



MELTON CITY COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of the Melton City Council

25 March 2024

**THESE MINUTES CONTAIN REPORTS DEALT WITH AT A
CLOSED MEETING OF COUNCIL**

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MELTON CITY COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE MELTON CITY COUNCIL HELD
IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS, MELTON CIVIC CENTRE,
232 HIGH STREET MELTON ON 25 MARCH 2024 AT 7.00PM

Present: Cr K Majdlik (Mayor)
Cr S Abboushi (Deputy Mayor)
Cr L Carli
Cr J Farrugia
C G Kesic
Cr S Ramsey
Cr J Shannon
Cr B Turner
Cr A Vandenberg

R Wai, Chief Executive Officer
P Leersen, Director Organisational Performance
T Scoble, Director City Life
S Romaszko, Director City Futures
N Whiteside, Director City Delivery
E Keogh, Head of Governance
R Hodgson, Senior Coordinator Governance
V Zdjelar, Governance Officer

1. OPENING PRAYER AND RECONCILIATION STATEMENT

The Mayor, Cr Majdlik opened the meeting at 7.04pm with the opening prayer and reconciliation statement.

2. APOLOGIES AND LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Nil.

3. CHANGES TO THE ORDER OF BUSINESS

Nil.

4. DEPUTATIONS

Nil.

5. DECLARATION OF ANY PECUNIARY INTEREST, OTHER INTEREST OR CONFLICT OF INTEREST OF ANY COUNCILLOR

Nil.

6. ADOPTION AND CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Minutes of the Meeting of Council held on 26 February 2024 be confirmed as a true and correct record.

Motion

Crs Ramsey/Carli.

That the Minutes of the Meeting of Council held on 26 February 2024 be confirmed as a true and correct record.

CARRIED

7. SUMMARY OF INFORMAL MEETING OF COUNCILLORS

7.1 SUMMARY OF INFORMAL MEETINGS OF COUNCILLORS IN ACCORDANCE WITH CHAPTER 6, RULE 1 OF THE COUNCIL'S GOVERNANCE RULES

- Monday 26 February 2024 Summary of Informal Meeting of Councillors
- Monday 4 March 2024 Summary of Informal Meeting of Councillors
- Monday 18 March 2024 Summary of Informal Meeting of Councillors

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Summaries of Informal Meetings of Councillors dated 26 February 2024, 4 March 2024 and 18 March 2024 provided as **Appendices 1 - 3** respectively to this report, be received and noted.

Motion

Crs Abboushi/Carli.

That the Summaries of Informal Meetings of Councillors dated 26 February 2024, 4 March 2024 and 18 March 2024 provided as **Appendices 1 - 3** respectively to this report, be received and noted.

CARRIED

LIST OF APPENDICES

1. Summary of Informal Meeting of Councillors - dated 26 February 2024
2. Summary of Informal Meeting of Councillors - dated 4 March 2024
3. Summary of Informal Meeting of Councillors - dated 18 March 2024



INFORMAL MEETING OF COUNCILLORS

Chapter 6, Rule 1 of the Governance Rules 2020

MEETING DETAILS:

Meeting Name:	Briefing of Councillors		
Meeting Date:	Monday 26 February, 2024	Time Opened:	6.15 pm
		Time Closed:	6.47 pm
Councillors present:	Cr K Majdlik (Mayor) Cr S Abboushi (Deputy Mayor) Cr L Carli Cr J Farrugia Cr G Kesic Cr S Ramsey Cr J Shannon Cr B Turner Cr A Vandenberg		
Officers present:	R Wai M Merritt T Scoble N Whiteside P Leersen R Hodgson	Chief Executive Officer Acting Director City Futures Director City Life Director City Delivery Director Organisational Performance (CFO) (online) Senior Coordinator Governance	
Guests	Nil		
Apologies	S Romaszko M Kruger	Director City Futures Head of Governance	
Matters discussed:	1. Council Meeting Agenda		

CONFLICT OF INTEREST DISCLOSURES:

Were there any conflict of interest disclosures by Councillors		Yes
Matter No.	Councillor making disclosure	Councillor left /meeting
Council Meeting Agenda Item 16.8	Cr Ramsey	Yes

REPORT PRODUCED BY:

Officer name:	Renee Hodgson, Senior Coordinator Governance	Date:	26/02/2024
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INFORMAL MEETING OF COUNCILLORS

Chapter 6, Rule 1 of the Governance Rules 2020

MEETING DETAILS:

Meeting Name:	Briefing of Councillors		
Meeting Date:	Monday 4 March, 2024	Time Opened:	6.15pm
		Time Closed:	9.48pm
Councillors present:	Cr K Majdlik (Mayor) Cr S Abboushi (Deputy Mayor) (online) (Items 1, 2, 7-13) Cr L Carli Cr S Ramsey (Items 1& 2) Cr J Shannon Cr B Turner		
Officers present:	R Wai	Chief Executive Officer	
	P Leersen	Director Organisational Performance (CFO)	
	S Romaszko	Director City Futures	
	T Scoble	Director City Life (Present 1, 2, 8-13)	
	N Whiteside	Director City Delivery	
	E Keogh	Head of Governance	
	A Ravindran	Head of Technology (Departed 8.17pm (Items 1 & 2))	
	M Kruger	Interim Senior Advisor, Office of the CEO (Item 1)	
	R Hodgson	Senior Coordinator Governance (Item 1)	
	S Reimers	Councillor Liaison Officer (Item 1)	
	A Nealer	Councillor Liaison Officer (Item 1)	
	J Simpson	Coordinator Open Space Planning (online) (Item 7)	
	M Hutchinson	Manager Engineering and Asset Services (online) (Item 8)	
	J Horne	Manager Environment and Waste (online) (Item 10)	
	M Smith	Coordinator Strategic Transport Planning (online) (Items 11 & 12)	
	B Mehta	Manager City Infrastructure Planning (online) (Items 11 & 12)	
Guests	Mark Frisby – Fitzgerald Frisby Landscape Architecture (FFLA) Item 7		
Apologies	Cr G Kesic		
	Cr J Farrugia		
	Cr A Vandenberg		
Matters discussed:	1. Councillor Request Procedure 2. Technology Transformation Update 3. Historical Vehicle Purchase by Council 4. Lendlease Divestment to Stockland (Atherston) 5. Development of Strategic Land Purchases Strategy 6. Budget Development 2024/25 and Councillor Budget Day 7. Melton Weir Parkland Strategy Update 8. Melton Civic Centre Path Project Update 9. Update Melton Town Centre Revitalisation 10. Update Circular Economy and Resource Recovery Strategy 11. Response to Notice of Motion 875 (Cr Majdlik) – Walking and Cycling Network Along the Kororoit Creek 12. Rural Interface and Growth Areas Upgrade Strategy (RIGARUS) 13. General Updates from Officers		

Informal Meeting of Councillors

	14. Other items: Good Practice Guidelines for service rates and charges, traffic management in school zones in development areas.		
CONFLICT OF INTEREST DISCLOSURES:			
Were there any conflict of interest disclosures by Councillors			Yes
Matter No.	Councillor making disclosure	Councillor left /meeting	
9	Cr Shannon	Yes	
REPORT PRODUCED BY:			
Officer name:	Roslyn Wai	Date:	Monday 04/03/2024



INFORMAL MEETING OF COUNCILLORS

Chapter 6, Rule 1 of the Governance Rules 2020

MEETING DETAILS:

Meeting Name:	Briefing of Councillors		
Meeting Date:	Monday 18 March, 2024	Time Opened:	6.18pm
		Time Closed:	10.04pm
Councillors present:	Cr K Majdlik (Mayor) Cr S Abboushi (Deputy Mayor) (Online) Cr L Carli Cr J Farrugia Cr G Kesic Cr J Shannon Cr B Turner Cr A Vandenberg		
Officers present:	R Wai Chief Executive Officer P Leersen Director Organisational Performance (CFO) S Romaszko Director City Futures T Scoble Director City Life N Whiteside Director City Delivery E Keogh Head of Governance R Hodgson Senior Coordinator Governance C Ciciulla Head Major Project Delivery M Merritt Manager City Strategy (online) J Simpson Coordinator Open Space Planning (online) M Milbourne Principal Strategic Planner (online)		
Guests	T Beck William Ross Architects <i>Item 6</i> A Petrou William Ross Architects <i>Item 6</i> C Redding Schemology (online) <i>Item 3</i> M Malouf CEO Employment and Remuneration Committee Independent Consultant (online) <i>Item 1</i>		
Apologies	Cr S Ramsey		
Matters discussed:	1. Confidential Item: CEO Employment and Remuneration Committee Discussion 2. Lake Caroline Masterplan – Draft Strategy 3. Melton Planning Scheme Review Update 4. Toolern Review Update 5. Response to Notice of Motion 877 (Cr Vandenberg) Planning for a Stolen Generations Marker within the City of Melton 6. Plumpton Aquatic & Leisure Centre Project – Masterplan Update 7. Draft Reports - Councillor Questions and Clarity 8. General Updates from Officers		

CONFLICT OF INTEREST DISCLOSURES:

Were there any conflict of interest disclosures by Councillors	No
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REPORT PRODUCED BY:

Officer name:	Emily Keogh, Head of Governance	Date:	18 March 2024
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8. CORRESPONDENCE INWARD

8.1 PARLIAMENTARIAN AND DEPARTMENTAL LETTERS RECEIVED BY THE MAYOR

- The Hon. Kristy McBain MP, Minister for Regional Development, Local Government and Territories – Disaster Ready Fund Guidelines released
- The Hon. Melissa Horne MP, Minister for Local Government – Local Government Service Rates and Charges Minister's Good Practice Guidelines

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council receive and note the Parliamentarian and Departmental letter received by the Mayor, provided as **Appendix 1 and 2** to this report:

1. The Hon. Kristy McBain MP, Minister for Regional Development, Local Government and Territories – Disaster Ready Fund Guidelines released
2. The Hon. Melissa Horne MP, Minister for Local Government – Local Government Service Rates and Charges Minister's Good Practice Guidelines

Motion

Crs Turner/Abboushi.

That Council receive and note the Parliamentarian and Departmental letters received by the Mayor, provided as **Appendix 1 and 2** to this report:

1. The Hon. Kristy McBain MP, Minister for Regional Development, Local Government and Territories – Disaster Ready Fund Guidelines released
2. The Hon. Melissa Horne MP, Minister for Local Government – Local Government Service Rates and Charges Minister's Good Practice Guidelines

CARRIED

LIST OF APPENDICES

1. The Hon. Kristy McBain MP, Minister for Regional Development, Local Government and Territories - dated 30 January 2024
2. The Hon. Melissa Horne MP, Minister for Local Government - dated 5 March 2024



The Hon Kristy McBain MP

Minister for Regional Development, Local Government and Territories
Member for Eden-Monaro

Ref: MC23-071817

Dear Mayor

Disaster Ready Fund Guidelines released

I write to advise you of the opening of Round Two of the **Disaster Ready Fund (DRF)**, and to seek assistance in promoting the DRF Program Guidelines and helping stakeholders to submit applications, where appropriate.

The DRF Program Guidelines can be found at www.nema.gov.au/programs/disaster-ready-fund/round-two.

Through your significant local stakeholder connections, local governments are well positioned to play an important role in delivering this program, and in helping to build and improve Australia's resilience to the impacts of natural disasters.

The Australian Government is providing up to one billion dollars over five years through the DRF, from July 2023. Through the DRF, communities, businesses and stakeholders in your regions will be supported to reduce risk and better prepare for natural disasters.

Round Two of the DRF will deliver up to \$200 million of Government funding for disaster risk reduction and resilience initiatives in 2024-25. This new round builds on the experiences and outcomes from Round One, as well as feedback from extensive stakeholder consultation. Government funding will be matched by state, territory, local government and other applicants, where possible.

I also wish to draw your attention to the eligibility and selection criteria contained in the guidelines. All proposals must align with one or more of the following investment principles:

1. Risk informed – draw on evidence of disaster risk (for examples risk assessments) when outlining case for funding;
2. Aligned with plans – align with existing national, state and territory, and local hazard mitigation and resilience or adaptation plans, or support their development;
3. Priority targeted – demonstrate alignment with the Second National Action Plan National Actions, found at www.nema.gov.au/about-us/policies/strategies-and-frameworks; and
4. Diverse and equitable – investment decisions support outcomes across a broad range of natural hazard and project types, geographic areas, domains, and consider the DRF's potential population impact.

Proposals must be submitted to **Lead Agencies** between 9:00 am (local time in their jurisdiction) on Monday 22 January and 5:00 pm (local time in their jurisdiction) on Wednesday 20 March 2024. Subject to the number of applications received, successful projects are expected to be announced in the second half of 2024.

For assistance with proposals, please contact your Lead Agency at www.nema.gov.au/programs/disaster-ready-fund/round-two. For general enquiries, you can email Disaster.Ready@nema.gov.au.

Thank you for helping to create stronger, more secure and more resistant communities before, during and after natural disasters.

Yours sincerely



Kristy McBain MP

30 /1 / 2024

Enc



The Hon Melissa Horne MP

Minister for Casino, Gaming and Liquor Regulation
Minister for Local Government
Minister for Ports and Freight
Minister for Roads and Road Safety

121 Exhibition Street
Melbourne, Victoria 3000 Australia

Ref: CMIN-2-24-23372

Dear Mayor

In December 2023, I published the Local Government Service Rates and Charges Minister's Good Practice Guidelines (the Guidelines).

I have received feedback and queries regarding the timing of the Guidelines. I acknowledge that many councils are concerned about the potential impact on 2024-25 budgets.

The intention of the Guidelines is to articulate what I consider good practice in the application of Service Rates and Charges that raise over \$1.2 billion per annum from Victorian ratepayers. The date of 1 March 2024 is the date that the Guidelines come into effect as a formal articulation of my expectations.

As Minister for Local Government, I have a responsibility to set standards that support accountable local government services. It is important to note that the good practices set out in the Guidelines address issues that have been articulated by the Victorian Ombudsman, the Essential Services Commission, and the Victorian Auditor General for over a decade.

I acknowledge that Ministerial Good Practice Guidelines issued under s.87 of the *Local Government Act 2020* are not mandatory and are not enforceable. As such, I urge councils to consider the Guidelines, their own practices, and transparency with their ratepayers. Having published my expectations of the sector about Service Rates and Charges, some councils may require more time than the next budget cycle to comply with the Guidelines. For those councils unable to comply in 2024-25, I expect that they will demonstrate a pathway for compliance in future budgets.

Thank you for the role that you are playing as a leader in your local community.

If you require further information, please contact Mike Gooley, Executive Director, LGV via email at mike.gooley@ecodev.vic.gov.au.

Yours sincerely



The Hon. Melissa Horne MP

Minister for Casino, Gaming and Liquor Regulation

Minister for Local Government

Minister for Ports and Freight

Minister for Roads and Road Safety

Date: 05/03/2024

Cc: Chief Executive Officer

9. PETITIONS AND JOINT LETTERS

Nil.

10. RESUMPTION OF DEBATE OR OTHER BUSINESS CARRIED OVER FROM A PREVIOUS MEETING

Nil.

11. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

Submitter: Burnside Resident	
Question asked of Council	Response
What is Council doing to remove the parking of heavy vehicles from the residential streets and residential premises of the Melton municipality, in particular Burnside and Caroline Springs?	<p>Council is aware of the concerns of illegal truck parking throughout the municipality and on this basis, implemented an ongoing monitoring and enforcement program.</p> <p>Council Community Safety Officers conduct regular patrols, during both business and after-hours, to identify illegally parked trucks. Council Officers have also met with local police who have also conducted a number of patrols in known hot-spots.</p> <p>Council Officers and police can issue infringement notices, however they are unable to remove registered trucks from a road.</p>
Submitter: Burnside Resident	
Question asked of Council	Response
What proactive steps have been made to address the issue of overgrown vegetation and dumped rubbish in the Modeina estate?	<p>As part of Council's Community Safety Programs Council officers undertake ongoing proactive monitoring and enforcement activities relating to private property. Any property identified to be in breach of the Unsightly Property provisions of Council's Local Law, is issued with a Notice to Comply.</p> <p>During the fire season Council's Fire Prevention Officer also conducts inspections to ensure property owners reduce the fire risk.</p> <p>In relation to illegal rubbish dumping, Council's Litter Prevention Officers investigate dumping and conduct proactive enforcement activities to reduce litter and dumped rubbish.</p>

Submitter: David O'Connor	
Question asked of Council	Response
Is Melton City Council impacted by the shortfall in developer contributions brought about by rising costs and changing circumstances between the time contributions are applied and the infrastructure is delivered?	<p>Both Council and developers are affected by the rising costs of construction and the timing aspects of working within development contribution processes.</p> <p>Council seeks to mitigate this risk by entering into Section 173 agreements with developers for the delivery of works in a Works-In-Kind arrangement, so that assets are received instead of contributions, therefore eliminating the time factor in each instance.</p>
Submitter: David O'Connor	
Question asked of Council	Response
Given the current economic pressures which are adding to operational costs for many organisations, how does Melton City Council plan to sustain services within the municipality whilst maintaining a cap on rate increases?	<p>Council acknowledges the annual rate cap is set by the Victorian Government following recommendations from the Essential Services Commission.</p> <p>Therefore, it is important that Council remains efficient and continues sound and prudent financial management activities that involves developing an effective yearly budget, undertaking regular service reviews, identifying operational efficiencies, advocacy to State and Federal government to maintain funding, effective maintenance of assets, effective management of capital delivery, and identifying other revenue generating opportunities to lessen the reliance on rates.</p> <p>Council reports all financial performance through the Audit and Risk Committee quarterly including a yearly review of the 10-year financial plan for financial sustainability purposes.</p>

Submitter: Amanah Shaikh	
Question asked of Council	Response
Is there insignificant evidence regarding the genocide in Palestine right now, indicated by the International Court of Justice, or insufficient numbers in the community in Melton that have called upon the Melton City Council for a motion to be moved or amended and forwarded to local MP's in solidarity with Palestine or even a call for a ceasefire?	<p>At its meeting on 26 February 2024, Melton City Council passed a motion acknowledging the deep concern and grief some members of our community experience as a result of international conflicts and also condemned any conflict that results in the loss of innocent lives.</p> <p>This was Council's statement standing with our impacted community members for all international conflicts.</p>
Submitter: Victoria Ramahi	
Question asked of Council	Response
Under the intercultural cities (in which Melton City Council is a participant) good practice examples of security, justice and safety and anti discrimination and equality, will the council reconsider passing a more inclusive motion, detailing the Palestinian genocide, as have councils of surrounding municipalities, and MCC's motion for Ukraine during their time of need?	<p>At its meeting on 26 February 2024, Melton City Council passed a motion as a show of support for all community members impacted by all international conflicts to be inclusive. Motions tabled at a Council Meeting are at the discretion of Councillors.</p>
Submitter: Beer	
Question asked of Council	Response
Could we ask the Council Mayor to write a letter to the Victorian Premier and State Minister for Roads enquiring timelines for the upgrade of Hopkins Rd?	<p>The upgrade and duplication of Hopkins Road is a key advocacy priority for Council as the number of crashes has significantly increased over the last five years in line with the increases in traffic. The safety of our residents is paramount and we are currently seeking a meeting with the Minister for Transport Infrastructure and the Minister for Roads and Road Safety to discuss the urgency of Hopkins Road.</p> <p>The upgrade to Hopkins Road is included in our State Budget Submission and has been raised with local members.</p>

Submitter: Beer	
Question asked of Council	Response
Does the Council have a defined traffic management plan for Hopkins Rd – Grand Boulevard intersection during Level Crossing Removal provisions for the two side lane exit off Grand Boulevard to Hopkins Road?	<p>The Victorian Government is responsible for the delivery of this Level Crossing Removal project, and is also responsible for the care and management of the intersection of Hopkins Road and Grand Boulevard.</p> <p>Any further improvements to this intersection is a responsibility of the Victorian Government that may occur as part of the future duplication of Hopkins Road.</p>
Submitter: Nitin Ahuja	
Question asked of Council	Response
With new estates victims of illegal dumping, what steps are being undertaken by the council to make estate developers accountable including the last instance of onsite reviews in Mt Atkinson with a view to issue appropriate fines?	<p>Council acknowledges the impact of illegal dumping in our city. We have designated Litter Prevention Officers to investigate and initiate enforcement action to reduce the amount of illegal dumping.</p> <p>This has resulted in infringement notices being issued to offenders, over 3,700 infringements in the last 12 months, and in a number of circumstances, prosecutions which have been 66 in the last 12 months.</p>
Submitter: Nitin Ahuja	
Question asked of Council	Response
With no firm date for duplication of a rural grade Hopkins Rd by the state government, what steps are the council traffic management team undertaking to avoid a repeat of instances where heavy traffic is default diverted through residential streets in Mt Atkinson?	<p>Council's Traffic and Transport Team are continuing to monitor the road network in and around Mt Atkinson and are progressing a number of road upgrade projects in the broader road network to manage the increase in traffic. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Hopkins Road Level Crossing Removal to be delivered by the Victorian Government, noting anticipated to be completed in 2026. • The sealing of Troups Road South, noting works anticipated to commence by the end of this year. • Sealing of the unsealed section of Mt Cottrell Road, noting scheduled to be delivered in the 2024/25 financial year.

Submitter: Osama Usuf	
Question asked of Council	Response
In previous answers to public questions, Council has reiterated that Grand Boulevard extension will be completed between March and June 2024, considering we are towards the end of March 2024, can you please provide the specific date for its public opening?	Grand Boulevard is being constructed by Stockland, the developer of Mt Atkinson and Grand View estates. We understand from the developer that the construction works remain on track for completion by the end of June 2024.
Submitter: Matthew Pearse	
Question asked of Council	Response
What was the response from Melbourne Water that Council received relating to the public question re Thornhill Park wetlands from February's council meeting public question and subsequent article in the Star Weekly and will Council officers hold Melbourne water accountable to that response?	Officers met with Melbourne Water representatives on 8 March 2024 and raised the Thornhill Park wetlands matter. Council has made further contact with Melbourne Water since this meeting but is yet to receive a formal response from Melbourne Water.
Submitter: Natalie Blackman	
Question asked of Council	Response
What is the Council's stance on the importance of a new suburb creation process which was last undertaken 10 years ago given that we are the fastest growing Local Government area nationally?	There are no immediate plans to make further changes to the boundaries of suburbs. Council is undergoing a number of precinct structure planning processes to create new suburbs to accommodate the city's growth.
Submitter: Natalie Blackman	
Question asked of Council	Response
Similar to advocacy for essential Infrastructure like rail and state roads which are not in the scope of local government, what advocacy is the council doing for ensuring communication infrastructure (like Mobile and Broadband) are meeting standards expected in a developed country?	Whilst Council is not directly responsible for the provision of this infrastructure, officers work with service providers to locate and consider appropriate sites for future mobile network infrastructure. Council continues to advocate and work towards facilitating a solution for mobile network infrastructure within our municipality.

Submitter: Adam Duggan	
Question asked of Council	Response
Melton Council has constantly failed to engage with residents that have reached out in regard to the humanitarian crisis being experienced in the Palestinian community, why has the council failed to engage with this community and how will they better serve them moving forward?	At its February 2024 Council Meeting, Melton City Council recognised that Council's responsibility is in providing good governance and services for the wellbeing of the City of Melton community and that representation regarding international matters is the responsibility of international leaders and the Federal Government. Given that this is not a matter that Council has any direct control over, this is a matter best raised with Federal representatives.
Submitter: Adam Duggan	
Question asked of Council	Response
If council fails to engage with residents and fails to represent residents and fails to justly administrate complaints, what recourse do residents have other than electing new representation at the upcoming elections?	Melton City Council handles all complaints in accordance with its Complaint Handling Policy. Complaints made to Councillors are overseen by Council's Head of Governance and in this instance, this is what has occurred in relation to the matters that you've raised.
Submitter: Girish Khara	
Question asked of Council	Response
Whilst its been 6 months since the last proactive pet patrol in Mt Atkinson (August 2023), what is the launch date for community engagement on Council's new dog off leash park strategy?	A strategic direction relating to dog off leash areas in the City is currently being considered. The exact timing for completion of the strategy is yet to be determined.
Submitter: Girish Khara	
Question asked of Council	Response
What is the amount of differential rates revenue received by the council over last 4 years on the commercial land earmarked for Mt Atkinson Major Town Centre (also known as Westfield) in its present vacant state (received) vis its built state (potential)?	<p>Under Council's differential rating structure rates for vacant land is charged at 150% of the general rate charge and 200% for commercial vacant land.</p> <p>Council Officers are continuing to work with the developer to establish a design framework for the Mt Atkinson commercial area.</p> <p>Given this, any future rates revenue cannot be estimated presently.</p>

12. PRESENTATION OF STAFF REPORTS

12.1 LAKE CAROLINE DRAFT MASTERPLAN AND ACTIVATION STRATEGY

Author: Jeanette Simson - Coordinator Open Space Planning

Presenter: Sam Romaszko - Director City Futures

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To consider the Lake Caroline Draft Masterplan and Activation Strategy and endorse the Strategy for consultation.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council endorse the Lake Caroline Draft Masterplan and Activation Strategy, provided as **Appendix 1** to this report for consultation between 19 April and 6 May 2024.

Motion

Crs Abboushi/Farrugia.

That Council endorse the Lake Caroline Draft Masterplan and Activation Strategy, provided as **Appendix 1** to this report for consultation between 19 April and 6 May 2024.

CARRIED

REPORT

1. Executive Summary

The Lake Caroline Masterplan and Activation Strategy (Appendix 1) project commenced in October 2022. The Draft Strategy identifies opportunities for future activation and improved integration between the lake and adjacent commercial and residential interfaces. A key element of the Draft Strategy is the identification of locations for amenity and infrastructure upgrades and informal recreation nodes. This Strategy will guide the future use and development of the reserve and lake.

The initial stage of the project involved a detailed site assessment and background analysis. Consultation on the existing uses, constraints and opportunities was undertaken. The feedback from the consultation activities underpinned the development of the three key themes the masterplan identifies: Activation, Ecology and Connection.

Community consultation on the Draft Strategy is proposed to occur from 19 April through to 6 May 2024 and will include distribution of a letter, a drop in community session, trader engagement activities, social media and supporting material.

2. Background/Issues

Background

Lake Caroline Reserve is one of the largest and most significant passive open spaces within the municipality. Located north of Kororoit Creek, it attracts visitors including local residents and the wider metropolitan population.

Lake Caroline is an artificial waterbody and was created as part of the Delfin Caroline Springs development of the early 2000s. The reserve and lake is unique in its amenity, generosity of open space and ecological value.

The reserve is 20 years old and elements of the original design such as the boardwalks and play equipment are due for renewal in coming years. Currently there are no strategic documents to guide the siting, design and delivery of these works. Water quality has also deteriorated, and this has become a significant barrier to use at particular times of the year.

Significant change has occurred at the interfaces around the reserve since its development and there is a need for the reserve and lake to better respond to the changed needs and aspirations of the community.

Active transport routes around the lake and from east to west are indirect and subject to poor passive surveillance. This reduces the likelihood of incidental activity, such as walking to the shops and reduces the perception of safety for path users.

In addition, since the recent COVID-19 Pandemic, a number of regular events such as markets and celebrations and activities such as paddle-boating around and on the lake precinct have ceased. Council and the community are seeking ways to reactivate the lake and reserve.

The development of Lake Caroline Masterplan and Activation Strategy was identified to provide a vision and principles to guide the future development and activation of the lake and its surrounds. These principles align with the three themes which were drawn from the site assessment and community consultation – Ecology, Connections and Activation. Consultants were appointed in late 2022 to commence development of this Strategy.

The project consultants undertook extensive site assessment and a background analysis. Councillor visioning workshops were facilitated after which the initial phase of community consultation was undertaken. The consultation identified the community's insights on the how the lake and surrounds are used and valued by the community and visitors and highlighted issues and opportunities for improvements.

The summary of community consultation findings set the framework for the development of the Draft Strategy recommendations.

The project consists of five stages:

Stage 1	Site assessment/Background analysis
Stage 2	Community Consultation #1
Stage 3	Draft Masterplan and Activation Strategy Report
Stage 4	Community Consultation #2
Stage 5	Final Masterplan and Activation Strategy Report

The Strategy is now in Draft form and has been endorsed by the Melton Weir Advisory Committee, of which a copy of the minutes will be presented at the next Ordinary Meeting of Council.

Officers are seeking input via community consultation on this document. Following consultation, the document may be amended to address matters raised through consultation. The final document will seek endorsement at a future Council meeting. Details of the proposed community consultation activities are referenced in Section 5.

2.1 Lake Caroline Draft Masterplan and Activation Strategy

The Draft Strategy provides a vision and principles to guide the future development and activation of the lake and its surrounds. These principles align with the three themes which were drawn from the site assessment and community consultation – Ecology, Connections and Activation. An overview of the activation and on ground initiatives that respond to these principles are summarised below as follows:

Ecology

Masterplan Principle

To create thriving ecological zones for the community to engage with, that expand upon and connect to existing areas of ecological value.

Key Initiatives

1. Connect to the northern ecology cascade and wetland system
2. Lookouts, bird hides and boardwalks
3. Floating Wetlands
4. Connect and expand upon Kororoit Creek green link
5. Enhance and expand southern lake side ecology

Connections

Masterplan Principle

To facilitate movement around and across the Lake ensuring safe, direct connections and to provide links to the broader community and facilities.

Key Initiatives

1. Mid-lake crossing to connect the south and west of the Lake
2. Lighting and amenity along the south-eastern promenade
3. Shared, slow zone at Lake Street
4. Revisit the Western Promenade and the connection to Lake Street
5. New Northern Promenade
6. Clear signage & wayfinding

Activation

Masterplan Principle

To provide a range of flexible spaces to enable the curation of year-round evening, cultural, events, festivals and other activities.

Key Initiatives

1. Generous event lawn at the northern end of the Lake
2. Accessible place for play and connection
3. Dedicated picnic locations
4. Expanded decking areas for café activation and events
5. Shared zone at Lake Street to enable markets and festivals
6. Viewing areas at key locations around the Lake

3. Council and Wellbeing Plan Reference and Policy Reference

The Melton City Council 2021-2025 Council and Wellbeing Plan references:

3. A fast growing, innovative and well-planned City

3.1 A City of 20-minute neighbourhoods.

4. Financial Considerations

To date, budget has only been provided for the development of the Strategy. Funding associated with the implementation of actions within the Strategy would be considered as part of Councils yearly budget process.

5. Consultation/Public Submissions**5.1 Preliminary consultation**

The first round of community and stakeholder consultation, undertaken in 2023 sought feedback on the existing uses, issues, and opportunities associated with Lake Caroline.

Activities included a Councillor visioning workshop, intercept interviews at CS Square, direct trader engagement, a community drop-in session at Caroline Springs Library, an online survey and social media content, a pin-drop map and a resident mailout. In total, over 500 submissions were received from the online and face to face communications.

The key findings are summarised below.

1. Most respondents are at their early 30s to late 40s.
2. The majority of respondents are female.
3. Most visitors live within 2km from Lake Caroline Reserve; half of the respondents reside in Caroline Springs.
4. A large majority of respondents travel to Lake Caroline by foot or by car.
5. Most respondents visit the Lake either daily or weekly.
6. Most respondent spend 15 mins to 1 hour in Lake Caroline Reserve.
7. Many respondents come with their children;
8. Most users currently visit the Lake for exercising; appreciating nature and scenic views; and for children's play.

This user data aligned with what people most wanted to see at the lake and reserve. Highly requested activities included markets, seasonal celebrations and festivals, floating cafes, rentable boats and community exercise groups. There was also very strong support for provision of improved play facilities and water play activities, a water crossing, floating wetlands and lighting on the water. These requests underpin the recommendations in the Draft Strategy.

5.2 Upcoming consultation

The second round of consultation on the Lake Caroline Draft Masterplan and Activation Strategy is scheduled for 2 weeks from 19 April to 6 May 2024. Residents and stakeholders will be encouraged to provide feedback via the following activities and channels.

1. One drop in community information session
2. Trader engagement
3. Melton conversations page update and comments page
4. Social media posts
5. Print advertisement to be provided at key locations around the lake.
6. Postcards at key community activity centre locations and local businesses
7. Postcard mailout to local residents
8. Email updates to previous survey respondents as requested.

Following this second consultation period, the project consultants and Council officers will review and consider submissions in the development of the final version of the Strategy. Officers will then provide a final Masterplan for consideration in June 2024.

6. Risk Analysis

If Council does not proceed with the recommendations, planned consultation will not occur before the end of the year and would significantly extend the completion date. This may also limit the ability for upgrade and asset renewal works to occur as they are all contingent on the adoption of the Strategy.

There are a number of grant funding opportunities available for projects outlined in the Strategy. Delayed approval of the Strategy will limit the ability for grant funding to be sought and allocated to these projects.

7. Options

Council has the option to:

1. Endorse the Lake Caroline Draft Masterplan and Activation Strategy for community consultation.
2. Endorse the Lake Caroline Draft Masterplan and Activation Strategy for community consultation with changes.
3. Defer consideration of the Draft Strategy to enable further options to be considered prior to community consultation.

LIST OF APPENDICES

1. Draft Lake Caroline Master Plan Activation Strategy





M2223 LAKE CAROLINE MASTER PLAN & ACTIVATION STRATEGY
Draft Master Plan Report & Activation Strategy

MARCH 2024

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Project Team

City of Melton engaged TCL to lead the Project Team to develop the Lake Caroline Master Plan and Activation Strategy.

City of Melton Project Leads include:
Adrian Cope
Jeanette Simson

TCL Project Team includes:
Lisa Howard
Iris Fong
Lex Segal

- The project team wishes to acknowledge the contribution and assistance from the following:
- Members of the Project Working Group - comprised of City of Melton staff and TCL
 - Councilors of Melton City Council
 - Community and stakeholder group representatives who gave their time and knowledge during consultation phases
 - Authors of the many background reports on the Lake and its surroundings

REPORT TITLE		
Rev	Date	Purpose
01	23.02.2024	For Review
02	18.03.2024	For Review

An aerial photograph of a rural landscape, likely in Victoria, Australia, showing a mix of agricultural fields, a winding road, and a small body of water. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent blue filter and white text. In the bottom left corner, the word 'HIGHWAY' is written in a stylized, spaced-out font. In the bottom right corner, the number '3' is visible. The text is centered and reads:

We acknowledge the Traditional Owners and custodians of this land, the Wurundjeri People on which Lake Caroline Reserve is located.

We respect their continuing connection to land, waters, and culture and recognise that sovereignty has never been ceded. We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging.





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1 INTRODUCTION

6



1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Lake Caroline Master Plan and Activation Strategy was commissioned by City of Melton at the end of 2022. It was a response to ongoing feedback from the local community around a number of recurring themes and issues of the Lake Reserve Precinct.

Lake Caroline Reserve is one of the most significant open spaces in the Caroline Springs area, and attracts both locals and residents from all around the City of Melton. Lake Caroline is an artificial waterbody, and was created as part of the Delfin Caroline Springs submission in the early 2000s. The Reserve is valued for its amenity, generosity of open space and ecological value.

Since the recent COVID-19 Pandemic, a number of regular events and attractions around the Lake Precinct have ceased to exist, and Council and the community are seeking ways to reactivate.





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Draft Master Plan Report & Activation Strategy

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2.0 SITE CONTEXT

The City of Melton is one of metropolitan Melbourne's outer west councils - it covers a vast 528 square kilometers and is one of the fastest growing municipalities. Caroline Springs is 31km from the Melbourne CBD and lies on the far east of the Council boundary.

Lake Caroline is sited in the heart of Caroline Springs, adjacent to the main civic and shopping precinct.





2.1 HISTORICAL CONTEXT

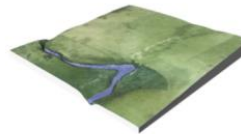
The land, where the Lake sits, locates within the Traditional Country of the Wurundjuri Woi Wurung People of the Eastern Kulin Nation.

The region was primarily a grazing area since Colonisation. In 1999, Caroline Springs was developed as part of the greenfield development by Delfin. Lake Caroline was conceived as a magnificent artificial recreational lake, acting as the centerpiece of Caroline Springs Town Center.

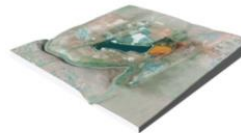
In 2005, the construction of Caroline Springs was underway, with many of the roads and the Lake near completion. The Town Center, including Lake Caroline, the shopping district, and much of the residential areas had been completed in 2009, with the suburb completed in full in 2013.

Since its completed construction, Caroline Springs has been thriving, being home to more than 20,000 people. It is expected to continue to grow and expand, which puts pressures on the supply of quality public open space.

Before Colonisation



1948



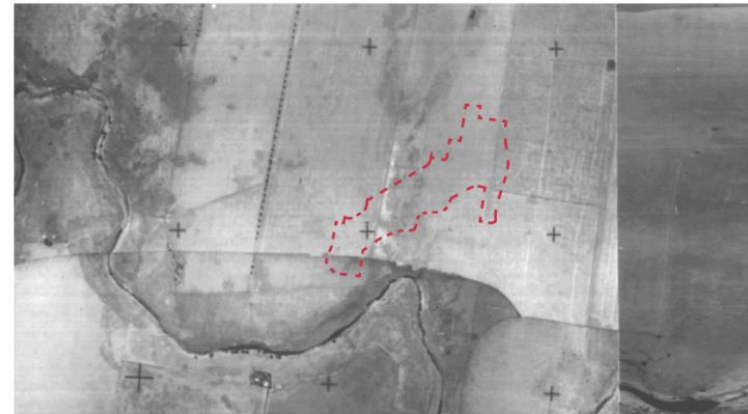
2005



2009



2022



Caroline Springs Region with current boundary of Lake Caroline shown as red dashed and Kororoit Creek visible to the south, 1948. (Source: Department of Lands and Survey, Aerial Survey of Victoria)



View north towards future Caroline Springs Town Center and Lake Caroline, with Kororoit Creek in foreground, 1962 (Source: Ian Harrison)

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2.2 EXISTING LAND USE CONDITION

Lake Caroline is located within the Town Center of Caroling Springs, adjacent to CS Square and a number of public and commercial facilities. This includes Caroline Springs Library, Caroline Spring Police Station and Mecure CS and Westwaters Hotel. Lake Caroline is also in close proximity of a number of schools, making the Lake a popular hanging spot for students.

Public Art 'Rhythm and Seed'

Public Art 'Words for Water'

CS War Memorial

Public Art 'On Tap'

LEGEND

- Commercial / Hospitality
- Educational
- Institutional
- Waterbody / Waterway
- Open Space / Reserve
- Feature of Interest



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2.3 LANDSCAPE

Lake Caroline is a composite reserve itself, which comprises three open spaces: Lake Caroline Reserve, Boathouse Reserve and Lake Caroline Waterfront.

The Lake is surrounded by a ring of landscape reserves and open spaces, including both native landscape and designed landscape, which presents opportunities to strengthen connection among these open spaces.

Some noticeable landscapes include: Themada Grassland, located on the northeast to the Lake, is a remnant landscape of Natural Temperate Grasslands of Southern Volcanic Plain; The Urban Wetland and The Cascade, located on the upstream of the Lake, are designed open spaces to facilitate the overall wetland system.

Lake Caroline is in close proximity to Kororoit Creek, connected via a small open space known as Lake Caroline Spillway.

LEGEND

- Passive Open Space / Reserve
- Active Open Space
- Waterbody / Waterway
- Existing Tree



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2.4 TOPOGRAPHY

The overall topography of Caroline Springs is measured between 92m to 67m above sea level, with the lowest point being Kororoit Creek.

The immediate surrounding of Lake Caroline is relatively flat, with a steeper fall observed on the southern side of the Lake. The depth of the Lake ranges between 0.4m to 2m.

LEGEND



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2.5 HYDROLOGICAL SYSTEM

Lake Caroline is the main retention water body of Caroline Springs, with an area of 7.49 ha. It is part of the greater water system, connected to the Cascade and Urban Wetland upstream and Kororoit Creek downstream through the Spillway. Stormwater from the surrounding area is collected and discharged into the Lake.

Lake Caroline also serves as a reservoir, providing irrigation water to the adjacent open spaces and sportsgrounds.

Water Reticulation System
Pump
Fountain

LEGEND

-  Drainage Connection (Underground - dashed)
-  Surface Runoff
-  Water Inlet / Outlet
-  Drainage System Feature
-  Wetland / Spillway
-  Retention Pond
-  Lake Wall
-  Main Prevailing Wind - Summer
-  Main Prevailing Wind - Winter

Image caption



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2.6 ECOLOGY

Caroline Springs and Lake Caroline are located on Western Volcanic Plains, which is historically dominated by grasslands with scattered trees. A number of key ecological habitats have been identified, including Themeda Grasslands, Lake Caroline and Kororoit Creek.

Themeda Grasslands is part of Natural Temperate Grasslands of Southern Volcanic Plain, as defined by Australian Government Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment of Water.

Fauna sighted in this region include (but not limited to): Eastern long-necked turtle (*Chelodina longicollis*), Black Swan (*Cygnus atratus*), Eastern Grey Kangaroo (*Macropus giganteus*), Growling Grass Frog (*Ranoidea rabiforis*), Common Eastern Froglet (*Crinia signifera*), Eastern Banjo Frog (*Limnodynastes dumerillii*), Tiger Snake (*Notechis scutatus*), Eastern Brown Snake (*Pseudonaja textilis*).

LEGEND

-  Habitat - Remnant
-  Habitat - Current
-  Record of Growling Grass Frog (Post 2007)
-  Historical Record of Growling Grass Frog (Prior 2006)



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2.7 HERITAGE & CULTURAL SENSITIVITY

Lake Caroline and its surrounding sits within the Traditional Country of the Wurundjuri Woi Wurung People of the Eastern Kulin Nation.

Kororoit Creek and its proximity are identified as areas of Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Sensitivity as specified in Division 3, Part 2 of the Aboriginal Heritage Regulations 2018. This area is either known to contain, or are likely to contain Aboriginal cultural heritage places and objects.

LEGEND

 Areas of Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Sensitivity



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2.8 Trail Network

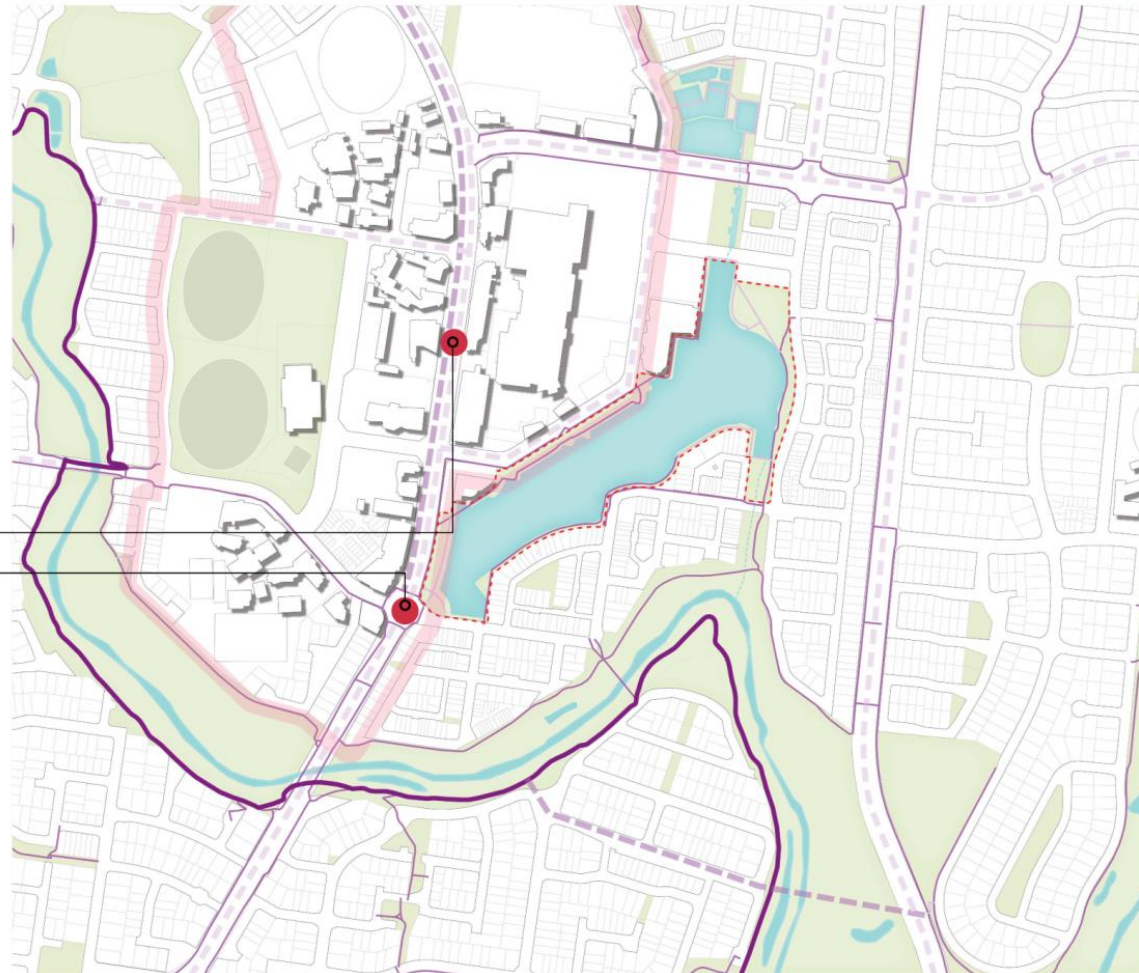
Lake Caroline is highly accessible by foot and bicycle. The Lake itself provides a 1.8km shared circuit for pedestrian and cyclists, allowing visitors to move around within the parkland.

Lake Caroline is connected by a number of existing cycleway and footway, which further leads to Kororoit Creek Trail. To further improve the accessibility, a number of proposed cycleway network and pedestrian network are identified in *Moving Melton - Melton Integrated Transport Strategy* (2015). Caroline Springs Town Center is designated as a Pedestrian Priority Area, with its future development centered around walking and cycling activities.

Future Caroling Springs Boulevard
Pedestrian Crossing (due 2024)
Signals (due 2026)

LEGEND

- Kororoit Creek Trail
- Cycleway
- Footway
- - - Proposed Cycleway Network
- - - Proposed Pedestrian Network
- Pedestrian Priority Area
- Future Works



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2.9 PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Lake Caroline is accessible by Public Transport Victoria bus on its northern, eastern and western interface.

The nearest train station is Caroline Springs Railway Station, providing Ballarat V/Line rail service. The train station is 3.46km south to the Lake and is connected to the Town Center via bus service.

It is worth noting that there is a large carpark in CS square, providing 1,200 free car parking spaces and making cars a more preferred transportation when visiting Lake Caroline.



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2.10 CURRENT CONDITION

A detailed mapping has been undertaken to document the existing furniture, facilities, amenities and material of Lake Caroline Reserve, Boathouse Reserve and Lake Caroline Waterfront to assist assessment on issues and opportunities.



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2.11 FURNITURE & MATERIALS

A photo inventory has been undertaken to document the existing furniture, facilities, amenities and material of Lake Caroline Reserve, Boathouse Reserve and Lake Caroline Waterfront.



Seating



Doggy Bags



Drinking Fountain



Barbecue and Seatings



Timber Deck Pier



Fitness Equipment



CCTV & Light Post



Rubbish Bin



NW - Lake Street Interface



NW & NE - Lake Street Interface



Signage



Playground
(near Lake Street)



Existing Softfall Condition



Prints on Ground



Table Tennis Table





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3.0 ISSUES & OPPORTUNITIES

3.1 INTERFACE

Lake Caroline, including Lake Caroline Reserve, Boathouse Reserve and Lake Caroline Waterfront, are divided into interfaces to allow in-depth analysis and assessment of issues and opportunities, and assisted by multiple on-site observation.

Northern interface includes the majority of Lake Caroline Reserve and Boathouse Reserve. Southern Interface includes Lake Caroline Waterfront and its connecting interface with Lake Caroline Reserve.



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3.2 NORTHERN INTERFACE



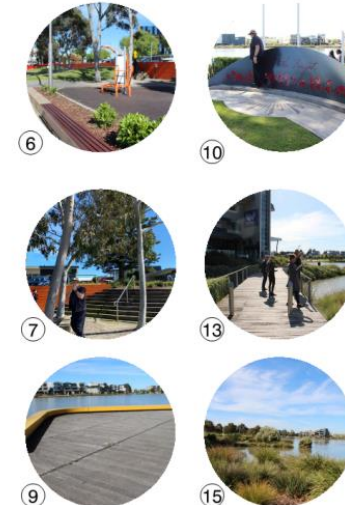
ISSUES

- ① Boardwalk weathered and degraded
- ② Food & Beverage businesses do not engage with the lake
- ③ Lack of seating
- ④ Material discontinuity
- ⑤ Space constraints shared pedestrian and cyclist path close to waters edge
- ⑫ Hard edges with degrading surfaces
- ⑯ Lack of wetland management
- ⑰ Underutilised playground area
- ⑱ Deck Jetty weathered and degraded
- ⑳ Lack of shade



OPPORTUNITIES

- ⑥ Space for upgrading fitness equipment
- ⑦ Pedestrian activation opportunity from Lake Street to waterfront
- ⑨ Upgrade and more events for existing activity hotspot
- ⑩ Retain and celebrate existing memorials
- ⑪ Update play elements
- ⑬ Existing boardwalk
- ⑭ Business opportunities to engage with the Lake
- ⑮ Expand on existing wetland planting for habitat



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 District of Lake Caroline Masterplan & Activation Strategy

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3.3 SOUTHERN INTERFACE



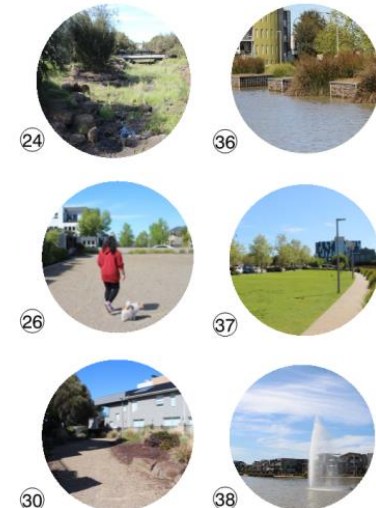
ISSUES

- ②1 Insufficient seating in area that does not connect to the surrounds
- ②2 Wayfinding issue due to material discontinuity
- ②3 Lack of connection to Kororoit creek
- ②5 Lack of shade
- ②7 Limited existing gym facilities
- ②9 Lack of seating along walkway
- ③2 Material discontinuity and degradation
- ③4 Multiple pathways with confusing wayfinding
- ③5 No pram crossing for users



OPPORTUNITIES

- ②4 Spillway always being dry, opportunity for upgrading water filtering biodiversity potential.
- ②6 Opportunity for activation, currently dead space
- ③0 Better visual cue to hint access to other open space
- ③1 Connect to other existing open space to create a parkland system
- ③6 Habitat improvement and educational opportunity
- ③7 Better amenities for picnic on lawn
- ③8 Opportunity for more water display, water features and filtering system to improve water quality and attractions





4 CONSULTATION & ENGAGEMENT

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4.0 CONSULTATION OVERVIEW

4.1 APPROACH

Lake Caroline is a major attraction in Caroline Springs located north of Kororoit Creek. The lake holds significance to the local community. Members of the local community and key stakeholders have expressed the need for a Master plan to outline the priorities and key design features of the Lake's future.

The Project Team acknowledge it is important to consult, listen and learn about the community and stakeholders' opinions and knowledge of the Lake.

Key insights from engagement with the public and key stakeholders are outlined from information provided in one on one interviews with key stakeholders, submissions to City of Melton's Caroline Springs Master plan Survey and on-site community consultation sessions.

Thorough community consultation ensures the Project Team can create a balanced response to local and stakeholder desires.



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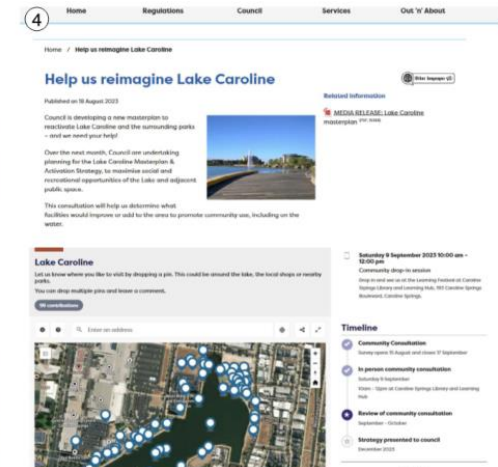
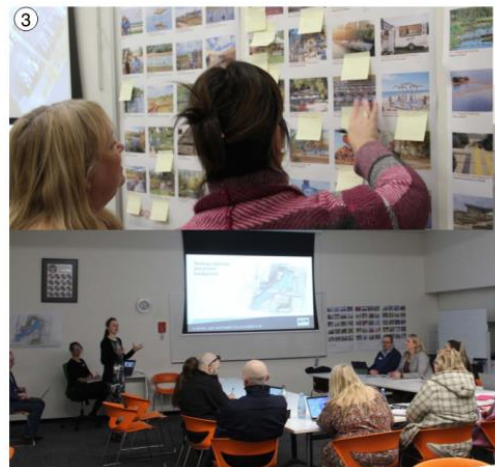
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CONSULTATION SNAPSHOTS

- ① Intercept Interviews at CS Square, 08.09.2023.
- ② Community Drop In Session at Caroline Springs Library, 09.09.2023.
- ③ Councilors Workshop at Caroline Springs Library, 12.07.2023.
- ④ Online Community Consultation at Melton Consultation [Screenshot], 15.08.2023 - 17.09.2023.



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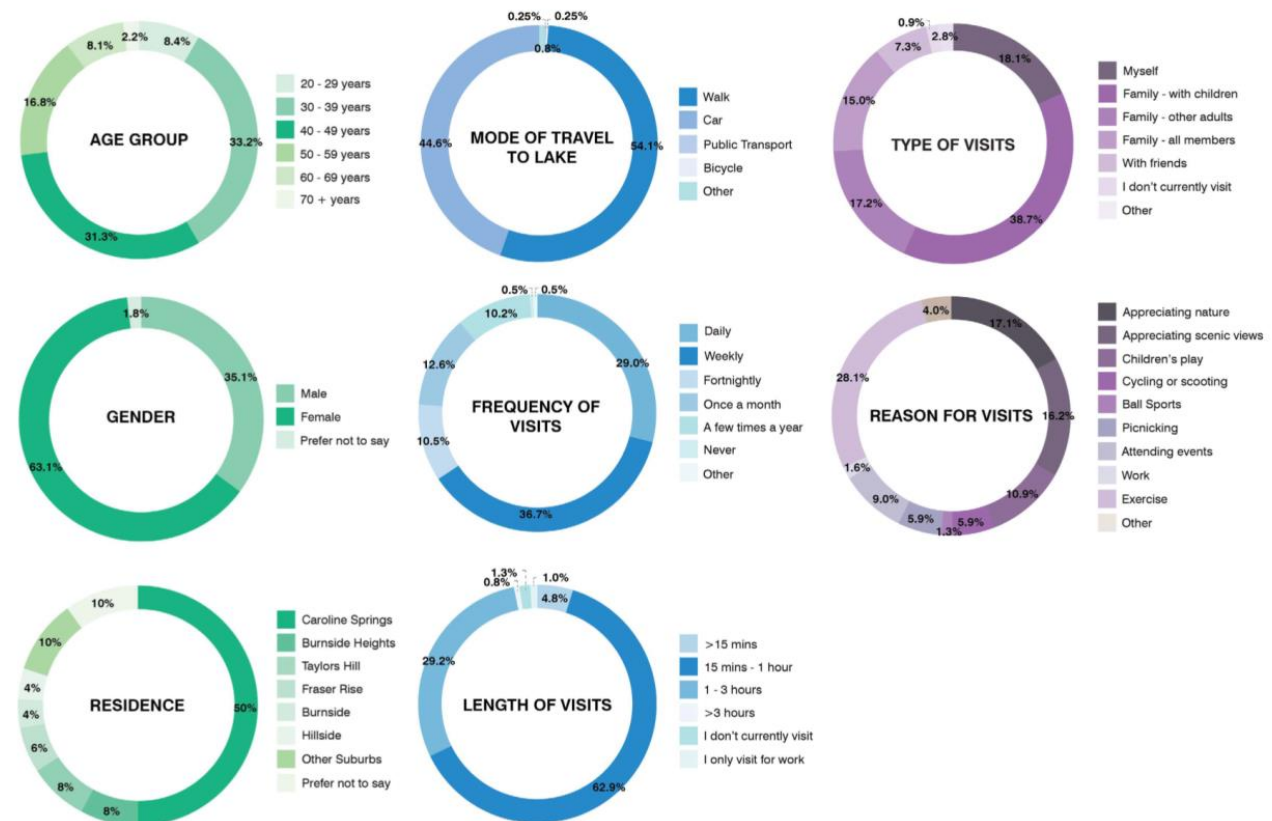
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4.2 OUTCOME

As part of the online community consultation, 395 respondents have completed the questionnaire at Melton Consultation website.

USER OVERVIEW



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KEY THEMES

Community and stakeholder aspirations are focused into key themes that encompass desires for the future of Lake Caroline.

ACTIVATION

Turning Lake Caroline into a regional destination where the community celebrates and gathers, with LC being the key stage where collective memories form, being the proud of CS and Melton Area

ECOLOGY

Transform Lake Caroline into a thriving wildlife habitat / haven and a place for close nature encounter and educational opportunities.

CONNECTIONS

Improving Lake Caroline from being a blue desert, better knitted into the Caroline Springs's urban fabrics and allow better physical and visual access from the surroundings

Some overlapping priorities between council and the public can be seen in the following precedent examples.

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Draft Master Plan Report & Activation Strategy



Source: Topio

Public space use

Upgrading the outdoor gym equipment



Source: Sedgemoor Model Boat Club

Infrastructure and Amenities

Watersport facilities



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Waterplay

Art installation misters



Source: Sydney Park by Turt Design Studio

Hydrology

Develop the current cascades for better water filtration and aeration



Source: ACT Parks and Reserves

Education

Provide Information of species and there importance to the Lake



Source: Herald Sun

Wetland Ecology

Maintain health of current lake ecology



Source: Floating Island International

Wetland

Floating wetlands



Source: John Gollings

Education

Incorporate the greater context of wetlands importance



Source: John Gollings

Water access

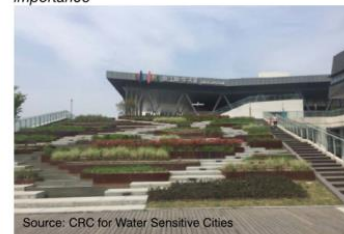
Platform and deck connection to wetland



Source: John Gollings

Stepping Stones

Element of play with water crossing



Source: CRC for Water Sensitive Cities

Amphitheater and Level Change

Wetland plants integrated into amphitheater



Source: Brighton City Centre, Genl Architects & Landscape Projects

Pavement and Material Detail

Seamless shared user path for Lake Street

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THINGS COMMUNITY WANTS TO SEE

The following diagram summarises the events, activities and additional facilities the respondents want to see at Lake Caroline.



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Draft Master Plan Report & Activation Strategy

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THINGS COMMUNITY WANTS TO SEE



Water Crossing (Source: Melbourne Cairnlea Lake Boardwalk, Hassell)



Festivals including Music, Food and Wine, Film, Light (Source: Melton City Council)



Waterplay Elements (Source: Elizabeth Caruthers Park)



Lighting on the Water (Source: Lake Macquarie City)



Floating Wetlands (Source: Evergreen Brick Works)

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Draft Master Plan Report & Activation Strategy

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LAKE WIDE INITIATIVES

The initiatives extracted from the consultation can be summarised as follows:

ACTIVATION

Turning Lake Caroline into a regional destination where the community celebrates and gathers, with LC being the key stage where collective memories form, being the proud of Caroline Springs and Melton Area.

ECOLOGY

Transform Lake Caroline into a thriving wildlife habitat / haven and a place for close nature encounter and educational opportunities.

