisory committee membership opportunities will be communicated in ways that are accessible and easy to understand. This will include consideration of plain language communications, translated information where appropriate, and the use of communication channels and formats that support participation by people with varying levels of English language proficiency.

Officers will also identify and respond to potential barriers to participation to support equitable access to the recruitment process.

Other Principles for consideration

Overarching Governance Principles and Supporting Principles

(i) the transparency of Council decisions, actions and information is to be ensured.

Public Transparency Principles

(c) Council information must be understandable and accessible to members of the municipal community;

Strategic Planning Principles

(b) strategic planning must address the Community Vision;

Service Performance Principles

(a) services should be provided in an equitable manner and be responsive to the diverse needs of the municipal community;

COUNCIL POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

Environmental Sustainability Considerations (including Climate Emergency)

The proposed 'Climate Leadership and Response Advisory Committee' responds to Council's commitment to environmental sustainability and responding to the climate emergency.

Equity, Inclusion, Wellbeing and Human Rights Considerations:

The DAAC, and the proposed 'Equity, Diversity and Inclusion', and 'Health and Wellbeing' advisory committees respond to Council's commitment to equity, inclusion, wellbeing and human rights.

Economic Development and Cultural Considerations

The proposed 'Vibrant Places and Economy Advisory Committee' responds to Council's commitment to a City that is liveable with vibrant places and spaces, safe streets and a thriving local economy.

Operational Impacts

Supporting 15 advisory committees was resource intensive, requiring significant officer time for administration, governance support, and member recruitment and coordination. With the new model reducing the number of committees to 7, the overall administrative workload will reduce, and these functions will be further streamlined through a single dedicated secretariat role responsible for coordinating operational needs across all committees. This approach will reduce duplication, strengthen consistency and improve the overall efficiency of committee operations.

Legal and Risk Implications

The Common and Special ToR will minimise legal and governance risks by establishing clear procedures for committee operations, member conduct, conflict-of-interest requirements and reporting pathways.

By standardising expectations and embedding consistent processes across all advisory committees, the ToR reduce the likelihood of procedural ambiguity or inconsistent practice. This approach supports transparency, accountability and robust risk management across the new advisory committee structure.

IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

Subject to Council endorsement, officers will develop and implement a transition plan to support the commencement of the new model.

This will include:

- Communications to existing committee members and stakeholders;
- Establishment of governance and operational protocols;
- Recruitment and appointment processes for community members;
- Councillor appointment processes;
- Development of Committee Secretariat support arrangements; and
- Implementation of monitoring and evaluation processes.

The transition plan will seek to ensure continuity of community participation while providing clarity regarding the purpose, role and operation of all future advisory and engagement bodies.

Action	Timing
Council endorsement of 7 advisory committees	25 August 2026
Recognition event for previous DAAC members and launch of EOI process.	September 2026 (date TBC)
DAAC EOI process	September/October 2026
New DAAC established	October/November 2026
EOI process for remaining committees	September – November 2026
All committees established	End of 2026
First meeting of remaining committees	Jan-March 2027

RELATED DOCUMENTS

Attachments

- Appendix A - Darebin Advisory Committee - Common Terms of Reference 2026 - Aug 2026 (**Appendix A**) ⇩
- Appendix B - Interfaith Advisory Committee - Special Terms of Reference (**Appendix B**) ⇩
- Appendix C - Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Advisory Committee - Special Terms of Reference (**Appendix C**) ⇩
- Appendix D - Advisory Committees - Previous Resolution Summaries and Review Findings (**Appendix D**) ⇩
- Appendix E - Darebin Council Advisory Committees and Groups Framework (**Appendix E**) ⇩
- Appendix F - Advisory Committee review - Key themes and summary Councillor-member sessions April 2026 (**Appendix F**) ⇩

DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST

Section 130 of the *Local Government Act 2020* requires members of Council staff and persons engaged under contract to provide advice to Council to disclose any conflicts of interest in a matter to which the advice relates.

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

COMMON TERMS OF REFERENCE
for Council Advisory Committees

1. Establishment	Council may establish an Advisory Committee as part of its Governance Framework according to *Council's Governance Rules 2020 (page 52).* An Advisory Committee can only be established by a Council resolution.
2. Purpose 	Council has developed a Council Plan 2025-2029 (Council Plan) to guide its strategic focus during the Council term. The Council Plan outlines six strategic directions, which are: 1. **Aboriginal Culture and Knowledge** - *marri-gin (Progress Power Flow)* 2. **Equity, Diversity and Inclusion** - *karri-nun (Respect Politeness)* 3. **Health and Wellbeing** - *balit-bargoongagat (Strong People Linked Together)* 4. **Climate Leadership and Response** - *liwik (Leadership)* 5. **Vibrant Places and Economy** - *yalingbu (Welcoming Public Spaces)* 6. **Decision-making, Community Engagement and Transparency** - *boonde-mak ballett-ak (Unite Together)* The Council Plan was developed following extensive community consultation, ensuring it responds to the Darebin 2040 Community Vision. As part of Council's ongoing commitment to engage with our community, five Advisory Committees have been established to provide advice and feedback to Council throughout the life of the Plan, focussing on 1-5 of the strategic directions. (Noting that in relation to strategic direction 6, an Audit & Risk Committee operates as per the Local Government Act 2020).
3. Application of these Terms of Reference	These Terms of Reference apply to all five Advisory Committees. Specifics in relation to each individual Advisory Committee are provided in: • **Appendix 1:** Darebin Aboriginal Advisory Committee (DAAC) • **Appendix 2:** Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Advisory Committee • **Appendix 3:** Health and Wellbeing Advisory Committee • **Appendix 4:** Climate Leadership and Response Advisory Committee • **Appendix 5:** Vibrant Places and Economy Advisory Committee Throughout this Terms of Reference, the word "Committee" refers to each of the five Advisory Committees.
4. Scope	Items that the Committee may consider in relation to the relevant Council Plan strategic direction are: • Draft Strategic Plans and Policies • Proposed Projects, Programs and Events • Community Engagement Planning • Advocacy Priorities • Any other items listed in the relevant Appendix.
5. Term	All Advisory Committees will end on 1 October in the year following the General Council election, or as determined by the Governance Rules whichever is the sooner. Council may at any time by resolution set a date or a milestone that when reached or completed causes the cessation of the Committee and the expiry of Committee Members' terms.
6. Committee limitations and indemnity	The Committee is to act in an advisory capacity to Council only and has no delegated authority, therefore Members are not indemnified, to make decisions or form policy on behalf of Council. The Committee is not responsible for expenditure, nor does it have an operational role, and neither it, nor its Members, may direct Council staff in the performance of their duties.

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	Other Committee limitations will be detailed in the relevant Committee Appendix.
7. Recruitment and induction of Community Members	All Community Members are appointed by Council resolution following a public Expression of Interest (EOI) process, for a term specified in the resolution. The EOI process must align with Darebin strategies, frameworks, policies, and relevant legislation: • Towards Equality Framework – Equity, Inclusion, and Human Rights Framework 2019-2029 • Legislative obligations, including positive duty obligations, under the Equal Opportunity Act 2010, Sex Discrimination Act 1984, Gender Equality Act 2020, and Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006. Committees comprise the following types of Members, unless specified otherwise in their relevant Appendix: • Councillor Members – appointed annually (non-voting) • Community Members - individual/professional (voting) Where vacancies occur 'mid-term,' a replacement Community Member may be appointed by Council's CEO, subject to an EOI process. Members appointed because of a 'mid-term' vacancy will serve the balance of the former Member's term. A position becomes vacant if a Committee member fails to attend 3 consecutive meetings without reasonable grounds or communication, on a case-by-case basis. Community Members may apply for, and be appointed, to multiple Committees concurrently. Prioritising diversity of membership will be considered in Members who are appointed. **Gender Equity** Gender equity will inform the recruitment and selection of Community Members (individuals and representatives of organisations) and Councillor Members for all Committees. Women must comprise at least 50% of overall membership. As directed by the Governance Rules 2020, any person appointed to an Advisory Committee that nominates for election to Council, State Parliament or Federal Parliament must take leave of absence from their member position from the time of declaring they have nominated (or intend to nominate). If elected, they will be deemed to have resigned from the Committee. Community Members (individuals and representatives of organisations) will be selected based on membership criteria in the relevant Appendix, in addition to the following considerations: **Community Members (Individual):** Council will seek to ensure diverse representation across the following identities and experiences, appointing members from these cohorts where possible, unless otherwise stipulated in the relevant Appendix. The significance of representation across these cohorts by more than one member is noted as an enabler for peer support and to strengthen cultural safety. • Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people • Gender, including men, women, trans, and gender diverse people • Diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds • Migrants, refugees, and people seeking asylum

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	• Diverse faith backgrounds • Young people (15-25 years) • Older people (over 65 years) • LGBTIQA+ people • People with disability • Different employment status (employed and un-employed) • Education (University and no higher education) • Place-based (e.g. where people reside, work, or study in Darebin) with a focus on neighbourhoods that experience greater levels of socio-economic disadvantage according to the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA) Index of Relative Socio-economic Disadvantage (IRSD) **Community Members (Professional):** Some Members may represent an organisation, peak body, or agency, which has specialist knowledge relating to the strategic context and scope of the Committee. Where a Member is appointed to the Committee as a representative of a particular organisation a proxy may attend meeting on their behalf if the nominated person cannot attend. Organisations, peak bodies, and agencies represented must meet the following criteria; • Not for profit, public service, community service, social enterprise, faith organisation, Traditional Owner Corporation, Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation (ACCO), or other structures that are not privately owned/for-profit, unless specified in the relevant Appendix. • Based in Darebin, or has a remit and focus that includes, and is applicable to, Darebin communities. **Induction:** Community Members must participate in an induction arranged by Council at the commencement of their term on the Committee. The induction will include an overview of the Council's role and functions as a Local Government Authority, the relationship of the Committee with Councillors and the community, governance protocols, and any other matters to ensure that members are well supported. Members may be required to participate in specified training relevant to the work of the Committee from time to time, or attend meetings, forums, or workshops with Members of other Committees, to share knowledge and for the collaborative provision of advice as appropriate.
8. Role and term of Chairperson (Councillor)	The Chairperson is responsible for the following, unless specified otherwise in the relevant Committee Appendix: • Attend and chair all meetings of the Committee, except where absence is unavoidable, in which case the Deputy Chairperson will temporarily assume the role. • Approve the meeting schedule and meeting agenda with the Committee Secretariat (Council Officer). • Ensure the Committee's business is conducted in a manner that upholds Aboriginal Cultural safety. • Ensure the Committee's business is conducted with zero tolerance for racism, ableism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, or discrimination of any kind. • Ensure the Committee's business is conducted in an orderly manner in compliance with the Darebin's Governance Rules, including Conflict of Interest protocols.

DRAFT

	• Support and encourage participation from all Members present at the meeting by adapting their approach to meet differing styles and needs of attendees. • Direct any person to be excluded from a meeting or for any item of business, for example, on the grounds of confidentiality or a conflict of interest. • Ensure that advice and recommendations recorded by the Committee Secretariat (Council Officer) in the meeting represent the collective views of the Committee. • Report the Committee's advice and recommendations to Council with the administrative support of the Committee Secretariat (Council Officer). • Report the outcomes of the Council Meetings in relation to Committee advice at the following meeting. Upon appointment, all Councillor Members must undertake training (or demonstrate relevant recent training and proficiency) in running and participating in effective, inclusive, and culturally safe Committee meetings.
9. Role of Committee Secretariat and Executive Sponsor (Council Officers)	**Committee Secretariat** An appointed Council Officer will fulfill the role of Committee Secretariat. General responsibilities: • Support Committee meetings, including scheduling, agenda development, meeting minutes, records management, venue bookings, and catering arrangements. • Support good governance by providing procedural and policy advice to the Committee. • Develop and coordinate the Member recruitment and induction process. • Provide support to Members, including responding to email and telephone enquiries. • Maintain up to date information regarding Advisory Committees at Council (internal and external). • Prepare the Annual Committee Outcomes Report • Undertake essential training to ensure skills in Aboriginal Cultural Safety, disability inclusion, and awareness, LGBTIQA+ inclusion and awareness, and other appropriate areas relating to inclusion and equity. Agenda development: • The Committee Secretariat will draft the agenda in consultation with the Chairperson, Executive Sponsor, and where appropriate, relevant Council staff. • Members can request the Committee Secretariat to list items on the agenda. Such items will be included on the agenda subject to agreement of the Chairpersons and Executive Sponsor. • The Committee Secretariat will coordinate meeting attendance. Special guests / subject matter experts may be invited to the meeting at the combined discretion of the Chairperson, including the Deputy Chairperson and Committee Secretariat (Council Officer). • Committee agendas will be forwarded to Members by email no later than five working days before a scheduled meeting. • Minutes will be provided to the Chairperson no later than 10 working days after the meeting and will include a summary of discussions, details of any conflicts of interest disclosed, and any advice for Council consideration. • The Chairperson shall ratify the Committee minutes prior to their distribution via the meeting minutes of the next Ordinary Council meeting. • Committee minutes will be received at noted at the next practical Council meeting.

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	Executive Sponsor The CEO will appoint a senior council officer (usually a member of the executive management team) as the Executive Sponsor of each Committee. The Executive Sponsor will be responsible for determining frequency of any additional meetings in accordance with the needs of Council, agenda development and reviewing minutes before they are provided to the Chair.
10. Responsibilities, duties, and conduct of Members	In conducting its activities associated with its strategic context and scope the Committee will; • Conduct itself according to, and within, the Terms of Reference and any relevant Council resolution. • Inform itself of issues, opportunities, constraints, and urgent actions relating to the Committee. • Provide honest, considered, and constructive advice to Council that will improve Council decision making. • Provide advice on strategic and other planning work to help set short and longer-term direction and action. • Foster a culture that seeks to understand and explore diverse views of Members, which are reflected in advice to Council. • Participate in a manner that upholds cultural safety, with zero tolerance for racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, or discrimination of any kind. All Members will be given opportunity, encouragement, and support to put their views before the Committee to be considered by Council. During all Committee undertakings, Members must: • Prepare for, attend, and actively participate in meetings • Act honestly and treat others with respect by listening to one another and by allowing all Members to have a voice. • Exercise reasonable care and diligence. • Not make improper use of their position or make improper use of information acquired because of their position. • Respectful behaviour is inclusive of all Committee meetings, emails, correspondence, telephone calls, and online meetings. Members must work co-operatively with other Members, respect the authority of the Chair(s) and meeting procedures, and must not seek to dominate the meeting or insist or imply that their own views and ideas carry more weight than those of others.
11. Quorum	A quorum for meetings of the Committee will be: • Half of the voting Members plus one • At least one Councillor Member (Chairperson or Acting Chairperson) • At least one Council Officer to provide secretariat support. If a quorum is not met within a reasonable time of the scheduled meeting start time: • The meeting must be adjourned or rescheduled, at the discretion of the Chairperson.
12. Recommendations of the Committee to Council	Formal advice and recommendations of the Committee to Council will be determined by the Members and finalised by the Chairperson. Where agreement cannot be reached by the majority of Members, the minutes should reflect that a common view was not reached.
13. Conflict of interest, privacy, and confidentiality	The conflict of interest and confidentiality provisions in the Local Government Act 2020 apply to all Members. Councillor Members must disclose any conflict of interest in a matter being considered by the Committee in accordance with the Act and Council's Governance Rules 2020.

	A Community Member who has a personal interest in a matter being considered by the Committee must disclose that personal interest to the Committee and leave the room and not participate in any discussion and/or decision in relation to that matter. All committee members much respect confidential and sensitive handling of information as appropriate. Any disclosure made in accordance with this clause must be recorded in the minutes of the relevant Committee meeting by the Committee Secretariat (Council Officer).
14. Committee meetings, frequency, and arrangements	The Committee will meet quarterly. Meetings will: • Be held at an accessible and suitable Darebin venue or may be held virtually. • Offer a hybrid in-person and online option to attend. • Be held on a quarterly basis. • Usually commence at 6pm on a Monday, Wednesday, or Thursday, unless another day or time is required. • Commence on time and conclude by the stated completion time, not extending beyond a 120-minute duration. • Be scheduled and confirmed in advance. • Be recorded through minutes. • Notice of any additional Committee meetings will be provided 2 weeks in advance. • Be closed to the public.
15. Reporting requirements and transparency	Committee meeting minutes and recommendations will be submitted to the next practical scheduled Council Meeting. • A Councillor Member (Chairperson or Deputy Chairperson) will speak to the minutes if required. • After receiving Committee meeting minutes, a Councillor Member (Chairperson or Deputy Chairperson) will provide an update back to Members at the next Committee meeting. To maintain transparency of Committee operations and in alignment with Council's Governance Rules the following information is to be published on Council's website in respect of each Committee: • The Terms of Reference and Appendix for each Committee • The names of all Members • Minutes of Committees meetings in Ordinary Council Meeting Minutes **Note that in some instances identifying details may be redacted to maintain safety for some Members, if required.* **Annual Committee Outcomes Reporting:** An annual report will be compiled to summarise the actions and outcomes of each committee. • Annual actions include committee membership, meeting attendance, and the number of meetings conducted. • Annual outcomes include agenda items considered as they relate to the purpose of the committee, summary of advice provided to Council, and outcomes of advice provided. The annual report will reflect the above approach, unless stipulated otherwise in the relevant Appendix.

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16. Member support	Council will provide a range of support and reasonable adjustments to enable Member participation, if required. Examples include; • Wellbeing support and debrief arrangements for sensitive discussions, particularly in the context of Aboriginal Cultural Safety. • Access supports and reasonable adjustments. • Language support, including translation and literacy support.
17. Honorariums, sitting fees and meeting expenses	Community Members (Individual) will be paid an honorarium for each Committee Meeting they attend unless otherwise specified in the relevant appendices. . Some meeting expenses for Members will be covered by Council as per the relevant Committee Appendix, e.g. transport costs. Expenses that relate to the access needs of Members to attend meetings and participate in the Committee will be covered by Council, e.g. Auslan interpreter. Council will cover the cost of interpreters and other language supports required by culturally and linguistically diverse Members to attend meetings and participate in the Committee. Venue and catering costs for meetings will be covered by Council. Catering provided will meet the cultural and dietary requirements of all meeting attendees.
18. **Out of scope (Groups, Taskforces, Networks, Alliances, Panels Delegated Committees, and External Groups)**	On occasion, Council may also form groups, committees, and other bodies during the delivery of operational projects, programs, and services that are not considered Advisory Committees and are not covered by this Terms of Reference. Formation of these groups will be in line with Council Community Engagement Frameworks and Policies and project management protocols. Examples include: • Community Reference Group • Working Group or Taskforce • Network • Alliance. • Panel • Delegated Committees External (Non-Council) Groups**:** Councillors and Officers may have a role to play in groups established by other organisations, including other local government authorities, which are not covered by this Terms of Reference. Councillors may be appointed as representatives of Council, or Officers may be members of these external groups. when they strategically align to Council priorities.
19. Other relevant information	**Media and Publicity:** • Council may feature photographic or videographic content or names of Members through their communications channels to promote the work of the Committee. • Members' contact details will not be shared publicly. • Members must not speak to the media, or make posts or comments on social media, on behalf of the Committee unless Council provides written authorisation. Any unauthorised contact with the media may result in a review of the person's membership and may result in suspension or removal. **Note that in some instances identifying details may be redacted to maintain safety for some Members, if required.*

20. Committee contact details	The appointed Committee Secretariat (Council Officer) detailed in the relevant Appendix will be the contact point for enquiries relating to the Committee.
21. Date of Council adoption of Terms of Reference	**TBC**
22. Review of Terms of Reference	These Terms of Reference current until the Committee term ends but may be reviewed by Council resolution at any time. Members will review and provide advice to Council on the relevant Committee Appendix at the first meeting and then annually.

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Appendix 1

1. Name	**Darebin Aboriginal Advisory Committee (DAAC)** ***This document is an Appendix to the Common Terms of Reference (ToR) for Council Advisory Committees. The ToR and this Appendix guide the operations of this Committee, and both should be referred to.***
2. Strategic context 	**Strategic Direction:** Aboriginal Culture and Knowledge **Council Plan 2025-2029 Strategic Objective:** ➢ *"a city that celebrates Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture, values, knowledge and traditions, respects the right for self-determination and takes deliberate action toward Truth-telling."* **Council Plan Strategies:** • *Commit to a journey of self-determination with Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.* • *Preserve, celebrate, and educate the Darebin community about Aboriginal heritage and living culture.* • *Build a culturally safe Council and organisation to deliver inclusive and culturally safe spaces and services.*
3. Scope	In addition to the items specified in clause 4 of the Terms of Reference, the committee may also consider any other matters listed below: • Cultural safety • Support cultural governance to embed Aboriginal cultural knowledge, protocols, and perspectives. • Strategic advice on issues, opportunities, and community priorities (health, housing, wellbeing, culture, arts, youth, social justice) • Implementation and monitoring of Council's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Action Plan - balit-marra, Employment Strategy and other commitments. • Provide advice aligned with Closing the Gap, community priorities, and Treaty and Truth-telling processes. • Support Council to build strong, respectful, relationships with Traditional Owners, ACCOs, Elders, youth, and community.
4. Committee engagement and self-determination	In line with Council's strategic objective, the self-determination and cultural authority of this Committee will be enabled and respected by applying the following engagement approach when conducting meetings, developing meeting agendas, and providing Committee advice, recommendations, and endorsement to Council. This approach acknowledges that the involvement of the Committee increases with cultural significance and community impact. **Committee Engagement Approach:** **INFORM — Minimum requirement** Council provides early, transparent updates on Aboriginal strategies, policies, community-impacting initiatives, and cultural risks. The Committee may ask questions, flag concerns, and identify items for deeper engagement. **CONSULT — Meaningful input** Council seeks Committee advice before making decisions. Used for: early policy design, community engagement approaches, cultural protocols, planning matters, youth/Elder/queer/clan-inclusive priorities. Council must demonstrate: "You said → We did" through the process outlined in clause 15 of the Terms of Reference. **RECOMMEND — Significant cultural impact** The Committee provides formal recommendations on major strategies and cultural matters, including: • Aboriginal Action Plan – balit-marra

	• Treaty and Truth-telling work • Budget priorities impacting Aboriginal communities • Cultural safety frameworks • ACCO partnerships Council must respond formally, with rationale for decisions, through the process outlined in clause 15 of the Terms of Reference. **ENDORSE — Highest cultural significance.** On matters of the highest cultural significance, the Committee and Council may, by agreement of both entities, jointly endorse positions and statements that relate to matters of the highest cultural significance, including: • Cultural protocols and identity representations • Major public statements • Treaty alignment • Truth-telling commitments • 26 January and other sensitive issues It is noted that as the Committee is an advisory committee with no delegated power, 'co-endorsement' is intended to demonstrate solidarity where there is alignment between the Committee and Council on matters of the highest cultural significance. **DELEGATED DECISION MAKING** From time-to-time Council may by resolution in accordance with section 63 of the Local Government Act 2020 delegate specific, defined decision-matters powers to the committee on matters relating the *Aboriginal Culture and Knowledge* strategic direction.
5. Committee limitations	Community Members do not represent all Aboriginal people and do not act as the exclusive voice of Aboriginal communities. Committee advice is only one mechanism by which Council decisions are informed and is complemented by other community engagement activities undertaken in line with Council's Community Engagement Policy.
6. Membership and term of membership	The Committee will consist of: • Two Councillor Members: o One Chairperson o One Councillor Member (can be the Acting Chairperson to cover absence of the Councillor Chairperson) o Appointed annually by Council resolution. • Up to fifteen (15) Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander Community Members – Individual o Professional members formally representing organisations will not be considered for this Committee. o One Co-Chairperson: Community Member (2-year term; no consecutive terms unless endorsed by Committee vote). o The Community Co-Chairperson will lead community authority in meetings, ensure cultural protocols are embedded in meeting proceedings, and advise the Chairperson on agenda items. o At least one Wurundjeri Woi-Wurrung representative. o Applications will be received through a publicly advertised Expression of Interest (EOI) process. o Members will be appointed by Council resolution for a two-year term. o If a Community Member successfully applies for a second term, the maximum cumulative term they can undertake is 4 years (e.g. 2 x 2-year terms).

	Community Members should meet at least one of the following criteria to be an eligible applicant: • Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people who live (primary or secondary residence), work, or study in the Darebin community. • Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung members are not required to live, work, or study in the Darebin community, acknowledging that Wurundjeri Country extends beyond Darebin. In addition, Community Members should meet one or more of the following criteria, which will be evaluated when selecting successful applicants in the Expression of Interest (EOI) process: • Involvement in the wider community with strong community networks and connections, leadership, engagement, or advocacy experience • Good knowledge and understanding of local issues relevant to the Committee's focus. • Knowledge of relevant organisations and potential partnerships, particularly with Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (ACCOs) • Willingness to contribute positively to meetings in a fair and respectful manner. In addition to the factors listed in clause 7 of the Terms of Reference, recruitment of members will prioritise representation and inclusion of: • Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders • Different Clan groups Council (by resolution) may elect to cease a member's participation earlier than the term of appointment for reasons such as: • The member no longer meets the criteria of membership. • The member breaches the Terms of Reference. A Community Member may choose to cease their membership at any time. Members may be required to hold a valid Working with Children Check to ensure compliance with Council's Child Safe obligations.
7. Sitting fees and meeting expenses	Sitting Fees: • $200 per meeting Community Co-Chair • $150 per meeting individual community members Council will review sitting fees during the annual review of the relevant Appendix as per clause 21 in the Terms of Reference.

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Appendix 2

1. Name	**Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Advisory Committee** ***This document is an Appendix to the Common Terms of Reference (ToR) for Council Advisory Committees. The ToR and this Appendix guide the operations of this Committee, and both should be referred to.***
2. Strategic context 	**Council Plan 2025-2029 Strategic Objective:** ➢ *"a city where our rich diversity is celebrated, everyone can thrive and belong, and our services, programs, places and spaces are equitable, responsive, inclusive and accessible to all."* **Council Plan Strategies:** • *Plan and establish Council's strategic response to build equity, inclusion, and human rights for our community.* • *Develop and deliver equitable services, programs, and places.* • *Create an approach to supporting the community that recognises life stages, life changes and events that shape people and their needs.*
3. Scope	In addition to the items specified in clause 4 of the Terms of Reference, the committee may also consider any other matters listed below: • Implementation of Council action plans and strategies relevant to the strategic context of the Committee.
4. Committee limitations	Committee advice is only one mechanism by which Council decisions are informed and is complemented by other community engagement activities undertaken in line with Council's Community Engagement Policy.
5. Honorarium	Community Members (Individual) will be paid a $50.00 honorarium for each Committee Meeting they attend.
6. Membership and term of membership	The Committee will consist of: • Two Councillor Members: o One Chairperson and one Deputy Chairperson o Appointed annually by Council resolution • Up to fifteen (15) Community Members, comprising both individual and professional members: o Applications received through a publicly advertised Expression of Interest (EOI) process. o Appointed by Council resolution for a two-year term. o If a Community Member successfully applies for a second term, the maximum cumulative term they can undertake is 4 years (e.g. 2 x 2-year terms). **Community Members (Individual)** must live (primary or secondary residence), work, or study in the Darebin community. In addition, Community Members should meet one or more of the following criteria, which will be evaluated when selecting successful applicants in the Expression of Interest (EOI) process: • Involvement in the wider community with strong community networks and connections, leadership, engagement, or advocacy experience. • Good knowledge and understanding of local issues relevant to the Committee's focus. • Willingness to contribute positively to meetings in a fair and respectful manner. • Have lived experience(s) that relate one or more of the following: o People with disability

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	○ Culturally and linguistically diverse people and communities ○ Migrants, refugees, and people seeking asylum ○ LGBTIQA+ people and communities ○ Gender equality and the prevention of gender-based violence. ○ People from faith communities ○ Services, programs, places in Darebin ○ Families, Youth and Children ○ Older adults (65 years and over), particularly those who have experience receiving aged care services ○ Housing insecurity, sleeping rough, or homelessness. **Community Members (Professional)** are appointed to represent an organisation, which should meet one or more of the following criteria in addition to the criteria listed in clause 7 of the Terms of Reference: • An organisation, agency, or service that focuses on and supports people and communities that relate to the lived experiences listed above. Council (by resolution) may elect to cease a member's participation earlier than the term of appointment for reasons such as: • The Member no longer meets the criteria of membership • The Member breaches the Terms of Reference. A Community Member may choose to cease their membership at any time. Members may be required to hold a valid Working with Children Check to ensure compliance with Council's Child Safe obligations.

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Appendix 3:

1. Name	**Health and Wellbeing Advisory Committee** ***This document is an Appendix to the Common Terms of Reference (ToR) for Council Advisory Committees. The ToR and this Appendix guide the operations of this Committee, and both should be referred to.***
2. Strategic context 	**Council Plan 2025-2029 Strategic Objective:** ➢ *"a city where everyone in the community can access the opportunities, infrastructure and services they need to be physically and mentally safe and healthy."* **Council Plan Strategies:** • *Collaborate and partner with health organisations to deliver positive health and wellbeing opportunities.* • *Create an enabling environment for positive mental health.* • *Foster a safe and respectful community environment.* • *Maintain and improve community facilities, parks, and open spaces to support people to stay healthy and active.*
3. Scope	In addition to the items specified in clause 4 of the Terms of Reference, the committee may also consider any other matters listed below: • Implementation of Council action plans and strategies relevant to the strategic context of the Committee.
4. Committee limitations	Committee advice is only one mechanism by which Council decisions are informed and is complemented by other community engagement activities undertaken in line with Council's Community Engagement Policy.
5. Honorarium	Community Members (Individual) will be paid a $50.00 honorarium for each Committee Meeting they attend.
6. Membership and term of membership	The Committee will consist of: • Two Councillor Members: o One Chairperson and one Deputy Chairperson o Appointed annually by Council resolution • Up to fifteen (15) Community Members, comprising both community and professional Members: o Applications received through a publicly advertised Expression of Interest (EOI) process. o Appointed by Council resolution for a two-year term. o If a Community Member successfully applies for a second term, the maximum cumulative term they can undertake is 4 years (e.g. 2 x 2-year terms) **Community Members (Individual)** must live (primary or secondary residence), work, or study in the Darebin community. In addition, Community Members should meet one or more of the following criteria, which will be evaluated when selecting successful applicants in the Expression of Interest (EOI) process: • Involvement in the wider community with strong community networks and connections, leadership, engagement, or advocacy experience. • Good knowledge and understanding of local issues relevant to health and wellbeing, including mental wellbeing, gender equality, and the prevention of gender-based violence, and modifiable health risks. • Knowledge of the impacts of social connection, isolation, and loneliness on health and wellbeing. • Knowledge of local Darebin spaces and places relevant to health and wellbeing, including sport and recreation facilities/sites.

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	• Participation in local sport and recreation, including clubs, groups, or associations.
	• Willingness to contribute positively to meetings in a fair and respectful manner.
	• Have lived experience that relates to the following:
	  ○ Mental health condition(s)
	  ○ Disability and/or chronic health condition(s)
	  ○ Health and wellbeing of culturally and linguistically diverse people and communities
	  ○ Health and wellbeing of migrants, refugees, and people seeking asylum
	  ○ Health and wellbeing of LGBTIQA+ people and communities.
	  ○ Health and wellbeing of people of different genders, including men, women, transgender, and gender diverse people.
	  ○ Health and wellbeing needs throughout the lifespan – children, youth, families, and older adults (65 years and over)
	  ○ The impact and harm associated with gambling.
	  ○ Housing insecurity, sleeping rough, or homelessness
	  ○ People with experience as a carer
	  ○ Veterans
	
	Community Members (Professional) are appointed to represent an organisation, which should meet one or more of the following criteria in addition to the criteria listed in clause 7 of the Terms of Reference:
	• Health agencies and organisations, including culturally specific organisations (Aboriginal Community Controlled organisations and others).
	• Disability support, advocacy, and service providers.
	• Housing and homelessness agencies, organisations, and services.
	• Neighbourhood Houses that provide services and support that relate to health and wellbeing.
	• Mental health services, organisations, and agencies.
	• Health promotion and primary prevention organisations, particularly the prevention of family violence and gender-based violence against women, trans, and gender diverse people.
	• LGBTIQA+ focussed health agencies, services, and organisations.
	• Health agencies, services, and organisations supporting culturally and linguistically diverse people and communities.
	• Service providers, agencies, and organisations that specifically support people living with disability, older adults, young people, children, and families.
	
	Council (by resolution) may elect to cease a member's participation earlier than the term of appointment for reasons such as:
	• The Member no longer meets the criteria of membership
	• The Member breaches the Terms of Reference.
	
	A Community Member may choose to cease their membership at any time.
	
	Members may be required to hold a valid Working with Children Check to ensure compliance with Council's Child Safe obligations.

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Appendix 4:

1. Name	**Climate Leadership and Response Advisory Committee** ***This document is an Appendix to the Common Terms of Reference (ToR) for Council Advisory Committees. The ToR and this Appendix guide the operations of this Committee, and both should be referred to.***
2. Strategic context 	**Council Plan 2025-2029 Strategic Objective:** ➢ *"a city that is a climate leader, drives opportunities for achieving zero emissions, adapts by transforming how we provide services, open spaces and infrastructure, and works with our community to build ongoing resilience."* **Council Plan Strategies:** • *Work alongside Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung and all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to support them to maintain and share their culture and knowledge to protect, preserve, revitalise, and heal Country to support self-determination and maintain a thriving, resilient natural environment.* • *Work towards zero emissions by pursuing ambitious energy efficiency and renewable energy opportunities for Council operations and buildings, and for Darebin homes, businesses, organisations, and transport.* • *Adapt Council services, assets, and infrastructure to respond to climate change projections.* • *Support the community and businesses to successfully adapt to and cope with the impacts of climate change.*
3. Scope	In addition to the items specified in clause 4 of the Terms of Reference, the committee may also consider any other matters listed below: • Implementation of the Darebin Climate Emergency Plan 2024-2030 and other action plans and strategies relevant to the strategic context of the Committee.
4. Committee limitations	Committee advice is only one mechanism by which Council decisions are informed and is complemented by other community engagement activities undertaken in line with Council's Community Engagement Policy.
5. Honorarium	Community Members (Individual) will be paid a $50.00 honorarium for each Committee Meeting they attend.
6. Membership and term of membership	The Committee will consist of: • Two Councillor Members: o One Chairperson and one Deputy Chairperson o Appointed annually by Council resolution • Up to fifteen (15) Community Members, comprising both individual and professional members: o Applications received through a publicly advertised Expression of Interest (EOI) process. o Appointed by Council resolution for a two-year term. o If a Community Member successfully applies for a second term, the maximum cumulative term they can undertake is 4 years (e.g. 2 x 2-year terms) **Community Members (Individual)** must live (primary or secondary residence), work, or study in the Darebin community. In addition, Community Members should meet one or more of the following criteria, which will be evaluated when selecting successful applicants in the Expression of Interest (EOI) process:

	• Involvement in the wider community with strong community networks and connections, leadership, engagement, or advocacy experience.
	• Good knowledge and understanding of local issues relevant to the Committee's focus.
	• Willingness to contribute positively to meetings in a fair and respectful manner.
	• Have lived experience in addition to the criteria outlined in clause 7 of the Terms of Reference that relates to the following:
	  ○ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, with a focus on Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Traditional Owners.
	  ○ Specialist climate expertise, technical or other, including conservation and land management, integrated catchment and stormwater management, biodiversity, and climate adaptation.
	  ○ Expertise in sustainability, waste, and circular economy.
	  ○ Understanding of local community concerns and sentiments around biodiversity issues and opportunities.
	
	Community Members (Professional) are appointed to represent an organisation, which should meet one or more of the following criteria in addition to the criteria listed in clause 7 of the Terms of Reference:
	
	• Specialist climate expertise, including conservation and land management, integrated catchment and stormwater management, biodiversity, and climate adaptation.
	
	Council (by resolution) may elect to cease a member's participation earlier than the term of appointment for reasons such as:
	• The member no longer meets the criteria of membership.
	• The member breaches the Terms of Reference.
	
	A Community Member may choose to cease their membership at any time. Members may be required to hold a valid Working with Children Check to ensure compliance with Council's Child Safe obligations.

