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AGENDA OF THE ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING

To be held on Monday 27 November 2023 at 6.00pm.

This Council Meeting will be held at Preston City Hall, 284 Gower Street, Preston.

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

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

Persons wishing to make a Submission to an agenda item or ask a Public Question, may do so online by 12.00 noon on the day of the meeting via the Question and Submissions form.



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

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

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

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

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



English

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

Arabic

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

Chinese

这些是市议会会议纪要。如需协助了解任何纪要项目，请致电8470 8888。

Greek

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

Hindi

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

Italian

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

Macedonian

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

Nepali

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

Punjabi

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

Somali

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

Spanish

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

Urdu

یہ کاؤنسل کی میٹنگ کا ایجنڈا ہے۔ ایجنڈے کے کسی بھی حصے کے بارے میں مدد کے لیے براہ مہربانی 8470 8888 پر فون کریں۔

Vietnamese

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

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Agenda

1. OPENING OF MEETING AND MEMBERSHIP

Cr. Julie Williams (Mayor) (Chairperson)

Cr. Susanne Newton (Deputy Mayor)

Cr. Emily Dimitriadis

Cr. Gaetano Greco

Cr. Tom Hannan

Cr. Tim Laurence

Cr. Trent McCarthy

Cr. Lina Messina

Cr. Susan Rennie

2. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF TRADITIONAL OWNERS

3. APOLOGIES

4. DISCLOSURES OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

5. CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETINGS

Recommendation

That the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Council held on 23 October 2023 be confirmed as a correct record of business transacted.

6. COUNCIL'S OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY RESPONSIBILITIES

7. QUESTION AND SUBMISSION TIME

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

QUESTIONS

Members of the public can ask up to three (3) questions at an Ordinary Council meeting. **Members of the public wishing to ask a question must register their question using the Questions and Submission Time Form before 12 noon on the day of the meeting.**

Questions that are not lodged by 12 noon on the day of the Council Meeting will not be accepted, and no questions will be taken from people *in attendance* on the night of the Council Meeting.

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

- a) relates to a matter outside the duties, functions or powers of Council;
- b) is defamatory, indecent, abusive, offensive, irrelevant, trivial or objectionable in language or substance;
- c) may lead to a breach of Council's statutory obligations;
- d) relates to a Notice of Motion, Petition or item of urgent business;
- e) deals with a subject matter already answered;
- f) is aimed at embarrassing a Councillor or an Officer; or
- g) deals with a matter that should be, or has been, considered as a confidential matter or relates to any matter in respect of which Council may close the Meeting to the public under section 66 of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

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

SUBMISSIONS

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

If the person wishing to make a submission or their representative is not in attendance (including virtual attendance for a scheduled hybrid meeting) when the Agenda item is to be considered, their submission will not be read out.

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

No member of the public can make a submission to a Notice of Motion, Petition (unless originator of petition, Governance Rule 16.3(6)) or item of Urgent Business presented at a Council meeting.

HOW TO SUBMIT YOUR QUESTION OR MAKE A COMMENT OR SUBMISSION

Members of the public who wish to make a submission to an agenda item at an Ordinary Council Meeting, may register their intent to make a submission before 12.00 noon on the day of the meeting in one of the following ways:

- (a) online at darebin.vic.gov.au; or
- (b) by mail to PO Box 91, Preston 3072.

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

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

8. PETITIONS

9. CONSIDERATION OF REPORTS

9.1 GOVERNANCE REPORT - NOVEMBER 2023

Author: Coordinator Governance Services

Reviewed By: General Manager, Governance and Engagement

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Summary of Advisory Committees, Councillor Briefing and other informal meetings of Councillors (**Appendix A**).
- Reports by Mayor and Councillors.
- Councillor Expenses Report for the quarter 1 July 2023 to 30 September 2023 (**Appendix B**) to this report.
- Darebin Nature Trust – Deferral of appointment of new community members.
- Confidential Council resolutions made public (October 2023).

Officer Recommendation

That Council:

- (1) Notes the Governance Report – October 2023.
 - (2) Notes the summary of attendance at Councillor Briefings at **Appendix A** to this report, for incorporation in the minutes of this meeting.
 - (3) Notes that reports by Mayors and Councillors submitted prior to the meeting and circulated to Councillors, will be incorporated in the minutes of this meeting.
 - (4) Notes the Councillor Expenses Report for the quarter from 1 July 2023 to 30 September 2023 at **Appendix B** to this report.
 - (5) Notes the appointment of nine (9) community members to the Darebin Nature Trust (DNT) will be presented to Council at the December 2023 meeting.
 - (6) Notes that there was one confidential council resolution made public for the month of October 2023.
-

BACKGROUND / KEY INFORMATION

In accordance with Council's Governance Rules 2020, the agenda for each Ordinary Meeting is required to list certain governance/administrative matters in addition to other specified items.

These include Reports of Standing Committees i.e. Hearing of Submissions Committee, Summary of Meetings i.e. Briefings, Advisory Committee, responses to Public Questions taken on notice, reports by Mayor and Councillors, Councillor expenses and a range of other governance matters.

In accordance with best practice, good governance principles, transparent and account reporting, officers deem it appropriate to consolidate governance/administrative reports into one standing report to provide a single reporting mechanism for a range of statutory compliance, transparency and governance matters.

This also ensure compliance with the requirements of the *Local Government Act 2020* ('the Act'), Council's Governance Rules and related regulations.

Previous Council Resolution

At its meeting on 23 October 2023, Council resolved the following:

'That Council:

- (4) *Defers the appointment of nine (9) community members to the Darebin Nature Trust (DNT) the November 2023 Council Meeting.'*

ALIGNMENT TO 2041 DAREBIN COMMUNITY VISION

Strategic Direction 1: Vibrant, Respectful and Connected

ALIGNMENT TO 2021-25 COUNCIL PLAN

Strategic Direction 4 Responsible, Transparent and Responsive

ALIGNMENT TO COUNCIL PLAN STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

4.1 We will ensure balanced and responsible financial decision making that meets the needs of our community now and into the future

DISCUSSION

Matters covered in this report for the month of September 2023 are:

Summary of Advisory Committees, Councillor Briefing and other informal meetings of Councillors

Council's Governance Rules 2020 require any meeting of an Advisory Committee established by Council and attended by at least one Councillor, or a scheduled or planned meeting to discuss the business of Council, including briefing Councillors, and which is attended by at least half of the Councillors and one member of Council staff (excluding Council, Delegated Committee or Community Asset Committee meetings), the Chief Executive Officer must ensure that a summary of the meeting is:

- a) Tabled at the next convenient Council meeting; and
- b) Recorded in the minutes of that Council meeting.

The summary of the meeting should include:

- a) Time, date and location of the meeting;
- b) Councillors in attendance;
- c) Topics discussed;
- d) Positions of council officers in attendance;
- e) The organisation that any attendees external to council are representing; and
- f) Conflicts of interest declared, including the reason.

The Advisory Committees, Councillor Briefings or other Informal Meetings of Councillors are summarised at **Appendix A**.

Reports by Mayor and Councillors

By 4.00pm on the day of each Ordinary Council Meeting, the Mayor and Councillors submit a report detailing their attendance at various functions and activities since the last Council Meeting. These reports will be recorded in the minutes of this meeting.

Councillor Expenses – Quarter 1 from 1 July 2023 to 30 September 2023

Councillor Expenses Report for the period from 1 July 2023 to 30 September 2023, are included at **Appendix B** to this report. The Councillor Expenses report will also be made available on Council's website.

Darebin Nature Trust - appointment of new members

At its meeting on 23 October 2023, Council resolved to defer the appointment of members to the Darebin Nature Trust to the November 2023 Council meeting.

Council officers are working on finalising the necessary information to support the Advisory Committee recommendations. Additional time is required to ensure a thorough review of the recruitment process and to guide transparent and well-informed decision-making. This information is proposed to be presented in the next Governance Report at the December 2023 meeting. All stakeholders will be updated, with the delay not likely to impact the next scheduled DNT meeting (early 2024).

Confidential Council resolutions made public (October 2023)

In accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020* and Council's Public Transparency Policy 2020, Council decision making processes must be transparent unless when the Council is dealing with information that is confidential by virtue of this Act or any other Act.

Council information must be publicly available unless:

- i. The information is confidential by virtue of the Act or any other Act; or
- ii. Public availability of the information would be contrary to the public interest.

As part of Council's commitments made under the Public Transparency Policy, the number of Council resolutions made each month that were confidential but have been made public as the confidential nature of the information has lapsed, or Council resolved to make the resolution public, will be presented to Council on a monthly basis (if applicable).

At its confidential Council Meeting held on 23 October 2023, one confidential item, 'Item 13.1 Confidential Report – CEO Performance Review', was presented to Council for consideration. Council subsequently resolved to make its decision public.

The Council Resolution was carried unanimously as follows:

13.1 CEO Performance Review

'That Council:

- (1) Notes the CEO Employment Matters Committee is satisfied that the CEO performance during the past 6 months of his Performance Agreement is satisfactory.*
- (2) Notes the next CEO Performance review will be due 30 June 2024.*
- (3) Resolves to make this decision public in the Governance Report at the next Council meeting.'*

CONSIDERATION OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT (2020) PRINCIPLES**Financial Management**

Not applicable

Community Engagement

Not applicable

Other Principles for consideration**Overarching Governance Principles and Supporting Principles**

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

Public Transparency Principles

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

Strategic Planning Principles

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

Service Performance Principles

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

COUNCIL POLICY CONSIDERATIONS**Environmental Sustainability Considerations (including Climate Emergency)**

Not applicable

Equity, Inclusion, Wellbeing and Human Rights Considerations:

Not applicable

Economic Development and Cultural Considerations

Not applicable

Operational Impacts

Not applicable

Legal and Risk Implications

Not applicable

IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

The Councillor Expenses will be published on Council's website.

RELATED DOCUMENTS

- Governance Rules
- *Local Government Act 2020*

Attachments

- Summary of Advisory Committees, Councillor Briefing and other informal meetings of Councillors (**Appendix A**)
- Quarter 1 Councillor Expenses - Q1 1 July 2023 to 30 September 2023 (**Appendix B**)

DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST

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

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



SUMMARY OF COUNCILLOR ATTENDANCE AT ADVISORY COMMITTEES, COUNCILLOR BRIEFINGS AND OTHER INFORMAL MEETINGS OF COUNCILLORS

MEETING DETAILS:	Title:	Councillor Briefing Session
	Date:	9 October 2023
	Location:	Council Chamber (Hybrid Meeting)
PRESENT:	Councillors:	Cr. Newton (Deputy Mayor) (Chairperson), Cr. Dimitriadis (online), Cr. Greco (from 4.19pm), Cr. Hannan, Cr. Laurence, Cr. Rennie (online) Cr Dimitriadis left the meeting at 5.33pm and returned at 5.50pm
	Council Staff:	Peter Smith, CEO Tarnya McKenzie, General Manager Governance and Engagement (item 4.1, item 5.1) Kylie Bennetts, General Manager Community Rachel Ollivier, General Manager Operations and Capital (item 5.2) Vanessa Petrie, General Manager City Sustainability and Strategy (item 4.2) Enna Giampiccolo, Manager Governance & Communications (item 4.1, 5.1) Chad Griffiths, Manager City Futures (item 4.2) Neil Cooney, Acting Manager, City Development (Item 4.2) Matthew Cullen, Coordinator, Statutory Planning (Item 4.2) Lizzy Skinner, Manager City Works (item 5.2) Georgina Steele, Senior Governance Officer.
	External Attendees:	Lisa Tripodi, Independent Chair, Audit and Risk Committee
APOLOGIES:		Cr. Williams (Mayor) (Chairperson), Cr Trent McCarthy, Cr Lina Messina.

The Meeting commenced at 4.04pm

MATTERS CONSIDERED		DISCLOSURES AND COMMENTS
1	Pre-Planning Meeting Discussion and Questions	No disclosures were made
2	Presentation from ARC - Performance of the Audit and Risk Committee and the Internal Audit program	No disclosures were made
3	Response to Victoria's Housing Statement and associated planning reforms	No disclosures were made
4	Annual Report 2022/2023	No disclosures were made
5	Container Deposit Scheme	No disclosures were made

The Meeting concluded at 6.14pm

RECORD COMPLETED BY:	Officer Name:	Enna Giampiccolo
	Officer Title:	Manager, Governance and Communications.



SUMMARY OF COUNCILLOR ATTENDANCE AT ADVISORY COMMITTEES, COUNCILLOR BRIEFINGS AND OTHER INFORMAL MEETINGS OF COUNCILLORS

MEETING DETAILS:	Title:	Councillor Briefing Session
	Date:	16 October 2023
	Location:	Council Chamber (Hybrid Meeting)
PRESENT:	Councillors:	Cr. Williams (Mayor) (Chairperson), Cr. Newton (Deputy Mayor), Cr. Dimitriadis (online), Cr. Greco, Cr. Hannan, Cr. Laurence (in person from 4.25pm), Cr. Rennie from 4.35pm), Cr Lina Messina (online – left mtg from 4.12pm-4.26pm)
	Council Staff:	<p>Peter Smith, CEO</p> <p>Tarnya McKenzie, General Manager Governance & Engagement (item 4.3)</p> <p>Kylie Bennetts, General Manager Community (item 4.4, 4.5)</p> <p>Rachel Ollivier, General Manager Operations & Capital (item 4.1, 4.2)</p> <p>Vanessa Petrie, General Manager City Sustainability & Strategy (item 4.6)</p> <p>Enna Giampiccolo, Manager Governance & Communications</p> <p>Greg Phippen, Coordinator, Property Services (item 4.1, 4.2)</p> <p>Jo Smale, Manager Families, Youth & Children (item 4.2)</p> <p>Margaret Phillips, Leader Early Childhood Resources & Education (Item 4.2)</p> <p>Daryl Whitford, Special Adviser, (item 4.3)</p> <p>Lisa Wheelhouse, Acting Manager Customer & Transformation (item 4.3)</p> <p>Julie Wyndham, Coordinator Corporate Strategy (item 4.3)</p> <p>Matthew Pope, A/Manager, Creative Culture & Events (item 4.5)</p> <p>Leah Crossman, Art and Collections Coordinator (Item 4.5)</p> <p>Kirsty Baird, Community Hubs Coordinator (Item 4.5)</p> <p>Allan Middlemast, Acting Manager Climate Emergency & Sustainable Transport (item 4.6)</p> <p>Kevin de Leeuw, Acting Coordinator Transport Strategy and Programs (item 4.6)</p>

		Melanie McCarten, Manager Recreation & Libraries (item 4.4) Mel Berkley, Capital Programs (item 4.4) Anthea Kypreos, Manager Capital & Major Projects (Item 4.4) Jody Brodribb, Coordinator Governance Officer
	External Attendees:	
APOLOGIES:		Cr Trent McCarthy

The Meeting commenced at 4.02pm

MATTERS CONSIDERED		DISCLOSURES AND COMMENTS
1	Leasing & Licensing Policy - Draft	Cr Rennie declared a conflict due to her involvement in Jika Jika and did not attend the briefing.
2	Property Matters - Leasing of Kindergartens & Childcare Centres	No disclosures were made
3	2024-25 Planning and Budgeting Program	No disclosures were made
4	John Hall Pavilion Design	No disclosures were made
5	Migration Public Artwork Project Plan	No disclosures were made
6	Parking Permit Policy - Stage 2 Consultation feedback and draft policy - Response to Councillor questions	No disclosures were made
7	October Council Meeting Agenda Question Time	No disclosures were made
8	General Business	No disclosures were made
9	Renewal of Microsoft Enterprise Agreement (EA)	No disclosures were made
10	Cultural Diversity and Social Justice Oration	No disclosures were made

The Meeting concluded at 7.24pm

RECORD COMPLETED BY:	Officer Name: Officer Title:	Enna Giampiccolo Manager, Governance and Communications.
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Councillor Expenses - Q1 1 July 2023 - 30 September 2023 (If applicable GST is excluded)

	Cr Dimitriadis	Cr Greco	Cr Hannan	Cr Laurence	Cr McCarthy	Cr Messina	Cr Newton (Deputy Mayor)	Cr Rennie	Cr Williams (Mayor)	Total
										\$
Councillor Allowances	11,178	11,178	11,178	11,178	11,178	11,178	18,485	11,178	36,970	133,704
*Mobile (Usage & Data Plan)	95	136	95	136	95	136	95	95	95	981
Internet (Laptop) (*Cr. Laurence does not use a laptop)	41	41	41	-	41	41	41	41	41	327
Travel (Cabcharge/misc travel expenses)									502	502
Family care							895			895
Conferences (Inc. all related costs/travel/meals/accom)								116	122	238
Training & Development										-
Good Governance Training	167	167	167	167	167	167	167	167	167	1,500
Functions/events										-
Subscription / Memberships							564			564
Stationary / printing / equipment										-
Mayoral Vehicle									2,159	2,159
Total net expenses	11,481	11,522	11,481	11,481	11,481	11,522	20,247	11,597	40,056	140,871

Notes:

Telephone and internet charges are recorded in the month they are incurred. All other expenses are reported on a cash basis in the month that they are paid.

Cr's Greco, Laurence and Messina - Mobile plan Includes Ipad usage & data plan

Reimbursements to Council include payments from Councillors owed for a range of previous months which were paid for within this quarter

Further explanation of the expense categories is available in the City of Darebin Councillor Support and Expenses Policy June 2021.

9.2 2023-24 Q1 PERFORMANCE REPORT (FINANCIAL AND NON-FINANCIAL) ENDING 30 SEPTEMBER 2023

Author: Coordinator Corporate Strategy
Acting Chief Financial Officer

Reviewed By: General Manager, Customer and Corporate

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Council is required by the *Local Government Act 2020* (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.

The 2023-24 Quarter One (Q1) (July – September 23) Performance Report includes progress of the Council Plan Action Plan (CPAP), Capital Works Program, Council Resolutions, Procurement (**Appendix A**), and Financial Performance (**Appendix B**). The 2023-24 Council Plan Action Plan provides an overview of Council's performance in delivering the year three actions that will contribute to the completion of the four-year strategic actions in the (revised) Council Plan 2021-25.

Overall, the Q1 results indicate that delivery of the 2023-24 Council Plan Action Plan is progressing well, with 82.5% (66 actions) On Track, 5% (4 actions) Delayed, 1.3% (1 action) Off Track, 2.5% (2 actions) Completed, and 8.8% (7) actions Not Started, as detailed in **Appendix A**.

The 2023-24 Quarter One Financial Report in **Appendix B** provides an update of the financial results ending 30 September 2023.

To comply with *the Act*, the report includes the following comparisons for the three months ended 30 September 2023:

- A comparison of actual and budgeted results to date (s.97(2)(a))
- An explanation of any material variations (s.97(2)(b))
- Any other matters prescribed by the regulations (s.97(2)(c))

For the three months ended 30 September 2023, Council has recorded an operating surplus of \$114.93 million, which is \$2.78 million ahead of the year-to-date budget. After eliminating capital and other items, the adjusted underlying surplus is \$114.91 million, which is \$2.76 million more than the year-to-date budget.

An underlying surplus is the net surplus for the year adjusted for non-recurrent capital grants and contributions. It is an accepted measure of financial sustainability as it is not impacted by non-recurring or once-off items of revenue and expenses that can often mask the operating results.

Although Council is reporting a favourable year-to-date operating surplus, at this point in time there are no significant variances forecast compared to the adopted budget.

Significant favourable timing variances between actual results and the adopted YTD budget include;

- Delays in confirmation from insurer of the 2023-24 industrial special risk insurance premium (\$1,046k),
- Costs associated with the state funded Eighty-Six festival project (\$656k), and
- Delays in adoption of the Council's Enterprise Agreement 2022-25 (\$560k).

For the three months ended 30 September 2023, Council has expended \$6.15 million on the capital works program, which is \$0.3 million ahead of the year-to-date budget.

Additional carry forwards from 2022-23 and minor changes between projects has increased the adopted capital budget by \$3.25 million to \$33.29 million.

The financial position as at 30 September 2023, shows Council's cash (\$37.53M) and investment (\$13.65M) balance of \$51.18m is ahead of the YTD adopted budget of \$48.99m. YTD net current assets of \$151.35m is ahead of the YTD adopted budget of \$135.78m.

Officer Recommendation

That Council:


- (1) Endorses the quarter one Performance Report 2023-24 including Council Plan Action Plan Progress at **Appendix A**.
- (2) Notes the quarter one update of the Capital Works program at **Appendix A**.
- (3) Notes the quarter one update on Council Resolutions contained within this report for the current financial year 2023-24.
- (4) Notes the Financial Report for the three months ended 30 September 2023 at **Appendix B**.
- (5) Notes the quarter one Procurement update contained within this report.

BACKGROUND / KEY INFORMATION

Underpinning the 2023-24 Council Plan Action Plan is 2041 Darebin Community Vision and the (revised) Council Plan 2021-25 and its four strategic directions. For 2023-24 there are a total of 80 year three actions across the four strategic directions.

The quarterly Performance Report provides an overview of Council's performance in delivering year three actions that will contribute to the completion of the four-year strategic actions in the (revised) Council Plan 2021-25.

The Q1 Council Plan Action Plan progress report reflects the status of the actions adopted by Council on 26 June 2023.

Embedded into the Council Plan is the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan. This enables Council to meet its obligations under the *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008* by outlining how we will protect, promote, and improve the public health and wellbeing of our community. Strategic actions that form the health and wellbeing component are identified by a heart symbol . The 2023-24 Council Plan Action Plan includes 32 health and wellbeing actions equalling 40% of all year three actions. Health and Wellbeing actions were 84.4% On Track at the end of September 2023.

Council's financial report for the three months ended 30 September 2023 provide an overview of the Council's financial performance for the quarter. In accordance with section 97 of the *Local Government Act 2020*, as soon as practicable after the end of each quarter of the financial year, the Chief Executive Officer must ensure that a quarterly financial report is presented to the Council at a Council meeting which is open to the public.

The quarterly financial report must include a comparison of the actual and budgeted results to date; an explanation of any material variations and any other matters prescribed by the regulations and is attached as **Appendix B** to this report.

Previous Council Resolution

At its meeting held on 26 June 2023, Council resolved:

'That Council:

- (1) Note the revised Council Plan 2021-25 (incorporating the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan) and 2023-24 Council Plan Action Plan were out on community exhibition seeking community feedback during the period 23 May to 6 June 2023.*
- (2) Acknowledge the community feedback provided and note officers will write thanking individuals for their time in responding to the revised Council Plan 2021-25 and Council Plan Action Plan.*
- (3) Adopt the revised Council Plan 2021-25 (incorporating the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan) at Appendix A.*
- (4) Adopt the draft 2023-24 Council Plan Action Plan at Appendix B.*
- (5) Authorise the CEO to amend the Council Plan 2021-25 and 2023-24 Council Plan Action Plan to reflect any amendments resolved by the Council in the 2023-24 Budget.'*

ALIGNMENT TO 2041 DAREBIN COMMUNITY VISION

Strategic Direction 1: Vibrant, Respectful and Connected

Strategic Direction 2: Prosperous, Liveable and Flourishing

Strategic Direction 3: Climate, Green and Sustainable

ALIGNMENT TO 2021-25 COUNCIL PLAN

Strategic Direction 1: Vibrant, Respectful and Connected

Strategic Direction 2: Prosperous, Liveable and Flourishing

Strategic Direction 3: Climate, Green and Sustainable

Strategic Direction 4 Responsible, Transparent and Responsive

ALIGNMENT TO COUNCIL PLAN STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

This report provides an overview of Q1 performance focusing on financial and non-financial information, ending 30 September 2023.

DISCUSSION

Overall Performance Summary:

Performance measurement	Q4 summary commentary	Status
Council Plan Action Plan performance	As at the end of Q1, 30 September 2023, 82.5% (66 actions) were On Track, 5% (4 actions) were Delayed, 1.3% (1 action) was Off Track, 2.5% (2 actions) were Completed, and 8.8% (7) actions were Not Started.	
Capital Works Performance	A solid majority (93%) of programs and projects were 'On Track' as at 30 September 2023	93% On Track
Council Resolutions	In the first quarter of the 2023-24 financial year, 32 resolutions have been made through Council meetings, 9 have been completed and 23 resolutions are in progress.	31% completed and 69% in progress
Financial Performance	<p>Year-to-date operating surplus of \$114.93m is slightly ahead YTD adopted budget of \$112.15m. Main drivers behind the YTD variance represents timing differences attributed to user fees & charges and statutory fees and a permanent variance arising in Financial Assistance Grant budgeted in 2023/24 however, received in 2022/23.</p> <p>Year-to-date capital expenditure of \$6.15m is ahead the YTD adopted budget of \$5.82m. Main drivers behind the YTD variance represents timing differences attributed to building, plant, machinery and equipment and roads.</p> <p>Year-to-date cash (\$37.5M) and investment (\$13.7M) balance of \$51.2m is ahead of the YTD adopted budget of \$49.0m. Restricted cash and intended obligation (\$26.0m). YTD net current assets of \$151.3m is ahead of the YTD adopted budget of \$135.8m.</p>	Stable
Procurement Update	The primary procurement focus is on local business improvement each year. There is a slight percentage increase to local businesses payments from FY2022/23, resulting from higher transactions made from local suppliers by Council.	On track

Non- financial Performance:

Q1 Council Plan Action Plan Performance Update

The 2023-24 CPAP has a total of 80 yearly actions. As at the end of Q1, 30 September 2023, 81.3% (65 actions) were On Track, 5% (4 actions) were Delayed, 1.3% (1 action) was Off Track, 3.8% (3 actions) were Completed, and 8.8% (7) actions were Not Started.

Appendix A provides a detailed progress update on each action and its current status.

Figure One: Q1 yearly action progress for 2023-24 Council Plan Action Plan

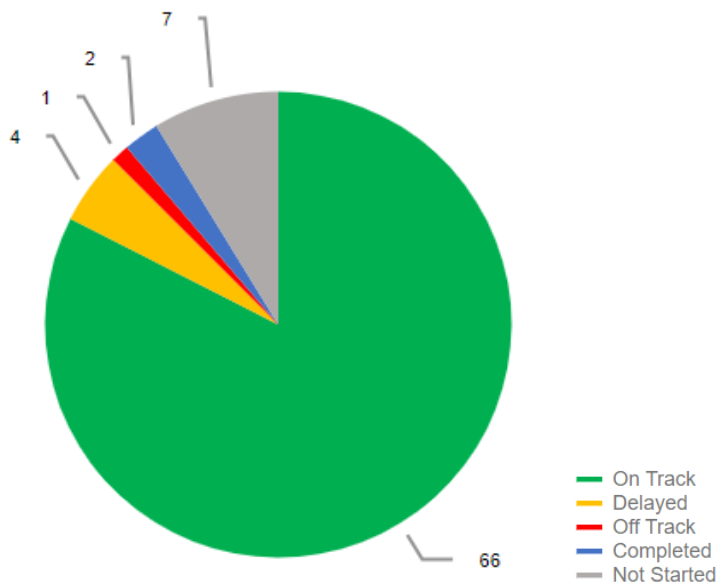
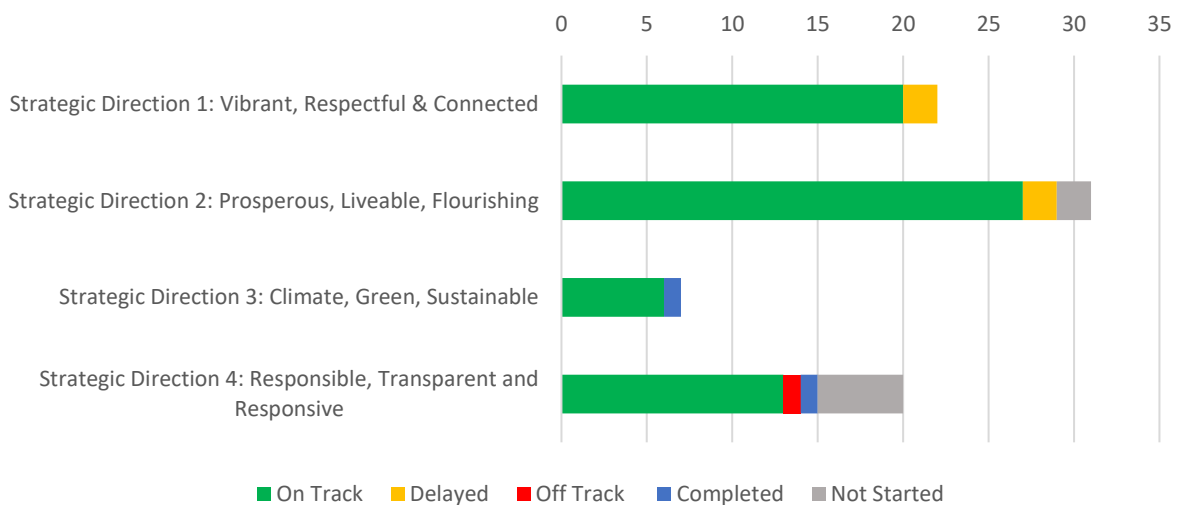


Figure Two: Q1 status of all actions by Strategic Direction

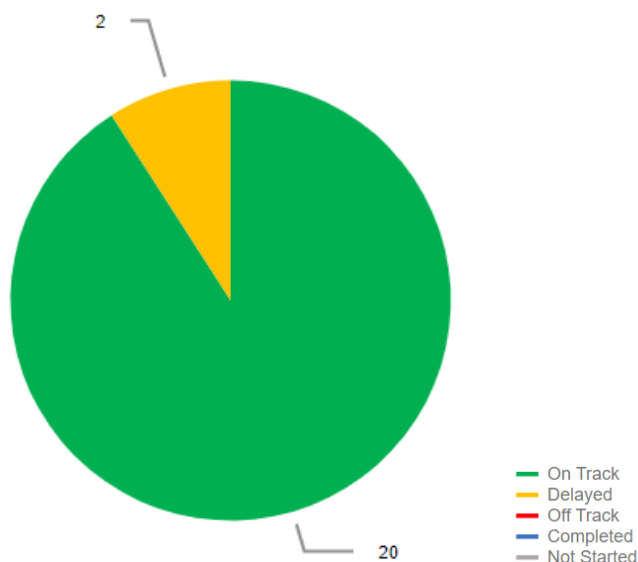
The following graphs illustrate the status of the 80 actions as of the end of Q1, as well as the progress breakdown for each Strategic Direction.



Strategic Direction 1: Vibrant, Respectful and Connected

Strategic direction one is focused on the community and its people. The priority and four-year objectives are centred on improving the lives of the community by celebrating diversity, supporting empowerment, connecting to, and preserving local history and providing vibrant and dynamic spaces, amenities, and events for all. This strategic direction has eight strategic objectives spanning across four years with 22 actions to be delivered throughout 2023-24.

Figure Three: Q1 Status of Strategic Direction 1 actions



The 2023-24 Council Plan Action Plan includes 22 actions that deliver Strategic Direction 1: Vibrant, Respectful and Connected.

Highlights this quarter include:

- Implementation of the Darebin Aboriginal Advisory Committee’s advice to Council on the Voice to Parliament Referendum.
- Continuing consultation with Aboriginal Organisations to establish a new community grants stream

At the end of Q1, the following two actions are reported as Delayed.

1-13 Develop a Cultural Diversity Action Plan

- The project has commenced with preliminary research and scoping and Council endorsed a submission to the Federal Government’s Multicultural Framework Review.

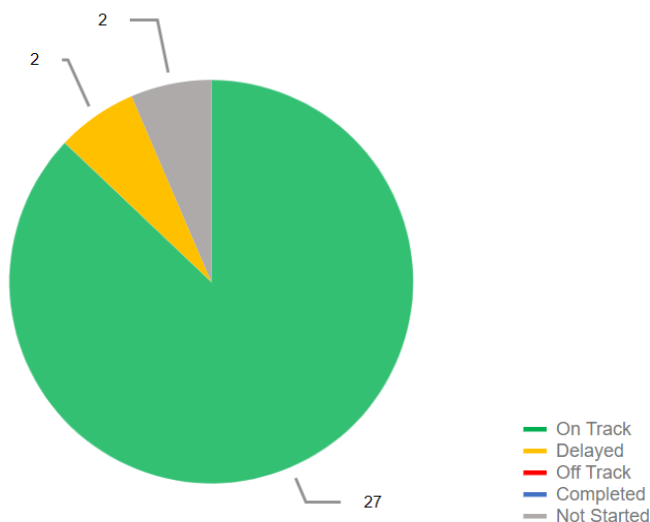
1-19 Develop a Sexuality, Sex and Gender Diversity Action Plan

- Project planning has commenced with a focus on engagement with the LGBTIQ+ communities and the Sexuality, Sex and Gender Diversity Advisory Committee.

Strategic Direction 2: Prosperous, Liveable and Flourishing

Strategic direction two is focused on creating infrastructure and spaces for the community to feel safe, respected and welcomed as well as to develop partnerships to support local businesses and community to drive growth and economic sustainability. This strategic direction has 11 strategic objectives, spanning across the four years with 31 actions to be delivered throughout 2023-24.

Figure Four: Q1 Status of Strategic Direction 2 actions



The 2023-24 Council Plan Action Plan includes 31 actions that deliver Strategic Direction 2: Prosperous, Liveable and Flourishing.

Highlights this quarter include:

- Planning and design work continued for proposed expansions of existing kindergarten facilities, supported in part by grants secured from the State Government.
- The redevelopment of Northcote Aquatic and Recreation Centre has reach practical completion with minor final works and testing in progress.
- Completion of design and consultation for the redevelopment of John Hall Reserve Pavilion.
- Traffic Blackspot design and construction continuing for sites identified at Belgrove/Ovando and Victoria and Mitchell Street Northcote.
- Liaison with the Department of Transport and Planning and other stakeholders regarding the interpretation of planning controls introduced by the Minister for Planning to protect the Preston Market via Amendment C182dare.

At the end of Q1, the following two actions are reported as Delayed.

- 2-2 Reservoir Leisure Centre minor renewal works and scoping for longer term redevelopment and rebuilding options
 - Timing has been delayed given the complexity of the project and the need for additional time to carefully think through the approach given its importance to our community and Council.

2-17 Develop a Community Safety Framework

- Work is being undertaken to build agreement and collaboration to improve safety across Darebin. This is being supported by community safety mapping to enable community members to share their experiences of places that make them feel safe or unsafe in Darebin.

At the end of Q1, the following two actions are Not Started.

2-31 Facilitate more crisis, affordable and social housing

- Council’s Property Strategy will incorporate consideration of these opportunities. The Property Strategy is a multi-year project and is reported as Off Track at the end of Q1.

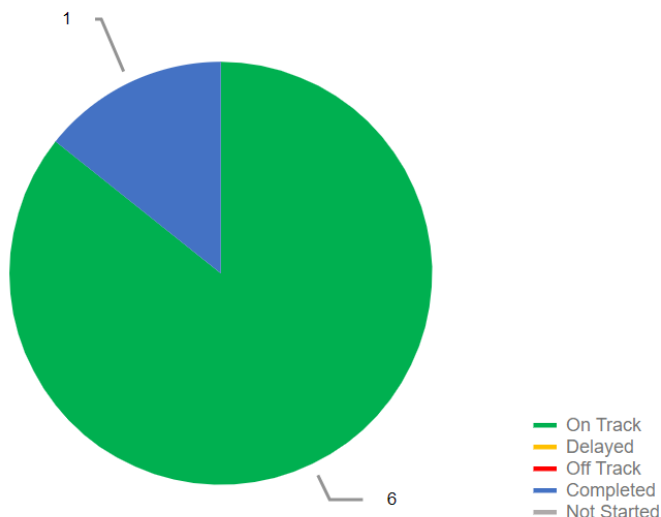
2-50 Host supplier forums, connecting Aboriginal-led businesses

- Engagement with Kinaway and local aboriginal businesses has not commenced due to end of year reporting commitments. Meetings are planned to recommence in the next quarter.

Strategic Direction 3: Climate, Green and Sustainable

Strategic Direction three is focused on building and ensuring the community and Council owned infrastructure is resilient to climate change, increasing canopy cover over Council managed land, improving water quality and biodiversity across Darebin, improving air and water by reducing carbon emissions through renewable energy, and reusing waste to stimulate a local circular economy. This strategic direction has five strategic objectives spanning across four years with 7 actions to be delivered throughout 2023-24.

Figure Five: Q1 Status of Strategic Direction 3 actions



The 2023-24 Council Plan Action Plan includes 7 actions that deliver Strategic Direction 3: Climate, Green and Sustainable.

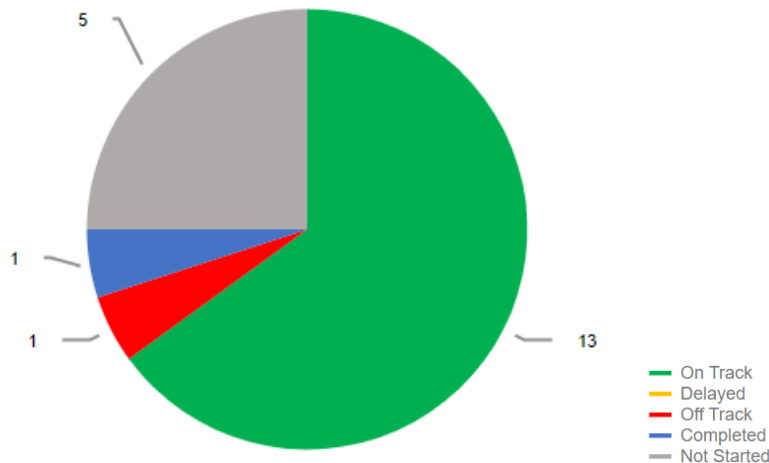
Highlights this quarter include:

- Community consultation and engagement was undertaken to inform future kerbside waste services including 1,000 responses to a survey and four workshops with groups that spoke a language other than English as a first language.

Strategic Direction 4: Responsible, Transparent and Responsive

Strategic direction four is focused on transparent and accountable decision making, ensuring that the organisation is financially responsible, managing resources effectively to ensure our current and future services meet the needs of our community, as well as planning and supporting our community through change. This strategic direction has five strategic objectives, spanning across four years with 20 actions to delivered throughout 2023-24.

Figure Six: Q1 status of Strategic Direction 4 actions



The 2023-24 Council Plan Action Plan includes 20 actions that deliver Strategic Direction 4: Responsible, Transparent and Responsive.

Highlights this quarter include:

- The Organisational Strategy has been developed and presented to a Councillor Briefing.
- The development of 79 service profiles is substantially complete.
- The Election Period Policy has been reviewed and considered by Council.
- Actions contained in the Good Governance Action Plan have been completed.
- Draft advocacy priorities have been developed and internal engagement completed.

At the end of Q1, the following action is Off Track.

4-5 Establish the Property Strategy

- Progress has been slower than planned due to unexpected competing priorities and data gaps that need to be addressed to undertake the strategic work. The work is being staged to prioritise critical elements to inform upcoming budget and planning decisions.

At the end of Q1, the following actions are Not Started.

4-8 Undertake drainage asset condition inspections

- Complete the review of the Drainage Asset Management Plan
- Complete the review of the Plant and Fleet Asset Management Plan
- These actions are due to commence in the second quarter

Complete the review of the ICT Asset Management Plan

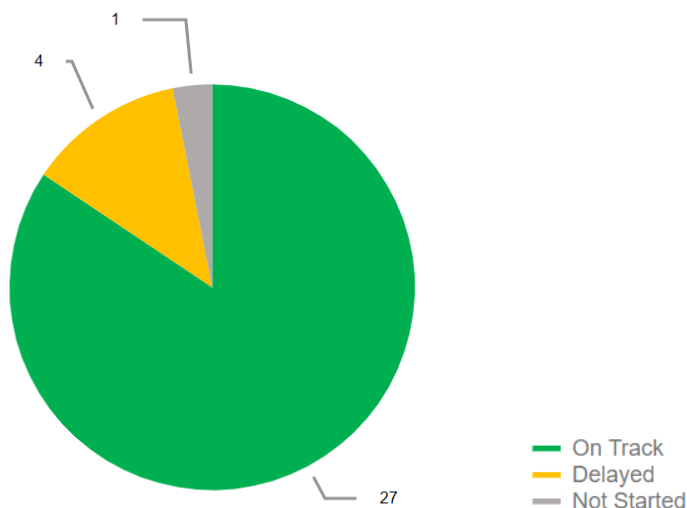
- This action is due to commence in the third quarter

Q1 2023-24 Health and Wellbeing Actions

There are 32 Health and Wellbeing actions in the 2023-24 Council Plan Action Plan. As at the end of Q1, 30 September 2023, 84.4% (27 actions) were On Track, 12.5% (4 actions) were Delayed, and 3.1% (1 action) were Not Started.

Refer to **Appendix A** for more information.

Figure Seven: Q1 status of Health and Wellbeing Actions



Health and Wellbeing Highlights

- There are 2,340 registered participants relating to 2023-24 annual sports club agreements with 2,491 registered for the summer 2023-24 season. Of the total number of participants, 1,052 are women and girls, 195 are from Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander backgrounds, 435 from low socio-economic backgrounds and 1,058 from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. Council is planning a census with sports clubs to obtain better baseline diversity data.
- Key messages to raise awareness of Bowel Cancer have been developed using collateral from Cancer Council. These messages will be delivered to the community via a social media campaign in the second quarter.
- There were 116 community grants awarded in 2023-24. 102 (87%) focused on activities supporting events that address loneliness through supporting social connectedness and positive mental health.
- Darebin's work on heat health with disadvantaged communities has focused on a partnership with the Darebin Information, Volunteer & Resource Service (DIVRS). This partnership has identified actions that Darebin could take to better protect the community in extreme heat conditions. These recommendations have been considered in the development of the draft Climate Emergency Plan, which will go out for community consultation in early 2024.
- Council developed key messages to encourage cessation of vaping and smoking using collateral from Quit Victoria. These messages will be delivered to the community via a social media campaign in the second quarter.

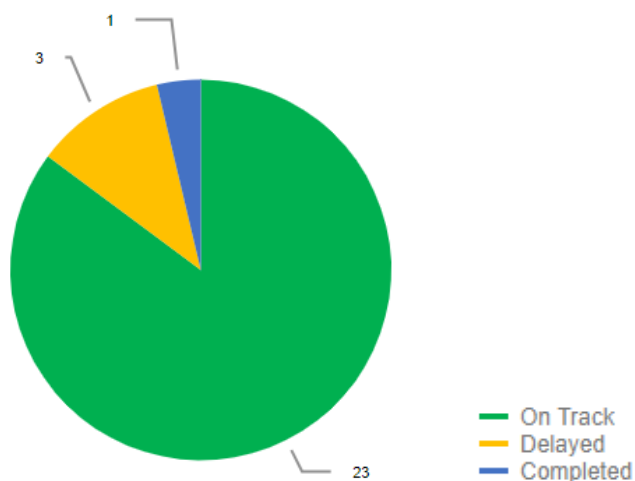
- Over 60 participants attended the weekly health kiosks sessions with nursing students. 50 community members attended free weekly exercise classes including women’s exercise, chair exercise, yoga, and Pilates to improve physical and mental health. Health information and discussion groups this quarter have covered Diabetes, Dementia, teeth care and other health topics with 30 participants attending our ongoing health education programs. We also ran a family healthy eating lunch box workshop with 30 people in attendance, facilitated weekly gardening activities with local participants learning to grow and share fresh health produce and facilitated fortnightly food relief, providing 30 packs of fresh fruit and vegetables to local community.

10 Big Actions

There are a total of twenty-seven year three actions that contribute to the achievement of the 10 Big Actions. Of these, twenty-three (85%) are On Track, three (12%) are Delayed, and one (4%) is Completed.

Refer to **Appendix A** for more information.

Figure Eight: Q1 status of actions contributing to the Big Actions

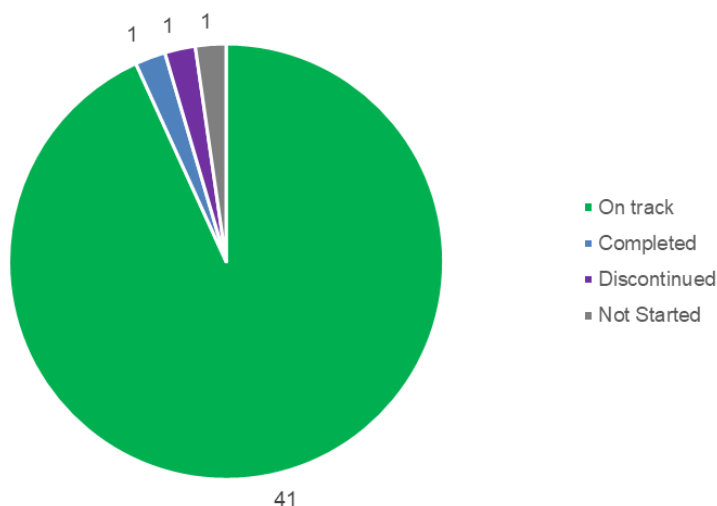


Capital Project Performance

Capital Works program is progressing well, and projects are continuously monitored to ensure their ongoing financial and strategic viability. ELT is updated monthly on individual projects including any additions/cancellations to planned program.

Annual budget for the 2023-24 Capital Works Program is \$30.03M and year-to-date expenditure as of 30 September is \$6.14M. The portfolio consists of 44 programs of works with 137 individual projects. As of 30 September 2023, forty-one (93%) projects/programs were on track, one project had been completed, one project had been discontinued, and one project had not started. Refer to the chart below for the overall breakdown.

Figure Nine: Q1 Status of Programs and Major Projects



Council Resolution Status Report

In the first quarter of the 2023-24 financial year, 32 resolutions were made through Council meetings, 9 have been completed and 23 resolutions are in progress.

Due to the complexity of some of the resolutions, they may span multiple years and can be superseded or updated as the initiatives progress.

The current status of Q1 Council resolutions is shown in the table below:

2023-24	In Progress	Completed	Total
1 July 2023 – 30 September (Q1)	22	10	32

Of the 32 Q1 resolutions, 17 (53%) were adopted per the Officer Recommendation and 15 (47%) were adopted by Council with an alternate resolution.

	Number of resolutions	Included in number of resolutions		
		Referred to Budget	Notice of Motion	Further report or Briefing requested
Officer Recommendation adopted as presented in the Agenda	17	0	0	1
Alternate Resolution adopted by Council	15	0	2	4
Total	32	0	2	5

Financial Performance

Overall Performance Summary:

Performance measurement	Q3 summary commentary	Status
Operating Performance	Year-to-date operating surplus of \$114.93m is slightly ahead YTD adopted budget of \$112.15m. Main drivers behind the YTD variance represents timing differences attributed to user fees & charges and statutory fees and a permanent variance arising in Financial Assistance Grant budgeted in 2023/24 however, received in 2022/23.	Stable
Capital Performance	Year-to-date capital expenditure of \$6.15m is ahead the YTD adopted budget of \$5.82m. Main drivers behind the YTD variance represents timing differences attributed to building, plant, machinery and equipment and roads.	Stable
Financial Performance	Year-to-date cash (\$37.5M) and investment (\$13.7M) balance of \$51.2m is ahead of the YTD adopted budget of \$49.0m. Restricted cash and intended obligation (\$26.0m). YTD net current assets of \$151.3m is ahead of the YTD adopted budget of \$135.8m.	Stable

A) Budget performance

1.1 Operating performance

Performance for the first three months of the financial year is ahead of the year-to-date budget by \$2.78m.

	YTD Budget \$'000	YTD Actual \$'000	YTD Var \$'000	Adopted Budget \$'000
Operating				
Revenue	162,849	162,130	(719)	205,838
Expenditure	(50,702)	(47,203)	3,499	(196,178)
Surplus (deficit)	112,147	114,927	2,780	9,660
Capital & other				
Revenue / grants	0	(20)	(20)	(1,286)
Adjusted underlying surplus/(deficit)	112,147	114,907	2,760	8,374

For the three months ended 30 September 2023, Council has recorded an operating surplus of \$114.93 million, which is \$2.78 million ahead of the year-to-date budget. After eliminating capital and other items, the adjusted underlying surplus is \$114.91 million, which is \$2.76 million more than the year-to-date budget.

An underlying surplus is the net surplus for the year adjusted for non-recurrent capital grants and contributions. It is an accepted measure of financial sustainability as it is not impacted by non-recurring or once-off items of revenue and expenses that can often mask the operating results.

Total expenditure year-to-date is favourable by \$3.50 million and total revenue year-to-date is unfavourable by \$0.72 million. The main items contributing to this favourable variance are lower expenditure for materials and services offset by lower income than budgeted from user fees, Financial Assistance Grant, and monetary contributions.

Revenue from operating grants is unfavorable due to the receipt of Financial Assistance Grant in 2022-23 budgeted in 2023-24.

Revenue in User and Statutory fees and fines are unfavourable due to lower traffic enforcement fines being issued and lower income at the Darebin Resource Recovery Centre.

1.2 Capital performance

	YTD Budget \$'000	YTD Actual \$'000	YTD Var \$'000	Adopted Budget \$'000	Budget + Cfwd \$'000
Property	2,873	4,550	(1,677)	5,950	6,882
Plant & equipment	1,622	538	1,084	5,200	5,815
Infrastructure	1,323	1,060	263	18,882	20,590
Total capital works	5,818	6,148	(330)	30,032	33,287

For the three months ended 30 September 2023, Council has expended \$6.15 million on the capital works program, which is \$0.3 million ahead of the year-to-date budget. The variance is due mainly to near completion of the Northcote Aquatic & Recreation Centre offset by delays in plant and equipment and infrastructure works.

Additional carry forwards from 2022-23 and minor changes between projects has increased the adopted capital budget by \$3.25 million to \$33.29 million.

1.3 Financial Position

	YTD Budget \$'000	YTD Actual \$'000	YTD Var \$'000	Adopted Budget \$'000	Audited 2023 \$'000
Cash and investments	48,985	51,181	2,196	51,441	55,967
Net current assets	135,781	151,345	15,564	25,677	36,969
Net assets and total equity	1,767,117	1,779,428	12,311	1,664,631	1,664,503

The FY23 audited closing cash position was \$2.9M (*refer statement of cash flow – cash & cash equivalents at beginning of Financial Year \$39M - \$452M*) higher than budgeted. Main reasons driving this is as follows:

- Unexpected early receipt of the FY24 Financial Assistance Grant. received in June 23.
- Timing differences between invoices received for payment and when cash is paid to suppliers, based on payment terms & conditions.
- Timing differences between invoices raised to customers and when cash is received by Council, based on payment terms and conditions.

The financial position as at 30 September 2023 shows a cash (\$37.53M) and investment balance (\$13.65M) of \$51.18 million, which is \$2.20 million ahead of budget. The variance is due mainly to timing differences in receipt of rates, fees and charges, payments to employees and suppliers and a higher opening cash and investment position compared with budget.

The cash and investment balance of \$51.18 million was sufficient to meet restricted cash and intended allocation obligations of \$26.05 million at the end of September. 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 \$151.35 million, which is \$15.56 million more than budget, primarily due to higher opening cash position and timing of rate receivables. The net asset position of \$1.78 billion is \$12.31 million more than budget. This is mainly due to the prior year revaluation increment of investment properties.

Procurement update

Council's Social and Sustainable Procurement Policy Principles continue to drive:

- Value for money is more than price paid.
- More opportunities for the local business community, in particular our social enterprises, to increase their capacity and capability to become suppliers to Council.
- Increased opportunities for local businesses and social enterprises to create capacity for local job seekers, especially those who are marginalised, disadvantaged and under-represented in the work force.
- Working to reduce our negative impact on the environment, support our climate emergency goals and move towards our aim of carbon neutral through purchasing behaviours.
- Lead procurement governance practices of integrity, probity and accountability while building organisational capability and expertise.
- Achieving equity, inclusion, and diversity outcomes.

Corporate Social Responsibility results to date

The following table below provides information of supplier and contract activities for Q1 period July to September 2023, which address our S&SP policy objectives in delivering local, social and sustainable benefits.

1. Local Economy

Supplier payments – local businesses identified by postcode within Darebin (includes contracted and adhoc payments)						
Q1 Results Supplier payments	Transacted all Suppliers	Transacted Local Suppliers	% Transacted Suppliers	\$ Total aggregated payments all Suppliers	\$ Local Suppliers aggregated payments	% Local Suppliers payments
Payment to suppliers (excludes statutory payments)	791	206	26%	\$22.759M	\$2.906M	13%
Expenditure will continue to be monitored. Practices include sourcing and inviting local suppliers to register and provide quotes and pricing.						
Contracts awarded by Category – formal contracts ranging from one to five year term.						
Q1 Results Awarded by Category	No of contracts awarded	No of contracted awarded locally	\$Total aggregated contract sum	Contract sum awarded locally	% \$awarded locally	YTD Local Aggregated
Works	3	-	\$10.621M	-	-	
Services	2		\$550K			
Consultancy	3		\$380K			
Goods (plant)	2	-	\$210k	-	-	
Total	10	-	\$11.761M	-	-	
Current aggregated year to date will continue to move due to timing of retiring, new or renewal of capital and operational needs. Local businesses may not always be able to fulfill our requirements thus needing to source outside of Darebin. The consequences are less funds going back into the community. Social objectives is a mandatory 25% weighted criteria priority and continue to be promoted in improving local economy and achieving social objectives. The procurement team continues to educate staff, local business registration in which sourcing activities include targeting local businesses.						

2. Social Opportunities –resulting from contracting

Q1 Results S&SP Objective	Awarded that identify supporting people	Contract total value	Aligned benefits (% or actual no).
Indigenous & Torres Strait staff	-	-	
Disadvantaged & local apprentices or trainees	5	\$230K	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employed disadvantaged staff through Disability Confident Recruiters 15% of workforce are local apprentices
Evidence of Local (15-25yo) Young 10% dividend	-	-	
Gender Equity	8	\$632k	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policies and Equality Diversity evidenced
Social or Charitable Enterprises engaged through contracting	7	\$607k	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kids Under Cover APM Employ Services Diversity Council of Australia Social Traders

Our Social procurement ensures that purchasing decisions always include equity, inclusion and diversity that will collectively achieve a more holistic community result, delivering maximum value for our community. Results continue to move as tendering dependencies are driven by new or renewing procurement events.

Mandatory selection criteria and overall weighting of 25% is applied to:

- Local businesses at 5%
- Social at 5%
- Sustainability at 5% and
- Remaining 10% aligned to either category according to the procurement type or activity.

3. Sustainability

Q1 Results S&SP Objective	No. contracts awarded that address environmental sustainable procurement objectives
Environmental policies and initiatives in reducing environmental impacts	8
Environmental Management System	1

CONSIDERATION OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT (2020) PRINCIPLES**Financial Management**

The Q1 2023-24 Financial Report is scheduled to be presented to the Audit and Risk Committee on 4 December 2023.

Community Engagement

The preparation of the 2023-24 Quarter 1 Performance Report (financial and non-financial) was supported by, and involved detailed discussions with, all senior leaders, project managers and relevant responsible officers.

Overarching Governance Principles and Supporting Principles

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

Public Transparency Principles

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

Strategic Planning Principles

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

Service Performance Principles

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

COUNCIL POLICY CONSIDERATIONS**Environmental Sustainability Considerations (including Climate Emergency)**

Procurement activities detail specific factors considered in all purchasing decisions including re-usable, recycled, low and energy efficient initiatives and climate emergency objectives in reducing CO2 emissions. The Q1 period of the 2023-24FY has resulted in 8 contracts which address Councils sustainable objectives by suppliers evidencing their policies, initiatives, and systems.

Suppliers have demonstrated initiatives and outcomes which actively reduce the reliance of fossil fuels, promote and market recycled materials, use of 100% recycled post consumers and FSC accredited paper products, and adhere to Darebin Council's Sustainable Design (ESD) policy.

Equity, Inclusion, Wellbeing and Human Rights Considerations:

The 2023-24 Council Plan Action Plan applies several Equity, Inclusion, Wellbeing and Human Rights Considerations.

In line with Darebin's Social and Sustainable Procurement policy, procurement evaluation criteria give weighting to social initiatives and practices.

Tenderers are assessed in how their business activities demonstrated a commitment to addressing disadvantaged and improving equity to deliver social value and positive social outcomes, including a commitment to employment of youth and Aboriginal people. Council continues to award contracts that employ indigenous staff or sub-contractors, young local youth students and trainees living locally and gender equity policies with a high percentage of gender diverse workforce.

Economic Development and Cultural Considerations

The 2023-24 Council Plan Action Plan applies several Economic Development and Cultural Considerations.

Evaluation criteria incorporated into procurement activities gave weight to Darebin based businesses. In addition, businesses that could demonstrate a local economic contribution through regular purchasing from local traders or the employment of local people were viewed favourably in line with evaluation criteria. Tendering activities includes a strong focus on employing local people, Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples, people from a CALD background, young people, those experiencing disadvantage and people with a disability whilst keeping a gender inclusive lens.

The Q1 period of the 2023-24FY results indicate awarded contracts will deliver long term economic benefits for the local community, and the actual aggregated payments to date continue to increase.

Operational Impacts

- Operational impacts are considered in delivering the Q1 Council Plan Action Plan.
- Operational impacts are considered in delivering the 2023-24 procurement activities.

Legal and Risk Implications

There are no known legal and / or risk implications from this report.



IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

2023-24 Q1 Performance Report will be accessible to the community via the Darebin website and social media.

RELATED DOCUMENTS

- 2041 Darebin Community Vision
- Revised 2021-25 Council Plan (incorporating Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan)
- 2023-24 Council Plan Action Plan
- 2023-24 Annual Budget
- Financial Plan 2021 to 2031
- *Local Government Act 2020*
- Social and Sustainability Procurement Policy December 2021
- 10-year Capital Works Plan

Attachments

- Appendix A - Q1 2023-24 Performance Report (**Appendix A**) [↓](#) 
- Appendix B - Financial Report for the 3 months ended 30 September 2023 (**Appendix B**) [↓](#) 

DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST

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

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



COUNCIL PLAN ACTION PLAN 2023–2024

PROGRESS REPORT Q1

the place
to live



INTRODUCTION

Welcome

Guiding the way Council delivers its services and plans for the future is the 2021–25 Council Plan. This plan was developed following the most recent election and revised in 2023-24. The plan outlines the objectives and aims of Council over its four-year term. Development of the plan included significant community consultation at community forums and social media.

Council has committed to four directions that will guide our actions and resources for a period of four years:

1. Vibrant, Respectful and Connected – making sure our community is one where all our people are valued, and no one is left behind
2. Prosperous, Liveable and Flourishing – building on Darebin’s strengths in relation to business, services and industry, and creating a city where all services and facilities to support a balanced, healthy life are easily accessible to our residents
3. Climate, Green and Sustainable – ensuring Darebin is a leader in responding to the climate emergency, and our natural environment is protected and enhanced
4. Responsible, Transparent and Responsive – recognising we are here to serve our community, in all its diversity, and that we govern transparently and accountably.

For more detail on the Council Plan, go to www.darebin.vic.gov.au/About-Council/Council-structure-and-performance/Council-plan

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

We invite you to read on to see what we’ve done to implement the Council Plan in the first quarter of the 2023-24 financial year.

INTRODUCTION

How to Read This Report

This document outlines our progress in completing the 2023-24 Council Plan Action Plan.

There are four sections to this report:

Section one provides an overview of the 10 Big Action themes.

Section two provides the quarter one action commentary and progress status for the 80 actions from the 2023-24 Council Plan Action Plan. The actions are arranged by Council Plan strategic direction/objective and have commentary that outlines the progress against that action as at 30 September 2023.

Section three is the Capital Works Portfolio Status Report for Quarter One which provides the status and progress of all programs and major projects.

Section four is the status of Council Resolutions report which provides a summary of the organisation's progress in implementing Council's decisions for the 2023-24 financial year.

Darebin at a Glance

The City of Darebin is located between five and fifteen kilometres north of Melbourne's central business district.

It has been home to the Wurundjeri people for many thousands of years.

Our city covers 53 square kilometres of land stretching from the inner northern suburbs of Northcote and Fairfield to Reservoir and Bundoora.

In 2022, our city's estimated population was 150,325 people, and this is forecast to increase to 215,360 by 2041.

We are home to one of Victoria's largest and most diverse communities in the realms of culture, language, religion, socioeconomic background, employment status, occupation and housing need. In 2021, 46,688 of our residents were born overseas; 18 per cent had arrived in Australia in the five years prior.

We have a diverse mix of properties – with 68,081 residential properties, 4,661 business properties and 531 mixed-use properties. Our largest industries are education and training, retail, manufacturing, health care and social assistance.

As a Council, we are responsible for a large part of our city's infrastructure and natural habitat. We own, manage, or maintain 333 buildings, 790 hectares of open space, 27 sports reserves, seven natural reserves, 57 playing fields/sports grounds, 130 playgrounds, 29 wetlands, 84,300 trees, 530 km of roads, 30 km of shared paths, 1,045 km of sealed footpaths, 66 road and foot bridges, 628 km of stormwater pipes, 23,194 stormwater pits, and 30 gross pollutant traps (structures that trap solid waste such as litter).

While our city's social and economic prosperity is changing, with more of our residents earning higher incomes, we still have many of our residents experiencing disadvantage.

The Socio-Economic Index for Areas (SEIFA) score ranks areas based on indicators that contribute to disadvantage (including unemployment and income). In 2021, Darebin's SEIFA disadvantage score was 1018, which is the same as for Greater Melbourne.

In March 2023, our unemployment rate was 3.9 per cent. This is slightly higher than the unemployment rate for Greater Melbourne (3.8 per cent), and Victoria overall (3.7 per cent).

10 BIG ACTIONS

Big Action Number	Council Plan Strategic Action Numbers	Big Action Description
BA1	(None in 2023-24)	Build Infrastructure for the future by developing Northcote Aquatic and Recreation Centre, redeveloping BT Connor Pavilion in Reservoir, and building Darebin Intercultural Centre in Preston.
BA2	2-2 2-3 2-6	Plan infrastructure for decades to come by redeveloping Reservoir Leisure Centre, activating Edwardes Lake Boat House in Reservoir, building new kindergarten facilities, and undertaking a feasibility study for a Global Learning Hub in Preston.
BA3	2-15 2-16 3-1 3-2 3-18	Continue to lead with our response to the climate emergency by updating our Climate Emergency Plan to set out how to best achieve zero greenhouse gas emissions for Darebin by 2030, offering solar installations and energy retrofits to pensioners and vulnerable communities, delivering new business and community power purchase partnerships, supporting a shift to a circular economy and programs aimed to improve safety for people cycling, walking and wheeling, increasing active travel which will also reduce transport emissions.
BA4	1-1 1-2 1-3 1-4	Deepen our commitment to truth and justice for First Nations communities in partnership with the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation and Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander peoples who live and work in Darebin.
BA5	2-40	Support vulnerable members of our community by providing support with COVID-19 recovery, expanding our Homelessness Assertive Outreach program, and supporting community-led programs in East Reservoir and East Preston, to achieve greater physical and mental health, and wellbeing for all.


10 BIG ACTIONS

Big Action Number	Council Plan Strategic Action Numbers	Big Action Description
BA6	2-49 2-52	Champion local business and creative industries by providing support with COVID-19 recovery, facilitating the establishment of a Darebin Chamber of Commerce, and improving the lighting and safety of our retail precincts and business activity centres.
BA7	1-6 1-7 1-10 1-12 1-13 1-14 1-19 1-35	Build a more inclusive community for all by supporting Darebin's multicultural communities, reducing racism and discrimination, increasing access to our Council's services and sporting assets by groups who are under-represented, developing our Disability Action Plan, to improve access for all to our services and infrastructure, and achieving Rainbow Tick accreditation (best practice in LGBTQIA+ inclusion) for our services and activities.
BA8	2-33 2-62	Improve the quality of development and work to protect all that we love about Darebin by pursuing protections for Preston Market, conducting a Planning Scheme review informed by in-depth community consultation, and reviewing to amend our Parking Permit Policy.
BA9	3-11	Protect our natural environment and biodiversity by significantly improving water quality in Edwardes Lake, increasing tree canopy coverage in our parks, residential areas and retail precincts, and enhancing understorey planting.
BA10	1-20 2-6	Expand our delivery of quality universal services across the lifespan by providing more three-year old kindergarten places, continuing to deliver our flagship Age Friendly Darebin Project, expanding aged care direct services, and registering to become a home care package provider.

Council Plan

1.0: Vibrant, Respectful and Connected

1.1: We will prioritise and respect the voices and aspirations of Traditional Owners and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in Darebin



H&W	Strategic Action	Action	Comments	Status	Status Explanation
	<p>[1-1] In consultation with the Traditional Owners, Darebin Aboriginal Advisory Committee and local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities develop and commence implementation of a three-year Aboriginal Action Plan</p> <p>Key elements of this Plan, in addition to items mentioned in the Council Plan, to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop partnerships with local Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations to enhance our work towards mutual goals A meaningful and comprehensive response to the six key requests of DAAC's Our Black Lives Matter statement to Council Continue to implement and expand our Aboriginal Employment Strategy and Aboriginal Action Plan Begin discussions with Traditional Owners to understand the feasibility and resources required for Council to hand back land and responsibility for land management 	<p>In consultation with the Traditional Owners, Darebin Aboriginal Advisory Committee and local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities develop and commence implementation of a three-year Aboriginal Action Plan.</p> <p>Key elements of this Plan, in addition to items mentioned in the Council Plan, to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop partnerships with local Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations to enhance our work towards mutual goals A meaningful and comprehensive response to the six key requests of DAAC's Our Black Lives Matter statement to Council Continue to implement and expand our Aboriginal Employment Strategy and Aboriginal Action Plan Begin discussions with Traditional Owners to understand the feasibility and resources required for Council to hand back land and responsibility for land management 	<p>The focus in this quarter has been implementing the Darebin Aboriginal Advisory Committee's advice to Council on the Voice to Parliament Referendum. The Aboriginal Action Plan draft themes were presented to the Aboriginal Advisory Committee in September with further work to be completed over the next few months.</p>		On Track






 Completed
  On Track
  Delayed
  Off Track
  Not Started



H&W	Strategic Action	Action	Comments	Status	Status Explanation
	[1-2] Progress a partnership with the Wurundjeri Woiwurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation and continue to progress “decolonising” Bundoora Park	Progress a partnership with the Wurundjeri Woiwurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation and continue to progress “decolonising” Bundoora Park	The re-establishment of a Wurundjeri Garden has been highlighted by the Traditional Owners as a key priority in the 'decolonising' Bundoora Park initiative. This project is scheduled to be completed in time for the Yarning Conference 2023 on 10 October, with further planting to be scheduled in months to come.		On Track
	[1-3] Deliver initiatives that support truth telling, and provide opportunities for culturally diverse communities, and our broader Darebin community, to learn about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and history	Deliver initiatives that support truth telling, and provide opportunities for culturally diverse communities, and our broader Darebin community, to learn about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and history	Bundoora Homestead launched the Truth Telling space as part of the ongoing partnership with Wurundjeri and Traditional Owners. The second stage truth telling space at Bundoora Farm is near completion. This work will support the sixth annual School Yarning conference. In addition to this project, Council has again delivered the annual Ganbu Gulin event. In this event, Traditional Owners welcome new citizens to Darebin. Council has also focused on delivering the advice provided by the Darebin Aboriginal Advisory Committee in relation to the Voice to Parliament referendum.		On Track
	[1-4] Increase support to Aboriginal community-controlled organisations by incorporating a specific funding stream into our Community Grants Program	Establish an appropriate grant stream, subject to guidance from the Darebin Aboriginal Advisory Committee	Consultation with Aboriginal Organisations is ongoing. Five organisations out of a target of ten have been completed. The remaining five will be consulted before the end of October.		On Track

 Completed
  On Track
  Delayed
  Off Track
  Not Started

1.2: We will develop partnerships with organisations from across our city, to value and include people from multicultural and diverse backgrounds





H&W	Strategic Action	Action	Comments	Status	Status Explanation
	[1-6] Support and promote a significant increase in participation in Darebin's sports clubs, in particular, for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, women, girls, people of all abilities, and multicultural and diverse communities	Support and promote a significant increase in participation in Darebin's sports clubs, especially for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, women, girls, people of all abilities, and multicultural and diverse communities	There are 2,340 registered participants relating to 2023-24 annual sports club agreements with 2,491 registered for the summer 2023-24 season. Addressing participant diversity, 1,052 are women and girls, 195 are from Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander backgrounds, 435 from low socio- economic backgrounds and 1,058 from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. Council is planning a census with sports clubs to obtain better baseline diversity data. Get Active In Darebin is focused on delivering programs to get our community, particularly those from first nations, CALD and new arrival backgrounds, participating in free introductory physical activities. Council is supporting a range of events to increase participation by communities at risk of exclusion including Annual Women's Cricket Carnival conducted by North Metro Cricket Association, Somali Week (December), Samoan Cricket Carnival (January) and Aboriginal Junior Football and Netball Carnival (September).		On Track
	[1-7] Encourage and reward sporting and leisure groups/sporting teams that use Council's recreation spaces, by reducing user fees to those that demonstrate inclusion for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island peoples, women, girls, people of all abilities, and multicultural and diverse communities	Encourage and reward sporting and leisure groups/sporting teams that use Council's recreation spaces, by reducing user fees to those that demonstrate inclusion for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island peoples, women, girls, people of all abilities, and multicultural and diverse communities	Council's Performance Subsidy Program is evaluated annually, with an in-depth review undertaken to increase the number of clubs participating in the program. Forty sports clubs participated in 2022-23.		On Track

 Completed
  On Track
  Delayed
  Off Track
  Not Started



H&W	Strategic Action	Action	Comments	Status	Status Explanation
	[1-9] Partner with Bowel Cancer Screening, Cancer Council Victoria and local community organisations to increase awareness of bowel cancer and improve community understanding, including for Aboriginal and culturally and linguistically diverse communities, of the benefits of screening, with a particular focus on underrepresented groups undertaking bowel cancer screening	Partner with Bowel Cancer Screening, Cancer Council Victoria and local community organisations to increase awareness of bowel cancer and improve community understanding, including for Aboriginal and culturally and linguistically diverse communities, of the benefits of screening, with a particular focus on underrepresented groups undertaking bowel cancer screening	Key messages to raise awareness of Bowel Cancer have been developed using collateral from Cancer Council. These messages will be delivered to the community via a social media campaign in the second quarter.		On Track

 Completed
  On Track
  Delayed
  Off Track
  Not Started

1.3: We will help to build an inclusive and empowered community, where social cohesion and community harmony are fostered

H&W	Strategic Action	Action	Comments	Status	Status Explanation
	[1-10] Develop the Disability Action Plan to improve access to services and infrastructure for our residents and visitors	Develop an implementation plan for the Disability Action Plan to improve access to services and infrastructure for our residents and visitors	The Disability Action Plan 2023 - 2025 has been compiled and teams have recorded their actions in their Unit Work Plans to be implemented and reported on throughout the year. The Access and Inclusion team is meeting with each Division's leadership team to discuss their priorities for the coming year and the actions that will have the most impact on our community. Actions within the plan are being implemented including the completion of the Writeability program in Darebin, the launch of the Disability Pride Mural on the Preston Library and the commencement of the Good Access is Good Business program with local services and businesses.		On Track
	[1-12] Develop and deliver a program to support middle years students (later primary school, and early secondary school-aged) from Darebin schools to connect with each other, and take action on systemic racism issues together, to support student voices	Evaluate the completed pilot program to support middle years students to connect with each other, and act on systemic racism issues together, to support student voices and provide findings to Department of Education and Training for consideration in any future programs they may choose to run	Feedback from most participants has been received on the Council led Year 6 Anti Racism Workshop. A report including suggestions received for improvement will now be collated and presented to the Department of Education and Training for consideration.		On Track

 Completed
  On Track
  Delayed
  Off Track
  Not Started

H&W	Strategic Action	Action	Comments	Status	Status Explanation
	[1-13] Develop a Cultural Diversity Action Plan to improve access, participation and engagement of people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds including:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to venues and encourage participation in Council services where participation is low • Work with our sporting and recreation clubs to increase participation • Identify creative opportunities to reflect Darebin's different cultures in the built environment across our city • Work with our local organisations to create an active Community Leader network comprising community leaders from our culturally diverse communities 	Develop a Cultural Diversity Action Plan to improve access, participation and engagement of people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds including:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to venues and encourage participation in Council services where participation is low • Work with our sporting and recreation clubs to increase participation • Identify creative opportunities to reflect Darebin's different cultures in the built environment across our city • Work with our local organisations to create an active Community Leader network comprising community leaders from our culturally diverse communities 	The Cultural Diversity Action Plan project commenced with preliminary research and scoping. This has involved gathering data from multiple sources and internal stakeholder consultation. In this quarter, Council also prepared a submission to the Federal Government's Multicultural Framework Review. The submission was endorsed by Council on 25 September.		Delayed







 Completed
  On Track
  Delayed
  Off Track
  Not Started

1.4: We will embrace diversity and ensure everyone is included in our society, and no one is left behind - by combating discrimination, and championing equity, inclusivity and diversity

H&W	Strategic Action	Action	Comments	Status	Status Explanation
	[1-14] Continue to become more LGBTIQ+ inclusive across Council's services and activities including work towards Rainbow Tick accreditation for several services	Continue to become more LGBTIQ+ inclusive across Council's services and activities including work towards Rainbow Tick accreditation for several services	Collection of and reporting on baseline data regarding Council's Rainbow Tick Accreditation readiness has been finalised. The accreditation scope has been confirmed. Preparation for accreditation has commenced.		On Track
	[1-19] Develop a Sexuality, Sex and Gender Diversity Action Plan to support the inclusion, rights and wellbeing of LGBTIQ+ communities and work to combat homophobia, biphobia and transphobia	Develop a Sexuality, Sex and Gender Diversity Action Plan to support the inclusion, rights and wellbeing of LGBTIQ+ communities and work to combat homophobia, biphobia and transphobia	This action is being progressed in line with Council's work towards the Rainbow Tick Accreditation. Project planning has commenced, with a focus on engagement with the LGBTIQ+ communities and the Sexuality, Sex and Gender Diversity Advisory Committee.		Delayed

 Completed
  On Track
  Delayed
  Off Track
  Not Started

1.5: We will increase social connection to reduce isolation and loneliness, and support positive mental health

H&W	Strategic Action	Action	Comments	Status	Status Explanation
	[1-20] Deliver Age Friendly Darebin and implement aged care reforms	Deliver Age Friendly Darebin and implement aged care reforms	The processes for the implementation and oversight Deliver Age Friendly Darebin are in progress. Service Improvement plans are in place and form part of the broader suite of actions preparing for aged care reforms with oversight from the Project Control Group (PCG). An updated Communications plan has also been developed.		On Track
	[1-22] Review opportunities through Council services, and in partnership with others, to address the digital divide for public housing and high-risk accommodation residents, culturally and linguistically diverse communities and other excluded groups	Review opportunities through Council services, and in partnership with others, to address the digital divide for public housing and high-risk accommodation residents, culturally and linguistically diverse communities and other excluded groups	A digital support program has been confirmed and a cyber security course at East Preston Community Centre is to commence in Term 3 in partnership with Council's libraries team and key partners. Outreach will be undertaken to promote these programs with people from the local community, with a particular focus on excluded groups.		On Track
	[1-23] Provide grants, and deliver and facilitate programs, services, and events that address loneliness, through supporting social connectedness and positive mental health	Provide grants, and deliver and facilitate programs, services, and events that address loneliness, through supporting social connectedness and positive mental health	There were 116 community grants awarded in 2023-24. 102 (87%) focused on activities supporting events that address loneliness through supporting social connectedness and positive mental health.		On Track



 Completed
  On Track
  Delayed
  Off Track
  Not Started

1.6: We will ensure our festivals, events and functions are inclusive and respond equitably to, and value the diverse needs and aspirations of, our community

H&W	Strategic Action	Action	Comments	Status	Status Explanation
	[1-28] Deliver an annual cultural diversity and social cohesion oration as part of the FUSE festival	Deliver a new annual cultural diversity and social cohesion oration	<p>Planning is currently underway to deliver our annual Molly Hadfield Social Justice Oration as an independent event in March 2024, adjacent to our new Out of the Park Picnic signature event delivery and aligned to our FUSE Autumn 2024 delivery period.</p> <p>Planning and development of a new social justice oration to be held at the Intercultural Centre to align with the World Day of Cultural Diversity on Tuesday 21 May 2024 is also underway.</p>		On Track
	[1-29] Deliver a signature cultural event as part of the FUSE festival in and around the grounds of the Bundoora Homestead Art Centre that showcases culturally diverse artists, music, food, participatory workshops and performances.	Deliver a signature cultural event as part of the FUSE festival in and around the grounds of the Bundoora Homestead Art Centre that showcases culturally diverse artists, music, food, participatory workshops and performances	<p>Planning is currently underway to produce a signature festival event at Bundoora Homestead Arts Centre in March 2024. This re-imagined Out Of The Park Picnic event will include the Meet the Makers program, Our Songs, Darebin Arts prize exhibition and expands on our culturally diverse artists, music, food, participatory workshops and performance programs. We are currently negotiating with MAV about co-programming opportunities within a specified scope with consideration of Council objectives. FUSE will balance grass roots cultural community programming with innovative and contemporary community engaged creative outcomes. This one-day event will amalgamate FUSE Autumn 2024 into a single, multifaceted festival event.</p>		On Track






 Completed
  On Track
  Delayed
  Off Track
  Not Started

1.7: We will continue to be a local government leader in the prevention of violence against women, and gender equity

H&W	Strategic Action	Action	Comments	Status	Status Explanation
	[1-30] Implement and extend our Gender Equality and Preventing Violence Against Women Action Plan, using an intersectional approach	Implement and extend our Gender Equality and Preventing Violence Against Women Action Plan, using an intersectional approach	Darebin's Family Violence Network was convened in August with a guest presentation from Switchboard. In September Darebin's Gender Equity Advisory Committee was convened. A grant submission for Free from Violence was prepared and proposes to fund a part-time Gender Equity Project Officer to lead the implementation of the Local Government Guide on Preventing Family Violence and All Forms of Violence Against Women for Darebin. In addition, funding would allow for associated training for Darebin employees.		On Track

 Completed
  On Track
  Delayed
  Off Track
  Not Started

1.8: We will work towards a discrimination-free, and systemic racism-free Darebin, and reduce the impact of poverty and disadvantage

H&W	Strategic Action	Action	Comments	Status	Status Explanation
	[1-34] Address inequities in the distribution of resources, and ensure the needs of our most vulnerable people are prioritised by implementing our Towards Equality Framework	Address inequities in the distribution of resources, and ensure the needs of our most vulnerable people are prioritised by implementing our Towards Equality Framework	The Towards Equality Framework has been implemented mostly through the application of the Equity Impact Assessment (EIA), incorporating the legally mandated Gender Impact Assessment (GIA). In the first quarter, ten EIAs were undertaken on a range of plans, including Community Infrastructure Plan; Integrated Family Children and Youth Strategy; Outdoor Dining Policy; McDonnell Park upgrade; an Anti-racism project; as well as the staff Code of Conduct and Equal Employment Opportunity Policy.		On Track
	[1-35] Work with the Darebin Ethnic Communities Council, our community, and local organisations, to foster respect and address systemic racism	Work with the Darebin Ethnic Communities Council, our community, and local organisations, to foster respect and address systemic racism	Planning continues with partners to develop anti-racism programs and initiatives. In line with the Darebin Aboriginal Advisory Committee advice to Council, reporting racism collateral was developed and shared in Council venues with a focus on the lead up to the Voice to Parliament Referendum. In partnership with Victoria University, Council is preparing to undertake a series of focus groups to assist build baseline data related on experiences of racism. This data will inform priorities in Council's human rights and anti-racism work.		On Track
	[1-36] Continue to implement the Welcoming Cities Standard, with the aim of becoming a 'Mentoring' level Council	Continue to implement the Welcoming Cities Standard, with the aim of becoming a 'Mentoring' level Council	During Q1, evidence has been collected from across the organisation in support of Welcoming Cities Accreditation. A submission will be finalised by February 2024.		On Track




 Completed
  On Track
  Delayed
  Off Track
  Not Started

H&W	Strategic Action	Action	Comments	Status	Status Explanation
	[1-38] Mitigate the impacts of climate change on the health and wellbeing of our disadvantaged communities	Through the development and implementation of the Climate Emergency Plan mitigate the impacts of climate change on the health and wellbeing of our disadvantaged communities	Darebin's work on heat health with disadvantaged communities has focused on a partnership with the Darebin Information, Volunteer & Resource Service (DIVRS). This partnership has identified actions that Darebin could take to better protect the community in extreme heat conditions. These recommendations have been considered in the development of the draft Climate Emergency Plan, which will go out for community consultation in early 2024.		On Track






 Completed
  On Track
  Delayed
  Off Track
  Not Started

2.0: Prosperous, Liveable and Flourishing


2.1: We will deliver equitable and accessible infrastructure to provide opportunities for our community to live well

H&W	Strategic Action	Action	Comments	Status	Status Explanation
	[2-2] Redevelop Reservoir Leisure Centre, incorporating opportunities to enhance health, wellbeing and socioeconomic outcomes	Undertake minor renewal works while commencing scoping for the longer-term options for the redevelopment and rebuilding of the centre to enhance health, wellbeing and socioeconomic outcomes	Following a discussion with the Executive Leadership Team (ELT) in relation to PACE and desired outcomes, the multidisciplinary project team are refining their approach to go to ELT prior to briefing Council. Timing of this has been delayed given the complexity of the project and the need for additional time to carefully think through the approach given its importance to our community and Council.		Delayed
	[2-3] Invest in the Edwardes Lake Boathouse in Reservoir to support a long-term lease arrangement	Continue to advocate to the descendants of the original owner to remove the restrictive covenants so appropriate renewal works of the boat house can occur	Council aims to update the Edwardes Lake Boathouse with the aim of finding a commercial operator to bring it to life as a venue or business. While undertaking its due diligence for this project, Council identified that the original gifting deed of the land to the Council included a very old restrictive covenant which prohibited “the manufacture, storage, sale or distribution of fermented spiritous and intoxicating liquors”. This needs the approval of the covenantor to remove it or vary it and it has been difficult to identify and communicate with the covenantor who is in the UK. Council is making progress and is persistently working through the necessary steps; however, it is difficult to estimate the length of time this will take. Once the covenant is removed, Council will also need to update the building for it to be suitable for operators by including toilets, air conditioning, plumbing, new windows and doors to the deck, and deck extension).		On Track

 Completed
  On Track
  Delayed
  Off Track
  Not Started







H&W	Strategic Action	Action	Comments	Status	Status Explanation
	[2-6] Expand funded 3-year-old kindergarten	Expand funded 3-year-old kindergarten	Planning and design work has continued for proposed expansions of existing kindergarten facilities, in part supported by two new planning grants that Council successfully secured from the State Government. Discussions are ongoing with the State Government to finalise a Building Blocks Partnership Agreement, which would secure State funding for several planned projects. This will be presented for Council consideration in the second quarter.		On Track
	[2-9] Redevelop KP Hardiman Pavilion in Kingsbury	Continue pavilion design and commence construction	The design of the new KP Hardiman Pavilion is progressing well. The construction of the pavilion has been programmed to start in 2024-25 in Council's 4-year capital works budget and will be considered as part of next year's budget discussions.		On Track
	[2-10] Redevelop the Northcote Aquatic and Recreation Centre	Complete construction of the Northcote Aquatic and Recreation Centre	The redevelopment of the Northcote Aquatic and Recreation Centre is complete for practical purposes with minor final works and testing in progress. The centre will re-open in late November.		On Track
	[2-11] Develop an Integrated Families, Youth and Children Strategy	Develop an Integrated Families, Youth and Children Strategy	Background research and planning for community engagement have been completed. Community engagement is scheduled to commence in October following endorsement by Council of the approach in Quarter 1.		On Track

