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# AGENDA OF THE COUNCIL MEETING

Held on Monday 24 September 2018

Public question time will  
commence shortly after 6.00pm.



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

Darebin City Council acknowledges the Wurundjeri people as the traditional owners and custodians of the land we now call Darebin and pays respect to their Elders, past, present and future.

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 - Agenda**

This is the Agenda for the Council meeting. For assistance with any of the agenda items, please telephone 8470 8888.

**Arabic**

هذا هو جدول أعمال اجتماع المجلس. للحصول على المساعدة في أي من بنود جدول الأعمال، يرجى الاتصال بالرقم 8470 8888.

**Chinese**

这是市议会会议议程。如需协助了解其中的任何议项，请致电8470 8888。

**Greek**

Αυτή είναι η Ημερήσια Διάταξη (Agenda) της συνεδρίασης του Δημοτικού Συμβουλίου. Για βοήθεια σε οποιοδήποτε θέμα της ημερήσιας διάταξης, παρακαλούμε τηλεφωνήστε στο 8470 8888.

**Hindi**

यह काउंसिल की बैठक के लिए एजेंडा है। एजेंडा के किसी भी आइटम के साथ सहायता के लिए कृपया 8470 8888 पर टेलीफोन करें।

**Italian**

Questo è l'ordine del giorno per la riunione municipale. Per assistenza su uno dei punti dell'agenda chiamate il numero 8470 8888

**Macedonian**

Ова е дневен ред за состанокот на Советот на Општината. За помош за било која точка од дневниот ред, ве молиме телефонирајте на 8470 8888.

**Somali**

Kani waa ajandaha kulanka Golaha Degmada. Wixii caawima ah oo ku saabsan qodob kasta oo ka mid ah ajandaha fadlan la xiriir tel: 8470 8888.

**Vietnamese**

Đây là chương trình buổi họp của Hội đồng Thành Phố. Muốn biết thêm các thông tin về chương trình buổi họp, xin hãy gọi số 8470 8888.

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# Agenda

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## 1. MEMBERSHIP

Cr. Kim Le Cerf (Mayor) (Chairperson)

Cr. Gaetano Greco

Cr. Tim Laurence

Cr. Trent McCarthy

Cr. Lina Messina (Deputy Mayor)

Cr. Susanne Newton

Cr. Susan Rennie

Cr. Julie Williams

## 2. APOLOGIES

Cr. Steph Amir is on an approved leave of absence.

## 3. DISCLOSURES OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

## 4. CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETINGS

<b>Recommendation</b>
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**That** the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Council held on 3 September 2018 be confirmed as a correct record of business transacted.

## 5. 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 can ask up to two (2) questions at an Ordinary Council meeting.

Questions submitted online will be responded to in the first instance. If you are not present at the meeting, the Chairperson will read the question and provide a response. The Chairperson may then take questions from members in the gallery.

Any question not answered at the meeting will be taken on notice and a written response will be provided to the person asking the question.

In accordance with the Darebin Governance Local Law, the Chairperson may disallow a question if it:

- is defamatory, indecent, abusive, offensive, irrelevant, trivial or objectionable in language or substance; or
- deals with a subject matter already answered; or
- is aimed at embarrassing a Councillor or an officer.

If you are unable to submit your question prior to the Ordinary Council meeting, the Chairperson may take questions from the floor.

### **SUBMISSIONS OR COMMENTS**

Members of the public may make a comment or 2 minute submission on a matter listed on the Agenda prior to the item being debated.

A person who is unable to stay at the meeting until the Agenda item is heard, may make their comment or submission during Question Time.

### **HOW TO SUBMIT YOUR QUESTION OR MAKE A COMMENT OR SUBMISSION**

Members of the public who wish to ask a question, or make a comment or submission to an agenda item, at an Ordinary Council meeting are encouraged to do so in one of the following ways:

- (a) online at [darebin.vic.gov.au/questionsandsubmissions](http://darebin.vic.gov.au/questionsandsubmissions) by 3pm on the day of the meeting; or
- (b) by email to [Q&S@darebin.vic.gov.au](mailto:Q&S@darebin.vic.gov.au); by 3pm on the day of the meeting; or
- (c) in person at the Preston Customer Service Centre, 274 Gower Street, Preston; or
- (d) by mail to PO Box 91, Preston 3072; or
- (e) with a Council officer prior to a Council meeting.

Council meetings can be viewed at the Watch Council and Planning Committee meetings page.

Agenda's will be available for viewing on Council's website at the 'Meeting Agendas and Minutes' page by 5pm, up to 6 days prior to the date of the meeting. Copies are also available at Customer Service centres and libraries.

**6. PETITIONS**

**7. URGENT BUSINESS**



## 8. CONSIDERATION OF REPORTS

### 8.1 COUNCIL PLAN ACTION PLAN 2017–18 END OF FINANCIAL YEAR REPORT

**Author:** Coordinator Planning and Reporting

**Reviewed By:** General Manager Governance and Engagement

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#### PURPOSE

To outline Council's activities during the period 1 July 2017 to 30 June 2018 in implementing the Council Plan Action Plan 2017–18

<b>Recommendation</b>
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**That** Council notes the Council Plan Action Plan 2017/18 end of financial year report.

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#### BACKGROUND / KEY INFORMATION

Council is required by the *Local Government Act 1989* ('the Act') to prepare a Council Plan containing the strategic objectives of Council, strategies for achieving those objectives, and indicators to monitor the achievement of those objectives.

Supporting the Council Plan is an annual action plan that outlines the principle activities that will be undertaken over the course of each financial year.

This report summarises Council's activities and progress made during the period 1 July 2017 to 30 June 2018 in implementing the Council Plan Action Plan 2017–18. The attached Council Plan Action Plan Progress Report contains updates on approximately 150 separate actions, as well as highlights of the capital works program and a short financial summary. The Report demonstrates that in the first year of the Council Plan 2017–21, significant progress has been made.

#### Previous Council Resolution

At its meeting held on 22 June 2017, Council resolved:

*'That Council receive quarterly updates on progress of the Action Plan.'*

#### COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT

##### Consultation

Not applicable

##### Communications

A communications plan has been prepared, which includes the distribution of information through the Darebin website, the Darebin 2021 Council Plan website and social media.

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## ANALYSIS

### Alignment to Council Plan / Council policy

Goal 6 - A well governed Council

This is relevant to Council Plan Strategy 6.3 'We will communicate our progress on the actions in this Council Plan to residents, community leaders, community organisations, business, industry, and Victorian and Federal governments to ensure we can all act together.

### Environmental Sustainability Considerations

The Council Plan has a specific goal that addresses Council's commitment to environmental sustainability, which is a theme that runs through the goals of the plan.

### Equity, Inclusion and Wellbeing Considerations

The Council Plan has a specific goal that addresses Council's commitment to equity and the development of programs that benefit all, including our most vulnerable.

### Cultural Considerations

The Council Plan has a specific goal that recognises that our diverse community is our greatest asset.

### Economic Development Considerations

The Council Plan has a specific goal that addresses Council's commitment to support and attract local businesses and industries.

### Financial and Resource Implications

The total cost of graphic design for the quarterly reports is approximately \$5,000 per annum. There are no other external costs.

### Legal and Risk Implications

There are no risks associated with the development of the Council Plan-Action Plan Progress Reports.

## DISCUSSION

The attached Council Plan Action Plan Report for the end of the 2017–18 financial year contains progress reports on approximately 150 separate actions, as well as a summary of the capital works program and a financial summary. For those actions that have fallen behind schedule, project leaders are closely monitoring activities and will respond accordingly to ensure remediating and/or alternative actions are undertaken. These actions have been carried forward into the Council Plan Action Plan for 2018–19, as appropriate.

There were a number of outstanding highlights of the 2017–18 year including;

- The Single-Use Plastic Free Events Policy was adopted in February 2018.
- The Climate Emergency Darebin Advisory Committee was appointed in April and comprises a wide range of leading thinkers and community representatives.

- Ten solar installations in businesses were facilitated by Council, including the largest in Darebin (400kw).
- An additional 1,100 trees were planted in parks, streets and bushland areas. (The total number of trees planted was approximately 3,000.)
- Council resolved to undertake an Aged Friendly Darebin Review in 2018–19, which will explore ways to provide ongoing support for older people in Darebin.
- Council launched the online Kindergarten and Child Care Parent Portal.
- Darebin's Creative and Cultural Infrastructure Framework was adopted on 19 March 2018.
- In collaboration with Moreland and Whittlesea Councils, Darebin opened a new shared regional animal facility that will effectively manage lost and abandoned animals.
- Safety treatments at high-risk locations were constructed, including the Massey Avenue/Broadhurst Avenue roundabout and the corridor-based projects along McFadzean Avenue in Reservoir and Mansfield Street in Thornbury.
- Council partnered with Melbourne Polytechnic to deliver the Darebin 'Pitch IT' program, which aims to support the growth of local entrepreneurial businesses.
- The Darebin SPEAK project provided young people who experience discrimination and racism with a platform to raise their concerns and increase their sense of belonging.

## OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

N/A

## IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

### Details

Once adopted, this Report will be promoted using a variety of communication channels. Information from this Report will also be incorporated into the Darebin City Council Annual Report 2017–18.

## RELATED DOCUMENTS

- Council Plan 2017–21
- Council Plan Action Plan 2017–18
- Council Plan Action Plan Progress Report to 30 March 2018
- Council Plan Action Plan 2018–19

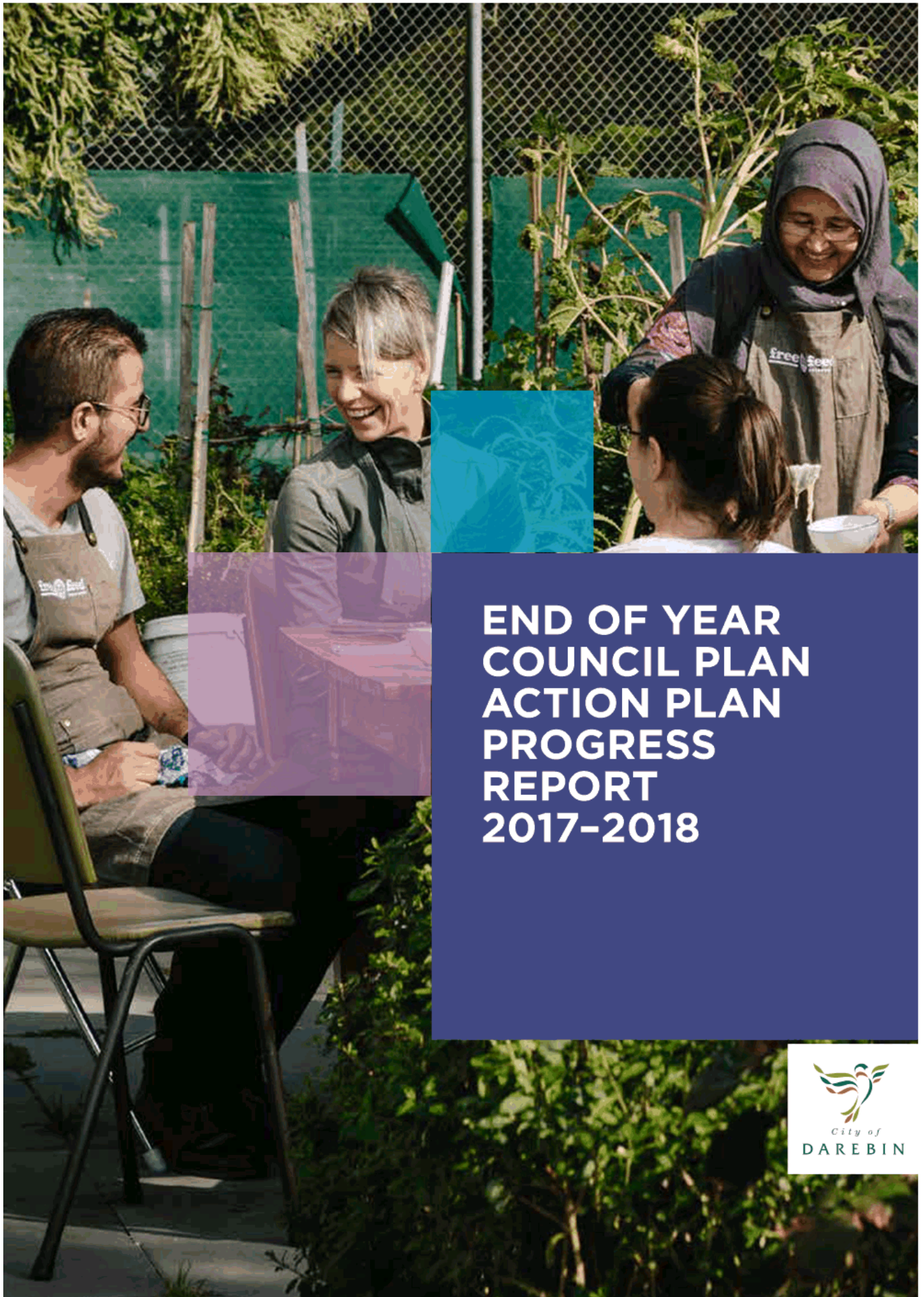
## Attachments

- End of Year Action Plan Progress Report (**Appendix A**) [↓](#)

## DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST

Section 80C of the *Local Government Act 1989* requires members of Council staff and persons engaged under contract to provide advice to Council to disclose any direct or indirect interest in a matter to which the advice relates.

The 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.



**END OF YEAR  
COUNCIL PLAN  
ACTION PLAN  
PROGRESS  
REPORT  
2017-2018**



# INTRODUCTION

## Welcome

Darebin Council aspires to a greener, bolder, more connected city. We are working hard to address the critical issues affecting our community including the climate emergency, unprecedented growth and change, and growing inequality. Please read on to see what we've done to meet these challenges throughout 2017-18.

## How to Read This Report

This document outlines our progress in completing the Council Plan Action Plan 2017-2018. The report comes in four sections:

1. The Big Action Progress Report covers the status of the 16 priority projects that Council has set in its Council Plan for 2017-21.
2. The Capital Works Summary which provides highlights from some of the 163 projects in our Capital Works Program.
3. The Action Plan Update covers the items from the 2017-18 Council Plan Action Plan. The Actions are arranged by Council Plan goal and each page has two columns. The column on the left has the heading '2017-18 actions working towards targets'. This column shows the Action that should be completed by the end of the financial year. The right hand column displays the progress comments as at 30 June 2018.
4. The Financial Reference complements the Action Plan Update section and includes an End of Financial year summary of Operating Performance, Capital Works Performance and a Financial Overview.

## Darebin at a Glance

The City of Darebin is one of Australia's fastest growing areas, located in the northern suburbs of Melbourne, covering an area of around 53 square kilometres of land encompassing the areas of Bundoora, Kingsbury and Macleod, Fairfield and Alphington, Northcote, Preston, Reservoir, Coburg and Thornbury. Darebin is changing as Melbourne's population grows, and its suburbs are becoming highly sought after places to live because of good transport, amenity and access to employment. Around 40% growth is expected in the next 20 years.

We are home to one of the largest, most diverse communities in Victoria in terms of culture, language (around 140 languages are spoken), religion, socioeconomic background, employment status, occupation and housing need. We have one of the largest populations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) residents in metropolitan Melbourne. We know that one in five Darebin residents is affected by a disability of some kind, and that almost one-third require assistance. Nearly 6 percent of our population, 16 years and over, identify as bisexual, gay, lesbian or 'other' sexuality. While the social and economic prosperity of Darebin is changing with more residents earning higher incomes, there are many people in Darebin who experience disadvantage and our unemployment rate of 6.3 percent is higher than the greater Melbourne figure of 5.9 percent.

## Our Services

The City of Darebin provides over 100 services to residents, businesses and community groups, from the early years – maternal and child health and family services – through to retirement and seniors activities.

Services are also available to support new businesses, maintain roads, footpaths and drains, waste collection, youth services, libraries, sports grounds, arts programs, festivals and more.

### **Our Plan for a Greener, Bolder, More Connected City**

Guiding the way Council delivers its services and plans for the future is the 'Council Plan 2017-21'. This Plan was developed following the most recent election and outlines the objectives and aims of Council over its four year term. Development of the Plan included significant community consultation at community forums, festivals and using social media.

Council understands that there are a number of challenges facing our country and community, and has outlined actions that will enable us to meet these head on. To live our vision of being 'A greener, bolder, more connected city' the Council's aspirations are:

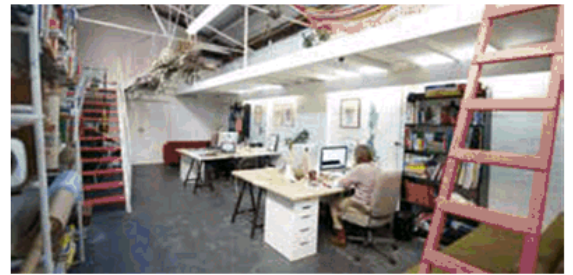
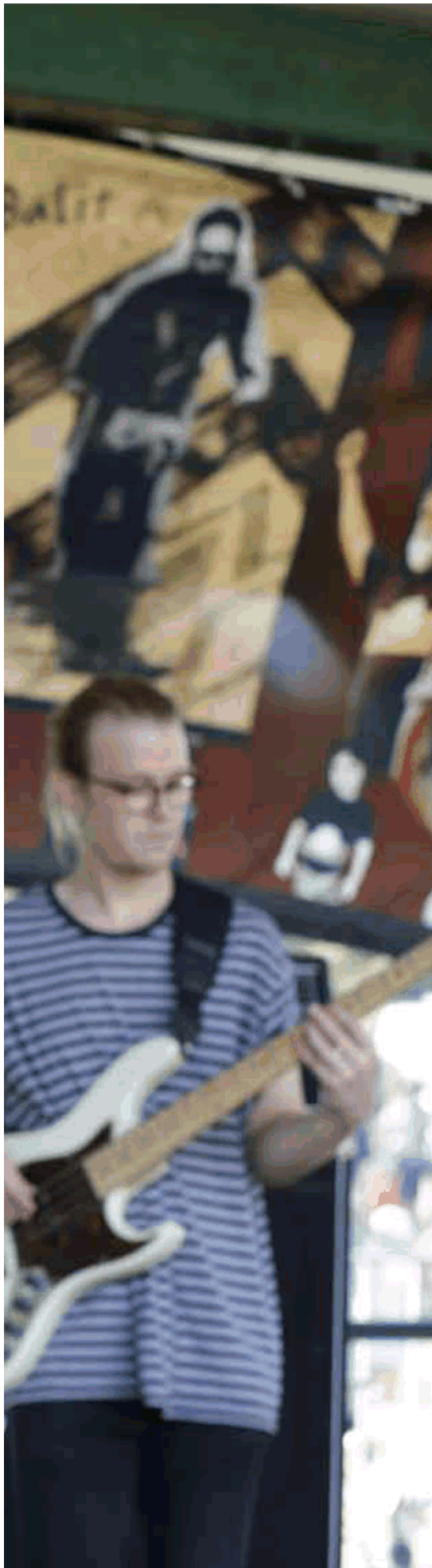
1. We will be leaders in creating a sustainable city through local innovation projects that address climate change.
2. We will improve the wellbeing of people in our community by providing opportunities for them to live their lives well.
3. We will ensure our planning system facilitates high quality and sustainable development that extracts social, environmental and economic benefits for our community.
4. We will support and attract a diversity of local businesses and industries by fostering an environment in which they can thrive.

5. We will lead on equity and recognise our diverse community as our greatest asset for solving future challenges.

6. We will be a leading, modern, and open council to meet our challenges, now and in the future. Under each goal of the Council Plan are three strategies dictating how the organisation plans to meet each of these objectives. For more detail on the Council Plan go to [www.darebin2021.org](http://www.darebin2021.org)

Supporting the Council Plan is an annual Action Plan which sets out our work for the financial year to ensure that the objectives of Council Plan are implemented.





# REPORT AGAINST OUR 16 BIG ACTIONS





## BIG ACTIONS – COUNCIL PRIORITIES AND PROGRESS.

### Action 1

#### Double solar power

Progress towards doubling solar power in the City by 2021 is well underway. Council has expanded the 'Solar Saver' program to be available for all residences interest free. An additional 481 homes have been signed up in 2017-18 for solar power installation between July and December 2018. Investigations to expand the program to include businesses has been completed with recommendations now with Council for consideration.

Status - on target

### Action 2

#### Create a new Darebin Energy Foundation

The new Climate Emergency Darebin Advisory Committee members were appointed in April and includes leading community representatives and industry thinkers. The new Advisory Committee was formed as a result of the great work undertaken by the interim Darebin Energy Foundation Committee which focused on restoring a safe climate at emergency speed, through the elimination of greenhouse gas emissions and excess carbon dioxide in the air.

Status - on target

### Action 3

#### Dramatically improve walking and cycling

Throughout 2017-18, Council has focused on developing and implementing effective and relevant strategy, infrastructure and education - all of which is needed to achieve the desired step change.

Council sought community feedback on the draft Walking and Safe Travel Strategies (to be considered and adopted by Council in 2018-19), with research completed on how to improve infrastructure for cycling and walking at key trails and missing links. This includes the corridor along the South Morang line in Northcote, Thornbury and Preston, and the Northern Pipe Trail shared path from Merri Creek to Reservoir Station.

A highlight of the education work completed was a partnership with Reservoir West Primary School to deliver a new "Octopus Schools" model which aims to achieve safe travel to school. This project includes the construction of a bike shed, student art opportunities and workshops - parents are also encouraged to participate.

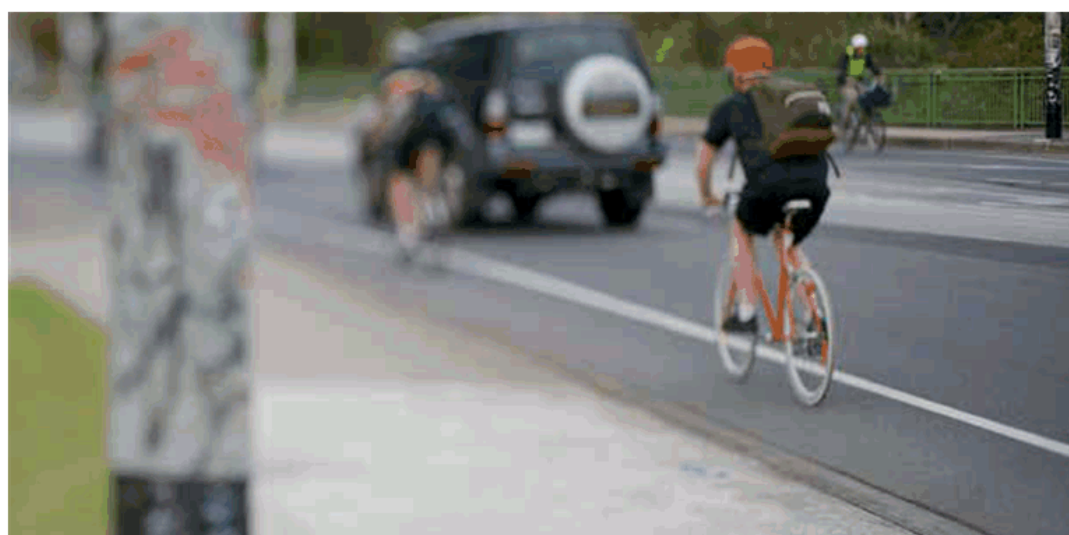
Status - on target

### Action 4

#### Advocate for better public transport

Council has continued its active advocacy on a wide range of public transport improvements both large and small. Priorities have included advocating for level crossings to be removed at Cramer St and Murray Rd when the Bell St crossing is removed; significant improvements to the road network at Reservoir shopping centre to be made; ongoing advocacy for the Tram 11 extension to Edwardes Lake Park; tram route 86 stop upgrades; and an increased number of buses to improve connections across the City.

Status - on target



### Action 5

#### Establish a Nature Trust to create more open space across Darebin

The Darebin Nature Trust members have been appointed after expressions of interest were received from a broad range of skilled, enthusiastic and committed residents. In 2017-18 Council also progressed its review of the Open Space Strategy including consultation to understand community needs and aspirations. This work includes identifying and understanding the future open space needs of our City, including recreation and biodiversity. The Strategy review outcomes will inform Council's approach to its Open Space Levy and how this will be applied to future development.

**Status - on target**

### Action 6

#### Create a new park, playground, oval and children's hub on the site of the old Ruthven Primary School in Reservoir

This site is now safe and accessible to the public thanks to a number of maintenance improvements that have been made whilst the longer term planning for the site progresses.

In 2017-18, work towards this goal has been focused on community consultation and research to understand community needs and aspirations. Investigations will continue in 2018-19 with outcomes used to inform future options for the site and to support the Community Reference Group.

**Status - behind schedule**

### Action 7

#### Build a multi-sports stadium

The project scope to build four (4) new indoor netball courts and stadium was approved by Council in June 2018 as part of the Multi Sport Stadium development at 281 Darebin Road, Thornbury. Design for the four outdoor courts has been completed with Council aiming to have a contractor engaged by September 2018. Design of the Women's Multi Sports Stadium facility has also commenced.

**Status - behind schedule**

### Action 8

#### Renew the Northcote Aquatic and Recreation Centre

The project scope for the development options for the Northcote Aquatic and Recreation Centre feasibility study is near completion. Consultation with the community seeking views on the Centre and its services has been completed with information being prepared for Council consideration in September 2018.

**Status - behind schedule**



## BIG ACTIONS – COUNCIL PRIORITIES AND PROGRESS.

### Action 9

#### Reimagine and revitalise seniors clubs

This is being considered as part of the Age Friendly Darebin Review initiated in May 2018.

**Status - behind schedule**

### Action 10

#### Reinvigorate the Darebin Arts Centre

The Darebin Arts Centre Strategic Plan is being finalised. This follows the completion of a 'current state review' of the venues. The Plan will detail a refreshed vision and strategic approach for the venues that will activate the spaces in line with artists, audiences and Council's commitment to creative industries.

**Status - on target**

### Action 11

#### Increase our tree canopy and urban forest

Data collection has played a key role in guiding Council in how it can increase its tree canopy and improve upon the sustainable urban forest initiatives. Thermal imaging and canopy coverage data has revealed an increase in canopy coverage from 13% to 16% over the past five years since the initial assessment. Due to additional funding being made available an extra 1,100 trees were planted in parks, streets and bushland areas resulting in a total number of trees for 2017-18 being approximately 3,000.

**Status - on target**

### Action 12

#### Expand our land subdivision levy

Council's current land subdivision levy (Open Space Levy), collects funds for new and improved open space capacity to help meet the needs of our growing population. To support this, the Open Space Strategy is being reviewed - this will also include recreation and biodiversity. To date, a detailed analysis of current and future needs and broad community consultation to understand aspirations and needs right across the City has been completed.

The next steps in 2018-19 include the release of a draft Strategy and community consultation to inform Council's decision about the final Open Space Strategy. Council also intends to seek changes to the Planning Scheme to allow for expansion of the Open Space Levy.

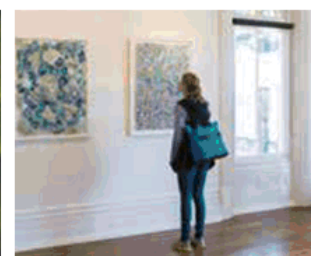
**Status - behind schedule**

### Action 13

#### Create a developer contributions scheme

Council has commenced work on the creation of a Developers Contribution Scheme. This is a major project that will continue in 2018-19.

**Status - behind schedule**



### Action 14

#### Create a new suburb for Northland

Council's community engagement has focused on gathering ideas and community aspirations for a new suburb within the Northland Urban Renewal Precinct in East Preston. The engagement process has informed the development of a vision for the Precinct. A range of research and technical work has also progressed which will inform the new Structure Plan (this will guide future development at the site). This work will continue in 2018-19.

Status - on target

### Action 15

#### Use the opportunity created by the Government's removal of road and rail crossings

Advocacy for the removal of level crossings has been a high priority for Council and will continue to be so in 2018-19. Council has called for the State Government to ensure that the Reservoir level crossing also includes improvement of the road network and creation of a new city heart by connecting Edwardes Street and Broadway for pedestrians through a major public space.

Council is calling for level crossings at Preston including Oakover Road, Cramer Street, Murray Road and Bell Street to be removed with an elevated rail solution to improve connectivity and public space through Preston. Council is also working closely with the Rail Crossing Authority (LXRA) to ensure that disruptions associated with the Grange Road level crossing removal works, are reduced; and improved public spaces, cycle and pedestrian connections are included in the design.

Status - behind schedule

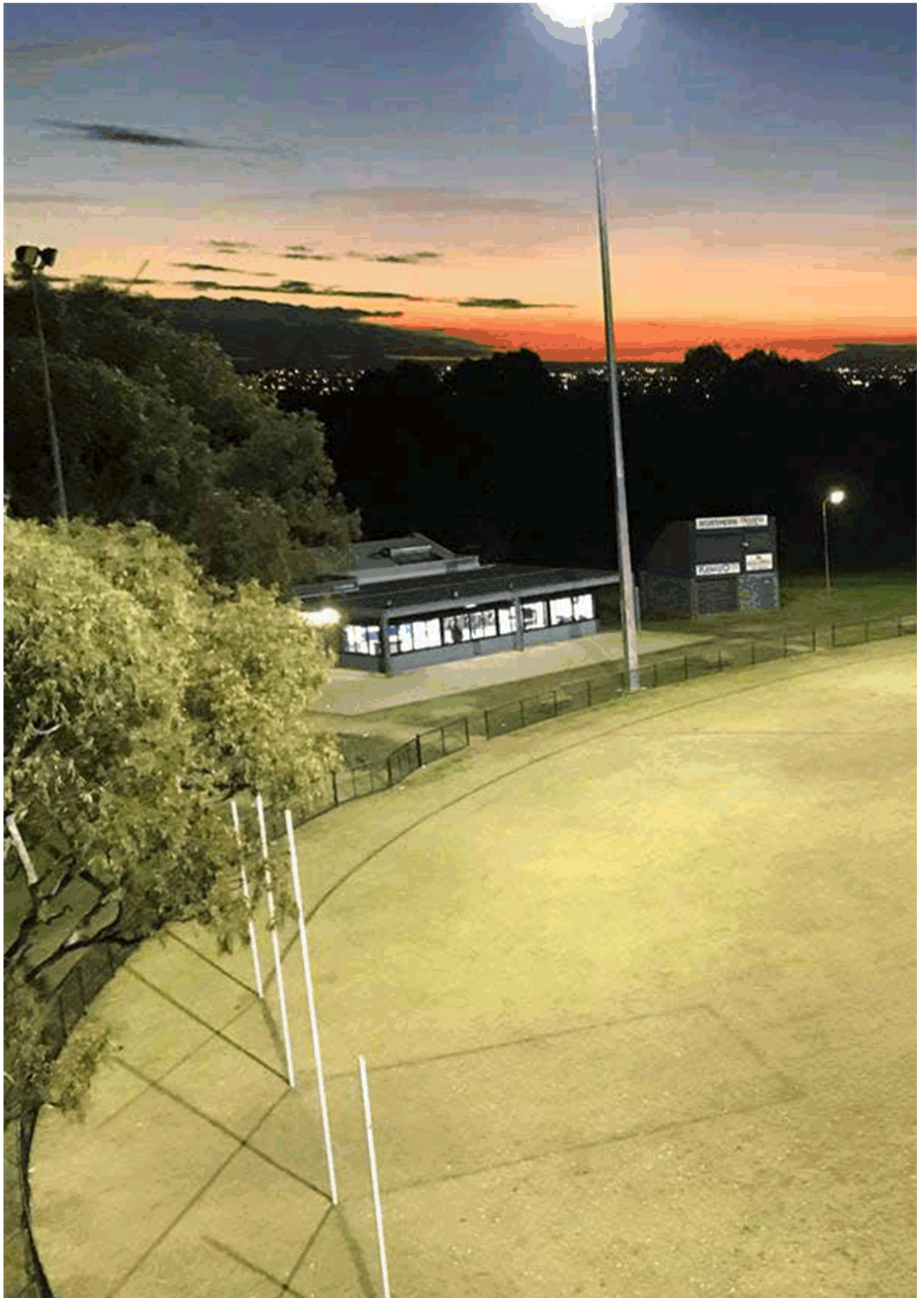
### Action 16

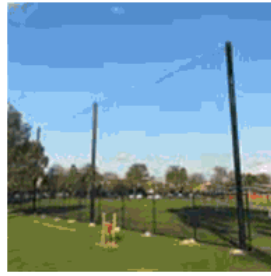
#### Develop a plan for the revitalisation of central Preston

Council has prepared engagement plans to help shape a vision for the Central Preston Precinct and is seeking specialist advice which, along with community feedback will be used to explore how this precinct could be revitalised over time. This project will have several stages over multiple years resulting in the development of a Structure Plan. This will become part of the Planning Scheme and inform how the area develops. Council has also partnered with the Victorian Planning Authority to review the planning controls and future opportunities at the Preston Market site, which plays a key role in the heart of Central Preston. This work will continue in 2018-19.

Status - on target





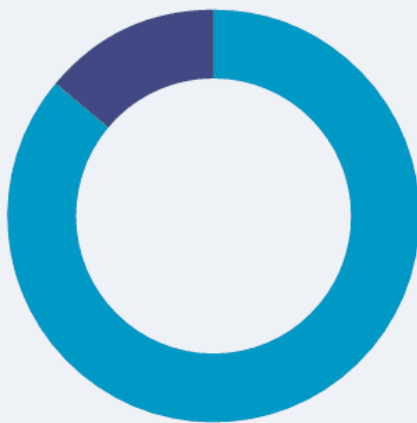


# CAPITAL WORKS



# CAPITAL WORKS 2017-18

## Overall Performance



- **86%** Completed or Closed
- **14%** Carry forward (approved)

Darebin City Council committed \$47.3 million to its 2017-18 capital works program of 163 projects. As at 30 June 2018, 140 (86 per cent) of these projects have been completed or closed, at an actual expenditure of \$32.8 million. This is consistent with the average annual spend of \$31 million for the previous five years. The remaining 23 projects (14 per cent) are being carried over to be delivered in the 2018-19 financial year.

For 2017-18, Capital works carry-forwards totalled \$7,428,716, compared to \$12,680,238 for 2016-17. This was a decrease in carry forwards of \$5,251,522 (approximately 40%). This result is an indication of our improving project management practices and our efforts to ensure that Council delivers on its commitments to the community.

Darebin's capital works program continued Council's strong investment in new and renewed infrastructure during the first year of the four-year Council Plan 2017-21. Capital expenditure for 2017-18 included \$22.89 million on asset renewal, \$4.15 million on asset upgrades and expansion works, and \$5.76 million on new assets. Some of these projects are being delivered over several financial years.



## Highlights of completed projects

Works	Actual expenditure
Inner City netball courts construction – Moore Park, Donath Reserve and Northcote High School	\$1,700,229
Footpath Programs – Renewal and Disability Access	\$2,387,240
Reservoir Streetscape Masterplan Implementation	\$422,184
DISC Synthetic Soccer Pitch	\$ 2,510,071
DISC Cycling Infield Barrier and Safety	\$482,718
Sports safety fencing	\$183,350
Sports-fields Lighting Program – Pitcher Park and Bundoora Park	\$553,876
Play-space Upgrade Program	\$818,710
Traffic Management – Road Safety	\$1,248,862
Portable classroom building	\$664,674
Pedestrian Stairway Renewal – Mt Pleasant Road to Willow Street, Preston	\$207,378
Road rehabilitation and resurfacing programs	\$2,749,284
Retail activity centre streetscape upgrades	\$199,301
Reservoir Leisure Centre Program	\$389,498

## Highlights

### Inner City Netball Courts

Actual expenditure 2017-18: \$1.7 million

Darebin Council and the State Government co-funded the construction of netball courts at the following three sites across Darebin: Moore Park, Reservoir (two new courts); Donath Reserve, Reservoir (three new courts) and Northcote High School (two new courts). The courts are part of the government's \$9.6 million Inner City Netball Program to build 64 competition-compliant netball courts in inner-Melbourne, particularly to facilitate the needs of increased participation by girls and women in sport.

### Footpath Program – Renewal and Disability Access

Actual expenditure 2017-18: \$2.39 million

The renewal project replaced 7,500 metres of footpath defects on the primary and secondary pedestrian network and increased funding for footpath maintenance to \$1.7 million. The Disability Access Improvement project improved and enhanced pedestrian infrastructures where it was identified as highest priority and with the highest potential pedestrian use in Darebin. This was a response to an assessment completed in 2016 based on the Principal Pedestrian Network (PPN).

### Reservoir Streetscape Masterplan Implementation

Actual expenditure 2017-18: \$422,184

Work earmarked for 2017-18 on the implementation of the Reservoir Streetscape Masterplan for Edwardes Street and Broadway Reservoir has been completed. This includes installation of street trees, signage, public art and artist's concept for laneway design.

### DISC Synthetic Soccer Pitch

Actual expenditure 2017-18: \$2.5 million

Three new synthetic soccer pitches have been built for the State Soccer Centre at the John Cain Memorial Park in Thornbury. The synthetic surface has a longer life than the previous surface, which was removed and donated to local schools. The centre is managed by the Football Federation Victoria, which provides state-level competition facilities.



# CAPITAL WORKS 2017-18

## DISC Cycling Infield Barrier and Safety

Actual expenditure 2017-18: \$482,718

The Darebin International Sports Centre (DISC) is home of the State Cycling Centre, State Football Centre and State Lawn Bowls Centre. DISC features a 250-metre International Cycling Union-sanctioned indoor velodrome that caters for up to 1250 spectators. The original infield safety barrier at the velodrome is constructed with a steel pipe rail balustrade, which posed a significant safety risk to cyclists if they lose control and crash into the pipe rail barrier. To manage and reduce cyclist injury, risks and incidents, a continuous infield safety barrier was constructed around the infield circumference of the DISC velodrome.

## Sports safety fencing

Actual expenditure 2017-18: \$183,350

New safety fencing was installed at Mayer Park in Thornbury to protect residential homes and at WH Robinson Reserve in Preston to protect the adjacent playground.

## Sports-fields Lighting Program – Pitcher Park and Bundoora Park

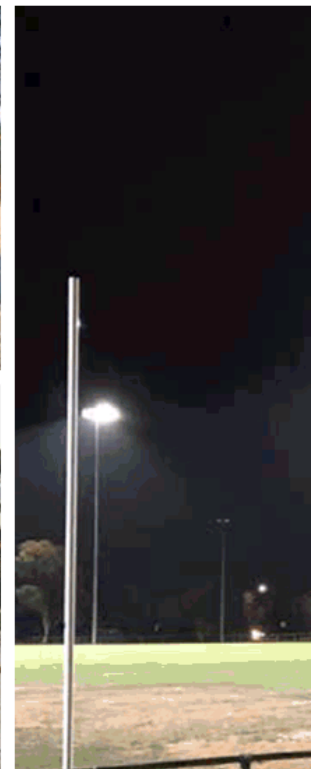
Actual expenditure 2017-18: \$553,876

New LED sports field lighting was installed at Pitcher Park in Alphington and Bundoora Park, with the assistance of State Government grants. Pitcher Park is home to the Parkside Sports Club and more than 638 people across all sports clubs use this location. Bundoora Park is home to the Junior Football club and cricket club with more than 372 members. The new LED lighting system will allow the entire playing surface to be used safely for training and competition. LED lights provide a number of benefits, including higher efficiency, lower energy consumption, lower maintenance costs, and approximately 10 times the working life when compared to traditional floodlights.

## Playspace Upgrade Program

Actual expenditure 2017-18: \$818,710

Play-space designs were completed during the year for Bundoora Park Urban Farm Snakes and Ladders Play-space, Bundoora Park Homestead Play-space, All Nations West, LW Williams Reserve in Preston, LE Cotchin Reserve in Reservoir, Gresswell Grange Reserve in Bundoora and a new natural playspace at the recently acquired Rona Street Reserve.



These projects are ready for handover to a construction project manager early in the new financial year. Upgrades have been completed for the BBQ shelter in Robinson & Capp Reserves in Preston, footpaths and upgrades in Reservoir, the Donath Reserve (Skate Park), Horton Reserve, Ludeman Reserve and Merrilands Community Centre.

#### Traffic management

Actual expenditure 2017-18: \$1.25 million

Four traffic management and safety projects were completed with two in Reservoir and one each in Thornbury and Northcote. In Reservoir, the roundabout at Massey Avenue and Broadhurst Avenue intersection was upgraded and road safety treatments were installed along McFadzean Avenue between Broadhurst Avenue and Hughes Parade. Mansfield Street between High Street and Victoria Road in Thornbury had speed humps and raised informal pedestrian crossing installed. The crossing at Alfred Nuttall Kindergarten was treated to reduce vehicle speeds and improve road safety in Northcote. Community engagement was undertaken for three area-based traffic safety projects, with one each in Thornbury, Northcote and Reservoir.

#### Portable classroom building, Merrilands Community Centre

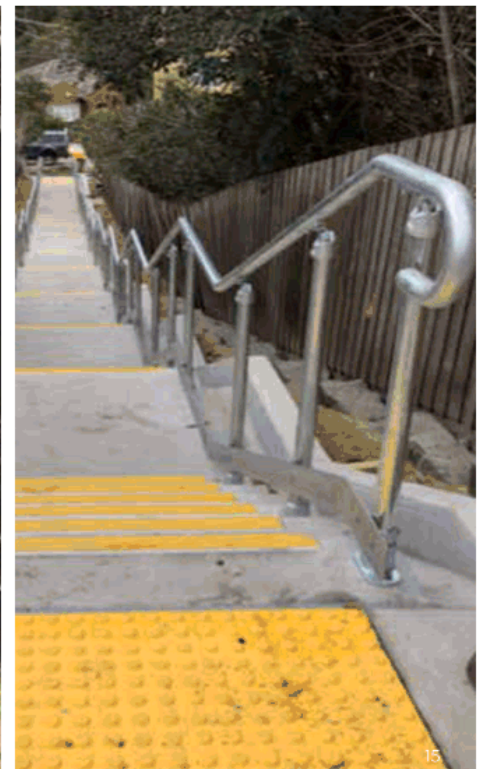
Actual expenditure 2017-18: \$664,674

A portable classroom building was constructed near the Merrilands Community Centre to accommodate the Preston Reservoir Adult Community Education (PRACE), a neighbourhood house that meets the language, literacy and numeracy, vocational training and further education needs of the local community. PRACE previously operated out of a number of Council buildings. The new portable building has three community/class rooms, an office space and an amenities area, and will improve community outcomes for people, particularly in Reservoir.

#### Pedestrian Stairway Renewal – Mt Pleasant Road to Willow Street, Preston

Actual expenditure 2017-18: \$207,378

The existing pedestrian stairway between Mt. Pleasant Road and Willow Street was reported unsafe due to a reported slippage accident and was closed to the public. The project had to reconstruct and upgrade the stairs and paths to meet compliance requirements and made it safer for the general public.







# PROGRESS REPORT ON THE 2017-18 ACTION PLAN



## GOAL 1

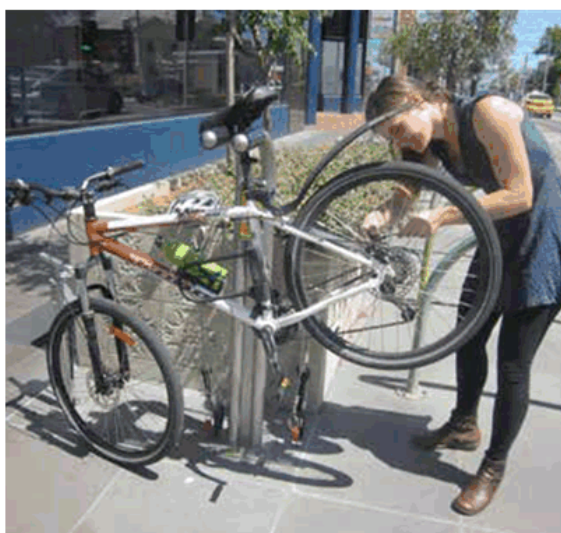
We will be leaders in creating a sustainable city through local innovation projects that address climate change.

**1.1 We will become an energy and water efficient city and reduce waste.**

2017-2018 actions working towards targets:	Progress comments:
Develop a model for a Darebin Energy Foundation for consideration in the 2018-2019 budget.	The Climate Emergency Darebin Advisory Committee was appointed in April and includes a range of leading thinkers and community representatives. It will build on the work of the interim Darebin Energy Foundation committee to restore a safe climate at emergency speed by eliminating greenhouse gas emissions and enabling drawdown of excess carbon dioxide in the air.
Develop and enact a <i>Climate Emergency Plan</i> .	The Climate Emergency Plan was developed following community consultation and adopted by Council on 21 August 2017. The Plan is being implemented with key initiatives such as the Solar Saver Program and the Darebin Energy Foundation in progress.
Host a Climate Emergency Conference to promote Darebin as leaders in local responses to the climate emergency.	The date has been postponed to September 2018 to enable better participation. The purpose, outcomes and themes of the conference have been developed and the guest speakers are being finalized. The Municipal Association of Victoria and Greenhouse Alliances conference will be hosted by Darebin in July and will include a Climate Emergency stream.
Carry out an additional 200 inspections of drainage pits and pipes in high risk flood areas to reduce flood risk.	1324 pits were inspected with over 500 requiring cleaning. Focus for the year has been on high flood risk areas and associated arteries. Council has exceeded the target.
Implement actions from the <i>SES Emergency Management Audit</i> into a revised <i>Emergency Management Plan</i> .	Council has developed an Emergency Management Plan. The shared resource with Moreland City Council is working well and the SES audit recommendations are being implemented. Mapping of infrastructure, vulnerable people and other related information will be finalised along with the allocation of IT resources over the 2018-19 financial year.
Review our <i>Fossil Fuel Divestment Strategy</i> .	The Fossil Fuel Divestment Strategy was incorporated into Council's Investment Policy. The Investment Policy gives preference to investing with financial institutions that state that they do not finance fossil fuel projects. A further review of the Investment Policy will occur in late 2018 following consultation with the Northern Alliance for Greenhouse Action and the Eastern Alliance for Greenhouse Action.
Develop an <i>Environmentally Sustainable Development Policy</i> to outline minimum standards for new and refurbished Council buildings.	The draft Darebin Environmentally Sustainable Design Building Policy was adopted by Council at its 2 July 2018 meeting which sets high standards for Council buildings.
Update our <i>Vehicle Policy</i> to ensure priority selection of environmentally friendly, preferably electric or hybrid, passenger fleet vehicles.	The Draft Vehicle Policy is currently being reviewed. Council's passenger vehicles are being replaced with hybrid models. Replacement of the light and heavy fleet by electric/hybrid options is being considered.
Extend our Solar Saver program - which helps residents buy solar without upfront costs - to ensure 2,000 kilowatts solar is committed for installation in the following year.	Progress towards doubling solar power in the City by 2021 is well underway. Council has expanded the 'Solar Saver' program eligibility to all residences interest free. An additional 478 homes (2,042kW) signed up in 2017-18 to have solar power installed under this program between July and December 2018. Options to expand the program further are well underway with Council considering expansion of Solar Saver to businesses and also the use of Environmental Upgrade Agreements for business.



2017-2018 actions working towards targets:	Progress comments:
<p>Increase the number of businesses taking up subsidised LED lighting (Light\$mart project) by 20 and installing larger solar systems by 10.</p>	<p>20 Light\$mart retrofits were completed with a variety of businesses including retailers, manufacturers, schools and not for profit organisations. Ten solar installations in businesses were facilitated by Council including the largest in Darebin (400kw) with a business in Preston.</p>
<p>Hold a green business expo, two green business networking events and increase the number of businesses on our green business directory.</p>	<p>The Green Business event 'Sustainability Matters' was delivered on 10 April and had 60 attendees. Two Green Business Networking events were held on 14 November and 28 March. Eight 'We are Greening our Business' certificates have been awarded and included in the Green Business Directory. Six new businesses have commenced an organic waste collection with Compost Collectors.</p>
<p>Complete the John Cain stormwater harvest and flood mitigation works to provide water for irrigation of sports grounds to increase annual supply of water use from non-drinking supplies by 15 megalitres.</p>	<p>The project to capture and store stormwater for reuse has experienced some delays due to rain but, is on budget with construction works nearing completion. Earthworks have been completed and work on the installation the irrigation system has commenced.</p>
<p>Include Water Sensitive Urban Design or Environmentally Sustainable Design practices or products into at least 75% of Council's capital work projects.</p>	<p>Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD) and/or Environmentally Sustainable Design (ESD) practices and products were used in Council projects during 2017-18. A detailed measurement framework will be established that will allow accurate monitoring of the percentage of projects that adhere to these guidelines. Examples of projects in 2017-18 that incorporated WSUD and/or ESD include: Council's first LED lights installed at Bundoora Park and Pitcher Park sportsgrounds, Darebin International Sports Centre (DISC) underground stormwater tank linked to irrigation (to save up to 15 megalitres of potable water annually); used synthetic grass distributed for re-use (to two schools, one kindergarten and over 100 individuals/groups); 17 passive irrigation tree pits installed in The Broadway, Reservoir and \$500,000 of ESD improvement works (eg: tap and/or light upgrades) were completed at childcare centres, neighbourhood houses, leisure facilities and other Council buildings across the municipality.</p>



## GOAL 1

We will be leaders in creating a sustainable city through local innovation projects that address climate change.

**1.1 We will become an energy and water efficient city and reduce waste.**

2017-2018 actions working towards targets:	Progress comments:
Develop a policy and action plan to eliminate single use plastic items at Council events/ activities and events/activities at Council sites.	The Single-Use Plastic Free Events Policy was adopted by Council in February 2018. Action plans have been developed and are beginning to be implemented throughout Council. The 2017 Carols by Candlelight was Single-Use Plastic Free and the March 2018 Kite Festival included promotion and information on the elimination of single-use plastic, with cheaper drinks for those using their own cups. Implementation continues.
Encourage the community, traders, schools and others to minimise single-use plastic and advocate to State government and larger retailers to implement plastic bans.	The Single-Use Plastic Free Events Policy was adopted by Council in February 2018. The School competition received 150 entries across seven schools. Advocacy to the State Government and larger retailers in Darebin is completed. The State Government announced in June 2018 that legislation to ban single-use plastics will take effect at the end of 2019. The campaign with community, traders, schools etc is scheduled to commence after the implementation of the in-house Single-Use Plastics Free Events Policy and the implementation of the State Government plastic bags ban.  The 2017 Carols by Candlelight was Single-Use Plastic Free and the March 2018 Kite Festival included promotion and information on the elimination of single-use plastic, with cheaper drinks for those using their own cups.
Develop a model for the introduction of a new food waste collection and processing service in 2019-20.	A six month food waste trial commenced on 8 December 2017 in the Kingsbury area with participants using green waste bins for food waste. The trial diverted food waste from landfill and contributed to the creation of compost for Victorian farmers. 1024 Kingsbury households were invited to participate and place food waste into their green waste bins. Door to door surveying was completed recently with 400 households, with the aim to increase council's understanding of the drivers and barriers for participation. A final evaluation of the trial will also include an survey and a detailed kerbside waste and green waste bin audit. Results of the trial will be reported to Council in late 2018 with the view to developing a new food waste collection and processing service for residents in 2019-20. Results will also inform Council's Waste Strategy Review in 2018-19.
Continue advocacy on the landfill levy and other relevant waste and recycling issues, to redirect levies to Council to reduce waste to landfill, increase recycling and address climate change.	An Advocacy Plan has been developed and implemented with the Municipal Association of Victoria and the Australian Local Government Association. This has included letters to the Premier of Victoria, the Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change and nine local MPs. Council has advocated its position in meetings with the State Government, at workshops and in forums; and has proposed/ supported motions to the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV), the 2017 and 2018 State Councils, and the Metropolitan Waste and Resource Recovery Group's Local Government Forum (MWRRG LG Forum). Further, Council's Landfill Levy advocacy has requested improved transparency on the Levy's spending/allocation and increased funding to councils for action on climate change, waste reduction, recycling and illegal dumping.

## 1.2 We will increase **sustainable transport** through safer streets for walking and cycling, and advocacy for public transport.

2017–2018 actions working towards targets:	Progress comments:
Install 16 car share bays on council managed land.	In 2017–18, eight permanent bays were installed. Future locations for three floating bays and seven permanent bays were approved and will be installed later in 2018. Consultation with the community is underway on a further ten locations. A Draft Car Share Policy is being developed and will be included in the consultation for the Parking Strategy.
Investigate the feasibility of introducing a green ticket option at Council managed and operated arts venues that will give a discount to those that use sustainable transport to get to the event.	Council has investigated a green tickets scheme and is trialling a transport information campaign in 2018. A survey of travel behaviour has been undertaken and will be utilised to inform the trial.
Produce a walking and cycling map encouraging green travel options to Council managed and operated arts venues.	Council has developed a green travel map which provides environmentally sustainable transport options to the arts venues. This is sent to ticket purchasers and available on the arts venues websites.
Improve six intersections and crossings on key walking/cycling routes.	Council has completed construction of four new zebra crossings in Northcote and Reservoir, traffic signal upgrades to improve walkability in Preston, three safer shared path crossings in Reservoir and Northcote, and two new cycle crossings of busy roads in Northcote and Preston. The Draft Walking Strategy consultation is complete; the updated strategy will go to Council in late 2018.
Improve the whole-of-trip experience for cyclists throughout Darebin including improvements in way-finding, path network expansion, safety improvements, path upgrades, removing conflict points with vehicles, increased parking (100 new spaces across 50 hoops) and making active transport a priority in some streets.	Seven key cycling projects have been completed: the Arthurton Road/ St Georges Road bus stop relocation (to clear the shared path), the Yarana Road shared path installation, raised crossings on the Robinson Rd and Cheddar Rd shared paths and new bike crossings on Regent St, Preston and on Station St, Northcote. 71 new bike hoops have been installed. The successful partnership with Melbourne Water has led to over 2km of wider shared path being reinstated, as well as access paths and vegetation plantings following their water works on St Georges Road.
Redesign three streets where green space, walking and cycling take priority.	In 2017–18 Council completed designs for four streets in Northcote and Thornbury. These designs and community feedback will be considered in 2018–19 and it is intended that construction of these projects will begin 2018–19. In addition, Council did further work to explore the feasibility of eight other active transport and greener corridors across Darebin.
Complete an audit of our safe active travel routes to schools and deliver six priority projects across the schools audited.	The audit of our safe active travel routes and all six priority projects were completed. Projects included: a raised crossing for Reservoir Primary and a zebra crossing for Westgarth Primary School. In addition, at Reservoir West Primary School (our pilot 'Octopus School'), 33% of students rode to school on Ride2School day. Council has also installed a new bike shed, provided a new local area walking map, and painted student-designed safe travel and octopus images on the road and in front of the school.

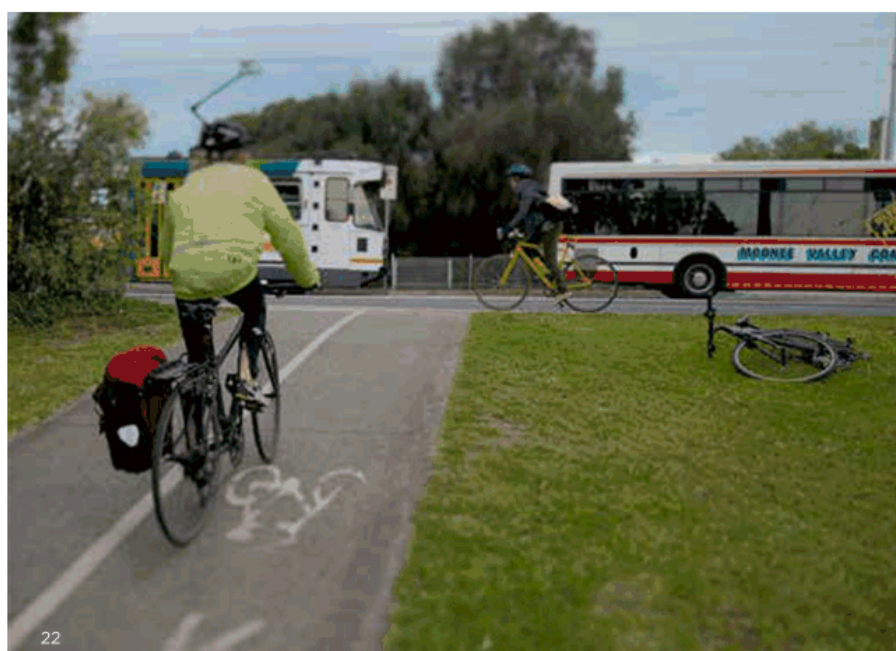


# GOAL 1

We will be leaders in creating a sustainable city through local innovation projects that address climate change.

1.2 We will increase sustainable transport through safer streets for walking and cycling, and advocacy for public transport.

2017-2018 actions working towards targets:	Progress comments:
Install 40km/hour signage in the Fairfield North and Northcote (Charles to Bent Street) areas.	Speed limit reductions (from 50km/h to 40km/h) have been installed in three precincts: Charles St to Bent St, Northcote, in Fairfield north, and in south Fairfield.
Replace 7,500m of footpath defects on the primary and secondary pedestrian network and increase funding towards footpath maintenance to \$1.7M.	All works have been completed with a strong focus on walkability and bicycle networks around Darebin.
Advocate to the Victorian Government to seek their commitment to proceed with the design phase for the installation of tram Route 86 accessible "super stop" tram stops.	Substantial research and analysis was completed to support and advocate for the tram stop upgrades. The State Government has not yet committed funding for these accessible stops.
Advocate to the Victorian Government to commit to undertaking works in the vicinity of tram Route 11, including the upgrade of the Regent Street terminus, and the Reservoir level crossing removals project which will enable a future tram Route 11 extension to Edwardes Street.	Council has advocated to the State Government throughout the year for a tram Route 11 extension to Edwardes Street. This project is one of Council's top priority requests to the State Government.
Continue to advocate to the Victorian Government for an increase in bus service and coverage across Darebin.	Council has provided input to the Metropolitan Transport Forum as part of their Local Government 'Bus Matters' advocacy strategy, and continues to advocate to the State Government on Darebin bus issues. High priorities include the need to provide: better east west bus connections, a new bus service linking La Trobe University and Burnley Station, a bus service across the Chandler Highway Bridge, and an increase in the frequency and extent of hours for key routes.



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**1.3** We will expand and improve our network of **open and green spaces, parks and natural environments** to provide the lungs for our city and reduce the impacts of climate change.

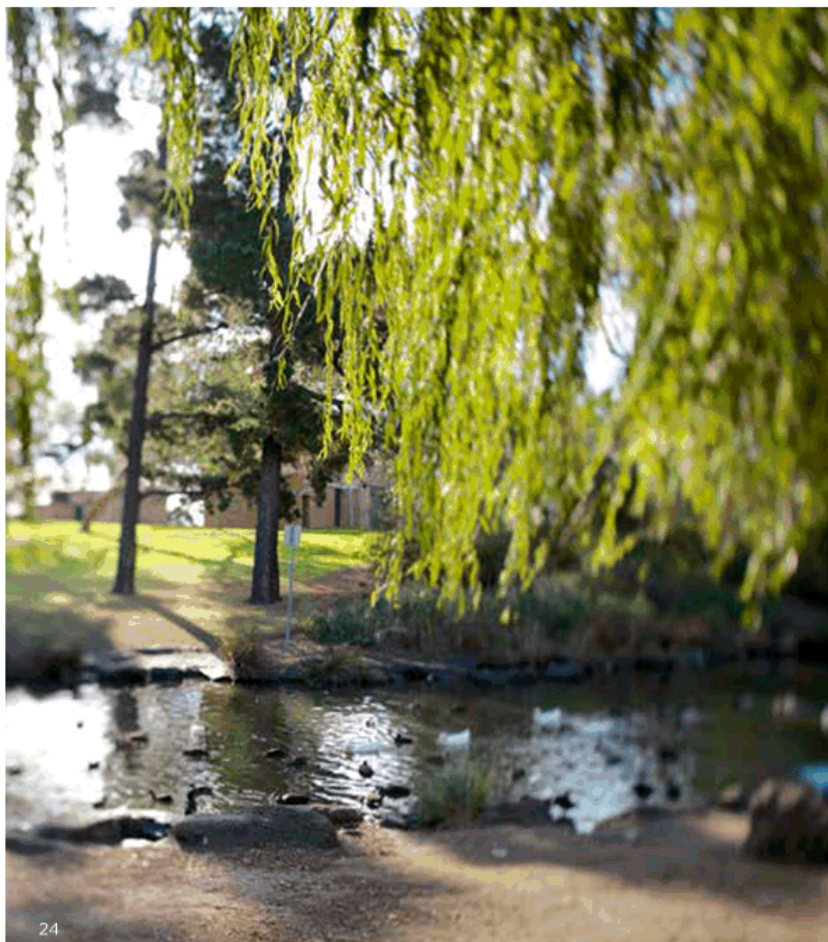
2017-2018 actions working towards targets:	Progress comments:
Develop a model for a Darebin Nature Trust for the 2018-19 budget.	Council has established the Darebin Nature Trust as an advisory committee and members have been appointed by Council. Through 2018-19, the Trust will consider the best model for long term management and will provide advice on a range of issues including development of the Open Space Strategy.
Review our <i>Open Space Strategy</i> through an audit of open space and publish a list of new public open spaces to acquire, preserve or upgrade.	In 2017-18 the review of the Open Space Strategy progressed through a detailed analysis of current and future needs as well as community consultation to understand resident aspirations. The next steps will be in 2018-19 including the release of a draft Strategy for community consultation. After the Strategy is finalised Council intends to seek changes to the Planning Scheme to expand the current Open Space Levy (subdivision levy) to help meet the needs of our growing population.
Implement, as a minimum, all yearly actions in the:	
- Edwardes Lake Park Master Plan	Council delivered a number of improvements at Edwardes Lake Park including new furniture and planting. Note that there is not an existing master plan at the park, rather, community consultation and design was undertaken during 2017-18 to develop a new master plan, which is expected to be finalised in 2018-19.
- Bill Lawry Oval and Oldis Gardens (BLOG) Master Plan	Capital works associated with the Master Plan were completed including design of a perimeter fence and cycle path, tree assessment and a review of landscaping. Construction of the fence and cycle path is scheduled for 2018-19.
- Bundoora Park Master Plan	As part of the implementation of the Master Plan a Bundoora Park Precinct Coordination group has been set up to guide implementation. Designs have been completed for a new environment and sustainability playspace in Bundoora Farm which will be constructed in 2018-19. Installation of the new signage across Bundoora Park has been completed.
- Robinson Capp Master Plan	All capital works associated with the Master Plan for 2017-18 have been completed. This includes the construction of a new BBQ shelter and the relocation of a path.
- Dole/Donath Master Plan	All nominated actions have been completed including the construction of a portion of the main pedestrian path, tree planting and works to the skate ramp. A Community Reference Group for Donath Dole reserves has been established and has met twice. This group will prioritise the remaining Master Plan actions and will advocate generally for the reserves.
- Ray Bramham Gardens Master Plan	This project has been deferred until the 2019-20 financial year.

# GOAL 1

We will be leaders in creating a sustainable city through local innovation projects that address climate change.

**1.3** We will expand and improve our network of **open and green spaces, parks and natural environments** to provide the lungs for our city and reduce the impacts of climate change.

2017-2018 actions working towards targets:	Progress comments:
Develop new Master Plans and yearly action plans for Mayer Park and the Northcote Golf Course.	The Mayer Park Community Reference Group (CRG) has been established and has met twice. As this new participatory community-based engagement process takes longer, time has been added to allow for the creation of the Master Plan document. Development of a master plan for the Northcote Golf Course was postponed due to the delay of the State Government's report on the Future of Golf.
Plant 1,900 trees in streets, parks, public land and play spaces, particularly in urban heat island hot spots (areas that are warmer than their surroundings because of human activity such as buildings and roads) identified through infrared photography.	Thermal imaging and canopy coverage results have been received and show an increase from 13% to 16% over the five years since the initial assessment. Due to additional funding being made available an extra 1,100 trees were planted in parks, streets and bushland areas. The total number of trees planted was approximately 3,000.
Install four new rain gardens/water sensitive urban devices.	20 new rain gardens/water sensitive urban design devices have been installed. Works to implement an integrated water management project at John Cain Park to address localised flooding and improve water quality are also well progressed.



## GOAL 2

We will improve the wellbeing of people in our community by **providing opportunities** for them to live their lives well.

**2.1** We will ensure health and social services meet our community's needs across their life-course.

2017-2018 actions working towards targets:	Progress comments:
See "Implement a Darebin Service Review program' Goal 6.1.	
Develop and implement the Health and Wellbeing plan 2017-2021.	The Health and Wellbeing Plan and 2017-18 Action Plan were adopted in December 2017. Key achievements in 2017-18 included hosting a professional development session for the 'Deadly Dan' health promotion resource with the Victorian Aboriginal Health Service, funding six schools to participate in the Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden program and providing mental health first aid training to over 30 staff from Council and community organisations.
Run workshops, information sessions and events for families of children to a satisfaction level above 80%.	Seven Navigating Kindergarten and Childcare access information sessions have been held outlining the benefits of the Maternal and Child Health service and Early Year's services. Sixty two information sessions were held on topics such as sleep, settling, babies and food, and postnatal care and were attended by 780 families. Reported satisfaction levels exceeded 80%.
Provide at least six workshops for educator learning.	The Immunisation Leader attended four early childhood network meetings to promote the importance of the vaccination program and how educators can encourage families to access the immunisation service. Further workshops were not delivered due to a decision at the network meetings that individual support to childcare centres and kindergartens would be more productive.
Develop a master plan for the former Ruthven school site for mixed community service, open space and sporting use.	Following the community consultation process, work has commenced on the development of the Master Plan. Maintenance works have also been completed. A community reference group has been nominated and has met twice. Additional investigation and research is underway to understand the need for a community facility on the site. The outcome of these investigations will inform the master planning process.



## GOAL 2

We will improve the wellbeing of people in our community by **providing opportunities** for them to live their lives well.

**2.1** We will ensure health and social services meet our community's needs across their life-course.

2017-2018 actions working towards targets:	Progress comments:
Use Victorian Government funding for supported playgroups to expand program to six weekly sessions across the municipality.	Nine supported playgroups with 80 families enrolled are operating within the municipality (Kingsbury, Reservoir, Fairfield and Thornbury). An Arabic and Persian speaking bicultural worker provided support as required.
Develop and enact a <i>Youth Services Strategy</i> .	A service benchmarking process and review of the 2012-17 Youth Engagement Strategy has been completed. A Project Reference Group has been established with members from the young Citizen Jury. A Consultation and Engagement Plan and a Project Communications Strategy will both be implemented in 2018-19.
Review existing aged care services in light of the reform agenda and run an aged care reforms consultation with 500 people consulted.	Council received 720 responses to a survey and 46 people attended focus groups. A regional "ideas hack" was held in March with 60 local experts contributing to the workshop. A number of service reviews and projects were completed. Council resolved to undertake the Age Friendly Darebin Review in 2018-19 which will explore ways to provide ongoing support for older people in Darebin.
Maximise opportunities for people with disability through the National Disability Insurance Scheme: 300 people assisted to access the NDIS in 2017-2018.	To date 374 clients have been assisted to transition, or navigate the transition, to the National Disability Insurance Scheme. Council will continue to build partnerships and support participants.
Identify locations and work with relevant stakeholders to design and build a fully compliant Changing Place.	A \$100,000 grant has been secured from the Department of Health and Human Services to build a Changing Place facility in Preston – the first of four facilities to be built. Further contribution from Council is required to build this facility and has been included in the Public Toilets Strategy.



**2.2 We will expand opportunities for participation and social connection through sport, physical activity, arts, culture and other leisure activities.**

2017–2018 actions working towards targets:	Progress comments:
Design and build at least six new or upgraded play spaces for large and small public open spaces.	Playspaces have been completed at Woolhouse Reserve, McAdam Reserve, Ludeman Reserve, Horton Reserve, Susan Walsh Reserve and Adams Reserve. Designs have been completed for playspaces at LW Williams, Bundoora Park River Red Gum, Bundoora Park Farm, Bundoora Park Homestead, Rona Reserve, LE Cotchin and All Nations Parks. These playspaces will be constructed in 2018–19.
Prepare and maintain sportsgrounds so 100% are ready for competition.	The program of upgrading sports grounds has been completed successfully this year. Key projects include: the upgrade of the playing surface at Bill Lawry oval, a new irrigation system installed at Mayer Park, and a sub-surface drainage system installed at Crispe Park. In addition to these projects, works to make the grounds ready for the seasonal changeover from summer to winter sports was also completed on time.
Finalise the design for the Multi Sports Stadium and commence contract tendering works.	The project scope to build four new indoor netball courts and stadium was approved by Council on 12 June 2018 as part of the overall Multi Sport Stadium development at 281 Darebin Road, Thornbury. Council has endorsed the budget to commence design in 2018–19 for the Multi Sports Stadium facility. Designs for the four outdoor courts have been completed and have been put out to tender for construction.
Finalise options to redevelop the Northcote Aquatic and Recreation Centre.	Works to develop a feasibility study on redevelopment options for the Northcote Aquatic and Recreation Centre is nearly complete with some further due diligence required. Consultation with the community seeking their views of the Centre and the services has been completed.
Install new green outdoor gyms across the municipality.	A new green outdoor gym was delivered in partnership with the Heidelberg Teaching Unit at the Reservoir High School. Future green gym sites have been identified in readiness for any funding opportunities becoming available.
Apply a diversity focus across leisure infrastructure projects to determine a priority list of projects based on community needs.	Consultation with local clubs has been completed. The planning for capital works projects have incorporated measures around inclusion, diversity and access. Further evidence to inform the priority list of projects will be developed in 2018–19 through the Leisure and Recreation Infrastructure Review.
Review our sport and leisure work with an “inclusive” focus and develop a plan to reduce barriers and increase participation by girls, women and low income residents.	A review of the sporting subsidy arrangements has begun in order to give higher weighting to inclusivity. Further review and planning is required and this will be completed in 2018–19.
Examine the feasibility of more free and low cost exercise activities.	An evaluation of the Get Active in Darebin program has been undertaken. The evaluation results will shape the future program. The Community Gym Program has been developed and is now ready for implementation.
Undertake an audit of six seniors centres to develop a plan for their renovation.	The project will need to be extended into 2018–19. The built form will be considered as part of Council’s commitment to creating an Age Friendly Darebin.

## GOAL 2

We will improve the wellbeing of people in our community by **providing opportunities** for them to live their lives well.

**2.2** We will expand **opportunities for participation and social connection** through sport, physical activity, arts, culture and other leisure activities.

2017-2018 actions working towards targets:	Progress comments:
Ongoing implementation of <i>Arts Strategy 2014 - 2020</i> .	Council has progressed priorities in the Arts Strategy 2014-20. The focus this year has been on signature programs such as Speakeasy, the Arts Partnership Initiative and festivals such as the Kite Festival, Music Feast and Homemade Food and Wine Festival. Council has also been trialling new initiatives such as an Events Partnership Scheme and artist-engaged programs such as Risk Residencies at Darebin Arts Centre.
Employ, program, commission and support a greater diversity of artists to reflect Darebin's rich multicultural character.	Council programs and events have enabled multiple shows with lead artists from diverse multicultural backgrounds. The forecast for programming in 2018 contains a minimum of 10 shows with lead artists of CALD, Indigenous or LGBTI backgrounds.
Write strategic plans and refreshed visions for: Northcote Town Hall, Darebin Arts and Entertainment Centre and Bundoora Homestead Art Centre.	Following a review of the Northcote Town Hall and Darebin Art Centre a report is tabled for 2018 where Council will deliberate on a preferred operational model. Once adopted, strategic business plans will be progressed and implemented aligned to the Council resolution.
Review operating models across all Council owned cultural facilities to ensure they remain sustainable.	Bundoora Homestead Art Centre, Northcote Town Hall and Darebin Arts Centre operating models have been reviewed as part of an internal strategic review process. The process included consultation, research and evaluation. New Operations Plan and People Plans have been adopted by the Bundoora Homestead Board of Management and Council. The review of Northcote Town Hall and Darebin Arts Centre is complete.
Review Councils festivals and events, implement a centralised events consultancy service, and get endorsement of a <i>Future of Festivals in Darebin Plan</i> .	Council is currently reviewing festivals held in Darebin and will deliver a new framework for Council adoption in late 2018. As part of the review, the current event permit process and refresh of the Events Guidelines and Workbook has been undertaken. A renewed event permit process and consultancy service will be implemented during 2018-19.





2017-2018 actions working towards targets:	Progress comments:
Provide four or more opportunities for community participation in local food growing, preparation and celebrations.	Three Sustainable Food Leaders forum have been held – providing opportunity to network with others and to hear about local food projects. The spring Backyard Harvest Festival involved 24 events in Darebin during November 2017. The Autumn Backyard Harvest Festival involved four events in Darebin, held in conjunction with the Homemade Food and Wine Festival in May/June 2018.
Promote and support at least one local food project which demonstrates multiple social, economic and environmental benefits.	The business plan for the Community Food Hub was completed and the consortium were successful in achieving a substantial grant from the Lord Mayor’s Charitable Fund. The \$20,000 for site works at the Melbourne Innovation Centre in Alphington has been fully implemented.
Expand the Backyard harvest festival to provide more open garden opportunities and sustainable food education.	The Backyard Harvest Festival (18-26 November 2017) was run this year to include Moreland (in partnership) and included 35 events with 433 people attending over both municipalities.
Continue to provide grants to Family Violence, Emergency Relief, Housing, Legal and Multicultural services that provide programs, activities and services to Darebin residents.	A \$40,000 grant for addressing Family Violence in priority groups across Darebin was awarded to Your Community Health for the ‘Celebrations of Strength and Resilience’ Project. A \$6,000 grant was provided to the Reservoir Neighbourhood House and a \$500 grant was awarded to the Darebin Community Legal Centre for the ‘Week Without Violence’ activities.
Increase funds to our Neighbourhood Houses and develop a new longer term funding model for the partnership.	An eight year funding model for the Darebin Neighbourhood Houses and Darebin Information and Volunteer Resource Service was endorsed by Council in June 2018 and will be effective 1 July 2018. This includes an additional \$20,000 per site phased in over two years.





## GOAL 2

We will improve the wellbeing of people in our community by **providing opportunities** for them to live their lives well.

**2.3** We will expand **lifelong-learning** opportunities, to enable local people to learn, develop their interests, and secure good quality work.

2017-2018 actions working towards targets:	Progress comments:
Ongoing implementation of our <i>Early Years Strategy</i> .	Council has launched the on line Kindergarten and Child Care Parent Portal. The Registration for Kindergarten and Child Care High Priority Referral form and process were modified to make it more user-friendly. Five training and professional development sessions were provided to kindergarten and child care centres. Local Area Early Years to Primary School Transition Plans have been developed with input from local primary schools and kindergartens.
Enhance partnerships with local schools and school networks to collaboratively identify areas of high priority and disadvantage.	Council continues to support schools through a range of initiatives that support the education and wellbeing outcomes of students. Key achievements in 2018-19 include a careers day attended by 200 year 10 students, supporting three new schools to commence the Berry Street Resiliency program and hosting a professional development session for early years and primary school educators for the Welcome to Country book written by Aunty Joy Murphy.
Develop a comprehensive <i>Lifelong-Learning Strategy</i> that incorporates both Council, community and educational services, programs and activities.	Consultation activities including a community survey, focus groups, interviews and group presentations have resulted in contributions from over 350 community members. This feedback, along with a demographic analysis, is being used to shape the draft Strategy which will be completed in the next financial year.
Extend opportunities for lifelong learning through the Neighbourhood House network with an emphasis in 2017-2018 on the establishment of learning programs at the East Preston Community Centre.	The East Preston Community Centre has twelve weekly programs established and has delivered a range of one-off events in the first year of operation. Highlights include completing a mural project with local residents, commencing a fortnightly outreach Housing Service at the Centre with the Office of Housing and the Preston Reservoir Adult Community Education Reconnect Employment Support program. Council will continue to operate the Centre until June 2020. In 2018-19, Council will inform the operational and governance model for July 2020 and beyond.
Provide dynamic and responsive library events and programs.	A variety of well-attended events have been delivered through Darebin Libraries. This was supported by 'Libraries After Dark' funding. Feature events include: Clementine Ford, participation in the Melbourne Writers Festival, events promoting Naidoc Week, Feminist Writers Festival, Chinese Folk stories, author talks, local history exhibitions and performances by local musicians.
Review/enhance Darebin Libraries community language collections and services, reflecting the 2016 Census information.	New digital resources have been added to the collection to support language learning for children, literacy development and reading. The implementation of Collection Promotion Plans, which are designed to raise awareness of the library's resources, has commenced.
Deliver enhanced digital services, including computer upgrades and a website refresh.	Purchasing of updated self-serve borrowing kiosks is underway. The wireless networks have been redesigned and upgraded to improve speeds for library customers. The website refresh will be completed in 2018-19.

## GOAL 3

We will ensure our planning system facilitates high-quality and sustainable development that extracts social, environmental and economic benefits for our community.

**3.1** We will encourage and facilitate **appropriate high-quality development in identified areas** to create opportunities for living accessibly to public transport, infrastructure, open space and attractive, safe public areas.

2017-2018 actions working towards targets:	Progress comments:
Review the Darebin Planning Scheme.	In 2017-18 work has progressed to review the Darebin Planning Scheme including a technical review as required under the Planning and Environment Act. The purpose of the review is to understand if the current scheme is achieving what was intended, and to identify if any updates are required to reflect current state planning policy. The next steps for 2018-19 include the strategic review, and work towards securing changes to the planning scheme, which will require approval from the State Government.
Promote the benefits of sustainable development that is accessible to public transport, commercial and community facilities, to the community.	All strategic planning projects undertaken have embedded sustainable development as a key fundamental principle. This is an ongoing action.
Advocate for the Planning Minister to approve our guidelines for development along the Plenty Road identified growth corridor.	The Minister has approved the guidelines which will improve the quality of built form along the corridor.
Seek the Planning Ministers approval to amend the <i>Preston Market Incorporated Plan</i> , and have it included in the Darebin Planning Scheme, to ensure the future of the Preston Market.	Preston Market is one of the most-loved, iconic features of our city and we share our community's deep interest in its long-term future. During the year, we sought the Minister for Planning's approval to review the Preston Market Incorporated Plan, and update the Darebin Planning Scheme, to ensure the future viability of the market. Council commenced work with the Victorian Planning Authority on delivering community engagement to understand what the community love about the market and to established a Community Reference Group to develop a vision and high level principles for the Preston Market precinct. The Victorian Planning Authority expects to deliver its recommendations to the Planning Minister in October 2018.
Implement new noise equipment to improve response to noise complaints.	New noise detection technology has been implemented which ensures that noise complaints are assessed in an objective and consistent approach. Council's Unreasonable Noise Policy was updated to reflect the newly acquired equipment and its deployment methodology.
Plan a Northland Urban Renewal Precinct by developing a structure plan.	The focus this year has been on community engagement. The community's aspirations and ideas for a new suburb have contributed to an overall vision for a new suburb within the Northland Urban Renewal Precinct. Substantial research and technical analysis have also contributed to the development of a Structure Plan.
Plan a Northland Urban Renewal Precinct by completing an economic and employment study to inform an <i>Economic and Employment Strategy</i> .	The Northland Urban Renewal Plan Economic and Employment Strategy (stage 1) has been completed.
Plan a Northland Urban Renewal Precinct by consulting on, and preparing, a TW Blake Community Park concept plan.	The TW Blake concept plan has been consulted on in accordance with the Engagement Strategy. Following the feedback provided from the consultation process, Council is now working on further developing the concept plan.

## GOAL 3

We will ensure our planning system facilitates high-quality and sustainable development that extracts social, environmental and economic benefits for our community.

**3.1** We will encourage and facilitate **appropriate high-quality development in identified areas** to create opportunities for living accessibly to public transport, infrastructure, open space and attractive, safe public areas.

2017-2018 actions working towards targets:	Progress comments:
Plan a Northland Urban Renewal Precinct by preparing a <i>Public Realm and Open Space Strategy</i> for community consultation.	Development of this has progressed, but not as fast as anticipated. It is still on track for the next step which where it will be included in community consultation as part of the future Structure Plan development.
Consult with our community to develop and update our vision, plans and design guidelines for activity centres including Oakover Village, Reservoir Junction and Preston Central.	Work towards planning for improvements to Preston Central has progressed on this multi year project including preparation for community engagement. For Reservoir, in 2017-18, Council's focus has been to advocate to the State Government to significantly improve the Reservoir Junction when it removes the level crossing. In regards to Oakover Village, Council has completed technical guidance to inform future development plans on this site.
Continue to work with the Victorian Government to achieve the separation of road and rail at crossings, including advocating for, and leading the design processes to:	
- Improve open space, access and connections, safety and amenity for pedestrians and bike riders, and interchange facilities for public transport.	Ongoing advocacy efforts continue aimed at securing State Government commitment to (a) additional level crossing removals at Cramer and Murray Road and (b) improved urban design and place making. This project will continue in 2018-19.
- Integrate new creative spaces into new buildings, master plans and major infrastructure.	Advocating for better outcomes for the community from any level crossing removals in Darebin has been a high priority for Council throughout 2017-18 and this will continue in 2018-19.
Increase the open space levy across the city and advocate for its immediate approval by the Minister.	Expanding the levy is a multi-year project. In 2017-18, the Review of the Open Space Strategy was delayed but substantial progress has been made. Work completed includes a detailed analysis of current and future needs as well as broad community consultation to understand aspirations across the City. While the Open Space Strategy is being finalised in 2018-19, Council will prepare to seek changes to the planning scheme to expand the current open space levy (subdivision levy) to help meet the needs of our growing population.





