



MELTON CITY COUNCIL

**Notice is hereby given that the
Meeting of the Melton City Council
will be held in the Council Chambers,
Melton Civic Centre, 232 High Street Melton
on 25 May 2026 at 6:00 PM.**

Public Copy

**Roslyn Wai
CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

Visitors to the Gallery please note:

Proceedings at Council meetings are controlled by the Chairperson. The Chairperson is empowered to enforce the provision of Council's Governance Rules, which includes the following aspects:

- Members of the public do not have a right to address Council and may only do so with the consent of the Chair or by prior arrangement.
- 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.
- A member of the public present at a Council meeting must not disrupt the meeting.
- 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.
- 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, he or she may adjourn the meeting to a later time on the same day or to some later day as he or she thinks proper.
- The Chair 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 the Governance Rules and whom the Chair has ordered to be removed from the gallery under Rule 80.
- Members of the public in the gallery must not operate **recording equipment** at a Council or Committee Meeting without the prior written consent of Council.
- **Question time** is available at every Scheduled Meeting to enable members of the public to address questions to Council. All questions must be received by the Chief Executive Officer or other person nominated for this purpose no later than 10am on the day of the Scheduled Meeting by submitting questions into the receptacle designated for public questions at the Customer Service Desk, or via electronic medium as per Council website directions.

A person must not submit more than two (2) individual questions at a meeting, inclusive of all parts and variants as interpreted by the Chairperson or other person authorised for this purpose by the Chairperson.

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1. **OPENING PRAYER AND RECONCILIATION STATEMENT**

The Chairperson will read the opening prayer and reconciliation statement.

Prayer

‘Almighty God we humbly beseech Thee to vouchsafe Thy blessing upon this Council, direct and prosper its deliberations to the advancement of Thy glory and the welfare of the people whom we serve – Amen.’

Reconciliation Statement

Melton City Council acknowledges that the land it now occupies has a history that began with the Indigenous occupants, the Kulin Nation. Council pays its respects to the Kulin Nation people and their Elders and descendants past and present.

2. APOLOGIES AND LEAVE OF ABSENCE

The Chairperson will call for any apologies received from any Councillors who are unable to attend this meeting.

3. CHANGES TO THE ORDER OF BUSINESS

4. DEPUTATIONS

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

Pursuant to Part 6, Division 2 of the *Local Government Act 2020* and Council's Governance Rules, Councillors must declare any General Conflict of Interest or Material Conflict of Interest they have in any of the matters being considered at this meeting.

6. ADOPTION AND CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Minutes of the Meeting of Council held on 27 April 2026 be confirmed as a true and correct record.

7. SUMMARY OF INFORMAL MEETING OF COUNCILLORS

7.1 SUMMARY OF INFORMAL MEETINGS OF COUNCILLORS

- Monday 13 April 2026 Summary of Informal Meeting of Councillors
- Monday 20 April 2026 Summary of Informal Meeting of Councillors
- Monday 27 April 2026 Summary of Informal Meeting of Councillors
- Monday 4 May 2026 Summary of Informal Meeting of Councillors

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Summaries of Informal Meetings of Councillors dated 13 April 2026, 20 April 2026, 27 April 2026, and 4 May 2026 provided as **Appendices 1 to 4** respectively to this report, be received and noted.

LIST OF APPENDICES

1. Summary of Informal Meeting of Councillors - 13 April 2026
2. Summary of Informal Meeting of Councillors - 20 April 2026
3. Summary of Informal Meeting of Councillors - 27 April 2026
4. Summary of Informal Meeting of Councillors - 4 May 2026



INFORMAL MEETING OF COUNCILLORS

MEETING DETAILS:

Meeting Name:	Briefing of Councillors		
Meeting Date:	Monday 13 April 2026	Time Opened:	5.02 pm
		Time Closed:	7.56 pm
Councillors present:	Cr L Carli (Mayor) Cr Dr P Zada (Deputy Mayor) Cr K Majdlik (online) Cr B Morris Cr S Ramsey (departed at 6.50pm) Cr J Shannon (online) Cr J Verdon		
Officers present:	R Wai Chief Executive Officer L Rowland Chief Financial Officer S Romaszko Director City Futures T Scoble Director City Life N Whiteside Director City Delivery E Keogh Head of Governance R Hodgson Manager Governance S Phelagti Manager Capital Delivery (Item 1) K Walton Manager Roads & Traffic (Item 1 to 3) M Hutchinson Design & Investigations Coordinator (Item 1 to 3) J Farrell Manager Customer Experience (Item 4) T Toaldo Chief People Officer (Item 5)		
Guests	Nil		
Apologies	Cr S Abboushi Cr B Turner Cr A Vandenberg (leave of absence)		
Matters discussed:	1. Taylors Road Corridor Update 2. Taylors and Barnards Road Intersection 3. Caroline Springs Boulevard and The Crossing Intersection Project – April 2026 Update 4. Council and Community Submissions Follow Up 5. Draft Reports 6. Corporate Branding Update 7. 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:	Renee Hodgson, Manager Governance	Date:	Monday 13 April 2026
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INFORMAL MEETING OF COUNCILLORS

MEETING DETAILS:

Meeting Name:	Briefing of Councillors (online)		
Meeting Date:	Monday 20 April 2026	Time Opened:	4.57 pm
		Time Closed:	8.22 pm
Councillors present:	Cr L Carli (Mayor) Cr Dr P Zada (Deputy Mayor) Cr S Abboushi Cr K Majdlik Cr B Morris Cr S Ramsey Cr J Shannon Cr B Turner		
Officers present:	R Wai Chief Executive Officer L Rowland Chief Financial Officer S Romaszko Director City Futures T Scoble Director City Life N Whiteside Director City Delivery S McManus Acting Head of Governance S Prestney Manager Healthy Connected Communities (Item 1 & 2) N Marino Manager Finance (Item 3) K Walton Manager Roads & Traffic (Item 4) M Hutchinson Design & Investigations Coordinator (Item 4)		
Guests	Nil		
Apologies	Cr A Vandenberg Cr J Verdon		
Matters discussed:	1. Gambling Harm Prevention and Reduction Policy Discussion 2. Response to Notice of Motion 703 (Cr Abboushi) – Lake Caroline CCTV Trial Final Evaluation Report 3. Melton City Council Draft Budget 4. Taylors Road Corridor Projects Update 5. Advocacy Update – Victorian Election Campaign 6. General Updates from Officers		

CONFLICT OF INTEREST DISCLOSURES:

Were there any conflict of interest disclosures by Councillors		No
Matter No.	Councillor making disclosure	Councillor left meeting
		No

REPORT PRODUCED BY:

Officer name:	Sean McManus, Acting Head of Governance	Date:	Monday 20 April 2026
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INFORMAL MEETING OF COUNCILLORS

MEETING DETAILS:

Meeting Name:	Briefing of Councillors		
Meeting Date:	Monday 27 April 2026	Time Opened:	5.12 pm
		Time Closed:	5.45 pm
Councillors present:	Cr Dr P Zada (Deputy Mayor) Cr S Abboushi Cr K Majdlik Cr B Morris Cr S Ramsey Cr J Shannon Cr B Turner Cr A Vandenberg (arrived 5.37pm) Cr J Verdon (arrived 5.18pm)		
Officers present:	R Wai Chief Executive Officer L Rowland Chief Financial Officer S Romaszko Director City Futures T Scoble Director City Life N Whiteside Director City Delivery E Keogh Head of Governance R Hodgson Manager Governance		
Guests	Nil		
Apologies	Cr L Carli (Mayor)		
Matters discussed:	1. Council Agenda		

CONFLICT OF INTEREST DISCLOSURES:

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

Officer name:	Renee Hodgson, Manager Governance	Date:	Monday 27 April 2026
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INFORMAL MEETING OF COUNCILLORS

MEETING DETAILS:

Meeting Name:	Briefing of Councillors		
Meeting Date:	Monday 4 May 2026	Time Opened:	5.07 pm
		Time Closed:	8.18 pm
Councillors present:	Cr L Carli (Mayor) Cr Dr P Zada (Deputy Mayor) Cr S Abboushi (joined online at 5.10pm) Cr K Majdlik Cr B Morris Cr S Ramsey (online) Cr J Shannon Cr B Turner Cr J Verdon		
Officers present:	R Wai Chief Executive Officer S Romaszko Director City Futures T Scoble Director City Life N Whiteside Director City Delivery L Rowland Chief Financial Officer E Keogh Head of Governance R Hodgson Manager Governance J Farrell Manager Customer Experience (Item 1) S Prestney Manager Healthy Connected Communities (Item 2) K Walton Manager Roads & Traffic (Item 3)		
Guests	Nil		
Apologies	Cr A Vandenberg		
Matters discussed:	1. Council Plan Action Plan (CAP) – Councillors Review of proposed actions 2. Djerriwarrh Festival 2025 Review 3. Response to NOM 994 – Deanside Village Estate Traffic Analysis 4. FY2526 Q3 Grant Funding Report 5. Review of Council Expenses Policy and Proposed Councillor Professional Development Policy 6. Mayor and Councillor Support Function Review 7. General Updates from officers		

CONFLICT OF INTEREST DISCLOSURES:

Were there any conflict of interest disclosures by Councillors? No

REPORT PRODUCED BY:

Officer name:	Renee Hodgson, Manager Governance	Date:	Monday 4 May 2026
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8. CORRESPONDENCE INWARD

8.1 PARLIAMENTARIAN AND DEPARTMENTAL LETTERS RECEIVED BY THE MAYOR IN RESPONSE TO NOTICES OF MOTIONS

- The Hon. Katy Gallagher, Minister for Government Services – Response to Notice of Motion 997

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council receive and note the following Parliamentary and Departmental letter received by the Mayor in response to Notices of Motions, provided as **Appendix 1** to this report:

1. The Hon. Katy Gallagher, Minister for Government Services – Response to Notice of Motion 997

LIST OF APPENDICES

1. The Hon. Katy Gallagher, Minister for Government Services dated 20 April 2026

**Senator the Hon Katy Gallagher**

Minister for Finance
Minister for Women
Minister for the Public Service
Minister for Government Services
Senator for the Australian Capital Territory

MC26-001480

Mayor Lara Carli
Sugar Gum Ward Councillor
PO Box 21
MELTON VIC 3023

Email: Lara.Carli@melton.vic.gov.au

Dear Councillor Carli

Thank you for your correspondence of 27 March 2026 about service centre referrals.

I can assure you that customers are not restricted to using a single service centre and may attend any service centre to receive the same level of service and support, regardless of their recorded office location.

Services Australia uses an office locator as an office-to-postcode mapping tool to identify service centres within reasonable proximity to the customer. For example, for customers living in the Mt Atkinson estate area, the office locator may identify multiple service centres including:

- Werribee Service Centre – approximately 10 km away
- Sunshine Service Centre – approximately 11 km away.

The customer has the choice as to which service centre they attend.

Customers may request to update their recorded office location to reflect their preferred service centre. This ensures records align with individual circumstances and access needs. Customers can update their recorded office location by calling their regular payment line or by attending a service centre.

The National Disability Insurance Scheme is administered by the Hon Mark Butler MP, Minister for Health and Ageing, and Minister for Disability and the National Disability Insurance Agency. Your correspondence and a copy of this response have been sent to Minister Butler for his consideration.

I trust this information is of assistance to you.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Katy Gallagher'.

Katy Gallagher

20.4.26

cc: The Hon Mark Butler MP, Minister for Health and Ageing, and
Minister for Disability and the National Disability Insurance Scheme

Parliament House CANBERRA ACT 2600

9. PETITIONS AND JOINT LETTERS

9.1 PETITION - IMPACT OF ODOUR AND NOISE EMITTING FROM BANCHORY GROVE, HILLSIDE

SUMMARY

A petition has been received containing 33 signatories in relation to residents in the immediate vicinity experiencing ongoing issues with odour and noise emitting from Banchory Grove, Hillside.

The petition states:

“The purpose of these signatures is to formally raise serious concerns about ongoing odour and noise impacts affecting residents in the immediate vicinity.

Residents are being exposed to persistent cooking odours, grease laden-air, and continuous noise from commercial tenants. These impacts occur daily, for extended hours, and are being directed into our homes and outdoor living areas. As a result, we are unable to open windows, hang washing, use our yards, or enjoy basic peace and quiet.

These conditions are affecting our health and wellbeing, causing symptoms such as nausea, headaches, disrupted sleep, and ongoing stress. There is no reasonable reprieve, and our quality of life has been significantly diminished.

In addition, these issues are negatively impacting property values and have made some homes difficult to sell.

These impacts arise from the approval and operation of the adjoining development. Council has a responsibility to ensure that residential amenity is protected and that developments do not unreasonably affect neighbouring homes.”

The petition meets the requirements of Council's Governance Rule 64.

Section 64.8 of Council's Governance Rules requires that: 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.

This petition will be referred to the CEO, who will advise the lead petitioner of the outcome.

9.2 PETITION - PLANNING TRANSPARENCY & INFRASTRUCTURE IMPACT ASSESSMENT FOR MAJOR INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

SUMMARY

A petition has been received containing 55 signatories in relation to planning transparency and infrastructure impact assessment for major industrial development.

The petition states:

"We request that Melton City Council strengthen its approach to planning assessment & community transparency regarding major industrial and infrastructure developments within the municipality.

We are concerned that rapid industrial growth in parts of the municipality may place increasing pressure on local infrastructure systems, including water supply, energy demand, transport networks, and community services. We also note community interest in improved transparency regarding the cumulative impacts of such developments.

We are not opposed to development within the municipality. However, we seek assurance that growth is supported by adequate planning, infrastructure coordination, and accessible public information.

Request to Council

We therefore request that Melton City Council:

- 1. Consider commissioning or advocacy for cumulative impact assessment framework for major industrial developments within the municipality*
- 2. Advocate for improved public access to information regarding infrastructure demand (including water and energy) associated with major developments*
- 3. Review & strengthen community consultation processes for high-impact developments*
- 4. Maintain or establish a public register/map of major approved a proposed industrial development within the municipality*
- 5. Continue to ensure planning decisions balanced economic development with infrastructure capacity and community wellbeing"*

The petition meets the requirements of Council's Governance Rule 64.

Section 64.8 of Council's Governance Rules requires that: 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.

This petition will be referred to the CEO, who will advise the lead petitioner of the outcome.

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

Nil.

11. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

12. PRESENTATION OF STAFF REPORTS

12.1 COUNCIL AND WELLBEING PLAN 2025-2029 - ANNUAL ACTION PLAN 2025/26, THIRD QUARTER PROGRESS REPORT

Author: Mitchell Nash - Corporate Planning and Performance
Presenter: Emily Keogh - Head of Governance

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To provide the third quarter update on the progressive achievement of the Council and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 - Annual Action Plan 2025/26, Third Quarter Progress Report.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council receive and note the Council and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 - Annual Action Plan 2025/26, Third Quarter Progress Report (1 July 2025 – 31 March 2026) as presented at **Appendix 1**.

REPORT

1. Executive Summary

The Melton City Council and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 is prepared in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020*. The Plan is reviewed on an annual basis to adapt to the evolving needs of our growing community.

Each year, Council produces an Annual Action Plan identifying the Council Annual Action Plan (CAAP) actions that Council will work towards achieving, which respond to the strategic outcomes and strategies identified in the Council and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 and Annual Budget.

The progressive achievement of the Melton City Council: Annual Action Plan is reported at the conclusion of each quarter of the fiscal year, with a final summary provided at the conclusion of each fiscal year and through the production of Council's Annual Report.

Appendix 1 provides detail on activity for the third quarter (1 July - 31 March 2026), in the progressive achievement of the Melton City Council: Annual Action Plan 2025/26.

2. Background/Issues

The Council and Wellbeing Plan is Council's primary vision and strategic planning document that establishes the direction Council has committed to for its 4-year term of office. The Council and Wellbeing Plan contains objectives, strategies, and performance indicators.

Each year Council provides a range of services, activities, and initiatives for the community. The key strategic activities and new initiatives are included in the development of an Annual Action Plan.

The Melton City Council: Annual Action Plan 2025/26 provides 42 CAAP actions to support the delivery of the Council and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 Council has committed to deliver.

Council provides the community with quarterly progress reports that support Council's commitment in providing transparency, through public access to relevant information, decision making and strategic documents.

Appendix 1 provides a detailed summary on the progress of each CAAP action in 2025/26, inclusive of the period from 1 July - 31 March 2026. The areas with a stronger link to health and wellbeing are displayed with a heart icon ♥, while those with a ● indicate a Disability Action Plan action.

The following table provides a summary of progress against the CAAP actions.

Status	Description	Number of actions
Completed	The Action has been completed	12
On track	At least 90% of the action target has been achieved	38
Off Track	Between 75% and 90% of the action target has been achieved	4
Monitor	Less than 75% of the action target has been achieved	0
Not Due to Start	The action is scheduled to start later this year	0
Total Actions		42

12 CAAP actions have been completed to the end of the third quarter. CAAP highlights included:

- Action 1.1.2.1 - Provided 10 community event grants (up to \$5,000 each) to local community cultural groups, to facilitate positive cultural inclusion.
- Action 1.2.2.1 - Delivered and promote an annual 16 Days of Activism campaign across the City
- Action 1.2.2.2 - Facilitate Council's Early Years Educators to deliver at least two professional development sessions promoting gender equity initiatives for 2025/26.
- Action 1.3.1.1 - Established the Social Investment Partnerships Stream of the Community grants program to support the partnering of Community organisations to deliver solutions to current and emerging social needs including food access services in the City.
- Action 1.3.3.1 - Deliver health and fitness opportunities across Council parks and community centres, engaging at least 500 participants.
- Action 1.4.1.1 - Develop and implement a stakeholder engagement plan for a university in Cobblebank.
- Action 1.4.2.1 - Facilitate access for community to the Melton Learning Directory to provide up to 100 free and low-cost learning opportunities for all ages abilities and interests.
- Action 1.5.1.1 - Develop a targeted investment campaign to attract large businesses and government agencies into the City
- Action 1.5.3.1 - Facilitate at least 15 placements for secondary school and tertiary based students to undertake work placements at the Melton City Libraries.
- Action 2.2.2.1 - Development and implementation of a Communications Plan for the community roll-out of the mandated four-bin kerbside collection service
- Action 3.3.1.1 - Utilised an evidence-based approach, reviewed, updated and prioritised Council's advocacy initiatives, ensuring alignment with the Council and Wellbeing Plan, and Council and community feedback.
- Action 3.4.2.1 - Complete the delivery of Phase One, of Council's approved Technology Change Program.

Upon Council receipt of this update, the Progress Report will be published on Council's website.

3. Council and Wellbeing Plan Reference and Policy Reference

The Melton City Council 2025-2029 Council and Wellbeing Plan references:

3. A progressive and trusted Council

3.2 An organisation that prioritises good governance, integrity and accountability and is community minded in its decision-making.

4. Financial Considerations

Initiatives and activities delivered from the Melton City Council: Annual Action Plan 2025/26 are funded within the Council approved 2025/26 Budget.

5. Consultation/Public Submissions

The Council and Wellbeing 2025-2029 planning process was undertaken in response to the deliberative engagement requirements of the Local Government Act 2020. The process involved extensive consultation with stakeholders including the community, Council staff, government agencies, community organisations and private industry.

Council also initiated a Community Panel to support the development of the Plan. This process resulted in the publication of the Melton City Council and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029. The Melton City Council: Annual Action Plan 2025/26 was prepared with internal consultation of Council staff and management.

6. Risk Analysis

Nil.

7. Options

Nil.

LIST OF APPENDICES

1. Council and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029, Annual Action Plan 2025-26 Third Quarter Progress Report

Council Annual Action Plan Progress Report - Quarter 3 2025/26



GREEN

At least 90% of action target achieved



AMBER

Between 75% and 90% of action target achieved



RED

Less than 75% of action target achieved

* Dates have been revised from the Original dates

1 A healthy and inclusive community

1.1 A connected community where people have equitable access to local activities, events, programs and services

1.1.1 Strengthen access, inclusion and safety for all ages, cultures, abilities, and genders for all Council services and events.

Action Title: 1.1.1.1 All Council delivered public events, programs and services to be reviewed against Council's Disability Audit Tool Checklist, ensuring 100% compliance



Responsible Department	Status	Start Date	End Date	% Complete	Target	On Target %
Community Care & Active Living	In Progress	01-Jul-2025	30-Jun-2026	75%	75.00%	 GREEN

Action Progress Comments: The Disability Audit Tool Checklist was reviewed and redesigned to ensure it is fit for purpose for use across a broad range of programs and services as well as public events being provided Council in 2025/26.

Consultation internally has commenced to finalise the tool. Council's Arts and Events Team are continuing to review all major events to ensure compliance.

The 2025 Djerriwarrh Festival and the 2025 Carols by Candlelight public events were reviewed against the Disability Audit Tool Checklist for compliance and requirements. The tool is now being referred to across other Council programs and services.

1.1.2 Support local community and cultural groups to deliver events that celebrate cultural diversity and strengthen social connection.

Action Title: 1.1.2.1 Provide 10 community event grants (up to \$5,000 each) to local community cultural groups, to facilitate positive cultural inclusion



Responsible Department	Status	Start Date	End Date	% Complete	Target	On Target %
Healthy Connected Communities	Completed	01-Jul-2025	30-Jun-2026	100%	75.00%	 GREEN

Action Progress Comments: For the 2025/26 year, 10 community event grants were provided to local community groups to support event delivery. A total of \$43,175 was awarded.

1.2 A safe and inclusive community that celebrates and promotes its diversity, and where people are proud to live.**1.2.1 Implement improvements to enhance safety in our streets and public spaces.**Action Title: 1.2.1.1 Deliver Council's 2025/26 Street Lighting and Open Space Path Lighting Improvement Programs to enhance safety 

Responsible Department	Status	Start Date	End Date	% Complete	Target	On Target %
Capital Delivery	In Progress	01-Jul-2025	30-Jun-2026	75%	75.00%	 GREEN

Action Progress Comments: The delivery of 2025/26 Street Lighting and Open Space Path Lighting Improvement Programs has progressed with procurement for the head contractor well advanced. The capital delivery project is on track for delivery by April 2026.

Action Title: 1.2.1.2 Deliver the Rough Sleepers Partnership Initiative in partnership with other agencies with all notifications recorded and referred to the partnership within three business days 

Responsible Department	Status	Start Date	End Date	% Complete	Target	On Target %
Community Care & Active Living	In Progress	01-Jul-2025	30-Jun-2026	75%	75.00%	 GREEN

Action Progress Comments: Delivered the Rough Sleepers Partnership Initiative in partnership with other agencies with all notifications recorded and referred to the partnership within three business days to provide assertive outreach response, with a total of 68 notifications received to end of March 2026.

1.2.2 Promote gender equality and the prevention of gender-based violence in all its forms impacting people of all ages.Action Title: 1.2.2.1 Deliver and promote an annual 16 Days of Activism campaign across the City 

Responsible Department	Status	Start Date	End Date	% Complete	Target	On Target %
Healthy Connected Communities	Completed	01-Jul-2025	30-Jun-2026	100%	75.00%	 GREEN

Action Progress Comments: Council hosted a Walk for Inclusion and Respect on 3 December. Over 100 community members, Councillors, Council staff, emergency services, disability advocates, and local organisations participated in support of the prevention of violence against women. The Libraries Team hosted a panel discussion at Melton Library with Tarang Chawla, which focused on accountability and respectful behaviour.

Action Title: 1.2.2.2 Facilitate Council's Early Years Educators to deliver at least two professional development sessions promoting gender equity initiatives for 2025/26 

Responsible Department	Status	Start Date	End Date	% Complete	Target	On Target %
Child, Family & Youth	Completed	01-Jul-2025	30-Jun-2026	100%	75.00%	 GREEN

Action Progress Comments: Two professional development sessions promoting gender equity have been delivered to local early childhood professionals, with topics including 'Responding to Resistance to Gender Equity' and 'Body Safety - Deepening the Conversation'. Council continues to build sector awareness and capacity to support intersectional gender equity practice in local child, family and youth services, and support opportunities for fathers to increase engagement and participation in parenting and social programs.