 Completed
  On Track
  Delayed
  Off Track
  Not Started






H&W	Strategic Action	Action	Comments	Status	Status Explanation
	[2-13] Plan for the redevelopment of John Hall pavilion and public toilet in Kingsbury	Continue pavilion design and commence construction	The redevelopment of John Hall Reserve Pavilion is running on schedule and on budget. The design and consultation phases are complete and the final stage of preparing documentation is underway. The construction tender will occur before the end of the year with construction planned to commence around April 2024.		On Track

 Completed
  On Track
  Delayed
  Off Track
  Not Started

2.2: We will design and create public spaces where our people feel safe, welcome, and respected, including improving lighting and safety for people walking, wheeling, cycling and driving

H&W	Strategic Action	Action	Comments	Status	Status Explanation
	[2-15] Improve road safety, and the cycling, walking and wheeling network, by constructing high priority improvements	Improve road safety, and the cycling, walking and wheeling network, by constructing high priority improvements	Designs are progressing for construction of four priority road safety projects this year. The projects include a signal crossing of Miller Street at Devon Street, a northern Reservoir truck management project, and road safety cushion installation on Davidson Street and Radford Road in Reservoir.		On Track
	[2-16] Investigate and prioritise road safety, accessibility, cycling, walking and wheeling improvements across Darebin by using a Local Area Placemaking approach - where one third of the city is reviewed, with community involvement, each year	Investigate and prioritise road safety, accessibility, cycling, walking and wheeling improvements across Darebin by using a Local Area Placemaking approach - where one third of the city is reviewed, with community involvement, each year	The first round of community consultation for the Your Street Your Say Group B areas was completed in early 2023. The findings from the first round of community consultation are being used with transport data and adopted strategies to form a list of prioritised projects for delivery. Feedback on the list of projects and their priority will be requested in the second round of community consultation.		On Track
	[2-17] Develop and implement a Community Safety Framework	Develop a Community Safety Framework	Council has continued to develop a Community Safety Framework using the PACE model (Policy Priorities & Settings, Assessment of Options, Commitment and Execution and Evaluation) to build agreement and collaboration to improve safety across Darebin. In addition, a community safety mapping project is underway enabling community members to share their experiences of places that make them feel safe or unsafe in Darebin. Results from this project will assist Council to understand key areas to prioritise in future work with our partners.		Delayed

 Completed
  On Track
  Delayed
  Off Track
  Not Started





H&W	Strategic Action	Action	Comments	Status	Status Explanation
	[2-19] With State Government approval, reduce the speed limit in more local streets across our city	With State Government approval, reduce the speed limit in more local streets across our city	Speed limit reduction applications are continuing to be developed and submitted to the Department of Transport and Planning to reduce the speed limit on local roads in Darebin. The areas of focus for reducing the speed limit on local roads this year are Thornbury and Preston.		On Track
	[2-21] Develop a Community Infrastructure Plan to inform Council's decision making on the future of our assets, based on service needs across our city for the next 10 years	Continue to develop a Community Infrastructure Plan, including an implementation plan	Research and modelling are being undertaken to gain a better understanding of the community infrastructure needs over the next twenty years, as well as improving information about the utilisation and configuration of existing Council facilities and whether they are fit-for-purpose given projected needs. Council has recently procured a software package that will assist with this exercise and will undertake a more comprehensive audit over the next 6 months.		On Track
	[2-23] Update flood risk assessments across Darebin, and incorporate them into our Darebin Planning Scheme	Commence work on planning scheme amendment to introduce updated flood levels into Darebin Planning Scheme	Council is in discussion with Melbourne Water and the Department of Transport and Planning about the process for formalising new flood mapping, including the preparation of a draft planning scheme amendment provisions.		On Track
	[2-24] Continue our Traffic Blackspot Design and Construction Program	Continue our Traffic Blackspot Design and Construction Program	Project sites have been identified for new Blackspot designs. Design and construction is continuing for sites already identified such as Belgrove/Ovando and Victoria and Mitchell Street Northcote.		On Track

 Completed
  On Track
  Delayed
  Off Track
  Not Started

H&W	Strategic Action	Action	Comments	Status	Status Explanation
	[2-27] Actively participate in the Reservoir Revitalisation Board to improve outcomes for the Reservoir community	Actively participate in the Reservoir Revitalisation Board to improve outcomes for the Reservoir community	Darebin's Mayor and CEO are active members of the Reservoir Revitalisation Board. Council staff continue to work to deliver board-funded projects in Reservoir, including beautification and improvement of the Cheddar Road median, tree uplighting in Broadway and activation events in the Reservoir centre. The final Reservoir Economic Analysis and Investment Attraction Strategy report was shared with the Reservoir Revitalisation Board and presented to Council and community at a Council meeting in Quarter 1.		On Track
	[2-30] Undertake a review of the General Local law	Undertake a review of the General Local law	Internal stakeholder meetings have commenced to identify key issues related to local laws. Benchmarking of other Local Government Local Laws is also underway. An engagement plan is currently being developed.		On Track

 Completed
  On Track
  Delayed
  Off Track
  Not Started

2.3: We will facilitate more affordable, social and public housing in Darebin, to meet our community's needs

H&W	Strategic Action	Action	Comments	Status	Status Explanation
	[2-31] Enable and facilitate more affordable and social housing across our city	Facilitate more crisis, affordable and social housing across our city through development of the Property Strategy and the Advocacy Strategy	Council's Property Strategy will incorporate consideration of these opportunities. For progress of the Property Strategy see action strategic action 4-5. Council currently has several sites leased for temporary and/or community housing purposes.		Not Started
	[2-32] Partner with the State Government to ensure its social and public housing investment meets our community's needs, and creates liveable, connected communities through appropriate design and construction	Partner with the State Government to ensure its crisis, housing first, social and public housing, and its consideration of private development, meets our community's needs and creates liveable, connected communities through design and construction	With the release of the Victorian Government's Housing Statement on 20 September 2024, Council is considering how best to respond and implement the reforms to enable a greater supply of housing, particularly those around social and affordable housing associated with the Big Housing Build. Council also successfully advocated for the inclusion of a mandatory affordable housing contribution as part of the Preston Market controls introduced by the Minister for Planning.		On Track

 Completed
  On Track
  Delayed
  Off Track
  Not Started

2.4: We will foster local urban streetscapes and activity centres that connect our community, support economic recovery, and encourage people to live, work and play locally

H&W	Strategic Action	Action	Comments	Status	Status Explanation
	[2-33] Review to amend the Parking Permit Policy to: (i) to improve access for people with special needs (ii) to allow owners of single lot dwellings that exist on their own Torrens title, the option to have an additional residential parking permit at the same price as current parking permits (iii) to allow single lot dwellings built after December 2004 that are greater than 300sqm property with three or more bedrooms and that exist on their own Torrens title (even if the property was previously subdivided), to have the same entitlements to parking permits as dwellings built before December 2004 (iv) to ensure that renovations of a property that is still a single lot on its own Torrens title and is greater than 300sqm with three or more bedrooms are still entitled to parking permits	Finalise the new Parking Permit Policy	Stage 2 community engagement on the draft parking permit policy was completed in April 2023. Following further analysis, an updated policy is expected to be presented to Council for consideration in November.		On Track
	[2-36] Develop a policy setting the basis for how Council may permit commercial or private Electric Vehicle charging infrastructure on our public streets	Run an Expression of Interest process to identify potential EV charging partners	An expression of interest process, to identify EV charging partners, will be completed over the next couple of months. This will confirm which providers are interested in setting up community chargers in Darebin.		On Track



 Completed
  On Track
  Delayed
  Off Track
  Not Started

2.5: We will invest in services and the built environment to improve access for our residents and visitors

H&W	Strategic Action	Action	Comments	Status	Status Explanation
	[2-39] Create additional accessible car parking spaces in our city	Create additional accessible car parking spaces in our city	Possible sites identified and scoping complete.		On Track



 Completed
  On Track
  Delayed
  Off Track
  Not Started

2.6: We will support the human rights, housing and wellbeing needs of our people experiencing homelessness

H&W	Strategic Action	Action	Comments	Status	Status Explanation
	[2-40] Deliver programs that support people sleeping rough and experiencing homelessness including Assertive Outreach and advocate for funding for Towards Zero	Advocate for funding to initiate the Towards Zero approach to support people sleeping rough and experiencing homelessness	Council allocated \$80,000 towards implementing the Towards Zero program in Darebin. Advocacy work has begun to seek an additional \$65,000 required per year from the State Government to initiate the project.		On Track

 Completed
  On Track
  Delayed
  Off Track
  Not Started

2.8: We will advocate to reduce the harm associated with electronic machine gambling, alcohol and tobacco



H&W	Strategic Action	Action	Comments	Status	Status Explanation
	[2-47] Support partner and local community organisations, groups, and clubs, to deliver initiatives that encourage the cessation of vaping and smoking	Support partner and local community organisations, groups, and clubs, to deliver initiatives that encourage the cessation of vaping and smoking	Council developed key messages to encourage cessation of vaping and smoking using collateral from Quit Victoria. These messages will be delivered to the community via a social media campaign in the second quarter.		On Track

 Completed
  On Track
  Delayed
  Off Track
  Not Started

2.9: We will leverage investment, partnerships and advocacy to drive Darebin’s growth and sustainability and ensure Darebin is a great place to do business

H&W	Strategic Action	Action	Comments	Status	Status Explanation
	[2-49] Invest in economic reactivation and recovery initiatives to support existing and new industries, to ensure Darebin's economy is robust and resilient	Invest in economic reactivation and recovery initiatives to support existing and new industries, to ensure Darebin's economy is robust and resilient	The Greening our Business tool - which is a cross-Council and NAGA (Northern Alliance for Greenhouse Action) project - is continuing to progress on schedule. The sustainable business initiatives (Light\$mart, Energy\$mart, Solar Saver, Sustainable Leaders Program) continue to support the recovery of Darebin's business community through investing in energy efficiency, renewable energy and waste avoidance to reduce energy and waste costs. Three solar installations (a total of 27kw) were undertaken through the Solar Saver program and two Light\$mart upgrades (87 lights) were implemented, resulting in a total annual saving of \$1,900 and 5.87 tonnes of CO2 emissions for the two businesses. These programs also delivered \$26,000 of State and Federal rebates and subsidies directly to these businesses. Promotions are continuing to encourage the uptake of these recovery initiatives.		On Track
	[2-50] Continue to implement our Social and Sustainable Procurement Policy to increase the engagement of Aboriginal-led businesses, and focus on job creation for culturally and linguistically diverse peoples, and young people	Host supplier forums, connecting with Aboriginal-led businesses in the Darebin community at least every two months to provide tailored information regarding upcoming procurement	Engaging with Kinaway and local aboriginal businesses this FY has not commenced due to commitments with end of financial year reporting. Planned meetings will recommence in October.		Not Started

 Completed
  On Track
  Delayed
  Off Track
  Not Started


H&W	Strategic Action	Action	Comments	Status	Status Explanation
	[2-51] Build partnerships across all levels of government and the private sector, to attract new industries and investment into Darebin, to support its future growth	Build partnerships across government and the private sector, to attract new industries and investment into Darebin, to support its future growth	The partnership across State Government departments continues to grow investment across key industries and encourage investment into Darebin. With investment from Creative Victoria, The Eighty-Six festival is in its final stages of development and delivery, bringing focus and investment to our Creative industries and generating opportunity for future investment in creative sectors throughout Darebin. The Reservoir Revitalisation board continues to create opportunities for growth and investment into Reservoir and its business community.		On Track
	[2-52] Undertake consultation with industry and other key stakeholders to help inform the future development of an Economic Development Strategy and interest in partnering with Council on ways industry and business can connect, network and influence for the benefit of the Darebin community	Undertake consultation with industry and other key stakeholders to help inform the future development of an Economic Development Strategy and interest in partnering with Council on ways industry and business can connect, network and influence for the benefit of the Darebin community	Early stakeholder engagement has commenced with six industry-themed round table forums planned from 10 to 19 October. A full day summit is planned for 30 November. A community engagement plan has been developed for the summit series including a 'Have your say' page to promote broad engagement. Further research and engagement will be undertaken in 2024 to inform the new Economic Development Strategy.		On Track

 Completed
  On Track
  Delayed
  Off Track
  Not Started

H&W	Strategic Action	Action	Comments	Status	Status Explanation
	[2-53] Catalyse new jobs at scale in Darebin with businesses, new industry attraction and our partners - including Jobs Victoria Advocates - focusing on jobseekers facing multiple employment barriers including culturally and linguistically diverse peoples, young people, women, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples	Catalyse new jobs in Darebin with businesses, new industry attraction and our partners - including Jobs Victoria Advocates - focusing on jobseekers facing multiple employment barriers including culturally and linguistically diverse peoples, young people, women, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples	Partnership brokering and relationship building is ongoing given that State government funding in this area is reduced. Since July, the following actions have been undertaken: 1) Continued and expanded the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment network. 2) Discussed with potential partners, including Meals with Impact and Whitebox, some community-based solutions to employment service provision gaps. 3) Discussed how to support employment programs with partners Dyson bus and other activities.		On Track

 Completed
  On Track
  Delayed
  Off Track
  Not Started

2.10: We will ensure major changes in our city achieve significant improvements in our City

H&W	Strategic Action	Action	Comments	Status	Status Explanation
	[2-62] Protect Preston Market, including advocating Council's position to the State Government during its planning consultation process, and working with our community to advocate for the strongest possible planning controls and Protections	Continue efforts to protect the Preston Market through participating in the strategic and statutory planning processes and supporting traders through existing programs	Council officers have continued to liaise with the Department of Transport and Planning and other stakeholders regarding the interpretation of planning controls introduced by the Minister for Planning to protect the market via Amendment C182dare. Council has convened regular meetings with the market traders' group, market management and the Preston Central Business Association to ensure these stakeholders are engaged with Council's current programs and events, such as the upcoming Industry Summit event and the Active Spaces program.		On Track

 Completed
  On Track
  Delayed
  Off Track
  Not Started







2.11: We will improve the sustainability, accessibility, and design of development on private land in our city

H&W	Strategic Action	Action	Comments	Status	Status Explanation
	[2-65] Complete major planning reform work to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduce an open space levy to fund open spaces in our city Introduce a Developer Contributions Scheme to help fund infrastructure for our growing population Establish Heidelberg Road Corridor controls Establish Thornbury Park Heritage Estate controls 	Progress a planning scheme amendment to deliver an interim 5% Open Space Levy	Draft planning scheme amendment documents were considered and endorsed by Council at the October Planning Committee. Council will now seek the Minister for Planning's authorisation to commence Amendment C210dare to enable the collection of an open space levy up to 5% for all subdivisions.		On Track
	[2-66] Complete our Central Preston Structure Plan	Complete our Central Preston Structure Plan	<p>Draft versions of the structure plan and Activity Centre Zone schedules have been produced and are being updated based on findings from additional work on the built form guidelines to strengthen future planning controls. The recent release of the Victorian Government's Housing Statement includes Preston as a priority activity centre, and early discussions have started about how Council and State Government can partner to achieve the best outcomes for Preston Central.</p> <p>Subject to discussions with the Department of Transport and Planning about the Housing Statement, it is intended report the draft documents to Council with a view to commencing a planning scheme amendment and undertaking public consultation in early 2024.</p>		On Track

 Completed
  On Track
  Delayed
  Off Track
  Not Started


3.0: Climate, Green and Sustainable

3.1: We will adapt to climate change and build the resilience of our community, infrastructure and the built environment, with a focus on our vulnerable communities at risk of fuel poverty, and flooding

H&W	Strategic Action	Action	Comments	Status	Status Explanation
	[3-1] Through our Solar Saver 4-year program, support solar installation and energy efficiency retrofits for our vulnerable households, including public and social housing, and renters	Install up to 150 systems and undertake a service review to inform future directions	52 Special Charge systems are being progressed, and marketing continues to increase installations. There have been 92 quotations through Council's Bulk Buy contract. The service review is underway.		On Track
	[3-2] Review our Climate Emergency Plan, including in- depth engagement with our community	Finalise the Climate Emergency Plan and consider the options for future actions that accelerate progress toward net zero, including options for reducing household and business reliance on gas and options for the future of the solar saver program	The new Climate Emergency Plan is in the process of being drafted. Feedback will be requested on the draft Climate Emergency Plan through the second round of community consultation in early 2024.		On Track
	[3-3] Support our community members experiencing fuel poverty, to prevent heating and freezing	Incorporate fuel poverty into the development and implementation of the new Climate Emergency Plan	Fuel poverty is being considered in the development of the draft Climate Emergency Plan. Feedback will be requested through community consultation in early 2024.		On Track


 Completed
  On Track
  Delayed
  Off Track
  Not Started

3.2: Aim to achieve 12% canopy cover on Council owned and managed land by 2025, prioritising catchment biodiversity and shopping areas

H&W	Strategic Action	Action	Comments	Status	Status Explanation
	[3-8] Acquire land to create new parks	Finalise the acquisition of the three parcels of land at Clements Reserve	Council has endorsed a resolution to proceed with the purchase of three parcels of land at Clements Reserve. A Contract of Sale and S173 agreement was received from the Department of Transport and Planning (DTP) for Council/legal review.		On Track


 Completed
  On Track
  Delayed
  Off Track
  Not Started

3.3: We will drive significant improvements in water quality and biodiversity across Darebin, designating Edwardes Lake as a flagship project to demonstrate water recreation (in the long term)

H&W	Strategic Action	Action	Comments	Status	Status Explanation
	[3-11] Establish and adequately resource the Edwardes Lake Taskforce to significantly improve the water quality and amenity of Edwardes Lake in Reservoir	Continue to monitor the health of the lake and invest in activities that improve water quality (as recommended by the taskforce)	<p>Monthly water monitoring has been completed for July, August and September and additional monitoring has been carried out by the Environment Protection Authority (EPA).</p> <p>The Edgars Creek and Edwardes Lake Task Force met in August. Updates on the following water improvement programs are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * A litter reduction program is planned for October in partnership with the EPA. * Five community planting days have been completed as part of Darebin Rewilding in partnership with Friends of Edwardes Lake. New areas for rewilding around the Lake and along Edgars Creek are being scoped and prepared for next season's planting. * Scoping of renaturalisation works surrounding the gross pollutant site has been completed with works to begin in October. 		On Track

 Completed
  On Track
  Delayed
  Off Track
  Not Started

3.5: We will reduce waste and stimulate a local circular economy, where waste resources are re-used rather than discarded

H&W	Strategic Action	Action	Comments	Status	Status Explanation
	[3-16] Develop a plan to respond to new State Government requirements for contaminated land	Finalise and implement the Contaminated Land Framework	The Contaminated Land Management Framework continues to be developed. A project to collect environment monitoring data at the Darebin Parklands has commenced.		On Track
	[3-18] Undertake waste reform and take action towards establishing a circular economy	Undertake community engagement to inform future kerbside waste services for residents	Community consultation took place between August and September 2023. Over 1000 people completed the survey. Four workshops were held with groups that spoke a language other than English as a first language.		Completed

 Completed
  On Track
  Delayed
  Off Track
  Not Started



4.0: Responsible, Transparent and Responsive

4.1: We will ensure balanced and responsible financial decision making that meets the needs of our community now and into the future



H&W	Strategic Action	Action	Comments	Status	Status Explanation
	[4-2] Develop and implement an Advocacy Framework and four year Advocacy Plan, informed by our Council Plan priorities, aimed at influencing public policy change and attracting support and funding for our priorities including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investment in early intervention and tertiary mental health services Dedicated sexual and reproductive health service in the Northern region Key transport priorities Inceased funding for road safety infrastructure, driver behaviour and law enforcement Towards Zero approach to address homelessness Local Economic Development priorities Protection of Strathallan as public land Community and business use of energy efficiency initiatives Higher and mandatory Environmentally Sensitive Design (ESD) standards in building and planning controls 	Develop and implement an annual statement of advocacy priorities including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investment in early intervention and tertiary mental health services Dedicated sexual and reproductive health service in the Northern region Key transport priorities Inceased funding for road safety infrastructure, driver behaviour and law enforcement Towards Zero approach to address homelessness Local Economic Development priorities Protection of Strathallan as public land Community and business use of energy efficiency initiatives Higher and mandatory Environmentally Sensitive Design (ESD) standards in building and planning controls 	A first draft of advocacy priorities has been completed and feedback received. Consultation across the various Council business units, such as Transport, Sports, Climate and Environment, City Futures and Economic Development, has been completed. A second draft of the advocacy priorities will be produced in Q2.		On Track
	[4-4] Review our 10-year Financial Plan to ensure a level of revenue and expenditure that maintains a balance between service delivery, asset maintenance and renewal, and provides a strong, sustainable base for the future	Implement the action plan provided to the Minister for Local Government in response to the Monitor's Report	Actions contained in the Good Governance Action Plan have been completed.		Completed

 Completed
  On Track
  Delayed
  Off Track
  Not Started

4.2: We will ensure our assets are optimised for the benefit of our community




H&W	Strategic Action	Action	Comments	Status	Status Explanation
	[4-5] Review our Asset Portfolio, to ensure maximum benefit for our community is being realised, including the occupancy of unused and under-utilised Council buildings	Establish a Lease and Licensing Policy, with consideration to the inputs provided through deliberative engagement to inform the Council Plan.	A draft leasing and licensing policy document is in development and the matter is planned to be considered by Council in late 2023 for release for community engagement. Community feedback will be considered in early 2024 with the aim of establishing a Policy to come into effect 1 July 2024.		On Track
		Establish the Property Strategy	This project is a multi-year project and is in progress. This work is important to ensure services are in good locations accessible for the community, to get best value for Council's properties, and for prioritising strategic sites for redevelopment to maximise community value. Progress this year has been slower than expected - there have been some unexpected competing priorities and data gaps are needing to be filled to undertake the strategic work. To address this challenge the work is currently being staged carefully to prioritise critical elements to inform upcoming budget and planning decisions, with other elements to come at later stages if needed.		Off Track
	[4-6] Explore opportunities for Council owned and managed land (including airspace) to be used as temporary housing for people at risk or who are experiencing homelessness	Incorporate the consideration of temporary housing opportunities for people at risk or who are experiencing homelessness into the development of the Property Strategy for Council owned land	Council's Property Strategy will incorporate consideration of these opportunities. For progress of the Property Strategy, see strategic action 4-5 above. Council currently has several sites leased for temporary and/or community housing purposes.		On Track

 Completed
  On Track
  Delayed
  Off Track
  Not Started





H&W	Strategic Action	Action	Comments	Status	Status Explanation
	[4-8] Improve delivery of our services to our community by developing an Asset Management Plan for Open Space, establishing a level of service for each class of our assets, and collecting data on our drainage assets	Undertake drainage asset condition inspections to support the early detection of damage and deterioration and to inform the Drainage Asset Management Plan	This action is due to commence next quarter.		Not Started
		Complete the review of the Drainage Asset Management Plan	The Drainage Asset Management Plan (AMP) project will commence in the next quarter.		Not Started
		Complete the review of the ICT Asset Management Plan	The Information and Communication Technology Asset Management Plan project will commence in the third quarter.		Not Started
		Complete the establishment of the Arts and Cultural Collection Asset Management Plan	The final draft of the Arts and Cultural Collection Asset Management Plan has been developed.		On Track
		Complete the review of the Plant and Fleet Asset Management Plan	The Plant and Fleet Asset Management Plan (AMP) review will commence in the second quarter.		Not Started

 Completed
  On Track
  Delayed
  Off Track
  Not Started

4.3: We will transform our services and service delivery models to ensure they meet the current, emerging and future needs of our community




H&W	Strategic Action	Action	Comments	Status	Status Explanation
	[4-10] Transform our models of service delivery through the development of service profiles and conduct service reviews, to improve and ensure accessibility, inclusivity for under-represented groups and consistency of our customer experience	Transform our models of service delivery through the development of service profiles and conduct service reviews, to improve and ensure accessibility, inclusivity for under-represented groups and consistency of our customer experience	The development of Service Profiles is nearly complete, with 79 individual services identified in total. A Service Review program and prioritisation for 2023/24 is being developed. Recruitment for the new team to undertake reviews has commenced. The first review is scheduled to commence in this quarter.		On Track
	[4-12] Develop and implement a new 4-year Organisational Strategy to deliver on Council Plan Strategic Direction 4 and other organisational improvement priorities in an integrated and efficient way	Through the development of an Organisational Strategy the following will be integrated: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customer Service, Technology and Innovation • Engagement, Governance and Risk • Long Term Financial Sustainability, Asset Management and Project Delivery • Leadership, People and Culture 	An Organisational Strategy has been developed and presented at a Council Briefing. Scoping has commenced on the key milestones, deliverables and outcomes for each initiative. Program governance has also commenced.		On Track
	[4-13] Establish a long-term investment in IT systems to improve our customer experience, enable our people and deliver effective governance, compliance, improved data and cyber risk management	Progress Council approval of this investment in 2023-24.	Work is on track to present a report to Council in the next quarter, seeking endorsement and adoption of Council's Information and Communications Technology (ICT) and Digital Strategy		On Track

 Completed
  On Track
  Delayed
  Off Track
  Not Started

H&W	Strategic Action	Action	Comments	Status	Status Explanation
		Integrate this work with our Customer Experience strategy and our People and Culture Plan	An Information and Communications Technology (ICT) and Digital strategy has been developed with extensive engagement and consultation across all departments, including the Customer Experience area. This strategy is planned for endorsement and adoption at a November / December 2023 Council meeting.		On Track
		Develop detailed business requirements for systems replacement and test the open market for available options	This project will commence after the Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) benefit realisation plan is completed and the business case is approved. Commencement is planned for the third quarter of this financial year.		Not Started
		Develop a detailed Benefits Realisation Plan	Work has commenced to develop a detailed Benefits Realisation Plan.		On Track
		Develop and incorporate a Governance Platform and standards into the overall ICT Governance Framework and Architecture	Work has commenced and is now in progress. Scheduled for completion by Dec 2023.		On Track

 Completed
  On Track
  Delayed
  Off Track
  Not Started

4.4: We will improve the effective governance and public accountability of Council

H&W	Strategic Action	Action	Comments	Status	Status Explanation
	[4-14] Improve effective governance and accountability of Council	Deliver a professional development program for Councillors and continue to promote external professional development opportunities available to Councillors	Professional development was delivered through the Good Governance Action Plan and some Councillors are enrolled or have completed a Company Directors course. Professional development will continue to be offered.		On Track
		Provide regular reporting to Council to improve transparency on matters including: the status of Council resolutions, the number of Notices of Motion, training undertaken by Councillors, the number of complaints received - customer complaints and complaints about Councillors, matters referred to or received from integrity agencies and the cost of Councillor Conduct matters.	All reports referred to are in place and are reported as required.		On Track
		Promote the 2024 Council election to raise awareness for potential Councillor candidates across the municipality	The Election Period Policy has been reviewed, as required by the Governance Rules. The revised policy was considered by Council at its meeting on 23 October 2023. Other election-related activities will be undertaken and communicated as required.		On Track

 Completed
  On Track
  Delayed
  Off Track
  Not Started

CAPITAL WORKS

Project by Asset Class	Delivery Due Date	Status	Project Status Comments
Buildings			
John Hall Pavilion Design	Multi-year Project	●	Design of the new John Hall Pavilion is progressing well with the documentation due to be complete in Q2. The pavilion is scheduled to commence construction in Q4.
Northcote Aquatic and Recreation Centre	30-Sep-23	●	Northcote Aquatic and Recreation Centre redevelopment was completed late September 2023 and is on track to open to the community in November 2023.
Workplace office accommodation	30-Jun-24	●	Scope is currently underway.
DRRC asset renewal	30-Jun-24	●	Project has not commenced yet.
Funded Three-Year-Old Kindergarten	30-Jun-24	●	Works are in progress to finalise the scope and commence design works. Finalisation of the program is expected in Q2.
Building Renewal Program	30-Jun-24	●	Works are progressing well for the projects within the building renewal program.
Drainage			
Drainage System Renewal and Upgrade Program including WSUD and Reactive Works and stormwater pipe relining	30-Jun-24	●	Work have been completed on the drainage upgrade at Purinuan Road in Q1. The design for the drainage upgrade at Massey Avenue is complete and will be out to market for pricing in Q2 with works planned for Q3.
Sportsground Sub-Surface Drainage	30-Jun-24	●	The consultant has been awarded to commence designing the two sportsgrounds drainage works, with the designs to occur in Q2 – Q3.
Pit lid renewal program	30-Jun-24	●	Pit lid replacement program is progressing well.
Footpaths & Cycleways			
Footpath Renewal Program	30-Jun-24	●	"Various locations has been identified and prioritised based on proactive and reactive inspections.
Transport Safety Projects Design	30-Jun-24	●	Approximately 2200 sq m of footpath has been reconstructed so far, this financial year."
Transport Safety Projects Construct	30-Jun-24	●	Work to progress the design of transport safety projects continues. All design projects are on track for completion before June 2024.

● Completed
 ● On Track
 ● Discontinued
 ● Not Started

CAPITAL WORKS

Project by Asset Class	Delivery Due Date	Status	Project Status Comments
Computers & Telecommunications			
IT Improvement Program	30-Jun-24	●	Procurement for upgrading the outdated content management solution is in progress with the aim to finalise the vendor and start the work in October. This initiative targets to stand up a local government focussed Website and Intranet for the council during this FY. Software license optimisation and renewals is in progress.
IT Infrastructure Upgrade Program	30-Jun-24	●	Activities related to Network upgrade, Cloud Migration of the IT Infrastructure and Disaster Recovery set up have been successfully completed. Planned activities for addressing Cyber Security Risks are in progress. Planning commenced for replacement and upgrade of devices and hardware.
Land			
Land Acquisition to Create New Parks	30-Jun-24	●	The review of the contract of sale and associated documentation has temporarily been placed on hold whilst Council and Department of Transport discuss the current contamination mitigation and remediation requirements at Clements Reserve
Contaminated Land Remediation	30-Jun-24	●	Project scoping is progressing well, and the first stage of works are due to commence in Q2.
Irrigation Upgrades and Renewals Program	30-Jun-24	●	Full irrigation upgrades have been scoped and designed for Barling Oval 3 - These works will occur in March 2024 to coincide with the end of the current Cricket Season.
Oval and Sportsground Renewal and Upgrade Program	30-Mar-24	●	Consultant has been engaged in Q1 with design works to occur in Q2. Construction is anticipated in Q2 to Q3.
Synthetic Cricket Wicket Installation	30-Nov-23	●	Construction works have commenced at John Hall Reserve and McDonnell Park for the synthetic cricket wicket project and are going well. The works are due to be complete in Q2.
Libraries			
Library Collections	30-Jun-24	●	Project to purchase library collections is on track.
Parks, Open Space & Streetscapes			
John Cain Memorial Park and Preston City Oval Lighting Design	30-Jun-24	●	The design for the new lights is progressing well at both sites with completion expected in Q2.
Preston City Oval Cricket Nets	30-Jun-24	●	Construction of the Preston City Oval Cricket nets is progressing well with works on track to be completed early Q2.

● Completed
 ● On Track
 ● Discontinued
 ● Not Started

CAPITAL WORKS

Project by Asset Class	Delivery Due Date	Status	Project Status Comments
Parks, Open Space & Streetscapes			
Park Asset Renewal Program including drinking fountains and swing at Susan Walsh	01-May-24	●	A comprehensive list of sites and assets gaps have been identified with staged installation already occurring.
Street lighting safety renewal program -High St Preston and Gillies St car park	30-Jun-24	●	The contract has been awarded with installation of the new lights scheduled for January 2024.
Street Furniture and Equipment Renewal Program	24-May-24	●	Orders were placed for 5 seats and 6 bin surrounds which will be delivered by December 2023.
McDonnell Precinct Upgrades	30-Sep-24	●	Project scoping and early designs have been completed for the McDonnell Precinct upgrade.
Street Lighting BT Connor surrounding - Scope	30-Jun-24	●	Project scoping and planning is underway in preparation to brief Councillors.
Play Space Renewal Program	30-Jun-24	●	Quarterly provision of Softfall mulch to playgrounds and Childcare centres is underway. Sites are identified during regular safety inspections and orders placed each quarter to ensure clean, safe and adequate amounts of soft fall are present at all playgrounds in Darebin.
Open Space Improvements Program	30-Jun-24	●	Works are progressing well for the projects within the program.
Plant, Machinery and Equipment			
Replacement of Mobile Garbage, Green Waste and Recycling Bins	30-Jun-24	●	Approx 1200 new bins have been received this financial year with a further 2500 expected to be delivered in early 2024.
Vehicular Plant Replacement - Heavy Vehicle	30-Jun-24	●	Four mowers and two utility vehicles have been replaced till date in this financial year and one garbage compaction truck is due to be delivered in October.
Vehicular Plant Replacement - Light Vehicle	30-Jun-24	●	The program is to replace light passenger vehicles which includes pool cars, operational use cars and private use cars. The vehicles are identified to be replaced based on usage, age, and engine type. Council is also transitioning towards zero emission targets and replacing with EVs where possible/practical.
Youth Services Asset Renewal Program	30-Jun-24	●	Project is in progress. Rescoped asset list for financial year 2024 has been completed. Procurement process will commence in second quarter.
Art Collection Acquisitions - Bundoora Homestead Art Centre	31-May-24	●	Research and project management for the art collection acquisitions is underway and is on track. Benchmarking of key collecting areas and review of updated collections policy has been undertaken in Q1.

● Completed
 ● On Track
 ● Discontinued
 ● Not Started

CAPITAL WORKS

Project by Asset Class	Delivery Due Date	Status	Project Status Comments
Plant, Machinery and Equipment			
Reservoir Leisure Centre Gym Equipment and Group Exercise Equipment	30-Jun-24	●	Project to purchase gym and group exercise equipment is on track.
Darebin Furniture Purchases including libraries	30-Jun-24	●	The first round of furniture has been ordered, and remaining furniture is expected to be ordered in Q2.
Arts Venues Asset and Equipment Renewal	30-Jun-24	●	Minor equipment renewal projects undertaken. Further scoping for remainder of works continuing.
Direction signage to country of origin	30-Jun-24	●	Scoping of the project to commence in Q2.
Migration Monument - Scope	30-Jun-24	●	Consultation and development of artist brief continues. Project delivery timelines presented to council briefing in October 2023.
Recreation, Leisure & Community Facilities			
Reservoir Leisure Centre	30-Jun-24	●	The first stage of works for roof repairs are due to be completed in Q2.
Roads			
Kerb and Channel Renewal Program	30-Jun-24	●	The scope of works has been finalised and will be awarded in Q2 with works scheduled for Q3.
Road Resurfacing Program	30-Jun-24	●	The scope of work has been finalised and quotes for the project will be obtained in Q2 with construction scheduled for Q3.
Asset Management Road Survey	30-Jun-24	●	Project is funded via Operational budget and therefore discontinued from Capital Works Portfolio
Road Rehabilitation Design	30-Jun-24	●	Designs are in progress for these projects and are expected to be priced by the market in Q2 with construction constructed scheduled for Q3-Q4.

● Completed
 ● On Track
 ● Discontinued
 ● Not Started

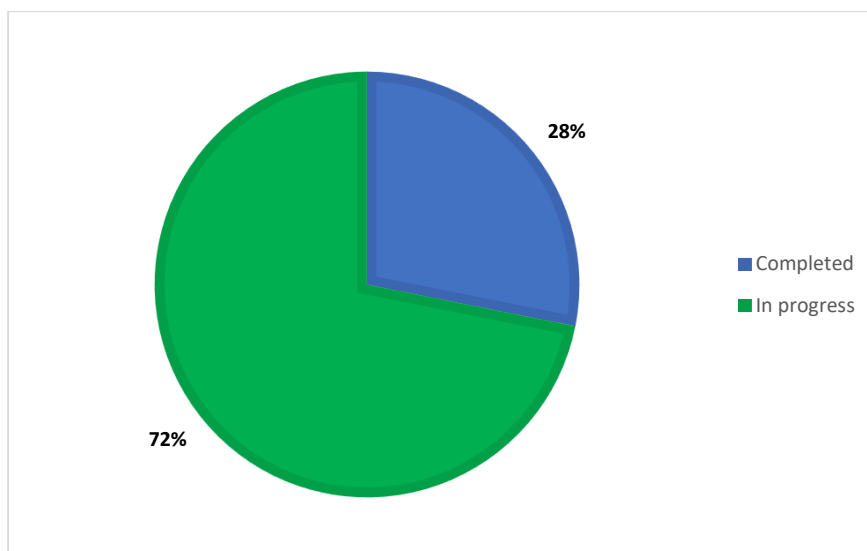
STATUS OF COUNCIL RESOLUTIONS

In the first quarter of the 2023 – 24 financial year, 32 resolutions were made through Council meetings, 9 have been completed and 23 resolutions are in progress.

Due to the complexity of some of the resolutions, they may span multiple years and can be superseded or updated as the initiatives progress.

The current status of Q1 Council resolutions is shown in the chart below:

Status of Council Resolutions





CITY OF DAREBIN

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 **National Relay Service**
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If you are deaf, or have a hearing or speech impairment, contact us through the National Relay Service.

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T 8470 8470

العربية	Italiano	Soomalii
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Ελληνικά	नेपाली	اردو
हिंदी	ਪੰਜਾਬੀ	Tiếng Việt

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FINANCIAL REPORT

Three months ended 30 September 2023



Financial Report 3 months ended 30 September 2023

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Financial Report

3 months ended 30 September 2023

1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 Operating performance

Performance for the first three months of the financial year is ahead of the year-to-date budget by \$2.78m.

	YTD Budget \$'000	YTD Actual \$'000	YTD Var \$'000	Adopted Budget \$'000
Operating				
Revenue	162,849	162,130	(719)	205,838
Expenditure	(50,702)	(47,203)	3,499	(196,178)
Surplus (deficit)	112,147	114,927	2,780	9,660
Capital & other				
Revenue / grants	0	(20)	(20)	(1,286)
Adjusted underlying surplus/(deficit)	112,147	114,907	2,760	8,374

For the three months ended 30 September 2023, Council has recorded an operating surplus of \$114.93 million, which is \$2.78 million ahead of the year-to-date budget. After eliminating capital and other items, the adjusted underlying surplus is \$114.91 million, which is \$2.76 million more than the year-to-date budget.

Total expenditure year-to-date is favourable by \$3.50 million and total revenue year-to-date is unfavourable by \$0.72 million. The main items contributing to this favourable variance are lower expenditure for materials and services offset by lower income than budgeted from user fees, Financial Assistance Grant and monetary contributions.

Revenue from Rates and charges are favourable due to higher waste charges.

Revenue from operating grants is unfavorable due to the receipt of Financial Assistance Grant in 2022-23 budgeted in 2023-24.

Revenue in User and Statutory fees and fines are unfavourable due to lower traffic enforcement fines being issued and lower income at the Darebin Resource Recovery Centre.

1.2 Capital performance

	YTD Budget \$'000	YTD Actual \$'000	YTD Var \$'000	Adopted Budget \$'000	Budget + Cfwd \$'000
Property	2,873	4,550	(1,677)	5,950	6,882
Plant & equipment	1,622	538	1,084	5,200	5,815
Infrastructure	1,323	1,060	263	18,882	20,590
Total capital works	5,818	6,148	(330)	30,032	33,287

For the three months ended 30 September 2023, Council has expended \$6.15 million on the capital works program, which is \$0.3 million ahead of the year-to-date budget. The variance is due mainly to near completion of the Northcote Aquatic & Recreation Centre offset by delays in plant and equipment and infrastructure works.

Additional carry forwards from 2022-23 and minor changes between projects has increased the adopted capital budget by \$3.25 million to \$33.29 million.

Financial Report

3 months ended 30 September 2023

1.3 Financial Position

	YTD Budget \$'000	YTD Actual \$'000	YTD Var \$'000	Adopted Budget \$'000	Audited 2023 \$'000
Cash and investments	48,985	51,181	2,196	51,441	55,967
Net current assets	135,781	151,345	15,564	25,677	36,969
Net assets and total equity	1,767,117	1,779,428	12,311	1,664,631	1,664,503

The FY23 audited closing cash position was \$2.9M (*refer statement of cash flow – cash & cash equivalents at beginning of Financial Year \$39M - \$452M*) higher than budgeted. Main reasons driving this is as follows:

- Unexpected early receipt of the FY24 Financial Assistance Grant. Received in June 23.
- Timing differences between invoices received for payment and when cash is paid to suppliers, based on payment terms & conditions.
- Timing differences between invoices raised to customers and when cash is received by Council, based on payment terms and conditions.

The financial position as at 30 September 2023 shows a cash (\$37.53M) and investment balance (\$13.65M) of \$51.18 million, which is \$2.20 million ahead of budget. The variance is due mainly to timing differences in receipt of rates, fees and charges, payments to employees and suppliers and a higher opening cash and investment position compared with budget.

The cash and investment balance of \$51.18 million was sufficient to meet restricted cash and intended allocation obligations of \$26.05 million at the end of September. 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 \$151.35 million, which is \$15.56 million more than budget, primarily due to higher opening cash position and timing of rate receivables. The net asset position of \$1.78 billion is \$12.31 million more than budget. This is mainly due to the prior year revaluation increment of investment properties.

Financial Report 3 months ended 30 September 2023

2. FINANCIAL ANALYSIS

2.1 Operating performance

The information in the table below shows income and operating expenditure for the period ended 30 September 2023. The five columns of data provide information on the following:

- YTD budget to 30 September 2023 (i.e. estimated timing of income and expenditure)
- YTD actual results to 30 September 2023
- YTD variance of actuals compared to budget
- Annual budget as adopted by Council

The report provides a year-to-date summary of Council's financial position and is a guide on the timing of receipts and payments. Timing differences can occur during the financial year and year to date variances do not imply that the annual budget will be affected.



Financial Report

3 months ended 30 September 2023

DAREBIN CITY COUNCIL

Comprehensive Income Statement

For the 3 months ended 30 September 2023

	YTD Budget \$'000	YTD Actual \$'000	YTD Variance \$'000	YTD Variance %		Annual Budget \$'000
Income						
Rates and charges	148,318	149,178	860	0.6%		152,133
Statutory fees and fines	1,913	1,647	(266)	(13.9%)	<	8,775
User fees	3,217	2,896	(321)	(10.0%)	<	13,116
Grants - operating	6,565	6,014	(551)	(8.4%)	<	18,841
Grants - capital	0	20	20	0.0%		1,865
Contributions - monetary	1,726	1,055	(671)	(38.9%)	<	6,539
Net gain (loss) on disposal of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	146	140	(6)	(4.1%)		1,436
Other income	964	1,180	216	22.4%	>	3,133
Total income	162,849	162,130	(719)	(0.4%)		205,838
Expenses						
Employee costs	23,140	22,780	360	1.6%	>	100,557
Materials and services	17,793	14,608	3,185	17.9%	>	60,053
Depreciation	6,678	6,596	82	1.2%		26,714
Amortisation - intangible assets	128	166	(38)	(29.7%)	<	512
Bad and doubtful debts	3	467	(464)	(100%)	<	1,436
Borrowing costs	434	452	(18)	(4.1%)		1,735
Finance Costs - leases	0	1	(1)	0.0%		2
Other expenses	2,526	2,133	393	15.6%	>	5,169
Total expenses	50,702	47,203	3,499	6.9%		196,178
Surplus for the year	112,147	114,927	2,780	2.5%		9,660
Less						
Grants - capital (non-recurrent)	0	(20)	(20)	0.0%		(1,286)
Adjusted underlying surplus/ (deficit)	112,147	114,907	2,760	2.5%		8,374

Legend	
< (\$100,000) and (-5%)	Unfavorable Variance
> = \$100,000 and 5%	Favorable Variance

Financial Report

3 months ended 30 September 2023

Operating Revenue – notes

1. **Rates and charges:** Major variances include:
 - General rates & charges are \$0.30 million more than budget. (T)
 - Waste charges are \$0.40 million more than budget. Additional and larger bin charges have been exceeded. (T)
 - Supplementary rates and charges are \$0.3 million more than budget. Timing and quantum of building supps undertaken since April-23. (T)
 - Solar Saver special charge is \$0.1 million less than budget. Lower than anticipated take up of the special charge. The revenue has been offset by a decrease in Solar Saver expenditures (refer materials and services section, first bullet point for more details. (T)
2. **Statutory fees and fines:** Major variances include:
 - Traffic enforcement penalties issued are \$324K less than the budget. (T)
3. **User fees:** Major variances include:
 - Darebin Resource Recovery Centre income is \$288K less than the budget. Lower than anticipated waste volumes being processed. This will result in a corresponding reduction of expenditure (e.g. tipping costs) (T)
 - Reservoir Leisure Centre income is \$171K greater than the budget. Strong growth experienced in centre swim school participation. (T)
4. **Grants operating:** Major variances include:
 - Victorian Grants Commission (Commonwealth Financial Assistance Grants) for 2023-24 were 100% prepaid in 2022-23 and accordingly the grants received are \$1.15 million less than budget. It is forecast this variance will be \$3.47 million less than the budget at the end of the financial year. (P)
 - Supported and connected living is \$289K less than budget. Commonwealth Home Support Programme (CHSP) funding recognized in accordance with agreed performance obligations. (T)
 - Economic development is \$788K greater than budget. Unbudgeted State Government funding for 86 Festival received in advance. (P)
5. **Contributions - monetary:** Major variances include:
 - Public open space and developer contributions are \$614K less than budget. Construction and development has been impacted by rising interest rates and economic uncertainty. (T)
6. **Other income:** Major variances include:
 - Interest on investments is \$358K greater than budget. Rising interest rates in conjunction with higher cash balances have increased yield on invested funds. (P)
 - Cost recoveries received from Victorian Workcover Authority is \$263K. This item is unbudgeted. (P)
 - Lower than expected take-up of the Solar Saver program has impacted income receipt of Small-Scale Technology Certificates (\$278K, Refer Rates and charges and materials and services, offset by decrease in subsequent expenditure) (T)

Note: (T) Timing, (P) Permanent

Financial Report

3 months ended 30 September 2023

Operating Expenses – notes

7. **Employee costs:** Major variances include:

- City futures is \$174K less than budget at the end of September. (T). Vacancies in city design and urban strategic planning.
- Creative culture and events is \$135K less than budget at the end of September. (T)
- Information services is \$112K less than budget at the end of September. (T)
- Recovery, resilience and economic development is \$181K less than budget at the end of September. (T)
- City works is \$395K more than budget at the end of September. Awaiting first quarter allocation of capital recovery costs. (T)
- City safety and compliance is \$104K more than budget at the end of September. Additional School crossing supervision costs. (T)

8. **Materials and services:** Major variances are:

- Environment & Sustainable transport is \$789K less than budget at the end of September. Due primarily to lower than anticipated take up of the Solar Saver program. (T)
- City Works and major projects is \$323K less than budget at the end of September. Lower than anticipated facility management costs. (T)
- Recreation and Libraries is \$436K less than budget at the end of September. Costs associated with Library management and Northcote Aquatic & Recreation Centre. (T)
- Creative culture and events is \$264K less than budget at the end of September. (T)
- Information services is \$243K less than the budget at the end of September. Timing of prepaid IT license agreement fees. (T)
- Family, youth and children is \$148K less than budget at the end of September. (T)
- Parks and open space is \$249K less than the budget at the end of March and it is forecast to be \$779K less than budget at the end of the financial year. Offset savings in parks management, bushlands and sports ground maintenance. (P)
- Supported and connected living is \$231K less than budget. Lower costs associated with contract meals and the positive ageing care finders project. (T)
- Insurance premium is \$1,046k less than budget. Timing of payment for industrial special risk insurance premium to insurer. (T)
- Financial services is \$240K more than the budget at the end of September. Additional recoverable rate collection costs. (T)
- Recovery, resilience and economic development \$656K more than budget at the end of September. Costs associated with Eighty-Sixth festival project. (Refer grants operating) (P).

Note: (T) Timing, (P) Permanent

Financial Report

3 months ended 30 September 2023

9. **Bad and doubtful debts:** Major variance is:

- Property management bad and doubtful debts is \$466K more than budget. Associated write-off of outstanding licence at iceHQ stadium at CH Sullivan Reserve. (T).

10. **Other expenses:** Major variances are:

- Parks and open space is \$374K less than budget at the end of September. Timing of contribution made to Darebin and Merri Creek management committees. (T)
- Community grants are \$370k less than budget at the end of September. Timing of assessment and payment of the community grants program. (T)
- Balance of contributions received from participating Council's for the Local Government Victorian Energy Collaboration \$293K was not budgeted. (P)

Note: (T) Timing, (P) Permanent

2.2 Capital performance

The information in the table below shows capital expenditure for the period ended 30 September 2023. The six columns of data provide information on the following:

- YTD budget to 30 September 2023
- YTD actual results to 30 September 2023
- YTD variance of actuals compared to budget
- Annual budget as adopted by Council
- Budget + carry forwards (annual) forecast of the year end position

Financial Report

3 months ended 30 September 2023

DAREBIN CITY COUNCIL

Statement of Capital Works

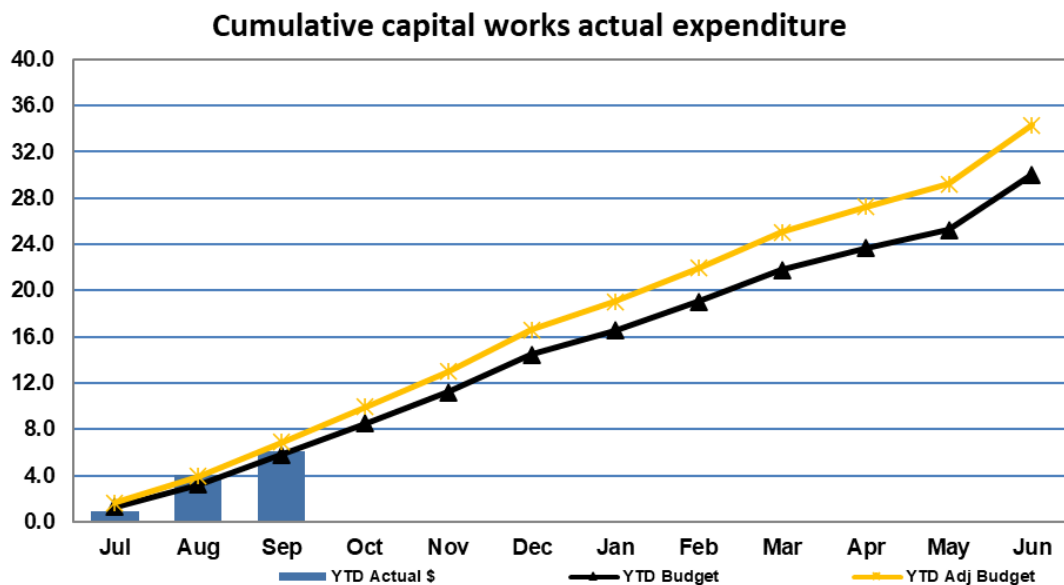
For the 3 months ended 30 September 2023

	YTD Budget \$'000	YTD Actual \$'000	YTD Variance \$'000	YTD Variance %	Annual Budget \$'000	Budget & CFWDs \$'000
Capital works						
Property						
Land	0	0	0	0.0%	600	1,570
Buildings	2,873	4,550	(1,677)	(58.4%) <	5,350	5,312
Total property	2,873	4,550	(1,677)	(58.4%)	5,950	6,882
Plant & equipment						
Plant, machinery & equipment	928	162	766	82.5% >	1,820	1,820
Fixtures, fittings & furniture	1	0	1	100.0%	30	30
Computers & telecommunications	455	259	196	43.1% >	2,600	3,215
Library books	238	117	121	50.8% >	750	750
Total plant & equipment	1,622	538	1,084	66.8%	5,200	5,815
Infrastructure						
Roads	210	0	210	100.0% >	4,750	4,890
Bridges	0	0	0	0.0%	0	137
Footpaths & cycleways	423	245	178	42.1% >	2,750	2,750
Drainage	82	47	35	42.7%	1,580	1,580
Land Improvements	23	89	(66)	(287.0%)	350	857
Recreation, leisure & community facilities	4	0	4	100.0%	5,550	5,839
Waste management	63	10	53	84.1%	350	350
Parks, open space & streetscapes	518	669	(151)	(29.2%) <	3,452	4,088
Off-street car parks	0	0	0	0.0%	100	100
Total infrastructure	1,323	1,060	263	19.9%	18,882	20,590
Total capital works	5,818	6,148	(330)	(5.7%)	30,032	33,287
Represented by:						
Asset renewal	4,461	4,715	(254)		23,026	25,523
New assets	455	481	(26)		2,350	2,606
Asset expansion	523	553	(30)		2,700	2,994
Asset upgrade	379	400	(21)		1,956	2,169
Total capital works	5,818	6,148	(330)	(5.7%)	30,032	33,287

Legend	
< (\$100,000) and (-5%)	Unfavorable Variance
> = \$100,000 and 5%	Favorable Variance

Financial Report

3 months ended 30 September 2023



Capital Expenditure – notes

1. **Buildings:** Major variances include:

- Northcote Aquatic and Recreation Centre redevelopment is \$1.73M greater than budget. Works are well progressed and near completion as per the project plan. (T)
- Northcote Town Hall chiller replacement is \$132K greater than budget. Works completed earlier than anticipated. (T)
- Merrilands Community Centre works is \$92K less than budget. (T)

2. **Plant, machinery & equipment:** Major variances include:

- Vehicular plant replacement program is \$753M less than budget. Delays in availability of replacement vehicles. (T)
- Mobile garbage bin replacement is \$52K less than the budget. (T)

3. **Computers & telecommunications:** Major variances include:

- IT equipment replacement is \$225K less than budget. (T) Awaiting renewal of existing equipment lease arrangements.
- Website and intranet improvements is \$148K less than budget. (T)
- IT infrastructure upgrades is \$101K greater than budget.

4. **Library books:** Major variances include:

- Digital library purchases are \$120K less than budget. (T)

Note: (T) Timing, (P) Permanent

Financial Report

3 months ended 30 September 2023

Capital Expenditure – notes

5. **Roads:** Major variances include:

- Road resurfacing program is \$51K less than budget. (T)

6. **Footpaths & cycleways:** Major variances include:

- Footpath renewal program is \$152K less than budget. (T)

7. **Parks, opens space & streetscapes:** Major variances include:

- Light up Rezza is \$119K greater than budget. 2022-23 External funded project which will be completed this year. (P)
- WH Robinson Reserve cricket net is \$215K greater than budget. Project carried forward from 2022-23. (P)
- Playspace upgrades is \$84K less than budget. (T)
- Public open space improvement program is \$116K less than budget. (T)



Note: (T) Timing, (P) Permanent

Financial Report

3 months ended 30 September 2023

2.3 Financial position

	YTD Budget \$'000	YTD Actual \$'000	YTD Var \$'000	Adopted Budget \$'000	Audited 2023 \$'000
Cash and investments	48,985	51,181	2,196	51,441	55,967
Net current assets	135,781	151,345	15,564	25,677	36,969
Net assets and total equity	1,767,117	1,779,428	12,311	1,664,631	1,664,503

Cash & Investment balance

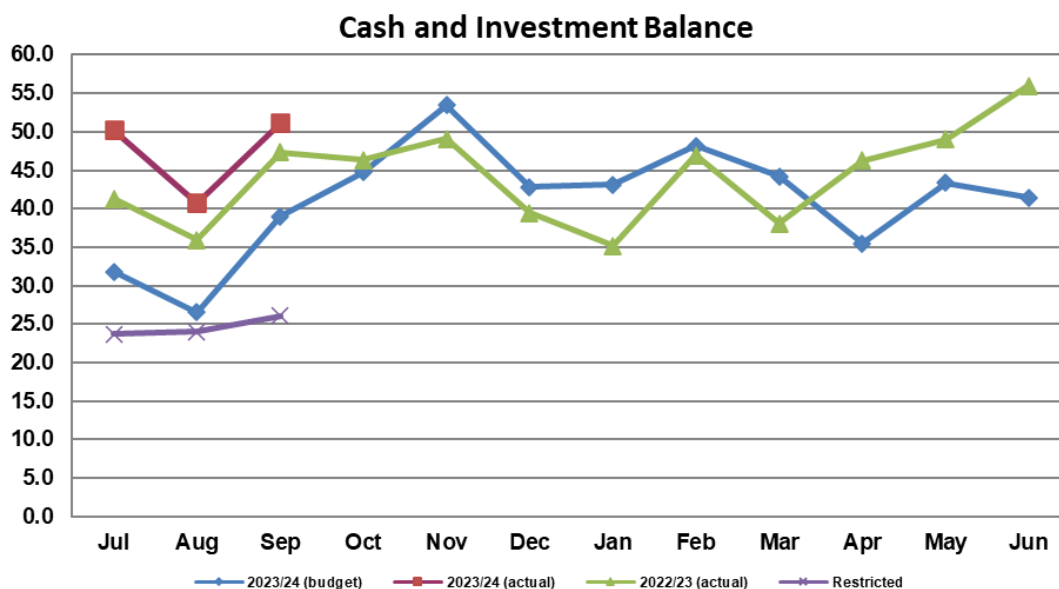
The chart below shows projections of how Council’s cash balance is expected to perform over the course of the 2023-24 financial year. The chart portrays:

- YTD budget to 30 September 2023
- YTD actual results to 30 September 2023
- YTD variance of actuals compared to budget
- Annual budget as adopted by Council
- Restricted Cash

Restricted cash includes:

- Drainage development reserve
- Recreational lands contributions held on behalf of developers
- Carried forward capital works
- Trust funds and deposits.

The graph below shows Council’s cash balance is within expectations. Every opportunity is taken to invest surplus cash to maximise investment returns.



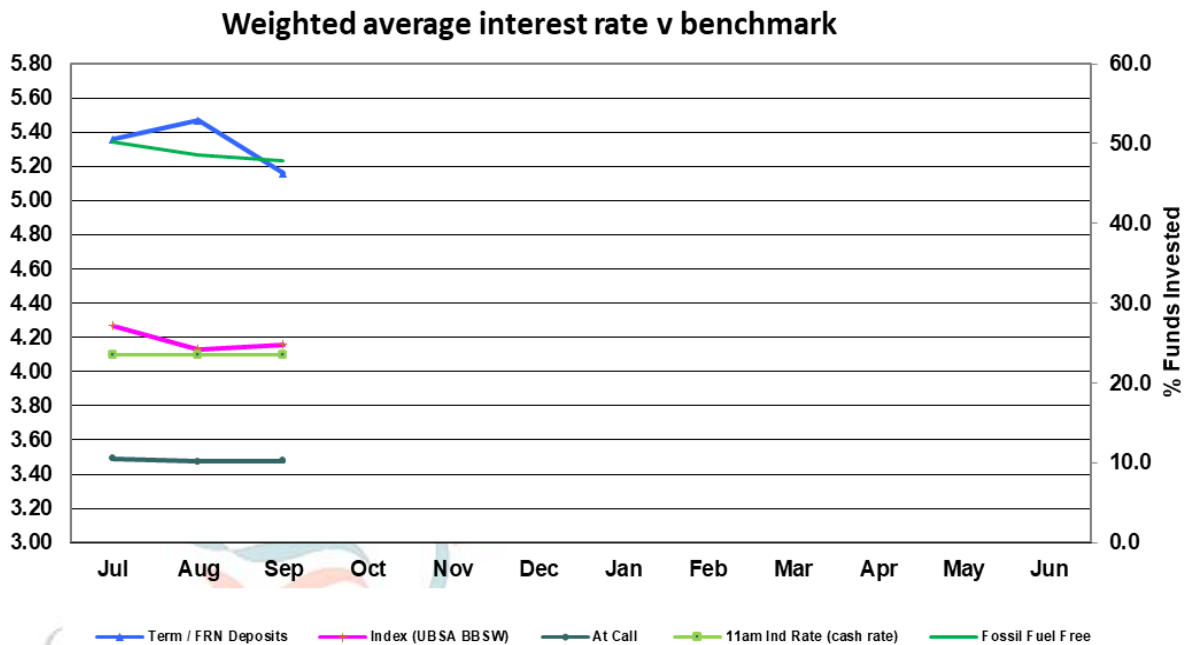
Note: Cash and investments include term deposits with a maturity date exceeding 90 days which are classified as other financial assets in the Balance Sheet (\$13.65M).

The graph below shows Council’s interest performance against the market as well as showing the percentage of investments that were placed with financial institutions and authorised deposit-taking institutions which do not have a record of funding fossil fuels. As at 30 September 2023, 48% of all

Financial Report 3 months ended 30 September 2023

invested funds were placed with financial institutions and Authorised Deposit taking Institutions (ADI's) which do not have a record of funding fossil fuels (30 June 2023 50%).

A comprehensive review of the Council's investment portfolio has been undertaken for the 3 months ended 30 September 2023. The council's investment portfolio has earned \$546,000 in interest on investments, with term deposits, floating rate deposits and cash investments earning an annualised rate of 4.36% (June 2023: 2.94%).



Working capital

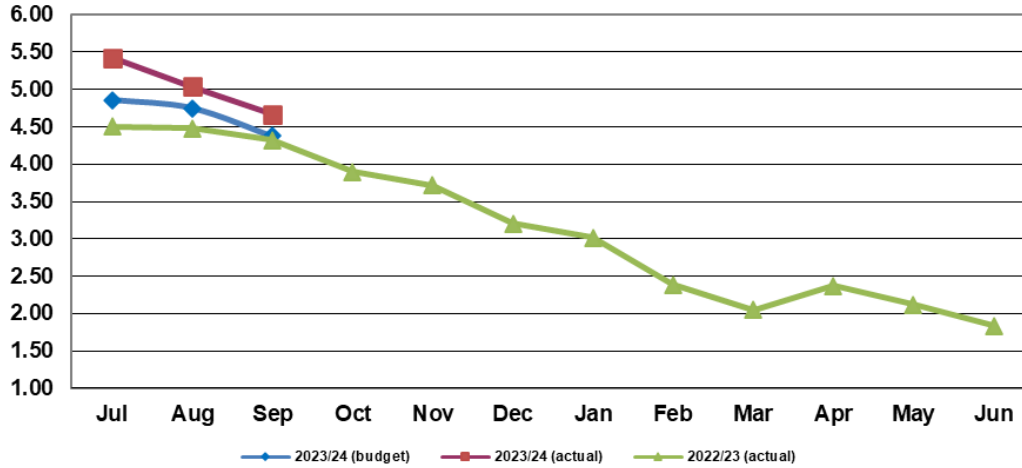
The chart below shows projections of the movement in Council's working capital over the course of the 2022/23 financial year. The chart portrays:

- Budgeted 2023/24 working capital
- Actual 2023/24 working capital
- Actual 2022/23 working capital

Financial Report

3 months ended 30 September 2023

Working capital (current assets/current liabilities)

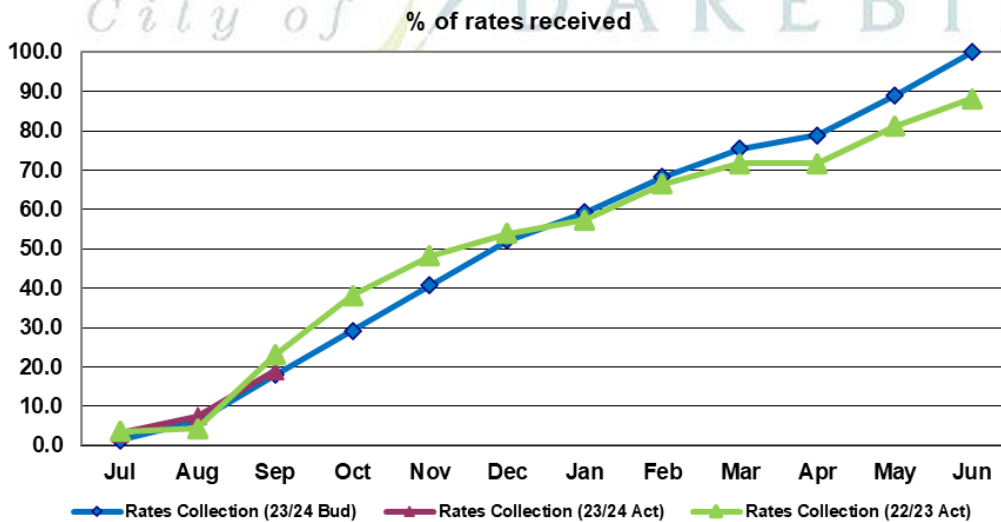


As at 30 September 2023, \$148.8 million was raised in general and waste rates and charges including supplementary valuations generated by changes to council’s property base. At 30 September 2023, 18.6% of the rates raised have been collected compared to the same period of the 2022-23 financial year of 23.4%.

Note: 1st Quarter rate installment due date of 30 September fell on a Saturday. Collection amounts exclude rates and charges received between 2 & 6 October (\$9.28 million).

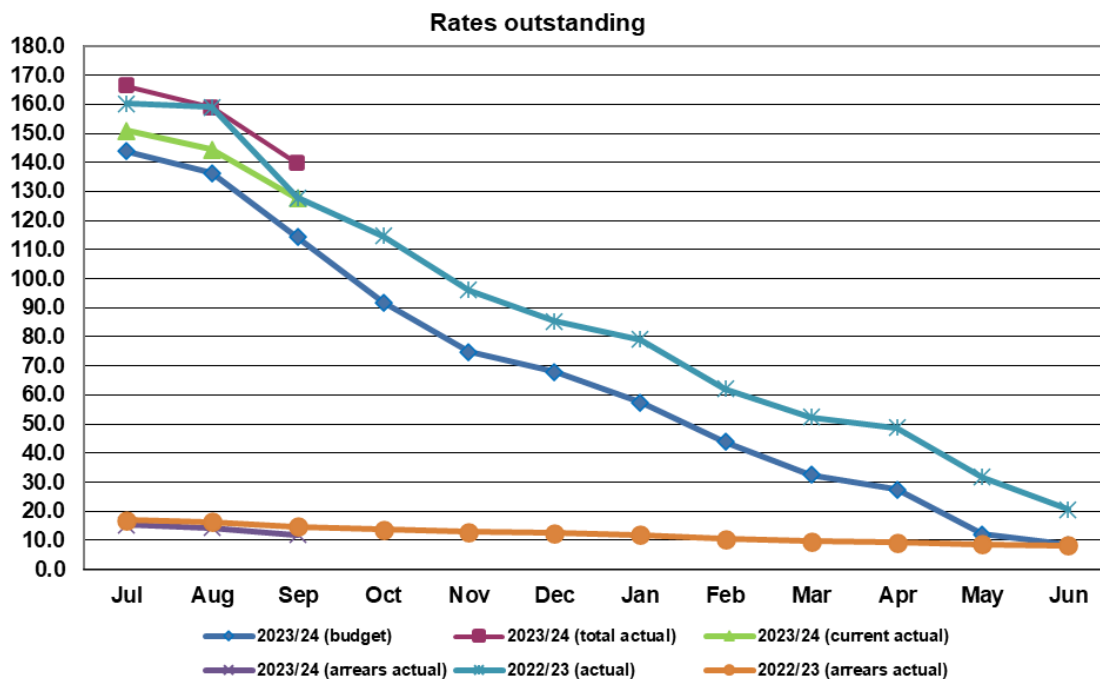
Rates debtors

The following graphs show that current collection trends are closely following the 2022-23 collection trend and the budgeted collection trend:



Financial Report

3 months ended 30 September 2023



Financial Report
3 months ended 30 September 2023

APPENDIX A

Comprehensive Income Statement
Balance Sheet
Statement of Cash Flows
Statement of Capital Works



Financial Report

3 months ended 30 September 2023

DAREBIN CITY COUNCIL

Comprehensive Income Statement

For the 3 months ended 30 September 2023

	YTD Budget \$'000	YTD Actual \$'000	YTD Variance \$'000	Annual Budget \$'000
Income				
Rates and charges	148,318	149,178	860	152,133
Statutory fees and fines	1,913	1,647	(266)	8,775
User fees	3,217	2,896	(321)	13,116
Grants - operating	6,565	6,014	(551)	18,841
Grants - capital	0	20	20	1,865
Contributions - monetary	1,726	1,055	(671)	6,539
Net gain (loss) on disposal of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	146	140	(6)	1,436
Other income	964	1,180	216	3,133
Total income	162,849	162,130	(719)	205,838
Expenses				
Employee costs	23,140	22,780	360	100,557
Materials and services	17,793	14,608	3,185	60,053
Depreciation	6,678	6,596	82	26,714
Amortisation - intangible assets	128	166	(38)	512
Bad and doubtful debts	3	467	(464)	1,436
Borrowing costs	434	452	(18)	1,735
Finance Costs - leases	0	1	(1)	2
Other expenses	2,526	2,133	393	5,169
Total expenses	50,702	47,203	3,499	196,178
Surplus for the year	112,147	114,927	2,780	9,660
Less				
Grants - capital (non-recurrent)	0	(20)	(20)	(1,286)
Adjusted underlying surplus/ (deficit)	112,147	114,907	2,760	8,374

Financial Report

3 months ended 30 September 2023

DAREBIN CITY COUNCIL

Balance Sheet

As at 30 September 2023

	YTD Budget \$'000	YTD Actual \$'000	YTD Variance \$'000	Annual Budget \$'000	Audited 2023 \$'000
Current assets					
Cash and cash equivalents	38,984	37,531	(1,453)	41,440	41,813
Trade and other receivables	123,001	138,243	15,242	15,164	22,232
Other financial assets	10,001	13,650	3,649	10,001	14,154
Inventories	101	67	(34)	101	66
Prepayments	3,798	2,941	(857)	2,056	2,901
Other assets	78	134	56	921	145
Total current assets	<u>175,963</u>	<u>192,566</u>	<u>16,603</u>	<u>69,683</u>	<u>81,311</u>
Non-current assets					
Trade and other receivables	3,046	2,918	(128)	3,385	2,704
Other financial assets	6	6	0	6	6
Property, infrastructure, plant & equipment	1,669,297	1,659,675	(9,622)	1,673,477	1,660,142
Right-of-use assets	80	30	(50)	83	29
Investment property	2,643	9,270	6,627	2,643	9,270
Intangible assets	701	1,073	372	315	1,241
Total non-current assets	<u>1,675,773</u>	<u>1,672,972</u>	<u>(2,801)</u>	<u>1,679,909</u>	<u>1,673,392</u>
Total assets	<u>1,851,736</u>	<u>1,865,538</u>	<u>13,802</u>	<u>1,749,592</u>	<u>1,754,703</u>
Current liabilities					
Trade and other payables	2,880	6,451	(3,571)	10,428	13,082
Trust funds and deposits	9,899	10,647	(748)	5,938	6,908
Unearned Income	2,615	724	1,891	2,615	1,254
Provisions	21,140	19,278	1,862	20,840	18,986
Interest bearing loans and borrowings	3,567	4,089	(522)	4,102	4,080
Lease liability	81	32	49	83	32
Total current liabilities	<u>40,182</u>	<u>41,221</u>	<u>(1,039)</u>	<u>44,006</u>	<u>44,342</u>
Provisions	1,846	2,424	(578)	1,846	2,380
Interest bearing loans and borrowings	42,591	42,465	126	39,109	43,478
Total non-current liabilities	<u>44,437</u>	<u>44,889</u>	<u>(452)</u>	<u>40,955</u>	<u>45,858</u>
Total liabilities	<u>84,619</u>	<u>86,110</u>	<u>(1,491)</u>	<u>84,961</u>	<u>90,200</u>
Net assets	<u>1,767,117</u>	<u>1,779,428</u>	<u>12,311</u>	<u>1,664,631</u>	<u>1,664,503</u>
Equity					
Accumulated surplus	698,909	708,398	9,489	594,994	593,470
Asset revaluation reserve	1,055,675	1,055,673	(2)	1,055,676	1,055,675
Other reserves	12,533	15,357	2,824	13,961	15,358
Total equity	<u>1,767,117</u>	<u>1,779,428</u>	<u>12,311</u>	<u>1,664,631</u>	<u>1,664,503</u>

Financial Report

3 months ended 30 September 2023

DAREBIN CITY COUNCIL

Statement of Cash Flow

For the 3 months ended 30 September 2023

	YTD Budget \$'000	YTD Actual \$'000	YTD Variance \$'000	Annual Budget \$'000
Cash flows from operating activities				
Rates	34,854	29,554	(5,300)	150,907
Statutory fees and fines	1,912	1,052	(860)	9,605
User fees & charges (inclusive of GST)	3,534	4,469	935	14,357
Grants - operating	5,472	6,478	1,006	18,673
Grants - capital	0	251	251	1,848
Contributions - monetary	1,449	1,055	(394)	6,539
Other income	1,227	634	(593)	3,184
Employee costs	(24,876)	(22,929)	1,947	(100,587)
Materials and services (inclusive of GST)	(22,299)	(19,976)	2,321	(71,796)
Net FSPL refund / payment	3,928	3,596	(332)	0
	5,201	4,184	(1,017)	32,730
Interest	(264)	476	741	753
Trust funds and deposits	0	147	147	0
Net GST refund / payment	2,231	2,429	198	3,304
Net cash provided by operating activities	7,168	7,237	69	36,787
Cash flows from investing activities				
Proceeds from sale of property, plant & equipment	137	145	7	1,436
Payment for property, infrastr, plant & equipment	(5,817)	(10,541)	(4,724)	(30,032)
Repayment of loans and advances	0	0	0	0
Proceeds from sale of other financial assets	0	504	504	0
Net cash used in investing activities	(5,680)	(9,892)	(4,213)	(28,596)
Cash flows from financing activities				
Finance costs	(434)	(622)	(188)	(1,735)
Repayment of borrowings	(1,004)	(1,004)	0	(3,950)
Net cash used in financing activities	(1,438)	(1,627)	(189)	(5,685)
Net increase / (decrease) in cash & cash equivalents	50	(4,282)	(4,332)	2,506
Cash & cash equivalents at the beginning of the year	38,934	41,813	2,879	38,934
Cash & cash equivalents at the end of the period	38,984	37,531	(1,453)	41,440

Financial Report

3 months ended 30 September 2023

DAREBIN CITY COUNCIL

Statement of Cash Flow

For the 3 months ended 30 September 2023

Reconciliation of cash flows from operating activities to surplus

	YTD Budget \$'000	YTD Actual \$'000	YTD Variance \$'000	Annual Budget \$'000
Surplus for the year	112,147	114,927	2,780	9,660
Items not involving cash or non operating in nature				
Depreciation and amortisation	6,806	6,762	(44)	27,226
Interest expense	434	453	19	1,737
Bad & doubtful debts	3	467	464	1,436
Net (gain) / loss on sale of assets	(146)	(140)	6	(1,436)
Decrease / (Increase) in trade and other debtors	(108,826)	(119,624)	(10,798)	(294)
Decrease / (Increase) in other operating assets	44	2,793	2,749	(6)
(Decrease) / Increase in Trade creditors	(7,629)	(6,162)	1,467	635
(Decrease) / Increase in other operating liabilities	4,035	7,423	3,388	(2,171)
(Decrease) / Increase in provisions	300	338	38	0
	<u>(112,076)</u>	<u>(115,231)</u>	<u>(3,155)</u>	<u>(1,836)</u>
Net cash provided by operating activities	<u>7,168</u>	<u>7,237</u>	<u>69</u>	<u>36,787</u>



Financial Report

3 months ended 30 September 2023

DAREBIN CITY COUNCIL

Statement of Capital Works

For the 3 months ended 30 September 2023

	YTD Budget \$'000	YTD Actual \$'000	YTD Variance \$'000	Annual Budget \$'000	Budget & CFWDs \$'000
Capital works					
Property					
Land	0	0	0	600	1,570
Buildings	2,873	4,550	(1,677)	5,350	5,312
Total property	2,873	4,550	(1,677)	5,950	6,882
Plant & equipment					
Plant, machinery & equipment	928	162	766	1,820	1,820
Fixtures, fittings & furniture	1	0	1	30	30
Computers & telecommunications	455	259	196	2,600	3,215
Library books	238	117	121	750	750
Total plant & equipment	1,622	538	1,084	5,200	5,815
Infrastructure					
Roads	210	0	210	4,750	4,890
Bridges	0	0	0	0	137
Footpaths & cycleways	423	245	178	2,750	2,750
Drainage	82	47	35	1,580	1,580
Land Improvements	23	89	(66)	350	857
Recreation, leisure & community facilities	4	0	4	5,550	5,839
Waste management	63	10	53	350	350
Parks, open space & streetscapes	518	669	(151)	3,452	4,088
Off-street car parks	0	0	0	100	100
Total infrastructure	1,323	1,060	263	18,882	20,590
Total capital works	5,818	6,148	(330)	30,032	33,287
Represented by:					
Asset renewal	4,461	4,715	(254)	23,026	25,523
New assets	455	481	(26)	2,350	2,606
Asset expansion	523	553	(30)	2,700	2,994
Asset upgrade	379	400	(21)	1,956	2,169
Total capital works	5,818	6,148	(330)	30,032	33,287

9.3 DAREBIN PARKING PERMIT POLICY 2023 FOR ADOPTION**Author:** Acting Coordinator Sustainable Transport**Reviewed By:** General Manager City Sustainability and Strategy

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Updating the Residential Parking Permit Policy is an action item included in the Council Plan 2021-2025. The project has set out to:

- Improve equity and access to on-street parking permits.
- Support Carers and those providing care support.
- Manage on-street parking that provides access for a variety of users and ensures a safe street network.
- Improve the customer experience by having a parking permit policy that is easy to understand, transparent and consistent in its application.

On-street parking is a community asset and there are often not enough spaces for everyone, especially in streets near shops and public transport. This is when Council needs to manage parking so that spaces are available for those who need them most.

An extensive policy review has been undertaken, including two rounds of community engagement. The results of the second round of engagement are described in this report.

The second round of community engagement sought feedback on a draft policy that included expanding permit access beyond the '2004' rule, where the '2004 rule' only provides permit access for residents living in dwellings built before December 2004.

The expanded access to residential parking permits included dwellings built after December 2004, but before the date of this policy adoption, dwellings with a commercial vehicle, and dwellings that have 2 or more cars that exceeds the number of off-street parking spaces. The draft policy also included allowing single dwelling rebuilds to access a residential permit, a new carers permit, a new services permit, and a user pays permit.

The final policy analysis considered a broad range of evidence, including community engagement, technical transport standards and an independent peer review. The expanded access beyond the '2004' rule risks creating increased permit demand and therefore parking demand. While this is expected to be dispersed throughout the municipality, streets surrounding activity centres, railway stations and other major destinations have a higher risk of increased parking demand. Considering this risk, on balance, the recommended policy does not include expanded access beyond the '2004 rule'.

There is an alternative policy option available for Council consideration that provides the expanded access included in the draft consultation policy. Two alternative policy approaches to achieve this access are set out in this report, including two alternative motions.

For all options, officers recommend undertaking a review after one year of operation and reporting back to Council the effectiveness of operations. This provides an opportunity to adjust the policy should unintended impacts occur.

Finally, this report recommends an implementation approach for the new policy. It is recommended that the new carers policy be made available by December 2023, and that all other residential permits be available from February 2024 onwards, which is when current permits expire.

This report recommends fees, where all fees are the current fees that were set in the 2023-24 budget, noting that future permit fees will be set through the annual budget process. The exception is the service permit, which is a new permit. Officers are recommending setting a fee for this new permit type, so it can be made available in February 2024.

Officers recommend deferring the new daily visitor permits until such time that an e-permit system is introduced. The current, transferable residential permit is recommended to be retained until daily visitor permits are introduced.

Officer Recommendation

That Council:

- (1) Adopts the Darebin Parking Permit Policy 2023 in the form attached to this Officer Report as **Appendix A**.
 - (2) Fixes, for the purposes of the Darebin Parking Permit Policy 2023, the fees and charges specified in the table attached to this Officer Report as **Appendix B**.
 - (3) Includes the fees and charges fixed under paragraph 2 of this Resolution in Council's Schedule of Fees and Charges for 2023/24.
 - (4) Notes that future fees and charges will be set through the annual budget process.
 - (5) Directs the Chief Executive Officer to cause the updated Schedule of Fees and Charges for 2023/24 to be published on Council's website.
 - (6) Implements the Darebin Parking Permit Policy 2023 in the following manner:
 - a. Make the carers permit available by 1 December 2023
 - b. Make the Service, User-pays and Resident Permits with updated eligibility available by 1 March 2024
 - c. Retain the current Transferrable Resident Permit until an online permit system is created, where the Transferrable Resident Permits:
 - i. Are resident permits that are used by residents and their visitors and can be easily transferred between vehicles.
 - d. Introduce the Daily Visitor Permit bundles following the creation of an online permit system in the future.
 - e. Discontinue the transferable Resident Permit after Daily Visitor Permit bundles have been introduced.
 - (7) Directs the Chief Executive Officer to make administrative changes to the Darebin Parking Permit Policy 2023.
 - (8) Thanks the community and key stakeholders for providing valuable feedback to the process of developing the Darebin Parking Permit Policy 2023.
 - (9) Directs the Chief Executive Officer to bring a report to Council that outlines the effectiveness and impact of the policy after one year of operation.
-

BACKGROUND / KEY INFORMATION

Updating the Residential Parking Permit Policy is an action item included in the Council Plan 2021-2025. The project has set out to:

- Improve equity and access to on-street parking permits.
- Support carers and those providing care support.
- Manage on-street parking that provides access for a variety of users and ensures a safe street network.
- Improve the customer experience by having a parking permit policy that is easy to understand, transparent and consistent in its application.

On-street parking is a community asset and there are often not enough spaces for everyone, especially in streets near shops and public transport. This is when Council needs to manage parking so that spaces are available for those who need them most.

Darebin's Parking Permit Policy provides clear rules about parking permit eligibility and allocation.

As urban areas have become more populated the demand for parking has increased. Within Darebin, increased parking pressure is being experienced throughout the municipality. This pressure is highest on those streets adjacent to activity centres (High Street, Fairfield, Westgarth, Reservoir), around railway stations and large parking demand generators such as education facilities, markets and industrial areas.

Parking is a limited resource that if carefully managed can improve neighbourhood amenity, can provide accessibility for people who need it, the experience of visitors and liveability for residents. The way parking is managed can also influence road safety outcomes by preventing and limiting cars circulating streets and idling as they search for parking.