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Appendix 5:

1. Name	**Vibrant Places and Economy Advisory Committee** ***This document is an Appendix to the Common Terms of Reference (ToR) for Council Advisory Committees. The ToR and this Appendix guide the operations of this Committee, and both should be referred to.***
1. Strategic context	**Council Plan 2025-2029 Strategic Objective:** ➢ *"a city that is liveable with vibrant places and spaces, safe streets and a thriving local economy."* **Council Plan Strategies:** • *Plan for housing growth and development that meets the needs of our diverse community.* • *Manage Darebin's transport network to increase safety, accessibility, and sustainability.* • *Support social and economic revitalisation to help Darebin become a great place to visit and do business.* • *Enrich, diversify, and grow Darebin's creative economy and cultural ecology by delivering events, festivals, arts centres, arts programming, and curation that reflect and connect with local communities.* • *Enhance and maintain public spaces and infrastructure to improve amenity (Basic Services).*
2. Scope	In addition to the items specified in clause 4 of the Terms of Reference, the Committee may also consider any other matters listed below: • Implementation of Council action plans and strategies relevant to the strategic context of the Committee.
3. Committee limitations	Committee advice is only one mechanism by which Council decisions are informed and is complemented by other community engagement activities undertaken in line with Council's Community Engagement Policy.
4. Honorarium	Community Members (Individual) will be paid a $50.00 honorarium for each Committee Meeting they attend.
5. Membership and term of membership	The Committee will consist of: • Two Councillor Members: o One Chairperson and one Deputy Chairperson o Appointed annually by Council resolution • Up to fifteen (15) Community Members, comprising both individual and professional members: o Applications received through a publicly advertised Expression of Interest (EOI) process. o Appointed by Council resolution for a two-year term. o If a Community Member successfully applies for a second term, the maximum cumulative term they can undertake is 4 years (e.g. 2 x 2-year terms). Community Members must live (primary or secondary residence), work, or study in the Darebin community. In addition, Community Members should meet one or more of the following criteria, which will be evaluated when selecting successful applicants in the Expression of Interest (EOI) process: • Involvement in the wider community with strong community • networks and connections, leadership, engagement, or advocacy experience • Good knowledge and understanding of local issues relevant to the Committee's focus.

	• Willingness to contribute positively to meetings in a fair and respectful manner.
	• Have lived experience that relates to the following:
	  ○ Housing insecurity, sleeping rough, or homelessness.
	  ○ Experiences and perceptions of safety in public spaces in Darebin.
	  ○ Transport opportunities and barriers in Darebin, including walking, cycling, public transport, and private transport,
	  ○ Place-based knowledge relevant to the strategic context of the Committee.
	  ○ Performing artists, arts workers, designers, filmmakers, photographers, visual and digital artists, and social and cultural entrepreneurs.
	  ○ Musicians, composers, promoters, producers, tour managers, and music venues.
	  ○ Local Traders and Business Owners.
	
	Community Members (Professional) are appointed to represent an organisation, which should meet one or more of the following criteria in addition to the criteria listed in clause 7 of the Terms of Reference:
	• Arts organisations, collectives, galleries, and arts access organisations.
	• Musicians, composers, promoters, recording and production studios, touring companies, and music venues.
	• Local Traders and Business Owners based in Darebin (private, for-profit commercial enterprise).
	• Traders Association or registered local Business Network.
	• Organisations providing support and services relating to housing and homelessness.
	• Organisations related to transport planning, including sustainable transport.
	
	Council (by resolution) may elect to cease a Member's participation earlier than the term of appointment for reasons such as:
	• The member no longer meets the criteria of membership.
	• The member breaches the Terms of Reference.
	
	A Community Member may choose to cease their membership at any time. Members may be required to hold a valid Working with Children Check to ensure compliance with Council's Child Safe obligations.

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Special TERMS OF REFERENCE
Interfaith Advisory Committee

1. Establishment	Council may establish an Advisory Committee as part of its Governance Framework according to *Council's Governance Rules 2020.* An Advisory Committee can only be established by a Council resolution.
2. Purpose	The Interfaith Advisory Committee provides independent, informed and representative advice to Council on matters affecting faith communities and the role of religion, belief, and spirituality in community life. The Committee acts as a conduit between Council and faith communities, enabling Council to better understand community perspectives, identify emerging issues and develop policies, services and initiatives that promote community inclusion, mutual understanding, respectful relationships and community wellbeing.
3. Application of these Terms of Reference	These Terms of Reference apply to the Interfaith Advisory Committee. Throughout this Terms of Reference, the word "Committee" refers to the Interfaith Advisory Committee.
4. Scope	The Committee will provide advice to Council on strategic planning and policy matters, including: • Council plans, strategies and policies that may impact faith communities. • Opportunities to strengthen community connectedness, inclusion and respectful relationships across the municipality. • Emerging demographic, cultural and faith-related trends within the municipality. • Barriers to participation experienced by faith communities in civic and community life. Council may also seek advice from the Committee on: • Strategies that foster respect, understanding and positive relationships between people of different faiths and backgrounds. • The promotion of inclusive communities where residents feel welcome, safe and valued. • Community responses to discrimination, prejudice and exclusion. • Strengthening community resilience during emergencies, crises or significant community events. • Opportunities to encourage greater understanding of the municipality's religious and cultural diversity.
5. Term	All Advisory Committees will end on 1 October in the year following the General Council election, or as determined by the Governance Rules whichever is the sooner. Council may at any time by resolution set a date or a milestone that when reached or completed causes the cessation of the Committee and the expiry of Committee Members' terms.
6. Committee limitations and indemnity	The Committee is to act in an advisory capacity to Council only and has no delegated authority, therefore Members are not indemnified, to make decisions or form policy on behalf of Council.

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	Committee advice is only one mechanism by which Council decisions are informed and is complemented by other community engagement activities undertaken in line with Council's Community Engagement Policy. The Committee is not responsible for expenditure, nor does it have an operational role, and neither it, nor its Members, may direct Council staff in the performance of their duties.
7. Honorarium	Community Members (Individual) will be paid a $50.00 honorarium for each Committee Meeting they attend.
8. Recruitment and induction of Community Members	All Community Members are appointed by Council resolution following a public Expression of Interest (EOI) process, for a term specified in the resolution. The EOI process must align with Darebin strategies, frameworks, policies, and relevant legislation: • Towards Equality Framework – Equity, Inclusion, and Human Rights Framework 2019-2029 • Legislative obligations, including positive duty obligations, under the Equal Opportunity Act 2010, Sex Discrimination Act 1984, Gender Equality Act 2020, and Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006. • Cultural Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan 2026-30 Committees comprise the following types of Members: • Councillor Members – appointed annually (non-voting) • Community Members - individual/professional (voting) The Committee Secretariat (Council Officer) is nominated by the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) to support the Committee and is not considered a Member of the Committee. Where vacancies occur 'mid-term,' a replacement Community Member may be appointed by Council's CEO, subject to an EOI process. Members appointed because of a 'mid-term' vacancy will serve the balance of the former Member's term. A position becomes vacant if a Committee member fails to attend 3 consecutive meetings without reasonable grounds or communication, on a case-by-case basis. Community Members may apply for, and be appointed, to multiple Committees concurrently. Prioritising diversity of membership will be considered in Members who are appointed. **Gender Equity** Gender equity will inform the recruitment and selection of Community Members (individuals and representatives of organisations) and Councillor Members for all Committees. Women must comprise at least 50% of overall membership. As directed by the Governance Rules 2020, any person appointed to an Advisory Committee that nominates for election to Council, State Parliament or Federal Parliament must take leave of absence from their member position from the time of declaring they have nominated (or intend to nominate). If elected, they will be deemed to have resigned from the Committee.

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	Community Members (individuals and representatives of organisations) will be selected based on membership in clause 8, in addition to the following considerations: **Community Members (Individual):** Council will seek to appoint individuals from a diverse range of faith traditions who have strong connections within their communities and can contribute community perspectives, knowledge and experience relevant to the Committee's purpose. **Community Members (Organisation Representatives):** Some members may be appointed as representatives of organisations, peak bodies, faith organisations or agencies that can contribute specialist knowledge, expertise and perspectives relevant to the purpose of the Committee and the diversity of faith communities within Darebin. Where a member is appointed as the representative of a particular organisation, a proxy may attend meetings on their behalf if the nominated representative is unable to attend. Organisations represented on the Committee must: • Be a not-for-profit organisation, public sector agency, community service provider, registered faith organisation, social enterprise, Traditional Owner Corporation, Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation (ACCO), or another entity that operates for public or community benefit. • Have a demonstrated connection to faith communities, interfaith collaboration, community cohesion, social inclusion, cultural diversity, community wellbeing, or related areas relevant to the Committee's purpose. • Be based in Darebin, or demonstrate a clear connection to and involvement with communities within the City of Darebin. • Be able to contribute knowledge, expertise or perspectives that support the Committee's objectives. **Induction**: Community Members must participate in an induction arranged by Council at the commencement of their term on the Committee. The induction will include an overview of the Council's role and functions as a Local Government Authority, the relationship of the Committee with Councillors and the community, governance protocols, and any other matters to ensure that members are well supported. Members may be required to participate in specified training relevant to the work of the Committee from time to time, or attend meetings, forums, or workshops with Members of other Committees, to share knowledge and for the collaborative provision of advice as appropriate.

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9. Membership and term of membership	The Committee will consist of: • Two Councillor Members: o One Chairperson and one Deputy Chairperson o Appointed annually by Council resolution • Up to fifteen (15) Community Members, comprising both individual and professional members: o Applications received through a publicly advertised Expression of Interest (EOI) process. o Appointed by Council resolution for a two-year term. o If a Community Member successfully applies for a second term, the maximum cumulative term they can undertake is 4 years (e.g. 2 x 2-year terms). **Community Members (Individual)** must live (primary or secondary residence), work, or study in the Darebin community. In addition, Community Members should meet one or more of the following criteria, which will be evaluated when selecting successful applicants in the Expression of Interest (EOI) process: • Involvement in the wider community with strong community networks and connections, leadership, engagement, or advocacy experience. • Good knowledge and understanding of local issues relevant to the Committee's focus. • Willingness to contribute positively to meetings in a fair and respectful manner. • Have lived experience from a faith community or communities. **Community Members (Organisation Representative)** are appointed to represent an organisation, which should meet one or more of the following criteria in addition to the criteria listed in clause 7 of the Terms of Reference: • An organisation, agency, or service that focuses on and supports people and communities that relate to diverse faith communities. Council (by resolution) may elect to cease a member's participation earlier than the term of appointment for reasons such as: • The Member no longer meets the criteria of membership • The Member breaches the Terms of Reference. A Community Member may choose to cease their membership at any time. Members may be required to hold a valid Working with Children Check to ensure compliance with Council's Child Safe obligations.
10. Role and term of Chairperson (Councillor)	The Chairperson is responsible for the following: • Attend and chair all meetings of the Committee, except where absence is unavoidable, in which case the Deputy Chairperson will temporarily assume the role. • Approve the meeting schedule and meeting agenda with the Committee Secretariat (Council Officer). • Ensure the Committee's business is conducted in a manner that upholds Aboriginal Cultural safety. • Ensure the Committee's business is conducted with zero tolerance for racism, ableism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, or discrimination of any kind. • Ensure the Committee's business is conducted in an orderly manner in compliance with the Darebin's Governance Rules, including Conflict of Interest protocols.

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	• Support and encourage participation from all Members present at the meeting by adapting their approach to meet differing styles and needs of attendees. • Direct any person to be excluded from a meeting or for any item of business, for example, on the grounds of confidentiality or a conflict of interest. • Ensure that advice and recommendations recorded by the Committee Secretariat (Council Officer) in the meeting represent the collective views of the Committee. • Report the Committee's advice and recommendations to Council with the administrative support of the Committee Secretariat (Council Officer). • Report the outcomes of the Council Meetings in relation to Committee advice at the following meeting. Upon appointment, all Councillor Members must undertake training (or demonstrate relevant recent training and proficiency) in running and participating in effective, inclusive, and culturally safe Committee meetings.
11. Role of Committee Secretariat and Executive Sponsor (Council Officers)	**Committee Secretariat** An appointed Council Officer will fulfill the role of Committee Secretariat. General responsibilities: • Support Committee meetings, including scheduling, agenda development, meeting minutes, records management, venue bookings, and catering arrangements. • Support good governance by providing procedural and policy advice to the Committee. • Develop and coordinate the Member recruitment and induction process. • Prepare briefing and meeting reports as required. • Provide customer service and support to Members, including responding to email and telephone enquiries. • Maintain up to date information regarding Advisory Committees at Council (internal and external). • Prepare the Annual Committee Outcomes Report • Undertake essential training to ensure skills in Aboriginal Cultural Safety, disability inclusion, and awareness, LGBTIQA+ inclusion and awareness, and other appropriate areas relating to inclusion and equity. Agenda development: • The Committee Secretariat will draft the agenda in consultation with the Chairperson, Executive Sponsor, and where appropriate, relevant Council staff. • Members can request the Committee Secretariat to list items on the agenda. Such items will be included on the agenda subject to agreement of the Chairpersons and Executive Sponsor. • The Committee Secretariat will coordinate meeting attendance. Special guests / subject matter experts may be invited to the meeting at the combined discretion of the Chairperson, including the Deputy Chairperson and Committee Secretariat (Council Officer). • Committee agendas will be forwarded to Members by email no later than five working days before a scheduled meeting. • Minutes will be provided to the Chairperson no later than 10 working days after the meeting and will include a summary of discussions, details of any conflicts of interest disclosed, and any advice for Council consideration.

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	• The Chairperson shall ratify the Committee minutes prior to their distribution via the meeting minutes of the next Ordinary Council meeting. • Committee minutes will be received at noted at the subsequent Ordinary Council meeting. Executive Sponsor The CEO will appoint a senior council officer (usually a member of the executive management team) as the Executive Sponsor of each Committee. The Executive Sponsor will be responsible for determining frequency of any additional meetings in accordance with the needs of Council, agenda development (as per clause 14 above) and reviewing minutes before they are released to Council.
12. Responsibilities, duties, and conduct of Members	In conducting its activities associated with its purpose and scope the Committee will: • Conduct itself according to, and within, the Terms of Reference and any relevant Council resolution. • Inform itself of issues, opportunities, constraints, and urgent actions relating to the Committee. • Provide honest, considered, and constructive advice to Council that will improve Council decision making. • Provide advice on strategic and other planning work to help set short and longer-term direction and action. • Foster a culture that seeks to understand and explore diverse views of Members, which are reflected in advice to Council. • Participate in a manner that upholds cultural safety, with zero tolerance for racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, or discrimination of any kind. All Members will be given every opportunity, encouragement, and support to put their views before the Committee to be considered by Council. During all Committee undertakings, Members must: • Prepare for, attend, and actively participate in meetings • Act honestly and treat others with respect by listening to one another and by allowing all Members to have a voice. • Exercise reasonable care and diligence. • Not make improper use of their position or make improper use of information acquired because of their position. Respectful behaviour is inclusive of all Committee meetings, emails, correspondence, telephone calls, and online meetings. Members must work co-operatively with other Members, respect the authority of the Chair(s) and meeting procedures, and must not seek to dominate the meeting or insist or imply that their own views and ideas carry more weight than those of others.
13. Quorum	A quorum for meetings of the Committee will be: • Half of the voting Members plus one • At least one Councillor Member (Chairperson or Acting Chairperson) • At least one Council Officer to provide secretariat support. If a quorum is not met within a reasonable time of the scheduled meeting start time: • The meeting must be adjourned or rescheduled, at the discretion of the Chairperson.

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14. Recommendations of the Committee to Council	Formal advice and recommendations of the Committee to Council will be determined by the Members and finalised by the Chairperson. Where agreement cannot be reached by the majority of Members, the minutes should reflect that a common view was not reached.
15. Conflict of interest, privacy, and confidentiality	The conflict of interest and confidentiality provisions in the Local Government Act 2020 apply to all Members. Councillor Members must disclose any conflict of interest in a matter being considered by the Committee in accordance with the Act and Council's Governance Rules 2020. A Community Member who has a personal interest in a matter being considered by the Committee must disclose that personal interest to the Committee and leave the room and not participate in any discussion and/or decision in relation to that matter. All committee members must respect confidential and sensitive handling of information as appropriate. Any disclosure made in accordance with this clause must be recorded in the minutes of the relevant Committee meeting by the Committee Secretariat (Council Officer).
16. Committee meetings, frequency, and arrangements	The Committee will meet quarterly. Meetings will: • Be held at an accessible and suitable Darebin venue or may be held virtually. • Offer a hybrid in-person and online option to attend. • Be held on a quarterly basis. • Usually commence at 6pm on a Monday, Wednesday, or Thursday, unless another day or time is required. • Commence on time and conclude by the stated completion time, not extending beyond a 120-minute duration. • Be scheduled and confirmed in advance. • Be recorded through minutes. • Notice of any additional Committee meetings will be provided 2 weeks in advance. • Be closed to the public.
17. Reporting requirements and transparency	Committee meeting minutes and recommendations will be submitted to the next practical scheduled Council Meeting. • A Councillor Member (Chairperson or Deputy Chairperson) will speak to the minutes if required. • After receiving Committee meeting minutes, a Councillor Member (Chairperson or Deputy Chairperson) will provide an update back to Members at the next Committee meeting. To maintain transparency of Committee operations and in alignment with Council's Governance Rules the following information is to be published on Council's website in respect of each Committee: • The Terms of Reference of this Committee • The names of all Members • Minutes of Committees meetings in Ordinary Council Meeting Minutes **Note that in some instances identifying details may be redacted to maintain safety for some Members, if required.*

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	Annual Committee Outcomes Reporting: An annual report will be compiled to summarise the actions and outcomes of each committee. • Annual actions include committee membership, meeting attendance, and the number of meetings conducted. • Annual outcomes include agenda items considered as they relate to the purpose of the committee, summary of advice provided to Council, and outcomes of advice provided.
18. Member support	Council will provide a range of support and reasonable adjustments to enable Member participation, if required. Examples include; • Wellbeing support and debrief arrangements for sensitive discussions, particularly in the context of Aboriginal Cultural Safety. • Access supports and reasonable adjustments. • Language support, including translation and literacy support.
19. Meeting expenses	Expenses that relate to the access needs of Members to attend meetings and participate in the Committee will be covered by Council, e.g. Auslan interpreter. Council will cover the cost of interpreters and other language supports required by culturally and linguistically diverse Members to attend meetings and participate in the Committee. Venue and catering costs for meetings will be covered by Council. Catering provided will meet the cultural and dietary requirements of all meeting attendees.
20. Committee limitations	Committee advice is only one mechanism by which Council decisions are informed and is complemented by other community engagement activities undertaken in line with Council's Community Engagement Policy.
21. Out of scope (Groups, Taskforces, Networks, Alliances, Panels Delegated Committees, and External Groups)	On occasion, Council may also form groups, committees, and other bodies during the delivery of operational projects, programs, and services that are not considered Advisory Committees and are not covered by this Terms of Reference. Formation of these groups will be in line with Council Community Engagement Frameworks and Policies and project management protocols. Examples include: • Community Reference Group • Working Group or Taskforce • Network • Alliance. • Panel • Delegated Committees External (Non-Council) Groups: Councillors and Officers may have a role to play in groups established by other organisations, including other local government authorities, which are not covered by this Terms of Reference. Councillors may be appointed as representatives of Council, or Officers may be members of these external groups. when they strategically align to Council priorities.
22. Other relevant information	**Media and Publicity:** • Council may feature photographic or videographic content or names of Members through their communications channels to promote the work of the Committee. • Members' contact details will not be shared publicly. • Members must not speak to the media, or make posts or comments on social media, on behalf of the Committee unless

	Council provides written authorisation. Any unauthorised contact with the media may result in a review of the person's membership and may result in suspension or removal. **Note that in some instances identifying details may be redacted to maintain safety for some Members, if required.*
23. Committee contact details	The appointed Committee Secretariat (Council Officer) will be the contact point for enquiries relating to the Committee.
24. Date of Council adoption of Terms of Reference	**TBC**
25. Review of Terms of Reference	These Terms of Reference current until the Committee term ends but may be reviewed by Council resolution at any time. Members will review and provide advice to Council on this Terms of Reference at the first meeting and then annually.

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Special TERMS OF REFERENCE
Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Advisory Committee

1. Establishment	Council may establish an Advisory Committee as part of its Governance Framework according to *Council's Governance Rules 2020.* An Advisory Committee can only be established by a Council resolution.
2. Purpose	The CALD Advisory Committee provides advice and recommendations to Council on matters affecting culturally and linguistically diverse communities within the municipality. The Committee acts as a conduit between Council and culturally and linguistically diverse communities to enable their voices and needs to be considered in Council planning, decision-making and service delivery.
3. Application of these Terms of Reference	These Terms of Reference apply to the Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) Advisory Committee. Throughout this Terms of Reference, the word "Committee" refers to the Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) Advisory Committee.
4. Scope	The Committee will provide advice to Council on relevant matters, including: • Council policies, plans and strategies that impact culturally and linguistically diverse communities. • Council's reviews of services and programs to ensure access, equity and inclusion for CALD communities are considered. • Emerging issues, trends and priorities affecting CALD residents and communities. • Community participation and civic leadership, including opportunities to increase representation and involvement in local government. • Advocacy priorities and partnerships that support positive outcomes for CALD communities. • Council initiatives, projects or proposals where a multicultural community perspective would assist decision-making.
5. Term	All Advisory Committees will end on 1 October in the year following the General Council election, or as determined by the Governance Rules whichever is the sooner. Council may at any time by resolution set a date or a milestone that when reached or completed causes the cessation of the Committee and the expiry of Committee Members' terms.
6. Committee limitations and indemnity	The Committee is to act in an advisory capacity to Council only and has no delegated authority, therefore Members are not indemnified, to make decisions or form policy on behalf of Council. Committee advice is only one mechanism by which Council decisions are informed and is complemented by other community engagement activities undertaken in line with Council's Community Engagement Policy. The Committee is not responsible for expenditure, nor does it have an operational role, and neither it, nor its Members, may direct Council staff in the performance of their duties.
7. Honorarium	Community Members (Individual) will be paid a $50.00 honorarium for each Committee Meeting they attend.

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8. Recruitment and induction of Community Members	All Community Members are appointed by Council resolution following a public Expression of Interest (EOI) process, for a term specified in the resolution. The EOI process must align with Darebin strategies, frameworks, policies, and relevant legislation: • Towards Equality Framework – Equity, Inclusion, and Human Rights Framework 2019-2029 • Legislative obligations, including positive duty obligations, under the Equal Opportunity Act 2010, Sex Discrimination Act 1984, Gender Equality Act 2020, and Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006. • Cultural Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan 2026-30 • Welcoming Cities national standards Committees comprise the following types of Members: • Councillor Members – appointed annually (non-voting) • Community Members - individual/professional (voting) The Committee Secretariat (Council Officer) is nominated by the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) to support the Committee and is not considered a Member of the Committee. Where vacancies occur 'mid-term,' a replacement Community Member may be appointed by Council's CEO, subject to an EOI process. Members appointed because of a 'mid-term' vacancy will serve the balance of the former Member's term. A position becomes vacant if a Committee member fails to attend 3 consecutive meetings without reasonable grounds or communication, on a case-by-case basis. Community Members may apply for, and be appointed, to multiple Committees concurrently. Prioritising diversity of membership will be considered in Members who are appointed. **Gender Equity** Gender equity will inform the recruitment and selection of Community Members (individuals and representatives of organisations) and Councillor Members for all Committees. Women must comprise at least 50% of overall membership. As directed by the Governance Rules 2020, any person appointed to an Advisory Committee that nominates for election to Council, State Parliament or Federal Parliament must take leave of absence from their member position from the time of declaring they have nominated (or intend to nominate). If elected, they will be deemed to have resigned from the Committee. Community Members (individuals and representatives of organisations) will be selected based on membership in clause 8, in addition to the following considerations: **Community Members (Individual):** Council will appoint members to this committee that identify as at least one of the following: • Diverse cultural and linguistic background • Migrants, refugees, and people seeking asylum Council will also seek to ensure diverse representation across a range of identities and experiences.

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	Community Members (Organisation Representatives): Some members may represent an organisation, peak body, or agency, which has specialist knowledge relating to the purpose and scope of the Committee. Where a member is appointed to the Committee as a representative of a particular organisation a proxy may attend meeting on their behalf if the nominated representative cannot attend. Organisations, peak bodies, and agencies represented must meet the following criteria: • Not for profit, public service, community service, social enterprise, registered faith organisation, Traditional Owner Corporation, Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation (ACCO), or other structures that are not privately owned/for-profit. • Based in Darebin, or has a remit and focus that includes, and is applicable to, Darebin communities. **Induction:** Community members must participate in an induction arranged by Council at the commencement of their term on the Committee. The induction will include an overview of the Council's role and functions as a Local Government Authority, the relationship of the Committee with Councillors and the community, governance protocols, and any other matters to ensure that members are well supported. Members may be required to participate in specified training relevant to the work of the Committee from time to time, or attend meetings, forums, or workshops with Members of other Committees, to share knowledge and for the collaborative provision of advice as appropriate.

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9. Membership and term of membership	The Committee will consist of: • Two Councillor Members: o One Chairperson and one Deputy Chairperson o Appointed annually by Council resolution • Up to fifteen (15) Community Members, comprising both individual and professional members: o Applications received through a publicly advertised Expression of Interest (EOI) process. o Appointed by Council resolution for a two-year term. o If a Community Member successfully applies for a second term, the maximum cumulative term they can undertake is 4 years (e.g. 2 x 2-year terms). **Community Members (Individual)** must live (primary or secondary residence), work, or study in the Darebin community. In addition, Community Members should meet one or more of the following criteria, which will be evaluated when selecting successful applicants in the Expression of Interest (EOI) process: • Involvement in the wider community with strong community networks and connections, leadership, engagement, or advocacy experience. • Good knowledge and understanding of local issues relevant to the Committee's focus. • Willingness to contribute positively to meetings in a fair and respectful manner. • Have lived experience from culturally and linguistically diverse and migrant communities, with particular focus on newly arrived migrants. **Community Members (Organisation Representatives)** are appointed to represent an organisation, which should meet one or more of the following criteria in addition to the criteria listed in clause 7 of the Terms of Reference: • An organisation, agency, or service that focuses on and supports people and communities that relate to culturally and linguistically diverse and migrant communities. Council (by resolution) may elect to cease a member's participation earlier than the term of appointment for reasons such as: • The Member no longer meets the criteria of membership • The Member breaches the Terms of Reference. A Community Member may choose to cease their membership at any time. Members may be required to hold a valid Working with Children Check to ensure compliance with Council's Child Safe obligations.
10. Role and term of Chairperson (Councillor)	The Chairperson is responsible for the following: • Attend and chair all meetings of the Committee, except where absence is unavoidable, in which case the Deputy Chairperson will temporarily assume the role. • Approve the meeting schedule and meeting agenda with the Committee Secretariat (Council Officer). • Ensure the Committee's business is conducted in a manner that upholds Aboriginal Cultural safety. • Ensure the Committee's business is conducted with zero tolerance for racism, ableism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, or discrimination of any kind.

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	• Ensure the Committee's business is conducted in an orderly manner in compliance with the Darebin's Governance Rules, including Conflict of Interest protocols. • Support and encourage participation from all Members present at the meeting by adapting their approach to meet differing styles and needs of attendees. • Direct any person to be excluded from a meeting or for any item of business, for example, on the grounds of confidentiality or a conflict of interest. • Ensure that advice and recommendations recorded by the Committee Secretariat (Council Officer) in the meeting represent the collective views of the Committee. • Report the Committee's advice and recommendations to Council with the administrative support of the Committee Secretariat (Council Officer). • Report the outcomes of the Council Meetings in relation to Committee advice at the following meeting. Upon appointment, all Councillor Members must undertake training (or demonstrate relevant recent training and proficiency) in running and participating in effective, inclusive, and culturally safe Committee meetings.
11. Role of Committee Secretariat and Executive Sponsor (Council Officers)	**Committee Secretariat** An appointed Council Officer will fulfill the role of Committee Secretariat. General responsibilities: • Support Committee meetings, including scheduling, agenda development, meeting minutes, records management, venue bookings, and catering arrangements. • Support good governance by providing procedural and policy advice to the Committee. • Develop and coordinate the Member recruitment and induction process. • Provide and support to Members, including responding to email and telephone enquiries. • Maintain up to date information regarding Advisory Committees at Council (internal and external). • Prepare the Annual Committee Outcomes Report • Undertake essential training to ensure skills in Aboriginal Cultural Safety, disability inclusion, and awareness, LGBTIQA+ inclusion and awareness, and other appropriate areas relating to inclusion and equity. Agenda development: • The Committee Secretariat will draft the agenda in consultation with the Chairperson, Executive Sponsor, and where appropriate, relevant Council staff. • Members can request the Committee Secretariat to list items on the agenda. Such items will be included on the agenda subject to agreement of the Chairpersons and Executive Sponsor. • The Committee Secretariat will coordinate meeting attendance. Special guests / subject matter experts may be invited to the meeting at the combined discretion of the Chairperson, including the Deputy Chairperson and Committee Secretariat (Council Officer). • Committee agendas will be forwarded to Members by email no later than five working days before a scheduled meeting. • Minutes will be provided to the Chairperson no later than 10 working days after the meeting and will include a summary of discussions, details of any conflicts of interest disclosed, and any advice for Council consideration.

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	• The Chairperson shall ratify the Committee minutes prior to their distribution via the meeting minutes of the next Ordinary Council meeting. • Committee minutes will be received at noted at the subsequent Ordinary Council meeting. **Executive Sponsor** The CEO will appoint a senior council officer (usually a member of the executive management team) as the Executive Sponsor of each Committee. The Executive Sponsor will be responsible for determining frequency of any additional meetings in accordance with the needs of Council, agenda development (as per clause 14 above) and reviewing minutes before they are released to Council.
12. Responsibilities, duties, and conduct of members	In conducting its activities associated with its purpose and scope the Committee will: • Conduct itself according to, and within, the Terms of Reference and any relevant Council resolution. • Inform itself of issues, opportunities, constraints, and urgent actions relating to the Committee. • Provide honest, considered, and constructive advice to Council that will improve Council decision making. • Provide advice on strategic and other planning work to help set short and longer-term direction and action. • Foster a culture that seeks to understand and explore diverse views of Members, which are reflected in advice to Council. • Participate in a manner that upholds cultural safety, with zero tolerance for racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, or discrimination of any kind. All members will be given every opportunity, encouragement, and support to put their views before the Committee to be considered by Council. During all Committee undertakings, Members must: • Prepare for, attend, and actively participate in meetings • Act honestly and treat others with respect by listening to one another and by allowing all Members to have a voice. • Exercise reasonable care and diligence. • Not make improper use of their position or make improper use of information acquired because of their position. • . Respectful behaviour is inclusive of all Committee meetings, emails, correspondence, telephone calls, and online meetings. Members must work co-operatively with other Members, respect the authority of the Chair(s) and meeting procedures, and must not seek to dominate the meeting or insist or imply that their own views and ideas carry more weight than those of others.
13. Quorum	A quorum for meetings of the Committee will be: • Half of the voting Members plus one • At least one Councillor Member (Chairperson or Acting Chairperson) • At least one Council Officer to provide secretariat support. If a quorum is not met within a reasonable time of the scheduled meeting start time: • The meeting must be adjourned or rescheduled, at the discretion of the Chairperson.

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14. Recommendations of the Committee to Council	Formal advice and recommendations of the Committee to Council will be determined by the Members and finalised by the Chairperson. Where agreement cannot be reached by the majority of Members, the minutes should reflect that a common view was not reached.
15. Conflict of interest, privacy, and confidentiality	The conflict of interest and confidentiality provisions in the Local Government Act 2020 apply to all Members. Councillor Members must disclose any conflict of interest in a matter being considered by the Committee in accordance with the Act and Council's Governance Rules 2020. A Community Member who has a personal interest in a matter being considered by the Committee must disclose that personal interest to the Committee and leave the room and not participate in any discussion and/or decision in relation to that matter. All committee members must respect confidential and sensitive handling of information as appropriate Any disclosure made in accordance with this clause must be recorded in the minutes of the relevant Committee meeting by the Committee Secretariat (Council Officer).
16. Committee meetings, frequency, and arrangements	The Committee will meet quarterly. Meetings will: • Be held at an accessible and suitable Darebin venue or may be held virtually. • Offer a hybrid in-person and online option to attend. • Be held on a quarterly basis. • Usually commence at 6pm on a Monday, Wednesday, or Thursday, unless another day or time is required. • Commence on time and conclude by the stated completion time, not extending beyond a 120-minute duration. • Be scheduled and confirmed in advance. • Be recorded through minutes. • Notice of any additional Committee meetings will be provided 2 weeks in advance. • Be closed to the public.
17. Reporting requirements and transparency	Committee meeting minutes and recommendations will be submitted to the next practical scheduled Council Meeting. • A Councillor Member (Chairperson or Deputy Chairperson) will speak to the minutes if required. • After receiving Committee meeting minutes, a Councillor Member (Chairperson or Deputy Chairperson) will provide an update back to Members at the next Committee meeting. To maintain transparency of Committee operations and in alignment with Council's Governance Rules the following information is to be published on Council's website in respect of each Committee: • The Terms of Reference of this Committee • The names of all Members • Minutes of Committees meetings in Ordinary Council Meeting Minutes **Note that in some instances identifying details may be redacted to maintain safety for some Members, if required.*

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	Annual Committee Outcomes Reporting: An annual report will be compiled to summarise the actions and outcomes of each committee. • Annual actions include committee membership, meeting attendance, and the number of meetings conducted. • Annual outcomes include agenda items considered as they relate to the purpose of the committee, summary of advice provided to Council, and outcomes of advice provided.
18. Member support	Council will provide a range of support and reasonable adjustments to enable Member participation, if required. Examples include; • Wellbeing support and debrief arrangements for sensitive discussions, particularly in the context of Aboriginal Cultural Safety. • Access supports and reasonable adjustments. • Language support, including translation and literacy support.
19. Meeting expenses	Expenses that relate to the access needs of Members to attend meetings and participate in the Committee will be covered by Council, e.g. Auslan interpreter. Council will cover the cost of interpreters and other language supports required by culturally and linguistically diverse Members to attend meetings and participate in the Committee. Venue and catering costs for meetings will be covered by Council. Catering provided will meet the cultural and dietary requirements of all meeting attendees.
20. Committee limitations	Committee advice is only one mechanism by which Council decisions are informed and is complemented by other community engagement activities undertaken in line with Council's Community Engagement Policy.
21. Out of scope (Groups, Taskforces, Networks, Alliances, Panels Delegated Committees, and External Groups)	On occasion, Council may also form groups, committees, and other bodies during the delivery of operational projects, programs, and services that are not considered Advisory Committees and are not covered by this Terms of Reference. Formation of these groups will be in line with Council Community Engagement Frameworks and Policies and project management protocols. Examples include: • Community Reference Group • Working Group or Taskforce • Network • Alliance. • Panel • Delegated Committees External (Non-Council) Groups: Councillors and Officers may have a role to play in groups established by other organisations, including other local government authorities, which are not covered by this Terms of Reference. Councillors may be appointed as representatives of Council, or Officers may be members of these external groups. when they strategically align to Council priorities.
22. Other relevant information	**Media and Publicity:** • Council may feature photographic or videographic content or names of Members through their communications channels to promote the work of the Committee. • Members' contact details will not be shared publicly. • Members must not speak to the media, or make posts or comments on social media, on behalf of the Committee unless Council provides written authorisation. Any unauthorised contact with the

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	media may result in a review of the person's membership and may result in suspension or removal. **Note that in some instances identifying details may be redacted to maintain safety for some Members, if required.*
23. Committee contact details	The appointed Committee Secretariat (Council Officer) will be the contact point for enquiries relating to the Committee.
24. Date of Council adoption of Terms of Reference	**TBC**
25. Review of Terms of Reference	These Terms of Reference remain current until the Committee term ends but may be reviewed by Council resolution at any time. Members will review and provide advice to Council on this Terms of Reference at the first meeting and then annually.

