



Merri-bek
City Council

COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA

Wednesday 12 August 2026

Commencing 6.30 pm

Bunjil (Council Chamber), Merri-bek Civic Centre,
90 Bell Street, Coburg

Language Link

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Acknowledgement of the traditional custodians of the City of Merri-bek

Merri-bek City Council acknowledges the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung people as the Traditional Custodians of the lands and waterways in the area now known as Merri-bek, and pays respect to their elders past, present, and emerging, as well as to all First Nations communities who significantly contribute to the life of the area.

Information about Council Meetings

These notes have been developed to help people better understand Council meetings. All meetings are conducted in accordance with Council's Governance Rules.

WELCOME The Mayor, who chairs the meeting, formally opens the meeting.

APOLOGIES Where a Councillor is not present, their absence is noted in the minutes of the meeting. Council may also approve leaves of absence in this part of the meeting.

DISCLOSURES OF CONFLICTS INTERESTS A Councillor has a duty to disclose any direct or indirect financial or other interests, they may have in any matter to be considered by Council that evening.

CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES The minutes of the previous meeting are put before Council to confirm the accuracy and completeness of the record.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS AND OTHER MATTERS At each Council Meeting provision of 10 minutes will be made in the Agenda for the Mayor and Councillors to acknowledge and recognise achievements of local individuals and organisations; and raise matters considered important to Council.

PETITIONS Council receives petitions from citizens on various issues. Council formally accepts petitions at Council meetings.

PUBLIC QUESTION TIME This is an opportunity (30 minutes), for citizens of Merri-bek to raise questions with Councillors.

COUNCIL REPORTS Council officers prepare detailed reports, which are considered by Councillors and a Council position is adopted on the matters considered. The Mayor can invite firstly Councillors, secondly Officers, and then citizens in attendance to identify Council reports which should be given priority by the meeting and considered in the early part of the meeting.

NOTICES OF MOTION A motion which has been submitted to the Chief Executive Officer no later than 12 pm (noon) 10 business days prior to the meeting which is intended to be included in the agenda. The motion should outline the policy, financial and resourcing implications.

NOTICE OF RESCISSION A Councillor may propose a motion to rescind a resolution of the Council, provided the previous resolution has not been acted on, and a notice is delivered to the CEO or delegate setting out the resolution to be rescinded and the meeting and date when the resolution was carried. If a motion for rescission is lost, a similar motion may not be put before the Council for at least one month from the date it was last lost, unless the Council resolves that the notice of motion be re-listed at a future meeting.

FORESHADOWED ITEMS This is an opportunity for Councillors to raise items proposed to be submitted as Notices of Motion at future meetings.

URGENT BUSINESS The Chief Executive Officer or Councillors, with the approval of the meeting, may submit items of Urgent Business (being a matter not listed on the agenda) but requiring a prompt decision by Council.

CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS Whilst all Council meetings of Council are open to the public, Council has the power under the *Local Government Act 2020* to close its meeting to the public in certain circumstances which are noted where appropriate on the Council Agenda. Where this occurs, members of the public leave the Council Chamber or Meeting room while the matter is being discussed.

CLOSE OF MEETING The Mayor will formally close the meeting and thank all present.

NEXT MEETING DATE The next Council meeting will be held on Wednesday 9 September 2026 commencing at 6.30 pm, in the Bunjil (Council Chamber), Merri-bek Civic Centre, 90 Bell Street, Coburg. The next Planning and Related Matters meeting will be held on Wednesday 26 August 2026 commencing at 6.30 pm.

WELCOME

1. APOLOGIES/LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Cr Theodosis has requested a leave of absence from 22 July to 25 July 2026 inclusive.

2. DISCLOSURES OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

3. MINUTE CONFIRMATION

The minutes of the Council Meeting held on 8 July 2026 and the Special Council Meeting held on 20 July 2026 be confirmed.

4. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS AND OTHER MATTERS

5. PETITIONS

Nil

6. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

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9. NOTICE OF RESCISSION

Nil

10. FORESHADOWED ITEMS

11. URGENT BUSINESS

12. CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS

**12.1 CONTRACT AWARD: RFT-2026-11: RETAINING WALL
REHABILITATION AT WHEELER STREET, PASCOE VALE SOUTH**

Pursuant to section 3(1)(g(ii)) of the Local Government Act 2020 this report has been designated as confidential because it relates to private commercial information, being information provided by a business, commercial or financial undertaking that if released, would unreasonably expose the business, commercial or financial undertaking to disadvantage.

7. COUNCIL REPORTS

7.1 DON BOSCO HOSTEL AND YOUTH CENTRE BRUNSWICK - ADVOCACY

Director Community, Eamonn Fennessy

Early Years and Youth

Officer Recommendation

That Council:

1. Acknowledges the Salesians of Don Bosco Hostel and Youth Centre's role as a valued place providing activities and programs for children and young people over many years.
2. Notes the significant community interest in the Salesians of Don Bosco religious order's proposed sale of the Don Bosco Hostel and Youth Centre in Brunswick.
3. Writes to the Salesians of Don Bosco requesting that they reconsider the proposed sale of the Don Bosco Hostel and Youth Centre in Brunswick and explore options to continue operating the facility in its current location.
4. Writes to the relevant State and Federal Government Ministers encouraging them to engage with the Salesians of Don Bosco about grant opportunities and funding programs that could support the continued delivery of programs for children and young people from the Don Bosco Hostel and Youth Centre in Brunswick.

REPORT

Executive Summary

The Don Bosco Hostel and Youth Centre in Brunswick has been a valued place for children, young people and families since 1939.

The Don Bosco Hostel and Youth Centre is wholly owned and operated by the Catholic Church's Salesian Society (Salesians), and delivers programs and activities from its Sydney Road, Brunswick site. These include a 30-room hostel for young men aged 18 to 24, and a popular Youth Centre operating after school, on weekends and during school holidays. Activities include in-ground trampolines, table tennis, pool tables, a swimming pool and basketball courts. Don Bosco Hostel and Youth Centre is also a well-known and affordable venue for children's birthday parties.

The Salesian Society has recently determined that the Don Bosco Hostel and Youth Centre is underutilised and surplus to its requirements. The 2,871 square metre site is being offered for sale through an Expression of Interest process closing on 20 August 2026. The proposed sale and potential closure has generated significant community concern about the loss of valued services and programs. Community members have requested, through a petition with more than 5,500 signatures, that Council and the Victorian Government urgently work together to "keep the centre open and in community hands".

This report considers whether Council should purchase and operate the Don Bosco Hostel and Youth Centre and concludes this is not recommended, given the significant and unbudgeted acquisition, renewal and operating costs, the absence of a current policy direction, and Council's existing obligations and required investment in community infrastructure, programs and services in Brunswick and across Merri-bek.

The report recommends that Council write to the Salesians of Don Bosco requesting they reconsider the proposed sale and explore options to continue operating the facility. It also recommends writing to relevant State and Federal Government Ministers encouraging them to engage with the Salesians about grant and funding opportunities that could support continued programs for children and young people from the Don Bosco Hostel and Youth Centre in Brunswick.

Previous Council Decisions

There are no previous Council decisions relevant to this matter.

1. Policy Context

The Merri-bek Children, Young People and Families Strategy 2026-2029 guides how agencies, governments, families, and the community will work together to create opportunities, strengthen wellbeing, and support children and families in Merri-bek.

2. Background

The Don Bosco Hostel and Youth Centre in Brunswick

The Don Bosco Hostel and Youth Centre in Sydney Road, Brunswick has been operated by the Catholic Church's Salesian Society for 87 years. For many decades, the Don Bosco Hostel and Youth Centre has provided accommodation for young men through its hostel, as well as a range of free after-school, weekend and school holiday programs for children and young people through its Youth Centre.

The Don Bosco Youth Centre offers activities including table tennis, pool tables, trampolines, a swimming pool and basketball courts. It is also a popular and affordable venue for children's birthday parties. The Don Bosco Hostel and Youth Centre is well known and highly valued by many members of the community in Brunswick and beyond.

The Don Bosco Hostel and Youth Centre is located on land that was originally a pasta factory operated by Sebastian Danelli, one of the earliest Italian immigrants to Brunswick, who arrived in the area in the early 1850s. The Danelli family later bequeathed the property to the Catholic Church, which opened the historically significant Spanish Mission-style Don Bosco Hostel in the early 1940s.

The hostel originally functioned as a home for Catholic boys and young men from rural Victoria who had come to Melbourne to work or study. The current Youth Centre, which hosts a range of popular and accessible programs, was constructed in the late 1970s after the original building was impacted by fire.

In recent weeks, the Salesian Society has advertised the Don Bosco Hostel and Youth Centre for sale by Expression of Interest, closing on 20 August. The property is being offered with vacant possession for occupation or development. It is understood the sale follows a review of the Salesian Society's property holdings, which identified the Don Bosco Hostel and Youth Centre as an underutilised facility.

An indicative valuation for the site is above \$10 million, although the final sale price could be considerably higher depending on market interest. The 2,871 square metre site has a 74-metre frontage to Sydney Road, with additional frontages to Tinning Street and Prowse Street. The property includes a 30-room hostel and other residential facilities, including a commercial kitchen, dining hall, offices, chapel, indoor and outdoor recreation areas, a multipurpose basketball court and swimming pool. Three retail tenancies are also included as part of the property.

There is strong community interest in the future of the Don Bosco Hostel and Youth Centre and the highly valued programs offered by the Salesians through the Youth Centre. On 21 July, community members commenced a petition titled 'Save Don Bosco Youth Centre, Brunswick – 87 years of Community History'.

The petition has more than 5,500 signatures and describes the Don Bosco Hostel and Youth Centre as a unique, low-cost or free place for young people. It argues that the loss of the facility would particularly affect disadvantaged and low-income families, children and young people, and that Brunswick's growing population increases the need for facilities of this kind. The petition calls on Council and the Victorian Government to urgently work together to "keep the centre open and in community hands".

3. Issues

Purchase and operation of the Don Bosco Hostel and Youth Centre

The Don Bosco Hostel and Youth Centre is wholly owned and operated by the Catholic Church's Salesian Society.

Council funds and operates a broad range of services and programs for children, young people and families across Merri-bek. This includes youth-specific and youth-accessible third spaces, such as Oxygen Youth Space and the Glenroy Library Youth Lounge. The new Coburg Library and Piazza, which is due to open in 2030, will also include a strong focus on children, young people and families, with dedicated spaces to support these groups.

Current work is also underway to support youth-initiated spaces and programs in Fawkner. Council is also considering 'third space' activation programs for young people in existing community facilities in Brunswick, including Brunswick Library, Brunswick Baths and Gym, Balum Balum Place and Brunswick Town Hall.

Suggestions have been made that Council should consider purchasing and operating the Don Bosco Hostel and Youth Centre. Council has no current policy, strategic framework or direction that supports purchasing this site or making an investment of this scale. If Council were to consider acquiring and operating the Don Bosco Hostel and Youth Centre, it would involve a significant and unbudgeted up-front and on-going capital and operational cost.

The current program offering and service model at the Don Bosco Youth Centre is not a model Council could operate without significant additional operational funding, or without ceasing other programs or services. Operating these programs and services under Council management would require the creation of a new staff team and additional operating expenditure estimated to be in the order of \$1-3 million per year (depending on the operating model and level of service).

Some aspects of the facility, including the 30-room hostel accommodation for young men aged 18 to 24 and the outdoor swimming pool, are not services Council is currently equipped to operate.

The site value is likely to exceed \$10 million. The condition of the building infrastructure is currently unknown. However, substantial investment is likely to be required to upgrade the Don Bosco Hostel and Youth Centre's ageing, heritage-listed buildings to contemporary standards.

Council already funds and provides a wide range of community infrastructure, venues, programs and services in Brunswick and across Merri-bek.

Examples of these investments are outlined below, including completed project costs and projects budgeted in Council's 2026–2031 Capital Works Program. Costs are presented in today's dollars and are subject to change.

Investment Area	Examples and Timing	Value
Major civic and community infrastructure	Completed: Balum Balum Place construction, delivered, plus ongoing operating costs	\$30,000,000
	Proposed / under development: Coburg Library and Piazza, to be completed by 2030	\$60,000,000
	Balum Balum Place northwest building renewal in 2027-28	\$1,189,000
	Coburg Bluestone Cottage Complex redevelopment	\$4,000,000
	Coburg Town Hall works	\$1,970,000
Brunswick community infrastructure	Completed: Brunswick Baths and Gym recent works,	\$2,245,000
	Dunstan Reserve Childcare upgrade	\$1,600,000
	Proposed / under development: Brunswick Early Years Hub construction in 2026-27	\$12,500,000
	Brunswick Library refresh/meeting rooms in 2028-30	\$1,740,000
	Brunswick Baths gym expansion in 2030-31	\$8,750,000
Early years and childcare facilities	Dawson Street Child Care upgrade	\$3,090,000
	Proposed / under development: Hadfield Early Years Centre redevelopment in 2027-29	\$9,650,000
Sports fields and active recreation	Lake Park Kinder Upgrade in 2030-31	\$1,850,000
	Proposed / under development: AG Gillon Oval improvement works in 2027-28	\$3,325,000
	Balfe Park drainage and irrigation upgrade in 2026-27	\$1,050,000
	Coburg Athletics Track resurfacing	\$1,450,000
	Coburg Basketball Stadium changerooms in 2029-30	\$900,000
	De Chene Reserve Coburg lighting upgrades in 2029-30	\$400,000
	Dunstan Reserve Brunswick sports field redevelopment in 2027-28	\$3,045,000
	Dunstan Reserve sports field lighting	\$790,000
	East Coburg Tennis Club surface renewal in 2030-31	\$1,100,000
	JP Fawcner West and East sports field upgrade in 2027-28	\$4,500,000
	McDonald Reserve hockey pitch	\$3,890,000
	Parker Reserve lighting upgrade in 2030-31	\$1,100,000
	Raeburn Reserve sports field upgrade in 2030-31	\$2,800,000
	Ray Kibby Table Tennis Centre in 2030-31	\$1,850,000
	Shore Reserve lighting and sports field upgrade in 2028-29	\$2,900,000
	Sports field upgrades and renewals	\$3,780,000
	Wallace Reserve sports field lighting upgrade	\$1,400,000
	Oak Park East sport field lighting in 2027-28	\$350,000
Total		\$173,214,000

Other significant community infrastructure commitments and future needs include the management, maintenance and renewal of Council's six aquatic and leisure centres; addressing an 18-court shortfall in basketball facilities for the thousands of residents who play the sport; renewing numerous community halls and venues, maternal and child health centres, and; expansion of kindergartens to meet the need of an additional 900 places by 2036, driven by Victorian Government early years policy reforms.

Given the scale of this existing and committed investment, and Council's significant community infrastructure assets, programs and services in Brunswick and across Merri-bek, it is not recommended that Council purchase and operate the Don Bosco site. If Council were to determine to purchase and operate the site, it would need to consider difficult trade-offs, including which of the infrastructure, services or programs listed above could be reduced or ceased, and which planned projects could be deferred.

Advocacy to the Salesian Society, State and Federal Government

This report acknowledges the strong community sentiment about the future of the Don Bosco Hostel and Youth Centre and the positive impact it has had on generations of children, young people and families in Brunswick and beyond. It recommends that Council write to the Salesians of Don Bosco requesting that they reconsider the proposed sale of the Don Bosco Hostel and Youth Centre and explore options to continue operating the facility.

The report also recommends that Council write to relevant State and Federal Government Ministers encouraging them to engage with the Salesians of Don Bosco about grant opportunities and funding programs that could support the continued delivery of programs for children and young people from the Don Bosco Hostel and Youth Centre in Brunswick.

Climate emergency and environmental sustainability implications

There are no climate emergency implications associated with this report.

Economic sustainability implications

There are no economic sustainability implications associated with this report.

Legal and risk considerations

There are no legal or risk considerations arising from this report.

Human Rights Consideration

The implications of this report have been assessed in accordance with the requirements of the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities, and this report is relevant to the right to take part in public life.

4. Community consultation and engagement

Council has not undertaken community consultation and engagement on this matter given the issue relates to the sale of land held by another organisation. Councillors have been briefed on the proposed sale of the Don Bosco Hostel and Youth Centre and are aware of community sentiment through correspondence and media reporting.

Affected persons rights and interests

Before making a decision that affects a person's rights, Council must identify whose rights may be directly affected and provide an opportunity for that person (or persons) to convey those views regarding the effect on their rights and consider those views.

The proposed sale of the Don Bosco Hostel and Youth Centre in Brunswick will affect local community members, children, youth and families. The matter and current sentiment will also be of interest and importance the Catholic Church and the Salesian Society. There are no individual rights or interests affected by this report.

Communications

A public statement will be made available on the Merri-bek website following Council consideration of this report.

5. Officer Declaration of Conflict of Interest

Council officers involved in the preparation of this report have no conflict of interest in this matter.

6. Financial and Resources Implications

The recommendations of this report have no financial implications and advocacy in the form of correspondence can be undertaken as proposed within existing budgets and resource allocations.

As addressed in the report, there would be significant cost and budget considerations and likely impacts to existing programs, services and planned projects if Council were to consider acquiring and operating the Don Bosco Hostel and Youth Centre. This is not a recommendation of this report.

7. Implementation

Subject to Council's decision, the next steps would be:

1. Writing to the Salesians of Don Bosco requesting them to reconsider the proposed sale of the Don Bosco Hostel and Youth Centre in Brunswick and to find ways to continue operating the facility and programs delivered from it.
2. Writing to the relevant State and Federal Government Ministers encouraging them to engage with the Salesians of Don Bosco about grant opportunities and funding programs that could allow them to continue to deliver programs for children and youth from the Don Bosco Hostel and Youth Centre in Brunswick.
3. Communicating Council's position publicly through a statement on Council's website.

Attachment/s

There are no attachments for this report.

7.2 TATE RESERVE - CONFLICT RESOLUTION OUTCOME

Director City Infrastructure, Greg Rodwell

Open Space and Environment

Officer Recommendation

That Council:

1. Notes the proposed activities and improved amenities recommendations from the Tate Reserve Conflict Resolution Process outlined in section 3 of this report.
2. Adopts the Council Order at Attachment 1 (Dog Off-Leash and Dog Prohibited Areas) with tracked changes accepted, for publication in the Victorian Government Gazette, with an effective date of 29 August 2026, noting that the Order makes a change to the Off Leash area for Tate Reserve.
3. Refers the allocation of \$122,850 from the Public Resort and Recreation Land Fund to the Q1 2026/27 budget process for improved amenities and signage.
4. Acknowledges and thanks the Tate Reserve community, Friends of Merri Creek and the Merri Creek Management Committee for their participation in the Tate Reserve Conflict Resolution Process and continued engagement through 2026/27.

REPORT

Executive Summary

This report outlines the results arising from the Tate Reserve conflict resolution process. The process has resulted in proposed changes to the permanent interventions for Tate Reserve compared with what was trialled during Stage 1 of the Dog Walking Merri-bek project. The changes represent a compromise outcome which aims to address the needs of key stakeholders in a fair and balanced manner.

The changes, when compared to the trial interventions, include increasing the dog on leash area to the western side of the reserve, realigning of the fencing and installing additional amenities and signage.

The proposed works and initiatives are expected to cost \$122,850 and are not currently budgeted for. It is proposed to refer this budget request to the Q1 2026/27 budget forecast process.

Council officers will continue to engage with the local community, including with the Tate Reserve Working Group for 2026/27, which has been established as part of the conflict resolution process. This project continues to represent an important opportunity to better manage and ensure our open spaces remain safe, inclusive, and sustainable for all members of the Merri-bek community.

Previous Council Decisions

Dog walking in Merri-bek Project – 8 April 2026

That Council:

1. *Notes the community engagement outcomes of the Stage 1 pilot Dog Walking in Merri-bek project summarised in Attachment 1 of this report and thanks the community for their significant contributions throughout the six-month pilot period of engagement.*
2. *Endorses the recommendations arising from the six-month pilot program across seven of eight identified parks (Attachment 2) including interventions for improved amenities and signage.*
3. *Acknowledges that recommendations arising from the Tate Reserve pilot will be deferred to enable specific site issues to be worked through.*

4. *Allocates \$220,000 from the Public Resort and Recreation Land Fund in 2026/27 in the draft budget to provide for improved amenities and signage related to the recommendations in Stage 1.*
5. *Receives a report by mid-2027 outlining a proposed stage 2.*

Dog walking in Merri-bek - Consultation Summary and Stage 1 Pilot Implementation – 9 July 2025

That Council:

1. *Revises Attachment 1 and Attachment 2 so that they reflect changes to Tate Reserve to increase the area zoned as No Dogs, still retaining a corridor for Dog Off-Leash along the western side of the No Dogs area.*
2. *Adopts the Council Order at Revised Attachment 1 (Dog Off-Leash and Dog Prohibited Areas) and directs for it to be published with tracked changes accepted in the Victorian Government Gazette with an effective date of 28 July 2025.*
3. *Endorses the implementation of the Stage 1 pilot program across eight identified parks the support the Council Order to trial draft principles and interventions for improved management of dog access (Revised Attachment 2) for a minimum of six months, utilising capital funding of \$150,000 set aside in 2025/26 for this purpose.*
4. *Notes that the community has participated significantly in consultation on Stage 1 of the Dog Walking in Merri-bek project summarised in Attachment 3 of this report and that officers will continue to engage with the community during the pilot.*
5. *Receives a future report at the conclusion of the Stage 1 pilot on outcomes, learnings and future recommendations as part of the preparation of Stage 2 of the Dog Walking in Merri-bek project (remaining off leash reserves).*

1. Policy Context

Community Vision

The Council Plan 2025 to 2029 sets out Council's and our community's vision for the future in Merri-bek. Key objectives and strategies related to this report include:

- 1.1: Greening and beautifying our public and open spaces
- 1.2: Restore and renature open spaces, creek corridors and waterways that create a vibrant network of interconnected green corridors, enhance wildlife habitats and promote biodiversity.
- 1.3: Inspire and activate community connection and care for nature, ecological sustainability
- 1.5: Work closely with Traditional Owners and local First Nations People to care for Country
- 3.1: Build new and revitalised local parks that promote access to open space close to home, catering for all needs and abilities.
- 5.3: Coordinate advocacy efforts to pursue funding, policy changes and projects that achieve positive community outcomes, by collaborating with community members, peak bodies, and other levels of government.
- 5.5: Strengthen engagement through greater use of inclusive communications catering to Merri-bek's diverse audiences; and through education, targeted consultations, storytelling, and closing the loop to community.
- 5.7: Co-design meaningful consultation of local place initiatives.

Open Space Strategy

Council adopted its current Open Space Strategy in 2024. The following strategic directions are relevant to this report:

- Ensuring our open space network is adaptive, biodiverse, cooling, healthy and resilient.
- Providing open space for everyone.

Planning Scheme

Merri-bek's waterway parklands are covered by both the Environmental Significance Overlay (ESO) and Significant Landscape Overlay (SLO) which provide the statutory, environmental, and visual justification for Council decisions regarding dog access, such as creating fenced "no-go" zones, maintaining riparian buffers, and managing the overall intensity of recreation in waterway corridors. The objectives of the planning scheme, specifically the ESO and SLO, provide a framework for Councils to manage waterways by controlling land use in sensitive riparian areas. These overlays protect waterway health—and, by extension, manage the impacts of dogs—by maintaining vegetative buffers, preventing erosion, and managing public access to sensitive habitat areas.

Other strategic plans

Council has identified opportunities to improve dog walking in open spaces through area-specific planning processes and wider policy initiatives, including the Merri Creek Environs Strategy and the Domestic Animal Management Plan.

2. Background

Merri-bek currently provides 57 designated dog off-leash reserves and 8 fenced dog parks, supporting a wide range of recreational users. The 2024 Open Space Strategy identified the need to balance the sometimes-competing demands of dog walkers, families, cyclists, sporting clubs, other park users and broader environmental outcomes. Community feedback indicated that open spaces are an important finite resource and are required to meet a multitude of needs, highlighting the need for improved management to ensure safe and respectful use by everyone.

Following extensive community engagement and temporary changes at eight reserves as part of the Dog Walking in Merri-bek Stage 1 pilot project, Council considered the outcomes at its 8 April 2026 meeting. Council endorsed permanent recommendations for seven of the eight pilot reserves, while recognising that Tate Reserve required further investigation to identify a proposal that would achieve broader community support. The Stage 1 outcomes for the seven of the eight pilot reserves were supported through committed funding for the delivery of the approved recommendations through the 2026/27 budget process.

3. Issues

Community Feedback

Community feedback from Stage 1 of the Dog Walking Project reinforced many of the issues previously identified through engagement on the Open Space Strategy. Dog walking is one of the most common uses of open space and provides significant physical and mental health benefits, while also contributing to a greater sense of safety and activity in parks. However, both dog owners and non-dog owners expressed growing concern about the behaviour of a minority of dog owners, particularly dogs being off leash in designated on-leash areas, on shared paths, and around playgrounds and picnic areas. Concerns were also raised about responsible pet ownership, including dog waste, inadequate control of dogs, and poor recall.

Residents, particularly those who are uncomfortable around dogs, highlighted the need for better management of dogs in public spaces. Environmental groups also raised concerns about the impacts of dogs on biodiversity and wildlife in sensitive creek and parkland environments. As a result, the community called for increased education and enforcement of dog owner responsibilities, clearer signage and communication regarding leash requirements, more fenced and purpose-built dog parks, and improved provision of dog waste bags and bins. While only 14% of households have registered dogs, dog walkers remain among the most frequent users of parks, reinforcing the need for Council to balance the needs of all park users, improve perceptions of safety and inclusiveness, and protect important environmental values.

Tate Reserve Conflict Resolution

External facilitators were engaged to support a conflict resolution process between key stakeholders relating to use and management of Tate Reserve in Coburg. The facilitator's role was to be independent and neutral, and to support all parties to find both:

- a lasting resolution for how Tate Reserve is used, and
- some steps that may heal the relational rift that has impacted all stakeholders and other users of Tate Reserve.

The facilitator conducted an initial workshop with Council officers, several stakeholder interviews and facilitated two constructive stakeholder workshops. Key recommendations as a result of this process included:

- The establishment of a stakeholder working group.
- Additional works to the reserve including a new nature-based resting place, nature and educational signage, a drinking fountain, erosion management works, and rock beaching.
- Development of a staged approach to the works, supported by the Tate Reserve Working Group.
- Realignment of the habitat fencing (dog prohibited area) (*Figure 2*) resulting in a reduction to the habitat area than originally proposed during the trial (*Figure 1*).



Large habitat "No Dogs" zone, with smaller main path off-leash corridor along the western side.

Figure 1



Expanded dog prohibited zone (compared to existing), with the remaining reserve changed to off-leash.

Figure 2

Climate emergency and environmental sustainability implications

There are no specific climate emergency implications associated with this report.

Legal and risk considerations

Local Government Act 2020

The Local Government Act 2020 and Merri-bek's Local Laws provide requirements and guidance for how Merri-bek plans, delivers and manages our open space. The Local Government Act articulates that "the role of a Council is to provide good governance in its municipal district for the benefit and wellbeing of the municipal community" (section 8 (1)). The Local Laws provide clarity about responsibilities in our open spaces, including on-leash dog areas in our parks and playgrounds and protection of our natural environment in open spaces.

Domestic Animals Act 1994

Section 26 of the *Domestic Animals Act 1994* allows Victorian Councils to prohibit dogs from certain public places within the municipality and a requirement for dogs to be on leash at all times, unless in a designated off-leash area as named by the Council.

Merri-bek Council has an existing Order that was amended in July 2025 to include the changes outlined in the Stage 1 pilot and this Order is proposed to be further amended as a result of the further community engagement activities and review of the Stage 1 pilot.

Human Rights Consideration

The implications of this report have given consideration to the requirements of the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities and there are no relevant implications for the proposed interventions of Stage 1. It is noted that Council has conducted extensive community engagement as part of this process, ensuring the views of the community have been considered in the proposals outlined in this report.

Affected persons rights and interests

Before making a decision that affects a person's rights, Council must identify whose rights may be directly affected and provide an opportunity for that person (or persons) to convey those views regarding the effect on their rights and consider those views. Council has engaged directly with local community groups and users of Tate Reserve as part of both the Stage 1 Pilot project and conflict resolution process.

4. Officer Declaration of Conflict of Interest

Council officers involved in the preparation of this report have no conflict of interest in this matter.

5. Financial and Resources Implications

The proposed permanent interventions for Tate Reserve, following the conflict resolution process include:

- Nature based resting place with seating and drinking fountain
- Educational and nature signage
- Fencing
- Rock beaching on the creek (subject to Melbourne Water approval)

The cost to deliver these outcomes has been estimated to cost \$122,850. This is currently unbudgeted and is proposed to be referred to the 26/27 Q1 Budget Forecast process for consideration.

6. Implementation

Subject to endorsement by Council and following Q1 2026-27 Budget Forecast Review process, officers will begin the implementation of the Tate Reserve changes. The changes will be staged, and information will be provided to the community, including through the Tate Reserve working group to ensure a smooth implementation process. Works will be subject to normal procurement processes.

Attachment/s

- | | | |
|---|---|------------|
| 1 | Council Order - Dog off leash areas - August 2026 - Track Changed version | D26/333498 |
| 2 | Executive Summary - Tate Reserve Resolution process May 2026 | D26/335211 |

Council Order – 12 August 2026 Council meeting

DOGS OFF LEASH AREAS

Order of the Merri-bek City Council

Section 26(2) Domestic (Feral and Nuisance) Animals Act 1994

Dogs must be under effective control

The owner of any dog must keep the dog in effective control by means of a chain, cord or leash held by the owner and attached to the dog while the dog is in any public place, other than designated off-leash areas.

Designated off-leash areas.

A dog may be exercised off a chain, cord or leash in designated off-leash areas, subject to the following conditions:

- The owner must carry a chain, cord or leash sufficient to bring the dog under effective control if the dog behaves in a manner which threatens any person or animal;
- The owner must remain in effective voice or hand control of the dog so as to be able to promptly bring the dog under effective control by placing the dog on a chain, cord or leash if that becomes necessary; and
- The owner must not allow the dog to worry, attack, rush at or threaten any person or animal.

If a dog is not restrained by means of a chain, cord or leash in a designated off-leash area, the owner must bring the dog under effective control by means of a chain, cord or leash at all times when the dog is within:

- 15 metres of:
 - any playground or children's play equipment;
 - the principal location of an organised sporting or community event or festival;
 - the principal location of an organised public meeting; or
 - a permanent barbecue or picnic area when in use.
- 1 metre of:
 - a shared pathway (and at all times while on the shared pathway).

List of Designated off-leash areas

Name of Park/Reserve	Street	Suburb	Melways Reference
Clifton Park	Victoria St	Brunswick	29 E7
Joyce Reserve	Northumberland Rd	Pascoe Vale	17 A6
McDonald Reserve	Bell St	Coburg	17 K12
DeChene Reserve	Bell St	Coburg	18 A12
Jackson Reserve	Golf Rd	Coburg North	17 K9
Cash Reserve	Livingstone St	Coburg North	18 A8
Sheils Reserve	Duggan St	Brunswick West	29 B5
Holbrook Reserve	Moonee Pde	Brunswick West	29 A8
Egan Reserve	Rennie St	Coburg	30 B3
Jones Park	Albion St	Brunswick East	30 A5
Braddy Reserve	Victoria St	Brunswick West	29 B6
Phillips Reserve	Weigall St	Brunswick East	30 B8
Sumner Park	Alister St	Brunswick East	30 C9
Abrahams Reserve	Clara St	Brunswick East	30 A5
Bowden Reserve	Nicholson St	Coburg	30 A1
Bridges Reserve	Bell St	Coburg	29 J1
Richards Reserve	Charles St	Coburg North	17 F9
Martin Reserve	Epping St	Hadfield	17 E2
Mommson Reserve	North Street	Hadfield	17 C2
Moomba Park Reserve	McBryde St	Fawkner	8 A12
Sewell Reserve	Glenroy Rd	Glenroy	17 A3
Wallace Reserve	Justin Ave	Glenroy	7 A12
Anderson Reserve	Linda St	Coburg	29 G3
Esselemont Reserve	Somerset St	Pascoe Vale Sth	16 J9
Gervase Ave Reserve	Gervase Ave	Glenroy	6 F12
J P Fawcner	Francis St	Oak Park	16 F6
Jacana Valley	Fran St	Glenroy	16 D2
Kingsford Smith Ulm Reserve	Pengana Ave	Glenroy	16 D4
A G Gillon Oval	Hope St	Brunswick	29 E6
Gilpin Park*	Albert St	Brunswick	29 E7
Reaburn Reserve	Pearson St	Brunswick	29 E7
Wylie Reserve	South Daly St	Brunswick West	29 C8
Hosken Reserve	Pallett St	Coburg North	17 F8
Raeburn Reserve	Raeburn St	Pascoe Vale	17 C9
Balfe Park	John St	Brunswick	30 A9
Fleming Park*	Victoria St	Brunswick	30 A8
Kirkdale Park	Kirkdale St	Brunswick East	30 B8
Methven Park	Methven St	Brunswick	29 K8
Campbell Reserve	Moreland Rd	Coburg	30 A4
Breary Reserve	Heliopolis St	Pascoe Vale Sth	17 A11
Dunstan reserve	Peacock St	Brunswick West	29 B4
Fraser Reserve	Hopetoun Ave	Brunswick West	29 A4
Morris Reserve	Wadham St	Pascoe Vale Sth	29 A2
Shore Reserve	Reynard St	Coburg	29 C2
Charles Mutton Reserve	Mutton Rd	Fawkner	17 J5
Parker Reserve	Mathieson St	Coburg North	17 J7
Austin Crescent Reserve	Austin Cres	Pascoe Vale	16 K8
Cole Reserve	Kent Rd	Pascoe Vale	17 B7

Hallam Reserve	Landells Rd	Pascoe Vale	17 D6
Rayner Reserve	Devon Rd	Pascoe Vale	16 J7
Roberts Reserve	Harrison St	Brunswick	30 B6
GE Clarke Reserve*	Kalang Road	Glenroy	N/A
Robinson Reserve*	McPherson St	Coburg	N/A
Lorne Street Reserve*	Lorne St	Fawkner	N/A
Harmony Park*	Gaffney St	Coburg	N/A
Tate Reserve*	Grant St	Coburg	N/A

***Off Leash areas in these parks are designated by the mapped areas and specific restrictions shown in Schedule 1.**

Prohibition

Playgrounds

Dogs are prohibited within the immediate perimeter of any playground at all times.

Creeks & Waterways

Dogs are prohibited within any Creeks & Waterways at all times.

Review

Council may, by order of resolution:

- Remove a reserve or part of a reserve; and /or
- Add a reserve or part of a reserve

to the list of designated off-leash areas.

