



**Merri-bek**  
City Council

## **MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING**

Held at the Council Chamber, Merri-bek Civic Centre,  
90 Bell Street, Coburg  
on Wednesday 10 April 2024

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The Mayor opened the meeting at 7.02 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.

*In accordance with Governance Rule 3.5.7(5), the meeting was adjourned at 11.00 pm on Wednesday 10 April 2024 and resumed at 6.04 pm on Thursday 11 April 2023.*

	Wednesday 10 April		Thursday 11 April	
Present	Time In	Time Out	Time In	Time Out
Cr Adam Pulford, Mayor	7.02pm	11.00 pm	6.04 pm	7.31 pm
Cr Lambros Tapinos, Deputy Mayor	7.02pm	11.00 pm	6.04 pm	7.31 pm
Cr Angelica Panopoulos	7.02pm	11.00 pm	6.04 pm	7.31 pm
Cr Helen Davidson	7.07 pm	11.00 pm	6.04 pm	7.31 pm
Cr Annalivia Carli Hannan	Leave of absence		Leave of absence	
Cr Helen Pavlidis	7.02pm	11.00 pm	6.24 pm	7.31 pm
Cr James Conlan	7.02pm	11.00 pm	Apology	
Cr Mark Riley	7.02pm	11.00 pm	6.04 pm	7.31 pm
Cr Monica Harte	Leave of absence		Leave of absence	
Cr Oscar Yildiz JP	7.02pm	11.00 pm	6.04 pm	7.31 pm
Cr Sue Bolton	7.04pm	11.00 pm	6.22 pm	7.31 pm

## OFFICERS

Chief Executive Officer – Cathy Henderson  
 Director Business Transformation – Sue Vujcevic  
 Director City Infrastructure – Anita Curnow  
 Acting Director Community – Lisa Dempster  
 Director Place and Environment – Joseph Tabacco  
 Manager Governance and Strategy – Yvonne Callanan  
 Unit Manager Governance – Troy Delia

## APOLOGIES/LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Cr Carli Hannan was on an approved leave of absence from 1 April 2024 to 30 April 2024 inclusive.

Cr Harte requested a leave of absence (carers/compassionate leave) from 1 April to 19 April 2024 inclusive.

## Resolution

**Cr Bolton moved, Cr Riley seconded -**

**That Cr Harte be granted leave (carers/compassionate) from 1 April to 19 April 2024 inclusive.**

**Carried unanimously**

Cr Tapinos requested a leave of absence from 30 May to 30 June 2024 inclusive.

### **Resolution**

**Cr Riley moved, Cr Pavlidis seconded -**

**That Cr Tapinos be granted leave of absence from 30 May to 30 June 2024 inclusive.**

**Carried unanimously**

## **DISCLOSURES OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**

The Chief Executive Officer, Cathy Henderson declared a material conflict of interest in Item 12.2 Chief Executive Officer Employment Matters, as it considers matters relating to the CEO.

Cr Yildiz declared a general conflict of interest in item 7.1 Proposed Merri-bek Budget 2024-28 as he is the number one ticket holder for Brunswick Juventus FC and there being an item in the proposed budget relating to De Chene Reserve Female Friendly Changerooms.

## **MINUTE CONFIRMATION**

### **Resolution**

**Cr Panopoulos moved, Cr Riley seconded -**

**The minutes of the Council Meeting held on 13 March 2024 be confirmed.**

**Carried**

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS AND OTHER MATTERS**

Cr Riley acknowledged the following:

- Merri Merri Wayi Community Day to be held 20 April 2024
- Treaty Forum to be held 23 May

Cr Pavlidis addressed Council's social media ban processes.

## **PETITIONS**

### **5.1 JOE CANNIZZARO - PETITION - PARK STREET, BRUNSWICK PARKING**

A petition has been received containing 30 signatures requesting Council take appropriate action to rectify and standardise parking arrangements in Park Street, Brunswick, between McVean Street and the Upfield Railway Line.

### **Resolution**

**Cr Riley moved, Cr Tapinos seconded –**

**That Council:**

- 1. Receives the petition requesting Council take appropriate action to rectify and standardise parking arrangements in Park Street, Brunswick, between McVean Street and the Upfield Railway Line.**
- 2. Refers the petition requesting Council to take appropriate action to rectify and standardise parking arrangements in Park Street, Brunswick, between McVean Street and the Upfield Railway Line to the Director City Infrastructure.**

**Carried unanimously**

## 5.2 MARGARET-MARY CASHIN - PETITION - HOSKEN RESERVE

A Petition has been received containing 36 signatures requesting Council consider concerns raised regarding the Hosken Reserve Masterplan.

### Resolution

**Cr Bolton moved, Cr Panopoulos seconded –**

**That Council:**

- 1. Receives the petition regarding the Hosken Reserve Masterplan.**
- 2. Refers the petition regarding the Hosken Reserve Masterplan to the Director City Infrastructure.**

**Carried**

7.18 pm Cr Conlan left and returned to the meeting.

## PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

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

*Public Question Time commenced at 7.21 pm.*

### Report 7.1 Proposed Merri-Bek Budget 2024-28

Council received 3 statements and 2 questions. The following 2 statements and 2 questions were presented to Council:

1. Andy Fergus made the following statement:

I am one of six community members of Better Breeze Block, a community organization who exist to advocate improvements to the public environment in our dense little neighbourhood. We formed in late 2022 in response to exceptionally poor quality and unsafe street environment in our immediate surrounds. In the lead up to this draft budget we've worked closely with a number of Councillors and officers to promote practical and effective solutions to improve our neighbourhood. We are speaking with some disappointment tonight at the lack of commitment and concrete action in this years upcoming budget. We request an opportunity to work closely with councillors and officers in the coming months to identify low cost short term opportunities to address the challenges in our street.

The elevated rail project is often sighted as a reason to pause and expenditure in our street. It may never proceed and if it does it's current 2030 finish date and if it does it will meant that little Josh and Adeline in my building aged 2 and 3 will be 8 and 9 years old before they see any material improvements in their environment. It's two terms of council away it is a significant time delay and one as a community we're not willing to accept. While we appreciate the many competing interest and needs in council, of course we feel the acute and many unique needs our high density community are not fully appreciated.

We are the most densely populated area in Merri-bek with approximately 1850 residents in our block and further 1900 approved or actually under construction permits to the immediate south of us. Apartment dwellers necessarily live in and depend on the public realm, far more than those in larger homes and backyards in the suburbs. Research from the City of Melbourne has actually shown that apartment dwellers disproportionately use public space for their recreational needs, makes sense.

We have low rates of car ownership, high rates of walking, bicycle use and mass transit.

The needs of people living on top of each other are intensified particularly if we want to make apartment living attractive to all as we do. Since our community formed we've transformed Bucket Street into a biodiverse pocket park with our own funds and labor. We've worked with councillors to achieve a temporary crossing the park as well as facilitated public workshop events, which a number of you thankfully attended. We've brought together a little community across 17 buildings and now 500 residents who have contributed to our events.

Public safety in our streets for pedestrians of all ages and sizes is a core priority for our community along with urban greening and addressing climate risk associated with heat and flooding, we've seen both in the last six weeks actually. We've secured research partnerships with the University of Melbourne using our street as a case study we draw upon a remarkable breadth of skill and background, unified collective desire to improve our environment. In the coming financial year, we hope to work with all levels of council as well as our current and future Councillors to secure a roadmap that ensures critical upgrades to the safety and amenity of our environment, will help you to apply for grants bring to bear research and pull our immense community together.

2. Andrea Bunting asked the following questions:

Ms Bunting highlighted the budget allocated for footpath and bike path renewals, amounting to a \$200,000 reduction and that the reduction contradicts Council's commitment in 2022 to maintain the funding at \$2 million annually and suggesting that maintaining the funding at the promised level and indexing it to inflation would be preferable. Concerns were also raised about pedestrian safety and crash hotspots, particularly in Lygon Street, Brunswick East and highlight that over the past five years, 18 pedestrians have been injured on Lygon Street. Despite this, the budget only includes one project for Lygon Street, specifically a threshold at Pitt Street. However, this project has faced delays and lacks funding for construction.

The question asked was if Council can reinstate the original budget allocation and consider indexing it to inflation in relation to foot and bike path renewals and how does the budget address road safety in areas with high rates of pedestrian injuries or fatalities, and specifically asked what measures are being taken to enhance pedestrian safety on Lygon Street.

**At the request of the Mayor, Director City Infrastructure, Anita Curnow responded:**

In relation to the footpath funding for renewal, yes your observation is correct. That amount has been reduced by \$200,000 this year, and that was really in the light of quite a lot of pressure on our capital budget this year and we needed to find ways of supporting the capital program that we were seeking to deliver and so for this one year that and also some other road resurfacing other road related funding was reduced by total of over \$400,000 and of that \$200,000 was from the footpath and bike path renewal program. You are welcome to put in a submission to the budget process in relation to that.

Regarding Lygon Street specifically, we've rolled out a number of threshold treatments in recent years to address pedestrian safety, most recently at the Barkly Street and Jarvie Street intersections. A treatment at Pitt and Lygon street is identified for design and evaluation in the 2024/25 financial year. However, with Lygon street being a particularly vibrant street that performs a variety of functions, we would be happy to discuss how a more strategic approach to addressing pedestrian safety in the Brunswick East Activity Centre can be taken at the next meeting of the Sustainable Transport Advisory Committee.

3. Kenna Morrison made the following statement:

First I want to acknowledge and thank those who prepared the draft budget for the allocation of \$80,000 for the Hope St and Gillon Oval Pedestrian Safety Upgrades.

I also want to affirm the high priority of this as it is the part of Hope Street that probably has the highest number of children and young people crossing it each day. There are many young children and young people regularly accessing the oval. This allocation is such a high priority that this allocation must be protected!

This will be the first action implemented by Council in response to the clearly expressed concern of residents which was acknowledged by Council in unanimously supporting the speed limit reduction to 40km/h last year. However, it seems that we are still waiting for the State Transport department to get around to approving the 40 km/h speed limit. Please actively advocate for this to be lifted as a high priority for the Department's action.

Without detracting from the importance of the work at Gillon Oval I'd also ask that attention be given to the off-set intersection with Frederick and Percy Streets which is particularly busy confusing for pedestrians, and dangerous. Simple, temporary pedestrian crossings like the new crossing in Breese Street could be achieved very economically as no concrete work would be required. Planning could then be done for more substantive measures.

#### **Report 7.4 Merri-Bek Planning Scheme Amendment C230mbek – Brunswick Activity Centre Zone Decision Gateway 1**

Council received 1 statement and 2 questions. The following statement and 2 questions were presented to Council:

1. Asanka Epa, on behalf of YIMBY Melbourne made the following statement:

Firstly, I'd like to thank officer's for their work in putting this comprehensive amendment through. The simplification of planning regulations in Brunswick is itself pretty complicated and this clearly had a lot of good work put into it.

Now I'd like to note today's piece in the Brunswick Voice where YIMBY Melbourne states that this runs the risk of Merri-bek becoming something of a ghost town. We know demand for commercial space has fallen significantly in the wake of Covid. The new requirements improving the usability of commercial space that does get built is great!

However, forcing developments to have a minimum commercial space that they might not need where they could have housing instead is a great concern. In addition the emphasis on preserving industrial areas is a little misplaced.

Employment spaces are good, and we should certainly permit mixed-use in as many places as possible, but Brunswick is not an industrial working-class suburb anymore, and the need for housing is much greater than the need for industrial employment and services in the area.

The affordable housing contributions is something we very much support, and good on Council for leading the way in this, but we think it should apply to housing developments that don't increase the number of dwellings as well as does that do. There's no real reason not to apply it to someone who's, say, getting rid of a dwelling, and the more funds council can receive this way the better.

The final thing I'd like to say is that this does continue the historical land use strategy where practically all new apartments are kept boxed in the former commercial and industrial areas while all the primary residential areas in Brunswick are largely shielded from new housing of any kind, market, affordable, or social.



This is very much an equity issue where apartments and new housing is largely only allowed in the most polluted and noisiest areas, and ownership of the rest is limited to those who can afford to buy land.

There is absolutely no reason why more housing should not be allowed in residential areas within the catchment of trains and trams in well-located Brunswick.

2. Red Fennessy on behalf of Rebecca Bird asked the following questions:

Noting the documented and current context of a national, state and local housing crisis:

- a) Why is Council seeking to mandate minimum commercial floor area requirements in place of residential dwellings within designated and well serviced activity centres where housing opportunities should be prioritised instead of underutilised commercial floor area as acknowledged in Council strategic basis for the amendment?
- b) Can Council direct the submitters to other examples of Activity Centre Zones within Metropolitan Melbourne which apply minimum floor area requirements for commercial uses and advise whether the examples apply discretionary or mandatory provisions?

**At the invitation of the Mayor, Cr Lambros Tapinos responded:**

Commercial space and industrial space throughout our land use strategy is really important for the city. Merri-bek is probably one of the worst cities for people living here and working abroad, their either going into the city or going into our industrial north. This city really is in desperate need of jobs and it's in desperate need of spaces, industrial spaces and commercial spaces to be providing jobs and to be encouraging people to set up the businesses and manufacturing in our city. So it's something that is a big priority for us, as much the housing crisis and providing more stock is and a whole range of other objectives is as well.

Having more people live and work locally is great for our environment because it's less cars on the road commuting to and from work if the can live and work locally.

Merri-bek is taking the housing crisis very seriously, the level of development in our municipality is substantial and well above the Melbourne average and when we are doing our strategic planning we always consider to have that as the main objective because we all acknowledge this in a housing crisis. The jobs also important and the activation is also a safety measure, we feel that we need quite active frontage to provide passive surveillance to our public spaces and that is a great addition to the street.

but all of these discussions are really important and I hope we can continue to have them and continue to engage in this process. We need to find the right balance, some years ago there was a proposal for 50% mandatory commercial, I voted against that proposal. I said it's not the right balance, I think this one is fairer.

*7.40 pm Cr Conlan left the meeting and returned at 7.41pm.*

*7.40 pm Cr Davidson left the meeting and returned at 7.41pm.*

**Report 7.6 Naming the Park At 260 Sydney Road, Brunswick - Voting Poll Results**

Council received 1 statement and 1 question was taken on notice. The following statement was presented to Council:

Vicky Guglielmo made the following statement:

My name is Vicky Guglielmo a long term resident of 25 years. I am here tonight to make a statement written by my mum Angela. She is here with my Dad, Domenico and sister Nicole. We are the first relatives of Michelle Guglielmo. Absent tonight is Michelle only son Alessio. Unfortunately he is at work and could not be here.

