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MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING

Held on Tuesday 27 October 2026

Released to the public on 2 November 2026

LIVE STREAMING OF THE COUNCIL MEETING WAS MADE AVAILABLE ON COUNCIL'S WEBSITE.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Chinese
这些是市议会会议纪要。如需协助了解任何纪要项目，请致电8470 8888。

Greek

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Urdu
یہ کاؤنسل کی میٹنگ کی روداد کے نقاط ہیں۔ روداد 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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MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY MEETING DAREBIN CITY COUNCIL ON TUESDAY 27 OCTOBER 2026

THE MEETING OPENED AT 6.05PM

The Chairperson, Mayor Emily Dimitriadis advised that the meeting was being streamed live and that audio and video would be made available on Council's website.

1. OPENING OF MEETING AND MEMBERSHIP

Councillors

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

Council Officers

Anne Howard - Chief Executive Officer
Caroline Buisson - General Manager Customer and Corporate
Nina Cullen - General Manager Community Life
Enna Giampiccolo - Executive Manager Governance and Communications
Rachel Ollivier - General Manager Infrastructure and Operations
Vanessa Petrie - General Manager City Sustainability and Strategy
Jody Brodribb - Coordinator Governance Services
Emma Geier - Head of Governance and Risk

2. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF TRADITIONAL OWNERS

The Chairperson, Mayor Dimitriadis, opened the meeting with the following statement:

I would like to start by acknowledging the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people, the Traditional Owners of this land. I recognise their continuing connection to land, water and culture and pay my respects to Elders past, present and future leaders.

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STATEMENT FROM MAYOR

Before we move on with tonight's meeting, I would like to acknowledge the tragic events that have resulted in Dr Helen Haines, the Federal Member for Indi, sustaining life-changing injuries. On behalf of Darebin City Council, I extend our sincere thoughts and best wishes to Dr Haines, her family, friends, staff and colleagues during this incredibly difficult time.

We also recognise the wider impact of these events on the people of Indi and on communities across Victoria. Incidents such as this cause shock, distress and uncertainty far beyond those directly involved. They affect everyone who values public service, democratic participation and the safety of those who serve their communities.

At times like these, it is important to reflect on the values that underpin our democracy. Every person who chooses to serve in public office, regardless of their political views, should be able to do so safely and without fear. Healthy democracies rely on robust debate, differing opinions and respectful disagreement. They do not tolerate violence, intimidation or threats.

The emergence of political violence and hostility directed towards people in public life and violence against women is deeply concerning and is corrosive to our democratic institutions. There can be no place in our community for behaviour that seeks to silence, intimidate or harm others because of their role in public life.

Tonight, Darebin Council expresses its support for Dr Helen Haines, her loved ones and the broader community she serves. We reaffirm our commitment to respectful civic participation, democratic engagement and community cohesion.

As a Council, we will continue to reject and resist the encroachment of political and gendered violence, hatred and intimidation wherever we can. We all share a responsibility to foster a culture of respect, civility and constructive dialogue, and to ensure our democracy remains strong, safe and inclusive.

We wish Dr Haines strength in her recovery and extend our support to all those affected.

Thank you.

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3. APOLOGIES

Cr. Ruth Jelley.

4. DISCLOSURES OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Cr. Tsalkos disclosed a general conflict of interest in Confidential Item 13.1 Community Awards.

Mayor Dimitriadis disclosed a general conflict of interest in Confidential Item 13.1 Community Awards.

5. CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETINGS

Recommendation

That the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Council held on 22 September 2026 be confirmed as a correct record of business transacted.

Council Resolution

MINUTE NO. 26-156

MOVED: Cr. A Villella
SECONDED: Cr. V Tsalkos

That the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Council held on 22 September 2026 be confirmed as a correct record of business transacted the following amendment:

a. The vote on the Amendment to Agenda Item 11.1 Preston Market Feasibility Study was Carried Unanimously.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

6. COUNCIL'S OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY RESPONSIBILITIES

The Chairperson, Mayor Dimitriadis, made the following statement:

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

It's wonderful to see so many community members 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:

- *Members of the gallery must remain silent at all times during a Meeting (other than a gallery member who is invited to address the Meeting).*
- *Councillors and members of the gallery addressing the Meeting must do so in a courteous and respectful manner and take direction from the Chairperson whenever called on to do so.*
- *Anyone attending a Meeting must not utter any offensive, indecent, insulting, or objectionable words, including words that are racist, sexist or homophobic.*
- *If anyone 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.*

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7. QUESTION AND SUBMISSION TIME

Members of the public wishing to ask a question, or make a verbal submission, at an Ordinary Council meeting must register to do so by submitting their questions and registering before 12 noon on the day before the meeting.

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

Responses were provided to the following questions as submitted for Public Question Time.

- **Aaron Pinkus**

Question 1

In December 2025 Darebin City Council signed the joint statement on Councils standing united against Antisemitism, which stated that Council would "continue to work every day to stamp out antisemitism and hate, and to ensure our cities remain places of safety, respect, and belonging for all." Since signing this Statement, what specific actions has the Council taken that are aimed at stamping out antisemitism?

Response from General Manager Community Life

Thank you for your question. Council is strongly committed to addressing all forms of racism including antisemitism. It seeks to build places and opportunities social connection. In March 2026 Council released its Cultural Diversity and Inclusion Plan which aims to strengthen the rights, inclusion and wellbeing of all community members by ensuring Darebin's culturally diverse and migrant communities have equitable opportunities to thrive. Initiatives under this plan will be rolled out each year.

As part of its recent Advisory Committee Review, Council identified the importance of hearing and seeking advice from the multi faith community in Darebin. It is in the process of setting up an Interfaith Advisory Committee and it is keen to have the Jewish community as part of this Committee so it can hear and learn from the voice of community, how Council can support.

Based on work that has recently been looked into that relates to offensive graffiti, we're changing the way we seek information so we can understand why a resident finds particular graffiti offensive, we will be reviewing new or emerging markings with our diversity experts and updated lists as required, and we will ensuring training for staff involved in the assessment of offensive graffiti provides appropriate coverage of diverse cultural, community, and inclusion considerations.

Also, over the past 2 years, Council worked with the Centre for Multicultural Youth to deliver professional development to 10 Darebin primary and secondary schools on **Schools Standing Up to Racism**. This initiative established communities-of-practice and provided resources to support schools to address racism and discrimination in their important learning environments.

Question 2

The Royal Commission on Antisemitism and Social Cohesion's final report will be handed down in December 2026 and is likely to contain implications for local councils across Australia. Given several submissions referenced events and experiences of Darebin's Jewish community, what plans does the Council have to review the report and brief the Mayor and Councillors on appropriate follow-up measures?

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Response from General Manager Community Life

Council will be reviewing the findings and recommendations of the Royal Commissions final report when it is released, and it will consider how these can inform and strengthen work already underway across the organisation.

Question 3

As we approach the first anniversary of the Bondi terror attack on 14 December 2025, which had profound impacts on the Australian Jewish Community, including here in Darebin, what plans does the Council have to mark the event in solidarity with Darebin's Jewish Community?

Response from General Manager Community Life

Council acknowledges the profound impact that the Bondi tragedy had on many people across Australia, including members of Darebin's Jewish community. The Darebin Mayor made a statement on 15 December 2025, calling this out. Council remains committed to support social inclusion and community wellbeing and recognises the importance of standing against violence and hatred in all their forms. Council will have the opportunity to consider what it may wish to do to mark the anniversary.

With leave of the Chair, a follow up question was allowed:

Question 4

In relation to the first question, there are a lot of actions being taken that are very broad in general to promote social cohesion, which I appreciate, is there anything specific to antisemitism that the Council is doing?

Response from General Manager Community Life

One of the examples I gave is of change practices that we have put in place to specifically combat and better understand evidence of antisemitism. In addition, we are very keen to have the Jewish community consider participating in the new Interfaith Advisory Committees so we can learn how best to support the community and hear community voice

- **Natalie James**

Question 1

What plans does Council have to engage with the local Jewish Community and relevant Victorian Jewish organisations to overcome the lack of awareness of antisemitism and Jewish identity and to support Council staff to effectively identify, prevent and respond to antisemitism in a culturally appropriate way?

Response from General Manager Community Life

Thank you for your question. As mentioned above, Council is in the process of establishing its new Interfaith Advisory Committee and this will be a forum to get advice on a range of issues including how we support members of the Jewish community. Council hopes there is strong representation on this Committee from the Jewish Community.

Council is also building additional steps into its practices to support identification of emerging hate signs in graffiti, and other harming antisemitic occurrences. It will also ensure training for staff involved in the assessment of offensive graffiti provides appropriate coverage of diverse cultural, community, and inclusion considerations.

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Question 2

How many times has Council met with members of the Jewish community to respond to their complaints and concerns in the last 3 years?

Response from General Manager Community Life

Council has established processes to ensure concerns raised by community members are received, assessed and responded to in a timely and appropriate manner. These processes apply to all community members and provide a mechanism for concerns, complaints and enquiries to be considered and actioned by the relevant area of the organisation. Whilst we do not have specific numbers there have been meetings with members of the Jewish community to discuss complaints or concerns. Matters may relate to different areas within the organisation.

Question 3

What actions has Council taken to respond to antisemitism and address concerns of members of the Jewish community in the last 3 years?

Response from General Manager Community Life

This question was addressed in previous responses.

With leave of the Chair, a follow up question was allowed:

Question 4

People who participated in the previous committees on behalf of the Jewish community did not find that environment a safe one for them. How might Council reassure members of the Jewish community that these new committees will be safe for them and will the Council be prepared to sit down with the JCCV (the Jewish Community Council of Victoria) to discuss ensuring this will be the case.

Response from General Manager Community Life

I can assure the community that the advisory committee is new and has gone through a new decision-making process to ensure that it is diverse and comprehensive. There are criteria and we are currently advertising expressions of interest for that committee. I am very certain that Council will have the opportunity to meet with relevant groups as requested over time and we'll get back to you on that.

- **Geraldine Wood**

Question 1

I would like to know why Council is "blocking" or hiding my comments on the posts Darebin Council makes on Instagram?

Response from Executive Manager Governance and Communications

Thank you for your question Geraldine. Council uses its social media channels to keep the community informed about upcoming events, activities, projects and initiatives.

Open discussion, communication and feedback from the community are encouraged. Our social media channels are moderated in line with our social media terms of use which are listed on our website. Comments may be hidden if not in line with these terms.

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We have not been able to locate the hidden posts you have referred to, and I will ask a member of the Digital Communications team to contact you over the coming week to see if we can get to the bottom of the matter.

Questions related to the Preston Market were read one after another, followed by a single statement by the General Manager City Sustainability and Strategy to address all issues raised.

- **Ishtar Hope**

Question 1

The community of Darebin has repeatedly called for public acquisition of the Preston Market so why is Council going against the public's interests by endorsing the plans of private developers when it comes to the future of Preston Market?

- **Celine Mucke**

Question 1

How is Council considering the outcomes of their earlier heritage reports and advice regarding the Preston market structure in the face of this design while considering, its value, with no attempt at in situ retention, conservation and retaining the recognised, local technical and aesthetic significance within the heritage overlay.

Question 2

Council commissioned an identity study and heritage advice which recognised social significance to the existing streets, intersections, food halls, and independent shops. Before endorsing the plan, will Council request an independent assessment which provides accountability and outlines the impacts to heritage and community of demolition, reconstruction, development above the market and the state their position based on these findings?

Question 3

Council acknowledges on item 9.1 that development above the eastern shed conflicts with heritage guidelines, what is Council's proposed response to avoiding impacts above the market and promoting a design that compliments the social space and historical structure?

- **Alana Greenberg**

Question 1

How will the Council ensure that children and families are recognised as key stakeholders to the Preston Market, including ensuring that the proposed redevelopment of the Market assesses and addresses impacts on child and family health and wellbeing through changes to fresh food availability, recreation and play spaces, screens and advertising, parents' rooms (including baby change and feeding facilities), and car parking?

Question 2

Has the Council considered the redevelopment of the former Moonee Ponds Market, or other relevant markets, as a case study for the culturally destructive impact of introducing 'big box retail' into community market spaces, and how are such lessons being applied to the proposed redevelopment of the Preston Market?

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- **Xavier Dupe**

Question 1

Regarding item 9.1 Preston Market - Development Plan Submission, will the Council rule out the proposed plan given community opposition?

- **Lachlan Challis**

Question 1

The redevelopment plans will severely impact the Market and its ability to serve the community as it does now - what consideration has Council given to this in light of the future influx of new residents due to the Preston Activity Centre?

Question 2

Why does the draft submission contained in tonight's agenda go against overwhelming community sentiment in favour of saving the market and publicly acquiring it, and instead support an unpopular, impractical and short-sighted development at the expense of the community?

Question 3

How can Council justify keeping the feasibility report on the acquisition of the market largely confidential given the overwhelming community interest in the Market itself and in its public acquisition, repair, and protection from developers?

- **George Kanjere**

Question 1

What has Darebin Council done to ensure that its submission to Engage Victoria is in line with community expectations regarding the future of Preston Market, and specifically the full retention of the market building (i.e. no "relocation", temporary or permanent)?

Question 2

What measures is Darebin Council taking to address the elimination of the Council from planning decisions, especially decisions that will have major ramifications for the future of Council operations, such as the demolition and redevelopment of Preston Market?

Question 3

The current Development Plans are widely considered to be in contradiction to the wishes of Darebin residents, and so it is unclear why Council is proposing to make a submission in favour of the Development Plan, albeit with modifications. How has Darebin Council fulfilled its obligation to the residents of Darebin regarding the safeguarding of Preston Market?

- **Ronja Sen**

Question 1

Can locals please have more communication about the Preston market development plans? I'm a little concerned about what's happening and can't seem to find any thorough information.

Question 2

Once we have more information about the Preston market development plans, can we please have more time to consider it as locals?

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- **Esther Doecke**

Question 1

Is the Darebin Council going to express their support for Preston Market and oppose the motion supporting the new Preston Market development plans?

Statement from the General Manager City Sustainability and Strategy in response to public questions on the Preston Market

Thank you for all your questions this evening. I'm going to respond with the one statement.

Council recognises Preston Market's significant heritage, cultural and social value, and the strong and varied community interest in its future.

Officer's draft submission on the Development Plan identifies key changes to improve planning outcomes of the proposed redevelopment.

Council has advocated for stronger planning protections for more than a decade, including through the Heart of Preston vision and planning controls introduced in 2023 that require substantial retention of the market in its current location.

The proposed Development Plan retains approximately 81% of the original market footprint and 77% of the heritage space frame. However, the officer's draft submission seeks further improvements, including maximising the retention of existing market structures and streets, prioritising in-situ conservation, and avoiding development above the eastern shed or significantly recessing built form where this cannot be avoided.

The planning provisions applying to the Preston Market site support a range of land uses, including retail, commercial, entertainment, residential and office uses. Officer's draft recommendations seek to protect the market's heritage significance, distinctive character and role as a valued community gathering place.

We acknowledge the importance of the market to children, families, traders and the broader community. Should the proposal progress to the planning permit stages, Council will continue to advocate for appropriate construction management, and business continuity plans to support safe access, continued trading where practical, parking arrangements and the market's ongoing accessibility. The draft submission also seeks built form and public realm outcomes that respect the market's social significance and support its continued role as a community destination.

The Development Plan process is led by the Victorian Government, with the Minister for Planning as the Responsible Authority and also the final decision-maker. Council's role is advisory: to assess the proposal against the Darebin Planning Scheme, identify inconsistencies with the planning controls and to recommend changes. Council has shared the Victorian Government's consultation information through its own communication channels and encourages residents to access the planning documents and make submissions through Engage Victoria. The consultation deadline is 28 October 2026, as set by the State Government.

Council's ongoing advocacy seeks to ensure that Preston Market's heritage, community role and ongoing operation are properly considered as the Preston Activity Centre grows. While the State Government retains responsibility for the final planning decision, Council will continue to advocate for improvements that better protect the market for current and future generations

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In regard to the question about the Preston Market Feasibility Report which is item 9.2 this evening, the feasibility report on the public acquisition was prepared to inform Council's consideration of the financial, operational and other implications of acquiring and managing the market. Some information is confidential where disclosure could prejudice commercial negotiations, reveal commercially sensitive information or affect Council's negotiating position.