Definitions

- "chain, cord or leash" means a chain, cord or leash which effectively restrains the dog;
- "designated off-leash area" means a park or reserve or other place which has been designated by an order of Council under Section 26 of the Domestic (Feral and Nuisance) Animals Act 1994, as contained in the list above;
- "owner" has the same meaning as in the Domestic (Feral and Nuisance) Animals Act 1994;
- "public place" has the same meaning as in section 3 of the Summary Offences Act 1966;
- "shared path" has the same meaning as in Road Rule 242 of the Road Rules – Victoria

SCHEDULE 1 – Zoned Dog Off Leash Areas and Specific Restrictions

Gilpin Park - Albert St, Brunswick



-  On-leash
-  Off-leash
-  Off-leash
(Timed Restrictions)
-  Prohibited

Fleming Park - Albert St, Brunswick East



-  On-leash
-  Off-leash
-  Off-leash
(Timed Restrictions)
-  Prohibited

Harmony Park - Gaffney St, Coburg



-  On-leash
-  Off-leash
-  Off-leash
(Timed Restrictions)
-  Prohibited

Robinson Reserve – McPherson St, Coburg

Additional Restrictions: the designated Off Leash Area only operates before 9:00am and after 5:00pm. This area is On Leash at all other times.



-  On-leash
-  Off-leash
-  Off-leash
(Timed Restrictions)
-  Prohibited

Tate Reserve - Grant St, Coburg





Lorne Street Reserve - Lorne St, Fawkner



-  On-leash
-  Off-leash
-  Off-leash
(Timed Restrictions)
-  Prohibited

GE Clarke Reserve – Kalang Rd, Glenroy



-  On-leash
-  Off-leash
-  Off-leash
(Timed Restrictions)
-  Prohibited



Project Background

In 2025, Merri-Bek Council initiated the Dog Walking in Merri-bek Project to improve the sharing of open space, including a review of dog on- and off-leash status in parks. Tate Reserve, historically used as an off-leash area despite being officially on-leash, became a focal point for community conflict. Two petitions were received from opposing parts of the community: one advocating for fewer restrictions on dogs (community-led Friends of Tate Reserve), and another seeking a larger no-dog habitat area (led by the Friends of Merri Creek and the Merri Creek Management Committee, MCMC). Council ultimately endorsed an expanded no-dog habitat area for the trial, sparking further community division and acts of vandalism against signage and temporary fencing.

In response, an external facilitator was engaged as an independent facilitator to support a conflict resolution process, aiming to find a lasting resolution for the use of Tate Reserve and to repair community relationships. This process occurred from May to July 2026.

Conflict Resolution Approach

The following items were seen as key objectives of the process:

Objectives

1. Resolve the conflict to enable new dog walking trials.
2. Improve environmental outcomes and biodiversity, including education and habitat connectivity.
3. Support safe and accessible use for all, balancing the needs of dog owners and nature advocates.
4. Optimize Council resources by reducing vandalism-related costs.
5. Increase compliance with local laws and responsible pet ownership.

Process Steps

- Site Visit: Facilitators and Council officers assessed the site and its history.
- Stakeholder Mapping: Identified key groups, including Friends of Merri Creek East Coburg (FOMC), Merri Creek Management Committee (MCMC), Friends of Tate Reserve (FOTR), Council officers, and others.
- Stakeholder Interviews: Gathered perspectives, grievances, and hopes from primary groups.
- Conflict Resolution Workshops: Two workshops brought stakeholders together to build understanding and co-create solutions.

Key Findings

Stakeholder Perspectives

- FOMC: Sought improved dog ownership culture, wildlife corridors, and felt blindsided by community campaigns.
- FOTR: Felt excluded from decision-making, concerned about safety and fairness, and advocated for evidence-based, inclusive solutions.

- MCMC: Focused on habitat connectivity, biodiversity, and the negative impact of vandalism and uncontrolled dogs.

Workshop Insights

- Shared Goals: All parties desired a sustainable, workable solution and improved relationships.
- Risks Identified: Decision-makers not present, potential for continued vandalism, and communication challenges.
- Resolution Process: Emphasized the need for clear communication, inclusive decision-making, and phased implementation of changes.

Risks and Mitigations

- Council Decisions Not Upheld: Mitigated by involving Councillors as observers and ensuring awareness.
- Community Non-Compliance: Shared responsibility for upholding outcomes and ongoing education.
- Reduced Trust in Council: Addressed through transparent communication and visible action.
- Biodiversity Loss: Highlighted as a risk if outcomes are not maintained; ongoing education recommended.

Resolution and Actions

All parties unanimously agreed to adopt a revised position for the zoning of on leash and off leash provisions within the reserve with the following key caveats:

- Install additional amenities (e.g., seating) outside the fenced habitat area before fencing is erected.
- Carefully design fencing to balance safety, aesthetics, and habitat protection.
- Establish a Council-governed working group (including all stakeholders) to oversee implementation and maintain positive momentum.
- Consult and educate the community about the changes prior to implementation.

Immediate Actions

- Council to prepare a recommendations report and communication plan.
- Council to consult with Wurundjeri and initiate a working group.
- Stakeholders to communicate and advocate for the agreed resolution.

Facilitator Observations and Recommendations

- The working group should be convened promptly to maintain momentum and good will from all parties.
- Relationships remain fragile; ongoing engagement and visible Council action are critical to rebuilding trust.
- Clear, ongoing communication and education about biodiversity and the purpose of changes are essential.

Conclusion

The conflict resolution process at Tate Reserve has produced a consensus-driven path forward, balancing environmental, community, and Council priorities. The success of the resolution will depend on continued collaboration, transparent communication, and a commitment to shared stewardship of Tate Reserve.

7.3 C236MBEK - GATEWAY 2 - DCP 2.0 CONSIDERATION OF SUBMISSIONS AND REQUEST FOR A PLANNING PANEL

Director Place and Environment, Pene Winslade

City Design and Economy

Officer Recommendation

That Council:

1. Notes and considers all submissions made on or before the last date of exhibition of Amendment C236mbek to the Merri-bek Planning Scheme (Amendment), in accordance with section 22(1) of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* (Vic) (Act).
2. Notes and considers late submissions made after the last date of exhibition of the Amendment in accordance with section 22(2) of the Act.
3. In relation to all submissions which were considered by Council, refers those submissions to an independent Planning Panel appointed by the Minister for Planning (Minister) under Part 8 of the Act in accordance with section 23 of the Act.
4. Endorses the response to submissions and the recommendations as set out in the C236mbek Engagement Report at Attachment 1 to form the basis of Council's submission to the independent Planning Panel.
5. Authorises the Director Place and Environment to make administrative changes to the Amendment and to give directions on issues which arise in the course of the Panel hearing in response to expert evidence and submissions consistent with Council's endorsed position in Attachment 1.

REPORT

Executive Summary

As Merri-bek grows, demand for new and upgraded roads, drainage and community facilities will increase. To ensure new development continues to contribute to this infrastructure need, Council has prepared a new 15-year Development Contributions Plan (DCP 2.0) to replace the previous plan, which expired earlier this year.

Planning Scheme Amendment C236mbek (the Amendment) proposes to introduce DCP 2.0 into the Merri-bek Planning Scheme by:

- Applying Schedule 2 to the Development Contributions Overlay (DCPO2) to all land within the municipality.
- Incorporating the *Development Contributions Plan* (Hill PDA, March 2026).

If approved, the Amendment will enable Council to continue collecting contributions from new development (DCP levy) to help fund essential infrastructure.

The Amendment was publicly exhibited for four weeks from 11 May to 17 June 2026. Four submissions were received, with the majority supporting the Amendment:

- The three supportive submissions welcomed the continuation of Merri-bek's development contributions program and recognised DCP 2.0 as an equitable mechanism to help fund essential infrastructure, including drainage upgrades.
- The one non-supportive submission raised concerns about the proposed transitional arrangements and the relationship between DCP 2.0 and the future Infrastructure Contributions Plan (ICP).

Officers have considered the submissions and issues raised and do not propose any changes to the Amendment. As such, this report recommends that Council endorses the Amendment as exhibited and request the Minister for Planning appoint an Independent Planning Panel to consider the Amendment and submissions received during exhibition.

Previous Council Decisions

C236mbek – Development Contributions Plan 2.0 – Gateway 1 – Authorisation & Exhibition – 14 May 2025

That Council:

1. *Endorses the report Merri-bek Development Contributions Plan (April 2025) as shown in Attachment 1 as part of Amendment C236mbek.*
2. *Seeks authorisation from the Minister for Planning to prepare Merri-bek Planning Scheme Amendment C236mbek in accordance with section 8A of the Planning and Environment Act 1987.*
3. *Subject to the Minister's authorisation, prepares Amendment C236mbek, generally in accordance with the documentation provided at Attachments 1 and 2.*
4. *Exhibits Amendment C236mbek in accordance with section 19 of the Planning and Environment Act 1987 and as outlined in the Consultation section of this report.*
5. *Authorises the Director Place and Environment to make changes to the Amendment prior to exhibition based on any conditions imposed in the authorisation granted by the Minister for Planning and to make administrative changes to correct errors and grammatical changes.*

1. Policy Context

Council Plan 2025-2029

The *Council Plan 2025-2029* (Council Plan) aims to create a healthy and inclusive municipality that cares for nature, is climate-resilient, and provides beautiful, liveable spaces and places that support a vibrant community and a thriving economy and culture

The Council Plan identifies a DCP 2.0 as a key supporting strategy and policy to help achieve Theme 3 - Beautiful and Liveable City strategic objective:

Create safe, accessible streets and public spaces that support vibrant communities, active travel, rest and relaxation, and community pride, while ensuring development and growth are well managed and local character is celebrated, ensuring Merri-bek is a welcoming, liveable, and connected place for all.

Budget and Capital Works Program

Council's adopted 4-Year Budget 2025-2029 (the Budget) sets out what Council will deliver in terms of services, infrastructure and projects over four years and how these activities will be funded. The Budget also contains Council's 4-year Capital Works Program (CWP) that includes a detailed breakdown of project spending over the four-year budget period.

The 4-year Budget and CWP have informed the project list for the new DCP 2.0, with projects commencing in the 2026/27 financial year and onwards considered for inclusion in the DCP project list.

Planning and Environment Act 1987 and Ministerial direction

The *Planning and Environment Act 1987* (the Act) provides the legal basis for a DCP by setting out the statutory framework that allows Council to collect development contributions to help fund identified infrastructure. This collection requires Council to deliver all the infrastructure projects listed in the DCP before its expiry and to apply collected funds solely to those identified projects.

The *Ministerial Direction on the Preparation and Content of Development Contributions Plans* (Ministerial Direction) provides direction to Councils on the preparation and content of a DCP, including where a DCP can be applied, what development can be exempt, and what can be funded from collected levies. It also sets out specific reporting requirements Councils must follow when they have a DCP.

Development Contributions Guidelines

The *Development Contributions Guidelines, March 2007 (DCP Guidelines)* prepared by the Victorian Government also guide the preparation of a DCP. They provide a clear and detailed direction on key concepts and required tasks in preparing a full cost apportionment DCP. They are also recognised by Planning Panels Victoria as the appropriate guide to the development of DCPs.

The proposed DCP 2.0 has been prepared in accordance with these guidelines.

Merri-bek Planning Scheme

Municipal Planning Strategy

Merri-bek's Municipal Planning Strategy (MPS) at Clause 02.03-8 (Infrastructure – Community Infrastructure) includes the following strategic direction focused on providing infrastructure to support a growing and changing population:

In planning and delivering community infrastructure, Council supports:

- *Providing accessible community infrastructure (e.g. health, education, social, leisure and cultural facilities) in different locations suited to the local community's needs.*

Planning Policy Framework

The Planning Policy Framework (PPF) includes state planning policies that apply in all planning schemes across the state. This includes existing policy related to development and infrastructure contributions at Clause 19.03-1S (Development and infrastructure contributions plans). This clause includes an objective to facilitate the timely provision of planned infrastructure to communities through the preparation and implementation of development contributions plans and infrastructure plans.

Strategies to support this objective include:

- *Prepare development contributions plans and infrastructure contributions plans, under the Planning and Environment Act 1987, to manage contributions towards infrastructure.*
- *Collect development contributions.*

2. Background

Development Contribution Plan Overlay

The Development Contributions Plan Overlay (DCPO) is a planning tool that enables councils to implement a DCP. The schedule to the DCPO sets out areas where development contributions are required to fund infrastructure, services, and works prior to development.

The DCPO does not itself trigger the need for a planning permit. Instead, it applies to planning permit applications for subdivision and for buildings and works within the overlay area, with requirements typically implemented through permit conditions. In addition, the levy is collected at defined points in the development process, including prior to the issue of a building permit or statement of compliance. This ensures that new development contributes to the infrastructure identified in the DCP.

Schedule 1 to the Development Contributions Plan Overlay

In 2015, Amendment C133 introduced Merri-bek's first DCP the *Moreland Development Contributions Plan 2015* (DCP 1.0) into the scheme and applied Schedule 1 to the Development Contributions Plan Overlay (DCPO1) to all land in the municipality. This DCP has played a key role in supporting the delivery of essential infrastructure since its introduction, delivery of 842 projects that had a total cost of approximately \$115 million.

DCP 1.0 is no longer imposing levies on new development and expired on 30 June 2026.

Proposed Schedule 2 to the Development Contributions Plan Overlay

Amendment C236mbek proposes to introduce DCP 2.0, a 15-year Development Contributions Plan, into the Merri-bek Planning Scheme by applying Schedule 2 to the Development Contributions Plan Overlay (DCPO2) across the municipality. The proposed DCP 2.0 identifies road, streetscape, drainage and community infrastructure projects to be funded through development contributions required to support Merri-bek's projected growth. The Amendment was authorised by the Minister for Planning on 3 March 2026 and publicly exhibited from 11 May to 17 June 2026.

Infrastructure Contribution Plan levy

An Infrastructure Contribution Plan (ICP) and Infrastructure Contribution Plan Overlay (ICPO) is set to apply to the Brunswick and Coburg Activity Centres and their catchment (as defined by the Housing Choice and Transport Zone) as part of the Victorian Governments Activity Centre Program.

Similar to the DCP, the ICP is a contribution mechanism that will impose a levy on new development to help fund essential infrastructure. However, unlike the DCP, the ICP will not include a specific list of projects. Instead, it establishes a list of essential infrastructure categories for which collected contributions may be used.

The rates of the ICP are set by the Victorian Government and will be substantially higher than the DCP at:

- \$11,350 per dwelling.
- \$114 per sqm of commercial floor area over 100sqm.
- \$57 per sqm of commercial floor area over 200sqm.

Council will likely be responsible for collecting the levies, keeping 2/3 to help fund Merri-bek's local infrastructure and transferring 1/3 to the state to go towards state infrastructure.

It is anticipated that an amendment to introduce the ICP and ICPO into the Merri-bek Planning Scheme mid 2026 with collections to commence in July 2027.

3. Issues

The C236mbek Engagement Report at **Attachment 1** includes a summary of all the submissions received during the exhibition period. It documents the key themes raised in each submission, along with a recommended response and proposed direction on each submission.

A total of four submissions were received, summarised in Table 1.

Table 1 – summary of submissions		
Submission	Submission type	Summary of submission
Submission 1	Supportive	The DCP 2.0 includes a suitable exemption for the types of works undertaken by the submitter.
Submission 2	Supportive	With the expiry of Merri-bek's current DCP, the proposed DCP 2.0 will support the ongoing collection of DCP levies.
Submission 3	Supportive	The DCP 2.0 is an appropriate mechanism to equitably fund and deliver drainage infrastructure required to manage flood risk and support sustainable development.
Submission 4	Not supportive and requesting changes	Opposes the DCP 2.0 being applied to current planning permit applications, requesting: • Exclude any planning permits lodged prior to the gazettal of C236mbek from a DCP liability. • Ensure the DCP liability is coordinated with the proposed state government ICP to ensure a development is not subject to duplicated or excessive infrastructure contributions.

Key Themes

The three supportive submissions are noted and do not raise any matters requiring changes to the Amendment. The only submission that did not support the Amendment, relating to land at 20 Leinster Grove, Brunswick East, raised two key issues, which are discussed below.

Issue 1 - Exemptions for current planning applications and financial implications

Planning applications lodged prior to the gazettal of C236mbek should be excluded from a DCP liability on the basis the additional levy creates an additional cost that has not been considered in the design and financially modelling at the time of lodgement.

Officer response

The DCP provides a fair and consistent method for new developments to contribute to the essential infrastructure required to support population growth. It uses population and development projections from 2026-2041 to inform the DCP levy rates and projected income.

The DCP is proposed to apply to developments that occur following gazettal of C236mbek, regardless of when a planning permit application was lodged. This approach is consistent in all current and past DCPs in Victoria. It is important that this approach is retained, as these developments will trigger a demand for infrastructure and were included in the demand assumptions used in the DCP. Excluding them would undermine the integrity and equitable distribution of the contribution framework underpinning the DCP.

The proposed DCP does include exemptions, and these exemptions are consistent with the directions in *The Act* and the *DCP Guidelines*, as well as DCP's currently operating across Victoria.

No changes are recommended to the Amendment.

Issue 2 – DCP levy relationship with the ICP levy

Ensure that any new DCP liability is appropriately managed with the proposed state government ICP so that contributions are not duplicated or excessive.

Officer response

Both the DCP and the ICP are proposed to apply to the Brunswick and Coburg Activity Centres and their catchments, meaning a single development may be subject to two levies. The site 20 Leinster Grove Brunswick East is not within any of these areas where the ICP is currently proposed to apply.

However, there will be properties in the Merri-bek municipality where the proposed DCP and ICP will apply, meaning that a property will be subject to two different levies. The state government have outlined that to avoid an unreasonable financial burden on development, the calculated ICP levy operates as a cap on total contributions, with the ICP levy reduced by the calculated DCP levy payable for the same development

For example – a development generates the following levies from the addition of one dwelling:

- Calculated DCP levy = \$284
- Calculated ICP levy = \$11,350

The ICP levy is then adjusted to address the levy cap.

- DCP levy = \$284
- ICP levy = \$11,066

No changes are required or recommended to the Amendment.

Legal and risk considerations

DCP 2.0 is a legal instrument that obligates Council to deliver the infrastructure projects listed in the DCP before the DCP expiry date and to use the collected levies solely to fund the specified projects.

If Council resolves to not proceed with any of the infrastructure projects listed in the DCP, the funds collected for these projects can be reallocated to new projects with the Minister for Planning's approval or refund the levies collected to affected landowners.

To address this risk, DCP 2.0 includes a four yearly review process to ensure that the DCP remains consistent with expected future development and infrastructure projects needs and costs.

Human Rights Consideration

The implications of this report have been assessed in accordance with the requirements of the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities and there are no adverse impacts. The human rights considered as part of the preparation of this report relate specifically to freedom, dignity, and equity.

The notification carried out as part of the Amendment does not limit or interfere with any Human Rights, in particular 'Section 13: The right to privacy and reputation', 'Section 18: The right to take part in public life', and 'Section 20: Property rights', with the following is noted:

- Any person may elect to take part in the process by providing a submission to the Responsible Authority.
- No parties are deprived of any legal or proprietary interest in land, or the ability to use and develop that land in accordance with the planning regulatory framework.
- A person is considered to be deprived of their property rights if a regulation has the effect of substantially depriving a property owner of the ability to use his or her property or part of that property. Amendment C236mbek implements existing planning scheme policy.

It is also considered that the proposed changes to the Merri-bek Planning Scheme by C236mbek will not have a direct or significant impact on gender equality.

4. Community consultation and engagement

Amendment C236mbek was publicly exhibited from 11 May 2026 to 17 June 2026. To support the public exhibition, direct notice was given to:

- Prescribed Ministers, relevant state government departments and authorities.
- Adjoining local Councils.
- Industry bodies with a development focus.
- Planning permit applicants (for development and subdivision) across a 26-month period (1 January 2024 to 5 March 2026).
- Building surveyors who registered permits across a 26-month period (1 January 2024 to 5 March 2026).

To reach the wider community and ensure the community had an opportunity to learn about the Amendment, the following notification was also undertaken:

- Public notice in the Government Gazette on the 14 May 2026.
- Public notice in the Herald Sun and The Age newspapers on 18 May 2026.
- Focussed Facebook post on 18 May 2026.
- A dedicated C236mbek webpage that provides information about the Amendment, including access to all the supporting documents, and a series of FAQs. The website also contains information on how to make a submission, including an online form to make it easy for people to make a submission.

Strategic Planning Officers were available for phone calls to talk about the Amendment with any member of the community.

Affected persons rights and interests

Before making a decision that affects a person's rights, Council must identify whose rights may be directly affected and provide an opportunity for that person (or persons) to convey those views regarding the effect on their rights and consider those views.

Under section 19(1A) of the Act, it is considered impractical to individually notify every property owner throughout the municipality of the C236mbek proposed changes. Directly notifying the development industry, and specifically those who manage planning applications in Merri-bek for both development and subdivision (the type of applications relevant to a DCP) ensures that those who design new development in collaboration with owners are aware of the proposed DCP.

If resolved by Council, all submitters will also be invited to be part of an independent planning Panel Hearing. Here, interested submitters will have an opportunity to present their view on the Amendment to an independent panel of experts and can ask questions directly to the expert consultants.

5. Officer Declaration of Conflict of Interest

Council officers involved in the preparation of this report have no conflict of interest in this matter.

6. Financial and Resources Implications

Financial

Administrative costs associated with the processing of the Amendment will be met within the base budget of the Strategic Planning Unit.

Once implemented into the Merri-bek Planning Scheme, DCP 2.0 will generate a significant income stream for Council and assist in delivering Council's CWP, particularly those infrastructure items forming part of DCP 2.0.

Based on a full development scenario, Council would collect approximately \$24 million over the life of the DCP towards the delivery of identified infrastructure items. However, if development occurs at a slower rate than predicted in DCP 2.0, Council will collect fewer contributions and will have to cover the funding gap through its general rates budget to deliver the specified infrastructure projects.

One of the key principles in compiling the project list for DCP 2.0 was to avoid over-commitment and this was done by selecting projects from Council's CWP and current road audit program. Community infrastructure projects have been included where there is a high degree of certainty that the project will be delivered.

This level of commitment also allows Council to manage any risks associated with a potential shortfall in development contributions due to a lower than anticipated rate of development, as Council will not over-commit to the delivery of infrastructure projects on an annual basis.

Resources

Council currently has an administrative policy in place which sets out the administrative processes to be followed when implementing DCP 1.0. An update to this policy is anticipated to ensure it aligns with DCP 2.0 and current best practice.

The administration of the DCP will have resourcing implications on several Council Branches and Units, who will oversee the levying of the DCP, receipt of payments and oversight of project delivery.

7. Implementation

The following timeline for the Amendment is broken down into the key 'decision gateways' for Council. The timeline is approximate and subject to not only Council's continual approval at key decision gateways but also Ministerial approval timelines and Planning Panels Victoria reporting:

Decision Gateway 1 - Authorisation and exhibition (Completed).

Decision Gateway 2 - Submission Review and Panel Request:

- August 2026 - Consider submissions and seek the Ministers appointment of Panel.
- September 2026 - Panel Directions Hearing.
- October 2026 - Panel Hearing.
- December 2026 - Panel Report is provided to Council.

Decision Gateway 3 - Review Panel report and final decision:

- February 2027 - Report on the Panel's recommendations and consider adoption of final version of the Amendment.
- March 2027 - Submit the Amendment to the Minister of Planning for approval.
- Mid to late 2027 - Anticipated approval by the Minister of Planning.

Attachment/s

- 1 C236mbek Engagement Report D26/290999

Amendment C236mbek Engagement report

June 2026



1. Overview of Amendment C236mbek

Amendment C236mbek proposes to introduce Council's new municipal-wide Development Contributions Plan (Hill PDA, March 2026) (DCP 2.0) into the Merri-bek Planning Scheme.

It seeks to do this by:

- Adding Schedule 2 to Clause 45.06 Development Contributions Plan Overlay (DCPO2) and applying the DCPO2 to all land in the Merri-bek municipal area.
- Amending Schedule to Clause 72.04 Incorporated documents to include a reference to the Development Contributions Plan March 2026 incorporated document

The proposed DCP 2.0 & DCPO2 is needed to continue to collect contributions from new development to help fund the necessary infrastructure to support Merri-bek's growing population. It does this through an established framework that allows Council to collect and allocate development levies in an equitable way to fund priority transport, drainage, public realm and community infrastructure projects.

Chronology of events

Table 1 – Chronology of events	
Date	Event
2023-2025	Pre-amendment steps – preparation of DCP 2.0 and amendment documents
14 May 2025	Council resolution to seek authorisation
30 May 2025	Letter received from the Department of Transport (DTP) advising the amendment is on review
3 March 2026	Letter of authorisation from DTP with conditions received
11 May 2026 to 17 May 2026	Exhibition of C236mbek in accordance with the engagement plan outlined in Gateway 1 Council report – 14 May 2025 (summarised in Section 3 of this report)

2. Authorisation

A letter of authorisation to progress C236mbek was received via Ministerial delegation on 3 March 2026 that included conditions and a further recommendation. Table 2 and 3 outline how council and the amendment appropriately responded to these conditions and recommendation.

Conditions of authorisation

Table 2 – Conditions of authorisation	
Condition of authorisation	How the condition was addressed
1 Update the Explanatory Report using the current explanatory report template and to address the following matters: a) Removal of reference to Ministerial Direction 9 as it has been revoked b) The response to Ministerial Direction 11(MD11) to reflect the recent changes to MD11 and VC283. c) Any other changes recommended by DTP in the attached track version of the explanatory report.	The explanatory report has been updated to address these matters as follows: a) Reference to Ministerial Direction 9 has been removed. b) Additional content has been added to respond to updated Ministerial Direction 11 to describe how the amendment is consistent with the delivery of the relevant housing target set out in the Planning Policy Framework. c) All updates made as per DTP's track version except the suggestion to include a table with a list of all affected land. C236mbek is a municipal wide DCP and as such applies to every property in Merri-bek municipal boundary. That equates to about 78,000 properties. A table listing all properties is excessive and unnecessary to communicate what land is affected by the amendment. A description that the amendment applies to all land in Merri-bek in conjunction with a map is as concise, useful and suitable approach to communicate how the DCP and DCPO will apply. An email was sent to DTP seeking support of this approach on 4/3/2026. DTP replied on 12/03/2026 supporting council's alternative approach, confirming Council's updates to the explanatory report would comply with this authorisation condition.
2 Update Schedule 2 to the DCP in accordance with the Ministerial Direction The Form and Content of Planning Schemes as follows: a) Delete Table 1 and associated notes as it is information only that is contained within the DCP and does not provide any information to assist a developer to understand their DCP obligations.	The DCPO has been updated as per the authorisation as follows: a) Table 1 and associated notes have been deleted b) Summary of contributions heading has been deleted and the Summary of Levies Payable heading moved to its place.

b) Delete the subheading "Summary of Contributions" and replace "Summary of Levies Payable" c) Amend the Table for Levies payable by Non-Residential Development (4) by changing the column headings for Commercial and Industrial from "per square metre (sqm) of floorspace" to "per square metre (sqm) of gross floorspace". d) Retain the following notes and delete the remaining notes after viii: i. The levies are current as at 1 July 2024. ii. The main development types identified in the Merri-bek Development Contributions Plan 2 (HillPDA, April 2025) are Residential, Commercial and Industrial. Commercial refers to retail, office or other commercial uses. For development that does not fall within one of the three development types, the development contribution that applies to Commercial development will apply in default unless the Collecting Agency agrees in writing to a different development type. iii. Where the Merri-bek Development Contributions Plan 2 (HillPDA, April 2025) provides for a Community Infrastructure Levy at the Maximum Dwelling Amount as determined in accordance with section 46L(3) of the Planning and Environment Act 1987, it will be adjusted to the Maximum Dwelling Amount each year. iv. Where the Merri-bek Development Contributions Plan 2 (HillPDA, April 2025) provides for a Community Infrastructure Levy of less than the Maximum Dwelling Amount, that levy will be adjusted annually on the 1st of July each year (or first practical date thereafter) in accordance with the Building Price Index for Melbourne shown in the Rawlinsons Australian Construction Handbook. v. The Development Infrastructure Levy will be adjusted annually on the 1st of July each year (or first practical date thereafter) in accordance with the Building Price Index for Melbourne shown	c) The column names in the Levies payable by non-residential development table has been updated to refer to 'gross floorspace'. d) The notes have been reduced, modified and re-ordered as directed in the authorisation letter.
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in the Rawlinsons Australian Construction Handbook. vi. A list showing the current contribution amounts may be viewed at Merri-bek City Council's website or by contacting the planning department.	
3 Make any consequential changes required to reflect updates (in project timings, costings etc) that occurred since the authorisation request was submitted to the Department of Transport and Planning (DTP).	The DCP has been updated to reflect changes in project costings and funding to align with Councils 2026-2031 Budget and Capital Works Program. It also included the removal of one project, Brunswick Baths Plant Rehabilitation - Mechanics and BMS, given its priority and viability had changed.

Response to other recommendations in the letter of Authorisation

Table 3 - Other recommendation in the C236mbek Authorisation letter

DTP's recommendation		Council response
1	DTP's Train and Tram Zone Activity Centres Program (TTZACP) team has recently engaged with Merri-bek officers regarding the Infrastructure Contributions Plan (ICP) proposed for Brunswick and Coburg activity centres. It is requested that you engage with the TTZACP team prior to submitting the amendment documentation for the municipal wide DCP exhibition to confirm timeframes and alignment with the Infrastructure Contribution Plan (ICP).	Email was sent on 4/3/2026 to DTP's TTZACP and ICP team seeking their views on the exhibition dates proposed for C236mbek. Council received a response on 5/3/2026 stating they had no issues with the proposed exhibition dates.

Impact of the amendment

The Planning and Environment Act 1987 s16N sets out impact categories for planning scheme amendments with associated procedural steps. This amendment preceded the application of Low, Medium or High categorisation through the authorisation process.

3. Exhibition

Amendment C236mbek was publicly exhibited for just over five weeks (38 days) from Monday 11 May 2026 to Wednesday 17 June 2026. The first day of notice is marked by the posting of letter notices on the 11 May 226.

To support the public exhibition, direct notices were given to:

- Prescribed Ministers, relevant state government departments and authorities
- Adjoining local Councils
- Industry bodies with a development focus
- Planning permit applicants for buildings and works and subdivision across a 26-month period (1 January 2024 to 5 March 2026) via an email notice.

- Building surveyors who registered permits across a 26-month period (1 January 2024 to 5 March 2026) via an email notice, or, a letter notices where email addresses were not known.
- To reach the wider community and ensure the community had an opportunity to learn about the Amendment, the following notification was also undertaken:
 - Public notice in the Government Gazette on the 14 May 2026
 - Public notice in the The Age newspaper on 18 May 2026
 - Public notice in the Herald Sun on 18 May 2026 and 25 May 2026. The second notice was undertaken to correct a typo by News Corp in the publication of the notice in the hard copy notice (incorrect amendment number was used)
 - Focussed Facebook post on 18 May 2026
 - A dedicated [C236mbek webpage](#) that provides information about the amendment, including access to all the amendment documents, background documents and series of FAQs. The website also contains information on how to make a submission, including an online form to make it easy for people to make a submission.
 - Advertised on the state government's [Browse Amendments - C236mbek amendment page](#)

Strategic Planning Officers were available for phone calls to talk about the Amendment with any member of the community.

Appendix 1 includes copies of notices sent via email, gazette, newspapers and Facebook.

4. Submissions - Summary of the issues raised in submissions, Officer responses and recommendations

Table 4 provides a summary of all the submissions received during the exhibition period documenting the themes included in each submission and the Council Officer recommended response and direction on each submission.

Submission number	Affected property address	Submission type	Summary of submission	Themes	Council Officer response to submission	Recommended Decision 1 – Recommended action in response to each submission pursuant to s23 of the P&E Act.	Recommended Decision 2 – Whether the submission is of a nature precluded from referral to a Panel pursuant to section 23(6) of P&E Act.
1.	No specific property address stated	Supportive	Submission stated they had no objection to the amendment, highlighting there being a suitable exemption for the types of works undertaken by the submitter.	Exemptions / Transitional provisions	Support noted	No changes proposed to the amendment	No
2.	No specific property address stated	Supportive	Submission stated they do not oppose the amendment, noting that with the expiry of Merri-bek's current DCP, the proposed DCP will support the ongoing collection of DCP levies.	Continuation of DCP program	Support noted	No changes proposed to the amendment	No
3.	No specific property address stated	Supportive	Submission stated they do not oppose the amendment as exhibited, highlighting that the DCP is an appropriate mechanism to equitably fund and deliver drainage infrastructure required to manage flood risk and support sustainable development.	Equitable mechanism Supports required infrastructure upgrades	Support noted	No changes proposed to the amendment	No
4.	20 Leinster Grove Brunswick East	Not supportive & change requested	Opposes the DCP being applied to current planning permit applications, in particular their current planning application at 20 Leinster Grove Brunswick East comprising for 130 dwellings. Submission requests: a) Exclude any planning permits lodged prior to the gazettal of C236mbek from a DCP liability on the basis the additional levy creates an additional cost that has not been considered in the design and financially modelling at the time of lodgement. b) Ensure the DCP liability is coordinated with the Victorian Government's proposed Infrastructure Contribution Plan (ICP) to ensure a development is not subject to duplicated or excessive infrastructure contributions.	Financial implications Exemptions / Transitional provisions ICP/DCP relationship	a) The DCP provides a fair and consistent mechanism for new developments to contribute to essential infrastructure required to support population growth. It uses population and development projections from 2026-2041 to inform the DCP levy rates and projected income. The DCP is proposed to apply to new developments that occurs following gazettal of C236mbek, regardless of when a planning permit application was lodged. This is consistent with the approach taken in all current and past DCPs in Victorian Planning Schemes. It is important that this approach is retained, as these developments will trigger a demand for infrastructure and were included in the demand assumptions used in the DCP. A development of 130 dwellings in Brunswick East would generate a requirement to pay a total of \$36,920 in	Refer the submission to a panel	No

			c) Keep the submitter informed of the progress of C236mbek, including panel haring or further opportunity to be heard.		DCP levies or \$284 per dwelling. On balance, this is not considered an onerous cost and will support improved infrastructure the development will benefit from. b) The Victorian Government is proposing to apply an ICP to the Sydney Road corridor of the Brunswick Activity Centre, the Coburg Activity Centre and their associated catchments (land in the Housing Choice and Transport Zone). The submitter's site at 20 Leinster Grove Brunswick East is not within any of these areas where the ICP is currently proposed to apply. Nevertheless, there will be some sites in the Merri-bek municipality where both the proposed DCP and ICP will apply, meaning that a site will be subject to two different levies. In those circumstances, to avoid unreasonable financial burden on development, the State Government has proposed for the ICP levy payable for a development to be reduced by the total amount of DCP levy payable for that development. This means that total amount of paid by a development under the ICP and DCP system will not exceed the standard ICP amount. c) The request to remain involved in the amendment process has been noted.		
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Appendix 1 - Engagement documents

Notice of preparation

The below Notice of preparation was included as an attachment to all email and letter notices and formed the copy for notices in the Government Gazette and newspapers (The Age and Herald Sun).

