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MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING

Held on Tuesday 22 September 2026

Released to the public on 28 September 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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Table of Contents

Item Number		Page Number
1.	**OPENING OF MEETING AND MEMBERSHIP**	**1**
2.	**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF TRADITIONAL OWNERS**	**1**
3.	**APOLOGIES**	**1**
4.	**DISCLOSURES OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**	**1**
5.	**CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETINGS**	**2**
6.	**COUNCIL'S OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY RESPONSIBILITIES**	**2**
7.	**QUESTION AND SUBMISSION TIME**	**3**
8.	**PETITIONS**	**14**
8.1	TABLING OF PETITION	14
8.2	TABLING OF PETITION	15
8.3	TABLING OF PETITION	16
8.4	TABLING OF PETITION	16
9.	**CONSIDERATION OF REPORTS**	**18**
9.1	2 WINGROVE ST ALPHINGTON - MASTERPLANNING PROJECT PLAN UPDATE	18
9.2	DAREBIN PLANNING SCHEME REVIEW 2026	21
9.3	PLANNING SCHEME AMENDMENT C222DARE - PLACES OF WORSHIP	23
9.4	DRAFT 2025-26 FINANCIAL REPORT AND PERFORMANCE STATEMENT	25
9.5	PROJECT AND INITIATIVE BUDGET ADJUSTMENTS	27
9.6	GOVERNANCE REPORT - SEPTEMBER 2026	28
10.	**ITEMS TO BE TABLED**	**33**
11.	**NOTICES OF MOTION**	**33**
11.1	PUBLIC ACQUISITION OF THE PRESTON MARKET	33
11.2	DATA CENTRES	37
11.3	MELBOURNE WATER PIPE TRAIL NEXT STEPS FOLLOWING THE FEASIBILITY STUDY	40
11.4	COUNCIL CONTROL OF PLANNING FOR HEALTHY NEIGHBOURHOOD SHOPPING STRIPS	44
12.	**URGENT BUSINESS**	**47**
13.	**CONSIDERATION OF REPORTS CONSIDERED CONFIDENTIAL**	**47**
14.	**CLOSE OF MEETING**	**48**

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MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY MEETING DAREBIN CITY COUNCIL ON TUESDAY 22 SEPTEMBER 2026

THE MEETING OPENED AT 6.04PM

The Chairperson, Mayor 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 (online)
Cr. Ruth Jelley
Cr. Julie O'Brien (online)
Cr. Alexandra Sangster
Cr. Vasilios Tsalkos
Cr. Angela Villella (online)

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
Chad Griffiths – Acting General Manager City Sustainability and Strategy
Jody Brodribb - Coordinator Governance Services

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.

3. APOLOGIES

Cr Olaris was an apology for the meeting.

4. DISCLOSURES OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Cr Sangster disclosed a general conflict of interest in Agenda Item 9.3 Planning Scheme Amendment C222dare - Places Of Worship as she is employed by the Uniting Church of Australia.

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5. CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETINGS

Council Resolution

MINUTE NO. 26-142

MOVED: **Cr. C Boglis OAM**
SECONDED: **Cr. V Tsalkos**

That the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Council held on 25 August 2026 be confirmed as a correct record of business transacted with the following amendments to Agenda Item 9.10 Governance Report:

1. Voting on the Amendment to point (13) be corrected to read 'Carried Unanimously' and noting that Cr Boglis did not vote on the Amendment as she had left the meeting prior to the vote due to a technical issue at 8.36pm and returned at 8.39pm, after the vote had been held.

2. Voting on point (13)(a) be amended to reflect the following:

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

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

6. COUNCIL'S OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY RESPONSIBILITIES

The Chairperson, Mayor Dimitriadis, made the following statement:

It's wonderful to see you all here in the gallery this evening. I would like to remind everyone that Council Darebin is committed to ensuring psychologically safe, respectful, inclusive meetings for all participants. We have a shared responsibility for collaborative discussions which respect diverse opinions and responsibilities and remain fair, objective, courteous and respectful.

For members of the public who are in attendance tonight, we kindly ask you to be respectful of one another & to maintain a civil tone when addressing the meeting, & remind you that members of the gallery must remain silent at all times during a Meeting, unless you are invited to address the Meeting.

If anyone does engage in conduct that is improper or disorderly, the Chairperson can direct that person to cease their conduct & 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.

- **Carmen Lahiff-Jenkins**

Question 1

When will the old library in Reservoir, and the space around it, be reactivated into public use as a services hub, or neighbourhood house or something similar?

Response from General Manager Infrastructure and Operations

Council is committed to identifying the best long-term outcome for the site. The building is at end of life and cannot be used in its current form. The site was included in a 2025 Expression of Interest process, and proposals relating to the site remain under consideration, with decisions coming to Council at a future meeting. We will keep the community informed as that proceeds.

When the old library building was closed the library services relocated to the south side of Edwardes St Reservoir into the Community and Learning Centre which also has also got family services support, youth services, meeting spaces and maternal and child health.

There is a neighbourhood house in Cuthbert Road, Reservoir, which is the same site as the Reservoir Leisure Centre and the Senior Citizens Centre.

Question 2

The zoonotic disease Bird Flu is here in Darebin and the current advice is to record and report, but I have explored the steps and have found out there is not a retrieve option - what should communities do if they find a dead bird or more (do we leave the carcasses)?

Response from General Manager Infrastructure and Operations

The state response to avian influenza (bird flu) is being led by the State Government's Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA).

Current advice to community members is not to retrieve or handle dead birds. We ask people to avoid contact, record the location and details, and report the sighting to Agriculture Victoria. They have an emergency hotline which is easily searchable on the internet.

They will determine whether a carcass is left in place, tested, or removed.

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- **Jenny Wong**

Question 1

Given the Preston City Oval EOI was for a one-year lease only, will council confirm that any proposal to extend or renew that lease will be brought back to a public council meeting for a decision, rather than being resolved administratively?

Question 2

When will the EOI process for the 2027 football season at Preston City Oval commence, and will it be publicly advertised with a clear timeline so all interested clubs can apply on equal terms?

Response from General Manager Infrastructure and Operations

Firstly, I want to acknowledge that there has been a lot of interest and support expressed for the Bullants to access this site. We will work with all clubs to help provide access to suitable grounds and to balance the needs across the community. We use an application and evaluation process every year to do this. This process has not yet opened for 2027, but will do so in due course.

Getting into the detail of question 1 and 2, the Expression of Interest process that you've asked about was a particular process in 2026, and we're not intending to use that particular process for next season. That was communicated in the materials circulated in the last EOI process and reflects that there will be more limited access in 2027 because of planned construction to improve the site.

That said there is a transparent process that allows interested clubs to apply for access to Council sporting grounds and facilities that's set out in Council's Sporting Fees, Charges and Occupancy Agreement Policy. Councillors have set that policy through decisions in this chamber and it is Council officers role to implement it, including evaluating any applications and making allocation decisions in line with the Policy and its established criteria.

Question 3

What is council's policy on protecting the access rights of established community clubs when a ground is temporarily allocated to another user?

Response from General Manager Infrastructure and Operations

There are two elements of our process that are important for enabling access through the season.

The first one happens at the start of the allocations process, before consideration of applications, the number of hours that can be offered at a ground is assessed. We aim to work out what's possible and available to allocate, depending on the service standard, and in this case the ground is a premier ground. That's important to give the ground the best chance of recovering and remaining usable through the winter season with unpredictable rain.

Secondly, the evaluation process of applications. That's done against the criteria in the policy that I mentioned before, and those criteria balance several things, but they include criteria that recognises the contribution of established clubs through past investment by clubs at a site. And the criteria relating to participation by Darebin residents also recognises the role of established clubs in the Darebin community.

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- **John Nugent**

Question 1

Mayor, my question is about the Complex Customer Behaviour Policy – isn't it Council responsibility to notify the person that he or she has placed unreasonable demands on staff?

Response from General Manager Customer and Corporate
Thank you for your question. Yes, under the policy, Council will advise the person of the concerns identified and seek to work with them to find a more appropriate way to engage with Council.

The aim is to maintain access to services while balancing Council's responsibility to provide a safe and respectful environment for staff, Councillors and the broader community.

Any measures taken under the policy are communicated to the individual, along with the reasons for the decision.

Question 2

Mayor, could you please advise if Council still stands by this statement:

"Darebin City Council see complaints as a valuable opportunity to improve the way we operate and the services we provide. We encourage people to contact us when they have a problem with our services, actions, decisions and policies."

Response from General Manager Customer and Corporate
Yes, Council continues to stand by that statement. We recognise that complaints provide valuable feedback about our services and they play an important role in helping us to improve.

We regularly review complaints data and trends to identify opportunities for improvement, inform service changes and help us better understand the needs and experiences of our community.

While not every complaint will result in a change, complaints are an important source of insight and remain a key part of how Council listens, learns and continuously improves.

MOTION – ADJOURNMENT 6.23PM

Council Resolution

MOVED: **Cr. V Tsalkos**
SECONDED: **Cr. R Jelley**

That Council adjourn the meeting for a short break.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

The meeting adjourned at 6.23pm and resumed at 6.28pm.

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- **Jenny Woodly**

Question 1

Does Council hold any written record that it was offered a First Right of Refusal on the State land adjoining H.P. Zwar Reserve, or only the State's advice that a FROR applied for "State Government entities" only?

Response from Acting General Manager City Sustainability and Strategy

Council holds no record of having received an offer and it has checked with the State Government earlier this year. The State Government confirmed it did not make an offer to Council.

Question 2:

With respect to State land adjoining H.P. Zwar Reserve, given the Victorian Government Landholding Policy requires surplus State land to be offered to the local council, not only State agencies, will the CEO write to the relevant Ministers and Development Victoria asking why Council was excluded and requesting a proper opportunity for Council to express interest in buying land for future public open space?