Council also recognises the importance of transparency and accountability. The confidentiality does not extend beyond what is necessary to protect information.

- **Lalita Ponnuthurai**

Question 1

What financial (or other) incentives or penalties has the State Government put in place to ensure Darebin Council meets its target of 69,000 new homes by 2051?

Response from General Manager City Sustainability and Strategy

Thank you for your question. There are currently no direct financial incentives or penalties associated with meeting or not meeting the housing target. The targets are intended to guide long-term strategic planning and ensure councils plan for sufficient housing opportunities.

- **Brendan Murphy**

Question 1

A Bundoora Darebin resident has provided a letter of support to the Yarra Plenty Regional Library board to provide a mobile library bus to frequent Bundoora Square twice a month. Considering the positive /vices/ opportunities this would create for all residents from Darebin Bundoora, would the Darebin City Council provide a letter of support to YPRL on library bus frequently Bundoora Square?

Response from General Manager Community Life

Thank you for your question, Brendan. Darebin City Council is not a member council of the Yarra Plenty Regional Library. This is a matter for Yarra Plenty Regional Library and its member councils. We encourage you to contact Yarra Plenty Regional Libraries and Whittlesea City Council, as the council for where it resides, to discuss your request.

It would not be appropriate for Darebin Council to seek to influence the operations of another library service which is not part of Darebin's services.

Question 2

It's been mentioned that showers at Reservoir Leisure Centre are tempered. Is a tempered shower, cold, warm or hot?

Response from General Manager Community Life

Tempered hot water is water blended by a safety device to prevent severe scalding and is a regulatory requirement in a public space like Reservoir Leisure Centre. RLC has these devices fitted throughout the facility and, as a result, the water would be considered warm to hot.

We are aware, unfortunately, RLC experiences intermittent hot water issues in the change room showers. Council is investing in a new all-electric hot water system along with change room upgrades. Construction is scheduled to commence in Autumn 2027.

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Question 3

If you are an unincluded member of the community (i.e homeless) in Reservoir, relying / needing a hot shower, where would go for a hot shower in Reservoir?

Response from General Manager Community Life

People experiencing homelessness and rough sleeping can access the Community Shower Access Program at RLC, which provides free shower and locker access Monday to Sunday since 2019.

Eligibility and suitability assessments for the program are undertaken by Merri Outreach Support Service following referrals from program partners.

- **Matthew Zammitt**

Question 1

Given there are two people currently identifying as Darebin Council's 'Chief People Officer', has Darebin Council made a decision to have 2 Chief People Officers?

Response from General Manager Customer and Corporate

No Darebin Council does not have two Chief People Officers. Council's approved organisational structure contains one Chief People Officer position. The substantive occupant of the role is currently on extended leave and another employee has been appointed to perform the role during that period to ensure continuity of leadership and service delivery.

Question 2

What is Darebin Council's latest WorkCover Employer Performance Rating - and if Council does not have a rating or does not know it - why not?

Response from General Manager Customer and Corporate

Darebin’s current WorkCover Employer Performance Rating (EPR) is 2.

Council is highly committed to continually improving workplace safety outcomes. The Employer Performance Rating is only one part of a broader WorkCover premium calculation and reflects claim history over several years. Our focus is on prevention, return to work and supporting employee wellbeing, with regular oversight by Council and the Audit and Risk Committee

In considering this rating, it is important to recognise that Darebin delivers a broad range of services to the community, many of which are provided by in-house staff. This results in a diverse workforce with different workplace risks and claim exposures.

For this reason, direct comparisons between councils can be misleading, as councils may have different industry classifications, service profiles and workforce risk exposures.

Question 3

Why does Darebin Council disclose such scant information about its WorkCover claims performance compared to other councils?

Response from General Manager Customer and Corporate

Thank you for your feedback. Council's Annual Report is prepared in accordance with applicable reporting requirements.

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Councils may adopt different approaches to the type and level of information included in their annual reports.

Council reviews its reporting practices on an ongoing basis to make sure that it is accurate. Council's current reporting includes information relevant to understanding its performance, workforce, risks and operations.

EXTENSION OF PUBLIC QUESTION TIME – 6.42PM

Council Resolution

MOVED: **Cr. A Villella**
SECONDED: **Cr. J O'Brien**

That Public Question Time be extended by 30 minutes.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

- **John Nugent**

Question 1

At the previous Council Meeting, Council confirmed it's their responsibility to notify a person that has placed unreasonable demands on staff. Mayor, can you advise how Council can place a person on a plan, when Council has not followed their own policy and not advised a person by letter, phone, email or in person? What is Council going to do now, if a person is on a plan?

Question 2

Mayor, the last Council Meeting confirmed that they recognise that complaints and feedback help Council to improve its services. Can you advise why Council count the number of times I come into Customer Services and then use this information against me? Once again, Council is following own policy.

Response from General Manager Customer and Corporate

Thank you for your questions. I will respond to both questions 1 and 2 together.

Council records customer interactions in its customer relationship management system so that requests, feedback and complaints can be tracked, managed and responded to within appropriate timeframes.

Council may also review patterns of customer contact where this assists in the management of ongoing matters and helps ensure Council resources are used effectively.

Council's Managing Complex Customer Behaviour Policy outlines how Council will respond when customer interactions place unreasonable demands on employees or Council resources.

The policy also sets out Council's approach to communicating with customers when measures are put in place under the policy.

UNCONFIRMED

Question 3

Mayor, can you please explain why Donath West hasn't had any capital works spent on it for the past 10 years, in that time Council has provided very limited maintenance to its grounds, trees and shrubs, light still to be adjusted and on unsealed pathways (need to be 2 meters wide) and also not one successful petition lodged. Mayor, please explain why Donath West hasn't received attention from Council.

Response from General Manager Infrastructure and Operations

Donath West is part of a large and valued multi sports precinct which includes Donath East Reserve and Dole Reserve, and which has multiple sportsgrounds, pavilions and play areas and is well used including for tennis, netball, soccer, cricket, play and informal recreation.

Our capital works records over the last 6 years show a range of works have been completed at Donath West and the broader precinct. I can also confirm that adjustment of the light which you specifically asked about has now been completed. The list the team has provided me includes capital works projects and planting projects. I will give you printed copy of the list tonight, and it will be included in the record of minutes.

Printed list of works provided:

JC Donath and IW Dole Recent Works

General

- JC Donath West pavilion and public toilet upgrade – Completed June 2024 - CW
- West Pavilion Alarn Upgrade 24/25 - CW
- Wetland Project 23/24 feeds irrigation to west and pipe upgraded during project - CW
- Furniture and bin renewal to Darebin standard occurred over last 10 years - CW
- Central shelter concrete surface upgrade 23/24 - CW

Sports Grounds

- JC Donath Oval 4 and 5 – Synthetic cricket wicket upgrades, including synthetic winter covers – Both Completed November 2024 - CW
- JC Donath 1 – top dressing (20m3 sand) 2025 – Ops Budget
- Donath 6 Drainage works 23/24 - CW

Sports Field Lighting

- Donath 6 Sports Field Lighting upgraded 22/23 - CW
- Donath 6 Sports Field Lighting Alarm System 24/25 - CW
- Donath 1 light adjustment – August 2025 - CW
- IW Dole – lighting upgrade in 2022 - CW

Paths

- Path network upgrade from blacktop to concrete completed around 19/20 - CW
- Path along tennis courts (non-paved) renewed 25/26 – 150lm - Operational
- Tennis courts to club rooms Harmer st (240lm) scheduled for 26/27 - CW
- Top section 170lm for capital the following year 27-28 (TBC – CW)

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Rewilding

- 2021 Rewilding (CW): Renewal and dirt spoil mound (tennis courts) revegetation (Middle Donath West 3000m2)
- 2022 Rewilding (CW): Infill revegetation beds middle and new Wagga Rd edge (Wagga Rd 1200m2)
- 2024 Rewilding capital (CW): Infill Wagga Rd
- 2025 Rewilding (Operational): Infill Middle Donath west (part grant funded Landcare)
- 2026 Rewilding (Operational): Renewal northwest entrance (Keon Park station) new cross over section
- 2026-27 Rewilding (Operational): Ongoing establishment of previous seasons plantings.

Tree Planting:

- 46 trees planted since 2024; IW Dole (40) and JC Donath (6) – Operational Budget

Cr. O'Brien left the meeting at 6:49pm.

- **Jane Tallulah Richards**

Question 1

In the draft annual report presented under item 9.3 of this meeting, it states that Darebin removed 370 pieces of graffiti in a12-month period. Can the Council provide a breakdown of how many of these 370 pieces of graffiti were deemed to be offensive, constitute hate speech, and how many were deemed to be antisemitic?

Response from General Manager Infrastructure and Operations

Thank you for your question, Jane. Nineteen per cent of the graffiti removal requests recorded during the reporting period were offensive. Council does not hold a more detailed breakdown by subcategories.

Question 2

My family personally logged over 300 items of antisemitic graffiti via the advertised method of Snap Send Solve over a 24-month period. Could Council please advise how many of the Snap Send Solve items we logged during this period were actioned and the graffiti removed? Our personal experience has been that the majority of these items were left in Snap Send Solve with no action or closed on SnapSendSolve over 9 months after they were lodged.

Response from General Manager Infrastructure and Operations

There have been issues with some offensive graffiti reports not reaching Council in the last year. We have fixed the underlying issues and cleaned up a number of older graffiti reports that we were able to access. Graffiti reports in SnapSendSolve on assets owned by other government agencies or utilities (such as power poles or post boxes) go to them and Council does not have visibility of it.

Council is unable to verify the total number of reports submitted by an individual or family through SnapSendSolve.

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Given the challenges Jane has described over an extended period, our team have spoken to Jane today and discussed this in more detail. We have confirmed that Council's target response time is for offensive graffiti to be removed within 48 hours, and I understand the resident will continue to report graffiti to Council if needed in future.

Question 3

Noting the advice provided to Council at its meeting of 22 September 2026 that Council does not currently provide training to specifically address antisemitism or improve understanding of Jewish identity to staff, how can the Council be satisfied that it is correctly identifying antisemitic graffiti reported to it?

Cr. O'Brien returned to the meeting at 6:52pm.

Response from General Manager Infrastructure and Operations

We've looked at this question carefully just recently after we identified the issue with offensive graffiti reports not reaching Council.

We found that while overt hate, threats, well known symbols, or vulgar graffiti was readily identified as offensive, particular challenges were found with identifying new or emerging markings.

We are taking two main actions. Firstly, we're using residents' insights to help spot new symbols. We're adjusting questionnaires to understand why a resident regards an item of graffiti as offensive and calling residents when it's not clear. New or emerging markings will be reviewed with Council's internal diversity teams and our list of identified offensive graffiti updated as required.

Secondly, we are ensuring training for staff involved in the assessment of offensive graffiti provides appropriate coverage of diverse cultural, community, and inclusion considerations. While our training is not specific to one culture, it is designed to achieve the purpose the question is intending.

- **Glen Cisar**

Question 1

Given that Darebin Council's WorkCover premium is nearly four times what it was in 2022, what is Darebin's target WorkCover premium, how will this be achieved and by when?

Response from General Manager Customer and Corporate

Council is actively working to improve workplace safety and WorkCover performance, with clear accountability for safety outcomes across the organisation, including amongst senior leaders.

WorkCover premiums have increased due to factors including claim costs, wage growth and changes across the broader WorkCover scheme. Premiums are based on claims experience over several years, so improvements in safety performance can take time to be reflected in premium costs.

The health, safety and wellbeing of our people is a high priority for Council. We have a range of initiatives underway to prevent injuries, support injured employees and improve return to work outcomes.

Progress is regularly monitored and reported to both Council and the Audit and Risk Committee.

UNCONFIRMED

Question 2

The draft annual report (at Note 7) shows remuneration for senior management rose by 19.4% to $3.92 million, having already risen by 18.5% the year prior. How does Council explain this increase?

Response from General Manager Customer and Corporate

The increase largely reflects changes in who was in senior management roles during the year and when those positions were filled, along with normal salary increases. The figure reported in the Annual Report is based on accounting requirements and does not mean senior managers received pay rises of this amount. All figures are independently audited.

Question 3

By what date will Darebin Council have completed all actionable recommendations made in the 2025 Municipal Monitors' report?

Response from Executive Manager Governance and Communications

Thank you for the question. The Monitors' Report was delivered on 17 December 2025 and made recommendations across a range of topics including financial sustainability, role clarity, decision making procedures and practices and community complaint handling.

Darebin's action plan has 13 actions, and we confirm that 5 commitments are complete, 6 require quarterly or annual action, which are on track and 2 are on hold pending the finalisation of the Local Government Act Stronger Communities Bill.

The two actions on hold will be actioned in the 12 months following the enactment of the new bill.

Of the six actions which are categorised as 'on track' , one will be finalised by 30 December 2026, and the five remaining are required to be in place for the remainder of the council term.

For the duration of the Action Plan, Council will continue to provide an update to the community every six months via the Governance Report, a quarterly update to the Audit and Risk Committee and an annual update to the Minister for Local Government.

- **Angela Denton**

Question 1

Why does the report in the 27 October 2026 agenda restrict financial acknowledgment and remediation exclusively to a five-week window (1 July 2026 to 11 August 2026), completely ignoring the agreed 2021–2026 scope and documented overcharges in previous financial years?

Response from General Manager Community Life

Thank you for your question. Council must approve any changes to client fees in the adopted annual budget. This Report requests approval to amend HACC PYP client fees for 2026-27 to align with the State department's updated fee guidelines. These guidelines were issued too late to change the proposed fees in the current budget prior to its approval.

Any fee remediation matter prior to this financial year is the subject of a separate process and is outside the scope of this Report.

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Question 2

Can the Executive clarify how a report isolating a five-week period satisfies formal commitments made to the Victorian Ombudsman and affected residents to investigate overcharging dating back to 2021?

Response from General Manager Community Life

The commitments and detailed responses to queries made to the Victorian Ombudsman are a separate process and investigation, and they are outside of the scope of this report. That work is continuing.

As mentioned above, the report that is being considered by Council tonight, seeks a Council decision to update Council's published HACC PYP fees, to align with State Governments HACC PYP fee guidelines.

Question 3

Can the Executive confirm or deny whether Darebin Council characterized the HACC-PYP retrospective billing anomalies to the Victorian Ombudsman as being less than one dollar per invoice?

Response from General Manager Community Life

I understand Officers were in discussion with you this morning to clarify this question. They will reach out to you further to ensure that there is a shared understanding of the information provided to the Ombudsman about the pricing guide and service fee.

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SUBMISSIONS

The following people each made 2-minute verbal submissions to items listed on the agenda as follows:

9.1 Preston Market - Development Plan Submission

1. Loki Sangarya
2. Chris Erlandsen
3. Zeng Chin
4. Celine Mucke
5. Alana Greenburg
6. Kath Larkin (represented by Stephanie Price)
7. Ben Tomasiello
8. Serena Ashmore
9. Lachlin Challis
10. Tammy Connelly
11. Lalita Ponnuthurai
12. Anh Nguyen
13. George Kanjere
14. Leah Healy - online

9.2 Preston Market Feasibility Study

1. Agapi Pashos

9.4 Trial Hard Rubbish Review

1. Peter Gonis
2. Carolyn Lunt
3. Fiona Nelson - online
4. Agapi Pashos

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8. PETITIONS

8.1 TABLING OF PETITION - INSTALLATION OF DOG WASTE BINS AND OTHER APPROPRIATE BINS AT SOUTH PARK, NORTHCOTE

Council Resolution

MINUTE NO. 26-157

MOVED: **Cr. A Sangster**
SECONDED: **Cr. K Olaris OAM**

That the petition:

We, the undersigned ask Council to:

Investigate and consider the installation of dog waste bins in the public open spaces accessed via the gateway at the end of Beaconsfield Parade adjacent to the golf course, to assist in managing dog waste and maintaining the amenity of the area.

be tabled and referred to the Chief Executive Officer for consideration and response.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Elizabeth Neumann, as the submitter of the petition made a 2-minute submission.

