



Merri-bek
City Council

Minutes of the Council Meeting

Held in Bunjil (Council Chamber), Merri-bek Civic Centre,
90 Bell Street, Coburg
on Wednesday 12 August 2026

TABLE OF CONTENTS

APOLOGIES/LEAVE OF ABSENCE	3
DISCLOSURES OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST	3
MINUTE CONFIRMATION	4
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS AND OTHER MATTERS	4
PETITIONS	5
PUBLIC QUESTION TIME	6
COUNCIL REPORTS	
7.1 DON BOSCO HOSTEL AND YOUTH CENTRE BRUNSWICK - ADVOCACY	14
7.2 TATE RESERVE - CONFLICT RESOLUTION OUTCOME	16
7.3 C236MBEK - GATEWAY 2 - DCP 2.0 CONSIDERATION OF SUBMISSIONS AND REQUEST FOR A PLANNING PANEL	17
7.4 SUBURB BOUNDARY REALIGNMENT COBURG NORTH/FAWKNER - BETWEEN SYDNEY ROAD AND MERRI-CREEK.	18
7.5 YEAR 1 COUNCIL ACTION PLAN 2025-26 - FOURTH QUARTER PERFORMANCE REPORT	19
7.6 OPEN COUNCIL RESOLUTIONS REPORT	20
7.7 GOVERNANCE REPORT - AUGUST 2026 - CYCLICAL REPORT	20
7.8 CONTRACT AWARD: RFT-2026-10 - BALFE PARK, BRUNSWICK EAST - SPORTS GROUND UPGRADE WORKS	22
NOTICES OF MOTION	
8.1 DATA CENTRES	24
8.2 SUPPORT FOR ACCESS TO JUSTICES OF THE PEACE	27
NOTICE OF RESCISSION	27
FORESHADOWED ITEMS	27
URGENT BUSINESS	27
CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS	28
12.1 CONTRACT AWARD: RFT-2026-11: RETAINING WALL REHABILITATION AT WHEELER STREET, PASCOE VALE SOUTH	
<i>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.</i>	

The Mayor opened the meeting at 6.30 pm and stated the Council meeting is being held on the traditional country of the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung people and acknowledged them as Traditional Owners. The Mayor paid respects to their Elders, past, present and emerging, and the Elders from other communities who may be here today.

Present	Time In	Time Out
Cr Nat Abboud, Mayor	6.30 pm	9.10 pm
Cr Helen Davidson, Deputy Mayor	6.30 pm	9.10 pm
Cr Sue Bolton	6.34 pm	9.10 pm
Cr Liz Irvin	6.30 pm	9.10 pm
Cr Dr Jay Iwasaki	6.30 pm	9.10 pm
Cr Chris Miles	6.30 pm	9.10 pm
Cr Helen Politis	6.30 pm	9.10 pm
Cr Adam Pulford	6.39 pm	9.10 pm
Cr Ella Svensson	6.30 pm	9.10 pm
Cr Katerine Theodosis	6.34 pm	9.10 pm
Cr Oscar Yildiz JP	6.30 pm	9.10 pm

OFFICERS

Chief Executive Officer – Kate McCaughey
 Director Community – Eamonn Fennessy
 Director Place and Environment – Pene Winslade
 Director City Infrastructure – Greg Rodwell
 Acting Director Business Transformation – Yvonne Callanan
 Acting Manager Governance and Strategy – Sophie Barison
 Acting Unit Manager Governance and Risk – Glen Moore

APOLOGIES/LEAVE OF ABSENCE

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

Cr Pulford requested a leave of absence from 10 August to 28 August 2026 inclusive.

Resolution

Cr Svensson moved, Cr Davidson seconded -

That Cr Theodosis be granted a leave of absence from 22 July to 25 July 2026 inclusive; and Cr Pulford be granted a leave of absence from 10 August to 28 August 2026 inclusive.

Carried

DISCLOSURES OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Nil.