Planning and Environment Act 1987

MERRI-BEK PLANNING SCHEME

Notice of the preparation of an amendment to a planning scheme

Amendment C236mbek

Overview

The Amendment introduces Council's new municipal-wide Development Contributions Plan into the Merri-bek Planning Scheme.

For further details, refer to the explanatory report about the amendment.

Details of the amendment

The Merri-bek City Council planning authority has prepared Amendment C236mbek to the Merri-bek Planning Scheme.

The land affected by the amendment is all land in the Merri-bek City Council municipal area.

The amendment proposes to:

- Introduce and apply the Development Contributions Plan Overlay Schedule 2 (DCPO2) to all land in the municipality
- Incorporate the Development Contributions Plan (March 2026, H88 PDA)

You may inspect the amendment, any documents that support the amendment and the explanatory report about the amendment, free of charge, at

- Department of Transport and Planning website www.planning.vic.gov.au/public-inspection or by contacting 1800 789 386 to arrange a time to view the amendment documentation.
- Merri-bek City Council website at www.merri-bek.vic.gov.au/amendment-c236mbek or on request, during office hours, at the office of the planning authority (Coburg Customer Service Centre, 90 Bell Street Coburg) by contacting 9240 1111 to arrange a time to view the amendment documentation.

Any person may make a submission to the planning authority about the amendment. Submissions must be made in writing giving the submitter's name and contact address, clearly stating the grounds on which the amendment is supported or opposed and indicating what changes (if any) the submitter wishes to make.

Name and contact details of submitters are required for the planning authority to consider submissions and to notify such persons of the opportunity to attend planning authority meetings and any public hearing held to consider submissions.

The closing date for submissions is **Wednesday 17 June 2026**

Email submissions to planning@merri-bek.vic.gov.au. Alternatively mail to

Strategic Planning Unit
Submission to Amendment C236mbek
Merri-bek City Council
Locked Bag 10
Brunswick VIC 3056

The planning authority must make a copy of every submission available at its office and/or on its website for any person to inspect free of charge until the end of the two months after the amendment comes into operation or lapses.



Alayna Chapman
Strategic Planning Unit Manager

OFFICIAL

Email notice

Merri-bek Amendment C236mbek | Giving notice

 **Nia Kolokas**
To:  14/07/2026

 **Notice of Preparation of Amendment C236mbek.pdf**
-pdf File

Good Morning

Amendment C236mbek – Merri-bek Planning Scheme

Council wishes to advise you of proposed Amendment C236mbek to the Merri-bek Planning Scheme. The purpose of the Amendment is to enable Council to collect development contributions to fund new and upgraded infrastructure required to support Merri-bek's current and future communities.

To achieve this, the Amendment proposes to introduce Council's new municipal-wide Development Contributions Plan (also referred to as DCP 2.0) into the Merri-bek Planning Scheme by:

- Applying a Development Contributions Plan Overlay (DCPO2) to the entire Merri-bek Council municipal area
- Incorporating the Development Contributions Plan (March 2026, Hill PDA) into the scheme

The date by which Council can collect levies under the current Development Contributions Plan Overlay (DCPO1) has now expired. The introduction of DCPO2 will allow Council to continue collecting contributions from new residential, commercial, and industrial development.

This email and attachments are for your information only and you do not have to act. However, any person may make a written submission to Council. Information on how to make a submission is in the attached Notice of Preparation of an Amendment. **The closing date for submissions is Wednesday 17 June 2026.**

Please be aware that submissions are public documents that Council must make available for viewing by any person as part of the planning process. We will deal with your submission in line with our privacy notice at [Privacy \(merri-bek.vic.gov.au\)](https://www.merri-bek.vic.gov.au/privacy). This includes removing your personal information when we make your submission available online.

Submissions emailed, posted, or viewed in person will not have your personal information removed. If you cannot access the privacy notice online, please give us a call and we can email or post a copy to you.

You can access extra information about the proposed changes by going to www.merri-bek.vic.gov.au/amendment-c236mbek and at the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning website [Planning Scheme amendments on exhibition](https://www.delwp.vic.gov.au/planning-scheme-amendments-on-exhibition).

If you need more information or have any questions about this matter, please contact Council by email at strategicplanning@merri-bek.vic.gov.au or telephone 9240 1111

Your sincerely

Nia Kolokas
Principal Strategic Planner
Merri-bek City Council

www.merri-bek.vic.gov.au

Merri-bek City Council acknowledges the Wurundjeri Woiwurrung people as the Traditional Custodians of the lands and waterways in the area now known as Merri-bek. We pay respect to their Elders past, present, and emerging, as well as to all First Nations communities who significantly contribute to the life of the area.



Letter notice

Included with the letter notice was a copy of the Notice of preparation as documented above.

Merri-bek Civic Centre
90 Bell Street
Coburg Victoria 3058
T: (03) 9240 1111

Postal Address
Locked Bag 10
Brunswick Victoria 3056
merri-bek.vic.gov.au



National Relay Service
Voice Relay number
1300 555 727
TTY number
133 477
SMS relay number
0423 877 787

11 May 2026

[Redacted Address]

Dear [Redacted Name],

AMENDMENT C236MBEK – MERRI-BEK PLANNING SCHEME

Council wishes to advise you of the proposed Amendment C236mbek to the Merri-bek Planning Scheme. The purpose of the Amendment is to enable Council to collect development contributions to fund new and upgraded infrastructure required to support Merri-bek's current and future communities.

To achieve this, the Amendment proposes to introduce Council's new municipal-wide Development Contributions Plan (also referred to as DCP 2.0) into the Merri-bek Planning Scheme by:

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If you need more information or have any questions about this matter, please contact Council by email at strategicplanning@merri-bek.vic.gov.au or telephone 9240 1111.

Your sincerely,



Nia Kolokas
Principal Strategic Planner

Μεταλλική Σελήνη, Μερρί-Μπέκ, Βικτώρια, Αυστραλία. Η Μερρί-Μπέκ είναι μια κοινότητα που αναπτύσσεται γρήγορα. Η Μερρί-Μπέκ είναι μια κοινότητα που αναπτύσσεται γρήγορα. Η Μερρί-Μπέκ είναι μια κοινότητα που αναπτύσσεται γρήγορα.

Πρόταση για τροποποίηση του Πλαισίου Προγραμματισμού της Μερρί-Μπέκ (Merri-bek Planning Scheme) που διέπει τις διαδικασίες ανάπτυξης. Η πρόταση αφορά την εισαγωγή ενός νέου σχεδίου συνεισφοράς για την ανάπτυξη (DCPO2) σε όλη την κοινότητα. Η εισαγωγή του DCPO2 θα επιτρέψει στο Συμβούλιο να συνεχίσει να συλλέγει συνεισφορές για την ανάπτυξη νέων οικιστικών, εμπορικών και βιομηχανικών αναπτύξεων.

Ημερομηνία κατά την οποία το Συμβούλιο μπορεί να συλλέγει εισφορές υπό το ισχύον σχέδιο συνεισφοράς για την ανάπτυξη (DCPO1) έχει λήξει. Η εισαγωγή του DCPO2 θα επιτρέψει στο Συμβούλιο να συνεχίσει να συλλέγει συνεισφορές από νέα οικιστικά, εμπορικά και βιομηχανικά αναπτύγματα.

Αυτή η email και τα επισυνάψιμα είναι για ενημέρωσή σας μόνο και δεν έχετε υποχρέωση να δράσετε. Ωστόσο, οποιοσδήποτε μπορεί να κάνει γραπτή υποβολή στο Συμβούλιο. Πληροφορίες σχετικά με το πώς να κάνει μια υποβολή είναι στην επισυνάψιμη 'Ενημέρωση για την τροποποίηση'. Η ημερομηνία λήξης των υποβολών είναι **Παρασκευή 17 Ιουνίου 2026**.

Παρακαλούμε να είστε ενήμεροι ότι οι υποβολές είναι δημόσια έγγραφα που το Συμβούλιο πρέπει να κάνει διαθέσιμα για εξέταση από οποιοδήποτε άτομο ως μέρος του διαδικασίας. Θα αντιμετωπίσουμε την υποβολή σας σύμφωνα με την πολιτική μας για την προστασία των προσωπικών δεδομένων στο www.merri-bek.vic.gov.au/privacy. Αυτό περιλαμβάνει την αφαίρεση των προσωπικών σας δεδομένων όταν κάνουμε την υποβολή σας διαθέσιμη online.

Οι υποβολές που αποστέλλονται, αποστέλλονται ή παρατηρούνται στο πρόσωπο δεν θα έχουν τα προσωπικά σας δεδομένα αφαίρεται. Εάν δεν μπορείτε να προσβάλετε την πολιτική μας online, παρακαλούμε να μας καλέσετε και θα μπορούσαμε να email ή να αποστείλουμε αντίγραφο στην οδόν σας.

Μπορείτε να προσβάλετε επιπλέον πληροφορίες σχετικά με τις προτεινόμενες αλλαγές επισκεπτόμενοι το www.merri-bek.vic.gov.au/amendment-c236mbek και στο Υπουργείο Περιβάλλοντος, Γης, Νερού και Προγραμματισμού στο [Planning Scheme amendments on exhibition](http://www.delp.vic.gov.au/planning-scheme-amendments-on-exhibition).

Εάν χρειάζεστε περισσότερες πληροφορίες ή έχετε οποιεσδήποτε ερωτήσεις σχετικά με αυτό το θέμα, παρακαλούμε επικοινωνήστε με το Συμβούλιο μέσω email στο strategicplanning@merri-bek.vic.gov.au ή τηλεφώνηστε στο 9240 1111.

Με εκτίμηση,



Nia Kolokas
Principal Strategic Planner

Μεταλλική Σελήνη, Μερρί-Μπέκ, Βικτώρια, Αυστραλία. Η Μερρί-Μπέκ είναι μια κοινότητα που αναπτύσσεται γρήγορα. Η Μερρί-Μπέκ είναι μια κοινότητα που αναπτύσσεται γρήγορα. Η Μερρί-Μπέκ είναι μια κοινότητα που αναπτύσσεται γρήγορα.

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Ημερομηνία κατά την οποία το Συμβούλιο μπορεί να συλλέγει εισφορές υπό το ισχύον σχέδιο συνεισφοράς για την ανάπτυξη (DCPO1) έχει λήξει. Η εισαγωγή του DCPO2 θα επιτρέψει στο Συμβούλιο να συνεχίσει να συλλέγει συνεισφορές από νέα οικιστικά, εμπορικά και βιομηχανικά αναπτύγματα.

Αυτή η email και τα επισυνάψιμα είναι για ενημέρωσή σας μόνο και δεν έχετε υποχρέωση να δράσετε. Ωστόσο, οποιοσδήποτε μπορεί να κάνει γραπτή υποβολή στο Συμβούλιο. Πληροφορίες σχετικά με το πώς να κάνει μια υποβολή είναι στην επισυνάψιμη 'Ενημέρωση για την τροποποίηση'. Η ημερομηνία λήξης των υποβολών είναι **Παρασκευή 17 Ιουνίου 2026**.

Παρακαλούμε να είστε ενήμεροι ότι οι υποβολές είναι δημόσια έγγραφα που το Συμβούλιο πρέπει να κάνει διαθέσιμα για εξέταση από οποιοδήποτε άτομο ως μέρος του διαδικασίας. Θα αντιμετωπίσουμε την υποβολή σας σύμφωνα με την πολιτική μας για την προστασία των προσωπικών δεδομένων στο www.merri-bek.vic.gov.au/privacy. Αυτό περιλαμβάνει την αφαίρεση των προσωπικών σας δεδομένων όταν κάνουμε την υποβολή σας διαθέσιμη online.

Οι υποβολές που αποστέλλονται, αποστέλλονται ή παρατηρούνται στο πρόσωπο δεν θα έχουν τα προσωπικά σας δεδομένα αφαίρεται. Εάν δεν μπορείτε να προσβάλετε την πολιτική μας online, παρακαλούμε να μας καλέσετε και θα μπορούσαμε να email ή να αποστείλουμε αντίγραφο στην οδόν σας.

Μπορείτε να προσβάλετε επιπλέον πληροφορίες σχετικά με τις προτεινόμενες αλλαγές επισκεπτόμενοι το www.merri-bek.vic.gov.au/amendment-c236mbek και στο Υπουργείο Περιβάλλοντος, Γης, Νερού και Προγραμματισμού στο [Planning Scheme amendments on exhibition](http://www.delp.vic.gov.au/planning-scheme-amendments-on-exhibition).

Εάν χρειάζεστε περισσότερες πληροφορίες ή έχετε οποιεσδήποτε ερωτήσεις σχετικά με αυτό το θέμα, παρακαλούμε επικοινωνήστε με το Συμβούλιο μέσω email στο strategicplanning@merri-bek.vic.gov.au ή τηλεφώνηστε στο 9240 1111.

10

Council Meeting 12 August 2026

48

Government Gazette notice

1076 G 20 14 May 2026

Victoria Government Gazette

Planning and Environment Act 1987

MERRI-BEK PLANNING SCHEME

Notice of the Preparation of an
Amendment to a Planning Scheme
Amendment C236mbek

Overview

The Amendment introduces Council's new municipal-wide Development Contributions Plan into the Merri-bek Planning Scheme.

For further details, refer to the explanatory report about the Amendment.

Details of the Amendment

The Merri-bek City Council planning authority has prepared Amendment C236mbek to the Merri-bek Planning Scheme.

The land affected by the Amendment is all land in the Merri-bek City Council municipal area.

The Amendment proposes to:

- introduce and apply the Development Contributions Plan Overlay Schedule 2 (DCPO2) to all land in the municipality;
- incorporate the Development Contributions Plan (March 2026, Hill PDA).

You may inspect the Amendment, any documents that support the Amendment and the explanatory report about the Amendment, free of charge, at the Department of Transport and Planning website, www.planning.vic.gov.au/public-inspection or by contacting 1800 789 386 to arrange a time to view the Amendment documentation, the Merri-bek City Council website at www.merri-bek.vic.gov.au/amendment-c236mbek or on request, during office hours, at the office of the planning authority, Coburg Customer Service Centre, 90 Bell Street, Coburg, or by contacting 9240 1111 to arrange a time to view the Amendment documentation.

Any person may make a submission to the planning authority about the Amendment. Submissions must be made in writing giving the submitter's name and contact address, clearly stating the grounds on which the Amendment is supported or opposed and indicating what changes, if any, the submitter wishes to make.

Name and contact details of submitters are required for the planning authority to consider submissions and to notify such persons of the opportunity to attend planning authority meetings and any public hearing held to consider submissions.

The closing date for submissions is Wednesday 17 June 2026.

Email submissions to strategicplanning@merri-bek.vic.gov.au, alternatively mail to Strategic Planning Unit, Submission to Amendment C236mbek, Merri-bek City Council, Locked Bag 10, Brunswick, Victoria 3056.

The planning authority must make a copy of every submission available at its office and/or on its website for any person to inspect, free of charge, until the end of the two months after the Amendment comes into operation or lapses.

ALAYNA CHAPMAN
Strategic Planning Unit Manager

Planning and Environment Act 1987

WHITTLESEA PLANNING SCHEME

Notice of the Preparation of an
Amendment to a Planning Scheme
Amendment C291wsea

Overview

This Amendment seeks to apply the Public Acquisition Overlay 15 (PAO15) to land at 70 and 80 Boundary Road, Wollert, to facilitate the delivery of essential road infrastructure outlined in the Wollert Precinct Structure Plan 2017, and Wollert Development Contributions Plan 2017. The application of the PAO15 will enable land to be acquired to construct a new intersection at Boundary Road and Andrew Road, Wollert.

For further details, refer to the explanatory report about the Amendment.

Details of the Amendment

The City of Whittlesea has prepared Amendment C291wsea to the Whittlesea Planning Scheme.

The land affected by the Amendment is located at 70 and 80 Boundary Road, Wollert.

The Amendment proposes to apply the Public Acquisition Overlay 15 over parts of the abovementioned land to facilitate the delivery of road infrastructure.

You may inspect the Amendment, any documents that support the Amendment and the explanatory report about the Amendment, free of charge, at the Department of Transport and Planning website, www.planning.vic.gov.au/public-inspection or by contacting 1800 789 386 to arrange a time to view the Amendment documentation, the Engage Whittlesea website.

Newspaper notice – The Age

1076 G 20 14 May 2026

Victoria Government Gazette

Planning and Environment Act 1987 MERRI-BEK PLANNING SCHEME Notice of the Preparation of an Amendment to a Planning Scheme Amendment C236mbek

Overview

The Amendment introduces Council's new municipal-wide Development Contributions Plan into the Merri-bek Planning Scheme.

For further details, refer to the explanatory report about the Amendment.

Details of the Amendment

The Merri-bek City Council planning authority has prepared Amendment C236mbek to the Merri-bek Planning Scheme.

The land affected by the Amendment is all land in the Merri-bek City Council municipal area.

The Amendment proposes to:

- introduce and apply the Development Contributions Plan Overlay Schedule 2 (DCPO2) to all land in the municipality,
- incorporate the Development Contributions Plan (March 2026, Hill PDA).

You may inspect the Amendment, any documents that support the Amendment and the explanatory report about the Amendment, free of charge, at the Department of Transport and Planning website, www.planning.vic.gov.au/public-inspection or by contacting 1800 789 386 to arrange a time to view the Amendment documentation, the Merri-bek City Council website at www.merri-bek.vic.gov.au/amendment-c236mbek or on request, during office hours, at the office of the planning authority, Coburg Customer Service Centre, 90 Bell Street, Coburg, or by contacting 9240 1111 to arrange a time to view the Amendment documentation.

Any person may make a submission to the planning authority about the Amendment. Submissions must be made in writing giving the submitter's name and contact address, clearly stating the grounds on which the Amendment is supported or opposed and indicating what changes, if any, the submitter wishes to make.

Name and contact details of submitters are required for the planning authority to consider submissions and to notify such persons of the opportunity to attend planning authority meetings and any public hearing held to consider submissions.

The closing date for submissions is Wednesday 17 June 2026.

Email submissions to strategicplanning@merri-bek.vic.gov.au, alternatively mail to: Strategic Planning Unit, Submission to Amendment C236mbek, Merri-bek City Council, Locked Bag 10, Brunswick, Victoria 3056.

The planning authority must make a copy of every submission available at its office and/or on its website for any person to inspect, free of charge, until the end of the two months after the Amendment comes into operation or lapses.

ALAYNA CHAPMAN
Strategic Planning Unit Manager

Planning and Environment Act 1987 WHITTLESEA PLANNING SCHEME Notice of the Preparation of an Amendment to a Planning Scheme Amendment C291wsea

Overview

This Amendment seeks to apply the Public Acquisition Overlay 15 (PAO15) to land at 70 and 80 Boundary Road, Wollert, to facilitate the delivery of essential road infrastructure outlined in the Wollert Precinct Structure Plan 2017, and Wollert Development Contributions Plan 2017. The application of the PAO15 will enable land to be acquired to construct a new intersection at Boundary Road and Andrew Road, Wollert.

For further details, refer to the explanatory report about the Amendment.

Details of the Amendment

The City of Whittlesea has prepared Amendment C291wsea to the Whittlesea Planning Scheme.

The land affected by the Amendment is located at 70 and 80 Boundary Road, Wollert.

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You may inspect the Amendment, any documents that support the Amendment and the explanatory report about the Amendment, free of charge, at the Department of Transport and Planning website, www.planning.vic.gov.au/public-inspection or by contacting 1800 789 386 to arrange a time to view the Amendment documentation, the Engage Whittlesea website

Newspaper notice – The Herald Sun

First notice on 18 May 2026 with incorrect amendment number in print copy.

[illegible]

[illegible]

Facebook post

Merri-bek City Council
May 18 at 9:30 AM · 🌐

Submissions are now open for Amendment C236mbek, which proposes to introduce a new Council-wide Development Contributions Plan (DCP) and Development Contributions Plan Overlay (DCPO) into the Merri-bek Planning Scheme.

A DCP is a document that explains how new developments will help pay for the extra services and infrastructure that Council needs, such as roads, drainage and community facilities.

The DCPO2 is the planning scheme tool to action the plan and require developers to pay a levy (fee) to contribute to the cost of the infrastructure projects listed in the DCP.

Money collected from the DCP will help fund improvements to our early years centres, libraries, pools and upgrades to local roads and drainage.

Find out more and make a submission by Wednesday 17 June: <https://brmw.ch/21x2zyl>

Image description: an adult and a group of children reading a book outside a library. [See less](#)



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Privacy Collection Notice

This privacy collection notice is included on the C236mbek webpage and imbedded in the online submission tool. This notice was also shared to all submitters to inform them of how Council will manage their submission as part of acknowledging receipt of each submission.

PRIVACY COLLECTION NOTICE

Merr-bek Council collects information from organisations and individuals during the planning scheme amendment process through submissions made to an Amendment. Submissions may be handwritten, electronic (both written and audio-visual) and often contain images, maps and plans. Submissions frequently contain personal information which at times may be sensitive for commercial, health or other reasons.

Natural justice and transparency are important parts of the Planning Scheme Amendment process. Under section 21(2) of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* (Vic), Council must make all submissions to an Amendment available to view by any person at its offices for a period of two months after the Amendment is gazetted or lapses. This includes all personal names and address details, unless specifically requested to be deleted prior to the submission being made publicly available.

Submissions are used by Council when assessing the Amendment and summaries of your submission are included in any Council report that considers the Amendment following the close of exhibition. Your submission will also be used and disclosed in the public process of a Panel Hearing if one is required. Any submission forwarded to Planning Panels Victoria will be dealt with in accordance with their privacy policy.

Publication of Submission on Council's Website

Council will make all submissions available to view online on its website during the Planning Scheme Amendment Process. All submissions made available online will be redacted to remove personal names, telephone and address details. Submissions will be removed from the website once the Amendment is finalised.

Use of your personal information

In accordance with the *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014* (Vic) and *Health Records Act 2001* (Vic) the personal information submitted by you is being collected by Merri-bek City Council for the submission process and it will not be disclosed to any other external party without your consent, except as a requirement of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* (Vic). This includes disclosing your personal information upon request (name and address only) to any person who has made a submission during the Planning Scheme Amendment process.

If you do not provide your name and address Council will not be able to consider your submission.

You can gain access to your personal information you have provided to Merri-bek City Council and if you wish to alter it, please contact Council's Privacy Officer via telephone on 9240 1111 or e-mail at Privacyofficer@merr-bek.vic.gov.au

[For more information regarding privacy please visit Merri-bek Council's webpage at Privacy \(merr-bek.vic.gov.au\)](#)

7.4 SUBURB BOUNDARY REALIGNMENT COBURG NORTH/FAWKNER - BETWEEN SYDNEY ROAD AND MERRI- CREEK.

Acting Director Business Transformation, Yvonne Callanan

Financial Services

Officer Recommendation

That Council endorses the realignment of the Coburg North and Fawkner suburb boundary to encompass properties at 90A Mathieson Street, 92 Mathieson Street, 12 Manly Court, 14 Borang Street, and 18 Albert Street Fawkner, into Coburg North as outlined in this report.

REPORT

Executive Summary

Development activity has created the need for a minor realignment of the Fawkner/Coburg North suburb boundary to ensure affected properties are addressed consistently with their road access and the Naming Rules for Places in Victoria.

The proposal would transfer 90A and 92 Mathieson Street, 12 Manly Court, 14 Borang Street and 18 Albert Street from Fawkner to Coburg North, resolving current mapping and addressing inconsistencies arising from recent development.

The impacted properties currently have ongoing issues with mail and service deliveries. In addition, inconsistencies with Vicmap create a risk for emergency services if there is a need to attend the property promptly. Realigning the suburb boundary will address these issues.

Consultation with directly affected owners who responded indicated support for the change. While no objections were received, some adjacent owners requested a broader boundary shift to the centreline of Queens Parade. This option is inconsistent with the current boundary and would affect a further 63 properties without the same demonstrated need.

A targeted realignment is recommended as the most appropriate response, supporting accurate addressing, service delivery and compliance with State naming requirements while avoiding unnecessary changes to established suburb boundaries.

Previous Council Decisions

Nil.

1. Policy Context

Merri-bek Council is a Naming Authority under the *Geographic Place Names Act 1998* (the Act) and is the first point of contact for adding or changing names for places, features and roads within the municipality.

The *Naming rules for places in Victoria 2022* (The Naming Rules), are the statutory guidelines provided for under section 5 of The Act that provide standardised naming conventions and clear naming procedures. Any naming proposal must conform to these guidelines.

Proposals are assessed for compliance with the 'The Naming Rules' including, Australian Standards AS NZS 4819-2011 Rural and Urban Addressing (The Standards). Once endorsed by Council the proposal is forwarded to the Registrar of Geographic Names for consideration.

The relevant sections of the 'The Standards' and 'The Naming Rules' are as follows:

- Section 3.4.2 of the Standards requires that boundaries of localities in areas that are subject to development should be reviewed and amended where appropriate.
- Section 5.2.1 of the Naming Rules requires the suburb boundary to wrap around properties at the end of the road in dead-end roads and cul-de-sacs, to ensure that all properties accessed from the same road are addressed to the same locality.
- Section 1.3 of the Naming Rules also require applications to assess and address any impact to the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names resolutions, Sustainable Development Goals and Victorian Aboriginal Affairs Framework goals, where relevant.

2. Background

The Coburg North/Fawkner locality boundary sits at the rear of properties facing Queens Parade between Sydney Road and Merri Creek, encompassing all Queens Parade into Fawkner (See figure 1).

While locality boundaries are intended to be enduring, in areas subject to development, boundaries need to be reviewed and amended where appropriate. Several Queens Parade properties have been subdivided, creating properties that front onto streets attributed to Coburg North (affected properties shown in figures 1 & 2).

The proposed realignment would place properties accessed from Coburg North streets within Coburg North. This change is required to comply with state naming rules, meet addressing standards and prevent mapping anomalies (See figure 2).

Figure 1. Current boundary

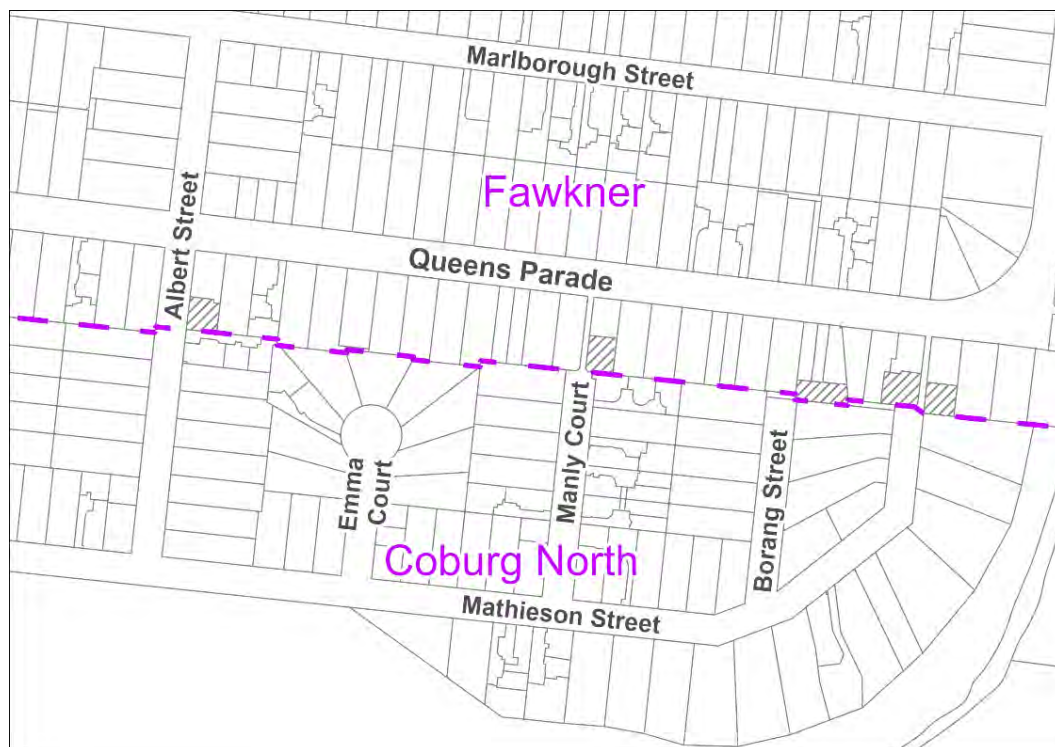
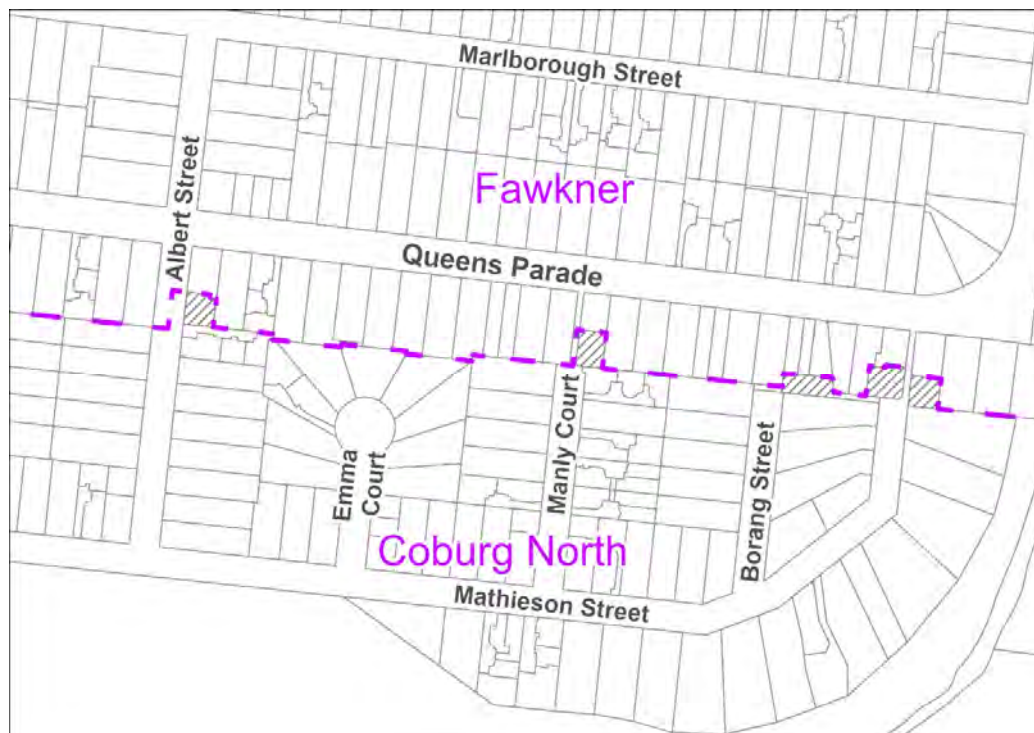


Figure 2. Proposed Boundary



Figures 3 – 6 below and on the following pages, show the five affected properties in greater detail.

Figure 3. Mathieson Street current and proposed

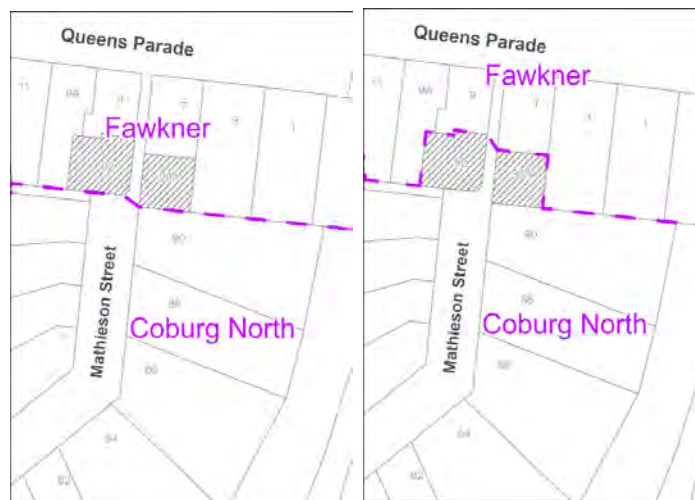


Figure 4. Borang Street current and proposed

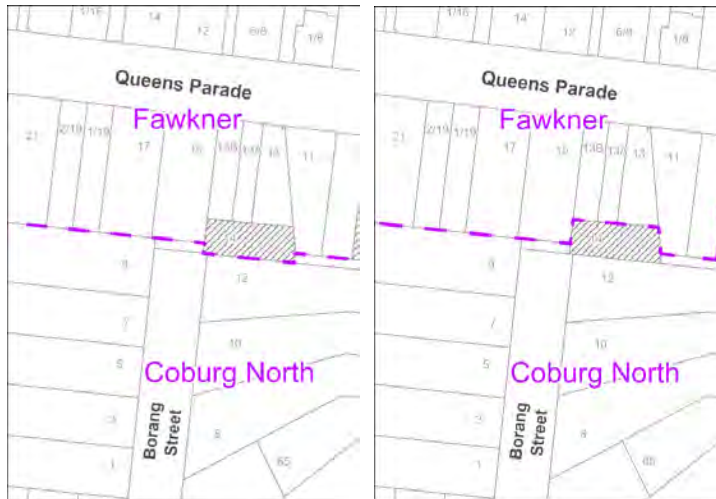


Figure 5. Manly Court current and proposed

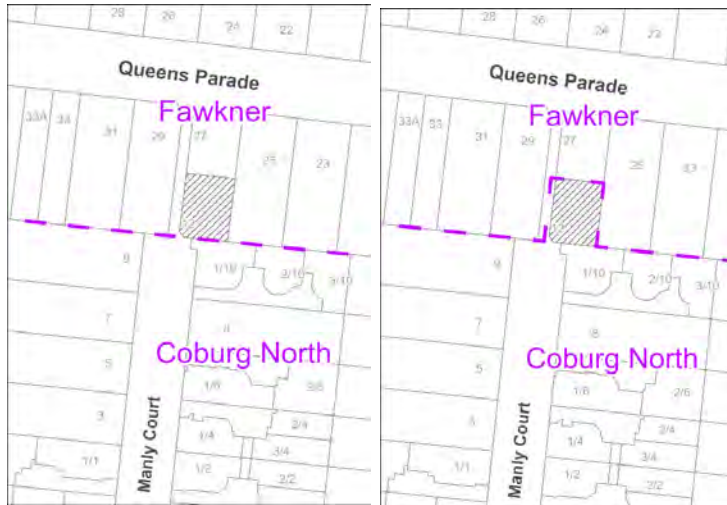
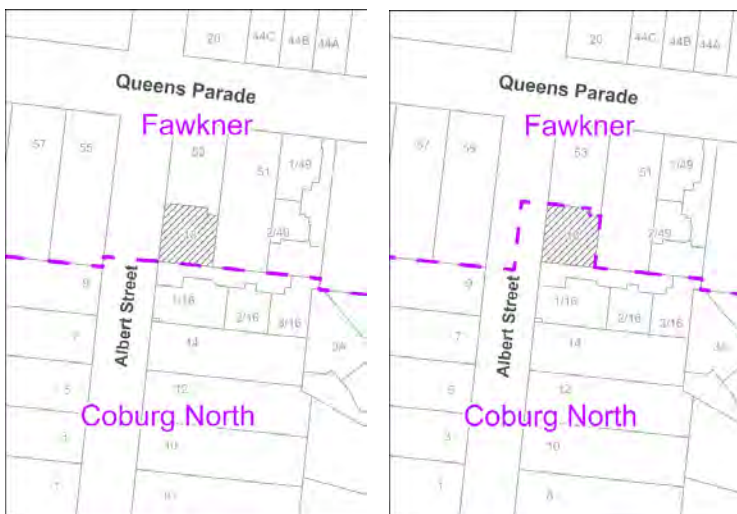


Figure 6. Albert Street current and proposed



In accordance with Section 5.2.1 of 'The Naming Rules' it is recommended is to amend the locality boundary to incorporate the properties into the Coburg North suburb. Council officers have assessed that this proposal meets all relevant statutory requirements including the following:

- Conforms to the statutory requirements in Section 5.2 of 'The Naming Rules'.
- All naming conventions are being properly followed due to locality names remaining unchanged.
- The locality boundaries sit wholly within Merri-bek municipality therefore Council does not need to consult with neighbouring municipalities.
- The amendment is a small realignment with no impact to United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names resolutions, Sustainable Development Goals, or Victorian Aboriginal Affairs Framework goals.