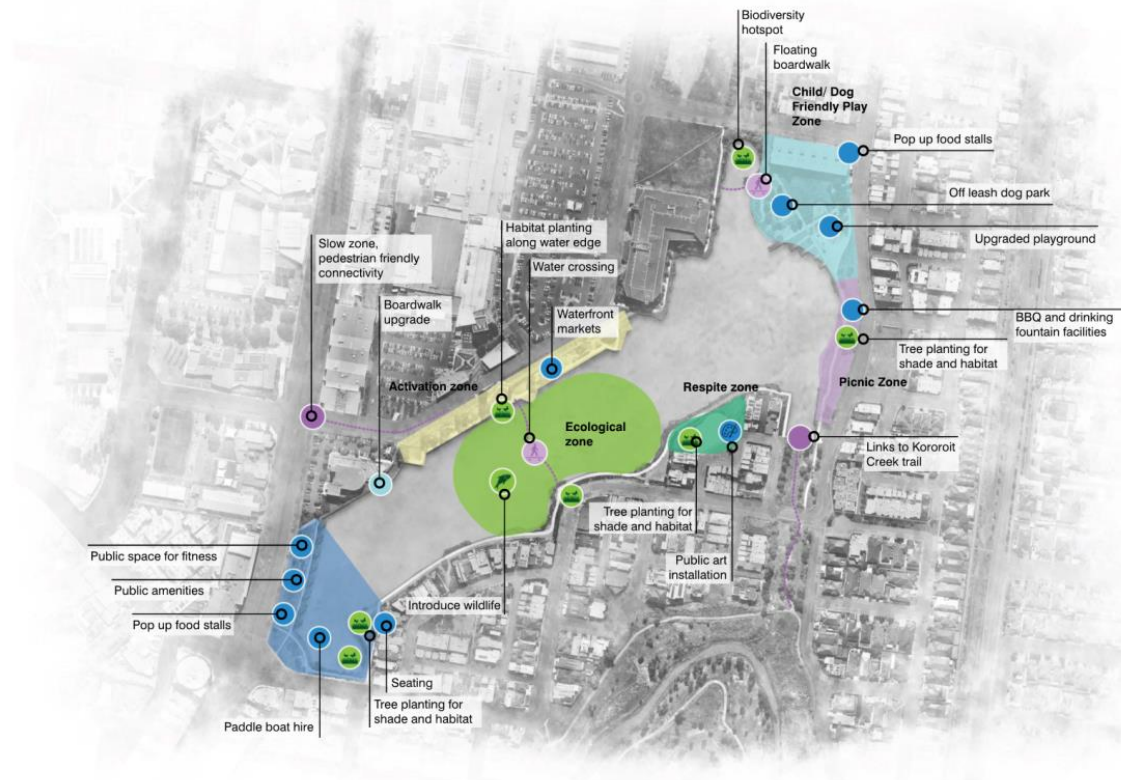
CONNECTIONS

Improving Lake Caroline from being a blue desert, better knitted into the Caroline Springs's urban fabrics and allow better physical and visual access from the surroundings

Some overlapping priorities between council and the public can be seen in the following precedent examples.

"It would be great to make it a destination that allows you to stay longer after walking around the lake."

- Survey response from a local resident





5 VISION & PRINCIPLES

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Draft Master Plan Report & Activation Strategy

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5.0 VISION & PRINCIPLES

5.1 PRINCIPLES & KEY MOVES

			
Site Themes			
Masterplan Principles	<p>ECOLOGY</p> <p>Create thriving ecological zones that expand upon and connect to existing ecology 'hot-spots' for the community to engage with</p>	<p>CONNECTIONS</p> <p>Facilitate movement around and across the Lake to provide safe connections and links to the broader community and facilities</p>	<p>ACTIVATION</p> <p>Provide a range of flexible spaces to enable the curation of year-round evening, cultural, events, activities and festivals</p>
Key initiatives	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Connect to the northern ecology cascade and wetland system 2. Lookouts, birdhides and boardwalks 3. Floating Wetlands 4. Connect and expand upon Kororoit Creek green link 5. Enhance and expand southern lake side ecology 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mid-lake crossing to connect the south and west of the Lake 2. Lighting and amenity along the south-eastern promenade 3. Shared, slow zone at Lake Street 4. Revisit Western Promenade and connection to Lake Street 5. New Northern Promenade 6. Clear signage & wayfinding 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Generous event lawn at northern end of Lake 2. Accessible place for Play and Connection 3. Dedicated picnic locations 4. Expanded decking areas for café activation and events 5. Shared zone at Lake Street to enable markets and festivals 6. Viewing areas at key locations around the Lake

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5.2 TESTING SCENARIOS

TCL tested three scenarios that focussed specifically on each site theme that was identified. These scenarios implied an extreme version of each them, noting that this could be tested against the community and stakeholder feedback to then feed into a single proposed masterplan.

ECOLOGY FOCUSED

The objectives for the Ecology focussed design included:

- A clean environment for wildlife and residents
- A site connected to the water
- A place for rest and respite

This scenario achieved many of the ecological principles that had been identified, but specifically excluded some key items of activation and connection.



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CONNECTION FOCUSED

The objectives for the Connection focussed design included:

- Connecting the Kororoit Creek
- Connecting the Lake Edge with the Water
- Connecting to the Greater Urban Fabric



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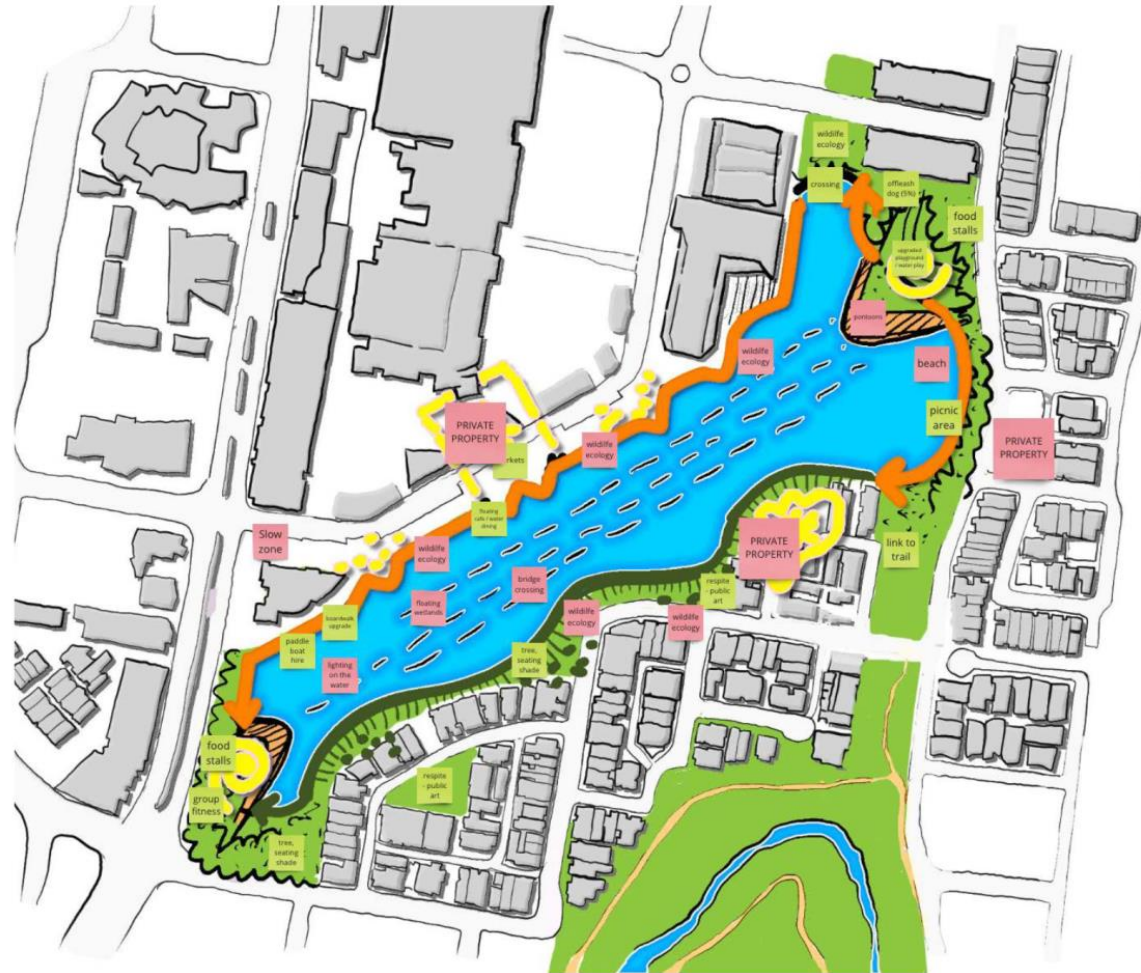
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ACTIVATION FOCUSED

The objectives for the Activation focussed design included:

- An Unique Events Destination
- An Accessible Place to Play and Connect
- High Interest in Outdoor Cinema and Artificial Beach







DRAFT MASTER PLAN PROPOSAL

The overall Draft Master Plan proposes a sequence of large-scale changes and interventions around the precinct. These can be categorised into seven precincts in line with the key themes that have been identified throughout the analysis and engagement phases.



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6.1 BOATHOUSE EVENT LAWN, PLAY & CAFE

Boathouse Reserve and its surroundings are envisioned as the major activity hub of Lake Caroline of both daily and special occasions, comprising of Boathouse Playground, Boathouse Event Lawn, Boathouse Cafe and Boathouse Pier. The existing public space and infrastructure would be upgraded to accommodate events and festivals of greater scale and variety.

The new accessible Boathouse Playground will be nestled between the Northern Ecology Zones and Northern Promenade. It will better utilise the space for a bespoke playground in combination with significant nature play elements.



Pengbu Central Commons by PLAT Studio (Source: PLAT Studio)



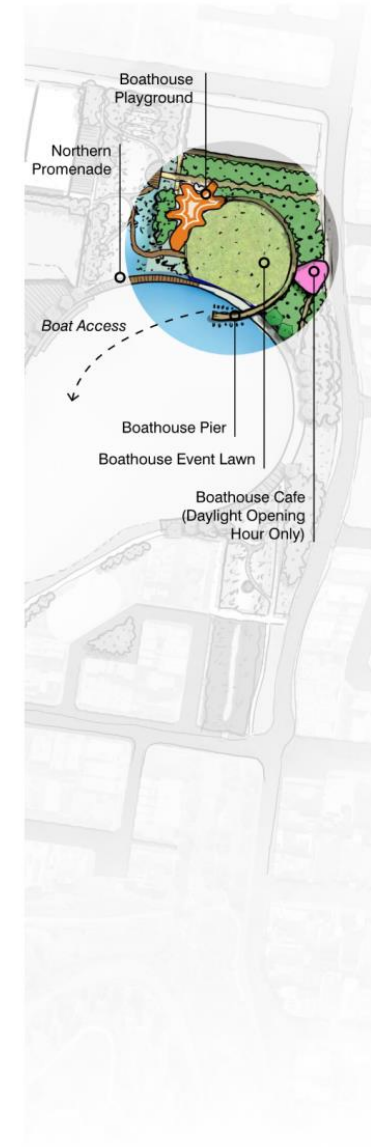
(Source: Melton City Council)

A small Boathouse Café will activate the north-east corner of the event lawn, providing food and beverage, toilets, as well as power and utilities for connection to larger events.

The Boathouse Pier is a small pier that arcs out beyond the Northern Promenade, into the Lake. It will facilitate small paddle and/or row boat rentals. It gives visitors an opportunity to wander out over the water and interact with the local bird life.

In the instance of events, a floating stage could be connected to the pier, to maximise 'on-land' space for event capacity.

On a lovely sunny day, the café would set up tables and chairs along the pier.



(Source: Glenthorne National Park Playspace)



(Source: Richter Spielgerate)

Sited adjacent to the event lawn and cafe, the playground will better serviced, and framed by garden bed and vegetation. A generous Boathouse Event Lawn will be situated facing south, and gently sloping towards the Lake. Enclosed by garden bed, and canopy trees to the north, the Event Lawn is activated on all edges by the Northern Promenade, the Café and the Playground.

Significant tree plantings will buffer the Lawn from the existing townhouses on the boundary. The Event Lawn at around 1800m² will be able to cater for a range of events including concerts, markets and festivals, and is set up as a perfect viewing area for fireworks or Lake activation. In non-event mode, it is the ideal place for a picnic, or for rolling a ball around the lawn.



(Source: Bethnal Green Gardens)



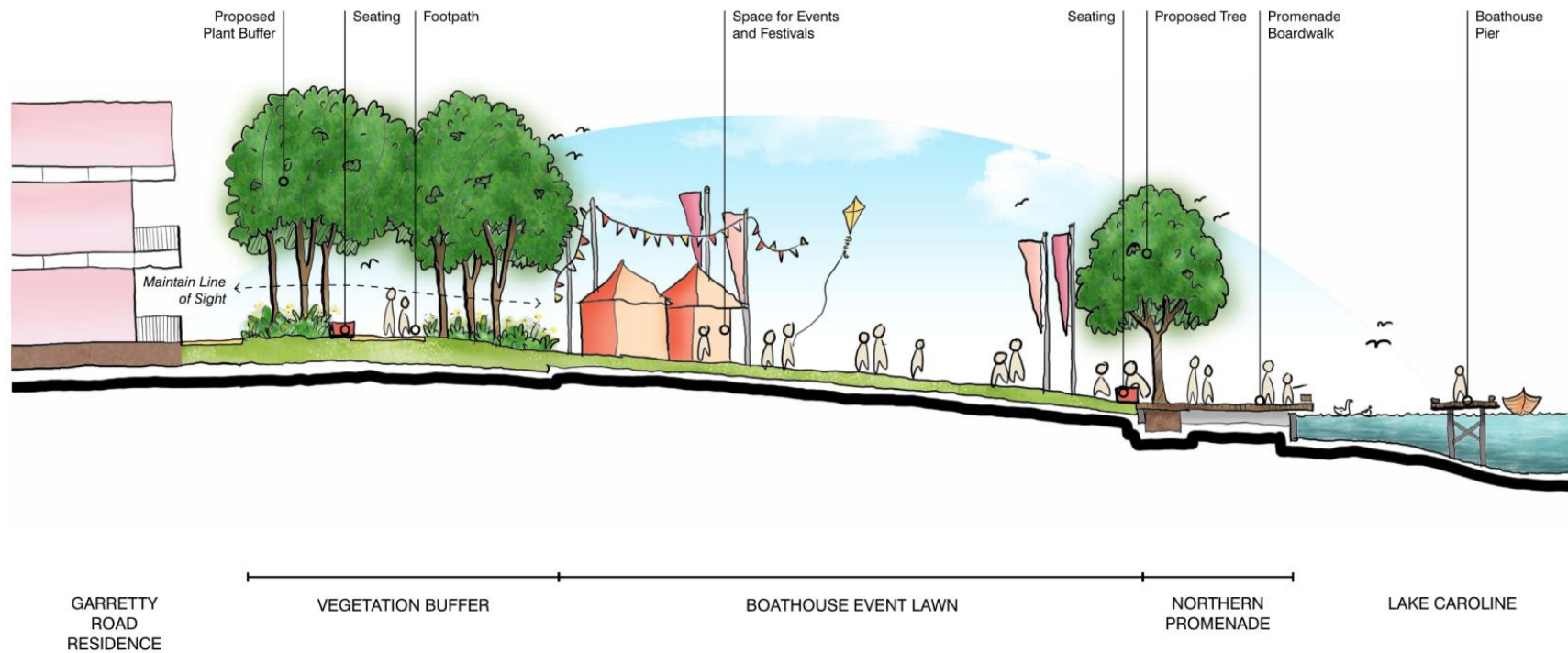
Punta San Vigilio (Source: ambienthotel)

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6.2 NORTHERN ECOLOGY CONNECTIONS

The Northern Ecology Connections comprises of two areas, which are the key inlet and outlet of Lake Caroline.

The Cascade Wetlands will build upon the wetlands to the north of Garretty Road, providing high quality, continued wetland habitat to connect directly into Lake Caroline.

This secluded area of habitat will enable discreet moments of connection for the community through lookouts, boardwalk opportunities and bird hides.



The Weir Wetland

Adelaide Botanic Gardens Wetlands by TCL (Source: John Gollings)



Cascade Wetland Lookout

South Parkland Wetlands by TCL (Source: Jackie Gu)



Boardwalk

South Parkland Wetlands by TCL (Source: Jackie Gu)



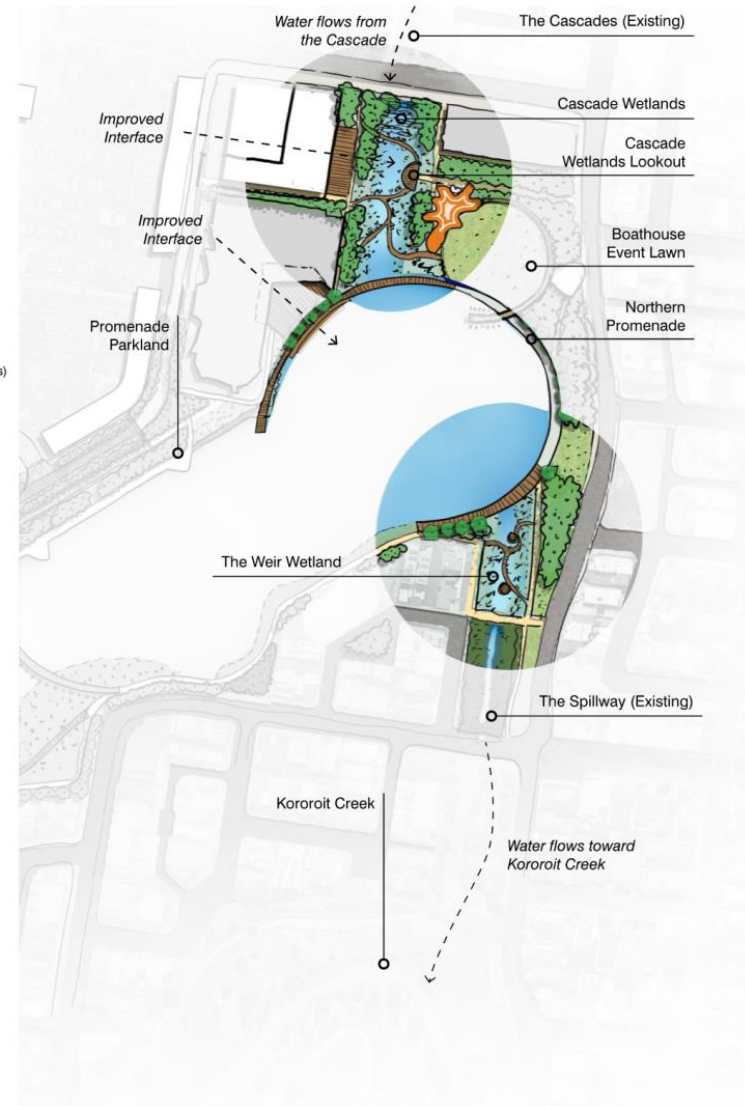
Northern Promenade

Anney's Lakelront Promenade (Source: KC to Anney)

Providing a habitat buffer to Lake Caroline Weir, the Weir Wetland enables extended habitat connection to the Lake, as well as water cleansing ahead of overflow and discharge to the Kororoit Creek.

The generous Northern Promenade creates a sweeping arc at the northern end of the Lake. This grand gesture connects the Weir Wetlands, open lawns of The Esplanade, Boathouse Event Lawn and Playground, and the Promenade Parkland on the western side of the Lake.

It is envisaged that the Promenade will be tree-lined, providing much needed amenity and shade.

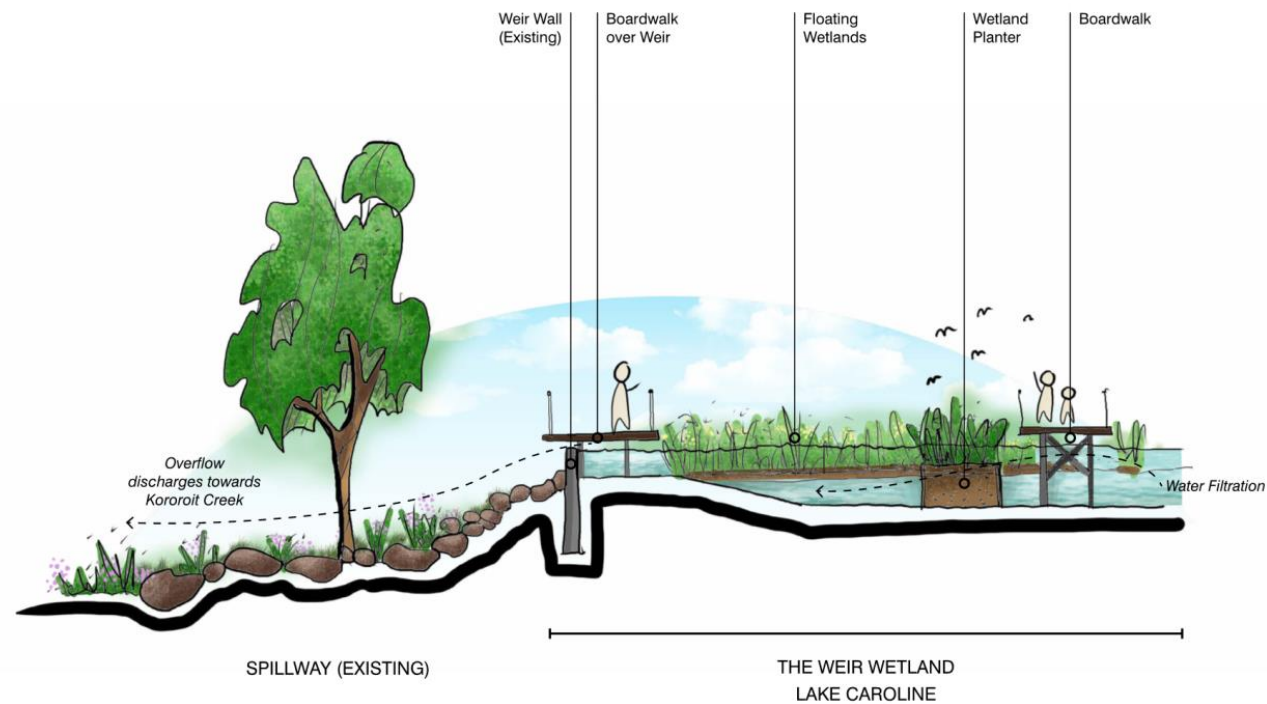


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6.3 LAKE CROSSING BRIDGE

The Lake Crossing Bridge is proposed as a high quality floating pontoon for pedestrians and cyclists. It will provide a direct connection for residents on the south-west of the Lake to the retail and Shopping Precinct. For visitors to the Lake, it provides an alternative sequence of loops for walking, running and recreation.

Boat access will be allowed underneath the Bridge, which visitors could travel between the western end and eastern end of the Lake.

The additional connection will assist with passive surveillance and increased pedestrian and cyclist activity.

Boardwalk Bridge



(Source: Architonic)

Pontoon Bridge



West India Quay Floating Bridge (Source: David Boardman)

Passage under Bridge



Nymburk Pedestrian Bridge by SHP (Source: Milos Vejchoda)

Bridge across Levels

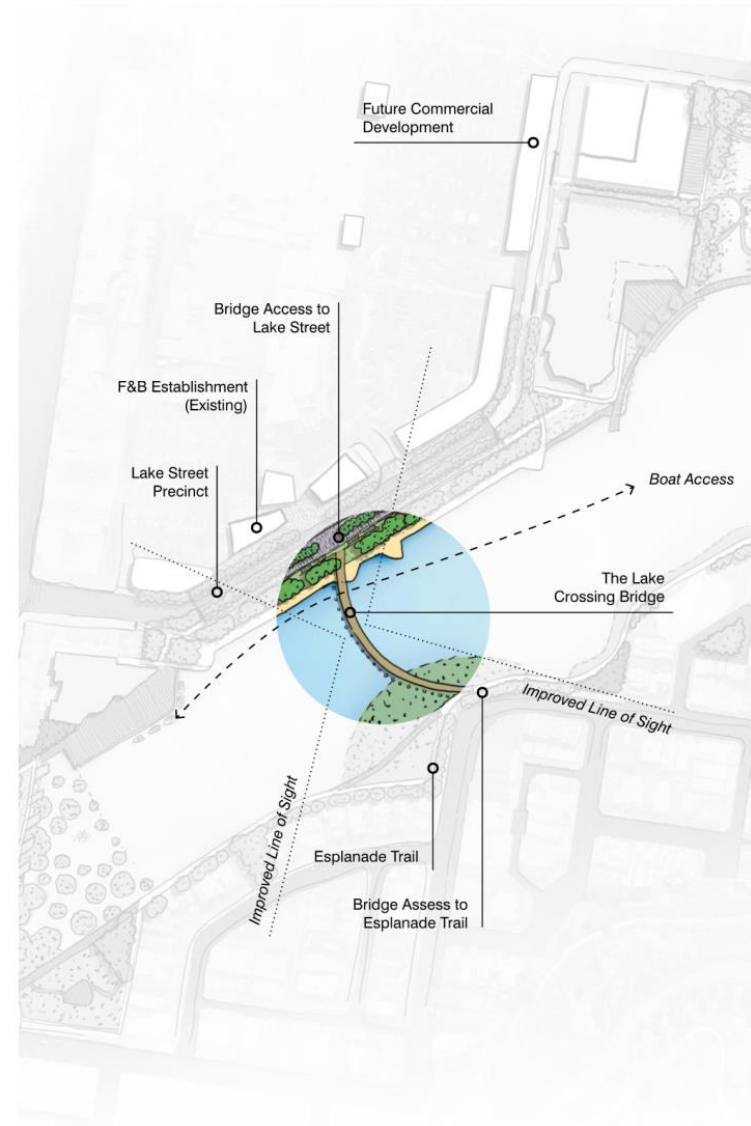


Riverbank Pedestrian Bridge by TCL (Source: John Gollings)

Lake Crossing Bridge



Enshi Floating Bridge (Source: unknown)

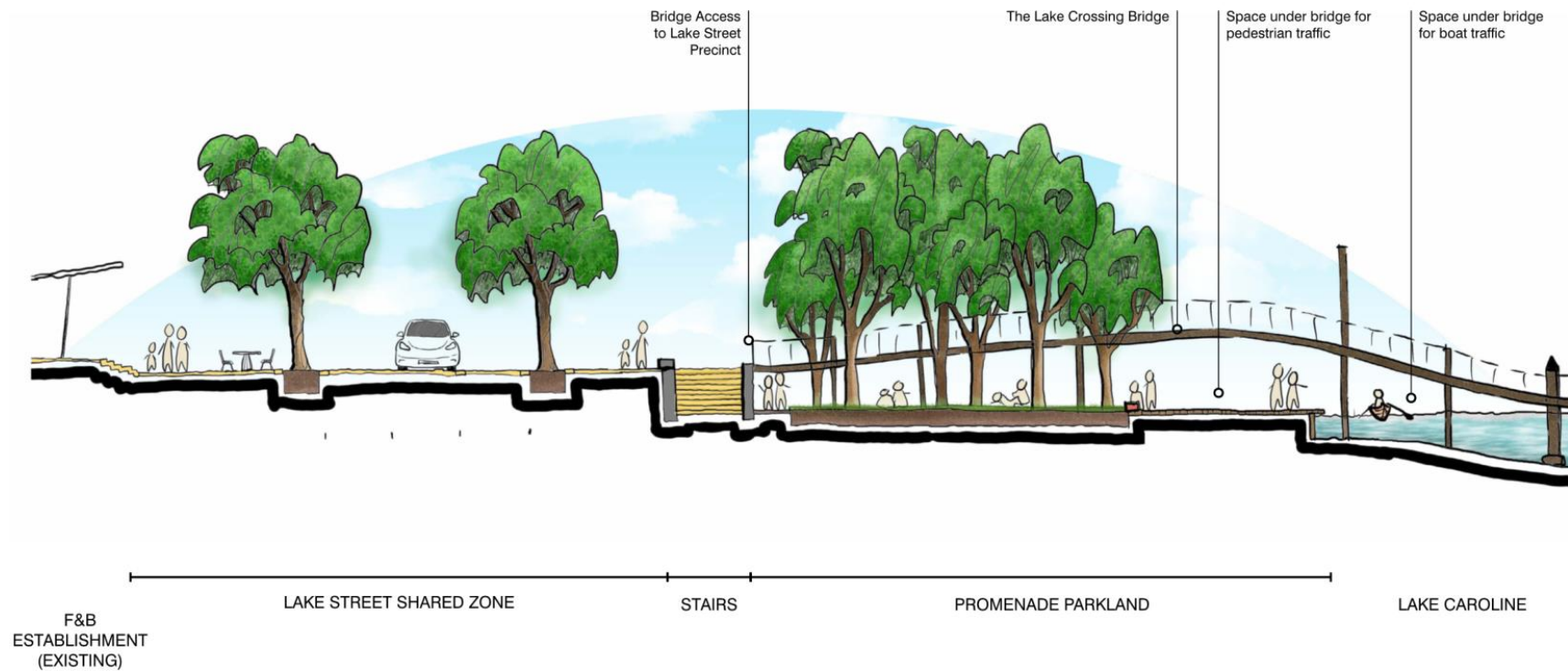


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6.4 LAKE STREET PRECINCT

Lake Street is proposed as a significant upgrade to the existing street to allow for traffic calming, pedestrian priority and regular activation through markets and festivals.

It is proposed to include consistent, flush and quality paved materials across footpath, parking and road carriageway; significant street tree planting; café spillout from existing retailers and reduced traffic flow.



Sunday Markets

Meander Market (Source: City of Adelaide)



Events on Lake Street

Johnston Street Fiesta (Source: Colombiantojos)



Lake Street Shared Zone

Street in Barcelona (Source: unknown)

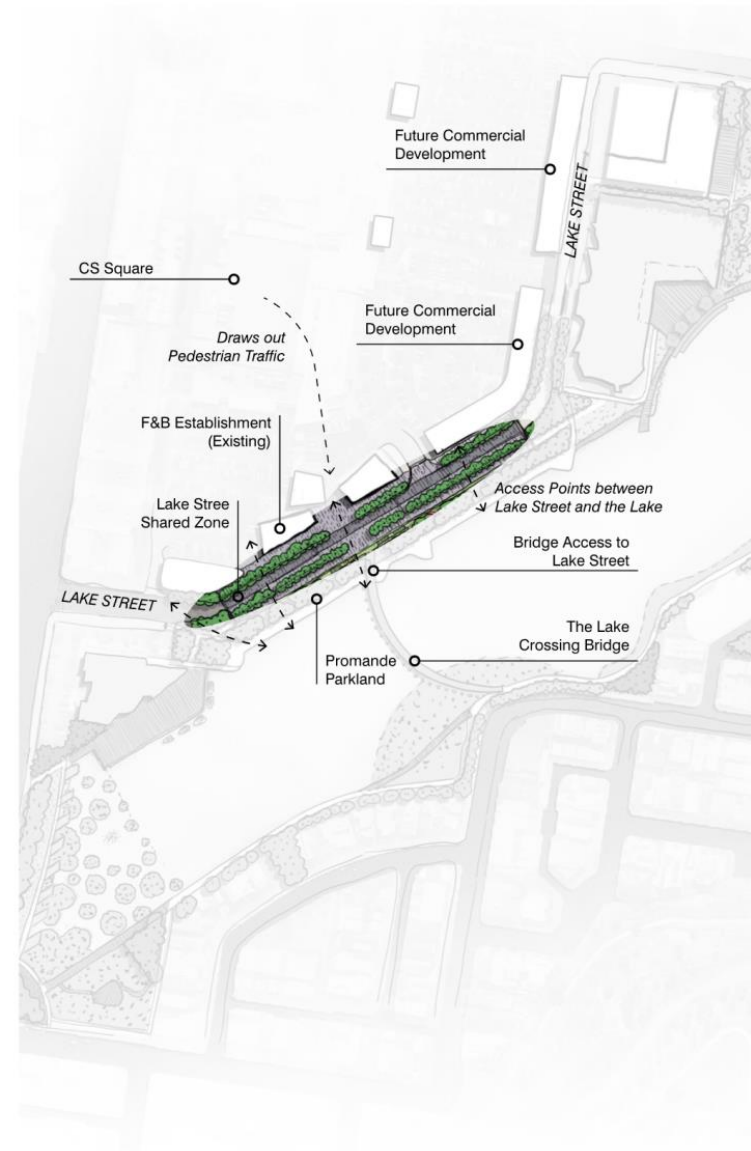


Lake Street Shared Zone

Copenhagen Shared Space (Source: Michael Kodransky)

The transformation of this street would facilitate safe and direct connections from the Lake side to the retail and shopping precinct. It would stimulate investment along the western edge of Lake Street. Businesses that provide community facilities and stimulate further activation would be recommended.

The upgraded Lake Street will enable a variety of activation opportunities, including café spill out from adjacent businesses, regular weekend markets, and partial or full street closure to facilitate larger festivals and events.

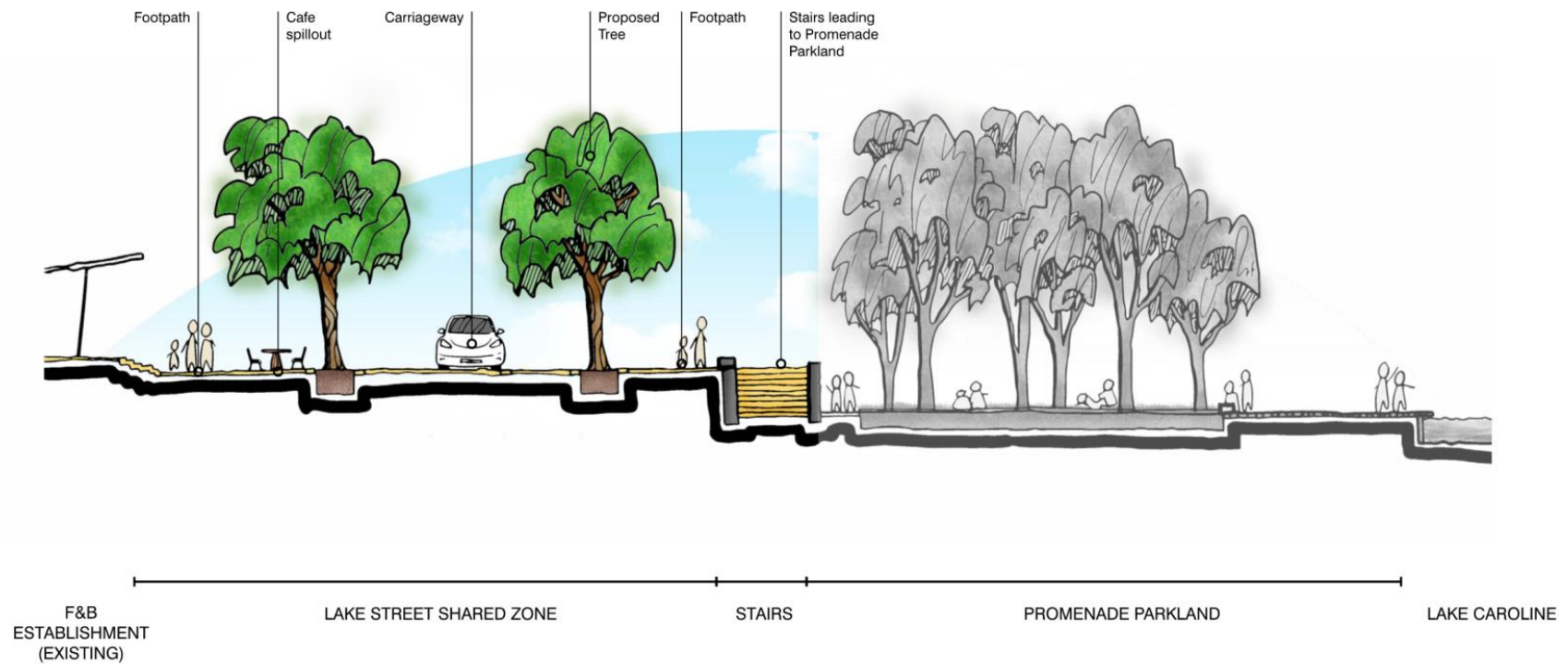


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6.5 PROMENADE PARKLAND

The Promenade Parkland seeks to reinvigorate the existing promenade landscape which is 'fussy' in its complex mounding, pathways and spaces.

It is proposed to be simplified into a generous lawn that can host significant trees for shade and amenity. A simple linear footpath or boardwalk would interface with the lake edge. This would allow for picnics, events, markets and festivals when required, and passive activation at other times.

Existing facilities and amenities will be reviewed and upgraded to support daily activation of Promenade Parkland. The park interface with CS War Memorial will be enhanced to facilitate the RSL events.



Promenade Parkland

North Terrace by TCL (Source: John Gollings)



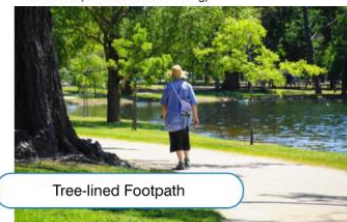
Boardwalk Promenade

Yarra River Promenade (Source: Victoria Walks)



Lake Edge Linear Lawn

Yarra Trail (Source: David L. Young)

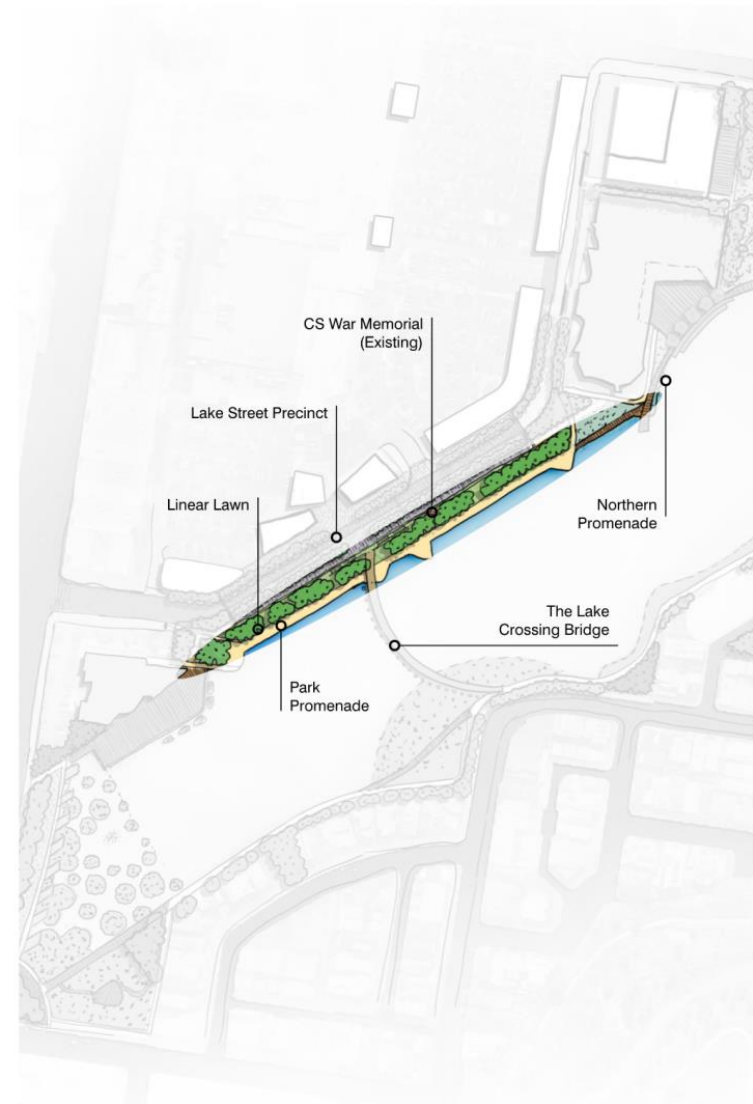


Tree-lined Footpath

Lake Wendouree (Source: Days Out with George)



CS War Memorial

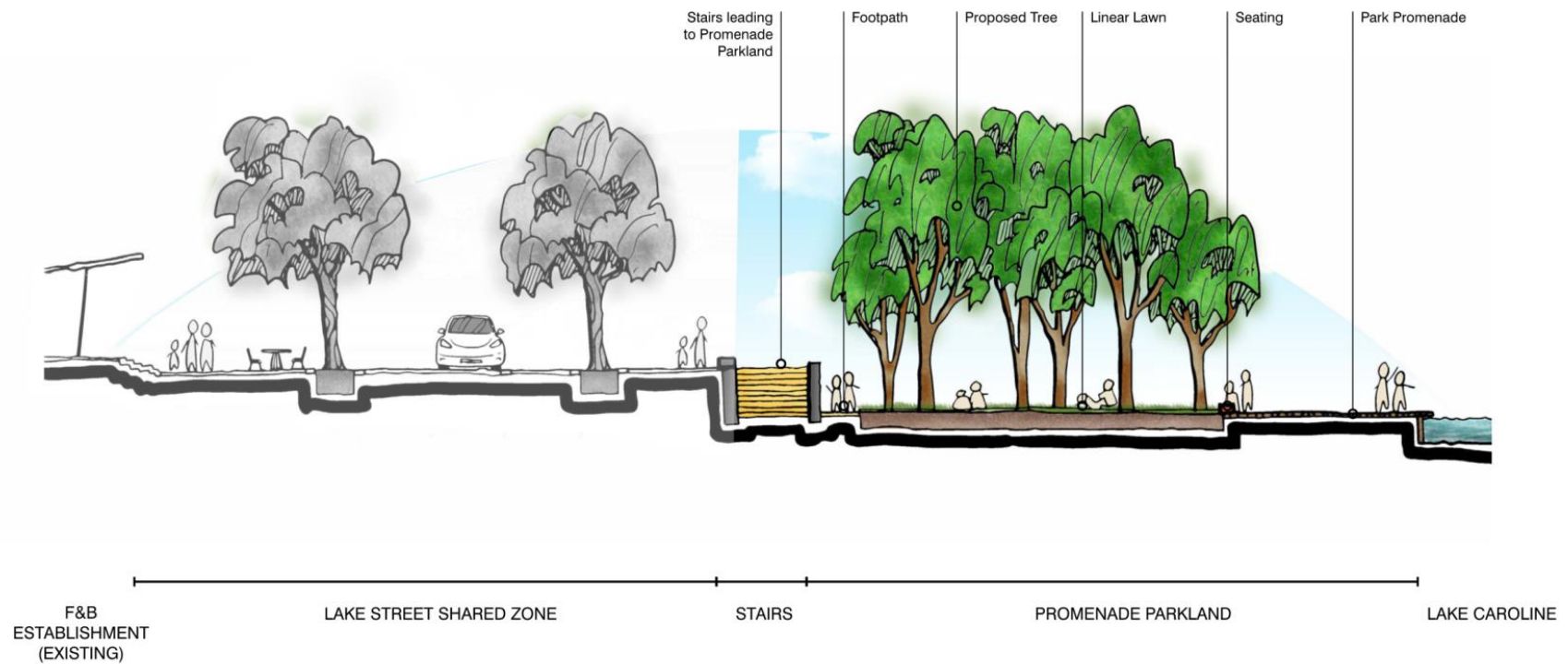


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6.6 SOUTHERN DECK PRECINCT

The existing deck is proposed to be expanded out to a generous multi-use space for outdoor activation, and boat launch zone.

It is intended that the food and beverage offering and steps to the lower deck would be upgraded to enable more flexibility. It would be the ideal location for functions and pavilion set ups. Additional tree planting can be provided in the on-ground locations to create better existing amenity.

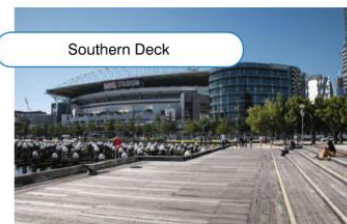


Southern Deck & Boat Launch



Southern Deck & Boat Launch

Punta San Vigilio (Source: ambienthotel)



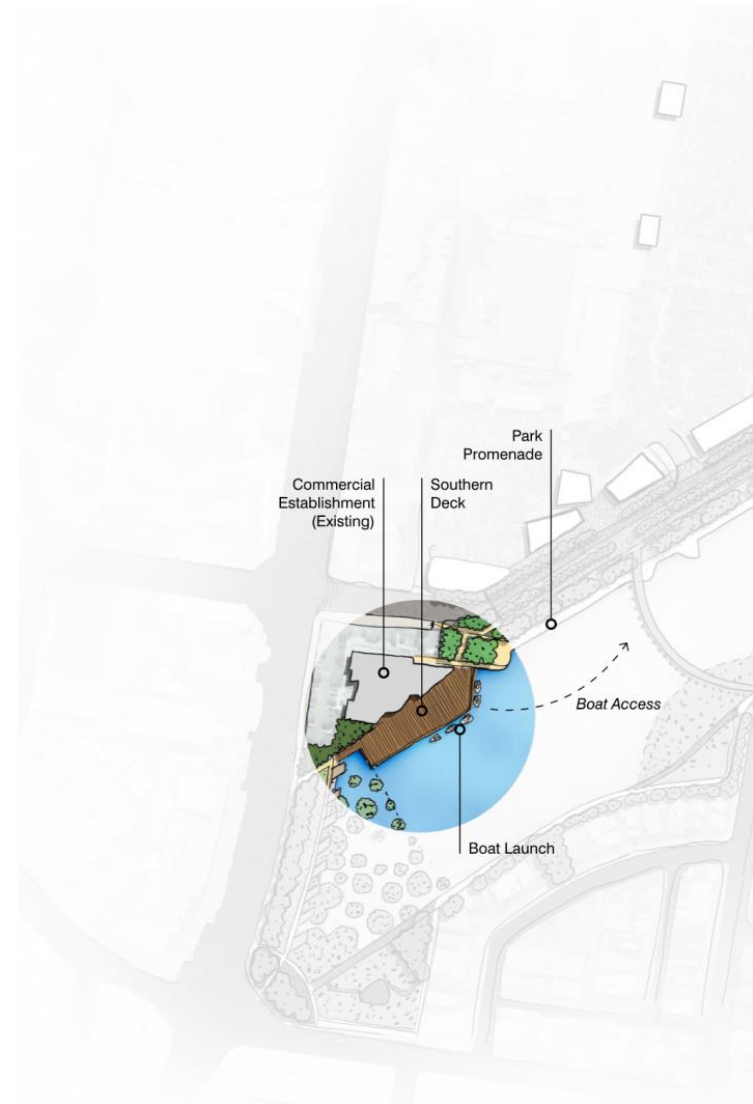
Southern Deck

Victoria Harbour at NAB by TCL (Source: unknown)



Southern Deck

South Wharf Promenade (Source: The Boatbuilders Yard)

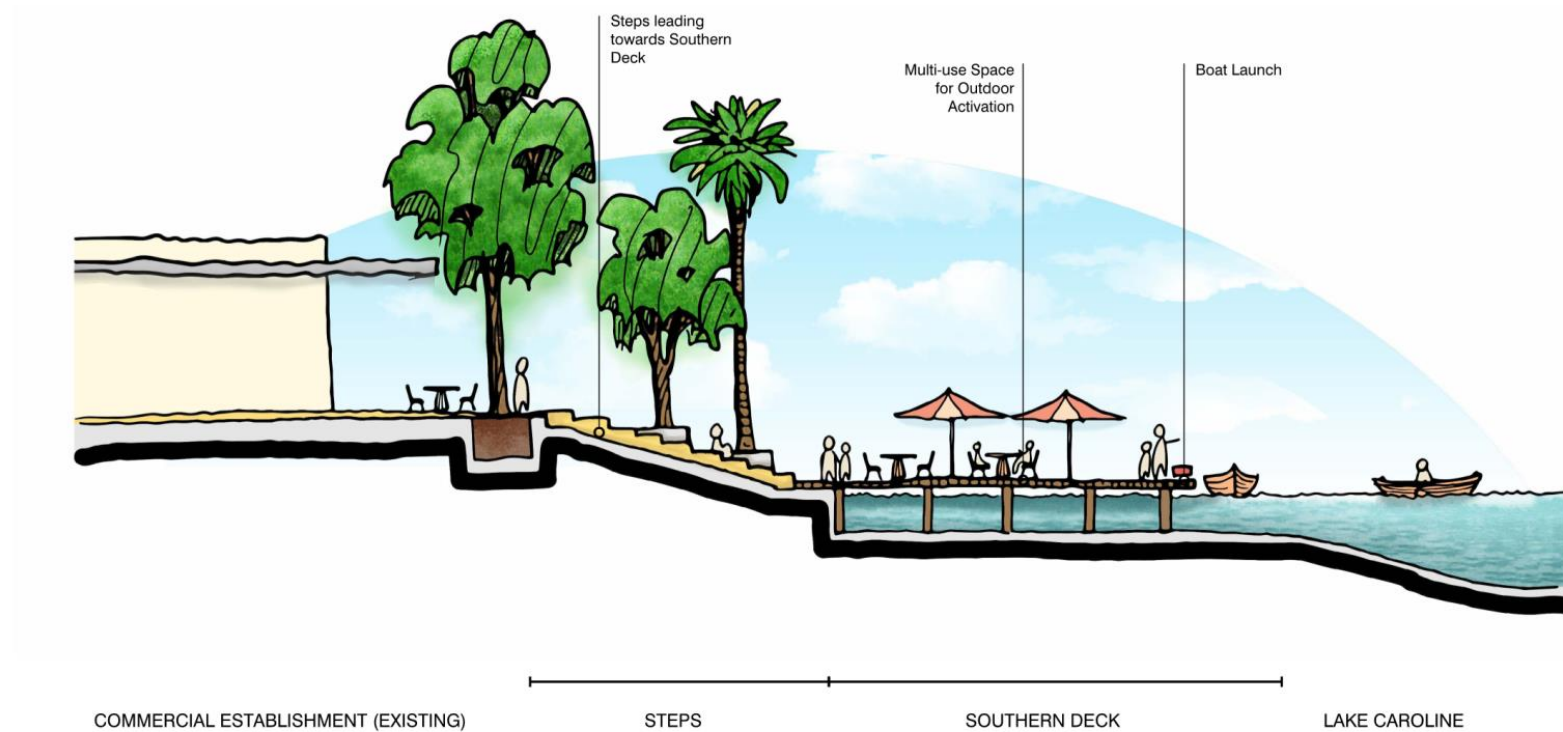


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6.7 SOUTHERN ECOLOGY PRECINCT

The Southern Ecology Precinct will transform the south end of Lake Caroline into a lush, shaded habitat zone, enhancing the small moments of ecology that already thrive in this area. It will provide a visually arresting entry view and foreground to the lake. The amenity is appropriate for the surrounding land use which is primarily residential.

Additional significant tree planting along the Esplanade and Caroline Springs Boulevard will provide both sound and visual buffer to the busy adjacent road.



Floating Wetlands

Redcliffe Golf Course Floating Wetland (Source: Fytogreen)



Art Interpretation

East Point Park Bird Sanctuary by PLANT Architect Inc (Source: Cameron Lintott)

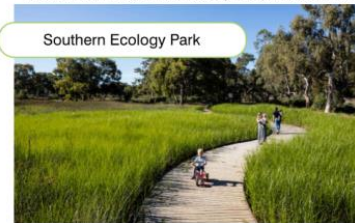
The existing pocket park will be re-conceived to complement the Lake habitat. The area provides opportunities for lookouts, boardwalks, education and interpretation.

A series of Floating Wetlands will be installed within the lake, adjacent to the Southern Ecology Park, to provide additional water cleansing and filtration for the overall health of the lake. This will be facilitated by the existing fountain, upgraded to improve the aeration and water movement in the Lake.



Southern Ecology Park

Adelaide Botanic Garden Wetlands by TCL (Source: John Gollings)



Southern Ecology Park

Oaklands Park and Wetland by TCL (Source: Sam Noonan)

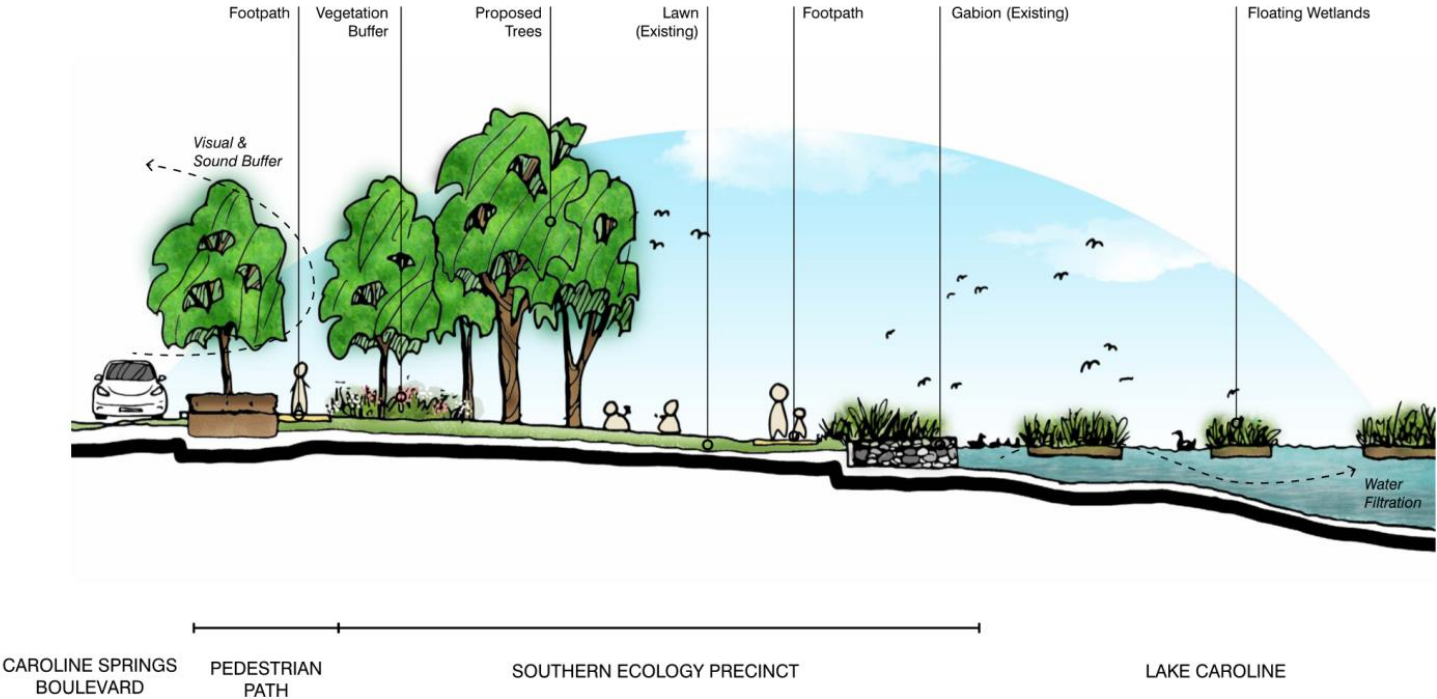


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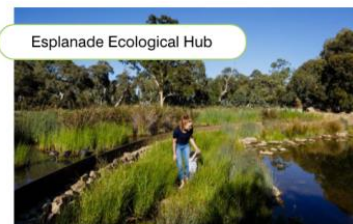
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6.8 ESPLANADE PRECINCT

Enhancing the amenity on the eastern residential side of Lake Caroline, the Esplanade Ecology Hub provides a substantial increase in vegetation and ecology along the edge of the Lake.

The extended habitat provides an immersive departure point for the Lake Crossing Bridge.

The Esplanade Trail will be upgraded to see improvements in lighting, furnishings and general amenity. It will be primarily characterised by an ecology-edged lake, generous footpath with tree plantings carefully placed between house boundaries to avoid blocking views of the Lake.



Oaklands Park and Wetland by TCL (Source: Sam Noonan)



Adelaide Botanic Garden Wetlands by TCL (Source: John Gollings)



Jawbone Flora and Fauna Reserve (Source: Mamma Knows West)

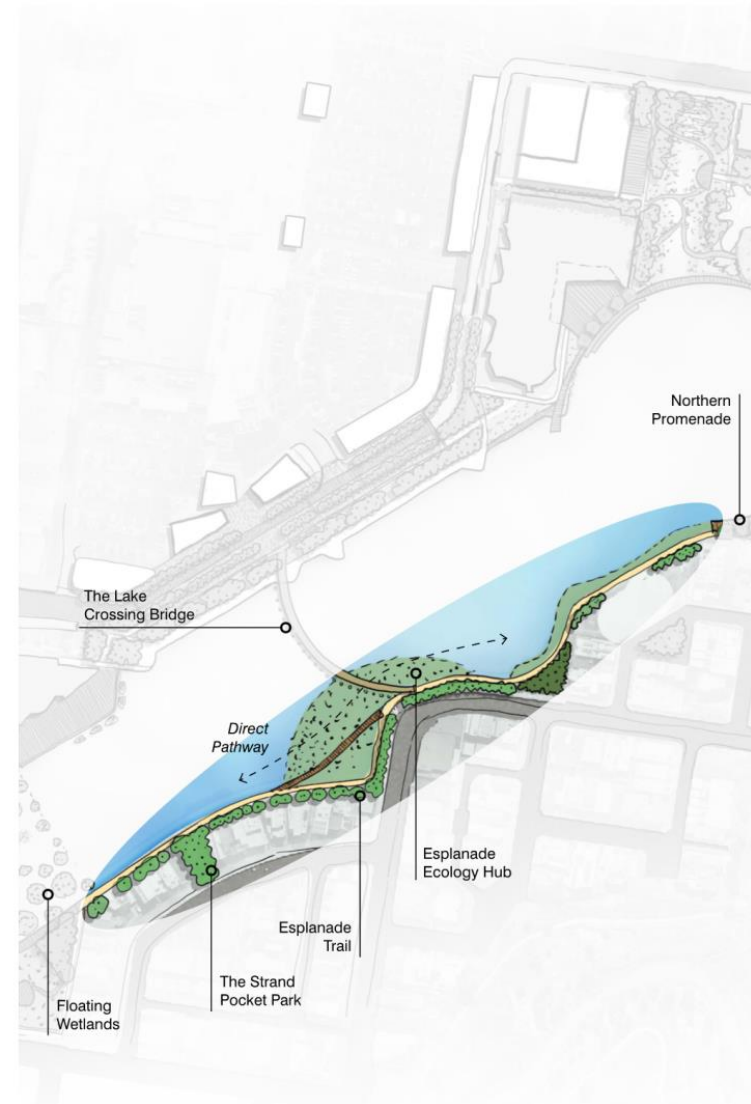


Tidbinbilla Sanctuary by TCL (Source: ACT Parks and Reserve)

The Esplanade Trail will connect the Northern Promenade to the Floating Wetlands. The Lake Crossing Bridge will be accessed from the Trail as well.