1.2.3 Facilitate the provision of diverse and affordable housing.

Action Title: 1.2.3.1 Develop a Council policy position for affordable housing in the City of Melton

Responsible Department	Status	Start Date	End Date	% Complete	Target	On Target %
City Strategy	In Progress	01-Jul-2025	30-Jun-2026	85%	75.00%	 GREEN
Action Progress Comments: The Victorian Government is undertaking multiple housing-related planning reforms. Council officers are working with relevant authorities, including the Department of Transport, to strengthen affordable housing provision mechanisms within Precinct Structure Plans. In addition to this, officers are preparing a policy position for consideration.						

1.3 A City that invests in and promotes positive public health and wellbeing outcomes.**1.3.1 Support healthier eating and enhance food security in our City.**

Action Title: 1.3.1.1 Establish the Social Investment Partnerships Stream of the Community grants program to support the partnering of Community organisations to deliver solutions to current and emerging social needs including food access services in the City 

Responsible Department	Status	Start Date	End Date	% Complete	Target	On Target %
Healthy Connected Communities	Completed	01-Jul-2025	30-Jun-2026	100%	100.00%	 GREEN

Action Progress Comments: The Social Investment Partnerships program launched in October 2025. It was established to support community organisations to achieve Council's objective to invest in positive public health and wellbeing outcomes. Organisations can apply for up to \$25,000. Officers developed guidelines, an assessment process and promoted the program online. Three grants were awarded to City of Melton organisations to support food relief and social inclusion activities. A total of \$62,320 was awarded for the 2025/26 financial year.

1.3.2 Grow awareness and understanding of mental health and wellbeing to address stigma and barriers.

Action Title: 1.3.2.1 Run six community mental health workshops in partnership with local health providers, targeting 300 participants 

Responsible Department	Status	Start Date	End Date	% Complete	Target	On Target %
Healthy Connected Communities	In Progress	01-Jul-2025	30-Jun-2026	50%	50.00%	 GREEN

Action Progress Comments: Co-designed mental health workshops have been developed in partnership with Headspace Melton.

In the third quarter, one workshop has been delivered to date to 26 participants. Headspace recommend no more than this amount per workshop. The remaining five workshops will be delivered by 30 June 2026.

1.3.3 Increase active living and physical activity for all.

Action Title: 1.3.3.1 Deliver health and fitness opportunities across Council parks and community centres, engaging at least 500 participants  

Responsible Department	Status	Start Date	End Date	% Complete	Target	On Target %
Recreation & Community Activation	Completed	01-Jul-2025	30-Jun-2026	100%	75.00%	 GREEN

Action Progress Comments: The following Health and Fitness Opportunities were provided for community participation up until December 2025:

Health and wellbeing programs delivered across Community Centres, Neighbourhood Houses and Men's Sheds (1,567 participants), 2x 10-week Daughters of The West program with a weekly exercise component (84 participants), 1x 10-week Syriac Iraqi Daughters of The West program with a weekly exercise component (84 participants), 2x Family event at Atherstone Traffic School, supporting families to participate in safe active travel (270 attendees), Strength Training program hosted by Leisure Centres (15-20 participants each week), established Aintree Junior Parkrun on Saturday mornings (35 Participants each week), established OZ Tag group Come and Try Days over July and August (80 Participants), and a Women in Sport Breakfast hosted in December (90 attendees).

1.4 A community with access to local training, education and learning opportunities for all ages and abilities.**1.4.1 Advocate for the provision of all levels of education and training locally, including a university within the City.**

Action Title: 1.4.1.1 Develop and implement a stakeholder engagement plan for a university in Cobblebank

Responsible Department	Status	Start Date	End Date	% Complete	Target	On Target %
Grant Attraction & Partnerships	Completed	01-Jul-2025	30-Jun-2026	100%	75.00%	 GREEN

Action Progress Comments: Council's refreshed advocacy priorities were announced in January 2026 with a university for Cobblebank included in the Advocacy Priorities Booklet. The booklet has been sent to all local members, relevant State and Federal Ministers and key stakeholders. Key stakeholders have been engaged to discuss the need for a university in Cobblebank with the Mayor meeting with Federal Member for Gorton Alice Jordan-Baird, Federal Member for Hawke Sam Rae, Federal Minister for Skills and Training Andrew Giles and Victorian Minister for Skills and TAFE Gayle Tierney. All these stakeholders have been provided with a prospectus that outlines the student demand and advantages of a university in Cobblebank. The insights from these meetings will inform the development of a strategic advocacy action plan for the establishment of a university campus, leveraging co location opportunities in the Cobblebank Precinct.

1.4.2 Create learning opportunities for all stages of life and abilities including early engagement with and support for children,

Action Title: 1.4.2.1 Facilitate access for community to the Melton Learning Directory to provide up to 100 free and low-cost learning opportunities for all ages abilities and interests

Responsible Department	Status	Start Date	End Date	% Complete	Target	On Target %
Healthy Connected Communities	Completed	01-Jul-2025	30-Jun-2026	100%	75.00%	 GREEN

Action Progress Comments: For the 2025/26 financial year, community centres and Neighbourhood Houses have delivered 105 free and low-cost learning programs.

1.5 A strong, diverse and future focused local economy that provides our community with varied local job opportunities.**1.5.1 Advocate and encourage investment in the City to support new businesses and local jobs.**

Action Title: 1.5.1.1 Develop a targeted investment campaign to attract large businesses and government agencies into the City

Responsible Department	Status	Start Date	End Date	% Complete	Target	On Target %
Economic Development & Tourism	In Progress	01-Nov-2025	30-Jun-2026	90%	40.00%	 GREEN

Action Progress Comments: An Investment Marketing Campaign to support the attraction of large businesses and government agencies into the City is currently being developed.

1.5.2 Advocate for new Precinct Structure Plans which are employment focussed to facilitate the creation of local jobs

Action Title: 1.5.2.1 Advocate to the Victorian State Government for the development of employment and industrial Precinct Structure Plans

Responsible Department	Status	Start Date	End Date	% Complete	Target	On Target %
City Strategy	In Progress	01-Nov-2025	30-Jun-2026	50%	50.00%	 GREEN

Action Progress Comments: Council officers continue to engage with the Victorian Government to influence employment and industrial Precinct Structure Plan work program, in particular with New Communities, that is in line with Council's Melton Employment and Industrial Land Strategy and the Victorian Governments 10-year plan for industrial land. In addition, work is underway to finalise a Staging and Sequencing Plan to assist with advocacy to the Victorian Government of new precinct structure plans identified in the 10-year plan for Melbourne's greenfields.

1.5.3 Facilitate local partnerships which create and promote a variety of employment and other pathway opportunities.

Action Title: 1.5.3.1 Facilitate at least 15 placements for secondary school and tertiary based students to undertake work placements at the Melton City Libraries

Responsible Department	Status	Start Date	End Date	% Complete	Target	On Target %
Healthy Connected Communities	Completed	01-Jul-2025	30-Jun-2026	100%	100.00%	 GREEN

Action Progress Comments: Throughout the delivery of this initiative, Libraries have supported a total of 18 students to undertake work placements within Melton City Libraries. Five students undertook a secondary school work experience program, one tertiary student completed placement in pursuit of their degree, in addition to a number of students undertaking placements including the Duke of Edinburgh International Award. Students will continue their participation in the program for the remainder of the financial year.

Action Title: 1.5.3.2 In collaboration with partner organisations to support local students enrolled in tertiary education, deliver Year 1 of the Suburban University Study Hub at the Melton Library and Learning Hub

Responsible Department	Status	Start Date	End Date	% Complete	Target	On Target %
Healthy Connected Communities	In Progress	01-Jul-2025	30-Jun-2026	80%	75.00%	 GREEN

Action Progress Comments: The Suburban University Study Hub officially opened in September 2025 to support tertiary students to access campus-style study spaces, on-site administrative and academic support, and a range of student support services free of charge. Officers completed building works to fit out the space and install new IT infrastructure. Specialist staff have been employed by our local partner, Djerrirwarrh Community & Education Services, to activate the Hub. Since opening, 158 students have registered to use the Study Hub.
As at the end of the third quarter, Djerrirwarrh Community & Education Services reported that there are 150 active student memberships for the Suburban University Study Hub.

1.6 A City that respects and celebrates Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander cultures.**1.6.1 Provide and promote opportunities for the celebration and recognition of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander history and culture.**

Action Title: 1.6.1.1 Deliver cultural celebration events in partnership with our First Nations Community for Council's Dates of Significance

Responsible Department	Status	Start Date	End Date	% Complete	Target	On Target %
Healthy Connected Communities	In Progress	01-Jul-2025	30-Jun-2026	75%	75.00%	 GREEN

Action Progress Comments: Council partnered with Wurundjeri to deliver a Welcome to Country and Smoking ceremony as well as a First Nations workshop and didgeridoo performance at the recent Lakeside Alive event on 21 March 2026. Currently planning for Reconciliation Week events in May/June.

1.6.2 Provide leadership in reconciliation, build positive partnerships and community relationships, and support culturally appropriate activities, services and places.

Action Title: 1.6.2.1 Form a Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group and commence development of Council's 'Reflect' Reconciliation Action Plan, ready for future endorsement by Reconciliation Australia

Responsible Department	Status	Start Date	End Date	% Complete	Target	On Target %
People	In Progress	01-Jul-2025	30-Jun-2026	60%	75.00%	 AMBER

Action Progress Comments: Registered intent to develop Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) with Reconciliation Australia on 25 March 2026. Internal Working Group currently being finalised with the first meeting scheduled for 21 April 2026. Terms of Reference drafted for working group. Draft RAP in progress with the initial draft to be presented at the first working group meeting.

2 A thriving and well-designed City**2.1 A City that plans for and adapts to climate change.****2.1.3 Build collaborative partnerships to facilitate collective action to address climate change and its impacts on health.**

Action Title: 2.1.3.1 Engage with stakeholders such as Greater Western Water, Melbourne Water, and relevant Victorian State Government departments and agencies to support collective action on climate change and its health impacts

Responsible Department	Status	Start Date	End Date	% Complete	Target	On Target %
City Strategy	In Progress	01-Jul-2025	30-Jun-2026	75%	75.00%	 GREEN

Action Progress Comments: Stakeholders Greater Western Water (GWW), Melbourne Water (MW) and other agencies have been engaged with regularly, particularly in the Integrated Water management (IWM) areas. Further engagement planning is underway, including documenting key partners and confirming responsibilities.

2.2 A City that is clean, minimises waste and increases resource recovery through efficient, sustainable practices.**2.2.1 Increase community awareness and understanding of waste and resource recovery.**

Action Title: 2.2.1.1 Deliver a total of 20 waste education sessions across at least 10 schools, to reach a minimum of 500 students, and two major community events to reach at least 1,000 community members to support behaviour change in waste minimisation and recycling behaviour

Responsible Department	Status	Start Date	End Date	% Complete	Target	On Target %
Operations	In Progress	01-Jul-2025	30-Jun-2026	75%	75.00%	 GREEN

Action Progress Comments: Council has delivered waste and recycling education programs including 12 waste education sessions at four schools and one playgroup with a total reach of 295 students. Council's Waste Education Team attended Djerriwarrh Festival and Lakeside Alive (major community events), with a reach of 9,125 community members.

2.2.2 Implement the Victorian Government's kerbside waste reforms.

Action Title: 2.2.2.1 Development and implementation of a Communications Plan for the community roll-out of the mandated four-bin kerbside collection service

Responsible Department	Status	Start Date	End Date	% Complete	Target	On Target %
Operations	Completed	01-Oct-2025	30-Jun-2026	100%	55.00%	 GREEN

Action Progress Comments: The kerbside collection service communications plan has been developed to ensure our community is aware of the new glass and universal food and garden organics bin collection services commencing on 1 July 2027. The first phase of implementation has focused on bin collection day or week changes for impacted properties, with the remaining messaging to commence in late 2026 prior to the new bins being delivered and collected.

2.3 A City that has well-designed and maintained places and spaces accessible to all.**2.3.1 Implement improvements in our streets and public spaces to keep them clean and reduce waste, litter and graffiti.**

Action Title: 2.3.1.1 Deliver the graffiti rapid response program with 90% compliance for: response within 48 hours for offensive graffiti, and for response within 10 days for all other graffiti on Council assets						
Responsible Department	Status	Start Date	End Date	% Complete	Target	On Target %
Operations	In Progress	01-Jul-2025	30-Jun-2026	75%	75.00%	 GREEN
Action Progress Comments: In the period from 1 July 2025 to 31 March 2026 Council has delivered the graffiti rapid response program including: Responded to 733 graffiti removal requests with 95% completed within 10 days.						

2.3.2 Increase multi-use and accessible open spaces.

Action Title: 2.3.2.1 Deliver a minimum of 20 new and upgraded parks and open spaces within the City						
Responsible Department	Status	Start Date	End Date	% Complete	Target	On Target %
City Strategy	In Progress	01-Jul-2025	30-Jun-2026	80%	75.00%	 GREEN
Action Progress Comments: Council is on track to achieve the target of 20 park/open space upgrades in 2025/26. Fourteen Major and Minor Park Upgrades have been completed in the current financial year to date: Toolern Creek Regional Park, Fieldstone Way Reserve, Royal Crescent Reserve, Hillside Recreation Reserve Playspace, Barwon Street Reserve, Black Wood Drive Recreation Reserve, Sovereign Boulevard Reserve, The Parkway Reserve, The Grange Reserve Upgrade, Emil Court Reserve, Northgate Linear Reserve, Freemans Link Reserve, The Melton South Recreation Reserve Playspace, Punjel Drive Reserve. Five Parks Path Lighting projects have been delivered. The East Side Seniors Exercise Park has been completed and the West Side Seniors Exercise Park is nearing completion. Six Minor Parks projects have either commenced construction or are due to commence construction in April: St Georges Ave Reserve, Sugar Gum Reserve, Warringah Reserve, West Melton Recreation Reserve, Springbank Park, and Cypress Views Village Park. Contracts have been awarded for Mt Carberry Reserve Playspace, Norm Raven Reserve, Parkwood Green Reserve and Turf Club Boulevard. Arbour Boulevard Central Reserve, Archer Drive Reserve, Auburn Drive Reserve, Parkview Reserve, Jai Court, Sedate Drive, Taylors Hill Central Park, and McDonald Street Reserve Playspace have been tendered, with contracts due to be awarded shortly.						

2.4 A City that plans and delivers infrastructure that is evidence-based, fit for purpose and accessible, delivering value to the city and its people.**2.4.1 Maximise delivery of the annual Capital Works program.**

Action Title: 2.4.1.1 Review the delivery model of Council's capital program to further maximise future delivery						
Responsible Department	Status	Start Date	End Date	% Complete	Target	On Target %
Capital Delivery	In Progress	01-Jul-2025	30-Jun-2026	75%	75.00%	 GREEN
Action Progress Comments: The review of the delivery model for Council's capital program has seen the implementation of a number of improvement opportunities including: * Changes to the management of design phase with Capital Delivery Team leading the process which have seen measurable improvements in both delivery, costs, quality and time. * Implementation of third party design review process in advance of progressing to construction phase. * Implementation of Scope and Dollar Variation Dashboard identifying key theme areas for improvement. * Implementation of Risk and Issues Dashboard identifying key theme and mitigation strategies. * Lessons Learnt Workshops managed by Council's Capital Delivery Team to ensure coordination across the organisation						

2.5 A well-planned, integrated and maintained transport network that enables people to move around.**2.5.1 Advocate for safe, sustainable, integrated, increased, and more connected public transport across the City of Melton.**Action Title: 2.5.1.1 Develop a 2026 advocacy campaign for the Victorian State Government Election incorporating improvements to public transport 

Responsible Department	Status	Start Date	End Date	% Complete	Target	On Target %
Grant Attraction & Partnerships	Completed	01-Jul-2025	30-Jun-2026	100%	75.00%	 GREEN

Action Progress Comments: The Victorian State Election Campaign was presented to ELT and Council in April 2026. The Campaign will be launched in June in readiness for the State election.

2.5.2 Continue to invest in our local road network, and advocate for improvements in State and Federal roads.

Action Title: 2.5.2.1 Complete at least 90% of the 2025/26 planned local road improvements.

Responsible Department	Status	Start Date	End Date	% Complete	Target	On Target %
Operations	In Progress	01-Jan-2026	30-Jun-2026	65%	50.00%	 GREEN

Action Progress Comments: Of the 142 planned local road improvement projects, 91 (64%) have been completed as at 31 March 2026. A further 42 projects (29.5%) are on track to be completed this financial year.

Action Title: 2.5.2.2 Complete at least 90% of the 12.9 kilometres of 2025/26 planned road asphalt renewal.

Responsible Department	Status	Start Date	End Date	% Complete	Target	On Target %
Operations	In Progress	01-Jan-2026	30-Jun-2026	95%	75.00%	 GREEN

Action Progress Comments: Of the 61 road renewal sites for 2025/26, 58 have been completed with the remaining three on track to be completed by the end of April 2026.

2.5.3 Maintain and develop our cycling and walking networks.Action Title: 2.5.3.1 Complete at least 90% of the 2025/26 planned cycling and walking path improvements 

Responsible Department	Status	Start Date	End Date	% Complete	Target	On Target %
Operations	In Progress	01-Sep-2025	30-Jun-2026	75%	60.00%	 GREEN

Action Progress Comments: The delivery of 2025/26 Planned Cycling and Walking Paths Program has progressed with 50% of works completed by 31 March 2026 and the remaining works on track for completion by 31 May 2026.

2.6 A greener City that protects and enhances its natural environment.**2.6.2 Reduce the impacts of heatwaves on the community through increased tree canopy cover and urban design.**Action Title: 2.6.2.1 Plant more than 20,000 trees within our City 

Responsible Department	Status	Start Date	End Date	% Complete	Target	On Target %
City Strategy	In Progress	01-Jul-2025	30-Jun-2026	90%	75.00%	 GREEN

Action Progress Comments: As of January 2026 18,614 trees have been planted. This includes 4,478 trees under Council's annual planting program, 11,116 trees, both advanced and tubestock, for external landscape works, 520 trees, both advanced and tubestock, under the More Trees for a Cooler, Greener West program, and approximately 2,500 development sector-delivered trees. Council has now moved into the second planting season of the year. Further trees will be planted under the various tree programs and by developers.

2.6.3 Advocate for Precinct Structure Plans that deliver sustainable, coordinated, infrastructure-ready and liveable communities.

Action Title: 2.6.3.1 Advocate to the Victorian State Government on improving growth area planning standards for new Precinct Structure Plans

Responsible Department	Status	Start Date	End Date	% Complete	Target	On Target %
City Strategy	In Progress	01-Jul-2025	30-Jun-2026	75%	75.00%	 GREEN

Action Progress Comments: Council officers are engaging with the Victorian Government through the Greenfield Housing Choices program to advocate for improved housing diversity and density in our Precinct Structure Plan areas. Officers are developing a Staging and Sequencing Plan to assist with advocacy to the Victorian Government of new Precinct Structure Plan areas identified in the 10-year plan for Melbourne's greenfields.

2.6.4 Protect and enhance biodiversity and the cultural and heritage values across our city.

Action Title: 2.6.4.1 Develop an action plan to support delivering outcomes that protect and enhance biodiversity in the City

Responsible Department	Status	Start Date	End Date	% Complete	Target	On Target %
City Growth and Development	In Progress	01-Jul-2025	31-Mar-2026	90%	100.00%	 GREEN

Action Progress Comments: Consultation activities have been undertaken and a draft Biodiversity Action Plan has been prepared for consideration.

3 A progressive and trusted Council**3.1 An organisation that genuinely engages with community and is committed to excellence in customer experience.****3.1.1 Implement Council's Customer Experience Strategy.**

Action Title: 3.1.1.1 Deliver a Customer Service Charter and all Year One actions in the Customer Experience Strategy to advance customer satisfaction ratings

Responsible Department	Status	Start Date	End Date	% Complete	Target	On Target %
Customer Experience	In Progress	01-Jul-2025	30-Jun-2026	75%	75.00%	 GREEN

Action Progress Comments: : In Q3, Council finalised recruitment of a CX Quality Assurance role and Experience Research & Insights Analyst, with work commencing on the development of Quality Assurance Framework and Voice Of Customer program, including developing business requirements for a suitable experience survey platform to support Council's Voice of Customer and Voice of Employee programs, and preparations for the Annual Community Survey . Additionally CX work progressed with supporting the development of a new Online Bookings System for Venues, MyLot (AI planning and building tool to support customer enquiries), Website redevelopment, Genesys Uplift (email queue management), Complaint Management Training for Customer Service Officers and key business partners, and preparation for Stage 2 of the Technology Change Program, including the development of the request management system. Following finalisation of recruitment of Council's engagement roles, work will recommence on finalising the Customer Charter.

3.1.2 Increase the use of deliberative engagement to support Council decision making.

Action Title: 3.1.2.1 In addition to Council's ongoing community engagement initiatives, develop an annual deliberative engagement program that outlines opportunities for community feedback into key projects and initiatives

Responsible Department	Status	Start Date	End Date	% Complete	Target	On Target %
Customer Experience	In Progress	01-Jan-2026	30-Jun-2026	75%	75.00%	 GREEN

Action Progress Comments: Between 1 July 2025 and 31 March 2026, 28 community engagement projects were published on Council's engagement platform - with over 35,000 people visiting the platform and making more than 1,800 contributions and feedback on Council projects. Development of an annual deliberative engagement program will be undertaken in the final quarter of the 2025/26 financial year, with recruitment of Council's engagement roles being finalised, and expected to commend towards the end of April. Scoping and development of Council's approach for a deliberative engagement program is expected to be finalised by the end of the financial year.

Action Title: 3.1.2.2 Engage specialist organisations in a review of Council's approach to hardship support

Responsible Department	Status	Start Date	End Date	% Complete	Target	On Target %
Organisational Performance	In Progress	01-Jul-2025	30-Jun-2026	80%	75.00%	 GREEN

Action Progress Comments: Prior to December 2025, Officers provided feedback on the Victorian State Government Draft Ministerial Guidelines on hardship, which will further support internal policy amendments. Officers have also identified a range of immediate hardship improvements, which are being assessed for implementation and will lead to an uplift in service standards and offerings for community members required hardship support. A Draft hardship policy has been created and is being presented to ELT for review and consideration prior to progressing to Council Briefing (May) and Policy Review panel (June). It is expected that the policy will be supported with the objective being complete.

3.2 An organisation that prioritises good governance, integrity and accountability and is community minded in its decision-making.**3.2.1 Implement initiatives to continue to advance Council's integrity maturity.**

Action Title: 3.2.1.1 Develop an Integrity Framework to underpin the organisation's focus on integrity maturity

Responsible Department	Status	Start Date	End Date	% Complete	Target	On Target %
Integrity	In Progress	01-Jul-2025	30-Jun-2026	60%	80.00%	 AMBER

Action Progress Comments: The draft Integrity Framework is nearing completion with endorsement scheduled for June 2026.

3.2.2 Develop a new Council website to improve the accessibility of information available online.

Action Title: 3.2.2.1 Undertake a scope, design and tender process for Council's new website, incorporating best practice accessibility standards and using technology to add to customer communication options and customer experience

Responsible Department	Status	Start Date	End Date	% Complete	Target	On Target %
Communications	In Progress	01-Jul-2025	30-Jun-2026	60%	60.00%	 GREEN

Action Progress Comments: The Website Redevelopment Project scope was endorsed by ELT on 5 September 2025 and outlined that the project would be delivered over two years to ensure integration with the current Technology Change Project. Year One actions are progressing well and will be completed as scheduled.

3.3 An organisation that is proactive and effective in advocacy to support our rapidly growing City.**3.3.1 Develop and implement an annual strategic advocacy and government relations plan that is evidence based and community driven in its prioritisation.**

Action Title: 3.3.1.1 Utilising an evidence-based approach, review, update and prioritise Council's advocacy initiatives, ensuring alignment with the Council and Wellbeing Plan, and Council and community feedback

Responsible Department	Status	Start Date	End Date	% Complete	Target	On Target %
Grant Attraction & Partnerships	Completed	01-Jul-2025	30-Nov-2025	100%	100.00%	 GREEN

Action Progress Comments: Council's advocacy priorities were reviewed and developed in the first quarter of the financial year, and endorsed by Council in October 2025. A new priorities document has been developed and will be launched on 30 January 2026 following by a government relations engagement plan to progress awareness of and advocacy of the priorities with key decision makers.

3.3.2 Implement Council's investment strategy, the advancing of alternative revenue generation opportunities, and identification and implementation of efficiency improvements.