My name is Angela Guglielmo and the mother of Michelle Guglielmo.

I support Michelle Guglielmo as the name for the park as I am so proud of my daughter and of her achievements in such a short life. I am a migrant woman 80 years old and I am so thankful to see that my daughter's name is being honoured, and also my Italian heritage. I emigrated from Italy in 1948 and have many long standing connections in Brunswick, Glenroy and Coburg. As a working class migrant I have worked in local industries and hospitality in Brunswick and Glenroy from the 60s through to 2000s. I have made many friends, supported my family to flourish in Melbourne and enjoyed our community events and celebrations. Italian migrants have also created places where cultural celebrations were a weekly occurrence. Vizzini Social in Coburg, and the Calabria Club in West Brunswick to only name two, decades of celebrations for migrants seeking connections and to practice cultural traditions.

Italians have a long proud history in Brunswick and across Melbourne's north. All my three daughters, Nicole, Michelle and Vicky have lived in Merri-bek since the late 1990s, our family are connections deep and varied to this place still to this day. For myself to see names that reflect our identity is an affirming and meaningful gesture. A recognition of not only of Michelle but also of the migration story of resilience and compassion, of country and of connection.

In closing our family is so grateful to Council, the Merri-bek community in this moment. We feel so proud of the legacy of Michelle and of all women, migrants and creatives who remind us of the gift of compassionate and united world.

### **Report 7.7 Trial Road Closure - Barrow Street, Coburg**

Council received 5 statements and 1 question was taken on notice. The following 3 statements were presented to Council:

1. Ross Bicknell made the following statement:

I've been a resident on Barrow Street for six years now and I think the safety of young families in particular using Barrow Street to get to some of the childcare centres the Merri-bek Primary School in particular, is one that my family uses down the Moreland Road end of Barrow Street but also Gilmore Park that a lot of families use. I think the safety of pedestrians and young kids in particular has been an issue on Barrow Street for a long time.

I've seen some pretty nasty accidents on Barrow Street, cars cross the other side of the road and go through fences because they use the roundabouts which are quite flat to go straight over the top of them and try and get around the lights at the corner of Nicholson and Moreland Road in particular. It's pretty scary sometimes trying to even just cross the road.

I really support the idea that Council is trying to make things safer. I looked at the agenda and even the end down at Moreland Road which is the end that I am at, has the highest traffic volumes and highest speeds so I'm hopeful that if this goes well that maybe this end will be looked at to. I am thankful that it is still being looked at.

### **Question Time Extension**

#### **Resolution**

**Cr Panopoulos moved, Cr Bolton seconded -**

**That question time be extended by 30 minutes at 7.49 pm.**

**Carried**

2. Cate Hall on behalf of Coburg High School's Walking and Riding Committee made the following statement:

For four years now Coburg High has done a travel to school census which consistently shows an ever increasing sustainable transport rate. This year there are 78% of students who walk, ride, or catch public transport to school. This percentage equates to well over 1000 students on the surrounding dangerous roads each morning and afternoon. And we know they come roughly equally from all points of the compass. As our Principal Brent Houghton said in the media this week, We support anything that will make that journey safer. So we are very pleased to see, in the new Merri-bek transport strategy, the inclusion of advocacy (and I quote) "to the State Government to improve safety along Murray Rd and around the Pentridge and CHS areas for pedestrians and cyclists, particularly children travelling to school."

Thank you also for looking at safety changes on surrounding Council controlled roads including, Pentridge Boulevard, Stockade Ave, and the continuation of the strategic corridor along Urquhart St. Barrow St is another route to school needing needing improved safety. Barrow St is a key, direct North-South route to Coburg High for all the neighbourhoods south of Bell and between Sydney Rd and Nicholson/Holmes. As our principal stated to the Herald Sun, Merri-bek Primary School is one of our biggest feeder primary schools. This indicates students from the section south of Bell would benefit from the trial of a modal filter on Barrow Street. .

This Barrow St trial is a natural flow on from a recent successful Open Streets collaboration where Merri-bek council worked with Merri-bek PS and CHS on a transition ride to school program (via Barrow) for students moving from primary to high school. This was in keeping with shared values to give young people opportunities to travel independently in Merri-bek, in ways that are healthy and zero-carbon. Barrow St is supposed to act as safe, quiet residential street route (a shimmy) for those bike commuters who do not want to go as far west as the Upfield shared path, or as far east as the Merri Creek trail. These commuters include teenagers attending CHS. There are some who support on-street shimmies over separated bike lanes - this is the moment to act on that support!

Consistent with Council's advocacy to State Government to improve safety around Coburg High areas for children travelling to school, please support this chance for Local Government to do the same. Support the opportunity for our young people to be safer travelling in our municipality.

3. Ashok Mathew on behalf of Merri-bek Bicycle User Group made the following statement:

I commute to work by bike for several years now and use Barrow St as part of the East Brunswick shimmy to travel south from Coburg to work. In June 2021, I was riding on Barrow Street and was hit by a car at an intersection on my way to work. I was very luckily unscathed, but only a few days before that incident, I came upon another person – Verity – who was hit by a car on Barrow Street and who had to be treated for many weeks and was seriously injured. It was because I was hit by a car on Barrow Street that I joined Merri-bek BUG.

A few months after my accident, speed breakers were installed on some of the cross streets on the roundabouts and I am grateful for those now. Those measures now give me the confidence to keep using the shimmy. Barrow St is a substantial part of the East Brunswick Shimmy and an important route for residents travelling by bike on the eastern side of Brunswick who want to move in a north-south direction.

The Merri-creek path is circuitous, indirect and veers eastwards, while Nicholson St is a hostile and dangerous place for vulnerable road users. Motor vehicle traffic dominates Nicholson Street to such an extent that even the footpaths are regularly the site of crashes as cars lose control and career into fences with depressing regularity.

For residents wanting to travel north and southwards and connect to other routes in Merri-bek or Pentridge Boulevard, Canning Street and the Capital City Trail, Barrow St is the only option we have.

Merri-bek BUG regularly hear from residents who have had close calls, and worse, crashes like my own on Barrow St. It comes as no surprise to anyone who uses the shimmy to hear that traffic volumes are higher.

More recently the vehicles rat-running on this route are noticeably bigger and heavier, changing the comfort level of Barrow St for people on bikes. This is untenable on a route which connects so many school students from both primary and secondary schools, as well as their parents and friends.

While the proposed trial would deter non-local motor vehicle traffic it will open the street to people moving around by other means. At last month's Council meeting some Councillors expressed concerns about potential 'unintended consequences' of a trial, but we are already dealing with 'unintended consequences'. The use of Barrow Street as a rat run is that 'unintended consequence' that was not planned.

No one was consulted on whether they want more traffic on their local street, and residents who ride were not asked if they wanted more traffic on the shimmy. Instead, services like Google and Waze send drivers down residential streets with no regard for Council's designated bike routes, for how school students move around nor for the impact it has on residents on the street and their access to transport.

The proposed trial will allow the benefits of limiting through traffic to be explored, while measuring any negative impacts, and 'unintended consequences', all while allowing residents to have their say on how they are impacted.

We urge Councillors to support the officers' recommendation and allow the proposed trial to proceed. Recently, I came face to face with rat running traffic on the traffic-calmed streets of the Pentridge precinct, on March 22 – which is designated as Ride 2 School Day. After a reported spill of waste on the Ring Road, 4WDs and other large vehicles, clogged the local streets – with some of them deciding to veer across Brosnan Park through the grass, only feet away from my son who was riding his bike in the park.

This wayward behaviour are the unintended consequences that we have at present, and I urge the Councillors to take a stand for those of us at risk.

*7.54 pm Cr Conlan left the meeting and returned at 7.55 pm.*

## **Report 7.14 2023/24 Third Quarter Financial Report**

Council received 1 question.

John Englart asked What are the updated measures being taken in the design of the resurfacing to reduce microplastics pollution to local stormwater and waterways from the resurfacing of Clifton Park?

### **At the request of the Mayor, Director City Infrastructure, Anita Curnow responded:**

Guidance has been sought from an industry specialist into the social, economic, and environmental considerations into the removal and replacement the synthetic surface (both surface and infill) at Clifton Park.

This included recommendations on improving the environmental controls surrounding the synthetic playing surface. This information is being used in the development of the specifications for the design and construction of the project.

Council will incentivise environmental performance for the playing surface and infill and the environmental controls surrounding the playing surface through the procurement process.

## **Notice of Motion 8.1 Accessible Tram Stops For Sydney Road**

The following 2 statements were received and presented to Council:

1. Christian Astourian read their statement:

We want to support the motion to Council to provide \$5K for our Sydney Road Accessible Tram Stops flyers, leaflets and posters for the 1 year anniversary rally because we still need your support to keep the pressure on the state government to commit with clear timelines on the building of accessible tram stops along Sydney Road before the Upfield level crossings removal. We need the full amount.

2. Alicia Liley read their statement:

As you may recall, I have a profound injury, causing me to be legally over 50% disabled. Thank you all for your consideration of my several disabilities, such as my slowness. It is actually DISABILITY for which I am speaking about tonight. I speak on behalf of a successful campaign stimulated from Christian Astourian 12 months ago.

The Sydney Road Accessible Tram Stops (SATS) campaign's aim is to insist that the state government implement the federal disability standards of having 100% Accessibility for all Public Transport to be nationwide, demanding that all public transport, such as trams and tram stops, must be accessible!!!!!! It is essential that the local Council of Merri-bek takes part of this local action!!

I thank the Council for funding SATS the 20,000 leaflets last year that has raised awareness of this discrimination of preventing people in wheelchairs or any mobility devices, as well as prams, shopping trolleys, some elderly citizens from using public transport when the State government instal SKY RAIL on the Upfield line. Not too many buses take wheelchairs! Thus, provoking the Sydney Road Accessible Tram Stops campaign. Thank you Christian for bringing attention of a basic human rights issue to us all!

Council, Your 2023 help contributed to community building's growth in Merri-bek, and thus it is worthy of the Councils' future support. Also, your support was clearly effective in gaining a hearing with the state government as evidenced by the engagement of the Department of Transport with Council SATS request of \$5,000 support will enable us to continue and strengthen our successful campaign, including letterboxing and further public awareness raising via official Council channels, so that we require maximum support!

I want to finish by quoting from Merri-bek's 2021-2031 Community Vision and I trust that Councillors will vote in favour of Councillor Sue Bolton's motion in the spirit of this Council's own vision.

An empowered and collaborative Merri-bek In 2031, Merri-bek is a place that engages meaningfully and has a real commitment to collaboration.

The community is aware of all council activities and trust in decisions and processes. The community will know where the unmet needs of our neighbours are and will be actively engaged in working towards a brighter future for all.

## **Notice of Motion 8.3 Support For Speed Limit Reduction And School Zones**

Council received 1 statement.

Nat Abboud read their statement:

Will Council add a point to Cr Panopoulos' motion regarding 40kph zones that commits to requesting Dept of Transport to install 40kph speed limits during school times on Bell Street from Elizabeth Street to the existing 40kph zone at council.

**At the invitation of the Mayor, Cr Panopoulos responded:**

I will include that as an amendment for tonight, and hopefully Councillors will support that.

## **Notice of Motion 8.4 No To Waste To Energy Incinerator In Northern Suburbs**

Council received 1 statement.

John Englart read their statement:

I'd like to support Cr Bolton's motion for Council to do a submission on the Cleanaway Waste to Energy Incinerator at Wollert. I congratulate Council officers for their work over many years on waste management consistent with moving towards a circular economy.

The proposed Incinerator is 13 km north of Merri-bek. It is 1.2 km from Merri Creek, with water courses 400m on either side that flow into Merri Creek. Wollert houses are 2 km away, Craigieburn is 3.4 km away.

Within a 10km radius agriculture includes cropping, vineyards, beef and sheep farming, and horse studs.

Regulation and management of Incineration of waste is covered under international treaties:

- The Basel Convention is explicit that an environmental assessment should be undertaken for all hazardous waste incineration projects. An Environment Effects Study was proposed but denied by the Planning Minister on 5th October 2023. Victoria would appear to be in breach of international treaty obligations.
- Whittlesea Council has been under administration since 2020 so residents have no elected Councillors to speak to the State Government, which raises human rights concerns.
- In Europe the European Commission recommended in 2017 moratoriums on new incinerators and decommissioning existing polluting incinerators.
- Even with substantial air filters Incinerators produce toxic air pollution gases and particulates. Nanoparticles in particular can travel long distances, penetrate deep into lungs. Air pollution includes PM10, PM2.5 and nano-particles, volatile metals, PFAS, volatile organic compounds (VOCs), polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), dioxins and furans.
- A 2020 Australian Public Health Association systematic literature review on Incinerators and public health found that "contamination of food and ingestion of pollutants is a significant risk pathway for both nearby and distant residents." "significant risks associated with waste incineration as a form of waste management" "based on a precautionary principle there is insufficient evidence to conclude that any incinerator is safe"
- In 2023 12 million Residents of Paris Ile de France Region advised not to eat backyard eggs and produce due to PFAS and dioxin contamination related to waste incinerators.

8.15 pm Cr Yildiz left the meeting.

## **Non-Agenda Items - Questions**

1. Rachel Matton on behalf of Kelli Skapetis

This question related to two questions submitted to the Council Meeting held 13 March 2024, that were taken on notice, but not reflected in the minutes of that meeting and asked confirm why Council has introduced a practice of omitting questions from meeting minutes, and from what date has this practice been occurring?

**At the request of the Mayor, Director Business Transformation, Sue Vujcevic responded:**

The recent updates to the format of the Council Minutes adhere to the Governance Rules as outlined in sections 3.6.1 and 3.11.1, while ensuring that the minutes remain concise and accurate.

The revised format lists those questions and statements relating to agenda-related items, followed by questions and statements related to non-agenda matters, as well as identifying where questions and or statements received are taken on notice.

