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AGENDA

Hearing of Submissions Committee Meeting to be held
at Darebin Civic Centre, 350 High Street Preston
on Monday 13 May 2019 at 7.00pm




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

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

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

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

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



Italian

Questo è l'ordine del giorno della riunione del Consiglio Comunale di Darebin per la data che compare sulla prima pagina di questo documento. Se desiderate informazioni in lingua italiana sugli argomenti dell'ordine del giorno, siete pregati di chiamare la Linea Telefonica Multilingue del Comune al 8470 8888.

Greek

Αυτή είναι η ημερήσια διάταξη για τη συνεδρίαση του Δημοτικού Συμβουλίου Darebin, για την ημερομηνία που φαίνεται στο εξώφυλλο αυτού του εγγράφου. Αν θα θέλατε πληροφορίες στα Ελληνικά σχετικά με τα θέματα σ' αυτή την ημερήσια διάταξη, παρακαλούμε καλέστε την Πολυγλωσσική Τηλεφωνική Γραμμή του Δήμου στον αριθμό 8470 8888.

Chinese

這是一份戴瑞濱市議會議程表，其開會日期顯示於此文件之封面。如果您欲索取有關此議程表的中文資料，敬請致電 8470 8888 聯絡市議會的多語種電話專線。

Arabic

هذا هو جدول أعمال اجتماع مجلس بلدية داربيبن والذي سيحدد في التاريخ الوارد في الصفحة الأولى من هذه الوثيقة. إذا أردت الحصول على مزيد من المعلومات في اللغة العربية حول المواضيع المذكورة في جدول الأعمال، فيرجى الاتصال برقم هاتف البلدية المتعدد اللغات 8470 8888

Macedonian

Ова е дневниот ред за состанокот на Општината на Градот Даребин, која ќе биде на датумот покажан на предната корица од овој документ. Ако Вие сакате некои информации на Македонски јазик, за предметите на овој дневен ред, Ве молиме повикајте ја Општинската Повеќејазична Телефонска Линија на 8470 8888.

Vietnamese

Đây là nghị trình cho cuộc họp của Hội đồng Thành phố Darebin; ngày họp có ghi ở trang bìà tài liệu này. Muốn biết thêm về chương trình nghị sự bằng Việt ngữ, xin gọi cho Đường dây Điện thoại Đa Ngôn ngữ của Hội đồng Thành phố qua số 8470 8888.

Bosnian

Ovo je dnevni red za sastanak Gradske općine Darebin čiji je datum održavanja naznačen na prvoj strani ovog dokumenta. Ako želite više informacija o tačkama ovog dnevnog reda na bosanskom jeziku, molimo nazovite općinsku višjejezičnu telefonsku službu na 8470 8888.

Croatian

Ovo je dnevni red sastanka u Darebin City Council za dan koji je naveden na prednjem ovitku ovog dokumenta. Ako želite informacije o tačkama ovog dnevnog reda na hrvatskom jeziku, molimo da nazovete Council Multilingual Telephone Line (Višjejezičnu telefonsku liniju) na 8470 8888.

Portuguese

Esta é a pauta para a reunião da Câmara Municipal de Darebin a ser realizada na data que consta na capa deste documento. Se você deseja informação em Português sobre os itens desta pauta, por favor ligue para a Linha Telefônica Multilíngue da Câmara no 8470 8888.

Serbian

Ово је дневни ред за састанак Darebin City Council-а (Градско веће Darebin) који ће се одржати на дан који је наведен на насловној страни овог документа. Ако желите информације на српском о тачкама дневног реда, молимо вас да назовете Council Multilingual Telephone Line (Вишејезичку телефонску линију Већа), на 8470 8888.

Somali

Kuwani waa qodobada shirka lagaga wada hadli doono ee Degmada Degaanka Darebin ee taariikhda lagu xusey boga ugu sareeya ee qoraalkan. Haddii aad doonysid wararka ku saabsan qodobadan oo ku qoran Af-Somali, fadlan ka wac Khadka Taleefanka Afafka ee Golaha oo ah 8470 8888.

