



Minutes of the Special Council Meeting

Held in Bunjil (Council Chamber), Merri-bek Civic Centre,
90 Bell Street, Coburg
on Monday 23 June 2025

1.	WELCOME	3
2.	APOLOGIES/LEAVE OF ABSENCE	3
3.	DECLARATIONS OF CONFLICTS OF INTERESTS	3
4.	COUNCIL REPORTS	4
4.1	PROPOSED MERRI-BEK CITY COUNCIL 4-YEAR BUDGET 2025-2029 - FOR ADOPTION	4
4.2	ENDORSEMENT OF DRAFT MERRI-BEK COMMUNITY VISION AND DRAFT COUNCIL PLAN 2025-2029 FOR PUBLIC CONSULTATION	22

The Mayor opened the meeting at 6.00 pm and stated the Council meeting is being held on the traditional country of the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung people and acknowledged them as Traditional Owners. The Mayor paid respects to their Elders, past, present and emerging, and the Elders from other communities who may be here today.

Present	Time In	Time Out
Cr Helen Davidson, Mayor	6.00 pm	7.25 pm
Cr Helen Politis, Deputy Mayor	6.00 pm	7.25 pm
Cr Nat Abboud	6.00 pm	7.25 pm
Cr Sue Bolton	6.00 pm	7.25 pm
Cr Liz Irvin	6.00 pm	7.25 pm
Cr Dr Jay Iwasaki	6.00 pm	7.25 pm
Cr Chris Miles	6.00 pm	7.25 pm
Cr Adam Pulford	6.00 pm	7.25 pm
Cr Ella Svensson	6.00 pm	7.25 pm
Cr Katherine Theodosis	6.00 pm	7.25 pm
Cr Oscar Yildiz JP	6.00 pm	7.25 pm

OFFICERS

Chief Executive Officer – Cathy Henderson
 Director Business Transformation – Sue Vujcevic
 Director City Infrastructure – Anita Curnow
 Director Community - Eamonn Fennessy
 Chief Financial Officer – Jemma Wightman
 Manager Governance and Strategy – Yvonne Callanan
 Acting Unit Manager Governance – Sophie Barison

APOLOGIES/LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Nil.

DISCLOSURES OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Cr Oscar Yildiz disclosed a general conflict of interest in report 4.1 *Proposed Merri-bek City Council Budget 2025-2029* regarding budget allocations for DeChene Reserve projects due to being the former number 1 ticket holder for Brunswick Juventus Football Club who are located at DeChene Reserve.

Cr Helen Politis disclosed a general conflict of interest in report 4.1 *Proposed Merri-bek City Council Budget 2025-2029* regarding budget allocations for Brunswick Beethoven Festival, due to being a member on the board of the Beethoven Music Festival Committee.

COUNCIL REPORTS

4.1 PROPOSED MERRI-BEK CITY COUNCIL 4-YEAR BUDGET 2025-2029 - FOR ADOPTION

Executive Summary

Council must prepare and adopt a rolling 4-year Budget that contains financial statements and other matters. This must be finally approved by Council no later than 30 June each year.

The purpose of this report is to present for adoption the:

- 4-Year Budget 2025-2029 (Attachment 1)
- 4-Year Revenue and Rating Plan 2025-2029 (Attachment 2).

The 4-Year Budget 2025-2029 continues to deliver services to Merri-bek's 191,000 plus residents within the 3.00 per cent rate cap set by the State Government. The 4-year budget funds key initiatives and delivers critical major projects while maintaining Council's financial sustainability.

Key features of the budget include:

- An operating projects program of \$2.8 million. Key projects in the program include:
 - Continued funding for the Urban Forest Strategy - Tree Planting Regime (\$470,000);
 - Expanding our supporting seniors to live independently (outdoor help for seniors) (\$540,000);
 - Continuing the solar and/or thermal grants for low-income earners (\$205,000);
 - Continuing to fund the Youth Holistic Outreach Program (\$120,000);
 - Increased grant opportunities to support local artists (\$110,000); and
 - Doubling the funding for the Renuwall mural program (\$60,000).
- A capital works program of \$90.5 million in 2025/26. Key projects in the program include:
 - Commencing planning and design for the \$60 million Coburg library and piazza project;
 - Continuing to spend well above the resolved \$12 per head per capita rate on transport infrastructure spend, with \$17.62 per capita allocated in 2025-26;
 - Roads and carparks renewal and maintenance (\$27.3 million);
 - Improvements to parks, open space, and streetscapes (\$12.8 million); and
 - Footpaths, bicycle paths and transport infrastructure (\$6.7 million).
- As part of Council's participatory budgeting process earlier this year, funding three community budget ideas in 2025/26 totaling \$313,573:
 - Improving Gilpin dog park \$160,000;
 - Lizard with bikes – revitalising the Coburg velodrome underpass \$100,000; and
 - Challenging gender-based violence through youth led initiatives \$53,573.

As well as funding the top voted project, Native understorey planting, for \$0.3 million over the next 4-years as a strategic priority.

- The 4-Year Budget 2025-2029 continues Council's strong commitment to delivering on its major projects pipeline with a further \$7.9 million set aside for the Significant Projects Reserve to fund future projects. This reserve is being used to save for the next significant project – the Coburg library and piazza.

Since public exhibition of the Proposed 4-Year Budget 2025-2029 which occurred from 24 April to 22 May 2025, amendments have been made to develop the Proposed budget based on new information (e.g., changes to fees as set by the State Government), final rates figures and minor capital works changes (phasing and funding assumptions). Details of the changes are summarised in section 3 of this report.

196 submissions were received on the proposed budget in the second round of community engagement; these submissions are in addition to the 42 eligible community budget ideas received in the first stage of engagement. A copy of public submissions received, and Council officer commentary is provided as Attachment 3.

The proposed budget has an unrestricted surplus of \$483,970. Following the community consultation period, officers have highlighted the below projects that are a high priority to fund, however, cannot be funded without creating a budget deficit, these include:

- Ballerit Mooroop (\$500,000)
- Coburg basketball stadium feasibility study (\$150,000);
- Morris Reserve cricket nets (\$130,000);
- Beethoven music festival (\$15,000 for the next 4-years).

Officer Recommendation

That Council:

1. Having considered all submissions received and in accordance with Section 94 of the *Local Government Act 2020*, adopts the Annual Budget 2025-2029 (Attachment 1 to this report) and the 4-year Revenue and Rating Strategy 2025-2029 (Attachment 2 of this report).
2. Formally declares the Rates Levies and Annual Service Charges for the 2025-26 rating year as follows:
 - a) Declaration of Rates and Charges:
In accordance with section 158 of the *Local Government Act 1989*, the following rates and charges are declared for the rating year commencing 1 July 2025 and ending 30 June 2026.
 - b) Amount intended to be raised:
An amount of \$200,522,426 (or such other amount as is lawfully raised as a consequence of this resolution) be declared as the amount which Council intends to raise by general rates and the annual service charge, which is calculated as follows:

Category	Amount
Residential properties	\$157,125,438
Commercial properties	\$9,990,013
Industrial properties	\$7,054,169
Municipal charge	\$0
Service charges	\$26,338,626
Charge in lieu of rates on cultural and recreational lands	\$14,180
Total	\$200,522,426

Rates Information:

i. General rates:

A general rate to be declared for the 2025-26 financial year. The rateable amount per property will be determined by multiplying the Capital Improved Value of each rateable property by the rate in the dollar indicated in the following table:

Category	Rate
Residential properties	0.0023883 (0.23883 cents in the dollar of Capital Improved Value)
Commercial properties	0.0023883 (0.23883 cents in the dollar of Capital Improved Value)
Industrial properties	0.0023883 (0.23883 cents in the dollar of Capital Improved Value)

- ii. No amount is fixed as the minimum amount payable by way of general rate in respect of each rateable property within the municipal district.

c) Municipal charge:

No municipal charge is declared in respect of the 2025-26 financial year.

d) Annual service charge:

- i. An annual service charge, for the collection and disposal of refuse, be declared in respect of the 2025-26 financial year.
- ii. The annual service charge be in the sum of, and be based on the criteria, set out below:

Category	Rate
Household Rubbish - Shared	\$108.10
Household Rubbish - 80 litre	\$166.31
Household Rubbish - 120 litre	\$374.20
Household Rubbish - 160 litre	\$457.36
Household Rubbish - 200 litre	\$498.94
Household Rubbish - 240 litre	\$582.09
Household Rubbish - 160 litre (concession)	\$228.68
Household Rubbish - 200 litre (concession)	\$249.47
Household Rubbish - 240 litre (concession)	\$291.05
Household Rubbish – Fortnightly – Shared	\$88.16
Household Rubbish – Fortnightly – 80 litre	\$101.73
Household Rubbish – Fortnightly – 120 litre	\$135.64
Household Rubbish – Fortnightly – 240 litre	\$305.18
Household Rubbish – Fortnightly – 360 litre	\$474.73
Household Rubbish – Fortnightly – 240 litre (concession)	\$135.64
Household Rubbish – Fortnightly – 360 litre (concession)	\$305.18
Mixed Recycling - Shared	\$36.14
Mixed Recycling - 120 litre	\$41.70

Mixed Recycling - 240 litre	\$55.61
Mixed Recycling - 360 litre	\$125.11
Food & Garden Organics - Shared	\$61.10
Food & Garden Organics - 120 litre	\$94.00
Food & Garden Organics - 240 litre new services	\$211.49
Glass Recycling - Shared	\$11.57
Glass Recycling - 120 litre	\$17.81
Glass Recycling - 240 litre	\$40.06

e) Cultural and recreational land:

In accordance with section 4(4) of the *Cultural and Recreational Lands Act 1963*, the following amounts be declared as a charge in lieu of the general rate (which would otherwise be payable):

Glenroy Road, Glenroy	Northern Golf Club	12,300
Outlook Road, Coburg	Vic Amateur Basketball Association	1,881
Total:		14,180

f) Incentives:

No incentives are declared for the payment of general rates (and annual service charge described earlier in this resolution) before dates fixed or specified for their payment under section 167 of the *Local Government Act 1989*.

g) Interest on rates and charges:

- i. Interest is to be charged in accordance with section 172 of the *Local Government Act 1989*, on any amounts of rates and charges which have not yet been paid by the instalment dates fixed by the Minister in accordance with section 167 of the *Local Government Act 1989*;
- ii. That the interest to be charged is at the rate fixed under section 2 of the *Penalty Interest Rates Act 1983*, that applied on the first day of July immediately before the due date for payment; and
- iii. Interest on rates and charges is to be calculated from the date on which the instalment was due.

h) Interest on unpaid monies:

- i. Interest is to be charged on any amounts of money (other than rates and charges) which a person owes to the Council, and which has not been paid by the due date;
- ii. The interest rate shall be determined by Council from time to time and shall not exceed the rate fixed from time to time by the Order-in-Council; and
- iii. That such interest is to be applied in accordance with the provisions of section 120 of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

3. Notes that the fees and charges in the Annual Budget 2025-2029 have been updated from the Proposed Annual Budget 2025-2029 with the following changes. Statutory Fees and Charges have been increased by 3.00 per cent due to the fees and fines being set as part of the Victorian State Budget and gazette 22 May 2025.

4. In accordance with Section 87(4) of the Road Safety Act 1986, resolves to fix at 0.5 penalty units the penalty for those parking infringements specified as Item 1 to 11 in Column 1 of Schedule 6 of the Road Safety (General) Regulations 2019 effective 12 June 2025, unless otherwise resolved
5. Advises submitters that Council has considered their submissions relating to the Proposed Annual Budget 2025-2029 and that the submitters be advised of the outcome of the consideration as it relates to their specific submission through this council report, and they be thanked for their contributions.
6. Authorises the Director Business Transformation to finalise the Merri-bek Council Annual Budget 2025-2029, including any amendments as a result of the adoption of the Budget 2025-2029 and or/minor administrative changes, including making the final documents available for public inspection.

Separating the Motion

With the agreement of Council, Council separated those parts of the Proposed Budget relating to DeChene Reserve projects and the Brunswick Beethoven Festival grant to enable those Councillors with a disclosed conflict of interest to participate in the remainder of the Proposed Budget.

