



**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 July 2024

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The Mayor opened the meeting at 7.03 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.

<b>Present</b>	<b>Time In</b>	<b>Time Out</b>
Cr Adam Pulford, Mayor	7.03 pm	10.41 pm
Cr Lambros Tapinos, Deputy Mayor	7.03 pm	10.41 pm
Cr Angelica Panopoulos	7.03 pm	10.41 pm
Cr Helen Davidson	Apology	
Cr Annalivia Carli Hannan	7.08 pm	8.48 pm
Cr Helen Pavlidis	7.03 pm	10.24 pm
Cr James Conlan	7.25 pm	9.52 pm
Cr Mark Riley	7.03 pm	10.41 pm
Cr Monica Harte	7.03 pm	10.41 pm
Cr Oscar Yildiz JP	7.03 pm	10.41 pm
Cr Sue Bolton	7.03 pm	10.41 pm

## **OFFICERS**

Chief Executive Officer – Cathy Henderson  
 Director Business Transformation – Sue Vujcevic  
 Acting Director City Infrastructure – Indivar Dhakal  
 Director Community – Eamonn Fennessy  
 Acting Director Place and Environment – Phil Priest  
 Manager Governance and Strategy – Yvonne Callanan  
 Unit Manager Governance – Troy Delia

## **APOLOGIES/LEAVE OF ABSENCE**

Cr Davidson was an apology to the meeting.

Cr Conlan requested a leave of absence from 17 July to 13 August 2024 inclusive and 15 August to 1 September 2024 inclusive.

## **Resolution**

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

**That Cr Conlan be granted a leave of absence from 17 July to 13 August 2024 inclusive and 15 August to 1 September 2024 inclusive.**

**Carried unanimously**

## **DISCLOSURES OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**

Cr Carli Hannan disclosed a general conflict of interest in item 7.1 Barrow Street Trial Road Closure at Harding Street, Coburg, due to her employer Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools made a submission to the report.

Mayor, Cr Pulford disclosed a material conflict of interest in item 7.15 Governance Report - July 2024 - Cyclical Report, due to his attendance at the Northern Councils Alliance Mayor and CEO advocacy visit to Canberra in August 2024.

## MINUTE CONFIRMATION

### Resolution

Cr Bolton moved, Cr Harte seconded -

**The minutes of the Council Meeting held on 12 June 2024 and the Special Council Meeting held on 26 June 2024 be confirmed.**

**Carried unanimously**

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS AND OTHER MATTERS

7.08 pm Cr Yildiz left the meeting.

7.08 pm Cr Carli Hannan joined the meeting.

Cr Bolton acknowledged a concern about bike paths and options available to enforce regulations on construction companies that block these paths; and noted a State Government announcement relating to safety measures for the Bell Street Bridge, prompted by long-term resident advocacy.

7.11 pm Cr Yildiz returned the meeting.

Cr Riley acknowledged the Merri-bek men for non-violence group working on Courageous Conversations with men about violence against women.

Mayor, Cr Pulford acknowledged:

- His attendance with Cr Yildiz and Cr Pavlidis at the Australian Local Government Associations National General Assembly on behalf of Merri-bek Council in Canberra.
- Brunswick Cycling Club members Ruby Roseman-Gannon and Lucas Plapp's who will represent Australia in the Road Cycling team at the Paris Olympics.
- Brunswick local Campbell Harrison who will be representing Australia in Sport Climbing at the Paris Olympics.

Cr Yildiz acknowledged Coburg local Stacy Hymer representing Australia in Taekwondo at the Paris Olympics.

Cr Bolton acknowledged Fawkner local Rhydian Cowley representing Australia in Race Walking at the Paris Olympics.

7.14 pm Cr Carli Hannan left the meeting.

Cr Pavlidis raised the following:

- A concern regarding the election period policy. Noting that while there have been several reviews of governance rules, there appears to have been no specific review of the election period policy and requested that officers provide an update on whether a review has been conducted, emphasising that this should be more than just a name update.
- Reported that the terms of reference for some advisory committees are missing from the website and has advised the Governance team.
- Addressed concerns regarding alternative service arrangements, noting that some community members have been blocked from social media and from contacting Council officers and have been under these arrangements for an extended period without review and requested information on the number of members under these arrangements and the process for their review and notification.
- Provided an update on the foreshadowed notices of motion raised at the June Council meeting, advising of current discussions with officers the possibility of delivering these motions operationally rather than through reports or Notices of Motion to Council. Further information will be provided at the next meeting.

Councillor Pavlidis requested that the issues and questions raised be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

7.18 pm Cr Carli Hannan returned to the meeting.

## PETITIONS

### 5.1 PETITION - BRUNSWICK BATHS X SAXON STREET PRECINCT

A petition (D24/308652) has been received containing 399 signatures requesting Council expands Brunswick Baths as part of the Saxon Street Precinct.

#### Officer Recommendation

That Council:

1. Receives the petition, requesting Council expands Brunswick Baths as part of the Saxon Street Precinct.
2. Refers the petition requesting Council expands Brunswick Baths as part of the Saxon Street Precinct to the Director Community for consideration and response.

#### Resolution

Cr Tapinos moved, Cr Riley seconded -

That Council:

1. **Receives the petition, requesting Council expands Brunswick Baths as part of the Saxon Street Precinct.**
2. **Refers the petition requesting Council expands Brunswick Baths as part of the Saxon Street Precinct to the Director Community for consideration and response.**

Carried

7.25 pm Cr Conlan entered the meeting.

7.25 pm Cr Panopoulos left the meeting.

## PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

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

Public Question Time commenced at 7.26 pm.

### Report 7.1 Barrow Street Trial Road Closure at Harding Street, Coburg

Council received 4 statements and 1 question. The following 3 statements and 1 question were presented to Council.

#### Statement 1

Helen Kratzmann made the following statement:

I am asking Councillor's to support the modal filter trial on Barrow Street at Harding Street in Coburg. It would mean a lot to people in our community, who are facing increased traffic volumes in local streets because motorists are trying to avoid the arterials like Nicholson Street which are congested (likely because motorists are trying to avoid CityLink tolls).

Many residents use Barrow Street to walk and ride, because it provides a somewhat safer alternative to Nicholson Street. However, with the preliminary works for the installation of the De Carle Street bike lanes, there is increased traffic on Barrow Street.

There is also grid connectivity through the section of Coburg encapsulated by Nicholson, Moreland, Sydney Road and Harding Street. This is problematic and must be addressed. This road closure experiment is the first step.

Barrow Street feeds into several primary schools. Barrow Street is a Council controlled local road and it is within your power to help make this local street in Merri-bek safer for children who walk and ride to school.

Council's Human Rights Policy states that Council is committed to being a Child-Friendly City and Community where children and young people's rights are upheld, and initiatives and practices support their participation in civic life. Yet, children and their families have to contend with rat running, speeding motorists when trying to cross or travel on Barrow Street to get to school. Parents have been struck by motorists at roundabouts. Residents have had motorists crash across the footpath, through their fences and into their houses. The most recent crash was just last week!

This trial is about implementing measures to give our children freedom to travel independently. So they can walk or ride to school safely, or to the movies, or to visit a friend.

The transport team have done an excellent job with the report. They've been explicit about the consultation, which includes consultation with St Bernard's, contrary to what has been claimed on social media by the Pascoe Vale MP and another Councillor. I've spoken to St Bernard's parents who are 'furious' at the principal's position. It's important for Councillors to remember that the whole of St Bernard's school community is not against the trial. It's also important to remember that if Councillors are giving weight to the St Bernard's principal's opposition to this trial, Councillors should apply equal weight to the view of the principal's at Coburg High and Merri-bek Primary who are both 100% behind the trial.

The officer's report also addresses many of the concerns raised during the consultation process. Officers have been transparent about community concerns raised and they have adequately responded to those concerns including where third parties are involved (such as emergency services, waste services, bus drivers, etc). I think that the consultation work undertaken to inform such a well written report makes proceeding with the trial difficult to refute. I hope Councillors think the same way too.

*7.29 pm Cr Panopoulos returned to the meeting.*

## **Statement 2**

Maria Giordano, on behalf of Merri-bek Primary School made the following statement:

Good evening, Councillors. I am here tonight to ask you to support the modal filter trial at Barrow and Harding Streets.

People in our school community have raised their concerns about road danger in the area and Merri-bek Primary is extremely supportive of this trial.

Thank you to Council officers for acting on our school community's concerns. I commend the officer's comprehensive, considered report. How wonderful that Council is also seeking funding to deliver pedestrian crossings and speed management treatments on Barrow Street, where it intersects with both Rennie and Blair Streets.

Merri-bek Primary has a large cohort of children and families who walk and ride to school. During Council's Open Streets Trials in 2022, active travel on event day averaged 65.4%, with the highest rate on event day of 70.6%. Many people travel on or across Barrow Street several times each day. Merri-bek Primary has harnessed the opportunity provided by Council to collaborate in a program with Coburg High, to help year 6 Merri-bek Primary school children travel by bike to Coburg High. The Ride & Stride Transition Day supports independent, active travel for children.

As Principal of Merri-bek, I actively encourage active transport. I'm a bike riding convert after trialling an e-cargo bike through Council's Ride & Stride Program – as are many school families. Prior to the e-cargo bike trial, no one would have seen me on a bike. Since the e-cargo bike trial I display my bike proudly in my office. That's the benefit of a trial. The opportunity to try something different and see things from a refreshingly new perspective.

Car crashes are the leading cause of death for Australian children. A modal filter on Barrow Street at Harding Street will help to calm traffic and reduce road danger to children and their families at local schools.

Our school community wholeheartedly welcomes infrastructure changes that will protect children and their families from road violence.

### **Question 1**

Nat Abboud asked if Council considered closing Barrow Street at Sheffield rather than Harding to allow the school drop off at St Bernard's to happen with less disruption whilst still addressing traffic issues on Barrow??

