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MINUTES OF THE HEARING OF SUBMISSIONS COMMITTEE MEETING

Held on Monday 3 June 2024

Released to the public on 4 June 2024

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**MINUTES OF THE DAREBIN CITY COUNCIL
HEARING OF SUBMISSIONS COMMITTEE MEETING
HELD AT DAREBIN COUNCIL CHAMBER
350 HIGH STREET PRESTON, MONDAY 3 JUNE 2024**

THE MEETING OPENED AT 6.04PM

1. PRESENT

Councillors

Cr. Susanne Newton (Mayor) (Chairperson)
Cr. Emily Dimitriadis – 6.05pm
Cr. Gaetano Greco
Cr. Tom Hannan
Cr. Trent McCarthy
Cr. Susan Rennie
Cr. Julie Williams

Council Officers

Peter Smith - CEO
Kylie Bennetts – General Manager, Community
Enna Giampiccolo – Acting General Manager, Customer and Corporate
Rachel Ollivier – General Manager, Infrastructure, Operations and Finance
Vanessa Petrie – General Manager, City Sustainability and Strategy
Felicity Walsh – Acting Manager, Governance and Communications
Jody Brodribb – Coordinator Governance Services

2. APOLOGIES

Cr. Tim Laurence (Deputy Mayor)
Cr. Lina Messina

3. DISCLOSURES OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Nil.

4. CONFIRMATION OF THE PREVIOUS HEARING OF SUBMISSIONS COMMITTEE MEETING

Committee Decision

MOVED: Cr. J Williams
SECONDED: Cr. S Rennie

That the Minutes of the Hearing of Submissions Committee Meeting held on 11 December 2023 be confirmed as a correct record of business transacted.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

5. COUNCIL'S OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY RESPONSIBILITIES

The Mayor made the following statement:

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

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

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

6. CONSIDERATION OF REPORTS

6.1 HEARING OF SUBMISSIONS: DRAFT 2024-25 BUDGET & ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS AND RENEWAL OF SPECIAL RATE LEVIES

Author: Coordinator Management Accountant
Coordinator Place and Behavioural Economics
Acting Head of Economic Development and Activation
Chief Financial Officer

Reviewed By: General Manager Infrastructure, Operations & Finance

SUBMITTERS

The following people spoke in support of their written submissions to the Draft 2024/25 Budget:

1. *Matt Heafield*
2. *Ruth Jelley*
3. *Max Taylor*
4. *Amelia Trompf*
5. *Richard Cosway*
6. *Mark Goodie*
7. *Carly Demont*
8. *Serena O'Meley*
9. *Mathew Guglielmi*
10. *Rebecca Gray*
11. *Zak Gruevski*
12. *Christina DiPierdomenico*
13. *Aunty Esme Bamblett*
14. *Hunter Cullen*
15. *Janine Adam*
16. *Joanna Margiolois*
17. *Shandil Bhan*

6.46pm – Cr Rennie disclosed a conflict of interest prior to the submission from Christina DiPierdomenico and left the meeting.

6.50pm – Cr Rennie returned to the meeting after the submission from Christina DiPierdomenico.

The following people spoke in support of their written submissions to the Special Rates Levy Renewal:

18. *Christine Yew*
19. *Nick Lahanis*

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

At its meeting on 29 April 2024, Council resolved to give notice of its intention to adopt the draft budget 2024-25 and associated documents, including the following related matters:

- Draft 2024-25 Budget (Incorporating the 4-year budget)
- Draft 2024-25 Council Plan Action Plan
- Draft Revised Revenue & Rating Plan 2023-27
- Declaration of the public waste service charge
- Declaration of the service charge for kerbside collection services
- Granting of a rate rebate to pensioners, granting of two concessions aligned to equity principles to support the separation of waste cost recovery from general rates.
- Granting of a safety net concession for ratepayers experiencing hardship as a result of the service rate and service charge
- Renewal of three Special Rate Levies within the following business areas:
 - Preston Business District
 - Fairfield Business District
 - Northcote Business District

Prior to adopting the Budget in its final form, Council placed the draft budget & associated documents on public display, with any person requesting to be heard in support of their written submission to be heard by Council's Hearing of Submissions Committee at 6.00pm on 3 June 2024.