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Advisory Committee Review: Previous Resolution Summaries and Review Findings

Part 1 - Background

Advisory Committee review

Darebin's advisory committee review has involved work with Councillors, committee members and officers to address the multiple review resolutions. The review process, findings and opportunities are documented below. This document also has detailed summaries of each of the 15 previous advisory committees.

Resolutions relating to the review

The tables below detail the resolutions and actions taken to address the different components:

Council Resolution: 16 December 2024 Minute no. 24-163 (Governance report)	**Advisory Committee Review – Addressing the 16 December 2024 resolution**
At Council meeting 16 December 2024, Council resolved: *... (7) Notes that all Council Advisory Committees and Reference Groups sunset on 30 June 2025 and a full review will be conducted to consider which Committees should be reestablished, along with review of the terms of reference. The review report be received by Council no later than the last Council meeting in May 2025 and be undertaken according to the following (but not limited to) guiding points with each to be reported on:*	Below in brief are the actions taken to address this resolution. More detail in the Methodology section below.
a) *Length of operation of the advisory committees*	This was addressed through the 21 July 2025 Councillor briefing session, which included a briefing paper and Councillor workshop that was conducted as part of the engagement phase of this review.
b) *The committee's terms of reference and especially their purpose and the extent to which that purpose has been achieved.* *the committee's terms of reference and especially their purpose and the extent to which that purpose has been achieved.*	As above. This was also addressed through surveying committee members (29 responses) and workshops with convenors (officers).
c) *the positioning of the advisory committee within the structure outlined in the Darebin Community Engagement Policy, February 2023.*	This was addressed through the 21 July 2025 Councillor briefing session, which included a briefing paper and Councillor workshop that was conducted as part of the engagement phase of this review,

Advisory Committee Review: Previous Resolution Summaries and Review Findings

	specifically through the "Community Engagement Strategic linkages: Community Engagement Policy" section. The review also incorporated feedback from Council's Community Engagement Team on the alignment, purpose, and structure of advisory committees in relation to the Darebin Community Engagement Policy, February 2023.
d) numbers of community representatives and their particular expertise as it relates to the purpose of the advisory committee.	This was addressed through the 21 July 2025 Council briefing workshop and papers.
e) key achievements of the advisory committee over the length of their operation and especially in the last 12 months.	This was addressed through the 21 July 2025 Council briefing workshop and papers.
f) mechanisms within the Terms of Reference or otherwise for reporting of committee advice to Councillor briefings and Council meetings.	This was addressed through the 21 July 2025 Council briefing workshop and papers, through surveying of committee members (29 responses) and workshops with convenors (officers).
g) the extent and nature of advice formally provided to Council in the last 12 months.	This was addressed through the 21 July 2025 Council briefing workshop and papers.
h) the function and effectiveness of existing six-monthly reports to Council and the extent to which those reports from advisory committees have directly influenced Council resolutions, especially in the last 12 months.	Council moved to annual reporting for advisory committees in 2023. The effectiveness of this was discussed at the 21 July 2025 Councillor workshop and in the Council briefing paper,
i) Commits to offering an opportunity for community representatives of advisory committees to address Councillors about the importance of their advisory committee.	This was addressed through committee member surveying in September 2025, through the opportunity offered for Officers conducting the review to visit committee meetings and gather feedback in the presence of the Councilor Chairperson. All advisory committee members were advised of upcoming Council meetings with agenda items that related to the review, at which opportunities were available to address Council via the public question and submission processes. In April 2026 advisory committee members were given the opportunity to address Councillors about the importance of their advisory committee at an online forum.

Advisory Committee Review: Previous Resolution Summaries and Review Findings

12 May 2025 MINUTE NO. 25-046 (Governance Report) *That Council:*	**Addressing the resolution**
.... 4) Extends the sunset period for all current Community Advisory Committees and Reference Groups from 30 June 2025 to 31 December 2025 to enable a comprehensive review to be undertaken that aligns with Council's adopted Council Plan 2025-29 and incorporates processes that ensure their success	The sunset period of all committees and reference groups was extended and a comprehensive review was delivered between early 2025 and July 2026.

15 December 2025, MINUTE NO. 25-206 *That Council:*	
1) Notes that the Advisory Committee Review is still underway and has already identified a range of strategic and operational opportunities.	
2) Provides in-principle support for transitioning towards a model of fewer, more-broadly based advisory committees that more clearly align to Council Plan themes and strategic objectives.	This was addressed by Officers developing a proposal for a new advisory committee model with five committees. Proposed committees clearly aligned with 2025-2029 Council Plan.
3) Approves the extension of the current 15 advisory committees to 30 June 2026 to enable further work and Council consideration with a view to implementing the new model from 1 July 2026.	
4) Receives a report at the March 2026 Council meeting with more details about the proposed future model including the number and scope of advisory committees, Terms of Reference and relevant transition processes	This was addressed through a Council report although the item was deferred to the April 2026 Council meeting.

28 April 2026, MINUTE NO. 26-056 ***That Council:***	
1) Notes that as per its resolution of 15 December 2025, Council's current fifteen advisory committees will expire on 30 June 2026.	

Advisory Committee Review: Previous Resolution Summaries and Review Findings

2) *Acknowledges the contribution of outgoing advisory committee members and thanks them for their time, commitment and input into Council's work and decision-making.*	This has been addressed on a Committee-by-Committee basis, in agreement with members and Committee convenors.
3) *In relation to the Aboriginal Culture and Knowledge strategic objective:*	
a) *Establishes the Darebin Aboriginal Advisory Committee to operate in accordance with the relevant clauses of the draft Advisory Committee Terms of Reference at Appendix A, noting that where relevant the term Darebin Aboriginal Advisory Committee replaces the term Aboriginal Culture and Knowledge Advisory Committee.*	This has been addressed and all references to the Aboriginal Advisory Committee have now been replaced with the term Darebin Aboriginal Advisory Committee.
b) *Notes that in relation to the Darebin Aboriginal Advisory Committee; an Expression of Interest process to appoint Committee members will start as soon as possible, in accordance with the Terms of Reference with Advisory Committee members to be determined at a future Council meeting.*	This has been addressed with the CEO having met with Uncle Alan Brown, the previous Co-Chair of DAAC, to determine an appropriate approach to recognising the contributions of former committee members and commencing the expression of interest process for new members. This approach seeks to support a respectful transition to the new committee arrangements.
4) *In relation to the establishment of other advisory committees, requests the CEO to bring a report to Council no later than August 2026 which considers the Councillor/advisory committee member sessions held in April 2026 (Appendix B) and makes further recommendation on the structure of advisory committees and other groups such as tasks forces, reference groups and networks.*	This has been addressed with the report prepared for the August 2026 Council meeting. Having regard to the consideration of the Councillor/Advisory Committee member sessions, the August report presents an Advisory Committees and Groups framework and a proposal regarding specific groups.
5) *The terms of reference of all Advisory Committees will include a requirement that their membership comprise at least 50% women*	This has been addressed in the Advisory Committee Terms of Reference.

Review Methodology and Outputs

Officers undertook the following activities to deliver on review parameters:

Desktop review

Advisory Committee Review: Previous Resolution Summaries and Review Findings

Review of all documentation, including current terms of reference, Committee agendas, minutes.

Councillor workshop

A Councillor workshop was conducted as part of the engagement phase of this review exploring purpose, scope and effectiveness. A backgrounder findings paper was shared (content included in this paper below).

Current Committee Members

An online survey was sent to current members of the committees and groups within the scope of the review, and 29 responses were received.

In-person engagement with advisory committees

Committees were offered an in-person survey session, of which five opted into.

Current Committee Convenors (Officers) Workshop

Two workshops were held for officer committee convenors.

All the above engagement methods informed the review findings and recommendations.

Advisory Committee Review: Previous Resolution Summaries and Review Findings

Findings

Strengths and Challenges

The review found that advisory committees at Darebin had the following **strengths**:

- Volunteer based
- Local civic participation and engagement
- Community values and expertise to inform Council's decision-making
- Community members gain experience in a formal committee setting and to develop a better understanding of local government
- Enable Council to meet community engagement commitments as per the Darebin Community Engagement Policy
- Alignment with Darebin's social justice commitments as per *Towards Equality: Darebin Council's Equity, inclusion, and human rights framework 2019-2029.*

The following **challenges** were identified:

- Inconsistencies in the Terms of Reference and processes
- Some committees are not following its Terms of Reference
- Lack of a Policy governing advisory committee establishment and operation
- There is inconsistency in how advice is reported to Council to support decision making
- Several committees are perceived to be under-utilised
- Staff time invested in servicing the committees may not be proportionate to strategic impact.
- Inconsistent committee attendance can impact functionality
- Some groups are not functioning as advisory committees (ie set up to provide advice to Council) but as another type of group (eg working group, steering committee, network, taskforce).

Advisory Committee Review: Previous Resolution Summaries and Review Findings

DAREBIN'S 15 PREVIOUS ADVISORY COMMITTEES

Active and Healthy Ageing Advisory Committee (AHAAC)	
Purpose	Informing Council on issues that influence services delivered to those ageing in Darebin and report on the Darebin Active and Healthy Ageing Strategy.
Year established	2009
How was the committee established? *E.g. Council resolution, legislative requirement*	The committee was established following extensive community consultation culminating in the Active and Healthy Ageing Strategy 2011 – 2021. The Year 1 Action Plan identifies an action which was to establish the Darebin Active and Healthy Ageing Board. Expected outcomes included: • Opportunity for older adults from diverse community to monitor progress of the Active and Healthy Ageing Strategy • Opportunity for Council to develop an understanding of the issues, policies and drivers that influence aged care. Council resolution 13/11/2017: That the following Community Advisory Committees be established for the 2017/2018 Council year and the appropriate number of Councillors be appointed as members of each Committee: Active and Healthy Ageing Community Board.
Number of positions available on the committee	12
Number of members (as of April 2025)	7 (due to resignations)
Councillor representative/s	• Cr. Connie Boglis OAM (Chair) • Cr. Gaetano Greco (Proxy)
Please list key projects/ focus areas from the past 12 months	• Age Friendly Darebin • Federal Aged Care Reforms • Engagement and consultation on Council-led projects
Total number of meetings held annually	4 (Quarterly)

Advisory Committee Review: Previous Resolution Summaries and Review Findings

Estimated annual time commitment for members and Councillors	8 hours total attending committee meetings, 4 hours pre-reading = 12 hours per member. 12 hours x 12 members = **Total: 144 hours.**
Estimated annual time commitment from officers	**Total: 103 hours.**

Advisory Committee Review: Previous Resolution Summaries and Review Findings

Art and Heritage Advisory Committee	
Purpose	Providing expert advice and support to achieve visual art, public art and heritage interpretation projects, services and activities.
Year established	2020. Before that, it was called the Bundoora Homestead Board of Management and had been operating for 2 decades as a section 86 special committee.
How was the committee established? *E.g. Council resolution, legislative requirement*	The Art & Heritage Advisory Committee was established by Council resolution in March 2020, upon dissolution of the former Bundoora Homestead Board of Management. Council resolution 6/04/2020: That Council: (1) Moves to dissolve the Bundoora Homestead Board of Management Special Committee and transitions to an Art & Heritage Advisory Panel.
Number of positions available on the committee	Minimum of 12 community members.
Number of members (as of April 2025)	13
Councillor representative/s	• Cr. Alexandra Sangster (Chair) • Cr. Kristine Olaris OAM (Proxy)
Please list key projects/ focus areas from the past 12 months	• Migration Public Artwork - provided ongoing support and advice around the design and delivery of a major new public art commission for Darebin, the Migration public artwork. • Indoor Art Collection – provided guidance on future management of works of unknown provenance • Darebin Art Collections Acquisitions – provided recommendations on new acquisitions for Darebin Council • Bundoora Homestead exhibition proposals – members of the Committee sat on the assessment panel for the 2024 expressions of interest process to exhibit at Bundoora Homestead.

Advisory Committee Review: Previous Resolution Summaries and Review Findings

	• Workshop on the Darebin 2041 Community Vision and Council Plan 2025-2029
Total number of meetings held annually	4 (Quarterly) Additionally, committee members also get co-opted to sit on one-off assessment panels such as the Art Acquisition panel (annual), exhibition proposals or public art assessment panels.
Estimated annual time commitment for members and Councillors	8 hours total attending committee meetings, 4 hours pre-reading = 12 hours per member. 12 hours x 13 members = **Total: 156 hrs.**
Estimated annual time commitment from officers **E.g. Developing Agendas, organising meeting logistics - on the day set up and following up actions from previous meetings. Liaising with members and Councillors between meetings.**	**Total: 66 hours.**

Advisory Committee Review: Previous Resolution Summaries and Review Findings

Climate Emergency Darebin Advisory Committee	
Purpose	Climate Emergency Darebin Advisory Committee provides advice and feedback to Council in the implementation of Council's Climate Emergency Plan.
Year established	2018
How was the committee established? *E.g. Council resolution, legislative requirement*	Council resolution Minute No 18-069, 26 Feb 2018 included Adoption of Climate Emergency Darebin Advisory Committee Terms of Reference Appendix A. The original purpose of CED AC was to help Council implement the Climate Emergency Plan The Terms of Reference were revised in 2020/2021 as per all Council Advisory Committees; the central purpose noted above remained the same although with different ways of getting to the end goal.
Number of positions available on the committee	10
Number of members (as of April 2025)	8
Councillor representative/s	• Cr. Julie O'Brien (Chair) • Cr. Emily Dimitriadis (Proxy)
Please list key projects/ focus areas from the past 12 months	• Structure, scope and objectives of each Pillar within the CEP. • Approaches, networks and strategies for reaching a diverse audience for the Stage 2 community consultation about the CEP. • Detailed feedback and advice on emerging plans for specific actions.
Total number of meetings held annually	4 (Quarterly)
Estimated annual time commitment for members and Councillors	8 hours total attending committee meetings, 4 hours pre-reading = 12 hours per member. 12 hours x 10 members = **Total: 120 hrs.**
Estimated annual time commitment from officers	**Total: 60 hours.**

Advisory Committee Review: Methodology, Findings and Current Committee Summaries

Darebin Aboriginal Advisory Committee	
Purpose	Playing an important role in contributing to and monitoring the implementation of the Darebin Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Action Plan.
Year established	2011
How was the committee established? *E.g. Council resolution, legislative requirement*	Council resolution 13/11/2017: That the following Community Advisory Committees be established for the 2017/2018 Council year and the appropriate number of Councillors be appointed as members of each Committee: Darebin Aboriginal Advisory Committee.
Number of positions available on the committee	11
Number of members (as of April 2025)	10
Councillor representative/s	• Cr. Kristine Olaris OAM (Co-Chair) • Cr. Emily Dimitriadis
Please list key projects/ focus areas from the past 12 months	• Local Treaty/Treaty • Community Treaty Presentations • Decolonising Bundoora Park - Truth Telling • Racism in Sport • Council Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Action Plan • Council Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment strategy and action Plan • Climate Emergency • Mental Health and Wellbeing • Aboriginal Housing/Homelessness • Aboriginal Community Grants • DAAC Recruitment • DAAC Workshops • Ganbu Gulin • Darebin Aboriginal Community Awards
Total number of meetings held annually	4 (Quarterly) 2-5 Yarning Circles per year as per membership
Estimated annual time commitment for members and Councillors	6 hours per meeting per member. 6 hours x 11 members = **Total: 66 hrs.**
Estimated annual time commitment from officers	**Total: 184-1046 hours**

Advisory Committee Review: Methodology, Findings and Current Committee Summaries

Darebin Community Awards Advisory Committee	
Purpose	The purpose of this Committee is to provide advice and recommendations to Council in relation to the selection of winners annually for Darebin Community Awards
Year established	2018
How was the committee established? *E.g. Council resolution, legislative requirement*	Endorsement of the Darebin community awards advisory committee - new members 2 July 2018. BACKGROUND / KEY INFORMATION This report is following on from Council endorsement of the new Terms of Reference for the Advisory Committee, Notion of Motion No. 8.6 from the Council meeting held on 30 April 2018. Previous Council Resolution: At its meeting held on 21 August 2017, Council resolved: 'That Council continues to recognise excellence and service in Darebin, renewed as the Darebin Community Awards, and to be awarded on a day other than January 26.'
Number of positions available on the committee	13
Number of members (as of April 2025)	10
Councillor representative/s	• Cr. Kristine Olaris OAM (Chair) • Cr. Gaetano Greco (Proxy)
Please list key projects/ focus areas from the past 12 months	Every year the Darebin Community Awards highlight the wonderful and impactful contributions our community members make to the City of Darebin. • Citizen of the Year • Young Citizen of the Year • Community Group of the Year • Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Community Leader of the Year • Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Emerging Young Community Leader of the Year • Sustainability Award

Advisory Committee Review: Methodology, Findings and Current Committee Summaries

	• Lifetime Achievement Award • CALD Elder Community Leader of the Year, and • CALD Emerging Community Leader of the Year
Total number of meetings held annually	3 (Tri-annually)
Estimated annual time commitment for members and Councillors	6 hours total attending committee meetings, 3 hours prereading = 9 hours per member. 9 hours x 13 members = **Total: 117 hours**
Estimated annual time commitment from officers	18 hours for 1x officer 8 hours for 1x officer **Total: 26 hrs.**

Darebin Disability Advisory Committee	
Purpose	Advising Council on issues relating to access and inclusion for people with disabilities and carers living, working, studying, or visiting Darebin.
How was the committee established? *E.g. Council resolution, legislative requirement*	1994 Preston City Council moved a motion to develop a (Preston) Disability Advisory Committee. Council resolution 13/11/2017: That the following Community Advisory Committees be established for the 2017/2018 Council year and the appropriate number of Councillors be appointed as members of each Committee: Darebin Disability Advisory Committee.
Number of positions available on the committee	There is no cap on number of positions available on the committee
Number of members (as of April 2025)	11
Councillor representative/s	• Cr. Vasilios Tsalkos (Chair) • Cr. Matt Arturi (Proxy)
Please list key projects/ focus areas from the past 12 months	DDAC provided feedback regarding the following projects at the March, June, September, and November meetings: o Darebin Council Community Awards (Disability Category) o LGBTIQA* Action Plan

Advisory Committee Review: Methodology, Findings and Current Committee Summaries

	o Outdoor Dining and Trading Policy and Design Guidelines o Housing Strategy o Future redevelopment of Reservoir Leisure Centre o 2024 Year in review of DDAC priorities and achievements o Planning DDAC priorities for 2025 DDAC provided feedback regarding the following projects in Special Meetings: o Route 86 Tram Accessibility Upgrades o Hard Waste Trial o Darebin 2041 Community Vision Review and new Council Plan
Total number of meetings held annually	4 (Quarterly)
Estimated annual time commitment for members and Councillors	8 hours total attending committee meetings, 4 hours pre-reading = 12 hours per member. 12 hours x 11 members = **Total: 132 hrs.**
Estimated annual time commitment from officers E.g. Developing Agendas, organising meeting logistics - on the day set up and following up actions from previous meetings. Liaising with members and Councillors between meetings.	**Total: 200 hrs.**

Advisory Committee Review: Methodology, Findings and Current Committee Summaries

Darebin Domestic Animal Management Reference Group	
Purpose	This group provides strategic advice and recommendations to Council in relation to the implementation of the Domestic Animal Management Plan.
Year established	2013
How was the committee established? *E.g. Council resolution, legislative requirement*	The group was established as an action item in the 2013-2017 Domestic Animal Management Plan (to support the implementation of the Plan)
Number of positions available on the committee	10
Number of members (as of April 2025)	10
Councillor representative/s	• Cr Connie Boglis OAM (Chair) • Cr Julie O'Brien (Proxy)
Please list key projects/ focus areas from the past 12 months	• Group feedback on the Local Law Review • Thinking ahead for the next Domestic Animal Management Plan (due end of 2025) • Monthly social media posts covering a range of animal ownership topics • Darebin Council selected to participate in pilot study for a targeted cat desexing program and grant received ($25,000) • Improvements to signage in parks • Increasing pet registration numbers
Total number of meetings held annually	3 (Tri-annually)
Estimated annual time commitment for members and Councillors	6 hours total attending committee meetings, 3 hours prereading = 9 hours per member. 9 hours x 10 members = **Total: 90 hours**
Estimated annual time commitment from officers	**Total: 15 hours** – including meeting attendance, completion of minutes, reports etc.

Advisory Committee Review: Methodology, Findings and Current Committee Summaries

Darebin Education Network	
Purpose	The purpose of this Committee is to provide advice and recommendations to Council to: • Promote equitable and quality learning and education for all students across Darebin primary and secondary schools • Provide information and advice to Darebin City Council on priorities for equity in education, especially for students who experience educational disadvantage and in student wellbeing • Create opportunities for exchange and collaboration between primary and secondary schools across all sectors – public, Catholic and independent, on mutual priority areas of teaching and learning, and on student wellbeing • Create opportunities for exchange, collaboration and initiatives between Darebin schools and Darebin City Council on priorities of teaching and learning, and on student wellbeing.
Year established	The Darebin Public Education Advocacy Committee was formed in 2012 to provide guidance in the development of the Darebin Education Inquiry during 2012—2013. However, in 2015 it became more formally an advisory committee to Darebin Council, as the Darebin Education Committee. It had a name change to Darebin Education Network by Council resolution in 2019. Council resolution 13/11/2017: That the following Community Advisory Committees be established for the 2017/2018 Council year and the appropriate number of Councillors be appointed as members of each Committee: Darebin Education Committee. Council resolution 2/12/2019: That Council: (1) Establishes the following Community Advisory Committees for a period of 12 months or until such time as Council makes a further resolution on the matter.

Advisory Committee Review: Methodology, Findings and Current Committee Summaries

	(2) Appoints the appropriate number of Councillors as members of each Committee until the 24th of October 2020. Darebin Education Committee (To be renamed Darebin Education Network from January 2020).
How was the committee established? *E.g. Council resolution, legislative requirement*	As one of the recommendations from the Darebin Education Inquiry and as part of overall process of review and development of Advisory Committees.
Number of positions available on the committee	It is not a fixed membership network, and no community members are directly involved. Membership is open to all Principals or representatives from school leadership of all 48 Darebin schools across all the school sectors. It is usual to have up to 10 schools represented.
Number of members (as of April 2025)	See above
Councillor representative/s	• Cr. Ruth Jelley (Chair) • Cr. Matt Arturi (Proxy)
Please list key projects/ focus areas from the past 12 months	• Supporting schools to embed teaching Aboriginal history and culture and truth-telling: o Seventh Darebin Schools' NAIDOC Yarning Conference o Annual whole-of-school cultural awareness with Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Cultural Corporation x 1 Darebin school • Careers tour and visit by First Nations students of Reservoir High to Council. This was a collaboration between Community Inclusion and People and Culture • 'Digital Safety and Wellbeing' - This is a key issue raised by schools with a focus on parents. Four workshops for parents were delivered at East Preston Islamic College, Preston Northeast PS and Somali Australia Council of Victoria • Each of the DEN meeting were held in various community organisations and spaces to encourage connections between schools and communities- Islamic Museum or Australia, Bundoora Homestead and Aboriginal Advancement League with presentations by each organisation.

Advisory Committee Review: Methodology, Findings and Current Committee Summaries

	• Provision of advice across Council for strengthening partnerships between schools and Council programs and services – mental health, active transport, libraries, leisure and recreation, events and Arts, community grants, anti-racism and gender equity.
Total number of meetings held annually	4 (Quarterly)
Estimated annual time commitment for members and Councillors	8 hours total attending committee meetings, 4 hours prereading = 12 hours per member 12 hours x 10 schools = **Total: 120 hours**
Estimated annual time commitment from officers E.g. Developing Agendas, organising meeting logistics - on the day set up and following up actions from previous meetings. Liaising with members and Councillors between meetings.	**Total: 40 – 60 hours** for administrative aspects of quarterly meetings as a minimum – but please note this does not include actioning items and direct presentations made at the DEN meetings.

Advisory Committee Review: Methodology, Findings and Current Committee Summaries

Darebin Interfaith Council	
Purpose	Providing advice to Council on issues affecting faith communities, informing Council decision making in relation to policy, programs, and services.
Year established	2017
How was the committee established? *E.g. Council resolution, legislative requirement*	Council resolution 13/11/2017: That the following Community Advisory Committees be established for the 2017/2018 Council year and the appropriate number of Councillors be appointed as members of each Committee: Darebin Interfaith Council
Number of positions available on the committee	15
Number of members (as of April 2025)	18
Councillor representative/s	• Cr. Alexandra Sangster (Co-Chair) • Cr. Ruth Jelley (Proxy)
Please list key projects/ focus areas from the past 12 months	• Participated in the East Reservoir Community Iftar event led by the Somali Australia Council of Victoria (SACOV). • Attended the Darebin Volunteer Expo 2024. • Provided input and feedback to the Darebin Council Climate Emergency Plan 2024-30. • Participated in the 2024 Intercultural Centre Cultural Diversity Oration. • Organized and hosted the 2024 Refugee Week Dinner, the theme of the year was 'Finding Freedom: Family'. • The Committee also participated in faith-based events on behalf of Council throughout the year.
Total number of meetings held annually	4 (Quarterly)
Estimated annual time commitment for members and Councillors	8 hours total attending committee meetings, 4 hours pre-reading = 12 hours per member. 12 hours x 18 members = **Total: 216 hours**
Estimated annual time commitment from officers	**Total: 48 hours** (Please note that this varies depending on the task, e.g.: more hours are used when consultations take place as well as extra meetings, and faith-based events take place where the Officer's attendance is requested)

Advisory Committee Review: Methodology, Findings and Current Committee Summaries

Darebin Nature Trust	
Purpose	Providing advice to Council on issues affecting biodiversity, informing Council decision making in relation to policy, programs and services.
Year established	See answer below.
How was the committee established? *E.g. Council resolution, legislative requirement*	• Jun 2018 - DNT was established as an interim body for one year. Formed as a group of experts to play a key role in providing advice and insight into the development of the Darebin Open Space Strategy. • Feb 2020 – Open space strategy finalised, recruitment for long-term DNT: candidates assessed against expertise level. • Sep 2020 - DNT restructure forming four working groups to work in collaboration with council officers. • Jun 2021 – Council resolution to sunset all existent advisory committees on 30 June 2021, start a simultaneous round of recruitment, and to adopt a standard ToR for all advisory committees - new Terms of Reference incorporated diversity and inclusion as key criteria for recruitment. • Jun 2023 – sunset of current DNT committee as per ToR • Sep 2023 – recruitment of nine new members, pivoting away from the initial DNT model centered on expertise, to one that is in alignment with the standard ToR adopted from Council's resolution in June 21. • Guided by Darebin's 'Towards Equality Framework 2019-2029', the recruitment process was designed with the aim of delivering meaningful, equitable and inclusive engagement with the DNT, by listening to the aspirations and views of Darebin's diverse communities, especially those whose voices might be less often heard or have never been given an opportunity before.

Advisory Committee Review: Methodology, Findings and Current Committee Summaries

Number of positions available on the committee	10 Originally, there were 9 positions as established in the ToR, Clause 4: "The membership of the Trust will comprise up to nine community members and three Councillor representatives." However, a motion was passed at the Council meeting on December 18, 2023 to modify the Terms of Reference to allow the appointment of ten members: "Endorses the appointment of ten (10) ~~nine (9)~~ community members to the Darebin Nature Trust (DNT) and requests that the CEO (or delegate) update the DNT Terms of Reference to allow for up to 10 (10) community members. ~~as recommended in confidential Appendix C in accordance with the DNT Terms of Reference~~ (page 14)".
Number of members (as of April 2025)	9
Councillor representative/s	• Cr. Vasilios Tsalkos (Co-Chair) • Cr. Julie O'Brien (Proxy)
Please list key projects/ focus areas from the past 12 months	• Consultation - Our Vision. Our Plan. Our Darebin. The DNT brought a new perspective by highlighting that Council's current priorities are human-centric, lacking consideration of environmental and other species' health. • Climate Emergency Plan consultation focusing on the Caring for Country Pillar. • Review of natural environment strategies and plans, and discussion about the top priorities for our biodiversity. This work will help guide the next renewal proposals.
Total number of meetings held annually	4 (Quarterly)
Estimated annual time commitment for members and Councillors	8 hours total attending committee meetings, 4 hours prereading – 12 hours per member. 12 hours x 10 members = **Total: 120 hours**

Advisory Committee Review: Methodology, Findings and Current Committee Summaries

Estimated annual time commitment from officers	• **Non-recruitment years:** ~ 130–150 hours • **Recruitment years:** ~ 170–190 hours

Advisory Committee Review: Methodology, Findings and Current Committee Summaries

Edgars Creek and Edwardes Lake Task Force	
Purpose	This Advisory Committee provides advice and feedback to Council on the implementation of Council's Edgars Creek & Edwardes Lake Task Force. The Task Force is a partnership between local government, Traditional Owners, water agencies and community organisations to coordinate and advance initiatives that significantly improve the environmental health of Edgars Creek and Edwardes Lake with the purpose to improve water quality, build flood resilience, and enhance the natural environment.
Year established	2017 & 2019
How was the committee established? *E.g. Council resolution, legislative requirement*	Edwardes Lake Task Force - Council resolution 13/11/2017: That the following Community Advisory Committees be established for the 2017/2018 Council year and the appropriate number of Councillors be appointed as members of each Committee: Edwardes Lake Park Reference Group.
Number of positions available on the committee	11
Number of members (as of April 2025)	11
Councillor representative/s	• Cr. Gaetano Greco (Chair) • Cr. Vasilios Tsalkos (Proxy)
Please list key projects/ focus areas from the past 12 months	• New planting areas to improve habitat and riparian vegetation supported by Darebin City Council and Friends of Edwardes Lake. • Successful Green Links Grant (DEECA) application by Friends of Edwardes Lake, with extensive revegetation areas. • Active monthly Water Watch volunteering group for water monitoring. • Active weekly Litter Watch/Litter Collection and Reduction and Weeding volunteering groups, contributing to habitat management and pollution prevention.

Advisory Committee Review: Methodology, Findings and Current Committee Summaries

	• Installation of a water sensor to better monitor water quality at Edgars Creek and Edwardes Lake, installed near the Merri drains outlet. • Initial consultations and assessments for works at the Gross Pollutant Trap (north of Leamington Street Wetlands) • Response to pollution events at Edwardes Lake in collaboration with the EPA (Environment Protection Authority).
Total number of meetings held annually	4 (Quarterly)
Estimated annual time commitment for members and Councillors	8 hours total attending committee meetings, 2 hours prereading = 10 hrs. 10 hours x 11 members = **Total: 110 hours**
Estimated annual time commitment from officers	**Total: 32-40 hours**

Advisory Committee Review: Methodology, Findings and Current Committee Summaries

Gender Equity Advisory Committee	
Purpose	Providing strategic advice to Council on issues affecting gender-diverse communities and a gender lens on policies, programs, and services.
Year established	This committee was previously called the Darebin Women's Advisory Committee from 2009-2021. In 2022, it was renamed the Gender Equity Advisory Committee.
How was the committee established? *E.g. Council resolution, legislative requirement*	Council resolution 21/08/2017: That Council: (1) Reaffirms its longstanding commitment to achieving marriage equality through a free vote in parliament, noting Council's previous endorsement of marriage equality in July 2015 and December 2016, as well as Council's support of its LGBTIQ citizens since 2012 through actions delivered via the Sexuality, Sex and Gender Diversity Action Plan and also the Sexuality, Sex and Gender Diverse Advisory Committee, and Council's support to IDAHOBIT since 2010. According to Objective document A2395746: "August 2009 (Council resolution 17 August 2009) for developmental phase of DWAC – November 2010 (Council report 29 November 2010) for current ToR – No end date". Established in response to growing community need and aligns with Council responsibilities under the Gender Equality Act 2020, Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006, Sex Discrimination Act 1984.
Number of positions available on the committee	15
Number of members (as of April 2025)	15
Councillor representative/s	• Cr. Kristine Olaris OAM (Chair) • Cr. Ruth Jelley (Proxy)

Advisory Committee Review: Methodology, Findings and Current Committee Summaries

Please list key projects/ focus areas from the past 12 months	• Molly Hadfield Social Justice Oration for International Women's Day • LGBTIQA+ Action Plan Development • New draft Climate Emergency Plan – presentation. • Local Laws Review • Free from Violence whole of Council Program, Health Check review • Darebin Community Vision and Council Plan consultation • Awareness raising campaigns including Week without Violence October and 16 days of Activism against gender-Based Violence • Overview of State Government's Fair Access Policy at Darebin.
Total number of meetings held annually	4 (Quarterly)
Estimated annual time commitment for members and Councillors	4x2 hour meetings =8hr annually 1 hour prep (pre-reading) for meetings= 4 hours annually 2 hours of travel (up to) to and from meetings=8 hours annually. **Total: 20 hours per member annually.**
Estimated annual time commitment from officers	Varies depending on projects and member recruitment cycle. On average, the annual minimum amount of time would be 124 hours over a 12-month period. However, in a recruiting year this could increase to up to 200 hours annually. **Total: 124 hours – 200 hours**

Advisory Committee Review: Methodology, Findings and Current Committee Summaries

LGBTIQA+ Advisory Committee	
Purpose	Advising Council on issues and barriers to equality affecting people in the City of Darebin who identify as LGBTIQA+.
Year established	2011
How was the committee established? *E.g. Council resolution, legislative requirement*	At its meeting on 21 June 2010 Council made three resolutions in relation to an earlier call from a community member for Council to support IDAHO (International Day Against Homophobia). The resolutions were to: 1. Endorse the development of a range of initiatives to support the International Day Against Homophobia and other actions that combat sexuality-based discrimination. 2. Note the carriage of this issue by the Gender Equity Working Group. 3. Sponsor a Council Forum/Workshop with the affected community to support International Day against Homophobia and to assist the development of a range of initiatives to combat sexuality-based discrimination.
Number of positions available on the committee	12
Number of members (as of April 2025)	9
Councillor representative/s	• Cr. Julie O'Brien (Chair) • Cr. Kristine Olaris OAM (Proxy)
Please list key projects/ focus areas from the past 12 months	The Committee are key stakeholders for the LGBTIQA+ Action Plan, providing advice and contributions being a primary focus during the majority of meetings held in 2024.
Total number of meetings held annually	4 (Quarterly)
Estimated annual time commitment for members and Councillors	8 hours total attending committee meetings, 4 hours pre-reading = 12 hours annually per member. 12 hours x 12 members = **Total: 144 hrs.**

Advisory Committee Review: Methodology, Findings and Current Committee Summaries

Estimated annual time commitment from officers	**Total: 107 hours**

Advisory Committee Review: Methodology, Findings and Current Committee Summaries

Welcoming Cities Community Reference Group	
Purpose	Facilitating and monitoring Council's progress toward the principles and criteria across the six categories of the Welcoming Cities Standard.
Year established	2018
How was the committee established? *E.g. Council resolution, legislative requirement*	Council resolution 7/08/2017 to establish a reference group: That Council: (3) Endorse becoming a member of Welcoming Cities. (3) Establishes a reference group to facilitate and monitor the progress towards achieving the guidelines in the Welcoming Cities Standard. (3) Receive a report on appropriate terms of reference regarding the reference group in October 2017.
Number of positions available on the committee	14
Number of members (as of April 2025)	13
Councillor representative/s	• Cr. Gaetano Greco (Chair) • Cr. Ruth Jelley (Proxy)
Please list key projects/ focus areas from the past 12 months	o **Welcoming Cities Accreditation: T**he reference group provided significant support to Council's accreditation with Welcoming Cities (obtained August 2024) o **Advice and feedback** on Council actions and initiatives, notably: ○ Migration Public Artwork ○ Council resolution in Feb. 2024 on 'Reviews and updates to Council's Social and Sustainable Procurement Policy'. ○ Council's resolution in April 2024 on conflict in Gaza. ○ Darebin 2041 Community Vision and the new Council Plan 2025-2029 o **Cultural Diversity Employment Data motion**: advice and advocacy on Council's motion for the establishment of baseline data for internal Workforce Diversity with a focus on staff from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

Advisory Committee Review: Methodology, Findings and Current Committee Summaries

	o **New Cultural Diversity & Inclusion Action Plan**: initial consultation and advice to support the development of the plan.
Total number of meetings held annually	4 (Quarterly)
Estimated annual time commitment for members and Councillors	8 hours total attending committee meetings, 4 hours prereading = 12 hours per member annually. 12 hours x 14 members = **TOTAL:168 hours annually.**
Estimated annual time commitment from officers E.g. Developing Agendas, organising meeting logistics - on the day set up and following up actions from previous meetings. Liaising with members and Councillors between meetings.	It varies depending on the action and advice. **Total: 71 - 236 hours**

Advisory Committee Review: Methodology, Findings and Current Committee Summaries

Young Citizens Jury	
Purpose	The Young Citizens Jury is a group of young people who meet to advise council on community issues from a youth perspective. It enables young people to participate in civic life, develop skills, contribute to council, and other relevant bodies, decision making about issues that are important to them, and have a voice about possible solutions.
Year established	2017
How was the committee established? *E.g. Council resolution, legislative requirement*	Council resolution 19/06/2017: That Council makes the following commitments as part of the 2017 INLLEN Jobs for Youth Campaign, in line with the Council Plan: ..... (4) Convenes a 'young citizens' jury' in September and October comprised of local young people as part of the Jobs for Youth campaign. The young citizens' jury will provide recommendations to: a) Council and other relevant bodies on what young people want and need to thrive in a rapidly changing world. b) Council's new Youth Strategy and other Council strategies where relevant.
Number of positions available on the committee	20
Number of members (as of April 2025)	3 (recruitment temporarily paused)
Councillor representative/s	Not applicable; Councillors are not represented on this advisory committee.
Please list key projects/ focus areas from the past 12 months	• Provided input to Youth Services successful Hey Grant and Freeza funding applications • Participated in the development of Darebin Families, Youth and Children Strategy by providing: o Members of FY&C Strategy Reference Group o Community engagement and consultation process,

Advisory Committee Review: Methodology, Findings and Current Committee Summaries

	○ Co-design engagement activities and the Youth Round Table, ○ Feedback on the content and design of the new Darebin Families, Youth and Children Strategy: A Framework for Collective Action publication • Participated in Council's Rainbow Tick Accreditation project. Youth Services are one of the three in scope services. Feedback was provided on issues such as LGBTIQA+ safe, inclusive, and welcoming service delivery. • Undertook inclusive spaces audits on key Youth Services sites • Provided input to, and feedback on, Darebin's Community Vision and Council Plan 2025-2029 • Attended the Deliberative Panel and delivered a presentation on Darebin's young people and key issues that are important to them • Panel members for the Darebin Community Grants Program assessed and provided funding recommendations for the Youth Grant category.
Total number of meetings held annually	Monthly
Estimated annual time commitment for members and Councillors	Nil Councillors. 72 hours annually (8 hours per month attending committee meetings, 4 hours per month pre-reading). Additional time is required when working on a specific activity – see above.
Estimated annual time commitment from officers	Support for formal committee meetings is estimated at approx. 214 hours annually including: • Meeting facilitation (incl. set up/pack down): 6 hours/meeting (double staffed) • Admin duties: 5 hours/meeting (agenda, minutes, stakeholder liaison, follow-ups)

Advisory Committee Review: Methodology, Findings and Current Committee Summaries

	• Youth engagement: 6 hours/meeting (check-ins, reminders, follow-up tasks) • Recruitment: ~ 40 hours annually *Outside of formal meetings* - additional officer time is required for project delivery, reporting, and communications, with an estimated 90 hours annually, including: • Project support (~2 hours/month prep + 4 hours/month delivery with 2 staff) • Reporting and evaluation (~8–10 hours/year) • Promotion and comms (~10 hours/year beyond meeting admin) • Jury members are also supported to develop leadership and other skills during their term. **Total: 304 hours annually**

Darebin Council Advisory Committees and Groups Framework

Purpose of this Framework

Council uses a range of advisory, engagement, partnership and governance mechanisms to support decision-making, community participation and the delivery of Council priorities. These may include advisory committees, reference groups, panels, working groups, alliances and networks.