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Agenda

1. MEMBERSHIP

Cr. Susan Rennie (Mayor) (Chairperson)

Cr. Susanne Newton (Deputy Mayor)

Cr. Gaetano Greco

Cr. Steph Amir

Cr. Tim Laurence

Cr. Kim Le Cerf

Cr. Trent McCarthy

Cr. Lina Messina

Cr. Julie Williams

2. APOLOGIES

3. DISCLOSURES OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

4. CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS HEARING OF SUBMISSIONS COMMITTEE MEETING

Recommendation

That the Minutes of the Hearing of Submissions Committee Meeting held on 25 March 2019 be confirmed as a correct record of business transacted.

5. CONSIDERATION OF REPORTS

5.1 PROPOSED RENEWAL OF A SPECIAL RATE SCHEME FOR FAIRFIELD VILLAGE BUSINESS PRECINCT 2019–2024

Author: Coordinator Economic Development

Reviewed By: General Manager City Sustainability and Strategy

PURPOSE

For the Hearing of Submissions Committee to hear, receive and note the submissions made on the proposed intention to declare Special Rate Scheme for Fairfield Village Business Precinct for a further five years 2019–2024.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

At its meeting on 18 March 2019, Council resolved to commence the statutory process under *the Local Government Act 1989* to declare a special charge scheme to and for the properties defined in the Fairfield Village Business Precinct for the encouragement of business and commerce.

The Public Notice was given regarding the proposed declaration and inviting submissions under section 223 of the Act by 5pm on 29 April 2019. Letters to businesses and property owners were notified by mail and provided a copy of the Public Notice.

Four submissions were received by the closing date for submissions, and one submitter has requested to be heard in support of their submission.

It is noted that the role of the Hearing of Submissions Committee is only to ‘hear’ and receive submissions. There are no options for consideration, or analysis of submissions included in this report. Following the Hearing of Submissions Committee meeting, a report will be submitted for consideration at a meeting of Council on 11 June 2019.

Recommendation

That the Hearing of Submissions Committee:

- (1) Receives and notes the written and verbal submissions.
 - (2) Thanks the submitters and presenters for addressing the Committee in support of their written response.
 - (3) Notes that a report will be presented to the Council meeting of 11 June 2019 on the Special Rate Scheme for Fairfield Village Business Precinct, which will include a response to the issues raised in the submissions.
-

BACKGROUND / KEY INFORMATION

At its meeting on 18 March 2019, Council resolved to give public notice of its Intention to Declare a Special Rate renewal at a meeting of Council to be held on 11 June 2019.

Notice was given by mail on 26 March 2019 to owners and businesses liable to pay the proposed special charge for the purposes of marketing, promotion and development of the High Street Northcote Business Precinct.

A public notice was placed in the Northcote and Preston Leader on Tuesday 7 and Wednesday 8 May 2019. The notices invited submissions from 5pm on 29 April 2019

Any person requesting to be heard in support of their written submission was invited to do so at the meeting of Council's Hearing of Submissions Committee at 7.00pm on 13 May 2019.

Previous Council Resolution

At its meeting held on 18 March 2019, it was resolved:

That Council

(1) *Having otherwise considered all relevant matters, commences the statutory process under the Local Government Act 1989 to reintroduce a special rate to and for the properties defined in the Fairfield Village Business Precinct for the encouragement of business and commerce (Appendix A – Map). This Special Rate will commence on 1 July 2019 and end on 30 June 2024, and raise an amount of \$66,000 per annum, multiplied by the Consumer Price Index Rate provided by the Australian Bureau of Statistics for the previous financial year for years two, three, four and five of the Scheme.*

(2) *Apply the criteria to be used as the basis for levying the special rate:*

i. *For the period of the scheme, it is proposed that the special rate will be assessed as follows:*

Properties allocated to the “primary” special benefit will be subject to a special rate of 0.00066645 cents in the dollar of the Capital Improved Value of the property (plus any CPI increase annually in the second, third, fourth and fifth years of the scheme).

Properties allocated to the “secondary” special benefit will be subject to a special rate of 0.00049984 cents in the dollar of the Capital Improved Value of the property (plus any CPI increase annually in the second, third, fourth and fifth years of the scheme).