Community engagement occurred between the following dates:

Draft 2024-25 Budget & Associated Documents

- Between 30th April – 20th May 2024 (21 days) through online/hardcopy budget submission forms.

Special Rate Levy Renewal

- Between 2nd May 2024 – 30th May 2024 (28 days) through online/hardcopy budget submission forms.

To date, a total of 113 (102- Draft Budget / 11 - Special Rates) submissions were received by the closing date, including twenty-three (25) submitters (22 – Draft Budget / 3– Special Rates) requesting to be heard in support of their written submission.

Note: Council will continue to receive submissions relating to the renewal of Special Rate Levies until close date (30th May 2024) and report will be updated accordingly.

A break-down on the number of submissions by major theme is as follows:

- Leisure & Recreation: 42
- Financial Assistance, Grants and Addressing Disadvantage: 25
- Parks, Open Space & Reserves: 9
- General Matters: 9

- Active/Sustainable Transport: 6
- Traffic Management: 4
- Environmental Issues: 3
- Public Places: 3
- Waste Management: 1
- Special Rates Levy: 11

Connection to Council relating to submitters over the draft budget & associated documents were as follows:

Connection to Council	% of submissions
Live	66%
Visit	22%
Work	10%
Own a business	2%

Geographical location by suburb information relating to submitters over the draft budget & associated documents are as follows:

Postcode	Suburb	% of total Submitters
3072	Preston	21%
3073	Reservoir	14%
3070	Northcote	13%
3078	Alphington/Fairfield	10%
3083	Bundoora/Kingsbury	7%
3071	Thornbury	5%
3085	Macleod/Yallambie	5%
3087	Watsonia	4%
3056	Brunswick	2%
3058	Coburg/Moreland	2%
3079	Invanhoe	2%
3047	Broadmeadows/Dallas/Jacana	1%
3054	Carlton Nth/Princess Hill	1%
3055	Brunswick West	1%
3067	Abbotsford	1%
3082	Mill Park	1%
3095	Eltham	1%
3103	Balwyn	1%
3129	Box Hill/Mont Albert	1%
3135	Heathmont/Ringwood East	1%
3145	Caulfield East/Malvern East	1%
3146	Glen Iris	1%
3155	Boronia	1%
3750	Wollert	1%
3922	Cowes/Smiths Beach	1%

Detailed management responses to each submission can be found at **Appendix A** (draft 2024-25 budget & associated documents) and **Appendix B** (Special Rate Levy). A list of submitters requesting to be heard in support of their written submission can be found at **Appendix C**.

High-level management responses to themed submissions is as follows:

Leisure & Recreation / Parks, Open Space & Reserves / Public Places

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

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

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

This year, strong, positive support has been shown for the KP Hardiman Pavilion Redevelopment project, attracting more than 20% of total submissions.

Financial Assistance, Grants and Addressing Disadvantage

Council has a substantial community grants program. The draft 2024-25 program is valued at \$963,040, to support organisations, projects and initiatives that make Darebin a better, healthier, sustainable, and more inclusive place.

Traffic & Transport issues

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

Special Rate Levy

Current challenges in the economic climate, and the need to build awareness of the role and activities of traders' associations, are key themes among submissions to the Special Rates Levy proposal.

Council's Creative Culture and Economic Development department will continue to highlight the importance of building strong relationships between businesses and relevant trader's associations, to help businesses to understand spending and marketing activities and showcase mutual benefits.

Following the Hearing of Submissions Committee meeting, a report in relation to all submissions received will be submitted for consideration at a Council briefing scheduled for 11 June 2024.

Committee Decision

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

That Council:

- (1) Receives and notes the written and verbal submissions.
- (2) Thanks all submitters and presenters for addressing the Committee in support of their budget submission.
- (3) Refers all submissions for further consideration to the Council meeting to be held on 24 June 2024 as part of Council's deliberations in adopting the Budget 2024-25 & associated matters and renewal of the special rate levies (**Appendix A & Appendix B**).
- (4) Notes that submissions that are not incorporated into the 2024-25 Budget will be referred for consideration in the development of the draft 2025-26 Budget.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

7. CLOSE OF MEETING

The meeting closed at 7.14pm.