This framework has been developed to assist Councillors and officers in determining the most appropriate mechanism for a particular purpose. It outlines the key features, benefits, limitations and resource implications of different group types and supports a consistent, transparent and informed approach to establishing Council-supported bodies.

These mechanisms are one of several ways Council engages with community members and stakeholders and should be considered alongside Council's Community Engagement Policy and other engagement approaches.

Quick Decision Guide

If the purpose is to..	Consider...
Obtain strategic advice and recommendations to inform Council decision-making	**Community Advisory Committee**
Seek ongoing input on a project, place, strategy or implementation process	**Community/Stakeholder Reference Group**
Undertake deliberative engagement or gather focused input on a specific issue, challenge or policy question	**Panel**
Coordinate delivery of a project, event or shared initiative with partners	**Working Group / Taskforce**

Bring organisations together around shared advocacy priorities and collective action	**Alliance**
Support networking, information sharing and relationship building across a sector or area of interest	**Network**

Key Considerations

When deciding which mechanism is most appropriate, consider:

- What is the intended purpose and outcome?
- Is strategic advice, engagement, collaboration, advocacy or delivery required?
- What level of influence will participants have?
- Is a formal governance structure required?
- What level of Council oversight is necessary?
- What resources are available to support the group?
- Is the need ongoing or time limited?
- How does the proposed mechanism complement other community engagement activities?

Types of Advisory Committees and Groups

COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEES	
FEATURES	BENEFITS
▪ They are not legally mandated ▪ Advisory Committees are established by Council resolution and operate under a 'Terms of Reference' document, in which Council sets out the committee's purpose and how it will function ▪ Council retains control over the membership and purpose of the committee and the agenda. ▪ Generally, specific advice (expressed as recommendations) of an Advisory Committee will be communicated to Council via reports on the relevant matters, particularly when they are required to inform a Council decision ▪ Councillors generally undertake Chairperson duties on the advisory committee, unless specified otherwise in the Terms of Reference ▪ Advisory committees have a defined term ▪ Community representatives can be local residents or stakeholders appointed in their own right or representatives of service authorities, support agencies or community organisations ▪ Progress and activities of committees is reported to Council through formal reports ▪ Whilst Council is not bound to accept a recommendation of an advisory committee, Council should give due and proper consideration to all recommendations and suggestions put forward and give advisory committee members feedback on how their recommendations have been used. ▪ Council formally appoints Advisory Committee members through the provision of a Council Report with an officer recommendation	▪ They provide advice to Councillors and Council Officers on a specific subject to support Council's decision-making ▪ The focus area of the committees strategically aligns to Council's priorities ▪ They enable Council to draw on the expertise, lived experience, and diverse perspectives of committee members ▪ To enable Council to listen to the aspirations, views, and expertise of people, particularly those whose voices might be less often heard, especially those most affected by Council decisions ▪ To support Council decision-making on subjects that are complex, technical, and are strategic priorities for Darebin communities ▪ As per the Community Engagement Policy, Advisory Committees are a method to meet policy principles and minimum standards at collaborate IAP2 level

LIMITATIONS	RESOURCES
▪ They do not have any formal delegated decision-making authority to act in place of Council ▪ They have no legal standing, and they are not responsible for expenditure and cannot direct Council officers ▪ The advisory committees will observe Governance Rules and other relevant rules and regulations made by the council (e.g. Code of Conduct) unless exempted ▪ Committee advice is only one mechanism by which Council decisions are informed and is complemented by other community engagement activities undertaken in line with Council's Community Engagement Policy.	▪ They typically comprise one or more Councillors ▪ They involve a Secretariat to support committee meetings, oversee member recruitment, prepare reports and provide customer service to members. ▪ Typically includes a number of community representatives ▪ Councillors are appointed as Chair and to Advisory Committees annually via a Council resolution ▪ Some advisory committee members may receive a sitting fee as per the Terms of Reference ▪ Some meeting expenses for Members will be covered by Council as per the Terms of Reference, for example transport costs. ▪ Expenses that relate to the access needs of Members to attend meetings and participate in the Committee will be covered by Council, for example interpreters and other language supports required by culturally and linguistically diverse members, Auslan interpreters. ▪ Officers conduct the recruitment process for members according to the Terms of Reference, usually involving a public Expression of Interest process ▪ Council will often provide a venue and catering that meets the cultural and dietary requirements of all attendees
COMMUNITY/STAKEHOLDER REFERENCE GROUP	
FEATURES	BENEFITS
▪ Created for a particular purpose and disbanded when that purpose is achieved ▪ Is often linked to a project, specific subject, or place with a focus on providing input on operational matters and implementation of a specific strategy, plan or Council Plan action ▪ Includes selected community members, stakeholder representatives and/or subject matter experts appointed by Council Officers ▪ Generally, has a Terms of Reference and a defined term	▪ Provides sustained or in-depth community feedback outside of standard community engagement approaches ▪ Provides feedback and input to support the operational work of Council Officers ▪ Can be used to complement broader community engagement approaches, including through provision of advice to inform and support planning for broader engagement
LIMITATIONS	RESOURCES

▪ Does not have delegated decision-making authority ▪ Does not direct Council officers or manage expenditure ▪ Usually does not have a formal reporting mechanism to Council unless specifically requested. Relevant updates would usually be provided by Council Officers.	▪ Organised and administered by a Council Officer ▪ Generally chaired by an appropriately authorised Council officer, such as a member of the Executive Team, Manager or Coordinator ▪ No delegated Councillor representative ▪ Council may provide a venue and catering
PANEL	
FEATURES	BENEFITS
▪ Created for a particular purpose and disbanded when that purpose is achieved ▪ Generally convened for a short-term period but may be tasked to provide feedback on long-term issues ▪ Are often focused on a specific challenge, issue, or need ▪ Panel members may consist of interest groups and subject matter experts or representative community members ▪ The panel may be assessing or discussing a specific issue or challenge to develop proposed solutions or guidance ▪ May have a focus on assessment or evaluation for a specific purpose or task (e.g. a Grants Assessment Panel) ▪ May have a Terms of Reference ▪ Does have a defined purpose and scope ▪ May be called a Community Panel, People's Panel, Deliberative Panel, Citizens' Jury, Citizens' Assembly or other names ▪ Panel members may be appointed by Officers or recruited through a specialist process if a representative panel is being formed ▪ Reports or recommendations from Panels can go either to Council or to Officers depending on the nature of the purpose around which the panel has been convened	▪ Provide insight and solutions-oriented input from a range of community members, subject matter experts and interested parties ▪ Can provide a forum for community, organisations, experts, and interest groups to provide input into a project, issue, or challenge ▪ May promote discussion and build a shared understanding on a complex topic or issue ▪ Panel processes place a high focus on valuing the expertise and knowledge in a sector and the community ▪ Often used for deliberative engagement, to meet the requirement under the Local Government Act 2020 to use deliberative engagement practices to develop certain documents and processes including the Community Vision, Council Plan, Financial Plan and Asset Plan.
LIMITATIONS	RESOURCES
▪ Does not have delegated decision-making authority ▪ Is most effective for well-defined questions, issues, or challenges rather than broad discussions	▪ May require a panel facilitator or host and potentially a specialist recruiter if seeking to recruit a representative panel ▪ Council Officer(s) are responsible for convening and administering the panel ▪ A Councillor representative may be appointed to attend as an

	observer ▪ Council may provide the venue and catering ▪ Level of resourcing is dependent on the size of the panel and the amount of time they are given to complete their deliberation, which will vary depending on the complexity of the issue.
WORKING GROUP/ TASKFORCE	
FEATURES	BENEFITS
▪ Short-term, created for a particular purpose and is disbanded when that purpose is achieved ▪ Is often linked to a specific project or place ▪ May be connected to the implementation of a strategy or plan ▪ Focussed on supporting delivery of a project or strategy rather than on provision of advice ▪ Often comprises members from different organisations and community groups appointed by Council Officers ▪ Membership may be fluid – with relevant people brought into the group as required by the needs of the project ▪ May not have a formal Terms of Reference ▪ Has a defined term (e.g., completion of the project, event, etc.) ▪ No formal reporting to Council, except through Officer reports related to the project	▪ Enables the group to work together to complete tasks and achieve outcomes ▪ Supports the delivery of projects and actions that have a partnership approach in place ▪ Provides a structure for action-oriented involvement in projects rather than only an advisory capacity ▪ Can provide greater efficiency through leveraging of partnership resources ▪ Can enable dynamic and agile partnership working, supporting responsiveness to shifting circumstances and emerging issues
LIMITATIONS	RESOURCES
▪ Does not have delegated decision-making authority ▪ Works within the defined scope and deliverables of a project ▪ Decisions and actions are undertaken within the agreed project scope and deliverables only ▪ Does not direct Council officers or manage expenditure	▪ Organised and administered by a Council Officer ▪ Relatively lower level of resourcing required for administration than Advisory Committees or Reference Groups ▪ No delegated Councillor representative ▪ Council may provide a venue and catering
ALLIANCE	

FEATURES	BENEFITS
▪ Brings together organisations with shared interests ▪ Often has an advocacy focus ▪ Members are often organisations and interest groups ▪ May have a Terms of Reference ▪ Has a defined purpose and scope, usually accompanied by a list of shared advocacy goals or priorities ▪ May have a defined term ▪ May include multiple levels within its structure (e.g. an officer level group and a CEO/Mayoral level group) ▪ Membership is open to organisations and groups that have aligned interests and usually requires some form of commitment to a shared purpose, typically endorsed at a senior level of management or governance within member organisations.	▪ Strengthens the ability to advocate, influence, and make change by working together, increasing collective impact ▪ Can provide a structure for strengthening relationships and building capacity across sectors or in specific areas ▪ Raises the profile for certain issues, causes or needs ▪ Can amplify local issues and advocacy priorities to other levels of government ▪ Can assist in clarifying shared priorities at a local, regional, state, or sector level
LIMITATIONS	RESOURCES
▪ Does not have delegated decision-making authority ▪ The focus areas of the alliance will often be limited to priorities that are shared by the members	▪ A Council Officer is responsible for convening and administering the Alliance ▪ A Councillor representative may or may not be appointed ▪ Council may provide a venue and catering ▪ The multi-level approach does require a higher resource investment, including officer, CEO, and Councillor time
NETWORK	
FEATURES	BENEFITS
▪ Often established to enable networking across a sector or area of shared interest (e.g. a health and wellbeing network or family violence practitioner network) ▪ Focuses on information sharing and relationship building, and may support informal coordination and collaboration between organisations ▪ Often comprises members from different organisations, peak bodies, government agencies, and services. ▪ Members self-select to join the network based on its scope and purpose. Membership is generally informal and open, meaning new members can	▪ Networks can strengthen the communication, partnerships, and knowledge sharing across a sector or area of interest to support coordination, efficiency and responsiveness ▪ Can provide a structure for capacity building across a sector ▪ A place-based network can provide local context and profile for the broader sectors, services, and areas of interest

join at any time with no formal commitment required and different people from an organisation are free to attend rather than a specific delegate ▪ May not have a formal Terms of Reference ▪ May be ongoing or have a defined term ▪ Will usually have a defined scope and purpose ▪ Networks may be chaired by a member or a Council Officer	
LIMITATIONS	RESOURCES
▪ Does not have delegated decision-making authority ▪ A network does not have a task focus. Members may form adjacent working groups if required. ▪ No formal reporting to Council ▪ Can be utilized as a forum for stakeholder engagement on relevant policies or strategies but should not be used as an alternative to broader community engagement approaches.	▪ Organised and administered by a Council Officer ▪ No delegated Councillor representative ▪ Council may provide a venue and catering

Appendix A: Legislative and Governance Context
Council uses a range of advisory committees and other groups to support community participation, stakeholder engagement, collaboration and informed decision-making. These mechanisms operate within the broader governance framework established by the Local Government Act 2020, Council's Governance Rules and other relevant Council policies and procedures.

While some groups may be established through a formal Council resolution, others may be established operationally by Council officers to support the delivery of Council priorities, projects, strategies and services. The level of formality, governance and reporting requirements will vary depending on the purpose and nature of the group.

The mechanisms described in this framework are intended to provide advice, input, engagement, collaboration or partnership opportunities. Unless otherwise specified, they do not have delegated decision-making authority and do not act on behalf of Council.

Local Government Act 2020
The Local Government Act 2020 establishes the legislative framework within which Councils operate and includes requirements relating to governance, transparency, accountability and community engagement.

The Act requires councils to undertake community engagement and, in some circumstances, deliberative engagement to support the development of key strategic planning documents, including the Community Vision, Council Plan, Financial Plan and Asset Plan. Panels and similar deliberative engagement approaches may be used to support these requirements.

The Act also establishes the roles and responsibilities of Councillors, the Chief Executive Officer and Council officers, which should be taken into consideration when establishing advisory committees and other groups.

Governance Rules
Council's Governance Rules provide the framework for the conduct of Council business and support transparent, accountable and effective decision-making.

Where established by Council resolution, Advisory Committees operate in accordance with their Terms of Reference and any relevant requirements of Council's Governance Rules. Committee members are expected to comply with any applicable policies, procedures and codes of conduct.

Council should give due consideration to advice and recommendations provided through established advisory committees and other groups, recognising that such advice is one of a range of inputs that may inform Council decisions alongside broader community engagement, technical advice, statutory requirements and organisational priorities.

KEY THEMES AND SUMMARIES FROM COUNCILLOR AND ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBER SESSIONS - 15-16 April 2026

Overview

Two sessions were held on the 15th and 16th April 2026 to enable advisory committee members to address Councillors on the importance of their committee.

The sessions were organised to fulfill a Council resolution regarding the advisory committee review. The other components of the resolution were already delivered through the review process:

Resolution (16 December 2024 – Minute No. 24-163) of:

*"**That** Council:...*

(7) Notes that all Council Advisory Committees and Reference Groups sunset on 30 June 2025 and a full review will be conducted to consider which Committees should be reestablished, along with review of the terms of reference. The review report be received by Council no later than the last Council meeting in May 2025 and be undertaken according to the following (but not limited to) guiding points with each to be reported upon:

... (i) Commits to offering an opportunity for community representatives of advisory committees to address Councillors about the importance of their advisory committee."

Background

Officers reached out to the 175 members sitting on Council's 15 advisory committees. 11 advisory committee members opted to attend the sessions, representing nine committees.

The following committees were represented:

1. Climate Emergency Darebin
2. Darebin Nature Trust
3. Edwards Lake and Edgars Creek Water Quality Taskforce
4. Gender Equity Advisory Committee
5. Darebin Disability Advisory Committee
6. Darebin Youth Jury
7. Welcoming Cities Reference Group
8. Darebin Interfaith Council
9. Active and Healthy Ageing Advisory Committee

The following committees, while offered the opportunity were not in attendance:

1. Darebin Domestic Animal Management Reference group

2. Darebin Education Network
3. Art and Heritage Advisory Panel
4. Darebin Community Awards Advisory Committee
5. Darebin Aboriginal Advisory Committee*
6. LGBTIQA+ Advisory Committee

*Darebin Aboriginal Advisory Committee has also been engaged with separately to gather feedback on their committee's draft Terms of Reference.

The sessions were held as a Teams meeting with 15 minutes allocated to each committee. Members were advised that the Councillors present were there to listen to their address about the importance of their committee, and that if time permitted Councillors would then be invited to ask questions, but that the priority was hearing from all members that attended.

Once done, members were thanked for their attendance and contribution and that insights shared will help inform Councillors in their decision-making.

Key themes:

- The importance of specialist insight within connected Council decision-making: Members emphasised the value of deep, specialist knowledge grounded in lived experience and professional expertise, while noting the importance of this advice informing wider Council decision-making rather than operating in isolation.
- Lived experience strengthens relevance and legitimacy: Advisory committees were consistently described as bringing real-world insight that improves policy design, service delivery and community outcomes, particularly for groups whose needs may be less visible through general consultation.
- Trust, continuity and feedback loops are critical: Members highlighted the importance of continuity in relationships with Councillors and officers, and of receiving feedback on how advice informs decisions, to maintain trust and engagement.
- Integration across Council functions enhances impact: Many speakers acknowledged that their areas of focus intersect with multiple Council domains, and that advisory input is most effective when it can inform work across programs and services.
- Advisory approaches should be fit-for-purpose: Feedback reflected an understanding that different issues benefit from different engagement mechanisms, including standing advisory committees, taskforces or working groups, depending on context and purpose.

Summary of Committee feedback:

Climate Emergency Darebin Advisory Committee

Members highlighted the importance of climate action being embedded across Council planning, operations and services, given the far-reaching impacts of climate change on community wellbeing, infrastructure and cost of living. The committee's specialist expertise was valued, alongside recognition that climate advice is most effective when it informs a wide range of Council initiatives, supported by strong relationships, continuity and clear feedback on implementation.

Darebin Nature Trust

The Darebin Nature Trust emphasised the need for biodiversity and nature to maintain a clear and intentional voice in Council decision-making. The member present highlighted the Trust's role in providing specialist ecological expertise and community stewardship insight, noting that environmental considerations intersect with health, climate resilience and place-making and require visibility where multiple priorities converge.

Edwards Lake and Edgars Creek Water Quality Taskforce

The member present described the taskforce as a practical, outcomes-focused mechanism that brings together Council, agencies and community stakeholders to manage complex and ongoing water quality risks. The discussion highlighted the effectiveness of flexible, purpose-built governance arrangements that complement broader advisory functions and support sustained attention to technical and place-specific issues.

Gender Equity Advisory Committee

The member present outlined the committee's role in strengthening Council leadership in gender equity and gender-based violence prevention, noting that this work spans policy, workplace practice, community safety and service delivery. Gender equity was described as most effective when embedded across Council systems, supported by a strong advisory voice grounded in lived experience and sector expertise.

Darebin Disability Advisory Committee

Members highlighted the committee's role in bringing practical accessibility and inclusion insights into Council planning, infrastructure and services. Emphasis was

placed on ensuring disability
perspectives remain consistently embedded, participation remains accessible, and lived experience continues to inform decision-making across Council activities.

Darebin Youth Jury

The Youth Jury was described as an effective model for engaging young people through regular interaction, hands-on projects and meaningful recognition of participants' time. The member present highlighted the value of youth perspectives informing a broad range of Council issues, while noting the importance of engagement approaches tailored to how young people connect and participate.

Welcoming Cities Community Reference Group

Members emphasised the importance of sustained and informed engagement with culturally diverse communities, noting that cultural diversity shapes demand across many Council services and affects nearly half of Darebin's population. They highlighted the value of a dedicated forum in supporting policy development, service delivery and accreditation outcomes, and in providing Council with direct insight into migrant and refugee settlement experiences. Members also stressed the importance of maintaining strong connections with settlement services and community organisations to ensure engagement remains meaningful and informed.

Darebin Interfaith Council

The member present highlighted the distinctive role faith communities play in strengthening social cohesion, providing support and identifying emerging issues. Emphasis was placed on maintaining clear and trusted pathways for faith perspectives to inform Council work across areas such as community safety, wellbeing and inclusion. Members argued that the Interfaith Council provides governance assurance by ensuring faith perspectives are consistently considered, supporting early risk identification, religious literacy and alignment with cultural diversity commitments. It was strongly noted that without a dedicated interfaith mechanism, Council risks disengagement, missed issues, and difficulty demonstrating that faith communities have been meaningfully heard.

Active and Healthy Ageing Advisory Committee

Members focused on the growing importance of ageing-related issues, including transport, access to services, carer support and social connection. Contributions highlighted how ageing intersects with health, infrastructure, housing and community development, and the value of ensuring older residents' voices inform Council decision-making.

9.9 CT202544 CONTRACT AWARD FOR THE REDEVELOPMENT OF PITCHER PARK RESERVE

Author: Capital Project Manager

Reviewed By: Chief Executive Officer

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Pitcher Park Sports field Redevelopment Project aims to deliver a critical surface renewal to a highly utilised, district-level sports field in Alphington. This important community asset accommodates organised community sport, including AFL and cricket. The project seeks to address significant surface drainage and turf condition issues that are currently impacting safety, playability, and overall user experience.

In the 2025-26 financial year, detailed designs for the renewal works were prepared and submitted as part of a funding application under the Local Sports Infrastructure Fund. Council was successful in securing $452,000 toward the for this contract project.

Following this, Council progressed to a public tender process to engage a suitably qualified contractor to deliver the program of works, with the objective of completing the renewal for community use by April 2026.

A comprehensive tender evaluation process was undertaken, including detailed assessment, financial due diligence, and risk analysis.

This report presents the outcome of the tender process and seeks Council's approval of the recommendation put forward by the evaluation panel.

Subject to Council endorsement, the contract is proposed to commence in September 2026 and conclude on 31 March 2028, inclusive of the defects liability period.

Officer Recommendation

That Council:

(1) Awards contract No. CT202544 Pitcher Park Redevelopment Project to **Supplier B** for the contract sum nominated in **Appendix A**.

(2) Authorises the Chief Executive Officer (or delegate) to finalise and execute the contract documents on behalf of the Council

(3) Authorises the Chief Executive Officer to act as the Principal on behalf of Council including execution of contract variations in line with the terms of the contract.

(4) Releases the name of the successful tenderer and contract sum once all unsuccessful tenderers have been advised.

BACKGROUND

Pitcher Park is a heavily used district sports oval supporting AFL, cricket and community recreation, with more than 800 players across its tenant football and cricket clubs.

A 2025 Council audit identified the reserve as a high-priority renewal project due to deteriorated turf conditions, an uneven playing surface, access issues and a degraded cricket wicket.

Council allocated **$500,000** in June 2025 and secured an additional **$452,000** through the Local Sports Infrastructure Fund in March 2026. Detailed designs were completed in 2025-26, and a public tender process was subsequently undertaken in accordance with Council's Social and Sustainable Procurement Policy, transitioning the project into the delivery phase.

Usage and Participation

Pitcher Park supports strong and growing community participation, with more than 800 football and cricket players, including women, girls and all-abilities teams. The upgrade will improve capacity, support increased winter and summer use, reduce cancellations, and strengthen the park's role as a key community sport and recreation hub.

Existing Site Conditions and Impact

The oval is in poor condition, with drainage issues, an uneven surface, worn turf, limited grass coverage, access constraints and a degraded cricket wicket affecting safety and playability. These issues have led to training and match disruptions, reduced capacity, and constraints on club growth.

To address these challenges, Sports Design Group has developed a renewal design focused on improving drainage, surface levels and overall playing conditions, creating a safer and more reliable facility for users.

Key Construction Deliverables

The project will deliver a multi-use, fit-for-purpose sports ground through the following key works:

- Stripping existing topsoil and installing a new levelled, sand-based profile to improve drainage, with material disposed of or reused sustainably offsite
- Repair and renewal of drainage infrastructure to enhance performance, reduce wear, and improve playability
- Removal of the existing uneven cricket wicket and installation of a new synthetic wicket to improve safety and consistency of play
- Construction of a spoon drain adjacent to the coaches' boxes to improve water capture and ground conditions around the oval perimeter
- Reinstatement and testing of irrigation infrastructure
- Installation of a durable, drought-tolerant Santa Ana couch (warm-season) turf playing surface using mega rolls

Confidentiality

Confidential information relevant to this matter has been provided in the confidential section of the agenda attachments in accordance with section 66(2)(a) and the definition of *confidential information* under section 3(1) of the *Local Government Act 2020 (Vic)*. The information constitutes Council business information that, if prematurely released, could prejudice Council's position in commercial negotiations.

To support good governance, transparency and informed decision-making, all reasonable efforts have been made to include as much information as possible within the public report.

Only those elements that are necessary to protect Council's commercial interests have been provided separately as confidential attachments to assist Council's consideration of this matter.

This item has been included in the public agenda to facilitate transparency and accountability in Council's decision-making. Should discussion of confidential information be required to enable Council to make a decision, the matter will be deferred to the confidential section of the meeting agenda.

Previous Council Resolution

This matter is not the subject of a previous Council resolution.

ALIGNMENT TO 2041 DAREBIN COMMUNITY VISION

Strategic Direction 2: Prosperous, Liveable and Flourishing

ALIGNMENT TO 2021-25 COUNCIL PLAN

Strategic Direction 2: Prosperous, Liveable and Flourishing

ALIGNMENT TO COUNCIL PLAN STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

4.2 We will ensure our assets are optimised for the benefit of our community

1-13: Work with our sporting and recreation clubs to increase participation.

DISCUSSION

Public Tender

In line with Council's Social and Sustainable Procurement Policy 2021, a public tender process was conducted to select the preferred contractor. The tender was advertised on Council's online portal and in *The Age* newspaper. The tender conditions followed Council's Standard Request for Tender document, while the contract terms were based on the AS4000-1997 General Conditions of Contract. Submissions were invited to submit lump sum price proposals, in accordance with the project specifications.

Request for Tender (RFT)

The RFT was issued on the 8 May 2026 and closed on the 4 June 2026. Tenderers were also given the opportunity to visit the site on 20 May 2026. Details of the tenderers who submitted proposals by the closing date and time are outlined in Confidential Report **Appendix B** issued under separate cover.

Tender Evaluation

Submissions were evaluated against the following pre-established criteria:

- Price
- Demonstrated previous experience and capability
- Proposed methodology
- Program and availability
- Local business objectives

- Social initiatives and practices
- Sustainable initiatives and practices
- Compliance: Conflict of interest declaration, OH&S and WWCC
- Compliance: Certificates of currency for required insurances and Workcover
- Compliance: Financial Viability
- Compliance with Specifications
- Compliance with Agreement

The evaluation details, final scores and resulting matrices are provided in confidential ***Appendix B*** issued under separate cover.

Tender Evaluation

A tender evaluation panel (TEP) was established with representatives across the origination. The (TEP) members met on 24 June 2026 and 7 July 2026, to evaluate the submissions against the following pre-established criteria:

Tender price (rates)	**Sustainable Initiatives and Practices**
Experience and Capacity	**Working with Children Check**
Program and Availability	**OH&S**
Proposed methodology	**Insurances**
Local Business Objectives	**Financial Viability and Corporate Scorecard Assessment**
Social Initiatives and Practices	**Compliance with Specifications and Agreement**

**In accordance with the evaluation plan, only shortlisted tenderers were subject to third-party financial health checks*

Evaluation Stage

Tender Evaluation Panel shortlisted the highest-scoring tenderers. The shortlisted tenders were competitively priced and provided confidence in market rates. Post-tender clarifications and Best and Final Offers (BAFOs) were sought to confirm scope, pricing inclusions, and site reinstatement requirements, while also addressing financial assessment findings. All responses were received and evaluated by the panel (TEP) and were considered satisfactory. The final tendered prices are provided in **Attachment C.**

Reference Checks

Reference checks were undertaken for the preferred tenderer as part of the evaluation process. The referees provided positive feedback regarding the contractor's performance, capability, quality of work, program management and ability to successfully deliver projects of a similar scale and complexity.

The outcomes of the reference checks confirmed the contractor's demonstrated experience and capacity to deliver the project and provided additional assurance regarding their suitability for appointment. The feedback received was consistent with the tender submission and supported the evaluation panel's recommendation to award the contract.

Conflict of Interest and Confidentiality

All evaluation panel members completed conflict of interest and confidentiality declarations, with no conflicts identified. During evaluation, a panel member was named as a referee by a tenderer without their consent. After review, the panel determined no actual, perceived or potential conflict existed, and the member remained on the panel.

The tender process complied with Council procurement, probity and evaluation requirements, with independent probity oversight ensuring a fair and consistent assessment. In line with Council's Social and Sustainable Procurement Policy 2025, a public tender was advertised through the e-tender portal and Council website using Council's standard tender conditions and AS4000 Special Conditions of Contract, with submissions based on lump-sum pricing.

CONSIDERATION OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT (2020) PRINCIPLES

Financial Management

Timeline and funding sources

This project is scheduled for delivery over two financial years, spanning 2025-26 and 2026-27. It was included in the Council's four-year Capital Works Program, which was endorsed in June 2025. The project will be partially funded by Council.

Project Budget

Year	Project Budget (ex. GST)
2025-26	$500,000
2025-26 (LSIF Grant)	$452,000
2026-27	$50,000
Total	$ 1,002,000

A detailed total project cost estimate and further financial details of the project can be found in the confidential attachment **Appendix A** issued under separate cover.

Community Engagement

In accordance with Council's Community Engagement Framework, broader community consultation was not undertaken as the project represents a like-for-like renewal, with limited opportunity to influence scope and key deliverables. However, targeted consultation was undertaken with tenant clubs and relevant State Sporting Associations to ensure the proposed upgrades are fit-for-purpose and address existing usage challenges on site.

The project specifically aims to address critical safety and compliance issues, remove barriers to participation associated with limited capacity and poor ground conditions, and ensure Pitcher Park continues to function as a key hub for community AFL and cricket. By delivering a safe, high-quality sports ground, Council will support increased participation particularly among women and girls, enable greater utilisation of the facility, and improve the reliability of training and competition throughout the year.

The project scope and detailed design have been developed in alignment with AFL and Cricket Victoria facility guidelines for community and district-level competition, as well as relevant elements of Sport and Recreation Victoria's Female Friendly Sport Infrastructure Guidelines.

Communications

A communications plan will be developed prior to any construction to inform both the community and key stakeholders of the project, progress and impacts. Engagement activities will include:

- Letter drop to properties within a 500-metre radius of Pitcher Park Reserve
- On-site signage
- Darebin website project page
- Social media engagement
- Translations into key community languages

Overarching Governance Principles and Supporting Principles

(b) priority is to be given to achieving the best outcomes for the municipal community, including future generations;

Public Transparency Principles

(a) Council decision making processes must be transparent except when the Council is dealing with information that is confidential by virtue of this Act or any other Act;

Strategic Planning Principles

(a) an integrated approach to planning, monitoring and performance reporting is to be adopted;

Service Performance Principles

(a) services should be provided in an equitable manner and be responsive to the diverse needs of the municipal community;
(c) quality and costs standards for services set by the Council should provide good value to the municipal community;

COUNCIL POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

Environmental Sustainability Considerations (including Climate Emergency)

Consistent with Darebin's Climate Emergency declaration and sustainability objectives, the tender evaluation considered suppliers environmental policy aspects of their proposals.

The project specification includes several sustainability initiatives, including installation of Santa Ana couch, a drought-tolerant turf species with lower irrigation requirements, improved drainage and sand capping to reduce stormwater runoff, and the reuse of surplus soil at Bundoora Park Golf Course to minimise waste and maximise resource recovery.

Equity, Inclusion, Wellbeing and Human Rights Considerations:

In line with Darebin's Social and Sustainable Procurement Policy, the tender evaluation criteria gave weight to social initiatives and practices. Tenderers were assessed on their ability to demonstrate commitment to address disadvantage, improve equity and deliver social value.

Economic Development and Cultural Considerations

The evaluation criteria gave weight to Darebin based businesses and/or suppliers who could demonstrate local economic contribution through regular purchasing from local traders or the employment of local people. These factors were viewed favourably in line with evaluation criteria.

Operational Impacts

Operational impacts have been carefully considered in consultation with Parks and Open Space and Leisure teams to ensure the project does not cause any unintended disruptions to sporting team, turf maintenance, or the continued operation of the existing pavilion during construction.

The Pitcher Park carpark along Separation Street will be closed for the duration of the construction, which is expected to be completed by April 2027. The entire sports field will also be closed for the duration of the project. The community will be notified well in advance to works commencing on site.

Legal and Risk Implications

Due diligence activities have been undertaken to inform project planning and risk management, including soil investigations, feature and level surveys, and irrigation and drainage assessments. Consultation has also been carried out with Yarra Valley Water to ensure alignment with relevant utility requirements and to identify any associated risks building in proximity to an existing easement.

Financial Checks

Third-party financial health checks were undertaken for the two highest scoring tenderers. Their report identified that both these tenderers had "*a Satisfactory financial capacity to undertake the contract in question.*

Probity

An independent probity advisor was also appointed to oversee this procurement process. They provided a report which outlined that:

"It is our opinion that the procurement activities for the Pitcher Park Redevelopment Project (contract reference CT202544), up to and including the identification of the preferred supplier […]:

- *Were fair, transparent and conducted with integrity;*
- *Were carried out in accordance with the Strategic Procurement Plan;*
- *Complied with applicable laws, regulations and guidelines;*
- *Took into account all relevant matters and did not take into account any irrelevant matters;*
- *Applied rules consistently and fairly;*

- *Contained adequate processes to manage actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest;*
- *Made decisions that were free from bias and external influences;*
- *Were secure and confidential; and*
- *Were reported accurately and fully in the Pitcher Park Award Report.*

IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

The contract is scheduled to commence in September 2026, with on-site works expected to begin shortly thereafter. The redevelopment is anticipated to reach practical completion by the end of March 2027, subject to any granted extensions of time or delays due to inclement weather.