Question 3:

Will council advocate to government and developers to include the adjoining State land in public open space and upgrades to H.P. Zwar Reserve?

Response from Acting General Manager City Sustainability and Strategy

Thanks for the questions. I will answer both questions 2 and 3 together.

The subject land is identified as 28A and 30A Jessie Street and has been included in the Victorian Government's Small Sites program, being conducted by Development Victoria.

Under the Victorian Government's Landholdings Policy and Guidelines:
"*The sale of land that has been developed (or is being sold under development agreements) by Development Victoria*" is exempt from being offered for first right of refusal to other agencies, such as councils.

Nonetheless, given the recent announcement of a second Preston High Campus, Council is discussing opportunities about the future of the site with stakeholders to ensure that safe, accessible links are maintained between the proposed school site, the oval and the park.

- **Geraldine Wood**

Question 1

At last month's council meeting, I submitted 3 questions for the council meeting, only 1 question was read out. The 2 questions which were not read out, were responded to via an email. In the interest of transparency I believe this is poor form. Why were the other 2 questions not read out?

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Executive Manager Governance and Communications

Thanks for the question Geraldine. A review of public questions submitted for the August council meeting indicates that we saw there was only one question received from you, which was asked and answered on the evening.

In the meantime, officers have emailed you to invite you to resubmit your other two questions, for which we would be happy to provide a response in writing.

- **Laila Pawley**

What specific measures will Council put in place to protect young children using the Crispe Park playground next to a single driveway during busy football games?

Response from General Manager Infrastructure and Operations

Thanks for the question. We do of course really take safety of children seriously. We're going to reach out to the club to discuss the risk and work out if further risk controls are needed on game days.

We're aware of a few different solutions in different places, such as traffic controllers on game day, that sort of thing that can work in these sorts of circumstances.

It goes without saying that drivers of course have legal responsibilities in terms of managing their own driving in a circumstance like that and parents will clearly play an important role in supervision of children.

- **Carolyn Whytcross**

Question 1

Why is Crispe Park still a designated dog park when there has been a purposefully built dog park near Edwardes Lake?

Question 2

Why does council prioritise dog owners over the health and safety of pavilion and ground users of football?

Response from General Manager Infrastructure and Operations

Thanks for the question. The main reason that we've got designated dog areas in multiple parks is really to balance the provision of that facility for dog owners in different places. There are just two designated dog parks across the city and clearly the population needs more than that so we do share facilities. Crispe Park is one of those. We do recognise that balancing those different uses can be challenging.

We do however, expect to need to use that approach into the future. We're in an urban environment, space is at a premium, sharing grounds with other users is going to be important, and it will be important to be able to manage the sorts of issues you're describing well enough.

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- **Susan Novak**

Question 1

How does council determine upgrades, improvements and maintenance priorities at a pavilion/ground?

Response from General Manager Infrastructure and Operations

Thank you for the questions. In terms of how we determine upgrades, improvements and maintenance priorities, maintenance is probably the most straightforward.

For things that are straightforward maintenance, it should be as simple as the club reaching out to their council contact and reporting things. In terms of more substantial works or improvements, the two main ways council identifies priorities is firstly it looks at the conditions of the assets and we renew assets when they reach end of life. At the moment we've got a process going on which will look at the condition of all the buildings across Council, we're going through that work at the moment and we expect to have that data when we put priorities together for the 2027-28 financial year and the budget.

Secondly, we look at changing needs – Council has a tight financial outlook and always gets more requests than it can deliver every year but we're looking at things like is the population growing, are the service needs or changing, is female participation in sport growing before we do need to look at adapting bathrooms, for example.

Question 2

Can Council outline the amount of money that has been spent on Crispe Park over the last 5 years with an itemised list of what works have been completed during that time?

Response from General Manager Infrastructure and Operations

It's not an easy list to retrieve given the way we keep all our data.

What we can do is follow up with you to share any information about the capital works, the larger sized work. We may be able to share a list of maintenance works but we wouldn't have costs associated with those.

Question 3

Why does council feel the need to continually change the goal posts for community clubs to make self-funded improvements to pavilions?

Response from General Manager Infrastructure and Operations

We definitely appreciate the investment clubs make towards facilities.

There is a works approval process, the purpose of which is to check that works comply legislatively, and it's intended fundamentally to help protect users, clubs and Council.

We are taking a look at how to make it easier – we think there's a better balance to strike between due diligence and actually making it run smoothly and easily and being a good workable process. So we'll do that over the next few months.

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- **Natalie James**

Question 1

What training do Council staff have with respect to antisemitism, Jewish identity and trauma informed care?

Response from General Manager Infrastructure and Operations

Natalie, I do want to acknowledge that you have raised a complaint with Council about how we manage offensive graffiti and issues with reports of graffiti not being addressed earlier this year. As part of this, you have raised similar questions and concerns about training of staff. We've met and since then we have been investigating what happened and the root causes so that we can consider how to best address issues with the process.

What I can share today about training that Council has had, is we do have an Employee Code of Conduct Policy that promotes a safe, respectful and inclusive workplace. Between August and October 2025, Council delivered anti-racism training to 170 employees. Cultural diversity and trauma-informed care training has also been provided to relevant frontline staff. All employees are required to complete Council's mandatory Creating a Safe, Inclusive and Respectful Workplace training which covers discrimination, harassment, inclusion and respectful workplace behaviours.

That's what we have in place. We don't have specific training on antisemitism or Jewish identity.

Question 2

Could you please outline Council's policy and operational response to reports of offensive graffiti, including what happens when reports are received via each of the three channels advertised on the website; that is SnapSendSolve app, email and by telephone.

Response from General Manager Infrastructure and Operations

We aim to remove offensive graffiti within 2 days. We do that on our own property and where we can on private property. There are some situations where Council doesn't have the power or can't remove it, but I won't go into those.

In terms of how to get reports to Council, we recently identified some challenges with those reaching us by some channels. We have addressed some of the causes of that, but not all of them as yet. At this point in time:

- Some reports of offensive graffiti sent by email could still be filtered out by the email security system. To check if a report has reached Council, residents can phone Council and we can look that up.
- When sent via SnapSendSolve, Council is receiving reports of offensive graffiti on our assets like benches or footpaths, and also on private fences or windows, but if it is on an asset owned by a different government body – such as a post box or a power pole, it goes to the owner and Council does not get those currently. Not all the asset owners will remove graffiti.

Residents can also phone Council and report – we would ask they've got the address and can describe the graffiti when they do that.

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Question 3

My follow up question goes to the training. Given the nature of evidence before the Royal Commission about antisemitism, how it's evolved and often arises in highly covert and coded forms, it's possible that while we often feel we know discrimination when we see it, your staff may not recognise it and this is something I gave evidence to the Royal Commission about myself. So my question is, based on the training people have received, are you confident that your people are supported to understand and recognise material that's hostile to Jewish people when they see it?

Response from General Manager Infrastructure and Operations

Certainly that's a question we're looking at as part of the investigation we're doing about your complaint. We don't have a particular solution to that right now. Certainly none of the training that we've got is specifically targeted to that, at this point in time.

EXTENSION OF PUBLIC QUESTION TIME – 6.42PM

Council Resolution

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

That Public Question Time be extended for 30 minutes.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

- **Lisa Oakley**

Like questions were also asked by Tim Symonds.

Question 1

In the new proposed parking changes for Showers Street between St Georges Rd and Railway Place West, why are the existing permit parking protections to be unfairly removed from the residential frontage of properties 42-50 Showers street, while permit protections remain outside newly built apartments e.g. 36 Showers street, that are not entitled to permits?

Question 2

Once construction of the 483-apartment development, supermarket and office complex at 30 St Georges Road and 47-49 Showers Street is complete, there will be a substantial increase in parking demand. Given the development has no visitor parking allocation, how does Council expect existing residents to find parking after work hours if permit parking restrictions are removed entirely, including after 6:00 pm?

Response from Acting General Manager City Sustainability and Strategy

I'll answer questions 1 and 2 together. Thank you for your questions Lisa.

Changes to parking in the Preston South area have been made following the second stage of community consultation that was undertaken from 15 June to 24 July, with Council working with community to improve on-street parking.

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Feedback was received from 123 survey participants which has played a key role in shaping the final parking plan, which seeks to:

- achieve a balance between providing priority access for residents while allowing some short-term parking opportunities by visitors, and
- to discourage long-term parking by residents who are not entitled to parking permits.

That is quite a general answer, so Council will write to you following this meeting with a more specific response to parts of your question.

Question 3

How can council propose and put in new parking restrictions (e.g. 3 hour parking restrictions) that have no resources to mandate?

Response from Acting General Manager City Sustainability and Strategy

The installation of parking restrictions is delegated to officers who follow a defined process of collection and analysis of parking data and engagement with the community. Further information related to the parking change process is available on Council's website.

- **Tim Symonds**

Under the new proposal there is a significant reduction in permit parking. Why has the council sold more permits than available permit parks. The council confirmed to me last week that there are 44 active permits in Showers St, but under the new proposal there will be fewer than 40 spots available.

Response from Acting General Manager City Sustainability and Strategy

Thank you for your questions Tim, many of which are similar to Lisa's questions and accordingly what we'll do post this meeting is write to you with a more detailed response to all of your questions.

In relation to your second question, the number of parking spaces within Showers Street remains the same. Residents eligible for a parking permits are entitled to park within either the permit or 3P zone, and park as long as they wish.

- **Gabrielle Olarenshaw**

Question 1

Can Council please clarify, on the public record, the exact date and decision-maker who authorised the $15,000 payment [to Darebin Falcons], including the relevant Council resolution, officer delegation or other authority relied upon?

Question 2

Can Council please advise the exact funding source and budget/grant program from which the $15,000 was paid, and whether it was classified as a grant, sponsorship, contribution, partnership payment, loan or another form of financial assistance?

Question 3

What was the purpose of providing Darebin Falcons with $15,000, the conditions attached to it, and whether repayment was ever contemplated or required?