2017-2018 actions working towards targets:	Progress comments:
<p>Implement a new <i>Developer Contribution Scheme</i> across the city.</p>	<p>In 2017-18, Council started collecting funds from developments in activity centres towards the upgrade of streetscapes adjacent to their development. This allows collection of some funds while work to implement a City-wide Development Contributions Scheme takes place. Work has progressed but has been postponed in order to develop a long term detailed plan for infrastructure works across Darebin – which is a critical component of a Development Contributions Scheme. By its nature this project will require a change to the planning scheme, which is a multi-year project.</p>
<p>Work with the Victorian Government to develop a Master Plan, in collaboration with our community, to create high-quality public housing at the Stokes and Penola site ensuring it complements the surrounding neighbourhood.</p>	<p>Council has advocated throughout the year for creation of a high quality neighbourhood and increases in social housing supply in both the Stokes/Penola site and broader Oakover precinct including the establishment of guidance for future development. There remains a need for advocacy to achieving increases in social and affordable housing.</p>
<p>Explore the options for providing social housing on Council owned land work to determine an appropriate mechanism.</p>	<p>Council has commenced statutory and community consultation regarding the use of one of Council's car parks for affordable housing. The Lord Mayor's Charitable Foundation has a \$1million grant available for the selected developer team. The Responding to Housing Stress Local Action Plan will be reviewed in 2018-19 with a view to further explore opportunities for developing council land.</p>
<p>Progress partnership agreement with Victorian Government in order to progress Social and Affordable Housing Pilot Project in relation to three identified Council owned sites.</p>	<p>The State Government has advised that any partnership with Council would be through Council making an application through the Social Housing Growth Fund. Council commenced formal exploration of whether to lease one of the sites at Townhall Avenue for development. This site may be eligible for funding via this initiative. The long list of three identified sites were examined which found that the remaining two sites were not appropriate for development due to current leasing and use arrangements.</p>

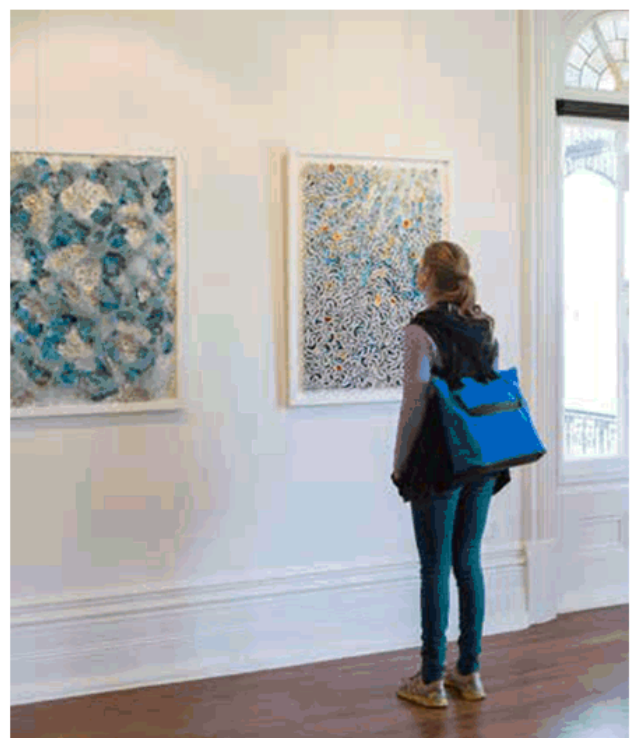


## GOAL 3

We will ensure our planning system facilitates high-quality and sustainable development that extracts social, environmental and economic benefits for our community.

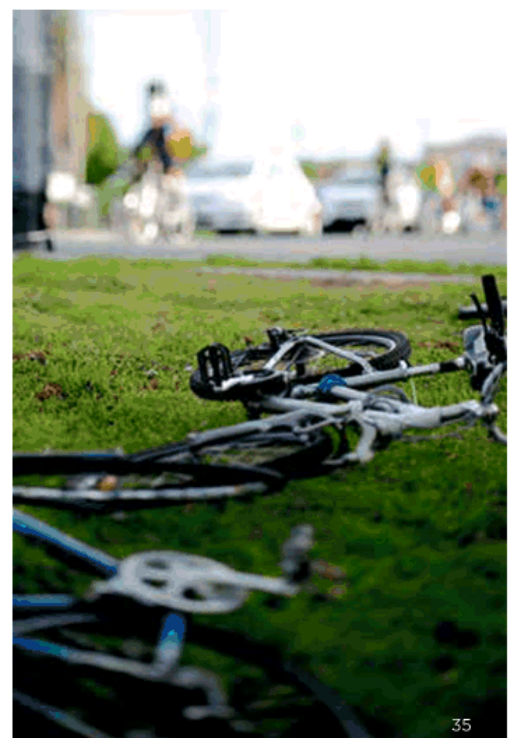
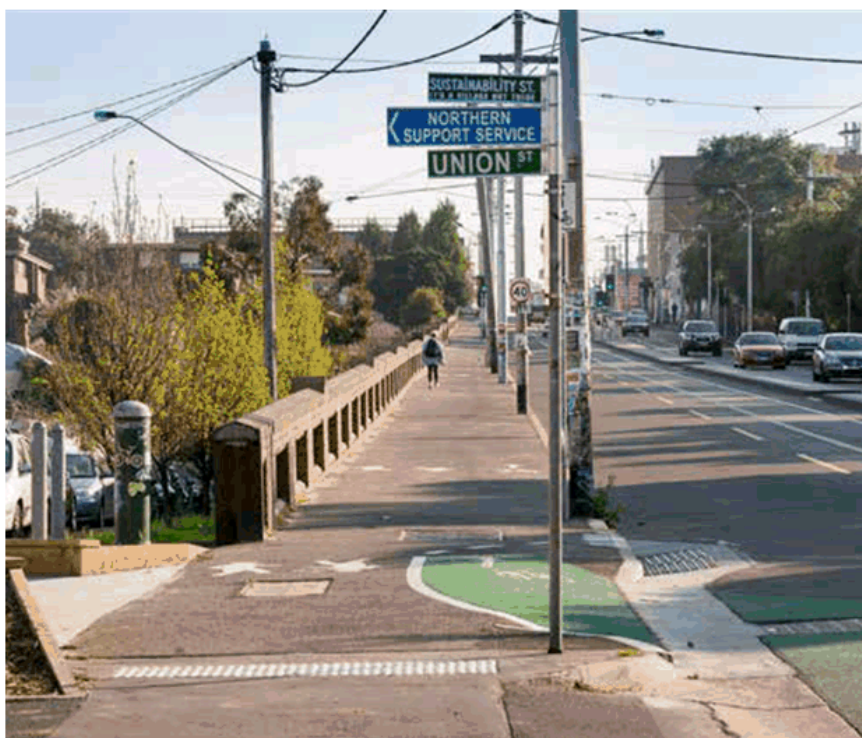
**3.2** We will support our creative industries to ensure the city grows as a significant arts and creative centre.

2017-2018 actions working towards targets:	Progress comments:
Develop a portfolio of affordable and accessible working spaces in Darebin owned facilities for artists and companies.	A number of initiatives are being trialled in the arts venues with a view to implementing them permanently if successful. These include an Event Partnership Program, Risk Residencies, Quick Response Program and Co-working spaces.
Develop an inaugural <i>Cultural Infrastructure Framework</i> that will ensure consideration of new creative spaces into new buildings, Master Plans and developments.	Darebin's Creative and Cultural Infrastructure Framework was adopted by Council on 19 March 2018. Implementation has commenced.
Develop a new framework for public art and redesign our public art program.	Following consultation with internal and external stakeholders, a draft policy has been developed and will undergo further review before presentation to Council later in 2018.
Develop a cultural outcomes framework, aligned to the Council Plan, which will monitor the outcomes of cultural activity and be reported against annually.	Council has been working with the Cultural Development Network to develop a Cultural Development Plan. The plan details specific activities and measures regarding Council's cultural services and programs aligned to the Council Plan community goals. A pilot program related to the Speakeasy program is underway where evaluation tools and outcome measures are being tracked. Following the outcomes of the pilot evaluation program and application of the Cultural Development Plan, a wider program will be rolled out during 2018-19.



**3.3 We will manage local roads, buildings and public spaces to make our city safer, cleaner and more attractive.**

2017-2018 actions working towards targets:	Progress comments:
Re-surface a minimum of 22 kilometres of roads.	The road resurfacing program has been completed. A total of 14.3KM was completed by 30 June 2018.
Invest over \$1.1m towards improving traffic management across our city, including the installation of traffic calming devices at high risk locations: Reservoir (Cheddar to Plenty Rd) and the eastern side of the rail corridor between Miller St and Clarke St through Thornbury and Northcote.	To ensure the treatments are fit for purpose and meet the expectations of the community in the high risk locations, consultation and feasibility investigations were completed in the following areas: Reservoir ( Cheddar Road to Plenty Road area), Northcote (Mitchell and Bastings Streets area), and Thornbury (Clarendon Street Area between Dundas Street and Darebin Road). Design work will continue with community involvement in 2018-19. Construction of safety treatments at high risk locations were completed including: Massey Avenue/Broadhurst Avenue roundabout, and the corridor based projects along McFadzean Avenue in Reservoir and Mansfield Street in Thornbury. Stage one of safety treatments were installed along Springthorpe Boulevard in Macleod and Queen Street in Reservoir. Construction of these priority projects will continue in 2018-19.
Upgrade six to eight retail centres with new amenities including bins, recycling bins, cycle hoops, seats and natural shade as per our <i>Retail Activity Centres Strategic Review</i> .	Cost estimates and designs have been completed for six retail centres. The scope of this project was deferred to 2018-19 to allow for a more price competitive tendering process.
Increase maintenance and cleaning programs of public open spaces and streetscapes.	A review to improve cleanliness has been undertaken and has been implemented. A new contract for maintenance of landscapes of major shopping strips is in place with increased cleaning frequency from six weeks to four weeks. Hot spots locations have been targeted with a coordinated cleaning service.



## GOAL 3

We will ensure our planning system facilitates high-quality and sustainable development that extracts social, environmental and economic benefits for our community.

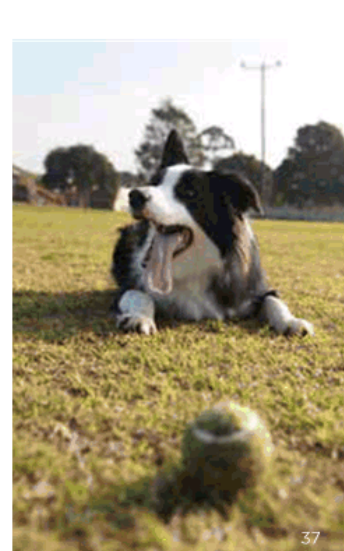
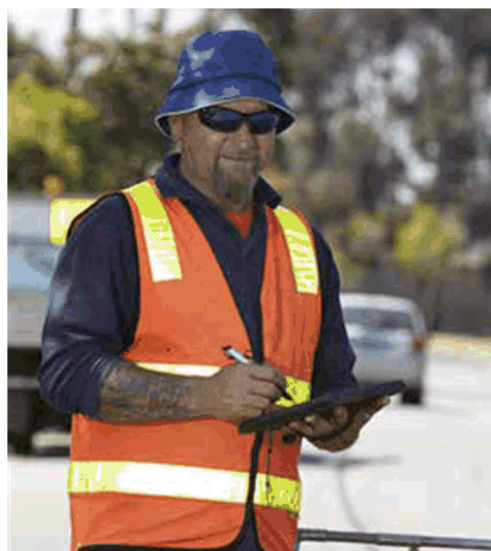
**3.3** We will manage local roads, buildings and public spaces to make our city **safer, cleaner and more attractive.**

2017-2018 actions working towards targets:	Progress comments:
Complete the Our Fairfield Village (Station Streetscape Masterplan).	Significant research and community engagement work was undertaken to explore options to improve transport, places for people, and streetscapes in the area. This included a Community Reference Group for Fairfield Village which has met five times. A number of works have been programmed for 2018-19 based on this consultation including safer crossings and improved parking restrictions. A draft Master Plan has not yet been released while additional research/surveys into traffic flow and parking are underway. The Fairfield Village Built Form Guidelines Planning Scheme Amendment went on exhibition in May and public submissions were received until 18 June 2018.
Make safer, through good urban design, 10 public spaces and places where people feel unsafe.	The upgrade of Bundoora Park public toilet is complete. 17 new street trees will be planted along Broadway in Reservoir, and a review of lighting in Reservoir, Edwardes Lake Park and Donath Dole Reserves will be completed by the end of March 2018. An upgrade of five playspaces and six pocket parks to rejuvenate and improve perceptions of safety are currently underway.
Upgrade one public toilet facility considering diversity, responsible reuse of water and inclusion of CPTED principles (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design).	Designs for a 'Changing Places' public toilet (converting the current toilets at Kelvin Grove, Preston) was completed in June 2018.
Adopt a <i>Preventing Violence Against Women Plan</i> .	The Preventing Violence Against Women action plan will be finalised for endorsement in late 2018. Key achievements in 2017-18 included: twenty four women graduating from the Global Sisters Sister School, a five week business education program for women experiencing employment disadvantage, a Darebin Women's Leadership Networking Event attended by approximately fifty women and the International Women Day event attended by 150 women.





2017-2018 actions working towards targets:	Progress comments:
<p>Open a new regional shared animal facility with Moreland and Whittlesea councils, to effectively manage lost and abandoned animals. The facility will allow animals to be held for longer until they are reunited with their owner or rehomed, maintaining our policy of no kill of healthy animals.</p>	<p>Contract negotiations with RSPCA for the management of the new facility were finalised in August. The Facility opened on Monday 16 October 2017.</p>
<p>Take the lead in developing a new <i>Domestic Animal Management Plan</i> that other municipalities can link their plans to. The Plan will outline strategies for:</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ensuring responsible owners safely integrate in the community with their pets, causing no harm or nuisance to others.</li> </ul>	<p>The draft Animal Management Plan was released for public comment during September 2017 and was workshopped with the Animal Management Reference Group. The final Plan was adopted by Council at its meeting on 16 October 2017.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Increasing registrations and identification of pets to decrease the number of animals that end up in the facility in the first place.</li> </ul>	<p>The draft Animal Management Plan was released for public comment during September 2017 and was workshopped with the Animal Management Reference Group. The final Plan was adopted by Council at its meeting on 16 October 2017.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Improving dog walking infrastructure.</li> </ul>	<p>The Domestic Animal Plan was adopted by Council on 16 October 2017. The Plan is now being implemented. Research undertaken in November 2017 focused on why people do/don't walk their dog on leads and was incorporated into the Plan.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ensuring Darebin officers will work with neighbouring councils to develop partnerships with relevant stakeholders to implement programs that reflect best practice and address animal welfare issues.</li> </ul>	<p>Council will sign a shared services agreement with the City of Moreland in April 2018 to facilitate the after-hours collections and pound services. The service will commence in May.</p>





## GOAL 4

We will support and attract a diversity of local businesses and industries by fostering an environment in which they can thrive.

**4.1** We will foster an environment that ensures our local businesses succeed – from large industries to microbusiness and freelancers.

2017–2018 actions working towards targets:	Progress comments:
Improve our efficiency with permit application processes.	Council continues to work towards streamlining planning regulations for businesses. Whilst the process improvement plan has been activated there has not yet been an improvement in the permit applications. The improvements have been slowed by IT challenges which are being worked through.
Provide at least one forum on quoting and tendering to help local businesses work with and understand Council's purchasing practices.	The Doing Business with Darebin event was held on 31 January 2018 with 29 registered attendees.
Encourage local businesses to take up Victorian and Federal Government apprenticeships and other employment programs for young people to increase youth employment.	Council has promoted and participated in various programs and initiatives to encourage local employment including a Northern Jobs Fair, a local careers expo and a Local Employment Industry forum introducing local businesses to Darebin's employment service providers. Council also participated in The Bridge Step Up to Work program and Transition to Work program for disadvantaged young people.
Undertake projects which create partnerships between tertiary providers and local businesses.	Council partnered with Melbourne Polytechnic to deliver the Darebin 'Pitch IT' program and the May Digital Darebin series. A collaboration with the La Trobe University School of Social Business delivered a social enterprise workshop in May. Council also facilitated an Industry Tour of the Northern College of Arts and Technology.
Increase engagement with Darebin businesses by developing a strategy to increase: subscribers, Facebook followers, social media posts per year, interaction with our website.	Council's Business Monthly e-news now has 2,900 subscribers. The Business Connection newsletters have been distributed in both print and electronic versions. The Darebin Business Facebook page has 522 followers and the Active Spaces in Darebin Facebook page has 1,501 followers. A plan to increase digital engagement with Council's social media and website has been developed and will be implemented in 2018-19.
Deliver a program of opportunities for local technology entrepreneurial start ups.	Free WiFi was rolled out in the activity centres of Preston, Northcote, Reservoir and Fairfield. Council delivered the Darebin 'Pitch IT' program and hosted the National Freelance Conference in Northcote on 15 March 2018.
Continue to provide advice to increase the capacity of local businesses to export products and services and adopt digital technology.	Council delivered an Export Program with 10 local businesses to increase their capacity to export and held three workshops. Council also delivered two Digital Darebin series in July 2017 and May 2018 as well as the 'Pitch IT' program.
Deliver events on business topics to build skills and networks.	The annual event calendar has delivered five industry forums, two women in business networking events, two green business events, four business breakfasts, three export workshops, four creative networking events, one annual business networking event and nine digital business events. 1770 people attended business events in 2017-18.



2017-2018 actions working towards targets:	Progress comments:
Support or attract at least one new major festival or event to increase visitors.	Council attracted the Victorian Fair Trade Festival (4 August-13 August). It was the first time the event had been held outside of Melbourne. Council also attracted National Freelance Day on 15 March with 202 attendees. Approximately 70% of participants came from outside of Darebin.
Identify strategic freight corridors to assist goods to reach Darebin while managing the impact on our community.	Council has collated information outlining existing freight arrangements in Darebin. This information will provide the basis for Council to manage how freight moves through Darebin and therefore minimise the effects of this on the community.
Undertake a smart parking pilot, which includes the development of a mobile information application (app), in one activity centre.	Council explored a smart parking pilot of sensor technology to inform a mobile information application (app), however detailed investigation determined that this should be undertaken as a whole of municipality approach to avoid issues with inconsistent technology, legality of enforcement and to ensure best value. The pilot was subsequently abandoned. A Parking Strategy Opportunities and Issues paper is currently being developed, and comprehensive parking data collected, to inform development of a Parking Strategy. The strategy will guide future technology upgrades across Darebin.



## GOAL 4

We will support and attract a diversity of local businesses and industries by fostering an environment in which they can thrive.

**4.2** We will enable and activate space, including vacant shopfronts and council facilities, to accommodate different businesses and industries.

2017-2018 actions working towards targets:	Progress comments:
Increase in the number of vacant shops reactivated.	Council conducted 34 new business meetings and 17 meetings with real estate agents. Three businesses leased vacant shops and art was installed in an additional three vacant shop fronts. Four murals were installed.
Assist in repurposing a minimum of one Council facility for business purposes.	Council investigated the possibility for the Yanada House kitchen to be repurposed as a 'kitchen incubator' for business with Melbourne Innovation Centre.
Work with the Melbourne Innovation Centre to develop a Master Plan for the site that will support emerging businesses and jobs growth into the future.	The master planning work is being led and managed by Melbourne Innovation Centre, who have extended the timeline over two years at this stage.
Undertake a Darebin Arts and Entertainment Centre future options scoping study.	The Darebin Arts Centre review is completed and Council will receive a report in August 2018 that details the current state analysis and recommendations for future operational models.



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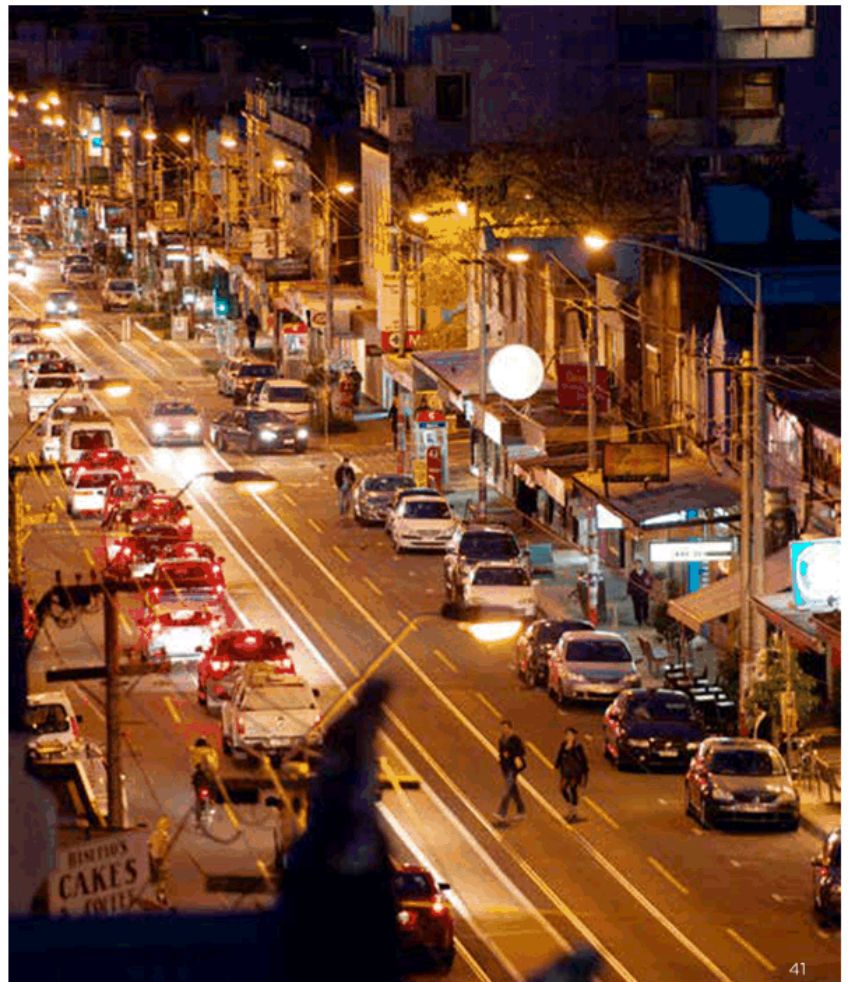
**4.3 We will pursue regionally significant economic opportunities to drive growth and sustainability for our region.**

**2017-2018 actions working towards targets:**

Continue our partnership with NORTH Link and the Northern Region of Councils (Darebin plus Banyule, Hume, Moreland, Nillumbik and Whittlesea) to collectively advocate for regional economic growth through infrastructure, industry support, and tourism development.

**Progress comments:**

In partnership with NORTH Link, Council delivered actions from the Melbourne's North Food and Beverage and the Melbourne's North Workforce Plans. Council participated in regional events to assist economic development outcomes including the establishment of a Melbourne's North Food Group. Council also supported NORTH Link's successful bid to receive \$400,000 over two years to establish a Melbourne's North Food Group.



## GOAL 5

We will lead on equity and recognise our **diverse community as our greatest asset** for solving future challenges.

**5.1** We will ensure our services, facilities and programs **benefit all**, including our most vulnerable.

2017-2018 actions working towards targets:	Progress comments:
Develop an Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy with associated actions plans.	Council continues to deliver commitments under the existing Equity, Inclusion and Human Rights framework while the new framework is being developed. Internal consultation is under way and the new framework is due for Council endorsement in early 2019. The Sexuality, Sex and Gender Diversity and Multicultural Action Plan have been developed and delivered. Key projects included advocacy on the Marriage Equality Campaign and the adoption of the Welcoming Cities Network standards.
Continue to connect with interfaith, not-for-profit organisations and community groups to strengthen our work.	The Darebin SPEAK project provided young people who experience discrimination and racism with a platform to raise their concerns and increase their sense of belonging. The Darebin Interfaith Council provided a bus tour of places of worship in Darebin to community and faith leaders to increase awareness and understanding of faith communities in Darebin.
Update our equity, inclusion and wellbeing audit tool and apply it to all actions arising from this plan.	The Equity, Inclusion and Wellbeing Planning and Audit Tool (EIWPAT) was updated to strengthen its application of wellbeing and disability considerations. The tool is applied to a large cross section of projects, with a view to increase its application to all projects identified in the Council plan once the new Framework has been endorsed in early 2019.
Provide training (EIPAT) to ensure coordinators, team leaders and senior managers know how to effectively apply the tool.	Training on the Equity, Inclusion and Wellbeing Planning and Audit Tool (EIWPAT) for this period was delivered through a range of platforms including one on one assessment and planning meetings for identified projects. A more comprehensive information and training session is scheduled for the fourth quarter along with delivery of additional staff inductions.
Integrate our <i>Anti-Racism Strategy</i> into the equity, inclusion and wellbeing audit tool.	Anti-racism considerations have been applied through the Equity, Inclusion and Wellbeing Planning and Audit Tool (EIWPAT) and integrated into the new draft Equity, Inclusion and Human Rights Framework. Anti-Racism commitments were enacted through programs such as the Welcoming Cities, Darebin SPEAK and the Refugee Welcome Zone commitment.
Develop two new initiatives with community on food security and community safety.	Community safety initiatives included the completion and evaluation of the Preston Forecourt community safety project , which demonstrated a reduction in crime within this precinct and increased use of the space by the community. Food security projects included the development of the Darebin Emergency Relief Services Guide and the establishment of a partnership with Span Community House to develop a community food garden at East Preston Community Centre.
Provide new ramps at the John Cain Memorial Reserve sports pavilion and at the Darebin Arts and Entertainment Centre.	Designs for the John Cain Grandstand Accessible Ramp have been finalised. Construction is planned to commence later in 2018 and will be coordinated with the Multi Sport Stadium project. Following an unfavourable tender contract process, the construction of the Darebin Arts Centre access ramp has been deferred until early 2019.



2017-2018 actions working towards targets:	Progress comments:
Improve accessibility to Neighbourhood Houses.	Accessibility works to the front and rear entrance at Merrilands East Building will commence in July, with a 2018-19 funding application put forward for additional building renewal and West Building works. 'The Bridge' Preston ramp construction is scheduled for December 2018/January 2019.
Upgrade the lift in the Preston City Hall and the path at the Council Operations Centre.	The project is slightly behind schedule due to delays in shipping the lift car and will be completed in August 2018. The works at the Operations Centre have been completed.
Continue to provide grants to services that provide programs, activities and services to marginalised and vulnerable residents.	Following an Expression of Interest process, funding was provided to support seven Darebin organisations to deliver 11 community activities during the Christmas/New Year's period to residents who experience food insecurity and social isolation.
Review the outcome of the Darebin Intercultural Centre needs analysis to find it a more appropriate long-term home.	A needs analysis and service review were presented to Council in October 2017. In the 2018-19 budget proposal, a needs and location study will be commissioned to determine the functional, space and design requirements for a new home for the Darebin Intercultural Centre.
Develop and implement actions to improve communication with our multicultural community in response to the 2016 Census and research we undertook in 2016-2017 to understand community preferences.	Extensive research was undertaken to identify pathways for improving communication with CALD Communities, and to understand the preferred method of communication and awareness level of our services and programs within these groups. Consultation across the organisation is now underway to identify the best ways for the recommendations of the research and action plan to be applied to ensure we meet the needs of the diverse Darebin community.
Continue to provide a Darebin rate rebate.	Darebin's rate rebate was provided in 2017-18.
Advocate to VCAT for a reduction in approvals for gaming machines.	Actively participated as an Alliance for Gambling Reform Member during this period with key campaigns, ongoing advocacy and engagement with local communities and peak bodies.  Poker machines: Council carried out community consultation and prepared a Social and Economic Impact Statement. Council have lodged a request with VCAT to appeal the decision made by the Victorian Commission for Gambling and Liquor Regulation on the Darebin RSL site which seeks to increase the number of electronic gaming machines and extend opening hours.
Advocate to the Federal Government to provide greater support for refugees.	As a Refugee Welcome Zone, Welcoming Cities Network member and a signatory to the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) Council supported the #LetThemStay and #WithRefugees campaigns by advocating to the State and Federal Governments. Partnership work with the Darebin Emergency Relief Network and North East Regional Settlement Inter-agency Network has taken place to improve access to services for newly arrived communities in the Darebin community.

## GOAL 5

We will lead on equity and recognise our **diverse community as our greatest asset** for solving future challenges.

**5.1** We will ensure our services, facilities and programs **benefit all**, including our most vulnerable.

2017-2018 actions working towards targets:	Progress comments:
<p>Advocate to the Federal Government to address housing affordability.</p>	<p>A review of the Housing Strategy and the Responding to Housing Stress Action Plan is currently underway. Darebin has just secured a grant from the Department of Health and Human Services to assist with the technical data analysis which will form part of the review of the Responding to Housing Stress Action Plan.</p>
<p>Develop a <i>Local Diversity and Inclusion Through Employment Strategy</i> to eliminate the barriers to diversity in the workforce and bring Darebin's workforce more demographically in line with the community.</p>	<p>A Volunteer Policy is being developed to support employment strategies. The Employment Pathways Committee is working across the organisation to explore local employment and placement options. The organisation continues to work closely with the Darebin Aboriginal Advisory Committee, Darebin Ethnic Communities Council, La Trobe University, Melbourne Poly Technic and other external stakeholders to identify and support local employment pathways within Council. Since July 2017 Council has supported 120 placements, a careers expo for approximately 250 local students and the annual Real Jobs Industry Program for year 10 local students, as well as employability skills training for the Croxton School and Preston Reservoir Adult Community Education Centre. Work on the Local Diversity and Inclusion Through Diversity Strategy will be completed in 2018-19.</p>
<p>Make our Aboriginal, Cross Cultural, Diversity and Inclusion and Disability Awareness Training - under our <i>Diversity Capabilities Framework</i> - mandatory for all staff and introduce it to Council induction.</p>	<p>Council's Employee Induction Program includes a focus on Equity and Inclusion and incorporates a smoking/cleansing ceremony by an Aboriginal Elder. Council has delivered LGBTIQ, Introduction to Diversity, Disability Awareness, Say No to Racism, and Aboriginal &amp; Torres Strait Islander Awareness training. An Aboriginal Mentoring Program will commence in July 2018.</p>



## 5.2 We will bring the ideas of our diverse community into our decision-making.

2017-2018 actions working towards targets:	Progress comments:
Continue to provide community grants to organisations undertaking activities across our goals.	The 2018-19 Grants Program was open between February and April, with 188 applications received. Assessment has been completed with 96 cash grant applications (total \$237,816) and 61 venue hire applications (total \$81,500) of in-kind venue hire support. Notification of results will occur in mid-July 2018.
Write a <i>Community Engagement Framework 2018-2021</i> .	This project is deferred to align with the proposed requirements under the new Local Government Act. A first draft will be completed for public consultation by the end of 2018. The plan will include improved ways of engaging with the Darebin community, such as digital channels, listening posts and pop up activities.
Develop best practice engagement methods.	Since the launch of the Your Say Darebin interactive community engagement platform in July 2017, more than 40 projects requiring community engagement have been hosted on this site, with more than 700 registered community members providing feedback. The platform has allowed Council to broaden the scope of tools it uses to engage with the community and widen the participation reach of the community. Registered participant numbers continue to grow. In 2018-19, the Community Engagement Strategy will stimulate further development of innovative community engagement methods.
Establish a reference group that can provide ideas about how to reconfigure our community advisory structures.	The Reference Group will be activated in line with the new Darebin Community Engagement Strategy which will be created in 2018-19.
Develop training and online resources to help citizens make verbal or written submissions at Council meetings and write submissions to other bodies.	Council has facilitated three Community Workshops focusing on grant writing and general engagement with government and like bodies. Online training resources have also been provided with 57 community members participating. Further training will be facilitated during 2018-19.
Improve technology in Chambers to ensure the community can clearly hear, in person or via the live web stream, Council debates and decisions made.	Primary equipment has been installed, providing flexibility of audio configuration with wireless microphones and video recording including internet streaming functionality.
Develop an <i>Advocacy Strategy</i> that identifies priority issues, partners, strategies, goals, actions and timelines.	A Strategic Advocacy Framework was presented to Councillors and endorsed in July 2017. Advocacy Plans were developed for the 2018 State election and for the Northcote by election. Council is currently preparing the 2018-19 Advocacy Plan.



## GOAL 5

We will lead on equity and recognise our **diverse community as our greatest asset** for solving future challenges.

**5.3** We will be responsive and respectful to the current and emerging aspirations of **Traditional Owners and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities** in Darebin.

2017-2018 actions working towards targets:	Progress comments:
<p>We will Implement Council's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Strategy. Provide a supportive, safe and culturally inclusive work environment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people; Attract and recruit Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people through providing culturally appropriate and flexible recruitment and selection processes; and Implement support mechanisms and provide flexible working arrangements and career development opportunities.</p>	<p>Council provided Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Awareness Training in June 2018. Online training options are also being explored. Council will introduce a mentoring program to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees and refugees in 2018-19. Council is currently developing a Cultural Leave Policy in consultation with Darebin's Aboriginal Advisory Committee and Darebin Ethnic Communities Council. Council continues to support work experience placements and work closely with Inner Northern Local Learning and Employment Network, secondary schools and tertiary institutions. Council supported two Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander trainees and recruitment has commenced for two new trainees for 2018-19.</p>
<p>Implement and monitor activities and commitment outlined in the Aboriginal Action Plan.</p>	<p>The draft Aboriginal Action Plan has been prepared and will be presented to the Aboriginal Advisory Committee for endorsement in late 2018. Projects delivered in 2017-18 included the development of the Darebin Aboriginal Recognition and Discovery Map, completion of the Darebin Aboriginal history project and advocacy relating to the Batman electorate renaming.</p>
<p>In partnership and through consultation with the Wurundjeri Council and relevant communities, develop a framework and action plan to document, share and celebrate local Aboriginal history.</p>	<p>Initial planning, supported by a comprehensive engagement process has commenced. A Draft Framework and Action Plan is proposed for December 2018.</p>
<p>Develop and deliver Aboriginal Engagement and Mentorships programs and opportunities.</p>	<p>Two presentations of theatre works by Aboriginal artists are scheduled for the last quarter of 2018. Council is also supporting the Melbourne International Comedy Festival's Indigenous talent development program for the second time. New partnerships have been fostered through an event celebrating the 'World's Oldest Living Culture' scheduled for September 2018. The Darebin Community Awards have expanded this year to include two new categories specific to recognising Darebin's Aboriginal leaders.</p>



## GOAL 6

We will be a **leading, modern, and open council** to meet our challenges, now and in the future

**6.1** We will implement **the best delivery models** to optimise efficiency and value.

2017–2018 actions working towards targets:	Progress comments:
Implement a Darebin Service Review program.	Three service reviews have been completed. A draft work plan has been developed for 2018–19, which includes proposed improvements and estimated cost savings. The application of business improvement methodologies and mapping of key internal processes has also commenced, with processes being documented in Promapp, (Council's process mapping system).
Develop and implement a <i>Workforce Planning Strategy</i> to ensure our organisation's leadership capability and workforce's skills and capabilities equip us to respond to the needs of our community into the future.	Council is working closely with neighbouring northern Councils as part of a regional Workforce Planning initiative. The aim is to leverage better practice and share resources. Council will develop a Workforce Planning Strategy that considers Council's resource needs into the future. The work will be finalised in 2018–19.
Build our strategic research capability.	This project has been deferred as a complete review of Council's engagement strategic research capability is planned for the first two quarters of 2018–19. This review will identify how we can better utilise information gathered through consultation, engagement and demographic data to inform decision-making.
Build our capability to use information generated by our community engagement in decision-making.	The introduction of the Your Say Darebin platform has allowed for a new level of transparency in how Council gathers and interprets community feedback on projects by publicly displaying processes and timelines for community members. The next stage of this project will build on the platform and identify how we can better utilise information gathered through consultation, engagement and demographic data to inform decision-making and reduce duplication of community engagement efforts.
Appoint a contemporary and progressive CEO who will ensure that the organisation can respond to the challenges in the plan.	Council appointed Ms. Sue Wilkinson as Chief Executive Officer in September 2017.
Collaborate with other Councils to explore in-house services or contracted services that can be shared at a regional level to minimise costs and maximise the value for money for our communities.	Council actively participates in the Northern Region Procurement Excellence Network and has developed a combined contract register to identify opportunities for collaboration. Staff recruitment, office cleaning, information technology, repairs and maintenance (Security Services) contracts are currently being developed.
Invest in the <i>Internet of Things Platform</i> to: optimise energy consumption; maintain assets; and mitigate risk and decrease insurance premiums.	Council is continuing to research and identify productivity, efficiency and environmental opportunities including a collaboration with Northern Region Councils to identify future initiatives. This will be further supported by the new IT Strategy currently being developed.
Review our digital access across all Council services, and implement our <i>Digital Transformation Strategy</i> to enhance accessibility online, by mobile and by emerging technologies.	Council is continuing to identify and implement digital solutions. This includes an online platform for kindergarten registrations, online Health Portal and automation of a number of manual processes. Roll out of the Digital Transformation project will be ongoing. This will be further supported by the implementation of the IT Integration project.

## GOAL 6

We will be a **leading, modern, and open council** to meet our challenges, now and in the future

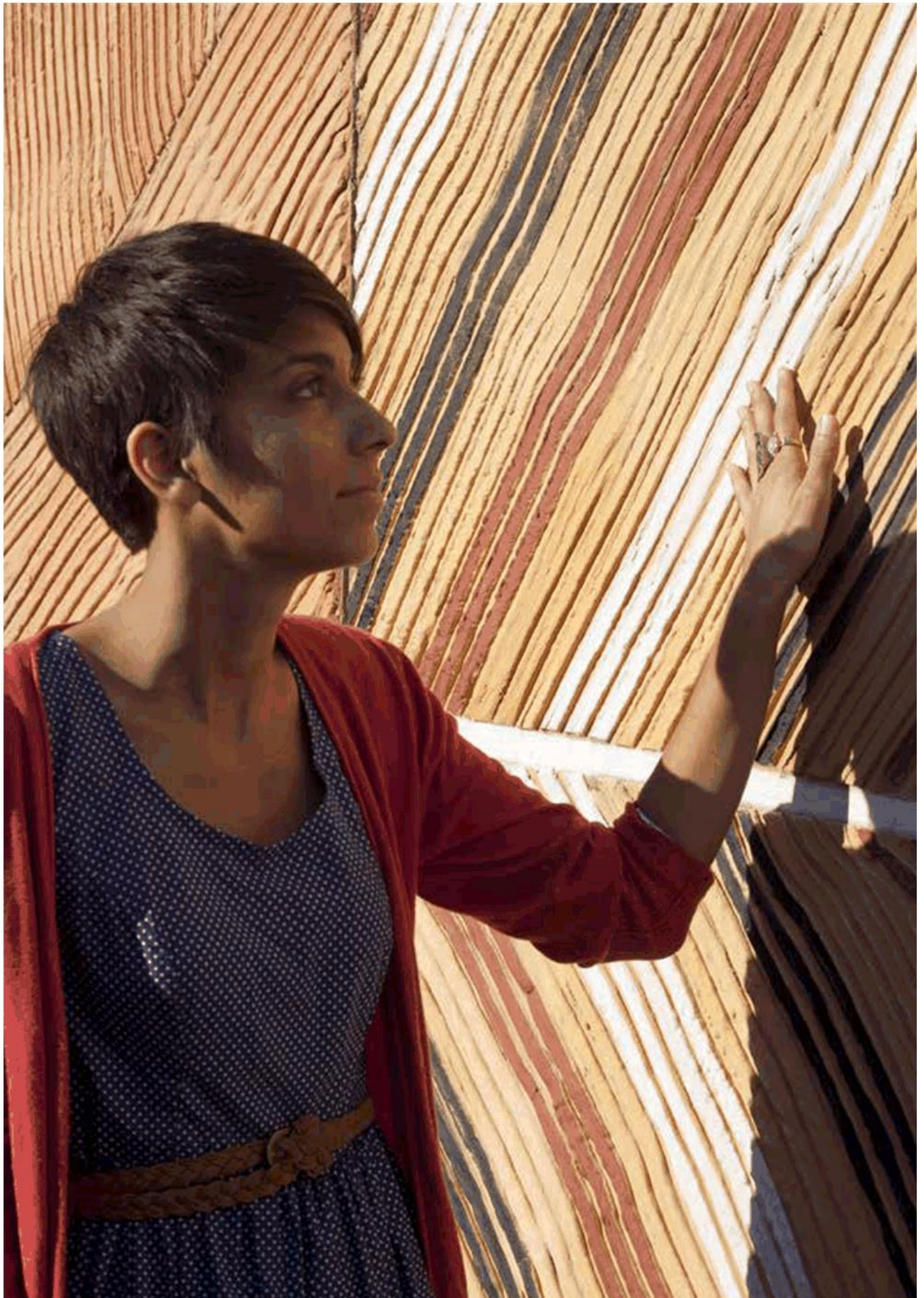
**6.2** We will find new ways to deliver **long-term financial sustainability**.

2017-2018 actions working towards targets:	Progress comments:
Undertake feasibility analysis for the introduction of alternate revenue opportunities including <i>Public Open Space Levy, Developer Contribution Scheme</i> , parking strategy, grant seeking, and commercial opportunities for Council facilities.	A range of work is in progress: A review of the Open Space Strategy is currently underway and an update to the current Open Space Levy will be completed after the strategy is reviewed. A development contributions scheme is being implemented in two stages; firstly an interim policy is currently being finalised which will require the collection of funds from developers for upgrade of streetscapes, and secondly a draft development contributions plan is being prepared alongside the 10 year infrastructure plan. Full implementation of this will take some time as it requires an amendment to the planning scheme and therefore ministerial approval. A parking strategy will be developed next financial year through community engagement which will inform the ultimate approach.
Prepare an Annual budget that enables Darebin City Council to fully fund service delivery whilst achieving an operating surplus.	The Annual Budget 2018-19 was adopted by Council on 12 June 2018.
Develop a ten year financial strategy that delivers ongoing underlying surpluses that allow the funding of ongoing service delivery to the community. The timely renewal of community assets and the assets required for ongoing service delivery and new community assets.	Council's ten year Long Term Financial Plan (LTFP) has been updated as part of the 2018-19 Annual Budget process. A review of Council's Asset Management Strategy and practices is currently underway. This will be integrated into the LTFP during the 2019-20 budget cycle.
Implement the <i>Darebin City Council Enterprise Risk Management Strategy</i> .	Council's Enterprise Risk Management (ERM) Strategy is currently being reviewed and will be progressed through to the Audit Committee in August 2018.
Review and test Council's <i>Business Continuity Plan</i> .	A template for recovery plans was developed and a full list of critical services was collated and reviewed by the Business Continuity Committee. A review of the Business Continuity Framework and related plans will take place in 2018-19. This review was deferred due to the organisational restructure.
Deliver capital works efficiently, effectively whilst maintaining high-quality outcomes.	Of the 163 capital works projects 140 (86%) had been either closed or completed. The remaining 23 projects (14%) will be carried over and completed the 2018-19 financial year. Strategic and operational drivers will be finalised for the evaluation and prioritisation of future capital works programs.

**6.3 We will communicate our progress on the actions in this council plan to residents, community leaders, community organisations, business, industry, and Victorian and Federal governments to ensure we can all act together.**

2017-2018 actions working towards targets:	Progress comments:
<p>Develop and execute an annual <i>Media and Communication Strategy</i> to ensure Council news is disseminated through a range of channels.</p>	<p>A review of the communications, media and marketing function was started and will continue into 2018-19. The aim of this review is to identify current approaches to communications and recommend improvements in the delivery of information to the Darebin community. The Media and Communications strategy will be developed once this review is completed.</p>
<p>Implement ongoing website enhancements to improve customer experience, provide access to timely information, and enable community feedback.</p>	<p>A review of the Darebin website functionality is complete. The review identified issues with the ease in which information could be found, as well as several gaps in the website's functionality. The decision has been made to not make enhancements to the site. Instead, the website will be redeveloped in 2018-19 and will also centralize many of Council's other websites (such as libraries), to provide both financial and resource efficiencies, as well as improve the experience for the user.</p>







# FINANCIAL SUMMARY



## FINANCIAL SUMMARY ENDED 31 MARCH 2018

### Operating performance

	Annual Budget \$'000	Actual \$'000	Var \$'000	Mid-Year Forecast \$'000
<b>Operating</b>				
Revenue	170,181	172,556	2,375	172,166
Expenditure	(157,381)	(160,687)	(3,306)	(159,113)
<b>Surplus (deficit)</b>	12,800	11,869	(931)	13,053
<b>Capital &amp; other</b>				
Revenue / grants	(2,696)	(779)	1,917	(1,763)
Developer contributions	(5,000)	(5,386)	(386)	(6,013)
Adjusted underlying surplus	5,104	5,704	600	5,277

For the twelve months ended 30 June 2018, Council has recorded an operating surplus of \$11.87 million, which is \$0.9 million less than annual budget. After eliminating capital and other items, the adjusted underlying surplus is \$5.70 million, which is \$0.6 million ahead of budget.

The main items contributing to this unfavourable variance are capital grants, materials and services, bad and doubtful debts, other expenses and offset by favourable variances in operating grants and other income.

### Capital performance

	Annual Budget \$'000	Actual \$'000	Var \$'000	Budget & CFWD's \$'000	Mid-Year Forecast \$'000
Property	11,420	6,521	(4,899)	13,014	13,051
Plant & equipment	9,458	4,898	(4,560)	10,077	8,640
Infrastructure	26,449	21,393	(5,056)	29,029	24,509
<b>Total capital works</b>	47,327	32,812	(14,515)	52,120	46,200

Council spent \$32.81 million on capital works for the year ended 30 June 2018, which was \$14.52 million less than the annual budget of \$47.33 million. The variance is due mainly to delays in completion of buildings works, plant, machinery and equipment, computers and telecommunications, roads, bridges and parks, open space and streetscapes.

Savings of \$4.87 million have been realised on projects completed as part of the 2017-2018 capital works program. In addition, Council has carried forward capital works projects totaling \$7.43 million from 2017-2018.

## Financial position

	Annual Budget \$'000	Actual \$'000	Var \$'000	Mid-Year Forecast \$'000
Cash and investments	50,571	85,766	35,195	65,352
Net current assets	30,541	60,083	29,542	47,284
Net assets and total equity	1,295,469	1,520,614	225,145	1,371,922

The financial position as at 30 June 2018 shows a cash and investment balance of \$85.77 million which is \$35.19 million ahead of annual budget. The variance is due mainly to funding for capital works carried forward for completion in 2018-19, an increase in the level of rates and contributions received and the timing of receipt of the 2018-19 Victorian Grants Commission funding. The cash and investment balance of \$85.77 million was sufficient to meet restricted cash and intended allocation obligations of \$32.24 million at the end of June.

Restricted cash is the amount of cash holdings Council requires to meet external restrictions such as trust funds, statutory reserves and cash for intended allocations such as cash held to fund future capital works.

The net current asset position is \$60.08 million which is \$29.54 million more than budget. The net asset position of \$1.52 billion is \$225.15 million more than annual budget.





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**8.2                    3KND KOOL N DEADLY INDIGENOUS RADIO -  
RELOCATION TO THE FORMER PRESTON POLICE  
STATION****Author:**                    Coordinator Equity and Diversity**Reviewed By:**            General Manager Community

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**PURPOSE**

The report provides Council with an update on the progress to date for the relocation of 3KND Kool n Deadly Radio (3KND) into the former Preston Police Station on Roseberry Avenue, Preston and seeks to reaffirm Council's commitment to the project.

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

On 7 August 2017, Council endorsed the relocation of 3KND Kool n Deadly Radio (3KND) into the former Preston Police Station subject to external investment being secured. This followed an initial scoping of a suitable Council-owned site to accommodate 3KND radio station under a long term lease arrangement. The site met primary selection criteria regarding space requirements, proximity to public transport and proximity to other allied services and held the endorsement by the Darebin Aboriginal Advisory Committee.

Under arrangements with State Government, 3KND has indicated that it has potential investment capacity of \$750,000 following sale of their former premises, with an opportunity for additional co-investment from both State and Federal bodies subject to further feasibility testing.

A project implementation plan, detailing studio design and construction for the site has since been progressed. More recently, the station has received funding to undertake further feasibility testing in relation to site requirements. In the interim the station has been temporarily located within the Darebin North East Community Hub. A key project assumption moving forward is it to ensure strategic alignment with other Council commitments, including integration within future Preston Civic Precinct development.

This report details the progress to date, Council's commitments and project key milestones.

<b>Recommendation</b>
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**That Council:**

- (1) Reaffirms the endorsement for 3KND to be located into the former Preston Police Station subject to external investment being secured.
  - (2) Works with 3KND through a Memorandum of Understanding agreement to actively seek the funding required to undertake the works at the former Preston Police Station.
  - (3) Through a Memorandum of Understanding agreement, ensures strategic alignment with the future Preston Civic Precinct development.
  - (4) Receive a further report in March 2019 on the project progress and options for Council's ongoing investment.
-

## BACKGROUND / KEY INFORMATION

3KND is Melbourne's first Aboriginal owned and managed radio station, providing a service to the Aboriginal and wider community. Council has established a strong working relationship with 3KND through a range of activities supporting health and wellbeing outcomes.

In 2017, 3KND sought Council's support to identify a suitable site for relocation within Darebin. The proposed relocation had support from the Darebin Aboriginal Advisory Committee and a traditional smoking ceremony was undertaken at the site in 2017 given the history of the site and cultural considerations.

The former Preston Police Station was identified as the only suitable potential Council-owned site to accommodate the radio station, meeting primary site selection criteria in terms of size, proximity to public transport and proximity to other allied services.

The building has been vacant since its acquisition in 2005 from the Victorian Government and substantial works would be required to make the site fit for use by any service. The site is affected by a Heritage Overlay which has external heritage controls that require the exterior of the building to be maintained. Internally, the building may be redeveloped.

A project implementation plan, detailing studio design and construction for the site has since been progressed. More recently, 3KND has received funding to undertake further feasibility testing in relation to the site requirements.

### Previous Council Resolution

At its meeting held on 7 August 2017, Council resolved:

*'That Council:*

- 1) *Endorses relocation of 3KND into the former Preston Police Station subject to external investment being secured.*
- 2) *Note the temporary relocation of 3KND to the Darebin North East Community Hub*
- 3) *Notes Heads of Agreement document (Appendix A – Draft Lease Terms).'*

## COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT

### Consultation

- 3KND
- Strategic Asset Management
- Major Projects
- Creative Culture and Events including Coordinator Community Hubs
- Equity and Diversity Unit including Aboriginal Contact Officer
- Previous engagement as per 7 August 2017 Report including the Darebin Aboriginal Advisory Committee

### Communications

A communications plan will be developed in partnership with 3KND with key messages and will be implemented according to key project milestones.

## ANALYSIS

### Alignment to Council Plan / Council policy

Goal 5 - Involving our diverse community

Council's partnership with 3KND and the development of a vibrant Aboriginal cultural/business media enterprise within the Preston Precinct site will support number of Council Plan strategies, specifically Goal 5, 5.1, 5.2 and 5.3: *"We will be responsive and respectful to the current and emerging aspirations of Traditional Owners and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in Darebin."*

### Environmental Sustainability Considerations

Any future building works at the Roseberry Street site would be compliant with Council's ESD Building Policy and applicable building standards.

### Equity, Inclusion and Wellbeing Considerations

This initiative supports health and wellbeing outcomes for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community advancing economic, social and cultural opportunities both for First Nations and for the Darebin community at large.

There are significant cultural, social and economic benefits for the local community and Council in retaining Victoria's largest Aboriginal controlled radio station within our municipality on this site, including potential program linkages with the Intercultural Centre, Darebin Libraries and other Council services.

### Cultural Considerations

This proposal recognises self-determination and the right of First Nations to celebrate their living culture through independent community controlled media.

### Economic Development Considerations

Darebin has attracted significant investment of Aboriginal controlled agencies within the municipality. Support for relocation of 3KND onto this site would enhance local employment and business opportunities with potential to lever co-investment for future development of the precinct.

### Financial and Resource Implications

Based on the 7 August 2017 resolution, there is no direct financial commitment to this project.

It is estimated that the physical works would be in the order of \$1.75M (excluding GST). This cost analysis will undergo further testing as part of feasibility study for the site.

Council's support of the proposed relocation is on the proviso that these capital costs for the refurbishment, construction and fit out of the facility are sourced and/or funded by 3KND. The CEO and Council staff are actively supporting 3KND's efforts to secure the required external funding.

Council's current allocation of resources is in-kind support to coordinate the Project Working Group and deliverables as part of the MOU.

## Legal and Risk Implications

A key risk is that the initiative is unable to secure the additional external funding required to commence the capital elements of the project. Funding received to undertake a feasibility study will help mitigate this risk and strengthen investment confidence. Further to this, a partnership approach to seeking these funds between Council and 3KND with further enhance investment confidence.

## DISCUSSION

### Partnership arrangement and governance

Council's commitment and responsibilities to this project will be articulated through a Memorandum of Understanding with 3KND Kool n Deadly Radio.

A Project Working Group has been established which includes participation of 3KND representatives. The working group will be responsible to facilitate project deliverables under a MOU.

### External Funding Support

An estimated \$1m would be required in addition to 3KND's contribution from the sale of their property to meet the \$1.75m target. Council will continue to work with 3KND and other tiers of Government to secure financial support. Obtaining these funds is the key milestone to initiate the project into the capital works phase.

A further report to Council in March 2019 is proposed to update on the on the project progress, including the status of external funding in the project. This will provide options for Council's ongoing investment in the project.

### Former Preston Police Station

3KND have provided an outline of their space requirements, and a detailed project implementation plan has been commenced.

To accommodate 3KND on the Roseberry Street site, it is proposed to redevelop the original red brick (heritage significant) portion of the former Police Station building to provide a gross floor area in the order of 270m<sup>2</sup>. Redevelopment would include major internal modifications such as replacement of all wall and ceiling linings, doors and trim, new electrical, plumbing and mechanical services, new compliant toilet/amenity areas and the building made accessible in terms of the Access to Premises Standards.

Appropriate environmentally sustainable design features and acoustic treatments suitable for radio station operation would be also need to be incorporated into the works. Works would include basic landscaping with undercover area and car parking spaces.

### 3KND Accommodation Proposal

It is proposed that Council would contribute the land and building to the works (via an initial peppercorn lease arrangement that increases in value over a 40 year term). Capital costs for the refurbishment, construction and fit out of the facility would be funded by 3KND and other external providers.

Under the proposal a Heads of Agreement arrangement would be entered for a fixed period stipulating conditions and terms. In the interim, an MOU arrangement is being negotiated with 3KND supported by an internal Project Working Group.

**Alignment to other projects and opportunities**

Significantly, the project intersects with the Preston Civic Precinct development and compliments the Darebin Intercultural Centre. It increases the potential to develop partnership activities between the organisations and greater participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community together with non-Indigenous communities in programs and activities promoting cross cultural exchange and collaboration.

**OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION**

- Option 1  
Recommended** Council reaffirms its commitment to the project.  
Support with no capital contribution.  
In August last year, Council resolved to support the proposed accommodation arrangements on the proviso that the capital costs for the refurbishment, construction and fit out of the facility are sourced and/or funded by 3KND.
- Based on the project progress to date and the funding received by 3KND to undertake further feasibility testing in relation to site requirements it is recommended that Council reaffirm the commitment for 3KND to be located into the former Preston Police Station, subject to external investment being secured.
- Option 2  
Not Recommended** Revisit/reconsider the proposal and withdraw support  
Over the last twelve months, significant effort has been invested to achieve the relocation of 3KND to the site. Withdrawing support would likely damage Council's relationship with 3KND and members of the wider Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community.

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY****Details**

A detailed project implementation plan has been developed and forms basis for project mapping including studio design and construction; sites specifications and land use considerations. Implementation will be supported through:

- Finalisation of an MOU with 3KND outlining milestones and timeframes responsibilities, and deliverables.
- Implementation of the MOU deliverables supported through the Project Working Group.
- Executive Management Team and Council will be kept informed of any key milestones regarding investment contributions and feasibility study outcomes/recommendations.

**Communication**

A communication plan will be developed and implemented regarding project funding milestones and/or commencement of site development in addition to statutory requirements.

## Timeline

Next Steps	Timeline
<b>Phase One</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of MOU</li> <li>• Project mapping re-confirming site scoping/ specifications</li> <li>• 3KND Feasibility Study and Recommendations</li> <li>• 3KND and Council actively seek funding</li> </ul>	Finalised by October 2018 October 2018 – March 2019 Ongoing
<b>Phase Two</b> Capital phase of project entered	Commenced once funding secured

**March 2019** - Council report on the project progress and options for Council's ongoing investment.

## RELATED DOCUMENTS

- Council Meeting Minutes – 7 August 2017

## Attachments

Nil

## DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST

Section 80C of the *Local Government Act 1989* requires members of Council staff and persons engaged under contract to provide advice to Council to disclose any direct or indirect interest in a matter to which the advice relates.

The 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.

**8.3 SOCIAL AND SUSTAINABLE PROCUREMENT AT DAREBIN****Author:** General Manager Governance and Engagement**Reviewed By:** Chief Executive Officer

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**PURPOSE**

This report provides information regarding the preparation of a new Procurement Policy and Strategy for the City. The new Procurement Policy and Strategy will seek to embed social and sustainable procurement principles as well as to ensure a best practise approach. This report also seeks to respond to previous, related Council resolutions.

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The preparation of a new Procurement Policy and Strategy for the City of Darebin creates the opportunity to realise the extraordinary potential of procurement to create an impact above and beyond the products or services we purchase.

Recognising that a great deal of the City's resources are expended in the purchase of goods, services and works, the new Policy and Strategy will integrate social and environmental goals into Councils procurement processes with the aim of driving attitudinal and systemic change.

The overall intent of this work will be to create a framework that allows Council to generate deliberate and measurable social and environmental outcomes aligned with the goals outlined in the Council Plan. Specifically, it is envisaged that this work will assist Council to:

- contribute to addressing complex local challenges facing the community
- ensure our procurement practices are sustainable and strategically aligned
- assist to generate local employment opportunities and promote social inclusion
- demonstrate leadership
- achieve greater value for money
- encourage use of localised supply chains to encourage and/or promote social inclusion, job creation, community development and local economic development
- favour the purchase of appropriate goods and services which minimise environmental impacts

Local Government procurement practises are strictly regulated and all activities must occur in the context of competition and administrative law requirements.

The new Strategy will adopt a positive screening approach as opposed to limiting or preventing opportunities to participate (via bids or tenders). Structuring the framework and evaluation criteria to support the engagement of suppliers, vendors and partners that demonstrate corporate responsibility through delivery of social and environmental outcomes will be a key goal of this work.

The Policy and Strategy preparation is included in the Council Plan Action Plan for 2018/19.



**Recommendation**

**That** Council endorses the preparation of a new Procurement Policy and Strategy adopting a practical and specific evaluation approach to support the engagement of suppliers, vendors and partners that demonstrate corporate responsibility through real-time social and sustainable outcomes.

**BACKGROUND / KEY INFORMATION**

On 4 December 2017, in response to Notice of Motion No. 340 Council resolved:

*'Council resolves that:*

1. *Council officers provide a report to Council in February 2018, after obtaining appropriate legal advice, outlining available mechanisms, any potential risks, costs and proposed policy or procedural changes to give lawful effect to advancing Darebin as an "Adani Free City".*
2. *Council officers take the necessary steps to ensure that, at the conclusion of existing binding contracts, lawful consideration is given to ceasing any future association with organisations known to have a financial interest in, provide goods or services to or otherwise support the proposed Adani Carmichael Coal Mine until such time as that association is ceased.'*

On 12 December 2016, as part of a requirement to review the procurement policy Council resolved (in part);

*'That Council:*

.....

3. *Considers changes to the Procurement Policy to strengthen Section 6 (Social Procurement) to:*
  - (a) *Deliver a 'youth employment' dividend (eg. 10% of all work to be provided to apprentices and trainees), as recommended by the Northern Youth Employment Taskforce.*
  - (b) *Provide further employment opportunities for refugee and asylum seeker community members.*
  - (c) *Encourage and promote the engagement of Aboriginal businesses, organisations and individuals; and*
  - (d) *Achieve improved sustainability and environmental outcomes for the Darebin community.*
4. *Receives a further report before October 2017 to consider the following changes to the local business framework in Appendix A to ensure that where available three local quotes are always sought and that the local content weighting be lifted from 10% to 20%. "*

It is recommended that the outcomes sought from these resolutions be addressed and implemented through the preparation of a new Procurement Policy and Strategy.

## **ANALYSIS**

### **Alignment to Council Plan / Council policy**

- Goal 1 - A sustainable city
- Goal 2 – Opportunities to live well
- Goal 4 – A strong economy
- Goal 5 – Involving our Diverse Community
- Goal 6 – A well governed City

### **Environmental Sustainability Considerations**

A more specific evaluation and assessment approach to Council's procurement framework would enable broader environmental sustainability outcomes to be achieved through Council's engagement with its suppliers, vendors and partners.

### **Equity, Inclusion and Wellbeing Considerations**

The implementation of a procurement framework that includes a more specific evaluation and assessment approach to the engagement of suppliers, vendors and partners will take into account equity, inclusion and wellbeing outcomes in the best interests of our community.

### **Cultural Considerations**

The implementation of a procurement framework that includes a more specific evaluation and assessment approach to the engagement of suppliers, vendors and partners will take into account cultural outcomes and opportunities in the best interests of our community.

### **Economic Development Considerations**

A new Procurement Policy and Strategy will ensure that the quality and the value for money of the goods and services procured are not compromised.

The implementation of a procurement framework that includes a new approach to the engagement of suppliers, vendors and partners that demonstrate corporate responsibility through social and environmental outcomes would facilitate positive local economic outcomes. This would be strengthened through engagement with local businesses on how they can work with Council to achieve better community outcomes, in addition to potentially leveraging extended local networks.

Options to include requirement for potential vendors and tenderers to detail affiliations that they may have with activities that are inconsistent with Council's values (such as mining and gambling for example) as part of any evaluation criteria will be tested.

### **Financial and Resource Implications**

It is important that the implementation of a new social procurement framework does not significantly increase Council's costs for goods, services and works or compromise value for money. This will be assessed as part of the development of the new Policy and Procurement Strategy.

### **Legal and Risk Implications**

There are competition law, administrative law and procurement issues associated with seeking to specifically exclude entities from participating in public purchasing processes.

Doing so could leave Council open to legal challenge and potential prosecution for contravention of the *Competition and Consumer Act 2010* (Cth) (CCA).

Council has obtained legal advice regarding its previous resolution which seeks to establish Darebin as an Adani Free City by ceasing any future association with organisations known to have a financial interest in, provide goods or services to or otherwise support the proposed Adani Carmichael Coal Mine until such time as that association is ceased ("the Proposal").

This advice indicates that if Council determined to award tenders or enter into contracts according to affiliations with Adani, the existence of such an affiliation may constitute an irrelevant consideration and therefore a breach of the rules of procedural fairness (or natural justice) and may also contravene the CCA. This might open Council's decisions on such matters to challenge by way of an action in judicial review.

It is therefore recommended that the new Policy and Strategy seek to include assessment criteria that supports the engagement of suppliers, vendors and partners that demonstrate corporate responsibility through delivery of social and environmental outcomes rather than exclude those that do not from participating in the process. It is about improving the alignment of all procurement practices and outcomes with Council's vision.

## DISCUSSION

The use of social and sustainable procurement practices would allow Council to meet the needs for goods, services and works, not only on the basis of the best practice principles in procurement, but more widely by maximising long-term net benefits for our community.

These wider benefits are directly compatible with the primary objective of Council to endeavour to achieve the best outcomes for the local community having regard to the long-term and cumulative effects of decisions made now.

To undertake social and sustainable procurement, Council must comply with all general requirements relating to procurement and in addition should ensure that:

- Council's procurement policy specifically provides for the inclusion of social and sustainable benefit considerations in procurements;
- The request for tender/quote materials for a particular procurement clearly state that social and sustainable benefits will be considered, with details about the kinds of benefits that will or may be considered; and
- If social and sustainable benefits form part of the basis for selection of a particular service provider, that the benefits are clearly articulated in terms of benefit to the community and financial benefit in a manner that demonstrates the contribution of the benefit to Council's objectives as set out under section 3C of the *Local Government Act 1989* (Vic).

This will meet the relevant requirements of the *Local Government Act 1989* and minimise the risk of challenges to the procurement process under common law.

While Council's procurement policy makes a commitment to social and sustainable procurement, there is an opportunity for Council to exercise this in a more tangible and explicit way and redefining procurement policy and evaluation criterion will be the first step.

For Council to embed social and sustainable procurement as a legitimate part of mainstream practice, Council will be required to review its Procurement Policy and Strategy. The existing Council Procurement Policy, Procurement Guidelines and tender templates provide the framework through which a local government's procurement activity is undertaken.

It is important that these key procurement documents are reviewed and updated to incorporate social and sustainable procurement principles and practices supported by a focused staff engagement and training program across Council.

This work can be undertaken as part of the complete review of all procurement and contract documentation.

The new procurement policy statement will also need to be socialised with the open market to ensure our intent and vision is clearly articulated and understood. This would also include Council communicating procurement success stories arising from the implementation of the new procurement framework.

## **OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION**

- Option 1 Prepare a new Social Procurement Strategy (*recommended*)
- Option 2 Do nothing. Retain the existing procurement arrangements

## **IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY**

### **Details**

If endorsed, work will commence immediately and will include reviews of Council's:

- Procurement Policy
- Procurement Framework
- Workflows and associated procurement documents
- Contract management

This work is included in the 2018/19 Council Plan Action Plan. It is anticipated that it will be complete by March 2019.

The implementation of a new Procurement Policy and Strategy will be facilitated through compulsory staff training. Socialising the new procurement arrangements will also occur with the open market and vendors to ensure our intent and vision is clearly articulated and understood.

### **Communication**

- Engagement with Council staff on reviewing and improving Council's procurement policy, procedures and processes would be undertaken.
- Training across Council will be required to successfully implement Council's procurement policy, procedures and processes including social and sustainable procurement practices.

## **RELATED DOCUMENTS**

- Victorian Local Government Best Practice Procurement Guidelines 2013
- Beyond Value for Money: Social Procurement for Victorian Local Government

### **Attachments**

Nil

**DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST**

Section 80C of the *Local Government Act 1989* requires members of Council staff and persons engaged under contract to provide advice to Council to disclose any direct or indirect interest in a matter to which the advice relates.

The 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.

**8.4 LANGUAGE AIDE AND MULTILINGUAL LINE  
2017 REVIEW - IMPLEMENTATION UPDATE**

**Author:** Team Leader Training & Development - Customer Service  
Coordinator Customer Service

**Reviewed By:** General Manager Governance and Engagement

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**PURPOSE**

To provide Council with an update of the status of the implementation of the outcomes from the 2017 Language Aide and Multilingual Line Review.

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Established in March 2000, the Language Aide program utilises the skills of bilingual Council staff to provide communication assistance to residents and other customers and stakeholders.

In 2016, a review of the Language Aide program was a key recommendation of the Customer Service Model Review. The review was conducted in 2017 and outlined a series of recommendations designed to improve the service in conjunction with recommendations provided by Council.

An overview of the status of those recommendations is provided in this report.

<b>Recommendation</b>
-----------------------

**That** Council notes this report on the Language Aide and Multilingual Line 2017 Review – Implementation Update.

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**BACKGROUND / KEY INFORMATION**

In August 2017, Council resolved to request a report on the implementation and outcomes of the 2017 Language Aide and Multilingual Line Review. Specifically, Council resolved:

*'That Council:*

- (1) *Note this report and the recommendation of the Language Aide and Multilingual Telephone Line Review 2017.*
- (2) *In line with the key finding of this report officers develop and implement the following strategies to:*
  - a) *Increase the overall number of interpreting and translation request to internal Language Aides, especially for Arabic, Mandarin and Cantonese;*
  - b) *Increase the speed of the service for LOTE users to improve satisfaction levels which are currently low;*
  - c) *Reduce the time taken to manage a call on the MTL queue as on average it is double of the Customer Service queue*
  - d) *Reduce the abandonment rate among calls to the multilingual queue*

- e) *Eliminate the nearly 60% of calls to the MTL that are conducted in English only which circumvent the Customer Service queue.*
  - f) *Increase the awareness of the MTL amongst residents, including a high profile campaign in Darebin Community News, other media outlets and with targeted direct mail.*
  - g) *Review the set-up of the front counter customer service centres to facilitate better and more practical use of Language Aids or professional interpreters*
  - h) *Provide greater prominence to Multicultural language services on the Council home page.*
  - i) *Improve data collection and monitoring for Council reporting purposes*
- (3) *Receive a further report in 12 months on the implementation and outcomes of the above recommendations.'*

## COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT

### Communications

The program is supported by a communications plan.

### ANALYSIS

#### Alignment to Council Plan / Council policy

Goal 5 - Involving our diverse community

Darebin has an extraordinarily diverse community comprising many non-English speaking residents. 1 in 15 people in Darebin identify as having a low level of proficiency in English. Most requests for language assistance to Customer Service result in the use of internal Language Aides, with an average of over 60% of requests managed in house.

The program directly supports Council's commitment to employee diversity via Darebin's Diversity Capabilities Framework by calling on the skills of staff to aid in the routine work that Council does with its residents and other stakeholders. The pool of Language Aide support staff includes people from a diversity of age, gender and spoken language groups who are acknowledged and remunerated for their skills. As a result, Language Aides became champions of access and equity in their respective work areas which results in a more flexible and inclusive workplace.

### DISCUSSION

Established in March 2000, the Language Aide program utilises the skills of bilingual Council staff to provide communication assistance to residents and other customers and stakeholders. The purpose of the Language Aide program is to facilitate equal access and participation in Council services and programs by people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities. It is an important service which assists Council to achieve its commitment to a cohesive, included and engaged community. In 2016, a review of the Language Aide program was a key recommendation of the Customer Service Model Review.

The recommendation required that the outcome of the review improve its functionality and overhaul face to face and phone data collection systems. The review was completed in July 2017 (**Appendix C**).

The Language Aide program continues to deliver on its promise of easy access to Council for people from CALD backgrounds with over 70% of all incoming CALD interactions being conducted by a Language Aide for the 2017/18 financial year.

The current status of implementation of recommendations from the 2017 Language Aide Review is as follows:

Recommendation	Status
Implement pre-certification training identified by NAATI for as an opt-in option for existing Language Aides and as mandatory for new Language Aides.	Complete
Implement the testing system being developed by NAATI which is based on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages as optional for existing Language Aides and as mandatory for new Language Aides.	Complete
Investigate changes to data collection that allow simple, request-linked and easy reporting of support instances in Pathway (or any customer request system).	Complete
Develop a performance measure for the MTL to continuously monitor service performance and usage.	Complete
Implement suggested changes to the routing of MTL calls and usage of prime agents and skills based routing.	Complete
Ensure that the internal and external communications and training plan is refined and implemented. This should include communication via the intranet, website and updates in the knowledge management system.	Complete
Implement and communicate within the organisation all key Language Aide policy and guidelines changes including adoption of the training, recruitment and remuneration recommendations.	In Progress
Design & Implement processes to count CALD visitors to all Customer Service Centres.	Complete
Measure the effectiveness of changes to the policy and guidelines quarterly	Ongoing
Work with Councils within the Northern Metropolitan Region to explore, develop and share resources and ideas for expansion and shared services.	Ongoing
Work towards creating a significant and inclusive plan to integrate indigenous language into the Language Aide program and include this as part of Council's Aboriginal Action Plan 2017-2019.	Ongoing
Increase the overall number of interpreting and translation request to internal Language Aides, especially for Arabic, Mandarin and Cantonese;	Ongoing
b) Increase the speed of the service for LOTE users to improve satisfaction levels which are currently low;	Ongoing
c) Reduce the time taken to manage a call on the MTL queue as on average it is double of the Customer Service queue	Ongoing
d) Reduce the abandonment rate among calls to the multilingual queue	Ongoing
e) Eliminate the nearly 60% of calls to the MTL that are conducted in English only which circumvent the Customer Service queue.	Complete
f) Increase the awareness of the MTL amongst residents, including a high profile campaign in Darebin Community News, other media outlets and with targeted direct mail.	Ongoing



Recommendation	Status
g) Review the set-up of the front counter customer service centres to facilitate better and more practical use of Language Aids or professional interpreters	Complete
h) Provide greater prominence to Multicultural language services on the Council home page.	In Progress
i) Improve data collection and monitoring for Council reporting purposes	Complete

### Environmental Sustainability Considerations

There are no factors in this report which impact upon the environment.

### Equity, Inclusion and Wellbeing Considerations

The Language Aide Program contributes to Council's obligations under the Multicultural Victoria Act (2011) and Victoria's Equal Opportunity Act 2010 by enhancing the availability of language support to all consumers and provides a cultural bridge into a sometimes cumbersome and regulation oriented business.

### Cultural Considerations

Darebin has an extraordinarily diverse community comprising many non-English speaking residents. The Language Aide program provides an interim and immediate measure for residents who may have an entrenched distrust of governments and government processes. This can be especially true for people who have arrived in Australia and spent time in detention centres where their immediate experience has formed a personal view of all government agencies. Providing interpreting and translating services is an essential way of ensuring that non-English speakers stay connected and that a trusting relationship can be built around these services.

### Economic Development Considerations

There are no factors in this report which impact upon economic development.

### Financial and Resource Implications

Implementation of Language Aide and MTL Review 2017 recommendations have been delivered within current financial resources.

### Legal and Risk Implications

There are no legal or risk implications.

### RELATED DOCUMENTS

- Council meeting minutes - 21 August 2017

### Attachments

- Implementation Status Report Recommendations of the Language Aide and Multilingual Line Review (**Appendix A**) [↓](#)
- Language Aide Program and Multilingual Telephone Line Marketing Strategy and Action Plan (**Appendix B**) [↓](#)

- Language Aide MTL Review Final Report - July 2017 (**Appendix C**) [↓](#)

### **DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST**

Section 80C of the *Local Government Act 1989* requires members of Council staff and persons engaged under contract to provide advice to Council to disclose any direct or indirect interest in a matter to which the advice relates.

The 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.

**Implementation Status Report:  
Recommendations of the Language Aide and Multilingual Line Review**

Item	Recommendation	Status	Comments
1.01	Implement pre-certification training identified by NAATI for as an opt-in option for existing Language Aides and as mandatory for new Language Aides.	Complete	<p>January 2018 - A number of Language Aides have attended Monash University's 'Entry to Community Interpreting' courses and have provided positive feedback.</p> <p>March 2018 - We are working with Monash University to develop a training package for Language Aides that will help in achieving NAATI accreditation and further study. Work on this will commence in the 2018/19 financial year.</p> <p>May 2018 - Monash University are undertaking a programmed assessment of our Language Aide Support Group that includes assessment of Language Use and Training Needs of our Language Aides.</p>
1.02	Implement the testing system being developed by NAATI which is based on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages as optional for existing Language Aides and as mandatory for new Language Aides.	Complete	<p>July 2018 - NAATI have confirmed that they are trialling a new Language Aide Testing model. NAATI have proposed that we offer some of our Language Aides to participate in the new testing model.</p> <p>August 2018 - NAATI have identified testing opportunities to commence in October 2018 for Language Aides. Language Aides have begun registering.</p>
2.01	Investigate changes to data collection that allow simple, request-linked and easy reporting of support instances in Pathway (or any customer request system).	Complete	We have made improvements to existing data collection systems in order to streamline the information gathered for easy comparison.
2.02	Develop a performance measure for the MTL to continuously monitor service performance and usage.	Complete	We have made improvements to existing data reporting systems in order to streamline the way we measure the performance of the MTL.
2.03	Implement suggested changes to the routing of MTL calls and usage of prime agents and skills based routing.	Complete	<p>July 2018 - Suggested changes have been implemented as per the Marketing Plan.</p> <p>Since employing a dedicated agent, the service level has improved by an average of 20% per month. Prior to the Prime Agent's employment, the average service level was 52%, post officer employment the service level has averaged over 75%.</p>
2.04	Ensure that the internal and external communications and training plan is refined and implemented. This should include communication via the intranet, website and updates in the knowledge management system.	Complete	June 2018 - The Marketing Plan is in the process of being finalised and is in it's first stage of implementation.

**Implementation Status Report:  
Recommendations of the Language Aide and Multilingual Line Review**

Item	Recommendation	Status	Comments
2.05	Implement and communicate within the organisation all key Language Aide policy and guidelines changes including adoption of the training, recruitment and remuneration recommendations.	In Progress	June 2018 - The Marketing Plan is in the process of being finalised and is in it's first stage of implementation. Internal communications regarding changes and improvements to the Language Aide Program have been communicated to the organisation via internal communication mechanisms. Implementation of the policy has been delayed due to ongoing EBA negotiations, as these negotiations form a major part of the policy implementation.
2.06	Design & Implement processes to count CALD visitors to all Customer Service Centres.	Complete	We have introduced a new data collection mechanism for counting CALD customers, however this has proven difficult as Officers are hesitant to assume that customers want to be identified as coming from a CALD background if they haven't requested the support of a Language Aide or Professional Interpreter.
2.07	Measure the effectiveness of changes to the policy and guidelines quarterly	Ongoing	This is ongoing work via quantitative data collection and qualitative information gathering from participants of the Language Aide Program and Language Aide Support Officers
3.01	Work with Councils within the Northern Metropolitan Region to explore, develop and share resources and ideas for expansion and shared services.	Ongoing	Initial discussions have been planned.
4.01	Work towards creating a significant and inclusive plan to integrate indigenous language into the Language Aide program and include this as part of Council's Aboriginal Action Plan 2017-2019.	Ongoing	Initial discussions have been planned.
5.01	Increase the overall number of interpreting and translation request to internal Language Aides, especially for Arabic, Mandarin and Cantonese;	Ongoing	June 2018 - The Marketing Plan is in the process of being finalised and is in it's first stage of implementation. It includes strategies to increase the number of requests received from communities that are Arabic, Mandarin and Cantonese users.
5.02	b) Increase the speed of the service for LOTE users to improve satisfaction levels which are currently low;	Ongoing	A dedicated officer (Prime Agent) on the MTL has improved the Average Speed of Answer by an average of 50%. Prior to the Prime Agent's employment, the Average Speed of Answer was 40 seconds, post employment the Average Speed of Answer has reduced to an average of 20 seconds.

**Implementation Status Report:  
Recommendations of the Language Aide and Multilingual Line Review**

Item	Recommendation	Status	Comments
5.03	c) Reduce the time taken to manage a call on the MTL queue as on average it is double of the Customer Service queue	Ongoing	<p>There have been some difficulties in quantifying this recommendation as we have found that the majority of calls that require a Language Aide or Professional Interpreter will always generally take longer to manage than a call through to the Customer Service queue.</p> <p>This is due to the work being undertaken by Language Aides and Customer Service Officers to provide a cultural bridge into Council bureaucracy, which can be the source of confusion and frustration for people from CALD and NESB backgrounds. It also requires extra time to explain services and processes.</p>
5.04	d) Reduce the abandonment rate among calls to the multilingual queue	Ongoing	Abandoned calls have reduced by around 9 calls per month, with further improvements to the MTL Queue being implemented in July 2018 which should see this number reduce again.
5.05	e) Eliminate the nearly 60% of calls to the MTL that are conducted in English only which circumvent the Customer Service queue.	Complete	<p>Amendments to the MTL Queue Design are in the process of being implemented. Amendments include:</p> <p>The initial announcement has been shortened to under 15 seconds to reduce the incidence of abandonment e.g. "Welcome to the City of Darebin, you have called the Multilingual Telephone Line".</p> <p>After the main announcement, officers answering this line will make the following statement: "Welcome to the Darebin Multilingual Line, which language do you require". This will ensure all English calls are directed to the main Customer Service (8888) queue and that those callers will not attempt to circumvent the Customer Service queue and any genuine callers' communication needs are immediately attended to.</p>
5.06	f) Increase the awareness of the MTL amongst residents, including a high profile campaign in Darebin Community News, other media outlets and with targeted direct mail.	Ongoing	The Marketing Plan is in the process of being finalised and is in it's first stage of implementation, it includes clearly defined strategies to promote the service to target user groups.
5.07	g) Review the set-up of the front counter customer service centres to facilitate better and more practical use of Language Aids or professional interpreters	Complete	See item 2.06
5.08	h) Provide greater prominence to Multicultural language services on the Council home page.	In Progress	The Marketing Plan is in the process of being finalised and is in it's first stage of implementation. it includes strategies to improve online information regarding Council's Language Aide Program with the support of Council's Communication Unit.

**Implementation Status Report:  
Recommendations of the Language Aide and Multilingual Line Review**

Item	Recommendation	Status	Comments
5.09	i) Improve data collection and monitoring for Council reporting purposes	Complete	We are making improvements to existing systems of data collection in order to streamline the information gathered for easy comparison and have produced a dashboard which provides an overall view of the service, including languages accessed, method of contact and volume of work covered by Language Aides vs. professional interpreting services.



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# Language Aide Program & Multilingual Telephone Line

Marketing Strategy & Action Plan

June 2018

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**Executive Summary**

Established in March 2000, the Language Aide Program utilises the skills of bilingual Council staff to provide communication assistance to residents and other relevant customers and stakeholders. The purpose of the Language Aide program is to facilitate equal access and participation in Council services and programs by people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities.

An effective strategy for interacting with customers from a spectrum of cultural and sociolinguistic backgrounds is an essential component of providing equal access to services for community members who have low proficiency in English.

The Language Aide Program and Multilingual Telephone Line (MTL) were comprehensively reviewed in 2017 – one of the recommendations was to develop a comprehensive communications and training plan. This Marketing Strategy will provide the rationale for the chosen communications.

This document will outline the approximate size of the market in service usage, and detail a targeted marketing strategy and provide a plan moving forward.