6.06 pm *Having declared a conflict of interest in the Proposed Budget items relating to DeChene Reserve projects, Cr Yildiz left the meeting.*

Resolution

Cr Abboud moved, Cr Irvin seconded -

That Council

1. **Having considered all submissions received and in accordance with Section 94 of the *Local Government Act 2020*, adopts the following as part of the Annual Budget 2025-2029:**
 - a) **Remove the design funding in the capital works program for DeChene Reserve upgrade from \$50,000 to \$0 for the 2025/26 financial year; and**
 - b) **Reducing the allocation for DeChene carpark upgrade in the capital works program from \$1,000,000 to \$250,000 and rename the project 'DeChene Reserve Parking and Access Improvements for the 2026/27 financial year'.**

Carried

6.09 pm *Cr Yildiz returned to the meeting.*

6.10 pm *Having declared a conflict of interest in the Proposed Budget item relating to the Brunswick Beethoven Festival, Cr Politis left the meeting.*

Resolution

Cr Theodosis moved, Cr Miles seconded -

That Council

1. **Having considered all submissions received and in accordance with Section 94 of the *Local Government Act 2020*, adopts the following as part of the Annual Budget 2025-2029:**
 - a) **Allocate \$15,000 in the strategic priorities for the Beethoven music festival grant; for 2025-26 and 2026-27 financial years.**

Carried

6.11 pm *Cr Politis returned to the meeting.*

Motion

Cr Irvin moved, Cr Svensson seconded -

That Council:

1. Having considered all submissions received and in accordance with Section 94 of the Local Government Act 2020, adopts the Annual Budget 2025-2029 (Attachment 1 to this report) and the 4-year Revenue and Rating Strategy 2025-2029 (Attachment 2 of this report), subject to the following change:
 - 1.1 For the 2025-26 financial year:
 - a) Allocate \$10,000 in the strategic priorities for grants for faith, cultural and asylum seeker organisations to assist in their support of recently arrived families from Palestine in Merri-bek.
 - b) Allocate \$85,000 in the strategic priorities for the social worker program at the libraries.
 - c) Allocate \$500,000 in the capital works program for the Ballerdt Mooroop program.
 - d) Allocate \$150,000 in the capital works program for design and upgrade works of the Pigeon Club, Martin Reserve.
 - e) Allocate \$10,000 in the capital works program for ATC Cook shelter – drainage issues.
 - f) Offset points a) – f) by:
 - i) Removing the strategic priority Lygon Street gallery hop from \$30,000 to \$0.
 - ii) Reducing the strategic priority expand and extend outdoor help program from \$270,000 to \$135,000 (for 2025-26 only).
 - iii) Reducing the capital works program for resurfacing program (roads) from \$2,700,000 to \$2,600,000.
 - 1.2 For the 2026-27 financial year:
 - a) Allocates \$150,000 in the strategic priorities for the stage 2 feasibility study for McDonald Reserve.
 - b) Allocates \$150,000 in the strategic priorities for the Coburg basketball feasibility study.
 - c) Allocates \$250,000 in the capital works program for design and upgrade works of the Pigeon Club, Martin Reserve.
 - d) Allocate \$120,000 in the capital works program for Morris Reserve cricket nets.
 - e) Allocate \$100,000 in the capital works program for Jackson Reserve catch net.
 - f) Allocate \$60,000 in the capital works program for fencing at Shore Reserve
 - g) Allocate \$35,000 in the strategic priorities to the Merri-bek TAC L2P learner program for a grant to purchase a vehicle.
 - h) Allocate \$50,000 in the capital works program for a shade sail at Glenroy Bowls Club.

2. Notes the financial impact on 2025-26 is a net additional expenditure of \$455,000, resulting in a forecasted unrestricted surplus of \$28,971, with a view to it being allocated by council resolution to:
 - a) The Glenroy Men's shed (\$15,000) in the event they are successful in the Men's shed funding program and require a 20% co-contribution.
3. Notes the financial impact on 2026-27 is a net additional expenditure of \$180,000, resulting in a forecasted unrestricted surplus of \$308,953.
4. Formally declares the Rates Levies and Annual Service Charges for the 2025-26 rating year as follows:
 - a) Declaration of Rates and Charges:
In accordance with section 158 of the *Local Government Act 1989*, the following rates and charges are declared for the rating year commencing 1 July 2025 and ending 30 June 2026.
 - b) Amount intended to be raised:
An amount of \$200,522,426 (or such other amount as is lawfully raised as a consequence of this resolution) be declared as the amount which Council intends to raise by general rates and the annual service charge, which is calculated as follows:

Category	Amount
Residential properties	\$157,125,438
Commercial properties	\$9,990,013
Industrial properties	\$7,054,169
Municipal charge	\$0
Service charges	\$26,338,626
Charge in lieu of rates on cultural and recreational lands	\$14,180
Total	\$200,522,426

Rates Information:

i. General rates:

A general rate to be declared for the 2025-26 financial year. The rateable amount per property will be determined by multiplying the Capital Improved Value of each rateable property by the rate in the dollar indicated in the following table:

Category	Rate
Residential properties	0.0023883 (0.23883 cents in the dollar of Capital Improved Value)
Commercial properties	0.0023883 (0.23883 cents in the dollar of Capital Improved Value)
Industrial properties	0.0023883 (0.23883 cents in the dollar of Capital Improved Value)

- ii. No amount is fixed as the minimum amount payable by way of general rate in respect of each rateable property within the municipal district.

- c) Municipal charge:
No municipal charge is declared in respect of the 2025-26 financial year.
- d) Annual service charge:
- i. An annual service charge, for the collection and disposal of refuse, be declared in respect of the 2025-26 financial year.
 - ii. The annual service charge be in the sum of, and be based on the criteria, set out below:

Category	Rate
Household Rubbish - Shared	\$108.10
Household Rubbish - 80 litre	\$166.31
Household Rubbish - 120 litre	\$374.20
Household Rubbish - 160 litre	\$457.36
Household Rubbish - 200 litre	\$498.94
Household Rubbish - 240 litre	\$582.09
Household Rubbish - 160 litre (concession)	\$228.68
Household Rubbish - 200 litre (concession)	\$249.47
Household Rubbish - 240 litre (concession)	\$291.05
Household Rubbish – Fortnightly – Shared	\$88.16
Household Rubbish – Fortnightly – 80 litre	\$101.73
Household Rubbish – Fortnightly – 120 litre	\$135.64
Household Rubbish – Fortnightly – 240 litre	\$305.18
Household Rubbish – Fortnightly – 360 litre	\$474.73
Household Rubbish – Fortnightly – 240 litre (concession)	\$135.64
Household Rubbish – Fortnightly – 360 litre (concession)	\$305.18
Mixed Recycling - Shared	\$36.14
Mixed Recycling - 120 litre	\$41.70
Mixed Recycling - 240 litre	\$55.61
Mixed Recycling - 360 litre	\$125.11
Food & Garden Organics - Shared	\$61.10
Food & Garden Organics - 120 litre	\$94.00
Food & Garden Organics - 240 litre new services	\$211.49
Glass Recycling - Shared	\$11.57
Glass Recycling - 120 litre	\$17.81
Glass Recycling - 240 litre	\$40.06

- e) Cultural and recreational land:
In accordance with section 4(4) of the *Cultural and Recreational Lands Act 1963*, the following amounts be declared as a charge in lieu of the general rate (which would otherwise be payable):

Glenroy Road, Glenroy	Northern Golf Club	12,300
Outlook Road, Coburg	Vic Amateur Basketball Association	1,881
Total:		14,180