Additionally, the contract includes a defects liability period of 52 weeks, starting from the date the practical completion certificate is issued by Council's superintendent to the contractor.

Table: Project Program

Stage	Indicative Dates
Council Meeting (Award Construction Contract)	August 2026
Award Construction Contract	September 2026
Commence Construction	October 2026
Complete Construction – Practical Completion	April 2027
Defects rectification, final completion and handover	May 2027
End of Defect Liability Period	May 2028

RELATED DOCUMENTS

Attachments

- Contract Award - CT202544 for the Redevelopment of Pitcher Park Reserve (**Appendix A**) Confidential - enclosed under separate cover
- Tender Evaluation Matrix - CT202544 Contract Award for the Redevelopment of Pitcher Park Reserve (**Appendix B**) Confidential - enclosed under separate cover
- Financial Submission Information from Tenderers (**Appendix C**) Confidential - enclosed under separate cover

DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST

Section 130 of the *Local Government Act 2020* requires members of Council staff and persons engaged under contract to provide advice to Council to disclose any conflicts of interest in a matter to which the advice relates.

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

9.10 GOVERNANCE REPORT - AUGUST 2026

Author: Governance Services Advisor
Senior Governance Officer

Reviewed By: Chief Executive Officer

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Summary of Councillor attendance at Advisory Committee Meetings, Councillor Briefings, and other informal meetings of Councillors **(Appendix A)**
- Activity Reports by Mayor and Councillors
- Responses to Public Questions on notice at the 28 July 2026 Ordinary Council Meeting **(Appendix B)**
- Status of Petitions tabled during the current Council Term (November 2024 to 31 July 2026) **(Table A)**
- Quarterly reporting of Freedom of Information (FOI) statistics (FY 25/26) **(Table B)**
- 2025-26 – Q4 Councillor Expenses **(Appendix C)**
- Bi-annual CEO expense reimbursements and credit card transactions report (1 January 2026 to 30 June 2026)
- Audit and Risk Committee Summary Minutes **(Appendix D)**
- Biannual status update of the Good Governance Action Plan responding to the Municipal Monitors' report. **(Appendices E and F)**
- Instruments of Appointment and Authorisation *(Planning and Environment Act 1987)* **(Appendices G)**
- Revocation of the Councillor Interaction Protocols (**Appendix H**)
- Motions to Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) State Council meeting **(Appendices I, J and K)**

Officer Recommendation

That Council:

(1) Notes the Governance Report – August 2026.

(2) Notes the Summary of attendance at Advisory Committees Meetings, Councillor Briefings, and other informal meetings of Councillors at **Appendix A** to this report.

(3) Notes that the activity reports by Mayors and Councillors submitted prior to the meeting and circulated to Councillors, will be incorporated in the minutes of this meeting.

(4) Notes the responses provided to questions taken on notice at the 28 July 2026 Council Meeting **(Appendix B)**

(5) Notes the status of petitions tabled during the current Council term (November 2024 to 31 July 2026) **(Table A)**

(6) Notes the Freedom of Information (FOI) statistics shown in **Table B** for the 2025/26 financial year.

(7) Notes the 2025-26 Q4 Councillor Expenses **(Appendix C)**

(8) Notes that there have been no expense reimbursement claims or CEO Credit Card transactions for the period 1 January 2026 to 30 June 2026.

(9) Notes the Summary Minutes of the Audit and Risk Committee Meeting held on 17 June 2026 **(Appendix D)**.

(10) Notes the biannual status update of the Good Governance Action Plan **(Appendices E and F)**

(11) In the exercise of the powers conferred by section 147 (4) of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*, resolves that:

(a) The members of Council staff referred to in the 'Instruments of Appointment and Authorisation (Planning and Environment Act 1987)' attached as **Appendix G** be appointed and authorised as set out in the Instruments.

(b) Council's Common Seal be affixed to the Instrument of Appointment and Authorisation (Planning and Environment Act 1987).

(c) The Instruments of Appointment and Authorisation (Planning and Environment Act 1987) come into force immediately once the common seal of Council is affixed to the instrument and remains in force until Council determines to vary or revoke it.

(12) Revokes the Councillor Interaction Protocol (**Appendix H**).

(13) Considers and determines whether to submit the proposed (attached as **Appendices I, J and K)** to the MAV State Council to be held October 2026:

(a) Motion 1 *Accelerating Support for Councillor Psychological Safety, Wellbeing and Protection from Process Abuse* **(Appendix I)**

(b) Motion 2 *Strengthening Integrity, Accountability and Independent Oversight* **(Appendix J)**

(c) Motion 3 *Consistent public reporting of significant Council expenditure* **(Appendix K)**

(14) Notes that Cr Arturi, as Council's appointed delegate will attend the MAV State Council meeting.

BACKGROUND / KEY INFORMATION

Pursuant to Council's Governance Rules 2020, the agenda for each Ordinary Meeting is required to list certain governance/administrative matters in addition to other specified items.

These include Reports of Standing Committees i.e. Hearing of Submissions Committee, Summary of Meetings i.e. Briefings, Advisory Committee, responses to Public Questions taken on notice, reports by Mayor and Councillors, Councillor expenses and a range of other governance matters.

In accordance with best practice, good governance principles, transparent and accountable reporting, officers deem it appropriate to consolidate governance/administrative reports into one standing report to provide a single reporting mechanism for a range of statutory compliance, transparency, and governance matters.

This also ensure compliance with the requirements of the *Local Government Act 2020* ('the Act'), Council's Governance Rules and related regulations

Previous Council Resolution

This matter is not the subject of a previous Council resolution.

ALIGNMENT TO 2041 DAREBIN COMMUNITY VISION

Pillar 4: Collaborative, Transparent and Responsible

ALIGNMENT TO OUR DAREBIN PLAN 2025-29

Strategic Direction 6: Decision Making, Community Engagement and Transparency - A City that is well-managed, transparent and trusted by its community and partners, with clear and respectful communication that builds confidence in Council's decisions.

DISCUSSION

Matters covered in this report are:

Summary of Advisory Committees, Councillor Briefing and other informal meetings of Councillors

Pursuant to Council's Governance Rules 2020, a summary of any meeting of an Advisory Committee, as established by Council and attended by at least one Councillor, or a scheduled or planned meeting to discuss the business of Council, including briefing Councillors, and which is attended by at least half of the Councillors and one member of Council staff (excluding Council, Delegated Committee or Community Asset Committee meetings) must be tabled at the next convenient Council meeting.

The Summary of Advisory Committees, Councillor Briefing and other informal meetings of Councillors is provided at **Appendix A**.

Activity Reports by Mayor and Councillors

By 4.00pm on the day of each Ordinary Council Meeting, the Mayor and Councillors are required to submit a report detailing their attendance at various functions and activities since the last Council Meeting. These reports will be recorded in the minutes of this meeting.

Responses to Public Questions taken on Notice – 28 July 2026

Questions taken on notice at the Ordinary Council Meeting held on 28 July 2026 and subsequently responded to, are provided at **Appendix B.**

Status of Petitions tabled during the current Council Term (November 2024 to 31 July 2026)

Petitioning is a long-established process for members of the community to demonstrate community support for a request or views on a matter, and for that request or view to be presented directly to Council.

During the current Council Term, there have been 28 petitions tabled, there is currently 1 petition in progress, shown in **Table A** below.

Table A

	Date Tabled	Petition	Status

	Date Tabled	Petition	Status
1	24 February 2026	Request for City of Darebin construct a toilet block in Johnson Street, Keon Park	**In progress** - Officers are assessing the petition, and a response will be provided to the petitioner via letter.
2	24 March 2026	Oppose the proposed bike lane and parking changes for Gower Street from High Street to Plenty Road	**Closed** - Officers have assessed the petition, and a response outlining the outcome has been provided to the petitioner via letter.
3	24 March 2026	Hold a public, in-person information and consultation session for the ratepayers, residents, and community members of Kingsbury	**Closed** - Officers have assessed the petition, and a response outlining the outcome has been provided to the petitioner via letter.
4	28 April 2026	Traffic Calming Feature on Clough Parade	**Closed** - Officers have assessed the petition, and a response outlining the outcome has been provided to the petitioner via letter.
5	28 April 2026	Fix Legs Lane	**Closed** - Officers have assessed the petition, and a response outlining the outcome has been provided to the petitioner via letter.
6	26 May 2026	Upgrade of School Crossing for Reservoir East Primary School on Yarra Ave, Reservoir	**Closed -** Officers have assessed the petition, and a response outlining the outcome has been provided to the petitioner via letter.
7	26 May 2026	West Preston Football Netball Club Petition to improve facilities	**Closed -** Officers have assessed the petition, and a response outlining the outcome has been provided to the petitioner via letter.
8	26 May 2026	Proposed Permanent Removal of On-Street Parking – Arthurton Road, Northcote (Merri Creek to Herbert Street) for Protected Bike Lanes	**Closed -** Officers have assessed the petition, and a response outlining the outcome has been provided to the petitioner via letter.

Freedom of Information

The *Freedom of Information Act 1982* extends as far as possible, the right of the community to access information in the possession of the government bodies constituted under the law of Victoria (such as Council) for certain public purposes by:

a. making available to the public information about the operations of agencies and ensuring that rules and practices affecting members of the public in their dealings with agencies are readily available to persons affected by those rules and practices; and

b. creating a general right of access to information in documentary form in the possession of Ministers and agencies limited only by exceptions and exemptions necessary for the protection of essential public interests and the private and business affairs of persons in respect of whom information is collected and held by agencies.

As part of Council's commitments made under the Public Transparency Policy, a snapshot of the number of FOI requests made and the outcomes of those requests will be presented to Council on a quarterly basis. The below snapshot encompasses the FOI Statistics for FY 25/26.

Table B

FOI Statistics FY 25/26 -Year to Date	COUNT
Total number of requests received (1 July 2025- 30 June 2026)	88
Total number of requests received in Qtr. 4	19
Outcome of requests (valid requests for FY 25/26)	
Access granted in full (no exempt material)	22
Access granted in part (some exempt material)	22
Access denied in full (all material exempt)	1
Withdrawn	6
Administrative Release	6
Not Proceeded With	4
Act does not apply	0
No Documents found	6
Not yet finalised	3
Number of Active Requests (as at 30 June 2026)	3
VCAT appeals	
VCAT appeals lodged	0
VCAT confirmed agency decision	0
VCAT varied agency decision	0
VCAT overturned agency decision	0

Councillor Expenses – Quarter 4, 2025-26

Councillor Expenses Report for the period from 1 April 2026 to 30 June 2026, are included at **Appendix C to** this report. The Councillor Expenses report will also be made available on Council's website following the publication of the minutes of this meeting.

CEO Credit Card transactions (1 January 2026 – 30 June 2026)

The CEO Employment and Remuneration Policy provides that Council will meet expenses incurred by the CEO including:

- Membership and subscription fees payable to professional associations which are necessary or desirable in performance of duties;
- Reasonable costs incurred where attending conferences, seminars or undertaking professional development activities; and
- Reasonable costs incurred in performance of duties.

Pursuant to the CEO Employment and Remuneration Policy a report on credit card transactions and any claim for reimbursements made by the CEO will be provided to Council twice annually for approval.

The independent Audit and Risk Committee will also receive twice annual reporting on all CEO corporate card transactions for oversight.

This update provides information pertaining to the CEO corporate card transactions for the period **(1 January 2026 – 30 June 2026).**

Anne Howard, CEO

Reporting Period: (1 January 2026 – 30 June 2026)

For the reporting period, the CEO:

- Did not have a corporate card;
- Did not lodge or receive any reimbursement claim; and
- Did not utilise a shared corporate card (held by the Coordinator of Financial Accounting on behalf of the Council).

Audit and Risk Committee Meeting Summary Minutes – 17 June 2026

The summary minutes of Audit and Risk Committee meetings are provided for transparency for both Council and the Darebin community. The summary minutes of the Meeting held on **17 June 2026 (Appendix D)** are attached to this report.

Good Governance Action Plan Update

On 17 December 2025 the Minister for Local Government released the Municipal Monitors' Report for the City of Darebin **(Appendix E)**.

At the Council Meeting on 24 February 2026, Council adopted a Governance Action Plan with 15 commitments responding to the various Monitors' recommendations. The recommendations spanned topics including financial sustainability, role clarity, decision making procedures and practices and community complaint handling.

The Minister for Local Government has acknowledged the Governance Action Plan and will receive annual updates.

Officers have prepared a bi-annual status report of the action plan **(Appendix F)**, which is progressing well and summarised as follows:

- 5 commitments are complete
- 6 commitments are on track
- 1 commitment is on hold
- 1 commitment is not yet complete.

Delegations and Authorisations

It is essential and in the interests of effective governance to encourage the delegation of decision making to the lowest competent level within the organisation. This enables the best use of the abilities of elected Councillors and Officers, ensures cost effective use of resources, and promotes the development of efficient and effective management. Authority and responsibility are inseparable. Delegations cannot, however, remove from the Council and senior management the ultimate accountability for the affairs of Council.

Further, specific officers are required to be appointed as authorised officers under various pieces of legislation.

Council subscribes to the Maddocks Lawyers Authorisations and Delegations Service, which provides biannual advice regarding legislative amendments and the provision of template instruments which are then tailored to the organisational requirements.

Two Instrument of Appointment and Authorisation - *Planning and Environment Act 1987* have been prepared for Council resolution (**Appendix G**).

The instruments have been checked for accuracy, the appropriateness of the delegations and authorisations and alignment with the current organisational structure.

Councillor Interaction Protocols

Section 46 of the Local Government Act 2020 (LG Act) creates a legislated obligation on the Chief Executive Officer to ensure that such a protocol is developed and implemented to support arrangements for interaction between members of Council staff and Councillors.

As part of a recent piece of work to review Council's policy framework, the protocols were identified as being adopted through a resolution of Council in December 2022. Because this protocol is clearly the responsibility of the CEO and the Act states that Councillors cannot perform any function of the CEO, the adoption through resolution is inconsistent with the LG Act. As such, the most appropriate action is for Council to formally revoke this protocol (Appendix H) to ensure Councillors are operating in compliance with the LG Act. The CEO will be responsible for ensuring the protocol is developed and implemented in accordance with Section 46 of the LG Act.

Motions to Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) State Council meeting

The MAV State Council is made up of representatives from each member council. State Council meets twice a year, or more if needed. Member Councils can submit business to be considered by State Council in accordance with the MAV Rules. Representatives vote on matters before State Council.

Proposed motions for submission by Darebin Council to MAV ahead of the 23 October 2026 State Council meeting have been provided to the Governance Services team. The motions, attached at **Appendices I, J** and **K,** have been collated and are presented under cover of this Governance Report for Council's consideration. MAV will be formally advised of motions endorsed by Council after the 25 August 2026 meeting.

Submitted MAV motions will be assessed according to the MAV Rules 2022 which set out that motions cannot be repetitive in form or substance, must be of strategic relevance to MAV and of significance to Local Government.

CONSIDERATION OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT (2020) PRINCIPLES

Financial Management

Not Applicable.

Community Engagement

Not Applicable.

Other Principles for consideration

Overarching Governance Principles and Supporting Principles

(a) Council decisions are to be made and actions taken in accordance with the relevant law;

(i) the transparency of Council decisions, actions and information is to be ensured.

Public Transparency Principles

(a) Council decision making processes must be transparent except when the Council is dealing with information that is confidential by virtue of this Act or any other Act;

(b) Council information must be publicly available unless (i) the information is confidential by virtue of this Act or any other Act; or (ii) public availability of the information would be contrary to the public interest;

(c) Council information must be understandable and accessible to members of the municipal community;

(d) Public awareness of the availability of Council information must be facilitated

Strategic Planning Principles

(d) strategic planning must identify and address the risks to effective implementation;

Service Performance Principles

(e) service delivery must include a fair and effective process for considering and responding to complaints about service provision.

COUNCIL POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

Environmental Sustainability Considerations (including Climate Emergency)

Not applicable.

Equity, Inclusion, Wellbeing and Human Rights Considerations:

Not applicable.

Economic Development and Cultural Considerations

Not applicable.

Operational Impacts

Not applicable.

Legal and Risk Implications

Not applicable.

IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

- The Councillor expenses will be published on the Council website.

RELATED DOCUMENTS

- *Local Government Act 2020*
- *Freedom of Information Act 1982*
- *CEO Employment Matters Charter*
- Darebin City Council Governance Rules

Attachments

- Appendix A - Summary of Councillor Attendance (**Appendix A**) ⇩
- Appendix B - Record of Questions taken on notice - 28 July 2026. (**Appendix B**) ⇩
- Appendix C - Q4 Councillor Expenses (**Appendix C**) ⇩
- Appendix D - Summary Minutes - ARC Meeting - 17 June 2026 (**Appendix D**) ⇩
- Appendix E - Darebin Municipal Monitor Report (**Appendix E**) ⇩
- Appendix F - Action Plan - Municipal Monitors Report 2025 - August 2026 Council Update (**Appendix F**) ⇩
- Appendix G - Instrument of Appointment and Authoriation (Planning and Environment Act 1987) (**Appendix G**) ⇩
- Appendix H - Councillor Interaction Protocol 2022 (**Appendix H**) ⇩
- Appendix I - MAV Motion 1 Accelerating Support for Councillor Psychological Safety Wellbeing and Protection from Process Abuse (**Appendix I**) ⇩
- Appendix J - MAV Motion 2 - Strengthening Integrity Accountability and Independent Oversight in Victorian Local Government (**Appendix J**) ⇩
- Appendix K - MAV Motion 3 -Consistent public reporting of significant council expenditure (**Appendix K**) ⇩

DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST

Section 130 of the *Local Government Act 2020* requires members of Council staff and persons engaged under contract to provide advice to Council to disclose any conflicts of interest in a matter to which the advice relates.

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

SUMMARY OF COUNCILLOR ATTENDANCE AT ADVISORY COMMITTEES, COUNCILLOR BRIEFINGS AND OTHER INFORMAL MEETINGS OF COUNCILLORS

MEETING DETAILS:	**Title:**	Councillor Briefing
	Date:	7 July 2026
	Location:	Council Chamber (Hybrid Meeting)
PRESENT:	**Councillors:**	Cr. Emily Dimitriadis (Mayor) (Chairperson) Cr. Matt Arturi (Deputy Mayor) Cr. Connie Boglis OAM (online until 8.20pm) Cr. Ruth Jelley Cr. Julie O'Brien (online) Cr. Kristine Olaris OAM (online) Cr. Alexandra Sangster (online) Cr. Vasilios Tsalkos Cr. Angela Villella (online until 8.21pm)
	Council Staff:	Anne Howard, CEO (items 4.6, 4.7 & 4.11) Lisa Wheelhouse, Acting General Manager Customer & Corporate (item 4.2) Jeanne Poustie, Acting General Manager Community Life (items 4.1, 4.3 & 4.8) Keith McKellar, Acting General Manager Infrastructure, & Operations (items 4.4, 4.5, 4.9, 4.10 & 4.11) Vanessa Petrie, General Manager City Sustainability & Strategy Enna Giampiccolo, Executive Manager Governance & Communications (item 4.7) Nathan Korotkov, Senior Team Leader, Service Projects (Item 4.1) Anja Hauenschild, Coordinator Social and Independent Living (Item 4.1) Julie Wyndham, Coordinator Corporate Strategy and Performance (Item 4.2) Jo Smale, Manager Community Services and Development (item 4.3) Seb Cunningham, Coordinator Sector Strategy and Initiatives (Item 4.3) Michael Pogemiller, Manager Natural and Civic Spaces (items 4.4, 4.8, 4.9 & 4.10) Lee McKenzie, Manager Assets and Capital (items 4.5 & 4.9) Estee Hulley, Interim Manager of Property and Facilities (Item 4.5)

		Yogeeta Silva, Head of Property Development (Item 4.5) Melanie McCarten, Manager Community Places and Programs (Item 4.8 & 4.9) Troy Watson, Senior Coordinator Darebin Libraries (Item 4.8)
	External Attendees:	Nil
APOLOGIES:		Caroline Buisson, General Manager Customer & Corporate Nina Cullen, General Manager Community Life Rachel Ollivier, General Manager Infrastructure & Operations

The Meeting commenced at 4.35pm

MATTERS CONSIDERED		DISCLOSURES AND COMMENTS
4.1	Aged Care Responsible Persons	No disclosures were made.
4.2	Tier 1 Priorities progress - May 2026	No disclosures were made.
4.3	Darebin Families, Youth and Children Strategy - Proposed Collaborative Governance Framework and Collective Action Plan	No disclosures were made.
4.4	Avian Influenza	No disclosures were made.
4.5	Preston Courthouse - First Right of Refusal (FROR)	No disclosures were made.
4.6	Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Native Title Claim	No disclosures were made.
4.7	Local Government Act Amendment Bill - No reports presentation only **Item deferred**	
4.8	2026-27 Living Libraries Infrastructure Program Grant Application	No disclosures were made.
4.9	JC Donath Pavilion Project	No disclosures were made.
4.10	Preston City Oval Grounds Follow-up	No disclosures were made.

MATTERS CONSIDERED		DISCLOSURES AND COMMENTS
4.11	Merri Common	No disclosures were made.

The Meeting concluded at 8.39pm

RECORD COMPLETED BY:	**Officer Name**:	Enna Giampiccolo
	Officer Title:	Executive Manager, Governance & Communications

SUMMARY OF COUNCILLOR ATTENDANCE AT ADVISORY COMMITTEES, COUNCILLOR BRIEFINGS AND OTHER INFORMAL MEETINGS OF COUNCILLORS

MEETING DETAILS:	**Title:**	Councillor Briefing
	Date:	14 July 2026
	Location:	Council Chamber (Hybrid Meeting)
PRESENT:	**Councillors:**	Cr. Emily Dimitriadis (Mayor) (Chairperson) (left the Briefing at 6.20pm, Deputy Mayor assumed the Chair) Cr. Matt Arturi (Deputy Mayor) Cr. Ruth Jelley Cr. Julie O'Brien Cr. Kristine Olaris OAM (online) (left the Briefing at 6.50pm) Cr. Alexandra Sangster Cr. Vasilios Tsalkos
	Council Staff:	Anne Howard, CEO Nina Cullen, General Manager Community Life Enna Giampiccolo, Executive Manager Governance & Communications (item 4.5) Rachel Ollivier, General Manager Infrastructure & Operations (items 4.3, 4.4 & 5.1) Vanessa Petrie, General Manager City Sustainability & Strategy (items 4.1, 4.2 & 4.6) Lisa Wheelhouse, Acting General Manager Customer & Corporate Emma Geier, Head of Governance & Risk Craig Cinquegrana, Manager Transport (items 4.1 & 4.2) Allan Middlemast, Coordinator Sustainable Transport (item 4.1) Kevin de Leeuw, Coordinator Transport Planning and Programs (item 4.1 & 4.2) Nick Lavars, Transport Project Officer (item 4.1 & 4.2) Keith McKellar, Manager Operations & Waste (items 4.3 & 5.1) Lee McKenzie, Manager Assets & Capital (items 4.3 & 5.1) Antonia Mouzakis, Coordinator Development & Capital Delivery (item 4.3) Mel Berkley, Capital Project Manager (item 4.3) Michael Pogemiller, Manager Natural & Civic Spaces (item 4.3 & 4.4)

		Meagan Merritt, Manager City Futures (item 4.6) Stevie Meyer, Coordinator Strategic Planning (item 4.6) Joel Schmetzer, Principal Strategic Planner (item 4.6)
	External Attendees:	Nil
APOLOGIES:		Cr. Connie Boglis OAM Cr. Angela Villella Caroline Buisson, General Manager Customer & Corporate

The Meeting commenced at 4.30pm

MATTERS CONSIDERED		**DISCLOSURES AND COMMENTS**
4.1	Transport Priority Projects	No disclosures were made.
4.2	Micromobility Trial (verbal update)	No disclosures were made.
4.3	JC Donath East Pavilion Renovation - Concept Design	No disclosures were made.
4.4	Shared Sports Grounds with Cricket Pitches	No disclosures were made.
4.5	Community Engagement Improvement Plan- Year 2 update	ITEM DEFERRED
4.6	Planning Scheme Review 2026 Update	No disclosures were made.
5.1	Fire Safety Systems Inspection Maintenance, Installation & Inspection - Contract Award (For Information Only)	No disclosures were made.

The Meeting concluded at 7.21pm

RECORD COMPLETED BY:	**Officer Name**:	Enna Giampiccolo
	Officer Title:	Executive Manager, Governance & Communications

SUMMARY OF COUNCILLOR ATTENDANCE AT ADVISORY COMMITTEES, COUNCILLOR BRIEFINGS AND OTHER INFORMAL MEETINGS OF COUNCILLORS

MEETING DETAILS:	**Title:**	Councillor Briefing
	Date:	21 July 2026
	Location:	Council Chamber (Hybrid Meeting)
PRESENT:	**Councillors:**	Cr. Emily Dimitriadis (Mayor) (online) Cr. Matt Arturi (Deputy Mayor) (Chairperson) Cr. Connie Boglis OAM (online from 5.12pm) Cr. Julie O'Brien Cr. Kristine Olaris OAM Cr. Vasilios Tsalkos
	Council Staff:	Anne Howard, CEO Nina Cullen, General Manager Community Life Enna Giampiccolo, Executive Manager Governance & Communications (items 4.1 & 4.3) Rachel Ollivier, General Manager Infrastructure & Operations (item 4.2) Vanessa Petrie, General Manager City Sustainability & Strategy Lisa Wheelhouse, Acting General Manager Customer & Corporate Emma Geier, Head of Governance & Risk Carmel Ganino, Head of Communications & Engagement (item 4.1) Lisa Joyce, Community Engagement Lead (item 4.1) Ania Sieracka, Senior Adviser, Communications & Engagement (item 4.1)
	External Attendees:	Nil
APOLOGIES:		Cr. Ruth Jelley Cr. Alexandra Sangster Cr. Angela Villella Caroline Buisson, General Manager Customer & Corporate

The Meeting commenced at 4.45pm

MATTERS CONSIDERED		DISCLOSURES AND COMMENTS
4.1	Year 2 of the Community Engagement Improvement Plan	No disclosures were made.
4.2	Merri Common Project Update	No disclosures were made.
4.3	Update on Local Government Act Amendment Bill - Stronger Communities	No disclosures were made.

The Meeting concluded at 6.10pm

RECORD COMPLETED BY:	**Officer Name**:	Enna Giampiccolo
	Officer Title:	Executive Manager, Governance & Communications

Question and Submission Time – Questions taken on Notice

At the Council meeting held on 28 July 2026, the following question was taken on notice.

- **Lisa Oakley**

Question 2.

Have been advised a 19m semi-trailer can safely enter/exist the Assemble development site at 47 Showers Street (Preston) onto a residential street in Showers Street. Have great concerns over my car and visitors outside my house on Showers Street. How was this assessment made?

Can the swept path assessments within the permit be provided to residents?

Response From General Manager City Sustainability & Strategy

Negotiations with builders on their access requirements are informed by technical diagrams, including swept path assessments. Council officers review the information and then under delegation provide permits with conditions.

Swept path diagrams which are used for considering these permits are not shared. What I will do is ask for a senior officer to call you tomorrow as it sounds like there might be a few other matters that we need to potentially support you with.

The below email was sent 30/07/2026

Dear Ms Oakley

Thank you for the correspondence below and your public question at the 28 07 2026 Council meeting which was taken on notice. I hope this response answers your concerns.

As advised, we can't provide you with the documents such as swept path diagrams that the builder has provided us. We do understand your concerns about the risks to parked cars from trucks accessing the building site.

I believe that the Construction Management Plan with the proposed traffic management controls will address this risk. The plan is currently being amended for approval. The builder will be notifying residents when traffic management changes are to be implemented.

As part of this plan the parking along both sides of Showers Street from St Georges Road to #44 Showers Street will be restricted for construction. This will allow for the roadway to be cleared for the heavy vehicle movements.

Please don't hesitate to contact [redacted] if you need further clarification.

Manager Transport

Q4 Councillor Expenses - 1 April 2026 - 30 June 2026

	Cr Arturi (Deputy Mayor 20/11/25)	Cr Boglis	Cr Dimitriadis (Mayor from 20/11/25)	Cr Jelley	Cr O'Brien	Cr Olaris	Cr Sangster	Cr Tsalkos	Cr Villella	Council	Total
											$
Councillor Allowances	16883	9690	33,766	9690	9690	9690	9690	9690	9690		**118,482**
Mobile & Laptop (Usage & Data Plan)	123	123	123	123	150	123	123	123	95		**1,105**
Travel (Cabcharge/misc travel expenses)		315					185				**500**
Family care											**-**
Conferences (Inc. all related costs/travel/meals/accom)		1,263	2,277	1,345				122			**5,006**
Training & Development				- 1,200		1,800				6,550	**7,150**
Functions/events											**-**
Subscription / Memberships											**-**
Stationary / printing / equipment											**-**
Mayoral Vehicle			3,861								**3,861**
Mandatory Councillor Professional Development											**-**
Councillor Conduct Matters											**-**
Total net expenses	**17,006**	**11,391**	**40,027**	**9,958**	**9,840**	**11,613**	**9,999**	**9,935**	**9,786**	**6,550**	**136,104**

Notes:
Telephone and internet charges are recorded in the month they are incurred. All other expenses are reported on a cash basis in the month that they are paid.
Amounts rounded to nearest $
If applicable, GST is excluded
Councillor Expenses are in accordance with the Darebin Councillor Support and Expenses Policy
Further explanation of expense categories is available in the Darebin Councillor Support and Expenses Policy 2025.

City of DAREBIN

the place to live

SUMMARY MINUTES OF THE AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE MEETING

Held on Wednesday 17 June 2026 at Darebin Civic Centre, 350 High Street Preston, Ngurungaeta Room, (Council Chamber)

Summary minutes released to the public on 25 August 2026.

AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE MEETING SUMMARY MINUTES 17 JUNE 2026

CONTENTS

1. WELCOME & ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY 1
2. IN-CAMERA 1
3. APOLOGIES 1
4. DISCLOSURES OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST 1
5. CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS AUDIT COMMITTEE MEETING 1
6. CONFIRMATION OF MEETING AGENDA 1
7. CONFIDENTIALITY 1
8. STANDING REPORTS 1
8.1 ACTIONS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETING 1
8.2 CEO REPORT 2
8.3 REGULATORY SERVICES: INFRINGEMENTS, ENFORCEMENT & COMPLIANCE UPDATE 2
8.4 INFORMATION SERVICES REPORT 2
8.5 DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION REPORT 2
8.6 AGED CARE SERVICE PROVISION AND PERFORMANCE 2
8.7 AGED CARE REFORM UPDATE 2
9. FINANCIAL REPORTS 2
9.1 FINANCIAL REPORT 3
9.2 DRAFT 2027-2035 BUDGET UPDATE 3
9.3 2025-26 ASSET VALUATION UPDATE 3
10. EXTERNAL AUDIT 3
10.1 VAGO INTERIM MANAGEMENT LETTER FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2026 3
11. RISK MANAGEMENT 3
11.1 RISK MANAGEMENT REPORT 3
11.2 HEALTH AND SAFETY REPORT 4
12. INTERNAL AUDIT 4
12.1 INTERNAL AUDIT PROGRAM STATUS 4
12.2 COMPLETED INTERNAL AUDITS 4
12.3 RECENT REPORTS AND PUBLICATIONS 4
12.4 OUTSTANDING AUDIT ACTIONS STATUS REPORT 4
13. GOVERNANCE 5
13.1 COMMITTEE MANAGEMENT REPORT 5
13.2 COMMITTEE WORKPLAN STATUS REPORT 5
14. OTHER BUSINESS 5
15. COMMITTEE MEMBER CONFERENCE 5
16. NEXT MEETING 5
17. CLOSE OF MEETING 5

WEDNESDAY 17 JUNE 2026 - 2.00PM - DAREBIN CIVIC CENTRE 350 HIGH STREET PRESTON NGURUNGAETA ROOM (COUNCIL CHAMBER)

Committee Members

- Ms Lisa Tripodi – Independent External Member and Chairperson
- Dr Marco Bini – Independent External Member
- Mr Jonathan Kyvelidis – Independent External Member
- Cr Emily Dimitriadis – Mayor / Councillor Member
- Cr Vasilios Tsalkos – Councillor Member

Attendees

Internal Auditor – NTT

- Pat Scanlon – Partner, NTT

External Auditors

- Tyson Holt – Associate Director, RSD Audit

Officers

- Anne Howard – Chief Executive Officer
- Caroline Buisson – General Manager Customer & Corporate
- Nina Cullen – General Manager Community
- Rachel Ollivier – General Manager Infrastructure, Operations & Finance
- Vanessa Petrie – General Manager City Sustainability & Strategy
- Enna Giampiccolo – Exec. Manager, Governance, Risk and Communication
- Emma Geier – Head of Governance & Risk
- Jared Lingard – Coordinator Audit & Risk
- Christine Walsh – Chief Transformation Officer (Item 8.5)
- Srini Krishnan – Chief Financial Officer (Items 9.1, 9.2, 9.3, 10.1)
- Michael O'Riordan – Coordinator Financial Accounting (Items 9.1, 9.3, 10.1)
- Dean Gibbons – Head of Financial Planning and Analysis (Item 9.2)
- Lee Mckenzie – Manager Buildings Property & Capital (Items 9.1, 9.2)
- Alicia Schulz – Chief People Officer (Item 12.2 Appendix B)
- Lalitha Koya – Chief Information officer (Item 12.2 Appendix C)
- Chad Griffiths – Manager City Development (Item 12.2 Appendix D)

Observers

- Cr Kristine Olaris – Councillor *

Minutes

- Tristan Glennon – Audit & Compliance Officer (minutes)

* These participants attended virtually
^ Apology

AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE MEETING SUMMARY MINUTES 17 JUNE 2026

1. WELCOME & ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

The Chair gave an Acknowledgement of Country and welcomed the Committee members, and all attendees and observers present at the meeting.

2. IN-CAMERA

The Chair confirmed with committee members that there was no In-Camera session required at this meeting.

3. APOLOGIES

The Chair opened the meeting at 2:04pm

Apologies:

- Nil

4. DISCLOSURES OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

No Conflicts of Interest declared.

5. CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS AUDIT COMMITTEE MEETING

The minutes of the Audit and Risk Committee Meeting held on 18 March 2026, as approved out-of-session, were noted.

6. CONFIRMATION OF MEETING AGENDA

The agenda was confirmed with items 8.3, 8.4, 8.6, 8.7, 9.3, 11.2, 12.1 and 12.4 taken as read.

7. CONFIDENTIALITY

The Committee noted the confidentiality statement included in the agenda.

8. STANDING REPORTS

8.1 ACTIONS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLUTION
The Audit and Risk Committee noted the status of the action items from previous meetings.

KEY FINDING

- Management will continue to work towards the completion of the open actions and provide an update at each quarterly meeting.

8.2 CEO REPORT

RESOLUTION
The Audit and Risk Committee noted the CEO Report.

KEY FINDING

- The Committee received a quarterly update from the Chief Executive Officer on matters including emerging risks, governance, finance, workplace and compliance matters.

8.3 REGULATORY SERVICES: INFRINGEMENTS, ENFORCEMENT & COMPLIANCE UPDATE

RESOLUTION
The Audit and Risk Committee noted the Regulatory Services: Infringements, Enforcement & Compliance Update report.

8.4 INFORMATION SERVICES REPORT

RESOLUTION
The Audit and Risk Committee noted the Information Services Report.

KEY FINDINGS

- Management continue to monitor and report on information services risks and security posture.

8.5 DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION REPORT

RESOLUTION
The Audit and Risk Committee noted the Digital Transformation Report.