Action Title: 3.3.2.1 Realise a minimum of \$10M in general operational efficiency savings to support ongoing financial sustainability

Responsible Department	Status	Start Date	End Date	% Complete	Target	On Target %
Organisational Performance	In Progress	01-Jul-2025	30-Jun-2026	75%	75.00%	 GREEN

Action Progress Comments: Officers are continuing to work through opportunities to improve operational efficiencies; however, any material savings are expected to be realised in future years. To date, officers have identified \$4.9m in operational efficiencies through the EEP program, with further initiatives to be progressed.

A review of council's vacant land holdings have identified an estimate of \$15 Million in vacant land divestment savings, this will be presented to ELT for further discussion, and if supported will be progressed to divestment in 2026/27.

3.4 A future focused organisation where success is measured by outcomes, impact and continuous improvement.**3.4.2 Implement Council's Technology Change Program to uplift core technology systems to improve service delivery.**

Action Title: 3.4.2.1 Complete the delivery of Phase One, of Council's approved Technology Change Program

Responsible Department	Status	Start Date	End Date	% Complete	Target	On Target %
Information	Completed	01-Jan-2026	30-Jun-2026	100%	70.00%	 GREEN

Action Progress Comments: Technology Change Program (TCP) Phase 1 has been completed, delivering key systems for finance, procurement, budgeting, payroll and human resources. The post-implementation support period is also complete, providing staff with improved tools to deliver services more efficiently and better support our growing community.

3.4.3 Continue a program of service reviews to ensure services are fit for purpose to meet community needs.

Action Title: 3.4.3.1 Develop a new Council Services Review schedule for 2026-2028 to have a rolling program of reviews of Council's core services

Responsible Department	Status	Start Date	End Date	% Complete	Target	On Target %
Transformation	In Progress	01-Jul-2025	30-Jun-2026	60%	75.00%	 AMBER

Action Progress Comments: For 2025/26 service reviewed have been conducted for Maternal and Child Health, Recreation and Facilities Activation, Child Families & Youth, and Health Connected Communities. The schedule focus for service reviews planned for 2026/27 is to be developed in consultation with ELT.

3.4.4 Develop and implement a property management framework that balances highest and best use of Council's property

Action Title: 3.4.4.1 Undertake a review of Council landholdings to identify highest and best use and document a plan to guide future management

Responsible Department	Status	Start Date	End Date	% Complete	Target	On Target %
Property	In Progress	01-Jul-2025	30-Jun-2026	60%	75.00%	 AMBER

Action Progress Comments: The draft Property Framework is nearing completion with endorsement scheduled for June 2026.

3.5 A safe and respectful organisation that embraces diversity and actively supports inclusion.**3.5.1 Develop and implement a diversity and inclusion plan for the workplace, including delivery of a new Gender Equality**Action Title: 3.5.1.1 Complete a Workplace Gender Audit by December 2025 and submit Council's new Gender Equality Action Plan by May 2026, in accordance with statutory timeframes to the Commission for Gender Equality  

Responsible Department	Status	Start Date	End Date	% Complete	Target	On Target %
People	In Progress	01-Jul-2025	30-Jun-2026	90%	75.00%	 GREEN

Action Progress Comments: Council Workplace Gender Report submitted to the Commission for Gender Equality on 1 December 2025. Compliance notification received on 16 March 2026. Both Progress Report and Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP) have been drafted & presented to Executive Leadership Team for endorsement 1 April 2026. GEAP strategies shared with workforce via internal Intranet Page for comment. On track for submission on 1 May 2026.

12.2 COUNCIL AND WELLBEING PLAN 2025-2029 - ANNUAL ACTION PLAN 2026/27

Author: Joel Farrell - Manager Customer Experience
Presenter: Emily Keogh - Head of Governance

PURPOSE OF REPORT

For Council to consider actions identified to implement Year Two of the *Council and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029*.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council adopts the Year Two Action Plan 2026-2027 of the *Council and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029*, provided as **Appendix 1** to this report.

REPORT

1. Executive Summary

The *Local Government Act 2020* requires each Council to develop or review the Council Plan in accordance with its deliberative engagement practices and adopt the Council Plan by 31 October in the year following a general election.

The *Council and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029* (the Plan) for the City of Melton was adopted by Council at the 28 July 2025 Council Meeting, and this report outlines the Year Two (2026/27) actions for Council adoption.

2. Background/Issues

Council engaged an independent organisation to conduct a deliberative engagement panel process for preparation of the Council and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029. In February and March 2025, 50 community members were invited to join the Melton Community Panel to collectively review the Community Vision, identify the most important actions for Council for the next four years, and provide guidance to Council on managing its finances and investing in assets.

The *Council and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029* (the Plan) was adopted by Council at the 28 July 2025 Council Meeting, and a Year Two Action Plan 2026-2027 has been developed in response to the priorities identified in the Plan.

Progress on implementation of the Year One Action Plan 2025-2026 has been reported to Council on a quarterly bases with the final Fourth Quarter progress report expected to be presented to the Council Meeting on Monday 24 August 2026, following the completion of the financial year.

Progress on implementation of the Year Two Action Plan 2026-2027 will continue this process of quarterly reporting throughout the 2026/27 financial year.

3. Council and Wellbeing Plan Reference and Policy Reference

The Melton City Council 2025-2029 Council and Wellbeing Plan references:

3. A progressive and trusted Council

3.4 A future focused organisation where success is measured by outcomes, impact and continuous improvement.

4. Financial Considerations

In accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020*, Council's Budget must give effect to the Council Plan, and provide the funds and resources required for the effective implementation of the Plan.

5. Consultation/Public Submissions

Engagement on the development of the Council and Wellbeing Plan

Extensive community consultation and engagement was undertaken in the initial development of the Council and Wellbeing Plan, with the findings of this engagement process being used to help inform the development of annual action plans.

During the initial development phase, Council undertook a deliberative engagement process between February and March 2025. This process involved 50 community members who collectively reviewed the Community Vision and identify the most important actions for Council for the next four years. The panel also provided guidance to Council on managing its finances and investing in assets. Concurrently to the deliberative process, broader community engagement was also undertaken seeking community ideas for the Council Plan and Budget.

Following completion of the deliberative engagement process, the draft Council and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 was placed on public exhibition from 24 June 2025 to 8 July 2025. During this time, the community was invited to provide feedback through the City of Melton Conversations online engagement portal.

Council Plan and Budget Ideas for 2026/27

In addition to the initial consultation and engagement on the development of the Plan, as part of Council's annual review and update of the Council Plan and Budget, an additional round of engagement was undertaken.

Between mid-November 2025 and the end of January 2026, City of Melton ratepayers, residents, visitors, community groups, sporting clubs and local businesses were invited to put forward ideas and suggestions for consideration in 2026/27. These ideas needed to demonstrate strong community benefit in supporting the delivery of the long-term Community Vision and Council's Strategic Objectives as outlined in the Melton City Council and Wellbeing Plan. For an idea to be considered by Council, it had to be deliverable on Council owned or managed land or buildings, be able to be deliverable in the 2026/27 financial year and be consistent with Council's existing policies and procedures.

Only one idea was accepted per individual or group, with people making multiple ideas being asked to prioritise the idea which they wanted considered by Council. Idea submitters were invited to discuss their idea with Councillors on Sunday 1 March 2026.

The engagement process was promoted through multiple mediums including City of Melton Conversations online engagement portal, social media, Council's website, and through Council community email networks. The opportunity for community ideas was open from 17 November 2025 to Monday 27 February 2026.

214 ideas were received from individuals, community groups and sporting clubs in total, however a number of these were multiple contributions from the same person/group. In total 138 ideas were assessed and considered. The remaining ideas were provided to Councillors but were not formally considered. Of the 138 people/groups who put forward an idea for consideration, 24 community members presented their idea in person, with a further three providing a video presentation.

These ideas were used to help inform the development of Council and Wellbeing Actions for 2026/27, alongside the annual update of the Budget.

Draft Budget Feedback

With the *Local Government Act 2020*, requiring 'that the budget gives effect to the Council Plan', community feedback on the Draft Budget (between 28 April and 12 May 2026) was utilised in the final stage of community consultation and engagement. During this process 208 contributions were made, with this feedback being reviewed and considered before finalising actions for 2026/27.

6. Risk Analysis

There are no associated risks to Council in the adoption of the *Council and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 – Year Two Action Plan 2026-2027*. The development of these documents was undertaken in compliance with the *Local Government Act 2020*.

7. Options

Council has the option to adopt the Officer's recommendation.

LIST OF APPENDICES

1. Council and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 - Year Two Action Plan 2026/27

Council and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 - Year Two Action Plan 2026/27

Theme 1 – A healthy and inclusive community

Strategic Priority - We are an inclusive, connected, and healthy community where everyone feels welcome, safe, and supported.

Objective 1.1 - A connected community where people have equitable access to local activities, events, programs and services.

Strategies	Actions
1.1.1 Strengthen access, inclusion and safety for all ages, cultures, abilities, and genders for all Council services and events. ♥ ●	Establish at least two structured engagement opportunities with people of lived experience (including people with disability, young people, older adults and culturally diverse community members) to inform the design and delivery of Council services and events.
1.1.2 Support local community and cultural groups to deliver events that celebrate cultural diversity and strengthen social connection. ♥	Support community-led cultural events delivered across the City through grants, capacity building and streamlined Council support processes.

Objective 1.2 - A safe and inclusive community that celebrates and promotes its diversity, and where people are proud to live.

Strategies	Actions
1.2.1 Implement improvements to enhance safety in our streets and public spaces. ♥	Complete at least 90% of the planned new and upgrade works for the Path Lighting Improvement and Street Lighting Improvement programs across the City to enhance safety.
	Continue the delivery of and review the Rough Sleeper Partnership Initiative in partnership with support agencies to identify opportunities for strengthening referral and support processes.
1.2.2 Promote gender equality and the prevention of gender-based violence in all its forms impacting people of all ages. ♥	Deliver and promote an annual 16 Days of Activism campaign across the City, and review and evaluate outcomes by June 2027 to strengthen the effectiveness of future gender-based violence prevention initiatives.
	Facilitate Council's Early Years Educators to deliver professional development promoting gender equity initiatives for 2026/27.

Strategies	Actions
1.2.3 Facilitate the provision of diverse and affordable housing. ●	Finalise and adopt a Council Affordable Housing Policy position to provide a clear framework for Council's role in supporting, facilitating and advocating for the delivery of diverse and affordable housing across the City.

Objective 1.3 - A City that invests in and promotes positive public health and wellbeing outcomes.

Strategies	Actions
1.3.1 Support healthier eating and enhance food security in our City. ●	Deliver the Melton Food System Collective Action Plan during 2026/27 and strengthen community-led food and wellbeing initiatives through partnerships, grants promotion (Social Investment Partnerships) and targeted community education.
	Seek to attract at least two Expressions of Interest in the social partnership stream with a focus on improving long term health outcomes.
1.3.2 Grow awareness and understanding of mental health and wellbeing to address stigma and barriers. ♥	Partner with local health providers, community groups, schools and youth service agencies to deliver targeted community and youth mental health and wellbeing workshops, reaching at least 250 participants to improve mental health literacy, reduce stigma and increase awareness of support services.
1.3.3 Increase active living and physical activity for all. ♥ ●	Engage at least 500 participants, (people of all genders, abilities and cultural backgrounds) in participation in activities at Council community facilities, including active open spaces.
	Promote the active health benefits from responsible pet ownership through community awareness programs, in line with Council's Domestic Animal Management Plan.

Objective 1.4 - A community with access to local training, education and learning opportunities for all ages and abilities.

Strategies	Actions
1.4.1 Advocate for the provision of all levels of education and training locally, including a university within the City.	Develop and implement an advocacy action plan for a university campus in the City, leveraging co-location opportunities.
	Continue to support the delivery 'Suburban University Study Hub for Melton', in partnership with Djerriwarrh Community and Education Services.
	Support access to 3 and 4 year-old kindergarten through the implementation of the Melton City Council Kindergarten Infrastructure and Services Plan.
1.4.2 Create learning opportunities for all stages of life and abilities including early engagement with and support for children, young people and families.	Deliver early years literacy programs through Council's libraries that support families in building children's foundational skills in learning and literacy that are accessible to all.

Objective 1.5 - A strong, diverse and future focused local economy that provides our community with varied local job opportunities.

Strategies	Actions
1.5.1 Advocate and encourage investment in the City to support new businesses and local jobs.	Commence development of an Investment Attraction Strategy to guide Council's place-based investment attraction, aligned with the Victorian Government's Economic Growth Statement.
1.5.2 Advocate for new Precinct Structure Plans which are employment focussed to facilitate the creation of local jobs.	Advocate to the Victorian Government for the timely development of employment and industrial Precinct Structure Plans in the City and supporting infrastructure.
1.5.3 Facilitate local partnerships which create and promote a variety of employment and other pathway opportunities.	Explore and scope opportunities to establish a Council-led employment pathways and work experience programs, including partnerships with education and employment providers, to support young people and/or under-represented community members.
1.5.4 Strengthen and promote the City's unique character and visitor attractions/experiences.	Review Council's approach to the promotion of Tourism and the local Visitor Economy.

Objective 1.6 - A City that respects and celebrates Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander cultures.

Strategies	Actions
1.6.1 Provide and promote opportunities for the celebration and recognition of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander history and culture.	Deliver cultural celebration events in partnership with our First Nations Community for Council's Dates of Significance.
	Complete engagement on the Stolen Generations Project with First Nations communities.
1.6.2 Provide leadership in reconciliation, build positive partnerships and community relationships, and support culturally appropriate activities, services and places.	Subject to endorsement by Reconciliation Australia, commence implementation of Council's 'Reflect' Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP), including establishing a monitoring and evaluation framework and setting the foundations for moving towards a future 'Innovate RAP'.

Theme 2 – A thriving and well-designed City

Strategic Priority - We have well-designed places and spaces, and our natural environment is protected for current and future generations to thrive.

Objective 2.1 - A City that plans for and adapts to climate change.

Strategies	Actions
2.1.1 Continue investment for Council's operations to remain on track to meet net zero emissions in line with State and Federal Government targets.	Develop a Net Zero Emissions Roadmap for Council operations to meet net zero emissions by 2045, in line with State and Federal Government targets.
	Complete the Green Star certification process with the aim of achieving a 5 Star rating for the Cobblebank Community Hub.
2.1.2 Include climate change and integrated water management considerations in asset renewal.	Join the Victorian Government's WaterSmart program and identify five priority sites for the installation of digital monitoring devices to support water efficiency assessments.
2.1.3 Build collaborative partnerships to facilitate collective action to address climate change and its impacts on health. ♥	<i>No action for 2026/27.</i>

Objective 2.2 - A City that is clean, minimises waste and increases resource recovery through efficient, sustainable practices.

Strategies	Actions
2.2.1 Increase community awareness and understanding of waste and resource recovery.	Develop a Circular Economy Action Plan that encourages resource recovery in the City.
2.2.2 Implement the Victorian Government's kerbside waste reforms.	As required by the Victorian State Government, deliver the roll-out of the mandated glass collection and universal food organics and garden organics (FOGO) kerbside services by 1 July 2027.

Objective 2.3 - A City that has well-designed and maintained places and spaces accessible to all.

Strategies	Actions
2.3.1 Implement improvements in our streets and public spaces to keep them clean and reduce waste, litter and graffiti.	Enhance community reporting of graffiti, litter and dumped rubbish through the implementation of reporting QR Codes located on public bins and signage in shopping strips, parks and priority sites.
2.3.2 Increase multi-use and accessible open spaces. ●	Reduce graffiti in public spaces through rapid removal, proactive hotspot patrols and education programs that strengthen community pride.

Objective 2.4 - A City that plans and delivers infrastructure that is evidence-based, fit for purpose and accessible, delivering value to the city and its people.

Strategies	Actions
2.4.1 Maximise delivery of the annual Capital Works program.	Achieve practical completion of the Cobblebank Community Hub in 2026. Progress delivery of the Aquatic and Leisure Centre at Fraser Rise to be open by mid-2028.
2.4.2 Deliver fit-for-purpose community infrastructure that is accessible, inclusive and designed to enhance community safety. ● ♥	Finalise construction and commence the operationalisation of Deanside Children's and Community Centre for early years services and community programs, and progress construction of the Aintree, Diggers Rest and Rockbank children's and community centres.

Objective 2.5 - A well-planned, integrated and maintained transport network that enables people to move around.

Strategies	Actions
2.5.1 Advocate for safe, sustainable, integrated, increased, and more connected public transport across the City of Melton. ♥	Deliver Councils 2026 Victorian Election campaign with a focus on the electrification of the Melton line and new train stations.
2.5.2 Continue to invest in our local road network, and advocate for improvements in State and Federal roads.	Complete at least 90% of the planned new and upgrade works for local road improvements. Advocate for funding support from the Victorian Government for Taylors Road upgrades, and for Taylors Road to be declared as a State arterial road.
2.5.3 Maintain and develop our cycling and walking networks. ♥	Complete at least 90% of the planned new and upgrade works for the Pedestrian and Cycling Program.

Objective 2.6 - A greener City that protects and enhances its natural environment

Strategies	Actions
2.6.1 Promote the use of sustainable design in City planning.	No action for 2026/27.
2.6.2 Reduce the impacts of heatwaves on the community through increased tree canopy cover and urban design. ♥	Develop housing design guidelines for residential developments to encourage more street trees canopy cover.
2.6.3 Advocate for Precinct Structure Plans that deliver sustainable, coordinated, infrastructure-ready and liveable communities.	Advocate to the Victorian Government on improving growth area planning standards for new Precinct Structure Plans and investment in supporting infrastructure.
2.6.4 Protect and enhance biodiversity and the cultural and heritage values across our city.	Develop a framework for the management of conservation reserves within the City.
	Support delivery of three community planting days in the City to promote community connection with the environment.

Theme 3 – A progressive and trusted Council

Strategic Priority: We are innovative and effective in leading and managing our rapidly growing City in a sustainable and transparent way.

Objective 3.1 - An organisation that genuinely engages with community and is committed to excellence in customer experience.

Strategies	Actions
3.1.1 Implement Council's Customer Experience Strategy.	Establish a Voice of Customer program to align with customer experience feedback programs.
	Implement the Hardship Policy within Council with a focus on systems, processes, and people to continue to help people experiencing genuine hardship.
3.1.2 Increase the use of deliberative engagement to support Council decision making.	Trial community participation in budgeting approaches to help inform the next annual review of Council's budget.

Objective 3.2 - An organisation that prioritises good governance, integrity and accountability and is community minded in its decision-making.

Strategies	Actions
3.2.1 Implement initiatives to continue to advance Council's integrity maturity.	Commence implementation of Council's new Integrity Framework, including the development of a proactive audit schedule that tests current integrity controls.
3.2.2 Develop a new Council website to improve the accessibility of information available online. •	Undertake a feasibility assessment of available technology to add customer chat to Council's communication channels to further improve customer experience on Council's website.

Objective 3.3 - An organisation that is proactive and effective in advocacy to support our rapidly growing City.

Strategies	Actions
3.3.1 Develop and implement an annual strategic advocacy and government relations plan that is evidence based and	Implement Council's Victorian State Election Advocacy Strategy and continue to advocate for Council's refreshed priorities launched in January 2026.
3.3.2 Implement Council's investment strategy, the advancing of alternative revenue generation opportunities, and identification and implementation of efficiency improvements.	Pilot two alternative revenue projects to test viability before wider implementation.

Objective 3.4 - A future focused organisation where success is measured by outcomes, impact and continuous improvement.

Strategies	Actions
3.4.1 Implement the Workplace Transformation Plan with a focus on Customer, People, Technology and Growth.	Implement Council's new Workforce Plan.
3.4.2 Implement Council's Technology Change Program to uplift core technology systems to improve service delivery.	Continue delivery of Phase Two of Council's approved Technology Change Program, including: development of a new request management system; and planning, building and application compliance modules.
3.4.3 Continue a program of service reviews to ensure services are fit for purpose to meet community needs.	Implement Council's Services Review schedule for 2026/27 to ensure services are fit for purpose and meet community needs.
3.4.4 Develop and implement a property management framework that balances highest and best use of Council's property	Complete assessments of Council landholdings to guide future use and investment decisions.

Objective 3.5 - A safe and respectful organisation that embraces diversity and actively supports inclusion.

Strategies	Actions
3.5.1 Develop and implement a diversity and inclusion plan for the workplace, including delivery of a new Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP), a 'Reflect' Reconciliation Action Plan, and a Disability Action Plan. ♥ ●	Implement Council's new Gender Equality Action Plan and undertake Gender Impact Assessments when considering changes to Council policy, strategy or service delivery.

♥ Health and Wellbeing Initiatives

● Disability Action Initiatives

12.3 MELTON CITY COUNCIL BRANDING UPDATE

Author: Lauren Wall - Manager Communications

Presenter: Emily Keogh - Head of Governance

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To present the proposed refreshed logo for Melton City Council and provide an overview of the planned implementation.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council endorse the updated Melton City Council logo as it appears in **Appendix 1**.

REPORT

1. Executive Summary

Melton City Council has undertaken a project to refresh its corporate identity, including the development of an updated Council logo that meets accessibility requirements whilst reflecting the original narrative of the brand. The refreshed logo has been designed as an evolution of Council's existing identity, retaining key recognisable elements while enhancing usability, accessibility and consistency across digital and physical applications. The updated design supports improved brand recognition, strengthens Council's visual presence and ensures the organisation's identity remains fit-for-purpose.

This report seeks Council endorsement of the proposed updated logo and provides an update regarding the implementation approach.

2. Background/Issues

Council's visual identity plays a vital role in how the organisation is recognised by residents, businesses, and stakeholders. A contemporary and consistent identity supports Council's reputation, strengthens community connection and ensures Council communications remain clear, professional and accessible across a range of digital and traditional platforms.

Reasons for Change

The existing logo was created at a time when contemporary accessibility standards and digital communication requirements did not exist.

The current logo presents limitations in relation to readability, scalability and accessibility across digital platforms, mobile devices, social media channels and printed materials. In particular, elements of the existing design are not readable at smaller sizes and do not meet best practice accessibility expectations.

A refreshed logo provides an opportunity to modernise Council's visual identity while maintaining recognition and connection to the City of Melton's identity.

Accessibility Considerations

Accessibility has been a key motivating factor in the development of the refreshed logo design. The updated design has been created to improve legibility, colour contrast and usability across a range of applications, including digital communications, websites, signage, presentations and printed materials.

The design and typography support clearer recognition for users with vision impairment and align more closely with contemporary accessibility principles and digital-first communication standards. The refreshed logo has also been designed to perform consistently across responsive digital environments and a wide variety of formats and sizes.

Benefits of the New Logo

The refreshed logo will deliver several strategic and operational benefits for Council, while maintaining continuity with the existing corporate identity. The updated design retains key visual elements of the current logo to preserve community recognition and familiarity, while enhancing these elements through contemporary design principles including improved scale, proportion, typography, colour application and visual balance.

These refinements create a clearer and more versatile identity that performs more effectively across digital and print environments without losing connection to Council's established brand.

Importantly, the refreshed logo is intended to evolve Council's existing identity rather than replace it entirely, ensuring the City of Melton's established visual recognition is retained while modernising its presentation.

Phased Roll-Out Plan

The implementation of the refreshed logo will be undertaken through a staged and pragmatic approach to ensure operational continuity and cost efficiency.

The initial phase will focus on updating high-visibility and high-use digital and printed communications, including Council's website, social media channels, corporate templates, reports, and key external-facing publications. This ensures immediate consistency across the most frequently used and publicly visible platforms with no replacement costs.

The subsequent phase will extend to broader printed materials and stationery as existing stock is depleted, with updated branding incorporated into reprints and new production runs.

The final phase will involve the gradual transition of physical assets across the city including signage, uniforms, and facility branding. These assets will be updated progressively in line with scheduled maintenance, renewal programs, and asset replacement cycles, ensuring a cost-effective approach that avoids premature replacement and unnecessary expenditure.

3. Council and Wellbeing Plan Reference and Policy Reference

The Melton City Council 2025-2029 Council and Wellbeing Plan references:

3. A progressive and trusted Council

3.1 An organisation that genuinely engages with community and is committed to excellence in customer experience.

4. Financial Considerations

The cost of designing the refreshed logo was \$15,500 excluding GST.