### **At the request of the Mayor, Acting Director City Infrastructure, Indivar Dhakal responded:**

After this section of Barrow Street was selected through the shortlisting process for trial closure sites, there were several locations of Barrow Street considered, including the intersection of Sheffield Street.

Installing the infrastructure at the intersection of Sheffield and Barrow is not expected to have additional benefits compared to the proposed location on Harding Street. However, the proposed location would have the additional benefit of supporting pedestrian safety for people walking along Harding street, which is an important pedestrian link to the Coburg activity centre. It is expected this infrastructure would have more safety benefits than a wombat crossing in this location and would be more cost effective.

Changing the site location to the intersection of Sheffield Street is also not expected to address the St Bernard Primary Schools concerns and might lead to other issues for the schools bus and waste truck access to the school campus.

### **Statement 3**

Brent Houghton, on behalf of Coburg High School made the following statement:

My name is Brent Houghton, Brunswick West, and I am the Principal of Coburg High School. I would like to address item 7.1 of tonight's agenda regarding the potential trial road closure of Barrow Street at Harding Street.

There has been discussion about a lack of consultation about this proposal. The point that I would like to make tonight is that the views of young people are often under-represented when Councils are making decisions or consulting on their plans, particularly around transport issues. As one example, when Council sought community consultation on your Moving Around Merri-bek Discussion Paper, you received 523 responses, of which just 7 came from people aged under 18 - a paltry 1.3% and well below the 17.9% of people aged under 18 in Merri-bek.

For the past four years our school has conducted a travel census, which has shown year on year growth in the proportion of students walking, riding and catching public transport. We have just completed a more in depth survey with more than half of the school population, which showed that the sustainable travel rate in our school is now 80% in the morning and 86% in the afternoon.

The number one concern of those students walking, riding or catching public transport is 'Drivers speeding outside the school' with 67% of students saying they saw this either sometimes or often.



Second was 'Turning drivers not giving way to students crossing the street' with 61% of students saying they saw this either sometimes or often.

I can tell you, based on the survey data we captured, that we estimate that 171 students live and therefore travel in what we called Area 8 - south of Bell Street, east of Sydney Road and west of Merri Creek. Of those Area 8 students, our survey found that in the mornings 90% of students walked, rode or caught public transport. Incredibly, that percentage is 98% in the afternoon.

Here are some comments from Area 8 students in the survey.

A male Year 11 bike riding student wrote of his near miss experience on Barrow Street in 2023 - he said he was 'going through a roundabout with right of way and car almost went right through me, [I] had to stop in middle of the roundabout'.

A male Year 7 student described the Barrow St crossover with Harding as the location on his walk to school that made him feel most unsafe, with heavy traffic and no traffic light.

No less than 14 other students mentioned Harding Street as a place where they felt unsafe or had experienced a near miss.

### **Meeting adjourned**

*7.42 pm Mayor, Cr Pulford adjourned the meeting for five minutes due to disorder in the Gallery.*

### **Meeting resumed**

*7.50 pm Mayor, Cr Pulford resumed the meeting*

So my point is - please listen to the views of the young people expressed through our survey. They may not own a home, fill in surveys on a Council website or turn up to public consultation meetings, but they certainly exist, very high numbers of them walk or ride to school (particularly those living in this part of Coburg - Area 8 in our survey) and they are teenagers - vulnerable road users and they say they experience speeding drivers and drivers not giving way at intersections frequently.

And sadly, transport issues are matters of life and death for young people. According to the ABS, land transport accidents were the leading cause of death in Australia for people aged 1-14 in 2022 and for those aged 15-24 it was second leading cause of death. At Coburg High in the last 18 months we have had three bike riders and one pedestrian taken to hospital via ambulance on their way to or from school - each hit by cars, showing the danger is real. I'd like to try and finish on a positive.

Your 40km/h local streets approach is the right one, at a recent Council meeting you agreed to extend the popular O'Hea Street bike and walking path, you have a fantastic Ride and Stride program running with local primary schools and at Coburg High we thank Council for your advocacy with the state government, helping to achieve a 40km/h school speed zone for Bell Street, up to the eastern side of the notorious and unsafe bridge.

With Council's continued support we hope to see improvements on Murray Road, another dangerous state arterial road - a four lane race track - which in the five years up until September last year there had been no less than 49 injury crashes and one fatality.

A trial road closure of Barrow Street at Harding Street is another small step in that direction of making our local streets - Streets for people.

## **Report 7.4 Bachar Houli Foundation – Islamic College of Sport and Centre for Excellence Proposal**

Council received 2 questions. They were presented to Council.

### **Question 1 and 2**

Ron Rosinsky asked why the ‘Gardening Mob’ were encouraged to establish and develop a community garden at the property now the subject of a proposed redevelopment, and how long has Council known about the redevelopment proposal and its impact on the site and current tenants?

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

The Coburg Commons Group (the Gardening mob) are working closely with the Merri Community Shed. Both groups are using the Coburg Bowls Club site under a short-term user agreement with Council which ends later this year. They were encouraged to use the site for an agreed short term as they are doing great things in our community.

Officers have been in regular contact with the Merri Community Shed and will be meeting with them and the Coburg Commons group over the next few weeks to discuss the Bachar Houli proposal further and importantly their ongoing and longer-term accommodation needs.

Council have known about the Bachar Houli Foundation Proposal for a number of months however tonight is the first time Council is formally considering the proposal. The report tonight requests a further report next year with much more information on proposal and its implications.

## **Report 7.13 Friends of Aileu Annual Report 2023**

Council received 1 question. It was presented to Council.

### **Question**

Marion Attwater asked if, as part of the application to declare Friends of Aileu a charitable or community organisation with the Victorian Gaming and Casino Control Commission, approval to conduct gaming has been sought, and is there any other application information the public or Councillors should be made aware of, such as Councillor enrolment in AICD company directors course?

#### **At the request of the Mayor, Director Community, Eamonn Fennessy, responded**

It is important to clarify that the application submitted by Merri-bek City Council - Friends of Aileu to be declared as a charitable or community organisation does not inherently equate to an approval to conduct gaming activities. The designation as a charitable or community organisation primarily serves to facilitate the ability to raise funds (through fundraising/raffles) and therefore registration is required by the Victorian Gambling and Casino Control Commission. The application is focused on supporting the community-driven initiatives and programs that benefit the Aileu community, rather than enabling gaming operations.

## **Notice of Motion 8.3 Art and History at the Brunswick Town Hall**

Council received 1 statement. It was presented to Council.

John Englart made the following statement:

I note this Councillor initiated motion seeks to maximise use of Brunswick Town Hall, including expansion of art exhibition space by Noel Counihan Gallery and feature history. I agree with the intent.

The Brunswick Town Hall building was going to be demolished by a decision of Brunswick Council in 1973 and redeveloped as a modern five story building. It is only present due to the campaign in 1974 to stop the demolition and preserve the town hall by Vic and Vida Little and the Brunswick Progress Association.

This motion would appear to provide a permanent opportunity to recognise Vic and Vida Little in the history of Merri-bek. Their role in many local campaigns was significant, just as Noel Counihan had a significant social impact during earlier years, and as a significant local artist. Yet this motion fails to acknowledge their significant role in saving the Brunswick Town Hall, or any permanent recognition.

## **NON-AGENDA ITEMS - QUESTIONS**

Council received 6 questions on subjects not in the agenda. The following question was presented to Council.

### **Stormwater and flash flooding risk**

John Englart asked if recent stormwater and flash flood modelling been undertaken in Merri-bek, and if so, what is the risk?

#### **At the request of the Mayor, Acting Director Place and Environment, Phil Priest responded:**

Council has completed stormwater mapping across the municipality for its local drainage catchments to understand the risks associated with overland stormwater flows during severe 1 in 100-year storm events.

Once prepared Council undertook consultation on the stormwater maps with affected landowners, before they were declared for use by building surveyors, under the Building Regulations 2018. Further consultation with affected landowners also occurred in 2023, ahead of commencing a formal planning scheme amendment process.

Planning Scheme Amendment C196more to the Merri-bek Planning Scheme recently completed a formal public exhibition process on 17 June this year. This amendment seeks to expand the current planning scheme controls on this issue, to an additional 12,000 properties.

These controls will ensure that new buildings in these areas are designed to reduce the risk of property damage from the overland flow of water during severe storm events.

Officers are happy to discuss this work with you and further information can also be found on Council's website.

## **Question Time Extension**

### **Resolution**

**Cr Bolton moved, Cr Harte seconded -**

**That Public Question Time be extended by 30 minutes at 8.07 pm.**

**Carried**

### **Bikes lane closures**

Johannes Brants requested that Council make the required resources available to address the prolific illegal bike lane closures on Council roads.

#### **At the invitation of the Mayor, Cr Bolton responded:**

I understand there will be a report to Council about this issue in September, I hope that one of the recommendations of the report will be that Council carries out a blitz on construction sites. Because there hasn't been sufficient resources for enforcement, construction companies think that the road is theirs, as well as the property that they are developing.

I am hopeful that the Council report that comes back in September will advocate some strong measures for this, because I think it is very dangerous what you are describing.

## Survey of Local Residents

Nic Dolby made the following statement:

I live within two houses of a road closure. I did a survey of local residents about the Moreland Road and Barrow Street closure, that was implemented in the late 1980's. I was able to doorknock 79 houses in the short time that I gave myself, I got 35 responses, one response against the closure, one response that was ambiguous about the closure and 33 responses that were positive about the closure.

This is a proposal by Council officers to reduce rat running. Rat running by distracted, impatient, higher speed non local drivers.

You vote 'no' to street closures, this street closure trial, you are voting 'yes' to more traffic, more rat runners, more distracted impatient drivers. You are voting 'yes' to more traffic, you are voting 'yes' to more accidents, more injuries and more fatalities, particularly amongst those vulnerable groups, children and the elderly.