The manner in which the special rate is assessed (that is, the criteria to be used as the basis for levying the special rate) is: For the first year and subsequent years of the proposed special rate – each commercially zoned property included in the special rate is to pay the amount calculated in Appendix B of the respective property's Capital Improved Value.

(3) *Give public notice in the Preston and Fairfield Village Leader newspapers, of Council's intention to declare a Special rate at its ordinary meeting to be held on 11 June 2019; in accordance with the Proposed Declaration of the Special rate (Appendix C).*

(4) *Send separate letters enclosing a copy of the public notice to the owners and the occupiers referred to and set out in the listing of rateable properties in Appendix A to the Proposed Declaration of the Special Rate advising:*

a) *Of the intention of Council to declare the Special Rate at its ordinary meeting to be held on 11 June 2019;*

- b) *The amount for which the property owner or the occupier (being a person who as a condition of a lease under which the person who occupies the property is required to pay the Special rate) will be liable; and*
 - c) *The basis of the calculation and distribution of the Special Rate and notifying such persons that submissions and/or objections in writing in relation to the Proposed Declaration of Special Rate will be considered and/or taken into account by Council in accordance with the Act.*
- (5) *Advises the Fairfield Village Traders Association of this resolution.*
- (6) *Authorises the appropriate members of Council's staff:*
- a) *To carry out any and all other administrative procedures necessary to enable Council to carry out its functions under the Act; and*
 - b) *To prepare a funding agreement between Council and the Fairfield Village Traders Association to formalise the administrative operations of the Special rate*
- (7) *Approve the agreement specified in paragraph 6(b) of this resolution and it be subsequently submitted to Council for approval and sealing before the proceeds of the Special rate, or any part of them, are paid to the Fairfield Village Traders Association for the purposes for which the Special Rate has been made*

COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT

Consultation

Council has consulted with the Fairfield businesses and property owners within the Business Precinct throughout the process. Officers have:

- Visited each business and hand delivered survey and information sheet to commence the Intention to Declare process.
- Attended Fairfield Traders Association Committee meetings
- Placed advertisements in the Preston and Northcote Leader newspapers.
- Sent individual letters to property owners and business occupiers who are required to pay the Special Rate Levy.
- Attended information sessions held by the Fairfield Village Traders Association
- Responded to queries from businesses, real estate agents and property owners regarding the special rate.

Communications

In addition to the survey the Association distributed a brochure outlining the benefits provided to businesses via the special rate over the past five years.

ANALYSIS

Alignment to Council Plan / Council policy

Goal 4 - A strong economy

The overall goal is to support and attract a diversity of local businesses and industries by fostering an environment in which they can thrive. The current and proposed scheme raise

funds to achieve marketing, promotions and business development outcomes in line with the Council Plan.

Council's Tourism Strategy – *A destination plan for Darebin 2016 – 2021* seeks to increase awareness of the diversity of experiences on offer in our City.

Environmental Sustainability Considerations

Climate Emergency

Supporting vibrant local shopping centres can help encourage local shopping and more pedestrian and active transport trips compared to vehicle trips. This can have a small impact on reducing emissions.

Equity, Inclusion and Wellbeing Considerations

Associations have always struggled to get representation from the diverse background of business owners. Supporting vibrant local shopping centres can help encourage local shopping and community inclusion.

Cultural Considerations

Events delivered through the special rate levy are often unique to the businesses and community.

Economic Development Considerations

The events, marketing and promotional activities held in these precincts attract people from neighbouring suburbs and provide a boost to the local economy, which is the key to maintaining strong and vibrant retail centres.

Financial and Resource Implications

The amount that is proposed to be raised as the special rate in 2019/20 is \$66,000. The total amount proposed to be raised over 5 years is \$330,000 plus an annual increase of CPI. Council's contribution in providing resources for the set up and administration of a new special rate is estimated to be \$10,000 over five years. This amount will not be recovered from the business association and will be absorbed in the Council's Economic Development operational budget.

Legal and Risk Implications

In line with the Act Council public notice has been given of a proposed declaration of the special charge and Council has written to all people who will be liable to contribute.