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Response from General Manager Infrastructure and Operations

Thank you. The decision to allocate that funding was made on 24 November 2025 by Council in a meeting like this one. Quoting from the Council approved minutes:

That Council:
…Approves project budget adjustments for the Operating Projects and Special Initiatives budgets as per Table 2 of this report amended to allocate $15,000 to the 'Darebin Falcons VFLW Interim support fund',

The funding source was a project account in our financial system called the Unallocated Operating Projects and Special Initiatives Program fund project account.
Generally that account has funds in it that have come back to it from savings through the course of the year if a project comes slightly under budget.

The purpose of the funding was to support the Darebin Falcons 2026 VFLW program. This was not provided to the club as a loan; it was a contribution, and as such it does not need to be paid back.

- **Hollie Thompson**

Question 1

When assessing the ground conditions of Tier One ovals what turf management standards or Australian Rules Football Ground Guidelines does Council use, if any.

Response from General Manager Infrastructure and Operations

Thank you for the question. Certainly we use relevant sporting codes and industry guidelines. What I don't have in front of me is whether there's a specific name of the standard they would apply in this case and it's likely to vary from ground to ground.

We monitor ground conditions regularly monitored with visual inspections it's our qualified turf team that do those as part of day-to-day operations, and they take remedial action when required. We don't have a documentation process of quite the nature that you describe, we do record observations through work records and photographs but I wouldn't characterise it as a formal weekly reporting process.

Question 2

Is this [turf assessment] documented and recorded on a weekly basis during the Football winter season?

Response from General Manager Infrastructure and Operations

No. Assessments are not currently documented through a formal weekly reporting process. Ground conditions are monitored regularly by Council's turf management staff, with observations recorded through works records and photographs where issues are identified.

- **Brenda Tait**

Question 1

The questions are in relation to the Make Polluters Pay petition and Notice of Motion put forward at the previous Council meeting.

CONFIRMED

Could Council provide a specific update on: What steps at a higher level will be taken by Council given the Motion has been unanimously supported?

Response from Acting General Manager City Sustainability and Strategy

At a high-level, Council has resolved to prepare potential future funding scenarios and action priorities for the Climate Emergency Plan for consideration before the 2027-28 budget process.

Officers are reviewing climate projects and impact of actions delivered to date and have consulted experts on priorities. A report to Council will summarise the approach and future priorities in the next delivery phase that could be strengthened through the climate compensation fund.

Question 2

Is any current or planned advocacy with the Australian Government or Parliament being considered by Council?

Response from Acting General Manager City Sustainability and Strategy

The resolution requested Council to write to the Federal Minister of Climate Change and the Local Member of Parliament. Letters are currently in progress to The Hon Chris Bowen MP and The Hon Ged Kearney MP aligned to the suggested content of the resolution.

Question 3

How can Darebin progress opportunities to advocate for the Polluters Pays Motion and encourage its support through networks such as M9 and the Northern Councils Alliance and engagement with local MPs?

Response from Acting General Manager City Sustainability and Strategy

Darebin is part of multiple Climate Networks including the M9 Climate Network and Resilient Asset Management and Investment Project Group, both of which have been made aware of the Climate Compensation Fund resolution.

CONFIRMED

8. PETITIONS

8.1 TABLING OF PETITION - REVIEW AND REPLACE THE DAREBIN GRAFFITI MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

Council Resolution

MINUTE NO. 26-143

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

That the petition:

"We, the undersigned ask Council to:

(1) Immediately correct Council's public information on graffiti so that it accurately reflects the Graffiti Management Strategy 2019-2023 (the Strategy), including the priority categories, the treatment of offensive graffiti regardless of location or ownership.

(2) Establish and publicise a clearly identified, effective and actively monitored channel for reporting of offensive graffiti in Darebin, regardless of asset ownership.

(3) Respond to individuals making reports of offensive graffiti within a reasonable timeframe and make genuine reasonable endeavours to remove it within the response times listed in the current Strategy.

(4) Provide a report to Council at the next Ordinary Meeting, or if this is not possible a later meeting as agreed by Council, on the current annual action plan for graffiti, and on the data on frequency of graffiti, location, reported details and cost of removal that the Strategy requires Council to record and analyse (p. 23).

(5) Report to Council before the end of 2026, or if this is not possible a later meeting as agreed by Council, on the delivery of the specific commitments made in the Strategy, including: the graffiti reporting database (p. 18), the Memoranda of Understanding with utility owners to allow Council contractors to remove Priority One offensive graffiti from utility assets (p. 18), the proposed Amenity Local Law amendment providing that an owner must not allow graffiti to remain (p. 8), and the evaluation of the Strategy (p. 23).

(6) Provide a recommendation to Council before the end of 2026, or if this is not possible a later meeting as agreed by Council, for a process to develop a new policy that is robust, effective and enforced consistently across the municipality, informed by the approaches of comparable councils, including those Council itself benchmarked against in 2019 (p. 14) and the M9 group of councils of which Darebin is one. The process must include genuine community consultation, including with the communities who have been the targets of offensive graffiti, and with residents who have attempted to report graffiti to Council and can tell Council what happened when they did.

The standard we walk by is the standard we accept. Residents should not have to walk by graffiti that is hostile, hateful, discriminatory or threatening. Letting it remain on display undermines the Council's aspiration for an inclusive and safe community for all Darebin residents and visitors. Council's approach to graffiti must consider that when it is offensive or hostile it is not merely illegal property damage but also a signal to impacted community members that they are not welcome in Darebin. Council's operational response should recognise this and comply with its own policies."

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

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Natalie James, as the submitter of the petition made a 2-minute verbal submission.

CONFIRMED

8.2 TABLING OF PETITION - PRESTON BULLANTS AMATEUR FOOTBALL CLUB ACCESS TO PRESTON CITY OVAL

Council Resolution

MINUTE NO. 26-144

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

That the petition:

"The Preston Bullants Amateur Football Club has completed the most successful season in its history. Four of the club's five teams qualified for finals for the first time, and the Senior Men's Team secured a historic Grand Final victory. This achievement has resulted in promotion to the Premier C Division of the Victorian Amateur Football Association, one of Australia's oldest and most prestigious football competitions.

Promotion to Premier C requires the Senior Men to play on a Premier-standard playing surface. The club's current home ground, Ruthven Reserve, is classified by Darebin City Council as a District Level Park which does not meet VAFA's premier-level requirements. With five teams currently competing and a sixth team expected to join in 2027, Ruthven Reserve cannot accommodate the expanded program or the higher-level competition standards.

An additional playing surface is urgently required to ensure the club can meet the VAFA's Premier-grade obligations and continue providing high-quality community football pathways.

Our community strongly believes that Preston City Oval should function as a shared community asset, not an exclusive venue reserved solely for elite sports pathways. Granting equitable access to local community clubs will optimise utilisation of this historic ground, ensure consistent maintenance by committed local stakeholders, and preserve Preston's proud sporting heritage.

As dedicated ratepayers and members of the Preston community, many of us hold a deep connection to the legacy of the former Preston Bullants VFL/VFA club. We believe the Preston Bullants Amateur Football Club deserves equitable access to Preston City Oval, particularly during the winter season. Our players, parents, partners, and members are active contributors to the community and deserve opportunities to develop and showcase the sporting talents of Preston residents.

Preston City Oval is not merely an elite venue; it is a community facility intended to be shared by all ratepayers. Current limitations on access hinder the ability to foster an inclusive environment where players of all abilities can thrive. The Oval is significantly underutilised, and granting increased access will ensure its benefits extend to a broader base of community members while guaranteeing consistent care and maintenance.

By focusing resources solely on elite pathways, Darebin Council risks overlooking the potential of emerging local footballers who wish to call Preston home. Many former participants have progressed to higher levels of competition, and continued access to quality facilities is essential for nurturing future talent. Disconnecting community players from their historic home ground diminishes these opportunities.

We therefore urge Darebin Council to recognise the importance of nurturing local talent, preserving community heritage, and strengthening social cohesion by granting the Preston Bullants Amateur Football Club increased access to Preston City Oval in 2027 and beyond."

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

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Patrick Ryan, as the submitter of the petition made a 2-minute verbal submission.

CONFIRMED

8.3 TABLING OF PETITION - UPGRADE CRISPE PARK PAVILLION FOR BETTER FACILITIES, NORTHSIDE LIONS

Council Resolution

MINUTE NO. 26-145

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

That the petition:

"As the proud members of the largest AFL Masters club in northern metro Victoria, we've long struggled with inadequate facilities at Crispe Park Pavilion.

Despite our passion and commitment, we constantly find ourselves overlooked when it comes to necessary upgrades.

Our current pavilion simply does not meet the needs of our community. The scarcity of restrooms is a significant issue for both players and spectators, rendering game days a logistical nightmare. Even more concerning is the state of the away rooms, which lack basic amenities such as showering cubicles and private toilets. It's embarrassing and frankly unacceptable for our club and visiting teams to have to contend with such conditions.

We are calling on the Federal, State, Local government arms and sports authorities to prioritise the development and funding of essential upgrades to Crispe Park Pavilion. Upgrades like modernised and increased restroom facilities, private showering cubicles, and a general overhaul of the away rooms are vital steps.

Improved facilities would not only benefit our club but also enhance the overall experience for local sports fans and visiting teams. It will foster community spirit, support healthier lifestyles, and ensure our beloved sport can thrive in better conditions."

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

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Krystyna Edwards, as the submitter of the petition made a 2-minute verbal submission.

8.4 TABLING OF PETITION - SAVE MERRILANDS EARLY LEARNING DAYCARE

Council Resolution

MINUTE NO. 26-146

MOVED: **Cr. A Villella**
SECONDED: **Cr. A Sangster**

That the petition:

"For over 40 years, Merrilands Early Learning has been a cornerstone for families in North-West Reservoir, providing nurturing care and quality education to our little ones. This beloved community daycare is a second home for our families, shaped by the dedication and love of its remarkable staff. Many of these staff members have devoted decades to our children, creating an environment rich in support, learning, nourishment and genuine care.