## NON-AGENDA ITEMS - QUESTIONS TAKEN ON NOTICE

Council received 5 questions that were taken on notice relating to:

- 5G Towers
- Council jurisdiction
- Use of Council resources for election campaign purposes

*Public Question Time concluded at 8.19 pm.*

## COUNCIL REPORTS

Cr Carli Hannan disclosed a general conflict of interest during the debate and left the meeting at 8.48 pm, due to identifying that her employer, Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic school had made a submission to this report.

*8.47 pm Cr Riley left the meeting during the debate.*

*8.48 pm Cr Riley returned to the meeting.*

### 7.1 BARROW STREET TRIAL ROAD CLOSURE AT HARDING STREET, COBURG

#### Executive Summary

Barrow Street is an important local link for people to walk, ride and drive. The street connects many local destinations that are significant for our local community, and forms part of the East Brunswick Shimmy bike route. It is also a key route for local school students from St Bernard's Primary School, Coburg High and Primary Schools, Antonine College and Merri-bek Primary School.

On Barrow Street, south of Harding Street, the recorded the average weekday vehicle volumes as 1,243. Whilst this traffic volume is well within the capacity for a local street, it is considered too high for a strategic cycling corridor that is widely used by school children. Council officers are also aware of community concerns that Barrow Street is used as a rat run which has contributed to some people feeling unsafe to walk and ride in the area.

The recent consultation on the proposed trial road closure saw a diversity of views including strong views from the community.

After careful consideration, Council officers are proposing that the trial road closure proceed. The trial road closure would be at the southern intersection of Harding Street which is a key walking and riding corridor, to provide safe access to nearby schools and local destinations.

It is proposed that installation be timed to align with the conclusion of the 2024 school year which is scheduled for 20 December 2024. The intention for this timing will be to allow local traffic to adjust to the new arrangement prior to the school year commencing in 2025. This timing will have several benefits, including minimising the impacts to other local streets while traffic adjusts to the closure in the first month of the trial. Launching the trial during the summer months will also help attract people to test the new walking and riding environment along Barrow Street while the weather is most suitable.

The trial is proposed to run for approximately 12 months, during which Council officers can assess whether a permanent closure is an appropriate and viable option for this location. This assessment would be made by gathering and assessing relevant traffic data, observations and community feedback. This two-stage process has worked well in the recent past as it has allowed Council officers and the community to evaluate the real-life impacts and benefits of the trial road closure before a decision is made to make it permanent.

At the April 2024 Council meeting, it was resolved to commence consultation on the trial road closure. The 28-day consultation ran from the 3 May 2024 to 31 May 2024. The consultation included a circular letter, an advertisement in The Age and the creation of a Barrow Street trial road closure Conversation Merri-bek webpage. The letter drop was sent to all owners and occupiers of properties on Barrow Street and the immediate surrounding street as these residents were considered most impacted by the trial and would therefore provide valuable insight into the use of Barrow Street and possible impacts of the proposal.

The intention of the consultation was to:

- Understand local use of the streets and any issues with the proposal that may not be as visible to Council.
- Identify issues or functions in the area that may not be expected or identified by Council officers ahead of the consultation.
- Gauge the level of community support for the proposal.

Anyone interested in the project was able to submit their feedback via the Conversations Merri-bek website. There was a considerable response to the consultation. 442 responses were received via the Conversations Merri-bek web page and seven submissions were made via email or phone. Of these, 53 per cent of responses were in support of the proposal, 5 per cent were in support with concerns, less than 1 per cent were unsure or neutral and 41 per cent were not in support.

The key concerns received were that the trial road closure:

- May not be as effective as speed humps or other traffic treatments.
- May negatively impact access to St Bernard Primary School.
- May result in increased traffic volumes or issues on surrounding streets.
- May not be necessary as the road operates fine, or that very few people walk and ride along Barrow Street currently.
- Will not address other safety concerns in the area.

Shortly after the consultation began, the Principal of St Bernard's Primary School circulated a petition to all parents of the school campaigning against the project. Council officers received 111 petitions from 73 properties opposing the proposal, from school parents and children.

As a key stakeholder, Council officers take the concerns of St Bernard's Primary School seriously and have made efforts to address these concerns. Whilst the school express disappointment in the way that consultation has been carried out, Council officers have made good faith attempts to better understand the concerns of the school which are detailed in this report. This included correspondence with the school in writing, by phone and through in person meetings since the consultation period commenced, which have provided valuable insight into the operations of the school and their concerns with the trial.

The Hearing of Submissions was held on 6 June 2024. Representatives of St Bernard's Primary School and Coburg High School attended along with 11 other submitters both for and against the proposal. Coburg High School and Merri-bek High School are both supportive of the proposal as they consider their students will benefit from a calmer Barrow Street.

In response to concerns that emergency vehicles would be impacted by the trial road closure, both Ambulance Victoria and the Department of Transport and Planning have confirmed that emergency access would be unaffected.

Following the collation of the community consultation, Council officers' expectation remains that the trial road closure will:

- Significantly lower traffic volumes on Barrow Street, and an overall safer walking and cycling environment for school children.
- Result in a minor traffic increases to surrounding streets that is still well below the recommended capacity of a local street.
- Trigger a higher uptake of walking and riding along the Barrow Street corridor.
- Have a minimal impact to vehicle access for parents, emergency vehicles, buses and waste trucks.
- After witnessing and experiencing the benefits of the trial closure, expand the rate of community support for the closure treatment.

Blocking the passage of vehicles can be an effective treatment that helps Council 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.

Following Council's April 2024 resolution to commence consultation, Council officers have concluded the 28 day consultation, and held the Hearing of Submissions. A report was received from the Department of Transport and Planning with no objection on the proposal. Overall, when comparing the benefits of the road closure with the speculative concerns highlighted, it is recommended that Council proceed with the trial to allow the impacts to be addressed and quantified during the trial.

The cost of the trial estimated to be \$10,000. If the Council proceed with the permanent road closure, the cost of the entire project including the civil infrastructure may cost up to \$150,000 and can be paid for as part of the Transport Road Safety and Amenity capital budget.

Ahead of the installation of the trial infrastructure, council officers will offer support to St Bernard's Primary School Community to communicate and prepare for the changes to the local road network in the 2025 school year.

## Officer Recommendation

That Council:

1. Considering the report from the Department of Transport and Planning and the written and verbal submissions from the public submitted under Section 223 of the *Local Government Act 1989* (the Act), resolves under Clause 10, Schedule 11 of the Act to block the passage or access of vehicles, other than bicycles and pedestrians, by installing temporary barriers (bollards) to trial a road closure on Barrow Street, Coburg, from the intersection of Harding Street to a point up to 8 metres further south. The trial shall be in place for approximately 12 months starting in December 2024.
2. Following the trial, receives a report from Council officers in early 2026 with a recommendation on whether to proceed with consulting with the community on a permanent road closure under Section 223 of the Act.
3. Schedules installation of trial infrastructure to occur during the 2024/25 Summer School Holidays to allow for local schools and the community to prepare for the closure ahead of the 2025 school year.

## Resolution

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

That Council:

1. **Considering the report from the Department of Transport and Planning and the written and verbal submissions from the public submitted under Section 223 of the *Local Government Act 1989* (the Act), resolves under Clause 10, Schedule 11 of the Act to block the passage or access of vehicles, other than bicycles and pedestrians, by installing temporary barriers (bollards) to trial a road closure on Barrow Street, Coburg, from the intersection of Harding Street to a point up to 8 metres further south. The trial shall be in place for approximately 12 months starting in December 2024.**
2. **Following the trial, receives a report from Council officers in early 2026 with a recommendation on whether to proceed with consulting with the community on a permanent road closure under Section 223 of the Act.**
3. **Schedules installation of trial infrastructure to occur during the 2024/25 Summer School Holidays to allow for local schools and the community to prepare for the closure ahead of the 2025 school year.**

**Carried**

Cr Pulford called for a division.

**For**

Cr Bolton  
Cr Pulford  
Cr Panopoulos  
Cr Conlan  
Cr Riley  
Cr Harte

**Total For (6)**

**Against**

Cr Yildiz  
Cr Pavlidis  
Cr Tapinos

**Total Against (3)**

## Meeting adjourned

8.54 pm Mayor, Cr Pulford adjourned the meeting for five minutes.

## Meeting resumed

8.59 pm Mayor, Cr Pulford resumed the meeting.

## **7.2 UPFIELD CORRIDOR URBAN DESIGN FRAMEWORK (BRUNSWICK LXP) - STAGE 1**

### **Executive Summary**

Developing an Upfield Corridor Urban Design Framework (UDF) was a commitment made in Reshaping Brunswick (April 2023), Council's adopted position paper that outlines the Council and the community's vision for the Brunswick level crossing removals project (the project).

Through previous engagement, we heard what sort of outcomes the community want for the corridor. The UDF is a first step in planning for broader revitalisation and will support Council's advocacy to the State Government to extend the project scope outside the narrow rail corridor.

There remains considerable uncertainty about the details of the project, including the number and location of new stations. The recent announcement, in May 2024 of a delay, pushing the removal of level crossings from 2027 to 2030, adds further uncertainty as the surrounding area continues to evolve. To manage these uncertainties, the UDF has been divided into two stages. This approach allows for important input into the project's preliminary design work now, while remaining adaptable to the evolving physical context and new project details, as they are announced.

Stage 1 of the UDF includes concept plans for reimagining streets that terminate at or run parallel to the rail corridor. The concept plans demonstrate opportunities for increased tree planting to reduce the urban heat island effect, new open spaces for residents and visitors, and active transport connections to the future cycling and pedestrian paths beneath the elevated rail line. These plans are informed by an analysis of existing Council policies, of current urban challenges and opportunities, and public realm design principles derived from community feedback.

Work on Stage 2 of the UDF will begin once initial plans for the project are released. This stage will address changes in movement and access around the new train stations, and potential streetscape upgrades for key east-west streets between the new stations and Sydney Road and other important destinations. It will also update Stage 1, incorporating the new station locations and any additional urban context changes. Stage 2 will include further community engagement and reporting to a future Council meeting for a decision.