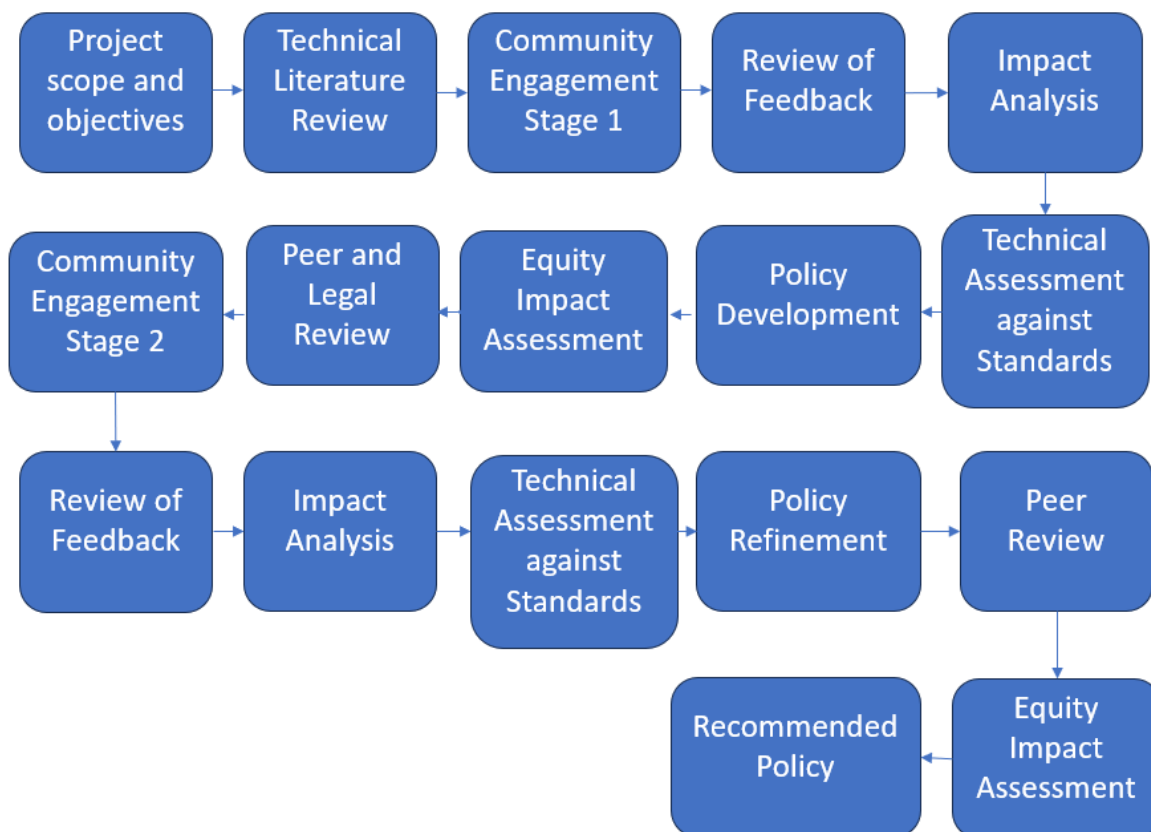
Since the policy was introduced in 2004 Darebin's diverse community has continued to grow and change, as have people's parking needs.

An update of the policy is needed to improve access and equity, while avoiding unintended problems such as little or no available parking spots, and cars circulating and causing local congestion as they try to find a park.

How was the recommended policy update developed?

The parking permit policy review started in 2021 and included a series of steps which have led to the development of the recommended Policy.

These steps are summarised below:



Previous Council Resolution

At its meeting held on 27 March 2023, Council resolved:

That Council:

- (1) *Endorses community consultation on the draft Parking Permit Policy at Appendix A, with the following amendments:*
 - a) *On page 6, under the sub-heading ‘Eligible dwellings’ add the following dot point:*
 - i. *“Dwellings built between 20 December 2004 and adoption of this policy in 2023 as part of a new development or subdivision resulting in 2 dwellings on the original lot AND did not have a planning permit granted for a parking waiver or reduction in the minimum car parking requirements”*
 - b) *On page 6, under the sub-heading ‘Ineligible dwellings’ replace “Dwellings built on or after 21 December 2004 as part of a development of 2 or more dwellings on a lot” with:*
 - i. *“Dwellings built after 21st December 2004 as part of a development of 3 or more dwellings on a lot.”*

- c) On page 15, Appendix B: Extenuating Circumstances, under the heading “Circumstances where an extenuating permit would be granted with supporting documentation” add the following dot point:
- i. “Dwellings that are eligible for a residential permit, and have two or more cars registered to an address, and the number of cars registered at that address exceeds the number of off-street parking spaces. Only one permit of this type is allowed, with a maximum of two Resident Permits per dwelling. The following dwellings are excluded: medium and high density developments with 3 or more dwellings on a lot, and, 2 dwellings on a lot built after adoption of this policy in 2023.”
- d) On page 15, Appendix B: Extenuating Circumstances, under the heading “Circumstances where an extenuating permit would be granted with supporting documentation” add the following dot point:
- i. “Where a resident is required to store a commercial vehicle at their residential property, this is will be considered where:
- The resident can demonstrate they have insufficient space to store their commercial vehicle within their property
 - Provide evidence that the vehicle is a work vehicle and not for personal use.

(2) Thanks the community and stakeholders for providing valuable feedback during Stage 1 community engagement

ALIGNMENT TO 2041 DAREBIN COMMUNITY VISION

Strategic Direction 2: Prosperous, Liveable and Flourishing

ALIGNMENT TO 2021-25 COUNCIL PLAN

Strategic Direction 2: Prosperous, Liveable and Flourishing

ALIGNMENT TO COUNCIL PLAN STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

2.1 We will deliver equitable and accessible infrastructure to provide opportunities for our community to live well

DISCUSSION

This discussion section is presented in 2 parts:

- Part A – reports back consultation findings, describes officers’ final policy analysis, puts forward officer recommended policy, and puts forward an alternative policy option (and suggested alternative motions) for Council consideration.
- Part B – describes how the adopted updated policy should be implemented and recommends permit fees for adoption.

PART A: POLICY REVIEW AND OPTIONS

Community Engagement

Between October and November 2022, the first stage of community engagement took place. The community were asked to provide feedback on four policy options and to answer a series of open-ended questions around other parking needs and concerns.

Following the first stage of community engagement Officers prepared a draft policy and at the Council meeting on 27 March 2023 Council endorsed community engagement on the draft policy with some amendments.

Between April and May 2023, the second stage of community consultation was delivered. The community were asked to provide feedback on a draft parking permit policy, and specifically their views on permit eligibility and the proposed new parking permit categories. Engagement communications can be found at [Darebin's YourSay page](#).

A summary of engagement techniques and findings from the stage 2 community engagement is presented in this section. A detailed report on the community engagement activities and findings is attached at **Appendix C**.

The second stage of community engagement on a draft Parking Permit Policy took place between 19 April and 28 May 2023. Community members were asked to provide their feedback on the policy, primarily via an online survey on the Your Say Darebin website.

Over 665 individuals were engaged directly, including 555 people who completed the survey and over 110 people across 6 drop-in sessions and a pop-up engagement event.

Who Participated

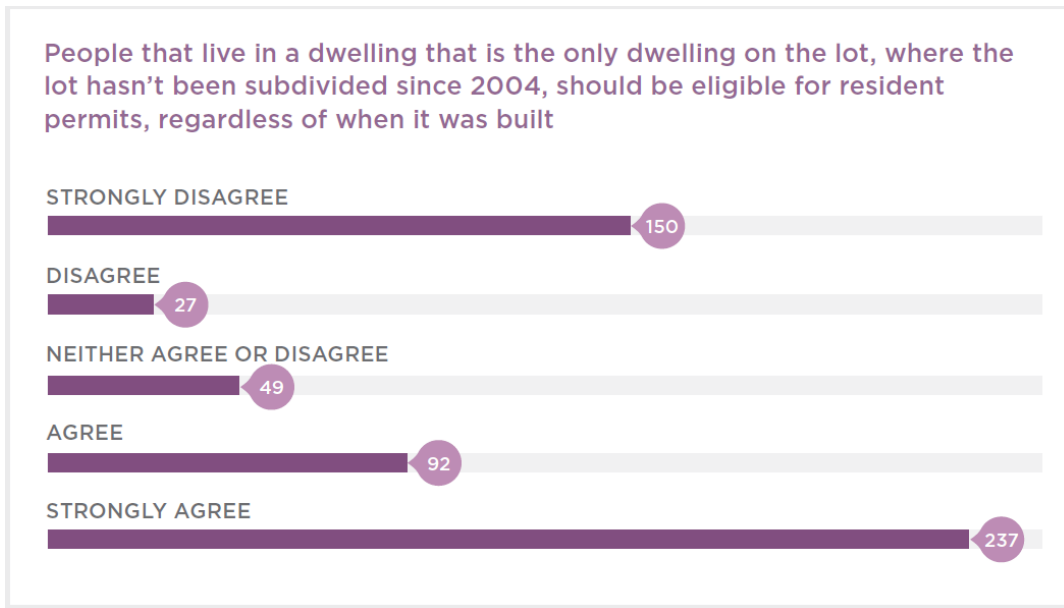
The second stage of engagement reached a broad cross-section of the community. Some key demographic information from the survey participants includes:

- 54% female, 43% male, and 2% another gender identity.
- 4% Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander.
- 20% spoke a language other than English at home.
- 11% identify as living with disability.

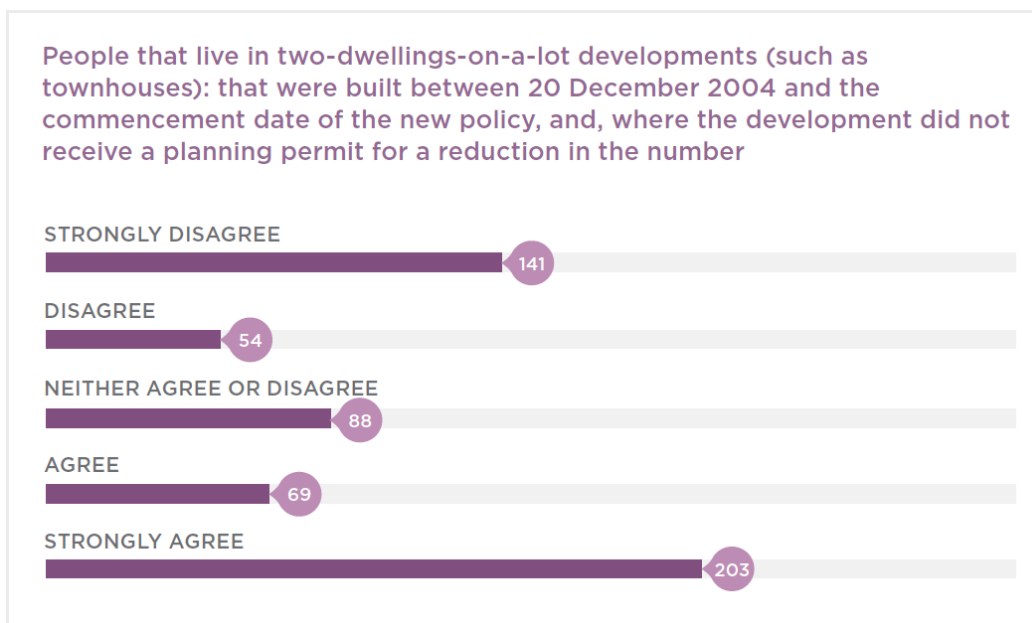
Response Summary

Eligibility for Resident Permits

Respondents were asked two questions about eligibility for Resident Permits. Firstly, they were asked whether they agreed with allowing new single dwelling developments, including rebuilds, access to Resident Permits. Whilst 27% of people strongly disagreed, the majority of respondents (59%) agreed or strongly agreed with this.



Participants were also asked whether new two-dwelling-on-a-lot developments should be eligible for resident permits.



The responses to the question about whether two dwellings on a lot should be eligible for resident permits are as follows:

	Number of respondents	Percentage of respondents
Strongly agree	203	37%
Agree	69	12%
Neither agree or disagree	88	16%
Disagree	54	10%
Strongly disagree	141	25%
Total	555	100%

‘Strongly agree’ received the most responses with 203 respondents strongly agreeing that two dwellings on a lot should be eligible for parking permits.

Combining ‘strongly agree’ and ‘agree’ results in:

- 272 respondents (203 + 69) = 49%

Combining ‘strongly disagree’ and ‘disagree’ results in

- 195 respondents (141 + 54) = 35%

Other parking permit categories

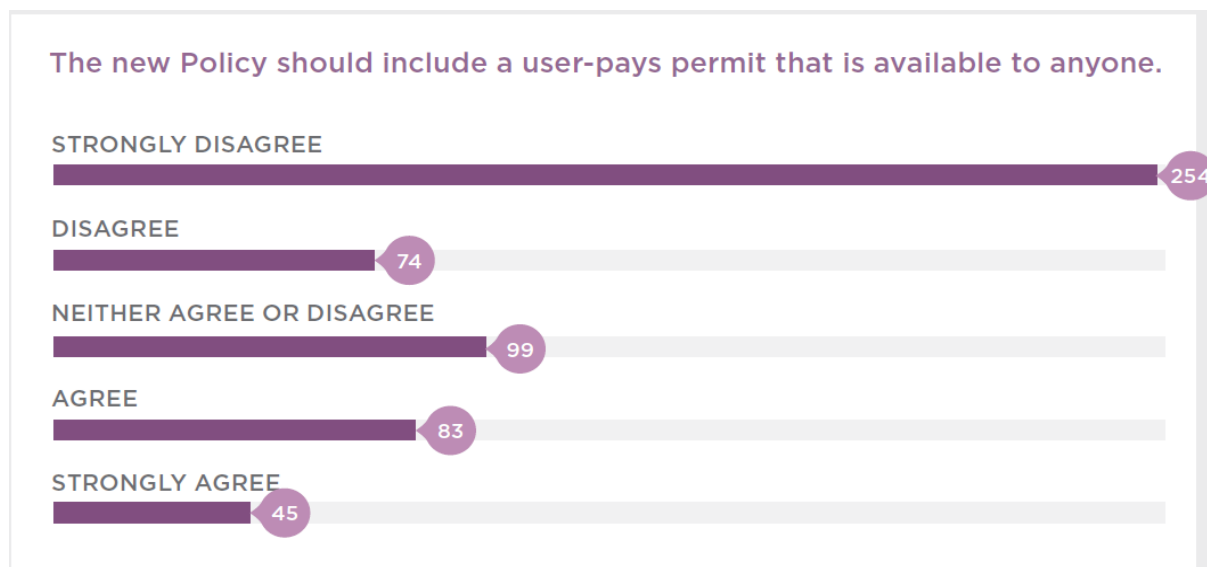
Overall, the Carer Permits and the Service Permits were both well supported by the community.

The introduction of Daily Visitor Permits showed 52% of respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing that they should be included. Some respondents suggested that they preferred transferable Resident Permits that can be used for visitors.

The draft Policy shared for stage 2 consultation also proposed a User-Pays Permit, which would be available to anyone, not just Darebin residents.

This permit type is similar to the current Type 2 Temporary Permit, which is available to Darebin residents who aren’t eligible for residential parking permits.

Expanding this eligibility to anyone did not receive community support, with 59% of respondents disagreeing or strongly disagreeing. A common concern amongst participants was that these permits would not prioritise the parking needs of Darebin residents, and would lead to increased parking demand.

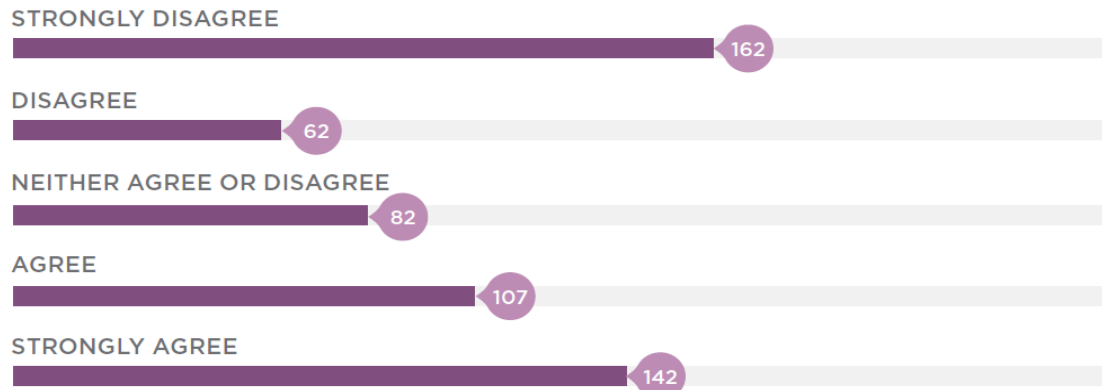


Extenuating circumstances

There was community support to allow people who are ineligible for resident permits but are experiencing extenuating circumstances to apply for a Resident Permit, with 62% of respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing.

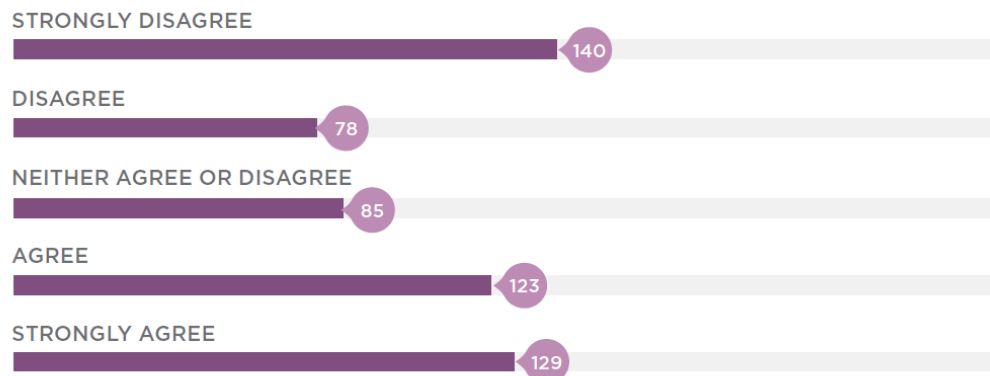
Regarding whether people with two or more cars and insufficient off-street parking should be eligible for an additional Resident Permit as an extenuating circumstance, showed 45% agreed or strongly agreed, whereas 40% disagreed or strongly disagreed.

Dwellings that are eligible for a resident permit, and: have two or more cars registered to an address, and the number of cars exceeds the number of off-street parking spaces, should be eligible for an extenuating circumstances resident permit.



Similarly, when asked whether people who need to store a commercial vehicle at their property but do not have sufficient off-street parking should be eligible for an additional Resident Permit as an extenuating circumstance. 39% disagreed or strongly disagreed, and 45% agreed or strongly agreed.

Dwellings where a resident needs to store a commercial vehicle, where the resident can prove that: (a) they have insufficient space to store their commercial vehicle within their property and (b) the vehicle is a work vehicle and not for personal use should be eligible for an extenuating circumstances resident permit



Final Policy Review Process

A final policy analysis of the consultation policy was undertaken to inform a final recommendation to Council. (The consultation policy can be found [here](#).) This analysis included:

- Review of feedback received through stage 2 community engagement.
- Analysis of neighbouring councils’ parking permit policies.
- Darebin council’s existing strategies and policies.
- Alignment with austroads guide to traffic management part 11: parking.

- Analysis of the likely car parking demand impacts arising from various policy options.
- The recommendations of an independent, expert peer reviews (**appendix d and e**).

The feedback received during stage 2 community engagement indicates that the draft Policy that was consulted on generally met the communities' expectations, and so extensive changes were not considered necessary.

The final policy review assessed how the consultation policy would likely impact the street network. In particular, this review carefully considered how the introduction of increased permit access might affect demand.

Allowing two-dwellings-on-a-lot development to access residential permits

Under the current 2017 policy, only houses built before December 2004 are eligible for most types of permits. The purpose of this '2004 rule' is to ensure that the parking needs of residents living in older homes are catered for, while managing the demand for on-street parking created by new development. It helps to ensure that when people build new homes in Darebin, they include enough off-street parking to meet the needs of occupants.

The consultation policy increases permit eligibility by allowing houses that were built as part of a two-dwellings-on-a-lot development *after December 2004 but before the commencement of the new policy* to access resident permits.

Council has approved approximately 773 two-dwellings-on-a-lot developments between December 2004 and February 2021. Potentially, there could be between 773 to 1,546 additional permits issued. Two-dwellings-on-a-lot are dispersed throughout the municipality, and in many situations, officers expect that additional demand for on-street parking created by these new permits to be accommodated within streets.

Officers do expect some localised impacts where these developments are clustered close to activity centres and other land uses that create demand for parking like schools and places of employment. This is most likely to occur in streets that are already experiencing parking pressure.

The independent review, undertaken by Stantec, recommended removing this provision from the final policy (Attachment D). They advised that:

- "Given permit parking restrictions that have been in place in 2004, it is highly likely that these types of dwellings would have at least one, if not two, off-street car parking spaces in order to meet their planning scheme car parking requirements.
- Effectively, this waiver/reduction part of the policy is saying that dwellings that already have car parking are entitled to more.
- Homebuyers need to make the parking decision at the time of purchase.
- For these reasons, this type of policy change is inconsistent with the objective of the policy itself and also councils wider strategic goals of reducing car use."

Including commercial vehicles and 2 cars or more as an extenuating circumstance

The updated policy proposes introducing extenuating circumstances.

The recommended purpose of extenuating circumstances is to support any Darebin resident who may experience an unexpected and life-altering event by issuing a residential permit, at no cost, for 12 months. It is not expected that there would be a significant volume of these permits issued. This purpose has been included in the recommended policy at Attachment A.

The April draft consultation policy includes two extenuating circumstances that may lead to a significant permit uptake, and therefore could result in increased parking demand and localised congestion. These circumstances are a dwelling that has 1) a commercial vehicle, and 2) two or more cars that exceeds the number of off-street parking spaces.

It is not possible to project how many additional permits may be issued because we do not have data on how many dwellings own a commercial vehicle, or own two or more cars that exceeds the number of off-street parking spaces. If this permit eligibility was included in the adopted policy, officers would expect to better understand uptake patterns after a year of operation.

Officer Recommended Policy

On balance, officers recommend not expanding the '2004 rule' by increasing eligibility to houses that were built as a two-dwellings-on-a-lot development, have a commercial vehicle, and / or have two or more cars that exceeds the number of off-street parking spaces.

This is because there is risk of increased parking demand that would in turn increase parking and traffic congestion on streets, giving rise to road safety risks and reduced accessibility.

This recommendation is also consistent with national guidelines (Austroads).

Policy options for Council consideration

At-a-glance

There are three policy options available for Council consideration:

- **Option 1:** retain the '2004 rule' and remove two-dwellings-on-a-lot built after December 2004 but before the date of the revised policy, and commercial vehicles and owning 2 or more cars from accessing additional permit/s (officer recommendation).
- **Option 2A:** expand the '2004 rule' to allow two-dwellings-on-a-lot built after December 2004 but before the date of the revised policy to access residential permits, and allow all houses eligible for a residential permit to access 2 permits, regardless of whether they have a driveway/garage or not.
- **Option 2B:** expand the '2004 rule' to allow two-dwellings-on-a-lot built after December 2004 but before the date of the revised policy to access residential permits, and expand residential permits to create a commercial vehicle permit and to allow a two or more car households to access two permits.
- **For all options:** every Darebin household can access a carers permit, a service permit and a user pays permit.

Option 1

Who is eligible for resident permits?



Dwellings built before 20 Dec 2004

+



All single dwellings on a lot



Option 2A

Who is eligible for resident permits?



Built before 20 Dec 2004

+



All single dwellings on a lot

+




2 dwellings on a lot until policy adopted

- All eligible properties can have 2 parking permits




Option 2B

Who is eligible for resident permits?




Dwellings built before 20 Dec 2004

+




All single dwellings on a lot

+




2 dwellings on a lot until policy adopted

+




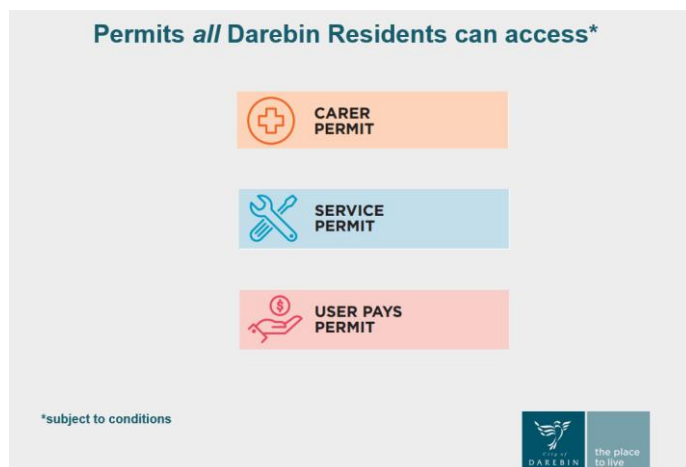
- Own 2+ vehicles
- 1 type allowed
- Max 2 resident permits

+



- Own commercial vehicle
- 1 type allowed
- Max 2 resident permits





Option 1 (officer recommended)

A recommended Policy has been prepared and is attached in **Appendix A** for Council's consideration. This policy would provide the following permits:

Permit	Eligibility	Description
Residential Parking Permit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Available for pre 20 Dec 2004 dwellings Available for single dwelling on a lot built after 20 Dec 2004, where the number of dwellings has not increased or the property hasn't been subdivided 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dwellings eligible for up to two permits Dwellings with off-street parking & shop-top dwellings eligible for one permit Valid for a maximum of 12 months
Visitor Parking Permit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Available to households that are eligible for residential parking permits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each visitor permit is valid for a single day only Only valid while the resident resides at the address There is no upper limit for the number of times this type of permit that can be purchased
Carers Permit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Available to <i>all</i> Darebin residents that have supporting documentation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Issued to the resident requiring visiting carers Transferrable between vehicles. Carer permits are free to eligible residents. A maximum of one carer permit per dwelling Valid for a maximum of 12 months
Service (trade) Parking Permit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Available to <i>all</i> Darebin residents Applicant must produce evidence of tradespeople, removalists, etc. servicing the residence (e.g. quote or receipt) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A maximum of three permits can be purchased within a twelve-month period Permits are valid up to a maximum of four weeks.

Permit	Eligibility	Description
User Pays Permit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Available to <i>all</i> Darebin residents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The permit is valid for four weeks Can be renewed every four weeks within a 12-month period
Extenuating Circumstances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Available to <i>all</i> Darebin Residents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Considered against the accepted list of extenuating circumstances defined in the appendix of the Policy.

Option 2A

This option allows households with a commercial vehicle and/or owning two or more cars to access two permits, by allowing *all* households eligible for a residential permit to obtain two permits – regardless of whether they have a garage/driveway or not.

If Council elects to achieve the same accessibility that was included in the April consultation draft, officers recommend that this approach is adopted because it will provide the best customer experience – eligibility is clear, and residents will not have to demonstrate that they own a commercial vehicle for trade, or that they own 2 or more cars.

To encourage people to use their on-site parking, officers recommend charging a higher permit fee for the second permit if a household has on-site parking. It is recommended that this higher fee be considered and introduced through Council’s annual budget process.

This alternative approach (Option 2A) would be structured as follows:

Permit	Eligibility	Description
Residential Parking Permit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Available for pre 20 Dec 2004 dwellings Available for single dwelling on a lot built after 20 Dec 2004 Available to 2 dwellings on a lot built between 20 Dec 2004 and adoption of this policy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>All</i> Dwellings eligible for up to two permits Dwellings with off-street parking pay a higher fee for their 2nd permit to encourage use of off-street parking (implemented through budget process) Shop-top dwellings eligible for one permit only Valid for a maximum of 12 months
Visitor Parking Permit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Available to households that are eligible for residential parking permits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each visitor permit is valid for a single day only Only valid while the resident resides at the address There is no upper limit for the number of times this type of permit that can be purchased
Carers Permit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Available to <i>all</i> Darebin residents that have supporting documentation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Issued to the resident requiring visiting carers Transferrable between vehicles. Carer permits are free to eligible residents. A maximum of one carer permit per dwelling Valid for a maximum of 12 months
Service (trade) Parking Permit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Available to <i>all</i> Darebin residents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A maximum of three permits can be purchased within a twelve-

Permit	Eligibility	Description
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Applicant must produce evidence of tradespeople, removalists, etc. servicing the residence (e.g. quote or receipt) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> month period Permits are valid up to a maximum of four weeks.
User Pays Permit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Available to <i>all</i> Darebin residents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The permit is valid for four weeks Can be renewed every four weeks within a 12-month period
Extenuating Circumstances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Available to <i>all</i> Darebin Residents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Considered against the accepted list of extenuating circumstances defined in the appendix of the Policy.

Therefore, an alternative motion to give effect to Option 2A would read:

'That Council

- (1) *Adopts the Darebin Parking Permit Policy 2023 in the form attached to this Officer Report as Appendix A, with the following amendments*
 - a) *Under the sub-heading 'Eligible dwellings' add the following dot point:*
 - *"Dwellings built between 20 December 2004 and adoption of this policy in 2023 as part of a new development or subdivision resulting in 2 dwellings on the original lot"*
 - b) *Under the sub-heading 'Ineligible dwellings' replace "Dwellings built on or after 21 December 2004 as part of a development of 2 or more dwellings on a lot" with:*
 - *"Dwellings on a lot that make up a development of 3 or more dwellings, where one or more of the dwellings was constructed after 21 December 2004"*
 - c) *Under the heading "Number of resident permits available" amends the details to reflect the following;*
 - *The maximum number of resident permits per dwelling is 2. Dwellings with access to off-street parking are required to pay a higher fee to encourage the use of off-street parking*
 - *For the purposes of this Policy, Off-Street Car Parking means an area on private property designed for parking, including a driveway, garage, or carport that conforms with the relevant Australian Standards.*
- (2) *Fixes, for the purposes of the Darebin Parking Permit Policy 2023, the fees and charges specified in the table attached to this Officer Report as **Appendix F**.*
- (3) *Includes the fees and charges fixed under paragraph 2 of this Resolution in Council's Schedule of Fees and Charges for 2023/24.*
- (4) *Directs the Chief Executive Officer to cause the updated Schedule of Fees and Charges for 2023/24 to be published on Council's website.*
- (5) *Implements the Darebin Parking Permit Policy 2023 in the following manner:*
 - a) *Make the carers permit available by 1 December 2023.*
 - b) *Make the Service, User-pays and Resident Permits with updated eligibility available by 1 March 2024.*

- c) *Retain the current transferrable Resident Permit until an online permit system is created, where the Transferrable Resident Permits:*
- i. *are resident permits that are for use by residents and their visitors and can be easily transferred between vehicles.*
- d) *Introduce the Daily Visitor Permit bundles following the creation of an online permit system in the future.*
- e) *Discontinue the transferable Resident Permit after Daily Visitor Permit bundles have been introduced.*
- (6) *Directs the Chief Executive Officer to make administrative changes to the Darebin Parking Permit Policy 2023.*
- (7) *Thanks, the community and key stakeholders for providing valuable feedback to the process of developing the Darebin Parking Permit Policy 2023.*
- (8) *Directs the Chief Executive Officer to bring a report to Council that outlines the effectiveness and impact of the policy after one year of operation.'*

Option 2B

This option also provides permit access for houses with a commercial vehicle or owning two or more cars, however, it:

- *Removes these two provisions from being an extenuating circumstance, and instead includes them as an option for households who are eligible for a residential permit.*
- *More clearly defines commercial vehicle access.*

The intent of extenuating circumstances is to support all residents who experience an unexpected and life altering event with access to residential permits, at no cost. A commercial vehicle, or two or more vehicles, is not consistent with this intent, and so officers recommend moving these two permits into residential permit eligibility.

This alternative approach (Option 2B) would be structured as follows:

Permit	Eligibility	Description
Residential Parking Permit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Available for pre 20 Dec 2004 dwellings Available for single dwelling on a lot built after 20 Dec 2004 Available to 2 dwellings on a lot built between 20 Dec 2004 and adoption of this policy Permits available to eligible dwellings that have a commercial vehicle (conditions apply) Permits available to eligible dwellings that own two or more vehicles (conditions apply) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dwellings eligible for up to two permits Dwellings with off-street parking & shop-top dwellings eligible for one permit Valid for a maximum of 12 months
Visitor Parking Permit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Available to households that are eligible for residential parking permits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each visitor permit is valid for a single day only Only valid while the resident resides at the address There is no upper limit for the number of times this type of permit that can be purchased
Carers Permit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Available to <i>all</i> Darebin residents that have supporting documentation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Issued to the resident requiring visiting carers Transferrable between vehicles. Carer permits are free to eligible residents. A maximum of one carer permit per dwelling Valid for a maximum of 12 months
Service (trade) Parking Permit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Available to <i>all</i> Darebin residents Applicant must produce evidence of tradespeople, removalists, etc. servicing the residence (e.g. quote or receipt) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A maximum of three permits can be purchased within a twelve-month period Permits are valid up to a maximum of four weeks.
User Pays Permit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Available to <i>all</i> Darebin residents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The permit is valid for four weeks Can be renewed every four weeks within a 12-month period
Extenuating Circumstances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Available to <i>all</i> Darebin residents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Considered against the accepted list of extenuating circumstances defined in the appendix of the Policy.

Therefore, an alternative motion to give effect to Option 2B would read:

'That Council:

- (1) *Adopts the Darebin Parking Permit Policy 2023 in the form attached to this Officer Report as Appendix A, with the following amendments:*
 - a) *Under the sub-heading 'Eligible dwellings' add the following dot point:*
 - *"Dwellings built between 20 December 2004 and adoption of this policy in 2023 as part of a new development or subdivision resulting in 2 dwellings on the original lot"*
 - b) *Under the sub-heading 'Ineligible dwellings' replace "Dwellings built on or after 21 December 2004 as part of a development of 2 or more dwellings on a lot" with:*
 - *"Dwellings on a lot that make up a development of 3 or more dwellings, where one or more of the dwellings was constructed after 21 December 2004"*
 - c) *Under the heading "Resident Permit" add the following dot point:*
 - *"Dwellings that are eligible for a residential permit, and have two or more cars registered to an address, and the number of cars registered at that address exceeds the number of off-street parking spaces. Only one permit of this type is allowed, with a maximum of two Resident Permits per dwelling. The following dwellings are excluded: developments with 3 or more dwellings on a lot built after 20 December 2004, and, 2 dwellings on a lot built after adoption of this policy in 2023. The resident parking permit fee is applicable to this permit"*
 - d) *Under the heading "Resident Permit" add the following dot point:*
 - *"Where a resident is required to store a light commercial vehicle at their residential property, this is will be considered where:*
 - *The resident can demonstrate they have insufficient space to store their commercial vehicle within their property and provide evidence that the vehicle is a work vehicle used to transport bulky goods and / or specialised equipment, and not for personal use*
 - *In determining whether a property has sufficient space, Council will have regard to specifications outlined in Australian Standard 2890.1:2004 Parking facilities Part 1: Off-street car parking*
 - *Light commercial vehicles are considered as motor vehicles constructed to carry bulky goods and / or specialised equipment that are less than or equal to 4.5 tonnes gross vehicle mass. They include utility vehicles, panel vans, cab chassis vehicles and goods vans.*
 - *Only one permit of this type is allowed. Properties eligible for two Resident Permits per dwelling are not entitled to this permit. The following dwellings are excluded: developments with 3 or more dwellings on a lot built after 20 December 2004, and, 2 dwellings on a lot built after adoption of this policy in 2023.*
 - *The resident parking permit fee is applicable to this permit.*
- (2) *Fixes, for the purposes of the Darebin Parking Permit Policy 2023, the fees and charges specified in the table attached to this Officer Report as **Appendix G**.*
- (3) *Includes the fees and charges fixed under paragraph 2 of this Resolution in Council's Schedule of Fees and Charges for 2023/24.*

- (4) *Directs the Chief Executive Officer to cause the updated Schedule of Fees and Charges for 2023/24 to be published on Council's website.*
- (5) *Implements the Darebin Parking Permit Policy 2023 in the following manner:*
 - a) *Make the carers permit available by 1 December 2023.*
 - b) *Make the Service, User-pays and Resident Permits with updated eligibility available by 1 March 2024.*
 - c) *Retain the Transferrable Resident Permit until an online permit system is created, where the Transferrable Resident Permits:*
 - i. *are resident permits that are for use by residents and their visitors and can be easily transferred to between vehicles.*
 - d) *Introduce the Daily Visitor Permit bundles following the creation of an online permit system in the future.*
 - e) *Discontinue the transferable Resident Permit after Daily Visitor Permit bundles have been introduced.*
- (6) *Directs the Chief Executive Officer to make administrative changes to the Darebin Parking Permit Policy 2023.*
- (7) *Thanks, the community and key stakeholders for providing valuable feedback to the process of developing the Darebin Parking Permit Policy 2023.*
- (8) *Directs the Chief Executive Officer to bring a report to Council that outlines the effectiveness and impact of the policy after one year of operation.'*

PART B: IMPLEMENTATION

Officers have developed an implementation plan with the objective of achieving a great customer experience. The elements are described below:

Recommended timelines

- Assumes Council adoption of Parking Permit Policy on 27 November 2023
- Introduce the free Carer Permit as a paper-based permit from 1 December 2023
- Introduce new Resident, Services and User-pays permits as paper-based permits by 1 March 2024 (this is when existing permits expire)
- Retain existing paper-based application process until Council transitions to an online permit system in the future.
 - *Due to concerns around misuse, high costs and limited availability of printing suppliers, the introduction of Daily Visitor Permits should be deferred until Council transitions to an online permit system.*
 - *During this transition period, transferrable resident permits are recommended to remain available and after such time an online permit system is implemented, the bundles of daily visitor permits should be introduced and the transferrable permit discontinued.*

Key Milestone	Nov 2023	Dec 2023	Jan 2024	Feb 2024	Mar 2024	Apr 2024 onwards	Future date
Parking permit policy endorsed by Council							
Carer Permits (paper based) introduced							
Community notification about new permit policy and permit fees							
Service Permits, User-pays Permits, and new Resident Permit eligibility introduced (paper based)							
Current paper-based application process remains							
Daily Visitor Permits made available when Council transitions to ePermits							
Transferrable Resident Permits discontinued when Council transitions to ePermits							

The above implementation plan aligns with the expiry of existing resident parking permits at the end of February 2024. Officers recommend that the carers permit is introduced as soon as possible after policy endorsement (December), allowing Council to provide this much needed benefit for the community.

If Council adopts a new policy, a communications plan will be prepared to inform our community on the new parking permit policy and the new parking permit fees.

Future Transition to ePermits

It is recommended that eventually Council transitions to a paperless ePermit system. ePermits allows the community to manage their permit needs through a website or app and means improved flexibility for residents.

There is a significant investment associated with ePermits that needs to be considered through Council’s annual budget process.

e-Permits can result in efficiencies through quick and simple application processes for customers and improved permit processing.

While transitioning to ePermits will require significant up-front investment, this approach will be more cost effective in the medium-long term as it has lower ongoing costs, and significantly reduces the administration associated with the scheme.

Permit Prices

Fees and charges are set by Council through its annual budget process.

Because a new parking permit policy was not adopted before the 2023-24 budget was developed and adopted, Council now needs to set a fee for the new service permit in order to make this permit available in February.

Officers are recommending the service permit be set at a per week rate of \$30/week for up to 4 weeks. This contributes to covering the additional administration steps required for this type of permit, while balancing access. Concessions would apply.

(The carers permit and extenuating circumstances are recommended to be no cost).

The fees for all other permits that renew in February 2024 will be those adopted by Council in its 2023-24 budget.

Future permit fees will be considered and set through Council's annual budget process, which is informed by community consultation. Factors that would also inform future years fees includes CPI, benchmarking with comparable Councils and parking demand management.

12 month review of policy

If Council adopts a new parking permit policy, it is recommended a report is brought to Council after the policy has been in operation for 12 months.

This report would consider the effectiveness of the policy, uptake of permits, community feedback and any need for adjustments if required.

CONSIDERATION OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT (2020) PRINCIPLES

Financial Management

Council's parking permit fees do not currently cover the costs of administrating and enforcing the existing policy.

A review of current and expected future operating costs indicates that the officer recommended policy will increase operating costs (staff costs, cost of permits and postage) by 19%. Including the additional elements in the policy that was consulted on could increase operating costs by a further 24%.

These costs do not include the enforcement of the scheme. The more permits in the community, the higher expectations there will be of enforcement which will need to be considered.

It may be necessary in future years to adjust permit fees to address operating costs, and to influence behaviour and demand, (should this policy lever be required to address parking / traffic congestion and the road safety, accessibility and amenity impacts). The 12 month review will consider these aspects.

The current permit system is paper based. Introducing daily visitor permits at this time would create a major administrative effort, which would divert officer resources from other critical safety and compliance activities. They would incur significant printing costs, as well as a high risk of unauthorised use and 'reproduction' of daily permits.

Introducing ePermits would have a significant upfront investment, and this needs to be considered as part of Council's budget setting process.

Other Principles for consideration

Overarching Governance Principles and Supporting Principles

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

Public Transparency Principles

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

Strategic Planning Principles

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

Service Performance Principles

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

COUNCIL POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

Environmental Sustainability Considerations (including Climate Emergency)

Parking management and the amount of access to parking not only has access outcomes, it can also change the safety, health and environmental profile of a city.

Managing access to on-street parking and providing alternative options for people to travel influences people's transport choices. Encouraging active and sustainable travel is essential for limiting localised air pollution and greenhouse gasses being produced by the transport industry. Transport makes up 15% of all Darebin community greenhouse gas emissions.

Localised high parking demand and congestion frequently results in cars circulating and stalling as they search for a park. This increases tail-pipe pollution (from internal combustion cars), which studies have shown contributes to increased mortality.

Equity, Inclusion, Wellbeing and Human Rights Considerations:

Two Equity and Gender Impact Assessments were undertaken with Councils Diversity team. The first assessment was undertaken when the draft policy was being prepared and the second assessment following the conclusion of the stage 2 community engagement.

Some of the considerations that came through the EIA/GIA assessments include:

- Recommendation to consider organising activities and engagement with a few prioritised schools to improve engagement with young people.
- Update Carer Permit eligibility language to include "people living with a disability".
- Important to issue 'extenuating circumstances' permits quickly and efficiently.
- Council must disseminate information regarding extenuating circumstances to the broader community.
- Ensure extenuating circumstances permits can be issued retrospectively (recent case of many new temporary Aboriginal children and their families coming to the area, because of floods where they live).
- Consideration of young people living in shared households.

Economic Development and Cultural Considerations

Parking pressure is predominately near activity centres. A careful balance is needed between providing access to permits for residents and access to the services for visitors or traders.

Extending parking permits to newer developments may have an impact on the economic viability of adjacent activity centres by reducing the amount of short term parking opportunities.

Operational Impacts

Any policy changes through this process would require updates to the way the Policy is administered, communicated, maintained and enforced. This may take time to resource and establish.

Legal and Risk Implications

The recommended Policy has been peer reviewed by an independent expert, and has been informed by an earlier legal review. The draft policy presented to Council has addressed Councils' legal responsibilities.

Options 2A and 2B have a risk of increased permit uptake, and therefore increased parking demand. This may create localised parking pressure, particularly in streets near activity centres. This in turn creates road safety and access risks that will need to be managed.

If parking congestion is caused by cars with a permitted right to park, parking restrictions will not be able to reduce demand and therefore road safety risks. The only policy option available will be to dampen permit demand through increased permit fees, or, to reduce permit eligibility through amending the policy.






Option 2B will be more administratively burdensome for both customers and Council, and this may diminish customer experience.

The independent peer reviews of the recommended policy and consultation policy have been included in **Appendix D** and **E**. These reviews recommend that eligibility should not be provided to lots that have been developed since 2004, and that the policy should be as clear as possible and owning a certain number of cars or needing to store a commercial vehicle are not extenuating circumstances.

RELATED DOCUMENTS

- Austroads Guide to Traffic Management Part 11: Parking
- Darebin Transport Strategy 2007-2027

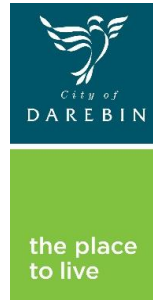
Attachments

- Darebin Parking Permit Policy 2023 (**Appendix A**) [↓](#) 
- Darebin Parking Permit Policy 2023 - Fees Option1 (**Appendix B**) [↓](#) 
- Community Engagement Report (**Appendix C**) [↓](#) 
- Part A Independent Peer Review (**Appendix D**) [↓](#) 
- Part B Independent Peer Review (**Appendix E**) [↓](#) 
- Darebin Parking Permit Policy 2023 - Fees Option 2A (**Appendix F**) [↓](#) 
- Darebin Parking Permit Policy 2023 - Fees Option 2B (**Appendix G**) [↓](#) 

DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST

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

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



Parking Permit Policy

November 2023

Objective Document ID Number	[]
Responsible Officer	[]
Custodians	[Sustainable Transport]
Date Reviewed	[Month 2023]
Review Purpose	Creation
Endorsed by Council on Date	
Date to be Reviewed	[]
Version Number	[V0.1]

Darebin City Council
 Parking Permit Policy – For endorsement (November 2023)

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Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

Darebin City Council acknowledges the Wurundjeri Woi-Wurrung people as the traditional owners and custodians of the land and waters we now call Darebin and affirms that Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung people have lived on this land for millennia, practising their customs and ceremonies of celebration, initiation and renewal. Council acknowledges that Elders past, present and emerging are central to the cohesion, intergenerational wellbeing and ongoing self-determination of Aboriginal communities. They have played and continue to play a pivotal role in maintaining and transmitting culture, history and language.

Council respects and recognises Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities' values, living culture and practices, including their continuing spiritual connection to the land and waters and their right to self-determination. Council also recognises the diversity within Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities have had and continue to play a unique role in the life of the Darebin municipality. Council recognises and values this ongoing contribution and its significant value for our city and Australian society more broadly.

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

1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose

The purpose of this Parking Permit Policy (**Policy**) is to provide direction for Council when allocating parking permits to ensure that the process is managed equitably and applied consistently.

1.2 Objectives

The objectives of this Policy are to:

- effectively manage Council's limited on-street car parking assets in areas where there is high demand for on-street car parking to improve safety, amenity, environmental and wellbeing outcomes for the community
- specify who is eligible for permits and therefore who will have long-term access to on-street parking where timed restrictions exist
- contribute to achieving the 2041 Darebin community vision and Council's vision and objectives set out in the Darebin Transport Strategy 2017-2027 and the Safe Travel Strategy 2018-2028
- ensure that Council's parking management practices are consistent with its road management and safety obligations, including the Austroads Guide to Traffic Management Part 11 – Parking;
- ensure decisions about parking permits are made in a transparent and consistent way.

1.3 Legislation

The authority for Council to establish a resident parking scheme comes from Schedule 11 of the Local Government Act 1989. Compliance with parking control signs is enforced under the Road Safety Road Rules 2017. This legislative framework allows safe, efficient and enforceable systems to be established to support the needs of our community.

1.4 Context

This policy replaces the Darebin Resident Parking Permit Policy 2017.

In December 2004, Council introduced requirements in the planning scheme to ensure new developments include enough parking spaces on-site to meet the parking needs of its residents. The purpose of this is to manage the impact of new development on the demand for on-street parking. As such, residents of new developments are not eligible for

Darebin City Council

Parking Permit Policy – For endorsement (November 2023)

resident and visitor parking permits as their parking needs should be met within their property or development boundary.

2 Scope

This Policy specifies the different types of parking permits offered by Council, and the eligibility criteria, application requirements and conditions of use.

There are 5 types of parking permits available for use in Darebin, which are:

- Resident permit (section 3.1)
- Visitor permit (section 3.2)
- Carer permit (section 3.3)
- Service permit (section 3.4)
- User-pays permit (section 3.5)

3 Parking Permits

All permits:

- can be used to park an Eligible Vehicle (section 4.1) in a Permit Zone or Timed Parking areas of 1P or greater on residential streets within the Permit Area (Appendix A) for as long as desired, except where other supplementary signage states that permits are not valid or in areas outlined in section 4.2 of this Policy;
- will either include the vehicle's registration number on the physical permit or be digitally assigned to a vehicle's registration number, except for carer permits; and
- must be fixed to the correct vehicle in a visible location or be digitally assigned to a vehicle's registration number. Carer permits can be transferred between eligible vehicles, and must be displayed in a visible location in the eligible vehicle's windscreen.

All permits (except the Carer Permit) must be purchased at a fee set by Council and are non-refundable.

Council does not guarantee that parking will be available for a permit holder.

Permit holders are not exempt from complying with Victorian Road Safety Rules.

More information on the general use of permits can be found in section 4 of this Policy.

3.1 Resident Permit

3.1.1 Purpose and use

The purpose of the resident permit is to provide residents of eligible dwellings with the opportunity to apply to Council for a permit enabling them to park on-street in their area.

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Resident permits are valid for a maximum of 12 months.

3.1.2 Eligibility

To be eligible for a resident permit, an applicant must:

- Live in a dwelling in Darebin within 100m of where Timed Parking or Permit Zone restrictions apply. The 100m distance is measured as a straight line from the closest property boundary to where the restricted parking zone starts;
- provide proof that the dwelling is their primary residence;
- provide proof that there is an Eligible Vehicle registered at the address that does not already have a permit allocated to it; and,
- live in an eligible dwelling, which is explained below.

Residents who do not meet these eligibility requirements but have an extenuating circumstance that may require them to need a parking permit for a period of time may also apply. The purpose of the extenuating circumstance is to support residents experiencing genuine hardship.

These applications will be assessed on a case-by-case basis. Permits granted under this clause will be valid for a maximum of 12 months and are free-of-charge.

Guidance on extenuating circumstances is provided in Appendix B. A permit issued under extenuating circumstance will be at Council's discretion.

Eligible dwellings

- All dwellings built before 20 December 2004*; or
- A single dwelling on a lot built on or after 20 December 2004, where:
 - additional dwelling/s have not been added after the initial home's construction; and
 - the residential lot existed before 20 December 2004 and has not been subdivided after 20 December 2004; and
 - the new dwelling is replacing a single dwelling on the lot (rebuilt and renovations)
- A dwelling within the Springthorpe Estate built before 27th November 2023

**Does not include dwellings above shops built before 20 December 2004 with off-street parking*

Ineligible dwellings

- Dwellings on a lot that make up a development of 2 or more dwellings, where one or more of the dwellings was constructed after 21 December 2004; or
- Dwellings above shops that have off-street parking.

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Number of resident permits available

The maximum number of resident permits per dwelling is 2, including permits issued under the extenuating circumstance clause. Dwellings with access to off-street parking are eligible for a maximum of 1 resident permit.

Type of dwelling	Without off-street parking	With off-street parking
Eligible dwellings	2	1
Dwelling above a shop built before 20/12/2004	1	0

For the purposes of this Policy, Off-Street Car Parking means an area on private property designed for parking, including a driveway, garage, or carport that conforms with the Darebin Planning Scheme or relevant Australian Standards.

If residents use their off-street car parking for another use (e.g. storage) or have removed their off-street parking since the adoption of this Policy The dwelling is eligible for a maximum of 1 resident permit.

3.2 Visitor Permit

3.2.1 Purpose and use

The purpose of visitor permits is to give visitors attending eligible dwellings the opportunity to park nearby on a short-term basis.

- Visitor permits are sold to eligible residents in bundles as either paper or digital permits. The form and number of permits in a bundle is to be determined by Council annually.
- Each visitor permit is valid for a single day only and cannot be reused

3.2.2 Eligibility

Visitor permits can only be purchased by residents who are eligible for a resident permit.

Eligible residents do not need to hold a current resident permit to purchase visitor permits.

A visitor permit is only valid while the applicant resides at the address shown on the approved application form.

Visitor permits are not designed for ongoing use by residents. Where a resident living at an eligible dwelling wants to use a permit to park on the street in a Permit Zone or time restricted area, they will need to apply for a resident permit or user-pays permit.

3.3 Carer Permit

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3.3.1 Purpose and use

The purpose of carer permits is to give people providing care for a Darebin resident living with a disability or a long-term health condition the opportunity to park near the resident's dwelling. These permits are issued to the resident requiring care and are transferrable between vehicles of people providing their care.

Carer permits are valid for a period of 12 months from the date the permit is granted, expiring on the final day of the month of issue the following year.

Carer permits are free to eligible residents. A maximum of one carer permit per resident is available.

3.3.2 Eligibility

To be eligible for a carer permit, an applicant (the person receiving care) must:

- live in a dwelling in Darebin within 100m of where Time Restricted Parking or Permit Zone restrictions apply. The 100m distance is measured as a straight line from the closest property boundary to where the restricted parking area starts.
- provide proof that the dwelling is their primary residence; and
- have disability or a long-term health condition that requires a visiting carer, as evidenced by the below.

Applicants must provide one of the following:

- a Companion Card;
- appropriate documents from a government health body indicating disability or a long-term health condition that requires visiting carers; or
- appropriate documents from a medical practitioner or psychologist indicating disability or a long-term health condition that requires a visiting carer; or
- Evidence that they are a NDIS participant, or
- Evidence that they have a My Aged Care support plan.

3.4 Service Permit

3.4.1 Purpose and use

The purpose of the service permit is to provide an exemption of up to four weeks from Timed Parking or Permit Zone restrictions for workers (including tradespeople, removalists, cleaners) servicing Darebin residents who are not eligible for visitor permits.

Residents eligible for visitor permits are recommended to purchase this type of permit where services are being conducted at their property.

3.4.2 Eligibility

To be eligible for a service permit, an applicant must:

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- live in a dwelling in Darebin within 100m of where Time restricted parking or permit zone restrictions apply. The 100m distance is measured as a straight line from the closest property boundary to where the restricted parking zone starts;
- produce evidence of residency in Darebin; and
- produce evidence of tradespeople, removalists, etc. servicing the residence (e.g. quote or receipt) specifying the dates when the work will take place.

The property owner, housing provider, tradesperson, removalist or other person providing the service may also apply for the permit on the resident's behalf. The application must include a letter or email from the resident consenting to the application being made.

Eligible people can purchase three permits within a twelve-month period (beginning from the commencement date of the first permit).

Permits are valid for the dates on which the work is expected only, issued in 1-week increments, up to a maximum of four weeks. If more permits or a longer time period is required (e.g. extensive works at the property), the applicant should contact Council to request a work zone permit.

3.5 User-Pays Permit

3.5.1 Purpose and use

The purpose of the user-pays permit is to allow longer-term access to on-street parking in areas where Timed Restrictions or Permit Zones apply. This permit is priced at a high rate to reflect that Council is not subsidising access to the user, as with other permits, that off-street parking should be used where it exists, and that sustainable modes of transport should be prioritised.

This higher price also manages demand, helping to prioritise access to on-street parking for eligible residents and other priority users, while allowing some flexibility when access to on-street parking is required.

3.5.2 Eligibility

To be eligible for a User-pays permit, the applicant must:

- produce evidence of residency in Darebin

The permit is valid for four weeks from the date of issue and can be renewed every subsequent month within a 12-month period.

4 Use of Permits

4.1 Eligible vehicles

Permits can only be issued for use in an Eligible Vehicle, which means a registered light passenger vehicle, such as a car or a van. Permits can not be used on a boat, bus, trailer,

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truck, caravan or vehicles greater than; 4.5 tonnes Gross Vehicle Mass (GVM) or 7.5 metres in length.

4.2 Where parking permits can and can't be used

Vehicles displaying a parking permit are exempt from parking restrictions in Timed Parking Areas of 1 hour or more and Permit Zones on residential streets within the designated Parking Area allocated to the permit. Permits only allow exemption from parking restrictions in front of residential properties within the Parking Area. The map at Appendix A shows all of the Parking Areas.

Parking permits issued by Council do not override the *Road Safety Act 1986* or the *Road Safety (Road Rules) Regulations 2017*.

This means that permit holders are still liable to comply with parking regulations which address:

- restrictions in Off Street Car Parks
- restrictions on arterial roads
- Clearways
- No Stopping areas
- Accessible Parking Bays (Disability Parking Areas)
- Bus Stops
- Taxi Ranks
- No Parking areas
- Loading Zones
- across driveways
- Construction Zones
- paid parking areas
- centre reservations
- nature strips and footpaths
- any other statutory offence.

4.3 Proof of residency

When applying for a resident, visitor, carer, or service permit, residents are required to provide proof of residency. This proof must indicate the applicant's name and residential address in Darebin. Accepted forms of proof of residency are:

- current driver's license;
- utility bill (not mobile phone);
- residential lease agreement; or
- rates notice; or
- Vehicle registration certificate.

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4.4 Lost or stolen permits

Lost or stolen permits must be reported as soon as possible. A Statutory Declaration is required to verify lost or stolen permits. A replacement cost may be applied by Council.

4.5 Permit cancellation

Permits must not be transferred, sold to another person or duplicated. If permits are used in breach of the conditions of issue, fraudulently, or applied for with false or misleading information Council may withdraw one or all permits issued to that property.

Any permit issued under the Policy may be suspended at any time by members of the Victorian Police, an Authorised Officer of Council, or Council Officer with delegated power under the relevant instrument of delegation.

4.6 Renewal of permits

Residents are responsible for ensuring that their current parking permit is valid, and if needed ensure that permits are renewed.

5 Cost of Permits

Council charges fees for all parking permit types, except for carer permits. Fees are used to manage demand for parking permits and to pay for the administration of the parking permit scheme.

When Council implements a new parking change trial in a street or Parking Area, all eligible dwellings where a timed restriction or permit zone is to be introduced at their property frontage will be eligible for free resident permits for the duration of the trial.

Once a permit has been approved, Council does not issue fee refunds unless Council has been required to cancel the permit due to a change in a law or regulation that impacts the conditions upon which the permit was issued.

Concession card holders as specified in this clause are entitled to receive a discount on resident permit fees and visitor permit fees, and a discounted rate for service and user-pays parking permits. The discount rate will initially be set at 50% of the full priced fee for resident permit fees and visitor permit fees. Fees are reviewed annually as part of Council's budgeting process. Fees and charges are available from the Darebin website (www.darebin.vic.gov.au), or from the City of Darebin (274 Gower Street Preston). The following card holders are entitled to these concession discounts:

- Pensioner Concession Card, 4
- Department of Veteran's Affairs (DVA) Gold Card
- Department of Veteran's Affairs (DVA) Gold Card specifying War Widow
- Department of Veteran's Affairs (DVA) Gold Card specifying TPI
- Department of Veteran's Affairs Pensioner Concession Cards.

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6 Duration of Permits

- Resident permit
 - Valid for a maximum of 12 months.
- Visitor permit (See Section 3.2)
 - Valid for 1 day, midnight to midnight
- Carer permit (See Section 3.3)
 - Valid for a maximum of 12 months from the date of issue
- Service permit (See Section 3.4)
 - Valid for up to a maximum of four weeks
- User-pays permit (See Section 3.5)
 - Valid for four weeks

7 Appeals

Any person may lodge an appeal against a decision made by Council to refuse to issue a parking permit. The appeal must be lodged with Council within 30 days of the decision being made. Appeals are to be made to:

Darebin City Council
PO Box 91
Preston, VIC 3072

The general grounds for an appeal are:

- an error in applying this Policy;
- where Council has used its discretion to make a decision that the applicant disagrees with; or
- any other matter which the applicant believes should be considered by Council.

A decision will not be reviewed simply because it has caused inconvenience to the applicant, including placing a financial cost on them.

Council will use its discretion when making a decision on an appeal.

Appeal decisions can be made (and determined) by the CEO or their delegate.

8 Governance

This Policy is to be formally reviewed at a minimum once every 10 years. Council can at its discretion review it sooner.

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9 Definitions

For the purposes of this Policy, the following definitions apply.

Terms	Definitions
Commercial Property	A property that is used primarily for business activities
Dwelling	A residential property where people live including; a house, apartment, townhouse, or unit,
Dwelling above a shop	A residential property located above a ground floor retail property and not a new development
Eligible Vehicle	A light passenger vehicle, such as a car or a van not greater than 4.5 tonnes GVM or 7.5 metres in length.
Medical Practitioner	A person who is registered under the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law in the medical profession
Mixed use development	A development that includes residential and commercial properties
New development	A building constructed on or after 20 December 2004 that includes residential uses
On-Street Car Parking	Area on road used for legally parking a vehicle. This can include indented and angled parking bays.
Off-Street Car Parking	Area on private land designed for parking a vehicle, ie driveway, garage, carport etc. This also includes Council owned or private car parks.
Parking Scheme	A system for managing the fair and equitable use of on-street parking that includes parking signs, permits and enforcement
Parking Area	Area(s) as shown in the map in Appendix A where a parking permit can be used
Permit Zone	An area of road where parking is restricted to permit holders, designated by a red and white parking sign with the wording "Permit Zone"
Timed Parking	An area of road in a residential street that has parking restriction signs of 1P or greater

Darebin City Council

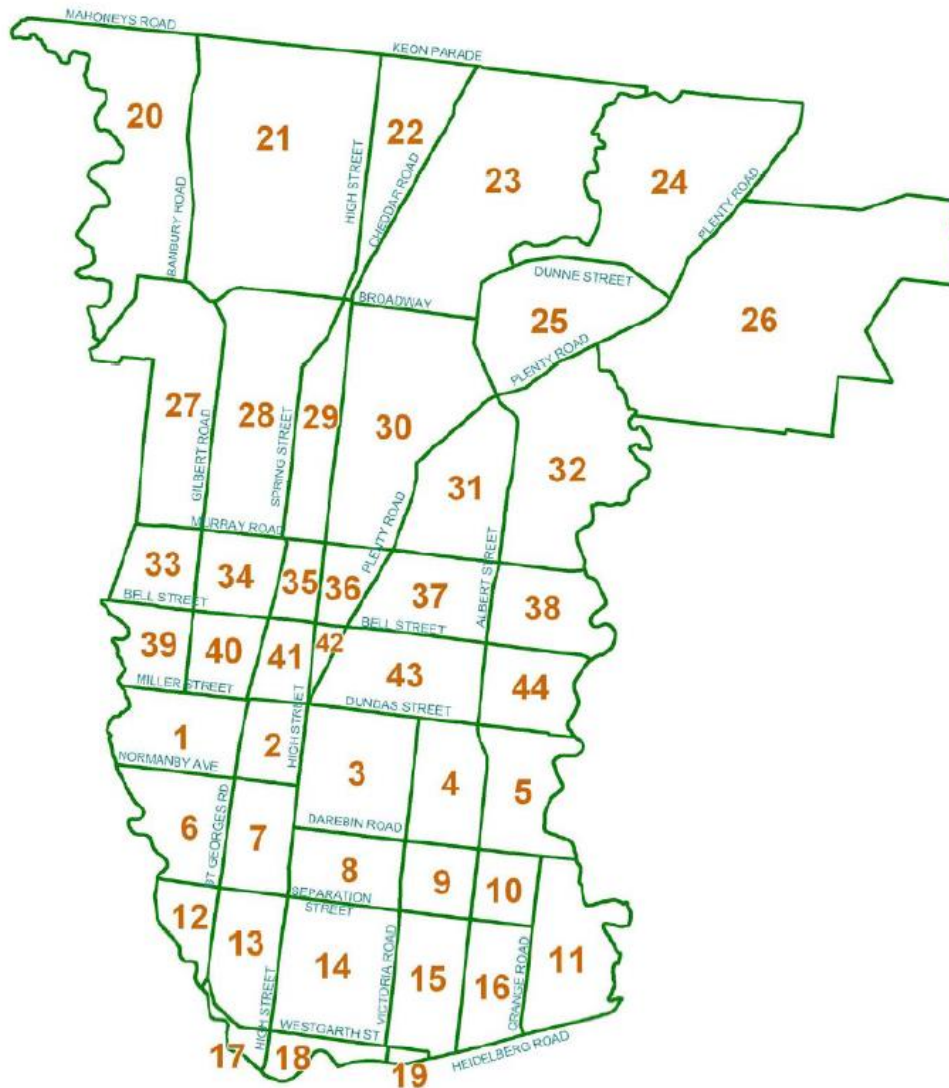
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APPENDIX A: Parking Areas

Where you can park with a permit

All parking permit types are issued to a specific Parking Area, shown on the map below. These areas include immediately adjacent and parallel streets. A parking permit allocated to a particular Parking Area must only be used within that Parking Area. Where a permit is issued to property on a road that intersects two parking areas, the permit can be used on either side of that road.



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Appendix B: Extenuating Circumstances

Circumstances where an extenuating permit <u>would</u> be granted with supporting documentation	Circumstances where an extenuating permit <u>would not</u> be granted
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resident fleeing domestic violence • A resident’s home affected by natural disaster (fire or flood) and a need for temporary accommodation • Medical or health condition that has resulted in the applicant no longer being able to access their off-street parking (preference however that residents consider a disabled parking permit in the first instance and council can provide support by providing an accessible parking space on their residential street) • Major construction has occupied unrestricted on-street parking and a permit is required for a resident to store their car in time restricted areas nearby • Where building work blocks laneway access to off-street parking (only valid for the duration of the disruption) and there is no alternative access to the property 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Property has more vehicles than can be stored off-street or can access resident or daily visitor permits for storing on-street. This includes households with many occupants who are of driving age • Vehicle cannot access off-street parking • For business or commercial reasons • Properties with residents who have temporarily moved to allow for construction, repair or upgrade works to their primary place of residence. All parking requirements should be considered when deciding upon temporary accommodation.

Darebin Parking Permit Policy 2023: Fees – Option 1

Fee Structure	1 st Resident Permit*	2 nd Resident Permit*	Temporary Permit	Visitor per 10**	Carer	Services p/w	User-Pays p/m	User-pays further months
Proposed Standard Fees	\$46 per year	\$70 per year	Discontinue	TBC	Free	\$30 per week - \$120 for 4 weeks	\$100 per month	Discontinue
Proposed Pension Fees	\$23 per year	\$35 per year	N/A	TBC	Free	\$15 per week -\$60 for 4 weeks	\$50 per month	Discontinue
Replacement Permit Fee	\$46	\$46	N/A		Free	N/A	N/A	N/A

* Resident permits can either be transferable or a residential sticker linked to a vehicle’s registration number

** Fees to be confirmed when these are introduced in line with Councils budget process



the place
to live

Community Engagement
Stage 2 Report - June 2023

Parking Permit Policy



What we did

Between 19th of April 2023 and 28th of May 2023, Council exhibited a draft Parking Permit Policy to the community and asked for their feedback. Feedback was received primarily through an online survey on the [Your Say Darebin](#) website, as well as through a number of face-to-face community engagement events. A summary of the community engagement program can be seen below:

555
survey responses



7
face-to-face
engagement
sessions

An icon depicting face-to-face engagement. It shows three stylized human figures sitting around a table, and a separate figure with a speech bubble next to them.

2 community
workshops with
CALD groups

An icon depicting community workshops. It shows two groups of people: one group with three people sitting at a table, and another group with two people standing and talking.

665 Individuals engaged (including 109 people at face to face sessions and people who completed the survey)

Who we heard from

General demographics

Below is a snapshot of the demographics of the respondents to the community survey.

Connection to Darebin

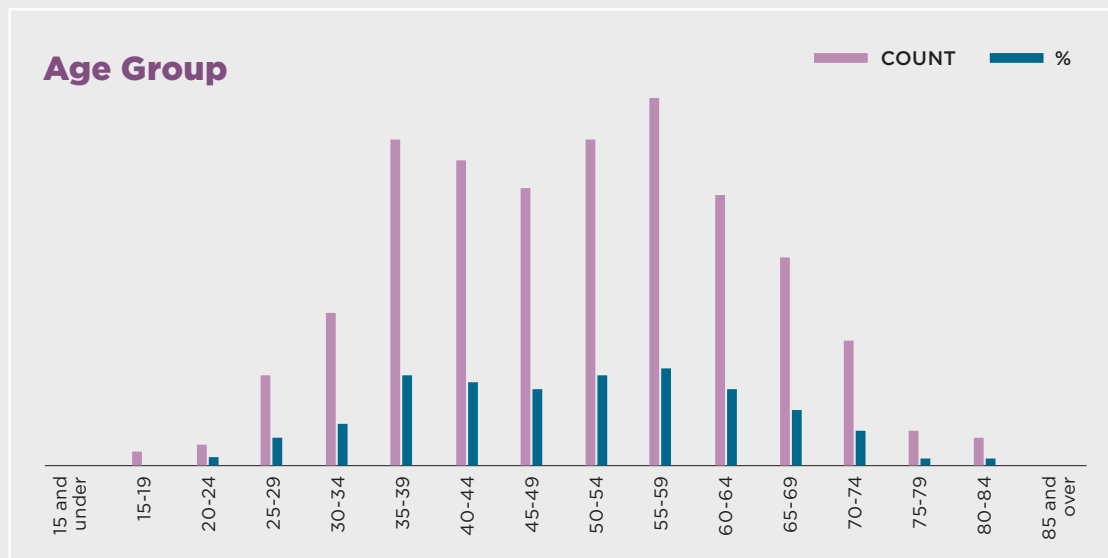
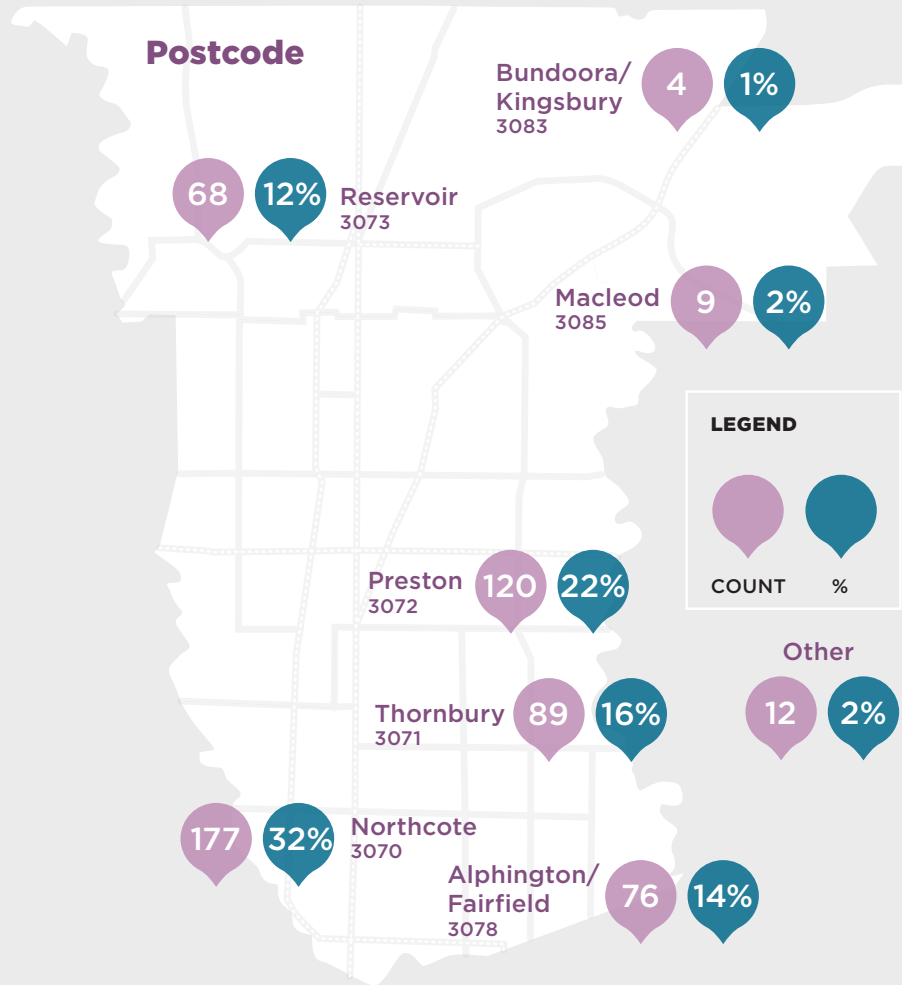
532 Live

142 Work

29 Visit

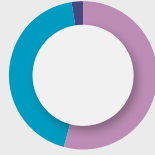
51 Own a business

15 Study



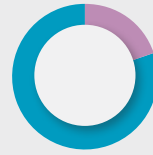
Who we heard from

Gender



	Count	%
Female	188	54%
Male	150	43%
Other identity	8	2%

Language other than English



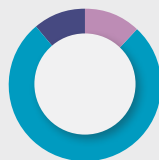
	Count	%
Yes	87	20%
No	352	80%

Languages spoken: Italian, German, Macedonian, Spanish, German, Japanese, Hindi, Thai, Tagalog, Tamil, Albanian, Arabic, Lithuanian, Yiddish, Lebanese, Mandarin, Croatian, Portuguese, Russian, Turkish, Dutch, Cantonese, Greek, and AUSLAN.

Do you identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander or both?

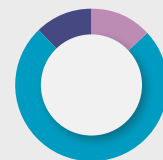
	Count	%
No	384	87%
Yes, Aboriginal	11	3%
Yes, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	4	1%
Yes, Torres Strait Islander	0	0%
I prefer not to say	41	9%

Do you identify as having a disability?



	Count	%
I prefer not to say	53	12%
No	339	77%
Yes	49	11%

Do you have carers visit your home?



	Count	%
I prefer not to say	58	13%
No	331	75%
Yes	53	12%

It was not mandatory for respondents to provide demographic information other than a postcode.

Who we heard from

Project specific information

Survey participants who live in Darebin were also asked some questions about their households more specifically related the draft Parking Permit Policy. An overview of these responses can be seen below.

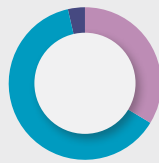
Number of cars in household

	Count	%
0	13	2%
1	169	32%
2	230	43%
3	65	12%
4+	55	10%

How many homes are there in your development?

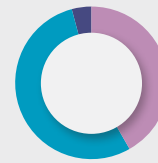
	Count	%
1	66	33%
2	67	34%
3	14	7%
4	15	8%
5+	27	14%
Not sure	10	5%

Year house was built

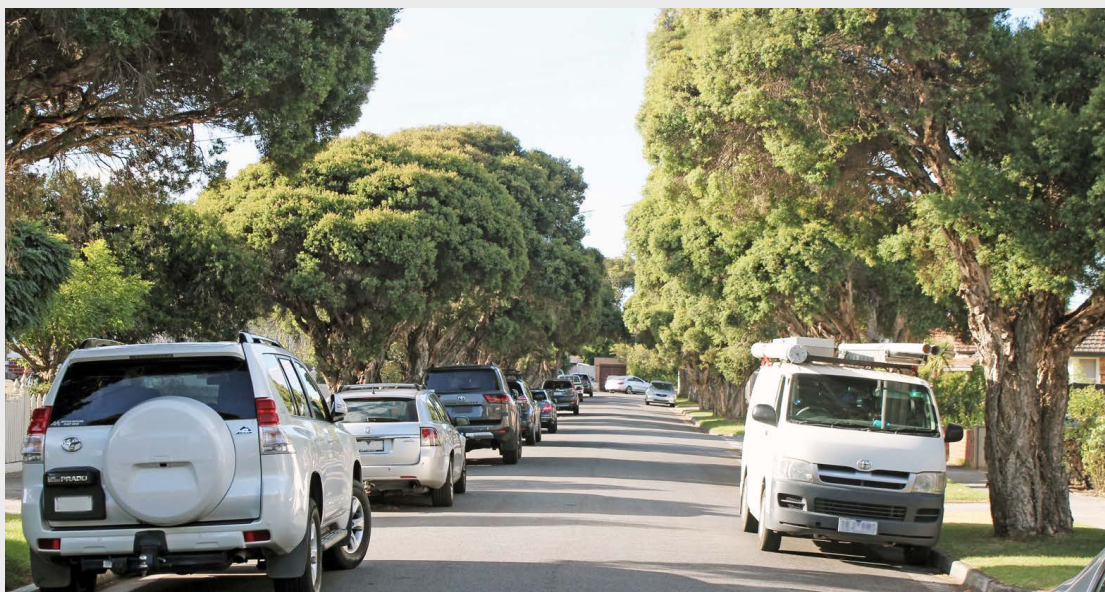


	Count	%
After 2004	180	34%
Before 2004	333	63%
Not sure	19	4%

Are there parking restrictions on your street?



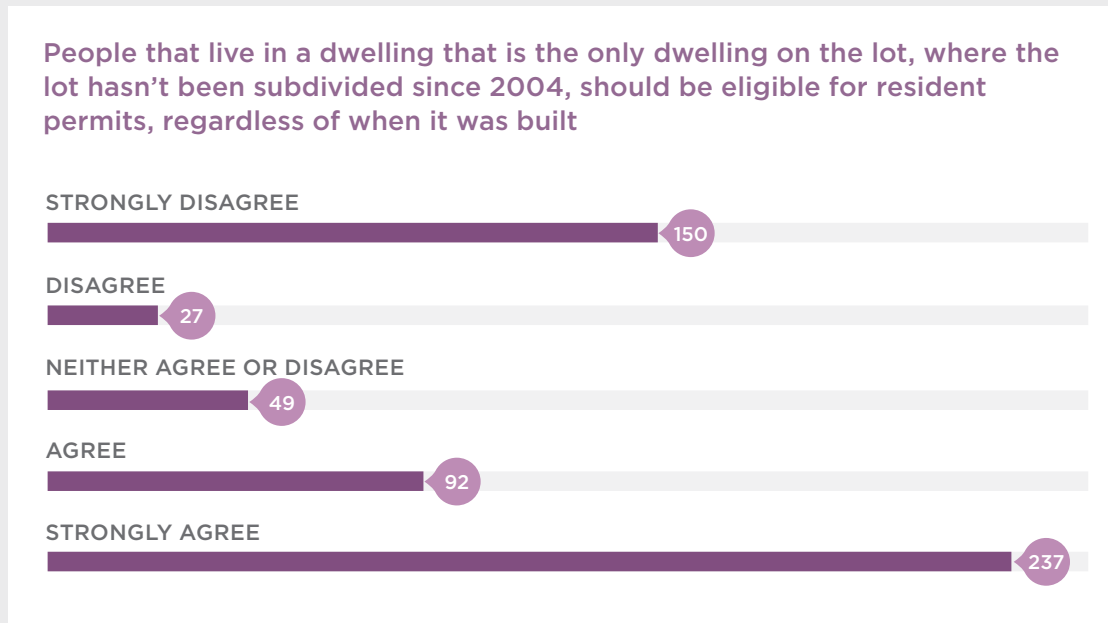
	Count	%
Yes	223	42%
No	287	54%
Not sure	22	4%



What we heard

1. Resident permits

Survey participants were asked two questions about proposed changes to Resident Permit eligibility.



- A majority of respondents (59%) agreed or strongly agreed that residents of new single dwelling developments built after 2004, including rebuilds and renovations, should be eligible for resident permits.
- Of those that disagreed or strongly disagreed (32%), the most common issues raised related to requiring all new developments to provide sufficient off-street parking, and ensuring residents use off-street parking.



It is fair to allow those who have not changed the operation of the land to carry over their previous entitlements.

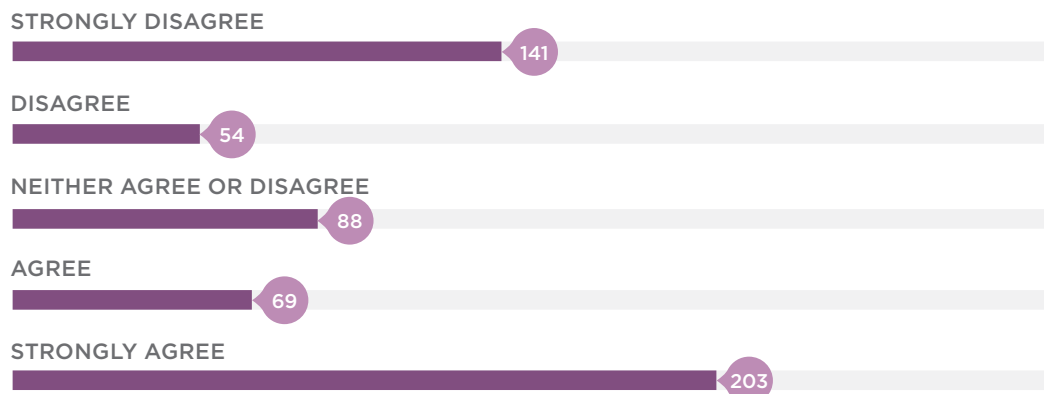


I am concerned that there is a finite amount of space on the street for parking and community uses such as safer bike riding and walking routes. The expanded eligibility will put more pressure on that space.



Any rebuilds from new policy date should meet policy guidelines to allow for enough resident and visitor parking.

People that live in two-dwellings-on-a-lot developments (such as townhouses): that were built between 20 December 2004 and the commencement date of the new policy, and, where the development did not receive a planning permit for a reduction in the number



- 49% of survey participants agreed or strongly agreed that two-dwelling-on-a-lot developments built between 2004 and the commencement date of the draft policy should be considered as eligible dwellings for resident permits, whereas 35% disagreed or strongly disagreed.
- This represents relative community support, but not a strong consensus.
- Some people raised concerns with the impact this could have on on-street parking demand, and suggested the residents of newer developments should primarily use their off-street parking



The decision to increase the number of dwellings on the land was made on the basis that they would NOT be eligible for permits. This change simply adds extra cars onto the street, whilst effectively having council subsidise the private homeowner.



We have a rental crisis. People do not have the luxury of choice when it comes to selecting dwellings based on age, subdivision etc.



If residential developments have been required to include off street parking, then they should not have access to street parking.

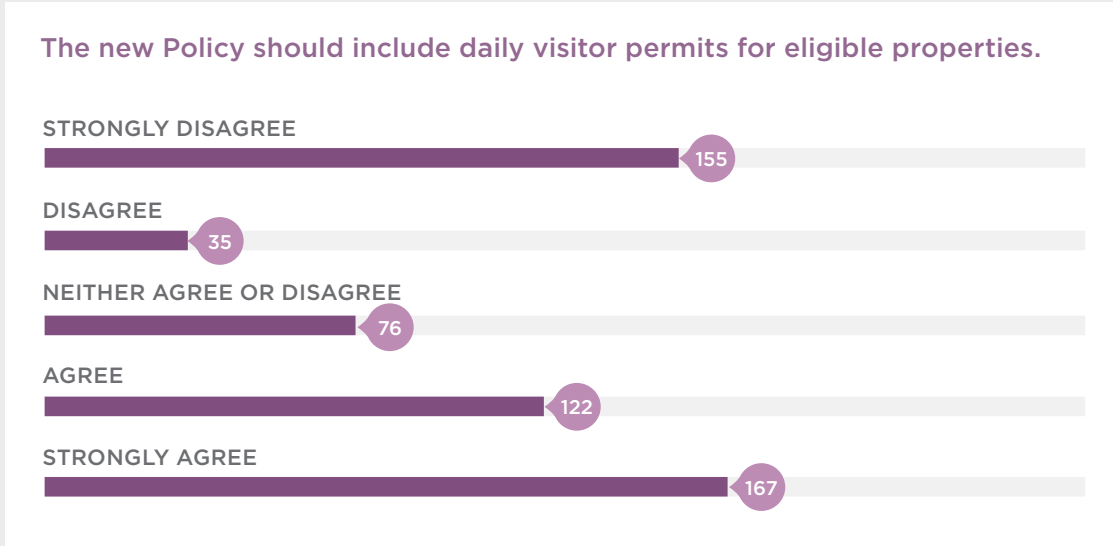


This is sensible and considered view “infill development” and associated access to housing necessitates through moderate higher density development makes this change a forward thinking and pragmatic policy.



