Merri-bek City Council

PROPOSED
Minutes of the Council Meeting

Held in Bunjil (Council Chamber), Merri-bek Civic Centre,
90 Bell Street, Coburg
on Wednesday 14 October 2026

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The Mayor opened the meeting at 6.32 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	6.32 pm	8.09 pm
Cr Helen Davidson, Deputy Mayor	Apology	
Cr Sue Bolton	6.32 pm	8.09 pm
Cr Liz Irvin	6.32 pm	8.09 pm
Cr Dr Jay Iwasaki	6.32 pm	8.09 pm
Cr Chris Miles	6.32 pm	8.09 pm
Cr Helen Politis	6.32 pm	8.09 pm
Cr Adam Pulford	6.33 pm	8.09 pm
Cr Ella Svensson	6.32 pm	8.09 pm
Cr Katerine Theodosis	6.32 pm	8.09 pm
Cr Oscar Yildiz JP	6.32 pm	8.09 pm

OFFICERS

Chief Executive Officer – Kate McCaughey
Director Business Transformation – Sue Vujcevic
Director City Infrastructure – Greg Rodwell
Director Place and Environment – Pene Winslade
Director Community – Eamonn Fennessy
Manager Governance and Strategy – Yvonne Callanan
Unit Manager Governance and Risk – Sophie Barison
Team Leader Governance – Naomi Ellis

APOLOGIES/LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Cr Davidson, Deputy Mayor was an apology to the meeting.

DISCLOSURES OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Nil.

MINUTE CONFIRMATION

Resolution

Cr Miles moved, Cr Iwasaki seconded -

The minutes of the Council Meeting held on 9 September 2026 be confirmed.

Carried

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS AND OTHER MATTERS

Cr Iwasaki:

- Acknowledged the tragedy at Brunswick Brickworks over the weekend, and shared the residents' sense of regret and sorrow, noting residents' longstanding advocacy for improved safety at the site.

Cr Politis:

- Acknowledged October as Festival Month, including the Victorian Seniors Festival. Council's Seniors Festival opened with the Bolder Exhibition at Coburg Town Hall on 1 October, attracting a large turnout of residents aged from their 60s to their 90s. Speakers shared stories of their ongoing involvement in and contributions to the community.
- Recognised Council's Aged Care services in supporting residents to remain at home and active in the community, including:
    - More than 56,500 Meals at Home deliveries in the last financial year.
    - Gardening services.
    - Shopping assistance.
    - Personal care and household support services.
- Noted that only around 30 per cent of Victorian councils continue to provide these services.
- Acknowledged the successful, sold-out Elvis tribute concert at Coburg Town Hall, noting strong participation by attendees.
- Noted that the Brunswick Greek Festival would be held at the Albion Street Greek Church on the coming Sunday.

Cr Miles

- Reported attending Glenroy Football Club's 80th anniversary celebrations with Cr Davidson, noting the club's history and the longstanding contributions of volunteers and community members.

Cr Bolton

- Reported attending the Fawkner Tennis Club launch of a new Tennis Victoria-supported program aimed at encouraging girls and women to participate in tennis. The program runs through to 19 December and uses innovative, fun teaching methods designed to build confidence and enjoyment of the game. The program attracted diverse participation from local women and girls.

Cr Irvin

- Reported attending the Brunswick Community History Group meeting featuring a presentation by Kelvin Thomson on the history of Moonee Ponds Creek. The presentation highlighted the positive outcomes from decades of activism and advocacy. Successful rehabilitation projects undertaken by Melbourne Water and Merri-bek Council were recognised as outcomes of that advocacy.

Mayor, Cr Abboud

- Reported attending the Rotary Lift the Lid Walk along the Merri Creek with Kelvin Thompson and Cr Davidson.
- Acknowledged Carers Appreciation Week, thanking carers across Merri-bek for their work.
- Acknowledged International Plain Language Day and Council's efforts to make its communications and services accessible to Merri-bek's diverse community. Welcomed 25 new Community Connectors, noting that the program began in 2021–22 with six participants and now includes 25 connectors representing a broad cross-section of the community.

PETITIONS

Nil.

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 6.45 pm.

Notice of Motion 8.1 Restoration of full postal services to Glenroy

Council received 1 statement. It was presented to Council.

Chris Osborne and **Wendy Rushby** made the following statement:

Three years ago, our post office closed, and for the past three years we've been fighting to bring postal services back to Glenroy. We are now a well-established working group, and I want to thank Merri-bek Council for the support you've provided us. I'd also like to thank Ms Kathleen Matthews-Ward MP for previously writing to the Minister in support of restoring postal services in Glenroy, and providing us with a meeting space over the last three years. Supporting Cr Davidson's motion tonight would be greatly appreciated also.

We're also starting a new campaign for a licensed postal service in Glenroy. Despite multiple applications and several suitable sites being identified, Australia Post has repeatedly refused these applications without providing any explanation.

The lack of local postal services is affecting both residents and businesses. Local retailers are having to close their shops temporarily to access postal services elsewhere, while many elderly residents and people with disabilities are forced to travel by public transport to neighbouring suburbs. Some of the alternative locations suggested by Australia Post are not fully accessible, lacking wheelchair access.

We thank Council for its continued support of your fight to bring a postal service back to Glenroy.

We know we will not get an actual Post Office back in Glenroy, but we need a fully functional LPO, with services of Face to face contact, Banking, Bill payments, Identity checks, and mailing services.

Glenroy has a large community of elderly and disability residents, who have to catch public transport or get family or friends to help them. Having a local LPO will make their lives easier. Also give them independence.

Glenroy also have a large number of small families, that rely on a local LPO , especially for the families, that only have one car, so the parent responsible for the family, have to catch public transport (trying to get prams and toddlers on PT, as they have minds of their own). If an LPO was local walking would be a great advantage.