Tree Canopy Size Matters

- 5-20°C cooler underneath canopies
- Large trees with dense canopies can remove 60-70 times more air pollution than smaller trees
- Larger trees raise property values proportionally
- Tree with large canopy offers more shade protection against sun exposure
- Tree with large canopy offers better respiratory health by producing oxygen and intercepting pollutants more effectively
- Tree with large canopy offers better protection on street infrastructure and paving against exposure



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INDICATIVE ELEVATION

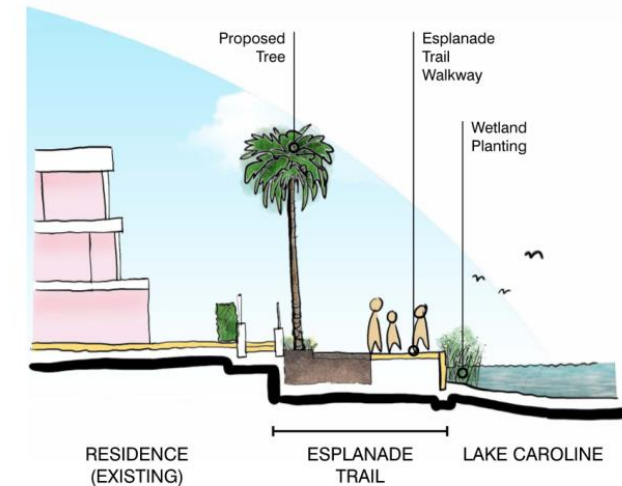
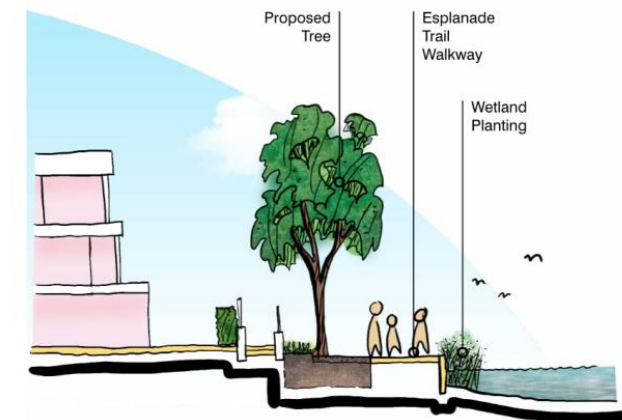


TREE TYPE 1 - 30% CANOPY COVER



TREE TYPE 2 - 5% CANOPY COVER

INDICATIVE SECTION



RESIDENCE
(EXISTING)

ESPLANADE
TRAIL

LAKE CAROLINE



ACTIVATION STRATEGY

This Activation Strategy provides a well-rounded approach to activation around the Lake Caroline Precinct, by suggesting activation opportunities under the following pillars:

- Creation of public amenities to facilitate activation (i.e. picnic areas, playgrounds, lawn, promenades etc)
- Council facilitated programming and events (festivals, markets, concerts)
- Private operator activation through retail offerings (cafes, boat hire etc)



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7.1 BOATHOUSE EVENT LAWN ACTIVATION

- Picnic
- Recreational activities
- Ball games
- Farmers markets
- Festival & events
- Concerts
- Lake event seating
- Stage and amphitheatre
- Night-time events

7.2 BOATHOUSE PIER ACTIVATION

- Boat Hire
- Café & dining activation along the pier
- Lake event seating



Lakeside Alive 2024 (Source: Melton City Council)



Picnic on Lawn



Boat Hire (Source: Studley Park Boathouse)



Punta San Vigilio (Source: ambienthotel)



Caroline Springs Annual Carols (Source: Star Weekly)



Lakeside Alive 2024 (Source: Melton City Council)



Dining along Pier (Source: BLU Crabhouse & Raw Bar)



Lakeside Alive 2024 (Source: Melton City Council)

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7.3 NORTHERN PROMENADE ACTIVATION

- Lakeside events
- Picnic
- Active recreation



7.4 THE WEIR WETLAND ACTIVATION

- Bird watching
- Ecology walking & education tours

Northern Promenade



Lakeside at Carousel (Source: Lucas Worcester)



Active Fitness (Source: Topio)



Markets (Source: Homegrown Markets Speers Point)

The Weir Wetland



Birdwatching (Source: Backyard Bird Watchers)



Educational Walks (Source: John Gollings)



Guided Educational Tours (Source: ACT Parks and Reserve)



Self-Guided Tours (Source: ACT Parks and Reserve)

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7.5 LAKE STREET SHARED ZONE ACTIVATION

- Café spillout from adjacent businesses
- Regular weekend markets
- Street closure to facilitate larger festivals

7.6 PROMENADE PARKLAND ACTIVATION

- Picnics
- Lakeside Festivals
- Lake Event viewing



Farmers Markets (Source: City of Adelaide)



Cafe Spillout (Source: TkKunikawa)



Sunday Market on roadside (Source: Arts Centre Melbourne)



Festival on Street (Source: Beat Magazine)



Fireworks (Source: Melton City Council)



Lakeside Alive (Source: unknown)



Picnic on Lawn

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7.7 SOUTHERN DECK & BOAT LAUNCH

- Café spillout and dining
- Boat hire
- Small scale events
- Outdoor booking on deck

7.8 SOUTHERN ECOLOGY PRECINCT ACTIVATION

- Picnic
- Yoga
- Bird watching
- Ecology walking & education tours



Southern Deck

Boat Hire (Source: Studley Park Boathouse)



Small scale events (Source: unknown)



Promenade Parkland

Birdwatching (Source: ACT Parks and Reserve)



Picnic on Lawn



Café Spillout (Source: The Boatbuilders Yard)



Outdoor Booking (Source: Royal Botanic Gardens Melbourne)

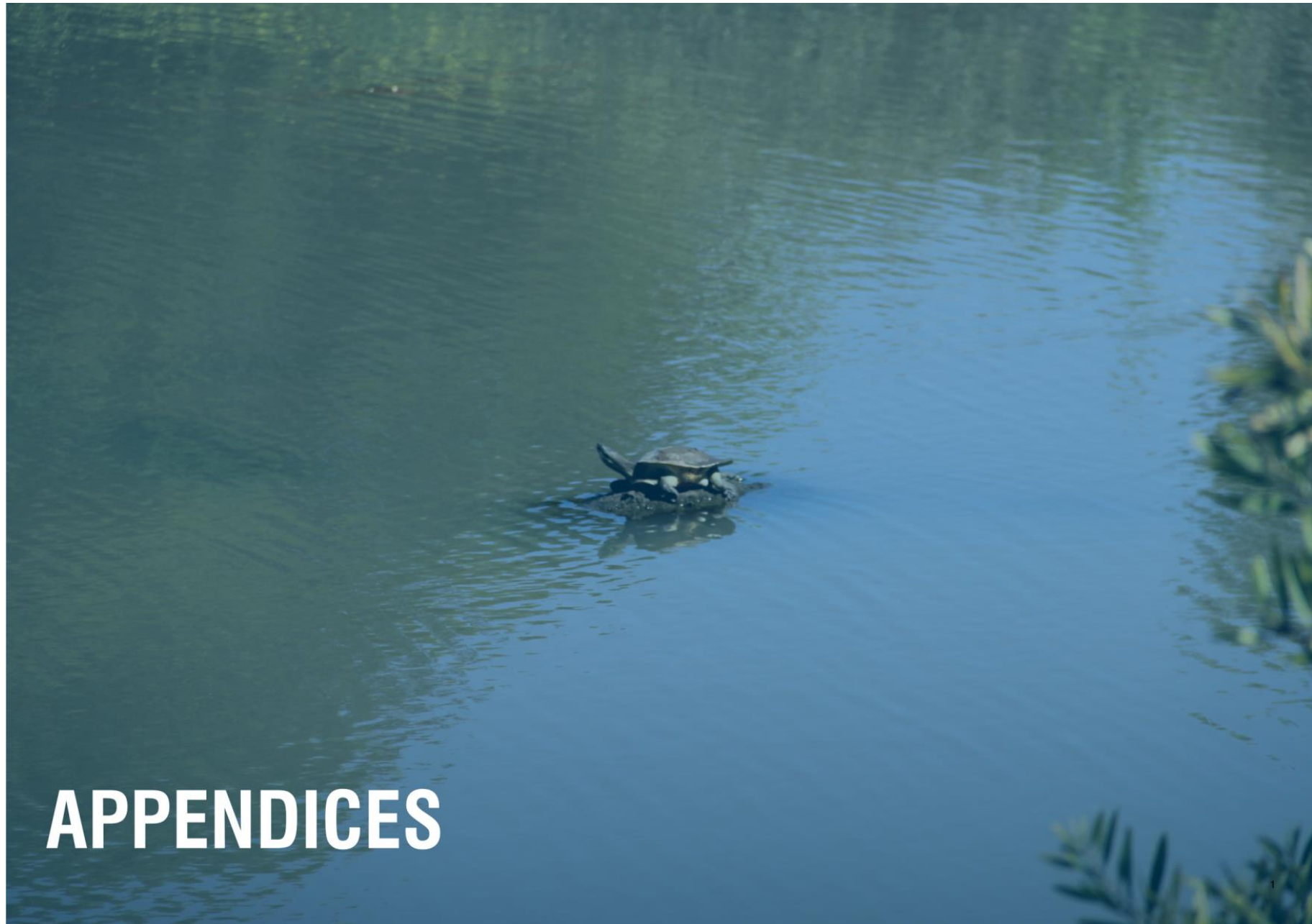


Yoga (Source: Cape Town Magazine)



Community Exercise Group (Source: NBC News)





APPENDIX 1.0 BENCHMARK STUDY

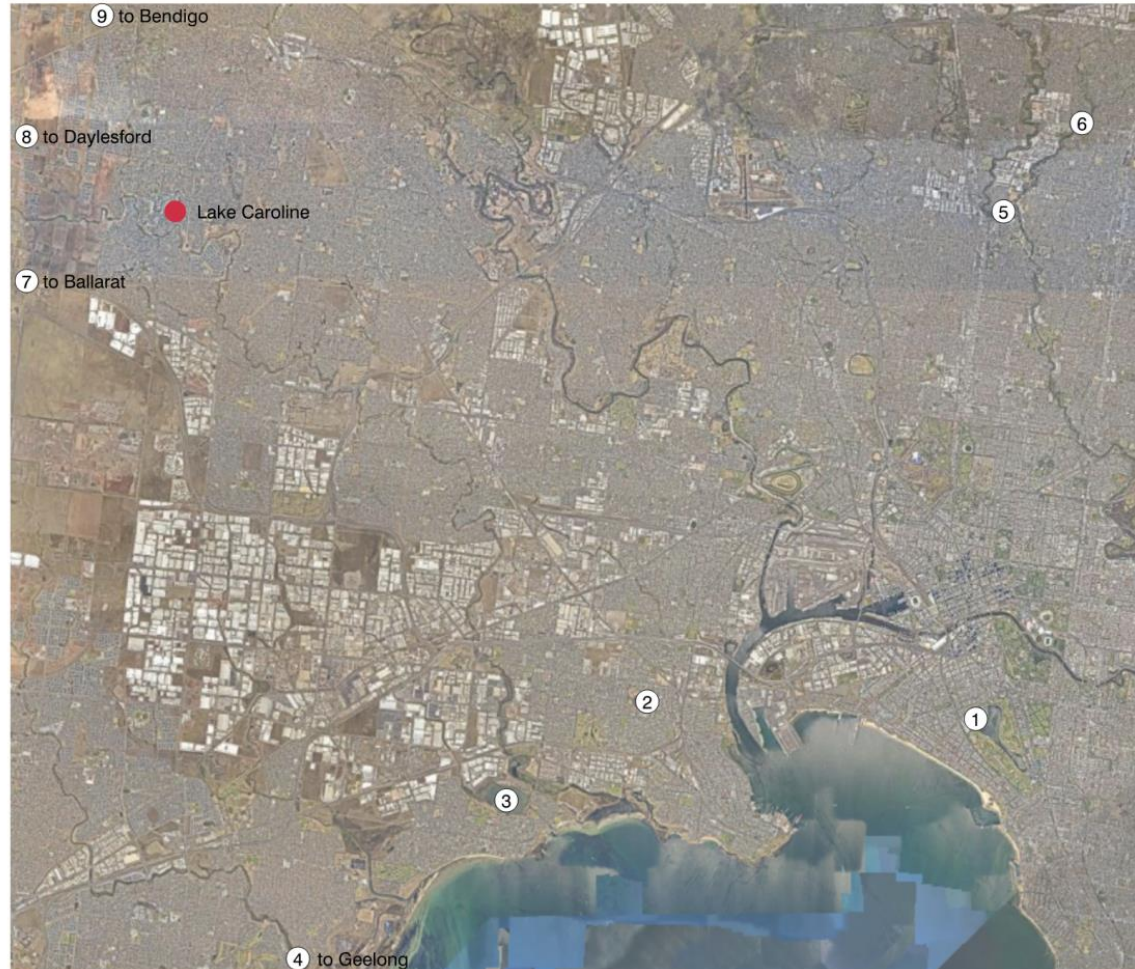
TCL have undertaken a benchmark study of a number of lakes and waterbodies in Victoria. The aim is to understand the context and usage of these precedents through analysis, which could be brought forward to assist the development of the Lake Caroline Master Plan and Activation Strategy.

The precedents are selected based of their similarity to Lake Caroline, in terms of their artificial construction, recreational purpose and ecological functions. It is worth noting that these precedents are of various scale, which could still provide insight for future of the Lake.

List of Studied Lakes

- ① Albert Park, Melbourne
- ② Newport Lakes Reserve, Newport
- ③ Cherry Lake Reserve, Altona
- ④ St Leonards Lake Reserve, Geelong
- ⑤ Coburg Lake Reserve, Coburg
- ⑥ Edwardes Lake Park, Reservoir
- ⑦ Lake Wendouree, Ballarat
- ⑧ Lake Daylesford, Daylesford
- ⑨ Lake Weeroonam, Bendigo

All aerial photos are sourced from Google Map.



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A1.0 LAKE CAROLINE

The following are the basic information of Lake Caroline, which are used to identify suitable precedent.

The Lake is connected to two wetlands upstream, and Kororoit Creek downstream via the Spillway. There is algae bloom event in the Lake but it is infrequent.

Total Area (of the Reserve)10.47ha / 104700m²**Area (Lake Caroline Reserve)**1.97ha / 19700m²**Area (Boathouse Reserve)**0.52ha / 5200m²**Area (Lake Caroline Waterfront)**0.48ha / 4800m²**Area (Waterbody)**7.49ha / 74900m²**Length**

000

Width

000

Perimeter

1900m / 1.9km

Depth (Waterbody)

approx. 0.4m - 2m



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A1.1 ALBERT PARK

TOTAL AREA

225ha / 2250000m²

KEY FACTS

- Managed by Parks Victoria
- Repurposed from existing wetlands and lagoon
- A long history of recreational activities, such as Australian Grand Prix
- Regional and State destination for sporting events, including Lakeside Stadium, Melbourne Sports and Aquatic Centre (MSAC) and many sports clubs
- A popular spot for dog walking, cycling, rowing and boating
- Not known to be used as a community gathering space
- Full of ecology

ACTIVITIES / USES

Outdoor Recreation

- Gym Equipment
- Playground

Facilities

- Picnic Tables
- BBQ

Daily Use

- Dog Walking
- Cycling
- Running

Water Play

- Rowing
- Swimming (Indoor)

Ecology

- Wetland

Sporting Events

- Lakeside Stadium
- MSAC
- Australian Grand Prix



Shared User Path



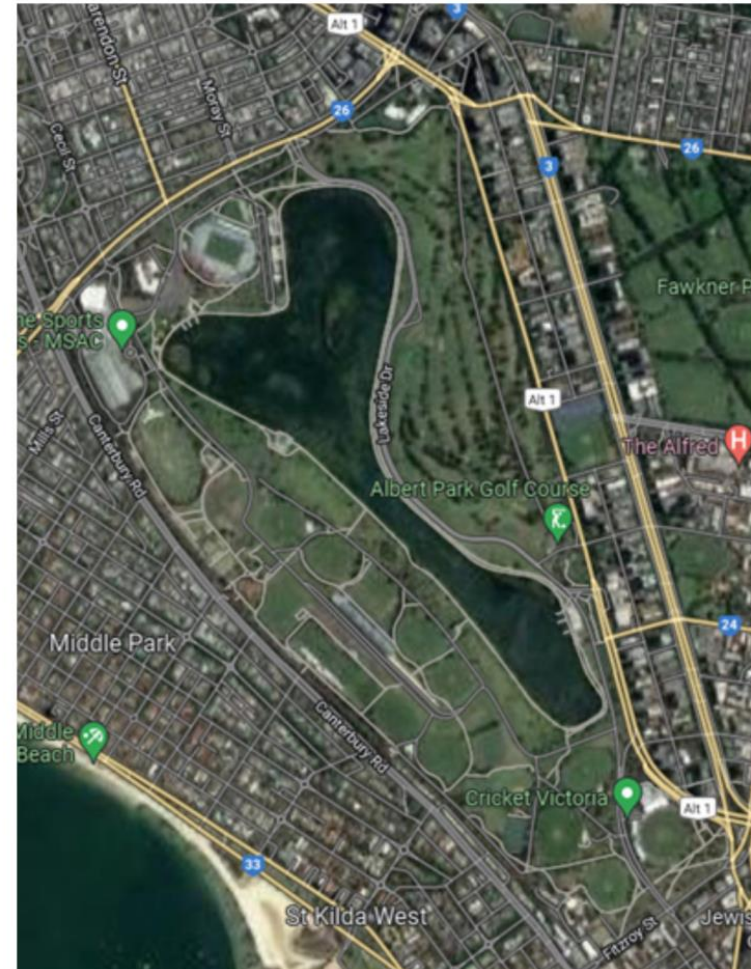
Wetland Ecology



Formula 1



Playground



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A1.2 NEWPORT LAKES RESERVE

TOTAL AREA

3.3ha / 330000m²

KEY FACTS

- Managed by Hobsons Bay City Council
- Former bluestone quarry and rubbish tip site
- Contain remnants of native bushland and has been extensively revegetated
- Local level open space
- Contains a 2km self-guided nature trail, BBQ and shaded seating facilities

ACTIVITIES / USES

Outdoor Recreation

- Gym Equipment
- Playground
- Off-leash Dog Area
- Walking Trail

Facilities

- Picnic Tables
- BBQ
- Public Toilets
- Shelter
- Water Fountains
- On-site Nursery

Daily Use

- Dog Walking
- Cycling
- Running

Ecology

- Wetland Ecology
- Native Bushland
- Bird Watching



Rock Crossing



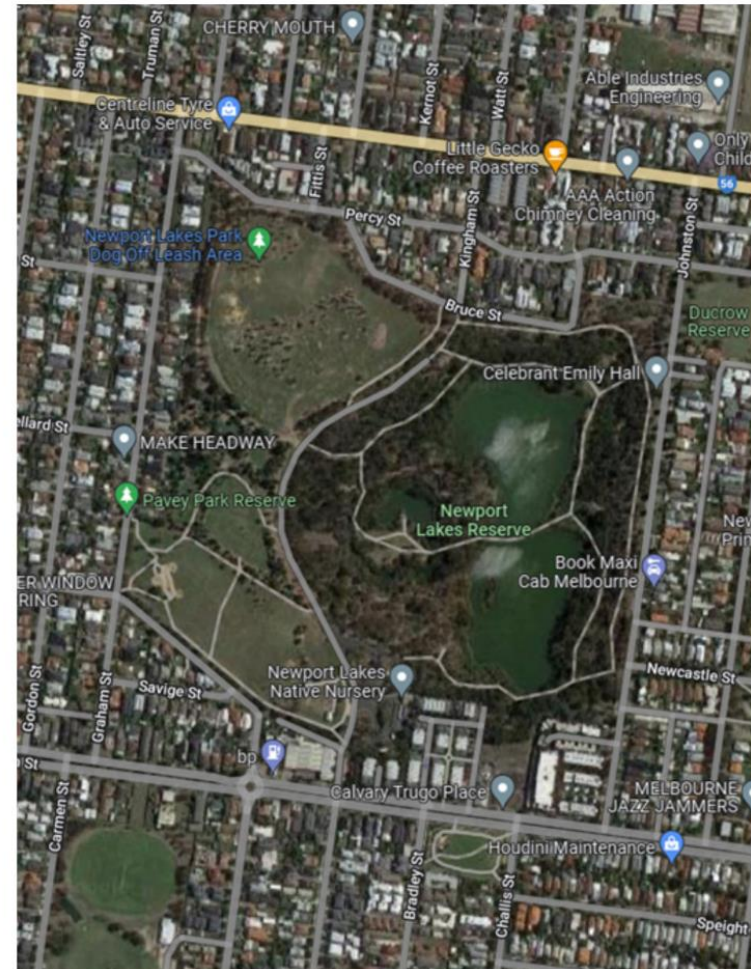
Wetland Ecology



Natural Scenery



Playground



T.C.L

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Draft Master Plan Report & Activation Strategy

MARCH 2024

A1.3 CHERRY LAKE

TOTAL AREA

101ha / 1010000m²

KEY FACTS

- Managed by Hobsons Bay City Council
- Converted from historical wetlands and swamps
- Contains a 3.5km walking and cycling trail circuits, boating and bird hide
- Community space to house Cherry Lake Sunday Market
- Part of Kororoit Creek
- Full of Ecology

ACTIVITIES / USES

Outdoor Recreation

- Gym Equipment
- Playground
- 3.5km trail

Facilities

- Picnic Tables
- BBQ
- Food Van
- Toilets
- Drinking Tap
- Shelters

Daily Use

- Dog Walking
- Cycling
- Running

Water Play

- Canoeing

Ecology

- Wetland Ecology

Events

- Sunday Markets
- Bird Watching



Wetland



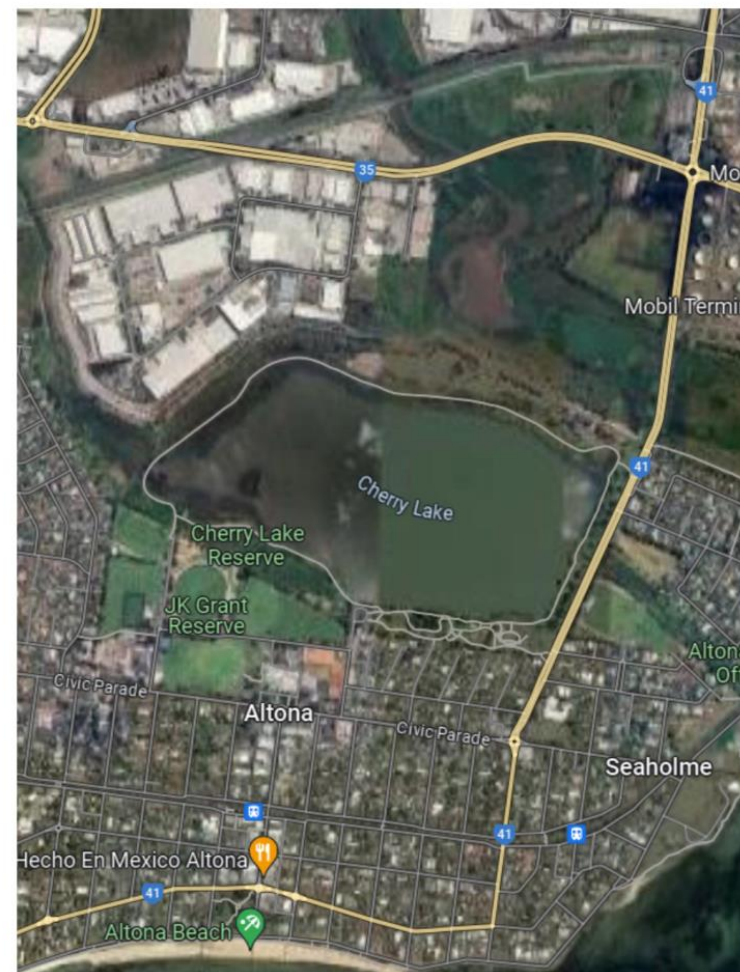
Outdoor Gym



Playground



Cycling / Shared Path



T.C.L

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A1.4 ST LEONARDS LAKE RESERVE

TOTAL AREA

23ha / 233650m²

KEY FACTS

- Managed by City of Greater Geelong
- Close to the St Leonards Salt Lagoon
- Local level open space
- Used by local community and sports clubs
- Master Plan completed in October 2011, with the aim to provide a place for people to stay physically active, strengthen social connections and engage in community life
- Facility Development Plan in development as of February 2022

ACTIVITIES / USES

Outdoor Recreation

- Playground
- Netball Court
- Oval (cricket)
- Hard wickets
- Bocce Court

Facilities

- Picnic Tables
- BBQ
- Pavilion
- Rotunda
- Toilets
- Off-lead Dog Area

Daily Use

- Dog Walking
- Cycling
- Running

Ecology

- Wetland Ecology
- Native Bushland
- Bird Watching



Wetland



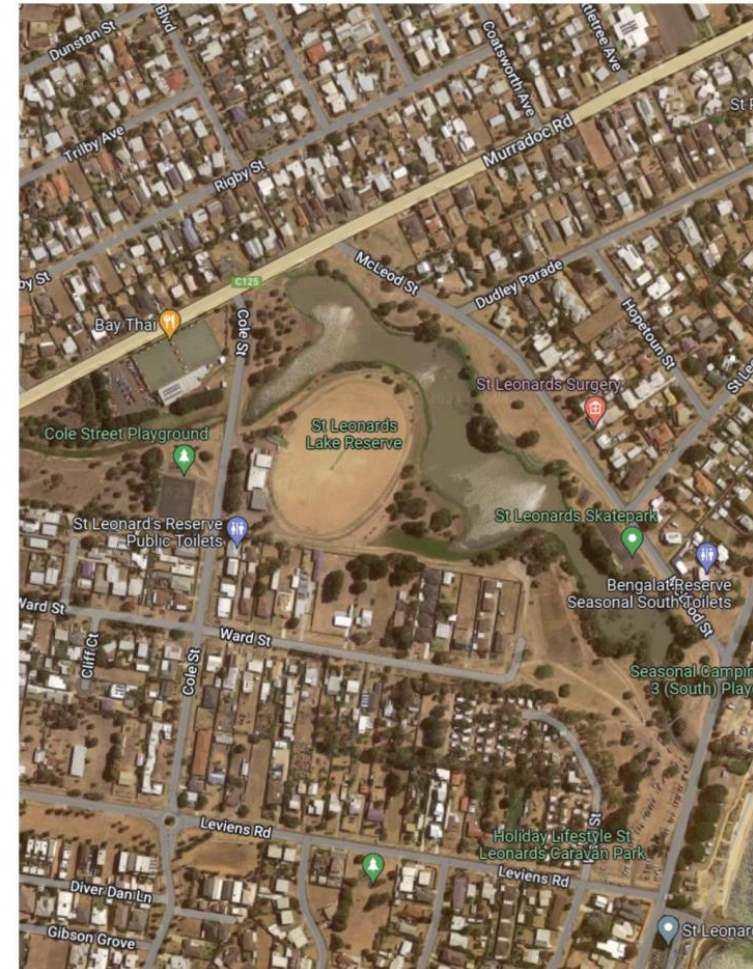
Off-lead Dog Area



Sport Facilities



Playground



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A1.5 COBURG LAKE RESERVE

TOTAL AREA

14ha / 141700m²

KEY FACTS

- Managed by Merri-bek City Council
- Artificial lake created by the construction of a weir on Merri Creek
- District level open space
- Contains BBQ, all abilities playground, nature play, bocce court

ACTIVITIES / USES

Outdoor Recreation

- Gym Equipment
- Playground
- Bocce Court

Facilities

- Picnic Tables
- BBQ
- Toilets
- Shelters

Daily Use

- Dog Walking
- Cycling
- Running

Water Play

- Canoeing

Ecology

- Wetland Ecology
- Nature Play



Wetland



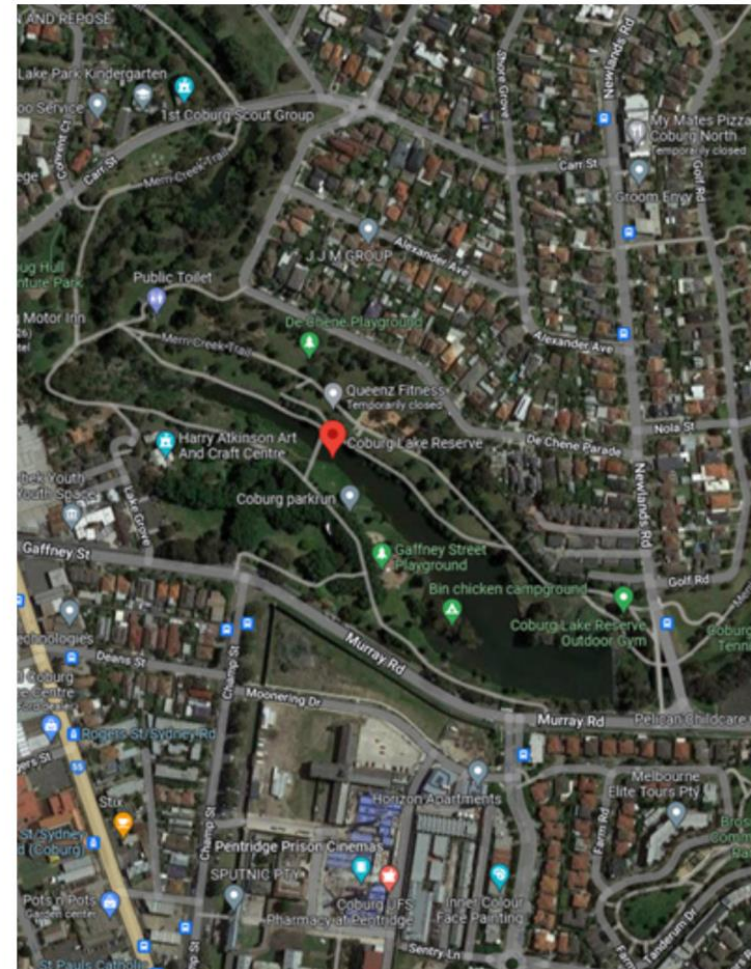
Outdoor Gym



Wildlife Island



Concert Stage



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A1.6 EDWARDES LAKE

TOTAL AREA

26ha / 260000m²

KEY FACTS

- Managed by City of Darebin
- Second largest urban lake in Melbourne Metropolitan Area
- Artificial lake formed by damming Edgars Creek
- Regional level open space
- Contains off-lead dog area, athletic track, sports clubs, all abilities playground and skate park
- Master Plan completed in 2009 by Rush Wright Associates with the lake envisioned as the regional destination for the northern suburbs
- Social group "Friends of Edwardes Lake / Edgars Creek Wetlands" is established for the benefit of the Lake

ACTIVITIES / USES

Outdoor Recreation

- Gym equipment
- 2x Playgrounds
- Athletics track

Facilities

- Picnic Tables
- BBQ
- Shelter
- Toilets
- Off-lead Dog Area
- Skate park

Daily Use

- Dog Walking
- Cycling
- Running

Ecology

- Wetland Ecology

Events

- Community Festivals



Wetland Ecology



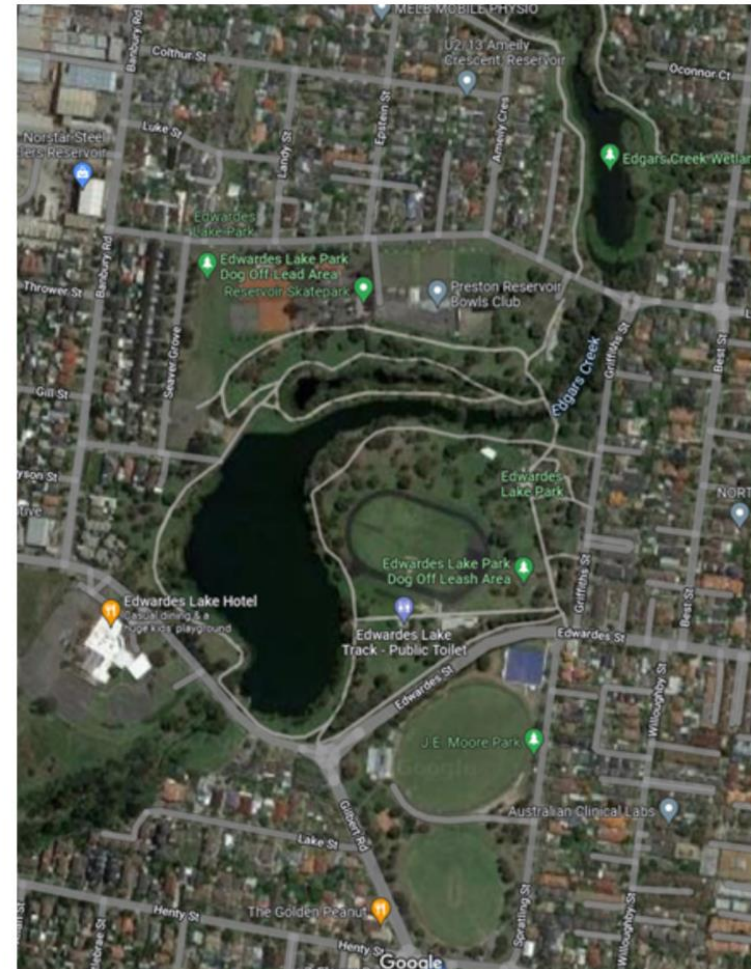
Steam Locomotive on Display



Outdoor Gym



Playground



T.C.L

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1.7 LAKE WENDOUREE

TOTAL AREA

238ha / 2380000m²

KEY FACTS

- Managed by City of Ballarat
- Artificial lake created by damming wetlands
- Regional level open space / destination
- Contains 6km walking track and 2km rowing course
- Home of rowing in 1956 Olympics
- Was fully dried up in 2006 and 2011 during drought period
- Master Plan completed in 2017 by City of Ballarat and Urban Initiatives

ACTIVITIES / USES

Outdoor Recreation

- Gym Equipment
- Playground
- 6km Running Track
- Peddle Boat Hire

Facilities

- Picnic Tables
- BBQ
- Restaurants / Cafes
- Toilets

Daily Use

- Dog Walking
- Cycling
- Running

Water Play

- Rowing
- Fishing
- Sailing

Ecology

- Wetland Ecology
- Nature Play

Others

- Botanical Garden



Lakeside



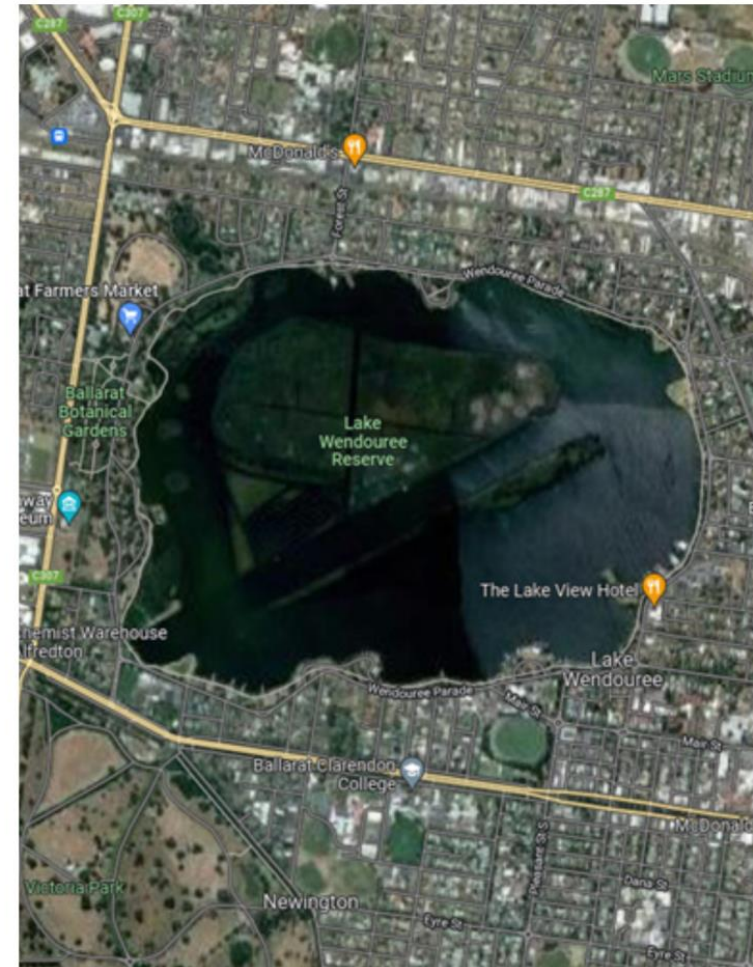
Nature Trail



Playground



Rowing



TOTAL AREA
11.6ha / 116000m²

- Managed by Hepburn Shire Council
- Artificial lake formed by damming wetlands in 1927
- Former site of gold digging and a Chinese market garden
- Regional destination

Outdoor Recreation

- Gym equipment
- Playground

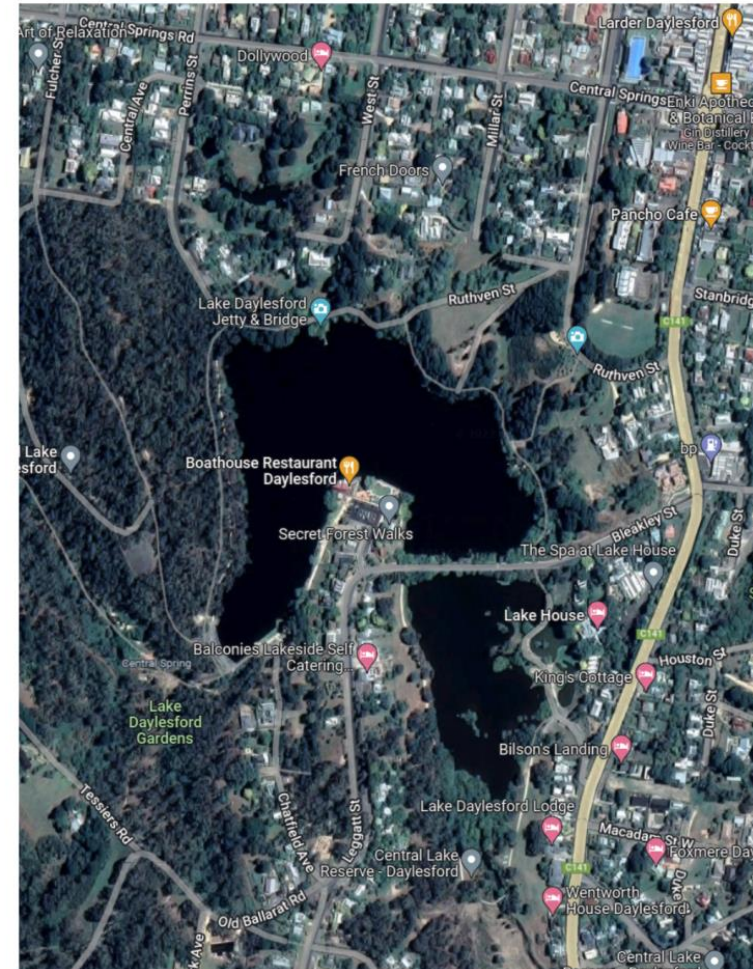
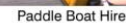
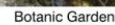
- Picnic Tables
- BBQ
- Shelters
- Restaurants / Cafes
- Toilets

- Dog Walking
- Cycling
- Running

- Swimming
- Paddle Boat Hire
- Fishing

- Wetland Ecology

- Botanical Garden



T.C.L

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1.8 LAKE WEEROONA

TOTAL AREA

18ha / 180000m²

KEY FACTS

- Managed by City of Greater Bendigo
- Artificial lake created on former mine, designed by William Guilfoyle in 1878
- Regional level open space
- Master Plan completed in 2011

ACTIVITIES / USES

- Outdoor Recreation
 - Gym Equipment
 - Playground

Facilities

- Picnic Tables
- BBQ
- Shelters
- Toilets

Daily Use

- Dog Walking
- Cycling
- Running

Water Play

- Rowing
- Fishing

Ecology

- Wetland Ecology
- Educational



Rowing



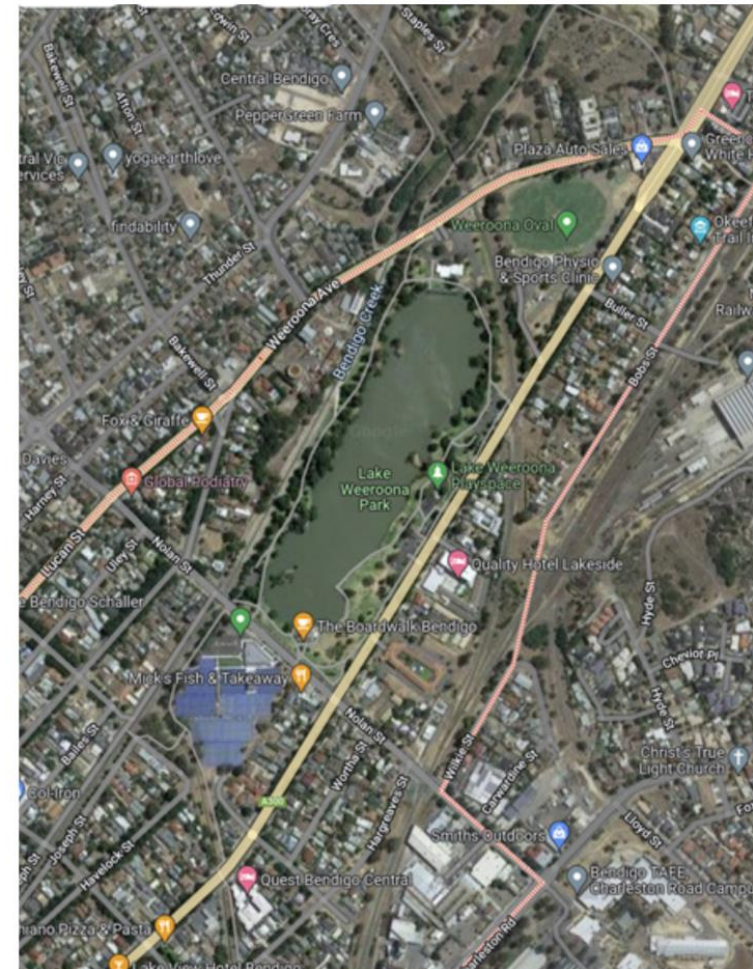
Wetland Education



Playground



Cycling





APPENDIX 2.0 CONSULTATION FEEDBACK

Community consultation is a key component in the development of the Lake Caroline Master Plan and Activation Strategy. As the lake holds significance to the local community, it is critical to listen and understand their opinion, and incorporate their knowledge into the development.

Multiple consultation sessions had been carried out, with the detailed analysis being included in this appendix.

"It is a great community asset that could be improved to make it even better for everyone living in our community. It is great that you are consulting the community about what can be done and what they want to see down at Lake Caroline."

- Survey response from a local resident

A2.1 USER

The online survey provides key information on the users' demography and their activity statistic, summarised as follows:

- Most respondents are at their early 30s to late 40s
- Most respondents are female
- Most visitors live within 2km from Lake Caroline Reserve; half of the respondents reside in Caroline Springs
- A large majority of respondents travel to Lake Caroline by foot or by car
- Most respondents visit the Lake either daily or weekly
- Most respondents spend 15 mins to 1 hour in Lake Caroline Reserve
- Many respondents come with their children; other respondents come with their family members or by themselves
- Most users visit the Lake for exercising; appreciating nature; appreciating scenic views; and children's play

The profile of the respondents reflects the following findings:

USER BACKGROUND

- 91.6% of the respondents are aged 30 or above. This implies the survey outcome does not have strong associations with the younger community, who might not have access or unable to respond to the online survey.
- 63.1% of the respondents are identified as female, reflecting the opinions particularly associated with female.
- 80% of the respondents live within 2km from Lake Caroline Reserve. However some respondents were willing to travel to Lake Caroline from suburbs beyond the 5km radius, including St Albans, Melton, Tarnet and Ardeer.

TRAVEL & TIME SPENT ON SITE

- 54.1% of the respondents walk to Lake Caroline and 44.6% drive, revealing the Lake is largely accessed by foot or car.
- 53.8% of the respondents visit Lake Caroline regularly, varying from daily to weekly. It indicates a strong consistent population using the Lake.
- 62.9% of the respondents spend 15 minutes to an hour in Lake Caroline Reserve. However, during both online and in-person consultation, the respondents mentioned they would like to spend more time in the Lake (more than an hour) if more reasons are provided.

NATURE OF VISITS

- 70.9% of the respondents visit the Lake with family, whether that be with other adults, children or the whole family. This data indicates the respondents are expecting having activities and facilities for all ages and abilities.
- 18% of the respondents use the Lake when they are by themselves indicating there are needs for independent activities and safety.
- 33.3% of the respondents visit the Lake to appreciate the nature and surrounding views, highlighting that the habitats and natural elements as key elements to draw people to the Lake.
- 28.1% of the respondents visit the Lake for exercise, reflecting an importance to reify running and exercise infrastructure.
- 9% of the respondents visit the Lake for events but many suggested that more events would help increasing their tendency to visit the Lake.



A2.2 ACTIVATION-RELATED OPINION

Activation around the precinct has been spatially identified by community members through City of Melton's online interactive comment map. Combining this with high ranking survey data, the following activation hotspots have been identified along Lake Caroline's edge.

An Unique Events Destination

A artful space for community and council led events including music, markets and pop up food stalls to occur.

Something that will draw people from neighboring localities to visit.

The lake is unique to Caroline springs, the community want to activate it.

88.62% of survey participants selected markets as an important feature to see on the Lake.

An Accessible Place to Play and Connect

Upgrading playgrounds and incorporating a fenced off leash dog area to allow children of all ages and abilities to play amongst the Lake has been identified amongst all consultation sessions.

23% of survey participants commented on upgrading playgrounds as well as comments for upgrades mentioned in consultation with Project working group, Counsellors and community consultation sessions.

Introducing BBQs and picnic facilities to encourage community member to spend more time on the lake, connecting with family and friends has also been identified as important through survey data.

High Interest in Outdoor Cinema and Artificial Beach

Events, festivals and occasions are identified as key drivers to activate the Lake.

Furthermore **66.67%** of community members surveyed desire after dark activities which includes outdoor cinemas and moonlight boating.

72% of users mentioned dining out as their main reason for visiting Lake Caroline.

30% of survey participants have identified Floating bars and restaurants as their number one preference of what they would like to see on the lake - the highest ranking preference in this question.

"It's a perfect area for more arts engagement. Perhaps an art trail around the Lake. At the moment it is just town houses with one big tap. It would be great to get more interesting structures around the lake to lead a trail and celebrate the aesthetic."

"Ability for tables and chairs to sit by the lake - in the warmer months would be nice to have a coffee van there, so u can go for your walk and then sit and have a coffee. Consider having entertainment certain time of the day ie singer or table with games ie chess"

" The lake is under utilised as no watersports are available..

"... buskers and free live entertainment..."

"It would be great to make it a destination that allows you to stay longer after walking around the lake."

"More interactive play spaces around the lake would be welcomed (eg musical activities) or more toddler friendly equipment in the playground."

"Multi level shipping container event space community feel for the young professionals and young families in the area - public space with pop up shops open for vendors to lease containers and public benches for food and drink shade from the sun as well as open air spaces. Also a space to listen to live music and big screens for sporting and national event."

"A multi use recreational space for music events/stallholders/food vendors alike. Could be a cost effective option like a shipping container (refer to Sunshine Social) or Boxpark - there are benches/large tvs/beanbags for film event nights/food vendors and a DJ 'booth'. This would be fantastic for all ages, especially young adults as we need to travel out of the city via Vline for a night out. The Vline service is irregular and not accessible (would need to get an uber to the station twice if you plan to drink). It would be so nice to be able to walk to the lake on a Friday night and have events hosted in this space. Sport screenings/ karaoke nights/film nights/music nights w/ a DJ/ food stalls and pop up markets. The space would already be there and could create diverse opportunities. This will also bring people to the area."

"As a resident of Caroline Springs and a mother of two children under the age of 10 I cannot stress how much this current playground needs improvement. It would be lovely to have a new, fun... playground in Caroline Springs"

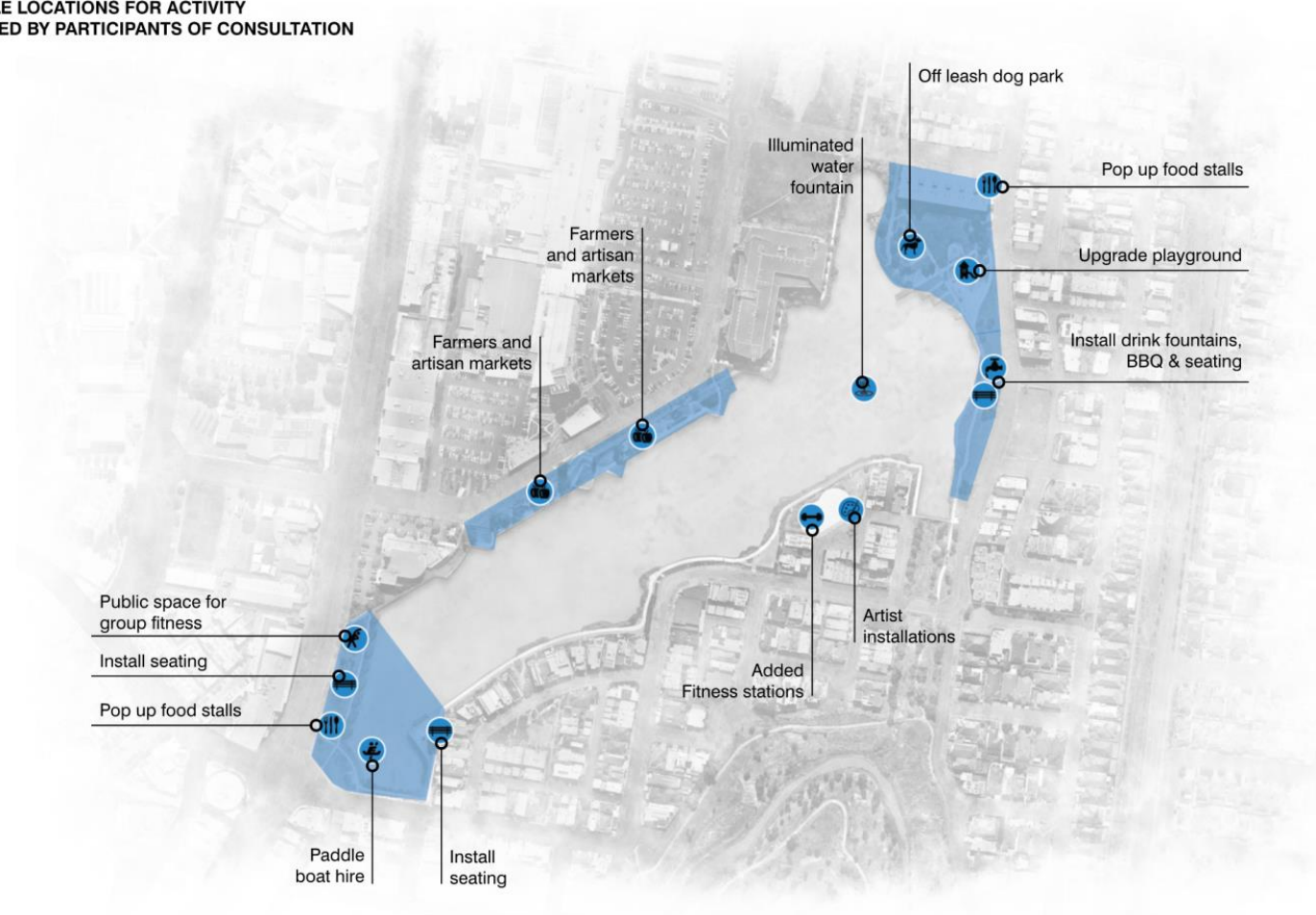
- Survey response from a local resident

T.C.L

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POSSIBLE LOCATIONS FOR ACTIVITY IDENTIFIED BY PARTICIPANTS OF CONSULTATION



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A2.3 ECOLOGY-RELATED OPINION

Ecology is one of the main concerns raised by the participants, which the presence and protection of wildlife and lack of vegetation are among the items most frequently mentioned.

An Ecological Habitat

Introducing vegetation to encourage more wildlife back to the lake aligns with user interests of Lake Caroline. The provision of educational opportunities and observation on wildlife is also preferred.

64.33% of survey participants identified their main reason for visiting the lake is to appreciate nature and scenic views.

A Clean Environment for Wildlife and Residents

Water quality to be monitored as it is cited as one of the major factor influencing the perception of the Lake as well as for the quality of wildlife habitat.

15% of participants across the City of Melton Survey, Community Consultation and Intercept interview sessions all mentioned their desire for a cleaner, nicer smelling and more beautiful lake.

A Site Connected to the Water

More opportunities to connect with the water itself. Floating berms, paddle boats, upgraded boardwalks, revegetation of the edge of the lake

A Place of Rest and Respite

Seating, shade to facilitate community members to rest amongst the natural features of Lake Caroline.

"In the past there were a lot more birds on and around the lake, and birds and frogs in the Wetlands. The whole area needs to be weeded, and dead plants and rubbish removed to improve water quality and attract the wild life back to the area."

"There are almost no trees around the lake which makes it quite hot to run around during Summer."

"Protected Nature observation space for local wildlife."

"Add additional habitat for wildlife"

"More consideration to the local wildlife needs to be put in place."

"Protect the wildlife which is a draw card to the area. Higher level of water quality."

"Would like to see signs for vehicles to be aware of the wildlife around the lake such as "duck crossing" as there have been times where drivers do not slow down."

"Take better of the wildlife."

"Anything that supports and promotes the wildlife that lives there."

"Needs more trees, also could do with some potted trees along the residential side to pretty it up."

"Need more identifiable drinking fountains and seating around the lake. Whereas the whole loop is quite long to complete in one go, so providing somewhere for people to rest and take a break would be nice."

"Need more trees and flower gardens, regular cleaning both inside the lake and around the paths."

"More planting, more bird habitat. Bridge or boardwalk to feel engaged. Makes you feel connected to be on top of the water and engaged in the landscape."

"Just keeping the lake immaculate and clean. The lake is a leading and vibrant part of Caroline Springs and Melton municipality and should be well looked after"

"Make it a place where the community can come and get engaged in nature"

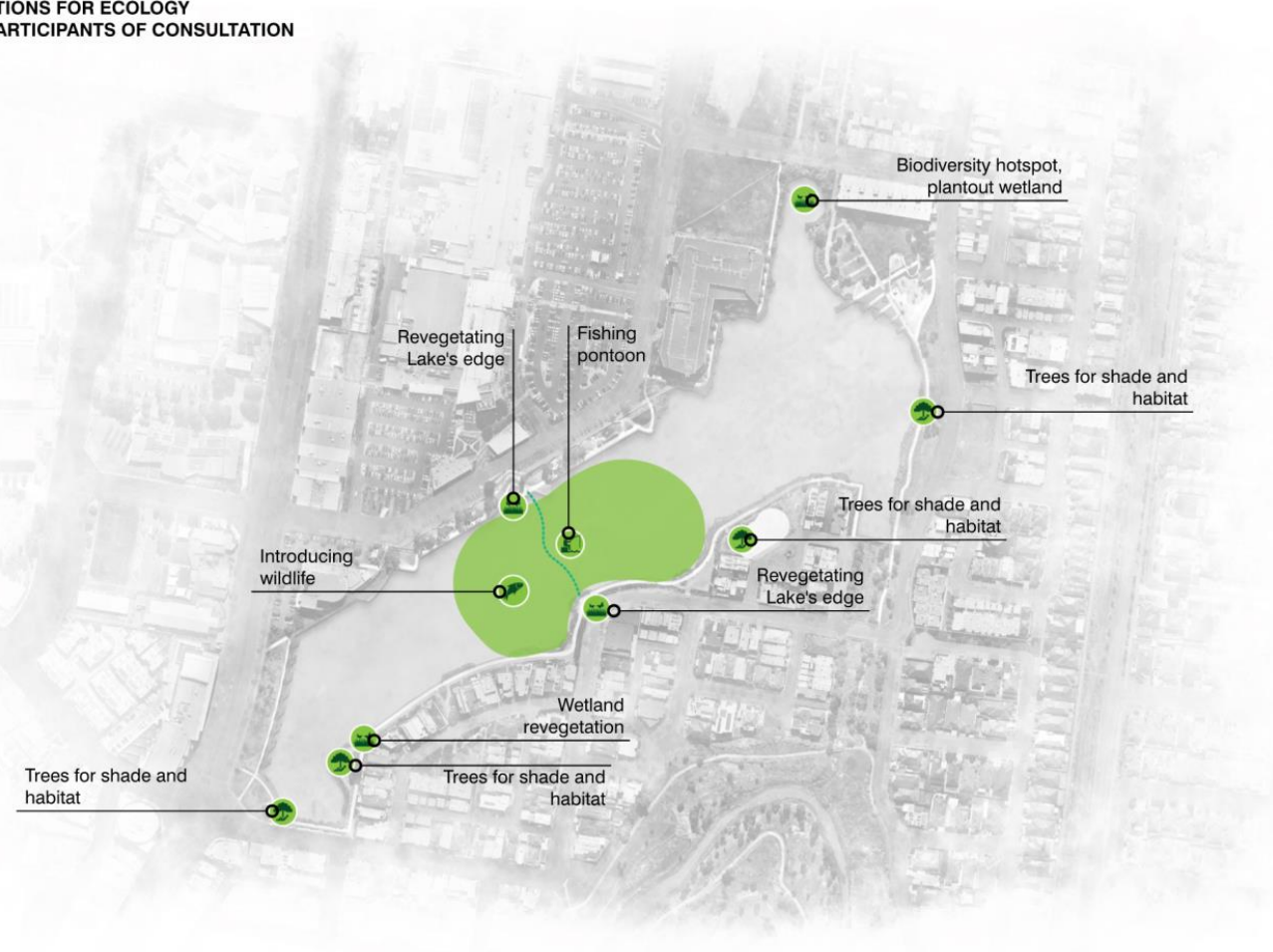
- Survey response from a local resident

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POSSIBLE LOCATIONS FOR ECOLOGY
IDENTIFIED BY PARTICIPANTS OF CONSULTATION





A2.4 CONNECTIONS-RELATED OPINION

Connections throughout Lake Caroline are looking to better connect the lake's edge to the environment as well as stitch the water with the greater suburban fabric.

Connecting the Kororoit Creek

Connections identified by survey participants include connecting the lake to Kororoit Creek better, which would provide better access to the residents who live further from the Lake.

Connecting the Lake Edge with the Water

19.61% of Survey participants identified their first choice for additional lake facilitates as Water Crossings (Including foot bridges and boardwalks). This was the third highest ranking before Rentable Boats (39.81%) and Floating Cafes (30.67%).

Connecting to the Greater Urban Fabric

Introduction of Slow Zone and signalised intersections has also been identified to make entering the Lake safer and easier from nearby areas.

"When the lake was constructed there was a causeway from near the corner of Lake St and the West Waters Hotel to the south side of the lake which separated the clean west part from the unfiltered east end. This was very useful from walkers who did not want to do the whole circuit of the lake, a pedestrian bridge at this point would be useful."

"When at the lake crossing from the shops through lake street to the lake can actually be difficult even with the pedestrian crossing. The road is busy and people will speed through it and even ignore people crossing."

"Intersection of Lake St and Caroline Spring boulevard is very busy during school hours and business hours."

"It could also do with a bridge as it takes a long time to get around, and it's disconnected to the shops."

"Most importantly for future elevation and access to the lake from surrounding areas, better connected paths throughout other areas to the lake ie. paths along Kororoit creek from Clarke Road Streamside Reserve and further into Kororoit creek regional park once completed."

"...bring the foot bridge back and possibly an island with a coffee shop plus an island for the birds to retreat to."