Regarding your question about questions taken on notice and meeting Minutes, what we do is aligned with Governance Rule 3.6.3(13), which states that questions taken on notice are to be referred for action by the relevant Director, with responses provided separately.

In this regard, the Governance Rules do not require questions taken on notice to be published in the minutes themselves, however, a report of the status of these items are to be provided at the next practicable Council Meeting, as per Rule 3.6.2(13). Council has the practice of presenting a copy of questions taken on notice and the response, to the next practicable Council meeting via the cyclical Governance Report.

8.15 pm Cr Yildiz returned to the meeting.

## 2. Warran Hocking

*Warran Hocking was not present at the meeting, their questions were read and responded to by Director City Infrastructure, Anita Curnow.*

This question raised concerns regarding the Hosken Reserve masterplan. It was noted that community space was reduced, footpaths removed, and mounds added, impacting safety, particularly for children riding around the reserve, the removal of connecting space for carparks poses safety risks and asked will council fix these safety issues? Further it was noted that Council has been informed about an old dump site and the potential for spill contamination, particularly in the refresh group and during consultation and asked Why didn't council budget for this risk assessment and will the risk assessments and soil testing be released publicly?

### **At the request of the Mayor, Director City Infrastructure, Anita Curnow responded:**

First, to the masterplan.

Council has committed to implement the adopted masterplan and its intended outcomes for the community and sporting clubs. When the masterplan was approved, it was indicative only, subject to feasibility, traffic study, stakeholder engagement and detailed design. Given recent community interest in the project and how the masterplan is being implemented, officers will bring a report to the May Council meeting with a full update on the project. Also, a drop in session will be organised for the public to obtain updates, engage with officers and talk about matters of concern. The details of this will be provided on the Conversations Merri-bek page on the Hosken Reserve project.

Mr Hocking's statement suggests that a field has been repositioned between the time of the adoption of the masterplan and its implementation. This is not true. Both north and south pitches are in the same location as was intended originally.

Mr Hocking also comments on the removal of a footpath. This was introduced as a measure to save on costs, given significant cost pressures on the project. Officers have now looked again at the layout of the footpaths, and it is possible to modify the design to achieve the desired 'riding loop' without it cutting over any car park or driveway.

The modifications made to the car park near the Active Recreation Zone were made to increase the amount of onsite parking, given resident concern about on-street parking in the traffic study. In addition, access by maintenance vehicles (e.g. mowers) was aided by this change. Given feedback from the community, officers have begun redesigning the area between the community space and the Active Recreation Zone to allow a continuous path that does not cut through the car park, and are looking at either alternative access for maintenance vehicles, or modified access that ensures pedestrians are protected.

Mr Hocking also commented on the mounds that have been fashioned in the space between North field and footpath along the west of the community space. These were introduced primarily as a measure to reduce costs. With the escalation of construction costs, this project like many others has been difficult to keeping costs of capital projects in check, and the team has worked very hard to find ways to achieve this. The mounds have saved \$250,000 in avoided soil removal costs. In addition, they provide separation between the community space and sports field. This will enhance the privacy and noise levels on game days. This separation also reduces the chance of the community space being used for training or as a kick off area. The mounds will have trees planted on them. Council officers are happy to further discuss the mounds to consider adjustments that might improve further their effectiveness in making Hosken Reserve a place everyone can enjoy when compete.

Moving now to Mr Hocking's second question with respect to management of risk associated with contamination.

In 2020/21 budget, the costing adopted by Council for implementation of masterplan did include significant funds to deal with any contamination based on the history and industry estimates.

While there have been some additional costs incurred directly as a result of the detection of higher than expected levels of contamination, even without this, the project has experienced significant cost pressures.

Since the adoption of these budgets, construction industry has experienced between 35% - 45 % increase in the cost, and Hosken project has been no exception.

A number of cost saving measures have been implemented to reduce overall cost of the project. This has included reducing the amount of the south pitch with hybrid turf, so that it is only in the high wear areas saving approx. \$500,000, a contribution by sporting clubs of grandstand seating, modification of the player race, and creation of viewing/separation mounds.

No contamination was detected during construction of the north pitch. That means that the fill used for the mounds that have been placed on either side of that pitch are clean fill.

Council's contractor first became aware of contamination by asbestos when excavation for the south pitch progressed. While there was a substantial layer of clean fill on the south pitch, some asbestos was discovered under this. The contractor is very experienced with dealing with asbestos, and works were halted immediately, WorkSafe advised as required, and arrangements made for the fill that had been excavated to be removed and disposed of as required. The safety of the community and workers on the site were key considerations in ensuring all the necessary steps were taken.

More recently, asbestos and category D (which is the lowest category) contamination were uncovered when trenching was done to install a new BBQ as part of the landscaping works. This was closer to the playground and so the playground was closed while necessary testing, removal and remediation are underway.

The asbestos at Hosken Reserve is believed to be from illegal dumping in the past. It has been buried and by being removed expeditiously after being identified, has remained in a non-friable state.

On Monday 8 April, WorkSafe attended Hosken Reserve to inspect the approach to management of the site and remediation works. WorkSafe subsequently issued Council with a WorkSafe Inspection Report number DHR-192728 that detailed all of the observations of the inspector. The Inspection Report concludes with the statement "After observing the asbestos removal work this morning at Hoskins Reserve at 39 Shorts Road in Coburg North, I am off the belief that the work is being conducted as per the general requirements of Part 4.4 of the Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2017."



Council is confident that asbestos at Hosken Reserve is being managed in accordance with WorkSafe and EPA requirements. All of the details of the management of asbestos at the site have also been submitted to EPA for review today. Mr Hocking asked whether the soil testing reports could be made publicly available.

Officers will prepare a report for the May Council meeting that provides transparency with respect to the various requests from the community on the management of asbestos and the details relating to implementation of the masterplan.

### **Non-Agenda Items - Questions Taken On Notice**

Council received a further 12 questions that were taken on notice relating to:

- Residential construction outside of EPA approved hours
- Public Question Time
- Palestine
- Greenbank Crescent, Pascoe Vale South
- Illegally parked, unregistered or dumped cars around Justin Avenue area, Glenroy
- Hosken Reserve asbestos

*Public Question Time concluded at 8.23 pm.*

## **ALTER THE ORDER OF BUSINESS**

### **Resolution**

**Cr Panopoulos moved, Cr Tapinos seconded -**

**That the order of business be altered, and Council considers the following items first, before returning to the order of items as printed in the agenda:**

- 1. 7.6 Naming the park at 260 Sydney Road Brunswick - voting poll results**
- 2. 7.7 Trial Road Closure - Barrow Street, Coburg**
- 3. 8.1 Accessible tram stops for Sydney Road**

**Carried**

## **COUNCIL REPORTS**

### **7.6 NAMING THE PARK AT 260 SYDNEY ROAD BRUNSWICK - VOTING POLL RESULTS**

#### **Executive Summary**

Council purchased land, located at 260 Sydney Road, Brunswick, shown in Attachment 1, on 9 June 2020 to create a new park. This area had been identified as an open space gap area under Council's Park Close to Home Framework. Construction of the new park at this site commenced in March 2024 with completion expected in October 2024.

This report proposes to name the new park following a community voting poll.

A public consultation was undertaken to seek naming suggestions for the new park between 14 March 2023 to 28 April 2023. From this consultation, Council received twelve (12) naming submissions. The naming submissions were assessed in accordance with the Naming Rules and Council's Naming Policy preference criteria. Three names were shortlisted to be included in a voting poll to name the park.

At its meeting on 14 February 2024, report 7.4, Council resolved to establish a voting poll with the following three names for the park Wa dam buk (meaning 'renew' in Woi Wurrung language), Michelle Guglielmo (a name commemorating a local resident, Council employee and Counihan Gallery curator) and Noogal nganjin (meaning 'we belong' in Woi Wurrung language).

A voting poll is part of the naming process to ensure a chosen name will have community support, in accordance the Naming Rules.

Public notice for the voting poll was given on Council's Conversations Merri-bek website for from 21 February 2024 until 22 March 2024. Votes were received via Council's Conversations Merri-bek website, email and post. The results from the voting process for the park were: 272 total votes. Michelle Guglielmo Park was the preferred name with a total 130 votes, being 48 per cent of votes. These results can be seen in Attachment 2.

Registration was necessary for voting through Conversations Merri-bek, to ensure that respondents didn't vote multiple times. The large majority of voters were Merri-bek residents.

It is recommended that Council endorses the name Michelle Guglielmo Park, reflecting the outcome of community support in the voting poll.

## Officer Recommendation

That Council:

1. Having invited the community to vote for the name for the new park at 260 Sydney Road, Brunswick, endorses the name 'Michelle Guglielmo Park' for the new park name.
2. Authorises the Director of Place and Environment to do all things required to formalise the name Michelle Guglielmo Park with Geographic Names Victoria.

## Resolution

**Cr Riley moved, Cr Tapinos seconded -**

That Council:

1. **Having invited the community to vote for the name for the new park at 260 Sydney Road, Brunswick, endorses the name 'Michelle Guglielmo Park' for the new park name.**
2. **Authorises the Director of Place and Environment to do all things required to formalise the name Michelle Guglielmo Park with Geographic Names Victoria.**

**Carried unanimously**

## 7.7 TRIAL ROAD CLOSURE - BARROW STREET, COBURG

### Executive Summary

Managing our streets to function optimally for safety, accessibility, health, liveability and inclusivity often involves restricting the movement of vehicles on some streets. Blocking the passage of vehicles can be an effective treatment that helps us achieve the objectives of the Moving Around Merri-bek Strategy and ensure our street network functions optimally. When locations for these treatments are considered thoughtfully, tested with temporary materials and evaluated before permanent installation, they can be highly effective in improving the functionality, safety and quality of streets for all users.

To meet the objectives tied to the values of Safe, Healthy, Sustainable and Liveable in the Moving Around Merri-bek Strategy (2024), Council officers identified opportunities for restricting vehicle movement on streets that meet the following criteria:

- Streets with strong year-on-year growth due to rat-running.
- Local streets on strategic cycling corridors or which will complete 'missing links' in the cycling network.
- Areas where lingering and spending time is encouraged.

While there are several streets that would meet this criteria, Council Officers are restricted by the rigorous process required for trialling, consulting, monitoring, evaluating and reporting on these treatments in line with the *Local Government Act 1989*. Therefore, opportunities to undertake these treatments are carefully considered against the criteria above. The site considered to have the most community benefit opportunities from such a treatment is Barrow Street, Coburg at the intersection of Harding Street.

The road closure is proposed to be located on Barrow Street from the intersection of Harding Street to a point up to 8 metres further south. Currently the street provides an alternative north-south route for vehicles seeking to avoid using Nicholson Street or Sydney Road. This is why higher vehicle volumes are experienced on this section of Barrow Street when compared with other streets on the East Brunswick Shimmy bike route.

The trial infrastructure is expected to reduce rat-running through local roads in this area of Coburg by ensuring that vehicles looking for an alternative to Nicholson Street are deterred from seeking an alternative local street as a short-cut. This outcome is expected to create a safer road environment for the most vulnerable road users such as pedestrians, cyclists and school children by reducing vehicle volumes and speeds, while maintaining local access for residents to enjoy a quieter and safer street environment.

Barrow Street is an important local bicycle link that forms part of the East Brunswick Shimmy bike route that helps people get through Coburg and Brunswick East to connect with the Canning Street Bike Route in the south. The route connects to local destinations that have a large local catchment. These destinations include Coburg High School, the Lygon Street precinct, East Brunswick Village and Fleming Park. Helping people ride along this route for access to local shops and services can be significantly improved by minimising its function as a through route for vehicles so that Nicholson Street remains a more appropriate option for vehicles traveling through this area.

Barrow Street also functions as an important walking and riding link for local schools. St Bernard's Catholic Primary School is in close proximity to the proposed treatment so the closure is expected to significantly enhance the comfort, safety and amenity of the street near the school. The street also functions as an attractive link for students at Coburg High and Primary Schools to the north of the street, Antonine College to the east and Merri-bek Primary School to the south-west of the street.

To proceed with a road closure at this location, Clause 10, Schedule 11 of the *Local Government Act 1989* requires a formal public consultation procedure be followed enabling public submissions to be considered prior to any Council decision in accordance with Section 207A of the Act. The Act grants the power to Council to place barriers on a road temporarily for a genuine traffic diversion experiment and requires Council to consider a report from the Department of Transport and Planning on the proposal.

If the trial is successful, a further public consultation process would be required prior to any permanent road closure. This will enable the community to consider the impacts of the temporary road closure with a further opportunity provided for submissions before a final decision on any permanent road closure.

Should the recommendation be adopted, Officers will commence a Section 223 public consultation procedure for the closure of Barrow Street at the intersection of Harding Street and return to council with the findings of that consultation process before installing any infrastructure on the street.

## **Officer Recommendation**

That Council:

1. Approves the commencement of the process under Section 207, Schedule 11, Clause 10(1)(c) of the *Local Government Act 1989* to erect temporary barriers at Barrow Street, Coburg, at the intersection with Harding Street, from Harding Street to a point up to 8 metres further south, to block the passage of vehicles other than bicycles, for the purpose of a genuine traffic diversion experiment.
2. Gives public notice of the traffic diversion experiment proposals and calls for submissions under Section 223 of the *Local Government Act 1989* as required by Section 207A of the Act, in *The Age*, on Council's website and to owners and occupiers of all properties in the area as shown in Attachment 1.
3. Appoints the Mayor as Chair, and Councillors \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ to a Committee to hear any submitters requesting to be heard in support of their written submission.
4. Authorises the Chief Executive Officer to set the date and time and location for the Hearing of Submissions Committee meeting following consultation with the appointed Councillors and submitters requesting to be heard.

- Following the consultation process, receives a report outlining any submissions received, including a summary of any Hearing of Submissions Committee meeting held, in relation to the proposed traffic diversion experiment and the report from the Department of Transport and Planning on the proposal, with a recommendation on whether to proceed to the trial.