MINUTE CONFIRMATION

Resolution

Cr Iwasaki moved, Cr Davidson seconded -

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

Carried

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS AND OTHER MATTERS

Cr Politis

- Attended a Merri-bek Business networking event in Coburg North, held in a renovated warehouse now operating as a dance studio. The event brought together a diverse range of local businesses, including long-established operators, artists and creative industries such as glass blowing. Cr Politis noted the area employs more than 3,500 people and continues to grow, and congratulated the Economic Development Unit for creating opportunities for local businesses to connect, collaborate and support local jobs.
- Acknowledged Aged Care Employee Day on 7 August, noting Merri-bek is one of only 30% of councils continuing to provide aged care services that support older residents to remain at home and live in their community with dignity and independence. Cr Politis also acknowledged Alex, a Merri-bek Community Transport driver.

Cr Yildiz

- Expressed his condolences on the passing of Cr Politis's mother, Stamata Politis.
- Acknowledged the passing of Patricia Ilhan and the incredible work she has done for so many different foundations.

Cr Miles

- Congratulated Hadfield Football Club on reaching finals for the first time in 11 years and noted he would attend their final home-and-away game on Saturday.

Cr Bolton

- Attended the opening of the new clubrooms at Shore Reserve, noting the long-term advocacy and perseverance of the club over many years. Cr Bolton acknowledged the club's 100-year history and its welcoming role in the community, including for diverse families, neurodiverse people and queer parents, highlighting the broader community role of local sporting clubs.
- Attended the third anniversary rally for the Sydney Road Accessible Tram Stops campaign, noting the campaign's increasing urgency as the Upfield line closure for level crossing removal approaches and acknowledging growing political interest in the need for accessible tram stops.
- Acknowledged an attack on a Muslim woman at Glenroy Coles in mid-July, noting the real-world impacts of racist commentary and that the incident contributed to the organisation of a Unite Against Racism rally in Broadmeadows on 25 July.

Mayor, Cr Abboud

- Acknowledged Cr Yildiz's attendance at the opening of the new clubrooms at Shore Reserve and his significant advocacy for the club.
- Reminded the community that nominations for the Merri-bek Awards close in a few weeks, with details available on Council's website across a range of award categories.

PETITIONS

PETITION - EXTENDING FAWKNER OUTDOOR POOL'S EARLY-MORNING LAP SWIMMING HOURS AND OPERATING SEASON

A petition has been received containing 423 signatories requesting Council extends Fawkner Outdoor Pool's early-morning lap swimming hours and operating season.

Resolution

Cr Bolton moved, Cr Iwasaki seconded -

That Council:

- 1. Receives the petition, requesting Council extends Fawkner Outdoor Pool's early-morning lap swimming hours and operating season.**
- 2. Refers the petition requesting Council extends Fawkner Outdoor Pool's early-morning lap swimming hours and operating season to the Director Community for consideration and response.**

Carried

PETITION - SAVE DON BOSCO YOUTH CENTRE, BRUNSWICK - 87 YEARS OF COMMUNITY HISTORY

A petition has been received with 5994 signatories requesting Council and the State Government do everything in their power to keep Don Bosco Youth Centre, Brunswick open and in community hands.

Resolution

Cr Yildiz moved, Cr Svensson seconded -

That Council:

- 1. Receives the petition, requesting Council and the State Government do everything in their power to keep Don Bosco Youth Centre, Brunswick open and in community hands.**
- 2. Refers the petition requesting Council and the State Government do everything in their power to keep Don Bosco Youth Centre, Brunswick open and in community hands to the Director Community for consideration and response.**

Carried

PETITION - REQUESTING COUNCIL ADDRESS THE PUBLIC HEALTH ISSUE IN MURIEL COURT, COBURG NORTH

A petition has been received containing 17 signatories requesting Council addresses the public health issue in Muriel Court, Coburg North.

Resolution

Cr Politis moved, Cr Miles seconded -

That Council:

- 1. Receives the petition, requesting Council addresses the public health issue in Muriel Court, Coburg North.**

2. Refers the petition requesting Council addresses the public health issue in Muriel Court, Coburg North to the Director Place and Environment for consideration and response.

Carried

PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

A summary of questions and the responses provided, and items for which community statements were made is provided below. Questions submitted in writing and not asked are taken On Notice.

Public Question Time commenced at 6.55 pm.

6.55 pm Cr Pulford left the meeting.
6.56 pm Cr Pulford returned to the meeting.
6.56 pm Cr Theodosia left the meeting.
6.57 pm Cr Theodosia returned to the meeting.
6.57 pm Cr Miles left the meeting.
6.58 pm Cr Miles returned to the meeting.