KEY FINDING

- Management have progressed the planning for Digital Transformation to ensure the approach is adequate, planning is completed and council has insights into key areas of focus required to ensure successful preparation and technology selection.

8.6 AGED CARE SERVICE PROVISION AND PERFORMANCE

RESOLUTION
The Audit and Risk Committee noted the Aged Care Service Provision and Performance report.

KEY FINDING

- Supported and Connected Living are following good practice by presenting the Responsible Persons report to the Audit and Risk Committee.

8.7 AGED CARE REFORM UPDATE

The report was taken as read.

RESOLUTION
The Audit and Risk Committee noted Aged Care Reform Update report.

9. FINANCIAL REPORTS

9.1 FINANCIAL REPORT

RESOLUTION
The Audit and Risk Committee noted the Quarterly Financial Report, including:
1) the Financial Report for the (9) months ended 31 March 2026.
2) the Capital Works Status Update Q3 2025-26.
3) the Operating Projects Program Status Update Q3 2025-26.

KEY FINDING
- Council is monitoring and managing its financial position, key controls and addressing procurement capability and compliance.

9.2 DRAFT 2027-2035 BUDGET UPDATE

RESOLUTION
The Audit and Risk Committee noted the progress update and the next steps to completion of the draft 2026-27 Budget and subsequent 3 financial years.

9.3 2025-26 ASSET VALUATION UPDATE

RESOLUTION
The Audit and Risk Committee noted:
1) the 2025-26 Asset Valuations Update.
2) that a further assessment will be undertaken at year end.

10. EXTERNAL AUDIT

10.1 VAGO INTERIM MANAGEMENT LETTER FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2026

RESOLUTION
The Audit and Risk Committee noted the Darebin City Council – Interim Management Letter for the year ended 30 June 2026.

KEY FINDINGS
- There are three open audit findings for the current and prior years all with a risk rating of “Low.”
- There is one partially resolved recommendation from the Results of the 2024-25 Audits: Local Government report.

11. RISK MANAGEMENT

11.1 RISK MANAGEMENT REPORT

RESOLUTION
The Audit and Risk Committee noted the Risk Management Report, including:
1) Review of Darebin Council’s Risk Profile
2) Key Metrics reported in the Compliance Report (Appendix A)
3) Insurance Claims
4) Effectiveness of Systems and Processes that Monitor Compliance with Legislation and Regulations
5) Effectiveness of Business Continuity Planning and Processes
6) Review of Council’s compliance with procedures associated with complaints including confidential and anonymous employee complaints

7) Review management's approach to maintain an effective internal control framework is sound and effective

KEY FINDINGS

- Management is monitoring and reporting key metrics including Freedom of Information Requests, Privacy Impact Assessments, Privacy Breaches, Cyber Incidents, Fraud Allegations, Policies and Mandatory Training.
- Management has provided an update on systems and processes to monitor compliance with legislation and regulations.

11.2 HEALTH AND SAFETY REPORT

RESOLUTION
The Audit and Risk Committee noted the Health and Safety Report.

12. INTERNAL AUDIT

12.1 INTERNAL AUDIT PROGRAM STATUS

RESOLUTION
The Audit and Risk Committee noted the Internal Audit Program Status report.

KEY FINDINGS

- Delivery of the annual internal audit program has been completed.
- Council is tendering for new Internal Audit Service Providers.

12.2 COMPLETED INTERNAL AUDITS

RESOLUTION
The Audit and Risk Committee noted the:

- Completed Internal Audits Report
- Risk Management Framework Internal Audit Report
- Payroll Internal Audit Report
- IT General & Security Controls Internal Audit Report
- Building Safety Management Internal Audit Report

KEY FINDING

- The 2025-26 Internal Audit Program has been completed.

12.3 RECENT REPORTS AND PUBLICATIONS

RESOLUTION
The Audit and Risk Committee noted the Recent Report and Publications Report and Management comments.

KEY FINDING

- Management has reviewed recent reports and publications related to issues of management controls, integrity and continuous improvement that impact the local government sector and initiated action to mitigate Council's risk in response.

12.4 OUTSTANDING AUDIT ACTIONS STATUS REPORT

RESOLUTION
The Audit and Risk Committee:

- Noted the Outstanding Audit Actions Status Report.

- Noted and accepted the Proposed Adjusted Due Dates (Appendix A)

KEY FINDING

- Management is progressing the completion of outstanding audit actions.

13. GOVERNANCE

13.1 COMMITTEE MANAGEMENT REPORT

RESOLUTION

The Audit and Risk Committee:

1) **Noted** the Committee Management Report.
2) **Noted** the 2025-26 Annual Survey of the Committee
3) **Noted and endorsed** the Bi-Annual Committee Report for the period December 2025 – May 2026 subject to incorporating feedback provided by Committee members.
4) **Noted and endorsed** the Annual Committee Performance Report for the period July 2025 – June 2026 subject to incorporating feedback provided by Committee members and updates to reflect June ARC meeting attendance.

KEY FINDINGS

- Compliance with the Local Government Act 2020 has been met by preparing the Bi-Annual Report and Annual Committee Performance Report.
- Management has supported the Committee by reviewing the Audit and Risk Committee Annual Work Plan.

13.2 COMMITTEE WORKPLAN STATUS REPORT

RESOLUTION

The Audit and Risk Committee:

1) **Noted** the Committee Work Plan Status report.
2) **Noted and endorsed** the Annual Work Plan for 2026-27.

14. OTHER BUSINESS

Nil.

15. COMMITTEE MEMBER CONFERENCE

The Chair confirmed with committee members that there was no Committee Member Conference required at this meeting.

16. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Audit Committee will be held at 2.00pm on Wednesday 9 September 2026.

17. CLOSE OF MEETING

As there was no further business, the Chair closed the meeting at 4:17pm.

Municipal Monitors appointed to Darebin City Council

Report to the Minister for Local Government

1. Background

1.1 Appointment

On 24 April 2024, the former Minister for Local Government, the Hon Melissa Horne MP (the former Minister), appointed us (June Anstee and Ross Millard), as Municipal Monitors to Darebin City Council pursuant to section 179(1) of the *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act) to monitor governance processes and practices. This appointment commenced on 29 April 2024 for a period of eight months until 31 December 2024.

We provided an interim report to the former Minister in late November 2024 and on 18 December 2024 our term of appointment was extended by the Minister for Local Government from 1 January 2025 until 30 June 2025. Our Terms of Reference for 2024 and 2025 are attached as Appendix A and Appendix B respectively.

Our appointment as Monitors to the Council was in response to governance concerns and councillor conduct issues undermining the operations and functions of the Council during the Council term 2020-2024. These concerns were raised with the former Minister in letters sent by two councillors during December 2023 and January 2024 respectively. Correspondence was also provided to the Minister by some community members concerning the dysfunctional conduct and culture and the disruptions to Council meeting procedures and processes.

The Mayor received a letter from the former Minister on the 26 February 2024. The Mayors' response to the former Minister on 7 March 2024, was signed by seven councillors. The Mayor addressed in the response the concerning and dysfunctional culture, and poor interactions between councillors and the impact on the well-being of councillors and staff. The seven councillors provided a commitment to work to improve the governance and conduct concerns and the disrespectful interactions between councillors.

Our Terms of Reference identified focus areas to be monitored and addressed in our report and included:

- Council policies, processes and practices related to the recruitment, appointment, and proposed employment conditions of an ongoing Chief Executive Officer and

the establishment of an effective working relationship between the new CEO and the Council

- Outstanding actions by the Council in relation to financial sustainability, IT and staff accommodation investment identified by the previous Monitor's final report and recommendations of 2 February 2023
- The relationships between councillors and Council staff, the Councillor Code of Conduct and the processes for resolving disputes between councillors
- Meeting procedures and decision-making processes and councillor adherence to the Governance Rules
- Health and safety processes and practices, including matters that maybe creating a serious risk to the health and safety of Councillors, Council staff or other persons
- Any other matter that may be affecting the Council's ability to effectively perform.

1.2 Context for the Darebin City Council

The City of Darebin is located in the northern suburbs of Melbourne and is bounded by Merri-bek in the West, Whittlesea in the North, Banyule in the East and Yarra in the South. The area is approximately 54 square kilometres comprising 13 mainly residential suburbs with a mix of retail and industrial businesses throughout the municipality.

The population is estimated to be 155,683 (ABS Estimated Resident Population 2023). Darebin municipality has a diverse multi-cultural population with 33.7% of residents being born overseas. The most common countries for overseas migration include:

- Italy (5.3%)
- Greece (3.7%)
- India (3.3%)
- China (3.2%)

Electoral structure and the Councillors

The Darebin City Council is subdivided into 9 Wards with a single councillor elected to each Ward. Prior to 2020 the Council was subdivided into three multi–divisional wards with 9 councillors elected across three Wards.

The outcome of the Victorian 2024 Local Government elections was that seven (7) new councillors were elected with two former councillors - Emily Dimitriadis and Gaetano Greco - returned.

Death of Councillor Gaetano Greco – April 2025

In late April 2025 many Council officers, staff, Councillors and many members of the community were shocked and saddened by news of the death of Gaetano Greco, who had been a long-serving councillor for the Darebin Council for in excess of 17 years.

Gaetano Greco is remembered for his passionate, active and dedicated representation of community interest groups and Darebin community members.

The by-election to fill the extraordinary vacancy in the North West Ward was scheduled for 1 August 2025. The final outcome of the by election will be advised by the Victorian Electoral Commission during August 2025.

The Councillors and their Wards pre and post the October 2024 Council elections

Council ward	2020-2024	2024-2028
1. West Ward	Cr Susanne Newton	Cr Connie Boglis
2. North Central Ward	Cr Julie Williams	Cr Vasilios Tsalkos
3. Central Ward	Cr Lina Messina	Cr Kristine Olaris
4. South Central Ward	Cr Susan Rennie	Cr Ruth Jelley
5. North West Ward	Cr Gaetano Greco	Cr Gaetano Greco (deceased April 2025) By-election scheduled for 1 August 2025)
6. South West Ward	Cr Trent McCarthy	Cr Alexandra Sangster
7. North East Ward	Cr Tim Laurence	Cr Matt Arturi
8. South Ward	Cr Tom Hannan	Cr Julie O'Brien
9. South East Ward	Cr Emily Dimitriadis	Cr Emily Dimitriadis

The Council workforce 2024-2025

The Council workforce current in June 2025, comprised 1257 personnel, 820 of these staff are appointed to full time positions with 437 staff classified as part-time. Fifty-four (54) multiple short- term contractors were engaged throughout the 2024-2025 year to undertake specific projects and to back-fill temporary absences by permanent staff.

At the time of our appointment the on-going Chief Executive Officer had been in place since October 2022 and was supported by an Executive leadership team comprised of 3 General Divisional Managers and one Acting General Manager.

Financial sustainability 2024-2030

The Council's financial position, like many Councils throughout Victoria, is impacted by the rates cap, ageing assets, depreciation costs, rising construction, maintenance, insurance costs and in-house service costs.

The financial report for the full year 2024-2025 is forecast to have revenue of $215,347,000 and operating expenditure of $211,480,000, providing a budget surplus of $3,867,000. Capital works expenditure is forecast to be $32,484,000.

In compliance with section 94(1) of the Act, the Council has adopted a four-year budget (financial outlook) for the 2025-2026 year and for each of the subsequent three (3) financial years. The adopted budget for the 2025-2026 year is less positive than the preceding year and is projected to have a smaller surplus than forecast for the 2024-2025 year. The Operating Revenue for 2025-2026 is estimated to be $228,881,000 with Operating Expenditure of $227,816,000 providing a surplus of $1,065,000. Capital Expenditure for the period is budgeted to be $38,447,000. A savings target of $3.2 million is projected to be achieved during the 2025-2026 year.

Savings Targets 2025-2029

The focus of the Council's four-year budget (outlook) is to assist with the restoration of the long-term financial sustainability by implementing progressive annual savings targets and cost reduction initiatives for each of the four years from 2025-2026 until 2028-2029. Savings targets totalling $9.7 million are projected to be reached by year four (2028-2029). The plan and details to achieve these savings and efficiencies has not been prepared or provided to the Audit and Risk Committee.

The financial forecast for each year from 2026-2027 until 2028-2029 is for the budgets to remain in deficit. The draft 10-year financial plan anticipates the Council will achieve a budget surplus by 2029-2030 and each of the subsequent years to 2034-2035.

*On 25 June 2025 the Audit and Risk Committee at its meeting received an update on the *draft budget for 2025-2026 (incorporating the four- year financial budget(outlook), the draft 10-year Financial Plan and the 10 Year Revenue and Rating Plan).*

Background Context-Ministerial interventions (1996- December 2025)

Throughout much of its recent history (1996-2025) Darebin Council has been undermined by governance failures and frequent dysfunctional behaviour by a small number of councillors triggering external oversight.

Examples include:

- accusations of bullying and disrespectful conflict between councillors during Council meetings

- failure to respect the division between the operational role of the CEO (section 46 of the Act) and the strategic role of the councillor (section 28 of the Act)
- overriding and disregarding the Mayor's ruling during Council meetings
- disrespectful and repetitive questioning of managers and officers during Council meetings and councillor briefings creating a perception of distrust between councillors and staff
- failures to consistently declare conflicts of interest and observe the procedure provided by the Governance Rules adopted in compliance with the provisions of the Act
- failure to read all material, documents, reports and briefing papers prior to Council and Committee meetings resulting in poor decision-making practices and outcomes
- inadequate knowledge of the Governance Rules leading to councillor conflict and difficulties navigating and accurately applying the provisions during Council meetings
- the excessive overuse and misuse of Notices of Motions, and
- the failure during Council meetings and Briefing meetings to consistently minimise risks to staff well-being and safety.

This challenging and dysfunctional behaviour by a small number of councillors took place during the previous Council term 2020-2024, and specifically during the period July 2023-May 2024. The behaviour was described by some councillors and senior officers as 'entrenched culture' and mode of behaviour that causes disruptions to the orderly management of the Council agenda and frequently "appear(ed) like warfare".

The Ministerial Interventions made at Darebin City Council between 1996–2025 to address and modify some of these concerns included the appointment of a Commission of Inquiry, appointment of an Administrator, the suspension of the councillors, and more recently the appointment of a Monitor in 2014, and Inspectors of Municipal Administration in 2015, and Monitors between 2022-2025.

The exception to this lengthy period of interventions was between 2016-2020 when the Councillors and the organisation appeared to function smoothly without significant incidents, conflicts or disruptions. During 2017 -2022 the CEO, Ms Sue Wilkinson, remained in place for a 5-year term. A positive working relationship appeared to have been formed between the CEO and the Mayor until late 2021 and the Council remained relatively cohesive with a dominant and unified councillor faction during this period.

The CEO Ms Sue Wilkinson, resigned in early March 2022 and the dysfunctional conduct by a small number of councillors appeared to re-emerge and escalate from this time. A Monitor was appointed between April 2022 until January 2023 and a further two Monitors in April 2024-2025.

Further Context

Disruptive and unruly Council meetings (Ordinary Council meeting 18 December 2023; Special Council meetings 8 & 22 January 2024)

From a review of video recordings of the December 2023 and January 2024 Council meetings, and media statements, and discussions held with councillors and staff, it appeared a minority of the councillors frequently engaged in disrespectful and dysfunctional behaviour towards other councillors and the Mayor during meetings. Some councillors appeared to 'weaponise' provisions of the Governance Rules during meetings, such as overusing notices of motion (NOMs) provisions which disrupted the Chair and the orderly conduct of the business agenda. For example, the Council meeting of 18 December 2023 was unable to be completed with a significant amount of councillor time devoted to one controversial NOM titled "Ceasefire in Palestine", which included a resolution to fly the Palestinian flag above the Preston Town Hall, debated and adopted.

This was the first meeting chaired by the newly elected Mayor. The CEO was on leave and unable to be present, and an acting CEO was present during the meeting. The agenda to be debated was excessively lengthy with 23 items listed, 10 Council Business items and 13 NOMs. The agenda was not able to be completed in the time allocated for the meeting. The "Ceasefire in Palestine" NOM was controversial and generated significant scrutiny from the media, members of the public, and other persons that appeared to be affiliated with a group supporting the Palestinian cause. The Council meeting was interrupted by frequent interjections and interruptions from members of the public viewing the proceedings from the public gallery, by the behaviour of a small number of councillors, noted to be disrespectful towards the Mayor and other councillors and by the misuse of the Governance Rules relating to NOMs.

The behaviour of some councillors towards the Mayor appeared to be inconsistent with the provisions and standards provided by the Councillor Code of Conduct and the Governance principles and provisions of the Act to treat councillors and others with respect and to "acknowledge and support the role of the Mayor" (section 28 of the Act).

Some staff and councillors described the Council meeting as unruly, and 'the worst meeting they have ever experienced' and expressed concerns that they felt intimidated by the angry outbursts from community members in the public gallery. The interjections and heckling from the public and disruptions to the proceedings also created risks to the well-being and health and safety of staff in attendance. We were advised by the CEO that occupational health and safety incident notifications were submitted by staff in the days following this meeting. We also were advised of an incident involving staff outside the building immediately prior to the commencement of the Council meeting when members of the public yelled abuse towards a Council officer.

The behaviour that occurred prior to and during this Council meeting had extensive and immediate ramifications on the reputation of the Council and the health and well-being of staff members and other councillors.

An Acting Manager advised us of discussions that were held with community members following this meeting about their concerns with the Palestinian flag flying over the Town Hall and feeling unsafe in the community arising from the actions of councillors.

The dysfunctional conduct by the minority of the councillors noticeably began to reduce from late May 2024, soon after we commenced the monitoring role. The disparate factional councillor groups remained, but the Councillors appeared to be somewhat more collaborative and able to reach agreement on significant matters in a more respectful way during Council meetings.

1.3 Monitoring Activities

Former Councillors (2020-2024 term)

Throughout this report we have, where necessary, distinguished each Council term by reference to the "newly elected Councillors" (2024-2028 term) or the "former Councillors" (2020-2024 term).

From early May 2024 we met with the then CEO, Mr Peter Smith, and established a schedule of regular meetings to conduct enquiries into governance processes and procedures. Our discussions with the then CEO ceased in late July 2024 when he provided notice of his resignation and commenced a period of leave.

We continued our enquiries and discussions with each of the three General Managers and the Acting General Manager of Governance from the Executive Leadership team, and senior Managers and some senior staff members; we reviewed many of the organisational policies and protocol relevant to our Terms of Reference.

We met all former councillors and the former Mayor collectively during May 2024 to clarify our role and our Terms of Reference and to seek the Councillors views regarding governance concerns and suggestions for improvements. A letter was provided to each former councillor inviting them to participate in voluntary confidential discussions with us. All former councillors were receptive to the invitation and nominated dates for these discussions throughout May and June 2024.

The majority of these former councillors including the former Mayor welcomed the appointment and support from the Monitors and sought further discussions throughout the period May 2024 until the Council elections commenced in October 2024.

We met separately with the former Mayor, Ms Susanne Newton, and held regular discussions with her between May 2024 until the commencement of the election period. We provided support and suggestions regarding meeting procedure and implementation of the Governance Rules and management of unruly and disrespectful exchanges between some former councillors and disruptions by some community members during question time.

Policies and Procedures

We reviewed organisational policies, protocol and procedures and the Governance Rules relevant to our Terms of Reference. We discussed suggestions to improve and simplify some Governance Rules provisions with the Governance Manager and the Interim CEO.

Community complaints about the Council and former Councillors

We reviewed the complaints policies and procedures applicable to the management and assessment of all complaints made to the Council by the community that included:

- Community Complaints about a Councillor Policy adopted by Council resolution in 2023
- The Complaints Handling Policy incorporating the process and procedures to manage customer complaints including 'complex customer behaviour' adopted and updated by the Executive Leadership Team in 2020, 2023, 2024 and 2025
- The Policy to Manage Complex Customer Behaviour – adopted August 2024 by the Executive Leadership Team, and
- The procedures applicable to the Council's internal review of complaints decisions upon request by the Customer provided in the Complaints Handling Policy and the Complex Behaviour policy.

We noted that although three policies governed the customer complaints process only one had been adopted by a resolution of the Council.

Discussions were undertaken with the Acting Governance Manager and the interim CEO during 2024 and with the General Manager Customer and Corporate during 2025, that focused on the Complaints Handling Policy and the internal review process, Council procedures, the requirements of section 107 of the Act and the principles of procedural fairness. We formed the view that the Council process could be more aligned with the intention of the Act in relation to the internal review process of complaints decisions and the internal review of the decisions concerning 'Complex (unreasonable) Customer Behaviour.'

We considered a small number of community complaints made to the Council regarding the Council's decision-making and internal review process and procedures. Discussions took place with some community members who sought a meeting with the Monitors

concerning matters relevant to our terms of reference and the experience, concerns and impact on them of the Council's community complaints process and protocol.

Addressing community complaints does not routinely form part of the monitoring role however the circumstances of the matters raised with us appeared to create a potential risk to the well-being, health and safety of these community members and the relevant officers and staff members involved in the decision-making process and the internal review process.

Advisory Committees

Discussions were held separately with representatives appointed to the Advisory Committees including: the Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) Ms Lisa Tripodi and the Independent Chair of the CEO Employment Matters and Remuneration Committee Mr Joe Carbone. We attended ARC meetings and meetings of the CEO Employment Matters and Remuneration Committee.

We reviewed relevant policies and other documents including the Charter of the ARC and the CEO Employment Matters and Remuneration policy and the CEO Employment Matters Charter.

Separate discussions were held with the Finance Manager and Managers to assist with our appreciation of the financial position of the Council and the Council's progress with the implementation of the proposals and recommendations made by the previous Darebin Monitor in the report to the Minister of Local Government of February 2023.

The Interim CEO Recruitment and appointment process August- September 2024

We held discussions with the former Mayor and the former CEO, concerning the recruitment of a temporary Independent Chair required by the terms of the CEO Employment Matters Charter to constitute a quorum to enable the CEO Employment Matters Committee to start the recruitment process. The Independent Chair was appointed by Special Council meeting on 5 September 2024. We oversaw the recruitment process for the appointment of the Interim CEO and observed the interview process. We provided assistance to the former Mayor, the Committee and some former councillors throughout the recruitment process and observed the final interview process. Mr Michael Tudball was appointed as the interim CEO by Council resolution on 16 September 2024 and commenced in the role 25 September 2024.

Discussions were held with the Interim CEO on a weekly basis from 25 September 2024 until 30 June 2025. Discussions initially focused on governance concerns including the community complaints procedures and policies, the need for a centralised streamlining and co-ordination and compliance process for all Council policies and related protocol.

Newly elected councillors (2024-2028 term)

We met all newly elected councillors collectively in November 2024 and discussed our role and terms of reference and provided information and suggestions concerning governance processes and policies, the role of a councillor and the development of positive and cohesive councillor working relationships. A further collective councillor discussion was conducted in March 2025 concerning the Governance Rules and the declaration of conflicts of interest.

We met and provided support at the request of five individual newly elected councillors on numerous matters and occasions between January 2025 to June 2025 to assist and clarify councillor responsibilities, councillor conflict resolution, mediation and dispute resolution processes. We held regular discussions with the newly elected Mayor, Cr Kristine Olaris, between January 2025–June 2025.

The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Recruitment and appointment process January-April 2025

We oversaw the recruitment process for the appointment of the ongoing CEO, from January 2025 and provided advice to the newly elected councillors and the newly elected Mayor regarding the Council's process. We participated in discussions with the newly elected Mayor and the newly elected councillors and the Independent Chair of the CEO Employment Matters Committee, provided advice and suggestions in relation to essential leadership qualities and skills required for the long-term success of the on-going CEO, and we held discussions with the recruitment representative and observed the interview process.

Other Monitoring activities and attendances (29 April 2024 – 30 June 2025)

- Regular attendances at Council and Special Council meetings and most Councillor Briefings.
- Review of the recordings of Council meetings and Special Council meetings held during 2023 and prior to the appointment of Monitors
- A discussion with the former CEO of Darebin City Council and the current CEO of Yarra City Council, Ms Sue Wilkinson (2017 - 2022)
- Discussions with the previous Monitor, Mr John Watson, concerning proposals and recommendations outlined in the report provided to the Minister of Local Government, February 2023
- Meetings with the Interim CEO and Acting Governance Manager concerning content and suggestions regarding the development of the mandatory Induction Program
- Attendance at some mandatory Councillor Induction training sessions held in November 2024 including the Legal Governance session conducted by an external lawyer

- Provision of information sessions and discussions with former and newly elected Councillors during 2024-2025 concerning the CEO Recruitment process, the division between the Strategic Role of Councillors and the Operational Role of the CEO, and proposals to facilitate cohesive Councillor team work and communications
- Discussions with newly elected Councillors and the Acting Governance Manager concerning a proposal to provide additional team building and working relationships support by a series of workshops throughout 2025 to be facilitated by an external organisational psychologist. These sessions were in addition to the mandatory Induction sessions conducted in 2024.

2. Governance at the Council

From the commencement of our appointment (29 April 2024) we held discussions with the former Mayor, the former CEO, some former Councillors and some senior Officers and formed the view the organisation at that time collectively appeared unsettled.

There appeared to be diminished trust between officers and some former councillors. Staff and former councillors reported the negative impact experienced by them from the systemic, unruly and intimidating behaviour that had taken place during some Council and briefing meetings held between July 2023 until May 2024. Poor former councillor behaviour was reported to have commenced in the early stages of the 2020-2024 Council term. Some staff and some former councillors had become accustomed to experiencing disrespectful interactions and behaviour to the extent that it appeared to have become normalised and accepted as part of "the culture of Darebin."

This situation needs to be addressed as it has and will continue to impact upon many operations of the organisation, the officers and staff and the trust between some staff and the councillors.

The Model Councillor Code of Conduct introduced in October 2024 facilitates sound working relationships and supports respectful communications. The strengthening of positive respectful relations within the Council and between councillors and staff will ensure the new councillors and the Council have a solid framework to regain the trust between the officers, staff and the councillors and to restore the community trust in the Council.

The newly appointed Council, during the first eight months of their term, appear to be working cohesively and resolving issues within the councillor group. The councillors will benefit from the guidance of the new CEO to commence in July 2025.

Observations and findings in relation to our Terms of Reference

2.1 Chief Executive Officer (CEO) recruitment and appointment process

The appointment of a suitable and highly skilled ongoing CEO is pivotal to the success of the functions and operations of the CEO and the Council, and represents one of the most important decisions a Council can make.

Section 45 of the Act provides the framework for the Council to develop the CEO Employment and Remuneration Policy (the Policy) that must provide for:

- The Council to obtain independent professional advice in relation to the matters dealt with in the Policy
- The process to recruit and appoint the CEO
- The provisions to be included in the contract of employment
- Performance monitoring
- Annual reviews, and
- Include matters prescribed by the Regulations.

The Council adopted the CEO Employment and Remuneration policy (the Policy) on 15 December 2021 which has been regularly reviewed and amended, the most recent review and amendments being undertaken on 24 February 2025.

The Act further provides that the Council must have regard to relevant statements of wages policy issued by the Victorian Government, and any Determinations in relation to remuneration bands relevant to the CEO Employment and Remuneration Policy issued under the *Victorian Independent Remuneration Tribunal and Improving Parliamentary Standards Act 2019*.

CEO Advisory Committee to the Council

The Policy provides for the Council to establish a CEO Employment Matters Committee (the Committee) as an advisory Committee to the Council concerning the recruitment, appointment and terms of engagement of the CEO and the Interim CEO.

The purpose of the Committee is to make recommendations to the Council and to assist the Council with its CEO employment responsibilities and other relevant matters specified by Section 45 of the Act and the provisions of the Policy.

An independent Chair (the Chair) with substantial professional expertise in Human Relations and Local Government is to be appointed by the Council. The role of the Independent Chair underpins the recruitment process.

The Chair is responsible to provide guidance to the councillors concerning the merit-based selection and interview process and the necessary attributes to be satisfied by the successful candidate to successfully fulfil the CEO role.

Quorum requirements

The CEO Employment Matters Committee Charter (the Charter) provides that the quorum for the Committee to start the recruitment process for the CEO cannot be achieved until the Chair is present.

This sole reliance on the presence of one independent chair to satisfy the quorum requirement in our view is an impediment to the timely and prompt commencement of the CEO recruitment process.

We observed an example of the ramifications of this provision that delayed the commencement of the recruitment and appointment process for the Interim CEO during August 2024. The Chair was unavailable for an extended period at the time and at short notice, consequently the Committee quorum could not be achieved. To address this absence an additional recruitment and selection process was initiated to appoint a temporary Independent Chair with expertise in Human Relations and Local Government.

The process to recruit the on-going CEO or an Interim CEO must commence in a timely manner to facilitate the needs and on-going operations of the Council. The expertise and responsibilities to be provided by the Chair is essential to guide and provide assistance and support to the Councillors concerning the merit-based selection and appointment process.

To address the potential failure to achieve a quorum and to ensure the CEO recruitment process can commence when a CEO or Interim CEO is required by the Council we propose that the Council amend the Policy and the Charter to include the appointment of a second independent expert with Human Relations expertise to deputise for the Independent Chair and to constitute a Committee quorum should an unexpected absence occur. The second independent member will be available to assist the Council and the Independent Chair at all CEO Committee meetings and during the CEO recruitment and selection process.

Proposals to address this deficiency are contained in section 3 of this report as part of the recommendations to the Council.

Committee membership

The Terms of Reference for the CEO Employment and Remuneration Committee are provided by the Policy and the Charter. The Council by resolution in January 2025 decided to expand the membership of the CEO Employment Matters Committee, when there is a vacancy in the CEO position, to include all nine councillors. The Committee is responsible to undertake the merit-based selection and interview process of the applicants for the CEO position and report back to the Council with the preferred candidate.

The 2025 amendment to include the full Council to form the CEO interview panel varied the process adopted by the former Council in August 2024 to delegate the CEO recruitment and selection process to the Mayor, four councillors and the Independent Chair. The remaining councillors could attend the interview process as observers. This model was applied in September 2024 to interview and select the Interim CEO.

The CEO interview process (the on-going CEO and the Interim CEO)

We attended and observed both the 2024 and the 2025 selection and interview process for the Interim CEO and the on-going CEO respectively.

The former councillors in 2024 adopted by resolution an interview panel of three councillors, the Mayor and the temporary independent Chair. This process appeared to be a streamlined and an effective model. The former councillors appeared to be collectively focused on the merit-based selection process and the scoring of the merits of each candidate against the pre-determined criteria during each interview and sought the assistance and guidance from the temporary independent Chair and on occasions from us throughout the process.

The 2025 Council resolution established a more complex model, replacing the delegation responsibilities previously undertaken in 2024 by the Mayor and four councillors, with all nine councillors to attend and participate in the interviewing and selection process. Seven of these nine councillors had been recently elected and had no previous councillor experience or Council operational or Council management experience.

We noted that the merit-based selection and interview process to recruit the Council's ongoing CEO to be a challenging responsibility for newly elected and in-experienced councillors. The selection process to appoint the ongoing CEO was undertaken between January-April 2025 following the completion of the mandatory councillor induction and in-service program. The newly elected Councillors at this time had limited experience of the operational role of the CEO.

We had discussions with the recruitment representative, the councillors and the independent Chair with respect to the management of the panel interviews, the questioning process and the merit-based scoring to assess the candidates. We observed the interviews of the candidates, the selection process undertaken by the councillors and the panel discussions.

A comprehensive list of the candidates was prepared by the recruitment firm for the councillors to consider and select a short list of candidates for interview. We initially had concerns that the councillors in selecting the shortlist had under emphasised some key skills essential for success of the Council's CEO that included:

- financial and commercial skills
- the capacity to manage a large and complex service delivery organisation

- the capacity to re-engineer processes and the compliance framework of the organisation adopted in 2023
- the capacity and experience to oversee the restoration of the long-term financial sustainability of the Council, and
- to overs the successful implementation of the digital technology strategy transformation (ERP).

The councillors considered these suggestions and an additional candidate was included for interview.

The recruitment process for the ongoing CEO commenced in late January 2025. All nine councillors participated in panel discussions and the process to interview the candidates. The participation of the councillors in the panel discussions and the interview process appeared to become informal leading to at times a loss of focus on the merit assessment process and assessment of the pre-determined key selection criteria. Given the large number of recently elected councillors participating in the final interview and the scoring and selection process, the situation was managed with the guidance of the recruitment representative and the assistance of the Chair.

The co-ordination and the focus of the questioning process could have been improved, with the Mayor and the Recruitment representative only being responsible for directing the questions to each candidate.

The appointment process was finalised on 17 April 2025 at a Special Council meeting with the adoption of the Committee's recommendation to appoint Ms Anne Howard (the former CEO of the Colac-Otway Shire Council) to the role of CEO of the Council.

We propose the Committee policy and the Charter be amended to support the appointment of a smaller interview panel to consist of the Mayor and four councillors together with the Independent Chair and one additional independent member with expertise in human relations and recruitment processes.

Proposals to improve the CEO selection and panel process are included in section 3 of this report as part of the recommendations to the Council.

Establishment of an effective working relationship between the CEO and the Council

Council term 2020-2024

Councillor Interaction Protocols

The Councillors rely on and require guidance, advice and support from the CEO and Council officers to undertake their role. The role of the CEO in relation to the councillors is to ensure information is provided to support the Mayor and the councillors in the fulfilment of their strategic decision-making role (section 46(1)(a) of the Act) and to manage the interactions between the members of the Council staff and the Councillors.

The 'Councillor Interaction Protocols' guide the interactions between members of Council staff and Councillors, and the CEO and Councillors. The Act also requires councillors to 'act in accordance with the standards of conduct' in all interactions with the CEO and officers. There was an apparent lack of trust between some former councillors affecting working relationships and limiting councillor collaboration at briefings and Council meetings. We observed there was a noticeable degree of mistrust by some former councillors towards officers during Councillor briefings and Council meetings.

We noted that a number of internal Councillor Conduct complaints had been lodged in the months preceding our appointment in early 2024, with the referral of a number of the complaints to the Principal Councillor Conduct Registrar. One Councillor had been suspended for a month by a decision of an Internal Arbiter for a breach of the conduct standards. Some former councillors made informal complaints to us about their colleagues and we discussed possible methods of resolving these issues informally.

Working relationships between former councillors and the former CEO (April-July 2024)

We observed that the trust between a small number of the former councillors and the former CEO was minimal and instances of disrespectful communications were reported to us that included actions and gestures by some former councillors towards the CEO and some Council officers. This alleged conduct was inconsistent with the behavioural standards and the governance principles and the then Councillor Code of Conduct.

It is important to record that only a small number of former councillors were reported to have engaged in disrespectful behaviour and we observed the majority of former councillors were respectful when interacting and communicating with Officers and the former CEO.

We held discussions with all former councillors individually regarding concerns and conduct alleged to have taken place between December 2023 to May 2024. Although the views and opinions of the former councillors differed regarding the reasons for the disrespectful communications and conflict, we considered that some of the concerns relating to improving respectful councillor interactions during meetings could be addressed through councillor discussions and workshops. These discussions continued with some former councillors until the commencement of the 2024 Council election period.

Working relationships between the newly elected councillors and the Interim CEO (October 2024–1 July 2025)

The newly elected Councillors formed a positive and respectful working relationship with the Interim CEO following the October 2024 elections. The Councillors relied on the guidance and support provided by the Interim CEO from the commencement of their term of office and throughout the mandatory induction process.

The newly elected councillors supported our suggestions to participate in a series of workshops during 2025 to develop and improve team building and conflict resolution skills to facilitate their strategic and other decision-making responsibilities required by section 28(1) of the Act.

From our observations the newly elected councillors working relationships and interactions with the Interim CEO appeared to be respectful and consistent with the standards of behaviour provided by the Model Councillor Code of Conduct. All newly elected councillors worked well with the Interim CEO and appeared to have established positive working relationships by the end of our term as Monitors on 30 June 2025.

We note that the ongoing CEO commenced at Darebin City Council on 2 July 2025.

2.2 Outstanding actions identified by the previous Municipal Monitors' report 2 February 2023

A focus area of our Terms of Reference was to monitor the outstanding actions by the Council to address some findings and recommendations made by the previous Monitor.