However, our community is now facing a significant loss. Apparently, due to the increase in new for-profit childcare centres in the area, Merrilands has been forced to close the doors of its daycare at the end of the year.

CONFIRMED

This closure threatens not only the livelihoods of the qualified and experienced staff who will be left jobless, but also the stability and security of working families who rely on this invaluable service for their daily working lives and well-being.

Merrilands will continue to operate its sessional 3 and 4 yr old kinder program only, two days a week from 8:30am - 4pm, without the scaffolding of long daycare, leaving all the babies, toddlers, children and kinder kids who require more contact hours left without care. The closure of Merrilands has disrupted many families, leaving them in a desperate scramble for alternate, privately-owned childcare arrangements at short notice, many of which come at a higher cost and without the familiar comfort and warmth that a small community childcare like Merrilands can offer.

Fourth-year kinder children will also be left with a gap in care arrangements in early 2027 before school.

starts. This all contributes to a large mental and financial load on the Merrilands families. Furthermore, separating the very special connections that our babies and children have made to their friends, educators, and community is incredibly heartbreaking.

Please sign this petition in unity with the Merrilands community and its educators, in a bid to keep Merrilands daycare operating for generations to come, and in solidarity with the not-for profit daycare sector, which is at risk of dissolving."

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

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Etta Curry, as the submitter of the petition made a 2-minute verbal submission.

MOTION – ADJOURNMENT 7.21PM

Council Resolution

MOVED: **Cr. R Jelley**
SECONDED: **Cr. M Arturi (Deputy Mayor)**

That Council adjourn the meeting for a short break.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

The meeting adjourned at 7.21pm and resumed at 7.29pm.

CONFIRMED

9. CONSIDERATION OF REPORTS

9.1 2 WINGROVE ST ALPHINGTON - MASTERPLANNING PROJECT PLAN UPDATE

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2 Wingrove Street Alphington (the Site) is a strategically significant Council-owned property currently undergoing a masterplanning process to inform the long-term use and redevelopment (the Project).

Since Council's previous consideration of the project, officers have continued progressing masterplanning activities, including establishment of the Community Reference Group (CRG), community engagement, and preparation for geotechnical investigations. Procurement documentation for the geotechnical investigations is being finalised, with investigations expected to commence in 2027. These investigations will inform future land use opportunities, redevelopment constraints and preparation of the Site Masterplan.

An updated Indicative Project Plan has been developed following a review of project requirements, investigation timeframes and future planning activities. The updated timeline indicates redevelopment of the Site is unlikely to commence before 2032.

There are tenants operating from site with licences in place until May 2028. This report recommends Council consider extending existing licence agreements to 31 December 2031 and authorise the Chief Executive Officer to consider requests for additional licensed areas where this supports community benefit outcomes. Continued occupation would maintain site activation and passive surveillance, support ongoing community and environmental outcomes, and reduce the administrative burden associated with multiple short-term licence renewals or a future expression of interest process.

Alternatively, Council could instead plan for an expression of interest process ahead of the licence expiry dates. Given the recent EOI process at this site, the zoning of the site and the short term between 2028 and 2031, it is unlikely that Council would secure better community benefit from an further EOI process, and it is possible that the uncertainty could reduce community benefit compared to extending licences.

Officers have considered financial, building condition, security, contamination and reputational risks associated with extending the licence arrangements. Risks are considered manageable and can be addressed through appropriate licence conditions.

Officer Recommendation

That Council:

(1) Notes the updated Indicative Project Plan for the Site and supports it being shared publicly and with the Community Reference Group for discussion.

(2) Authorises that offers be made for extensions of existing licence agreements, on similar terms and to the current occupiers, to 31 December 2031, subject to licensees maintaining relevant planning approvals, complying with contamination management requirements, providing requested compliance documentation, and meeting licence obligations relating to safety and security.

CONFIRMED

(3) Authorises the Chief Executive Officer (or delegate) to consider, negotiate and finalise requests from existing licensees for the use of additional unallocated site areas and building spaces, where the proposed use supports community benefit outcomes and is consistent with the future implementation of the Site Masterplan.

(4) Authorises the Chief Executive Officer (or delegate) to extend the tenure and number of meetings of the Community Reference Group to align with the updated indicative Project Plan.

Motion

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

That Council:

(1) Notes the updated Indicative Project Plan for the Site and supports it being shared publicly and with the Community Reference Group for discussion.

(2) Authorises that offers be made for extensions of existing licence agreements, on similar terms and to the current occupiers, to 31 December 2031, subject to licensees maintaining relevant planning approvals, complying with contamination management requirements, providing requested compliance documentation, and meeting licence obligations relating to safety and security, with the addition of point (3) below:

(3) Amends all existing and proposed lease agreements at 2 Wingrove Street Alphington, such that the Emergency Events clause may only be exercised where there is a clear, immediate, and imminent threat to life, property, or public safety. In any such instance, Councillors are advised within 48 hours for the reason of entering and restricting property access, including the action planned to return the tenants to the site in a timely manner.

(4) Authorises the Chief Executive Officer (or delegate) to consider, negotiate and finalise requests from existing licensees for the use of additional unallocated site areas and building spaces, where the proposed use supports community benefit outcomes and is consistent with the future implementation of the Site Masterplan.

(5) Authorises the Chief Executive Officer (or delegate) to extend the tenure and number of meetings of the Community Reference Group to align with the updated indicative Project Plan, and invites all tenants of the site to be additional members of the CRG.

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

Council Resolution **MINUTE NO. 26-147**

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

That Council:

(1) Notes the updated Indicative Project Plan for the Site and supports it being shared publicly and with the Community Reference Group for discussion.

(2) Authorises that offers be made for extensions of existing licence agreements, on similar terms and to the current occupiers, to 31 December 2031, subject to licensees maintaining relevant planning approvals, complying with contamination management requirements, providing requested compliance documentation, and meeting licence obligations relating to safety and security, with the addition of point (3) below:

CONFIRMED

(3) Amends all existing and proposed lease agreements at 2 Wingrove Street Alphington, such that the Emergency Events clause may only be exercised where there is a clear, immediate, and imminent threat to life, property, or public safety. In any such instance, Councillors are advised within 48 hours for the reason of entering and restricting property access, including the action planned to return the tenants to the site in a timely manner.

(4) Authorises the Chief Executive Officer (or delegate) to consider, negotiate and finalise requests from existing licensees for the use of additional unallocated site areas and building spaces, where the proposed use supports community benefit outcomes and is consistent with the future implementation of the Site Masterplan.

(5) Authorises the Chief Executive Officer (or delegate) to extend the tenure and number of meetings of the Community Reference Group to align with the updated indicative Project Plan, and invites all tenants of the site to be additional members of the CRG

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

CONFIRMED

9.2 DAREBIN PLANNING SCHEME REVIEW 2026

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to seek Council adoption of the Darebin Planning Scheme Review 2026: Summary Report (**Appendix A**) and the Darebin Planning Scheme Review 2026: Background Report (**Appendix B**)**.** Together, these reports present the findings and recommendations of the Darebin Planning Scheme Review 2026 (the Review).

The Review is required under section 12B of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* (the Act), which requires councils to conduct a review following adoption of a Council Plan and report the findings to the Minister for Planning. It provides a 'health check' of the Darebin Planning Scheme, identifying opportunities for improvement and efficiency, and informing future planning scheme changes aligned with *Our Darebin Plan 2025–29*.

The Review has found that, while the planning scheme remains functional and strategically sound, targeted improvements are needed to modernise outdated provisions, address gaps, complete strategic planning work, and strengthen support for day-to-day decision-making.

A Five-Year Strategic Planning Work Plan has been developed to implement key recommendations of the Review with priorities focused on:

- Maintaining and improving the planning scheme more regularly over time by updating and refining policies and controls so they remain contemporary and effective.
- Implementing the Darebin Housing Strategy through updated residential policies and controls that support better quality and located housing and respond to State reforms.
- Establishing a proactive heritage program to modernise Darebin's heritage framework to strengthen heritage policy and address gaps.
- Preparing a new Economic Land Use Strategy to guide the protection, enhancement and transition of employment land in response to changing economic conditions.
- Developing a new structure plan for Northcote to replace the ageing plan and better guide growth, heritage, and activity centre objectives.
- Finalising a new Open Space Strategy and updating our municipal Development Contributions Plan.

Council's adoption of the review and submission to the Minister for Planning will enable Council to meet its obligations under the Act and establish a clear work program to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the Darebin Planning Scheme.

Council Resolution **MINUTE NO. 26-148**

MOVED: **Cr. R Jelley**
SECONDED: **Cr. A Sangster**

That Council:

(1) Adopts the Darebin Planning Scheme Review 2026: Summary Report (**Appendix A**) and Background Report (**Appendix B**) prepared in accordance with Section 12B of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*.

CONFIRMED

(2) Notes that findings of the Darebin Planning Scheme Review 2026: Summary Report (**Appendix A**) and Background Report (**Appendix B**) will be reported to the Minister for Planning in accordance with Section 12B(5) of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*.

(3) Notes that the Five-Year Strategic Work Plan (contained within **Appendix A**) prepared to implement the priorities and recommendations of the Planning Scheme Review 2026 will guide Council's strategic planning work program, subject to Council's annual budget decisions.

(4) Authorises the Chief Executive Officer to make minor administrative changes, or any changes required to implement Council's resolution, to the documentation prior to publishing on Council's website, as needed.

CARRIED

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

CONFIRMED

9.3 PLANNING SCHEME AMENDMENT C222DARE - PLACES OF WORSHIP

Cr Sangster disclosed a general conflict of interest in Agenda Item 9.3 Planning Scheme Amendment C222dare - Places Of Worship as she is employed by the Uniting Church of Australia and left the meeting at 7.40pm before discussion on the item commenced.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Amendment C222dare proposes to apply the Heritage Overlay to seven (7) places of worship in Darebin. The amendment seeks to implement the recommendations of the *Places of Worship Heritage Assessment Volumes 1 and 2* (*Extent Heritage, February 2026)*.