We don't want Glenroy to become a ghost suburb, we need an LPO, our businesses are suffering without an LPO, as they either have to close or get a staff member to go, to, another LPO, which takes time away from their business (it can take anything from half an hour to an hour), which they can ill afford.

Australia Post is owned by us, being a Government Body, it is totally unreasonable, as why they are closing Post Offices down. They are supposed to be providing a service to the community, which they are definitely not fulfilling.

NON-AGENDA ITEMS - QUESTIONS

Council received 5 questions relating to non-agenda items. They were presented to Council.

Ban the use and sale of synthetic fake spider web

Helen Breier asked Council:

Question 1

What it will do to prevent the risk of synthetic fake spider web impacting wildlife, children and asthmatics this Halloween season?

Question 2

Can Council at least inform residents of risks?

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

Council acknowledges the concerns raised about the potential impacts of synthetic spider web decorations on wildlife, particularly birds and insects during the spring nesting season, as well as concerns about plastic pollution and public health.

While Merri-bek City Council does not currently have a specific prohibition on synthetic spider web decorations, Council is committed to reducing single-use plastics through its Plastic Wise Policy. This policy supports the transition away from single-use plastics at Council facilities, services and events and encourages the use of sustainable alternatives.

The regulation and sale of consumer products is generally governed by the Australian Consumer Law, administered by the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) and Consumer Affairs Victoria. And the protection of native wildlife is primarily regulated by the Victorian Government through the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA). However Council recognises the importance of protecting local biodiversity and will continue to support this through our communication channels, as undertaken in previous years and by other councils, encouraging residents and businesses to avoid synthetic spider webs and choose wildlife-friendly Halloween decorations.

Council can also consider feedback on this issue as part of the upcoming consultation on the draft Community Local Law.

Retention of support for quarterly Mountfield and Howard Street Laneway cleanup activities

Suzy Pinchen asked Council if it would continue to provide bins for the quarterly laneway clean-up activities undertaken by residents in line with the previous practice?

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

Thank you for your question and for the significant contribution that residents of the Mountfield Street and Howard Street laneway community have made over many years.

Council acknowledges the dedication of residents who have voluntarily organised clean-up events for more than 15 years. These efforts have helped maintain the laneway, fostered community connection, and contributed positively to the local environment. Council sincerely appreciates the time and commitment that residents continue to invest in this initiative.

The decision to cease the delivery of temporary bins for the quarterly clean-up events was not made lightly and is not intended to diminish Council's support for these activities.

Over recent years, Council's City Amenity service has experienced a significant increase in demand, particularly in relation to responding to illegally dumped rubbish, litter hotspots and other amenity issues across the municipality. The delivery and collection of temporary bins requires dedicated staff, vehicles and operational resources that are increasingly needed to respond to these growing demands and to maintain essential services across Merri-bek.

Council is not seeking to reduce support for the clean-up activities undertaken by residents, nor is Council seeking to reduce the frequency at which rubbish generated through these events is collected. Rather, Council is working to identify an approach that continues to support the community group's valuable work while ensuring Council resources can be used as effectively as possible to deliver services across the municipality.

Council officers have been engaging with representatives of the group and remain committed to working collaboratively to identify a practical and sustainable solution that meets the needs of the community while balancing broader service delivery responsibilities. The proposed solution is register the event as a Community Litter Collection – by registering the event, the event will be provided with public liability insurance cover as well as access to a litter clean up kit, which contains gloves, high vis vests, bags, first aid equipment and data sheets

Council greatly values the contribution of the Mountfield Street and Howard Street residents and looks forward to continuing to support community-led initiatives that strengthen neighbourhood amenity, environmental outcomes and community connection.

7.08 pm Cr Bolton left the meeting.
7.09 pm Cr Bolton returned to the meeting during the debate.

Climate Advocacy Motion from Council Meeting on 13 May 2026

Valerie Kay and Ruben asked Council:

Question 1

Following the Climate Advocacy decision in May, when will the report will be available?

Question 2

Will the report consider a levy on big polluters?

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

We have already written to State and Federal ministers and Treasurers.

The report scoping options for a project will come to a future Council meeting. We don’t yet have a date but we hope in the coming months. As soon as the report is published we can let you know so you can read it and attend the Council meeting where it is considered, if you would like to.

Public Question Time concluded at 7.10 pm.

ALTER THE ORDER OF BUSINESS

With the agreement of Council, the order of business was altered to bring forward item Notice of Motion 8.1 Restoration of full postal services to Glenroy, before returning to the order of business as printed in the agenda.

NOTICE OF MOTION

8.1 RESTORATION OF FULL POSTAL SERVICES TO GLENROY

Motion

That Council:

1. Writes to Australia Post, Anika Wells MP, Jo Briskey MP, Peter Kahlil MP and Kathleen Matthews-Ward MP seeking that Australia Post seek to offer a licence for a local Glenroy business to operate a postal service that allows for bill payment and other agency services on which residents have relied.
2. Seeks that Australia Post work to establish a fully equipped postal outlet capable of providing in-person postal and bill payment services, while also ensuring that the needs of older residents, residents with disability or mobility limitations and residents who rely on face-to-face services and local businesses are properly considered.

Resolution

Cr Miles moved, Cr Irvin seconded -

That Council:

1. **Writes to Australia Post, Anika Wells MP, Jo Briskey MP, Peter Kahlil MP and Kathleen Matthews-Ward MP seeking that Australia Post seek to offer a licence for a local Glenroy business to operate a postal service that allows for bill payment and other agency services on which residents have relied.**
2. **Seeks that Australia Post work to establish a fully equipped postal outlet capable of providing in-person postal and bill payment services, while also ensuring that the needs of older residents, residents with disability or mobility limitations and residents who rely on face-to-face services and local businesses are properly considered.**

Carried unanimously

7.18 pm Cr Miles left the meeting.
7.18pm Cr Bolton left the meeting.