Once Council resolves to realign the boundary, it is submitted the Geographic Names Victoria Registrar for finalisation and gazettal whereby the Land Victoria maps are amended. After this occurs addressing can then be changed to the impacted properties.

3. Issues

The impacted properties currently have ongoing issues with mail and service deliveries. In addition, inconsistencies with Vicmap create a risk for emergency services if there is a need to attend the property promptly. Realigning the suburb boundary will address these issues.

Community impact

The proposed change has a positive community impact in terms of addressing risk for emergency services and addressing mail and service delivery issues.

Climate emergency and environmental sustainability implications

There are no climate emergency implications associated with this report.

Economic sustainability implications

There are no economic sustainability implications related this matter.

Legal and risk considerations

The recommendations in this report comply with the requirements of the *Geographic Place Names Act 1998* and the *Naming rules for places in Victoria 2022*.

Human Rights Consideration

The implications of this report have been assessed in accordance with the requirements of the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities and there are no implications associated with this report.

4. Community consultation and engagement

Council's Community Engagement Policy 2024 requires community engagement when community impact is anticipated. As the proposed boundary realignment has negligible community impact and limited scope for community influence, directly affected persons were contacted directly.

A public notice was published on the Conversations Merri-bek page, inviting submissions for 40 days and exceeding the minimum 30-day requirement under the Naming Rules.

Affected persons rights and interests

Before making a decision that affects a person's rights, Council must identify whose rights may be directly affected and provide an opportunity for that person (or persons) to convey those views regarding the effect on their rights and consider those views.

Letters were sent to ratepayers and residents of directly impacted properties, and properties adjacent to the proposed boundary change inviting submissions. A public notice was also published on the Conversations Merri-Bek Page, inviting submissions for 40 days meeting the minimum 30 days as per the Naming Rules.

All directly affected owners that responded indicated support for the change. While no objections were received, two submissions were received from adjacent owners requesting the boundary instead shift to the centreline of Queens Parade. This option would have the effect of incorporating their properties into Coburg North.

While this approach is an option under the Naming Rules it is inconsistent to the historical boundary and would require a broader consultation involving 63 directly affected properties and an undetermined number of indirectly affected properties. The impact would affect a substantially larger area without the same demonstrated need.

The proposed boundary realignment outlined in this report has been assessed as necessary due to the risks affecting the directly impacted properties. Given the support of the directly impacted owners, the proposed targeted realignment is recommended.

5. Officer Declaration of Conflict of Interest

Council officers involved in the preparation of this report have no conflict of interest in this matter.

6. Financial and Resources Implications

There are no financial implications of this report. The lodgement to Geographic Names Victoria and issuing of addressing reflecting the suburb boundary change can be completed with the current resources in the Financial Services budget.

7. Implementation

Should Council support the recommendation of this report, Council officers will submit the resolution to Geographic Names Victoria Registrar for finalisation and gazettal whereby the Land Victoria maps are amended.

Once complete, the address of the impacted properties will be updated and other relevant government departments, Yarra Valley Water and Australia Post will be notified.

Attachment/s

There are no attachments for this report.

7.5 YEAR 1 COUNCIL ACTION PLAN 2025-26 - FOURTH QUARTER PERFORMANCE REPORT

Acting Director Business Transformation, Yvonne Callanan

Governance and Strategy

Officer Recommendation

That Council:

1. Receives and notes the Year 1 Council Action Plan 2025-26 – Fourth Quarter Performance Report (provided as Attachment 1).
2. Endorses the proposed withdrawal of Action 68 – 'Redesign grants program to support more opportunities to create, learn and connect,' noting that this action is proposed to be included in the Merri-bek Council Action Plan 2026-2027.

REPORT

Executive Summary

The Fourth Quarter Performance Report (**Attachment 1**) provides an overview of Council's performance in delivering the Council Plan 2025–2029, with a specific focus on implementation of the Year 1 Council Action Plan 2025–26.

The report highlights key achievements and progress across initiatives supporting Council's strategic objectives and provides a status update on the 79 adopted actions, as follows:

- 25% (20 actions) concluded and achieved
- 71% (56 actions) are in progress and on track
- 3% (2 actions) were endorsed by Council to be placed on hold or withdrawn
- 1% (1 action) is proposed to be placed on hold or withdrawn.

Overall, 96% of Council Action Plan actions were completed or remain on track for delivery, reflecting strong implementation of the first year of the Council Plan 2025–2029. The majority of actions in progress are multi-year initiatives that will continue through the remaining years of the Council Plan.

A further action (Action 68 – *Redesign grants program to support more opportunities to create, learn and connect*) is proposed to be withdrawn from the Year 1 Council Action Plan 2025–26 and considered for inclusion in the Year 2 Council Action Plan 2026–27, as outlined in the issues section of this report.

Previous Council Decisions

Year 1 Council Action Plan 2025–26 – Third Quarter Performance Report – 13 May 2026

That Council:

1. *Received and notes the Year 1 Council Action Plan 2025-26 – Third Quarter Performance Report (provided as Attachment 1).*
2. *Noted that Action 68 - Redesign grants program to support more opportunities to create, learn and connect is currently behind schedule.*
3. *Endorsed withdrawal of Action 12, (relating to expanding Council's practice to ensure Council buildings and infrastructure are environmentally sustainable) noting that this action is proposed to be replaced by two specific actions in the proposed Merri-bek Council Action Plan 2026-2027 to improve clarity and strengthen intended outcomes.*

Year 1 Council Action Plan 2025–26 - Second Quarter Performance Report – 11
February 2026

That Council:

1. *Receives and notes the Year 1 Council Action Plan 2025-26 – Second Quarter Performance Report (provided as Attachment 1).*
2. *Endorses to place on hold Action 53 - Deliver the Wheatsheaf Road Glenroy streetscape improvement project.*

Adoption of the Merri-bek Community Vision 2025–2035, Merri-bek Council Plan 2025–2029 and Merri-bek Council Action Plan 2025–2026 – 10 September 2025

That Council:

1. *Adopted the Merri-bek Community Vision 2025-2035 (provided as Attachment 1) in accordance with legislative requirements of the Local Government Act 2020.*
2. *Adopted the Merri-bek Council Plan 2025–2029 (provided as Attachment 1) in accordance with legislative requirements of the Local Government Act 2020 and the Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008, noting that it incorporates the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029.*
3. *Adopted Merri-bek Council Action Plan 2025-2026 (provided as Attachment 2) as the first year of actions to deliver against the Merri-bek Council Plan 2025-2029, with an additional action to be added under Theme 2: Healthy and Inclusive Communities, at initiative 2.9. to read: “Explore, including through partnership arrangements, ways to improve health, access and inclusiveness in public & private spaces for people in precarious housing such as access to toilets and bathrooms, seating under shelter, showers, lockers and a place to heat food as well as improved access to services.”*
4. *Authorised the Director Business Transformation to finalise the Merri-bek Community Vision 2025-2035, Merri-bek Council Plan 2025-2029 and Merri-bek Council Action Plan 2025-2026, including any minor administrative changes, professional design of the documents and online versions, for distribution and implementation.*
5. *Advised submitters that Council has considered their submissions relating to the Draft Council Plan 2025-2029 and that the submitters be advised of the outcome of the consideration, as it relates to their specific submission through this council report (provided as Attachment 3), and they be thanked for their contributions.*
6. *Thanked, the members of the Community Panel and Community Youth Panel for their contribution and advise them in writing of the outcome of Council's decision.*

1. Policy Context

In accordance with sections 88 and 90 of the *Local Government Act 2020*, Council adopted its revised Community Vision 2025-2035 and a new Council Plan 2025-2029 in September 2025.

The Year 1 Council Action Plan 2025-26 supports the implementation of the Council Plan 2025-2029 for the first financial year of the 4-year period and includes specific actions to be undertaken, resourced through the 2025-26 annual budget (included in the 2025-2029 budget).

This report demonstrates Council's continuing commitment to manage funds sustainably, equitably and transparently on behalf of ratepayers, key stakeholders and the broader community.

2. Background

This report presents the fourth quarter performance results for the Year 1 Council Action Plan 2025–26, providing a year-end assessment of Council's progress in delivering the first year of the Council Plan 2025–2029.

3. Issues

Overall, 96% of actions have been completed or remain on track for delivery, with a majority of actions in progress representing multi-year initiatives that continue into the Year 2 Council Action Plan 2026–27.

One action, Action 68 – ‘Redesign grants program to support more opportunities to create, learn and connect,’ is proposed to be withdrawn from the Year 1 Council Action Plan 2025–26. If endorsed, will be included in the Year 2 Council Action Plan 2026–27, increasing the total number of actions from 82 to 83 for the adopted plan.

A summary of key highlights is provided below, with detailed fourth-quarter performance updates included in **Attachment 1**.

Theme 1: Care for nature and climate resilience:

Council continued to implement a broad range of initiatives that support climate resilience, biodiversity, and environmental sustainability throughout Merri-bek. The annual tree planting season commenced with a target of planting 2,800 trees, while the Tree for Me pilot program was established to support tree planting in schools, retirement villages, and residential backyards. Initial engagement commenced with community partners, including a retirement village and a local primary school, to support future planting opportunities and community participation.

Integrated water management and biodiversity outcomes also advanced, including completion of the native understorey planting trial across five locations, progression of major stormwater harvesting and wetland projects, and embedding water-sensitive urban design principles into strategic planning for Coburg and Brunswick. Council also successfully delivered the Community Budget Ideas-funded Lizards with Bikes project, transforming the Coburg Velodrome underpass through a new mural and landscaping, celebrated with a community planting day and official opening.

Throughout the year, Council continued to support community climate action through sustainability, energy efficiency, and circular economy initiatives. The Home Energy Subsidy Program delivered thermal upgrades for 12 low-income households and solar photovoltaic systems for a further three households, with an additional 33 households progressing through the program. The Solar Savers program also supported 136 households seeking quotes for all-electric home energy upgrades.

Theme 2: Healthy and inclusive communities:

Council continued to strengthen community wellbeing, inclusion and participation through targeted programs, strategic partnerships, and investment in community services. Extensive engagement with young people helped shape the future provision of free third spaces across Merri-bek, with more than 400 survey responses and a Youth Summit informing a feasibility study that will guide future Council decision-making. Council also successfully delivered the Community Budget Ideas-funded Take the Lead program, empowering young women to challenge gender stereotypes and co-design campaigns promoting respectful relationships.

Support for older residents and vulnerable community members expanded through personalised assistance, outreach programs, and community-based services. The Outdoor Help Program supported 427 older residents, representing a 63% increase in participation compared with the previous year, while the Age Well Program provided personalised support to 275 residents and engaged a further 883 community members through 60 outreach events. Progress also continued on key community infrastructure projects, including the Brunswick Early Years Hub.

Partnerships with First Peoples, community organisations and service providers continued to grow through progress on the First Peoples Self-Determination Strategy, expanded homelessness and Library Social Work support, and affordable housing initiatives. More than 250 people attended Ballarrt Moorroop Day, celebrating the return of the site to Wurundjeri ownership and an important milestone in First Peoples self-determination.

Theme 3: Beautiful and liveable city:

Council continued to enhance safe, accessible, and vibrant public spaces across Merri-bek through investment in parks, streets, and sustainable transport initiatives. During the year, Council delivered upgrades to Gervase Reserve and H.M. Dowd Reserve, completed a new local park in Pascoe Vale through the Park Close to Home Program, and delivered the Community Budget Ideas-funded Gilpin Dog Park upgrade, including a new enclosed area for small dogs.

Amenity and safety improvements were also delivered across Merri-bek's public spaces, including the installation of 16 new in-ground market umbrellas in Victoria Mall in partnership with local businesses to increase shade and enhance the visitor experience. Hooning prevention measures were also implemented across reserve car parks in Glenroy and Hadfield, with detailed design work progressing to incorporate increased tree canopy, integrated water management, and water-sensitive urban design into future upgrades.

Active and sustainable transport initiatives continued to expand across the municipality, with the largest Ride & Stride e-bike subsidy program to date supporting more than 119 families. Active travel initiatives continued across 16 schools, Open Streets programs were delivered at five schools, and more than 20 Home-to-Street electric vehicle charging installations were completed to support the transition to lower-emission transport options.

Theme 4: Thriving economy and culture:

Investment in local businesses, activity centres, and creative industries reinforced Merri-bek's position as a vibrant destination to live, work and visit. During the year, Council delivered 36 business skills workshops and networking events, facilitated 66 business permit concierge services, progressed revitalisation projects across Coburg and Glenroy, and partnered with RMIT University and Creative Victoria to deliver Melbourne Design Week as part of the Brunswick Design District. The Brunswick Design District's digital presence was also enhanced through a new online directory showcasing more than 100 creative businesses and spaces.

Key placemaking initiatives advanced across Merri-bek's activity centres, with streetscape improvements progressing in West Street, Hadfield, and the detailed design for the Belair Avenue streetscape project completed. Council also endorsed the Places for People Plan, establishing a long-term vision for creating high-quality public spaces that support vibrant shopping strips and activity centres.

Art and culture continued to enrich Merri-bek's public spaces, with five new public art projects delivered across the municipality. These projects showcased local and First Peoples artists while celebrating creativity, strengthening local identity and creating welcoming places for the community.

Theme 5: Engaging and responsible council:

Advocacy remained a key focus throughout the year, with Council working alongside State and Federal Governments, regional alliances, and sector partners to progress shared priorities. Council published its 2026 Victorian State Election Advocacy Priorities, made submissions on matters including anti-LGBTIQ+ hate crimes and social cohesion, and secured more than \$4.1 million in external funding to deliver priority community infrastructure projects.

The Community Connectors Program expanded Council's reach and engagement with Merri-bek's diverse communities, with 20 Community Connectors representing more than 11 communities and languages sharing Council information through trusted local networks. During the year, the program shared more than 180 multilingual Council messages, reached an audience of more than 65,000 community members, and contributed to increased participation across Council initiatives, including a 42% increase in multicultural participation in the Community Budget Ideas process and a 45% increase in kindergarten enrolments from multicultural families through targeted in-language communications.

Organisational resilience and long-term planning also advanced through climate risk management and financial sustainability initiatives that will inform future investment and decision-making. Detailed design and delivery planning for the Breese Street precinct improvements also progressed following Council's endorsement of the preferred concept design.

Detailed updates for fourth quarter performance are shown in **Attachment 1**.

Completed actions (Achieved)

Since the Third Quarter Report presented in May 2026, 20 actions have been completed. These actions were intended for delivery within the 2025–26 financial year and have now achieved their intended outcomes.

Notably, the completed actions include delivery of the 2025–26 Community Budget Ideas, demonstrating Council's commitment to implementing community-prioritised initiatives.

These included:

- Facilitating the Lizards with Bikes: Revitalising the Coburg Velodrome Underpass project
- Delivering youth-led initiatives to challenge gender-based violence
- Completing improvements to the Gilpin Dog Park, as part of the broader Dog Walking in Merri-bek initiative.

These outcomes demonstrate the Council Action Plan's contribution to delivering priorities identified by both the community and Councillors, with transparent reporting of progress and outcomes. Detailed performance updates for all completed actions are provided in **Attachment 1**.

In Progress (On Track)

A total of 56 actions (71%) were on track to deliver against the outcomes of the Year 1 Council Action Plan 2025–26. These are multi-year actions that will continue into the Year 2 Council Action Plan 2026–27, reflecting Council's ongoing commitment to delivering long-term strategic priorities over the four-year Council Plan period. Detailed performance updates are provided in **Attachment 1**.

Endorsed withdrawn

Two actions (3%) were endorsed for withdrawal from the Year 1 Council Action Plan 2025–26 to enable a revised approach to delivery. Both actions have been incorporated into the Year 2 Council Action Plan 2026–27, as outlined in the table 1 below.

Table 1: Actions incorporated into the Year 2 Council Action Plan 2026–27

Action #	Action Description and Update	Directorate
12	Expand Council's practice to ensure Council buildings and infrastructure are environmentally sustainable in their planning, design, and implementation. In the first year, focus on tangible increases to recycled content. Over four years work towards new buildings and infrastructure that is 100% renewably powered, lower carbon, reflect circular economy principles, consider ways to be more climate resilient and adapted and work is prioritised to reflect greatest need.	City Infrastructure

Action #	Action Description and Update	Directorate
	Action Update: This action was endorsed to be withdrawn from further reporting at the May 2026 Council meeting and were adopted in the 2026-27 Action Plan as: Action 84: Deliver climate vulnerability improvements to the following Council owned facilities; Fawkner Maternal Child Health, Yooralla Community Hub and Newlands Senior Citizens Centre. Action 85: Develop and implement a whole-of-program capital works prioritisation framework that integrates asset condition, service need, climate vulnerability, social, economic, disability, inclusion and environmental considerations.	
53	Deliver the Wheatsheaf Road Glenroy streetscape improvement project (over two years) Action Update: This action has been placed on hold for the remainder of the financial year, with Council endorsing this position at its February 2026 Council meeting due to external factors impacting delivery. As a multi-year initiative, the action has been included in the Year 2 Council Action Plan 2026-27.	Place and Environment

Proposed Withdrawn

One action (1%) is currently classified as 'Proposed Withdrawn' under the Year 1 Council Action Plan 2025–26. Further detail is provided in the table 2 below. Subject to endorsement, this action will also be included in the Year 2 Council Action Plan 2026–27.

Table 2: Proposed to be withdrawn action

Action #	Action Description and Update:	Directorate
68	Redesign grants program to support more opportunities to create, learn and connect Action Update: The review and redesign of the Community Grants Program has been deferred to enable a more comprehensive program review and redesign process. Subject to Council endorsement, this work will be progressed through the Year 2 Council Action Plan during the 2026/27 financial year.	Community

Community impact

Community impact is addressed throughout the Council Plan 2025-2029 but primarily under strategic objective 5: Engaging and Responsible Council - A responsive and engaged Merri-bek that prioritises excellent service, embraces engaging communication methods, advocates community needs, and continues to uphold sustainable financial management and accountable governance that builds trust and collaboration with the community.

Climate emergency and environmental sustainability implications

Climate emergency and environmental sustainability considerations are embedded throughout the Council Plan 2025–29. These objectives are proactively addressed under strategic objective 1: Care for Nature and Climate Resilience - To create a flourishing and climate resilient Merri-bek by improving wildlife and nature connectivity, greening and cooling for healthier streets and public realm, and engaging the community in meaningful climate action. In addition, there are broader climate, health and environmental implications reflected across the plan as a whole.

Economic sustainability implications

Economic sustainability is addressed across the Council Plan 2025–29, with key focus under strategic objective 4: Thriving Economy and Culture - A lively and inclusive Merri-bek where the economy supports local business and industry growth, celebrates artistic and creative expression, and connects the community through vibrant cultural experiences; and strategic objective 5: Engaging and Responsible Council. These objectives together promote economic resilience by supporting local economic activity while maintaining strong governance, financial sustainability, and accountability in Council decision-making.

Legal and risk considerations

The Merri-bek Community Vision 2025-35 and Merri-bek Council Plan 2025-2029 and processes associated with the development of these documents have been undertaken in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government Act 2020 and the Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008.

Human Rights Consideration

The implications of this report have been assessed in accordance with the requirements of the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities.

4. Community consultation and engagement

Community consultation and engagement was not required for this report as it reflects the performance against the Council Plan 2025-2029.

Affected persons rights and interests

Before making a decision that affects a person's rights, Council must identify whose rights may be directly affected and provide an opportunity for that person (or persons) to convey those views regarding the effect on their rights and consider those views. There are no individual rights or interests affected.

5. Officer Declaration of Conflict of Interest

Council officers involved in the preparation of this report have no conflict of interest in this matter.

6. Financial and Resources Implications

All actions documented in the Council Action Plan 2025-26 are resourced through the 2025-26 annual budget (included in the 2025-2029 Budget).

7. Implementation

The fourth quarter Council Action Plan 2025–26 performance results will be:

- published on Council's website;
- reported through the Report of Operations in Council's 2025–26 Annual Report; and
- presented to the Audit and Risk Committee in November 2026 as part of the Council Plan 2025–2029 – First Year Implementation Report.

Attachment/s

- 1 Council Action Plan Report 2025-26 - Progress Report - Quarter 4 D26/308238



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Merri-bek City Council acknowledges the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung people as the Traditional Custodians of the lands and waterways in the area now known as Merri-bek. We pay respect to their Elders past, present, and emerging, as well as to all First Nations communities who significantly contribute to the life of the area.

Executive Summary

This report demonstrates Council's ongoing commitment to the sustainable, equitable, and transparent management of funds on behalf of Merri-bek ratepayers, key stakeholders, and the broader community.

In accordance with sections 88 and 90 of the Local Government Act 2020, Council adopted the revised Community Vision 2025–2035 and Council Plan 2025–2029 on 10 September 2025.

The Council Action Plan 2025–26 outlines the specific actions to be undertaken during the first financial year to implement the Council Plan. All actions in the Action Plan are resourced through the 2025–26 Annual Budget, which forms part of the broader 2025–2029 Budget.

This Fourth Quarter Performance Report provides an update on the delivery of the Council Action Plan 2025–26.

In summary, the status of the 79 actions in the plan is as follows:

Number	Percentage	Status	Definition	Traffic Light
20	25%	Concluded	Completed, achieved	✓
56	71%	In Progress	On track	●
2	3%	Withdrawn	On hold or removed	●
1	1%	Proposed Withdrawn	Proposed hold or removed	●

The rest of this report below provides a detailed progress update for each action below including:

- A description of the action
- The percentage complete against what was planned for this financial year
- The status in the form of a traffic light (see table above); an
- Relevant officer commentary.

Theme 1: Care for nature and climate resilience

Strategic Objective 1: To create a flourishing and climate resilient Merri-bek by improving wildlife and nature connectivity, greening and cooling for healthier streets and public realm, and engaging the community in meaningful climate action.

Action No.	Action	Status	Directorate	Comments
1	Plant and nurture suitable trees in tricky places, parks, and streets		City Infrastructure	The annual tree planting season commenced in May 2026 and is scheduled for completion by September 2026, with a target of planting 2,800 trees across Merri-bek. The program continues to prioritise increasing canopy cover and shade within parks and open spaces, supporting improved environmental outcomes and enhancing the comfort, liveability and amenity of public spaces for the community.
2	Investigate opportunities to reduce impacts of urban heat and increasing heatwaves by collaborating to get more shade trees in places like schools, retirement villages, and backyards		Place and Environment	The Tree for Me pilot program, which supports tree planting in schools, retirement villages and residential backyards, has been developed. Engagement with a retirement village is ongoing, with a focus on tree maintenance, volunteer opportunities and exploring potential planting opportunities within the site. A planting date at a primary school has been confirmed, supported by strong leadership and engagement from the Junior School Council.
3	Facilitate native understorey planting trial project		City Infrastructure	The native understorey planting trial project has now concluded, with Council completing preparatory works across all project sites, including Moomba Park (Fawkner), Westbreen Creek (Pascoe Vale), Kernan Avenue Reserve (Pascoe Vale South), Park Street Linear Reserve (Brunswick East), and Yaruk'ho Wilam Edgars Creek Parkland (Coburg North). Community planting days have been delivered and/or scheduled across several sites as part of the 2026 planting program.
4	Commence the biodiversity and climate change resilience top-up research grant program		City Infrastructure	Development of the biodiversity and climate change resilience top-up research grant program progressed, with implementation planned for 2026–27 following finalisation of program guidelines and stakeholder engagement.
5	Facilitate the Lizards with bikes: revitalising the Coburg Velodrome underpass project		City Infrastructure	This project saw the successful completion of the mural and new plantings, which were celebrated through a community planting day and opening event held in June 2026.
6	Deliver key stormwater harvesting and wetland projects as outlined in the Integrated Water Management Action Plan		Place and Environment	Detailed design and planning for priority stormwater harvesting and water-sensitive urban design projects continued during the reporting period. Community engagement and feasibility work progressed, with some detailed design activities requiring further consultation, cultural heritage planning and alignment with updated flood modelling before they can be finalised.

Action No.	Action	Status	Directorate	Comments
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Merri-Bek Council Action Plan 2025-26 - Quarterly Report: Q4

7	Deliver outcome-focused Integrated Water Management planning for the Coburg and Brunswick activity centres to enhance liveability, manage stormwater and flood, support water efficiency, and build climate resilience	✓	Place and Environment	Contributions to Integrated Water Management (IWM) outcomes within Coburg and Brunswick have been progressed through the following initiatives: - The final Integrated Water Management Roadmap has been prepared by Melbourne Water in partnership with Merri-bek, in collaboration with IWM Forum members led by the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA). - Integrated Water Management considerations were incorporated into Merri-bek's submission to the Department of Transport and Planning (DTP) for the Built Form Overlay for the Merri-bek cluster (Brunswick and Coburg), supporting alignment with broader water-sensitive urban design outcomes. - Integrated Water Management principles were embedded in the Coburg Central IWM Plan as part of the 'Coburg is Here' concept through the provision of subject matter expertise via the project working group.
8	Promote and support an inclusive energy transition, including solar and thermal subsidies for low-income households	●	Place and Environment	Highlights delivered throughout the 2025-26 financial year include: - Delivery of the Multi-Cultural Communities World Environment Day event in Fawkner, attended by more than 300 community members and featuring 29 community and Council stalls. Post-event evaluation found that 86% of attendees felt more motivated to make sustainable choices, while 100% reported feeling more connected to Council. - Implementation of the Home Energy Subsidy Program, which, following a delayed commencement, supported the installation of thermal upgrades (including insulation and draught-proofing) for 12 low-income households and solar photovoltaic systems for three households during the reporting period. A further 33 households are continuing to progress through the program. - Delivery of two DIY Draught-proofing for Renters workshops, attended by a total of 43 participants. - Delivery of a Community Energy information session attended by 18 community members. - Delivery of a winter communications campaign encouraging residents to transition to all-electric appliances to reduce household energy costs and improve home health outcomes, resulting in 136 residents seeking quotes through program partner Solar Savers.

Action No.	Action	Status	Directorate	Comments
9	Deliver circular economy community initiatives and trial a fortnightly rubbish service	●	Place and Environment	During the quarter, circular economy initiatives included community workshops on DIY eco skincare products, cloth nappies and reusable period products; hosting a Mending Circle in partnership with Fashion Revolution Australia and Merri Menders; and expanding the reusable subsidy to cover continence products. Council also promoted Circular Campus to Community events in collaboration with RMIT.

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				The findings of the fortnightly rubbish trial were shared with trial participants via mail and with the broader community through a final stage of engagement. The 2025-26 financial year also marked the completion of the fortnightly rubbish trial program, culminating in Council's decision to transition to a municipality-wide fortnightly rubbish service from July 2027.
10	Increase awareness and capacity of the Merri-bek community on heat and flood risks to support resilience building		Place and Environment	Implementation of the Climate Resilience Communication Plan has commenced. The Plan will provide web-based public information on climate risks in Merri-bek, which will in turn support face-to-face engagement with at-risk groups. An Urban Heat Forum was attended by around 60 participants from Council and various community groups in March. The forum has sparked community conversations about actions to address urban heat.
11	Commence Oak Park Sports and Aquatic Electrification and Plant Room Renewal Project		Community	Building permits have been completed, and construction works are commencing. The works and commissioning are due to be completed by the end of September 2026, in preparation for the upcoming summer season.
12	Expand Council's practice to ensure Council buildings and infrastructure are environmentally sustainable in their planning, design, and implementation. In the first year, focus on tangible increases to recycled content. Over four years work towards new buildings and infrastructure that is 100% renewably powered, lower carbon, reflect circular economy principles, consider ways to be more climate resilient and adapted and work is prioritised to reflect greatest need.		City Infrastructure	This action was endorsed to be withdrawn from further reporting at the May 2026 Council meeting and were adopted in the 2026-27 Action Plan as: - Action 84: Deliver climate vulnerability improvements to the following Council owned facilities; Fawcner Maternal Child Health, Yooralla Community Hub and Newlands Senior Citizens Centre. 3 City Infrastructure - Action 85: Develop and implement a whole-of-program capital works prioritisation framework that integrates asset condition, service need, climate vulnerability, social, economic, disability, inclusion and environmental considerations.

Action No.	Action	Status	Directorate	Comments
13	Continue reducing carbon emissions of Council's fleet		City Infrastructure	Merri-Bek City Council has ordered six new Zero-Emissions Light Commercial vehicles in 2025/26 and taken delivery of four with the remaining two due in the first half of July. Procurement planning for the purchase of an additional six vehicles early next financial year has commenced. Energy needs will be supported by council's growing network of Council and community charging stations. Evaluation and trial periods continue for Zero-Emissions Heavy Fleet assets through engagements with the industry to ensure the plant provided to our operators is safe and fit-for-purpose for both operators and the community. Given this plant is essential for

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				council to deliver the essential services to the community we are working ensure that the required energy is available to drive this category of plant at asset delivery.
14	Continue to advocate for Environmentally Sustainable Design outcomes in the planning scheme to State Government		Place and Environment	Merri-bek is a member of the Council Alliance for a Sustainable Built Environment (CASBE) and works closely with other member councils to provide feedback and undertake advocacy activities throughout the year. The 2025-26 financial year has been characterised by significant state planning reform and a strong focus on retaining Environmentally Sustainable Development (ESD) standards within the planning process. CASBE meets periodically with the Department of Transport and Planning (DTP) to advocate for these outcomes and will continue to do so as required. Other advocacy activities undertaken during the year included a joint submission with the Greenhouse Alliances to the Inquiry into Renewable and Affordable Energy for Apartments. Merri-bek has also continued to support CASBE's advocacy efforts through the provision of feedback on submissions and correspondence, and participation in strategic workshops.
15	Promote the delivery of more climate resilient, less carbon intensive and more nature-inclusive private developments through providing clearer guidance for environmentally responsive design, promoting, and negotiating improved outcomes through the planning permit application process and subsequent proactive enforcement of planning conditions		Place and Environment	Environmentally sustainable development outcomes continue to be progressed in line with planning reforms. This includes on-site stormwater management measures such as rainwater tanks, raingardens and permeable paving, as well as external shading to protect north-facing windows from summer heat and support the installation of solar panels in new developments. The proactive enforcement program for environmentally sustainable development also continues, with a focus on improving on-site outcomes, including the delivery of larger raingardens near creeks. Officers are also exploring opportunities to improve the overall design quality and sustainability performance of new buildings through pre-application meetings and broader educational initiatives.

Theme 2: Healthy and inclusive communities

Strategic Objective 2: To support accessible facilities, programs, services, housing that promote community wellbeing, and connection for all ages, abilities, genders, and cultures, fostering a safe, inclusive, and thriving Merri-bek community.

Action No.	Action	Status	Directorate	Comments
16	Investigate possibility for renewal of Pascoe Vale Outdoor Pool	●	Community	Investigations and costings for the Pascoe Vale Outdoor Pool have been completed, and a report is being finalised for presentation to Council outlining the overall investment required to maintain Council's six aquatic and leisure centres. This work forms part of the broader update to the Aquatic and Leisure Strategy 2018-2038, which has also been completed.
17	Review progress of the 20 years Aquatic and Leisure Strategy	●	Community	The review of the Aquatic and Leisure Strategy has been completed, including investigations and costings associated with Council's six aquatic and leisure centres. A report is being finalised for presentation to Council, outlining the actions and investment required to maintain these facilities over the next 10 years and informing future capital works planning and budgeting.
18	Facilitate support for the Youth Holistic Outreach Program	●	Community	A new funding and service agreement is being developed along with a revised program model to be delivered in the new financial year.
19	Challenging gender-based violence through youth led initiatives	✓	Community	Delivery of the 'Take the Lead' program has been successfully completed at Coburg High School and Pascoe Vale Girls College. Across the program, young women participated in interactive sessions exploring topics including gender roles and stereotypes, the drivers of violence against women, respectful and unhealthy relationship dynamics, recognising red flags, help-seeking pathways, and available legal and community support services. Engagement across both schools was consistently strong. Students contributed thoughtfully to discussions and activities and demonstrated increasing confidence in sharing ideas and engaging with topics that can often feel sensitive or difficult to discuss. A key achievement of the program was creating opportunities for meaningful youth participation and co-design. Through consultation and creative activities, students co-designed campaign materials, including posters and social media content focused on promoting women's empowerment and challenging restrictive gender stereotypes and expectations. A consistent theme across both schools was hearing directly from students about the pressures and expectations they experience and creating space to reflect on how these can impact wellbeing, relationships, confidence and future opportunities.
20	Scope options to provide additional free third spaces for children, young people, and families	●	Community	Engagement with young people has been undertaken to understand the needs and aspirations for 3rd spaces. Engagement occurred via a range of techniques and forums. This including a survey that received more than 400 responses and a Youth Summit that was held on 25 June 2026, attended by students from a range of primary and secondary schools across Merri-bek. The feasibility study into the creation of additional free third spaces will inform a report that is scheduled to be presented to Council in late 2026.
21	Progress the development of the Brunswick Early Years Hub	●	Community	The builder has been appointed, and ground works are underway on site. A formal sod-turning event with the Minister for Children is planned in the coming months to mark the

Merri-Bek Council Action Plan 2025-26 - Quarterly Report: Q4

Action No.	Action	Status	Directorate	Comments
				commencement of the construction phase of the facility, which is scheduled for completion by late 2027.
22	Increase awareness of library early literacy programming through partnership with MCH	✓	Community	A partnership approach has been established between Merri-bek Libraries and Maternal and Child Health services to increase awareness of early literacy opportunities. Development of video resources promoting early literacy programs and services is underway and will support consistent messaging by Librarians and Maternal and Child Health Nurses when engaging with new parent groups.
23	Deliver and extend outdoor help program for seniors for 2025/26	✓	Community	The Outdoor Help Program for older residents continued to be successfully delivered throughout 2025/26, supporting older people to maintain safe and accessible outdoor spaces and remain living independently at home. Demand for the program remained strong, with participation increasing significantly compared to the previous year. During the year, the program supported 427 older residents across all Merri-bek suburbs, representing a 63% increase in participation from the previous year. The program reached residents from 19 different cultural backgrounds, demonstrating its broad accessibility and value to the community. While a small number of more complex requests were unable to be completed within the financial year, these will continue to be managed through ongoing program delivery arrangements.
24	Deliver the ageing well navigation support program to older residents	✓	Community	Over the past few months, the Age Well Program provided one-to-one support to 99 people and connected with a further 217 community members through 18 outreach events. In response to community feedback and identified needs, a series of monthly themed information sessions was delivered, alongside presentations, workshops and community events in partnership with a range of local organisations. Ongoing collaboration with medical professionals, charities, food relief providers and other essential services has continued to strengthen referral pathways, while consistent internal and external promotion has supported increased community awareness and access to services. Across the 2025-26 financial year, the Age Well Program supported 275 older residents through personalised one-to-one assistance, helping them navigate the aged care system, connect with social and physical activity opportunities, and plan confidently for the future. An additional 883 people were engaged through a total of 60 outreach events delivered throughout the year.