The project was intentionally scoped as a refinement and evolution of Council's existing corporate identity, rather than a full rebrand, to ensure a measured and cost-effective approach. Retaining and enhancing key elements of the current logo has enabled Council to modernise its visual identity while minimising broader implementation and transition costs.

The implementation approach will prioritise updates to digital assets and corporate communication materials in the first instance. Physical assets, including signage and other infrastructure, will be updated progressively in line with existing asset renewal and replacement schedules. This staged approach minimises unnecessary expenditure and reduces waste while ensuring a consistent transition to the refreshed identity over time.

5. Consultation/Public Submissions

No public consultation was undertaken as part of this project, as the proposed logo refresh represents an evolution and refinement of Council's existing corporate identity rather than the introduction of a new brand identity.

The project relates primarily to operational branding and visual communication assets, with the refreshed logo retaining key recognisable elements of the current design to maintain continuity and community familiarity.

6. Risk Analysis

If Council does not proceed with the proposed logo refresh, existing accessibility limitations in the current logo will persist. This includes reduced legibility at smaller scales, inconsistent performance across digital platforms, and limitations in meeting contemporary accessibility expectations for inclusive communication.

There is also a risk of continued inconsistency in the application of Council's corporate identity across digital, print, and physical assets, which may reduce visual coherence and clarity of Council communications.

The proposed refresh mitigates accessibility risks by introducing a more accessible and legible logo that can be consistently applied visual across all applications.

7. Options

1. Endorse the proposed refresh of Melton City Council's corporate logo.
2. Request further refinement of the proposed updated logo design prior to endorsement, noting this option may incur additional charges to the project cost.
3. Retain the existing logo with no change.

LIST OF APPENDICES

1. Updated Melton City Council Logo

Updated Melton Council logo



Updated Melton Council logo



12.4 PROPOSED LEASE - 28 CONSERVATORY DRIVE, DEANSIDE

Author: Sian Rainford - Senior Lawyer and Property Advisor

Presenter: Neil Whiteside - Director City Delivery

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To consider commencing the statutory process to enter into a lease with Powercor Australia Ltd (ACN 064 651 109) for part of the land situated at 28 Conservatory Drive, Deanside.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council:

1. Commence the statutory process to lease part of the land situated at 28 Conservatory Drive, Deanside (being part of proposed Lot RES4 on PS849680P) contained in Certificate of Title Volume 12546 Folio 355 (**the Land**) indicatively highlighted in red on the below plan to Powercor Australia Ltd (ACN 064 561 109) for the purpose of housing an electrical substation and for any other purpose incidental to the receiving, distributing, transforming and supplying of electricity.
2. Note that a public notice will be published on Council's website of Council's intention to lease the land in accordance with its obligations pursuant to section 115 of the *Local Government Act 2020* (Vic) for a period of no less than 28 days.
3. Following the notice period, delegates to the Chief Executive Officer the authority to decide to enter into the lease with Powercor on the commercial terms acceptable to the Chief Executive Officer in their sole discretion.
4. Delegates to the Chief Executive Officer the authority to do all things necessary to negotiate and finalise the agreement for lease and lease, including execution of the agreement for lease, lease, or any other relevant documentation.

REPORT

1. Executive Summary

On 27 October 2025, Council approved the construction and cost plan of Deanside Children's & Community Centre (**the Project**). In order to provide electricity to the Project, an electrical substation is required. Powercor Australia Ltd (ACN 064 561 109), as the power authority, has made an offer to Council as it relates to the substation, which includes an Agreement for Lease and a Lease.

The purpose of the substation is to:

- Change electricity voltage up or down.
- Turn parts of the grid on or off safely.
- Manage how electricity flows and keep it balanced.
- Protect equipment with safety switches.
- Watch and control how the grid is working.
- Deliver electricity safely and efficiently.

The purpose of the lease documentation is to provide Powercor with the right to use and access that part of the land required to install, maintain and fix the substation. Council does not have the necessary skills, expertise or resources to assume this responsibility.

This matter is being presented to a meeting of Council, in circumstances where the terms of the lease documentation are beyond the scope of the Lease and Licence Policy which determines a maximum term of a lease to be twenty (20) years).

The exact specifications of the leased area are to be determined following installation of the substation and will be identified in the lease. The indicative specifications and location are identified on the below plan:



2. Background/Issues

Council approved the Deanside Children's & Community Centre (**the Project**) construction and associated cost plan at its meeting on 27 October 2025. During schematic design stage of the Project, an electrical design has been developed.

Council's design consultant has submitted the electrical design to Powercor, as the power authority. Powercor have since offered an agreement for lease to Council.

The lease document proposes that Council as landowner, grant Powercor a lease for an initial term of 30 years and a further term of 20 years, for a peppercorn rental amount of 0.10 cents per annum, payable on demand, to house the substation.

A substation acts as a crucial link in the power system, receiving electricity from the main supply and ensuring it is delivered safely and efficiently to the Project.

The purpose of the substation is to:

- Change electricity voltage up or down.
- Turn parts of the grid on or off safely.
- Manage how electricity flows and keep it balanced.
- Protect equipment with safety switches.
- Watch and control how the grid is working.
- Deliver electricity safely and efficiently.

A lease is required to enable Powercor to carry out its duties and functions in relation to the substation, including:

- Installing, checking, fixing, maintaining, replacing, or removing poles, wires, cables, and related equipment needed for electricity, and clearing anything that blocks access to them.
- Installing, checking, fixing, maintaining, replacing, or removing underground electric cables and related equipment, and clearing anything that blocks access to them.
- Allowing vehicles and equipment to access the area at all times.

The proposed design draws from existing electrical supply on Kiosk located on corner of Acres Lane and Conservatory Drive. The high voltage supply will then run through the proposed substation which will then distribute required electricity to service the Project.

Council's Lease and Licence Policy limits the issuing of a lease to no more than twenty (20) years. For delivery of power to the Project, Powercor are seeking secure, long-term tenure, to ensure they maintain the necessary access rights to the asset. Council does not have the skills, expertise or resources to install, check, maintain or fix the asset, and Powercor will be required to provide this support to ensure activation and ongoing operation of the Project.

Officers, pursuant to delegation, are authorised to lease land. In circumstances where the lease proposal extends beyond the parameters of the Lease and Licence Policy, the matter is being presented to Council for consideration.

The commercial terms of the Lease include:

1. An initial term of thirty (30) years, with one further term of twenty (20) years;
2. Rental of \$0.10 cents per annum, payable on demand;
3. Council to be responsible for all fees, charges, taxes, outgoings or other costs associated with the leased area.

3. Council and Wellbeing Plan Reference and Policy Reference

The Melton City Council 2025-2029 Council and Wellbeing Plan references:

2. A thriving and well-designed City

2.4 A City that plans and delivers infrastructure that is evidence-based, fit for purpose and accessible, delivering value to the city and its people.

4. Financial Considerations

There are no direct financial considerations as it relates to this proposal. The proposed rental amount is \$0.10 cents per annum, payable on demand.

In circumstances where the purpose of the lease, is to service a Council facility, and is at the request of Council, Officers recommend that a peppercorn rental amount is appropriate and that market value for the land should not be sought.

5. Consultation/Public Submissions

Section 115 of the *Local Government Act 2020*, requires Council to comply with its community engagement policy, where Council has not included a proposal in its financial year budget, and where the proposed lease is:

- (a) for one year or more and -
 - (i) the rent for any period of the lease is \$100 000 or more a year; or
 - (ii) the current market rental value of the land is \$100 000 or more a year; or
- (b) for 10 years or more.

The proposed lease to Powercor, means that Council must comply with its community engagement policy. The community engagement policy requires that Council publish a notice of intention to lease on its website. This notice, subject to reaching terms to the satisfaction of the CEO and pending resolution of Council, will be published as soon as practicable.

6. Risk Analysis

There exists significant risk to the progression of the Project, if a lease is not entered into with Powercor, including that the Project will not be able to be activated. The risk associated with this report are low, noting it is only to commence the statutory process and that the CEO will exercise the decision making to grant or not grant the lease.

7. Options

1. That Council resolve in line with the recommendation as set out in the report.
2. That Council do not resolve in line with the recommendation, and seek to negotiate with Powercor for a term of the lease which is no more than twenty (20) years.

LIST OF APPENDICES

Nil

12.5 LEADWEST JOINT DELEGATED COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Author: Renee Hodgson - Manager Governance

Presenter: Emily Keogh - Head of Governance

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To present the unconfirmed minutes of the LeadWest Joint Delegated Committee held on 7 May 2026.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council note the unconfirmed minutes of the LeadWest Joint Delegated Committee meeting held on 7 May 2026 as **Appendix 1**.

REPORT

1. Executive Summary

The purpose of the LeadWest Committee is to oversee the preparation and implementation of the LeadWest Strategic Plan and identified sub projects as adopted and agreed by member Councils.

The minutes attached to this report include the unconfirmed minutes of the LeadWest Joint Delegated Committee meeting held on 7 May 2026.

2. Background/Issues

The LeadWest Committee was established as a Joint Delegated Committee pursuant to section 64 of the *Local Government Act 2020 (the Act)*, with the Cities of Brimbank, Hobsons Bay, Maribyrnong, Melton, and Wyndham, on and from 1 August 2021.

It has delegated powers and functions in an Instrument of Delegation and Schedule and has Terms of Reference that govern its operations, meeting, and reporting arrangements.

Attached to this report are the unconfirmed minutes of the LeadWest Joint Delegated Committee meeting held on 7 May 2026 (**Appendix 1**).

3. Council and Wellbeing Plan Reference and Policy Reference

The Melton City Council 2025-2029 Council and Wellbeing Plan references:

3. A progressive and trusted Council

3.2 An organisation that prioritises good governance, integrity and accountability and is community minded in its decision-making

4. Financial Considerations

The ongoing budget for the LeadWest Committee will include two components. Firstly, to deliver the projects in the four-year implementation plan, recommendations will be made to member Councils for consideration in each Council's annual budgeting process. Secondly, a payment of a base contribution to apply equally to all Councils.

5. Consultation/Public Submissions

The LeadWest Committee provides a mechanism for a regional approach to advocacy and the delivery of a Strategic Plan. The LeadWest Strategic Plan is underpinned by a rolling four-year implementation plan which will be delivered by teams from across the member councils implementing specific projects. This Plan was prepared following extensive consultation including a focus on engaging Councillors from the member Councils.

6. Risk Analysis

The legal framework for the LeadWest Committee structure is pursuant to s.64 of the Act. There is no perceived risk in the recommendation contained within this report.

7. Options

That Council note the unconfirmed minutes of the LeadWest Joint Delegated Committee held on 7 May 2026 as per the recommendation to this report.

LIST OF APPENDICES

1. Unconfirmed Minutes LeadWest Joint Delegated Committee Meeting - 7 May 2026



LeadWest Joint Delegated Committee

DRAFT Meeting Minutes – 7 May 2026

Meeting Details

Date	Thursday 7 May 2026
Time	4:00pm – 5:00pm
Location	Online
Chair	Cr Susan Yengi, Maribyrnong City Council
Attendees	Cr Lucy Nguyen Brimbank City Council Ms Fiona Blair Chief Executive Officer, Brimbank City Council Cr Rayane Hawli Deputy Chair, Hobsons Bay City Council Mr Phu Nguyen Chief Executive Officer, Hobsons Bay City Council Cr Dr Phillip Zada Melton City Council Ms Roslyn Wai Chief Executive Officer, Melton City Council Cr Susan Yengi Chair, Maribyrnong City Council Ms Maria Weiss Director Community Life, Maribyrnong City Council (proxy) Cr Mia Shaw Wyndham City Council Mr Stephen Wall Chief Executive Officer, Wyndham City Council Ms Simone Kemp Executive Officer (EO), LeadWest
Apologies	Celia Haddock Chief Executive Officer, Maribyrnong City Council
Guests	Leanne Mitchell, Australian Alliance to End Homelessness Kerry Hylton, Australian Alliance to End Homelessness
Minutes	Simone Kemp, Executive Officer, LeadWest
File ref	26/153478

Meeting items

No.	Agenda Item	
1.	Welcome, Acknowledgement & Apologies	LeadWest Chair, Cr Susan Yengi (the Chair), declared the meeting open at 4.02pm. The Chair welcomed committee members and acknowledged and recognised Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as the first peoples and traditional custodians of the land and waterways on which we live and paid respects to Elders past, present and future. The Chair noted an apology from Celia Haddock who was represented by Maria Weiss, Director Community Life, Maribyrnong City Council at the meeting. The Chair acknowledged Stephen Wall would join the meeting at 4.30pm.



2.	Conflict of Interest	Nil
3.	Confirmation of Previous Minutes	The minutes from the meeting held on 25 February 2026 were adopted without amendment. Moved: Cr Dr Phillip Zada Seconded: Cr Rayane Hawli Carried: Yes
4.	Actions arising	The EO confirmed there were no outstanding actions.
5.	Homelessness Research presentation	<i>(Cr Nguyen joined the meeting at 4.10pm.)</i> The Chair introduced consultants from the Australian Alliance to End Homelessness (AAEH) to present the findings of the LeadWest homelessness research project. A copy of the report was shared with committee members the day before the meeting. Leanne from the AAEH presented an overview of the research project process and findings to the committee. Leanne presented the data available that shows homelessness numbers in Australia, Victoria and in Melbourne's west at a point in time via the Census 2021 data, and Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) figures from 2024/25. She explained the difficulties with gaining a true understanding the full extent of homelessness with Census data not an accurate count of homelessness and limitations in all data available generally. Leanne notes that AIHW data shows 60% of people who accessed services in the west were at risk of homelessness and around 40% were experiencing homelessness. More than 15,000 coming through homelessness services in the west represents the highest number of people seeking assistance for homelessness in Australia. Leanne provided a summary of the current state findings gathered through working with councils to collect data and understand observations and concerns. She presented key findings and advocacy priorities for committee consideration focussed on housing, assertive outreach, community-level data collection, coordination of services and resources to coordinate crisis responses locally. Leanne commented on the lack of assertive outreach across the west and that there is \$26million in the state



		budget for assertive outreach, but unsure at this stage what funds are coming to the west. <i>(Stephen Wall joined the meeting at 4.32pm.)</i> The Chair thanked AAEH for their work and delivery of the project. The Chair asked for clarification on data collection and engagement with stakeholders other than Councils. Leanne provided an overview of process with councils and lived experience engagement with Council to Homeless Persons (CHP) peer advice group engagement and recommended taking this piece of work to service providers. The Chair asked if the findings were consistent with the research out there and if there was anything unexpected along the way. Leanne said it was consistent with what they are hearing from other areas, however biggest surprise were the rates of homelessness access in the western suburbs. The committee was referred to Appendix 1 which provides a summary of findings of each LGA. The Chair sought clarification on advocacy ask 3 re: community data collection. AAEH confirmed it was to fund a system to collect the real-time data that is deidentified and made available to Councils. Councils would not contribute to the data collection - <i>Advance to Zero</i> is an example of one approach. Fiona thanked AAEH for the report. Pointed to the issue that came through re: illegal rooming houses, and that data is not generally being tracked but would be helpful in providing an understanding of what is happening in the region as a hidden issue. Fiona suggested a good next step would be to do some validation with service providers and suggested the committee should discuss after conclusion of this discussion. Leanne agreed that illegal rooming houses and squats would be an important area to look into. The research shows that while Brimbank has been actively collating this information/data, LeadWest councils acknowledged it was an issue. <i>AAEH left the meeting.</i> The Chair encouraged everyone to read the documents.
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		Councillor delegates requested time to read the documents in more detail and ask any questions via email ahead of the June meeting. The committee agreed to bring the research documents back to the June meeting for endorsement. Action: LeadWest homeless research documents to be added to June meeting agenda for further discussion and consideration.
6.	LeadWest Advocacy 6.1 Stakeholder engagement: MP Meetings 6.2 State Election Advocacy Update including Let's Get It Done campaign and Canberra delegation	6.1 - Stakeholder engagement: MP Meetings The Chair provided committee members an update on recent advocacy activities including meetings with Evan Mulholland MP and Mathew Hilkari MP – an update to the committee was provided via email ahead of the committee meeting. The Chair also provided updated the committee on a meeting between herself, the EO, the Chair of WoMEDA Peter Dawkins and Executive Director of WoMEDA, Giulia Baggio. The purpose of the meeting was to better understand the work and activities of WoMEDA and opportunities to support each other's work. The Chair advised she had provided WoMEDA with an overview of LeadWest's state election campaign, and WoMEDA had raised their campaign focussed on the next term of government. Cr Shaw said it was an important to understand the roles of WoMEDA and LeadWest so there isn't a crossover. She thanked the Chair for raising the matter. The Chair confirmed western region CEOs are part of the WoMEDA board and Stephen clarified that WoMEDA are aware of the need to not duplicate the role of LeadWest and the aim is to complement each other. WoMEDA is focussed on economic development. LeadWest represents its Councils. WoMEDA has industry-based membership, alongside local government. 6.2 State Election Advocacy Update The Chair provided update on the LeadWest State Election advocacy plan. She advised that the launch date has been moved to 2 June on the advice of the Advocacy Officers Group to align with when Parliament is sitting – and to avoid the Federal Budget release. Cr Nguyen and Cr Shaw both confirmed they were happy with the launch date proposed. The Chair outlined the campaign launch which would take place on the steps of Parliament and encouraged involvement from member councils, through their



	councillors and in particular Mayors. She confirmed she has spoken to her councillor group at Maribyrnong. Cr Shaw acknowledged the request and would discuss with Stephen post-meeting ahead of any formal invitations being sent to council. Roslyn advised that she has spoken with the Mayor of Melton, and they would welcome the Mayor being invited to the launch to attend alongside Cr Dr Zada. Roslyn recommended the invitation be sent via the Mayor. This approach was generally supported by the committee. Action: Invitations to be sent to LeadWest Council Mayors (or CEOs) to attend the Let's Get it Done campaign launch on 2 June. The Chair asked the EO to provide a further update on the campaign plans. The EO shared designs for the campaign launch materials, based on the preferred logo chosen at the February meeting and requested input into poster/corflute designs and messages. Councillors discussed preferences with the majority preferring option B (project name and campaign logo). Cr Hawli recommended incorporating the LeadWest logo into the design, which was supported. <i>(Cr Shaw left the meeting at 5pm.)</i> Cr Zada said the messaging should encourage parties to engage in conversation. Stephen offered to seek Cr Shaw's input into the design options, but agreed with the cleaner design - option B. The EO provided a further detail re: launch activities including media release and open letter to party leaders, which would be made available publicly. The Chair advised the CEOs would not be at the launch event. Canberra delegation in June Cr Yengi provided an update on the meetings that have been locked in for the LeadWest delegation to Canberra from 23-25 June.
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		Three meetings have been confirmed for Thursday 25 June, with meeting details to be shared by the EO with calendar holds to be placed in calendars shortly. Action: EO to provide meeting details for Canberra with committee members and place holds in calendars.
7.	Meeting close	The Chair declared the meeting closed at 5.13pm.

Meeting actions summary:

Meeting Item	Action
5 Homelessness research presentation	LeadWest homeless research documents to be added to June meeting agenda for further discussion and consideration.
6.2 State Election Advocacy Update	Invitations to be sent to LeadWest Council Mayors or CEOs to attend the Let's Get it Done campaign launch on 2 June.
6.2 State Election Advocacy Update	EO to provide meeting details for Canberra with committee members and place holds in calendars.

Next Meeting Date: Wednesday 3 June 2026, 3-4.30pm, Hobsons Bay City Council

2026 Meeting Schedule

- Wednesday 25 February, 3-4.30pm (online)
- Thursday 7 May 2026, 4-5pm (online – additional scheduled meeting)
- Wednesday 3 June, 3-4.30pm (in-person, Hobsons Bay City Council)
- Wednesday 2 September, 3-4.30pm (online)
- Wednesday 2 December, 3-4.30pm (in-person, Maribyrnong City Council)

12.6 ADVISORY COMMITTEES OF COUNCIL - AGGREGATED MEETING MINUTES

Author: Renee Hodgson - Manager Governance

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 meeting, provided as **Appendices 1 to 2** of this report, and adopt the recommendations arising within the Minutes:

1. Disability Advisory Committee 23 April 2026
2. Policy Review Panel 14 May 2026

REPORT

1. Executive Summary

Whilst not mentioned in the *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act), Council has the power to create Advisory Committees pursuant to its general power set out in section 10 of the 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 Act, Council has the power to create Advisory Committees pursuant to its general power set out in section 10 of the 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 2025/26 municipal year was approved by Council at its Scheduled Meetings on 6 and 24 November 2025.

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	23 April 2026
2.	Policy Review Panel	14 May 2026

3. Council and Wellbeing Plan Reference and Policy Reference

The Melton City Council 2025-2029 Council and Wellbeing Plan references:

3. A progressive and trusted Council

3.2 An organisation that prioritises good governance, integrity and accountability and is community minded in its decision-making

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 - 23 April 2026
2. Policy Review Panel Minutes - 14 May 2026

MINUTES



Disability Advisory Committee Meeting

held on 23 April 2026 in Melton Library and Learning Hub, 31 McKenzie Street Melton, Grant-Pyke Room.

Present:	Cr Kathy Majdlik	Councillor
	Cr Sophie Ramsey	Councillor
	Andrew Power	Community Representative
	Hayley Sayers	Community Representative
	Linda Campbell	Community Representative
	Ravindaur Kaur	Organisational Representative

In Attendance:	Roslyn Wai	CEO
	Coral Crameri	Manager Community Care and Active Living
	Aaron Tan	Coordinator Community Wellbeing and Inclusion
	Nicole Migani-Roberts	Advocacy and Inclusion Officer
	Matthew Hutchinson	Design & Investigations Coordinator
	Allison Coonan	Coordinator Executive Support

Guest:	Annemarie O'Connell	Auslan Trainer
	Rachael Altair	Business & Industry Development Officer
	Susan Beniston	Coordinator Economic Development & Tourism

Quorum: A quorum must be achieved for a meeting to commence. A quorum is at least 50% of each member category present. 2 Councillors, 2 Community Representatives and 1 Organisational Representative must be present.

Chairperson:	Cr Kathy Majdlik	Councillor
Minute Taker:	Allison Coonan	Coordinator Executive Support

1. Welcome

The Chairperson opened the meeting at 12:45pm and welcomed the Committee members and attendees.

2. Acknowledgement of Country

The Chairperson gave an Acknowledgement of Country.

3. Apologies

Mayor, Cr Lara Carli	Chair
Cr Julie Shannon	Councillor
Marie Claudine Agathe	Community Representative
Troy Scoble	Director City Life

MINUTES



4. Declaration of Interest and/or Conflict of Interest

Nil.

5. Confirmation of Minutes of Previous Meeting

The Disability Advisory Committee confirmed the minutes of the Disability Advisory Committee Meeting held on 5 March 2025.

6. Business Arising from Previous Minutes

6.1. Marveloo - Advocacy and Inclusion Officer

An update was provided on the utilisation of the Marveloo during the Lakeside Live event. The Marveloo with access matting was well utilised, its closeness to the stage was a great location and event security always in the vicinity. Council have received positive feedback for its utilisation and advertising through social media.

6.2. Communication Boards – Advocacy and Inclusion Officer

Officers referred to the March 10 meeting update and confirmed that photos of the Atherstone and Hazelwood Communication Boards were shared with the committee on 10 March.

7. Standing Agenda Items

7.1. Auslan Training Session – Annemarie O’Connell, Auslan Trainer

The committee participated in an Auslan training session conducted by Annemarie O’Connell from the Diamond Valley Learning Centre. Annemarie is a qualified teacher of the Deaf, providing short courses for individuals and businesses.

The committee were introduced to common signs, greetings and phrases as well as learning the Auslan alphabet. Cr Majdlik thanked Annemarie for introducing the committee to Auslan, with the training warmly received by all and a highlight of the meeting.

7.2. City of Melton Business Excellence Awards

Officers presented a recap of the 2025 Melton Business Excellence Awards and an overview of the upcoming 2026 awards. The presentation included:

- Noting the 2026 Disability Inclusion Initiative Award category description has been revised to better reflect and strengthen the importance of inclusivity.
- Overview of the Disability Inclusion Initiative Award category criteria was presented.
- Overview of social media campaign for the Disability Inclusion Initiative Award.
- Noting of key dates: Applications opening 13 May, Applications Close 9 July, Finalists Announced 22 July and award winners announced at the event on 16 Sept.
- Tickets to be offered to community representatives.