COUNCIL REPORTS

7.1 2025-26 MERRI-BEK CITY COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORT

Executive Summary

The Merri-bek City Council Annual Report 2025-26 contains Council's audited Financial and Performance Statements and provides information on Council operations and services delivered to and for the community for the 2025-26 financial year.

The report, at Attachment 1, contains the key highlights and achievements of Council for the year, including progress against the Council Plan.

Officer Recommendation

That Council:

1. Formally receives the Merri-bek City Council Annual Report 2025-26, provided as Attachment 1.

2. Authorises the Director Community to make minor changes to the report if required.

Resolution

Cr Politis moved, Cr Irvin seconded -

That Council:

1. **Formally receives the Merri-bek City Council Annual Report 2025-26, provided as Attachment 1.**
2. **Authorises the Director Community to make minor changes to the report if required.**

7.19 pm Cr Miles returned to the meeting during the debate.

Carried unanimously

7.2 DRAFT PLANNING SCHEME REVIEW 2026 FOR ADOPTION

Executive summary

Council is required to review its planning scheme every four years to assess its effectiveness and efficiency and ensure it continues to respond to the changing needs of the municipality and the Victorian planning system.

Since the last review of the Merri-bek Planning Scheme (Scheme) in 2022, Victoria's planning system has undergone significant State-led reform, including new housing targets, residential development standards and increasingly standardised assessment pathways. These changes have reshaped how land use and development will be planned and managed in a growing and changing Merri-bek.

Given the extent of these reforms, earlier this year the Department of Transport and Planning (DTP) issued the *Planning Scheme Reviews: Advisory Note, March 2026* (Advisory Note). The Advisory Note sets out matters for councils to consider when undertaking their reviews as part of the 2026 review cycle (refer to Attachment 1). Housing is a strong focus, reflecting the State Government's direction to increase housing supply and capacity.

For Merri-bek, some of the key matters arising from the Advisory Note include:

- Implications of State Government housing targets, including Merri-bek's target of 69,000 net additional dwellings by 2051, and potential additional capacity indicated by the State.
- Changes to the statutory planning framework and alignment with broader State planning directions.
- The new *Plan for Victoria*, including changes to the classification of activity centres.

The draft *Planning Scheme Review 2026* (Review) at Attachment 2 considers the implications of these reforms for Merri-bek and finds that the Scheme remains broadly effective as a framework for managing land use and development. It identifies strategic priorities to ensure the Scheme remains contemporary and responsive to Merri-bek's future needs, as well as some non-material and routine updates.

Having regard to the Advisory Note, the Review adopts a two-track Roadmap:

- **Track A – non-material updates:** A routine amendment to improve the accuracy, consistency and operation of the planning scheme and align local content with recent State Government reforms.

- **Track B – strategic priorities:** Focus Council's effort within three pillars: Housing & Residential Development, Economy & Employment, and Climate, Risk & Environment.

The Roadmap represents a shift in Council's approach to strategic planning, from progressing individual projects and amendments towards a strategy-led approach, including proposed future work on a Housing Strategy, Spatial Economy & Employment Strategy, and Climate, Risk & Environment Framework.

This approach establishes the evidence and strategic direction before determining the statutory response, focusing Council's resources on a small number of priorities over the next four years. Adoption of the Review does not introduce new planning controls or commit Council to unbudgeted expenditure; future strategic projects and amendments will be subject to separate budget, engagement and statutory processes.

It is recommended that Council adopt the draft *Planning Scheme Review 2026* at Attachment 2 as the final Review, in accordance with section 12B(1) of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* (Act) and submit it to the Minister for Planning by the end of October 2026, in accordance with section 12B(5) of the Act.

Officer Recommendation

That Council:

1. Adopts the draft *Planning Scheme Review 2026* (Review) at Attachment 2 to this report as the final Review for Merri-bek City Council, having undertaken the review in accordance with section 12B(1) of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*.
2. Submits the final Review to the Minister for Planning in accordance with section 12B(5) of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*.
3. Authorises the Director Place and Environment to undertake any procedural and administrative actions necessary to give effect to this resolution.

Resolution

Cr Irvin moved, Cr Pulford seconded -

That Council:

1. **Adopts the draft Planning Scheme Review 2026 (Review) at Attachment 2 to this report as the final Review for Merri-bek City Council, having undertaken the review in accordance with section 12B(1) of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*.**
2. **Submits the final Review to the Minister for Planning in accordance with section 12B(5) of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*.**
3. **Authorises the Director Place and Environment to undertake any procedural and administrative actions necessary to give effect to this resolution.**

7.24 pm Cr Bolton returned to the meeting during the debate.

Carried unanimously

7.3 CENTRAL COBURG PROGRAM ROAD MAP

Executive summary

Council has established a long-term vision for Central Coburg and, with the Central Coburg Framework Plan endorsed in June 2026, the focus can now shift from planning the future precinct to delivering it.

The transformation of Central Coburg will take place over 10–20 years and will require Council to work differently across different sites and at different points in the development cycle. Current market conditions mean that traditional development models are not feasible at this time in the cycle. The Central Coburg Road Map provides a practical pathway forward, allowing Council to continue making progress where it can, while creating opportunities to test new approaches and respond as market conditions change.

A key part of this approach is exploring Community Wealth Building opportunities on selected Council-owned sites. This provides an opportunity to consider how public land assets can attract investment in Central Coburg with lasting community benefit, including through new partnerships and alternative ownership and delivery models. If successful, these initiatives will keep Coburg's distinctiveness and essence, strengthen the precinct and increase the value of other landholdings. At the same time, Council can continue to prepare sites for traditional market opportunities where and when they are viable.