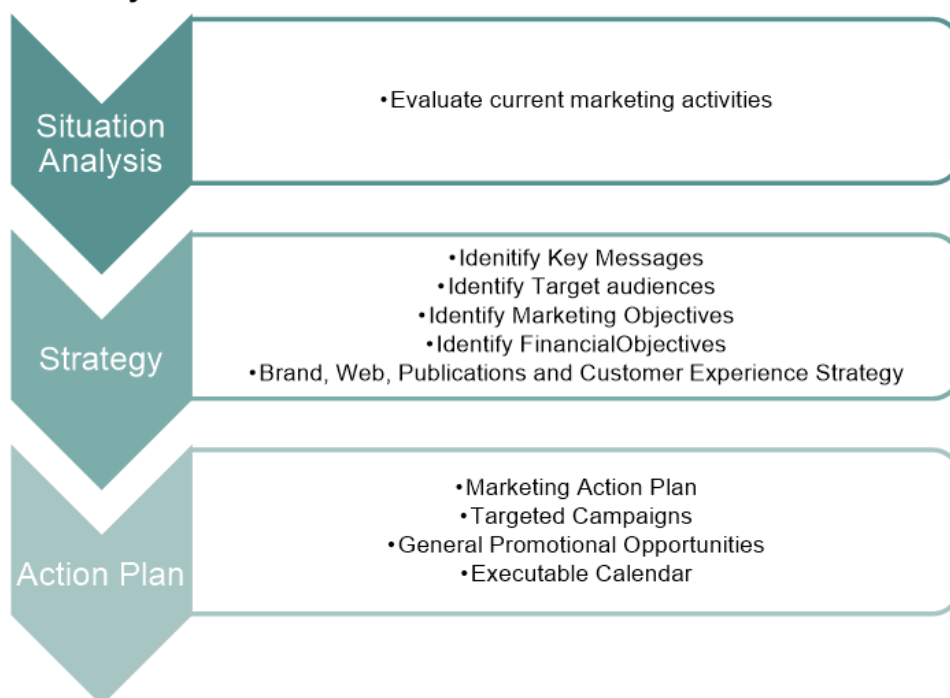
The timing of this strategy is important as it will set out how to approach a large portion of the community that is rapidly evolving within the City of Darebin.

This strategy needs to help answer the question “why would I use the Council’s language services?” In other words – what differentiates Darebin’s Language Aide Program and MTL from using a family member or other support person to help with bridging the gap between Council and CALD community members?

Answering this question can be achieved bearing in mind the challenges currently being faced:

1. a general marketing and promotional environment that is noisy and drowns out the message of your service and makes it difficult to stand out; and
2. the complexity, diversity and breadth of the CALD community groups within Darebin and their differing needs
3. a disjointed communications approach – a marketing plan requires unification of key messages across all communication points.

**Situation Analysis**

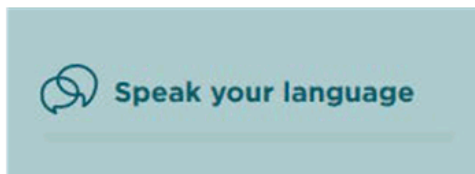


## Position in the Marketplace

### Brand Equity

Brand equity is a phrase used in marketing which describes the value of having a well-known brand name, based on the idea that the owner of a well-known brand name can generate more money from services/products with that brand than from services/products with a less well-known name.

An audit was conducted by the Communications department at Council to refresh and revive the City of Darebin brand in 2014 resulting in a new 'Speak Your Language' logo:



The previous logo was as follows:



The rebranding exercise was undertaken to develop and maintain brand equity for the council and its various programs and services. What the audit discovered was that the Darebin brand had been diluted and used in such a way that people within the municipality could not identify council facilities, services and programs as part of and funded by council.

There are some issues with the use of the 'Speak Your Language' logo and phrasing – across the Darebin website there are locations where this has been changed to 'Speak My Language'. This could be confusing for service users who are looking for the 'your' pronoun within the Darebin website.

However, there are many ways to embed the brand with the right cultural groups who need to understand council services in the language of origin.

### What kinds of services and community groups exist in the current market place?

Within the municipality of Darebin – there are a vast number of community groups and clubs which celebrate separate ethnic and religious groups. There are too many to list so this report focuses mainly on groups who provide a broad range of services and represent the community at Council functions and events. They are:

*Darebin Ethnic Communities Council (DECC)* – The DECC is the peak body for ethnic communities within the Darebin municipality in the State of Victoria. Council hosts DECC offices within the Intercultural Centre.

*Action on Disability within Ethnic Communities Inc. (ADEC)* - ADEC is a state-wide organisation that strives to empower people with a disability from Non-English speaking backgrounds, their carers, and families to fully participate as members of the Victorian community. Its head office is located within Darebin.

*Darebin Interfaith Council Committee* – the committee was established on the 29 June 2005 and is managed by a two year appointed Governing Committee. Since its establishment, the Committee has been actively working at a municipal and regional level to promote peace and harmony through dialogue and engagement with community leaders and faith representatives. This is achieved through the organisation of annual events and projects which are open to the participation of the Darebin community.

*Victorian Cooperative on Children's Services for Ethnic Groups (VICSEG)* - VICSEG New Futures is a not for profit, community organisation incorporating the Victorian Cooperative on Children's Services for Ethnic Groups (VICSEG Programs for Families, Children & Young People) and New Futures Training. Together VICSEG Programs for Families, Children & Young People and New Futures Training provide support and training to newly arrived and recently settled migrant communities, refugees and asylum seekers.

*Spectrum Migrant Resource Centre* - Spectrum delivers services to newly arrived and established people with migrant and refugee backgrounds in the northern and western Melbourne areas. They work together with individuals and families to help them successfully settle into all aspects of community life.

This is a small sample of the representative groups within Darebin. However there is a vast array of services and cultural clubs that gather at Council facilities and other venues within Darebin. This marketing plan will seek the managers of the Language Aide Program to work with Council's departments that have established relationships across these groups and services. Those departments and business units (at the time of printing) are:

- Aged & Disability
  - Service Delivery
  - Community Participation and Development
- Creative Culture & Events
  - Community Hubs
- Families, Youth & Children
- Equity & Wellbeing
  - Community Wellbeing & Social Policy
  - Equity & Diversity

#### **What is the current size of the market?**

2016 Census Data shows 59.2% of the Darebin population reported they are Australian born, and 40.7% reported they were born overseas.

About 1 in 15 people in Darebin identify as having a low level of proficiency in English. More non-English speaking residents are found in the Northern suburbs of Darebin. The low English proficiency group are mostly made up of Italian, Greek, Mandarin, Vietnamese, Arabic, Cantonese and Macedonian speakers.

A group of 10,678 Darebin residents have identified themselves as having a low level of English proficiency. A total of 54,334 (37%) Darebin residents report speaking a language other than English at home.

At 7.3% of the Darebin population, this is significantly higher than the Greater Melbourne average of 5.0%.

### How many people use the LA Service/MTL?

Rate of calls per resident per year	Darebin Population	Number of CS calls	Rate	Low-English population	Number of MTL calls	Rate
2016/17	146,719	149,203	101.7%	10,678	1,462	13.7%

### Current Marketing Activities

There is no consistent campaign or marketing approach to advertise the MTL or Language Aide service other than the 'lock-up' used below on all council flyers, and newsletters:

<b>CITY OF DAREBIN</b> 274 Gower Street, Preston PO Box 91, Preston, Vic 3072 <b>T 8470 8888 F 8470 8877</b> <b>E mailbox@darebin.vic.gov.au darebin.vic.gov.au</b>	 <b>National Relay Service</b> If you are deaf, or have a hearing or speech impairment, contact us through the National Relay Service. <a href="http://relayservice.gov.au">relayservice.gov.au</a>	 <b>Speak your language</b> <b>T 8470 8470</b> العربية Italiano 繁體中文 Македонски Ελληνικά Soomalii हिंदी Tiếng Việt
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The number is also advertised on the website as well as with a section with the 'Speak Your Language' reference provided on Council's letterhead.

### Feedback

The only feedback that is gathered regarding the Language Aide Program and Multilingual Telephone Line is via an annual question in the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter of the Darebin Community Survey.

The Darebin Community Survey is conducted four times a year. It is a door knock interview with 250 randomly selected Darebin residential households. Most of the survey involves measuring level of satisfaction with council services. However, there is an opportunity every quarter for managers to ask 'one-off' questions around a proposed service change, a new project or to assess expectation or perception of residents.

Questions regarding Council's Multilingual services are asked in the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter (March) each year. This is currently the only source of regular and measurable feedback received. The questions are themed as follows:

**Awareness:** Are you aware that Council provides a multi-lingual telephone service for any Council service enquiries?

2017/18 Analysis:

Respondents from multi-lingual households (60.1%) were slightly less likely to be aware of the multi-lingual telephone service than were respondents from English speaking households (67.3%).

This variation may well reflect a lower level of engagement with Council of respondents from multi-lingual households than respondents from English speaking households.

**Method of finding out about the service:** How did you first find out about this service?

2017/18 Analysis:

The main method by which respondents first became aware of the multilingual telephone service remain the same as last year, either they saw it in a publication (39.6%), word of mouth (29.2%) or the website (16.2%).

**Importance of the multi-lingual service:** On a scale of zero (very unimportant) to ten (very important), with five being neutral, how important do you believe it is that Council provides the multi-lingual telephone service?

**2017/18 Analysis:**

Respondents on average considered it very important that Council provides the multilingual telephone service, with average importance of 8.57 this year, almost identical to the 8.55 recorded last year.

**Online Presence**

The current online presence of the Language Aide Program and Multilingual Telephone Line are very limited and outlined below.

**Website**

The Language Aide Program is outlined on the website via the following links:

<http://www.darebin.vic.gov.au/Your-Council/Talk-to-us/Customer-Service#Speak-My-Language-Interpreting-Services>

<http://www.darebin.vic.gov.au/Darebin-Living/Community-support/Multicultural>

<http://www.darebin.vic.gov.au/> (scroll to the bottom to find 'Speak Your Language' lock up)

The content on each page is quite fractured, overly verbose and difficult to navigate.

**YouTube:**

There are several videos on Council's YouTube profile that advertise the service in the top 10 languages spoken within the municipality including English.

Language	YouTube Link	Video Title	Number of Views	Date of Publication
English	<a href="https://youtu.be/30nUXEvUkpk">https://youtu.be/30nUXEvUkpk</a>	DarebinMTS_11_Englis	175 Views	7 May 2013
Greek	<a href="https://youtu.be/l6XvLJX8TAq">https://youtu.be/l6XvLJX8TAq</a>	Darebin MTS Greek	133 views	30 June 2013
Vietnamese	<a href="https://youtu.be/vZn87Ev3Wxc">https://youtu.be/vZn87Ev3Wxc</a>	Vietnamese Telephone Line	167 Views	14 May 2013
Somali	<a href="https://youtu.be/gR7hZOsCB-s">https://youtu.be/gR7hZOsCB-s</a>	Somali Multilingual Telephone Line	109 views	8 May 2013
Mandarin	<a href="https://youtu.be/VfP0g-h1wEc">https://youtu.be/VfP0g-h1wEc</a>	DarebinMTS_11_Mandarin	172 views	8 May 2013
Macedonian	<a href="https://youtu.be/P4JOb7s71ko">https://youtu.be/P4JOb7s71ko</a>	DarebinMTS_11_Macedonian	95 Views	8 May 2013
Italian	<a href="https://youtu.be/12RVPX9o3SU">https://youtu.be/12RVPX9o3SU</a>	DarebinMTS_11_Italian	136 Views	8 May 2013
Hindi	<a href="https://youtu.be/wjVpnSrZdSE">https://youtu.be/wjVpnSrZdSE</a>	DarebinMTS_11_Hindi	174 Views	7 May 2013
Cantonese	<a href="https://youtu.be/SSyRKSZSuMI">https://youtu.be/SSyRKSZSuMI</a>	DarebinMTS_11_Cantonese	103 views	7 May 2013
Arabic	<a href="https://youtu.be/ShziAsZ9MCA">https://youtu.be/ShziAsZ9MCA</a>	Multilingual (sic) Telephone Line in Arabic	136 Views	6 May 2013

These videos were produced in 2013 and it may be time to revisit them. There is an opportunity here to utilise this format to promote the service.

### Radio Advertising

In 2017, a decision was made to trial radio advertising on SBS Radio and 3CR for languages that are amongst the top 20 languages spoken within the municipality but with little contact to the MTL. This data was gathered via the 2016 Census and not via Darebin's pre-determined top eight community languages. The following advertising was undertaken:

Platform	Dates	Language	Program	MTL Stats (# calls over that period)
3CR 855AM, 3CR Digital and streamed live via <a href="http://www.3cr.org.au">www.3cr.org.au</a>	3 July – 30 September 12 week campaign	Turkish	Turkish Women's Show, 9.30 – 10pm Tuesdays	1
3CR 855AM, 3CR Digital and streamed live via <a href="http://www.3cr.org.au">www.3cr.org.au</a>	3 July – 30 September 12 week campaign	Spanish	Mujeres Latinoamericanas, 7 – 8pm Thursdays	0
3CR 855AM, 3CR Digital and streamed live via <a href="http://www.3cr.org.au">www.3cr.org.au</a>	3 July – 30 September 12 week campaign	Spanish	Mafalda, 6.30 – 7.30pm Fridays	0
3CR 855AM, 3CR Digital and streamed live via <a href="http://www.3cr.org.au">www.3cr.org.au</a>	3 July – 30 September 12 week campaign	Spanish	Voice of Chile, 7.30 – 8pm Fridays	0
SBS Radio 2 (Victoria)	1 June – 14 June 2 Week Campaign	Hindi	Sun & Sat 5pm-6pm	0
SBS Radio 2 (Victoria)	1 June – 14 June 2 Week Campaign	Persian	Sun – Sat 7am – 9am	2
SBS Radio 2 (Victoria)	1 June – 14 June 2 Week Campaign	Persian (Farsi)	Tues & Thurs 3pm – 4pm	
SBS Radio 2 (Victoria)	1 June – 14 June 2 Week Campaign	Indonesian	Sun & Wednesday 3pm – 4pm	0

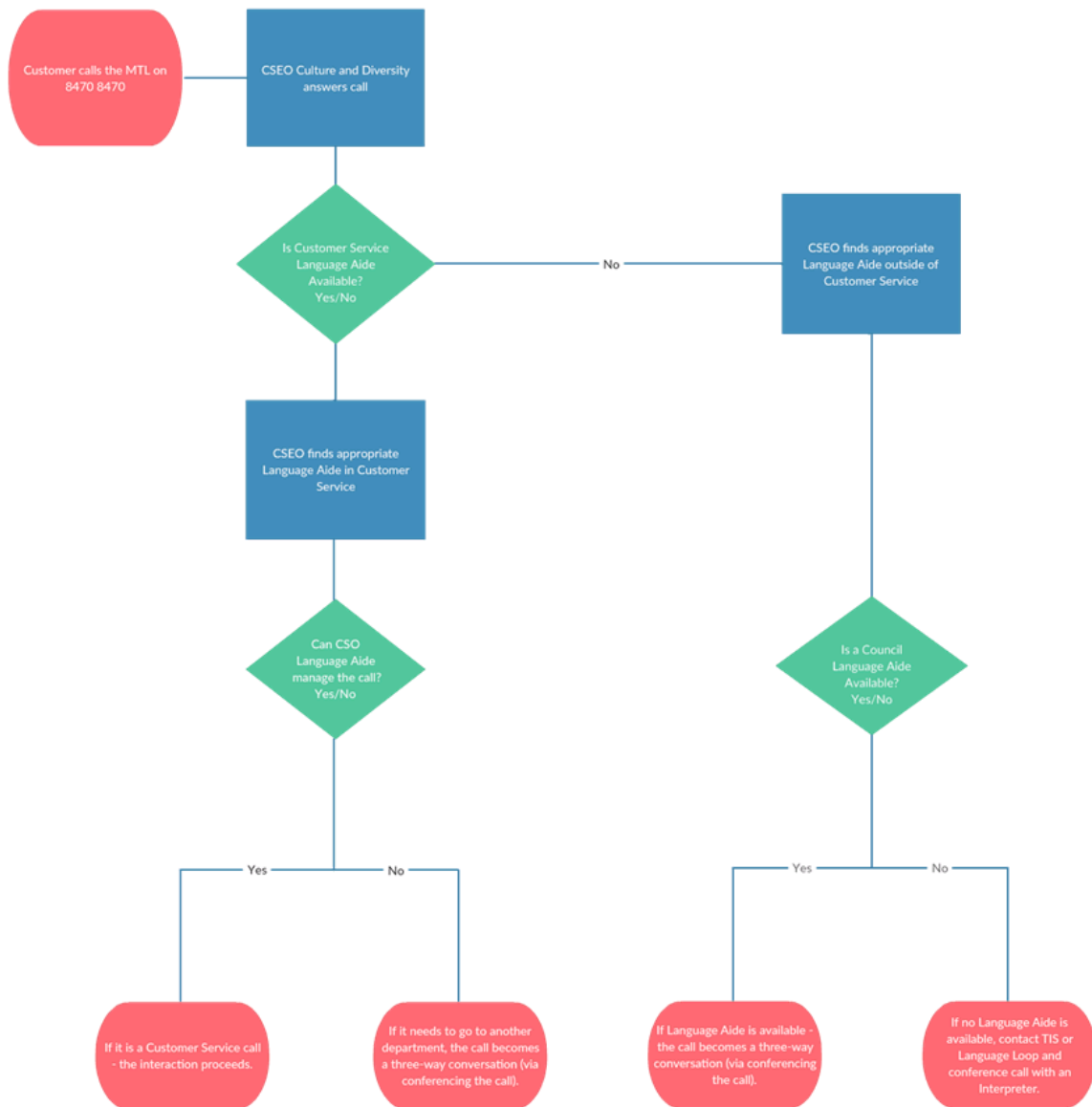
It is evident by the lack of phone call interactions that this type of advertising is inefficient and does not produce any value for return on investment.

**Current Customer Experience**

The current customer experience of Language Aide and MTL use is varied dependent on the way in which a CALD customer approaches Council.

In the main, Language Aide interactions occur at Customer Service front counters, via the MTL or via an appointment made with an officer. Service delivery is always based on availability of a Language Aide with interpreting services being available at all times.

Data from the Community Survey indicates that there is a difference in satisfaction between interactions that are face-to-face or over the phone. Satisfaction is lower for face-to-face visitors, with a rating of 7.48 compared to phone calls, which was rated at 8.67 out of 10 (10 being highly satisfied). This may indicate that it is more difficult for Customer Service staff to contact a Language Aide or interpreter when responding to a customer in person or that the required language is not available in the moment the customer requires it and requires extra steps and intervention to achieve first contact resolution. The flow chart below demonstrates the flow of a call into the MTL:



**Current Print & Publications Marketing**

There are no current MTL and Language Aide Program specific print marketing materials. Annual articles in the Darebin Community News feature the service. However these are written in English and are targeted at English speaking friends and family members of potential MTL users.

In previous years (prior to Darebin's overall rebranding in 2014) brochures, magnets and pamphlets were used to promote the service across Neighborhood Houses and other venues via various teams and units across Council. These have not been in circulation for a number of years.

**What the Research Tells Us**

In 2017, the Communications team commissioned Myriad International to produce a CALD Communications Report for internal use.

The key recommendations of the report advised Council that the strongest form of communication with CALD communities is via continuing engagement and relationship building via social activities, attendance at community groups and that any publications need to be specifically targeted to ethnicity, age and arrival context.

Knowledge of language services should not be assumed, and these need ongoing promotion. That written/translated resources be used in conjunction with engagement, as written materials can have limited value on their own. Such materials should also reflect accessible language, pictorials and images that are meaningful to the community.

That written translated resources be used in conjunction with engagement, as written materials can have limited value on their own. Such materials should also reflect accessible language, pictorials and images that are meaningful to the community.

The size of a community does not necessarily equate to need. Factors such as recent arrival, age and socio-economic status can impact on access to communication.

Except for young people, CALD communities have a preference for face to face communication delivered within their community settings or services where trusted relationships exist.

There are no one ideal means of communicating with CALD communities, and multi-faceted approaches are required using traditional media, ethnic media and social networks as well as family members. Social media is also highly useful for youth and new arrival communities who are technology savvy but have limited English language proficiency. Messages, therefore, should be concise and simple.



## Marketing Strategy

### Key Messages

- a. We can speak your language
- b. Let us help you understand how Council works

### Marketing Objectives

- Attract more service users

### Financial Objective

- NIL

### Developing Brand Equity

The Speak Your Language 'brand' personality is:

- Confident
- Strong
- Clear

## Targeted Promotional Opportunities

### A Visitors to Darebin Facilities

- Customer Service Centres
- Libraries
- Neighbourhood Houses
- Leisure Centres
- Childcare Centres & Kindergartens
- Maternal Health Centres
- Community Hubs

### B Ethnic Community Clubs and Groups

- Northwest Fiji Seniors Club
- Australian Greek Elderly Citizens Club Northcote
- Australian Greek Ex Servicemen's Elderly Club of Northcote
- Nevoliany Scopia Social Club Hall
- Batman Elderly Greek Women's Group
- Darebin Greek Women's Senior Citizens Group
- Greek Women's Elderly and Friendly Club
- Hellenic Stegi Friendly Elderly Citizens Club Inc
- St. Methodios and Kyrilos Greek Orthodox Church
- Reservoir Greek Elderly Citizens Club
- Thornbury Greek Senior Citizens Club
- Greek Senior Citizen's Club – The Hope

- Northern Region Indian Seniors Association
- Italian Elderly Citizens Group - Holy Spirit
- Italian Senior Citizens Club of Preston
- Italian Women's Club of Reservoir
- Kingsbury Italian Senior Citizens Club
- Merrilands Italian Senior Citizens Club
- Northcote Italian Pensioners Club
- Italian Senior Citizens Club – St Joseph's
- Reservoir Italian Pensioners Club
- St. Mary's Italian Elderly Citizens Club
- Thornbury Italian Senior Citizens Club
- Australian Lebanese Zhale Association
- Australian Lebanese Christian Ladies Group
- Maronite Activities Group for the Elderly
- Reskeon Maltese Seniors Group
- Merrilands Community Centre
- Australian Macedonian Pensioners Group of Reservoir
- Bigla Senior Citizens Group
- Macedonian Senior Citizens Club Pellister
- Macedonian Senior Citizens Group - St. Nikola Merlikinski

- Northcote Macedonian Senior Citizens Group
- Prespa Macedonian Senior Citizens Club
- Polish Senior Citizens Club of Reservoir
- Multi Ethnic Slavic Senior Citizens Group
- Preston / Reservoir Indochinese Elderly Group

#### **C Members of Darebin's Advisory Committees**

- Active and Healthy Ageing Community Advisory Board
- Darebin Aboriginal Advisory Committee
- Darebin Arts Ambassadors
- Darebin Disability Advisory Committee
- Darebin Education Committee
- Darebin Housing Committee
- Darebin Interfaith Council
- Darebin Women's Advisory Committee

- Darebin Youth Advisory Group

#### **D Informal Groups and Places of Worship**

- Greek Church of the Nazarene
- Islamic Society of Victoria
- St's Methodios & Cyril (Greek Orthodox)
- Australian Shia Gathering Place Inc
- Linh-Son Buddhist Temple
- St Mark's Coptic Orthodox Church
- Macedonian Bulgarian Eastern Orthodox Church
- Macedonian Orthodox Church
- St Nikola Macedonian Orthodox Church
- Islamic Society of Victoria
- Reservoir Mosque
- Alawi Islamic Social Centre
- Imam Ali Islamic Centre Melbourne
- Reservoir Vietnamese Baptist Church
- Preston Chinese Methodist Church

Integrated Marketing Approach

Online

Website

YouTube

Print & Publications

Brochures

Postcards/Business Cards

Posters

Customer Experience

Languages Available Board at Preston Front Counter

Correct Routing of MTL Calls

Implementation of Customer Feedback

Implementation of Communication Access Symbol Accreditation across Customer Service Centres

## Online Strategy

### Website

#### Redevelopment of MTL pages

The current offering on the Darebin website regarding information on Council's services are dependent upon officers from various business units having materials translated and then submitted to officers within the Communications team for inclusion on the website.

The Communications team have advised that this content is based on the most common questions that are asked of Council. Customer Service have not had any involvement or provided advice on this content (unless this content was procured prior to 2014).

This plan proposes to retain the current content, however, to work with business units who own the original content and advise that they translate pages within the website that are most commonly visited by members of the public. This should then be directly linked from original content to newly translated content.

This data can be provided by the Digital and Web team and be used to inform this part of the strategy.

Cost = Translation costs (borne by business units who own the original content)

Measure 1 = increased visits to the website

Measure 2 = increased use of MTL

#### YouTube

The current suite of videos developed are suitable and useful communication tools. However, they may benefit from updating and renaming so as to be searchable and increase their viewership.

It may also be worthwhile incorporating translated videos from other departments on pages with related translated content or embedded/linked to within highly viewed pages.

Another option worth considering is adding translated captions on current videos with high viewership so as to improve accessibility for those who speak a LOTE and share these resources more broadly with NESB community members.

This strategy will not incorporate the creation of new videos due to costs that exceed the budget for this type of work within this project and the historically low viewership of the current videos.

Cost = Translation costs (borne by business units who own the original content)

Measure 1 = increased visits to the website

Measure 2 = increased use of MTL

### Print & Publications Strategy

You can touch and hold print – it communicates on many more levels (kinetic, scent, visual, intellectual). It enables much more sophistication in message and branding, and many businesses have forgotten the value of print, so a printed message can stand out from the crowd. Print marketing is proactive – so you're not waiting for consumers to search for your information. It doesn't rely on technology to perpetuate itself, and creative print products get attention and drive action.

Print lasts – and travels, it gets read more often, it's often kept and referred to later and most importantly - it can be passed on to others – reaffirming the Darebin brand by the very important word of mouth channel (which is uncontrolled).

The brand needs to be applied across all printed materials, displays, posters and promotional campaigns. This will unify the message and improve consumer 'buy-in' – adding to the credibility of the venue and proclaiming it as a council asset.

### Targeted Materials

In the past – communications regarding the Language Aide Program have focused solely on the Multilingual Telephone Line and not on the breadth of services that can be provided.

There is an opportunity here to communicate the whole service (face to face, reading basic forms and letters etc...) in plain English.

It is proposed that a suite of materials be designed specifically to promote the service. Ongoing design work will require a small annual budget to cater for:

- Brochures
- Postcards
- Posters
- Small-format cards (similar to business cards)

These materials will then be distributed across the four target markets either via a direct mail program or via Council officers with direct relationships amongst these groups and venues:

- Visitors to Darebin Facilities
- Ethnic Community Clubs and Groups
- Members of Darebin's Advisory Committees
- Informal Groups and Places of Worship

Cost = graphic design and print fees

Measure = increased use of Language Aide Program

## Customer Experience Strategy

### Learning about the Customer

The Language Aide/MTL service needs to start regularly asking for feedback in order to better understand and service its customers. This is an essential part of knowing what kind of service to provide and how to target marketing.

Feedback can be collected using both qualitative and quantitative data collection.

#### Qualitative:

- Ask staff to report specific incidents verbal of feedback to the Language Aide Support Officer (Currently CSEO – Culture & Diversity)

#### Quantitative:

- Ask each customer who uses the service at a counter
- Cost = graphic design and print fees
- Measure = increased use of Language Aide Program

Cost = incorporated into the cost of Customer Service Mystery Shopping/Net Promoter Funding

Measure = increased use of Language Aide Program

### Communicating with Program Users

A few improvements to the face to face and telephone service are proposed to support customer interactions. These include:

- Introduction of a 'Languages Available' notice board at Preston Front Counter which changes each day depending on the officers available on site
- Implementation of Communication Access Symbol Accreditation across Customer Service Centres and accreditation via Scope.
- Amendments to the MTL Queue including:
  - The initial announcement to be shortened to under 10 seconds to reduce the incidence of abandonment e.g. "Welcome to the City of Darebin, you have called the Multilingual Telephone Line"
  - After the main announcement, officers answering this line will make the following statement: "Welcome to the Darebin Multilingual Line, which language do you require". This will ensure all English calls are directed to the main Customer Service (8888) queue and that those callers will not attempt to circumvent the Customer Service queue and any genuine callers' communication needs are immediately attended to.

Cost = administrative costs of making changes to the queue design

Measure = decreased abandonment rate

### Marketing Action Plan

Action	Internal/External	Communication Channel	Responsibility	Collateral Required
Create a dedicated web page with all relevant links and information that explains the Language Aide service and how it is used and partner with the Digital and Web Team in providing greater prominence to the Language Aide Program and MTL as per Council Resolution (detailed in Item 607 from Council Meeting held on 21 August 2017)	External	Web	Customer Service Administration Officer Customer Service Enhancement Officer – Culture & Diversity Communications - Digital and Web Team	Online
Work with business units with frequently accessed content on the website to support them in reformatting or redeveloping relevant and linkable content.	External	Web	Customer Service Enhancement Officer – Culture & Diversity Communications - Digital and Web Team Business Units Across Council	Online
Provide translated captions for current YouTube videos to increase their accessibility to CALD community members	External	Web	Customer Service Enhancement Officer – Culture & Diversity Communications - Digital and Web Team	Online
Re-title videos currently on YouTube to make them more easily searchable	External	Web	Customer Service Enhancement Officer – Culture & Diversity Communications - Digital and Web Team	Online
Develop a suite of printed materials, translated in the top 8 languages as well as those languages which represent the newly-arrived groups	External	Print	Customer Service Enhancement Officer – Culture & Diversity Communications – Brand and Design Specialist	Posters Brochures Postcards

Partner with business units in Council involved in direct service delivery to assist with promotion of the service by providing materials	External	Print	Customer Service Enhancement Officer – Culture & Diversity Business Units Across Council	Posters Brochures Postcards
Provide materials via direct mail to clubs and groups within Darebin as well as to community centres, neighbourhood houses and other venues	External	Print	Customer Service Enhancement Officer – Culture & Diversity Business Units Across Council	Posters Brochures Postcards
Provide bi-monthly updates via internal communication channels regarding the Language Aide Program etc....	Internal	Web	Customer Service Enhancement Officer – Culture & Diversity	NIL
Implement quantitative and qualitative feedback tools to begin measuring user satisfaction of the service that focuses face to face interactions and phone calls to the MTL.	External	Telephone & FtF	Customer Service Enhancement Officer – Culture & Diversity	NIL







the place  
to live

# Review of Language Aide Program & Multilingual Telephone Line

July 2017



**Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners And Aboriginal And Torres Strait Islander Communities in Darebin**

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Darebin City Council acknowledges the Wurundjeri people as the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the land we now call Darebin and pays respect to their Elders, past, present and future.

We pay respect to all other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in Darebin.

We recognise and pay 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.



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### Background & Rationale

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Established in March 2000, the Language Aide Program utilises the skills of bilingual Council staff to provide communication assistance to residents and other relevant customers and stakeholders. The purpose of the Language Aide program is to facilitate equal access and participation in Council services and programs by people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities.

An effective strategy for interacting with customers from a spectrum of cultural and sociolinguistic backgrounds is an essential component of providing equal access to services for community members who have a low proficiency in English. It is the understanding that people from different cultural groups need support to interact and develop new social connections that forms the basis of the Language Aide program.

The discipline of translating and interpreting allows bilingual language speakers to act as mediators and bridges between the cultures in our community. It also enables us as a community to operate cohesively within the context of a multicultural society.

The Language Aide Program is an important service which assists Council to achieve its commitment to a cohesive, included and engaged community. In 2016, a review of the Language Aide program was a key recommendation of the Customer Service Model Review. The recommendation required that the outcome of the review improve its functionality and overhaul face to face and phone data collection systems.

The provision of support via the Language Aide program is critical to customers who are unable or uncomfortable communicating in English and helps the community in the following ways:

- helping customers overcome complex service systems and rules;
- ensuring that services are provided at the same standard to all stakeholders from all backgrounds;
- ensuring legal requirements are met (e.g. obtaining informed consent);
- enhancing the quality of program and service delivery; and
- save on costs by delivering services in a more efficient, resource friendly and targeted approach.



**Executive Summary**

Darebin has an extraordinarily diverse community made of many non-English speaking residents. About 1 in 15 people in Darebin identify as having a low level of proficiency in English.

Most requests for language assistance result in the use of internal Language Aides, with around one-quarter of language support requests resulting in the use of professional interpreting services. Most interactions are over the phone with about one-quarter of requests coming from in-person interactions.

Having said that, it is clear that community requirements for the Language Aide Program are changing. The demographic of our population has shifted significantly since the inception of the service with a reduction in traditional language groups requiring support and an increase service to community members from alternate cultural groups. The shift is supported by data supplied by the Australian Bureau of Statistics and the Department of Immigration and Border Protection and our own internal data sources.

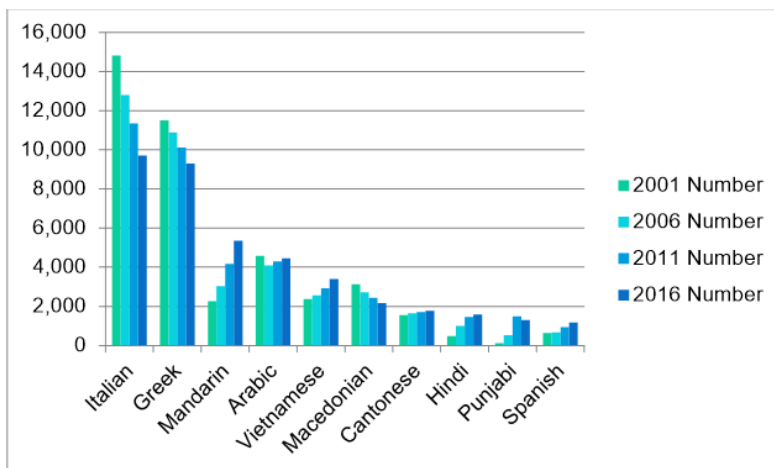


Figure 1 Language spoken at home – City of Darebin, ranked by size<sup>1</sup>

It is with these facts and numbers in mind that we undertake this review. Many improvements have been suggested that include providing a clear skills-based pathway for staff who are Language Aides and building community awareness around the options for service by using modern communication techniques. Recommendations are listed at the end of this document on page 30.

Darebin has an extraordinarily diverse community made of many non-English speaking residents. About 1 in 15 people in Darebin identify as having a low level of proficiency in English. The low English proficiency group are mostly made up of Italian, Greek, Mandarin, Vietnamese, Arabic, Cantonese and Macedonian speakers. Satisfaction among the non-English group is lower for face-to-face interactions. The abandonment rate is higher among calls to the multilingual queue (MTL), and wait times are longer. Non-English speakers are much less likely to contact Council than the general population.

In terms of Council’s commitment to employee diversity, the program directly supports the implementation of Darebin’s Diversity Capabilities Framework by calling on the skills of staff to aid in the routine work that Council does with its residents and other stakeholders. The pool of Language Aide support staff includes people from a diversity of age, gender and spoken language groups. As a result, Language Aides became champions of access and equity in their respective work areas and this is reflected by making Council more flexible and inclusive.

<sup>1</sup> (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2017)



## Quantitative Analysis

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### A note about data integrity

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A significant portion of this review is largely based on data extracted from internal systems and information provided by vendors and contractors. Unfortunately, as outlined in a chart further down this report - the data is unreliable. The data used and extracted has relied on the accurate, timely and consistent entry of minute detail into manual systems and there have been no previously outlined catch-all approaches to data collection. This has been recognised as a shortfall of both the service and a setback in conducting this review. A recommendation has been developed as a result that ensures the integrity and usefulness of quantitative data collection, interpretation and value specifically about the Language Aide program.

### Summary:

Darebin has an extraordinarily diverse community made of many non-English speaking residents. About 1 in 15 people in Darebin identify as having a low level of proficiency in English. More non-English speaking residents are found in the Northern suburbs of Darebin. The low English proficiency group are mostly made up of Italian, Greek, Mandarin, Vietnamese, Arabic, Cantonese and Macedonian speakers. Internal Language Aides cover our Greek and Italian cohort of customers. Satisfaction among the non-English group is lower for face-to-face interactions, and users show a lower level of satisfaction with the speed of the service. The abandonment rate is higher among calls to the multilingual queue (MTL), and wait times are longer. About half of the calls made to the MTL and conducted in English only. Non-English speakers are much less likely to contact Council than the general population.

### Key findings:

- A group of 10,678 Darebin residents have identified themselves as having a low level of English proficiency. A total of 54,334 (37%) Darebin residents report speaking a language other than English at home.
- Low English Proficiency residents are about 20 times less likely to make a call to Council than the overall population.<sup>2</sup>
- The majority of this group speak Italian, Greek, Mandarin, Arabic, Vietnamese, Macedonian and Cantonese (in descending order of low-level English proficiency)
- Language Aides cover Greek and Italian well; with fewer instances of Language other than English (LOTE) contact requiring an external interpreter for language aide assistance.
- Macedonian and Vietnamese are well covered. Arabic, Mandarin and Cantonese result in around half of requests for assistance being referred to the external interpreter.
- North Darebin suburbs of Reservoir, Kingsbury and Bundoora have a much higher proportion of LOTE speakers than South Darebin suburbs of Northcote, Fairfield and Alphington.
- LOTE user satisfaction is unusually low for speed of service.
- LOTE user satisfaction is unusually low for face-to-face visitors compared to phone calls
- LOTE user satisfaction has marginally declined from 2014/15 to 2015/16.
- The time taken to manage a call to the MTL queue is, on average, more than double that of the Customer Service queue
- The abandonment rate is higher among calls to the multilingual queue (MTL), as are wait times.

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<sup>2</sup> (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2017)

### Darebin Community

The data used in this report can be used to provide insight into the Darebin community. Data is from the 2016 and 2011 Censuses. This section also uses data from Darebin's Annual Community Survey.

2016 Census Data shows 59.2% of the Darebin population reported they are Australian born, and 40.7% reported they were born overseas. The overall population is growing faster than the rate of Australian-born residents: in 2011 60% of Darebin residents were born in Australia.

Top 5 Countries by Birth, 2016, 2011 Census of Darebin population:

Country of Birth	2016	2011
Italy	6,130	7,168
China (excludes SARS and Taiwan)	4,821	4,334
India	4,561	4,443
Greece	4,553	5,001
England	2,812	2,609

Table 1 (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2017)

A total of 54,334 (37%) Darebin residents report to speaking a language other than English (LOTE) at home.

The following table shows Census data of the number of LOTE speakers by language and those who have identified as having low English proficiency (LEP). This data can be used to indicate which language groups are most likely to contact Council in a LOTE, or in general, have a need for Darebin services and information to be provided in a LOTE. The percentage can indicate which LOTE communities are more or less likely to have a firm grasp of English.

Language Spoken at home	2016; persons speaking language at home	Speaks English not well or not at all	% of LEP	2011; persons speaking language at home	Speaks English not well or not at all	% of LEP
Italian	9,708	1,944	20%	11,360	2,535	22%
Greek	9,301	2,119	23%	10,125	2,323	23%
Mandarin	5,345	1,823	34%	4,168	1,141	27%
Arabic	4,450	913	21%	4,298	808	19%
Vietnamese	3,401	874	26%	2,924	847	29%
Macedonian	2,170	421	19%	2,448	506	21%
Cantonese	1,771	590	33%	1,715	571	33%
Hindi	1,590	71	4%	1,461	80	5%
Punjabi	1,304	117	9%	1,489	85	6%
Spanish	1,181	121	10%	945	91	10%
Croatian	513	67	13%	529	96	18%
Chinese, not further defined	410	131	32%	404	127	31%
Turkish	373	41	11%	394	87	22%

Table 2 (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2017)

The table shows that 9,232 members of the Darebin community have a low level of English proficiency in the above-identified languages. This community is the target of the Language Aide program. A total group of 10,678 Darebin residents have identified themselves have a low level of English proficiency.

At 7.3% of the Darebin population, this is significantly higher than the Greater Melbourne average of 5.0%.

This data is supported by matching the data recorded via MTL phone calls handled by Language Aides and VITS in 2015/16.

*Low English Proficiency Darebin residents vs. number of calls to the MTL queue, top 5 languages.*

LOTE	Low English Proficiency	2016/17 Calls to MTL	2015/16 Calls to MTL
Greek	2,119	138	224
Italian	1,944	93	137
Mandarin	1,823	92	90
Arabic	913	33	54
Vietnamese	874	25	52

Table 3 (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2017) (Darebin City Council, 2017)

The ranking of languages with higher numbers of low English proficiency speakers matches those of the calls made to the MTL queue. However, the rate at which the low English proficiency (LEP) group is calling Council is very low when compared to the rate at which regular calls are made.

Rate of calls per resident per year	Darebin Population	Number of CS calls	Rate	Low-English population	Number of MTL calls	Rate
2016/17	146,719	149,203	101.7%	10,678	1,462	13.7%

Table 4 (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2017); (Darebin City Council, 2017)

The table above shows that in general, residents who identify as having low proficiency in English are far less likely to make a call to Council than the overall population.

After taking abandoned calls and calls made in English into account to MTL, only 478 calls were made to the MTL in a language other than English across 2016/17. This represents 4.4% of the population, or one call made for each 22 people identifying as having low English proficiency.

Factors affecting this may include:

- LEP group asking friends or family to contact Council on their behalf
- Preference to speak face-to-face
- Low awareness of Language Aide program and interpreting services. Low awareness is somewhat supported by results to the Annual Community Survey.

Responses to the 2016/17 Annual Community Survey show that 60.2% of Darebin residents are aware of Council's multilingual telephone service (MTL). 55.7% of respondents who are from a multilingual household are aware of the MTL service.

Awareness of the multilingual service is particularly low among young adults in Darebin. Only 37.5% of respondents aged 20 to 35 years old reported they were aware of the MTL service.

The Annual Community Survey asked respondents how they had first found out about the service. Among the Multilingual household responses, 49.1% saw it in a publication, 24% heard from word of mouth and

14.7% were told by a Council staff. No respondents had first found out about the MTL service through the website.

To raise awareness about multilingual services, Council has recently undertaken radio advertising on SBS Radio and 3CR. As the advertising campaign has been undertaken over 12 weeks, results relating to the success of this campaign are not yet available at the time of this report.

Increasing the prominence of the multilingual services information on the Darebin website may also help to increase awareness.

2014 Household Survey data shows the geographical difference across Darebin in terms of language other than English (LOTE) spoken at home.

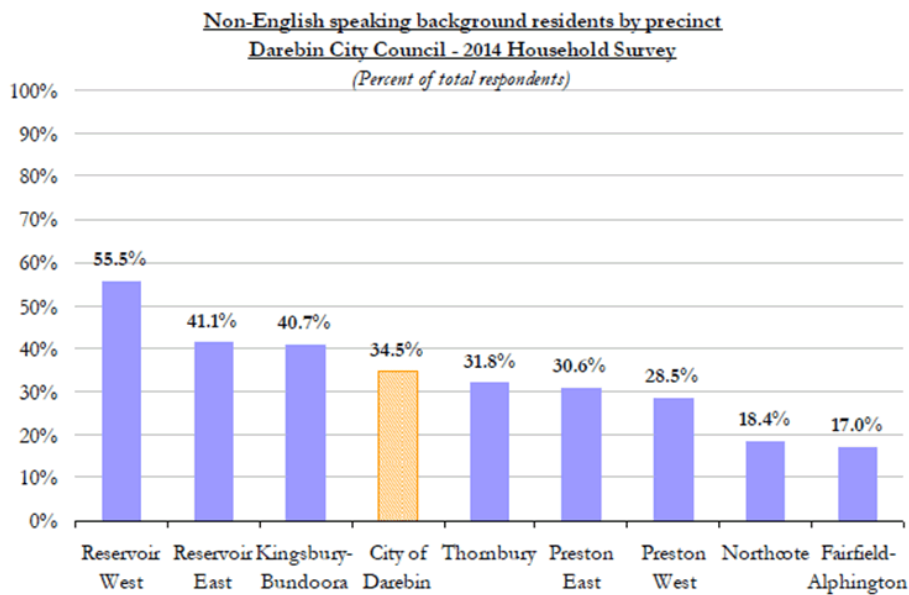


Figure 2 Household Survey Data 2014

Suburbs located in the Northern region of Darebin including Reservoir, Kingsbury and Bundoora have a much higher proportion of LOTE speakers than suburbs in the South of Darebin (Northcote, Fairfield and Alphington). Variation in the location of LOTE speaking residents should be considered in program delivery and communication methods.

### Contact with Council

Data demonstrating contact with Council is partially incomplete or unreliable. System shortcomings have resulted in multiple methods of data capture with limitations outlined below. An attempt has been made to incorporate data from a range of sources to give a more complete picture.

Data in this section is sourced via:

Source of data	Strength	Limitations
Zeacom	Automatically captured	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>High proportion of calls made to Multilingual queue are for English only</li> <li>No data on calls made to regular Customer Service queue</li> </ul>
Pathway Register	More accurate and complete data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Relies on Language Aides manually entering the information</li> <li>Doesn't cover interactions not made with a Language Aide</li> </ul>
Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS)	Only partially complete – not used on a regular basis.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Only covers some phone interactions</li> </ul>
Victorian Interpreting and Translating Service (VITS)	Detailed and includes costs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Doesn't cover most interactions</li> </ul>

Table 5 (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2017), (Darebin City Council, 2017), (Victorian Translating and Interpreting Service (VITS), 2017)

### Number of Non-English Interactions

The majority of non-English interactions are performed by Language Aides with 460 (72%) interactions in 2015/16. Over the same period, VITS conducted 155 (24%) interactions over the phone for Council and 28 (4%) interactions by an interpreter onsite. Similarly, 74% of all Language Aide interactions over 2016/17 were handled internally.

Over 2016/17, 57% of calls to the MTL queue were conducted in English rather than a LOTE. A similar trend has been seen in 2015/16, with 55% of calls to MTL completed in English only. This means there is room for improvement in communicating the intention of that specialised number for members of our community.

The data extracted via Zeacom does not align with Pathway data. Pathway data shows 330 telephone records were made in 2016/17. In the same period 244 instances of face-to-face contact were recorded. The discrepancy between the number of records in Pathway versus those recorded by Zeacom is due to manual entry. We can extract an assumable average by combining these records with qualitative information in order to establish usage trends.

### Language Aide Coverage by Language

The table below shows the coverage managed for each language across 2015/16 and 2016/17. Italian has the largest number of calls at over 150 calls over 80%% were handled by the Language Aide team. A similar rate is covered by Language Aides in Greek (80%) and Macedonian (70%). Other languages have a far lower ratio of calls handled by Language Aides, for example Language Aides handled 40% of Arabic calls, 42% of Mandarin calls and 50% of Cantonese calls.

	Number of LOTE phone calls handled by Language Aides		Number of LOTE calls handled by TIS and VITS		Portion covered by LA	
	2015/2016	2016/2017	2015/2016	2016/2017	2015/2016	2016/2017
Italian	97	67	17	17	85%	80%
Greek	91	102	15	39	86%	72%
Mandarin	42	61	52	42	45%	59%
Vietnamese	12	19	14	27	46%	41%
Arabic	26	25	31	24	46%	51%
Macedonian	14	22	5	11	74%	67%
Cantonese	14	6	7	5	67%	55%
Other	20	31	7	23	74%	23%
<b>Total Calls (excluding English)</b>	<b>296</b>	<b>342</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>46%</b>	<b>51%</b>

Table 7 (Darebin City Council, 2017)

### On Site Interpreter Bookings

Much of the increase in the 2016/17 financial year in bookings is due to Darebin Libraries holding 'Tech Savvy Seniors' sessions for non-English speakers. This accounted for 26 bookings.

Onsite (face to face) interpreting	Number	Total Cost	Average Cost
2016/17	71	\$7518.95	\$105.90
2015/16	22	\$2844.38	\$129.29
2014/15	15	\$1901.68	\$126.78

Table 8 (Darebin City Council, 2017)

We can assume two factors contribute to the low number of face to face interpreter bookings:

1. Council officers are confident in their communications from members of the community from CALD backgrounds
2. Council officers are unaware of their responsibilities and ability to book interpreters for meetings with members of the community from CALD backgrounds

Staff survey results conclusively indicate that there is room for improvement for awareness, particularly regarding language services for translation and checking of written documents. The staff survey also asked questions regarding awareness of the different aspects of Council language-related support services.



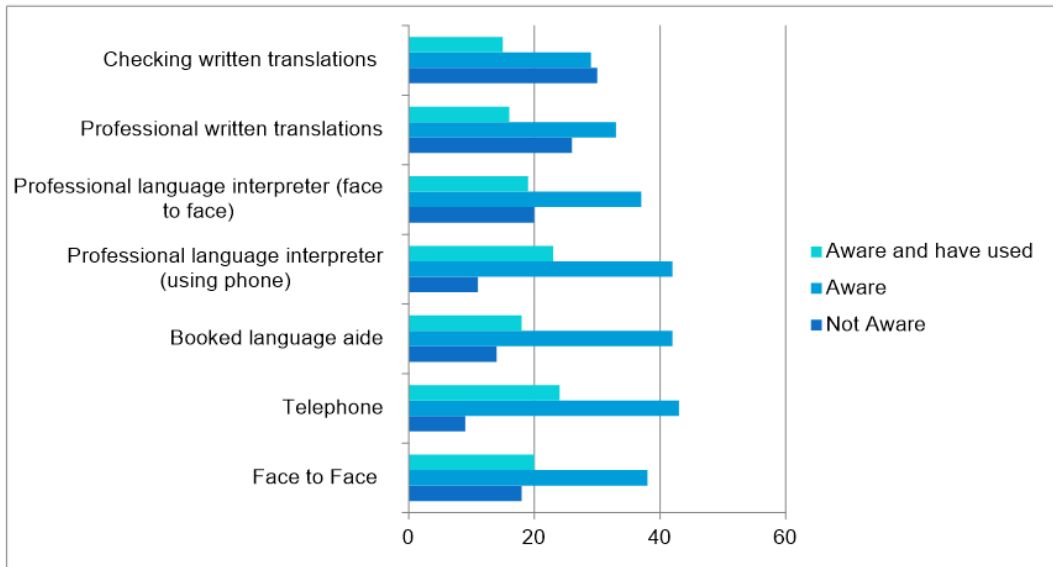


Figure 3 Staff Survey - Awareness of Language Services

The communications plan included in [appendix four](#) of this document clearly outlines new approaches to increasing staff awareness around regularly and confidently using Language Aide support officers and professional interpreting and translation services to enhance service delivery and provision.

**User Satisfaction**

Darebin’s quarterly Household Survey includes data on user satisfaction of Council services and information, which has been analysed to identify differences between residents with an English speaking background and those with a LOTE background.

For the 2015/16 survey, Darebin respondents to the question ‘Staff understand my language needs’ rated satisfaction (8.34) marginally but not measurably lower than the metropolitan Melbourne average (8.52).

The 2016/17 survey examined the importance of the MTL telephone service. Respondents rated the service as very important, with an average score of 8.55 out of 10. A majority of 94% of households rated the service as important or very important.

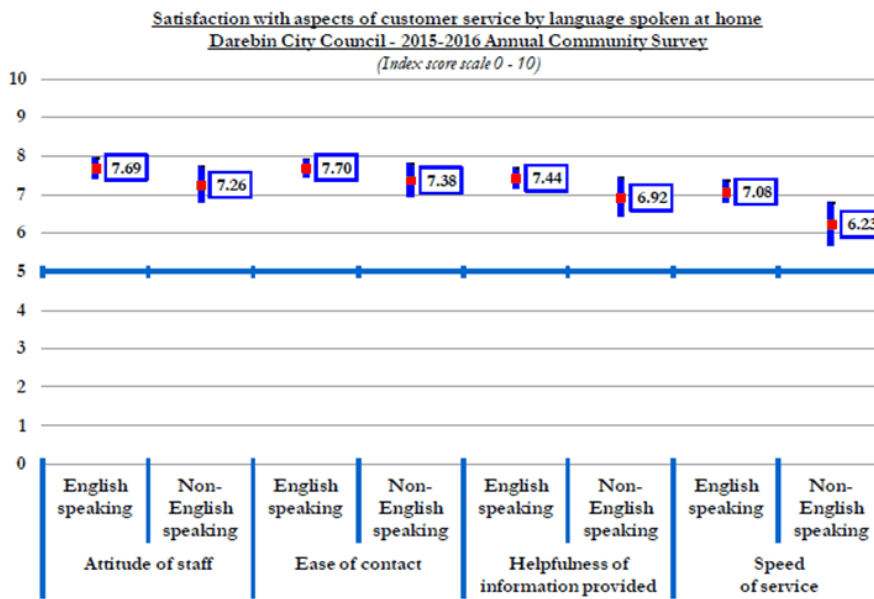


Figure 4 2015-16 Annual Community Survey

It is important to provide services and information to our LOTE community just as well, if not better, as those with and English speaking background.

Satisfaction with customer service was rated consistently lower among LOTE speakers. The most significant difference can be seen with the rating for 'Speed of service', this will be further expanded under the section below examining abandonment and wait times for calls to the MTL queue.

Data from the Community Survey indicates that there is a difference in satisfaction between interactions that are face-to-face or over the phone. Satisfaction is lower for face-to-face visitors, with a rating of 7.48 compared to phone calls, which was rated at 8.67 out of 10 (10 being highly satisfied). This may indicate that it is more difficult for Customer Service staff to contact a Language Aide or interpreter when responding to a customer in person or that the required language is not available in the moment the customer requires it and requires extra steps and intervention to achieve first contact resolution.

This may be due to a system limitation – the current set up of front counter desking does not allow a headset to be used by the CSO and a handset for the same call be provided to the customer while calling through to a Language Aide or professional interpreter.

Abandonment and Wait Times for the Multilingual Queue (MTL)

The abandonment rate of calls made to the Multilingual queue (MTL) is far higher than the abandonment rate of the normal Customer Service queue (CS).

Service levels are pre-determined using a specific calculation. Service levels used at Darebin are calculated using the method below:

$$\text{Service Level} = \frac{\text{calls answered within 20 seconds}}{\text{total calls answered} + \text{total calls abandoned}} \times 100$$

Our standard service level across all queues is to answer 75% calls within 20 seconds of the phone ringing. Using this formula the Multilingual (MTL) queue wait times are consistently higher compared to Customer Service queue.

Combined with data from the Quarterly Community Survey, this is an important issue to define and understand. As a result of these service levels, non-English speakers often have longer wait times and are more likely to abandon their phone call, and have a lower satisfaction with the speed of phone service as a result. This is clearly demonstrated by user satisfaction ratings acquired from the quarterly community survey compared with MTL data.

	Average Handling Time (minutes)		Average Wait time (minutes)		Average Speed of Answer (seconds)		Abandonment rate	
	2015/16	2016/17	2015/16	2016/17	2015/16	2016/17	2015/16	2016/17
<b>Multilingual Queue (8470)</b>	3.24	4.01	1:52	1.26	0.47		31%	30%
<b>Customer Service Queue (8888)</b>	2.44	3.00	1.06	0.57	0.94	0.46	5.3%	4%

Budget

The cost of Language Aide Allowances is \$17651.20 for the 2016/2017. The budget is set at \$34,000 and this has not been increased or decreased for a number of years.

This is paid to 25 individual Language Aides, speaking 16 different languages. The allowance is paid in the full amount of \$896 to full time staff, and paid pro-rata to part time staff based on hours worked.

The VITS Fee Schedule puts \$22.55 as the fee for calls during business hours under 15 minutes. Each minute thereafter is charged at \$1.65. The average cost of using a staff member to manage calls to the multilingual line has been calculated to \$11.80 per 15 minute block. This is a clear cost saving of over 50%.

If every phone call to the MTL was diverted to VITS (as is the arrangement with many other authorities that do not have an internal Language Aide program) the cost to Council would rise to \$51,511 or greater (2271 total calls made to MTL in 2015/16).

This would be in addition to 205 face-to-face interactions that would need to be referred to VITS, and the onsite bookings. Overall cost would be \$58,978.

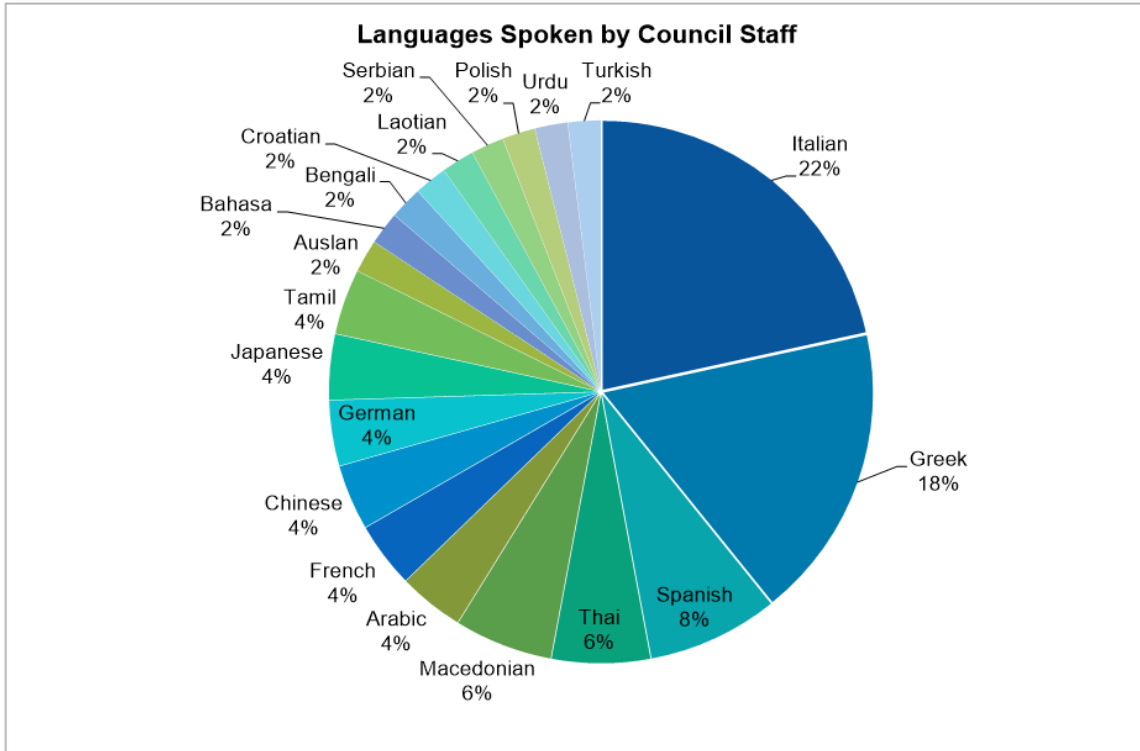
VITS and TIS National's registered interpreters have expertise in 170 languages and dialects.<sup>3</sup> This provides us with ample support for the 138 languages identified by residents of Darebin which fall outside the parameters of support provided within the Language Aide program.

Staff Survey

<sup>3</sup> (Australian National Audit Office, 2015)

Darebin Staff were sent a survey about the Language Aide program. 81 responses were received which equates to around 10% of the permanent staff pool. 54.3% of respondents reported that they speak a language other than English.

20 different languages are spoken by Darebin staff who responded to the survey. Please see the chart below for languages spoken:



*Staff Survey Key Findings*

- 32.6% of respondents who reported they speak a language other than English also said they speak this as their main language at home.
- 40.5% of respondents who reported they speak a language other than English have 'Intermediate fluency'. This is termed as vocabulary that is centred around everyday conversations and social interactions, whereas 52.4% have 'Advanced fluency' - vocabulary that includes ability to describe complex social, legal and abstract terms, and formal interactions.
- 86% of respondents had informal experience assisting others in a language other than English language. 23.8% had completed formal training in that language. 46.5% were aware about formal interpreting and translating accreditations.
- 62.8% of respondents said they are interested in becoming a language aide. 24 written responses were received to the question 'Why would you be interested in becoming a language aide?' A large majority of 75% of these responses mentioned helping or supporting the community in some way as a reason to be a language aide. 3 responses specifically mentioned the difficulty in non-English speaking residents in accessing Council information. 2 responses mentioned the benefit of the allowance, as did 2 responses for the issue of gaining practice in the language, and one response mentioned the benefit for career development.

- 15 responses were received for the question 'Why wouldn't you be interested in becoming a language aide?' Of these responses, 10 mentioned a lack of confidence, skill or fluency. 4 mentioned time constraints or demands of their current role. One response mentioned a lack of information about the language aide program.
- To change minds about joining the language aide program, respondents mentioned that more information about the program and clear definitions of the boundaries would help (4 responses). 2 respondents said formal training would help to change their mind about joining the language aide program.

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## Qualitative Analysis

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### Translating and Interpreting in the Local Government Context

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The Multicultural Victoria Act 2011 (the Act) states that all individuals in Victoria are equally entitled to access opportunities and participate in and contribute to the social, cultural, economic and political life of the State. Interpreting and translation services are crucial to ensuring this is achieved.<sup>4</sup>

Further, Victoria's Equal Opportunity Act 2010 includes a 'positive duty obligation' which means that government agencies need to take proactive and reasonable steps to address causes of discrimination, regardless of whether a complaint has been made or not. A number of other Acts, both State and Federal, include provisions on the use of interpreting and translating services. Types of discrimination can include:

- refusing to provide a service
- providing a poor quality service
- having unreasonable requirements, conditions or practices within the organisation that disadvantages a person because of their race, disability or other attributes.

In addition, the failure to identify the need for or to promote the availability of an appropriate language service may have legal consequences. Local Government routinely makes decisions that affect the rights of individuals or provide services that require client consent. This can create a risk of inadequate procedural fairness which can sometimes result in legal decisions being appealed, reviewed and overturned, incurring additional costs and avoidable delays.

The Language Aide program addresses these obligations by enhancing the availability of language support to all consumers and provides a cultural bridge into a sometimes cumbersome and regulation oriented business. The program provides an interim and immediate measure for consumers who may have an entrenched distrust of governments and government processes. This can be especially true for people who have arrived in Australia and spent time in detention centres where their immediate experience has formed a personal view of all government agencies. Providing interpreting and translating services is an essential way of ensuring that non-English speakers stay connected and that a trusting relationship can be built around these services. This is paramount to integration, resilience and economic success<sup>5</sup>

In terms of Council's commitment to employee diversity, the program directly supports the implementation of Darebin's Diversity Capabilities Framework by calling on the skills of staff to aid in the routine work that council does with its residents and other stakeholders. The pool of Language Aide support staff includes people from a diversity of age, gender and spoken language groups who are acknowledged and remunerated for their skills. As a result, Language Aides became champions of access and equity in their respective work areas.

### Bilingual Skills of the Customer Service Team

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The Customer Service unit consists of 32 staff in total. 59% of Customer Service staff group are currently registered as Language Aides; by comparing this figure to 37% of Darebin's overall residential population identified as speaking a LOTE, we are confident that our staffing adequately covers the community's LOTE communication requirements on a day-to-day basis.

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<sup>4</sup> (Victorian Government, 2017)

<sup>5</sup> (Scanlon Foundation, 2016)

Language Aide support is currently offered in the following languages:

- Auslan
- Bahasa Indonesia
- Cantonese
- Greek
- Italian
- Macedonian
- Mandarin
- Serbian
- Sinhala
- Spanish
- Vietnamese

Staff outside of the Customer Service area support the Language Aide service in the following languages:

- Hindi
- Farsi/Persian
- Somali
- Macedonian
- Arabic
- Turkish

### Current Remuneration Model

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The Language Aide Allowance is a cost effective way of providing language services within the organisation. The allowance is currently available to staff that are fluent in English and one or more languages other than English (LOTE).

It is paid to an employee who undertakes work involving direct contact with speakers of the LOTE that they speak, and agrees to use these language skills to assist members of the public who have limited English proficiency.

There is no doubt that residents and other stakeholders who need language assistance should be provided with this vital service and there is no question that the service is an effective way of utilising existing resources to meet the needs of diverse client groups.

Issues around the current remuneration model have indicated that a new model of compensation be adopted in line with the Policy update, the introduction of a new Enterprise Bargaining Agreement and in line with goals set out in the 2017-2021 Council Plan. Issues include:

- never having to undertake Language Aide duties despite being paid a full allowance;
- no position description or duty statement and expectations of language aides;
- a lack of revision of skills and training;
- no opportunity to build real-world skills that add to a person's employability; and
- equal distribution of work.

### Proposed Remuneration Model

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A proposed remuneration model has been designed to further consider training, certification and skills improvement as central to payment. It is modelled on both the Victorian Public Service Language Aide Allowance and the NSW Community Language Allowance scheme.

Further, the proposed model allows recipients of the allowance a pathway to undertake accreditation by the National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters (NAATI), which guarantees that recipients' skills meet national standards for interpreters and translators.

The full proposed remuneration model and amendments to the policy relating to reimbursement are provided via [appendix two](#).

#### Clarification of Language Aides and their Obligation to Object to Work

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The operation of the Language Aide program throughout the years has been so well entrenched in the operation of day-to-day Council business that the role and abilities of our Language Aide support officers can be confused with that of professional translators and interpreters. In fact, the role of translators and interpreters is also often confused as one and the same. NAATI defines the difference as follows<sup>6</sup>:

**Translators** deal with the written word. They translate written text from one language to another.

**Interpreters** deal with the spoken word or signed languages. They interpret what each speaker is saying or signing into the other person's language.

To further define the work of our Language Aide staff we have outlined parameters that allow officers to decline support requests:

- A language aide is an employee who uses a language other than English in the course of their regular work to assist community members
- Language Aides are only able to assist with low-risk communication
- The skills of language aides should be verified by the employer in both English and the language other than English
- It is not a credential in interpreting or translating and should not be construed as such
- Language Aides are required to undertake training to understand the boundaries of their role
- Departments should maintain a database of language aides in their employment so staff can access them quickly and easily
- Language aides should only provide language assistance where the outcome of a situation has no risk of adverse effects for either the client or the organisation.
- Language aides should not be used to communicate information that is legally binding or puts at risk either the organisation or the client.<sup>7</sup>

#### Managing the Multilingual Telephone Line (MTL)

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It is evident by the MTL Queue abandonment data and community survey results that an improvement to the delivery of the MTL service can be made by increasing the availability of officers to respond to the needs of CALD customers more immediately.

The following amendments are recommended to ensure that calls to the multilingual line are well managed:

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<sup>6</sup> (National Authority for Accreditation of Translators and Interpreters, 2017)

<sup>7</sup> (Victorian Government, 2017)



- The initial announcement to be shortened to under 10 seconds to reduce the incidence of abandonment e.g. "Welcome to the Darebin Multilingual Line"
- After the main announcement and auto-attendant will announce "for xxx language press #" for each language type (top 10 languages). This will ensure all English calls are directed to the main Customer Service (8888) queue and that callers will not attempt to circumvent the queue.
- Language Aide officers are 'prime agents' with dedicated 'Skills Routing' for their nominated spoken language/s. This will route the calls to the correct agent in the available language instantly.
- If the agent is not available the call will have a nominated language (predetermined by the auto-attendant) and the right phone interpreter can be then contacted and connected to the caller more efficiently.
- All other calls to the MTL outside of the top 10 languages and English are to be routed to the general speak your language number and the prime agent will answer the call as per a usual queue call

### Benchmarking

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It is well recognised that Darebin City Council is a leader in the field of providing multilingual support to its customers and stakeholders. Benchmarking has demonstrated that Darebin has the largest pool of Language Aides and represents a wide variety of languages spoken across the municipality, including those groups who are most at risk of disengagement. The benchmarking process indicated that municipalities outside of the Northern Region are not yet in a position to offer formalised in-house support of CALD residents aside from professional interpreting services. The table below compares the status of each Language Aide program across Metropolitan Northern Region LGAs.

*Language Aide Programs across Metropolitan Northern Region LGAs*

LGA	# of Language Aides	Languages Represented	Multilingual Line	VITS	TIS	Online Presence
<b>Darebin</b>	19	Arabic Auslan Bahasa - Indonesia Greek Italian Farsi/Persian Hindi Italian Macedonian Mandarin Punjabi Serbian/Croatian Sinhalese Spanish Turkish Vietnamese	Yes	2 <sup>nd</sup> Option Accessed via separate numbers	1 <sup>st</sup> Option – TIS user for telephone interpreting	Basic information provided in top 8 community languages. Frequent translations of community information in top 8 languages. Facilitated by Diverse Communications Officer.
<b>Moreland</b>	11  Based on Darebin's model, Language Aides are trained by VITS.	Italian, Greek, Arabic and Turkish.  Staff not accredited by NAATI.	No multilingual line – callers are directed to call the regular Customer Service number and be connected with a Language Aide.	Accessed via separate numbers	N/A	Council gives topical information in community languages
<b>Whittlesea</b>	Capped at 20 in top 10 languages.  Based on Darebin's model, Language Aides are trained by VITS.	Arabic, Greek, Hindi, Italian, Macedonian, Mandarin, Punjabi, Tamil, Turkish, Vietnamese.	No multilingual line – callers are directed to call the regular Customer Service number and be connected with a Language Aide.	Accessed via separate numbers.	N/A	Information provided in other Languages for a limited number of pages
<b>Hume</b>	There is a bilingual service offering that is limited to staff who are not located within the Customer Service Team. Some are CSOs who have NAATI Lang Aide training (Arabic & Turkish).	N/A	N/A	Accessed via separate numbers	TIS User	N/A
**Moreland and Whittlesea utilise a similar testing system as language aides in Darebin. Upon assignment, new Language Aides are required to conduct a short interview with a VITS officer to determine the level of their language ability.						

### Current Language Aide Recruitment and Testing Model

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The appointment of Language Aides has not been based on any prior experience or qualifications. In the past, the model of recruitment is to consider the cultural origin of a Customer Service Officer as the priority over other skills that are crucial to the tasks required of the broader role. This has often resulted in the employment of staff who are not equipped to perform tasks related to the breadth, depth, technicalities and difficulty of a Local Government customer service role.

To further complicate the current model of Language Aide officer recruitment, training is not based on a tested or proven language training model and has room for improvement and formalisation. Training currently supplied by VITS does not address language acquisition and maintenance needs of staff and does not support the further development of interpreting and translating skills.

The current competency test (which has not changed since the program's inception in 2000) appoints an interpreter from the VITS pool of interpreters in the selected language. The interpreter is issued a proforma and instigates a conversation with the Language Aide applicant. The applicant is judged on the merits of that guided conversation. Some concerns about this approach include:

- It is not based on any factual or researched approach to language proficiency assessment;
- The interpreter is (presumably) not a qualified assessor of the chosen spoken LOTE;
- Fluency in the source language (English) is not tested via this process;
- The community expectation of interpreters and translators is that they are assessed based on the requirements put forward by NAATI. This expectation is not met at Darebin.

### Proposed Language Aide Testing and Recruitment Model

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Darebin wishes to begin aligning its testing, training and accreditation of Language Aides with NAATI's new language testing and interpreter/translator certification regime. This will allow us to adopt standardisation and quality control of the previous ad-hoc arrangement of recruitment and testing of bilingual staff.

Presuming that a person can interpret or translate just by having fluency in a LOTE is an unfortunate and shared misconception. Translation and interpreting are specific skills that must be developed over time. We propose that Darebin implements the testing system being developed by NAATI which is based on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR).<sup>8</sup>

The CEFR is a framework, published by the Council of Europe in 2001, which describes a language learners' ability in terms of speaking, reading, listening and writing at six reference levels as defined in the table below.

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<sup>8</sup> (Council of Europe, 2001)

Level group	Level group name	Level	Level name	Description
A	Basic user	A1	<b>Breakthrough or beginner</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Can understand and use familiar everyday expressions and very basic phrases aimed at the satisfaction of needs of a concrete type.</li> <li>Can introduce themselves and others and can ask and answer questions about personal details such as where he/she lives, people they know and things they have.</li> <li>Can interact in a simple way provided the other person talks slowly and clearly and is prepared to help.</li> </ul>
		A2	<b>Waystage or elementary</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Can understand sentences and frequently used expressions related to areas of most immediate relevance (e.g. very basic personal and family information, shopping, local geography, employment).</li> <li>Can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar and routine matters.</li> <li>Can describe in simple terms aspects of their background, immediate environment and matters in areas of immediate need.</li> </ul>
B	Independent user	B1	<b>Threshold or intermediate</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Can understand the main points of clear standard input on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc.</li> <li>Can deal with most situations likely to arise while travelling in an area where the language is spoken.</li> <li>Can produce simple connected text on topics that are familiar or of personal interest.</li> <li>Can describe experiences and events, dreams, hopes and ambitions and briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans.</li> </ul>
		B2	<b>Vantage or upper intermediate</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Can understand the main ideas of complex text on both concrete and abstract topics, including technical discussions in their field of specialization.</li> <li>Can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible without strain for either party.</li> <li>Can produce clear, detailed text on a wide range of subjects and explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options.</li> </ul>
C	Proficient user	C1	<b>Effective operational proficiency or advanced</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Can understand a wide range of demanding, longer clauses, and recognize implicit meaning.</li> <li>Can express ideas fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions.</li> <li>Can use language flexibly and effectively for social, academic and professional purposes.</li> <li>Can produce clear, well-structured, detailed text on complex subjects, showing controlled use of organizational patterns, connectors and cohesive devices.</li> </ul>
		C2	<b>Mastery or proficiency</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Can understand with ease virtually everything heard or read.</li> <li>Can summarize information from different spoken and written sources, reconstructing arguments and accounts in a coherent presentation.</li> <li>Can express themselves spontaneously, very fluently and precisely, differentiating finer shades of meaning even in the most complex situations.</li> </ul>

Table 6 (Council of Europe, 2001)

Another key aspect of the CEFR's approach is the belief in 'plurilingualism'. This is the understanding that a language is not learned in isolation from other languages. Studying a foreign language inevitably involves comparisons with a first language. Each new language that a learner encounters contributes to the development of general language proficiency, weaving together all the learner's previous experiences of language learning. It becomes easier and easier to pick up at least a partial competence in new languages.<sup>9</sup>

Proficiency refers to the ability of performing an action or function. It refers to one's ability to use language for real world purposes to accomplish real world linguistic tasks, across a wide range of topics and settings. The language proficiency test is an evaluation of how well a person can use language to communicate in real life.<sup>10</sup> This is in line with the upcoming changes to the NAATI Accreditation Framework (Appendix 2).

One of the benefits of making expectations about minimum levels of proficiency explicit is that these levels can also serve as benchmarks for monitoring proficiency standards both at entry and exit from the range of accredited courses preparing people for work in the Translating and Interpreting profession.

Advertising for language skills through our recruitment process is an effective way of increasing the multilingual resources in Customer Service. Position descriptions and job advertisements includes phrases such as:

- Persons from language other than English backgrounds are encouraged to apply
- The ability to speak a community language is desirable
- Bilingual applicants are encouraged to apply, but this is not a prerequisite
- Persons who speak (community language) are encouraged to apply
- Suitably qualified candidates with a high level of fluency in a community language as identified in the most recent ABS Census are encouraged to apply

#### Incorporation of Local Indigenous Languages in the Language Aide Program

We acknowledge that Darebin is the home of many significant Aboriginal organisations and Council has a perfect opportunity to learn and share in the living history of both Traditional Owner groups and the many other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander groups and nations that have settled in the municipality and contribute to the growing local economy of Darebin. In Australia, most Indigenous people identify strongly with a traditional cultural and linguistic identity. This identity encompasses the tribe with which they identify geographically and is a distinct linguistic group. In the vast majority of cases, the tribal name is also the given to the tribe's spoken language.<sup>11</sup>

The Second National Indigenous Survey conducted in 2014 found that traditional language is a strong part of Indigenous people's identity, and connection with language is critical for their wellbeing<sup>12</sup>. Survey respondents want traditional languages to be strong into the future; they want their languages to have better recognition within Australia. The survey also indicates that active use and transmission of languages is the key to strengthening or maintaining traditional languages, while a lack of opportunities to share language prevents respondents from learning traditional languages.

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<sup>9</sup> (Trim, 2011)

<sup>10</sup> (National Accreditation Agency for Translating and Interpreting, 2016)

<sup>11</sup> (Marmion, 2014)

<sup>12</sup> (Marmion, 2014)

In light of moving toward a community that is focused on inclusivity with an emphasis on Reconciliation and Council's collective focus on making service delivery and programs more equitable by reducing discrimination and increasing access for vulnerable or under-represented people we propose that efforts be made to explore the opportunity to include employees who are speakers of local aboriginal languages into the Language Aide Support group<sup>13</sup>.

Together with this understanding, and with the multitude of sacred cultural sites across the Darebin LGA and important historical events being located within our municipality it is vital to incorporate a plan to work towards the inclusion of Koorie languages such as Woiwurrung and Aboriginal English to support our customers as part of the Language Aide program.

Working with our Aboriginal Liaison Officer, the Darebin Aboriginal Advisory Committee, Aboriginal Employment Officer and other stakeholders, we will work towards creating a significant and inclusive plan to integrate indigenous language and include this as part of Council's Aboriginal Action Plan 2017-2019.

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<sup>13</sup> (Darebin City Council, 2017)

### List of Recommendations

No	Recommendation	Resource Implication
1.	Implement pre-certification training identified by NAATI for as an opt-in option for existing Language Aides and as mandatory for new Language Aides.	Internal resources
2.	Implement the testing system being developed by NAATI which is based on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages as optional for existing Language Aides and as mandatory for new Language Aides.	Internal resources
3.	Investigate changes to data collection that allow simple, request-linked and easy reporting of support instances in Pathway (or any customer request system).	Internal resources
4.	Develop a performance measure for the MTL to continuously monitor service performance and usage.	Internal resources
5.	Implement suggested changes to the routing of MTL calls and usage of prime agents and skills based routing.	Internal resources
6.	Ensure that the internal and external communications and training plan is refined and implemented. This should include communication via the intranet, website and updates in the knowledge management system.	Internal resources
7.	Implement and communicate within the organisation all key Language Aide policy and guidelines changes including adoption of the training, recruitment and remuneration recommendations.	Internal resources
8.	Work with Councils within the Northern Metropolitan Region to explore, develop and share resources and ideas for expansion and shared services.	Internal resources
9.	Implement processes to count CALD visitors to all Customer Service Centres.	Internal resources
10.	Work towards creating a significant and inclusive plan to integrate indigenous language into the Language Aide program and include this as part of Council's Aboriginal Action Plan 2017-2019.	Internal resources
11.	Measure the effectiveness of changes to the policy and guidelines quarterly	Internal resources

## Appendices

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### Appendix 1 - Accreditation Steps

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#### *NAATI Accreditation Model*

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The new NAATI accreditation model won't be rolled out until the beginning of 2018 and is currently under review. The new VPS Guidelines will likely be released in early July this year.

The base level (previously referred to by NAATI as the Language Aide certification) will require our Language Aides to undertake one of the following pathways to 'Provisional Certification' (this is still at the proposal level):

- **PATHWAY ONE**  
Graduate of a NAATI endorsed interpreting qualification no more than three years prior to the date of application – Diploma or higher (AQF 1 Level 5 or comparable)
  - **PATHWAY TWO**  
Graduate from a non-NAATI endorsed interpreting qualification –Diploma or higher (AQF1 level 5 or comparable); and
  - Met the standard set by NAATI for language competency, ethical competency and intercultural competency tests
- PATHWAY THREE**
- Holds Certified Provisional Interpreter in another language.
  - **PATHWAY FOUR (preferred pathway)**  
Completion of AQF units in interpreting theory and/or practice assessed by NAATI as meeting pre-requisite requirements or NAATI offered Interpreter Training Modules.
  - Met the standard set by NAATI for language competency, ethical competency and intercultural competency tests.
  - **PATHWAY FIVE**  
Already holds NAATI Recognised Practising Interpreter credential in the language.

#### *Test Format (for all pathways) conducted by NAATI or an approved accreditation organisation*

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The test will be in both language directions.

Each test will consist of three tasks.

1. One telephone dialogue interpreting (consecutive mode) role play
2. Two face-to-face dialogue interpreting (consecutive mode) role plays.  
Each dialogue will relate to different domains and will be based on real-life exchanges as encountered by non-English speakers in everyday life situations in non-specialised and non-complex contexts, e.g. enquiry about government services for new immigrants, a customer purchasing a car, enquiry about parental payments at a government office. Approximate length – 40 minutes



*Recertification Requirements*

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Evidence of:

- ongoing work practice – 40 assignments per year for interpreters
- continuous professional development – 40 PD points per year

Ongoing certification will be dependent on ethical and professional conduct by the practitioner

*Language Proficiency Testing*

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Melbourne University Placement Tests (MUPTs) measuring general proficiency in French, German, Arabic, Italian, Chinese, Indonesian, Spanish and Russian;

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### Appendix 2 - Language Aide Allowance & Remuneration

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This policy provides for the payment of a Language Aide Allowance to suitably qualified employees who have a basic level of competence in a language other than English.

#### *Objectives - Policy statement*

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A significant number of people in Darebin whose first language is not English either do not speak English or do not have sufficient command of the language to avail themselves of the services and programs provided by Darebin City Council.

As a strategy to provide equal access to departmental services and programs, the Language Aide program draws on the existing language skills of employees of Darebin City Council.

#### *Audience and applicability*

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All bilingual/multilingual permanent and temporary customer service, administrative and business support staff are eligible to apply for the Language Aide Allowance.

#### *Context*

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The Language Aide program is administered by the Customer Service business unit.

#### *Responsibilities and delegations*

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Language Aide Allowance recipients are responsible for the following:

- providing timely and accurate language assistance;
- keeping informed about the City of Darebin's services and referral points related to their work area, as well as a general understanding of other departmental services;
- determining if a matter is formal or sufficiently complex to warrant the use of interpreters and notifying the appropriate person to ensure that this assistance is provided;
- keeping records of Language Aide usage; and
- notifying their manager or supervisor if the Language Aide workload is excessive, that is, if the demand for Language Aide assistance is impacting negatively on the employee's normal workload.

*Responsibilities of officers with delegation of authority to approve payment of a language aide allowance.*

Officers or their nominees with the delegation of authority to approve payment of the Language Aide Allowance have particular responsibilities with regard to the implementation of the Language Aide program. These include:

- identifying the potential demand for a specific language within their area;
- determining the languages, number and locations of recipients under the Language Aides service;
- surveying the existing language skills of staff members who may be eligible for Language Aide testing;
- advising all staff in the workplace of the names of Language Aide recipients and ensuring all staff, the public and service users are aware of the availability of the service;
- ensuring Language Aide Allowance recipients are available to use their community language/s when required;

- Notifying payroll to organise payment of the Language Aide Allowance once it has been approved and to stop payment once the Language Aide Allowance recipient no longer uses their language skills. This may be due to a change in tasks or when the employee is transferred to another location where there is no demand for the language skills; and
- Biannually reviewing staff members receiving a Language Aide Allowance to determine that there is continued demand for their language assistance;

#### *Monitoring, evaluation and reporting requirements*

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The Manager, Customer Service, or nominee, will monitor the implementation of the Language Aide Allowance. This will include review with appropriate stakeholders and reporting on compliance as required.