"Most importantly for future elevation and access to the lake from surrounding areas, better connected paths throughout other areas to the lake ie. paths along Kororoit creek from Clarke Road Streamside Reserve and further into Kororoit creek regional park once completed"

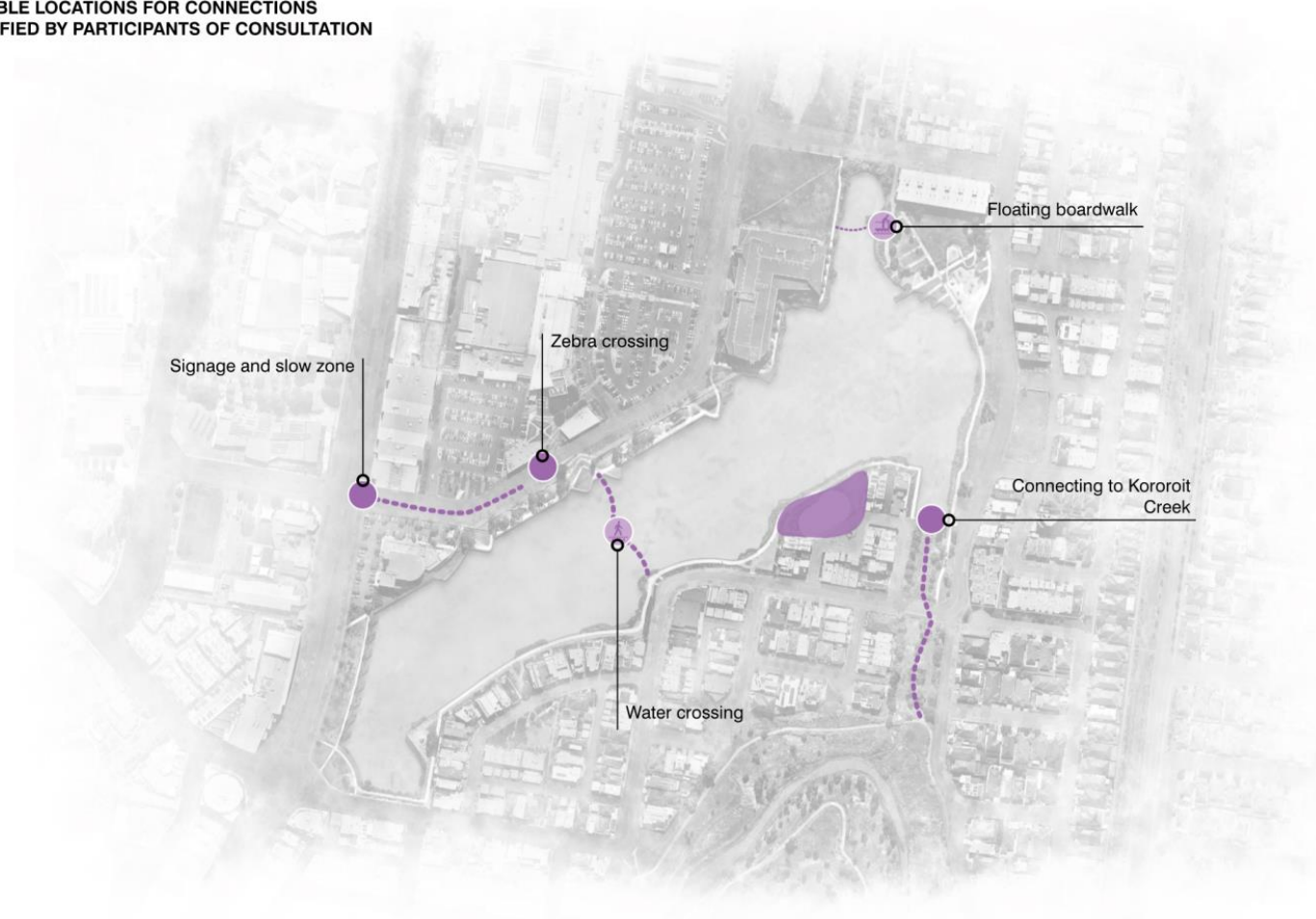
- Survey response from a local resident

T.C.L

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POSSIBLE LOCATIONS FOR CONNECTIONS
IDENTIFIED BY PARTICIPANTS OF CONSULTATION





3.0 SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS & REPORTS

The development of the Lake Caroline Master Plan and Activation Strategy is informed by many background study, survey, documents and reports. The Project Team wishes to acknowledge the assistance and contribution of the authors of the following documents and reports:

- City of Melton Playspace Strategy Background Analysis Report (Draft) - Bricolage Design 2019
- Active Transport: Children and Young People - VicHealth December 2009
- Lake Caroline Spillway Construction Documentation - Urbanedge Landscape Architects 2011
- Boathouse Reserve Assessment - City of Melton 2013
- Caroline Springs Promenade Landscape Documentation Package - Taylor Cullity Lethlean 2004
- Caroline Springs Lake Residential Wall Landscape Documentation - Land Projects & Cardno 2009
- Lake Caroline Construction Documentation Package - Earth Tech 2002
- Open Space Asset Management Plan - City of Melton
- Caroline Springs Boulevard Traffic Survey - City of Melton 2022
- Caroline Springs Town Centre Comprehensive Development Plan - Delfin Limited 2000
- Mobile Food Vehicle Policy - City of Melton 2022
- Open Space Plan 2016 - 2026 - Melton City Council 2016
- Open Space Plan 2016-2026 Background Report - Melton City Council 2016
- Safe City, Proud Communities Plan 2020-2024 - City of Melton
- Green Infrastructure, a vital step to Brilliant Australian cities - Aecom 2017
- Landscape Guidelines for the Shire of Melton - Melton City Council 2010
- Urban Design Guidelines for Victoria - Victoria State Government Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning 2017
- Kororoit Creek Regional Strategy 2005-2030 - Land Design Partnership Pty Ltd 2006
- Lake Caroline Operation & Maintenance Manual and Dam Safety Emergency Plan - GHD 2013

12.2 DRAFT MELTON WEIR PARKLAND STRATEGY

Author: Jeanette Simson - Coordinator Open Space Planning

Presenter: Sam Romaszko - Director City Futures

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To consider the Draft Melton Weir Parkland Strategy and endorse the Strategy for consultation.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council endorse the Draft Melton Weir Parkland Strategy, provided as **Appendix 1** to this report for consultation between 19 April and 6 May 2024.

Motion

Crs Shannon/Ramsey.

That Council endorse the Draft Melton Weir Parkland Strategy, provided as **Appendix 1** to this report for consultation between 19 April and 6 May 2024.

CARRIED

REPORT

1. Executive Summary

The Draft Melton Weir Parkland Strategy (**Appendix 1**) commenced in October 2022. The Draft Strategy provides direction on the future development of the parkland. Recommendations for amenity and infrastructure improvements have been provided with delivery responsibility outlined in the implementation plan. The objective is to improve access and opportunities for passive recreation, increasing visitation and transforming the weir into a recreational drawcard for Melton and the broader metropolitan area.

The initial stage of the project involved a detailed site assessment and background analysis. Consultation on the existing uses, constraints and opportunities was undertaken. The feedback from the consultation activities guided the development of strategic plans and recommendations contained within the Strategy.

Community consultation on the Draft Strategy is proposed to occur from 19 April through to 6 May 2024 and will include corflutes and posters at key locations around the weir, distribution of letters, social media and web content and supporting material.

2. Background/Issues

Background and History

The study area for the Melton Weir Parkland Strategy extends along the north-western interface of the Melton Reservoir from the western edge of the Scenic Botanica residential development (193-295 Brooklyn Road, Brookfield) to the southern end of the Weir at the Exford Road bridge. Land located within the water body extent and around the weir/dam wall is owned and managed by Southern Rural Water. The majority of the land along the proposed parkland is still under private ownership, with Council owned land located around the Arnolds Creek confluence and the recently handed over Toolern Waters Estate.

The Melton Reservoir Development Strategy, adopted by the Shire of Melton in 2005, envisioned Melton Reservoir to be a significant recreational and environmental asset.

The Development Strategy sought to:

- Address public access issues through the creation of a key recreation node at the Arnolds Creek Confluence; as well create a number of secondary picnic nodes at other key road access points.
- Establish a linear parkland between the Reservoir and future residential development.
- Enhance the existing Southern Rural Water (SRW) picnic facility off Exford Road.

Following the creation of the Growth Areas Authority (later known as VPA) by the State Government under the 2005 - A Plan for Growth Areas, the Toolern PSP was Gazetted in 2010. This provided a framework for the development of the land to the north and west of the reservoir. The Toolern PSP earmarked a linear open space reserve between the edge of the Reservoir and the newly planned development.

A committee was initially created in February 2013 and reinstated prior to the commencement of the project to provide a forum for communication between the Reservoir's primary stakeholders (Southern Rural Water and Melbourne Runabout and Speedboat Club) and Council. The committee has played a critical role in the development of the Draft Strategy.

In July 2022, Council appointed project consultants to prepare the Melton Weir Parkland Strategy. They have since undertaken extensive background research and community, stakeholder and Committee engagement. This work has directly informed the development of the Draft Melton Weir Parkland Strategy.

The project consists of five stages:

Stage 1	Inception
Stage 2	Analysis
Stage 3	Consultation and Stakeholder Engagement
Stage 4	Draft Strategy
Stage 5	Final Strategy

The Strategy is now in Draft form and Officers are seeking input via community consultation on this document. Following consultation, the document may be amended to address matters raised through consultation. The final document will seek endorsement at a future Council meeting. Details of the proposed community consultation activities are referenced on Section 5.

3. Council and Wellbeing Plan Reference and Policy Reference

The Melton City Council 2021-2025 Council and Wellbeing Plan references:

3. A fast growing, innovative and well-planned City

3.1 A City of 20-minute neighbourhoods.

4. Financial Considerations

To date, budget has been provided for the development of the Strategy. Funding associated with the implementation of actions within the Strategy will be considered as part of Councils annual budget process.

5. Consultation/Public Submissions

5.1 Preliminary consultation

The first round of community and stakeholder consultation, undertaken in 2023 sought feedback on the existing uses, issues, and opportunities associated with the Melton Weir Parkland. Activities included Committee meetings, a face to face consultation session at the Weir Views linear reserve, an online survey and social media content and a resident mailout. In total, 378 responses were received.

5.2 Upcoming consultation

The second round of consultation on the Draft Melton Weir Parkland Strategy is scheduled from 19 April to 6 May 2024. Residents and stakeholders will be encouraged to provide feedback via the following activities and channels.

- Letters to residents and stakeholder organisations
- Committee engagement
- Melton conversations page update and comments page
- Social media posts
- Print advertisement to be provided at key locations around the lake.
- Postcards at key community activity centre locations and local businesses
- Postcard mailout to local residents
- Email updates to previous survey respondents as requested.

Following this second consultation period, the project consultants and Council officers will review and consider submissions in the development of the final version of the Strategy.

6. Risk Analysis

If Council does not proceed with the recommendations, planned consultation will not occur before the end of the year and would significantly extend the completion date.

Delayed approval of the Strategy will limit the ability for future works to occur as they are contingent on the adoption of the Strategy.

7. Options

Council has the option to:

1. Endorse the Draft Melton Weir Parkland Strategy for community consultation.
2. Endorse the Draft Melton Weir Parkland Strategy for community consultation with changes.
3. Defer consideration of the Draft Melton Weir Parkland Strategy to enable further options to be considered prior to community consultation.

LIST OF APPENDICES

1. Melton Weir Parkland Strategy (Draft)



DRAFT

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Melton City Council acknowledges First Nations peoples living and working in Melton. Council recognises the people of the Kulin Nations as the original custodians of the land now known as City of Melton. On behalf of the municipality, Council pays respect to their Elders, past, present and future.

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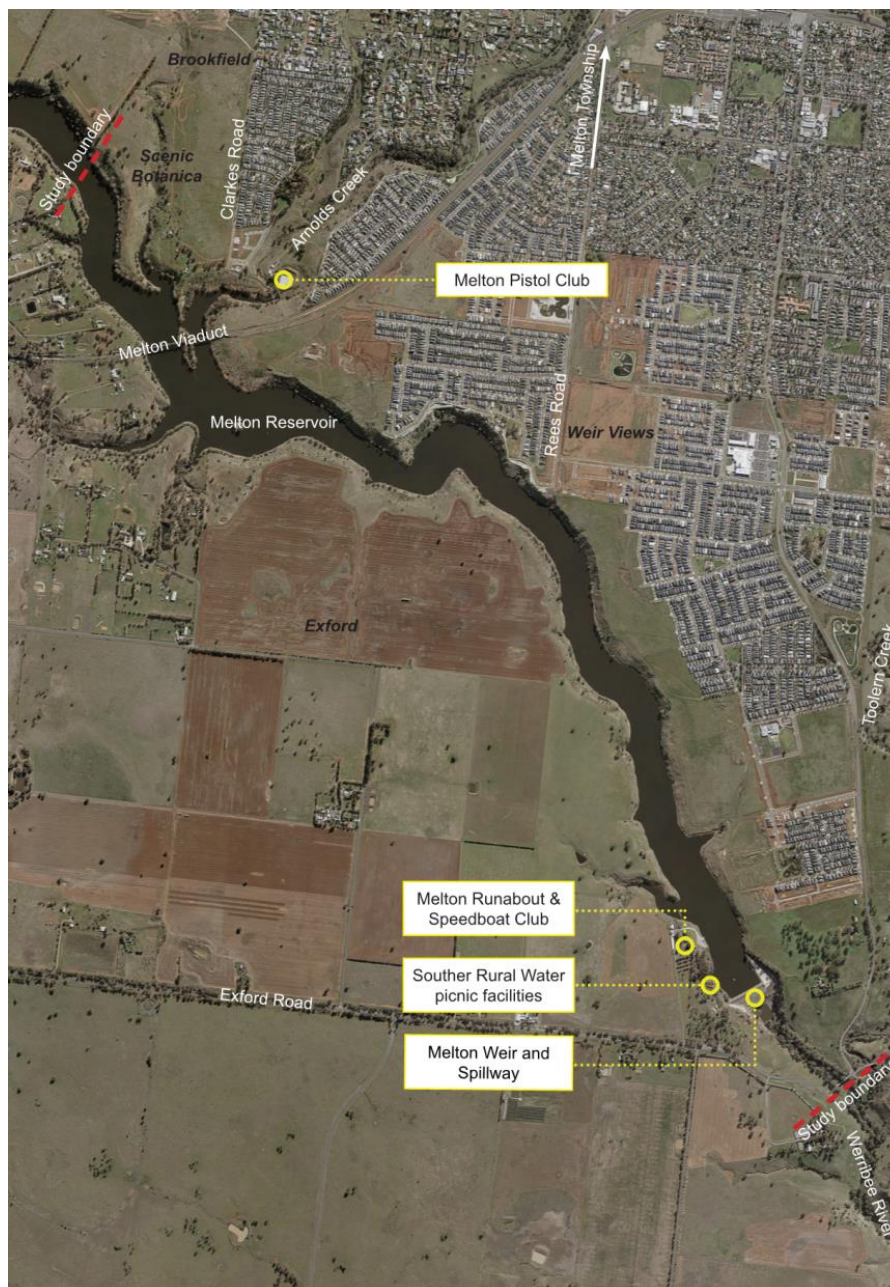
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fitzgerald
frisby
landscape
architecture

Due to the level of ongoing development surrounding Melton Weir, the Melton Weir Parkland strategy should be reviewed after 10 years

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1. Introduction

Background

The Melton Weir, also known as Melton Reservoir, is located to the south of the Melton Township. The City of Melton is one of the fastest growing municipalities in Australia, with the population forecast to grow from 209,145 in 2023 to 416,106 by 2051.¹ New suburbs are creating an urban interface along the north eastern edge of the weir including Weir Views and Brookfield. Rural and agricultural properties in Exford abut the western and southern edge of the weir.

The study area for the strategy extends from the western edge of the Scenic Botanica development the weir near the Exford Road bridge, including connections to Toolern Creek and Arnolds Creek.

The Melton Reservoir is managed by Southern Rural Water. The principal use of the reservoir is for water storage and supply for market gardens throughout the Werribee Irrigation District.

Fragmented land ownership and management presents a significant challenge between farmers, developers, Council and Southern Rural Water. There are issues with dumping and other antisocial activities especially in the area near the end of Clarkes Road.

The Melton Runabout & Speedboat Club (MRSBC) and the Melton Pistol Club are located within the parkland strategy focus area. The MRSBC is located towards the southern end of the reservoir on the western bank. Club facilities include clubhouse, boat ramp and viewing areas. The MRSBC host motorboat racing events, including the national level the Melton Gold Cup, as well as fishing, water skiing, and wakeboarding². The MRSBC currently operates the only boat ramp in to the reservoir which is only accessible by club members. The Melton Pistol Club is located at the Arnolds Creek confluence. Access to the club is from the end of Clarkes Road. The club is currently closed as it undertakes a review of club operations. There are no plans to relocate the clubs from their existing locations as park of the parkland strategy.

Project Objectives

The objective of the Melton Weir Parkland Strategy is to outline the proposed development of the parklands along the edge of the Melton Reservoir to create a regional destination.

Project objectives are to:

- Identify recreational opportunities along the parkland interface to the reservoir
- Identify opportunities for recreation activities along to the waters edge within the Parklands
- Connecting the Parklands to broader linear open spaces
- Propose shared path connections to the reservoir and connections to the Melton Township, Eynesbury and Cobblebank Activity Centre.
- Develop a prioritised Action Plan including short and long term actions.

¹ City of Melton population forecasts, <https://forecast.id.com.au/melton>

² 'Notice Board' <https://www.mrsbc.com.au/water-skiing-fishing>



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Traditional Owners and Aboriginal communities

The Wirribi Yaluk (Werribee River) acts as a boundary between the Wurundjeri Woiwurrung People to the east and Wadawurrang People to the west. Further south along the Wirribi Yaluk is an intersection between the Wurundjeri Woiwurrung People, Wadawurrang People and Bunurong People.³

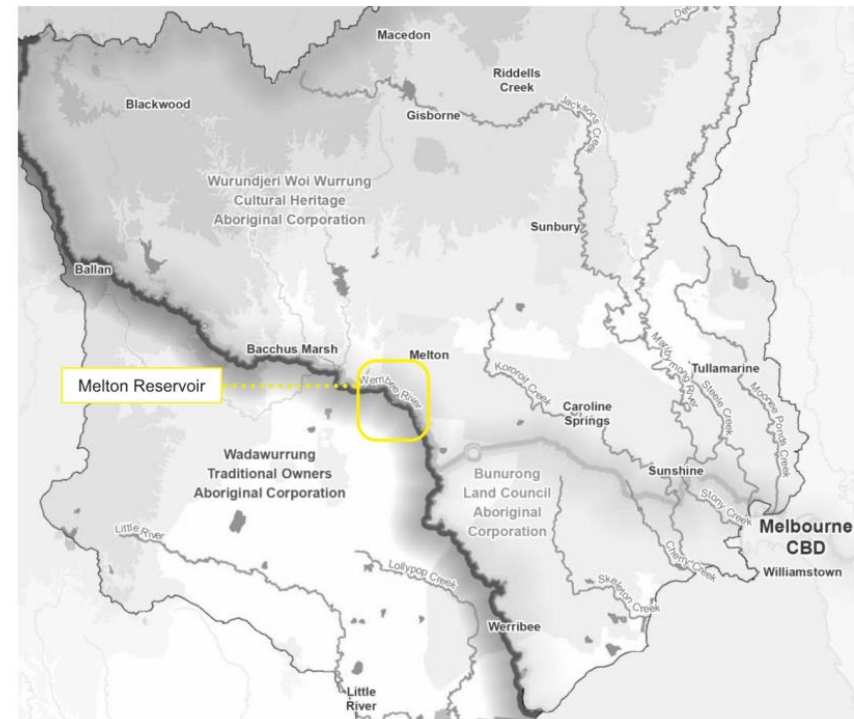


Fig. 1:1: Registered Aboriginal Party boundaries within Waterways of the West region.
Source: DECCA, 'Waterways of the West Action Plan', 2021

³ DECCA 'Waterways of the West Action Plan', 2021, p1

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History

In the late 1830s the now Melton area around the Werribee River functioned as a rural service centre for surrounding districts mainly used for grazing and farming. Growth in the area was largely due to the gold rush in the 1850s, followed by a second wave of expansion that took place from the 1890s into the early 1900s. This was mainly due to the construction of the railway line and the development of the Melton Reservoir.⁴

The reservoir was constructed between 1913 and 1916 with a capacity of 21,000 megalitres to be used for irrigation downstream at Werribee. In 1937, the embankment was raised and vertical lift spillway gates were installed to increase the capacity to 23,500 megalitres. Siltation has reduced its total volume back to 14,340 megalitres. From 1988 to 1994, additional upgrade works were undertaken included the remodeling of the spillway, removal of the flood gates, and the development of a second spillway.⁵



Fig. 1.2: Construction of the Melton Dam.
Source: State Library of Victoria, 1940's



Fig. 1.3: Arnolds Creek confluence map.
Source: State Library of Victoria, 1964



Fig. 1.4: Melton Reservoir.
Source: State Library of Victoria, 1900/1940

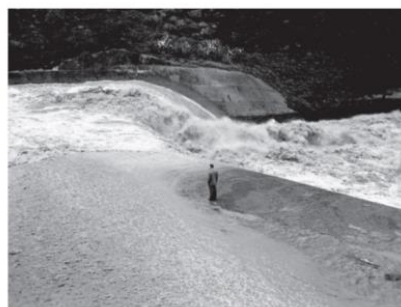


Fig. 1.5: Melton spillway and regulator gates.
Source: State Library of Victoria, 1954

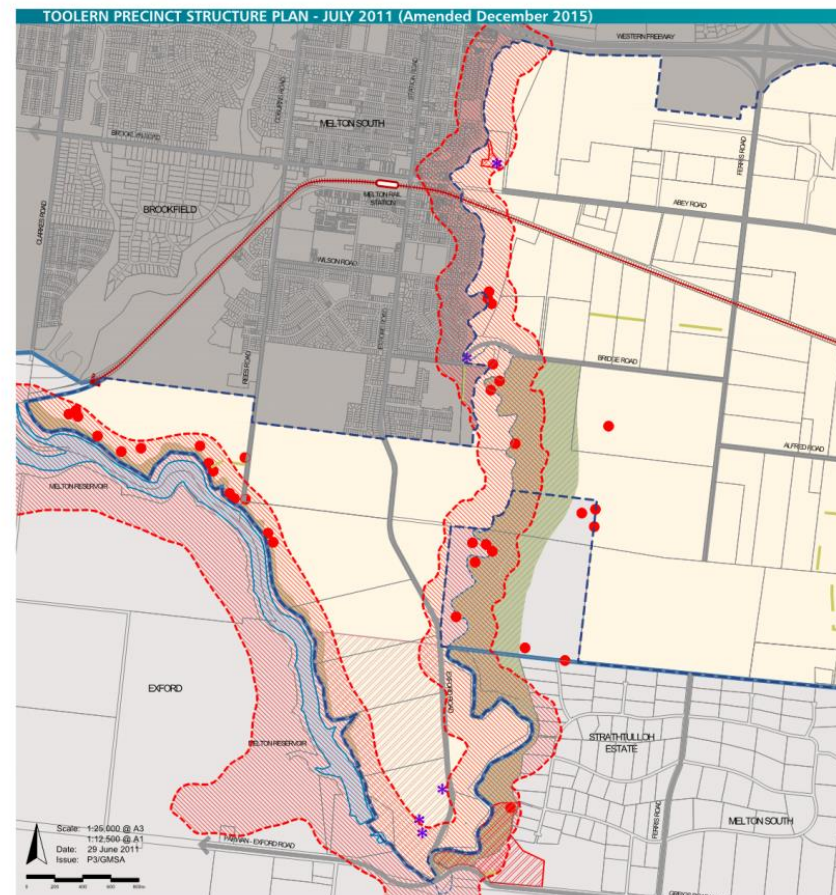


Fig. 1.6: Heritage Plan
Source: VPA, Toolern Precinct Structure Plan, 2011

⁴ Settlement history', <https://profile.id.com.au/melton/about>
⁵ 'History', <https://www.srw.com.au/water-and-storage/water-storages/melton-reservoir>

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Reservoir Water Storage

The Melton Weir is one of few permanent bodies of freshwater in the western region of metropolitan Melbourne. It is surrounded by steep, rocky escarpments for the majority of the reservoir edges.⁶ The water level fluctuates by up to 7 metres in height, reflecting the inconsistent rainfall in the area and irrigation demand.

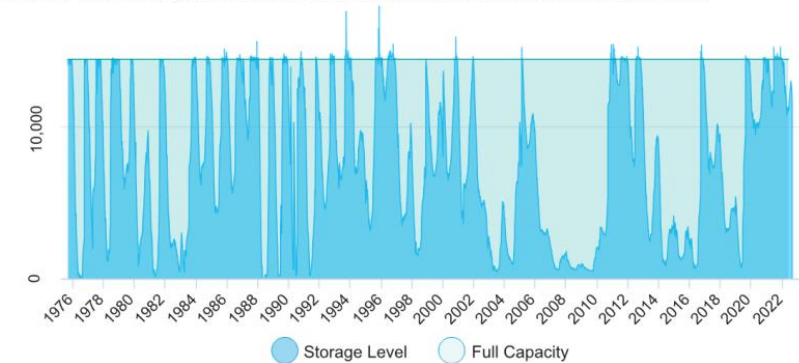


Fig. 1.7: Melton Reservoir water storage
Source: Southern Rural Water



Fig. 1.8: Low water storage along the escarpment overlooking Melton Reservoir in 2016.



Fig. 1.9: Fluctuation of water storage at the Arnolds Creek confluence.

6 Melton City Council, Melton Reservoir Development Strategy, 2005

2. Existing Conditions

The following photographs provide an overview of current site conditions.



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3. Strategic Context

The following is a summary of key documents that have informed the development of the Melton Weir Parkland Strategy.

The full summary of documents is included in Appendix A.

The Toolern Precinct Structure Plan (Victorian Planning Authority, 2011)

The Toolern Precinct Structure Plan (PSP) is a key influence of the Parkland Strategy. It defines the parkland boundary and has proposed recreation facilities including trails, neighborhood activity centres, open spaces, vegetation protection, location community facilities/schools, wetlands and waterways.

The PSP also includes the Melton Reservoir open space/ residential interface diagram. The diagram in Fig. 3.1 illustrates how the offset to residential development is determined along the interface with the Melton Reservoir. A 25m buffer zone from the top of the break of slope is proposed which includes the location of a shared trail and road reserve so residential lots overlook the Parklands.

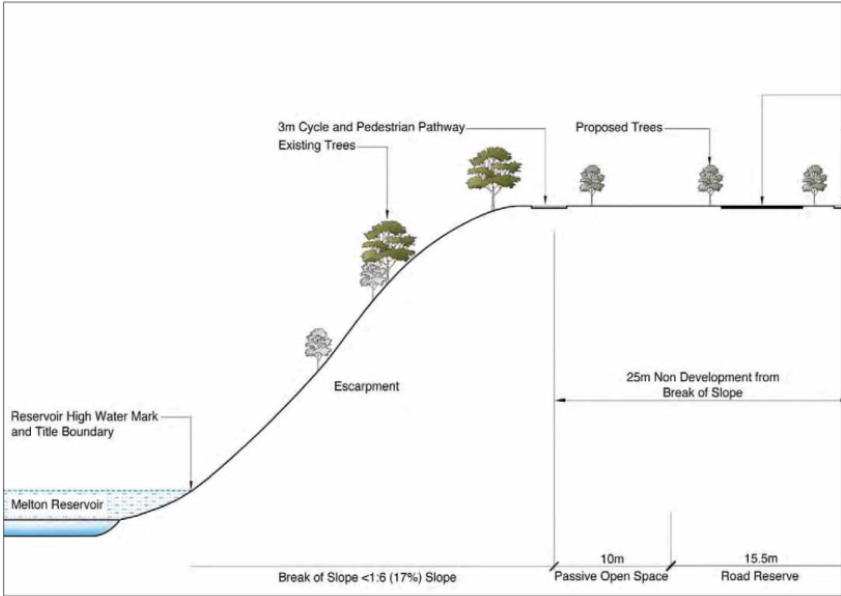


Fig. 3.1: Melton reservoir open space/residential interface.
Source: Toolern Precinct Structure Plan, 2011, p41

The Melton Reservoir Development Strategy (EDAW Gillespies, 2005)

This strategy recommends a shared path located within a linear park network extending along the eastern edge of the reservoir, linking to the regional open space network along the Werribee River and Djerriwarrh Creek. It also recommends linking the reservoir to the Melton Township.

The strategy proposes the creation of a district level recreation node located at the Arnolds Creek confluence, incorporating sealed roads and car parks, formal picnic areas, toilets, a playground and a launching area for non-motorised water craft. It also recommends a district level passive recreation reserve at the existing Southern Rural Water picnic facility including a viewing platform, upgraded picnic facilities and landscaped areas. It also proposes two local level nodes at Rees Road and Hopetoun Park Road.

The strategy recommends that a weed management plan is developed and implemented.

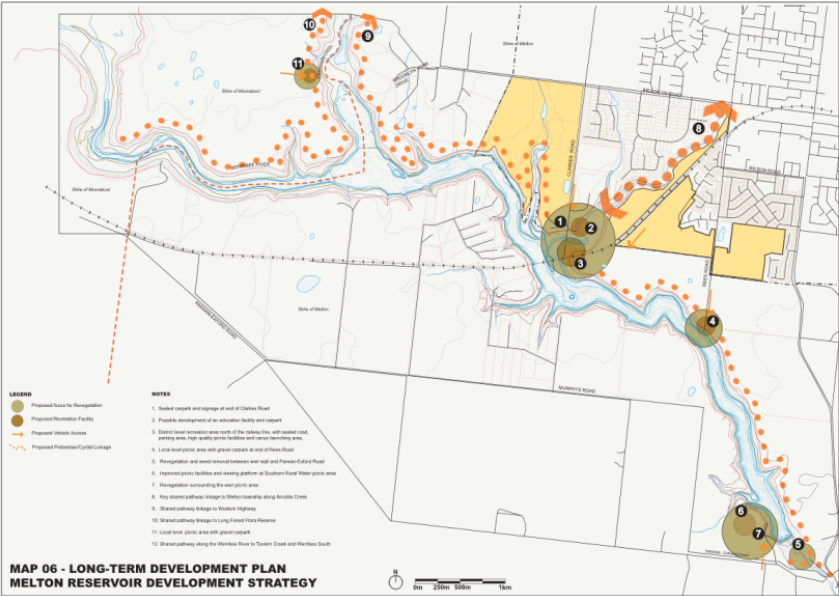


Fig. 3.2: Long-term development plan.
Source: Melton Reservoir Development Strategy, 2005, p39

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4. Consultation

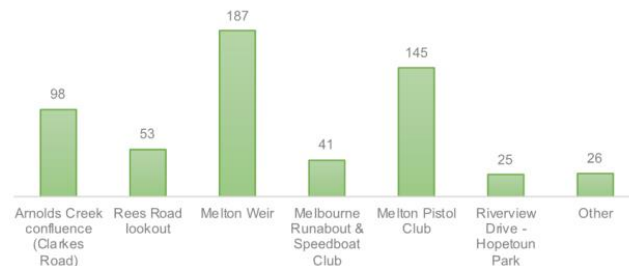
Community engagement for the Melton Weir Parkland Strategy was undertaken in two phases. The first phase of community engagement was completed in June 2023 and included the following:

- The Melton 'Have Your Say' page was publicly available from 24 April to 2 June 2023. The community was invited to provide feedback through the online survey. The survey received 1031 online views and 387 survey respondents.
- A project flyer with a QA code and links to the online survey was mailed to households within a 400m radius of the Melton Reservoir.
- On-site engagement session was held on 13 May 2023.
- 172 respondents registered for updates via the Melton Weir Parkland Strategy project website.

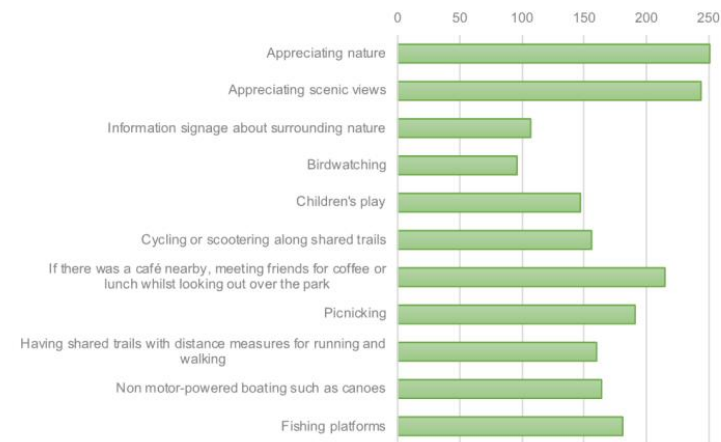


Fig. 4.1: On-site community consultation on 13th May 2023 at the shelter near the end of Rees Road

The online survey and on-site engagement session provided valuable insight into where visitors frequent the parklands, notably the Melton Weir and Arnolds Creek confluence (including the Melton Pistol Club).



The survey also provided information on the types of activities respondents wanted included in the parklands.



In addition to survey questions, the following is a summary of the key issues and opportunities raised by the community.

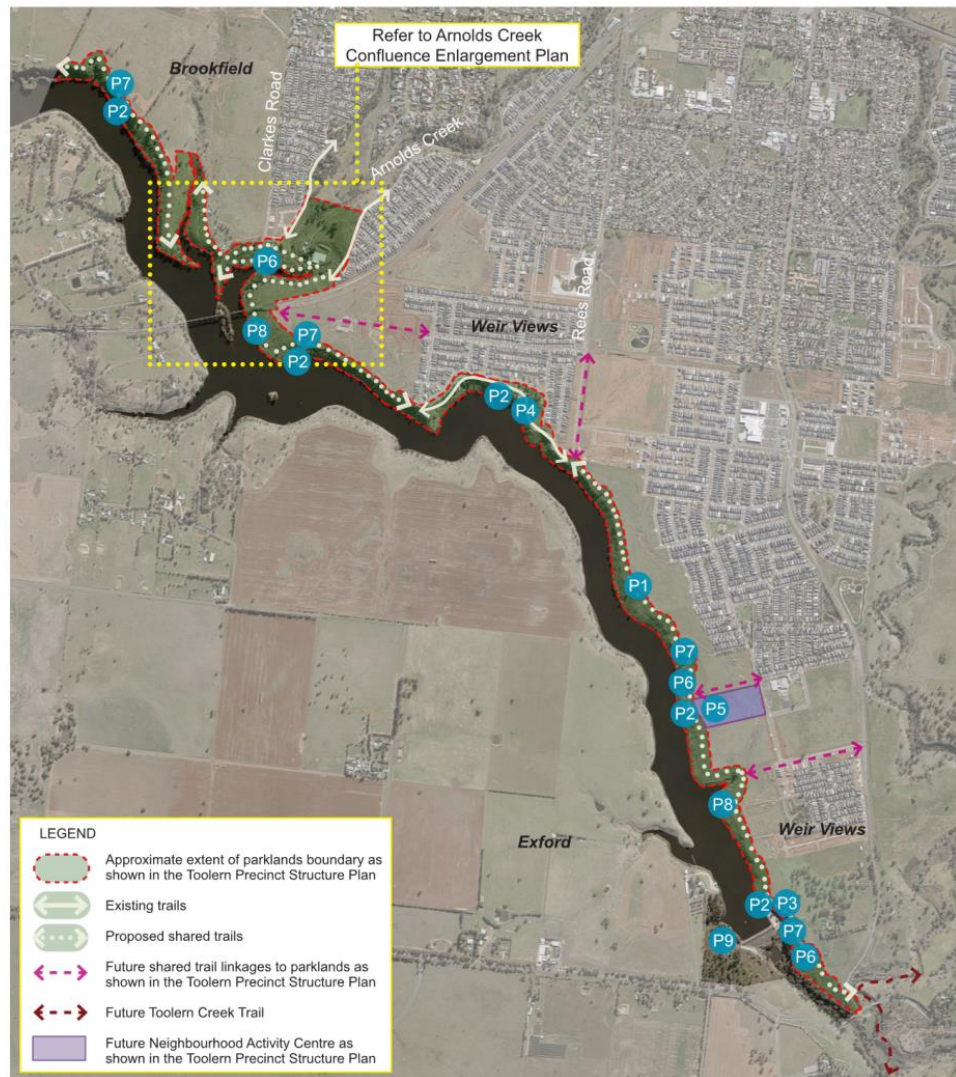
- There is a lack of viewing options such as lookouts at key scenic locations along the reservoir.
- All trails should be accessible along the eastern edge of the reservoir.
- There is currently low tree canopy cover and native vegetation throughout the parklands.
- There is no public access to water.
- There is no Wadawurrung and Wurundjeri Woiwurrung representation throughout the parklands.
- There is a preference for public access to the weir and spillway.
- Lack of public toilets.
- Opportunities for fishing platforms along the reservoir.
- Opportunities for public artwork.
- The inclusion of local groups to be involved in the management of the parklands
- Concerns of anti-social behaviour throughout the parklands
- Rubbish and dumping throughout the parklands
- There is a lack of signage to access the parklands

The following issues and opportunities raised during consultation have been taken into consideration and are not proposed to be included in the parklands.

- A designated dog off lead
- A designated area for events and festivals
- Public access to the weir and spillway
- Free camping spots along the reservoir edge

The community engagement summary is included in Appendix B

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5. Parkland Strategy

The Parkland Strategy has been developed following the review of site conditions and analysis of strategic documents, plans and strategies. Community and stakeholder engagement has also provided valuable insights on community aspirations for the Parkland.

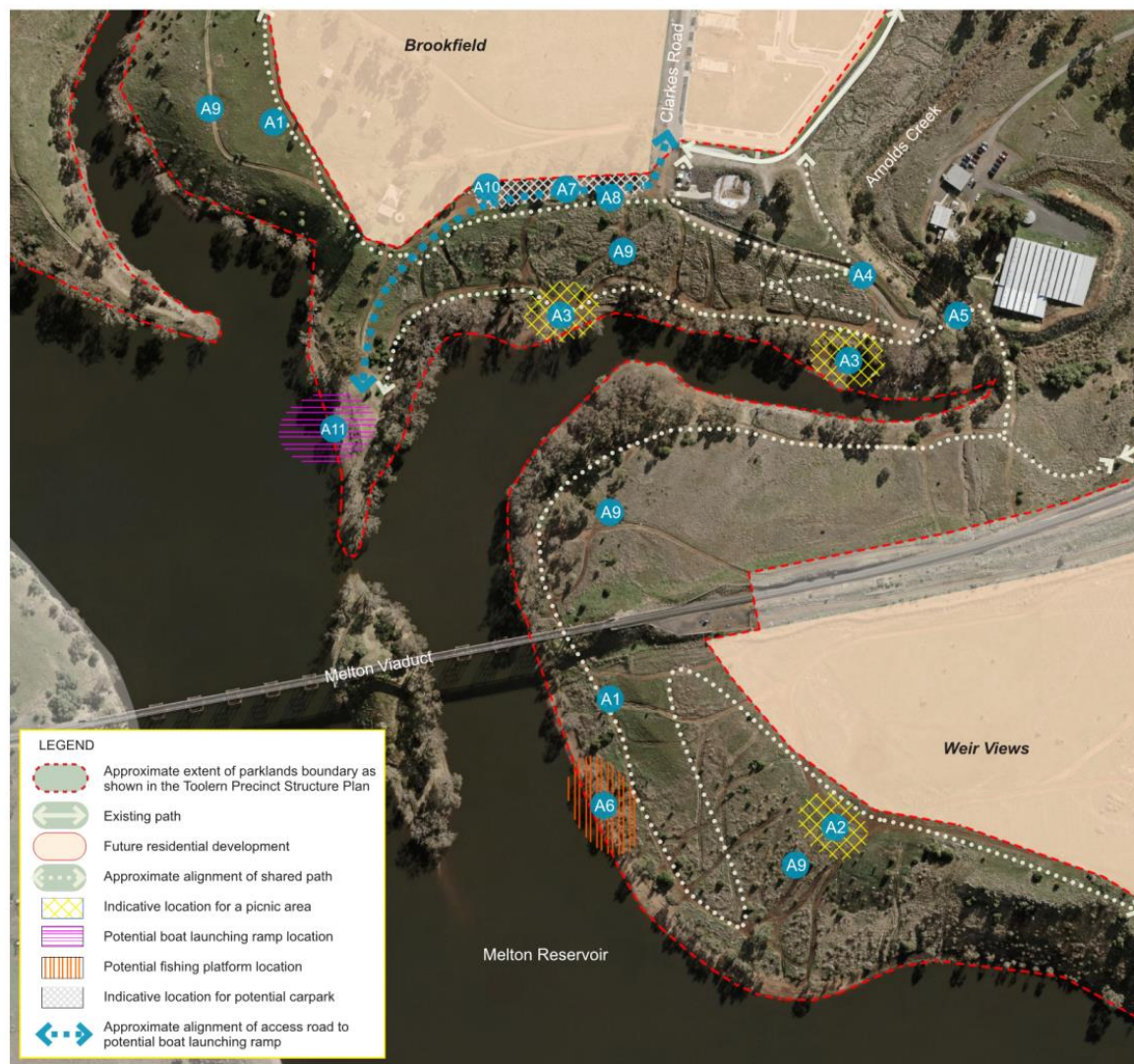
The following recommendations will assist the establishment of the Parklands that will be progressively constructed over time. Detail site investigations will be required to determine the final design of the Parkland elements.

- P1 Construct a continuous shared path along the eastern edge of the reservoir with connections to existing and future shared paths to the Melton Township, Eynesbury and Cobblebank Activity Centre.
- P2 Construct 5 viewing platforms at key locations along the parklands to enable visitors to enjoy views of the water and escarpments. Indicative locations include:
 - Brookfield,
 - Arnolds Creek confluence,
 - at the southern end of Rees Road,
 - near the future neighbourhood centre,
 - overlooking the weir and spillway in Weir Views.
- P3 Create a new picnic area on the east side of the weir near the spillway featuring a viewing platform, shelter, barbecues, picnic tables and bins.
- P4 Construct basketball half court in parklands at the southern end of Rees Road.
- P5 Investigate the potential location of a waterfront cafe with views over the water as part of the neighbourhood centre.
- P6 Install new play spaces. Indicative locations include:
 - at the southern end of Clarkes Road,
 - near the future neighbourhood activity centre,
 - near the weir wall.
- P7 Install 4 outdoor gyms in Brookfield, area south of the rail bridge, near the neighbourhood centre and near the weir
- P8 Investigate opportunities to install 2 fishing platforms in areas where the topography enables accessible grade paths to the waters edge. Proposed locations are the area south of the Melton Viaduct and the area to the south of the proposed neighbourhood activity centre
- P9 Decommission the Southern Rural Water picnic facilities and play space returning this area to maintenance and operations uses.

The following recommendations are not shown on the plan as final locations will be determined as part of detailed design.

- P10 Install bicycle repair stations at key locations along the shared trail and at the junction of connecting trails.
- P11 Install seating approximately every 250m along the parklands shared trail.
- P12 Increase tree canopy cover where appropriate to provide shade and shelter.
- P13 Install interpretive signage in key locations along the parkland trail. Signage to be in English, Woiwurrung and Wadawurrung text.
- P14 Implement wayfinding signage at key locations along shared path.
- P15 Review process of land management and maintenance to reduce rubbish and dumping as the Parklands and adjoining new residential developments are constructed.

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Arnolds Creek Confluence Plan

The Arnolds Creek confluence is proposed to be a key destination within the parklands. The following are proposed upgrades to this precinct.

- A1 Connect Weir Views and Brookfield with a shared trail.
- A2 Create a new picnic area along parkland interface in Weir Views featuring a viewing platform, shelter, barbecues, bins and picnic tables.
- A3 Create a new picnic area on the northern edge of the confluence in close proximity to disabled parking bays featuring a shelter, barbecues, bins and picnic tables.
- A4 Replace the existing access road and carpark at the end of Clarkes Road with accessible walking tracks. Access to the Pistol Club is to be retained from Hinkler Crescent.
- A5 Update the existing pedestrian bridge over Arnolds Creek to strengthen the trail connections within the Parklands and surrounding residential areas.
- A6 Investigate opportunities for fishing with the construction of fishing platform south of the Melton Viaduct in Weir Views.
- A7 Investigate car parking at the end of Clarkes Road.
- A8 Install bollards and fencing to contain access to formalised tracks and revegetate disturbed areas with locally indigenous plant species.
- A9 Revegetation existing escarpments with locally indigenous plant species.
- A10 Investigate public toilets at the end of Clarkes Road.
- A11 Support the study undertaken by Better Boating Victoria and Southern Rural Water in terms of provision of a potential boat launching ramp and vehicular access road at the end of Clarkes Road. The feasibility of a boat launch will be subject to detailed site investigations as well as consideration of the 'on water' safety issues.

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Parkland Furniture and Fencing

The following images are examples of the furniture and fencing proposed for the parklands.



Council standard seat



Council standard picnic table



Council standard bicycle hoops as installed in Weir Views



Fencing as installed in Weir Views



Double skillion roof shelter as installed in Weir Views



Council standard dual rubbish bins

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Precedent Imagery

The following images are examples of some of the recommendations proposed for the parklands.



Kanteen, South Yarra



Lake Caroline, Caroline Springs

Examples of riverside dining options to be explored as part of the Neighborhood Activity Centre.



Create recreation nodes with seating, shelter, bins, drinking fountain, fitness station and bicycle repair station at Wimbledon Blvd, Cobblebank



Example of a lookout and signage which could be installed on the edge of the escarpment at Farrans Lookout, Tintalra.

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6. Implementation

The following table outlines the actions along with their estimated implementation costs. The Melton Weir Parkland interface is included within the Toolern PSP which allows Council to lobby developers for the development of trails and associated infrastructure within their land. This study along with the PSP provides Council with information to ensure the parkland interface is strategically aligned, funded and delivered in accordance with the region's plans.

Parkland Plan

Item	Action	Delivery Responsibility		
		Council	Developer	SRW
P1	Construct a continuous shared path along the eastern edge of the reservoir with connections to existing and future shared paths to the Melton Township, Eynesbury and Cobblebank Activity Centre.	x	x	
P2	Construct 5 viewing platforms at key locations along the parklands to enable visitors to enjoy views of the water and escarpments. Indicative locations include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brookfield, • Arnolds Creek confluence, • at the southern end of Rees Road, • near the future neighbourhood activity centre, • overlooking the weir and spillway in Weir Views. 	x	x	
P3	Create a new picnic area on the east side of the weir near the spillway featuring a viewing platform, shelter, barbecues, picnic tables and bins.	x	x	
P4	Construct basketball half court in parklands at the end of Rees Road.	x		
P5	Investigate the potential location of a waterfront cafe with views over the water as part of the neighbourhood centre.	x	x	
P6	Install new play spaces. Indicative locations include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • at the southern end of Clarkes Road, • near the future neighbourhood activity centre, • near the weir wall. 	x	x	
P7	Install 4 outdoor gyms in Brookfield, area south of the rail bridge, near the neighbourhood centre and near the weir	x	x	
P8	Investigate opportunities to install 2 fishing platforms in areas where the topography enables accessible grade paths to the waters edge. Proposed locations are the area south of the Melton Viaduct and the area to the south of the proposed neighbourhood activity centre	x	x	x
P9	Decommission the Southern Rural Water picnic facilities and play space returning this area to maintenance and operations uses.	x		x
P10	Install bicycle repair stations at key locations along the shared trail and at the junction of connecting trails.	x	x	
P11	Install seating approximately every 250m along the parklands shared trail.	x	x	
P12	Increase tree canopy cover where appropriate to provide shade and shelter.	x	x	
P13	Install interpretive signage in key locations along the parkland trail. Signage to be in English, Woiewurrung and Wadawurrung text.	x	x	
P14	Implement wayfinding signage at key locations along shared path.	x	x	
P15	Review process of land management and maintenance to reduce rubbish and dumping as the Parklands and adjoining new residential developments are constructed.	x		

DRAFT

Arnolds Creek Confluence Plan

Item	Action	Delivery Responsibility			
		Council	Developer	SRW	Better Boating Victoria
A1	Connect Weir Views and Brookfield with a shared trail.	x	x		
A2	Create a new picnic area along parkland interface in Weir Views featuring a viewing platform, shelter, barbecues, bins and picnic tables. (Viewing platform including in item P2)	x	x		
A3	Create a new picnic area on the northern edge of the confluence in close proximity to disabled parking bays featuring a shelter, barbecues, bins and picnic tables.	x			
A4	Replace the existing access road and carpark at the end of Clarkes Road with accessible walking tracks. Access to the Pistol Club is to be retained from Hinkler Crescent.	x			
A5	Update the existing pedestrian bridge over Arnolds Creek to strengthen the trail connections within the Parklands and surrounding residential areas.	x			
A6	Investigate opportunities for fishing with the construction of fishing platform south of the Melton Viaduct in Weir Views.	x	x	x	
A7	Investigate car parking at the end of Clarkes Road.	x			
A8	Install bollards and fencing to contain access to formalised tracks and revegetate disturbed areas with locally indigenous plant species.	x			
A9	Revegetation existing escarpments with locally indigenous plant species.	x	x	x	
A10	Investigate public toilets at the end of Clarkes Road.	x			
A11	Investigate the installation of a boat launching ramp and vehicular access road at the end of Clarkes Road. The feasibility of a boat launch will be subject to detailed site investigations as well as consideration of the 'on water' safety issues.	x		x	x

DRAFT

Appendix A: Strategic Context Summary

The following is a summary of key documents that have informed the development of the Melton Weir Parkland Strategy.

The Toolern Precinct Structure Plan (Victorian Planning Authority, 2011)

The Toolern Precinct Structure Plan (PSP) is a key influence of the Parkland Strategy. It defines the parkland boundary and has proposed recreation facilities including trails, neighborhood activity centres, open spaces, vegetation protection, location community facilities/schools, wetlands and waterways.

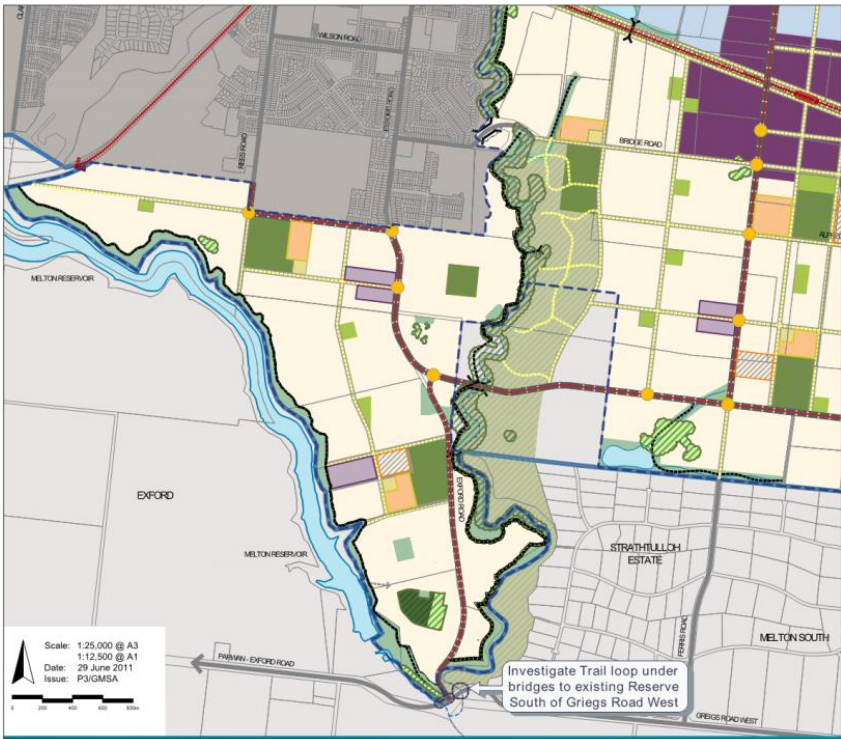


Fig. 1: Walking and Trails Plan. Source: Toolern Precinct Structure Plan, 2011, p62

Scenic Botanica Landscape Master Plan (CJ ARMS Landscape Architecture, 2021)

The Scenic Botanica Landscape Master Plan is a 10 stage residential development proposal located along Clarkes Road, Brooklyn Road, and the Melton Reservoir. Along the Melton Reservoir interface, a 3 metre wide shared path is proposed. At the south-east boundary of the development site, the shared path stops and is required to continue into the neighbouring parcel.



Fig. 2: Endorsed Landscape Master Plan. Source: Scenic Botanica Landscape Master Plan, 2021, p1

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The Werribee River Shared Trail Strategy (Hansen Partnership, 2013)

The Werribee River Shared Trail Strategy identifies opportunities for broader community and tourism benefits including infrastructure such as trail links and formal access to the Werribee River. The strategy recommends that the shared path is a 3 metre wide reinforced concrete trail of 250mm depth on crushed rock with 0.5 metre wide grassed runoff either side.

Linking the Melton Weir Parklands to the Werribee River Trail will provide opportunities as a recreational role in the broader metropolitan trail network.

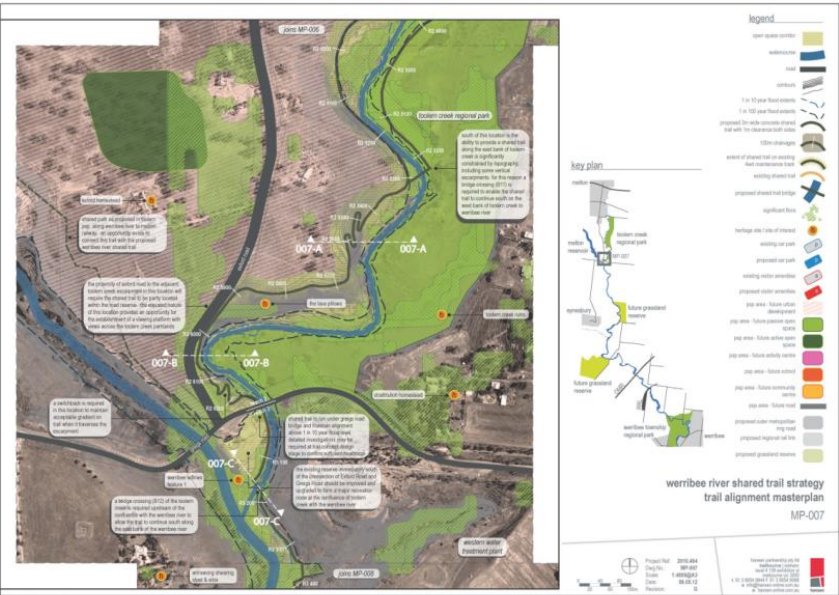


Fig. 3: Trail Alignment. Source: Werribee River Shared Trail Strategy, 2013, p52

Victorian Recreational Boating Strategy 2021 – 2030 (Better Boating Victoria, 2021)

This strategy sets out a number of objectives aiming to improve the maintenance of public facilities, renewing and building new boating facilities, improving access and navigation and investing in destination locations. The strategy identifies Melton Reservoir as a potential location for new boating facilities. Boating facilities considered include boat ramps, pontoons and jetties, car and trailer unit parking and lighting.

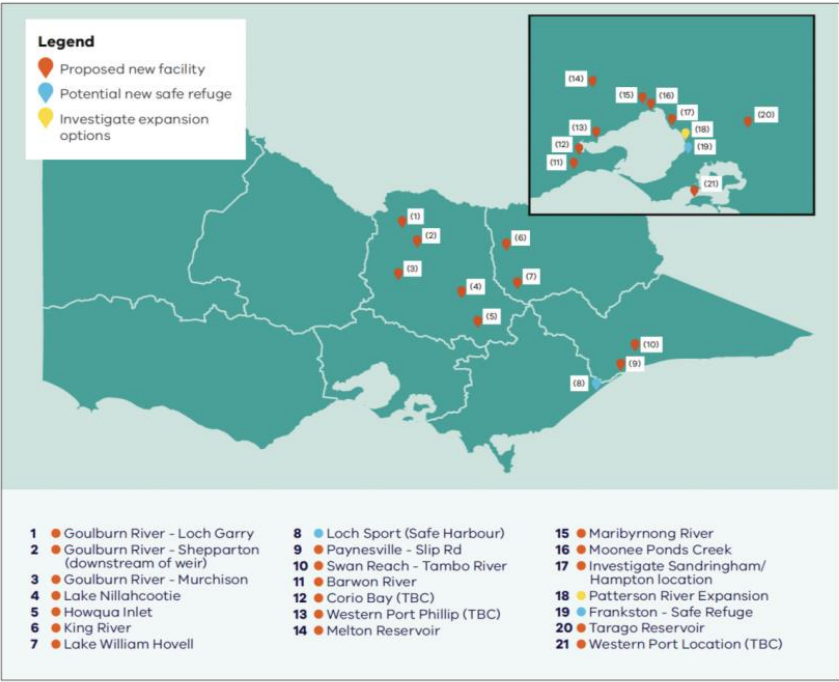


Fig. 4: A map showing potential new boat launch facilities across Victoria. Source: Victorian Recreational Boating Strategy 2021 – 2030 , 2021, p33

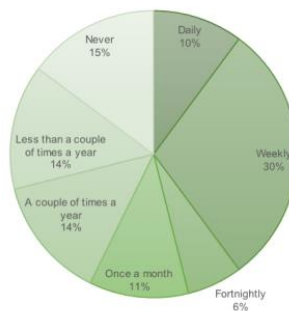
Appendix B: Consultation Summary

The following table provides a summary of key findings, comments or suggestions from initial consultation with key stakeholders as part of the Parklands Plan

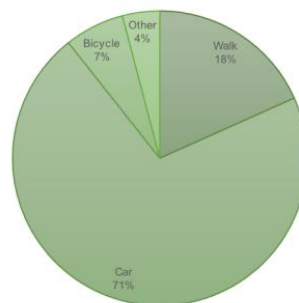
Between 24 April and 2 June 2023, Melton City Council conducted community engagement for the Melton Weir Parkland Strategy.

Feedback was collected via an online survey, accompanied by a hard copy flyer which was dropped off to residents within a 400m radius of the reservoir. In-person consultation was held at the lookout shelter at the end of Rees Road, Weir Views on the 13 May 2023 with approximately 40 people attending. There was a total of 1031 online views and 387 responses were received. 172 respondents registered for future updates via email. Below is a summary of the feedback received. This feedback helps Council to understand what is important to the community.

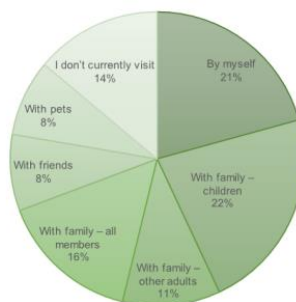
How often do you currently visit the open spaces with the Melton Weir Parklands?



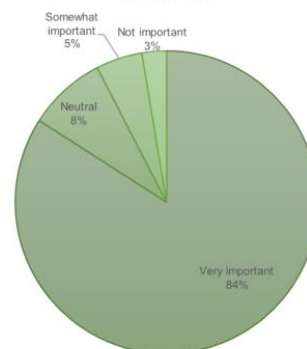
How do you travel there?



Who do you currently visit The Melton Weir with on most of your visits?



How important are large parks and open spaces along natural waterways to you?



Melton Weir Parklands

INFORMATION SESSION

WHEN: Saturday 13 May, 10am-1pm

WHERE: Marriott Boulevard (picnic shelter near Shackell Street intersection), Weir Views

HAVE YOUR SAY: Tell us how you would like to use the open space along the Melton Weir and Reservoir

Visit: [Conversations.melton.vic.gov.au/MeltonWeir](https://conversations.melton.vic.gov.au/MeltonWeir) or call us on 9747 7200



Have your say!

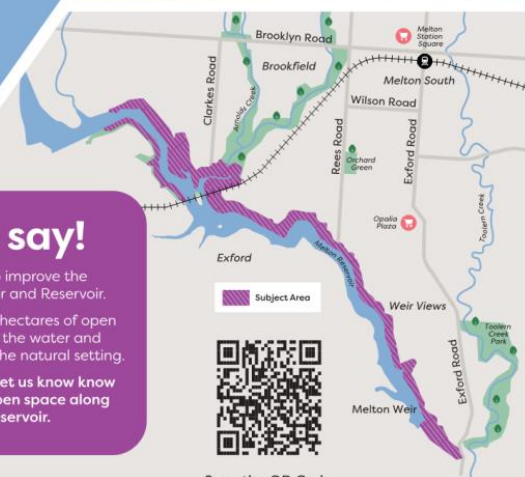
Help us develop a strategy to improve the parklands along the Melton Weir and Reservoir.

We're considering ways to linking hectares of open space, connect more people to the water and parklands, and make the most of the natural setting.

Complete the online survey and let us know how you would like to use the open space along the Melton Weir and Reservoir.

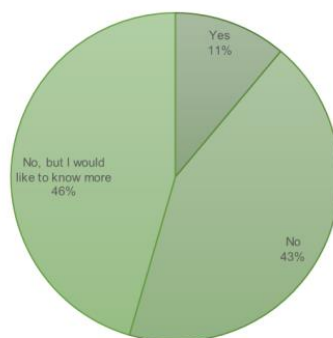


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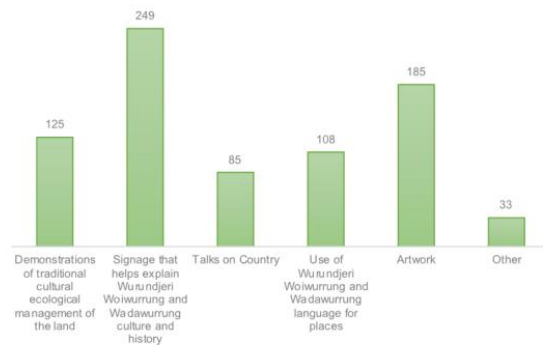


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Do you know much about the cultural heritage and history of Melton Weir Parklands area?