Action No.	Action	Status	Directorate	Comments
25	Deliver programs addressing food security through local markets, referral, and voucher	●	Community	A successful launch event for the VicHealth-funded Community Food Alliance project was held in April, attracting more than 100 community members and representatives from local food organisations, Alliance partners, including Merri Food Hub, CIS Merri-bek, Fawkner Food

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	systems, strengthening local procurement and logistic			Bowls and Open Table, hosted stalls where participants could learn about their role in the partnership. Community members were encouraged to get involved by shopping at the twice-weekly Merri Food Hub markets, referring clients requiring food vouchers, or volunteering with partner organisations. Council also partnered with CERES to deliver the sold-out Olives to Oil Festival as part of the My Smart Garden program. Residents joined friends and neighbours to collect locally grown olives, many of which would otherwise have gone to waste. The olives were then processed and returned to participants as olive oil.
26	Review and implement Social Cohesion Plan		Community	A key achievement of the Social Cohesion Plan was the Women in Small Business Empowerment project in Fawkner, delivered with SisterWorks. Co-designed with local women, it supported 12 women from diverse backgrounds to build skills, confidence, and connections to grow their business ideas, while providing a supportive space to share experiences and overcome barriers. In 2026, the Democracy Lab engaged 23 Merri-bek participants across eight sessions, creating a practical space to explore democratic participation, share ideas, and build confidence, skills, and connections for community involvement. This quarter, 15 women graduated from the Go Girls Foundation program at Glenroy Hub. The program helped them build confidence, practical skills, and independence, supporting their path to employment through workshops, coaching, and community support. The Hume and Merri-bek Anti-Racism Support Network was set up in 2025 with local community services. The Network hosted a community workshop to help people share their experiences and highlight priorities for addressing racism. The Network also ran two free training sessions for staff, building their confidence, skills, and knowledge to respond to racism with care and understanding. The Merri-bek Interfaith Network brought people from different faiths together to build understanding and connection. Members took part in World Environment Day in Fawkner, ran a Places of Worship bus tour, and organised a Peace Pole planting for World Interfaith Harmony Week. These activities helped people learn from each other and build stronger community relationships.
Action No.	Action	Status	Directorate	Comments
27	Evaluation and development of a human rights policy		Community	The evaluation of the Human Rights Policy has been completed, with key findings informing engagement on the development of the new Human Rights Policy and consideration by the Health, Wellbeing and Social Inclusion Advisory Committee. The evaluation found that the Policy has strengthened Council's systems, capabilities and practices to support human rights and has contributed to more inclusive and accessible services and programs. Community satisfaction with Council's support for diversity, inclusion and human rights remains high, with a satisfaction rating of 7.5 out of 10. The evaluation

Merri-Bek Council Action Plan 2025-26 - Quarterly Report: Q4

				supports the continuation and strengthening of the Human Rights Policy in its next phase (2026-2036).
28	Create Library of Things plan for Merri-bek libraries	●	Community	A Library of Things Plan has been developed and the collection will continue to grow in line with the plan.
29	Deliver the Homelessness Strategy and Action Plan including Functional Zero and Assertive outreach	●	Community	Key achievements during the reporting period included the extension of the Assertive Outreach Program for a further three years. Opportunities to increase the sustainability and impact of the program through collaboration with neighbouring councils, including Banyule and Darebin, continue to be explored. Planning has also commenced for the Merri-bek Zero strategic workshop to identify shared priorities and strengthen access to services and supports.
30	Advocate for systemic changes to enable a socially just and climate resilient Merri-bek.	●	Place and Environment	This quarter, Officers appeared at the hearing of the Victorian Parliamentary Inquiry into renewable and affordable energy for apartments. Work continued with local government, Strata and social sector partners on advocacy for energy upgrades of apartments in lead up to the state election.
31	Embed library social worker program	●	Community	Referral processes have been developed and implemented. Library staff have been trained in identifying and referring potential clients into the Library Social Work Program. The Library Social Work Program began operating in April 2026. The service operates Tuesday - Thursday at Brunswick Coburg and Glenroy Libraries as a short-term assistance and referral service. Since April, the Library Social Workers have provided secondary consults to library staff 39 times and 11 community members have been referred into the program.
32	Explore, including through partnership arrangements, ways to improve health, access and inclusiveness in public & private spaces for people in precarious housing such as access to toilets and bathrooms, seating under shelter, showers, lockers and a place to heat food as well as improved access to services	✓	Community	This action forms part of the broader Homelessness Strategy. During the reporting period, opportunities to strengthen partnerships with service providers have continued to be explored to increase access to facilities and support for people experiencing homelessness, including services such as mobile laundry and shower facilities. Council's leisure centres at Brunswick, Coburg and Fawkner have continued to provide access to shower facilities as part of this support.
Action No.	Action	Status	Directorate	Comments
33	Develop and implement Gender Equality and Family Violence Action Plan	●	Community	During the reporting period, Council continued to strengthen the Family Violence Network and contribute to regional collaboration initiatives focused on family violence prevention and response, led by Women's Health in the North. Evidence and learnings gathered throughout the past 12 months are also informing the development of Council's new Human Rights Policy, the Gender Equality (Community) Plan 2026-2028, and other relevant strategic plans and actions.
34	Deliver an annual Tobacco education and enforcement program	●	Place and Environment	Across the 2025-26 financial year, a total of 209 tobacco education visits were undertaken, including proactive visits to retailers, food premises and outdoor locations where signage is required. Signage was provided and installed at locations where required.

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35	Develop and implement First Peoples self-determination strategy		Community	The development of Council's First Peoples Self-Determination Strategy progressed throughout the 2025-26 financial year through ongoing partnership and engagement with First Peoples communities and organisations. Key activities informing the development of the Strategy included continued monthly cultural consultations with Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Elders, which provided strategic advice to Council across a range of policies, plans and projects, and ongoing engagement through the First Peoples Advisory Committee. In May 2026, the Advisory Committee appointed a new Aboriginal community Co-Chair and considered priority matters relating to First Nations procurement opportunities and support for Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung aspirations for the Ballert Mooroop site. In June 2026, Council delivered a Truth-Telling and Effective Allyship workshop to strengthen organisational capability and support the development of a culturally informed and responsive self-determination approach. Council also continued to participate in a Municipal Association of Victoria initiative with eight Victorian councils to strengthen public understanding of Treaty and develop positive, values-based narratives that support First Peoples self-determination and reconciliation outcomes. Through its community grants program, Council supported the establishment of The Brunswick Circle, a multicultural reconciliation initiative that strengthens relationships between migrant, refugee and First Nations communities.
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Action No.	Action	Status	Directorate	Comments
36	Partner with the Victorian Aboriginal Health Service to investigate options, locations and co-design culturally safe programs and services that promote and improve access to Councils Aquatic and Leisure Centres addressing a range of barriers for Aboriginal Victorians		Community	Council continued to partner with the Victorian Aboriginal Health Service and the contracted aquatic and leisure service provider to investigate options, locations and the co-design of culturally safe programs and services that improve access to Council's aquatic and leisure facilities for First Nations communities. This work has focused on identifying barriers to participation and opportunities to strengthen culturally safe and accessible service delivery. This remains a priority area under the new contract term and the associated four-year rolling Strategic Plan.
38	Progress plans and projects to revitalise and improve central Coburg		Place and Environment	Council endorsed the updated Central Coburg Framework Plan and Development Standards in June 2026. The endorsed documents incorporate community feedback received during consultation on the draft Framework Plan undertaken between November and December 2025.

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39	Deliver the Merri-bek Affordable Housing Action Plan		Place and Environment	Implementation of the Merri-bek Affordable Housing Action Plan progressed throughout 2025-26 through continued advocacy, strategic planning and partnership development activities. Council officers continued to work with government agencies and housing providers to advance accessible and inclusive housing opportunities, including First Peoples housing on Council-owned land. During the year, officers prepared and submitted detailed analysis to inform the Department of Transport and Planning's consideration of amendments to the affordable housing permit provisions for two major developments in Brunswick and Coburg proposed by Assemble Communities. Officers also provided expert advice to support the development of the Central Coburg Framework and Development Standards, which include a significant affordable housing contribution and were adopted by Council on 10 June 2026.
40	Support the development of Ballerri Mooroop site/community hub with engagement of local First Peoples communities and Traditional Owners		Community	This year, Ballerri Mooroop Day was coordinated by the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation, with support from Merri-bek City Council. Around 250 people from the Aboriginal and wider local community gathered to celebrate the significant and long-anticipated transfer of the Ballerri Mooroop site from the State Government to Wurundjeri ownership, marking an important step in cultural recognition and self-determination. The day commenced with a Welcome to Country and a smoking ceremony, setting a respectful and meaningful tone for the celebrations. Attendees were invited to listen to a panel discussion featuring Wurundjeri leaders, who shared insights into the cultural and historical importance of the site including potential future uses of the site. The program also included a dance workshop led by the Djirri Djirri Dance Group, along with a variety of community stalls, educational displays, and engaging children's activities, creating a vibrant and inclusive atmosphere for all who attended.

Theme 3: Beautiful and liveable city

Strategic Objective 3: Create safe, accessible streets and public spaces that support vibrant communities, active travel, rest and relaxation, and community pride, while ensuring development and growth are well managed and local character is celebrated, ensuring Merri-bek is a welcoming, liveable, and connected place for all.

Action No.	Action	Status	Directorate	Comments
41	Facilitate additional public toilets in parks & reserves		City Infrastructure	Council has adopted the 2026/27 Capital Works Program, which includes the delivery of two new public toilets at Fran Reserve and Cox Reserve during 2026/27. These projects have been incorporated as actions within Year 2 of the Council Action Plan and will be reported on accordingly.
42	Deliver Park priorities		City Infrastructure	Council continues to finalise the concept design for the new park at 568 Sydney Road, Brunswick, with community consultation on the design planned for late 2026. Council has also commenced work on its new Park Close to Home project in Fawkner, with further information and community consultation to occur in late 2026. During the year, Council completed upgrades to several parks, including Gervase Reserve in Glenroy and H.M. Dowd Reserve in Pascoe Vale. Council also delivered a new park at York Street, Pascoe Vale, as part of the Park Close to Home Program.
43	Deliver increased shade in Victoria Mall		Place and Environment	In collaboration with local businesses, Council has delivered 16 new in-ground market umbrellas in Victoria Mall, improving shade and amenity within this important public space.
44	Implement hooning prevention measures in reserve carparks in Glenroy		City Infrastructure	Temporary hooning prevention measures have been implemented and are being monitored at Middle Street Reserve, Hadfield, A.T.C. Cook Reserve, Glenroy, and Wallace Reserve, Glenroy. Following the implementation of these interim measures, detailed design work is underway at the Glenroy sites to investigate opportunities to increase tree canopy cover and incorporate integrated water management and water-sensitive urban design elements within the car parks. The Wallace Reserve site experienced multiple instances of vandalism; however, the infrastructure has since been reinstated and continues to be monitored.
45	Implement the outcomes of the community engagement for the Stage 1 Pilot - Dog Walking in Merri-bek initiatives at 8 different reserves, including improving Gilpin dog park		City Infrastructure	Detailed community workshops have been completed as part of the conclusion of Stage 1 of the pilot project. The findings of seven of the eight Stage 1 sites were presented and adopted by Council to be made permanent in the April 2026 Council Meeting with the eighth park being presented to Council in the first quarter of 2026/27. The Gilpin Park enclosed dog park upgrade has also been completed, including the creation of a new enclosed area for small dogs adjacent to Pearson Street. Ongoing implementation of this initiative will continue through the Council Action Plan 2026/27.
46	Engage the community in the review of and update of the Domestic Animal Management Plan		City Infrastructure	This action was achieved in the previous quarter.
47	Engage the community in the review of and update of the Local Law		City Infrastructure	Progress remains on track. Initial community consultation was undertaken between April and May 2026, resulting in 129 survey responses and 11 written submissions. Recent work has included the preparation of a draft Local Law and internal consultation activities. The next phase of work,

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Action No.	Action	Status	Directorate	Comments
				scheduled for July 2026, includes completion of a legal review, with further community consultation anticipated in the second quarter of the 2026/27 financial year.
48	Adopt a new Road Management Plan and implement the changes resulting from its review	✓	City Infrastructure	The Road Management Plan was reviewed in time to meet the statutory deadline of 31 October and was subsequently endorsed by Council at the October Council meeting. The changes have now been implemented and embedded into ongoing operations.
49	Deliver the Streets for People Plan priority projects	●	Place and Environment	Delivery of Streets for People priority projects is progressing across multiple locations. During the quarter, work continued on the Hope Street and Breese Street projects, including refinement of project proposals in response to community feedback. Council also approved a 12-month extension of the Barrow Street, Coburg trial road closure, incorporating safety modifications and ongoing monitoring. Planning has also progressed for the Harding Street-Munro Street and Albert Street projects.
50	Deliver sustainable transport initiatives that improve options for people walking and riding throughout Merri-bek	●	Place and Environment	Council advanced a range of sustainable transport initiatives to improve walking and cycling options across Merri-bek. Progress was made on the School Transport Precincts Program, including engagement with the Merri-bek Primary School community to support access improvements. Planning for key walking and cycling infrastructure projects continued, including improvements to the Merri Creek Trail at Bowden Reserve and Clara Street, as well as the delivery of Streets for People priority projects. Council also promoted sustainable travel behaviour change through staff travel initiatives and participation in Healthy Streets training.
51	Deliver the Ride & Stride behaviour change program plus priority infrastructure upgrades around schools, to foster safe and active travel to and from school	●	Place and Environment	Highlights have included: - The launch of the largest Ride & Stride e-bike subsidy program to date, with more than 119 families supported. In response to the national fuel crisis, the program expanded beyond primary schools to include childcare centres and kindergartens. Of recipients, 67% identified as women or gender diverse. - Collaboration with the City of Kingston on the development of an Open Streets National Toolkit, scheduled to be launched in July. - Drafting of Council's first School Precincts Plan, including a co-design workshop with the first Ride & Stride school. - Throughout the 2025-26 financial year, Council continued to work with 16 Ride & Stride schools, while Open Streets initiatives were delivered regularly at five schools, supporting increased participation in active and sustainable travel.
52	Support the expansion of the Electric Vehicle (EV) charging network across Merri-bek	●	Place and Environment	Throughout the 2025-26 financial year, a range of projects contributed to the expansion of electric vehicle charging infrastructure across Merri-bek. The Home-to-Street Electric Vehicle Charging Trial achieved more than 20 installations and has now progressed to the evaluation stage, with expressions of interest closed. Installation of the dual electric vehicle charger at The Grove is nearing completion, with final bay line marking and energisation by Jemena remaining. Investigations have also continued into the potential installation of a fast charger near the Brunswick Tram Depot. In addition, community consultation on the introduction of pole-mounted electric vehicle chargers was completed during the year.

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Action No.	Action	Status	Directorate	Comments
53	Deliver the Wheatsheaf Road Glenroy streetscape improvement project (over two years)		Place and Environment	This action has been placed on hold for the remainder of the financial year, with Council endorsing this position at its February 2026 Council meeting due to external factors impacting delivery. As a multi-year initiative, the action has been included in the Year 2 Council Action Plan 2026-27.
54	Ensure Council is well briefed to support the best possible design outcomes from major planning applications		Place and Environment	Most major planning proposals are determined by Council resolution at Planning and Related Matters (PARM) Council meetings. Generally, proposals that exceed structure plan height limits or major application referred to Council by the Minister for Planning, are considered by Councillors. All major planning applications undergo a review process with expert input from Council's urban design, environmentally sustainable development, and heritage advisory teams. In 2025/26 Council was briefed and considered the following major proposals at PARM Council meetings: • 253 -259 Brunswick Road, Brunswick - six storeys • 2 Florence Street, Coburg - seven storeys • 278-282 Albert Street, Brunswick - nine storeys • 932 Sydney Road, Coburg North - mixed-use development including warehouse, service station and convenience restaurant • 90 Bell Street, Coburg - Coburg Health Hub • 50-52 Breese Street and 655-661 Sydney Road Brunswick (Brunswick Market) - townhouses
55	Reporting on Ministerial planning permit decision-making through the Quarterly Planning Permit Activity Reporting to the Planning & Related Matters Council Meeting		Place and Environment	The Quarterly City Development Activity Report includes details of Ministerial applications. In the 2025-26 financial year, the following Ministerial application has been reported to the Planning and Related Matters Council meeting: MIN/2025/7 - 50-52 Breese Street and 655-661 Sydney Road, Brunswick, for 43 townhouses, reported to the March 2026 meeting.

Action No.	Action	Status	Directorate	Comments
56	Ensure the review of the Merri-bek Planning Scheme leads to a framework that supports great housing, employment, and liveability in Merri-bek		Place and Environment	This action is on track. Work is underway to ensure the Merri-bek Planning Scheme continues to provide a clear and effective framework of local policies and controls to guide the location and form of housing growth. A Planning Scheme Review, aligned with the Department of Transport and Planning's 2026 guidance note and the finalised Housing Target Scorecard, is being prepared and is on track to be presented to Council in October 2026.

Theme 4: Thriving economy and culture

Strategic Objective 4: A lively and inclusive Merri-bek where the economy supports local business and industry growth, celebrates artistic and creative expression, and connects the community through vibrant cultural experiences.

Action No.	Action	Status	Directorate	Comments
57	Continue to develop the Brunswick Design District in partnership with RMIT University and Creative Victoria, with a focus on supporting economic opportunities and job growth in design-related businesses		Place and Environment	Over the reporting period, Council: - Partnered with RMIT University and Creative Victoria to deliver the Melbourne Design Week x Brunswick Design District Open Studios event, featuring a two-day public program across 12 design and creative studios in Merri-bek. Promotional videos were also produced for participating businesses to support ongoing marketing and engagement. - Delivered significant upgrades to the Brunswick Design District website, including the development of a new directory showcasing more than 100 creative spaces within and surrounding the precinct. - Commenced an update of the Brunswick Design District signature brochure to further promote the precinct's creative industries and destination.
58	Implement safety & amenity improvements in major activity centres including Glenroy, Brunswick, and Coburg		Place and Environment	Safety and amenity improvements in major activity centres continue to progress through project planning, issue assessment and coordination with related transport and place-based initiatives. During the quarter, Council continued advocacy for improvements to the Sydney Road tram corridor, including alignment with the Victorian Government's accessible tram stop program. Council also investigated local safety issues, including at the Barkly Street and Lygon Street intersection, and identified a school crossing request for future consideration. Work also continued on activity centre access and parking management through the Victorian Government's Activity Centre reform process. In addition, development of the Road Safety Plan commenced, with work progressing towards the implementation of the Brunswick and Coburg 30 km/h speed limit trial zones.
59	Belair Street, Glenroy, on-street garden bed		Place and Environment	Council has finalised the detailed design for the Belair Avenue streetscape project, which will enhance greening and improve the amenity and appearance of the precinct. Targeted community engagement has been undertaken with local businesses to inform and refine the final design. The project is now ready for delivery in the 2026/27 financial year.
60	Deliver the West Street Streetscape Renewal Project (over two years)		Place and Environment	Council is progressing the delivery of streetscape improvements to West Street, Hadfield, to enhance the amenity and appearance of the shopping strip. Works remain on track for completion by the end of the calendar year, with progress to date meeting the delivery targets for this financial year.

Action No.	Action	Status	Directorate	Comments
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61	Deliver priority actions from the Places for People Plan		Place and Environment	On 10 June 2026, Council endorsed Merri-bek's Places for People Plan, Council's long-term strategy for delivering high-quality public spaces that support the vibrancy, sustainability and liveability of shopping strips and activity centres. Delivery of several high-priority opportunities identified in the Plan has commenced, including projects at West Street, Hadfield; Post Office Place, Glenroy; and 568 Sydney Road, Brunswick.
62	Develop a Public Art Policy		Community	This action was achieved in the previous quarter
63	Deliver the Merri-bek Economic Development Action Plan		Place and Environment	Throughout the 2025/26 financial year, including during the fourth quarter, the Economic Development Unit continued to deliver Year 2 actions under the Economic Development Action Plan, including: - Delivered six business events (and yearly total of 36 business skills workshops and networking events) - Delivered of a major Brunswick Design District event for Melbourne Design Week - Continued progression of Business Friendly Council service improvement initiative (ongoing during 2026). - Continued support to Sydney Road Brunswick and Central Coburg business associations, including regarding their proposed respective renewals. - Delivered a Shopfront Improvement project in Melville Road and commenced a similar project in Victoria Mall, Coburg. - Delivered ongoing social media support to West Street shopping strip during the Shopping Strip Renewal works. - Facilitated 66 business permit concierge processes. - Produced and distributed (incl. via YouTube, Council socials, Palace Cinema) new Investment Attraction video - Merri-bek: The Smart Choice for Business. - Progress two State Govt grant funded Multicultural Business Precinct Revitalisation projects in Coburg and Glenroy. - Launched, with three neighbouring Councils, new Greening our Business website and tool for businesses aspiring to greater environmental sustainability. - Supported six businesses to attend NorthLink Circular Economy forum to assist them to learn how to improve their circular business practices. - Held second annual Tourism Roundtable for Merri-bek's visitor-economy involved businesses, precincts and stakeholders.
Action No.	Action	Status	Directorate	Comments
64	Maintain the Commercial Priority Planning Service to facilitate well prepared planning permit		Place and Environment	The Urban Planning Unit continues to provide its Commercial Priority Service to support new and expanding businesses in navigating the planning process. From July 2025 to June 2026, as a Business Friendly Council, Merri-bek processed 30 commercial priority planning

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	applications that can deliver new or increased local employment opportunities			applications through this service, to help facilitate new and/or expanding businesses that provide increased opportunities for local employment in Merri-bek.
65	Deliver expanded Merri-bek murals street art program	✓	Community	The 2025-26 financial year saw the delivery of several significant public art projects across Merri-bek. Murals have been delivered at Fleming Park, East Brunswick (designed as a celebration of Treaty by artist Robert Michael Young), Shirley Robertson Children's Centre, Coburg (co-designed with children and artist Amanda Newman), Oxygen Youth Space, Coburg (by young, local First Peoples artist Njarala Paton), Union Street, Brunswick (by Camilo Delgado in collaboration with PRONIA), and Glenroy Community Hub (by Marco Pennacchia in response to the rainbow crossings/mural report).
66	Scope project to activate underutilised community spaces for arts and performance	●	Community	Findings will be presented to Council in August 2026. This action will continue under the next stage of the scoping process which will be to establish three community venues for increased performance and arts usage.
67	Refresh festival program in line with community needs	●	Community	Council deferred its decision on the refreshed festival program to allow for community consultation in July, with a Council decision scheduled for September. As this work extends beyond the current reporting period, it will continue under the Year 2 Council Action Plan as Community engagement and partnership planning to develop a refreshed festival program.
68	Redesign grants program to support more opportunities to create, learn and connect	●	Community	The review and redesign of the Community Grants Program has been deferred to enable a more comprehensive program review and redesign process. Subject to Council endorsement, this work will be progressed through the Year 2 Council Action Plan during the 2026/27 financial year.
69	Develop scope for Fawkner Library redevelopment to increase opportunities to learn and connect	●	Community	An information-gathering process has been undertaken to invite ideas from the Fawkner community on the future design of the library. A concept design has subsequently been developed and costed, incorporating a more flexible and functional layout with increased floor space.
70	Undertake design competition for the Coburg Library and Piazza concept design	●	Community	The milestone set for this action was achieved in the previous quarter.

Theme 5: Engaging and responsible council

5: A responsive and engaged Merri-bek that prioritises excellent service, embraces engaging communication methods, advocates community needs, and continues to uphold sustainable financial management and accountable governance that builds trust and collaboration with the community.

Action No.	Action	Status	Directorate	Comments
71	Develop Customer Experience Strategy		Community	A Customer Experience Strategy is currently in development and is scheduled to for delivery by August 2026.
72	Deliver advocacy activities that support council priorities		Business Transformation	Regular engagement continued with local State and Federal Members of Parliament, alongside collaboration with key advocacy partners, including the Northern Councils Alliance, Melbourne's Nine (M9), the Council Alliance for a Sustainable Built Environment, the Northern Alliance for Greenhouse Action, and the Mayoral Taskforce for People Seeking Asylum. During the quarter, Council published its 2026 Victorian State Election Advocacy Priorities to support engagement with Members of Parliament and election candidates. Council also advocated for improved infrastructure funding for growing communities through engagement with Infrastructure Victoria and made submissions to the Victorian Government's Inquiry into Anti-LGBTIQ+ Hate Crimes and the Commonwealth Royal Commission into Antisemitism and Social Cohesion. These submissions advocated for strengthened government leadership, enhanced partnerships, and initiatives that promote community cohesion. During the quarter, Council secured \$2.968 million in Victorian Government funding for the Raeburn and A.G. Gillon Reserve Stormwater Harvesting Scheme, McDonald Reserve Hockey Pitch Stage 1, and raised priority crossings in Glenroy. Council also secured \$1.2 million in Australian Government funding for the Enhancing Edgars Creek Corridor Project.
73	Increase editions and page count for Community News		Community	This action was achieved in the previous quarter.

Action No.	Action	Status	Directorate	Comments
74	Continue the Merri-bek Community Connectors program	✓	Community	During 2025-26, the program engaged 20 Community Connectors representing more than 11 communities and languages, including Greek, Italian, Turkish, Bangla, Pashto, Nepali, Arabic, Vietnamese, Urdu, Mandarin and Dari. Throughout the year, Connectors communicated Council information through their own trusted community networks, reaching an average of 300 people per Connector and an overall audience of more than 65,000 community members across Merri-bek. Some key highlights have included: - Shared more than 180 Council messages in multiple languages through trusted community networks, increasing awareness of Council services, programs, events, consultations and funding opportunities among multicultural communities. - Contributed to strong participation outcomes across Council initiatives, including: 450 of 1,074 Council Plan Community Panel expressions of interest from multicultural community members; - a 42% increase in multicultural participation in the Community Budget Ideas process; 31% of Advisory Committee applications from migrants and refugees; and - a 45% increase in kindergarten enrolments from multicultural families following targeted in-language communications. - Increased participation in Council events, programs and consultations by supporting culturally appropriate communication and community engagement. - Provided real-time community feedback to inform Council planning, communications and service delivery, helping to improve accessibility and cultural responsiveness. - Reviewed translated communications for more than 55 major Council campaigns, ensuring information was accurate, culturally appropriate and accessible. - Completed tailored Community Leadership and Advocacy training and Council's Child Safe training, strengthening leadership capability and supporting safe participation for children and young people. - Participated in more than 11 in-person meetings, providing community perspectives on key Council initiatives, including Community Budget Ideas, Community Grants, fortnightly rubbish collection, Centre Coburg revitalisation and accessible communications and engagement policies.
Action No.	Action	Status	Directorate	Comments

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75	Maintain the planning and building on-line booking service for improved customer convenience and freely accessible high-quality advice	✓	Place and Environment	Both the Urban Planning and Building Services online booking systems continue to operate effectively, providing improved access to professional town planning and building advice and services at no cost to community members who are unable to attend Council offices in person.
76	Integrate climate risk into Council processes and systems, focusing on risk management, finance, and asset management and capital works planning	●	Place and Environment	During the 2025-26 financial year, Council continued to strengthen its approach to climate risk management and adaptation planning. This included a review of operational risks associated with flood impacts on Council buildings, with officers coordinating preparedness actions to reduce potential impacts and improve organisational resilience. Council's project to assess climate and financial risk has also progressed significantly during the year. Climate change-related expenditure, including activities to reduce carbon emissions, respond to climate risk, loss and damage, and enable climate action, is being identified and quantified. This work will support future decision-making regarding the prioritisation of programs and activities, as well as capital and operational budget planning.
77	Update Merri-bek's open space and developer contribution models	●	Place and Environment	Merri-bek's open space and developer contributions reform program is progressing as planned. The new Development Contributions Plan (DCP 2.0) has been authorised by the Minister for Planning and completed formal public exhibition on 17 June 2026. Separately, Amendment C235mbek, which proposes an updated Public Open Space Contribution Rate, continues to progress through the Planning Panel process. Following receipt of the final Panel Report, Council will consider the Panel's recommendations and determine whether to adopt the amendment, with or without changes.
78	Complete or commence construction of every project listed in Merri-bek's first Development Contributions Plan before 30 June 2026	✓	City Infrastructure	This action has been marked complete with all projects commenced or completed to enable acquittal of the Developer Contributions Plan. There are two projects that have not commenced construction, Kendall Harding Bridge and HK Kinder (Volga St), both projects are currently in the final stages of the design phase with significant enough progress made on each project to acquit the Developer Contribution requirements.
79	Finalise designs for the Breese Street precinct improvements	●	Place and Environment	Option 2 - Central Shared Zone was endorsed by Council at its March 2026 meeting. Funding for detailed design has been included in the draft 2026/27 Budget. Detailed design and delivery planning are progressing, with construction staging to be aligned with the Level Crossing Removal Project

7.6 OPEN COUNCIL RESOLUTIONS REPORT

Acting Director Business Transformation, Yvonne Callanan

Governance and Strategy

Officer Recommendation

That Council receives and notes the Open Council Resolutions Report provided as Attachment 1 to this report.

REPORT

Executive Summary

The Open Council Resolutions Report provided as **Attachment 1** has been prepared to inform Councillors and the community of the actions taken to date to implement Council resolutions that are currently open and not yet finalised.

There are currently 39 open Council resolutions, with 2 of these relating to Petitions, 19 relating to Council officer reports and 18 relating to Notices of Motion.

Previous Council Decisions

Open Council Resolutions Report – 13 May 2026

That Council receives and notes the Open Council Resolutions Report provided as Attachment 1 to this report.

1. Policy Context

Section 46(2) of the *Local Government Act 2020* states:

- (a) That Chief Executive Officer has responsibility for ensuring that the decisions of the Council are implemented without undue delay.
- (e) When requested by the Mayor, reporting to the Council in respect of the implementation of a Council decision.

This report also supports Council's continuing commitment to transparent management of resources on behalf of ratepayers, key stakeholders and the broader community.

2. Background

The purpose of the Open Council Resolutions Report, provided as **Attachment 1**, is to inform Councillors and the community of the actions taken to date to implement the Council resolutions that are currently open.

3. Issues

The Open Council Resolutions Report (shown at **Attachment 1**) outlines the open resolutions and indicates that there is a total of 39 Open Resolutions, with 2 of these relating to Petitions, 19 relating to Council officer reports and 18 relating to Notices of Motion. Each open resolution in **Attachment 1**, includes a target date for completion.

The table below details the allocation of open items - Petitions, Council Reports, Notices of Motion, and Urgent Business—across each Directorate and the CEO Executive Office:

Directorate	Petitions	Council Reports	Notices of Motion	Urgent Business
Chief Executive Office	-	-	-	-
Business Transformation	-	1	-	-
City Infrastructure	-	-	1	-
Community	-	2	9	-
Place and Environment	2	16	8	-
	2	19	18	0

Attachment 1 excludes resolutions relating to Confidential Items and items relating to Planning and Related Matters.

An Open Council Resolutions report is presented to Council on an ongoing basis, to promote the transparency of how Council resolutions are implemented.

Community impact

Community impact is addressed through the Council Plan 2025-2029 under strategic objective 4: Act with transparency and accountability in all financial and governance practices, setting the standard for integrity and building trust within the community.

Climate emergency and environmental sustainability implications

Some open resolutions may, once completed, deliver benefits that support climate emergency and environmental sustainability outcomes.

Economic sustainability implications

There are no economic sustainability implications associated with the preparation of this report.

Legal and risk considerations

There are no legal and risk implications associated with the preparation of this report.

Human Rights Consideration

The implications of this report have been assessed in accordance with the requirements of the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities.

4. Community consultation and engagement

Community consultation and engagement is not required for this report as it reflects the status of the implementation of Council Decisions that have been previously made.

Affected persons rights and interests

Before making a decision that affects a person's rights, Council must identify whose rights may be directly affected and provide an opportunity for that person (or persons) to convey those views regarding the effect on their rights and consider those views. There are no individual rights or interests affected.

5. Officer Declaration of Conflict of Interest

Council officers involved in the preparation of this report have no conflict of interest in this matter.

6. Financial and Resources Implications

Any financial implications associated with the preparation of this report have been met within existing resource and budget allocations.

7. Implementation

The reporting of the Open Council Resolutions will continue on an ongoing basis, with the next report to be presented to Council in November 2026.

Attachment/s

- 1 Open Council Resolutions Report for the period ending 30 June 2026 D26/327250



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Petitions – 2

Director Place and Environment	Council 13/08/2025	Target Date: 30/11/2026	Further Report: No
5.1 Petition requesting Council take action to reduce the volume of cars on Shaftsbury Street, Coburg			
That Council: 1. Receives the petition, requesting Council take action to reduce the volume of cars on Shaftsbury Street, Coburg, particularly between Reynard Street and Munro Street. 2. Refers the petition requesting Council take action to reduce the volume of cars on Shaftsbury Street, Coburg, particularly between Reynard Street and Munro Street, to the Director Place and Environment for consideration and response. Progress Comment. Several traffic calming options are being considered and assessed through a design and road safety review process. Outcomes will be presented to Council in late 2026.			

Director Place and Environment	Council 10/06/2026	Target Date: 30/11/2026	Further Report: No
5.2 Petition - Shaftsbury Street, Coburg Traffic			
That Council: 1. Receives the petition requesting Council includes Shaftsbury Street, Coburg in this year's budget (2026-2027) to progress next steps in ensuring traffic volumes will be reduced on the street.			

2. Refers the petition requesting Council includes Shaftsbury Street, Coburg in this year's budget (2026-2027) to progress next steps in ensuring traffic volumes will be reduced on the street to the Director Place and Environment for consideration and response.