- f) Incentives:
No incentives are declared for the payment of general rates (and annual service charge described earlier in this resolution) before dates fixed or specified for their payment under section 167 of the *Local Government Act 1989*.
- g) Interest on rates and charges:
- i. Interest is to be charged in accordance with section 172 of the *Local Government Act 1989*, on any amounts of rates and charges which have not yet been paid by the instalment dates fixed by the Minister in accordance with section 167 of the *Local Government Act 1989*;
 - ii. That the interest to be charged is at the rate fixed under section 2 of the *Penalty Interest Rates Act 1983*, that applied on the first day of July immediately before the due date for payment; and
 - iii. Interest on rates and charges is to be calculated from the date on which the instalment was due.
- h) Interest on unpaid monies:
- i. Interest is to be charged on any amounts of money (other than rates and charges) which a person owes to the Council, and which has not been paid by the due date;
 - ii. The interest rate shall be determined by Council from time to time and shall not exceed the rate fixed from time to time by the Order-in-Council; and
 - iii. That such interest is to be applied in accordance with the provisions of section 120 of the *Local Government Act 2020*.
5. Notes that the fees and charges in the Annual Budget 2025-2029 have been updated from the Proposed Annual Budget 2025-2029 with the following changes. Statutory Fees and Charges have been increased by 3.00 per cent due to the fees and fines being set as part of the Victorian State Budget and gazette 22 May 2025.
 6. In accordance with Section 87(4) of the Road Safety Act 1986, resolves to fix at 0.5 penalty units the penalty for those parking infringements specified as Item 1 to 11 in Column 1 of Schedule 6 of the Road Safety (General) Regulations 2019 effective 12 June 2025, unless otherwise resolved
 7. Advises submitters that Council has considered their submissions relating to the Proposed Annual Budget 2025-2029 and that the submitters be advised of the outcome of the consideration as it relates to their specific submission through this council report, and they be thanked for their contributions.
 8. Authorises the Director Business Transformation to finalise the Merri-bek Council Annual Budget 2025-2029, including any amendments as a result of the adoption of the Budget 2025-2029 and or/minor administrative changes, including making the final documents available for public inspection.

Lost

Cr Pulford called for a division.

For

Cr Bolton
Cr Pulford
Cr Svensson
Cr Irvin
Cr Iwasaki

Total For (5)

Against

Cr Yildiz
Cr Theodosis
Cr Miles
Cr Davidson
Cr Abboud
Cr Politis

Total Against (6)

Foreshadowed Motion

Cr Abboud moved, Cr Miles seconded -

That Council:

1. Having considered all submissions received and in accordance with Section 94 of the Local Government Act 2020, adopts the Annual Budget 2025-2029 (Attachment 1 to this report) and the 4-year Revenue and Rating Strategy 2025-2029 (Attachment 2 of this report), subject to the following change:
 - 1.1 For the 2025-26 financial years
 - a) Allocate \$10,000 in the strategic priorities for grants for faith, cultural and asylum seeker organisations to assist in their support of recently arrived families from Palestine in Merri-bek.
 - b) Allocate \$60,000 in the capital works program for fencing at Shore Reserve.
 - c) Offset point a - b) by:
 - i) Removing the strategic priority Lygon Street gallery hop from \$30,000 to \$0.
 - ii) Reducing the capital works program for resurfacing program (roads) from \$2,700,000 to \$2,675,000.
 - 1.2 For the 2026-27 financial year:
 - a) Allocate \$85,000 in the strategic priorities for the social worker program at the libraries.
 - b) Allocate \$120,000 in the capital works program for Morris Reserve cricket nets.
 - c) Allocates \$150,000 in the strategic priorities for the stage 2 feasibility study for McDonald Reserve.
 - d) Allocates \$150,000 in the strategic priorities for the Coburg basketball feasibility study.
 - e) Allocate \$50,000 in the capital works program for a shade sail at Glenroy Bowls Club.
 - f) Allocate \$100,000 in the capital works program for a catch net at Jackson Reserve.
 - g) Allocate \$10,000 in the capital works program for ATC Cook shelter – drainage issues.
 - h) Allocate \$20,000 in the capital works program for a shade sail at Brentwood Kindergarten.
 - i) Allocates \$75,000 in the capital works program for the Glenroy Men's Shed upgrade.
2. Notes the financial impact on 2026-27 financial year (as per 1.2 above) is a net additional expenditure of \$25,000, resulting in a forecasted unrestricted surplus of \$463,953.
3. Retains the surplus of \$503,971 in 2025-26 with a view to it being allocated by a future Council resolution in 2025-26 to:
 - a) The Ballertr Mooroop project, in the event that the Ballertr Mooroop project does not receive external grants or state government resourcing of portable or temporary buildings on the site.