Officers encouraged the committee to reach out to local businesses to nominate and discuss the Disability Inclusion Initiative Award category.

Feedback was provided on the proposed social media images with suggestions they reflect leaders in the community, disability accessibility and inclusive images.

Officers were requested to consider improving safety access to the stage by reducing hazards where possible, covering electrical cords and ensuring the stage is stable.

MINUTES



Actions:

Officers to review images used for the Disability Inclusion Initiative Award social media campaign.

7.3. General update on matters relating to accessibility and inclusion

A general update was not presented during this meeting; officers have been providing a weekly update to the committee which has been positively received.

8. General Business

Linda Campbell, Community Representative, thanked officers for the new footpath connecting Melton West through to Bunnings, the new path has enabled her to travel easily and safely on her mobility scooter.

9. Next Meeting

The next meeting is to be held on Thursday 18 June 2026 commencing at 12.30pm at the Melton Library and Learning Hub, 31 McKenzie Street Melton, Grant-Pyke Room.

10. Close of Business

The meeting closed at 2:17pm.



MELTON CITY COUNCIL

Minutes of the Policy Review Panel Meeting of the Melton City Council

14 May 2026

MINUTES OF THE POLICY REVIEW PANEL14 MAY 2026

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MINUTES OF THE POLICY REVIEW PANEL14 MAY 2026

MELTON CITY COUNCIL**MINUTES OF THE POLICY REVIEW PANEL MEETING OF THE
MELTON CITY COUNCIL HELD VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS
ON 14 MAY 2026 AT 9:30 AM**

Present: Cr Carli, Mayor (Chair)
Cr Majdlik
Cr Shannon
Cr Ramsey

In Attendance: Roslyn Wai Chief Executive Officer
Emily Keogh Head of Governance
Renee Hodgson Manager Governance

1. WELCOME

The Chair, Cr Carli, opened the meeting at 9.33am and welcomed the Panel Members and attendees.

2. APOLOGIES

Nil.

3. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS AND / OR CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Nil.

4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

The Policy Review Panel noted the Minutes of the Policy Review Panel held on 2 April 2026 and adopted by Council at the Scheduled Meeting held on 27 April 2026.

5. OTHER BUSINESS CARRIED OVER FROM A PREVIOUS MEETING

Nil.

MINUTES OF THE POLICY REVIEW PANEL14 MAY 2026

6. PRESENTATION OF STAFF REPORTS**6.1 COUNCIL EXPENSES AND COUNCILLOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT POLICIES****Responsible Officer:** Emily Keogh - Head of Governance**Document Author:** Troy Delia - Senior Coordinator Governance**Motion**

Crs Ramsey/Majdlik.

That the Policy Review Panel recommend Council approve:

1. The revised and updated Council Expenses Policy, provided as **Appendix 1** to this report; with changes made by the Panel highlighted in yellow; and
2. The newly developed Councillor Professional Development Policy, provided as **Appendix 4** to this report, with changes made by the Panel highlighted in yellow.

CARRIED

The Panel noted that all Councillors had been provided with the opportunity to read and review the Council Expenses Policy and Councillor Professional Development Policy prior to the policies being presented to the Policy Review Panel.

1. Background**1.1 The Policy**

The Council Expenses Policy was last reviewed and updated on 22 July 2024 and is provided as **Appendix 3** to this report. With a review date scheduled of two years from its adoption, a review of the policy was undertaken to ensure the policy remains current.

In accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020 (the Act)*, Council is obligated to maintain a policy in relation to the reimbursement of Councillors or Delegated Committee members for legitimate out-of-pocket expenses. However, such reimbursement is contingent upon satisfying specific criteria, including the bona fide nature of the expenses, their relevance to the official role, and their reasonable necessity.

As a result of recent amendments to the Act which requires all Councillors to undertake induction training upon their election and ongoing professional development training throughout their term (including the requirements for the mayor and deputy mayor to undertake additional training upon their appointment to that role) it was identified that the provisions relating to Councillor professional development contained in the existing Council Expenses Policy, are no longer sufficient to meet Council's needs and obligations.

Therefore, it was determined that whilst the Council Expenses Policy was being reviewed to separate the Councillor professional development provisions to create a stand-alone Councillor Professional Development Policy and update the remainder of the policy to reflect current or industry practices.

MINUTES OF THE POLICY REVIEW PANEL14 MAY 2026

Council Expenses Policy

When reviewing the Council Expenses Policy, consideration was given to the way the existing provisions were being applied and interpreted, and whether the existing provisions took into consideration matters that are now considered to be good practice.

The key changes to the Council Expenses Policy are shown as track changes in **Appendix 2**, and include:

- Removal of the Insurance provision (insurance is not a reimbursable Councillor expense).
- Clarification and amendment of the Child Care/Carer (Care) Expenses provisions.
- Amendment of the Access and Inclusion provisions to provide additional options for assisting Councillors to perform their role.
- Amendment of the Councillor Allowance provisions to reflect the role of the Victorian Independent Remuneration Tribunal.
- Amendment to the Communication Technology provisions relating to the Use of Council equipment overseas, to state that it is not permitted.
- Amendment of the Apparel and Stationery provisions to add blazers, ties and scarves and introduce a process for the replacement of worn or damaged items if required.
- Amendment of the Travel and Vehicle Expenses provisions to allow for the reimbursement of Tolls and accommodation when travelling interstate or overseas.
- Clarification of the Mayoral Vehicle Provisions.
- Deletion of the Professional Development, Training and Conferences provisions (now contained within the newly created Councillor Professional Development Policy).
- Amendment of the Accompanying Partners/Guests provisions to provide exemption for circumstances where the Councillor has carer responsibilities or requires carer assistance.
- Clarification of the Meals provisions.
- Other minor administrative changes as required.

Councillor Professional Development Policy

The purpose of the Councillor Professional Development Policy is to set out the arrangements for supporting Councillor professional development and compliance with the induction and professional development obligations of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

Councillor professional development commences prior to nomination and continues throughout the four-year term as an elected representative, with a combination of mandatory training prescribed by legislation and discretionary training identified as necessary to the Council or Councillor.

Professional development may include conferences, courses, and training – generally these are one off, occasional or short-term in nature, and supported by a program, course material or invitation by organisers.

The proposed Policy is provided as **Appendix 4**, and includes provisions relating to:

- Budget allocations for Councillor Professional Development activities

MINUTES OF THE POLICY REVIEW PANEL14 MAY 2026

- Requirement for Councillors to complete an application to attend training or conference
- Mayoral Induction Program
- Mandatory Candidate Training
- Candidate Support Program
- Councillor Induction Program
- Regular Councillor Professional Development Program
- Councillor Participation
- Certification
- Conferences, Seminars and Other Training
- Australian Institute of Company Directors Course (AICD)
- Other provisions relating to Authorisation and Reporting.

1.2 Sources/benchmarking

Benchmarking was undertaken with like policies from other Councils, such as Brimbank, Hume, Merri-bek and Wyndham, to ensure consistency with best practice.

1.3 Consultation

Consultation has been undertaken with the Executive Leadership Team and Councillors at the 4 May 2026 Briefing of Councillors.

1.4 Communication and Implementation

The policies will be communicated to all Councillors who are not present at the Council meeting at which it is resolved to be adopted.

The policies will be available on Council's website.

1.5 Compliance

The Policy complies with the *Local Government Act 2020* and the *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*.

1.6 Measures of Success

If Councillors comply with these policies, then they are considered successful. Compliance with the Policies can only truly be measured by an Audit. Governance Reviews/Audits are conducted from time to time by the Inspectorate.

All out of pocket expense claims will be reported to the Audit and Risk Committee as provided for in its annual work plan and as required by the Act.

LIST OF APPENDICES

1. Council Expenses Policy - Draft with Policy Review Panel Changes
2. Council Expenses Policy - Changes Tracked
3. Council Expenses Policy July 2024 - Current
4. Councillor Professional Development Policy - Draft with Policy Review Panel Changes

MINUTES OF THE POLICY REVIEW PANEL

14 MAY 2026

Item 6.1 Council Expenses and Councillor Professional Development Policies

Appendix 1 Council Expenses Policy - Draft with Policy Review Panel Changes

Council Expenses Policy

Date adopted	TBA
Adopted by	Council
Review due	May 2029
Responsible officer	Head of Governance
Records reference	10404147

1. Purpose

The Council Expenses Policy (**Policy**) supports the requirements of the *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act) in relation to payment of allowances and reimbursement of expenses for Councillors and Delegated Committee members. It also provides an overview of how Council provides resources to its Councillors and Delegated Committee members to support them to carry out their functions and duties.

This Policy is not intended to prescribe for every possible situation that may arise. Any matter not provided for in this Policy will be considered by the Mayor and / or the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), or the Deputy Mayor if the matter pertains to the Mayor.

Under the Act, Council must reimburse a Councillor or Delegated Committee member for out-of-pocket expenses where the Council is satisfied that the expenses:

- Are bona fide expenses;
- Have been reasonably incurred in the performance of the role of Councillor or Delegated Committee member; and
- Are reasonably necessary for the Councillor or Delegated Committee member to perform that role.

2. Application and Scope

This Policy applies to all Councillors elected to the Melton City Council.

This Policy also applies to Delegated Committee members where specified under this Policy.

Expenditure must always be in the interests of the City of Melton community and is allocated from Council's annual budget.

Claims for any expenditure not included in this Policy will be subject to a Council resolution.

MINUTES OF THE POLICY REVIEW PANEL

14 MAY 2026

Item 6.1 Council Expenses and Councillor Professional Development Policies

Appendix 1 Council Expenses Policy - Draft with Policy Review Panel Changes

3. General Provisions

3.1. Overarching Principles

- Where possible, Council will book and pay for any expenses up front. Where this is not appropriate or practicable, Council will reimburse the Councillor for the out-of-pocket expense/s incurred, where those expenses comply with this Policy.
- Expense claims must be reasonable and proportionate. They must also include an explanation if the connection between the expense incurred, and the role of Councillor or member of a Delegated Committee is unclear.
- Unreasonable expenses will not be reimbursed. For example, Council will not reimburse mini-bar expenses or the purchase of alcohol. The Head of Governance will determine whether expenses claimed are considered to be unreasonable or disproportionate in accordance with this Policy.
- Council will only reimburse expenses incurred by Councillors. Council will not pay for, or reimburse expenses for, partners or anyone else accompanying the Councillor on external Council-related business, unless the Councillor requires access and equity support in accordance with section 3.5 of this policy.
- Where a Delegated Committee is appointed by Council, relevant clauses from this Policy will be incorporated into the Terms of Reference and reimbursement of bona fide out-of-pocket expenses incurred by Delegated Committee members while performing their duties in those roles will be made in line with this Policy.
- Training in relation to this Policy will be provided to all Councillors during the initial Councillor Induction training and periodically to ensure they are aware of the protocols in relation to Councillor expenses.

3.2. Claiming Expenses

All claims for reimbursement of expenses must be submitted via the electronic Expenses Claim Form. Documentation, such as tax invoices, receipts etc, must be uploaded with the claim form to verify the expenditure.

Receipts must be provided for any expenses which are being claimed, unless otherwise specified in this Policy. Failure to produce a receipt may result in the expense not being reimbursed.

Receipts must be itemised and contain sufficient, relevant information about the expense incurred. Receipts with only a total price, without any explanation of what the expenditure relates to (such as EFTPOS receipts), will not be accepted.

The Head of Governance will review and authorise relevant claims in accordance with this Policy.

Reimbursement will occur as soon as practicable following the receipt of an accurately completed Council Expense Claim Form, and all required documentation, being received and authorised. Reimbursement will be paid via electronic funds transfer into the Councillor/Delegated Committee member's nominated bank account.

All reimbursements will be paid in arrears.

MINUTES OF THE POLICY REVIEW PANEL

14 MAY 2026

Item 6.1 Council Expenses and Councillor Professional Development Policies

Appendix 1 Council Expenses Policy - Draft with Policy Review Panel Changes

Requests for reimbursement should be received within 30 days of the cost being incurred. All claims for the previous financial year should be made by 7 July each year to ensure that they appear in the correct financial year.

3.3. Legal Costs

3.3.1. Responsibility

Subject to 3.3.2 and Council's adopted Internal Resolution Procedure, other than by specific Council resolution any legal expenses incurred by a Councillor, or Delegated Committee member, shall be the responsibility of that Councillor or Delegated Committee member. A Councillor or Delegated Committee member shall not engage legal representation or seek legal advice where they will be seeking reimbursement from Council unless specifically authorised by Council before incurring the costs.

3.3.2. Risk to Health and Safety

Where the CEO believes that there would be a risk to health and safety for a Councillor or Delegated Committee member, and supporting legal advice from a qualified legal practitioner recommends the provision of Council funded legal advice in relation to a specific matter, the CEO may authorise expenditure for legal costs in relation to that specific matter, under delegation.

3.4. Child Care/Carer (Care) Expenses

Council will reimburse the cost of necessary child care or carer services where the provision of care is reasonably required for a Councillor or Delegated Committee member to perform their role. Carer services will be eligible to be reimbursed when a Councillor is a carer in a care relationship within the meaning of section 4 of the *Carers Recognition Act 2012*.

A person who provides child/family care does not need to be a licenced or registered provider, however, must not be a family member (spouse or domestic partner, parent, sibling, grandparent, child, grandchild, step-parent, step-sibling, or step-child of the Councillor or Delegated Committee member) or any person who normally lives with the Councillor, Delegated Committee member, or child/family member, except where a live-in (professional) helper such as a nanny is required to work extra time at extra expense because of the Councillor or Delegated Committee member's duties.

Care expenses must be claimed via a completed Council Expenses Claim Form and substantiated by documentation showing the dates and times care was provided. The Councillor or Delegated Committee member must also provide the description of Council work undertaken and details of child care / caring required for each occasion.

Care Expenses will be reimbursed for attendance at:

- Council Meetings, Briefings of Councillors, and Submission Hearings of the Council;
- Delegated Committee Meetings;
- Official Council functions;

MINUTES OF THE POLICY REVIEW PANEL

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- Meetings arising as a result of a Councillor being appointed by the Council to an external body or an Advisory Committee;
- Training or conferences the Councillor is attending which Council has paid for; and
- Other meetings, events, or occasions as agreed from time to time by the Mayor or Head of Governance, or by resolution of the Council, prior to the expense being incurred.

Care Expenses that may be reimbursed include:

- payment to an accredited child care/attendant care provider, or
- payment to a person providing care who does not:
 - have a familial relationship with the Councillor; or
 - reside either permanently or temporarily with the Councillor; or
 - have a relationship with the Councillor or the Councillor's partner such that it would be inappropriate for Council to reimburse monies paid to the care provider.

Fees are generally payable per hour or part thereof, subject to any minimum period which is part of the care provider's usual terms.

Fees that can be reimbursed are subject to a maximum hourly rate approved by the Chief Executive Officer (guided by industry rate).

3.5. Access and Inclusion

Council commits to supporting any individual who requires particular support or equipment to be able to fulfil their role as a Councillor or Delegated Committee member.

The Head of Governance may assess and approve requests for support, beyond that specified in this policy, to allow a Councillor living with a disability (whether temporary or permanent) to perform their duties of office.

Councillors or Delegated Committee members requiring particular support or reasonable modifications to access Council's facilities or utilise Council's resources should contact the Head of Governance.

3.6. Councillor Welfare

Councillors and Delegated Committee members may approach the CEO with regard to any specific guidance, counselling or coaching they may require to enhance their performance as a Councillor or Delegated Committee member.

Councillors or Delegated Committee members may seek counselling on a confidential basis through Council's Employee Assistance Program.

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4. Councillor Allowances

Council will pay an allowance to the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Councillors in accordance with the relevant determination made by the Victorian Independent Remuneration Tribunal.

Payment will be made by electronic funds transfer into the Councillor's nominated bank account.

Allowances shall be paid in arrears, approximately fortnightly or monthly as nominated by the Councillor, and shall continue to be paid until such time that the Councillor ceases to hold the office of Councillor, or where the Councillor has elected to not receive their allowance in accordance with section 39(5) of the *Local Government Act 2020* and Council's 'Councillors as Candidates in State and Federal Elections Policy'.

Allowances will be withheld in the event that a Councillor is ordered to stand down in accordance with the Act.

5. Administrative Support

5.1. Meeting Rooms and Mayoral Office

The Mayor is provided with office accommodation at the Melton Civic Centre and Caroline Springs Library which may be used for Council business.

Council also provides a Councillor Lounge at the Melton Civic Centre which includes an office/lounge area and a meeting room which is available for all Councillors to use. Refreshments will be provided for Councillors in the Councillor Lounge.

Councillors may request to use other meeting rooms owned and controlled by Council for meetings where the primary purpose is to allow the Councillor to discharge their Council duties. The Councillor must be in attendance and bookings must be made in advance through the Mayor and Councillor Support Team. Costs associated with booking the meeting room will be included in Council's operational budget. Councillors will be required to reimburse any costs incurred outside this Policy.

5.2. Professional Memberships

Council will pay a Councillor's membership of a professional association where the qualification for the membership was gained via a previously approved Councillor Professional Development program or event..

5.3. Communication Technology

Due to the significant environmental impact associated with printing Council's business papers, it is Council's preference that all Council and Committee papers, Councillor communications and correspondence are distributed electronically.

Councillors will be provided with a mobile phone, laptop computer and a multi-functional printer/scanner/photocopier to assist with the conduct of Council business. Councillors will also be provided with a Council email address and mobile phone number. Any equipment and service provided is to be used for official Council business only.

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Council will pay all costs associated with the provision of this equipment and services including paper for printing, printer cartridges, connection fees, rental charges and all Council business call and data charges. These costs will be reported in the quarterly Councillor expenses report.

It is acknowledged that there will be some incidental private use of mobile communications equipment, such as occasional standard phone calls and text messages within Australia.

Use of council equipment overseas is not permitted.

Councillors must adhere to Council's Privacy Policy and the Model Councillor Code of Conduct in using any IT resources provided by Council. Council equipment and electronic communications system must be used in accordance with policies and legislation. Council-provided technology such as mobile phones and laptops will be replaced for each new Council term and in accordance with Council's policies.

5.4. Administrative Support

The Mayor and Councillor Support Team will provide administrative support to Councillors to assist them, such as with responding to correspondence, enquiries, requests for service, registrations for attendance at approved conferences, reservations for accommodation and meeting rooms as part of their official duties as a Councillor.

The Mayor and Councillor Support Team will provide diary management support for Councillors relating to their official delegate appointments, official invites and events that are included in the Council Calendar.

5.5. Inwards Correspondence & Invitations

All hardcopy mail received by Council is deemed to be Council business and will be opened by Information Management staff. Private mail should not be sent via, or to, the Council address.

The Mayor and Councillor Support Team will advise Councillor/s of any relevant correspondence or invitations received.

5.6. Apparel and Stationery

Council's official letterhead is only to be used for official Council correspondence signed by either the Mayor or an authorised member of Council staff.

Each Councillor, on request, may be provided with the following Melton City Council corporate apparel which is to be returned when the Councillor ceases to hold the office of Councillor:

- one suit jacket
- one winter jacket/soft shell jacket
- one pair of pants or skirt/dress
- 2 shirts/tops

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Replacement of worn out or damaged items of Melton City Council corporate apparel can be requested once per Council term, via the Mayor and Councillor Support Team. The relevant item must be returned to Council at the time of the request for a replacement.

Councillors will be provided with protective clothing to meet safety requirements in carrying out the duties of office (for example, high visibility vests and helmets for site visits), as required.

5.7. Return of Resources

All resources provided to Councillors are provided for use by the Councillor in the conduct of their duties of office. All equipment provided and items purchased, including representational corporate apparel bearing the Melton City Council logo, shall be returned to the Mayor and Councillor Support Team within seven days of the Councillor ceasing to hold the office of Councillor, unless specified elsewhere in this Policy.

6. Travel and Vehicle Expenses

Council encourages a range of travel options conducive to the environment. Reasonable transport expenses incurred by Councillors or Members of Delegated Committees in the course of their official duties in their role will be reimbursed.

Where travel is required, any additional stops or arrangements necessary to accommodate physical or medical requirements may be approved by the Chief Executive Officer in consultation with the Mayor.

Expenses will be reimbursed to Councillors following receipt of a completed Expense Claim Form which includes all required information and supporting documentation.

6.1. Private vehicle use

Council will reimburse travel costs associated with the use of a private vehicle, including tolls and car parking fees, reasonably incurred when attending meetings and functions (within Victoria) which are related to their duties as a Councillor or Member of a Delegated Committee.

Travel expenses claimed in relation to events must be supported by documentation which demonstrates the event was related to their duties as a Councillor or member of a Delegated Committee.

The allowance payable for reimbursement of private vehicle use will be in accordance with the rates determined by the Australian Taxation Office (ATO) 'cents per kilometre' method calculation.

Councillors can also seek reimbursement for pre-approved use of a taxi, uber or like service provider for the cost of travel directly related to their duties, noting that the use of public transport or private transport is the preferred method of transport where practical. In determining practicality the following matters will be considered:

- Proximity to a train station
- The time of the event / meeting/ Council business the Councillor is attending

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- Relevant safety considerations
- Proximity of the event / meeting / Council business to a car park
- Accessibility requirements

6.2. Interstate travel

Council will cover costs associated with Councillors travelling interstate on Council business that is approved by the CEO in consultation with the Mayor and is within the limits of the budget approved by Council. This comprises airfares, accommodation, car hire, taxis, and ride-sharing fares.

All Councillor travel will be booked by the Mayor and Councillor Support Team and will utilise the most direct route and the most practical and economical mode of transport. Air travel up to and including 5 hours duration will be in economy class. Air travel expected to be greater than 5 hours duration will be premium economy class. To ensure value for money, all requests for airline bookings and accommodation must be advised as soon as possible.

Travel claims will be for travel to and from the Councillor's notified place of normal residence.

6.3. Overseas travel

Council will cover costs associated with Councillors travelling overseas on Council business as approved by Council resolution within the limits of the budget approved by Council. This comprises airfares, accommodation, visas, passports, car hire, taxis, ride-sharing fares, and any other genuine expenses.

All Councillor travel will be booked by the Mayor and Councillor Support Team and will utilise the most direct route and the most practical and economical mode of transport. Air travel up to and including 5 hours duration will be in economy class. Air travel expected to be greater than 5 hours duration will be premium economy class. To ensure value for money, all requests for airline bookings and accommodation must be advised as soon as the travel is approved by Council.

Travel claims will be for travel to and from the Councillor's notified place of normal residence.

6.4. Mayoral Vehicle

The Mayor is expected to perform a range of additional duties throughout their mayoral term. Council will support the Mayor of the day, through the provision of a fully maintained Council vehicle, commensurate with the role and duties, in accordance with Council's Motor Vehicle Policy and in consultation with the Mayor.

The Mayoral vehicle will include a fleet card for fuel purchases.

6.5. Council Pool Vehicles

A Council fleet vehicle may be provided for use by Councillors for Council related business, should a vehicle be available. Any use of a Council fleet vehicle will be reported as a Councillor expense in the quarterly report in accordance with the Australian Taxation Office cents per kilometre rate.

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6.6. Fines and Infringements

Any costs arising from a breach of road, traffic parking or other regulations or laws or for damage or loss of a vehicle is the responsibility of the person travelling and will not be reimbursed or funded by Council.

7. Events and Functions

Provision of resources, or reimbursement of expenses, to a Councillor to attend a function or event will only be provided:

- Where the Mayor has been invited to represent Council at an event;
- Where a benefit to Melton City Council can be demonstrated e.g., attendance will contribute towards a commitment under the Council Plan;
- Where, if an invitation has been received by the individual, they have been invited in their capacity as a Councillor;
- Following all supporting documentation, such as invitations / emails etc., being presented with any claims resulting from the attendance.
- Where a Councillor is unable to attend an event or function – an apology should be provided either directly to the organiser or via the Councillor Support Team as soon as practicable.
- Where a cost has been incurred by Council for a Councillor to attend an event or function – failure to attend an event without an apology may result in the Councillor being asked to reimburse Council for the cost of attendance. This decision will be made by the CEO in consultation with the Mayor, taking into consideration any special circumstances that may have occurred. Evidence of these circumstances may be requested.

Invitations to events that are unrelated to their role as Councillor may give rise to conflict of interest concerns and Councillors should consider the Councillor Gift Policy when considering these invitations.