Report 7.1 Don Bosco Hostel and Youth Centre Brunswick - Advocacy

Council received 2 statements and 1 question. They were presented to Council:

Statement 1

Mark Everhuis made the following statement:

We are meeting today on the Wurundjeri land of the Kulin Nation where Aboriginal children and young people have played for tens of thousands of years. I want to pay my respects to elders past and present and to pay those same respects to any Aboriginal people here today or online.

My name is Mark Evenhuis. I live in Coburg. My two boys have grown up jumping on the trampolines and patting the rabbits at Don Bosco.

I'm one of many fighting to keep Don Bosco part of our community.

My friends with me today will speak to what Don Bosco means to us and what it could become. But I want to use my statement to first clarify what our community is asking for.

The Salesians say selling was a difficult decision, made after reviewing their local services and intended to meet their financial obligations to survivors of historic abuse.

The Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse found that about one in five members of the Salesian order had child sexual abuse claims against them between 1950 and 2010, totalling over 100 reported claims.

However, the Salesians' financial reporting shows the order has hundreds of millions of dollars in assets and investments - more than enough to meet these claims many times over.

We've recently written to the Salesians asking them to instead sell off assets that would have less impact on children and young people's wellbeing.

But we are not holding our breath that they will change their minds. So we need Council to be on the front foot in finding an alternative pathway to keep the centre part of our community.

We are also reluctant to mount a campaign to stop the sale. We don't want to stand between survivors of horrendous abuse and the compensation they rightfully deserve.

We also understand that Council finances will not extend to purchasing the property.

So what are we asking for? We are asking for the Council to urgently explore all reasonable options to keep this precious asset in our community – options beyond those outlined in the Council's report.

We think these options should include council urgently approaching the State Government, to build high density housing, with provision for a youth centre to be leased on a peppercorn rent to the right organisation.

We think a similar result could be achieved through bringing in a registered Community Housing Provider via the Development Facilitation Program.

The Council could also consider offering a future developer additional building height in exchange for a s173 agreement which gifts the youth centre to the community

These options are fleshed out in more detail in the pro bono brief prepared by Emmett Sati attached to this statement.

All we're asking for is that Council fight for Don Bosco's future as hard as this community loves the place. But the clock is ticking. The Salesians' EOI closes in a week. Thank you.

Statement 2

Claire Marshall, made the following statement:

My name is Claire Marshall. I live in Coburg with my partner and primary age children on unceded Wurundjeri land.

My community members and friends in the room have spoken about the value of Don Bosco to our community and how it is a safe and important place for families to gather.

Don Bosco also provides an increasingly rare service in our community - a place for vulnerable families and children to gather, at no cost.

Council members understand that there are multiple intersecting factors that are increasing disadvantage, poverty, poor mental health and poor outcomes for children, young people and families across Merri-bek.

We know that without third places - a place that isn't home or school that is a safe and accessible place to meet, socialise and form community - poor social outcomes and marginalisation increase.

We also know on the research and the data that these factors present together - intersectional disadvantage and a lack of safe, community-based places to go - we see increases in school disengagement, youth engagement in the justice system, and violence in the home and the community.

This is a collective responsibility of our community. It is not the individual fault of these children and young people. If we withdraw the services and safe places that these members of our community come to, we as a community - and Council as our representatives - have contributed to the troubling outcomes we know come next.

We have an opportunity to protect a space that contributes to better outcomes with the vulnerable and disadvantaged people who are also deeply valued members of our community. A space that provides hostel and a safe place to sleep for young people with nowhere else to go. A third place for people who can't afford anything else in our community. Protecting Don Bosco will also protect countless members of Merri-Bek - delivering on Council's own vision for Merri-Bek to lead, and leave no-one behind.

Question

Lee Cath asked if Council will commit to working actively with community members, along with State and Federal Governments, to find a solution which retains the Don Bosco Centre for community use, including writing to the Salesians to ask for an extension to the EOI period on the sale of the property?

7.06 pm Cr Pulford left the meeting.

At the request of the Mayor, Director Community, Eamonn Fennessy responded:

Thank you, Lee, for your question, and to acknowledge the great love for Don Bosco that is in the room. Many of us in the room have experienced the Centre as children, as parents, possibly as grandparents and it is a terrific and valued place.