Three recommendations remained outstanding at the end of our term of appointment (30 June 2025). All three recommendations had reached the planning stage with implementation of the below proposals to commence during the 2025-2026 year:

(i) **Restoration of the financial position of the Council to a sound long term and sustainable basis**

The Council is faced with a number of financial and budgetary pressures. The Council has commenced planning to achieve projected targeted savings and efficiencies starting from the 2025-2026 financial year. The details of how these savings and efficiencies are to be achieved have not been released at this time or provided to the Audit and Risk Committee for consideration.

Budget deficits and annual savings targets

The adopted four-year budget (financial outlook) is forecast to operate with budget deficits for each of the three years commencing from year two (2026-2027) until 2028-2029. The underlying budget assumptions are to achieve financial efficiencies and annual savings each year commencing with savings of $3.2 million during 2025-2026 and increasing to total annual savings of $9.7 million by 2028-2029.

The draft 10-year financial plan forecasts the budget will reach a surplus by the 2029-2030 year and for each subsequent year until 2034-35.

We propose that the Council provide and publish six monthly progress reports until 2029-2030 of the targeted savings and efficiencies achieved and to be achieved from 2026 until 2029. These progress reports to be provided to the Audit and Risk Committee and to

be published for the information of the community in accordance with the transparency principles.

Achievement of budgeted savings targets

The achievement of the annual savings targets requires the direction and guidance of the Finance team and the Audit and Risk Advisory Committee to the Council. The success of the four-year adopted budget (financial outlook) is underpinned by the strategic decision-making activities of the Councillors and their focus on the financial sustainability principles.

The Act requires the Councillors when reaching decisions to focus on and "*give effect to the overarching governance principles*" (section 9(1)) and "... to *take into account the supporting* financial principles" (section 9(3)(d)) in the performance of their role to provide good governance '*for the benefit and well-being of the municipal community'*.

The principles require the councillors to give priority 'to achieving the best outcomes for the municipal community, including future generations' (section 9(2)(b)) and give effect to 'the ongoing viability of the Council' (section 9(2)(g) and s9(3)(d)).

As part of the process to restore the financial position of the Council to a long-term sustainable basis and to support better informed decision-making, additional measures should be adopted by the Council to include:

a. More detailed and improved officer briefings to councillors concerning Council finances to include a "financial impact" briefing summary of the financial benefits and/or the financial detriment to the wider municipality of proposals under consideration. The briefing summary to also include the Officer recommendations concerning the financial impacts

b. Service reviews to be undertaken of some in-house services provided by Council to identify efficiencies and savings. The service reviews to be provided to all councillors and the Audit and Risk Committee, and

c. The Audit and Risk Committee be provided with six monthly updates of the restricted and unrestricted cash amounts and forecasts, with the mid-year update to be provided by mid-June of each year.

(ii) **Priority investment to replace and upgrade ageing Information Computer Technology systems by the implementation of a Digital Technology strategy (ERP) to continue functioning into the future**

The former Council resolved in 2024 to implement the long overdue transition to the Digital Technology Strategy (ERP). The cost of this project is substantial requiring expenditure of $36.44 million staged over a five-year period from 2025-2026 until 2029-2030.

This significantly large investment is to be funded from Operating revenue and will impact the annual budgets until the implementation is finalised by 2029-2023. It is forecast that modest annual savings may be achieved following the final implementation of the Digital Technology Strategy (ERP). Details of these projected digital system efficiencies to be realised by the implementation of the Digital Strategy have not been provided at this stage.

The new system is expected to enhance cyber security and facilitate the co-ordination of each of the divisions including the creation of a centralised digital compliance and data storage system.

(iii) **Fit for Purpose Staff Accommodation-investment to be prioritised**

Discussions were held with the Buildings Property and Capital Manager (the Manager) responsible for the overall provision of accommodation for staff in the Preston Town Hall precincts at High Street and Gower streets.

The attributes of "fit for purpose accommodation" were identified by the Manager to include: adequate lighting, safe spaces, the provision of accessible spaces and disability access, clean and hygienic spaces, centralized heating and cooling including monitored air ventilation systems, sufficient desks and working spaces for employees.

The Manager undertook consultations with the staff to understand and assess the accommodation deficiencies and identify necessary improvements. The improvements identified included: upgrading meeting rooms and equipment; relocating some staff to newly centralised team areas to enhance workplace connectivity; new workspaces to be designed to be ergonomically suitable including some sit-to -stand desks; the provision of sufficient desks and working spaces for employees; lighting audits and monitoring of air-quality to be undertaken; and an external review to be undertaken during 2026-2027 with respect to the "future workplace" to identify improvements and budget allocations to support the recommendations and outcomes of the review.

The Council allocated funding to be invested progressively over a three-year period to implement the accommodation improvements. The preliminary implementation commenced during 2024-2025 with the proposals projected to be completed by 2027-2028.

Our views and recommendations about what is needed to address the outstanding actions (i)-(iii) above are provided in section 3 of this report as part of the recommendations to the Council.

2.3 Council decision-making processes and practices (2023-30 June 2025)

At the commencement of our appointment we attended Council meetings held on 29 April 2024 and during May 2024 and reviewed recordings of the Council meetings from July 2023 until March 2024.

Some concerning governance practices and former councillor behaviour was observed to disrupt the progress of the Council agenda leading to disrespectful conduct between former councillors and failures to observe the divide between the operational role of the CEO and the strategic role of the Councillors.

Since that time, many improvements have been achieved and more respectful interactions between former Councillors began to emerge from June 2024 consistent with the standards of behaviour contained in the Councillor Code of Conduct. The former Councillors' interactions during the Council meetings held between June-September 2024, in the lead up to the local government elections, appeared to be more collaborative and cohesive and interactions with Officers and the Acting CEO remained respectful and consistent with the Councillor Code of Conduct standards of behaviour.

Decision making procedures and practices (former and current councillors)

The Act empowers mayors and councillors to lead their councils. Local councils are representative bodies that are "*accountable, transparent, collaborative, efficient and engaged with their communities*" and "*have the functions and powers necessary to enable Councils to perform their role*" (section 4 of the Act).

The role of a Councillor is fundamentally to represent the interests of the entire local government district (municipality). All councillors upon election are bound by and required to implement the requirements of section 28 of the Act together with the overarching governance and supporting principles (section 9) and other provisions relevant to the role and responsibilities of the Council provided by the Act.

Council meetings and decision-making procedures

The purpose of a Council meeting is to reach decisions for the benefit of the whole community. The "role of a Council is to provide good governance in its municipal district for the benefit and well-being of the municipal community" (section 8 of the Act). Darebin Council meetings are conducted monthly with additional unscheduled (Special) Council meetings held as necessary, to manage urgent items or other business that could not be completed during the previous scheduled Council meeting.

The former Council conducted six additional unscheduled Council meetings between January-April 2024 to complete 12 unfinished agenda items from the Council meeting of December 2023.

The Governance Rules

Section 60 of the Act requires the Council to adopt a framework of rules to govern the procedures to be applied during Council and Committee meetings. The Council adopted the Governance Rules (the Rules) following the engagement of the community in 2020. The Rules were amended in August 2023 to include the election period policy.

Local Government Victoria is planning to introduce Model Governance Rules in December 2025. The Model Governance Rules will support the Council's meeting procedures, practices in its existing Rules. The Model Councillor Code of Conduct prescribed in the Local Government (Governance and Integrity) Regulations 2020 requires Councillors to adhere to the Council's Rules.

The Rules are comprehensive, and although complicated, are generally fit for purpose. Some provisions in our view, could be improved to facilitate the efficient management of the governance and decision-making processes during Council meetings. The Rules are currently under review by the Council with the community engagement process scheduled to commence in late July 2025.

As part of the review of the Rules we proposed some amendments to be considered by the Council to include:

- the removal of inconsistencies and ambiguities within the Rules
- reducing the length of the Rules
- amending the purpose of a Notice of Motion (NOM) to align with the meaning of the strategic role of a local councillor by section 28(1) of the Act and the Governance principles in sections 9(2)(b)(d) and (g) of the Act, and
- limiting the number of NOMs to be placed on each Council agenda to a maximum of two.

Governance Rules and Notices of Motion (NOMs)

The Governance Rules Overview provides that:

"*A Notice of Motion is a useful way for a Councillor to raise an issue which does not require advice or a lot of consideration on an Agenda.*"

The NOMs debated during Council meetings between 2023-2025 in most cases required extensive debate and consideration and consumed significant amounts of Council time. Issues are frequently raised requiring further officer research, advice and reports.

The former Council between February 2023 to February 2024 added 58 NOMs at short notice onto the agenda of nine Council meetings in addition to the scheduled Council business items. The 58 NOMs comprised: 4 NOMs for the 27 February 2023 meeting; 6 NOMs for the 24 April 2023 meeting; 2 NOMs for the 26 June 2023 meeting; 2 NOMs for the 28 August 2023 meeting; 1 NOM for the 23 October 2023 meeting; 8 NOMs for the 23

November 2023 meeting; 13 NOMs for the 18 December 2023 meeting; 11 NOMs for the 8 January 2024 meeting; and 11 NOMs for the 1 February 2024 meeting.

The majority of these nine Council meetings were disrupted by conflict and disrespectful councillor behaviour, lengthy discussions together with multiple amendments proposed for consideration and discussion. Five of the nine meetings failed to complete the Council agenda with the unfinished matters transferred to the next scheduled Council meeting or to additional unscheduled Council meetings. Six unscheduled meetings were required in the three months following the December 2023 Council meeting to complete the unfinished agenda items.

The December 2023 Council meeting (see section1.1 of this report) provides an example of extreme overuse of the NOMs provision with 13 NOMs including a contentious NOM related to international matters, listed for debate along with 10 other business agenda items. This agenda of 23 items contributed to conflict and dysfunctional behaviour by some former councillors, and posed risks to the health, safety and well-being of officers and staff. The agenda could not be completed in the time allocated under the Rules for the conduct of the meeting.

Notices of Motion (2024-2025)

The Interim CEO prepared guidelines in early 2025 to manage the NOM process and to assist the newly elected Councillors with the procedures to place NOMs on the Council agenda. We observed that the overuse of the NOM provision cannot be addressed without the co-operation of all councillors.

The maximum number of NOMs that can be placed on an agenda is not adequately addressed by the Rules. Recent history suggests this deficiency disrupts the orderly conduct of Council meetings, prevents councillors from fulfilling their obligations under the Act, places unnecessary pressure on the workload of officers and delays the orderly completion of reports and advice previously requested.

The addition of multiple NOMs to the Council agenda diverts the focus of councillors from their primary role, to participate in decision-making for the benefit of the whole community and “future generations”. Many of the NOMs debated during Council meetings related to matters confined to a single member Ward, or related to matters of concern by a small community group or in at least one the matters was unrelated to the local government jurisdiction. A number of the NOMs were not urgent and called for officer reports and in our view could have reached the agenda through the usual administrative and councillor briefing process.

The success of the Rules is dependent on the Councillor’s understanding of the application of the Rules. The complicated nature of the Rules and the apparent difficulties experienced by some councillors applying the correct Rule during the meeting process can disrupt and delay decision-making leading to councillor confusion and often

conflict. A strategic focus by all councillors ensures that the Council can plan for and meet the future needs of its "wider" municipality in an efficient and effective manner.

We propose the Rules be amended by Council to provide that:

- the purpose of a NOM, as provided by the Overview of the Rules, ***being matters that "do not require advice or a lot of consideration",*** be adopted to govern all NOM provisions
- the total number of NOMs that can be placed on the agenda of each Council meeting be limited to a maximum of two per Council meeting, and
- The NOMs should be used for exceptional purposes only.

We propose the Minister give consideration during the review and preparation of the Model Governance Rules to:

- Restricting the maximum number of NOMs to be placed on the Council agenda for each Council meeting to two (2), and
- Clarifying the purpose for the use of a NOM.

Conflict of interest declarations (s130 of the Act), Good Governance and the Model Councillor Code of Conduct

The Governance Rules provide the process to be followed by councillors to declare conflicts of interest and to ensure the Council considers and makes decisions fairly and on the merits.

The Council officers have prepared a checklist to assist the newly elected councillors with applying the provisions relating to the declaration of conflicts of interest. Both the former and current councillors were observed to regularly declare ***material conflicts of interest*** in compliance with their responsibilities of the Act (section 128), the Governance Rules and the standards provided by the Councillor Code of Conduct and the Model Councillor Code of Conduct.

However, the councillors appeared challenged by the application of the ***general conflict*** of interest provision (section 128 of the Act), and applying principles and practices to ensure unbiased democratic Council decision-making. The councillors were noted to have limited understanding of the application of this provision and the perception of a conflict of interest by the impartial fair-minded person.

We conducted a refresher workshop for the newly elected councillors in March 2025 to clarify some councillor responsibilities and processes including the councillors' obligation and public duty to declare general conflicts of interest whenever an impartial, fair-minded person could perceive that the councillor's private interests could conflict with their public duty to ensure bias-free decision-making processes.

All newly elected councillors attended this session and some sought follow up support prior to Council meetings to clarify and seek assistance in relation to the applicability of the concept of the 'impartial fair-minded person…" to their specific circumstances (section 127 of the Act).

To support this process the Council is encouraged to provide regular six-monthly updates and in-service training to the councillors to support the integrity provisions of the Model Councillor Code of Conduct, the application of section 127 of the Act and the test for a general conflict of interest.

The Council meeting agenda and accompanying reports and documents

From the commencement of our appointment (April 2024) the Council agenda items and the accompanying reports, documents and attachments were noted to be excessively lengthy. The agenda and attached reports regularly exceeded 400 pages and often were in excess of 700 pages. The current expectation is that councillors are to read all the agenda material prior to the commencement of each Council meeting or Briefing meeting.

The Model Councillor Code of Conduct and the standards of conduct require *"that a Councillor must do everything reasonably necessary to ensure that they perform the role of a Councillor effectively and responsibly" by "diligently using Council processes to become informed about matters which are subject to Council decisions"*.

Councillors generally are employed in other professions in a full-time capacity and manage community responsibilities and commitments in their part-time councillor role. Decision-making practices are undermined when councillors are not well informed of the issues.

Councillors have expressed to us that the volume of information is unmanageable and cannot be thoroughly read in the limited time available. We have proposed amendments to the current process and discussed these proposals with Councillors, the Interim CEO, and some General Managers.

To facilitate well informed discussions at Briefing meetings and well-informed decision-making during Council meetings we consider a review of the structure of the information included in the reports and the attachments to the agendas and presented to councillors is timely.

To improve the governance process and the quality of informed decision–making we suggest all the information required to be read and understood by councillors prior to each Briefing and Council meeting be condensed into an Executive summary of a maximum of 6 pages and include the Officers recommendations. The summary to include separate electronic links to each document, report and other relevant attachments. It is

recommended that each attachment be limited to a maximum of 15 pages unless exceptional circumstances exist to justify a longer document or report.

The Model Councillor Code of Conduct, Constructive Councillor working relationships, dispute resolution processes, team building and Councillor-only meetings

The former Councillors (2020-2024 term) were divided into a mix of different political factions and values. These differences appeared to contribute to instances of conflict, disrespectful and dysfunctional interactions and behaviour between some of the councillors. The resolution of disrespectful interactions and conflict was routinely managed through the internal arbitration process.

From discussions and interviews with several former councillors it seemed the preferred option to manage disrespectful interactions and conflict was to utilise the Internal Arbitration process in preference to internal dispute resolution processes.

We observed that the internal arbitration process is not always the best method for managing conflict and disputes between councillors because:

- It can be lengthy and the resolution of the complaints by this method can be slow, and
- It is not suited to rapidly resolving or responding to the frequency of the dysfunctional conduct and interactions experienced by the Councillors and Officers, for example, where this occurs on a weekly or monthly basis.

We observed that the former Councillors were not sufficiently confident to undertake in-house dispute resolution or mediation processes during the 2020-2024 term due to the additional conflict and tensions this process was perceived to create.

The 2024 amendments to the Local Government (Governance and Integrity) Regulations 2020 promote effective working relationships between councillors by encouraging the use of inhouse dispute resolution processes in the first instance to resolve conflict and other negative and disrespectful interactions by councillors. If the matter cannot be resolved councillors can apply for an independent arbiter to make a finding in relation to the alleged misconduct.

2024-2028 Council term

The recently elected councillors appear to be less divided and more cohesive than the former councillors. It is noted that a clear majority group assists to maintain cohesion within the group. The interactions between all councillors appears respectful and the disputes at this early stage in the 2024-2028 term are minimal compared to the previous Council term. Tensions between councillors that have recently arisen have been managed by utilising the Council's process for internal dispute resolution and mediation. Within the first eight months of the current Council term, and at the conclusion of the

monitoring period, to our knowledge no formal misconduct complaints or applications had been filed to commence the Internal Arbitration Process.

Team building and constructive councillor working relationships and training

The development of effective working relations between the councillors is the foundation to maintaining a focused, cohesive and functioning Council able to manage conflict and misunderstandings within the group.

During discussions held with the newly elected councillors in November 2024 we proposed an early focus on these skills to ensure long-term cohesion of the councillor team. A series of ongoing team building workshops throughout 2025 was proposed to be facilitated by an expert organisational psychologist.

This process was proposed in addition to the team building sessions conducted as part of the mandatory councillor induction program. The Councillors collectively supported this proposal and an independent organisational psychologist was engaged to facilitate the workshops and to assist with the development of a councillor framework for conflict resolution. The first of these workshops was conducted in June 2025. Although it is important for all councillors to consider, question and robustly debate Council matters it is also necessary to maintain councillor cohesion by respectful discourse and interactions during this process.

Role of the Councillor (section 28 of the Act)

Councillors are responsible for developing strategies for future generations and the municipality.

A strategic focus on the financial sustainability and management principles ensures that the Council can realise future plans. Councillors are entrusted by the community to make decisions for the community as a whole and to oversee the financial stewardship of the Council.

The role of Councillors is separate to Council operations managed by the CEO. The Act (section 28(3) of the Act) requires that Councillors observe the separation of these obligations.

The role of a Councillor formed part of the mandatory councillor induction training and all newly elected councillors have worked towards respecting the separation of the roles. During an early Council meeting in 2025 we observed an incident concerning unnecessary questioning of a Council officer regarding technical methods applied to a survey process conducted by the staff.

Support was provided to a small number of newly elected councillors following this meeting regarding the separation of the roles by section 28(3) of the Act and the functions of the CEO by section 46((1)(b) of the Act. These provisions were discussed with

some councillors to ensure they understood that regardless of their personal professional experience and expertise, they are not permitted to undermine the professionalism of officers by conducting an interrogation process during Council meetings. The newly elected councillors at the time were attending their third Council meeting and appeared to not appreciate the separation of the role of the councillor and the operational role of the officers and the administration.

Councillor Only meetings

The Mayor is required by section 18(1)(e) and (f) of the Act to 'assist Councillors to understand their role' and to 'promote behaviour among councillors that is consistent with the Model Councillor Code of Conduct'.

The former Mayor and a number of former councillors during 2024 felt compelled to cancel the Councillor Only meetings due to concerns that details of discussions and information shared during these meetings and considered confidential by the councillors, was being shared with third parties and appearing on social media.

Councillor only meetings provide an important confidential forum for all councillors to de-brief, reflect upon and discuss matters and interactions and issues arising from the previous Council meeting or Councillor briefing meetings.

We held discussions with the newly elected Mayor and some newly elected Councillors to encourage the reinstatement of the Councillor Only meetings on a regular monthly schedule to facilitate and support the constructive working relationships and interactions between all nine newly elected councillors. We propose that this forum continue at least monthly with all councillors in attendance.

Mandatory councillor induction

A comprehensive councillor induction program was developed by the Executive Leadership team, Managers and the Interim CEO. We provided suggestions to the Interim CEO and Acting Governance General Manager on aspects of the Councillor Induction program during its development.

The mandatory councillor induction program extended over five days during November 2024 and was designed to provide the newly elected Councillors with the tools and framework to undertake their decision-making role and community representation responsibilities in compliance with the provisions of the Act and the Model Councillor Code of Conduct.

We attended some induction sessions and workshops including Legal Governance and meeting procedures provided by an external lawyer.

2.4 Occupational Health and Safety

The Council has a well-developed Councillor Occupational Health and Safety Policy and a Staff Occupational Health and Safety Policy. These polices are regularly reviewed.

From the commencement of our appointment we were briefed by Officers, the former CEO and the former Mayor regarding the safety risks and incident reports filed by staff and officers following the December 2023 Council meeting. The staff present at this meeting or observing from an adjoining room felt threatened and intimidated by the behaviour of members of the public and a small number of former councillors.

In response to these incidents the former CEO implemented additional Occupational Health and Safety protocol and risk strategies to be reviewed by officers and staff prior to the commencement of each Council meeting and to further support the well-being and safety of officers and staff required to attend the Council meetings.

Although the Council meetings conducted throughout 2024 were in the most part conducted without risks to the safety or well-being of attendees, we noticed that some staff and officers in the lead up to each Council meeting appeared apprehensive and unsettled.

2.5 Other matters affecting Council's ability to effectively perform

Council Policies

The Council between 2020-2024 appeared to have adopted a large number of staff and Councillor policies (approximately 119). The majority of the policies concerned operational matters and were adopted by the Executive Leadership team. Less than one third of the policies were adopted by the Council decision-making process and related to the strategic role of councillors.

The centralised indexation and compliance system appeared from our observations to be under-developed and not appropriate to efficiently locate, manage, record and review the large volume of policies adopted and amended during the previous five years. These deficiencies were discussed with the Interim CEO and a review of the policy indexation, management and compliance system was in progress at the conclusion of his term of appointment on 1 July 2025.

The Community Complaints handling policy and process

Section 107 of the Act provides that the Council 'must develop and maintain a complaints policy that includes:

- a process for dealing with complaints made to Council
- a process for reviewing any action, decision or service in respect of which the complaint is made; and
- the prescribed processes for internal review of complaints made to a Council.

The Act (section 107(2) further provides that the internal review of decisions about customer complaints undertaken by the Council must provide for a 'review that is independent of the person that took the action, that is independent of the person that made the decision and is independent of the person who provided the service'.

The Council has a Community complaints process in place to assess and determine the merits of community complaints and undertake decision reviews upon request by a community member. The Council policy and the operational procedures for community complaints include:

- The 'Community Complaints about a Councillor Policy', adopted by the Council in 2023
- The 'Complaints Handling Policy' (the Policy) adopted by the Executive Leadership Team, effective since 2020 and reviewed in December 2024 and May 2025. The Policy includes a protocol to manage and make decisions about 'complex (and unreasonable) customer behaviour.' Until December 2024, complex customer behaviour was described by the Policy to be *"any behaviour officers find challenging to manage and unreasonable in nature"*. This description was widened in scope in December 2024 to include behaviour that raises 'substantial health, safety, resource or equity issues for our organisation, our staff, other service users or the complainant themselves'.
- Protocol and procedures to manage Complex Customer Behaviour adopted July 2024, and
- The 'Complex Customer Behaviour Policy', developed and adopted by the Council's Executive Leadership Team in August 2024.

Although the above three policies concern the management of all Council complaints made to the Council including complaints made about councillors and the related procedures for the management of these complaints only two policies are publicly available on the Council website. We consider that the Act by (section 106 and 107) and the transparency principles support that all three policies be published on the website and be adopted by a resolution of the Council.

A decision made to deem the behaviour of the Customer "complex or unreasonable" results in sanctions to limit contact with the Council officers and staff and can lead to a denial of access to some Council services during the period of the restrictions.

Internal Review of decisions about customer complaints

The Customer, if dissatisfied with the outcome of their complaint, can request an 'independent internal review of the decision or action' to be undertaken by the Council.

We held discussions with the Interim CEO and the acting General Manager of Governance during 2024 concerning measures to improve the independence and fairness of the internal review process.

The Council's Internal review process

The Council's Executive Leadership Team amended the Complaints Handling Policy (the Policy) and procedures for the internal review of a complaints decision in May 2025. The new policy became effective in June 2025.

The system in place until June 2025 for the internal review of Council's complaints decisions was undertaken in accordance with the Complaints Handling policy adopted in December 2024. The 2024 Policy and the associated Complex Behaviour Policy (adopted August 2024) established procedures to review the complaints decision made by the Council. These procedures included a panel of three officers to independently review the original complaints decision.

We proposed in discussions held in 2024 and 2025 that the independence of the review process for all complaints including the associated decisions concerning Complex Behaviour could have been more closely aligned with the process as provided by section 107(2) of the Act.

In our view as discussed with the Interim CEO and the Governance Manager, that any Manager, General Manager or any officer overseeing the Customer resolutions division or participating in the original decision-making process should exclude themselves from the internal review process and discussions. This same review process should also be applied to the review of decisions to declare the behaviour of a customer, "Complex or Unreasonable."

Decisions to deem the behaviour of a customer to be "Complex or unreasonable" can lead to restrictions being placed on the customer to limit or prevent communications with Council officers and staff and to restrict access to some Council services. In these circumstances and as the rights of the customer are impacted by the Council decision-making processes the Council is encouraged to ensure the internal review process be conducted promptly, transparently, and independently from the original decision-maker/s including any manager or officer that oversaw the decision-making process or participated in relevant discussions.

Arising from discussions with the Interim CEO and the Acting Governance General Manager throughout 2024, amendments and improvements were implemented by officers to the Complaints handling policy and the internal review process. However at the conclusion of our term of appointment some concerns with the independence of the Council's internal review process remained.

The intent of the provisions of the Act and the Ombudsman's guidance on complaints handling is that any person who participated in discussions with or provided guidance to the original decision-maker should not participate as a member of the panel to conduct the internal review process.

We propose that the Council further review the internal review procedures, the Complaints Handling policy and the Complex Customer Behaviour policy to align the policies and the internal review process with the service performance principles (section 106(2)(e)) of the Act), the principles of procedural fairness and the independent review process provided by (section 107(2)(a) – (c) of the Act.

The Council is encouraged to re-establish an internal independent review panel of senior officers or managers from a division separate to the Customer resolutions team, and who have not participated in discussions relating to the original decision/s under review.

Leadership changes (the Mayor and Chief Executive Officer)

From March 2022 until July 2025, the Council experienced low retention rates for the position of the on-going Chief Executive Officer (CEO). A total of nine CEOs were employed or appointed by the Council between 2022-2025 including two on-going CEOs, two Interim CEOs and five Acting CEOs.

Throughout this period of fluctuating changes to the operational leadership, the Councillors also adopted the practice of appointing a different Mayor annually between October 2021 to October 2024, resulting in four different Mayors appointed during the 2020-2024 Council term.

Section 26(3) of the Act permits councillors to elect the Mayor either annually or every two years. The Act by section 27A requires that each new appointee must undertake compulsory Mayoral training within one month of their appointment. The Act (section 27A(5)) also requires that the CEO 'provide reasonable assistance ' to enable the Mayor to access the training.

In addition to the mandatory Mayoral training required to be completed within one month of the Mayoral election, the CEO and General Managers provide an induction and orientation process for newly elected Mayors that occurs across the 3-6 months after the Mayoral election.

The need to support the orientation and induction of each newly elected Mayor combined with the frequent operational leadership changes in the position of the CEO between March 2022 to July 2025 imposed additional pressure on the Officers, staff and the Acting and Interim CEOs.

It is recommended the Councillors consider any operational difficulties and CEO leadership vacancies and the potential impact to be placed on the organisation when deciding to appoint a different Mayor annually rather than every two years.

During the 2016-2020 Council term, the Council experienced relative longevity with the CEO and Mayoral leadership. During this period, it is noteworthy that the Council retained the same CEO for a five-year term and, elected only two different Mayors during the 4-year term.

3. Recommendations for the Council

The recommendations for the Council are directed towards improving governance processes and practices for matters referred to in our 2024 and 2025 terms of reference (Appendices A and B respectively).

We recommend the Council develops and regularly reports publicly on its progress to implement an Action Plan incorporating the following improvements:

CEO Recruitment process and policy

1. The Council should amend the CEO Employment and Remuneration Policy and the Charter to provide for:

- Councillor membership of the CEO Employment and Remuneration Committee for all matters to be the Mayor and a maximum of four other councillors appointed by Council resolution
- The CEO Employment and Remuneration Committee conducts candidate interviews, with the remaining councillors able to participate as observers only
- The CEO Employment and Remuneration Committee includes two (rather than one) independent expert member, with expertise in the management of Human Relations and Local Government, appointed by the Council, and
- The CEO Employment and Remuneration Committee continues to provide a report and recommendations for selected candidate/s to the Council for consideration and adoption by resolution.

Financial sustainability

2. The Council should undertake Service Reviews of some Council in-house services to identify efficiencies and savings.

3. More detailed and improved financial briefings be provided to councillors concerning the proposals under consideration together with a "financial impact" summary to include details of the projected financial benefits and detriment to the municipality.

Outstanding actions identified by the previous Municipal Monitors' report (2 February 2023)

Restoration of the financial position of the Council to a long-term sustainable basis

4. The Council provide six-monthly updates until 2029-2030 to the Audit and Risk Committee and the community on the Council's progress to achieve the annual savings and efficiency targets underpinning the four-year budget that includes $3.2 million during 2025-2026 increasing to $9.7 million by 2028-2029.

5. The Council provide six-monthly updates to the Audit and Risk Committee and the community on the progress of the implementation of the ERP digital strategy solution until final completion (2029-2030).

6. The Council provide annual updates to the Audit and Risk Committee and the community of the progress and implementation of "fit for purpose" staff accommodation in the Preston Town Hall and Gower Street precincts.

Councillor conduct and relationships

7. The Councillors continue to participate in the remaining two team building councillor 'Working Together Workshops' throughout 2025.

8. The Mayor and the Councillors continue to hold Councillor only meetings on a regular monthly schedule in addition to holding the CEO and councillor meetings.

Council meetings and decision-making

Notices of Motion (NOMs)

9. All Councillors should limit their use of NOMs, especially where the NOM addresses issues inconsistent with the role of the Council or may cause disruptions to Council meetings.

10. The Council's Governance Rules should be amended to limit the number of NOMs per Council meeting to a maximum of two.

Conflict of Interest Declarations

11. The Council provide regular six-monthly in-service training sessions to all Councillors to support their understanding and application of declarations of a general conflict of interest as defined by section 127 of the Act.

Council agenda and reports

12. The format and length of the Council agenda and documents should be restructured and the length of all material reduced to improve the quality of decision-making by the provision of:

(i) a detailed Executive summary of Officer reports of no more than 6 pages including the officer recommendations, and

(ii) All other relevant information (including the detailed Officer report and other attachments) be available electronically by separate links for councillors to easily access each separate document and/or other reference material.

Complaints Handling and the internal review process

13. The Council amend the 2025 Complaints Handling Policy and the 2024 Complex Behaviour Policy to establish a panel to undertake independent internal reviews of complaints decisions requested by the customer, including reviews of decisions made to implement contact restrictions and other limitations with respect to a customer.

14. With respect to the Council's internal review process for complaints, the Council ensure that:

- The Independent panel's internal review process is aligned with section 107(2) of the Act
- The independent panel is comprised of senior Managers or officers from a division separate to the Complaints and Customer Resolutions division and who did not participate in the original decision-making process
- The Customer be permitted to submit any additional written information to the independent review panel for its consideration, and
- The internal review of Complex Customer Behaviour decisions be undertaken by the independent review panel before contact restrictions or other service limitations are implemented with respect to the customer.

15. The Council ensures that its Complaints Handling policies be developed and maintained in accordance with section 107 of the Act and adopted by a Council resolution.

Council Leadership roles

16. During periods of high turnover of operational leadership (such as the CEO or members of the Executive Leadership Team), the councillors give consideration to electing a Mayor for a two-year term.

4. Recommendations for the consideration of the Minister for Local Government

17. The Minister give consideration in the development of the proposed Model Governance Rules to limit the number of Notice of Motions to be placed on the agenda of each Council meeting to a maximum of two per meeting.

Acknowledgement

We wish to thank the Councillors and the Mayors from the former and current Council terms, the former CEO and the Interim CEO, the Executive leadership team, Managers

and staff, for their co-operation, guidance and insights, and their constructive suggestions for governance improvements to the decision-making process and the outcomes for the community.

We also wish to acknowledge the valuable time spent by the Interim CEO who met almost weekly with us between September 2024 to June 2025 to discuss issues and to progress some of our suggestions and proposals for governance improvements.

In our view, the Council's current councillors are well-placed to reset the Council and to implement and improve some governance practices and to restore the community trust in the Council.

June Anstee

Municipal Monitor

30 June 2025

Ross Millard

Municipal Monitor

30 June 2025

Appendix A: Terms of Reference of Appointment of the Municipal Monitors to Darebin City Council appointed under section 179 of the *Local Government Act 2020* (2024)

Without limiting the Municipal Monitors' functions and powers under sections 180 and 181, respectively, of the Act, the Municipal Monitors are:

1. To monitor the governance processes and practices of the Council, with specific regard to the following matters –

a. any outstanding actions by the Council (including in relation to IT and staff accommodation investment) to address the findings and recommendations identified in the Municipal Monitor's Final Report – 2 February 2023;

b. the relationships between councillors and between councillors and Council staff, including councillor behaviour with respect to the Councillor Code of Conduct and processes for resolving disputes between councillors;

c. the Councillors' understanding and performance of their statutory roles and responsibilities, including in relation to confidentiality requirements;

d. the Council's meeting procedures and decision-making processes, including Council briefings and meetings, and councillor adherence to the Governance Rules;

e. the Council's processes and practices in relation to health and safety, including any matters that may be creating a serious risk to the health and safety of councillors, Council staff or other persons;

f. any support needed in the lead up to and following the elections in October 2024 to ensure good governance at the Council;

g. the adequacy of Council's community engagement policies, processes and practices; and

h. any other matters that may be affecting the Council's ability to effectively perform, including behaviour that may be preventing the Council from performing its functions.

2. To advise, and provide any relevant assistance and support, to the Council in relation to the improvement of the Council's governance processes and practices, with specific regard to the matters raised in clause 1.

3. To report to the Minister for Local Government, with respect to the matters in clause 1, on:

a. any steps or actions taken by the Council to improve its governance and the effectiveness of those steps or actions; and

b. any recommendations in relation to the exercise of any Ministerial power under the Act.

Appendix B: Terms of Reference of Appointment of the Municipal Monitors to Darebin City Council appointed under section 179 of the *Local Government Act 2020* (2025)

Without limiting the Municipal Monitors' functions and powers under sections 180 and 181,

respectively, of the Act, the Municipal Monitors are:

1. To monitor the governance processes and practices of Darebin City Council (the Council), with specific regard to the following matters –

a. the Council's policies, processes and practices related to the recruitment, appointment, and proposed employment conditions of an ongoing Chief Executive Officer, including but not limited to materials developed and advice used to inform the processes and practices of the Council's CEO Employment and Remuneration Committee;

b. the establishment of an effective working relationship between the ongoing Chief Executive Officer and the Council;

c. any outstanding actions by the Council to address the findings and recommendations identified in the Municipal Monitor's Final Report – 2 February 2023;

d. the relationships between councillors and between councillors and Council staff, including councillor behaviour with respect to the Councillor Code of Conduct and processes for resolving disputes between councillors;

e. the Councillors' understanding and performance of their statutory roles and responsibilities, including in relation to confidentiality requirements;

f. the Council's meeting procedures and decision-making processes, including Council briefings and meetings, and councillor adherence to the Governance Rules;

g. the Council's processes and practices in relation to health and safety, including any matters that may be creating a serious risk to the health and safety of councillors, Council staff or other persons;

h. any support needed following the elections in October 2024 to ensure good governance at the Council;

i. the adequacy of Council's community engagement policies, processes and practices; and

j. any other matters that may be affecting the Council's ability to effectively perform, including behaviour that may be preventing the Council from performing its functions.

2. To advise, and provide any relevant assistance and support to the Council in relation to the improvement of the Council's governance processes and practices, with specific regard to the matters raised in clause 1.

3. To assist the Council to develop an Action Plan and progress updates for any necessary governance improvements, with specific regard to the matters raised in clauses 1 – 2.

4. To report to the Minister for Local Government, with respect to the matters in clause 1, on:

a. any steps or actions taken by the Council to improve its governance and the effectiveness of those steps or actions; and

b. any recommendations in relation to the exercise of any Ministerial power under the Act.