Public exhibition of Planning Scheme Amendment C222dare ran for a period of six weeks, from 5 March to 30 April 2026 (see exhibited documents here).

Council received a total of eleven (11) submissions with five (5) requesting changes to the amendment and six (6) in support or raising no objection. Following exhibition of a planning scheme amendment, Council must consider all submissions before deciding next steps.

Officers commissioned further heritage work in response to submissions, and to test the heritage assessments against new *Victorian Local Heritage Guidelines (May 2026)* which were published after the close of exhibition.

A heritage peer review of the Former Croxton Methodist Church and the Omar Bin El Khattam Mosque (Preston Mosque) recommends that these places be removed from the amendment because they do not satisfy the new tests for applying a heritage overlay set out in the guidelines.

Officers recommend Council refer all submissions to planning panel and form a position for Planning Panel that the Former Croxton Methodist Church and the Preston Mosque be excluded from the heritage overlay and removed from the amendment.

Council Resolution **MINUTE NO. 26-149**

MOVED: **Cr. R Jelley**
SECONDED: **Cr. V Tsalkos**

That Council:

(1) Formally considers all written submission received in response to Amendment C222dare to the Darebin Planning Scheme.

(2) Writes to all submitters thanking them for their submissions and to inform them of Council's response to submissions and decision to refer Amendment C222dare to a Planning Panel.

(3) Endorses the response to submissions as attached at **Appendix A**.

(4) Requests that the Minister for Planning appoint a Planning Panel under Part 8 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* to consider submissions to Amendment C222dare to the Darebin Planning Scheme.

(5) Refers all submissions to Amendment C222dare to the Planning Panel to be appointed by the Minister for Planning.

(6) Endorses the recommended changes to Amendment C222dare outlined in this

CONFIRMED

report and attached at **Appendix B** to form the basis of Council's submissions to the independent Planning Panel, specifically the exclusion of the Former Croxton Methodist Church and at 326-332 St Georges Road, Thornbury and Omar Bin El Khattam Mosque, at 88-92 Cramer Street, Preston from the proposed heritage overlay.

(7) Submits a changed position on Amendment C222dare to the Panel, which removes the Preston Mosque and the Former Croxton Methodist Church from the amendment.

(8) Authorises the Chief Executive Officer to make any administrative changes to Amendment C222dare that may be required as part of Council's submissions to the Panel.

(9) Notes an administrative Planning Scheme Amendment will be sought, under delegation, to extend the interim Heritage Overlay (HO327) to continue heritage protections for the Former Croxton Methodist Church while the permanent provisions are being considered through Amendment C222dare.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Cr Sangster returned to the meeting at 7:45pm.

CONFIRMED

9.4 DRAFT 2025-26 FINANCIAL REPORT AND PERFORMANCE STATEMENT

PURPOSE

This report outlines the Council's financial performance and position as of 30 June 2026, covering both operations and capital spending. It also reviews how the Council performed against its annual performance indicators. This report is a key assurance milestone which is important in ensuring the integrity of Council's financial accounting, it does not consider future options arising from the results, this will be considered at future meetings.

SUMMARY

Key elements of the Statements together with commentary on major variances between the Council's adopted budget and actual results are discussed in the Analysis of Results – refer to **Appendix A**, page 8, note 2). There were no significant disclosure changes in the 2025-26 Financial Reports. Commentary on material movements between 2024-25 and 2025-26 is provided in **Appendix F**.

Council Resolution **MINUTE NO. 26-150**

MOVED: **Cr. R Jelley**
SECONDED: **Cr. V Tsalkos**

That Council, having considered Council's draft Financial Reports, Performance Statements, VAGO Final Management Letter, VAGO Closing Report and Management Representation Letter for 2025-26, at **Appendices A, B, C, D** and **E** respectively to this report and having received the recommendations of the Audit and Risk Committee:

(1) Notes the recommendation from the Audit and Risk Committee that Council approve **'in principle'** the Annual Financial Report and the Annual Performance Statement ended 30 June 2026; and that the Council resolution include the authorisations provided for at points (4), (5), (6) and (7).

(2) Approves in principle the Financial Report for the year ended 30 June 2026 as per **Appendix A** to this report.

(3) Approves in principle the Performance Statements for the year ended 30 June 2026 as per **Appendix B** to this report.

(4) Authorises the Chief Executive Officer, Councillor Emily Dimitriadis and Councillor Vasilios Tsalkos to certify the Financial Reports in their final form after any changes recommended or agreed to by the Auditor-General have been made.

(6) Authorises the Chief Financial Officer to make any non-material changes to the Annual Financial Report and the Annual Performance Statement that may arise from the completion of audit and internal review procedures.

(7) Authorises the Chief Executive Officer to forward the Annual Financial Report and the Annual Performance Statement to the Victorian Auditor-General's Office (VAGO).

CARRIED

For	Against
Cr. Emily Dimitriadis (Mayor)	Cr. Connie Boglis OAM
Cr. Matt Arturi (Deputy Mayor)	Cr. Angela Villella

CONFIRMED

Cr. Ruth Jelley
Cr. Julie O'Brien
Cr. Alexandra Sangster
Cr. Vasilios Tsalkos

CONFIRMED

9.5 PROJECT AND INITIATIVE BUDGET ADJUSTMENTS

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, Table 2 and Table 3 of this report.

To support transparent and effective financial management, Council maintains two unallocated project accounts within its financial system:

- 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: **$373,866**
- Unallocated Operating Projects and Special Initiatives Program Account: **$79,445.**

Council Resolution **MINUTE NO. 26-151**

MOVED: **Cr. M Arturi (Deputy Mayor)**
SECONDED: **Cr. R Jelley**

That Council:

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

(2) Notes that there are no requested changes to Operating Projects this month.

CARRIED

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

CONFIRMED

9.6 GOVERNANCE REPORT - SEPTEMBER 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 31 August 2026).
- Instrument of Delegation to members of Council staff (S6).
- Adjustments to the allowances payable to Mayors, Deputy Mayors, and Councillors.

Council Resolution **MINUTE NO. 26-152**

MOVED: Cr. C Boglis OAM
SECONDED: Cr. M Arturi (Deputy Mayor)

That Council:

(1) Notes the Governance Report – September 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 25 August 2026 Council meeting.

(5) Notes the status of petitions tabled during the current Council term (**November 2024 to 31 August 2026**) as shown in **Table A** of this report.

(6) In the exercise of the powers conferred by section 11 of the *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act) and the other legislation referred to in the attached Instrument of Delegation, resolves:

(a) To delegate to the members of Council staff holding, acting in or performing the duties of the officers or positions referred to in the 'Instrument of Delegation to members of Council staff (S6)' (**Appendix B**) the powers, duties and functions set out in that instrument, subject to the conditions and limitations specified in that Instrument.

(b) To adopt and affix Council's Common Seal to the Instrument of Delegation from Council to members of Council Staff (S6) (**Appendix B**).

(c) That this instrument comes into force immediately once the Common Seal of Council is affixed to the instrument.

(7) Notes the determination made by the Victorian Independent Remuneration Tribunal (**Appendix D**) providing for an adjustment to the values of the allowances payable to Mayors, Deputy Mayors and Councillors effective from 1 July 2026 as shown in **Table B** of this report.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

CONFIRMED

ACTIVITY REPORTS BY MAYOR AND COUNCILLORS

REPORT OF CR. EMILY DIMITRIADIS (MAYOR)

Cr. Dimitriadis reported on her attendance at the following functions/activities:

25 August 2026
- Introduction Meeting - City of Darebin / Chris Parr, Liberal for Bundoora and Bernadette Khoury, Liberal for Northern Metropolitan
- Meeting with CEO
- Council Meeting

27 August 2026
- Smarterlite Introduction Meeting

28 August 2026
- Darebin Basketball - Vic Pol v. Reservoir Highschool Basketball Friendly match

30 August 2026
- Art for All at Fairfield Primary School
- Northside FC Family and Friends Day
- WARM Inc. End of Season Celebration

31 August 2026
- Meeting with CEO

1 September 2026
- Your Community Health – Naloxone Dispensing Machine Launch Overdose Awareness Day
- Meeting with CEO

2 September 2026
- Planting Day with Guardian Childcare Preston – Habitat Hubs and Advanced Trees for a Greener, Cooler Preston

3 September 2026
- AFL Grand Final Cup showcase at Pitcher Park, Alphington
- Reservoir High Production: Rock of Ages

4 September 2026
- M9 Meeting - Federal MPs Josh Burns, Sarah Witty and Jo Briskey
- Mary Shield Game 1: VIC v WA
- Meeting with Nathan Lambert MP (and CEO)

5 September 2026
- Citizenship Ceremony x Ganbu Gulin
- Ganbu Gulin: Burndap, Neto!

6 September 2026
- Mary Little Shield Gold Medal Game and Final Presentations
- Women’s Northcote City FC
- That Land presented by Tarab Ensemble

CONFIRMED

7 September 2026
- Introduction meeting - City of Darebin / Lokesh Sangarya, The Australian Greens (Candidate for Preston)

8 September 2026
- Meeting with CEO
- Meeting with Cr Ruth Jelley
- Councillor Briefing Session

9 September 2026
- Launch the Beyond Age exhibition (FUSE Darebin Event)
- Walk in Her Shoes Final Forum
- Darebin Audit and Risk Committee Meeting - September (Quarterly Meeting)
- St Joseph the Worker Visual Art Show

11 September 2026
- The Cube – Opening Night Presented by Darebin FUSE Festival

13 September 2026
- Northern Falcons Family Day and Junior Presentation
- Opening Day for Kingsbury Lawn Bowls Club
- Preston Symphony Orchestra - Youth Concerto Competition

14 September 2026
- Announcement of Opening of Creating Safer Places Grant Program with Minister Paul Edbrooke and Nathan Lambert MP
- Meeting with CEO

15 September 2026
- Meeting with Grace and Pace e-bikes and City of Darebin
- Tour of Fire Rescue Victoria - Thornbury Workshop
- Meeting with CEO
- Councillor Briefing Session

16 September 2026
- Meeting with Community Reference Group - 2 Wingrove St Alphington
- Darebin Audit and Risk Committee Meeting - September (VAGO financial and performance statements)
- Darebin Community Awards – Panel Induction

17 September 2026
- MAV Mayors Institute Annual Oration with Ms Patricia Karvelas

18 September 2026
- M9 Forum
- Meeting with Cr Julie O'Brien

19 September 2026
- Northern Football Netball League Men's Final

CONFIRMED

20 September 2026
- Darebin Ganesh Chaturthi Celebrations
- Senol NPL Women's Grand Final

21 September 2026
- Meeting with CEO

REPORT OF CR. MATT ARTURI

Cr. Arturi was on approved leave for the period 18 August 2026 to 17 September 2026 and did not submit a report.