#### *Responsibilities of the Customer Service Enhancement Officer – Diversity & Multicultural*

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The main responsibilities of the Customer Service Enhancement Officer include:

- distributing information on the Language Aide program throughout the organisation using a pre-defined communications plan;
- arranging for external advertising and promotional opportunities using a pre-defined communications plan
- reviewing and updating the list of staff receiving the Language Aide Allowance;
- liaising with NAATI about the Provisional Interpreter test; arranging testing and training for Language Aides; and
- providing, when required, a report on the Language Aide program and MTL usage.
- organising quarterly monthly meetings of Language Aides, preparing agendas, minutes and following up on actions raised
- Organising on-site interpreters as per requests from various departments.
- Monitoring the usage of the Multilingual Telephone Line to ensure it is properly used by all customer service officers and other officers across the organisation
- Training newly recruited customer service staff on the usage of the MTL
- Ensuring data is entered into the MTL register following Language aide interactions(interpreting etc.)
- Providing feedback to interpreting agency in relation to complaints about interpreting
- Updating information regarding the MTL and Language Aides on the intranet and Knowledge Hub
- Liaising with payroll regarding the payment of the Language Aides allowance twice a year.

### Appendix 3 - Procedures for Administering the Language Aide Allowance

These procedures outline the eligibility requirements and payment procedures for staff members receiving the Language Aide Allowance.

Directors, Managers and Coordinators, have authority to approve the payment of the Language Aide Allowance to eligible employees and determine the level of payment. The Language Aide Allowance is paid to approved customer service, business support, administrative and desk-based staff from the Language Aide Allowance budget.

The two current rates for the Language Aide Allowance, which will be adjusted in accordance with relevant awards and agreements, are:

- the base level rate which is paid to staff members who have passed the P examination conducted by NAATI and whose language skills are required to meet occasional demands for one to one language assistance. Occasional demand means that there is no regular pattern of demand that necessitates the use of the staff member's language skills.
- the higher level rate is one and a half times the base allowance which is paid to staff members who use their language skills for one to one language assistance on a regular basis or who have achieved qualifications of NAATI Provisionally Certified Interpreter and above and who are required to meet either occasional or regular demands for one to one language assistance.

### Status of Language Aide Allowance recipients

Language Aide Allowance recipients are to be viewed as language aides and not fully qualified interpreters or translators. Language Aide Allowance recipients do not necessarily have the requisite skills for undertaking the type of work a Provisionally Certified or Certified Interpreter or translator undertakes.

### The Language Aide Test

To be eligible for a Language Aide Allowance, the staff member (except those already accredited by NAATI) must pass a language test to determine their ability to speak and/or read a community language. The test is conducted and administered by NAATI and consists of the following elements:

- conversation in English and a language other than English in a semi-formal context, as well as a complex or problematic exchange;
- summarising brochure or work-related text from English into the language being tested;
- summarising brochure or work-related text from the language being tested into English; and
- reading out loud a text in the language being tested.

Employees who are accredited by NAATI at pre-certification level and above do not need to sit for the NAATI test.

Costs for Language Aide testing and any review of test results will be funded from the Language Aide budget.

Appendix 4 - Communication & Training Plan

Action	Internal/External	Communication Channel	Responsibility	Collateral Required
Discuss and plan use of 'Speak Your Language' branding with Communications team	Internal	Web/Print	Language Aide Support Officer Customer Service Team Leader	Postcard Ads Feedback Form Online
Introduce new badges that identify Customer Service staff as Language Aides	Internal	FtF	Language Aide Support Officer	Badges
Create a dedicated web page with all relevant links and information that explains the Language Aide service and how it is used	External	Web	Customer Service Administration Officer  Language Aide Support Officer  Communications	Online
Create a calendar and targeted campaign of Social Media 'stories' that can be issued every 6 weeks regarding council's varied language aide officers/users	External	Web	Language Aide Support Officer  Communications	Online
Create multiple YouTube animations that explain the service as a series:  • Interviews with users of the service (diverse ages, needs etc...)	External	Web	Language Aide Support Officer  Communications	Online

Action	Internal/External	Communication Channel	Responsibility	Collateral Required
• Interviews with staff captioned in LOTE languages (selectable on YouTube)				
Drop in sessions??? @ Northland/Northcote Plaza/DCH/North Reservoir	External	FtF	Language Aide Support Officer Communications	Postcard Ads Feedback Form
Explore efficacy of radio campaigns for targeted language and cultural groups	External	Radio	Language Aide Support Officer Communications	Ads
Explore Skype for Business for Video calls	Internal	Web/Telephone	Language Aide Support Officer Digital Services Customer Service Team Leader	NIL
Bi-annual meetings of the Language Aide Support Group	Internal	FtF	Language Aide Support Officer	Feedback Form
Provide bi-monthly updates in Staff to Staff on Language Aides & Language Aide Program etc....	Internal	Web	Language Aide Support Officer	NIL
Appropriate Lang Aide support training offered by	Internal	FtF & Online	Language Aide Support Officer Customer Service Team Leader – Training & Development	NIL

Action	Internal/External	Communication Channel	Responsibility	Collateral Required
<b>NAATI</b>				
<b>Annual Working with Interpreters and Translators training for Darebin – P&amp;D to facilitate</b>	Internal	FtF & Online	Customer Service Team Leader – Training & Development Learning & Development	NIL
<b>Cross Cultural Communication Training for Staff at Darebin – P&amp;D to facilitate</b>	Internal	FtF & Online	Customer Service Team Leader – Training & Development Learning & Development	NIL

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**8.5 NORTHCOTE AQUATIC AND RECREATION CENTRE  
(NARC) FEASIBILITY STUDY FINDINGS****Author:** Coordinator Leisure Contracts**Reviewed By:** General Manager Operations and Capital

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**PURPOSE**

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the investigations and studies undertaken for the Northcote Aquatic and Recreation Centre (NARC) project including: the feasibility study, and recommend next steps.

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- Council has two aquatic facilities. NARC is a 50 year old Council asset, built in 1968 as an outdoor pool facility. It is a very important service, highly valued by the local community.
- In 2015 a comprehensive building condition audit for NARC was conducted which identified a number of major issues and concluded that the NARC building is near the end of its lifespan.
- In May 2017 Otium Planning Group (OPG) was engaged to conduct a Feasibility Study and Precinct Master Plan (the Feasibility Study) into the future redevelopment options for NARC. (See **Appendix A** for the full feasibility study.)
- The Feasibility Study included community consultation and attracted input from over 1,600 participants.
- Four redevelopment options were investigated as part of the Feasibility Study:
  - Option 1: Do nothing (urgent safety works only)
  - Option 2: Maintain existing facility (proactive maintenance program)
  - Option 3: Redevelop in part (refurbish existing building and extend)
  - Option 4: Full redevelopment, with two indicative options assessed:
    - Option 4A - Smaller scale facility (5,430 m<sup>2</sup>)
    - Option 4B - Larger scale facility (7,874 m<sup>2</sup>)
- In investigating the redevelopment scenarios, it became evident that Options 1-3 are unlikely to be viable primarily due to the current condition of the facility.
- In order to meet community needs, the NARC redevelopment project will therefore need to be a substantial redevelopment of the facility.
- Reservoir Leisure Centre is also an important facility, much loved by the community. Major works are planned for Reservoir Leisure Centre, separately to the NARC project.

<b>Recommendation</b>
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**That Council:**

- (1) Notes the Northcote Aquatic and Recreation Centre Feasibility Study and Precinct Master Plan.

- (2) Agrees in principle to the redevelopment of Northcote Aquatic and Recreation Centre as set out in Option 4, subject to funding, to ensure a facility that meets current and future needs of the local community, and seeks to maximise environmentally sustainable design features.
  - (3) Agrees to progress technical studies, finalise scope and commence procurement processes for architectural design services.
  - (4) Continues advocacy to the State and Federal Governments seeking funding for three major recreation projects – Northcote Aquatic and Recreation Centre, Reservoir Leisure Centre and the Multi Sports Stadium.
  - (5) Receives a report in December 2018 setting out detailed funding options and financial impacts for the project, in the context of the Long-Term Financial Plan and revised 10-Year Capital Works Plan.
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## BACKGROUND / KEY INFORMATION

NARC is a 50 year old Council asset, built in 1968 as an outdoor pool facility. It is a very important service for the local community.

In 2015 a comprehensive building condition audit for NARC was conducted. This audit identified a number of major issues that required corrective actions to keep the facility operating. The audit also concluded that the NARC building condition was poor and at the end of its lifespan.

In May 2017 Otium Planning Group (OPG) was engaged to conduct a Feasibility Study and Precinct Master Plan (the Feasibility Study) into the future redevelopment options for NARC. As noted above, four options were investigated in this study (see **Appendix A**)

The four redevelopment options investigated were:

- Option 1: Do nothing (urgent safety works only)
- Option 2: Maintain existing facility (proactive maintenance program)
- Option 3: Redevelop in part (refurbish existing building and extend)
- Option 4: Full redevelopment
  - 4A Smaller scale facility (5,430 m<sup>2</sup>)
  - 4B Larger scale facility (7,874 m<sup>2</sup>)

Due diligence investigations for the project completed to date or currently underway include:

- ESD and Green Star Strategy, undertaken by Cundall March 2018
- Technical Advice Report, undertaken by Macutex April 2018
- Strategic and Statutory Due Diligence Report, undertaken Calibre April 2018
- Environmental and Geotechnical Site Assessment, undertaken by Meinhardt May 2018
- Transport and Traffic – Due Diligence Study, undertaken by Cardno April 2018
- Condition, Capacity and Upgrade Requirements of Utilities, currently being undertaken by Cardno
- Hydrostatic testing of the 50M outdoor pool.

In investigating the four redevelopment scenarios, it became evident that Options 1, 2 and 3 are unlikely to be viable primarily due to the current condition of the facility, and also due to the technical complexities that arise from facility reuse and the challenge of ‘marrying’ the existing with a new structure.

The NARC redevelopment project is therefore required to be a full redevelopment of the facility.

The feasibility study considered Options 4A and 4B for redevelopment, with Option 4A a smaller scale facility and Option 4B a larger scale facility. These options are not intended to be presented as an either/or choice for Council consideration. Instead they demonstrate the indicative cost, footprint and achievable outcomes associated with two possible redevelopment scenarios. This high level of understanding, still contains untested assumptions that will be investigated more rigorously throughout the design process.

Market and industry trend advice suggests that the larger the facility, the greater the patronage catchment and this can improve financial viability. However the current visitation catchment is localised to within a 5 - 10 kilometre radius of the facility.

A project of this scale and complexity is a major undertaking, requiring significant time and cost investment to ensure success. The further consultation, research and investigation that will inform the design of the redeveloped NARC will be an iterative process.

### **Previous Council Resolution**

At its meeting held on 5 November 2014, Council resolved:

*'That Council: Proceed to develop concept options at the Northcote Aquatic and Recreation Centre site.'* (Resolution 8.2).

## **COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT**

### **Consultation**

The Feasibility Study included community consultation and key stakeholder interviews. The purpose of this phase of community consultation was to:

- Understand perceptions of the facility held by both users and non-users of NARC
- Increase the understanding of current use patterns
- Identify future facility priorities

Key stakeholder interviews were held with: YMCA staff, Dennis Cricket Club, Northcote Junior Football Club and local organisations.

The four week community consultation process involved current users and non-users of NARC within the Darebin community and local schools. Overall, over 1,600 people participated in the consultation as well as key stakeholders. Consultation results cover many aspects of the facility in its current and potential future state. Overwhelmingly the consultation highlighted that the current service is highly valued. This mirrors the experience of many other local government areas that find public swimming pools hold high levels of intrinsic cultural connection and therefore value with their communities.

Internal Council Departments were also consulted regarding the proposed redevelopment options to ensure their key needs, considerations and feedback was identified and captured.

### **Communications**

A communication plan for the next phase of the project will be developed.

## ANALYSIS

### Alignment to Council Plan / Council policy

Goal 2 - Opportunities to live well

2.2 We will expand opportunities for participation and social connection through sport, physical activity, arts, culture and other leisure activities.

Targets from our 4 year Council Plan: Redevelop the Northcote Aquatic and Recreation Centre into a \$50M state-of-the-art aquatic Centre.

2018/19 Actions: Finalise options to redevelop the Northcote Aquatic and Recreation Centre.

### Environmental Sustainability Considerations

Environmentally Sustainable Design (ESD) considerations have been investigated in the Feasibility Study by OPG, and an ESD and Green Star Strategy has been prepared.

The focus of the ESD considerations has been on which redevelopment option provides the greatest opportunity to comprehensively integrate ESD into the design and subsequent operation of the new facility. The overall goal will be to achieve a minimum 5 star, but to also investigate 6 star, Green Star certification.

Council's draft ESD policy (section 2.1) includes the commitment that *"all major new buildings with a total design and construction value of \$10M or more (GST excl) is to achieve a certified Green Star rating of at least 5 Stars."*

Darebin's Local Planning Policy Framework (Clause 22.12 Environmentally Sustainable Development) requires non-residential buildings with a gross floor area of 1,000m<sup>2</sup> or more to have a sustainability management plan.

Given the cost and scale of the NARC redevelopment, a minimum of 5 Star certification outcome will be required to align with the ESD policy and the Local Planning Policy Framework.

Both option 4A and 4B provide the greatest opportunity for achieving ESD outcomes, with 4B providing the greatest scope for ESD impact.

The ESD and Green Star Strategy prepared for NARC concludes that:

- *"Option 3 has the potential for missed opportunities and while a 5 Star Green Star certification may be achievable, 6 Star certification would be potentially impracticable.*
- *Option 4 opens up many opportunities to undertake a holistic sustainable design approach for the new building across the whole site... A 6 Star rating would still be a challenging aspiration however with significant support from Council and dedicated design and contractor teams it would be achievable."*

### Equity, Inclusion and Wellbeing Considerations

The Equity and Wellbeing Department will continue to contribute to the project to ensure inclusion, access and equity considerations can be incorporated into the design and operation of this facility.

## **Cultural Considerations**

The Creative Culture and Events Department have been engaged and will continue to contribute to the project to ensure that arts and cultural considerations can be incorporated into the design and operation of this facility.

## **Economic Development Considerations**

The Economic Development team have been engaged and will need to continue to contribute to the project to ensure that the economic benefits of this project can be maximised and realised

## **Financial and Resource Implications**

The indicative cost ranges for each option, sourced by OPG who engaged a Quantity Surveyor as part of the Feasibility Study are considered in the Redevelopment Options section of this report below.

The financial implications and considerations of this project include:

- There is \$50M indicatively planned for the NARC Redevelopment in the long term financial plan. A new 10-year Capital Works Plan is currently being prepared for consideration by Council later in financial year 2018-19.
- Additional funding possibilities will include borrowings, including the recently announced low interest loans guaranteed by the Victorian Government via the Community Sports Infrastructure Loans Scheme.
- State and Federal Government grants and other external grants (e.g. Melbourne Water) will also be pursued. Funding phasing over the project life will also need to be considered.
- Other funding possibilities which will be explored include the introduction of paid parking at the site after redevelopment, as well as commercial rental for instance to allied health professionals or for a café.
- \$432k has been allocated in the 2018/19 capital works program to commence the design phase.
- Further investigation into the financial implications of the operating business model will commence during the design period. A further report will be provided to Council in December 2018.

## **Legal and Risk Implications**

Due diligence studies and preliminary risk analysis has identified project risks. They are discussed as part of the Feasibility Study at Appendix A.

The risk implications for Council will need to be managed through a comprehensive risk management strategy for the preferred option.

The legal implications are unknown at this stage and will need to be addressed as part of the risk management strategy.

## DISCUSSION

### Key Feasibility Study Findings:

- The population of Darebin is expected to increase by 52% to 224,213 by 2041, with the largest annual rate of change anticipated by 2021.
- The annual NARC attendance figures over the past six years have decreased by 119,323 visits (19.5%).
- The financial performance of NARC is stable; however, it is being challenged with increasing maintenance and upgrade requirements, which is affecting Council's annual guaranteed return and operational performance.
- Current industry trends indicate that stand alone aquatic facilities often do not meet annual operating costs and minimal return on capital investment.
- To maximise the chance of a financially viable facility there are a number of factors that would need to be achieved, such as:
  - High ability to recover expenses
  - Excellent program range and attendances
  - High secondary spend
  - Draws users from a large catchment area
  - High revenue returns from health and fitness offerings
  - Complementary business options (e.g. day spa, sports medicine)

### Key Community Consultation Findings:

- Community consultation data is set out in Appendix A.
- Feedback suggests the condition, quality and cleanliness of the facility are below average, the size of spaces (change rooms, pools, café, gym and group fitness studios) are small and overcrowded.
- 68.4% of respondents had used other leisure centres within the previous 12 months, with WaterMarc (Greensborough) attracting 1 in 5 respondents. This suggests that the community want to use modern aquatics facilities that meet their needs and are willing to travel to these facilities.
- 100% of respondents who were not currently using NARC in the past 12 months indicated they wanted to increase their use. The top three issues identified that would encourage use were improved:
  - Cleanliness and hygiene
  - Recreation/leisure pool
  - Outdoor grassed/shaded areas.

Overall the Feasibility Study and community consultation found that NARC is a highly valued and utilised community asset, however it is not meeting the current needs of the community. To meet existing and future needs the facility requires significant improvement to the condition, functionality and services offered.

## Due Diligence Findings

### **Existing Facility Condition Technical Advice:**

Further to the 2015 Condition Audit, Macutex conducted a Technical Advice Report in April 2018 that concluded:

*“Upon Macutex’s desktop review of all available documentation, discussions with Council / Stakeholders, and on-site meetings; Macutex advise against reusing any of the existing infrastructure on the NARC site aside from 50m outdoor pool\*.*

*\*Provided that further hydrostatic testing is carried out to accurately and confidently determine if there are any leaks. In the event leaks are detected, costs associated with remedial works to the pool and its vicinity will need to be factored into the cost of the redevelopment option.”*

### **Strategic and Statutory Planning**

The Strategic and Statutory Due Diligence Report, undertaken by Calibre noted that:

*“At a Strategic level, the planning scheme supports the design of a facility that meets community needs and aspirations, is innovative in its built form and environmental impact, but also recognises the prevailing site and neighbourhood characteristics.*

*From a strategic perspective Option 4B – ASK6 [Calibre reference] provides for the most integrated redevelopment outcome that would meet the needs of a growing community. This plan provides for a great interface with the adjoining park and childcare centre enabling the centre to operate as a community activity hub. Additional consideration will need to be given to the car park design to provide for a softer interface with the existing residential neighbourhood, whilst recognising that Council’s traffic consultant has identified that there will be increased parking demand as mentioned above.”*

Furthermore, this report concludes that planning permit will not be required for the proposed use. However, a planning permit will be required under the Special Building Overlay (SBO) if the footprint of the building encroaches into the SBO area, as both option 4A and 4B do. The removal of any native vegetation or the reduction in car parking requirements will also trigger the need for Planning Approvals. Arboriculture advice is still pending.

### **Transport and Traffic**

The Transport and Traffic – Due Diligence Study conducted by Cardno identified that the site can accommodate any generated car parking with ease.

The current car parking provision create parking shortfalls for both Option 3 and 4. The design phase of the project will need to give further consideration to parking and traffic management including consideration of:

- Additional on-site parking
- Time restricted parking (on site and surrounds)
- A dedicated pedestrian/cycling crossing facility
- Removal of on-street parking along the Victoria Rd, site frontage
- Improved cycling and walking routes to and from the centre
- Relocation of bus stops
- Integration with the McDonnell Park precinct

In particular, behaviour change strategies to encourage non-car based visitation to the site will need to be investigated and implemented.

### ***Environmental and Geotechnical Site Assessment***

The Environmental and Geotechnical Site Assessment undertaken by Meinhardt concluded that:

*“Generally, it is considered that the existing site is suitable for the proposed development options. However further consideration must be given to the existing subsurface soil conditions, geological conditions, and site constraints identified during the investigation.”*

### **Reservoir Leisure Centre**

Reservoir Leisure Centre is also an important community asset that needs significant works. Options are currently being explored to ensure significant improvement to facilities for users, while ensuring the facilities are well-maintained for decades to come. A feasibility study for RLC is funded in 2018-19 and a further report will be brought back to Council.

## **OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION**

The Feasibility Study investigated four potential redevelopment options, analysing each option in terms of asset condition, usage and capacity to increase services and programs, opportunities to address Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) compliance and Environment Sustainability Design (ESD) initiatives, risks and financial impact for Council.

Based on the Feasibility Study, community consultation findings and the analysis of the four potential redevelopment options, Options 1 and 2 do not provide a viable long-term outcome.

During the preparation of the Otium Feasibility Study, the Macutex Technical Advice Report was received which provided unequivocal advice against the reuse of any of the existing infrastructure (except the outdoor 50m pool and only once further hydrostatic testing has been completed). This advice indicates that Option 3 is also not viable.

This information resulted in further investigation being done, to test two differently scaled redevelopment options adjacent to the current footprint via Options 4A and 4B. The difference between the two options relate to the size of the facility components and the initiation of a number of significant ESD innovations.

The following provides a summary of the key facility components and areas for options 4A and 4B

<b>Component</b>	<b>Option 4A COMPONENTS m2</b>	<b>Option 4B COMPONENTS m2</b>
<b>GROUND FLOOR</b>		
Lobby	75m2	75m2
Reception	90m2	90m2
Café / Function Room	100m2	360m2
Kitchen	110m2	110m2
Wet lounge	230m2	310m2
Administration	200m2	230m2
Adventure play	220m2	180m2



Component	Option 4A COMPONENTS m2	Option 4B COMPONENTS m2
Informal leisure /toddlers pool	NA	280m2
25M pool	580m2	580m2
Learn to swim pool	270m2	270m2
Program pool	250m2	250m2
Change village	65m2	65m2
Group change	300m2	300m2
Accessible change village including changing places facility	40m2	70m2
Steam room	15m2	15m2
Sauna	15m2	15m2
Linkage to childcare/multi purpose room	NA	485m2
<b>Sub Total Ground Floor</b>	<b>2,650m2</b>	<b>3,687m2</b>
<b>FIRST FLOOR</b>		
Gym	650m2	700m2
Program rooms	300m2	940m2
Change rooms	100m2	100m2
Circulation	140m2	140m2
Plant	160m2	160m2
Outdoor deck	50m2	270m2
<b>Sub Total First Floor</b>	<b>1,430m2</b>	<b>2,312m2</b>
<b>OUTDOOR AREA</b>		
Existing 50m pool	1,300m2	1,300m2
Toddlers pool	50m2	475m2
<b>Sub total outdoor area</b>	<b>1,350m2</b>	<b>1,875m2</b>
<b>TOTAL BUILDING AREA</b> (excluding car parking)	<b>5,430m2</b>	<b>7,874m2</b>

The key differences between the two options are:

Option 4A includes:

- Retention of the existing tennis courts
- Some ESD initiatives
- No link to the existing childcare centre
- No re use of the existing facility

Option 4B includes:

- A greater range of ESD initiatives including water gardens for water harvesting and reuse and solar panels.
- Larger café/function room
- Larger leisure /toddlers pool
- Larger area for health and wellness

- Linkages to the current child care/occasional care Centre providing an integrated service model.
- Reuse of some of the existing pools to create an outdoor water park that may attract a wider more regional catchment.

Both option 4A and 4B would comply with all current Disability Discrimination Act requirements and incorporate a range of universal design initiatives and would include a Changing Places facility that would be accessible 24 hours a day. The new facility would also incorporate a range of environmental sustainable design initiatives such as water gardens for the retention and reuse of back wash water.

The below table is a summary comparison of the four redevelopment options. Please note that the cost estimates for options 4A and 4B are derived from the high level concept plan as detailed in **Appendix A** with some assumed risk mitigation contingency.

A more detailed and accurate cost plan and schematic design will be provided as the project is further refined.

	<b>Option 1: Do Nothing</b> (urgent safety works only)	<b>Option 2: Maintain existing facility</b> (proactive maintenance program)	<b>Option 3: Redevelop in part</b> (refurbish existing building and extend)	<b>Option 4: Full redevelopment</b>
<b>Estimated cost of option</b>	\$396k - \$400k (immediate works required)	\$3.3M (over a 10 year period)	\$28M - \$46M*	\$40-45M (Option 4A) \$60-65M (Option 4B)
<b>Asset condition</b>	Continue to be aged and out of date.	May appear slightly cleaner and more up to date.	Moderate to significant improvements in cleanliness and modern facilities* *Further Macutex investigation strongly recommends against this option due to the risk and cost implications	State of the art, modern facility.
<b>Usage/ capacity for increased services / programs</b>	At capacity, no increased services/ programs.	At capacity, no increased services/ programs.	Improved with potential limitations on services/ programs capacity.	Capacity for services and programs to meet the needs of the community.
<b>DDA compliance</b>	None	Limited	Half	Full
<b>ESD opportunities</b>	None	None	Limited	Full
<b>Risk to Council</b>	Asset will no longer be operational in the next 5 years. Continue to decline in participation numbers and financial return for Council.	Asset will no longer be operational in the next 5 -10 years. Continue to decline in participation numbers and financial return for Council.	Significant risk and cost implications (as advised by Macutex) Facility will need to close down for redevelopment, significant financial loss to Council and no community access.	Capital Cost, site constraints and business growth (however, facility will most likely be able to remain open during redevelopment).

<b>Financial impact</b>	Council funding only.	Council funding only.	Council funding, Sport and Recreation Victoria funding opportunities.	Council funding, Sport and Recreation Victoria and Melbourne Water opportunities.
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## IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

### Details

See timeline below.

### Communication

A communication plan for the next phase of the project will be developed.

### Timeline

<b>Project Milestone</b>	<b>Indicative Date</b>
Finalise project scope (including budget and project outcomes) and adoption of project implementation plan	September – December 2018
Procurement for architectural services	January – March 2019
Award Principal Architect tender	April 2019
Commence schematic design	April 2019 – September 2019
Commence detailed design and tender documentations, including further community consultation	September 2019 – September 2020
Council consideration of final design	October 2020
Procurement for construction services	November – February 2021
Award construction tender	March 2021
Construction commences	March 2021
Construction complete	Late 2022/Early 2023

## RELATED DOCUMENTS

- Council Minutes – 5 November 2014

### Attachments

- Northcote Aquatic and Recreation Centre Feasibility Study and Precinct Master Plan (Appendix A) [↓](#)

## DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST

Section 80C of the *Local Government Act 1989* requires members of Council staff and persons engaged under contract to provide advice to Council to disclose any direct or indirect interest in a matter to which the advice relates.

The 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.



# NORTHCOTE AQUATIC AND RECREATION CENTRE

## FEASIBILITY STUDY AND PRECINCT MASTER PLAN

SEPTMEBER 2018



Prepared by  
Otium Planning Group Pty Ltd

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## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 Study Background

The Northcote Aquatic and Recreation Centre (NARC) is located at 180 Victoria Road, Northcote. The original facility was built in 1968 as an outdoor pool facility. NARC presently includes the following infrastructure:

- Outdoor 50m pool, 25m pool and toddlers heated pool
- Indoor 25m x 10m lane pool
- Learn to swim pool, leisure pool with beach entry
- Spa, sauna and steam room
- Gymnasium, Health Club
- Cycling studio
- Group fitness room
- Crèche
- Café
- Change rooms and amenities (male/female/accessible)
- Front of house/reception/retail
- Private consultation rooms

This facility has aged over the past 20 years and has fallen into a poor state of repair. A condition audit by Macutex in 2016 identified a range of major issues, with an extensive list of urgent maintenance and renewal requirements to keep the facility operating. NARC is considered to be near the end of its life cycle, as detailed in the Macutex condition report.

Darebin City Council has identified the need to identify the future upgrade or redevelopment options which will best meet the needs and aspirations of the community, users and stakeholders. Accordingly, Council wished to undertake a comprehensive study to identify the feasibility of redeveloping NARC in conjunction with a Master Plan for the surrounding precinct.

The purpose of the Master Plan was to investigate, scope and evaluate options to improve current sporting and leisure opportunities within the precinct, to determine future needs and development of the site, including additional sporting and leisure options, all in conjunction with local needs. The aim of the study was to investigate the following four options.

- Option 1: Do nothing
- Option 2: Maintain the existing through a major maintenance program
- Option 3: Redevelop in part, refurbish existing building and extend
- Option 4: A total new redevelopment

Otium Planning Group, in association with Peddle Thorp Architects, was commissioned to work in collaboration with Council on the review of the above options. Following the preliminary assessment of each option a final recommended option including extensive detail would be provided.



## 1.2 Project Methodology

The following table details the methodology used to undertake the feasibility study.

**Table 1: Project Methodology**

Stage	Task
Stage 1: Scope and Return Brief	1. Project Clarification
	2. Site Inspection
	3. Project Plan
Stage 2: Interim Discussion Paper	4. NARC Usage and Financial Review
	5. Review of Relevant Research
	6. Stakeholder Interviews
	7. User Group Forums
	8. Industry Benchmarking
	9. Aquatic, Leisure and outdoor sporting facility trends Industry Trends
	10. Technical Assessment
	11. Interim Discussion Paper
	12. Meeting 2 with PWG
Stage 3: Preliminary Report	13. NARC User Survey
	14. Resident Telephone Survey
	15. Priority Component Options
	16. Preliminary Report/Return Brief
	17. Meeting 3 with PWG
Stage 4: Draft Detailed Report	18. Draft Component Brief
	19. Facility Concept Options
	20. Indicative Cost Plan
	21. Financial Modelling
	22. Funding Opportunities
	23. Initial Report
	24. Recommended Option
	25. Precinct master Plan
	26. Draft Report
	27. Draft Report Review
Stage 5: Draft Final Report Stage 6: Final Report	28. Meetings to Review the Draft Report
	29. Summary of Feedback on Draft Report
	30. Complete Final Report



## 2. Project Area

The City of Darebin is located in the northern suburbs of Melbourne, between 5 and 15km north of the Melbourne CBD. The municipality covers an area of approximately 53km<sup>2</sup> and includes the suburbs of Alphington, Bundoora, Coburg, Coburg North, Fairfield, Kingsbury, Macleod, Northcote, Preston, Reservoir and Thornbury.

The City of Darebin is an established residential, industrial, commercial, cultural and educational area with a substantial number of parkland areas. The Council is surrounded by:

- City of Whittlesea in the north
- City of Banyule and Darebin Creek in the east
- City of Yarra in the south
- City of Moreland and Merri Creek in the west

The figure below highlights the location of the City of Darebin in relation to the Greater Melbourne area.

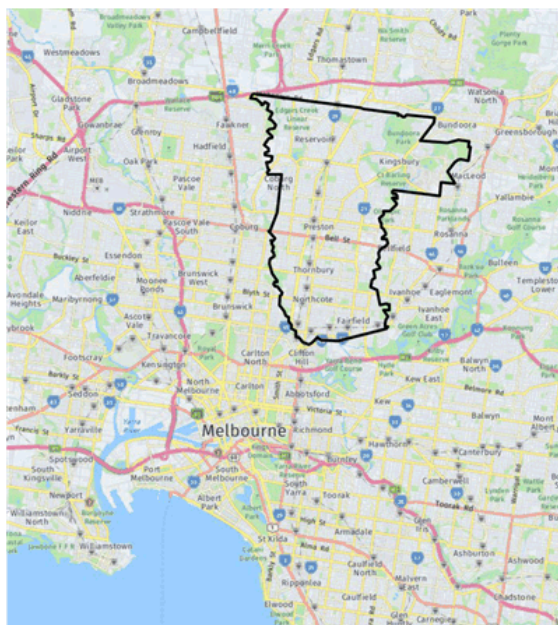


Figure 1: Location of the City of Darebin

### 2.1 Demographic Review

The following section summarises the key population and demographic characteristics and trends likely to impact future participation in sport and recreation within the Darebin area. The population and demographic profile is based wherever possible on the 2016 ABS Census data and has been sourced from .id, an online company that analyses ABS Census data.

The following provides a snapshot of the current demographic and population characteristics. A detailed demographic review is provided in Appendix 1.



### Population

- The population in the City of Darebin in 2016 was 146,721, an increase of 7.5% (10,247 residents) from 136,474 residents in 2011.
- Analysis of the five-year age groups of the City of Darebin in 2016 compared to Greater Melbourne shows that there was a lower proportion of people in the younger age groups (under 15) and a similar proportion of people in the older age groups (65+). Overall, 16.0% of the population was aged between 0 and 15, and 14.2% were aged 65 years and over, compared with 18.3% and 14.0% respectively for Greater Melbourne.
- There are more females than males within the population, which is consistent with the Greater Melbourne population.

### Diversity

- Cultural diversity is high with 28.2% being born in non-English speaking countries and 37.0% speaking a language other than English at home, compared to 27.0% and 32.3% respectively for the Greater Melbourne area.
- The most common language spoken at home other than English is Italian, spoken by 6.6% of the population, followed by Greek (6.3%), Mandarin (3.6%), Arabic (3.0%), and Vietnamese (2.3%).

### Disadvantage and Social Capital

- Analysis of individual income levels in the City of Darebin in 2016 compared to Greater Melbourne shows that there was a lower proportion of people earning a high income (those earning \$1,750 per week or more) and a higher proportion of low income people (those earning less than \$500 per week). Overall, 11.1% of the population earned a high income, and 38.6% earned a low income, compared with 11.9% and 37.8% respectively for Greater Melbourne.
- There is a moderate level of disadvantage within the Darebin population, with the municipality ranking 41st out of Victorian Council areas on the SEIFA Index of Relative Social Economic Disadvantage with a score of 990.3. The higher on the Index, the lower the level of disadvantage.

### Housing and Transport

- 4.3% of households were social housing dwellings, which is considerably higher than the Greater Melbourne population average of 2.6%.
- 78.7% of households own one or more vehicles, which is lower than the Greater Melbourne population where 83.9% own one or more vehicles.

### Future Population

- It is expected that the population within the Darebin City Council area will increase by 52.8% from 146,721 in 2016 to 224,213 in 2041. The largest annual average rate of change is predicted to occur between 2016 and 2021 before slowing down.



### 3. Competitor Review

#### 3.1 Darebin City Council Facilities

A review of the aquatic facilities within the Darebin area indicates that there is a total of five aquatic facilities. Of these, two are Council facilities, two are privately operated Learn to Swim facilities and one is located as part of a University. The table below details the current Darebin aquatic facility provision.

**Table 2: Darebin City Council Aquatic Facilities**

Facility	Address	Facilities	Map Ref
<b>Council Owned</b>			
Northcote Aquatic & Recreation Centre	180 Victoria Rd, Northcote	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Indoor and outdoor pool</li> <li>• Gym</li> <li>• Tennis courts</li> <li>• Crèche</li> <li>• Café</li> <li>• Spa, sauna steam room</li> </ul>	1
Reservoir Leisure Centre	2A Cuthbert Rd, Reservoir	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gym</li> <li>• 25m pool</li> <li>• Steam room, sauna, spa</li> <li>• Crèche</li> <li>• Cafe</li> </ul>	2
<b>Subtotal Council Facilities</b>	<b>2 FACILITIES</b>		
<b>Privately Owned</b>			
Jump! Swim School - Reservoir	49 Radford Rd, Reservoir		3
Jump! Swim School - Fairfield	33/44 Sparks Ave, Fairfield		4
<b>Subtotal Private Facilities</b>	<b>2 FACILITIES</b>		
<b>Education Facilities</b>			
La Trobe University	Centreway, Bundoora	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 25m indoor pool</li> </ul>	5
<b>Subtotal Education Facilities</b>	<b>1 FACILITY</b>		
<b>TOTAL NUMBER OF FACILITIES</b>	<b>5 FACILITIES</b>		



The following map details the location of the current Darebin aquatic facilities.



Figure 2: Darebin City Council Aquatic Facilities

### 3.2 Regional Facility Provision

A review of aquatic facility provision in the following neighbouring municipalities has been completed to identify key issues or facility developments that will impact on facilities in the Darebin City Council area. The neighbouring municipalities included:

- Moreland City Council
- City of Boroondara
- City of Whittlesea
- Banyule City Council
- City of Yarra

Table 3: Regional Aquatic Facility Provision

Facility	Address	Map Ref
<b>Moreland City Council</b>		
Brunswick Baths	14 Dawson Street, Brunswick	A1
Coburg Leisure Centre	Bridges Reserve, Bell Street, Coburg	A2
Coburg Olympic Pool	50 Murray Road, Coburg	A3
Oak Park Aquatic Centre	563A Pascoe Vale Road, Oak Park	A4
Pascoe Vale Outdoor Pool	7 Prospect Street, Pascoe Vale	A5
Fawkner Leisure Centre	79-83 Jukes Road, Fawkner	A6
North St Learn to Swim	89 North Street, Hadfield	A7
Elite Swimming	8 Attercliffe Street, Pascoe Vale	A8
Elite Swimming	27 Colebrooke Street, Brunswick	A9
Moomba Park/Links Swimming	Moomba Park	A10
<b>City of Boroondara</b>		
Boroondara Sports Complex	271C Belmore Road, Balwyn North	B1
Ashburton Pool & Recreation Centre	8 Warner Avenue, Ashburton	B2
Hawthorn Aquatic and Leisure Centre	1 Grace Street, Hawthorn	B3
Kew Recreation Centre	383 High Street, Kew	B4



Facility	Address	Map Ref
Xavier College	135 Barkers Road, Kew	B5
Bialik College Gringlas Sports Centre	21 Cato Street, Hawthorn East	B6
Genazzano FCJ College	301 Cotham Road, Kew	B7
City of Whittlesea		
Mill Park Leisure	33 Morang Drive Mill Park	C1
Thomastown Recreation and Aquatic Centre	54 Main Street, Thomastown	C1
Whittlesea Swim Centre	50 Walnut Street, Whittlesea	C1
Banyule City Council		
WaterMarc Banyule	1 Flintoff Street, Greensborough	D1
Ivanhoe Aquatic Banyule	170 Waterdale Road, Ivanhoe	D2
Olympic Leisure Banyule	15 Alamein Road, Heidelberg West	D3
Jump! Swim School - Bundoora	4/37 The Concord, Bundoora	D4
City of Yarra		
Collingwood Leisure Centre	Turnbull Street, Clifton Hill	E1
Fitzroy Swimming Pool	Alexandra Parade, Fitzroy	E2
Richmond Recreation Centre	Gleadell Street, Richmond	E3





Figure 3: Surrounding Councils Current Aquatic Facilities



## 4. Operational Review

The NARC facility is located 180 Victoria Road, Northcote. The facility was constructed 1968 and is now 50 years old.

### 4.1 Current Facilities

The facilities at the Centre include three outdoor pools (50m, 25m and toddlers heated pool), indoor 25m pool, learn to swim pool, leisure pool with beach entry, spa, sauna and steam room, gymnasium and group fitness facilities, crèche, café, private consultation rooms, and associated support amenities.



Figure 4: Aerial Map of NARC Site

### 4.2 Hours of Operation

The following table details the current hours of operation of the Centre.

Table 4: Hours of Operation

Day	Hours of Operation
Monday - Friday	6.00am - 10.00pm
Saturday	7.30am - 8.00pm
Sunday	8.00am - 8.00pm



### 4.3 Program and Usage Review

NARC offers a range of aquatic and leisure-based services including:

- Health and wellness (cycle, Pilates, yoga, group fitness, aqua aerobics)
- Personal training
- Aquatic education
- Recreational swimming/lap swimming
- School carnivals
- Pryme movers
- Youth programs
- Tennis coaching/tennis court hire

#### 4.3.1 Centre Attendance

The following table details the total annual usage of the centre over the six-year period 2011/2012 to 2016/2017.

Table 5: Usage Review

Year	Attendance
2011/2012	605,512
2012/2013	612,798
2013/2014	566,349
2014/2015	546,040
2015/2016	515,072
2016/2017	493,475

Source: NARC Monthly Reports

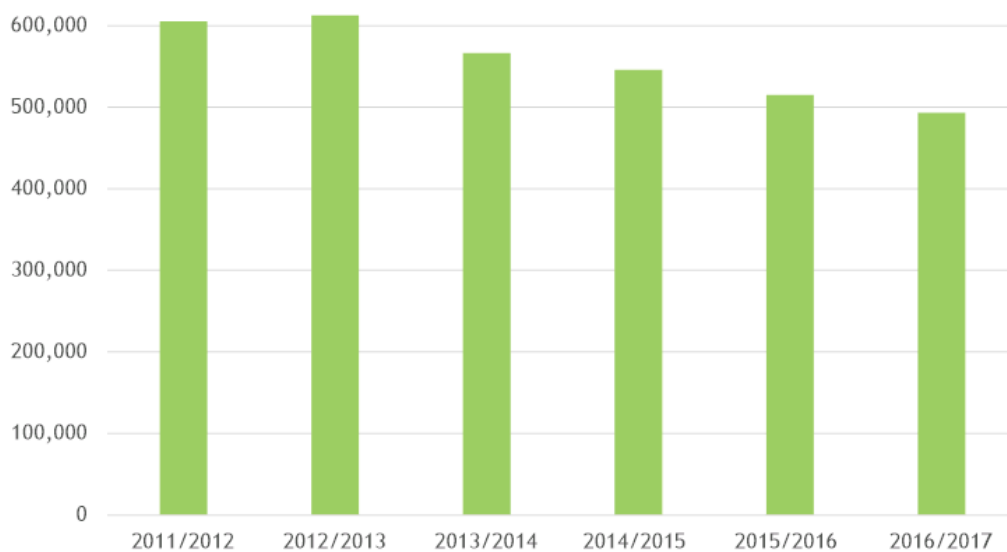


Figure 5: NARC Total Attendance 2011/2012 - 2016/2017



A review of total usage of NARC over the past three years indicates that over the past six years, the Centre usage has decreased from a high of 612,798 visits in 2012/2013 to a low of 493,475 in 2016/2017 a decrease of 119,323 visits (19.5%).

The following sections provide a summary of the key program areas over the past three years.

#### 4.3.2 Members Profile

The following table provides a summary of the membership as at June each year.

Table 6: Membership Profile

	2014/2015 - June	2015/2016 - June	2016/2017 - June
Total	3,543	3,389	3,396
Health and Wellness	2,728	2,584	2,495
Aquatic	373	312	325
Pryme	328	365	413
Youth	88	89	68
Tennis	Externally operated figures not available	Externally operated figures not available	225 (June 2017)
Other	-	-	63

Overall, the membership numbers at NARC decreased between 2014/2015 and 2015/2016 before remaining steady to 2016/2017. Membership within the health and wellness area decreased over the three years while the number of members using Pryme increased substantially.

#### 4.3.3 Aquatic Education

The following provides a summary of aquatic education between 2014/2015 and 2016/2017.

Table 7: Aquatic Education

	2014/2015 - June	2015/2016 - June	2016/2017 - June
Total Enrolments	2,455	2,465	2,334

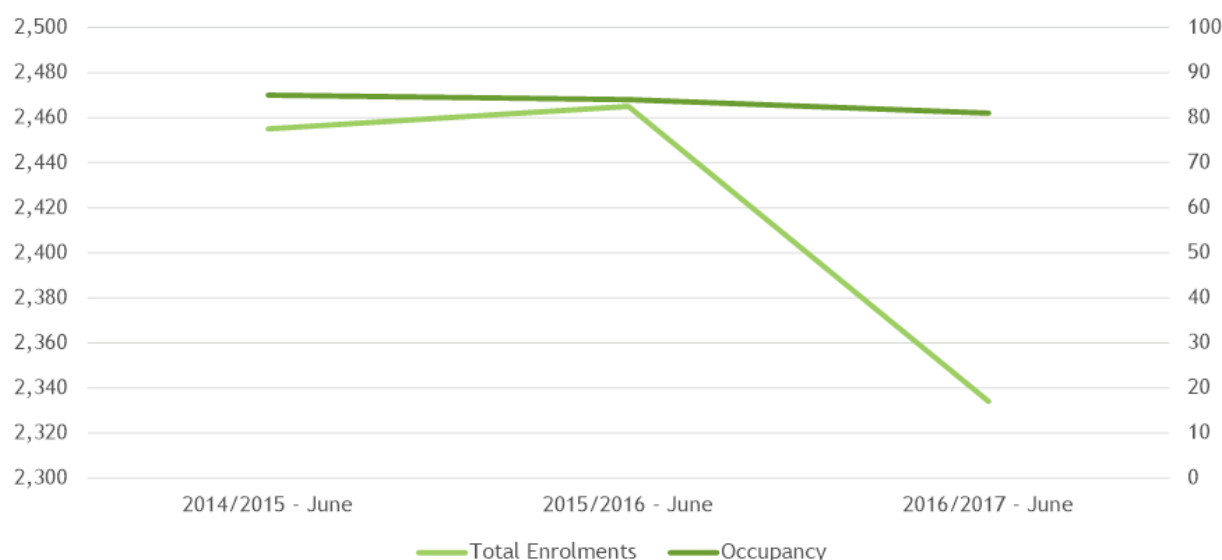


Figure 6: Aquatic Education

Over the past three years, aquatic education/learn to swim members have remained relatively constant however over the last 12 months participation has decreased by approximately 131 students (5.3%).

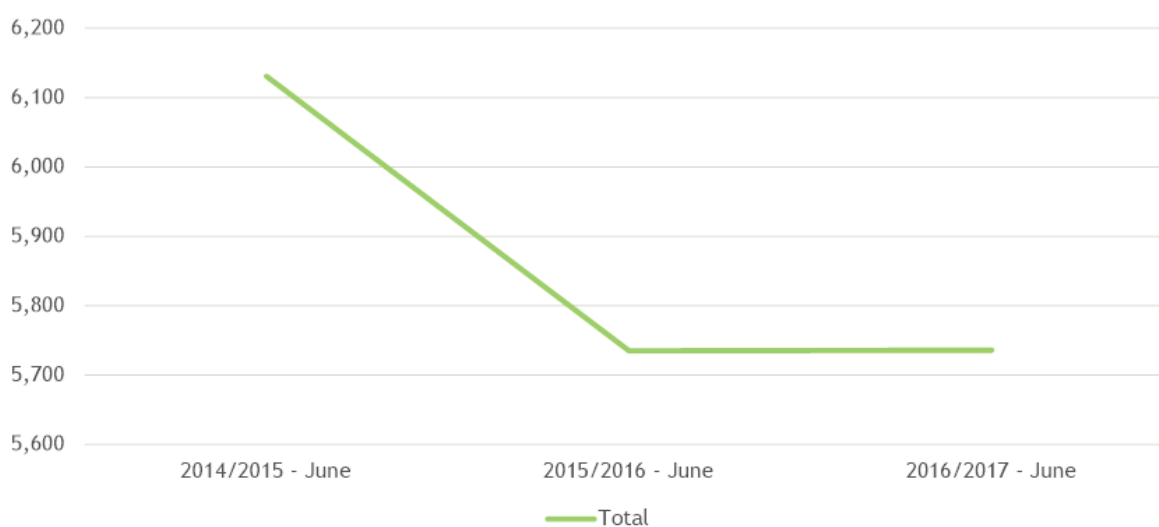


#### 4.3.4 Group Fitness

The following provides a summary of group fitness between 2014/2015 and 2016/2017.

**Table 8: Group Fitness**

	2014/2015 - June	2015/2016 - June	2016/2017 - June
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,131</b>	<b>5,735</b>	<b>5,736</b>



**Figure 7: Group Fitness**

Over the past three years the number of group fitness members has decreased from a high of 6,131 in 2014/2015 to 5,736 in 2016/2017, a decrease of 395 members (6.5%).

#### 4.4 Financial Review

The following table provides a summary of the operational performance of the Centre over the past three years.

**Table 9: Financial Review**

Category	Annual Revenue \$	Annual Expenditure \$	Operating Surplus/Deficit	Contracted Guaranteed Net Return	Subsidy Funded by YMCA
2014/2015	\$5,576,303	\$4,725,023	\$851,280	\$896,162	-\$44,882
2015/2016	\$5,880,390	\$4,925,332	\$955,058	\$995,392	-\$40,334
2016/2017	\$6,371,576	\$5,417,714	\$953,862	\$1,074,807	-\$120,945

The following details the areas of change in the financial models that account for the increasing annual revenue:

- Swimming lessons increased between 2014/2015 and 2016/2017 from \$1,513,237 to \$1,641,832 this increase is attributed to a significant increase in a number of learn to swim fees and charges categories beyond the normal CPI figure, which was adopted by Council in November 2014 as a means of raising fees to be in line with industry standards. Additional income was also generated via a range of promotional activities.
- Recreational swimming increased from \$344,745 in 2014/2015 to \$377,358 in 2016/2017. The increase in revenue is attributed to the normal fees and charges increase and an hotter then average summer season particularly during the period January to March 2017.



- Operational income for tennis increased significantly due to YMCA taking over the direct management and operation of the service (both court hire and coaching). This achieved a net income of approximately \$50,000 in June 2017.
- For 2014/2015 and 2015/2016, the café was leased and returned an operational income of \$17,400 and \$13,953 respectively. In 2016/2017 the café was managed by the YMCA and returned an operational income of \$201,914.

#### 4.5 Technical Assessment Review

Macutex Pty Ltd was commissioned by Darebin City Council in 2015 to undertake an Updated Asset Condition Audit of the NARC.

Table 10: Macutex - Asset Condition Audit

Audit Type	Timing of Works				
	Urgent Works	Within 12 Months	1-2 Years	3-5 Years	6-10 Years
Building Condition Audit	-	-	\$485,140	\$269,815	\$303,120
Maintenance Issues	\$29,800	\$40,990	\$27,980	-	-
BCA Compliance	\$800	\$19,060	\$94,430	\$67,800	-
Building Structure Audit	\$245,000	\$11,000	\$800	\$6,000	-
Electrical Audit	-	\$7,000	\$79,000	\$19,000	\$3,000
Mechanical Audit	\$1,000	\$21,400	\$20,750	\$10,000	\$404,000
Pool Plant & Equipment	\$119,600	\$4,000	\$108,050	\$663,200	\$280,700
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$396,200</b>	<b>\$103,450</b>	<b>\$816,150</b>	<b>\$1,035,815</b>	<b>\$990,820</b>

A summary of the key findings of the Condition Assessment in the Macutex report is provided below.

- External building finishes are generally in an average to poor condition. External timbers and surface finishes, including the roof coverings, will require renewal in the short to medium term.
- The majority of the building internal elements are worn and dated and will require replacement in the short to medium term with particular emphasis on floor coverings, surface finishes and internal doors.
- The suspended concrete slab over the spa area, and to a lesser degree the sauna, is in poor structural condition due to significantly corroded supporting steel beams. Large areas of concrete are visible as a result in the extensive corrosion.
- The retaining wall and south wall serving the outdoor plant room are in very poor condition due to significant structural movement and should be demolished and rebuilt with appropriately designed footings.
- The condition of pool related plant and equipment within the plant rooms is considered poor in comparison to industry standards and will require major expenditure in the immediate future. The UV system on the indoor pool does not meet chloramine compliance and other upgrades are required to bring the relevant plant and equipment up to current industry standards.
- In the next five years, Council will need to budget for approximately \$600,000 + GST in capital replacement and \$500,000 + GST in repair and maintenance.
- Water of unknown source is continually entering the circulation pump pit from two penetrations in the pit wall. These penetrations are the two filtered water pipes servicing the indoor pool. The volume net of seepage is approximately 1,000L/day. This water is pumped back into the pump well allowing for some degree of water reclamation.
- A dynamic test of the pools' operating as usual indicated a daily loss of approximately 40,000L/day. The outdoor balance tank does not appear to be leaking and hence this leak is most likely to be



within the pressured pipework, i.e. filtered water supply. This needs to be urgently rectified by way of replacing the existing outdoor plant is eventually moved.

It is estimated that the overall cost for repair and renewals relating to the building and pool infrastructure in the next 10 years will be in excess of \$3.3M.

It should be noted the NARC is nearing the end of its usable life expectancy. The main building was constructed in the 1960's, along with the majority of the pool infrastructure, and repairs to these areas particularly the underground services will be extremely costly.

It is unclear at this stage where exactly the majority of the 40,000L/day of water is escaping but it is highly likely that the soil surrounding the building is oversaturated and in the opinion of the structural engineer is a significant contributing factor to the observed building movement.

Investigations carried out by Macutex and their sub-consultants have identified a number of major risks at the facility including the leaking pipework, corroded roof coverings/roof structure, unstable concrete slabs and retaining walls which require urgent attention and rectification.

#### 4.6 Macutex Report April 2017

In April 2017 Macutex undertook further assessment of the Northcote Aquatic Centre. The purpose of the review was to ascertain how much of the existing NARC building and infrastructure can be reused as part of a Redevelopment.

The documentation provided and reviewed included the following:

- Report completed by Macutex and titled "Updated Condition Audit of the Northcote Aquatic & Recreation Centre (NARC)" dated February 2016.
- Northcote Aquatic & Recreation Centre Masterplan (prepared August 2017 by Peddle Thorp / Otium)
- Northcote Aquatic & Recreation Centre - Councilor Workshop (prepared by Otium)
- Northcote Aquatic & Recreation Centre - Outdoor Pool Leak Assessment Report (prepared December 2017 by Roejen)
- NARC - Planning Advice draft report (prepared 15th March 2018 by Calibre)

Upon Macutex's desktop review of all available documentation, discussions with Council / Stakeholders, and on-site meetings; Macutex advised against reusing any of the existing infrastructure on the NARC site aside from 50m outdoor pool\*.

\*Provided that further hydrostatic testing is carried out to accurately and confidently determine if there are any leaks. In the event leaks are detected, costs associated with remedial works to the pool and its vicinity will need to be factored into the cost of the redevelopment option.



## 5. Consultation and Market Research

This section summarises the key findings identified through the studies market research and consultation and includes:

- Interviews with key stakeholders
- Advisory committee
- Facility User Survey
- School Survey
- Resident Telephone Survey
- Public Submissions

### 5.1 Interviews with Key Stakeholders

#### 5.1.1 YMCA Workshop

##### General Comments

1. Despite being an aging facility with a number of operational challenges, the facility continues to attract a large number of visitations and memberships. Key statistics are 3,300 members, 2,200 swim school students, 150 swim club members and 250 tennis students.
2. The facility is very viable, continuing to return close to \$900k surplus to Council.
3. The area's demographics have changed significantly over the past two decades.
4. Staff identified that the facility will be less viable and cater for less visitations/memberships without a building/maintenance program.
5. The facility is a National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) pilot site.
6. Key success areas are:
  - a. Swim School
  - b. Fitness, Health, Gym
  - c. School Swimming Carnivals; 50m outdoor pool is key
  - d. General aquatics
  - e. NDIS
7. Key opportunities/challenges are:
  - a. Continue with above
  - b. Car Parking
  - c. Utilising two levels (lift inadequate)
  - d. Reception/entry and circulation and capacity to integrate services across the site
  - e. Inadequate contemporary change spaces
  - f. Being a leading health/wellness/aquatics destination with all of life pathways for health, fitness, recreation and sport
  - g. Water features and fun family zones
  - h. Inadequate support amenity such as staff offices, storage
  - i. Potential for increased hours of operation, including 24-hour venue?
  - j. Buffer facility from local residents





8. The workshop broke into three groups to provide feed-back for the development of the Master Plan/conceptual design. These three areas were:
  - a. Front of House
  - b. Aquatics and Operations
  - c. Programs and Services
9. A summary of comments is provided under each of the three areas. As many of the comments are more geared to informing detailed design the following section provides the key information for developing the NARC Master Plan.

#### Comments for Master Plan (not in order of importance)

1. Larger and more inviting entry/reception area
2. Retain outdoor pool and enhance with tiered seating and programmable outdoor space, including retaining and enhancing grassed areas
3. 10 lane indoor pool with spectator seating
4. Integrated indoor leisure water/play/teaching and aquatic water spaces
5. Enhanced hydro-therapy/aquatic exercise spaces
6. Increased health and wellness provision, including expanded spa etc.
7. Enhanced toddler pool area and 'stay and play' area, zero depth, 10m by 5m
8. Expanded weights, gym areas and group fitness areas
9. Fully integrated consulting rooms, especially linked to health and wellness/gym areas
10. Large, lockable change room spaces suitable for large school groups
11. Increased office space of at least 40m<sup>2</sup>
12. Security room for when counting cash or dropping cash in place where you can still see customer service area
13. Expanded change rooms, including at least four family change rooms
14. Retain six tennis courts on-site, potentially more closely linked to main facility
15. Improved circulation between entry, change and program spaces.
16. Increased car-parking with enhanced security and controls; consider underground car-parking.

#### Front of House

1. Traffic flow space for consumers entry and exit clearly defined with turnstiles
2. Multiple locker systems within change rooms and within the health club
3. Well set up merchandise store that is aligned with traffic flow
4. Office space suitable for size of centre and number of staff (30 people)
5. Membership presentation/space waiting area
6. For health and safety reasons standing desks at customer service
7. Parking provide a boom gate for members area and then a casual parking area consideration be given to increasing parking due to increase in members and usage
8. Change rooms family change space before entering the actual change room and cater for school groups
9. Ability to be able to lock rooms from control space; example group fitness room once class starts
10. Proper staff and multi-purpose training rooms with ability to change room sizes; provide showers and amenities in staff rooms



11. Security room for when counting cash or dropping cash in place where you can still see customer service area
12. Entrance space and air lock before actually entering the facility

#### Aquatics and Operations

1. Multi-lane indoor lap pool dedicated to online lap swimmers
2. 25m family friendly outdoor pool
3. Separate hydro pool 15m by 10m
4. Multiple bodies of water
5. Separate school change rooms capable of catering for up to 100 children at a time
6. Separate wet and dry change rooms
7. Outdoor toilet block
8. 'Stay and play' area zero depth, 10m by 5m
9. Seating for outdoor pool tiered chairs
10. Disability access including ramp access rails, disabled toilets, pushed buttons for open and close door
11. Recycling bins
12. 10 lane indoor pool; eight lanes plus two lanes (with gentle slope) for learn to swim and aqua aerobics
13. Less exit points
14. Electronic scoreboard
15. Three-tiered seating for the 25m indoor pool and toddler pool
16. Underground car park currently experiencing car thefts; need lighting, cameras and a disability access
17. Access to tennis courts
18. More meeting rooms and club rooms

#### Disabled Access

1. Push buttons for open/close for disability rooms and toilets
2. Two benches inside the shower/disability rooms
3. Appropriate height of hooks in the change rooms and showers
4. Instead of paper rolls, paper sheet dispensers in the toilets. The rolls are too heavy to pull for the hands of some people with disabilities.
5. More than one disable change room and toilet on pool deck close to beach access/hydro pool
6. Extra 25/50m indoor pool for hydrotherapy, with ramp access
7. Balustrade in hydrotherapy pool/area
8. More space at entrance (inside and outside) of the facility for wheel chair/pram access
9. More than one and closer to front entrance disabled parking
10. Less gutter dip from car park to path (currently too hard to push forward with a manual wheelchair)
11. Speed humps along the entrance in front of the centre. There are too many cars that speed along while people and young children disembark cars.



### Programs and Services

Comments primarily cover Health & Wellness, Café and Child Care.

#### Health Club

- Multi-purpose consultation rooms, 2-3 each of 3m x 4m; plus, consulting rooms for physiotherapists, exercise physiologists, Pryme (older adults) and medical professionals.
- Multiple Storage Rooms, 1-2 each of 2m x 3m
- Offices, 2-3 each of 3m x 4m
- Current size of health club would need to be reviewed/two stories for the health club? Suggested placing group fitness on one level and gym on the other.
- Need wheelchair access through health club

#### Group Fitness

- Group Fitness Room, 2 multi-purpose, 1 of 25m x 15m, 1 of 15m x 10m; multi-purpose room/pack up, set up
- Cycle Studio, 1 of 15m x 10m
- Outdoor Training Area Undercover, 25m x 10m
- Hydro-therapy pool to provide space for group fitness classes
- Lift Access
- Flat Wall for projections; e.g. virtual classes

#### Child Care

- Current size is appropriate
- Storage rooms, 2 of 2m x 2m
- Outdoor undercover secure area for childcare
- Bathroom facilities, direct access from outside
- Capacity to expand with multi-purpose rooms designed to child care standards

#### Tennis

- Improve connection to the centre and provide easy access to toilets, change rooms, café/pavilion and ability to control lights independently

#### Café

- Make the café a feature of the centre, creating a member hub
- Outdoor service capacity for carnivals and/or other precinct users
- Commercial kitchen

#### Additional pool ideas

- 10 lane x 50m indoor pool with a boom so it can be transformed into 2 x 25m pools (maintain the outdoor pool though)
- Touch pads and timing system/screen
- Hot and cold recovery centre
- Club rooms for the club?
- Undercover area at the end of the outdoor pool for stretching and other activities



- Omega racing blocks so we could hold comps. The club would be able to make a bucket load from that.
- Overlay the Northcote logo on the bottom of the pool

### 5.1.2 Dennis Cricket Club

Table 11: Dennis Cricket Club Consultation

Question	Response				Comment
Number of Teams	2012	2017	Projected for 2022		Greatest growth has been in females and Milo program. Club was originally a seniors' only club.
	3 senior 9 junior Plus Milo program	4 senior 10 junior Plus Milo program	2 more teams which would operate facility to absolute capacity		
Total Membership		More than 200 plus 70 in Milo program plus cater for 130 Milo cricketers from other clubs as part of hub centre role			
Number on waiting list?	Have been directing additional children in U11 and U13 to other teams in the area.				
NARC Facilities Used by Club:	How Used	No of Hours per week	No of Weeks per Year	Lighting	Currently ovals are used to approximately 80% of capacity in peak and shoulder times. Both ovals will be used to full capacity within the next 3 to 5 years. The lack of access to suitable lighting is an issue in the early and late part of the season as approx. 1.5 hours of activity each night is conducted beyond 6.30pm. Weeknight training times are extended after daylight savings begins.
Main Oval with lights	Training and Competition	28 hours plus use by another club on Sunday pm	All season	Lighting is ok for cricket training	
Second oval	Training and Competition	Approx. 25 hours plus	All season	Lighting is unsuitable for cricket training	
Practice wickets	Training and practice/ warm-up area for competitions	Heavily used 15 hours per week for training	All season	No lighting	
Pavilion	Support facility for all activities				
Identify current gaps in provision and assess future development requirements?	Need lighting for cricket wickets and improved lighting on second oval. There is a storage shortfall. Lack of play area on-site for younger children (refer junior football club comments). As Club continues to grow the capacity of the facility to cater for other cricket clubs/activities will be limited. The area in front of the pavilion is either dusty or muddy and requires either paving or turfing.				
Current facility issues and needs?	The Club currently does not have access to lighting; needs key from Council which Club advises has not been provided. In the medium to long term the Club would like to see spectator amenity, function space and seating stand constructed on top of pavilion. There is poor lighting on path from pavilion to car park. There is a need for ramps/more graduated circulation spaces between the ovals and support amenity.				Unable to access indoor wickets within 5 to 8kms of club base (travel to Bundoora sometimes in pre-season and wet nights).



Question	Response	Comment
Any Other Comments on Facilities at NARC?	See NARC redevelopment as opportunity to bring new customers to site with potential to cross-market cricket. As a club generally don't use NARC facilities but many players use for conditioning and rehab.	

### 5.1.3 Northcote Junior Football Club

Table 12: Northcote Junior Football Club Consultation

Question	Response				Comment
Number of Teams	2012	2017	Projected for 2022		Large growth in females, Auskick and lower age groups. Seeking to consolidate girls' teams. Have traditionally struggled with upper age groups for boys.
	3 senior 9 junior Plus Milo program	14 junior teams Plus Auskick	3 more teams which would operate facility to absolute capacity		
Total Membership		Almost 600 with 250 plus in Auskick program	650 plus which would be the maximum capacity for facilities.		
NARC Facilities Used by Club:	How Used	No of Hours per week	No of Weeks per Year	Lighting	Currently ovals are used to capacity in peak and shoulder times for Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday nights and Saturday morning and all-day Sunday. Ovals are also used by school groups and other users on nights not used by NJFC.
			Access facility from March to late September. Generally good co-operation between cricket and junior football club in organising access at cross-over seasonal times. However unable to host finals.		
	Main Oval with lights	Training and Competition	4.00pm - 8.00pm training three days per week with Auskick Saturday mornings and Games all day Sunday; total is approx. 25 hours per week.	All season	Lighting is ok for cricket training
Second oval	Training and Competition	As above but utilisation week-nights during winter limited because of poor lighting.	All season		
Pavilion	Support facility for all activities				
Identify current gaps in provision and assess future development requirements?	Need improved lighting on second oval and on circulation space. Identified that cutting down a tree adjoining oval closest to NARC would improve lighting. Inadequate separation of dedicated female toilets, shower and change area in pavilion; especially difficult when there is a cross-over from girls' teams to boys' teams or vice-versa. Seeking a playground on the site (potentially on southern side between two ovals) as it would be vital for young children attending				Seeking grant for an electronic scoreboard.



Question	Response	Comment
	activities and there isn't any accessible play equipment in the area. The area in front of the pavilion is a mud pit and slopes towards pavilion.	
Current facility issues and needs?	Parking is inadequate on Game Days with spill-over into adjoining streets and NARC carpark.	
Any Other Comments on Facilities at NARC?	Would like to see NARC redevelopment include a café/kiosk accessible from oval (not concerned with impact on revenue from their own kiosk).	

#### 5.1.4 Local Physiotherapy Provider

A local resident, who is also currently a director of a local Physiotherapy Group, expressed an interest in establishing a financial partnership with the Council and would consider providing seeding funds for some capital development.

He believes there is the potential to link memberships with access to the multi-disciplinary health services. Initially he suggested an area of 100m<sup>2</sup> comprising three consulting rooms of 12m<sup>2</sup>, 20-30m<sup>2</sup> physio gym and 25-40m<sup>2</sup> of multi-functional space for classes and rehab exercise areas, with access to heavy equipment for final stage of rehab pathway; access to hydro-therapy.

He believes that the NARC is an ideal location to promote health wellness and well-being across community. He reinforced that NARC is positioned to be a leading health/wellness/aquatics destination with all of life pathways for health, fitness, recreation and sport.

He spoke about trends occurring in health and wellness. He identified that the centre needs a muscular skeletal Physiotherapist on-site with a multidisciplinary Health Service and the desire to co-locate exercise prescription. He wants to have larger consulting rooms at NARC, especially in the longer term.

He spoke about the ideal potential flow of spaces which included consulting rooms to physiotherapy gym, to a gym with Pilates integrated on-site with fitness, cardio and exercise areas. It is desirable to also link with the provision of yoga, clinical Pilates and remedial exercise, as well as tai chi.

He emphasized the need for good parking and providing a suite of services. Consulting suites need good parking availability. He indicated he would like to have the opportunity to have some input into design at the facility.

## 5.2 Advisory Committee

### Local Resident 1

A number of points relating to traffic management were raised with the introduction of a one-way traffic flow to ease flow during busy periods as well as the need to reduce the reliance on cars by forcing people to cycle, walk or take public transport. Special permits could be introduced for mothers with young children, elderly, disabled etc. The potential to open up the front to introduce a park like feel was also raised.

### Launch Housing

Launch Housing recommended the implementation of a program currently being run by the City of Yarra which enables community based or non-government organisations to purchase community memberships for their clients, on health care cards, at a significantly reduced rate. The programs targeted groups include:

- Person with a disability
- Person from a CALD background
- Older adults (55+ years)
- Housing estate resident



### Men's Health Unit, Victorian Aboriginal Health Service

The manager supports the redevelopment, particularly of the indoor pool. Despite users paying to get into the facility, they are often limited in the areas they can use due to classes and lessons. Due to the small nature of the spaces available this often leads to young children close to rowdy teenagers. They also support the opening of the diving boards and pool which helps relationships form amongst users.

### Team Leader Access and Inclusion, Aged and Disability

It is important to consider physical barriers and include various types of access to the pools other than lifts, including ramps (and the provision of aquatic wheelchairs) and zero depth entry ramp/beach access. This access should be available to all pools. This is to ensure equitable and dignified access for all. Accessible features such as changing places should be included, as well as appropriate and accessible signage and audible and visual alarm systems, especially if there is a water movement sequence (waves). Appropriate seating should also be considered which allows for wheelchair integration. Social connection and inclusion is an ongoing priority for Darebin Disability Advisory Committee (DDAC) and therefore the availability of an accessible social meeting space would encourage greater use and have wellbeing outcomes for people. This may include a café with integrated seating. Consider space and acoustics to ensure that it is a welcoming and enjoyable environment to be in.

## 5.3 Surveys

A number of surveys were undertaken in order to gain an understanding of the thoughts and opinions of various different sectors of the community including:

- Users of the NARC
- Schools in the City of Darebin area
- Local residents via a random sample telephone survey
- A public submission form for community members

## 5.4 User Survey

This section summarises the key findings from the users' survey of the NARC. A total of 1,273 surveys were completed with respondents providing information on:

- Respondent profile
- Current use of aquatic facilities
- Potential future use of aquatic facilities

A copy of the written comments is detailed in Appendix 2 of this report.



#### 5.4.1 Respondent Profile

The following summarises the user survey respondents sample for the NARC.

**Table 13: User Survey Respondent Sample**

Category	Sub-group	Number	%
Gender	Male	317	25.7
	Female	895	72.4
	Prefer not to specify	24	1.9
Age Range	10 years and under	2	0.2
	11 to 19	18	1.5
	20 to 29	85	6.9
	30 to 39	381	30.8
	40 to 49	449	36.3
	50 to 59	173	14.0
	60 to 69	95	7.7
	70 years plus	35	2.8
Suburb	3070	526	42.5
	3071	258	20.8
	3072	169	13.6
	3073	38	3.1
	3078	149	12.0
	3083	9	0.7
	3085	3	0.2
	Other	87	7.0

A review of the survey respondents indicates that:

- More females (72.4%) than males (25.7%) responded to the survey.
- The age group that represents the highest percentage of the respondents is 40 to 49 years (36.3%) followed by 30 to 39 years (30.8%).
- The predominant postcodes where respondents lived were 3070 (42.5%), followed by 3071 (20.8%).

#### 5.4.2 Use of the Northcote Aquatic and Recreation Centre

The majority of survey respondents had made use of NARC in the previous 12 months. The following analysis relates to the respondents who had used the Centre in the past 12 months.

#### 5.4.3 Visitation to the Centre

The main times that people used NARC are detailed in the table below.

**Table 14: NARC Arrival Times**

Time Slot	% of Respondents
Before 9.00am	17.0%
9.00am to 12.00pm	34.6%
Midday to 2.00pm	4.6%
2.00pm to 5.00pm	17.8%
5.00pm to 8.00pm	23.4%
After 8.00pm	2.6%

The most popular timeslots identified were 9.00am to 12.00pm (34.6%), followed by 5.00pm to 8.00pm (23.4%), and 2.00pm to 5.00pm (17.8%).





The length of time that respondents spent at the Centre on an average visit is detailed below.

**Table 15: NARC Length of Visit**

Length of Visit	% of Respondents
Less than 0.5 hours	0.9%
0.5 hours to 1 hour	29.4%
1 hour to 1.5 hours	47.2%
1.5 hours to 2 hours	18.4%
More than 2 hours	4.1%

Most respondents spend 1 to 1.5 hours at the Centre (47.2%), followed by 0.5 to 1 hour (29.4%) and 1.5 to 2 hours (18.4%).

#### 5.4.4 Transport to the Centre

The table on the following page summarises how respondents travelled to the Centre and where they came from.

**Table 16: Transport to NARC**

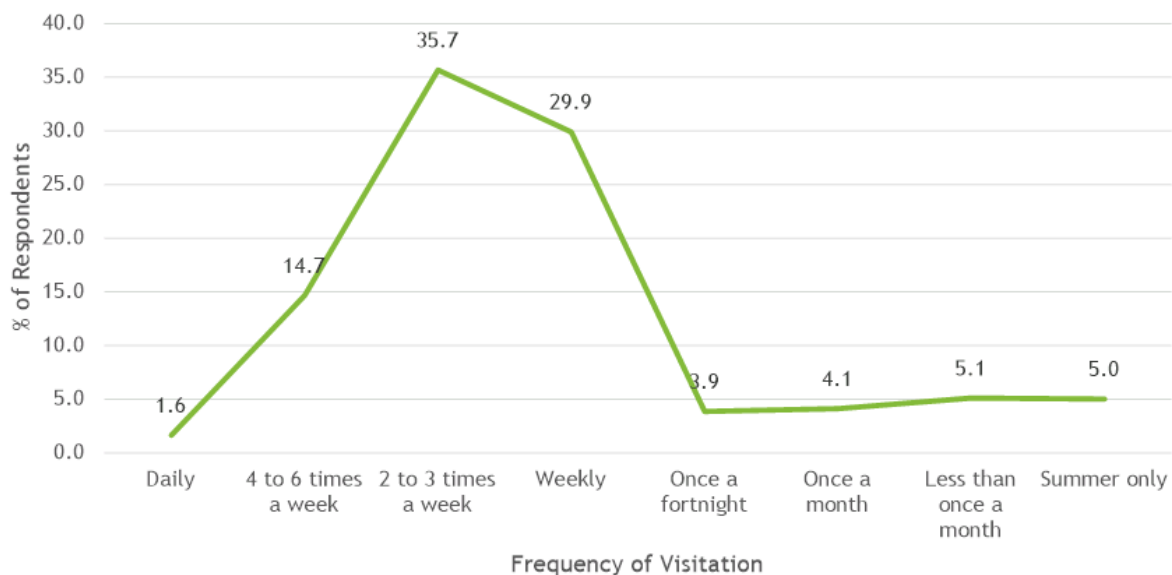
Category	Sub-Group	Number	% of Respondents
Location of Origin	Home	1,097	90.4%
	Work	58	4.8%
	School	50	4.1%
	Shopping Centre	0	0.0%
	Other	9	0.7%
Mode of Transport	Car (on own)	526	43.3%
	Car (with others)	367	30.2%
	Walk	172	14.2%
	Bike	125	10.3%
	Bus	12	1.0%
	Taxi	2	0.2%
	Train	1	0.1%
	Other	9	0.7%

Most survey respondents indicated that they travel to the Centre from their home (90.4%), followed by work (4.8%).

The majority of respondents travelled by car either on their own (43.3%) or with others (30.2%). Walking and riding a bike were also popular modes of transport (14.2% and 10.3% respectively) indicating that the location of the facility is an important factor in their decision to choose the facility.

#### 5.4.5 Frequency of Visitation

The following figure summarises the frequency of visitation to the Centre.



**Figure 8: NARC Frequency of Visitation**

The results indicate that the majority of respondents are regular users of the NARC facility. More than eight out of 10 respondents (81.9%) use the Centre once a week or more with the most common being 2 to 3 times per week (35.7%) followed by weekly (29.9%).

**5.4.6 Reasons for Choosing the Facility**

Respondents provided a range of reasons why they chose to use the centre. The key reasons listed in order of frequency of response were:

- Close to home 79.4%
- Friends/family use it 10.7%
- Good facilities 13.3%
- It has an indoor pool 15.9%
- To attend aquatic program 16.4%
- Low entry charges 11.8%
- Range of gym equipment available 12.1%
- To attend health and fitness program 20.5%
- To attend leisure water/fun pools 9.2%
- To attend learn to swim program 18.4%
- To use outdoor pool 38.2%

**5.4.7 Rating of Facilities and Services**

Survey respondents were asked to rate the current facilities and services at NARC under a five-point rating system. Those respondents that rated the facilities and/or services as poor or very poor were asked to identify which facilities and/or services in particular they were unhappy with.



### Facilities

The results were:

- Excellent 3.6%
- Good 27.4% **31.0% (combined excellent/good rating)**
- Adequate 42.0%
- Poor 20.9%
- Very Poor 6.1% **27.0% (combined poor/very poor rating)**

The survey results indicated that less than a third of respondents (31.0%) rated the facilities excellent or good, while 27.0% rated them as poor or very poor.

Respondents that rated the facilities as poor or very poor were asked which areas they were unhappy with. The following were the most commonly identified areas.

**Table 17: Areas of Unhappiness with Facilities**

Area Unhappy	% of Respondents
Change rooms	84.8%
Indoor pool/s	65.4%
Outdoor pool/s	38.0%
Air quality in Pool Hall	32.5%
Spa/sauna	29.8%
Entry and Reception area	25.5%
Kiosk and food facilities	23.1%

The area that respondents were most unhappy with at NARC was the change rooms, with this being identified by 84.8% of respondents who rated the facilities as poor or very poor.

### Services and Programs

The results were:

- Excellent 9.9%
- Good 49.4% **59.3% (combined excellent/good rating)**
- Adequate 33.6%
- Poor 6.3%
- Very Poor 0.8% **7.1% (combined poor/very poor rating)**

The survey results indicated that nearly six out of 10 respondents (59.3%) rated the facilities excellent or good while just 7.1% rated them as poor or very poor.

Respondents that rated the services and programs as poor or very poor identified the following services and/or programs as an area of concern.

**Table 18: Areas of Unhappiness with Services and Programs**

Area Unhappy	% of Respondents
Too crowded	35.5%
Customer service/assistance	32.3%
Group fitness timetable	29.0%
Level and quality of instructors	26.9%
Level of fees and charges	25.8%
Food and beverage services	23.7%
Range of programs and services offered	20.4%



The area of biggest concern was the crowding of the facility (35.5%), followed by the customer service and assistance (32.3%).

#### 5.4.8 Activities Undertaken at Facility

The main activities undertaken at the Centre were:

- Take child to pool 45.3%
- Lap swim/fitness 42.5%
- Recreation swimming/fun 34.2%
- Use gym/weights 33.5%
- Group health and fitness classes 24.2%
- Cool down from hot weather 19.6%
- Take part in aquatic program 16.0%
- Use sauna/spa 11.5%
- Meet with friends 6.1%
- Personal training 5.9%
- Tennis activities 5.8%
- Aqua aerobics 5.5%

#### 5.4.9 Other Swimming Pool/Leisure Centre Facility Use

All survey respondents, whether they had used the NARC or not in the previous 12 months, were asked to identify all other swimming pools or leisure centres that they had used in the last 12 months.

**Table 19: Use of Other Swimming Pool/Leisure Centres**

Aquatic Facilities	% of Respondents
No other aquatic centre	31.6%
WaterMarc	19.6%
Fitzroy Outdoor Pool	17.7%
Collingwood Leisure Centre	15.3%
Ivanhoe Leisure Centre	14.0%
Brunswick Baths	13.3%
Reservoir Leisure Centre	8.7%
Coburg Leisure Centre	7.6%
Carlton Baths	4.7%
MSAC	2.8%
Richmond Swim Centre	2.5%
Thomastown Aquatic & Leisure Centre	2.5%
Kew Recreation Centre	1.7%

Nearly a third of respondents (31.6%) had not used any other facilities, however a significant number had used a range of facilities with WaterMarc attracting the largest number of visitors with one in five (19.6%) of respondents.

In addition to the pools listed, 70 aquatic facilities within Victoria, as well as a range of pools around Australia, were listed as having been used in the preceding 12 months.

#### 5.4.10 Future Facility Use

To assist with identifying the level of demand for future use of swimming pools/leisure centres, respondents were asked if they would like to make greater use of the NARC in the future.



Table 20: Future Use of NARC

Would like to make greater use?	Total	Male	Female	0-39 Years	40-59 Years	60+ Years	Used in Previous 12 Months	Not Used in Previous 12 Months
Yes	92.1%	87.6%	93.5%	96.1%	91.3%	80.7%	91.8%	100.0%
No	7.9%	12.4%	6.5%	3.9%	8.7%	19.4%	8.2%	0.0%

More than nine out of 10 respondents (92.1%) indicate that they would like to make greater use of the NARC in the future. The results in the table indicate that:

- Females are more likely than males (92.5% compared to 87.5% respectively) to want to increase their use of aquatic and leisure centres in the future.
- The proportion of the population that is most active, 0 - 39 years, is most likely to wish to increase their use of aquatic facilities (96.1%) while older adults are least likely (80.7%).
- Survey respondents who stated that they had not used NARC in the previous 12 months were more likely to want to use the facility in the future, with 100% of respondents wishing to increase their use, compared to 91.8% of current users.

Respondents who indicated they would like to make greater use of aquatic and leisure facilities in the future were asked to nominate facilities or features that would encourage this increased use. The most popular changes nominated were as per the following table.

Table 21: Future Aquatic and Leisure Centre Priorities

Future Priority Features	% of Respondents
Cleaner more hygienic facilities	64.2%
Improved indoor recreation/leisure pool	33.0%
Improved outdoor grassed/shaded areas	32.5%
Additional family change rooms	31.6%
Membership packages/discount offers	28.5%
Improved social and food areas (café)	21.1%
Improved gym/weights facilities	20.1%
Larger indoor learn to swim pool	20.1%
Improved health and fitness classes (aerobics)	19.1%
Other	27.6%

The results indicate that there is support for improving the cleanliness and hygiene levels of the facility (64.2% of respondents), improving the indoor recreation/leisure pool (33.0%) and outdoor grassed/shaded areas (32.5%).

## 5.5 School Survey

Surveys were sent to 41 schools in the City of Darebin area. Three schools took the opportunity to have their say regarding their use of aquatic facilities.

### 5.5.1 Use of Aquatic Centre's

School representatives were asked a range of questions about their schools use of aquatic centre's and aquatic based programs and services. The questions were aimed at identifying aquatic participation and facility usage trends and key reasons why activities and facilities were selected.

Of the three schools that completed the survey, all had participated in a learn to swim or school sport swimming program.

### 5.5.2 Schools Aquatic Program Coordination

Each of the three schools had their learn to swim/school swimming program conducted by centre instructors.



### 5.5.3 Frequency of Student Visitation

The schools indicated how many times over the course of a year student would visit the pool.