## **Resolution**

**Cr Bolton moved, Cr Conlan seconded -**

**That Council:**

- Approves the commencement of the process under Section 207, Schedule 11, Clause 10(1)(c) of the Local Government Act 1989 to erect temporary barriers at Barrow Street, Coburg, at the intersection with Harding Street, from Harding Street to a point up to 8 metres further south, to block the passage of vehicles other than bicycles, for the purpose of a genuine traffic diversion experiment.**
- Gives public notice of the traffic diversion experiment proposals and calls for submissions under Section 223 of the Local Government Act 1989 as required by Section 207A of the Act, in The Age, on Council's website and to owners and occupiers of all properties in the area as shown in Attachment 1.**
- Appoints the Mayor as Chair, and Councillors Conlan, Bolton and Pavlidis to a Committee to hear any submitters requesting to be heard in support of their written submission.**
- Authorises the Chief Executive Officer to set the date and time and location for the Hearing of Submissions Committee meeting following consultation with the appointed Councillors and submitters requesting to be heard.**
- Following the consultation process, receives a report outlining any submissions received, including a summary of any Hearing of Submissions Committee meeting held, in relation to the proposed traffic diversion experiment and the report from the Department of Transport and Planning on the proposal, with a recommendation on whether to proceed to the trial.**

**Carried**

The Mayor called for a division.

**For**

Cr Bolton  
Cr Davidson  
Cr Pulford  
Cr Panopoulos  
Cr Conlan  
Cr Riley  
Cr Tapinos

**Total For (7)**

**Against**

Cr Yildiz  
Cr Pavlidis

**Total Against (2)**

## 8.1 ACCESSIBLE TRAM STOPS FOR SYDNEY ROAD

### Motion

That Council:

1. Endorses the Community Rally/event for Accessible Tram Stops on Sydney Road that is to take place on Saturday 22 June at 11am.
2. Supports the Community Rally/event up to the amount of \$5000 to:
  - assist with publicity, including printing of leaflets and posters, and distribution of information about the event to early childhood centres, maternal and child health services, reference and advisory groups, Seniors' groups, disability groups, neighbourhood houses, libraries and using Council web sites, social media channels and Council's electronic newsletter to promote the community rally /event.
  - assist with the provision of face masks to ensure a safe community rally for people who are vulnerable if they catch Covid.

### Resolution

**Cr Bolton moved, Cr Panopoulos seconded -**

**That Council:**

1. **Endorses the Community Rally/event for Accessible Tram Stops on Sydney Road that is to take place on Saturday 22 June at 11am.**
2. **Supports the Community Rally/event up to the amount of \$5000 to:**
  - **assist with publicity, including printing of leaflets and posters, and distribution of information about the event to early childhood centres, maternal and child health services, reference and advisory groups, Seniors' groups, disability groups, neighbourhood houses, libraries and using Council web sites, social media channels and Council's electronic newsletter to promote the community rally /event.**
  - **assist with the provision of face masks to ensure a safe community rally for people who are vulnerable if they catch Covid.**

**Carried unanimously**

Cr Yildiz declared a general conflict of interest in this item as he is the number one ticket holder for Brunswick Juventus FC and there being an item in the proposed budget relating to De Chene Reserve Female Friendly Changerooms.

With the agreement of Council, Council separated that part of the budget relating to De Chene Reserve to enable Cr Yildiz to participate in the remainder of the proposed budget.

Having declared a conflict of interest, Cr Yildiz left the Chamber at 9.11pm.

## 7.1 PROPOSED MERRI-BEK BUDGET 2024-28

Council must prepare and adopt a rolling 4-year Budget that contains financial statements and other matters. This must be finally approved by Council no later than 30 June each year. The purpose of this report is to present Merri-bek City Council's proposed 4-year Budget 2024-2028 (the Proposed Budget) for endorsement for public exhibition.

The Proposed Budget continues to deliver services to Merri-bek's 174,000-plus residents within the 2.75 per cent rate cap set by the State Government, funds Councillor and community initiatives and delivers critical major projects while maintaining Council's financial sustainability.

Key features of the budget include:

- An operating projects program of \$6.4 million. Key projects in the program include:
  - Funding of \$1.0 million for the Urban Forest Strategy - Tree Planting Regime, additional tree planting and planting trees in tricky-to-plant areas;
  - Expanding our supporting seniors to live independently (outdoor help for seniors) program as well as heating and cooling support (\$0.5 million);
  - Continuing the solar and/or thermal grants for low-income earners (\$0.4 million);
  - Continuing the funding of \$0.2 million to facilitate the homelessness assertive outreach program;
  - Additional funding of \$60,000 to increase shopping street clean-ups, including one additional bin service provided to all shopping strips as well funding to replant garden beds with climate resistant plants; and
  - Continuing our co-funding of Merri Wayi which is a community-led collaboration to enable our nature and urban worlds to thrive along the Merri-Creek (\$25,000).
- A capital works program of \$83.1 million. Key projects in the program include:
  - Completion of the \$36.9 million Fawkner Leisure Centre redevelopment (stage one) which is due to open for the 2024-25 summer season;
  - Completion of the \$29.0 million Saxon Street Cultural and Community Hub;
  - Continuing the \$22.2 million upgrade works on several early years' facilities over the next 5-years including Dunstan Reserve childcare centre and Brunswick Early Years Hub;
  - Improvements to parks, open space and streetscapes (\$19.0 million);
  - Roads and carparks renewal and maintenance (\$17.6 million) and
  - Footpaths, bicycle paths and transport infrastructure (\$3.4 million).
- As part of Council's participatory budgeting process earlier this year, funding six community budget ideas totaling \$399,000:
  - Accelerate the installation of sunshades over Merri-Bek's playgrounds \$150,000
  - Take the Next Step \$59,000
  - Drinking fountains in shopping strips \$60,000
  - More seats on walking routes to the shops \$40,000
  - Free basketball court and soccer field for all of Fawkner \$30,000

- Half-court basketball ring in Glenroy \$60,000
- The Proposed Budget continues Council's strong commitment to delivering on its major projects pipeline with a further \$13.1 million set aside for the Significant Projects Reserve to fund future projects. Saxon Street Cultural and Community Hub and Fawkner Leisure Centre Redevelopment (stage one) projects are the two key projects being funded from the reserve which will be complete in the current year.
- A minor surplus of \$42,000 which is proposed to be kept aside for potential allocation following feedback received through the public exhibition process.
- The budget is informed by the Draft Merri-bek Council Action Plan 2024-2025 (provided as Attachment 3). The Council Action Plan is developed annually to support implementation of the Merri-bek Council Plan 2021-2025 and identifies the strategic objectives and actions to deliver against the major initiatives and priorities (as contained in the Council Plan).
- The budget has been prepared in accordance with the Revenue and Rating Plan 2021-25 which was adopted at the Special Council meeting held 24 June 2021.

This report presents the Proposed Budget (Attachment 1) for Council endorsement to make it available for public exhibition and comment.

## Officer Recommendation

That Council:

1. Endorses the Proposed 4-year Budget 2024-2028 (provided as Attachment 1 to this report), for the purpose of community exhibition commencing 17 April 2024 until 5pm on 17 May 2024.
2. Endorses the voting outcomes of the Community Budget Ideas Process (provided as Attachment 2 to this report), noting that the proposed budget includes the following selection of community budget ideas totaling \$399,000 (higher than the \$250,000 set aside):
  - i) Accelerate the installation of sunshades over Merri-Bek's playgrounds \$150,000
  - ii) Take the Next Step (family violence peer education program) \$59,000
  - iii) Drinking fountains in shopping strips \$60,000
  - iv) More seats on walking routes to the shops \$40,000
  - v) Free basketball court and soccer field for all of Fawkner \$30,000
  - vi) Half-court basketball ring in Glenroy \$60,000
3. Notes the draft Merri-bek Council Action Plan 2024-2025 (provided as Attachment 3 to this report) as the fourth and final year of actions to deliver against the Merri-bek Council Plan 2021-2025, which will be presented for endorsement alongside the final proposed 4-year Budget 2024-2028 for consideration for adoption.
4. Notes that \$13.1 million will be transferred to Significant Projects Reserve to accumulate funding for Council's long-term significant priorities which include, but are not limited to, the Fawkner Leisure Centre Redevelopment (stage one) and the Saxon Street Cultural and Community Hub projects.
5. Notes that a minor surplus of \$42,000 is proposed to be kept aside for potential allocation following feedback received through the public exhibition process.
6. Invites feedback on the Proposed 4-year Budget 2024-2028 and makes available for public inspection the Proposed 4-year Budget 2024-2028 on the Council website and at the three civic centres and all libraries.



7. Establish a hybrid Hearing Committee, consisting of all Councillors, and appointing the Mayor as Chair, to be held on Wednesday, 29 May 2024 commencing at 6.00pm at the Coburg Civic Centre and invites any submitters who indicate they wish to be heard in support of their submission on the Proposed 4-year Budget 2024-2028.
8. Receives a further report at its meeting on 26 June 2024 outlining any feedback received on the Proposed 4-year Budget 2024-2028 and presenting a final Proposed 4-year Budget 2024-2028 for consideration for adoption.

## **Resolution**

**Cr Panopoulos moved, Cr Tapinos seconded –**

**That Council:**

1. **Endorses as part of the budget for public exhibition the proposed capital works funding allocation in 2024/25 and 2025/26 for De Chene Reserve Female Friendly Changerooms, as set out in the Attachments, for the purpose of community exhibition commencing 17 April 2024 until 5pm on 17 May 2024.**

**Carried unanimously**

*9.13 pm Cr Yildiz returned to the meeting after the vote.*

## **Motion**

**Cr Panopoulos moved, Cr Tapinos seconded –**

**That Council:**

1. Endorses the Proposed 4-year Budget 2024-2028 (provided as Attachment 1 to this report) excluding De Chene Reserve Female Friendly Changerooms, for the purpose of community exhibition commencing 17 April 2024 until 5pm on 17 May 2024), subject to the following change:
  - a) Allocate \$60,000 in the strategic priorities operating projects to fund the Youth Holistic Outreach Program (YHOP) for one year
  - b) Brings forward the \$40,000 for shopping strips (Melville Road/Albion Road) from the 2026/27 capital works program into 2024/2025
  - c) Offset point a) by reducing the strategic priorities operating projects funding for the 'Supporting seniors to live independently (expand outdoor help & heating/cooling)' from \$253,000 to \$193,000 (the heating/cooling component would reduce from \$115,000 to \$55,000) and offset point b) by reducing the surplus by \$40,000.
2. Endorses the voting outcomes of the Community Budget Ideas Process (provided as Attachment 2 to this report), noting that the proposed budget includes the following selection of community budget ideas totaling \$399,000 (higher than the \$250,000 set aside):
  - i) Accelerate the installation of sunshades over Merri-Bek's playgrounds \$150,000
  - ii) Take the Next Step (family violence peer education program) \$59,000
  - iii) Drinking fountains in shopping strips \$60,000
  - iv) More seats on walking routes to the shops \$40,000
  - v) Free basketball court and soccer field for all of Fawkner \$30,000
  - vi) Half-court basketball ring in Glenroy \$60,000

3. Notes the draft Merri-bek Council Action Plan 2024-2025 (provided as Attachment 3 to this report) as the fourth and final year of actions to deliver against the Merri-bek Council Plan 2021-2025, which will be presented for endorsement alongside the final proposed 4-year Budget 2024-2028 for consideration for adoption.
  4. Notes that \$13.1 million will be transferred to Significant Projects Reserve to accumulate funding for Council's long-term significant priorities which include, but are not limited to, the Fawkner Leisure Centre Redevelopment (stage one) and the Saxon Street Cultural and Community Hub projects.
  5. Notes that a minor surplus of \$2,000 is proposed to be kept aside for potential allocation following feedback received through the public exhibition process.
  6. Invites feedback on the Proposed 4-year Budget 2024-2028 and makes available for public inspection the Proposed 4-year Budget 2024-2028 on the Council website and at the three civic centres and all libraries.
  7. Establish a hybrid Hearing Committee, consisting of all Councillors, and appointing the Mayor as Chair, to be held on Wednesday, 29 May 2024 commencing at 6.00pm at the Coburg Civic Centre and invites any submitters who indicate they wish to be heard in support of their submission on the Proposed 4-year Budget 2024-2028.
  8. Receives a further report at its meeting on 26 June 2024 outlining any feedback received on the Proposed 4-year Budget 2024-2028 and presenting a final Proposed 4-year Budget 2024-2028 for consideration for adoption.
- 9.14 pm Cr Riley left the meeting during the debate.  
 9.14 pm Cr Davidson left the meeting during the debate.  
 9.16 pm Cr Riley returned to the meeting during the debate.  
 9.17 pm Cr Davidson returned to the meeting during the debate.

## Amendment

Cr Bolton moved, Cr Conlan seconded to amend the motion to include the following:

- a) Remove all 'new member' fees proposed for Fawkner Leisure Centre (FLC) in the Schedule of Fees and Charges.
- b) Amend the Schedule of Fees and Charges to remove reference to 'Foundation members until 30/06/2026' for Fawkner Leisure Centre, due to a) above.
- c) Increase the Aquatics & Community Facilities expense budget in materials and services by \$4,000 and offset this increase by reducing the surplus by \$4,000 (ie. \$38,000), due to a) above.d) Amend point 5 to read 'Notes a minor deficit of \$2,000.

**Lost**

Cr Bolton called for a division.

### For

Cr Bolton  
 Cr Conlan

**Total For (2)**

### Against

Cr Davidson  
 Cr Yildiz  
 Cr Pulford  
 Cr Panopoulos  
 Cr Pavlidis  
 Cr Riley  
 Cr Tapinos

**Total Against (7)**

## Amendment

Cr Pavlidis moved, Cr Yildiz seconded to amend the motion to include the following -

- a) Allocates a further \$100,000 in the strategic priorities operating projects to increase funding for the 'Supporting seniors to live independently (expand outdoor help & heating cooling)' budget
- b) Offset point a) by reducing the strategic priorities operating project tree planting and maintenance from \$100,000 to \$0.

**Lost**

Cr Pavlidis called for a division.

### **For**

Cr Pavlidis  
Cr Davidson  
Cr Yildiz  
Cr Tapinos

### **Against**

Cr Riley  
Cr Bolton  
Cr Conlan  
Cr Pulford  
Cr Panopoulos

**Total Against (4)**

**Total Against (5)**

## Amendment

Cr Pavlidis moved, Cr Yildiz seconded to amend the motion to include the following -

- a) Allocates an additional \$120,000 funding in the 2024/25 capital works program for footpath maintenance.
- b) Offset point a) by reducing the strategic priorities operating project Ballerrt Mooroop business case funding from \$120,000 to \$0.