Progress Comment

Several traffic calming options are being considered and assessed through a design and road safety review process. Outcomes will be presented to council in late 2026

Officer Reports – 19

Director Place and Environment	Council 11/10/2017	Target Date: 31/12/2026	Further Report: No
DCS59/17 Proposed Land Swap with Darul Ulum College of Victoria - Evans Reserve, Fawkner That Council, having given public notice and having considered the submission received, in accordance with sections 189 and 223 of the Local Government Act 1989: 1. Determines to exchange part of its land at 20 Victory Street, Fawkner, with land currently owned by Darul Ulum College of Victoria at 21 and 23 Marjory and 16 and 18 Victory Streets, Fawkner, as shown in the negotiated plan at Attachment 1 to this report. 2. Authorises the Director Corporate Services to do all things necessary to affect the exchange of land of part of its land at 20 Victory Street, Fawkner as shown in with land owned by the Darul Ulum College of Victoria at 21 and 23 Marjory and 16 and 18 Victory Streets, Fawkner, as shown in Attachment 1 to this report, including the execution of all relevant documentation. 3. Authorises the Director Corporate Services to commence the subdivision of approximately 2,393 square metres from the Evans Reserve, shown as the red hatched area on Attachment 1 to this report, and remove its drainage, sewerage and recreation reserve status pursuant to section 24(A) of the Subdivisions Act 1988. 4. Requests authorisation from the Minister for Planning to prepare a planning scheme amendment in accordance with section 20(4) of the Planning and Environment Act 1987 to rezone 21 and 23 Marjory and 16 and 18 Victory Streets, Fawkner, to Public Park and Recreation Zone and rezone the land to be sold at 20 Victory Street, Fawkner, shown as the blue hatched area on attachment 1 to this report, to General Residential 1 (GRZ1). 5. Notifies the person who made a submission in writing of its decision and the reasons for that decision 6. Explores options with Darul Ulum to preserve 7 mature native trees that exist on the site in keeping with the aims of the newly adopted Urban Forest Strategy Progress Comment The land swap process is underway. Since the original 2017 decision, the State Government has introduced a Windfall Gains Tax that may render the swap cost prohibitive. Council's legal advisor is in conversations with the State Revenue Office as to whether this will impact the transaction. Further steps will be dependent on the outcome of these conversations.			

Director Place and Environment	Council 13/09/2023	Target Date:	Further Report:
		30/09/2026	No
7.9	Naming of Laneways		
	That Council:		
1.	Notes the potential risks and resource challenges associated with a universal approach to naming laneways, and that individual requests for naming laneways can be accommodated within the existing Naming Merri-bek Places Policy (2013), in cases where there is a clear reason to consider them as exceptions to standard practice.		
2.	Continues discussions with Geographic Names Victoria to assess the name 'Kastoria Lane' against Geographic Naming Victoria's naming rules for places in Victoria - Statutory requirements for naming roads, features and localities – 2022.		
3.	Writes to the submitter of the request to name a walkway on Sydney Road 'Pagonis Place' requesting supporting evidence in relation to the naming rules, specifically Principle C – linking the name to the place and Principle I – using commemorative names.		
4.	Commence a formal process to name the laneway between Trafford Street and Ann Street, Brunswick.		
5.	Continues to assess individual naming requests as the naming authority, noting that the Registrar of Geographic Names holds the power to either approve or reject any proposal for naming.		
6.	Refers to the 2024/25 budget process consideration of allocating funds for the installation of informative text beneath new road names and interpretive signage at newly named parks to offer insights into the history and significance of place names and enhances understanding and appreciation of the locale's heritage and cultural importance.		
7.	If budget savings are declared in the 2023/24 budget, that consideration be given to allocating savings identified to ensure that projects nominated in this recommendation are delivered with interpretive signage elements.		
	Progress Comment		
	All actions have been implemented except for point 4 which will commence once Council's naming policy has been updated. Work is in train to update Council's naming policy in 2026.		

Director Place and Environment	Council 8/05/2024	Target Date: 30/09/2026	Further Report: No
7.4 Naming the Park at 14 Frith Street, Brunswick - voting poll results			
That Council: 1. Invite further consultation from the broader Merri-bek community on the resolved list of names for the Park at 14 Frith Street, with a view to a report coming back to Council in August 2024 with the final outcome of the consultation and poll and to confirm Council's preferred name. 2. Undertake a review of the Naming Merri-bek Places Policy, including consideration of: a) Considering naming parks and facilities only after they have been opened to the public, allowing users of the space to engage in the naming process. b) Reviewing consultation methods to explore additional strategies for increasing community participation. c) Considering incorporating a pre-poll workshop with submitters and stakeholders to discuss proposed names, taking into account historical and contextual factors for each site, as well as the overarching objectives of the policy, particularly in prioritising indigenous, women and migrant names.			
Progress Comment The Frith Street renaming was completed in 2024. A full internal review of the Naming Policy is yet to take place but is underway.			

Director Place and Environment	Council 12/02/2025	Target Date: 30/09/2026	Further Report: No
7.6 Fawkner Transport Study Implementation			
That Council: 1. Endorses infrastructure improvements to improve transport safety and accessibility in Fawkner including:			

- a) A new pedestrian priority crossing on Jukes Road at the Fawkner Leisure Centre to assist in north-south movement.
 - b) Completing a missing link of shared user path between McBryde Street and the Merri Creek.
 - c) Shared Path Accessibility Improvements in Charles Mutton Reserve.
 - d) Zebra Crossings at the intersections of Jukes Road and Williams Street.
 - e) Raised threshold crossings along Jukes Road at the intersections of McDougall Street, Penn Court and Co-op Lane.
2. Endorses the following actions to reduce conflicts between pedestrians and vehicles on Bonwick Street:
- a) Installing new signage to direct visitors to the adjacent car parks near Bonwick Street.
 - b) Formally requesting a compliance blitz by Victoria Police to reduce double parking, cars not giving way to pedestrians and other unsafe driver behaviour.
 - c) Reconsider a "Walking Legs" pedestrian sign on the zebra crossing in the carpark on the eastern side of Bonwick St to signify that that it is a pedestrian crossing.
 - d) In 12 months assess the impact of the above measures on the intersection of Jukes Rd and Bonwick St and bring a report to council identifying ways pedestrian safety could be further improved
3. Endorses the Fawkner Safe Travel Corridors as the preferred active transport routes within Fawkner and investigates extending the north south cycling corridor continuing through Parker Reserve to Shorts Road to enable this as a safe cycling corridor to Aldi supermarket, Upfield Bike Path, Merlynston Station, and Hosken Reserve.
4. Notes that there will be opportunity as part of the Streets for People Plan to identify priority corridors throughout Merri-bek for targeting improvements, which may include the east-west bicycle route in Fawkner at Roma Street and the Sydney Road – Murray Street intersection.

Progress Comment

All items have been delivered or are in delivery. An evaluation of the changes will be assessed in the second half of 2026 and a report will be presented to council in early 2027 to close item 2d.

Director Community	Council 12/03/2025	Target Date: 30/08/2026	Further Report: Yes
7.2 Bachar Houli Foundation - Islamic College of Sport and Aspire Sports Centre That Council: - Notes the Bachar Houli Foundations concept designs for the proposed Aspire Sports Centre as shown in Attachment 1. - Notes the Federal Government's commitment to provide grant funding of \$15 million and the Bachar Houli Foundation's application to the Victorian Government's Building Fund for Non-Government Schools to develop the facility. - Notes the planning requirements that must be met for the project to proceed, and the significant community benefits it will deliver. - Resolves to enter into a peppercorn lease agreement with the Bachar Houli Foundation for a 30-year term with a 10-year extension option, exercisable by the Bachar Houli Foundation, subject to confirmation that funding has been secured for the project. - Receives a further report setting out: - detailed terms of the proposed lease agreement - potential relocation options for existing users at the former Coburg Bowls Club - grant funding updates - further design and planning considerations, draft community and stakeholder engagement plan - details outlining how women and girls will be intentionally included in the programs and design of the facility and how this will be measured and reported by the Bachar Houli Foundation - Requests officers continue to explore the potential of Council's adjacent Russell Street car park sites, particularly for future community sport and recreation infrastructure needs, and maximise any synergies or colocation potential with the Bachar Houli Foundation as their proposal develops. Progress Comment Council officers are working with the Bachar Houli Foundation and other stakeholders in relation to the project and its design and use. Community engagement materials are now available on Conversations Merri-bek about the project. Officers are continuing to develop a lease and this will be the subject of a report to Council later in 2026.			

Director Community	Council 12/03/2025	Target Date: 9/06/2027	Further Report: Yes
7.5	Vicki Cleary Day 2025 and Family Violence Initiatives		
That Council:			
1. Notes the information provided on current data, initiative and partnerships on prevention of family violence and gender based violence 2. Endorses the proposed program of support for the annual Vicki Cleary Day. 3. Requests that an evaluation, outcomes report, and future program proposal be presented to Council for consideration in the first half of 2027. 4. Refers support for Vicki Cleary Day in May 2025 to Quarter 3 budget deliberations. 5. Refers a funding request of \$40,000 to the 2025/26 budget process for consideration.			
Progress Comment			
A successful Vicki Cleary Day was held in May 2026 with planning for 2027 to consider an Essendon District Football League round. An evaluation of the program will be presented to Council in 2027.			

Director Place and Environment	Council 9/04/2025	Target Date: 30/10/2026	Further Report: No
7.16	Electrical capacity upgrade - Hadfield Operations Centre		
That Council:			
1. Notes the need for an increase in electrical capacity at the Hadfield Operations Centre (also known as 5 Walter Street, Hadfield) by 3,000kVA (or 3 MW), to support electrification of the site and installation of infrastructure necessary for the transition of Council fleet to zero emissions vehicles.			

2. Authorises the Chief Executive Officer to do all things necessary to upgrade electrical capacity at Hadfield Operations Centre, including:
 - a) Accepting the negotiated offer from Jemena to install a new 3 MegaWatt kiosk transformer at Hadfield Operations Centre, for \$403,690.59 (excluding GST); and
 - b) Executing a contract for the delivery of required civil and electrical works on Council property to operationalise the transformer.
3. Notes that the following sums have been referred to the draft budget process for 2025/26:
 - a) \$403,690 (for the Jemena offer)
 - b) \$376,000 (for the remaining works).

Progress Comment

Item 1 and 2 a) Completed

Item 2b) The tender evaluation for the civil and electrical works is underway and a contractor expected to be appointed, and contract executed in October.

Item 3 Completed.

Director Place and Environment	Council 13/08/2025	Target Date: 27/08/2026	Further Report: No
7.1	Streets for People Plan		
That Council:			
1. Notes the findings of the community engagement on the draft Streets for People Plan, and thanks the community for their feedback. 2. Adopts the Streets for People Plan (Attachment 1), including the Streets for People network, the high priority projects list, and the Streets for People process for design, community engagement, and delivery. 3. Advocates to the State Government to: a) Make improvements to Elm Grove and Urquhart Street in the Coburg Civic and Pentridge area or negotiate changes in the responsible authority for roads in this area, with a goal of moving the state road designation from Elm and Urquhart Streets to Pentridge Boulevard.			

- b) Make improvements for people walking and riding along the length of Boundary Road, Pascoe Street, and Rhodes Parade, in Pascoe Vale.
- c) Design and deliver the Craigieburn Line shared path project in collaboration with Council.
- 4. Notes the findings of the investigation into turning roads into parks.
- 5. Conducts a review into the operation of Northumberland Road, between Rhodes Parade and Arndt Street, 12 months following reconstruction of the road. The review shall consider feedback from Pascoe Vale Girls College, Pascoe Street businesses, local residents, and users of Northumberland Road.
- 6. Adds the following text to the 'Proposed Network - Corridor and Targeted network' section of the Streets for People Plan (as a new paragraph 2 on Page 17 of the plan – page 41 of the Council Agenda): "Targeted projects focus on smaller improvements that can be made to the street. This includes elements such as street trees, wayfinding, street benches, and other amenities. Targeted projects typically will not consider significant changes to the way the street operates, such as road closures or protected bike lanes."
- 7. Changes the title in Table 3 of the Streets for People Plan from "Aspirations Community Engagement" to "Engagement on the community's aspirations and lived experiences" (page 20 of the Streets for People Plan, and page 44 of the Council Agenda).
- 8. Authorises the Director Place and Environment to make minor changes to the policy document for publication, as required.

Progress Comment

Northumberland Road review will be conducted in the coming months following the completion of road reconstruction. All other items have been delivered.

Director Place and Environment	Council 12/11/2025	Target Date: 31/12/2026	Further Report: No
7.4 Proposed Sale of Council Land - 10 Murrell Street, Glenroy			
That Council: 1. Notes the five submissions received in relation to the proposed sale of Council land at 10 Murrell Street, Glenroy, and the advice set out in this report. 2. Endorses the proposed sale of the land by a public process. 3. Writes to all submitters thanking them for their submissions and informing them of Council's decision. 4. Authorises the Chief Executive Officer to do all things necessary to effect the sale. 5. Directs the net proceeds of the sale to the Significant Projects Reserve.			
Progress Comment The property has been listed for a sale through a real estate agent. The sale campaign is still underway.			

Director Place and Environment	Council 11/03/2026	Target Date: 31/10/2026	Further Report: Yes
7.2 568 Sydney Road - Park Close to Home – Preliminary Community Engagement			
That Council: 1. Notes the community engagement report on options for the new park at 568 Sydney Road, Brunswick. 2. Endorses the schematic design for 568 Sydney Road, Brunswick (Image 3 in this report), with any future changes to parking on Staley St to come back to council for a decision. 3. Endorses the approach to report back to the community, including the schematic design being publicly available on Conversations Merri-bek.			

4. Receives a future report on the results of a second round of community engagement, with a recommended concept design for endorsement.
5. Explore further traffic calming measures for Staley Street.

Progress Comment

A second round of community engagement on the concept designs is scheduled for September 2026.

Director Place and Environment	Council 11/03/2026	Target Date: 8/12/2027	Further Report: Yes
7.10	Visible solar energy systems in Heritage Overlay		
That Council:			
1. Notes that Amendment C233mbek seeks to reduce planning permit requirements for some visible solar energy systems on contributory and non-contributory heritage buildings. 2. Receives a further report by late 2027 on further options to amend the Merri-bek Planning Scheme, including the potential removal of permit requirements for visible solar energy systems within the Heritage Overlay, informed by planning panel precedents, independent heritage advice and the outcomes of Amendment C233mbek. 3. Notes that consultation with Council's Liveability Advisory Committee and Environmental Sustainability and Climate Resilience Advisory Committee, and the Brunswick History Group and the Coburg Historical Society will be undertaken as part of the preparation of the further report.			
Progress Comment			
Council is seeking guidance from the state government to enable more efficient methods of actioning this recommendation in the Planning Scheme. A report will be provided in 2027 once options have been investigated and stakeholders have been consulted.			

Director Place and Environment	Council 8/04/2026	Target Date: 30/06/2027	Further Report: Yes
7.2 Shared E-Bike Scheme for Merri-bek			
That Council: 1. Approves a pause on progressing a shared e-bike scheme. 2. Receives a future report when a Merri-bek shared e-bike scheme becomes feasible.			
Progress Comment No further update at this stage.			

Director Place and Environment	Council 13/05/2026	Target Date: 30/09/2026	Further Report: No
7.6 Proposed sale of land - rear of 436-442 Sydney Road, Coburg - Final decision			
That Council: 1. Notes the feedback received in relation to the proposed sale of Council land at the rear of 436-442 Sydney Rd, Coburg. 2. Endorses the proposed sale of the land by private treaty to the owner of the neighbouring properties at 436-442 Sydney Rd, Coburg. 3. Writes to all those who provided feedback thanking them for their feedback and informing them of Council's decision. 4. Authorises the CEO or their delegate to do all things necessary to effect the sale.			
Progress Comment Officers are currently working with the owner of the neighbouring properties and their solicitor to finalise the sale.			

Director Place and Environment	Council 13/05/2026	Target Date: 27/05/2026	Further Report: No
7.5	Evaluation Trial Road Closure - Barrow Street, Coburg		
That Council:			
1. Continues the Barrow Street road closure trial for a further 12 months to allow further development and community engagement on the Harding Street (Streets for People) concept design to address the impacts of the road closure trial on surrounding streets. 2. Implements safety modifications to the Coburg Street/Sheffield Street (Coburg) intersection. In addition, ensures that traffic counting is undertaken at the narrower southern end of Coburg Street in addition to other parts of Coburg St, and assess if any traffic calming measures are needed at the southern end.			
Progress Comment			
Further designs have been prepared for the Coburg/Sheffield Street intersection. These modifications have been included in draft designs for the Harding/Munro Streetscape improvement designs and will be subject to further community consultation.			

Director Place and Environment	Council 13/05/2026	Target Date: 27/05/2026	Further Report: No
7.1	Proposed Amendment C239mbek – Brunswick and Coburg Activity Centres Heritage Project: Decision Gateway 1		
That Council:			
1. Adopts the Brunswick and Coburg Activity Centre Heritage Study: Stage 2 Final Report (GML Heritage, 2025) at Attachment 1 as the general basis for Amendment C239mbek to the Merri-bek Planning Scheme (Amendment).			

2. Notes the Brunswick and Coburg Activity Centres Heritage Study Peer Review (Lovell Chen, 2025) at Attachment 2 and the Brunswick and Coburg Activity Centre Heritage Project: Summary of findings and officer recommendations report at Attachment 3.
3. As the planning authority, applies to the Minister for Planning (Minister) under section 8A of the Planning and Environment Act 1987 (Vic) (Act), for authorisation to prepare the Amendment.
4. If authorisation is received:
 - a) Authorises the Director Place and Environment to make changes to the draft Amendment documentation at Attachment 5 as required prior to exhibition of the Amendment to correct any administrative errors and to meet any conditions the Minister imposes through authorisation.
 - b) Endorses, for the purpose of exhibition, the draft Amendment documentation at Attachment 5, subject to any changes required under (4)(a) above.
 - c) Exhibits the Amendment in accordance with sections 17, 18 and 19 of the Act.

Progress Comment

Council officers have sought authorisation and is awaiting response from the Minister for Planning.

Director Business Transformation	Council 13/05/2026	Target Date: 9/12/2026	Further Report: Yes
7.9	Draft Financial Management Policy		
That Council:			
1. Adopts the Finance Management Policy (provided as Attachment 1 to this report) 2. Subject to point (1) approval, revokes the following policies which are now incorporated into the Finance Management Policy: a) Investment Policy b) Loan and Borrowing Policy c) Financial Reserves and Capital Management Policy			

3. Notes that a report on the Fossil Fuel Divestment Strategy that accounts for the Finance Management Policy will be brought to Council before the end of 2026.

Progress Comment

The updated Finance Management Policy is now available on Council's website, and the policies listed in item 2 have been revoked. A report on the Fossil Fuel Divestment Strategy will be brought to Council before the end of 2026.

Director Place and Environment

Council 10/06/2026

Target Date:**Further Report:**

24/06/2026

No

7.3**Places for People Plan 2026**

That Council:

1. Notes the findings of the community engagement on the draft Places for People Plan.
2. Adopts Places for People (Attachment 1) for implementation.
3. Changes page 27 of the Places for People (Attachment 1) to identify the Pascoe Vale Road opportunity as a high priority project and provides a report back to council by December 2026 with recommendations for public realm improvements to the pedestrian areas of Pascoe Vale Road.
4. Revokes the Shopping Strip Renewal Policy 2015–2025 and notes that it is superseded by and incorporated into Places for People Plan.
5. Authorises the Director Place and Environment to make minor changes to the policy document for publication, as required.

Progress Comment

Report to be scheduled for December 2026 on the outcome of the investigation on Pascoe Vale Road.

Director Place and Environment	Council 10/06/2026	Target Date: 30/08/2027	Further Report: No
7.1	Kerbside Waste Reform - Fortnightly Rubbish		
That Council:			
1.	Notes that the proposed introduction of a fortnightly rubbish collection service is the last stage of Council's major kerbside waste reform program adopted by Council in 2021, following previous implementation of booked hard waste and the four-bin kerbside service.		
2.	Notes that a fortnightly rubbish service would save ratepayers at least \$16 million over the next decade when compared to a weekly rubbish service.		
3.	Thanks the 3,000 households and businesses in parts of Hadfield and Brunswick/Brunswick West that took part in the trial of fortnightly rubbish.		
4.	Notes the evaluation findings from the fortnightly rubbish Trial during July–December 2025, which reduced waste sent to landfill by 19 per cent and almost doubled the amount of food waste recovered via food and garden organics (FOGO) bins.		
5.	Thanks the community for almost 2,000 contributions received during eight weeks of community engagement about fortnightly rubbish (detailed at Attachment 1).		
6.	Having considered the trial findings, community feedback, Council's adopted policy settings, financial implications, environmental outcomes, equity impacts and implementation requirements, resolves to endorse the transition to a municipality-wide fortnightly rubbish service as standard from July 2027 or as soon as practicable after this date (no later than October 2027), including the policy adjustments, concessions, implementation supports and operational measures outlined in this report. Contacts residents about bin size preferences in early 2027.		
7.	Authorises the Chief Executive Officer to update and release Council's Kerbside Waste Service and Charge Policy to reflect Council's decision and the service adjustments outlined in this report as follows, together with any necessary administrative amendments: a) Increase the standard rubbish bin to 140 litres (instead of 120 litres); b) Increase the maximum volume for rubbish to 480 litres per fortnight (instead of 360 litres in the Trial), with an associated increase in the waste charge multiplier; c) Provide ad hoc rubbish collections for a fee on an as-needed basis (instead of an annual fee option for ongoing weekly rubbish collections); d) Rename the Financial Hardship concession to a Pensioner Concession, applicable to rubbish and FOGO bins, and streamline eligibility to align with the Municipal Rates Concession;		

- e) Provide weekly rubbish collection service, with adjusted charge, for large apartment buildings (e.g. 20+ households) where Council deems that fortnightly rubbish is not viable; and
 - f) Provide operational discretion for delegated Officers to make manageable service adjustments for case-by-case exceptional circumstances, including on compassionate grounds.
8. Further to point 7 above, introduces additional measures to make fortnightly waste collection easier for households, including:
- a) Expanding the large family concession to be a "larger household" concession, with any households with six or more residents eligible for a free upsize.
 - b) Introducing a concession for households that foster multiple animals on an ongoing basis (three or more animals).
9. Requests Council officers to contact Merri-be real estate agents to encourage them to distribute information to renters about the kerbside service in Merri-bek, including:
- i) Circumstances when renters are able to order free larger bins without needing their landlord's permission (if they are eligible for a concession).
 - ii) Circumstances where renters will need the property owner's permission to change a bin size or service level.
10. By September 2026, receives a briefing on further measures that could make fortnightly waste collection easier for households, including:
- a) The provision of free paper bags for kitchen caddies.
 - b) Further incentives to reduce nappies in landfill, including exploring expanding existing reuseable nappy subsidies, and a subsidised nappy recycling program.
11. Develop and implement an evidence-based program to encourage greater use of FOGO. This would include:
- a) Analysis of current FOGO use (bin lift rates, household types not using FOGO and the reasons why not).
 - b) Extensive promotion of the use of the FOGO bin – including information about the need to reduce landfill (landfill capacity), and the environmental and cost benefits of removing FOGO from the landfill bin.

Progress Comment

Items 1,2,3,4,5. Noted and completed.

Item 6. Planning for this item is in progress.

Items 7, 8, 9, 10, 11. In progress.

Director Place and Environment	Council 10/06/2026	Target Date: 24/06/2026	Further Report: Yes
7.2 Central Coburg updated framework plan and Site A1 Expressions of Interest process			
That Council:			
- Endorses the updated Central Coburg framework (Attachment 1) and development standards (Attachment 2). - Notes how the feedback provided during the engagement has been reflected in the updated Central Coburg framework (Attachment 1) and informed the development standards (Attachment 2). - Publishes the updated Central Coburg framework (Attachment 1) and development standards (Attachment 2) Council's Conversations Merri-bek page. - Authorises the Director Place and Environment to make any minor refinements to the updated Central Coburg framework and development standards. - Receives a report at a future council meeting on accessibility measures and considerations for the Central Coburg plan, and that an accessibility consideration be made at different stages of the project to ensure that no changes get made which make the precinct inaccessible, and authorises the Director Place and Environment to reflect this into the Framework Plan and Design Principles. The accessible assessment needs to consider a wide range of disabilities including but not limited to mobility disabilities, vision impairment, hearing impairment and other disabilities. - Commences an open Expression of Interest ('EOI') process to invite organisations with a local connection to put forward ideas for potential community uses they might develop and deliver on the southern portion of the Council-owned site at 28 Victoria Street, Coburg, with dimensions approximately 26.9m x 45.4m ('Site A1'). - Following the EOI, receives a report confirming next steps for this site, including optimal uses, and a recommended shortlist (subject to suitable EOI(s) being received), that may progress to a potential Request for Information (RFI) process to submit proposals to purchase the site from Council and use it to deliver community services and outcomes. - In accordance with section 114 of the Local Government Act 2020, authorises public notice be posted on Council's website and feedback sought on Council's intention to sell the site to a successful respondent pending Council decisions on the EOI and RFI processes.			

Progress Comment

Actions 1, 2, 3, and 4 have been completed.

Work is underway on items 5 and 6 (with actions 7 and 8 to come after the completion of 6).

Notices of Motion – 18

Director Community	Council 9/08/2023	Target Date: 30/06/2027	Further Report: Yes
8.2 First Nations Advisory Committee			
That Council: 1. Undertakes a review of existing processes associated with Council decision-making (including the formation of Officer recommendations and Notices of Motion) that have an impact on the First Nations community and explore ways to effectively consider and/or refer such matters to the First Nations Advisory Committee and Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation for their advice and feedback, prior to presenting to Council for consideration. 2. In addition, the review would seek input from the First Nations Advisory Committee and Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation at the beginning of the process and on the outcomes of the review prior to presentation to Council. 3. Receives a further report identifying recommendations that can fulfill the objectives mentioned in point 1) above.			
Progress Comment A First People's Strategy as part of the Council Plan will outline how this group will be involved in decisions. There is budget allocation in the draft 2026/27 budget for consideration for this work. A report will be presented in 2027			

Director Place and Environment	Council 13/03/2024	Target Date: 1/12/2026	Further Report: Yes
8.6 Dangers for cyclists and pedestrians at Hudson Street and Victoria Street, Coburg intersection			
That Council:			
1. Receives a report on safety hazards and potential solutions for cyclists and pedestrians at the Hudson Street and Victoria Street, Coburg intersection. 2. Requests officers to take account of potential flow-on effects of additional traffic to Hudson Street and consider the need for potential safety improvements to Hudson Street as part of the Harding/Munro Streets for People project.			
Progress Comments.			
The Harding/Munro Street design scheduled for community consultation in late 2026, which will close out the outstanding action from this decision.			

Acting Director City Infrastructure	Council 12/06/2024	Target Date: 31/12/2026	Further Report: Yes
8.1 Standards for enclosed dog parks			
That Council:			
1. Conducts a review of the standards for enclosed off-lead dog parks with consideration given to: • eliminating gaps in fences, underneath fences and underneath gates that allow tiny dogs to escape • provision of water in both the large dog and small dog sections of the dog park • provision of shade in dog parks, especially in the area where people gather to watch their dogs • latches on gates to be accessible on both sides of the gate for people in wheelchairs			

2. Receives a report on the outcome of the review.

Progress Comment

The Open Space Guidelines are currently under development and are not yet finalised. While the enclosed off-lead dog park standards will be considered for inclusion in the Guidelines, the matters outlined at Item 1 have already been taken into account as part of the recent upgrade of the Gilpin Park Dog Park, including the provision of water and shade for the human and canine users and accessible gates. Once completed, the Guidelines will be provided to members of the Environmental Sustainability and Climate Resilience, Health, Wellbeing and Social Inclusion, and Liveability Advisory Committees for feedback in late 2026.

Director Community

Council 10/07/2024

Target Date:

12/10/2026

Further Report:

Yes

8.2 Recognition of internationally renowned local artist - Destiny Deacon 1956 to 2024

That Council:

1. Pays tribute to the life and work of internationally renowned Merri-bek artist Destiny Deacon.
2. Receives a report with recommendations on the best way to recognise the contribution of Destiny Deacon to art, the First Nations community and the local community. Some suggestions for recognition to be considered include an artist's residency or art prize in Destiny Deacon's name as well as other recommendations.

Progress Comment

Report on this matter is being prepared for a late 2026 Council meeting, following consultation with Destiny's family.

Director Place and Environment	Council 14/08/2024	Target Date:	Further Report:
		31/10/2026	No
8.3 Short Stay Accommodation			
That Council:			
1. Writes again to the Minister for Government Services, Gabrielle Williams MP, noting our earlier request for further detail about the proposed legislative changes in respect to short stay accommodation, observing that significant time has elapsed since the announcement of the measure and expressing concern about the efficacy of the proposed action, if it does not include an annual cap on the number of days a property can be rented on a short-term basis.			
2. Writes to the Minister for Planning raising the important issue of the proliferation of short-stay accommodation and its impact on housing supply in light of the current housing crisis and seeking the Minister's advice and views on the appropriateness of the planning system to address this issue and of any plans to do so as part of the Government's planning reform agenda, as well as advice on any other suggested mechanisms for how State and/or Local Government can regulate the extent to which dwellings are being rented out as short-stay accommodation.			
3. Notes the success other jurisdictions have had in shifting properties back to long-term housing by installing caps on the number of days they can be available for short stay.			
4. Notes the advice provided in the report to the February 2024 Council meeting about the inability to pursue a local law on the basis of the impending legislation and receives a report once more detail is known about the legislation. The report should consider what options there are, particularly in relation to the ability for a local law to impose an annual cap on the number of days a property can be listed as short-stay accommodation and include any advice received from the Minister for Planning.			
Progress Comment			
1. Complete. Letter sent and response received in March 2025.			
2. Complete. Letter sent and response received in December 2024.			
3. Complete. No action required.			
4. In progress. Council Officers are preparing a submission to the state government draft report with proposed planning controls to help councils with regulating short-stay accommodation that was released in April. A report will come to council by late 2026.			

Director Place and Environment	Council 11/09/2024	Target Date:	Further Report:
		30/12/2026	Yes
8.3 Upfield Train Line			
That Council:			
1. Receives a report as soon as practicable that identifies the methodology and cost for a survey of people who live north of Batman station who are also current users of the Upfield Line or who have abandoned using the Upfield line. Such a survey would seek to discover: • why people have abandoned using the Upfield Line • changes people have made to their public transport usage because of the unreliability of the train service for people who live north of Batman station • whether people would resume using the Upfield train if it was duplicated to improve frequency and reduce cancellations • whether people would be attracted to using the Upfield train service if there were one or two extra train stations between Gowrie and Upfield stations. 2. Proposes to our partner Councils in the Northern Alliance of Councils (Banyule, Darebin, Hume, Mitchell Shire, Nillumbik and Whittlesea) that we commission this survey to support advocacy efforts for the Upfield Line duplication and extension.			
Progress Comment			
Work to begin by September 2026, alongside development of the Transport Advocacy Strategy.			

Director Community	Council 12/02/2025	Target Date: 30/10/2026	Further Report: Yes
8.2 Reviving Pascoe Vale Pool			
That Council: 1. Acknowledges the importance of accessible, high quality local pools for all residents in Merri-bek. 2. Recognises that during this Climate Crisis, we have an obligation to take proactive action and ensure that there are spaces for residents to stay cool in increasingly hot summers. 3. Requests Officers provide a report that considers the level of investment required for the refurbishment of Pascoe Vale Pool, with a view to: • Extending opening hours • Improving facilities • Avoiding unexpected maintenance • Increasing sustainability • Advocating to both state and federal levels of government for funding. 4. Revisits the Aquatic and Leisure Strategy for an update.			
Progress Comment Officers are progressing consultations with relevant stakeholders. A report will be presented to Council in late 2026.			

Director Community	Council 12/02/2025	Target Date: 30/10/2026	Further Report: Yes
8.3 Improving safety, cleanliness and wellbeing of community at Victoria Mall			
That Council receives a report by mid-March that considers:			

1. Security

In the interests of public safety, Council extends the current level of Security Services in Victoria Mall with these security services to be trained in and have a focus on de-escalation, for a period of a further 6 months and undertakes a review of the impact of these services within the next 3 months.

2. Cleanliness

Maintains and seeks to increase the cleaning services in the Mall, so that rubbish, tree debris and pigeon droppings are properly managed. In the interests of wellbeing the community should have access to a healthy, hygienic and pleasant public space, that enhances community wellbeing and contributes to a thriving local economy.

3. Community Forum

That Council coordinates a Community Needs and Safety Forum, which is advertised for the public to attend as well as all stakeholders, including Council, traders, service providers, sports clubs, community leaders to have an input into community safety in central Coburg. This forum should consider ways of turning the area in front of the Coburg Library into a community space.

4. Exploring ways to better engage with people displaying dangerous and antisocial behaviour

To keep the community safe, address safety concerns, and reassure shoppers, traders, and the community, Council explores methods for better engaging with people displaying dangerous and antisocial behaviour.

5. Reinstating public seating with back rests and access to shelter in Coburg Mall

In the interests of elderly people, people with mobility issues and others, Council to consider reinstating public seating with back rests in Coburg Mall. Consideration should be given to providing an equivalent amount of public seating to that which was demolished, and some of the new seating to be in front of the library with a table.

Progress Comment

Items 1 and 2 have been actioned.

Item 4 has been actioned and appropriate measures are in place.

Item 3, the community forum, is still to be organised in 2026 to determine further actions, which will include consideration of item 5.

Director Community	Council 14/05/2025	Target Date: 30/12/2026	Further Report: No
8.3 Honouring the Life and Legacy of Joe Sam Luppino			
That Council: 1. Formally recognises and honors the outstanding contribution of Joe Sam Luppino by naming the grandstand at Coburg City Oval the "Joe Sam Luppino Stand". 2. Should this not be deemed suitable, identifies and considers an alternative location or facility within Merri-bek to appropriately commemorate Joe's legacy and service to the community.			
Progress Comment This naming process is currently underway with delivery expected for 2026. This is currently with the Geographic Names Victoria.			

Director Place and Environment	Council 10/09/2025	Target Date: 30/11/2026	Further Report: No
8.9 Urgent Action Required on Road Safety: Recent Fatal Incidents on Moreland Road			
That Council: 1. Recognises two recent deaths on the state-controlled Moreland Road, of a cyclist on 25 August and a skateboarder in mid-May, both caused by motorists. 2. Acknowledges the urgent need for a safer road environment for vulnerable users along Moreland Road. 3. Writes to the Minister for Transport and relevant Department of Transport and Planning (DTP) officials to request: a) An immediate safety audit of Moreland Road.			

- b) Implementation of priority interventions at Murdock Street, Gordon Street, and other high-risk locations.
- c) That the State government fund and deliver safety enhancements including pedestrian crossings, speed reductions, infrastructure upgrades, safe cycling infrastructure and road user awareness campaigns.

Progress Comment

Supporting documentation is being prepared to inform requests for road safety interventions and priority crossing investment on state roads. This work will inform the letter to the Minister for Roads and Road Safety.

Supporting documentation has been prepared to inform councils road safety plan. The ministerial letter will be sent upon the completion of the draft road safety plan in late 2026.