Where acceptance of the invitation could be perceived as a conflict of interest or create an impression of compromised impartiality, the invitation should be politely declined.

Council does not support political parties, financially or by any other means. Where a Councillor attends a political party event in a personal capacity the cost is to be borne by the individual Councillor and no reimbursement will be provided. This does not apply to official functions the Councillor is attending in their role of Councillor which are also attended by members of political parties.

7.1. Charity fundraising events

Council may meet the cost of the Mayor or, if the Mayor is unable to attend, their representative, to attend charity fundraising events within the City of Melton where the work of the charity benefits the Melton community. If the Mayor or their representative wishes to make a financial contribution to the charity (e.g., a donation or purchase of an auction item) they will be required to make this contribution personally.

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Council is sometimes asked to support a charity or fund-raising event by purchasing tickets or groups of tickets (such as "tables"). Requests of this nature will be approved by the CEO. The CEO, in consultation with the Mayor, will also determine how the tickets will be allocated and whether the recipients will be required to purchase the tickets or contribute towards their cost.

8. Accompanying Partners/Guests

Any additional attendance fees, airfares accommodation costs, meal costs, ticket or any other costs incurred as a result of the attendance of partners and/or children shall be borne by the Councillor. Council will not provide administration assistance to undertake travel arrangements for any person other than the Councillor(s) attending, unless specific exemption is granted for circumstances where the Councillor has carer responsibilities or requires carer assistance.

9. Accommodation & Meals

Where overnight accommodation is required, accommodation will be selected based on what is reasonable given the location and event being attended.

Accommodation will be arranged to achieve the best value for Council, with breakfast and parking being included wherever possible. Accommodation is to be based at the training/conference venue, or at close proximity. The Mayor and Councillor Support Team will book the accommodation upon receipt of an approved Councillor Application to Attend Training or Conference Form, which will be approved by the Head of Governance.

Should Councillors elect to stay at accommodation that is more expensive than the above rates the Councillor will be responsible for paying the difference.

Council will not cover or reimburse the purchase of alcohol.

9.1. Other accommodation costs

In-room movie charges and dry-cleaning/laundry costs will not be reimbursed to a Councillor or paid for by Council.

9.2. Meals

When a Councillor is attending training and conferences in person, Council will pay for meals that are not included in the training or conference package or included with the accommodation arrangements. Meal allowances will also be paid when a Councillor is attending official Council meetings or functions of an extended duration in person that occur during a standard meal period and where a meal is not provided at the meeting or function.

Meal allowances will be paid in accordance with the reasonable meal allowance amounts published by the Australian Taxation Office (ATO), as updated from time to time. Applicable limits will be based on the most current ATO rates in effect at the time the expense is incurred. Current rates for the 2025-26 year are as follows:

Breakfast -	\$34.75
Lunch -	\$39.10
Dinner -	\$66.65

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Should Councillors elect to purchase a meal that is more expensive than the allowances above, the Councillor will be responsible for paying the difference.

Incidental costs such as **snacks**, coffee or alcohol will not be reimbursed by Council.

Mini bar expenses of \$15 per day may be reimbursed to Councillors, noting however, this excludes alcohol and should be utilised only where no other options are available. All other mini bar item accounts are the responsibility of the Councillor.

10. Reporting

The CEO shall ensure that any reporting in relation to Councillor expenses and/or travel required by the Act or the relevant regulations is completed.

Full details of all reimbursements made in accordance with this Policy will be provided quarterly to the Audit and Risk Committee.

In the interests of transparency and good governance, details of reimbursements to Councillors and Delegated Committee members will also be published in Council's Annual Report and quarterly on Council's website.

11. Definitions

Term	Definition
The Act	means the <i>Local Government Act 2020</i>
Consumer Price Index (CPI)	Means the food and non-alcoholic beverage Consumer Price Index in Melbourne, Australia or if this index is discontinued or suspended, such other index that represents the change in the cost of living in Melbourne
Official Council Functions	means functions arranged by Council where Councillors have been invited to attend in their capacity as Councillor
Official Council Business	means business undertaken in the performance of the role of Councillor

12. Related Documents

Name	Location
<i>Local Government Act 2020</i>	https://www.legislation.vic.gov.au/in-force/acts/local-government-act-2020
Model Councillor Code of Conduct	Documents Reports Strategies Melton City Council
Councillor Professional Development Policy	Documents Reports Strategies Melton City Council

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Name	Location
Public Transparency Policy	Documents Reports Strategies Melton City Council
Motor Vehicle Policy	Melton City Council Intranet
Credit Card Policy	Documents Reports Strategies Melton City Council
Councillor Gift Policy	Documents Reports Strategies Melton City Council

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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Item 6.1 Council Expenses and Councillor Professional Development Policies
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Date adopted	22-July-2024 <u>TBA</u>
Adopted by	Council
Review due	22-July-2026 <u>TBA</u>
Responsible officer	Head of Governance
Records reference	10404147

1. Purpose

The Council Expenses Policy (is Policy) supports the requirements of the *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act) in relation to payment of allowances and reimbursement of expenses for Councillors and Delegated Committee members. It also provides an overview of how Council provides resources ~~and training~~ to its Councillors and Delegated Committee members to support them to carry out their functions and duties.

This Policy is not intended to prescribe for every possible situation that may arise. Any matter not provided for in this Policy will be considered by the Mayor and / or the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), or the Deputy Mayor if the matter pertains to the Mayor.

Under the Act, Council must reimburse a Councillor or Delegated Committee member for out-of-pocket expenses where the Council is satisfied that the expenses:

- Are bona fide expenses;
- Have been reasonably incurred in the performance of the role of Councillor or Delegated Committee member; and
- Are reasonably necessary for the Councillor or Delegated Committee member to perform that role.

2. Application and Scope

This Policy applies to all Councillors elected to the Melton City Council.

This Policy also applies to Delegated Committee members where specified under this Policy.

Expenditure must always be in the interests of the City of Melton community and is allocated from Council's annual budget.

Claims for any expenditure not included in this Policy ~~will~~ may be subject to a Council resolution.

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3. General Provisions

3.1. Overarching Principles

- Where possible, Council will book and pay for any expenses up front. Where this is not appropriate or practicable, Council will reimburse the Councillor for the out-of-pocket expense/s incurred, where those expenses comply with this Policy.
- Expense claims must be reasonable and proportionate. They must also include an explanation ~~for the expense~~ if the connection between the expense incurred, and the role of Councillor or member of a Delegated Committee is unclear.
- Unreasonable expenses will not be reimbursed. For example, Council will not reimburse mini-bar expenses ~~for~~ the purchase of alcohol. The Head of Governance will determine whether expenses claimed are considered to be unreasonable or disproportionate in accordance with this Policy.
- Council will only reimburse expenses incurred by Councillors. Council will not pay for, or reimburse expenses for, partners or anyone else accompanying the Councillor on external Council-related business~~—, unless the Councillor requires access and equity support in accordance with section 3.5 of this policy.~~
- Where a Delegated Committee is appointed by Council, relevant clauses from this Policy will be incorporated into the Terms of Reference and reimbursement of bona fide out-of-pocket expenses incurred by Delegated Committee members while performing their duties in those roles will be made in line with this Policy.
- Training in relation to this Policy will be provided to all Councillors during the initial Councillor Induction training and periodically to ensure they are aware of the protocols in relation to Councillor expenses.

3.2. Claiming Expenses

All claims for reimbursement of expenses must be submitted via the electronic Expenses Claim Form. Documentation, such as tax invoices, receipts etc, must be uploaded with the claim form to verify the expenditure.

Receipts/~~tax-invoices~~ must be provided for any expenses which are being claimed, unless otherwise specified in this Policy. Failure to produce a receipt/~~tax-invoice~~ may result in the expense not being reimbursed.

Receipts/~~tax-invoices~~ must be itemised and contain sufficient, relevant information about the expense incurred. ~~EFTPOS-r~~Receipts/~~invoices~~ with only a total price, without any explanation of what the expenditure relates to (~~such as EFTPOS receipts~~), will not be accepted.

The Head of Governance will review and authorise ~~the- relevant~~ claims in accordance with this Policy.

Reimbursement will occur ~~within-21-days~~as soon as practicable~~possible~~ following the receipt of an accurately completed Council Expense Claim Form, and all required documentation, being received and authorised. Reimbursement will be paid via electronic funds transfer into the Councillor/Delegated Committee member's nominated bank account.

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All reimbursements will be paid in arrears.

Requests for reimbursement should be received within ~~30-60~~ days of the cost being incurred. ~~Claims for expenses submitted three months or more since the expenses were incurred will not be reimbursed.~~ All claims for the previous financial year ~~should~~ must be made by 7 July each year to ensure that they appear in the correct financial year.

~~Claims for reimbursement of expenses incurred in a previous financial year cannot be accepted once the accounts for that year have been closed.~~

~~3.3. Insurance~~

~~Council will ensure that policies of insurance are maintained in accordance with the provisions of the Act to provide the relevant protections to Councillors and Delegated Committee members while performing their duties as a Councillor or Delegated Committee member. These insurance policies include:~~

- ~~• Public liability~~
- ~~• Professional indemnity~~
- ~~• Councillor and Officers liability~~

~~3.4.3.3. Legal Costs~~~~3.3.1. Responsibility~~

~~Subject to 3.3.2 and Council's adopted Internal Resolution Procedure, Other than by specific Council resolution any legal expenses incurred by a Councillor, or Delegated Committee member, shall be the responsibility of that Councillor or Delegated Committee member. A Councillor or Delegated Committee member shall not engage legal representation or seek legal advice where they will be seeking reimbursement from Council unless specifically authorised by Council before incurring the costs.~~

~~3.3.2. Risk to Health and Safety~~

~~Where the CEO believes that there would be a risk to health and safety for a Councillor or Delegated Committee member, and supporting legal advice from a qualified legal practitioner recommends the provision of Council funded legal advice in relation to a specific matter, the CEO may authorise expenditure for Councillor legal costs in relation to that specific matter, under delegation.~~

~~3.5.3.4. Child Care/Carer (Care) Expenses~~

~~Council will reimburse the cost of necessary child care or carer services where the provision of care is reasonably required for a Councillor or Delegated Committee member to perform their role. Carer services will be eligible to be reimbursed when a Councillor is a carer in a care relationship within the meaning of section 4 of the Carers Recognition Act 2012.~~

~~A person who provides child/family care does not need to be a licenced or registered~~

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~~provider, however, must not be an immediate family member (spouse or domestic partner, parent/mother/father, sibling/sister/brother, grandparent/mother/grandfather, child, grandchild, step-parent, step-sibling, or step-child of the Councillor or Delegated Committee member or sister-in-law/brother-in-law) or any person who normally lives with the Councillor, Delegated Committee member, or child/family member, except where a live-in (professional) helper such as a nanny is required to work extra time at extra expense because of the Councillor or Delegated Committee member's duties~~

~~Care expenses will not be reimbursed if paid to a family member or a person who normally or regularly lives with the Councillor or Delegated Committee member, except where a live-in (professional) helper such as a nanny is required to work extra time at extra expense because of the Councillor or Delegated Committee member's duties.~~

Care expenses ~~will~~ must be claimed via a completed Council Expenses Claim Form and ~~shall be~~ substantiated by documentation showing the dates and times care was provided. The Councillor or Delegated Committee member ~~must~~ shall also provide the description of Council work undertaken and details of child care / caring required for each occasion.

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Care Expenses will be reimbursed for attendance at:

- Council Meetings, Briefings ~~of Councillors Sessions~~, and Submission Hearings of the Council;
- Delegated Committee Meetings;
- Official Council functions;

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- Meetings arising as a result of a Councillor being appointed by the Council to an external body or an Advisory Committee;
- Training or conferences the Councillor is attending which Council has paid for; and
- Other meetings, events, or occasions as agreed from time to time by the Mayor or CEO-Head of Governance, or by resolution of the Council, prior to the expense being incurred.

Care Expenses that may be reimbursed include:

- payment to an accredited child care/attendant care provider, or
- payment to a person providing care who does not:
 - have a familial ~~or like~~ relationship with the Councillor; or
 - reside either permanently or temporarily with the Councillor; or
 - have a relationship with the Councillor or the Councillor's partner such that it would be inappropriate for Council to reimburse monies paid to the care provider.

Fees are generally payable per hour or part thereof, subject to any minimum period which is part of the care provider's usual terms.

~~Rates for non-accredited child care/attendant care provider must be reasonable and agreed in advance where possible. Fees that can be reimbursed are subject to a maximum hourly rate approved by the Chief Executive Officer (guided by industry rate).~~

3.6.3.5. Access and Inclusion

Council commits to supporting any individual who requires particular assistance support or equipment to be able to fulfil their role as a Councillor or Delegated Committee member.

~~The Head of Governance may assess and approve requests for support, beyond that specified in this policy, to allow a Councillor living with a disability (whether temporary or permanent) to perform their duties of office.~~

Councillors or Delegated Committee members requiring particular workplace assistance support or reasonable modifications to access Council's facilities or utilise Council's resources should contact the Head of Governance.

3.7.3.6. Councillor Welfare

Councillors and Delegated Committee members may approach the CEO with regard to any specific guidance, counselling or coaching they may require to enhance their performance as a Councillor or Delegated Committee member.

Councillors or Delegated Committee members ~~experiencing personal difficulties~~ may seek counselling on a confidential basis through Council's Employee Assistance

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Council will pay an allowance to the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Councillors ~~as in accordance with the relevant any required under determination made by the the Act~~ Victorian Independent Remuneration Tribunal.

Allowances shall be paid ~~in arrears~~, approximately ~~fortnightly or monthly~~ ~~as nominated by the Councillor~~, provided that ~~upon and shall continue to be paid until such time that the~~ Councillor ceases to hold ~~the~~ office of Councillor, or pending an election, payment shall be withheld until such time as the Councillor is declared elected. If a Councillor retires or has their position as a Councillor terminated, ~~they will be required to reimburse Council any Allowance paid in advance.~~

Allowances will be withheld in the event that a Councillor is ~~suspended or~~ ordered to stand down in accordance with the Act.

Payment will be made by electronic funds transfer into the Councillor's nominated bank account.

6.5. Administrative Support**6.1.5.1. Meeting Rooms and Mayoral Office**

The Mayor is provided with office accommodation at the Melton Civic Centre and Caroline Springs Library which may be used for Council business.

Council also provides a Councillor Lounge at the Melton Civic Centre which includes an office/lounge area and a meeting room which is available for all Councillors to use. Refreshments will be provided for Councillors in the Councillor Lounge.

Councillors may request to use other meeting rooms owned and controlled by Council for meetings where the primary purpose is to allow the Councillor to discharge their Council duties. The Councillor must be in attendance and bookings must be made in advance through the Mayor and Councillor Support Team. Costs associated with booking the meeting room will be included in Council's operational budget. Councillors will be required to reimburse any costs incurred outside this Policy.

6.2.5.2. Professional Memberships

Council will pay a Councillor's membership of a professional association where the qualification for the membership was gained via ~~the a previously Council approved~~ "Councillor Professional Development ~~program or event~~, ~~Training and Conferences~~" provisions of this Policy.

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6.3.5.3. Communication Technology

Due to the significant environmental impact associated with printing Council's business papers, it is Council's preference is that all Council and Committee papers, Councillor communications and correspondence are distributed electronically.

Councillors will be provided with a mobile phone, laptop computer and a multi-functional printer/scanner/photocopier to assist with the conduct of Council business. Where special accommodations are required, this can be approved by the CEO in consultation with the Mayor. Councillors will also be provided with a Council email address and mobile phone number. Any equipment and service provided is to be used for official Council business only.

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Council will pay all costs associated with the provision of this equipment and services including paper for printing, printer cartridges, connection fees, rental charges and all Council business call and data charges. These costs will be reported in the quarterly Councillor expenses report.

It is acknowledged that there will be some incidental private use of mobile communications equipment, such as occasional standard phone calls and text messages within Australia.

Use of council equipment overseas is not permitted. must be pre-approved in writing by the CEO.

Councillors must adhere to Council's Privacy Policy and the Model Councillor Code of Conduct in using any IT resources provided by Council. Council equipment and electronic communications system must be used within the boundaries of normal appropriate practice in accordance with policies and legislation.

This includes, but is not limited to:

- Storage, transmission, downloading or display of material must not contravene any state or federal law such as equal opportunity, occupational health and safety, and sexual harassment legislation.
- Communication activities must not defame an individual, organisation, association, company, or business.
- The use must not contravene a Council policy, procedure, statute, or regulation.
- The equipment or electronic communications system must not be used to run a private business, whether for profit or not-for-profit.

Any faults or issues with the equipment should be reported to the Mayor and Councillor Support Team at the earliest possible opportunity and they will liaise with Council's Technology department to have the fault or issue rectified.

Council-provided technology such as mobile phones and laptops will be replaced for each new Council term and in accordance with Council's policies.

6.4.5.4. Administrative Support

The Mayor and Councillor Support Team will provide administrative support to Councillors to assist them, such as with responding to correspondence, enquiries, requests for service, registrations for attendance at approved conferences, reservations for accommodation and meeting rooms as part of their official duties as a Councillor.

The Mayor and Councillor Support Team will provide diary management support for Councillors relating to their official delegate appointments, official invites and events that are included in the Council Calendar.

6.5.5.5. Mail Inwards Correspondence & Invitations

All hardcopy mail received by Council is deemed to be Council business and will be opened by Information Management Central Records staff. Private mail should not be sent via, or to, the Council address.

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The Mayor and Councillor Support Team will advise Councillor/s of any relevant correspondence or invitations received.

6.6.5.6. Apparel and Stationery

Council's official letterhead is only to be used for official Council correspondence signed by either the Mayor or an authorised member of Council staff. Councillors are to provide their own letterhead for electoral or ward representation purposes and make it clear they are communicating in their personal capacity, not as a representative of Council.

Each Councillor, on request, may be provided with the following Melton City Council corporate apparel which is to be returned when the Councillor ceases to hold the office of Councillor:

- one suit jacket or blazer
- one winter jacket/soft shell jacket
- one pair of pants or skirt/dress
- 2 shirts/tops
- One tie or scarf

A budget allocation of \$1,000 per Councillor per term, is available for the purchase of apparel, should a Councillor prefer to source particular items themselves. These items of apparel must display Councils logo to be eligible.

At the mid-point of each Council term, each Councillor, on request, is to be provided with a replacement jacket and pants or skirt/dress, as required.

A further budget allocation of \$1,000 per Council term per Councillor is made for the purchase of additional or ~~r~~Replacement of worn out or damaged items of Melton City Council corporate apparel can be requested once per Council term, via the Mayor and Councillor Support Team. The relevant item must be returned to Council at the time of the request for a replacement.

Councillors will be provided with protective clothing to meet safety requirements in carrying out the duties of office (for example, high visibility vests and helmets for site visits), as required. At the commencement of each Council term, Councillors will be provided with personal protective equipment (PPE) required to assist in carrying out the duties of office.

6.7.5.7. Return of Resources

All resources provided to Councillors are provided for use by the Councillor in the conduct of their duties of office. All equipment provided and items purchased, including representational corporate apparel bearing the Melton City Council logo, shall be returned to the Mayor and Councillor Support Team within seven days of the Councillor ceasing to hold the office of Councillor's retirement or termination of office, unless specified elsewhere in this Policy.

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7.6. Travel and Vehicle Expenses

Council encourages a range of travel options conducive to the environment. ~~A Council 'pool' vehicle will be provided for use by Councillors for Council-related business.~~ Reasonable transport expenses incurred by Councillors or Members of Delegated Committees in the course of their official duties in their role will be reimbursed.

Expenses will be reimbursed to Councillors following receipt of a completed Expense Claim Form which includes all required information and supporting documentation. ~~Some discretion will be allowed in limited instances where expenses claimed cannot be supported by documentation such as receipts.~~

7.1.6.1. Private vehicle use

Council will reimburse travel costs associated with the use of a private vehicle, including ~~tolls and~~ car parking fees, reasonably incurred when attending meetings and functions (within Victoria) which are related to their duties as a Councillor or Member of a Delegated Committee.

Travel expenses claimed in relation to events must be supported by documentation which demonstrates the event was related to their duties as a Councillor or member of a Delegated Committee.

The allowance payable for reimbursement of private vehicle use will be in accordance with the rates determined by the Australian Taxation Office (ATO) 'cents per kilometre' method calculation.

Councillors can also seek reimbursement for pre-approved use of a taxi, uber or like service provider for the cost of travel directly related to their duties, noting that the use of public transport or private transport is the preferred method of transport where practical. In determining practicality the following matters will be considered:

- Proximity to a train station
- The time of the event / meeting / Council business the Councillor is attending
- Relevant safety considerations
- Proximity of the event / meeting / Council business to a car park
- Accessibility requirements

7.2.6.2. Interstate travel

Council will cover costs associated with Councillors travelling interstate on Council business that is approved by the CEO in consultation with the Mayor, and Mayor and is within the limits of the budget approved by Council. This comprises airfares, accommodation, car hire, taxis, and ride-sharing fares.

All Councillor travel will be booked by the Mayor and Councillor Support Team and will utilise the most direct route and the most practical and economical mode of transport. Air travel up to and including 5 hours duration will be in economy class. Air travel

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expected to be greater than 5 hours duration will be premium economy class. To ensure value for money, all requests for airline bookings and accommodation must be advised as soon possible.

~~Travel claims will be for travel to and from the Councillor's notified place of normal residence. Travel claims will be to and from the Councillor's notified place of normal residence.~~

7.3.6.3. Overseas travel

Council will cover costs associated with Councillors travelling overseas on Council business as approved by Council resolution within the limits of the budget approved by Council. This comprises airfares, accommodation, visas, passports, car hire, taxis, ride-sharing fares, and any other genuine expenses.

All Councillor travel will be booked by the Mayor and Councillor Support Team and will utilise the most direct route and the most practical and economical mode of transport. Air travel up to and including 5 hours duration will be in economy class. Air travel expected to be greater than 5 hours duration will be premium economy class. All air travel will be in economy class. To ensure value for money, all requests for airline bookings and accommodation must be advised as soon as the travel is approved by Council.

Travel claims will be for travel to and from the Councillor's notified place of normal residence.

7.4.6.4. Mayoral Vehicles

The Mayor is expected to perform a range of additional duties throughout their mayoral term. Council will support the Mayor of the day, through the provision of a A-fully maintained Council vehicle, commensurate with the role and duties, and in consultation with the Mayor, will be provided to assist the Mayor to perform their duties and for private use during the Mayoral term in accordance with Council's Motor Vehicle Policy and in consultation with the Mayor.

The Mayoral vehicle will include a fleet card for fuel purchases.

6.5. Council Pool Vehicles

A Council fleet 'pool' vehicle may be provided for use by Councillors for Council related business, should a vehicle be available. Any use of a Council fleet vehicle will be reported as a Councillor expense in the quarterly report in accordance with the Australian Taxation Office cents per kilometre rate.

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Any costs arising from a breach of road, traffic parking or other regulations or laws or for damage or loss of a vehicle is the responsibility of the person travelling and will not be reimbursed or funded by Council.

8. Professional Development, Training and Conferences

Council will allocate a set amount at the start of each term, which will be reviewed at budget time, to each Councillor for them to attend professional development, training, and conferences.

The set amount for each Councillor will cover the registration fees, reasonable travel, meal, and accommodation expenses associated with attendance by Councillors at professional development, training, and conferences.

Training that is provided directly by Council will not be deducted from the annual allocation.

Councillors wanting to attend professional development, training or conferences are required to complete an Application to Attend Training or Conference Details ("Application") form which will then be submitted to the Mayor and CEO for approval.

Factors to be considered in the review include:

- Relevance of the program to the efficient and effective operations of Melton City Council;
- Whether the event provides an opportunity to receive or upgrade relevant training and skills related to the role of a Councillor;
- Whether the event provides the opportunity to learn key information about an issue of public policy related to the City of Melton community;
- Whether the event has the potential to foster broad economic development opportunities with the municipality.
- Cost/benefit of being represented;
- Expertise, interest, and experience of Councillors in areas of conference business.

Reports of professional development, training and conferences attended by Councillors will be provided to all Councillors at the next available Briefing of Councillors. The Report should describe the learning, knowledge or information obtained as a result of attending the professional development, training or conference.

Approval of Councillors' attendance at professional development, training, and conferences where the cost exceeds their budget allocation, or their budget allocation has been exhausted will be via Council resolution.