**Lost**

Cr Pulford called for a division.

### **For**

Cr Pavlidis  
Cr Davidson  
Cr Yildiz

### **Against**

Cr Riley  
Cr Bolton  
Cr Conlan  
Cr Pulford  
Cr Panopoulos  
Cr Tapinos

**Total Against (3)**

**Total Against (6)**

## Resolution

**Cr Panopoulos moved, Cr Tapinos seconded –**

**That Council:**

1. **Endorses the Proposed 4-year Budget 2024-2028 (provided as Attachment 1 to this report) excluding De Chene Reserve Female Friendly Changerooms, for the purpose of community exhibition commencing 17 April 2024 until 5pm on 17 May 2024), subject to the following change:**
  - a) **Allocate \$60,000 in the strategic priorities operating projects to fund the Youth Holistic Outreach Program (YHOP) for one year**
  - b) **Brings forward the \$40,000 for shopping strips (Melville Road/Albion Road) from the 2026/27 capital works program into 2024/2025**
  - c) **Offset point a) by reducing the strategic priorities operating projects funding for the 'Supporting seniors to live independently (expand outdoor help & heating/cooling)' from \$253,000 to \$193,000 (the**

heating/cooling component would reduce from \$115,000 to \$55,000) and offset point b) by reducing the surplus by \$40,000.

2. **Endorses the voting outcomes of the Community Budget Ideas Process (provided as Attachment 2 to this report), noting that the proposed budget includes the following selection of community budget ideas totaling \$399,000 (higher than the \$250,000 set aside):**
  - i) **Accelerate the installation of sunshades over Merri-Bek's playgrounds \$150,000**
  - ii) **Take the Next Step (family violence peer education program) \$59,000**
  - iii) **Drinking fountains in shopping strips \$60,000**
  - iv) **More seats on walking routes to the shops \$40,000**
  - v) **Free basketball court and soccer field for all of Fawkner \$30,000**
  - vi) **Half-court basketball ring in Glenroy \$60,000**
3. **Notes the draft Merri-bek Council Action Plan 2024-2025 (provided as Attachment 3 to this report) as the fourth and final year of actions to deliver against the Merri-bek Council Plan 2021-2025, which will be presented for endorsement alongside the final proposed 4-year Budget 2024-2028 for consideration for adoption.**
4. **Notes that \$13.1 million will be transferred to Significant Projects Reserve to accumulate funding for Council's long-term significant priorities which include, but are not limited to, the Fawkner Leisure Centre Redevelopment (stage one) and the Saxon Street Cultural and Community Hub projects.**
5. **Notes that a minor surplus of \$2,000 is proposed to be kept aside for potential allocation following feedback received through the public exhibition process.**
6. **Invites feedback on the Proposed 4-year Budget 2024-2028 and makes available for public inspection the Proposed 4-year Budget 2024-2028 on the Council website and at the three civic centres and all libraries.**
7. **Establish a hybrid Hearing Committee, consisting of all Councillors, and appointing the Mayor as Chair, to be held on Wednesday, 29 May 2024 commencing at 6.00pm at the Coburg Civic Centre and invites any submitters who indicate they wish to be heard in support of their submission on the Proposed 4-year Budget 2024-2028.**
8. **Receives a further report at its meeting on 26 June 2024 outlining any feedback received on the Proposed 4-year Budget 2024-2028 and presenting a final Proposed 4-year Budget 2024-2028 for consideration for adoption.**

**Carried unanimously**

## **7.2 ADOPTION OF NEW MERRI-BEK OPEN SPACE STRATEGY**

### **Executive Summary**

Council endorsed the Draft Open Space Strategy to be released for consultation on 6 December 2023. Feedback was formally invited for five weeks from 16 January 2024 to 20 February 2024. This was the final stage of consultation after extensive engagement with the community earlier in 2023 in which Council heard from and met with over 900 people.

A total of 26 submissions were received on the draft documents, including submissions from individuals and also groups. Over ten people attended three in-person information sessions held across Merri-bek in Brunswick, Coburg and Glenroy. Another five people addressed the Hearing of Submissions on 19 February. The draft documents were also reviewed by internal stakeholders and Council's legal advisers.

We included changes to the final Strategy and final Action Plan to directly address submissions and feedback received on the draft documents. These changes include:

- Greater acknowledgement of the Voice of the Youth and Children's Voice
- Greater acknowledgement of the needs of older and ageing persons
- Reference to spaces such as footpaths which, while not technically open space, impact open space access and usage
- Discussion about long-term maintenance of open space
- Changes to Actions to align with upcoming Council programs, including Planning Scheme Amendments related to open space
- Changes recommended by Council's legal advisers.

With the benefit of the both stages of community engagement, the final Open Space Strategy and Action Plan are reflective of the diverse needs, desires and ambitions of our community in open space and across Merri-bek.

Through the work finalising the strategy, work was undertaken to address the Notice of Motions for Commercial leases in open space and BMX park / track in Moreland's northwest ward. During the community engagement process, Council heard varied feedback about commercial leases, with submitters raising concerns with some leases, whilst other feedback supported commercial leases as a way to activate and enhance open space. The new Open Space Strategy provides a 'decision making framework' and 'decision making guidance' which will guide future open space decisions, including consideration of commercial leases in open space. Council has undertaken some preliminary analysis of the need and suitability for BMX, cyclocross and other biking activities across Merri-bek. Further work and targeted community engagement is required and has been included in the Action Plan.

This Council report also includes commentary on Notice of Motions previously addressed through earlier work in developing the Open Space Strategy that resulted in these Notice of Motions being action. This information has been included in the Background section of the report and includes Dogs and Moonee Ponds Creek, Kingsford Smith Ulm Reserve, Making Spaces for Creative Play, Opportunities for fenced dog-off-leash areas in northern Moreland and multiple Notice of Motions relating to Open Space in Brunswick.

## **Officer Recommendation**

That Council:

1. Endorses as final the Merri-bek Open Space Strategy (Attachment 1) and associated Action Plan (Attachment 2).
2. Authorises the Director City Infrastructure to make minor editorial changes in finalising the documents for publication, including graphical design, that do not change the meaning of the Strategy or Action Plan.
3. Notes the Community Engagement Report (Attachment 3) detailing the methodology and findings of community engagement, including from the Hearing of Submissions, on the Merri-bek Open Space Strategy and Action Plan and thanks the community for their participation throughout the process of preparing the Open Space Strategy.

4. Endorses the approach to open space planning represented in the Open Space Technical Background Report (Attachment 4) and 20-year Project List (Attachment 5), noting that these documents align with the Open Space Strategy and Action Plan.

## **Time Extension**

### **Resolution**

**Cr Bolton moved, Cr Riley seconded -**

**That the Council meeting be extended by 30 minutes at 10.30 pm.**

**Carried**

*At the request of Cr Conlan to vote on the motion separately, the Chairperson put to the vote Parts 1 a), b), d) and Parts 2, 3 and 4.*

### **Resolution**

**Cr Tapinos moved, Cr Panopoulos seconded -**

**That Council:**

1. **Endorses as final the Merri-bek Open Space Strategy (Attachment 1) and associated Action Plan (Attachment 2), with the following changes to the Action Plan:**
  - a) **Insert a new action for 2024/25 in the Action Plan under Direction 1: Providing parks close to home and enhancing existing open spaces after action 1.9 to “Prepare a municipal-wide view of priority of gap areas in addition to the suburb by suburb view, in preparation for the refresh of the Park Close to Home Framework”**
  - b) **Amend action 1.10 listed for 2025 to 2029 under Direction 1: Providing parks close to home and enhancing existing open spaces so that it reads “Refresh the Park Close to Home Framework to guide land acquisition and prioritisation of projects across Merri-bek, taking into account the Open Space Background Technical Report, the Merri-bek Strategic Property Framework, consideration of the Merri-bek Planning Scheme and ensuring the framework is practical to apply.”**
  - d) **Insert a new actions for 2024/25 in the Action Plan under Enabling Actions after action 6.8 to “Develop and present to Council principles and a procedure to govern the management of the Public Resort and Recreation Land Fund so that it holds adequate funding to support significant strategic property purchases.”**
2. **Authorises the Director City Infrastructure to make minor editorial changes in finalising the documents for publication, including graphical design and numbering of actions, that do not change the meaning of the Strategy or Action Plan.**
3. **Notes the Community Engagement Report (Attachment 3) detailing the methodology and findings of community engagement, including from the Hearing of Submissions, on the Merri-bek Open Space Strategy and Action Plan and thanks the community for their participation throughout the process of preparing the Open Space Strategy.**
4. **Endorses the approach to open space planning represented in the Open Space Technical Background Report (Attachment 4) and 20-year Project List (Attachment 5), noting that these documents align with the Open Space Strategy and Action Plan.**

**Carried**

*Council then voted on 1 c) separately.*

- 1c) **Amend action 4.13 listed for 2024/25 in the Action Plan under Direction 4: Providing open space for everyone to add “d) consideration of whether additional land is required under the Park Close to Home Framework for new sporting facilities.”**

**Carried**

## **7.3 THE COBURG CONVERSATION ENGAGEMENT FINDINGS AND PRECINCT OBJECTIVES**

### **Executive Summary**

The revitalisation of central Coburg is a long-held ambition of Merri-bek City Council. As the owner of multiple sites in Coburg, Council is in a unique position to shape a program of transformation.

We have reached a major milestone in this ambition: the delivery of a large-scale engagement program with over 1300 participants, called The Coburg Conversation (summarised in Attachment 2), and the articulation of Council’s objectives for transforming the area (captured in Attachment 1 ‘Revitalising Coburg: Objectives’) that provides the foundation for the next stage of this work.

Place revitalisation programs are long-term, complex and require significant investment and multiple parties. Stage one of the Coburg Revitalisation Program, the delivery of a new health and community services precinct on Bell Street next to the Civic Centre, is now in the advanced stages of planning. The next phase of the Revitalisation Program focuses on the Council-owned sites at Waterfield Street and Russell Street and the site of the existing Coburg Library.

Previous terms of Council, around the mid-2000s, carried out engagement, put detailed planning settings in place, and explored partnerships, but were unable to finalise the delivery plans, models and partners needed to achieve a revitalisation project of this scale at that time.

However, that does mean that much of the planning work is complete and puts Council in a strong position to be able to move forward with a different approach now, adjusted for changes to community needs and aspirations, updated Council policy positions and priorities, changed market conditions and the current funding environment.

Due to the length of time since the last significant community engagement process on central Coburg, and the scale of change that this program would bring about, Council ran an extensive engagement program called The Coburg Conversation from September to December 2023. A mixed-method approach was developed to offer a range of opportunities for people to engage in a way that was meaningful to them, and at a place and time that was convenient. Activities included online and in-person elements, creative expressions and one-on-one conversations, and included specific activities targeting priority groups as described in Council’s Human Rights Policy, as well as local traders, older people, and children and young people.

A total of 1356 people took part in the variety of engagement activities throughout this phase of The Coburg Conversation.

Feedback was sought on what people love about Coburg’s existing character, possibilities for a renewed Coburg Library, green and open spaces, housing, including social and affordable housing, and how to make the best use of Council’s land. A summary of feedback is included as an Attachment to this report (Attachment 2). This was the first phase of The Coburg Conversation, and subsequent phases are intended to be delivered to inform future stages of planning and delivery of the Revitalisation Program.

Taking into account findings from this process, as well as Council's adopted policies and priorities across a raft of issues, the document 'Revitalising Coburg: Objectives' has been developed and is attached to this report as Attachment 1.

The purpose of 'Revitalising Coburg: Objectives' is to establish overarching goals, point to tangible outcomes and provide clear direction for the next stage of project planning.

Six objectives are proposed which are:

- A new library in the heart of Coburg
- New inviting public spaces
- More greening and cooling
- New high-quality housing, including social and affordable housing
- People friendly streets
- Thriving diverse local economy

The report also includes a set of principles to guide the work in its next stages.

Once objectives are in place, more work is needed to be able to define detailed planning, such as the location or specific uses or services within the new library, what types of affordable housing are possible and in what ratios, or what each site can accommodate. The objectives and principles in 'Revitalising Coburg' clearly define what Council is seeking to achieve to be able to guide this next stage of detailed planning.

Should Council adopt 'Revitalising Coburg: Objectives', the next steps will involve further site investigations and feasibility work, partnership building, and the development of funding and delivery models. It is anticipated that recommendations for a preferred delivery model and key design moves such as the vision for a new Coburg Library, will be presented to Council in early to mid-2025.

## **Officer Recommendation**

That Council:

1. Notes the feedback provided from the community about the future of central Coburg captured in 'The Coburg Conversation – Summary of Community Engagement for Revitalising Coburg' (Attachment 2)
2. Thanks the many community members, local groups businesses and organisations who took the time to share their views and ideas for the future of the area
3. Adopts 'Revitalising Coburg: Objectives', that sets out Council's high-level objectives for achieving the revitalisation of central Coburg, (Attachment 1) and will act as a guide for the next stage of detailed planning for this program.

## **Resolution**

**Cr Panopoulos moved, Cr Tapinos seconded -**

**That Council:**

1. **Notes the feedback provided from the community about the future of central Coburg captured in 'The Coburg Conversation – Summary of Community Engagement for Revitalising Coburg' (Attachment 2)**
2. **Thanks the many community members, local groups businesses and organisations who took the time to share their views and ideas for the future of the area**



3. **Amends objective 5 on page 29 in Attachment 1 to this report adding the italicised words to read:**  
***Safe, green, inviting, and accessible journeys that link key destinations and open space, and all types of transport to, from and within the precinct, giving clear priority to pedestrians, cyclists and those living with mobility issues.***
4. **Includes the concept of a community centre as part of the Coburg Library project in the next round of community consultation on Revitalising Coburg. Such a community centre would include a kitchen that the public is allowed to use, a shower and lockers, an additional meeting room or rooms, which could facilitate the Library opening up this additional space during extreme heat periods.**
5. **Adopts ‘Revitalising Coburg: Objectives’, that sets out Council’s high-level objectives for achieving the revitalisation of central Coburg, (Attachment 1) and will act as a guide for the next stage of detailed planning for this program.**

10.05 pm *Cr Conlan left the meeting during the debate.*

10.05 pm *Cr Davidson left the meeting during the debate and was absent for the vote.*

10.06 pm *Cr Pavlidis left the meeting during the debate and was absent for the vote.*

10.06 pm *Cr Conlan returned to the meeting prior to the vote.*

**Carried unanimously**

## **7.4 MERRI-BEK PLANNING SCHEME AMENDMENT C230MBEK - BRUNSWICK ACTIVITY CENTRE ZONE DECISION GATEWAY 1**

### **Executive Summary**

In the Brunswick Activity Centre, new developments are focusing on apartments and not providing enough space for new businesses. The focus of Merri-bek Planning Scheme Amendment C230mbek is on land use; encouraging business investment and jobs, to ensure the vibrancy of the area does not decline.