REPORT OF CR. CONNIE BOGLIS

Cr. Boglis did not submit a report.

REPORT OF CR. JULIE O'BRIEN

Cr. O'Brien reported on her attendance at the following functions/activities:

25 August 2026
- Pre-Briefing and Council Meeting

27 August 2026
- Merri Creek Management Committee Meeting
- Meeting with the CEO

1 September 2026
- Councillor Briefing Session

5 September 2026
- Citizenship Ceremony
- Ganbu Gulin Festival

8 September 2026
- Councillor Briefing Session

9 September 2026
- Community Campaign Gathering
- Friends of Baucau Committee Meeting

15 September 2026
- Councillor Briefing Session

18 September 2026
- Meeting with the Mayor

REPORT OF CR. KRISTINE OLARIS OAM

Cr. Olaris reported on her attendance at the following functions/activities:

25 August 2026
- Pre Council meeting
- Council Meeting

CONFIRMED

29 August 2026
- Onsite community engagement for A.G. Davis Park

30 August 2026
- Northside Football Club's Family Day

3 September 2026
- Mary Rogers Awards at Parliament House

12 September 2026
- The Cube at Preston Market (FUSE Festival)

31 August – 21 September 2026
- Approved Leave

REPORT OF CR. RUTH JELLEY

Cr. Jelley did not submit a report.

REPORT OF CR. ALEXANDRA SANGSTER

Cr. Sangster reported on her attendance at the following functions/activities:

2 September 2026
- Meeting with Uncle Alan Brown (former DAAC)
- Touched base with some Gibert St Traders

4 September 2026
- Meeting with CEO

5 September 2026
- Ganbu Gulin Festival

6 September 2026
- Attended Tarak Ensemble with Mayor at Darebin Arts

18 September 2026
- Met with members of Darebin Climate Action

22 September 2026
- Met with Mayor

Attended and prepared for all briefings except 8 September 2026 as I was unwell. Responded via phone call, texts and emails from residents.

REPORT OF CR. VASILIOS TSALKOS

Cr. Tsalkos did not submit a report.

REPORT OF CR. ANGELA VILLELLA

Cr. Villella was on approved leave from 26 August 2026 to 12 September 2026 and did not submit a report.

CONFIRMED

10. ITEMS TO BE TABLED

Nil

11. NOTICES OF MOTION

11.1 PUBLIC ACQUISITION OF THE PRESTON MARKET

Take notice that at the Council Meeting to be held on 22 September 2026, it is my intention to move:

***That** Council:*

(1) Notes the two separate 'Save the Preston Market' petitions that were tabled in the Victorian Parliament and at Darebin Council totalling nearly 30,000 signatures and requesting to put Preston Market in public hands.

(2) Notes the substantial community submissions regarding the compulsory public acquisition of Preston Market that were presented as part of the 2024/2025 budget process.

(3) Notes that for the 22 July 2024 Council meeting, former Cr Gaetano Greco had listed a Notice of Motion (later withdrawn because he was unable to attend the meeting) requesting that a feasibility study be undertaken to broadly outline the scope, timelines and cost for public acquisition of the Preston Market.

(4) Notes on 12 May 2025 a motion was unanimously passed to allocate $30,000 of the 2025/2026 Operating budget to fund the Preston Market feasibility study.

(5) Notes that to date, nearly 1.5 years since the council allocated the money, Council has still not seen the Preston Market feasibility study.

(6) Requests the CEO immediately finalise the report on the Preston Market feasibility study and bring it to the 27 October 2026 Council Meeting.

Rationale:

The Preston Market is an important community issue. The feasibility study is to be honoured and presented to the community in a timely manner. The NoM simply asks for this to materialise.

Notice Received:	**31 August 2026**
Notice Given to Councillors	**31 August 2026**
Date of Meeting:	**22 September 2026**

CONFIRMED

Motion

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

That Council:

(1) Notes the two separate 'Save the Preston Market' petitions that were tabled in the Victorian Parliament and at Darebin Council totalling nearly 30,000 signatures and requesting to put Preston Market in public hands.

(2) Notes the substantial community submissions regarding the compulsory public acquisition of Preston Market that were presented as part of the 2024/2025 budget process.

(3) Notes that for the 22 July 2024 Council meeting, former Cr Gaetano Greco had listed a Notice of Motion (later withdrawn because he was unable to attend the meeting) requesting that a feasibility study be undertaken to broadly outline the scope, timelines and cost for public acquisition of the Preston Market.

(4) Notes on 12 May 2025 a motion was unanimously passed to allocate $30,000 of the 2025/2026 Operating budget to fund the Preston Market feasibility study.

(5) Notes that to date, nearly 1.5 years since the council allocated the money, Council has still not seen the Preston Market feasibility study.

(6) Requests the CEO immediately finalise the report on the Preston Market feasibility study and bring it to the 27 October 2026 Council Meeting.

Amendment

MOVED: **Cr. R Jelley**
SECONDED: **Cr. A Sangster**

That Council:

(1) Notes the two separate 'Save the Preston Market' petitions that were tabled in the Victorian Parliament and at Darebin Council totalling nearly 30,000 signatures and requesting to put Preston Market in public hands.

(2) Notes the substantial community submissions regarding the compulsory public acquisition of Preston Market that were presented as part of the 2024/2025 budget process.

(3) Notes that for the 22 July 2024 Council meeting, former Cr Gaetano Greco had listed a Notice of Motion (later withdrawn because he was unable to attend the meeting) requesting that a feasibility study be undertaken to broadly outline the scope, timelines and cost for public acquisition of the Preston Market.

(4) Notes on 12 May 2025 a motion was unanimously passed to allocate $30,000 of the 2025/2026 Operating budget to fund the Preston Market feasibility study.

(5) Notes that Councillors were briefed on the Preston Market Feasibility Study on 17 February 2026 which summarised findings from the 2021 feasibility study and that property and maintenance costs will have increased since the 2021 estimates.

(6) Notes that to date, nearly 1.5 years since the council allocated the money, Council has still not seen the Preston Market feasibility study.

(7) Requests the CEO immediately finalise the report on the Preston Market feasibility study and bring it to the 27 October 2026 Council Meeting.

CONFIRMED

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

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

Substantive Motion

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

That Council:

(1) Notes the two separate 'Save the Preston Market' petitions that were tabled in the Victorian Parliament and at Darebin Council totalling nearly 30,000 signatures and requesting to put Preston Market in public hands.

(2) Notes the substantial community submissions regarding the compulsory public acquisition of Preston Market that were presented as part of the 2024/2025 budget process.

(3) Notes that for the 22 July 2024 Council meeting, former Cr Gaetano Greco had listed a Notice of Motion (later withdrawn because he was unable to attend the meeting) requesting that a feasibility study be undertaken to broadly outline the scope, timelines and cost for public acquisition of the Preston Market.

(4) Notes on 12 May 2025 a motion was unanimously passed to allocate $30,000 of the 2025/2026 Operating budget to fund the Preston Market feasibility study.

(5) Notes that Councillors were briefed on the Preston Market Feasibility Study on 17 February 2026 which summarised findings from the 2021 feasibility study and that property and maintenance costs will have increased since the 2021 estimates.

(6) Notes that to date, nearly 1.5 years since the council allocated the money, Council has still not seen the Preston Market feasibility study.

(7) Requests the CEO immediately finalise the report on the Preston Market feasibility study and bring it to the 27 October 2026 Council Meeting.

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

Council Resolution **MINUTE NO. 26-153**

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

That Council:

(1) Notes the two separate 'Save the Preston Market' petitions that were tabled in the Victorian Parliament and at Darebin Council totalling nearly 30,000 signatures and requesting to put Preston Market in public hands.

(2) Notes the substantial community submissions regarding the compulsory public acquisition of Preston Market that were presented as part of the 2024/2025 budget process.

(3) Notes that for the 22 July 2024 Council meeting, former Cr Gaetano Greco had listed a Notice of Motion (later withdrawn because he was unable to attend the meeting) requesting that a feasibility study be undertaken to broadly outline the scope, timelines and cost for public acquisition of the Preston Market.

(4) Notes on 12 May 2025 a motion was unanimously passed to allocate $30,000 of the

CONFIRMED

2025/2026 Operating budget to fund the Preston Market feasibility study.

(5) Notes that Councillors were briefed on the Preston Market Feasibility Study on 17 February 2026 which summarised findings from the 2021 feasibility study and that property and maintenance costs will have increased since the 2021 estimates.

(6) Notes that to date, nearly 1.5 years since the council allocated the money, Council has still not seen the Preston Market feasibility study.