8.2 TABLING OF PETITION - SUPPORT OUTDOOR SEATING AT GIU GIU CAFÈ

Council Resolution

MINUTE NO. 26-158

MOVED: **Cr. A Sangster**
SECONDED: **Cr. M Arturi (Deputy Mayor)**

That the petition:

We, the undersigned ask Council to:

Help Us Keep Our Local Café Thriving. We are asking for your support in requesting that Darebin City Council reconsider its decision to deny outdoor seating at Giu Giu Café. Giu Giu is a small, family-run café that was built with the hope of becoming a welcoming place for our local community. Outdoor seating would allow customers to gather, enjoy their coffee, and contribute to a more vibrant and connected neighbourhood.

What has made this decision particularly difficult is that the previous businesses operating from this same premises were granted outdoor seating permits for many years. The location has a long history of accommodating outdoor dining, and we are simply asking to be given the same opportunity. We respectfully ask Council to work with us to find a practical solution that allows outdoor seating while maintaining public safety and accessibility.

Why this matters:

Outdoor seating would:

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- *Support a small local business during a challenging economic climate.*
- *Create a more welcoming and vibrant streetscape.*
- *Encourage people to spend more time supporting other local businesses nearby.*
- *Improve the customer experience by providing a place to sit and enjoy food and drinks.*
- *Help strengthen the local economy and sense of community.*
- *Ensure the safety of dogs by being over seen by their owners.*

As members of the community, we believe small businesses deserve the opportunity to grow and contribute positively to the neighbourhood.

We respectfully ask Darebin City Council to reconsider its decision and allow Giu Giu Café the same opportunity that previous businesses at this location have enjoyed.

Thank you for supporting local business and helping us create a more welcoming space for our community.

be tabled and referred to the Chief Executive Officer for consideration and response.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Beyonce Saracino, as the submitter of the petition made a 2-minute submission.

PROCEDURAL MOTION – 7.58PM

Council Resolution

MOVED: **Cr. M Arturi (Deputy Mayor)**
SECONDED: **Cr. A Villella**

That the meeting be adjourned for 10 minutes

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

The meeting resumed at 8.08pm.

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9. CONSIDERATION OF REPORTS

9.1 PRESTON MARKET - DEVELOPMENT PLAN SUBMISSION

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents a draft submission on the proposed Preston Market Development Plan and recommends that Council adopt the submission and lodge it with the Victorian Government.

The draft submission is broadly supportive of the proposed Development Plan's response to key aspects of the planning controls for the Preston Market Precinct, including substantial retention of the Preston Market in situ, measures to support market continuity, and management of overshadowing impacts, while facilitating housing in a highly accessible location.

The draft submission also identifies a number of areas where the proposal could be strengthened through further information, clarification or refinement.

On 23 September 2026, Council received a request from the Minister for Planning, through the Department of Transport and Planning, for comment on the proposed Development Plan for the Preston Market Precinct. There is no statutory requirement for the plan to be referred to Council, and Council's role is advisory only, with the Minister being the responsible authority and decision-maker for this matter.

Council must provide its submission by 28 October 2026.

Officer Recommendation

That Council:

(1) Adopts the submission on the proposed Preston Market Precinct Development Plan at **Appendix A**.

(2) Authorises the Chief Executive Officer to make any minor corrections and clarifications or necessary updates to the submission at **Appendix A**, consistent with Council's resolution.

(3) Authorises the Chief Executive Officer to lodge the submission at **Appendix A** with the Victorian Government no later than 28 October 2026.

(4) Writes to the Minister for Planning to:

a. provide Council’s submission at **Appendix A**

b. request that Council is given the opportunity to provide advice on any future planning applications for the Preston Market Precinct.

(5) Writes to the Preston, Northcote and Bundoora State Members of Parliament to provide Council’s submission at **Appendix A**.

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Motion

MOVED: Cr. A Villella
SECONDED: Cr. C Boglis OAM

That Council:

(1) Notes that the proposed Preston Market Development Plan released for consultation falls significantly short of the community expectations articulated in the Heart of Preston document and the award-winning Preston Market Quarter Identity Study (Hello City, 2019), particularly in relation to the retention of the market's character, cultural identity, public amenity, independent traders and role as an important civic and community space.

(2) Therefore not support the proposed submission (**Appendix A**) and instead replace **Appendix A** with clauses 3–8 below, and to advocate for an outcome that places the long-term interests of the Preston community at the centre of all planning decisions.

(3) Affirms that the future of Preston Market must be determined by its enduring social, cultural, economic and community value, rather than solely by its potential to generate private development profit. Council recognises the market as an important multicultural meeting place, a source of affordable fresh food, a home for independent traders and a significant part of Preston's local identity.

(4) Calls for the proposed Development Plan not to proceed in its current form unless its impacts on built density, open space, parking, traffic, existing traders, pedestrian safety, environmental sustainability and community life are satisfactorily addressed through meaningful consultation with the community and market traders. In particular, Council calls for the following changes:

a) Retention of the market footprint

The existing market footprint must be fully retained, including the southern sheds and the fruit and vegetable sheds, which should remain intact. The proposed reduction of the market footprint to approximately 81% risks diminishing trader capacity, reducing consumer choice, disrupting established trading relationships and undermining the traditional market experience that attracts residents from across Melbourne.

b) Reduction of excessive building heights

The proposed building heights of up to 16 storeys are excessive in the context of the market's established character and surrounding neighbourhood. Such heights risk overwhelming the market, changing its look and feel, reducing sunlight and contributing to a scale of development that is inconsistent with the market's role as a distinctive public-facing community destination. Building heights and overall density must be reconsidered to achieve a more appropriate transition between the market and surrounding streets.

c) Retention of adequate car parking

The proposed reduction of approximately 100 car parking spaces must be reconsidered. Adequate parking is essential to maintaining practical and inclusive access to Preston Market, particularly for older residents, people with mobility limitations, families, traders and customers transporting fresh produce. Council should seek a comprehensive parking and transport assessment that considers existing demand, projected population growth, accessible parking requirements, loading arrangements and the cumulative effects of surrounding development.

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d) Assessment in the context of the Preston Activity Centre

The Development Plan must be assessed in the context of the broader Preston Activity Centre planning framework, including the anticipated provision of approximately 10,200 homes along High Street, Preston, and the planning controls introduced in April 2025 that permit increased building heights and more intensive residential development. The cumulative impacts of this growth must be properly assessed, including increased traffic congestion, parking pressure, inadequate public open space, pedestrian safety risks, environmental impacts, pressure on local infrastructure and services, and the urban heat island effect. Development must be matched by sufficient investment in transport, community infrastructure, tree canopy, public open space and essential services.

e) Protection of existing traders and affordable retail opportunities

The Development Plan must demonstrate how existing traders will be protected from displacement and how affordable, accessible trading opportunities will be maintained during and after redevelopment. Clear and enforceable arrangements should address relocation, continuity of trade, affordable rents, access for deliveries and the ability of independent traders to return to the market.

f) Protection of the market's multicultural identity and community function

The plan must protect the market's multicultural character, traditional trading environment and role as an accessible gathering place. The market should remain a welcoming destination for people of different cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds, rather than becoming a development in which the traditional market experience is diminished or displaced.

(5) Calls on the Victorian Government to increase the minimum affordable housing provision from 10% to at least 20% of the residential component of the development, subject to the applicable planning and legislative framework, and to prioritise genuinely affordable housing, including public and social housing. Council considers that a development of this scale and in such a strategically significant location should make a substantial contribution to addressing Victoria's housing affordability crisis. The State Government should also increase direct investment in urgently needed public and social housing, rather than relying on private development alone to meet housing needs.

(6) Calls on the Victorian Government to investigate public acquisition of Preston Market as a serious and credible alternative to the proposed private redevelopment. This investigation should include:

a) An independent and transparent financial feasibility assessment, including acquisition costs, potential funding models, ongoing operational costs and long-term financial sustainability.

b) Consideration of appropriate public ownership, governance and management arrangements that protect the market's community purpose while supporting financially sustainable operations.

c) Meaningful consultation with market traders, local residents, community organisations and other relevant stakeholders.

d) An assessment of the social, cultural, economic and public benefits of retaining the market in public ownership compared with the proposed redevelopment model.

e) Consideration of the petition signed by more than 30,000 residents calling for the market to remain in public hands, as a significant expression of community concern and support for public ownership.

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(7) Identifies the following objectives for any public acquisition and future management model:

a) Protect the market's traditional character, multicultural identity and distinctive trading environment.

b) Retain affordable and secure trading opportunities for independent traders and small businesses.

c) Preserve and improve accessible community gathering areas and public open space.

d) Ensure adequate car parking, public transport connections, loading access, cycling infrastructure and pedestrian safety.

e) Establish long-term planning and governance protections against excessive development and the loss of the market's essential community functions.

f) Ensure that the market remains an affordable and inclusive destination for residents across Preston, Darebin and the wider community.

g) Give the Preston community, market traders and relevant community organisations a meaningful and ongoing role in decisions about the market's future.

h) Protect the market as a source of affordable fresh food, local employment, small-business activity and cultural exchange.

(8) Requests that Council forward its amended submission and the resolutions arising from this motion to the Victorian Minister for Planning, the relevant State Government departments and other appropriate authorities, and publicly advocate for:

a) A revised Development Plan that responds to the concerns identified in this motion.

b) Independent assessment of the cumulative impacts of the proposed redevelopment and the wider Preston Activity Centre planning framework.

c) A transparent investigation of public acquisition and long-term public ownership options.

d) Further meaningful consultation with market traders and the broader Preston community before any final development outcome is determined.

e) Public reporting on the outcomes of the State Government's consideration of these matters.

(9) Resolves that Council's advocacy for Preston Market be guided by the principle that the market's long-term community value, cultural significance, accessibility and contribution to local life must be protected for current and future generations.

(10) Authorises the Chief Executive Officer to lodge the revised submission at **Appendix A** with the Victorian Government no later than 28 October 2026.

(11) Write to the Preston, Northcote and Bundoora State Members of Parliament to provide Council's submission.

Amendment

MOVED: **Cr. J O'Brien**
SECONDED: **Cr. A Sangster**

That the substantive motion be amended by including the following point:

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(4) (g) Environmentally Sustainable Design

Mandate the strongest achievable Environmentally Sustainable Design standards be applied across the entire site, including energy efficiency, electrification, climate resilience, water sensitivity and urban greening, and that Green Star Communities certification be sought as a benchmark for the precinct.

Opportunities for on-site renewable energy generation must be maximised through the inclusion of solar photovoltaic infrastructure on rooftops, building facades and, where appropriate, apartment balconies.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

THE AMENDMENT WAS PUT AND CARRIED. THE SUBSTANTIVE MOTION THEN READ AS FOLLOWS:

Motion

MOVED: Cr. A Villella
SECONDED: Cr. C Boglis OAM

That Council:

(1) Notes that the proposed Preston Market Development Plan released for consultation falls significantly short of the community expectations articulated in the Heart of Preston document and the award-winning Preston Market Quarter Identity Study (Hello City, 2019), particularly in relation to the retention of the market's character, cultural identity, public amenity, independent traders and role as an important civic and community space.

(2) Therefore not support the proposed submission (**Appendix A**) and instead replace **Appendix A** with clauses 3–8 below, and to advocate for an outcome that places the long-term interests of the Preston community at the centre of all planning decisions.

(3) Affirms that the future of Preston Market must be determined by its enduring social, cultural, economic and community value, rather than solely by its potential to generate private development profit. Council recognises the market as an important multicultural meeting place, a source of affordable fresh food, a home for independent traders and a significant part of Preston's local identity.

(4) Calls for the proposed Development Plan not to proceed in its current form unless its impacts on built density, open space, parking, traffic, existing traders, pedestrian safety, environmental sustainability and community life are satisfactorily addressed through meaningful consultation with the community and market traders. In particular, Council calls for the following changes:

a) Retention of the market footprint

The existing market footprint must be fully retained, including the southern sheds and the fruit and vegetable sheds, which should remain intact. The proposed reduction of the market footprint to approximately 81% risks diminishing trader capacity, reducing consumer choice, disrupting established trading relationships and undermining the traditional market experience that attracts residents from across Melbourne.

b) Reduction of excessive building heights

The proposed building heights of up to 16 storeys are excessive in the context of the market's established character and surrounding neighbourhood. Such heights risk overwhelming the market, changing its look and feel, reducing sunlight and contributing to a scale of development that is inconsistent with the market's role as a distinctive public-facing community destination. Building heights and overall density must be reconsidered to achieve a more appropriate transition between the market and surrounding streets.

UNCONFIRMED

c) Retention of adequate car parking

The proposed reduction of approximately 100 car parking spaces must be reconsidered. Adequate parking is essential to maintaining practical and inclusive access to Preston Market, particularly for older residents, people with mobility limitations, families, traders and customers transporting fresh produce. Council should seek a comprehensive parking and transport assessment that considers existing demand, projected population growth, accessible parking requirements, loading arrangements and the cumulative effects of surrounding development.

d) Assessment in the context of the Preston Activity Centre

The Development Plan must be assessed in the context of the broader Preston Activity Centre planning framework, including the anticipated provision of approximately 10,200 homes along High Street, Preston, and the planning controls introduced in April 2025 that permit increased building heights and more intensive residential development. The cumulative impacts of this growth must be properly assessed, including increased traffic congestion, parking pressure, inadequate public open space, pedestrian safety risks, environmental impacts, pressure on local infrastructure and services, and the urban heat island effect. Development must be matched by sufficient investment in transport, community infrastructure, tree canopy, public open space and essential services.

e) Protection of existing traders and affordable retail opportunities

The Development Plan must demonstrate how existing traders will be protected from displacement and how affordable, accessible trading opportunities will be maintained during and after redevelopment. Clear and enforceable arrangements should address relocation, continuity of trade, affordable rents, access for deliveries and the ability of independent traders to return to the market.

f) Protection of the market's multicultural identity and community function

The plan must protect the market's multicultural character, traditional trading environment and role as an accessible gathering place. The market should remain a welcoming destination for people of different cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds, rather than becoming a development in which the traditional market experience is diminished or displaced.

g) Environmentally Sustainable Design

Mandate the strongest achievable Environmentally Sustainable Design standards be applied across the entire site, including energy efficiency, electrification, climate resilience, water sensitivity and urban greening, and that Green Star Communities certification be sought as a benchmark for the precinct.

Opportunities for on-site renewable energy generation must be maximised through the inclusion of solar photovoltaic infrastructure on rooftops, building facades and, where appropriate, apartment balconies.

(5) Calls on the Victorian Government to increase the minimum affordable housing provision from 10% to at least 20% of the residential component of the development, subject to the applicable planning and legislative framework, and to prioritise genuinely affordable housing, including public and social housing. Council considers that a development of this scale and in such a strategically significant location should make a substantial contribution to addressing Victoria's housing affordability crisis. The State Government should also increase direct investment in urgently needed public and social housing, rather than relying on private development alone to meet housing needs.

UNCONFIRMED

(6) Calls on the Victorian Government to investigate public acquisition of Preston Market as a serious and credible alternative to the proposed private redevelopment. This investigation should include:

a) An independent and transparent financial feasibility assessment, including acquisition costs, potential funding models, ongoing operational costs and long-term financial sustainability.

b) Consideration of appropriate public ownership, governance and management arrangements that protect the market's community purpose while supporting financially sustainable operations.

c) Meaningful consultation with market traders, local residents, community organisations and other relevant stakeholders.

d) An assessment of the social, cultural, economic and public benefits of retaining the market in public ownership compared with the proposed redevelopment model.

e) Consideration of the petition signed by more than 30,000 residents calling for the market to remain in public hands, as a significant expression of community concern and support for public ownership.

(7) Identifies the following objectives for any public acquisition and future management model:

a) Protect the market's traditional character, multicultural identity and distinctive trading environment.

b) Retain affordable and secure trading opportunities for independent traders and small businesses.

c) Preserve and improve accessible community gathering areas and public open space.

d) Ensure adequate car parking, public transport connections, loading access, cycling infrastructure and pedestrian safety.

e) Establish long-term planning and governance protections against excessive development and the loss of the market's essential community functions.

f) Ensure that the market remains an affordable and inclusive destination for residents across Preston, Darebin and the wider community.

g) Give the Preston community, market traders and relevant community organisations a meaningful and ongoing role in decisions about the market's future.

h) Protect the market as a source of affordable fresh food, local employment, small-business activity and cultural exchange.