Amendment C230mbek proposes to apply an Activity Centre Zone to the Brunswick Activity Centre. The Activity Centre Zone is designed to increase the opportunities for employment in the area and to simplify and improve the current controls that are made up of a mixture of zones and overlays affecting properties in multiple combinations.

Between 2021 and 2023, three phases of community engagement were undertaken about a proposed Activity Centre Zone for the Brunswick Activity Centre. The provisions of the zone have been drafted over this time, with changes being progressively made in response to community feedback, with this feedback indicating that the community is broadly supportive of the project direction.

### **Officer Recommendation**

That Council:

1. Using its powers as a planning authority under ss 8A and 8B of the *Planning and Environment* 1987, seeks authorisation from the Minister for Planning to prepare Merri-bek Planning Scheme Amendment C230mbek as shown in Attachment 1 to this report.
2. Endorses the reports which outline the rationale and evidence which underpins the proposed planning scheme changes:
  - a) Vibrant Brunswick Draft Brunswick Activity Centre Structure Plan as shown in Attachment 2.
  - b) A Job in Moreland 2021 Final Report as shown in Attachment 3.

- c) Moreland Affordable Housing Planning Provision 2020 Final Report as shown in Attachment 4.
  - d) Environmental Audit Overlay Preliminary Risk Screen Assessment SKM Report Final as shown in Attachment 5.
  - e) Environmental Audit Overlay Preliminary Risk Screen Assessment Golder Report Final as shown in Attachment 6.
  - f) Planning Enforcement Noise Complaints Report 2018-2022 as shown in Attachment 7.
3. Following receipt of the Minister’s authorisation, exhibits the Amendment in accordance with Section 19 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* and as outlined in the Consultation section of this report.
  4. Authorises the Director Place and Environment to make changes to the Amendment based on conditions imposed in any authorisation granted by the Minister for Planning and to make minor changes.

## Resolution

**Cr Panopoulos moved, Cr Bolton seconded -**

**That Council defers the matter to the May 2024 Council meeting to allow for further briefing and consideration by Councillors.**

- 10.13 pm Cr Pavlidis returned to the meeting during the debate.
- 10.14 pm Cr Yildiz left the meeting during the debate.
- 10.14 pm Cr Davidson returned to the meeting during the debate.
- 10.17 pm Cr Yildiz returned to the meeting during the debate.

**Carried**

Cr Pulford called for a division.

<b>For</b>	<b>Against</b>	<b>Abstain</b>
Cr Bolton	Cr Davidson	Cr Yildiz
Cr Pulford	Cr Tapinos	
Cr Panopoulos		
Cr Pavlidis		
Cr Conlan		
Cr Riley		
<b>Total For (6)</b>	<b>Total Against (2)</b>	<b>Total Abstain (1)</b>

## 7.5 AMENDMENT C231MBEK - INTRODUCTION OF THE MOVING AROUND MERRI-BEK TRANSPORT STRATEGY AND MERRI-BEK OPEN SPACE STRATEGY INTO THE MERRI-BEK PLANNING SCHEME - DECISION GATEWAY 1

### Executive Summary

Amendment C231mbek seeks to introduce new policy direction from the endorsed *Moving Around Merri-bek* Transport Strategy and the *Merri-bek Open Space Strategy* into the Merri-bek Planning Scheme.

*Moving Around Merri-bek* is a long-term strategic document that guides the way Council manages and makes changes to Merri-bek’s transport system. It replaces Councils current transport strategy, the *Moreland Integrated Transport Strategy 2019*. Council adopted the *Moving Around Merri-bek* strategy at its meeting of 10 March 2024 (Council Report 7.2).

The *Merri-bek Open Space Strategy* will guide the way Council plans, delivers, and maintains open space in Merri-bek. Once adopted, the strategy will replace Council's current open space strategy, the *Moreland Open Space Strategy 2012-2022*.

The Merri-bek Planning Scheme currently contains high level strategic direction and policies from the *Moreland Integrated Transport Strategy 2019* and the *Moreland Open Space Strategy 2012-2022*. As both strategies will be replaced, the policy content within the Merri-bek Planning Scheme will also need to be updated.

## Officer Recommendation

That Council:

1. Using its powers as a planning authority under ss8A and 8B of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*, seeks authorisation from the Minister for Planning to prepare Amendment C231mbek to the Merri-bek Planning Scheme as detailed in Section 3 of this report and in Attachment 1 to this report.
2. Following receipt of the Minister's authorisation, exhibits the Amendment in accordance with Section 19 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* as outlined in the Consultation section of this report.
3. Authorises the Director Place and Environment to make changes to the Amendment to ensure consistency with the Council adopted version of the *Merri-bek Open Space Strategy*.
4. Authorises the Director Place and Environment to make changes to the Amendment based on conditions imposed in any authorisation granted by the Minister for Planning and to make minor changes.

## Motion

Cr Tapinos moved, Cr Yildiz seconded –

That Council defers the matter to the May 2024 Council meeting to allow for further briefing and consideration by Councillors.

Lost

## Resolution

Cr Panopoulos moved, Cr Riley seconded -

That Council:

1. **Using its powers as a planning authority under ss8A and 8B of the Planning and Environment Act 1987, seeks authorisation from the Minister for Planning to prepare Amendment C231mbek to the Merri-bek Planning Scheme as detailed in Section 3 of this report and in Attachment 1 to this report.**
2. **Following receipt of the Minister's authorisation, exhibits the Amendment in accordance with Section 19 of the Planning and Environment Act 1987 as outlined in the Consultation section of this report.**
3. **Authorises the Director Place and Environment to make changes to the Amendment to ensure consistency with the Council adopted version of the Merri-bek Open Space Strategy.**
4. **Authorises the Director Place and Environment to make changes to the Amendment based on conditions imposed in any authorisation granted by the Minister for Planning and to make minor changes.**

10.22 pm Cr Conlan left and returned to the meeting during the debate.

10.22 pm Cr Bolton left the meeting during the debate and was absent for the vote.

**Carried unanimously**

*The order of business was altered to bring forward report 7.6 Naming the park at 260 Sydney Road Brunswick - voting poll results and 7.7 Trial Road Closure - Barrow Street, Coburg, to be the first and second items to be considered at the meeting.*

10.25 pm Cr Bolton returned to the meeting.

## **7.8 BOX FOREST ROAD - NORTHERN MEMORIAL PARK ENTRANCE TREATMENT**

### **Executive Summary**

In 2021, the Greater Melbourne Cemeteries Trust (GMCT), which manages both Fawkner Memorial Park and Northern Memorial Park, approached council with a request to explore potential modifications to the road alignment on Box Forest Road adjacent to Victoria Boulevard – the main entrance to Northern Memorial Park. Their proposal focused mainly on a right-turn lane into Victoria Boulevard that would require the road to be widened to accommodate the new lane. GMCT had concerns regarding possible congestion when entering the cemetery, particularly during funeral processions, due to the high traffic volume along Box Forest Road. In addition, Northern Memorial Park was expected to become more frequently visited as Fawkner Memorial Park (on the opposite side of Box Forest Road) is reaching capacity. The GMCT also requested that Council fully fund the construction should the proposal be supported.

From this request, Council officers liaised with the GMCT several times over the course of the following year, advising that the proposal was not supported primarily due to safety concerns and concerns about lack of community benefit. The safety concerns were that pedestrians and cyclists would be closer to vehicular traffic on Box Forest Road as a result of the road widening requirements of the proposal. On 8 February 2023, Council resolved to call for a report to be presented to Council, investigating the proposal, possible options for improvement on Box Forest Road, new pedestrian crossings and undertaking consultation with the GMCT.

Following a thorough investigation, Council officers found that the proposed turn lane and associated road widening would likely increase risk for pedestrians and cyclists, with little improvement to traffic congestion. In addition, the estimated cost of implementing the proposal is \$584,490 (including contingency). Traffic modelling also showed marginal improvements to queues and traffic delays.

Regarding potential new pedestrian crossing points, it is to be noted that the existing school crossing outside 58 Hilton Street, 100 metres west of May Street, is currently being upgraded to a signalised crossing. A new signalised crossing is also proposed by Department of Transport and Planning on Box Forest Road near Sages Road.

As such, Council officers recommend that GMCT's proposal is not supported based on the following reasons:

- Increased safety and amenity risk to pedestrians and cyclists.
- Negative impact on green space and trees.
- Significant cost of implementation.
- Only minor impacts to travel times and congestion noted as possible benefits.

While some community benefit may result from the proposal in the form of reduced congestion during funeral processions, overall community benefit is considered to be low when compared to other negative impacts and high costs.

## Officer Recommendation

That Council:

1. Notes that Box Forest Road traffic is currently operating in an acceptable manner, and that the addition of a right-turn lane and other treatments as proposed by Greater Metropolitan Cemeteries Trust (GMCT) (see Attachment 1) is not warranted due to significant costs in exchange for little community benefit.
2. Requests Officers to progress approvals processes with the Department of Transport and Planning to make the following changes to the existing 40 km/h School Zone (8 – 9:30 am and 2:30 – 4 pm School Days) on Box Forest Road that currently applies between Sages Road and 54 Box Forest Road:
  - a) Extend the times so that the 40 km/h zone applies between 8 am – 4 pm, Monday to Friday.
  - b) Extend the length of the 40 km/h zone so that it applies between East Street and Sydney Road.
3. If approval is received from the Department of Transport and Planning, install the 40 km/h signage at the approved locations.

## Resolution

**Cr Tapinos moved, Cr Yildiz seconded –**

At the request of Cr Panopoulos, the Chairperson put each item to the vote separately.

**That Council:**

1. **Notes that Box Forest Road traffic is currently operating in an acceptable manner, and that the addition of a right-turn lane and other treatments as proposed by Greater Metropolitan Cemeteries Trust (GMCT) (see Attachment 1) is not warranted due to significant costs in exchange for little community benefit.**

**Carried**

Cr Tapinos called for a division.

<b>For</b>	<b>Against</b>	<b>Abstain</b>
Cr Bolton	Cr Davidson	Cr Pavlidis
Cr Pulford	Cr Tapinos	
Cr Panopoulos	Cr Yildiz	
Cr Conlan		
Cr Riley		
<b>Total For (5)</b>	<b>Total Against (3)</b>	<b>Total Abstain (1)</b>

2. Monitor traffic movements and liaise with GMCT about possible traffic treatments and funding opportunities with a report back to council in February 2025.

**Lost**

Cr Tapinos called for a division.

<b>For</b>	<b>Against</b>	<b>Abstain</b>
Cr Bolton	Cr Riley	Cr Pavlidis
Cr Davidson	Cr Pulford	
Cr Tapinos	Cr Panopoulos	
Cr Yildiz	Cr Conlan	
<b>Total For (4)</b>	<b>Total Against (4)</b>	<b>Total Abstain (1)</b>

3. Requests Officers to progress approvals processes with the Department of Transport and Planning to make the following changes to the existing 40 km/h School Zone (8 – 9:30 am and 2:30 – 4 pm School Days) on Box Forest Road that currently applies between Sages Road and 54 Box Forest Road:
  - a) Extend the times so that the 40 km/h zone applies between 8 am – 4 pm, Monday to Friday.
  - b) Extend the length of the 40 km/h zone so that it applies between East Street and Sydney Road.
4. If approval is received from the Department of Transport and Planning, install the 40 km/h signage at the approved locations.

Carried

## Substantive Resolution

That Council:

1. Notes that Box Forest Road traffic is currently operating in an acceptable manner, and that the addition of a right-turn lane and other treatments as proposed by Greater Metropolitan Cemeteries Trust (GMCT) (see Attachment 1) is not warranted due to significant costs in exchange for little community benefit.
2. Requests Officers to progress approvals processes with the Department of Transport and Planning to make the following changes to the existing 40 km/h School Zone (8 – 9:30 am and 2:30 – 4 pm School Days) on Box Forest Road that currently applies between Sages Road and 54 Box Forest Road:
  - a) Extend the times so that the 40 km/h zone applies between 8 am – 4 pm, Monday to Friday.
  - b) Extend the length of the 40 km/h zone so that it applies between East Street and Sydney Road.
3. If approval is received from the Department of Transport and Planning, install the 40 km/h signage at the approved locations.

Carried

## Time Extension

### Resolution

Cr Panopoulos moved, Cr Riley seconded -

That the Council meeting be extended by 30 minutes at 10.32 pm.

Carried

## 7.9 REMOVING REDUNDANT VEHICLE CROSSOVERS

### Executive Summary

Redundant vehicle crossovers are driveways and access points that are no longer actively used to provide access to a property. This may result from a fence or wall being constructed at a property, a change in land use, or the historic development of a property.

Property owners are responsible for the management of vehicle crossovers. Clause 9.4(c) of Council's General Local Law reads *An owner or occupier of premises must remove any redundant vehicle crossing.*

Council currently enforces this local law when assessing building and planning permits; a *Statement of Compliance* is not provided until all redundant vehicle crossovers are removed. This reduces the instances where a new redundant vehicle crossover is created.

Council pro-actively removes redundant vehicle crossings as part of our road reconstruction program, subject to written consent from the relevant property owner. This action will ensure the gradual removal of the remaining vehicle crossovers as road assets require renewal.

An options assessment considered three new approaches to removing redundant vehicle crossovers: Pro-active enforcement, a municipal-wide removal program, and a targeted activity centre removal program.

A pro-active enforcement approach was deemed unviable due to the high estimated staff resources to undertake cold-call enforcement to the 400 estimated properties in contravention of Clause 9.4(c) of the General Local Law. This approach was also deemed to be unlikely to be considered fair by the community.