Consistent with the approval process for travel, all interstate and overseas conferences must be pre-approved by resolution of Council.

All approved attendances at training and conferences shall be booked through the Mayor and Councillor Support Team.

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In instances where the course or qualification will not be completed prior to the next election, Council will only reimburse costs associated with units that were completed during the elected term. Specifically, expenses claimed for subjects that will be undertaken during a period that includes the caretaker period or after the elected term has expired will not be paid/reimbursed. If the Councillor is re-elected, they can apply to have relevant expenses reimbursed for subjects undertaken during this period.

In the event the Councillor does not successfully complete a subject or withdraws from the course they will be required to repay any fees or costs paid by Council in relation to that unit/qualification.

9.7. Events and Functions

Provision of resources, or reimbursement of expenses, to a Councillor to attend a function or event will only be provided:

- Where the Mayor has been invited to represent Council at an event;
- Where a benefit to Melton City Council can be demonstrated e.g., attendance will contribute towards a commitment under the Council Plan;
- Where, if an invitation has been received by the individual, they have been invited in their capacity as a Councillor;
- Following all supporting documentation, such as invitations / emails etc., being presented with any claims resulting from the attendance.
- Where a Councillor is unable to attend an event or function – an apology should be provided either directly to the organiser or via the Councillor Support Team as soon as practicable.
- Where a cost has been incurred by Council for a Councillor to attend an event or function – failure to attend an event without an apology may result in the Councillor being asked to reimburse Council for the cost of attendance. This decision will be made by the CEO in consultation with the Mayor, taking into consideration any special circumstances that may have occurred. Evidence of these circumstances may be requested.

Invitations to events that are unrelated to their role as Councillor may give rise to conflict of interest concerns and Councillors should consider the Councillor's Gift Policy when considering these invitations.

Where acceptance of the invitation could be perceived as a conflict of interest or create an impression of compromised impartiality, the invitation should be politely declined.

Council does not support political parties, financially or by any other means. Where a Councillor attends a political party event in a personal capacity the cost is to be borne by the individual Councillor and no reimbursement will be provided. This does not apply to official functions the Councillor is attending in their role of Councillor which are also attended by members of political parties.

9.4.7.1. Charity fundraising events

Council may meet the cost of the Mayor or, if the Mayor is unable to attend, their representative, to attend charity fundraising events within the City of Melton where the

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work of the charity benefits the Melton community. If the Mayor or their representative wishes to make a financial contribution to the charity (e.g., a donation or purchase of an auction item) they will be required to make this contribution personally.

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Council is sometimes asked to support a charity or fund-raising event by purchasing tickets or groups of tickets (such as "tables"). Requests of this nature will be approved by the CEO. The CEO, in consultation with the Mayor, ~~or where possible advise the Mayor~~, will also determine how the tickets will be allocated and whether the recipients will be required to purchase the tickets or contribute towards their cost.

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Any additional attendance fees, airfares accommodation costs, meal costs, ticket or any other costs incurred as a result of the attendance of partners and/or children shall be borne by the Councillor. Council will not provide administration assistance to undertake travel arrangements for any person other than the Councillor(s) attending, unless specific exemption is granted for circumstances where the Councillor has carer responsibilities or requires carer assistance.

11.9. Accommodation & Meals

Where overnight accommodation is required, accommodation will be selected based on what is reasonable given the location and event being attended.

Accommodation will be arranged to achieve the best value for Council, with breakfast and parking being included wherever possible. Accommodation is to be based at the training/conference venue, or at close proximity. The Mayor and Councillor Support Team will book the accommodation upon receipt of an approved Councillor Application to Attend Training or Conference Form, which will be approved by the Head of Governance.

Should Councillors elect to stay at accommodation that is more expensive than the above rates the Councillor will be responsible for paying the difference.

Council will not cover or reimburse the purchase of alcohol.

11.1. Refreshments (mini-bar)

Council will reimburse a Councillor for reasonable mini-bar expenses, such as bottled water and small snacks etc. Alcohol purchased via the mini-bar will not be reimbursed. An itemised account will be required for reimbursement.

9.1. Refreshments (mini bar)

Council will reimburse a Councillor for bottled water only. Alcohol and snacks purchased via the mini-bar will not be reimbursed. An itemised account will be required for reimbursement.

11.2.9.2. Other accommodation costs

In-room movie charges and dry-cleaning/laundry costs will not be reimbursed to a Councillor or paid for by Council.

11.3.9.3. Meals

When a Councillor is attending training and conferences in person, Council will pay for meals that are not included in the training or conference package or included with the accommodation arrangements. Meal allowances will also be paid when a Councillor is attending official Council meetings or functions of an extended duration in person that occur during a standard meal period and where a meal is not provided at the meeting or function.

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Meal allowances will be paid in accordance with the reasonable meal allowance amounts published by the Australian Taxation Office (ATO), as updated from time to time. Applicable limits will be based on the most current ATO rates in effect at the time the expense is incurred. Current rates for the 2025-26 year are as follows: Daily allowances for meals will be paid to a maximum amount as follows and adjusted in accordance with the consumer price index (CPI):

Breakfast - \$3334.7500
Lunch - \$4639.1047.00
Dinner - \$6566.6567.00

Should Councillors elect to purchase a meal that is more expensive than the allowances above, the Councillor will be responsible for paying the difference.

Incidental costs such as snacks, (with the exception of mini bar related items), coffee or alcohol will not be reimbursed covered by Council, unless included as part of a meal as stipulated above. These rates are based on the rates determined by the ATO and will be updated annually in accordance with ATO published rates or 3%, whichever is greater.

All mini bar item accounts for items other than bottled water, are the responsibility of the Councillor.

12.10. Reporting

The CEO shall ensure that in any reporting in relation to Councillor expenses and/or travel required by the Act or the relevant regulations is completed.

Full details of all reimbursements made in accordance with this Policy will be provided quarterly to the Audit and Risk Committee.

In the interests of transparency and good governance, details of reimbursements to Councillors and Delegated Committee members will also be published in Council's Annual Report and quarterly on Council's website.

13.11. Definitions

Term	Definition
The Act	means the <i>Local Government Act 2020</i>
Consumer Price Index (CPI)	Means the food and non-alcoholic beverage Consumer Price Index in Melbourne, Australia or if this index is discontinued or suspended, such other index that represents the change in the cost of living in Melbourne

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Term	Definition
<u>Family Member</u>	<u>Means immediate family member (partner, parents, partners parents, sister/brother, grandmother/grandfather or sister-in-law/brother-in-law) or person who normally lives with the Councillor or child/family member (except in the case of a live-in professional helper such as a nanny).</u>
Official Council Functions	means functions arranged by Council where Councillors have been invited to attend in their capacity as Councillor
Official Council Business	means business undertaken in the performance of the role of Councillor

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14.12. Related Documents

Name	Location
<i>Local Government Act 2020</i>	https://www.legislation.vic.gov.au/in-force/acts/local-government-act-2020
<u>Model Councillor Code of Conduct</u>	Documents Reports Strategies Melton City Council
<u>Councillor Professional Development Policy</u>	Documents Reports Strategies Melton City Council
Public Transparency Policy	Documents Reports Strategies Melton City Council
Motor Vehicle Policy	Melton City Council Intranet
Credit Card Policy	Documents Reports Strategies Melton City Council
<u>Councillor Gift Policy</u>	Documents Reports Strategies Melton City Council

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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Council Expenses Policy

Date adopted	22 July 2024
Adopted by	Council
Review due	22 July 2026
Responsible officer	Head of Governance
Records reference	10404147

1. Purpose

This Policy supports the requirements of the *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act) in relation to payment of allowances and reimbursement of expenses for Councillors and Delegated Committee members. It also provides an overview of how Council provides resources and training to its Councillors and Delegated Committee members to support them to carry out their functions and duties.

This Policy is not intended to prescribe for every possible situation that may arise. Any matter not provided for in this Policy will be considered by the Mayor and / or the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), or the Deputy Mayor if the matter pertains to the Mayor.

Under the Act, Council must reimburse a Councillor or Delegated Committee member for out-of-pocket expenses where the Council is satisfied that the expenses:

- Are bona fide expenses;
- Have been reasonably incurred in the performance of the role of Councillor or Delegated Committee member; and
- Are reasonably necessary for the Councillor or Delegated Committee member to perform that role.

2. Application and Scope

This Policy applies to all Councillors elected to the Melton City Council.

This Policy also applies to Delegated Committee members where specified under this Policy.

Expenditure must always be in the interests of the City of Melton community and is allocated from Council's annual budget.

Claims for any expenditure not included in this Policy will be subject to a Council resolution.

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3. General Provisions**3.1. Overarching Principles**

- Where possible, Council will book and pay for any expenses up front. Where this is not appropriate or practicable, Council will reimburse the Councillor for the out-of-pocket expense/s incurred, where those expenses comply with this Policy.
- Expense claims must be reasonable and proportionate. They must also include an explanation if the connection between the expense incurred, and the role of Councillor or member of a Delegated Committee is unclear.
- Unreasonable expenses will not be reimbursed. For example, Council will not reimburse mini-bar expenses for the purchase of alcohol. The Head of Governance will determine whether expenses claimed are considered to be unreasonable or disproportionate in accordance with this Policy.
- Council will only reimburse expenses incurred by Councillors. Council will not pay for, or reimburse expenses for, partners or anyone else accompanying the Councillor on external Council-related business.
- Where a Delegated Committee is appointed by Council, relevant clauses from this Policy will be incorporated into the Terms of Reference and reimbursement of bona fide out-of-pocket expenses incurred by Delegated Committee members while performing their duties in those roles will be made in line with this Policy.
- Training in relation to this Policy will be provided to all Councillors during the initial Councillor Induction training and periodically to ensure they are aware of the protocols in relation to Councillor expenses.

3.2. Claiming Expenses

All claims for reimbursement of expenses must be submitted via the electronic Expenses Claim Form. Documentation, such as tax invoices, receipts etc, must be uploaded with the claim form to verify the expenditure.

Receipts/tax invoices must be provided for any expenses which are being claimed, unless otherwise specified in this Policy. Failure to produce a receipt/tax invoice may result in the expense not being reimbursed.

Receipts/tax invoices must be itemised and contain sufficient, relevant information about the expense incurred. EFTPOS receipts/invoices with only a total price, without any explanation of what the expenditure relates to, will not be accepted.

The Head of Governance will review and authorise the claims in accordance with this Policy.

Reimbursement will occur within 21 days of an accurately completed Expense Claim Form, and all required documentation, being received and authorised. Reimbursement will be paid via electronic funds transfer into the Councillor/Delegated Committee member's nominated bank account.

All reimbursements will be paid in arrears.

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Requests for reimbursement should be received within 30 days of the cost being incurred. Claims for expenses submitted three months or more since the expenses were incurred will not be reimbursed. All claims for the previous financial year must be made by 7 July each year to ensure that they appear in the correct financial year.

Claims for reimbursement of expenses incurred in a previous financial year cannot be accepted once the accounts for that year have been closed.

3.3. Insurance

Council will ensure that policies of insurance are maintained in accordance with the provisions of the Act to provide the relevant protections to Councillors and Delegated Committee members while performing their duties as a Councillor or Delegated Committee member. These insurance policies include:

- Public liability
- Professional indemnity
- Councillor and Officers liability

3.4. Legal Costs

Other than by specific Council resolution any legal expenses incurred by a Councillor shall be the responsibility of that Councillor. A Councillor shall not engage legal representation or seek legal advice where they will be seeking reimbursement from Council unless specifically authorised by Council before incurring the costs. Where the CEO believes that there would be a risk to health and safety for a Councillor, and supporting legal advice from a qualified legal practitioner recommends the provision of Council funded legal advice, the CEO may authorise expenditure for Councillor legal costs under delegation.

3.5. Child Care/Carer (Care) Expenses

Council will reimburse the cost of necessary child care or carer services where the provision of care is reasonably required for a Councillor or Delegated Committee member to perform their role. Carer services will be eligible to be reimbursed when a Councillor is a carer in a care relationship within the meaning of section 4 of the *Carers Recognition Act 2012*.

Care expenses will not be reimbursed if paid to a family member or a person who normally or regularly lives with the Councillor or Delegated Committee member, except where a live-in (professional) helper such as a nanny is required to work extra time at extra expense because of the Councillor or Delegated Committee member's duties.

Care expenses will be claimed via a completed Expenses Claim Form and shall be substantiated by documentation showing the dates and times care was provided. The Councillor or Delegated Committee member shall also provide the description of Council work undertaken and details of child care / caring required for each occasion.

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Care Expenses will be reimbursed for attendance at:

- Council Meetings, Briefing Sessions, and Submission Hearings of the Council;
- Delegated Committee Meetings;
- Official Council functions;
- Meetings arising as a result of a Councillor being appointed by the Council to an external body or an Advisory Committee;
- Training or conferences the Councillor is attending which Council has paid for; and
- Other meetings, events, or occasions as agreed from time to time by the Mayor or CEO or by resolution of the Council, prior to the expense being incurred.

Care Expenses that may be reimbursed include:

- payment to an accredited child care/attendant care provider, or
- a person providing care who does not:
 - have a familial or like relationship with the Councillor; or
 - reside either permanently or temporarily with the Councillor; or
 - have a relationship with the Councillor or the Councillor's partner such that it would be inappropriate for Council to reimburse monies paid to the care provider.

Fees are generally payable per hour or part thereof, subject to any minimum period which is part of the care provider's usual terms.

Rates for non-accredited child care/attendant care provider must be reasonable and agreed in advance where possible.

3.6. Access and Inclusion

Council commits to supporting any individual who requires particular assistance to be able to fulfil their role as a Councillor or Delegated Committee member. Councillors or Delegated Committee members requiring particular workplace assistance or reasonable modifications to access Council's facilities or utilise Council's resources should contact the Head of Governance.

3.7. Councillor Welfare

Councillors and Delegated Committee members may approach the CEO with regard to any specific guidance, counselling or coaching they may require to enhance their performance as a Councillor or Delegated Committee member.

Councillors or Delegated Committee members experiencing personal difficulties may seek counselling on a confidential basis through Council's Employee Assistance Program.

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4. Councillor Allowances

Council will pay an allowance to the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Councillors as required under the Act.

Allowances shall be paid approximately monthly provided that upon a Councillor ceasing to hold office or pending an election, payment shall be withheld until such time as the Councillor is declared elected. If a Councillor retires or has their position as a Councillor terminated, they will be required to reimburse Council any Allowance paid in advance.

Allowances will be withheld in the event that a Councillor is suspended or ordered to stand down in accordance with the Act.

Payment will be made by electronic funds transfer into the Councillor's nominated bank account.

5. Administrative Support

5.1. Meeting Rooms and Mayoral Office

The Mayor is provided with office accommodation at the Melton Civic Centre and Caroline Springs Library which may be used for Council business.

Council also provides a Councillor Lounge at the Melton Civic Centre which includes an office/lounge area and a meeting room which is available for all Councillors to use. Refreshments will be provided for Councillors in the Councillor Lounge.

Councillors may request to use other meeting rooms owned and controlled by Council for meetings where the primary purpose is to allow the Councillor to discharge their Council duties. The Councillor must be in attendance and bookings must be made in advance through the Mayor and Councillor Support Team. Costs associated with booking the meeting room will be included in Council's operational budget. Councillors will be required to reimburse any costs incurred outside this Policy.

5.2. Professional Memberships

Council will pay a Councillor's membership of a professional association where the qualification for the membership was gained via the "Professional Development, Training and Conferences" provisions of this Policy.

5.3. Communication Technology

Due to the environmental impact, Council's preference is that all Council and Committee papers, Councillor communications and correspondence are distributed electronically.

Councillors will be provided with a mobile phone, laptop computer and a multi-functional printer/scanner/photocopier to assist with the conduct of Council business. Where special accommodations are required, this can be approved by the CEO in consultation with the Mayor. Councillors will also be provided with a Council email address and mobile phone number. Any equipment and service provided is to be used for official Council business only.

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Council will pay all costs associated with the provision of this equipment and services including paper for printing, printer cartridges, connection fees, rental charges and all Council business call and data charges.

It is acknowledged that there will be some incidental private use of mobile communications equipment, such as occasional standard phone calls and text messages within Australia. Use of council equipment overseas must be pre-approved in writing by the CEO.

Councillors must adhere to Council's Privacy Policy and the Councillor Code of Conduct in using any IT resources provided by Council. Council equipment and electronic communications system must be used within the boundaries of normal appropriate practice.

This includes, but is not limited to:

- Storage, transmission, downloading or display of material must not contravene any state or federal law such as equal opportunity, occupational health and safety, and sexual harassment legislation.
- Communication activities must not defame an individual, organisation, association, company, or business.
- The use must not contravene a Council policy, procedure, statute, or regulation.
- The equipment or electronic communications system must not be used to run a private business, whether for profit or not-for-profit.

Any faults or issues with the equipment should be reported to the Mayor and Councillor Support Team at the earliest possible opportunity and they will liaise with Council's Technology department to have the fault or issue rectified.

Council-provided technology such as mobile phones and laptops will be replaced for each new Council term and in accordance with Council's policies.

5.4. Administrative Support

The Mayor and Councillor Support Team will provide administrative support to Councillors to assist them, such as with responding to correspondence, enquiries, requests for service, registrations for attendance at approved conferences, reservations for accommodation and meeting rooms as part of their official duties as a Councillor.

The Mayor and Councillor Support Team will provide diary management support for Councillors relating to their official delegate appointments, official invites and events that are included in the Council Calendar.

5.5. Mail Inward & Invitations

All hardcopy mail received by Council is deemed to be Council business and will be opened by Central Records staff. Private mail should not be sent via or to the Council address.

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Council's official letterhead is only to be used for official Council correspondence signed by either the Mayor or an authorised member of Council staff. Councillors are to provide their own letterhead for electoral or ward representation purposes and make it clear they are communicating in their personal capacity, not as a representative of Council.

Each Councillor, on request, may be provided with the following Melton City Council corporate apparel which is to be returned when the Councillor ceases to hold office:

- one suit jacket
- one winter jacket
- one pair of pants or skirt/dress
- 2 shirts/tops

At the mid-point of each Council term, each Councillor, on request, is to be provided with a replacement jacket and pants or skirt/dress, as required.

A further budget allocation of \$1,000 per Council term per Councillor is made for the purchase of additional or replacement items of Melton City Council corporate apparel.

At the commencement of each Council term, Councillors will be provided with personal protective equipment (PPE) required to assist in carrying out the duties of office.

5.7. Return of Resources

All resources provided to Councillors are provided for use by the Councillor in the conduct of their duties of office. All equipment provided and items purchased, including representational corporate apparel bearing the Melton City Council logo, shall be returned to the Mayor and Councillor Support Team within seven days of the Councillor's retirement or termination of office, unless specified elsewhere in this Policy.

6. Travel and Vehicle Expenses

Council encourages a range of travel options conducive to the environment. A Council 'pool' vehicle will be provided for use by Councillors for Council related business. Reasonable transport expenses incurred by Councillors or Members of Delegated Committees in the course of their official duties in their role will be reimbursed.

Expenses will be reimbursed to Councillors following receipt of a completed Expense Claim Form which includes all required information and supporting documentation. Some discretion will be allowed in limited instances where expenses claimed cannot be supported by documentation such as receipts.

6.1. Private vehicle use

Council will reimburse travel costs associated with the use of a private vehicle, including car parking fees, reasonably incurred when attending meetings and functions (within Victoria) which are related to their duties as a Councillor or Member of a Delegated Committee.

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Travel expenses claimed in relation to events must be supported by documentation which demonstrates the event was related to their duties as a Councillor or member of a Delegated Committee.

The allowance payable for reimbursement of private vehicle use will be in accordance with the rates determined by the Australian Taxation Office (ATO) 'cents per kilometre' method calculation.

Councillors can also seek reimbursement for use of a taxi, uber or like service provider for the cost of travel directly related to their duties, noting that the use of public transport or private transport is the preferred method of transport where practical.

6.2. Interstate travel

Council will cover costs associated with Councillors travelling interstate on Council business that is approved by the CEO and is within the limits of the budget approved by Council. This comprises airfares, car hire, taxis, and ride-sharing fares.

All Councillor travel will be booked by the Mayor and Councillor Support Team and will utilise the most direct route and the most practical and economic mode of transport. Air travel up to and including 5 hours duration will be in economy class. Air travel expected to be greater than 5 hours duration will be premium economy class. To ensure value for money, all requests for airline bookings and accommodation must be advised as soon possible.

Travel claims will be to and from the Councillor's notified place of normal residence.

6.3. Overseas travel

Council will cover costs associated with Councillors travelling overseas on Council business as approved by Council resolution within the limits of the budget approved by Council. This comprises airfares, visas, passports, car hire, taxis, ride-sharing fares, and any other genuine expenses.

All Councillor travel will be booked by the Mayor and Councillor Support Team and will utilise the most direct route and the most practical and economic mode of transport. All air travel will be in economy class. To ensure value for money, all requests for airline bookings and accommodation must be advised as soon as the travel is approved by Council.

Travel claims will be to and from the Councillor's notified place of normal residence.

6.4. Vehicles

A fully maintained Council vehicle, commensurate with the role and duties, and in consultation with the Mayor, will be provided to assist the Mayor to perform their duties and for private use during the Mayoral term in accordance with Council's Motor Vehicle Policy.

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Any costs arising from a breach of road, traffic parking or other regulations or laws or for damage or loss of a vehicle is the responsibility of the person travelling and will not be reimbursed or funded by Council.

7. Professional Development, Training and Conferences

Council will allocate a set amount at the start of each term, which will be reviewed at budget time, to each Councillor for them to attend professional development, training, and conferences.

The set amount for each Councillor will cover the registration fees, reasonable travel, meal, and accommodation expenses associated with attendance by Councillors at professional development, training, and conferences.

Training that is provided directly by Council will not be deducted from the annual allocation.

Councillors wanting to attend professional development, training or conferences are required to complete an Application to Attend Training or Conference Details ("Application") form which will then be submitted to the Mayor and CEO for approval.

Factors to be considered in the review include:

- Relevance of the program to the efficient and effective operations of Melton City Council;
- Whether the event provides an opportunity to receive or upgrade relevant training and skills related to the role of a Councillor;
- Whether the event provides the opportunity to learn key information about an issue of public policy related to the City of Melton community;
- Whether the event has the potential to foster broad economic development opportunities with the municipality.
- Cost/benefit of being represented;
- Expertise, interest, and experience of Councillors in areas of conference business.

Reports of professional development, training and conferences attended by Councillors will be provided to all Councillors at the next available Briefing of Councillors. The Report should describe the learning, knowledge or information obtained as a result of attending the professional development, training or conference.

Approval of Councillors' attendance at professional development, training, and conferences where the cost exceeds their budget allocation, or their budget allocation has been exhausted will be via Council resolution.

Consistent with the approval process for travel, all interstate and overseas conferences must be pre-approved by resolution of Council.

All approved attendances at training and conferences shall be booked through the Mayor and Councillor Support Team.

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In instances where the course or qualification will not be completed prior to the next election, Council will only reimburse costs associated with units that were completed during the elected term. Specifically, expenses claimed for subjects that will be undertaken during a period that includes the caretaker period or after the elected term has expired will not be paid/reimbursed. If the Councillor is re-elected, they can apply to have relevant expenses reimbursed for subjects undertaken during this period.

In the event the Councillor does not successfully complete a subject or withdraws from the course they will be required to repay any fees or costs paid by Council in relation to that unit/qualification.

8. Events and Functions

Provision of resources or reimbursement of expenses to a Councillor to attend a function or event will only be provided:

- Where the Mayor has been invited to represent Council at an event;
- Where a benefit to Melton City Council can be demonstrated e.g., attendance will contribute towards a commitment under the Council Plan;
- Where, if an invitation has been received by the individual, they have been invited in their capacity as a Councillor;
- Following all supporting documentation, such as invitations / emails etc., being presented with any claims resulting from the attendance.

Invitations to events that are unrelated to their role as Councillor may give rise to conflict of interest concerns and Councillors should consider Council's Gift Policy when considering these invitations. Where acceptance of the invitation could be perceived as a conflict of interest or create an impression of compromised impartiality, the invitation should be politely declined.

Council does not support political parties, financially or by any other means. Where a Councillor attends a political party event in a personal capacity the cost is to be borne by the individual Councillor and no reimbursement will be provided. This does not apply to official functions the Councillor is attending in their role of Councillor which are also attended by members of political parties.