(8) Requests that Council forward its amended submission and the resolutions arising from this motion to the Victorian Minister for Planning, the relevant State Government departments and other appropriate authorities, and publicly advocate for:

a) A revised Development Plan that responds to the concerns identified in this motion.

b) Independent assessment of the cumulative impacts of the proposed redevelopment and the wider Preston Activity Centre planning framework.

c) A transparent investigation of public acquisition and long-term public ownership options.

d) Further meaningful consultation with market traders and the broader Preston community before any final development outcome is determined.

UNCONFIRMED

e) Public reporting on the outcomes of the State Government's consideration of these matters.

(9) Resolves that Council's advocacy for Preston Market be guided by the principle that the market's long-term community value, cultural significance, accessibility and contribution to local life must be protected for current and future generations.

(10) Authorises the Chief Executive Officer to lodge the revised submission at **Appendix A** with the Victorian Government no later than 28 October 2026.

(11) Write to the Preston, Northcote and Bundoora State Members of Parliament to provide Council's submission.

LOST

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

The motion was Lost on the casting vote of the Chairperson, Mayor Dimitriadis.

Motion

MOVED: **Cr. K Olaris OAM**
SECONDED: **Cr. M Arturi (Deputy Mayor)**

That Council:

(1) Adopts with the following amendments, Council's submission on the proposed Preston Market Precinct Development Plan at **Appendix A**:

a) That the existing market footprint as far as practicable and that continuous market operations must be maintained during development.

b) That retaining the Market's current feel is paramount, as described in objective 1 of the Heart of Preston document.

c) That the 16 storey tower proposed to the north of the precinct to Murray Rd be decreased to 14 stories aligned to planning controls.

d) That in order to accommodate lower tower heights, while avoiding additional bulk/width, consideration be given to decreasing the total number of apartments.

e) That car parking allocated to the general public attending the market be increased to at least current levels ie 890 car spaces.

f) That the Market Park be delivered on one level enabling greater open space functions, noting the significant shortage of open space in Preston.

g) That the strongest achievable Environmentally Sustainable Design standards be applied across the entire site.

h) That the 10% affordable housing allocation be further defined to include a minimum 5% social and or public housing.

i) That tenancy and built-form outcomes that support small businesses, social enterprises, community-focused services and locally owned operators should be prioritised.

UNCONFIRMED

(2) Authorises the Chief Executive Officer to make any minor corrections and clarifications or necessary updates to the submission at **Appendix A**, consistent with Council's resolution.

(3) Authorises the Chief Executive Officer to lodge the submission at **Appendix A** with the Victorian Government no later than 28 October 2026.

(4) Writes to the Minister for Planning to:

a) provide Council's submission at **Appendix A.**

b) request that Council is given the opportunity to provide advice on any future planning applications for the Preston Market Precinct.

(5) Writes to the Preston, Northcote and Bundoora State Members of Parliament to provide Council's submission at **Appendix A**.

THE MOTION WAS PUT AND CARRIED AND BECAME THE COUNCIL RESOLUTION AS FOLLOWS:

Council Resolution **MINUTE NO. 26-159**

MOVED: Cr. K Olaris OAM
SECONDED: Cr. M Arturi

That Council:

(1) Adopts with the following amendments, Council's submission on the proposed Preston Market Precinct Development Plan at **Appendix A**:

a) That the existing market footprint as far as practicable and that continuous market operations must be maintained during development.

b) That retaining the Market's current feel is paramount, as described in objective 1 of the Heart of Preston document.

c) That the 16 storey tower proposed to the north of the precinct to Murray Rd be decreased to 14 stories aligned to planning controls.

d) That in order to accommodate lower tower heights, while avoiding additional bulk/width, consideration be given to decreasing the total number of apartments

e) That car parking allocated to the general public attending the market be increased to at least current levels ie 890 car spaces.

f) That the Market Park be delivered on one level enabling greater open space functions, noting the significant shortage of open space in Preston.

g) That the strongest achievable Environmentally Sustainable Design standards be applied across the entire site.

h) That the 10% affordable housing allocation be further defined to include a minimum 5% social and or public housing.

i) That tenancy and built-form outcomes that support small businesses, social enterprises, community-focused services and locally owned operators should be prioritised.

(2) Authorises the Chief Executive Officer to make any minor corrections and clarifications or necessary updates to the submission at **Appendix A**, consistent with Council's resolution.

(3) Authorises the Chief Executive Officer to lodge the submission at Appendix A with the Victorian Government no later than 28 October 2026.

UNCONFIRMED

(4) Writes to the Minister for Planning to:

a) provide Council's submission at **Appendix A**.

b) request that Council is given the opportunity to provide advice on any future planning applications for the Preston Market Precinct.

(5) Writes to the Preston, Northcote and Bundoora State Members of Parliament to provide Council's submission at **Appendix A**.

CARRIED

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

The motion was Carried on the casting vote of the Chairperson, Mayor Dimitriadis.

UNCONFIRMED

9.2 PRESTON MARKET FEASIBILITY STUDY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Council has long advocated for the protection of the Preston Market (the Market), recognising its importance as a community gathering place, a source of affordable fresh food, a valued part of Darebin's cultural identity and an important gathering place for the community.

In August 2023, new planning controls were introduced by the Minister for Planning for the Preston Market Precinct, including a Heritage Overlay and requirements for the substantial retention of the Market's buildings and footprint.

Council committed to undertaking a Preston Market Feasibility Study in the 2025-26 annual budget. Preston Market Feasibility Study (the study) was commissioned to inform Council's consideration of whether public ownership of Preston Market warrants further investigation.

The study outlines estimated acquisition, refurbishment and operating costs associated with public ownership of Preston Market. Having regard to Council's financial position, organisational capacity and its service and capital investment priorities, officers do not consider public acquisition and operation of Preston Market to be a feasible proposition for Council.

The Feasibility Study is now complete and presented to Councillors as a confidential attachment to this report **(Appendix A)**. The Feasibility Study meets the definition of confidential information under section 3 of the *Local Government Act 2020* because it contains “business information, being information that would prejudice the Council's position in commercial negotiations if prematurely released”. Maintaining confidentiality over the Feasibility Study is important and required by legislation, however officers understand that this is challenging for the community, with many people having a strong interest in the details of the possibility of acquisition and in particular the likely cost. Officers have therefore prepared a summary paper **(Appendix C)** that Councillors may consider releasing to the public, which shares key information in an appropriate manner that still protects the interests of Council and third parties.

Officer Recommendation

That Council:

(1) Notes the completion of the Preston Market Feasibility Study, included under confidential **Appendix A**.

(2) Notes that officers have assessed the feasibility of Council acquiring the property for the primary purpose of supporting the ongoing operation of the Preston Market in a manner reasonably consistent with how the community enjoys the market today.

(3) Notes that analysis of the Preston Market Feasibility Study has the following conclusions:

a) That Council has no compulsory acquisition powers over the property which means acquisition would only occur if the landowner were a willing seller and if contract conditions could be agreed, including price;

b) That the value of the land in an open property market would reflect the potential for redevelopment in accordance with the planning controls;

UNCONFIRMED

c) That if Council pursued acquisition of the property, it would take on responsibility for aging assets that would require investment soon to support the market's ongoing operations;

d) That if Council pursued acquisition of the property, it would need to establish capabilities it does not currently have, including commercial management and market operations, as well as assume new risks and responsibilities associated with these functions.

e) That the estimated total cost for land acquisition and works required to appropriately support the ongoing operation of the Preston Market is beyond Council's foreseeable financial capacity.

(4) Notes that the conclusions in the above point 3 relate to public acquisition by Council and do not include any assessment by public acquisition by other levels of government which is considered to be outside the scope of Council's work.

(5) Determines to not consider or pursue acquisition of the Preston Market, having considered the Preston Market Feasibility Study and assessment.

(6) Determines that the '*Preston Market Public Acquisition Summary Paper*' attached as **Appendix C** to this report is deemed to be no longer confidential information and should be released as an attachment to the minutes of this Council Meeting.

(7) Continues to play an important role in protecting the Preston Market's social, cultural and historical value for generations to come through advocacy and participating in future planning decisions including the development plan and planning permit decisions.

Motion

MOVED: **Cr. A Villella**
SECONDED: **Cr. M Arturi (Deputy Mayor)**

That Council:

(1) Notes the completion of the Preston Market Feasibility Study, included under confidential **Appendix A**.

(2) Notes that officers have assessed the feasibility of Council acquiring the property for the primary purpose of supporting the ongoing operation of the Preston Market in a manner reasonably consistent with how the community enjoys the market today.

(3) Notes that analysis of the Preston Market Feasibility Study has the following conclusions:

a) That Council has no compulsory acquisition powers over the property which means acquisition would only occur if the landowner were a willing seller and if contract conditions could be agreed, including price;

b) That the value of the land in an open property market would reflect the potential for redevelopment in accordance with the planning controls;

c) That if Council pursued acquisition of the property, it would take on responsibility for aging assets that would require investment soon to support the market's ongoing operations;

d) That if Council pursued acquisition of the property, it would need to establish capabilities it does not currently have, including commercial management and market operations, as well as assume new risks and responsibilities associated with these functions;

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e) That the estimated total cost for land acquisition and works required to appropriately support the ongoing operation of the Preston Market is beyond Council's foreseeable financial capacity.

(4) Notes that the conclusions in the above point 3 relate to public acquisition by Council and do not include any assessment by public acquisition by other levels of government which is considered to be outside the scope of Council's work.

(5) Determines to not consider or pursue acquisition of the Preston Market, having considered the Preston Market Feasibility Study and assessment.

(6) Determines that the '*Preston Market Public Acquisition Summary Paper*' attached as **Appendix C** to this report is deemed to be no longer confidential information and should be released as an attachment to the minutes of this Council Meeting.

(7) Continues to play an important role in protecting the Preston Market's social, cultural and historical value for generations to come through advocacy and participating in future planning decisions including the development plan and planning permit decisions.

Procedural Motion

MOVED: **Cr. M Arturi (Deputy Mayor)**
SECONDED: **Cr. J O'Brien**

8.40pm - That the meeting adjourn for a break.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

8.48pm - The Meeting resumed.

Amendment

MOVED: **Cr. J O'Brien**
SECONDED: **Cr. A Sangster**

That point (8) be added to the substantive motion as follows:

(8) Requests that the CEO write to the Minister for Planning to confidentially share the complete Preston Market Feasibility Study to the Victorian Government so that the work can be used as they consider the future of the market.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

THE AMENDMENT WAS PUT AND THE SUBSTANTIVE MOTION THEN READ AS FOLLOWS:

Substantive Motion

MOVED: **Cr. A Villella**
SECONDED: **Cr. M Arturi (Deputy Mayor)**

That Council:

(1) Notes the completion of the Preston Market Feasibility Study, included under confidential **Appendix A**.

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(2) Notes that officers have assessed the feasibility of Council acquiring the property for the primary purpose of supporting the ongoing operation of the Preston Market in a manner reasonably consistent with how the community enjoys the market today.

(3) Notes that analysis of the Preston Market Feasibility Study has the following conclusions:

a) That Council has no compulsory acquisition powers over the property which means acquisition would only occur if the landowner were a willing seller and if contract conditions could be agreed, including price;

b) That the value of the land in an open property market would reflect the potential for redevelopment in accordance with the planning controls;

c) That if Council pursued acquisition of the property, it would take on responsibility for aging assets that would require investment soon to support the market's ongoing operations;

d) That if Council pursued acquisition of the property, it would need to establish capabilities it does not currently have, including commercial management and market operations, as well as assume new risks and responsibilities associated with these functions;

e) That the estimated total cost for land acquisition and works required to appropriately support the ongoing operation of the Preston Market is beyond Council's foreseeable financial capacity.

(4) Notes that the conclusions in the above point 3 relate to public acquisition by Council and do not include any assessment by public acquisition by other levels of government which is considered to be outside the scope of Council's work.

(5) Determines to not consider or pursue acquisition of the Preston Market, having considered the Preston Market Feasibility Study and assessment.

(6) Determines that the '*Preston Market Public Acquisition Summary Paper*' attached as **Appendix C** to this report is deemed to be no longer confidential information and should be released as an attachment to the minutes of this Council Meeting.

7) Continues to play an important role in protecting the Preston Market's social, cultural and historical value for generations to come through advocacy and participating in future planning decisions including the development plan and planning permit decisions.

8) Requests that the CEO write to the Minister for Planning to confidentially share the complete Preston Market Feasibility Study to the Victorian Government so that the work can be used as they consider the future of the market.

THE SUBSTANTIVE MOTION WAS PUT AND CARRIED AND BECAME THE COUNCIL RESOLUTION AS FOLLOWS:

Council Resolution **MINUTE NO. 26-160**

MOVED: Cr. A Villella
SECONDED: Cr. M Arturi (Deputy Mayor)

That Council:

(1) Notes the completion of the Preston Market Feasibility Study, included under confidential **Appendix A**.

(2) Notes that officers have assessed the feasibility of Council acquiring the property for the primary purpose of supporting the ongoing operation of the Preston Market in a

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manner reasonably consistent with how the community enjoys the market today.

(3) Notes that analysis of the Preston Market Feasibility Study has the following conclusions:

a) That Council has no compulsory acquisition powers over the property which means acquisition would only occur if the landowner were a willing seller and if contract conditions could be agreed, including price;

b) That the value of the land in an open property market would reflect the potential for redevelopment in accordance with the planning controls;

c) That if Council pursued acquisition of the property, it would take on responsibility for aging assets that would require investment soon to support the market's ongoing operations;

d) That if Council pursued acquisition of the property, it would need to establish capabilities it does not currently have, including commercial management and market operations, as well as assume new risks and responsibilities associated with these functions;

e) That the estimated total cost for land acquisition and works required to appropriately support the ongoing operation of the Preston Market is beyond Council's foreseeable financial capacity.

(4) Notes that the conclusions in the above point 3 relate to public acquisition by Council and do not include any assessment by public acquisition by other levels of government which is considered to be outside the scope of Council's work.

(5) Determines to not consider or pursue acquisition of the Preston Market, having considered the Preston Market Feasibility Study and assessment.

(6) Determines that the '*Preston Market Public Acquisition Summary Paper*' attached as **Appendix C** to this report is deemed to be no longer confidential information and should be released as an attachment to the minutes of this Council Meeting.

(7) Continues to play an important role in protecting the Preston Market's social, cultural and historical value for generations to come through advocacy and participating in future planning decisions including the development plan and planning permit decisions.

(8) Requests that the CEO write to the Minister for Planning to confidentially share the complete Preston Market Feasibility Study to the Victorian Government so that the work can be used as they consider the future of the market.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

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APPENDIX C - Preston Market Public Acquisition Summary Paper - *released to the public as resolved at 27 October 2026 Council Meeting.*

PRESTON MARKET PUBLIC ACQUISITION SUMMARY PAPER

Darebin City Council commissioned an independent assessment of the feasibility of acquiring and operating Preston Market under public ownership. This summary outlines the key findings and conclusions for Council's consideration in determining whether they should be shared with the community.

1. Opportunities and challenges with public ownership by Council

The assessment found that public ownership could provide Council with greater influence over the future of the Preston Market site and its long-term direction. However, ownership would also involve a substantial financial commitment and significant ongoing asset management responsibilities.

The study identified several uncertainties that would require further investigation if acquisition were to be considered further. These include structural condition, environmental risks, building services, heritage matters and future infrastructure requirements. Such investigations would only be warranted if Council intended to actively pursue acquisition.

2. Financial feasibility

The study included an estimate of the market value of the site based on as *Comparable Transactions Approach*. The study was also recognised that the acquisition would see Council take on aged assets and infrastructure that would need upgrade and refurbishment in coming years if the market is to continue to operate. The study included an *Order of Cost Estimate* for anticipated works, which noted not all structural elements were able to be assessed and would be potentially incur additional costs.