- 8 visits per year 66.7%
- 10 visits per year 33.3%

The frequency of use data indicates that all students that participate in learn to swim programs are visiting the pool more than eight times per year.

The number of students that participated in learn to swim programs were as follows:

**Table 22: Number of Students that Participate in Learn to Swim Programs**

School	School Enrolment	No. of students that participate annually	No of students that attend each visit
1	180	110	40
2	620	320	-
3	180	110	35

The results regarding school enrolment and learn to swim attendance figures show that there is the potential to increase the number of students that are participating in aquatic style programs throughout the school year.

### 5.5.4 Most Popular Terms

To gain an understanding of when students use swimming pools, schools were asked to nominate which school terms the school typically uses the pools. The results were detailed below:

- Term One 0 schools
- Term Two 0 schools
- Term Three 1 school
- Term Four 2 schools

### 5.5.5 Aquatic Based Sport Programs

Only one school participated in an aquatic program other than learn to swim, with district level school swim carnivals and triathlons being participated in.

### 5.5.6 Aquatic Centre Use

The following pools are used by the schools in the areas surrounding the Darebin Council.

- NARC 2 schools
- Reservoir Leisure Centre 1 school
- Ivanhoe Aquatic Centre 1 school

Two schools identified NARC as the pool they use the most, with the other school nominating the Reservoir Leisure Centre.

### 5.5.7 Reasons for Choosing Aquatic Centre's

School representatives were asked to identify the key reasons that their school has chosen to use the facility that they use the most.

- Close to school 3 schools
- Affordable price 1 school
- Indoor facilities 1 school



- Good facilities 1 school
- 50m outdoor pool 1 school
- Quality of programs 2 schools

#### 5.5.8 Future Facility Development

All schools were asked to identify what would encourage their school in the future to make a greater use of swimming pools/aquatic Centre's. The nominated features include:

- Separate school change rooms 3 schools
- More variety in water based 2 schools
- More leisure water/waterslides/fun pools 2 schools
- More shallow water 1 school
- Indoor warm water pools 1 school
- More indoor heated water 1 school
- Diving facilities 1 school
- First aid courses 1 school
- Administration of bookings 1 school
- Greater range of water spaces at one pool 1 school
- Cheaper entry fees 1 school
- Improved swim instructors 1 school
- Provision of transport services 1 school

Survey respondents were asked to identify any aquatic facilities or aquatic programs that are lacking in their local area. Only one school answered, with an indoor 50m pool and effective wet weather shelter around the outdoor pool.

#### 5.5.9 School Facilities

Schools were asked to identify if they had any pools on their school property. None of the schools had pools as part of their school campus.

### 5.6 Residents Telephone Survey

This section summarises the key findings from the Darebin City Council residents telephone survey conducted in December 2017 and January 2018. The survey mirrors the questions asked in the users' survey and involved 400 respondents (aged 15 years and over) who were randomly selected across the council area based on the demographic profile to provide information on:

- Current use and non-use of swimming pools/leisure centres
- Future use or non-use of swimming pools/leisure centres
- Ratings and issues on current council aquatic facilities
- Respondent profile

The respondents profile was developed to reflect the population spread of people in the City of Darebin area. All respondents were surveyed via telephone by Field Works Market Research Pty Ltd.

The survey questions were based on a range of Otium Planning Group aquatic surveys standard questions and principally sought information on peoples' use of public swimming pools/leisure facilities which include council, school, private and commercial centres, but not home facilities.



### 5.6.1 Respondent Profile

The following table summarises the residents' telephone survey respondent sample.

**Table 23: Resident Survey Respondent Sample**

Category	Sub-Group	Number	%
Gender	Male	189	47%
	Female	211	53%
Age Range	15 - 19 years	20	5%
	20 - 24 years	24	6%
	25 - 34 years	58	15%
	35 - 44 years	77	19%
	45 - 54 years	86	22%
	55 - 64 years	62	16%
	65 - 74 years	43	11%
	75 years and older	30	8%
Suburb	Alphington (3070)	16	4%
	Bundoora (3083)	38	10%
	Coburg (3058)	35	9%
	Coburg North (3058)	15	4%
	Fairfield (3078)	13	3%
	Kingsbury (3083)	3	1%
	Macleod (3085)	23	6%
	Northcote (3070)	66	17%
	Preston (3072)	66	17%
	Reservoir (3073)	92	23%
	Thornbury (3071)	33	8%

A review of the survey respondents sample indicates that there were more females surveyed than males (53% compared to 47%), however this represents the existing population distribution indicating a reasonably balanced and similar sample profile.

The age bracket that represented the largest proportion of the survey pool was 45 to 54 years (22% of respondents) followed by 35 to 44 years (19%).

The majority of survey respondents lived in Reservoir - 3073 (23%), Northcote - 3070 (17%) and Preston - 3072 (17%).

### 5.6.2 Current Use of Swimming Pools

Survey respondents were questioned on their use of public swimming pools in the past 12 months. Public swimming pools included Council, school and commercial centres but not home pools.

A total of fifty-five per cent (55%) of people had used or visited a pool in the past 12 months. Forty-five per cent (45%) had not used or visited a pool in 12 months.

Usage of swimming pools/leisure centres did not change by gender, however did change according to the age profile as indicated in the results listed in the table below.

**Table 24: Household Telephone Survey Use of Aquatic Facilities**

Use of Aquatic Facilities	Total Responses	Males	Females	15 to 34 Years	35 to 54 Years	55+ Years
Yes	55%	55%	55%	60%	70%	33%
No	45%	45%	45%	40%	30%	67%

The facility usage results indicate that nearly six out of 10 people (55%) have used these facilities, with equal use by females and males (both 55%). The age group that were most likely to use aquatic facilities were 35 to





54-year old (70% yes) while those over the age of 55 were more likely to have not used any aquatic facilities (only 33% having used such facilities).

### 5.6.3 Reasons for Non-use

Just over four out of 10 respondents (45%) had not used a swimming pool in the previous 12 months. These respondents were asked to identify the main reasons for the lack of use of such facilities. The most commonly identified reasons are listed in the following table.

**Table 25: Reasons for Lack of Use of Aquatic Facilities**

Reasons for Lack of Use of Swimming Pools	% of Total Responses	Gender	
		Male %	Female %
Too busy	22%	21%	23%
Not interested	19%	25%	15%
Don't like swimming	12%	13%	11%
Health problems	10%	7%	13%
Have and use own pool	8%	7%	8%
Too old	7%	6%	7%
Go to the beach	5%	5%	5%
Can't swim	5%	4%	6%
Unhygienic/public pools not clean	4%	6%	3%
Don't like chlorine	3%	6%	1%

The main constraints to use of facilities included being too busy (22%), not being interested (19%) and not liking swimming (12%). Constraints that affect people's use of pools can change depending upon their gender. Males are more likely to be not interested, not like swimming and find public pools unhygienic/not clean, while females are more likely to be too busy, have health problems or not be able to swim.

The main constraints to use swimming pools can be categorized under a number of common themes being:

- Personal Issues: Too busy (22%), not interested (19%), don't like swimming (12%)
- Product Issues: Don't like chlorine (3%)
- Placement Issues: Have and use own pool (8%), go to the beach (5%)

### 5.6.4 Most Popular Swimming Pools

Users of swimming pools were spread around a number of different facilities. A summary of the most used pools, compared to the pool people nominated as the one they use the most, is as follows:

**Table 26: Most Popular and Used Swimming Pools**

Swimming Pools Used in the Past 12 Months	% of respondents	Facility Used the Most in Past 12 Months
NARC	49%	37%
Reservoir Leisure Centre	22%	16%
Coburg Leisure Centre	18%	12%
WaterMarc	12%	8%
Brunswick Baths	9%	2%
Ivanhoe Leisure Centre	7%	4%
Collingwood Leisure Centre	5%	4%
Fitzroy Outdoor Pool	5%	1%
Thomastown Aquatic & Leisure Centre	5%	3%
Coburg Olympic Swimming Pool	3%	1%



The current facility usage indicates that the two council-owned aquatic facilities in Darebin are used by a significant number of the respondents. NARC had been used by 49% of respondents in the preceding 12 months while the Reservoir Leisure Centre had been used by 22% of the respondents.

NARC and Reservoir Leisure Centre were the facilities of choice when it came to the most used centres in the previous 12 months. Fifty-three per cent (53%) of respondents identified that Darebin City Council pools were their most used pools (37% at NARC and 16% at the Reservoir Leisure Centre). While Brunswick Baths had been used by 9% of respondents, it was identified as their most commonly used pool by just 2%.

#### 5.6.5 Northcote Aquatic & Recreation Centre (NARC)

Survey respondents who identified that they had visited or used NARC in the previous 12 months were asked a range of questions relating to their use of the facility.

##### Rating of NARC

Survey respondents who had used NARC were asked to rate the current facilities and services under a 5-point rating system.

The results were:

• Excellent	13%	
• Good	46%	59% (Combined excellent/good rating)
• Adequate	32%	
• Quite Poor	7%	
• Very Poor	1%	8% (Combined quite poor/very poor rating)

Those respondents that identified they felt the facilities and services were quite poor or very poor (nine respondents) were asked to identify which features in particular they were unhappy with. The results are demonstrated in the following table.

Table 27: NARC Facilities and/or Services that Require Improvements

Area	% of respondents
Size and quality of outdoor swimming pools	33%
Facility cleaning and presentation	33%
Size and quality of indoor swimming pools	22%
Size of indoor change rooms	22%
No adventure water areas for youth i.e. waterslides	22%
Water temperature of the outdoor pools	11%
Quality and level of instructors	11%
Water temperature of indoor pools	11%
Other	44%

##### Choosing NARC

The main reasons for choosing NARC were identified, with the majority of respondents identifying the proximity to home was the key reason for their choice (81%). This was followed by the inclusion of an outdoor pool (17%).



Table 28: Reasons for Choosing NARC

Reason for Choosing Pool	% of respondents
Close to home	81%
It has an outdoor pool	17%
Friends/Family use it	9%
Good facilities	6%
Range of indoor/outdoor pools available	6%
It has indoor pools	4%
Learn to swim pools and programs	4%
To use gym and fitness equipment	4%
To attend health and fitness programs/class	3%
Close to work/school	3%

### Travel to NARC

The following table provides the most common modes of transport to the centre and who the respondents are most likely to visit with.

Table 29: Transport to NARC

Transport Mode	% of respondents
Car (with others)	44%
Car (on own)	27%
Bike	17%
Walk	11%
Other	1%
Visit Facility With	% of respondents
Family members	52%
By yourself	31%
Friends	15%
Club members	2%

Most people travelled to NARC by car (71%), either with others (44%) or by themselves (27%). More than half of respondents usually visit the centre with family members (52%), followed by themselves (31%) and with friends (15%).

### Frequency of Visitation

Respondents were asked to identify how often they had used the NARC. The majority of respondents used the facility infrequently, with more than a third (36%) using it less than once a month, followed by weekly (17%).

Table 30: Frequency of Visitation to NARC

Frequency of Use	% of respondents
4-6 times per week	6%
2-3 times per week	13%
Weekly	17%
Once a fortnight	5%
Once a month	10%
Less than once a month	36%
Summer only	14%

#### 5.6.6 Most Used Facility

Survey respondents who identified that they had not used NARC were asked a range of questions relating to the aquatic facility that they had used the most in the previous 12 months. The main reasons for choosing the most used facility were identified with the majority of respondents identifying that the proximity of the pool to home was the key reason for their choice (59%). This was followed by having good facilities (18%), the fact that friends and family use the facility (10%) and to attend a health and fitness programs/classes (9%).



Table 31: Reasons for Choosing Most Used Facility

Reason for Choosing Pool	% of respondents
Close to home	59%
Good facilities	18%
Friends/Family use it	10%
To attend health and fitness program/class	9%
Range of indoor/outdoor pools available	7%
To use waterslides/adventure water areas	5%
Close to work/school	5%
It has an outdoor pool	5%

### 5.6.7 Activities Undertaken at Swimming Pools

The main activities undertaken at swimming pools were:

- Recreation swimming/fun 46%
- Lap swim/fitness 35%
- Take child to pool 19%
- Use gym/weights 11%
- Learn to swim class 11%
- Use sauna/spa 9%
- Group health and fitness classes i.e. aerobics/pump 6%
- Aerobics 4%
- Health related activities (massage etc.) 3%

### 5.6.8 Future Facility Use

To assist with identifying the level of demand for future use of swimming pools, respondents were asked if they would like to make greater use of these facilities in the future.

Table 32: Future Use of Swimming Pools/Leisure Centres

Would like to make greater use	Total	Male	Female	Previously visited pool in past 12 months		15-34 Years	35-54 Years	55+ Years
				Yes	No			
Yes	74%	72%	76%	89%	55%	82%	85%	55%
No	26%	28%	24%	11%	45%	18%	15%	45%

More than seventy per cent (74%) of people indicated that they would like to make greater use of swimming pools/leisure centres in the future. The table above indicates that:

- Females were more likely to want to increase their use of swimming facilities than males (76% compared to 72%).
- Current users of swimming pools (89%) were more likely to want to increase their use in the future than non-users of pools (55%).
- People in their most active years (15-54 years) are more likely to want to increase the use of swimming pools (82% 15 - 34 years; 85% 35 - 54 years) when compared to those who are in their older years (55+ years of age) (55%).

Respondents who indicated that they would like to make greater use of swimming pools were asked to nominate features that would encourage this increased use. There were 58 different features/facilities nominated with the most common responses having been identified in the table below.



Table 33: Future Priority Features for Swimming Pools

Future Priority Features	% of respondents
Cleaner more hygienic facilities	20%
Nothing	19%
Membership packages/discount offers	11%
Improved gym/weights facilities	9%
More facilities for children/families	8%
Outdoor grassed/shaded areas	8%
More variety of activities/programs	7%
Larger change rooms	7%
More/improved health/fitness classes	6%

Those respondents who indicated that they would not like to make greater use of swimming pools in the future were asked to identify why this was the case.

Table 34: Reasons for Non-Increase of Use of Swimming Pools

Reasons for Non-Increased Use	% of respondents
Not interested	30%
Don't like swimming	18%
Too old	14%
Too busy	13%
Have and use own pool	10%
Health problems	10%
Cannot swim	8%
Go to the beach	5%
Unhygienic/public pools not clean	5%

## 5.7 Public Submissions

The community was given the opportunity to have a say regarding the current and future needs for aquatic facilities and services at NARC. 108 residents submitted a public submission and following is a summary of the ideas and issues identified.

### Current Facilities and Services

Respondents were generally quite positive about NARC with a significant number commenting on the sense of community and the welcoming nature of the facility. There were however a number of areas that required significant improvement. The key themes were:

- Run Down Facilities
  - The most commonly identified theme amongst the comments was the run-down nature of the entire facility. This was also commonly identified when respondents identified what they would like improved in the future.
  - “Desperately needs a renovation and upgrade.”
  - “It looks like a 1970 place, no paint job will ever hide this.”
  - “The facility is tired, outdated and in desperate need of a re-vamp.”
- Hygiene/Cleanliness
  - There was significant concern over the cleanliness of the facility in a number of areas. There were a number of comments about children getting sick after having visited the pool. Areas such as the change rooms, in and around the pool area.
  - “Has a reputation for being germey and kids getting sick all the time”
  - “I think there’s a general grimy feel about the whole place. I.e. toilets, indoor pool area”
  - “The cleanliness and hygiene of the pool is frankly a disgrace and a health hazard.”



- Change Rooms
  - There were a number of comments relating to the current change rooms including the location, cleanliness, ventilation and size. Change rooms were also regularly mentioned when it came to identifying the changes the respondents would like to see in the future.
  - “The change rooms are old dirty. The showers have a tick coating of body fat smeared all over the wall.”
  - “More family change rooms are needed near the indoor pool”
  - “The change rooms (re female) are too hot, in disrepair, too small, and lacks ventilation.”
- Facility Location
  - Respondents were positive with relation to the location of the facility and the provision of the 50m pool in relation to the northern suburbs.
  - “It has a great outdoor pool and the location is good serving the inner north”
- Gym
  - There were both positive and negative comments relating to the gym with concerns with the size of the area leading to overcrowding.
  - “Gym is often overcrowded”
  - “The gym and program rooms are too small.”
  - “The popularity of the gym means that the equipment is very squashed.”
  - “Good range of gym equipment”

#### Future Facility Improvements

- Expanded Play Water
  - A number of respondents were interested in the expansion of water areas that catered to children’s recreation use of the facility such as waterslides, expanded plays areas while swimming lessons were being run.
  - “More kid friendly facilities to encourage kids to play in the water, slides other obstacles.”
  - “The pool is not great for waterplay. I would like to see more outdoors waterplay activities such as the area at Crocodile Park in Point Cook. This is reasonably safe and fun area for small children.”
- Outdoor 50m Pool
  - Respondents were concerned with keeping the outdoor 50m pool.
  - “Apart from keeping the excellent 50-metre outdoor pool...”
  - “Rebuild everything but the 50m pool.”
- Other Aquatic Facilities
  - Respondents supplied a number of aquatic facilities in the Melbourne area that they felt were ideal facilities to model the NARC redevelopment on including Carlton Baths, Aqualink Box Hill, WaterMarc, and the Peninsula Aquatic Recreation Centre (PARC).
- Equality of Facility Provision
  - A number of respondents were concerned with the provision of neutral change facilities and the use of inclusive and diverse language.
  - “the centre needs to be inclusive of trans and gender diverse people and not make assumptions that everyone identifies as male or female. The centre should make provision for other gender options on application forms and provide gender neutral and accessible bathrooms and change room facilities.”
  - “Gender neutral changing rooms and toilets please, and less gendered language.”



- Increased Water Spaces
  - Residents were interested in expanding the amount of water spaces available at the centre and to increase the flexibility of those spaces.
  - “Most of the area is filled with swimming lessons. We need more pools!”
  - “The pools do not have enough flexibility. The outdoor pool needs to have a “boom” installed which allows for the 10 lanes to be broken up into 20 x 25 metre lanes. You can also have free swim/water polo sections without sacrificing lanes for the swim squads.”
- Group Fitness Classes
  - There were a large number of responses that provided suggestions to changes to the current group fitness timetable with more classes in the morning and range of different classes that could be offered.

### 5.8 Industry Trends

The following details a range of trends within the Sport and Recreation Industry that may have an impact on an aquatic and leisure facility.

#### 5.8.1 Aquatic and Leisure Facility Specific Trends

Components that contribute to successful contemporary aquatic and leisure facilities are summarised in the figure below.

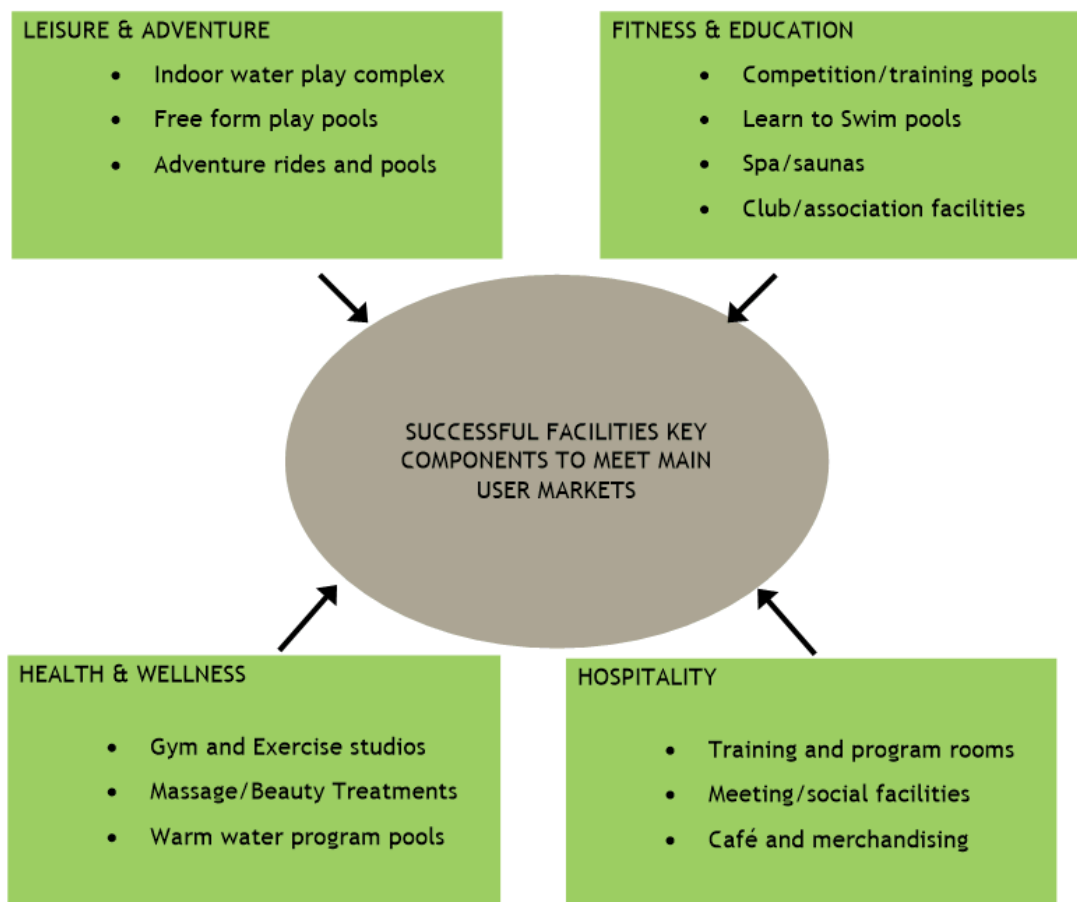


Figure 9: Successful Aquatic and Leisure Facility Model



### 5.8.2 Aquatic Facility User Markets

Traditionally, many local government aquatic and leisure facilities were built for specialist or limited market users (i.e. competitive swimmers or high-level sport participants). Detailed planning and comprehensive feasibility studies now are able to show more targeted user profiles.

Such studies usually identify the demographic profile of residents in the project area, their current aquatic and leisure participation patterns and use of surrounding aquatic and leisure facilities that provide a sound base for more user-friendly facilities.

The majority of aquatic facility market research indicates complexes must equally cater for four distinct aquatic user markets, as outlined in Figure 10: Main Aquatic Leisure Facility User Markets on the following page.

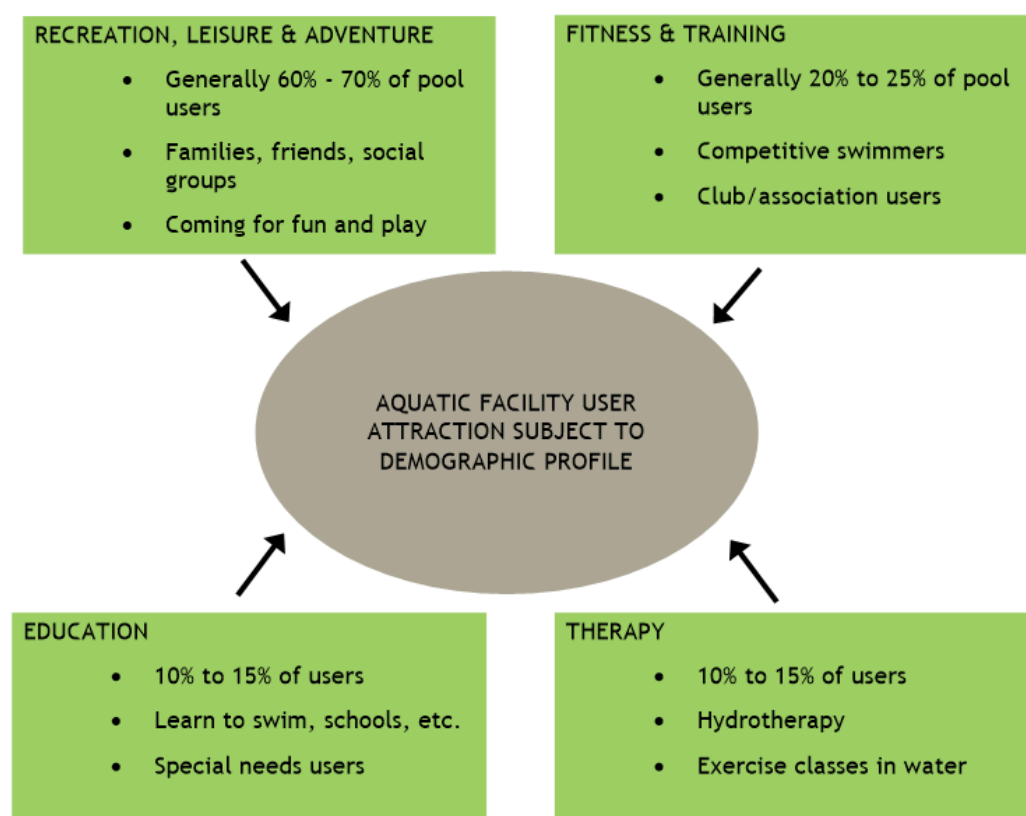


Figure 10: Main Aquatic Leisure Facility User Markets

The main aquatic leisure facility user markets are:

- **Recreation and Leisure Market** - usually made up of families, people coming with friends and groups for fun, relaxation, social activity and low-level competition/participation.
- **Competitive/Training/Fitness Market** - usually made up of people predominantly attending facilities alone for structured fitness or competition activities.
- **Education Market** - usually made up of children and adults wishing to increase water safety and survival skills. Includes Learn to Swim classes, school and club use and individuals improving their skills and techniques. They require hot water pools and water depths with some straight edges and easy water access, etc.
- **Health and Therapy Market** - usually made up of children, adults and older adults wanting to relax or exercise in hot water. This market also includes specialist health condition groups such as arthritis,





asthma sufferers, etc. They require hot water pools and associated health relaxation areas, i.e. spa/saunas, etc.

Previous studies have indicated that the recreation and leisure market will usually be the largest as it contains people of all ages, ability, types, interest and gender. The competitive/training/fitness market is a more specialist market as it usually contains younger, fitter and more active people who have made time to train and compete.

Benchmarking studies have indicated that in many cases 60% to 70% of facility users come from the recreation/leisure sector with 20% to 30% coming from the competitive/training/fitness markets. The health and therapy and education markets can range from 10% to 20% of the market subject to the age and health profile of the community in which the facility is located.

The most successful centres attract all user markets and should be set up to allow people to participate in a range of activities at the one site. The further addition of health and fitness facilities, spas and saunas and social areas have been very successful at many aquatic facilities, as they add to the user experience and contribute to people being attracted to attend these facilities more often.

### 5.8.3 Aquatic Facility Activities

Industry trends indicate that in the majority of current indoor and outdoor stand-alone aquatic facilities, revenue does not meet annual operating costs. While some centres may have the capacity to return an operational surplus, they show minimal return on capital investment which results in run down facilities not meeting customer needs/often shut due to breakdowns etc. A review of successful centres demonstrates that they have the following characteristics:

- High visits per square metre
- High expense recovery ability including capital repayment
- High operating profits per visit
- Excellent program range returns and attendances
- High secondary spend returns
- Excellent range of attendance types (adult/child ratio)
- Draws users from a large catchment area
- High revenue returns from health and fitness (often used to subsidise aquatics)

Traditionally, commercial investment in aquatic facilities has been in specialist pools such as learn to swim or as additions to health and fitness clubs. High capital cost and limited financial returns have contributed to this situation.

### 5.8.4 Health and Fitness Activity Areas

Industry trends indicate that users of aquatic facilities are also significant users of health and fitness facilities. Location of each of these activity components at the one site improves financial viability.

Health and fitness components have the capacity to record high expense recovery returns, with many centres returning 125% to 180% of expenditure. Traditionally these returns can also attract commercial investors and operators to health and fitness facilities. Locating these facilities at aquatic centres increases the potential of cross-selling and spin-off use. It also improves the membership/program user and casual user ratio especially where services such as a spa, steam or sauna or available.

### 5.8.5 Ancillary Services and Activity Areas

In recent years, there has been a trend to develop a range of complementary businesses in conjunction with aquatic and leisure facilities. These include:



- Wellness Centres/Day Spas - there is an emerging trend of adding in an area for specialist wellness activities, services and merchandising. The key services found at successful wellness centres include massage, beauty therapy treatments, gentle exercise classes and relaxation and 'time out' activities.
- Inclusion of such facilities offers a broader range of activities to a larger age profile of people. The massage and beauty therapy are high yield sales activities and can have high linked merchandising product sales.
- It is essential in developing such areas that they are located with good views, away from general public noise and viewing areas and have very good finishes and fittings. There needs to be a close by lounge for relaxation after treatment or classes.
- Sports Medicine: Development of consulting rooms, with patient access to health and fitness and pools, have been excellent revenue generators.
- Health and Therapeutic Services - health consultancies, weight loss and therapeutic services linking in worker and accident rehabilitation patients to use the range of facilities with centre memberships paid by relevant authorities.
- Health and Beauty Services- leased areas to services such as beauticians, hair salons and body toning.

#### 5.8.6 Potential Future Aquatic & Leisure Facility Trends

Aquatic and Leisure Facility reviews in Australia, North America, Canada, the Middle East and China in recent years, along with research into health and fitness trends, provides a guide to potential aquatic and leisure facility innovations and trends.

Key points of relevance to this project are provided below.

##### Leisure Play Equipment

Changing static shallow water areas into water play and fun zones is one of the most popular renovations. This can be done by adding simple play equipment, water sprays and interactive equipment to existing pools. Added to this is the option to introduce inflatable play equipment to allow the area to be changeable.

##### Major Attraction Leisure Features

Water slides and similar challenge and adventure type activities have remained popular as long as the venue has a range of slides/rides to maintain peoples' interest. Single ride facilities struggle to keep interest due to the lack of variety. Multi-ride areas allow users to try different length and configuration rides.

There is also a range of new water rides that have a slide component leading to another ride experience such as dropping into a bowl and then water, or onto a ramp and then into a splash pool but require significant capital investment. A key design trend is to link all slides to a common entry platform to ensure one staff person can supervise the area. A common splash down zone also allows one lifeguard to control a range of ride water entry points.

##### Special Effects

A range of North American Indoor leisure parks have added computerised light shows and sound systems to allow night time areas to be changed. The use of lights and sound provided users with new indoor facility experiences at night-time.

Some centres have gone further by adding projection walls to incorporate movies and short video clips with their new light and sound effects.



### Health and Fitness Trends

*Profile of the Fitness Industry in Australia* (Fitness Australia, 2016)<sup>1</sup>, identifies the following current and future trends.

- Current Trends:
  - 24/7 gyms will continue to have a presence and cater for those who are “time poor during regular business hours, self-motivated and fitness-confident” gym users.
  - Demand will continue for “personal full-service model” that provides “sufficient flexibility”.
  - Demand for online fitness services - direct customer-based programs through social media have risen over the past few years; some see social media business models as new income streams in the future.
- Future Trends:
  - Efficient fitness such as body weight training and high intensity interval training (refer below) are ideal for the time poor.
  - Population changes provide opportunities such as:
    - Ageing population - may be directed to fitness by health professional; may also be increase in “older” fitness professionals.
    - Increasing number of unhealthy with high rates of overweight/obese requiring fitness professionals to help improve their health.
  - Expectation for higher standards of fitness trainers and professionals - qualifications will be expected for those referred by health professionals.
  - Technology advances including wearables; connectivity to internet and apps is providing increased opportunities to bypass going to the gym or using a personal trainer in person to engage in fitness activities; opportunity for real time delivery of fitness programs which could enable expansion of programs to remote areas where access to a gym or instructors may not be available or for those who have difficulty leaving home.
- Factors Impacting on Participation:
  - Convenience of location followed by what services are provided are the highest factors in determining what gym, with location and value for money the key factors impacting on long term commitment.
  - Reasons for discontinuing include conflicting time commitments and changed circumstances.
  - Affordability is a major issue in committing to a gym.
  - Personal training - short term interactions up to six months were the most common type, whilst reasons for discontinuing was cost and achieving initial goal.
  - Perceived reputation of a facility in terms of presentation and cleanliness.

The *Worldwide Survey Fitness Trends for 2017* aims to assist the health and fitness industry with decisions regarding programming and business. The top twenty trends for 2017 include continued support for some new trends from 2016, such as wearable technology and body weight training, whilst sport specific training and core training dropped out of the top 20 trends. The top 20 2017 trends as identified in the survey with the 2016 ranking are provided in the table below.

<sup>1</sup> Profile of the Fitness Industry in Australia, Fitness Australia, 2016.



Table 35: Top 20 Worldwide Fitness Trends for 2017

2017 Ranking	Trend	2016 Ranking
1	Wearable Technology	1
2	Body weight training	2
3	High-intensity interval training	3
4	Educated, certified, and experienced fitness professionals	5
5	Strength training	4
6	Group training	
7	Exercise is Medicine ®	
8	Yoga	10
9	Personal training	6
10	Exercise and weight loss	9
11	Fitness programs for older adults	8
12	Functional fitness	7
13	Outdoor activities	14
14	Group personal training	11
15	Wellness coaching	13
16	Worksite health promotion	12
17	Smartphone exercise apps	17
18	Outcome measurements	20
19	Circuit training	18
20	Flexibility and mobility rollers	16

Source: *Worldwide Survey of Fitness Trends for 2017*, Walter R Thompson, American College of Sports Medicine, 2016.

For the second year in a row, wearable technology such as activity trackers, smart watches, smart glasses, smart fabrics and interactive textiles, is ranked as the number one trend. Wearable technology can motivate people to increase physical activity and exercise and have potential to make programs “fast, clear and enjoyable”.<sup>2</sup> This is followed by body weight training (2), high intensity interval training (3) and educated fitness professionals (4). High intensity interval training, which typically takes 30 minutes to perform, potentially meets the needs of those time poor/too busy, providing a time-efficient exercise option.

New to the Top 20 for 2017 is group training (6) which is classified as more than five participants. The reason for this increase in popularity was not able to be identified through the research.

A continued interest in “strength training and functional fitness” is also reflected in the trends. A gap in the trends identified by one of the expert reviewers was the lack of interest in programs targeting childhood obesity.

In terms of the ongoing impact of technology, *The Club of 2020* (2016)<sup>3</sup>, identifies a number of ways that technology may continue to change the fitness industry, with technology (wearables, mobile app and social media) being important to success. The following key themes are discussed:

- Business Model - new models include premium classes, pay-as-you-go options (e.g. younger members able to select different package options such as total club visits), at home services (e.g. could include workout at centre and virtual personal training, or trainers going to a person’s home, more services provided outside the centre) and time based pay (depending on times use centre, off-peak and peak); demand for personalised service - pay premium for personalised service.
- Personalisation - key is availability of data which will enable personalised experiences that are tailored for each member.
- Wearables - growing at 35% (annual compounding rate); includes smart clothing, linkages to mobiles (messages to apps); points and rewards programs.

<sup>2</sup> *Worldwide Survey of Fitness Trends for 2017*, Walter R Thompson, American College of Sports Medicine, 2016.

<sup>3</sup> *The Club of 2020*, Greg Skloot and Bryan O’Rourke, Netpulse, 2016.



“In 5 years, nearly every successful club will have its own app that integrates with the variety of other technologies that members and staff utilize on a daily basis.”<sup>3</sup>

- Internet - smarter equipment (e.g. preventative maintenance, automated replacement ordering; automated touchless check-in (e.g. iBeacon technology with mobile app).
- Optimisation - capacity utilisation providing real time information on classes, centre usage, etc.; dynamic pricing.

A US based study by Technogym<sup>4</sup> of 5,000 Millennials (those aged 14-34 years) found that:

- Millennials would like to exercise more often however indicated that they are often too busy and unable to properly devote the time they needed resulting in a growing wellness deficit. As such “short, sharp exercise formats that fit into their everyday busy schedules” are generally sought.
- Technology has ability to assist in overcoming the wellness deficit, and social media has power to motivate to exercise more often.
- Key barriers are too busy (50%) and lack of motivation (30%).
- Preferences of Millennials included:
  - Tracking and monitoring fitness programs is important (65%).
  - Mobile technology benefits include tracking progress wherever and whenever (72%) with use likely to rise (56% to 74%).
  - Group exercise benefits include increased motivation (70%) and more enjoyable sessions (65%).
  - Physical competitions are a good way of keeping fit whilst socialising (69%).
  - Workout should be interactive, fun (77%) and personalised to meet individual goals (77%).

#### Leisure Furniture and Food/Beverage/Merchandising

Many centres endeavour to keep parents and children at centres longer, to encourage greater secondary spending on food/beverage/merchandising, by providing quality furniture. The use of pool side lounges, tables, chairs and umbrellas has allowed families to stay close to the water areas in relative comfort.

Food/beverage/merchandising area has seen some major changes through development of pool side and dry area multi-serving zones. Linked to these are high quality wet and dry lounge zones where people are encouraged to sit down and relax. A number of other centres visited have used merchandising innovations, such as all existing customers having to go through the sales area.

Other innovations include:

- Multi-media video screens through the centre reminding customers about programs, special promotions, and food/beverage and merchandising specials.
- Providing customers with discount vouchers (at entry to centre) to spend in food/beverage and merchandising outlets or on their next visit.
- Offering combination sales specials to attract a higher spend per person.

<sup>4</sup> Technogym Study Explores the Mindset of Millennials, [www.ausleisure.com.au](http://www.ausleisure.com.au), December 6 2016.



## 6. Strategic Direction

This section covers future facility options identified from the operational, market research and consultation reviews completed and summarised in Sections 1 to 5 of this report. The facility priorities and associated facility development options have then been analysed and interpreted into a notional proposed development brief to address the current and future aquatic and leisure facility needs of Darebin residents.

### 6.1 Future Strategy Direction

The Study's market research, consultation and aquatic trend reviews indicate that there are a number of localised trends in relation to the future development and usage of the NARC.

These include the following broad trends that will impact on the future aquatic strategy for the area:

- The NARC is an aged and out-dated indoor/outdoor aquatic facilities. Technical reviews of the facility indicate the need to provide significant funding (in excess of \$3M) to bring the facilities up to standard without improving the usage or range of services and programs offered.
- Total usage of the facility has decreased from a high of 612,798 annual visits in 2012/2013 to 493,475 annual visits in 2016/2017, a decrease of approximately 119,323 (19.5%).
- While the financial performance remains relatively strong, expenditure is increasing resulting in a decreasing operating performance.
- Participation in aquatic and health and wellness activities is highly valued by residents with 55% of the population currently making use of aquatic and leisure facilities and 74% of the population wishing to either make use or make greater use of facilities in the future.
- Future demand will be affected by the demographics of the area with a large number of people 63.4% in their most active years (0 to 45 years) and also a large representation 18.3% of people aged 60+ years. This results in the need to provide a balance provision of services and facilities to meet the needs of these key target groups.
- The outdoor pool plays a very important role as a community "meeting place" particularly for young people and as a key venue for school carnivals across both Darebin and the wider region.
- Market research and consultation findings indicate the centre is a local use facility attracting users from a 5km to 10km radius. The key features identified by residents to encourage either use in the future or greater use were as follows.

Table 36: Future Aquatic and Leisure Centre Priorities

Future Priority Features	Resident Telephone Survey % of respondents	User Survey % of respondents
Cleaner more hygienic facilities	20%	64%
Improved indoor recreation/leisure pool		33%
Membership packages/discount offers	11%	29%
Additional family change rooms	-	32%
Improved gym/weights facilities	9%	20%
Improved social and food areas (café)	-	21%
More facilities for children/families	8%	-
Larger indoor learn to swim pool	-	20%
Outdoor grassed/shaded areas	8%	32.5%
More variety of activities/programs	7%	-
Larger change rooms	7%	-
More/improved health/fitness classes	6%	19%



## 6.2 Development Options

The purpose of the Master Plan was to investigate, scope and evaluate options to improve the current sporting and leisure opportunities within the NARC precinct, to determine future needs and development of the site, including additional sporting and leisure options, all in conjunction with local needs. The aim of the study was to investigate the following four options:

- Option 1: Do nothing
- Option 2: Maintain the existing through a major maintenance program
- Option 3: Redevelop in part, refurbish existing building and extend
- Option 4: A total new redevelopment

The following provides a description and analysis of each of the identified options.

### 6.2.1 Option 1: Do Nothing

This option would see only the “Urgent Works” items identified within the Macutex Technical Assessment undertaken. The cost of these works as identified in the 2015 report is approximately \$396,200.

#### Asset Impact

This option would see only the urgent safety works undertaken at the Centre. Any works that would provide improvements to the overall amenity and functionality of the facility or provide for new market areas would not be undertaken. The facility would continue to appear as an aged and out-dated facility and no additional facility components to address identified user needs would be developed.

The current poor physical access to the facility or compliance with the DDA would not be addressed. Environmentally sustainable design initiatives would not be incorporated or addressed within the facility. It is anticipated that there will be a continual deterioration of the facility, plant and equipment with the potential/risk of equipment or facility failure.

#### Usage Impact

Given the aging facility, it is anticipated that this option would see the current trend of decreasing attendance continue. The key usage areas of learn to swim and health and wellness memberships would continue to decline as a result of the quality of the facility and access to new more up to date facilities within the catchment area.

Given the age and condition of the facility there will be limited opportunity to provide for new user markets. It is anticipated that the facility would not meet the identified community needs in particular the key areas that residents/users identified would encourage them to make use or greater use of the facility in the future.

#### Financial Impact

In line with declining casual and membership usage, it is anticipated that the revenue will decrease while expenditure will increase at a significantly greater rate as a result of the age and maintenance requirements of the facility.

Industry trends indicate that over a period of time the current financial return to Council will decrease to a point that an operational subsidy will be required to enable the continued operation of the facility.

This option would not meet the requirements for an application for the State Governments Better Pools Funding Program.



### 6.2.2 Option 2: Maintain the existing through a major maintenance program

This option would see the implementation of the key recommended works within the Macutex Technical Assessment undertaken over a 10-year period. The cost of these works, as identified in the 2015 report, is approximately \$3.3M. Given the age of the facilities and the potential for “unknown” issues, the cost to maintain the facility to required standards is not fully known. There is the potential that the cost to undertake the required works could increase by 100%.

#### Asset Impact

This option would see a range of maintenance works undertaken at the Centre. The identified works may provide some improvements to the overall amenity of the facility but would not address a number of the functional issues. The facility may appear as a slightly cleaner more up to date facility, however no additional facility components to address identified user needs would be developed.

Given the limited works recommended within this option only some of the physical access to the facility or compliance with the DDA would be addressed. Limited environmentally sustainable design initiatives would be incorporated or addressed within the facility.

It is anticipated that there will be a continual deterioration of the facility and plant and equipment with the potential/risk for equipment or facility failure.

#### Usage Impact

Given the aging facility, it is anticipated that this option would see the current trend of decreasing attendance continue, this maybe at a slightly slower rate than for Option 1. The key usage areas of learn to swim and health and wellness memberships would continue to decline as a result of the quality of the facility, lack of additional programmable areas and access to new more up to date facilities within the catchment area.

Given the age and condition of the facility, there will be limited opportunity to provide for new user markets. It is anticipated that the facility would not meet the identified community needs, in particular the key areas that residents/users identified would encourage them to make use or greater use of the facility in the future.

#### Financial Impact

In line with declining casual and membership usage, it is anticipated that the revenue will decrease while expenditure will increase at a significantly greater rate as a result of the age and maintenance requirements of the facility.

Industry trends indicate that over a period of time the current financial return to Council will decrease to a point that an operational subsidy will be required to enable the continued operation of the facility.

This option would not meet the requirements for an application for the State Governments Better Pools Funding Program.

This option would be considered a “band aid” option to mitigate risk in the short term (1 - 3 years) but not a long-term solution to the aquatic and leisure needs of the Darebin community. Based on the feedback received through the community consultation process this option would not be well received by residents.





### 6.2.3 Option 3: Redevelop in part, refurbish existing building and extend

#### Asset Impact

This option would see the existing building undergo a significant redevelopment and extension to create an upgraded aquatic and leisure facility in line with the identified community needs. It is anticipated that this option would make use (where appropriate) of the existing infrastructure and upgrade and extend the facility to include the following components:

- Retention of the southern end of the existing entry building
- Demolish existing gym and build new extended health and wellness area
- New Warm Water Pool
- Retention of the existing Leisure and Learn to Swim Pool within new enclosure.
- Retention of the existing external 50 m Pool
- New Spa
- New Pool Plant
- New indoor 25m Pool
- New entry, reception, amenities and café
- New Adventure Play zero depth splash deck

The redeveloped facility would comply with all current Disability Discrimination Act requirements and would incorporate a range of environmentally sustainable design initiatives.

The redevelopment of the existing facility may create some challenges as a result of the “marrying” of old and new infrastructure. The age of the existing infrastructure may also be problematic as additional issues (not yet identified) may be discovered once construction commences.

The pre-design indicative order of capital cost for this option is estimated in the range of \$28M to \$46M (2017) depending on redevelopment scope. This includes building works, contingency, fees/FFE and escalation for 12 months.

#### Condition of the Facility

The option to redevelop the existing facility was initially seen as a feasible alternative to developing a new facility however as a result of the 2017 Macutex Report recommendation detailed below this option is no longer feasible.

*“It should be noted that the NARC is nearing the end of its usable life expectancy. The main building was constructed in the 1960’s along with the majority of the Pool infrastructure.” Based on the date of construction of the building and its current condition, Macutex do not recommend the use of existing infrastructure other than the 50m pool, provided the Leak Assessment confirms there are no issues”.*

### 6.2.4 Option 4: A total new redevelopment

#### Asset Impact

This option would see the demolition of the majority of the existing building and infrastructure and the development of a new indoor aquatic and leisure centre. Two options (4A and 4B) for the development of a new facility have been presented. The difference between the two options relate to the size of the facility components and the initiation of a number of significant ESD innovations.

Option 4B identifies some components of the existing facility that could be retained as part of the development of an outdoor leisure water feature providing a significant attractor to a wider regional catchment and a “point of difference” to other competitor facilities i.e. Ivanhoe Aquatic Centre and WaterMarc.



The following provides a summary of the key facility components and areas for Options 4A and 4B.

Table 37 Key Facility Components - Options 4A and 4B

Component	Option 4A COMPONENTS M2	Option 4B COMPONENTS M2
<b>GROUND FLOOR</b>		
Lobby	75m2	75m2
Reception	90m2	90m2
Café / Function Room	100m2	360m2
Kitchen	110m2	110m2
Wet lounge	230m2	310m2
Administration	200m2	230m2
Adventure play	220m2	180m2
Informal leisure /toddlers pool	NA	280m2
25M pool	580m2	580m2
Learn to swim pool	270m2	270m2
Program pool	250m2	250m2
Change village	65m2	65m2
Group change	300m2	300m2
Accessible change village including changing places facility	40m2	70m2
Steam room	15m2	15m2
Sauna	15m2	15m2
Linkage to childcare/multi purpose room	NA	485m2
Sub Total Ground Floor	2650m2	3687m2
<b>FIRST FLOOR</b>		
Gym	650m2	700m2
Program rooms	300m2	940m2
Change rooms	100m2	100m2
Circulation	140m2	140m2
Plant	160m2	160m2
Outdoor deck	50m2	270m2
Sub Total First Floor	1430m2	2312m2
<b>OUTDOOR AREA</b>		
Existing 50m pool	1300m2	1300m2
Toddlers pool	50m2	475m2
Sub total outdoor area	1350m2	1875m2
<b>TOTAL BUILDING AREA (excl. car parking)</b>	<b>5430m2</b>	<b>7874m2</b>

The key differences between the two options are:

Option B includes:

- A greater range of ESD initiatives including water gardens for water re use and solar panels.
- Larger café/function room
- Larger leisure/toddlers pool
- Larger area for health and wellness
- Linkages to the current child care/occasional care Centre providing an integrated service model.
- Re use of some of the existing pools to create an outdoor water park that may attract a wider more regional catchment.



Option A includes:

- Retention of the existing tennis courts
- Some ESD initiatives
- No link to the childcare
- No re use of the existing facility

Both option 4A and 4B would comply with all current Disability Discrimination Act requirements and incorporate a range of universal design initiatives and would include a Changing Places facility that would be accessible 24 hours a day. The new facility would also incorporate a range of environmental sustainable design initiatives such as water gardens for the retention and reuse of back wash water. The aim of a new facility would be to achieve a five-star rating.

The pre-design indicative order of capital cost for this option is estimated in the range of \$56M to \$60M (2017) depending on redevelopment scope. This includes building works, contingency, fees/FFE and escalation for 12 months.

#### Usage Impact

The key priority components suggested as part of both Option 4 A and 4B the proposed new facility would address the key issues and needs identified as part of the community consultation process.

Given the predicted population growth and the age profile of residents within the primary catchment of the facility, it is anticipated that usage/participation across all programs areas would increase resulting in an annual visitation for each option as follows

- Option 4A 580,000 to 640,000 visits.
- Option 4B 630,000 to 730,000 visits

The proposed dedicated learn to swim, warm water program pool, leisure water, gym and multiple program rooms will enable the operators to build on the current membership and attract a range of new markets that are currently not making use of the facility.

Given the size of the existing site there is the opportunity to place a new facility on an alternate location of the site, enabling the existing building to continue to operate throughout the entire construction of the new facility. This would result in the old facility closing and the new facility opening concurrently, thus providing residents with the opportunity to continue to use the centre and mitigating against the significant loss of business during the construction phase of the project. Based on the current contract arrangement this would enable the retention of approximately \$2M (guaranteed net return) over the two-year construction period.

#### Financial Impact

In line with increasing usage, it is anticipated that the operating performance will be retained and improved over the first few years of operation. It is anticipated that revenue will increase as follows for the two options

- Option 4A 20% to 25%
- Option 4B 30% to 40%

Both options would result in maintaining the positive operating performance of the Centre. The anticipated business growth period would be reduced due to the retention of members and users during the 21-month construction phase.

These options would meet the requirements for an application for the State Governments Better Pools Funding Program.

This option provides for the greatest level of community influence and involvement in the design and final outcomes of the facility.



### Capital Cost

Quantity surveyors Turner and Townsend have developed an indicative capital cost report for the two options. A copy of the cost report is provided in Appendix 3. In summary the indicative capital cost for option 4A and 4B are:

- Option 4A - \$42M
- Option 4B- \$61M

### 6.3 Environmental Design Implications

Council commissioned Cundall to prepare an Environmentally Sustainable Design review of the two preferred options. The report provided an overview of the two redevelopment options under consideration and the associated high level sustainability implications for each option. The following provides a summary of the key findings in the report. A full copy of the Cundall report is available upon request.

A summary of the potential Green Star pathways is presented below. These pathways are an indicative guide as to how the project might look to target a 6 Star Green Star rating, demonstrating “World Leadership” in sustainable design and construction. In comparing the pathways for the two different redevelopment options, the following comments are presented:

- Option 3 - Major Refurbishment will be much more difficult to achieve a 5 or 6 Star Green Star rating compared to Option 4 - Full Redevelopment.
- Option 4 - Full Redevelopment provides more opportunities for a holistic redesign of the building and the site and hence there are greater opportunities to score Green Star points in relation to Indoor Environment Quality, Energy, Water, Land Use & Ecology and Stormwater credits.
- For the credits where the requirements can be discretely applied only to the new works, in general both options should be able to achieve similar scores. In particular, this applies to the Management and Materials categories.
- For *Option 3 - Major Refurbishment*, depending on the scope of the works and the proposed concept design, a 6 Star rating (75 points) may not be practicable and the project team might decide to target a 5 Star rating (60 points). This would still be a terrific achievement, as there are currently only one or two aquatic centres that are Green Star registered in Australia and none of them are existing buildings
- For *Option 4 - Full Redevelopment*, a 6 Star rating (75 points) could be achievable. The sustainable design aspirations and Green Star target would need to be considered from the very beginning of concept design. Workshops with the architect and the ESD consultant would be needed to ensure that good sustainable design practices are embedded into the base design from the beginning. This would allow many of the credits to be achieved without excessive capital cost.

The redevelopment of the Northcote Aquatic and Recreation Centre provides an excellent opportunity for the City of Darebin to embed world-class sustainable design and construction initiatives into this major recreation centre, in alignment with council’s strategic goals relating to sustainable design, innovation and climate change, and specific policies for energy, water and waste.

If the project is to undergo a major refurbishment, significant sustainable design targets could be achieved and the redeveloped centre would undoubtedly be a much better building for the environment and the centre’s staff and visitors.

If a Green Star rating were to be sought, a 6 Star rating would potentially be impracticable (depending on the scope of the refurbishment), however a 5 Star rating could be achievable, which would be a significant and unique achievement for an existing aquatic centre.

If the project is to undergo a full redevelopment, this opens up many opportunities to undertake a holistic sustainable design approach for the new building, across the whole site and even with interactions with neighboring properties.



A 6 Star Green Star rating would still be a challenging aspiration, however with significant support from council and dedicated design and contractor teams it would be achievable.

## 6.4 Traffic Review

### 6.4.1 MGM Traffic Preliminary Assessment

MGM Traffic Pty Ltd was commissioned by the project team to review the project plans and provide a preliminary assessment of the proposed designs. The following outlines the analysis provided by MGA Traffic.

#### Existing Conditions and Surrounds

The Northcote Aquatic and Recreation Centre is located at 180 Victoria Street. The site has frontages to Victoria Road, Clifton Street and Lorna Avenue. The site is within a Public Parks and Recreations Zone (PPRZ). The Clifton Street Childcare Centre is located to the east of the Aquatic Centre with direct vehicle access to Clifton Street. McDonnell Park is located to the further east of the site.

Vehicle access to off-street parking areas is permitted via three separate crossovers, including the main access central to the site and a secondary access point to the south along Victoria Road. A separate entry is located to the north of the main entrance which creates a loop road for pick up drop off and also connects to the main parking area.

Victoria Road functions as a Council Road (Road Zone 2) and provides a link between Bell Street and Heidelberg Road. Kerbside parking is permitted on both sides of the road with bus stops located opposite the site. On-road bicycle lanes are also accommodated within the carriageway.

Clifton Street runs along the site's northern boundary and connects to Victoria Road as an unsignalised cross-intersection, permitting full turning movements on the east approach with the west approach being one-way (eastbound only) permitting exit movements on to Victoria Road only.

Lorna Avenue is a local access street that terminates as it approaches the subject site permitting pedestrian access only,

The intersection of Victoria Road/Separation Street is signalised which accommodates controlled pedestrian crossings on all approaches. A painted and physical median along Victoria Road opposite Clifton Street provides some refuge for east-west pedestrian movements. Footpaths are provided on both sides of Victoria Road.

#### Site Layout Opportunities and Constraints

In general, the car parking layouts for the two options appear to comply with the relevant design standards (Australian Standards AS2890.1-2004 and Clause 52.06 of the Planning Scheme, ie 2.6m wide spaces x 4.9m long bays off a 6.4m aisle), noting that an extensive review to improve layout efficiency and traffic management will need to be undertaken once the preferred option is chosen. Our initial comments on the layout plans are as follows:

#### Option 3: Refurbish the existing facility and maintain the existing car park

- The layout proposes to maintain the existing vehicle access arrangements. This option does not increase traffic volumes along Clifton Street.
- A car parking demand assessment is required to establish the parking requirements of the proposal. Car parking surveys will need to be undertaken to confirm base parking demands and profiles on a weekday and weekend.
- The layout should incorporate bicycle parking, disabled parking to the new standards, maintain the pickup and drop off areas (along the loop road).

#### Option 4: New build including a car park between the Aquatic Centre and Victoria Road

- The vehicle access point proposed to the north is very close to the Clifton Street intersection (approximately 20m). For improved safety, consideration should be made to relocate this connection



further south from Clifton Street or remove from the design (preferred). The consolidation of access points is expected to improve the operation of Victoria Road.

- The car park can link to Clifton Street to utilise the Victoria Road/Clifton Street intersection, however it is acknowledged that there may be sensitivities with additional traffic volumes for residents. Traffic surveys and analysis should be undertaken to confirm the existing capacity of the intersection and daily volumes on Clifton Street should this be an option.
- A bus stop is located to the site's frontage towards Clifton Street. The stop may need to be relocated subject to the location of the proposed access. A formal and direct pedestrian link from the bus stop to the Aquatic is recommended
- The increase of car parking supply over existing conditions allows for greater usage of the site and flexibility with various ancillary uses. A car parking demand assessment is required to establish the parking requirements of the proposal.
- The layout should minimise the conflict points of the intersecting parking aisles with the main access point.
- It is recommended that the layout incorporate a 'kiss and ride' pick up/drop off area for improved efficiency.
- The layout should incorporate a high number of disabled car parking spaces compliant to the Australian Standard.
- Bicycle parking should be provided in accordance with the provisions set out in Clause 52.34 of the Planning scheme. Spaces should be provided within the front of the building with secured spaces available for staff within the building.
- The layout will need to consider bus access and loading/waste collection requirements.

General comments on both plans:

- Consideration can be made to provide short turning lanes by the removal of nearby on-street parking for improved safety along Victoria Road and improved sight distance for exiting vehicles.
- A detailed traffic and transport assessment will need to be undertaken to confirm the adequacy of the parking provision and the post development operation of the adjoining intersections and if any mitigating works are required to facilitate access through the road network

#### 6.4.2 Cardno Transport and Traffic - Due Diligence Study (23 April 2018)

Cardno were engaged by Darebin City Council to prepare a Traffic and Transport Due Diligence Study to assist with the feasibility and precinct master planning exercise to guide future development of NARC. The report was prepared to review the two development options and assess their relative impact on the surrounding road network and parking provision.

NARC is currently well serviced by pedestrian and bike connections with footpaths and on-road bicycle lanes provided on both sides of Victoria Road in the vicinity of the site, On-site parking provision for the existing centre is generally adequate except during the weekend peak times. Traffic circulation around the centre is generally satisfactory.

The key assessment findings of each of the development options were:

#### Option 3 - Redevelopment in Part of Existing Centre

Contemplates the redevelopment of the existing facility to include improved swimming and health and fitness areas, whilst largely maintaining current car parking layout. The proposed layout includes 183 spaces.

- For the purpose of the traffic and parking assessment, it was determined that the development would attract approximately 700,000 visitations per year
- The increased patronage to the Centre (applying a factor of 40%) is predicted to result in approximately 440 traffic movements to and from the site during the weekend peak hour and a



parking requirement of approximately 305 spaces during peak times, resulting in an on-site parking shortfall of 122 vehicles.

#### Option 4 - Comprehensive Redevelopment of Site

Considers the demolition of the existing centre, with an outdoor leisure pool to be built in its place. An expanded aquatic centre is then to be constructed to the south of the site.

- Requires significant changes to the existing car park layout, including changes to the access arrangements and movement in and around the centre. The proposed layout shows a total of 238 on-site car spaces.
- It is anticipated that the development would attract approximately 800,000 visitors annually.
- The increased patronage to the centre (applying a factor of 60%) is expected to result in approximately 500 traffic movements to and from the site during weekend peak hour with a parking demand in the order of 350 spaces during peak hour, resulting in an on-site parking shortfall of 122 vehicles.

Key conclusions and recommendations applicable for both development options are summarised as follows:

- Council to consider implementing an appropriate time restriction to existing on-street parking in the vicinity of the site, especially Clifton Street, Lorna Avenue, Hakatare Street, and Kellett Street
- The installation of a dedicated pedestrian/bicycle crossing point (i.e zebra crossing) across Victoria Road
- Provide dedicated pedestrian crossings within the on-site car park, including associated linemarking or pavement surface to demarcate areas between pedestrians and vehicles
- Consider the removal of on-site parking along the Victoria Road sit frontage and in proximity to site access points to further improve sight lines available to drivers
- Consolidate the two southern access points to eliminate conflict points and provide additional car parking spaces
- Consider a shared path along the NARC site frontage to improve connections with the centre and reduce the likelihood of car-bicycle collisions
- Expand existing sustainable transport links to NARC. Examples include extending the connection of existing bicycle lanes through the Victoria Road/Separation Street intersection
- Installation of additional bicycle rails and facilities in accordance with or exceeding Clause 52.34 of the Darebin Planning Scheme to encourage uptake in cycling activity to the site
- Consideration to be given to the strategic bicycle network and the integration of the NARC and McDonnell Park precinct together with the redevelopment of the industrial sites to the south-east of NARC

### 6.5 Macutex Technical Advice Report (20 April 2018)

Macutex were engaged by the City of Darebin to ascertain how much of the existing NARC building and infrastructure could be reused as part of a redevelopment.

The documentation provided and reviewed including the following:

- Report completed by Matutex and titled "Updated Condition Audit of the Northcote Aquatic & Recreation Centre (NARC)" dated February 2016
- Northcote Aquatic & Recreation Centre Masterplan (prepared August 2017 by Peddle Thorp/Otium)
- Northcote Aquatic & Recreation Centre - Councilor Workshop (prepared by Otium)
- Northcote Aquatic & Recreation Centre - Outdoor Pool Leak Assessment Report (prepared December 2017 by Roejen)
- NARC - Planning Advice draft report (prepared 15<sup>th</sup> March 2018 by Calibre)



Upon Macutex's desktop review of all available documentation, discussions with Council/Stakeholders, and on-site meetings; Macutex advise against reusing any of the existing infrastructure on the NARC site aside from the 50m outdoor pool\*.

\*Provided that further hydrostatic testing is carried out to accurately and confidently determine if there are any leaks. In the event leaks are detected, costs associated with remedial works to the pool and its vicinity will need to be factored into the cost of the redevelopment.

## 6.6 Cardno Hydraulic Modelling (23 April 2018)

Darebin City Council engaged Cardno to undertake a hydraulic assessment of the two preferred options for the redevelopment of the Northcote Aquatic and Recreation Centre. As the site has been identified as being subject to overland flooding by a Melbourne Water Flood Overlay, a hydraulic assessment is required for the redevelopment to identify and assess what changes the proposed redevelopment has on site hydraulics.

The two preferred options for the redevelopment of the Northcote Aquatic and Recreation Centre should be able to meet the Melbourne Water requirements for negative impacts for building within identified flow paths.

Option 3 due to the location of the proposed building within the existing building footprint does not cause adverse impacts of site of the NARC, therefore would be deemed acceptable to Melbourne Water.

Option 4 causes increases in flood levels of up to 20mm off site along Lorna Avenue, this is the maximum permissible under current Melbourne Water advise for adverse impacts off site. The limited increases in flood extent along the neighbouring properties to the south of the site should be able to be dealt with during the detailed design stage by ensuring there is a flow path from Lorna Avenue to the sports ovals if this is the selected option for the redevelopment of the Northcote Aquatic and Recreation Centre.

## 6.7 Calibre Strategic and Statutory Due Diligence Report - Northcote Aquatic & Recreation Centre Redevelopment (16 April 2018)

The Darebin Planning Scheme seeks to provide a high-quality built, natural and open space environment for existing and future residents. It recognises the need to provide for community infrastructure as development and population densifies within the municipality. The scheme also advocates for links and interfaces, activation, protection of valuable open spaces and environmentally sustainable design.

This strategic planning framework should be used as a guide for Council going forward on this proposed redevelopment project.

This study confirms that a Planning Permit will not be required for the proposed use, buildings or works within the Zone. Planning permission will however, be required under Clause 44.05-1 of the Special Building Overlay to construct a building or to construct or carry out works for both comprehensive redevelopment schemes (Option 4) as both encroach into the SBO area. The redevelopment of the existing scheme (Option 3) will not require planning permission as the works will occur outside of the overlay. The removal of any Native Vegetation will trigger the need for Planning Approvals as will any reduction in car parking requirements. A study of Native Vegetation on site and detailed design will determine if further planning permission is required for vegetation removal.

Hydrological and Transport and Traffic reports have also been prepared by Cardno, and confirm that:

- The site can accommodate any generated car parking requirement with ease (subject to urban design input) Cardno (2018b)
- The Transport and Traffic Due Diligence report, prepared by Cardno (2018a) identifies that the site is mostly accessed by private car and therefore there will be an increased demand for car parking generated by the proposed upgrades and extensions. The transport and traffic report also notes that the NARC is also well serviced by surrounding public transport infrastructure, with a number of sustainable transport options accessible by patrons. The Cardno (2018a) transport and traffic report





further identified a number of pedestrian cross upgrade options, and some reconfiguration of access points

- Both design concepts can meet the needs of Melbourne Water, as per the Cardno (2018b) Hydraulic Report. The report identified that Option 3 will not cause adverse impacts on current site conditions at the NARC, whilst Option 4 will require works to mitigate or manage flood level increase due to the extent of proposed works

It should be noted that at the time of writing this report, Arboriculture advice was still forthcoming.

At a Strategic level, the planning scheme supports the design of a facility that meets community needs and aspirations, is innovative in its built form and environmental impact, but also recognizes the prevailing site and neighbourhood characteristics.

From a strategic perspective Option Four - ASK6 provides for the most integrated redevelopment outcome that would meet the needs of a growing community. This plan provides for a great interface with the adjoining park and childcare centre enabling the centre to operate as a community activity hub. Additional consideration will need to be given to the car parking design to provide for a softer interface with the existing residential neighbourhood, whilst recognizing that Council's traffic consultant has identified that there will be increased parking demand as mentioned above.

#### Option Three: Redevelopment of existing, ASK7

This option is the smallest-scale redevelopment plan proposed for the site, however still provides for upgraded facilities that will be provided within much of the existing building footprint. The option further retains much of the current street interface and spaciousness. A key strength of this option is the retention of much of the landscaping throughout the site. This option would also see the redevelopment having less of an impact on neighbourhood character and amenity, as the area in general is to remain as an established residential area with low rise dwellings accommodating limited growth.

In terms of infrastructure upgrades, the existing carpark can also be retained and/or upgraded, whilst new bike facilities and other transport options should also be made available considering that the redevelopment of the facility is in aim of attracting more and a greater diversity of users.

Notably, as Council's Strategic Planning team expects that Victoria Road's character may change over time, and demographic trends as well as the State and Local Planning policy highlights that the population of Darebin is increasing. This redevelopment needs to reflect these challenges however as the most limited option; the facility may reach capacity sooner than expected when considering that demographic forecasts for the City of Darebin.

The option does not improve upon site interfaces and linkages to the McDonnell Reserve located immediately behind the facility. Nor does it address the residential development to the south. A comprehensive landscaping plan might be able to suggest how this issue could be improved. With this in mind, Council should take into account that the Darebin Planning Scheme at Clause 11.06, Clause 15 and Clause 21.02 discusses the need for planning and development to consider interfaces between different domains to improve accessibility and interaction between people and places.

The option does retain the site's contribution to the existing neighbourhood character, and therefore provides a positive response to State and Local Planning Policies at Clause 15 (SPPF) and Clause 21 (LPPF) which seek to ensure that new development seeks to maintain current and expected neighbourhood character. This scheme also provides the greatest CEPTED opportunities. As such, there is scope to expand and tie this development within changes occurring in the area.

No Planning Permit will be required for use or development under this option.

#### Option Four: Comprehensive Redevelopment, ASK1 and ASK6

The Darebin Planning Scheme highlights the increasing demand for more facilities and services to be provided as Darebin's size and density increases. At Clause 11.06-5 the SPPF identifies that neighbourhoods must be supported by creating safe and healthy design and infrastructure that is accessible. These schemes seek to achieve this to a large extent.



The comprehensive redevelopment options provide for more community facilities and activities. These will act to serve an important role as the population and its diversity increases. The schemes provide co-location of recreation and health facilities.

The comprehensive redevelopment options seek to provide a better integration to the parkland at the rear to the rear; however, these options provide an undesirable street interface to Victoria Road due to the size and location of the new car park. This is a key issue that may need to be considered by Council in the frame of considering pedestrian experience along Victoria Road. Also, the current street landscaping that provides an attractive and rather welcoming urban environment would be lost. In addition, landscaping plans will need to show an improved landscaping outcome, considering the amount of the site to be developed.

The opportunity to design and build a facility for best practice design should be encouraged. The urban design of this project, and the precinct as a whole, needs to provide for sightlines between places, across the private and public domain, active frontages to the street and improved external lighting for public safety given the large extent of car parking proposed between the facility and the road. The current comprehensive options do not always meet these measures or CPTED principles

Flood mitigation will need to be addressed at the detailed design phase to ensure no offsite impacts to the satisfaction of Melbourne Water and the Catchment Management Authority.

A Planning Permit will be required for buildings and works as a result of the Special Buildings Overlay. A Planning Permit will also be required if the vegetation required to be removed is identified as Native Vegetation. A Planning Permit will also be required if a reduction in the required provision car parking or bicycle parking is deemed necessary following an assessment of the final design.

## 6.8 Homewood Consulting Pty Ltd Preliminary Tree Assessment, Assessment of Trees and Northcote Aquatic Recreation Centre (27 April 2018)

Homewood Consulting Pty Ltd were engaged to provide a preliminary tree assessment report on existing trees at the Northcote Aquatic and Recreation Centre. It is proposed to redevelop the site and an arborist report is required to assess the health and condition and arboricultural retention value of the trees to assist in the design phase.

The Preliminary Tree Assessment is an arboricultural report which provides an assessment of the existing trees on a property in order to assist the preparation of a development design. It is not an assessment of the impact of proposed development on the trees and is not intended to accompany a planning submission to council. Prior to submission for planning purposes, a 'Construction Impact Assessment' is recommended.

247 trees were assessed at the Northcote Aquatic and Recreation Centre. Preliminary investigations are being undertaken in regards to proposed works on the site and the health, condition and retention value of existing trees has been provided to identify any development constraints the trees may present.

All trees were assessed for their health, structure, landscape contribution and Useful Life Expectancy (ULE) and were assigned a retention value.

**Table 38 Retention Values for Assessed Trees**

Retention Category	No of Trees
High	42
Medium	63
Low	142
Total	247

Trees assessed with a 'High' retention value are the most significant trees on site and all reasonable efforts should be made to retain them in the landscape with any design proposal.



Trees assessed with a 'Medium' retention value are mainly mature trees with structural faults reducing their useful life expectancy or semi-mature specimens well established and in good condition. As many as possible should be incorporated into the new design.

Trees assessed with a 'Low' retention value are trees with poor health and/or structure, young/small trees easily replaceable or trees not suitable to be retained with a new development.

Council has requested that two options (referred to as Option 3 and Option 4) be considered in regards to their respective impacts on existing vegetation. The numbers of trees located within the building footprint of each design are shown in the tables below.

**Table 39 Number of Trees within Building Footprint for Option 3**

Retention Value	Species Origin			Total
	Indigenous	Native	Exotic	
High	0	1	0	1
Medium	0	0	1	1
Low	2	1	31	34
<b>Total</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>36</b>

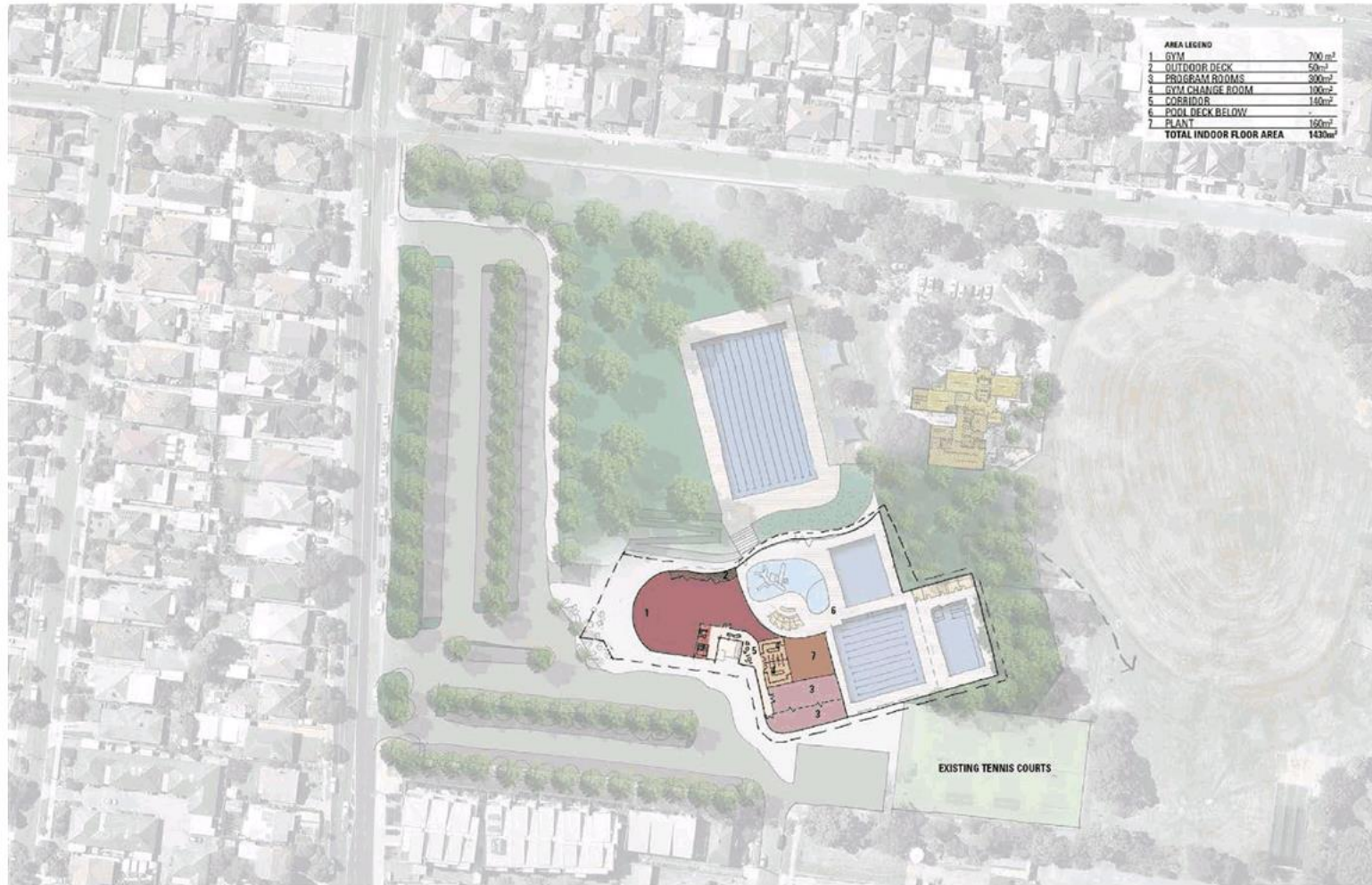
**Table 40 Number of Trees within Building Footprint of Option 4**

Retention Value	Species Origin			Total
	Indigenous	Native	Exotic	
High	0	8	0	8
Medium	1	2	2	5
Low	6	9	4	19
<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>32</b>

The site does not appear to have any planning overlays applied to it that relate to removal of vegetation. However if the site has an area of greater than 4000 square metres, under Clause 52.17 of Victorian planning schemes it is likely that a permit would be required to remove any native vegetation. Council should consult their planning department for further clarification on this matter.

It is recommended that:

1. Tree Protection Zone (TPZ) and Structural Root Zone (SRZ) dimensions of each tree to be retained are represented to scale on all design plans.
2. Tree protection requirements and limits of encroachment (detailed in Appendix 2 and Appendix 3 of the Tree Assessment Report) are taken into consideration when designing the proposed development.
3. The design team maintains regular contact with the Project Arborist to ensure the design is sympathetic to the protection requirements of trees worthy of retention and that the protection zones for retained trees will not be compromised by the proposed design.
4. Following completion of a proposed design, the plans are assessed by the Project Arborist to determine the potential impact to the trees (Construction Impact Assessment).



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**NORTHCOTE AQUATIC RECREATION CENTRE**  
CLIFTON STREET, NORTHCOTE, VIC

**FIRST LEVEL FLOOR PLAN**  
OPTION 4A

REVISION  
4

DATE  
MAY 18

SCALE  
1:500 @A1



DRAWING NO.  
**F002**



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**NORTHCOTE AQUATIC RECREATION CENTRE**  
CLIFTON STREET, NORTHCOTE, VIC

REASON FOR ISSUE:  
DRAFT

**GROUND FLOOR PLAN**  
**OPTION 4A**

REVISION 4 DATE MAY 18 SCALE 1:500 @A1



DRAWING NO  
**F001**



AREA LEGEND	
1 GYM	650m <sup>2</sup>
2 OUTDOOR DECK	270m <sup>2</sup>
3 PROGRAM ROOMS	940m <sup>2</sup>
4 GYM CHANGE ROOM	100m <sup>2</sup>
5 CORRIDOR	150m <sup>2</sup>
6 POOL DECK BELOW	40m <sup>2</sup>
7 STORAGE	40m <sup>2</sup>
<b>TOTAL INDOOR FLOOR AREA</b>	<b>1870m<sup>2</sup></b>

**PEDDLE THORP**

**NORTHCOTE AQUATIC RECREATION CENTRE**  
CLIFTON STREET, NORTHCOTE, VIC

**FIRST LEVEL FLOOR PLAN**  
**OPTION 4B**

REVISION: 1      DATE: MAY 18      SCALE: 1:500 @A1



DRAWING NO.  
**F002**



**PEDDLE THORP**

**NORTHCOTE AQUATIC RECREATION CENTRE**  
CLIFTON STREET, NORTHCOTE, VIC

**GROUND FLOOR PLAN**  
**OPTION 4B**

REVISION: 1      DATE: MAY 18      SCALE: 1:500 (B:A1)



DRAWING NO  
**F001**



AREA LEGEND	
1	PLANT 1000m <sup>2</sup>
2	EXISTING 50 M POOL
3	EXISTING PROGRAM POOL
4	OUTDOOR LEISURE
5	ENVIRONMENTAL GARDENS
6	NEW CAR PARK
7	DROP OFF
8	RAMP
9	STAIR ACCESS
TOTAL INDOOR FLOOR AREA 1000m <sup>2</sup>	

**PEDDLE THORP**

**NORTHCOTE AQUATIC RECREATION CENTRE**  
CLIFTON STREET, NORTHCOTE, VIC

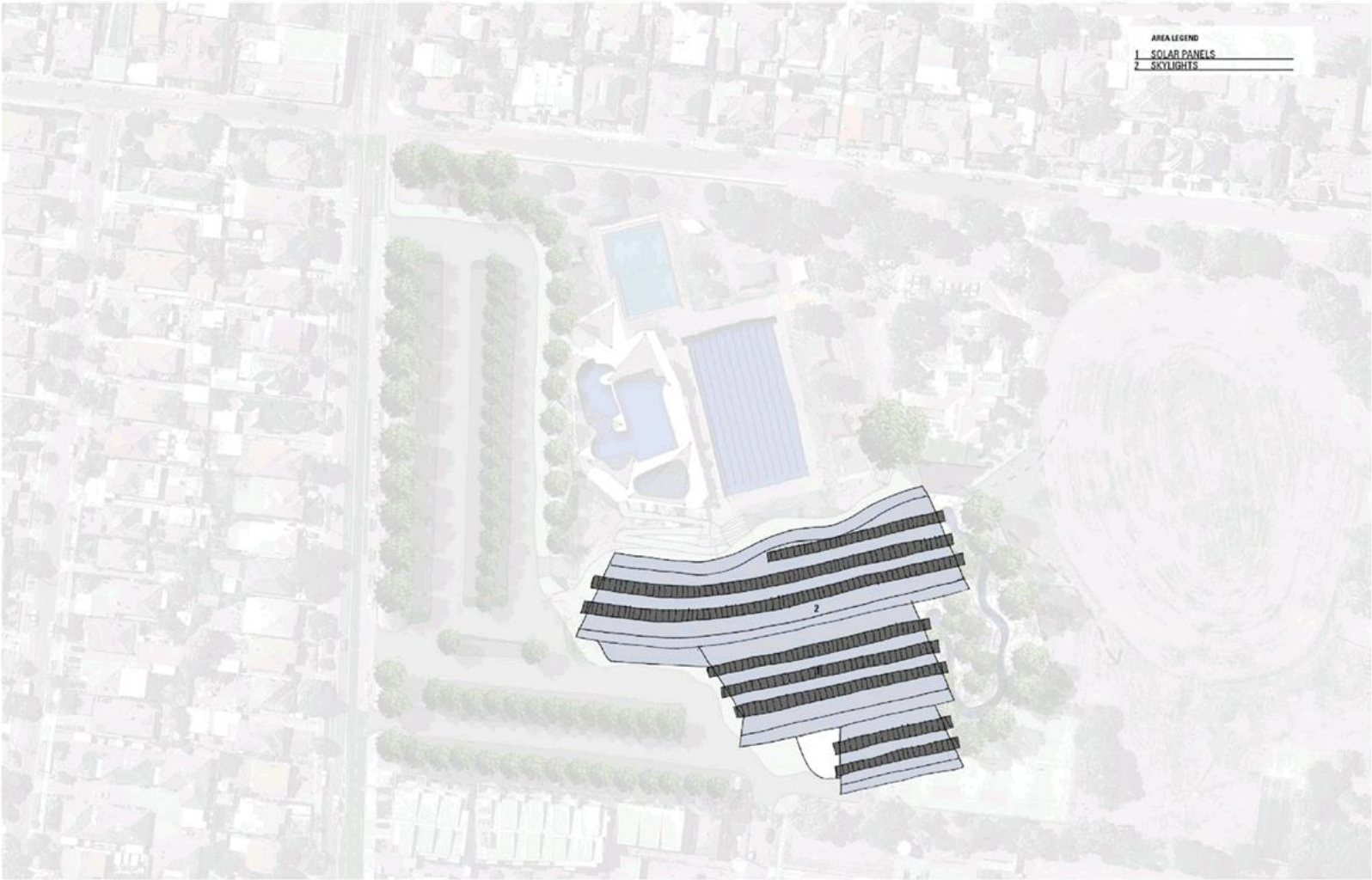
**PLANT LEVEL FLOOR PLAN**  
OPTION 4B

REVISION 1      DATE: MAY 18      SCALE: 1:500 @A1



DRAWING NO:  
**F003**





**PEDDLE THORP**

**NORTHCOTE AQUATIC RECREATION CENTRE**  
CLIFTON STREET, NORTHCOTE, VIC

**ROOF PLAN**  
**OPTION 4B**

REVISION  
1

DATE  
MAY 18

SCALE  
1:500 @A1



DRAWING NO  
**F004**



Table 41: Summary of Facility Options

	Option 1: No development maintain building	Option 2:	Option 3: Redeveloped existing building	Option 4A: Redevelopment	Option 4B: Redevelopment
Estimated Cost of option	\$396,000 - \$400,000	\$3.3M	\$28M - \$46M	\$42M	\$61M
Capacity for increase in population with additional programs/services and space	Nil	Nil	Limited	Future proofed to accommodate some population growth	Future proofed to accommodate population for next 20 /30years
Capacity for community engagement throughout project (none, partial, full)	None	None	Partial	Full	Full
ESD opportunities	None	Limited	Partial	Opportunities - to include some ESD initiatives	Opportunities to incorporate innovative ESD initiatives- potential to achieve five-star rating,
DDA compliant (limited, half, full)	None	Limited	Half	Full	Full
Planning permits required (yes/no)	No	No	Yes - potential tree removal	Yes - potential tree removal	Yes - potential tree removal
Top 3 Risks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Aged infrastructure/Facility failure</li> <li>Not addressing community need</li> <li>Decreasing financial performance/increased cost to Council</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Aged infrastructure/Facility failure</li> <li>Not addressing community need</li> <li>Decreasing financial performance/increased cost to Council</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Aged infrastructure/at the end of its useful life</li> <li>Recommendation by Macutex not to refurbish existing infrastructure.</li> <li>Closure of facility for two-year period / loss of business</li> <li>Decreasing financial performance/increased cost to Council</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>High capital cost</li> <li>Site constraints</li> <li>Facility may not service catchment in the long term</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Higher capital cost</li> <li>Site constraints</li> </ul>



	Option 1: No development maintain building	Option 2:	Option 3: Redeveloped existing building	Option 4A: Redevelopment	Option 4B: Redevelopment
Additional funding options (yes, no, partial)	No Council only	No Council only	Yes Sport and Recreation Victoria State Government - Better Pools	Yes Sport and Recreation Victoria State Government - Better Pools	Yes Sport and Recreation Victoria State Government - Better Pools Melbourne Water - ESD initiatives
Impact on delivering/operating current services (none, partial, full)	Partial	Partial	Full	Minimal - facility operational during construction phase	Minimal - facility operational during construction phase
Service outcomes	No change to the current level of service	No change to the current level of service	Additional program and service outcomes such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Additional learn to swim water</li> <li>• Dedicated warm water pool for Rehabilitation and therapy</li> <li>• Upgraded health and wellness area</li> <li>• Leisure water</li> </ul>	Additional program and service outcomes such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Additional learn to swim water</li> <li>• Dedicated warm water pool for Rehabilitation and therapy</li> <li>• State of the art health and fitness area</li> <li>• Dedicated wellness area - supporting allied health activities</li> <li>• Community meeting and program spaces</li> <li>• Indoor leisure water indoor</li> <li>• ESD initiatives</li> </ul>	Additional program and service outcomes such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Additional learn to swim water</li> <li>• Dedicated warm water pool for Rehabilitation and therapy</li> <li>• State of the art health and fitness area</li> <li>• Dedicated wellness area - supporting allied health activities</li> <li>• Community meeting and program spaces</li> <li>• Major leisure water indoor and outdoor (point of difference)</li> <li>• Linkages to child care facility</li> <li>• Significant ESD initiatives including water harvesting /reuse</li> <li>• Achieves highest service level outcomes due to size of facility components.</li> </ul>



A review and analysis of the outcomes of the four options review indicated that options one to three are not seen as feasible for the following reasons:

- The age of the existing infrastructure and the Macutex review that indicates the facility is at the end of its useful life
- The lack of quality facility components to address the community needs and demands as identified through the community engagement process
- The limited ability to initiate significantly improved environmental practices
- The increasing operational expenditure requirement
- The decreasing participation impacting on revenue generation
- The limited opportunities to attract alternate external funding



## 7. Financial Model

This report provides the recommended final draft management and financial model for the following option 4A and 4B for the redeveloped Northcote Aquatic and Recreation Centre:

The new facilities proposed to be developed will see the centre be set up to service eventually a population of in excess of 224,213 people by 2041. This report covers:

- Financial Models Global Impacts
- Business and demand assumptions
- Management and Staffing Options
- Business performance summaries
- Appendixes - Recommended 10 Year Financial models and fees and charges

This report should be read in association with the financial model spread sheets listed as an attachment to this report.