### **Officer Recommendation**

That Council:

1. Endorses the Stage 1 of the Upfield Corridor Urban Design Framework (Attachment 1).
2. Notes that the Chief Executive Officer will write to the CEO of the Level Crossing Removal Project to advise of Council's endorsement of the Stage 1 Upfield Corridor Urban Design Framework and providing them a copy to inform future design considerations for the Brunswick level crossing removals project.
3. Endorses a staged approach to the completion of the Upfield Corridor Urban Design Framework, with work on Stage 2 (the final stage), including further community engagement, to commence once plans for the Brunswick level crossing removals project have been released by the State Government.
4. Notes the community engagement detailed in Section 4 of this report and thanks the community for their participation in this engagement.



## Resolution

Cr Tapinos moved, Cr Panopoulos seconded -

That Council:

1. **Endorses the Stage 1 of the Upfield Corridor Urban Design Framework (Attachment 1).**
2. **Notes that the Chief Executive Officer will write to the CEO of the Level Crossing Removal Project to advise of Council's endorsement of the Stage 1 Upfield Corridor Urban Design Framework and providing them a copy to inform future design considerations for the Brunswick level crossing removals project.**
3. **Endorses a staged approach to the completion of the Upfield Corridor Urban Design Framework, with work on Stage 2 (the final stage), including further community engagement, to commence once plans for the Brunswick level crossing removals project have been released by the State Government.**
4. **Notes the community engagement detailed in Section 4 of this report and thanks the community for their participation in this engagement.**

Carried

9.04 pm Cr Yildiz returned to the meeting after the vote on item 7.2.

## 7.3 FAWKNER MERRI CREEK PARKLANDS PLAN

### Executive Summary

This report presents the final Fawkner Merri Creek Parklands Plan (Attachment 1) for endorsement. The Plan has been prepared to identify, protect and enhance the environmental, cultural heritage and community open space values along the Merri Creek open space corridor in Fawkner and Coburg North. This valuable 71-hectare parkland is five kilometres long and extends from the Western Ring Road and Moomba Park in the north to Parker Reserve and Spry Street, Reserve in Coburg North in the south. It includes mostly open grassland parkland along the, often steep, Merri Creek.

The Plan seeks to balance the role of the creek as a primary waterway biodiversity corridor with the need to maintain drainage and key service easement functionality while meeting the increasing needs of the local community for open space and recreational access. The draft plan has been developed by Merri-bek City Council in consultation with the local community, the Friends of Merri Creek, the Fawkner Residents Association and Merri Creek Management Committee.

Four stages of extensive community engagement were undertaken for the Plan. During Stage 1 between November 2020 and April 2021, ideas and stories were collected from the community and key stakeholders such as the Friends of Merri Creek, Fawkner Resident Association, sporting clubs and the Merri Creek Management Committee. Strengthening the natural values was identified as a key priority but so was improving community connections to the parklands and nature. Council then prepared a draft Plan that was then taken back to the community and stakeholders in Stage 2 for 4 weeks' engagement in October and November 2021. Community feedback on the draft Plan was very positive and complementary (Attachment 2), the suggestions and comments provided informed the development of a revised draft. Stage 3 of engagement ran for 8 weeks from December 2022 through to January 2023. The community feedback informed the final draft which was taken to Council in March 2023 before going out to the community for a final 6 weeks during May and June 2023 (Stage 4). Stages 3 and 4 Feedback (Attachment 3) received from both online and during pop-up site meetings was very supportive with the only concerns raised around the location and scale of proposed park activation around Sahara Way Fawkner. Updates to the 5 precinct plans were made to reflect this helpful community feedback.

Following discussion and refinement of priorities and actions in consultation with key stakeholders and the local community the final plan will be used to guide strategic planning and management actions, capital works and implementation priorities over the next nine years along the creek and open space corridor.

The Cost Plan identifies a total of \$4.368 million in Council funded works throughout the Parklands (in 2024 dollars) which could be delivered between 2025 and 2032. To deliver the Plan, \$893,000 is earmarked in the existing Capital Works Program. It is estimated that \$1.61 million in new capital works spending would be required, which would be subject to future Council budget processes. In addition, a further \$1.87 million is proposed to be sourced from the Public Resort and Recreation Land Fund (Open Space Fund or PRRLF). More than \$1.3 million in external grant funding has been identified to deliver on the Plan to leverage existing or proposed expenditure by Council. Some additional matching funding may be required depending on the grant conditions. This Plan together with Council's active advocacy and track record on these matters means Merri-bek is well positioned to realise this funding. All proposed projects will be subject to future Council budget processes, and their priority will be assessed along with all other projects in annual updates of the Capital Works Program.

## **Officer Recommendation**

That Council:

1. Endorses the Fawkner Merri Creek Parklands Plan, at Attachment 1 to this report.
2. Acknowledges the Community Engagement Summary Reports and thanks the community, Friends of Merri Creek, Fawkner Residents Association and Merri Creek Management Committee for their feedback, patience and support for the Plan.
3. Notes that the Fawkner Merri Creek Parklands Plan identifies a total of \$1.6105 million in proposed new capital works spending in the Parklands over the next 8 years. These projects will be subject to future Council budget processes, and their priority will be assessed along with all other projects in annual updates of the Capital Works Program.

## **Resolution**

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

**That Council:**

- 1. Endorses the Fawkner Merri Creek Parklands Plan, at Attachment 1 to this report.**
- 2. Acknowledges the Community Engagement Summary Reports and thanks the community, Friends of Merri Creek, Fawkner Residents Association and Merri Creek Management Committee for their feedback, patience and support for the Plan.**
- 3. Notes that the Fawkner Merri Creek Parklands Plan identifies a total of \$1.6105 million in proposed new capital works spending in the Parklands over the next 8 years. These projects will be subject to future Council budget processes, and their priority will be assessed along with all other projects in annual updates of the Capital Works Program.**
- 4. Notes and acknowledges the principles and objectives of Merri Merri Wayi within the Fawkner Merri Creek Parklands implementation stages and that the subsequent projects consider aligning further engagement with Darebin City Council and the Traditional Owners of this land.**

**Carried unanimously**

## **7.4 BACHAR HOULI FOUNDATION - ISLAMIC COLLEGE OF SPORT AND CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE PROPOSAL**

### **Executive Summary**

The Bachar Houli Foundation (BHF) is a not-for-profit community organisation, whose purpose is to use sport as a platform to empower young Muslim people and promote social cohesion through education and connection.

The vision of BHF is to contribute to building a culturally safe Australia, where young people from all backgrounds are empowered to make the most of their opportunities and contribute to a thriving multicultural nation. BHF use sport as a platform to empower young Muslim people and promote social cohesion through education and connection. Its programs focus on engagement, education, cultural awareness, employment and talent.

BHF has recently established the Islamic College of Sport (ICS), which enables students to complete their senior secondary education at an Islamic school, but in an education program that is better suited to their learning style. The first class of ICS began in 2024 and is located in the pavilion at Coburg City Oval, through an arrangement with the Coburg Football Club.

The BHF have approached Council seeking support to create a new multi-purpose facility within the heartland of the Muslim community in Coburg. The intent of the facility is to create an active and culturally diverse place where boys and girls can feel welcomed and safe, and where Muslim and non-Muslim communities can connect through sport. The facility, (which includes indoor courts and multi-purpose spaces), will be home for BHF's and ICS's programs, as well as spaces for local sporting clubs and broader community use. It will be a destination that brings people together, more often, so they form deeper connections and friendships.

BHF has approached Council to seek support for the new facility, by enabling the development of the former Coburg Bowls Club. The proposed arrangement includes making the site available and providing a long-term lease to BHF at a peppercorn rate. Council will retain ownership of the land and the capital improved facility. BHF is seeking funding support for \$20 million of investment in the facility from both the Federal and State Governments.

The proposal has significant benefits for the social cohesion and health and wellbeing of Merri-bek community on many levels. This report outlines the proposal, seeks Council's support for its intent and recommends a future report in 2025 on all aspects of the project in detail for Council's consideration.

## **Officer Recommendation**

That Council:

1. Notes the Bachar Houli Foundation's proposal (attachment 1) for an Islamic School of Sport and Centre of Excellence at the former Coburg Bowls Club.
2. Supports the intent of the proposal, subject to further detailed investigation and consideration.
3. Notes officers will continue progressing project discussions with the Bachar Houli Foundation.
4. Receives a report in early 2025 setting out the parameters of the project in more detail, including leasing processes, community engagement, project funding strategy, design, planning requirements and timeframes and the conditions of joint community use of the proposed facility.

## **Motion**

Cr Yildiz moved, Cr Tapinos seconded -

That Council:

1. Notes the Bachar Houli Foundation's proposal (attachment 1) for an Islamic School of Sport and Centre of Excellence at the former Coburg Bowls Club.
2. Supports the intent of the proposal, subject to further detailed investigation and consideration.
3. Notes officers will continue progressing project discussions with the Bachar Houli Foundation.
4. Receives a report in early 2025 setting out the parameters of the project in more detail, including leasing processes, community engagement, project funding strategy, design, planning requirements and timeframes and the conditions of joint community use of the proposed facility.

## **Amendment**

Cr Conlan moved, Cr Riley seconded -

5. Considers the inclusion of the Coburg Commons and local food groups into future development/refurbishments of the site, as part of the EOI process.

**Lost**

## Resolution

Cr Yildiz moved, Cr Tapinos seconded -

That Council:

1. **Notes the Bachar Houli Foundation's proposal (attachment 1) for an Islamic School of Sport and Centre of Excellence at the former Coburg Bowls Club.**
2. **Supports the intent of the proposal, subject to further detailed investigation and consideration.**
3. **Notes officers will continue progressing project discussions with the Bachar Houli Foundation.**
4. **Receives a report in early 2025 setting out the parameters of the project in more detail, including leasing processes, community engagement, project funding strategy, design, planning requirements and timeframes and the conditions of joint community use of the proposed facility.**

Carried unanimously

## 7.5 GLENROY COMMUNITY HUB CAFE - EXPRESSION OF INTEREST UPDATE

### Executive Summary

This report updates Council on the outcome of a second Expression of Interest (EOI) process, for the café outlet in Bridget Shortell Reserve at the Glenroy Community Hub precinct. The EOI was open to all potential operators, including for-profit commercial businesses, social enterprises and not-for-profits. Following the EOI advertising process, which commenced on 23 March 2024 and closed on 26 April 2024, seven submissions were received. The internal Evaluation Panel conducted an interview with the preferred proponent on 30 May 2024.