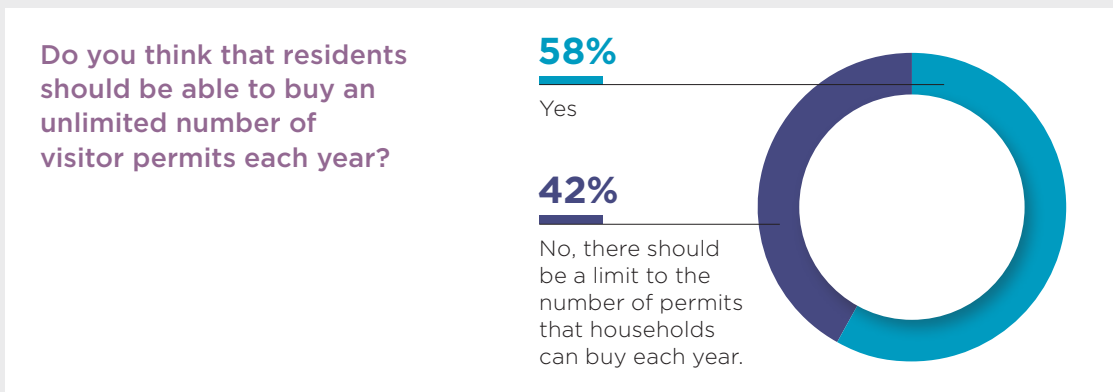
There should not be any discrimination between single dwelling and subdivision blocks.

2. Visitor permits



Key insights:

- Including daily visitor permits for eligible properties was a somewhat polarising topic. 28% of participants strongly disagreed, and 30% strongly agreed
- Overall, more people supported this policy (52%) than not (34%)
- Some respondents suggested a transferrable resident permit should be available to be used for visitors
- Others wanted daily visitor permits to be available to more dwelling types



There should be an annual limit or the system can be easily rorted.

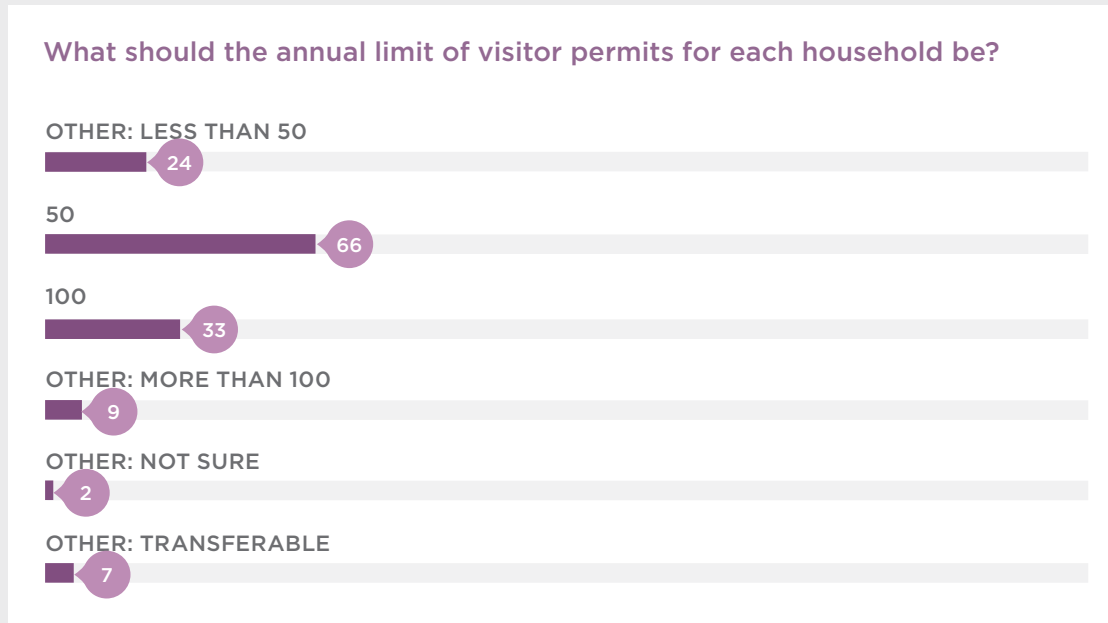


I think all households should have a permit for visitors to use when staying.



We should be entitled to visitor parking permits at minimum.

Those who responded “No” to the above question were asked what the limit should be.



You should be able to purchase an annual transferable permit to reduce the admin burden on council and residents. Books of 10 are an absolute pain.

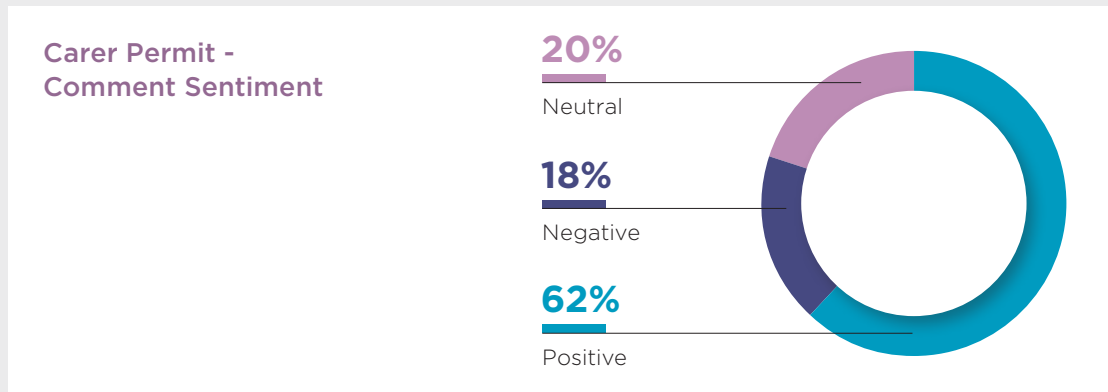


Allowing eligible residents to purchase unlimited sets of 10 daily visitor permits may increase demand for on-street parking, potentially worsening existing parking issues.



3. Carer permits

Participants were shown the proposed carer permit eligibility requirements and were asked to provide a comment if they wanted to.



Key insights:

- The majority of comments about the proposed carer permits were positive
- The most common theme of the comments was that the eligibility requirements should not be overly restrictive, to ensure ease of access for those who need it
- Some respondents wanted to ensure that measures are taken so that this permit type is not abused



Broaden the evidence acceptable - not all residents who require care are NDIS supported and may have arranged care via a means other than a medical practitioner.



Carer permits must be free and available as required only limited by the need of the person in care.



It should also include people that provide care through My Aged Care.



This permit doesn't understand the nature of NDIS support workers. There are many cases where multiple supports are needed, and only allowing for one will reduce support and our ability to live and engage in society.



Necessary to have this. Necessary to have governance to prevent abuse of the permit.

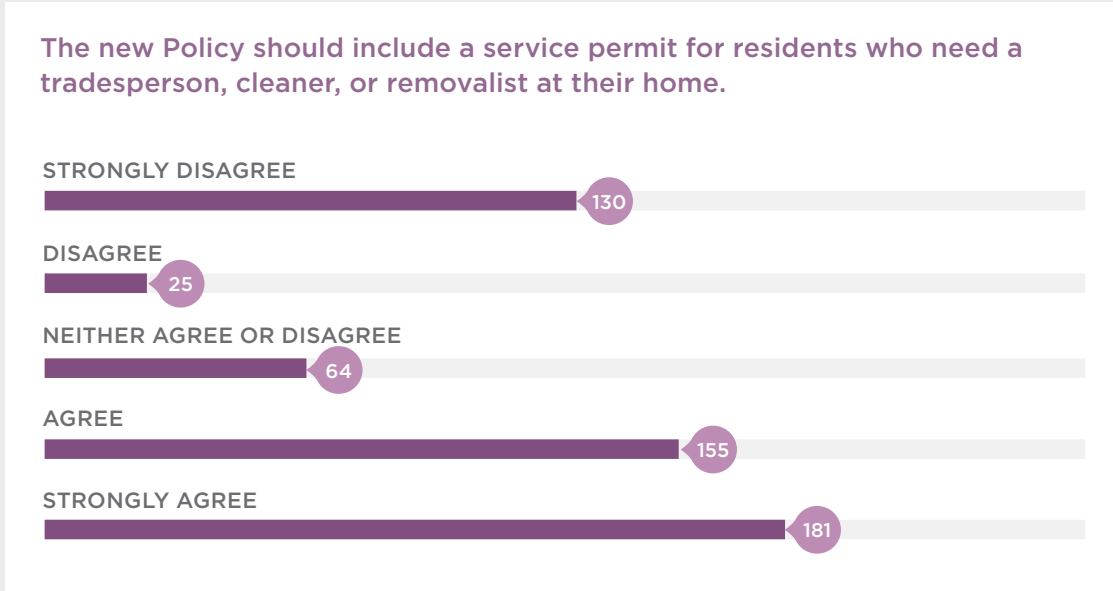


if you are a couple you may need different carers I assume that the permit is able to be used by either person and for different carers.



This is an excellent proposal worthy of community support.

4. Service permits



Key insights:

- There was community support for the introduction of service permits, with 61% of people surveyed responding “agree” or “strongly agree” to this question
- Some respondents wanted greater flexibility in how service permits could be used



✓
The time period should be nominated as part of the application process with the possibility to extend if necessary.



✓
Provide transferable permits as previous as work can take longer than 4 weeks for renovations or repairs.

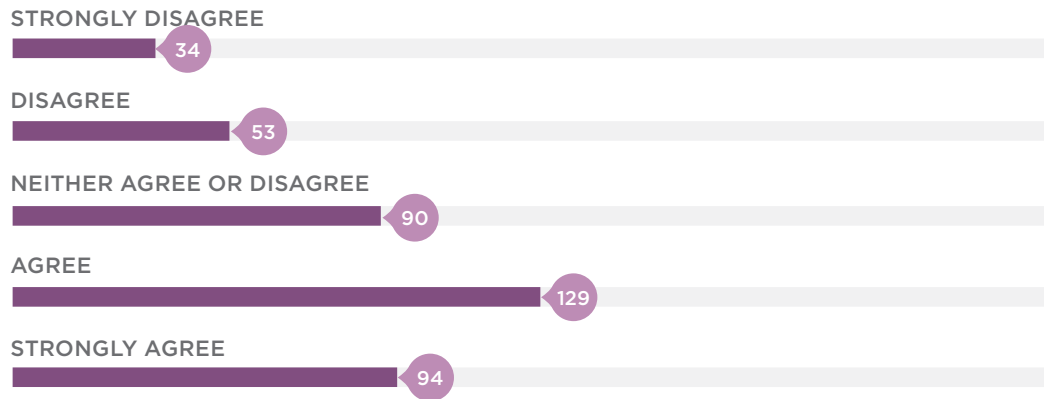


✓
Needs to be more flexible, someone might need 10 1 day passes, someone might need one 3 month pass.



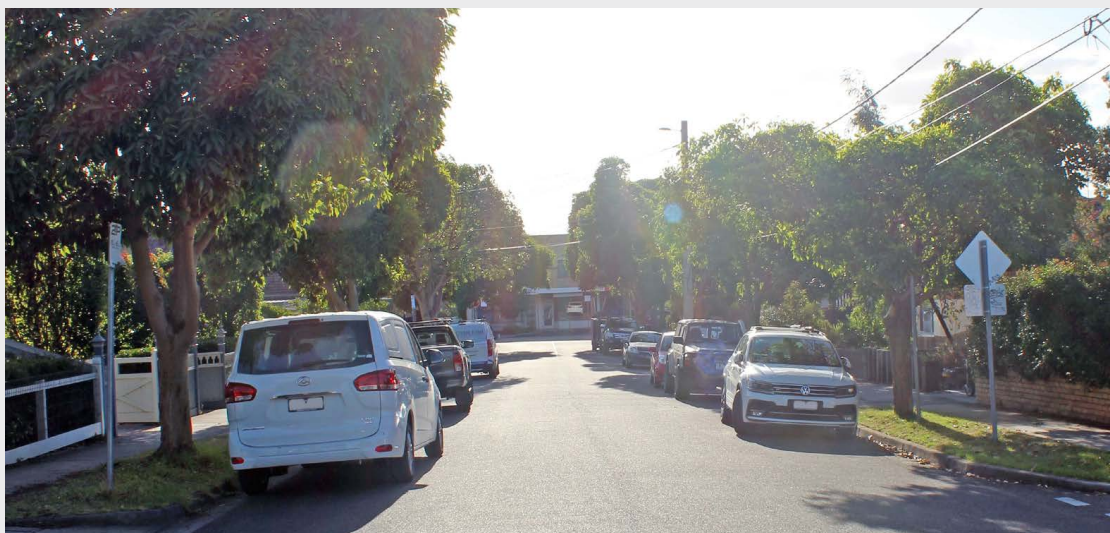
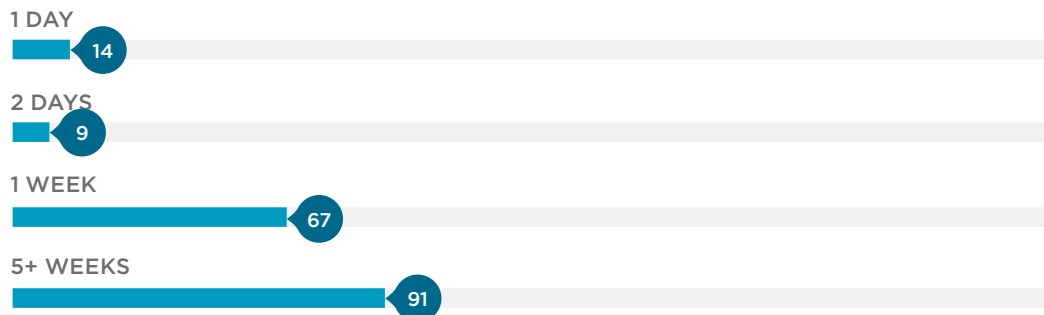
✓
Seems OK. If there are substantial works then they should have to apply to council separately.

Service permits should be valid for up to 4 weeks each.

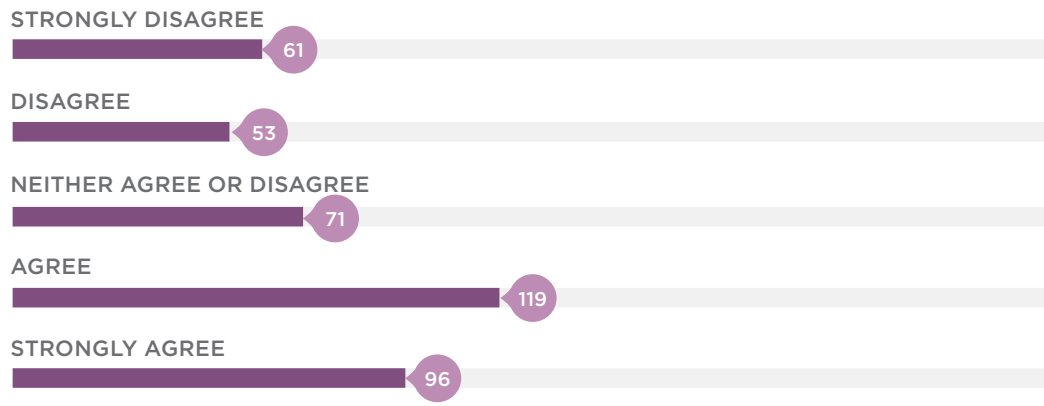


Those who answered “strongly disagree”, “disagree” or “neither agree or disagree” to the above question were asked how long they thought service permits should be valid for.

How long should service permits be valid for?

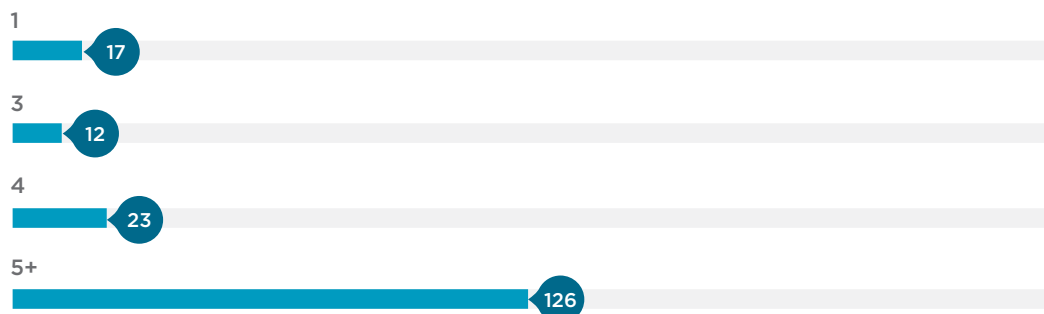


Two service permits per dwelling per year should be available to each dwelling.

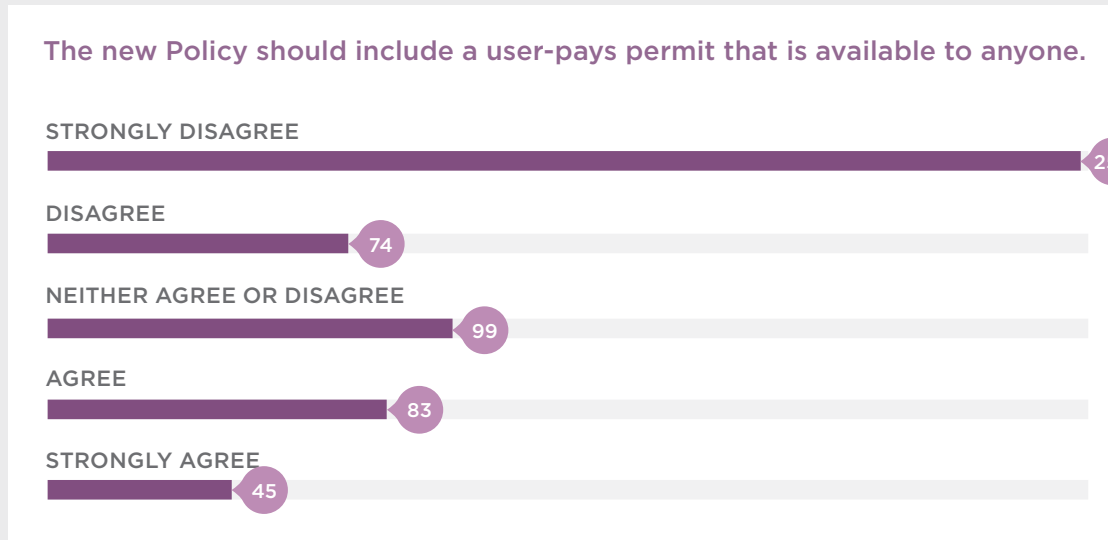


Those who answered “strongly disagree”, “disagree” or “neither agree or disagree” to the above question were asked how many service permits should be available to each dwelling per year.

How many service permits should be available to each dwelling per year?



5. User-pays permits




Key insights:

- The proposed user-pays permit did not receive community support, with 59% of respondents strongly disagreeing or disagreeing with them being available to anyone
- A common concern was that these permits would increase parking demand and would not prioritise residents’ needs
- Some people stated that user-pays would be unfair as they would likely only be accessible to those who could afford the higher costs


 ↓
 Trouble already with parking where there are no off street parking available.


 ↓
 the revenue from these permits should be directed to active transport.


 ↓
 This is a bad idea. You are trying to sell our resident parking to people who do not live here. Only residents should be able to get parking permits. You should not do this under any circumstances.

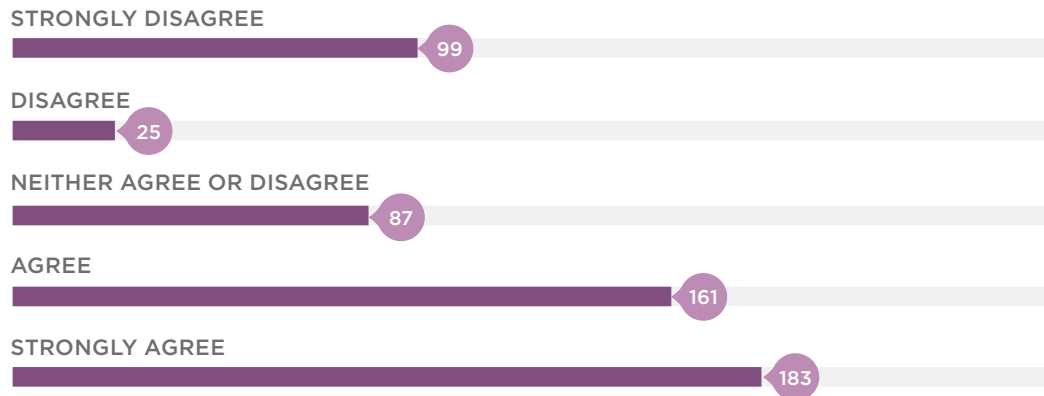

 ↓
 Sometimes it is necessary for non-residents to park in Darebin.


 ↓
 There should be an upper limit on these permits, perhaps 50 days/year.


 ↓
 A user-pays permit system undermine’s council’s transport strategy and further entrenches inequality in Darebin.

6. Extenuating circumstances resident permits

People who aren't eligible for resident permits, but are experiencing extenuating circumstances should be able to apply for an annual resident permit.



Key insights:

- 62% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that people experiencing extenuating circumstances should be able to apply for a resident permit even if they are otherwise ineligible
- Generally, people wanted for this type of permit to be easily accessible for those who needed it whilst ensuring it can't be easily abused



There should be empathy for extenuating circumstances and include more than the mentioned situations.

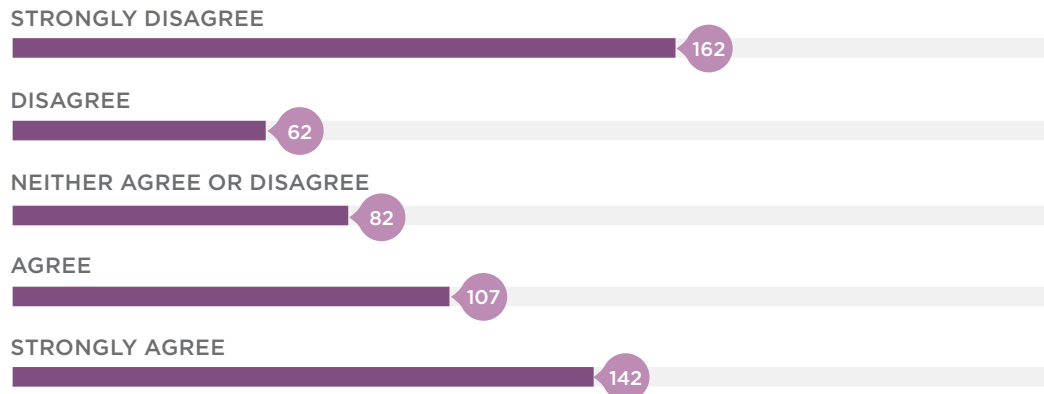


I think flexibility in these systems is essential.



No extenuating circumstances. Opens the door to abusing the process.

Dwellings that are eligible for a resident permit, and: have two or more cars registered to an address, and the number of cars exceeds the number of off-street parking spaces, should be eligible for an extenuating circumstances resident permit.



Key insights:

- There was no consensus from the community on the above question, with 40% either disagreeing or strongly disagreeing, and 45% agreeing or strongly agreeing
- Some that supported this option stated that it would help larger families with multiple cars and people living in sharehouses
- Of those that didn't agree, some suggested that this could lead to increased on-street parking demand and car ownership
- Some respondents raised concerns around equity



Having too many cars isn't really extenuating circumstances?
This approach will contribute to the on-street congestion.



Large families with young adults need the parking permits.

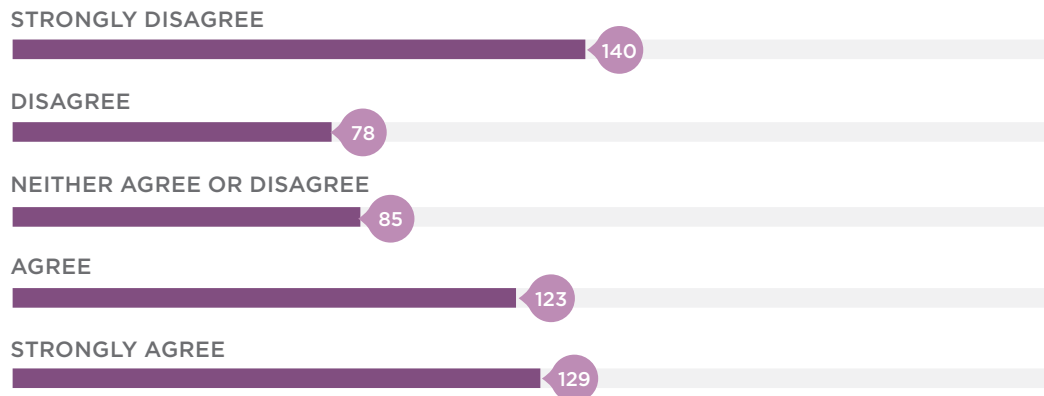


This is appropriate for those households with adult children living at home (and possibly their partners), and so have several cars.
Not appropriate if there are two people living in the dwelling with multiple cars.



If you have more than 2 cars and they don't fit on your property, you should apply for the user pays permit not a resident permit.

Dwellings where a resident needs to store a commercial vehicle, where the resident can prove that: (a) they have insufficient space to store their commercial vehicle within their property and (b) the vehicle is a work vehicle and not for personal use should be eligible for an extenuating circumstances resident permit



Key insights:

- There was no consensus from survey participants on the above question, with 39% either disagreeing or strongly disagreeing, and 45% agreeing or strongly agreeing
- Some people stated that this option would be a way for Council to support their employment needs
- A common sentiment was that residential streets should not be used to store commercial vehicles on behalf of businesses
- This was seen by some as unfair



Both my wife and myself are required to use vehicles provided by our employers and would require permits for these vehicles and our private vehicles.



Employment are key to strong communities supporting those with work needs is key to that.



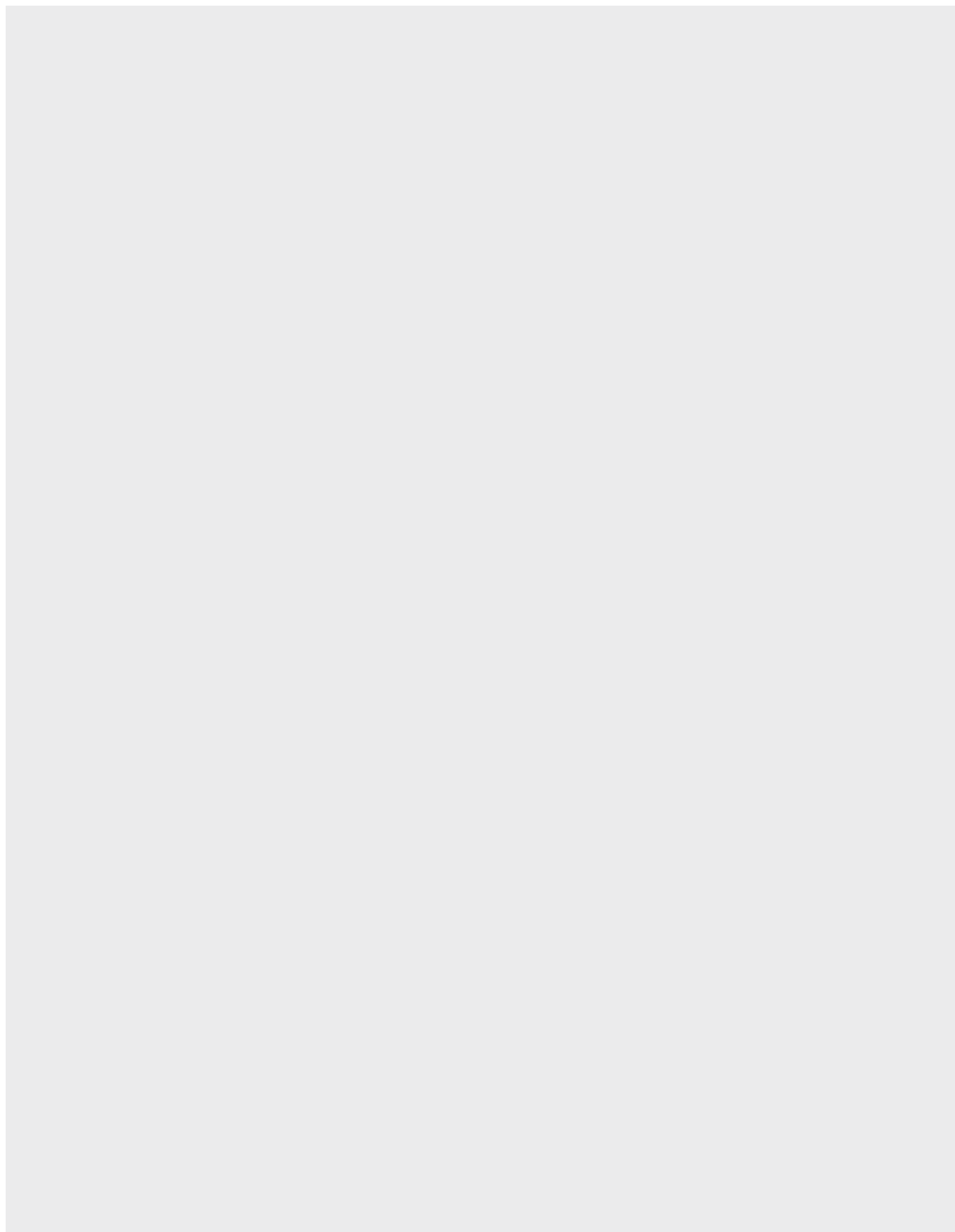
Their business should pay for the user-pays permit if they can afford to give them a car.



No. These persons should not be prioritised over others as it discriminates those who work in different industries who are not required to use commercial vehicles.



Being given a work vehicle is a privilege not an extenuating circumstance. There is also no way to prove they aren't using it for personal use. This seems like another way to get around the permit system because you are privileged to have lots of cars.



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Darebin Parking Permit Policy

Stage 2 Peer Review

Final Report

Prepared for: Darebin City Council

Date: 9 June 2023

Ref: 300304464

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Revision

Revision	Date	Comment	Prepared By	Checked By
A	9 June 2023	Final	N McCracken	C Coath

Neale McCracken

For and on behalf of

Stantec Australia Pty Ltd

Acknowledgement of Country

In the spirit of reconciliation, Stantec acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of country throughout Australia and their connections to land, sea and community. We pay our respect to their Elders past and present, and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Limitations

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Appendix A. Parking Permit Policy Detailed Review

Executive Summary

Purpose of a Parking Permit Policy

A parking permit scheme controls and manages parking in residential streets where demand for on-street parking is high.

There are many reasons for this legacy issue, including the planning requirements and a historical trend of increasing car ownership over the past 40+ years. This leads to a need to manage on-street parking where it previously wasn't a problem.

The purpose of the policy is to set a baseline for Council providing car parking for dwellings that had limited or no access to car parking at the time the policy was originally made.

For Darebin, this baseline is set at 20 December 2004 – the "2004 rule".

In line with this purpose, a parking permit policy should be clear and ensure:

- Council will continue to manage the needs of parking for those that it previously did so.
- Council will not take on the responsibility of providing and managing parking for new developments.

This places the responsibility of providing parking on developers and the decisions on what is enough parking on residents. Council must presume due diligence is being carried out by these parties.

- Developers of properties that would not have access to parking permits will market the property with whatever amount of parking they believe will attract prospective residents.
- Prospective residents must decide if the parking available at a dwelling is suitable for their needs, including visitors.

Findings and Recommendations

Our findings relating to the Darebin Parking Permit Policy, which was provided to Stantec on 22 May 2023, are:

- Do not introduce an ability for residents to gain access to permit parking if they reside in dwellings that do not meet the 2004 rule.
 - To do so would be inconsistent with the purpose of a parking permit scheme.
 - Introducing the ability for people to own more cars is also inconsistent with councils' wider objectives and policies on climate change and sustainability.
- Reference to the Climate Change Emergency, declared by Darebin City Council¹, has been removed from the latest version of the policy. It is recommended this wording is reintroduced.
 - Tackling climate change requires a whole-of-economy response. This includes local, state and federal government strategies and policies covering all aspects of our society.
 - It is acknowledged that not all policies can actively contribute to addressing climate change.
 - However, governments must avoid policies that actively make it more difficult to meet climate change goals.
- It may not be appropriate for the policy to specify examples of extenuating circumstances as:
 - It risks prejudging decisions and creates confusion on the intent of the extenuating circumstances measure.
 - Full discretion can be retained by council if no examples are included in the policy.
 - There is a separate appeal process for applicants to challenge instances they believe the policy has been incorrectly interpreted or otherwise not applied as intended.

¹ <https://www.darebin.vic.gov.au/Waste-and-environment/Sustainability/Energy-and-climate/Climate-emergency-declaration> (as of 5 June 2023)



1. Introduction

1.1 Background and Scope of Engagement

The Darebin City Council (herein 'DCC' or 'Council') Council Plan 2021-2025² identifies the requirement to review Council's Parking Permit Policy (Strategic Action 2-37).

In response to this action, Council has prepared a Draft Parking Permit Policy for Council adoption.

As part of the preparation of the draft policy Council has sought to undertake a peer review to ensure it is fit for purpose in terms of:

- equity of use
- transparency
- enforceability
- compliance with legislation and industry guidelines and standards.

Stantec was originally engaged by Council in December 2022 to review the relevant documentation and prepare a peer review report of the draft policy.

Following Stantec's involvement in Stage 1 of the Project, a draft parking permit policy has been produced to reflect resolutions made at a Council meeting on 27 March 2023.

Darebin Council commissioned Stantec in May 2023 to carry out further consultancy services to review the updated draft policy.

The Stage 2 peer review is split into two parts:

- **Part A** – Review of the latest draft policy that was recently exhibited for community consultation – **this report**.
- **Part B** – Review of an updated policy that is based on community input and the Part A review - **additional report**.

1.2 Reference Documents

Reference has been made to the following in preparing this report:

- Draft Parking Permit Policy, dated March 2023
- Darebin Council Climate Emergency Plan
- Boroondara Parking Permit Policy, 2016
- Moonee Valley Parking Permit Eligibility Criteria
- Maribyrnong Resident Parking Permit Policy, 2014
- Yarra Parking Permit Policy
- Banyule Parking Permit Policy
- Austroads Guide to Traffic Management Part 11 – Parking
- Resident Parking Permit Policy, Community Engagement Report, Greenshoot Consulting, December 2022
- Agenda and minutes of the Darebin Council meeting on 27 March 2023.

1.3 Limitations

There are a number of aspects of permit parking schemes that could require a fuller appreciation of the economic implications of the policy in order to provide a holistic review. This would require a full cost-benefit analysis or similar. This review is limited to the broader intent of the scheme to manage parking and encourage sustainable transport outcomes.

² Council Plan 2021-2025 <https://www.darebin.vic.gov.au/about-council/council-structure-and-performance/council-plan>

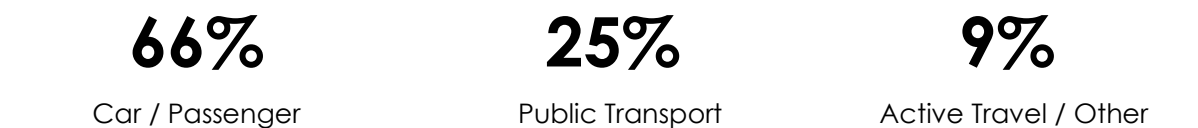


2. Background Review

2.1 Travel Behaviour in Darebin

2.1.1 Mode shares

Travel mode shares for Darebin, as shown below, indicate that it is reasonably car-dependent but is well below the Greater Melbourne average of 75% car use (approx.).



Source: ABS Census 2016 Resident Journey to Work for the City of Darebin

2.1.2 Car ownership (per household)

At 1.4 cars per household, car ownership within Darebin, as shown below, is below the Greater Melbourne average of 1.6 cars per household.



Source: ABS Census 2016, Car Ownership for the City of Darebin

2.2 Current Parking Permit Policy

Darebin City Council currently operates a policy that provides various parking permits to eligible households. The policy was first introduced in 1997 and has undergone several reviews, most recently in 2017.

In 2004, Council amended the policy to restrict properties that were built after 20 December 2004 to access parking permits. Known as the '*2004 Rule*' this rule seeks to ensure newer developments are '*self-sufficient*' in their parking supply. The 2004 policy update was supported by a review that was undertaken by SKM in May 2004.

In 2017, Council amended the policy to allow post-2004 properties access to one *Type 2 Temporary Permit* per month at a significant fee to allow limited opportunities for post-2004 dwellings to access parking permits. This update also removed the eligibility for rebuilds.

2.3 Community Engagement

Community engagement was undertaken by Darebin City Council with engagement support provided by Greenshoot Consulting. Their remit extended to organising and hosting community pop-up events, focus group discussions and assistance developing engagement material. Their scope also included reviewing the community engagement feedback and presenting this in a summary report, with oversight from Council.

Overall, 686 people provided comments or opinions on various aspects of the proposed parking policy.

Further community engagement has been carried out on the updated policy that is the subject of this review, i.e. the version that reflects the Council resolution at the meeting on 27 March 2023. The community engagement period ended on 28 May 2023. The recent engagement outcomes have not been made available to Stantec as the intent is that the outcomes of this review are considered by Council side-by-side with the engagement responses when preparing a further update to the policy.



The discussion on community engagement in this report is therefore limited to the earlier round of engagement conducted in 2022.

2.3.1 Car Ownership of Respondents

It is important to note that the opinions of the members of the community typically reflect those that own cars compared to those that do not. Information provided in the project brief by Council is set out in Table 2.1, while the ABS Census car ownership data for the Darebin LGA is set out in Table 2.2. A comparison of the community engagement with the ABS Census data indicates overrepresentation within the community engagement responses, in percentage terms, of people who own more than one car and underrepresentation of people who don't own cars.

Table 2.1 – Car Owned per Household – Community Engagement Respondents

Cars at household	Count	Percentage
0	13	2.1%
1	253	40.4%
2	274	43.8%
3+	86	13.7%
Total	626	100.0%

Source: City of Darebin

Table 2.2 – Car Owned per Household – Darebin LGA (Census 2021)

Cars at household	Count	Percentage
0	7,366	12.48%
1	27,575	46.71%
2	17,619	29.84%
3+	6,480	10.98%
Total	59,040	100.00%

Source: ABS Census as provided by City of Darebin

2.3.2 Policy Options

The community was asked to consider 4 different parking policy options:

1. 2 resident permits and 100 visitor permits, appealable to households built on or before 20 December 2004
2. Building on Option 1 by adding the ability for households of 1-2 dwellings on a lot built after 20 December 2004 to access the same number of resident and visitor permits.
3. Building on Option 2 by adding the ability for households of 3-4 dwellings on a lot built after 20 December 2004 to access 1 resident permit and 100 visitor permits.
4. A different kind of system that allocates parking permits on the basis of priority and the amount of parking spaces available in an area. Only instances of 4+ dwellings on a lot built after 20 December 2004 would be ineligible for parking permits.



3. Proposed Parking Permit Policy

3.1 Purpose of a Parking Permit Policy

The general purpose of a parking permit scheme is to protect on-street parking for residents of older housing stock that have historically had access to parking along residential street frontages. The policy is put in place in areas where competition for on-street parking is high. This can occur anywhere in a municipality but is generally found in residential areas that back onto commercial zones (high streets or activity centres of some kind) or in residential areas that were built before car ownership became more and more affordable. In earlier years of lower car ownership, the amount of parking available on the street was sufficient – meaning no need to provide an on-lot parking space. Indeed, many residential areas long pre-date widespread motor car use. However, the increased number of 2- and 3-car households (and their visitors) has created high demand for on-street parking spaces.

The purpose of the policy is to set a baseline for Council providing car parking for dwellings that had limited or no access to car parking at the time the policy was originally made. For Darebin, this baseline has been set at 20 December 2004 – the "2004 rule".

Drawing a line in this way creates two outcomes:

- Residents that previously had access to on-street parking continue to do so.
 - This is "fair" as the decision to develop and the subsequent homebuying decision would have been made in view of the car use and parking availability at the time (i.e. lower car use and plentiful on-street parking).
- Residents of dwellings built after the date cannot access a permit.
 - This is also "fair" as the decision to develop and the subsequent homebuying decision will be made in view of the parking availability at the dwelling. This will either be zero parking or one or more off-street spaces.

To some, this will seem "unfair" as it creates a perceived set of "haves" and "have nots". However, it is objectively "fair" as the policy is essentially saying:

- Council will continue to manage the needs of parking for those that it previously did so.
- Council will not take on the responsibility of providing and managing parking for new developments.
 - Developers must decide how much on-lot parking to provide
 - Residents must decide if the amount of on-lot parking is suitable for their needs, including any visitor parking.

A policy that retains these tenets is objectively fair.

Further, and for the same reasons, this policy is also "fair" when applied to any other types of permit that are linked to the "2004 rule", such as visitor permits.

3.2 Policy Structure

The draft Darebin Parking Permit Policy is structured as follows:

- **Introduction** – sets the purpose and objectives of the policy as well as relevant legislation
- **Scope** – states objectives for how the policy has been developed.
- **Parking Permits** – states the purpose of each permit type, the eligibility criteria and where the permits apply. The types of permits are:
 - Resident Permit
 - Visitor Permit
 - Carer Permit
 - Service Permit
 - User Pays Permit
- **Use of Permits** – sets conditions for permit use and what to do if a permit is lost or stolen, or what to do to cancel or renew a permit.
- **Cost of Permits** – sets out why fees are charged and the rate of concession



- **Appeal** – set outs general grounds for appeal and what is not considered to be an appealable claim.
- **Governance** – sets the minimum review period of 10 years and the requirement for an annual efficiency review.
- **Definitions** – sets out definitions of key terms.

3.3 Differences between current and earlier draft policy versions

3.3.1 Council Resolution at 27 March 2023 meeting

Darebin Councillors resolved to make the following amendments to the previous draft policy:

- Changes to resident permit eligibility:
 - Changes to make certain dwellings eligible - *"Dwellings built between 20 December 2004 and adoption of this policy in 2023 as part of a new development or subdivision resulting in 2 dwellings on the original lot AND did not have a planning permit granted for a parking waiver or reduction in the minimum car parking requirements"*
 - Other wording changes to restrict permit eligibility for dwellings built after 2004 to up to two dwellings on a lot, subject to other conditions elsewhere in the policy.
- Changes to extenuating circumstances:
 - *"Dwellings that are eligible for a residential permit, and have two or more cars registered to an address, and the number of cars registered at that address exceeds the number of off-street parking spaces. Only one permit of this type is allowed, with a maximum of two Resident Permits per dwelling. The following dwellings are excluded: medium and high-density developments with 3 or more dwellings on a lot, and, 2 dwellings on a lot built after adoption of this policy in 2023."*
 - *"Where a resident is required to store a commercial vehicle at their residential property, this is will be considered where:

 - > *The resident can demonstrate they have insufficient space to store their commercial vehicle within their property*
 - > *Provide evidence that the vehicle is a work vehicle and not for personal use."**

The policy has been changed to reflect the Councillors resolution.

3.3.2 Other Changes

Other general changes to the policy include:

- Addition of a primary application pathway for a parking permit made in extenuating circumstances and removal of this pathway as a secondary means (such as a type of alternative appeal route, should a primary application be rejected).
- Clarification and consistency on the area over which each permit types apply and for how long.
- Removal of the *"Sustainable Transport Incentive"* – which in an earlier policy version sought to introduce an alternative for residents who do not want to take up a parking permit.
- References to the Climate Change Emergency that has been recognised by Darebin Council have been removed from the latest policy version.

3.4 Assessment Criteria

When reviewing the policy, we have not adopted a line-by-line tick box approach, but rather we have flagged where there is a clear conflict or potential violation of these criteria,

Typical criteria for the assessment of any policy in the public domain are:

- **Equity:** Ensure that the policy does not disproportionately burden any particular group or create any unintended negative consequences for certain groups of residents, such as low-income households or individuals with disabilities.
- **Transparency:** Review the policy's eligibility criteria and ensure that they are clear, consistent, and based on objective criteria such as residency, vehicle ownership, and parking availability.



- **Consistency:** Ensure that the policy is consistent across all areas of the community, and that it does not create any unintended disparities between different neighbourhoods or areas.
- **Proportionality:** Review the policy's enforcement mechanisms and ensure that they are proportionate to the severity of the violation, and that penalties are not overly harsh or excessive
- **Impartiality:** Review the policy's appeal process and ensure that it is fair, impartial, and provides an opportunity for residents to contest decisions related to parking permits.
- **Reasonableness:** Review the policy's alternative solutions, and consider if there are any other ways the parking policy's objectives can be achieved, and if the policy is reasonable in light of the situation it's addressing.
- **Community Involvement:** Review the policy's community engagement process, ensuring that the community was involved and aware of the parking policy's development, and that their feedback was considered.

3.5 Introduction [to the policy]

A detailed review of the policy "Introduction" is set out in Section A.1 of Appendix A.

The content in the introduction section is broadly satisfactory; however, the Appendix includes some items for consideration.

We recommend reinserting the previous wording on Climate Emergency as it has a place in all policies set down by governments of all levels. That said, we recognised that not all policies actively contribute to addressing climate change, but any policy should not actively make it more difficult to meet climate change goals.

It is noted that the "Context" section, introduced in this version of the policy, clearly sets out the reason why the policy exists. It is important to bear this context in mind when determining the suitability of the policy.

3.6 Scope

A detailed review of the policy "Scope" is set out in Section A.2 of Appendix A.

Minor wording change only - Replace "outline" with "specify". This type of change needs to be applied elsewhere across the policy.

3.7 Permit Types

3.7.1 Introductory wording

We agree with the wording of this section of the policy.

3.7.2 Resident Permit

A detailed review of the *resident* permit type is set out in Section A.3.1 of Appendix A.

Key points to note from this review are as follows:

- It is recommended to remove the ability for a lot with two homes built after 2004 (provided they don't have a car parking waiver or a reduction in the statutory car parking requirement) to have access to a parking permit.
 - This is effectively saying that people who already have car parking are entitled to more
 - this type of policy change is inconsistent with the objective of the policy itself and also council's wider strategic goals of reducing car use
- The definition of what constitutes access to parking is broadly acceptable; however, we recommend that a definition that includes the "presence of a crossover" is considered instead. A similar policy wording is defined in permit parking policies in neighbouring municipalities.
- Some minor wording changes are recommended to remove potentially (albeit inadvertent) ambiguous language from the policy wording.

3.7.3 Visitor Permit

A detailed review of the *visitor* permit type is set out in Section A.3.2 of Appendix A.



We agree with the policy wording.

3.7.4 Carer Permit

A detailed review of the *carer* permit type is set out in Section A.3.3 of Appendix A.

We generally agree with the policy wording; however:

- Clarify if all the eligibility criteria need to be met. Or are they either/or?

3.7.5 Service Permit

A detailed review of the *service* permit type is set out in Section A.3.4 of Appendix A.

We agree with the policy wording.

3.7.6 User-Pays Permit

A detailed review of the *user-pays* permit type is set out in Section A.3.5 of Appendix A.

The premise of a user-pays permit is supported on the basis of the wording set out in the "*Purpose and use*" subsection.

We agree with the policy wording.

3.8 Use of Permits

Stantec agrees with the wording of this section of the policy.

3.9 Cost of Permits

Stantec agrees with the wording of this section of the policy.

3.10 Appeals Process

Stantec agrees with the need for an appeals process.

The policy wording is sufficient.

3.11 Governance

Stantec agrees with the wording of this section of the policy.

3.12 Definitions

Stantec agrees with the wording of this section of the policy.

3.13 Appendix A: Parking Areas

The Springthorpe Estate should be a separate permit zone if it is thought necessary to separate it out from the rest of the policy.

3.14 Appendix B: Extenuating Circumstances

There appears to be confusion and conflict in the examples given as to when an extenuating circumstances permit may or may not be applicable. These circumstances are discussed in the following.

- The following two examples appear to conflict with each other or are otherwise unclear how this is an atypical scenario that requires action by Council.
 - **Eligible** - *Dwellings that are eligible for a residential permit, and have two or more cars registered to an address, and the number of cars registered at that address exceeds the number of off-street parking spaces.*



Only one permit of this type is allowed, with a maximum of two Resident Permits per dwelling. The following dwellings are excluded: medium and high-density developments with 3 or more dwellings.

- **Ineligible** - Property has more vehicles than can be stored off-street or can access resident or daily visitor permits for storing on-street. This includes households with many occupants who are of driving age.

The first example conflicts with the maximum allowable number of resident permits rule. It should not be included in the policy or should be worded more clearly to minimise the number of permits issued.

- These two examples also conflict with each other.
 - **Eligible** - Where a resident is required to store a commercial vehicle at their residential property, this is will be considered where:
 - > The resident can demonstrate they have insufficient space to store their commercial vehicle within their property
 - > Provide evidence that the vehicle is a work vehicle and not for personal use.

This example has the potential to allow many more parking permits to be provided to people who park their business vehicle at home. It should not be included in the policy or should be worded more clearly to minimise the number of permits issued.

- **Ineligible** - For business or commercial reasons

The first of these can be construed to allow tradesmen's utes/vans to park in permit zones, i.e. any vehicle registered to a business would get a parking permit. It also could be construed that this sits outside of typical residential passenger vehicle parking, making commercial vehicle parking in addition to resident parking.

- The following example is unnecessary as it is covered by other mechanisms.
 - Medical or health condition that has resulted in the applicant no longer being able to access their off-street parking (preference however that resident consider a disabled parking permit in the first instance and council can provide support by providing an accessible parking space on their residential street).

It may be more appropriate that the policy does not specify examples of extenuating circumstances as:

- Doing so risks prejudging decisions and creates potential confusion on the intent of the extenuating circumstances measure.
- Full discretion can be retained by council if no examples are included in the policy.
- There is a separate appeal process for applicants to challenge instances they believe the policy has been incorrectly interpreted or otherwise not applied as intended.

In the event that examples are considered to be essential, it may be more appropriate that such examples be provided as part of a Frequently Asked Questions document rather than being tied to the policy.



4. Council Specific Requests

Within the brief for this project, Council set out matters to consider when undertaking this review. These are set out in Table 4.1 below, along with our response.

Table 4.1 – Council Specific Requests and Stantec Responses

Item	Stantec Response
Review of the draft Policy including its suitability and effectiveness and assess whether it achieves' its designated purpose.	<p>Broadly, yes, the draft Policy is generally fit for purpose.</p> <p>The exceptions to this include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider removing examples of extenuating circumstances. • The addition of certain dwellings built after 2004 now becoming eligible for parking permits. This does not meet Councils wider objectives of reducing car use.
Provide advice on whether the draft Policy is consistent with other metropolitan Councils.	<p>Stantec has reviewed several other permit parking policies for neighbouring councils when preparing this report, including Boroondara, Merri-Bek, Maribyrnong, Banyule, Yarra and Moonee Valley.</p> <p>Some policies are standalone; some are part of a wider parking management policy.</p> <p>While there are differences between the permit types on offer across each council area, the purpose and objectives of each policy all read similarly.</p> <p>The draft Darebin Parking Permit Policy is consistent with the approach adopted elsewhere.</p>
Identify any risks with the Policies with a focus on the Council amendments made at the Council meeting on 27 March 2023. What are the implications? Do the amendments lead to unintended consequences? How to they align with industry standards and best practise? Do these this create equity concerns in of themselves?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introducing the ability for residents of any dwellings that do not meet the 2004 rule to gain access to permit parking. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – To do so would be inconsistent with the purpose of a parking permit scheme. – Introducing the ability for people to own more cars is also inconsistent with councils' wider objectives and policies on climate change and sustainability. • The inclusion of examples of extenuating circumstances risks undermining Councils discretion when considering such an application. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Some of the eligible/ineligible examples conflict with each other. – Consider removing examples of extenuating circumstances for reasons stated elsewhere in this review.
Provide advice in relation to relevant legislation, design guides and standards.	<p>There are no specific recommendations related to legislation, design guides and standards.</p> <p>The draft Policy generally reflects the methodology set out in the Austroads Guide to Traffic Management Part 11: <i>Parking Management Techniques</i> and is consistent with policies adopted in neighbouring municipalities.</p>
Test the proposed draft Policy in relation to the eligibility criteria and advise on the implications they would expect to see. Are there any issues or concerns in relation to the eligibility criteria?	<p>The eligibility criteria set out in the draft policy are generally sufficient.</p> <p>The exception to this is the addition of dwellings built after 2004 now becoming eligible for parking permits. This does not meet Councils wider objectives of reducing car use.</p> <p>See Section 3.8 and Appendix A for details.</p>
Test the proposed draft Policy in relation to parking permit types.	<p>The proposed parking permit types account for the majority of envisaged users.</p> <p>The extenuating circumstances pathway is sufficient to capture potentially many infrequent other needs that are not readily apparent or may otherwise require special consideration.</p> <p>A permit issued under extenuating circumstances should be needs-based and time-limited based on that need, rather than 12 months in all cases.</p>



Item	Stantec Response
	Consider removing examples of extenuating circumstances for reasons stated elsewhere in this review.
Is the Policy easily understood?	Broadly yes, the policy is easily understood. Minor wording changes are recommended outside of the more substantive changes noted elsewhere in this review.
Can it be implemented, if not, what improvements are recommended?	The policy could not be implemented in its current form. We recommend that the change to allow homes built after 2004 to be able to access resident permits should not go ahead. Changing the policy in this manner would go against the stated objectives of the Council and the policy itself. Examples of extenuating circumstances should be considered to be removed for reasons stated elsewhere in this review.
Does the consultant identify any improvements from a customer focused perspective?	Minor wording changes are recommended outside of the more substantive changes noted elsewhere in this review.
Opportunities to strengthen the Policy	The policy will be strengthened by not allowing residents to access a parking permit for dwellings that do not meet either the 2004 rule. Removing examples of extenuating circumstances would also strengthen the policy.



5. Conclusions and Recommendations

The following key recommendations are made based on the assessment and discussions set out in this report:

- Update the draft policy to remove the ability for residents to gain access to a resident parking permit if they reside in any dwelling built after 20 December 2004. This is to ensure:
 - the policy remains consistent with the objective of managing resident on-street parking as a legacy issue only,
 - Council does not take on the responsibility of providing and managing parking for new development
 - the policy remains consistent with the objective of managing car use and council's wider sustainability objectives of reducing vehicle travel.
- Reference to the Climate Change Emergency, declared by Darebin City Council³, has been removed from the latest version of the policy. It is recommended this wording is reintroduced.
 - Tackling climate change requires a whole-of-economy response. This includes local, state and federal government strategies and policies covering all aspects of our society.
 - It is acknowledged that not all policies can actively contribute to addressing climate change.
 - However, governments must avoid policies that actively make it more difficult to meet climate change goals.
- It may be more appropriate that the policy does not specify examples of extenuating circumstances as:
 - Doing so risks prejudging decisions and creates potential confusion on the intent of the extenuating circumstances measure.
 - Full discretion can be retained by council if no examples are included in the policy.
 - There is a separate appeal process for applicants to challenge instances they believe the policy has been incorrectly interpreted or otherwise not applied as intended.
- Other recommendations are relatively minor and are set out in the various relevant sections of this report. These recommendations are largely to improve readability and clarity and remove repetition.

³ <https://www.darebin.vic.gov.au/Waste-and-environment/Sustainability/Energy-and-climate/Climate-emergency-declaration> (as of 5 June 2023)



Appendix A. Parking Permit Policy Detailed Review



A.1 Introduction [to the policy]

Policy Wording	Stantec Comment
Purpose	
The purpose of this Parking Permit Policy (Policy) is to provide direction for Council when allocating parking permits to ensure that the process is managed equitably and applied consistently.	Agree
Objectives	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> effectively manage Council's limited on-street car parking assets in areas where there is high demand for on-street car parking to improve safety, amenity, environmental and wellbeing outcomes for the community 	Agree
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> outline who is eligible for permits and therefore who will have priority access to on street parking where timed restrictions exist 	Generally agree Replace "outline" with "specify". Remove "priority" with "long-term".
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> contribute to achieving the 2041 Darebin community vision and Council's vision and objectives set out in the Darebin Transport Strategy 2017-2027 and the Safe Travel Strategy 2018-2028 	Agree
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensure that Council's parking management practices are consistent with its road management and safety obligations, including the Austroads Guide to Traffic Management Part 11 – Parking; 	Agree
Legislation	Agree. No comment
Climate Emergency	Removed from this version of the policy. We recommend reinserting the previous wording. It is imperative that all policies have clarity on how our actions contribute to our carbon footprint and how we can reduce that footprint to achieve net zero carbon emissions.
Context	Agree.

A.2 Scope

Policy Wording	Stantec Comment
This Policy outlines the different types of parking permits offered by Council, and the eligibility criteria, application requirements and conditions of use.	Replace "outlines" with "specifies".
<p>There are 5 types of parking permits available for use in Darebin, which are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resident permit (section 3.1) Visitor permit (section 3.2) Carer permit (section 3.3) Service permit (section 3.4) User-pays permit (section 3.5) 	Agree



A.3 Permit Types

A.3.1 Resident Permit

Policy Wording	Stantec Comment
<p>Purpose and Use</p> <p>The purpose of the resident permit is to provide residents of eligible dwellings with the opportunity to apply to Council for a permit enabling them to park on-street in their area without having to comply with Permit Zones or Timed Parking restrictions. Resident permits are valid for a maximum of 12 months.</p>	<p>Remove "without having to comply with Permit Zones or Timed Parking restrictions."</p> <p>This wording is ambiguous. A statement to this effect is clearly made in the introductory wording to this section.</p>
<p>Eligibility</p> <p>To be eligible for a resident permit, an applicant must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Live in a dwelling in Darebin within 100m of where Timed Parking or Permit Zone restrictions apply. The 100m distance is measured from the closest property boundary to where the restricted parking zone starts; • provide proof that the dwelling is their primary residence; • provide proof that there is an Eligible Vehicle registered at the address that does not already have a permit allocated to it; and, • live in an eligible dwelling, which is explained below. <p>Residents who do not meet these eligibility requirements but have an extenuating circumstance that may require them to need a parking permit for a period of time may also apply. These applications will be assessed on a case-by-case basis. Permits granted under this clause will be valid for a maximum of 12 months.</p> <p>Guidance on extenuating circumstances is provided in Appendix B.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A dwelling within the Springthorpe Estate 	<p>Generally agree.</p> <p>The method for determining how "100m" is measured should be stated. Is it walk distance or straight line distance?</p> <p>Extenuating circumstances permit should be at most 12 months. Shorter durations should be the default, as extenuating circumstances are often over shorter durations, not the long term. Parking permits should not be provided for longer than is necessary.</p> <p>Pro-rated fees could be implemented to enable this.</p> <p>The Springthorpe Estate should be a separate permit zone if it is thought necessary to separate it out from the rest of the policy. This will remove an ambiguity on geographical coverage.</p>
<p><u>Eligible homes</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All dwellings built before 20 December 2004*; *Does not include dwellings above shops built before 20 December 2004 with off-street parking • A single dwelling on a lot built on or after 20 December 2004, where: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – additional dwelling/s have not been added after the initial home's construction; – the residential lot existed before 20 December 2004 and has not been subdivided after 20 December 2004; and – the new dwelling is replacing a single dwelling on the lot (rebuilds and renovations) • Dwellings built between 20 December 2004 and adoption of this policy in 2023 as part of a new development or subdivision resulting in 2 dwellings on the original lot AND did not have a planning permit granted for a parking waiver or reduction in the minimum car parking requirements. 	<p>Agree.</p> <p>Agree.</p> <p>Disagree. We recommend removing this line from the policy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Given permit parking restrictions that have been in place in 2004, it is highly likely that these types of dwellings would have at least one, if not two, off-street car parking spaces in order to meet their planning scheme car parking requirements • Effectively, this waiver/reduction part of the policy is saying that dwellings that already have car parking are entitled to more. • Homebuyers need to make the parking decision at the time of purchase • For these reasons, this type of policy change is inconsistent with the objective of the policy itself and also councils wider strategic goals of reducing car use.



Policy Wording			Stantec Comment									
<u>Ineligible homes</u>												
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dwellings built after 21st December 2004 as part of a development of 3 or more dwellings on a lot; or 			Should be altered to be reduced to 2 dwellings on a lot.									
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Homes above shops that have off-street parking 			Agree. No comment.									
<u>Number of resident permits available</u>												
<p>The maximum number of resident permits per dwelling is 2. Dwellings with access to off-street parking are eligible for a maximum of 1 resident permit.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Type of home</th> <th>Without access to off-street parking</th> <th>With off-street parking</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Eligible dwellings</td> <td>2</td> <td>1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Dwelling above a shop built before 20/12/2004</td> <td>1</td> <td>0</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>			Type of home	Without access to off-street parking	With off-street parking	Eligible dwellings	2	1	Dwelling above a shop built before 20/12/2004	1	0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Suggest a sunset clause is considered to reduce the number of permits available over time
Type of home	Without access to off-street parking	With off-street parking										
Eligible dwellings	2	1										
Dwelling above a shop built before 20/12/2004	1	0										
<p>For the purposes of this Policy, Off-Street Car Parking means an area on private property designed for parking, including a driveway, garage, or carport.</p> <p>If residents use their off-street car parking for another use (e.g. storage) or have removed their off-street parking since the adoption of this Policy they are eligible for a maximum of 1 resident permit.</p>			<p>Generally agree with this definition of what constitutes "access to parking".</p> <p>The Merri-Bek parking permit policy, which was based on work completed by Stantec (then GTA Consultants), defines access to off-street parking as the presence of a crossover to the property.</p> <p>Moonee Valley has a similar policy to Merri-Bek, but does not include access to a laneway or right of way as access to parking. We consider this unnecessary in this case.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any instances whereby laneway access is considered too restrictive to effectively provide access to off-street parking can be considered on a case-by-case basis. <p>The "presence of crossover" definition is simpler than that proposed by Darebin and should be considered for adoption here.</p>									

A.3.2 Visitor Permit

Policy Wording		Stantec Comment
Purpose and use		
<p>The purpose of visitor permits is to give visitors attending eligible dwellings the opportunity to park nearby the eligible dwelling on a short-term basis.</p>		Agree.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visitor permits are sold to eligible residents in either books or digital permits. The form and number of permits per book is to be determined by Council annually. Each visitor permit is valid for a single day only and cannot be reused 		Agree.
Eligibility		
<p>Visitor permits may only be purchased by residents who are eligible for a resident permit.</p> <p>Eligible residents do not need to hold a current resident permit to purchase visitor permits.</p> <p>A visitor permit is only valid while the applicant resides at the address shown on the approved application form.</p> <p>Visitor permits are not designed for use by residents. Where a resident living at an eligible dwelling wants to use a visitor permit they will need to apply for a resident permit or user pays permit.</p>		Agree.



A.3.3 Carer Permit

Policy Wording	Stantec Comment
<p>Purpose and use</p> <p>The purpose of carer permits is to give people providing care for a Darebin resident living with a disability or a long-term health condition the opportunity to park near the resident’s dwelling. These permits are issued to the resident requiring care and are transferrable between vehicles.</p> <p>Carer permits are valid for a period of 12 months from the date the permit is granted, expiring on the final day of the month of issue the following year.</p> <p>Carer permits are free to eligible residents. A maximum of one carer permit per dwelling is available.</p>	<p>Agree.</p>
<p>Eligibility</p> <p>To be eligible for a carer permit, an applicant (the person receiving care) must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> live in a dwelling in Darebin within 100m of where Time Restricted Parking or Permit Zone restrictions apply. The 100m distance is measured from the closest property boundary to where the restricted parking zone starts; provide proof that the dwelling is their primary residence; and have disability or a long-term health condition that requires a visiting carer, as evidenced by the below. <p>Applicants must provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a Companion Card; appropriate documents from a government health body indicating disability or a long-term health condition that requires visiting carers; or appropriate documents from a medical practitioner or psychologist indicating disability or a long-term health condition that requires a visiting carer; or Evidence that they are a NDIS participant. 	<p>Generally agree.</p> <p>Do all the eligibility criteria need to be met? Or are they either/or?</p>

A.3.4 Service Permit

Policy Wording	Stantec Comment
<p>Purpose ad use</p> <p>The purpose of the service permit is to provide an exemption of up to four weeks from Timed Parking or Permit Zone restrictions for workers (including tradespeople, removalists, cleaners) servicing Darebin residents who are not eligible for visitor permits. Residents eligible for visitor permits are recommended to purchase this type of permit where services are being conducted at their property.</p>	<p>Agree</p>
<p>Eligibility</p> <p>To be eligible for a service permit, an applicant must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> live in a dwelling in Darebin within 100m of where Time restricted parking or permit zone restrictions apply. The 100m distance is measured from the closest property boundary to where the restricted parking zone starts; produce evidence of residency in Darebin; and produce evidence of tradespeople, removalists, etc. servicing the residence (e.g. quote or receipt) specifying the dates when the work will take place. <p>The tradesperson, removalist or other person providing the service may also apply for the permit on the resident's behalf. The application must include a letter or email from the resident providing consenting to the application being made.</p>	<p>Agree</p>



Policy Wording	Stantec Comment
<p>Eligible people can purchase two permits within a twelve-month period (beginning from the commencement date of the first permit).</p> <p>Permits are valid for the dates on which the work is expected only, up to a maximum of four weeks. If more permits or a longer time period is required (e.g. extensive works at the property), the applicant should contact Council to request a work zone permit.</p>	

A.3.5 User-Pays Permit

Policy Wording	Stantec Comment
<p>Purpose and use</p> <p>The purpose of the user-pays permit is to allow longer-term access to on-street parking in areas where Timed Restrictions or Permit Zones apply. This permit is priced at a high rate to reflect that Council is not subsidising access to the user, as with other permits, that off-street parking should be used where it exists, and that sustainable modes of transport should be prioritised.</p> <p>This higher price also manages demand, helping to prioritise access to on-street parking for eligible residents and other priority users, while allowing some flexibility when access to on-street parking is required.</p>	<p>Agree with the premise of the introduction of a user-pays permit. This is similar to the approach taken in Merri-Bek Council, and the policy wording and the Darebin Council document is similar.</p>
<p>Eligibility</p> <p>Any person may apply for this permit.</p> <p>The permit is valid for four weeks from the date of issue and can be renewed every subsequent month within a 12-month period.</p>	<p>Agree.</p>



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Darebin Parking Permit Policy

Stage 2B Peer Review

Final Report

Prepared for: Darebin City Council

Date: 20 June 2023

Ref: 300304464

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Revision

Revision	Date	Comment	Prepared By	Checked By
A	20 June 2023	Final	N McCracken	C Coath

Neale McCracken

For and on behalf of

Stantec Australia Pty Ltd

Acknowledgement of Country

In the spirit of reconciliation, Stantec acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of country throughout Australia and their connections to land, sea and community. We pay our respect to their Elders past and present, and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Limitations

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Appendix A. Parking Permit Policy Detailed Review

Executive Summary

Purpose of a Parking Permit Policy

A parking permit scheme controls and manages parking in residential streets where demand for on-street parking is high.

There are many reasons for this legacy issue, including the planning requirements and a historical trend of increasing car ownership over the past 40+ years. This leads to a need to manage on-street parking where it previously wasn't a problem.

The purpose of the policy is to set a baseline for Council providing car parking for dwellings that had limited or no access to car parking at the time the policy was originally made.

For Darebin, this baseline is set at 20 December 2004 – the "2004 rule".

In line with this purpose, a parking permit policy should be clear and ensure:

- Council will continue to manage the needs of parking for those that it previously did so.
- Council will not take on the responsibility of providing and managing parking for new developments.

This places the responsibility of providing parking on developers and the decisions on what is enough parking on residents. Council must presume due diligence is being carried out by these parties.

- Developers of properties that would not have access to parking permits will market the property with whatever amount of parking they believe will attract prospective residents.
- Prospective residents must decide if the parking available at a dwelling is suitable for their needs, including visitors.

Findings and Recommendations

Our findings relating to the Darebin Parking Permit Policy, which was provided to Stantec on 19 June 2023, are:

- Reference to the Climate Change Emergency, declared by Darebin City Council¹, has been removed from the latest version of the policy. It is recommended this wording is reintroduced for these reasons:
 - Tackling climate change requires a whole-of-economy response. This includes local, state and federal government strategies and policies covering all aspects of our society.
 - It is acknowledged that not all policies can actively contribute to addressing climate change.
 - However, governments must avoid policies that actively make it more difficult to meet climate change goals.
- It may not be appropriate for the policy to specify examples of extenuating circumstances as:
 - It risks prejudging decisions and creates confusion on the intent of the extenuating circumstances measure.
 - Full discretion can be retained by council if no examples are included in the policy.
 - There is a separate appeal process for applicants to challenge instances they believe the policy has been incorrectly interpreted or otherwise not applied as intended.
 - The examples could be replaced by a statement on the rationale for including the extenuating circumstances pathway in the policy. This statement could also include whether there is an intent for Council to charge a fee for a permit issued in extenuating circumstances or if it is to be issued free-of-charge.

¹ <https://www.darebin.vic.gov.au/Waste-and-environment/Sustainability/Energy-and-climate/Climate-emergency-declaration> (as of 5 June 2023)



1. Introduction

1.1 Background and Scope of Engagement

The Darebin City Council (herein 'DCC' or 'Council') Council Plan 2021-2025² identifies the requirement to review Council's Parking Permit Policy (Strategic Action 2-37).

In response to this action, Council has prepared a Draft Parking Permit Policy for Council adoption.

As part of the preparation of the draft policy Council has sought to undertake a peer review to ensure it is fit for purpose in terms of:

- equity of use
- transparency
- enforceability
- compliance with legislation and industry guidelines and standards.

Stantec was originally engaged by Council in December 2022 to review the relevant documentation and prepare a peer review report of the draft policy.

Following Stantec's involvement in Stage 1 of the Project, a draft parking permit policy has been produced to reflect resolutions made at a Council meeting on 27 March 2023.

Darebin Council commissioned Stantec in May 2023 to carry out further consultancy services to review the updated draft policy.

The Stage 2 peer review is split into two parts:

- **Part A** – Review of the latest draft policy that was recently exhibited for community consultation – **completed**.
- **Part B** – Review of an updated policy that is based on community input and the Part A review - **this report**.

1.2 Reference Documents

Reference has been made to the following in preparing this report:

- Draft Parking Permit Policy, dated June 2023
- Darebin Council Climate Emergency Plan
- Boroondara Parking Permit Policy, 2016
- Moonee Valley Parking Permit Eligibility Criteria
- Maribyrnong Resident Parking Permit Policy, 2014
- Yarra Parking Permit Policy
- Banyule Parking Permit Policy
- Austroads Guide to Traffic Management Part 11 – Parking
- Parking Permit Policy, Community Engagement Stage 2 Report, Darebin Council, June 2023
- Other documents as nominated.

1.3 Limitations

There are a number of aspects of permit parking schemes that could require a fuller appreciation of the economic implications of the policy in order to provide a holistic review. This would require a full cost-benefit analysis or similar. This review is limited to the broader intent of the scheme to manage parking and encourage sustainable transport outcomes.

² Council Plan 2021-2025 <https://www.darebin.vic.gov.au/about-council/council-structure-and-performance/council-plan>

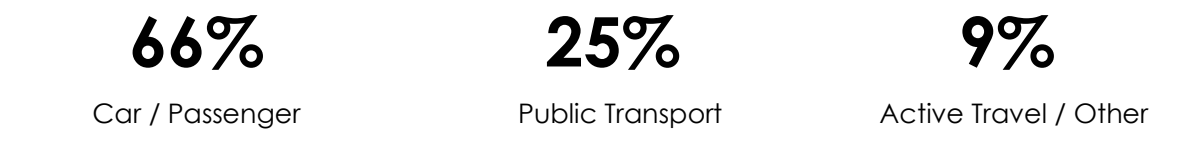


2. Background Review

2.1 Travel Behaviour in Darebin

2.1.1 Mode shares

Travel mode shares for Darebin, as shown below, indicate that it is reasonably car-dependent but is well below the Greater Melbourne average of 75% car use (approx.).



Source: ABS Census 2016 Resident Journey to Work for the City of Darebin

2.1.2 Car ownership (per household)

At 1.4 cars per household, car ownership within Darebin, as shown below, is below the Greater Melbourne average of 1.6 cars per household.



Source: ABS Census 2016, Car Ownership for the City of Darebin

2.2 Current Parking Permit Policy

Darebin City Council currently operates a policy that provides various parking permits to eligible households. The policy was first introduced in 1997 and has undergone several reviews, most recently in 2017.

In 2004, Council amended the policy to restrict properties that were built after 20 December 2004 to access parking permits. Known as the '2004 Rule' this rule seeks to ensure newer developments are 'self-sufficient' in their parking supply. The 2004 policy update was supported by a review that was undertaken by SKM in May 2004.

In 2017, Council amended the policy to allow post-2004 properties access to one *Type 2 Temporary Permit* per month at a significant fee to allow limited opportunities for post-2004 dwellings to access parking permits. This update also removed the eligibility for rebuilds.

2.3 Community Engagement

Community engagement was undertaken by Darebin City Council with engagement support provided by Greenshoot Consulting. Their remit extended to organising and hosting community pop-up events, focus group discussions and assistance developing engagement material. Their scope also included reviewing the community engagement feedback and presenting this in a summary report, with oversight from Council.

Overall, 686 people provided comments or opinions on various aspects of the proposed parking policy.

Further community engagement has been carried out on the updated policy that is the subject of this review, i.e. the version that reflects the Council resolution at the meeting on 27 March 2023. The community engagement period ended on 28 May 2023. The engagement report, dated June 2023, has been provided to Stantec for consideration in this review report.



2.3.1 Car Ownership of Respondents

It is important to note that the opinions of the members of the community typically reflected those that own cars compared to those that do not. Information provided by Council on the 2022 and 2023 engagement exercises is set out in Table 2.1, while the ABS Census car ownership data for the Darebin LGA is set out in Table 2.2.

A comparison of community engagement participants with the ABS Census data indicates overrepresentation of people who own more than one car and underrepresentation of people who don't own cars.

Table 2.1 – Car Owned per Household – Community Engagement Respondents

Cars at household	2022 Community Engagement Participation		2023 Community Engagement Participation	
	People	Percentage	People	Percentage
0	13	2.1%	13	2.4%
1	253	40.4%	169	31.8%
2	274	43.8%	230	43.2%
3+	86	13.7%	120	22.5%
Total	626	100.0%	532	99.9% (due to rounding)

Source: City of Darebin

Table 2.2 – Car Owned per Household – Darebin LGA (Census 2021)

Cars at household	Count	Percentage
0	7,366	12.48%
1	27,575	46.71%
2	17,619	29.84%
3+	6,480	10.98%
Total	59,040	100.00%

Source: ABS Census as provided by City of Darebin

2.3.2 Policy Options

2022 Community Engagement

The community was asked to consider 4 different parking policy options:

- 2 resident permits and 100 visitor permits, appealable to households built on or before 20 December 2004
- Building on Option 1 by adding the ability for households of 1-2 dwellings on a lot built after 20 December 2004 to access the same number of resident and visitor permits.
- Building on Option 2 by adding the ability for households of 3-4 dwellings on a lot built after 20 December 2004 to access 1 resident permit and 100 visitor permits.
- A different kind of system that allocates parking permits on the basis of priority and the amount of parking spaces available in an area. Only instances of 4+ dwellings on a lot built after 20 December 2004 would be ineligible for parking permits.

2023 Community Engagement

The community was asked to consider more specific aspects on an updated draft policy following earlier engagement and peer review:

- Resident Permit
 - People that live in a dwelling that is the only dwelling on the lot, where the lot hasn't been subdivided since 2004, should be eligible for resident permits, regardless of when it was built.
 - People that live in two-dwellings-on-a-lot developments (such as townhouses): that were built between 20 December 2004 and the commencement date of the new policy, and, where the development did not receive a planning permit for a reduction in the number.



- Visitor Permit
 - The new Policy should include daily visitor permits for eligible properties.
 - Do you think that residents should be able to buy an unlimited number of visitor permits each year?
 - What should the annual limit of visitor permits for each household be?
- Service Permit
 - The new Policy should include a service permit for residents who need a tradesperson, cleaner, or removalist at their home.
 - Service permits should be valid for up to 4 weeks each.
 - How long should service permits be valid for?
 - Two service permits per dwelling per year should be available to each dwelling.
 - How many service permits should be available to each dwelling per year?
- User-Pays Permit
 - The new Policy should include a user-pays permit that is available to anyone.
- Extenuating circumstances
 - People who aren't eligible for resident permits, but are experiencing extenuating circumstances should be able to apply for an annual resident permit.
 - Dwellings that are eligible for a resident permit, and: have two or more cars registered to an address, and the number of cars exceeds the number of off-street parking spaces, should be eligible for an extenuating circumstances resident permit.
 - Dwellings where a resident needs to store a commercial vehicle, where the resident can prove that: (a) they have insufficient space to store their commercial vehicle within their property and (b) the vehicle is a work vehicle and not for personal use should be eligible for an extenuating circumstances resident permit.

The majority of aspects did not generate a strong consensus; however, those that did include:

- A majority of respondents (59%) agreed or strongly agreed that residents of new single dwelling developments built after 2004, including rebuilds and renovations, should be eligible for resident permits.
- The majority (62%) of comments about the proposed carer permits were positive.
- There was community support for the introduction of service permits, with 61% of people surveyed responding "agree" or "strongly agree".
- The proposed user-pays permit did not receive community support, with 59% of respondents strongly disagreeing or disagreeing with them being available to anyone.

Further detail is provided in the community engagement report³.

³ Parking Permit Policy, Community Engagement Stage 2 Report, Darebin Council, June 2023



3. Proposed Parking Permit Policy

3.1 Purpose of a Parking Permit Policy

The general purpose of a parking permit scheme is to protect on-street parking for residents of older housing stock that have historically had access to parking along residential street frontages. The policy is put in place in areas where competition for on-street parking is high. This can occur anywhere in a municipality but is generally found in residential areas that back onto commercial zones (high streets or activity centres of some kind) or in residential areas that were built before car ownership became more and more affordable. In earlier years of lower car ownership, the amount of parking available on the street was sufficient – meaning no need to provide an on-lot parking space. Indeed, many residential areas long pre-date widespread motor car use. However, the increased number of 2- and 3-car households (and their visitors) has created high demand for on-street parking spaces.

The purpose of the policy is to set a baseline for Council providing car parking for dwellings that had limited or no access to car parking at the time the policy was originally made. For Darebin, this baseline has been set at 20 December 2004 – the "2004 rule".

Drawing a line in this way creates two outcomes:

- Residents that previously had access to on-street parking continue to do so.
 - This is "fair" as the decision to develop and the subsequent homebuying decision would have been made in view of the car use and parking availability at the time (i.e. lower car use and plentiful on-street parking).
- Residents of dwellings built after the date cannot access a permit.
 - This is also "fair" as the decision to develop and the subsequent homebuying decision will be made in view of the parking availability at the dwelling. This will either be zero parking or one or more off-street spaces.

To some, this will seem "unfair" as it creates a perceived set of "haves" and "have nots". However, it is objectively "fair" as the policy is essentially saying:

- Council will continue to manage the needs of parking for those that it previously did so.
- Council will not take on the responsibility of providing and managing parking for new developments.
 - Developers must decide how much on-lot parking to provide
 - Residents must decide if the amount of on-lot parking is suitable for their needs, including any visitor parking.

A policy that retains these tenets is objectively fair.

Further, and for the same reasons, this policy is also "fair" when applied to any other types of permit that are linked to the "2004 rule", such as visitor permits.

3.2 Policy Structure

The draft Darebin Parking Permit Policy is structured as follows:

- **Introduction** – sets the purpose and objectives of the policy as well as relevant legislation
- **Scope** – states objectives for how the policy has been developed.
- **Parking Permits** – states the purpose of each permit type, the eligibility criteria and where the permits apply. The types of permits are:
 - Resident Permit
 - Visitor Permit
 - Carer Permit
 - Service Permit
 - User Pays Permit
- **Use of Permits** – sets conditions for permit use and what to do if a permit is lost or stolen, or what to do to cancel or renew a permit.
- **Cost of Permits** – sets out why fees are charged and the rate of concession



- **Appeal** – set outs general grounds for appeal and what is not considered to be an appealable claim.
- **Governance** – sets the minimum review period of 10 years and the requirement for an annual efficiency review.
- **Definitions** – sets out definitions of key terms.

3.3 Differences between current and earlier draft policy versions

Changes to the policy from the version reviewed by Stantec in January 2023 include:

- Addition of a primary application pathway for a parking permit made in extenuating circumstances and removal of this pathway as a secondary means (such as a type of alternative appeal route, should a primary application be rejected).
- Clarification and consistency on the area over which each permit type applies and for how long.
- Removal of the "*Sustainable Transport Incentive*" – which in an earlier policy version sought to introduce an alternative for residents who do not want to take up a parking permit.
- References to the Climate Change Emergency that has been recognised by Darebin Council have been removed from the latest policy version.

3.4 Assessment Criteria

When reviewing the policy, we have not adopted a line-by-line tick box approach, but rather we have flagged where there is a clear conflict or potential violation of these criteria,

Typical criteria for the assessment of any policy in the public domain are:

- **Equity:** Ensure that the policy does not disproportionately burden any particular group or create any unintended negative consequences for certain groups of residents, such as low-income households or individuals with disabilities.
- **Transparency:** Review the policy's eligibility criteria and ensure that they are clear, consistent, and based on objective criteria such as residency, vehicle ownership, and parking availability.
- **Consistency:** Ensure that the policy is consistent across all areas of the community, and that it does not create any unintended disparities between different neighbourhoods or areas.
- **Proportionality:** Review the policy's enforcement mechanisms and ensure that they are proportionate to the severity of the violation, and that penalties are not overly harsh or excessive.
- **Impartiality:** Review the policy's appeal process and ensure that it is fair, impartial, and provides an opportunity for residents to contest decisions related to parking permits.
- **Reasonableness:** Review the policy's alternative solutions, and consider if there are any other ways the parking policy's objectives can be achieved, and if the policy is reasonable in light of the situation it's addressing.
- **Community Involvement:** Review the policy's community engagement process, ensuring that the community was involved and aware of the parking policy's development, and that their feedback was considered.

3.5 Introduction [to the policy]

A detailed review of the policy "Introduction" is set out in Section A.1 of Appendix A.

The content in the introduction section is broadly satisfactory; however, the Appendix includes some items for consideration.

We recommend reinserting the previous wording on Climate Emergency as it has a place in all policies set down by governments of all levels. That said, we recognise that not all policies actively contribute to addressing climate change, but any policy should not actively make it more difficult to meet climate change goals.

It is noted that the "Context" section, introduced in this version of the policy, clearly sets out the reason why the policy exists. It is important to bear this context in mind when determining the suitability of the policy.



3.6 Scope

We agree with the wording of this section of the policy.

3.7 Permit Types

3.7.1 Introductory wording

We agree with the wording of this section of the policy.

3.7.2 Resident Permit

A detailed review of the *resident* permit type is set out in Section A.3.1 of Appendix A.

Key points to note from this review are as follows:

- The definition of what constitutes access to parking is broadly acceptable; however, we recommend that a definition that includes the "presence of a crossover" is considered instead. A similar policy wording is defined in permit parking policies in neighbouring municipalities.
- Some minor wording changes are recommended to remove potentially (albeit inadvertent) ambiguous language from the policy wording.

3.7.3 Visitor Permit

A detailed review of the *visitor* permit type is set out in Section A.3.2 of Appendix A.

We agree with the policy wording.