- b) The Glenroy Men's shed (\$15,000) in the event they are successful in the Men's shed funding program and require a 20% co-contribution.
4. Formally declares the Rates Levies and Annual Service Charges for the 2025-26 rating year as follows:
- a) Declaration of Rates and Charges:
- In accordance with section 158 of the *Local Government Act 1989*, the following rates and charges are declared for the rating year commencing 1 July 2025 and ending 30 June 2026.
- b) Amount intended to be raised:
- An amount of \$200,522,426 (or such other amount as is lawfully raised as a consequence of this resolution) be declared as the amount which Council intends to raise by general rates and the annual service charge, which is calculated as follows:

Category	Amount
Residential properties	\$157,125,438
Commercial properties	\$9,990,013
Industrial properties	\$7,054,169
Municipal charge	\$0
Service charges	\$26,338,626
Charge in lieu of rates on cultural and recreational lands	\$14,180
Total	\$200,522,426

Rates Information:

i. General rates:

A general rate to be declared for the 2025-26 financial year. The rateable amount per property will be determined by multiplying the Capital Improved Value of each rateable property by the rate in the dollar indicated in the following table:

Category	Rate
Residential properties	0.0023883 (0.23883 cents in the dollar of Capital Improved Value)
Commercial properties	0.0023883 (0.23883 cents in the dollar of Capital Improved Value)
Industrial properties	0.0023883 (0.23883 cents in the dollar of Capital Improved Value)

- ii. No amount is fixed as the minimum amount payable by way of general rate in respect of each rateable property within the municipal district.
- c) Municipal charge:
- No municipal charge is declared in respect of the 2025-26 financial year.
- d) Annual service charge:
- i. An annual service charge, for the collection and disposal of refuse, be declared in respect of the 2025-26 financial year.

- ii. The annual service charge be in the sum of, and be based on the criteria, set out below:

Category	Rate
Household Rubbish - Shared	\$108.10
Household Rubbish - 80 litre	\$166.31
Household Rubbish - 120 litre	\$374.20
Household Rubbish - 160 litre	\$457.36
Household Rubbish - 200 litre	\$498.94
Household Rubbish - 240 litre	\$582.09
Household Rubbish - 160 litre (concession)	\$228.68
Household Rubbish - 200 litre (concession)	\$249.47
Household Rubbish - 240 litre (concession)	\$291.05
Household Rubbish – Fortnightly – Shared	\$88.16
Household Rubbish – Fortnightly – 80 litre	\$101.73
Household Rubbish – Fortnightly – 120 litre	\$135.64
Household Rubbish – Fortnightly – 240 litre	\$305.18
Household Rubbish – Fortnightly – 360 litre	\$474.73
Household Rubbish – Fortnightly – 240 litre (concession)	\$135.64
Household Rubbish – Fortnightly – 360 litre (concession)	\$305.18
Mixed Recycling - Shared	\$36.14
Mixed Recycling - 120 litre	\$41.70
Mixed Recycling - 240 litre	\$55.61
Mixed Recycling - 360 litre	\$125.11
Food & Garden Organics - Shared	\$61.10
Food & Garden Organics - 120 litre	\$94.00
Food & Garden Organics - 240 litre new services	\$211.49
Glass Recycling - Shared	\$11.57
Glass Recycling - 120 litre	\$17.81
Glass Recycling - 240 litre	\$40.06

- e) Cultural and recreational land:

In accordance with section 4(4) of the *Cultural and Recreational Lands Act 1963*, the following amounts be declared as a charge in lieu of the general rate (which would otherwise be payable):

Glenroy Road, Glenroy	Northern Golf Club	12,300
Outlook Road, Coburg	Vic Amateur Basketball Association	1,881
Total:		14,180

- f) Incentives:

No incentives are declared for the payment of general rates (and annual service charge described earlier in this resolution) before dates fixed or specified for their payment under section 167 of the *Local Government Act 1989*.