The Road Map also identifies projects that Council can deliver directly to improve the precinct and create the conditions for future investment. The Waterfield West public realm and infrastructure upgrade is the first of these catalyst projects. It will prepare the site for the new Library and Piazza, improve the operation of the precinct and address infrastructure, access and parking requirements. Early works are proposed to commence in July 2027, ahead of construction of the Library and Piazza, currently planned for mid-2028.

Together, the Road Map and Waterfield West public realm and infrastructure upgrade provide the next step in delivering the vision for Central Coburg. They allow Council to keep moving forward now, while retaining the flexibility to shape the future of the precinct as new opportunities emerge.

Officer recommendation

That Council:

1. Endorses the Central Coburg Road Map at Attachment 1 to guide implementation of the Central Coburg Framework.
2. Receives a discussion paper on Community Wealth Building options in 2027.
3. Endorses the budgeted Waterfield West public realm and infrastructure works to proceed, which will deliver flood mitigation across the entire Waterfield West site, public realm upgrades around the Library and Piazza, and interim reconfiguration of the surrounding carpark to minimise disruption to the precinct as development is staged in the medium term.

Resolution

Cr Politis moved, Cr Svensson seconded -

That Council:

1. **Endorses the Central Coburg Road Map at Attachment 1 to guide implementation of the Central Coburg Framework.**
2. **Receives a discussion paper on Community Wealth Building options in 2027.**
3. **Endorses the budgeted Waterfield West public realm and infrastructure works to proceed, which will deliver flood mitigation across the entire Waterfield West site, public realm upgrades around the Library and Piazza, and interim reconfiguration of the surrounding carpark to minimise disruption to the precinct as development is staged in the medium term.**

Carried

Cr Bolton abstained from voting.

7.4 MERRI-BEK COMMUNITY LOCAL LAW 2026 - DRAFT FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Executive Summary

The General Local Law 2018 expires on 1 February 2028. Council has undertaken a comprehensive review and prepared a new draft Community Local Law 2026 (Attachment 1) and draft Building and Works Code of Practice 2026 (Attachment 2) for public consultation.

The draft has been informed by round 1 community consultation, two Councillor sessions, extensive internal review and external legal advice. It modernises and consolidates Council's local law framework, improves clarity and enforceability, and strengthens controls relating to amenity, safety, accessibility, environmental protection, Council assets, animals, vehicles, waste, businesses and building activity.

The draft also responds to emerging issues raised through the review process. This includes a proposed provision addressing the inappropriate use of recording devices in Council facilities, including emerging technologies such as smart glasses, where their use may impact privacy, safety, amenity or the orderly operation of a municipal place. More detailed restrictions for sensitive locations, such as change rooms and leisure facilities, will continue to be managed through facility-specific conditions of entry.

Round 1 consultation generated 138 direct contributions (Attachment 3). Strongest support related to building-site management, shopping-trolley controls, dangerous and unsightly land, hooning-related powers and animal containment. Consultation results are engagement evidence and are not statistically representative.

The review is funded within the approved Amenity and Compliance budget. No additional funding is sought through this report. Outstanding legal advice is being finalised and is expected to result only in minor drafting amendments before the draft is released for consultation.

The proposed commencement date of the Community Local Law 2026 is 1 April 2027.

Officer Recommendation

That Council:

1. Endorses the draft Community Local Law 2026 and draft Building and Works Code of Practice 2026 for community engagement.
2. Notes the community engagement period for the draft Community Local Law 2026 and draft Building Works Code of Practice 2026 will be from 15 October to 12 November 2026 and includes:
    a) Commencing the statutory process for making the proposed Community Local Law 2026 in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020* by making a copy of the draft Community Local Law 2026 available at Council offices and on Council's website of its intention to make the Community Local Law 2026, stating its objectives and intended effect of the draft local law and the community engagement process that applies in respect of making the local law.
3. Authorises the Chief Executive Officer make minor drafting amendments resulting from the outstanding external legal advice before the draft is released for consultation.
4. Notes that all submissions received during consultation will be considered before the final draft is legally certified and presented to Council for adoption in December 2026.

Motion

Cr Miles moved, Cr Irvin seconded -

1. Endorses the draft Community Local Law 2026 and draft Building and Works Code of Practice 2026 for community engagement.
2. Notes the community engagement period for the draft Community Local Law 2026 and draft Building Works Code of Practice 2026 will be from 15 October to 12 November 2026 and includes:
    a) Commencing the statutory process for making the proposed Community Local Law 2026 in accordance with the Local Government Act 2020 by making a copy of the draft Community Local Law 2026 available at Council offices and on Council's website of its intention to make the Community Local Law 2026, stating its objectives and intended effect of the draft local law and the community engagement process that applies in respect of making the local law.
3. Authorises the Chief Executive Officer make drafting amendments including those relating to audible intruder alarms, light spill, Council's guidelines for community gardens and food growing, donation bins and recording devices resulting from the outstanding external legal advice before the draft is released for consultation.
4. Notes that all submissions received during consultation will be considered before the final draft is legally certified and presented to Council for adoption in December 2026.

Meeting Adjournment

Resolution

Cr Iwasaki moved, Cr Irvin seconded -

That the meeting be adjourned at 7.34 pm for 5 minutes.

Carried

The Council meeting adjourned at 7.34 pm.

Meeting Resumption

Resolution

Cr Iwasaki moved, Cr Miles seconded -

That the meeting resume.

Carried

The Council meeting resumed at 7.40 pm with all Councillors present.

Resolution

Cr Miles moved, Cr Irvin seconded -

That Council:

1. Endorses the draft Community Local Law 2026 and draft Building and Works Code of Practice 2026 for community engagement.