A municipal-wide program is estimated to cost \$2,060,000 to remove an estimated 400 redundant vehicle crossovers. A targeted activity centre program is estimated to cost \$280,000 to remove 50 vehicle crossovers.

It is recommended that Council continue with existing practices to pro-actively remove redundant vehicle crossovers as part of the road reconstruction program and to enforce the local law provision as part of planning and building permit applications.

## **Officer Recommendation**

That Council:

1. Continues with existing practices of removing redundant vehicle crossovers as part of Council's streetscape renewal programs and road reconstruction works.
2. Continues with existing practices of enforcing the redundant vehicle crossing local law Clause 9.4(c) when a property is developed.
3. Notes the cost estimates for undertaking a municipal-wide redundant vehicle crossover removal program (\$2,060,000) and an activity-centre focused removal program (\$280,000).
4. Notes the likely costs to staff resources and negative community sentiment of actively enforcing non-compliance with Clause 9.4(c) of Council's General Local Law regarding redundant vehicle crossovers.

## **Resolution**

**Cr Tapinos moved, Cr Bolton seconded -**

**That Council:**

1. **Continues with existing practices of removing redundant vehicle crossovers as part of Council's streetscape renewal programs and road reconstruction works.**
2. **Continues with existing practices of enforcing the redundant vehicle crossing local law Clause 9.4(c) when a property is developed.**
3. **Notes the cost estimates for undertaking a municipal-wide redundant vehicle crossover removal program (\$2,060,000) and an activity-centre focused removal program (\$280,000).**

4. **Notes the likely costs to staff resources and negative community sentiment of actively enforcing non-compliance with Clause 9.4(c) of Council's General Local Law regarding redundant vehicle crossovers.**
5. **Notes the vehicle crossover geospatial dataset (Attachment 1) and the need to complete the mapping of the municipality with a priority on Activity Centres.**
6. **Refers to the 2025/26 budget discussion an estimated cost for the removal of redundant crossovers in Activity Centres to facilitate other space demand including car parking bays, footpath widening, on-street dining, and bike parking, tree planting.**

**Carried**

## **7.10 MERRI CREEK MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE - FUNDING AND SERVICE AGREEMENT 2024-2027**

### **Executive Summary**

The Merri Creek is a highly valued environmental and community asset and Merri-bek City Council and the Merri Creek Management Committee have a long-standing relationship and mutual affinity for the Merri Creek dating back to the inception of the Merri Creek Management Committee in 1989.

Merri-bek City Council provides funding, along with other member partners, to support the operations of the Merri Creek Management Committee, in addition to engaging its services for targeted maintenance work along the Merri Creek. The Merri Creek Management Committee has a strong track record of delivering value to the community through both its advocacy, education programs and specialist maintenance works. The Merri Creek Management Committee also plays a key role in community education and public awareness for matters impacting the creek like contamination, litter, biodiversity, and flora and fauna protection.

Council's current funding agreement with the Merri Creek Management Committee is due to end in June 2024. Establishment of a new 3-year Funding and Service Agreement was supported at the 13 September 2023 Council Meeting and will contribute to the continued viability of the Merri Creek Management Committee as part of Council's long-standing commitment to the proactive natural resource management of the Merri Creek.

### **Officer Recommendation**

That Council:

1. Approves a new 3-year Funding and Service Agreement with Merri Creek Management Committee, commencing from 1 July 2024 until 30 June 2027.
2. Delegates responsibility for executing the Funding and Service Agreement to the Chief Executive Officer.

### **Resolution**

**Cr Riley moved, Cr Conlan seconded -**

**That Council:**

1. **Approves a new 3-year Funding and Service Agreement with Merri Creek Management Committee, commencing from 1 July 2024 until 30 June 2027.**
2. **Delegates responsibility for executing the Funding and Service Agreement to the Chief Executive Officer.**

**Carried unanimously**



## 7.11 ADOPTION OF COUNCIL'S GOVERNANCE RULES 2024

### Executive Summary

In August 2023, Council endorsed revised Governance Rules for community consultation, including additional amendments related to special meetings, the Chairperson's duties, questions of council, and community statements. A 21 day community consultation period followed, with a report on the revised rules scheduled for the October 2023 Council meeting.

However, the adoption of revised Governance Rules was deferred to the November 2023 Council meeting, and subsequently, to the February 2024 Council meeting for further review of specific provisions.

Council at its meeting held in February 2024, endorsed further amendments to address inconsistencies and improve procedures within the Governance Rules. These amendments included adjustments to quorum procedures, rules governing notices of rescission, urgent business procedures, and handling of questions and community statements during meetings.

Due to additional amendments being made after the initial community consultation in August 2023, further community consultation was undertaken for the proposed changes resulting from the review process. One submission was received during the public exhibition period which commenced on 16 February 2024 and concluded on 8 March 2024, leading to considerations by Council officers.

After thorough review of all submissions, Council officers do not recommend any further amendments to the final version of the Governance Rules. The presented Governance Rules represent the culmination of changes endorsed by Council in both August 2023 and February 2024 and is provided in Attachment 1 for consideration and adoption.

Feedback received during the second consultation process is included in Attachment 2, no further changes to the governance rules are recommended in response to the submission received in March 2024.

### Officer Recommendation

That Council:

1. Adopts the Governance Rules provided in Attachment 1 to this report.
2. Writes to all submitters who contributed feedback in the August 2023 and February 2024 community consultation processes, thanking them for their contribution and providing a copy of the outcome of Council's decision.

### Resolution

**Cr Panopoulos moved, Cr Pulford seconded -**

**That Council:**

1. **Adopts the Governance Rules provided in Attachment 1 to this report.**
2. **Writes to all submitters who contributed feedback in the August 2023 and February 2024 community consultation processes, thanking them for their contribution and providing a copy of the outcome of Council's decision.**

**Carried**

*Cr Pavlidis abstained from the vote*

## **7.12 PROPOSED COUNCILLOR CONTACT WITH LOBBYISTS DEVELOPERS AND SUBMITTERS POLICY**

### **Executive Summary**

In 2021, Council initiated a trial public registry for Councillor meetings with developers, operating on an opt-in basis. The trial, concluding in July 2023, had limited disclosures, prompting the Council to extend it while maintaining the opt-in system.

Simultaneously, the Council resolved to formulate a policy for Councillor interaction with developers and lobbyists. The significance of the Independent Broad-Based Anti-Corruption Commission's (IBAC's) Operation Sandon, delivered in July 2023, highlighted improper influence, leading to recommendations for enhanced donation and lobbying regulations.

In response to Council resolutions and prompted by Operation Sandon, a comprehensive policy titled 'Councillor Interaction with Lobbyists, Developers and Submitters' has been prepared for Council consideration for adoption.

Drawing on research and guidance from the Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC) in New South Wales, the policy aims to strike a balance by defining expectations for Councillor conduct, ensuring adherence to legal and ethical norms, minimising risks in planning application assessments and establishing transparent reporting mechanisms for community accessibility.

Importantly, the policy does not prohibit Councillor engagement but provides provisions for effective and transparent oversight of interactions with lobbyists, developers, and submitters.

At the Council meeting held 14 February 2024, Council deferred the proposed Councillor Interaction with Lobbyists Developers and Submitters Policy for further refinement. Subsequently, Council officers conducted a thorough review, leading to significant enhancements aimed at improving clarity and refining the policy's focus.

Key changes include: grammatical adjustments to enhance readability; clarification regarding policy application to apply to land development for multiple dwellings or for commercial purposes; and the consolidation of requirements concerning interactions with lobbyists and developers to streamline the policy. A separate section addressing enforcement processes has been included, alongside updated definitions to improve clarity.

The policy revisions also now limit requirements for Councillor registering interaction with submitters only to instances involving concerns about inappropriate behaviour, conflicts of interest or undue influence. These revisions are informed by findings from an IBAC investigation.

### **Officer Recommendation**

That Council adopts the Councillor Interaction with Lobbyists, Developers and Submitters Policy as provided in Attachment 1.

### **Motion**

Cr Riley moved, Cr Panopoulos seconded -

That Council adopts the Councillor Interaction with Lobbyists, Developers and Submitters Policy as provided in Attachment 1.

## Amendment

Cr Bolton moved, Cr Conlan seconded -

That Council adopts the Councillor Interaction with Lobbyists, Developers and Submitters Policy as provided in Attachment 1 with the following amendments:

1. Add an additional point under Section 4.3 Other Forms of Interaction with the words:  
Private developers will be banned from attending and/or briefing meetings of councillors when the general public is not invited to attend.

10.44 pm Cr Tapinos left the meeting and returned during the debate.

**Lost**

Cr Pulford called for a division.

### For

Cr Bolton  
Cr Conlan

### Against

Cr Davidson  
Cr Yildiz  
Cr Pulford  
Cr Panopoulos  
Cr Pavlidis  
Cr Riley  
Cr Tapinos

**Total For (2)**

**Total Against (7)**

## Amendment

Cr Tapinos moved, Cr Pavlidis seconded -

That Council adopts the Councillor Interaction with Lobbyists, Developers and Submitters Policy as provided in Attachment 1 with the following amendments:

1. Remove Section 4.2 – Interaction between Councillors and submitters
2. Amend the policy to encompass interactions with submitters by:
  - a) Amending Section 4.1 to incorporate submitters (by inserting the term "submitter" alongside references to developers and lobbyists).
  - b) Amending Section 4.4 to encompass submitters (by inserting the term "submitter" alongside references to developers and lobbyists).
3. Renumber the policy accordingly, as a result of removing Section 4.

## Motion

Cr Panopoulos moved, Cr Riley seconded –

That the amendment now be put.

**Lost**

## Meeting Adjournment

The Mayor declared the meeting adjourned at 11 pm, to be resumed at 6.00 pm on Thursday 11 April 2024.

## Meeting Resumption

The meeting resumed at 6.07 pm on Thursday 11 April 2024.

## Amendment

Cr Tapinos moved, Cr Pavlidis seconded -

That Council adopts the Councillor Interaction with Lobbyists, Developers and Submitters Policy as provided in Attachment 1 with the following amendments:

1. Remove Section 4.2 – Interaction between Councillors and submitters
2. Amend the policy to encompass interactions with submitters by:
  - a) Amending Section 4.1 to incorporate submitters (by inserting the term "submitter" alongside references to developers and lobbyists).
  - b) Amending Section 4.4 to encompass submitters (by inserting the term "submitter" alongside references to developers and lobbyists).
3. Renumber the policy accordingly, as a result of removing Section 4.

**Lost**

Cr Pulford called for a division.

### **For**

Cr Tapinos  
Cr Yildiz

**Total For (2)**

### **Against**

Cr Davidson  
Cr Pulford  
Cr Panopoulos  
Cr Riley

**Total Against (4)**

## Resolution

Cr Riley moved, Cr Panopoulos seconded -

That Council adopts the Councillor Interaction with Lobbyists, Developers and Submitters Policy as provided in Attachment 1.

**Carried unanimously**

## 7.13 BRUNSWICK MECHANICS INSTITUTE MANAGEMENT MODEL

### Executive Summary

The Brunswick Mechanics Institute (BMI) is a State government owned building that is managed by Council.

In 2017, a tender was completed seeking an organisation to manage the Brunswick Mechanics Institute, and was awarded to Next Wave Inc.

In July 2023, Council resolved to extend the Next Wave contract until its maximum term. The extension was approved and the contract is expiring on 30 June 2025.

At that time in July 2023, Council requested that consideration be given to whether a future tender process is needed to procure a managing organisation for BMI, or if the venue could come into internal Council management. This report sets out the two options, and recommends a new approach, but still within a model of external management.

Any tender for future management of Brunswick Mechanics Institute will need to be released for public application in late April 2024.

A decision would be made by Council to approve the successful tenderer in August 2024.

## Officer Recommendation

That Council:

1. Endorses a new approach to the operation of the Brunswick Mechanics Institute from 1 July 2025 that:
  - a) Aligns with the 2023-2030 Arts and Culture Strategy
  - b) Designates the space for creative development, small, low-tech and/or informal public events and activations, artist networking and engagement
  - c) Includes the following terms and key performance indicators:
    - i. Ability for Council to program the space for a set number of weeks per year
    - ii. That local artists and communities are prioritised through a pre-approved hire decision making model
    - iii. Artists to receive in-kind or reduced rates for venue hire
    - iv. Prioritisation of Merri-bek based artists and creatives
    - v. Prioritisation of artists from Merri-bek Human Rights priority groups
    - vi. Inclusion of artist networking events and outdoor activation in the activity requirements
    - vii. A clear communication and reporting strategy for sharing information about the activities happening at BMI with the public and Council.
2. Proceeds to tender for the management of Brunswick Mechanics Institute for a term of three years, plus two further three year options.
3. Notes that the funds required (\$80,000 per annum) to action this resolution are budgeted for within the current year Council budget.