The cost of refurbishment cannot be de-linked from acquisition because Council would not be able to support ongoing market operations without undertaking works in coming years.

A summary of key financial considerations specifically for Council as a purchaser is below. This does not reflect the potential cost to other purchasers who consider acquiring the property as their circumstances may result in a higher or lower cost.

- The total cost of acquisition (land and works) is estimated to be in the order $173 million
- The purchase would need Council to partly fund the acquisition, requiring:
    - Approx. $86 million cash with the balance to be sourced through a loan; and
    - Approx. $12.5 million per annum to meet operational costs and debt servicing.

Council does not have the financial capacity to acquire the property, make necessary investments and ensure ongoing operation of the Preston Market. To create the necessary financial capacity to consider acquisition would involve significant impact on Council's ability to continue to fund other community services, infrastructure and priorities.

3. Statutory Authority to acquire

Council has no compulsory acquisition powers to acquire the site. Compulsory acquisition through a Public Acquisition Overlay is highly unlikely, would require approval by the Minister of Planning and may not satisfy the stator tests for compulsory acquisition. This means that acquisition would be reliant upon a willing vendor.

4. Operational feasibility

Preston Market is an established retail destination with about 100 tenants, an existing customer base and supporting infrastructure. The ongoing operation of the market would require active management, ongoing capital investment and specialised operational expertise that Council doesn’t not have. Council would need to invest in new capabilities that are not core to council, requiring additional resourcing, upskilling and financial commitment.

Conclusion

Having considered a range of matters, it is not feasible for Council to pursue public acquisition of the Preston Market. Council can continue to play an important role in supporting the long-term success of the market through advocacy, planning processes and proactive communications with the diverse market stakeholders.

9.3 ANNUAL REPORT 2025-26

Statement from Mayor

The purpose of this next item is for Council to note the Darebin City Council Annual Report 2025-26. In accordance with the requirements of the Local Government Act, it is the duty of the Mayor to report on the implementation of the Council Plan by presenting the Annual Report for consideration.

This Annual Report marks the first year of delivering the Our Darebin Council Plan 2025-29.

As Mayor, it has been rewarding to see the priorities our community helped shape being brought to life and making a meaningful difference across Darebin.

Throughout 2025-26, we turned our shared vision into action and I'd like to highlight the following achievements:

- *strengthening partnerships and deepening our commitment to truth-telling and healing*
- *supporting local families through expanded early childhood services and upgraded facilities*
- *protecting our natural environment, preserving biodiversity and building climate resilience*
- *celebrating our creative community and delivering vibrant arts and cultural programs*
- *delivering and maintaining high-quality core services, open spaces and infrastructure across Darebin*

It has been a busy year, and 78% of Year One actions are complete, helping to deliver better outcomes for our community. I invite you to find out more by reading the Annual Report, which Councillors are about to consider.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The *Local Government Act 2020* (Section 98) requires each Council in Victoria to prepare an Annual Report for the previous financial year which contains a report of operations, the audited financial and performance statements, and a copy of the Auditor's report on the financial statements.

To increase transparency in reporting, Council has aligned the Annual Report 2025-26 against the six sets of principles incorporated in the Act, whilst ensuring compliance with legislative reporting requirements and best practice.

The Annual Report 2025-26 contains Darebin City Council's audited Financial and Performance Statements ('Statements') which were subject to an earlier Council report at the September Council meeting. These Statements provide information about Council operations and services delivered to and for the Darebin community for the 2025-26 financial year. The Statements have been presented to, and considered by, the Audit and Risk Committee. The Financial and Performance Statements and the Auditor-General reports are included in the Annual Report 2025-26.

The Annual Report 2025-26 (**Appendix A**) contains the key highlights and achievements of Darebin Council for the first year of the *Our Darebin Plan 2025–2029*. Since the commencement of the Act, the previous legislative requirement for Council to submit the annual report to the Minister has been repealed therefore no longer a requirement.

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A summary of the Annual Report is currently in development to include as content on the Council website to inform the community of Darebin Council's achievements over the past year. The full Annual Report will also be available on the website to view or download.

Council Resolution

MINUTE NO. 26-161

MOVED: **Cr. V Tsalkos**
SECONDED: **Cr. M Arturi (Deputy Mayor)**

That Council:

(1) Notes the Darebin City Council Annual Report 2025-26, attached at **Appendix A**, prepared and presented in accordance with s98 of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

(2) Notes that a summary of the Annual Report 2025-26 will be available in digital format on Council's website, to increase transparency and accessibility, along with a full copy of the Annual Report 2025-26 for community members to download.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

UNCONFIRMED

9.4 TRIAL HARD RUBBISH REVIEW

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report outlines the findings of the first twelve-month review of Council's two-year booked hard rubbish collection trial, in accordance with Council's resolution of 3 March 2025, and seeks Council decision as to the preferred long-term hard rubbish service model for implementation from July 2027.

The review demonstrates that the booked hard rubbish collection service has delivered the operational, customer and environmental benefits anticipated when the trial commenced. Service demand has aligned with forecast levels, customer satisfaction among service users is high, the proportion of hard rubbish recycled has increased, and the proportion disposed to landfill disposal has reduced. Overall, the service has met performance expectations across all key measures.

While the transition to the booked service involved initial implementation challenges, including an initial backlog which resulted in long wait times, and operational teething issues, these were resolved early in the trial period. No significant ongoing service delivery issues have been identified during the remainder of the first year.

Community engagement undertaken as part of the review confirms that hard rubbish collection remains a highly valued Council service. Feedback indicates strong support for Council continuing to provide a hard rubbish collection service; however, there is no clear community consensus on the preferred delivery model. Noting that there are difference preferences for the delivery model with the community, experience from other Council areas shows that community satisfaction with hard rubbish services remains high whichever model is selected.

The first year of the trial provides Council with a robust evidence base to determine service arrangements beyond June 2027. There are differences between the models in regards to equity considerations, in regards to amenity, and in regards to recycling rate. There was no material difference between the models in regards to cost or effect on dumping. On balance, the assessment found that the community benefits arising from a booked collection model are somewhat greater than for a blanket collection model and more strongly aligned with Council's strategic objectives, however both models would reasonably service the Darebin community. The considerations are detailed in this report so that they can be balanced in decision making.

Officer Recommendation

That Council:

(1) Notes the findings of the first twelve-month review of the two-year booked hard rubbish collection trial.

(2) Notes that the booked hard rubbish collection service has delivered improved environmental outcomes, strong customer satisfaction and improving operational performance.

(3) Notes that community feedback demonstrates strong support for Council continuing to provide a hard rubbish collection service, while no clear community consensus exists regarding the preferred service delivery model.

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(4) Endorses the booked hard rubbish collection service as Council's preferred ongoing hard rubbish service model from 1 July 2027.

(5) Authorises the Chief Executive Officer, or delegate, to undertake all necessary procurement, contract and operational activities and negotiate and execute all necessary agreements to secure and implement the endorsed booked hard rubbish collection service from 1 July 2027.

Motion

MOVED: Cr. A Villella
SECONDED: Cr. V Tsalkos

That Council:

(1) Notes the findings of the first twelve-month review of the last two-year booked hard waste rubbish collection.

(2) Notes that the community feedback demonstrates strong support for Council continuing to provide a hard rubbish collection service.

(3) Notes that the current Booked system will end on 30 June 2027.

(4) Endorses a municipality-wide yearly hard rubbish collection from July 2027 (maximum volume 2 cubic metres).

(5) Endorses the first municipality -wide pickup to occur in November 2027 and yearly from then on.

(6) Receives advice via briefing in preparation for the next budget cycle of establishing an additional yearly 5000 booked hard rubbish collections or a second municipality wide pick up.

(7) Authorises the Chief Executive Officer, or delegate, to undertake all necessary procurement, contract and operational activities and negotiate and execute all necessary agreements to secure and implement the endorsed municipality -wide hard rubbish collection.

Extension of Time

MOVED: Cr. J O'Brien
SECONDED: Cr. C Boglis OAM

That the Council meeting continue after 9.05pm for 30 minutes.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

THE MOTION WAS PUT AND CARRIED AND BECAME THE COUNCIL RESOLUTION AS FOLLOWS:

Council Resolution

MINUTE NO. 26-162

MOVED: Cr. A Villella
SECONDED: Cr. V Tsalkos

That Council:

(1) Notes the findings of the first twelve-month review of the last two-year booked hard waste rubbish collection.

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(2) Notes that the community feedback demonstrates strong support for Council continuing to provide a hard rubbish collection service.

(3) Notes that the current Booked system will end on 30 June 2027.

(4) Endorses a municipality-wide yearly hard rubbish collection from July 2027 (maximum volume 2 cubic metres).

(5) Endorses the first municipality -wide pickup to occur in November 2027 and yearly from then on.

(6) Receives advice via briefing in preparation for the next budget cycle of establishing an additional yearly 5000 booked hard rubbish collections or a second municipality wide pick up.

(7) Authorises the Chief Executive Officer, or delegate, to undertake all necessary procurement, contract and operational activities and negotiate and execute all necessary agreements to secure and implement the endorsed municipality -wide hard rubbish collection.

CARRIED

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

UNCONFIRMED

9.5 DIGITAL DAREBIN - MIGRATION PARTNER

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Digital Darebin Transformation Program has been established to identify and implement the Technology One Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) solution that will allow Council to deliver on its strategic commitments under the Our Darebin Plan 2025 – 2029. A large part of implementing an ERP is migrating data from current systems to a new system.

Through the program planning phase, data discovery and from other council colleague experiences. Council has learned that data migration is complex and high risk and often underestimated. It requires high data expertise and data experts with experience in delivering data migration in similar complex environments. From these learnings and to mitigate the risk related to data migration the decision was made to procure a dedicated data migration partner to take responsibility for this element of the program delivery.

Council Resolution **MINUTE NO. 26-163**

MOVED: **Cr. V Tsalkos**
SECONDED: **Cr. M Arturi (Deputy Mayor)**

That Council:

(1) Notes the complex and high-risk nature of the data migration required for the Program and the need for data migration expertise.

(2) Notes that appointing the Data Migration Partner will support the Program with compliance obligations in relation to data and privacy and mitigate data migration related risks.

(3) Notes that a Strategic Procurement Plan was developed in accordance with Council's Procurement Policy and that a Request for Tender was undertaken through the Victorian Government eServices Register.

(4) Notes that the approved ERP Program budget of $50 million (including contingency) remains sufficient to deliver the Data Migration Partner contract.

(5) Notes that the tender process identified a preferred supplier for Contract CT202636 Digital Darebin Data Strategy and Migration Services, comprising services for migrating data from all existing solutions into the new solution and ensuring accuracy of data migration.

(6) Approves the awarding of Contract CT202636 to supplier as described in confidential **Appendix A** using the eServices standard contract for a period of 3 years, with options for 1-year extensions. The total contract value is as described in confidential **Appendix A.**

(7) Authorises the Chief Executive Officer to execute the contract and all associated documentation and to administer the contract, including the approval of variations in accordance with the contract conditions and Council policy.

(8) Authorises the Chief Executive Officer to publicly disclose the successful supplier following execution and exchange of the contract.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

UNCONFIRMED

9.6 RENEWAL OF MICROSOFT ENTERPRISE AGREEMENT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Council relies extensively on Microsoft technologies to support secure, reliable and connected digital services across the organisation. Core platforms, including Microsoft 365, Windows, SQL Server, Azure cloud services, data analytics and artificial intelligence capabilities, are critical to daily operations, productivity, collaboration, information security and business continuity.

The current Microsoft Enterprise Agreement (EA), which provides access to these products and services, operates on a three-year renewal cycle and is due to expire on 1 December 2026. A Request for Tender was issued through the Victorian Government eServices Register to pre-qualified Microsoft Licensing Solution Providers. The procurement process was conducted in accordance with the Local Government Act 2020 and Council's procurement policy framework. Two conforming tenders were received and evaluated.

Renewing the Microsoft EA for a further three-year term will ensure continued access to essential Microsoft software and cloud services, support Council's technology strategy, maintain licensing compliance, and optimise software licensing costs. The renewal will also support Council's information security, reliability, collaboration and flexible working capabilities while ensuring continuity of critical business operations.

The proposed expenditure is provided for within the approved IT software licences and maintenance operational budget. As the total contract value exceeds the Chief Executive Officer's delegated authority, Council approval is required to enter into a new three-year Enterprise Agreement commencing on 1 December 2026.

Council Resolution **MINUTE NO. 26-164**

MOVED: **Cr. M Arturi (Deputy Mayor)**
SECONDED: **Cr. A Villella**

That Council:

(1) Notes the strategic importance of Microsoft technologies in supporting Council's operational processes, workforce productivity, information security and business continuity.

(2) Notes that a Strategic Procurement Plan was developed in accordance with Council's Procurement Policy and that a Request for Tender was undertaken through the Victorian Government eServices Register.

(3) Notes that the tender process identified a preferred supplier for Contract CT202633 for the provision of a three-year Microsoft Enterprise Agreement, including software subscriptions, licence management services, Azure cloud services and associated licence growth requirements.

(4) Approves the award of Contract CT202633 to supplier as described in confidential Appendix A for the provision of a Microsoft Enterprise Agreement and associated services for the period 1 December 2026 to 30 November 2029, for a total contract value as described in confidential **Appendix A**.

(5) Authorises the Chief Executive Officer to execute the contract and all associated documentation and to administer the contract, including the approval of variations in accordance with the contract conditions and Council policy.

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(6) Authorises the Chief Executive Officer to publicly disclose the successful supplier following execution and exchange of the contract.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

UNCONFIRMED

9.7 CHANGE TO FEE GUIDANCE - HACCPYP AND CARE CONNECT, 2026/2027

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Supported and Connected Living Department (SandCL) require a change to Council's published User Fees and Charges Schedule FY 2026-27 for the Home and Community Care Program for Younger People (HACC PYP) and Associated Provider (Support at Home) Flexible Respite fees.

Any changes to the published Schedule require Council resolution. The change to HACCPYP fees is to meet the Department of Families Fairness and Housing (DFFH) HACCPYP Fees Policy and schedule of fees, commencing as of July 1, 2026. The change to Associated Provider (Support at Home) Flexible Respite fee is to remedy an error, and ensure correct fees are approved and publised on Council's website

Officer Recommendation

That Council:

(1) Approves the amendments to the Council User Fees and Charges Schedule 2026/27 detailed in **Appendix A** - Schedule of Proposed Amendments to the Council User Fees and Charges Schedule 2026/27, comprising:

(a) amendments to Home and Community Care Program for Younger People (HACC PYP) fees to align with the Victorian Government HACC PYP Fees Policy; and

(b) amendments to the Associated Provider (Support at Home) Flexible Respite weekday and public holiday fees to correct administrative errors.

(2) Authorises the Chief Executive Officer or delegate to implement and publish the approved amendments to the Council User Fees and Charges Schedule 2026/27.

Motion

MOVED: Cr. C Boglis OAM
SECONDED: Cr. A Villella

That Council:

(1) Approves the amendments to the Council User Fees and Charges Schedule 2026/27 detailed in Appendix A - Schedule of Proposed Amendments to the Council User Fees and Charges Schedule 2026/27, comprising:

a) amendments to Home and Community Care Program for Younger People (HACC PYP) fees to align with the Victorian Government HACC PYP Fees Policy; and

b) amendments to the Associated Provider (Support at Home) Flexible Respite weekday and public holiday fees to correct administrative errors.

(2) Authorises the Chief Executive Officer or delegate to implement and publish the approved amendments to the council user fees and charges schedule 2026/27.

(3) Requests the Chief Executive Officer to provide the following by December 2026 Ordinary Council Meeting on HACC PYP client fees charged from 1 July 2021 to 11 August 2026, as an attachment to the Governance report, and on the website including:

UNCONFIRMED

a) fees charged compared with the Department of Health Schedule of Fees applying at the time;

b) the number of clients affected and the total overcharged, by financial year;

c) the remediation plan and timeframes, including contact with former clients; and

d) controls in place to prevent recurrence.