2. Notes the community engagement period for the draft Community Local Law 2026 and draft Building Works Code of Practice 2026 will be from 15 October to 12 November 2026 and includes:

a) Commencing the statutory process for making the proposed Community Local Law 2026 in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020* by making a copy of the draft Community Local Law 2026 available at Council offices and on Council's website of its intention to make the Community Local Law 2026, stating its objectives and intended effect of the draft local law and the community engagement process that applies in respect of making the local law.

3. Authorises the Chief Executive Officer make drafting amendments including those relating to audible intruder alarms, light spill, Council's guidelines for community gardens and food growing, donation bins and recording devices resulting from the outstanding external legal advice before the draft is released for consultation.

4. Notes that all submissions received during consultation will be considered before the final draft is legally certified and presented to Council for adoption in December 2026.

5. Notes that Council will also explore whether it is possible to ban the use of decorative plastic netting (i.e fake spider web) through our local laws and, if it is, updates the draft local laws with a provision to ban its usage in Merri-bek.

Carried unanimously

7.5 GOVERNANCE REPORT - OCTOBER 2026

Executive Summary

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

This Governance report includes:

- Records of Meetings, with a recommendation that Council notes the records.
- Responses to Public Question Time taken on notice at the 9 September 2026 Council meeting, with a recommendation that Council notes the responses.
- A recommendation that Council retain, for a further 12 months, the 15% cumulative contract variation threshold applying to contracts approved by the Chief Executive Officer under delegation and to contracts approved by Council.
- A recommendation that Council appoints and authorises the Council officers referred to in the Instrument of Appointment and Authorisation (*Planning and Environment Act 1987*).
- A report from Cr Iwasaki on attendance at an approved activity, at the Victorian Greenhouse Alliance Conference.
- The summary of minutes from the Audit and Risk Committee held 1 September 2026.
- The Merri-bek City Council Audit and Risk Committee Performance Report 2025/26.
- The Merri-bek City Council Audit and Risk Committee Recommendations and Findings Report.
- The Financial Management Report as at 31 August 2026.

Officer Recommendation

That Council:

1. Notes the Records of Meetings, at Attachment 1 to this report.
2. Notes the responses to questions taken on notice during Public Question Time at the 9 September Council meeting, provided as Attachment 2 to this report.
3. Extends for a further 12 months the temporary increase in the Chief Executive Officer's delegated authority to approve cumulative contract variations from 5% to 15% of the approved contract sum, applying to contracts approved by the Chief Executive Officer under delegation and to contracts approved by Council.
4. In the exercise of the powers conferred by section 11 of the *Local Government Act 2020* and the other legislation referred to in the attached Instrument of Delegation, delegates to the person holding the position, or acting in or performing the duties, of Chief Executive Officer the powers, duties and functions set out in the Instrument of Delegation to the Chief Executive Officer, provided as Attachment 3 to this report, subject to the conditions and limitations specified in that Instrument and determines:
    a) The instrument comes into force immediately when signed by the Chief Executive Officer and Mayor.
    b) On the coming into force of the instrument, the previous delegation to the Chief Executive Officer adopted on 15 April 2026 is revoked.
    c) The duties and functions set out in the instrument must be performed, and the powers set out in the instrument must be exercised, in accordance with any guidelines or policies of Council that it may from time to time adopt.
5. Receives a report at its October 2027 Council meeting to review the Instrument of Delegation from Council to the Chief Executive Officer.
6. 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 24 August 2026.
    c) Authorises the affixing of Council's common seal.
7. Notes Cr Iwasaki's report on attendance at an approved activity, at the Victorian Greenhouse Alliance Conference.
8. Notes the summary of minutes from the Audit and Risk Committee held 1 September 2026 at Attachment 5 to this report.
9. Notes the Merri-bek City Council Audit and Risk Committee Performance Report 2025/26 at Attachment 6 to this report.
10. Notes the Merri-bek City Council Audit and Risk Committee Recommendations and Findings Report at Attachment 7 to this report.
11. Notes the Financial Management Report as at 31 August 2026 at Attachment 8 to this report.

Resolution

Cr Irvin moved, Cr Svensson seconded -

That Council:

1. **Notes the Records of Meetings, at Attachment 1 to this report.**
2. **Notes the responses to questions taken on notice during Public Question Time at the 9 September Council meeting, provided as Attachment 2 to this report.**
3. **Extends for a further 12 months the temporary increase in the Chief Executive Officer's delegated authority to approve cumulative contract variations from 5% to 15% of the approved contract sum, applying to contracts approved by the Chief Executive Officer under delegation and to contracts approved by Council.**
4. **In the exercise of the powers conferred by section 11 of the *Local Government Act 2020* and the other legislation referred to in the attached Instrument of Delegation, delegates to the person holding the position, or acting in or performing the duties, of Chief Executive Officer the powers, duties and functions set out in the Instrument of Delegation to the Chief Executive Officer, provided as Attachment 3 to this report, subject to the conditions and limitations specified in that Instrument and determines:**
    a) **The instrument comes into force immediately when signed by the Chief Executive Officer and Mayor.**
    b) **On the coming into force of the instrument, the previous delegation to the Chief Executive Officer adopted on 15 April 2026 is revoked.**
    c) **The duties and functions set out in the instrument must be performed, and the powers set out in the instrument must be exercised, in accordance with any guidelines or policies of Council that it may from time to time adopt.**
5. **Receives a report at its October 2027 Council meeting to review the Instrument of Delegation from Council to the Chief Executive Officer.**
6. **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 24 August 2026.**
    c) **Authorises the affixing of Council's common seal.**
7. **Notes Cr Iwasaki's report on attendance at an approved activity, at the Victorian Greenhouse Alliance Conference.**
8. **Notes the summary of minutes from the Audit and Risk Committee held 1 September 2026 at Attachment 5 to this report.**
9. **Notes the Merri-bek City Council Audit and Risk Committee Performance Report 2025/26 at Attachment 6 to this report.**
10. **Notes the Merri-bek City Council Audit and Risk Committee Recommendations and Findings Report at Attachment 7 to this report.**

11. Notes the Financial Management Report as at 31 August 2026 at Attachment 8 to this report.

Carried unanimously

7.6 MAV-2026-5 PROVISION OF SPECIALISED HEAVY VEHICLE FLEET PARTS, REPAIRS AND ASSOCIATED SERVICES

Executive Summary

Council approval is sought to opt into an established panel agreement providing access to six specialised suppliers for the provision of heavy vehicle fleet parts, repairs and associated services. These suppliers provide critical products and technical expertise that are essential to maintaining the safety, reliability and operational performance of Council's heavy vehicle fleet.