Council will consider a report this evening on the Don Bosco Centre, and how best to advocate for Don Bosco. A key recommendation of the report is to advocate to both levels of government to see what support can be put in place to continue the service that is offered at Don Bosco.

7.08 pm Cr Pulford returned to the meeting.

Report 7.6 Open Council Resolutions Report

Council received 2 questions. They were presented to Council:

Andrea Bunting asked if Council has made any representations to the State Government to request that in the new contracts the train operator be penalised for short-shunting trains at Batman Station?

Andrea Bunting asked if Council will use its survey on bus services to collect data about whether residents will be more attracted to using the Upfield train line if the bus service frequency improved?

At the request of the Mayor, Director Place and Environment, Pene Winslade responded:

Council's established advocacy has long focused on improving reliability, frequency and capacity on the Upfield Line, particularly through duplication of the single-track section between Gowrie and Upfield alongside other network improvements such as removing the remaining level crossings.

The State's re-franchising process is a matter for the Victorian Government, and Council has not adopted a specific position regarding contractual penalties within that procurement. However, as Council develops its broader transport advocacy priorities, Council can consider whether there are opportunities to advocate for measures that improve reliability, noting that primary advocacy focus remains around the infrastructure investment that unlocks everything else.

In relation to the second question, the updated Council Resolution Action Memo this month indicates that the survey work will be developed shortly alongside work on the Transport Advocacy Strategy. The original resolution did not specifically include alternative modes of transport but Council can consider your feedback around bus connections and other relevant factors when we design that survey.

Notice of Motion 8.1 Data Centres

Council received 3 statements and 1 question. The question was taken on notice. The following statements were presented to Council:

Statement 1

Sarah Webber made the following statement:

I call on the Council to support a moratorium on data centres (DC) development and support stronger planning frameworks to prevent harms to communities and the environment.

I am a Merri-bek resident, and a technology researcher at the University of Melbourne. I have a background in IT infrastructure project management. I am also a board member at Merri-bek Tech, a local group of volunteers. Like many IT professionals, we are deeply concerned about fast tracking DCs, and increasing dependence on extractive tech corporations, many of which disregard humane values, democracy and environmental impacts.

Impacts and Risks

Australia is targeted for DC developments as communities across the USA and Europe protest the negative impacts of these facilities. DCs contribute to industrialisation of suburbs, and occupy land that might have been used for housing or parks. They are polluting and noisy, cause power price increases and outages, and consume scarce water - and they don't deliver the jobs promised.

Societal benefits from large DCs will be negligible

Hyperscale DCs are being built primarily to expand Generative AI, because products such as ChatGPT and Claude are attracting enormous speculative investment, even though there is scant evidence of social benefits. The mode of "productivity" GenAI offers involves fewer jobs, and less meaningful work.

These DCs use imported technology and provide few jobs after construction; for example, a 20ha DC planned for Truganina will employ just 48 staff and 12 off-peak staff.

AI DCs will delay climate change milestones

DC companies are notoriously secretive about energy and water consumption. But large AI DCs involve energy density and fluctuations that cannot be met with present-day renewables and batteries, so despite any renewable energy they fund for others to use, overall they will delay net zero milestones. For stable supply they require generators and diesel stored onsite, creating air pollution and enormous fire risk.

These negative impacts and risks are unacceptable, given the lack of community benefits.

Recommendations

We call on the Council to support calls for a moratorium on data centre development, taking seriously public opposition, and widespread concern amongst academics and IT professionals.

We advocate for:

- smaller data centres that can be powered through renewable energy, without offsets.
- digital infrastructure that is democratically planned to meet community priorities, and locally owned to build local technology expertise and capabilities.

At a minimum, Council must call on State and Federal Governments to:

- pause DC developments, and
- establish planning frameworks, enforceable standards and legislation to protect communities and the environment from harm.

Statement 2

Maggie Cowling, on behalf of Climate Action Merri-bek made the following statement:

Climate Action Merri-bek supports Cr Sue Bolton's notice of motion 8.1.

While there are currently no AI data centre proposals for Merri-bek, we should nonetheless be prepared by establishing our minimum expectations and planning requirements. We should also stand in solidarity with communities to our north and west who are yet again the target of Melbourne's most polluting new projects.