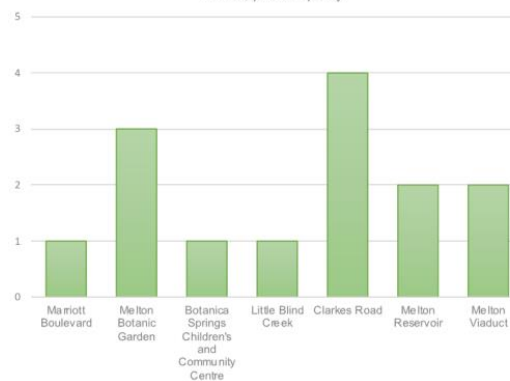
The Melton Reservoir is a boundary between the Wurundjeri Woiwurrung people to the east, and the Wadawurrung people to the west. How would you like learn to learn more about Wurundjeri Woiwurrung and Wadawurrung cultural values in the parklands? (You can choose more than one)



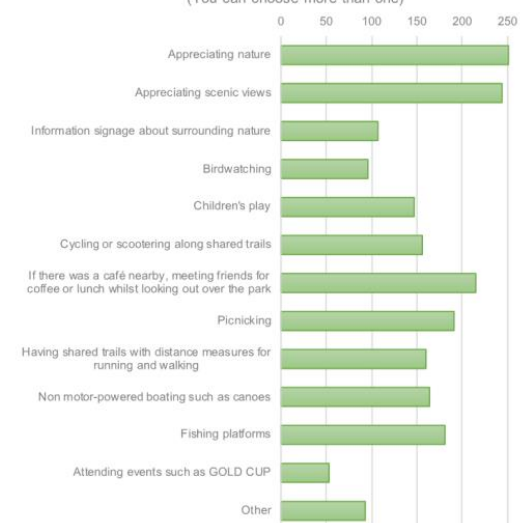
Which areas do you visit? (You can choose more than one)



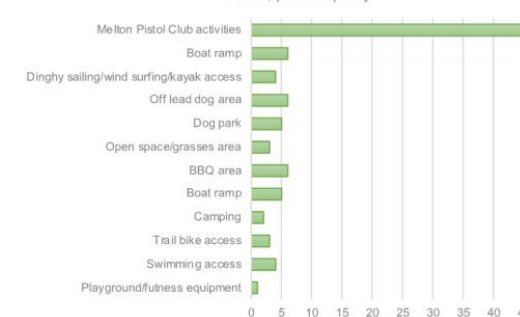
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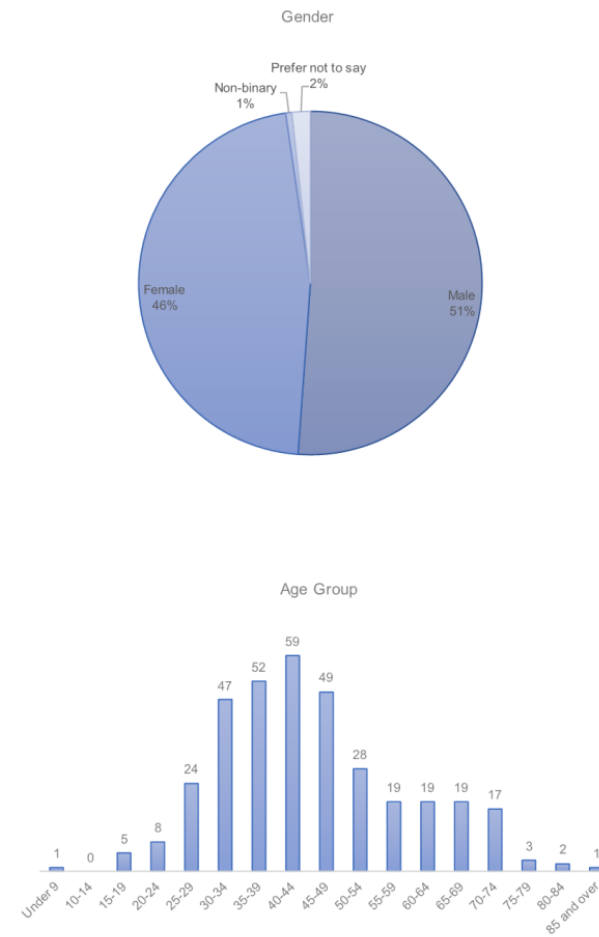
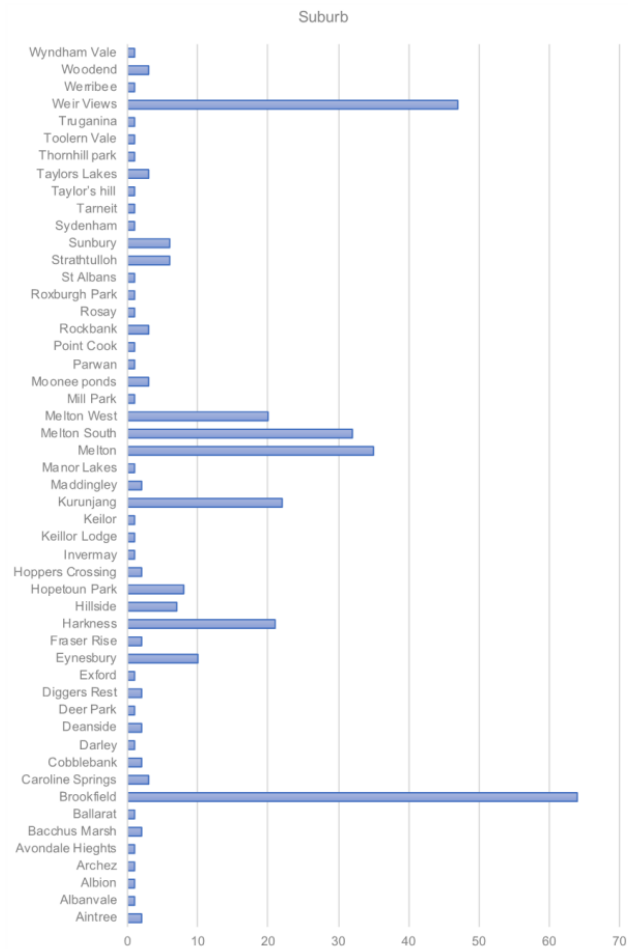
What activities would you enjoy doing in Melton Weir Parklands? (You can choose more than one)



If other, please specify



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12.3 GOVERNANCE RULES

Author: Vanja Zdjelar - Governance Officer
Presenter: Emily Keogh - Head of Governance

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To seek Council's approval of the Draft Governance Rules.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council adopt the Draft Governance Rules, provided as **Appendix 1**.

Motion

Crs Ramsey/Shannon.

That Council adopt the Draft Governance Rules, provided as **Appendix 1**.

CARRIED

REPORT

1. Executive Summary

Council's Governance Rules (the Rules) are required to comply with Section 60 of the *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act). The Act stipulates that a Council may amend its Governance Rules.

The current Rules underwent a comprehensive review to assess their alignment with Council practices and to identify areas of improvement. The Rules have also had minor changes to language throughout the document to strengthen definitions and reduce ambiguity in the interpretation of the Rules.

The Melton City Council Election Period Policy which forms a part of the Rules has also had a considerable update to align with current practice in accordance with the Act.

2. Background/Issues

Council's current Governance Rules, adopted by Council on 15 August 2022 provided the basis for the revised Governance Rules.

In reviewing the Rules, officers considered and analysed various sources, including Governance Rules from other Councils, such as Hume City Council, and have also taken into account recommendations from the Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission's (IBAC) Operation Sandon report.

Whilst the high-level topics in the updated Rules remain similar, the following notable changes have been made:

Chapter 2 Part A - Introduction

Section 9.1: Definitions of 'absolute majority' 'disorder' and 'quorum' added.

Chapter 2 Part B– Election of Mayor

The Rules have been strengthened and clarified, specifically providing for each of the following possible events:

- Single Nomination
- Two or More Nominations and Candidate Elected on First Vote
- Two Nominations or Two Remaining Candidates and No Candidate Obtaining an Absolute Majority on First Vote
- Three or More Nominations and No Candidate Obtaining Absolute Majority on First Vote.

Chapter 2 Part C, Division 2 –Quorums

Attendance via Electronic Means retired from this section, as modes of attendance are now detailed in Division 14 – Physical and Remote Attendance.

Section 21 added: Inability to achieve or maintain quorum due to conflicts of interest – process from the Act.

Chapter 2 Part C, Division 4 – Motions and Debate

Section 29.1 added: A notice of motion must be sent via a Councillor's Melton email address to the Chief Executive Officer by 12 noon six (6) days prior to the Council meeting.

Section 29.2 added: A notice of motion must call for a Council report if the Motion proposes to have an impact on certain criteria outlined in the draft Rules.

Section 29.3: Rules governing when the Chief Executive Officer may reject any notice of motion strengthened and clarified.

Section 35 added: Agreed alteration to Motion or Amendment Rules added.

Section 47 added: Debate on Tabled Items added.

Chapter 2 Part C, Division 6 – Rescission Motions

Section 52.2 added: Any Councillor proposing a notice of rescission is required to provide written justification that must include one or more of the criteria outlined in the draft Rules.

Chapter 2 Part C, Division 7 – Points of Order

Section 61 strengthened: Five additional points regarding when a point of order may be raised added.

Chapter 2 Part C, Division 8 – Public Engagement with Council

Section 62.3 strengthened: The allotted public question times extended to 20 minutes.

Section 62.4 strengthened: Rules on cut off times for public questions changed to 10am on the day of the Council Meeting.

Section 62.7 strengthened: Clarification on circumstances where questions may be disallowed by the Chair or the Chief Executive Officer.

Section 63 added: Submission Hearings rules added.

Chapter 2 Part C, Division 9 – Voting

Section 71 added: Once a vote on a matter has been taken, no further discussion relating to the matter is allowed.

Section 72 added: If a motion is lost, a similar motion may not be put before Council for at least six months from the date that it was last lost, unless Council resolves that the motion be re-listed at a future meeting.

Section 73 added: En bloc voting is not permitted.

Chapter 2 Part C, Division 10 - Minutes

Section 78 added: Audiovisual recording of Council Meetings added.

Chapter 2 Part C, Division 11 – Behaviour

Section 80.2 added: The Mayor, in accordance with section 19(1)(b) of the *Local Government Act 2020* may direct a Councillor to leave a Council meeting if the behaviour of the Councillor is preventing the Council from conducting its business.

Chapter 2 Part C, Division 14 – Physical and Remote Attendance

Section 85 added: Mode of attendance added to include electronic, in-person or a mix as specified in notices. Rules on request for electronic attendance strengthened. Rules surrounding actions where technical difficulties arise added.

Chapter 2 Part C, Division 15 – Miscellaneous

Section 87 strengthened: The CEO holds decision making authority in collaboration with the Mayor in regards to a number of rules in this chapter.

In urgent situations where consulting with the Mayor is not possible, the CEO may independently decide on a course of action and promptly inform the Mayor of the decision made.

Chapter 5 – Disclosure of Conflicts of interest

Rules strengthened throughout chapter. Section 104 added to include information about the maintenance of the Conflict of Interest Register.

Chapter 6 – Election Period Policy

The Election Period Policy (the Policy) has had a major update to align with the new Policy Template. The policy adopts practices outlined in the *Local Government Act 2020* and focuses on fair and democratic election principles. The policy:

- Addresses Section 69 of *the Act* concerning the election period
- Covers decision-making, resource usage, public consultation, events and communications during the election period
- Addresses Councillor conduct and misuse of position during elections.

Additional General Updates

References to speakers standing and Councillors resuming their seat were removed.

3. Council and Wellbeing Plan Reference and Policy Reference

The Melton City Council 2021-2025 Council and Wellbeing Plan references:

6. A high performing organisation that demonstrates civic leadership and organisational excellence

6.3 An organisation that demonstrates excellence in civic leadership and governance.

4. Financial Considerations

Nil.

5. Consultation/Public Submissions

The draft Rules were reviewed by the Policy Review Panel on 15 February 2024 which resulted in a recommendation to Council to:

1. Advise its intention to adopt the draft Governance Rules set out at Appendix 1, inclusive of changes made by the Panel, and seek submissions in relation to the draft by:
 - a. Advertising in the Melton & Moorabool Star Weekly and the Brimbank & North West Star Weekly; and
 - b. Exhibiting a copy of the draft Governance Rules on Council's website and the Melton Conversations Page.
2. Convene an online meeting to hear from anyone who states in their submission a desire to be heard, at 6.00pm on Tuesday 12 March 2024.
3. Consider a report in relation to any and all submissions and make a final decision in relation to the draft Governance Rules at the Council Meeting scheduled for 7.00pm on 25 March 2024.

Council received and adopted the recommendations from the Policy Review Panel – 15 February 2024 Minutes at the 26 February 2024 Scheduled Meeting.

Pursuant to section 60(4) of the Act, the Draft Rules underwent two weeks of public consultation. One response was received which was of positive nature. The respondent indicated that the Draft Governance Rules provided good governance for conducting Council business. The respondent did not request to be heard on their response, resulting in cancellation of the online meeting scheduled at 6:00pm Tuesday 12 March 2024.

6. Risk Analysis

Not proceeding with the recommendation to adopt the Governance Rules may risk Council's ability to operate transparently, efficiently, and in accordance with best practice, potentially hindering its ability to fulfill its responsibilities.

7. Options

Council may:

1. Approve the Draft Governance Rules as set out at Appendix 1.
2. Approve the Draft Governance Rules with amendments.

LIST OF APPENDICES

1. Draft Governance Rules - March 2024

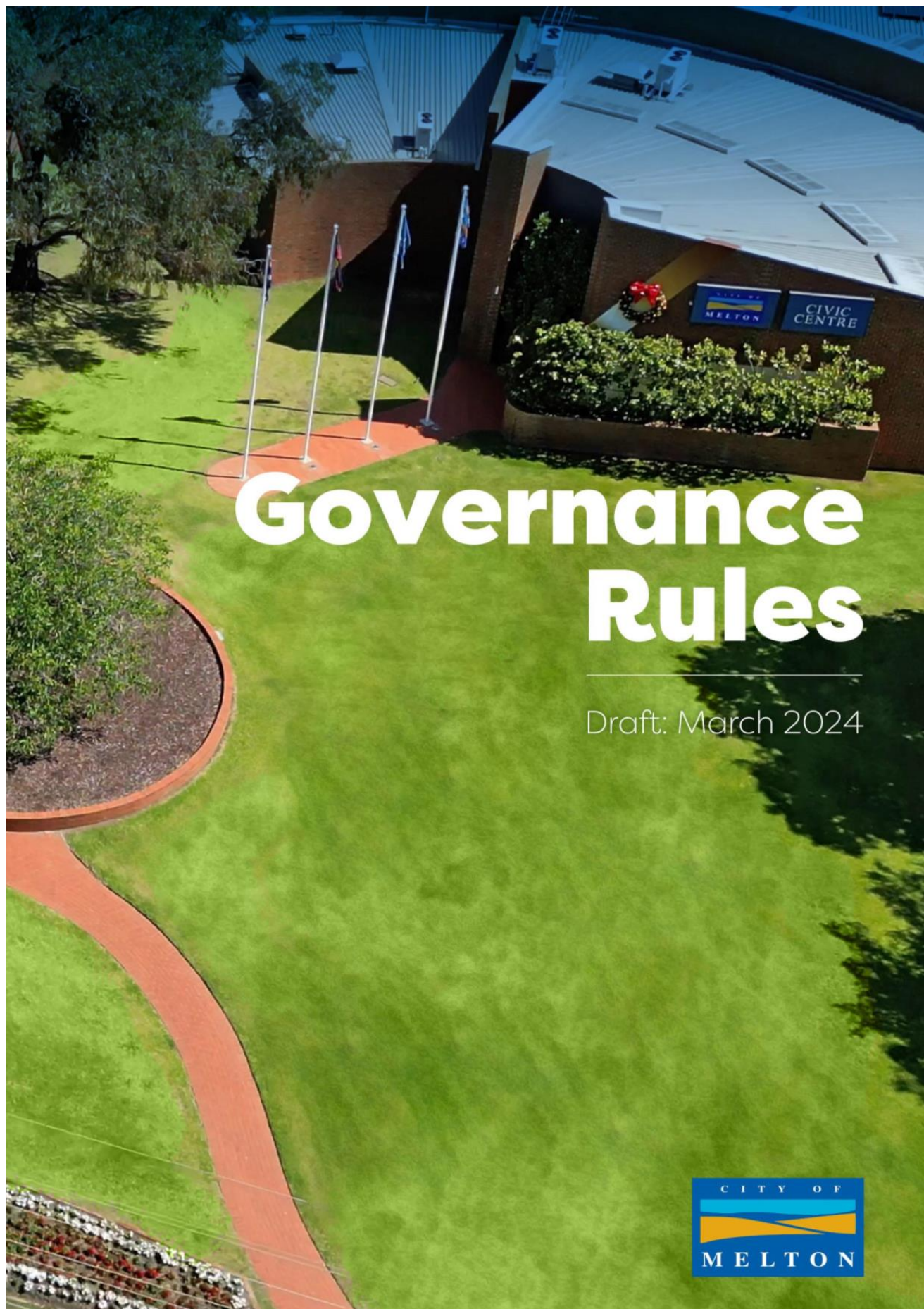


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INTRODUCTION

1. Nature of Rules

These are the Governance Rules of Melton City Council, made in accordance with section 60 of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

2. Date of Commencement

These Governance Rules commence on 25 March 2024.

3. Contents

These Governance Rules are divided into the following Chapters:

Chapter	Name
Chapter 1	Governance Framework
Chapter 2	Meeting Procedure for Council Meetings
Chapter 3	Meeting Procedure for Delegated Committees
Chapter 4	Meeting Procedure for Community Asset Committees
Chapter 5	Disclosure of Conflicts of Interest
Chapter 6	Election Period Policy

4. Definitions

In these Governance Rules, unless the context suggests otherwise the following words and phrases mean:

Act	means the <i>Local Government Act 2020</i>
Attend, attending and in attendance	Include attend, attending or in attendance by electronic means
Chief Executive Officer	includes an Acting or Interim Chief Executive Officer
Community Asset Committee	means a Community Asset Committee established under section 65 of the Act
Confidential Information	Has the same meaning as in section 3 of the Act
Council	means Melton City Council
Council meeting	means a meeting of the Council convened in accordance with these Governance Rules and includes a scheduled meeting and unscheduled meeting, whether held as face- to-face (in-person) attendance in a set location or via electronic means (virtual) or in a 'hybrid' or 'parallel' format that mixes in-person and electronic attendance
Delegated Committee	means a Delegated Committee established under section 63 of the Act

Delegated Committee Meeting	means a meeting of a Delegated Committee convened in accordance with these Governance Rules and includes a scheduled or unscheduled meeting, whether held as face-to-face (in-person) attendance in a set location or via electronic means (virtual) or in a 'hybrid' or 'parallel' format that mixes in-person and electronic attendance
En Bloc	refers to a group of items on the Agenda for a Meeting which are considered and voted on as a group
Mayor	means the Mayor of Melton City Council
Quorum	Means an absolute majority in accordance with section 61(4) of the Act.
These Rules	means these Governance Rules

Chapter 1 – Governance Framework

5. Context

These Rules should be read in the context of and in conjunction with the overarching governance principles specified in section 9(2) of *the Act*.

6. Decision Making

- (a) In any matter in which a decision must be made by Council (including persons acting with the delegated authority of Council), Council must consider the matter and make a decision:
 - (i) fairly, by giving consideration and making a decision which is balanced, ethical and impartial; and
 - (ii) on the merits, free from favouritism or self-interest and without regard to irrelevant or unauthorised considerations
- (b) Council must, when making any decision to which the principles of natural justice apply, adhere to the principles of natural justice (including, without limitation, ensuring that any person whose rights will be directly affected by a decision of Council is entitled to communicate their views and have their interests considered).
- (c) Without limiting anything in paragraph (b) of this sub-Rule:
 - (i) before making a decision that will directly affect the rights of a person, Council (including any person acting with the delegated authority of Council) must identify the person or persons whose rights will be directly affected, give notice of the decision which Council must make and ensure that such person or persons have an opportunity to communicate their views and have their interests considered before the decision is made;
 - (ii) if a report to be considered at a Council meeting concerns subject-matter which will directly affect the rights of a person or persons, the Report must record whether the person has or persons have been provided with an opportunity to communicate their views and have their interests considered;
 - (iii) if a report to be considered at a Delegated Committee meeting concerns subject-matter which will directly affect the rights of a person or persons, the Report must record whether the person has or persons have been provided with an opportunity to communicate their views and have their interests considered.

Chapter 2 – Meeting Procedure for Council Meetings

Part A – Introduction

7. Title

This Chapter will be known as the "Meeting Procedure Chapter".

8. Purpose of this Chapter

The purpose of this Chapter is to:

- 8.1. provide for the election of the Mayor and any Deputy Mayor;
- 8.2. provide for the appointment of any Acting Mayor; and
- 8.3. provide for the procedures governing the conduct of Council meetings

9. Definitions and Notes

9.1. In this Chapter:

"absolute majority" means the number of Councillors which is greater than half the total number of Councillors of a Council.

"agenda" means the notice of a meeting setting out the business to be transacted at the meeting;

"Chair" means the Chairperson of a meeting and includes a Councillor who is appointed by resolution to chair a meeting under section 61(3) of *the Act*;

"disorder" means disruptive or disrespectful behaviour which negatively affects the ordinary function of Council meetings. Such behaviour may include but is not limited to – using aggressive, threatening or violent behaviour or language;

"hybrid" means a meeting format where some participants attend via electronic means and some participants attend in person.

"municipal district" means the district under the local government of a Council;

"notice of motion" means a notice setting out the text of a motion, which it is proposed to move at the next relevant meeting;

"notice of rescission" means a notice of motion to rescind a resolution made by Council;

"open to the public" means a Council meeting:

- Held in person at which members of the public have the opportunity to attend;
- Held in person where members of the public do not have the opportunity to attend, but which is livestreamed on Council's Internet site or livestreamed on Council's Internet site irrespective of method of attendance;

"quorum" a quorum at a Council meeting means an absolute majority; and

"written" includes duplicated, lithographed, photocopied, printed and typed, and extends to both hard copy and soft copy form, and writing has a corresponding meaning.

- 9.2. Introductions to Parts, headings and notes are explanatory notes and do not form part of this Chapter. They are provided to assist understanding.

Part B – Election of Mayor

Introduction: This Part is concerned with the annual election of the Mayor. It describes how the Mayor is to be elected.

10. Election of the Mayor

The Chief Executive Officer must facilitate the election of the Mayor in accordance with the provisions of *the Act*.

11. Method of Voting

The election of the Mayor must be carried out by a show of hands.

12. Determining the election of the Mayor

- 12.1. The Chief Executive Officer must open the meeting at which the Mayor is to be elected, and invite nominations for the office of Mayor.
- 12.2. Any nominations for the office of Mayor must be:
- 12.2.1. In writing and in a form prescribed by the Chief Executive Officer; and
- 12.2.2. seconded by another Councillor.
- 12.3. Once nominations for the office of Mayor have been received, the following provisions will govern the election of the Mayor:

1. Single Nomination

If there is only one nomination, the candidate nominated must be declared to be elected.

2. Two or More Nominations and Candidate Elected on First Vote

- If there are two or more nominations, the Councillors present at the meeting must vote for one of the candidates;
- In the event of a candidate receiving an absolute majority of the votes, that candidate is declared to have been elected.

3. Two Nominations or Two Remaining Candidates and No Candidate Obtaining an Absolute Majority On First Vote

In the event of two candidates being nominated or remaining, and neither candidate receiving the votes of an absolute majority of Councillors, the Councillors in attendance at the meeting may vote again or can consider whether to resolve to conduct a new election at a later date and time.

4. Three or More Nominations and No Candidate Obtaining Absolute Majority on First Vote

In the event that:

- There are three or more candidates; and
- No candidate receives an absolute majority of votes;
- The candidate with the fewest number of votes must be declared to be a defeated candidate.
- If two candidates then remain, the process in Section 3 above is to be followed.
- If there are three or more candidates remaining the Councillors in attendance at the meeting will then vote for one of the remaining candidates;
- If one of the remaining candidates receives an absolute majority of the votes, they are duly elected. If none of the remaining candidates receive an absolute majority of the votes, the process of declaring the candidates with the fewest number of votes a defeated candidate and voting for the remaining candidates must be repeated until two candidates remain. The process in Section 3 above is to be followed.
- If no candidate can be determined to have the fewest number of votes due to two or more candidates having an equality of votes then the candidate who is to be declared a defeated candidate will be determined by lot.

5. Elections Conducted by Lot

If a lot is conducted, the Chief Executive Officer will have the conduct of the lot and the following provisions will apply:

- each candidate who has an equal number of votes with another candidate or candidates will draw one lot;
- the order of drawing lots will be determined by the alphabetical order of the surnames of the Councillors who received an equal number of votes except that if two or more such Councillors' surnames are identical, the order will be determined by the alphabetical order of the Councillors' first names; and
- as many identical pieces of paper as there are Councillors who received an equal number of votes must be placed in a receptacle.
- If the lot is being conducted to determine who is a defeated candidate, the word "Defeated" shall be written on one of the pieces of paper, and the Councillor who

draws the paper with the word "Defeated" written on it must be declared the defeated candidate. The Councillors in attendance at the meeting will then vote for one of the remaining candidates.

- If one of the remaining candidates receives an absolute majority of the votes, they are duly elected. If none of the remaining candidates receive an absolute majority of the votes, the process of declaring the candidates with the fewest number of votes a defeated candidate, or determining the defeated candidate by lot, must be repeated until two candidates remain. The process in Section 3 above is to be followed.
- Where a Councillor is attending the meeting by electronic means they are to nominate a member of Council staff to draw out the paper on their behalf.

6. Resolution to Conduct a New Election

- If an absolute majority of the Councillors cannot be obtained at the meeting, the Council may resolve to conduct a new election at a later specified date and time.
- The resolution to conduct a new election at a later date and time must specify the date and time of the new meeting to conduct the election.

13. Election of Deputy Mayor and Chairs of Delegated Committees

Any election for:

- 13.1. any office of Deputy Mayor; or
- 13.2. Chair of a Delegated Committee

will be regulated by Rules 10-12 (inclusive) of this Chapter, as if the reference to the:

- 13.3. Chief Executive Officer is a reference to the Mayor; and
- 13.4. Mayor is a reference to the Deputy Mayor or the Chair of the Delegated Committee (as the case may be).

14. Appointment of Acting Mayor

If Council has not established an office of Deputy Mayor and it becomes required to appoint an Acting Mayor, it can do so by:

- 14.1. resolving that a specified Councillor be so appointed; or
- 14.2. following the procedure set out in Rules 11 and (inclusive), at its discretion.

Part C – Meetings Procedure

Introduction: This Part is divided into a number of Divisions. Each Division addresses a distinct aspect of the holding of a meeting. Collectively, the Divisions describe how and when a meeting is convened, when and how business may be transacted at a meeting.

Division 1 – Notices of Meetings and Delivery of Agendas

15. Meetings Fixed by Council

Subject to Rule 17, Council must from time to time fix the date, time, place, and format (in person or electronic – including hybrid) of all Council meetings.

16. Council May Alter Meeting Dates

Council by resolution, or the Chief Executive Officer in consultation with the Mayor, may change the date, time, place and/or format of any Council meeting which has been fixed and must provide reasonable notice of the change to the public.

17. Meetings Not Fixed by Council

- 17.1. The Mayor or at least 3 Councillors may by a written notice call a Council meeting.
- 17.2. The notice must specify the date, time, place, and format of the Council meeting and the business to be transacted.
- 17.3. The Chief Executive Officer must convene the Council meeting as specified in the notice.
- 17.4. Unless all Councillors in attendance unanimously agree to deal with any other matter, only the business specified in the written notice can be transacted at the Council meeting.

18. Notice Of Meeting

- 18.1. A notice of meeting, incorporating or accompanied by an agenda of the business to be dealt with, must be delivered or sent electronically to every Councillor for all Council meetings at least 48 hours before the meeting.
- 18.2. Notwithstanding sub-Rule 18.1, a notice of meeting need not be delivered or sent electronically to any Councillor who has been granted leave of absence unless the Councillor has requested the Chief Executive Officer in writing to continue to give notice of any meeting during the period of their absence.
- 18.3. Reasonable notice of each Council meeting must be provided to the public. Council may do this:
 - 18.3.1. for meetings which it has fixed by preparing a schedule of meetings annually, twice yearly or from time to time, or prior to each such Council meeting; and
 - 18.3.2. for any meeting by giving notice on its website.

Division 2 – Quorums

19. Inability To Obtain a Quorum

- 19.1. If after 30 minutes from the scheduled starting time of any Council meeting, a quorum cannot be obtained:

- 19.2. the meeting will be deemed to have lapsed;
- 19.3. the Mayor must convene another Council meeting, the agenda for which will be identical to the agenda for the lapsed meeting; and
- 19.4. the Chief Executive Officer must give all Councillors written notice of the meeting convened by the Mayor.

20. Inability To Maintain a Quorum

- 20.1. If during any Council meeting, a quorum cannot be maintained then Rule 19 will apply as if the reference to the meeting is a reference to so much of the meeting as remains.
- 20.2. Sub-Rule 20.1 does not apply if the inability to maintain a quorum is because of the number of Councillors who have a conflict of interest in the matter to be considered.

21. Inability to Achieve or Maintain a Quorum Due to Conflicts of Interest

If a quorum cannot be achieved or maintained during a Council meeting due to a majority of Councillors having declared a Conflict of Interest in an item:

- 21.1. The Council must consider whether the decision can be made in an alternative matter such as:
 - 21.1.1. splitting the matter into two or more separate parts, so that a quorum can be maintained for each separate part; or
 - 21.1.2. making prior decisions in component parts of the matter at a meeting for which a quorum can be maintained, before deciding the overall matter at a meeting for which a quorum can be maintained; or
 - 21.1.3. deferring the item under consideration to facilitate the making of decisions on component parts of the matter at a meeting for which a quorum can be maintained.
- 21.2. If Council is unable to use an alternative manner, Council must decide to establish a delegated committee to make the decision in regard to the matter consisting of:
 - 21.2.1. all the Councillors who have not disclosed a conflict of interest in regard to the matter; and
 - 21.2.2. any other person or persons that the Council considers suitable.

22. Adjourned Meetings

- 22.1. Council may adjourn any meeting to another date or time but cannot in the absence of disorder or a threat to the safety of any Councillor or member of Council staff adjourn a meeting in session to another place.
- 22.2. The Chief Executive Officer must give written notice to each Councillor of the date, time and place to which the meeting stands adjourned and of the

business remaining to be considered.

- 22.3. If it is impracticable for the notice given under sub-Rule 22.2 to be in writing, the Chief Executive Officer must give notice to each Councillor by telephone or in person.

23. Time limits for Meetings

- 23.1. A Council meeting must not continue after 10.30pm unless a majority of Councillors present vote in favour of it continuing.
- 23.2. A meeting cannot be continued for more than 30 minutes (or a further 30 minutes, if a majority of Councillors has already voted to continue it for 30 minutes).
- 23.3. In the absence of such continuance, the meeting must stand adjourned to a time, date and place announced by the Chair immediately prior to the meeting standing adjourned. In that event, the provisions of sub-Rules 22.2 and 22.3 apply.

24. Cancellation or Postponement of a Meeting

- 24.1. The Chief Executive Officer may, in consultation with the Mayor, in the case of an emergency necessitating the cancellation or postponement of a Council meeting, cancel or postpone a Council meeting.
- 24.2. The Chief Executive Officer must present to the immediately following Council meeting a written report on any exercise of the power conferred above.

Division 3 – Business of Meetings

25. Agenda and the Order Of Business

The agenda for and the order of business for a Council meeting is to be determined by the Chief Executive Officer in consultation with the Mayor so as to facilitate and maintain open, efficient and effective processes of government.

26. Change To Order Of Business

Once an agenda has been sent to Councillors, the order of business for that Council meeting may be altered with the consent of Council.

27. Urgent Business

If the agenda for a Council meeting makes provision for urgent business, business cannot be admitted as urgent business other than by resolution of Council and only then if it:

- 27.1. relates to or arises out of a matter which has arisen since distribution of the agenda; and
- 27.2. cannot safely or conveniently be deferred until the next Council meeting.

Division 4 – Motions and Debate

28. Councillors May Propose Notices Of Motion

Councillors may ensure that an issue is listed on an agenda by lodging a Notice of Motion.

29. Notice Of Motion

- 29.1. A notice of motion must be sent via a Councillor's Melton email address to the Chief Executive Officer by 12 noon 6 days prior to the Council meeting to allow sufficient time for the Chief Executive Officer to include the notice of motion in agenda papers for a Council meeting and to give each Councillor at least 48 hours' notice of such notice of motion. For example, if the Council meeting is held at 7.00pm on a Monday, a notice of motion must be lodged with or sent to the Chief Executive Officer by 12noon on the Tuesday prior to the meeting.
- 29.2. It is recommended that a notice of motion call for a Council report, as opposed to an immediate decision, if the Notice of Motion proposes to:
 - 29.2.1. commit expenditure outside the current budget
 - 29.2.2. impact the current levels of service
 - 29.2.3. impact Council Policy
 - 29.2.4. contractually commit Council
 - 29.2.5. relate to Council legal proceedings
- 29.3. The Chief Executive Officer, in consultation with the Mayor, may reject any notice of motion which:
 - 29.3.1. is vague or unclear in intention;
 - 29.3.2. has already been raised in the current term of Council;
 - 29.3.3. relates to a matter which is to be considered at the Council Meeting in an Officer Report;
 - 29.3.4. relates to a matter outside the duties, functions and powers of Council;
 - 29.3.5. relates to a matter which is workplace operations;
 - 29.3.6. relates to a matter which should be dealt with through Council's budget development process;
 - 29.3.7. relates to a complaint which should be dealt with through Council's Complaint Management Process;
 - 29.3.8. is defamatory, indecent, abusive, offensive, irrelevant, trivial or objectionable in language or substance;
 - 29.3.9. deals with a subject matter already answered;

- 29.3.10. is repetitive of a question already asked by the person;
 - 29.3.11. is aimed at embarrassing a Councillor or a member of Council staff or directed at a Councillor or a member of Council staff;
 - 29.3.12. relates to confidential, personal or sensitive information;
 - 29.3.13. relates to personnel matters;
 - 29.3.14. relates to the personal hardship of any resident or ratepayer;
 - 29.3.15. relates to industrial matters;
 - 29.3.16. relates to contractual matters;
 - 29.3.17. relates to proposed developments;
 - 29.3.18. relates to legal advice;
 - 29.3.19. relates to matters affecting the security of Council property; or
 - 29.3.20. relates to any other matter which Council considers would prejudice Council or any person.
- 29.4. Before a notice of motion is rejected the Chief Executive Officer must:
- 29.4.1. give the Councillor who lodged it an opportunity to amend it prior to rejection, if it is practicable to do so; and
 - 29.4.2. notify in writing the Councillor who lodged it of the rejection and reasons for the rejection.
- 29.5. The full text of any notice of motion accepted by the Chief Executive Officer, in consultation with the Mayor, must be included in the agenda.
- 29.6. The Chief Executive Officer must cause all notices of motion to be numbered, dated and entered in the notice of motion register in the order in which they were received.
- 29.7. Except by leave of Council, each notice of motion before any meeting must be considered in the order in which they were entered in the notice of motion register.
- 29.8. If a Councillor who has given a notice of motion is absent from the meeting or fails to move the motion when called upon by the Chair, any other Councillor may move the motion.
- 29.9. If a notice of motion is not moved at the Council meeting at which it is listed, it lapses.
- 29.10. If a notice of motion is lost, a similar motion may not be put before Council for at least six months from the date it was last lost, unless Council resolves that the notice of motion be re-listed at a future meeting.

29.11. A Notice of Motion cannot be raised during the Election Period.

Notices of Motion are not allowed during the Election Period so that decisions in relation to matters which are prohibited under *the Act* or the Election Period Policy are not put before Council for consideration, and that the incumbent Council does not make any decisions during the election period that will be binding on an incoming Council save for decisions which are part of the normal operating function of Council which includes most town planning matters.

30. Chair's Duty

Any motion which is determined by the Chair to be:

- 30.1. defamatory;
- 30.2. objectionable in language or nature;
- 30.3. vague or unclear in intention;
- 30.4. outside the powers of Council; or
- 30.5. irrelevant to the item of business on the agenda and has not been admitted as urgent, or purports to be an amendment but is not,

must not be accepted by the Chair.

31. Introducing a Report

31.1. Before a written report is considered by Council and any motion moved in relation to such report, a member of Council staff may introduce the report by indicating as concisely as possible, and by taking more than 3 minutes unless determined otherwise by the Chair:

- 31.1.1. 34.1.1 its background; or
- 31.1.2. 34.1.2 the reasons for any recommendation which appears.

31.2. Unless Council resolves otherwise, a member of Council staff need not read any written report to Council in full.

32. Introducing A Motion or an Amendment

The procedure for moving any motion or amendment is:

- 32.1. the mover must state the motion or amendment without speaking to it;
- 32.2. the motion or amendment must be seconded and the seconder must be a Councillor other than the mover. If a motion or amendment is not seconded, the motion or amendment lapses for want of a seconder;
- 32.3. if a motion or an amendment is moved and seconded the Chair must ask:
- 32.4. Does any Councillor wish to speak to the motion or amendment?"

- 32.5. if no Councillor indicates a desire to speak to it, the Chair may declare the motion or amendment carried without discussion;
- 32.6. if a Councillor indicates opposition or a desire to speak to it, then the Chair
- 32.7. must call on the mover to address the meeting;
- 32.8. after the mover has addressed the meeting, the seconder may address the meeting;
- 32.9. after the seconder has addressed the meeting (or after the mover has addressed the meeting if the seconder does not address the meeting,) the Chair must invite debate by calling on any Councillor who wishes to speak to the motion or amendment; and
- 32.10. if, after the mover has addressed the meeting, the Chair has invited debate and no Councillor speaks to the motion or amendment, then the Chair must put the motion or amendment to the vote.

33. Right Of Reply

- 33.1. The mover of a motion, including an amendment, has a right of reply to matters raised during debate.
- 33.2. After the right of reply has been taken the motion must immediately be put to the vote without any further discussion or debate.

34. Moving An Amendment

- 34.1. Subject to sub-Rule 34.2 a motion which has been moved and seconded may be amended by leaving out or adding words. Any added words must be relevant to the subject of the motion.
- 34.2. A motion to confirm a previous resolution of Council cannot be amended.
- 34.3. An amendment must not be directly opposite to the motion.

35. Agreed alteration to Motion or Amendment

- 35.1. With leave of the Council both the mover and seconder of a motion or amendment may agree to an alteration proposed by another Councillor.
- 35.2. Any such alteration will not be regarded as an amendment to the motion or amendment.

36. Who May Propose an Amendment

- 36.1. An amendment may be proposed or seconded by any Councillor, except the mover or seconder of the original motion.
- 36.2. Any one Councillor cannot move more than one amendment in relation to the motion.

37. How Many Amendments May Be Proposed

- 37.1. Any number of amendments may be proposed to a motion but only one amendment may be accepted by the Chair at any one time.
- 37.2. No second or subsequent amendment, whether to the motion or an amendment of it, may be taken into consideration until the previous amendment has been dealt with.

38. An Amendment Once Carried

- 38.1. If the amendment is carried, the motion as amended then becomes the motion before the meeting, and the amended motion must then be put.
- 38.2. The mover of the original motion retains the right of reply to that motion.

39. Foreshadowing Motions

- 39.1. At any time during debate a Councillor may foreshadow a motion so as to inform Council of their intention to move a motion at a later stage in the meeting, but this does not extend any special right to the foreshadowed motion.
- 39.2. A motion foreshadowed may be prefaced with a statement that in the event of a particular motion before the Chair being resolved in a certain way, a Councillor intends to move an alternative or additional motion.
- 39.3. The Chief Executive Officer or person taking the minutes of the meeting is not expected to record foreshadowed motions in the minutes until the foreshadowed motion is formally moved.
- 39.4. The Chair is not obliged to accept foreshadowed motions.

40. Withdrawal Of Motions

- 40.1. Before any motion is put to the vote, it may be withdrawn by the mover and seconder with the leave of Council.
- 40.2. If the majority of Councillors objects to the withdrawal of the motion, it may not be withdrawn.

41. Separation Of Motions

Where a motion contains more than one part, a Councillor may request the Chair to put the motion to the vote in separate parts.

42. Chair May Separate Motions

The Chair may decide to put any motion to the vote in several parts.

43. Priority of address

In the case of competition for the right of speak, the Chair must decide the order in which the Councillors concerned will be heard.

44. Motions In Writing

- 44.1. The Chair may require that a complex or detailed motion be in writing.
- 44.2. Council may adjourn the meeting while the motion is being written or Council may defer the matter until the motion has been written, allowing the meeting to proceed uninterrupted.

45. Repeating Motion and/or Amendment

The Chair may request the mover or the person taking the minutes of the Council meeting to read the motion or amendment to the meeting before the vote is taken.

46. Debate Must Be Relevant to The Motion

- 46.1. Debate must always be relevant to the motion before the Chair, and, if not, the Chair must request the speaker to confine debate to the motion.
- 46.2. If after being requested to confine debate to the motion before the Chair, the speaker continues to debate irrelevant matters, the Chair may direct the speaker to not speak further in respect of the motion before the Chair.
- 46.3. A speaker to whom a direction has been given must comply with that direction.

47. Debate on Tabled Items

There is to be no debate on items which have been tabled.

48. Speaking Times

A Councillor must not speak longer than the time set out below, unless granted an extension by the Chair:

- 48.1. the mover of a motion or an amendment which has been opposed: 5 minutes;
- 48.2. any other Councillor: 3 minutes; and
- 48.3. the mover of a motion exercising a right of reply: 2 minutes.

49. Addressing the Meeting

Unless the Chair requests to be addressed by a specific pronoun:

- 49.1. Any person addressing the Chair must refer to the Chair as:
 - 49.1.1. Mayor; or
 - 49.1.2. Chairas the case may be;
- 49.2. all Councillors, other than the Mayor, must be addressed as:

49.2.1. Cr Surname

49.3. all members of Council staff must be addressed by their official title.

50. Right to Ask Questions

50.1. A Councillor may, when no other Councillor is speaking, ask any question concerning or arising out of the motion or amendment before the Chair.

50.2. The Chair has the right to limit questions and direct that debate be commenced or resumed.

Division 5 – Procedural Motions

51. Procedural Motions

51.1. Unless otherwise prohibited, a procedural motion may be moved at any time and must be dealt with immediately by the Chair.

51.2. Procedural motions require a seconder.

51.3. Notwithstanding any other provision in this Chapter, procedural motions must be dealt with in accordance with the following table:

PROCEDURAL MOTIONS TABLE

Procedural Motion	Form	Mover & Seconder	When Motion Prohibited	Effect if Carried	Effect if Lost	Debate Permitted on Motion
Deferral to later hour and/or date	That this matter be deferred to *am/pm and/or *date	Any Councillor who has not moved or seconded the original motion or otherwise spoken to the original motion	(a) During the election of a Chair; (b) When another Councillor is speaking	Motion and any amendment postponed to the stated time and/or date	Debate continues unaffected	Yes
Deferral of debate indefinitely	That this matter be deferred until further notice	Any Councillor who has not moved or seconded the original motion or otherwise spoken to the original motion	(a) During the election of a Chair; (b) When another Councillor is speaking; or (c) When the motion would have the effect of causing Council to be in breach of a legislative requirement	Motion and any amendment postponed but may be resumed at any later meeting if on the agenda	Debate continues unaffected	Yes
3. The closure	That the motion be now put	Any Councillor who has not moved or seconded the original motion or otherwise spoken to the original motion	During nominations for Chair	Motion or amendment in respect of which the closure is carried is put to the vote immediately without debate of this motion, subject to any Councillor exercising their right to ask any question concerning or arising out of the motion	Debate continues unaffected	No

Division 6 – Rescission Motions

52. Notice of Rescission

The purpose of a rescission motion is to provide an avenue to revisit Council decisions where the vote did not accurately reflect the opinion due to a misunderstanding, new information has arisen which may affect the decision of Council or some vital information was overlooked in Council forming its decision.

Rescission motions are not to be used to revisit decisions which are unpopular, or which Councillor/s did not vote in favour of.

- 52.1. A Councillor may propose a notice of rescission provided:
- 52.1.1. it is in writing;
 - 52.1.2. it is supported in writing by at least three Councillors;
 - 52.1.3. the resolution proposed to be rescinded has not been acted on; and
 - 52.1.4. the notice of rescission is delivered to the Chief Executive Officer within 24 hours of the resolution having been made setting out:
 - (a) the resolution to be rescinded; and
 - (b) the meeting and date when the resolution was carried.
- 52.2. Any Councillor proposing a notice of rescission is required to provide written justification that must include one or more of the following:
- 52.2.1. The vote did not accurately reflect the opinion held by the meeting due to the misunderstanding of the motion or for some other reasons;
 - 52.2.2. New information has become available which may affect the decision of Council; or
 - 52.2.3. Some vital information was overlooked in Council forming its decision.
- 52.3. The Chief Executive Officer, in consultation with the Mayor, may reject any notice of rescission which does not include the above justification, or appropriate evidence in relation to the justification.

It should be remembered that a notice of rescission is a form of notice of motion.

Accordingly, all provisions in this Chapter regulating notices of motion equally apply to notices of rescission.

- 52.4. Once there is a valid rescission it should be circulated to the Mayor and Councillors as soon as possible and not wait for the Agenda.
- 52.5. A resolution will be deemed to have been acted on if:

- 52.5.1. its contents have or substance has been communicated in writing to a person whose interests are materially affected by it; or
 - 52.5.2. a statutory process has been commenced so as to vest enforceable rights in or obligations on Council or any other person.
- 52.6. The Chief Executive Officer or an appropriate member of Council staff must defer implementing a resolution which:
- 52.6.1. has not been acted on; and
 - 52.6.2. is the subject of a notice of rescission which has been delivered to the Chief Executive Officer in accordance with sub-Rule 52.1.4,
- unless deferring implementation of the resolution would have the effect of depriving the resolution of efficacy.

By way of example, assume that, on a Monday evening, Council resolves to have legal representation at a planning appeal to be heard on the following Monday.

Assume also that, immediately after that resolution is made, a Councillor lodges a notice of motion to rescind that resolution. Finally, assume that the notice of rescission would not be dealt with until the next Monday evening (being the evening of the day on which the planning appeal is to be heard).

In these circumstances, deferring implementation of the resolution would have the effect of depriving the resolution of efficacy. This is because the notice of rescission would not be debated until after the very thing contemplated by the resolution had come and gone. In other words, by the time the notice of rescission was dealt with the opportunity for legal representation at the planning appeal would have been lost.

Sub-Rule would, in such circumstances, justify the Chief Executive Officer or an appropriate member of Council staff actioning the resolution rather than deferring implementation of it.

53. If Lost

If a motion for rescission is lost, a similar motion may not be put before Council for at least six months from the date it was last lost, unless Council resolves that the notice of motion be re-listed at a future meeting.

54. If Not

If a motion for rescission is not moved at the meeting at which it is listed, it lapses.

55. May Be Moved By Any Councillor

A motion for rescission listed on an agenda may be moved by any Councillor in attendance but may not be amended.

56. When Not Required

- 56.1. Unless sub-Rule 56.2 applies, a motion for rescission is not required where

Council wishes to change policy.

56.2. The following standards apply if Council wishes to change policy:

- 56.2.1. if the policy has been in force in its original or amended form for less than 12 months, a notice of rescission must be presented to Council; and
- 56.2.2. any intention to change a Council policy, which may result in a significant impact on any person, should be communicated to those affected and this may include publication and consultation, either formally or informally.

Division 7 – Points of Order

57. Chair To Decide

The Chair must decide all points of order by stating the provision, rule, practice or precedent which they consider applicable to the point raised without entering into any discussion or comment.

58. Chair May Adjourn to Consider

- 58.1. The Chair may adjourn the meeting to consider a point of order but otherwise must rule on it as soon as it is raised.
- 58.2. All other questions before the meeting are suspended until the point of order is decided.

59. Dissent From Chair's Ruling

- 59.1. A Councillor may move that the meeting disagree with the Chair's ruling on a point of order, by moving:
- 59.2. "That the Chair's ruling [setting out that ruling or part of that ruling] be dissented from".
- 59.3. When a motion in accordance with this Rule is moved and seconded, the Chair must leave the Chair and the Deputy Mayor (or, if there is no Deputy Mayor or the Deputy Mayor is not in attendance, temporary Chair elected by the meeting) must take their place.
- 59.4. The Deputy Mayor or temporary Chair must invite the mover to state the reasons for their dissent and the Chair may then reply.
- 59.5. The Deputy Mayor or temporary Chair must put the motion in the following form:
- 59.6. "That the Chair's ruling be dissented from."
- 59.7. If the vote is in the negative, the Chair resumes the Chair and the meeting proceeds.
- 59.8. If the vote is in the affirmative, the Chair must then resume the Chair, reverse or vary (as the case may be) their previous ruling and proceed.

- 59.9. The defeat of the Chair's ruling is in no way a motion of censure or non-confidence in the Chair, and should not be so regarded by the meeting.

60. Procedure For Point Of Order

A Councillor raising a point of order must:

- 60.1. state the point of order; and
- 60.2. state any section, Rule, paragraph or provision relevant to the point of order.

61. Valid Points of Order

A point of order may be raised in relation to:

- 61.1. a motion, which, under Rule 30, or a question which, under Rule 62, should not be accepted by the Chair;
- 61.2. a question of procedure;
- 61.3. a matter which is contrary to these Rules;
- 61.4. a matter which is contrary to legislation;
- 61.5. a matter which is outside the duties, functions and powers of Council;
- 61.6. a matter that is irrelevant;
- 61.7. an error of fact; or
- 61.8. any act of disorder.

Rising to express a difference of opinion or to contradict a speaker is not a point of order.

Division 8 – Public Engagement with Council

62. Public Questions

- 62.1. There must be a public question time at every Council meeting fixed under Rule 14 to enable members of the public to submit questions to Council.
- 62.2. Sub-Rule does not apply during any period when a meeting is closed to members of the public in accordance with section 66(2) of *the Act*.
- 62.3. Public question time will not exceed 20 minutes in duration unless extended by further blocks of 20 minutes duration by resolution, up to a maximum of 2 further blocks.

- 62.4. Public Questions must be submitted to Council:
- 62.4.1. in writing, state the name and contact details of the person submitting the question and generally be in a form approved or permitted by Council; and
 - 62.4.2. lodged electronically at the prescribed email address prior to 10am on the day of the Council meeting or placed in the receptacle designated for the purpose at the Civic Centre Customer Service Desk prior to 10am on the day of the Council meeting.
- 62.5. No person may submit more than two questions at any one meeting, and no multi-part questions will be accepted as a singular question.
- 62.6. The Chair or their nominee may read to those in attendance at the meeting a question which has been submitted in accordance with this Rule.
- 62.7. A question may be disallowed by the Chair or the Chief Executive Officer if it is determined that it:
- 62.7.1. Relates to a matter which is to be considered at the Council Meeting;
 - 62.7.2. relates to a matter outside the duties, functions and powers of Council;
 - 62.7.3. Relates to a matter which is workplace operations;
 - 62.7.4. Relates to a complaint which should be dealt with through Council's Complaint Management Process;
 - 62.7.5. is defamatory, indecent, abusive, offensive, irrelevant, trivial or objectionable in language or substance;
 - 62.7.6. deals with a subject matter already answered;
 - 62.7.7. is repetitive of a question already asked by the person;
 - 62.7.8. is aimed at embarrassing a Councillor or a member of Council staff or directed at a Councillor or a member of Council staff;
 - 62.7.9. relates to confidential, personal or sensitive information;
 - 62.7.10. relates to personnel matters;
 - 62.7.11. relates to the personal hardship of any resident or ratepayer;
 - 62.7.12. relates to industrial matters;
 - 62.7.13. relates to contractual matters;
 - 62.7.14. relates to proposed developments;
 - 62.7.15. relates to legal advice;
 - 62.7.16. relates to matters affecting the security of Council property; or

62.7.17. relates to any other matter which Council considers would prejudice Council or any person.

62.8. Any question which has been disallowed by the Chair or the Chief Executive Officer must be made available to any Councillor upon request.

All questions and answers must be as brief as possible, and no discussion may be allowed other than by Councillors for the purposes of clarification.

62.9. Like questions may be grouped together and a single answer provided.

62.10. The Chair may nominate a Councillor or the Chief Executive Officer to respond to a question.

62.11. A Councillor or the Chief Executive Officer may require a question to be put on notice. If a question is put on notice, a written copy of the answer will be sent to the person who asked the question.

63. Submission Hearing

63.1. The Chief Executive Officer may, in consultation with the Mayor, elect to hold a Submission Hearing to allow people to address Council on a specific matter (such as planning matters or the adoption of key documents) or a Submissions Hearing may be recommended in a Council report.

63.2. Submissions must be submitted to Council in writing in accordance with the advertisement on the matter.

63.3. Each speaker or submitter must state or include their name and, where appropriate, whether they are speaking in support or against the matter. The statements are to be strictly limited to the officer recommendation or notice of motion before them.

63.4. Each speaker is to confine themselves to 3 (three) minutes each. Comments submitted in writing are to be of a length that will take not more than 3 (three) minutes to be read out.

63.5. No submissions received in writing will be read out during the Submission Hearing if the submitter is not present, but they will be circulated to all Councillors.

63.6. There is no right of reply or discussion allowed, and no questions can be directed to the Officers, Councillors or visitors in the gallery. The only statements that can be made are either directly related to the matter.

63.7. A submission may be disallowed by the Chair if the Chair determines that it:

63.7.1. relates to a matter outside the duties, functions and powers of Council;

63.7.2. Relates to a matter which is workplace operations;

63.7.3. Relates to a complaint which should be dealt with through Council's Complaint Management Process;

63.7.4. is defamatory, indecent, abusive, offensive, irrelevant, trivial or objectionable in language or substance;

- 63.7.5. deals with a subject matter already answered;
 - 63.7.6. is repetitive of a question already asked by the person;
 - 63.7.7. is aimed at embarrassing a Councillor or a member of Council staff or directed at a Councillor or a member of Council staff;
 - 63.7.8. relates to confidential, personal or sensitive information;
 - 63.7.9. relates to personnel matters;
 - 63.7.10. relates to the personal hardship of any resident or ratepayer;
 - 63.7.11. relates to industrial matters;
 - 63.7.12. relates to contractual matters;
 - 63.7.13. relates to proposed developments;
 - 63.7.14. relates to legal advice;
 - 63.7.15. relates to matters affecting the security of Council property; or
 - 63.7.16. relates to any other matter which Council considers would prejudice Council or any person.
- 63.8. Hearing meetings are not required to be open to the public or livestreamed but can be at the discretion of the Chief Executive Officer or the Chair.
- 63.9. No Agenda or Minutes will be created for Submission Hearings. Councillors will be provided with a running sheet which lists the submitters who wish to address Council on the matter.

64. Petitions and Joint Letters

- 64.1. Unless Council determines to consider it as an item of urgent business, no motion (other than a motion to receive the same) may be made on any petition, joint letter, memorial or other like application until the next scheduled Council meeting after that at which it has been presented.
- 64.2. Every petition or joint letter presented to Council must be in writing (other than pencil), contain the request of the petitioners or signatories and be signed by at least 12 people.
- 64.3. Every petition or joint letter must be signed by the persons whose names are appended to it by their names or marks, and, except in cases of incapacity or sickness, by no one else and the address of every petitioner or signatory must be clearly stated.
- 64.4. Any signature appearing on a page which does not bear the text of the whole of the petition or request may not be considered by Council.
- 64.5. Every page of a hard copy petition or joint letter must be a single page of paper and not be posted, stapled, pinned or otherwise affixed or attached to any piece of paper other than another page of the petition or joint letter.

- 64.6. Electronic or online petitions, joint letters, memorials or like applications must contain the name and email address of each petitioner or signatory, which details will, for the purposes of this Rule, qualify as the address and signature of such petitioner or signatory.
- 64.7. Before petitions, joint letters, memorials or like applications are presented to Council, its compliance with Rule 64 must be verified by the Chief Executive Officer.
- 64.8. Petitions, joint letters, memorials or like applications will be included in the Council Meeting Agenda of the first scheduled Council Meeting following their receipt and application. Any petitions, joint letters, memorials or like applications received after the Agenda has been compiled will be presented to the next scheduled Council Meeting. If a petition, joint letter, memorial or other like application relates to an operational matter, Council must refer it to the Chief Executive Officer for consideration.

Division 9 – Voting

65. How Motion Determined

To determine a motion before a meeting, the Chair must first call for those in favour of the motion and then those opposed to the motion, then those abstaining from the vote, and must then declare the result to the meeting.

66. Silence

Voting must take place in silence.

67. Recount

The Chair may direct that a vote be recounted to satisfy themselves of the result.

68. Casting Vote

In the event of a tied vote, the Chair must exercise a casting vote.

69. By Show Of Hands

Voting on any matter is by show of hands.

70. Procedure For A Division

- 70.1. Immediately after any question is put to a meeting and before the next item of business has commenced, a Councillor may call for a division.
- 70.2. When a division is called for, the vote already taken must be treated as set aside and the division shall decide the question, motion or amendment.
- 70.3. When a division is called for, the Chair must:
 - 70.3.1. first ask each Councillor wishing to vote in the affirmative to raise a hand and, upon such request being made, each Councillor wishing to vote in the affirmative must raise one of their hands. The Chair must then state, and the Chief Executive Officer or any authorised officer must record, the names of those Councillors voting in the affirmative;

and

- 70.3.2. then ask each Councillor wishing to vote in the negative to raise a hand and, upon such request being made, each Councillor wishing to vote in the negative must raise one of their hands. The Chair must then state, and the Chief Executive Officer or any authorised officer must record, the names of those Councillors voting in the negative.

71. No Discussion Once Declared

Once a vote on a matter has been taken, no further discussion relating to the matter is allowed.

72. If Lost

If a motion is lost, a similar motion may not be put before Council for at least six months from the date it was last lost, unless Council resolves that the motion be re-listed at a future meeting.

73. En Bloc Voting

En bloc voting is not permitted.

Division 10 – Minutes

74. Confirmation of Minutes

- 74.1. At every Council meeting the minutes of the preceding meeting(s) must be dealt with as follows:
- 74.1.1. a copy of the minutes must be delivered to each Councillor no later than 48 hours before the meeting;
 - 74.1.2. if no Councillor indicates opposition, the minutes must be declared to be confirmed;
 - 74.1.3. if a Councillor indicates opposition to the minutes:
 - 74.1.4. they must specify the item(s) to which they object;
 - 74.1.5. the objected item(s) must be considered separately and in the order in which they appear in the minutes;
 - 74.1.6. the Councillor objecting must move accordingly without speaking to the motion;
 - 74.1.7. the motion must be seconded;
 - 74.1.8. the Chair must ask:
"Is the motion opposed?"
 - 74.1.9. if no Councillor indicates opposition, then the Chair must declare the motion carried without discussion and then ask the second of the questions described in sub-Rule 74.1.14;
 - 74.1.10. if a Councillor indicates opposition, then the Chair must call on the mover to address the meeting;

- 74.1.11. after the mover has addressed the meeting, the seconder may address the meeting;
- 74.1.12. after the seconder has addressed the meeting (or after the mover has addressed the meeting if the seconder does not address the meeting), the Chair must invite debate by calling on any Councillor who wishes to speak to the motion, providing an opportunity to alternate between those wishing to speak against the motion and those wishing to speak for the motion;
- 74.1.13. if, after the mover has addressed the meeting, the Chair invites debate and no Councillor speaks to the motion, the Chair must put the motion; and
- 74.1.14. the Chair must, after all objections have been dealt with, ultimately ask:
"The question is that the minutes be confirmed" or
"The question is that the minutes, as amended, be confirmed",
and they must put the question to the vote accordingly;
- 74.1.15. a resolution of Council must confirm the minutes;
- 74.1.16. unless otherwise resolved or required by law, minutes of a Delegated Committee requiring confirmation by Council must not be available to the public until confirmed by Council.