Access to this panel will provide a compliant and efficient procurement pathway for specialised fleet maintenance requirements, ensuring critical repairs and replacement parts can be sourced in a timely manner. This will assist in minimising vehicle downtime, reducing operational disruption and supporting the continued delivery of essential Council services.

The proposed agreement will also provide an interim procurement solution while Procurement and Fleet progress planning a comprehensive Fleet Services and Consumables contract, which is expected to encompass tyres, automotive spare parts and other specialised fleet services.

The expenditure associated with this panel will be funded through existing fleet maintenance budgets. While maintenance costs are expected to increase as Council continues to operate an ageing heavy vehicle fleet, this expenditure is necessary to manage the heightened risks associated with ageing assets. Ongoing investment in replacement parts, repairs and specialised technical services is essential to ensure vehicles remain safe, compliant and operationally reliable, while reducing the risk of breakdowns, unplanned downtime, service disruptions and associated safety impacts. Adoption of the recommendation will enable Council to effectively manage these risks while maintaining fleet availability and supporting continuity of service delivery.

The tender complies with Section 109(1) of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

Officer Recommendation

That Council:

1. Authorises opting into a Collaborative Procurement Agreement with Municipal Association Victoria (MAV) Contract No NPN 1.23 - Trucks, Buses, Specialised Trucks, Truck Bodies and Trailers with the Schedule of Rates Tender:
    a) For an initial contract term that has already commenced ending 31 January 2027, with an option of a future two (2), three (3) year extension options at the discretion of Council.
    b) Access the following suppliers appointed under the contract:
        1. Adtrans Truck Centre (Iveco)
        2. Bucher Municipal
        3. Whitehorse Truck Spares T/A Fuso Port Melbourne (Daimler)
        4. CMI Hino
        5. Superior Pak

6. CMV Truck and Bus (Volvo)

c) For a maximum expenditure of $5,038,000 (excluding GST) for the term of the contract, including extension options.

2. Authorises the Chief Executive Officer to execute all documents and do all things necessary to give effect to the agreement, exercise any extension options subject to satisfactory contractor performance, and approve variations in accordance with the contract and Council's Procurement Policy.

Resolution

Cr Svensson moved, Cr Irvin seconded -

That Council:

1. Authorises opting into a Collaborative Procurement Agreement with Municipal Association Victoria (MAV) Contract No NPN 1.23 - Trucks, Buses, Specialised Trucks, Truck Bodies and Trailers with the Schedule of Rates Tender:

a) For an initial contract term that has already commenced ending 31 January 2027, with an option of a future two (2), three (3) year extension options at the discretion of Council.

b) Access the following suppliers appointed under the contract:

1. Adtrans Truck Centre (Iveco)

2. Bucher Municipal

3. Whitehorse Truck Spares T/A Fuso Port Melbourne (Daimler)

4. CMI Hino

5. Superior Pak

6. CMV Truck and Bus (Volvo)

c) For a maximum expenditure of $5,038,000 (excluding GST) for the term of the contract, including extension options.

2. Authorises the Chief Executive Officer to execute all documents and do all things necessary to give effect to the agreement, exercise any extension options subject to satisfactory contractor performance, and approve variations in accordance with the contract and Council's Procurement Policy.

Carried unanimously

7.7 CONTRACT AWARD: RFT-2026-22- FAWKNER NETBALL COURTS UPGRADE (NEW ROOF AND RESURFACING WORKS)

Executive Summary

This report seeks Council approval to award Contract RFT-2026-22 – Fawkner Netball Courts Upgrade (New Roof and Resurfacing Works) to the preferred contractor Alchemy Construct Pty Ltd.

The project will upgrade the existing eight netball courts at Charles Mutton Reserve, Fawkner, including the construction of roof structures over the netball courts, resurfacing of all eight courts, civil and drainage works, sports lighting, electrical works and associated sporting infrastructure.

Two 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, Alchemy Construct Pty Ltd has been identified as the preferred contractor, who has a strong track record of delivering local government, community, sport and recreation infrastructure projects, together with experience in the construction of large-span steel roof structures.

The tender complies with section 109(1) of the *Local Government Act 2020.*

Officer Recommendation

That Council:

1. Awards the contract RFT-2026-22 for Fawkner Netball Courts Upgrade (New roof and resurfacing works) (the **Contract**), to **Alchemy Construct Pty Ltd** (the Contractor) for a fixed lump sum amount of $4,120,029.00 (excluding GST) plus a provisional sum of $300,000.00 (excluding GST), totaling $4,420,029.00 (excluding GST), and otherwise subject to and in accordance with paragraph 2 of this Resolution:
2. Authorises the Chief Executive Officer to:
    a) 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;
    b) 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;
    c) Advise all tenderers of Council's decision in relation to the Contract (conditional on acceptance of the contract by the Contractor in accordance with the terms of this resolution);
3. Acknowledges and thanks the Australian Government for its support and contribution to this project for the amount of $4.561 million.