DISCUSSION

There have been six enquiries received regarding this process and four written objections. At the time of writing this report, one submitter has requested to be heard in support of their submission. The general issues raised by the submitters include:

- Receives no perceived benefit from the levy
- Runs a business that operates out of two subdivided properties (which requires a double payment)

- Does not see their property as part of the Special Rate area
- Type of business does not receive any benefit from a general marketing campaign or events

OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

It is recommended that Council proceed with the Hearing of Submissions as outlined in this report. The role of this Committee is only to hear submissions.

Council must provide the submitters that have requested to be heard the opportunity to do so, in accordance with s.223 of the *Local Government Act 1989*. If Council were not to proceed with the hearing, it would need to be rescheduled.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

Details

Following the Hearing of Submissions, a report will be presented to Council for consideration on 11 June 2019.

Communication

All submitters have been advised of the Council meeting date at which Council will consider the declaration of the special charge and will be provided written notice of the outcome of Council's decision. This will include responses for the issues raised in the submission.

Timeline

RELATED DOCUMENTS

- Council Meeting Minutes 18 March 2019
- Public Notice in The Preston and Northcote Leader Newspapers - 26 & 27 March 2019

Attachments

- Extract of Submissions (**Appendix A**) [↓](#)
- Hearing of Submissions Proposed Special Rate Scheme for Fairfield Village Business Precinct (**Appendix B**) Confidential - enclosed under separate cover

DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST

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

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

APPENDIX A - Submissions – Proposed Fairfield Village Special Rate Scheme 2019-2024

Extracts from submissions with identifying information removed. The hearing of Submissions Committee has received all submissions in full.

<p>Submitter One</p>	<p>We do not have employees. We have been paying this Special Levy for last 20 years. We were left with no choice. The levy was forced upon us. We had and have no benefits deriving from our contributions to this levy that we have been paying for last 20 years. We could have used that money in some other ways. However that much for statutory rights and their enforcement. You might appreciate that it is not easy to support oneself as the full-time artists at any time in the history of humanity.</p> <p>Last year 2018/2019 we paid \$264.85 as Fairfield Special Levy (find attached copy of rates notice). In this particular letter dated from 26 March 2019 you informing us that the new special levy will be \$490.75. It is almost 100% increase on the previous year levy. Why?</p> <p>The past two years 2017 and 2018 and it is still continuing has been a total chaos for Railway Place and surrounding streets because of the development of the former RSL Fairfield site (7-9 railway Place and backing to 44 Gillies St) and development on the north west corner of Railway Place and Station Street.</p> <p>Our life as occupiers became a nightmare. Constant noise, dust, being constantly observed by people working on building site, noise of the crane overhead, lack of parking, endless truck movements was just the beginning.</p> <p>The building site was active from 7am till 8pm and sometimes longer. We complained to the City of Darebin many times but nothing positive for us come out of it, the builders were always excused. Why?</p> <p>We had to decide not to bring our clients because of the noise, dust and lack of parking and a general total chaos happening in the street. It disrupted and harmed our business. We complained on many occasions to City of Darebin officials but nothing has been done to ameliorate our situation. No proposals of not paying the levy in the period of chaos created by constructions activities.</p> <p>We believe it is unfair for us to pay this levy and especially that it is almost 100% more than previous year.</p> <p>In the notice of intention to declare a special rate for Fairfield Village Business District it says that this levy is for purpose of defraying expenses to be incurred by council in providing funds to the incorporated body operating as the Fairfield Traders Association.</p>
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	<p>It defies our logical thinking what is the purpose of supporting association that cannot look after itself using funds of its members? Please note that, we are not members of this organization (Fairfield Traders Association) and never had contact with them nor they have ever contacted us in the previous 20 Years. Why do we pay to support this organisation? How can this organisation promote us? We promote ourselves through our website and work directly with architects and other clients with no agents or other promoters. We don't rely on form of the passing trade. The City of Darebin takes this into consideration classifying our property as Mixed Use Occupancy (see attached copy of valuation notice 2018 - 2019). Please be so kind and reconsider our particular position.</p>
<p>Submitter Two</p>	<p>I run a store in Station St Fairfield. I write to you to explain my position on the proposed fee payable for the promotion of this street. We have been here for over three years now. In that time I have seen some efforts from the Traders group to create events etc to get more people down to Station St. Halloween days, Christmas elves hunts, Easter egg hunts and also a street party/ rides day usually in the street next to the chicken shop. Also a few movie nights.</p> <p>Initially this all seems great for business but unfortunately it is not great at all for us. It seems to be a winner for the chicken shop and a few other food shops but mostly our shop will have kids without parents running through our shop being pests. While I acknowledge that all this is great for the people of Fairfield to experience these things it comes at a great cost to most of the Businesses here. This is a very local street with most of our traders being within a few km radius and who come here from convenience and cause they enjoy our service.</p> <p>The voucher book distributed to the locals has resulted in only one person redeeming the token. As too the local directory that was printed in today's world is definitely not relevant compared to google. Rates for this area are huge. I personally pay over \$5000 per year for the right to trade. For that I get one recycle bin emptied every two weeks. I would hope that the Christmas decorations or Easter decorations would be paid for by the council out of my rates. I would rather spend my money on new signage or fix up my shop to maintain a great shop and service that will keep the locals coming back. Perhaps this is a fee for the owners of the buildings to be hit with as they get the huge rent that I'm paying but as for struggling business owners it's not</p>