THE MOTION WAS PUT AND CARRIED AND BECAME THE COUNCIL RESOLUTION AS FOLLOWS:

Council Resolution **MINUTE NO. 26-165**

MOVED: Cr. C Boglis OAM
SECONDED: Cr. A Villella

That Council:

(1) Approves the amendments to the Council User Fees and Charges Schedule 2026/27 detailed in Appendix A - Schedule of Proposed Amendments to the Council User Fees and Charges Schedule 2026/27, comprising:

a) amendments to Home and Community Care Program for Younger People (HACC PYP) fees to align with the Victorian Government HACC PYP Fees Policy; and

b) amendments to the Associated Provider (Support at Home) Flexible Respite weekday and public holiday fees to correct administrative errors.

(2) Authorises the Chief Executive Officer or delegate to implement and publish the approved amendments to the council user fees and charges schedule 2026/27.

(3) Requests the Chief Executive Officer to provide the following by December 2026 Ordinary Council Meeting on HACC PYP client fees charged from 1 July 2021 to 11 August 2026, as an attachment to the Governance report, and on the website including:

a) fees charged compared with the Department of Health Schedule of Fees applying at the time;

b) the number of clients affected and the total overcharged, by financial year;

c) the remediation plan and timeframes, including contact with former clients; and controls in place to prevent recurrence.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

UNCONFIRMED

9.8 CAMPAIGN SUPPORT FOR 26 JANUARY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides background information on the significance of the 26 January, it's impacts on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, and the Australian Long Weekend campaign led by Clothing the Gaps. It also outlines the opportunity for Council to become one of the first local governments in Australia to formally support the campaign.

Officer Recommendation

That Council:

(1) Notes that the City of Darebin is home to one of Melbourne's largest Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander populations and we value our long-standing relationship with this community.

(2) Notes Council's position which is to oppose Australia's national celebration being held on 26 January out of respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, many of whom identify this date with invasion and oppression.

(3) Considers Darebin City Council becoming the first local government organisation to join the Clothing the Gaps Australian Long Weekend campaign, which advocates for the Australia Day public holiday to be moved to the second last Monday in January each year, creating a three-day national event.

(4) Considers Darebin City Council becoming the first local government to recognise 26 January as a day of mourning.

(5) Notes that Council's support for this campaign is consistent with its commitment to truth-telling and advancing respectful engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Motion

MOVED: **Cr. K Olaris OAM**
SECONDED: **Cr. A Sangster**

That Council:

(1) Notes that the City of Darebin is home to one of Melbourne's largest Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander populations and we value our long-standing relationship with this community.

(2) Notes Council's position which is to oppose Australia's national celebration being held on 26 January out of respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, many of whom identify this date with invasion and oppression.

(3) Reaffirms its 2017 commitment to the Change the Date campaign and advises the Clothing the Gaps organisation of this position.

(4) Recognises the 26 January as a Day of Mourning and advises the Clothing the Gaps organisation of this position.

(5) Before formalising a position in relation to an alternative day or time for a National Day:

a) Requests advice the Wurundjeri Woi wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal

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Corporation to understand the views of Traditional Owners; and

b) Requests advice from the Darebin Aboriginal Advisory Committee (which is soon to be established) to seek an understanding of views of people in the Aboriginal Community and Aboriginal organisations across Darebin.

THE MOTION WAS PUT AND CARRIED AND BECAME THE COUNCIL RESOLUTION AS FOLLOWS:

Council Resolution

MINUTE NO. 26-166

MOVED: Cr. K Olaris OAM
SECONDED: Cr. A Sangster

That Council:

(1) Notes that the City of Darebin is home to one of Melbourne's largest Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander populations and we value our long-standing relationship with this community.

(2) Notes Council's position which is to oppose Australia's national celebration being held on 26 January out of respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, many of whom identify this date with invasion and oppression.

(3) Reaffirms its 2017 commitment to the Change the Date campaign and advises the Clothing the Gaps organisation of this position.

(4) Recognises the 26 January as a Day of Mourning and advises the Clothing the Gaps organisation of this position.

(5) Before formalising a position in relation to an alternative day or time for a National Day:

a) Requests advice the Wurundjeri Woi wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation to understand the views of Traditional Owners; and

b) Requests advice from the Darebin Aboriginal Advisory Committee (which is soon to be established) to seek an understanding of views of people in the Aboriginal Community and Aboriginal organisations across Darebin.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

UNCONFIRMED

9.9 MENTAL HEALTH ACTIONS 2026-2027

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report is in response to Council resolution 26-091 that calls for the development of a small number of targeted mental health actions. This report provides Council with the proposed Mental Health Actions 2026-2027, to implement action 3.2.1.2 of the Council Action Plan, for endorsement. See **(Attachment A)** for detail.

Council Resolution

MINUTE NO. 26-167

MOVED: **Cr. C Boglis OAM**
SECONDED: **Cr. J O'Brien**

That Council endorses the Mental Health Actions 2026-2027 listed below, to be delivered in 2026/2027 financial year within the allocated budget of $50,000, to implement action 3.2.1.2 of the Our Darebin Action Plan 2026-2027:

(1) Facilitate a mental health service provider network.

(2) Provide training to incorporate knowledge of the mental health system into existing navigation roles at Council.

(3) Develop an exploration paper on co-location best practice models.

(4) Apply a collective impact model to existing local mental health promotion initiatives to strengthen reach, sustainability and outcomes.

(5) Include Mental Health as a focus area at the 2027 Health and Wellbeing Forum.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

UNCONFIRMED

9.10 MELBOURNE WATER TRAIL FEASIBILITY STUDY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents the findings of the feasibility study (**Appendix A**) that investigated an off-road shared user path on Melbourne Water land between the Mernda railway line in the northeast and Elizabeth Street in the southwest of the municipality. This route is identified in the 2022 Northern Trails Strategy, which was prepared by the Northern Councils Alliance.

The corridor alignment incorporates Council roads and land owned by Melbourne Water, VicTrack and the Department of Transport and Planning (DTP), with Yarra Trams also a key stakeholder.

The feasibility study is a 2025-26 Council operating project and has been delivered in collaboration between Darebin City Council, Merri-bek City Council and Melbourne Water. Stakeholder and community feedback has been considered and incorporated into the final feasibility study where relevant.

The study has been valuable in establishing a well-defined concept, identifying delivery requirements, constraints and costs, and providing an evidence base to support future planning and decision-making by the Northern Councils Alliance.

The study confirms that delivery of the project is technically feasible, subject to further design development and approvals.

However, the estimated capital cost of $7.5 million (excluding rail crossing works) presents a significant funding challenge and would require substantial reprioritisation within Council's Capital Works Program.

Officer Recommendation

That Council:

(1) Notes the completion of the Melbourne Water Trail Feasibility Study Report at **Appendix A**.

(2) Thanks the community for providing their feedback as part of the community engagement process.

(3) Thanks Melbourne Water and Merri-bek City Council for their role in the completion of the report.

(4) Shares the Melbourne Water Trail Feasibility Study with the Northern Councils Alliance to inform its initiatives and projects.

Motion

MOVED: Cr. C Boglis OAM
SECONDED: Cr. A Villella

That Council:

(1) Notes the completion of the Melbourne Water Trail Feasibility Study Report at **Appendix A**.

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(2) Thanks the community for providing their feedback as part of the community engagement process.

(3) Thanks Melbourne Water and Merri-bek City Council for their role in the completion of the report.

(4) Shares the Melbourne Water Trail Feasibility Study with the Northern Councils Alliance to inform its initiatives and projects.

(5) Notes that:

a) The trail is Priority 5 in Darebin's top ten unfunded trail priorities in the Northern Regional Trails Strategy (2022);

b) Community engagement on the Study sought feedback on three major road crossings only, with the 19 local street crossings provided for information;

c) The Study assessed the trail as a whole project; and

d) Officers have prepared an indicative section-by-section cost breakdown in response to a Councillor question, which was not included in the agenda report.

(6) Requests that officers bring a report to the February 2027 Ordinary Meeting that sets out the indicative cost of each section of the trail, with notes provided by the officers on the assumptions and limitations of this feasibility study.

THE MOTION WAS PUT AND CARRIED AND BECAME THE COUNCIL RESOLUTION AS FOLLOWS:

Council Resolution **MINUTE NO. 26-168**

MOVED: Cr. C Boglis OAM
SECONDED: Cr. A Villella

That Council:

(1) Notes the completion of the Melbourne Water Trail Feasibility Study Report at **Appendix A**.

(2) Thanks the community for providing their feedback as part of the community engagement process.

(3) Thanks Melbourne Water and Merri-bek City Council for their role in the completion of the report.

(4) Shares the Melbourne Water Trail Feasibility Study with the Northern Councils Alliance to inform its initiatives and projects.

(5) Notes that:

a) The trail is Priority 5 in Darebin's top ten unfunded trail priorities in the Northern Regional Trails Strategy (2022);

b) Community engagement on the Study sought feedback on three major road crossings only, with the 19 local street crossings provided for information;

c) The Study assessed the trail as a whole project; and

d) Officers have prepared an indicative section-by-section cost breakdown in response to a Councillor question, which was not included in the agenda report.

(6) Requests that officers bring a report to the February 2027 Ordinary Meeting that sets out the indicative cost of each section of the trail, with notes provided by the officers on the assumptions and limitations of this feasibility study.

CARRIED

UNCONFIRMED

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

The motion was Carried on the casting vote of the Chairperson, Mayor Dimitriadis.

UNCONFIRMED

9.11 PROJECT AND INITIATIVE BUDGET ADJUSTMENTS

The Chairperson, Mayor Dimitriadis vacated chair to move a motion in relation to this item. Deputy Mayor Arturi assumed the Chair.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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

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

To support transparent and effective financial management, Council maintains two project accounts within its financial system to capture and manage any unallocated project funding:

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

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

If Council approves all the recommended adjustments in Table 1 and 2 the balance of funds will be as follows:

- Unallocated **Capital** Works Program Account: **$93,509**
- Unallocated **Operating** Projects and Special Initiatives Program Account: **$14,985.**

Officer Recommendation

That Council:

(1) Approves the Project Budget adjustments for FY26-27 for the Capital Works Projects as per Table 1 of this report.

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

Motion

MOVED: Cr. E Dimitriadis (Mayor)
SECONDED: Cr. A Sangster

That Council:

(1) Approves the Project Budget adjustments for FY26-27 for the Capital Works Projects as per Table 1 of this report.

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(2) Approves the Project Budget adjustments for FY26-27 for the Operating Projects as per Table 2, with an adjustment that the 'Community Street Party Support' transfer be reduced to $11,866 to support street parties between mid-December to mid-January to a maximum amount of $10,000 in 2026-27.

Extension of Time

MOVED: **Cr. J O'Brien**
SECONDED: **Cr. K Olaris OAM**

That the Council meeting continue after 9.35pm for 30 minutes.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

THE MOTION WAS PUT AND CARRIED AND BECAME THE COUNCIL RESOLUTION AS FOLLOWS:

Council Resolution **MINUTE NO. 26-169**

MOVED: **Cr. E Dimitriadis (Mayor)**
SECONDED: **Cr. A Sangster**

That Council:

(1) Approves the Project Budget adjustments for FY26-27 for the Capital Works Projects as per Table 1 of this report.

(2) Approves the Project Budget adjustments for FY26-27 for the Operating Projects as per Table 2, with an adjustment that the 'Community Street Party Support' transfer be reduced to $11,866 to support street parties between mid-December to mid-January to a maximum amount of $10,000 in 2026-27.

CARRIED

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

Mayor Dimitriadis resumed the Chair.

UNCONFIRMED

9.12 PROPERTY MATTERS - SALE OF MINOR ASSETS - 183 TYLER ST PRESTON, 45 NORTHERNHAY ST RESERVOIR, 24 HARKER ST ALPHINGTON AND 4/9 BISCHOFF STREET PRESTON

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report seeks Council approval for the sale of discontinued roads (subject Roads) adjoining the following properties (Properties), to the respective adjoining property owners:

- 183 Tyler Street, Preston (shown in **Appendix A**),
- 45 Northernhay Street, Reservoir (shown in **Appendix B**)
- 2 Lots at 24 Harker Street Alphington (shown in **Appendix C**) and
- 4/9 Bischoff Street Preston (shown in **Appendix D**)

The statutory process for the proposed sales has been completed, in accordance with Council's Sale of Minor Assets Policy ('the Policy'), and with no submissions received.

No operational requirement to retain the land has been identified. Existing Council and Yarra Valley Water infrastructure interests will be protected through appropriate title arrangements.

The land has a combined independently assessed market value of approximately $131,000, with purchasers contributing to 50% of Council's associated legal and administrative costs.

Council Resolution

MINUTE NO. 26-170

MOVED: Cr. J O'Brien
SECONDED: Cr. V Tsalkos

That Council:

(1) Notes that following public notice, no submissions were received in relation to the proposed sale of the Roads adjoining 183 Tyler Street Preston, 45 Northernhay Street, two lots at 24 Harker St Alphington, and 4/9 Bischoff Street Preston these are the adjacent property owners, by private treaty in accordance with Council's Sale of Minor Assets Policy May 2022.

(2) Authorises that the sale of Roads be sold by private treaty to the respective owners of the adjoining properties in accordance with the relevant sections of the Local Government Act 1989, the Local Government Act 2020 and Council's Sale of Minor Assets Policy.

(3) Directs that the sale of the Roads will not affect any right, power or interest held by Yarra Valley Water or Council in connection with any drainage, sewerage, water or other infrastructure, including any pipes located in, on or under the Roads. These interests will be reflected by an amendment to the title.

(4) Authorises the Chief Executive Officer, to execute all relevant documents to give effect to the sale and transfer of land from the Roads to the owners of the adjoining properties.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

UNCONFIRMED

9.13 GOVERNANCE REPORT - OCTOBER 2026

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Summary of Councillor attendance at Advisory Committee Meetings, Councillor Briefings, and other informal meetings of Councillors.
- Activity Reports by Mayor and Councillors.
- Public Questions taken on notice.
- Status of Petitions tabled during the current Council Term (November 2024 to 30 September 2026).
- Audit and Risk Committee Revised Charter.

Council Resolution **MINUTE NO. 26-171**

MOVED: Cr. C Boglis OAM
SECONDED: Cr. K Olaris OAM

That Council:

(1) Notes the Governance Report – October 2026.

(2) Notes the Summary of attendance at Advisory Committees Meetings, Councillor Briefings, and other informal meetings of Councillors at **Appendix A** to this report.

(3) Notes that the activity reports by Mayors and Councillors submitted prior to the meeting and circulated to Councillors, will be incorporated in the minutes of this meeting.

(4) Notes that there were no public questions taken on notice at the 22 September 2026 Council meeting.

(5) Notes the status of petitions tabled during the current Council term (**November 2024 to 30 September 2026**) as shown in **Table A** of this report.

(6) Endorses the attached Audit and Risk Committee Charter (**Appendix B**).

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

UNCONFIRMED

10. ITEMS TO BE TABLED

Nil.

11. NOTICES OF MOTION

11.1 CRISPE PARK: SAFETY, FACILITIES AND TRANSPARENT PRIORITISATION

Take notice that at the Council Meeting to be held on 27 October 2026, it is my intention to move:

***That** Council:*

(1) Notes the public questions and petition concerning Crispe Park tabled at the 22 September 2026 Council meeting.

(2) Notes ongoing community and club concerns about the safety, condition, accessibility, maintenance, and suitability of Crispe Park facilities.

(3) Requests a report, using information and records already held by Council, to be presented before the end of the 2026 Council year that:

a) Summarises the current known condition, functionality and renewal priorities for the pavilion, change rooms, toilets, showers, playing surface, playground, access and parking/surfaces.

b) Identifies any known safety, accessibility, compliance, or facility issues relevant to co-tenants and the ability to host finals.

c) Summarises works undertaken at Crispe Park since 2019, including available costs, funding sources, delivery arrangements, and any scheduled future work.

d) Explains Council and club responsibilities for works at Council-owned sporting facilities, including arrangements where clubs fund or undertake works and typical timelines.

e) Explains the criteria and processes used to prioritise sporting facility works (safety, compliance, asset condition, risk, accessibility, service need and funding).

(4) Requests that the report clearly distinguish verified Council information from user-reported matters and flag any items that may require further consideration through existing reporting or budget processes.