75. No Debate on Confirmation of Minutes

No discussion or debate on the confirmation of minutes is permitted except where their accuracy as a record of the proceedings of the meeting to which they relate is questioned.

76. Deferral Of Confirmation of Minutes

Council may defer the confirmation of minutes until later in the Council meeting or until the next meeting if considered appropriate.

77. Form and Availability of Minutes

- 77.1. The Chief Executive Officer (or other person authorised by the Chief Executive Officer to attend the meeting and to take the minutes of such meeting) must keep minutes of each Council meeting, and those minutes must record:
 - 77.1.1. the date, place, time and nature of the meeting;
 - 77.1.2. the names of the Councillors in attendance and the names of any Councillors who apologised in advance for their non-attendance;
 - 77.1.3. the names of the members of Council staff in attendance
 - 77.1.4. any disclosure of a conflict of interest made by a Councillor, including the explanation given by the Councillor under Chapter 5;
 - 77.1.5. arrivals and departures (including temporary departures) of Councillors during the course of the meeting;

- 77.1.6. each motion and amendment moved (including motions and amendments that lapse for the want of a seconder);
 - 77.1.7. the vote cast by each Councillor, including any abstention from voting;
 - 77.1.8. the vote cast by any Councillor who has requested that their vote be recorded in the minutes;
 - 77.1.9. Responses to public questions;
 - 77.1.10. the failure of a quorum;
 - 77.1.11. The grounds on which any item was listed as confidential business with reference to the types of confidential information described in s3(1) of *the Act*;
 - 77.1.12. any adjournment of the meeting and the reasons for that adjournment; and
 - 77.1.13. the time at which standing orders were suspended and resumed.
- 77.2. The Chief Executive Officer must ensure that the minutes of any Council meeting are:
- 77.2.1. published on Council's website; and
 - 77.2.2. available for inspection at Council's office during normal business hours.
- 77.3. Nothing in sub-Rule requires Council or the Chief Executive Officer to make public any minutes relating to a Council meeting or part of a Council meeting closed to members of the public in accordance with section 66 of *the Act*.

78. Audiovisual Recordings of Council Meetings

- 78.1. An audiovisual recording will be taken of Council Meetings, and livestreamed to the public, where Council decides to consider Confidential Information, Council may resolve to close the meeting to the public, closing the public gallery and suspending the live stream and recording pursuant to section 66(1) of *the Act*.
- 78.2. The audiovisual recording will be archived for viewing on Council's website to accompany the publication of the meeting's Minutes.

Division 11 – Behaviour

79. Members of the Public Addressing the Meeting

- 79.1. Members of the public do not have a right to address Council outside Division 8 above and may only do so with the consent of the Chair or by prior arrangement.
- 79.2. Any member of the public addressing Council must extend due courtesy and respect to Council and the processes under which it operates and must take direction from the Chair whenever called on to do so.
- 79.3. A member of the public in attendance at a Council meeting must not disrupt the meeting.

80. Chair May Remove

- 80.1. The Chair may order and cause the removal of any person, other than a Councillor, who disrupts any meeting or fails to comply with a direction given under sub-Rule 79.2.
- 80.2. The Mayor, in accordance with section 19(1)(b) of the Act, may direct a Councillor to leave a Council Meeting if the behaviour of a Councillor is preventing the Council from conducting its business.

It is intended that this power be exercisable by the Chair, without the need for any Council resolution. The Chair may choose to order the removal of a person whose actions immediately threaten the stability of the meeting or wrongly threatens their authority in chairing the meeting.

81. Chair may adjourn disorderly meeting

If the Chair is of the opinion that disorder at the Council table or in the gallery makes it desirable to adjourn the Council meeting, the Chair may adjourn the meeting to a later time on the same day or to some later day as they think proper. In that event, the provisions of sub-Rules 22.3 apply.

82. Removal from Chamber

The Chair, or Council in the case of a suspension, may ask the Chief Executive Officer or a member of the Victoria Police to remove from the Chamber any person who acts in breach of this Chapter and whom the Chair has ordered to be removed from the gallery under Rule 80.

Division 12 – Additional Duties of Chair

83. The Chair's Duties and Discretions

In addition to the duties and discretions provided in this Chapter, the Chair:

- 83.1. must not accept any motion, question or statement which is derogatory, or defamatory of any Councillor, member of Council staff, or member of the community; and
- 83.2. must call to order any person who is disruptive or unruly during any meeting.

Division 13 – Suspension of Standing Orders

84. Suspension of Standing Orders

- 84.1. To expedite the business of a meeting, Council may suspend standing orders.

The suspension of standing orders should be used to enable full discussion of any issue without the constraints of formal meeting procedure.

Its purpose is to enable the formalities of meeting procedure to be temporarily disposed of while an issue is discussed.

- 84.2. The suspension of standing orders should not be used purely to dispense with the processes and protocol of the government of Council. An appropriate motion would be:

"That standing order be suspended to enable discussion on....."

- 84.3. No motion can be accepted by the Chair or lawfully be dealt with during any suspension of standing orders.

- 84.4. Once the discussion has taken place and before any motions can be put, the resumption of standing orders will be necessary. An appropriate motion would be:

"That standing orders be resumed."

Division 14 – Physical and Remote Attendance

85. Mode of Attendance

- 85.1. Each notice of meeting must indicate whether the relevant Council meeting is to be conducted:

85.1.1. wholly in person;

85.1.2. wholly by electronic means; or

85.1.3. partially in person and partially by electronic means.

- 85.2. The indication in the notice of meeting must be consistent with any Resolution of Council that has expressed a preference for, or otherwise specified, when Council meetings are to be conducted:

85.2.1. wholly in person;

85.2.2. wholly by electronic means; or

85.2.3. partially in person and partially by electronic means.

- 85.3. If a Council meeting is to be conducted wholly in person a Councillor may nonetheless request to attend by electronic means.

- 85.4. Any request must:

85.4.1. be in writing;

85.4.2. be given to the Chief Executive Officer no later than 24 hours prior to the commencement of the relevant Council meeting where possible; and

85.4.3. specify the reasons why the Councillor is unable to attend the Council meeting in person.

- 85.5. The Chief Executive Officer, in consultation with the Mayor, will consider each request and respond to the relevant Councillor at least 6 hours before the Council meeting.

- 85.6. Requests to attend by electronic means can be made in the following circumstances:
- 85.6.1. Where a Councillor has a contagious illness;
 - 85.6.2. Where a Councillor has a short-term medical condition or impairment;
 - 85.6.3. Where a Councillor has an ongoing medical condition or impairment.
 - 85.6.4. Where a Councillor has Carer responsibilities;
 - 85.6.5. If a Councillor has taken leave;
 - 85.6.6. If a Councillor is travelling for work;
 - 85.6.7. If a Councillor has taken compassionate leave;
- 85.7. Where the circumstances above exist, Councillors are encouraged not to attend the meeting and must consider their ability to fully participate in the meeting before applying to attend by electronic means;
- 85.8. Where a situation has not been provided for under these Rules the Chief Executive Officer may determine the matter.
- 85.9. The Chief Executive Officer may request evidence to support the application as required.
- 85.10. The Chief Executive Officer may approve and must not unreasonably refuse any request.
- 85.11. The Chief Executive Officer must ensure that any request received in accordance with sub-Rule .4 and any other request received from a Councillor to attend by electronic means is made known at the commencement of the relevant Council meeting.
- 85.12. A Councillor who is attending a Council meeting by electronic means is responsible for ensuring that they are able to access such equipment and are in such an environment that facilitates participation in the Council meeting.
- 85.13. A Councillor who is attending a meeting by electronic means must be able to:
- 85.13.1. hear the proceedings;
 - 85.13.2. see all Councillors and members of Council staff who are also attending the Council meeting, at least while a Councillor or member of Council staff is speaking;
 - 85.13.3. be seen by all Councillors, members of Council staff and members of the public who are physically present at the Council meeting; and
 - 85.13.4. be heard when they speak.
- 85.14. If the conditions above cannot be met by one or more Councillors attending a Council meeting, whether because of technical difficulties or otherwise:

85.14.1. the Council meeting will nonetheless proceed as long as a quorum is present; and

85.14.2. the relevant Councillor (or Councillors) will be treated as being absent from the Council meeting or that part of the Council meeting

unless the Council meeting has been adjourned in accordance with these Rules.

85.15. A Councillor who is attending a meeting by electronic means must be in a private, confidential space by themselves and be free from distractions.

85.16. Nothing in this Rule prevents a Councillor from joining (or re-joining) a Council meeting at the time that they achieve compliance with sub-Rule .13 even if the Council meeting has already commenced or has continued in their absence.

86. Meetings Conducted Remotely or partially in person and partially by electronic means

86.1. If a Council meeting is conducted wholly or partially by electronic means, the Chair may, with the consent of the meeting, modify the application of any of the Rules in this Chapter to facilitate the more efficient and effective transaction of the business of the meeting.

86.2. If the Chair is attending the Council meeting virtually and leaves the meeting due to technical issues the Deputy Mayor (or, if there is no Deputy Mayor or the Deputy Mayor is not in attendance, temporary Chair elected by the meeting) must take their place until the Chair returns to the meeting.

86.3. If the Chief Executive Officer is attending the meeting virtually and leaves the meeting due to technical issues a member of the Executive Leadership Team will assist the Chair until the Chief Executive Officer is able to return to the meeting.

86.4. Council may resolve to make certain meetings in person only.

Division 15 - Miscellaneous

87. Urgent Decisions required under this Chapter

There are a number of Rules under this Chapter where the Chief Executive Officer has decision making power, will to exercise this power in consultation with the Mayor.

Where a matter is urgent and consultation with the Mayor is not possible, the CEO may determine the appropriate course of action and will notify the Mayor of any decisions made as soon as practicable following the decision.

88. Disputes in relation to Decisions required under this Chapter

There are a number of Rules under this Chapter where the Chief Executive Officer has decision making power, but will exercise this power in consultation with the Mayor.

Where agreement cannot be reached on a matter, the CEO may determine the appropriate course of action.

89. Procedure not provided in this Chapter

- 89.1. Where a situation has not been provided for under these Rules the Chair may determine the matter.
- 89.2. The Chair may adjourn the meeting to consider a situation not provided for under these Rules.

90. Criticism of members of Council staff

- 90.1. The Chief Executive Officer may make a brief statement at a Council meeting in respect of any statement by a Councillor made at the Council meeting criticising them or any member of Council staff.
- 90.2. A statement under sub-Rule 90.1 must be made by the Chief Executive Officer, through the Chair, as soon as practicable after the Councillor who made the statement has concluded their statement.

Chapter 3 – Meeting Procedure for Delegated Committees

91. Meeting Procedure Generally

If Council establishes a Delegated Committee:

- 91.1. all of the provisions of Chapter 2 apply to meetings of the Delegated Committee; and
- 91.2. any reference in Chapter 2 to:
 - 91.2.1. Council is to be read as a reference to a Delegated Committee;
 - 91.2.2. a Council meeting is to be read as a reference to a Delegated Committee meeting;
 - 91.2.3. a Councillor is to be read as a reference to a member of the
 - 91.2.4. Delegated Committee; and
 - 91.2.5. the Mayor is to be read as a reference to the Chair of the Delegated Committee.

92. Meeting Procedure Can Be Varied

Notwithstanding Rule 92 if Council establishes a Delegated Committee that is not composed solely of Councillors:

- 92.1. Council may; or
- 92.2. the Delegated Committee may, with the approval of Council

resolve that any or all of the provisions of Chapter 2 are not to apply to a meeting of the Delegated Committee, in which case the provision or those provisions will not apply until Council resolves, or the Delegated Committee with the approval of Council resolves, otherwise.

Chapter 4 – Meeting Procedure for Community Asset Committees

93. Introduction

In this Chapter, “Instrument of Delegation” means an instrument of delegation made by the Chief Executive Officer under section 47(1)(b) of *the Act*.

94. Meeting Procedure

Unless anything in the Instrument of Delegation provides otherwise, the conduct of a meeting of a Community Asset Committee is in the discretion of the Community Asset Committee.

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Chapter 5 – Disclosure of Conflicts of Interest

95. Definition

In this Chapter:

- 95.1. “meeting conducted under the auspices of Council” means a meeting of the kind described in section 131(1) of *the Act* (whether such a meeting is known as a ‘Councillor Briefing’ or by some other name); and
- 95.2. a member of a Delegated Committee includes a Councillor.

96. Disclosure of a Conflict of Interest at a Council Meeting

A Councillor who has a conflict of interest in a matter being considered at a Council meeting at which they:

- 96.1. are in attendance must disclose that conflict of interest by explaining the nature of the conflict of interest to those in attendance at the Council meeting immediately before the matter is considered and indicate whether it is a general conflict of interest or a material conflict of interest; and
- 96.2. must disclose that conflict of interest by providing to the Chief Executive Officer a written notice:
 - 96.2.1. advising of the conflict of interest;
 - 96.2.2. explaining the nature of the conflict of interest and indicating whether it is a general or material conflict of interest; and
 - 96.2.3. detailing, if the nature of the conflict of interest involves a Councillor’s relationship with or a gift from another person, the:
 - 96.2.4. name of the other person;
 - 96.2.5. nature of the relationship with that other person or the date of receipt, value and type of gift received from the other person; and
 - 96.2.6. nature of that other person’s interest in the matter. The Councillor must leave the Council meeting immediately before the matter in which they have declared a conflict of interest is considered and not return to the meeting until after the matter has been disposed of.

97. Disclosure of Conflict of Interest at a Delegated Committee Meeting

- 97.1. A member of a Delegated Committee who has a conflict of interest in a matter being considered at a Delegated Committee meeting at which they:
- 97.2. are in attendance must disclose that conflict of interest by explaining the nature of the conflict of interest to those in attendance at the Delegated Committee meeting immediately before the matter is considered and indicate whether it is a general conflict of interest or a material conflict of interest; and
- 97.3. must disclose that conflict of interest by providing to the Chief Executive Officer a written notice:

- 97.3.1. advising of the conflict of interest;
- 97.3.2. explaining the nature of the conflict of interest and indicating whether it is a general or material conflict of interest; and
- 97.3.3. detailing, if the nature of the conflict of interest involves a member of a Delegated Committee's relationship with or a gift from another person the:
 - 97.3.4. name of the other person;
 - 97.3.5. nature of the relationship with that other person or the date of receipt, value and type of gift received from the other person; and
 - 97.3.6. nature of that other person's interest in the matter.

The member of a Delegated Committee must leave the Delegated Committee meeting immediately before the matter in which they have declared a conflict of interest is considered and not return to the meeting until after the matter has been disposed of.

98. Disclosure of a Conflict of Interest at a Community Asset Committee Meeting

A Councillor who has a conflict of interest in a matter being considered at a Community Asset Committee meeting at which they:

- 98.1. are in attendance must disclose that conflict of interest by explaining the nature of the conflict of interest to those in attendance at the Community Asset Committee meeting immediately before the matter is considered and indicate whether it is a general conflict of interest or a material conflict of interest; and
 - 98.1.1. must disclose that conflict of interest by providing to the Chief Executive Officer a written notice:
 - 98.1.2. advising of the conflict of interest;
 - 98.1.3. explaining the nature of the conflict of interest and indicating whether it is a general or material conflict of interest; and
 - 98.1.4. detailing, if the nature of the conflict of interest involves a member of a Councillor's relationship with or a gift from another person the:
 - (a) name of the other person;
 - (b) nature of the relationship with that other person or the date of receipt, value and type of gift received from the other person; and
 - 98.1.5. nature of that other person's interest in the matter.

The Councillor must, leave the Committee Asset Committee meeting immediately before the matter in which they have declared a conflict of interest is considered and not return to the meeting until after the matter has been disposed of.

99. Disclosure at a Meeting Conducted Under the Auspices of Council

A Councillor who has a conflict of interest in a matter being considered by a meeting conducted under the auspices of Council at which they are in attendance must:

- 99.1. disclose that conflict of interest by explaining the nature of the conflict of interest to those in attendance at the meeting immediately before the matter is considered and indicate whether it is a general conflict of interest or a material conflict of interest;
- 99.2. absent themselves from any discussion of the matter; and
- 99.3. as soon as practicable after the meeting concludes provide to the Chief Executive Officer a written notice recording that the disclosure was made and accurately summarising the explanation given to those in attendance at the meeting.

100. Disclosure by Members of Council Staff Preparing Reports for Meetings

- 100.1. A member of Council staff who, in their capacity as a member of Council staff, has a conflict of interest in a matter in respect of which they are preparing or contributing to the preparation of a Report for the consideration of a:

- 100.1.1. Council meeting;
- 100.1.2. Delegated Committee meeting;
- 100.1.3. Community Asset Committee meeting

must, immediately upon becoming aware of the conflict of interest, provide a written notice to the Chief Executive Officer disclosing the conflict of interest and explaining the nature of the conflict of interest and indicate whether it is a general conflict of interest or a material conflict of interest.

- 100.2. The Chief Executive Officer must ensure that the Report referred to in sub-Rule 100.1 records the fact that a member of Council staff disclosed a conflict of interest in the subject-matter of the Report.
- 100.3. If the member of Council staff referred to in sub-Rule 100.1 is the Chief Executive Officer:
 - 100.3.1. the written notice referred to in sub-Rule 100.1 must be given to the Mayor; and
 - 100.3.2. the obligation imposed by sub-Rule 100.2 may be discharged by any other member of Council staff responsible for the preparation of the Report.

101. Disclosure of Conflict of Interest by Members of Council Staff in the Exercise of Delegated Power

- 101.1. A member of Council staff who has a conflict of interest in a matter requiring a decision to be made by the member of Council staff as delegate must, immediately upon becoming aware of the conflict of interest, provide a written notice to the Chief Executive Officer explaining the nature of the conflict of interest and indicating whether it is a general conflict of interest or a material conflict of interest.

- 101.2. If the member of Council staff referred to in sub-Rule 101.1 is the Chief Executive Officer the written notice must be given to the Mayor.

102. Disclosure by a Member of Council Staff in the Exercise of a Statutory Function

- 102.1. A member of Council staff who has a conflict of interest in a matter requiring a statutory function to be performed under an *Act* by the member of Council staff must, upon becoming aware of the conflict of interest, immediately provide a written notice to the Chief Executive Officer explaining the nature of the conflict of interest and indicating whether it is a general conflict of interest or a material conflict of interest..
- 102.2. If the member of Council staff referred to in sub-Rule 102.1 is the Chief Executive Officer the written notice must be given to the Mayor.

103. Retention of Written Notices

The Chief Executive Officer must retain all written notices received under this Chapter for a period of three years.

104. Conflict of Interest Register

The Chief Executive Officer will maintain a Conflict of Interest Register for Councillors and Council staff which details:

- Councillor's or Council staff member's name
- Position Title
- Business Unit (for Council staff)
- Directorate (for Council staff)
- Date of Disclosure
- Description of matter
- Type and Nature of Conflict of Interest
- Details on how the conflict will be managed
- Supervisor's Name and Position Title
- Electronic Records Reference Number

Chapter 6 – Election Period Policy

1. Purpose

Melton City Council is committed to the principle of fair and democratic elections and will therefore adopt the practices within this Policy and relevant legislative requirements as outlined in the *Local Government Act 2020* (also referred to as '*the Act*').

This Policy addresses the requirements as outlined in section 69 of *the Act* in relation to the election period for local government elections and activities that are impacted during this time including decision-making, Council resources, public consultation and events, information and communications.

This Policy also addresses the requirements as outlined in *the Act* in relation to Councillor conduct and misuse of position during the election period. In addition to this policy, Council reinforces the importance of adhering to these requirements through its Code of Conduct for Councillors, which is about adopting good governance and leadership practices when representing Council and in dealings with the community, Council staff and other Councillors.

2. Application and Scope

This Policy applies to all Melton City Council Councillors, employees, contractors, consultants and volunteers during the statutory election period.

The election period (or caretaker period) for local government general elections commences at the time that nominations close on nominations day, 32 days before the election, and ends at 6.00pm on election day.

3. Decision Making

- 3.1. As per the requirements of section 69(2) of the *Local Government Act 2020*, Council is prohibited from making any decisions during the election period for a general election that:
 - 3.1.1. relates to the appointment or remuneration of the Chief Executive Officer but not to the appointment or remuneration of an Acting Chief Executive Officer; or
 - 3.1.2. commits the Council to expenditure exceeding one per cent of the Council's income from general rates, municipal charges and service rates and charges in the preceding financial year; or
 - 3.1.3. the Council considers could be reasonably deferred until the next Council is in place; or
 - 3.1.4. the Council considers should not be made during an election period.
- 3.2. As per the requirements of section 69(3) of the *Local Government Act 2020*, Council is prohibited from making any decisions during the election period for a general election or a by-election that would enable the use of Council's resources in a way that is intended to influence, or is likely to influence, voting at the election.

- 3.3. Council will refrain from making major decisions such as (but not limited to) the allocation of community grants and other significant direct funding to community organisations, major planning scheme amendments and changes to strategic objectives and strategies in the council plan. Any other decision will be considered only if absolutely necessary for Council operational purposes or pursuant to a statutory requirement.
- 3.4. Council will not make any decisions during the election period that will be binding on an incoming Council save for decisions which are part of the normal operating function of Council which includes most town planning matters.
- 3.5. Applications and proceedings made and conducted under Division 7 of Part 6 of the *Local Government Act 2020*, being Councillor Conduct Panels and VCAT, must be suspended during the election period for a general election.
- 3.6. If the Council considers that there are extraordinary circumstances where the municipality or the local community would be significantly disadvantaged by the Council not making a particular Major Policy Decision the Council will, by resolution, request an exemption from the Minister for Local Government, in accordance with section 177 of *the Act*.
- 3.7. The Chief Executive Officer will ensure that no Council Report goes to Council during the election period relates to a matter in section 3.1.1 above.
- 3.8. A decision made in contravention of this Policy is invalid (refer s69(4)) and any person who suffers any loss or damage as a result of acting in good faith on a Council decision that is invalid by virtue of subsection (4) is entitled to compensation from the Council for that loss or damage (refer s69(5)).

4. Communication

- 4.1. Prohibition on Publishing Material
- 4.2. Section 304(2) of *the Act* prohibits a Councillor or member of Council staff must not use Council resources to intentionally or recklessly print, publish or distribute or cause, permit or authorise to be printed, published or distributed any electoral material during the election period on behalf of, or purporting to be on behalf of, the Council unless the electoral material only contains information about the election process or is otherwise required in accordance with, or under, any Act or regulation.

A breach of this section of *the Act* is an offence.

- 4.3. Prohibited Material

Electoral matter is defined in *the Act* (refer s3(4) and s3(5)) and means matter which is intended or likely to affect voting in an election but does not include any electoral material produced by or on behalf of the Election Manager for the purposes of conducting an election.

- 4.4. Material is electoral matter if it expressly or implicitly:
 - (a) refers to or comments on the election, a candidate for the election or an issue before the voters in connection with an election.

- (b) publicises the strength or weaknesses of a candidate
- (c) advocates the policies of the Council or of a candidate
- (d) responds to claims made by a candidate
- (e) publicises the achievements of the elected Council
- (f) publicises matters that have already been the subject of public debate
- (g) is about matters that are known to be contentious in the community and likely to be the subject of election debate
- (h) deals with Election Candidates' statements
- (i) refers to Councillors or candidates by name or by implicit reference.

4.5. Council Publications – Certification

All publications to be printed, published or distributed during the election period must be certified by the Chief Executive Officer or their delegate. The Chief Executive Officer or their delegate will not certify a publication in either electronic or hard copy format that contains electoral matter. This includes social media activities and online/digital communications.

The certification by the Chief Executive Officer will be recorded in Council's Electronic Records Management System in the following form:

'Certified by the Chief Executive Officer in accordance with the Election Period Policy'.

In considering whether to grant approval for the publication of materials during an election period, in accordance with the provisions of *the Act*, the Chief Executive Officer:

4.5.1. must not permit materials to be published which includes an express or implicit reference to, or comment on:

- (a) the election
- (b) a candidate in the election
- (c) an issue submitted to, or otherwise before, the voters in connection with the election.

4.5.2. may approve publication of material which only contains information about:

- (a) the election process itself
- (b) Council information that does not include any reference to a current Councillor otherwise precluded by this policy.

4.6. Media Services

During the election period Council's Communications team must not be used in any way that might promote a Councillor as an election candidate.

Council publicity during the election period will be restricted to communicating normal Council activities and initiatives and subject to certification by the Chief Executive Officer.

4.6.1. Media Releases and Enquiries

Media releases will minimise references to specific Councillors and will not identify any Councillor in a manner that could promote a Councillor as an election candidate. Where it is necessary to identify a spokesperson, the Chief Executive Officer will be consulted.

All media enquiries are to be directed to the Communications team.

All media releases and responses to media enquiries will require certification by the Chief Executive Officer.

Councillors will not use their position as an elected representative or their access to Council Officers and other Council resources to gain media attention.

During the election period no Council employee may make any public statement that relates to an election issue unless prior approval has been obtained by the Chief Executive Officer. Any public statement must be approved by the Chief Executive Officer.

4.7. Correspondence from Councillors

Correspondence from Councillors on Council letterhead, or in relation to official Council business is not to occur during the election period. All correspondence during this time will come from the Chief Executive Officer or their delegate.

5. Council Publications

5.1. Council Agendas and Reports

Information and briefing material prepared by staff for Councillors during the election period will relate only to factual matters or to existing Council policies and services.

Such information will not relate to new policy development, new projects or matters that are the subject of public or election debate or that might be perceived to be connected with a candidate's election campaign.

Items submitted for Public Question Time will be reviewed to ensure that they comply with the principles of *the Act* and this Policy.

5.2. Annual Report

Council is required by *the Act* to prepare an Annual Report. The Council's Annual Report will be published during the election period.

The Annual Report will not contain any material that could be regarded as overt electioneering or that inappropriately promotes individual Councillors.

5.3. Council Website

Material published on Council's website in advance of the election period is not subject to certification, however existing material that is prominently displayed will be reviewed and consideration given to the removal of any such material that would be considered electoral matter, as if it were published during the election period.

Councillor photos and contact information will remain available on the website during the caretaker period, but Councillors' profiles will be removed.

Any material published on Council's website during the election period must be certified by the Chief Executive Officer.

The Annual Report does not require certification by the Chief Executive Officer however; any publication of an extract or summary of the Annual Report will require certification.

An election period statement will be placed on Council's website advising that it will not be updating or adding new information to the website during the election period other than necessary operational information.

5.4. Social Media

Content generated by Council Officers is to be kept to the minimum level assessed to mitigate the loss of any readership or subscription to the social media account.

Content must not include Prohibited Material as defined under 109.3 of this policy.

Social media accounts that allow third party generated content to be disabled must disable that functionality for the election period.

Where not possible, prohibited content published by third parties must be deleted as soon as practical, and consideration given to the temporary suspension of the social media account during the election period.

An election period statement will be placed on Council's social media accounts advising that it will not be updating or adding new information to these accounts during the election period other than necessary operational information.

6. Public Consultation

For the purposes of this section of the policy, public consultation means a process which

involves inviting (formally or informally) individuals, groups, organisations, businesses or the community generally to provide comment or feedback on an issue, proposed action, policy, plan or strategy of Council.

Public consultation is to be avoided where possible during the election period.

Prior to the commencement of the Election Period, public consultation which is likely to become contentious or politically sensitive during the course of the Election Period should be postponed where possible and practicable until after the election has been completed.

Any public consultations continuing into or commencing in the Election Period requires approval from the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and should avoid contentious or politically sensitive issues.

Where public consultation has occurred prior to the Election Period but a report on the consultation has not yet proceeded to a Council meeting, results of the consultation will also not be provided to Council until the Election Period has concluded.

Consultation for Permit Applications under the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* are exempt from this section of the Policy and can be conducted in accordance with statutory requirements.

7. Attendance at Functions and Events

7.1. Public events staged by external bodies

Councillors may continue to attend events and functions during the election period where necessary. Councillors must not use appearances at public events for the purposes of electioneering and are not to formally speak at these events unless expressly authorised by the Chief Executive Officer. Where this express authorisation has been given any speech must be approved by the Chief Executive Officer.

7.2. Council Functions and Events

It is preferable that no Council-run events and functions are held during the election period. If any are proposed to be held during the election period, they must have prior approval from the Chief Executive Officer and be considered essential to the operation of Council.

Public events and functions during the election period will only be organised and run by Council's administration if they are part of Council's normal business activities. Officers will plan to avoid staging any functions, public events or the launch of publications during the election period. No election material or active campaigning, including within the context of speeches by Councillors, is to be conducted at Council run and sponsored events.

Councillors may continue to attend Council events and functions during the election period.

7.3. Speeches and Keynote addresses

Councillors may make speeches at Council organised or sponsored events and functions during the election period subject to approval by the Chief Executive Officer. Any speeches to be delivered by a Councillor during the election period must be written by Council staff under the direction of the CEO. The Councillor Speaking Opportunity Protocol continues to apply during the election period.

8. Access to Council Information

- 8.1. Council affirms that all candidates for the Council election will be treated equally in terms of assistance and advice relating to the conduct of the Council election. All election related enquiries will be directed to the Returning Officer or, where the matter is outside the responsibilities of the Returning Officer, to the Chief Executive Officer.
- 8.2. Information and briefing material prepared by Council staff for Councillors during the election period will relate only to factual matters, existing Council services, or information that would normally be available to the public. All such requests for information or action are to be issued through the Chief Executive Officers Executive Assistant who will keep a record of requests made and advice provided.
- 8.3. No information will be provided which relates to new policy development, new projects or matters that are the subject of public or election debate or might be perceived to be connected with a candidate's election campaign.
- 8.4. All requests for information or action are to be issued through the Governance Team who will keep a record of requests made and advice provided. In the interests of ensuring equal access to all candidates, if information is sent to one candidate or Councillor, it should be sent to all.
- 8.5. The Governance Team will maintain an 'Information Request Register' during the election period for all requests relating to electoral matters and non-routine requests for information from election candidates, including incumbent Councillors. The Information Request Register will be a public document that contains all requests for information by Councillors and candidates, and the responses given to those requests.

9. Council Resources

- 9.1. As per the requirements of section 304(1) of the *Local Government Act 2020*, a Councillor or member of Council staff must not use Council resources in a way that:
 - 9.1.1. is intended to; or
 - 9.1.2. is likely to:affect the result of an election under this *Act*.

- 9.2. A Councillor or member of Council staff must not use Council resources to intentionally or recklessly print, publish or distribute or cause, permit or authorise to be printed, published or distributed any electoral material during the election period on behalf of, or purporting to be on behalf of, the Council unless the electoral material only contains information about the election process or is otherwise required in accordance with, or under, any Act or regulation.
- 9.3. Council will ensure that Council resources are not used inappropriately during an election period in ways that may influence voting in an election or provide undue advantage for a candidate. In any circumstances where the use of Council resources might be construed as being related to a candidate's election campaign, advice will be sought from the Chief Executive Officer.
- 9.4. Council Staff will not authorise, use or allocate a Council resource for any purpose that may influence voting in the election, except where it only relates to the election process and is authorised by the Chief Executive Officer.
- 9.5. Council resources, including office or meeting facilities, support staff, hospitality services, equipment, stationery, printing, photographs/graphics/videos and branding, will be used exclusively for normal Council business during the election period and will not be used in connection with any election campaign or in a manner that may be construed as supporting an election campaign.
- 9.6. No Council logos, letterheads or other expressions of Melton City Council's brand (such as photographs/graphics, corporate colours, font and "H-symbol" key line) will be used for, or be linked in any way to, a candidate's election campaign.
- 9.7. Council resources, including office or meeting facilities, support staff, hospitality services, equipment, stationery, printing, photographs/ graphics/videos and branding are not to be used in ways that may influence voting in an election or provide undue advantage for a candidate.
- 9.8. In any circumstances where the use of Council resources might be construed as being related to a candidate's election campaign, advice will be sought from the Chief Executive Officer.
- 9.9. Reimbursements of Councillors' out-of-pocket expenses during the election period will only apply to costs that have been incurred in performance of normal duties as a Councillor and not for expenses that could be perceived as supporting or being connected with the election.
- 9.10. Equipment and facilities such as phones, laptops, printers, etc., provided to Councillors for the purpose of conducting normal Council business will not be used for campaigning purposes. Where it is impractical for Councillors to discontinue their use of these facilities during the election period, Councillors will reimburse Council for the usage of those services in accordance with Council's Expenses Policy.
- 9.11. Council email addresses, facsimile numbers and telephone numbers will not be used as contact points in campaign material.

- 9.12. The Chief Executive Officer or any staff should not be asked to undertake any tasks connected directly or indirectly with electioneering.

10. Council Staff


- 10.1. Prior to the election period, the Chief Executive Officer will ensure that all members of Council staff are advised in regard to the application of the Election Period Policy.
- 10.2. Council staff will not undertake an activity, or assist Councillors in a way that could create a perception that they are being used for electoral purposes, or which may affect voting in the election, except where it only relates to the election process and is authorised by the Chief Executive Officer.
- 10.3. Council staff must not make any public statement that can be interpreted as a political comment or have influence on the electoral process, public statement includes social media platforms. Council staff must make it clear when making comments related to the election that they are expressing their own views and not making an official comment.
- 10.4. It is critical that Council staff be, and appear to be, apolitical throughout the election period to maintain the confidence
- 10.5. Any Council employee who considers that a particular use of Council resources may influence voting in an election or provide an undue advantage for a candidate should advise their immediate supervisor before authorising, using or allocating the resource. The Manager will seek appropriate advice in order to ascertain whether the use of Council resources is in accordance with this Policy.

11. Role of the Election Manager

All election related enquiries from candidates, whether sitting Councillors or not, will be directed to the Election Manager or, where the matter is outside the responsibilities of the Election Manager, to the Chief Executive Officer.

12. Misuse of Position

In accordance with Sections 123 and 124 of *the Act* a Councillor will not intentionally misuse or intentionally direct, or seek to direct, a member of Council staff. A breach of either section attracts serious penalties including possible imprisonment.



Definitions

Word or Term	Definition
the Act	means the <i>Local Government Act 2020</i> .
Caretaker Period	has the same meaning as 'Election Period'.
Council Information	means any communication or material containing facts, data or material about the Council and its products, services, processes or functions.
Council resources	means human, material and financial resources of Council, including but not limited to, Council office and works spaces, staff (fulltime, part time, casual, contract) and volunteers, hospitality services, equipment and stationery used for normal Council business.
Delegated Committee	has the same meaning as in s3(1) of <i>the Act</i> and means: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) a delegated committee established by a Council under section 63; or (b) a joint delegated committee established by 2 or more Councils under section 64; or (c) a committee, other than a Community Asset Committee, exercising any power of a Council under this <i>Act</i> or any other Act delegated to the committee under this <i>Act</i> or any other Act.
Delegation	means the giving of decision-making power(s) by instrument of a function, duty or power under any Act, where such delegation is allowed by law.
Election Period	has the same meaning as in section 3(1) of <i>the Act</i> and, in relation to an election, means the period that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) starts at the time that nominations close on nomination day; and (b) ends at 6 p.m. on election day
Electoral Matter	has the same meaning as in sections 3(4) of <i>the Act</i> and means matter which is intended or likely to affect voting in an election, but does not include any electoral material produced by or on behalf of the election manager for the purposes of conducting an election; <p>and</p> <p>Without limiting the generality of the definition of electoral matter, matter is to be taken to be intended or likely to affect voting in an election if it contains an express or implicit reference to, or comment on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) the election; or (b) a candidate in the election; or (c) an issue submitted to, or otherwise before, the voters in connection with the election
Event	means gatherings of internal and/or external stakeholders to discuss, review, acknowledge, communicate, celebrate, or promote a program, strategy or issue that is of relevance to the Council and its community and may take the

	form of conferences, workshops, forums, launches, promotional activities, social occasions such as dinners, receptions, and balls.
Function	has the same meaning as 'Event' as defined in this policy.
Inappropriate Decision	means any decision: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) that would enable the use of Council's resources in a way that is intended to influence, or is likely to influence, voting at the election (refer s69(3) of the <i>Local Government 2020 Act</i>) (b) the Council considers could be reasonably deferred until the next Council is in place (refer s69(2)(c) of <i>the Act</i>) (c) the Council considers should not be made during an election period (refer s69(2)(d) of <i>the Act</i>)
Major Policy Decision	means any decision: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) relates to the appointment or remuneration of the Chief Executive Officer but not to the appointment or remuneration of an Acting Chief Executive Officer (refer s69(2)(a) of <i>the Act</i>) (b) regarding the entering into a contract the total value of which exceeds one per cent of Council's income from general rates, municipal charges and service rates and charges in the preceding financial year.
Public consultation	means a process that involves inviting stakeholders (individuals, groups, organisations or the public generally) to comment on an issue or proposed action or proposed policy, and which includes discussion of the matter with the public.
Publications	means: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • brochures, pamphlets, handbills, flyers, magazines and books • reports (other than Agenda papers and Minutes) • advertisements and notices, except newspaper notices of meetings • new website material • social media • emails with multiple addresses, used for broad communication with the community • bulk mail outs or identical letters sent to a large number of people by or on behalf of Council • media releases • material to publicise a function or event • Councillor speeches.

Significant decision	<p>means any decision:</p> <p>(a) that may irrevocably commit the incoming Council to substantial expenditure or to other significant actions; and</p> <p>(b) that may have an irrevocable and/or significant impact on the municipality or a significant section of the community.</p>
Social media	<p>includes, but is not limited to Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Flickr, LinkedIn, Pinterest, Snapchat, Instagram, TikTok accounts but does not include the private and individual social media accounts of any candidate or Chief Executive Officer or staff member.</p>

13. Related

Name	Location
<i>Local Government Act 2020</i> (Vic)	www.legislation.vic.gov.au
<i>Local Government Act 1989</i> (Vic)	www.legislation.vic.gov.au
Code of Conduct (Councillors)	Governance Intranet Site and Council website
Code of Conduct (Employees)	Governance Intranet Site

12.4 AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE MINUTES - 5 MARCH 2024

Author: Renee Hodgson - Senior Governance Coordinator

Presenter: Emily Keogh - Head of Governance

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To present to Council the confirmed minutes (minutes) of the Audit and Risk Committee meeting held 5 March 2024.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council:

1. Note the confirmed minutes of the Audit and Risk Committee meeting held on 5 March 2024, provided as **Appendix 1** to this report.
2. Adopt the recommendations endorsed or approved by the Audit and Risk Committee, arising within the minutes.

Motion

Crs Shannon/Carli.

1. Note the confirmed minutes of the Audit and Risk Committee meeting held on 5 March 2024, provided as **Appendix 1** to this report.
2. Adopt the recommendations endorsed or approved by the Audit and Risk Committee, arising within the minutes.

CARRIED

REPORT

1. Executive Summary

The minutes of the Audit and Risk Committee meeting held on 5 March 2024 are appended to this report as **Appendix 1**.

The minutes contain recommendations for the consideration of Council.

2. Background/Issues

The Audit and Risk Committee is established by the Council pursuant to Section 53 of the *Local Government Act 2020* ('the Act').

The primary function and responsibility of the Audit and Risk Committee is to monitor the compliance of Council policies and procedures with the Act including any regulations, and chiefly, the overarching governance principles, Council's financial and performance reporting, Council's risk management and fraud prevention systems and controls and oversee the internal and external audit function.

The Audit and Risk Committee makes recommendations to Council for its consideration. These recommendations are set out in the minutes attached at **Appendix 1** for matters that the Audit and Risk Committee considered.

3. Council and Wellbeing Plan Reference and Policy Reference

The Melton City Council 2021-2025 Council and Wellbeing Plan references:

6.3 An organisation that demonstrates excellence in civic leadership and governance.

6.3.1 Maintain a high level of transparent, accountable, unbiased and representative governance.

4. Financial Considerations

Any and all financial considerations are set out within the reports and minutes of the Audit and Risk Committee.

5. Consultation/Public Submissions

Not applicable.

6. Risk Analysis

A risk analysis is contained within each report to the Audit and Risk Committee.

Risks identified by the Audit and Risk Committee and recommendations in relation to same should be carefully considered by Council as these represent an independent and forensic appraisal of the issues.

7. Options

The Audit and Risk Committee is not a delegated committee and operates in an advisory capacity to Council, therefore Council has the discretion to accept, reject or amend the Committee's recommendations.

LIST OF APPENDICES

1. Confirmed Audit and Risk Committee Minutes - 5 March 2024



MELTON CITY COUNCIL

Minutes of the Audit and Risk Committee Meeting of the Melton City Council

5 March 2024

MINUTES OF THE AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE MEETING5 MARCH 2024

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MINUTES OF THE AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE MEETING5 MARCH 2024

6.6 IT BUDGET UPDATE**6**

The purpose of this briefing paper is to provide the Audit and Risk Committee with:

- A review of Melton City Council's Information Technology program in FY23/24.
- The proposed Information Technology program and budget for FY24/25.
- An overview of the FY24/25 Technology Change Program (TCP) (formerly Enterprise Systems Transformation (EST) program).

7. OTHER MATTERS RAISED BY THE COMMITTEE**6****8. NEXT MEETING****6****9. CLOSE OF BUSINESS****6**

AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE MEETING

5 MARCH 2024

MELTON CITY COUNCIL**MINUTES OF THE AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE
MELTON CITY COUNCIL HELD ONLINE VIA MS TEAMS ON
5 MARCH 2024 AT 1.00PM**

Present: Jeff Rigby, Chairperson, Independent External Member
John Watson, Independent External Member
Bruce Potgieter, Independent External Member
Kathy Majdlik, Mayor
Julie Shannon, Councillor

Attendees: Roslyn Wai, Chief Executive Officer
Peter Leersen, Chief Financial Officer
Neil Whiteside, Director City Delivery
Troy Scoble, Director City Life
Emily Keogh, Head of Governance
Megan Kruger, Senior Advisor Office of the CEO
Ajay Ravindran, Head of Technology
Renee Hodgson, Senior Coordinator Governance

Guests: Wilson Tang, Internal Auditor

1. WELCOME / ELECTION OF CHAIR (IF REQUIRED)

The Chairperson opened the meeting at 1.02pm with an Acknowledgement of Country, welcomed the Committee members and extended a special welcome to Emily Keogh, Council's Head of Governance.

2. APOLOGIES AND LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Nil.

3. DECLARATIONS**3.1 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND/OR CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations made by Committee members or attendees.

AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE MEETING

5 MARCH 2024

3.2 INTEGRITY DECLARATIONS

Council's Chief Executive Officer and Head of Governance declared no obstruction to the work of internal or external audit.

Council's Chief Executive Officer and Head of Governance declared no new or impending legal action against Council or instances of statutory breach or fraud that had come to their attention since the last meeting of the Committee and that are not prevented from being disclosed to the Committee by statutory or integrity agency procedural requirements.

Council's Internal Auditor, Wilson Tang, declared no obstruction to the work of internal audit.

4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS**RECOMMENDATION:**

The Audit and Risk Committee ratified confirmation of the Minutes of the Audit and Risk Committee Meeting held on 8 February 2024 and noted by Council at the Scheduled Meeting held on 26 February 2024.

5. OTHER BUSINESS CARRIED OVER FROM A PREVIOUS MEETING

Nil.

6. PRESENTATION OF STAFF REPORTS**6.1 SCOPE FOR THE INTERNAL AUDIT OF INFORMATION SHARING BETWEEN THE ORGANISATION AND COUNCILLORS**

Author: Megan Kruger - Head of Governance

Presenter: Wilson Tang - Internal Auditor, Moore Australia

The Audit and Risk Committee:

1. Reviewed the *Scope for the Internal Audit of Information Sharing between the Organisation and Councillors*; and discussed minor changes for Internal Audit and management to consider; and
 2. Recommended Council approve the *Scope for the Internal Audit of Information Sharing between the Organisation and Councillors*.
-

AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE MEETING

5 MARCH 2024

6.2 SCOPE FOR THE INTERNAL AUDIT OF SOCIAL MEDIA

Author: Megan Kruger - Head of Governance
Presenter: Wilson Tang - Internal Auditor, Moore Australia

The Audit and Risk Committee:

1. Reviewed and discussed the *Scope for the Internal Audit of Social Media*; and
2. Recommended Council approve the *Scope for the Internal Audit of Social Media*.

6.3 SCOPE FOR THE INTERNAL AUDIT OF COMPLAINTS HANDLING

Author: Megan Kruger - Head of Governance
Presenter: Wilson Tang - Internal Auditor, Moore Australia

The Audit and Risk Committee:

1. Reviewed and discussed the *Scope for the Internal Audit of Complaints Handling*; and
2. Recommended Council approve the *Scope for the Internal Audit of Complaints Handling*.

6.4 SCOPE FOR THE INTERNAL AUDIT OF COUNCIL SAFETY (INCLUDING PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY)

Author: Megan Kruger - Head of Governance
Presenter: Wilson Tang - Internal Auditor, Moore Australia

The Audit and Risk Committee:

1. Reviewed and discussed the *Scope for the Internal Audit of Council Safety (Including Psychological Safety)*; and
2. Recommended Council approve the *Scope for the Internal Audit of Council Safety (Including Psychological Safety)*.

John Watson departed the meeting at 1.56pm due to loss of internet connection and did not partake any further in the meeting.

AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE MEETING

5 MARCH 2024

6.5 SCOPE FOR THE INTERNAL AUDIT OF REVENUE ASSURANCE AND COLLECTION**Author: Megan Kruger - Head of Governance****Presenter: Wilson Tang - Internal Auditor, Moore Australia**

The Audit and Risk Committee:

1. Reviewed and discussed the *Scope for the Internal Audit of Revenue Assurance and Collection*; and
2. Recommended Council approve the *Scope for the Internal Audit of Revenue Assurance and Collection*.

Wilson Tang departed the meeting at 1.57pm and did not partake any further in the meeting.

6.6 IT BUDGET UPDATE**Author: Ajay Ravindran - Head of Technology****Presenter: Ajay Ravindran - Head of Technology**

The Audit and Risk Committee received a presentation from the Head of Technology and noted the Information Technology Budget update.

7. OTHER MATTERS RAISED BY THE COMMITTEE

Nil.

8. NEXT MEETING

Thursday 9 May 2024, 12.00pm – 2.30pm.

9. CLOSE OF BUSINESS

The meeting closed at 2.19pm.

Confirmed

Dated this

.....CHAIRPERSON

12.5 ADVISORY COMMITTEES OF COUNCIL - AGGREGATED MEETING MINUTES

Author: Renee Hodgson - Senior Governance Coordinator

Presenter: Emily Keogh - Head of Governance

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To present the aggregated minutes of Advisory Committee meetings yet to be considered by Council.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council receive the minutes of the following Advisory Committee meetings, provided as **Appendices 1 and 2** to this report, and adopt the recommendations arising within the Minutes:

1. Disability Advisory Committee – 1 February 2024
2. Policy Review Panel – 14 March 2024

Motion

Crs Ramsey/Shannon.

That Council receive the minutes of the following Advisory Committee meetings, provided as **Appendices 1 and 2** to this report, and adopt the recommendations arising within the Minutes:

1. Disability Advisory Committee – 1 February 2024
2. Policy Review Panel – 14 March 2024

CARRIED

REPORT

1. Executive Summary

Whilst not mentioned in the *Local Government Act 2020* (the 2020 Act), Council has the power to create Advisory Committees pursuant to its general power set out in section 10 of the 2020 Act.

The minutes of the Advisory Committees attached to this report form the written record of the committee meetings, including any matters considered and any conflicts of interest disclosed.

The minutes also serve as the advice/recommendations to Council for its consideration.

2. Background/Issues

An Advisory Committee is a committee established by Council to provide advice to it or its delegate. Whilst not mentioned in the 2020 Act, Council has the power to create Advisory Committees pursuant to its general power set out in section 10 of the 2020 Act.

All Advisory Committees are subject to their individual Terms of Reference. The membership varies depending upon the committee's specific role. Committee membership will generally comprise a Councillor(s), council staff and community representatives and may include key stakeholders, subject matter experts and/or community service providers and organisations.

Councillor representation on Advisory Committees is generally for one year and is reviewed annually. The Councillor representation on Advisory Committees for the 2023/24 municipal year was approved by Council at its Scheduled Meetings on 2 and 27 November 2023.

The minutes of the following Advisory Committees, attached to this report, form the written record of the committee meetings detailing matters considered and any conflicts of interest disclosed.

The minutes also serve as the advice/recommendations to Council.

Appendix	Advisory Committee	Meeting Date
1.	Disability Advisory Committee	1 February 2024
2.	Policy Review Panel	14 March 2024

3. Council and Wellbeing Plan Reference and Policy Reference

The Melton City Council 2021-2025 Council and Wellbeing Plan references:

6. A high performing organisation that demonstrates civic leadership and organisational excellence

6.3 An organisation that demonstrates excellence in civic leadership and governance.

4. Financial Considerations

Advisory Committees are not responsible for operational expenditure and cannot direct Council officers to act without the consent of Council. Operational expenses and administrative actions arising from an Advisory Committee meeting are accommodated within Council's recurrent budgets, unless otherwise requested within the minutes of the meeting and detailed in a recommendation to Council for consideration.

5. Consultation/Public Submissions

Advisory Committees are one method of Council consulting and communicating with the community. Such a committee may be established to provide strategic level input into a broad area of Council operations, such as community safety or arts and culture. An Advisory Committee may also be established for a specific time-limited project, such as a review of a Local Law.

6. Risk Analysis

With a mandatory responsibility to report to Council and being restricted to making recommendations for Council consideration, risks attached to Advisory Committee actions are substantially mitigated.

It is prudent for Council to carefully consider any and all recommendations arising from Advisory Committee minutes, as Advisory Committees may canvass significant issues and significant expenditure in their deliberations.

7. Options

Advisory Committees are a Committee of Council, therefore Council has the discretion to accept, reject, amend, or seek further information on the Committee minutes and/or recommendations.

LIST OF APPENDICES

1. Disability Advisory Committee Minutes - 1 February 2024
2. Policy Review Panel Minutes - 14 March 2024



MINUTES

DISABILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Held on 1 February 2024 at 12:00 pm at the Melton Library and Learning Hub

Present:

Name	Title	In	Out
Cr K Majdlik	Mayor	12:00 p.m.	1:50 p.m.
Cr S Ramsey	Councillor	12:00 p.m.	1:50 p.m.
Cr L Carli	Councillor	12:00 p.m.	1:50 p.m.
C Crameri	Manager of Community Care and Active Living	12:00 p.m.	1:50 p.m.
R Wai	Chief Executive Officer	12:00 p.m.	1:50 p.m.
M Hutchinson	Council Officer - Manager Engineering and Asset Services	12:00 p.m.	1:50 p.m.
N Migani-Roberts	Council Officer – Advocacy and Inclusion Officer	12:00 p.m.	1:50 p.m.
A Tan	Council Officer – Coordinator Community Wellbeing and Inclusion	12:00 p.m.	1:50 p.m.
L Campbell	Community Representative	12:00 p.m.	1:50 p.m.
M Sidhu	Community Representative	12:00 p.m.	1:50 p.m.
A Alfonzo	Community Representative	1:00 p.m.	1:50 p.m.
S Beniston	Council Officer – Business & Industry Development Officer	12:00 p.m.	1:30 p.m.
H Taylor	Council Officer - Manager Arts Events & Economic Development	12:00 p.m.	1:30 p.m.

Chairperson: Cr Majdlik

Minutes: N Migani-Roberts

1. Welcome

The Chairperson welcomed all attendees to the meeting and proceeded with the Acknowledgment of Country. *'Melton City Council acknowledges the Traditional Owners of this land, the people of the Kulin Nations, and pays respects to their Elders, past, present and emerging.'*

2. Apologies

H Sayers: Community Representative



MINUTES

3. Declaration of interests and/or conflict of interests

Nil

4. Confirmation of minutes of previous meeting

N. Migani-Roberts confirmed the minutes of the December Disability Advisory Committee (DAC) meeting, which will be endorsed at the Council meeting, to be held 26 February 2024.

5. Actions from previous minutes

Noted with no outstanding actions.

6. Melton Town Centre Revitalisation Project

H. Taylor, Manager Arts Events & Economic Development and S. Beniston, Business & Industry Development Officer, presented to the Committee an overview of the Melton Revitalisation Project.

The project aims to improve accessibility within local businesses.

H. Taylor invited suggestions from the Committee on how to best utilise the funds to deliver increased accessibility within the Melton Town Centre.

Action:

N. Migani-Roberts to email DAC and request suggestions. N. Migani-Roberts will collate responses and email to S. Beniston by 13/2/2024.

Meeting suspended at 12:20 p.m.

Meeting re-commenced at 1:17 p.m.

7. Advocacy and Inclusion Officer Update

Municipality Banners

N. Migani-Roberts updated the committee on the action requested during the December, 2023 DAC meeting, 'To investigate municipality banners to celebrate International Day of People with Disability (IDPwD)'.

N. Migani-Roberts informed the Committee that forty banners celebrating IDPwD have been



MINUTES

ordered and will be hoisted from Friday 8 November till Monday 9 December, with IDPwD

celebrated on Tuesday 3 December.

Cr K. Majdlik thanked Committee members, C. Crameri and A. Tan for supporting the purchase of the banners.

Marveloo

N. Migani-Roberts provided an update to the Committee on the progress of build for the Marveloo.

The Marveloo is on schedule to be delivered late March 2024, with Council to coincide its official opening at a Council lead event.

Training

N. Migani-Roberts provided the Committee with an update on the introduction of the mandatory Disability Awareness Training for Melton City Council staff.

N. Migani-Roberts stated that the preferred provider has now been selected. N. Migani-Roberts will continue to update the Committee on the roll-out of the training.

Atherstone Traffic school

N. Migani-Roberts informed the Committee of the near completion of a Melton City Council Social Story to accompany Atherstone Traffic School and Communication Board.

The Social Story will be available for print and download on the Melton City Council website.

2024-2026 Disability Advisory Committee

N. Migani-Roberts thanked the Committee for their feedback as provided through emails and surveys, on the suggested revisions for the 2024-2026 Disability Advisory Committee Terms of Reference (ToR). The ToR has been provided to the Executive team for review.

N. Migani-Roberts informed that applications for Community Representatives for the 2024-2026 Disability Advisory Committee will be advertised approximately April 2024 and all current Community Representatives are encouraged to re-apply.



MINUTES

Free Public Transport for scooter and wheelchair users.

N. Migani-Roberts brought to the attention of the Committee about the Victorian free public transport travel pass and the eligibility requirements for wheelchair and scooter users.

Action:

N. Migani-Roberts to circulate the free travel pass application for scooter and wheelchair users for public transport.

8. Engineering Manager Update

M. Hutchinson provided an update to the Committee regarding major projects that have commenced in 2024.

- Hume Road duplication to be completed late 2024
- Rockback Middle Road intersection to be completed in 2025

9. Chief Executive Officer update

R. Wai provided an update to the Committee regarding revisions of the Melton City Council recruitment and selection policy with a focus on a disability specific inclusion lens.

R. Wai will continue to update the Committee on any further developments.



MINUTES

10. Business Arising

Nil

11. General Business

Madam Major, Cr K. Majdlik discussed amongst the committee in regard to a community member with disability and their negative experience in them attending the Australian Open's 'All Abilities Event' Day

Action:

N. Migani-Roberts to liaise with Melton City Council's Advocacy Lead to draft a letter of concern and feedback as expressed on behalf of the Disability Advisory Committee to send to the Australia Open.

12. Next Meeting

Date: 4 April 2024

Time: 12.00 p.m. – 2.00 p.m.

Venue: Melton Library and Learning Hub, Corr Room, First Floor

13. Close of business

The meeting closed at 1:50 p.m.



MELTON CITY COUNCIL

Minutes of the Policy Review Panel Meeting of the Melton City Council

14 March 2024

MINUTES OF THE POLICY REVIEW PANEL14 MARCH 2024

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MINUTES OF THE POLICY REVIEW PANEL14 MARCH 2024

MELTON CITY COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE POLICY REVIEW PANEL MEETING OF THE
MELTON CITY COUNCIL
HELD VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE ON
14 MARCH 2024 AT 2.00PM

Present: Cr Majdlik (Mayor)
Cr Carli
Cr Ramsey
Cr Shannon

In Attendance: R Wai Chief Executive Officer
T Scoble Director City Life
E Keogh Head of Governance
M Kruger Interim Senior Advisor, Office of the CEO
B Ball Manager Child, Families and Youth
R Hodgson Senior Coordinator Governance

1. WELCOME

The Chair, Mayor Majdlik, opened the meeting at 2.02pm, welcomed the Panel Members, and gave a special welcome to Emily Keogh, Council's Head of Governance.

2. APOLOGIES

Nil.

3. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS AND / OR CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Nil.

4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS**RECOMMENDATION:**

That the Minutes of the Policy Review Panel held on 8 February, 15 February and 21 February 2024 and adopted by Council at the Scheduled Meeting held on 26 February 2024 be noted.

Motion

Crs Ramsey/Shannon.

That the Minutes of the Policy Review Panel held on 8 February, 15 February and 21 February 2024 and adopted by Council at the Scheduled Meeting held on 26 February 2024 be noted.

CARRIED

MINUTES OF THE POLICY REVIEW PANEL

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5. OTHER BUSINESS CARRIED OVER FROM A PREVIOUS MEETING

Nil.

6. PRESENTATION OF STAFF REPORTS**6.1 CEO EMPLOYMENT AND REMUNERATION POLICY****Responsible Officer:** Roslyn Wai - Chief Executive Officer**Document Author:** Megan Kruger - Interim Senior Advisor, Office of the CEO**Date Prepared:** 08 February 2024

Cr Carli departed the meeting at 2.45pm and did not partake any further in the meeting.

Recommendation:

That the Policy Review Panel recommend Council adopt the updated CEO Employment and Remuneration Policy, provided as **Appendix 1** to this report.

Motion

Crs Ramsey/Shannon.

That the Policy Review Panel recommend Council adopt the updated CEO Employment and Remuneration Policy, provided as **Appendix 1** to this report, with changes made by the Panel highlighted in yellow.

CARRIED**1. Background****1.1 The Policy**

At its Meeting on 5 October 2023 the Policy Review Panel deferred the consideration of the updated CEO Employment and Remuneration Policy to its next meeting on 23 November 2023 or a meeting prior to this date, to enable the new Independent Member of the CEO Employment and Remuneration Committee (the Independent Member) time to review the draft Policy and provide comment.

The draft Policy was provided to the Independent Member to review via email. To ensure that all relevant matters are included and that the Policy can support Council fulfil its obligations under the Act the Independent Member of the CEO Employment and Remuneration Committee has recommended that the Maddocks template version of the CEO Employment and Remuneration Policy be presented to the CEO Employment and Remuneration Committee for consideration.

The Policy was presented to the CEO Employment and Remuneration Committee meeting on 28 February 2024, and some minor changes were suggested. These are highlighted in tracked changes in the attached draft Policy.

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The CEO Employment and Remuneration Policy (the Policy) is required to comply with section 45 of the Local Government Act 2020 (the Act). The existing Policy has been reviewed to ensure it was fit for purpose, clear and concise.

The Act stipulates that the Policy must provide for the following:

- the Council to obtain independent professional advice in relation to the matters dealt with in the Chief Executive Officer Employment and Remuneration Policy;
- the recruitment and appointment process;
- provisions to be included in the contract of employment;
- performance monitoring; and
- an annual review.

Section 45(3) of the Act, also states that Council, in developing the Chief Executive Officer Employment and Remuneration Policy, must have regard to the following:

- a) any statement of policy issued by the Government of Victoria which is in force with respect to its wages policy (or equivalent); and
- b) any Determination that is currently in effect under section 21 of the *Victorian Independent Remuneration Tribunal and Improving Parliamentary Standards Act 2019* in relation to remuneration bands for executives employed in public service bodies.