	<p>on. When the street fair is on we actually shut our doors now. Our sales drop well below what my rent will cost me for the day so effectively if I pay a staff member for that day I will be out at least \$200 for the day plus what my usual takings would be. When the Easter egg hunt is on we spent well over \$150 each time on Easter eggs. Only to have get their eggs. Absolutely no extra sales are made from these events. I object to the proposal and can be contacted on ...</p>
<p>Submitter Three</p>	<p>We just received 2 letters for special rate. The total amount of \$719.75, which we object to pay. We are small business owner, running on thin margin with big expenses. Last year has to be worst year for us, we had level crossing project on Grange road and water main replacement on Station Street disrupted business on Station Street - this is still felt this year because people change their routine due to road works last year and hasn't come back to Station Street.</p> <p>I would like to object to special rate, we are struggling to keep the business float. We don't need any more expenses to run our business so no more special rate from us thank you.</p>
<p>Submitter Four</p>	<p>Thank you for your recent letter regarding the proposed special rate for the Fairfield Business Precinct. Late last year we received a map layout from the Council outlining the area of the Business Precinct. We assumed that this excluded our business and those beyond, which is not retail and has no requirement for this type of promotion. The Christmas promotion excluded our business so we accepted that the border for the business precinct was correct. Also noted is the acceptance of the current rate structure for the services provided by Council for our property.</p>

5.2 PROPOSED RENEWAL OF THE SPECIAL CHARGE SCHEME FOR HIGH STREET NORTHCOTE BUSINESS PRECINCT 2019–2024**Author:** Coordinator Economic Development**Reviewed By:** General Manager City Sustainability and Strategy

PURPOSE

For the Hearing of Submissions Committee to hear, receive and note the submissions made on the proposed intention to declare a Special Charge Scheme for High Street Northcote Business Precinct for a further five years 2019–2024.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

At its meeting on 18 March 2019, Council resolved to commence the statutory process under *the Local Government Act 1989* to declare a special charge scheme to and for the properties defined in the High Street Northcote Business Precinct for the encouragement of business and commerce.

The Public Notice was given regarding the proposed declaration and inviting submissions under section 223 of the Act by 5pm on 29 April 2019. Letters to businesses and property owners were notified by mail and provided a copy of the Public Notice.

Two submissions were received by the closing date for submissions, and two submitters have requested to be heard in support of their submission.

It is noted that the role of the Hearing of Submissions Committee is only to 'hear' and receive submissions. There are no options for consideration, or analysis of submissions included in this report. Following the Hearing of Submissions Committee meeting, a report will be submitted for consideration at a meeting of Council on 11 June 2019.

Recommendation

That the Hearing of Submissions Committee:

- (1) Receives and notes the written and verbal submissions.
 - (2) Thanks the submitters and presenters for addressing the Committee in support of their written response.
 - (3) Notes that a report will be presented to the Council meeting of 11 June 2019 on the Special Charge Scheme for High Street Northcote Business Precinct which will include a response to the issues raised in the submissions.
-

BACKGROUND / KEY INFORMATION

At its meeting on 18 March 2019, Council resolved to give public notice of its Intention to Declare a Special Charge renewal at a meeting of Council to be held on 11 June 2019.