(5) Notes that this motion seeks only to obtain and clarify information already held by Council, existing responsibilities and prioritisation processes.

Rationale

This follows public questions and a petition at the 22 September 2026 meeting. It aims to clarify the current state of Crispe Park, recent works history, responsibilities and how facility priorities are determined, within existing Council resources.

UNCONFIRMED

Notice Received:	**23 September 2026**
Notice Given to Councillors	**23 September 2026**
Date of Meeting:	**27 October 2026**

Council Resolution

MINUTE NO. 26-172

MOVED: **Cr. C Boglis OAM**
SECONDED: **Cr. A Villella**

That Council:

(1) Notes the public questions and petition concerning Crispe Park tabled at the 22 September 2026 Council meeting.

(2) Notes ongoing community and club concerns about the safety, condition, accessibility, maintenance, and suitability of Crispe Park facilities.

(3) Requests a report, using information and records already held by Council, to be presented before the end of the 2026 Council year that:

a) Summarises the current known condition, functionality and renewal priorities for the pavilion, change rooms, toilets, showers, playing surface, playground, access and parking/surfaces.

b) Identifies any known safety, accessibility, compliance, or facility issues relevant to co-tenants and the ability to host finals.

c) Summarises works undertaken at Crispe Park since 2019, including available costs, funding sources, delivery arrangements, and any scheduled future work.

d) Explains Council and club responsibilities for works at Council-owned sporting facilities, including arrangements where clubs fund or undertake works and typical timelines.

e) Explains the criteria and processes used to prioritise sporting facility works (safety, compliance, asset condition, risk, accessibility, service need and funding).

(4) Requests that the report clearly distinguish verified Council information from user-reported matters and flag any items that may require further consideration through existing reporting or budget processes.

(5) Notes that this motion seeks only to obtain and clarify information already held by Council, existing responsibilities and prioritisation processes.

CARRIED

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

The motion was Carried on the casting vote of the Chairperson, Mayor Dimitriadis.

UNCONFIRMED

11.2 USE OF PRESTON CITY OVAL IN 2027

Take notice that at the Council Meeting to be held on 27 October 2026, it is my intention to move:

***That** Council:*

(1) Notes the VAFA letter dated 29 September 2026, sent to all Councillors, supporting the Preston Bullants Amateur Football Club playing nine home games at Preston City Oval in 2027 on the basis that Ruthven Reserve has a synthetic cricket pitch and is not considered suitable for VAFA Premier level competition, and that any such games would be fixtured around existing tenants.

(2) Notes that at the Council meeting on 22 September 2026, the petition from the Preston Bullants Amateur Football Club seeking use of Preston City Oval was tabled and referred to the Chief Executive Officer for consideration and response.

(3) Notes that the 2026 Expression of Interest process for Preston City Oval related to the winter 2026 season, and that proposed seasonal access for 2027 is to be considered under the applicable Council policies and processes, including the Sporting Fees, Charges and Occupancy Agreement Policy (August 2024, V6).

(4) Notes the publicly reported 2026 allocation outcomes at Preston City Oval, in which Darebin Falcons VFLW and Northern Knights received the primary allocation and the Preston Bullants Amateur Football Club was initially offered one senior game and no junior games, later offered three senior rounds and two junior rounds, with a junior fixture subsequently cancelled due to surface condition. Resolution 26-051, adopted on 28 April 2026, requested officers to review that allocation

(5) Requests that the Chief Executive Officer provide a report to Council by the December 2026 Ordinary Meeting covering:

a) Confirmation of the applicable provisions of the Sporting Fees, Charges and Occupancy Agreement Policy (August 2024, V6) for assessing 2027 seasonal access and competing demand at Preston City Oval, including relevant criteria and weightings for priority allocation where demand competes.

b) Available usage capacity at Preston City Oval in 2027, including hours, constraints during any construction phase, and the capacity available throughout the year having regard to existing tenant commitments.

c) The feasibility of fixturing nine Preston Bullants Amateur Football Club home games around existing Falcons and Knights fixtures, as supported by VAFA, having regard to the applicable policy and available capacity, together with the applicable fees for the Preston Bullants and current tenants, including any regional reclassification where the surface is prepared to VFL or Premier standard.

d) Confirmation that all proposed 2027 users of Preston City Oval will be assessed in accordance with the applicable published Sporting Fees, Charges and Occupancy Agreement Policy, including relevant criteria and available capacity.

e) An assessment of the remaining timeline for 2027 allocation decisions, noting that Council meetings resume in February 2027 and the football season commences in March or April 2027, including any practical constraints arising from this timeframe.

UNCONFIRMED

Rationale:

The Preston Bullants Amateur Football Club has been promoted to VAFA Premier C. The VAFA letter dated 29 September 2026, sent to all Councillors, states that Ruthven Reserve is not suitable for this level because of its synthetic cricket pitch and supports nine home games at Preston City Oval, fixtured around existing tenants.

The September petition was tabled and referred to the Chief Executive Officer. The 2026 Expression of Interest process related to winter 2026, and proposed access for 2027 requires consideration under the applicable Council policy and processes. Resolution 26-051 requested a review of the 2026 allocation.

This motion seeks a factual report by the December 2026 Ordinary Meeting on the applicable policy criteria, available capacity, feasibility of the VAFA supported games, fees and the practical timeline for 2027 allocation decisions ahead of the March or April season commencement. It does not direct a particular allocation.

Notice Received: **5 October 2026**

Notice Given to Councillors **5 October 2026**

Date of Meeting: **27 October 2026**

With leave of the Chairperson, Cr Boglis made amendments to her Notice of Motion and moved the following:

Motion

MOVED: **Cr. C Boglis OAM**
SECONDED: **Cr. A Villella**

That Council:

(1) Notes the VAFA letter dated 29 September 2026, sent to all Councillors, supporting the Preston Bullants Amateur Football Club playing nine home games at Preston City Oval in 2027 on the basis that Ruthven Reserve has a synthetic cricket pitch and is not considered suitable for VAFA Premier level competition, and that any such games would be fixtured around existing tenants.

(2) Notes that at the Council meeting on 22 September 2026, the petition from the Preston Bullants Amateur Football Club seeking use of Preston City Oval was tabled and referred to the Chief Executive Officer for consideration and response.

(3) Notes that the 2026 Expression of Interest process for Preston City Oval related to the winter 2026 season, and that proposed seasonal access for 2027 is to be considered under the applicable Council policies and processes, including the Sporting Fees, Charges and Occupancy Agreement Policy (August 2024, V6).

(4) Notes the publicly reported 2026 allocation outcomes at Preston City Oval, in which Darebin Falcons VFLW and Northern Knights received the primary allocation and the Preston Bullants Amateur Football Club was initially offered one senior game and no junior games, later offered three senior rounds and two junior rounds, with a junior fixture subsequently cancelled due to surface condition. Resolution 26-051, adopted on 28 April 2026, requested officers to review that allocation

(5) Requests that the Chief Executive Officer provide a report to Council by the December 2026 Ordinary Meeting covering:

    a) Confirmation of the applicable provisions of the Sporting Fees, Charges and Occupancy Agreement Policy (August 2024, V6) for assessing 2027 seasonal

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access and competing demand at Preston City Oval, including relevant criteria and weightings for priority allocation where demand competes.

b) Available usage capacity at Preston City Oval in 2027, including hours, constraints during any construction phase, and the capacity available throughout the year having regard to existing tenant commitments.

c) The feasibility of fixturing nine Preston Bullants Amateur Football Club home games around existing Falcons and Knights fixtures, as supported by VAFA, having regard to the applicable policy and available capacity, together with the applicable fees for the Preston Bullants and current tenants, including any regional reclassification where the surface is prepared to VFL or Premier standard.

d) Confirmation that all proposed 2027 users of Preston City Oval will be assessed in accordance with the applicable published Sporting Fees, Charges and Occupancy Agreement Policy, including relevant criteria and available capacity.

e) An assessment of the remaining timeline for 2027 allocation decisions, noting that Council meetings resume in February 2027 and the football season commences in March or April 2027, including any practical constraints arising from this timeframe.

(6) An assessment of the remaining timeline for 2027 allocation decisions, noting that Council meetings resume in February 2027 and the football season commences in March or April 2027, including any practical constraints arising from this timeframe.

Amendment

MOVED: **Cr. K Olaris OAM**
SECONDED: **Cr. M Arturi (Deputy Mayor)**

That Council:

(1) Notes the VAFA letter dated 29 September 2026, in to all Councillors, supporting the Preston Bullants Amateur Football Club approach to Darebin Council to play nine home games at Preston City Oval in 2027 on the basis that Ruthven Reserve has a synthetic cricket pitch and is not considered suitable for VAFA Premier level competition, and that any such games would be fixtured around existing tenants.

(2) Notes that at the Council meeting on 22 September 2026, the petition from the Preston Bullants Amateur Football Club seeking use of Preston City Oval was tabled and referred to the Chief Executive Officer for consideration and response.

(3) Notes that the 2026 Expression of Interest process for Preston City Oval related to the winter 2026 season, and that proposed seasonal access for 2027 is to be considered under the applicable Council policies and processes, including the Sporting Fees, Charges and Occupancy Agreement Policy (August 2024, V6).

(4) Notes that Council is currently in the process of facilitating an independent evidence based assessment of conditions and usage capacity of higher level grounds and that this will be completed in time for ground allocations.

(5) Notes that Council invests in Preston City Oval infrastructure and maintenance at a high standard that enables a state tier level of play.

(6) Requests a briefing to Councillors in December 2026 covering:

a) Confirmation of the applicable provisions of the Sporting Fees, Charges and Occupancy Agreement Policy (August 2024, V6) for assessing 2027 seasonal access and competing demand at Preston City Oval, including relevant criteria and weightings for priority allocation where demand competes.

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b) Available usage capacity at Preston City Oval in 2027, including hours, constraints during any construction phase, and the capacity available throughout the year.

c) The feasibility of fixturing nine Preston Bullants Amateur Football Club home games at Preston City Oval around existing Falcons and Knights fixtures.

d) Identify possible solutions within Darebin for the Preston Bullants Amateur Football Club should (c) not be possible.

e) Confirmation that all proposed 2027 users of Preston City Oval will be assessed in accordance with the applicable council processes and published Sporting Fees, Charges and Occupancy Agreement Policy, including relevant criteria as well as by ground capacity as informed by the independent assessment.

f) An assessment of the remaining timeline for 2027 allocation decisions, noting that Council meetings resume in February 2027 and the football season commences in March or April 2027, including any practical constraints arising from this timeframe.

(7) Requests a meeting to be organised by Darebin Council bringing together key stakeholders including Preston Bullants Amateur Football Club, Northern Knights and Darebin Falcons, VAFA and AFL prior to the allocation process, to provide clarity of process, update re construction timelines, outline ground availability and to build relationships and move past prior tensions.

CARRIED

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

THE AMENDMENT WAS PUT AND CARRIED AND BECAME THE SUBSTANTIVE MOTION:

Substantive Motion

MOVED: Cr. C Boglis OAM
SECONDED: Cr. A Villella

That Council:

(1) Notes the VAFA letter dated 29 September 2026, in to all Councillors, supporting the Preston Bullants Amateur Football Club approach to Darebin Council to play nine home games at Preston City Oval in 2027 on the basis that Ruthven Reserve has a synthetic cricket pitch and is not considered suitable for VAFA Premier level competition, and that any such games would be fixtured around existing tenants.

(2) Notes that at the Council meeting on 22 September 2026, the petition from the Preston Bullants Amateur Football Club seeking use of Preston City Oval was tabled and referred to the Chief Executive Officer for consideration and response.

(3) Notes that the 2026 Expression of Interest process for Preston City Oval related to the winter 2026 season, and that proposed seasonal access for 2027 is to be considered under the applicable Council policies and processes, including the Sporting Fees, Charges and Occupancy Agreement Policy (August 2024, V6).

UNCONFIRMED

(4) Notes that Council is currently in the process of facilitating an independent evidence based assessment of conditions and usage capacity of higher level grounds and that this will be completed in time for ground allocations.

(5) Notes that Council invests in Preston City Oval infrastructure and maintenance at a high standard that enables a state tier level of play.

(6) Requests a briefing to Councillors in December 2026 covering:

a) Confirmation of the applicable provisions of the Sporting Fees, Charges and Occupancy Agreement Policy (August 2024, V6) for assessing 2027 seasonal access and competing demand at Preston City Oval, including relevant criteria and weightings for priority allocation where demand competes.

b) Available usage capacity at Preston City Oval in 2027, including hours, constraints during any construction phase, and the capacity available throughout the year.

c) The feasibility of fixturing nine Preston Bullants Amateur Football Club home games at Preston City Oval around existing Falcons and Knights fixtures.

d) Identify possible solutions within Darebin for the Preston Bullants Amateur Football Club should (c) not be possible.

e) Confirmation that all proposed 2027 users of Preston City Oval will be assessed in accordance with the applicable council processes and published Sporting Fees, Charges and Occupancy Agreement Policy, including relevant criteria as well as by ground capacity as informed by the independent assessment.

f) An assessment of the remaining timeline for 2027 allocation decisions, noting that Council meetings resume in February 2027 and the football season commences in March or April 2027, including any practical constraints arising from this timeframe.

(7) Requests a meeting to be organised by Darebin Council bringing together key stakeholders including Preston Bullants Amateur Football Club, Northern Knights and Darebin Falcons, VAFA and AFL prior to the allocation process, to provide clarity of process, update re construction timelines, outline ground availability and to build relationships and move past prior tensions.

THE SUBSTANTIVE MOTION WAS PUT AND CARRIED AND BECAME THE COUNCIL RESOLUTION AS FOLLOWS:

Council Resolution **MINUTE NO. 26-173**

MOVED: Cr. C Boglis OAM
SECONDED: Cr. A Villella

That Council:

(1) Notes the VAFA letter dated 29 September 2026, in to all Councillors, supporting the Preston Bullants Amateur Football Club approach to Darebin Council to play nine home games at Preston City Oval in 2027 on the basis that Ruthven Reserve has a synthetic cricket pitch and is not considered suitable for VAFA Premier level competition, and that any such games would be fixtured around existing tenants.

(2) Notes that at the Council meeting on 22 September 2026, the petition from the Preston Bullants Amateur Football Club seeking use of Preston City Oval was tabled and referred to the Chief Executive Officer for consideration and response.

UNCONFIRMED

(3) Notes that the 2026 Expression of Interest process for Preston City Oval related to the winter 2026 season, and that proposed seasonal access for 2027 is to be considered under the applicable Council policies and processes, including the Sporting Fees, Charges and Occupancy Agreement Policy (August 2024, V6).

(4) Notes that Council is currently in the process of facilitating an independent evidence based assessment of conditions and usage capacity of higher level grounds and that this will be completed in time for ground allocations.

(5) Notes that Council invests in Preston City Oval infrastructure and maintenance at a high standard that enables a state tier level of play.

(6) Requests a **briefing** to Councillors in December 2026 covering:

a) Confirmation of the applicable provisions of the Sporting Fees, Charges and Occupancy Agreement Policy (August 2024, V6) for assessing 2027 seasonal access and competing demand at Preston City Oval, including relevant criteria and weightings for priority allocation where demand competes.

b) Available usage capacity at Preston City Oval in 2027, including hours, constraints during any construction phase, and the capacity available throughout the year.

c) The feasibility of fixturing nine Preston Bullants Amateur Football Club home games at Preston City Oval around existing Falcons and Knights fixtures.

d) Identify possible solutions within Darebin for the Preston Bullants Amateur Football Club should (c) not be possible.

e) Confirmation that all proposed 2027 users of Preston City Oval will be assessed in accordance with the applicable council processes and published Sporting Fees, Charges and Occupancy Agreement Policy, including relevant criteria as well as by ground capacity as informed by the independent assessment.

f) An assessment of the remaining timeline for 2027 allocation decisions, noting that Council meetings resume in February 2027 and the football season commences in March or April 2027, including any practical constraints arising from this timeframe.

(7) Requests a meeting to be organised by Darebin Council bringing together key stakeholders including Preston Bullants Amateur Football Club, Northern Knights and Darebin Falcons, VAFA and AFL prior to the allocation process, to provide clarity of process, update re construction timelines, outline ground availability and to build relationships and move past prior tensions.