This report seeks Council's endorsement to offer an initial one-year lease, with two additional three-year options, at a peppercorn rent to the preferred proponent, The Onemda Association Inc. This not-for-profit organisation's proposal was evaluated as having the greatest capacity to deliver a viable business and provide broader social benefits aligned with the vision and purpose of the Glenroy Community Hub.

The Onemda Association delivers hospitality training programs and other initiatives for people with an intellectual disability, and is a registered charity.

### Officer Recommendation

That Council:

1. Notes that it is not required to undertake a statutory process under section 115 of the *Local Government Act 2020* for this lease.
2. Endorses The Onemda Association Inc, a not-for-profit organisation, as the successful proponent to operate and manage the café outlet at the Glenroy Community Hub through a lease, subject to them passing a credit check.
3. Notes the terms of the lease will be for one-year, with two additional three-year options, at a peppercorn rent.
4. Authorises the Director Place and Environment to do all things necessary to negotiate and formalise the café lease at the Glenroy Community Hub.

## Resolution

Cr Riley moved, Cr Panopoulos seconded -

That Council:

1. **Notes that it is not required to undertake a statutory process under section 115 of the Local Government Act 2020 for this lease.**
2. **Endorses The Onemda Association Inc, a not-for-profit organisation, as the successful proponent to operate and manage the café outlet at the Glenroy Community Hub through a lease.**
3. **Notes the terms of the lease will be for one-year, with two additional three-year options, at a peppercorn rent.**
4. **Authorises the Director Place and Environment to do all things necessary to negotiate and formalise the café lease at the Glenroy Community Hub.**

**Carried unanimously**

## 7.6 LAND ADJACENT TO BRUNSWICK BATHS - OPTIONS FOR FUTURE USE

### Executive Summary

Council purchased a former school site at 33 Saxon Street, Brunswick in 2010. In 2012, 800 sqm of the site was annexed and subdivided to become part of the redeveloped Brunswick Baths. The building in this area, the North-West Building, has not been considered in the scope of the 33 Saxon Street project.

The Saxon Street concept plan endorsed by Council at its November 2021 meeting, notating the space that the North-West Building occupies as for 'potential future Baths extension'. The building is adjacent to the existing Brunswick Baths gym facility.

The potential for future use of the North-West Building is being investigated as a separate opportunity. This scoping has been accelerated due to recent interest in the Saxon Street site by arts organisations who have approached Council seeking space.

This report seeks to provide an understanding of the municipal needs, community benefits and costs of establishing the North-West Building in the short term as an expanded Brunswick Baths Health Club or arts and culture use.

### Officer Recommendation

That Council:

1. Notes the information provided in this report which outlines the comparative benefits, risks, costs and community impact of use options including:
  - a) Expansion of Brunswick Baths Health Club
  - b) Destination arts venue
  - c) Making space (affordable arts)
2. Recommends that the land adjacent to Brunswick Baths (North West building) be allocated for affordable arts usage that expand the activities of the broader Saxon Street cultural precinct, for a period of five years until longer term scoping and planning is undertaken.
3. Seeks an agreement with the operators of the Saxon Street precinct, These Are the Projects We Do Together (TPT) to incorporate the management and programming of the North West building into its management of the broader Saxon Street cultural

precinct for a period of five years.

4. Delegates the Director Place and Environment to do all things necessary to negotiate and finalise the details of this agreement with TPT and updating the User and Tenancy Framework to reflect the inclusion of the North West Building into the management contract.
5. Receives a briefing on options and indicative costs for a future expansion of the Brunswick Baths Health Club within the current facility footprint and in particular gym operations to cater for future service growth and demand.

## Resolution

**Cr Pulford moved, Cr Conlan seconded -**

**That Council:**

1. **Notes the information provided in this report which outlines the comparative benefits, risks, costs and community impact of use options including:**
  - a) **Expansion of Brunswick Baths Health Club**
  - b) **Destination arts venue**
  - c) **Making space (affordable arts)**
2. **Defers a decision on the future use of the North West building until early 2025, in the new Council term.**
3. **To inform this decision, receives a report in early 2025 on options and indicative costs for a future expansion of the Brunswick Baths Health Club within the current facility footprint and in particular gym operations to cater for future service growth and demand.**

9.48 pm *Cr Yildiz left the meeting during the debate.*

9.49 pm *Cr Yildiz returned to the meeting during the debate.*

**Carried unanimously**

9.52 pm *Cr Conlan left the meeting and did not return.*

## **7.7 ADOPTION OF THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ACTION PLAN 2024-2027**

### **Executive Summary**

Council is committed to creating an enabling environment and providing the support that businesses need to start up, grow and create new jobs in Merri-bek.

The draft Economic Development Action Plan (EDAP) 2024-2027 sets out how Council's Economic Development Unit will support local business and the local economy over the next three years. The Plan aims to facilitate a growing, productive, socially inclusive, and economically sustainable local economy. Its primary goal is to ensure ample access to goods, services, and employment opportunities, therefore supporting the health and wellbeing of the Merri-bek community.

The EDAP has been informed by significant engagement with businesses, through an online business survey, an in-person business feedback forum, discussions with businesses, trader associations, First Nations representatives, and various internal and external stakeholders across Council and its partner organisations.

The document is set out under seven themes, each with specific objectives. Each theme also contains priorities and related work plan actions. The Economic Development Unit will work proactively and collaboratively with other internal teams and external stakeholders to

implement the EDAP. The EDAP is also supported by a range of other Council programs and services that support Merri-bek businesses and the wider business community.

This report seeks Council's endorsement of the draft EDAP 2024-2027.

## **Officer Recommendation**

That Council:

1. Adopts as final the Economic Development Action Plan 2024-2027 at Attachment 1.
2. Authorises the Director Place and Environment to make minor editorial changes in finalising the document for publication, including graphical design, that do not change the meaning of the Action Plan.
3. Notes the Consultation Summary Report at Attachment 2 detailing the methodology and findings of consultation and thanks businesses and other stakeholders for their participation throughout the process of preparing the Economic Development Action Plan.

## **Time Extension**

### **Resolution**

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

**That the Council meeting be extended by 30 minutes at 10.00 pm.**

**Carried**

### **Resolution**

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

**That Council:**

1. **Adopts as final the Economic Development Action Plan 2024-2027 at Attachment 1, with the following additional actions included at Priority 7.4:**
  - i) **In partnership with the relevant Council teams, investigate the benefits of a grant program to incentivise businesses to introduce temporary or permanent threshold ramps at entries to businesses (Year 1) and subject to funding, implement any recommendations from the investigation (Year 2).**
  - ii) **Advocate to the Victorian Building Authority about the importance and benefits of disability access to businesses and the need for them to increase the capacity and expectations for building surveyors when implementing the Building Practice Note relating to access to buildings for people with a disability (Year 1).**
2. **Authorises the Director Place and Environment to make minor editorial changes in finalising the document for publication, including graphical design, that do not change the meaning of the Action Plan.**
3. **Notes the Consultation Summary Report at Attachment 2 detailing the methodology and findings of consultation and thanks businesses and other stakeholders for their participation throughout the process of preparing the Economic Development Action Plan.**

**Carried unanimously**



## **7.8 IMPROVING ACCESS TO EXERCISE PROGRAMS FOR OLDER PEOPLE IN MERRI-BEK**

### **Executive Summary**

At the 10 March 2021 Council meeting, following the Living and Ageing Well Report on Year 1 actions, Councillors requested a report on the feasibility and cost implications of providing Merri-bek seniors with a free gym and aquatic membership.

The report was presented at the 14 July 2021 Council meeting, in which officers proposed a supported pathway model that would address the barriers experienced by older people in participating in exercise. Council resolved to proceed with a pilot program and receive a report outlining results and future options.

The Strong and Active pilot and the Active Seniors Clubs Initiative (ASCI) both trialed ways of improving exercise access for older people in Merri-bek. In addition, work has been undertaken as part of Council's Living and Ageing Well Framework to explore other ways of supporting seniors to be more physically active.

The Strong and Active pilot recruited 27 older individuals into a 6-week program to try local exercise classes they had not tried before. This pilot addressed barriers for individuals such as cost and transport and established a network of peer support. This resulted in high attendance and continuation rates, and significant positive social and health outcomes. There was a focus on strengthening referral pathways between partner agencies Merri Health, Sussex Neighbourhood House, Pronia, Glenroy Neighbourhood House and Oak Park Leisure Centre YMCA. As a result of the pilot, new classes tailored to older people continued past the pilot phase.

The Active Seniors Clubs Initiative delivers outreach exercise classes to established seniors' groups or clubs. Merri-bek has over 70 self-led seniors' groups who meet at different community venues. This model encourages older people to exercise in a familiar social setting and has had very positive feedback from participants and much interest from other clubs wanting to participate.

Evaluation of these pilot initiatives highlight the value of a supported pathway for older adults into community exercise. Both have been highly effective in increasing exercise participation, with significant social and physical benefits. Both initiatives responded to older peoples' preferences to exercise in familiar, supported settings to try something new. This is demonstrated by the high uptake and interest from other older people in both pilots.

Both models provide a needed alternative to the current exercise environment which is siloed and results in older people not accessing the exercise they need.

There is an opportunity to improve the system by:

- Providing programs like the Strong and Active Pilot, which removed systemic barriers and provided social support for older people to transition to exercise programs at existing facilities.
- Enhancing the customer experience and onboarding to Active Merri-bek YMCA exercise programs to make them more welcoming and accessible.
- Providing outreach exercise classes at Seniors Clubs/programs in partnership with the YMCA.