Notice was given by mail on 26 March 2019 to owners and occupiers liable to pay the proposed special charge for the purposes of marketing, promotion and development of the High Street Northcote Business Precinct.

A public notice was placed in the Northcote and Preston Leader on Tuesday 7 and Wednesday 8 May 2019. The notices invited submissions from 5pm on 29 April 2019

Any person requesting to be heard in support of their written submission was invited to do so at the meeting of Council's Hearing of Submissions Committee at 7.00pm on 13 May 2019.

Previous Council Resolution

At its meeting held on 18 March 2019, it was resolved:

That Council:

- (1) *Having otherwise considered all relevant matters, commences the statutory process under the Local Government Act 1989 to reintroduce a Special Charge to and for the properties defined in the High Street Northcote Business Precinct for the encouragement of business and commerce (Appendix A – Map). This Special Charge to raise an amount of \$88,745 per annum for a period of five years commencing on 1 July 2019 and ending on 30 June 2024. That amount is multiplied by the Consumer Price Index provided by the Australian Bureau of Statistics for the previous financial year for years two, three, four and five of the Scheme.*
- (2) *Apply criteria to be used as the basis for levying the special charge:*
 - (1) *For the period of the scheme, it is proposed that the special charge will be assessed as follows:*

Properties allocated to the “primary” special benefit (as shown below) are charged \$480.00 per annum (plus any CPI increase annually in the second, third, fourth and fifth years of the scheme) including:

 - *203 to 385; 200 to 360, 360A High Street (inclusive)*

Properties allocated to the “secondary” special benefit (as shown below) are charged \$235.00 per annum (plus any CPI increase in the second, third, fourth and fifth years of the scheme) including:

 - *176 to 198; 387 to 409; 372 to 392 High Street (inclusive)*
 - *2A and 4A Mitchell Street (inclusive)*
 - *The property known as Northcote Central Shopping Centre Secondary (corner of High and Separation Streets Northcote)*
- (3) *Give public notice to be given in the Preston and Northcote Leader newspapers, of Council's intention to declare a Special Charge at its ordinary meeting to be held on 11 June 2019; in accordance with the Proposed Declaration of the Special Charge (Appendix B).*
- (4) *Send separate letters enclosing a copy of the public notice to the owners and the occupiers referred to and set out in the listing of rateable properties in Appendix A to the Proposed Declaration of the Special Charge advising:*

- a) *Of Council's intention to declare the Special Charge at its ordinary meeting to be held on 11 June 2019;*
 - b) *The amount for which the property owner or the occupier (being a person who as a condition of a lease under which the person who occupies the property is required to pay the Special Charge) will be liable; and*
 - c) *The basis of the calculation and distribution of the Special Charge and notifying such persons that submissions and/or objections in writing in relation to the Proposed Declaration of Special Charge will be considered and/or taken into account by Council in accordance with the Act*
- (5) *Advises the Northcote Business Association of this resolution.*
- (6) *Authorises the appropriate members of Council's staff:*
- a) *To carry out any and all other administrative procedures necessary to enable Council to carry out its functions under the Act; and*
 - b) *To prepare a funding agreement between Council and the Northcote Business Association to formalise the administrative operations of the Special Charge*
- (7) *Approve the agreement specified in paragraph 6(b) of this resolution and it be subsequently submitted to Council for approval and sealing before the proceeds of the Special Charge, or any part of them, are paid to the Northcote Business Association for the purposes for which the Special Charge has been made.*

COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT

Consultation

Council has consulted with the Northcote businesses and property owners within the Business Precinct throughout the process. Officers have:

- Visited each business and hand delivered survey and information sheet to commence the Intention to Declare process.
- Placed advertisements in the Preston and Northcote Leader newspapers.
- Sent individual letters to property owners and business occupiers who would be required to pay the Special Charge.
- Responded to queries from businesses, occupiers, real estate agents and property owners regarding the special charge.