### 7.1 Facility component areas

The key business assumptions have been developed from component area business units into the 10-year business plan. The facility layout plan is listed as attachment one in the report. NARC has been designed to incorporate the following main activity and development spaces:

- Indoor Aquatics Hall (25m pool, program pool, warm water pool, spa and sauna and leisure water)
- Outdoor Pool
- Indoor Health and Fitness
- Wellness Areas
- Reception, Control, Admin
- Ancillary Public Places
- Childcare
- Community Rooms
- Building Services/Plant
- Outdoor tennis courts

The models take into account the different areas and components within option 4A and 4B.

### 7.2 Centre Operating Hours

The base case financial model uses the following core business hours for management and staff rosters by key business unit areas:

#### Aquatics

Monday to Friday: 5.30am to 9pm  
Saturdays/Sundays 8am to 5pm

#### Gym/Weights - Staffed Times (Note 24 Hour Member Access)

Monday to Friday: 7am to 12noon/4pm to 8pm  
Saturdays/Sundays 8am to 12noon

Staffing rosters allow for duty managers to staff the centre from 30 minutes before and after opening hours so this sees 100 hours per week staff time rosters.



### 7.3 Proposed NARC Entry fees

A detailed review has been completed on entry fees and charges that has involved:

- Completed a review of major regional aquatic facility charges in metropolitan Melbourne.
- Reviewed latest industry fees and charges trends.
- Review of current Darebin aquatic and leisure facility fees

### 7.4 Global Impact Assumptions

The base case financial model includes the a range of global impacts across the 10 year business model based on all activity components being open 2022

Start up costs of \$540,918 for pre-opening salary and operational expenditure are included in the base case model. These include start up costs for:

Table 42 Global Impact Assumptions Start Up Costs

Start Up Operating Cost	Start Up Year Allowances
Centre Manager Salary (6 months)	\$67,500
Business Manager Salary (6 months)	\$52,500
Aquatics Coordinator Salary (5 months.)	\$27,355
Health & Fitness Co-Ordinator Salary (3 months)	\$27,355
Operations Coordinator Salary (5 months)	\$20,516
Sales Staff Salaries (4 months)	\$31,509
General Staff Salaries Allowance (2 months)	\$70,000
Salary On-costs (25% of \$335,098)	\$74,183
Allowance for Services/Energy Start Up	\$50,000
Marketing and Promotion Start Up Allowance	\$60,000
HR and IT Start Up Allowances	\$30,000
Start Up Operations Allowance	\$30,000
<b>Total (Year 1 Start Up Costs)</b>	<b>\$540,918</b>

Usage growth is based on global inputs of demand with allowances for new business establishment and then business consolidation.

### 7.5 Global Impacts

Otium Planning Group (OPG) has developed a financial model for Options 3 and 4. The financial models have been developed using OPGs computerised financial software. The 10-year projections are developed using the following global impact assumptions.

#### 7.5.1 Business Growth

Industry trends indicate it takes up to three years to establish new facilities usage and business.

The financial models therefore assume average business and usage in year three. These figures are impacted by reduced business and usage in year one at 5% less and year two at 2% less (than year 3). From year four onwards it is assumed the business growth will slowly increase before remaining steady at 105% from year nine. The financial models therefore sees the following business growth impacts.

Table 43: Business Growth

Year									
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
95%	98%	100%	101%	101%	102%	103%	104%	105%	105%



### 7.5.2 Price Growth/Increases

Facility hire and other fees price growth are set at 1% annually from year two onwards.

### 7.5.3 Consumer Price Index (CPI)

The financial model is annually impacted by a CPI increase. This has been set at 2.3% from year two to year 10. An additional 1% is provided every year to account for salary increases that may occur as a result of local enterprise bargain agreements and or salary increases. An additional 2.5% is provided every year to account

### 7.5.4 Alternative Expense Adjustment:

The model assumes energy costs and maintenance increase by 2.5% annually so slightly higher than annual CPI.

## 7.6 Business Assumptions

The following business and management assumptions impact on the financial model.

### 7.6.1 Recurrent Operating Expenditure

The majority of recurrent operating expenditure including utilities, administration, marketing and maintenance, floor resurfacing and cleaning are based on the industry benchmarks for similar facilities.

### 7.6.2 Building Depreciation and Cost of Capital

The financial models have been developed and include operational budgets. At this stage of the project they do not include total project costs including depreciation and cost of capital.

Industry trends indicate that leisure centres usually require a capital improvement investment about every three to five years to ensure they are presented at a high standard. At this stage of the project no allowance has been made for major capital asset improvement.

### 7.6.3 Management/Staffing

A base management and staffing structure has been developed for the Centre based on industry benchmarks.

A summary of key staffing positions and allocations by Equivalent Full Time (EFT) positions against average salary is identified in the Financial Model.

**Table 44: Proposed Centre Management Staffing EFT**

Staff Area	Equivalent Full Time
Wellness Centre Coordinator	1.0
Therapists	4.0
Aquatics Coordinator	1.0
Duty Supervisor	2.4
Lifeguards - Full Time	9.6
Lifeguards - Holidays/Birthday Parties	1.5
Aquatic Program Coordinator	1.0
Learn to Swim Instructors	3.5
Aquaerobics Instructors	0.3
Health and Fitness Coordinator	0.5
Gym Instructors	1.4
Casual Instructors	2.4
Membership Sales Staff	2.0
Café Supervisor	1.0
Café Staff	2.1
Centre Manager	1.0
Business Manager	1.0



Staff Area	Equivalent Full Time
Operations Coordinator	1.0
Receptionists/Customer Service	5.7
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>44.5 EFT</b>

Salaries are impacted by CPI (2.3%) annually and an additional 1.2% every year to take into account wage increases.

#### 7.6.4 Insurance

The model includes an allowance for public liability and building insurance.

#### 7.6.5 Food and Beverage/Merchandising

The staffing structure includes staffing allowance for the kiosk, which is based on 51 hours per week (peak hours).

The assumptions for secondary spend include:

- Kiosk/café - \$1.00 per spend with a 60% penetration.
- Merchandise - \$1.25 spend with a 40% penetration.

#### 7.6.6 Sponsorship

No allowance for sponsorship has been included in this model. There may be the opportunity to attract sponsorship as the project develops further.

### 7.7 Financial Models

The consultation team has used OPGs Computerised Facility Financial Model to develop a draft business model for Options 3 and 4. Detailed excel financial spreadsheets have been developed to assist with presenting the 10-year projections.

### 7.8 Financial Model - Option Four A

#### 7.8.1 Facility 10 Year Base Case Financial Models

The 10-year business projections are detailed in the following table.

**Table 45: Base Case 10 Year Operational Business Projections - Option 4A**

CATEGORY	YEARS										AVERAGE PER ANNUM (000)
	1 (000)	2 (\$00)	3 (000)	4 (000)	5 (000)	6 (000)	7 (000)	8 (000)	9 (000)	10 (000)	
Revenue	\$5,159	\$5,490	\$5,793	\$5,999	\$6,246	\$6,509	\$6,783	\$7,068	\$7,365	\$7,601	\$6,401
Expenditure	\$6,099	\$5,738	\$5,928	\$6,122	\$6,309	\$6,520	\$6,740	\$6,957	\$7,170	\$7,395	\$6,498
Operational Profit/Loss	(\$940)	(\$248)	(\$135)	(\$123)	(\$63)	(\$11)	\$43	\$111	\$195	\$206	(\$96)
Visitations	584	602	614	615	621	627	633	639	645	645	622

**Note:** Does not include development costs such as depreciation, capital cost repayments, land tax, Council rates.

The 10-year base case business projections indicate:

- Revenue is expected to increase annually ranging from \$5,159,000 in year 1 to \$7,601,000 by year 10.
- Expenditure is expected to increase annually ranging from \$6,099,000 in year 1 to \$7,395,000 in year 10.





- The Centre is expected to operate at an annual operating loss from year one to six. The average operating loss is estimated to be approximately \$97,000 per annum.
- Centre attendances are expected to gradually increase from 584,000 in year 1 to 645,000 by year 9 before remaining steady until year 10.

### Facility Business Scenario Comparison

The following table provides a comparison of the average operational performance over the 10-year period of each model based on:

- 10% more use.
- Base Case - Average predicted use.
- 10% less use.

**Table 46: Facility Business Scenario Comparison - Option 4A**

FACILITY STAGES	FACILITY BUSINESS SCENARIO		
	Optimistic Case 10% More Use Average Net Profit/(Loss) Over 10 years (\$000)	Base Case (Average Use) Average Net Profit/(Loss) Over 10 years (\$000)	Conservative Case 10% Less Use Average Net Profit/(Loss) Over 10 years (\$000)
Revenue	\$7,040	\$6,401	\$5,763
Expenditure	\$6,561	\$6,498	\$6,435
Operational Profit/Loss	\$479	(\$96)	(\$672)
Visitations	685	622	560

## 7.9 Financial Model - Option Four B

### 7.9.1 Facility 10 Year Base Case Financial Models

The 10-year business projections are detailed in the following table.

**Table 47: Base Case 10 Year Operational Business Projections - Option 4B**

CATEGORY	YEARS										AVERAGE PER ANNUM (\$000)
	1 (\$000)	2 (\$000)	3 (\$000)	4 (\$000)	5 (\$000)	6 (\$000)	7 (\$000)	8 (\$000)	9 (\$000)	10 (\$000)	
Revenue	\$5,375	\$5,719	\$6,034	\$6,249	\$6,506	\$6,780	\$7,066	\$7,363	\$7,672	\$7,918	\$6,668
Expenditure	\$6,099	\$5,738	\$5,928	\$6,122	\$6,309	\$6,520	\$6,740	\$6,957	\$7,170	\$7,395	\$6,498
Operational Profit/Loss	(\$724)	(\$19)	\$106	\$128	\$197	\$260	\$326	\$406	\$502	\$523	\$170
Visitations	595	614	627	627	633	640	646	652	658	658	635

**Note:** Does not include development costs such as depreciation, capital cost repayments, land tax, Council rates.

The 10-year base case business projections indicate:

- Revenue is expected to increase annually ranging from \$5,375,000 in year 1 to \$7,918,000 by year 10.
- Expenditure is expected to increase annually ranging from \$6,099,000 in year 1 to \$7,395,000 in year 10.
- The Centre is expected to operate at an annual operating loss in year 1 and 2. From years 3 to 10 the Centre returns and operating surplus. The average operating surplus is estimated to be approximately \$170,000 per annum.
- Centre attendances are expected to gradually increase from 595,000 in year 1 to 658,000 by year 9 before remaining steady for year 10.

### Facility Business Scenario Comparison



The following table provides a comparison of the average operational performance over the 10-year period of each model based on:

- 10% more use.
- Base Case - Average predicted use.
- 10% less use.

Table 48: Facility Business Scenario Comparison - Option 4B

FACILITY STAGES	FACILITY BUSINESS SCENARIO		
	Optimistic Case 10% More Use Average Net Profit/(Loss) Over 10 years (\$000)	Base Case (Average Use) Average Net Profit/(Loss) Over 10 years (\$000)	Conservative Case 10% Less Use Average Net Profit/(Loss) Over 10 years (\$000)
Revenue	\$7,333	\$6,668	\$6,003
Expenditure	\$6,561	\$6,498	\$6,435
Operational Profit/Loss	\$773	\$170	(\$432)
Visitations	699	635	572



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## 8. Warranties and Disclaimers

The information contained in this report is provided in good faith. While Otium Planning Group has applied their own experience to the task, they have relied upon information supplied to them by other persons and organisations.

We have not conducted an audit of the information provided by others but have accepted it in good faith. Some of the information may have been provided 'commercial in confidence' and as such these venues or sources of information are not specifically identified. Readers should be aware that the preparation of this report may have necessitated projections of the future that are inherently uncertain and that our opinion is based on the underlying representations, assumptions and projections detailed in this report.

There will be differences between projected and actual results, because events and circumstances frequently do not occur as expected and those differences may be material. We do not express an opinion as to whether actual results will approximate projected results, nor can we confirm, underwrite or guarantee the achievability of the projections as it is not possible to substantiate assumptions which are based on future events.

Accordingly, neither Otium Planning Group, nor any member or employee of Otium Planning Group, undertakes responsibility arising in any way whatsoever to any persons other than client in respect of this report, for any errors or omissions herein, arising through negligence or otherwise however caused.



## Appendix 1 - Demographic Profile and Population Trends

The following section of the report reviews the demographic profile of the Darebin City Council area based on information obtained from .id, an online based company who complete demographic analysis of ABS Census data.

The population trends indicate that between 2011 and 2016 the population of the Darebin City Council area during the Census increased from 136,474 people to 146,721 people. This equates to an approximate growth of 7.5% of the population (10,247 residents). It is predicted that the Estimated Resident Population, which takes into account an estimate of those missed by the census and those that were overseas, was 155,022 in 2016.

### Age Group Population Profile

The age profile of residents in 2016 compared to the Greater Melbourne area and the 2011 Census data was estimated as follows:

Table 49: Population Age Profile of Darebin City Council

	2016			2011			Change 2011 to 2016
	Number	%	Greater Melbourne %	Number	%	Greater Melbourne %	
0 to 4	8,836	6.0	6.4	8,860	6.5	6.5	-24
5 to 9	7,881	5.4	6.2	7,284	5.3	6.0	+597
10 to 14	6,723	4.6	5.7	6,101	4.5	5.9	+622
15 to 19	6,937	4.7	6.0	6,475	4.7	6.3	+462
20 to 24	11,345	7.7	7.4	10,738	7.9	7.5	+607
25 to 29	14,201	9.7	8.1	12,905	9.5	7.9	+1,296
30 to 34	14,265	9.7	8.2	12,410	9.1	7.5	+1,855
35 to 39	11,928	8.1	7.3	11,650	8.5	7.5	+278
40 to 44	11,002	7.5	7.0	11,075	8.1	7.5	-73
45 to 49	10,501	7.2	6.9	9,024	6.6	6.9	+1,477
50 to 54	8,612	5.9	6.2	7,932	5.8	6.4	+680
55 to 59	7,592	5.2	5.7	6,490	4.8	5.6	+1,102
60 to 64	6,001	4.1	4.9	5,542	4.1	5.1	+459
65 to 69	5,175	3.5	4.4	4,649	3.4	3.9	+526
70 to 74	4,236	2.9	3.3	4,551	3.3	3.0	-315
75 to 79	4,184	2.9	2.5	4,195	3.1	2.4	-11
80 to 84	3,566	2.4	1.9	3,519	2.6	2.0	+47
85 and over	3,736	2.5	2.0	3,074	2.3	1.8	+662
Total population	146,721	100.0	100.0	136,474	100.0	100.0	+10,247

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census of Population and Housing 2011 and 2016 (Usual residence). Compiled and presented in profile.id by .id, the population experts.

Analysis of the five-year age groups of the City of Darebin in 2016 compared to Greater Melbourne shows that there was a lower proportion of people in the younger age groups (under 15) and a similar proportion of people in the older age groups (65+). Overall, 16.0% of the population was aged between 0 and 15, and 14.2% were aged 65 years and over, compared with 18.3% and 14.0% respectively for Greater Melbourne.

The major differences between the age structure of the City of Darebin and Greater Melbourne were:

- A larger percentage of persons aged 25 to 29 (9.7% compared to 8.1%)
- A larger percentage of persons aged 30 to 34 (9.7% compared to 8.2%)
- A smaller percentage of persons aged 15 to 19 (4.7% compared to 6.0%)
- A smaller percentage of persons aged 10 to 14 (4.6% compared to 5.7%)



The largest changes in age structure in this area between 2011 and 2016 were in the age groups:

- 30 to 34 (+1,855 persons)
- 45 to 49 (+1,477 persons)
- 25 to 29 (+1,296 persons)
- 55 to 59 (+1,102 persons)

### Gender Population Profile

The following table details the gender comparison of the Darebin City Council residents in 2016 compared to 2011 and the Greater Melbourne.

**Table 50: Darebin City Council Resident Population Gender Comparison**

	2016			2011			Change 2011 to 2016
	Number	%	Greater Melbourne %	Number	%	Greater Melbourne %	
Population	146,721	100.0	100.0	136,474	100.0	100.0	+10,247
Males	70,903	48.3	49.0	66,455	48.7	49.2	+4,448
Females	75,816	51.7	51.0	70,019	51.3	50.8	+5,797

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census of Population and Housing 2011 and 2016 (Usual residence). Compiled and presented in profile.id by .id, the population experts.

There are more females than males in the Darebin City Council region (51.7% compared to 48.3%) which is slightly higher but still in line with the ratio in Greater Melbourne (51.0% versus 49.0%). The ratio of females has increased slightly within Darebin between 2011 and 2016.

### Country of Birth

The percentage of the population that is born overseas and the diversity of their country of origin can give an indication of how diverse the population is within a community.

An analysis of the cultural diversity data for the Darebin area shows that there is a slightly lower level of diversity when compared to Greater Melbourne with 33.2% being born overseas and 28.2% having been born in a non-English speaking country, compared to 33.8% and 27.0% in Greater Melbourne. People that spoke a language other than English as home accounted for 37.0% of the Darebin population compared to 32.3% in Greater Melbourne region.

The table below details the country of birth of residents in 2016 and 2011 as well as being compared against the population in Greater Melbourne.

**Table 51: Most Common Countries of Birth**

	2016			2011			Change 2011 to 2016
	Number	%	Greater Melbourne %	Number	%	Greater Melbourne %	
Australia	86,907	59.2	59.8	81,889	60.0	63.3	+5,018
Italy	6,130	4.2	1.4	7,166	5.3	1.7	-1,036
China	4,821	3.3	3.5	4,335	3.2	2.3	+486
India	4,561	3.1	3.6	4,445	3.3	2.7	+116
Greece	4,553	3.1	1.0	4,998	3.7	1.2	-445
United Kingdom	3,443	2.3	3.6	3,223	2.4	4.1	+220
Vietnam	2,798	1.9	1.8	2,330	1.7	1.7	+468
New Zealand	2,197	1.5	1.8	1,854	1.4	1.7	+343
Lebanon	1,170	0.8	0.4	1,273	0.9	0.4	-103
Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	1,150	0.8	0.4	1,322	1.0	0.4	-172

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census of Population and Housing 2011 and 2016 (Usual residence). Compiled and presented in profile.id by .id, the population experts.



The following table summarises the diversity within the Darebin population and identifies whether residents are from English or non-English speaking backgrounds.

Table 52: Summary of Diversity

	2016			2011			Change 2011 to 2016
	Number	%	Greater Melbourne %	Number	%	Greater Melbourne %	
Total overseas born	48,717	33.2	33.8	46,030	33.7	31.4	+2,687
Non-English-speaking backgrounds	41,409	28.2	27.0	39,588	29.0	24.2	+1,821
Main English speaking countries	7,308	5.0	6.8	6,442	4.7	7.2	+866
Australia	86,907	59.2	59.8	81,889	60.0	63.3	+5,018
Not stated	11,059	7.5	6.4	8,555	6.3	5.3	+2,504
Total Population	146,683	100.0	100.0	136,474	100.0	100.0	+10,209

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census of Population and Housing 2011 and 2016 (Usual residence). Compiled and presented in profile.id by .id, the population experts.

The percentage of the population born overseas is slightly lower in Darebin than in Greater Melbourne (33.2% compared to 33.8%). The percentage of the population that comes from a non-English speaking backgrounds however is higher than in Greater Melbourne with 28.2% compared to 27.0%.

#### Languages Spoken at Home

The Darebin area has a lower percentage of the population (56.3%) that speaks English only when compared to the Greater Melbourne population (62.0%). The top five languages other than English spoken within the Darebin area in 2016 were:

- Italian
- Greek
- Mandarin
- Arabic
- Vietnamese

#### Residents Income Levels

The table below presents the personal weekly income levels of City of Darebin residents.

Table 53: Weekly Income Gross Income Levels for the Darebin City Council Area

	2016		
	Number	%	Greater Melbourne %
Negative Income/Nil income	11,593	9.4	11.2
\$1 - \$149	5,127	4.2	4.5
\$150 - \$299	9,630	7.8	7.0
\$300 - \$399	11,263	9.1	7.7
\$400 - \$499	9,938	8.1	7.4
\$500 - \$649	8,353	6.8	7.0
\$650 - \$799	8,634	7.0	7.3
\$800 - \$999	9,749	7.9	8.3
\$1,000 - \$1,249	10,278	8.3	8.6
\$1,250 - \$1,499	7,334	5.9	6.0
\$1,500 - \$1,749	6,216	5.0	5.0
\$1,750 - \$1,999	4,147	3.4	3.4
\$2,000 - \$2,999	6,192	5.0	5.1
\$3,000 or more	3,398	2.8	3.4
Not stated	11,434	9.3	8.2
Total persons aged 15+	123,286	100.0	100.0

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census of Population and Housing 2011 and 2016 (Usual residence). Compiled and presented in profile.id by .id, the population experts



Analysis of individual income levels in the City of Darebin in 2016 compared to Greater Melbourne shows that there was a lower proportion of people earning a high income (those earning \$1,750 per week or more) and a higher proportion of low income people (those earning less than \$500 per week). Overall, 11.1% of the population earned a high income, and 38.6% earned a low income, compared with 11.9% and 37.8% respectively for Greater Melbourne.

The major differences between the City of Darebin's individual incomes and Greater Melbourne's individual incomes were:

- A larger percentage of persons who earned \$300 - \$399 (9.1% compared to 7.7%)
- A larger percentage of persons who earned \$150 - \$299 (7.8% compared to 7.0%)
- A smaller percentage of persons who earned Negative Income/Nil income (9.4% compared to 11.2%)

### Vehicle Ownership

The number of vehicles per household is detailed in the table below.

Table 54: Vehicle Ownership

	2011		
	Number	%	Greater Melbourne %
No motor vehicles	7,167	12.3	8.5
1 motor vehicle	23,970	41.0	33.2
2 motor vehicles	16,281	27.9	34.8
3 or more motor vehicles	5,730	9.8	15.9
Not stated	5,266	9.0	7.6
Total households	58,414	100.0	100.0

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census of Population and Housing 2011 and 2016 (Usual residence). Compiled and presented in profile.id by .id, the population experts

A household's ownership of vehicles can be used as an indicator of an individual's ability to independently access leisure facilities without the reliance on public transport or utilising other modes of transport.

A review of the vehicles ownership in the Darebin City Council indicates that nearly eight out of every 10 households (78.7%) own one or more vehicles indicating a relatively high ability to independently access leisure activities. However, this is lower than Greater Melbourne at 83.9%. There was also a significantly high number of households who identified that they have access to no motor vehicles (12.3% compared to 8.5% in Greater Melbourne) indicating there may be a reliance on public transport and non-motorised forms of transport such as walking, bikes or skateboards.

### Future Population

It is expected that the population within the Darebin City Council will increase 45.5% from 154,144 in 2016 to 224,213 in 2041. The largest average annual rate of change is predicted to occur between 2016 and 2021 before slowing down.

Table 55: Projected Population Growth 2016 - 2041

	2016	2021	2026	2031	2036	2041
Population	154,144	170,409	185,689	199,020	211,587	224,213
Change in population (5yrs)		16,265	15,280	13,332	12,566	12,626
Average annual change		2.03%	1.73%	1.40%	1.23%	1.17%

Source: Population and household forecasts, 2016 to 2041, prepared by .id, the population experts, June 2017.

The figures for the projected populations are slightly higher than the data collected during the census as it takes into account the population that may have been missed by the census and the population that were overseas at the time of the census.



The following table highlights the likely change in the population age profile between 2016 and 2041.

Table 56: Darebin City Council Future Population Age Profile

	2016		2021		2026		2031		2036		2041		Change b/w 2016 and 2041
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	
0 to 4	9,999	6.5	11,029	6.5	11,988	6.5	12,599	6.3	13,169	6.2	13,801	6.2	3,802
5 to 9	8,182	5.3	9,287	5.4	10,267	5.5	10,927	5.5	11,417	5.4	11,952	5.3	3,770
10 to 14	6,906	4.5	7,736	4.5	8,659	4.7	9,318	4.7	9,819	4.6	10,273	4.6	3,367
15 to 19	7,745	5.0	8,764	5.1	9,557	5.1	10,287	5.2	10,911	5.2	11,473	5.1	3,728
20 to 24	12,037	7.8	13,763	8.1	14,814	8.0	15,687	7.9	16,598	7.8	17,527	7.8	5,490
25 to 29	15,114	9.8	16,511	9.7	17,833	9.6	18,915	9.5	19,913	9.4	21,083	9.4	5,969
30 to 34	14,821	9.6	16,395	9.6	17,644	9.5	18,735	9.4	19,697	9.3	20,787	9.3	5,966
35 to 39	12,920	8.4	14,753	8.7	16,118	8.7	17,096	8.6	17,976	8.5	18,930	8.4	6,010
40 to 44	11,575	7.5	12,663	7.4	14,190	7.6	15,166	7.6	15,939	7.5	16,775	7.5	5,200
45 to 49	10,416	6.8	10,861	6.4	11,834	6.4	13,018	6.5	13,825	6.5	14,534	6.5	4,118
50 to 54	8,791	5.7	9,927	5.8	10,363	5.6	11,184	5.6	12,166	5.7	12,914	5.8	4,123
55 to 59	7,650	5.0	8,295	4.9	9,250	5.0	9,643	4.8	10,334	4.9	11,194	5.0	3,544
60 to 64	6,228	4.0	7,163	4.2	7,732	4.2	8,531	4.3	8,897	4.2	9,522	4.2	3,294
65 to 69	5,383	3.5	5,916	3.5	6,717	3.6	7,259	3.6	7,972	3.8	8,360	3.7	2,977
70 to 74	4,597	3.0	5,091	3.0	5,626	3.0	6,368	3.2	6,903	3.3	7,581	3.4	2,984
75 to 79	4,318	2.8	4,352	2.6	4,879	2.6	5,406	2.7	6,101	2.9	6,640	3.0	2,322
80 to 84	3,640	2.4	3,805	2.2	3,978	2.1	4,425	2.2	4,967	2.3	5,575	2.5	1,935
85+	3,821	2.5	4,100	2.4	4,240	2.3	4,457	2.2	4,984	2.4	5,293	2.4	1,472

Source: Population and household forecasts, 2011 to 2041, prepared by .id, the population experts, June 2017.

In 2016, the dominant age group for residents in the Darebin Council area was between 25 - 29 years, which accounted for 9.8% of the total population. While this age group is predicted to remain the largest of the population in 2041, it is expected to fall to account for only 9.4% of the total population. The age bracket that is predicted to experience the largest increase in population number is the 35 - 39 years of age group which is expected to increase by 6,010 residents while remaining steady at 8.4%.

The percentage of the population that is in their most active years (5 - 44 years of age) is predicted to fall slightly from 57.9% in 2016 to 57.4% in 2041.





## Appendix 2 - User Survey Written Comments

Responses	
1	<p>I believe that the proposed changes to children swim programs eats into their leisure times.</p> <p>Holidays are not for additional lessons - Holidays are for down time &amp; fun! The extra cost/burden is not warranted.</p>
2	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Improved female change rooms, hairdryers</li> <li>2. Outdoor shower/toilet or access to toilets via outdoor walkway rather than going through pool area.</li> <li>3. More attention given to "looking after" the outdoor pool area - not regularly swept, rubbish sits there for weeks.</li> <li>4. A cycle (designated lane) lane to the bike racks on the roadway.</li> <li>5. Leave outdoor pool as is - don't change a fantastic facility.</li> <li>6. Better cleaning of outdoor pool especially during busy times.</li> <li>7. Membership swipe in for faster access during busy times.</li> <li>8. Greater consideration for members during swim carnivals - some of 'closed' times in mornings disregard regular users - it's all about the schools!!</li> </ol>
3	<p>Outdoor grassed areas. Wrong trees planted - dropping berries stopping grass from growing! Grassed areas improvement would bring more families to picnic etc. Just wondering why the membership joining fee is around \$65?? Data entry? It's way too much for a single person like me on a low income! How about waiving the fee for people with a seniors' card? Thank you - in anticipation! (I cannot join because of this fee)</p>
4	<p>Seats always covered with bags &amp; towels. More hooks to hang towels on outdoors. Ban tennis Ballarat throwing in outdoor pool all other balls ok tennis balls when wet &amp; thrown at speed are a lethal weapon.</p>
5	<p>Don't support a massive revamp. Prime is a GREAT program but it is under resourced and complexities within it are NOT WELL UNDERSTOOD within general gym. It should/could be a stronger focus. This link between fitness/chronic disease/mental health offers so many opportunities. I would love to be part of this conversation designing gyms to optimise wellness &amp; reduce costs and burden of disease using an evidence informed approach.</p>
6	<p>The main part of the whole centre I think needs upgrading in the SPA jets are poor pressure. The area surrounding SPA and the area outside spa near lockers &amp; the walkway at the rear to the change rooms (VERY SKUNGY) Otherwise I like it.</p>
7	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Please provide more Zumba! or similar dance class</li> <li>2. Less Mills classes are not for everyone.</li> <li>3. It would be good if the over 50 membership was less restrictive - i.e. use classes all weekend not just before 4pm. Also e.g. one night a week you could come in after 4pm. Not everyone over 50 is retired and can come in during the day. In fact, most people are still working! Too narrow, focuses on Les Mills classes. Pools always occupied with lessons.</li> </ol>
8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Need outdoor showers</li> <li>- Indoor open showers need to work more effectively (pool side)</li> <li>- More pool side portables</li> <li>- The change rooms need a refurb</li> <li>- At least one lap lane available either in or outdoor pools at all times.</li> <li>- I've been coming to this pool for over 25 years. It is a really good facility in general but needs a renovation now.</li> <li>- Noise reduction for indoor pools (?)</li> <li>- Waterslide would be good for kids</li> <li>- New cafe has excellent food</li> </ul>
9	<p>Need another indoor pool specifically for water aerobics/water therapy. Would be used all the time if promoted as exercise for older adults/people in recovery/overweight</p>



Responses	
	children. Reception area is inadequate on hot days with queues out the door.
10	I only used the Fitzroy Pool when the 50m was closed in October. NARC is an excellent resource for this community and provides a wonderful experience for all types of users. Keep up the great work!
11	Staff have been very helpful. I had an accident and are unable to bring my son to the lessons. Staff were very helpful in finding another class so my husband can bring my son in. Thank you +++
12	A family change room/baby changing station in male change rooms. More room in the squat rack/chin up area. A place for gymnastic rings to hang, a sled to push.
13	Unclean Dated Bathrooms terrible Nice staff Outdoor pool heated well
14	Always enjoy the monthly healthy breakfast Extra aqua aerobics class Wednesdays Enjoy the friendliness of staff
15	Fantastic centre, but it has declined over the years and needs upgrade urgently.
16	I feel comfortable using this facility. The staff are good and I like the variety of users.
17	- Counter staff need to smile more! - a smile helps reduce dissatisfaction with facilities - More options for over 55's membership - Please create separate indoor pools if you go down this path with separate hydrotherapy area - - Please fix the drinking fountain in the pool area - we need to supply free water to customers - it currently only supplies a slow trickle!
18	- The flooring, showers & change rooms need updating - The outdoor pool is a bit grimy (the walls) but the water is clean & a great temperature now. - Please do not bring back piped music over the indoor pool or change rooms. It is noise pollution. - I found it inconvenient going to Brunswick Pool for 2 months recently so I appreciate the outdoor pool being open. Thank you
19	1. Gym area is too small 2. Need for a separate room for balance/stretching for (quite 'dangerous' in gym area) 3. Related to 2. for seniors, a specific balance, low impact meditation/yoga class 4. With growing population in the area, NARC would benefit from a larger Centre by expanding site if poss.
20	- Clean change rooms - smell + showers need scrub - new would be good - More space around equipment in gym. Not always feel safe - More shade outdoors.
21	- I am a Prime member - this is an excellent program to encourage over 50 people to get fitter + healthier - The quality of the cleaning service employed by NARC is sub-standard - change rooms are poorly cleaned
22	The Northcote Aquatic Centre is in desperate need of improvement. It's been at least 30 years any money was spent & it's time to bring it into the 21st century. A great example of a very good but simple indoor pool layout s Thomastown/Ivanhoe. Also, improved outdoor areas with water-play, better/cleaver pools & actually making use of the space where the diving pool was would make sense.  NARC has one of the most beautiful outdoor/grass areas of all the pools & that's a BIG plus. Keep the outdoor/grass area, re-tile the outdoor pools & replace filters/make them clearer, create an aqua play area where there is nothing @ the moment & rebuild the entire indoor pool & change room to today's standards and improve parking and access.
23	The staff the community are excellent. Staff are respectful, responsive and helpful. The building and facilities need upgrading & constant maintenance.



Responses	
	The spa needs to be bigger and heating during the winter. Showers
24	Overall, I am happy with the Centre. The staff are always friendly & helpful. I appreciate the flexibility of the Pryme membership. If I choose my time, it is not too crowded. Thank you. Dated & old facilities e.g. missing tiles grubby look Limited access to pools due to school use
25	Old building needs an update
26	- Yoga classes could be so much better - really basic & too much talking. - Cust service staff are really great. - Please stay open, don't close pool to renovate! - On hot days the fast lap lane is right next to 'aquatic play' - kids swim in the fast lane - dangerous!!
27	- The pools need to be cleaned more thoroughly. Water is often cloudy & has floating bits in it. - Sauna frequently taken over by older men. Very off-putting to women - Pump classes are good.
28	Priorities: - cleaner nicer change rooms - more family change rooms - so many kids come here & they are always occupied. I have a back injury so can't change both kids. - More space for kids swim lessons - it's very crowded - Ensure high standard of all swim instructors. - Pregnancy aquatics class - so many pregnant women @ narc - closest one otherwise is CBD - Adult swim correction classes would be great too.
29	We hear that in January 18 the Aqua class on Thursday morning it will be one class only during to holidays season. Can you please consider to make the class at 8am instead of 8.30am. Thank you
30	Generally, feel that staff aim their interaction at youngsters to middle aged don't offer advice to poor technique if they see it. Male staff chat the girls up. Staff too groupy.
31	I am so thankful for the yoga Pam has taught me and the Pilates Vicky has taught me. I have been practising at home, as cancer has reduced my energy levels - I am in awe of the strong foundation these women have come in my life.
32	Great staff but facilities definitely need an upgrade.
33	-The Centre needs upgrading. The building is old and leaks. - Classes tailored for older people needed - Cheaper access to gym for older people needed. Currently too expensive. - Need a safer pedestrian crossing on Victoria Road to the Centre. - When turning right in a car on Victoria Road into carpark, traffic usually banks up. Need to have NO PARKING in Victoria Road to allow traffic to flow. - Fitness class music is too loud.
34	More classes! Quicker entry (book online) More Yoga Stronger on swim lane etiquette.
35	Centre requires a complete re-build. Maintenance works are piece-meal/ad hoc. A complete refurbishment/re-build is required from entry to specialised areas of health/fitness. As the population ages it needs to have greater focus on the over 50's in our community. These do not have priority of programming or provision. Staff facilities are extremely poor - cramped and outdated.
36	In 10 years of filling out feedback forms I have never received a response! I have always asked for a response and left all my details. Management often talk down to people. Facilities are very old, dirty and dangerous, WorkCover should be called. Impossible to get a car park and members often miss classes over summer and swimming carnivals because car park and street parking is impossible. Also swimming lanes and aqua aerobics are often changed for non-members i.e. school swimming.
37	They stop classes mainly prime classes over public holidays and add extra for pump, step, attack classes at the same time. Discrimination against older people.



Responses	
38	Very poor customer service/assistance most cannot answer questions and will guess the answer! Unsafe leaking roofs, floors wet sometimes large pools on floors from leaking. NOT enough classes for older adults or people with injuries. Often classes are stopped completely over Christmas summer for 3 weeks and more e.g. Zumba that as one class a week is often stopped for six weeks or more.
39	2 hours car parking ridiculous! Leaking roof Poor sound system Cancellation of classes too readily & too often Old equipment in gym Dilapidated change room & toilets More variety of classes
40	2-hour car parking not long enough. Fitness classes cancelled too often when instructors & patrons don't want those cancellations.
41	Spin cycle room needs to be properly finished and fixed as the ceiling leaks and some patches look mouldy.
42	It's a well-run facility with the best 50 metre outdoor pool in Melbourne. The only complaint I could make is that there is not sufficient notice given of closure of the outdoor pool for carnivals sometimes and I turn up and find it is closed. The lap-lane availability page on the website is not sufficient in itself. There should also be notices at reception and a sheet listing the forthcoming carnivals should be available at reception. At least one week's notice should be given for all carnivals, including rescheduled carnivals.
43	Love the Northcote YMCA
44	I like the centre overall but I think the general level of cleaning could be improved as well as equipment e.g. steps used in STEP classes.
45	The gym needs to be bigger to accommodate a larger stretching exercise area. Not enough space to do Aqua aerobics adequately.
46	Some of the steps (in steps classes) need replacing. Sound system in group fitness room needs to be improved & reliable.
47	Good community service.
48	Centre badly in need of renovations. Reception area is poorly designed, often crowded and corridors blocked. Group fitness room has many problems, roof leaks, loose wiring, flooring comes unstuck in summer, microphone/sound system often broken.
49	Many new & young staff now. Whilst they are friendly they do not have much knowledge of services or classes relating to different needs. NARC website is always incorrect and/or out of date. Facebook page not utilised well. Pryme (FOF) timetable very limited for group fitness cardio.
50	- Good to see the improvements over last ten months e.g. more friendly/smiley staff on reception at 6am! - Open immediately at 6am - don't leave people outside freezing cold or very wet outside especially in winter - Have a trained person roaming in gym area to correct very poor technique such as with weights, sometimes see people who are properly doing themselves more harm than good. - Also, when a member is seen to be in distress or has hurt themselves have a trainer or staff member immediately go to their aid to offer support and assistance. About a month ago I was on the treadmill and observed a woman inadvertently walking into a bar with weights on each end at eye level. She clearly hurt herself and was immediately rubbing her head and appeared to have hurt her eye. Despite a NARC trainer being quite close by there was no urgency displayed or immediate care taken to help her - I thought this was very poor, created a health and safety issue and reflected very poorly on NARC.
51	- Cleaner pools - More shade outside - Family shower facility
52	Whilst membership for older adults is cheaper it is also very limiting. Timetable offers plenty of Aqua + wellness classes but very little variety of cardio. Not all older adults are inactive and would



Responses	
	be more than capable of cardio why not allow Pryme members access to all daytime classes? Would love to see more Zumba. Perfect for every age and fitness level. Instructors are excellent in all classes.
53	<p>1. I resent the constant emphasis on adding ever more members (by extreme advertising and promotion gimmicks like free access for a friend) which is to the detriment of existing members i.e. facility is ever more crowded and parts e.g. the pool is actually shut off from other users by hirers. The YMCA is visibly prompting increased cash flow above good service and a good experience for current users. Many users esp. groups come from outside Darebin yet Council bears the capital and maintenance costs - so the rates go up. I believe any operating surplus should not go to the YMCA but to Council to improve the facility.</p> <p>2. Noise! Please stop the compulsory broadcasting of TV (including advertisements) or video clips etc in gym. These are an invasion of the airspace. People are free to bring their own music. It is even difficult to drown out the penetrating assault with one's own music. Culturally, many video clips are very offensive e.g. top twenty U.S. pop clips, with gyrating, thrusting highly sexualised routines, often suggestive of violence or rape. Why in any event should we be saturated with the low-quality rubbish of another culture? The YMCA should not dare to talk about the meditative qualities of exercise when it subjects us to disturbing ugliness, aggression and noise as a compulsory "entertainment" background. (Turning down the noise is not enough and is not an acceptable solution)</p> <p>Buses still regularly idle outside the entrance, spewing out poisonous fumes. A notice forbidding idling is needed, plus stronger sanctions where necessary.</p>
54	<p>The pool needs a full reno, at the very least replace all rust and repaint.</p> <p>The pool is way too overcrowded and swimming lessons take up all the lanes so parents can't swim. Maybe they need to build a new pool in Preston.</p>
55	Programming of step classes during week in afternoon (after work). Both classes are on at 5.30 (too early unless you work very close to gym). Thursday class used to be at 6.30 but no longer. Is it possible to have 1 of the step classes on at 6.30pm or offer a step class 6.30pm on a Thursday?
56	It is my favourite community facility in my neighbourhood. The staff are great, the facilities good (especially the gym) but the indoor pool could be approved upon and more shaded swimming provided for outside.
57	Cycle room - too small and hot
58	I would like more variety in the classes especially during the day. You should consider shift workers/parents who can only work out in the middle of the day. Very disappointed no boxing classes are offered any longer during the day.
59	Really badly needs an upgrade. Hygiene is poor, mould in bathrooms, seats broken on toilets, grungy and old. Also, when we had a pram we found accessibility poor re doors, family change rooms etc.
60	Basically, it's good.
61	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Great centre</li> <li>- Gym needs to be expanded due to no. of members - too crowded</li> <li>- Lovely staff members</li> </ul>
62	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- There needs to be more than one family change room near the pools, with a toilet. The current one is always occupied, which is understandable when factoring changing/dressing young children.</li> <li>- Change room/showers look + feel very unhygienic.</li> <li>- Broken tiles around the indoor pool. My kids have cut themselves more than once. Very bad!!</li> <li>- If it wasn't for the access to the outdoor pool in the summer, I would have got a membership at a different centre.</li> </ul>
63	I come from Glenroy to go to water aerobics at Northcote. The instructor Rosa is great.
64	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Water quality in indoor pool has deteriorated in past few weeks i.e. Band-Aids, hairballs</li> <li>- It would be wonderful to have a separate pool for hydrotherapy, as the indoor H2O temp is a little cool for rehab.</li> </ul>
65	<p>Outdoor pool has been very cold in past 12 months.</p> <p>Generally good facilities but outdoor pool is cold in winter - not encouraged to use it.</p> <p>Concerned that expansion to gym etc will cause crowding.</p>



Responses	
66	Rules are important: notice in spa. pleas shower every time you enter! Often ignored, in particular members who go to spa from pool. It is either required or not please clarify!
67	- We come here because of the wider lap lanes. My only concern about the pools is the lack of availability of lap lanes for the public in the indoor pool during the day (schools often monopolies 930am to 3pm and lessons 4 to 7.30pm and on Saturdays and Sundays - lessons and swim squads. - Any upgrade to change rooms - please consider timed showers like Brunswick. It makes people aware of how long they are taking.
68	The facility is great. I just wish the creche hours were longer.
69	The slimy floors - hot benches. Mould in pools shower, paint peeling off ceilings. Poor health standard discrepancies. Dust in Centre ventilation When unavailable area closed - drop fees immediately e.g. recent 50m pool closure. Men talking loudly - shouting in spa + indoor pool.
70	A general overhaul of group fitness room. Mats + floor need cleaning. Greater range of Pryme classes. Or extend membership to cover more existing classes.
71	There are no classes I can attend on Tuesdays apart from Body Vive which isn't a favourite of mine because I have arthritis. It is hard on the knees as a lot of squatting, though a great class and I sometimes attend. It would be good to have an aqua aerobics OR Pilates OR body balance class on Tuesdays as well. Teachers are brilliant but Sat 2pm afternoon Pilates teacher is poor in my opinion, too slow and does same things over and over. It would be good to have a quality teacher at this prime time. ?Danielle or new instructor ?Michelle?  Many brilliant instructors already in Centre including Florence, Rosa, Nicki (pool), Danielle, Jacqui, Patrick, Teen + the woman who takes ZUMBA is brilliant - sorry I don't know her name!
72	Great facility just a bit tired in the gym. Fantastic team Well done.
73	I appreciate the friendly staff and the opportunity to meet people. I've lived in the area 3.5 years and Pryme fitness over 50 has been great. The Caltex healthy food is good, although the noise level is high when there are many people in cafe. More space would be good.
74	Seniors aqua programmes not at suitable hours for older people. Getting here for 7.30/8.30 to hard especially in winter. Senior's sacrificed for more financial kids programmes.
75	Pool is old, cold, dark doesn't match the quality swim program. We have stayed at NARC due to Lisa being an exceptional swim coach for son.
76	Really enjoy the new menu in the cafe. Well done! Would like to new change rooms. Frances is a legend!
77	- Some answers depend on the time of the year using the o/s pool - After a 7 week closure - no clock working o/s - change room could had been cleaner - outside pool could had been clean - Where is the suggestion box located now? - Community use is not considered when the pool is booked for school carnival + school groups - Front line staff could be better informed of what goes on with the centre rather than just give blank answers. - Management could be more friendly and ready accessible rather in the back room - The best thing for the future would be to build a separate training facility. - Why is the swimming squad so special
78	We need an entirely new pool (outdoors) for Preston area!! This one is great but too crowded plus more + more people living here.
79	1. Pity you didn't ask what I do like about NARC! 2. Pity 70 pus does not specify more clearly - I bit 70+ is a large category!
80	- cheaper prices - more variety in classes



Responses	
81	Overall, pretty good. Good friendly staff.
82	A couple more yoga classes on weekday mornings would be amazing.
83	It's very pleasant to come at this recreation centre. I only wish I could join more aquatic lessons but the timetable is very (almost) present for early birds!
84	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Lockers (bottom shelf) to close to ground</li> <li>- Heaters are needed in corridor from pools to change rooms</li> <li>- Bathrooms need a good clean - regularly</li> </ul>
85	<p>Question 10 - so, if you only care about if we consider NARC "poor" or "very poor" do you want to know why. Surely "adequate" is not the benchmark you want to aspire to, that this is good enough?? Poor methodology Darebin Council, if you really want to get a sense of how to improve/what members want.</p> <p>Question 13 - If wanting to compare with fitness centres/gyms that are not Council managed pools/gyms to understand why we are not using NARC for certain activities. E.g. the popularity of F45 and similar small training centres (I also use), because these are not on the NARC timetable often enough.</p> <p>Please take lessons from when Moreland Council renovated Brunswick Baths, (where I was a member) back in 2013.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Change rooms were made significantly smaller, which have caused huge issues when there are 5+ prams inside them.</li> <li>- Gym floor time + compressed because ceiling height along with fans was planned + constructed too low (was supposed to be group fitness room but later considered too dangerous for aerobics + ceiling fans)</li> </ul> <p>But positives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- great dedicated outdoor + functional training area</li> <li>- An investment in new equipment for Adrenaline HIIT/functional training + increased classes, to compete with F45 &amp; crossfire</li> <li>- Terrific indoor and outdoor kids water play areas</li> </ul> <p>Thank you!</p> <p>I love NARC - I want to see it because a great centre!</p>
86	Toilets change rooms are filthy. More information from front staff.
87	Update microphones for aerobic classes Monthly new programs for aerobics.
88	It's only the fellow clients & excellent Pilates teachers (Danielle) which keeps me coming.
89	NARC is a great community facility. I like to use the outdoor pool, which is generally very good. Although the water quality is always good, sometimes there is quite a lot of plant matter/dirt/gunk on the bottom of the pool, which can get stirred up at busy times.
90	Staff are marvellous & always ready to help. However, change rooms & indoor pool really outdated & don't entice people to participate. Gym facilities require more room, an accident is certainly a risk in overcrowded areas.
91	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Family change rooms big must could be easily achieved with portables</li> <li>- Screen near poolside showers to stop water spraying on people sitting there</li> <li>- Small swimming class sizes (7) is too big for half a lane</li> <li>- Ensure swim teachers lane changes are minimised this cuts into the lesson time</li> </ul>
92	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Website not regularly updated, tricky to negotiate.</li> <li>- Regular members wanting to use the outdoor 50m pool are not being considered when swimming carnival timetables are planned. Carnivals should not start before 9.00am to give members time for their morning swim.</li> </ul>
93	Great community feel
94	Great facility. I have benefited from the 50 plus service (Prime). Good to have programme personalised by instructors & to be able to catch up for assessment every 6 weeks or so. I feel my overall fitness has improved & I enjoy working out at the gym.
95	Seems to be a cost-cutting mentality over customer service, e.g. attempts to increase group fitness classes to overcrowding levels; cancellation of classes, e.g. Melbourne Cup weekend; proposed cuts



Responses	
	over Christmas period. If teacher is available classes should not be cancelled. Continuity of classes is important. Members have already paid for classes, so if there are a few less people on one day, that should be accepted.
96	Get a cover for outdoor pool like MSAC would be great. Outdoor pool water is not clear during hot weather days.
97	Creche is fantastic!
98	You could make better use of web page & social media to update patrons. Lap lane info often incorrect. Could use it to advise when sauna/spa breaks etc. This may lead to less customers arriving to find facilities they want to use are not available.
99	Earlier opening hours Sat + Sunday would be great.
100	Please open earlier Sat mornings :)
101	Change room need a makeover. System for handling arrivals needs improvement. Maybe extend the ticketing facility to all activities to allow members to by-pass queues. Gym often far too cold when fans near bike area are on - doubt that they are even needed?
102	I think it is definitely time to re-vamp NARC building. Roof leaks every time it rains. Be nice to see the exorbitant rates pay being spent on something I can benefit from along with the whole community.
103	- Need more seated showering options for males as are often not available (too many people use the facilities) - Lockers in area opposite the sauna are falling apart (rusty locks, rusty hinges) - Ask all reception staff to SMILE - this is free and helps keep everyone calm when there is a wait.
104	1. Need more "accessible" features e.g. I need to sit down to shower (due to dizziness + balance) but there are only 2 showers available (& are often being used so I need to wait (and get cold)) 2. Fittings in toilets - cheap and unreliable - e.g. locks on doors 3. Lockers in wet area near pool have rusty hinges + locks - need replacing!
105	Greatly appreciate healthy food/drink focus of cafe. Well done. We use it every week and enjoy with kids.
106	I would value continuity of access over upgrading of facilities.
107	I would be most disconcerted if facilities were to be unavailable. I do not drive and would not easily be able to access facilities at another such gym.
108	Fantastic "Pryme" programme Pilates session on Saturday too slow moving - hardly worth coming (unless do a gym session as well)
109	Fewer swim lessons and school programs in the outdoor pool!! The council website says that the plan is to redevelop the Centre into a \$50 million state-of-the-art aquatic centre. It will be so different from the community gym and pool facility which it is now that most of the questions in this survey will have little relevance to the planning of it. The centre will cease to be a 'community centre' and become a revenue earning facility drawing patronage from surrounding suburbs. No doubt giving kudos to Northcote but not advantaging the local community.
110	- Please o garbage collection/clean up in the carpark area - Service at counter and at cafe can sometimes be lack. - Don't like the TV in the cafe. Gentle music would be nice, no TV. - Outdoor pool is lovely - Small but fast waterslide would be fantastic - there is a great small one at Radisson Blu in Nadi Fiji as an example.
111	The massage room could be improved.
112	The outdoor pool is great! The female change rooms are NOT hygienic - always very dirty. The spin room is NOT adequate - too hot, no air, not enough room.
113	The change room/shower facilities are extremely poor and very overdue for upgrade. Makes it extremely unpleasant (impossible) to get ready for work here. Also need to fix the entry/exit for cars to make it safer - too many directions at once.
114	Tennis is badly neglected. Dave has done a great job improving it. He at least has a porta loo there now.





Responses	
	Build a proper clubroom. Retain outdoor square pool - WE LOVE IT.
115	Air conditioning & air quality needs major overhaul.
116	Charges for over 50's group activities are very reasonable. I think there needs to be concession rates for all services and programs for those with health care cards. Thank you for seeking input.
117	1. The change rooms have rust and mould and need major overhaul 2. One counter staff person (female) needs to be removed - she never smiles; is not helpful - job is too much for her 3. Overall, the centre is too small for number of clients in particular the entry/foyer and change rooms 4. The management do not respond to feedback. In conjunction with continued presence of point 2 above. Management's lack of action suggests they need total overhaul too. To illustrate, go to Carlton Baths YMCA and you can see the difference between a well-run centre and a poorly run one!
118	REPLACE THE MANAGEMENT!  IF YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT'S WRONG, GO AND SEE CARLTON BATHS + COMPARE.
119	My main frustration is the frequent closing of lap lanes both indoors (swim schools) & outdoors (endless carnivals). This goes with the changerooms choked by kids. Longstanding loyal adult customers get short shrift.
120	As I mainly use the gym, the relatively recent refurb improved this area considerably. The 50's program is excellent and Frances a star. Following recent surgery, it was helpful to have her design a new programme to get me started again. Though I don't use them, indoor and outdoor pools look very tired. Reception too small and slightly haphazard - queue system doesn't work. We should be able to scan into the gym rather than do it manually.
121	1. I have loved the revamped cafe! I now often buy something healthy after the gym. Good food! 2. Front desk and gym staff are all (almost always) very helpful, friendly people. 3. It's often VERY busy these days as the area has increased in population. 4. Love the lawns and outdoor pools - great for families.
122	NEEDS A PROPER KIOSK/CAFE SERVING NORMAL, DECENT, EVERYDAY FOOD, JUNK FOOD INCLUDED!!! WE NOW ONLY USE 7/11 ON CORNER SO WE KNOW WE ARE GETTING FRESH FOOD AND CAN BUY ICE BLOCKS AND COOL DRINKS.
123	I would love to swim in a pool where the water ratio included salt water as well I personally find the chlorine too harsh
124	The learn to swim program is exemplary at NARC and has taught my daughters to swim through perseverance, individual focus and consistency, across all teachers we have experienced. Thanks!
125	-Indoor pool can be cold for young children/babies -would be good to have a shallow pool for new walkers to walk in inside. Current pool gets deep quite quickly - recreation pool with jets/rain shower/bubbles Could be good if insufficient room for larger area (i.e. like water Marc)
126	Spin room can be very hot
127	Bring back the diving boards or install a water slide please.
128	The staff attitude and efficiency need to be improved. EVERY parent I know has problems with the administration around both the pool and the swimming programme.
129	- More fun things for the kids i.e. slides
130	The space where the old diving pool was could be put to greater use. The outdoor area could also be upgraded to provide activities other than just swimming. The group fitness room also needs to be upgraded
131	My main issue with the gym has been the cleanliness of the change rooms. I've been coming for many years and always avoid changing because the area is so run down. I have also noticed the grass outside dying though I haven't used the outdoor pool for a while. I'd like to see more grass areas not fake grass as this gets so hot underfoot. Green areas really help in the heat.



Responses	
132	While I totally support this facility being upgraded please don't use any of the green space around the pool complex (e.g. the oval etc.) Also, it would be great if members could access the pool from the oval side with a swipe card e.g. at a turnstile. And an outdoor cafe would be lovely too.
133	Overall good facility, perhaps get maintenance issues resolved a lot quicker and perhaps opening half an hour earlier on weekdays
134	Poor management during upgrade to external pool and reduced aqua aerobics sent me to Ivanhoe pool to see how good management can create a vibrant community
135	it would be good to see a Zumba class option to the group fitness
136	The pool and spa are always very dirty. Regular cleaning needs to be improved
137	I would like to see the redevelopment of NARC to include a 50m indoor pool with a movable boom. That way there can be swimming lessons on the shallow side and lap swimming on the other. Keeping the 50m outdoor pool and having a 50m indoor pool will make this one of the best facilities in Victoria and plenty of lane space for all users
138	Showers are never cleaned properly, mould on back of doors that can be easily scrapped off with a finger, paper towel and spray bottles in upstairs spin room nearly always empty. Adult squad class on a Monday night is fantastic, I have been attending for nearly 12 years along with about 10 other patrons, (the centre tried to cancel this squad earlier this year, fortunately due to our voices it continued), however provide a second session during the week maybe on a Thursday night at 8pm, we have a great outdoor pool, so let's advertise the adult squad!!!! and get another session running, also provide the 8pm Monday night adult swim squad coach Liam with a whiteboard so he can run and facilitate the session in a manner that allows fast and slow lanes to run together
139	The entry is difficult by car, can a friendlier car park be built. Not happy about lack of security notices etc. Example 'no mobile phones' sign. Wasn't there a little boy doing criminal activity there? Better layout so this doesn't happen. Spa facilities for female only e.g. Hydro pool.
140	Always friendly staff, but the facilities are showing their age. Changerooms and toilets would benefit from an upgrade. Thank you!
141	I have tried to use the centre but was discouraged from joining by very unhelpful desk staff who would not offer a tour, a trial usage period, or any information beyond direct answers to my questions. I left feeling they seem to have a sense of entitlement and are not part of the community. I suspect a cultural change is required as well as physical alteration to the centre.
142	As before: outdoor pool starts out clean but gets pretty dirty by the end of summer; a big automated vacuum that could be left to run overnight across the bottom would make it much nicer. Love the fact that the outdoor pool is heated
143	Great outdoor pool - Shame about indoor facilities Improve ventilation
144	Often, we have 25 participants in an aqua group, but limited lanes, even when there are no other swimmers or very few at the time. Economics bad as the cost of doing an aqua class is 4 times for lap swimmers and they also have the option of the outside pool. Apparently, it is Council who imposes this rigid rule and the operators do not have discretionary power as they do at Kew which operates under a different Council.
145	The other area that needs major improvement is the square outside pool, which has broken & sharp tiles with loose or missing grout on the floor of this medium outside pool for years. Both my kids & I have cut our toes/feet on the broken floor of this pool over the years that we used this pool (i.e. when kids were smaller) & I reported my concerns to front desk & management on every occasion this occurred. I don't think an incident report was ever completed by any manager or staff regarding our injuries & reported concerns, & often my reporting of it was met with comments like "Yeah we know it's bad but there's nothing we can do about it because it's Darebin Councils responsibility to maintain the pools & there's no money to repair it." I truly wonder how you'll ever get an idea about what's broken & what is causing people to injure themselves, if your staff never complete an incident report about what's happening to the customers at their pool!?! Poor form from both NARC staff & Darebin Council I'm afraid!
146	General cleanliness of the change rooms is poor
147	Apart from a complete rebuild a greater focus on a range of programs for the over 50 age group.
148	I have attended the pool for many years and simply because it is local and the most convenient. For as long as I can remember, cleanliness of both the pools and surrounding areas have been an issue. I



Responses	
	have repeatedly provided feedback and only once received a response which was evasive and simply pathetic. How hard it is to introduce rigorous regular cleaning routines. It does not matter what time of day ones attends the pool the cleanliness of pools (water and actual dirt on pool floor), surrounding areas (walking passages) and in particular the change rooms are a disgrace. Other pools also run by YMCA manage to have spotless or much higher cleanliness standards with high frequency as well.
149	Overall it is a great complex but it would be terrific for it to be modernised throughout, especially to improve comfort of the indoor pool area.
150	Hope in future Joe Fogg will be recognised for his contribution to life saving, swim classes and popularisation of previous baths.
151	Should clean the outdoor pool more often. Indoor pool is disgusting and my child is regularly sick after doing swim lessons
152	Please plan and build at a larger scale but of the same quality to Collingwood Leisure Centre Please plan and budget for fixtures and fittings in wet areas specifically designed for industrial scale use. It's always disappointing to see in showerheads/hand dryers broken within a few months of use as they are not built for purpose. Please ensure fixtures/fittings and finishes are designed for industrial scale/high use - can we please learn from other redevelopment failures/errors. Please we need a modern, beautiful and built for purpose facility for Darebin. Young families, in particular, rely heavily in water-based activities in summer living North of the city.
153	I think the facilities at Northcote are great, however we feel frustrated by the lack of lane availability when swimming lessons are on. We know swimming lessons are really important but perhaps there could be one weekday afternoon off a week? Last summer, we would visit the outside pool as the inside pool was used for lessons however even outside, on very busy days, multiple lanes were closed for 'private bookings' and there were only a handful of people in the lanes. In summer, people also play music from portable radios and unless the music or content is deemed to be offensive, there are no rules about volume. We don't think music should be allowed at the pool. We look forward to the outside pools opening again, as we have an infant who will love spending some time in the water. More shaded areas are always appreciated. Overall, we feel grateful that the pool is clean, accessible and a friendly place to visit but we don't go as often as we would like, due to lack of lane availability when we would like to visit.
154	Needs to be clean, modern and a safe environment. The staff need to be valued more. It needs to be a fun and motivating place to come.
155	The lack of family changerooms concerns me with my son about to turn 6. I'm not ready to let him go to change rooms on his own but having only 1 family accessible toilet is really restrictive.
156	Toilets need to be closer to the pools, and need to be able take children or either gender into them
157	Toilets and change rooms are disgusting
158	Please, please, please improve access to the centre for people who choose to walk or cycle there from the south. It is currently dangerous. A footpath could be built on the grassy strip on the south border of the car park and a nice big zebra crossing could connect it to the existing one in the middle of the car park, keeping pedestrians and bikes well away from the car park entrances.
159	I love coming to the facility. Would be great if tennis could be more integrated/have toilets. How about a cafe you can access from inside but also outside. A indoor space for sports like Carlton Baths would be great. Smaller rooms for smaller group yoga/meditation Rooms for physios/doctors etc
160	I like to swim laps over the warmer months and think it could be a good idea to have a pool specifically for recreational swimming/activities separate to the lane pool to accommodate both types of swimmers.
161	Please make it affordable to people on Centrelink pensions
162	It feels a bit tired and depressing.
163	The centre desperately needs upgrading. The cleanliness of the facility is questionable (pool, change rooms, group activity rooms). The outdoor pool is unreliable in that water temperature varies and the water quality is often poor. The indoor pool air quality is horrible.



Responses	
164	NARC is extremely rundown and expensive when compared to commercial gyms and other local govt rec centres. There should be no cost of entry for young people, older people and those with a disability. It is always busy and could be easily double the size. It is an essential health and wellness service and should be better connected to health services in that area. I would be happy to discuss with you how that could be achieved if interested.
165	1) Would be good to have gender option of "other" in Question 14 above, which includes both those who may not wish to specify, as well as those who identify as non-binary. 2) Also, it would be good if there was more room in both indoor and outdoor pools for recreational swimming, rather than laps. 3) And, more shade outside - it is such a shame the trees came down. 4) and better air filtration inside, as the high humidity and smell of chlorine is problematic for people with breathing issues.
166	Change rooms need attention
167	When are you asking us about Northcote Centre? This survey hasn't asked anything specific about the Northcote centre except for this question. It is poor survey design. It cannot be used to represent the opinions of people on Northcote aquatic and recreation centre because it didn't ask us about it until question 8 and this is just a little box. This is what I want there - more trees. It needs to be more like Coburg Leisure Centre - green and inviting and open and accessible to all ages, cultures, people and not feel stereotyped like you have to be a fitness guru to use it. Increased hours for classes that mean that people who work can get there but not at an ungodly hour - we don't all need to be there at 6am! Make classes at 7 or 7.30 for those who work local or don't work till later - 6am is not accessible to all. Make night classes fit in with mealtimes - 6pm or 6.30 preferably - not at 7 or 8 - that is not enough time for food to settle and it's too late to eat afterwards. If you are redeveloping Northcote aquatic centre, can you also have more sustainability features? Water tanks, you should be using huge below ground storage tanks so that you can also water the ovals there - or a wetland or something that means the grass is kept green. This will help keep the area cooler. What about a wind turbine there? Is that a possibility - or will solar panels make enough energy? It should be able to create enough energy to power the site there - there is lots of space and opportunity. If we have a climate emergency like Council is saying, how is this new centre going to help fix this? Also, with the drought and climate change - council did a water strategy a few years ago - how is this new centre going to support council's water plans that we commented on and gave input to? All parts of Council need to talk to each other, but the environment is really important to consider.
168	It's a lovely centre with a fantastic outdoor pool; sometimes in the warmer months the outdoor pool is heavily booked/closed due to carnivals; improve the changing areas;
169	I would love a membership scheme that doesn't completely screw me if I'm unable to come in for weeks, but also doesn't require me to pay attention to calling and putting it on hold. I've lost so much money to the NARC due to unused time, and then also spent tons on the joining fee when I've cancelled and then re-joined later. I travel a lot for work and my time at home is unpredictable, so I've lost so much money it's painful to think about.
170	Please have more sitting areas around the pools as it gets very crowded during swimming classes. Better/bigger indoor water play facilities for the kids. More fitness classes at after hour time slots.
171	I really like the staff and swim teachers. I wish the pool was cleaner-as my entire family had cryptosporidium in June 2017. I would like some toilets near the pool for kids to use as the disabled toilet always seems busy and I have 3 kids to then take everyone out of the pool for one to use the toilet. I don't really like the stone barriers as it makes it hard to see kids when playing in the water with them. Jets and clear barriers might be better. I love the zero depth play area at WaterMarc (mini slides and giant bucket dropping water and water jets) if you have the space or budget for something like that. You might even consider having a zero depth play area outside-open in the summer if indoor space is at a premium. My kids love waterfalls and rivers. I don't know if those are features the architect would consider incorporating into the design to bridge kid area with nature a bit more. I like that you have a crèche and look forward to trying it in the future. I think the prices have been reasonable. I like that there is usually parking and also bus access. I understand why you might want to switch to healthier meals at the cafe but would have liked to see hot chips (maybe even sweet potato) stay on the menu. I like outdoor shades for kid areas. I also like a little outdoor picnic area off of the cafe -perhaps near kid area.
172	Narc has great potential to become a meeting hub for young families. During the warm weather, it needs a better cafe that has outside access. A playground picnic area adjacent to kiddie pools. The



Responses	
	indoor learn to swim area needs to be bigger and upgraded. And I would suggest a revamp of general appearances.
173	<p>You run one of the best swimming programs around the area. The class sizes would be better reduced to maximum 4 with one teacher and increase price so more one on one. In the smaller children classes, you need two per group of 6 ridiculous what you put on one teacher. people will pay more you could offer a variety.</p> <p>We ended up moving from here to Ruyton Girls School Swimming because the change facilities were foul but the program here is just as good but requires a more dedicated swim. It's a big commitment to take your children weekly swimming for nearly 9 years and many times because of the class size they remain in the same level for so, so long. I think the option of smaller classes and private lessons would be taken very quickly by parents if it meant a less length of time needing to attend swimming lessons. Increased prices wouldn't offend anyone if it meant that children actually learnt to swim!</p>
174	I have been a member at the YMCA for 20 years and love the classes, the teachers and the variety it offers. It has a great community feel.
175	More bike parking please.
176	Having an outdoor 50-meter pool is great.
177	Cheaper entry used to be \$2.50 now \$6
178	I had to stop my membership because the time the indoor pools are free for laps is too late. I would love start swimming again =0)
179	<p>In addition to having fallen into disrepair I am disappointed with the way the centre has been run. The YMCA should not be offered to manage the future pool complex. I understand that the pool is old but there has been little or no improvements in years, yet many improvements could have been made at low cost. Most recently, major works were scheduled that closed the outdoor pool area for six weeks, during the peak season. The centre is normally filthy and the disused grounds a dumping site. There is clearly a cultural problem at the centre with staff disinterested in their important role. Finally, the cost of learn to swim program is exorbitant with the high fees continuing through school holidays despite no lessons being held.</p> <p>The commitment to a major redevelopment is overdue, but welcome! My hope is that when the centre is reopened that it is accompanied by a new management team who are interested in how the centre can be a centrepiece in our community.</p>
180	Really good to maintain community focus, it's a friendly gym and it's important to stay that way. Integrating other sports facilities like squash or badminton would be great as that's something not easily available in the area that I have to travel for and subsequently don't do as frequently as I'd like.
181	The change rooms are not good enough at present. There needs to be significant renovations to make them clean and hygienic. More family change rooms are also important. The outdoor pool is the best feature but swimming on hot days it's very exposed. Some shade over the outdoor pool would be fantastic. Its stuffy and hot inside so I don't use the inside pool. Perhaps if there was more air flow I would enjoy the indoor pool.
182	Enjoy the off-peak membership to stay fit in retirement.
183	Have been using facility for past 15 years but it is no looking very worn out. Love the heated outdoor pool
184	I like the NARC as it is, and don't see a big need to expand it
185	I travelled further to NARC because the crèche was so fantastic, which meant I got to swim laps. Then we started our child at the swim program which was also good but now I find it all so crazy busy I go less and less and have changed swim lessons to Reservoir Pool.
186	Love the outdoor pool and having a family trip there on a hot day. Sitting on the grass relaxing after a swim. It's an iconic Aussie activity.
187	Would be great to be able to specify what kinds of improvements to services we would like to see - will there be another survey to allow us to do this? This survey didn't really allow me to provide a reason why I might rate the centre as just 'good', and not 'excellent'. Seems crazy that you wouldn't want to understand why. Anyway, enjoy going to NARC and hope that any redevelopment doesn't shut the entire place down for a long period of time.