### **Officer Recommendation**

That Council:

1. Notes the evaluation findings relating to the Strong and Active Pilot and the Active Seniors Clubs Initiative (ASCI).
2. Notes that officers will continue to pursue opportunities to further implement the Strong and Active model in Merri-bek, through partnerships and external funding

opportunities.

3. Continues to collaborate with Active Merri-bek YMCA and other program providers with inclusive onboarding of older people into appropriate classes.
4. Notes the Living and Ageing Well Implementation Plan will continue to focus on exercise, exploring broader exercise and social opportunities such as seniors exercise parks or classes in the parks.

## **Resolution**

**Cr Yildiz moved, Cr Pavlidis seconded -**

**That Council:**

1. **Notes the evaluation findings relating to the Strong and Active Pilot and the Active Seniors Clubs Initiative (ASCI).**
2. **Notes that officers will continue to pursue opportunities to further implement the Strong and Active model in Merri-bek, through partnerships and external funding opportunities.**
3. **Continues to collaborate with Active Merri-bek YMCA and other program providers with inclusive onboarding of older people into appropriate classes.**
4. **Notes the Living and Ageing Well Implementation Plan will continue to focus on exercise, exploring broader exercise and social opportunities such as seniors exercise parks or classes in the parks.**

**Carried unanimously**

## **7.9 IMPROVING COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT POLICY FOR OLDER, NON-ENGLISH SPEAKING RESIDENTS**

### **Executive Summary**

Council's Community Engagement Policy (the Policy) supports the requirements of the *Local Government Act 2020*. The Policy sets standards for how Council engages with the Merri-bek community, to involve them in decision-making and in shaping projects and services that are important to them.

At the June 2024 meeting, Council requested a review of its Community Engagement Policy (2023) with a focus on improving engagement for older, non-English speaking residents to maximise opportunities for them to have their say on decisions that affect their lives.

This report recommends the Community Engagement Policy with minor amendments on improving engagement for older, non-English speaking residents be endorsed by Council for 15-business days public exhibition.

### **Officer Recommendation**

That Council:

1. Notes proposed revisions to the Community Engagement Policy that focus on improving engagement for older, non-English speaking residents to maximise opportunities for them to participate in decisions that affect their lives.
2. Endorses the draft Community Engagement Policy for 15-business days' public exhibition.

## Resolution

Cr Pavlidis moved, Cr Yildiz seconded -

That Council:

1. **Notes the proposed revisions to the Community Engagement Policy that focus on improving engagement for older, non-English speaking residents to maximise opportunities for them to participate in decisions that affect their lives.**
2. **Endorses the draft Community Engagement Policy, for 21-business days of public exhibition, including consulting of groups such as the Ethnic Communities Council, including the following further amendments:**

- a) **On page 12 of the Community Engagement Policy under the 'Older CALD residents' section include the following additional text:**

**"When older CALD residents, as a cohort, are identified as a key stakeholder for a project, such as a naming project, we will specifically hold and promote in person engagement. We will distribute non-digital information to help with this engagement. We will also consider:**

- **extending advertising of engagement in different languages to local multicultural papers**
- **extending timelines for engagement to maximise non-digital participation and allow for postage**
- **utilising existing Council relationships with older residents and groups through our meals on wheels service, home support, and support to senior groups and neighbourhood houses**
- **ensuring participation activities include translated content and easy ways to provide feedback, and in alignment with Council's Access and Inclusion Policy, where possible write to a grade 6 level in language translated content**
- **calendar of pop-up events regularly advertised in language and promoted to older residents**

**Council will also biannually organise a program of engagement activities which align with existing events for this older cohort of people. For example, aligning with Seniors Week. This program will aim to raise visibility and access to the engagement activities scheduled for the next 6 months. This will include facilitating CALD older residents to contribute to current open engagement, and register their interest in the program of engagement activities for scheduled for the following 6 months. This will guide upcoming proactive engagement by project managers, Council will enhance its distribution of Merri-bek Community News, ensuring in addition to delivering to households, customer services centres and libraries, we also distribute copies to community multicultural clubs".**

- b) **In addition to the actions listed in 'Older CALD Residents' section on page 12, include a biannual visit of language trained council officers to all CALD seniors groups registered with Council informing attendees of the seniors group of council information and consultation opportunities. At these biannual visits, council officers facilitate paper submission, feedback and or voting, on matters currently open for feedback, submissions and voting on Conversations Merri-bek.**
3. **Requests a report to the September 2024 Council meeting that explores options and costing to:**

- a) **Develop and maintain annually a stakeholder register of current cultural and community groups for the purposes of regular communication and promotion of Council activities, including community engagement.**
- b) **Increase the frequency and size of Council's Community News from 4 to 10 editions a year, and from 8 pages to 12 for the purpose of improving the timeliness and relevance of information to the community, based on communication needs identified through social research, and to ensure better visibility and access to community engagement activities in general.**
- c) **Expand and improve the volume of translated content in Community News, and content relevant to older residents and CALD residents that is currently distributed through other ways such as the Aged and Community Support Newsletter that is only distributed quarterly to people access Council's aged and community services.**

**Carried unanimously**

## **7.10 REAR OF 1 TO 15 MARKS STREET, 2 TO 16 WHITE STREET AND 21 AUDLEY STREET, COBURG - PROPOSED SALE OF LAND FROM A PREVIOUSLY DISCONTINUED ROAD**

### **Executive Summary**

At its meeting held on 29 January 2002, Council resolved to discontinue the road at the rear of 1 to 15 Marks Street, 2 to 16 White Street and adjoining 21 & 23 Audley Street, Coburg, shown hatched shown in Attachment 1, and to sell the land (from the former road) to adjoining property owners by private treaty.

Most of the land was sold and transferred to abutting property owners except for a few Lots that remained unsold due to lack of interest in purchasing and a prevailing use as a walkway between two properties at 4 White Street and 7 Marks Street, Coburg. These Lots are known as Lots A, B, 12, 13, D and 9 on Title Plan TP023519Q, shown in Attachment 2.

At the time, Council also directed that the section of land being used as a walkway between 4 White Street and 7 Marks Street only be sold once the use of the land as a walkway had ceased. Council officers have been advised by the abutting owners of 4 White Street and 7 Marks Streets Coburg that the land to the rear of their properties is no longer required or being used as a walkway.

Preliminary discussions and negotiations with the adjoining owners have resulted in offers being made for the acquisition of the land in Lots A, 12 and 13 and 9 on Title Plan TP023519Q in Attachment 2.

The purpose of this report is for Council to consider the written and verbal submissions received and to finalise the procedures and section 114 of the *Local Government Act 2020* for the sale of the land from the previously discontinued road.

### **Officer Recommendation**

That Council:

1. Notes that two submissions were received and that there was a Hearing of Submissions Committee Meeting on 2 May 2024.
2. Having fulfilled its obligations under section 114 of the Local Government Act 2020 and Council's Community Engagement Policy, supports the sale of the land from the discontinued road at the rear of 1 to 15 Marks Street, 2 to 16 White Street and adjoining 21 Audley Street, Coburg, and having received two written submissions

and heard a verbal submission regarding the proposal at the meeting of Council's Hearing of Submissions Committee held on 2 May 2024, directs that the land be sold to the owners of 21 Audley Street, 5 Marks Street and 15 Marks Street, Coburg, by private treaty.

3. Authorises the Director Place and Environment to do all things necessary to effect the sale of the land contained in Lots A, 12 & 13 and 9 on TP023519Q to the owners of 21 Audley Street, 5 Marks Street and 15 Marks Street, Coburg, respectively.
4. Advises the persons who lodged submissions in relation to the proposal, of Council's decision and the reasons for the decision.

## **Resolution**

**Cr Riley moved, Cr Pulford seconded -**

**That Council:**

1. **Notes that two submissions were received and that there was a Hearing of Submissions Committee Meeting on 2 May 2024.**
2. **Having fulfilled its obligations under section 114 of the Local Government Act 2020 and Council's Community Engagement Policy, supports the sale of the land from the discontinued road at the rear of 1 to 15 Marks Street, 2 to 16 White Street and adjoining 21 Audley Street, Coburg, and having received two written submissions and heard a verbal submission regarding the proposal at the meeting of Council's Hearing of Submissions Committee held on 2 May 2024, directs that the land be sold to the owners of 21 Audley Street, 5 Marks Street and 15 Marks Street, Coburg, by private treaty.**
3. **Authorises the Director Place and Environment to do all things necessary to effect the sale of the land contained in Lots A, 12 & 13 and 9 on TP023519Q to the owners of 21 Audley Street, 5 Marks Street and 15 Marks Street, Coburg, respectively.**
4. **Advises the persons who lodged submissions in relation to the proposal, of Council's decision and the reasons for the decision.**

**Carried**

## **7.11 CONTRACT AWARD: RFT-2023-570 - DUNSTAN STORMWATER HARVESTING PROJECT**

### **Executive Summary**

This report seeks the award of the preferred contractor, Multipro Civil Pty Ltd for the contract RFT-2023-570 Stormwater Harvesting Works at Dunstan Reserve.

A request for tender was released on Saturday, 2 March 2024 and closed on 28 March 2024, with five tenders received.

An extensive tender evaluation process was undertaken including 'value engineering' to reduce costs of the project, by undertaking further soil testing to eliminate stock piling of contaminated soil on site by sending the spoil material straight to approved landfill premises in accordance with EPA Victoria requirements and subsequent tender negotiations.

The tenders were evaluated and MultiPro Civil Pty Ltd was identified as the preferred tenderer, achieving the highest score through the evaluation process by the evaluation panel.

Multipro Civil Pty Ltd has previously delivered a similar type of stormwater harvesting project for Merri-bek City Council successfully to very good standard and demonstrated in

their tender submission that they have undertaken stormwater harvesting construction and drainage works for other local government authorities.