The Policy has been put into Council's Policy Template and is presented to the Policy review Panel for consideration.

1.2 Consultation

This is an update to the existing CEO Employment and Remuneration Policy and has been reviewed by the CEO Employment and Remuneration Committee.

1.3 Communication and Implementation

If adopted, the Policy will be communicated to staff and placed on the intranet site and Council's website.

1.4 Compliance

The updated Policy has been developed in accordance with the requirements of the *Local Government Act 2020* and *Gender Equality Act 2020*.

1.5 Measures of Success

The measure of success will be demonstrated by the employment cycle of the Chief Executive Officer being managed in a consistent manner in accordance with the mechanisms outlined in the Policy.

LIST OF APPENDICES

1. Draft CEO Employment and Remuneration Policy - Following CEO E&R Committee Feb 2024

MINUTES OF THE POLICY REVIEW PANEL

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Item 6.1 CEO Employment and Remuneration Policy

Appendix 1 Draft CEO Employment and Remuneration Policy - Following CEO E&R Committee Feb 2024

CEO Employment and Remuneration Policy

Date adopted	25 March 2024 TBC
Adopted by	Council
Review due	March 2028
Responsible officer	Head of Governance
Records reference	<insert reference>

1. Purpose

- 1.1 This is the Chief Executive Officer Employment and Remuneration Policy (Policy) of Melton City Council (Council), made in accordance with section 45 of the *Local Government Act 2020* (Act).
- 1.2 This Policy provides for the following matters which Council is responsible for under the Act and/or as a requirement of this Policy:
 - (a) the recruitment and appointment of the Chief Executive Officer ensuring that:
 - (i) the recruitment decision is based on merit;
 - (ii) the recruitment processes support transparency in the recruitment process and, subject to Council's discretion to offer re-appointment in accordance with section 44 of the Act, the public advertising of the position; and
 - (iii) regard is had to gender equity, diversity and inclusiveness;
 - (b) approving the Contract of Employment entered into between Council and the Chief Executive Officer;
 - (c) the appointment of an Acting Chief Executive Officer;
 - (d) the provision of independent professional advice in relation to the matters dealt with in the Policy;
 - (e) the monitoring of the Chief Executive Officer's performance;
 - (f) an annual review of the Chief Executive Officer's performance;
 - (g) determining the Chief Executive Officer's remuneration; and
 - (h) determine all matters relating to the CEO's employment.

2. Date of Commencement

This Policy commences operation on **<insert date>**.

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Item 6.1 CEO Employment and Remuneration Policy

Appendix 1 Draft CEO Employment and Remuneration Policy - Following CEO E&R Committee Feb 2024

3. Definitions

In this Policy, unless the context suggests otherwise the following words and phrases mean:

Act means the *Local Government Act 2020*.

Acting CEO means the person appointed by Council in accordance with **clause 13** of this Policy and section 44(4) of the Act to act in the position of Chief Executive Officer.

Annual Review Report has the meaning given in **clause 12.1**.

Chief Executive Officer or **CEO** means the Chief Executive Officer of Council.

Committee means the CEO Employment and Remuneration Committee established under this Policy.

Committee Member means each person appointed by Council to the Committee from time to time.

Contract of Employment means the contract of employment between Council and the CEO, including any schedules.

Council means **Melton City Council**.

Councillors means the individuals holding the office of a member of **Melton City Council**.

Council meeting has the same meaning as in the Act.

Executive Search Consultant means an independent consultant with specialist expertise in sourcing and evaluating candidates for senior executive roles.

Independent Advisor means the consultant appointed by Council from time to time to provide independent advice in accordance with section 45(2)(a) of the Act.

KPIs means Key Performance Indicators or performance criteria however described.

Mayor means the Mayor of Council.

Performance Plan means the annual performance plan setting out KPIs for the CEO.

Policy means this CEO Employment and Remuneration Policy adopted in accordance with section 45 of the Act.

Public Sector Wages Determination means any Determination that is currently in effect under section 21 of the *Victorian Independent Remuneration Tribunal and Improving Parliamentary Standards Act 2019* in relation to remuneration bands for executives employed in public service bodies.

Recruitment Policy means the recruitment policy adopted by the CEO under section 48(2) of the Act.

Regulations means the Regulations made under Division 7 of Part 2 of the Act.

Remuneration Package means the total gross remuneration package paid to the CEO pursuant to the Contract of Employment.

Resolution means a resolution of Council made at a properly constituted Council meeting.

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Item 6.1 CEO Employment and Remuneration Policy

Appendix 1 Draft CEO Employment and Remuneration Policy - Following CEO E&R Committee Feb 2024

4. Overview

- 4.1 This Policy outlines the mechanisms which support Council in fulfilling its obligations regarding the CEO's employment and under the Act.
- 4.2 The aims of the CEO in relation to this Policy are to:
 - 4.2.1 work collaboratively with the Committee in determining the Performance Plan on an annual basis;
 - 4.2.2 actively participate in the performance appraisal process as required by the Committee;
 - 4.2.3 make use of constructive feedback from Councillors and Committee Members in relation to performance appraisals;
 - 4.2.4 undertake professional development on an as needed basis, and/or as part of the Performance Plan; and
 - 4.2.5 promptly draw the Committee's attention to any situation where any variation of the Performance Plan may be required in light of the current circumstances.
- 4.3 The aims of Council (including via the Committee) in relation to this Policy are to:
 - 4.3.1 establish the Committee;
 - 4.3.2 provide processes for the recruitment of a natural person, and their appointment, to the position of CEO;
 - 4.3.3 draft and approve the Contract of Employment entered into between Council and the CEO;
 - 4.3.4 seek and be guided by independent professional advice in relation to the matters dealt with in this Policy;
 - 4.3.5 provide processes for determining and reviewing the Remuneration Package;
 - 4.3.6 provide processes for the monitoring of the CEO's performance including setting the Performance Plan and conducting an annual review;
 - 4.3.7 determine, as required, any variations to the Remuneration Package and terms and conditions of employment of the CEO;
 - 4.3.8 provide processes for the appointment of an Acting Chief Executive Officer; and
 - 4.3.9 have regard to all legal, contractual and statutory obligations owed to the CEO.

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Item 6.1 CEO Employment and Remuneration Policy

Appendix 1 Draft CEO Employment and Remuneration Policy - Following CEO E&R Committee Feb 2024

5. CEO Employment and Remuneration Committee

- 5.1 Council will establish a CEO Employment and Remuneration Committee (Committee).
- 5.2 The Committee will be an advisory committee to Council.
- 5.3 The purposes of the Committee are to consider, and make recommendations to Council with respect to, the:
 - 5.3.1 selection and appointment of the Independent Advisor;
 - 5.3.2 independent advice received from time to time from the Independent Advisor;
 - 5.3.3 performance monitoring of the CEO, including with respect to achievement of the KPIs;
 - 5.3.4 annual review of the CEO's performance, including against the KPIs;
 - 5.3.5 CEO's remuneration;
 - 5.3.6 recruitment and appointment of a CEO, if required;
 - 5.3.7 provisions to be included in the Contract of Employment from time to time;
 - 5.3.8 appointment of an Acting CEO, if required; and
 - 5.3.9 implementation of this Policy.
- 5.4 The Committee must include at least the Mayor and two Councillors.
- 5.5 The Committee is to be chaired by:
 - 5.5.1 the Mayor; or
 - 5.5.2 if the Mayor is absent, the Deputy Mayor, or if both are absent a Councillor who is present at the Committee meeting and is appointed by the members of the Committee who are also present.
- 5.6 The Committee is to hold meetings as often as is necessary to:
 - 5.6.1 prepare documentation relevant to the CEO's employment and remuneration, including Council reports and contractual documents, for the approval of Council;
 - 5.6.2 conduct and maintain appropriate records regarding performance reviews of the CEO; and
 - 5.6.3 review the Remuneration Package and conditions of employment of the CEO,
 - 5.6.4 discuss any other matters relating to the CEO's employment.


provided that the Committee meets at least twice in each year.
- 5.7 The Committee will provide a report to Council following each meeting describing its activities and making recommendations about any action to be taken by Council.

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Item 6.1 CEO Employment and Remuneration Policy

Appendix 1 Draft CEO Employment and Remuneration Policy - Following CEO E&R Committee Feb 2024

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- 5.8 The Committee will determine its procedures at its first meeting, which will include:
- 5.8.1 the rules for its meetings, noting that meetings should be conducted with as little formality and technicality as appropriate to fulfil the Committee's purposes;
 - 5.8.2 how often the Committee will meet, provided that the Committee meets at least twice in each year;
 - 5.8.3 quorum, provided that the quorum is not less than the Mayor and two Councillors or, if the Mayor is absent, three Councillors;
 - 5.8.4 means of attendance at Committee meetings (eg in person or electronically); and
 - 5.8.5 the taking of the minutes of the Committee meetings,
- and will communicate the procedures to Council.
- 5.9 For the avoidance of doubt, nothing in this Policy requires Council to accept any or all of the Committee's recommendations.

6. Recruitment of CEO

- 6.1 The Committee will establish and manage the process to recruit the CEO, designed to ensure that Council can select the best available candidate from a short list of preferred candidates (with or without a recommendation from the Committee).
- 6.2 The Committee will determine, and make a recommendation to Council, as to:
- 6.2.1 whether there is a need to engage an Executive Search Consultant to run the recruitment process; and, if so
 - 6.2.2 the Executive Search Consultant to be appointed to run the recruitment process.
- 6.3 If an Executive Search Consultant is engaged, the Committee, the Chair of the Committee or a member of Council staff nominated by the Committee must liaise with the Executive Search Consultant in connection with the recruitment process.
- 6.4 When considering the recruitment of the position of CEO, the Committee must:
- 6.4.1 ensure that the recruitment decision is based on merit;
 - 6.4.2 support transparency in the recruitment process and the public advertising of the position; and
 - 6.4.3 ensure that regard is had to gender equity, diversity and inclusiveness.
- 6.5 The Committee must ensure that the Executive Search Consultant publicly advertises the CEO role.
- 6.6 The Executive Search Consultant will be appointed on the terms agreed by Council, including that the Executive Search Consultant will prepare, and provide to Council, a schedule of dates for key decisions to be made by Resolution throughout the recruitment process.

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- 6.7 The Committee must provide a report and recommendation to Council so that each key decision identified in the schedule prepared under clause 6.6 can, if necessary, be made by Resolution. This may include recommendations as to:

6.7.1 the preferred candidate; and

6.7.2 the proposed high level contract terms (including the term of employment and Remuneration Package).

7. Appointment of the CEO

- 7.1 Council will receive a report from the Committee on the completion of its role in the recruitment process, and Council will proceed to decide on a preferred candidate with the support of the Committee to negotiate and finalise the Contract of Employment.
- 7.2 The Committee will provide a recommendation to Council on the provisions to be contained in the proposed Contract of Employment.
- 7.3 The appointment of the CEO must be made by Resolution.

8. Reappointment of the CEO

- 8.1 No more than 12 months and no less than 6 months prior to the expiry of the current CEO's Contract of Employment, the Committee will provide a recommendation to Council on:
- 8.1.1 whether the CEO should be reappointed under a new Contract of Employment;
- 8.1.2 if the recommendation is to reappoint the CEO, the proposed provisions of the further Contract of Employment; and/or
- 8.1.3 whether the position of CEO should be publicly advertised.
- 8.2 For the avoidance of doubt, any reappointment of the current CEO must be made by Resolution.
- 8.3 Where the Contract of Employment is for a term of 12 months or less, the period of months referred to in clause 8.1 shall be no more than 2 months and no less than 1 month.

9. Contract of Employment

- 9.1 The Contract of Employment is to be read in conjunction with this Policy (but the terms of this Policy are not incorporated into the Contract of Employment).
- 9.2 The Contract of Employment will, at a minimum, outline the following:
- 9.2.1 the employment term, which must not exceed 5 years in accordance with section 44(2) of the Act;
- 9.2.2 the responsibilities and duties of the position, including compliance with the Act and the Code of Conduct for Council staff;
- 9.2.3 how conflicts of interest will be managed;

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- 9.2.4 the CEO's Remuneration Package and other entitlements;
- 9.2.5 legislative and contractual obligations, including those during and continuing after appointment;
- 9.2.6 the CEO's leave entitlements;
- 9.2.7 processes for managing unsatisfactory performance;
- 9.2.8 processes for early termination, including notice of termination (or payment in lieu) provisions [noting that the Protecting integrity: Leading the Way Report (February 2019) notes that the general view from the sector is the suggested range should be 6-12 months for termination for any reason, and the standard VPS Executive Contract provides for 4 months] with notice of termination by Council being restricted to a maximum of six [6] months; and
- 9.2.9 any other matters required to be contained in the Contract of Employment by the Regulations.
- 9.3 The Contract of Employment may only be varied by a Resolution with the CEO's acceptance, with such variation to be recorded in a deed of variation.

10. Remuneration and Expenses

- 10.1 The Remuneration Package provided to the CEO will form part of the Committee's annual review, having regard to (in accordance with section 45(3) of the Act):
- 10.1.1 any statement of policy issued by the Government of Victoria which is in force with respect to its wages policy (or equivalent);¹ and
- 10.1.2 any Public Sector Wages Determination².
- 10.2 Remuneration will be reviewed on an annual basis, in accordance with the CEO's Performance Plan and contractual requirements.
- 10.3 Council will meet expenses incurred by the CEO as outlined in the Contract of Employment from time to time.
- 10.4 Council may provide the CEO with a corporate credit card to use in transactions related to the role of CEO. All corporate credit card expenditure will be reviewed and approved by the CFO and reported to the Mayor within 1 week of approval. All corporate credit card expenditure of the CEO will be reported quarterly to the Audit and Risk Committee.
- 10.5 Council's Audit & Risk Committee will receive quarterly reports on all CEO corporate credit card transactions.

¹ Section 45(3)(a) of the Act requires Council to have regard to any statement of policy issued by the Government of Victoria which is in force with respect to its wages policy (or equivalent). The current Victorian Government Wages Policy applies in the public sector from 4 April 2023. See <https://www.vic.gov.au/wages-policy-and-enterprise-bargaining-framework>

² Section 45(3)(b) of the Act requires Council to have regard to the published remuneration bands for executives employed in public service bodies. See: <https://www.vic.gov.au/tribunals-determination-vps-executive-remuneration-bands>

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11. Performance monitoring

- 11.1 Council will adopt an annual Performance Plan for the CEO, which will include KPIs. The Performance Plan must be developed by the Committee in consultation with the CEO and confirmed by a Resolution.
- 11.2 As part of the process for performance monitoring, performance principles may be developed by the Committee, in consultation with the CEO.
- 11.3 The CEO is to provide progress reports against the Performance Plan to the Committee on a bi-annual basis.
- 11.4 The Committee may meet with the CEO following each progress report to discuss the matters contained in the progress report and any feedback from Council.
- 11.5 Following the initial 6 months of the CEO's term, a workshop with Councillors and the CEO should be arranged so that:
 - 11.5.1 the CEO can prepare and present their views formed since their appointment on any related matters, and highlight any projections or forecasts of relevance to Council during their tenure;
 - 11.5.2 Councillors can provide feedback to the CEO on their perspective of the CEO's performance during the initial period of the CEO's employment; and
 - 11.5.3 Council and the CEO can consider projects and priorities for inclusion in the CEO's Performance Plan and KPIs.
- 11.6 Nothing in this Policy prevents the Committee and/or Council from monitoring the CEO's performance on an ongoing basis.

12. Annual review

- 12.1 In preparation for Council's annual review, the Committee is required to submit an annual review report (Annual Review Report) to Council which includes recommendations on the following:
 - 12.1.1 whether, and to what extent, the CEO has met the KPIs under the Performance Plan;
 - 12.1.2 whether, and to what extent or in what respect, any KPIs or other criteria ought to be varied under the Performance Plan;
 - 12.1.3 whether, and to what extent, the Remuneration Package ought to be varied; and
 - 12.1.4 any other necessary matters.
- 12.2 The Committee will submit the Annual Review Report to Council only after meeting with the CEO to discuss the Committee's proposed recommendations.
- 12.3 The Committee must consider the performance principles developed, **if any have been developed**, (as set out in clause 11.2) as part of the Annual Review. The Committee may also, from time to time, suggest changes to the performance principles to Council.

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12.4 The CEO may request the opportunity to address Council about any of the matters set out in clause 12.1 as part of this process.

12.5 Council shall, after receipt of the Annual Review Report, review the recommendations in the Annual Review Report, resolve upon the matters described in clause 12.1 and advise the CEO of the terms or effect of the Resolution.

13. Acting CEO

13.1 Council must appoint an Acting CEO when there is a vacancy in the office of the CEO or the CEO is unable to perform their duties under the Contract of Employment for a period exceeding 28 days.

13.2 The appointment of the Acting CEO must be made by a Resolution unless the Acting CEO is appointed for a period not exceeding 28 days, in which case the CEO may appoint an Acting CEO under delegation from Council pursuant to section 11(3) of the Act. Nothing in this Policy applies to the CEO's appointment of an Acting CEO under delegation.

13.3 Where applicable, the Committee may advise Council on:

13.3.1 the selection and appointment of an Acting CEO including whether it is appropriate to:

- (a) recruit an external candidate who is not currently employed by Council; or
- (b) appoint an internal candidate who is a current employee of Council;

13.3.2 the terms of the Acting CEO's contract of employment (to the extent that the terms set out in clause 9.2 of this Policy are inappropriate for an Acting appointment); and

13.3.3 performance monitoring and review processes, if applicable, which are to be determined by reference to the length of the Acting CEO's term of appointment.

14. Independent advice

14.1 The Independent Advisor is responsible for providing independent professional advice in relation to the matters dealt with under this Policy in accordance with section 45(2)(a) of the Act.

14.2 The Independent Advisor will be appointed on the recommendation of the Committee following a process to seek experienced and suitably qualified persons but must not be the Executive Search Consultant appointed by Council to assist in the recruitment process.

14.3 Council will determine the:

14.3.1 term of appointment of the Independent Advisor; and


14.3.2 remuneration of the Independent Advisor,

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and ensure that it is a term of the Independent Advisor's engagement that the Independent Advisor keep confidential all information which the Independent Advisor acquires by virtue of the engagement.

- 14.4 Council, or the Committee with the approval of a Resolution, can, on an as needed basis, obtain additional independent professional advice in relation to the matters dealt with under this Policy.

15. Dispute Resolution

- 15.1 In relation to any matter under this Policy or the CEO's Contract of Employment that may be in dispute, either the CEO or Council may:

15.1.1 give written notice to each other of the particulars of any matter in dispute; and

15.1.2 within 14 days of receiving a notice specified in clause 15.1.1, a meeting will be convened between the Committee and the CEO in an attempt to resolve the dispute.

- 15.2 If the dispute is not resolved, Council (in consultation with the CEO and on the recommendation of the Committee) will either within 14 days:

15.2.1 refer the dispute to an independent mediator (as agreed by the CEO and Council, or if they cannot agree a mediator appointed by the Executive Director of Local Government Victoria) and the Committee/Council agree to participate in any mediation process in good faith; or

15.2.2 nominate one or more external persons for the purpose of conducting further investigation and discussion (including any consultation with the CEO, as required) and making a recommendation to Council. Persons nominated for this purpose will have had no prior involvement in the dispute.

- 15.3 The cost of any mediation or investigation will be met by Council.

- 15.4 Having regard to any proposed outcome from any mediation under clause 15.2.1, or the recommendation made in accordance with clause 15.2.2, Council will make a final decision regarding the dispute which shall be binding on the parties.

- 15.5 During this process, no party shall be prejudiced as to the final resolution of the dispute. The parties will co-operate to ensure that the steps required to reach a resolution are carried out as expeditiously as possible for the benefit of all concerned.

- 15.6 Council and/or the CEO may nominate a representative (including a legal representative) to assist it and/or the CEO in this process. The Council will be responsible for meeting the cost of any nominated representative used by them or it. The CEO will be responsible personally for meeting the cost of any nominated representative used by them and cannot use Council funds to do so.

- 15.7 Neither the Committee nor the Mayor can make any binding decision under any dispute resolution process, without a Resolution.

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16. Administrative Support

- 16.1 Council acknowledges that, in implementing this Policy, it, the Committee and/or the Independent Advisor will from time to time require the assistance of members of Council staff, including assistance in relation to governance and human resources matters, and (where relevant) procurement and contract management.
- 16.2 Council, the Committee and/or the Independent Advisor may from time to time request a member of staff to provide assistance in implementing this Policy, recognising that the position of the member of staff is made difficult because they are accountable to the CEO (or a person acting as CEO) and therefore requests for assistance need to be limited to no more than those which are reasonably necessary.
- 16.3 For the purposes of this clause 16, and without limiting its generality, Council's Head of Governance and Senior Coordinator Governance, will provide support to the Committee by:
- 16.3.1 assisting in the coordination of Committee meetings;
 - 16.3.2 preparing relevant documentation for Committee meetings, including reports to Council and contractual documents;
 - 16.3.3 maintaining appropriate records regarding the CEO's annual review; and
 - 16.3.4 providing advice in connection with the proper governance of the Committee's role and proceedings.

17. Interaction with Act and Regulations

This Policy applies subject to any inconsistent obligations in the Act or the Regulations.

18. Confidentiality

Council is not required to disclose any personal information, being information which if released would result in the unreasonable disclosure of information about any person or their personal affairs.

19. Delegations

- 19.1 As set out in clause 13.2, Council must not delegate the power to appoint the CEO, whether on a permanent or acting basis, however, it may delegate to the CEO the power to appoint an Acting CEO for a period not exceeding 28 days (sections 11(2)(d) and 11(3) of the Act).
- 19.2 Council must not delegate the power to make any decision in relation to the employment, dismissal or removal of the CEO (section 11(2)(e) of the Act).

MINUTES OF THE POLICY REVIEW PANEL

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Item 6.1 CEO Employment and Remuneration Policy

Appendix 1 Draft CEO Employment and Remuneration Policy - Following CEO E&R Committee Feb 2024

20. Review of Policy

- 20.1 This Policy will be reviewed within 12 months of its adoption by Council.
- 20.2 This Policy will thereafter be reviewed at least every four years by the Committee and within 6 months after each Council election, and the Committee will make a recommendation to Council with respect to any suggested changes.

21. Related Documents

Name	Location
Local Government Act 2020	https://www.legislation.vic.gov.au/in-force/acts/local-government-act-2020
Chief Executive Officer's Employment Contract	Confidential Document
CEO Strategic Performance Objectives	Confidential Document
Fair Work Act 2009	FAIR WORK ACT 2009 (austlii.edu.au)
National Employment Standards	National Employment Standards – Fair Work Ombudsman
Council's Procurement Policy	Documents Reports Strategies Melton City Council
Victorian Independent Remuneration Tribunal and Improving Parliamentary Standards Act 2019	VICTORIAN INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION TRIBUNAL AND IMPROVING PARLIAMENTARY STANDARDS ACT 2019 (austlii.edu.au)
Government Policy on Executive Remuneration in Public Entities	Various, including: Public Entity executive remuneration policy Victorian Government (www.vic.gov.au) Remuneration bands for executives in prescribed public entities Victorian Government (www.vic.gov.au) Remuneration - VPSC
Equal Opportunity Act 2010	EQUAL OPPORTUNITY ACT 2010 (austlii.edu.au)
Gender Equality Act 2020	GENDER EQUALITY ACT 2020 (austlii.edu.au)
Protecting Integrity – Leading the Way. Managing the employment cycle of a council CEO – Local Government Inspectorate (Victoria) (February 2019)	Managing the employment cycle of a council CEO Local Government Inspectorate (lgi.vic.gov.au)

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MINUTES OF THE POLICY REVIEW PANEL14 MARCH 2024

Troy Scoble and Brendan Ball joined the meeting and confirmed they had no General Conflict or Material Conflict in respect of any matters they were presenting to the Panel.

6.2 KINDERGARTEN CENTRAL REGISTRATION POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Responsible Officer: Troy Scoble - Director City Life
Document Author: Brendan Ball - Manager Child, Families and Youth
Date Prepared: 01 March 2024

Recommendation:

That the Policy Review Panel recommend Council approve the revised and updated Kindergarten Central Registration Policy and Procedure.

Motion

Crs Shannon/Ramsey.

That the Policy Review Panel recommend Council approve the revised and updated Kindergarten Central Registration Policy and Procedure provided as **Appendices 3 and 4** to this report, with changes made by the Panel highlighted in yellow.

CARRIED

1. Background**1.1 The Policy**

Melton City Council currently operates the central kindergarten registrations for both three- and four-year-old children within 26 Council operated facilities across the municipality, in collaboration with eight (8) providers.

The proposed Policy and Procedure updates the previous Kindergarten Central Enrolment Policy and Procedure, incorporating minor changes required by State Government in the Kindergarten priority access guidelines, access to Early Start Kindergarten criteria and Central Registration Enrolment Scheme (CRES) Administrative grant obligations.

The Panel should note that requested minor changes are in line with State Government funding requirements to ensure access to kindergarten for vulnerable members of our community as well as consistency in children attending across the three- and four-year-old programs and removing registration fees for all.

1.2 Sources/benchmarking

Policy development and subsequent procedures are based on the requirements of the:

- State Government CRES funding requirements
- Department of Education (DE) Priority of Access guidelines.

The review reworded Council's Kindergarten Priority of Access Criteria that are contained within the revised Kindergarten Central Registration Policy and Information Booklet for families, with the Priority Guidelines listed in the Government's Kindergarten CRES policy. The modifications include

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- Broadening the eligibility requirements for children at risk of abuse in out of home care, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children as well as refugee and or asylum seeker children to include access to Early Start Kinder.
- Escalating families at risk of family violence, homelessness and experiencing vulnerability to category 1 Priority of Access.

The result of this simpler Priority of Access Guidelines in Council's publications and removal of kindergarten fees for families.

The Policy supports the CRES model, a Local Government-led program that aims to minimise the barriers to getting Victoria's children into kindergarten with the provision of a best practice model of managing centralised kindergarten registration.

As the Kindergarten Central Registration Policy and Procedure is based on the requirement of State Government guidelines, a Gender Impact Assessment was not required.

1.3 Consultation

The amendments have been developed in line with the State Government's updated Priority of Access requirements and CRES funding obligations.

1.4 Communication and Implementation

The Policy will be implemented by the Kindergarten Registration Officers in conjunction with the Children Services Program Team Leader, Coordinator Early Childhood, and Manager Child, Family and Youth Services.

The Policy and Procedure will replace the current versions on Melton City Council website.

1.5 Compliance

The policy considers the Local Government Act 2020 including the overarching Governance Principles and the Five Supporting Principles. This supports Council to develop an integrated, longer-term and transparent approach to planning with responsible use of resources to ensure financial, social and environmental sustainability.

It is also compliant with DE funding requirements relating to the enrolment of children in State Government funded kindergarten services and maintaining confidentiality, inclusion and accessibility.

The Policy enables compliance with the Early Years Compact Agreement and commitments in relation to prioritising the safety, development, and wellbeing of children, especially those experiencing vulnerability and disadvantage.

1.6 Measures of Success

The Policy and Procedure will be reviewed annually alongside of continuous improvement strategies as per a DE/MAV approved and required processes.

LIST OF APPENDICES

1. Kindergarten Central Registration Policy - Current
2. Kindergarten Central Registration Procedure - Current
3. Kindergarten Central Registration Policy - March 2024 - PRP Changes
4. Kindergarten Central Registration Procedure - March 2024 - PRP Changes

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Item 6.2 Kindergarten Central Registration Policy and Procedure

Appendix 1 Kindergarten Central Registration Policy - Current

	Kindergarten Central Registration Policy
Version No.	V3.0 - March 2023
Endorsement	Executive – March 2023 Policy Review Panel – 22 March 2023
Authorisation	Council – 27 March 2023
Review Date	March 2024
Responsible Officer	Manager Families and Children
Policy Owner	Early Childhood Coordinator

1. Purpose

This policy outlines the allocation of kindergarten places by Melton City Council's Kindergarten Central Registration Enrolment Scheme (CRES).

2. Scope

This policy applies to parents/guardians wishing to access a three or four year old kindergarten place, Kindergarten Early Years Manager's (EYMS), Council officers and agencies involved in the placement of children into three or four year old kindergarten as part of Council's CRES.

Melton City Council CRES does not include funded kindergarten programs provided in Long Day Care centres.

3. Background

A CRES is a local government-led program that aims to minimise the barriers to getting Victoria's children into kindergarten with the provision of a Best Practice model of Central Kindergarten Registration. The CRES takes a holistic view of a child's journey from birth to their first day at kindergarten. It is a collaborative model that coordinates councils, service providers, MCH staff, support services and other stakeholders to support families and carers.

Melton City Council has implemented the CRES to support Best Practice recommendations endorsed by DET and MAV. The CRES will support:

- transparently, fairly and equitably allocate kindergarten places in line with the Department's (DET) Priority of Access guidelines
- proactively identify and enrol vulnerable children in quality kindergarten programs
- minimise administrative burden on service providers
- responding to the needs of the community in early year's services provision.

In partnership with Kindergarten EYMS, Melton City Council Kindergarten CRES operates central registration, and allocation of kindergarten places for both three and four year old children within twenty six (26) kindergartens across the municipality.

Once a child has been allocated a place, Kindergarten EYMS are responsible for the kindergarten enrolments within their service.

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4. Definitions

Word/Term	Definition
Allocation Priorities	The priorities referred to when allocating places into a 3 or 4 year old Kindergarten program
Applicant	A child whose parent/guardian has lodged a completed kindergarten registration.
Best Practice	A best-practice model that streamlines the process of registering and enrolling children in kindergarten for families and service providers, ensuring the process is simple, consistent, inclusive and equitable.
CRES- Central Registration Enrolment Scheme	The CRES model is designed to reduce challenges for Central enrolment schemes and achieve consistency of kindergarten registration across Victoria. The model has been co-designed by stakeholders across Victoria, the Department of Education and Training (DET) and the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV).
Deferrals – Four Year Old	Children of City of Melton residents who attended kindergarten in Term One, but withdrew their place and deferred to the following year with DET approval. Children, who have deferred from a four year old kindergarten place and are considered by DET not to have accessed a year of funded kindergarten, are therefore eligible for kindergarten funding in the following year.
DET	State Government Department of Education and Training.
Eligible Child	A child who is eligible to be allocated a place in a CRES Melton City Council kindergarten.
Early Start Kindergarten (ESK)	Early Start Kindergarten provides free or low cost kindergarten to eligible 3 year old children who identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander or Refugee or Asylum Seeker or are known to Child Protection.
Early Years Compact Agreement	A ten year agreement between Department of Families, Fairness and Housing, Department of Education and Training and local government with the goal to support vulnerable children including to increase the participation of children in out of home care and children known to child protection in early years services Goals: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vulnerability, location and disadvantage do not determine outcomes for children Families are well supported by high quality, inclusive services for children and families in the early years. families can access help when and where they need it Stronger place-based governance and planning.

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Word/Term	Definition
Funded Kindergarten Place	After enrolment, children receive a funded DET kindergarten place when they attend kindergarten in the year before school From 2022, funded kindergarten places will be available for the two years prior to a child starting school Children are eligible for only one year of each 3 and 4 year old kindergarten place
Non Residents	Families who reside outside the Melton City Council municipality. Families are also considered to live outside the municipality boundaries if they move out of the municipality prior to the commencement of the Kindergarten year.
The Kindergarten Funding Guide	The Kindergarten Funding Guide is developed by DET and is updated from time to time to guide Kindergarten EYMS on operations including the eligibility criteria for funding and Priority of Access Criteria.
Kindergarten Registration	Information provided to Melton City Council by Parent/Guardians, advising of the request for a 3 and/or 4 year old child to be allocated a kindergarten place. This information is used by Melton City Council to allocate the child a kindergarten place and provided to the Kindergarten EYMS to process enrolment
Kindergarten Enrolment	Completed by Kindergarten EYMS to enrol a child within their service
Kindergarten Early Years Managers (EYMS)	The service which operates the Kindergarten program that is participating in CRES
Kindergarten Priority of Access Criteria	In line with the State Government and the DET Priority of Access Criteria, Priority of Access Criteria is implemented to support fair and equitable access to kindergarten
Registration Fee	A non-refundable fee payable when lodging a registration for kindergarten that contributes to the cost of Council administering the Kindergarten Registrations.
MAV- Municipal Association Victoria	The legislated peak body for local government in Victoria.

5. Policy Statement

Melton City Council is committed to:

- meeting the needs of the local community regarding kindergarten placement / enrolment
- equal access for all children based on the priorities set out in this policy
- compliance with the *Local Government Act 2020*, *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011* and the *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010*
- compliance with DET funding requirements relating to the enrolment of children in State Government Funded Kindergarten Services
- maintaining confidentiality in relation to all information provided on Kindergarten application forms
- being inclusive of all people, acknowledging the contribution of people and communities from diverse backgrounds, within the municipality
- striving for Gender Equity as per the Equality and Respect 2030 Strategy.

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Melton City Council is committed to the shared goals of the Early Years Compact and is committed to providing an inclusive and accessible kindergarten registration service to support **all** children's access to kindergarten.

The CRES model aims to:

- assist vulnerable families / carers who are at risk of not enrolling their child in kindergarten
- inform infrastructure, early years planning and investment: for evaluation and future planning, during which Council can gather data on current and projected demand for early years services
- ease of access for families: a CRES enables families / carers to register for enrolment at the number of kindergartens with a single registration form
- fair allocation of kindergarten places: CRES ensures the Kindergarten Priority of Access Criteria are applied so that children experiencing vulnerability or disadvantage have priority access to kindergarten. Additionally, children can also be prioritised based on locally agreed criteria
- increase uptake of kindergarten: the CRES seeks to find and register as many kindergarten-aged children as possible through a network of stakeholder relationships
- continue to ease the burden on individual kindergartens so that they can run most effectively, and the value of council-owned facilities is maximised.

Central Kindergarten registration procedures, systems and software will align with the CRES Best Practice model.

6. Eligibility Criteria

Consistent with State Government funding agreements, the following children are eligible to attend kindergarten:

- Children who are three years of age or older by 30 April in the year they are to attend three year old Kindergarten.
- Children who are four years of age or older by 30 April in the year they are to attend four year old Kindergarten.
- Families of children born between January and April can decide whether to enrol their children in the year they turn three, or the following year. These decisions will be up to the individual families and factors that might be taken into consideration include the individual child's developmental and learning levels, family circumstances and potential school starting ages.

Early Start Kindergarten provides kindergarten to eligible three year old children where programs are offered by a qualified Kindergarten teacher. Eligible children are those identified as Aboriginal and/ or Torres Strait Islander decent or a refugee and/or asylum seeker or known to Child Protection. Children eligible for ESK funding continue to have access to 15 hours of kindergarten per week.

7. Allocation Priorities

The DET Priority of Access Criteria states that in instances where more eligible children apply for a place at a kindergarten service than there are places, available children must be prioritised via:

- Children at risk of abuse or neglect, including children in Out-of-Home Care
- Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander children
- Asylum seeker and refugee children

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- Children eligible for the Kindergarten Fee Subsidy
- Children with additional needs defined as children who:
 - Require additional assistance in order to fully participate in the kindergarten program
 - Require a combination of services which are individually planned
 - Have an identified specific developmental delay

Any parent or child with an experience of displacement (a refugee experience or experience similar to a refugee) will be considered by exemption for ESK.

Consistent with the State Government and the DET Priority of Access Criteria, locally agreed criteria may be implemented to prioritise and determine the order of offers made. To support fair and equitable access to kindergarten, children of City of Melton residents will also be considered for priority of access should they have the following risk factors of vulnerability:

- A parent/guardian or child has a life threatening or debilitating illness or disease
- A parent/guardian who has a disability, diagnosed mental illness or drug and/or alcohol dependency
- Court orders that limit choices for Kindergarten
- Risk of family violence
- Risk of homelessness
- Eligibility for Early Start Kindergarten.

Children of City of Melton residents will also be prioritised if they have:

- attended Kindergarten in Term One but withdrew
- are eligible for a second year of funded 4 year old Kindergarten
- previously attended or had a sibling attend the Kindergarten of preference, in a three or four year old program, in the year of enrolling the current child or the previous year
- Attended the 3 year-old Kindergarten they are wanting to enrol for 4 year old for the first two terms of 3 year old Kindergarten
- two children from the same family enrolling for kindergarten in the same year.

Note: Once First and Second round allocations have been finalised, children will be prioritised according to the number of criteria met.

- In mixed-age groups, the Priority of Access Criteria will equally prioritise three and four year old children considered vulnerable under the policy.
- Where programs for three and four year old's are provided separately, the Priority of Access Criteria should be applied separately for each age cohort.

In the situation that three and four year old registration has been completed on the same registration form, the Priority of Access Criteria must be considered separately for each year at the point of allocation.

7.1. Non Residents

- Kindergarten applications from families who reside outside the Melton City Council municipality are required to have Director City Life final approval and acceptance based on recommendations from Council Officers/Manager based on the criteria above.
- Applications from residents residing outside the municipality wishing to enrol for Kindergarten the following year will not be assessed until November and will be determined on the Kindergarten vacancies at that time. Families should expect to receive an e-mail of the outcome of this decision by late November to early December

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- Any applications received in the year that the child is due to commence Kindergarten will be reviewed by the Director City Life within four weeks of the application date.
- Non Residents who have accepted a placement for their child's 3 year old Kindergarten year are not guaranteed a year old placement the following year. Normal Non Resident processes will still apply.
- Families are considered to live outside of the municipal boundaries if they move out of the municipality prior to the commencement of the Kindergarten year.

Note: Children in Out of Home Care may be an exception to the above and will be considered on a case by case basis according to the best interest of the child in consideration of the Early Years Compact Agreement

7.2. Second year of funded 4 year old Kindergarten

DET provides funding to support children to access a Kindergarten program in the two years before they start school.

As per the Kindergarten Funding Guide, a child is eligible to receive a second year of four year old funded Kindergarten if:

- the child is observed by the Early Childhood teacher as having delays in at least two outcome areas of learning and development detailed in the Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework
- there is evidence to suggest that the child will achieve better outcomes if they attend a second year of funded Kindergarten to strengthen the learning and development of skills in these areas and better facilitate transition to school the following year.

7.3. Deferrals

- In accordance with the Kindergarten Funding Guide and its successor agreements, an enrolment may be deferred within Term One, provided the registration has not been recorded by the Kindergarten teacher on the DET Kindergarten Information Management System.
- Families wishing to defer their enrolment should speak with Kindergarten EYM staff as soon as possible to discuss their child's readiness for Kindergarten.
- Families, in consultation with the Kindergarten teacher, are required to complete a deferral form whereby their enrolment will be re-offered the following year.

Note: Families wishing to defer who do not attend the Kindergarten program will not be entitled to a Deferral. The child will need to be re-enrolled following the standard enrolment process.

8. Registration**8.1 Registration Forms**

- Registration forms must be completed and accompanied by the registration administration fee (non-refundable) with supporting documentation as outlined in the Kindergarten Information Booklet.
- Registrations for both three and four year old kindergarten may be completed separately or within the same form.
- Kindergarten referral and expression of interest forms are for the purpose of identifying kindergarten eligible children. Information contained in the forms will be used to support kindergarten engagement but does not constitute a kindergarten registration or allocation.

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8.2 Fee Waiver

- A fee waiver will automatically apply to families eligible for Early Start Kindergarten and those that meet the fee waiver criteria listed in the Kindergarten Information Booklet.
- A fee waiver due to financial hardship may be applied.

8.3 Closing Dates

- The closing date for the first and second round allocation of places will be listed on the registration form.
- Registration forms may be submitted for the remainder of the year, but will not be included in the first and second round of allocations unless they are received by the required date.

8.4 Changing Preferences

- A change of preference must be lodged with a Kindergarten Registration Officer. Once received, this change of preference will be treated as a new registration and processed in the next allocation round. Fees are applicable.

8.5 Allocation of Places

Places will be allocated to eligible children, including those who are on the preference list, in accordance with the preference listed on the application form and in line with the Allocation Priorities of this policy.

8.6 Reserving Places

Two places per Kindergarten will be reserved for high priority children. DET defines high priority children to be:

- Children at risk of abuse or neglect, including children in Out-of-Home Care, Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander children, or Asylum seeker and refugee children
- Children who meet the fee waiver criteria listed in the Kindergarten Information Booklet
- Children with additional needs, defined as children who:
 - require additional assistance in order to fully participate in the kindergarten program
 - require a combination of services which are individually planned
 - have an identified specific disability or developmental delay

These places will be reserved until 30 October. Any remaining reserved places not filled by 30 October will be made available to preference list families and subsequent allocation rounds.

8.7 Managing Preference Lists

Children on preference lists will be allocated places once vacancies arise at individual Kindergartens. Places are allocated in order of the computer generated preference list and in line with the Allocation Priorities of this policy.

8.8 Offers

Families will be notified of a Kindergarten place after the close of first round allocations.

- If vacancies are not available at a preferred Kindergarten, Applicants will be placed on a preference list in accordance with the Allocation Priorities outlines in this policy.
- Second round offers will be administered approximately four weeks after the first round of offers.
- Offers after this time will be administered weekly.

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8.9 Acceptance of place

- Following the offer of a place by Council, the parent/guardian must notify their acceptance to Council by the date listed on the letter. Families who do not notify by the date advised will forfeit their place.
- Parents/guardians who do not receive an offer to a Kindergarten of their choice will be notified that they are awaiting allocation via a preference list.
- Parents/guardians who choose to wait for the Kindergarten of preference and not take up a second or third preference offer will be placed on a preference list.

9 Kindergartens located on school sites

A child enrolled into a City of Melton Kindergarten on a primary school site does not confirm your child's entry into that school the following year.

For further information in relation to school zoning boundaries go to www.findmyschool.vic.gov.au. For school enrolment processes, contact your local primary school.

10 Privacy

Access to completed application forms will be restricted to the Kindergarten Registration Officers, and other relevant Council Officers, in accordance with Council's Information Privacy Policy. Sharing of information will only occur with the consent of enrolling parent or if required by law.

11 Responsibility and Accountability

11.1 Kindergarten Registration Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsible for the administrative tasks associated with the receipt of registrations and allocation of Kindergarten placements in line with the Allocation Priorities of this policy.
11.2 Kindergarten Engagement Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsible for the identification, active engagement and outreach to families experiencing disadvantage, vulnerability or other barriers to kindergarten engagement • Support the kindergarten registration and allocation process for families experiencing disadvantage, vulnerability or other barriers to kindergarten engagement.
11.3 Children Services Team Leader	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that program procedures and systems support the policy • Oversee policy is implemented, referred to and reviewed as appropriate.
11.4 Kindergarten EYMS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsible for processing enrolments • Responsible for providing families with session times, orientation sessions and fee information in relation to the day to day operations of the Kindergarten program • Responsible for all operations of the Kindergarten including employing Kindergarten staff.
11.5 Parents & Guardians	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsible for providing all required documentation for the Kindergarten registration form by the date indicated in the Kindergarten Information Booklet.

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12 References, Sources, Links to Legislation and Other Documents

Name	Location
Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006	www.legislation.vic.gov.au
Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005	www.legislation.vic.gov.au
Children, Youth and Families Act 2005	www.legislation.vic.gov.au
Child Safe Standards	www.legislation.vic.gov.au
Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Commonwealth)	www.comlaw.gov.au
Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011	www.legislation.vic.gov.au
Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010	www.legislation.vic.gov.au
Equal Opportunity Act 2010	www.legislation.vic.gov.au
Victorian Gender Equality Act 2020	www.legislation.vic.gov.au
Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission Act 1986 (Commonwealth)	www.comlaw.gov.au
Kindergarten Funding Guide 2016	https://www.education.vic.gov.au/
Local Government Act 2020	www.legislation.vic.gov.au
Melton City Council Kindergarten Registration, language services and eligibility information	https://www.melton.vic.gov.au/
Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014	www.legislation.vic.gov.au
Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Commonwealth)	www.comlaw.gov.au
Sex and Age Discrimination Amendment Act 2011	www.comlaw.gov.au
Health Records Act 2001	www.legislation.vic.gov.au
The Early Years Compact Agreement	https://www.education.vic.gov.au/
The Equality and Respect 2030 Strategy	https://www.melton.vic.gov.au/
Victorian Kindergarten policy, procedures and funding criteria.	http://www.education.vic.gov.au

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Appendix 2 Kindergarten Central Registration Procedure - Current

	Kindergarten Central Registration Procedure
Linked policy document:	This procedure details actions and processes pursuant to the Kindergarten Central Registration Policy.
Version No.	V3.0 March 2023
Authorisation	Director City Life
Review Date	March 2025
Responsible Officer	Manager Families and Children
Procedure Owner	Early Childhood Coordinator

1. Purpose

This procedure outlines the process to be followed when registering a child into either 3 or 4 year old funded kindergarten via the Central Registration Enrolment Scheme and the basis on which places within the program will be allocated.

2. Scope

This procedure:

- informs Council staff involved in the placement of children into kindergarten as part of Council's Kindergarten Central Registration Enrolment Scheme.
- provides consistent data recording and process to promote the equitable allocation of kindergarten places in line with DET's Priority of Access Criteria.

3. Definitions

Word/Term	Definition
Allocation Priorities	The priorities referred to when allocating places into a 3 or 4 year old Kindergarten program
Applicant	A child whose parent/guardian has lodged a completed kindergarten registration.
CRES- Central Registration Enrolment Scheme	The CRES model is designed to reduce challenges for Central enrolment schemes and achieve consistency of kindergarten registration across Victoria. The model has been co-designed by stakeholders across Victoria, the Department of Education and Training (DET) and the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV).
Deferrals – Four Year Old	Children of City of Melton residents who attended kindergarten in Term One, but withdrew their place and deferred to the following year with DET approval. Children, who have deferred from a four year old kindergarten place and are considered by DET not to have accessed a year of funded kindergarten, are therefore eligible for kindergarten funding in the following year.
DET	State Government Department of Education and Training.

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Item 6.2 Kindergarten Central Registration Policy and Procedure

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Word/Term	Definition
Eligible Child	A child who is eligible to be allocated a place in a CRES Melton City Council kindergarten.
Early Start Kindergarten (ESK)	Early Start Kindergarten provides free or low cost kindergarten to eligible 3 year old children who identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander or Refugee or Asylum Seeker or are known to Child Protection.
Early Years Compact Agreement	<p>A ten year agreement between Department of Families, Fairness and Housing, Department of Education and Training and local government with the goal to support vulnerable children including to increase the participation of children in out of home care and children known to child protection in early years services</p> <p>Goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vulnerability, location and disadvantage do not determine outcomes for children • Families are well supported by high quality, inclusive services for children and families in the early years. • families can access help when and where they need it • Stronger place-based governance and planning.
Funded Kindergarten Place	<p>After enrolment, children receive a funded DET kindergarten place when they attend kindergarten in the year before school</p> <p>From 2022, funded kindergarten places will be available for the two years prior to a child starting school</p> <p>Children are eligible for only one year of each 3 and 4 year old kindergarten place</p>
Non Residents	Families who reside outside the Melton City Council municipality. Families are also considered to live outside the municipality boundaries if they move out of the municipality prior to the commencement of the Kindergarten year.
The Kindergarten Funding Guide	The Kindergarten Funding Guide is developed by DET and is updated from time to time to guide Kindergarten EYMS on operations including the eligibility criteria for funding and Priority of Access Criteria.
Kindergarten Registration	Information provided to Melton City Council by Parent/Guardians, advising of the request for a 3 and/or 4 year old child to be allocated a kindergarten place. This information is used by Melton City Council to allocate the child a kindergarten place and provided to the Kindergarten EYMS to process enrolment
Kindergarten Enrolment	Completed by Kindergarten EYMS to enrol a child within their service
Kindergarten Early Years Managers (EYMS)	The service which operates the Kindergarten program that is participating in CRES
Kindergarten Priority of Access Criteria	In line with the State Government and the DET Priority of Access Criteria, Priority of Access Criteria is implemented to support fair and equitable access to kindergarten
Registration Fee	A non-refundable fee payable when lodging a registration for kindergarten that contributes to the cost of Council administering the Kindergarten Registrations.

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Word/Term	Definition
MAV- Municipal Association Victoria	The legislated peak body for local government in Victoria.

4. Procedure

The Melton City Council Central Registration Enrolment Scheme must accept registrations for both 3 and 4 year old's. The Central Registration Team must follow this procedure when processing registrations and allocating kindergarten places.

Melton City Council is committed to allocating places based on the following:

- meeting the needs of the local community
- equal access for all children based on the priorities set out in the *Kindergarten Central Registration Policy*
- compliance with the Local Government Act 2020, *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011* and the *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010*
- compliance with DET funding requirements relating to the registration of children in State Government funded kindergarten services
- maintaining confidentiality in relation to all information provided on kindergarten registration forms.

5. Registration Forms

To enable streamlined processing of Kindergarten Registrations, families are encouraged to complete online forms available via the City of Melton website at:

melton.vic.gov.au/Kindergartens

- Families wishing to register their child into a kindergarten program, are required to complete one registration form, per child.
- Each registration form must be completed and accompanied by a Registration Fee (non-refundable) with required supporting documentation as outlined in the Kindergarten Information Booklet.

The following documents must be provided to support the child's registration:

- Evidence of living in the municipality or of being a ratepayer of Melton City Council.
- Evidence of the child's date of birth.
- Selected priority one evidence (where applicable)
- Completed registration forms including all required supporting documents and Registration Fee can be submitted :
 - online at: melton.vic.gov.au/Kindergartens

Although families are encouraged to utilise the online process, families unable to complete an online registration, can access paper forms from any of the following Council venues: Melton Civic Centre, Melton Library and Learning Hub and Caroline Springs Civic Centre/Library.

- Registration Forms submitted without the required supporting documentation will be considered incomplete.

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- In the event the Registration Fee is not received with the registration form, the registration form will be considered incomplete and will not be processed until payment is received.
- Incomplete registration forms will be returned to the family via post and will only be processed once the central registration team has received the complete document. This process may delay the registration process and the child's commencement into a kindergarten program.
- When a complete first round Registration Form is received and processed, the Central Registration Team will send families a confirmation of receipt within a four week period.
- Registration Forms from families who reside outside the municipality, are required to be assessed by the Director City Life prior to any approval.
- To facilitate the inclusion of all children into the program, registrations should clearly identify any additional or specific needs of the child (*refer to Inclusion and Equity Policy*).
- Registration Forms are confidential and are kept in a secure place on the premises.

6. Fee Waiver

- Families in financial hardship may apply for a waiver to the registration fee by providing a letter explaining their circumstances. This letter will be assessed by the Families and Children Manager and an outcome advised.
- A fee waiver will automatically apply to families eligible for Early Start Kindergarten and those that meet the fee waiver criteria listed in the Kindergarten Information Booklet

7. First and Second Round Offer Timelines

- The registration timeline on the Registration Form outlines the opening and closing dates for offers throughout the year:

○ First Round Registrations Open:	March
○ First Round Registrations Close:	June
○ First Round Offers sent to families:	Late June
○ Second Round Registrations Open:	June/July
○ Second Round Registrations Close:	Two weeks from opening date
○ Second Round Offer sent to families:	July
- From September in the year prior to starting kindergarten, families will receive information from their accepted Early Years Manager regarding commencement, procedures, including session times, days and fee information. This information is provided directly by the Early Years Manager to the families, **not** the Central Registration Team at Council.
- Registration Forms can be submitted for the remainder of the year and will continue to be accepted and allocated when/where vacancies are available. Families should expect to be contacted by their Early Years Manager within two weeks from submitting Registration Forms

8. Changing Preference or Personal Details

- Any change to a kindergarten preference after a family has accepted their offer, will incur a fee which must be paid prior to any changes being made.

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- All preference changes after a family has accepted an offer must be forwarded to the Central Registration Team in writing.
This can be done by:
 - Completing the 'Change of Information Form' (available from the Melton Civic Centre, Caroline Springs Civic Centre/ Library, Melton Library & Learning Hub or Melton City Council's website)

All preference changes prior to accepting an offer can be completed as follows:

- Writing a letter to Council addressed to the Central Registration Team,
 - Sending an email to kindergartens@melton.vic.gov.au
 - Accessing the parent portal and making these changes
- Families are advised to include all kindergarten preferences that they will accept, as not everyone will receive their first preference.
 - Any changes to a registration (other than updating contact details) will be treated as a new Registration Form and will be processed in line with the date the change was received by the Central Registration Team and not the original date that the registration was submitted.

9. Preference List

- The CRES allocates families through a computer generated system in accordance to the Priority of Access Criteria.
- Families cannot accept a place at a kindergarten and also be on a preference list for another kindergarten.
- Families can choose to not accept the place offered and to remain on the preference list at their preferred kindergarten.
- If families are still on the preference list in January in the year the child is to attend kindergarten, the Central Registration Team will contact the family to offer a place to the child at a kindergarten with vacancies.

10. Deferring Registration

- In accordance with the DET Kindergarten Funding Guide and its successor agreements, a registration may be deferred within Term One, provided the registration has not been recorded by the kindergarten teacher on the DET Kindergarten Information Management System.
- Families wishing to defer their registration should speak with their kindergarten provider as soon as possible to discuss their child's readiness for kindergarten. This process is only available to families when their child has commenced kindergarten in Term One.
- Families, in consultation with their kindergarten provider are required to complete a EYM Deferral form whereby their registration will be re-offered the following year. The EYM Deferral form must be completed by the Kindergarten teacher and signed by both the Kindergarten teacher and parent/guardian.
- Families cannot defer their Kindergarten place if their child does not attend a Kindergarten

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program. The child will need to be re-enrolled following the standard registration process.

11. Priority of Access/Allocation of Places

Priority of Access Criteria	Requirements for Eligibility
Priority 1	
Previous year Deferrals: Children of City of Melton residents who attended Kindergarten in Term One but withdrew.	Educator required to submit a referral outlining the child would benefit from deferring to the following year. Children who do not attend the Kindergarten program will not be entitled to a deferral.
Children of City of Melton residents who are eligible for a second year of 4 year old funded Kindergarten.	Children of City of Melton residents who DET have been approved for a second year of funded Kindergarten.
Children of City of Melton residents who are at risk of abuse or neglect or children in out-of-home care.	Referral by any service working with the family that assess the child as vulnerable, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Child Protection Maternal & Child Health Nurse Out of Home Care Provider Family Services.
Children of City of Melton residents who are of Aboriginal/Torres Strait Islander descent.	Family identifies the child as Aboriginal/Torres Strait Islander descent.
Children of City of Melton residents eligible for Aboriginal Early Start Kindergarten.	A child who meets all of the following criteria: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the child is three years old by 30 April in the year in which they are enrolled to attend the funded Kindergarten program the child has been identified as being Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander. Advice of eligibility may be either verbal (from a parent/guardian) or written from a professional such as a Koorie Engagement Support Officer (KESO).
Children of City of Melton residents eligible for Early Start Kindergarten known to Child Protection.	A child who meets both of the following criteria: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the child is three years old by 30 April in the year in which they are enrolled to attend the funded Kindergarten program, and the child is known to Child Protection. A child known to Child Protection means: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a child who has a current, or a history of, involvement with Child Protection, including those in out-of-home care, or a child who has been referred by Child Protection. A child's eligibility can be advised by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a parent/guardian who self-identify their child is currently supported by Child Protection or has been supported in the past, or a Child Protection professional.

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Priority of Access Criteria	Requirements for Eligibility
	Advice about eligibility may be either verbal (from a parent/guardian) or written from a Child Protection professional.
Children of City of Melton residents eligible for Early Start Kindergarten as Refugee or Asylum Seeker	<p>A child who meets all of the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the child is three years old by 30 April in the year in which they are enrolled to attend the funded Kindergarten program the child has been identified as a refugee or asylum seeker <p>Advice about eligibility is via an appropriate visa that identifies the child and/or parents/guardians as a refugee or asylum seeker or referral letter from case worker.</p> <p>Any parent/guardian or child with an experience of displacement (a refugee experience or experience similar to a refugee) will be considered by exemption for ESK.</p> <p>For anyone who is not automatically eligible for ESK but has experienced a refugee experience or experience similar to a refugee, please contact the local Department of Early Childhood Improvement Branch to discuss in the first instance.</p> <p>An email can then be sent (by you or Department regional team, depending on discussion) to Early Years Participation (early.years.participation@education.vic.gov.au) seeking consideration for an exemption. The Early Years Participation team will seek details including the child's Statistical Linkage Key (SLK) or name, date of birth and gender, and a brief description of the parent's refugee experiences (i.e. a simple summary such as <i>child's father was a refugee from Syria arriving by boat in Australia in 2013</i>). The Early Years Participation team can provide guidance via email on how to compose the simple summary, if needed</p>
<p>Children of City of Melton residents with additional needs, defined as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> children who have an identified specific disability or developmental delay children who require additional assistance in order to fully participate in the Kindergarten program children of City of Melton residents that require a combination of services which are individually planned 	<p>Referred by services, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Early Childhood Intervention Service Pre-School Field Officer Maternal and Child Health Nurse General Practitioner <p>Or evidenced by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Child Disability Health Care Card

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Priority of Access Criteria	Requirements for Eligibility
Children of City of Melton residents who have Asylum Seeker and/or Refugee Status.	Appropriate visa that identifies the child and/or parents as a refugee or asylum seeker or referral letter from case worker.
Fee waiver applies to families who meet the following criteria: The child of City of Melton resident who individually holds, or has a parent or guardian who holds one of the following	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commonwealth Health Care Card Commonwealth Pensioner Concession Card Department of Veterans' Affairs Gold Card or White Card Refugee Visa (subclass 200) In-Country Special Humanitarian Visa (subclass 201) Global Special Humanitarian Visa (subclass 202) Temporary Humanitarian Concern Visa (subclass 786) Protection Visa (subclass 866) Emergency Rescue Visa (subclass 20three) Woman at Risk Visa (subclass 204) Bridging Visas A-E or ImmiCard and/or The child is identified on their birth certificate as one of a set of triplets, quadruplets or more.
Priority 2	
Children of City of Melton residents where the parent/guardian or child has a life threatening or debilitating illness or disease.	Copy of a signed letter from a General Practitioner.
Children of City of Melton residents where a parent/guardian has a disability.	One of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Copy of a signed letter from a General Practitioner. Copy of a signed letter from a disability support agency.
Children of City of Melton residents where a parent/guardian or child has a diagnosed mental illness.	One of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Copy of a signed letter from a case worker/manager from a mental health or other relevant agency or mental health practitioner stating that the child or parent/guardian has a mental illness. Copy of a signed letter from a General Practitioner, stating that the child or parent/guardian has a mental illness.
Children of City of Melton residents where Court Orders limit choices for Kindergarten.	Copy of related Court Order.
Children of City of Melton residents where a parent/guardian has a drug and/or alcohol dependency.	Copy of a signed letter from a case worker/manager from a drug and alcohol or family support agency, stating that the child's family has a drug and/or alcohol dependency.

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Priority of Access Criteria	Requirements for Eligibility
Children of City of Melton residents where there is a risk of family violence	Copy of a signed letter from a case worker/manager from a family support agency stating that the child is at risk due to family violence.
Children of City of Melton residents where there is a risk of homelessness	Copy of a signed letter from a case worker/manager from a family support agency stating that the child is homeless or at risk of becoming homeless.
Children of City of Melton residents experiencing a situation resulting in vulnerability.	Copy of a signed letter from a case worker/manager from a family support agency or other.
Residents of the City of Melton who have previously had a child attend the Kindergarten of preference, in a 3 or 4 year old program, in the year of enrolling the current child or the previous year. Child attended the 3 year old Kindergarten they are wanting to enrol for 4 year old	A child's eligibility can be advised by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completing the details required on the Registration Form. The registration will be verified by reviewing the status through past records. Confirmation from Kindergarten that child has attended the 3 year old program for the first two terms
Priority 3	
Residents of the City of Melton.	Places will be allocated through a computer generated allocation system. Children of a multiple birth will be allocated a place at the same Kindergarten unless otherwise requested by the family.
Priority 4	
Non-Residents	Families who reside outside of the City of Melton municipality. To be assessed by the Director City Life

Note: Once allocations have been finalised, children will be prioritised according to the number of criteria met. In a situation where the same number of criteria is met, places will be allocated in order of the date the registration was received.