## Resolution

**Cr Riley moved, Cr Tapinos seconded -**

That Council:

1. **Endorses a new approach to the operation of the Brunswick Mechanics Institute from 1 July 2025 that:**
  - a) Aligns with the 2023-2030 Arts and Culture Strategy**
  - b) Designates the space for creative development, small, low-tech and/or informal public events and activations, artist networking and engagement**
  - c) Includes the following terms and key performance indicators:**
    - i. Ability for Council to program the space for a set number of weeks per year**
    - ii. That local artists and communities are prioritised through a pre-approved hire decision making model**
    - iii. Artists to receive in-kind or reduced rates for venue hire**
    - iv. Prioritisation of Merri-bek based artists and creatives**
    - v. Prioritisation of artists from Merri-bek Human Rights priority groups**
    - vi. Inclusion of artist networking events and outdoor activation in the activity requirements**



3. Note the decrease to the full-year forecast for operating income of \$0.01 million and the decrease to operating expenditure of \$2.2 million arising from the 2023/24 Third Quarter Financial Review.
4. Notes a forecast underspend of \$0.8 million against the adopted budget in the waste charge and \$1.3 million of unbudgeted grant funding (factored into the 2023/24 waste charge) to be transferred to the Waste Charge Reserve (\$1.1 million identified in the Third Quarter Financial Review).
5. Endorses the full-year capital expenditure forecast of \$109.0 million, arising from the 2023/24 Mid-Year Financial Review.
6. Carries forward the following capital project funding to the 2024/25 Capital Works Program:
  - Derby St Kindergarten Children’s Centre - \$1,000,000
  - Oak Park Kindergarten - \$1,000,000
  - Hosken Reserve Stage 4 Open Space & Civil Work - \$1,000,000
  - Clifton Park – Synthetic Soccer - \$740,001
  - Sportsfield Lighting – JP Fawkner Park - \$641,744
  - Mitchell Pde Retaining Wall - \$632,421
  - Greenbank Crescent Retaining Walls - \$525,000
  - Shared Zones – Victoria Street and Albert Street, Brunswick East - \$460,000
  - Sportsfield Lighting – Allard Park - \$378,785
  - Coburg Bluestone Cottage Complex Redevelopment - \$300,000
  - Dawson Street bike lane – make permanent - \$220,000
  - Merri Creek Trail Access and Safety Upgrades – Various - \$191,900
  - Accommodation Changes to Meet Service Demand - \$184,766
  - Merri Trial – Sumner Park to Capital City Trail Flood Mitigation – Bridge across Merri Creek into Darebin, Brunswick East - \$170,000
  - Furniture & Fittings Replacement Program - \$169,745
  - De Carle Street Protected Bike Lanes – The Avenue to Moreland Rd, Coburg - \$165,679
  - Gym Equipment Replacement Program – Various Locations - \$164,000
  - HW Foletta, Brunswick - \$130,000
  - Summer Bank/Dowding Reserve - \$130,000
  - Coburg Olympic Pool – Pool Plant and Building Works - \$120,000
  - Fisher Reserve, Brunswick East (Design Only) - \$120,000
  - Parks and Reserve flooding rectification - \$100,000
  - McBryde St Reserve (Moomba Park) – Social Room Amenities & Kitchen - \$100,000
  - Blackspot Project – De Carle St & Albion St - \$98,000
  - Kendall/Harding Footbridge – Footbridge over Merri Creek - \$76,424
  - MITS – Road closures - \$73,000
  - Shore Reserve – Public Toilets - \$35,457

- Brunswick Velodrome – Community Pump Track - \$30,000
  - Glenroy Activity Centre Upgrade Works – Wheatsheaf Rd North - \$21,862.
7. Approves the following additional capital project funding to be funded from the Public Resort and Recreation Land Reserve:
- Coburg Lake – Exersite - \$12,560
  - ATC Cook Reserve – Exersite - \$6,746
  - ATC Cook Reserve – Picnic Shelter - \$5,329
  - Charles Mutton Reserve – Tennis Court Resurface & Lighting - \$3,982.

## **Resolution**

**Cr Riley moved, Cr Yildiz seconded -**

**That Council:**

1. **Notes the 2023/24 Third Quarter Financial Report for the period ending 29 February 2024, including operating performance and capital performance.**
2. **Notes the status of the capital works program for 2023/24.**
3. **Note the decrease to the full-year forecast for operating income of \$0.01 million and the decrease to operating expenditure of \$2.2 million arising from the 2023/24 Third Quarter Financial Review.**
4. **Notes a forecast underspend of \$0.8 million against the adopted budget in the waste charge and \$1.3 million of unbudgeted grant funding (factored into the 2023/24 waste charge) to be transferred to the Waste Charge Reserve (\$1.1 million identified in the Third Quarter Financial Review).**
5. **Endorses the full-year capital expenditure forecast of \$109.0 million, arising from the 2023/24 Mid-Year Financial Review.**
6. **Carries forward the following capital project funding to the 2024/25 Capital Works Program:**
  - **Derby St Kindergarten Children’s Centre - \$1,000,000**
  - **Oak Park Kindergarten - \$1,000,000**
  - **Hosken Reserve Stage 4 Open Space & Civil Work - \$1,000,000**
  - **Clifton Park – Synthetic Soccer - \$740,001**
  - **Sportsfield Lighting – JP Fawkner Park - \$641,744**
  - **Mitchell Pde Retaining Wall - \$632,421**
  - **Greenbank Crescent Retaining Walls - \$525,000**
  - **Shared Zones – Victoria Street and Albert Street, Brunswick East - \$460,000**
  - **Sportsfield Lighting – Allard Park - \$378,785**
  - **Coburg Bluestone Cottage Complex Redevelopment - \$300,000**
  - **Dawson Street bike lane – make permanent - \$220,000**
  - **Merri Creek Trail Access and Safety Upgrades – Various - \$191,900**
  - **Accommodation Changes to Meet Service Demand - \$184,766**
  - **Merri Trial – Sumner Park to Capital City Trail Flood Mitigation – Bridge across Merri Creek into Darebin, Brunswick East - \$170,000**
  - **Furniture & Fittings Replacement Program - \$169,745**



- **De Carle Street Protected Bike Lanes – The Avenue to Moreland Rd, Coburg - \$165,679**
  - **Gym Equipment Replacement Program – Various Locations - \$164,000**
  - **HW Foletta, Brunswick - \$130,000**
  - **Summer Bank/Dowding Reserve - \$130,000**
  - **Coburg Olympic Pool – Pool Plant and Building Works - \$120,000**
  - **Fisher Reserve, Brunswick East (Design Only) - \$120,000**
  - **Parks and Reserve flooding rectification - \$100,000**
  - **McBryde St Reserve (Moomba Park) – Social Room Amenities & Kitchen - \$100,000**
  - **Blackspot Project – De Carle St & Albion St - \$98,000**
  - **Kendall/Harding Footbridge – Footbridge over Merri Creek - \$76,424**
  - **MITS – Road closures - \$73,000**
  - **Shore Reserve – Public Toilets - \$35,457**
  - **Brunswick Velodrome – Community Pump Track - \$30,000**
  - **Glenroy Activity Centre Upgrade Works – Wheatsheaf Rd North - \$21,862.**
- 7. Approves the following additional capital project funding to be funded from the Public Resort and Recreation Land Reserve:**
- **Coburg Lake – Exersite - \$12,560**
  - **ATC Cook Reserve – Exersite - \$6,746**
  - **ATC Cook Reserve – Picnic Shelter - \$5,329**
  - **Charles Mutton Reserve – Tennis Court Resurface & Lighting - \$3,982.**

6.24 pm *Cr Pavlidis entered the meeting before the vote.*

**Carried**

## **7.15 GOVERNANCE REPORT - APRIL 2024 - 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 Governance report includes:

- The summaries of minutes of Advisory Committees.
- The summary of minutes from the Audit and Risk Committee held 5 March 2024.
- The Merri-bek City Council Audit and Risk Committee Biannual Report July 2023 – March 2024 (incorporating recommendations and findings from September and November 2023), in accordance with the Audit and Risk Committee Charter.
- The annual Strategic Risk Review.
- Records of Meetings, with a recommendation that Council notes the records.
- Responses to Public Question Time items taken on notice at the 14 February 2024 and 13 March 2024 Council meetings, with a recommendation that Council notes the responses.

- The reappointment of Jeff Rigby as an independent member of the Audit and Risk Committee for the period 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2027.

### **Officer Recommendation**

That Council:

1. Notes the summary of minutes from Advisory Committees to Council, at Attachment 1 to this report:
  - a) Sustainable Transport Advisory Committee held 22 January 2024 and 5 March 2024.
  - b) Arts Advisory Committee held 20 February 2024.
  - c) Environmental Sustainability Advisory Committee held 14 March 2024.
2. Notes the summary of minutes from the Audit and Risk Committee to Council, at Attachment 2 to this report.
3. Notes the Merri-bek City Council Audit and Risk Committee Biannual Report July 2023 – March 2024, at Attachment 3 to this report.
4. Notes the Strategic Risk Review.
5. Notes the Records of Meetings, at Attachment 4 to this report.
6. Notes responses to questions taken on notice during Public Question Time at the 14 February 2024 and 13 March 2024 Council meetings, at Attachment 5 to this report.
7. In accordance with the recommendation of the Independent Member Review Panel, reappoints Jeff Rigby as an independent member of the Audit and Risk Committee for the period 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2027.

### **Resolution**

**Cr Riley moved, Cr Panopoulos seconded -**

**That Council:**

1. **Notes the summary of minutes from Advisory Committees to Council, at Attachment 1 to this report:**
  - a) **Sustainable Transport Advisory Committee held 22 January 2024 and 5 March 2024.**
  - b) **Arts Advisory Committee held 20 February 2024.**
  - c) **Environmental Sustainability Advisory Committee held 14 March 2024.**
2. **Notes the summary of minutes from the Audit and Risk Committee to Council, at Attachment 2 to this report.**
3. **Notes the Merri-bek City Council Audit and Risk Committee Biannual Report July 2023 – March 2024, at Attachment 3 to this report.**
4. **Notes the Strategic Risk Review.**
5. **Notes the Records of Meetings, at Attachment 4 to this report.**
6. **Notes responses to questions taken on notice during Public Question Time at the 14 February 2024 and 13 March 2024 Council meetings, at Attachment 5 to this report.**
7. **In accordance with the recommendation of the Independent Member Review Panel, reappoints Jeff Rigby as an independent member of the Audit and Risk Committee for the period 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2027.**

**Carried unanimously**

## NOTICES OF MOTION

*The order of business was altered to bring forward Notice of Motion 8.1 Accessible tram stops for Sydney Road as the third item considered at the meeting.*

### **8.2 SUPPORT FOR EMERGENCY FOOD AND MATERIAL AID RELIEF**

#### **Motion**

That Council receives a report in June which outlines:

1. The emergency food and material aid services and volunteer groups that exist in Merri-bek and where they are located, including any such services or volunteer groups that have closed or reduced their service.
2. The level of support that is offered to emergency food and material aid services and volunteer groups by Merri-bek council, compared to other local councils including how the actions in Council's Food Systems Strategy Extension 2020-2024 interacts with assistance for people needing emergency food and material aid.
3. Recommendations for a process by which Council can begin the process of acquiring land for the purpose of constructing a purpose-built facility which includes a commercial-standard kitchen for unfunded emergency food and material relief organisations.
4. How Council's Food Systems Strategy Extension 2020-2024 can be used to increase support for emergency food and material aid.

#### **Resolution**

**Cr Bolton moved, Cr Pulford seconded -**

**That Council receives a report in June which outlines:**

1. **The emergency food and material aid services and volunteer groups that exist in Merri-bek and where they are located, including any such services or volunteer groups that have closed or reduced their service.**
2. **The level of support that is offered to emergency food and material aid services and volunteer groups by Merri-bek council, compared to other local councils including how the actions in Council's Food Systems Strategy Extension 2020-2024 interacts with assistance for people needing emergency food and material aid.**
3. **Recommendations for a process by which Council can begin the process of acquiring land for the purpose of constructing a purpose-built facility which includes a commercial-standard kitchen for unfunded emergency food and material relief organisations.**
4. **How Council's Food Systems Strategy Extension 2020-2024 can be used to increase support for emergency food and material aid.**

*6.40 pm Cr Yildiz left the meeting and was absent for the vote.*

**Carried unanimously**

## **8.3 SUPPORT FOR SPEED LIMIT REDUCTION AND SCHOOL ZONES**

### **Motion**

That Council:

1. Requests Officers to submit an application to the Department of Transport and Planning for the installation of a 40 km/h school zone speed limit at the following locations:
  - a) Coonans Road between the intersections of Reynard Street and Brentwood Avenue.
  - b) Pentridge Boulevard between the intersections of Sydney Road and Bell Street.
2. Requests Officers to submit an application to the Department of Transport and Planning for the installation of a 40 km/h speed limit on Stockade Avenue, Coburg.

### **Resolution**

**Cr Panopoulos moved, Cr Bolton seconded -**

That Council:

1. **Requests Officers to submit an application to the Department of Transport and Planning for the installation of a 40 km/h school zone speed limit at the following locations:**
  - a) **Coonans Road between the intersections of Reynard Street and Brentwood Avenue.**
  - b) **Pentridge Boulevard between the intersections of Sydney Road and Bell Street.**
  - c) **Bell Street between the intersection of Elizabeth Street and the existing 40 km/h strip shopping centre zone near Rodda Street.**
2. **Requests Officers to submit an application to the Department of Transport and Planning for the installation of a 40 km/h speed limit on Stockade Avenue, Coburg.**
3. **Writes to the Department of Transport and Planning, requesting information on the efficacy of existing traffic calming measures (i.e. dragons' teeth and speeding warning signs) on Sydney Road, near Mercy College, and advocating for the installation of a signalised pedestrian crossing.**

6.43 pm *Cr Yildiz returned to the meeting before the vote.*

**Carried unanimously**

## **8.4 NO TO WASTE TO ENERGY INCINERATOR IN NORTHERN SUBURBS**

### **Motion**

That Council:

1. Reaffirms its opposition to Waste to Energy incineration.
2. Make a submission in response to the proposed Wollert Waste to Energy facility indicating Merri-bek Council's opposition to thermal waste to energy technologies.
3. Ensure that future Merri-bek waste processing contracts prohibit waste to energy thermal technologies.

### **Resolution**

**Cr Bolton moved, Cr Pulford seconded -**

That Council:

1. Reaffirms its opposition to Waste to Energy incineration.
2. Makes a submission in response to the proposed Wollert Waste to Energy facility indicating Merri-bek Council's opposition to thermal waste to energy technologies.
3. Ensures that future Merri-bek waste processing contracts prohibit waste to energy thermal technologies.

**Carried unanimously**

## **NOTICE OF RESCISSION**

Nil.

## **FORESHADOWED ITEMS**

Nil.

## **URGENT BUSINESS REPORTS**

Nil.

## **CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS**

### **Resolution**

**Cr Riley moved, Cr Pavlidis seconded –**

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

- **12.1 Contract Award: MAV – Microsoft Arrangement NPN 2.17-3 (RFQ-2023-549) 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.**

- **12.2 Chief Executive Officer Annual Performance Review because it relates to personal information, being information which if released would result in the unreasonable disclosure of information about any person or their personal affairs.**

**Carried**

The Council meeting closed to the public at 6.54 pm.

*6.54 pm Cr Davidson left the meeting.*

## **OPENING THE MEETING TO THE PUBLIC**

### **Resolution**

**Cr Bolton moved, Cr Yildiz seconded –**

**That the Council meeting be open to the public.**

**Carried**

The Council meeting opened to the public at 7.31 pm.

The Council meeting closed at 7.31 pm.

Confirmed

Cr Adam Pulford  
**MAYOR**