The lump sum construction contract offered includes preliminaries, demolition and site preparation, diversion pipes and pit work, earthworks (including removal and disposal of contaminated spoil), irrigation/ pump station installation and raingarden/ tank works.

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

There is an allocation of \$1.5 million in 2023/2024 budget for Sportsfield Stormwater Reuse project. This allocation consists of \$750,000 in grant funding through Melbourne water Liveable Communities, Liveable Waterways Program.

## Officer Recommendation

That Council:

1. Authorises the Chief Executive Officer to:
  - a) Make a formal offer to **Multipro Civil Pty Ltd, ACN 112 295 879 (Contractor)** to award to the Contractor contract **RFT-2023-570 Stormwater Harvesting Works at Dunstan Reserve** for the **construction of a storm water harvesting system** on the following terms and otherwise subject to and in accordance with paragraph 1(b) of this Resolution:
    - **for the lump sum of \$1,204,761 (excluding GST) plus provisional sum(s) of \$35,702 (excluding GST), totalling \$1,240,463 (excluding GST). The contract commencement date is 22 August 2024 for an estimated period of 26 weeks.**
  - b) Negotiate and finalise the terms of the Contract between Council and the Contractor provided that:
    - i. the terms specified in paragraph 1(a) of this Resolution shall not be altered without a further Resolution of Council; and
    - ii. other than terms referred to in paragraph 1(a) of this Resolution, the terms of the Contract are acceptable to the Chief Executive Officer;
2. Conditional on acceptance of the Contract by the Contractor in accordance with the terms of this Resolution:
  - a) Authorises the Chief Executive Officer to do all things necessary to execute the Contract and any required documentation for the Contract; and
  - b) Advises all tenderers of Council's decision in relation to the Contract.

## Resolution

Cr Riley moved, Cr Tapinos seconded -

That Council:

1. Authorises the Chief Executive Officer to:
  - a) Make a formal offer to Multipro Civil Pty Ltd, I 112 295 879 (Contractor) to award to the Contractor contract RFT-2023-570 Stormwater Harvesting Works at Dunstan Reserve for the construction of a storm water harvesting system on the following terms and otherwise subject to and in accordance with paragraph 1(b) of this Resolution:
    - for the lump sum of \$1,204,761 (excluding GST) plus provisional sum(s) of \$35,702 (excluding GST), totalling \$1,240,463 (excluding GST). The contract commencement date is 22 August 2024 for an estimated period of 26 weeks.
  - b) Negotiate and finalise the terms of the Contract between Council and the Contractor provided that:
    - i. the terms specified in paragraph 1(a) of this Resolution shall not be altered without a further Resolution of Council; and
    - ii. other than terms referred to in paragraph 1(a) of this Resolution, the terms of the Contract are acceptable to the Chief Executive Officer;
2. Conditional on acceptance of the Contract by the Contractor in accordance with the terms of this Resolution:
  - a) Authorises the Chief Executive Officer to do all things necessary to execute the Contract and any required documentation for the Contract; and
  - b) Advises all tenderers of Council's decision in relation to the Contract.

Carried unanimously

## 7.12 CONTRACT AWARD: RFT-2024-574- SUPPLY AND INSTALL OF GYM EQUIPMENT FOR COUNCIL'S AQUATIC AND LEISURE CENTRES

### Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to recommend the award of a contract (RFT 2024-8) for the supply, install and maintenance of gym equipment at Councils Aquatic and Leisure Centres as part of the ongoing gym equipment renewal program.

Tenders were called for a panel of suppliers for three main projects aligning with Council's five-year capital works budget.

The cyclic gym equipment renewal program is based on industry standards and warranty periods. To protect Council's interest, a lease/purchase arrangement has generally been used, so that if the contracted Service Provider went into insolvency etc, then Council still owned the assets. This is now becoming a costly exercise at the time of renewal due to the ongoing maintenance costs on out of warranty equipment.

This year a new approach was taken looking at the value of purchase outright, including purchase outright, lease own, or lease renew options over a three- and six-year periods.

The Finance Unit reviewed the three proposed options and pricing. From a financial perspective, the recommendation is an operating lease for 6 years due to:

- The six-year lease, warranty is extended to throughout the lease period.
- The six-year lease period is close to the useful life.
- There's only a minor trade in value if Council opted for a chattel mortgage.
- With the exception of smaller costed items where the interest rates to lease, out costs the replacement purchase price.

To undertake an operating lease over the six years, some financial adjustments will need to be made to the five-year Capital works budget as shown in the financial implications section. The adopted 2024-2028 budget assumed purchase of the equipment outright with the below funding arrangements.

- \$500,000 in the 2024/25 capital works program for Fawkner Leisure Centre Gym Equipment; and
- \$469,170 in the 2026/27 capital works program for Coburg Leisure Centre Gym Equipment.

The awarding of this contract will require the outright budget to be spread over a six-year period, covering the lease arrangement. The tender complies with section 109(1) of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

## Officer Recommendation

That Council:

1. Authorises the Chief Executive Officer to:
  - a) Make a formal offer to Life Fitness Australia ACN 079 300 815 (**Contractor**) to award Contract RFT-2024-8 for supply, install and maintenance of cardio and weight equipment under a purchase outright and operating lease (**Contract**) on the following terms and otherwise subject to and in accordance with paragraph 2(c) of this resolution:
    - i. For the lumpsum amount of \$1,078,444 (excluding GST) comprising of Fawkner Leisure Centre \$445,102 (excluding GST) and Coburg Leisure Centre \$633,342 (excluding GST).
    - ii. For a fixed term of seven years, commencing 01/10/2024.
  - b) Make a formal offer to Pilates Health Equipment ACN 650 009 304 (**Contractor**) to award Contract RFT-2024 -8 for the supply and install of Pilates Reformer equipment for Brunswick Baths and Oak Park Sports & Aquatic Centre under outright purchase agreement (**Contract**) on the following terms and otherwise subject to and in accordance with paragraph 2(c) of this resolution:
    - i. For the lumpsum amount of \$95,000 (excluding GST).
  - c) Negotiate and finalise the terms of the Contract between Council and the Contractor provided that:
    - i) The terms specified in paragraph 1(a) and 1(b) of this Resolution shall not be altered without a further Resolution of Council.
    - ii) Other than terms referred to in paragraph 1(a) and 1(b) of this Resolution, the terms of the Contract are acceptable to the Chief Executive Officer.



2. Conditional on acceptance of the Contract by the Contractor in accordance with the terms of this Resolution:
  - a) Authorises the Chief Executive Officer to do all things necessary to execute the Contract and any required documentation for the Contract.
  - b) Authorises the Chief Executive Officer to exercise the option(s) to extend contracts in accordance with the provisions within the Contract and subject to satisfactory performance of the Contractor.
  - c) Advises all tenderers of Council's decision in relation to the Contract.
3. Refers the budget impacts as paragraph 1(a) and (b) of this Resolution as detailed below:
  - a) Refer savings of \$374,900 from the 2024/25 capital works program (for Fawkner gym equipment replacement program) to the first quarterly financial review;
  - b) Refer operating expenditure of \$152,210 in relation to year 1 of the lease agreement to the 2024/25 first quarterly financial review (for leasing expenditure relating to Coburg and Fawkner leisure centres);
  - c) Refer the removal of the \$469,170 from the 2026/27 capital works program (for Coburg gym equipment replacement program) to the 2025-2029 budgeting process;
  - d) Refer the inclusion of the remaining 5 years of operating expenditure of \$152,210 per annum to the 2025-2029 budgeting process.
    - i. Noting this includes an overall shortfall of \$69,190 being referred to the future budget process.

## Resolution

Cr Yildiz moved, Cr Pulford seconded -

That Council:

1. **Authorises the Chief Executive Officer to:**
  - a) **Make a formal offer to Life Fitness Australia ACN 079 300 815 (Contractor) to award Contract RFT-2024-8 for supply, install and maintenance of cardio and weight equipment under a purchase outright and operating lease (Contract) on the following terms and otherwise subject to and in accordance with paragraph 2(c) of this resolution:**
    - i. **For the lumpsum amount of \$1,078,444 (excluding GST) comprising of Fawkner Leisure Centre \$445,102 (excluding GST) and Coburg Leisure Centre \$633,342 (excluding GST).**
    - ii. **For a fixed term of seven years, commencing 01/10/2024.**
  - b) **Make a formal offer to Pilates Health Equipment ACN 650 009 304 (Contractor) to award Contract RFT-2024 -8 for the supply and install of Pilates Reformer equipment for Brunswick Baths and Oak Park Sports & Aquatic Centre under outright purchase agreement (Contract) on the following terms and otherwise subject to and in accordance with paragraph 2(c) of this resolution:**
    - i. **For the lumpsum amount of \$95,000 (excluding GST).**

- c) **Negotiate and finalise the terms of the Contract between Council and the Contractor provided that:**
    - i) **The terms specified in paragraph 1(a) and 1(b) of this Resolution shall not be altered without a further Resolution of Council.**
    - ii) **Other than terms referred to in paragraph 1(a) and 1(b) of this Resolution, the terms of the Contract are acceptable to the Chief Executive Officer.**
- 2. **Conditional on acceptance of the Contract by the Contractor in accordance with the terms of this Resolution:**
  - a) **Authorises the Chief Executive Officer to do all things necessary to execute the Contract and any required documentation for the Contract.**
  - b) **Authorises the Chief Executive Officer to exercise the option(s) to extend contracts in accordance with the provisions within the Contract and subject to satisfactory performance of the Contractor.**
  - c) **Advises all tenderers of Council's decision in relation to the Contract.**
- 3. **Refers the budget impacts as paragraph 1(a) and (b) of this Resolution as detailed below:**
  - a) **Refer savings of \$374,900 from the 2024/25 capital works program (for Fawkner gym equipment replacement program) to the first quarterly financial review;**
  - b) **Refer operating expenditure of \$152,210 in relation to year 1 of the lease agreement to the 2024/25 first quarterly financial review (for leasing expenditure relating to Coburg and Fawkner leisure centres);**
  - c) **Refer the removal of the \$469,170 from the 2026/27 capital works program (for Coburg gym equipment replacement program) to the 2025-2029 budgeting process;**
  - d) **Refer the inclusion of the remaining 5 years of operating expenditure of \$152,210 per annum to the 2025-2029 budgeting process.**
    - i. **Noting this includes an overall shortfall of \$69,190 being referred to the future budget process.**

**Carried unanimously**

## 7.13 FRIENDS OF AILEU ANNUAL REPORT 2023

### Executive Summary

This report submits for Council's information the Friends of Aileu Annual Report 2023.