- In mixed-age groups, the Priority of Access Criteria will equally prioritise 3 and 4-year-old children considered vulnerable under the policy.
- Where programs for 3 and 4 year old's are provided separately, the Priority of Access Criteria should be applied separately for each age cohort.
- Priority of Access Criteria is applied to each registration based on information provided on the registration. When there are numerous registrations on the same priority, there is a random selection based on the available kindergarten places.
- Places will be allocated to eligible children, including those who are on the preference list, in accordance with the preference listed on the registration form and in line with the *Kindergarten Central Registration Policy*.
- After all returns have been processed, the remaining vacancies will be filled by the next eligible registrations.

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12 Non-Residents

- Kindergarten applications from families who reside outside the Melton City Council municipality are required to have Director City Life final approval and acceptance based on recommendations from Council Officers/Manager.
- Applications from residents residing outside the municipality wishing to register for kindergarten the following year will not be assessed until November and will be determined on the kindergarten vacancies at that time. Families should expect to receive an e-mail of the outcome of this decision by late November to early December
- Any applications received in the year that the child is due to commence kindergarten will be reviewed by the Director City Life within four weeks of the application date.
- Non-residents who have accepted a placement for their child's 3 year old kindergarten year are not guaranteed a 4 year old placement the following year. Normal non-resident processes will still apply.
- Families are considered to live outside of the municipal boundaries if they move out of the municipality prior to the commencement of the kindergarten year.

Note: Children in Out of Home Care may be an exception to the above and will be considered on a case by case basis according to the best interest of the child in consideration of the Early Years Compact Agreement

13 Second Year of 4 year old Funded Kindergarten

- DET provides funding to support children to access a kindergarten program in the year before they start school.
- Where a child is observed to display delays in key outcome areas of learning and development, the possibility of a second year of funded 4 year old kindergarten maybe considered. However, a second year of 4 year old kindergarten should only be considered if kindergarten will be the most appropriate environment to address the child's delays in development.
- From the time of registration, regular communication between the parent/guardian and the early childhood teacher in relation to a child's learning and development is important. If a parent/guardian and/or early childhood teacher observes that a child's learning and development is not progressing at a rate similar to their peers, strategies can be planned and implemented to support the child's learning and development in those specific areas.
- When considering whether a second year of funded 4 year old kindergarten will benefit a child, the early childhood teacher and parent/guardian must ensure that the child meets the eligibility criteria for a second year.

13.1 Determining Eligibility for a Second Year of Funded 4 Year Old Kindergarten

- An assessment of the child is undertaken and a Declaration of Eligibility for a second year of funded 4 year old kindergarten is completed and sent to the appropriate Department regional office. DET is responsible for approving second year requests

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- It is important that teachers ensure the plans and forms are completed accurately as they will be subject to annual audit processes undertaken by the Department.

13.2 Eligibility Criteria

- The early childhood educator can deem a child is eligible to receive a second year of funded 4 year old kindergarten if:
 - The child is observed as having delays in at least two outcome areas of learning and development detailed in the Victorian Early Years and Development Framework and
 - There is evidence to suggest that the child will achieve better outcomes if they attend a second year of funded 4 year old kindergarten to strengthen the learning and development of skills in these areas and better facilitate transition to school the following year.
- Children who have been granted early entry to kindergarten (i.e. children who are less than 4 years of age by 30 April in the year they attend a funded kindergarten program) are not eligible to apply for a second year of funded 4 year old kindergarten.

14. Early Start Kindergarten

- Early Start Kindergarten (ESK) was introduced in response to research showing that two years of quality education and care prepares children for success at school and leads to positive impacts later in life. Early Start Kindergarten will continue to provide 15 hours a week of subsidised 4 year old kindergarten until such time as three year old children across the state will have access to 15 hours of subsidised kindergarten.
- ESK provides kk kindergarten for:
 - All three year old Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.
 - Three year old children known to Child Protection.
 - All three year old refugee and asylum seeker children
- Children must be aged at least three years by 30 April in the year they enrol to be eligible for a place. Children can only begin ESK after they have turned three years of age or a parent/guardian must attend the sessions with them until they do. Families should check with the kindergarten about working with children check requirements.

15. Reserving Places

- Two places per kindergarten will be reserved by the Central Registration Team, for high priority children, as per the Priority of Access Guidelines from DET.

DET defines High Priority children to be:

- Children at risk of abuse or neglect, including children in Out-of-Home Care, Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander children, or Asylum seeker and refugee children.
- Children eligible for the fee waiver
- Children with additional needs, defined as children who:

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- require additional assistance in order to fully participate in the kindergarten program
 - require a combination of services which are individually planned
 - have an identified specific disability or developmental delay
- These places will be reserved until 30 October. Any remaining reserved places not filled by 30 October will be made available to preference list families and subsequent allocation rounds.

16. Managing Preference Lists

- Families who are unsuccessful in gaining a place are added to a preference list and advised if a vacancy arises.
- Preference lists are maintained in accordance with the Priority of Access Guidelines from DET.

17. Kindergarten Placement Offers

- A letter of offer for a kindergarten place will be e-mailed to families or sent via mail in the event Council do not have an e-mail address for the family, within two weeks after the close of first round allocations.
- If an applicant's first preference for a kindergarten is not available, they will be offered their nominated second or third preference kindergarten.
- If vacancies are not available at a preferred kindergarten, applicants will be placed on a preference list in accordance with Allocation Priorities.
- Second round offers will be made approximately four weeks after the first round of offers.
- Offers after this time are made on a weekly basis. Where offers can be made for first preferences, these will be processed automatically.

18. Acceptance of Place

- An offer of a kindergarten place will be made via a letter or email sent from the Central Registration Team to the family. The letter/email will need to be completed, stating whether the offer is accepted or declined and returned to the Central Registration team by the nominated date on the letter, in order for it to be valid.
- Families who do not return the acceptance letter by the date listed will forfeit their place.
- Once a family has confirmed the acceptance of a place, they are unable to remain on a preference list for another kindergarten.
- Parents/guardians who do not wish to accept the offer of a place, or withdraw their registration are requested to notify the Central Registration Team in writing.
- Parents/guardians who do not receive an offer to a kindergarten of their choice will be notified in writing that they are on a preference list.

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- Parents/guardians who choose to wait for the kindergarten of preference and not take up a second or third preference offer will be placed on a preference list.
- Families will be contacted by the allocated Early Years Manager to organise a time to attend orientation at the kindergarten.

19. Online Parent Portal

- Families will have access to the online parent portal once the letter of receipt is received within 4 weeks of submitting their registration form. This letter will provide an individual ID number that will be required to access the Parent portal.

The portal will enable families to:

- make changes to kindergarten preferences (prior to first round offers)
- have access to current preferences
- accept or decline an offer (after offer letters have been sent out)
- request to cancel a placement

20. Kindergartens located on School Sites

- Families are advised that enrolling children into a Melton City Council kindergarten on a school site does not guarantee entry into the school in the following year.
- Families are advised that kindergartens do not have the same boundary requirements as schools and should discuss this directly with the school.

21. Privacy

- Access to completed Registration forms are restricted to the Central Registration Team, and other relevant Council Officers, in accordance with Council's *Information Privacy Policy*. Information may be shared with family consent or if required by law.

22. Collection and Disposal of Information

- Council will dispose of personal information when it is no longer required to fulfil the purpose for which it was collected or required by law.
- For further information about the collection and disposal of personal information families can be directed to visit the Melton City Council website: www.melton.vic.gov.au

23. Engagement with Families

The CRES is an accessible, inclusive and equitable service. The Central Registration Team must consider factors that may pose a barrier to engagement and/or communication around kindergarten registration and make attempts to reduce any barriers to accessing kindergarten.

Free interpreters are provided by the service where required and assistance can also be sought from other Families and Children services programs when active engagement is required to support kindergarten registrations. This will be carried out in partnership with

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Councils Kindergarten Engagement Officer and may include collaboration with the families Maternal Child Health Nurse, Supported Playgroup Facilitator, Preschool Field Officer or Family Services Case Manager where applicable. The Out of Home Care Local Government contact at Council may also be able to support the kindergarten registrations of children in Out of Home Care.

Staff should seek support from their supervisor if they are concerned about the safety and wellbeing of a child and be familiar with the Child Safe Policy.

24. Responsibility /Accountability

24.1 Central Registration Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responsible for the administrative tasks associated with the receipt of registrations and allocation of kindergarten placements in line with the Allocation Priorities.
24.2 Early Years Managers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responsible for providing families with session times, orientation sessions and fee information in relation to the day to day operation of the kindergarten program. Responsible for employing kindergarten staff.
24.3 Parents & Guardians	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responsible for providing all required documentation for the Kindergarten Registration form by the date indicated in the Kindergarten Information Booklet.

25. References and links to legislation and other documents

Name	Location
Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006	www.legislation.vic.gov.au
Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005	www.legislation.vic.gov.au
Children, Youth and Families Act 2005	www.legislation.vic.gov.au
Child Safe Standards	www.legislation.vic.gov.au
Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Commonwealth)	www.comlaw.gov.au
Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011	www.legislation.vic.gov.au
Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010	www.legislation.vic.gov.au
Equal Opportunity Act 2010	www.legislation.vic.gov.au
Victorian Gender Equality Act 2020	www.legislation.vic.gov.au
Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission Act 1986 (Commonwealth)	www.comlaw.gov.au
Kindergarten Funding Guide 2016	https://www.education.vic.gov.au/
Local Government Act 2020	www.legislation.vic.gov.au
Melton City Council Kindergarten Registration, language services and eligibility information	https://www.melton.vic.gov.au/
Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014	www.legislation.vic.gov.au
Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Commonwealth)	www.comlaw.gov.au
Sex and Age Discrimination Amendment Act 2011	www.comlaw.gov.au

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Name	Location
<i>Health Records Act 2001</i>	www.legislation.vic.gov.au
<i>The Early Years Compact Agreement</i>	https://www.education.vic.gov.au/
<i>The Equality and Respect 2030 Strategy</i>	https://www.melton.vic.gov.au/
<i>Victorian Kindergarten policy, procedures and funding criteria.</i>	http://www.education.vic.gov.au

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Appendix 3 Kindergarten Central Registration Policy - March 2024 - PRP Changes

Kindergarten Central Registration Policy

Date adopted	25 March 2024
Adopted by	Council
Review due	1 March 2025
Responsible officer	Manager Child, Family & Youth Services
Records reference	10026205

1. Purpose

This policy outlines the allocation of kindergarten places by Melton City Council's Kindergarten Central Registration Enrolment Scheme (CRES).

2. Application And Scope

This policy applies to parents/guardians wishing to access a three- or four-year-old kindergarten place at an associated Council kindergarten, Kindergarten Early Years Manager's (EYM), Council officers and agencies involved in the placement of children into three- or four-year-old kindergarten as part of Council's CRES.

In partnership with Kindergarten EYMS, Melton City Council Kindergarten CRES operates central registration, and allocation of kindergarten places for both three- and four-year-old children within twenty-six (26) kindergartens across the municipality.

3. General Provisions

Melton City Council is committed to:

- meeting the needs of the local community regarding kindergarten registration
- equal access for all children based on the priorities set out in this policy.
- compliance with the *Local Government Act 2020, Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011* and the *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010*.
- compliance with DE funding requirements relating to the enrolment of children in State Government Funded Kindergarten Services.
- maintaining confidentiality in relation to all information provided on Kindergarten Registration forms.
- being inclusive of all people, acknowledging the contribution of people and communities from diverse backgrounds, within the municipality.
- striving for Gender Equity as per the Equality and Respect 2030 Strategy.

A CRES is a local government-led program that aims to minimise the barriers to getting Victoria's children into kindergarten with the provision of a Best Practice model of Central Kindergarten Registration. The CRES takes a holistic view of a child's journey from birth to their first day at kindergarten. It is a collaborative model that coordinates councils, service providers, MCH staff, support services and other stakeholders to support families and carers.

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Appendix 3 Kindergarten Central Registration Policy - March 2024 - PRP Changes

Melton City Council has implemented the CRES to support Best Practice recommendations endorsed by the Department of Education (DE) and the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV). The CRES will support:

- transparently, fairly and equitably allocate kindergarten places in line with the Department's (DE) Priority of Access guidelines.
- proactively identify and enrol vulnerable children in quality kindergarten programs.
- minimise administrative burden on service providers.
- responding to the needs of the community in early year's services provision.

Once a child has been allocated a place, Kindergarten EYM are responsible for the kindergarten enrolments within their service.

3.1. Central Registration Enrolment Scheme

The CRES model aims to:

- assist vulnerable families / carers who are at risk of not enrolling their child in kindergarten.
- inform infrastructure, early years planning and investment: for evaluation and future planning, during which Council can gather data on current and projected demand for early years services.
- ease of access for families: a CRES enables families / carers to register for enrolment at the number of kindergartens with a single registration form.
- fair allocation of kindergarten places: CRES ensures the Kindergarten Priority of Access Criteria are applied so that children experiencing vulnerability or disadvantage have priority access to kindergarten. Additionally, children can also be prioritised based on locally agreed criteria.
- increase uptake of kindergarten: the CRES seeks to find and register as many kindergarten-aged children as possible through a network of stakeholder relationships.
- continue to ease the burden on individual kindergartens so that they can run most effectively, and the value of council-owned facilities is maximised.

Central Kindergarten registration procedures, systems and software will align with the CRES Best Practice model.

3.2. Eligibility Criteria

Consistent with State Government funding agreements, the following children are eligible to attend kindergarten:

- Children who are three years of age or older by 30 April in the year they are to attend three-year-old kindergarten.
- Children who are four years of age or older by 30 April in the year they are to attend four-year-old kindergarten.
- Families of children born between January and April can decide whether to enrol their children in the year they turn three, or the following year. These decisions will be up to the individual families and factors that might be taken into consideration include the individual child's developmental and learning levels, family circumstances and potential school starting ages.

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Early Start Kindergarten provides kindergarten to eligible three-year-old children where programs are offered by a qualified Kindergarten teacher. Eligible children are those identified as Aboriginal and/ or Torres Strait Islander decent or a refugee and/or asylum seeker or known to Child Protection. Children eligible for ESK funding continue to have access to 15 hours of kindergarten per week.

3.3. Allocation Priorities

The DE Priority of Access Criteria states that in instances where more eligible children apply for a place at a kindergarten service than there are places, available children must be prioritised via:

- Children at risk of abuse or neglect, including children in Out-of-Home Care.
- Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander children.
- Asylum seeker and refugee children.
- Children with additional needs defined as children who:
 - Require additional assistance in order to fully participate in the kindergarten program.
 - Require a combination of services which are individually planned.
 - Have an identified specific developmental delay.

Any parent or child with an experience of displacement (a refugee experience or experience similar to a refugee) will be considered by exemption for ESK.

Consistent with the State Government and the DE Priority of Access Criteria, locally agreed criteria may be implemented to prioritise and determine the order of offers made. To support fair and equitable access to kindergarten, children of City of Melton residents will also be considered for priority of access should they have the following risk factors of vulnerability:

- A parent/guardian or child has a life threatening or debilitating illness or disease.
- A parent/guardian who has a disability, diagnosed mental illness or drug and/or alcohol dependency.
- Court orders that limit choices for kindergarten.
- Risk of family violence.
- Risk of homelessness.
- Eligibility for Early Start Kindergarten.

Children of City of Melton residents will also be prioritised if they have:

- attended kindergarten in Term One but withdrew.
- are eligible for a second year of funded four-year-old kindergarten.
- previously attended or had a sibling attend the kindergarten of preference, in a three- or four-year-old program, in the year of enrolling the current child or the previous year.
- Attended the three-year-old kindergarten they are wanting to enrol for four-year-old for the first two terms of three-year-old kindergarten.
- two children from the same family enrolling for kindergarten in the same year.

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Note: Once First and Second round allocations have been finalised, children will be prioritised according to the number of criteria met.

- In mixed-age groups, the Priority of Access Criteria will equally prioritise three- and four-year-old children considered vulnerable under the policy.
- Where programs for three- and four-year olds are provided separately, the Priority of Access Criteria should be applied separately for each age cohort.

In the situation that three- and four-year-old registration has been completed on the same registration form, the Priority of Access Criteria must be considered separately for each year at the point of allocation.

3.3.1. Non-Residents

Council will consider kindergarten registrations from families who reside outside the Melton City Council municipality. These will be assessed annually in November and will be determined on the kindergarten vacancies at that time. Council is committed to providing an outcome of this registration request by late November to early December.

Any registrations received in the year that the child is due to commence kindergarten will be resolved within four weeks of the application date.

Non-Residents who have accepted a placement for their child's three-year-old kindergarten year are not guaranteed a four-year-old placement the following year. Normal Non-Resident processes will still apply.

Families are considered to live outside of the municipal boundaries if they move out of the municipality prior to the commencement of the kindergarten year.

Note: Children in Out of Home Care may be an exception to the above and will be considered on a case-by-case basis according to the best interest of the child in consideration of the Early Years Compact Agreement.

3.4. Registration

3.4.1. Registration Fees

Council will contribute to the administration cost of operating the kindergarten CRES via State Government funding, enabling council to now provide this service to the community free of charge.

3.4.2. Allocation of Places

Places will be allocated to eligible children, including those who are on the preference list, in accordance with the preference listed on the registration form and in line with the Allocation Priorities of this policy.

3.5. Kindergartens Located on School Sites

A child enrolled into a City of Melton Kindergarten on a primary school site does not confirm your child's entry into that school the following year.

For further information in relation to school zoning boundaries go to www.findmyschool.vic.gov.au

For school enrolment processes, contact your local primary school.

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3.6. Privacy

Access to completed registration forms will be restricted to the Kindergarten Registration Officers, and other relevant Council Officers, in accordance with Council's Information Privacy Policy. Sharing of information will only occur with the consent of registering parent/guardian or if required by law.

3.7. Responsibility and Accountability

Kindergarten Registration Officer/ Central Registration team

- Responsible for the administrative tasks associated with the receipt of registrations and allocation of kindergarten placements in line with the Allocation Priorities of this policy.

Kindergarten Engagement Officer

- Responsible for the identification, active engagement and outreach to families experiencing disadvantage, vulnerability or other barriers to kindergarten engagement.
- Support the kindergarten registration and allocation process for families experiencing disadvantage, vulnerability or other barriers to kindergarten engagement.

Children Services Team Leader

- Ensure that program procedures and systems support the policy.
- Oversee policy implementation, referred to and reviewed as appropriate.

Kindergarten EYM

- Responsible for processing enrolments.
- Responsible for providing families with session times, orientation sessions and fee information in relation to the day-to-day operations of the kindergarten program.
- Responsible for all operations of the kindergarten including employing kindergarten staff.

Parents & Guardians

- Responsible for providing all required documentation for the Kindergarten Registration form by the date indicated in the Kindergarten Information Booklet.

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4. Definitions

Term	Definition
Allocation Priorities	The priorities referred to when allocating places into a three- or four-year-old kindergarten program.
Applicant	A child whose parent/guardian has lodged a completed kindergarten registration.
Best Practice	A best-practice model that streamlines the process of registering and enrolling children in kindergarten for families and service providers, ensuring the process is simple, consistent, inclusive and equitable.
CRES- Central Registration Enrolment Scheme	The CRES model is designed to reduce challenges for Central enrolment schemes and achieve consistency of kindergarten registration across Victoria. The model has been co-designed by stakeholders across Victoria, the Department of Education (DE) and the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV).
Deferrals – Four-Year-Old	Children of City of Melton residents who attended kindergarten in Term One but withdrew their place and deferred to the following year with DET approval. Children, who have deferred from a four-year-old kindergarten place and are considered by DE not to have accessed a year of funded kindergarten, are therefore eligible for kindergarten funding in the following year.
DE	State Government Department of Education
Eligible Child	A child who is eligible to be allocated a place in a CRES Melton City Council kindergarten.
Early Start Kindergarten (ESK)	Early Start Kindergarten provides free or low-cost kindergarten to eligible three-year-old children who identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander or Refugee or Asylum Seeker or are known to Child Protection.

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Term	Definition
Early Years Compact Agreement	<p>A ten-year agreement between Department of Families, Fairness and Housing, Department of Education and local government with the goal to support vulnerable children including to increase the participation of children in out of home care and children known to child protection in early years services.</p> <p>Goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vulnerability, location and disadvantage do not determine outcomes for children. • Families are well supported by high quality, inclusive services for children and families in the early years. • families can access help when and where they need it. • Stronger place-based governance and planning.
Funded Kindergarten Place	<p>After enrolment, children receive a funded DE kindergarten place when they attend kindergarten in the year before school.</p> <p>From 2022, funded kindergarten places will be available for the two years prior to a child starting school.</p> <p>Children are eligible for only one year of each three- and four-year-old kindergarten place.</p>
Non-Residents	Families who reside outside the Melton City Council municipality. Families are also considered to live outside the municipality boundaries if they move out of the municipality prior to the commencement of the kindergarten year.
The Kindergarten Funding Guide	The Kindergarten Funding Guide is developed by DE and is updated from time to time to guide Kindergarten EYMS on operations including the eligibility criteria for funding and Priority of Access Criteria.
Kindergarten Registration	Information provided to Melton City Council by Parent/Guardians, advising of the request for a three and/or four-year-old child to be allocated a kindergarten place. This information is used by Melton City Council to allocate the child a kindergarten place and provided to the Kindergarten EYM to process enrolment.
Kindergarten Enrolment	Completed by Kindergarten EYMS to enrol a child within their service.
Kindergarten Early Years Managers (EYM)	The service which operates the kindergarten program that is participating in CRES.

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Term	Definition
Kindergarten Priority of Access Criteria	In line with the State Government and the DE Priority of Access Criteria, Priority of Access Criteria is implemented to support fair and equitable access to kindergarten.
Municipal Association Victoria (MAV)	The legislated peak body for local government in Victoria.

5. Related Documents

Name	Location
Local Government Act 2020	https://www.legislation.vic.gov.au/in-force/acts/local-government-act-2020
Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006	www.legislation.vic.gov.au
Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005	www.legislation.vic.gov.au
Children, Youth and Families Act 2005	www.legislation.vic.gov.au
Child Safe Standards	www.legislation.vic.gov.au
Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Commonwealth)	www.comlaw.gov.au
Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011	www.legislation.vic.gov.au
Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010	www.legislation.vic.gov.au
Equal Opportunity Act 2010	www.legislation.vic.gov.au
Victorian Gender Equality Act 2020	www.legislation.vic.gov.au
Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission Act 1986 (Commonwealth)	www.comlaw.gov.au
Kindergarten Funding Guide	https://www.education.vic.gov.au/
Melton City Council Kindergarten Registration, language services and eligibility information	https://www.melton.vic.gov.au/
Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014	www.legislation.vic.gov.au
Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Commonwealth)	www.comlaw.gov.au
Sex and Age Discrimination Amendment Act 2011	www.comlaw.gov.au

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Name	Location
<i>Health Records Act 2001</i>	www.legislation.vic.gov.au
<i>The Early Years Compact Agreement</i>	https://www.education.vic.gov.au/
<i>The Equality and Respect 2030 Strategy</i>	https://www.melton.vic.gov.au/
<i>Victorian Kindergarten policy, procedures and funding criteria.</i>	http://www.education.vic.gov.au

The master document is controlled electronically. Printed copies of this document are not controlled. Document users are responsible for ensuring printed copies are valid prior to use. If printing, please think about whether you need to print in colour.

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Kindergarten Central Registration Procedure

Date adopted	25 March 2024
Adopted by	Council
Review due	1 March 2025
Responsible officer	Manager Child, Family & Youth Services
Records reference	10026209

1. Purpose

This procedure outlines the process to be followed when registering a child into either three- or four-year-old kindergarten via the Central Registration Enrolment Scheme (CRES) and the basis on which places within the program will be allocated.

2. Application And Scope

This procedure:

- informs Council staff involved in the placement of children into kindergarten as part of Council's Kindergarten Central Registration Enrolment Scheme.
- provides consistent data recording and process to promote the equitable allocation of kindergarten places in line with DE's Priority of Access Criteria.

3. General Provisions

The Melton City Council Central Registration Enrolment Scheme must accept registrations for both three- and four-year old's. The Central Registration Team must follow this procedure when processing registrations and allocating kindergarten places.

Melton City Council is committed to allocating places based on the following:

- meeting the needs of the local community regarding kindergarten registration.
- equal access for all children based on the priorities set out in the *Kindergarten Central Registration Policy*.
- compliance with the *Local Government Act 2020, Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011* and the *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010*.
- compliance with DE funding requirements relating to the enrolment of children in State Government funded kindergarten services.
- maintaining confidentiality in relation to all information provided on Kindergarten Registration forms.

3.1. Registration Forms

To enable streamlined processing of Kindergarten Registrations, families are encouraged to complete online forms available via the City of Melton website at: melton.vic.gov.au/Kindergartens

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Families wishing to register their child into a kindergarten program, are required to complete one registration form, per child.

Each registration form must be completed with required supporting documentation as outlined in the Kindergarten Information Booklet.

The following documents must be provided to support the child's registration:

- Evidence of living in the municipality or of being a ratepayer of Melton City Council.
- Evidence of the child's date of birth.
- Selected priority one evidence (where applicable).
- Completed registration forms including all required supporting documents online at: melton.vic.gov.au/Kindergarten.

Although families are encouraged to utilise the online process, families unable to complete an online registration, can access paper forms from any of the following Council venues: Melton Civic Centre, Melton Library and Learning Hub and Caroline Springs Civic Centre/Library.

Registration Forms submitted without the required supporting documentation will be considered incomplete.

Incomplete Registration Forms will be returned to the family via post and will only be processed once Council's Central Registration team has received the complete document. This process may delay the registration process and the child's commencement into a kindergarten program.

When a complete first round Registration Form is received and processed, the Central Registration Team will send families a confirmation of receipt within a four-week period.

Registration Forms from families who reside outside the municipality, are required to be assessed by the Director City Life prior to any approval.

To facilitate the inclusion of all children into the program, registrations should clearly identify any additional or specific needs of the child (*refer to Inclusion and Equity Policy*).

Registration Forms are confidential and kept secure.

3.2. Eligibility Criteria

Consistent with State Government funding agreements, the following children are eligible to attend kindergarten:


- Children who are three years of age or older by 30 April in the year they are to attend three-year-old kindergarten.
- Children who are four years of age or older by 30 April in the year they are to attend four-year-old kindergarten.
- Families of children born between January and April can decide whether to enrol their children in the year they turn three, or the following year. These decisions will be up to the individual families and factors that might be taken into consideration include the individual child's developmental and learning levels, family circumstances and potential school starting ages.

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Early Start Kindergarten provides kindergarten to eligible three-year-old children where programs are offered by a qualified Kindergarten teacher. Eligible children are those identified as Aboriginal and/ or Torres Strait Islander descent or a refugee and/or asylum seeker or known to Child Protection. Children eligible for ESK funding continue to have access to 15 hours of kindergarten per week.

3.3. First and Second Round Offers

The registration timeline on the Registration Form outlines the opening and closing dates for offers throughout the year:

- First Round Registrations Open: March
- First Round Registrations Close: June
- First Round Offers sent to families: Late June
- Second Round Registrations Open: June/July
- Second Round Registrations Close: Two weeks from opening date
- Second Round Offer sent to families: July

From September in the year prior to starting kindergarten, families will receive information from their accepted EYM regarding commencement, procedures, including session times, days and fee information. This information is provided directly by the Early Years Manager to the families, **not** the Central Registration team at Council.

Registration Forms can be submitted for the remainder of the year and will continue to be accepted and allocated when/where vacancies are available. Families should expect to be contacted by their EYM within two weeks from submitting Registration Forms.

3.4. Changing Preferences or Personal Details

All preference changes after a family have accepted an offer must be forwarded to Council's Central Registration team in writing.

This can be done by:

- Completing the 'Change of Information Form' (available from the Melton Civic Centre, Caroline Springs Civic Centre/ Library, Melton Library & Learning Hub or Melton City Council's website)

All preference changes prior to accepting an offer can be completed as follows:

- Writing a letter to Council addressed to the Central Registration Team,
- Sending an email to kindergartens@melton.vic.gov.au
- Accessing the parent portal and making these changes

Families are advised to include all kindergarten preferences that they will accept, as not everyone will receive their first preference.

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Any changes to a registration (other than updating contact details) will be treated as a new Registration Form and will be processed in line with the date the change was received by the Central Registration team and not the original date that the registration was submitted.

3.5. Preference List

The CRES allocates families through a computer-generated system in accordance with the Priority of Access Criteria.

Families cannot accept a place at a kindergarten and also be on a preference list for another kindergarten.

Families can choose to not accept the place offered and to remain on the preference list at their preferred kindergarten.

If families are still on the preference list in January in the year the child is to attend kindergarten, the Central Registration team will contact the family to offer a place to the child at a kindergarten with vacancies.

3.6. Deferring Registration

In accordance with the DE Kindergarten Funding Guide and its successor agreements, a registration may be deferred within Term One, provided the registration has not been recorded by the kindergarten teacher on the DE Kindergarten Information Management System.

Families wishing to defer their registration should speak with their kindergarten provider as soon as possible to discuss their child's readiness for kindergarten. This process is only available to families when their child has commenced kindergarten in Term One.

Families, in consultation with their kindergarten provider are required to complete a EYM Deferral form whereby their registration will be re-offered the following year. The EYM Deferral form must be completed by the kindergarten teacher and signed by both the kindergarten teacher and parent/guardian.

Families cannot defer their Kindergarten place if their child does not attend a kindergarten program. The child will need to be re-enrolled following the standard registration process.

3.7. Priority of Access/ Allocation of Places

Priority of Access Criteria	Requirements for Eligibility
Priority 1	
Previous year Deferrals: Children of City of Melton residents who attended Kindergarten in Term One but withdrew.	Educator required to submit a referral outlining the child would benefit from deferring to the following year. Children who do not attend the kindergarten program will not be entitled to a deferral.

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Children of City of Melton residents who are at risk of abuse or neglect or children in out-of-home care.	<p>The child is eligible for ESK, Access to Early Learning, and/or family, carer or legal guardian identifies the child as known to Child Protection or in out-of-home care, and/or referred by one of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Child Protection Child and family services (family services referral and support team, Child FIRST/integrated family services/Services Connect case worker) Maternal and Child Health nurse Out-of-home care provider.
Children of City of Melton residents who are of Aboriginal/Torres Strait Islander descent.	<p>Family identifies the child as Aboriginal/Torres Strait Islander descent.</p> <p>The child is eligible for ESK.</p>
Children of City of Melton residents who identify as Refugee or Asylum Seeker	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Child or family holds a visa or supporting documentation and information, including an ImmiCard, identifying the child and/or parents, carers or legal guardians as a refugee or asylum seeker, and/or Referred as a refugee or asylum seeker by a CALD outreach worker. The child is eligible for ESK.
<p>Children of City of Melton residents with additional needs, defined as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> children who have an identified specific disability or developmental delay children who require additional assistance in order to fully participate in the kindergarten program children of City of Melton residents that require a combination of services which are individually planned 	<p>The child holds a Child Disability Health Care Card, and/or has previously been approved for Kindergarten Inclusion Support (KIS) program, and/or has been referred by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the National Disability Insurance Scheme Early Childhood Intervention Services Preschool Field Officer Maternal and Child Health nurse, or is assessed as having delays in 2 or more areas and is declared eligible for a second year of funded Four-Year-Old Kindergarten.

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The child of City of Melton resident who individually holds or has a parent or guardian who holds one of the following.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commonwealth Health Care Card Commonwealth Pensioner Concession Card Department of Veterans' Affairs Gold Card or White Card, and/or The child is identified on their birth certificate as one of a set of triplets, quadruplets or more.
Children of City of Melton residents where there is a risk of family violence	Copy of a signed letter from a case worker/manager from a family support agency stating that the child is at risk due to family violence.
Children of City of Melton residents where there is a risk of homelessness	Copy of a signed letter from a case worker/manager from a family support agency stating that the child is homeless or at risk of becoming homeless.
Children of City of Melton residents experiencing a situation resulting in vulnerability.	Copy of a signed letter from a case worker/manager from a family support agency or other health or community service practitioner .
Priority 2	
Children of City of Melton residents where the parent/guardian or child has a life threatening or debilitating illness or disease.	Copy of a signed letter from a General Practitioner.
Children of City of Melton residents where a parent/guardian has a disability.	One of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Copy of a signed letter from a General Practitioner. Copy of a signed letter from a disability support agency.
Children of City of Melton residents where a parent/guardian or child has a diagnosed mental illness.	One of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Copy of a signed letter from a case worker/manager from a mental health or other relevant agency or mental health practitioner stating that the child or parent/guardian has a mental illness. Copy of a signed letter from a General Practitioner, stating that the child or parent/guardian has a mental illness.
Children of City of Melton residents where Court Orders limit choices for kindergarten.	Copy of related Court Order.

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Children of City of Melton residents where a parent/guardian has a drug and/or alcohol dependency.	Copy of a signed letter from a case worker/manager from a drug and alcohol or family support agency, stating that the child's family has a drug and/or alcohol dependency.
Residents of the City of Melton who have previously had a child attend the kindergarten of preference, in a three- or four-year-old program, in the year of enrolling the current child or the previous year. Child attended the three-year-old kindergarten they are wanting to enrol for four-year-old kindergarten	A child's eligibility can be advised by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completing the details required on the Registration Form. • The registration will be verified by reviewing the status through past records. • Confirmation from kindergarten that child has attended the three-year-old program for the first two terms
Priority 3	
Residents of the City of Melton.	Places will be allocated through a computer-generated allocation system. Children of a multiple birth will be allocated a place at the same kindergarten unless otherwise requested by the family.
Priority 4	
Non-Residents	Families who reside outside of the City of Melton municipality. To be assessed by the Director City Life

Note: Once allocations have been finalised, children will be prioritised according to the number of criteria met. In a situation where the same number of criteria is met, places will be allocated in order of the date the registration was received.

In mixed-age groups, the Priority of Access Criteria will equally prioritise three- and four-year-old children considered vulnerable under the policy.

Where programs for three- and four-year olds are provided separately, the Priority of Access Criteria should be applied separately for each age cohort.

Priority of Access Criteria is applied to each registration based on information provided on the registration. When there are numerous registrations on the same priority, there is a random selection based on the available kindergarten places.

Places will be allocated to eligible children, including those who are on the preference list, in accordance with the preference listed on the registration form and in line with the *Kindergarten Central Registration Policy*.

After all returns have been processed, the remaining vacancies will be filled by the next eligible registrations.

3.8. Non-Residents

Kindergarten applications from families who reside outside the Melton City Council municipality are required to have Director City Life final approval and acceptance based on recommendations from Council Officers/Manager.

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Applications from residents residing outside the municipality wishing to register for kindergarten the following year will not be assessed until November and will be determined on the kindergarten vacancies at that time. Families should expect to receive an e-mail of the outcome of this decision by late November to early December.

Any applications received in the year that the child is due to commence kindergarten will be reviewed by the Director City Life within four weeks of the application date.

Non-residents who have accepted a placement for their child's three-year-old kindergarten year are not guaranteed a four-year-old placement the following year. Normal non-resident processes will still apply.

Families are considered to live outside of the municipal boundaries if they move out of the municipality prior to the commencement of the kindergarten year.

Note: Children in Out of Home Care may be an exception to the above and will be considered on a case-by-case basis according to the best interest of the child in consideration of the Early Years Compact Agreement

3.9. Second Year of Four-Year-Old Funded Kindergarten

The Department of Education provides funding to support children to access a kindergarten program in the year before they start school.

Where a child is observed to display delays in key outcome areas of learning and development, the possibility of a second year of funded four-year-old kindergarten may be considered. However, a second year of four-year-old kindergarten should only be considered if kindergarten will be the most appropriate environment to address the child's delays in development.

From the time of registration, regular communication between the parent/guardian and the early childhood teacher in relation to a child's learning and development is important. If a parent/guardian and/or early childhood teacher observes that a child's learning and development is not progressing at a rate similar to their peers, strategies can be planned and implemented to support the child's learning and development in those specific areas.

When considering whether a second year of funded four-year-old kindergarten will benefit a child, the early childhood teacher and parent/guardian must ensure that the child meets the eligibility criteria for a second year.

After all returns have been processed, the remaining vacancies will be filled by the next eligible registrations. In the situation that three- and four-year-old registration has been completed on the same registration form, the Priority of Access Criteria must be considered separately for each year at the point of allocation.

3.9.1. Determining Eligibility for a Second Year of Funded Four-Year-Old Kindergarten

An assessment of the child is undertaken and a Declaration of Eligibility for a second year of funded four-year-old kindergarten is completed and sent to the appropriate DE regional office. DE is responsible for approving second year requests.

It is important that teachers ensure the plans and forms are completed accurately as they will be subject to annual audit processes undertaken by the DE.

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3.9.2. Eligibility Criteria

The early childhood educator can deem a child is eligible to receive a second year of funded four-year-old kindergarten if:

- The child is observed as having delays in at least two outcome areas of learning and development detailed in the Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework and,
- There is evidence to suggest that the child will achieve better outcomes if they attend a second year of funded four-year-old kindergarten to strengthen the learning and development of skills in these areas and better facilitate transition to school the following year.

Children who have been granted early entry to kindergarten (i.e. children who are less than four years of age by 30 April in the year they attend a funded kindergarten program) are not eligible to apply for a second year of funded four year old kindergarten.

3.10. Early Start Kindergarten

Early Start Kindergarten (ESK) was introduced in response to research showing that two years of quality education and care prepares children for success at school and leads to positive impacts later in life. Early Start Kindergarten will continue to provide 15 hours a week of subsidised four-year-old kindergarten until such time as three-year-old children across the state will have access to 15 hours of subsidised kindergarten.

ESK provides kindergarten for:

- All three-year-old Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.
- Three-year-old children known to Child Protection.
- All three-year-old refugee and asylum seeker children

Children must be aged at least three years by 30 April in the year they enrol to be eligible for a place. Children can only begin ESK after they have turned three years of age, or a parent/guardian must attend the sessions with them until they do. Families should check with the kindergarten about working with children check requirements.

3.11. Reserving Places

Two places per kindergarten will be reserved by the Central Registration Team, for high priority children, as per the Priority of Access Guidelines from DE.

DE defines High Priority children to be:


- Children at risk of abuse or neglect, including children in Out-of-Home Care, Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander children, or Asylum seeker and refugee children.
- Children with additional needs, defined as children who:
 - require additional assistance in order to fully participate in the kindergarten program,
 - require a combination of services which are individually planned,
 - have an identified specific disability or developmental delay.

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These places will be reserved until 30 October. Any remaining reserved places not filled by 30 October will be made available to preference list families and subsequent allocation rounds.

3.12. Managing Preference Lists

Families who are unsuccessful in gaining a place are added to a preference list and advised if a vacancy arises.

Preference lists are maintained in accordance with the Priority of Access Guidelines from DE.

3.13. Kindergarten Placement Offers

A letter of offer for a kindergarten place will be e-mailed to families or sent via mail in the event Council do not have an e-mail address for the family, within two weeks after the close of first round allocations.

If an applicant's first preference for a kindergarten is not available, they will be offered their nominated second or third preference kindergarten.

If vacancies are not available at a preferred kindergarten, applicants will be placed on a preference list in accordance with Allocation Priorities.

Second round offers will be made approximately four weeks after the first round of offers.

Offers after this time are made on a weekly basis. Where offers can be made for first preferences, these will be processed automatically.

3.14. Acceptance of Place

An offer of a kindergarten place will be made via a letter or email sent from the Central Registration team to the family. The letter/email will need to be completed, stating whether the offer is accepted or declined and returned to the Central Registration team by the nominated date on the letter, in order for it to be valid.

Families who do not return the acceptance letter by the date listed will forfeit their place.

Once a family has confirmed the acceptance of a place, they are unable to remain on a preference list for another kindergarten.

Parents/guardians who do not wish to accept the offer of a place, or withdraw their registration are requested to notify the Central Registration team in writing.

Parents/guardians who do not receive an offer to a kindergarten of their choice will be notified in writing that they are on a preference list.

Parents/guardians who choose to wait for the kindergarten of preference and not take up a second or third preference offer will be placed on a preference list.

Families will be contacted by the allocated EYM to organise a time to attend orientation at the kindergarten.

3.15. Online Parent Portal

Families will have access to the online parent portal once the letter of receipt is received within four weeks of submitting their registration form. This letter will provide an individual ID number that will be required to access the Parent portal.

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The portal will enable families to:

- make changes to kindergarten preferences (prior to first round offers)
- have access to current preferences.
- accept or decline an offer (after offer letters have been sent out).
- request to cancel a placement.

3.16. Kindergartens Located on School Sites

Families are advised that enrolling children into a Melton City Council kindergarten on a school site does not guarantee entry into the school in the following year.

Families are advised that kindergartens do not have the same boundary requirements as schools and should discuss this directly with the school.

3.17. Engagement with Families

The CRES is an accessible, inclusive and equitable service. The Central Registration team must consider factors that may pose a barrier to engagement and/or communication around kindergarten registration and make attempts to reduce any barriers to accessing kindergarten.

Free interpreters are provided by the service where required and assistance can also be sought from other Child, Families and Youth Services when active engagement is required to support kindergarten registrations. This will be carried out in partnership with Councils Kindergarten Engagement Officer and may include collaboration with the families Maternal Child Health Nurse, Supported Playgroup Facilitator, Preschool Field Officer or Family Services Case Manager where applicable. The Out of Home Care Local Government contact at Council may also be able to support the kindergarten registrations of children in Out of Home Care.

Staff should seek support from their supervisor if they are concerned about the safety and wellbeing of a child and be familiar with the Child Safe Policy.

3.18. Privacy

Access to completed Registration Forms are restricted to the Kindergarten Central Registration team, and other relevant Council Officers, in accordance with Council's *Information Privacy Policy*. Sharing of information will only occur with the consent of registering parent/guardian or if required by law.

3.19. Collection and Disposal of Information

Council will dispose of personal information when it is no longer required to fulfil the purpose for which it was collected or required by law.

For further information about the collection and disposal of personal information families can be directed to visit the Melton City Council website: www.melton.vic.gov.au

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3.20. Responsibility and Accountability**Kindergarten Registration Officer/ Central Registration team**

- Responsible for the administrative tasks associated with the receipt of registrations and allocation of kindergarten placements in line with the Allocation Priorities of this policy.

Kindergarten EYM

- Responsible for processing enrolments
- Responsible for providing families with session times, orientation sessions and fee information in relation to the day-to-day operations of the kindergarten program
- Responsible for all operations of the kindergarten including employing kindergarten staff.

Parents & Guardians

- Responsible for providing all required documentation for the Kindergarten Registration form by the date indicated in the Kindergarten Information Booklet.

4. Definitions

Term	Definition
Allocation Priorities	The priorities referred to when allocating places into a three- or four-year-old kindergarten program
Applicant	A child whose parent/guardian has lodged a completed kindergarten registration.
Best Practice	A best-practice model that streamlines the process of registering and enrolling children in kindergarten for families and service providers, ensuring the process is simple, consistent, inclusive and equitable.
CRES- Central Registration Enrolment Scheme	The CRES model is designed to reduce challenges for Central enrolment schemes and achieve consistency of kindergarten registration across Victoria. The model has been co-designed by stakeholders across Victoria, the Department of Education (DE) and the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV).
Deferrals – Four-Year-Old	Children of City of Melton residents who attended kindergarten in Term One but withdrew their place and deferred to the following year with DET approval. Children, who have deferred from a four-year-old kindergarten place and are considered by DE not to have accessed a year of funded kindergarten, are therefore eligible for kindergarten funding in the following year.

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Term	Definition
DE	State Government Department of Education
Eligible Child	A child who is eligible to be allocated a place in a CRES Melton City Council kindergarten.
Early Start Kindergarten (ESK)	Early Start Kindergarten provides free or low-cost kindergarten to eligible three-year-old children who identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander or Refugee or Asylum Seeker or are known to Child Protection.
Early Years Compact Agreement	<p>A ten-year agreement between Department of Families, Fairness and Housing, Department of Education and local government with the goal to support vulnerable children including to increase the participation of children in out of home care and children known to child protection in early years services.</p> <p>Goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vulnerability, location and disadvantage do not determine outcomes for children. • Families are well supported by high quality, inclusive services for children and families in the early years. • families can access help when and where they need it • Stronger place-based governance and planning.
Funded Kindergarten Place	<p>After enrolment, children receive a funded DE kindergarten place when they attend kindergarten in the year before school.</p> <p>From 2022, funded kindergarten places will be available for the two years prior to a child starting school.</p> <p>Children are eligible for only one year of each three- and four-year-old kindergarten place.</p>
Non-Residents	Families who reside outside the Melton City Council municipality. Families are also considered to live outside the municipality boundaries if they move out of the municipality prior to the commencement of the kindergarten year.
The Kindergarten Funding Guide	The Kindergarten Funding Guide is developed by DE and is updated from time to time to guide Kindergarten EYMS on operations including the eligibility criteria for funding and Priority of Access Criteria.

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Term	Definition
Kindergarten Registration	Information provided to Melton City Council by Parent/Guardians, advising of the request for a three and/or four-year-old child to be allocated a kindergarten place. This information is used by Melton City Council to allocate the child a kindergarten place and provided to the Kindergarten EYM to process enrolment.
Kindergarten Enrolment	Completed by Kindergarten EYMS to enrol a child within their service.
Kindergarten Early Years Managers (EYM)	The service which operates the kindergarten program that is participating in CRES.
Kindergarten Priority of Access Criteria	In line with the State Government and the DE Priority of Access Criteria, Priority of Access Criteria is implemented to support fair and equitable access to kindergarten.
Municipal Association Victoria (MAV)	The legislated peak body for local government in Victoria.

5. Related Documents

Name	Location
Local Government Act 2020	https://www.legislation.vic.gov.au/in-force/acts/local-government-act-2020
Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006	www.legislation.vic.gov.au
Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005	www.legislation.vic.gov.au
Children, Youth and Families Act 2005	www.legislation.vic.gov.au
Child Safe Standards	www.legislation.vic.gov.au
Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Commonwealth)	www.comlaw.gov.au
Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011	www.legislation.vic.gov.au
Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010	www.legislation.vic.gov.au
Equal Opportunity Act 2010	www.legislation.vic.gov.au
Victorian Gender Equality Act 2020	www.legislation.vic.gov.au

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Name	Location
<i>Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission Act 1986 (Commonwealth)</i>	www.comlaw.gov.au
<i>Kindergarten Funding Guide</i>	https://www.education.vic.gov.au/
<i>Melton City Council Kindergarten Registration, language services and eligibility information</i>	https://www.melton.vic.gov.au/
<i>Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014</i>	www.legislation.vic.gov.au
<i>Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Commonwealth)</i>	www.comlaw.gov.au
<i>Sex and Age Discrimination Amendment Act 2011</i>	www.comlaw.gov.au
<i>Health Records Act 2001</i>	www.legislation.vic.gov.au
<i>The Early Years Compact Agreement</i>	https://www.education.vic.gov.au/
<i>The Equality and Respect 2030 Strategy</i>	https://www.melton.vic.gov.au/
<i>Victorian Kindergarten policy, procedures and funding criteria.</i>	http://www.education.vic.gov.au

The master document is controlled electronically. Printed copies of this document are not controlled. Document users are responsible for ensuring printed copies are valid prior to use. If printing, please think about whether you need to print in colour.

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Troy Scoble and Brendan Ball departed the meeting at 3.04pm.

6.3 POLICY REVIEW PLAN

Responsible Officer: Roslyn Wai - Chief Executive Officer

Document Author: Megan Kruger - Interim Senior Advisor, Office of the CEO

Date Prepared: 17 November 2023

Recommendation:

That the Policy Review Panel recommend Council note the plan to review and update Council Policies that are currently overdue for review.

Motion

Crs Ramsey/Shannon.

That the Policy Review Panel recommend Council note the plan to review and update Council Policies that are currently overdue for review.

CARRIED

1. Background

1.1 Council Policies

Status at 1 July 2023

As at 1 July 2023 there were 71 Council Policies, with:

- 25 Policies Overdue for Review or due for review in the remainder of 2023; and
- 42 Policies up to date.

The status of Council Policies by directorate / business unit on 1 July 2023 was:

	#	%	Org Performance		City Life		City Delivery		City Futures		Governance		Engagement & Advocacy		People & Safety	
Overdue for Review	17	24%	1	14%	3	19%	1	17%	0	0%	6	27%	5	45%	0	0%
Due in 2023	8	11%	0	0%	1	6%	2	33%	1	13%	4	18%	0	0%	0	0%
Up to Date	42	59%	6	86%	12	75%	3	50%	7	88%	12	55%	6	55%	1	100%
Total	71		7		16		6		8		22		11		1	

Status at 1 March 2024

As at 1 March 2024 there were 68 Council Policies with:

- 10 Policies Overdue for Review;
- 17 Policies due for review in the remainder of 2024; and
- 41 Policies up to date.

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The status of Council Policies by directorate / business unit on 1 March 2024 was:

	#	%	Org Performance		City Life		City Delivery		City Futures		Governance		Engagement & Advocacy		People & Safety	
Overdue for Review	10	15%	1	11%	1	5%	0	0%	0	0%	7	37%	1	20%	0	0%
Due in 2024	17	25%	7	78%	6	32%	2	17%	0	0%	1	5%	1	20%	0	0%
Up to Date	41	60%	1	11%	12	63%	10	83%	3	100%	11	58%	3	60%	1	100%
Total	68		9		19		12		3		19		5		1	

Comparison from 1 July 2023 to 1 March 2024

	Status as at 1 July 2023		Status as at 31 December 2023	
	Number of Policies	Percentage	Number of Policies	Percentage
Overdue for Review	17	24%	10	15%
Due in 2023 / 2024	8	11%	17	25%
Up to Date	42	59%	41	60%
Total	71		68	

This is reduction in policies overdue for review from 24% to 15% in an 8-month period.

Policy Review Plan 2024

The remaining policies overdue for review, or due for review in 2024 are:

Policy	Review Date	Responsible Area
Online Engagement Policy	1/03/2017	Manager Engagement & Advocacy
Gifts and Merchandise Policy	30/03/2017	Head of Governance
Public Internet Policy	21/10/2018	Head of Technology
Live Streaming and Publishing of Council Meetings Policy	30/08/2021	Head of Governance
Councillor Speaking Opportunity Protocol	30/09/2021	Head of Governance
Purchase of Outgoing Mayoral Gifts Policy	30/09/2021	Head of Governance
Policy Approval Process Policy	30/06/2022	Head of Governance
Councillor and Delegated Committee Members Resources Facilities and Expenses Policy	31/01/2023	Head of Governance
Election Period Policy	31/07/2023	Head of Governance
Kindergarten Central Registration Policy	1/03/2024	Manager Families and Children

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Policy	Review Date	Responsible Area
Volunteer Policy	16/06/2024	Manager Community Care
Council Contribution to Fencing Costs Policy	30/06/2024	Manager Operations
Asset Valuation & Revaluation Policy	30/06/2024	Manager Finance
Fees & Charges Policy	30/06/2024	Manager Finance
Financial Reserves Policy	30/06/2024	Manager Finance
Gambling Harm Prevention and Reduction Policy	1/07/2024	Manager Healthy Connected Communities
Events Policy	1/10/2024	Manager Arts and Economic Development
CCTV (Assessment and Installation) Policy	1/11/2024	Manager Healthy Connected Communities
Community Infrastructure Planning Policy	1/11/2024	Manager Healthy Connected Communities
Community Achievement Awards Policy	26/11/2024	Manager Healthy Connected Communities
Advocacy Policy	30/11/2024	Manager Engagement & Advocacy
Unsafely or Fire/Storm Damaged Buildings Policy	1/12/2024	Manager Community Safety
Councillors as Candidates in a State or Federal Election Policy	19/12/2024	Head of Governance
Credit Card Policy	31/12/2024	Manager Finance
Debt Collection Policy	31/12/2024	Manager Finance
Financial Assistance (Rates & Charges) Policy	31/12/2024	Manager Finance
Procurement Policy	31/12/2024	Manager Procurement

1.2 Sources/benchmarking

Not directly applicable to this report.

The review process for each policy will include appropriate benchmarking and review of comparable policies, as well as a consideration of applicable legislative requirements.

1.3 Consultation

The Policy update schedule has been created in consultation with the Executive Leadership Team and Managers.

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1.4 Communication and Implementation

The Policy update schedule has been created in consultation with the Executive Leadership Team and Managers.

The Governance team will monitor the Policy Review Project and prompt the Executive Leadership Team and Managers as required. It will also update the Policy Register, Intranet and Internet as policies are reviewed and adopted by Council.

1.5 Compliance

The review process for Council policies includes a check for compliance with external legislation including the *Local Government Act 2020* and the *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*.

Additionally, all policies will be considered to assess whether a Gender Impact Assessment is required for compliance with the *Gender Equality Act 2020* and will be checked for compliance with Council's Instruments of Delegation.

LIST OF APPENDICES

Nil.

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7. GENERAL BUSINESS

Nil.

8. NEXT MEETING

Thursday 4 April, 9.00am.

9. CLOSE OF BUSINESS

The meeting closed at 3.15pm.

Confirmed

Dated this

.....CHAIRPERSON

**13. REPORTS FROM DELEGATES APPOINTED TO OTHER BODIES
AND COUNCILLOR REPRESENTATIONS AND
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Reports received from Cr Abboushi, Cr Carli, Cr Turner, Cr Vandenberg, Cr Kesic, Cr Ramsey, Cr Farrugia, Cr Shannon and Mayor Majdlik.

14. NOTICES OF MOTION

14.1 NOTICE OF MOTION 913 (CR ABBOUSHI) - ADOPT-A-PARK PROGRAM

Councillor: Steven Abboushi

NOTICE:

That Council implements an Adopt-A-Park program to:

1. Complement community efforts to maintain our parks and gardens and improve the environmental resilience of our neighbourhood public spaces through community stewardship.
2. Increase community use of Melton City Council's open spaces and places and instil further pride in neighbourhood public spaces.
3. Create and promote opportunities for existing and "in-progress" dynamic volunteering groups to support and care for parks and open places in the city.
4. Recognise and enhance the efforts of existing volunteer groups already actively caring for City of Melton parks and open places.

Motion

Crs Abboushi/Carli.

That prior to the implementation, Council be briefed on an Adopt-A-Park program to:

1. Complement community efforts to maintain our parks and gardens and improve the environmental resilience of our neighbourhood public spaces through community stewardship.
2. Increase community use of Melton City Council's open spaces and places and instil further pride in neighbourhood public spaces.
3. Create and promote opportunities for existing and "in-progress" dynamic volunteering groups to support and care for parks and open places in the city.
4. Recognise and enhance the efforts of existing volunteer groups already actively caring for City of Melton parks and open places.
5. Consider any legal implications for the consideration of implementing this action.

CARRIED

14.2 NOTICE OF MOTION 914 (CR ABBOUSHI) - SUPPORT FOR CARERS PROGRAM**Councillor: Steven Abboushi****NOTICE:**

That Council:

1. Further advocate for increased Support for Carers Program funding with the State Government.
2. Continue to support and facilitate access for City of Melton residents to organisations providing the Support for Carers Program in the City of Melton.
3. Apply for the Support for Carers program at the next available opportunity that funding is available.

Motion

Crs Abboushi/Ramsey.

That Council:

1. Further advocate for increased Support for Carers Program funding with the State Government.
2. Continue to support and facilitate access for City of Melton residents to organisations providing the Support for Carers Program in the City of Melton.
3. Apply for the Support for Carers Program at the next available opportunity that funding is available.
4. Receive an update from officers on the previous Council Resolution for a Carers Hub.

CARRIED

Cr Abboushi called for a division thereby setting aside the vote.

For:

Crs Abboushi, Carli, Farrugia, Kesic, Majdlik, Ramsey, Shannon, Turner and Vandenberg

Against:

Nil

The Mayor declared the Motion **CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

15. COUNCILLOR'S QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE**15.1 COUNCILLORS' QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE**

Cr Ramsey

Can Council get an update regarding our advocacy campaign discussed in the December 18, 2023 meeting concerning the level crossing removal project and contacting the Minister for Transport Infrastructure, The Hon. Danny Pearson, and local Members of Parliament, as Ferris Road is about to commence?

15.2 COUNCILLORS' QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Cr Ramsey

With the overpass especially at Ferris Road being one way either side, is there any funding or advocacy that we can do as a Council now?

15.3 COUNCILLORS' QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Cr Vandenberg

Can Council please provide an update on the opening of Conservatory Drive, Deanside?

15.4 COUNCILLORS' QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Cr Vandenberg

Can Council please confirm the amount within the Council budget line allocated for developer contributions and the amount utilised within the 2023-2024 financial period?

15.5 COUNCILLORS' QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Cr Turner

Can officers advise what power, if any, a Council has to regulate the price of fuel in our City, is there any action we can take as a Council to try to regulate prices, and what advocacy action has Council taken in the past, also is there any further action we can take?

15.6 COUNCILLORS' QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Cr Kesic

Regarding Melton City Council's budget surplus from the previous year, can I get clarification whether Melton City Council has a surplus of \$360 million in liquidity or if these funds are tied up in immovable property, footpaths, naturestrips etc?

15.7 COUNCILLORS' QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Cr Farrugia

Could you please provide an update on the minaret that's damaged at the corner of Taylors Road and Caroline Springs Boulevard, is there an ETA on when it will be completed?

15.8 COUNCILLORS' QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Cr Abboushi

Leading on from Cr Kesic's question regarding developer contributions and our commitments, are the developer contributions that Council has on hand committed funds, and do they still not meet the demand for the programs that we need now and in the near future?

16. URGENT BUSINESS**Motion**

Crs Abboushi/Ramsey.

That Council admit the Urgent Business Item in relation to a Proposed Purchase of Land to be considered as part of Confidential Business.

CARRIED

Motion

Crs Majdlik/Abboushi.

That Council admit the Urgent Business Item in relation to the Acknowledgement of the Passing of Allan Godfrey.

CARRIED

Motion

Crs Majdlik/Kesic.

That Council:

1. Acknowledges the passing of Allan Godfrey and his service as a World War II Veteran as well as his service to the community and send a letter under seal to his family.
2. Fly the flag at the Civic Centre at half-mast on the day of Allan's funeral.
3. Receive a report from Council officers, considering how Council could commemorate Allan Godfrey's life, service and legacy to community & Country (in consultation with his family).

CARRIED

17. CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS

Recommended Procedural Motion

That pursuant to section 66(1) and (2)(a) of the *Local Government Act 2020* the meeting be closed to the public to consider the following reports that are considered to contain **confidential information** on the grounds provided in section 3(1) of the *Local Government Act 2020* as indicated:

17.1 Nomination of Community Members for Community Grants Assessment Panel for 2024

(f) as it relates to personal information, being information which if released would result in the unreasonable disclosure of information about any person or their personal affairs.

17.2 Chief Executive Officer Employment and Remuneration Committee Meeting Minutes - 28 February 2024

(f) as it relates to personal information, being information which if released would result in the unreasonable disclosure of information about any person or their personal affairs.

Motion

Crs Abboushi/Carli.

That pursuant to section 66(1) and (2)(a) of the *Local Government Act 2020* the meeting be closed to the public to consider the following reports that are considered to contain **confidential information** on the grounds provided in section 3(1) of the *Local Government Act 2020* as indicated:

17.1 Nomination of Community Members for Community Grants Assessment Panel for 2024

(f) as it relates to personal information, being information which if released would result in the unreasonable disclosure of information about any person or their personal affairs.

17.2 Chief Executive Officer Employment and Remuneration Committee Meeting Minutes - 28 February 2024

(f) as it relates to personal information, being information which if released would result in the unreasonable disclosure of information about any person or their personal affairs.

17.3 Proposed Purchase of Land

(a) as it relates to Council business information, being information that would prejudice the Council's position in commercial negotiations if prematurely released.

CARRIED

18. CLOSE OF BUSINESS

The meeting closed at 9:00pm.

Confirmed

Dated this

.....CHAIRPERSON