Rather than repeat Cr Bolton's list of negative impacts from data centres, we would like to raise the following questions:

What impact will hyperscale AI data centres have on our energy transition, which Merri-bek is working so hard towards? Will they negate the advances we've made in renewables, destabilise the grid and push out the retirement of our fossil fuel power stations?

What impact will they have on our urban heat island problem, which we have also worked hard to mitigate?

How will they benefit local community climate resilience and adaptation?

What would well-crafted planning regulations look like that protect community from all the negative impacts of data centres?

On Monday night, Hume City Council, which already has several data centres, with a new proposal for a hyperscale data centre on Barry Rd close to homes, child care centre etc, passed a motion to write to state government ministers and the premier calling for a moratorium.

But on Tuesday, State Parliament blocked a bill to introduce a moratorium on new hyperscale AI data centres.

Merri-bek Council needs to know where it stands and we urge Council not only to support Cr. Bolton's motion, but to call for a moratorium while regulations, planning frameworks and standards are tailored.

7.22 pm Cr Theodosios left the meeting.

7.22 pm Cr Theodosios returned to the meeting.

Report 7.2 Tate Reserve – Conflict Resolution Outcome

Council received 1 question. It was presented to Council:

Viktoria Christopouolos asked how will the planned measures act as a sufficient solution to the issue, and what are the benefits of having a no-dog area at Tate Reserve?

At the request of the Mayor, Director City Infrastructure, Greg Rodwell responded:

Thank you for the question, Viktoria. Open spaces are important finite resources and are required to meet a multitude of needs. The recommended measures work together to reduce conflict by creating a clearer, safer and more legible spaces within Tate Reserve. Wider and improved paths provide greater capacity for pedestrians, runners, cyclists and dog walkers to share those spaces safely. Signage help users understand where different activities are permitted and promotes compliance with park rules. Fencing provides a clear, physical distinction between dog access areas and sensitive environment areas. Combined with the ongoing education and engagement that Council officers have been doing through the Tate Reserve Working Group, these measures are intended to improve safety, reduce conflict and protect environmental values and support respectful shared use of the reserve.

In terms of the second question, the no dog area at Tate Reserve provides an important environmental, safety and community benefit. It helps protect the sensitive creek-side habitat biodiversity and wildlife area from disturbance while supporting the revegetation and erosion management works that have been going on in that space for a few years. The area also creates a space for community members who feel uncomfortable around dogs and supports activities that benefit from a dog-free environment by providing a clear, defined area where the dogs are not permitted alongside areas where the dogs are able to remain accessible so the reserve can better accommodate the wider range of park users.

Question Time Extension

Resolution

Cr Bolton moved, Cr Iwasaki seconded -

That question time be extended by 30 minutes at 7.25 pm.

Carried

NON-AGENDA ITEMS - QUESTIONS

Central Coburg Car Parking

Rachel Esposito asked Council to clarify how many of the 900 public parking spaces identified in the revised Central Coburg Framework will be located in Lousia Street precinct, whether they will continue to operate as free 3-hour parking 7 days a week and whether Council has considered increasing public parking capacity by adding additional levels to the existing multi-level car parks?

At the request of the Mayor, Director Place and Environment, Pene Winslade responded:

Thank you, Rachel. The Central Coburg Framework is a long-term vision, it is a long-term, high level plan, not a fine grain, detailed plan. The projects are to be developed and delivered over the next 10 to 15 years. On Louisa Street, the Framework includes a new five-storey multi-deck car park with around 200 spaces. Additional stories would be difficult due to technical constraints. The final design and the detail for how the parking will be managed, that will be worked out later on considering all of the different users and needs in the area.

Rachel Esposito asked, given the proposed reduction in Council-managed public parking spaces from approximately 1,600 to 900, has Council assessed the potential impacts of reduced parking accessibility on diversity and inclusion, Central Coburg's economic activity, identity and vibrancy, and what specific measures will Council implement to ensure that older people, young families, people with disabilities and their carers continue to have equitable and reliable access to public parking, without limited spaces being routinely occupied by long-term parkers, local residents or tenants?

At the request of the Mayor, Director Place and Environment, Pene Winslade responded:

Thank you, Rachel. The current carparking level is around 1100 Council carparks, not 1600, so it is about an 80% reprovion that is proposed. Noting there is other, private car parking in the vicinity as well that is not within the scope of Council's consideration. We know parking is important for many visitors and businesses, particularly those who may have difficulty accessing Central Coburg using other means. The Framework retains around 80% of public parking reprovioned across Council-owned sites and distributes it across the precinct, not concentrated in one area but in different locations. Future parking design will consider different needs, including accessible parking, short-term stays and longer-term parking, looking at different needs from different individuals and from different user groups, business and the cultural precinct.