Resolution

Cr Bolton moved, Cr Miles seconded -

That Council:

1. Awards the contract RFT-2026-22 for Fawkner Netball Courts Upgrade (New roof and resurfacing works) (the Contract), to Alchemy Construct Pty Ltd (the Contractor) for a fixed lump sum amount of $4,120,029.00 (excluding GST) plus a provisional sum of $300,000.00 (excluding GST), totaling $4,420,029.00 (excluding GST), and otherwise subject to and in accordance with paragraph 2 of this Resolution:

2. Authorises the Chief Executive Officer to:

a) 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;

b) 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;

c) Advise all tenderers of Council's decision in relation to the Contract (conditional on acceptance of the contract by the Contractor in accordance with the terms of this resolution);

3. Acknowledges and thanks the Australian Government for its support and contribution to this project for the amount of $4.561 million.

Carried unanimously

7.8 CONTRACT AWARD: RFT-P-2024-3 - PROVISION OF GENERAL AND SPECIALIST TREE SERVICES

Executive Summary

This report seeks Council approval to award Contract RFT-P-2024-3 Re-Tender for the General and Specialist Tree Services to the preferred contractor Dianabelle Pty Ltd T/A RootControllers and Hydrox Australia.

This panel contract was re-tendered to expand the number of contractors in Category D – Tree Root Services. Two 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, Dianabelle Pty Ltd T/A RootControllers and Hydrox Australia has been identified as the preferred contractor, who have a strong track record of providing similar services.

The tender complies with section 109(1) of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

Officer Recommendation

That Council:

1. Awards the contract **RFT-P-2024-3** for the Re-Tender for the **Provision of General and Specialist Tree Services** (the **Contract**), to **Dianabelle Pty Ltd T/A RootControllers and Hydrox Australia** (the **Contractor)** under category D of the panel contract (Tree Root Services) for the submitted schedule of rates (excluding GST).
2. Notes there is no change to the maximum contract value previously authorised.
3. Authorises the Chief Executive Officer to:
    a) 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;
    b) 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; and
    c) Advise all tenderers of Council's decision in relation to the Contract (conditional on acceptance of the Contract by the Contractor in accordance with the terms of this resolution);
    d) Exercise the option(s) to extend contracts in accordance with the provisions within the Contract; and
    e) Accept new panel contractor(s) during the contract term subject to the same public tender/evaluation process as adopted for the original panel contractors, to ensure a range of suitable suppliers to meet Council's needs is maintained, providing the total contract amount remains unchanged.

Resolution

Cr Svensson moved, Cr Pulford seconded -

That Council:

1. **Awards the contract RFT-P-2024-3 for the Re-Tender for the Provision of General and Specialist Tree Services (the Contract), to Dianabelle Pty Ltd T/A RootControllers and Hydrox Australia (the Contractor) under category D of the panel contract (Tree Root Services) for the submitted schedule of rates (excluding GST).**
2. **Notes there is no change to the maximum contract value previously authorised.**
3. **Authorises the Chief Executive Officer to:**
    a) **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;**
    b) **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; and**
    c) **Advise all tenderers of Council's decision in relation to the Contract (conditional on acceptance of the Contract by the Contractor in accordance with the terms of this resolution);**
    d) **Exercise the option(s) to extend contracts in accordance with the provisions within the Contract; and**
    e) **Accept new panel contractor(s) during the contract term subject to the same public tender/evaluation process as adopted for the original panel contractors, to ensure a range of suitable suppliers to meet Council's needs is maintained, providing the total contract amount remains unchanged.**

Carried unanimously

7.9 CONTRACT AWARD: RFT-2026-25 - DRAINAGE IMPROVEMENT WORKS - WEST STREET, HADFIELD (EVERARD, LYONS, BOURCHIER TO HILTON STREET)

Executive Summary

This report seeks Council approval to award Contract RFT-2026-25 Drainage Improvement Works - West Street, Hadfield (Everard, Lyons, Bourchier to Hilton Street) to the preferred contractor, ADP Constructions Pty Ltd.

The Drainage Improvement Works West Street, Hadfield (Everard, Lyons, Bourchier to Hilton Street) has been included in the 2026–2027 Capital Works Program under the Roads and Carparks Program. The works involve construction of underground drainage pipes and associated pits, reinstatement of drainage trench, road resurfacing, replacement of some concrete kerb and channel, concrete vehicle crossings, concrete footpath. Another major objective of this project is to address flooding concerns along the scope of the work.

Two 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. Market interest in this project was limited due to its high complexity and associated construction risks. The works involve constructing more than 60 drainage pits, with some excavations exceeding 2.6 m in depth. Basalt rock is typically encountered from approximately 400 mm below ground level in this area, requiring extensive rock excavation. These challenging ground conditions and the associated cost and program risks discouraged a number of contractors from tendering for the project.

Following the tender evaluation process, including interview with the shortlisted tenderer ADP Constructions Pty Ltd has been identified as the preferred contractor, who have a strong track record in the major drainage as well as road reconstruction projects. ADP Constructions Pty Ltd has successfully delivered projects of similar scale and complexity for various other councils, with strong performance outcomes including two recent projects for Council (South Street, Hadfield Major Drainage Upgrade and O' Hea Street, Pascoe Vale Road Reconstruction).

Onsite construction is scheduled to commence in mid-February 2027 and is anticipated to be completed within a 19-week period, with practical completion targeted for mid to late June 2027, subject to ground conditions and weather. To minimise disruption to residents and local traffic, the works will be staged across two to three distinct sections and delivered concurrently by multiple crews, enabling an efficient construction program and accelerated project delivery.

The contract shortfall of $307,147.36 is being recommended to the quarterly forecasting process. Officers have identified two other projects from the Civil Assets program that will have savings declared in the upcoming forecast process that will offset the budget shortfall from this project.