3.7.4 Carer Permit

A detailed review of the *carer* permit type is set out in Section A.3.3 of Appendix A.

We agree with the policy wording.

3.7.5 Service Permit

A detailed review of the *service* permit type is set out in Section A.3.4 of Appendix A.

We agree with the policy wording. Minor typographical changes should be corrected before publishing.

3.7.6 User-Pays Permit

A detailed review of the *user-pays* permit type is set out in Section A.3.5 of Appendix A.

While noting the community response to this proposed permit type during the most recent community engagement, the premise of a user-pays permit is supported on the basis of the wording set out in the "*Purpose and use*" subsection.

We agree with the policy wording.

3.8 Use of Permits

Stantec agrees with the wording of this section of the policy.

3.9 Cost of Permits

Stantec agrees with the wording of this section of the policy.

3.10 Appeals Process

Stantec agrees with the need for an appeals process.

The policy wording is sufficient.



3.11 Governance

Stantec agrees with the wording of this section of the policy.

3.12 Definitions

Stantec agrees with the wording of this section of the policy.

3.13 Appendix A: Parking Areas

The Springthorpe Estate should be a separate permit zone if it is thought necessary to separate it out from the rest of the policy.

3.14 Appendix B: Extenuating Circumstances

The removal of a number of examples from the previous version of this policy is supported as this removes aspects of confusion and conflict.

The following example however is also considered unnecessary as it is covered by other mechanisms:

- *Medical or health condition that has resulted in the applicant no longer being able to access their off-street parking (preference however that resident consider a disabled parking permit in the first instance and council can provide support by providing an accessible parking space on their residential street).*

It may also be more appropriate that the policy does not specify examples of extenuating circumstances as:

- Doing so risks prejudging decisions and creates potential confusion on the intent of the extenuating circumstances measure.
- Full discretion can be retained by council if no examples are included in the policy.
- There is a separate appeal process for applicants to challenge instances they believe the policy has been incorrectly interpreted or otherwise not applied as intended.

It may be more appropriate that such examples be provided as part of a Frequently Asked Questions document rather than being tied to the policy, if examples are considered essential.

Alternatively, we suggest including a statement on the rationale for including the extenuating circumstances pathway in the policy. This statement could also include whether there is an intent for Council to charge a fee for a permit issued in extenuating circumstances or if it is to be issued free-of-charge.



4. Council Specific Requests

Within the brief for this project, Council set out matters to consider when undertaking this review. These are set out in Table 4.1 below, along with our response.

Table 4.1 – Council Specific Requests and Stantec Responses

Item	Stantec Response
Review of the draft Policy including its suitability and effectiveness and assess whether it achieves' its designated purpose.	Broadly, yes, the draft Policy is generally fit for purpose. The exceptions to this include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider removing examples of extenuating circumstances.
Provide advice on whether the draft Policy is consistent with other metropolitan Councils.	Stantec has reviewed several other permit parking policies for neighbouring councils when preparing this report, including Boroondara, Merri-Bek, Maribyrnong, Banyule, Yarra and Moonee Valley. Some policies are standalone; some are part of a wider parking management policy. While there are differences between the permit types on offer across each council area, the purpose and objectives of each policy all read similarly. The draft Darebin Parking Permit Policy is consistent with the approach adopted elsewhere.
Identify any risks with the Policies with a focus on the Council amendments made at the Council meeting on 27 March 2023. What are the implications? Do the amendments lead to unintended consequences? How to they align with industry standards and best practise? Do these this create equity concerns in of themselves?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introducing the ability for residents of any dwellings that do not meet the 2004 rule to gain access to permit parking. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – To do so would be inconsistent with the purpose of a parking permit scheme. – Introducing the ability for people to own more cars is also inconsistent with councils' wider objectives and policies on climate change and sustainability. • The inclusion of examples of extenuating circumstances risks undermining Councils discretion when considering such an application. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Some of the eligible/ineligible examples conflict with each other. – Consider removing examples of extenuating circumstances for reasons stated elsewhere in this review.
Provide advice in relation to relevant legislation, design guides and standards.	There are no specific recommendations related to legislation, design guides and standards. The draft Policy generally reflects the methodology set out in the Austroads Guide to Traffic Management Part 11: <i>Parking Management Techniques</i> and is consistent with policies adopted in neighbouring municipalities.
Test the proposed draft Policy in relation to the eligibility criteria and advise on the implications they would expect to see. Are there any issues or concerns in relation to the eligibility criteria?	The eligibility criteria set out in the draft policy are generally sufficient. See Section 3.7 and Appendix A for details.
Test the proposed draft Policy in relation to parking permit types.	The proposed parking permit types account for the majority of envisaged users. The extenuating circumstances pathway is sufficient to provide for other needs that are not readily apparent or may otherwise require special consideration. A permit issued under extenuating circumstances should be needs-based and time-limited based on that need, rather than 12 months in all cases. Consider removing examples of extenuating circumstances for reasons stated elsewhere in this review.
Is the Policy easily understood?	Broadly yes, the policy is easily understood. Minor wording changes are recommended outside of the more substantive changes noted elsewhere in this review.



Item	Stantec Response
Can it be implemented, if not, what improvements are recommended?	The policy can be implemented in its current form, subject to minor wording changes. Consider removing examples of extenuating circumstances for reasons stated elsewhere in this review.
Does the consultant identify any improvements from a customer focused perspective?	Minor wording changes are recommended outside of the more substantive changes noted elsewhere in this review.
Opportunities to strengthen the Policy	Removing examples of extenuating circumstances would also strengthen the policy and allow Council full discretion in such cases. The examples could be replaced by a statement on the rationale for including the extenuating circumstances pathway in the policy. This statement could also include whether there is an intent for Council to charge a fee for a permit issued in extenuating circumstances or if it is to be issued free-of-charge.



5. Conclusions and Recommendations

The following key recommendations are made based on the assessment and discussions set out in this report:

- Reference to the Climate Change Emergency, declared by Darebin City Council⁴, has been removed from the latest version of the policy. It is recommended this wording is reintroduced for these reasons:
 - Tackling climate change requires a whole-of-economy response. This includes local, state and federal government strategies and policies covering all aspects of our society.
 - It is acknowledged that not all policies can actively contribute to addressing climate change.
 - However, governments must avoid policies that actively make it more difficult to meet climate change goals.
- It may be more appropriate that the policy does not specify examples of extenuating circumstances as:
 - Doing so risks prejudging decisions and creates potential confusion on the intent of the extenuating circumstances measure.
 - Full discretion can be retained by council if no examples are included in the policy.
 - There is a separate appeal process for applicants to challenge instances they believe the policy has been incorrectly interpreted or otherwise not applied as intended.
 - The examples could be replaced by a statement on the rationale for including the extenuating circumstances pathway in the policy. This statement could also include whether there is an intent for Council to charge a fee for a permit issued in extenuating circumstances or if it is to be issued free-of-charge.
- Other recommendations are relatively minor and are set out in the various relevant sections of this report.

⁴ <https://www.darebin.vic.gov.au/Waste-and-environment/Sustainability/Energy-and-climate/Climate-emergency-declaration> (as of 5 June 2023)



Appendix A. Parking Permit Policy Detailed Review



A.1 Introduction [to the policy]

Policy Wording	Stantec Comment
Purpose	
The purpose of this Parking Permit Policy (Policy) is to provide direction for Council when allocating parking permits to ensure that the process is managed equitably and applied consistently.	Agree
Objectives	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> effectively manage Council's limited on-street car parking assets in areas where there is high demand for on-street car parking to improve safety, amenity, environmental and wellbeing outcomes for the community 	Agree
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> specify who is eligible for permits and therefore who will have long-term access to on street parking where timed restrictions exist 	Agree
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> contribute to achieving the 2041 Darebin community vision and Council's vision and objectives set out in the Darebin Transport Strategy 2017-2027 and the Safe Travel Strategy 2018-2028 	Agree
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensure that Council's parking management practices are consistent with its road management and safety obligations, including the Austroads Guide to Traffic Management Part 11 – Parking; 	Agree
Legislation	Agree. No comment
Climate Emergency	Removed from this version of the policy. We recommend reinserting the previous wording. It is imperative that all policies have clarity on how our actions contribute to our carbon footprint and how we can reduce that footprint to achieve net zero carbon emissions.
Context	Agree.

A.2 Scope

Policy Wording	Stantec Comment
This Policy specifies the different types of parking permits offered by Council, and the eligibility criteria, application requirements and conditions of use.	Agree
There are 5 types of parking permits available for use in Darebin, which are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resident permit (section 3.1) Visitor permit (section 3.2) Carer permit (section 3.3) Service permit (section 3.4) User-pays permit (section 3.5) 	Agree



A.3 Permit Types

A.3.1 Resident Permit

Policy Wording	Stantec Comment
Purpose and Use	
The purpose of the resident permit is to provide residents of eligible dwellings with the opportunity to apply to Council for a permit enabling them to park on-street in their area without having to comply with Permit Zones or Timed Parking restrictions. Resident permits are valid for a maximum of 12 months.	Remove " <i>without having to comply with Permit Zones or Timed Parking restrictions.</i> " This wording is ambiguous. A statement to this effect is clearly made in the introductory wording to this section.
Eligibility	
To be eligible for a resident permit, an applicant must: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Live in a dwelling in Darebin within 100m of where Timed Parking or Permit Zone restrictions apply. The 100m distance is measured as a straight line from the closest property boundary to where the restricted parking zone starts; • provide proof that the dwelling is their primary residence; • provide proof that there is an Eligible Vehicle registered at the address that does not already have a permit allocated to it; and, • live in an eligible dwelling, which is explained below. Residents who do not meet these eligibility requirements but have an extenuating circumstance that may require them to need a parking permit for a period of time may also apply. These applications will be assessed on a case-by-case basis. Permits granted under this clause will be valid for a maximum of 12 months. Guidance on extenuating circumstances is provided in Appendix B. A permit issued under extenuating circumstance will be at Councils discretion regardless of the definitions in Appendix B.	Generally agree. The policy should state whether there is a fee for this permit or if it will be provided free-of-charge. Delete wording " <i>regardless of the definitions in Appendix B.</i> ", it is unnecessary.
Eligible dwellings	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All dwellings built before 20 December 2004*; *Does not include dwellings above shops built before 20 December 2004 with off-street parking 	Agree.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A single dwelling on a lot built on or after 20 December 2004, where: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – additional dwelling/s have not been added after the initial home's construction; – the residential lot existed before 20 December 2004 and has not been subdivided after 20 December 2004; and – the new dwelling is replacing a single dwelling on the lot (rebuilds and renovations) 	Agree.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A dwelling within the Springthorpe Estate 	The Springthorpe Estate should be a separate permit zone if it is thought necessary to separate it out from the rest of the policy. This will remove an ambiguity on geographical coverage.
Ineligible homes	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dwellings built after 21st December 2004 as part of a development of 3 or more dwellings on a lot; or 	Should be altered to be reduced to 2 dwellings on a lot.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homes above shops that have off-street parking 	Agree. No comment.
Number of resident permits available	
The maximum number of resident permits per dwelling is 2. Dwellings with access to off-street parking are eligible for a maximum of 1 resident permit.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suggest a sunset clause is considered to reduce the number of permits available over time



Policy Wording			Stantec Comment
Type of home	Without access to off-street parking	With off-street parking	
Eligible dwellings	2	1	
Dwelling above a shop built before 20/12/2004	1	0	
<p>For the purposes of this Policy, Off-Street Car Parking means an area on private property designed for parking, including a driveway, garage, or carport that conforms with the Darebin Planning Scheme or relevant Australian Standards.</p> <p>If residents use their off-street car parking for another use (e.g. storage) or have removed their off-street parking since the adoption of this Policy The dwelling is eligible for a maximum of 1 resident permit.</p>			<p>Generally agree with this definition of what constitutes "access to parking".</p> <p>The Merri-Bek parking permit policy, which was based on work completed by Stantec (then GTA Consultants), defines access to off-street parking as the presence of a crossover to the property.</p> <p>Moonee Valley has a similar policy to Merri-Bek, but does not include access to a laneway or right of way as access to parking. We consider this unnecessary in this case.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any instances whereby laneway access is considered too restrictive to effectively provide access to off-street parking can be considered on a case-by-case basis. <p>The "presence of crossover" definition is simpler than that proposed by Darebin and should be considered for adoption here.</p>

A.3.2 Visitor Permit

Policy Wording	Stantec Comment
<p>Purpose and use</p> <p>The purpose of visitor permits is to give visitors attending eligible dwellings the opportunity to park nearby on a short-term basis.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visitor permits are sold to eligible residents in bundles as either paper or digital permits. The form and number of permits in a bundle is to be determined by Council annually. Each visitor permit is valid for a single day only and cannot be reused 	<p>Agree.</p> <p>Agree.</p>
<p>Eligibility</p> <p>Visitor permits may only be purchased by residents who are eligible for a resident permit.</p> <p>Eligible residents do not need to hold a current resident permit to purchase visitor permits.</p> <p>A visitor permit is only valid while the applicant resides at the address shown on the approved application form.</p> <p>Visitor permits are not designed for use by residents. Where a resident living at an eligible dwelling wants to use a visitor permit they will need to apply for a resident permit or user pays permit.</p>	<p>Agree.</p>

A.3.3 Carer Permit

Policy Wording	Stantec Comment
<p>Purpose and use</p> <p>The purpose of carer permits is to give people providing care for a Darebin resident living with a disability or a long-term health condition the opportunity to park near the resident's dwelling. These permits are issued to the resident requiring care and are transferrable between vehicles of people providing their care.</p> <p>Carer permits are valid for a period of 12 months from the date the permit is granted, expiring on the final day of the month of issue the following year.</p>	<p>Agree.</p>



Policy Wording	Stantec Comment
Carer permits are free to eligible residents. A maximum of one carer permit per dwelling is available.	
Eligibility	
<p>To be eligible for a carer permit, an applicant (the person receiving care) must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> live in a dwelling in Darebin within 100m of where Time Restricted Parking or Permit Zone restrictions apply. The 100m distance is measured as a straight line from the closest property boundary to where the restricted parking area starts. provide proof that the dwelling is their primary residence; and have disability or a long-term health condition that requires a visiting carer, as evidenced by the below. <p>Applicants must provide one of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a Companion Card; appropriate documents from a government health body indicating disability or a long-term health condition that requires visiting carers; or appropriate documents from a medical practitioner or psychologist indicating disability or a long-term health condition that requires a visiting carer; or Evidence that they are a NDIS participant, or Evidence that they have a My Aged Care support plan. 	Agree.

A.3.4 Service Permit

Policy Wording	Stantec Comment
Purpose and use	
<p>The purpose of the service permit is to provide an exemption of up to four weeks from Timed Parking or Permit Zone restrictions for workers (including tradespeople, removalists, cleaners) servicing Darebin residents who are not eligible for visitor permits. Residents eligible for visitor permits are recommended to purchase this type of permit where services are being conducted at their property.</p>	Agree
Eligibility	
<p>To be eligible for a service permit, an applicant must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> live in a dwelling in Darebin within 100m of where Time restricted parking or permit zone restrictions apply. The 100m distance is measured as a straight line from the closest property boundary to where the restricted parking zone starts; produce evidence of residency in Darebin; and produce evidence of tradespeople, removalists, etc. servicing the residence (e.g. quote or receipt) specifying the dates when the work will take place. <p>The property owner, housing provider, tradesperson, removalist or other person providing the service may also apply for the permit on the resident's behalf. The application must include a letter or email from the resident providing consenting to the application being made.</p> <p>Eligible people can purchase three permits within a twelve-month period (beginning from the commencement date of the first permit).</p> <p>Permits are valid for the dates on which the work is expected only, issued in 1-week increments, up to a maximum of four weeks. If more permits or a longer time period is required (e.g. extensive works at the property), the applicant should contact Council to request a work zone permit.</p>	<p>Agree</p> <p>Make the following typographical change: "providing consenting" or "providing consenting"</p>



A.3.5 User-Pays Permit

Policy Wording	Stantec Comment
<p>Purpose and use</p> <p>The purpose of the user-pays permit is to allow longer-term access to on-street parking in areas where Timed Restrictions or Permit Zones apply. This permit is priced at a high rate to reflect that Council is not subsidising access to the user, as with other permits, that off-street parking should be used where it exists, and that sustainable modes of transport should be prioritised.</p> <p>This higher price also manages demand, helping to prioritise access to on-street parking for eligible residents and other priority users, while allowing some flexibility when access to on-street parking is required.</p>	<p>Agree with the premise of the introduction of a user-pays permit.</p> <p>This is similar to the approach taken in Merri-Bek Council, and the policy wording and the Darebin Council document is similar.</p>
<p>Eligibility</p>	
<p>Only Darebin resident's may apply for this permit.</p> <p>The permit is valid for four weeks from the date of issue and can be renewed every subsequent month within a 12-month period.</p>	<p>Agree.</p>



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Darebin Parking Permit Policy 2023: Fees – Option 2A

Fee Structure	1 st Resident Permit*	2 nd Resident Permit* (without off-street parking)	2 nd Resident Permit* (with off-street parking)	Temporary Permit	Visitor per 10**	Carer	Services p/w	User-Pays p/m	User-pays further months
Proposed Standard Fees	\$46 per year	\$70 per year	\$70 per year	Discontinue	TBC	Free	\$30 per week - \$120 for 4 weeks	\$100 per month	Discontinue
Proposed Pension Fees	\$23 per year	\$35 per year	\$35 per year	N/A	TBC	Free	\$15 per week - \$60 for 4 weeks	\$50 per month	Discontinue
Replacement Permit Fee	\$46	\$46	\$46	N/A		Free	N/A	N/A	N/A

* Resident permits can either be transferable or a residential sticker linked to a vehicles registration number

** Fees to be confirmed when these are introduced in line with Councils budget process

Darebin Parking Permit Policy 2023: Fees – Option 2B

Fee Structure	1 st Resident Permit*	2 nd Resident Permit*	Temporary Permit	Visitor per 10**	Carer	Services p/w	User-Pays p/m	User-pays further months
Proposed Standard Fees***	\$46 per year	\$70 per year	Discontinue	TBC	Free	\$30 per week - \$120 for 4 weeks	\$100 per month	Discontinue
Proposed Pension Fees	\$23 per year	\$35 per year	N/A	TBC	Free	\$15 per week -\$60 for 4 weeks	\$60 per month	Discontinue
Replacement Permit Fee	\$46	\$46	N/A		Free	N/A	N/A	N/A

* Resident permits can either be transferable or a residential sticker linked to a vehicles registration number

** Fees to be confirmed when these are introduced in line with Councils budget process

***includes eligible dwellings that have a commercial vehicle and eligible dwellings that own two or more vehicles

9.4 NORTHCOTE GOLF COURSE PROJECT**Author:** Acting Principal Parks Strategic Planner**Reviewed By:** General Manager Operations and Capital

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

At its meeting on Monday 23 May 2022 and following an extensive community consultation process, Council endorsed the Northcote Public Golf Course site continuing to operate as a nine-hole golf course while also setting aside 5.72 hectares as dedicated public open space for the community to enjoy.

Since the new arrangements have been in place Golf Course usage has increased and customer satisfaction has been high. Golf rounds for the first quarter 2023 were 27% above the same time last year (7468 more rounds). Additionally, data collected from the Northcote Golf Course operators (Clublinks) suggest that 98% of respondents are either satisfied or highly satisfied with the current Northcote Golf Course:

A customer survey campaign was run and sent to the Northcote Golf players database. The responses realised **84 survey results**, another fantastic result to capture true customer data.

When responders were asked (84 Responses)
"Overall what is your satisfaction level of Northcote Golf Course?"

*43% (36 responses) were highly satisfied;
55% (46 responses) were satisfied;
2% (2 responses) were not satisfied.*

Forward design and due diligence completed

At the Council Meeting on the 27 March 2023, Council resolved to accept a \$200,000 grant from Sport and Recreation Victoria (SRV) and to commence design and due diligence works for the Northcote Public Golf Course project.

Design and due diligence work has been undertaken. The due diligence work has confirmed that the golf course and new open space areas are functional and safe.

The MasterPlan and other design works completed identify possible future improvements to the site including a new path, a redesign of the golf course, building improvements and the addition of a range of new park assets. These recommendations have merit, although they have different levels of priority and cost-benefit when assessed on need and benefits. Council has planned to allocate \$250,000 for improvements in 2024-25 in its 4 year capital works budget, which would allow it to start some implementation. Some minor new park assets (such as bins or seats) are also expected to be assessed as a high priority for consideration of funding as part of Council's annual parks improvement program.

The total cost to implement all recommendations outlined in the reports is over \$3 million and as with other Masterplans and forward improvements plans across the City, improvements would be made over time and priorities assessed and considered by Council annually through the Budget development process.

The design work completed provides a strong foundation for advocacy to seek external funding to consider bringing forward improvements to nearer term. It is proposed that community engagement on the detailed design of elements occurs once funding has been confirmed through subsequent Annual Budget processes.

Officer Recommendation

That Council:

- (1) Notes the design and due diligence works funded through the Sport and Recreation Victoria (SRV) grant have been completed.
- (2) Endorses the designs and concept plans for the purposes of long term planning, budgeting, advocacy or grant applications, and noting that ahead of any works, community consultation with local residents and stakeholders will be undertaken in relation to each project. This includes:
 - a. Northcote Public Golf Course draft masterplan to enhance the layout of the existing nine-hole course.
 - b. Designs of a new eastern pedestrian and cycling pathway (from Warrk-Warrk Bridge to Normanby Avenue).
 - c. Designs for a new Northern Park adjacent to Mayer Park.
 - d. Designs for improvements/modifications to the existing golf course clubrooms and Pro shop to further support community use.
- (3) Notes that the cost of the activities funded through the grant were slightly lower cost than estimated and therefore, delegates the CEO (or delegate) to negotiate with SRV to consider utilising the remaining grant funding for other elements of the Northcote Public Golf Course Project.
- (4) Notes the Business Activation Case for the Northcote Golf Course has been prepared.

BACKGROUND / KEY INFORMATION

This section includes a chronological overview of the Northcote Public Golf Course Project.

Council Meeting on 23 May 2022

At its meeting on Monday 23 May 2022 and following an extensive community engagement process, Council endorsed the Northcote Public Golf Course site continuing to operate as a nine-hole golf course while also setting aside 5.72 hectares as dedicated public open space for the community to enjoy.

Golf course usage following Council Meeting

Since the new arrangements have been in place Golf Course usage has increased and customer satisfaction has been high. Golf rounds for the first quarter 2023 were 27% above the same time last year (7468 more rounds). Additionally, data collected from the Northcote Golf Course operators suggest that 98% of respondents are either satisfied or highly satisfied with the current Northcote Golf Course:

A customer survey campaign was run and sent to the Northcote Golf players database. The responses realised 84 survey results, another fantastic result to capture true customer data.

When responders were asked (84 Responses)
"Overall what is your satisfaction level of Northcote Golf Course?"

43% (36 responses) were highly satisfied;
55% (46 responses) were satisfied;
2% (2 responses) were not satisfied.

Council Meeting on 27 March 2023

At the Council Meeting on the 27 March 2023, Council resolved to accept a \$200,000 grant from Sport and Recreation Victoria (SRV) and to commence design and due diligence works for the Northcote Public Golf Course project. As of November 2023, this work is complete. The due diligence work has confirmed that both the golf course layout and new open space areas are functional and safe.

The Golf Course Master Plan and other design works completed identify possible future improvements to the site including a new path, a redesign of the golf course, building improvements and the addition of a range of new park assets. These recommendations have merit, although they have different levels of priority and cost-benefit when assessed on need and benefits. Council has planned to allocate \$250,000 for improvements in 2024-25 Capital Works Program, which would allow it to start some implementation works. Minor new park assets (such as bins or seats) are also expected to be assessed as a high priority for consideration of funding as part of Council's annual parks improvement program in 2024-25.

Implementation of recommendations

The total cost to implement all recommendations outlined in the reports exceeds \$3 million and as with other Masterplans and forward improvements plans across the City, improvements would be made over time and priorities assessed and considered by Council annually through the Budget development process.

Previous Council Resolution

At its meeting held on 24 April 2023, Council resolved:

'That Council:

- (1) *Notes the State Government's \$200,000 grant criteria and conditions for the Northcote Golf Course as confirmed by representatives at Sport & Recreation Victoria (SRV):*
 - a) *Designs for golf course/construction of new fairway, green and tees/decommission southern fairway (\$30,000).*
 - b) *Designs and due diligence of new eastern pedestrian and cycling pathway (from Warrk-Warrk Bridge to Normanby Avenue) (\$70,000).*
 - c) *Designs and due diligence of new northern park adjacent to Mayer Park (\$90,000); and*
 - d) *Designs and due diligence of improvements to the golf clubrooms to support community use (\$10,000).*
- (2) *Accepts the \$200,000 grant funding offered by the State Government and delegates to the Chief Executive Officer to finalise the negotiations with SRV and to execute the funding agreement.*

- (3) *Allocates the \$30,000 of the \$200,000 grant described in 1a above for a golf course masterplan/concept plan undertaken by a golf course architect to help inform any future investment in golf and non-golf improvements to the site.*
- (4) *Receives a report from officers when the masterplan/optimal layout plan is complete later in 2023.*
- (5) *Notes that the grant is for design and due diligence work only and that completion of work following design is subject to funding being allocated by Council in future capital works budgets.*
- (6) *Notes that whilst the completion of a masterplan/concept plan for a viable 9 hole golf course layout will be useful to inform future investment in golf and non-golf improvements to the site, further expenditure would be required to progress the revised viable 9 hole golf course layout to “shovel ready status”. This would include consideration of staging, detailed design, documentation, procurement costs and a feasibility study to consider how to maximise private investment in the future redevelopment of the golf course.*
- (7) *Receives all the design and due diligence reports together (as described in points 1(a), (b), (c), (d) and point 3 above, as well as the report from officers in point 4), at the November 2023 Ordinary Council meeting. No capital improvement works on the eastern path or the northern park are to be undertaken at the Northcote Golf Course precinct until council receives all these reports.*
- (8) *Notes that the new share-use facilities may need to be named. If this is required, Council will work with the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation, the Darebin Aboriginal Advisory Committee, local residents and other interested stakeholders to seek Council endorsement of a name, as per Council’s Place and Road Naming Policy, at an appropriate time in the future after the masterplan is complete.’*

ALIGNMENT TO 2041 DAREBIN COMMUNITY VISION

Strategic Direction 2: Prosperous, Liveable and Flourishing

ALIGNMENT TO 2021-25 COUNCIL PLAN

Strategic Direction 3: Climate, Green and Sustainable

ALIGNMENT TO COUNCIL PLAN STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

2.2 We will design and create public spaces where our people feel safe, welcome, and respected, including improving lighting and safety for people walking, wheeling, cycling and driving

DISCUSSION

This section provides an overview of:

- Meeting community needs.
- Due diligence relating to the new open space.
- The Northcote Public Golf Course draft masterplan to enhance the layout of the existing nine-hole course with recommendations to inform future investment in golf and non-golf improvements.
- Designs and due diligence of new eastern pedestrian and cycling pathway (from Warrk-Warrk Bridge to Normanby Avenue).

- Designs and due diligence for the new Northern Park adjacent to Mayer Park.
- Designs and due diligence of improvements to the golf course clubrooms to support community use.
- The Business Case for Activation of the Northcote Public Golf Course.

Meeting community need

Since the new arrangements have been in place Golf Course usage has increased and satisfaction has been high. Golf rounds for the first quarter 2023 were 27% above the same time last year (7468 more rounds). Additionally, data collected from the Northcote Golf Course operators suggest that 98% of respondents are either satisfied or highly satisfied with the current Northcote Golf Course.

Due diligence work has confirmed that the golf course and new open space areas are functional and safe and that the club rooms are fit for purpose. The work has not identified critical or immediate needs.

The work has identified a range of opportunities and recommendations that have merit as potential improvements in the long term. The design work puts Council in a strong position to seek external funding support. In the 4 Year Capital Works Program, \$250,000 has been allocated for Northcote Golf Course project improvement works to occur in 2024-25. This will enable some implementation to commence.

Considering benefit and need, officer's assessment is that the highest priority improvement needed in this area is to construct the path to enable DDA compliance for this route and meet accessibility requirements, although Council would need to secure additional funding to deliver this within its current budget allocation. Some minor new park assets (such as bins or water fountains) are also expected to be assessed as a high priority for consideration of funding as part of Council's annual parks improvement program.

Golf Course Concept Design/ Master Plan

Under the funding agreement with SRV, \$30,000 was allocated to engage a golf course architect to develop a masterplan for the site. An RFQ process was adopted to appoint a suitably qualified golf course architect to complete the project. Refer to **Appendix A** for further details about the procurement methodology.



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Northcote Public Golf Course MASTERPLAN

Figure 1 – Draft Golf Course Master Plan

Scope

Officers consulted with Golf Australia in July 2023 and received high-level expert advice which informed the scope of this project. Golf Australia also provided a list of suitably qualified golf course architects to be considered as part of this process. Officers invited each recommended architect to submit a quotation as part of this process.

Please refer to **Appendix C** for a list all contractors invited to submit a quotation as part of this process and their response to the RFQ.

Following an assessment of the current state of Northcote Public Golf Course and engagement with key stakeholders, the golf course architect developed a concept design which focused on key aspects including:

- Playability and challenge
- Safety, remodelling
- Course layout
- Hole improvements
- Natural features and vegetation
- Playing surface
- Site operations

The proposed enhancements tabled in this report have all been designed to benefit entry-level golfers, women and girls, and the broader Darebin Community.

Key stakeholder engagement

Key stakeholders were invited to meet with the Golf Course Architect on site to ensure an effective design solution was identified in this initial phase of design. Their insights on both local user experience and industry expertise were considered to ensure the design solution in the draft concept plan was effective.

The following stakeholders shared their views during this process:

- Golf Australia
- Northcote Golf Club
- Normanby Park Golf Club
- Rainbow Golf Club Northcote
- Northcote Community Hub
- Club Links (current operator for the NGC)
- Recreation and Leisure Officers
- Parks and Open Space Infrastructure Officers

Following this process, the architect developed a draft masterplan for an improved layout and a prioritised list of feasible and practicable enhancement recommendations for a functional and safe nine-hole golf course that can be enjoyed by the community.

Key Considerations

The total indicative cost of the proposed priority works identified in the draft masterplan equates to \$1.3 million dollars with a number of key elements itemised accordingly. Officers recommend that any future improvements to the site be budgeted for and implemented in a staged approach to ensure adequate resource allocation and minimise disruption to the course and existing facilities.

Officers have considered the proposed changes and recommend that Council undertake further community and key stakeholder engagement prior to any construction works; Seeking input on the negotiable elements of the design including but not limited to course layout, shading and landscaping, asset installation and plant species selection.

Due Diligence

The following due diligence requirements were undertaken to inform the draft masterplan:

- A site condition feature survey and aerial image were sourced from the Department of Environment Land Water and Planning DELWP to understand current layout of the site. **(Included in Appendix B)**.
- Appraisal of the current state of the Northcote Golf Course. **(Included in Appendix B)**
- Existing Irrigation Survey **(Appendix D)**.
- Arboriculture Impact Assessment to consider the implications of the proposed changes to the site on existing trees **(Appendix E)**.

Design recommendations

The draft masterplan recommends a series of key changes be made to the current Northcote Public Golf Course site to enhance playability, course layout, safety, and the overall visitor experience. The priorities recommended via the masterplan include; decommissioning two existing holes and creating two new holes in a more suitable location to enhance flow and user experience. Other suggestions include enhancing amenities in the clubhouse area, remedial work on existing tees and fairways, and introducing new and improved assets.

Please refer to **Appendix B** for a copy of the draft golf course masterplan and comprehensive list of recommendations to achieve the optimised layout for a nine-hole golf course. This appendix also includes associated costing for detailed design, delivery, and course audit findings.

Eastern Pedestrian and Cycling Pathway

Under the funding agreement with SRV, \$70,000 was allocated for design and due diligence requirements for a new eastern pedestrian and cycling pathway. This work aligns with the Council Resolution passed on May 23, 2022, which endorsed a shared use model for the site and the establishment of a new path along the eastern boundary, linking the Warrk-warrk bridge and Mayer Park. Following a procurement process, officers engaged a suitably qualified landscape architect from within the Parks and Open Space Related Service Panel to design the eastern pedestrian and cycling pathway.



Figure 2 – Draft Concept for the Eastern Pedestrian and cycling pathway.

Scope

The awarded contractor was assigned the responsibility of developing a DDA (Disability Discrimination Act) compliant path structure which utilised the natural contours of the land and minimised impacts to existing trees. A core requirement of the design seeks to achieve an adequate distance from the residential boundary to minimise sound pollution and privacy concerns for local people. The path must also facilitate safe passage along the golf course boundary.

Officers requested that the contractor provide pricing for multiple surface options for Council’s consideration. Officers have provided an initial assessment of the cost, benefit and risks for concrete, stabilised granitic sand, and a sealed surface path.

Please note that the proposed pathway alignment was shared with the golf course architect ahead of the masterplan concept phase. This action was taken to ensure that any proposed alterations to the site would not compromise path safety and would result in a complete integration of both site uses.

Key Considerations

Three different materials were considered for the pedestrian and cycling pathway during the design process. These include:

Material Option	Indicative cost – Capital Improvements including 10% contingency	Officers Initial Recommendation and Indicative Maintenance Costing
Concrete (Recommended)	\$590,770	<p>While the highest initial capital investment option, a concrete path is recommended as it is the most stable surface option for walking and cycling and has the longest asset-life expectancy of 25 years.</p> <p>Minimal maintenance costs are associated per year with this surface option. Costs will include sweeping and debris blowing on a bi-monthly basis. Approximate costs are \$1,000 per annum.</p>
Stabilised granitic sand path	\$511,295	<p>The option has the potential to erode during heavy storms, extreme weather and cycling activity. This requires regular inspections and surface renewal. While a cheaper alternative to concrete, this option is not recommended given site typography and associated operational costs.</p> <p>The asset-life of this asset is 15-20 years. Maintenance costs will vary significantly based on the considerations above but will be more costly than option one.</p>
Sealed surface path (Bitumen)	\$475,532	<p>This option is less structurally stable than concrete, pathway edges and nearby tree roots have the potential to crack and destabilise the surface structure. Given these considerations, officers do not recommend this option to Council.</p> <p>The expected asset life of this option is 15 – 20 years with repair costs at \$150 per square meter.</p>

It is important to note that as the proposed path alignment is designed to achieve safety, privacy, DDA compliance and minimise impact to existing trees. As such it is considered the optimal configuration and the path location is not proposed for engagement.

Due Diligence

The following due diligence requirements were undertaken to inform the draft concept design:

- An existing site condition feature survey was undertaken and included an assessment of site boundaries, all significant natural and manufactured features, ground level and contours and underground services and utilities. **(Appendix H)**
- Geotechnical Assessment **(Appendix I)**
- Arboriculture Impact Assessment **(Appendix J)**
- Risk and Safety Assessment of the proposed path alignment **(Appendix K)**
- Contaminated soil testing and soil classification assessment (SCA) **(Appendix L)**
- Cultural Heritage Due Diligence Assessment. **(Appendix M)**

Draft concept plan

The concept plan features a Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) compliant continuous pathway of 1.8m wide. Additional buffer zones are proposed via indigenous planting and screening, as well as improved shading proposed via new and existing trees.

Please refer to **Appendix F** for draft concept design for the eastern pedestrian and cycling pathway. Refer to **Appendix G** for an opinion of probable cost for the design.

Northern Park

Under the funding agreement with SRV, \$90,000 was allocated to design and due diligence requirements of the new Northern Park. Officers initiated an RFQ process through the Darebin Parks and Open Space Panel and appointed a suitably qualified and experienced designer to complete this project component.



Figure 3 – Draft Concept for the Northern Park

Scope

The key objective was to develop a concept plan to rejuvenate and enhance the site through a combination of natural and structural improvements. This includes nature-based play elements, landscaping, planting, new assets and an emphasis on natural shading to create areas for picnicking, relaxation, and social interactions. These components were selected following an assessment of the feedback received via the community engagement process in 2022.

The total cost of works works proposed within the current concept design is: \$242,913.50 Refer to **Appendix N** for draft concept design for the Northern Park. Refer to **Appendix O** for the associated high level cost plan.

Due Diligence

The following due diligence requirements were undertaken to inform the draft concept design:

- An existing site condition feature survey was undertaken and included an assessment of site boundaries, all significant natural and manufactured features, ground level and contours and underground services and utilities **(Appendix H)**.
- Geotechnical Assessments **(Appendix I)**.
- Contaminated soil testing and soil classification assessment (SCA) **(Appendix P)**.
- Cultural Heritage Due Diligence Assessment. **(Appendix M)**.
- An Arboricultural impact assessment was not required as all enhancements proposed do not encroach on Tree Protection Zones.

Design recommendations

The park has been designed to serve as a rest area for cyclists and walkers while also functioning as a local park for nearby residents. Its design aims to enhance amenity, biodiversity, and provide a space for relaxation amid natural features.

The concept for the Northern Park considers its proximity to Mayer Park and aims to complement the planned regional improvements at Mayer Park which include a new play area, built facilities, BBQ shelters, picnic tables, and an outdoor gym. The infrastructure proposed aligns with park asset standards for an area of this size and emphasizes nature-based pause point along the path from Mayer Park to the Warrk-warrk bridge. The concept seeks to improve the environmental, geological, and cultural significance of the area in line with Darebin's Open Space and Natural Heritage Strategy.

The draft concept design features the following elements:

- Nature-based play area
- Park seats
- Picnic table
- Bicycle hoops
- Connecting path

Golf Clubrooms

Under the funding agreement with SRV, \$10,000 was allocated to design and undertake due-diligence requirements for the golf clubrooms and pro shop. Following engagement with Council's Facilities Management Team and evaluation process of core procurement requirements listed in this report, a suitably qualified building architect was engaged to undertake this project outcome.



Figure 4 – Draft Concept for the golf clubrooms

Scope

The appointed architect was tasked with developing a concept plan for improvements to the existing buildings with a list of recommended improvements to enhance community use. This plan includes estimated costs for both detailed design and construction. The buildings under consideration for improvement include the pro-shop, central residence, clubrooms, and the outdoor area.

The aim of proposed improvements seeks to support community use, diverse inclusion, golf operations and use beyond traditional golf activities. The concept aims ensure current building standards are adhered to while enabling aspects like hospitality, usability, and inclusivity. It also includes cost estimates for proposed improvements, detailed design and construction. The project's objective is to create a concept design for golf clubroom enhancements, based on an assessment of the current state of the buildings to better serve the community, operator and golf clubs at Northcote Public Golf Course.

The concept designs encompass a range of elements, including:

- A redesigned layout to meet building requirements.
- An assessment of facility size to ensure it accommodates current needs and future growth.
- Improved and accessible entrances to the clubroom and pro-shop.
- Building structure and essential services enhancements.
- Upgrades to the kitchen and cafeteria spaces.
- Improved and inclusive amenities and bathrooms.
- Replacement/upgrades of existing surfaces.
- A multipurpose club function room.
- Enhanced safety aspects including appropriate lighting and ventilation.
- Space planning for accessibility and compliance to the Disability Discrimination Act
- Maximising open space connectivity and visibility of the surrounding environment.
- Environmental design outcomes.

Design recommendations

The concept designs produced for the clubroom and Pro shop improvements aim to open the site to the public from Normanby Avenue, introducing opportunities to engage and activate the site through improved external areas, connected spaces and upgraded amenities.

Some key design components as part of this design response are as follows:

- New public entry and pedestrian link directly from Normanby Avenue.
- New recreation, landscaping and sitting spaces adjacent entry path with relaxed connection to Pro Shop/Café, offering further opportunities for activation.
- Upgraded Pro Shop and Café with strong external connections, improved accessibility and amenities.
- Refitted redundant building (residence) to create Player Amenities and Golf Club Operator overflow/office spaces.
- Upgraded Member Building with improved external aspects, accessibility and amenities.

- Flexible social spaces offering multipurpose opportunities.
- External decks and landscaping creating connected external facades and engagements.

Refer to **Appendix Q** for the draft concept design, recommended improvements and estimated costings for buildings within the Northcote Public Golf Course.

Refer to **Appendix R** for the associated Building Improvements Feasibility Study.

Due Diligence

A Business Activation Case for the Northcote Public Golf Course (**Appendix S**). It was comprised of:

- Benchmarking
- Partnership landscape and funding availability
- Facilities Assessment
- Consultation
- Demographics

Council's Facilities Management Team conducted a thorough review of the current facility's condition and renewal needs.

Business Case for Activation of the Northcote Public Golf Course

A Business Case for Activation of the Northcote Public Golf Course was commissioned to investigate opportunities to increase commercial activation of the area.

The business case work undertaken has not identified significant opportunities and it is not proposed that this be pursued further. Any large-scale activation of the site would require significant investment by Council or private enterprise, but the assessment undertaken indicates earnings will not be sufficient to offset the initial capital expense.

Scope

The report considers possibilities for private investment and public/private partnerships to establish commercial and social activities at the site. This includes options for both hospitality and events beyond traditional golf. It also considers community generated ideas and activation opportunities and considers the existing building condition, sites of a similar nature, and overall user experience.

PWC were engaged via an RFQ process to conduct a due diligence and business activation case study regarding potential future investment opportunities at the site. A range of community, sport, social, environmental and commercial stakeholders were engaged. Ideas and insights were identified and applied to subsequent analysis. Stakeholders included:

- City of Darebin Officers
- Golf Australia
- Leisure Management Services (Noting this work was commission during the previous contract agreement.)
- Northcote Golf Club
- Wurundjeri Corporation

- Merri Creek Management Committee
- Friends of Merri Creek
- Friends of Bracken Creek
- Northcote Golf and Community Hub
- Unlock Northcote Golf Course
- Normanby Park Golf Club
- Co-Ground
- Private Sector Investors

Outcome

The Business Case for Activation report did not identify significant opportunities. Any large-scale activation of the site would require significant investment by Council or private enterprise. The assessment undertaken indicates earnings will not be sufficient to offset the initial capital expense.

PWC have assessed some options for Council to consider for activation of the site. Three activation models were considered:

1. Activating broader daytime community uses (Social Enterprise Alliance)
2. Establishing a modern cafe and cultural and community education (Management Contract)
3. Larger hospitality and entertainment hub with club upgrades (Management Contract/leasing arrangement.)

PWC found that commercial sustainability is likely to be challenging due to the co-location and co-use of any development and the tension between access and timing of commercial, community and golf club use. Return on investment considerations determine private investment would be unlikely.

Based on the analysis undertaken, PWC have found that significant increased levels of patronage would be required for even a small-scale activation to be financially viable. Connectivity with the Merri Creek Trail would be key prerequisite to achieve the required visitation. Officers will assess these opportunities for improvement and recommend overall priorities to Council as part of its budget development process in 24/25. Refer to **Appendix S** for the PWC Activation Case Study and Building Facility Condition Report.

CONSIDERATION OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT (2020) PRINCIPLES

Financial Management

SRV Grant allocation and expenditure breakdown

The SRV funding attributed to the Northcote Public Golf Course project was allocated in March 2023 and totalled \$200,000. A condition of the grant was that all funds were to be spent on design and due diligence works associated with the project. No funding was to be spent on construction. To date a total of **\$169,743** has been spent on the Northcote Golf Course project. Below is a complete breakdown of funding allocation and expenditure relating to the SRV grant funding.

Golf Course Master Plan (Allocation - \$30,000)	
Components	Costs
Design and Masterplan development for Northcote Public Golf course	\$22,947
Tree assessment and Arborist report on existing natural assets	\$5,350
Total Cost	28,297

Indicative costs for proposed construction works	
Low priority* Course improvement works	\$620,000
High priority* Course improvement works	\$1.32 million

** Note that this is the language used by the consultant and doesn't reflect a whole of council priority assessment.*

Eastern Path (Allocation - \$70,000)	
Component	Costs
Safety analysis for course alteration/ Pathway interface (Jan 1 st 2023)	\$2,500
Eastern Path alignment and concept design	\$38,456
Soil contamination testing	\$5,275
Cultural Heritage Management Plan	\$30,140
Total cost	\$76,371

Indicative costs for proposed construction works	
Concrete Path option	\$590,770
Stabilised Granitic Path option	\$511,295
Bitumen Path option	\$475,532

Northern Park Design (Allocation - \$90,000)	
Component	Costs
Northern Park Concept design (inclusive detailed design)	\$9,105
Soil contamination testing	\$16,820
Cultural Heritage Management Plan	\$ 30,140
Total cost	\$56,065

Indicative costs for proposed construction works	
Proposed Park Construction	\$ 242,913

Golf Clubrooms & Building Improvements (Allocation - \$10,000)	
Component	Costs
Concept Designs for Building Improvements	\$9,010
Total cost	\$9,010

Indicative costs for proposed construction works	
Detailed Design	\$3.6 million
Cultural Heritage Management Plan	
Construction	

Funding of improvements identified in the Masterplan

The Masterplan and other design works completed identify a range of possible future improvements to the site including a new path, a redesign of the golf course, building improvements and the addition of a range of new park assets. These recommendations have merit, although they have different levels of priority when assessed on need and benefit.

Council has planned to allocate \$250,000 for improvements in 2024-25 in its 4 year capital works budget, which would allow it to start some implementation. Some minor new park assets (such as bins or seats) are also expected to be assessed as a high priority for consideration of funding as part of Council’s annual parks improvement program. The total cost to implement all recommendations outlined in the reports is over \$3 million and as with other Masterplans and forward improvements plans across the City, improvements would be made over time and priorities assessed and considered by Council annually through the Budget development process.

Advocacy opportunities

The design work completed provides a strong foundation for advocacy to secure external funding to consider bringing forward improvements to the nearer term. Council will be in a strong position to seek support with funding for the works.

Please note that the SRV funding does not include any construction related costs associated with the program. If endorsed, any future improvements will need to be considered by Council for future capital works budget development.

Community Engagement

Should Council choose to implement any of the course improvements community and stakeholder engagement would occur prior to each of the particular projects commencing. This engagement would communicate about upcoming works and seek feedback on any aspects that are negotiable including in regard to the timing or staging of works. This would include engagement with residents and stakeholders about details of projects such as play elements to be included, local issues that might arise or preferences for species. This engagement would explore details associated with implementation of the elements in the concept plans and Master plans. Specific details of the engagement will be developed once budget availability has been confirmed.

As part of the development of the Golf Course Masterplan, key stakeholders were invited to meet with the Golf Course Architect to ensure that an effective design solution was identified in this initial phase of design.

Other Principles for consideration

Overarching Governance Principles and Supporting Principles

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

Public Transparency Principles

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

COUNCIL POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

Environmental Sustainability Considerations (including Climate Emergency)

All designs presented in this report recommend changes which minimise the impact on trees and strive to preserve them where feasible. Vegetative screening between neighbouring properties and the interface zones between the golf and open space areas is also a central consideration. In alignment with the Darebin Tree Policy, it has been determined that should complete removal be necessary, an offset and replacement plan will be initiated into the concept designs. Furthermore, additional landscaping and vegetation enhancements will extend well beyond the requirements for tree offsets. It's important to note that all vegetation improvements will involve the use of indigenous species, as determined by the relevant Council units, thereby enhancing the current biodiversity and ecological value of the area.

Recommendations for building improvements are also based on Environmentally Sustainable Design principals and consider durability, energy efficiency, waste reduction, air quality and building materials. Considerations aim to reduce the impact on the environment and improve health and comfort of those visiting the site.

Equity, Inclusion, Wellbeing and Human Rights Considerations

Public open spaces play a vital role in enhancing the social and community fabric of neighbourhoods, serving as areas for social gatherings, interactions, and physical activity. As local areas experience growth and development, the demand for diverse and accessible public open spaces has increased. The concept and master plans respond to these needs by proposing high-quality walking paths (DDA compliant), accessible park amenities, including wheelchair-accessible picnic tables, as well as new nature spaces and open active areas designed with the principles of CPTED (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design) in mind. Within the scope for design of building improvements, officers have included female and gender diverse amenities and all-abilities access.

Economic Development and Cultural Considerations

Cultural sensitivities have been embedded in all aspects of the works for this project given the proximity to the Merri Creek. A detailed Cultural Heritage Due Diligence Investigation was undertaken in 2022. In line with the recommendations made in the report, officers have now commissioned a Cultural Heritage Management Plan for the Northern Park and path. The CHMP is currently with the Wurundjeri Council for final approval.

In preparing the scope of design works within the open space area, Council have requested that proposed improvements follow the existing site features and aim to create minimal land disturbance. The proposed design follows site contours to minimise soil disturbance required to instal a DDA compliant path.

Further cultural investigations must be undertaken for the golf course masterplan and building improvements once endorsed by Council. Officers are required to first understand the level of proposed soil disturbance prior to initiating such investigations. Officers note this element will need to be budgeted for and included as a required stage of any improvements. Officers will continue to work closely with Wurundjeri for all future considerations of the site to ensure their views are reflected within the final designs of the site.

Economic development opportunities, particularly as they relate to local procurement and local jobs, will be explored through any decision Council makes regarding the design and delivery of these projects.

Operational Impacts

Any changes to public open space will impact Council's operating and maintenance budgets. Council have endorsed \$100,000 dollars to be included within park operational budgets for the new open space area. These charges are allocated to mowing activities, weed management and running repairs of existing hard infrastructure including fencing and safety netting. Any additional works for the site will require additional budget to be attributed to ensure the site is maintained to standard. Associated costs will be provided in detail following community engagement on the design.

There will be costs associated with community engagement for the detailed design stage. It is anticipated this will be attributed to the Parks and Open Space operational budget.

Legal and Risk Implications

















Any future changes to the Northcote Public Golf Course must consider the existing contractual obligations with the Golf Course Operator, Clublinks. The current contract is in place until the 30 June 2026. As a key stakeholder for the site and buildings, any future development will require targeted engagement and negotiation prior to any staged improvement works occurring.

IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

Should Council resolve to endorse the concept designs tabled in this report, notice of the Council Resolution will be provided to:

- Key stakeholders.
- Submitters to the 2022 community engagement process.

Attachments

- Procurement Methodology - Golf Course Masterplan Designer (**Appendix A**) Enclosed under separate cover 
- Northcote Public Golf Course Masterplan Report (**Appendix B**) Enclosed under separate cover 
- CONFIDENTIAL Golf Aust. Recommended Contractors and Responses to Request for Quote for NGC Master Plan (**Appendix C**) Enclosed under separate cover Confidential - enclosed under separate cover
- CONFIDENTIAL Golf Course Masterplan - Due Diligence - Existing Irrigation Survey (**Appendix D**) Enclosed under separate cover Confidential - enclosed under separate cover
- CONFIDENTIAL Golf Course Masterplan - Due Diligence - Arboricultural Impact Assessment (**Appendix E**) Enclosed under separate cover Confidential - enclosed under separate cover
- Proposed Trail_ Northcote Golf Course (**Appendix F**) Enclosed under separate cover 
- Northcote Golf Course Trail Alignment - Concept Design and Documentation - Opinion of probable cost (**Appendix G**) Enclosed under separate cover 
- Northcote Golf Course Proposed Trail Site_ Existing Conditions Plan (**Appendix H**) Enclosed under separate cover 
- Geotechnical Investigation_ Northcote Golf Course_ 144 Normanby Avenue Thornbury (**Appendix I**) Enclosed under separate cover 
- Arboricultural Impact Assessment_ Assessment of Trees at Northcote Golf Course alias (**Appendix J**) Enclosed under separate cover 
- Northcote Golf Club_ Report on Safety Issues on the Golf Course (**Appendix K**) Enclosed under separate cover 
- Soil Testing and Soil Classification Assessment (**Appendix L**) Enclosed under separate cover 
- Due Diligence Report (Cultural Heritage) (**Appendix M**) Enclosed under separate cover 
- Nature Based Playspace Layout Plan_ Northcote Golf Course Northern Park, Thornbury (**Appendix N**) Enclosed under separate cover 
- Northcote Golf Course - Northern Park - High Level Cost Plan (**Appendix O**) Enclosed under separate cover 
- Soil Contamination Assessment (**Appendix P**) Enclosed under separate cover 
- Northcote Public Golf Course Building Improvements_ Concept Design Overview Enclosed under separate cover (**Appendix Q**) Enclosed under separate cover 
- Northcote Public Golf Course - Building Improvements Feasibility Study (**Appendix R**) Enclosed under separate cover 
- Northcote Public Golf Course: Business Activation Case (**Appendix S**) Enclosed under separate cover 

DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST

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

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

9.5 LEASING & LICENSING POLICY**Author:** Coordinator Property Services**Reviewed By:** General Manager Operations and Capital

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report recommends that Council endorse a draft Leasing and Licensing Policy (**Appendix A**) to proceed to community consultation. Proceeding to consultation will allow Council to understand community views on the proposed approach to support its community through rental subsidies where tenants deliver high community benefit through the community services they provide.

The establishment of a Leasing and Licensing Policy is important for effective corporate governance across the suite of leases and licenses. It supports decision-making in relation to occupancy agreements on Council owned or managed land in accordance with its obligations under the *Local Government Act 2020* and where applicable, the *Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978*. This will ensure that:

- There is consistency and transparency in the approach to establishing, managing and reviewing leases and licenses.
- There is adequate oversight on compliance to lease and licence conditions.
- There is consideration to provide return on investment to council (whether this be in the form of community benefits and outcomes or financial).
- Our community have visibility as to the expected terms and conditions that will be provided when entering into a lease or licence agreement with council.

The draft Policy does not cover:

- Recreation or Leisure leases or licenses
- Ad-hoc or casual hire of halls or rooms.
- Some other minor exclusions included in the draft Policy.

The draft Policy proposes:

- That Council continue to provide substantial support for not-for-profit organisations in Darebin by supporting our community via access to facilities and properties and where rental would be set on a peppercorn basis, at \$104 per annum (plus GST), incorporating a full rental subsidy contribution from Council.
- That the Policy would be applied to a lease or license when a new agreement is established or when an agreement is renewed. It would not affect current agreements during the current term.
- That there would be no change or increase to outgoings, utilities and maintenance obligations on any existing Tenant or Licensee even if a new Lease/Licence agreements or renewal of Lease/Licence agreements takes place; and
- That the outgoings, utilities and maintenance obligations in a Lease/Licence for any new Tenant or Licensee will be in line with existing Lease/Licence agreement for similar type uses; and

- That for commercial and government tenants/licensees, rent would be set on a commercial basis to ensure that commercial arrangements can benefit community by returning financial benefits to Council for use for community purposes.
- For not-for-profit tenants with income generating capacity and who earn a 'commercial-like' income such as from sub-letting or advertising, a portion of revenue would be shared with Council (10% or 20% depending on the circumstances as detailed in the draft Policy).

The draft Policy outlines other terms and conditions that are proposed to be managed across Council's leases and licenses.

Officer Recommendation

That Council:

- (1) Notes that establishing a Leasing and Licencing Policy is an action identified in an internal audit Review of Lease Management in November 2021.
- (2) Notes that establishment of a Leasing & Licensing Policy is proposed to provide consistent and transparent management of Council's Lease and Licence portfolio so that tenants, prospective tenants and community have clarity about how Council allocates access to community buildings and about the community benefits that arise from Council's contributions to community groups and activities through provision of rental subsidies and payment of other costs for land, buildings and facilities.
- (3) Reconfirms Council's long standing commitment to supporting community by providing facilities and properties for community uses through leasing and licensing arrangements. This includes making properties available on a peppercorn rental basis with contribution of full rental subsidies to support Darebin not-for-profit organisations.
- (4) Notes that a key purpose of the Policy is to provide greater transparency in regard to the community benefits from the investment by Council on behalf of ratepayers.
- (5) Notes that the draft Leasing & Licensing Policy does not apply to recreation and leisure tenants/licensees (including seasonal ground allocations, agreements on sporting pavilions, sporting facilities), ad-hoc or casual hire of halls, where Council is a Tenant or Licensee, agreements on EV stations and Neighbourhood battery installations.
- (6) Notes that if adopted as proposed, the Leasing and Licensing Policy would mean:
 - (a) for not-for-profit Tenants or Licensees, rental would be set on a peppercorn basis, at \$104 per annum (plus GST); and
 - i. no change or increase to outgoings, utilities and maintenance obligations on any existing Tenant or Licensee even if a new Lease/Licence agreements or renewal of Lease/Licence agreements takes place; and
 - ii. the outgoings, utilities and maintenance obligations in a Lease/Licence for any new Tenant or Licensee will be in line with existing Lease/Licence agreement for similar type uses.
 - (b) for commercial and government tenants/licensees, rent would be set on a commercial basis; and
 - (c) for not-for-profit tenants with income generating capacity and who earn a 'commercial-like' income such as from sub-letting or advertising, a portion of revenue would be shared with Council (10% or 20%).

- (7) Endorses the draft Leasing & Licensing Policy (**Appendix A**) to proceed to community consultation.
 - (8) Endorses the community engagement approach, which includes:
 - a. A consultation period open from 4 December 2023 to 3 March 2024.
 - b. Communications with all tenant organisation in the fortnight starting 28 November 2023 to bring to their attention the consultation period and opportunities to participate.
 - c. Opportunities for all tenant organisation to meet directly with Council staff and/or to join a workshop to provide feedback.
 - (9) Requests a further report be provided to the Council at its Ordinary Council meeting in March 2024 to consider community consultation feedback and any recommended changes to consider incorporating into a final Leasing and Licensing Policy.
-

BACKGROUND / KEY INFORMATION

Audit Action

HLB Mann Judd was commissioned in November 2021 to undertake a review of Council's practices concerning the management of lease and licence agreements. The primary objective of the review assessed the adequacy and effectiveness of systems, processes, and internal controls in relation to the management of leases and licences.

The audit focused on the development of an overarching property framework, Leasing & Licensing policy, suitable property management system, centralised lease register, lease compliance audit, budgetary controls, monthly performance reporting and appropriate procedural and pro-mapping functions (including debt recovery).

Council has finalised all of the above audit requirements excepting for the implementation of a Leasing and Licensing Policy.

Current Practices

Not including recreation and leisure facilities (which are not proposed to be covered by the draft Leasing and Licensing Policy), Council currently has 97 properties or facilities that it leases or licences and the majority of these are for community organisations providing community services which return benefit to the Darebin Community.

Council does not currently have an endorsed Leasing and Licensing Policy, however it has had in place some long standing practices. It has been common practice for Council to contribute full rental subsidies by charging community-based entities a peppercorn rent with a further contribution of Council covering many of the building maintenance costs. There is an exception in regard to the recent licences entered into by Council, at 2 Wingrove Street, Alphington, where Licensees were charged a Licence fee in line with their previous rental Agreements which were sub licenses from Council's Tenant.

Further, Council has been operating without an overarching Policy to govern decision-making in respect of setting lease terms and conditions for its community, commercial or government lease agreements. This means that there is variability and inconsistency in regard to other lease terms. This makes it hard for tenants or prospective tenants to know what to expect and also makes the administration of agreements more complex in their management.

Objectives of the draft Leasing and Licensing Policy

The draft Policy supports decision-making in relation to occupancy arrangements on Council owned or managed land or buildings in accordance with its obligations under the *Local Government Act 2020*, and where applicable, the *Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978*.

The aim of the Policy is to create a greater level of transparency and accountability to the ways in which lease and licences are considered and key terms are determined and endorsed. The Policy also sets to:

- Provide a clear and transparent approach to Lease and Licence applications and provide clarity of Council's role as Landlord and Licensor.
- Optimise the use of Council's existing and future property portfolio, with particular focus on the encouragement of multi-use facilities.
- Maximise the community benefits achieved via Council's investment in property.
- Ensure rent and licence fee charges, and outgoing recoveries are managed in a fair and equitable manner.
- Ensure the tenure of Council's owned or managed land or buildings are aligned with recommendations of Council's long-term strategic plans.
- Ensure a fair and equitable assessment of all Lease and Licence applications.
- Enable the appropriate and effective management of all Council owned buildings to maximise the useful life of these assets.
- Provide for a fair and financially viable approach to the leasing and licensing of Council owned buildings.
- Ensure compliance with relevant Legislation.
- Ensure Council property is leased and/or licensed for a purpose that benefits the community.
- Ensure the key maintenance and capital work responsibilities are clearly defined and allocated appropriately in the lease or licence document.

Previous Council Resolution

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

ALIGNMENT TO 2041 DAREBIN COMMUNITY VISION

Strategic Direction 1: Vibrant, Respectful and Connected

ALIGNMENT TO 2021-25 COUNCIL PLAN

Strategic Direction 4 Responsible, Transparent and Responsive

ALIGNMENT TO COUNCIL PLAN STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

1.2 We will help to build an inclusive and empowered community, where social cohesion and community harmony are fostered

1.3 We will embrace diversity and ensure everyone is included in our society, and no one is left behind – by combating discrimination, and championing equity, inclusivity and diversity

2.1 We will deliver equitable and accessible infrastructure to provide opportunities for our community to live well

2.5 We will invest in services and the built environment to improve access for our residents and visitors

4.1 We will ensure balanced and responsible financial decision making that meets the needs of our community now and into the future

4.2 We will ensure our assets are optimised for the benefit of our community

4.3 We will transform our services and service delivery models to ensure they meet the current, emerging and future needs of our community

DISCUSSION

Categorisation of Council's Lease and Licensed Property Portfolio

The draft Policy proposes a transparent and consistent approach for provision of rental subsidies in the use of facilities for community purposes. This proposed approach balances the community benefits provided by tenants and licensees with the financial support provided by Council.

The proposed approach is that each Lease or Licence application would be assessed to determine which of the following categories the Lease or Licence falls under, noting that the level of subsidy is different for each category:

- Category A: Council Services / Community Purpose
- Category B: Community Partnerships
- Category C: Commercial
- Category D: Government Agencies

Category A – Council Services/Community Purpose.

This category includes not-for-profit organisations with no or limited income generating capacity.

The draft Policy proposes that Tenants who are assessed as Category A would receive a full rental subsidy and be charged a nominal rent of \$104 per annum.

Around 50% of Councils of Council's current Lease and Licence portfolio is estimated to fall into this category.

In respect of Lease and Licence renewals, occupiers will receive the same terms as their previous agreement, although it is noted that most occupiers are currently responsible for most utility costs and cleaning costs. These are seen as Tenant/Licensee operational costs and it is standard practice that operational costs are paid by the occupant. The Tenant/Licensees' maintenance responsibilities will be in line with their current Maintenance Schedule – no change is proposed.

In respect of any new Lease and Licence agreement, Tenants will be responsible for utility and cleaning costs together with maintenance responsibilities in line with existing Maintenance Schedules for similar type uses.

Eligible organisations would include:

- Fully funded Council services and 'not for profit' groups/organisations with limited or no income generating capacity.
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Groups.
- Tenants generally expected to be captured under Category A include not for profit kindergartens and childcare services, some neighbourhood houses, community gardens, community housing, scouts and girl guide associations.

Category B – Community Partnerships

Category B tenants are not-for-profit organisations but with some income generating capacity. If that income is 'commercial like' such as from sub-letting or advertising, they would share a portion of this income with Council (10% usually; 20% if Council has provided the improvements that generate the revenue).

Council holds around 15% of their Lease and Licence portfolio with Category B agreements.

Tenants who are assessed as Category B will receive a full rental subsidy and be charged a nominal rent of \$104 per annum.

In respect of Lease and Licence renewals, Tenants will be responsible for utility and cleaning costs. These are seen as Tenant/Licensee operational costs which in most agreements are paid by the occupant. The Tenant/Licensees' maintenance responsibilities will be in line with their current Maintenance Schedule.

In respect of any new Lease and Licence agreement, Tenants will be responsible for utility and cleaning costs together with maintenance responsibilities in line with existing Maintenance Schedules for similar type uses.

Eligible organisation would be:

- Community groups, Council partnership organisations and 'not for profit' groups with income generating capacity.
- Services that may be assessed as Category B may include not-for-profit organisations that are running 'commercial like' services and/or sub-letting and could include some neighbourhood houses.

Under this provision, where a Category B Tenant/Licensee gains access to commercial income (other than fund raising) from activities such as:

- a) Subletting/Sublicensing
- b) Hiring rooms for private use (personal or commercial uses)
- c) Advertising revenue
- d) Regular or ongoing bar or restaurant operations
- e) Commercial licensing arrangements on the premises

For the purposes of assessing income for this clause, this does not include the occupier's fundraising events, nor community events or training that is run by not-for-profit entities.

The rental of Lease/Licence would be adjusted annually accordingly:

1. Where the Council has provided the improvements from which the commercial income is derived, Council will receive additional annual income in the amount of 20% of the Tenant's or Licensee's increased income (GST exclusive).
2. Where the Tenant or Licensee has provided the improvements from which the commercial income is derived, Council will receive additional annual income in the amount of 10% of the Tenant's or Licensee's increased income (GST exclusive).

Notwithstanding anything in this provision, the amount of additional income received by Council in any year under this provision cannot be greater than the assessed market rent for the Lease/Licence for that same period.

Category C – Commercial Entities

Council buildings and facilities occupied by for-profit organisations and would be charged a market rent as determined by Council's external valuers.

All utilities costs and maintenance costs would be covered by the tenant.

- Services that may be captured under Category C may include telecommunication facilities, car park agreements, commercial function centres and commercial enterprises and for-profit businesses.
- Council currently holds around 35% of their agreements as Category C.

Category D – Government Agencies

Government Agencies occupying Council buildings and facilities would be charged a market rent as determined by its external valuers.

Council buildings and facilities occupied for government purposes would be charged a market rent as determined by its external valuers.

- Council does not hold any Category D Leases and Licences agreements at present.

Building Utilities, Statutory Rates, Building Insurance and Building Outgoings

Current Category A and B Tenant/Licensees would only be responsible for the same utility, outgoings and operational costs as included in their current agreements. Under this draft Policy, this arrangement would continue when the Tenant/Licensees renew their agreement or enter into a new agreement.

Any new or renewing Category C and D Tenant/Licensees would be responsible for all utility, statutory rates, insurance and building outgoings costs which are chargeable to that property or part thereof.

Maintenance Responsibilities

The maintenance responsibilities proposed in respect of Category A and B Lease/Licence agreements are as follows:

- **Lease and Licence Renewals:** The maintenance responsibilities would be in line with the Maintenance Schedule in the occupant's previous/current Agreement.
- **New Agreements:** The maintenance responsibilities in the Maintenance Schedule would be in line with existing agreements for similar type uses.

- **Tenant/Licensee owned Fixtures, Fittings & Equipment:** Tenants/Licensees are responsible for maintenance, replacement and compliance of any fixtures, fittings and equipment that the occupier owns and/or has installed.

Tenants/Licensees in Category C and D will be responsible for costs associated with all non-structural maintenance on the building/property.

Community benefit, applications and expressions of interest

For buildings being leased or licensed for the first time and other opportunities valued at over \$100,000 annual rental, Council will conduct an Expression of Interest process to identify occupiers.

Council reserves the right to negotiate solely with an existing occupier where it is satisfied that the best community benefit can be achieved by doing so. In making this assessment, Council will consider:

- Nature of the service provided and the long-term community need for service in this location.
- Community benefits of continuity of service.
- Fitness for purpose of the building and the stage of lifecycle the building is at – for example, is it at end of life, due to be refurbished or redeveloped?
- Any community benefits arising from proposed investment in infrastructure by the occupier.

For sites which have previously been leased or licensed Council will periodically test if there are other community needs or uses for the facilities or sites by conducting a community needs assessment and/or running an Expression of Interest process.

It is proposed that all prospective Tenants/Licensees seeking a Lease or Licence on Council property, including existing Tenants/Licensee renegotiating a Lease or Licence, will be required to prepare an application that specifically addresses the Assessment Criteria as requested by Council. The purpose of this is to ensure a transparent understanding of community benefits to be provided, to enable consideration of how to best maximise utilisation of the facilities and to ensure appropriate due diligence.

The Assessment Criteria, will include:

- a) *Track Record* – Relevant experience, capability to deliver on contractual obligations, financial capacity, quality of services delivered to the community and Tenant/Licensee history.
- b) *Financial Offer* – Proposed financial investment in the asset, initiatives to honour contractual commitments and other financial offers.
- c) *Vision and Proposed Value* – Proposed vision and community benefit to be provided through use of the facility. That benefit can be tangible or intangible.
- d) *Community and Social Responsibility* – Cultural alignment with Darebin's values and elements of the proposal that achieve community, quality, environmental and sustainable objectives as outlined in the Council Plan.
- e) *Condition of Offer* – Any specific elements of the proposal including requests for exclusive use.
- f) *Council Financial Commitment* – Required works or capital commitment to be invested by Council.

- g) *Length of Tenure* – Considerations will include service needs and community benefits and tenant willingness and capacity to support the ongoing upkeep of the land and/or premises and to contribute to capital improvement and facility enhancement over the requested lease term.
- h) *Risk Mitigation* – Identify, evaluate, and mitigate likely actual and potential risks.
- i) *Fit for Purpose* – The proposed use of the property is appropriate taking into account building and planning requirements.
- j) *Property Utilisation* – See Maximising Utilisation of Council Property.

Tenure of Leases/Licenses

Council is proposing standard terms for a Lease/Licence:

Crown Land

- Lease 21 years
- Licence 3 Years

Council Land

- Lease 5 years
- Licence 3 Years

Council may consider longer term agreements on a case-by-case basis where it will consider the objectives of this Policy and other considerations such as:

- Nature of the service provided and the long-term community need for service in this location.
- Community benefits of continuity of service.
- Fitness for purpose of the building and the stage of lifecycle the building is at – for example, is it to be refurbished, redeveloped or at end of life?
- Any Community benefits arising from proposed investment in infrastructure by the occupier.

With the aim of supporting occupiers to forward plan, the draft Policy also proposes long notice periods ahead of the end of an agreements with category A and B organisations. Council will aim to provide 18 months' notice and to have a clear outcome of any expression of interest process 12 months prior to the end of an agreement.

Reporting

The draft Policy proposes to strengthen reporting in regards to community benefits provided through Councils properties and facilities to ensure transparency and to ensure Council is meeting its obligations in regards to application of peppercorn rents.

Council is aiming to strike a good balance in reporting between ensuring that it receives meaningful information to enable it to measure community benefit whilst not unnecessarily causing significant work to the Tenant/Licensee to produce such reports. It will work with occupiers to agree metrics that strike this balance appropriately.

The draft Policy proposes annual reporting from Tenant/Licensees to Council covering:

- Business plan
- Audited annual financial statement
- Marketing plan
- Membership details
- Community usage details
- Grants sought and received
- Utilisation metrics (building usage information)
- Community benefits and programs delivered to Darebin and its residents
- Social and environmentally sustainable outcomes and achievements
- Alignment to Council Objectives
- Venue occupancy data
- Revenue generation details
- Employee and volunteer numbers

Maximising use of facilities:

Council aims to maximise use of facilities and properties in order to maximise the benefit for community. There are some reasons why this doesn't work for all uses, however it will be considered during establishment of leasing and licensing arrangements and occupiers seeking exclusive use will need to explain why this is necessary and how they are maximising use of the facilities.

Where an occupier is not proposing to utilise the whole premises at all times or where Council requires part of the property to be set aside for Council or community use, the best ways to maximise utilisation will be explored during agreement negotiations and could include: some room availability reserved for use by Council or other not-for-profit community groups; or establishment of a license for use by another user.

CONSIDERATION OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT (2020) PRINCIPLES

Financial Management

Financial Implications on Current Rent Income from Council's Property Portfolio

The 2023/24 budgeted gross income for Council's leased and licenced portfolio (excluding sporting and seasonal licenses) is \$582,225. This figure is budgeted to reduce to an annual gross income of \$423,155 from 30 April 2024 when some of Council's commercial licenses reach expiry. Most of this income is currently received from commercial tenancies. The implementation of this draft Policy will cause minimal change regarding Council's current costs and income. This Policy would be implemented progressively over time at the end of current lease/licence agreements.

Council currently receives an annual rental of \$52 per annum from each of its Community - based Leases/Licenses that are on a peppercorn rental basis, with Council being responsible for the majority of the maintenance costs on these facilities.

Supporting community – Council contributions

Council has had a long-standing commitment to support community and not-for-profit organisations supporting the Darebin community. It makes significant contributions on behalf of community and rate payers via leases and licenses. These include:

- In 2022-2023, Council's contributed maintenance funds to support community uses (excluding capital costs) of \$673,875 across 36 Community use facilities. Council contributed building insurance funds for the 2022/2023 year calculated to be \$100 per \$100,000 of the replacement cost of the building. As such, insurance for a \$2M building was funded by Council at a costs of approximately \$2,000.
- Rental subsidies to support not-for-profit organisations are valued at \$5.412 million across all community use leases and licenses.

Building Outgoings and Maintenance Costs

The draft Leasing and Licensing Policy proposes that for Category A and B Leases/Licenses:

1. **Lease and Licence Renewals (or new Agreements with existing occupiers):** The status quo with current arrangements will continue going forward. As such, maintenance responsibilities will be in line with the Maintenance Schedule in the occupier's previous Agreement.
2. **New Agreements:** The Maintenance responsibilities in the Maintenance Schedule will be in line with existing agreements for similar type uses.
3. **Tenant/Licensee Fixtures, Fittings & Equipment:** Tenants/Licensees will continue to be responsible for maintenance, replacement and compliance of fixtures, fittings and equipment that they own and/or have installed.

Tenants and Licensees that fall into Category C and D agreements are responsible for all statutory and operational costs on the property excepting structural and capital works.

Financial Implications – Long Term Financial Sustainability and Building Renewal

It is critical for Council to have sufficient financial capacity to maintain its buildings to ensure that they are compliant, safe and are fit for purpose. Any gap in the maintenance and renewal funding program will result in the deterioration of the condition of its buildings, the eventual higher long-term cost to Council and an increase in Council's risk profile. In the longer term, the more Council's property portfolio can be 'financially self-sufficient', the more capacity Council has to maintain its community facilities for users in the long term.

Council currently does not recover enough rental from its commercial properties to pay for the maintenance and utility charges for its community Leases/Licenses. This draft policy proposes that all Commercial tenancies will have rental set on a commercial basis.

A recent building condition audit found that 47% of Council's community-based buildings are greater than 30 years old. Going forward, these buildings will require an injection of capital funding to extend their useable lifespan and to ensure that they are fit for purpose. Council is not likely to be able to fully fund this itself. It will need to explore options for supporting community needs as these buildings reach the end of their life.

Implementation of the Policy

Following consultation, Council would consider a final Policy.

This change for an occupier would come into effect at the point a Lease or License is renewed or commenced. The final Policy would be the basis on which any discussions or negotiations about a new Agreement term are undertaken by Council.

The final Policy would guide Council's approach from the time it is endorsed by Council.

Community Engagement

Community Engagement is planned to consult with community of the Policy. Feedback will be used to consider adjustments to the Policy before finalisation and consideration by Council at its meeting in March 2024.

Community engagement will include:

- A Fact Sheet on the draft Leasing and Licensing Policy (**Appendix B**) to be uploaded onto the Your Say Darebin project page.
- Opportunity for all tenant or licensee organisations to meet with or attend a workshop with Council officers (running from end-January to end-February 2024).
- An online survey via Your Say Darebin project page including frequently asked questions, directions to contact Council Property and Business Improvement via telephone or email with queries or to request a hard copy survey.
- A survey on the Your Say page to obtain community feedback.
- Draft policy and survey made available in print form for pick-up or mailout through Council Officers.
- 2 – 3 Social media posts (Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn Twitter).
- Staff 2 Staff newsletter.
- e-newsletters (What's on for Families, Sustainable Darebin, Your Darebin, Disability Access and Inclusion, Older and Active, EPCC, E-Business News).
- Printed material i.e., brochure or postcard (will include translated paragraphs for CALD communities).
- Targeted engagement with community groups.
- Targeted engagement with Council's Community Advisory Committees (i.e., Darebin Welcoming Cities Community Reference Group, Darebin Aboriginal Advisory Committee, Gender Equity Advisory Committee, Darebin Disability Advisory Committee, Sexuality, Sex and Gender Diversity Advisory Committee).

Communications to support the community engagement will include:

- Direct letters to all tenants and licences (including advice that targeted sessions will be held in Jan/Feb 2024).
- Printed materials such as brochure and posters, translated into top 6 languages with QR code link to Your Say page.
- Social media posts on Council corporate channels with links to Your Say page.
- Your Darebin e-newsletter and other business unit e-newsletters.
- Reference in DCN article.

Other Principles for consideration**Overarching Governance Principles and Supporting Principles**

- (a) Council decisions are to be made and actions taken in accordance with the relevant law;
- (b) priority is to be given to achieving the best outcomes for the municipal community, including future generations;
- (g) the ongoing financial viability of the Council is to be ensured;
- (i) the transparency of Council decisions, actions and information is to be ensured.

Public Transparency Principles

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

Strategic Planning Principles

- (a) an integrated approach to planning, monitoring and performance reporting is to be adopted;
- (d) strategic planning must identify and address the risks to effective implementation;

Service Performance Principles

- (a) services should be provided in an equitable manner and be responsive to the diverse needs of the municipal community;
- (b) services should be accessible to the members of the municipal community for whom the services are intended;
- (d) a Council should seek to continuously improve service delivery to the municipal community in response to performance monitoring;

COUNCIL POLICY CONSIDERATIONS**Environmental Sustainability Considerations (including Climate Emergency)**

The Assessment Criteria contained in the Leasing and Licensing Policy sets out that any application to Lease or Licence council property must have regard to Council's cultural alignment with Darebin's values and community, quality, environmental and sustainable objectives outlined in the Council Plan.

The draft Policy further advises that it should be read in conjunction with council's Climate Emergency Policy 2017.

Equity, Inclusion, Wellbeing and Human Rights Considerations:

An Equity Impact Assessment was undertaken on 24 March 2023.

Economic Development and Cultural Considerations

The draft Policy enables Council to measure in a transparent way the economic impact and community benefit generated through the leasing and licensing of Council facilities.

Operational Impacts

Due to the reporting information that will be provided to Council's internal stakeholders, Council will be in a better position to understand and measure the level of benefit its Tenants/Licensees provide to the community.

Legal and Risk Implications

This draft Policy has been developed to increase Council's level of governance and reduce risk implications.

IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

1. Seek Council endorsement of the draft Lease and Licensing Policy to proceed to Community Engagement – November 2023
2. Proceed to Community Engagement – December 2023
3. Evaluation of Community Engagement responses – March 2024
4. Proceed to Council briefing in March 2024
5. Seek Council endorsement of the draft Lease and Licensing Policy in March 2024
6. Implementation of the Draft Leasing & Licensing Policy in March 2024



RELATED DOCUMENTS

This policy should be read in conjunction with Council's:

- 2021-2025 Council Plan.
- 2021-2031 10 Year Financial Plan.
- 2022-23 Annual Budget.
- Community Engagement Policy 2021.
- Breathing Space – The Darebin Open Space Strategy
- Toward Equality Framework – Darebin City Council's Equity, Inclusion and Human Rights Framework 2019-2029.
- Climate Emergency Policy 2017.
- Sporting Fees, Charges and Occupancy Agreement Policy (October 2016).

These can be accessed from the intranet under Council policies and strategies.

Attachments

- Draft Leasing and Licensing Policy (**Appendix A**) [↓](#) 
- Fact Sheet - Draft Leasing and Licensing Policy (**Appendix B**) [↓](#) 

DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST

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

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



[Draft] Leasing and Licensing Policy

<p>Purpose</p>	<p>The Leasing and Licensing Policy (Policy) supports decision-making in relation to occupancy arrangements on Council owned or managed land or buildings in accordance with its obligations under the <i>Local Government Act 2020</i>, and where applicable, the <i>Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978</i> and which Council manages as stewards on behalf of the Darebin community.</p> <p>It ensures that a consistent, fair and transparent framework is applied when negotiating and finalising all occupancy agreements that will be linked to Council's property portfolio.</p> <p>This Policy provides direction to maximise occupancy and utilisation of Council owned and managed assets including co-location, clustering and multi-use tenancies to maximise public value and the delivery of services to support our community.</p> <p>The Policy also provides a transparent approach by ensuring consideration of community benefits is factored into decision making and that appropriate information and data is collected to demonstrate the community benefits which are achieved through the provision of community resources via various occupancy agreements.</p>
<p>Scope</p>	<p>This Policy applies to leases and licences for all property assets, including land and structures on Crown and freehold land, occupied by community groups, not-for-profit organisations, private individuals and commercial entities.</p> <p>This Policy does <u>not</u> apply to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • seasonal ground allocations, • Agreements on sporting pavilions and sporting facilities • ad-hoc or casual hire of halls; and • where Council is the Tenant or Licensee. • EV charging stations • Neighbourhood battery installations
<p>Definitions and Abbreviations</p>	<p>ELT: Executive Leadership Team</p> <p>ESM: Essential Services Maintenance</p> <p>Government Agency: A body whose purpose is to administer a service on behalf of government, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) a government department; (b) a Minister; (c) a local government; (d) a statutory authority; (e) a government-owned corporation; or (f) a subsidiary of a government-owned corporation <p>Head Lease: Where Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) leases a property owned by a third party with the intention of sub-letting part or all of the building or land to a different occupant; or b) leases to a Tenant and the Tenant then rents out part or all of the premises to a third party under a Sub-Lease

Draft Leasing and Licensing Policy



	<p>Sub-Lease: Where:</p> <p>a) Council rents out part or all of a building or land which it does not own, but leases from a separate party under a Head Lease; or b) a Tenant leases land or a building to a third party which it rents from Council under a Head Lease.</p> <p>Lease: Where exclusive occupation of a Council owned or managed land or building is granted to a Tenant for a fixed term in exchange for an agreed rental.</p> <p>Licence: Where non-exclusive occupation of a Council owned or managed land or building is granted to an occupant for a fixed term in exchange for an agreed licence fee</p> <p>Crown Land: Lands reserved and/or administered under the Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978, Land Act 1958 and Forests Act 1958</p> <p>CoM: A Committee of Management appointed by the State Government to manage Crown Land.</p> <p>Tenant: An individual or organisation who is granted a Lease</p> <p>Licensee: An individual or organisation who is granted a Licence</p> <p>Service Custodian: The Council department appointed as the stakeholder and primary liaison with the Tenant/Licensee for matters not related to Lease/Licence management.</p>
<p>Policy Statements</p>	<p>When leasing or licensing Council owned or managed land or buildings, the approach will be clear, consistent and transparent and consistent with <i>Darebin Council Plan 2021-2025</i>, <i>Darebin 2041 Community Vision</i>, and other relevant Council policies.</p> <p>In instances where Council is appointed CoM over a parcel of land, that land will be leased in accordance with the Leasing Policy for Victorian Crown Land. A Licence of Crown Land may also be granted to a Licensee by Council as CoM, subject to approval by the responsible minister or delegate of the responsible Department.</p> <p>Objectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To provide a clear and transparent approach to Lease and Licence applications and provide clarity of Council's role as landlord and licensor. • To optimise the uses of Council's existing and future property portfolio, with particular focus on the encouragement of multi-use facilities. • To maximise the community benefits achieved via Council's investment in property. • To ensure rent and licence fee charges, and outgoing recoveries are managed in a fair and equitable manner. • To ensure the tenure of Council's owned or managed land or buildings are aligned with recommendations of Council's long-term strategic plans. • To ensure a fair and equitable assessment of Lease and Licence applications. • To enable the appropriate and effective management of all Council owned or managed land or buildings to maximise the useful life of these assets. • To provide for a fair and financially viable approach to the tenancy of Council owned or managed land or buildings. • To ensure compliance with relevant Legislation • To ensure Council land is leased and/or licensed for a purpose that benefits the community.