Target canopy for urban Australia

Michele McKay asked how Council plans to adopt the proposed planning guideline of a 3:30:300 target for tree canopy in urban areas?

At the request of the Mayor, Director City Infrastructure, Greg Rodwell responded:

Thank you for the question. It is always great to hear about emerging thinking around urban greening. The 3:30:300 principle is an interesting approach and, while it is not an adopted Council principle, its goals are broadly consistent with many of Council's existing objectives for tree canopy and urban greening.

Merri-bek's Urban Forest Strategy sets a target to double canopy cover on Council land by 2030, and an aspirational target of 29% canopy cover across the municipality by 2050. Council has also committed to planting 10,000 new trees as part of the current 4-year Council Plan. This planting program is focused on establishing larger, longer-lived canopy trees, particularly in areas with low shade and higher urban heat, so that tree planting delivers the greatest benefits to the communities and places that need them most.

The Victorian Government has also introduced a 30% tree canopy target for urban areas through the Planning Policy Framework and progressed planning reforms to strengthen the retention and provision of canopy trees, including requirements relating to retaining existing trees, providing new canopy and suitable deep soil areas to support tree growth.

Merri-bek is proactively seeking to increase the amount of open space across the municipality through its Park Close to Home program. The program see Council uses open space contributions from developers used to purchase land which is turned into public open space; with the aim of ensuring that most households have access to open space within 500 metres, or 300 metres if they are within an activity centre. This allows for greater permeability in the urban landscape and increased planting opportunities to increase canopy cover.

As housing density increases through the Central Coburg Framework and the Victorian Government's Activity Centres Program, Council will continue to look for opportunities to increase canopy and greening in our streets and public spaces, as well as through private development.

7.34 pm Cr Pulford left the meeting.

Coburg Night Market

Siobhan McCuskey asked why Council would weaken the Coburg Night Market given such strong community support?

At the request of the Mayor, Director Community, Eamonn Fennessy responded:

Thank you for your question and insight into Coburg Night Market. I have passed them on to our festivals team. Council considered a refreshed and changed festivals program a couple of months ago. Council resolved to do a lot more community engagement. That has been occurring over past couple of months and closed in early August. We are currently collating what that means for us and what people have said. It is rich and varied at first glance. When Council has a clear understanding of what the feedback is telling us and what that means for our significant festivals program, significant in scale and significant in that most of it happens between late November and March, we will bring that back to Council for consideration and a decision. That will happen before the end of this year, 2026, giving us a clearer way forward with what happens with Coburg Night Market and all the other great festivals and events we run here at Merri-bek.

7.39 pm Cr Pulford returned to the meeting.

Fawkner Outdoor Pool usage data

Maddy Lemmo asked when the Fawkner Outdoor Pool was last opened from October to April, and is there recent data on usage?

7.45 pm Cr Yildiz left the meeting.

7.45 pm Cr Theodosia left the meeting.

At the request of the Mayor, Director Community, Eamonn Fennessy responded:

Thanks Maddy. Congratulations on the Fins Swimming Club forming. The Fawkner Leisure Centre includes a year-round indoor heated 25 metre pool and a seasonal outdoor 50 metre pool, with the standard operating season running from 1 December to 31 March each year.

Data is variable. On occasion, the season has been extended or adjusted, including opening in November during periods of forecast warm weather or remaining open into April where seasonal conditions and calendar events have aligned.

Outdoor pool attendance is highly influenced by weather conditions and seasonal temperature patterns. Historically, patronage increases gradually through December as temperatures rise, generally peaks during the school holiday period, and then declines from February into March as the weather becomes milder, schools return, and community members resume regular work, school and sporting commitments.

Council recognises that pool attendance can vary depending on factors such as weather, opening hours and community awareness. As a result, usage data needs to be considered alongside other factors when assessing the operation of the pool.

Officers are currently preparing a further report will be presented to Council in September in response to a Councillor Notice of Motion, providing an opportunity to consider the Fawkner Outdoor Pool in the wider context of Council's aquatic and leisure network across the municipality, including usage, service provision and community need.