CARRIED

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

UNCONFIRMED

11.3 OPERATION SANDON: RELEASE STATUS AND COMMENCE UNFINISHED RECOMMENDATIONS

Take notice that at the Council Meeting to be held on 27 October 2026, it is my intention to move:

That *Council:*

(1) Notes IBAC tabled its Operation Sandon special report on 27July 2023, with 34 recommendations on planning integrity, donations, lobbying, and council governance.

(2) Notes that, on IBAC's October 2026 progress report, 25 of the34 recommendations remained "in planning" at June 2026 and one had not commenced, and that the Local Government portfolio has passed through four ministers since the report (Melissa Horne, Nick Staikos, Paul Hamer and Tim Richardson).

(3) Notes that the Local Government Legislation Amendment (Stronger Communities) Act 2026 (assented 29 September 2026) advances several governance recommendations by enabling mandatory Model Governance Rules, prohibiting conflicted councillors from influencing others on a matter, strengthening CEO reporting of conflict breaches, and supporting enhanced reporting by the Principal Councillor Conduct Registrar.

(4) Notes that the Victorian Government's January 2025 update listed the following Local Government recommendations as unfinished, and that the content of the Model Governance Rules (which would implement several of them) has not yet been prescribed or released:

- *a) Mandatory detailed model meeting rules*
- *b) A transparency policy against private agenda deals*
- *c) An express ban on bloc voting*
- *d) Minutes that name speakers and record every councillor's vote*
- *e) Effective enforcement of conflict-of-interest breaches*
- *f) Planning reports that disclose donations, financial relationships and interested parties*
- *g) Detailed, consistent conflict declarations and records*
- *h) Penalties where a conflicted councillor influences colleague's*
- *i) Annual publication of conduct proceedings, outcomes and costs*
- *j) Stronger CEO reporting of serious misconduct*
- *k) Standard CEO contracts, termination-payment limits, an NDA ban and independent employment oversight.*

(5) Requests the Chief Executive Officer to write, within 14 days, to the Premier and the Minister for Local Government (Tim Richardson), copied to IBAC and the local members, and again in December 2026 when the new government is formed, calling on the Government to:

- *a) Publicly release, in full, the status of all 34 Operation Sandon recommendations, including which remain in planning or not commenced, and how the Stronger Communities Act has or has not acquitted specific recommendations*

UNCONFIRMED

b) Publish a deadline, the responsible minister and agency, and the reason for delay for each unfinished recommendation

c) Immediately commence and complete the unfinished Local Government recommendations that are not yet in force under the Stronger Communities Act or its regulations

d) Report progress to Parliament and councils within 90 days

(6) Requests the CEO to table the letter and any reply at the next ordinary meeting.

(7) Affirms that ratepayers are entitled to know who influenced decisions, who voted, who held a conflict, and what misconduct cost them

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Rationale:

IBAC tabled its Operation Sandon special report on 27 July 2023, making 34 recommendations to strengthen planning integrity, donation and lobbying regulation, the accountability of ministerial advisers, and council governance. Three years later, IBAC's October 2026 progress reporting confirmed that at June 2026, 25of the 34 recommendations remained "in planning" and one had not commenced. The Local Government portfolio has passed through four ministers in that time.

The Local Government Legislation Amendment (Stronger Communities) Act 2026 (assented 29 September 2026) advances several of the governance recommendations. It creates the framework for mandatory Model Governance Rules, prohibits conflicted councillors from directing or influencing others on a matter, strengthens CEO reporting of conflict-of-interest breaches to the Local Government Inspectorate, and supports enhanced reporting by the Principal Councillor Conduct Registrar. These are positive steps.

However, the Act does not yet implement the specific unfinished items identified in the Government's January 2025 update that depend on the content of the Model Governance Rules. Those Rules have not been prescribed or released.

As a result, the following remain outstanding: detailed model meeting rules; a transparency policy against private agenda deals; an express ban on bloc voting; minutes that name speakers and record every councillor's vote; full effective enforcement of conflict-of-interest breaches; planning reports that disclose donations and financial relationships; Consistent conflict records; penalties for a conflicted councillor influencing colleagues; annual publication of conduct proceedings, outcomes and costs; stronger CEO reporting of serious misconduct; and standard CEO Contracts, termination payment limits, an NDA ban and independent employment oversight.

Major planning and donations recommendations from Sandon, including restrictions on developer donations and independent determinative planning panels, are also not addressed by the Act.
Until the unfinished recommendations are commenced and completed, the conflict, voting, transparency, and conduct controls IBAC recommended are not fully in force. Ratepayers are entitled to know the status of all 34 recommendations, who is responsible for each unfinished item, and when they will be delivered.

This motion seeks that public accountability while recognising the progress already made through the Stronger Communities Act.

UNCONFIRMED

Notice Received: **8 October 2026**

Notice Given to Councillors **8 October 2026**

Date of Meeting: **27 October 2026**

With leave of the Chairperson, Cr. Boglis made amendments to her Notice of Motion and moved the following:

Motion

That Council:

(1) Notes that IBAC tabled its Operation Sandon special report on 27 July 2023, with 34 recommendations on planning integrity, donations, lobbying and council governance.

(2) Notes that the Victorian Government's January 2025 progress report to IBAC listed 10 of the 34 recommendations as acquitted, 23 as underway (including all 11 planning recommendations) and one as a matter for Parliament. Further notes that the Local Government portfolio has had four ministers since the report: Melissa Horne, Nick Staikos, Paul Hamer and Tim Richardson.

(3) Notes that the Local Government Legislation Amendment (Stronger Communities) Act 2026 advances several governance recommendations. It enables mandatory Model Governance Rules, prohibits conflicted councillors from influencing others, strengthens CEO reporting of conflict breaches, supports enhanced reporting by the Principal Councillor Conduct Registrar, and provides for a CEO Employment Matters Committee and standard CEO contract regulations. However, the following local government recommendations were listed as underway in January 2025 and, to the extent they are not implemented by that Act, depend on Model Governance Rules or regulations that have not yet been released:

   a) Model Governance Rules as minimum standards for council meetings (Rec 19).

   b) A Model Transparency Policy, including limits on pre-council meetings and private agenda deals (Rec 22).

   c) An express ban on bloc voting (Rec 23).

   d) Minutes that name the councillors who spoke on each motion and record every councillor's vote, whether or not a division is called (Rec 24).

   e) Timely and effective action on conflict-of-interest breaches (Rec 25).

   f) Planning reports that disclose donations, financial arrangements and interested parties (Rec 26).

   g) Detailed and consistent conflict-of-interest declarations and records (Rec 27).

   h) An appropriate penalty where a conflicted councillor attempts to influence colleagues (Rec 29).

   i) Annual publication of conduct proceedings, outcomes and costs (Rec 32).

   j) A standard CEO employment contract, including limits on termination payments and a ban on non-disclosure agreements, and an independent CEO employment committee with a majority of external members (Rec 34).

(4) Recognises the importance of transparency regarding the status of all recommendations arising from Operation Sandon, to ensure councils and communities can understand the progress being made to strengthen integrity and accountability across local government and the planning system.

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(5) Requests the Chief Executive Officer to write, within 14 days, to the Premier and the Minister for Local Government (Tim Richardson), copied to IBAC and local Members of Parliament, and again following the November 2026 state election, calling on the Victorian Government to:

a) Publicly release, in full, the current status of all 34 Operation Sandon recommendations, including how the Stronger Communities Act and any recent planning legislation have or have not acquitted specific recommendations

b) Publish, for each unfinished recommendation, a completion date, the responsible minister and agency, and the reason for any delay

c) Publicly release draft Model Governance Rules and any associated regulations required to implement outstanding recommendations as soon as practicable

d) Commence and complete the unfinished local government recommendations not yet in force

e) Report progress to Parliament and councils within 90 days.

(6) Requests the CEO to table the letter and any reply at the next practicable Ordinary Council Meeting.

(7) Affirms that ratepayers are entitled to know who influenced decisions, who voted, who held a conflict, and what misconduct cost them.

Amendment

MOVED: **Cr. J O'Brien**
SECONDED: **Cr. A Sangster**

That Council:

(1) Notes that Operation Sandon investigated corruption risks in Victoria's planning system and local government and, in July 2023, IBAC made a series of recommendations aimed at strengthening integrity, transparency and public confidence in decision-making.

(2) Notes that the Local Government Legislation Amendment (Stronger Communities) Act 2026 implements and advances a number of recommendations arising from Operation Sandon, including reforms relating to governance arrangements, conflicts of interest and councillor conduct.

(3) Notes that a number of Operation Sandon recommendations remain incomplete, are still under development, or are dependent on regulations, policy settings and the forthcoming Model Governance Rules for implementation.

(4) Recognises the importance of transparency regarding the status of all recommendations arising from Operation Sandon, to ensure councils and communities can understand the progress being made to strengthen integrity and accountability across local government and the planning system.

(5) Requests the Chief Executive Officer to write to the Premier of Victoria and the Minister for Local Government, with copies to IBAC and local Members of Parliament, calling on the Victorian Government to:

a) Publicly release a comprehensive update on the status of all Operation Sandon recommendations, including which recommendations have been completed, which remain outstanding, and which have been partly addressed through the Local Government Legislation Amendment (Stronger Communities) Act 2026.

b) Publish an implementation timetable for all remaining recommendations, including key milestones, responsible agencies and expected completion dates.

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c) Publicly release draft Model Governance Rules and any associated regulations required to implement outstanding recommendations as soon as practicable.

d) Commit to regular public reporting on progress towards implementation of all outstanding recommendations.

(6) Requests the Chief Executive Officer to table the correspondence and any response received at the next practicable Ordinary Council Meeting.

(7) Affirms Council's support for transparency, accountability and public confidence in local government decision-making.

CARRIED

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

THE AMENDMENT WAS PUT AND CARRIED AND BECAME THE SUBSTANTIVE MOTION:

Substantive Motion

MOVED: Cr. C Boglis OAM
SECONDED: Cr. A Villella

That Council:

(1) Notes that Operation Sandon investigated corruption risks in Victoria's planning system and local government and, in July 2023, IBAC made a series of recommendations aimed at strengthening integrity, transparency and public confidence in decision-making.

(2) Notes that the Local Government Legislation Amendment (Stronger Communities) Act 2026 implements and advances a number of recommendations arising from Operation Sandon, including reforms relating to governance arrangements, conflicts of interest and councillor conduct.

(3) Notes that a number of Operation Sandon recommendations remain incomplete, are still under development, or are dependent on regulations, policy settings and the forthcoming Model Governance Rules for implementation.

(4) Recognises the importance of transparency regarding the status of all recommendations arising from Operation Sandon, to ensure councils and communities can understand the progress being made to strengthen integrity and accountability across local government and the planning system.

(5) Requests the Chief Executive Officer to write to the Premier of Victoria and the Minister for Local Government, with copies to IBAC and local Members of Parliament, calling on the Victorian Government to:

a) Publicly release a comprehensive update on the status of all Operation Sandon recommendations, including which recommendations have been completed, which remain outstanding, and which have been partly addressed through the Local Government Legislation Amendment (Stronger Communities) Act 2026.

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b) Publish an implementation timetable for all remaining recommendations, including key milestones, responsible agencies and expected completion dates.

c) Publicly release draft Model Governance Rules and any associated regulations required to implement outstanding recommendations as soon as practicable.

d) Commit to regular public reporting on progress towards implementation of all outstanding recommendations.

(6) Requests the Chief Executive Officer to table the correspondence and any response received at the next practicable Ordinary Council Meeting.

(7) Affirms Council's support for transparency, accountability and public confidence in local government decision-making.

THE SUBSTANTIVE MOTION WAS PUT AND CARRIED AND BECAME THE COUNCIL RESOLUTION AS FOLLOWS:

Council Resolution **MINUTE NO. 26-174**

MOVED: Cr. C Boglis OAM
SECONDED: Cr. A Villella

That Council:

(1) Notes that Operation Sandon investigated corruption risks in Victoria's planning system and local government and, in July 2023, IBAC made a series of recommendations aimed at strengthening integrity, transparency and public confidence in decision-making.

(2) Notes that the Local Government Legislation Amendment (Stronger Communities) Act 2026 implements and advances a number of recommendations arising from Operation Sandon, including reforms relating to governance arrangements, conflicts of interest and councillor conduct.

(3) Notes that a number of Operation Sandon recommendations remain incomplete, are still under development, or are dependent on regulations, policy settings and the forthcoming Model Governance Rules for implementation.

(4) Recognises the importance of transparency regarding the status of all recommendations arising from Operation Sandon, to ensure councils and communities can understand the progress being made to strengthen integrity and accountability across local government and the planning system.

(5) Requests the Chief Executive Officer to write to the Premier of Victoria and the Minister for Local Government, with copies to IBAC and local Members of Parliament, calling on the Victorian Government to:

a) Publicly release a comprehensive update on the status of all Operation Sandon recommendations, including which recommendations have been completed, which remain outstanding, and which have been partly addressed through the Local Government Legislation Amendment (Stronger Communities) Act 2026.

b) Publish an implementation timetable for all remaining recommendations, including key milestones, responsible agencies and expected completion dates.

c) Publicly release draft Model Governance Rules and any associated regulations required to implement outstanding recommendations as soon as practicable.

d) Commit to regular public reporting on progress towards implementation of all outstanding recommendations.

UNCONFIRMED

(6) Requests the Chief Executive Officer to table the correspondence and any response received at the next practicable Ordinary Council Meeting.

(7) Affirms Council's support for transparency, accountability and public confidence in local government decision-making.

CARRIED

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

UNCONFIRMED

12. URGENT BUSINESS

ADMISSION OF URGENT BUSINESS

Council Resolution

MINUTE NO. 26-175

MOVED: Cr. C Boglis OAM
SECONDED: Cr. A Villella

That an Urgent Business item relating to "Condemning incivility and violence against elected representatives and recognising the safety of Councillors" be admitted to the agenda and be heard at Item 12.1.

LOST

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

UNCONFIRMED

13. CONSIDERATION OF REPORTS CONSIDERED CONFIDENTIAL

CLOSE OF MEETING

Recommendation

That in accordance with section 3(1) of the *Local Government Act 2020*, the meeting be closed to members of the public to consider the following items on the basis that these matters are confidential for the following reasons:

13.1 Darebin Community Awards Recommendation

This item is confidential because it is confidential meeting information, being the records of meetings closed to the public under section 66(2)(a), pursuant to Section 3(1) (h) of the Act.

13.2 Property Request for Proposal Outcome - 11-15 Ralph Street Reservoir

This item is confidential because it is private commercial information, being information provided by a business, commercial or financial undertaking that if released, would unreasonably expose the business, commercial or financial undertaking to disadvantage, pursuant to Section 3(1) (g(ii)) of the Act.

This is a confidential market sounding process.

13.3 Lease Proposal - 8 Robinson Road Reservoir

This item is confidential because it is private commercial information, being information provided by a business, commercial or financial undertaking that if released, would unreasonably expose the business, commercial or financial undertaking to disadvantage, pursuant to Section 3(1) (g(ii)) of the Act.

Contains details of a commercial RFP process which is in the confidential phase.

The meeting was closed to the members of the public at 10.05pm.

As Council had reached the maximum time limit for the meeting pursuant to section 1.3 of the Governance Rules, the Chairperson received the agreement of Councillors not to adjourn the Meeting to a subsequent day, as the Chairperson reasonably believed the remaining business would take less than 15 minutes to transact, as provided for in section 1.3.1.(7) of Governance Rules.

The Council considered and resolved on Report Items 13.1, 13.2 and 13.3 which had been circulated to Councillors with the Council Agenda Paper.

UNCONFIRMED

RE-OPENING OF MEETING

Council Resolution **MINUTE NO. 26-176**

MOVED: **Cr. K Olaris OAM**
SECONDED: **Cr. M Arturi (Deputy Mayor)**

That the meeting be re-opened to the members of the public.

CARRIED

The meeting was re-opened to the members of the public at 10.09pm.

14. CLOSE OF MEETING

The meeting closed at 10.09pm.

UNCONFIRMED

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CITY OF DAREBIN

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