Responses	
188	Would be great to have an area to stretch in the gym. the only bit is near the window and there are weights all around and you feel like people are going to trip over you when you try to stretch to cool down/warmup. maybe instead of that stupid 'CrossFit' area you could just have an open flat area with mirrors and the mats so people can do their own thing
189	We would really like to be able to use the aquatic Centre for swimming lessons for our 18mth old but find that the pool is too cold and he therefore can't stay in it too long.
190	Great community asset but plenty of room for improvement. Please do not privatise/corporatize as part of improvement!!
191	Changing rooms and showers need a major upgrade. More family facilities. Thanks.
192	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-gym staff are fantastic</li> <li>-Management were good a few years ago and now we are back to the bad old days</li> <li>-Patrons allowed to smoke outside entrance</li> <li>-Loutish behaviour now tolerated again</li> <li>-Billing of tennis lessons is still crazy (hint: issue invoices)</li> <li>-Many running machines in gym don't have functional internet</li> <li>-Foxtel screen in gym has wrong aspect ratio - so you can't read what is written on the screen when songs are played. (it's caused by you still using a 4:3 demuxer I believe).</li> <li>-David &amp; Luke are fantastic with the kids' tennis lessons.</li> <li>-Pam the yoga instructor is absolutely wonderful and a true asset to the centre.</li> <li>-Overall, I'm really happy but the management still have a way to go I'm afraid. For instance, the Accounts Department overcharged me, then missed a direct debit completely, then sent a text saying I hadn't paid what was owed - three months later. When I queried this the poor counter staff had to keep going back and forth to the accounts person. It was such a waste of time. They should have either 1. raised an invoice or 2. spoken to me directly - going through the counter staff was nonsensical.</li> <li>- The website is a joke. I cannot count the many times I have turned up for a group fitness class only to find it has been cancelled - and the website hasn't been updated - again.</li> <li>- Overall, I am happy with the NARC. The positives far outnumber the few negatives. Well done!</li> </ul> <p>Jason - Member 16350</p>
193	More space for prams needed
194	Equipment in the group fitness room is old and crappy. Steps are all busted and unsafe. Stereo and mic system is total crap and needs to be fixed. Air con is also busted in there! Please fix!
195	Change room facilities are appalling. Refuse to use them and I cringe when my daughter needs to use the toilet. The outdoor medium pool is so disgustingly dirty with all the grime that it collects at the bottom of the pool.
196	The spa/sauna area really needs an upgrade. Would like separate male/female facilities here too as it's male dominated currently.
197	You have one of the best aqua aerobics teachers around in Rosa. More high energy classes such as this would be great with a dedicated pool to prevent crowding.
198	Please get rid of the shower cubicles, which would make more room for more showers in a common space.
199	Great centre; very pleased with the new tennis court surfaces
200	I have been a member at this facility for the past 20 years and have enjoyed the community connections which it provides. The centre definitely needs updating particularly with cleaner bathroom and change facilities and more family change rooms. I would like to see nutrition education programs incorporated with exercise programs to cater for our increasingly obese population and some inclusive programs which will encourage overweight patrons to attend. Overall a great centre but time for an update.
201	Would be good if the upcoming change in the swimming lesson program to have lessons occur during school holidays could be reversed and optional holiday programs offered instead. Whoever made that decision to change clearly does not understand how tired kids get at the end of term and need a break, plus fact that families often go away during school holidays. Unless they offer corresponding opportunity to suspend memberships this definitely looks just like an excuse to hike up the fees. Not happy with the lack of consultation too!
202	Reinstate the other outdoor pools



Responses	
203	Northcote is an affluent area that justifies a stellar aquatic centre, gym facilities and change rooms. It's also an area with many young families and having better kids pools like maybe a wave pool or better interactive elements in the kids' pools would be great. Presently the narc facilities are tired and dingy with tiles missing and seems grungy to the point many don't want to use it as it gives the impression of being unhygienic. And it would also be good to crack down on people smoking around the outdoor pool.
204	Great staff great place could be better with a few improvements
205	Looks a bit dated. Needs to a re-fresh.
206	Thanks, we think the swimming coaches for children are great. We would like to see an improved indoor pool, including salt water pool if possible. We would also like to see cleaner pools and improved outdoor pool. More shade and trees would be nice. We like the emphasis on healthy food in the cafe, but would like to see improved cafe grounds, i.e. pleasant place to sit outside and inside.
207	Unfortunately, the showers are old and not very clean which makes me leave the pool without taking a shower. The pools, especially the outdoor pool that both my daughter and I use are usually not very clean either.
208	Survey is written as if use is only by the respondent, but I primarily take my children to the centre for lessons, so would have recommended demographic questions around that. Also, I'm a market researcher, so not sure whether my responses should be excluded?
209	Worst move when they changed over the cafe as it's terrible now
210	Needs a huge facelift. The indoor pool area is pretty gross.
211	integration of waterslide?
212	I think it needs to be cleaner, maybe have an upgraded water playground. Also, I kind of feel like you want some more space outside to sit around, better grass. Make the outdoor pool warmer!
213	The outdoor pool is always too cold. We had to put up with a broken boiler for almost a year, then the pool was closed for maintenance. The indoor pool is too small to accommodate all of the swimming programs. And the government wants all kids to know how to swim, insisting that schools provide swimming lessons. It's not a well laid out, clean centre. It needs a major overhaul.
214	It's very tired but it's our local. We take kids to other pools for recreational swimming and play due to better facilities and equipment like slides.
215	I believe a new facility as opposed to ongoing fixes (that have been going on over the years) is required. Change facilities require being looked at on a family basis (one has never been enough). The Tennis program has also grown and money should be spent on facilities for it.
216	Start from scratch, just make sure we keep the 50m pool
217	I feel that the outside pool area could be improved with more shaded and picnic areas and water activities for kids. See what Dickson Pool in the ACT has implemented for excellent community swimming pool facilities.
218	Change rooms toilets need massive upgrade
219	More family change rooms please!
220	Gym is often way too crowded, making doing a gym program very difficult. Also, a lack of staff in the gym to help with form and technique. Group fitness classes don't cater very well to people working office hours, shorter early morning classes and more evening classes would make them easier to get to. Also, the booking system for using group fitness classes is really outdated and inconvenient, should move to an electronic based system such as mind body soul so people can book classes in advance
221	Needs more frequent and thorough cleaning especially of change rooms and toilets and also gym equipment especially in winter
222	Too expensive for what it is Some of the staff are not friendly and up themselves
223	Excellent staff.
224	Children size toilets and larger shower cubicles for parent and child
225	Visit Aquanation and use that as the goal



Responses	
226	I find the facility extremely dirty. It needs a very good clean. Also new steps are required. The current ones have rips in them and extremely dangerous for participants.
227	Life guards need to ask people and children to get out of the swimming lanes especially the slow lanes. I don't mind slow people, I do mind people just relaxing in the swimming lanes or children trying to swim with parents pushing them to. Behaviour of young males during the summer period needs more attention. They actually spoil our relaxing time especially as families come to enjoy and relax. This behaviour doesn't happen at Brunswick pool. Toilets definitely need to be cleaner. Toilet paper needs to be replaced more regularly. The pool floors need to be cleaner too. Water tends to be cloudy. It would be great if the doors opened automatically. Try and check pools from overseas. If the pool was a restaurant they would be closed down.
228	Would it be possible for members to just scan a card on entry? It is really frustrating to have to wait in a long queue just to check in (especially since we've already paid). Otherwise great - I love NARC.
229	I really like the group fitness classes but find the music too loud, it's quite uncomfortable sometimes.
230	The spa is very unappealing. After months of it being out of action it re opened in the same state it closed in. It desperately needs to be re surfaced & needs to be hotter. Sometimes it seems that the money spent is on window dressing type items e.g. the perfectly good clock in the spa was replaced with a digital one which I know are rather expensive.
231	I believe you need to create a community environment. Due to the position of the facility, participants don't usually walk to cafes after attending NARC, so you should provide a cafe equal to one in High St or Station St which would bring people in, and the would see what is going on in the centre. The facility is too sterile.
232	The change rooms/bathrooms really need an upgrade and they need to be maintained properly. They are regularly dirty (toilets with dirty toilet paper on ground and waste on the seats). For the amount I pay every fortnight it is not really acceptable. Also, there needs to be electronic check-in in the reception area. This would help to manage large queues during busy periods. Also, staff need to be trained on how to process PT session payments -- every week when I attend and wish to purchase a PT session, it takes at least 5 minutes for the staff member to try and work out the computer system. Perhaps simplify your system so that this can be more seamless.
233	staff are great, but the facility is dated, it needs upgrading and better equipment. Kew's recreation facility is a great example of what I would like NARC to be like
234	love the big outdoor lap lanes and outdoor pool. don't like the indoor pool, too tiny, too crowded to swim in, too stuffy too noisy and too hot.
235	Can we please sort out the air con in the fitness class room?
236	The chance to revive this facility is exciting. Please account for massive population growth to our area. We should aim for a Melbourne aquatic centre type facility!
237	I think the staff and services at the centre are great but the centre itself is very tired and run down, I avoid using the spa/sauna and ladies change rooms as they are quite grubby looking. The gym is well equipped and there is always a friendly face at reception. My daughter attends swimming lessons and her teacher has changed at least four times this year which leads to really inconsistent lessons. Thanks, and I enjoy being a member however there is work to be done.
238	The centre should open at 530am, weekdays, as many people are queuing at 6am, I believe people would appreciate the earlier opening time to do a longer workout in the morning. The gym could consider a larger space to do the Adrenaline style classes. The outdoor pool needs to be cleaned more regularly in summer. And the yoga classes require a new teacher or at least hire a new teacher to offer more advanced classes. The classes should be of similar quality to what you would find in a yoga studio. A dedicated yoga and Pilates room would be awesome!
239	On the whole I like the architecture of the building. Some friends use Collingwood pool, because they say the indoor pool at Northcote is too shallow for lap swimming. I enjoy meeting and walking with the heart foundation walking group at the gym. We can always have a coffee there afterwards. I'm so pleased that we no longer have to swim with the smell of chip fat from the coffee shop.
240	Swimming space inside pool after school for children not in aquatic program
241	Great staff and swimming programs but very rundown facility.
242	The outdoor pool, changing rooms and general amenity including the grounds, are filthy and full of rubbish. You should employ people to get leaves and debris out of the pool, and scrub down the





Responses	
	edges. The place is so badly run, end the contract with the YMCA and put it back directly into the council mgt. Ivanhoe aquatic is a great e.g. of a well-run, correctly maintained facility
243	My main concern is the lack of free swimming space in the indoor pool. Swimming lessons should not preclude the community accessing the pool for free play and learning. This is particularly important for people with disabilities that can benefit hugely from accessing the pool for sensory and other purposes. A sensory hour at the centre each week may also help support autistic kids and adults to attend. Currently my son does swimming lessons at the Kew pool as the environment isn't as overwhelming for him and our teacher is amazing at supporting his needs. We did try lessons for him at Northcote when he was younger but the teacher didn't have an adequate understanding of autism and the environment was overwhelming.
244	The gym and sport staff are excellent. Plus, there are lots of programs but the change rooms, cafe and poolside area let the centre down.
245	The conduct and behaviour of men lingering in the vicinity of the spa and sauna areas needs to be strictly monitored. The swimming program needs to be thoroughly reviewed. The staff are disconnected and, in my experience, dismissive when attempting to sign up a child into the learn to swim program. I left the centre and have gone to a vastly superior program in a competing local facility.
246	Please don't put the outdoor pool undercover!!!
247	I really hope you don't cause a lot of inconvenience during the upgrade and the centre is fine as is
248	I changed gyms some time ago due to the gym not opening early enough and being so busy in the early morning. I take my daughter for swimming club and would love to see improved facilities so that swimming competitions can be more readily run from the pool. It is difficult to get to MSAC so she misses many competitions.
249	We no longer attend at NARC because of the poor hygiene and crowded pools. Neither outdoor nor indoor pools are clean and the change rooms are also old and in poor condition. Overall the experience of taking children to the pool has been so uncomfortable that we have begun swim lessons elsewhere - the pool and surrounds really are just too dirty. It's a real shame.
250	Please open earlier. I would love to go for early morning gym sessions but don't have time as I start work at 7.
251	The administration is shocking. The service is awful.
252	Parking restrictions need to be ENFORCED in summer months to allow all users fair access. On hot days cars are parked illegally and overstay the 2-hour limit which prevents other short duration users from accessing centre
253	It really needs an upgrade. Toilets, family facilities for changing/showering, better seating, cleaner, also better disabled bathroom is required.
254	Cafe is very average and could do with a better selection of food so that we did not always need to bring our own.
255	A dedicated hydrotherapy pool for NARC please
256	The place needs improvements
257	Quality occasional childcare is the reason I attend this facility otherwise the I could workout elsewhere
258	I used to have a membership and swim at Northcote at least three times a week before work, but after having a break when I had a child a few years ago now, I've found it really difficult to get motivated to get back into it regularly at Northcote. Facilities have deteriorated a lot over the last few years and access to the indoor pool facilities for lap swimming is limited due to lessons, classes and squad swimming. Squad swimmers seem to regularly take up several lanes and don't stick in them. I was sick of getting kicked when swimming in the lane next to them.  It doesn't seem to matter what time of day I come during the week, there is always something on and very limited public lap swimming access. The change rooms are disgusting - need a serious upgrade and need to be cleaned properly. Mould and hair in showers at 7am in the morning is thoroughly foul and clearly a sign of not being cleaned, rather than a sign of use.
259	I am a full member but mainly use prime programs due to limitations I only use prime programs which are always cut back or completely cut during public holiday and for weeks during Christmas



Responses	
	and January, often at the same time they cut these classes they will add extra classes for the young and very fit e.g. pump classes, step body attack. I pay the same as these members but can't use the gym that I pay for because prime programs are discriminated against. This should be looked into, I'm not talking about an occasional day but over summer weeks without my classes.
260	I live closer to Darebin pool but travel to Fitzroy because they have better lap swimming lanes and swim squads. If Northcote had this I would consider becoming a member.
261	I find the water temperature too cold for small children, particularly in winter, I would come more often regardless of whether if there was a warm space for the babies
262	It's a great centre. Well managed with friendly staff. The only facility I don't like is the spa. Bathrooms look a bit grubby but okay.
263	I refused to put my child in at Northcote for swimming lessons for hygiene reasons but also because the pool feels cold. I feel that the pool, change rooms and general pool environment is just not clean enough.
264	Pools are too crowded. Need bigger pools or more pools. More water play area for hot days. I miss the potato cakes in the winter and ice cream in the summer. Group aerobics classes always really full. Could all be twice the size and still busy/full.
265	add more meditation sessions
266	Fewer school carnival disruptions to outdoor pool would be nice, or at least a reduced membership fee over these periods
267	It is quite a grungy facility. It is extremely unpleasant sitting in the indoor pool area supervising one's children swim—humid, noisy, grubby. I am on a Carer Pension and have 4 children. I find the cost prohibitive to bring several kids to cool off on a hot day. Also, whenever I have considered joining to use weights, I have had to decide against it, based on cost.
268	Group fitness schedule has dramatically reduced in the last 2 years - this need to improve or I will be cancelling my membership
269	I have been a Northcote resident since birth and have used these facilities quite often during summer.  They haven't improved the facilities for over 30 years. They need to redevelop and include a waterslide, kids area a new outdoor pool without the swimming lanes, a new restaurant with a variety of food. New seating areas. New toilets, new sauna, new gym. Basically, it's dated and needs a new modernised aquatic centre to enhance this growing suburb Northcote. Just demolish the whole place and start fresh. All these little renovations they do are a waste of money and we deserve a beautiful aquatic centre that we can enjoy with our family and be proud of.
270	NARC is a great asset for residents. I commend the Council for upgrading the centre.
271	The general facilities, staff and programs are reasonably good; however, the whole place needs a renovation. The indoor pool area is very small for the amount of families using it, especially during swimming lesson times. The change rooms and showers need a complete upgrade. Half the time the showers don't work properly and they are very dirty (too old to keep clean properly). There needs to be more family change rooms (as sending a 6-year-old boy to shower and dress himself alone in the male change room is something most people are not willing to do). The improvement in outdoor shaded areas has been great, but as the east side of outdoor pool is west facing the shade sales don't really work after lunch. Having more at either end of the pool is important, as would be a bit of shading over the kids' pool. WaterMarc has some great change rooms.
272	Outdoor spaces for children could be much better, be great to have shaded water play and more creative water areas for little ones, like at Brunswick and Carlton baths and also at the park next to the royal children's hospital.
273	Doesn't need much to improve it. Just some more shade areas outside, e.g. over middle-sized pool, add family change rooms. Change over the "don't climb on this" caterpillar things that look fun to climb on. Certainly, doesn't need to blow \$50,000,000.
274	It would be good if more reception staff were educated in the group fitness programs available and a better understanding of the requirements for different age groups and abilities
275	The improvements I'd like to see are in order of necessity - 1. Better ventilated updated change rooms including separate outdoor toilets and quick-change facilities (current facilities are disgusting, poorly ventilated, rarely clean or stocked properly with paper, and not big enough to cope with the summer carnivals that bring in ridiculous numbers of students - girls who change in the toilets



Responses	
	making members wait!!!). 2. Overhaul of cycle and group fitness rooms for temperature control, decent audio facilities and sound proofing. 3. Separate men's and women's spa sauna areas. 4. Sprinkler system to keep grass through summer. 5. Waterslide
276	Expensive for family swimming. At Carlton Baths, children under 5 are free with paying adult. Current pricing makes it unaffordable as a family with 3 kids (all under 5) to come regularly.
277	Need to insulate the area from change room to pool. Ensure non-slippery surface for water and hydro/outside toilets. Partially heated bathroom in winter with radiant heat so swimmers can keep warm...Water quality is very poor
278	Northcote pool is an icon. Beautiful outdoor pools, the indoor pool just needs a revamp, very, very tired, great gym and programs, live in Ivanhoe but that centre even with the upgrade is oppressing hot and uninviting.
279	Indoor pool needs a major refurbishment. It doesn't feel clean and the facilities are poor. We currently take my 2-year-old to Brunswick pools which has a fantastic toddler pool and it feels clean
280	Absolutely love the outdoor 50m pool. Would be great to see better shade & grass areas around it.
281	I swim weekly on a Saturday morning in the indoor pool. Due to an early start swimming lesson one lane is unusable from 7.45/8.15am. If early swimming lessons are going to be the norm on a Sat morning, then please consider opening the centre at 6.30-7am to allow adult swimmers to have at least an hour access to all lanes in the indoor pool, before your lessons start. Thanks
282	I really dislike the change rooms (smelly, few personal/family changing spaces). the outdoor big pool is always very unclean. the indoor play pool is old rusty (bridge) and boring by comparison to other aquatic centres (Brunswick baths). The exterior of the building is an absolute eyesore and is in no way connected to the parkland or the children's centre behind. More natural, outdoor greenspace and timber, shade, softened interiors would be good.
283	Love the community feel. Would prefer gym treadmills with the option of running videos. thanks.
284	All under 4 lessons are in the morning which restricts options for parents. You should put more programs in the afternoon
285	Re-open side street to access car park so don't have to use Victoria road entrance as it can be dangerous with low visibility.
286	I don't like my young boys to be in the men's alone as we all know things do happen and there are horrible dangerous people around. We need more family friendly rooms... not gender, they are a minority, but there are lots of families. Give them one gender room if must not two or more... especially when there's only two to start with..... the shower areas are always dirty and disgusting.... there's plenty of room to extend. And you need another pool for the swimming lessons. it's just not enough. It's a popular venue.... so, fix it and it might be spectacular. What about a splash zone.... would be awesome....
287	Please ensure the 50m outdoor pool is functioning during the renovation
288	I do not like having to pay for my child and myself (adult) when I take my toddler swimming - I do not get to go for a swim! I bought a 10x pass for my child to get around this, but then it expired (in 12 months) before I had used it and staff refused to extend it.
289	Whatever you do, don't make the outdoor pool smaller
290	NARC is old, it needs to be updated, compared to other centres in the area. I've been attending the centre for 50 years & some things haven't changed
291	The toilets and pool need a severe update. This puts me off attending Northcote and I would rather drive further to Brunswick. Introducing a gymnastic program like north Balwyn would also be great.
292	It is great that it's outdoor pool is open way more often than others in the area. It's important for opening hours to be reliable and consistent (unlike Coburg)
293	I do adult tennis lessons there because the coaching is very good, as are the courts now. In the tennis direct debit, I get free pool use too, but I actually live closer to the Reservoir centre, so would like to be able to use the pool component at that centre, given that both centres are managed by Darebin. Also, I would rather have cardio tennis included in the tennis direct debit arrangements, given that I'm already interested in tennis, instead of free pool use.
294	Overpriced compared to other local pools and change areas are so grubby and run down. My children did lessons here for years but in the end, we could never get a park on time in summer... More parking, better family pricing, more swim lanes for adults from 5pm and improved change areas



Responses	
295	poor kids play areas in pool. no water features, things they want to climb on but are not allowed, temp highly variable
296	Family toilet is terrible. Everything indoors is dirty, dark, and dank. I used the spa/sauna once and never again.
297	it needs to be clean (change room, water air) the Richmond and Carlton bath have a much better standard
298	not impressed with customer service. Indoor pool and spa are so outdated and looks and smells. Indoor pool old and dirty looking. lightening is dull and all very sad looking. Outdoor pool is great, clean, fresh. More shaded areas needed outside. Too expensive fees compared with Collingwood and Richmond.
299	It's a great place, but more shaded areas outside in summer, also over part of the outside pool, would be helpful. Also, more regular cleaning of the outdoor pools.
300	For my partner and I to take our baby swimming for 10 minutes (1 watching, 1 taking baby) it costs too much to be able to afford to do more than once a week on a one income fam. Baby swim classes should be offered out of school terms as parent is at home
301	The centre definitely needs to be redeveloped and meet new standards of aquatic and recreational living, like Kew & Hawthorn YMCA centres.
302	I bring a child (15 years) with a disability and it is difficult to get the disabled or family change rooms as they are often busy. The poolside, quick change facilities are a good initiative to get changed before swimming but not so good for changing after swimming.
303	I used the accessible shower so I could shower and bring my child in in his pram. The tiles were cracked, was dirty and wasn't comfortable having my toddler walk around without any shoes on. The ladies' bathroom facilities also need a revamp, perhaps solid walls in the shower cubicles rather than partitions. Thanks
304	Please increase other fitness class rather than body pump or body vive. More Zumba and dance class.
305	The outdoor pool is a nice pool. The issue with it is that it doesn't have enough flexibility. Many pools now have "booms" that allow for the pool to be broken up into zones. The 10 lanes for instance can be broken at half way to form 20 x 25 metre lanes. This doubles the use. You can also form open swim sections/water polo without taking away lanes from the swim squads. There are many options that need to be thought about to maximise income for the pool and also flexibility for programmes.
306	The customer service is generally good, but the facilities are grotty, tired and inadequate for families. The air quality indoors is also unpleasant. The facility is nowhere near the standard that we would expect for the area.
307	Lower gym memberships would be much appreciated. Love the outdoor pool but it could do with a more regular clean out of hair etc in summer.
308	Generally, it is a nice space but in need of a spruce up in the change rooms. The outdoor pools are sometimes quite dirty in summer.  We have used the swimming lesson program for our kids but haven't been totally happy. A lot of changes of teachers, and after about a year of lessons I had to prompt to get feedback on my son's progress and the plan to advance him. Also find the policy of charging over the holidays very annoying - particularly for an individual lesson, being charged \$52 over school holidays for the privilege of not coming to class? This policy needs to be examined.
309	Good to see schools using inside pool but this coincides with times that suit my friends & I so comment about larger indoor pool related to this, and that online schedule isn't always updated in time to warn us of such clashes.
310	We stopped coming as much when you started charging adults who aren't swimming but have to be there to watch the kids, you don't supply us with anything other than a seat to sit on. The indoor pool it appalling, chipping paint and uneven tiles on soft, waterlogged skin is a painful thing to find with your feet.
311	If the indoor pool roof is redesigned I would not like to see a skylight installed. Skylights make the pool deck very hot in summer and waste energy through heat loss in winter. It doesn't matter about how insulating the glass supposedly is, sunlight on the glass causes heat build-up inside the pool area. Skylights are completely inappropriate for our Melbourne weather extremes.



Responses	
	The only appropriate solution would be north facing roof windows with eaves above them to shield the glass from the higher sun outside the summer months.
312	The centre and its facilities are good, but it is just too costly affair to be involved there.
313	If the change rooms were better then I would probably join again. Prefer dry change rooms for non-swimmers. Also, beginner classes should focus on newcomers, not those more experienced. i.e. yoga
314	I personally would like some sort of rock-climbing facility which can potentially also be used for other training purposes. A covered outdoor area (protected from sun and rain) with training facilities would solve the issue of a packed gym during peak hours plus some people like to train in fresh air.
315	Desperately need more family change rooms. Water/Splash play area would be good.
316	The charge room facilities & general cleanliness of the centre are horrible & an embarrassment. Separated child/lap swimming areas indoors should be addressed. The swim program for children needs a complete overhaul, after 2 years of persevering with swimming lessons at Northcote & changing to Collingwood our kids have learnt more in 6weeks than the last 2 years - a complete waste of time and money. Go & have a look at Box hill pool for an example of how a centre should be run.
317	It's great having a pool so close to home, but the standard of the facilities really need to be improved to keep up with demand. The indoor pool area is stifling, even in winter. In Summer, it is unbearable. General cleanliness could be much improved and a more visible person in charge would be useful.
318	It's a great local resource, reasonably priced and friendly. The shady outdoor area sets it apart for summer family outings.
319	Female change area is tired and could do with updating. the outside pool is often not clean on the bottom. There are not enough spin classes.
320	the Northcote outdoor 50m pool is a unique gem for YMCS/DCC. Let's ensure we keep it and invest in the surroundings. We don't want another indoor pool.
321	The front desk area is often crowded and seems to be poor design, if too many people are waiting the automatic door keeps opening and shutting, this can be distressing for children, I saw a child get separated from their parent and siblings.
322	School bookings makes the pool less useable but I accept the priority of this.
323	some facility components look shabby (e.g. lockers) though I realise you are working on upgrading different fittings/fixtures. More disabled showers would help (I need to sit when I shower and only have access to 2 showers with this option). Please fix the water fountain in the indoor pool area - the stream of water is just a trickle. Ask all the desk attendants to smile more - it's free and creates a friendly welcoming atmosphere (some of them do it now, but not all!). Thanks
324	Keep an outdoor pool. Make facilities like hawthorn
325	The pool is usually in need of repairs, I cut my foot on broken tiles the outdoor pool, and my daughter cut her foot open during school swimming about 4 weeks ago. I rarely use the pool as it is disgusting, appears to be unhygienic, it smells bad and the change rooms are outdated and old. It's not that pleasant to visit.
326	There is very little shade outside, which deters me from bringing the kids to the pool during the summer months. Also, it would be great to see more water-based facilities for the kids - such as water slides etc which other centres have.
327	I preferentially swim after lunch or late evening i.e. 13:00-15:00 or 19:30-21:00 but your survey did not permit me to fill both options. The access queues to the centre can be quite long with only 2-3 staff servicing them. There is no external indication of where the entry to the site is actually located i.e. absolutely no highly visible entry signage. It would be good if the spa pool was relocated to a more discrete area and not in a position where everyone has to walk past in order to access their lockers and to go to the changing room - it can be quite intimidating (for women) if there is a number of men are in the spa pool. It would be good if the pool was open later on hot nights - being able to swim and relax in a coolish area improves the opportunity to sleep and to have better quality sleep. It would be great if the pool was open until relatively late on New Year's Eve - at the moment it



Responses	
	closes early. Being open late on NYE could be a family friendly evening, no booze, and still allow one to relax and stay cool.
328	<p>I love the Northcote pool, it has a beautiful nostalgia attached to it and the grass is great to relax on in summer months. Last summer I started swimming their regularly, as it's the closest 50m to my house. I have two major gripes - firstly, the water is atrociously dirty. Hair, tissues, Band-Aids, you name it - it's hanging out there. A regular clean would not go astray.</p> <p>The second is the service - the staff are frequently rude and seem reluctant to help you. I went during a busy period last summer, I got into the pool and it was over max capacity. I was swam over, by other frustrated lappers looking for room. If the staff has said - 'hey, we're at max capacity for laps right now, it'll be better in an hour' it would have been super appreciated. Even if I had chosen to still go in, I would have known what to expect. I don't want to feel like I'm in a cattle pen when I'm just trying to do my workout. There are other instances - the only time I've seen a staff member cleaning the pool was when he was doing it right as I was swimming in my lane. I want to make it clear - it's not like he was at the other end, he was scooping right under me as I swam. Surely some of the profits made from cramming swimmers in could pay for this guy to just clean half an hour after the pool has closed? Not right on top of the people swimming.</p> <p>These are just two examples of the staff being unhelpful, but I cannot stress enough how much the vibe is that they don't want to be there and they don't want you to be there. Some customer service skill training and proper management in busy times, would not go astray. If you check out the Facebook reviews for the pool it is clear I am not the only one who has experienced this.</p> <p>I have started travelling further to the Fitzroy pool as it is clean and you at least get a smile when you pay. I just went for my first swim in the 50mt since it re opened and I think this message I sent my partner after sums it right up 'I can report the Northcote pool is just the same, still dirty, still rude but still kinda cute.'</p> <p>Northcote will always hold a really special place in my heart. Whilst I'm excited to see that it's being upgraded and would love to think that some of my tax dollars are going directly to it - at the end of the day it just needs a clean out and some better service - that would instantly make it a pool to reckon with.</p>
329	<p>I am really excited about Northcote pool being redeveloped the key things to improve for me are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- better family change facilities (including more frequent and better cleaning)</li> <li>- More shaded areas and children's water play equipment outside.</li> </ul>
330	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. More general public areas required during swim lesson times!</li> <li>2. Front counter staff are often unfriendly and unhelpful</li> <li>3. Entry area is congested</li> <li>4. Change rooms are often untidy</li> <li>5. Cost for casual child swim is too expensive at \$4.70 when attending with a sibling completing swim lessons for half an hour (particularly when the child has previously attended paid swim lessons for years prior - approx. 8yrs)</li> <li>6. Spa area is unsightly</li> <li>7. Parking is always a problem, cars seem to be parked there all day</li> <li>8. Indoor area's temperature is unbearable on hot days, ventilation of fresh air would be appreciated</li> <li>9. More shade outdoor required</li> </ol>
331	Needs more shade and more family change facilities
332	<p>I love NARC however the shower facilities I really dislike. The cubicles don't have separate drainage which means I stand in someone else's dirty water even if I am wearing things. They also do not seem to be cleaned frequently. I visit in the evening so by this time there is hair everywhere. The spa size is nice and social however the view of the wall is not. Sometimes it makes me feel uncomfortable when it's busy and people are looking around trying not to make eye contact. An outside view would be perfect.</p>
333	<p>People with aquatics memberships who visit for lap swimming are often short changed with poor lane availability at key times (i.e. after work times). Lanes are taken up with private lessons, squad, water polo, or "aqua play" a.k.a. horseplay. I think lessons for small children and less advanced</p>



Responses	
	swimmers, and aqua play should be moved to the indoor pool and smaller outdoor pool, so the 50m pool is available for lap swimming for aquatics members.
334	Both indoor and outdoor pool and change rooms require updating. The change rooms are disgusting and have been for some time- I avoid using them if possible, particularly when I have my children with me. It's such a shame because it could be such a great facility. I am within walking distance but will drive 20+mins to go to pools that have updated facilities.
335	I'd like there to be more classes like Torso Tone. My family would use the pool more if there was more shade and the changing rooms upgraded.
336	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Outdoor pool during winter often far too cold and not at standard temperature.</li> <li>- For most weekdays, no lanes available for use in indoor pool during until 8pm. At least 1-2 lanes should be available from 6pm as 8pm is too late.</li> <li>- Lap lane availability on website does not generally reflect actual lanes available when you arrive at pool. In particular, on hot days when the centre extends out aqua play and the number of lap lanes is reduced this should be updated on the website. Otherwise you turn up expecting 7 lanes for lap swimming when there is only 3 lanes and the lanes have too many people in them.</li> <li>- Bottom of outdoor pool is generally quite dirty and should be cleaned more regularly.</li> </ul>
337	I live on the property adjacent to the centre carpark. For any redevelopment to Centre specially carpark layout, I would like to be involved part of public consultation.
338	Recently on a very busy gym night there were 4 young males, I would say not more than 13 years old, using gym equipment unsupervised. They were enjoying themselves and trying to work out but a bit over exuberant, rushing in their little "pack" from one gym equipment piece to another. It didn't add to a feeling of safety in that setting. The staff on duty seemed more interested in chatting socially to usual members, seemingly unaware of the 4 young lads. I'm all for youth fitness and wellbeing but I thought there was an age limit or at least some supervision required. They definitely were young ones, not 16 years old.
339	More facilities for older people.
340	Can't believe two of the outdoor pools are still closed and it's late-November (and a week of consecutive over 30-degree days)! Desperately needs more family change areas. Not keen on the move to full year swimming lessons for kids. Holidays are for breaking routine (or can go to holiday programme if so inclined) Swim classes/schools/squad often takes over most of the facilities. In a dream world they should have their own pool... Lesson prices seem to increase a bit.
341	Staff is great. A bigger pool indoor would be great
342	PLEASE invest in new facilities! All other Councils have at least one quality leisure centre!
343	Pricing is generally above market; and charging for children is counter-intuitive to local health/participation initiatives, and contrary to nearby centres - e.g. Brunswick Baths. No shade sail over section of kids' outdoor pool. Poor plumbing.
344	Would love to use it more but am put off by claustrophobic indoor area, grotty common spaces and outdoor pools. My son loves it - just all needs freshened up big time. Well done on the healthy options cafe.
345	All four members of my family utilise the facilities at NARC, with two competitive swimmers who training at least 3 sessions per week. We also use the facilities for recreational purposes during summer and this is when they become less adequate for the level of use. Dedicated lap swimming become very difficult with the combined use outdoor pool during warmer months and there is no option for appropriate aqua play space to be made available for general public use.  Facilities including bathrooms and changing facilities are well below standard for such a highly utilised facility, and maintenance of the surrounds, including pool deck surfaces requires additional attention to remove hazards.
346	The outdoor pool is a great asset for the Darebin community. There's not many outdoor pools and the ones we have should be maintained. The NARC outdoor pool gets packed on hot days and it would be great to have extra capacity. It's not as fun with so many people in a small swimming space. If greater capacity is not possible please consider opening another outdoor pool in Reservoir



Responses	
	or support neighbouring councils to keep outdoor pools viable. They are important for the growing population and hotter weather caused by global warming. Indoor pools are no substitute. Also I'm really proud of Darebin's position on gay marriage and other social issues. Thank you
347	I attend this pool every week with friends for fitness/recreational purposes. We especially like the outdoor 50 metre pool - something that is not accessible in many other locations (certainly nothing closer to home that I'm aware of). While the NARC outdoor pool has been out of action, we have attended Fitzroy - a nice pool, but it's not NARC. We're so glad to be swimming at this outdoor 50 metre pool again. Please don't change it. There are so few outdoor 50s available!
348	Toilets need to be updated. Would like to see wet and dry change rooms.
349	Ironedge Matrix missing safety/spotter bars. Bathroom plumbing and tiling needed. More poolside outdoor relaxation shade and indoor spa could use a facelift. Thank you :-)
350	I love swimming outdoors year-round. Please keep the outdoor 50m.
351	Better air conditioner in gym
352	The family change facilities at Northcote are terrible and have been for years. It stops me from taking my family there. Only one family change room is ridiculous. The indoor pool is outdated. The outdoor pool is lovely. Yoga is awesome. Marietta is a great fitness instructor.
353	Cafe/food offerings could be vastly improved
354	I feel the facilities and associated offer is about right, no major changes required IMO
355	The indoor pool is too small with lap lane availability for the general public non-existent until after 8pm Monday to Friday which is too late. The temperature of the water for the outdoor pool is too cold in winter. Sometimes the water temperature readings show 26 degrees which is too cold. You have no choice but to swim as there are no lanes available indoor particularly during the week before 8pm and Saturday/Sunday mornings to late afternoons.
356	As a non-binary identified transgender person, my past experiences of using the NARC changing rooms have been filled with discomfort and anxiety. I was assigned-male-at-birth and present as a woman (rather than non-binary or gender non-conforming) to avoid abuse and harassment. When using the women's change rooms at NARC, I am constantly fearful that someone is going to harass me in the (false) belief that I shouldn't be using the women's. But where else am I supposed to shower and change? Many transgender people I know avoid swimming at pools because of the stigma which persists in the community. NARC can help by implementing transgender inclusive bathroom/changeroom policies, having gender neutral bathrooms, displaying visible anti-transphobia signage and consulting with transgender community organisations (e.g. Transgender Victoria, Ygender, Zoe Belle Gender Centre).
357	The Change Rooms/Showers/Toilets really need to be re-developed as they are actually quite disgusting. It is un-hygienic. Also, greater lap lane availability for the general public having a learn to swim pool to facilitate swimming lessons would be great
358	Would definitely use it more if it wasn't chlorine. Currently go to Boroondara to swim.
359	I love the outdoor 50m pool and use all year. Entry into the pool should be easy, no lining up, no crowding at the doorway. I would prefer not to have to walk through kids, and the extremely heated and chlorinated environment. It would be good if the pool attracted more elite athletes- I would attend the pool more often and join a squad.
360	Mostly good facilities. Would just like to see an uplift in cleanliness and hygiene, particularly in change rooms.
361	The outdoor pools are often extremely dirty, and regularly empty. Especially the babies pool. Indoors is waaaaay too hot.
362	NARC needs to be modernised to have a comparable appeal to WaterMarc and Brunswick Baths. It should have outdoor splash pads, a creative indoor swim play area and modern family change facilities. We currently travel to 3 or 4 other centres because the experience at these places is far better. Also, we only have to pay an adult entry price with children free under 5. At NARC it's expensive as you have to pay for kids over 2 I think. The redevelopment could simply copy that of Brunswick Baths as a base case or look to WaterMarc for the gold standard.
363	Looking forward to a much cleaner, better designed indoor pool to bring it up to the standards of other indoor pools in the area - Clifton Hill, Ivanhoe. The current indoor facility is tired and in need of better maintenance and cleanliness.





Responses	
364	Good facility but generally run down and could offer more for kids. Outdoor pools frequently closed
365	Love the 50m pool. I hope that any redevelopment incorporates a full time 50m pool.
366	I've been really disappointed in the state of the pools and facilities at NARC. I'm really hoping you look to improve the facilities particularly for families and children as it's not acceptable at the present and we've stopped attending swim lessons there as a result.
367	Along with improving the hygiene and quality of the pools I am particularly hoping that the upgrade will include improved children' and babies' pools and water play features
368	Love the outdoor 50m pool, water quality can be poor, when swimming in the morning Band-Aids and old leaves. Should be clean and ready everyday
369	I recently cancelled my membership after a number of years as I found with the growing population in the area the pool & facilities were just getting too crowded. An extra or bigger pool space would be great. Also, more hygienic spa & sauna area & maybe one day that big guy who puts the eucalyptus oil in the sauna regularly & ruins it for everybody else despite the signs saying not too, will actually be told off for it. I recently started visiting Collingwood & couldn't stop commenting on how clean & lovely the facilities were. Oh & never let Rosa who runs aqua aerobics leave. She is the only good instructor & bloody awesome
370	I love being able to swim in the outdoor pool all year round and really appreciate that it is available despite often low numbers during the week over winter. Our family also appreciate the large outside area in summer (could use more shade) which is rare so please keep it. Despite the run down/ageing facility our family enjoy going there and if it was given a much need renovation we would definitely use it more.  Also, despite the centre being run down there is no need for the change rooms/toilets to be as grotty as they are. They probably need to be cleaned more regularly, this could easily become a problem in upgraded change rooms if the cleaning contract is poorly managed. A final positive comment, the young lifeguards are very consciences and polite good job!
371	The algae in outdoor pool is rather off-putting. Is that healthy? It's recently been cleaned and it's much nicer, but I would have thought outdoor pools would have some kind of regular or daily cleaning regimen/devices to keep it free of growth and debris. The other issue is school groups and kids' classes in the indoor pool. There often is only one indoor lane for lap swimming. An indoor pool just for lap swimming would be so popular in winter, as an option when you don't feel like swimming outside. If it was a longer pool it would be even better! Staff, activities, spa and sauna, change rooms, parking, bicycle parking - all those things are great.
372	We don't go to Northcote pool because everyone tells us it's old & the water is too cold.
373	I have a few good local aquatic centres to choose from, I do Aqua aerobics weekly with friends at Collingwood etc but Northcote's 'old-school' outdoor grasses area is something special, we go regularly during summer with my small children, and have even been with other mums during the week. It's lovely to sit on the grass, find a tree for shade, bring snacks for the kids. It's lovely and relaxing and just like the days at the pool I grew up with. Please don't change the simplicity of that! Not even with fancy seating or shade structures! I know my friends like it for the same reason. Sometimes we meet other families there and go for fish n chips early dinner afterwards! It's basically like an afternoon at the beach, without the longer drive!!  The indoor pool is a bit dismal though, all weird ghastly colours and a bit too fluorescent light-ish - doesn't feel like a space to feel healthy or revitalised. But it's ok, I don't let that stop me if I feel like a swim.
374	Over 50's program is now minimal as staffing time allocation has been cut and disability support now included.
375	Splash pad area for kids and more shade on outdoor pools used with younger children would be great.
376	Great outdoor pool and I don't see any need for large-scale redevelopment. I think small, cosmetic improvements, and better resourcing (i.e. group fitness equipment updated more often) would be all that is required. The outdoor pool and lawn area is stunning and my preference for recreational swimming in summer (as opposed to Fitzroy pool). Don't f*ck Northcote pool up please!



Responses	
377	Northcote is the only pool that our toddler has contracted an ear infection from. Cleanliness is a huge area for improvement. We would love to attend swim lessons here and come for a swim before or after my daughter attends day-care at Clifton Street child care centre, but we currently do not due to the state of facilities. Very much looking forward to a renovation here!
378	I stopped going to NARC and filed a complaint because of the lack of decorum from other members (swearing and using words like c*nt, shouting across the room to their friends, suddenly dropping weights) and the appalling state of the change rooms. This was apparently addressed but I left because it left a sour taste in my mouth. I've been back sporadically to use the pool, but it's still outdated and poor.
379	There's a lot of wasted space outside that could be used for more gardens, areas. Would be nice to have garden visible from the spa area.
380	Swim lesson weekend lessons
381	The numbers attending the aqua aerobics classes are allegedly capped however there are often many more people doing the classes over the cap. The number of swimming lanes closed off is insufficient to meet the needs of the number of people attending and often, despite requests for additional lane closures from the class instructor and the attendees, requests are ignored. This leaves the class crammed in with little room to move. A safety issue
382	I feel like there is an opportunity to utilise the space around the centre better through improving the landscaping. Out the front it would be great to attract more food vans, have a playground for children and a picnic area for local residents. Perhaps even the odd local farmers market. The facilities themselves are adequate but tired. More shaded areas around the pools would be useful, as would toilets/family change rooms near the indoor toddlers' pool. Also, the new kiosk is less appealing and could improve. A new cafe with an outdoor seated area could be quite a draw card if the site were to be redeveloped. Also I'd be more inclined to use the gym if there were more flexible short term/casual visit options available. A clubhouse at the tennis courts may also be useful and my children would love to see a waterslide and diving pool. Please feel free to contact me if you have any further questions. Richard 0402238224. richardrome@gmail.com
383	Outdoor pool water gets very dirty and unhygienic easily in summer time which poses health risks to swimmers, especially for young and old. My mother got urinary tract infection last summer after I took her swimming there.
384	The staff I have interacted with have been really genuinely helpful and approachable - it's made it easier for me to approach exercise and fitness (an area I'm a bit inexperienced and unsure about).
385	The toddler outside pool is really unsafe as is with loose tiles. The water in the pools is often really dirty too.
386	the place is filthy. Literally properly filthy, like you don't even know what the word clean actually means. it's disgusting
387	THE most important determinant of accessibility is cost. The trouble with Darebin Council is it DISRUPTS everything for 2 years at the end of which very few if anything has improved (e.g. solar-boosted hot water "improvements" have resulted in showers constantly being cold) and in the end everything costs more. Go and build a greenfield site somewhere else!
388	The centre generally feels tired and worn out and has been patched up several times. We've had trouble with the waiting list system for swim lessons and went to Coburg instead as their system was much more user friendly. We also caught the gastro bug from Northcote a few years ago which put me off swimming there for a long time.
389	Communication as per previous comment.
390	I have been to Ringwood aquatic centre and quite envy that region. Wouldn't mind to pay that kind of money for that kind of facilities.
391	During summer some groups of teenagers can make the outdoor pool an uncomfortable place to be, gathering in "packs" playing loud music, smoking and practicing intimidation tactics.



Responses	
392	-the carpark needs cleaning, e.g. use the council street sweeper to collect rotted leaves twigs etc. -the swim and gym lockers need maintenance, loose hinges, broken chipboard
393	We are unhappy about the new swimming lessons all year round and therefore increased fees. Having to apply NOT to be charged over Christmas is wrong. We would like to visit the children's outdoor pools during the day over spring summer but there always seems to be a reason why they are unavailable. Hygiene/Cleanliness needs to be improved indoors. The cafe could be much improved in every way! It would encourage us to be around longer if it were better.
394	It would be great to have a better room for spin and adrenaline, and more adrenaline classes on offer.
395	Outdoor pool please, please retain Improve the changerooms Improve indoor pool
396	Please fix the bathrooms. They are gross!
397	Most of the staff provide poor customer service and are not inviting/engaged in their role. I would encourage the manager to employ people to fulfil the role of ambassador for the centre, not just to 'hang out with their friends' or engage in their own conversations and agendas. PS - there are a few great team members.
398	It's disgraceful that there is a no smoking line just outside the front door and you have to walk through a line of smokers to enter a health and fitness facility.
399	Get rid of the screamy lady in swim classes Make pool cleaner, cooler (indoor) like Clifton Hill Make it like Brunswick - nicer outdoors
400	I was a previous member of the gym but cancelled due to the lack of clean facilities, lack of compatible hours to work out & need for larger gym area. All of which I could get at another gym for the same price. I would rather use a facility that contributes to community but current Northcote Aquatic is not it.
401	It's just a very tired run-down space. I try and not even have to use the bathrooms they are so awful. The staff could do w some extra training around customer service. Although most are ok. You often feel they are chatting amongst themselves on a social level rather than fully paying attention to customers. The set up at reception does not work especially on busy days. In fact, it's terrible. The life guards need to get better at actually enforcing rules with kids who frequently spill over into lap lanes. I've been hit or 'jumped' on more than once by kids moving into lap Lanes and life guards do nothing. They often have to be asked to attend to it. And they look bored!!!
402	The outdoor pool is such a massive asset to our area. Pool temp and cleanliness is great. Lanes often not too full - keep up great work. Indoor pool however is often congested.
403	Please open earlier. 5:30am would be good.
404	Ensure the 50m pool is retained as we don't have one anywhere in the northern suburbs
405	old and very tired faculties, makes it look dirty and unclean.
406	Changing facilities and showers could be much improved. Staff and service quality already very good.
407	Northcote is a thriving area full of young families. We would love to have beautiful, clean pools that are warm and not just suitable for swimming, but also fun (like Greensborough's WaterMarc). Something like this would be an amazing development for the area and completely revive the Northcote pools to be a destination, rather than a last resort.
408	It would be a significant improvement to be able to make changes to my membership or transact other business with the centre online. Currently you often have to come in and fill out paper forms or call the centre personally.
409	The outdoor space sets this pool apart from most others. Keeping it, or maintaining as much as possible, with increased shade TREES would be the best thing for this development and the community who use it over summer.
410	I look forward to long overdue building works and improvements. Water slides and play things would be an appreciated bonus and draw more people to the centre.



Responses	
411	More programs/classes for people after 6pm. Extended pool times so doesn't class with swimming classes and squad training.
412	I used the Centre extensively when my children were younger. Great to see this happening for future families
413	The centre is overdue for improvement, especially when there are better choices within reach. As the closest centre to me I'd prefer to support it but will travel for cleaner and better facilities. I'd also like to see more water facilities for kids in the indoor area, water fountains etc. Just a few to make it a little more fun for them in the winter, as with Melbourne's long winters we don't always get to use the outdoor area that much. I'd also like to see more life guards and more monitoring. We have experienced spotting poo in the pool that was not noticed by anyone else on several occasions and have ended up unofficially supervising an unknown child under 5 as they gravitated to our kids and played with them. The toddler area outdoors has also been quite dirty at times, with bird feathers and bird poo.
414	Hair dryers in women's change room
415	You cannot use the spa for healing & injury recovery because it's full of men who seem to live in there & like to STARE. It's in a terrible location. Lockers are right next to the pool - same STARING issue if women want to use lockers in way to pools.
416	While the general areas are usually clean, the women's change room can be filthy. There could be a ban on food in that area as some mothers let their children eat/spill food & sadly don't clean up after themselves
417	We love the outdoor area with the outdoor pool, has a suburban pool feel, unlike Collingwood or Fitzroy where one is disconnected & the other is too small outside. Therefore wouldn't want to lose this.
418	Heating the corridors and shower areas. During winter times one freezes and serves as a disincentive to attend classes or swimming.
419	The only reason I have not switched away from NARC is because of the outdoor pool but it is becoming so crowded
420	Closing the outdoor pools during summer months to the public for school swimming carnivals is a concern for me in warm weather. The public should still be able to access the children's/babies pools
421	Needs to be modernized and more of a complete centre with internal access to tennis courts. An indoor basketball court or two would be a great addition
422	Staff were unbelievably unfriendly and unhelpful in the 4 times I visited to get information about childcare, swimming lessons, etc
423	Overcrowded. Balls of any sort should be banned from pools. When wet they become missiles. Greater supervision of pools on hot days. A few groups playing "sports" in the pool ruin it for many.
424	There needs to be a bigger space for Adrenaline classes (and more of them). We are now having to arrive at least 45 minutes prior to the class to get a ticket.
425	We have only been once and won't go back as it was terribly dirty, tiles missing from the pool, and in very poor condition. I don't find it hygienic for myself and more importantly my children and many other mums I know feel the same!
426	Large family change room area is extremely vital for families to safely and securely change children.  It is very difficult to get pre-school children into swimming lessons currently.
427	Would be great if the pool had Jo's recreation facilities in the same vein as Brunswick, i.e. indoor and outdoor fountains & slides.
428	it is very dated and for the number of rates that we pay, we deserve a better centre with better services
429	MORE PLAY THINGS FOR KIDS IN POOLS
430	The hygiene of the group class spaces, change rooms is a main issue for me. Plus, staff taking more of a role in enforcing gym towels and equipment cleaning in the gym area. Maintenance of spin cycles an issue.
431	Pool needs to be warmer for all year use
432	The centre is terrific as it is. Perhaps it could make better use of the area where the old diving pool used to be located.



Responses	
433	Great to see this centre will be getting a makeover! It is pretty tired and a bit rundown. I love the outdoor pool and think it could be given more cleaning attention - it gets pretty grotty and I never see anyone doing any cleaning, you see the same sandy floor, Band-Aids and hair balls from one week to the next!
434	The facility is fine- only thing to improve is frequency of squads. Brunswick had redevelopment and now swim lanes are too narrow and indoor pool too small with insufficient change room space- so if you are going to chance it make sure you learn from their mistakes!
435	More seating needed inside. Often can't find seating close to the pool. Near smaller, toddler end. Shower and change rooms could do with a cleaning blast
436	Although I acknowledge the indoor facilities upgrade will improve membership and at weather accessibility, I would hate to see the outside grassed social aspect of the pool diminished. Being so far from the beach in Northcote this pool is great in the summer season.
437	currently inadequate/poor quality/old/smelly equipment in some group fitness classes. Changeroom facilities are in poor repair. Classes are cancelled with no notice. cycle bikes are poorly maintained.
438	Why should we have to pay more on boot camps when already a fully paid member.
439	I used to us the gym until new flooring was put down to which I am allergic. I also felt that the gym area was developing a more competitive atmosphere. After Tom left the boot camps deteriorated. In all the group exercise classes that I have tried the music is WAY TOO LOUD. I joined another gym but I now have a pool membership because I have to do rehab at a particular depth and that is not possible at the gym I now go to. The facilities at NARC are showing their age and are too small for the number of people attending. There is an extremely narrow window of opportunity to do exercises in the indoor pool because of swimming lessons. The closure of the outdoor pool has probably made things more congested. The swimming lessons are extremely important but I hope that once the small outdoor pool opens lessons will be transferred to it. Walking in the outdoor pool is difficult because there is no shade. The outdoor area needs a half-court basketball/netball facility, at least. I like the outdoor exercise equipment but the black surface gets extremely hot which makes it unpleasant to train there from mid-Spring to late Autumn. I have heard that the food has improved at the cafe - it needed to! - but the area is too small. Separate, preferably outdoor, ice cream/cold drink sales facilities in the summer would help ease that pressure. The change rooms are too old and too small. Separate dry and wet change areas would be better.
440	I would like to see more yoga classes available between 9 am to 4 pm. A separate room for yoga and Pilates would be appreciated, i.e. a room where people take their shoes off (the group fitness room is often dirty).
441	The centre is a great place however it is an old building so an update would ensure the building lasts for a long time. The change rooms need redoing as they need to bigger to accommodate for our large learn to swim program and the outdoor needs to be cleaned more often
442	Every time my child visits the pool she gets sick. Bacterial infection, requiring hospitalization. We can no longer bring her to the pool. Hygiene levels are very poor and concerning. Band-Aids, cotton buds, old men spitting on the ground and staging in the pool blatantly... disgusting
443	Don't let the YMCA manage this facility, they are ruining this great community asset!
444	The outdoor pool is a great space which Northcote is lucky to have, we should make use of the space and improve the indoor pool and make it brighter (very dark)
445	It's nice to have an outside grass area, separate big and little pools, and a toddler/baby space with water spouts etc.
446	They often stop prime classes for weeks over Christmas/Easter/public hols. I am not a prime member I have a full membership put because of health reasons I now cannot do pump, step, body vive or attack classes. But it's always the prime classes that get put e.g. example on the Sunday before cup day they cancelled the only one class of Zumba the instructor was available and yet they put on an extra pump class. This wasn't a long weekend I pay full price for my membership the only other class cancelled was on the Tuesday cup day and that was also a prime class! They always discriminate against the older people. We never receive a reduction in fees when are classes ate stop especially over Christmas for 3 to 6 weeks. Not good enough as they market to the over 55yrs but don't deliver and let us down far too often.
447	Great programs, staff and communications. Facility is just a bit tired. would be great to have diving facility - not sure if there is interest.



Responses	
448	The change rooms and showers are disgusting and so is the spa area. I won't ever shower at the gym for fear of getting dirtier. More family change areas are required and quick-change facilities. The audio in the group fitness room is terrible and always fails. Air-conditioning is also poor in the group fitness room and the spin/cycle room.
449	The Wi-Fi is pretty ordinary, keeps dropping in and out
450	We love the outdoor pools, which we use all year around. It would be good to invest in making the outdoor space better, with more shade and trees. It would also be good to make pool entry cheaper or offer family discounts.
451	It's very poor value for money. City of Yarra has better pools for much lower user cost for seniors.
452	Northcote deserves to have the biggest and best aquatic centre out!! Watch out WaterMarc!!
453	It's a great service but looking very tired the shallow door pool needs redoing as a priority
454	The showers are in very poor condition and very dirty. We come home to shower as I find them quite awful. Some of the staff don't seem 100% up to speed with the children's swimming programs.
455	<p>Car parking is a major issue for NARC and the users of McDonnell Park - underground/multi-level parking should be considered (even under the McDonnell Park oval(s)). Feedback from other aquatic developments such as Watermark would support the importance of parking.</p> <p>The outdoor pool would benefit from some form of roof covering but ideally maintaining ventilation and the outdoor feel and appeal (reference MSAC outdoor pool for ideas). This also has the potential to support an array of solar panels for the facility which could offset energy usage.</p> <p>The current outdoor 25m pool would be ideal to be replaced with a competition depth (allowing diving) 25m indoor pool connected to main indoor area, or an expanded indoor area over including the outdoor toddler pools.</p>
456	<p>It has a good 50+ program but is busily getting rid of many of its older staff. That action doesn't really match up with the demographics of the area and the potential for older people to use the facility during the daytime.</p> <p>Membership doesn't seem to count much when it comes to pool bookings -- can get moved out of the water at the drop of a hat.</p>
457	Brunswick pool has an awesome kids' play area of fountains and slides - improved play areas like these (age specific) would be great with toddlers and parents to enjoy the pool more
458	<p>Run down but has an outdoor 50m pool.</p> <p>Not enough lanes made available to public for swimming when there is squad or swimming lessons. Pools are not policed enough so that people abide by the rules.</p>
459	The change rooms are in need of renovation.
460	It has everything we need it for although the gym area is a bit dated and could do with a face lift.
461	Really needs changerooms and showers on the pool deck. I attend with an 8-year girl, yet she can't go in the men's changeroom and is not comfortable going in the women's changeroom on her own. Also needs toilets outside
462	Improve teacher safety awareness when teaching children to swim
463	<p>I would love to see the change rooms and outdoor pool renovated to be less out-of-date and cleaner.</p> <p>I would also like to ensure that the renovations do not impact on the availability of lap lanes in the outdoor pool (i.e. once renovations are complete, still want good access and availability of lap lanes, and consistent water temperature outdoors)</p>
464	I began lap swimming when I joined last year but now I only partake in group fitness classes and private gym sessions as there were always so many people competing for the lap swimming spaces between 6:30am-7:30am. Additional lap swimming spaces at these times would be great!
465	We commenced our sons learn to swim program in Heidelberg which was a fantastic program. We didn't initially sign up to Northcote as we had heard bad reports from a number of local families, particularly regarding the hygiene of the pool & surroundings. We have since signed up due to convenience now that our son is older, however we have been very underwhelmed by the swim school - our son was miles ahead over the other children when we commenced at Northcote as he had lessons elsewhere. We have him currently enrolled, however due to the lack of standard with the swim program we are ending his lessons after this term. Even though Northcote pools is at our



Responses	
	doorstep we are finding the lessons are basically games & nursery rhymes. We pay money to hoping the focus is on water safety, we have been so disappointed. We would happily pay much more for a QUALITY swim school. The instructors also seem disinterested. I would recommend you send staff to observe the Learn to Swim Victoria program at Heidelberg, honestly, it's brilliant, in my opinion this is the standard all swim programs should be at. We need the facilities to have more shaded areas so families can come & spend time at the facilities.
466	<p>Overall, NARC is satisfactory in what it provides. The range of activities it offers is excellent, however with factors like wear and tear &amp; an increased local population, it is desperately in need of an upgrade to maintain standards.</p> <p>During peak hours, most of the gym equipment have "wait times" as they are occupied. Due to the size of the space, it can often feel a little cramped. I've personally had to wait to cardio equipment, weight bars and even floor space numerous times. In addition, while most of the weight machines and equipment at the hand fulfils its purpose, they appear old and nearing need for replacement. It would be great if the size of the gym area could be increased (possibly add a second storey to the gym). Along with this, more gym equipment would go very well to attracting even more local clients to the facility. Being in an overcrowded and worn out gym can be quite discouraging to keep attending.</p> <p>Lastly, the spa and sauna facilities could really use an upgrade. Thanks</p>
467	<p>My son has a reaction to whatever you use in your indoor pool and so we stopped going to the swimming lessons at the pool. I know of many families who quit because of similar issues. The changing rooms are some of the worst I have used (and since the outdoor pool was closed and for other reasons I have swum at five different facilities in the last year. The outdoor pool is generally very grotty (although has been a bit better since summer). I swim there for convenience but some days wonder if I can stand the grot floating in the pool.</p>
468	<p>More poolside lockers/cubbies are needed to store your gear. During peak swimming lesson times people use the seats to put their bags, leaving no-where to sit.</p> <p>Definitely need more family toilets in the main swimming area and a few more family change rooms. I would not let my 7-year-old son use men's change room/toilet by himself but you say he is not allowed in the female change area. More facilities need to be provided for this.</p> <p>More airflow in the main swimming area.</p>
469	Great to hear that a redevelopment is on the cards. I have only used the swimming facilities my biggest frustration is the location of the change rooms, the poor placement of the spa in the middle and the general need for a refurbishment. Collingwood pool is a much better environment and has better flow of use. Kids would love slides of some kind or outdoor spray areas like Brunswick,
470	The change rooms need improving. Despite recent renovations, the gym space is still very crowded, especially when classes are on or during peak personal training times. There should be more adult swim squad sessions.
471	The staff are lovely, kind and helpful. I think it is a really good facility, very well adapted for the variety of ages who use it. Its problem is really its popularity, especially now that the government has mandated swimming lessons for all primary schools. However, I usually manage to get into the water in the indoor pool 2 or 3 times a week, so I have no complaints. Though it would be good if some swimming lessons could take place outdoors, I perfectly understand that everyone is afraid of sunburn and rightly so.
472	Please reopen the children's pool soon!!
473	The outdoor pools are great and the main attraction for me, retain as much grass and shady trees as possible and keep the range of outdoor pools and dedicated lanes for lap swimmers
474	Inside is very airless and hot. Changing facilities not very clean.
475	My gripe has mainly been about the cleanliness of the change rooms, they are often disgustingly dirty. And the water quality of the indoor pools is often not great.
476	We really enjoy using the centre. It would be good if the outdoor area could have better/more shade so we could spend more time at the pool during hot days. I also find it frustrating having to share the outdoor lap pool with parents trying to teach their kids how to dive (as an example). If



Responses	
	<p>there was space for a second outdoor pool that could be used for more recreational use (and the lap pool solely for lap swimming), I think that would be good.</p> <p>I'd also be interested in doing more exercise classes, subject to some more competitive membership pricing.</p>
477	Biggest issue is cleanliness of the change areas, filthy outdoor pool (scum, clumps of hair), terrible customer service, poor - almost non-existent maintenance.
478	While the centre has improved recently I have been unhappy about the hygiene of the water and debris in the pools for years. I chose another centre for swimming lessons despite living within walking distance to Northcote and it being lower cost.
479	My family of 6 have been attending NARC for the last 14 years to use the swimming facilities and participating in the swimming programs. Whilst the programs itself have undergone improvements, the facilities have deteriorated over time. The change rooms are unhygienic and in complete need of an overhaul. The indoor pool is dangerous in certain areas with my children regularly cutting their feet in several areas in the pool on sharp surfaces. NARC is a great venue that has so much to offer. Please upgrade the facility so it's physical surroundings are in line with its great programming.
480	Love the outdoor pool. Its big. Plenty of space. Love the middle lane. Great staff. I never stay long but perhaps more seating etc outside for others?
481	changerooms definitely need an upgrade, so does spa sauna area and outdoors could use some more shade landscaping, but we love Northcote pool and want it to be accessible for everyone
482	I'd like to see a mother and sons area for showers and changing. There's no way I'm letting my 7-year-old in that change room by himself. Also, the spa and sauna are revolting.
483	We are seriously considering ceasing swimming lessons due to the new model about to be implemented (no breaks during holidays). Teacher continuity and better training to maximize the outcomes of the 30 min lessons. More fun areas for outdoor water play. More family rooms - specially to avoid issue of over 6-year old's having to change independently.
484	<p>A fantastic facility, well utilized by my family and important to maintain in our community. It is showing its age and does need refurbishment. Improved indoor and outdoor facilities are needed which should include better shade areas externally for the families that frequent the facility.</p> <p>On grade car parking broadly covers our needs as we use the facility later in the day however for daytime and weekend patrons I would imagine that parking would be problematic at peak times and with the large on grade area currently available; a multi-level parking structure would be able to be easily constructed and would better cater for pool, gym, tennis court and oval users.</p>
485	I've been going there for over 20 years and love it despite the conditions. The change rooms really need updating but other than that, I think it's pretty great.
486	I have grown up in and around the Darebin area most of my life - the NARC has been a constant as I have grown up and I have always on and off returned there to swim. As a queer member of one of the more queer-friendly communities in Melbourne and someone who loves swimming but has not been for a while due to my own gender dysphoria issues, having something simple like a safe space gender neutral change area, and an option to tick a box other than 'male, female or prefer not to say', would mean the world to me.
487	Love the outdoor pools variance. Kids square pool gets pretty grotty with black gunk over the last few summers, could do with more of a regular clean out.
488	The gym needs a big overhaul - not enough equipment/out of date equipment for weights - too crowded at peak times so if there was more equipment it would be better. Also needs a major re-do of the indoor pool area -I never swim inside as it is not pleasant (love the outdoor pool though). A bigger variety of classes would be good too (Ballet Barre etc.)
489	Having a 50 m outdoor pool is a big incentive to come for a swim at NARC
490	Keep the 50m outdoor pool.
491	The outdoor area is great. Please don't change it and take away the large grassy areas like Brunswick pools most recent redevelopment. The outdoor kids' area there is boring.
492	This massive space has the potential to be something great!
493	The outdoor lap pool cleanliness is shocking and lap availability is too low at peak times due to squad & carnival. I travel to Collingwood although this is around the corner, as I always know I can get a clean and none crowded lane availability. Additionally, the booking system for kids swim





Responses	
	programs and quality of teaching is substandard compared to Ivanhoe and Collingwood. a quality teacher is the exception not the norm. Unlike other nearby facilities
494	I think it's great but would realise its potential with more community facilities and other more "modern" sports/activities like a boxing ring/MMA dojo or a bouldering/rock climbing wall.
495	There's a lack of indoor space after school as all lanes are used for lessons so no lap swimming unless outside (cold for winter) Also no deep water play space indoor while lessons are on. Please keep well acoustically designed building. Nothing worse than all the noise bouncing off the roof. 50 m outdoor pool is great.
496	Our family has utilised the facilities at NARC for over 15 years (crèche to aquaguards). Our needs have changed during this time but improved family and disability change areas are still in need of improvement and rehab and physio for the community members in need of support to achieve their optimum ability must be prioritised alongside health & fitness for all
497	It would be great to see Northcote pool on par with its surrounding aquatic centres. Fees are high enough this should not be risen
498	It's a great place in a good location but I definitely think it needs upgrading and improvement
499	Below standard facilities. I only use the centre because of convenience but would leave if I thought I could find a more convenient place to exercise. Exercise classes need to move with the times/trends. Other gyms have modern programs like Grit or Barre or Bikram Yoga - Northcote aquatic has a fitness timetable that is from another era. I regularly hear members complain - nobody seems satisfied at the moment.
500	Great to have the lane availability for both pools on the website. But please keep it up to date.
501	be more inclusive!!
502	Looking a bit tired. Cafe recently has improved but could be nicer outdoor area. Facilities to do classes outside under shaded areas.
503	Spin/cycle room is too small. Roof often leaks when it rains, needs a total overhaul. Staff are excellent.
504	We love to support this local to us centre but look forward to facility upgrades regarding pools and change facilities
505	The cleanliness standards are a negative, especially the women's changing room showers! Some gym equipment is old. Needs a.) a bigger gym space & b.) more machines & free weights (etc) to cope better with the numbers.
506	The grass is awful, the life guards are listless and don't police basic rules, the indoor pool is so foul I have refused to swim there since age 5, the staff are over worked, rude and often incapable of doing basic things, the shade outdoors is inadequate at certain times of the day, the time table for gym classes doesn't favour early morning exercise that much, and frankly it is a shame that this has been left so long, especially given how nice Brunswick baths now is
507	The change room for boys for school swimming (the space to the north of the big indoor pool) is absolutely terrible.
508	There is a great diverse community at narc, prices need to stay reasonable to ensure the diversity is maintained. Also, a great range of activities, I can mix up my fitness regime easily.
509	I place HUGE value in having a 50m outdoor pool available close to home. Please do not get rid of the 50m outdoor pool. Council should review its contract with YMCA to make sure that casual pool users get a fair go in the outdoor pool. YMCA preferences their own swim/squad/teaching programs and reduce the outdoor lap lanes available to the casual public at peak times. This is bad. My rates pay for the pool - I should have comfortable (non-crowded) access to outdoor lap lanes.
510	The change rooms are appalling, and redevelopment should be prioritised. The entrance foyer is far too small and with queue tapes in place there is no space for people to move through the area. I currently don't use the cafe, although I used to regularly use it over the last 25 years.
511	NARC could be a premier facility but it needs a decent injection of funds to bring it in line with other facilities in the area. Cleanliness and hygiene are pretty poor at the centre. Piecemeal renovation works to date have done nothing to improve the facilities which is tired, dirty and uninviting. The outdoor pool is a fabulous local resource- it should be used to the advantage of the community and should be invested in



Responses	
512	Great environment, but aged building and facilities.
513	Bathrooms are too cold. It would be great to see these updated or have better poolside showers (the ones there are useless) and change facilities
514	a toilet in the gym area would be wonderful! For women with pelvic floor issues, racing back and forth to the toilets so far away difficult, also outside toilets would be useful for families during summer
515	The spa and sauna need a serious facelift. It would be great to have a clean spa/spa area to use.
516	My member ship has increased 60% in the past 5-6 years for no perceived added benefit. The constant re-enrolling on paper forms every time you want to resume kids swimming lessons after a period away is beyond irritating. We travel to WaterMarc in Greensborough for leisure as the slides and facilities are far superior.
517	I visit the pool every week and every week I see a cockroach in the indoor area. It's disgusting! Also, I don't like whilst my child has a lesson the aqua lane is open to general public. Often older men are within arm reach of my small child.
518	Lovely staff and fitness instructors. Parking is a nightmare in Summer/disincentive to visit when the centre is so busy. Ventilation in the change rooms needs to be improved.
519	We sometime go to Harold Holt and Brunswick Baths because the kids enjoy the water play The Green space outdoors is a huge draw card for families. More shade trees (rather than sales) would be welcomed. I love the annual live music at the pool. Consider how you could become more of a community hub. The new cafe should be accessible both by street traffic, and from inside the centre. There are no other cafes close by, and a coffee window that faced the street would be brilliant. It would be great to have some exercise classes where music wasn't blasted. Either inside or outside. I love the group classes that are held outdoors. Change rooms which are not gendered are welcomed. My husband takes my daughters swimming and it is getting difficult as the older one is too old to go to the men's, and the family space is limited. I'd love to see the centre engage with its surroundings more. You could work with Council to build a water playground behind the centre between the tennis courts, the kinder and the pool. Something along the lines of the water play at the Royal Park. <a href="http://www.melbourneplaygrounds.com.au/melbourneplaygrounds-info.php?id=29314">http://www.melbourneplaygrounds.com.au/melbourneplaygrounds-info.php?id=29314</a> Or, something like the water play at the Botanical Gardens. Put the carpark underground and use the space as water play gardens with shade. Rooftop netball courts would be excellent. The centre should be solar powered.
520	Especially whilst the outdoor pool is closed, it would be prudent for reception staff to advise swimmers that a school group is expected, and that all indoor lanes will be closed, prior to taking payment.
521	Parking as it is difficult on hot days
522	I think the staff do a great job with what they've got however the space is just too small. I never see anyone using the outdoor areas - expand the interior space of the gym to use up some of the lawns. Also, the crèche is not an appropriate place for classes, I always leave the class covered in play dough that was on the floor! It needs updating and refreshing.
523	Very poor options for family change area. Those that are available are in adequate, poolside without shower or one disabled change area poolside.
524	I love the outdoor pool and the space around it and it's great to have available in the summer, I feel very lucky to live close to a great outdoor pool. I attend cycle and pump classes regularly and am generally pleased with these. The change rooms however are in need of an upgrade, they are adequate but only just. I also think some toilet facilities outdoors, to be utilised in the hot months, could be good. Although I'm not sure how this would be achieved without being detrimental to the wonderful vastness of the open space around the outdoor pool.
525	PLEASE improve the safety of getting into and out of the facility. It is so unsafe to drive into and exit the NARC. The visibility is horrendous. Biking into the facility is treacherous. One poor person died yesterday. I have wondered each time I go on my bike or in the car whether I will have an accident. It is horrendous.
526	It would be great to have a facility similar to WaterMarc, bringing the 50m pool indoors, but perhaps with a retractable roof so in summertime it could be opened to the outdoors. Include a kids



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	slide/water park area (similar to WaterMarc), this would be fantastic. Improved family change room facilities are also necessary. A state of the art warm water therapy pool for disabled and elderly members of the community is a must. A general tidy up and upgrade to the facility is definitely overdue. Please look at improving Reservoir Leisure Centre soon as well, especially the outdoor area.
527	<p>The teaching program needs a new manager as well as appropriately qualified instructors. Lessons often end early (by a few minutes) which frustrates me as they only get 30 min. The classes on some weeks are a good size for my child's development but some weeks there are far too many students. I keep asking the instructors to work on one specific thing (the main reason my son is still not swimming well). We have been going for years and my child should be swimming much better than they are.</p> <p>The lack of family change toilets around the pool is another big problem. My son is too young to go into a men's change room on his own but getting to old for the ladies, so where do you change &amp; be able to visit the toilet? There is only one family change, it's often very dirty. The shower does not work probably.</p> <p>In the pool there are parts of tiles missing. In the deep end of the inside pool there is a cone over part of a missing tile. This is dangerous ad no sign it's their until you hit it. This pool has the potential to be a great facility. If something like what happened at Clifton hill pool could be undertaken that would be great. Often when you for a swim, the front desk will take your money and not tell you there is on swim lanes in the inside pool. Due to a nerve condition I have I can't use the outdoor pool. I have spoken to many other customers who get frustrated by this. There are so many lessons over the weekend, it's hard to get a swim.</p>
528	Car parking is a big issue as we live in Preston and need to drive there. Hygiene is a big issue too at the indoor pool. Would be great to have a pool at Preston - a huge, growing suburb - rather than \$50 million for Northcote to have a better pool.
529	just needs a good clean up looks old and drab
530	The change to the most recent cafe has been appalling. The service and quality of hot drinks is terrible, staff are under resourced. The food looks really unappetizing, is microwaved, not high quality, not fresh, and still highly processed though claiming to be healthier options, and the range is poor.
531	<p>The things about NARC which are great is the high proportion of very shallow pools (indoor and outdoor) for kids 1-3 years old. Please don't lose this as part of a new development. Also, having shade sails over the children's outdoor pools is critical.</p> <p>Keeping the 10-lane outdoor 50m pool is a must, but the reason why Northcote is great is because the pool isn't overwhelmed with squad bookings and leaves a lot of room for lap swimmers. That's why it's great.</p> <p>Also, there should be some opportunity for "foundation" membership of the new facility open to existing users so we aren't slugged the higher costs of when the new one opens.</p>
532	A pedestrian crossing across Victoria Rd (probably near Clifton Street intersection) would significantly improve patron safety with many children/families currently crossing at the little traffic island
533	Staff are very friendly and helpful which I really like
534	<p>I have been a member of NARC since March and in that time, I have participated in a number of the group fitness classes. Last week for cup week I encountered a number of issues with the centre. Firstly, the timetable was changed although they did not update this on the online group fitness timetable which I refer to. The limited number of classes on Cup day also meant that I was denied entry to a cycle class because it was at capacity. On the Friday evening I made another attempt to attend a pump class only to be told that the instructor hadn't turned up and the class had been cancelled. I typically go the gym 3 times per week so each time I attended the gym last week I was inconvenienced.</p> <p>The group fitness room itself is too small and often we are piled on top of each other particularly for some of the Pump classes I attend.</p> <p>I am not a swimmer so I have not ever used the swimming facilities. I might consider using the pool</p>



Responses	
	with summer approaching although the number of negative reviews that I have read online relating to the condition and cleanliness of the pools does not make me want to at this stage. As a resident of Northcote, I look forward to seeing the re-development of NARC!
535	We really, really love the outdoor lap pool -- please don't change it! Love the wide lanes, lane availability, water temperature and everything about it. I'd be happy if the 50m outdoor pool was the only thing at NARC -- it's all we need. We live in fear of it changing! It's so much better than Fitzroy, Brunswick, Reservoir, and on a par with the lap swimming experience at WaterMarc. Really hope it doesn't change!! I go 3x per week, all year round; and often again with kids for fun & picnics, etc.
536	It's a great facility so keep it going!
537	Most staff are terrific. Opening hours are very good.
538	membership is growing but class numbers still pretty small and cycling room is hot and crowded.
539	Want water slides with price included in ticket and family friendly change rooms and good outdoor pool with space for summer.
540	I feel that the staff do a wonderful job in the environment they work in. It does need more funding though. I have been a member for 3 years and I have never seen any improvements to the gym space apart from a few new treadmills. My daughter hates swimming lessons as she says the water is disgusting. Other families do not respect the place and often you are greeted with litter left on the sides and food crumbs. The swimming pool drainage areas always look like they have dirt in them with abandoned band aids. Showers have hair left in drain holes. The gym area is not cleaned properly. Dust is left piling up around the edges and behind equipment. The gym mats are filthy and smell of sweat - they are not cleaned or wiped down. The outdoor space for Adrenalin classes is still not completed 1 year on and to get a space you have to book 1 hour before the start of the class. Personal trainers do well considering the limits they face with the gym space
541	If the intent is to grow the number of customers the parking needs to be expanded. The aerobics class selection and timetable need to meet customer wants not what has seemed after numerous surveys and unaligned outcomes, the manager's personnel agenda.
542	The 50m outdoor is fantastic (when regularly cleaned and the bottom not bright green!), however the change room facilities are extremely poor with limited family change space available and cleanliness extremely poor with a number of mould varieties growing in the shower cubicles.
543	It is a very tired, but well-loved facility. I feel strongly that this facility has the space and potential to be the best community fitness centre in the North - it just needs some love and restoration - and we are willing to wait for it to be done properly. Thank you!
544	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Reception staff/and staff should be better trained in customer service. Some are nice and helpful, some are not. There seems to be no consistent good customer service. I have examples.</li> <li>2. A larger sauna or another sauna. It is difficult for young women (especially) to use the present sauna (too small) and spa crowded mostly (on some occasions with men). And it is very grubby.</li> <li>3. Change rooms are grubby.</li> <li>4. A larger space in the gym for stretching and exercise.</li> <li>5. The outside area could be great/lovely. It's hard to find shade. And there are trees which shed hard seeds which hurt bare feet.</li> <li>6. I've been into the cafe twice since the new one opened. I find it uninviting. Limited stock. Not warm or friendly.</li> <li>7. More lap availability in the in pool. When you join a gym, you hope that you can always use the facilities. It's not the case. Often, I can't use the pool because of lessons, aqua, carnivals. The answer - build another pool. The gym is used so much. Population is growing in Melbourne. People love exercise. It is important for the local kids to have a pool.</li> </ol>
545	The centre is poorly managed by the YMCA with a lack of innovation and poor daily maintenance of the facilities.
546	Love the outdoor pool!
547	I love that we have this YMCA managed facility close to home. It has a great sense of community but it's very tired and out-dated. The Pryme movers program is fantastic and I hope it's still running strong when I reach that age.
548	I really like the Northcote pool and look forward to its re-opening!



Responses	
549	The toilet/change room facilities are old and desperately in need of an upgrade.
550	It badly needs a revamp. It's also not great value: if I join Yarra Leisure, I have access to the facilities and a golf course for the same amount of money. And their facilities are nicer and cleaner too! It's only location and friends that stop me from swapping to them.
551	PLEASE try and make spa and sauna separate for males and females. As previously mentioned, it's impossible for any normal person to go in there due to the offensive people who are in there at any given time.
552	Read the google review if you want a feel for what the public think of the swimming pool. It's a great facility and there's plenty of space to redevelop into a great facility. The outdoor pools and grounds are brilliant in summer, but being Melbourne, a waste of space the rest of the year. Need to have a decent indoor heated pool for lap swimming in the cooler months. Need to bulldoze the disgusting change rooms and need more family friendly change rooms. Council need to spend more money on these facilities and less of my rates on politically motivated crap.
553	I am very passionate about swimming and the accessibility of swimming as a form of exercise. I love going to pools, and am also non-binary. For me, I feel ok going into the women's change rooms however it's not the most comfortable experience. I have so many trans and gender diverse friends who don't feel comfortable with this situation at all and so don't feel comfortable going to the pool at all. This is really sad as public pool facilities are so amazing and also very important in Summer. It would be great if you provided change room facilities that were more accessible to trans and GNC people
554	The centre is a bonus in the City of Darebin but the facilities have been allowed to deteriorate with the change rooms/showers being quite dirty and old and the outdoor pool not kept clean and heated to an acceptable temperature. Staff are also hit and miss in terms of customer service.
555	The Air quality in the indoor pool is quite poor, and at times feels like it burns my nostrils. If I had a choice to always use the outdoor pool I would, though not always practical as I take my son to indoor activities and learnt to swim program. Outdoors needs more shaded areas. The trees are good. The outdoor pool in summer has lots of 'floaties' as in small bits of dirt/black deposits which are very much visible to the eye. My family and I try to avoid putting our heads under water because of this.
556	Am happy to elaborate on these comments further at 0435 962 862 since as a local I'd love to see NARC improved 1) The change rooms and facilities remind me of going to a council pool as a kid in the 90's. i.e. dated change rooms, dodgy flooring. The indoor pool itself is good but could be better without redoing the whole thing. 2) The gym membership options were expensive considering other newer more flexible gym offerings in the area. E.g. if I don't use the pool for lap swimming I shouldn't need to pay for it to just use the gym. Plus, the amount of equipment and people crammed in there is a shocker regards, Mikael
557	My kids are members for swimming lessons and all the teachers have been excellent. Also, the recent upgrade of the cafe menu is very good as it is healthier than previously
558	I would love to have some potential input on your kiosk as we own cafes and have some great ideas.
559	I find the current facilities quite tired. I have heard from other people that they've moved to other newer, cleaner and more modern facilities.
560	Water clarity and quality needs to improve compared to other pools.
561	I love the pool. I find there are often not enough slow lanes whilst the fast lanes are often empty in the pool. I would like to be able to use the small outdoor pool for longer hours. This pool is hardly ever used once the kids go home and I'm very happy doing my laps in that pool as an alternative to sharing a lap lane with three other people. The numbers of squad and swimming lesson classes are increasing so the lanes in the indoor pool get quite congested. I really love this facility. The staff are always friendly and the centre is well laid out. I feel very lucky to have this facility so close.
562	The centre is really good in terms of general access and facilities and the people are great with the kids, it's just dated, maybe 24-hour access to the gym and change rooms would help it compete more in the space



Responses	
563	It's in desperate need of a revamp...swimming classes are crowded, and the viewing areas to watch your children are very poor. Give it a real face lift...you have the room. I also work for a council....you can do it!
564	change rooms always been a turn off
565	Staff are great. We really appreciate the Disability access swimming program for our Autistic son.
566	I am hoping the outside fitness area will be upgraded soon with a shade cloth installed. I would also like to see more HIIT classes introduced and a return to the 2 Saturday classes
567	keen to see a few squash courts added to the facilities
568	The pool is grotty. The family change rooms are abysmal...there is one (usually putrid) change room at the side of the pool for use by the hundred or so families in attendance during the hour or so I am there for kids swimming lessons. I have an innocent 8-year-old son who comes to the women's change room to shower with his 6-year-old sister and 4-year-old brother & we have been told he is no longer allowed in. I WILL NOT send an 8-year-old boy to the male change rooms unaccompanied & I think it is a disgrace that we now have no other option than to go home & shower. The entire centre is in desperate need of an overhaul. I know many families who have pulled their kids out of swim school & taken them to cleaner, more modern & quite frankly more professional pools for swim lessons. I too have ceased swimming lessons at this facility but am frustrated because it is by far my closest/most convenient location. Please give it the overhaul it deserves and put AS MANY FAMILY CHANGE ROOMS in as you can!!!! THANKYOU.
569	Less closure of outdoor pool for schools in summer. Update of outdoor pool to be done in wintertime.
570	The Hygiene of the Male Shower/Changing rooms. And the area of the Sauna/Spa/Steam Room Desperately need of a "face lift" The School Swimming Programs need to be adjusted. The kids come in and "Take Over" the place. The younger ones all hit the changing rooms-Their loud-take up all the space and generally make you feel Embarrassed. Like you "should not be there" The School kids need their Own area. Away from the adults. Build changing rooms with toilets and showers "outside" for them. It's very uncomfortable when you are naked after having a shower and then 20-30 kids come into the changing rooms. It's not very enjoyable!
571	The gym (weights and equipment) area needs to be a lot bigger with more equipment. Thanks!
572	Staff are always very friendly and helpful. A real asset to the organisation.
573	More shaded areas next to kid's pools would be great
574	currently has great staff, great vibe and welcoming environment for all users.
575	It would be great to utilise the outdoor space and remove the two smaller pools and replace with a splash pad (like Brunswick YMCA) and build another mid pool for kids. A diving pool would be good. But please keep as much grass space as possible as this is your asset. Having fold out chairs for hire in summer would be good to encourage people to stay on hot days although would need to improve the cafe. The indoor needs reconfiguring - lots of wasted space. Also needs better cooling system as very hot in summer.
576	I see a lot of potential! I know that in the community Northcote Pool is often considered "gross" and there are many families who bypass Northcote Pool in the summer because they don't feel safe due to the amount of people there displaying antisocial behaviour: stealing, swearing, fighting, not looking out for others etc. And no one working there has ever done anything about it! Anti-social behaviour should get those people banned from our local pool!
577	I Would do lap swimming and move my kids lessons here if only the pools were clean. They are disgusting! Piles of dirt on the bottom not to mention rubbish. The indoor pools are often slimy. Disgusting. Invest in cleaning resources above all else. Tennis is brilliant. We love Dave!
578	I love that NARC has a large outdoor pool. And there is plenty of space outside. The facility is dated and gym is always busy could be larger.
579	The toilet and changing facilities are in desperate need of an upgrade.



Responses	
580	The entire centre needs a huge update. I have recently cancelled my membership due to the poor quality of the building and lack of general cleanliness. The change rooms are particularly terrible. I will be having a mommy first baby next year and would like to think I could go back to the centre when she is learning to swim, however, I would never take my children there in its current state.
581	Too much gym space taken up by machines rarely used.
582	I would like to see all the tacked-on storage areas consolidated and better made of the outdoors with landscaping, trees, seating.
583	Please retain the outdoor grassed/AstroTurf areas, they are essential for enjoying the pool in the summer and it's a tragedy so many similar ones have been redeveloped (Greensborough) or under-utilised (Eltham). Northcote's outdoor pool is wonderful. If there could be larger waterplay areas assigned on hot days, that would be great. Nobody likes bothering the lap swimmers.
584	The gym is cramped and doesn't have a good vibe.
585	The 50m outdoor pool is a rare treasure in Melbourne - I want it to remain. I also want to go to the pool at 5am.
586	Shade outside is so important. Please remove dangerous "rock like" lumps from indoor pools, kids always want to climb on them, they can't read the "do not climb" signs painted on them. Totally ridiculous design fault. Our kids love going swimming at NARC. It's a great family activity. In the school holidays we can be there 9-3!
587	The whole centre is in desperate need of refurbishment. It really is an unpleasant facility, yet the NARC has so much potential for the community.
588	Please don't cover the outdoor pool! This is the main drawcard for our family.
589	I stopped attending NARC for gym as the facilities were so disgustingly dirty. We took a long break from the pool after finding a used condom in the family change room. The size of the gym and group fitness rooms are inadequate (too small) and everything is filthy. The indoor pool is unpleasant on hot days. It would be great to see the centre modernised and expanded to meet the demand and usage. It could easily be doubled in size. And please make it clean!!!
590	It would be great to have a greater variety of water play options (slides etc). It's nice having the option of inside and outside
591	NARC is an embarrassment. I took my babies once-never again. Filthy, unclean, unhygienic centre and I felt dirty just being in the place. it's truly foul and minor cosmetic improvements will never remove the years of poor hygiene and uncleanliness. I felt like a bad parent exposing my children to the health hazard that is NARC. Please demolish that giant toilet bowl of a place and start again.
592	Northcote Aquatic and Recreation Centre is a valued part of my life. I would be devastated if it has to close for redevelopment. Hopefully any redevelopment could be carried out in stages so that the Centre does not have to close.
593	The whole place needs serious updating. At this stage I'd rather go elsewhere.
594	I've filled out such forms many times with no result in 14 years. It'll be a miracle if anything happens.
595	Better maintenance of the centre
596	the indoor pool really needs to be fixed, there is cold air all around that pool, look at the main entry doors into the pool area, right in front of the doors of the main entrance. the staff at the front desk need to be more helpful & more informative e.g. fill in instructors, any lane changes etc. the above also goes for the teachers in charge, they seem to be nowhere when you need them constant cleanliness is required in female change room, this also goes to the 1 family room we need more family rooms with showers there are some really good swim instructors but some aren't as good or maybe not so confident please remind instructors to start all their classes on time & finish on time - every minute counts for a half hour class thank you
597	It's a relaxed friendly centre. I only swim outdoors, and previously used Fitzroy, but it became too expensive, and was not so well set up and welcoming to families. The pool options are great, and apart from the skanky older teenage boys on a hot day, we all love the outdoor pool.
598	It will be great to follow this project, good luck!



Responses	
599	It would be good to be friendlier to gender diverse folk. The perceived "safety" gender separated change rooms and facilities is out of date. I do feel less comfortable around men if they were showering naked etc but if there were guidelines or more closed/unit changing rooms or even more family changing rooms then this will protect against sexual harassment. I think having note unisex single stalls with showers would be great. Other thing is water/wet surfaces - I know it's a swimming pool and there's water everywhere but allowing water to pool on the pathway from the front door to the outdoor pool means that I have to take off shoes/sandals to walk through to outdoor area. Not convenient, nor would I think the parents sitting on the sides would enjoy wet shoes much either. More dry sitting areas would be ideal for family and friends who are not swimming. Last thing is that I'd hate for these upgrades to mean that the cost to access recreation and fitness would be prohibitive to people who need to budget tightly. Recreation and exercise is crucial to relieving stress and that group of people are particularly vulnerable to stress and other consequential health problems related to poverty and hardship.
600	I often use the ovals at the back of the pool for recreation also and would be very sad if these were lost in the construction of a bigger facility. They seem to be in constant use with footy, cricket, dog walkers, fitness instructors etc. I also think that if there was a cafe accessible to both these facilities then it would get a lot of business.
601	Better customer service is required from staff at reception.
602	The centre change rooms are disgraceful, dirty and run down. Equipment is old and not maintained properly. Prices are high considering the average customer service at reception and facilities. I am so close to going to another gym. The YMCA has badly managed this centre since 1991. It's a joke, new management is necessary to lift service and standards. Customer service is deplorable. It's embarrassing that in Northcote we have such a badly run and poorly maintained centre. Darebin council and the YMCA have a lot to answer for. Disgraceful!
603	Honestly, it's looking and feeling tired. Especially the changing facilities. But WE LOVE THE OUTDOOR 50m POOL. Love love love love the outdoor pool. It's a fabulous exercise experience all year round. Quiet, peaceful, all year round in all weathers and lots of fun in the heat, too. Please don't get rid of the outdoor pool. We've had generally positive and very consistent experiences with our swimming lessons but it's the outdoor pool that keeps me coming back. Did I mention we LOVE it??
604	It is very old and needs to be done up.
605	The people are great. The services are great. But the infrastructure is poor. Would use it much much more if the facilities were better.
606	Would be good to have on indoor lane for adult lap swimming all year round
607	It would be great to see good sustainable design with improved natural ventilation in summer and light, and a better cafe. It's all looking very tired but I would prefer to put up with that than to have money spent on ordinary design that wouldn't look good in 50 years. Don't do it unless it's going to be done really well. Thanks.
608	Outdoor swimming is horrible when there are bits of pool floor and black lines floating up from the bottom...sometimes our whole family comes home with bathers full of black bits. Car parking in summer is a nightmare, especially when you have swimming lessons after school time. If there was a shade over the medium sized outdoor pool then some swimming lessons could occur out there in the summer. We've been attending NARC as a family and before that as a couple for 13 years but have recently started looking at other options for swimming lessons as the pool conditions are not very nice. I would love to stay at NARC if I knew it was going to improve. My husband usually takes my two girls to swimming lessons and the only change facilities he feels comfortable taking them to is the family/disabled change room on the pool deck and he often has to wait up to 30-40 minutes for it as it is the only one available.
609	Staff are always friendly. Sauna and steam room need cleaning more frequently. I would appreciate it if staff were more proactive about ensuring conversations in the sauna/steam room/spa area are respectful and of a low volume as it states in the signs.
610	The female change rooms are very run down. Most time not clean. The cafe food is too boring now. There is nothing wrong with hot chips and sausage rolls now and again.