7.46 pm Cr Theodosia returned to the meeting.

Safety of School children in Blair Street

Christin Zylberberg asked, given the replacement buses in Blair Street and the temporary bus stop close to Merri-bek Primary School, how will Council ensure the safety of school children walking and riding to school.

7.48 pm Cr Yildiz returned to the meeting.

At the request of the Mayor, Director Place and Environment, Pene Winslade responded:

Thank you very much for your question. I don't have a full answer for the question. The Yarra Trams Depot upgrade is a Yarra Trams and DTP State Government project so I am not across specific changes in this location at the moment but the network is run by the State and Council can engage with the State to try and find out more . The team can come back to you to go through some of those more detailed questions that weren't written down to get them all and see what we can do to advocate with the State Government for you.

Public Question Time concluded at 7.50 pm.

COUNCIL REPORTS

7.1 DON BOSCO HOSTEL AND YOUTH CENTRE BRUNSWICK - ADVOCACY

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.

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.

Resolution

Cr Svensson moved, Cr Bolton seconded -

That Council:

1. Notes Council's ongoing work to provide and enable free third spaces for young people, including through the objectives of our Children, Young People and Families Strategy, and a report to Council in October 2025 assessing the need for free third spaces for young people in Merri-bek.
2. 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 for more than 80 years.
3. Acknowledges that having free space for children, young people and families is more important than ever with the increasing cost of living.
4. Notes the significant community concern about the Salesians of Don Bosco religious order's proposed sale of the Don Bosco Hostel and Youth Centre in Brunswick.
5. Notes that the Salesians of Don Bosco have stated they are seeking to sell the site to fund compensation for victim survivors of child abuse.
6. Writes to the Salesians of Don Bosco requesting that they extend the Expression of Interest period to allow for evaluation of alternative solutions to ensure the site continues as a youth space whilst also funding victim compensation, like selling off other church assets that would have less impact on children and young people's wellbeing, working with State and Federal governments to secure the future of the site, or making a condition of the sale retaining the site's current role of hosting a free space for children, young people and families.
7. Writes to relevant State and Federal Government Ministers and local State and Federal MPs requesting that they engage with the Salesians of Don Bosco around this issue to help ensure that this site can continue to host a free space for children, young people and families. This could include employing the expertise of Development Victoria to identify opportunities for the continued presence of a free youth centre at the site.
8. Backs community efforts to save a free space for children, young people and families at this site through providing in-kind support for community-driven campaign activities, up to the value of \$5000.

Carried

Cr Pulford called for a division.

For	Against	Abstained
Cr Bolton	Cr Davidson	Cr Theodosius
Cr Yildiz	Cr Miles	
Cr Pulford	Cr Politis	
Cr Svensson	Cr Abboud	
Cr Iwasaki		
Cr Irvin		
Total For (6)	Total Against (4)	Total Abstained (1)

Carried

7.2 TATE RESERVE - CONFLICT RESOLUTION OUTCOME

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.

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. Refer 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.

Resolution

Cr Iwasaki moved, Cr Irvin seconded -

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. **Refer 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.**

Carried unanimously

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

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.

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.

Resolution

Cr Bolton moved, Cr Yildiz seconded -

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.**

Carried unanimously

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

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.

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.

Resolution

Cr Bolton moved, Cr Abboud seconded -

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.

Carried unanimously

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

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.

Resolution

Cr Politis moved, Cr Irvin seconded -

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.**

Carried unanimously

7.6 OPEN COUNCIL RESOLUTIONS 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.

Officer Recommendation

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

Resolution

Cr Svensson moved, Cr Iwasaki seconded -

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

Carried unanimously

7.7 GOVERNANCE REPORT - AUGUST 2026 - CYCLICAL 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.

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.

Resolution

Cr Miles moved, Cr Svensson seconded -

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.**

Carried unanimously

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

Executive Summary

This report seeks Council approval to award Contract RFT-2026-10 – Balfe Park, Brunswick East 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.

Officer Recommendation

That Council:

1. Awards the Contract RFT-2026-10, Balfe Park, Brunswick East - 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), totaling \$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.