The tender complies with section 109(1) of the *Local Government Act 2020.*

Officer Recommendation

That Council:

1. Awards the contract **RFT-2026-25** for the **Drainage Improvement Works - West Street, Hadfield (Everard, Lyons, Bourchier to Hilton Street)** (the **Contract**), to **ADP Constructions Pty Ltd** (the **Contractor)** for a fixed lump sum amount of $1,346,257.36 (excluding GST) plus a provisional sum of $360,890.00 (excluding GST), totaling $1,707,147.36 (excluding GST).
2. Authorises the Chief Executive Officer to:
    a) 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;
    b) 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; and
    c) Advise all tenderers of Council's decision in relation to the Contract (conditional on acceptance of the Contract by the Contractor in accordance with the terms of this resolution);
3. Refers the contract shortfall of $307,147.36 to the quarterly forecast process.

Resolution

Cr Miles moved, Cr Bolton seconded -

That Council:

1. **Awards the contract RFT-2026-25 for the Drainage Improvement Works - West Street, Hadfield (Everard, Lyons, Bourchier to Hilton Street) (the Contract), to ADP Constructions Pty Ltd (the Contractor) for a fixed lump sum amount of $1,346,257.36 (excluding GST) plus a provisional sum of $360,890.00 (excluding GST), totaling $1,707,147.36 (excluding GST).**
2. **Authorises the Chief Executive Officer to:**
    a) **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;**
    b) **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; and**
    c) **Advise all tenderers of Council's decision in relation to the Contract (conditional on acceptance of the Contract by the Contractor in accordance with the terms of this resolution);**
3. **Refers the contract shortfall of $307,147.36 to the quarterly forecast process.**

Carried unanimously

7.10 CONTRACT EXTENSION: RFT-2023-477 FOR WAT DJEERING ANIMAL FACILITY SERVICES

Executive Summary

This report seeks Council approval to exercise the available five-year extension option for continued animal welfare services at the wat djerring Animal Facility and increase the maximum expenditure authorised under the contract.

Merri-bek is required to provide animal management and pound/shelter services to support its statutory functions, including the management of lost, impounded, seized, surrendered and unclaimed animals. The current agreement operates as a regional shared-service model between Whittlesea, Merri-bek and Darebin, with Whittlesea operating the facility as service provider.

The initial contract term commenced on 16 October 2022 and expires on 15 October 2027, with one optional five-year extension available. Council’s 2022 resolution requires further approval before exercising the extension, and the 2025 resolution requires Councillors to receive notice of any proposed extension at least 12 months before expiry.

The maximum spend authorised under the original contract was $3.5 million (inclusive of GST). The Chief Executive Officer subsequently approved a $525,000 contract variation under delegation, increasing the authorised value of the initial term to $4.025 million including GST. This report is recommending a new maximum spend under the contract, including the extension term of $10,131,000 (inclusive of GST) or $9,210,000 (excluding GST).

The recommended option remains to exercise the five-year extension under Merri-bek's separate Animal Welfare Services Agreement with the City of Whittlesea and continue the current regional shared-service arrangement to protect service continuity from October 2027. It reflects Council's existing capital investment, the established purpose-built facility, known service capacity and animal-welfare capability, and the absence of a replacement service that could be implemented without material transition risk.

Officer Recommendation

That Council:

1. Approves the extension of the Animal Welfare Services Agreement (RFT-2023-477) with the City of Whittlesea for the continued provision of animal welfare services at the wat djerring Animal Facility, for the period 16 October 2027 to 15 October 2032.
2. Approves an increased maximum spend under this contract (inclusive of the initial term and extension option) of $9,210,000 (excluding GST).
3. Notes that the contract operating model comprises Service Operating Costs and animal-specific costs, as detailed in section six of this report, and that Council officers will work with the Cities of Whittlesea and Darebin to confirm a clear, transparent and auditable methodology for allocating fixed and variable costs during the extension period.
4. Authorises the Chief Executive Officer to do all things necessary to give effect to the extension, including negotiating greater certainty in Service Operating Costs in the extension agreement, issuing any required notice, executing associated documents and making any administrative amendments required to continue the service.

Resolution

Cr Irvin moved, Cr Svensson seconded -

That Council:

1. **Approves the extension of the Animal Welfare Services Agreement (RFT-2023-477) with the City of Whittlesea for the continued provision of animal welfare services at the wat djerring Animal Facility, for the period 16 October 2027 to 15 October 2032.**
2. **Approves an increased maximum spend under this contract (inclusive of the initial term and extension option) of $9,210,000 (excluding GST).**
3. **Notes that the contract operating model comprises Service Operating Costs and animal-specific costs, as detailed in section six of this report, and that Council officers will work with the Cities of Whittlesea and Darebin to confirm a clear, transparent and auditable methodology for allocating fixed and variable costs during the extension period.**
4. **Authorises the Chief Executive Officer to do all things necessary to give effect to the extension, including negotiating greater certainty in Service Operating Costs in the extension agreement, issuing any required notice, executing associated documents and making any administrative amendments required to continue the service.**

Carried unanimously

NOTICES OF MOTION

Notice of Motion 8.1 - Restoration of full postal services to Glenroy - was brought forward to be considered as the first item.

NOTICE OF RESCISSION

Nil.

FORESHADOWED ITEMS

Nil.

URGENT BUSINESS REPORTS

Nil.

CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS

Resolution

Cr Svensson moved, Cr Politis seconded -

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

- **12.1 Procurement Exemption: EXE-2026-46: Semi-Automated Public Toilets because it relates to Council business information, being information that would prejudice the Council's position in commercial negotiations if prematurely released.**

Carried

The Council meeting closed to the public at 8.04 pm.

OPENING THE MEETING TO THE PUBLIC

Resolution

Cr Miles moved, Cr Irvin seconded -

The Council meeting be open to the public.

Carried

The Council meeting opened to the public at 8.09 pm.

The Council meeting closed at 8.09 pm.

Confirmed

Cr Nat Abboud
MAYOR