Communications

In addition to the survey the Association distributed a brochure outlining the benefits provided to businesses via the special charge over the past five years.

ANALYSIS

Alignment to Council Plan / Council policy

Goal 4 - A strong economy

The overall goal is to support and attract a diversity of local businesses and industries by fostering an environment in which they can thrive. The special charge would raise funds to

achieve marketing, promotions and business development outcomes in line with the Council Plan.

Council's Tourism Strategy – *A destination plan for Darebin 2016 – 2021* seeks to increase awareness of the diversity of experiences on offer in our City.

Environmental Sustainability Considerations

Climate Emergency

Supporting vibrant local shopping centres can help encourage local shopping and more pedestrian and active transport trips compared to vehicle trips. This can have a small impact on reducing emissions.

Equity, Inclusion and Wellbeing Considerations

Associations have always struggled to get representation from the diverse background of business owners. Supporting vibrant local shopping centres can help encourage local shopping and community inclusion.

Cultural Considerations

Events delivered through a special charge are often unique to the businesses and community.

Economic Development Considerations

The events, marketing and promotional activities held in these precincts attract people from neighbouring suburbs and provide a boost to the local economy, which is the key to maintaining strong and vibrant retail centres.

Financial and Resource Implications

The amount that is proposed to be raised as the special rate in 2019/20 is \$88,745. The total amount proposed to be raised over 5 years is \$443,725 plus an annual increase of CPI. Council's contribution in providing resources for the set up and administration of a new special charge is estimated to be \$10,000 over five years. This amount will not be recovered from the business association and will be absorbed in the Council's Economic Development operational budget.

Legal and Risk Implications

In line with the Act Council public notice has been given of a proposed declaration of the special charge and Council has written to all people who will be liable to contribute.

DISCUSSION

There have been eight enquiries received regarding the proposed special rate charge and two written objections. Two submissions were received by the closing date for submissions, and two submitters have requested to be heard in support of their submission. Submissions are attached in full.

The general issues raised by the submitters include:

- Receives no perceived benefit from the levy

OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

It is recommended that Council proceed with the Hearing of Submissions as outlined in this report. The role of this Committee is only to hear submissions.

Council must provide the submitters that have requested to be heard the opportunity to do so, in accordance with s.223 of the *Local Government Act 1989*. If Council were not to proceed with the hearing, it would need to be rescheduled.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

Details

Following the Hearing of Submissions, a report will be presented to Council for consideration on 11 June 2019.

Communication

All submitters have been advised of the Council meeting date at which Council will consider the declaration of the special charge and will be provided written notice of the outcome of Council's decision.

Timeline

This will include responses for the issues raised in the submission.

RELATED DOCUMENTS

- Council Meeting Minutes 18 March 2019
- Public Notice in The Preston and Northcote Leader Newspapers – 26 & 27 March 2019

Attachments

- Extract of Submissions (**Appendix A**) [↓](#)
- Hearing of Submissions Proposed High Street Northcote Special Charge Scheme (**Appendix B**) Confidential - enclosed under separate cover

DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST

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

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

APPENDIX A - Submissions - Proposed Northcote Special Charge Scheme 2019 -2024

Extracts from submissions with identifying information removed. The Hearing of Submissions Committee has received all submissions in full.

Submitter One	<p>I disagree with the Northcote special charge issued by the council. It does nothing for my type of business and never really has. I call and contest every year. I signed a document when I first opened the salon in 2012, which apparently was meant to be valid for 6 years. Had I of known there would be no benefit to my business I would not have agreed to sign it. That period is now over and I will not be paying the charge</p>
Submitter Two	<p>I have owned a shop in High St Northcote for nearly 50 years and I never knew that there was a Promotion that expires on 30 June 2019 and the Northcote Business Association maybe because I never had a Business there. Who is supposed to pay –the owner or the tenant? Two things I would like to know:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Who decide how to spend the money 2) Why the money has to be divided equally even if one shop is Large and one Small I think it should be in Comparison the Rates one Pay <p>I will not be coming to the meeting would you please read my submission at the meeting.</p>


6. CLOSE OF MEETING

**CITY OF
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