The Annual Report outlines activities and achievements of the Merri-bek and Hume City Councils' *East Timor Partnership Project (Friends of Aileu)* during the calendar year 2023.

### Officer Recommendation

That Council notes the Friends of Aileu Annual Report 2023 (Attachment 1).

### Resolution

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

**That Council notes the Friends of Aileu Annual Report 2023 (Attachment 1).**

*10.16 pm Cr Pavlidis left the meeting during the debate.*

**Carried unanimously**

## 7.14 FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT REPORT FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MAY 2024

This report presents the Financial Management Report for the financial year to date period ending 31 May 2024.

A detailed financial review was undertaken across the organisation at the end of February 2024. The results of this review are included in this report as the Full Year Revised Forecast.

The May 2024 Income Statement shows the Council surplus is \$5.0 million higher than the year-to-date revised forecast as a result of higher overall revenue and lower overall expenditure. These differences are considered largely timing in nature. As set out in the Issues section of this report, operating surplus funds do not convert to immediately available cash to Council; they are used to fund important community infrastructure projects like the Fawkner Leisure Centre redevelopment or the Cultural and Community Hub at 33 Saxon Street, Brunswick.

Council has spent \$66.3 million on capital expenditure, which is tracking below the year-to-date (YTD) forecast of \$87.0 million, with \$42.7 million budget remaining.

### Officer Recommendation

That Council notes the Financial Management Report for the period ended 31 May 2024, at Attachment 1 to this report.

### Resolution

**Cr Riley moved, Cr Pulford seconded -**

**That Council notes the Financial Management Report for the period ended 31 May 2024, at Attachment 1 to this report.**

*10.19 pm Cr Pavlidis returned to the meeting before the vote.*

**Carried unanimously**

## **Conflict of Interest**

Mayor, Cr Pulford declared a material conflict of interest in item 7.15 Governance Report - July 2024 - Cyclical Report, due to the consideration of his attendance at the Northern Councils Alliance Mayor and CEO advocacy visit to Canberra in August 2024, and vacated the chair at 10.20 pm.

10.20 pm     *The Deputy Mayor, Cr Tapinos assumed the chair.*

10.20 pm     *The Mayor, Cr Pulford left the meeting.*

## **7.15 GOVERNANCE REPORT - JULY 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:

- A summary of the minutes of the Arts Advisory Committee.
- A summary of minutes from the Audit and Risk Committee held 4 June 2024.
- Records of Meetings, with a recommendation that Council notes the records.
- A revised Prevention of Sexual Harassment in the Workplace - Councillor Policy for adoption.
- A proposal to amend the commencement time of the Council meeting of 9 October 2024.
- A report on Councillor enrolment in the AICD company Directors Course.
- A proposal to defer the review of the Councillor Gifts, Benefits, and Hospitality Policy and amend the current review date from December 2024 to April 2025, allowing the newly elected Council sufficient time to review and consider any proposed amendments.
- Proposed nomination for Mayor Pulford to attend the Northern Councils Alliance advocacy delegation to Parliament in Canberra in August.

### **Officer Recommendation**

That Council:

1. Notes the summary of minutes from the Arts Advisory Committee held 21 May 2024, at Attachment 1 to this report.
2. Notes the summary of minutes from the Audit and Risk Committee held 4 June 2024, at Attachment 2 to this report.
3. Notes the Records of Meetings, at Attachment 3 to this report.
4. Adopts the revised Prevention of Sexual Harassment in the Workplace - Councillor Policy at Attachment 4 to this report.
5. Amends the commencement time for the Council meeting of Wednesday 9 October 2024 from 7pm to 6pm.
6. Notes the information provided in relation to Councillor enrolment in the Australian Institute of Company Directors (AICD) – Company Directors Course.
7. Notes that the provisions relating to the Company Directors Course contained in the current Councillor Support, Expenses and Resources Policy will be considered when the policy is reviewed in the next Council term.

8. Defers the review of the Councillor Gifts, Benefits, and Hospitality Policy and amend the review date of this policy to April 2025.
9. Approves attendance of Mayor Adam Pulford at the Northern Councils Alliance Mayor and CEO advocacy visit to Canberra in August 2024, at a cost of up to \$1,200, and notes CEO Cathy Henderson will also be attending.
10. Notes actions and associated costs in the 2023/24 financial year for the implementation of Council's name change to Merri-bek City Council.

## **Resolution**

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

**That Council:**

1. **Notes the summary of minutes from the Arts Advisory Committee held 21 May 2024, at Attachment 1 to this report.**
2. **Notes the summary of minutes from the Audit and Risk Committee held 4 June 2024, at Attachment 2 to this report.**
3. **Notes the Records of Meetings, at Attachment 3 to this report.**
4. **Adopts the revised Prevention of Sexual Harassment in the Workplace - Councillor Policy at Attachment 4 to this report.**
5. **Amends the commencement time for the Council meeting of Wednesday 9 October 2024 from 7pm to 6pm.**
6. **Notes the information provided in relation to Councillor enrolment in the Australian Institute of Company Directors (AICD) – Company Directors Course.**
7. **Notes that the provisions relating to the Company Directors Course contained in the current Councillor Support, Expenses and Resources Policy will be considered when the policy is reviewed in the next Council term.**
8. **Defers the review of the Councillor Gifts, Benefits, and Hospitality Policy and amend the review date of this policy to April 2025.**
9. **Approves attendance of Mayor Adam Pulford at the Northern Councils Alliance Mayor and CEO advocacy visit to Canberra in August 2024, at a cost of up to \$1,200, and notes CEO Cathy Henderson will also be attending.**
10. **Notes actions and associated costs in the 2023/24 financial year for the implementation of Council's name change to Merri-bek City Council.**

**Carried**

*10.24 pm Cr Pavlidis left the meeting and did not return.*

*10.24 pm Cr Pulford returned to the meeting and resumed the chair.*

## **NOTICES OF MOTION**

### **8.1 FAMILY VIOLENCE INITIATIVES**

#### **Motion**

That Council receives a report:

1. Detailing current statistics on family violence in Merri-Bek, along with various initiatives aimed at prevention and response.
2. That explores the potential for renewed partnerships with local stakeholders, including Victorian Police, family violence support services and community organisations, in order to collaborate and enhance our practices and preventative measures within the Council and its services to combat family violence.
3. That considers, in partnership with Victoria Police and stakeholders, Council implementing public awareness campaigns about family violence, utilising multiple platforms, including social media and community events, to educate the public on recognising the signs of family violence; accessing available resources; understanding the importance of reporting incidents; and to challenge harmful gender stereotypes and promote respectful relationships.

#### **Resolution**

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

**That Council defers the item to the August Council meeting.**

**Carried unanimously**

### **8.2 RECOGNITION OF INTERNATIONALLY RENOWNED LOCAL ARTIST - DESTINY DEACON 1956 TO 2024**

#### **Motion**

That Council:

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

#### **Time Extension**

#### **Resolution**

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

**That the Council meeting be extended by 30 minutes at 10.28 pm.**

**Carried**

## **Resolution**

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

**That Council:**

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

**Carried unanimously**

## **8.3 ART AND HISTORY AT THE BRUNSWICK TOWN HALL**

### **Motion**

That Council calls for a report into the best use of the Brunswick Town Hall and as part of the report considers the following:

- Expanding the Counihan Gallery to include a permanent exhibition of the Merri-bek Art Collection which focus on the work of Noel Counihan and themes associated with Brunswick.
- Interpreting the history of Brunswick in collaboration with the Brunswick Historical Society the permanent exhibition spaces can display art and objects which interpret the history of the suburb, including the historical council chambers and multimedia displays.
- That consideration be given to expanding the Library and community usages, which include study spaces, meeting rooms, information and customer service desk and other community spaces.
- That consideration also be given to small scale commercial operations and, or social enterprises, which can contribute to the vision and function of the Brunswick Town Hall.

### **Resolution**

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

**That Council:**

- 1. Calls for a report into the best use of the Brunswick Town Hall and as part of the report considers the following:**
  - **Expanding the Counihan Gallery to include a permanent exhibition of the Merri-bek Art Collection which focus on the work of Noel Counihan and themes associated with Brunswick.**
  - **Interpreting the history of Brunswick in collaboration with the Brunswick Historical Society the permanent exhibition spaces can display art and objects which interpret the history of the suburb, including the historical council chambers and multimedia displays.**
  - **That consideration be given to expanding the Library and community usages, which include study spaces, meeting rooms, information and customer service desk and other community spaces.**

- That consideration also be given to small scale commercial operations and, or social enterprises, which can contribute to the vision and function of the Brunswick Town Hall.
- 2. Gives recognition to the role of prominent local activists Vic Little and Vida Little from the Brunswick Progress Association for their role in preventing the demolition of and saving of the Brunswick Mechanics Institute in 1971 and the Brunswick Town Hall in 1973.
- 3. Calls for a report that considers how Council could formally recognise and acknowledge the Littles and the many other local activists and artists who have made a significant contribution to Brunswick over time.

Carried unanimously

## **NOTICE OF RESCISSION**

Nil.

## **FORESHADOWED ITEMS**

Cr Tapinos foreshadowed that Council host a civic reception (or find a meaningful way) to celebrate and welcome back and honour our Olympians.

## **URGENT BUSINESS REPORTS**

Nil.

The Council meeting closed at 10.41 pm.

Confirmed

Cr Adam Pulford  
**MAYOR**