(7) Requests the CEO immediately finalise the report on the Preston Market feasibility study and bring it to the 27 October 2026 Council Meeting.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

CONFIRMED

11.2 DATA CENTRES

Take notice that at the Council Meeting to be held on 22 September 2026, it is my intention to move:

That *Council:*

(1) Notes the significant and growing community interest in the development and expansion of data centres, including concerns raised by residents, community organisations and environmental groups regarding their cumulative impacts.

(2) Writes to the Premier of Victoria, the Minister for Planning, the Minister for Artificial Intelligence and Digital Economy, and the Minister for Jobs, Industry and Advanced Manufacturing, requesting that the Victorian Government:

a) Introduce a moratorium on approvals for new data centres and expansions of existing data centres until a Victorian Parliamentary Joint Select Committee Inquiry into Data Centres has been completed. The Inquiry should include comprehensive public hearings and invite evidence from scientific experts, community organisations, Traditional Owners, local residents, local governments, industry representatives and relevant government agencies to consider the cumulative environmental, social and economic impacts of data centres and recommend an appropriate regulatory framework and other initiatives identified through the inquiry process.

b) Establish a joint State and Local Government Taskforce to develop planning, environmental and infrastructure policy responses for the siting and operation of data centres, including the preparation of planning scheme amendments for public consultation and implementation through regulation and/or legislation following completion of the proposed Parliamentary Inquiry. Ensure the work of the Taskforce includes consideration of: Cumulative and place-based strategic assessments; electricity network capacity and energy demand; water supply, water security and catchment health; biodiversity and ecosystem impacts; land use planning and agricultural land protection; clustering and precinct-based development; community amenity and social impacts; economic benefits, including local jobs and skills development; and any additional matters identified through research, consultation and stakeholder engagement.

c) Immediately release the Victorian Government's Sustainable Data Centre Action Plan and all supporting research informing its development.

(3) Ensures that any future planning development applications for new Data Centres or the expansion of ones existing in Darebin be brought to the attention of all Darebin councillors and request that any such planning permit applications be formally referred to Council for comment, and that the application go on public exhibition.

(4) Requests Officers bring a report to Council on options for developing a policy on mandated sustainability standards which include strict caps on water consumption, closed-loop cooling systems, and forbids them drawing on local drinking water supplies and requires developers to publicly disclose their projected energy loads, water usage, and climate impacts during the planning approval stage.

CONFIRMED

Rationale:

Data centres are among the most energy and water-intensive land uses in the modern economy. A single large facility can consume as much electricity as a regional city and draw millions of litres of water from local catchments daily. As a declared Climate Emergency council with a binding Climate Emergency Plan 2024–2030, Darebin cannot stand by while infrastructure of this scale is approved without proper scrutiny.

The core problem is a regulatory gap. Victoria has no comprehensive framework governing the siting, cumulative impacts, or community consultation requirements for data centres. Approvals proceed project by project, with no strategic or place-based assessment, no guaranteed role for Traditional Owners or local governments, and no public access to the Victorian Government's own Sustainable Data Centre Action Plan — which has not been released.

The cumulative risks are significant: pressure on electricity grids at the moment Victoria is transitioning to renewables; strain on water supplies already stressed by climate change; impacts on biodiversity, agricultural land, and community amenity; and infrastructure and planning consequences borne by local councils with no meaningful seat at the decision-making table.

A moratorium is not an anti-technology position. It is a precautionary, evidence-based response to approvals proceeding faster than the evidence base and regulatory frameworks can support. A parliamentary inquiry — with genuine community participation, expert evidence, and input from Traditional Owners and local government — is the appropriate mechanism to develop a fit-for-purpose response.

Until that framework exists, continuing to approve new facilities risks consequences that are significant, cumulative, and potentially irreversible. Darebin's Climate Emergency Plan commits us to exactly this kind of advocacy. Darebin can show its leadership in the climate space by joining other local councils such as Whittlesea, Maribyrnong, Melton, Brimbank and Hume in advocating for a local government voice in this contentious space. We need strict planning rules, environmental safeguards and community consultation.

Notice Received: **31 August 2026**

Notice Given to Councillors **31 August 2026**

Date of Meeting: **22 September 2026**

With leave of the Chairperson, Cr Sangster moved the following motion with minor amendments to point (3).

Council Resolution

MINUTE NO. 26-154

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

That Council:

(1) Notes the significant and growing community interest in the development and expansion of data centres, including concerns raised by residents, community organisations and environmental groups regarding their cumulative impacts.

(2) Writes to the Premier of Victoria, the Minister for Planning, the Minister for Artificial Intelligence and Digital Economy, and the Minister for Jobs, Industry and Advanced Manufacturing, requesting that the Victorian Government:

CONFIRMED

a) Introduce a moratorium on approvals for new data centres and expansions of existing data centres until a Victorian Parliamentary Joint Select Committee Inquiry into Data Centres has been completed. The Inquiry should include comprehensive public hearings and invite evidence from scientific experts, community organisations, Traditional Owners, local residents, local governments, industry representatives and relevant government agencies to consider the cumulative environmental, social and economic impacts of data centres and recommend an appropriate regulatory framework and other initiatives identified through the inquiry process.

b) Establish a joint State and Local Government Taskforce to develop planning, environmental and infrastructure policy responses for the siting and operation of data centres, including the preparation of planning scheme amendments for public consultation and implementation through regulation and/or legislation following completion of the proposed Parliamentary Inquiry. Ensure the work of the Taskforce includes consideration of: Cumulative and place-based strategic assessments; electricity network capacity and energy demand; water supply, water security and catchment health; biodiversity and ecosystem impacts; land use planning and agricultural land protection; clustering and precinct-based development; community amenity and social impacts; economic benefits, including local jobs and skills development; and any additional matters identified through research, consultation and stakeholder engagement.

c) Immediately release the Victorian Government's Sustainable Data Centre Action Plan and all supporting research informing its development.

(3) Ensures that any future planning development applications for new Data Centres or the expansion of ones existing in Darebin be brought to the attention of all Darebin councillors and request that any such planning permit applications be formally referred to Council for comment, and that the application go on public exhibition.

(4) Requests Officers bring a report to Council on options for developing a policy on mandated sustainability standards which include strict caps on water consumption, closed-loop cooling systems, and forbids them drawing on local drinking water supplies and requires developers to publicly disclose their projected energy loads, water usage, and climate impacts during the planning approval stage.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

CONFIRMED

11.3 MELBOURNE WATER PIPE TRAIL NEXT STEPS FOLLOWING THE FEASIBILITY STUDY

Take notice that at the Council Meeting to be held on 22 September 2026, it is my intention to move:

***That** Council:*

(1) Requests officers provide a report to the November 2026 Ordinary Meeting on the appropriate next step after the Melbourne Water Pipe Trail feasibility study.

(2) Requests that the report advise what should follow the feasibility study, including costing of a business case/investment case, concept design for a staged first section, or a lower-cost first-step option, and include an order-of-cost, proposed scope and timeframe for the recommended next stage for inclusion into the 27-28 budget.

(3) Requests that the report include:

a) An order-of-cost for a potential first stage comprising the Melbourne Water land section within Darebin and the highest-priority Critical crossings, including the three crossings officers would prioritise if Council can only progress a limited number due to cost; the proposed treatments and any design or construction funding identified in the 2026–27 capital program, or that could be planned for 2027–28; and

b) Separate, itemised order-of-costs for cheaper first-step options that do not treat the preliminary $7.5 million Darebin-section figure as the only path forward.

(4) Requests that cheaper first-step options include, in the first instance:

a) Melbourne Water opening existing gates on the pipe reserve to enable public access where safe and permitted;

b) Commencement from Elizabeth Street and smaller local streets, rather than a Critical-crossings-only focus; and those costs and treatments.

(5) Requests that if a cheaper deliverable option is identified, the report advise whether the project could be moved to Tier 1 priority and identify partner contributions that could meet part of the cost.

(6) Requests that the CEO write to the following agencies and departments seeking interest and investment and any written responses be added to the report:

a) The Department of Transport and Planning on Spring Street / Butters Street signals;

b) DTP and VicTrack on the Crawley Street rail crossing, including process and indicative timeframe;

c) DTP and Yarra Trams on the Gilbert Road crossing and Emergency/Ambulance access;

d) Melbourne Water on a shared-path licence or agreement to opening of existing gates as a first step; and

e) Merri-Bek City Council on works south of Elizabeth Street, including any funding, design or advocacy commitments and timing.

(7) Requests that the report identify potential State, Federal and other programs for which the project may be eligible, including relevant TAC, Black Spot and Active Transport programs, noting that eligibility and availability must be confirmed by the funding body, and list what would be required to lodge a competitive application, including concept plans, cost estimates, agency support and landowner approvals.

CONFIRMED

(8) Requests that the report identify, wherever information is available:

a) What Darebin may be expected to fund;

b) What other agencies or councils may be expected to fund; and

c) Potential external funding sources.

(9) Notes that this resolution does not allocate capital, does not commence a business case or concept design, and seeks no additional budget. The report is to be prepared from existing resources.

Rationale:

The feasibility study is a milestone. It identifies a feasible alignment, subject to approvals and further design, and records that delivery depends on Melbourne Water, the Department of Transport and Planning, VicTrack, Yarra Trams, Merri-bek City Council, street crossings and funding.

Preliminary material associated with the study refers to a Darebin-section cost in the order of $7.5 million. That figure is an estimate only. It is not a budget allocation, a preferred staging plan, or a decision that Council must proceed on that scale.

Council has not yet determined the appropriate next step. Options after a feasibility study can include a business case or investment case, concept design for a staged first section, a lower-cost first step, or no further work at this time. Those choices cannot be made properly without a report that sets out scope, order-of-cost, timeframe, agency positions and possible funding sources.

A first stage limited to the most expensive Critical crossings is one possible path. It is not the only path suggested by the study. Access along Melbourne Water land, including the use of existing gates where that is lawful and supported by the landowner, and a start from the Elizabeth Street end and smaller local streets, may present a different cost and delivery profile. Council should have those options costed and compared on the same terms, with estimates itemised and assumptions stated, so later debate is based on the study and on advice, not on a single headline figure.