8.1. Charity fundraising events

Council may meet the cost of the Mayor or, if the Mayor is unable to attend, their representative, to attend charity fundraising events within the City of Melton where the work of the charity benefits the Melton community. If the Mayor or their representative wishes to make a financial contribution to the charity (e.g., a donation or purchase of an auction item) they will be required to make this contribution personally.

Council is sometimes asked to support a charity or fund-raising event by purchasing tickets or groups of tickets (such as "tables"). Requests of this nature will be approved by the CEO. The CEO, in consultation with the Mayor, or where possible advise the Mayor, will also determine how the tickets will be allocated and whether the recipients will be required to purchase the tickets or contribute towards their cost.

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9. Accompanying Partners/Guests

Any additional attendance fees, airfares accommodation costs, meal costs or any other costs incurred as a result of the attendance of partners and/or children shall be borne by the Councillor. Council will not provide administration assistance to undertake travel arrangements for any person other than the Councillor(s) attending.

10. Accommodation & Meals

Where overnight accommodation is required, accommodation will be selected based on what is reasonable given the location and event being attended.

Accommodation will be arranged to achieve the best value for Council, with breakfast and parking being included wherever possible. Accommodation is to be based at the training/conference venue, or at close proximity. The Mayor and Councillor Support Team will book the accommodation upon receipt of an approved Councillor Application to Attend Training or Conference Form, which will be approved by the Head of Governance.

Should Councillors elect to stay at accommodation that is more expensive than the above rates the Councillor will be responsible for paying the difference.

Council will not cover or reimburse the purchase of alcohol.

10.1. Refreshments (mini bar)

Council will reimburse a Councillor for reasonable mini-bar expenses, such as bottled water and small snacks etc. Alcohol purchased via the mini-bar will not be reimbursed. An itemised account will be required for reimbursement.

10.2. Other accommodation costs

In-room movie charges and dry-cleaning/laundry costs will not be reimbursed to a Councillor or paid for by Council.

10.3. Meals

When a Councillor is attending training and conferences in person, Council will pay for meals that are not included in the training or conference package or included with the accommodation arrangements. Meal allowances will also be paid when a Councillor is attending official Council meetings or functions in person and where a meal is not provided at the meeting or function.

Daily allowances for meals will be paid to a maximum amount as follows and adjusted in accordance with the consumer price index (CPI):

Breakfast -	\$33.00
Lunch -	\$46.00
Dinner -	\$65.00

Should Councillors elect to purchase a meal that is more expensive than the allowances above, the Councillor will be responsible for paying the difference.

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Incidental costs such as snacks, coffee or alcohol will not be covered by Council unless included as part of a meal as stipulated above. These rates are based on the rates determined by the ATO and will be updated annually in accordance with ATO published rates or 3%, whichever is greater.

11. Reporting

The CEO shall ensure that any reporting in relation to Councillor expenses and travel required by the Act or the relevant regulations is completed.

Full details of all reimbursements made in accordance with this Policy will be provided quarterly to the Audit and Risk Committee.

In the interests of transparency and good governance, details of reimbursements to Councillors and Delegated Committee members will also be published in Council's Annual Report and quarterly on Council's website.

12. Definitions

Term	Definition
The Act	means the <i>Local Government Act 2020</i>
Consumer Price Index (CPI)	Means the food and non-alcoholic beverage Consumer Price Index in Melbourne, Australia or if this index is discontinued or suspended, such other index that represents the change in the cost of living in Melbourne
Official Council Functions	means functions arranged by Council where Councillors have been invited to attend in their capacity as Councillor
Official Council Business	means business undertaken in the performance of the role of Councillor

13. Related Documents

Name	Location
<i>Local Government Act 2020</i>	https://www.legislation.vic.gov.au/in-force/acts/local-government-act-2020
Councillor Code of Conduct	Documents Reports Strategies Melton City Council
Public Transparency Policy	Documents Reports Strategies Melton City Council
Motor Vehicle Policy	Melton City Council Intranet
Credit Card Policy	Documents Reports Strategies Melton City Council

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Councillor Professional Development Policy

Date adopted	TBD
Adopted by	Council
Review due	TBD
Responsible officer	Head of Governance
Records reference	TBD

1. Purpose

The purpose of the Councillor Professional Development Policy (Policy) is to:

- set out the arrangements for supporting Councillor professional development and compliance with the induction and professional development obligations of the *Local Government Act 2020*.
- strengthen good governance across Council through high quality learning and development programs for Councillors.
- encourage the professional leadership development of Councillors and improve individual knowledge and skills.

2. Application and Scope

Council benefits from ensuring its Councillors are well trained in their legislative obligations, principles of good governance, compliance with codes of conduct, conflicts of interest and other transparency disclosures and accountabilities.

Councillor professional development commences prior to nomination and continues throughout the four-year term as an elected representative, with a combination of mandatory training prescribed by legislation and discretionary training identified as necessary to the Council or Councillor.

Professional development may include conferences, courses, and training - generally are one off, occasional or short-term nature, and supported by a program, course material or invitation by organisers.

The *Local Government Act 2020* requires that all Councillors undertake candidate training prior to election (refer to s.256(7)), induction training upon their election (refer to s.32) and ongoing professional development training throughout their term (refer to s.33A). Further, the Mayor and Deputy Mayor are required to undertake additional training upon their appointment to that role (refer to s.27A).

The Local Government (Governance and Integrity) Regulations 2020 prescribe the matters that must be included in this training.

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For the Mayor and Deputy Mayor, the prescribed matters are:

- Roles and responsibilities;
- Chairing meetings;
- Engagement and advocacy;
- Leadership; and
- Any other matter relating to the role of the Mayor which the Chief Executive Officer has determined should be addressed.

For all Councillors (for both induction and ongoing professional development), the prescribed matters are:

- Working together in a Council;
- Decision making, integrity and accountability;
- Community representation;
- Strategic planning and financial management;
- Conduct;
- Land use planning; and
- Any other matter relating to the role of a Councillor which the Chief Executive Officer has determined should be addressed.

Any matter not provided for in this Policy will be considered by the Mayor and the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), or the Deputy Mayor if the matter pertains to the Mayor.

This Policy applies to all Councillors elected to the Melton City Council.

3. General Provisions

Council will provide a maximum of \$2,000 per annum per Councillor for professional development, training and conference attendance activities.

The allocation for each Councillor will cover the registration fees, reasonable travel, meal, and accommodation expenses associated with attendance by Councillors at professional development, training, and conferences.

Training that is provided directly by Council will not be deducted from the annual allocation.

Councillors wanting to attend professional development, training or conferences are required to complete an Application to Attend Training or Conference Details ("Application") form which will then be submitted to the Mayor and CEO for approval.

Factors to be considered in the review include:

- Whether the program has a demonstrable benefit to Council or its operations.
- Whether the event provides an opportunity to receive or upgrade relevant training and skills related to the role of a Councillor.

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- Whether the event provides the opportunity to learn key information about an issue of public policy related to the City of Melton community.
- Whether the event has the potential to foster broad economic development opportunities with the municipality.
- Cost/benefit of being represented.

Approval of Councillors' attendance at professional development, training, and conferences where the cost exceeds their budget allocation, or their budget allocation has been exhausted will be via Council resolution.

Any overseas conferences must be pre-approved by resolution of Council.

All approved attendances at training and conferences shall be booked through the Mayor and Councillor Support Team.

In the event the Councillor does not successfully complete a subject or withdraws from the course, they will be required to repay any fees or costs paid by Council in relation to that unit/qualification, **except where exceptional circumstances apply and are approved by the Chief Executive Officer.**

Any professional development courses undertaken by a Councillor should provide a demonstrable benefit to the Melton community. To reflect this commitment, all courses must be completed at least three months prior to the commencement of the election period for a general election for the Council.

For higher investment courses (more than \$5,000), such as AICD, to ensure benefit to the community, Councillors will only be able to undertake these courses in the first three years of the Council term.

4. Professional Development, Training and Conferences

4.1. Mayoral Induction program

Upon election to the office of Mayor or Deputy Mayor, the Chief Executive Officer shall provide the Mayor and Deputy Mayor with a program of professional development activities which, if completed within one month of being elected to the office of Mayor or Deputy Mayor, will satisfy each Councillor's obligation under section 27A(1) of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

The Mayoral Induction Program may be the same for both Councillors, or may differ between Councillors depending on identified learning needs.

The Mayoral Induction Program is subject to change and may be altered by the Chief Executive Officer with reasonable notice provided to Councillors.

Participation in the Mayoral induction program is mandatory for the Mayor and Deputy Mayor.

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4.2. Mandatory Candidate Training

Prior to the opening of nominations for local Council elections, the Chief Executive Officer will ensure information is provided on the Council website about the process of nomination for election as a Councillor, including the requirement all candidates undertake mandatory candidate training prior to nomination.

The completion of mandatory candidate training is a prescribed requirement under section 256(7) of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

Mandatory candidate training is developed and delivered by Local Government Victoria via an online module.

All candidates must provide proof of completion of the training to be eligible for nomination.

4.3. Candidate Support Program

Council may provide a candidate support program to assist new and potential candidates in developing an introductory understanding of the following matters:

- The local government election process
- Processes and procedures of nomination
- Local government legislative and policy fundamentals
- Codes of Conduct and other forms of accountability
- Professional Development Mandatory Training requirements
- Day to day life as a Councillor

Council may determine that to encourage candidate diversity and inclusion, that special measures are taken to provide tailored candidate support training to people under-represented on councils including but not limited to:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
- Culturally and Linguistically Diverse people
- People living with Disabilities
- LGBTIQ+ people
- Women and non-binary people
- Young people

4.4. Councillor Induction Program

Upon election, the Chief Executive Officer shall provide all Councillors with a program of professional development activities which, if completed within four months of taking the oath or affirmation of office, will satisfy each Councillor's obligation under section 32(1) of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

The Councillor induction program may be the same for all Councillors or may differ between Councillors depending on identified learning needs.

The Councillor induction program is subject to change and may be altered by the Chief Executive Officer with reasonable notice provided to Councillors.

Participation in the Councillor induction program is mandatory.

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4.5. Regular Councillor Professional Development Program

Throughout each calendar year, the Chief Executive Officer shall provide all Councillors with a program of professional development activities which, if completed during that calendar year, will satisfy each Councillor's obligation under section 33A(1) of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

The Councillor professional development program must include:

- Any training that is outlined under the Act as mandatory
- Training on the matters prescribed at regulation 6A(a) to (f) of the Local Government (Governance and Integrity) Regulations 2020; and
- Any other matter relating to the role of a Councillor which the Chief Executive Officer has determined should be addressed.

The Councillor professional development program may be delivered by:

- In-house training to a Councillor group (by an external subject matter expert, training provider or by a Council officer who is a subject matter expert in that area);
- Completion of online training modules;
- Self-directed learning by way of webinars, videos, podcasts or similar.
- Attendance at an external training event, seminar or conference;
- Completion of a recognised qualification; and/or
- Other activities deemed suitable by the Chief Executive Officer.

The Councillor professional development program may be the same for all Councillors or may differ between Councillors depending on identified learning needs.

The Councillor professional development program is subject to change and may be altered by the Chief Executive Officer with reasonable notice provided to Councillors.

4.6. Resourcing Councillor Professional Development

The Councillor Professional Development Program will be funded within Council's annually adopted Budget.

4.7. Councillor Participation

Participation by Councillors in the Mayoral Induction Program, Councillor Induction Program and Councillor Professional Development Program is required to satisfy sections 27A(1), 32(1) and 33A(1) of the Local Government Act 2020, respectively. Every effort shall be made by Councillors to participate in the training programs.

The Chief Executive Officer must provide reasonable assistance to a Councillor to enable them to access the training programs.

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Councillors shall notify the Chief Executive Officer without delay if they are unable to participate in any component of the training programs. The Chief Executive Officer will, to the extent practicable, make alternative arrangements to enable the training program to be completed (for example, by arranging a make-up training session to be offered to that Councillor).

4.8. Certification

Following each training program, the Chief Executive Officer will prepare a training certification statement which sets out the training undertaken by each Councillor during that calendar year. The statement shall include for each element of the training program:

- The date(s) the training was undertaken;
- The prescribed matters included, with reference to regulation 4A, 6 or 6A(2) of the Local Government (Governance and Integrity) Regulations 2020;
- The detailed matters addressed; and
- The manner of delivery.

If the training certification statement shows that all required elements have been completed, it shall be presented to each Councillor for certification. The Councillor must then make a written declaration that they have completed the training program by signing and dating the training certification statement in the presence of the Chief Executive Officer.

If the training certification statement shows that not all required elements have been completed, it may not be presented to the Councillor for certification until such time as the outstanding elements are completed.

If a Councillor fails to make the written declaration by:

- Four months from the taking of the oath or affirmation of office (subject to s32(4A) of the *Local Government Act 2020*, for the Councillor Induction Program,);
- One month from election as Mayor or Deputy Mayor; for the Mayoral Induction Program, or
- 31 December each year except for an election year when it must be completed by 1 September (subject to s33A(6) of the *Local Government Act 2020*), for the Councillor Professional Development Program;

The Chief Executive Officer shall withhold the payment of the Mayoral, Deputy Mayoral or Councillor allowance (until such time as both the training program has been completed and the written declaration has been made.)

The failure to make the written declaration by the deadline for any of the applicable training programs results in the withholding of the entire Mayoral, Deputy Mayoral or Councillor allowance (i.e. – a Mayor who fails to complete the Mayoral Induction declaration but does complete the Councillor Induction and Councillor Professional Development declarations will have their full allowance withheld – they do not 'revert' to receiving the Councillor allowance).

Upon the completion of the training program and the making of the declaration, payment of allowances shall resume, and any amounts withheld shall be paid.

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4.9. Conferences, Seminars and Other Training

In addition to the mandatory professional development training required under the *Local Government Act 2020*, Councillors may seek approval to attend other training or conferences that are relevant to their role as a Councillor during their term.

This includes, but is not limited to, training and conferences run by Industry Peak Bodies such as:

- Australian Local Government Association (ALGA);
- Australian Local Government Women's Association (ALGWA);
- Victorian State Government;
- Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) (includes the Australian Institute of Company Directors Program); and
- Victorian Local Governance Association (VLGA).

The types of training and conference activities and events at which Councillors seek approval to attend, must have a direct correlation to performing the role of Councillor. Such activities may involve seminars, conferences and formal study courses.

Council funded attendance at training and conferences requires the prior approval of the CEO, unless overseas travel is involved, in which case a resolution of Council is required.

Where Councillor training or conference attendance involves related costs such as accommodation, travel or other general costs, these should be identified by the Councillor when seeking authorisation from the Chief Executive Officer.

4.10. Australian Institute of Company Directors (AICD) Course

If a Councillor elects to attend the AICD Course delivered in partnership with the Municipal Association of Victoria, in accordance with the resolution of Council dated 23 February 2026, the cost of attendance will not contribute to, or affect the Councillor's expenses allocation for their attendance at conferences, seminars, and other training.

Councillors attending the AICD Company Directors course will be required to sit the accreditation. A Councillor who does not complete the accreditation will be required to refund the attendance cost.

4.11. Authorisation

The Chief Executive Officer, unless otherwise resolved by Council, is authorised to approve the funding of Councillors' attendance at training and conferences if:

- The attendance is in the community interest and reflects the identified needs of the Councillor.
- There is equity and fair and reasonable access to all Councillors to training and conferences, noting that conferences and seminars may be attended by the Mayor in the first instance.
- A quorum of Councillors is available to attend to the normal business of the Council.

MINUTES OF THE POLICY REVIEW PANEL

14 MAY 2026

Item 6.1 Council Expenses and Councillor Professional Development Policies

Appendix 4 Councillor Professional Development Policy - Draft with Policy Review Panel Changes

5. Reporting

Reports of professional development, training and conferences attended by Councillors will be reported upon annually to Council by way of a Council report. Councillors may also report in their delegate's report at the next available Council Meeting, describing the learning, knowledge or information obtained as a result of attending the professional development, training or conference.

The CEO shall ensure that all approved expenses relating to professional development, training and conference attendance activities will be included in the Councillor Expenses Report. In the interests of transparency and good governance, Councillor Expenses reports will be published in Council's Annual Report and on Council's website quarterly.

6. Definitions

Term	Definition
The Act	means the <i>Local Government Act 2020</i>
Demonstrable Benefit	Means (a) Clearly apparent benefit to the City of Melton and its community. (b) Relates directly to the role of Council or a Councillor of Melton (under the <i>Local Government Act 2020</i>). (c) Clear link to achieving Council's key commitments under the current Council and Wellbeing Plan. (d) Contributes to the development and skills of a Councillor, to perform their duties and responsibilities. (e) Relevant to Advisory Committee responsibilities and supports the role of a Representative. (f) Unlikely to create the impression an attempt is being made to compromise the impartiality of the Councillor in relation to their decision-making.
Candidate Support Program	means a program of preliminary training designed to educate potential local government candidates about Council election processes, local government legislative and policy fundamentals and life as a Councillor.
Councillor Induction Program	means the program of professional development activities provided to all Councillors upon election under Part 4.4 of this policy.
Councillor Professional Development Program	means the program of professional development activities provided annually to all Councillors under Part 4.5 of this policy.
Mandatory Candidate Training	means the course developed and delivered online by Local Government Victoria which is a pre-requisite for nomination as a Councillor.

MINUTES OF THE POLICY REVIEW PANEL

14 MAY 2026

Item 6.1 Council Expenses and Councillor Professional Development Policies

Appendix 4 Councillor Professional Development Policy - Draft with Policy Review Panel Changes

Term	Definition
Mayoral Induction Program	means the program of professional development activities provided to the Mayor and Deputy Mayor under Part 4.1 of this Policy.
Training Certification Statement	means the statement prepared by the Chief Executive Officer and presented to Councillors for signing under Part 4.8 of this Policy.
Training Program	means the Mayoral induction program, Councillor induction program and/or Councillor professional development program.

7. Related Documents

Name	Location
<i>Local Government Act 2020</i>	Local Government Act 2020 legislation.vic.gov.au
<i>Local Government (Governance and Integrity) Regulations 2020 (Vic)</i>	Local Government (Governance and Integrity) Regulations 2020 legislation.vic.gov.au
Council Expenses Policy	Documents Reports Strategies Melton City Council
Model Councillor Code of Conduct	Documents Reports Strategies Melton City Council
Public Transparency Policy	Documents Reports Strategies Melton City Council

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MINUTES OF THE POLICY REVIEW PANEL

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7. GENERAL BUSINESS

Nil.

8. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on Thursday 4 June 2026 at 9.30am, online.

9. CLOSE OF BUSINESS

The meeting closed at 10.59am.

Confirmed

Date:

.....CHAIRPERSON

**13. REPORTS FROM DELEGATES APPOINTED TO OTHER BODIES
AND COUNCILLOR REPRESENTATIONS AND
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Reports on external Committees and external Representative Bodies for which Councillors have been appointed by Council.

Address from Councillors in relation to matters of civic leadership and community representation, including acknowledgement of community groups and individuals, information arising from internal Committees, advocacy on behalf of constituents and other topics of significance.

14. NOTICES OF MOTION

14.1 NOTICE OF MOTION 998 (CR ABBOUSHI) - CRUMB RUBBER INFILL ON SYNTHETIC PLAYING SURFACES

Councillor: Steven Abboushi

I hereby give notice of my intention to move the following motion at the Scheduled Meeting of Council to be held on 25 May 2026:

MOTION:

That Council:

1. Write to the relevant government departments and request specialist advice and recommendations on best practice infill solutions and materials for synthetic sport facilities including:
 - a. Current evidence and research regarding the use of rubber infill, including safety, health and environmental considerations for installation, maintenance and ongoing use.
 - b. Best practice standards for installation, maintenance, and use of synthetic sport facilities with infill materials
 - c. Options for other infill materials including where other options may provide for safer or more sustainable alternative infill materials.
 - d. Future directions and key considerations for Councils in best practice synthetic sports facility provision including any relevant guidelines and specifications.
2. That the response received inform a future briefing of councillors.

PREAMBLE

Council has a responsibility to provide safe and accessible recreational facilities for all members of the community. In light of emerging evidence and growing public concern regarding crumb rubber infill and given that this issue is broader than just the City of Melton, it is prudent that the state government assess the safety of these surfaces to ensure they meet the highest possible standards.

This motion seeks to protect the community's health and wellbeing.

OFFICER'S COMMENTS:

Council officers will action in accordance with the Notice of Motion, subject to Council decision.

14.2 NOTICE OF MOTION 999 (CR DR ZADA) - HOPKINS ROAD CLOSURE AND FUTURE WESTERN HIGHWAY WORKS

Councillor: Phillip Zada

I hereby give notice of my intention to move the following motion at the Scheduled Meeting of Council to be held on 25 May 2026:

MOTION:

That Council:

1. Writes to the Department of Transport and Planning, the Victorian Infrastructure Delivery Authority, the Level Crossing Removal Project, and any other relevant state delivery agencies to express Council's concern and formally relay the complaints and concerns received from residents regarding the significant traffic impacts experienced during the Hopkins Road closure.
2. Requests a briefing for Council and Councillors by the Department of Transport and Planning and Level Crossing Removal team on:
 - a. the traffic management arrangements used during the Hopkins Road closure;
 - b. why traffic controllers, traffic operators, temporary traffic lights or other active traffic management measures were not allocated at key congestion points during peak times;
 - c. the impact on Leakes Road as the primary alternate route;
 - d. the coordination of works, including the Leakes Road overpass lighting closure;
 - e. the lessons learned from the closure; and
 - f. how these lessons will inform planning for future Western Highway, Leakes Road interchange and related road works.
3. Requests that a resident drop-in session by the Department of Transport and Planning / Victorian Infrastructure Delivery Authority and Level Crossing Removal team be held in the local area so affected residents can directly share their experiences, raise concerns, and provide feedback on future traffic management and closure planning when Western Highway project plans are released prior to commencement.
4. Seeks written assurance from the Victorian Infrastructure Delivery Authority and other respective responsible bodies that future planning for Western Highway, Leakes Road interchange and related works will properly consider integration with any other works being conducted, the limited alternative routes available to residents, including whether active traffic management such as temporary lights, traffic controllers or other intervention measures will be used during peak times to prevent residents being forced into hours of traffic for trips that normally take 10 to 15 minutes.

PREAMBLE

The Hopkins Road closure has caused significant disruption for residents across Mount Atkinson Ward and surrounding growth areas.

While the level crossing removal is supported and necessary, Council has received complaints and concerns from residents about the impact of the closure, particularly the severe congestion on Leakes Road, which became the main alternate route.

Residents have reported being stuck in gridlock for extended periods during peak times while trying to get to work, school, childcare, shops, appointments and other daily commitments. Trips that would normally take 10 to 15 minutes have, in some cases, taken well over an hour.

The disruption was made worse when the Leakes Road overpass was also closed to repair lighting during the same period, forcing some residents into long detours, including travelling towards Melton just to turn around or access city-bound routes.

Residents have reasonably asked why traffic controllers, traffic operators, temporary traffic lights or other active traffic management measures were not put in place during peak times to help manage congestion.

This motion seeks to formally express Council's concern, relay the complaints and concerns of residents, request a direct briefing for Council and Councillors, and ensure residents are given an opportunity to have their say before future major closures occur.

OFFICER'S COMMENTS:

Council officers will action in accordance with the Notice of Motion, subject to Council decision.

15. URGENT BUSINESS

16. 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:

16.1 Contract No. 26-205 - Synthetic Sportsground Maintenance

(g) as it relates to private commercial information, being information provided by a business, commercial or financial undertaking that—

(i) relates to trade secrets; or

(ii) if released, would unreasonably expose the business, commercial or financial undertaking to disadvantage.

16.2 Melton Bowling Club

(a) as it relates to Council business information, being information that would prejudice the Council's position in commercial negotiations if prematurely released.

16.3 Draft City of Melton Aquatic and Leisure Strategy 2026-2046

(a) as it relates to Council business information, being information that would prejudice the Council's position in commercial negotiations if prematurely released.

16.4 Technology Change Program - Delivery Partner Contract Update

(e) as it relates to legal privileged information, being information to which legal professional privilege or client legal privilege applies.

16.5 Audit and Risk Committee Independent Member Remuneration Review

(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. CLOSE OF BUSINESS