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To ensure the key maintenance and capital work responsibilities are clearly defined and allocated to the appropriate authority or Lessee/Licensee. <p>Rental / Licence Fee Categories</p> <p>Each Lease or Licence application will be assessed against community benefits criteria to determine whether the Lease or Licence falls under the following categories. Once the category is determined, agreements will be developed and managed based on the information contained in Table 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Category A: Council Services / Community Purpose Category B: Community Partnerships Category C: Commercial Category D: Government Agencies
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Lease and Licence Agreement Rental Categories: Table 1

Category	Category Name	Definition	Rent	Outgoings/utilities/legal costs	Maintenance	Rent reviews	Term of agreement (maximum term unless approved by Council)
	Council Services / Community Purpose	Fully funded Council services or 'not for profit' groups /organisations with limited or no income generating capacity/Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Groups For example, not for profit Kindergartens or childcare centres would fall into this category	Full rental subsidy contributed by Council. \$104 annual fee (set by crown and included in Council annual Fees and Charges schedule) While occupiers in this category generally don't generate revenue and would not be charged, if the occupier started to generate revenue as outlined in the Revenue Generation clause (in this Policy) during the agreement term, then the Revenue Generation clause would apply (which provides for 10% or 20% revenue sharing with Council).	Lease and Licence Renewals and New Agreements with an existing Tenant/Licensee: Outgoings/utilities responsibilities will be the same as the occupier's previous Agreement. New Agreements: All outgoings, utility usage charges and cleaning costs will be in line with existing agreements for similar uses. Each party pays its own legal costs.	Lease and Licence Renewals and New Agreements with an existing Tenant/Licensee: Maintenance responsibilities will be the same as the Maintenance Schedule in the occupier's previous Agreement. New Agreements: The Maintenance responsibilities in the Maintenance Schedule will be in line with existing agreements for similar type uses. Tenant/Licensee Fixtures, Fittings & Equipment: Tenants/Licensees are responsible for maintenance, replacement and compliance of any fixtures, fittings and equipment that the occupier owns and/or have installed.	Nil	Crown Land <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lease 21 years Licence 3 Years Council Land <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lease 5 years Licence 3 Years Council may consider longer term agreements on a case-by-case basis. It will consider the objectives of this Policy and other considerations such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nature of the service provided and the long-term community need for service in this location. Community benefits of continuity of service Fitness for purpose of the building and the stage of lifecycle the building is at – eg, is it to be refurbished, redeveloped or at end of life? Any Community benefits arising from proposed investment in infrastructure by the occupier.
	Community Partnerships	Community and 'not for profit' groups with income generating capacity/Council partnership organisations with income generating capacity	\$104 annual fee (set by crown and included in Council annual Fees and Charges schedule) Where revenue is generated as outlined in the Revenue Generation clause (in this Policy), then the provisions of this clause for 10% or 20% revenue sharing with Council would apply.	Lease and Licence Renewals and New Agreements with an existing Tenant/Licensee: Outgoings/utilities responsibilities will be the same as the occupier's previous Agreement. New Agreements: All outgoings, utility usage charges and cleaning costs will be in line with existing agreements for similar uses.	Lease and Licence Renewals and New Agreements with an existing Tenant/Licensee: Maintenance responsibilities will be the same as the maintenance schedule in the occupiers previous Agreement. New Agreements: The Maintenance responsibilities in the Maintenance Schedule will be in line with agreements for similar type uses. Tenant/Licensee Fixtures, Fittings & Equipment: Tenants/Licensees are responsible for maintenance, replacement and compliance of any fixtures, fittings and equipment that the occupier owns and/or have installed.	Nil	Note that community consultation will be undertaken when needed as part of making decisions about Council properties in line with Council's Community Engagement Policy and S115 of the LGA 2020 if proposal is greater than 10 years or a market rent exceeds \$100,000 per annum.

raft Leasing and Licensing Policy

			Each party pays its own legal costs.		
Commercial	Commercial entities using Council facilities for commercial gain	Market Rate as determined by Council valuers + GST Council may consider applying a provision to receive turnover profit rental in addition to market rent.	All paid by the Tenant/Licensee, including Rates, taxes, building, glass and public liability insurance, levies and legal costs, subject to the Retail Leases Act Tenant/Licensee to pay 50% of Councils legal costs to draft and finalise the Lease	Council will take a commercial approach to negotiations of terms. Generally, all non-structural maintenance requirements are payable by the Tenant/Licensee and / or all maintenance where the building and associated infrastructure is constructed or delivered by the Tenant/Licensee	Annual fixed increases determined at prevailing market rates with a Market Rent Review at end of Term or 5 years, whichever is shorter
Government Agencies	Government agencies occupying Council land or facilities	Market Rate as determined by Council valuers + GST <i>Where the agency has installed infrastructure or improvements on the land for the benefit of the community, then the CEO may reduce the rent having regard to the benefit provided</i>	All paid by the Tenant/Licensee, including Rates, taxes, building, glass and public liability insurance, levies and legal costs, subject to the Retail Leases Act Where the Tenant leases air rights only, the Agency is to pay for all statutory and operating costs on the property (excluding the land at ground level) Tenant/Licensee to pay Councils legal costs to draft and finalise the Lease	Council will take a commercial approach to negotiations of terms. Generally, all non-structural maintenance requirements are payable by the Tenant/Licensee where the building and associated infrastructure is owned by Council. All maintenance requirements are payable by the Tenant/Licensee where the building and associated infrastructure is constructed or delivered by the Tenant/Licensee	Annual fixed increases determined at prevailing market rates

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Policy	Standard Conditions: Leases and Licences will be prepared using Council approved standard templates prepared by Council's approved solicitors, incorporating relevant special conditions. These templates are to be reviewed and updated every 2 years or as required due to legislative changes.
Rent & Community Benefit	The Lease and Licence Schedule contained within a Category A and B Lease and Licence Agreement will specify: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The total net Rental (in line with Table 1) 2. The applied Commencing Community Benefit contribution from Council (discount) to be offset against the Commencing Market Rent. 3. The Commencing Market Rent as assessed by Council's valuer or the Net Annual Value, and
Revenue Generation	Where a Category A or B Tenant/Licensee is paying a peppercorn rent and gains access to commercial-like income from activities such as: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Subletting/Sublicensing b) Hiring rooms for private use (personal or commercial uses) c) Advertising revenue d) Regular or ongoing bar or restaurant operations e) Commercial licensing arrangements on the premises <p>For the purposes of assessing income for this clause, this does not include the occupier's fundraising events, nor community events or training that is run by not-for-profit entities.</p> <p>The rental of Lease/License fee will be adjusted for the following increases:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Where the Council has provided the building from which the commercial income is derived, Council will receive additional annual income in the amount of 20% of the Tenant's or Licensee's gross revenue (excluding GST). 2. Where the Tenant or Licensee has provided the building from which the commercial income is derived, Council will receive additional annual income in the amount of 10% of the Tenant's or Licensee's gross revenue (excluding GST). <p>Notwithstanding anything in this provision, the additional income received by council in any one year cannot be greater than the assessed market rent for the Lease/Licence (GST exclusive) for that same period.</p> <p>The Tenant or Licensee is responsible for the Council's legal costs in approving and executing any sublease or sublicense for a commercial activity.</p>
Arrears	Council may take action against a Tenant or Licensee to recover arrears where the Tenant or Licensee fails to pay any invoiced amounts for rent, licence fees and outgoings or other invoiced recoverable charges it is liable to pay under its agreement to Council within the period set by the terms and conditions of the Lease/Licence. <p>Following continued period of non-payment, Council may, at its absolute discretion, issue an appropriate breach notice to the Tenant or Licensee. Where the breach is not remedied, Council may take action to terminate the Agreement.</p>
Subletting/Sublicensing	All Council Leases/Licences will contain the right to sublet/sublicence subject to Council's absolute discretion. The sublease/sublicence will need to be consistent



	<p>with the permitted use, purpose and term of the head lease, and any planning controls that apply.</p> <p>In the case of Crown land, the consent of the Minister for Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA) will also be required.</p> <p>Tenants and Licensees must not negotiate directly with any telecommunications provider (or similar service provider) in relation to the installation of high and low impact telecommunication facilities on Council owned or controlled land and buildings.</p>
Merging or Novation	<p>The Tenant/Licensee must obtain Council's consent before merging with another community group, organisation or club. Failure to do so will result in a breach of the Lease/Licence agreement and Council will have the right to terminate the Agreement.</p>
Community Needs Assessment	<p>Prior to leasing/licensing or renewing a Lease/Licence on a Council owned/managed property or premises, Council officers will undertake a strategic assessment of community needs for the long-term community benefit that maximises the social, cultural, recreational, environmental and economic outcomes for which the property is held.</p>
Assessment Criteria	<p>All prospective Tenants/Licensees for Council property, including existing Tenants/Licensee renegotiating a Lease or Licence, are required to prepare an application that specifically outlines how the proposed use of the facilities addresses the Assessment Criteria as requested by Council.</p> <p>When considering new agreements, Council will conduct the necessary research and due diligence in line with the Assessment Criteria which will include as a minimum:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) <i>Track Record</i> – Relevant experience, capability to deliver on contractual obligations, financial capacity, quality of services delivered to the community and Tenant/Licensee history. b) <i>Financial Offer</i> – Proposed financial investment in the asset, initiatives to honour contractual commitments and other financial offers. c) <i>Vision and Proposed Value</i> – Proposed vision and community benefit to be provided through use of the facility. That benefit can be tangible or intangible. d) <i>Community and Social Responsibility</i> – Cultural alignment with Darebin's values and elements of the proposal that achieve community, quality, environmental and sustainable objectives as outlined in the Council Plan e) <i>Condition of Offer</i> – Any specific elements of the proposal including requests for exclusive use. f) <i>Council Financial Commitment</i> – Required works or capital commitment to be invested by Council. g) <i>Length of Tenure</i> – Considerations will include service needs and community benefits and tenant willingness and capacity to support the ongoing upkeep of the land and/or premises and to contribute to capital improvement and facility enhancement over the requested lease term. h) <i>Risk Mitigation</i> – Identify, evaluate and mitigate likely actual and potential risks. i) <i>Fit for Purpose</i> – The proposed use of the property is appropriate taking into account building and planning requirements. j) <i>Property Utilisation</i> – See <i>Maximising Utilisation of Council Property</i>



Negotiations	At all times, Council retains the right to determine whether or not direct negotiations shall take place with a current tenant/licensee or applicant.
Expiration of Agreements	<p>For Category A and B Leases/Licenses, Council will use reasonable endeavours to give notice to an existing Tenant/Licensee eighteen months prior to the expiration date of its occupancy agreement. This notice will request the Tenant/Licensee to register its interest in seeking a new Lease/Licence for a further term.</p> <p>Notwithstanding that Council has no requirement to offer the current Tenant/Licensee an offer to renew its occupancy agreement, Council will use reasonable endeavours to provide the current Tenant/Licensee with confirmation on whether a new Lease/Licence will be offered at least prior to twelve months before the expiration date.</p>
Expression of Interest	<p>For buildings being leased or licensed for the first time and other opportunities valued at over \$100,000 annual rental, Council will conduct an Expression of Interest process to identify occupiers.</p> <p>Council reserves the right to negotiate solely with an existing occupier where it is satisfied that the best community benefit can be achieved by doing so. In making this assessment, Council will consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nature of the service provided and the long-term community need for service in this location. • Community benefits of continuity of service • Fitness for purpose of the building and the stage of lifecycle the building is at – eg, is it at end of life, due to be refurbished or redeveloped? • Any community benefits arising from proposed investment in infrastructure by the occupier. <p>For sites which have previously been leased or licensed Council will periodically test if there are other community needs or uses for the facilities or sites by conducting a community needs assessment and/or running an Expression of Interest process. If there is a current tenant, this process will run in time to allow at least 12 months' notice to the existing tenant (see Expiration of Agreements above).</p> <p>Applicants are required to complete and submit an Expression of Interest in Council's approved form.</p>
Gambling	Council will not permit any form of gambling or betting activity in its Leased/Licensed facilities and will not enable any Lessee or Licensee to have a direct or indirect relationship with gaming or betting activities.
Maximising Utilisation of Council Property	<p>Council is committed to maximising access to and use of its facilities for the benefit of Darebin's community. Accordingly, Council will give preference to applications where the maximum utilisation of the premises can be achieved. Council welcomes applications that propose multipurpose uses, or which propose sharing of space between more than one community organization.</p> <p>Community Organisations have the onus of justifying any request for exclusive use and demonstrating that this will result in good rates of use at different times of the day, week and year.</p> <p>When assessing an Expression of Interest application for exclusive use, Council will assess the following factors:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) The applicant's service needs (sensitive work, security risks, space requirements, commercial premises)



	<p>b) The level of capital investment to be injected into the property by the applicant.</p> <p>c) The level of benefit delivered to the community.</p> <p>Council will support occupiers to sublet to aligned not-for profit organisations to optimize use of Council Property.</p> <p>Where an occupier is not proposing to utilise the whole premises at all times or where Council requires part of the premises to be set aside for Council or community use, the best ways to maximise utilisation will be explored during agreement negotiations and could include: some room availability reserved for use by Council or other not-for-profit community groups; or establishment of a license for use by another user.</p>
Insurance	<p>Council insures its assets for replacement value and public liability. Tenants and Licensees are advised to insure their fixtures, fittings and possessions as Council's insurance does not cover these.</p> <p>Tenants and Licensees are required to take out and maintain public liability insurance to a value as determined from time to time by Council. Tenants and Licensees must provide Council with evidence of this cover prior to the commencement of the Lease/License and annually thereafter.</p>
Works by the Tenant/Licensee	<p>The Tenant/Licensee must not apply for any Planning or Building Permit or carry out any alterations, improvements, additions or structural works to the Premises or the land without the Council's prior written consent.</p>
Security	<p>For commercial leases (Category C), to protect its interest against the Tenant/Licensee not fulfilling its obligations under the Lease/Licence, Council reserves the right to require the Tenant/Licensee to pay a security deposit or provide a bank guarantee prior to the commencement of the Lease/Licence Agreement. Council will assess the amount of the security deposit or bank guarantee having regard to the level of financial risk to Council; being, the term of the agreement, the extent of Tenant/Licensee works to be reinstated at Lease/Licence expiry and the level of capital injected into the property by Council.</p>
Reinstatement	<p>All improvements made to the land or premises by the Tenant/Licensee or approved to be made by the Tenant/Licensee will revert to Council at cessation of the Lease/Licence except where Council requires the Tenant/Licensee to remove such improvements and reinstate the land or premises to the same condition as prior to the Lease/Licence.</p>
Permitted Use	<p>Council will not, without the appropriate approvals, permit a change (which may be granted or withheld in Council's absolute discretion and subject to other conditions) in the use of the premises/land from the Permitted Use which would require a change in the planning and building permits and compliance with building regulations. Council is permitted to determine and end the Lease or Licence under these circumstances.</p>
Occupational Health & Safety	<p>The Tenant or Licensee will remain responsible for meeting the requirements of any applicable Occupational Health & Safety legislation or other lawful requirements.</p> <p>In the event that Council becomes aware of a substantial risk to the health and safety of a Tenant or Licensee, the general public, or any third party, then Council, after giving the Tenant/Licensee due and reasonable notice (having regard to the severity of the risk, may enter onto the Property to resolve such issues (at the cost</p>



	<p>of Council unless the issue is a default of the Licensee or Tenant) and will use reasonable endeavours to cause as little disruption as possible.</p> <p>Where the substantial risk to any party is considered by Council to be severe or life-endangering, then in addition to any right to enter the Property, Council may restrict access to part or all of the property, close the premises for a period as Council reasonably considers necessary, and/or terminate the Lease/Licence.</p>
<p>Retail Leases Act</p>	<p>Noting the exemptions below, the <i>Retail Leases Act 2003</i> (RLA) will apply to Leases (not Licences) where the premises are used wholly or predominantly for the sale or hire of goods by retail or the retail provision of services.</p> <p>The RLA imposes certain rights/obligations on parties to a Lease including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Council must provide a disclosure statement to a Tenant with estimates of the costs payable by the Tenant; - No Land Tax can be recouped from the Tenant; - The Lease must be at least 5 years in length (unless the Tenant applies to the Small Business Commissioner for a waiver certificate); - Council cannot recoup legal costs for negotiation, preparation or execution of the Lease; - Where a Lease contains an option to renew, Council must provide written notice to the Tenant of the option within certain timeframes before the term expires.
<p>Retail Leases Act Exemption</p>	<p>Often Council Leases which would otherwise be classed as a retail lease are granted an exemption from the RLA.</p> <p>The most common exemptions for Council Leases are on the following grounds:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The rent is under \$10,000 per annum and the premises are used wholly or predominantly for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o (i) public or municipal purposes; or o (ii) charitable purposes or - The rent is under \$10,000 per annum and the premises are used wholly or predominantly by a Tenant who: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o exists for the purposes of (and which uses the premises for) providing or promoting community, cultural, sporting, recreational or similar facilities or activities or objectives; and o applies its profits in promoting its objects; and o prohibits the payment of any dividend or other amount to its members. <p>Where an exemption applies, the Lease expressly states that the RLA does not apply based on the Tenant and/or their use of the premises.</p> <p>No exemption applies where the Lease would otherwise be a retail lease and the rent is greater than \$10,000, even where the other exemption requirements are met.</p>
<p>Release and Indemnity</p>	<p>The Tenant/Licensee occupies and uses the Premises and enters and uses the Land its own risk and releases Council from all claims resulting from any liability, loss, damage, expense, death or injury in connection with the Premises (except to the extent that Council is negligent).</p> <p>The Tenant/ Licensee must indemnify and hold harmless Council against all claims resulting from any liability, loss, damage, expense, death or injury in connection with</p>



	<p>the Premises and the use and occupation of the Premises by the Tenant/Licensee (except to the extent that Council is negligent).</p>
Child Safe Standards	<p>Any organisation that occupies Council land and/or buildings under an agreement that provides service for children will be required to comply with the Victorian Child Safe Standards and all applicable legislation at all times. This may include an agreement to adhere to Council’s Safeguarding Children Policies or the provision of documentation demonstrating compliance against the Child Safe Standards. The manner in which compliance will need to be demonstrated will be determined as a part of the assessment criteria process within this policy.</p>
Reporting	<p>Where required by Council, Tenants and Licensees in Classification A & B Tenants/Licensees must, on request or within 3 months of the end of each financial year provide Council with annual reports detailing the organisation’s:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business plan • Audited annual financial statement. • Marketing plan • Membership details • Community usage details • Grants sought and received. • Utilisation metrics (building/facility usage information) • Community benefits and programs delivered to Darebin and its residents. • Social and environmentally sustainable outcomes and achievements • Alignment to Council Objectives • Venue occupancy data • Revenue generation details • Employee and/or volunteer numbers <p>Council will liaise with Tenants/Licensees to confirm the information to be provided annually at the beginning of the agreement. This will be done to balance the need for information about community benefits with the need for straight forward reporting that is not an undue burden.</p>
Legal Documentation	<p>The Tenant/Licensee will be required to execute Council’s standard Lease/Licence Agreement. This Agreement must be fully executed prior to the Tenant/Licensee being permitted access to the Premises.</p> <p>Council will determine the whether the Agreement used to formalise the agreed terms and conditions between the Parties will be a Lease or a Licence. This determination will be based upon:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The exclusive nature of the proposed occupation 2. Whether the occupation and utilization of the premises is maximized 3. Whether the tenure is less than 12 months <p>Where an organisation would otherwise be granted a Licence but is seeking use of the land or building:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - only one day per week (or less); - fewer than 6 hours per week total; or - on an irregular or non-recurring basis <p>Then Council will enter into a hire arrangement with the organisation rather than a Licence.</p> <p>Council may enter into Lease or Licence agreement with Telecommunications Carriers/Operators that is not a standard Council Agreement where that Agreement is either adopted by other Councils and it is approved by Council’s solicitor.</p>



Key Responsibilities	Council	<p>Provide approval on Leases/Licences which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • have a rent or current market rental value of \$100,000 or more (and are for a term of one year or more); or • have a term of 10 years up to a maximum of 50 years; or • contain development works.
	Chief Executive Officer:	<p>Execute Leases/Licences on behalf of Council which require public advertising under Section 115 of the <i>Local Government Act 2020</i></p>
	Council Managers and General Managers	<p>Where a Lease/Licence term is equal or less than two (2) years and is in line with the Policy, the relevant officer may execute Leases and Licences which do not require public advertising under Section 115 of the <i>Local Government Act 2020</i> and comply with the current Instrument of delegation and financial delegations.</p>
	Leisure and Recreation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noting that this Policy does not cover recreation and leisure facilities Leases, Licences or agreements, management of Leisure Services Seasonal Agreements and major contract agreements for DISC, Bundoora & Northcote Golf Course, DISC, etc will continue to be the responsibility of Council's Recreation and Libraries Department (or any successor Department); •
	Service Custodians	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be the primary contact for day-to-day liaison with the Tenant/Licensee. • Obtain all required and relevant information from the prospective Tenant/Licensee to determine: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - its financial position; - its assessment against the Community Benefit criteria; and - its Lease /Licence Category. • Where requested by Property Services, annually assess all necessary community benefit annual reports required under the Lease/Licence and report the Tenant's/Licensee's compliance in this regard to Property Services. • Redirect any requests for proposed capital works by the Tenant/licensee to Property Services and Facilities for their review and approval. • Promptly provide Property Services with any correspondence it receives from the Tenant/Licensee that is relevant to the Lease/Licence or the property. • Promptly provide Property Services with all information relevant to the Tenant/Licensee and any notices issued by an Authority which affects the property. • Annually undertake a condition inspection of the Premises with a representative of Property Services • Enable the provision of keys and collections of security bonds where necessary.



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure Service agreements are to be set in place to meet key performance indicators and funding grants (where applicable) • Manage current and future grant application processes. • Where requested by Property Services, assist in negotiating and remedying any breach in relation to the occupancy of the site or operating standards.
	ELT Reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Manager Property and Asset Strategy will provide quarterly updates to ELT on the property portfolio.
	Property Services Team:	<p>Where the property is managed by Property Services, it will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raise, recover and account for rental and outgoings charges and ancillary recoveries. • Provide Stakeholders with a report notifying forthcoming critical dates. • Be the primary contact from the Tenant/Licensee on maintenance issues. • Develop the Policy, provide advice, guidance, template agreements and key Lease and Licence terms. • Attend negotiation meetings to support the relevant Service Manager (as requested). • Maintain a Lease and Licence register. • Provide advice to the relevant Service Manager regarding compliance with any existing agreements and legislation. • Leading and supporting the relevant Service Manager to negotiate terms with Tenant/Licensee in line with the Policy. • Obtain information relating to prospective Lessees or Licensees to assist with determining their eligibility to enter into a Lease or Licence agreement with Council. • Ensure legal requirements are met. • Annually request and obtain all necessary community benefit reports required under the Lease/Licence. • Manage any requests for proposed capital works, alterations or improvements to the premises by the Tenant/Licensee. • Monitor Tenant/Licensee compliance with the terms and conditions of the Lease or Licence. • Promptly notify the Stakeholder Manager where the Tenant/Licensee is non-compliant in its Lease/Licence obligations. • Provide relevant reporting from the Lease and Licence register. • Promptly provide relevant Service Manager with any compliance notice received on the property. • Write Council reports for proposed Leases and Licences. • In consultation with the Community Engagement Team, develop community consultation plans for proposed Leases and Licences as and when required. • Apply for approval in principle (grant and purpose) from DELWP if Council is considering entering into a Lease or a Licence for Crown land under the Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978.

Draft Leasing and Licensing Policy



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commission a building condition report as at Lease/Licence commencement, at regular intervals throughout the term, and prior to the end of the Lease/Licence term. • Lead the end of Lease/Licence process. • Be responsible for recovery of outgoings and undertaking rent reviews in a timely manner. • Manage a security deposit/bank guarantee register in accordance with terms of Lease/Licence and relevant legislation. • Obtain copies of evidence of relevant insurances from the Tenant/Licensee. • Be responsible for ensuring that Lease and Licence templates are regularly reviewed and updated. • Manage any breaches by the Tenant or Licensee. 		
	<p>Victorian Government (DEECA)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Before Council can grant a Lease or Licence over Crown Land, Council must first obtain 'grant and purpose approval' from DEECA to ensure that the permitted use is not contrary to the 'reserved purpose' of the land. • All Leases and Licences on Crown Land must use the form and wording of the Crown Agreement template. All such agreements have Special Conditions tailored to the individual Tenant/Licensee. • Review and approve all Leases and Licences entered into on Crown Land. • Ensure the occupancy of Crown Land aligns with the intended purpose of the land. • Set the standard terms for all agreements on Crown Land; and • Review and approve all alterations, additions and developments on Crown Land. 		
<p>Organisational Values</p>	<p>Council's organisational values enable and support the effective design and application of this Policy by guiding staff in the course of their work.</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td> <p>We Make a Difference: We are driven by our desire to make a difference for the people we serve. Our work is purposeful and creates a positive impact for the community. We are proud to work here. Our work matters.</p> <p>We are Accountable: We are empowered to own and take responsibility for our actions. We follow through on our commitments and deliver on our promises. We make it happen.</p> <p>We are Collaborative: We are united by a common purpose to serve the community. We work together, connecting within our teams and across the organisation. We are inclusive and collaborative. We are one.</p> </td> <td> <p>We have Integrity: We act with integrity and transparency in conversations and decision-making. Through open and clear communication, we build trust. We're honest. We walk the talk.</p> <p>We show Respect: We are diverse, inclusive, respectful and caring. We encourage everyone to have a voice and we listen to each other. We recognise one another's contributions and treat people fairly. We look after each other.</p> <p>We are Creative: We are bold, courageous and innovative. We try new things, experiment and continuously improve. We are open-minded, creative and forward-thinking. We are leaders.</p> </td> </tr> </table>		<p>We Make a Difference: We are driven by our desire to make a difference for the people we serve. Our work is purposeful and creates a positive impact for the community. We are proud to work here. Our work matters.</p> <p>We are Accountable: We are empowered to own and take responsibility for our actions. We follow through on our commitments and deliver on our promises. We make it happen.</p> <p>We are Collaborative: We are united by a common purpose to serve the community. We work together, connecting within our teams and across the organisation. We are inclusive and collaborative. We are one.</p>	<p>We have Integrity: We act with integrity and transparency in conversations and decision-making. Through open and clear communication, we build trust. We're honest. We walk the talk.</p> <p>We show Respect: We are diverse, inclusive, respectful and caring. We encourage everyone to have a voice and we listen to each other. We recognise one another's contributions and treat people fairly. We look after each other.</p> <p>We are Creative: We are bold, courageous and innovative. We try new things, experiment and continuously improve. We are open-minded, creative and forward-thinking. We are leaders.</p>
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Conflict of Interest	Officers managing any Lease or License transaction must sign the approved Council Confidentiality and Conflict of Interest form for Property Matters. The signed form must be provided to the Manager, Property and Asset Strategy and saved in the Objective folder for that relevant property. Officers declaring a Conflict of Interest cannot take active management in the processing of that Lease or License.
Breach of Policy	Breaches of policies are treated seriously. Any concerns about non-compliance should be reported immediately to the owner of this policy.
Implementation	This Policy will be implemented upon receiving Council endorsement.

GOVERNANCE

Parent Strategy/Plan	Property Management Framework
Related Documents	<p>This policy should be read in conjunction with Council's:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2021-2025 Council Plan • 2021-2031 10 Year Financial Plan • 2022-23 Annual Budget • Community Engagement Policy 2021 • Breathing Space – The Darebin Open Space Strategy • Toward Equality Framework – Darebin City Council's Equity, Inclusion and Human Rights Framework 2019-2029 • Climate Emergency Policy 2017 • Sporting Fees, Charges and Occupancy Agreement Policy (October 2016). <p>These can be accessed from the intranet under Council policies and strategies.</p>
Supporting Procedures and Guidelines	Leasing and Licensing Procedures and associated pro mapping documents are located in the Process Library on Council's intranet.
Legislations/Regulations	<p>Local Government Act 2020</p> <p>Local Government Act 1989 Local Government (General) Regulations 2015</p> <p>Land Acquisition & Compensation Act 1986</p> <p>Retail Leases Act 2003</p> <p>Retail Leases Regulations 2003</p> <p>Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978</p> <p>Land Act 1958</p> <p>Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004</p> <p>Residential Tenancies Act 1997</p> <p>Planning and Environment Act 1987</p> <p>Health Act 1958</p> <p>Children's Services Act 1998</p>

Draft Leasing and Licensing Policy



	<p>Cemeteries & Crematoria Act 2003</p> <p>Building Act 1993 & Building Regulations 2006 Building Code of Australia (BCA) - National Construction Code</p> <p>Heritage Act 1995</p> <p>Planning and Environment Act 1987</p>
Author	Manager Property and Asset Strategy
Policy Owner/ Sponsor	Coordinator Property Services
Date Effective	TBC
Review Date	Three years from adoption
Version Number	2.10 (17 November 2023)
Document ID	
Content Enquiries	Coordinator Property Services

Draft Leasing and Licensing Policy



the place to live

DRAFT LEASING AND LICENSING POLICY - FACT SHEET

Council is seeking community feedback on a draft Leasing and Licencing Policy.

This policy aims to ensure we have a consistent and transparent approach to managing lease arrangements of Council's property portfolio.

These include Council-owned or managed land or buildings occupied by not-for-profit entities, community groups, First Nations groups, commercial businesses, and government agencies.

The draft policy categorises leases into the following groups:

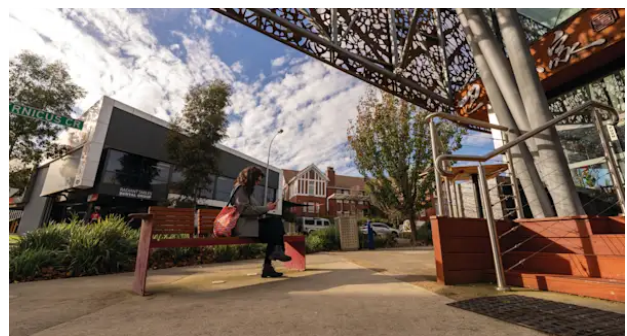
- Category A: Council Services / Community Purpose
- Category B: Community Partnerships
- Category C: Commercial
- Category D: Government Agencies

What is changing?

The proposed policy would mean the following changes to leases:

- Category A: rent will be charged at \$104 per annum with maintenance responsibilities on existing agreements at renewal to remain unchanged.
- Category B: rent will be charged at \$104 per annum with Council sharing in gains from commercial-like income generated by the occupant.
- Council has increased its reporting requirements to enable it to have visibility on the benefits and programs provided to the community. This is something we are particularly keen to get community feedback on.

- Categories C and D will be charged commercial rent rates.



This proposed policy will not affect any current leases, it will only come into effect at the time a lease is up for renewal.

This draft policy does not apply to seasonal ground licenses, agreements on sporting facilities and pavilions and casual hall hire.

We want to hear from the community with your thoughts on this policy.

Find out more or have your say from 4 December 2023 to 3 March 2024 at yoursay.darebin.vic.gov.au/leasingandlicensingpolicy

For further information please contact us at leaseandlicensing@darebin.vic.gov.au or 8470 8888.

CITY OF DAREBIN

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National Relay Service
relayservice.gov.au

If you are deaf, or have a hearing or speech impairment, contact us through the National Relay Service.



Speak Your Language
T 8470 8470

العربية	नेपाली	हिंदी	Español
繁體中文	Italiano	ਪੰਜਾਬੀ	اردو
Ελληνικά	Македонски	Soomalii	Tiếng Việt



**9.6 DAREBIN LIBRARIES AND LEARNING STRATEGY 2020-24
- OUTCOMES REPORT 2022-23**

Author: Coordinator Customer Service and Engagement
Manager Recreation & Libraries

Reviewed By: General Manager Community

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The *Darebin Libraries and Learning Strategy 2020-24* (Strategy) directs the focus of Darebin Libraries services, programs, technology, and spaces over the life of the Strategy. Annual action plans bring the Strategy to life operationally, delivering on community priorities and responding to emerging issues and community feedback.

This is the third annual report on the Strategy's progress and outcomes, addressing the 2022-23 action plan.

The 2022-23 financial year has been the first year uninterrupted by lockdowns since the beginning of the pandemic. The ability to offer undisrupted services has seen Darebin Libraries re-engage with our community through targeted programming, promotions, and outreach activities with great success.

Key outcomes achieved during 2022-23 are outlined below and in **Appendix B** *Darebin Libraries and Learning Strategy 2020-24 Outcomes 2022-23*.

Officer Recommendation

That Council notes the Darebin Libraries and Learning Strategy 2020-24 Outcomes 2022-23 (**Appendix B**).

BACKGROUND / KEY INFORMATION

The Strategy focuses on access and equity, embeds lifelong learning, and aligns activities to respond to the climate emergency and other Council priorities through four goals:

- Goal 1: Equity of access
- Goal 2: A thriving and resilient community
- Goal 3: Welcoming safe spaces
- Goal 4: Responsive services

To support the delivery of inclusive, welcoming, and accessible customer service, Darebin Libraries developed a new staff information portal. The portal has been adopted by team members and is delivering efficiencies and deeper engagement with customer service problem solving, processes, procedures, and inclusion.

See **Appendix B** for the *Darebin Libraries and Learning Strategy 2020-24 Outcomes 2022-23* report.

Previous Council Resolution

At its meeting held on 17 August 2020, Council resolved:

That Council:

- (1) *Adopt the Darebin Libraries and Learning Strategy 2020-24*
- (2) *Receives annual Council reports on progress and outcomes of the strategy and ensures information is provided in the Council Annual Report.'*

ALIGNMENT TO 2041 DAREBIN COMMUNITY VISION

Strategic Direction 1: Vibrant, Respectful and Connected
Strategic Direction 2: Prosperous, Liveable and Flourishing

ALIGNMENT TO 2021-25 COUNCIL PLAN

Strategic Direction 1: Vibrant, Respectful and Connected
Strategic Direction 2: Prosperous, Liveable and Flourishing

ALIGNMENT TO COUNCIL PLAN STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

1.4 We will increase social connection to reduce isolation and loneliness, and support positive mental health

The Strategy and associated action plans contribute to many Strategic Objectives, particularly through partnerships and collaboration.

DISCUSSION

The 2022-23 financial year has been the first year uninterrupted by lockdowns since the beginning of the pandemic.

The library team continued to increase their focus on raising awareness of library services with our communities at risk of exclusion – this was done through targeted events and promotion. In 2022-23, Darebin Libraries delivered 686 events for over 12,900 attendees. Protected Industrial Action meant many event attendance figures have not been captured for reporting purposes; as a result, we assume attendance numbers were much higher than those reported.

While some of the events targeting communities at risk of exclusion have smaller participation numbers, the impact of these events on connection and lifelong learning for our community can be measured through their feedback:

- “Amazing experience, relaxing, healing and grateful as someone who is struggling financially to have access to a class like this” Participant attending a ceramics workshop
- “I love that today you have a signer for deaf people. I really like how inclusive and accepting Preston library is” Participant at Celebrate Reading Hour with Aoife Clifford and Emma Viskic
- “I was amazed to learn that my library membership provides free access to such a vast array of content. The hands-on approach of getting our devices set up during the event was an added bonus. I’m now confidently using the library apps on my iPad, and I’m excited to explore more. Thank you for organising this event and making it accessible to older adults like me” Participant at Get Started with eBooks, Film Streaming and More

- “Rebecca was amazing! So good at reading stories ... so generous in sharing language and special items, great at incorporating song and dance” Participant at Wurundjeri Storytime
- “FANTASTIC! My animal loving 7 and 9-year-old were very excited and happy to see this. Library staff and presenter were wonderful, welcoming, and inclusive. WE (heart) DAREBIN! :)” Parent of participants of Wild Action school holiday program

Engagement with Darebin Libraries increased throughout the year, supported by targeted initiatives like the fines amnesty and the DISCOVER Darebin Libraries program. DISCOVER Darebin Libraries focused on bringing back customers who may have disengaged from libraries due to financial barriers or not knowing the breadth and depth of services delivered by a modern public library. There is now significant demand from community organisations and Council departments who wish to partner with Darebin Libraries; developing and maintaining partnerships and co-designing programs with our community takes time – this will be an increasing focus in 2023-24.

There have been changes in the way our community engage with Darebin Libraries:

- Digital library collection usage has continued to thrive with eAudiobook loans increasing by 132% and eBook loans increasing by 72% between 2022-23 and 2018-19.
- Demand for face-to-face Rhyme Time for 0-2-year-olds has sessions brimming with attendees and demand continuing to rise. Storytime attendance has been impacted by funded 3-year-old kindergarten with attendance not yet returning to pre-pandemic levels. Kindergartens were invited to Storytimes and outreach programs increased to Supported Playgroups to raise awareness of these opportunities and to continue early childhood literacy work in alternative settings.
- Anecdotally, there has also been an increase in our most vulnerable community members seeking library support and resources, with community members frequently mentioning cost of living pressures impacting them. Access to free internet, heating/cooling, and the cost of books, magazines, and streaming and newspaper subscriptions are all encouraging our community to use library services.

2022 Victorian Public Library Survey and Census

In 2022, Darebin Libraries participated in the Victorian Public Library Survey and Census, run by State Library Victoria. In early 2022, a statewide survey gathered information on the people who use public libraries, the services they use and the significance libraries hold in their day-to-day lives. Two months later, information was gathered from library visitors on 24 May 2022 to capture a snapshot of a typical day in the life of a library. Please note: the census project recognised that given the aftermath of the pandemic, library services had largely not fully returned to service post-pandemic and, therefore, the day was not ‘typical’; however, there was an agreement that no date would be perfect in the post-pandemic circumstances.

Darebin Libraries survey and census summary results can be found in **Appendix C** and **Appendix D**.

Some key findings from the library user survey and visitor census:

	Survey		Census	
	Darebin	Victoria	Darebin	Victoria
Key activities				
Borrow				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • books or magazines • DVDs or music • children’s books or DVDs • something for someone else • digital device (eg iPad) 	84%	82%	58%	53%
	27%	30%		
	34%	28%		
	22%	19%		
	2%	1%		
Download ebooks or other digital items (eaudiobook, video streaming)	43%	33%	1%	2%
Use library				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • computers for school, study or work • computers to access government services or complete forms • computers for job-seeking • internet or wifi 	14%	15%	23%	19%
	9%	9%		
	3%	3%		
	25%	24%		
Print, photocopy or scan	26%	28%	9%	10%
Frequency of use				
Use library more than once per week	16%	18%	25%	26%
Use library weekly	28%	28%	28%	30%
Use library every 2-4 weeks	39%	38%	36%	30%
Gender				
Female	72%	74%	64%	60%
Male	23%	24%	34%	39%
Other gender identity	2%	1%	0.85%	0.6%
Prefer not to say	3%	2%	0.2%	0.6%
Age				
0-5 years			15%	15%
6-11 years			7%	7%
12-17 years	3%	2%	9%	8%
18-24 years	2%	3%	4%	7%
25-34 years	13%	10%	10%	11%
35-49 years	32%	24%	22%	17%
50-69 years	12%	14%	21%	18%

	Survey		Census	
	Darebin	Victoria	Darebin	Victoria
70-84 years	14%	24%	9%	14%
85 years and over	1%	2%	3%	3%
Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin	1%	1%	0%	1%
Speak a language other than English at home				
Mandarin	2%	2%	1.8%	4.6%
Cantonese	1%	1%	1.2%	1.7%
Italian	3%	1%	5.7%	1.7%
Greek	2%	1%	3%	1.2%
Arabic	0%	1%	2.7%	1.5%
Vietnamese	2%	1%	2.8%	2.3%
Hindi			1.9%	1.2%
Other	10%	11%	10%	16%
Satisfaction with library services (average)	8.43	8.74	9.14	9.26

CONSIDERATION OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT (2020) PRINCIPLES

Financial Management

The Strategy Action Plan was delivered within Darebin Libraries 2022-23 operational and capital budget allocations, supported by Victorian Government contributions of \$1,070,970 through the Public Library Funding Program and \$17,913 through the Premiers' Reading Challenge grant.

In 2022-23, Darebin Libraries Cost of Library Service per Population figure was \$37.88 per capita, up from \$34.52 in 2021-22. This increase is not surprising given the reduction in service delivery costs and the reduction in estimated population figures.

An independent report by SGS Economics and Planning found that for every \$1 invested in Darebin Libraries, \$5.60 is returned in community benefits (*Libraries Work! The socio-economic values of public libraries to Victorians*, 2018)

Community Engagement

The 2022-23 *Outcomes Report* will be shared with our community through the dedicated Darebin Libraries and Learning Strategy 2020-24 page on the Darebin Libraries website (<https://libraries.darebin.vic.gov.au/Your-library/Strategy-and-guidelines/Darebin-Libraries-and-learning-strategy>), Facebook and eNewsletter. Printed copies will be made available at each library branch.

Other Principles for consideration

Overarching Governance Principles and Supporting Principles

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

Public Transparency Principles

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

Strategic Planning Principles

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

Service Performance Principles

- (a) services should be provided in an equitable manner and be responsive to the diverse needs of the municipal community;
- (b) services should be accessible to the members of the municipal community for whom the services are intended;
- (c) quality and costs standards for services set by the Council should provide good value to the municipal community;
- (d) a Council should seek to continuously improve service delivery to the municipal community in response to performance monitoring;

COUNCIL POLICY CONSIDERATIONS**Environmental Sustainability Considerations (including Climate Emergency)**

The role of the library in supporting Council's environmental sustainability focus was heightened in the Strategy, with a key outcome in Goal 2 to 'Help the Darebin community meet the challenges of the climate emergency'.

Addressing the climate emergency continued to be a priority for Darebin Libraries in partnership with Council teams and community organisations focused on sharing information and providing learning opportunities. Working with Darebin Creek Management Committee, school holiday programs were delivered educating children on the local environment and how to care for flora and fauna in their gardens and along our creeks.

Events targeting knowing how to keep cool in summer, mushroom growing and improving energy efficiency in your home were all well received by the community. These activities are supported by collections and resource lists as well as continued high demand for thermal cameras and energy efficiency kits for the community to assess their homes for cooling and heating for ways to save money.

Equity, Inclusion, Wellbeing and Human Rights Considerations:

Equity, inclusion, and wellbeing are at the heart of the library's work and embedded into the consultation and engagement undertaken. Each goal within the Strategy specifically addresses inclusion, while several key actions specifically target communities at risk of exclusion. An equity impact assessment was undertaken in June 2020, in relation to the engagement plan for the Strategy consultation.

The previous *Health and Wellbeing Plan, Towards Equality – Equity, Inclusion and Human Rights Framework 2019-29* and *Towards an Age Friendly Darebin* were strong reference points and influenced the focus and outcomes identified in the Strategy. The delivery of actions is adjusted to respond to the *Health and Wellbeing Plan* embedded in the *Council Plan 2021-25*.

Rainbow Storytimes was delivered during IDAHOBIT to celebrate the diversity of families in our community. These events were well-attended by our community and allies who

appreciated Council affirming our support. With strong planning, risk management and the support of Victoria Police, the sessions were delivered without disruption.

Trivia programming proved popular with events such as Social Trivia testing our community's knowledge with daily newspaper trivia fun and providing an opportunity for social connection and new friendships. A Drag Trivia night with Abril LaTrene delivered a fun and engaging event which appealed to a younger adult audience, celebrating our LGBTIQ+ community.

To support community health and wellbeing, Darebin Libraries delivered workshops, author talks and monthly programming supporting the Libraries After Dark initiative. Workshops included popular family history information sessions, and empowering workshops such as 'Women Can Roar' and 'Turning Sleep into Wellbeing' with professional counsellor Anne Subhani. Psychologist Erica Frydenberg delivered a session on 'Coping in good times and bad' and libraries continued to host the popular In the Loop program, which supports social inclusion and craft (which includes the sharing of NAIDOC craft projects for display in the library and community blankets for KOGO).

Economic Development and Cultural Considerations

Skills acquisition and lifelong learning is an important aspect of building community capacity and increases economic development opportunities.

Darebin Libraries art spaces provide the opportunity to share the art and expression of our community at Northcote and Fairfield Libraries. These spaces were reactivated with painting exhibitions by local artists including *Seasons in the Garden* by Nicholas Vardaxis, *On the road* by Philip Harris and *Obscured Stories* by Katherine Masiulanis. Exhibitions by local groups were also provided by Fairfield Primary School, Alphington CWA (*The Laos Fabric story*) and Darebin Climate Action Network (DCAN) (*Climate Change*).

Darebin Libraries hosted the Job Advocates on a weekly basis and delivered a number of events supporting the development of job ready skills and the promotion of job opportunities in Darebin.

Cultural Diversity

In response to the growing diversity of our community, community language collections have been expanded and refreshed. The addition of Hindi and Punjabi materials increased the number of dedicated community language collections from seven to nine. Urdu, Punjabi, German and French resources have been added to our digital collections to support increased access to information in community languages.

Culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) films provided through the Kanopy platform (our free alternative to paid streaming services) have continued to be popular. Regular CALD film screenings delivered in a range of languages, including French, Chinese, Greek, Italian, Spanish, Hindi, Vietnamese, and Arabic, were also well-attended with afternoon screenings a hit at Northcote Library.

Darebin Libraries delivered opportunities for adults to connect through exhibitions and events. In partnership with FUSE Festival, local artist Delia Poon launched and presented her exhibition *Exquisite Bias* sharing lived experiences of racism by people in the community to provide an interactive and accessible art experience through video and sound.

Working with Professional Migrant Women and Adult Migrant English Program, Darebin Libraries delivered 'Undefeated' an author talk and panel discussion celebrating the experience of migrant women. In partnership with the Multicultural Centre for Women's

Health, Darebin Libraries facilitated the delivery of health sessions, three in Mandarin and two in Arabic.

Other activities progressed by Darebin Libraries included partnering with Youth Services to run events at The Hub in Northland for CALD youth and their carers' and with Council's Best Start (Early Years' team) having CALD Preschool Field Officers attend Library Rhyme Time and Storytime sessions to inform and link parents to specialist early years services. Darebin Libraries also held Vietnamese and Greek story times.

During the year, Darebin Libraries collected and prepared stories from Greek and Italian migrants to be published on Darebin Heritage in 2023–24.

Operational Impacts

The Strategy directs the operational focus of Darebin Libraries services, programs, technology, and spaces over the life of the Strategy. Annual action plans are delivered collaboratively in partnership with other council teams as well as community organisations and individuals to ensure effective impact, especially for communities at risk of exclusion.

Legal and Risk Implications

Darebin Libraries undertakes consultative risk assessments and implements appropriate risk mitigation strategies to respond to emerging and known risks.





No legal implications have been identified.

IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

- The Strategy 2022-23 Outcomes report will be released via communication channels outlined above.
- Implementation of the 2023-24 Strategy Action Plan

RELATED DOCUMENTS

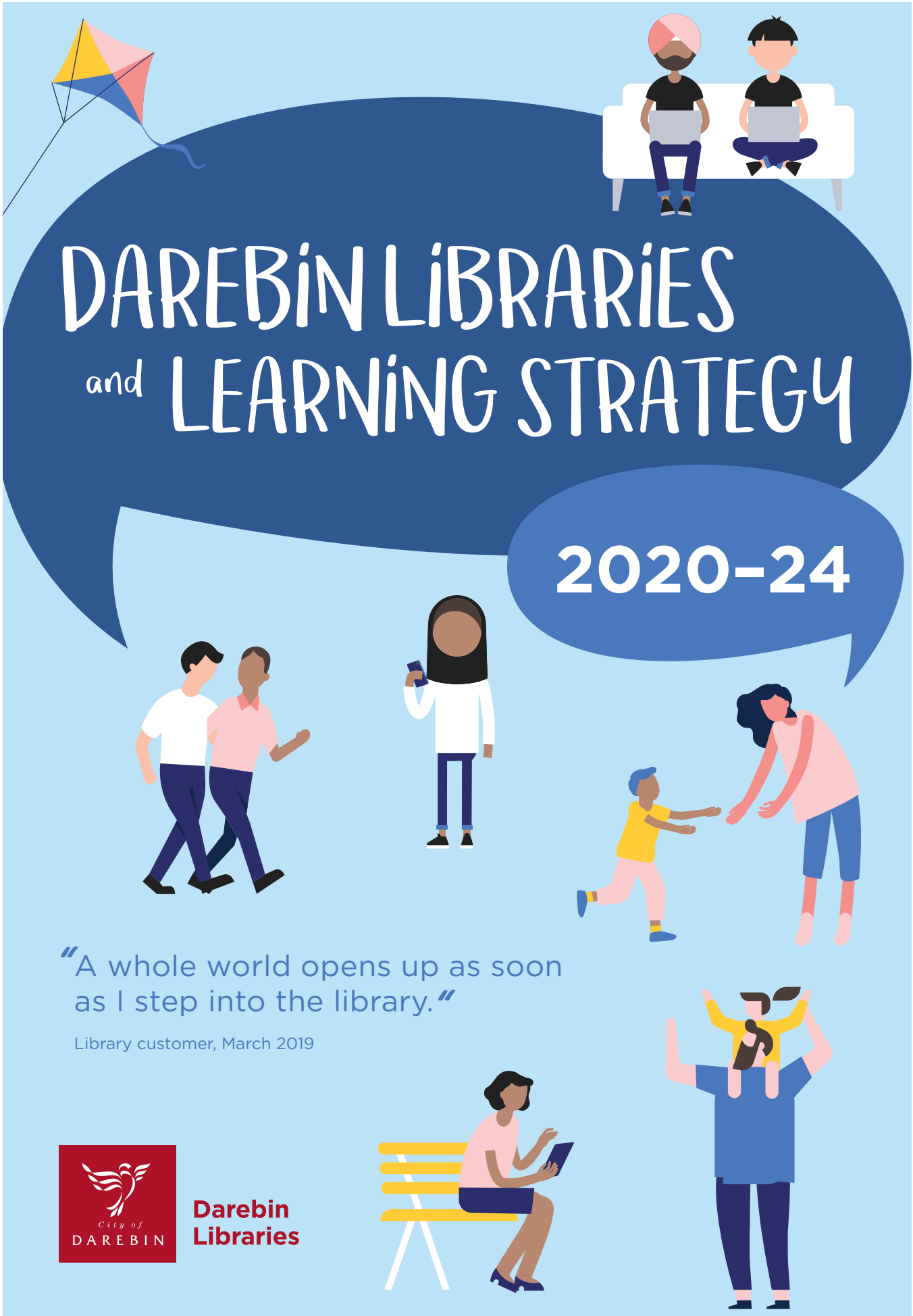
Attachments

- Darebin Libraries and Learning Strategy 2020-24 (**Appendix A**) [↓](#) 
- Darebin Libraries and Learning Strategy 2020-24 Outcomes 2022-23 (**Appendix B**) [↓](#) 
- 2022 Victorian Public Library Survey - Darebin Libraries (**Appendix C**) [↓](#) 
- 2022 Victorian Public Library Census - Darebin Libraries (**Appendix D**) [↓](#) 

DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST

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

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



“A whole world opens up as soon as I step into the library.”

Library customer, March 2019



**Darebin
Libraries**

“ I’m amazed every time I come that my local community has such a wonderful free resource that allows everyone to participate in learning and sharing. I’m an immigrant and my local library has been central to my sense of belonging to my local community – from reading material when I had no money for books, to mum and bubs sessions when my son was young. Thank you. ”



Library customer, March 2019

Acknowledgement

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

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

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

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

MAYOR'S FOREWORD

We're incredibly proud of our libraries in Darebin and have seen them grow to become an integral part of our community. Over the past five years, we've provided more than 6 million loans, welcomed more than 3.1 million visitors, and delivered nearly 44,000 items to our housebound customers including 12 aged care facilities.

No longer just a place to borrow books, our libraries are welcoming, safe places for anyone to read, study, work and relax. In the past five years, we delivered close to 3,000 events for almost 160,000 attendees, hosted 417,811 computer sessions, and supplied resources in more than 70 community languages. Our events and programs support lifelong learning, promote the benefits of reading, celebrate our diverse community, and encourage connection with others.



At Darebin Libraries, our mission is to inspire and enable our diverse community to learn and grow, and we have designed our *Darebin Libraries and Learning Strategy 2020-24* to do just that. Darebin is fortunate to have a wide range of formal and informal learning organisations for people of all ages and stages of life – from schools to neighbourhood houses, community learning organisations to small businesses with a learning focus. We look forward to partnering with our learning community to achieve shared goals and outcomes.

In developing the Strategy, we asked our community what they wanted and needed from us, and how we could support their lifelong learning. We also considered how our population is growing and how the way we live, work and learn is changing. We looked at the challenges facing all of us, including the climate emergency, the recovery from COVID-19, increasing income inequality and social isolation.

I, on behalf of Council, would like to sincerely thank the following community members for their contribution to the development of the *Darebin Libraries and Learning Strategy 2020-24* through their participation on, and commitment to, our Reference Groups:

- » Lifelong Learning Strategy: Amrita Chandra, Annette Davis (U3A), Basis Papageorge (Melbourne Polytechnic), Colleen Duggan (Darebin Neighbourhood House Network), Donna White, Elizabeth Branigan, Georgia Symons, Graham Stevenson (Department of Education), Dr Katherine Bussey, Millie Law, Neridah Baker (La Trobe University), Peter Bartley, Sandro Serio, and Shanthi Anthony (East Preston Islamic College)
- » Darebin Libraries Strategy: Anne Thoday, Bev White, Bill Swannie, Daniel Pintado, Maddy Maitri, and Rod Jones

Our Strategy reflects our commitment to responding to those challenges and harnessing the opportunities they present. Our Strategy has four goals:

- » To improve equity of access
- » To support our thriving and resilient community
- » To create welcoming, safe, inclusive and flexible spaces
- » And to deliver responsive services

These goals put our community at the heart of our decision making and will guide our efforts over the coming years.

We look forward to seeing you in our libraries in the future.

Cr Susan Rennie, Mayor, City of Darebin

INTRODUCTION



Darebin Libraries provides welcoming, inclusive and accessible spaces for our community members to connect, discover and learn.

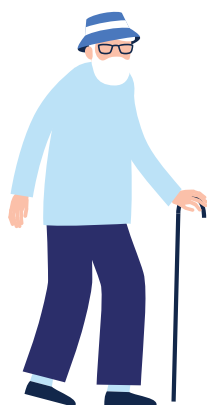
Our libraries provide equitable and easy access to information support, facilities, technology and programs that range from improving wellbeing and meeting life’s challenges to tackling climate change and educating the community about the safe use of technology.

We aim to enrich the lives of our community and create opportunities for lifelong learning.

For every \$1 invested in Darebin Libraries, \$5.60 is returned in community benefits according to *Libraries Work! The socio-economic value of public libraries to Victorians*. This is higher than the Victorian average of \$4.30. Community benefits include:

- » Access to services, programs, information technology and safe public spaces.
- » Opportunities for social interaction.
- » Contribution to language and digital literacy.
- » Complement to education services.
- » Contribution to community health and wellbeing.
- » Environmental savings through use of shared resources.

Darebin Libraries helps deliver Council’s goals as outlined in the Council Plan 2017–21, the Health and Wellbeing Plan 2017–21, the Equity, Inclusion and Human Rights Framework 2019–29, the Age Friendly Darebin report, the Youth Services Strategy 2019–21 and Darebin Climate Emergency Plan 2017–22.



To help us continue to provide services that benefit our community, we will use a community-centred approach and focus on four key goals that were developed together with the Darebin community:

1. Equity of access
2. A thriving and resilient community
3. Welcoming safe spaces
4. Responsive services

VISION, MISSION, VALUES



Our vision

By engaging with Darebin Libraries, our community will:
Connect. Discover. Learn.

Our mission

Our mission is to inspire and enable our diverse community to learn and grow.

- » Our libraries are welcoming, inclusive and safe places where anyone can read, study, work, relax and share.
- » We provide easy access to library collections, programs, services and resources that meet the needs of our community.
- » We understand, respond to and support the lifelong learning goals of our community.

Our values

Darebin Libraries staff are guided by the following values:

- » **Collaborative:** We are united by a common purpose to serve the community. We work together, connecting within our teams and across the organisation. We are inclusive and collaborative. We are one.
- » **Integrity:** We act with integrity and transparency in conversations and decision-making. Through open and clear communication, we build trust. We're honest. We walk the talk.
- » **Accountable:** We are empowered to own and take responsibility for our actions. We follow through on our commitments and deliver on our promises. We make it happen.
- » **Creative:** We are bold, courageous and innovative. We try new things, experiment and continuously improve. We are open-minded, creative and forward-thinking. We are leaders.
- » **Respect:** We are diverse, inclusive, respectful and caring. We encourage everyone to have a voice and we listen to each other. We recognise one another's contributions and treat people fairly. We look after each other.
- » **Make a Difference:** We are driven by our desire to make a difference for the people we serve. Our work is purposeful and creates a positive impact for the community. We are proud to work here. Our work matters.



“Information and knowledge are crucial to a decent society. Libraries are a social haven to allow everyone to learn, read and research. I love their availability and accessibility.”

Library customer, March 2019

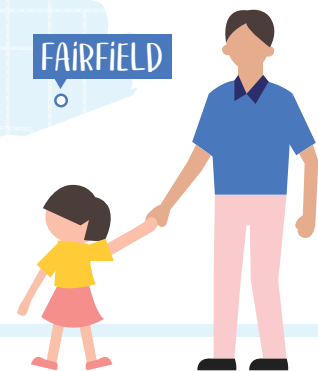
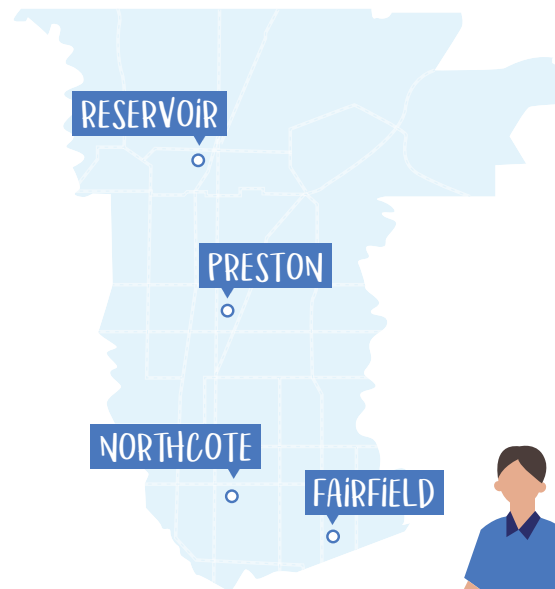
DAREBIN LIBRARIES

A SNAPSHOT

Darebin Libraries has four branches in Melbourne’s northern suburbs. They are in Fairfield, Northcote, Preston and Reservoir.

We also offer digital resources and collections on our website (darebinlibraries.vic.gov.au) and our mobile app.

A home delivery service is available for Darebin community members who are unable to visit our libraries because of age, illness or disability.



Our libraries offer:

Access to information and services

We are a trusted community resource and we offer equitable, easy access to information and services.



Diverse collections

Our collections include a variety of materials and formats to reflect the diverse needs of the Darebin community.



eResources
Our digital collections are always growing and include books, audiobooks, comics, newspapers, magazines, movies, music, learning platforms, local history resources and our own Darebin Libraries app.

Resources in community languages
More than 70 community languages are represented in our Languages Other Than English (LOTE) collections. We also provide access to language learning resources.

Free events and programs
Every week, we hold free events and programs to provide opportunities for lifelong learning and social connection, and to support the wellbeing of our community. Our Events Framework ensures we support those communities that need it most and helps address social isolation.

Digital access and support
We provide access to digital devices, including computers, laptops and tablets, and offer digital skills training. This helps our community access the internet and fully participate in social and economic life.

Lifelong learning
We provide a range of lifelong learning opportunities through our events program, our focus on digital literacy and our collections.

Reading and literacy development
We provide programs and resources to help reading and literacy development. Our Early Years Literacy program supports the development of foundational skills for the youngest of Darebin’s community members.

Spaces to work, learn, create, relax and play
Our libraries provide free, safe and inclusive spaces for communities and individuals.

Opportunities for collaboration
We work with our communities to explore different ways to meet their needs. Partnerships help us deliver a broader range of information and activities to new audiences at our libraries and other places in Darebin.

WHAT IS LIFELONG LEARNING?

Lifelong learning is the ongoing process of developing a person’s knowledge and skills throughout their entire life for personal growth, social and civic participation, and employment.

Darebin Libraries supports and encourages lifelong learning because it helps improve social inclusion, community engagement, personal development and employability.

Our approach to lifelong learning focuses on:

- » Delivering individual, community and economic benefits.
- » Learning for people of all ages and all life stages.
- » Embracing formal education, structured learning and informal learning.

Victorian public libraries have committed to embedding the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into our planning. The SDGs provide a framework to showcase the impact libraries achieve by providing access to information and helping our community transform their knowledge into life-enhancing opportunities.

Lifelong learning and libraries play an important role in:

- » Goal 1: No poverty.
- » Goal 3: Good health and well-being.
- » Goal 4: Quality education.
- » Goal 5: Gender equality.
- » Goal 8: Decent work and economic growth.
- » Goal 9: Industry, innovation and infrastructure.
- » Goal 10: Reduced inequalities.
- » Goal 11: Sustainable cities and communities.
- » Goal 13: Climate action.
- » Goal 16: Peace, justice and strong institutions.
- » Goal 17: Partnerships for the goals.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



THIS IS DAREBIN



- » Our **population is growing**. Darebin is currently home to over 160,000 residents and this number is forecast to grow by 39 per cent to more than 230,000 by 2041. It is likely that housing demand will be met by high-density housing, particularly in Preston and Reservoir.
- » The proportion of **older people** in our community continues to grow. People aged 65 years and over make up 13.7 per cent of the Darebin population. By 2041, this percentage is expected to rise to 14.7, meaning 33,846 people will be 65 years and over.
- » **Children** (aged 0–17 years) make up 19 per cent of Darebin's population and this percentage is expected to remain constant until 2041. This means an additional 12,956 children will be living in Darebin by 2041.
- » We are **culturally diverse**. In Darebin, 33 per cent of residents were born overseas, almost half of all residents had both parents born overseas, and 37 per cent of residents speak a language other than English at home. 138 languages are spoken in Darebin households.
- » **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples** make up 0.8 per cent of Darebin residents. Darebin recognises Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the first peoples of this country.
- » People with **disability** continue to face problems accessing services and information. Six per cent of our population reports needing help in their day-to-day lives due to disability.
- » Council recognises the world is in a state of **climate emergency**. Climate change is making weather more severe, which impacts human health and wellbeing as well as our natural environment.
- » Darebin's **economy** is changing. Once driven by manufacturing, the main growth industries are now in the service and knowledge sectors. The number of small, home-based businesses is growing, and technology, including automation, is transforming work.
- » **Income inequality** has widened in Darebin. Three of Darebin's northern suburbs rank among Victoria's most disadvantaged suburbs, while our south-eastern suburbs rank among the least disadvantaged. Older people, people for whom English is a second language, and single parents are more likely to be in the lowest 20 per cent of income earners.
- » In Darebin, 26 per cent of households contain only one person. **Social isolation** is a growing issue and has a significant negative impact on physical and mental health. Poverty, unemployment, and poor relationships are also associated with social isolation.



Sources

- » Australian Bureau of Statistics, *Census of Population and Housing 2016*, compiled and presented in profile.id by .id, the population experts (2016). Available at profile.id.com.au/darebin
- » ACOSS and University of NSW, *Inequality in Australia 2018*, (2018). Available at acoss.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/Inequality-in-Australia-2018_Factsheet.pdf

WHAT OUR COMMUNITY SAID

When developing this Strategy, it was important for us to understand and meet the needs of the Darebin community.

To reach as many people as possible, we used a variety of communication methods, which included:

- » A survey of more than 1,800 library customers to evaluate the success of the Darebin Libraries Strategy 2014-19.
- » Workshops and interviews.
- » An online survey of more than 1,060 community members.
- » Consultations with almost 250 community members in a variety of settings to understand problems accessing services and information, particularly for non-library users.
- » Attending 20 Council Advisory Committee meetings.
- » Community focus groups.

The results of these activities highlighted the positive impact of Darebin Libraries on our community and showed that we are seen as a valued and trusted community resource.

“ I love EVERYTHING about the library! I love how it is a village, with everyone from teeny-tiny babies to savvy senior citizens there. I love how libraries provide access to ‘the whole world’... especially now that it is not just books but the internet, and especially for people who are on low incomes. ”

Library customer, March 2019



GOALS, OUTCOMES AND KEY ACTIONS

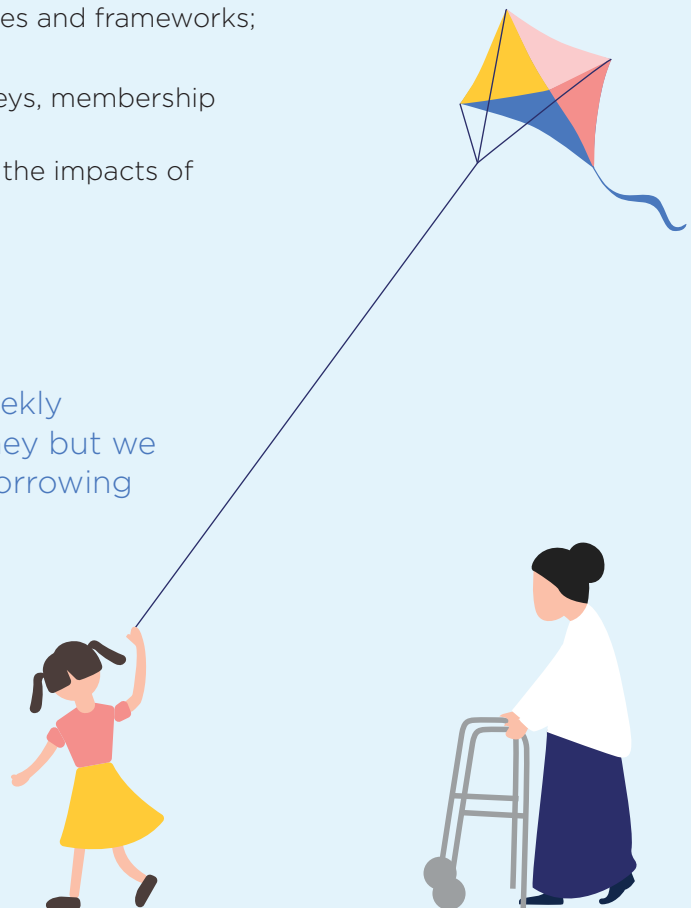
To develop our goals, outcomes and key actions for the Darebin Libraries Strategy 2020–24, we considered the make-up of Darebin’s population and how it is expected to change in coming years.

We also:

- » analysed the findings of the community consultations;
- » reviewed Council priorities, strategies and frameworks;
- » conducted a literature review;
- » analysed data including event surveys, membership data and digital analytics; and
- » incorporated responses to address the impacts of COVID-19.

“ It’s given my children and I a weekly excursion that doesn’t cost money but we can have fun selecting books, borrowing and returning. ”

Library customer, March 2019



“ The library enabled me to find employment by way of being able to use the computers. ”

Library customer, March 2019

Goal 1: Equity of access

We will provide services, resources and facilities that enable all community members to access our libraries.

Everyone has a place at our libraries. We support our communities by providing free and equitable access to information, resources, programs and spaces, to connect, discover and learn. We particularly support community members who are at risk of exclusion because of social isolation and/or limited access to technology, information and resources.

Outcomes	Key actions
Collections that meet the needs of the Darebin community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Consult with our community to better understand their evolving needs and preferred collection formats. » Increase the number of community languages in our collections. » Balance the transition from physical to digital collections in line with community use and need, responding to the evolving COVID-19 impacts.
Increased library access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Review library fines and charges to reduce barriers to use. » Review library opening hours. » Expand the reach of the home library service to include socially isolated groups.
Increased awareness and use of library services, especially by communities at risk of exclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Collaborate with our partners, community and other Darebin City Council departments to raise awareness and use of Darebin Libraries services, especially with communities at risk of exclusion.





“ I love that it’s a community hub – as an LGBTIQ community member I feel completely safe and welcome at Preston Library. I love the people catching up for chats... it’s such a great space. Staff are always cheery and helpful. ”

Library customer, March 2019

Goal 2: A thriving and resilient community

We will promote and support the wellbeing and resilience of our community through increased opportunities for lifelong learning and social connection.

Darebin Libraries helps build the strength of our community by providing opportunities to participate, learn, discover and connect.

Outcomes	Key actions
Events that meet diverse community needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Revise the Events Framework to increase the number of events that focus on the needs of communities at risk of exclusion and delivered in partnership with other Darebin City Council departments and community organisations and groups. » Increase the number of events delivered in community languages.
Opportunities to participate in lifelong learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Expand programs that foster lifelong learning, using digital delivery in response to COVID-19 impacts. » Increase digital literacy support across a variety of online platforms in partnership with community organisations. » Implement volunteering opportunities within the library. » Provide opportunities for communities to connect with Darebin’s local history and culture. » Consult local businesses to identify their learning and development needs and implement collections, events and programs to support them.
Help the Darebin community meet the challenges of the climate emergency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Collaboratively develop services, collections and programs to increase community understanding and knowledge to meet the challenges of the climate emergency.
Help the Darebin community meet the challenges of the COVID-19 recovery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Work with the Darebin Community and Business Recovery Taskforce and other Darebin City Council departments to implement services, collections and programs to help communities understand and meet the challenges of the COVID-19 recovery.

“ Great range of resources, excellent online access, pleasant, helpful staff... offers something for everyone in our community... happy to pay my rates for this kind of service! ”

Library customer, March 2019

Goal 3: Welcoming safe spaces

We will create welcoming, safe, flexible and inclusive physical and digital spaces.

Darebin Libraries are shared, safe and welcoming spaces that host a variety of activities. We want everyone to feel they belong, regardless of their age, size or ability. Our libraries need to be larger and designed to respond to the many and changing needs of our communities and the rapid projected population growth.

Outcomes	Key actions
Enhanced welcoming, safe, flexible and inclusive spaces to meet diverse and changing community needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Investigate the feasibility of new/refurbished libraries. » Work with communities to co-design spaces that are welcoming, safe, flexible, comfortable, inclusive and accessible for all. » Explore and implement ways to provide both quiet and collaborative spaces.
Appropriate technology to safely meet changing needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Upgrade the Darebin Libraries website. » Upgrade the Darebin Libraries app. » Improve access to digital resources and use technology to support the delivery of services, responding to evolving COVID-19 impacts.



“ We arrived in Australia a little over two years ago. I attend storytime with my child and previously attended rhyme time. These sessions played a major role in helping us to integrate into the community. We thoroughly enjoy them. They are really well run and an excellent service to the community. ”

Library customer, March 2019

Goal 4: Responsive services

We will continue to build Darebin Libraries’ capacity to provide services to meet our community’s needs.

To meet the needs of the Darebin community, we will take a community-centred approach to the design and delivery of our systems and services.

Outcomes	Key actions
A community-led approach to the design and delivery of library services and resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Implement Darebin Community Engagement Strategy and Framework. » Identify, encourage and support opportunities for community-led initiatives in libraries.
Continuously improving customer service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Reinvent library service delivery and customer service models in response to evolving COVID-19 impacts. » Provide staff with customer service and engagement training and support their ongoing professional development.
Knowing our impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Consult communities to identify how they are using libraries, what we are doing well and where we can improve.

Evaluation and reporting

This Strategy will be a ‘living’ document and we will develop annual service plans to ensure that Council delivers on community priorities and responds to emerging issues and community feedback over the next four years.

We will develop key performance indicators to measure our performance and will publish an annual progress report on the Darebin Libraries website.



DAREBIN LIBRARIES STRATEGY 2014-19 IN REVIEW

We are pleased to report some of the highlights and successes of our previous strategy.



KRA 1 Welcoming places and spaces

- ✓ A new library was opened at the Reservoir Community and Learning Centre.
- ✓ All Darebin Libraries branches benefited from physical improvements:
 - » Courtyards were opened at Northcote and Preston Libraries.
 - » The layout of the Northcote Library was revamped and a quiet room and dedicated youth space created.
 - » Furniture was upgraded to make meeting, lounging and study spaces more comfortable.
 - » The customer service and borrowing kiosks area at Fairfield Library were reconfigured.
 - » Lighting and seating outside Preston Library were enhanced.
- ✓ PlayStations were installed at all branches to support youth at risk of exclusion.



- ✓ Opening hours at Fairfield, Preston and Reservoir Libraries were increased by nine hours per week, including two hours on Thursday evenings for Libraries After Dark.
- ✓ Outreach activities were increased, which raised awareness of library services, collections and resources.
- ✓ Accessibility and Express computers were made available at all branches.

KRA 2 Dynamic collections

- ✓ A device-lending kiosk was introduced at Reservoir Library.
- ✓ Digital collections were expanded to include items in more than 70 community languages.
- ✓ Darebin Libraries was accredited against State Library Victoria's Reading and Literacy for All Early Years Checklist.
- ✓ The 1,000 Books Before School program and our Summer Reading Challenge supported early years literacy.

KRA 3 Strengthening our community

- ✓ A CALD Framework, a Literacy Framework and an Event Framework were developed to guide our work with Darebin's diverse community.
- ✓ We significantly increased the number of events focused on community learning, literacy and reader development, along with celebrations of cultural diversity and community engagement.
- ✓ The Conversation Café program was expanded to run twice per week across two library branches. We also delivered bilingual storytimes and the National Simultaneous Storytime in Woi-Wurrung and Spanish.
- ✓ Community language modules were installed on all public computers.

- ✓ Bookmark artwork and Book Art competitions celebrated our community’s creativity and love of libraries.
- ✓ The home library service was expanded to reach even more Darebin community members who are unable to visit our libraries because of age, illness or disability.

**KRA 4
Innovation**

- ✓ We released a new Darebin Libraries App and were the first library in the world to release the Planet Library App for young people.
- ✓ New and faster borrowing kiosks with EFTPOS payment were installed in all branches.
- ✓ Faster wifi, wifi printing and easier wifi access were launched in all branches.
- ✓ The Darebin ‘Houses of Northcote’ collection and exhibition was digitised.
- ✓ Libraries After Dark hours were extended and programming and marketing boosted to reduce social isolation.
- ✓ Darebin Libraries received eSmart accreditation which connects library customers with the skills and information they need for smart, safe and responsible use of technology.
- ✓ The Darebin Heritage website was launched (heritage.darebinlibraries.vic.gov.au) to make Darebin’s local history more accessible to the public.

**KRA 5
Working together**

- ✓ We delivered the Vic Tech Savvy Seniors program in partnership with PRACE and Spectrum Migrant Resource Centre. The program gave older people the opportunity to develop skills to use technology to safely socialise, access services or conduct personal business.

- ✓ The Be Connected program was delivered in partnership with the Fairfield Greek Hellenic Women’s Group to increase the confidence, skills and online safety of older Australians.
- ✓ Justice of the Peace weekly services were offered at Preston Library.
- ✓ Strengthened our ability to activate events more meaningfully with partners including delivering shared goals e.g. IDAHOBIT, International Women’s Day, 16 Days of Activism, Indigenous Literacy Day, Harmony Day, Midsumma Festival.
- ✓ Increased community consultation, especially to develop Frameworks and Action Plans.

**KRA 6
Knowledgeable, creative and accountable**

- ✓ Improved marketing and launch of Facebook page to engage with our customers.
- ✓ Shifted our focus from transactional to more meaningful customer service.
- ✓ Implementation of shelf-ready procurement. This approach decreases the time it takes for a collection resource to be available for our customers to borrow.
- ✓ Darebin Libraries Strategy Implementation Reference Group engaged with the library team throughout the life of the strategy.
- ✓ Increased focus on professional development, higher duties and secondment opportunities and presenting at conferences and seminars to build capability and capacity of our team members.
- ✓ Roles and positions were adapted within our organisational structure to support changing community needs.



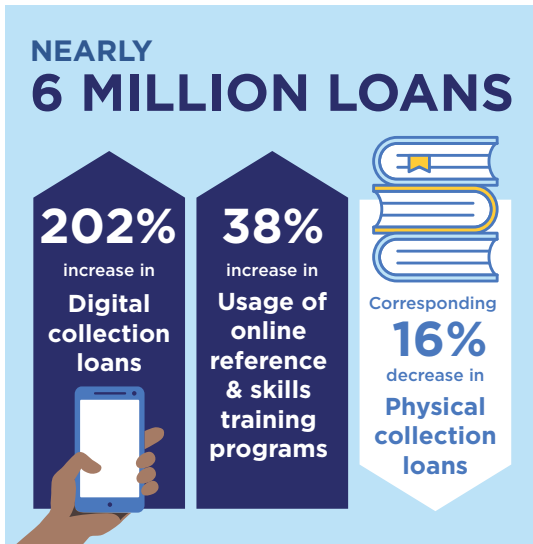
Key statistics: 2014-15 to 2018-19

NEARLY 6 MILLION LOANS

202% increase in Digital collection loans

38% increase in Usage of online reference & skills training programs

Corresponding **16%** decrease in Physical collection loans



MORE THAN 3.1 MILLION VISITS TO LIBRARY BRANCHES

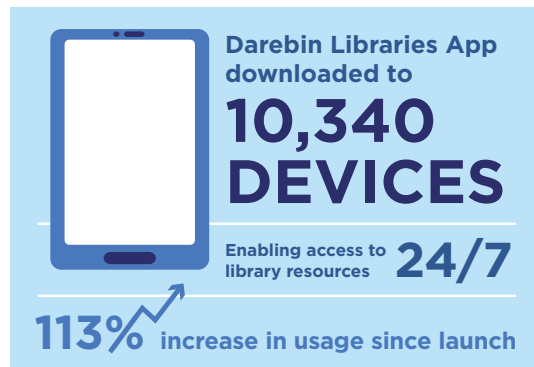
a slight **2%↓** in branch visits



Darebin Libraries App downloaded to **10,340 DEVICES**

Enabling access to library resources **24/7**

113% increase in usage since launch



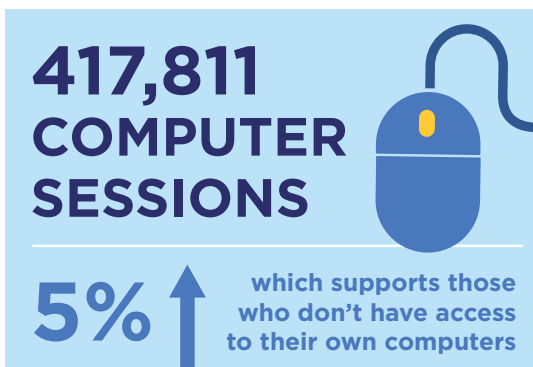
18+ MILLION WEBPAGE VIEWS

Pageviews increased **46%**



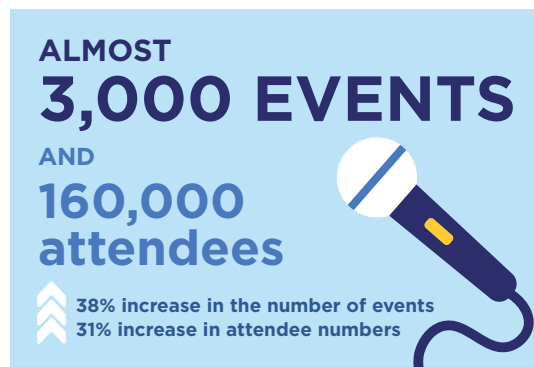
417,811 COMPUTER SESSIONS

5% ↑ which supports those who don't have access to their own computers



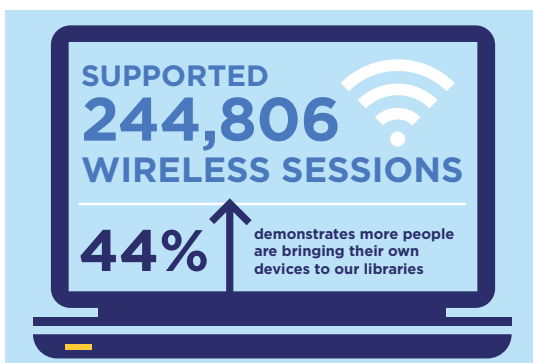
ALMOST 3,000 EVENTS AND 160,000 attendees

38% increase in the number of events
31% increase in attendee numbers



SUPPORTED 244,806 WIRELESS SESSIONS

44% ↑ demonstrates more people are bringing their own devices to our libraries

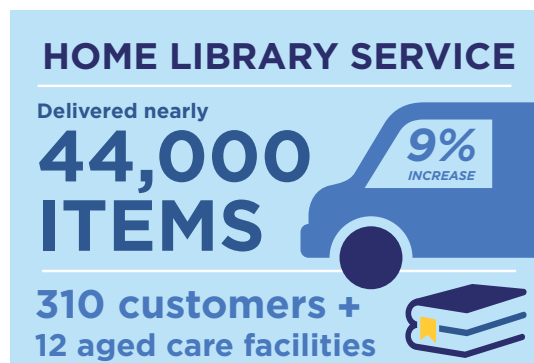


HOME LIBRARY SERVICE

Delivered nearly **44,000 ITEMS**

9% INCREASE

310 customers + 12 aged care facilities



“ I love the entire experience – the 15-minute walk to the library with my chatty children, the availability of books and magazines for all our ages and interests, the peaceful and happy environment, and the multicultural community of all ages that gathers there. ”

Library customer, March 2019





“My library helps me not feel lonely and staff at Reservoir are just lovely.”

Library customer, March 2019



Libraries
Change Lives

DAREBIN LIBRARIES

266 Gower Street, Preston
PO Box 257, Preston, Vic 3072
T 1300 655 355
E contact_us@darebinlibraries.vic.gov.au
darebinlibraries.vic.gov.au

 **National Relay Service**
relayservice.gov.au

If you are deaf, or have a hearing or speech impairment, contact us through the National Relay Service.

 **Speak your language**
T 8470 8470

العربية Italiano Soomalii
繁體中文 Македонски Español
Ελληνικά नेपाली اردو
हिंदी ਪੰਜਾਬੀ Tiếng Việt

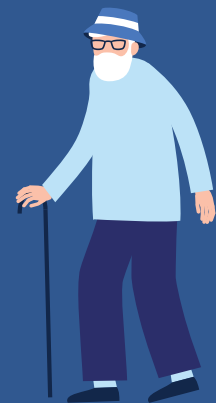


Darebin
Libraries



Darebin Libraries and Learning Strategy 2020-24

Outcomes 2022-23



ANNUAL HIGHLIGHTS

The 2022-23 financial year has been the first year uninterrupted by lockdowns since the beginning of the pandemic. The ability to offer undisrupted services has seen Darebin Libraries reengage with our community through targeted programming, promotions and outreach activities.

Fines Amnesty

In October 2022, Council resolved to implement an overdue fines amnesty from 7 November 2022 to 30 June 2023, and recommended the removal of overdue fines from 1 July 2023.