Responses	
611	Please redo indoor pool! Like watermark please. Change facilities are gross
612	So glad to hear there is a plan to improve the facilities. We are one family but know so many that all say same thing = its dirty, outdated and feels dodgy. The mid-sized outdoor pool is great for kids, but always has a layer of bird shit on the bottom? In summer the pool cleaners also empty the skimmers directly onto the lawns at edge of the larger outdoor pool = old Band-Aids, dirt, rubbish and leaves. Seems just so careless?
613	The lack of family change rooms is terrible and the state of the only ONE they have is disgusting. Always unclean and very unhygienic. The pool itself also is very unclean- Band-Aids, hair, sand grit and the mould and rust on the infrastructure is not acceptable. The facility needs an urgent upgrade.
614	Use money to upgrade existing facility and return savings to ratepayers.
615	The gym area is very small for the number of people that utilise this area of the centre. I have not renewed my membership to the gym because it is just too expensive compared to what is being offered at most other gyms in the area.
616	Be nice to time upgrades with others in the area. Currently there are three pools in the northern suburbs with upgrades that are closing pools in summer?! Please keep the grass! So nice to meet people at pools. Please keep outdoor 50m lap pool. Need better coffee, but I like healthy selections. Upgrades needed for indoor pool -to small and water temp too hot.
617	Water is dirty.
618	You only gave options for male or female gender. This excludes those who identify as neither
619	The whole place needs a refresh, it is all very old and the pools are not often clean
620	maintenance is very poor in the spa & change rooms. tap handles, reliable hot water, sanitary smells. these are rarely attended too and in terrible condition.
621	The squad swimmers take up too much space
622	Northcote is great with multiple pools and all the lovely grass. Lack of family change rooms is a big issue. We tend to use other pools more often unless it's hot because the water is too cool at Northcote for my skinny pre-schooler- he goes blue. And the soft fall surface around the indoor pool is so scungy it really needs to be replaced.
623	I've been coming here for years, it's a great centre. The grass area around the pool is great to relax with family and friends in summer. But it's not fair that the spa and sauna is dominated by men. Please, if you were to make a separated women's only spa/sauna, women would flock to it. Thank you
624	We attend the swimming pools for fun and for swimming lessons for my four-year-old daughter. We enjoy attending NARC and find the swimming program to be high quality and good value for money. The whole centre just feels very old, run down and tired, and it would be amazing to have it all redone and improved. I would definitely take my family there more than just on swimming lesson days if it was a state of the art centre. I currently find the changing rooms really unpleasant and will be so relieved when they are renovated - hopefully they will be prioritised. Thank you for taking my feedback.
625	Facilities for a family are below par. We would use NARC more if there were more family change facilities, of good standard. Newer change facilities with more change tables. Kiosk with more high chairs.
626	This is a great centre but at times there are poor decisions made that do not encourage people with their attendance, such as changing group fitness classes - it is pretty well known that the Group Fitness members will keep coming back and they're a good source of regular membership fees for the centre - if you don't upset them
627	The site has so much potential but the facilities are dismal and depressing. We avoid going to Northcote because it's always so filthy we're always wondering if the kids will get sick. The pool itself is cracked and in disrepair, and the change rooms are gross. I used to use the gym a lot but the opening hours aren't great and there is better equipment at Jett's Northcote. The outdoor area (aside from the pools themselves) used to be quite nice but several trees have gone and there is just no shade. Also, the outdoor pools are dirty and the toddler pool is slippery and dangerous. We used to go here a lot but now we go further afield to cleaner facilities.



Responses	
628	I truly hope the recent works on the outdoor pool improve filtering system and water quality to bring it up to the same standard of Fitzroy and Brunswick.
629	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- PLEASE keep the grass areas outside</li> <li>- keep natural tree shade areas</li> <li>- improve food offerings (no junk!)</li> <li>- model on New Brunswick Pool</li> <li>- more family change rooms (mums and dads take small children to the pool! Little girls shouldn't have to change in male change room and vice versa)</li> <li>- make the whole facility CLEAN</li> <li>- stop/enforce no photography with in the pool area</li> <li>- better water play areas for all ages</li> <li>- open earlier in the morning for lap swimming</li> <li>- better systems for dealing with accidents (poo) in the pool</li> <li>- better gym area upstairs - not just horrible dirty room to do gym classes in</li> <li>- there are SO many people in the area wanting to use these facilities, but they overall just fall short and are a HUGE disappointment considering the amount of rates we pay!</li> </ul>
630	a more interactive outdoor play area for child would be really good.
631	In the upgrade of change rooms, please consider a spinner for bathers, so they go home less wet.
632	Although I use the pool 2 - 3 times a week myself, I find the It has a bad reputation among the Westgarth mums who complain that its dirty, loud and disorganised. The swimming lesson program sometimes appears to be inconsistent, with young teachers coming and going with different faces each week. The Ivanhoe pool seems an oasis of calm and cleanliness in comparison. I would like to see be trained life guards rather than yawning teenagers!
633	You need to make a greater effort to cater and encourage the trans and gender diverse community
634	The facility is very old and had limited spending over the years to upgrade it. The change rooms are old, outdated and too small. The pool concourse is well beyond its useful life. The centre is very run down compared to other facilities I have used. The gym area is too small, etc. this facility needs a major makeover. I also found this survey very limited to provide more in-depth feedback
635	The gym is good. The bathrooms are the biggest issue. They are not thoroughly cleaned; the hot water systems are erratic and the room is very hot in summer. It's hard to get ready for work after the gym in these conditions so that stops me going sometimes.
636	It needs to be cleaner, brighter and more family change rooms.
637	These surveys are important. The detailed results of the survey should be shared with all staff at the centre - this has not been done in the past and is indicative of poor evaluation practice.
638	Please make it safer to leave the pool, the road should be reduced to 40 outside the centre. Please plant more trees in the pool area. Please put a fan in the changing rooms!
639	Indoor pool basic and at times unhygienic and temperature unreliable. Needs more interactive play areas for young kids. Change rooms old and dated.
640	I've tried to join the gym but there are not many morning sessions after 6am would be great to see more 7am classes
641	The entrance facilities are too small and need to be increased in size. The changing facilities are in need of a renovation and the outdoor pool needs
642	The outdoor area and pools could be made so much better, i.e., aqua play, slides, fun things for kids, plus more trees, shelter, BBQs, outside cafe, etc., etc.
643	I like the pool in Northcote Aquatic centre to be more like the Box Hill aquatic pool
644	I would love to swim with my child after her lesson but the recreational pool is currently way too crowded. There just isn't enough space for recreational swimming when lessons are on. I have also seen kids (and adults) throwing balls to each other in a crowded pool, and the lifeguards don't stop them, which seems very hazardous. There is so much potential at this site, I'm really excited to see what happens.
645	we now do classes at learn to swim because my daughter just wasn't progressing in the swimming classes, as a result our attendance at the pool has dropped significantly
646	I feel the centre is very rundown and needs a complete overhaul. The air conditioning in the gym is extremely low and often I feel like I'm going to pass out.



Responses	
647	Deep water running program. I have been a member for over twenty years and enjoy having a community gym/aqua facility. The centre is an important part of the local community and needs to be renovated and improved to continue to serve the local community.
648	The heated outdoor 50m pool is a fantastic and unique asset, please don't enclose it. Indoor pools are regularly hotter and noisier, which is an impediment to enjoyment for many. I encourage additional well designed indoor pool facilities and an outdoor water park/playground for kids would be great, but not at the expense of retaining the 50m outdoor pool.
649	Q
650	The current facilities are dirty, run down and more expensive than other YMCA pools that are fully renovated. We go there only when we cannot get to the other pools in the area. If they were renovated we would make much greater use of the centre.
651	Fun water slide or water play for kids
652	I was a member for approximately two years but left partly due to the rundown, unhygienic conditions of the centre. I want to WANT to be at the gym and feel good when I am there but it just isn't a nice place to be.
653	The outdoor green space is lovely. Please ensure any redevelopment includes lots of grass and gardens. The rest of the centre is tired and dated. The change rooms always feel quite dirty. Most women I know want to use the spa and sauna but don't because there are always old men in there dominating the space. Please consider separate male and female spas and saunas. Women want to use these facilities but don't feel comfortable doing so. Some gyms have them incorporated into the change rooms to avoid this issue. I would love to see this happen.
654	improve family change room and pool side change facilities
655	The change rooms are very poor - old, drafty, not clean
656	Great to hear there are changes proposed. Change rooms need a major overhaul. They are old and dirty. Indoor and outdoor pools really need attention. Indoor pool area is very dirty and dated. Outdoor pool needs more frequent cleaning and a nicer green space around it. Good benefit from some  Water play fun areas for children. Whole centre needs modernising. On the positive note, the reception staff are friendly and the group instructors are good quality. Fitness room good do with a bit of a revamp too however. Spa area is very dirty and uninviting.
657	Question 5 is a lovely example of the issue I have with your forms. I'm super happy to tell you what my gender is, but with my options limited to male/female/prefer not to say, I can't. As a trans-masculine person, changing in the women's area clearly wouldn't be appropriate, and changing in the men's leaves me open to violent assault. I choose gyms/pools based on their accessibility for people who do not fit the cisgender binary.
658	The opening hours need to be improved especially on a weekend to compete with other gyms. 7:30 Sat and 8am Sunday is making me go elsewhere. 6am as a minimum every day.
659	I wish that it was closer to home (dream). And would be nice to get free entry for myself and by myself with my child's membership. I currently have both children in swimming lessons and have been for the last three years, but if I visit the pool on my own I still have to pay for entry. What if I had five children with memberships, would I qualify then? or would ten children be enough?
660	It would be good to have better kids facilities - private swim (like Collingwood where we now attend), shaded outdoor pool areas, or indoor water facilities like WaterMarc
661	My whole family use the centre and would really value the upgrade. My daughters swim for Northcote swim club and when we go to other pools for competition we really see the difference and how much better the pool could be.
662	I have used the NARC for 5+ years, staff are friendly and the outdoor pool is a good pool with wide lanes and ideal for swim training. The temperature could be a little more consistent, although this has been addressed somewhat recently
663	The NARC is well beyond its useful life. The change rooms are awful/unhygienic. Major investment in the redevelopment of the centre would be very welcome. Money well spent.
664	My son prefers MAC, TRAC and Brunswick baths to Northcote pool because of the kids pools and kids play areas. We attend Northcote because it is closest for swimming lessons. I would really love to



Responses	
	see kids play areas like the ones at those other pools. The changing rooms are also getting old - I don't mind so much but I'm sure lots of people do. Also, more family change rooms would be good.
665	none
666	I think it would be great to make the facilities more accessible to everyone. Create a gender-neutral change room, there's a huge transgender and queer community in Northcote and surrounds and I know myself and a lot of people I know have been looking for a leisure centre/gym where we feel safe and respected.
667	I really like the graduated depth areas for toddlers. I don't like how much switching children do between classes (makeup classes) different kids in my son's class every week makes it harder for him to settle.
668	The hygiene of the facilities concerns me - my children have contracted gastro immediately following our past few visits (which may or may not be coincidental), prompting us to visit alternative facilities.
669	There is a huge, booming population in Darebin and this centre needs to get a major overhaul to meet demands. Have a look at WaterMarc, Aquanation.
670	the outdoor pool is great.
671	Increased security would be good. My friend and I have had our clothes stolen whilst swimming there and we were told by pool staff it is a regular occurrence that reports are made to Northcote Police Station. A bigger outdoor and indoor pool is required to service the rapidly increasing population in this area, including the AMCOR development of 5000 new residents (City of Yarra ratepayers but users of Darebin services).
672	they need better supervision in the gym
673	Great improvement to centre recently but lack of options/class times during day is not viable for me.
674	The change rooms/toilets and family change rooms need to be greatly improved. Also, the indoor pool is dated and old and often tiles missing or dirty
675	Non-gendered language and gender neutral changing rooms and gender-neutral bathrooms would make me much more likely to go back.
676	Desperately needs improved change rooms in particular family change rooms.
677	The kids part of the indoor pool is tired and dull, the bridge is dangerous and useless. Change rooms are very tired too. The baby pool outside should be replaced as the tiles are disgusting. The other kids pool is daggy and old. Something like this water area in Hastings New Zealand would be fantastic. <a href="http://www.hastingstribune.com/splash-pad/image_e45a8854-52c1-11e7-a579-1b3beae2fe9.html">http://www.hastingstribune.com/splash-pad/image_e45a8854-52c1-11e7-a579-1b3beae2fe9.html</a>
678	Please don't turn it into some huge facility like Greensborough. I love the localness of the facility. Please just focus on cleaning the place properly and some better maintenance. That might get your attendance up. I question the need to spend \$50m of the community's money on this. It will probably make it into an attraction for people from outside Darebin, which should not be seen as an objective if it is Darebin money being spent. I question whether Northcote people really need a huge facility. We are a pretty basic bunch. Give us a nice clean pool and clean bathrooms and we are happy.
679	Many facilities in Melbourne are indoor focussed, which is understandable however we still need somewhere to go if you want to be outside and swim. Check out George Bolton Swim centre in Adelaide outdoor pool & play area. They have BBQ's, water play equipment, lap pools & toddler pool. Family friendly but services the fitness conscious. No reason you can't have both indoor and outdoor facilities.
680	I have avoided the change rooms and spa for a long time. Would be great to see these improved.
681	I feel the YMCA has let this complex look tired and unclean. I would like to see a more competent team managing this Centre and hope that this will be looked into in the future. I would also like to see Darebin council acknowledge our swimming club and provide us with some level of support. We are a club with over 80 members ranging in age from 6-18 and it would be nice if Darebin council recognised the dedication these children put in week after week with meeting their goals and maintaining a healthy lifestyle.



Responses	
682	Any redevelopment must address the ongoing maintenance problems with the outdoor pool. I'd also like to know why this survey is being done, when there are no Vic Government commitments to funding. We already have the push to establish a netball centre, upgrades to the Northcote Primary and Secondary schools, so the likelihood of gaining \$10m for a pool redevelopment seem extremely remote.
683	I understand and appreciate not much junk food on offer at the cafe, but we are not overweight, or eat just food too often and REALLY feel like some hot chips after a swim.
684	Currently it is not very accessible or safe for transgender and gender diverse clientele. There needs to be change rooms and toilet facilities that are available and accessible for trans and non-binary people. Staff need to be trained to be respectful towards trans people in their use of language during group fitness classes - for instance not addressing a group as a whole using gendered terms such as 'ladies' etc. Also including gender options other than just 'male' and 'female' in all areas, for instance currently gym programs are only allocated to male or female cards, which is not inclusive of non-binary clients and forces us to be mis gendered to use a personalised program. This needs to change.
685	Needs 2 indoor pools; 1 to learn to swim in/adult lane swimming and the other for recreational fun. Currently adults can't swim in an indoor pool there as pool is too shallow. Current state of the indoor pool is disgusting, bridge is rusting, old plastic chairs to sit on, poor quality flooring, no water slides but awful large painted stones?! The change facilities are disgusting and not large enough. There should be multiple group fitness rooms with adequate ventilation rather than just fans pushing hot air around. The entry system is so old school! Should be 5 times larger with swipe card entry (see MSAC). It needs a proper designated spa and wellness area. Crèche services are excellent with regards to the carers there but it needs to be larger with a few rooms so kids can sleep there during the day. Currently with one room this can't happen and is a frequent annoyance to kids who want to use the gym but the crèche services aren't adequate. Need sea for designated prams. Cafe has got better but needs better flooring and wall decoration. Consider an underground car park.  In summary, I would consider using the existing structure but bringing it out at the front to incorporate larger entry, change rooms, crèche and an additional group fitness room (maybe cycling only room?). I would extend backwards to make the outdoor lane pool indoors and redesign the current indoor pool with water slides etc. This would mean you'd have ample space for 3 group session rooms on top of the new indoor area.
686	Let us have our own tennis code so we don't have to come inside first!
687	Sometimes the reception staff are warm and welcoming and this has made a big difference to my experience when I come for my regular swim. It would be great if all reception staff could greet customers this way.
688	I like the multiple outside pools. Inside pool gets really busy during swim lessons.
689	Too expensive for membership. Old building. Car park time only hrs, not long enough. Group fitness class offering not friendly for fulltime workers.
690	I have MS. The value and accessibility of the NARC is critical to my wellbeing. Commercial gyms really don't get that people with a disability are part of their clientele, but physical fitness is as critical to us as it is to everyone else
691	While it would be good to improve certain aspects of the current centre it is imperative the centre is created to look sympathetic with the local area and isn't a gross overdevelopment
692	Need for more flexible memberships. Temporary (preferably monthly) or ability to put membership uphold without limit (fee could apply). At the moment it only works for people who are full time in the area, and many people now have to travel frequently with work, making this difficult to sustain
693	We really like the centre and have recommended the swimming lessons to other families - the learning pools are good for small children.
694	When upgrading the showers PLEASE allow for individual adjustment of the water temperature. Other facilities that have been upgraded in recent years have set shower temperature and it's way too warm after exercise on a hot day and makes me not want to attend!!
695	Aquarena has a great outdoor kids water play area. WaterMarc's kid's area is amazing. The family open swim change rooms at Aquarena are not bad and allow lots of people to use them. The general feeling is everything feeling not very clean at the moment. The indoor swim area can feel a bit dark and depressing. Aquarena is light and bright, as is WaterMarc.



Responses	
696	Staff are fantastic, but the centre is old and poorly maintained. Has been long overdue for refurbishment particularly given the high number of children now in the area. Needs to urgently be brought up to the standard of state of the art facilities like WaterMarc and Collingwood leisure centre.
697	I'm generally pretty happy with facilities, love the outdoor pool. Think the change rooms could do with a makeover
698	Fitness instructors are good. The group fitness room needs upgrading and total refurbishment including better design layout, cooling, blinds, floor covering and equipment. Change rooms are in an absolutely disgraceful condition.
699	I used to be a member of the Northcote Aquatic Centre but cancelled my membership because of the poor quality outdoor swimming pool. The last time I visited the pool was last summer and was appalled (as were my fellow swimmers) that there was visible dirt in the bottom of the pool as well as chipped tiles. Since then I have been frequenting the Carlton Baths almost daily even though it is noticeably further from my house. I would love to see the centre upgraded. Have a look at the Carlton Baths and see the difference! We love the outdoor play equipment for children. It's such a fantastic feature and is one of the reasons we attend the centre as often as we do. The landscaping and outdoor furniture is also fantastic, it's great to be able to pull up a chair poolside or have lunch under an umbrella. Please upgrade and we will consider coming back!
700	We can't wait for the redevelopment and will certainly use it more when it is redeveloped
701	Bike class room is too small and bike equipment very poor for YMCA best practice and standards.
702	The indoor pool is always too cold :( The pools, change rooms and toilets always seem unclean.
703	I have found the quality of instructors can vary significantly especially in Pilates and Yoga. It would be great to get some strong instructors in this space and hold more regular classes in Pilates
704	It is obvious that the centre is very run down and this effects the users experience. The change rooms are dreadful, deck and seating areas around the pools are poorly conceived in terms of material selection and seating. There should be storage areas for belongings near the pool that are secure and sheltered form the weather. The toddler areas and mid-sized outdoor pool are very unappealing.
705	Classes are great. Improved formats. The range of sessions/classes available in early morning are perfect.
706	I would like to see better seating areas outside, improved focus from the cafe on health and well-being (rather than chips and junk food of the sort) I would like to see cheaper rates for parents. The indoor area is stuffy and feels congested, improvement to that would be great. A toddler and young kid area with slides and water activities would be good.
707	I have been going to the spa/sauna/swim for 17 years, the spa area has always been adequate, broken doors, dirty, zero ambiance, poor jet flow in spa, smelly change rooms
708	The staff and programs are great but the facility is run down, dated and 'feels dirty'
709	Do not interfere with the outdoor pool - it is brilliant
710	Better change room and family facilities, nicer places to sit, gelato bar or cart for the summer months (seriously!) would all make it more pleasant. The equator education program and swimming squad coaches are absolutely amazing though and are the main reason we continue on at the pool (Nick, James, Ben, Renee, Hannah in particularly).
711	Need to be more vigilant on lap swimmers indoors who swim in the wrong lanes and are far too slow to use the fast lane
712	The indoor pool is now so run down I refuse to let my kids go in it. The changing rooms are terrible and the only clean pool outdoors is the 50m. The community desperately needs new facilities....I now go to Brunswick or Fitzroy pool
713	Family membership rates option like Yarra leisure and YMCA Knox all have these and many other council gyms, why can't this happen at Northcote?
714	Please replace the Spa, it doesn't function as well as it should. Would be good for it to have more jets and be cleaned more regularly.
715	Water temperature that is appropriate for kids throughout the various seasons. Often the pool is too cold in winter.
716	PLEASE fix the showers! They are terrible



Responses	
717	A basketball court would be great!
718	The pool needs to be more fun with slides etc and events like Coburg has. Also need to cater for families. I can't swim when I take the kids because there's no suitable change facilities for us to shower. Plus need a vibrant calendar of events. Hire a water adventure course. Have a spooky Halloween event or something to bring the place to life as the fabulous community asset it deserves to be.
719	The general cleanliness of the space around the indoor pool needs to be improved - there are frequent urine puddles behind changing pods, Band-Aids on surfaces that have not been properly cleaned for months, and depressions in the floor that collect long-term puddles
720	If heated outdoor pool was more sheltered from weather and more shaded like Hawthorn where it's good year-round. Programs for older adults who are working not just limited hours prime memberships.
721	My family and I have been members on and off over the years (now all 4 of us members though unfortunately no longer any family or returning member discount offered). My children both learned to swim at the centre since they were bubs. We have been thrilled with the quality of the swim and exercise class teachers and programs, and the excellent crèche was a lifesaver for me with little ones, both in allowing me to return to much-needed exercise and personal time as well as to be able to go shopping/attend meetings etc for an hour or two on the odd occasion. I love the inclusive nature of the YMCA and the lack of pretension which exists at some commercial gyms. It has been great to see some recent needed upgrades to the centre. It would be good to see some additional improvements such as more garden landscaping, for example to screen from the houses on Clifton St and the kinder, and more trees to shelter under during summer - and a better view to look at from the rowing machines! Also, some outdoor bins with lids so that the birds don't peck out dirty nappies (my note about this in a feedback form went un-responded to for the past couple of years!) Also, it would be great to add a bather's spinner to ring out the water (as exists at the Peninsula Hot Springs) and to improve the entrance way to make more room for people to crowd in and line up during especially busy times as the automatic doors close on kids! And the locker walkway area is too cramped to the bathrooms. The staff are all great and there a lovely vibe about the place. I am a big fan of NARC and have many fond memories of times spent there. It will be great to see the space available used better. Thanks for the opportunity to provide feedback.
722	All the best, have a rest.
723	Since the outdoor pool has been out of action I've looked into a number of other pools (Ivanhoe, Reservoir) and discounted them as they don't have an outdoor pool. I went to Brunswick baths but found the outdoor pool too crowded. The fact that the outdoor pool at NARC is open year-round and rarely super busy is such a wonderful community resource. I hope it stays that way in the redevelopment!
724	I have been visiting the centre for 6 months now, and I can say that I have enjoyed and made use of the facilities there. I would love for there to be a much larger space for the gym, especially in the weights area.
725	Larger lockers to fit swim bag. Upgrade indoor pool to be deeper and add more lanes to allow for more lap lanes available and to run deep water running classes. Regular cleaning of air vents. Increase parking limit as 2hrs is insufficient! Review the layout of Collingwood indoor pools. Even though I am a member at NARC I purchase regularly a 20-pass card at Collingwood to participate in their Aqua aerobics and Deep Water running classes as their pool is deeper enough for all participants to participate as they open at least 4 lanes to accommodate all participants. Allow for more than 2hr parking so participants are able to participate in a class, swim a few laps/spa and shower. just like Collingwood pools! Looking forward to the refurbishments at NARC!!
726	I think the change rooms are inadequate and filthy. Also, temperature is not regulated. Often, I have come to my kids swimming class and the indoor area is stifling and I unbearably hot and no air circulating.
727	Needs new reception set up. Needs toilets outside. Need to fix air draughting across the indoor pool. Needs water play area. Needs redesign of change rooms. Needs decent system for booking swimming lesson times. Needs heating in corridor to change facilities. Needs drinking fountains inside and outside. Needs 50m indoor pool.
728	Having a gym and a variety of classes is fantastic! Please don't forgot about these things because of the aquatic side of things



Responses	
729	The outdoor pool is great, but the whole indoor/changing area lowers the standard and is unpleasant to walk through when only using outdoor pool
730	Need to make your gym area (treadmill etc) larger. Avoid it because I don't like that I have to write my name down to use the treadmill. Maybe use the space where the diving pool used to be. Also, the change rooms/showers are always filthy. Need an upgrade and regular clean. Fix the air con. I re-joined in May and hasn't been working properly since I've been there. My sister in law and Mum cancelled their membership because of the lack of air con and dirty change rooms. Baby pool also needs a refurbishment. I've been coming to those pools for over 30 years and nothing has been fixed other than the outdoor lap pool.
731	Last summer when I was swimming laps the outdoor pool was often grubby which was off-putting. The improvements to the cafe have been great but I think that the television is unnecessary (and is a waste of energy) and that the usual screening on the TV of music videos is appropriate given that so many pre-school children use the cafe with their parents. If you want music, just play music. Once this year there was briefly a playground on the lawn in front of NARC and it seems a shame that it can't be there all the time. I've been going to the centre for about 17 years.
732	The staff are great; the Fitness for over Fifty program not just fantastic but ESSENTIAL for many members, not least because of the opportunity for socialisation it offers retirees. As a rate payer I'm VERY happy for my rates to go to this kind of project. This public space and facility is very important. Thank you for the opportunity to comment. Wish to reiterate that the rehab section of the pool is very difficult to entre.
733	Retain outdoor 50 metre pool - improve cleanliness of change facilities & spa/sauna
734	The gym needs a massive overhaul and update. It's tight and depending on the time of day is incredibly crowded. Better supervision from the staff in the area is needed to make it welcoming and a comfortable environment for everyone, not the intimidating guys that throw weights around all the time. The value for money considering the quality of the facility is incredibly poor, if I lived anywhere else that didn't mean it was the closest facility to me I definitely would never come to NARC if I could help it.
735	I think an upgrade of the children's water facilities would be worthwhile. I note Coburg pool has invested in a kiddy slide which has been very popular
736	Too slow to access and, no electronic entry exit and locker security, scant regard for health and safety by group fitness trainers and incredibly poor stinking toilets.
737	It would be good to have more spacious weights and stretching area. At peak times it's very difficult to get equipment and find space to stretch or do exercises.
738	It's such a great centre, so valuable for our family. Long live the community-centred outdoor pool!
739	I won't take my children there as the indoor pool is dirty and areas near pool often smell of urine. The outdoor pool is often unclean also. The whole facility is looking dingy and tired. I will lap swim outside only but will go to other pools whenever time permits as this one is really not up to standard, especially for small children. A thorough redevelopment is needed asap.
740	it is old and has not been renovated for decades. Its change rooms are seldom clean.
741	Mums note - Tennis program is excellent and have been happy with swimming lessons. Parking is a HUGE issue and getting through reception at a timely pace difficult most weekday lessons after school. Change facilities need to be upgraded. More shaded seating areas for parents watching outdoor classes would be appreciated. Outdoor pool heating unreliable. Very limited free-swimming space indoors due to lessons. Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback.
742	The front entrance needs to be improved for safe pram access Childcare workers are wonderful and space isn't too bad but they are in need of outdoor play equipment for kids Some waterplay areas for older and younger kids would be a great addition I did swimming lessons with my one year old but stopped over winter as indoor pool was too cold, I know A few other parents who did the same
743	We take our daughter to Collingwood pool for lessons and go to Carlton North pool during the summer even though NARC is 3 blocks away because of the poor-quality pools. The change rooms and the pools feel dirty and old. during summer the indoor pool is also oppressively hot (no air con) which means it isn't a relief on a hot day when you can't be outdoors. The outdoors shaded areas are nice but the kid's pools are very poor quality as they are basically a big bird bath. In addition, there





Responses	
	is no real air con in the group fitness or gym rooms which means I think I will cancel my membership over summer.
744	I don't know how many times I've expressed concern about the poor change facilities - nothing happens - so I don't hold out a lot of hope that this survey will help - but I will say my thoughts again
745	I currently only attend for child aquatic program but go to WaterMarc PARC for water play/slides. If NARC had this then I would come more often.
746	It's fine as it is! Just fix up little things like broken tiles at the bottom of the indoor pool. If you really want to blow ratepayers money then expand the indoor pool so that there are more lanes. As a local primary school teacher, we struggle to fit all the kids into an indoor program each year. Don't get rid of car park spaces either as it's always hard to find and public transport there is poor.
747	Always way too hot when waiting for child in swim class. Very, very noisy and not enough seating around the indoor pools for waiting parents. Have tried two other swim schools and these issues seem to be the same everywhere so have come back to this one purely because it's close to home. I am using the disabled facilities to shower a child and these are adequate.
748	Staff are all friendly bar one, cafe works (needs a freshen too), entry and reception area need to be expanded and a better system so people aren't out the door or in paralysis when queuing up
749	Exciting - NARC facilities are so tired and run down. The staff do a great job The community deserves big improvements. Change rooms unhygienic
750	The space is a tad outdated, the change rooms are a little scary to go into and I know that I wouldn't take a shower in there if it was needed. So, I would love to see the space updated and money spent on the place. It's a great centre.
751	Programs for older adults are not all appropriately designed. Fit older adults can cope with more cardio and sensible exercise but not exercise that damages joints e.g. sustained long on one leg - body angles etc. sustained weight on arthritic wrists etc.
752	Pools are good. As noted, it'd be nice if, being a community centre, it had more flexible/reasonable options around the gym.
753	We used to use the centre multiple times per week with the kids but the education programme is not very good - we have found it much better elsewhere. The other main issue is the cleanliness/hygiene of the changing facilities and the ease of a young family being able to change when the kids/parents are mixed sex
754	The creche at the centre is absolutely amazing for mums who want to swim or use the gym. It is affordable and the people that work there are great. Hopefully some more money can be put into it to improve the facilities
755	Staff can often appear disengaged or inattentive, would like to see a more friendly and welcoming environment
756	An update to the Centre would be really great! The facilities are a bit tired at present.
757	Doing Pilates/yoga is a bit off putting when the mats are dirty and smelly and the floors are filthy. Also, it is often hard to hear the instructor. I have never used the spa/steam room as it is small and always full of men- that's no one's fault but I use the Brunswick baths as it's bigger and therefore more comfortable to share. I think more women would use them if they were bigger or had a women's hour maybe?
758	All the equipment is getting old and a bit worn out. I really like getting to yoga but bring my own mat because bits of rubber are peeling off on your hands. When you do weights classes there's often not enough weights for everyone to have varied sizes of plate, and there's often not enough blocks for yoga (except for wooden ones which no one wants to use because they're painful)
759	Needs new responsive management plus cleaner facilities & better maintenance like Fitzroy!
760	The women's bathroom and changing facilities are awful
761	The indoor pool area in particular has been a disgrace for as long as we've been using the centre (well over a decade) - we only continue there because it is close to home. Toilets and change facilities are run down and grotty. Area around pool is in bad condition and pool itself needs much improvement. We have had many discussions with other locals about why Northcote/Thornbury can't have a state-of-the-art pool and fitness centre - or at least one that doesn't feel so neglected and run-down.



Responses	
762	The floor surfaces actually appear disgustingly dirty. They are often lifting (trip hazard) and mouldy.  My son has caught fingers numerous times climbing out of the small indoor pool on broken pieces of the grated edging.
763	It's really quite run down and dirty. The indoor air temperature is stifling. Grotty inside. Not enough change facilities. Needs more outdoor undercover seating, especially for parents who are waiting for their kids in winter. More consistency in swim instructors. Really needs a total overhaul.
764	Well designed and clean change rooms and showers. Separate the toilets from the showers and change rooms.
765	The outdoor rec pool desperately needs to be resurfaced/cleaned. We have stopped coming as the pool is always dirty and has black debris floating in it which my kids ingest whilst swimming. A waterslide feature would be a welcome addition and more shaded areas.
766	The Fitness Over 50s program is very good and the staff that service it are really very, very good. It isn't at all clear that survey results are shared with staff. I believe that to do so is basic good management practice and should be undertaken regularly.
767	Pool is disgusting, esp. in warm weather
768	I prefer this centre to my local Brunswick Baths as it is friendlier. I do not like BB since its renovation.
769	The change room facilities are revolting. There is little room for families to get changed and the whole indoor pool area is grotty. This area really does need attention if you are to attract/retain users
770	I currently enjoy attending NARC I would love to see an expansion of the gym including free weights and cardio section as these often get overcrowded when I visit I would also like to see an expansion of the opening hours from 5:00am until 11:00pm on weekdays and from 6:00am on weekends. Thank you
771	We would love to use your services, but the pool is so unclean. Thank you for consulting & looking at improvements. Will be great for the area.
772	showers need to be cleaned more regularly
773	My daughter tends to get sick more often after attending this pool when compared to going to the Collingwood Leisure Centre.
774	Gym equipment is out of date and poor value compared to local low-cost gyms such as Jetts. I used to be a member but cancelled for this reason. Gym classes are excellent. Swimming lessons are good but the indoor pool environment and change rooms are old and unappealing in comparison with other nearby pools such as Brunswick Baths, Collingwood, Balwyn, Kew, even Box Hill Aqualink. Outdoor pool is excellent but still closed - why!!
775	Thrilled with your recent upgrade of the tennis courts and the improved management arrangements. Only request is to get rid of the portaloos and put in a proper toilet facility - and maybe some barbeque facilities to encourage more social activities around the courts as occurs at most tennis clubs.
776	A water play area like at WaterMarc for children would be wonderful. More change rooms for the disabled/families including toilet and shower.
777	It needs a clean up The gym is pretty dirty most of the time It would be great if they could install fans in the weights area it gets very hot in there when you work out
778	Over the past two years there has been a dramatic change to the number of fitness classes available and offered. I am starting to wonder whether I should find a new gym as the offering is very poor and at times that are not suitable
779	Full development is required. Very tired and old centre way behind modern aquatic standards
780	I live in Reservoir however my preferred centre to swim at is Northcote. But the limited lap lane availability makes it difficult to be able to attend at the times I would like too. I am sure I am not the only one who has the same opinion. Creating a learn to swim pool for swimming lessons would be a much better option as that would free up the lanes for lap swimming.



Responses	
781	Great to see that members can access mindfulness session and nutrition session but these have only been offered a couple of times, more regular sessions would be good (stronger links to Your Commonwealth Health could help) I've noticed that young teenage girls tend to move away from sport. It would be great to have an affordable program for the 13-16-year-old girls to promote a healthy body image and an opportunity to exercise with other girls to build their confidence and hopefully encourage a healthier view on sport and exercise for life. It would also be great to see more variety in the groups exercise classes. There's lots of gaps that could be filled with more classes -e.g.: currently only one boxing and kettle-bell class. It's disappointing to see membership fees have gone up and family memberships are no longer on offer. Why isn't 'Boot camp' part of the groups being offered to members? It would be great to offer this to all members at no extra fee, might be a great way to introduce a program for young girls too. My last point is that the toilets and showers need to be upgraded, the current state is simply unacceptable! Thanks for the opportunity to provide feedback.
782	I would love to use more facilities, i.e. showers, sauna, spa etc but until hygiene is improved I will not use. I would love to see a more varied daytime group fitness timetable for active older adults and I would appreciate a little more respect for this large group. Cancelling our classes for public holidays etc and keeping others is unfair as we have limited choices plus we are the least likely group to need a day off! I also have concern about the activities available to younger people, most classes are now geared for fit active people, very little aerobic choice for the less fit, the newcomer and those of a variety of shapes, sizes and lower fitness levels. Fitness should be fun first!
783	change rooms are old and run down, showers leak, indoor pool is small and has limited activities for children, outdoor pools look old, need more undercover areas, consider indoor water park, bigger gym area with a designated circuit and group rooms (2-3), cardio room separate from gym, bigger cafe area and more food options (perhaps space for a food truck), greater security during summer when busy, bigger outdoor pools, new lockers (more of them)



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## Appendix 3 - Capital Cost Estimate



## Appendix 4 - Financial Models

### Financial Model Option 4A

#### Business Case Scenario Comparisons

The following tables provide a 10-year impact comparison for the following different business scenarios:

- Optimistic Case - 10% more use than the base case
- Conservative Case - 10% less use than the base case

#### Optimistic Case Option

The following table details the 10-year optimistic case option.

Table 57: Optimistic Case - 10% More Use - Option 4A

CATEGORY	YEARS										AVERAGE PER ANNUM (000)
	1 (000)	2 (\$00)	3 (000)	4 (000)	5 (000)	6 (000)	7 (000)	8 (000)	9 (000)	10 (000)	
Revenue	\$5,674	\$6,037	\$6,371	\$6,597	\$6,869	\$7,159	\$7,460	\$7,773	\$8,099	\$8,359	\$7,040
Expenditure	\$6,150	\$5,793	\$5,985	\$6,181	\$6,370	\$6,584	\$6,807	\$7,026	\$7,243	\$7,469	\$6,561
Operational Profit/Loss	(\$476)	\$245	\$385	\$416	\$499	\$574	\$653	\$747	\$857	\$889	\$479
Visitations	642	662	676	676	683	689	696	703	710	710	685

Note: Does not include development costs such as depreciation, capital cost repayments, land tax, Council rates.

The 10-year optimistic case business projections indicate:

- Revenue is expected to increase annually ranging from \$5,674,000 in year 1 to \$8,359,000 by year 10.
- Expenditure is expected to increase annually ranging from \$6,150,000 in year 1 to \$7,469,000 in year 10.
- The Centre is expected to operate at an annual operating surplus from year two. The average operating surplus is estimated to be approximately \$519,000 per annum.
- Centre attendances are expected to gradually increase from 642,000 in year 1 to 710,000 by year 9 before remaining steady until year 10.

#### Conservative Case Option

The following table details the 10-year conservative case option.

Table 58: Conservative Case - 10% Less Use Option 4A

CATEGORY	YEARS										AVERAGE PER ANNUM (000)
	1 (000)	2 (\$00)	3 (000)	4 (000)	5 (000)	6 (000)	7 (000)	8 (000)	9 (000)	10 (000)	
Revenue	\$4,645	\$4,942	\$5,215	\$5,400	\$5,623	\$5,860	\$6,107	\$6,363	\$6,630	\$6,842	\$5,763
Expenditure	\$6,048	\$5,684	\$5,871	\$6,062	\$6,247	\$6,456	\$6,673	\$6,887	\$7,098	\$7,320	\$6,435
Operational Profit/Loss	(\$1,403)	(\$741)	(\$656)	(\$662)	(\$624)	(\$596)	(\$567)	(\$524)	(\$468)	(\$478)	(\$672)
Visitations	525	542	553	553	559	564	570	575	581	581	560

Note: Does not include development costs such as depreciation, capital cost repayments, land tax, Council rates.

The 10-year conservative case business projections indicate:

- Revenue is expected to increase annually ranging from \$4,645,000 in year one to \$6,842,000 by year 10.



- Expenditure is expected to increase annually ranging from \$6,048,000 in year one to \$7,320,000 in year 10.
- The Centre is expected to operate at an annual operating deficit from year one to year ten. The average operating deficit is estimated to be approximately \$655,000 per annum.
- Centre attendances are expected to gradually increase from 525,000 in year 1 to 581,000 by year 9 before remaining steady until year 10.

### Financial Model Option 4B

#### Business Case Scenario Comparisons

The following tables provide a 10-year impact comparison for the following different business scenarios:

- Optimistic Case - 10% more use than the base case
- Conservative Case - 10% less use than the base case

#### Optimistic Case Option

The following table details the 10-year optimistic case option.

**Table 59: Optimistic Case - 10% More Use - Option 4B**

CATEGORY	YEARS										AVERAGE PER ANNUM (000)
	1 (000)	2 (\$00)	3 (000)	4 (000)	5 (000)	6 (000)	7 (000)	8 (000)	9 (000)	10 (000)	
Revenue	\$5,911	\$6,289	\$6,636	\$6,873	\$7,155	\$7,457	\$7,771	\$8,098	\$8,437	\$8,708	\$7,333
Expenditure	\$6,150	\$5,793	\$5,985	\$6,181	\$6,370	\$6,584	\$6,807	\$7,026	\$7,243	\$7,469	\$6,561
Operational Profit/Loss	(\$240)	\$497	\$651	\$692	\$784	\$872	\$964	\$1,071	\$1,195	\$1,238	\$773
Visitations	655	676	690	690	697	703	710	717	724	724	699

**Note:** Does not include development costs such as depreciation, capital cost repayments, land tax, Council rates.

The 10-year optimistic case business projections indicate:

- Revenue is expected to increase annually ranging from \$5,911,000 in year 1 to \$8,708,000 by year 10.
- Expenditure is expected to increase annually ranging from \$6,150,000 in year 1 to \$7,469,000 in year 10.
- The Centre is expected to operate at an annual operating deficit in year 1 before operating at a surplus. The average operating deficit is estimated to be approximately \$773,000 per annum.
- Centre attendances are expected to gradually increase from 655,000 in year 1 to 724,000 by year 9 before remaining steady for year 10.

#### Conservative Case Option

The following table details the 10-year conservative case option.

**Table 60: Conservative Case - 10% Less Use - Option 4B**

CATEGORY	YEARS										AVERAGE PER ANNUM (000)
	1 (000)	2 (\$00)	3 (000)	4 (000)	5 (000)	6 (000)	7 (000)	8 (000)	9 (000)	10 (000)	
Revenue	\$4,838	\$5,148	\$5,432	\$5,626	\$5,857	\$6,104	\$6,361	\$6,628	\$6,907	\$7,128	\$6,003
Expenditure	\$6,048	\$5,684	\$5,871	\$6,062	\$6,247	\$6,456	\$6,673	\$6,887	\$7,098	\$7,320	\$6,435
Operational Profit/Loss	(\$1,209)	(\$535)	(\$438)	(\$436)	(\$390)	(\$352)	(\$312)	(\$259)	(\$191)	(\$192)	(\$432)
Visitations	536	553	564	564	570	576	581	587	593	593	572

**Note:** Does not include development costs such as depreciation, capital cost repayments, land tax, Council rates.



The 10-year conservative case business projections indicate:

- Revenue is expected to increase annually ranging from \$4,838,000 in year one to \$7,128,000 by year 10.
- Expenditure is expected to increase annually ranging from \$6,048,000 in year one to \$7,320,000 in year 10.
- The Centre is expected to operate at an annual operating deficit from year 1 to 10. The average operating deficit is estimated to be approximately \$432,000 per annum.
- Centre attendances are expected to gradually increase from 536,000 in year 1 to 593,000 by year 9 before remaining steady until year 10.





**8.6 CT2014848 - CONTRACT AWARD FOR CONSTRUCTION OF OUTDOOR NETBALL COURTS AND ASSOCIATED WORKS AT JOHN CAIN MEMORIAL PARK****Author:** Project Manager**Reviewed By:** General Manager Operations and Capital

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**PURPOSE**

To seek endorsement to award Contract No. CT201848 – Construction of Outdoor Netball Courts and Associated Civil Works at John Cain Memorial Park (JCMP).

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The appointment of an experienced contractor for the construction of outdoor netball courts and associated civil works was sought from an open public tender. A Request for Tender (RFT) was publicly advertised on 23 June 2018.

The scope of works for the construction of outdoor courts and associated civil works included:

- Construction of four (4) outdoor courts with compliance to Netball Victoria facility standards.
- Installation of LED sports lights and public lighting.
- Design and construction of a pre-fabricated amenity pavilion.
- Demolition of existing ticket box and installation of new ticket box, which includes accessibility upgrades.
- Re-alignment of access road around the outdoor courts.
- Landscape works including installation of garden beds, trees and park furniture.

The RFT closed on 26 July 2018 with three (3) submissions being received. The Tender Evaluation Panel (the Panel) completed two separate tender evaluation meetings on 16 August 2018 and 13 September 2018.

The Tender Evaluation details and scoring for the evaluation is provided as Confidential **Appendix A** circulated to Councillors under separate cover.

The proposed contract arrangement is a lump sum contract and works are expected to be completed by the end of May 2019.

<b>Recommendation</b>
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**That Council:**

- (1) Awards Contract CT201848 for the Construction of Outdoor Courts and Associated Works at John Cain Memorial Park to \_\_\_\_\_ for the contract sum of \$\_\_\_\_\_ (GST inclusive), for the period October 2018 to May 2019.
- (2) Approves a contingency amount of \$\_\_\_\_\_ (GST inclusive) for Contract CT201848 (being \_\_\_% of the construction cost and within the allocated 2018/19 budget).

- (3) Authorises the Chief Executive Officer to finalise and execute the contract documentation on behalf of the Council.

## BACKGROUND / KEY INFORMATION

This report deals with the award of contract No. CT201848 – Construction of Outdoor Netball Courts and Associated Civil Works

### Previous Council Resolution

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

## COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT

### Consultation

A design briefing session was held on 15 March 2018 with JCMP tenants and email updates were provided to the tenants throughout the design process.

Information was provided to 716 residents via direct mail (within 400m of JCMP) to provide an overview of the project and site map. Council received one response which sought clarification on access requirements through the precinct.

The Council staff, external organisations and community groups that have been consulted for this project are summarised in the following table:

**Table 1 – Stakeholder Consultation**

Title	Directorate/Organisation
Coordinator Facility Management	Facilities Management
Manager Parks and Open Space	Parks and Open Space
Coordinate Open Space and Horticulture	Open Space and Horticulture
Team Leader Horticulture	Open Space and Horticulture
Coordinator Tree Management	Tree Management
Coordinator Turf Management	Turf Management
Landscape Architect	Public Realm
Recreation Development Officer	Leisure Services
Coordinator Leisure Services	Leisure Services
Manager Recreation and Libraries	Recreation and Libraries
Principal Planner	Statutory Planning
Coordinator Equity and Diversity	Equity and Diversity
Coordinator Project Management	Project Management
Manager Assets and Capital Delivery	Assets and Capital Delivery
Senior Transport Engineer	Transport Engineering
Team Leader Transport Engineering	Transport Engineering
Civil Designer	Capital Delivery
Environment and Sustainability Officer	Statutory Planning
President	Northcote City Soccer Club

Title	Directorate/Organisation
Secretary	Darebin City Bowls Club
Executive Assistant to the CEO	Bowls Australia
Facilities Development Manager	Football Federation Victoria
Schools and DISC Co-ordinator	Cycling Victoria

## Communications

The Request for Tender (RFT) was publicly advertised on 23 June 2018 in the Age newspaper with submissions closing on 26 July 2018. Some initial clarifications were sought after the close of the tender to clarify price allowances submitted for the works.

The evaluation panel agreed to interview the preferred tenders to seek further clarifications and insights into the contractors experience, capability and capacity. Following the tender interviews further clarifications were sought from the contractors invited for tender interviews. Each contractor was requested the same clarifications to ensure fairness and transparency throughout the evaluation and clarification process.

A final tender evaluation meeting was held on 13 September 2018 to confirm the final scoring and selection of the preferred contractor.

## ANALYSIS

### Alignment to Council Plan / Council policy

Goal 2 - Opportunities to live well

The overall goal is to expand opportunities for participation and social connection outcomes by ensuring the new facilities at JCMP provide opportunities for the community to engage in organised sport and physical activity. The specific benefits will include:

- Improved accessibility and public safety.
- Increased opportunity for community participation in formal and informal sports and activities.
- Increased amenity for users at JCMP.
- Demonstration that Council is committed to providing new recreational facilities to the community.

### Environmental Sustainability Considerations

The following sustainable features have been considered in the design and construction of this project:

- LED sports lights and pedestrian lights which have a lower energy consumption than conventional lighting.
- Design and Construction of an amenity sports pavilion incorporating accessible toilet facilities, competition office and equipment storage. This amenity facility will be designed and constructed in accordance with Council's Environment and Sustainable Design (ESD) Building Policy.
- Use of drought tolerant plants and trees to reduce reliance on supplementary watering.
- Re-use of fencing materials and recycling of redundant light poles and other building materials.

- During construction the contractor will implement an Environmental Management Plan (EMP) that will cover items such as dust mitigation, minimisation of material waste, recycling of materials, waste management etc.

### **Equity, Inclusion and Wellbeing Considerations**

An Equity, Inclusion and Wellbeing Planning and Audit Tool (EIWPAT) has been prepared for this project to inform the equity and diversity inclusions and opportunities within the scope of works. The EIWPAT identified the following opportunities that were adopted as part of the project scope and design considerations:

- Provision of gender neutral accessible toilets.
- Provision of accessible pathways linking main facilities and improve pedestrian access around the site.
- Provision of passive seating for spectators, elderly and facility groups around the courts.
- Provision of public lighting, safety and improved sight lines to promote safety and minimise antisocial behaviours.

### **Cultural Considerations**

The tenderers were required to complete a tender schedule to confirm their employment practices regarding apprenticeships, work experience for students, employment of indigenous staff and partnerships with social enterprises. These elements were considered as part of the tender evaluation process.

### **Economic Development Considerations**

A local business assessment was carried out for each tenderer as part of the evaluation process in accordance with Council's procurement policy and guideline. A 10% weighting was allocated to this criteria.

### **Financial and Resource Implications**

The 2018/19 budget allocation is \$5,989,000 (excluding GST). The budget includes allowances for the construction of the outdoor netball courts, construction contingencies, project management fees and, in addition, an allowance for consultant fees to commence the design for the Women's Multi-Sports Stadium (WMSS) project through a separate tender.

### **Legal and Risk Implications**

A Risk Management Assessment Plan for the selection of a suitable contractor to undertake the construction of outdoor courts and associated civil works was prepared as part of the approved Strategic Procurement Plan. The risk controls in place identified low residual rating classifications.

The site is a former quarry and landfill and is known to have presented construction risks on previous projects and as a result a 20% contingency is included to mitigate possible cost impacts.

A financial check was completed on the shortlisted contractors through Dun and Bradstreet Pty Ltd on 5 September 2018. The financial checks verified the financial capacity of the shortlisted contractors to complete the works.

## DISCUSSION

The construction of outdoor netball courts and associated civil works forms part of the first stage of the Multi-Sports Stadium project located at JCMP.

The scope of works for the construction of outdoor netball courts and associated civil works includes:

- Construction of four (4) outdoor courts with compliance to Netball Victoria facility standards.
- Installation of LED Sports lighting compliant to 200Lux and Australian Standards.
- Design and construction of a pre-fabricated netball amenity pavilion that includes complainant accessible toilets, storage room, umpires/competition office.
- Demolition of existing ticket box and installation of new ticket box, which includes accessibility upgrades - construction of a new accessible ramp and stairs and relocation of the accessible car parking bays;
- Re-alignment of access road, which will be converted into pedestrian/emergency vehicle road only.
- Installation of public LED lighting to improve public safety and amenity.
- Landscape works including the installation of garden beds, trees, accessible footpaths, park furniture such as seats, water fountain, bike hoops etc.
- Realignment of existing underground services including gas, sewer, electrical and telecommunications.

The Request for Tender (RFT) was advertised on 23 June 2018 with submissions closing on 26 July 2018. Details of contractors that submitted proposals before the closing date and time are provided in Confidential **Appendix A** circulated to Councillors under separate cover.

The RFT submissions were evaluated by the panel against the evaluation criteria detailed in the table below. The evaluation criteria was established prior to the RFT being advertised, and was included in both the Strategic Procurement Plan and the RFT documentation.

Evaluation criteria:
Tender Price
Previous performance and, experience and reliability in the provision of similar types of projects/services.
Capacity and capability of the tenderer to undertake the works as specified
Local Business Content
Existence of management system and procedures covering Quality, OH&S and Environmental performance.
Capacity to meet the timelines as proposed or better.
Financial Viability
Insurances

The members of the panel, evaluation details, pricing and scoring for the evaluation is provided in Confidential **Appendix A** circulated to Councillors under separate cover.

## OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

Refer to Confidential **Appendix A** circulated to Councillors under separate cover for options for considerations.

## IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

### Details

Award Contract No. CT201848 – Construction of Outdoor Netball Courts and Associated Civil Works.

### Communication

The following communication and consultation updates will be provided:

- Provide letters to local residents informing them that works are planning to commence.
- Install a project information sign at the works site location to inform park users of the pending works and contact information for enquiries.
- Provide email updates to internal Council Stakeholders and JCMP tenants informing them of the works and changes site conditions during construction.
- Update Council website with information regarding the project and timelines.

### Timeline

- Notifications to Residents September 2018
- Issue Letter of Acceptance and Unsuccessful Letters – October 2018
- Finalise Contract – October 2018
- Turning of sod – Late October 2018
- Site Establishment – Late October/November 2018
- Expected completion of works by the end of May 2018

## RELATED DOCUMENTS

None Listed.

### Attachments

- Contract Evaluation (**Appendix A**) Confidential - enclosed under separate cover

## DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST

Section 80C of the *Local Government Act 1989* requires members of Council staff and persons engaged under contract to provide advice to Council to disclose any direct or indirect interest in a matter to which the advice relates.

The 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. CONSIDERATION OF RESPONSES TO PETITIONS, NOTICES OF MOTION AND GENERAL BUSINESS

### 9.1 RESPONSE TO PETITION: FORD STREET, PRESTON - REQUEST FOR FOOTPATH

**Author:** Transport Planner

**Reviewed By:** General Manager City Sustainability and Strategy

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#### PURPOSE

To update Council on actions in relation to a petition received by Council on 3 September 2018 requesting a new footpath in Ford Street, Preston.

#### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A petition has been submitted to Council requesting that a formal footpath be constructed along the eastern side of Ford Street in Preston. Ford Street currently has a formal concrete footpath along its western side, and no such facility on its eastern side.

Council officers have considered the request and based on an initial review consider the new footpath to be an appropriate piece of infrastructure for this road and likely to be deliverable, subject to budget allocation and further design work.

Funding for the project will be sought through Council's annual budget process.

<b>Recommendation</b>
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**That Council:**

- (1) Notes the contents of this report responding to the petition requesting a footpath for Ford Street, Preston.
  - (2) Considers a future year budget bid for the provision of a footpath in Ford Street, Preston as part of broader walking initiatives across Council.
  - (3) Writes to the petitioners and advises them of the outcome of their request.
- 

#### BACKGROUND

Ford Street is a cul-de-sac located off Cramer Street in Preston providing access to some 16 residential dwellings. The Omar Bin Al-Khattab Mosque is located at Ford Street's intersection with Cramer Street, with access to its rear car park provided from both Park Avenue and Ford Street. A child care centre (Wonder World Play Centre) is located to the north, also accessible from Ford Street.

Ford Street is approximately 125m long, and features a 1.5m (approx.) wide footpath on its western side and no such provision on its eastern side.

Cramer Street is designated as a "Primary" route on Council's Principal Pedestrian Network (PPN), while Ford Street is classed as an "other" route.

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Council's (draft) Walking Strategy (which is to be considered for adoption by Council in late 2018), states that for "other" routes, a minimum 1.2m wide footpath (1.5m wide desirable) should be provided along both sides of the street.

### **Previous Council Resolution**

At its meeting held 3 September 2018, Council resolved:

*'That the petition:*

*"I believe we are entitled to a footpath for many reasons, the number of residents of Ford St have increased substantially, because of four new townhouses (built last year) and 2 townhouses (built approx 10 years ago). We are currently building a new double story house for our family of 6 which includes my 4 children. This means there has been a significant increase of foot traffic.*

*There are a number of SAFETY reasons why we should have a footpath. Our street is filled with young families with children who play on the road, ride their bikes. I have seen people walk their dogs and push their prams on the road which is ridiculous. There is a kindergarten at the end of our street with only one safe footpath to access it on the other side of the road.*

*The mosque attracts a large gathering on most days. Ceremonies, Friday prayers, Saturday school sessions add to the high volume of pedestrian traffic that is already ongoing throughout the area. Meaning there is a lot of pedestrians in and around Ford St almost every day because of the PUBLIC USE of the mosque.*

*Most of the houses on Ford St are skirted with either grass or dirt which is a potential threat to the safety and hygiene of not only me but my fellow residents on my side of the street. I don't think it is fair that I'll have to walk through dirt and mud during winter or bring in dust during the summer into my home.*

*I also know there is a special charge scheme which I would like to address here. There is a lot of PUBLIC thoroughfare due to the popularity of the mosque on one end of the street and a kindergarten on the other end. Therefore I believe the charge scheme should be waived on this occasion.*

*I have lived in Preston for 45 years and in the street 23 years, so I personally know Ford St is due for an upgrade. It's 2018 and the City of Darebin should take measures to upgrade the one side of the street with a footpath."*

*be tabled and referred to the Chief Executive Officer for action.'*

### **COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT**

#### **Consultation**

Consultation will be held with the residents of Ford Street in regard to the construction of the new footpath if funding is allocated in a future budget for design work.

#### **Communications**

Residents of Ford Street will be advised of the proposed works if/when budget has been allocated and design work is scheduled to commence.



## ANALYSIS

### Alignment to Council Plan / Council policy

Goal 1 - A sustainable city

1.2 We will increase **sustainable transport** through safer streets for walking and cycling, and advocacy for public transport.

### Environmental Sustainability Considerations

By creating a safer environment for walking through provision of appropriate infrastructure Council will achieve a transport mode shift which will help to lower greenhouse gas emissions.

### Equity, Inclusion and Wellbeing Considerations

Improved facilities for pedestrians may contribute to a higher level of wellbeing through additional physical activity in a safer transport environment.

### Cultural Considerations

None

### Economic Development Considerations

None

### Financial and Resource Implications

Implementation of the footpath is initially estimated to cost in the order of \$60,000. Funding would need to be allocated through future years budget bids as part of broader walking initiatives across Council.

### Legal and Risk Implications

N/A

## DISCUSSION

The provision of infrastructure that supports sustainable modes of transport such as walking is supported through various goals of the Council Plan 2017-21, the Darebin Transport Strategy 2007-27, and the (draft) Walking Strategy 2018-28.

Given Ford Street provides access to a mixture of uses including residential dwellings, a child care centre and a place of worship, the request for a footpath is considered to be a reasonable request by the local community, and on initial review there appears to be sufficient verge width to accommodate a formal path without significant works.

Provision of a footpath will improve amenity for the local residents and will also better delineate pedestrian activity across vehicle crossovers, including that which serves the rear car park of the Omar Bin Al-Khattab Mosque.

Subject to an allocation of funding in a future budget, alignment options for the new footpath should consider the location of existing street trees, services and driveways, and should endeavour to provide a path width of 1.5m (with an absolute minimum of 1.2m). These dimensions are consistent with the expectations of the (draft) Walking Strategy 2018-28 for this category of road.

### OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

**Option 1 Recommended**

Consider the inclusion of the project (design and delivery) as part of the 2019/20 budget process.

**Option 2 Not Recommended**

Review the 18/19 footpath program to include Ford Street. The effect of this would be to cause a current project to be removed from the scheduled works. Additionally, given that consultation and detailed design have not occurred, it is unlikely that the works would be completed this financial year.

**Option 3 Not Recommended**

Write to the petitioners advising that Council does not support the investigation of a footpath in this location.

### IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

Subject to an allocation of funding in the 2019/20 Council budget, design, consultation and delivery works for the project could commence during the second half of 2019.

### RELATED DOCUMENTS

- Petition - Footpath on Ford Street, Preston
- Council Meeting Minutes - 3 September 2018

### Attachments

Nil

### DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST

Section 80C of the *Local Government Act 1989* requires members of Council staff and persons engaged under contract to provide advice to Council to disclose any direct or indirect interest in a matter to which the advice relates.

The 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.

**9.2                      RESPONSE TO PETITION: REQUEST FOR SAFETY BARRIERS AT NORTHERN PIPE TRAIL CROSSING CRAWLEY STREET, RESERVOIR****Author:** Transport Planner**Reviewed By:** General Manager City Sustainability and Strategy

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**PURPOSE**

To update Council on actions in relation to a petition received by Council on 3 September 2018 requesting safety barriers at the Northern Pipe Trail crossing at Crawley Street in Reservoir.

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

A section of the Northern Pipe Trail shared path located within G.E. Robinson Park in Reservoir has recently been realigned by Melbourne Water in partnership with Council. As part of these works, a raised threshold has been constructed across Crawley Street at Robinson Road to provide an at-grade path crossing facility for pedestrians and people riding bicycles between G.E. Robinson Park and the shared path located on the western side of Robinson Road.

A petition has been submitted raising concerns around the use and safety of the raised threshold, specifically requesting that safety barriers be installed on the shared path at the southern end of G.E. Robinson Park to encourage people riding bicycles (southbound) to slow down or dismount before crossing Crawley Street.

Council officers will undertake further investigation and provide a report back to Council with recommendations in November 2018.

<b>Recommendation</b>
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**That Council:**

- (1) Notes the contents of this report responding to the petition requesting safety barriers to be installed at the Northern Pipe Trail Crossing.
  - (2) Receives a further report regarding the design of the raised threshold and potential safety improvements in November 2018.
  - (3) Writes to the petitioners outlining the actions to be undertaken.
- 

**BACKGROUND / KEY INFORMATION**

Melbourne Water has recently undertaken pipe upgrade works within G.E. Robinson Park as part of their *Preston Reservoir to Merri Creek water main renewal project (M40)*. As part of this work and in partnership with Council, the shared path which forms part of the Northern Pipe Trail has been realigned within the southern section of the park to better align with the existing shared path further to the south, located along the western side of Robinson Road. It is noted that the shared path is located on land managed by Melbourne Water, however the path itself is maintained by Council.

In addition, a raised threshold has been constructed across Crawley Street at Robinson Road to provide an at-grade crossing facility for pedestrians and people riding bicycles on the Northern Pipe Trail between G.E. Robinson Park and the continuation of the shared path further south.

The petition tabled at the Council meeting on 3 September 2018 raises concerns around safety at the raised threshold and identifies potential for conflict between people (specifically on bicycle) and vehicles within Crawley Street. The petition recommends the installation of physical rails, bollards or barriers to encourage people riding bicycles southbound on the Northern Pipe Trail to slow down and/or dismount before crossing onto Crawley Street.

Give Way signs for traffic on Crawley Street indicate that users of the shared path have priority at the raised threshold.

### **Previous Council Resolution**

At its meeting held 13 August 2018, Council resolved:

*'That the petition:*

*"We, the undersigned, are concerned residents of Down and Crawley Street. See attached notice of serious safety hazard. Urgent demand for redress works re: Northern Pipe Trail crossing at Crawley Street and Robinson Road juncture."*

*be tabled and referred to the Chief Executive Officer.'*

## **COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT**

### **Consultation**

At this stage, the community has not been consulted on the suggested measures as they will not be progressed until further investigations have been undertaken.

### **Communications**

Community engagement for the Northern Pipe Trail masterplan being led through Council by the Public Places & Design team has undergone several phases of consultation this year, including the collection of feedback and identification of issues along the length of the trail between Merri Parade in Northcote to Reservoir Station.

## **ANALYSIS**

### **Alignment to Council Plan / Council policy**

Goal 1 - A sustainable city

1.2 We will increase **sustainable transport** through safer streets for walking and cycling, and advocacy for public transport.

### **Environmental Sustainability Considerations**

By creating a safer environment for walking and bike riding through the provision of appropriate infrastructure, Council will achieve a transport mode shift which will help to lower greenhouse gas emissions.

**Equity, Inclusion and Wellbeing Considerations**

Improved facilities for pedestrians and bike riders may contribute to a higher level of wellbeing through additional physical activity in a safer transport environment.

**Cultural Considerations**

None

**Economic Development Considerations**

None

**Financial and Resource Implications**

The Northern Pipe Trail realignment and raised threshold works were largely funded by Melbourne Water as part of their M40 pipeline renewal project.

**Legal and Risk Implications**

None

**DISCUSSION**

Council officers will undertake further investigation and provide a report back to Council with recommendations in November 2018.

**OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION****Option 1 Recommended**

Officers investigate options for potential safety improvements and provide a further report to Council in November 2018.

**Option 2 Not Recommended**

Do nothing. This would involve Council writing to the petitioners advising that Council does not support the request.

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY**

N/A

**RELATED DOCUMENTS**

- Petition – Safety barriers at Northern Pipe Trail crossing at Crawley Street Reservoir
- Council Meeting Minutes - 3 September 2018

**Attachments**

Nil

**DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST**

Section 80C of the *Local Government Act 1989* requires members of Council staff and persons engaged under contract to provide advice to Council to disclose any direct or indirect interest in a matter to which the advice relates.

The 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.

**10. NOTICES OF MOTION****10.1 DAREBIN COMMUNITY HOUSING EMERGENCY****Councillor:** Tim LAURENCE**NoM No.:** 366

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Take notice that at the Council Meeting to be held on 24 September 2018, it is my intention to move:

***That Council:***

- (1) Recognises that Darebin is facing a public housing shortfall due to the privatisation of public housing homes and land over the past four decades,*
- (2) Resolves to support a large increase in public housing in our LGA and that officers identify and create a list of council owned land and air space suitable for future state public housing, including but not limited to council owned car parks in Alphington, Fairfield, Northcote, Thornbury, Preston and Reservoir.*
- (3) Advocates all state and federal candidates and political parties in our Northern region to support a plan to use resources of all three levels of government to create state public housing on public land with the objective of reducing the local public housing waiting list to zero in the next term of State Government.*

**Notice Received:** 11 September 2018**Notice Given to Councillors** 18 September 2018**Date of Meeting:** 24 September 2018

**10.2 DAREBIN SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT RESERVE****Councillor: Tim LAURENCE****NoM No.: 367**

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Take notice that at the Council Meeting to be held on 24 September 2018, it is my intention to move:

***That:***

- (1) Resolves to establish a \$2 million sustainable transport reserve to assist with attracting funds to extend the route 11 Tram to the end of Gilbert Road and/or link it to Reservoir station.*
- (2) The creation of this sustainable transport reserve be referred to 2018-2019 budget process.*

**Notice Received: 11 September 2018****Notice Given to Councillors 18 September 2018****Date of Meeting: 24 September 2018**

**10.3 URGENT STORM WATER IMPROVEMENTS FOR MAIS STREET, PURINUAN ROAD AND ST VIGEONS ROAD, RESERVOIR****Councillor: Tim LAURENCE****NoM No.: 368**

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Take notice that at the Council Meeting to be held on 24 September 2018, it is my intention to move:

***That:***

- (1) Council officers report back with a detailed plan as soon as practicable to address the multiple storm water problems in Purinuan Rd, Mais Street and St Vigeons Rd Reservoir that were evident in the stormwater event in January 2016 when 85 mm of rain fell in the area.*
- (2) Any capital works identified in the officer report be referred to the 2018-2019 budget for consideration.*

**Notice Received: 11 September 2018****Notice Given to Councillors 18 September 2018****Date of Meeting: 24 September 2018**



**10.4 URGENT LONG TERM PROTECTION OF THE DAREBIN URBAN FOREST THROUGH THE ACQUISITION OF STRATHALLAN GOLF COURSE****Councillor:** Tim LAURENCE**NoM No.:** 369

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Take notice that at the Council Meeting to be held on 24 September 2018, it is my intention to move:

***That:***

- (1) Council supports the retention of the much needed open space provided by the Strathallan Golf Course and the original town planning vision that protected this land with Public Open Space and Recreation zoning.*
- (2) Council officers report back on options including but not limited to compulsory acquisition of the site for use as open space, recreation and conservation purposes and to retain the Strathallan Golf Course. Furthermore, that the officers' report include a valuation of the site and a timetable for the possible staged acquisition via our open space reserve.*
- (3) Councillors and council officers consult with the Strathallan Golf Club about the prospect of Council acquiring the land and the club continuing with a new lease with the Council.*
- (4) Council officers prepare a detailed report on the long-term protection of conservation areas and the public open space network in Bundoora and Macleod in La Trobe Ward for presentation to Council and the new Darebin Nature Trust.*

**Notice Received:** 11 September 2018**Notice Given to Councillors** 18 September 2018**Date of Meeting:** 24 September 2018

**10.5                      MAINTAINING                      COUNCIL                      OPENNESS                      AND  
TRANSPARENCY                      CONCERNING                      THE                      FUTURE                      OF  
PRESTON MARKET****Councillor:**                      **Gaetano GRECO****NoM No.:**                      **370**

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Take notice that at the Council Meeting to be held on 24 September 2018, it is my intention to move:

***That** Council commits to remain open and transparent in its dealings with the VPA, developers and other stakeholders regarding discussions concerning the future of Preston Market.*

**Notice Received:**                      **11 September 2018****Notice Given to Councillors**                      **18 September 2018****Date of Meeting:**                      **24 September 2018**

**10.6 COUNCIL SUPPORT FOR THE COMMUNITY AGED CARE FORUM RESOLUTION****Councillor: Gaetano GRECO****NoM No.: 371**

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Take notice that at the Council Meeting to be held on 24 September 2018, it is my intention to move:

***That Council:***

- (1) *Notes the highly successful community forum on aged care held in Preston by the "Does Council Care" coalition that was attended by over 70 community members who unanimously passed a resolution calling on Council
  - a. *To continue to provide at least its current services to Darebin aged care residents*
  - b. *That the current campaign to ensure Council's aged care services are continued and supported by the community*
  - c. *To explore every avenue to avoid the destruction of community valued, urgently needed, council provided aged services**
- (2) *Continues to provide Commonwealth Home Support Programme (CHSP) services while in receipt of any funding from the Commonwealth government.*
- (3) *Acts proactively to seek an extension of block funding for CHSP services by the Commonwealth Government until June 2020 and beyond.*
- (4) *Commits to maintaining and extending the provision and delivery of in-house aged care services if and when the Council stops receiving block funding from the commonwealth government.*
- (5) *Advocates for Councils to maintain in-house aged care services and invites Moonee Valley and Bendigo Councils to cooperate in leading the establishment of an Aged Care Advocacy Council Working Group tasked to coordinate a local government/community campaign to support Councils to maintain aged care services in the future.*

**Notice Received: 11 September 2018****Notice Given to Councillors 18 September 2018****Date of Meeting: 24 September 2018**

**10.7 PENSIONER RATE REBATE****Councillor: Gaetano GRECO****NoM No.: 372**

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Take notice that at the Council Meeting to be held on 24 September 2018, it is my intention to move:

***That Council resolves to increase the Council's Pensioner Rate Rebate from \$150 to \$200.***

**Notice Received: 11 September 2018****Notice Given to Councillors 18 September 2018****Date of Meeting: 24 September 2018**

**10.8 NORTHCOTE AQUATIC AND RECREATION CENTRE AND  
THE RESERVOIR LEISURE CENTRE****Councillor: Gaetano GRECO****NoM No.: 373**

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Take notice that at the Council Meeting to be held on 24 September 2018, it is my intention to move:

***That Council:***

- (1) Notes the Northcote Aquatic and Recreation Centre and the Reservoir Leisure Centre are both reaching their use by date as modern functioning swimming and recreational facilities.*
- (2) Notes the high maintenance cost in keeping the two centres safe and functioning for community use.*
- (3) Gives equal priority to the full redevelopment of both facilities to ensure they are delivered together for the benefit of all residents in Darebin.*

**Notice Received: 11 September 2018****Notice Given to Councillors 18 September 2018****Date of Meeting: 24 September 2018**

**11. REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES**

Nil

## 12. RECORDS OF ASSEMBLIES OF COUNCILLORS

### 12.1 ASSEMBLIES OF COUNCILLORS HELD

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An Assembly of Councillors is defined in section 3 of the *Local Government Act 1989* to include Advisory Committees of Council if at least one Councillor is present or, a planned or scheduled meeting attended by at least half of the Councillors and one Council Officer that considers matters intended or likely to be the subject of a Council decision.

Written records of Assemblies of Councillors must be kept and include the names of all Councillors and members of Council staff attending, the matters considered, any conflict of interest disclosures made by a Councillor attending, and whether a Councillor who has disclosed a conflict of interest leaves the assembly.

Pursuant to section 80A (2) of the Act, these records must be, as soon as practicable, reported at an ordinary meeting of the Council and incorporated in the minutes of that meeting.

An Assembly of Councillors record was kept for:

- Darebin Nature Trust – 7 August 2018
- Council Briefing Session – 27 August 2018
- Darebin Bicycle Advisory Committee – 28 August 2018
- Council Briefing Session – 10 September 2018

<b>Recommendation</b>
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**That** the record of the Assembly of Councillors held on 7, 27 and 28 August 2018 and 10 September 2018 and attached as **Appendix A** to this report, be noted and incorporated in the minutes of this meeting.

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#### Related Documents

- *Local Government Act 1989*

#### Attachments

- Assembly of Councillors - 24 September 2018 (**Appendix A**) [↓](#)



## ASSEMBLY OF COUNCILLORS PUBLIC RECORD

<b>ASSEMBLY DETAILS:</b>	<b>Title:</b>	Darebin Nature Trust
	<b>Date:</b>	Tuesday 7 August 2018
	<b>Location:</b>	Function Room, Preston Town Hall
<b>PRESENT:</b>	<b>Councillors:</b>	Cr. Kim Le Cerf (Mayor), Cr. Stephanie Amir, Cr. Trent McCarthy and Cr. Suzanne Newton.
	<b>Council Staff:</b>	Alison Breach, Sally Moxham, Allan Cochrane, Phoebe Luhrs, Phil Tulk, Stiele Hagens
	<b>Other:</b>	Members of the Darebin Nature Trust as nominated by Council
<b>APOLOGIES:</b>		nil

The Assembly commenced at 7 pm

MATTERS CONSIDERED		DISCLOSURES AND COMMENTS
1	Prepared agenda for the Darebin Nature Trust Meeting which included welcome, introductions, discussion of purpose and future of group.	No disclosures were made

The Assembly concluded at 9.45 pm

<b>RECORD COMPLETED BY:</b>	<b>Officer Name:</b>	Alison Breach
	<b>Officer Title:</b>	Coordinator Public Places & Design





## ASSEMBLY OF COUNCILLORS PUBLIC RECORD

<b>ASSEMBLY DETAILS:</b>	<b>Title:</b>	Council Briefing Session
	<b>Date:</b>	Monday 27 August 2018
	<b>Location:</b>	Council Chamber
<b>PRESENT:</b>	<b>Councillors:</b>	Cr. K Le Cerf, (Mayor), Cr. L Messina (D/Mayor), Cr. S Amir, Cr. T McCarthy, Cr. S Newton, Cr. S Rennie, Cr. J Williams, Cr. G Greco
	<b>Council Staff:</b>	S Wilkinson, I Bishop, V Albicini, C Henderson, R Ollivier Darren Rudd , Joanna Cuscaden Wendy Dinning, Philip Mallis, Che Sutherland, Sally Moxham, Rod Burke and Sunny
	<b>Other:</b>	Emily Mottram (Victorian Planning Authority), Amy Hubbard and Niamh Moynihan (Capire Consultancy) Dr Elliot Fishman (Vaughn Allan), Liam Davies (Institute of Sensible Transport); Cameron Martyn( Martyn Group) Dr Elizabeth Taylor(RMIT) and Valli Morphet( CoDesign Studio), Rhonda Galbally, Peter Allen, and Jocelyn Fuller
<b>APOLOGIES:</b>		Cr. T Laurence

The Assembly commenced at 5:35pm

MATTERS CONSIDERED		DISCLOSURES AND COMMENTS
1	Age Friendly Darebin Review – Meeting with Panel	No disclosures were made
2	Preston Market Update	No disclosures were made
3	Darebin Parking Strategy - issues and opportunities	Cr. Le Cerf disclosed a conflict of interest in this matter (one specific area regarding High Street) and left the Assembly at 7:59pm and returned at 8:18 pm.
4	NARC Redevelopment Project – Feasibility Study and Findings	No disclosures were made

MATTERS CONSIDERED		DISCLOSURES AND COMMENTS
5	General Business NOMs for 3 September 2018 Council Meeting were circulated	No disclosures were made

The Assembly concluded at 9.50pm

<b>RECORD COMPLETED BY:</b>	<b>Officer Name:</b> I Bishop
	<b>Officer Title:</b> GM Governance and Engagement



## ASSEMBLY OF COUNCILLORS PUBLIC RECORD

<b>ASSEMBLY DETAILS:</b>	<b>Title:</b>	Darebin Bicycle Advisory Committee
	<b>Date:</b>	Tuesday 28 August 2018
	<b>Location:</b>	Conference Room, Darebin Council Offices
<b>PRESENT:</b>	<b>Councillors:</b>	Cr. Steph Amir
	<b>Council Staff:</b>	Angela Andrews, Marcus Bennett
	<b>Other:</b>	Representatives of the Darebin Bicycle Advisory Committee.
<b>APOLOGIES:</b>		Gayle Ilievski, Jaron Fisher, Mark Upton

The Assembly commenced at approximately 6.30 pm

MATTERS CONSIDERED		DISCLOSURES AND COMMENTS
1	<b>Updates on:</b> VicRoads Strategic Cycling Corridors, Streets for People, Victorian Planning Provisions	No disclosures were made.
2	<b>Updates on Community Consultations:</b> Northern Pipe Trail, Parking Strategy, Walking Strategy, Safe Travel Strategy, Northland Urban Renewal Project	No disclosures were made.
3	<b>Updates on Travel Behaviour Change programs:</b> Octopus Schools, Preston Market, Bike Skills Workshops, Ride2Work Day	No disclosures were made.
4	<b>Updates on infrastructure projects:</b> Yarana Rd (Alphington), Tyler St contra-flow bike lane, Dundas St Bridge, Wood St Bridge, GE Robinson Park and Crawley St works by Melbourne Water, Northern Regional Trails Strategy, Bundoora Park shared path	No disclosures were made.
5	<b>Update on Dockless share bikes</b>	No disclosures were made.

The Assembly concluded at 8.30 pm

<b>RECORD COMPLETED BY:</b>	<b>Officer Name:</b>	Che Sutherland
	<b>Officer Title:</b>	Team Leader Transport Strategy



## ASSEMBLY OF COUNCILLORS PUBLIC RECORD

<b>ASSEMBLY DETAILS:</b>	<b>Title:</b>	Council Briefing Session
	<b>Date:</b>	Monday 10 September 2018
	<b>Location:</b>	Council Chambers
<b>PRESENT:</b>	<b>Councillors:</b>	Cr. K Le Cerf, (Mayor), Cr. L Messina (Deputy Mayor), Cr. S Amir, Cr. T McCarthy, Cr. S Newton, Cr. S Rennie, Cr. J Williams, Cr. G Greco
	<b>Council Staff:</b>	S Wilkinson, I Bishop, V Albicini, C Henderson, R Ollivier Joanna Cuscaden, Sunny Haynes, Jen Paterson, Melinda Viksne, Jess Fraser, Jules Thomson-Martin, Vicki Guglielmo, Brendan Moore, Leigh Goulet, Rod Burke, John Limbach, Alison Breach, Jen Loulie, Leah Mosel
	<b>Other:</b>	Representative of SGS Economics
<b>APOLOGIES:</b>		Cr. T Laurence

The Assembly commenced at 5:35 pm

MATTERS CONSIDERED		DISCLOSURES AND COMMENTS
1	Open Space Strategy	No disclosures were made Cr. Amir arrived at 5:38pm Cr. McCarthy arrived at 5:40pm Cr. Messina arrived at 5:43pm
2	Process for the Sale of Land from a discontinuance – rear of 31 Banff and 54 Hickford St, Reservoir	No disclosures were made
3	Proposed renaming of Batman Park	No disclosures were made
4	Graffiti Management and the public realm	No disclosures were made Cr. McCarthy left at 7:53pm

## ASSEMBLY OF COUNCILLORS – PUBLIC RECORD (CONT)

MATTERS CONSIDERED		DISCLOSURES AND COMMENTS
5	Reimagining Ruthven – project update	No disclosures were made
6	Fairfield Village Streetscapes Master Plan Project Update	No disclosures were made
7	Planning Scheme Review – Councillor Workshop	No disclosures were made
8	General Business Confirm Council planning session date	No disclosures were made

The Assembly concluded at 9:42 pm

<b>RECORD COMPLETED BY:</b>	<b>Officer Name:</b>	I Bishop
	<b>Officer Title:</b>	GM Governance and Engagement

### 13. REPORTS BY MAYOR AND COUNCILLORS

**Recommendation**

**That** Council note the Reports by Mayor and Councillors.

**14. CONSIDERATION OF REPORTS CONSIDERED CONFIDENTIAL**

The Chief Executive Officer, pursuant to section 77(2)(c) of the *Local Government Act 1989* (the Act), has designated the following items to be confidential:

**14.1 Provision of Cleaning Services to Council Facilities: Extension of Contract CT201402**

This item is designated confidential because it is a contractual matters pursuant to Section 89(2) (d) of the Act.

**14.2 Preston Market Update**

This item is designated confidential because it is a Any other matter which the Council or special committee considers would prejudice the Council or any person pursuant to Section 89(2) (h) of the Act.

**CLOSE OF MEETING**

<b>Recommendation</b>
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**That** in accordance with section 89(2) of the *Local Government Act 1989*, Council resolves to close the meeting to members of the public to consider the items designated confidential by the Chief Executive Officer.

**RE-OPENING OF MEETING**

<b>Recommendation</b>
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That the meeting be re-opened to the members of the public.

**15. CLOSE OF MEETING**