Director Community	Council 11/02/2026	Target Date: 30/12/2026	Further Report: Yes
8.2	Council support for community during extreme heat		
That Council:			
- Notes that Merri-bek council recognised that we are in a state of climate emergency in 2018 which obligates council to help develop a climate resilient community through assisting the community to adapt to climate extremes such as extreme heat. - Notes that climate change is causing an increase in the number of extreme heat events, which means that there is a need for more community venues that provide cool centres which are open to all community members - Notes that Merri-bek's libraries and aquatic centres, outdoor pools and Maternal and Child Health Centres are relied on as public venues to provide cool spaces during extreme heat. - Recognises that lack of access to cool spaces is a human rights and equity issue with higher death rates on extreme heat days. This makes extreme heat a life and death issue for many people, especially people from a range of vulnerable communities such as seniors, people with disabilities, First Nations people, young parents with young children and migrant communities.			

5. Receives a report which investigates:
 - a) potential additional community centres such as Neighbourhood Houses which could be cool centres to offer hot day activities in a cool environment. Such centres may need to be funded to install passive cooling such as a misting system and would be open to all community members.
 - b) how to make Merri-bek libraries and other Council venues more suitable to be cool spaces to promote to the community, using a holistic approach so that the spaces aren't just a bare air-conditioned room but have activities, programs and engagement.
 - c) availability of a health worker in a cool centre to monitor people's temperature
 - d) expanding the use of Merri-bek's community bus to transport elderly, isolated and vulnerable people to cool spaces;
 - e) options for a cool space in Merri-bek such as CB Smith Reserve Fawkner where there are a number of Council facilities in close proximity to each other such as the Fawkner Leisure Centre, the Fawkner Library, the Fawkner Community Hall, Fawkner Community and CB Smith Sport Pavillion as well as a park.
 - f) extension of low-income subsidy scheme for energy efficiency and solar panels
 - g) that councils air conditioning infrastructure is maintained and fit for purpose across all of its workplaces and facilities.
6. Advocates to state government for a low income subsidy scheme for people to install external blinds and secure window screens to mitigate against extreme heat.
7. Undertakes some targeted community consultation about what the community needs in order to deal with extreme heat. Such consultation could target seniors groups, domestic violence services, people with disabilities, migrant communities, homeless people, young parents with small children and other community organisations as well as open community consultation.
8. Considers a budget allocation in the 2026-27 Council budget for community initiatives to assist community centres such as neighbourhood houses to provide cool spaces for the community during extreme heat as well as targeted upgrades to make Council facilities able to be used as cool spaces.
9. Approaches the State Government about the potential for joint council and state government funding for such initiatives.

Progress Comment

A report on this matter will be provided to Council for consideration in the second half of 2026.

Director Place and Environment	Council 11/03/2026	Target Date: 24/11/2026	Further Report: Yes
8.2 Laneway beautification program			
That Council receives a report on a project to scope a laneway beautification program, which could: 1. Identify laneways and roundabouts to beautify. 2. Explore laneways and roundabouts that can be better activated. 3. Identify ways to encourage laneway and roundabout greening projects in appropriate neighbourhoods.			
Progress Comment A report will be presented to the November 2026 council meeting.			

Director Place and Environment	Council 13/05/2026	Target Date: 9/12/2026	Further Report: Yes
8.1 Footbridge across Merri-Creek in southern Fawkner			
That Council receives a report this year on what it would cost to determine service need and, pending that, undertakes a feasibility study, for a footbridge across the Merri Creek between Fawkner and Reservoir, near Lorne Street, Fawkner with a view to consideration in the 2027-28 budget process. The scope would consider: 1. Exploring options for external funding; and 2. Delivering an appropriate stakeholder consultation program which might include: City of Darebin; Merri Creek Management Committee; State Government; Victoria Walks; Bicycle Victoria; Walk on Merri-bek; Merri-bek Bicycle Users Group; Darebin Bicycle Users Group; Streets Alive Darebin.			

Progress Comment

A report is scheduled for the December 2026 council meeting.

Director Community

Council 13/05/2026

Target Date:

Further Report:

12/08/2026

Yes

8.4

Place-Based Community Development Program for Fawkner

That Council:

1. Notes the success of the Place-based Community Outreach – Fawkner Pilot program which has an emphasis on helping communities, especially disadvantaged and multicultural communities, to become sustainable and climate resilient.
2. Receives a report by August 2026 on options for an expanded Place-Based Community Development Program for Fawkner, including possible objectives, scope and cost implications, with consideration to be given to including a sustainable communities aspect.

Progress Comment

Officers working through the options and a report will be presented to Council in August 2026

Director Community	Council 13/05/2026	Target Date: 3/09/2026	Further Report: No
8.2 Merri-bek Creatives Workshop			
That Council facilitates a networking event at Council designed to hear from, support and help creatives to connect with each other and their common practices in the arts community.			
Progress Comment Event is scheduled to run in September 2026.			

Director Community	Council 13/05/2026	Target Date: 9/12/2026	Further Report: Yes
8.3 Open Fawkner Outdoor Pool Year-Round			
That Council receives a report which explores options for keeping the Fawkner Leisure Centre 50 metre outdoor pool from 1 September 2026, including for early morning lap swimming, with a view to have the outdoor pool open all-year-round.			
Progress Comment A report on pool opening hours will be presented to Council in late 2026.			

Director Place and Environment	Council 13/05/2026	Target Date:	Further Report:
		9/12/2026	Yes
8.5			
Climate Advocacy			
That Council:			
1. Notes:			
a)			
That people all around Australia, including Merri-bek, are experiencing increasing impacts of climate change, including heatwaves and extreme storms, placing pressure on local infrastructure, services and community wellbeing.			
b)			
The financial and social impacts of these climate events on households, businesses, and community organisations, already experiencing a cost-of-living crisis			
c)			
The rising costs to Council budgets as a result of climate change, including costs associated with disaster response, infrastructure repair and resilience upgrades;			
d)			
The existing constraints on local government budgets and shortfalls in existing government grants, meaning councils are ill-equipped to support residents and businesses without significantly compromising budget and resources.			
2.			
Writes to the Federal Minister for Climate Change and Energy, Minister for Local government, and Treasurer, and the Victorian Local Government Minister and Treasurer, advocating for more action and resources to help communities, households, and local governments tackle the intense challenges of climate change and a just transition in the community.			
3.			
Receives a report scoping a project to develop options to ensure adequate funding to manage the increasing costs of extreme weather events and other climate impacts on our communities, including appropriate means of liaising with and advocating to other tiers of government around funding options.			
Progress Comment			
1.			
Noted. Complete.			
2.			
In progress			
3.			
In progress			

Director Place and Environment	Council 10/06/2026	Target Date: 24/06/2026	Further Report: No
8.1	Glenroy Pascoe Vale Road Activity Centre Community Safety and Revitalisation		
That Council:			
1.	Recognises the importance of revitalising and beautifying Pascoe Vale Road (a State Road) within the Glenroy Activity Centre to improve visual appeal, public amenity, strengthen community pride, increase perceptions of safety and support local economic growth.		
2.	Recognises ongoing community and trader concerns regarding safety, amenity, and cleanliness throughout the precinct, and acknowledges the necessity for collaborative, multi-stakeholder approaches to revitalisation between Council, State Government, traders, property owners, and key stakeholders.		
3.	Requests officers undertake an audit of the Glenroy Pascoe Vale Road Activity Centre to identify priority maintenance, beautification, safety and activation works, including opportunities for Tricky Spot tree plantings, damaged bollards and pedestrian railings, graffiti removal and pressure cleaning requirements, and report back to Council by November 2026 outlining the findings, proposed priority actions and recommendations for further improvements.		
4.	Requests officers incorporate Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles in all future design and delivery works within the activity centre, with a view to improving community safety and fostering a welcoming, pedestrian-friendly environment.		
5.	Continues to engage with traders and landlords and property owners to address concerns related to shopfront cleanliness and presentation, and support activation of shopfronts to create a more vibrant and inviting streetscape.		
6.	The Mayor writes to Coles (and the relevant state MP), seeking their collaboration in improving the amenity and safety of their carpark, including enhanced landscaping, lighting, maintenance, and a more attractive community environment.		
7.	The Mayor writes to the Minister for Roads and Road Safety and the local State Member advocating for streetscape and infrastructure improvements along Pascoe Vale Road as a key activity centre.		
Progress Comment			
Officers have commenced investigations including undertaking a women's safety site walk facilitated by Monash University and XYX lab. A report will be presented to Council in late 2026.			

7.7 GOVERNANCE REPORT - AUGUST 2026 - CYCLICAL REPORT

Acting Director Business Transformation, Yvonne Callanan

Governance and Strategy

Officer Recommendation

That Council:

1. Notes the summary of minutes from Advisory Committees at Attachment 1 to this report, as follows:
 - a) Friends of Aileu Community Committee held 16 June 2026.
 - b) Environmental Sustainability and Climate Resilience Advisory Committee held 23 June 2026.
2. Notes the Records of Meetings, at Attachment 2 to this report.
3. Notes responses to questions taken on notice during Public Question Time at the 13 May, 10 June and 8 July 2026 Council meetings, provided at Attachment 3 to this report.
4. In the exercise of the powers conferred by section 147(4) of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* and section 313 of the *Local Government Act 2020*:
 - a) Appoints and authorises Council staff referred to in the Instrument at Attachment 4 to this report, as set out in the instrument.
 - b) Determines the instrument comes into force immediately, the common seal of Council is affixed to the instrument, remains in force until Council determines to vary or revoke it, and revokes the previous instrument executed on 26 February 2026.
 - c) Authorises the affixing of Council's common seal.
5. Endorses the following motions (provided at Attachment 5) for submission to the next Municipal Association of Victoria State Council meeting:
 - a) Advocating for the continuation of the Commonwealth Home Support Program
 - b) Increase Living Libraries funding.
6. Notes the regional advocacy activities undertaken through the Northern Councils Alliance and Melbourne 9.
7. Endorses the regional advocacy priorities and advocacy actions undertaken by the Northern Councils Alliance and Melbourne 9.

REPORT

Executive Summary

The Governance report is prepared as a monthly standing report to Council which provides a single reporting platform for a range of statutory compliance, transparency, and governance related matters. This report includes:

- A summary of the minutes of Advisory Committees.
- Records of Meetings, with a recommendation that Council notes the records.
- Responses to Public Question Time items taken on notice at the 13 May, 10 June and 8 July 2026 Council meetings, with a recommendation that Council notes the responses.

- A recommendation that Council appoints and authorises the Council officers referred to in the Instrument of Appointment and Authorisation (*Planning and Environment Act 1987*).
- Councillor initiated proposed motions for Council's consideration and endorsement to the Municipal Association of Victoria State Council meeting, on the following topics:
 - Advocating for the continuation of the Commonwealth Home Support Program
 - Increase Living Libraries funding.
- An update of regional advocacy activity undertaken through the Northern Councils Alliance and Melbourne 9, and an update of formal advocacy priorities of the Northern Councils Alliance and Melbourne 9.

Previous Council Decisions

Governance Report – February 2026 – Cyclical Report – 11 February 2026

That Council:

...

10. *In the exercise of the powers conferred by section 147(4) of the Planning and Environment Act 1987 and section 313 of the Local Government Act 2020:*
 - a) *Appoints and authorises Council staff referred to in the Instrument at Attachment 4 to this report, as set out in the instrument.*
 - b) *Determines the instrument comes into force immediately, the common seal of Council is affixed to the instrument, remains in force until Council determines to vary or revoke it, and revokes the previous Instrument executed on 1 December 2025.*
 - c) *Authorises the affixing of Council's common seal.*

...

Governance Report – August 2025 – Cyclical Report – 13 August 2025

That Council:

...

4. *Endorses the following motions (provided as Attachment 4) for submission to the next Municipal Association of Victoria State Council meeting:*
 - a) *Emergency Services and Volunteer Fund*
 - b) *Keep in-home aged care services in Council hands*
 - c) *Protect the future of our public pools.*

...

1. Policy Context

The *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act) and the Governance Rules set out the requirements for keeping and reporting records of meetings held under the auspices of Council.

Council's Governance Rules contains provision which enable the Chairperson to take a questions On Notice, with a considered written response being provided to the questioner, in circumstances including where the question requires information that is either not available or accessible at the time of that meeting, or where the time allowed for Public Question Time has elapsed.

Authorisation of planning officers under the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* is done in accordance with said Act.

The Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) is the legislated peak body for local government in Victoria. Council appoints a representative to the MAV to participate at, amongst other things, the two State Council Meetings held annually, and vote in accordance with Council's policy positions.

The Merri-bek Council Plan 2025-29 identifies advocacy as a core function of Council. Key advocacy priorities include:

- securing investment in community infrastructure and services
- addressing the social determinants of health
- increasing social and affordable housing
- influencing planning reform
- supporting arts and cultural development
- advancing climate action
- promoting community safety and inclusion.

The Plan commits Council to coordinating advocacy efforts with community members, peak bodies and other levels of government to pursue funding, policy change and projects that deliver positive community outcomes.

Under Section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020 (Vic)*, councils must give effect to the overarching governance principles, including seeking collaboration with other councils, governments and statutory bodies. The Act further requires councils to consider regional, state and national plans and policies in strategic planning and decision-making. Regional advocacy activities support Council's compliance with these governance principles.

2. Background

The Governance report is prepared as a monthly report to Council to provide a single reporting platform for a range of statutory compliance, transparency, and governance related matters.

In accordance with best practice principles and good governance practice, and to ensure compliance with the requirements of the Act, this report incorporates matters including reporting of Advisory Committees, records of meetings held under the auspices of Council, items relating to the delegation of Council powers and duties, and policy and strategy reporting.

3. Issues

Advisory Committee minutes

A summary of the minutes of Advisory Committees is provided at **Attachment 1** for Council's information:

- Friends of Aileu Community Committee held 16 June 2026
- Environmental Sustainability and Climate Resilience Advisory Committee held 23 June 2026.

Records of Meetings held under the auspices of Council

Records of matters discussed at meetings organised or hosted by Merri-bek that involve Councillors and Council officers are kept in accordance with the Governance Rules.

Meeting Records must include meeting attendees, including organisations represented by external presenters; the title of matters discussed; and any conflicts of interests disclosed and whether the declarant of a conflict of interests recused themselves from the meeting.

Some examples include Councillor Briefings, meetings with residents/developers/clients/organisations/Government departments/statutory authorities and consultations.

Records of Meetings received since the previous Council Meeting are presented at **Attachment 2** as follows:

- Central Coburg Oversight Committee – 1 July 2026
- Councillor Briefing – 6 July 2026
- Councillor Briefing – 13 July 2026
- Planning Briefing – 20 July 2026
- Councillor Briefing – 27 July 2026

Responses to Questions taken On Notice at Council meetings

At Council Meetings, questions are taken On Notice during Public Question Time, where persons submitting questions are not in attendance or where the maximum allowable time for public questions has elapsed.

Questions taken On Notice are provided with a written response following the meeting for which they are submitted and reported to Council at the next practicable meeting. The questions are recorded in the meeting minutes.

The responses to questions taken On Notice at **Attachment 3** to this report relate to questions from 13 May, 10 June and 8 July 2026 Council meetings regarding:

- Festivals Refresh
- Kerbside Waste Reform–Fortnightly Rubbish
- Coburg High School Site.

Appointment and Authorisation to enforce the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*

The appointment of Authorised Officers facilitates the administration and enforcement of any Act, regulations or local laws which relate to the functions and powers of the Council. Authorisations are made to specific Council officers in accordance with their roles and responsibilities.

In accordance with the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*, Authorised Officers can only be appointed by the Council as the Act prohibits delegation of the power to appoint Authorised Officers.

Council staff can only take action to enforce provisions of legislation where they have been properly and lawfully authorised. The authorisation proposed appoints the staff member as an Authorised Officer which will enable that Officer to take action and commence proceedings against people who have breached permit conditions or otherwise not complied with the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* or regulations.

The Instrument of Appointment and Authorisation at **Attachment 4** is a routine, administrative update to ensure all Planning staff have a correct and up-to-date authorisation. Updates are reviewed internally each quarter to ensure staff are authorised. The most recent update was presented to Council at its February 2026 meeting. Since the last update, one additional officer has been added to the authorisation. Two officers no longer employed at Council have been removed.

On the updated Instrument coming into force, the previous Instrument executed 26 February 2026 will be revoked.

Municipal Association of Victoria State Council Meeting

The Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) State Council meets twice a year to consider matters of state-wide significance.

At its meeting in December 2025, Council appointed the Mayor Cr Abboud, with Cr Pulford as substitute, as Merri-bek's representative to the MAV.

Motions

Motions must have state-wide significance or relevance across the Victorian local government sector and be related to current issues within the City of Merri-bek. Motions already adopted by the State Council remain active until they are completed, and the MAV has advised motions seeking the same outcomes as have been previously adopted will not be considered as complying with the criteria.

The State Council Meeting is scheduled to be held on 23 October 2026. Councils must submit motions no later than midnight on Monday 24 August 2026.

The proposed motions have been prepared based on suggestions from Councillors and are provided in **Attachment 5**, for Council's consideration and endorsement in relation to:

- Advocating for the continuation of the Commonwealth Home Support Program
- Increase Living Libraries funding.

Regional Advocacy Update

Northern Councils Alliance

The Northern Councils Alliance (NCA), which includes the Councils of Banyule, Darebin, Hume, Merri-bek, Mitchell, Nillumbik and Whittlesea, continued to coordinate regional advocacy and collaboration across Melbourne's north throughout 2026. A key focus was the development and endorsement of a unified advocacy agenda ahead of the 2026 State Election. NCA Mayor and CEO meetings were held on:

- 26 February 2026
- 30 April 2026
- 23 July 2026.

At the February 2026 Mayors and CEOs meeting, members endorsed the NCA's state election advocacy priorities and discussed the NCA's broader advocacy campaign activities for 2026. The alliance also resolved not to undertake its traditional Canberra delegation in 2026 and endorsed sending correspondence to relevant Members of Parliament regarding the status of the Northern Rail Plan.

In April 2026, the meeting highlighted the strategic importance of growth area planning, particularly the Cloverton Metropolitan Activity Centre and surrounding growth corridor, noting the significant infrastructure and service demands associated with projected population growth.

The April meeting recognised the contribution of the City of Whittlesea in leading regional work on both the Bus Network Review and Electric Vehicle Transition Report, which were acknowledged as important pieces of work supporting NCA advocacy objectives.

At the July 2026 meeting, members received a presentation from RedBridge on analysis relating to the 2026 State Election, supporting the NCA's election advocacy activities and strategic positioning. Councils also continued to share information about regional challenges and opportunities, including transport, health and human services planning.

NCA Advocacy Priorities

The NCA's advocacy program is centred on addressing the significant infrastructure, transport, health and economic challenges associated with rapid population growth across Melbourne's north. The NCA's current advocacy priorities are:

- **Upfield Rail Line Improvements:** duplication of the line between Gowrie and Upfield, extension and electrification to Wallan, and improved connectivity to support growing outer northern communities.
- **Improved Bus Services and Connectivity:** a comprehensive review of the bus network, stronger east-west connections, improved SmartBus services and better links to employment, education and health precincts.
- **Planning for an Outer North Hospital:** commencement of planning and land acquisition for a new major hospital at Cloverton to meet increasing healthcare demand across the region.
- **Hume Freeway Upgrades:** triplication of the freeway and targeted improvements at key congestion points to support commuters, freight movement and economic growth.
- **Outer Metropolitan Ring Road (OMR/E6):** planning, corridor protection and future delivery of the OMR/E6 transport corridor to support freight, growth and regional connectivity.
- **Northern Trails Network:** implementation of a 10-year program to complete more than 25 connected walking, cycling and riding trails across the north.
- **Expansion of the Inclusive Employment Program (IEP):** investment to expand employment opportunities for people experiencing barriers to workforce participation.

Advocacy actions undertaken included:

- Endorsing a coordinated advocacy platform for the 2026 State Election.
- Undertaking a regional advocacy campaign focused on transport, health and growth infrastructure priorities.
- Preparing and updating regional advocacy materials and key messages for use with governments, stakeholders and candidates.
- Advocating for progress on the Northern Rail Plan, including endorsement of correspondence to state and federal MPs.
- Promoting evidence-based advocacy through regional research and strategic projects, including the Bus Network Review, Electric Vehicle Transition Report and community engagement on transport and infrastructure needs.
- Supporting regional collaboration on major growth-area planning initiatives, particularly Cloverton and the outer north growth corridor, to strengthen future transport, health and service investment outcomes.

Melbourne 9

The Melbourne 9 council group (the M9) includes the councils of Melbourne, Darebin, Hobsons Bay, Maribyrnong, Merri-bek, Moonee Valley, Port Phillip, Stonnington and Yarra. The M9 has focused on advancing a coordinated advocacy program ahead of the Victorian State Election, centred on community safety, infrastructure for growth and transport connectivity. Recent M9 Mayor and CEO Meetings were held on:

- 13 March 2026
- 23 July 2026.

Key work included the delivery of the M9 Safer Communities Roundtable, which brought together councils, Victoria Police and community service organisations to identify shared responses to community safety challenges and inform regional advocacy priorities. A dedicated Safer Communities Working Group was established to progress this work.

M9 also progressed its Infrastructure for Growth agenda, seeking formal recognition of inner Melbourne as a growth region. The nine inner-city councils are experiencing rapid and sustained population growth- the average growth rate for the M9 region is 3.22%, well above the State average of 2.14% in the same period. While traditionally viewed as 'established areas', M9 is set to take on a quarter of the State's projected growth by 2051. This is equal to the anticipated growth for councils currently identified as 'growth areas'. To support this objective, M9 commissioned an independent Funding, Growth and Liveability Gap Analysis to examine future growth pressures, infrastructure requirements and funding gaps across the region.

Throughout the year, M9 engaged with key stakeholders including State Government Ministers, the Department of Transport and Planning, the Department of Treasury and Finance, Infrastructure Victoria and other advocacy organisations. Discussions focused on growth planning, infrastructure funding, planning reform, transport connectivity and service delivery. M9 also participated in the Federal Inquiry into Local Government Funding and Fiscal Sustainability, advocating for funding arrangements that better reflect councils' growing responsibilities.

Additional work included advocacy on:

- Circular economy and waste issues, including regional collaboration on waste reform, resource recovery and implementation challenges affecting councils.
- Nitrous oxide regulation and disposal, including calls for clearer controls, education and safe disposal pathways to reduce community harms and council waste impacts.
- Community safety partnerships, including stronger coordination between councils, Victoria Police, health agencies and community services to respond to complex local safety issues.
- Planning frameworks for data centres, including advocacy for clearer policy settings and greater local government input into siting, infrastructure and amenity impacts and ensuring local government is formally included in planning and consultation processes.

M9 Advocacy Priorities

M9's 2025-26 Advocacy Roadmap identified three primary advocacy priorities designed to influence State Government policy and funding decisions ahead of the 2026 Victorian State Election.

- **Community Safety**

M9 is advocating for a collaborative approach between local government, Victoria Police, health agencies and community service providers to address issues including mental health, homelessness, alcohol and other drugs, crime prevention and community resilience. M9 seeks stronger partnerships, improved coordination and increased investment in preventative and early-intervention services.

- **Infrastructure for Growth**

M9 is advocating for formal recognition of the region as an inner-metropolitan growth area. The alliance argues that while the region will accommodate a significant share of Victoria's future population growth, it does not currently receive access to growth-area funding streams. M9 is seeking dedicated infrastructure funding and stronger partnerships with government to support planning, housing growth, transport links and community infrastructure.

- **Better Transport and Connectivity**

M9 is advocating for a more coordinated approach to transport planning and investment that improves network accessibility and connectivity across inner Melbourne. The focus is on ensuring local government is involved in transport planning decisions, identifying priority transport gaps and securing investment in projects that support growth, accessibility and liveability.

Other emerging areas of advocacy:

- circular economy and waste issues
- nitrous oxide regulation and disposal
- community safety partnerships
- planning frameworks for data centres.

Advocacy Actions Undertaken

Advocacy actions undertaken during 2026 included:

- Hosting the M9 Safer Communities Roundtable and establishing a dedicated Safer Communities Working Group to develop and progress regional advocacy asks.
- Commissioning an independent Funding, Growth and Liveability Gap Analysis to provide an evidence base for recognition of M9 as a growth region and support future funding advocacy.
- Engaging directly with the Department of Transport and Planning, Department of Treasury and Finance, Infrastructure Victoria and other key agencies regarding growth, planning reform, approvals and infrastructure funding.
- Advocating for streamlined planning and approval processes through engagement with DTP and DTF.
- Participating in the Federal Inquiry into Local Government Funding and Fiscal Sustainability to advocate for improved funding arrangements for councils.
- Meeting with the Minister for Local Government, Youth Justice and Corrections to promote M9's growth, transport and community safety priorities.
- Resolving to write to the Minister seeking consideration of M9 as a recognised growth area.
- Developing and progressing advocacy relating to nitrous oxide regulation, disposal and education, including correspondence to the Therapeutic Goods Administration and relevant Ministers.
- Commencing advocacy regarding data centre planning, including preparation of a submission to the Federal inquiry into data centres and advocating for greater local government involvement in planning processes.
- Working collaboratively with sector partners, including the Municipal Association of Victoria, Metropolitan Transport Forum and other regional alliances, to strengthen and align advocacy efforts.

Climate emergency and environmental sustainability implications

There are no climate emergency implications associated with this report.

Human Rights Consideration

The implications of this report have been assessed in accordance with the requirements of the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities. This report does not contravene or limit any of the 20 fundamental human rights as set out in the Charter.

4. Community consultation and engagement

Advisory committees provide a valuable communication and consultation link between the organisation, Councillors, Council and the community.

Affected persons rights and interests

This report and its recommended decision do not affect any person's rights.

5. Officer Declaration of Conflict of Interest

Council officers involved in the preparation of this report have no conflict of interest in the matters listed.

6. Financial and Resources Implications

There are no financial implications associated with this report.

7. Implementation

Governance activity, including reports of Committees to Council, Records of Meetings and Community Question Time items will continue to be reported to Council monthly.

Subject to Council's decision, the next steps include:

- Executing the Instrument of Appointment and Authorisation at **Attachment 4** to enforce the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* and updating the Register of Authorisations for publishing on Council's website.
- Proposed motions will be submitted for the MAV State Council meeting in October 2026.

Attachment/s

1	Reports from Advisory Committees to Council - August 2026	D26/325493
2	Records of Meetings - August 2026	D26/337187
3	Responses to questions taken On Notice - August 2026	D26/325190
4	Instrument of Appointment and Authorisation - Planning and Environment Act 1987 - August 2026	D26/279228
5	Proposed Motions - MAV State Council - October 2026	D26/340205

FRIENDS OF AILEU COMMUNITY COMMITTEE - 16 JUNE 2026

A report of the Friends of Aileu Community Committee meeting held on 16 June 2026 is provided for Council's information.

Councillors appointed to the Friends of Aileu Community Committee:

Merri-bek City Council: Cr Adam Pulford (apology)

Hume City Council: Cr Jarrod Bell (apology) and Cr Naim Kurt (apology)

Key Items Discussed

- Initial observations from Sara Virginia Musarra, who has recently commenced an Australian Volunteer Program assignment supporting the Aileu Municipal Authority in the area of decentralisation. It is anticipated that following completion of her 12-month assignment Sara and the Aileu Administration will identify some areas of further organisational and professional development priorities, for which Friends of Aileu, and Merri-bek and Hume City Councils, may consider providing some support – Sara joined the meeting online from Aileu
- Activities of the Aileu Resource and Training Centre (ARTC), including its extension into providing a tourism experience at its Kadalak Farm in Aileu, and the upcoming professional development, networking and community engagement visit to Merri-bek and Hume by Joaozinho dos Reis, ARTC Program Manager – Joaozinho and Natalia Ximenes, ARTC Director, joined the meeting online
- Financial Report, including recommendations to use Friends of Aileu funds to:
 - Reimburse Timor-Leste technician Januario Muozinho \$US 230 for his visits to Aileu to assess equipment needs in the Aileu Municipal Dental Clinic, undertaking some repairs and providing some replacement items
 - Provide a payment of \$AU 100 to Xavi dos Santos, for his musical performances for Friends of Aileu
- The work of the Oral Health Promotion Working Group
- Proposals by the Aileu Municipal Youth Centre to seek volunteer advisor assignments through the Australian Volunteer Program and the PALMS program
- Anecdotal reports of young Timor-Leste workers being enticed to travel to Australia and Portugal on Tourist Visas, with the promise of being able to work and being provided with another Visa post arrival.

Disclosures of Conflict of Interest

Antoninho dos Santos, Project Administration Support Officer disclosed a general conflict of interest as he is Xavi dos Santos' father and left the meeting while the item dealing with the recognition payment to Xavi was discussed.

Committee Recommendation

There were no recommendations from the committee to Council.

Attachment/s

There are no attachments for this report.

**ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE RESILIENCE
ADVISORY COMMITTEE - 23 JUNE 2026**

A report of the Environmental Sustainability and Climate Resilience Advisory Committee meeting held on 23 June 2026 is provided for Council's information.

Councillors appointed to the Committee: Cr Iwasaki.

Key Items Discussed

- Victorian embedded network reforms and the importance of apartment residents sharing feedback and energy billing data to inform the reform process.
- Ideas for community engagement to support the rollout of fortnightly rubbish collection.
- Community education and preparedness for extreme heat events, particularly for apartment residents and other vulnerable community members.

Disclosures of Conflict of Interest

No conflict of interest was disclosed at the meeting.

Committee Recommendation

There were no recommendations from the committee to Council.

Attachment/s

There are no attachments for this report.

Record of Meeting

Meeting: Central Coburg Oversight Committee

Date: 1 July 2026

Meeting time: 3:00pm



This Record is kept in accordance with the Governance Rules adopted by Council.

Rule 9.1 provides that a record of the matters discussed at all **Hearing of Submission Meetings, Advisory Committee Meetings and Councillor Briefings** organised or hosted by Council will be kept.

The record will include the attendees at the meeting, including the organisations represented by external presenters, the title of matters discussed and any conflicts of interest disclosed and whether the person with the conflict of interest left the meeting.

Attendees	
Councillors	Cr Nat Abboud, Mayor Cr Jay Iwasaki Cr Liz Irvin
Apologies	Cr Chris Miles Cr Helen Politis
Council Staff	Kate McCaughy, CEO Pene Winslade, Director Place and Environment Eamonn Fennessy, Director Community Peter Sagar, Program Director Central Coburg Lisa Dempster, Manager Cultural Development
External participants	Nil

Items discussed	Conflict disclosed by, general or material and the nature	Left meeting
1 Precinct Business Case Framing	Nil	

Name and title of Council officer completing record: Peter Sagar, Program Director Central Coburg.

This form is kept in accordance with the Information Privacy Principles and Merri-bek City Council's Privacy Policy and practices as stated on Merri-bek's [website](#).

Record of Meeting

Meeting: Councillor Briefing

Date: 6 July 2026

Meeting time: 6.00pm – 8.00pm



This Record is kept in accordance with the Governance Rules adopted by Council.

Rule 9.1 provides that a record of the matters discussed at all **Hearing of Submission Meetings, Advisory Committee Meetings and Councillor Briefings** organised or hosted by Council will be kept.

The record will include the attendees at the meeting, including the organisations represented by external presenters, the title of matters discussed and any conflicts of interest disclosed and whether the person with the conflict of interest left the meeting.

Attendees	
Councillors	Cr Nat Abboud, Mayor Cr Jay Iwasaki Cr Helen Politis Cr Ella Svensson Cr Helen Davidson, Deputy Mayor Cr Liz Irvin Cr Chris Miles Cr Adam Pulford
Apologies	Cr Oscar Yildiz JP Cr Sue Bolton Cr Katerine Theodosis
Council Staff	Kate McCaughey, Chief Executive Officer Sue Vujcevic, Director Business Transformation Greg Rodwell, Acting Director City Infrastructure Eamonn Fennessy, Director Community Pene Winslade, Director Place and Environment Yvonne Callanan, Manager Governance and Strategy
External participants	Nil.

Items discussed		Conflict disclosed by, general or material and the nature	Left meeting
1	Council meeting agenda	-	-
2	Confidential property matter	-	-
3	General business	-	-
4	Confidential matter	-	-

Name and title of Council officer completing record: Sue Vujcevic, Director Business Transformation

This form is kept in accordance with the Information Privacy Principles and Merri-bek City Council's Privacy Policy and practices as stated on Merri-bek's [website](#).

Record of Meeting

Meeting: Councillor Briefing

Date: 13 July 2026

Meeting time: 6.00pm – 8.00pm



This Record is kept in accordance with the Governance Rules adopted by Council.

Rule 9.1 provides that a record of the matters discussed at all **Hearing of Submission Meetings, Advisory Committee Meetings and Councillor Briefings** organised or hosted by Council will be kept.

The record will include the attendees at the meeting, including the organisations represented by external presenters, the title of matters discussed and any conflicts of interest disclosed and whether the person with the conflict of interest left the meeting.

Attendees	
Councillors	Cr Nat Abboud, Mayor Cr Jay Iwasaki Cr Helen Politis Cr Ella Svensson Cr Sue Bolton Cr Helen Davidson, Deputy Mayor Cr Chris Miles Cr Adam Pulford Cr Katherine Theodosis
Apologies	Cr Oscar Yildiz JP Cr Liz Irvin
Council Staff	Kate McCaughey, Chief Executive Officer Sue Vujcevic, Director Business Transformation Greg Rodwell, Acting Director City Infrastructure Eamonn Fennessy, Director Community Pene Winslade, Director Place and Environment Alayna Chapman, Unit Manager Strategic Planning Caden McCarthy, Manager City Design and Economy Danielle Pepyat, Manager Amenity and Compliance Jemma Wightman, Chief Financial Officer Seamus Lowe, Unit Manager Property Christina Grayland, Acting Manager Community Wellbeing
External participants	Managing Director, Stubbs Consulting

Items discussed	Conflict disclosed by, general or material and the nature	Left meeting
1 C236mbek – DCP 2.0 Decision Gateway 2	-	-
2 Local Law	-	-
3 Update - Confidential Property Matters	-	-
4 Wurundjeri Woi-Wurung Native Title Claim & proposed Special Meeting (Monday 20 July)	-	-

This form is kept in accordance with the Information Privacy Principles and Merri-bek City Council's Privacy Policy and practices as stated on Merri-bek's [website](#).

Items discussed		Conflict disclosed by, general or material and the nature	Left meeting
5	CEO/Organisational Update	-	-

Name and title of Council officer completing record: Sue Vujcevic, Director Business Transformation

This form is kept in accordance with the Information Privacy Principles and Merri-bek City Council's Privacy Policy and practices as stated on Merri-bek's [website](#).

Record of Meeting

Meeting: Planning Briefing

Date: 20 July 2026

Meeting time: 6.10pm



This Record is kept in accordance with the Governance Rules adopted by Council.

Rule 9.1 provides that a record of the matters discussed at all **Hearing of Submission Meetings, Advisory Committee Meetings** and **Councillor Briefings** organised or hosted by Council will be kept.

The record will include the attendees at the meeting, including the organisations represented by external presenters, the title of matters discussed and any conflicts of interest disclosed and whether the person with the conflict of interest left the meeting.