The amnesty was embraced by our community and staff, supporting Darebin Libraries to become more equitable and accessible. Our community were encouraged to 'visit the library' to 'discover something new and we'll wipe your fines'. In the eight months of the amnesty, 2,145 community members reconnected with the libraries and \$62,514 in fines were waived. Overdue fines were discontinued from 1 July 2023.

“I am so happy that you took away the fines. Finally, I am able to borrow books for myself and children. Reading is so special to me. It has brought me so much joy. With so much uncertain in the world, knowing I have my library makes so much difference.”

Darebin Community Member

DISCOVER Darebin Libraries

DISCOVER Darebin Libraries, a showcase of all the goodness the libraries offer (and tied to the fines amnesty) was held between 6-19 March 2023, and saw an increase in community engagement with the libraries.

The program of over 90 events and information sessions offered opportunities for lifelong learning, digital support, social connection and employment support. There were information sessions for those new to public libraries and for those who would like to learn more, or those keen to collaborate with us and connect on common ground. DISCOVER also included a mini CALD film festival (with catering from local businesses), along with author talks, creative workshops and early years literacy programming.



Revitalised Outreach and Partnerships

Outreach and partnership activities returned and thrived, with a strong focus on communities at risk of exclusion. This included partnering with Darebin's Best Start Team CALD preschool field officers who attended Rhyme Time and Storytime sessions to connect with families and link them to Council and community services.

Darebin Libraries partnered with Youth Services, Yarra Libraries and Yarra Youth Services to deliver Hearts and Minds: a co-designed project with young people of colour exploring how public libraries can support youth mental health. This was funded by a Libraries for Health and Wellbeing Innovation grant.

A collaboration with Economic Recovery and Resilience and Swim Victoria resulted in digital classes for older Aboriginal community members, connecting them with employment opportunities in aquatic centres.

And, libraries partnered with North East Citizen Advocacy to provide monthly drop-in sessions at Reservoir Library aimed at connecting people with disability and their carers with NDIS support services.

Further outreach and partnerships are detailed in the following pages.



THE YEAR IN NUMBERS

Visitors

Visits to library branches grew throughout 2022-23, to a total of 407,447 visits for the year. This is almost twice as many visits as the previous year. Efforts to reengage our community included DISCOVER Darebin Libraries, a large-scale community engagement campaign held in March. DISCOVER saw an immediate 13% increase in library visits, which continued to build in the following months.

Loans

Reengagement with libraries is also reflected in our borrowing figures. The number of physical items borrowed increased by 40% for the year, with 763,677 physical loans, up from 542,076 in 2021-22.

The year also saw a 12% increase in eBook loans (67,146 in 2022-23 compared to 59,968 in 2021-22) and a 9% increase in eAudiobook loans (119,467 in 2022-23 from 109,690 in 2021-22).

When compared with pre-pandemic figures, the 2022-23 figures suggest that demand for physical items may not return to previous levels as reader format preferences may have changed. While we still expect physical loans to rise in the coming year, the adoption of eBook and eAudiobook formats increased dramatically during the pandemic and continues to grow. eAudiobook loans have more than doubled with a 132% increase in loans between 2022-23 and 2018-19. eBook loans have increased by 72% since 2018-19.

eResources

Other digital items were also well used. Film screening service, Kanopy, continues to be popular and eResources such as Encyclopedia Britannica and Press Reader had strong engagement figures. The only resource that declined in usage was Freegal music, by 20%, due to increased availability of free music streaming services.

Events

Event caps and mask requirements continued until early 2023, which limited the reach of our programming for the first six-months of the year. Darebin Libraries transitioned most programming back to face-to-face delivery as this has been the preference of community. However, some events remained online to support those who were housebound. Over the year, 686 events were held for 12,908 attendees.



GOAL 1: EQUITY OF ACCESS

We will provide services, resources and facilities that enable all community members to access our libraries

Collections that meet the needs of the Darebin community

Consult with our community to better understand their evolving needs and preferred collection formats

→ Collections survey developed and translated into Chinese, Arabic and Vietnamese to be delivered in 2023-24

Increase the number of community languages in our collections

- ✓ Two new language collections, Hindi (520 items) and Punjabi (255 items), were added
- ✓ 600 new digital titles added to our collections to support learning languages, and reading and listening in community languages, including Punjabi, Urdu, French and German

Balance the transition from physical to digital collections in line with community use and need, responding to the evolving COVID impacts

- ✓ Promoted engagement with eBooks and eAudiobooks throughout the year with events as part of the DISCOVER program, eNews and social media articles which resulted in increased usage

Increased library access

Review library fines and charges to reduce barriers to use

- ✓ Offered an overdue fines amnesty, reengaged lapsed members and empowered those previously concerned about fines to use our libraries which resulted in over 6,000 new members
- ✓ Designed and implemented the DISCOVER Darebin Libraries showcase program to promote the fines amnesty and encourage reengagement with the libraries. This saw library visits increase and continue to build in the following months

Expand the reach of the home library service to include socially isolated groups

- ✓ Continued working with Supported and Connected Living, Vision Australia and residential aged care to promote the service to socially isolated groups and provide accessible resources, including trialling Envoy Players



Increased awareness of library services, especially by communities at risk of exclusion

Collaborate with our partners, community and other Darebin City Council departments to raise awareness of Darebin Libraries services, especially with communities at risk of exclusion

- ✓ Worked with Access and Inclusion to develop a Disability-inclusive Communications Toolkit to better communicate and engage with communities living with disability
- ✓ Developed and distributed bespoke promotional material for the DISCOVER program in English and community languages to targeted groups via Maternal and Child Health Centres, neighbourhood houses, training organisations, schools, kindergartens, Aboriginal organisations, and health centres
- ✓ Collaborated with Supported and Connected Living to develop a Digital Literacy for Seniors program with State Government funding to deliver digital literacy support in 2023-24
- ✓ Partnered with Foundation House and Council's Best Start Team, Kindergarten Team, Your Community Health, Settlement Services, East Reservoir Foodbank and the Brotherhood of Saint Laurence to form a Communities of Practice to facilitate sector capacity building of staff across Darebin in Early Years services to improve inclusion and participation of children and families from a refugee background in Darebin
- ✓ Collaborated with the Keon Park Children's Hub Early Years' improvement team, attending regular meetings and delivering storytime sessions at Keon Park Children's Hub
- ✓ Reintroduced outreach to new parent groups in partnership with Maternal and Child Health



GOAL 2: A THRIVING AND RESILIENT COMMUNITY

We will promote and support the wellbeing and resilience of our community through increased opportunities for lifelong learning and social connection

.....

Events that meet diverse community needs

Revise the Events Framework to increase the number of events that focus on the needs of communities at risk of exclusion and delivered in partnership with other Darebin City Council departments and community organisations and groups

- Completed an Equity Impact Assessment as part of a review of the Events Framework to achieve better alignment with strategic priorities. Review continuing in 2023-24
- ✓ Continued to deliver Libraries After Dark at Preston Library and Reservoir Community and Learning Centre with a focus on tackling social isolation in Darebin
- ✓ Developed partnerships with North East Citizen Advocacy and Merri Health to promote and facilitate access to the NDIS and to deliver health awareness programs in 2024
- ✓ Increased focus on engaging youth, queer youth and their allies
 - Delivered youth writing workshops and a jewellery making workshop
 - Collaborated with Youth Services to establish a monthly youth games night at Reservoir Library
 - Partnered with Youth Services to run events at The Hub in Northland for CALD youth and their carers
- ✓ Delivered outreach and incursions with organisations and groups to promote libraries with a focus on communities at risk of exclusion
 - Rainbow storytimes delivered to celebrate IDAHOBIT
 - Weekly online Storytime sessions throughout July, August and September to support families who were immune compromised or isolated
 - Delivered three outreach visits to Croxton School
 - Partnered with Darebin's Early Years Playgroups to provide vulnerable families with play-based storytelling and literacy development games
 - Partnered with Professional Migrant Women and Adult Migrant English Program to deliver 'Undeclared' an author talk and panel discussion celebrating the experience of migrant women
 - Collaborated with Council's Best Start (Early Years' team) to have CALD Preschool Field Officers attended Library Rhyme Time and Storytime sessions to inform and link parents to specialist early years services

- ✓ Collaborated with Economic Recovery and Resilience and Swim Victoria to host digital classes for older Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people guiding them into work at recreation and aquatic centres across Darebin and the Northern suburbs

Increase the number of events delivered in community languages

- ✓ Delivered Vietnamese, Greek and Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung storytimes
- ✓ Delivered a range of movies for children and adults in languages including French, Chinese, Greek, Italian, Spanish, Hindi, Vietnamese and Arabic
- ✓ In partnership with the Multicultural Centre for Women’s Health delivered health sessions, three in Mandarin, two in Arabic
- ✓ Delivered Multisensory AUSLAN Storytime in collaboration with Vision Australia

(Also see digital literacy support below)

Opportunities to participate in lifelong learning

- ✓ Delivered 686 lifelong learning events
- Commenced evaluation of data from previous two years to review events and programming approach, ensuring accessibility for communities at risk of exclusion. Continuing in 2023–24
- ✗ *Develop and implement library induction tours for international students. Deferred due to pandemic*

Increase digital literacy support across a variety of online platforms and in partnership with community organisations

- ✓ In partnership with PRONIA, delivered 18 digital literacy sessions across Preston and Reservoir Libraries in English and Greek for over 100 older community members

Implement volunteering opportunities within the library

- ✓ Developed procedures and guidelines for volunteers working with Darebin Libraries, aligned with Council’s Volunteer Policy and piloted with Conversation Café
- Formed a partnership with La Trobe University and PRACE to train volunteers and deliver support with online forms, continuing in 2023–24

Provide opportunities for communities to connect with Darebin’s local history and culture

- ✓ Held four Wurundjeri Storytime sessions in English and Woi-wurrung celebrating and connecting with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history and stories
- ✓ Delivered a local history walk and talk to students from La Trobe University
- ✓ Better represented our diverse community in our local history resources, content and promotions by developing ten new Wurundjeri history articles for Darebin Heritage through consultation with Council’s Aboriginal Partnerships Officer, and collected and prepared stories from Greek and Italian migrants to publish on Darebin Heritage in 2023–24



Help the Darebin community meet the challenges of the climate emergency

Collaboratively develop services, collections and programs to increase community understanding and knowledge to meet the challenges of the climate emergency

- ✓ Developed and delivered three events to educate children and young people about the local environment including two in partnership with Darebin Creek Management Committee (Waterbugs and Frogs) and one with Northcote Library Food Gardeners (Seed Sphere)
- ✓ Collaborated with the Climate Emergency and Sustainable Transport team to deliver two events: Keeping Cool in Summer and Improving Energy Efficiency of your home
- ✗ *Increase climate change information and resources available through the Darebin Libraries website*

Help the Darebin community meet the challenges of the COVID recovery

Work with the Darebin Community and Business Recovery Taskforce and other Darebin City Council departments to implement services, collections and programs to help communities understand and meet the challenges of the COVID recovery

- ✓ Partnered with Economic Development and Job Advocates to provide events, training sessions and regular drop-in sessions at Reservoir, Preston and Northcote Libraries to prepare job seekers with tools to find employment at local businesses within Darebin



GOAL 3: WELCOMING SAFE SPACES

We will create welcoming, safe, flexible and inclusive physical and digital spaces

Enhanced welcoming, safe, flexible and inclusive spaces to meet diverse and changing community needs

Investigate the feasibility of new/refurbished libraries

- ✓ Advocacy continues for Darebin Libraries: participated in discussions for Preston Central Structure Plan, La Trobe University planning and Community Infrastructure Plan

Work with communities to co-design spaces that are welcoming, safe, flexible, comfortable, inclusive and accessible for all

- ✓ A furniture audit was completed resulting in better use of spaces and recommendations to inform purchases in future years
- A review of art spaces was completed with recommendations developed for implementation in 2023-24
- ✓ Collaborated with Access and Inclusion to host Prue Stevenson’s Disability Pride Mural at Preston Library

Explore and implement ways to provide both quiet and collaborative spaces

- Consultation and plan developed for a trial of zoned spaces at Preston Library in 2023-24

Appropriate technology to safely meet changing needs

Upgrade the Darebin Libraries website

- ✗ *Implement online services so customers can access online payments from home. Postponed to 2023-24*

Upgrade the Darebin Libraries app

- Completed procurement for app with self-serve functionality to be rolled out in 2023-24

Improve access to digital resources and use technology to support the delivery of services, responding to evolving COVID impacts

- Developed digital memberships proposal outlining considerations and recommendation for implementation in 2023-24
- ✓ Implemented device kiosks at Northcote and Fairfield Libraries



GOAL 4: RESPONSIVE SERVICES

We will continue to build Darebin Libraries' capacity to provide services to meet our community's needs

.....

A community-led approach to the design and delivery of library services and resources

Identify, encourage and support opportunities for community-led initiatives in libraries

- ✓ Delivered a co-designed project with young people of colour exploring how public libraries can support youth mental health and wellbeing. Hearts and Minds was funded by a Libraries for Health and Wellbeing Innovation grant and was delivered in partnership with Darebin Youth Services, Yarra Libraries and Youth Services
- ✓ Reactivated the LibArt Gallery at Northcote Library and display cabinets at Fairfield Library with targeted promotions, updated online information and information sessions, resulting in eight community exhibitions across the year

Continuously improving customer service

Reinvent library service delivery and customer service models in response to evolving COVID impacts

- Commenced an iterative review and update of procedures and communications to improve customer experiences. This included prioritising welcoming and inclusive language in library notices and updating guidance on implementing procedures with empathy
- ✓ Introduced autorenewals to remove pressure of returning items unless they are required by other community members

Provide staff with customer service and engagement training and support their ongoing professional development

- ✓ Redeveloped and launched a new library information portal as a tool for supporting inclusive and accessible customer service
- ✓ Delivered Responding to Homelessness training tailored to libraries
- ✓ Delivered Conflict Resolution training
- ✓ Delivered Mastering Reader Development training to strengthen the link between our reading community and library collections

Knowing our impact


Consult communities to identify how they are using libraries, what we are doing well and where we can improve

- Evaluated the value of inter-library loans and designed ways to continue to offer this service while responding to changes in costs and delivery model. To be implemented in 2023-24

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**Libraries
 Change Lives**



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National Relay Service
relayservice.gov.au
 If you are deaf, or have a hearing or speech impairment, contact us through the National Relay Service


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ગુજરાતી	සිංහල	தமிழ்



2022 VICTORIAN PUBLIC LIBRARY SURVEY – DAREBIN

The results from the 2022 Victorian Public Library Survey are presented below – shown in a copy of the survey questionnaire. This includes the results for Darebin Libraries (810 responses) against the state totals (18,131 responses).

LET'S START

1. What is the name of the public library you use most often?

34%	Preston
28%	Northcote
16%	Fairfield
16%	Reservoir
6%	Not stated

2. How did you find out about this survey?

Darebin	Vic	
29%	39%	I was at the library
52%	46%	Email or SMS
11%	9%	Social media
5%	2%	Library website/app
3%	3%	Other – please specify

3. Are you a library member?

98%	96%	Yes
2%	4%	No

ACCESSING THE LIBRARY

4. How do you access public library services? *Tick all boxes that apply*

97%	94%	By visiting a library
55%	54%	Through the library website
47%	26%	Through the library app
2%	3%	Through the mobile library
1%	2%	Through the home library service or other outreach services
3%	2%	3 rd party app (e.g. Borrowbox)
2%	3%	Other – please specify

5. How often do you use this library? *Please select only 1 option*

16%	18%	More than once a week
28%	28%	Weekly
39%	38%	Every 2 to 4 weeks
13%	11%	Every 2 or 3 months
5%	5%	1 to 2 times a year

6. How do you usually travel to the library? Please select only 1 option

Darebin	Vic	
41%	67%	Car/Motorcycle
39%	22%	Walk
10%	3%	Bicycle
8%	5%	Public transport
0%	0%	Mobility scooter/wheelchair
2%	3%	Other – please specify

7. Who do you usually come to the library with? Tick all boxes that apply

77%	76%	By myself
18%	13%	Children – Pre-school
18%	14%	Children – Primary school
4%	5%	Children – Secondary school
11%	13%	Spouse or partner
4%	6%	Friends
2%	2%	Parents
3%	4%	Other – please specify

LIBRARY USE

8. In the last year have you done any of the following things at/through the library? Tick all responses that apply

84%	82%	Borrow books or magazines
27%	30%	Borrow DVDs or music
34%	28%	Borrow children's books or DVDs
67%	59%	Search the catalogue or reserve an item
43%	33%	Download an ebook, audiobook or other digital item (e.g. emagazine, video streaming)
22%	19%	Borrow something for someone else
2%	1%	Borrow a digital device (e.g. iPad)
34%	31%	Read a book, magazine or newspaper in the library
28%	27%	Use library resources to look up information e.g. catalogue, reference material

9. In the last year have you done any of the following things at/through the library? Tick all responses that apply

10%	15%	Participate in a library program (in person/online) to learn something or develop a new skill
12%	13%	Participate in a library program (in person/online) for entertainment or social connection
15%	15%	Bring children to participate in a library program or event (in person or online)
33%	25%	Bring children to use the library
0%	1%	Bring adult day groups to use the library
65%	60%	Ask the library staff for help
16%	14%	Use the library as a place to do homework or study
16%	12%	Use the library as a place to work
5%	8%	Use the library as a place for a meeting
1%	2%	Hire library spaces or rooms
29%	25%	Catch up with someone or just pass time at the library

10. In the last year have you done any of the following things at/through the library? Tick all responses that apply

Darebin	Vic	
14%	15%	Use the library computers for school, study or work
9%	9%	Use the library computers to access government services or complete forms
3%	3%	Use the library computers for job-seeking
7%	10%	Use the library computers for leisure or entertainment
25%	24%	Use the library wifi
12%	13%	Ask the library staff for help using computers
26%	28%	Print, photocopy or scan
38%	31%	Use the library website/app to check what's on at the library
19%	14%	Use the Libraries Victoria app or other library app

11. Overall, how satisfied are you with the services of your library?

	Not satisfied				Moderately satisfied				Very satisfied			
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Darebin	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%	4%	3%	10%	22%	18%	39%	
Vic	2%	0%	0%	0%	0%	3%	2%	6%	16%	18%	51%	

Average score Darebin = 8.43

Average score Victoria = 8.74

LIBRARY PERFORMANCE

12. How important is your library in ... ?

Responses were rated against a 5-point scale ... 1 – Not important / 2 – Somewhat important / 3 – Moderately important / 4 – Important / 5 – Very important / Not applicable

Darebin	Vic	Average scores
4.71	4.69	Providing access to books, magazines, DVDs and other resources
4.05	4.18	Providing access to educational resources and support
4.40	4.37	Helping with children’s literacy and education
3.85	4.02	Helping you to learn new things
3.50	3.68	Connecting with your community
2.60	3.05	Connecting with friends
3.34	3.58	Providing access to computers and wifi
2.84	3.17	Helping you use computers and wifi
3.22	3.42	Providing somewhere to study
2.94	3.17	Providing somewhere to work
3.64	3.72	Providing somewhere to just be
2.76	3.04	Helping you to access online government services and complete forms
3.78	3.86	Supporting your mental health and wellbeing
2.94	3.24	Supporting your physical health and wellbeing
2.34	2.69	Helping you to access job opportunities
2.26	2.60	Helping you submit job applications
2.23	2.54	Helping you develop interview and job-ready skills

	Darebin %							Victoria %						
	1	2	3	4	5	N	1	2	3	4	5	N		
Providing access to books, magazines, DVDs and other resources	1	2	4	12	81	1	2	2	4	12	79	2		
Providing access to educational resources and support	6	6	11	21	47	9	5	5	9	20	50	12		
Helping with children’s literacy and education	6	2	4	12	58	18	6	2	4	12	55	20		
Helping you to learn new things	6	9	16	27	36	7	5	6	13	25	42	8		

	Darebin %						Victoria %					
	1	2	3	4	5	N	1	2	3	4	5	N
Connecting with your community	9	14	21	21	28	8	9	9	17	21	33	10
Connecting with friends	30	14	18	12	13	13	21	11	16	15	21	15
Providing access to computers and wifi	20	11	9	16	32	11	15	8	10	16	37	14
Helping you use computers and wifi	30	9	9	13	22	17	22	9	10	14	27	19
Providing somewhere to study	22	6	11	13	28	20	19	6	8	14	30	24
Providing somewhere to work	26	9	10	14	21	21	21	7	10	13	24	24
Providing somewhere to just be	13	9	13	17	38	9	12	8	12	18	38	13
Helping you to access online government services and complete forms	31	7	11	10	20	21	24	8	10	12	23	23
Supporting your mental health and wellbeing	9	9	15	20	39	7	9	8	12	20	41	11
Supporting your physical health and wellbeing	25	13	15	16	20	12	18	11	14	16	25	17
Helping you to access job opportunities	36	7	8	8	12	29	27	7	9	9	15	33
Helping you submit job applications	38	6	6	8	11	30	29	6	8	9	15	34
Helping you develop interview and job-ready skills	38	7	7	8	10	31	29	7	8	8	13	34

13. How well do you think your library performs in terms of ... ?

Responses were rated against a 5-point scale from 1 – Very poor to 5 – Excellent and Don't know / Not applicable

Darebin	Vic	Average scores
4.23	4.28	Opening hours
4.12	4.36	Look and feel of the library building
4.25	4.37	Availability and ease of finding books and information
4.11	4.17	Ease of using the library website
4.05	4.16	Access to the digital library
4.22	4.34	Providing computer/wifi access
4.38	4.50	Responding to users' requests

	Darebin %						Victoria %					
	1	2	3	4	5	DK	1	2	3	4	5	DK
Opening hours	1	2	11	41	42	2	1	3	11	34	47	4
Look and feel of the library building	1	4	15	39	39	1	1	3	11	30	54	2
Availability and ease of finding books and information	1	3	10	42	42	2	1	2	9	34	51	3
Ease of using the library website	1	2	15	41	32	8	1	3	14	34	38	10
Access to the digital library	1	4	14	30	28	24	1	3	12	26	33	25
Providing computer/wifi access	1	1	9	24	27	38	1	1	8	21	35	34
Responding to users' requests	1	2	8	25	47	17	1	1	6	22	54	16

14. How well do you think library staff perform in terms of ... ?

Responses were rated against a 5-point scale from 1 – Very poor to 5 – Excellent and Don't know / Not applicable

Darebin	Vic	Average scores
4.61	4.64	Being welcoming and friendly
4.59	4.66	Being knowledgeable and professional
4.35	4.47	Improving my use of library services
4.42	4.54	Being welcoming and friendly

	Darebin %						Victoria %					
	1	2	3	4	5	DK	1	2	3	4	5	DK
Being welcoming and friendly	1	2	5	19	72	1	1	1	4	17	74	2
Being knowledgeable and professional	1	1	5	22	67	4	1	1	4	19	71	5
Improving my use of library services	2	2	9	24	47	16	1	1	7	21	54	14
Going out of their way to be of help	2	2	9	23	57	8	1	2	7	19	65	7

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE LIBRARY

15. Do you agree with the following statements about your library?

Responses were rated against a 5-point scale from Strongly disagree / Disagree / Neutral / Agree / Strongly Agree / Don't know, Not applicable

Darebin	Vic	% Strongly Agree or Agree
89%	88%	The library welcomes people from all walks of life
81%	82%	The library is a hub for community activities and connections
58%	60%	The library has information I can't get elsewhere
69%	64%	At the library I can find out what is going on in my community
63%	56%	At the library I can find out about Council or other government services
93%	92%	I feel safe at the library
52%	59%	I feel connected to other people when I am at the library
71%	72%	I feel better when I am at the library

	Darebin %						Victoria %					
	SD	D	N	A	SA	DK	SD	D	N	A	SA	DK
The library welcomes people from all walks of life	2	0	4	24	65	6	3	1	3	22	66	6
The library is a hub for community activities and connections	1	1	10	35	46	7	1	1	8	32	50	7
The library has information I can't get elsewhere	2	7	24	32	26	10	1	5	22	29	31	12
At the library I can find out what is going on in my community	1	3	18	43	26	9	1	3	19	37	27	12
At the library I can find out about Council or other government services	1	2	19	38	25	15	1	3	20	32	24	19
I feel safe at the library	1	1	4	29	64	2	1	1	4	25	67	3
I feel connected to other people when I am at the library	2	4	34	30	22	8	2	4	25	29	30	11
I feel better when I am at the library	1	1	21	35	36	6	1	1	19	33	39	7

16. How important is the library to ... ?

Darebin %	Not very important			Moderately important				Very important				
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
You personally	0	0	0	0	1	6	2	8	13	13	55	
Your family	9	1	1	1	2	16	4	9	12	9	37	
Your community	2	0	1	1	1	8	3	8	13	13	51	
Victoria %	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
You personally	0	0	0	1	1	6	3	7	13	13	56	
Your family	7	1	1	2	2	14	4	8	13	11	36	
Your community	1	0	0	1	1	9	3	7	13	13	51	
	Average score Darebin						Average score Victoria					
You personally	8.82						8.84					
Your family	7.28						7.34					
Your community	8.49						8.53					

17. Briefly explain what your library means to you and your community?

18. If you could make one improvement to your library what would it be?

19. In the last year have you visited or used the State Library of Victoria?

Darebin	Vic	
28%	19%	Yes
72%	81%	No

If you answered 'Yes' ... what did you do at the State Library?

FINALLY, ABOUT YOU

20. What is your gender?

23%	24%	Male
72%	74%	Female
2%	1%	Other gender identity
3%	2%	I would prefer not to say

21. What is your age?

3%	2%	12 to 17 years
2%	3%	18 to 24 years
13%	10%	25 to 34 years
32%	24%	35 to 49 years
12%	14%	50 to 59 years
24%	21%	60 to 69 years
14%	24%	70 to 84 years
1%	2%	85 years and over

22. Are you of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin?

1%	1%	Yes
99%	99%	No

23. Do you speak a language other than English at home? *Please select only 1 option*

79%	81%	No – English only
2%	2%	Yes – Mandarin
1%	1%	Yes – Cantonese
3%	1%	Yes – Italian
2%	1%	Yes – Greek
0%	1%	Yes – Arabic
2%	1%	Yes – Vietnamese
10%	11%	Yes – Other (what language?)

24. Which of the following best describes you? *Please select only 1 option*

3%	3%	Child under 15 years
3%	3%	Dependent student (15 to 24 years)
28%	29%	Single person
29%	33%	Member of a couple without dependents
33%	28%	Member of a couple with dependents
4%	3%	Sole parent with dependents

25. What is your current employment status? Please select only 1 option

Darebin	Vic	
25%	20%	Full time employment
29%	23%	Part time/casual employment
7%	5%	Self-employed
3%	2%	Job seeker/unemployed
1%	2%	Disability pensioner
24%	36%	Retired
4%	6%	Home duties or carer
4%	4%	Student
3%	2%	Other – please specify

26. What is your total family income before tax? If single, please show your individual income

9%	10%	Less than \$25,000
13%	14%	\$25,000 to \$49,999
22%	19%	\$50,000 to \$99,999
24%	17%	\$100,000 to \$199,999
10%	5%	\$200,000 or more
22%	35%	I would prefer not to say

27. Do you have access to the internet apart from at the library? Tick all boxes that apply

2%	4%	No
85%	81%	Yes – at home
61%	55%	Yes – on a mobile device
36%	25%	Yes – at work
7%	5%	Yes – at school, TAFE or university
1%	1%	Yes – Other – please specify

28. Where do you live (suburb/town)?



2022 VICTORIAN PUBLIC LIBRARY CENSUS – Darebin

The results from the 2022 Victorian Public Library Census are presented below – shown in a copy of the census form. This includes the results for Darebin Libraries (133 responses) against the state totals (16,464 responses).

1. What library branch did you visit today?

2. What will/did you do at the library today? Tick up to 3 activities

<u>Darebin</u>	<u>Vic</u>	
58%	53%	Borrow books, DVDs or other items
1%	2%	Download ebooks or other digital items
23%	19%	Use the computers, internet or wifi
9%	10%	Print, photocopy or scan
17%	12%	Access children's books or activities
3%	7%	Attend a library program or event
27%	26%	Read, study or work
8%	8%	Catch up with someone or just pass time
9%	8%	Get information or ask for help from library staff
4%	4%	Use the library catalogue or website
2%	2%	Return items
8%	9%	Other – please explain

3. Did you come to the library today with other people?

<u>Darebin</u>	<u>Vic</u>	
58%	62%	No
27%	25%	Yes – 1 other
12%	8%	Yes – 2 others
3%	2%	Yes – 3 others
0%	3%	Yes – More than 3 others

4. How often do you use the library?

<u>Darebin</u>	<u>Vic</u>	
25%	26%	More than once a week
28%	30%	Weekly
36%	30%	Every to 2 to 4 weeks
10%	8%	Every 2 to 3 months
1%	6%	1 to 2 times a year

5. Are you a library member?

<u>Darebin</u>	<u>Vic</u>	
93%	84%	Yes
7%	16%	No

6. What is your gender?

<u>Darebin</u>	<u>Vic</u>	
64%	60%	Female
34%	39%	Male
0.85%	0.6%	Other gender identity
0.2%	0.6%	I would prefer not to say

7. What is your age?

<u>Darebin</u>	<u>Vic</u>	
15%	15%	0 to 5 years
7%	7%	6 to 11 years
9%	8%	12 to 17 years
4%	7%	18 to 24 years
10%	11%	25 to 34 years
22%	17%	35 to 49 years
21%	18%	50 to 69 years
9%	14%	70 to 84 years
3%	3%	85 years and over

8. Are you of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin?

<u>Darebin</u>	<u>Vic</u>	
0.0%	1.1%	Yes
100%	99%	No

9. Do you speak a language other than English at home?

<u>Darebin</u>	<u>Vic</u>	
71%	69%	No – English only
1.8%	4.6%	Yes – Mandarin
1.2%	1.7%	Yes – Cantonese
5.7%	1.7%	Yes – Italian
3.0%	1.2%	Yes – Greek
2.7%	1.5%	Yes – Arabic
2.8%	2.3%	Yes – Vietnamese
1.9%	1.2%	Yes – Hindi
10%	16%	Yes – Other (what language?)

10. Overall, how satisfied are you with the services of your library?

<u>Darebin</u>	<u>Vic</u>	
9.14	9.26	Average score out of 10
55%	62%	Score of 10 – Very satisfied
19%	17%	Score of 9
17%	13%	Score of 8
7%	5%	Score of 7
1%	1%	Score of 6
2%	1%	Score of 5 – Moderately satisfied
0%	1%	Score from 0 to 4

Thank you. Please return the completed form to your local library.

9.7 DAREBIN'S ELECTRONIC GAMBLING POLICY AND ACTION PLAN 2023 - 2027

Author: Wellbeing Policy Lead
Coordinator Community Development and Wellbeing

Reviewed By: General Manager Community

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to seek Council's endorsement of the **Minimising Harm from Poker Machines: Darebin Electronic Gaming Machines Policy 2023-2027 (the Policy) and Electronic Gaming Machine Action Plan (the Action Plan)**.

The Policy (**Appendix A**) reflects Council's commitment to minimising gambling harm associated with Electronic Gaming Machines (EGM) within the Darebin community. The policy will be implemented through an Action Plan (**Appendix B**).

The Policy was informed by a literature review on gambling harm (**Appendix C**), community engagement on gambling harm in the community (**Appendix D**), and a report of the community feedback on the draft Policy (**Appendix E**).

The Policy will be enacted through five priority areas and strategies that seek to maximise Council's investment and influence and provide a structure to guide future actions.

1. **Organisational Leadership** - Take a whole of organisation approach to minimise harm from EGMs. This includes ensuring that Councillors and Council officers lead by example through their official duties and that any of our actions aim to minimise harm from EGMs.
2. **Legislation Regulation** - Exercise the full extent of regulatory and legislative mandate to minimise harm from EGMs.
3. **Advocacy and Partnership** - Maintain strategic partnerships and undertake advocacy to minimise gambling harm.
4. **Awareness and Education** - Educate the community about the imbalance between EGMs harms and benefits. This is critical to ensure that community members have an informed perception of EGMs.
5. **Funding and Resourcing** - Dedicate resources and source funding to minimise harm from EGMs in the community.

The Policy proposes a move from a developmental approach to one that seeks compliance and outlines a process for Council to make decisions when a breach of the policy occurs.

The report also presents an overview of some of the broader policy changes announced by the Victorian Government in relation to Electronic Gaming Machines and outlines advocacy priorities.

Officer Recommendation**That Council:**

- (1) Thanks members of the community who have provided feedback to inform the review and development of the **Minimising Harm from Poker Machines: Darebin Electronic Gaming Machines Policy 2023 – 2027** and Action Plan.
- (2) Endorses the **Minimising Harm from Poker Machines: Darebin Electronic Gaming Machines Policy 2023 – 2027 (Appendix A)** and Action Plan (**Appendix B**).
- (3) Writes to the Premier and the Minister for Casino, Gaming and Liquor Regulation and local Members of Parliament to:
 - a. Acknowledge the Victorian Government's proposed reforms to reduce gambling related harm announced in July 2023.
 - b. Request further information on timelines for implementation of the reforms.
 - c. Share Council's Minimising Harm from Poker Machines: Darebin Electronic Gaming Machines Policy 2023-2027.
 - d. Request the Victorian Government continues to work with Council to take proactive steps to reform and minimise gambling harm in the City of Darebin.
- (4) Requests that the CEO (or delegate) shares Council's decision to endorse the Minimising Harm from Poker Machines: Darebin Electronic Gaming Machines Policy 2023-2027, and commitment to advocate for gambling reforms and minimise gambling harm through Council's established communication channels.
- (5) Requests that the CEO (or delegate) uses best endeavours to contact those who participated in community engagement to provide an update on how their feedback has been incorporated and outline the actions Council will implement over the life of the Policy to alleviate concerns.

BACKGROUND / KEY INFORMATION

The 2023-2027 Policy continues to identify Council as a strong leader in minimising gambling harm from Electronic Gaming Machines (EGMs) and builds upon Council's achievements over the last four years. Some of the key achievements of implementing the 2018-2022 EGM Policy include:

- Amending all lease agreements, funding arrangements and grants programs to ensure they comply with the EGM Policy and clearly notes the requirements of all groups funded or supported by Council through these arrangements.
- Council has played a significant role to support seven sport clubs to divest from EGM revenue and the reliance on EGMs.
- Many community organisations have undertaken significant reform in response to the Policy.
- In 2019 Council successfully negotiated with the Darebin RSL to stop its plan to apply for 15 additional EGMs.
- The 'Libraries After Dark' program was initially piloted allowing Libraries to remain open until 10pm weekly on Tuesdays at Reservoir and Thursdays at Preston.

Consultation

Two rounds of community consultation and a literature review have informed the Policy which continues to ensure it remains effective and demonstrates accountability to our stakeholders, partners, and community.

Stage 1: In September 2022, officers undertook six weeks of initial community engagement based on the previously endorsed policy statements of Council. A summary of engagement findings from 220 community members (**Appendix D**) included:

- Majority of community members are aware of the harm caused by EGMs.
- Social isolation is one of the contributors of use of pokies or visiting EGM venues.
- Majority of community members, including sporting clubs and seniors' clubs were supportive of Council's 2018-2022 EGM Policy.
- There were several requests for Council to support senior's clubs social outings by helping them identify non-EGM venues that provide subsidised meals and drinks.
- There were several requests for Council to continue working with sporting clubs to explore sponsorship and ways the clubs can generate income independent of EGM venue operators.
- Some suggestions made by community members on strategies to minimise harm from EGM machines fall outside the jurisdiction of Council.

Stage 2: In April 2023 officers undertook face to face workshops with seniors' club members including those from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse backgrounds, and a Your Say Darebin survey was completed. A summary of the engagement findings is included in (**Appendix E**). No changes were made to the draft Policy based on the Round Two community feedback. Key community feedback is listed below and the rationale behind not including this in the Policy.

Feedback received:

- The lack of appropriate alternative venues for seniors' clubs, that have capacity and provide low-cost meals, continues to be a barrier to fully divest from relying on EGM venues to conduct social activities.

Rationale:

- This feedback was noted. Action 5.3 of the Electronic Gaming Machine Action Plan outlines: Council will continue to explore ways to support seniors' groups to meet in non-EGM venues.

Feedback received:

- Allowing only attendance at RSL on ANZAC day could be problematic as RSL venues tend to be booked out or can be too expensive for clubs on this day.

Rationale:

- This feedback was noted. The Policy includes a provision for ANZAC Day and similar military services held at Returned & Services League (RSL) venues being exempt from this Policy. For these occasions Council resources such as access to the community bus will continue for eligible residents wishing to attend these commemorative events. In addition, Action 5.3 of the Action Plan outlines: Council will continue to explore ways to support seniors' groups to meet in non-EGM venues.

Feedback Received:

- Breaches of Policy - withdrawing funding because of breaching the Policy is unfair and discriminatory because of limited availability of non-EGM venues that provide subsidised meals and meeting rooms for seniors' groups.

Rationale:

- This feedback was noted.
- The Policy outlines if there has been a breach, that officers will consider the reason behind the breach and implement with the club or group a diversion plan to support and encourage compliance in a capacity building way.
- Action 4.1 of the Electronic Gaming Machine Action Plan outlines: Council commits to using its best endeavours within business-as-usual resources to support all community groups, clubs, organisations, associations, and businesses, especially those that are multilingual, to educate and inform them of the new changes included in this policy as well as assist them to fulfil their future obligations.
- Action 5.3 of the Electronic Gaming Machine Action Plan outlines: Council will continue to explore ways to support seniors' groups to meet in non-EGM venues.

Community members and groups who provided input and/or feedback into the development of the Policy, have been thanked for their participation and advised of the next steps which include Council's consideration of the Policy.

On adoption, as a part of a broader communications plan, officers will contact participants and provide an update on how their feedback has been incorporated or outline the actions Council will implement over the life of the Policy to alleviate concerns.

Victorian reforms to reduce gambling harm

On Sunday 16 July 2023, the Victorian Government announced the following reforms to reduce gambling harm at venues with electronic gaming machines (EGMs) across the state:

- Load up limits – how much money individuals can put into an EGM at a time – will be capped at \$100, down from the current limit of \$1,000 to reduce the amount that can be lost.
- Mandatory pre-commitment, carded play and load up limits will be introduced subject to thorough consultation with industry.
- Mandatory closure periods will be enforced for all gaming machine areas in a venue, except the casino, between 4am and 10am. This is aimed at addressing evidence showing some venues are implementing staggered opening hours to allow users to move between venues in one area to continue gambling (by mid-2024).
- All new EGMs will be mandated to spin at a rate of three seconds per game, slowing the pace of the game down and limiting the amount that can be lost.

The State Government's announcement in July 2023 provided no specific dates for the implementation of proposed reforms.

Previous Council Resolution

At its meeting held on 27 March 2023, Council resolved

'That Council:

- (1) *Endorses the 2023-2027 draft Minimising Harm from Pokies: Draft Darebin Electronic Gaming Machine Policy and draft Action Plan 2023-2027 for the purposes of public exhibition to receive community feedback from 03 April to 23 April 2023 with the following changes:*
 - a) *Under the section 'Policy Statements':*
 - i. *1.1.1.1 Amends the following statement to – 'Councillors and Council staff will not attend gambling venues when representing Council in an official capacity subject to policy exceptions identified'.*
 - ii. *1.1.1.2 Adds an additional dot point that reads – 'Within the first 6 months of implementation of this policy, Council commits to using its best endeavours within business-as-usual resources to supporting all community groups, clubs, organisations, associations and businesses, especially those that are multilingual, to educate and inform them of the new changes included in this policy as well as assist them to fulfil their future obligations, in appropriate languages, through the implementation of the Action Plan.'*
 - b) *Under the section 'Breach of Policy' amend as follows:*
 - i. *The previous Policy 2018 - 2022 outlined a four-year developmental approach to supporting groups to become compliant with the Policy. With the review, the draft Policy proposes a move from a graduated policy to one that seeks compliance.*
 - ii. *If there has been a breach, the draft Policy proposes that officers will consider the reason behind the breach and implement with the club or group a diversion plan to support and encourage compliance in a capacity building way.*
 - iii. *Where a club or group continues to intentionally breach the Policy, despite the best efforts of officers to support and encourage compliance in a capacity building way through a diversion plan, this may ultimately result in Council resolving to withdraw funds or hiring of venues, however this will ultimately be a decision for Council.*
- (2) *Notes the community feedback received through the exhibition process will be provided to Council to inform decision making on a final Policy and Action Plan later in 2023.'*

ALIGNMENT TO 2041 DAREBIN COMMUNITY VISION

Strategic Direction 2: Prosperous, Liveable and Flourishing

ALIGNMENT TO 2021-25 COUNCIL PLAN

Strategic Direction 2: Prosperous, Liveable and Flourishing

ALIGNMENT TO COUNCIL PLAN STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

2.8 We will advocate to reduce the harm associated with electronic machine gambling, alcohol and tobacco

DISCUSSION

The Policy has been informed by the initial community engagement findings and literature review. Stage 2 consultation was an opportunity for community members to provide feedback on the draft EGM Policy 2023-2027 and draft Action Plan. In general, community members were supportive of Council's approach outlined in the draft Policy and Action Plan.

Support to groups and clubs to assist comply with the Policy

All users of facilities and grant recipients have been made aware of Council's current commitment to reducing harm from EGMs. This is an ongoing process with key features in the Action Plan including:

- Continuation of access to council owned community facilities for groups and clubs.
- Assistance with finding alternative venues to hold special events and social outings.
- Ongoing education with clubs and where required provision of information.
- Assistance to support sourcing sponsorship.

Officers have formed the view that the biggest impact and key opportunities in implementing the Policy and are outlined in the Action Plan include:

- Continue advocacy efforts at a regional level and to the state government using established and where necessary new partnerships with peak bodies and key advocacy groups to minimise harm from gambling. Reducing harm from gambling was one of the advocacy priorities endorsed by Council on 25 July 2022.
- Continue to work with seniors' groups and explore ways to assist them to reduce their reliance on EGM venues to conduct social activities.
- Continue to raise community awareness on the harms of EGMs using data and publishing key indicators.
- Continue to support community-based agencies and welfare groups that are best placed to provide individual case work and prevention programs that are targeted, relevant and culturally appropriate to those who are more vulnerable to the harms associated with gambling.
- Continue to work closely with various members and clubs within the community and support them to participate in activities that not only add to their lives and contribute to the local community in particular through Council's Supported and Connected Living and Recreation and Leisure teams.

Breaches of the Policy

The previous policy outlined a four-year developmental approach to supporting groups to become compliant with the Policy. This Policy proposes a move from a graduated policy to one that seeks compliance.

As such, if there has been a breach, the Policy proposes that officers will consider the reason behind the breach and implement with the club or group a diversion plan to support and encourage compliance in a capacity building way.

Where a club or group continues to intentionally breach the Policy, despite the best efforts of officers to support and encourage compliance in a capacity building way through a diversion plan, this may ultimately result in Council resolving to withdraw funds or hiring of venues, however this will ultimately be a decision for Council.

Implications of the Policy on Councillors and Council Officers

Council commits to have a whole of organisation approach to minimise harm from EGM. This includes ensuring that Councillors and Council officers lead by example and that any of our actions aim to minimise harm from EGM. Consequently, Council commits to the following policy statements outlined in the Policy:

- Council staff will not run Council and community events, activities, programs, and social outings in venues that have EGM.
- Council staff and Councillors will not accept any gifts (in-kind or otherwise) from organisations, associations or businesses that receive funds from EGM gambling.
- Council staff and Councillors will not attend EGM venues when representing Council in an official capacity subject to policy exceptions identified.

CONSIDERATION OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT (2020) PRINCIPLES

Financial Management

The Policy and Action Plan will be implemented within existing resources.

Community Engagement

During the six weeks of Stage 1 community engagement, a total of 220 community members responded which included:

- 40 community members responded to a survey via Darebin's 'Your Say' page.
- 180 community members from across fourteen senior's clubs, twenty-five sporting clubs and six general community groups provided their feedback through either face-to-face group discussions, online group discussions, or via email.

In addition, six local community organisations and peak bodies participated in the consultation through an online focus group discussion, and one EGM venue operator provided feedback via email.

In Stage 2, a detailed communication plan including key messages was implemented across Council's social media platforms (Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter) and Council newsletters inviting community feedback on the draft Policy.

A total of 47 community members provided feedback on the draft Policy and draft Action Plan through the following engagement methods:

- A survey was conducted from 03 April to 23 April 2023, via Darebin Your Say Page. A total of 112 community members viewed the Your Say Darebin with only 7 people provided feedback on the draft Policy.
- Ten seniors' clubs participated in the face-to-face Focus Group discussions.
- Two seniors' clubs provided their feedback through email.

Overarching Governance Principles and Supporting Principles

(d) the municipal community is to be engaged in strategic planning and strategic decision making;

Public Transparency Principles

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

Strategic Planning Principles

- (b) strategic planning must address the Community Vision;

Service Performance Principles

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

COUNCIL POLICY CONSIDERATIONS**Environmental Sustainability Considerations (including Climate Emergency)**

There are no environmental sustainability considerations pertaining to this report on the Policy and Action Plan.

Equity, Inclusion, Wellbeing and Human Rights Considerations:

The Policy recognises that the impact that Darebin's EGM losses are most strongly felt by neighbourhoods who already experience disadvantage and health inequity. By seeking to reduce the harm caused by EGMs the policy will contribute to the wellbeing and equity objectives of Council.

In determining the ways to minimise harm from EGMs, the Policy considers the following principles outlined in Darebin's Towards Equality Framework:

- Human rights - Council affirms the right of all people to enjoy freedom and equality and be treated with respect and dignity.
- Social justice - Council applies an equity approach to support population groups experiencing poverty, discrimination, and marginalisation.
- Health equity - Council is committed to ensuring that everyone has a fair opportunity to attain their full health potential.

Economic Development and Cultural Considerations

There continues to be 12 venues in Darebin which operate a total of 744 Electronic Gaming Machines. Between 1 July 2022 and 30 June 2023, the Darebin community lost \$85,837,107 to EGMs. This is an increase from previous financial year 1 July 2021 and 30 June 2022 which was \$63,516,201.

Operational Impacts

The Policy and Action Plan will be implemented within existing resources.

Legal and Risk Implications

There are no legal or risk implications with the proposed draft Policy.






IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

- Implementation of Electronic Gaming Machine Policy and Action Plan 2023 - 2027 overseen by a Project Control Group of officers from across key council areas.
- The Action Plan will be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure that Council's actions and investment remain relevant and continue to meet the policy objective.
- Educate and inform all community groups, clubs, organisations, associations and businesses, especially those that are multilingual in appropriate languages of the Policy changes and assist them fulfil future obligations. To be undertaken in the first six months within Councils business-as-usual resources.

RELATED DOCUMENTS

- Darebin EGM Policy 2018 – 2022

Attachments

- Minimising Harm from Poker Machines_ Darebin Electronic Gaming Machine Policy 2023-2027 (**Appendix A**) [↓](#) 
- Darebin Electronic Gaming Machine Action Plan 2023-2027 (**Appendix B**) [↓](#) 
- Literature Review on Gambling Harm (**Appendix C**) [↓](#) 
- Community Engagement on Gambling Harm (**Appendix D**) [↓](#) 
- Community Feedback on the draft Policy (**Appendix E**) [↓](#) 

DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST

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

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



Minimising Harm from Poker Machines: Darebin Electronic Gaming Machines Policy 2023-2027

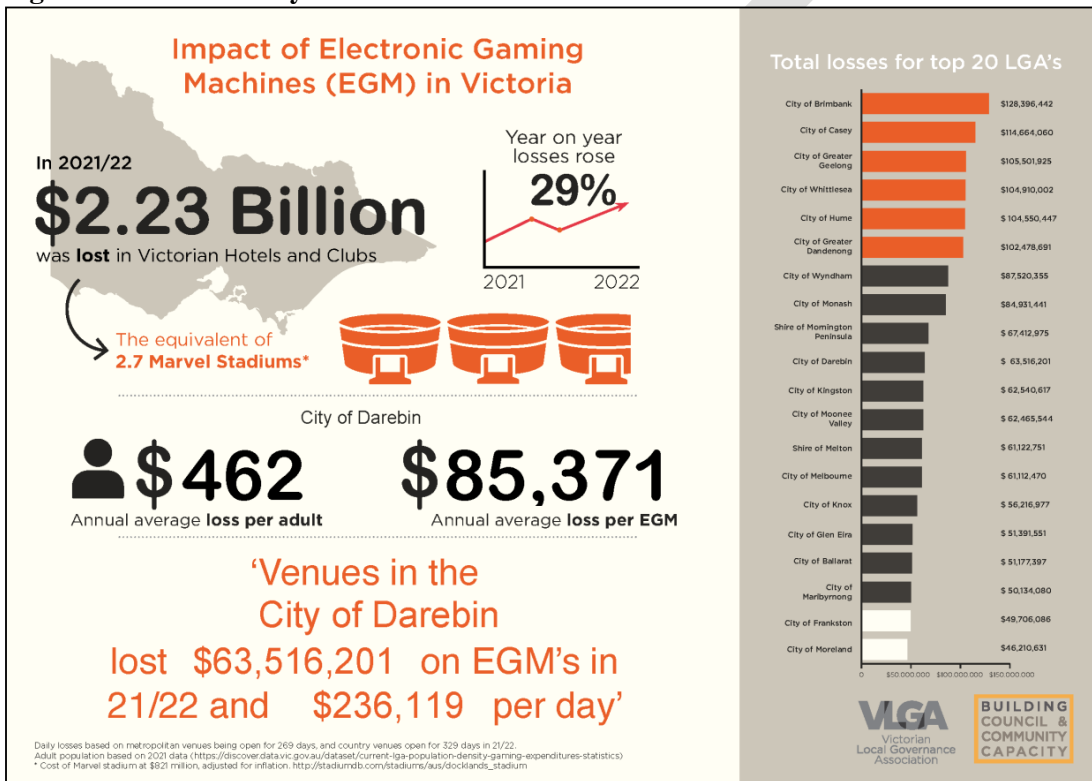
<p>Purpose</p>	<p>This Policy aims to make the City of Darebin free of the harm associated with Electronic Gaming Machines (EGM). The Policy outlines Council’s commitment to minimising harm from EGMs in the City of Darebin. The policy guides Council in its actions and decision making on gambling harm prevention.</p>
<p>Scope</p>	<p>The Policy has a specific focus on minimising gambling harms as a result of EGMs. Council recognises that there are other legal gambling opportunities available to the community including lotteries, wagering (racing or sports betting) and online gambling. Harm from these gambling activities need attention too. However, the Policy focuses on EGM gambling as current research indicates EGM cause the greatest harm in our community. The Policy also recognises the limited role Council plays in the regulation of EGM and acknowledges the powers of the State and Federal governments to create the most effective policy frameworks to regulate the gambling industry.</p> <p>Council acknowledges that there are some community cohorts or individuals who may be more vulnerable to the harms associated with gambling. Community-based agencies and welfare groups are best placed to provide individual case work and prevention programs that are targeted, relevant and culturally appropriate. Under this Policy, Council will support these agencies and groups to continue their work.</p>
<p>Context</p>	<p>BUILDING ON OUR ACHIEVEMENT</p> <p>Over the past four years, Council has worked with a range of stakeholders—local businesses, sporting clubs, seniors’ clubs and local community groups—to implement the 2018-2022 Darebin Electronic Gaming Machine Policy. Together, we have undertaken significant reform in response to the Policy. We are committed to building on this achievement in order to minimise harm from EGM machines in our community.</p> <p>During this period, Council provided support to Council-affiliated clubs to divest themselves of EGM. Council worked with sporting clubs to develop a transition plan in order to continue to access Council facilities and resources and provide a community benefit to their members.</p> <p>All sporting clubs, community groups, organisations and associations had until 30 June 2022 to complete a transition plan to divest themselves of EGM generated cash or in-kind support in order to be eligible for Council’s community grants, financial assistance or in-kind support from Council.</p> <p>Council also updated its internal policies and ensured all new lease agreements, MOUs, partnership agreements and funding agreements aligned with the Policy. These actions have supported Council’s effort in minimising harm from EGM machines in the community.</p>



WHY A FOCUS ON EGM?
 In Darebin, gambling through Electronic Gaming Machines (EGM) continues to be directly associated with the greatest harms to individuals, their families and the general community.

Between 1 July 2022 and 30 June 2023, the Darebin community lost \$85,837,107 to EGMs. This is an increase from previous financial year 1 July 2021 and 30 June 2022 which was \$63,516,201.

Figure 1: Loss of money to EGM



Source: Victorian Local Government Association

According to the Australian Gambling Research Centre,¹ EGM are aimed to maximise spending and “time on device” per user; their design employs psychological principles to maximise users’ bet sizes and machine usage. These characteristics increase the addictive potential of EGM.

Poker machine operators in Darebin

In September 2017 the Victorian Minister for Consumer Affairs, Gaming and Liquor imposed a regional cap of 769 EGM in the municipality. On 30 June 2023, there were 744 poker machines operators in 12

¹ Australian Gambling Research Centre. 2017. How electronic gambling machines work EGM structural characteristics. Accessed 7 December 2022. Available https://aifs.gov.au/sites/default/files/publication-documents/1706_argc_dp8_how_electronic_gambling_machines_work_0.pdf



venues in the City of Darebin, which is 97% of the legal limit.² Figure 2 shows spatial distribution of EGM venues in Darebin.

Figure 2: Spatial distribution of EGM poker machine operators in Darebin



² The City of Darebin has a regional cap of 769 poker machine entitlements.



Compared with all local government areas in Victoria, Darebin ranked the 10th highest community experiencing loss of money to poker machines.³ Table 1 below shows the loss of money by venue.

Table 1: Loss of money to poker machine operators by venue

Venue Name	#EGM	Loss of money (\$)				
		2018/2019	2019/2020	2020/2021	2021/2022	2022/2023
Albion Charles Hotel	50	5,619,528	3,868,270	3,478,011	4,142,633	5,318,588
Cramers Hotel	79	10,009,547	7,230,246	5,853,625	7,734,281	11,370,077
Croxtan Park Hotel	54	5,173,157	3,842,207	3,395,922	3,919,381	5,162,326
Darebin RSL	65	4,705,966	3,546,285	2,275,731	3,207,857	4,767,216
Edwardes Lake Hotel	100	13,251,226	9,050,771	7,135,590	11,202,586	15,215,438
Furlan Club	30	682,342	403,627	141,474	338,165	443,213
Junction Hotel	46	6,158,223	4,337,937	3,049,884	3,510,937	4,253,111
Olympic Hotel	80	1,0435,326	7,375,183	5,040,447	7,356,596	10,397,992
Preston Hotel	40	4,456,562	2,835,839	2,584,599	3,739,158	4,398,668
Reservoir RSL	68	465,582	2962675	2,260,209	2,996,676	4,360,788
Rose Shamrock & Thistle Hotel	44	5,192,480	3,492,567	2,687,538	3,311,663	4,497,852
Summerhill Hotel	88	11,426,171	7,996,689	8,897,905	12,056,268	15,651,839

Source: Victoria Gambling and Casino Control Commission.⁴

PUBLIC HEALTH APPROACH IN PREVENTION OF GAMBLING HARM

Council regards a public health approach as the most promising means to minimising gambling related harm. This is because of the recognition that many factors contributing to gambling harm exist beyond the individual's control. Levels of influence on gambling behaviour include:

- **Intrapersonal:** Knowledge, attitudes, beliefs, skills and personality traits.
- **Interpersonal:** Social networks and support systems; family and peers that provide social identity, support and role definition.
- **Institutional:** Social institutions with formal/informal rules, regulations, policies that constrain or promote behaviour.
- **Community:** Relationships, standards and networks that exist among individuals, groups and institutions.
- **Public Policy:** Local, state, federal policies and laws that regulate, support or constrain healthy actions and practices.

Therefore, a focus on self-responsibility or changing the behaviours of poker machine users is inadequate in addressing the many factors that

³ Victoria Responsible Gambling Foundation. 2021. Pokies across Victoria. Accessed 6 November 2023. Available <https://responsiblegambling.vic.gov.au/resources/gambling-victoria/pokies-across-victoria/darebin/>

⁴ Victoria Gambling and Casino Control Commission. 2022. Gambling expenditure by local area. Accessed 6 November 2023. Available <https://www.vgcc.vic.gov.au/resources/information-and-data/expenditure-data>



	<p>contribute to gambling harm. According to the Victorian Responsible Gambling Foundation (2015)⁵ a public health approach:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • enables consideration of the broad range of factors that influence individual gambling behaviour, including the social, cultural, political, institutional and environmental factors • considers the possible consequences of gambling harm for the individual, their families and the wider community • has the potential to address prevention of gambling at multiple levels <p>As such, the public health framework allows for a whole-of-Council approach to minimising harm from EGM in the community.</p>
<p>Details</p>	<p>PRIORITY AREAS The Policy will be enacted through the following five priority areas:</p> <p>Organisational Leadership Take a whole of organisation approach to minimise harm from EGM. This includes ensuring that Councillors and Council officers lead by example and that any of our actions aim to minimise harm from EGM.</p> <p>Legislation Regulation Exercise the full extent of regulatory and legislative mandate to minimise harm from EGM.</p> <p>Advocacy and Partnership Maintain strategic partnerships and undertake advocacy to minimise gambling harm.</p> <p>Awareness and Education Educate the community about the imbalance between EGM harms and benefits. This is critical to ensure that community members have an informed perception of EGM.</p> <p>Funding and Resourcing Dedicate resources and source funding to minimise harm from EGM in the community.</p> <p>POLICY STATEMENTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council will continue to be a statewide leader and innovator in reducing gambling harm. • Council will maintain independence from the gambling industry. Council will not accept financial contributions from poker machine operators and will not promote community grants or initiatives offered by local poker machine venues. • Council will not provide sporting grounds, Council venues or use of Council property to any sporting clubs, community groups, organisations or associations who directly operate or own EGM in Darebin or elsewhere.

⁵ Victorian Responsible Gambling Foundation. 2015. Background Paper: Using a public health approach in the prevention of gambling-related harm. Accessed 6 December 2022. Available <https://responsiblegambling.vic.gov.au/documents/21/using-a-public-health-approach-in-the-prevention-of-gambling-related-harm.pdf>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council will not support (in-kind or cash) any community groups, clubs, organisations, associations or businesses who hold functions and activities in an EGM venue. • Council will support any local business or clubs that wishes to divest themselves of EGM through the provision of advice. • Council will acknowledge and honour any existing arrangements between sporting clubs, community groups, community organisations, associations, business or Council programs and poker machine operators, owners and venues until a mutually suitable and tailored transition plan has been finalised. • Any sporting club, community group, organisation, association or business that operate or own EGM will be ineligible for community grants, financial assistance or in-kind support from Council. • Council staff will not run Council and community events, activities, programs and social outings in venues that have EGM. • Councillors and Council staff will not accept any gifts (in-kind or otherwise) from organisations, associations or businesses that receive funds from EGM gambling. • Councillors and Council staff will not attend EGM venues when representing Council in an official capacity subject to policy exceptions identified. • Council will block and filter gambling activities and advertisement across its internet and intranet. • Council will actively monitor and manage all EGM venue signage to ensure compliance with the Planning and Environment Act and the Gambling Regulations Act. • Council will ensure all new lease agreements, MOUs, partnership agreements, funding agreements and internal policies align with this Policy. • Council will support clubs to identify venues with no EGM to hold their outings and activities. • Council policy, action and advocacy will be informed by evidence-based public health and wellbeing research and policy. • Council supports measures to prevent and/or respond to gambling harm that are evidence-based and likely to have a positive impact. • In assessing any future proposals for the operation of EGM in the municipality, Council will treat applications from clubs in the same way as applications from pubs and other poker machine operators. • Council will oppose any planning and licensing application for additional EGM and the transfer of EGM in the municipality where there is evidence that the application will have negative social and economic impacts and minimal community benefit. • Council will not allow EGM on Council-owned or managed land. All planning decisions and advice relevant to gambling matters will be made with reference to this Policy and the relevant provisions of the Darebin Planning Scheme. • Through its Leasing and Licensing Policy, Council will not permit gambling promotion or advertising in Council-owned facilities. This pertains to sports betting, online gambling and EGM.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council will not permit gambling activity or the promotion or advertising of any gambling activity or venue on Council-owned or managed land or in Council facilities. • Council will publicly support and recommend reforms on policies, legislation and structures to minimise harm from EGM. • Council will lobby the state and federal government for the necessary legislative and regulatory reforms to reduce harm from EGM and provide greater protection for poker machine users. • Council will oppose any increase to the maximum municipal limit of EGM or the inappropriate relocation of existing machines to areas of high socioeconomic disadvantage as indicated in the Socioeconomic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA) index of disadvantage. • Council will provide public notice to the community when there is an application for new EGM licences in Darebin. Council will consult with our stakeholders (where applicable) and publish it on the website. • Council will raise awareness of the gambling harm occurring in the community by communicating gambling losses and related harm. • Council will participate in the annual gambling harm awareness week campaign and promote Gambler’s Help support service in the community. • Any sporting club, community group, organisation, association or business that operate or own EGM, or receives sponsorship or grants (in-kind or cash) from poker machine revenue will be ineligible for community grants, financial assistance or in-kind support from Council. • Council will not support (funding or in-kind) any club, community group, association, organisation or business that meet in venues that have EGM. • Council will not provide community grants, funding, sponsorship, Council facilities, publicity or promotion for community groups/organisations that promote gambling. • Council will continue to invest in community infrastructure, community programs and community networks to provide alternatives to gambling. • Community groups, clubs, organisations, associations and businesses that are in a Council-owned facility or building (in a capacity of a license or lease agreement) or plan to hire a council facility or building are prohibited from receiving sponsorship or grants (in-kind or cash) from poker machine operators. <p>POLICY EXCEPTIONS Music groups and musicians who perform in EGM venues Live music groups and musicians, and associated performers that perform in EGM venues and are not in direct receipt of Council funding but may be contracted by Council to perform at an event or associated Council sponsored program, are considered outside the scope of the Policy and will not be affected.</p>
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	<p>ANZAC Day and similar military services held at Returned & Services League (RSL) venues The RSLs will be exempt from the EGM Policy <i>only</i> for ANZAC day and similar military service events. For these occasions the Council resources such as access to the community bus will continue for eligible residents wishing to attend these commemorative events.</p>
<p>Definitions and Abbreviations</p>	<p>LANGUAGE USE</p> <p>Council rejects the public rhetoric of ‘responsible gambling’ and ‘problem gambler’, which seeks to shift the responsibility to the individual rather than the gambling industry, which takes money from the most vulnerable community members. This language deliberately hides the systemic and structural problems in the gambling environment, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The addictive design of EGM used in Australia • The opportunistic conduct of the gambling industry • A conflicted reliance on the significant taxation revenue generated by the State Government from EGM losses. <p>Therefore, ‘problem gambler’ and ‘gambling addicts’ is to be replaced with ‘people harmed by gambling’ in all Council communications. ‘Pokie players’ is to be replaced with ‘poker machine users.’ ‘Pokie venues’ is to be replaced with ‘poker machine operators/EGM venue/poker venue’ or ‘gambling industry’, and ‘gambling expenditure’ is to be replaced with ‘gambling losses’ or ‘money taken’.</p>
<p>Responsibilities</p>	<p>How are individuals responsible for the success of the policy? All employees are expected to be aware of this policy and to work within their teams to support and enable it as directed.</p> <p>How are managers responsible for the success of the policy? All managers, coordinators and team leaders are expected to understand and demonstrate a positive commitment to this policy and, where applicable, align it to the activities of their respective business units.</p> <p>Wellbeing Policy Lead The Wellbeing Policy Lead is responsible for coordinating implementation, monitoring and review of the policy in conjunction with relevant business units across Council.</p> <p>EGM Reference Group The Reference Group made up of council officers across relevant business units will provide oversight of the EGM Action Plan to ensure successful implementation of the Policy.</p> <p>The Group will be chaired by Manager, Equity and Wellbeing (or the proxy). The Wellbeing Policy Lead will provide secretariat support to the Group.</p>
<p>Implementation</p>	<p>Implementation of the Policy will be overseen by the Wellbeing Policy Lead.</p>



<p>Organisational Values</p>	<p>Council’s organisational values enable and support the effective design and application of this policy by guiding staff in the course of their work.</p> <p>We Make a Difference: We are driven by our desire to make a difference for the people we serve. Our work is purposeful and creates a positive impact for the community. We are proud to work here. Our work matters.</p> <p>We are Accountable: We are empowered to own and take responsibility for our actions. We follow through on our commitments and deliver on our promises. We make it happen.</p> <p>We are Collaborative: We are united by a common purpose to serve the community. We work together, connecting within our teams and across the organisation. We are inclusive and collaborative. We are one.</p> <p>We have Integrity: We act with integrity and transparency in conversations and decision-making. Through open and clear communication, we build trust. We’re honest. We walk the talk.</p> <p>We show Respect: We are diverse, inclusive, respectful and caring. We encourage everyone to have a voice and we listen to each other. We recognise one another’s contributions and treat people fairly. We look after each other.</p> <p>We are Creative: We are bold, courageous and innovative. We try new things, experiment and continuously improve. We are open-minded, creative and forward-thinking. We are leaders.</p>
<p>Breach of Policy</p>	<p>The previous EGM policy 2018-2022 outlined a four-year developmental approach to supporting groups to become compliant with the Policy. With the review, the Policy proposes a move from a graduated policy to one that seeks compliance.</p> <p>If there has been a breach, the Policy proposes that officers will consider the reason behind the breach and implement with the club or group a diversion plan to support and encourage compliance in a capacity building way.</p> <p>Where a club or group continues to intentionally breach the Policy, despite the best efforts of officers to support and encourage compliance in a capacity building way through a diversion plan, this may ultimately result in Council resolving to withdraw funds or hiring of venues, however this will ultimately be a decision for Council.</p>

GOVERNANCE

<p>Parent Strategy/ Plan</p>	<p>Minimising Harm from Poker Machines: Darebin Electronic Gaming Machine Policy 2023-2027</p>
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<p>Related Documents</p>	<p>This Policy should be read in conjunction with Council's:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Literature Review: Electronic Gaming Machine Policy 2023-2027 • Community Engagement Findings: Electronic Gaming Machine Policy 2023-2027
<p>Supporting Procedures and Guidelines</p>	<p>Minimising Harm from Poker Machines: Darebin Electronic Gaming Machines (EGM) Policy and Action Plan 2023-2027</p>
<p>Legislation/ Regulation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Local Government Act 2020 • The Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008 • The Planning and Environment Act 1987 • Gambling Regulation Act 2003 • The Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006

! All Darebin policies and procedures must be developed through the lens of key Darebin strategies, plans and related considerations. See the **Darebin Policy Review Lens** to inform and guide policy development and review.

DRAFT

Darebin Electronic Gaming Machines (EGM) Action Plan 2023-2027

To be read on consultation with Policy

Priority 1: Organisational Leadership: Take a whole of organisation approach to minimise harm from EGM. This includes ensuring that Councillors and Council officers lead by example and that any of our actions aim to minimise harm from EGM
Actions
1.1 Council will promote a range of non-gambling social, cultural and recreational opportunities in Darebin to promote active and healthy lifestyle choices.
1.2 Council will ensure that the community is notified of all planning applications related to EGM (including in neighbouring municipalities) and advise on opportunities for comment.
1.3 Council will include any copies of all gaming-related submissions it makes on Council website.
1.4 Council will support any local business or club that wishes to divest themselves of EGM through advice.
1.5 Council will continue to block and filter internet accounts across its services to ensure computers are not being accessed for gambling activity by staff and community.
1.6 Council will continue to source and maintain accurate data, information and research on poker machines and other forms of gambling for use in the development of policy, submissions, communications and as advocacy tools.
1.7 Where possible, Council will include gambling-related questions in relevant community surveys and consultations to inform future policy and program development.
1.8 Where possible, Council will participate in and/or support research undertaken by organisations on the determinants and impacts of gambling environments and gambling, and effective harm prevention and harm minimisation measures.
1.8 Where possible, Council will commission and contribute to research that will directly inform Council's policy objectives.
Priority 2: Legislation Regulation: Exercise the full extent of regulatory and legislative mandate to minimise harm from EGM.
Actions
2.1 Council will continue to ensure that all EGM operators adhere to the conditions in their planning permits and will advocate to the VCGLR if conditions are not being met.
2.2 Council will continue to monitor regulation and legislation and their impacts at a federal, state and local level.
2.3 Council will actively monitor and manage all EGM venue signage to ensure compliance with the Planning and Environment Act and the Gambling Regulations Act.
2.4 Council will continue to ensure all new lease agreements, MOUs, partnership agreements, funding agreements, and other relevant agreements and internal policies align with this Policy.

Priority 3: Advocacy and Partnership: Maintain strategic partnerships and undertake advocacy to minimise gambling harm.
Actions
3.1 Council will continue to seek reform to the Gambling Regulation Act to place greater regulation and restrictions on the gambling industry.
3.2 Council will continue to actively inform and contribute to the advocacy of local government gambling networks to generate local, sub-regional and regional advocacy strategies.
3.3 Council will continue to foster robust partnerships and alliances with peak bodies, advocacy groups, support groups and local community organisations in minimising gambling harm in the community.
3.4 Council will oppose any increase to the maximum municipal limit of EGM or the inappropriate relocation of existing machines to areas of high socioeconomic disadvantage as indicated in the SEIFA index of disadvantage.
3.5 Council will continue to partner with organisations and groups to undertake initiatives aimed at minimising gambling harm.
Priority 4: Awareness and Education: Educate the community about the imbalance between EGM harms and benefits. This is critical to ensure that community members have an informed perception of EGM.
Actions
4.1 Within the first 6 months of implementation of this policy, Council commits to using its best endeavours within business-as-usual resources to supporting all community groups, clubs, organisations, associations and businesses, especially those that are multilingual, to educate and inform them of the new changes included in this policy as well as assist them to fulfil their future obligations, in appropriate languages, through the implementation of the Action Plan.
4.2 Council will raise staff awareness and understanding of the EGM Policy during induction and ongoing.
4.3 Council will continue to raise awareness about gambling harm and promote gambling support services to the community through various communication channels.
4.4 Council will annually publish key indicators describing the gambling environment in Darebin including gambling losses, EGM numbers, gambling prevalence and gambling venues.
4.5 Council will continue to participate in the annual gambling harm awareness week campaign.
Priority 5: Funding and Resourcing: Dedicate resources and source funding to minimise harm from EGM in the community.
Actions
5.1 Council will support sporting clubs and seniors' clubs to continue to divest themselves from reliance on EGM revenue.
5.2 Council will continue to fund and seek external funding for a range of non-gambling social, cultural and recreational programs.
5.3 Council will continue to explore ways to support seniors' groups to meet in non-EGM venues.

Literature Review:

Darebin Electronic Gaming Machines (EGM) Policy 2023-2027

EGM games typically signal delivery of rewards with a combination of melodies and sounds, visual displays—such as lights and colourful images—and, in some cases, messages indicating a “successful” outcome.

Source: Australian Gambling Research Centre, 2017

Perceived benefits of Electronic Gaming Machines (EGM)

In Victoria, club venue operators are required to submit an annual community benefit statement (CBS) to the Victorian Gambling and Casino Control Commission (VGCCC).¹ The CBS verifies whether the club has contributed at least 8.33 percent of their net gaming machine revenue back to the community. This contribution can be in form of:

- *Direct Community Benefits* –such as donations, gifts and sponsorships,
- *Indirect Community Benefits* – such as capital expenditure
- *Miscellaneous* – such as costs for providing responsible gambling measures not required by law, as well as the reimbursement of expenses incurred by volunteers.

A study analysing 559 community benefits statements lodged in 2005/2006 in Victoria showed that 97.3% of the funds were reinvested into the operations and capital works of the clubs themselves, and only 2.6% were actual funds, gifts or sponsorship provided to the community.² The study also found that no funds (0%) were provided for responsible gambling measures and activities, excluding those measures required by law. The study demonstrated that claims made for the community benefits is a form of “*legitimising the harm caused by EGM by dressing up the normal expenses of business as providing unusual benefits to local communities.*” (p.9). The author concluded that “*current community benefit statements appear to be incapable of demonstrating the value of the community benefit generated by EGM venues in a manner which would be reasonably acceptable to the broad community*” (p.9).

Recent studies have documented a range of industry tactics and practices used by the EGM industry to normalise gambling and make it appealing to the community and soften the perception of risks associated with EGM venues. This includes promoting EGM venues as ‘family-friendly’ spaces,³

¹ Victorian Gambling and Casino Control Commission (VGCCC). 2022. Community Benefit Statements. Accessed 7 December 2022. Available <https://www.vgccc.vic.gov.au/gambling/gaming-venue-operator/understand-your-gaming-licence/your-obligations/community-benefit>

² Livingstone, C. 2007. Understanding the community benefit of electronic gaming machines: an interim analysis of Victorian EGM Community Benefit Statements. Monash University. Accessed 7 December 2022. Available <https://www.pc.gov.au/inquiries/completed/gambling-2010/submissions/sub134-attachment2.pdf>

³ Bestman A, Thomas S, Randle M, Pitt H, Daube M, Pettigrew S. 2016. Shaping pathways to gambling consumption? An analysis of the promotion of gambling and non-gambling activities from gambling venues. *Addict Res Theory*, 24(2):152-62

improving the design of EGM to ensure users spend more time and money on machines⁴ and using donations to influence public policy.⁵

Harm from EGM

Gambling harm include financial losses, suicide, depression, relationship breakdown, lowered work productivity, job loss, bankruptcy and crime

The Alliance for Gambling Reforms (the Alliance)⁶ estimated 2,968 Adults in Darebin experienced severe EGM gambling-related problems in 2017. Recent studies have linked EGM to significant health and social issues such as depression,⁷ family violence⁸ and criminal activities.⁹ The Productivity Commission¹⁰ also reported many harms associated with gambling such as financial losses, bankruptcy, lowered work productivity, job loss and suicide. According to the Commission, gambling-related harm is not limited to the person poker machine user; the harm extends to family members, friends and employers. The Commission also noted that harm may be severe and ongoing or may arise from excessive single occasion, and its consequences may persist over time.

⁴ Livingstone C. 2017. How Electronic Gambling Machines Work EGM Structural Characteristics. Accessed 19 December 2022. Available <https://aifs.gov.au/resources/policy-and-practice-papers/how-electronic-gambling-machines-work>

⁵ Eccleston R, Gray F. 2013. Five political realities of gaming regulation. *Gambl Res.* 2013;25(1):18-24; Hancock L, Smith G. 2017. Replacing the Reno Model with a robust public health approach to 'responsible gambling': Hancock and Smith's response to commentaries on our original Reno Model critique. *Int J Ment Health Addict*,12(3):1209-1220.

⁶ Alliance for Gambling Reforms. Gaming estimated prevalence of severe gambling problems, by LGA, 2017. Accessed 10 November 2022. Available <https://www.agr.org.au/gambling-data>

⁷ Dixon MJ, Gutierrez J, Stange M, Larche CJ, Graydon C, Vintan S, et al. Mindfulness problems and depression symptoms in everyday life predict dark flow during slots play: Implications for gambling as a form of escape. *Psychol Addict Behav.* 2019; 33(1):81-90.

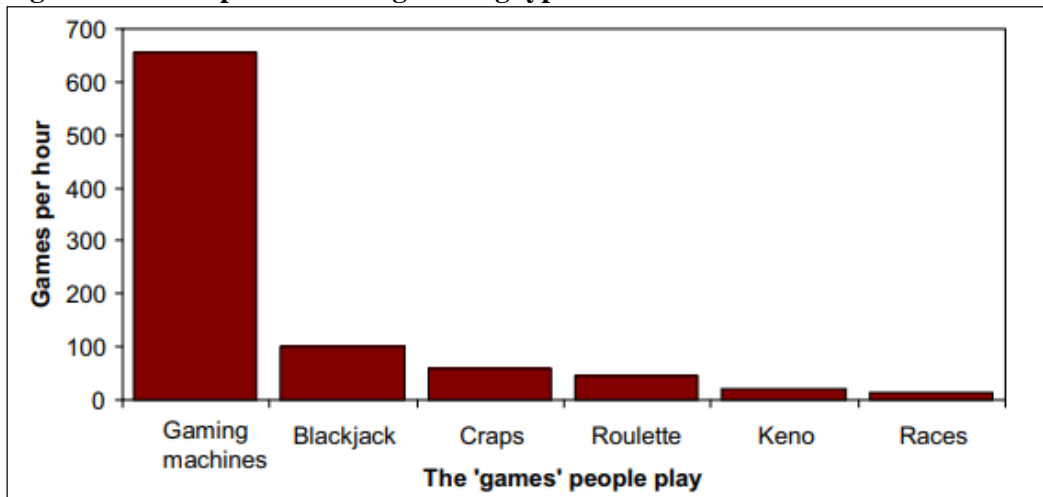
⁸ Markham F, Doran B, Young M. The relationship between electronic gaming machine accessibility and police-recorded domestic violence: A spatiotemporal analysis of 654 postcodes in Victoria, Australia, 2005–2014. *Soc Sci Med.* 2016;162: 106-14.

⁹ Langham E, Thorne H, Browne M, Donaldson P, Rose J, Rockloff M. 2016. Understanding gambling related harm: A proposed definition, conceptual framework, and taxonomy of harms. Accessed 19 December 2022. Available <https://bmcpublihealth.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12889-016-2747-0>

¹⁰ Productivity Commission 2010, Gambling, Report no. 50, Canberra. Accessed 18 November 2022. Available <https://www.pc.gov.au/inquiries/completed/gambling-2010/report>

- ✚ Most gambling harm arise from poker machines.
 - ✚ The risks of gambling harm increase significantly with the frequency of playing EGM.
 - ✚ Poker machines account for around 75–80 per cent of ‘people harmed by gambling’ and are found to pose significant problems for poker-machine users in general.
 - ✚ Poker machines are widely accessible throughout the community.
 - ✚ Regular poker-machine users (those using poker machines at least once a week) are estimated to spend on average around \$7000–8000 per annum, a sizeable share of household incomes, and a key source of harm.
 - ✚ There are vulnerabilities, extending beyond ‘people harmed by poker machines’, arising from widespread misunderstandings about how the machines actually work. For instance, the evidence shows that many people believe they can recover losses by continuing to use the machine (‘chasing losses’), and that machines run ‘hot’ or ‘cold’ (with over 50 per cent of poker machine users believing this).
 - ✚ Prices of playing gaming machines are poorly disclosed, while the fact that receipts are not issued accentuates the tendency for poker machine users to underestimate their spending.
 - ✚ The conditioning effects of random and intermittent payouts, combined with the capacity for rapid repetition of games — some hundreds per hour — can encourage sustained gambling (Figure 3 below)
- Source: Adapted from Productive Commission, 2010

Figure 1: Games per hour and gambling type

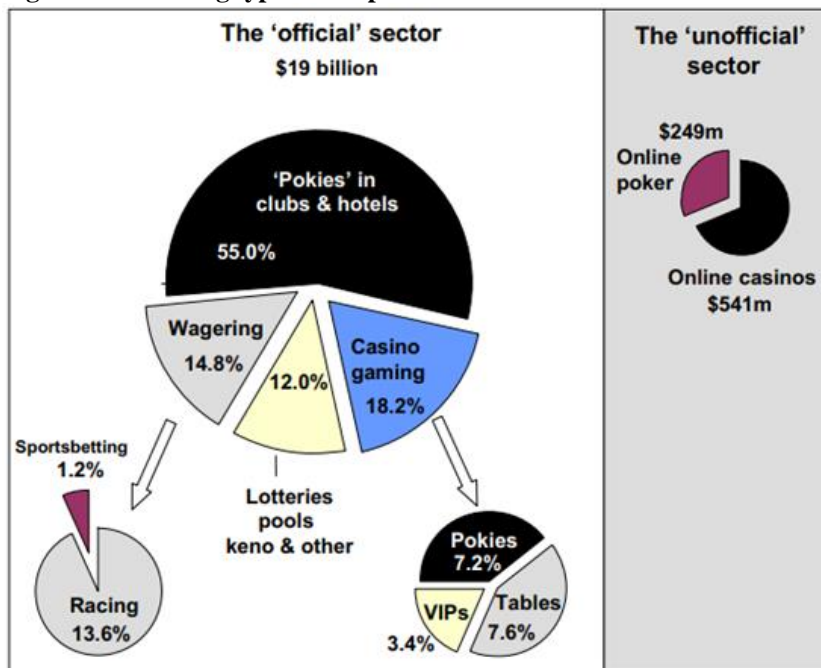


Source: Production Commission, 2010

Money lost to EGM

Electronic gaming machines contribute to the highest loss of money compared to other forms of gambling in Australia (see Figure 2 below).

Figure 2: Gambling type and expenditure



Source: Productive Commission¹¹

In the 2019 financial year, gaming machines accounted for the highest per capita expenditure on gambling in Australia, at 649.23 Australian dollars per capita. By comparison, the next highest spending was on casinos where per capita spending amounted to under 250 Australian dollars.¹²

Venues with EGM in Darebin

In September 2017 the Victorian Minister for Consumer Affairs, Gaming and Liquor imposed a regional cap of 769 EGM on the municipality. On 30 June 2021, there were 743 poker machines in 12 venues in the city of Darebin, which is 97% of the legal limit.¹³ Figure 3 and Figure 4 show spatial distribution of EGM venues and spatial representation of principles respectively.