Resolution

Cr Pulford moved, Cr Svensson seconded -

That Council:

1. **Awards the Contract RFT-2026-10, Balfe Park, Brunswick East - 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), totaling \$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.**

Carried unanimously

8.32 pm Cr Yildiz left the meeting.
8.34 pm Cr Yildiz returned to the meeting.

NOTICES OF MOTION

8.1 DATA CENTRES

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:
 - a) 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;
 - b) Are enforceable and ensures strong safeguards are legislated for people, the community, cultural heritage and the environment; and
 - c) 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.

Motion

Cr Bolton moved, Cr Iwasaki seconded –

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:
 - a) 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;
 - b) Are enforceable and ensures strong safeguards are legislated for people, the community, cultural heritage and the environment; and
 - c) 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.
 - d) There be a moratorium on approvals for new data centres and expansions of existing data centres until a Victorian Parliamentary Joint Select Committee Inquiry into Data Centres has been completed. The Inquiry should include comprehensive public hearings and invite evidence from scientific experts, community organisations, Traditional Owners, local residents, local governments, industry representatives and relevant government agencies to consider the cumulative environmental, social and economic impacts of data centres and recommend an appropriate regulatory framework and other initiatives identified through the inquiry process.
6. Supports any motions at the Municipal Association of Victoria State conference which call for a moratorium on approvals for new data centres and expansions of existing data centres.

In accordance with Governance Rule 3.9.7, Cr Davidson requested that the Chairperson put the Motion to the vote in separate parts. The Chairperson agreed and put point 5(d) to the vote separately.

Motion

- 5d) There be a moratorium on approvals for new data centres and expansions of existing data centres until a Victorian Parliamentary Joint Select Committee Inquiry into Data Centres has been completed. The Inquiry should include comprehensive public hearings and invite evidence from scientific experts, community organisations, Traditional Owners, local residents, local governments, industry representatives and relevant government agencies to consider the cumulative environmental, social and economic impacts of data centres and recommend an appropriate regulatory framework and other initiatives identified through the inquiry process.

Lost¹

¹ Following the declaration of the vote (as initially carried) it was identified that two Councillors present at the meeting had abstained. In accordance with section 61(5)(e) of the *Local Government Act 2020*, for the purpose of determining the result of a vote, a Councillor present at the meeting who does not vote is taken to have voted against the question. Upon recalculation of the vote in accordance with the Act, the motion was therefore lost.

Resolution

Cr Bolton moved, Cr Iwasaki seconded –

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:**
 - a) 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;**
 - b) Are enforceable and ensures strong safeguards are legislated for people, the community, cultural heritage and the environment; and**
 - c) 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.**
- 6. Supports any motions at the Municipal Association of Victoria State conference which call for a moratorium on approvals for new data centres and expansions of existing data centres.**

Carried Unanimously

8.50 pm *Cr Miles left the meeting.*
8.52 pm *Cr Miles returned to the meeting.*
8.57 pm *Cr Pulford left the meeting.*
9.00 pm *Cr Pulford returned to the meeting.*

8.2 SUPPORT FOR ACCESS TO JUSTICES OF THE PEACE

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.

Resolution

Cr Bolton moved, Cr Irvin seconded -

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.**

Carried unanimously

8.59 pm Cr Bolton left the meeting.

9.00 pm Cr Bolton returned to the meeting.

NOTICE OF RESCISSION

Nil.

FORESHADOWED ITEMS

Cr Miles foreshadowed a notice of motion for the September Council meeting regarding urgent safety upgrade of Boundary Road and Sussex Street intersection in Pascoe Vale.

9.02 pm Cr Pulford left the meeting.

Mayor About foreshadowed a notice of motion for the September Council meeting regarding buses.

URGENT BUSINESS

Nil.

CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS

Resolution

Cr Davidson moved, Cr Miles seconded -

In accordance with section 66(2) of the *Local Government Act 2020*, this Council meeting be closed to the public to consider this/these report(s):

- **Contract Award: RFT-2026-11: Retaining Wall Rehabilitation at Wheeler Street, Pascoe Vale South 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.**

Carried

The Council meeting closed to the public at 9.00 pm.

OPENING THE MEETING TO THE PUBLIC

Resolution

Cr Davidson moved, Cr Miles seconded -

The Council meeting be open to the public.

Carried

The Council meeting opened to the public at 9.10 pm.

The Council meeting closed at 9.10 pm.

Confirmed

Cr Nat Abboud
MAYOR