The project also cannot be advanced by Darebin acting alone. Signalised crossings, the rail interface, tram and emergency access, licensing of Melbourne Water land, and works south of Elizabeth Street sit with other agencies. Written responses from those agencies are needed before Council considers priority, partnership funding or any future budget bid.

This motion seeks a report to the November 2026 Ordinary Meeting so that Council can later decide, on evidence, whether to proceed, in what form, and at what scale. It does not allocate capital, does not commence a business case or concept design, does not elevate the project's priority, and seeks no additional budget. The report is to be prepared from existing resources.

Notice Received:	**2 September 2026**
Notice Given to Councillors	**2 September 2026**
Date of Meeting:	**22 September 2026**

CONFIRMED

MOTION

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

That Council:

(1) Requests officers provide a report to the November 2026 Ordinary Meeting on the appropriate next step after the Melbourne Water Pipe Trail feasibility study.

(2) Requests that the report advise what should follow the feasibility study, including costing of a business case/investment case, concept design for a staged first section, or a lower-cost first-step option, and include an order-of-cost, proposed scope and timeframe for the recommended next stage for inclusion into the 27-28 budget.

(3) Requests that the report include:

a) An order-of-cost for a potential first stage comprising the Melbourne Water land section within Darebin and the highest-priority Critical crossings, including the three crossings officers would prioritise if Council can only progress a limited number due to cost; the proposed treatments and any design or construction funding identified in the 2026–27 capital program, or that could be planned for 2027–28; and

b) Separate, itemised order-of-costs for cheaper first-step options that do not treat the preliminary $7.5 million Darebin-section figure as the only path forward.

(4) Requests that cheaper first-step options include, in the first instance:

a) Melbourne Water opening existing gates on the pipe reserve to enable public access where safe and permitted;

b) Commencement from Elizabeth Street and smaller local streets, rather than a Critical-crossings-only focus; and those costs and treatments.

(5) Requests that if a cheaper deliverable option is identified, the report advise whether the project could be moved to Tier 1 priority and identify partner contributions that could meet part of the cost.

(6) Requests that the CEO write to the following agencies and departments seeking interest and investment and any written responses be added to the report:

a) The Department of Transport and Planning on Spring Street / Butters Street signals;

b) DTP and VicTrack on the Crawley Street rail crossing, including process and indicative timeframe;

c) DTP and Yarra Trams on the Gilbert Road crossing and Emergency/Ambulance access;

d) Melbourne Water on a shared-path licence or agreement to opening of existing gates as a first step; and

e) Merri-Bek City Council on works south of Elizabeth Street, including any funding, design or advocacy commitments and timing.

(7) Requests that the report identify potential State, Federal and other programs for which the project may be eligible, including relevant TAC, Black Spot and Active Transport programs, noting that eligibility and availability must be confirmed by the funding body, and list what would be required to lodge a competitive application, including concept plans, cost estimates, agency support and landowner approvals.

CONFIRMED

(8) Requests that the report identify, wherever information is available:

a) What Darebin may be expected to fund;

b) What other agencies or councils may be expected to fund; and

c) Potential external funding sources.

(9) Notes that this resolution does not allocate capital, does not commence a business case or concept design, and seeks no additional budget. The report is to be prepared from existing resources.

LOST

THE MOTION WAS PUT AND LOST

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

CONFIRMED

11.4 COUNCIL CONTROL OF PLANNING FOR HEALTHY NEIGHBOURHOOD SHOPPING STRIPS

Take notice that at the Council Meeting to be held on 22 September 2026, it is my intention to move:

***That** Council:*

(1) Notes Council's commitment to the health and wellbeing of the community as set out in its adopted Health and Wellbeing Plan.

(2) Writes to the Victorian Government advocating for the establishment of a task force (or similar) to consider reforms that will enable the promotion of healthy food environments and reduce harm caused by tobacco and e-cigarette retail proliferation, and to investigate:

a) The most effective way to incorporate healthy food environment and tobacco harm reduction objectives into planning policies, strategies and planning schemes.

b) Enabling the consideration of the cumulative public health impacts within designated precincts, such as in close proximity to primary and secondary schools or where there is an over-concentration in a given area.

c) Requiring planning permits for the use of land for fast-food outlets, and clear criteria to refuse such applications where adverse public health impacts are anticipated.

d) Requiring the preparation and submission of independent Health Impact Assessments commissioned and funded by applicants as part of future applications for permits.

e) Requiring responsible authorities to consider public health outcomes, food security and equitable access to healthy food when assessing planning applications.

f) Expanding the powers and duties of the recently established Tobacco Licensing Victoria to:

i. Require permits for the establishment of new tobacco and e-cigarette retail outlets.

ii. Require referral and advertising of these permits, similar to that currently undertaken by Liquor Control Victoria, to local authorities and local residents.

iii. Require Tobacco Licensing Victoria to consider public health outcomes and the reduction of tobacco and e-cigarette availability when assessing permit applications.

iv. Designate tobacco-free retail precincts and areas.

(3) Supports a similar motion related to fast-food planning submitted by Maribyrnong City Council at the upcoming Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) State Council

CONFIRMED

Rationale:

An upcoming MAV motion being supported by Maribyrnong Council focuses on the challenges of fast-food proliferation and the planning gaps that currently limit councils' ability to respond. That motion has prompted consideration of the broader role planning can play in supporting public health outcomes.

This Notice of Motion builds on that work by expanding the focus beyond fast food to also address the growing proliferation of tobacco and e-cigarette retail outlets, which raise similar concerns about community health, local amenity and the ability of councils to respond through the planning system.

The Victorian planning system currently provides limited scope for councils to consider public health impacts when assessing proposals for new fast-food, tobacco and e-cigarette retail outlets. As a result, councils have little ability to manage the concentration of these businesses, particularly around schools, kindergartens, childcare centres and in communities experiencing disadvantage. This is despite growing evidence of the relationship between food and retail environments, chronic disease, smoking and vaping uptake, and broader community health and wellbeing outcomes. Darebin communities have recently experienced firsthand the limitations of the current framework. A Council decision to refuse planning permission for a multinational fast-food outlet was overturned at VCAT, with the business now preparing to open.

Many residents expressed concerns that the development was inconsistent with local character, would place pressure on existing local food businesses, and could contribute to increased traffic, noise and litter. None of that mattered in the current State process. At the same time, tobacco and e-cigarette retailers continue to proliferate across the municipality. Community concern has been heightened by ongoing allegations of illicit tobacco trading and the broader impacts of the so-called "tobacco wars" occurring across Victoria. Because the key planning powers and regulatory settings sit with the State Government, many community members feel excluded from decisions that have significant impacts on their neighbourhoods, local amenity and public health outcomes.

Planning reform should provide councils with the tools to:

- Consider cumulative public health impacts when making planning decisions.
- Refuse developments where significant adverse public health impacts are anticipated.
- Support healthier food environments and improved access to healthy food.
- Reduce children's and young people's exposure to tobacco and e-cigarette retailing.
- Encourage greater diversity in local food businesses.
- Better align land-use planning with broader public health and wellbeing objectives.

Council also recognises that planning reform is not solely a responsibility of the State Government. Local governments should continue to explore opportunities through future planning scheme reviews and local planning policies to support healthier food environments and reduce tobacco and e-cigarette related harms.

Notice Received: **2 September 2026**

Notice Given to Councillors **2 September 2026**

Date of Meeting: **22 September 2026**

CONFIRMED

Council Resolution

MINUTE NO. 26-155

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

That Council:

(1) Notes Council's commitment to the health and wellbeing of the community as set out in its adopted Health and Wellbeing Plan.

(2) Writes to the Victorian Government advocating for the establishment of a task force (or similar) to consider reforms that will enable the promotion of healthy food environments and reduce harm caused by tobacco and e-cigarette retail proliferation, and to investigate:

a) The most effective way to incorporate healthy food environment and tobacco harm reduction objectives into planning policies, strategies and planning schemes.

b) Enabling the consideration of the cumulative public health impacts within designated precincts, such as in close proximity to primary and secondary schools or where there is an over-concentration in a given area.

c) Requiring planning permits for the use of land for fast-food outlets, and clear criteria to refuse such applications where adverse public health impacts are anticipated.

d) Requiring the preparation and submission of independent Health Impact Assessments commissioned and funded by applicants as part of future applications for permits.

e) Requiring responsible authorities to consider public health outcomes, food security and equitable access to healthy food when assessing planning applications.

f) Expanding the powers and duties of the recently established Tobacco Licensing Victoria to:

i. Require permits for the establishment of new tobacco and e-cigarette retail outlets.

ii. Require referral and advertising of these permits, similar to that currently undertaken by Liquor Control Victoria, to local authorities and local residents.

iii. Require Tobacco Licensing Victoria to consider public health outcomes and the reduction of tobacco and e-cigarette availability when assessing permit applications.

iv. Designate tobacco-free retail precincts and areas.

(3) Supports a similar motion related to fast-food planning submitted by Maribyrnong City Council at the upcoming Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) State Council

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

CONFIRMED

12. URGENT BUSINESS

Nil

13. CONSIDERATION OF REPORTS CONSIDERED CONFIDENTIAL

CLOSE OF MEETING

Recommendation

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

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 Divestment Opportunities

This item is confidential because it is land use planning information, being information that if prematurely released is likely to encourage speculation in land values, pursuant to Section 3(1) (c) of the Act.

13.3 ERP System

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.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

The meeting was closed to the members of the public at 8.46pm.

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

RE-OPENING OF MEETING

Council Resolution

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

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

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

The meeting was re-opened to the members of the public at 8.58pm.

CONFIRMED

14. CLOSE OF MEETING

The meeting closed at 8.58pm.

CONFIRMED



2 November 2026

CONFIRMED

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