¹¹ Productivity Commission 2010, Gambling, Report no. 50, Canberra. Accessed 18 November 2022. Available <https://www.pc.gov.au/inquiries/completed/gambling-2010/report>

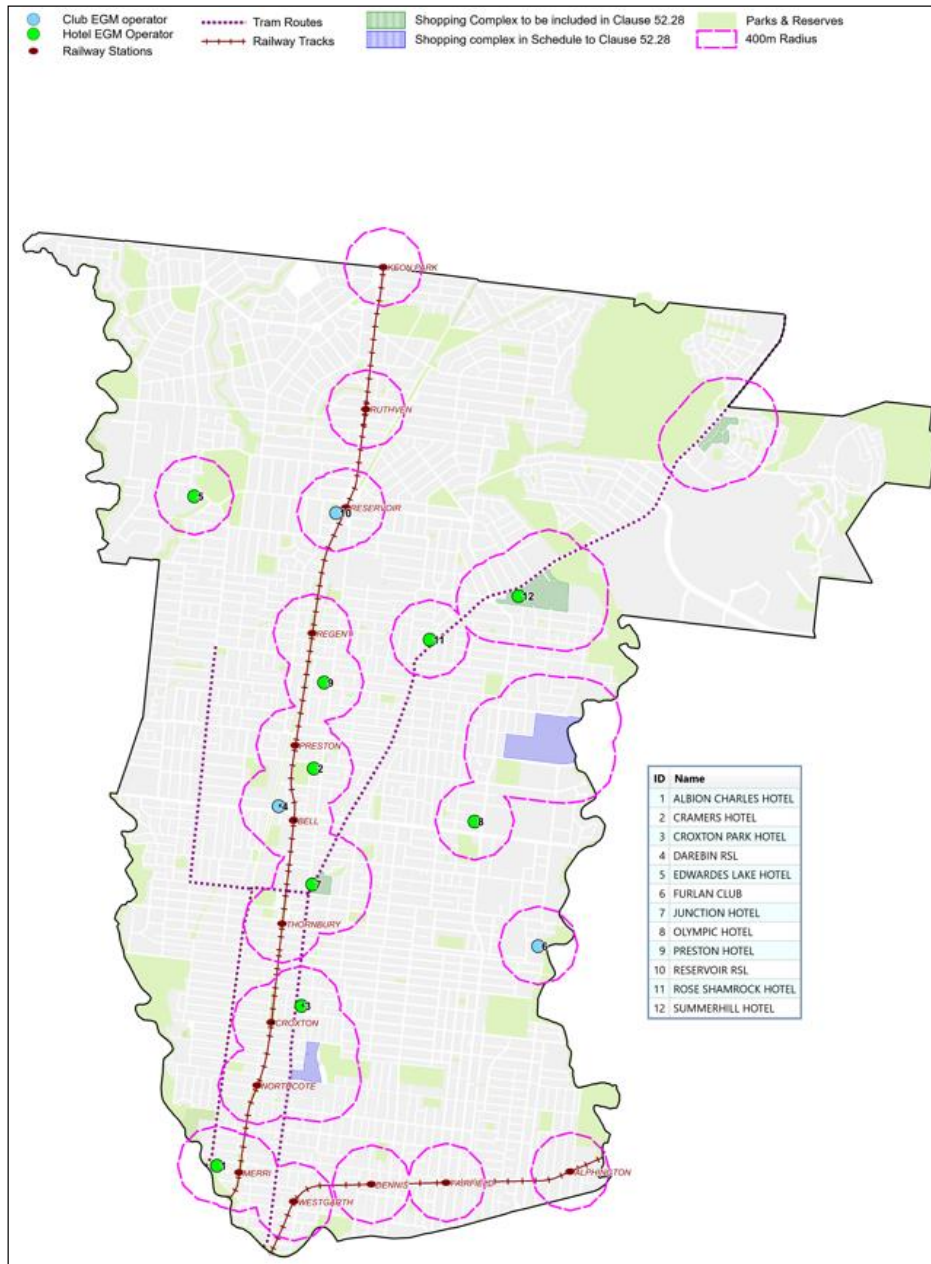
¹² Statista Research Department. 2022. Per capita gaming expenditure Australia FY 2019 by type. Accessed 25 July 2022. Available <https://www.statista.com/statistics/935357/australia-per-capita-gaming-expenditure-by-type/>

¹³ The City of Darebin has a regional cap of 769 poker machine entitlements.

Figure 3: Spatial distribution of EGM venues in Darebin



Figure 4: Spatial representation of principles



Compared with all local governments area in Victoria, Darebin ranked the 10th highest community experiencing loss of money to poker machines.¹⁴ Table 3 below shows the loss of money by venue.

¹⁴ Victoria Responsible Gambling Foundation. 2021. Pokies across Victoria. Accessed 19 December 2022. Available <https://responsiblegambling.vic.gov.au/resources/gambling-victoria/pokies-across-victoria/darebin/>

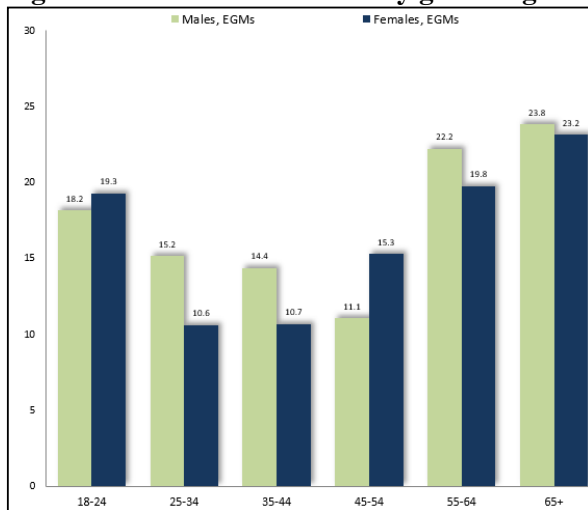
Table 3: Loss of money by venue

Venue Name	# EGM	Loss of money (\$)			
		2018/2019	2019/2020	2020/2021	2021/2022
Albion Charles Hotel	50	5,619,528.22	3,868,270.32	3,478,010.82	4,142,632.79
Cramers Hotel	79	10,009,546.93	7,230,246.32	5,853,625.25	7,734,281.03
Croxtton Park Hotel	54	5,173,156.60	3,842,207.28	3,395,921.73	3,919,381.10
Darebin RSL	65	4,705,966.24	3,546,284.86	2,275,731.04	3,207,856.80
Edwardes Lake Hotel	100	13,251,226.21	9,050,770.61	7,135,589.76	11,202,585.90
Furlan Club	30	682,342.40	403,627.42	141,473.72	338,165.42
Junction Hotel	46	6,158,222.61	4,337,936.65	3,049,883.78	3,510,937.39
Olympic Hotel	80	1,0435,325.79	7,375,182.60	5,040,447.15	7,356,596.30
Preston Hotel	40	4,456,562.38	2,835,838.75	2,584,598.62	3,739,157.74
Reservoir RSL	68	465,581.52	2962675.19	2,260,208.91	2,996,675.97
Rose Shamrock & Thistle Hotel	44	5,192,479.89	3,492,566.89	2,687,538.18	3,311,662.94
Summerhill Hotel	88	11,426,171.30	7,996,689.22	8,897,904.60	12,056,267.77

Source: Victoria Gambling and Casino Control Commission.¹⁵

Research shows that majority of poker machines users are aged 55 years and over with no significant differences between men and women (Figure 5).

Figure 5: Prevalence of EGM by gambling in Victoria by gender and age, 2014



Source: Alliance for Gambling Reform¹⁶

¹⁵ Victoria Gambling and Casino Control Commission. 2022. Gambling expenditure by local area. Accessed 9 November 2022. Available <https://www.vgccc.vic.gov.au/resources/information-and-data/expenditure-data>

¹⁶ Alliance for Gambling Reform. 2022. Gambling data. Accessed 19 December 2022, Available <https://www.agr.org.au/gambling-data> (adapted from 'Study of Gambling and Health in Victoria, Australia', Hare, S., 2015. Victorian Responsible Gambling Foundation and Victorian Department of Justice and Regulation).

Targeting disadvantaged neighbourhoods

Research indicates a positive relationship between socioeconomic disadvantage and EGM density and losses,¹⁷ and that harms associated with EGM are significantly linked to social inequality.¹⁸ A recent study showed that unemployed individuals and those with lower incomes and living in rental accommodation are more likely to experience harm from EGM.¹⁹ In addition, EGM are disproportionately concentrated in low socioeconomic areas.²⁰ This is a deliberate strategy of the gambling industry to target disadvantaged neighbourhoods and the most vulnerable community members in our municipality (see Figure 6).

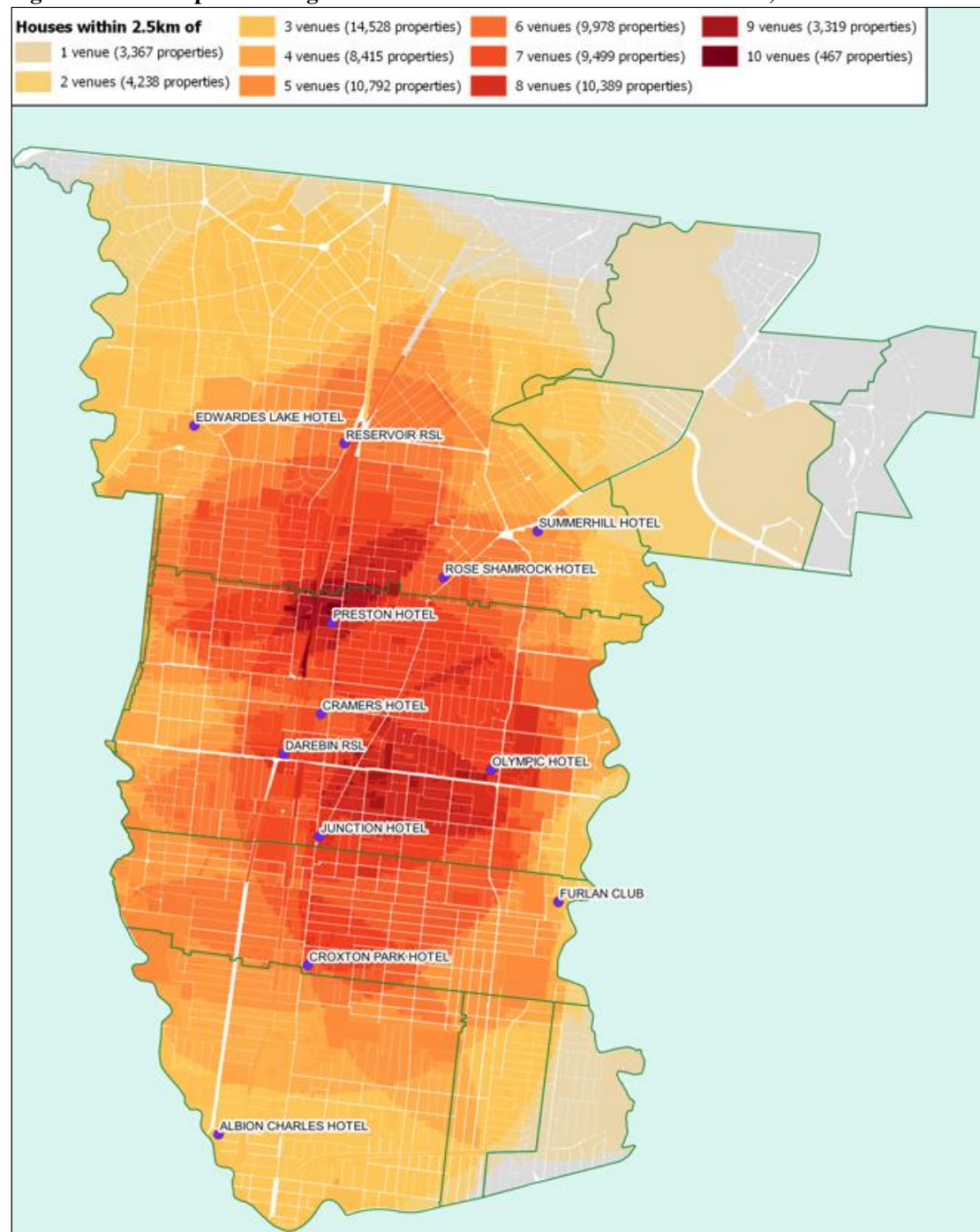
¹⁷ Rintoul, A, Livingstone, C & Mellor, A. 2013. 'Modelling vulnerability to gambling related harm: How disadvantage predicts gambling losses', *Addiction Research and Theory*, 21 (4): 329-338

¹⁸ Marko S, Thomas SL, Pitt H, Daube M. 2020. The development and implementation of electronic gambling machine policy: A qualitative study of local government policy makers. *Aust N Z J Public Health*, 44(5):369–75.

¹⁹ Armstrong A. & Carroll M. 2017. *Gambling Activity in Australia*. Accessed 19 December 2022. Available <https://aifs.gov.au/research/research-reports/gambling-activity-australia>

²⁰ Livingstone C, Adams P. 2011. Harm promotion: Observations on the symbiosis between government and private industries in Australasia for the development of highly accessible gambling markets. *Addiction*. 106(1):3- 8; South Australian Centre for Economic Studies. 2005. *Study of the Impact of Caps on Electronic Gaming Machines – Final Report*. Accessed 19 December 2022. Available <https://catalogue.nla.gov.au/Record/3698495>

Figure 6: Heat map of housing distribution within 2.5km of an EGM venue, 2013



Studies show that accessibility of EGM is linked to increased participation in gambling.²¹ Therefore, efforts to minimise harm from poker machines at an individual and community level must be combined with policy reforms to restrict and reduce the number of available machines.²²

²¹ South Australian Centre for Economic Studies.2005. Study of the Impact of Caps on Electronic Gaming Machines – Final Report. Melbourne (AUST): Victorian Department of Justice Office of Gaming and Racing; Young M, Markham F, Doran B. 2012. Placing bets: Gambling venues and the distribution of harm. Aust Geogr. 43(4):425-44

²² Marko S, Thomas SL, Pitt H, Daube M. 2020. The development and implementation of electronic gambling machine policy: A qualitative study of local government policy makers. Aust N Z J Public Health, 44(5):369–75.

Community Engagement Report

Darebin Electronic Gaming Machines (EGM) Policy 2023-2027

Introduction

On 5 September 2022 Council approved the process of engaging the community in reviewing and updating the 2018-2022 Darebin Electronic Gaming Machines (EGM) Policy. Stage 1 community engagement process formally concluded on 17 November 2022.

A total of 220 community members responded to the questions in a variety of different engagement methods. Forty (40) community members responded to the survey while 180 community members from across fourteen (14) senior’s clubs, twenty-five (25) sporting clubs, six (6) general community groups provided their feedback through either face to face group discussions, online group discussions, or sending their input via email.

In addition, six (6) local community organisations and peak bodies, participated in the consultation through an online focus group discussion. One (1) poker venue operator sent their feedback to the consultation questions via email.

Engagement methods

The consultation was conducted through the following engagement methods:

(1) Survey

- A survey was run from 9 September to 7 October 2022 via Darebin Your Say Page.
- There were 251 views on the page
- 40 community members responded to the survey

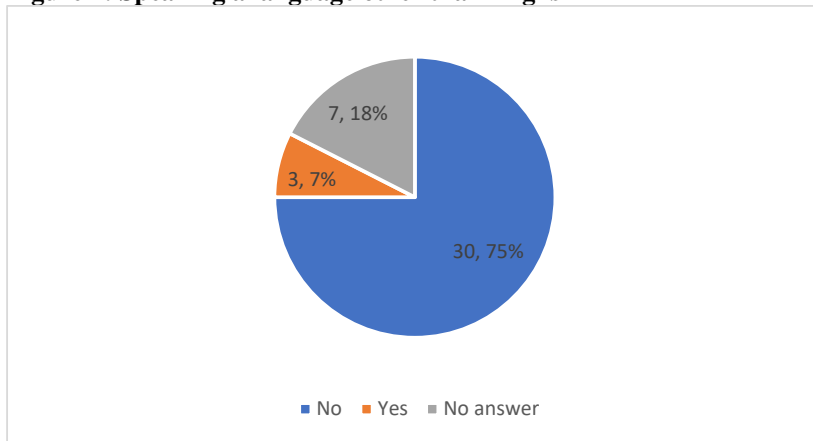
Majority of those who contributed to the survey were from Reservoir, Regent and Northcote (see Table 1 below)

Table 1: Contributions by location

Location	Postcode	Contributors
Reservoir	3073	12
Regent West	3072	11
Northcote	3070	6
Thornbury	3071	3
Burwood East	3151	1
Flemington	3031	1
Richmond	3121	1
Warrandyte	3113	1
Not disclosed		4

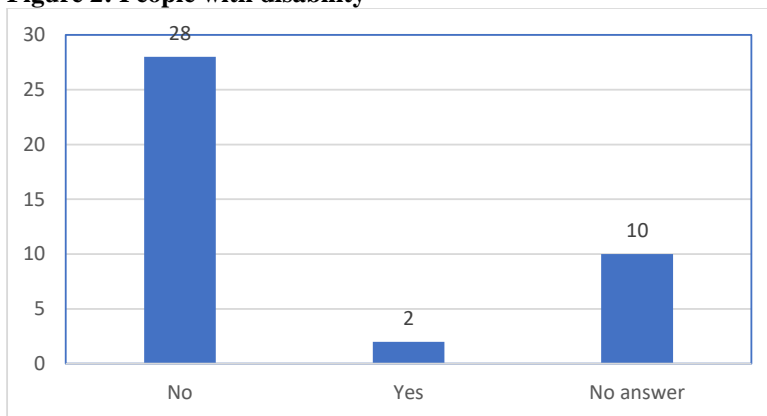
Majority of the survey respondents (75%, n=30) did not speak any other language apart from English. 7% (n=3) of respondents spoke a language other than English while 18% (n=7) chose not to disclose. None of the respondents identified as Aboriginal/Torres Strait Islander person (see Figure 1 below).

Figure 1: Speaking a language other than English



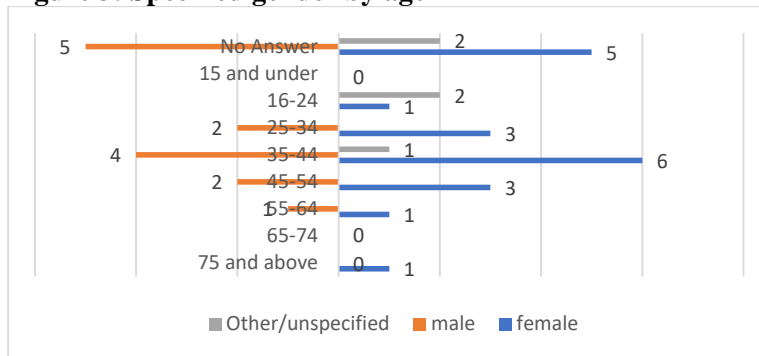
5% (n=2) of survey respondents identified as has people with a disability while 25% (n=10) chose not to disclose (see Figure 2 below).

Figure 2: People with disability



53% (n=21) of survey respondents identified as female while 35% (n=14) identified as male. 12% (5) respondents chose not to identify their gender. Majority (25%, n=10) of respondents were aged between 35-44 years. 25% (n=10) respondents chose not to disclose (see Figure 3 below).

Figure 3: Specified gender by age



(2) Face-to-face Focus Group Discussions (FGD)

Fourteen (14) Senior’s clubs from various cultural background including Greek, Italian and Macedonian attended face-to-face FGD organised at Senior Citizens Centres. An additional six (6) discussions sessions were held at East Preston Community Centre; one of these sessions was attended by recently arrived migrants. One (1) community group discussion was held at Alphington Community Centre. Two (2) face to face session was organised for young people; one (1) at the Youth Hub at Northlands Shopping Centre and another attended by Darebin Youth Jury. Two (2) face-to-face FGD targeting Aboriginal community were attended by forty-three (43) First Nations people.

(3) Online group discussions and email contributions

Local Community Organisations - Online

One (1) online discussion was held and attended by six (6) local community organisations and peak bodies.

Poker Machine Venue Operators – Online/Email

One (1) online meeting was also organised for the twelve (12) poker venue operators with poker s in Darebin. None of the operators attended the meeting. Poker machine operators were contacted via phone and email. They were requested to respond to the consultation questions via phone or by send an email. One (1) poker machine operator provided input via email.

Sporting Clubs – Online/E-mail

One (1) online meeting was attended by two (2) sporting clubs. An additional twenty-four (24) sporting clubs provided their input via email.

Council Advisory Committee’s

Members of the seven council’s advisory committees were informed about the consultation by email (via the relevant staff member) and encouraged to provide input via the survey on Darebin’s Your Say Page.

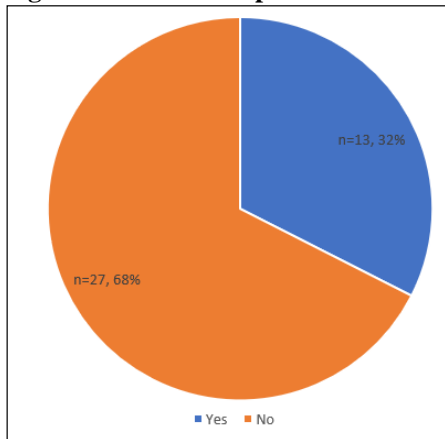
Findings

This section provides reports on emerging themes from findings of the consultation. Where possible, verbatim quotes from participants in the FGDs have been used. Personal data has been de-identified in order to protect the privacy of the participants.

Harm from poker/EGM machines

32% (n=13) survey respondents reported experiencing or having had a family member, or a loved one having experienced harm from poker machines (see Figure 4 below).

Figure 4: Harm from poker machines



Majority of survey participants agreed or strongly agree that poker machines are harmful (Figure 5)

- 90% (n=36) of respondents agreed/strongly agreed that poker machines are harmful to individual’s health and wellbeing.
- 88% (n=35) of respondents agreed/strongly agreed that poker machines could destroy family relationships.
- 90% (n=36) of respondents agreed/strongly agreed that poker machines could worsen family violence and intimate partner violence against women
- 93% (n=38) of respondents agreed/strongly agreed that poker machines could lead to financial difficulties and bankruptcy.

Figure 5: Perceptions about harm from poker machines

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Prefer not to answer	Count	Score
Pokie machines are harmful to an individual's health and wellbeing.	7.50% 3	0% 0	2.50% 1	12.50% 5	77.50% 31	0% 0	40	4.53
Pokie machines could destroy family relationships.	7.50% 3	2.50% 1	2.50% 1	10.00% 4	77.50% 31	0% 0	40	4.48
Pokie machines could worsen family violence and intimate partner violence against women.	5.00% 2	2.50% 1	2.50% 1	17.50% 7	72.50% 29	0% 0	40	4.50
Pokie machines could lead to financial difficulties and bankruptcy.	7.50% 3	0% 0	0% 0	7.50% 3	85.00% 34	0% 0	40	4.63

Similar experiences were reported in Focus Group Discussions:

“We all know someone [who has experienced harm from poker machines]”

Participants also spoke of the gambling industry as “predatory” and “malicious”, “robbing people”, and “profiting off of addiction” because they target people who are “poor”, “lonely”, “elderly” and those with “mental health issues” and those who use “illicit drugs”.

“Those most at risk are the lonely, particularly elderly who may not have any friends or family locally”

“Darebin and Whittlesea seniors are vulnerable people...Older people are more easily manipulated”

“[Poker s operators target] those with addiction issues, particularly drugs or alcohol, [and] those coming from a low socioeconomic background, or mental health issues”

“They want to make money from you. You can play the system, but you can’t beat the system”

A similar view was provided by a poker machine operator:

“In my personal experience those most at risk are the lonely – particularly elderly who may not have any friends or family locally, they visit gambling venues as a social outing”

Those with drugs and alcohol addiction and those from a low socioeconomic background and/or living with mental health issues are also high at risk of harm from EGM-related harm. Participants reported being aware of harm from poker machines such as “*depression*”, “*addiction*” “*financial stress*” and “*antisocial behaviour*”. In many cases, harms were most easily recognised where family members were also adversely affected by the behaviour of a poker-machine user.

“Pokers are malicious...They rob people of generational wealth”

“You think you’re going to win’...The machine gives you a little bit, makes you happy. It takes a lot more of it”

“Economic difficulties is caused by gambling”

“Financial stress makes people steal to get more money to play”

“I know a lot of people who’ve lost money- hundreds and thousands of dollars”

“They become depressed” “There is a lot of shame and stigma”

“[some people are] aggressive to family members”

“My friend’s husband sold their house and borrowed money under his wife’s name- and lost everything”

“Lots of families have been broken.... Marriage breaking...Houses have been sold...and there has been family violence”

Stories of personal experiences with EGM-related harms were often severe; community members spoke of “*suicide*”, “*family violence*”, “*lost houses*” and “*borrowed money*” among friends and neighbours. One poker- machine user talked about how he had “*wasted*” his “*hard-earned money*” and needed financial assistance to “*pay rent*”, “*buy food*”, and “*pay bills*” after the losses. Another poker-machine user spoke of how he lost all his salary and “*had no money to get my kids presents for Christmas*”.

“My father, every bit of money he had he spent on poker s”

“I lost 18k in a week and a half...I went into rental arrears...Money from Centrelink, dole, went straight in the machine”

“The pokies were a big contribution to [a colleague] killing himself”

Public harms such as “*threats*”, “*theft*” and “*bashings*” were acknowledged as a threat to the local community, among awareness of a ‘thriving’ drug trade in Darebin. Participants also

spoke about “*dodgy dealings*” with alleged “*money laundering*” by local crime syndicates and desperate individuals in poker venues.

“A lot of drug use around pokies now”

There were perceptions from Aboriginal community members that introduction of poker machines have replaced the social aspect of the venues “pubs used to be a community meeting place”. Consequently, they spoke of poker s as having “*taken away our community spirit*”.

Consequently, many participants were strongly opposed to poker machines:

“I really don’t like them”

“I don’t even want to step foot in a casino”

“I hate the pokies”

“Ban the pokies”

“If I had the power, I would eliminate all pokies tomorrow”

Reasons for using poker machines

None of the community members in the survey disclosed being a poker-machine user. Focus Group Discussion revealed that there was stigma and shame attached to poker -machine users. Some participants spoke of poker -machine users as being “*hypnotised*”, “*antisocial*”, “*addicted*”, “*blind drunk*” and “*irresponsible*”.

A common view in group discussions was that use of poker machines was an “*individual’s choice*”. Participants in FGD who disclosed that they were poker-machine users provided several reasons for gambling. Some talked about enjoying taking “*a chance*” with common optimism that they may “*win again*” if they continued to play. Others said that they played poker machines as a social activity and entertainment:

“I play pokies because “friends are doing it”

“I keep going back for entertainment”

“[Poker machine venues are] just somewhere to go”

However, some poker-machine users described their experience of using poker machines as “*therapeutic*” and a way of coping with stress of everyday:

“This is my way of dealing with stress”

“[I use poker machines] to switch off...to block off my problems”

Poker venues as socialisation venues

Many participants in group discussion who recently attended venues with poker machines reported not using the machines. They reported that the venues were places for escaping the “four walls at home” to socialise with friends and relatives. This was a common view across members of seniors’ clubs:

“It’s a way of getting out of the house for the day”

[Poker machine venues] “give something to talk and socialise over”

[Poker machine venues] provide “smoking area for chats”

“It’s a safe, accessible place for seniors and those with disabilities”

“[People] visit gambling venues as a social outing”

“[Poker machine venues provide] relaxation away from the kids...simply seeking to escape the four walls at home”

Another widely held view by members of seniors’ clubs was that poker machine venues are popular with older people because the businesses provide them good meals at a more affordable price:

“Cheap, good quality food in pokie venues” and “free coffee”

“Food is cheaper and excellent...drink voucher included”

“Venues provide a [free] bus [for seniors] if there’s 45 people”

“They say, ‘Have coffee, play machines, then have lunch’”

“Red Carpet Deals advertise cheap meals [at venues]”

Views about the 2018-2022 Darebin Electronic Gaming Machine Policy

- 25% (n=10) agreed/strongly agreed while 18% (n=7) disagreed/strongly disagreed that the current Policy has helped minimise harm from poker machines. 22% (9) neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement.
- 18% (n=7) agreed/strongly agreed while 18% (n=7) disagreed/strongly disagreed that the current Policy has positively impacted their community group/association/club. 30% (n=12) neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement.

- 35% (n=14) were not aware that Council had a Policy to minimise harm from poker machines.

Figure 6: Influence of the current Policy in minimising harm from poker machines

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Prefer not to say	I didn't know that Council had this Policy	Count	Score
The current Policy has helped minimise harm from pokie machines	10.00% 4	7.50% 3	22.50% 9	17.50% 7	7.50% 3	0% 0	35.00% 14	40	4.45
The current Policy has positively impacted my community group, association or club	10.00% 4	7.50% 3	30.00% 12	12.50% 5	5.00% 2	0% 0	35.00% 14	40	4.35

Local organisations and peak bodies described the current Policy as “strong”, “assertive” and “brave”. They spoke of the Policy as having set a standard for “best practice in local government” and has influenced recent EGM policies in other jurisdictions across Victoria.

Similar sentiments were held by sporting clubs:

“[Our club] backs the Darebin Council stance against electronic gaming revenue in view of the negative impacts of gambling, particularly for the most vulnerable”

“The club has policy which prevents us from receiving funds from gambling and as such are supportive of any restrictions on pokies in community spaces”

“[Council’s Policy] does not impact the [Club] as we do not have any EGMs or rely on revenue or sponsorship from businesses or clubs that have EGMs. As a community-based club, we support policies and initiatives that safeguard the community, and more specifically, those members of the community that are more at risk of social ills, including gambling, poverty and alcoholism”

All seniors’ clubs reported that since the introduction of the current Electronic Gaming Machine Policy, they have never held any social outings at a venue with poker machines.

Majority of club members who participated in discussions supported the current Policy and Action Plan:

“From a club perspective, damage to families is a great concern. [Therefore] we want to support [the policy] very much”

“Our club supports council’s current policy”

“We support the policy...it doesn’t appear to harm us”

“It’s a very consistent policy... [the policy] hasn’t affected us”

However, some members of senior’s clubs criticized the current Policy and Action Plan for banning clubs from having their social outings in poker venues. The Policy was recurrently described as *“an attack on seniors’ clubs”*, as their activities were the most significantly affected as they often planned outings to poker venues where large groups could access cheap and good quality meals through venue promotions: *“Three course meals”*, *“free coffee”* and *“drink vouchers”* were identified as prominent incentives for seniors to visit poker venues.

“Seniors clubs are particularly being targeted’ We get punished. Punished for being elderly”

“I think it’s an attack on seniors’ clubs. We paid taxes all their lives... we’re not kids...we should not be told what to do”

“We can’t even go to the RSL- how can you stop ex-servicemen from going to the RSL?”

Role of governments in minimising harm from EGM

Respondents were asked how varying levels of government - federal, state and local – could do differently to minimise harm from EGM. None of the survey respondents provided any suggestions. Nonetheless, many respondents in group discussions provided views about how different levels of government could be more active in reducing harm from poker machines. There was consensus that even though engaging in gambling activities is an *“individual’s choice”*, governments are responsible for the harms imposed upon the local community. Suggestions to minimise harm from EGM ranged from individual restrictions such as *“limiting the number of spins”* and a *“pre-paid card system”*, and policy reform to enforce *“sound limits”* and *“shorter opening hours”* for poker venues. A poker venue operator believed that the ease of access of EGM contributes to increase harm:

“I think one of the biggest issues in Darebin is the ease of access. There are a lot of venues, all with varying hours, just because one is closing doesn't mean you have to go home, because the one down the road is still open, and after that closes another one is still open. You can just bounce from venue to venue 24 hours a day and continuously gamble. If all venues in the area had a closing time. Say 3am for example I think the more vulnerable people, particularly those with addiction issues would be forced to go home instead of continuing on to the next location. Legally venues must close for 4 hours a day. But that isn't a break for vulnerable people when there's just somewhere else to go...I have found late at night is often when the most vulnerable attend venues”.

There was a consensus that the community is “not happy with the machines” being present in Darebin. Calls to “restrict”, “limit”, and “close” poker venues were fuelled by frustration towards the gambling industry and local government for allowing EGM to the area.

“Who put them in our front door in the first place?”

“Close some of them down”

“Shut down all the pokies...Shut them down in Darebin”

“Bloody machines should be controlled”

“Sledgehammer to the machines!”

“Stop gambling ads on TV- STOP!”

“Get people out of the house, but away from [poker] machines”

Participants suggested that the state government should add more regulations to the gambling industry in order to minimise community harm from poker s. Participants strongly supported reducing the number of machines allowed to operate within venues, as well as limiting the hours they are available to be used:

“Put restrictions on people. For example, timeouts sessions that expire or 20-minute break after each hour of use, or provide a pre-paid card system”

“Limit the number of spins that anyone can play”

“Limiting the number of machines”

“Higher taxes on venues”

“Reducing time when pokie venues are open and put betting limits”

Established government-led campaigns such as anti-smoking and drink-driving advertisements were suggested as effective ways to communicate the real harms of EGM use in Darebin. The

‘scare’ tactics commonly employed in such advertisements make clear and memorable statements to prevent risk-taking behaviours.

“Gambling ads are ridiculous”

“Stop advertising [gambling]...Make [gambling] uncool”

“Provide signs and advertisement on how much people have lost. [like smoking and drink-driving advertisements] people get scared”

“Advertise the suicide rate around gambling in the venues”

“Don’t tell me what I can win...Tell me what I can lose”

The currently endorsed message of ‘Gamble Responsibly’ was often referred to as “irresponsible” and insufficient to convey the potential harms of EGMs or deter others from their use. FGD participants suggested that there was “nothing” responsible about gambling in any form; and called for stronger and more specific approach to harm prevention.

“Gamble Responsibly; we need the opposite slogan”

“[They] advertise ‘gamble responsibly’- those who gamble are not responsible”

“We need the opposite slogan’ gamble responsibly’

“Stop commercial advertising of gambling!”

FGD participants suggested that Council has a duty of care to protect community members from gambling harms. Some participants in senior clubs accused council of double standard in the current Policy arguing that council is a beneficiary of poker s:

“Clubs at present can't benefit from pokie venues. Why then is council receiving money such as rates from pokie venues?”

“You’re grabbing on the other side!”

“Council takes a lot of money from venues [through rates] it’s hypocritical”

Many participants believed that there were few restrictions directed towards councillors or government officials themselves to receive donations and gifts from poker machine operators or attend the venues for occasions freely with “no recourse for their duplicity”. They argued that Council should lead by example and not have double standards. They suggested a few key actions that Council should take to reduce harm from poker s:

“Provide financial incentives to local businesses to remove [poker machines]”

*“Not allowing EGMs on council owned land”
“Buy-back scheme” [of poker machines]”*

Wider community awareness and engagement was also proposed to encourage people “out of the house” and “away from poker s”.

“Organise social activities for vulnerable and alone people”

“Raise awareness of addiction. People don’t believe they’re addicted”

Other suggestions provided include:

“Scare people like drink driving”

“Create awareness of harms’ [from poker s] that people understand... [provide information] in different languages”

“[Provide information on] Counselling programs [for those who] need help...and put them in touch with services”

“Organise social activities such as reading groups, cooking classes and other social things for vulnerable and alone people”

“Keep [community] centres open on public holidays”

“Activate partnership [between community groups and council] to help pensioners go out for social events more often”

“Provide incentives for pubs not to have [poker machines]”

Concerns raised by sporting and seniors’ clubs had a common theme of sponsorship and finding revenue to run club activities. Sporting clubs were tempted to take up sponsorships from the gambling industry to remain competitive. It was suggested that council should find more ways to support clubs in their independence from gambling revenue.

“We accept and are accustomed to seeking other revenue options. Difficulties however arise in the absence of a level playing field with clubs we compete against funded by electronic gaming revenue”

“Two years ago, we transitioned from receiving any form of in-kind or monetary support from EGM venues...we weren't as leveraged as other clubs but if you continue to narrow the scope of sponsorships it will make clubs harder to run. Sponsors used the Policy to knock back our sponsorship requests”

“The current policy impacts the club in lost dollars which we are not able to make up. Whilst the sentiment of reducing losses from gambling is a good one and one we support, it should not come at the expense of clubs trying to provide an outlet for people

to do exactly what you are trying to achieve with the policy, getting people out of gaming venues and into clubs like ours”

“Local sporting club are finding it extremely hard to attract sponsors to assist them to offset costs directly on their members...What is alarming is that sporting club outside of the Darebin Council boundaries are benefitting from sponsorship deals from EGM clubs within the Darebin Council boundaries”

The following suggestions were made regarding what Council could be doing more to support clubs to avoid reliance on revenue from poker machine operators:

“Clubs have to find ways to find revenue and support. To keep us as competitive as we can be...We need [more financial] assistance from council and other partners”

“We like the idea of reduced [sporting] ground rental as an incentive to meet council demands”

“Council can continue to advocate for a statewide/national ban on electronic gambling revenue for sports clubs in the best interests of vulnerable members of society and to ensure an equal funding playing field among clubs. Council can assist Clubs to be matched with potential sponsors through Darebin Council’s business development unit. Darebin Council could offer incentives to local businesses to sponsor clubs to reward pro social corporate responsibility behaviour within Darebin”

“There probably needs to be more education on what the council is doing to reduce the footprint of EGM’s in the LGA. You approved them but clubs are the ones that need to adapt to your change of policy direction. Having a meeting at a pub in the off-season is hard to avoid because they are good places large enough to meet socially. We’d like to see the offer of council space in the off-season to host meetings if you don’t want us utilising EGM venues”

“Offer function rooms or make function rooms more available [to clubs]”

“Offering discounts for seasonal ground rental or offering more funding (grants) to sporting clubs that are not reliant or affiliated with EGM revenue/businesses would encourage clubs & community groups to seek alternate revenue streams”

“You could assist by reducing fees and with reaching out to local sponsors which is difficult considering all the sporting clubs in the area are fighting for the same sponsorship dollars”

“Council could perhaps provide a list of venues that don’t have EGMs that we could meet in / have functions at (or alternatively that do have EGMs so we can avoid those venues)”

“The council could assist by perhaps linking clubs and local businesses for mutual beneficial connections...Darebin Arts Centre for example could be a good place for presentation nights if the council could facilitate access where the club could make money or somewhere similar. Having local artists to add to the evening may add to the attraction. Pathways for after hour locations our members could go to could also

benefit where we could encourage any members as an alternative for members, we know that would go to gambling venues after the club needs to close”

Members of seniors’ clubs also reported that older people were vulnerable to gambling gaming industry due to incentives such as free transport to poker venues. They requested Council to increase the clubs’ grants to make it affordable for the groups to hire transport for social outings:

“Offer more money to the [senior] clubs to be able to hire buses for social outings”

“Provide community bus for seniors clubs to facilitate transport during social outings... [allow clubs to] hire council buses [for outings]”

Service referral and support of those experiencing harm from poker machines

There was a consensus among participants that Council’s duty of care to the community must extend beyond everyday individual restrictions, to seek a broader approach to minimising harm from EGM.

One poker-machine user stressed the need for venues to support those who are signed up on the self-exclusion program:

“I’ve self-excluded... never once been stopped...I know I need help...Who is policing that? My gambling hasn’t gone down at all...Your ID scan shouldn’t allow you in the venue”

Local community organisations and peak bodies commended the Council for enhancing strong partnerships with the anti-gambling sector. They recommended that Council provides information on available support services such as ‘Gambler’s Help’ on the website, social media outlets and print media such as brochures, posters and wallet-sized cards with information on where to get help.

Discussion

Findings from the consultation have highlighted that many community members are aware of the harm caused by poker machines. However, Council and partner agencies should continue creating awareness about harm from poker machines to counter any perceived benefits. This should be done through a range of methods including social media campaigns, print media and targeted community education sessions. Community awareness on harm from poker machines should also be communicated in a range of languages in order to reach communities with low English proficiency.

Social isolation is one of the contributors of use of poker machines or visiting poker venues. Therefore, Council should deliver targeted regular social activities for different age groups in order to divert potential poker-machine users from poker venues. The findings also call for Council to work with Gamblers Help in the North to develop a referral pathway to support those community members experiencing harm from EGM.

The majority of participants were supportive of EGM harm reduction and prevention measures. The community attitudes revealed in this study also suggest that the community is supportive of a reduction in the number of EGMs in Darebin. Although success in reduction of EGMs may result in a reduction of EGM revenue, the Victorian government should view this in the context of the overall social and economic benefits resulting from such changes.

The overwhelming support of the 2018-2022 EGM Policy and Action Plan (current Policy and Action Plan) reinforces the need for Council to build on the past achievements in order to further minimise harm from EGM. Nonetheless, Council needs to further explore how to enable social outings of seniors' clubs away from the reliance of subsidized meals and drinks available at poker venues. In addition, Council should continue working with sporting clubs to explore sponsorship and ways sporting clubs can generate income independent of poker machine operators. There is an opportunity for Council to consider offering space to sporting clubs for their meeting during off-season.

Some recommendations made by community members on strategies to minimise harm from poker machines fall outside the jurisdiction of Council. Therefore, Council should continue to work with the anti-gambling sector to advocate to state and federal governments on minimising harm from poker machines. Advocacy work needs to happen in a range of areas including policy reforms, gambling advertisement, venues opening and closing hours, betting limits, reducing the number of poker s in the municipality, and requirements for poker machine operators to check their clients identity in order to monitor those in a self-exclusion program.

Conclusion

This consultation provided an opportunity for community members and our stakeholders to add their voice in the review and updating of the 2018-2022 Darebin Electronic Gaming Machine Policy for the 2023-2027 period. The community response to the consultation was

overwhelming due to the harm experienced by family or witnessed by the community from poker machines. Findings from the community engagement process highlight the following four priority areas in the next iteration of Council's Policy and Action Plan to minimise harm from poker machines:

Organisational Leadership:

Take a whole of organisation approach to minimising harm from EGMs. This includes ensuring that Councillors and Council officers lead by example and that any of their actions aim to minimise harm from EGMs.

Legislation Regulation:

Exercise the full extent of its regulatory and legislative mandate to minimise harm from EGMs.

Advocacy and Partnership:

Maintain strategic partnerships and undertake advocacy to minimise gambling harm in Darebin.

Awareness and education:

Educate the community about the imbalance between EGMs harms and benefits. This is critical to ensure that community members have an informed perception of EGMs.

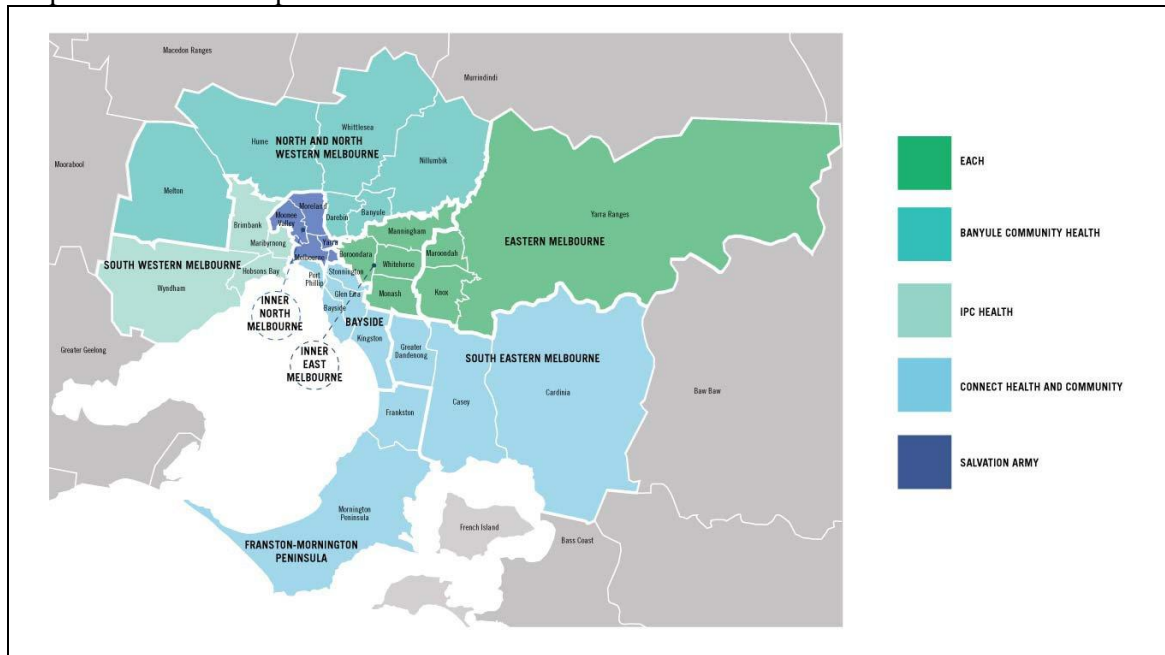
Funding and resourcing

Dedicate resources and source funding to minimise harm from poker machines in the community.

Appendix 1: Support Services

Free and confidential services are available across Victoria to people experiencing harm from their own or someone else’s gambling. Darebin community members can seek services from Banyule Community Health.

Help services in Metropolitan-all communities



Source: Victorian Responsible Gambling Foundation¹

First Nations awareness programs (state-wide)

- [Gippsland and East Gippsland Aboriginal Cooperative](#)
- [Mallee District Aboriginal Services](#)
- [Rumbalara Aboriginal Cooperative](#)
- [Victorian Aboriginal Health Service](#)
- [Strong Brother Strong Sister](#)

In-language help services (state-wide)

- [Arabic Welfare Incorporated](#)
- [Australian Vietnamese Women's Association](#)
- [Federation of Chinese Associations, Social Welfare Centre](#)
- [Springvale Indo-Chinese Mutual Assistance Association Incorporated](#)
- [Victorian Arabic Social Services](#)

For more information contact:

Community Wellbeing Community.Wellbeing@darebin.vic.gov.au

¹ Victorian Responsible Gambling Foundation. 2022. Gambler's Help services. Accessed 9 November 2022. Available <https://responsiblegambling.vic.gov.au/reducing-harm/gamblers-help-services/>



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 Speak Your Language
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**Stage 2 community feedback of the draft Electronic Gaming Machines (EGM) Policy
2023-2027 and draft Action Plan**

Introduction

On 27 March 2022, Council endorsed the draft Darebin Electronic Gaming Machine (EGM) Policy 2023-2027 and draft Action Plan for the purposes of public exhibition to receive community feedback with the following changes:

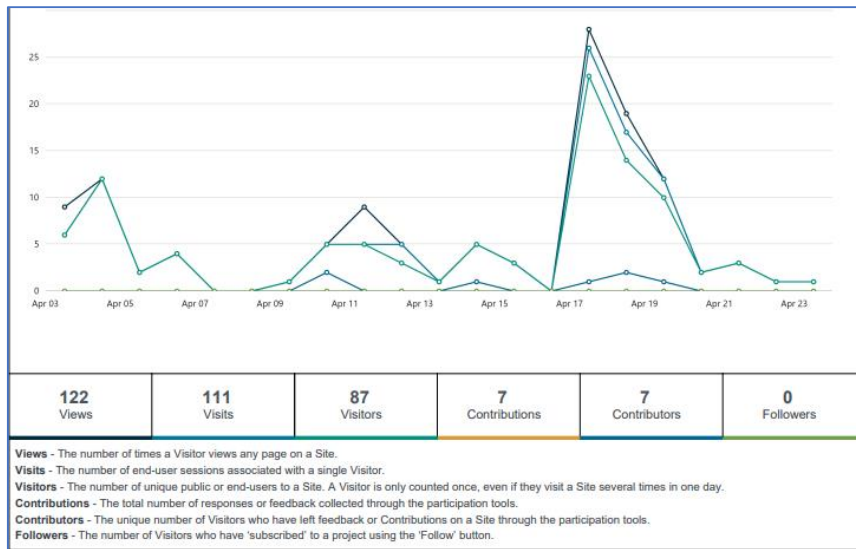
- a) Under the section 'Policy Statements':
 - i. *Amends the following statement to – 'Councillors and Council staff will not attend gambling venues when representing Council in an official capacity subject to policy exceptions identified'.*
 - ii. *Adds an additional dot point that reads – 'Within the first 6 months of implementation of this policy, Council commits to using its best endeavours within business-as-usual resources to supporting all community groups, clubs, organisations, associations and businesses, especially those that are multilingual, to educate and inform them of the new changes included in this policy as well as assist them to fulfil their future obligations, in appropriate languages, through the implementation of the Action Plan.'*
- b) Under the section 'Breach of Policy' amend as follows:
 - i. *The previous policy 2018 - 2022 outlined a four-year developmental approach to supporting groups to become compliant with the Policy. With the review, the draft Policy proposes a move from a graduated policy to one that seeks compliance.*
 - ii. *If there has been a breach, the draft Policy proposes that officers will consider the reason behind the breach and implement with the club or group a diversion plan to support and encourage compliance in a capacity building way.*
 - iii. *Where a club or group continues to intentionally breach the Policy, despite the best efforts of officers to support and encourage compliance in a capacity building way through a diversion plan, this may ultimately result in Council resolving to withdraw funds or hiring of venues, however this will ultimately be a decision for Council.*

Engagement methods

Stage two consultation was conducted through the following engagement methods:

(1) Survey

- A survey commenced from 03 April to 23 April 2023, via Darebin Your Say Page.
- There were 122 views on the page
- Seven community members responded to the survey (see Figure below)



(2) Face to face Focus Group Discussions (FGD)

The following ten (10) senior’s clubs participated in the FGD:

- Greek Ex-Service Club of Darebin District
- Batman Elderly Greek Women’s Group
- Keon Park Greeks Seniors Citizens Club
- Italian Elderly Citizens Group-Holy Spirit
- Thornbury Italian Senior Citizens Club
- Bigla Senior Citizen Group
- Macedonian Seniors Citizens Club-Pelister
- Australian Macedonians Pensioners Club Reservoir
- Polish Senior Citizens Club of Reservoir
- East Reservoir Senior Citizen’s Club

(3) Email contributions

The following three (3) senior’s club provided their feedback through email.

- Reskeon Seniors Group
- Roma social club
- Reservoir Probus

A total of 40 members of senior’s clubs provided feedback.

Findings

This section will summarise feedback from the community and officer recommendations. Where possible, verbatim quotes from participants have been used. Personal data has been de-identified in order to protect the privacy of the participants.

Two (2) survey respondents thought that Council had not missed any action that would minimise harm from EGM while three (3) people were unsure if we had missed any action:

“I think it is a good policy as a starter, but I would like all pokie machines banned from Darebin”

“An excellent start to stopping the normalisation and harm of gambling in the community”

“Limiting number of pokie venues in Darebin would be the best outcome and have more social for elderly people to enjoy, like dancing and dining also other games for fun would be better for mental and physical outcome. Seniors should be supported”

“Let people decide how they should spend their money, pay \$200 to see a show or go to spend it on the pokies”

Two (2) people thought that Council had missed the following actions:

“Change opening and closing hours. Most venues across Vic are open for 20 hours per day due to council approval, if venues are open for less than that, there is less time for gambling”

“Close all types of gambling, i.e. football, TAB, dogs, etc.etc. and not just the pokie. Government takes heaps from all of these venues, including cigarettes and alcohol, why not ban everything?”

Council is not able to implement the proposed actions given its limited role in regulating the gambling industry. However, Council draft Action Plan outlines key advocacy actions that aims to seek reform to the Gambling Regulation Act to place greater regulation and restrictions on the gambling industry.

Below feedback was received from seniors’ clubs in relation to key policy statements that would impact on their social outings and activities.

Policy statement 1:

- Council will support clubs to identify venues with no EGM to hold their outings and activities.

Feedback

All senior groups supported this policy statement noting that it has been challenging to find non-EGM venues that can provide affordable meals, meeting place and entertainment for seniors’ clubs:

“That is great if this would happen”

“Good idea, but we don’t trust that you will find any venues”

Policy statement 2:

- Community groups, clubs, organisations, associations and businesses that are in a Council owned facility or building (in a capacity of a license or lease agreement) or plan to hire a Council facility or building are prohibited from receiving sponsorship or grants (in-kind or cash) from poker machine operators.

Feedback

All seniors' groups supported this statement because none of them receive financial support from an EGM venue.

Policy statements 3 and 4:

- Council will not support (in-kind or cash) any community groups, clubs, organisations, associations or businesses who hold functions and activities in EGM venues.
- Council will not support (funding or in-kind) any club, community group, association, organisation or business that meet in venues that have EGM.

Feedback

Majority of the seniors' club members did not support these policy statements. Those opposed to the statements argued that it is challenging to find non-EGM venues that can provide meals and drinks that are discounted at the same rates comparable to EGM venues:

"Restaurants charge us minimum \$50 per person, the pokie venues charge us only \$25 per person and we get much more food and drinks"

"We collated a list but it's so expensive to go to a non-EGM venue. We don't have enough money to be able to go out. We are desperately trying to find somewhere for us to go"

"It's not fair, we go there for a cheap meal, and someone may be singing there"

"It is very difficult to find venues without EGM's that provide cheap meals for seniors"

"Why is only Darebin [council] stopping clubs [to go to pokie venues]? We look for cheap food. It is not fair"

"If we can find somewhere else to go, we will go. But other places are too expensive"

Others argued that using poker machines is a personal choice and there is little impact when clubs are prohibited from holding their social outings in an EGM venue:

*"Everyone knows we should not play [pokies]...But nobody can stop people using pokies"
"We are all adults. Nobody forces you to gamble"*

"It is good to take the club [members] to lunch but not allow them to play pokies, but we cannot stop them"

"We acknowledge the negative effects of gaming. However, to me the people in the [seniors] clubs are more responsible of what we do than people outside of the clubs. To me you're looking at penalising 2000 people in the clubs. You are penalising these 2000 people, and they are not the ones [likely to experience harm from EGM]. People in the clubs have support from the people around them in the clubs. The people that you need to be targeting

are the people not associated with the clubs as they do not have social support. Why pick on the clubs?"

Club members also insisted that Council should not be assuming that everyone who goes to an EGM venue is interested in using poker machines. Some also argued that Council is violating their human rights by prohibiting clubs from attending EGM venues:

"We only go for lunch. We don't play any pokies"

"I don't play pokies; I just go for a meal and to meet friends"

"Not everybody who goes to pokie venues plays"

"You are impeaching on people's right to choose where we go. This is pretty much blackmail"

"If we gamble at the pokies, we lose [our] money, not Council – this should not be up to Council to decide where we go and how we spend our time"

Club members also argued that none of Council money is used in poker machines:

"I don't think we should be prohibited [to go to EGM venues]. We do not put any Council money into the machines. Council money is used to subsidise meals or tea and coffee"

"It's not fair – we aren't using council money on the machines; we are using it on transport and subsidising the food. We are using the money to be able to afford a subsidised meal not for pokies"

"We are pensioners who just want to enjoy our last days happily. We should not be told what to do with our money"

Some also noted that when the social outing involves travelling with a bus there is usually no time for any of their club members to use poker machines:

"When we go for social outing at a pokie venue there is no time for members to go play pokies. Otherwise the bus will leave them"

"If the council can find something like the RSL that provides us with a cheap meal, then that is okay"

Some club members also argued that Council's funds to clubs is too little to justify prohibition of attending EGM venue by seniors' clubs:

"The money [Council Funding] is little. We may wish to use our own funds to hold an activity at a pokie venue"

"Nearly every hotel and RSL in Victoria has pokie machines, so you're banning all these clubs from going to every venue? To me if the council, is going to blackmail people, the clubs are just going to do what we want. We are entitled to do what we want"

Club members provided some suggestions to discourage any people using EGM during social outings:

“We want to be able to have lunch at places that have pokies, as long as we make it clear that they cannot play pokies during the lunch”

“We can make it known at the start, make it clear, that playing EGM is not allowed [during our] lunch”

“Should be written down as a rule, you cannot play the machines when you come out with us”

Policy Exception

ANZAC Day and similar military services held at The Returned and Services League (RSL)

The RSLs will be exempt from the EGM Policy only for ANZAC day and similar military service events. For these occasions the Council resources such as access to the community bus will continue for eligible residents wishing to attend these commemorative events.

Feedback

Majority of seniors' group members did not support the exception statement relation to holding social events at RSLs. Some of the reasons provided include: RSLs provide subsidised meals for seniors, prohibiting access to RSLs in discriminatory and that it is expensive to book a social activity at RSLs on ANZAC day:

“Even if the ANZAC day exemption occurred, the clubs can't book anyway because it's booked out on ANZAC day or it is too expensive the club to afford. Also, meals are not subsidized during public holidays”.

“RSL venues are very affordable, the seniors will feel they are discriminated against if we can't go there to eat a meal”

“It is not fair. We want to go for a good meal at RSL on Mother's Day and Father's Day”

“Anzac Day and RSL should be remembered all the time”

“We do not agree for 1 day an exemption”

“it is not fair to say you are not going to RSL. It is discrimination”

“We want to go 3 or 4 times a year”

“We want to be allowed to out for lunch, not only on ANZAC day [but also] on Mother's Day”

“Exemption should not be ANZAC day [only], but we should be allowed go all the time when we want to go to RSL, because the meals are cheap”

“It’s not fair to say you cannot go to the RSL. It’s discrimination to tell so many people and groups that they cannot go to places with EGM”

Breach of the Policy

The previous policy outlined a four-year developmental approach to supporting groups to become compliant with the Policy. With the review, the draft Policy has moved from a graduated Policy to one that seeks compliance. If there has been a breach, officers will explore the reason behind the breach and provide this information and a recommendation to Council for a decision. Recommendations may include a diversion plan. Where a club or group continues to intentionally breach the Policy, this may ultimately result in Council resolving to withdraw funds or hiring of venues. However, this will ultimately be a decision for Council.

Feedback

Many seniors club members were not supportive of Council’s proposed action to enforce the Policy:

“Withdrawing the funds – is a crime to go for lunch? We will be penalised for going to an EGM venue for lunch. That’s terrible. This goes back to the socialist way of making decisions”

“Council will penalise us for going out for lunch. This is blackmail”

“If we went [to EGM venues] on our own accord and raise our own money as a group, withdrawing funds is unfair as it is our own money. We’ll self-fund, we just want to get out and have a meal”

Discussion and Conclusion

Stage 2 consultation provided an opportunity for community members to provide feedback on the draft EGM Policy 2023-2027 and draft Action Plan. In general, community members were supportive of the draft Policy and draft Action Plan. However, majority members of council-funded seniors' clubs provided feedback on two policy statements and compliance clause, which they argued would disadvantage them. The key policy question is whether council should keep the two policy statements and compliance statement as they are in the draft Policy or provide an exemption for seniors' groups.

Older residents in Darebin, including older people from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, and culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD), are considered a vulnerable population group at risk of being socially isolated. Individuals who are socially isolated experience poor health and wellbeing outcomes. The 2019 Towards an Aged Friendly Darebin report noted that there was a lack of affordable recreation options for older people in Darebin (other than venues with EGM).

Council's work to promote inclusion opportunities for older people continues to be a priority. Council aims to encourage the use of non-EGM venues as part of the current Policy. The Supported and Connected Living Team within Council work closely with senior members of the community and support them to join in with groups and participate in activities that not only add to their lives, but also contribute to the local community. Through the community grants program, Council also supports social participation of senior club members by providing funding through the community grants program. This work must be taken into consideration when Council makes its final decision in relation to the draft 2023-2027 EGM Policy and Action Plan.

10. ITEMS TO BE TABLED

Nil

11. NOTICES OF MOTION

11.1 GRAFFITI MANAGEMENT

Councillor: Lina MESSINA

NoM No.: 16/2023

Take notice that at the Council Meeting to be held on 27 November 2023, it is my intention to move:

That Council:

- (1) *Notes that Graffiti has social and economic implications, which are acknowledged in the Graffiti Prevention Act 2007.*
- (2) *Notes that the Graffiti Prevention Act 2007 imposes significant penalties for graffiti crime, including imprisonment for up to two years, and grants general enforcement powers to Victoria Police and Protective Service Officers.*
- (3) *Notes that Council acknowledges the difference between public street art and vandalism, which includes placing images and text on other people's property without permission.*
- (4) *Writes to the Premier, the Opposition Leader, the Victorian Minister for Police and Minister for Crime Prevention, the Shadow Minister for Police, The Member for Northcote, the Member for Preston, and all Members for the Northern Region:*
- (5) *advocating for increased action on graffiti, including enforcement*
- (6) *advocating for the State Government to fund a pilot place-based graffiti taskforce in Darebin, to test a place-based and multi-disciplinary approach to graffiti prevention and law enforcement that could be deployed across other municipalities*
- (7) *seeking a meeting between senior State and Council officers to discuss and progress enforcement and a place-based graffiti pilot.*
- (8) *Writes to the Municipal Association of Victoria, the Northern Council Alliance, and the M9 Alliance, to ask that they support Darebin's calls for the State Government to increase action on graffiti, including enforcement.*
- (9) *Writes to the LXP, asking that they urgently remove graffiti from the Reservoir Train Station and surrounding precinct infrastructure, and that they take steps to ensure prevention and the swift clean-up of future graffiti.*
- (10) *Writes to the Lord Mayors of all Australian Capital cities, asking that they advocate to their respective State Governments that graffiti is a serious issue that needs to be prioritised.*
- (11) *Explores the effectiveness of the current Darebin General Local Law No. 1 in preventing graffiti through its Local Law Review project*

Notice Received: 10 November 2023

Notice Given to Councillors 10 November 2023

Date of Meeting: 27 November 2023

Rationale

Graffiti continues to be a challenge across Darebin, including a number of persistent hot-spots.

Graffiti is also a national issue, with rate payers across the country affected.

Council remains committed to supporting enforcement efforts in partnership with Victoria Police, focusing on the Graffiti Prevention Act 2007 and Local Laws concerning property dilapidation. That said, challenges in criminal convictions arise due to the stringent requirement of evidence "beyond a reasonable doubt," whereas civil convictions operate on the basis of evidence "on the balance of probability."

Further discussions are essential to explore the most effective policing and regulation methods.

This Notice of Motion calls for the State Government to partner with Darebin to discuss and explore the most effective prevention, policing and regulation methods through establishing a place-based taskforce pilot program in Darebin. It also calls for the current Local Law Review Project to pressure-test the effectiveness of the current Local Law No. 1.

Graffiti is a form of vandalism that damages property, causes public safety issues and can result in liability. It negatively impacts local neighbourhoods by making public & private spaces appear unsafe, unwelcoming and dirty. It is also a financial burden on ratepayers, residences and business operators. More often than not, graffiti is also used as a means to mark territories. Graffiti removal costs for the isn't just a nuisance for communities; it is also a major headache for businesses. It may appear threatening and make customers unhappy when they see something inappropriate written on an advertisement or sign.

Major hurdles facing the local governments at present and is the main reason why local authorities have a tough time controlling the spread of graffiti in some areas, and certainly a key reason why the p Rationale for Overhauling Graffiti Management in Australia.

1. Economic Impact:

Financial Drain on Council Budgets: Hundreds of thousands of dollars are spent annually from council budgets to clean up graffiti. Every dollar spent on graffiti removal is a missed opportunity to invest in community betterment. By overhauling graffiti management, resources can be redirected towards initiatives that enhance public spaces, strengthen community bonds, and improve overall quality of life.

Impact on Businesses: Graffiti poses a significant challenge for businesses, as it can be threatening and create dissatisfaction among customers. The cost of graffiti removal adds an extra economic burden on local businesses, affecting their overall viability and success.

Impact on residents: The financial and physiological impact on residents is widespread and profound when they identified the defacing of a sacred space without permission.

2. Social Impact:

Perception of Safety and Well-being: Graffiti contributes to an unsafe and unwelcoming perception of public and private spaces. This negatively impacts local neighbourhoods, creating an environment that may deter community engagement and diminish the overall well-being of residents. How can we give projects to those who vandal to address their social needs for creativity.

3. Legal Challenges:

Enforcement Hurdles: The spread of graffiti is challenging to control due to the difficulty in enforcing laws against illegal graffiti. Local authorities and the police face obstacles in convicting offenders, hindering effective deterrence measures.

Opportunity

A major overhaul in graffiti management in Australia is imperative to address the significant economic and social impacts of this form of vandalism. By implementing a comprehensive strategy that combines enforcement, project management, we can not only mitigate the financial burden but also foster safer, more vibrant communities. The focus should shift from mere cleanup efforts to a holistic approach that addresses the root causes and empowers communities. Local Government needs the state and police enforcement to come along the journey on how we make our streets cleaner, safer and vibrant again.

Attachments

Nil

11.2 EXTENSION OF EARLY YEARS SERVICES LEASE RENEWAL SUBMISSIONS**Councillor:** Emily DIMITRIADIS**NoM No.:** 17/2023

Take notice that at the Council Meeting to be held on 27 November 2023, it is my intention to move:

That Council:

1. *Notes that the date for the Hearing of Submissions Meeting for the Early Years Services Lease Renewal is 11 December 2023.*
2. *Notes that under Darebin's Governance Rules section 14.3(1), "Members of the public wishing to make a submission must register their intention to do so before 12 noon on the day of the Ordinary Council Meeting or Hearing of Submissions Meeting and be in attendance on the day of the Meeting to make their submission."*
3. *Extends the submission period for the 'Early Years Services Lease Renewal' Hearing of Submissions Meeting to allow community members to make a paper or online submission by 7 December 2023.*
4. *Ensures that people who wish to make a submission in person can register by 12 noon on 11 December 2023, as per s 14.3(1) of the above Governance Rules.*

Notice Received: 13 November 2023**Notice Given to Councillors** 13 November 2023**Date of Meeting:** 27 November 2023**Rationale**

Many residents have expressed concerns that the timeframe to register to make their submissions for the 'Early Years Services Lease Renewal' Hearing of Submissions Meeting by the current date of 28 November 2023 is too soon and that certain community views may be neglected or disadvantaged by not being able to register to make their submissions, despite being allowed to register to make in person submissions by 12 noon on the day of the Hearing of Submissions Meeting.

Attachments

Nil

11.3 BILL LAWRY OVAL STATUS**Councillor: Emily DIMITRIADIS****NoM No.: 18/2023**

Take notice that at the Council Meeting to be held on 27 November 2023, it is my intention to move:

That Council:

- (1) *Notes that in 2018, Darebin received \$450,000 in funding from the State Government for Female Friendly Facilities at Bill Lawry Oval <https://www.premier.vic.gov.au/northcote-scores-female-friendly-sporting-facilities/>*
- (2) *Notes that the (then) Premier stated that “This project will extend and refurbish the existing pavilion including the change rooms and public amenities, and provide a new fourth change room, medical room, accessible toilet and storage”.*
- (3) *Notes that the State Government has provided the funds to Council for Female Friendly Facilities at Bill Lawry Oval and Council has not acted to acquit to deliver the project.*
- (4) *Notes that as of the November 2023, which is five years after the announcement of the grant, Bill Lawry Oval is still lacking Female Friendly Facilities.*
- (5) *Requests a report to be presented to the February 2024 on the status of the funding, along with current plans and options to provide Female Friendly Facilities at Bill Lawry Oval.*

Notice Received: 13 November 2023**Notice Given to Councillors: 13 November 2023****Date of Meeting: 27 November 2023****Rationale**

In 2018, it was announced that Darebin would receive a significant grant to provide female friendly facilities at Bill Lawry Oval. This is over five years ago now and the community is still waiting for the important Female Friendly Facilities to be delivered at Bill Lawry Oval. Based on discussions with the community, I believe it is unclear to many community members, the status of Darebin’s commitment to providing Female Friendly Facilities at Bill Lawry Oval.

Attachments

Nil

**11.4 VICTORIAN FOOD SYSTEMS CONSENSUS STATEMENT,
TOWARDS A HEALTHY, REGENERATIVE AND EQUITABLE
FOOD SYSTEM IN VICTORIA****Councillor: Susanne NEWTON****NoM No.: 19/2023**

Take notice that at the Council Meeting to be held on 27 November 2023, it is my intention to move:

That Council:

- (1) *Notes that this motion moves to confirm support for the Victorian Food Systems Consensus Statement, Towards A Healthy, Regenerative and Equitable Food System in Victoria, facilitated by VicHealth and in carriage with Sustain: The Australian Food Network.*
- (2) *Brings forward a report that considers options for Darebin to:*
 - a. *affirm a commitment to the leverage points laid out in the Consensus Statement, including:*
 - i. *The legislation of the Right to Food in Victoria*
 - ii. *Establishing a governmental food systems committee to undertake a food systems inquiry and subsequently develop a Victorian food systems plan*
 - iii. *The advancement of a comprehensive food systems monitoring framework*
 - iv. *Regenerative and agroecological food production*
 - v. *The creation of a local food investment fund*
 - vi. *That all public sector food procurement and retail is healthy and sustainable*
 - vii. *Strengthening food literacy in schools in collaboration with educators*
 - viii. *Resourcing and empowerment of local councils to lead food system strategies*
 - ix. *The revision of the Victorian planning provisions legislation to promote health*
 - x. *Improving dignified access to healthy food through the food relief sector*
 - b. *undertake the VicHealth “building better food systems for healthier communities” module.*
- (3) *Supports the Food Systems and Food Security Working Group's advocacy efforts to lobby state politicians to begin a Food Systems Inquiry similar to the Food Production and Supply Inquiry in NSW (2021-22), including writing to the Victorian Minister for Health. This motion will be used for this end.*

Notice Received: 13 November 2023

Notice Given to Councillors 13 November 2023

Date of Meeting: 27 November 2023

Rationale

A commitment to these actions and leverage points will lead to a better food system for the LGA and more Victoria more broadly. A food system that is healthy, regenerative and equitable for the decades to come. One that guarantees a right to food for all and fosters a resilient, thriving community. Amid the sky-rocketing cost of living crisis and speculation on vital agricultural land in Victoria, it is imperative that we commit to strategies that enable access to food for all, protect our food production industries and regenerate the land.

Victoria's food system is in urgent need of an overhaul. We are currently facing unprecedented levels of food insecurity amidst the worst cost of living crisis in recent memory, an escalating ecological catastrophe and an uncertain global geopolitical stage.

A core component of the cost-of-living crisis is the unchecked inflation of food prices. Over the last year, the price of staple groceries has increased between 5%-15%, with quarterly inflation still at 8%. In conjunction with mortgage and rent payments, energy bills, and transportation costs all increasing, more and more households are becoming financially unstable.

These cost of living pressures are a primary cause of the alarming 21% rise in Food Bank distributions over the 2021-2022 period, with demand for food relief growing every month. Additionally, Over 365,000 children in Victoria have experienced severe food insecurity, drastically impacting their ability to engage and learn at school in the same period. FoodBank data shows that 70% of those facing food insecurity also experience high levels of psychological distress, particularly among parents. With the RBA interest rate increases continuing, and inflation showing little sign of slowing, these statistics are likely to undervalue the current state of food insecurity.

The cost-of-living crisis has only added to already high levels of food insecurity in part due to the devastating fires, floods, and droughts experienced over large parts of Australia in the last 5 years. With the climate crisis accelerating, these disasters are likely to become more prevalent, further plunging the food system into catastrophe. The events affect not only our food producing land, but also supply and distribution chains, leading to shortages in isolated areas.

Lastly, the current global geopolitical environment is one of high volatility and uncertainty. The ongoing consequences of Russia's invasion of Ukraine has drastically increased the price of wheat (a core ingredient in many staple and processed foods, as well as livestock feed), fertilisers (on which our current agricultural system is reliant), and fuel (used for farm machinery and freight). All of these factors lead to shortages and price increases, which in turn reduce access to food for a large number of Victorians.

We need a food system that is resilient to these shocks, one that will ensure food security to all for generations to come. Fortunately, in the last few years, high quality research led by food systems practitioners, community organisers, councils and academics, has been conducted to address these challenges. In particular, the Victorian Food Systems Consensus Statement (<https://vicfoodsystem.org.au/>) and the Melbourne Food System Resilience Report (https://science.unimelb.edu.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0009/4128795/Foodprint-Resilience-Report-2022_double_page.pdf) .

They call for the following actions:

1. Legislate the Right to Food in Victoria
2. Establish a government food systems enquiry to further the existing research and implement recommendations
3. Support First Nations Foodways and Sovereignty
4. Advance a comprehensive food systems monitoring framework
5. Shift to regenerative and agroecological food production – soil, carbon, health, profit
6. Create a local food investment fund
7. That all public sector food procurement and retail is healthy and sustainable
8. Strengthen food literacy in schools in collaboration with educators
9. Resource and empower local councils to lead food system strategies
10. Revise the Victorian planning provisions legislation to promote health
11. Improve dignified access to healthy food through the food relief sector
12. Protect peri-urban agricultural land from development and speculation
13. Diversify the Victorian food system – (locations of production, storage, retail; scale of enterprises involved in the systems, increased biodiversity – crops, forestry, livestock; distribution networks)
14. Strengthen local and regional food production rather than rely on imports
15. Decentralise food production, storage and retail options
16. Create a circular economy in which waste is put back into the system

A food system that incorporates all of these evidenced based best practices will create an environment in which all Victorians can thrive. we will be resilient to climate, economic, and geopolitical stresses. It will foster a closer connection between humans and the ecology of which we are a part. Communities will be stronger and more resilient, and we will be physically and mentally healthier.

I acknowledge the work of Nick Rose and Sustain (and the incredible example of the Oakhill Food Justice Farm on the border of Preston and Reservoir) in shaping this motion.

Attachments

Nil

11.5 ADDRESSING THE HOUSING CRISIS**Councillor: Susanne NEWTON****NoM No.: 20/2023**

Take notice that at the Council Meeting to be held on 27 November 2023, it is my intention to move:

That Council

- (1) *Acknowledges that the diversity of Darebin is our greatest strength, and that we must do all we can to ensure that people of all backgrounds and incomes are able to live and thrive in Darebin, and that providing housing to those in need is crucial to maintaining the rich diversity of the Darebin community now and into the future.*
- (2) *Acknowledges we are in a housing crisis and reaffirms its commitment to addressing housing affordability, social housing needs and homelessness.*
- (3) *Calls on the Victorian Government to increase public, social housing, affordable housing and homeless services in Darebin and across the state to help reduce the long waitlist of 65,195 people in Victoria seeking housing (June 2023 figure from the Applications on the Victorian Housing Register (VHR)).*
- (4) *Notes the recent State Government announcement to demolish and redevelop 44 public housing towers across the state, including the tower in Darebin at 1 Holmes Street, Northcote and seeks information from the Minister for Housing about the timeline for when the residents of 1 Holmes Street Northcote are to be relocated and when the tower is due to be demolished.*
- (5) *Notes that two of the key risks of public housing redevelopment, include:*
 - 5.1 *The risk of existing tenants not being relocated back into the community and consequently, losing their existing community support and social networks; and*
 - 5.2 *The risk of reduced Public Housing yield due to the sell-off of public land to developers to fund the redevelopment through private housing when greater yield could be achieved through direct funding of new public housing by the State Government.*
- (6) *Notes the State Government's recent Housing Statement, included a number of measures that remove planning powers from Council and reduce local government's role in influencing development, and limit and reduce the community's ability to participate in engagement and object to applications.*
- (7) *Requests the CEO to review the impacts of these announcements, brief Council on these impacts and provide a report to Council in early 2024, including:*
 - 7.1 *Recommendations for revised or amended policy and advocacy positions that could be adopted by Council to mitigate the risks and impacts of State Government initiatives and to leverage opportunities to increase social housing in Darebin.*
 - 7.2 *Recommendations for additional initiatives that could be implemented by Council to address the housing crisis, including recommended amendments to the Darebin Housing Strategy.*

Notice Received: 13 November 2023

Notice Given to Councillors 13 November 2023

Date of Meeting: 27 November 2023

Rationale

The Victorian Government should be increasing public housing to address the housing crisis. Instead, the Victorian Housing Statement (https://content.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/2023-09/DTP0424_Housing_Statement_v6_FA_WEB.pdf) shows the Victorian Government plans to demolish 44 public housing towers, increase the amount of people living on the sites from 10,000 to 30,000 and to replace public housing with social and private housing, on public land. The housing statement mentions it wants to “Expedite zoning, planning and land release for social and affordable housing” but misses an opportunity to mandate inclusionary zoning.

The Good Decisions, Made Faster reforms will make it much harder for local people and communities and local governments to participate in decision making around planning, and reduce their ability to oppose developments. The changes will also make it harder to implement Darebin’s good design guide.

The Victorian Government has not consulted adequately on these major changes.

We must consider the implications of these major changes on the growing level of homelessness in Victoria that this plan will further exacerbate, the disregard of the tenants’ human rights to a secure and permanent home, and the removal of Council’s statutory authority role in the planning of Darebin’s future development.

Further reading

<https://www.theage.com.au/national/victoria/northcote-housing-development-creates-two-classes-of-resident-20190613-p51xc5.html>

<https://www.homes.vic.gov.au/applications-victorian-housing-register-vhr>

Attachments

Nil

11.6 **86 FESTIVAL****Councillor:** **Lina MESSINA****NoM No.:** 21/2023

Take notice that at the Council Meeting to be held on 27 November 2023, it is my intention to move:

That Council

- (1) *Congratulates the Festival producers on the success of the 86 Festival held in October 2023, showcasing the vibrant live music precincts of Darebin.*
 - (2) *Writes to the Minister for Creative Industries to:*
 - a. *Thank the State Government for the funding support it provided to enable the inaugural 86 Festival to be held in October 2023*
 - b. *Call on the State Government to provide future funding to Festival producers to enable them to deliver future events in Darebin in 23/24*
 - (3) *Writes to Festival producers, Principal Partner Creative Victoria and event sponsor Yarra Trams to thank them for their role in delivering this unique event within Darebin*
 - (4) *Requests that the CEO completes an evaluation report of the 86 Festival and presents this back to Council at the earliest possible with the report to include:*
 - a. *Analysis of the economic impact within Darebin from 86 Festival visitation and local spend*
 - b. *An overview of the benefits of the 86 Festival for Darebin*
 - c. *An overview of the lessons learned (eg noise impacts, waste dumping, communications etc) and future mitigation strategies that could be implemented to improve large scale events and Festivals within Darebin.*
-

Notice Received: **13 November 2023****Notice Given to Councillors** **13 November 2023****Date of Meeting:** **27 November 2023****Rationale**

Rationale for Celebrating Arts and Culture in our Local Community

1. Enriching Cultural Fabric:

Community Identity: The vibrant arts and cultural scene on high streets like St, Station St, Plenty Rd, Edwards, Broadway, Gilbert Rd, and Murray Rd contributes significantly to shaping the identity of our municipality. It fosters a sense of pride and belonging among residents, creating a unique and memorable community character.

2. Economic Benefits:

Local Business Growth: The presence of artistic and cultural activities attracts visitors, contributing to increased foot traffic and economic activity for local businesses. This, in turn, stimulates economic growth and fosters entrepreneurship, making these areas hubs of culinary and artistic delights.

3. Community Engagement:

Social Cohesion: Arts and cultural events provide opportunities for community members to come together, fostering social cohesion and interaction. Shared cultural experiences promote understanding, tolerance, and unity among diverse groups within the community.

4. Need for Clear Policies:

Permitting Process: Establishing a clear and well-defined permitting process is crucial for sustaining the vibrancy of these cultural hubs. Such a process should consider the interests of business owners, residents, and visitors alike.

Waste Management: A robust policy should address waste management to ensure that events and businesses do not negatively impact the local environment. Proper disposal and recycling measures can mitigate the environmental footprint of cultural activities.

5. Balancing Interests:

Noise Levels and Operating Hours: Striking a balance between celebrating culture and respecting the needs of residents requires clear guidelines on noise levels and operating hours. A thoughtful policy should consider the diverse needs of both business owners and residents, promoting harmony within the community.

6. Supporting Local Businesses:

Community Support: A well-crafted policy should not only regulate but also actively support local businesses. This includes providing resources, assistance, and incentives to ensure that these cultural hubs continue to thrive and contribute positively to the local economy.

7. Showcasing Community Diversity:

Colour and Sound of 86 Festival: Events like the 86 Festival exemplify the diversity and creativity within our community. A clear policy framework can elevate and celebrate these cultural expressions, encouraging further participation and investment in local arts and cultural initiatives.

Conclusion:

Celebrating arts and culture is not just about entertainment; it is about nurturing a vibrant, inclusive, and economically thriving community. A well-defined policy for permits, waste management, and community support is essential to ensure that our cultural hubs continue to flourish, providing a rich tapestry of experiences for residents and visitors alike. By fostering a dynamic and supportive environment, we can strengthen the cultural identity of our municipality and create lasting benefits for all stakeholders.

Attachments

Nil

5. Strengthening Social Bonds:

Building Bridges: Elevating the voices of post-war migrants in decision-making processes can help bridge any existing gaps between different communities. It fosters understanding, tolerance, and unity, creating a stronger and more connected local society.

6. Addressing Invisibility:

Overcoming Silence: Despite the richness of our multicultural fabric, the voices of post-war migrants often remain unheard. Elevating these voices acknowledges their significance and actively works towards addressing historical invisibility in decision-making forums.

7. Community Empowerment:

Empowering Communities: Involving post-war migrants in decision-making empowers these communities to actively participate in shaping the future of the municipality. It fosters a sense of ownership and responsibility, encouraging ongoing engagement in civic affair.

In conclusion

Elevating the voices of post-war migration communities in council decision-making processes is not just a matter of diversity; it is a strategic imperative for building a stronger, more inclusive, and harmonious municipality. By actively involving these voices, we not only honour the historical contributions of post-war migrants but also ensure that our decisions are informed by the diverse experiences that enrich our community.

Attachments

Nil

11.8 RESERVOIR BOATHOUSE**Councillor:** Lina MESSINA**NoM No.:** 23/2023

Take notice that at the Council Meeting to be held on 27 November 2023, it is my intention to move:

That Council:

- (1) *Notes its commitment in its 2021-25 Council Plan to activate Edwardes Lake Boat House in Reservoir and that Council has been working towards finding a commercial lease to bring it to life as a venue or business.*
- (2) *Notes that Council has progressed work towards this including planning for works at the site in 2025-26 to make it suitable for an operator by including toilets, air conditioning, plumbing, new windows and doors to the deck, and deck extension.*
- (3) *Notes that in its due diligence work, Council has identified an old covenant on the land that would not allow an operator to serve alcohol. Council is currently seeking to have this removed, however the timeframe for this, and whether the covenantor will ultimately agree to removal is uncertain and not in Council's control.*
- (4) *Calls for a report about what options Council has for progressing further at this time towards its aim of finding a commercial operator to bring the Boathouse to life as a venue or business, including:*
 - a. *The option of calling for expressions of interest in 2024 for operators of the venue on the basis that they would invest in any necessary works to the building.*

Notice Received: 13 November 2023**Notice Given to Councillors** 13 November 2023**Date of Meeting:** 27 November 2023**Rationale:**

Rationale for Elevating Reservoir Boathouse to an Iconic Destination

1. Historic Significance:

Cultural Heritage: The Reservoir Boathouse stands as a testament to the cultural and historical heritage of the area. Elevating it to an iconic destination provides an opportunity to showcase and celebrate the local history, creating a bridge between the past and the present.

2. Potential as a Hub for Leisure:

Idyllic Location: Situated amidst picturesque parklands, the Reservoir Boathouse has the potential to become a hub for leisure and relaxation. Its serene surroundings make it an ideal location for people to dine, unwind, and enjoy the natural beauty of the area.

3. Economic and Social Impact:

Community Hub: Transforming the boathouse into an iconic destination can stimulate economic growth by attracting visitors to the area. This, in turn, can support local businesses and create job opportunities. Additionally, it can become a social hub, fostering community engagement and a sense of togetherness.

4. Overcoming Historical Constraints:

Old Covenant Discovery: The recent discovery of an old covenant has posed a challenge to the progress of improving the boathouse. However, by addressing this hurdle transparently and responsibly, we can demonstrate a commitment to historical preservation while still moving forward with the necessary improvements.

5. Cultural and Culinary Experience:

Dining and Celebration Venue: The Reservoir Boathouse has the potential to be a unique dining destination, offering a blend of culinary delights and cultural experiences. By curating events and celebrations, it can attract people from both the local community and beyond, becoming a sought-after venue for various occasions.

6. Transparency and Accountability:

Ensuring Progress: This report emphasizes the importance of transparency and adherence to due process. By outlining a clear plan and addressing any historical constraints openly, we aim to ensure that the community is well-informed about the efforts being made to bring the boathouse to life.

7. Collaboration for Success:

Community Involvement: Involving the community in the revitalization of the boathouse is crucial. Collaborative efforts, including public consultations and engagement, can generate ideas, garner support, and contribute to the success of the project.

Conclusion:

The Reservoir Boathouse, with its historical significance and idyllic location, holds immense potential to become an iconic destination for dining, leisure, and celebration. Overcoming challenges transparently, fostering community involvement, and highlighting the cultural and economic benefits will ensure the success of this endeavor. By elevating the boathouse to an iconic status, we not only enhance the local landscape but also create a lasting legacy for generations to come.

Attachments

Nil

12. URGENT BUSINESS

13. CONSIDERATION OF REPORTS CONSIDERED CONFIDENTIAL


14. CLOSE OF MEETING

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