Municipal Monitors Appointed to Darebin City Council April 2024-June 2025

Response to Report.

In April 2024, the Minister for Local Government, Melissa Horne, appointed Ms June Anstee and Mr Ross Millard as Municipal Monitors to the City of Darebin, in response to governance concerns raised by former Councillors and community members. On 17 December 2025, the Monitors' report to the Minister was published on the Local Government Victoria website. The report makes 16 recommendations to Council across a range topics, and one recommendation was presented for the consideration of the Minister for Local Government.

The following action plan documents the key themes presented throughout the report and Council's approach to addressing the recommendations made by the Monitors.

Key themes presented in the 2025 Municipal Monitors Report – Darebin City Council

1. Financial Sustainability
2. Role Clarity
3. Decision Making Procedures and Practices
4. Customer experience including complaint handling

Governance Action Plan		
Theme One – Financial Sustainability – responds to recommendations 2,3,4,5 & 6 of the Monitors' Report		
Commitment	**Due Date**	**Status**
Include an in-depth financial management module in the annual professional development program for councillors to improve financial literacy.	Annually	On track
Continue quarterly reports to ARC regarding Council's financial context, with a focus on the long-term financial plan, as outlined in the previous Monitors Report (John Watson 2023)	Quarterly	On track
Ensure Councillors are involved in, and contribute to, budget briefings and workshops as part of the development of annual budgets.	Annually – December to March	Complete
Keep the Minister informed of investments in technology and staff accommodation, as part of updates to this Governance Action Plan (priority from previous Monitor's report (John Watson 2023)	Annually	On track

Theme Two – Role Clarity – responds to recommendations 7& 8 of the Monitors' Report		
Commitment	**Due Date**	**Status**
Continue with Councillor Dynamics workshops, with focus on role clarity and team building	June 2026	Complete
Ensure Professional Development training includes focus on the roles of a Councillors, Chief Executive Officer and staff, and the Councillor Model Code of Conduct.	Annually	On track
Develop regular rhythm for Councillor-only time to strengthen team dynamics and relationships, inviting time with Chief Executive Officer as needed.	Monthly	Complete
Theme Three – Decision making procedures and practices – responds to recommendations 1,9,10,11,12 of the Monitors' Report		
Commitment	**Due Date**	**Status**
Undertake the recruitment of a new Chair for the CEO Employment Matters Committee, taking into account feedback in the report including consideration of contingency for absence of Chair	February 2027	On track
Conduct annual Conflict of Interest refresher training.	Annually	Complete
Review the Governance Rules and agree on changes to be made prior to the release of the Model Governance Rules. Rules to consider how to reduce the number of NOMs at each meeting, as per Monitors' Report.	June 2026	On Hold
Review agenda papers to ensure Councillors are supported with key information required for decision-making.	September 2026	
Theme Four – Community Complaint Handling – responds to recommendations 13,14,15 of the Monitors' Report		
Commitment	**Due Date**	**Status**
Review current complaints handling policies to ensure alignment with s107 of the Local Government Act.	July 2026	Complete
Review current complaints handling process to ensure clear, consistent and accessible communications with community members. This includes accessible ways to contact Council.	August 2026	On track

Instrument of Appointment and Authorisation
(*Planning and Environment Act* 1987)

In this instrument "**officer**" means -

Pamela Djurdjic

By this instrument of appointment and authorisation Darebin City Council -

1. under section 147(4) of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* - authorises the officers to carry out the duties or functions and to exercise the powers of an authorised officer under the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*; and

2. under section 313 of the *Local Government Act 2020* authorises the officers either generally or in a particular case to institute proceedings for offences against the Acts and regulations described in this instrument.

It is declared that this instrument -

(a) comes into force immediately upon its execution, but no earlier than 7 September 2026;

(b) remains in force until varied or revoked.

This instrument is authorised by a resolution of the Darebin City Council made on _____

The COMMON SEAL of
DAREBIN CITY COUNCIL
was affixed on _____
with the authority of the Council:

Signed by the Mayor _____

in the presence of:

Witness: _____

Date: _____

Signed by the Chief Executive Officer of Council _____
in the presence of:

Witness: _____

Date: _____

A8864003

Instrument of Appointment and Authorisation
(*Planning and Environment Act* 1987)

In this instrument "**officer**" means -

William Gowans-Rief

By this instrument of appointment and authorisation Darebin City Council -

1. under section 147(4) of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* - authorises the officers to carry out the duties or functions and to exercise the powers of an authorised officer under the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*; and

2. under section 313 of the *Local Government Act 2020* authorises the officers either generally or in a particular case to institute proceedings for offences against the Acts and regulations described in this instrument.

It is declared that this instrument -

(a) comes into force on immediately upon its execution, but no earlier than 7 September 2026;

(b) remains in force until varied or revoked.

This instrument is authorised by a resolution of the Darebin City Council made on _____

The COMMON SEAL of
DAREBIN CITY COUNCIL
was affixed on _____
with the authority of the Council:

Signed by the Mayor _____

in the presence of:

Witness: _____

Date: _____

Signed by the Chief Executive Officer of Council _____
in the presence of:

Witness: _____

Date: _____

A8864003

Councillor Interaction Protocols

Purpose	The purpose of these operating protocols is to outline: • How Councillors can seek information or advice from officers to support them in undertaking their role. • How the CEO can ensure all information and advice is provided transparently and equitably to support efficient and transparent management of Councillor and community requests. • How interactions between Councillors and staff should occur to maintain a professional, courteous and psychologically safe work environment.
Outcomes	Outcomes sought by these protocols include: • Councillors having access to advice, information and documentation to enable fulfilment of their role; • Ensuring Councillors and staff have clarity on how they should interact and work together; • Efficient and timely processing of requests for support on general Council Business, planning matters, information and service requests; • Supporting good governance principles, including transparency, accessibility and accountability; • Ensuring compliance with relevant legislation, including the *Local Government Act 2020*, *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004, Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014* and *Equal Opportunity Act 2010*.
Scope	These protocols seek to: • clarify interactions between Councillors and staff under section 46(1)(b) and (3)(c) of the *Local Government Act 2020*; • support the Chief Executive Officer in meeting obligations to Councillors and staff under the *Occupational Health & Safety Act 2004*; • support the safety and wellbeing of Councillors in interactions with staff when undertaking their role; • ensure efficient and effective use of officer time and resourcing.
Definitions and Abbreviations	In this Policy: **Act** means the *Local Government Act 2020* (Vic). **Chief Executive Officer (CEO)** means the person appointed by Council to be its Chief Executive Officer, or any person acting in that position. **Council** means the Darebin City Council being all the Councillors collectively. **Councillor** means a person holding the office of member of Darebin City Council. **Delegated Committee** means delegated committees defined under section 63 of the *Local Government Act 2020* (Vic).

November 2022

	Discrimination means discrimination as defined pursuant to Part 2 clause 7 of the *Equal Opportunity Act 2010* (Vic). **Mayor** means the Councillor elected to the Office of Mayor of the City or any person appointed by Council to be acting as Mayor. **Member of Council staff** means a natural person appointed by the CEO (other than an independent contractor under a contract for services or a volunteer) to enable the functions of the City to be carried out. The Chief Executive Officer is also a member of Council staff. **Role of a Councillor** means the role as defined by section 28 of the *Local Government Act 2020* (Vic) and replicated in the responsibilities section of this Policy. **Workplace Manslaughter** means workplace manslaughter as defined pursuant to Part 5A Division 1-Preliminary of the *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004* (Vic).
Interactions	The Councillor and member of Council staff will in all interactions treat each other respectfully. The respect should help build and maintain a constructive relationship between Councillors and Council staff. Councillors will generally interact with staff for the following reasons: • general Council business; • requests for information; and • requests for service on behalf of community members. Or Interact with staff in, but not limited to, the following forums: • Council meetings • Planning Committee meetings • Councillor Briefing • Advisory Committee meetings • Delegated Committee meetings Section 124 of the Act outlines that a Councillor must not intentionally direct, or seek to direct, a member of Council staff. A breach of s 124 of the Act by a Councillor is defined as serious conduct under the Act. Where social interactions occur between Councillors and Council staff, any discussion of Council business and/or operational matters is prohibited.
Nominated Key Contacts	Interactions between Councillors and staff should generally occur through interactions with the CEO, General Managers or Department Managers. These include: • **CEO** – the single employee of Council, Councillors can contact the CEO about any matter • **General Managers** – can be contacted on matters within their division of responsibility or when the CEO is unavailable • **Department Managers** – can be contacted on operational or matters within their area of responsibility

November 2022

	The exceptions to the above general provisions are as follows, when it is also appropriate for Councillors to contact the following staff in relation to their roles and functions: • **Manager Corporate Governance** – to discuss governance matters • **Manager City Development** – to discuss matters listed on the planning committee agenda or weekly planning committee call up list. • **Chief Legal & Integrity Officer** – to discuss Councillor Conduct matters • **Mayor & Councillor support team** – for activities covering administrative support for Councillors • **Manager Communications, Engagement and Customer Experience** – for matters associated with communications and media relations advice • **Nominated Staff Member leading support for a Council Committee** – i.e. staff member nominated as the lead officer for an Advisory Committee. • **Information Services Help Desk** – for matters associated with technology equipment • **Manager People and Culture** – for matters associated with any potential staff issues or issues relating to Discrimination or Workplace Manslaughter Officers in the above roles can respond to Councillor requests and depending on the nature of the request should copy their Manager or General Managers into their response. Given the volume and technical nature of enquiries the following officers can also respond to Councillor requests but must copy their Manager, and if necessary, their General Manager, into the response: • **Safety & Compliance** – Coordinator Civic Compliance, Team Leader Business Support, Team Leader Local Laws, Team Leader Traffic Enforcement, Senior Planning Compliance Officer • **City Development** – Coordinator Health Protection, Planning Coordinators, Coordinator Priority Development, Building Services Lead, Municipal Building Surveyor, Deputy Municipal Building Surveyor, City Designer, Assistant Manager City Development • **Sustainable Transport** – Coordinator Transport Engineering Councillors should not contact any staff other than those nominated above. If any other staff are contacted by a Councillor, they are required to refer the contact from a Councillor to their Department Manager or and the General Manager or CEO to determine who is best placed to provide a response.
Council Business	The formal business of Council is conducted through forums including but not limited to: • Council meetings and reports • Council committee meetings • Planning Committee • Councillor briefings and Councillor & Executive time These forums are governed by the Governance Rules, Councillor Code of Conduct and Staff Code of Conduct. Given the nature of planning matters, Councillors are encouraged to refer any requests for meetings relating to developments to the organisation. Councillors have an obligation to avoid involvement in operational matter of which assessment of

November 2022

	planning applications is a key matter. An officer will not attend meetings with Councillors to discuss or respond to operational planning matters. This ensures an efficient use of staff time and that all operational requests are fairly and equitably dealt with through the normal planning permit application processes.
Request for Information	Councillors may request information from staff by: • lodging a Councillor Service Request; • email, telephone or meeting with a nominated key contact as outlined in the Nominated Key Contacts section. The Councillor's request for information must be reasonable in the circumstances. It must not, for example, impose an unreasonable burden on the member of Council staff or set an unrealistic or impracticable deadline for a response. The request should not be designed to embarrass the member of Council staff or put them in a difficult position. If the Councillor intends to make public the information sought, this must be communicated to the staff member prior to disclosure to the public. Wherever possible Councillors should lodge a Councillor Service Request if seeking information as this will ensure a record is maintained, and the matter is regularly followed up if there is a delay responding. This method of contact is most suited if the request is non-urgent, is operational in nature or a Councillor is unsure which nominated key contact is responsible for the matter. If a manager or General Manager receive a request directly from a Councillor, they are responsible for having it recorded and tracked in Council's Councillor Service Request system. This can be done via direct entry, or via request to the EA to Mayor and Councillors. Nominated key contacts are accountable for following up on logged requests in a timely manner, with complex request responded to in 10 days and simple requests responded to in 5 days. Councillors can email, telephone or meet with nominated key contacts where the matter is complex, strategic, unique in nature or where a Councillor is seeking additional support. Councillors should contact staff within normal business hours. In the event of an emergency or significantly important issue (i.e. media) arising outside of ordinary business hours, the CEO or relevant General Manager should be contacted by the Councillor. Nominated key contact staff are responsible for communicating with Councillors, this should not be delegated to other officers.
Support for the Mayor and Councillors	The Executive Assistant to the Mayor and Councillors is to provide assistance to the Mayor and Councillors in carrying out their roles. The Mayor or Councillors may contact and work directly with the Executive Assistant to the Mayor and Councillor to gain the necessary support to carry out these activities. Requests for support beyond these activities will not be provided by staff within the Mayor and Councillors office and will be referred to the CEO to determine if provision of support for the requested activity is appropriate. The CEO may agree to support ongoing contact between the Mayor or Councillors and a staff member for the completion of a particular task or particular activity, for example, assigning a staff member to assist the Mayor in advocacy activities.

November 2022

	The Mayor may be invited by the CEO or a member of the Executive Leadership Team (ELT) to a meeting of staff or an organisational event to thank or address staff on behalf of Council. The CEO may also invite Councillors to these events. In all other respects, contact between the Mayor and Council staff will be in accordance with the Nominated Key Contacts section of these protocols.
Requests for Service	Councillors are encouraged to advise members of the community to contact Council's customer service channels directly to resolve service matters, particularly if it's the first time they have approached the Council. This enables community service requests to be logged and triaged appropriately and enables after hours support if urgent. Where a community member may have emailed all or multiple Councillors, or where there have been multiple contacts already with the organisation, Councillors should lodge a service request with customer service and if urgent or serious copy the relevant General Manager. Officers will not attend meetings with Councillors to discuss or respond to operational matters. This ensures an efficient use of staff time and that all operational requests are fairly and equitably dealt with through the Council's customer service request process. Councillors may choose to meet with community members to better understand community experience and concerns in relation to operational matters, however any specific requests should then come through from the customer as a service request to be responded to, recorded and reported on.
Provision of Information to Councillors	Where a request for information or service outlined in either Support for the Mayor or Request for Services sections is of broad interest to Council or Councillors, nominated key contacts are encouraged to provide this information to other Councillors, or to the Ward Councillor where the matter relates to a Ward, not just the Councillor making the request. Where a matter is a request for public information or clarity on a topic that is not likely to be considered as 'contentious' and is unlikely to come back before the Council meeting, staff can respond directly to an individual Councillor. If the Councillor making the request believes the request is sensitive or confidential in nature, they should flag this in their request. Nominated key contacts will be required to consider this as part of their responses and consult with their General Manager or the CEO, if they are of the view that distribution should occur to all Councillors. The relevant General Manager or the CEO will then discuss the matter with the Councillor concerned.
Involvement of Councillors in Operational Matters	The Mayor and Councillors are not to contact staff who are not nominated staff within these protocols, whilst undertaking their duties. This ensures that staff can carry out their duties without interruption by Councillors and prevents inappropriate Councillor contact with staff that may put staff health and wellbeing at risk. It also ensures that Councillors do not put themselves at any risk by entering operational environments and situations for which they have not been trained. The exception to this would be a general greeting either in the office or in the field of operations or briefly thanking staff for the work they are doing. Contact that must not occur under these protocols includes: • approaching staff when they are assisting a difficult customer

November 2022

	• approaching staff when they are operating machinery and/or equipment • questioning staff about how or why they are undertaking their duties • taking photos or videos of staff whilst they are undertaking these duties • directing or making suggestions to staff on how they should undertake their duties Councillors who wish to observe operations to inform their decision making may do so by making a request in writing to the relevant ELT member or CEO. On receipt of the request the Manager will assess the request and put in place arrangements to mitigate risks to enable the Councillor to observe the operations. Where these risks cannot be mitigated, the Manager may decline the request. Councillors observing operations should comply with these contact protocols.
Complaints and Feedback	If a Councillor or the member of Council staff considers that either has breached any of these Protocols they: • may immediately terminate the interaction with the Councillor or Council staff member; • must report, in relation to a possible Councillor breach, what has occurred to their General Manager or CEO; or • must report, in relation to a possible breach by a member of Council staff, confidentially to the CEO the nature of the compliant, to be dealt with in line with the Employee Code of Conduct and related staff policies. Where the alleged breach poses (or may pose) a risk to health and safety, the CEO may initiate an investigation or review process in accordance with the Councillor OHS Policy. If an investigation is initiated, the investigator will adopt a fair process and conduct a thorough and impartial investigation in accordance with the principles of natural justice. The CEO may also refer the matter to Councillors to be managed in line with the Councillor Code of Conduct under clause 4.2 and as set out in the Local Government Act 2020. The CEO is responsible for ensuring the member of staff is advised of what, if any, action has been taken with respect to an alleged breach. Nothing in this Protocol prevents the CEO from implementing immediate interventions to ensure the safety and wellbeing of those involved, so far as is reasonably practicable.
Attachments	**Attachment 1 – Legal Context** ***Local Government Act 2020*** Section 46 Functions of the Chief Executive Officer Pursuant to the Act, the CEO is responsible for ensuring the effective and efficient management of the day to day operations of the Council (s 46(1)(b)).

November 2022

	Without limiting the generality of subsection (1)(b), this responsibility includes the following … S 46 (3)(c) managing interactions between members of Council staff and Councillors and ensuring that policies, practices and protocols that support arrangements for interactions between members of Council staff and Councillors are developed and implemented. Section 124 Directing a member of Council staff A Councillor must not intentionally direct, or seek to direct, a member of Council staff— (a) in the exercise of a delegated power, or the performance of a delegated duty or function, of the Council; or (b) in the exercise of a power or the performance of a duty or function exercised or performed by the member as an authorised officer under this Act or any other Act; or (c) in the exercise of a power or the performance of a duty or function the member exercises or performs in an office or position the member holds under this Act or any other Act; or (d) in relation to advice provided to the Council or a delegated committee, including advice in a report to the Council or delegated committee. A breach of s 124 by a Councillor is defined as improper conduct and imposes a Penalty (120 penalty units) if substantiated. ***Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004*** Part 3, Division 2 Main duties of employers Section 21 Duties of employers to employees (1) An employer must, so far as is reasonably practicable, provide and maintain for employees of the employer a working environment that is safe and without risks to health. (2) Without limiting subsection (1), an employer contravenes that subsection if the employer fails to do any of the following— (a) provide or maintain plant or systems of work that are, so far as is reasonably practicable, safe and without risks to health;

November 2022

	(b) make arrangements for ensuring, so far as is reasonably practicable, safety and the absence of risks to health in connection with the use, handling, storage or transport of plant or substances; (c) maintain, so far as is reasonably practicable, each workplace under the employer's management and control in a condition that is safe and without risks to health; (d) provide, so far as is reasonably practicable, adequate facilities for the welfare of employees at any workplace under the management and control of the employer Section 23 Duties of employers to other persons (1) An employer must ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that persons other than employees of the employer are not exposed to risks to their health or safety arising from the conduct of the undertaking of the employer.
Breach of Protocols	Breaches of these protocols are treated seriously. Section 124 of the Act outlines that a Councillor must not intentionally direct, or seek to direct, a member of Council staff. A breach of s 124 of the Act by a Councillor is defined as improper conduct. Any concerns about non-compliance should be reported immediately to the CEO, General Manager or Manager Corporate Governance, If there is a significant breach and/or persistent breach of these protocols by a Councillor, the CEO will raise the matter with the Mayor, who may elect to pursue the matter through the Councillor Code of Conduct process. Adherence to these protocols will be considered as a requirement for Councillors in future iterations of the Councillor Code of Conduct.

GOVERNANCE

Related Documents	The following documents are related to these Protocols: • Councillor Code of Conduct • Employee Code of Conduct
Legislation/ Regulation	• Local Government Act 2020 (Vic) • Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 (Vic) • Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 (Vic) • Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic)

November 2022

	The implications of this policy have been assessed in accordance with the requirements of the Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities.
Author	Jacinta Stevens, Manager Corporate Governance
Policy Owner/ Sponsor	Jodie Watson, General Manager Governance & Engagement
Date Effective	19 December 2022
Review Date	The protocol will be reviewed within 12 months of each municipal election.
Version Number	0.1
Document ID	A6596486
Content enquiries	Jacinta Stevens, Manager Corporate Governance

November 2022

Motion 1: Accelerating Support for Councillor Psychological Safety, Wellbeing and Protection from Process Abuse

Mover: Councillor Connie Boglis OAM

That the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV):

Motion: Accelerating Support for Councillor Psychological Safety, Wellbeing and Protection from Process Abuse

Mover: Councillor Connie Boglis OAM

That the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV):

1. Notes and welcomes the comprehensive work program underway to implement the October 2025 State Council resolution on occupational violence, including the Councillor Health, Safety and Wellbeing Program, the sector-wide OHS framework being developed with the Victorian Government, Digital Safety and Online Harassment Response, and related evidence-informed and systemic-reform streams.
2. Notes the additional evidence from the Better Politics Foundation's Better Politics Study: Australia 2026 and the VLGA Victorian Councillor Census 2025 confirming significant psychosocial impacts on councillors, including elevated risks to mental wellbeing (particularly for women) and clear demand for improved supports.
3. Requests that the MAV, in progressing the Councillor Health, Safety and Wellbeing Program and related streams: a. prioritise confidential counselling, peer-support networks, early-intervention services and practical resources specifically designed for the unique circumstances of elected members; b. ensure the program incorporates the gendered findings of the above studies and addresses the higher reported risk for women councillors; and c. advocate for sustained State and Federal funding required to deliver and embed these supports.
4. Requests the MAV to examine, as a complementary element of its systemic-reform work, whether existing misconduct, complaints and integrity processes can themselves become vectors of intimidation or bullying, and to identify practical safeguards (including clearer guidance, early triage and support for those who report in good faith) that protect councillors and staff while fully preserving procedural fairness, natural justice and public confidence.
5. Requests the MAV to clarify, through advocacy and guidance, the respective responsibilities of councils and Chief Executive Officers under workplace-injury, occupational-health-and-safety, psychosocial-risk and compensation frameworks as they apply to councillors, so that support for councillor health, safety and wellbeing is unambiguous.

Rationale

Victorian councillors carry an increasingly demanding statutory role. New 2025–26 data confirm significant psychosocial impacts. The Better Politics Study: Australia 2026 found 70% of elected representatives reported adverse impacts on mental wellbeing; among the 135 Victorian councillors who responded, 61% agreed the role had harmed their mental health or wellbeing; and 1 in 7 reported thoughts of self-harm, with women nearly twice as likely as men. The VLGA Victorian Councillor Census 2025 found almost six in ten reported bullying or harassment, with women experiencing significantly higher rates of bullying and non-sexual harassment; 74% balanced council duties with employment or business; and clear demand for improved wellbeing support and resilience measures.

These findings reinforce that councillor wellbeing is a democratic-capacity issue: it affects decision quality, the diversity of those willing to stand, and public confidence.

This motion deliberately builds on, rather than restates, the October 2025 occupational-violence resolution and the live MAV work program. It supplies new evidence, seeks acceleration and gendered specificity within the existing Councillor Health, Safety and Wellbeing Program, and adds a tightly focused complementary protection against the weaponisation of integrity processes. It does not call for a new sector-wide framework, a broad independent review of the Local Government Inspectorate or IBAC, or other measures already under active implementation.

The motion aligns with MAV's strategic priority of active local democracy and good governance. For Darebin, it supports the capacity of councillors to deliver the Health and Wellbeing and transparent, integrity-focused decision-making priorities in Our Darebin Plan 2025–29.

Motion 2: Strengthening Integrity, Accountability and Independent Oversight in Victorian Local Government

Mover: Cr Connie Boglis OAM (Darebin City Council)

That the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) calls on the Victorian Government to:

1. Commission an independent review of Victoria's local government integrity framework. The review must examine the powers, jurisdiction, resourcing, coordination, accessibility and practical effectiveness of IBAC, the Local Government Inspectorate and other relevant oversight bodies, with explicit comparison to the frameworks in New South Wales, Queensland and other Australian jurisdictions.
2. Align the Victorian framework with contemporary best practice so that oversight bodies have equivalent powers and scope to those in leading jurisdictions. This must preserve procedural fairness, natural justice and public confidence, and ensure councillors and the public have clear, timely pathways for independent investigation of allegations of corruption, misconduct or serious governance failure.

Rationale

Strong public confidence in Victorian local government depends on an effective, independent and transparent integrity framework. Councillors need appropriate access to information and confidence that allegations of corruption, misconduct or serious governance failures can be independently investigated. Recent high-profile investigations and governance failures have highlighted limitations in the current system relative to other states. This motion seeks a statewide assessment of whether the existing framework remains fit for purpose and, where it does not, practical alignment with stronger models elsewhere.

MAV State Council Motion

Motion 3: Consistent public reporting of significant council expenditure

That the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV):

1. Notes and supports the unresolved May 2025 State Council resolution (Motion 32) calling for the Victorian Independent Remuneration Tribunal to set remuneration bands for Council CEOs.
2. Notes that the Local Government Legislation Amendment (Stronger Communities) Bill 2026 strengthens CEO employment and remuneration governance through independently chaired CEO Employment Matters Committees, but does not establish consistent sector-wide public reporting requirements for senior executive employment costs or other significant corporate expenditure.
3. Notes that while councils already disclose certain remuneration and expenditure information under legislative and accounting requirements, reporting practices vary across the sector.
4. Advocates for a consistent, standardised annual reporting framework across all 79 Victorian councils requiring significant expenditure categories to be separately identified and publicly reported, consistent with applicable employment, privacy and other relevant legal obligations including:
    a. CEO remuneration and senior executive employment costs;
    b. consultancy expenditure;
    c. legal services expenditure;
    d. external arbitration and dispute resolution costs;
    e. councillor conduct-related costs; and
    f. other significant governance and corporate expenditure.
5. Consults with member councils to develop best-practice principles and guidance for clear and consistent reporting of the above categories so communities can better understand significant council expenditure.
6. Advocates for measures that support transparency, accountability and community confidence, complementary to existing advocacy on CEO remuneration bands and the reforms in the Stronger Communities Bill.

Rationale

Motion 32 remains open and seeks independent band-setting for CEO remuneration. The Stronger Communities Bill improves the process for CEO employment and related advice. Neither establishes consistent public reporting of senior executive employment costs or other major expenditure categories such as consultancies, legal services and governance-related costs.

Councils already hold and, in varying formats, report much of this information. Current variation can limit comparability and community understanding. This motion seeks practical, sector-wide improvements to the visibility and consistency of significant expenditure reporting. It focuses on information councils already hold and expressly requires any framework to comply with employment law (including Fair Work Act section 333B workplace rights), privacy obligations and other legal requirements. It does not require employees to disclose information contrary to their rights.

10. ITEMS TO BE TABLED

Nil

11. NOTICES OF MOTION

11.1 CLIMATE COMPENSATION FUND – PROTECT DAREBIN RATEPAYERS, SERVICES AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Councillor: **Julie O'BRIEN**

NoM No.: 43/24-28

Take notice that at the Council Meeting to be held on 25 August 2026, it is my intention to move:

That *Council*

(1) Notes with concern

a) That Darebin and its communities, businesses, and natural environment are vulnerable to climate change-related impacts.

b) The rising costs, financial and psychosocial, which are borne by households, businesses, organisations, and communities in responding to climate impacts, including:

i. Losses from local extreme weather events impacting homes, income, infrastructure, natural environment, and First Nations cultural heritage.

ii. Escalating energy and insurance premiums, contributing to cost-of-living pressures and housing insecurity.

iii. Greater need and burden of retrofitting, adaptation and resilience measures against heat and flood risk.

iv. Increasing food costs and insecurity as primary producers are impacted.

v. Interruptions to Council and other government services that are used or relied on by the community.

c) The rising costs to Council budgets from mitigating and responding to climate impacts, including:

i. Reactive repair and replacement of damaged infrastructure.

ii. Proactive resilience upgrades to infrastructure such as drainage, roads and open space. Coordinating response and recovery efforts.

iii. Disruption to work plans from diverted resources.

iv. Increasing insurance premiums.

v. Investment in preparedness that supports and psychosocial support for community safety and wellbeing.

d) That existing constraints on local government revenue-raising, and shortfalls in Financial Assistance Grants, mean Councils cannot meet these costs without compromising other essential services.

e) That passing escalating climate-related costs onto ratepayers is not directly possible, and if that were to change, doing so would be neither fair nor sustainable, and that the "polluter pays" principle holds that those responsible for pollution should contribute to managing its impacts.

(2) Acknowledges growing support for a solution to these issues including that:

a) Ten Councils across Victoria, New South Wales and Tasmania have passed similar motions since February this year.

b) There are over 50 live 'Communities for Climate Compensation' campaigns across the country, including a one in Darebin that Councillors have been approached about.

c) Led by a City of Sydney motion, the Australian Local Government Association (ALGA) formally adopted the Climate Compensation Fund position, unopposed, at its June 2026 National General Assembly in Canberra, backed by the ALGA Board.

d) Similar motions were adopted at the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) State Council meeting in May 2026.

(3) Calls on the Australian Government and Parliament to:

a) Establish a Parliamentary Inquiry into the adequacy of the 2025 National Adaptation Plan, specifically addressing the lack of additional funding for local governments to deliver mandated adaptation responses.

b) Introduce a Climate Pollution Levy on fossil fuel corporations commensurate with the climate damage they are causing, and use the funds raised to create the National Climate Compensation Fund.

c) Provide sustained, funding enabling Councils to plan and deliver climate solutions and a just transition with certainty.

d) Establish a legislated National Climate Compensation Fund to meet the needs of communities on the frontline of climate impacts and households facing rising climate-related costs.

e) Ensure the National Climate Compensation Fund includes a dedicated funding stream for local governments, commensurate with the scale of financial risks identified in the 2025 National Climate Risk Assessment.

f) Ensure revenue raised through such mechanisms prioritises: strengthening local infrastructure resilience; investing in community preparedness; supporting disaster-impacted communities; and reducing financial pressure on ratepayers.

(4) Calls for Darebin Council to:

a) Champion this Motion and it's broader adoption in networks such as the M9 and Northern Councils Alliance and in conversation with local MPs.

b) Provide a briefing to Councillors to inform the 2027-28 Budget process and prepare for potential future funding scenarios resulting from a Climate Compensation Fund, provide a Briefing by February 2027 on the following:

i. Opportunities to bring forward projects within the four-year Capital Works Program that deliver climate resilience benefits.

ii. New strategic planning work needed to identify gaps in current commitments and prioritise capital projects and operating initiatives that strengthen community climate resilience.

c) Provide a Council Report - as part of the planned work to develop the next three-year Action Plan to deliver the Darebin Climate Emergency Plan (2024–2030),and table the report to Council by March 2027, that provides an overview of implementation progress to date and identifies priorities from the next delivery phase that could be enhanced or accelerated with additional funding.

(5) Directs the Mayor or CEO to write to the Federal Minister for Climate Change and Energy and the local Federal Member of Parliament, communicating the requirements outlined in Point 3 (a-f).

Rationale:

Across the country and here in Darebin, climate impacts such as heatwaves, flooding, bushfires, coastal and marine change are intensifying, placing pressure on infrastructure, services and community wellbeing.

Households, businesses and primary producers face rising costs: damage to homes and the environment, higher insurance and energy prices, business disruption and displacement, and impacts on First Nations resilience and cultural heritage.

Councils feel this directly. We're on the frontline with our communities, responsible for roads, drainage, community facilities and emergency response, yet we are operating in a rate-capped environment with limited capacity to raise revenue, even as mitigation and adaptation needs and costs escalate.

Passing these costs onto ratepayers isn't fair or sustainable, and Council continuing to absorb them risks the essential services our community relies on.

The ‘polluter pays’ principle offers a fairer path: big coal, oil and gas corporations should contribute their fair share to managing the impacts they've caused and a growing movement across the country is demanding this action.

A Climate Compensation Fund built on this principle could support disaster preparedness, insurance relief, flood and heat-proofed homes, safe community facilities, food security and offer a just transition for affected workers.
This Motion is timely and well-precedented.

Golden Plains passed a similar motion in February. Bass Coast and Mount Alexander Shire followed suit, and community campaigns are live across the country, including here in Darebin.

At the peak body level, similar motions were presented and passed at the last MAV State Council meeting in May while ALGA formally adopted the Fund as national policy, unopposed at their recent national conference in June.

Darebin has the opportunity not just to align with MAV and ALGA's position, but to lead the way for Victorian metro Councils by formally backing our local campaign and the national policy our peers have already adopted.

Notice Received: **5 August 2026**

Notice Given to Councillors **5 August 2026**

Date of Meeting: **25 August 2026**

Attachments

Nil.

11.2 61 JOHNSON STREET, RESERVOIR, PLANNING APPLICATION

Councillor: **Angela VILLELLA**

NoM No.: 44/24-28

Take notice that at the Council Meeting to be held on 25 August 2026, it is my intention to move:

That *Council:*

(1) Requests the Mayor to write to our local state member, Nathan Lambert MP and the Minister for Planning to bring to their attention community concerns relating to the proposed fast-tracked development at 61 Johnson Street, Reservoir. In this, specifically seek that the Minister for Planning direct Hallmarc to undertake further and more meaningful public consultation pursuant to Clause 52.20-4 of the Darebin Planning Scheme.

(2) Notes the following concerns to be include in the letter to the above-mentioned ministers:

a) Lack of community consultation

i. Residents have raised concerns regarding insufficient consultation with the fast tracking of the development.

ii. b. The fast-tracking application process has shortened the community consultation window of opportunity resulting in reduced community engagement and awareness of the project.

b) Insufficient parking and safety concerns

i. Residents of social housing such as women fleeing domestic violence must be afforded the right to be protected from harm, single mothers with young children and the disabled must be provided with easy access to parking and generally feel safe. These conditions can only be achieved with a sufficiently secure carpark space for these individuals. A private locked carpark space for all apartments may be the best way to achieve this. The nearby train station parking may not provide safety at all times, likewise with on street parking.

ii. Recent apartment developments and increased retail activity have resulted in increased traffic along Johnson Street with high demand for limited hour-long parking spaces. The street cannot accommodate on street parking for apartment residents.

c) Building social services/ infrastructure within social housing development across Victoria

i. Council welcomes the urgent investment in social housing however it notes the lack of social services in the Reservoir /Keon Park area. Planning for social housing must incorporate necessary infrastructure for support services within the development or close proximity to it. A social housing/support service precinct may be the best way to build community safety and resilience. Therefore, council recommends the government ensure a space on the 61 Johnson Street design plans (preferably the ground floor) can be used to house a provider of relevant social services.

Rationale:

The proposed social housing development has been fast tracked and operates outside of the usual planning application process where it could be called in and the community could have there say - this has lead to much community frustration. Serious concerns regarding lack of parking and the need for social services to provide support to the residents needs to be considered by the government. The area already has safety and traffic/parking challenges which I raised with Nathan Lambert. He did seem to be receptive to the issues raised. Whilst we welcome the provision of social housing it should come with proper precinct planning with safety and wrap around services key considerations.

Notice Received: **5 August 2026**

Notice Given to Councillors **5 August 2026**

Date of Meeting: **25 August 2026**

Attachments

Nil

12. URGENT BUSINESS

13. CONSIDERATION OF REPORTS CONSIDERED CONFIDENTIAL

In accordance with Section 66(2) of the *Local Government Act 2020*, Council may resolve to close the meeting to members of the public to consider the following items, deemed to be confidential in accordance with Section 3(1) of the Act for the reasons indicated:

13.1 PLANNING & ENVIRONMENT ACT 1987 (VIC)

This item is designated confidential because it is legal privileged information, being information to which legal professional privilege or client legal privilege applies, pursuant to Section 3(1) (e) of the Act.

CLOSE OF MEETING

Recommendation

That in accordance with section 66(2) of the *Local Government Act 2020*, Council resolves to close the meeting to members of the public to consider the matters are confidential in accordance with Section 3(1) of the Act.

RE-OPENING OF MEETING

Recommendation

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

14. CLOSE OF MEETING

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If you are deaf, or have a hearing or speech impairment, contact us through the National Relay Service.

Speak your language
T 8470 8470

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हिंदी	ਪੰਜਾਬੀ	Tiếng Việt