Attendees	
Councillors	Cr Nat Abboud, Mayor Cr Sue Bolton Cr Jay Iwasaki Cr Helen Politis Cr Ella Svensson Cr Helen Davidson, Deputy Mayor Cr Liz Irvin Cr Chris Miles Cr Adam Pulford
Apologies	None
Council Staff	Kate McCaughey, CEO Pene Winslade, Director Place and Environment Mark Hughes, Unit Manager Urban Planning Esha Rahman, Planning Coordinator
External participants	None

Items discussed		Conflict disclosed by, general or material and the nature	Left meeting
1	MPS/2026/101 – 81 Davies Street, Brunswick	None	

Name and title of Council officer completing record: Mark Hughes, Unit Manager Urban Planning

This form is kept in accordance with the Information Privacy Principles and Merri-bek City Council's Privacy Policy and practices as stated on Merri-bek's [website](#).

Record of Meeting

Meeting: Councillor Briefing

Date: 27 July 2026

Meeting time: 6.00pm – 8.00pm



This Record is kept in accordance with the Governance Rules adopted by Council.

Rule 9.1 provides that a record of the matters discussed at all **Hearing of Submission Meetings, Advisory Committee Meetings and Councillor Briefings** organised or hosted by Council will be kept.

The record will include the attendees at the meeting, including the organisations represented by external presenters, the title of matters discussed and any conflicts of interest disclosed and whether the person with the conflict of interest left the meeting.

Attendees	
Councillors	Cr Nat Abboud, Mayor Cr Sue Bolton Cr Jay Iwasaki Cr Helen Politis Cr Ella Svensson Cr Helen Davidson, Deputy Mayor Cr Liz Irvin Cr Chris Miles Cr Adam Pulford Cr Katherine Theodosis
Apologies	Cr Oscar Yildiz JP
Council Staff	Kate McCaughey, Chief Executive Officer Yvonne Callanan, Acting Director Business Transformation Greg Rodwell, Acting Director City Infrastructure Eamonn Fennessy, Director Community Pene Winslade, Director Place and Environment Richard Tolliday, Acting Manager Capital Works Planning and Delivery Matthew Diemer, Acting Unit Manager Transport Planning Caden McCarthy, Manager City Design and Economy Leanne Giardina, Manager Aged and Community Support Riley Morton, Unit Manager Financial Strategy Jemma Wightman, Chief Financial Officer
External participants	Nil.

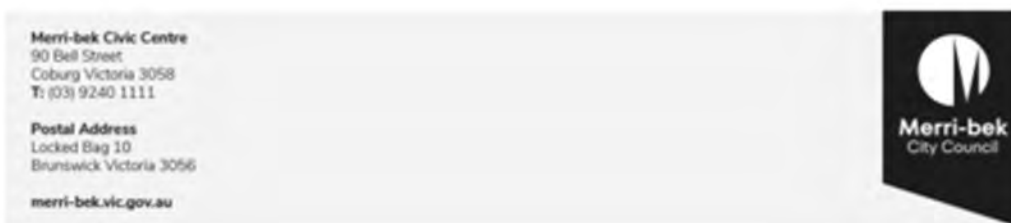
Items discussed		Conflict disclosed by, general or material and the nature	Left meeting
1	Dog walking in Merri-bek Tate Reserve	-	-
2	Road Safety Plan Workshop	-	-
3	Aged Care Act Compliance	-	-
4	Governance Briefing Series	-	-

This form is kept in accordance with the Information Privacy Principles and Merri-bek City Council's Privacy Policy and practices as stated on Merri-bek's [website](#).

Items discussed		Conflict disclosed by, general or material and the nature	Left meeting
5	Budget feedback	-	-
6	Proposed MAV motions	-	-
7	Don Bosco Youth Centre	-	-

Name and title of Council officer completing record: Yvonne Callanan, Acting Director Business Transformation

This form is kept in accordance with the Information Privacy Principles and Merri-bek City Council's Privacy Policy and practices as stated on Merri-bek's [website](#).



Doc. No. D26/227886
XRef.: D26/219302

Onur Kurt
[REDACTED]

Dear Onur,

PUBLIC QUESTION TIME ON NOTICE RESPONSE FROM MAY 2026 COUNCIL MEETING

I write to you in response to your question submitted to the 13 May 2026 Council meeting, as follows:

Question 1

Why did council not involve community and businesses in regard to the Festivals Program Refresh proposal?

The refresh of the festivals program is an action item in the Council Plan and seeks to ensure our festivals remain financially and environmentally sustainable, responsive to community needs, and equitable.

Officers have proposed to transition our larger events to a biennial model and introduce programming in areas that have no festivals to meet these goals. We were planning a consultation that brought in voices from the community and business in regards to changes in the festivals program.

In May 2026, Council resolved to defer the Festivals Program Refresh report until the September 2026 Council meeting for the purposes of seeking further information and consultation where required.

Officers are currently planning a consultation that is open to ideas and feedback from a variety of stakeholders, whose perspectives and experiences we value greatly. The consultation will open to community feedback in July, in order that we can report back to Council on outcomes in September.

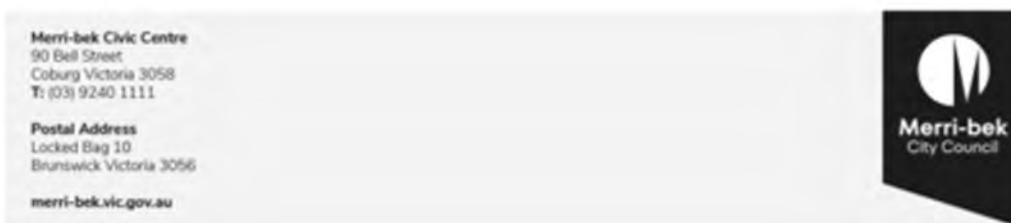
I trust this answers your questions, however if you require any further information, please don't hesitate to contact Lisa Dempster, Manager Cultural Development on ldempster@merri-bek.vic.gov.au.

Yours sincerely



Eamonn Fennessy
DIRECTOR COMMUNITY

26/06/2026



D26/308974

Marco Delorenzis
[REDACTED]

Dear Marco,

I write to you in response to your question submitted to the 10 June Council meeting, as follows:

- ***If every concession gets the next size up 240L bin at 33% more capacity than currently how is that reducing waste to landfill or making people use green waste FOGO bins better?***

A response to your question is below.

Council currently offers concessions to a small number of households with significant or unavoidable rubbish needs. This includes households managing nappies, medical waste, larger household needs or hardship circumstances. The purpose of the concession is to make the service practical and fair for everyone. The number of households accessing concessions is a small proportion of the municipality.

As part of the fortnightly rubbish trial, Council introduced additional concessions to support households with specific needs, and promoted these to trial participants. Fewer than four per cent of trial households accessed a concession, and the trial areas achieved significant overall reductions in landfill volume.

I hope this is helpful. If you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact wasteprojects@merri-bek.vic.gov.au.

Yours sincerely



Pene Winslade
DIRECTOR PLACE AND ENVIRONMENT



Greg Rodwell
ACTING DIRECTOR CITY INFRASTRUCTURE

9 / 07 / 2026



XRef: MPS/2023/774 &
D26/296895
Doc. No. D26/325108
Tel: 9240 1111

Peter Robertson
[REDACTED]

Dear Peter,

PUBLIC QUESTION TIME ON NOTICE RESPONSE FROM JULY 2026 COUNCIL MEETING

I write to you in response to your questions submitted to the 8 July 2026 Council meeting, as follows:

Question 1:

Coburg High School site, 81a Bell Street, the old Coburg High School site, closed 33 years ago is still empty. Council approved this massively inappropriate development some years ago. The owners of the site Blue Earth Group have allowed the site to become a dumping ground for rubbish. The site is a disgrace.

What is happening to the site?

Thank you for your continued interest in the former Coburg High School site (81A Bell Street, Coburg). I can confirm that this site continues to have a valid planning permit which allows:

Use and development of the land for the purposes of a multi-storey mixed-use development comprising dwellings, shop tenancy and food and drink premises across multiple buildings; a reduction to the standard car parking requirement; and alteration to access to a road in a Transport Zone.

The application was subject to a Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) review, which notably did not have any objector parties. Council and the permit applicant agreed to a consent position, noting the application had addressed VCAT concerns from the previous application.

It is unclear if and when the development will commence. Council has no influence on whether development commences, as this is a decision for the developer.

As a privately owned site, Council has limited levers to address any issues of dumped rubbish. On the Council land adjacent to this site, Council has had no reports for dumped rubbish this year, and two reports of dumped rubbish in the year prior. As the land is privately owned the responsibility to remove dumped rubbish from the land sits with the owner.

Council has received several complaints about dumped rubbish or unsightliness on private land in the past year and has worked proactively with the landowner to ask them to address these issues.

I trust this answers your question however, if you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact Mark Hughes, Unit Manager Urban Planning on mhughes@merri-bek.vic.gov.au for planning related enquires or Danielle Pepyat, Manager Amenity and Compliance on DPepyat@merri-bek.vic.gov.au for dumped rubbish queries.

Thank you for your interest in community engagement and public participation. The answer to your question is set out below.

Yours sincerely



Pene Winslade
DIRECTOR PLACE AND ENVIRONMENT

20 / 07 / 2026



**Instrument of Appointment and Authorisation
(Planning and Environment Act 1987 only)**

Planning Officers – August 2026

S11A Instrument of Appointment and Authorisation (Planning and Environment Act 1987)

Instrument of Appointment and Authorisation

In this instrument 'officer' means

- Aileen Chin
- Alex Osborne
- Anna Fraser
- Anthea Whitehead
- Antoinette Boxall
- Ariadne Hasiotis
- Caleb Cootes
- Dee Erdogan
- Denise Turner
- Devlin Morton
- Diahnn McIntosh
- Edward (Ned) Dumaresq
- Ekta Shah
- Emily Williams
- Esha Rahman
- Evan Strouss
- Gina Settle
- Graeme Linsell
- Houston Watt
- Jessica Henwood-White
- Jessica Weymouth
- Karmen Wheeler
- Kosta Vassilacopoulos
- Lachlan McGowan
- Lawson Peters
- Leanne Stockley
- Lucas Wearne
- Maddy Butler
- Mark Hughes
- Michelle Rowe
- Niall O'Brien
- Phi Tran
- Phil Priest
- Rachel Clarke
- Renee Wilson
- Robert Wallis
- Ryan Hay
- Vicki Lu
- Vita Galante
- Wyatt Griffiths

S11A Instrument of Appointment and Authorisation (Planning and Environment Act 1987)

1. under section 147(4) of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* authorises the officers to carry out the duties or functions and to exercise the powers of an authorised officer under the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*; and
2. under section 313 of the *Local Government Act 2020* authorises the officer generally to institute proceedings for offences against the Acts and regulations described in this instrument.

- comes into force immediately upon its execution;
- remains in force until varied or revoked.

The COMMON SEAL of
MERRI-BEK CITY COUNCIL
was affixed on ____ August 2026
with the authority of the Council:

Mayor, Councillor Nat Abboud

Proposed MAV Motion

Motion title: Advocating for the continuation of the Commonwealth Home Support Program.

Which of the 10 enabling priorities from the [MAV Strategy 2024 – 2027](#) does this motion align with? (please check relevant box)

☒ Active local democracy	☐ First Peoples local government relations
☐ Connected places	☐ Climate & regenerative design
☒ Health & wellbeing	☐ Diversity, equity & inclusion
☐ Sustainable economy	☐ Resilience & recovery
☐ FutureGen	☐ Intergenerational infrastructure

OR

☐ Significant to the sector (explain how this motion addresses an issue of significant to the local government sector in Victoria, i.e. how many councils impacted, issue relates to a current or emerging State Gov policy, legislative or funding priority, and why this cannot be resolved at a single council or regional level)

This is a significant issue for the 25 Victorian councils that provide CHSP services to their ageing communities and a united Victorian voice led by the MAV has more impact at the national level, adding to the strong advocacy of the CHSP Alliance.

Motion:

That the MAV:

1. Acknowledges the recent Senate Inquiry Recommendations to retain the Commonwealth Home Support Program beyond 2027.
2. Continues to advocate to the State and Federal Minister for Ageing and Aged Care for an accessible, equitable and high-quality aged care system in Victoria underpinned by block funding by:
 - Representing Victorian local government in consultations and co-design opportunities informing the future design of programs affecting our ageing community.
 - Joining the CHSP Alliance, to provide a Victorian council voice to the national advocacy coalition calling for the continuation, expansion and sustainability of the CHSP as a foundational tier in Australia's aged care system rather than it merged into Support at Home (SAH) Program.

Rationale:

For over a decade, the Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP) has helped older Australians maintain independence and remain active in their communities. This preventative approach is made possible through the flexibility and stability of block funding.

CHSP works because it provides timely support before problems become crises. For many older people, CHSP is not a short-term or transitional intervention, but an essential and ongoing source of support that underpins their ability to remain living in the community.

Block funding enables providers to respond quickly and flexibly, preventing unnecessary hospitalisations, delaying entry to residential care and reducing pressure on the broader aged care system.

A recent Senate Inquiry into the transition of CHSP to Support at Home recommended that the Commonwealth Home Support Program be retained as a separate block-funded program and not transitioned into the Support at Home Program. The committee concluded that CHSP should not be absorbed into the Support at Home model, citing widespread sector concerns that a transition would undermine access and equity.

The future of the CHSP is unclear beyond 30 June 2027, when current contracts and grant funding are due to end. Councils are awaiting clarity from the Federal Government on the future of the CHSP. These reforms currently impact 25 Victorian councils, and more than 130 nationally.

Continuation of a strong, united advocacy effort is critical to secure the future of the CHSP beyond 2027. By joining the CHSP Alliance, the MAV can amplify the voice of Victorian councils and their communities at a national level, ensuring that the proven benefits of a block-funded, preventative aged care model are clearly represented in future reform discussions, helping to safeguard a system that delivers significant benefits for older Australians, communities and the broader health and aged care sectors.

Proposed MAV Motion

Motion title: Increase Living Libraries funding

Which of the 10 enabling priorities from the [MAV Strategy 2024 - 2027](#) does this motion align with? (please check relevant box)

☐ Active local democracy	☐ First Peoples local government relations
☐ Connected places	☐ Climate & regenerative design
☒ Health & wellbeing	☐ Diversity, equity & inclusion
☐ Sustainable economy	☐ Resilience & recovery
☐ FutureGen	☒ Intergenerational infrastructure

OR

☐ Significant to the sector (explain how this motion addresses an issue of significance to the local government sector in Victoria, i.e. how many councils impacted, issue relates to a current or emerging State Gov policy, legislative or funding priority, and why this cannot be resolved at a single council or regional level)

Motion:

That the MAV: Call on the Victorian Government to:

1. Increase the annual allocation available through the *Living Libraries Infrastructure Program* to better meet growing community demand for contemporary library and learning facilities across metropolitan, regional, rural and interface councils.
2. Establish a long-term, indexed funding commitment for public libraries that reflects population growth, rising construction and infrastructure costs and the increasing expectation that libraries also support liveability, social connection, lifelong learning, access to services and flexible community space.

Rationale:

Public libraries are valued and widely used community facilities in Victoria. They are no longer simply places to borrow books; they are essential community hubs that support literacy, lifelong learning, digital inclusion, social connection, community cohesion and access to government and support services. The Victorian Government recognises libraries as places that strengthen communities, encourage participation and improve access to learning opportunities.

Libraries play an increasingly important role in addressing social and economic challenges. They provide free internet access, digital literacy support, quiet study environments, access to information and opportunities for community engagement. These services are particularly important for young people, older residents, newly arrived communities and people experiencing financial hardship.

As more housing is delivered, particularly higher density housing in established suburbs and activity centres, libraries are also expected to support liveability, providing residents with welcoming, free and flexible public places close to where they live.

Investment in library infrastructure delivers benefits well beyond the library sector, contributing to education, health, inclusion and economic participation outcomes. Economic modelling shows that every dollar invested in Victorian public libraries generates \$4.30 of benefits to the local community.

The Living Libraries Infrastructure Program plays a critical role in helping councils deliver new and upgraded library facilities. Government investment through the program has delivered significant benefits for local communities in recent years.

However, demand for library services continues to grow; Living Libraries funding has not increased at the same rate that construction, maintenance and renewal costs have increased. Many councils are experiencing rapid population growth, changing demographic needs and increasing demand for flexible spaces that support study, digital access, community programs and social connection. At the same time, the current funding pool remains small and can support only a very limited number of projects each year, leaving many proposals unfunded or significantly delayed.

Increasing Living Libraries funding would enable councils to respond to growing community expectations, deliver contemporary library facilities and ensure all Victorians have access to welcoming, inclusive and future-focused public library services.

A larger, sustainable and indexed funding commitment would strengthen the partnership between state and local government and support thriving, connected communities across Victoria.

7.8 CONTRACT AWARD: RFT-2026-10 - BALFE PARK, BRUNSWICK WEST - SPORTS GROUND UPGRADE WORKS

Director City Infrastructure, Greg Rodwell

Capital Works Planning and Delivery

Officer Recommendation

That Council:

1. Awards the Contract RFT-2026-10, Balfe Park, Brunswick West - Sports Ground Upgrade Works (the **Contract**), to **Global Turf Projects Pty Ltd** (the **Contractor**) for a fixed lump sum amount of \$1,046,337.47 (excluding GST) plus a provisional sum(s) of \$20,845.00 (excluding GST), totalling \$1,067,182.47 (excluding GST), and otherwise subject to and in accordance with paragraph 2 of this Resolution:
2. Authorises the Chief Executive Officer to:
 - a) Do all things necessary to execute the Contract and any required documentation for the Contract, including:
 - i. Negotiate and finalise the terms of the Contract between Council and the Contractor provided that the terms specified in paragraph 1 of this Resolution shall not be altered without a further Resolution of Council;
 - ii. Ensure that, other than terms referred to in paragraph 1 of this Resolution, the terms of the Contract are acceptable to the Chief Executive Officer;
 - iii. Advise all tenderers of Council's decision in relation to the Contract (conditional on acceptance of the Contract RFT-2026-10 by the Contractor in accordance with the terms of this Resolution).
3. Refers Contract RFT-2026-10 budget shortfall of \$49,461.47 to the first quarterly forecast process.

REPORT

Executive Summary

This report seeks Council approval to award Contract RFT-2026-10 – Balfe Park, Brunswick West Sports Ground Upgrade to the preferred contractor Global Turf Projects Pty Ltd.

The Balfe Park Sports Ground Upgrade forms part of Council's commitment to improving sporting infrastructure across Merri-bek and supporting the increasing demand for quality outdoor recreation facilities. The project will deliver upgrades to the existing soccer field, including drainage, irrigation and field regrading works, to improve playing conditions, increase field availability and enhance the long-term performance of the facility for the Brunswick Zebras Football Club and the broader community.

Seven conforming tenders were received and assessed in accordance with Council's Procurement Policy against weighted evaluation criteria including cost, capability, capacity, methodology, program and sustainability considerations.

Following the tender evaluation process, Global Turf Projects Pty Ltd has been identified as the preferred contractor, who have a strong track record of completing comparable sports field upgrade projects for local government clients. The contract award results in a budget shortfall of approximately \$102,820 which will be referred to in the quarterly forecast process.

The procurement process complies with section 109(1) of the *Local Government Act 2020* and Council's Procurement Policy.

Previous Council Decisions

There have been no previous Council decisions in relation to this specific project.

1. Policy Context

This report is in keeping with Council's commitment to accountability and sound financial management. It also addresses the requirement under section 109(1) of the *Local Government Act 2020* which requires Council to adhere to its Procurement Policy when entering into contracts for the purchasing of goods or services, or the carrying out of works. Council adopted the Procurement Policy on 11 June 2025 which sets the threshold for conducting a public tender for goods, services and works where once-off or ongoing cumulative spend over the life of the contract is expected to exceed \$350,000 (incl GST).

2. Background

The redevelopment of Balfe Park, Brunswick Soccer pitch is part of Council's commitment to upgrade sporting facilities across Merri-bek to support the growth of outdoor recreation.

The scope of the tender is to renew the existing ground to meet today's sport playing field standards. The upgrade will include but not limited to the following:

- Shape the ground to best surface shape to improve the drainage of the ground, remove existing undulation and increase its hours of use and usability.
- Import a 100mm rootzone sand profile with a drainage gravel subgrade that will improve the drainage and overall hours of usage to 30 hours.
- Install a network of subsurface stormwater drains resulting in better management of excess irrigation and rainwater.
- Installation of a new automated irrigation system.
- 6m high behind-goal netting and mobile soccer goals.
- Installation of soccer pitch line marking
- Installation of 300mm wide concrete edge strip under fence alignment to eliminate foreign grass infiltration into the ground.
- Vehicular and Pedestrian Access and Gates to sport ground
- Modify existing perimeter fence to suit new ground levels.
- Formalising 1.5m wide granitic sand path with timber plinths edge around the perimeter of the soccer pitch.
- Sod with washed Santa Ana Turf maxi rolls
- Synthetic Turf pad at entry/ exit points to and from the ground

The detailed design was finalised and approved by key stakeholder in 2025-26.

Community impact

The sports ground upgrade will align the facility with modern ground standards, and current environmental sustainability practices, while meeting the needs of the community and growing demand for sports.

Upgrading the Balfe Park soccer ground will make it available to be allocated for training and games and reduce reliance on use of other grounds. This will reduce wear and tear on the condition of these other grounds.

The redevelopment of this sportsground will not impact the ability for events to be hosted at Balfe Park. Amenities to make this possible such as removable fencing have been incorporated into scope of works.

Public Tender

A request for tender was released on 28 April 2026 and closed on 28 May 2026 with seven (7) tenders received:

Tenderers Name	ABN
BIS Infrastructure Pty Ltd.	37 604 485 501
Global Turf Projects Pty Ltd	53 608 443 670
Green Turf Pty Ltd	26 138 977 349
Native Space Pty Ltd	33 672 336 828
Quantum Civil Pty Ltd	41 653 806 430
SJM Turf and Civil Pty Ltd	23 624 750 018
Victorian Sports Group Pty Ltd	13 167 480 748

Tender Evaluation

Tenders were evaluated in accordance with Council's Procurement Policy and in accordance with the approved Procurement Evaluation and Probity Plan for this contract

The tender evaluation was based on the following the evaluation criteria:

Criteria	Weighting
Cost	40%
Capability of the tenderer to provide the works	15%
Capacity of the tenderer to provide the goods and/or services and/or works	10%
Methodology and task appreciation	15%
Tender Program/ Works Program	10%
Social Sustainability	3%
Economic Sustainability	3%
Environmental Sustainability	4%
Total	100%

The membership of the tender evaluation panel was as follows.

Title and/or company	Project Manager/ Generalist or Nominated Speciality	Full Voting / Advisory Member
Senior Project Manager	Project Manager (Chair)	Full
Acting Manager Recreation Services	Generalist	Full
Team Leader West and Sportsfields	Generalist	Full
Head of Building Projects	Generalists	Advisory
Acting Unit Manager Procurement	Procurement	Advisory

Further details of tender evaluation are shown in the Tender Recommendation Report (**Confidential Attachment 1**).

3. Issues

Collaboration

Note that section 109(2) of the *Local Government Act 2020* requires that any report to the Council that recommends entering into a procurement agreement must include information in relation to any opportunities for collaboration with other councils or public bodies which may be available.

Under this contract there are no opportunities to collaborate with other Councils or public bodies, because it is a local, stand-alone sports field construction project with specific timing requirements.

Interviews

An interview was conducted with the preferred contractor on 18 June 2026 via Microsoft Teams to confirm their capacity and capability to deliver the project. The discussion focused on the proposed construction program, subcontractor availability, current workload and resource commitments including sourcing material, and the contractor's ability to prioritise and resource the project to achieve the key milestone of establishing grass cover prior to Christmas 2026. The contractor provided satisfactory responses to all matters raised, giving the evaluation panel confidence in their ability to deliver the project in accordance with the proposed program.

Social/Environmental/Local Implications

The recommended tenderer demonstrated a strong commitment to delivering positive social, environmental and local participation outcomes through the project, supported by measurable initiatives, targets and demonstrated sustainability practices.

Key commitments and outcomes include:

- **Social procurement and inclusion:** Commitment to employment opportunities for disadvantaged groups, inclusive recruitment practices, Equal Employment Opportunity principles, and partnerships supporting employment and training outcomes.
- **Workforce development:** Established apprenticeship and training programs, delivered over 100 hours of professional development in the past year, and committed to local employment and student internship opportunities.
- **Community benefits:** Proposed community engagement initiatives including sustainability sessions, school site tours, community training, and ongoing feedback opportunities.
- **Local economic participation:** Commitment to sourcing at least 30% of project materials from local suppliers and prioritising local businesses and subcontractors where practical.
- **Indigenous and social participation:** Commitment to engaging Indigenous-owned businesses, achieving a 5% Indigenous workforce target across projects, supporting disability employment pathways and engaging social enterprises where practical.
- **Environmental sustainability:** Demonstrated a 30% reduction in company-wide carbon emissions over three years and achieved 75% diversion of office and construction waste from landfill through improved waste management practices.
- **Sustainable delivery and circular economy:** Applied circular economy principles through recycling and repurposing materials, including removed turf, and committed to sustainable materials, resource efficiency and waste reduction.
- **Environmental legacy:** Proposed sustainability education initiatives including environmental signage, community education on sustainable sports field management and ongoing sustainability monitoring.

Overall, the preferred contractor provided clear and measurable commitments that align with Council's social procurement, environmental sustainability and local participation objectives. The proposed initiatives demonstrate the tenderer's ability to deliver broader community, environmental and economic benefits throughout the project lifecycle.

Human Rights Consideration

The implications of this report have been assessed in accordance with the requirements of the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities.

4. Consultation / Recommendation from Management

Extensive internal and external stakeholder engagement was undertaken throughout the project development to inform the concept design and implementation approach. The engagement process was designed to ensure the proposed outcomes reflected stakeholder expectations, community needs and project objectives.

Engagement activities included:

- Consultation with internal Council departments and external stakeholders.
- Formal community consultation on the concept design and proposed implementation approach, including letterbox drops and opportunities for community feedback.
- A pop-up information session held at the Balfe Park Sports Pavilion on Thursday, 30 April 2026 (5:30 pm – 7:00 pm), where community members were invited to discuss the project with the project team, ask questions and provide feedback.
- An active Merri-bek Conversations project webpage, which was maintained throughout the project to provide updates on project progress, consultation opportunities, key milestones and outcomes.

Feedback received through these engagement activities was considered in the development and refinement of the final concept design and implementation approach.

5. Declaration of Conflict of Interest

Council Officers, external consultants and all other parties involved in the preparation of this report have no conflict of interest in this matter.

6. Financial and Resources Implications

The adopted budget has the below figures included in the capital works program for Balfe Park Brunswick West - Sports Ground Upgrade works:

Description	Allocated Budget Amount (excl. GST)	Project costs	Net (Allocated budget minus expected project cost)
2025-26 carry forward into 2026-27	\$50,000		
2026-27 approved budget	\$1,000,000		
Project expenditure to date		\$32,279	
<i>Recommended fixed lump sum amount RFT-2026-10 - Balfe Park, Brunswick West - Sports Ground Upgrade Works</i>		\$1,046,337.47	
<i>Recommended Provisional Sum amount RFT-2026-10 - Balfe Park, Brunswick West - Sports Ground Upgrade Works</i>		\$20,845.00	
Totals	\$1,050,000	\$1,099,461.47	\$49,461.47

The total anticipated cost to deliver this project is \$1,099,461.47 (excluding GST). Council budget in 2026/2027 for delivery of this contract is \$1,050,000 excluding GST). The budget shortfall of \$49,461.47 will be referred to the first quarterly budget forecast process.

In some cases, there may be contract variations required due to latent conditions outside of Council's and Contractor's control. In these instances, the delegated Council representative will have the authority to approve variations up to the percentage 15% (as at the time of writing this report) of the contract.

7. Implementation and timeline

It is proposed that the CEO be authorised to do all things necessary to execute the contract and any other required documentation.

The contracts will commence as soon as possible following Council endorsement.

Works on site are planned to commence in mid to late August 2026. Weather permitting, the ground is expected to be available for use in April 2027, accounting for the construction period and time needed for turf establishment.

Attachment/s

- 1** RFT-2026-10 Balfe Park, Brunswick West - Sports Ground Upgrade works -Tender Recommendation Report D26/275831

Pursuant to section 3(1)(g)(ii) of the Local Government Act 2020 this attachment has been designated as confidential because it relates to private commercial information, being information provided by a business, commercial or financial undertaking that if released, would unreasonably expose the business, commercial or financial undertaking to disadvantage.

8. NOTICES OF MOTION

8.1 DATA CENTRES

Cr Sue Bolton

Motion

That Council:

1. Notes the rapidly increasing electricity and water demand associated with the surge in data centre builds in Victoria.
2. Notes the surge in energy demand from data centre builds may potentially impact Victoria's decarbonisation objectives and increase pressure on energy infrastructure.
3. Notes the potential impact of data centres on local communities, including noise pollution (waterways and noise), strain on electricity provision, potential fire hazards, and impact on water supplies and waterways pollution.
4. Notes the M9 Councils' (including Melbourne, Merri-bek, Darebin, Hobsons Bay, Maribyrnong, Moonee Valley, Port Phillip, Stonnington, and Yarra) advocacy in train in relation to data centres, which includes:
 - a) Preparing an M9 Councils' submission to the Federal Parliamentary Inquiry examining the opportunities, impacts and regulatory settings associated with the growth of data centre infrastructure across Australia.
 - b) Writing to the relevant Minister calling for greater Council involvement in planning decisions relating to data centres.
5. Complementing the M9 work, writes to the Victorian Premier, the Victorian Minister for Artificial Intelligence and the Digital Economy, the Prime Minister, the Federal Minister for Industry and Innovation, and the Federal Minister for Environment, asking for urgent consideration of climate, environmental, construction and amenity impacts, and request they ensure policy and regulation of data centres that:
 - i) is informed by community interest, evidence and input from relevant scientific experts, as well as cities, eco-systems and communities impacted by the establishment of data centres;
 - ii) Are enforceable and ensures strong safeguards are legislated for people, the community, cultural heritage and the environment; and
 - iii) There is transparency for the community about the different types of data centres, their impacts on the community, and how the federal and state governments are mitigating these impacts.

1. Background

Cr Bolton's background:

There is rising community concern with the flood of applications for mega-data centres. Close to 30 are mega data centres are proposed for Victoria. The data centre proposed for Plumpton would be the largest in the country at 350 hectares or 175 MCGs.

A mega data centre is proposed for the old Ford Broadmeadows site with 6 huge data centre buildings, just 180 metres from residential homes.

These data centres are being approved at break-neck speed with a giant data centre being passed in around 75 days, one in Tullamarine being approved in 44 days and one in Geelong being approved in 28 days.

These fast-tracked approvals do not give local communities enough time to understand the likely impact of these developments.

In contrast, most other industrial permits take around 173 days to get approved.

Australian Energy Market Operator (AEMO) has revealed connection inquiries for large industrial loads – mostly data centres in Melbourne's north and west – have increased to more than 18 gigawatts. If these projects proceeded, peak demand would “more than double” and not be possible to support.

Fire Rescue Victoria has called for greater oversight over the significant volumes of diesel and lithium-ion batteries, which are used to run data centres.

Communities are only just starting to understand the implications of the rapid expansion of mega-data centres.

There are many risks associated with the development of all these data centres:

- A massive drain of scarce water supplies
- Massive climate pollution impacts
- Growing pressure on existing energy distribution networks, which already often struggle under peak load situations such as heat waves
- The likelihood that development without a similar expansion of renewables will extend the life of carbon polluting coal and fossil gas
- The creation of localised heat impacts on the host communities
- Potential for increases in energy prices which will flow on to local household consumers
- Industrialisation of residential areas

With the roll out of data centres being largely unregulated by state, territory and federal governments, there is a need to pause the data centres to allow communities to understand the risks and what is necessary for regulation.

2. Policy context

Officer's comments:

Data centres are a rapidly emerging issue for communities in Australia. To date there have been no planning permit applications in Merri-bek. However, the potential impact of data centres on amenity, climate and services means they are of interest to many councils.

As a member of the M9 group of Councils, Merri-bek will be party to a joint submission to the federal government on data centres. That submission will cover topics of mutual concern to the M9 Councils including requesting of Federal and State governments that:

- Data centre planning permit approvals involve Councils and community (rather than going through the Ministerial fast track process).
- Environmental impacts (including carbon emissions, water usage, and energy transition targets) are mitigated;
- The impact of data centres on amenity is managed; and
- There is transparency for the community about the impacts of data centres how federal and state governments are managing them.

From a Merri-bek perspective, an interest in the environmental and amenity impacts of data centres aligns with three of the Council Plan 2025-29 themes, actions within our Climate Emergency Action Plan 2025-2030 relating to reducing community emissions and supporting the renewable energy transition, and the Merri-bek Planning Scheme.

3. Financial Implications

Officer's comments:

An advocacy letter can be prepared without the need for additional budget.

4. Resources Implications

Officer's comments:

An advocacy letter can be written within existing staffing resources.

8.2 SUPPORT FOR ACCESS TO JUSTICES OF THE PEACE

Cr Sue Bolton

Motion

That Council supports the call from the Royal Victorian Association of Honorary Justices by writing to the Attorney General to immediately address the shortage of Justices of the Peace in Victoria, including:

- measures to stop the burnout and retirement of Justices of the Peace could include the request from the Royal Victorian Association of Honorary Justices for the immediate recruitment of 5000 new Justices of the Peace to support the Victorian community; and
- an ongoing commitment to train 500 new Justices of the Peace each year to increase the number available for the community.

1. Background

Cr Bolton's background:

Justices of the Peace provide an essential public service with an increasing demand for document witnessing and certification across Victoria.

The numbers of JPs is continuing to decline with no extra money in the 2026 State Budget to recruit more JPs. Victoria only has around 3500 JPs in contrast to Queensland with 80,000 JPs.

Only around 2000 of the Victorian JPs are active by volunteering to be in police stations, libraries, shopping centres and community centres.

The number of JPs is shrinking as JPs age and begin to retire, without active recruitment of new JPs occurring.

The JPs who are able to actively volunteer, are not paid for this role.

JPs are so worried about the shortage of JPs that the Royal Victorian Association of Honorary Justices (RVAHJ) has gone public to call on the State Government to immediately recruit 5000 new JPs to support the Victorian community; and an ongoing commitment to train 500 new JPs each year. increase the number of the JPs who are available for the community.

2. Policy Context

Officer's comments:

The motion is consistent with Council's role in advocating for equitable access to essential community services. Increased access to Justices of the Peace would support residents who require witnessing and certification services, including those who may experience barriers to accessing private or paid services. The proposal also aligns with Council objectives relating to community wellbeing, inclusion and social equity.

3. Financial Implications

Officer's comments:

The motion can be actioned within existing council budget.

4. Resources Implications

Officer's comments:

The motion can be delivered within existing council resources.