- g) Interest on rates and charges:
 - i. Interest is to be charged in accordance with section 172 of the *Local Government Act 1989*, on any amounts of rates and charges which have not yet been paid by the instalment dates fixed by the Minister in accordance with section 167 of the *Local Government Act 1989*;
 - ii. That the interest to be charged is at the rate fixed under section 2 of the *Penalty Interest Rates Act 1983*, that applied on the first day of July immediately before the due date for payment; and
 - iii. Interest on rates and charges is to be calculated from the date on which the instalment was due.
- h) Interest on unpaid monies:
 - i. Interest is to be charged on any amounts of money (other than rates and charges) which a person owes to the Council, and which has not been paid by the due date;
 - ii. The interest rate shall be determined by Council from time to time and shall not exceed the rate fixed from time to time by the Order-in-Council; and
 - iii. That such interest is to be applied in accordance with the provisions of section 120 of the *Local Government Act 2020*.
- 5. Notes that the fees and charges in the Annual Budget 2025-2029 have been updated from the Proposed Annual Budget 2025-2029 with the following changes. Statutory Fees and Charges have been increased by 3.00 per cent due to the fees and fines being set as part of the Victorian State Budget and gazette 22 May 2025.
- 6. In accordance with Section 87(4) of the Road Safety Act 1986, resolves to fix at 0.5 penalty units the penalty for those parking infringements specified as Item 1 to 11 in Column 1 of Schedule 6 of the Road Safety (General) Regulations 2019 effective 12 June 2025, unless otherwise resolved
- 7. Advises submitters that Council has considered their submissions relating to the Proposed Annual Budget 2025-2029 and that the submitters be advised of the outcome of the consideration as it relates to their specific submission through this council report, and they be thanked for their contributions.
- 8. Authorises the Director Business Transformation to finalise the Merri-bek Council Annual Budget 2025-2029, including any amendments as a result of the adoption of the Budget 2025-2029 and or/minor administrative changes, including making the final documents available for public inspection.

6.24 pm Cr Pulford left the meeting during the debate.

6.24 pm Cr Pulford returned to the meeting during the debate.

Amendment

Cr Svensson moved, Cr Bolton seconded –

The following amendment to be included as follows:

1.1 For the 2025-26 financial year:

- **Allocate an additional \$75,000 in the strategic priorities for the social worker program at the libraries.**
- **Offset by reducing the capital works program for resurfacing program (roads) from \$2,700,000 to \$2,600,000.**

Carried

Cr Miles called for a division.

For

Cr Bolton
Cr Pulford
Cr Svensson
Cr Irvin
Cr Iwasaki
Cr Abboud

Total For (6)

Against

Cr Yildiz
Cr Theodosis
Cr Miles
Cr Davidson
Cr Politis

Total Against (5)

The Amendment in the name of Cr Svensson was incorporated into the Substantive Motion.

Amendment

Cr Pulford moved, Cr Bolton seconded –

The following amendment be included as follows:

1.1 For the 2025-26 financial year:

- **Brings forward the \$3.5 million from the 2026-27 capital works program for McDonald Reserve hockey pitch – stage 1.**
- **Offsets the above, by reducing the transfer to the significant projects reserve by \$3.5 million.**

1.2 For the 2026-27 financial year:

- **Increase the transfers to the significant projects reserve by \$3.5 million.**

6.53 pm Cr Miles left the meeting during the debate.

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

Carried unanimously

The Amendment in the name of Cr Pulford was incorporated into the Substantive Motion.

Amendment

Cr Bolton moved -

1.1 For the 2025-26 financial year:

- a) **Brings forward the allocation of \$10,000 in the capital works program for ATC Cook Shelter – drainage issues in the quarterly forecast process, if surplus funds are available.**

The Amendment in the name of Cr Bolton was accepted by the mover and seconder and incorporated into the Substantive Motion.

Separating the Motion

At the request of Cr Yildiz, the Chairperson put part 3(a) relating to Ballerdt Mooroop project, separately.

Resolution

Cr Abboud moved, Cr Miles seconded -

That Council:

3. Retains the surplus of \$503,971 in 2025-26 with a view to it being allocated by a future Council resolution in 2025-26 to:
 - a) The Ballerri Mooroop project, in the event that the Ballerri Mooroop project does not receive external grants or state government resourcing of portable or temporary buildings on the site.

Carried

Cr Pulford called for a division.

For

Cr Bolton
Cr Pulford
Cr Svensson
Cr Irvin
Cr Iwasaki
Cr Abboud
Cr Theodosios
Cr Miles
Cr Davidson
Cr Politis

Total For (10)

Against

Cr Yildiz

Total Against (1)

Resolution

Cr Abboud moved, Cr Miles seconded -

That Council:

1. Having considered all submissions received and in accordance with Section 94 of the Local Government Act 2020, adopts the Annual Budget 2025-2029 (Attachment 1 to this report) and the 4-year Revenue and Rating Strategy 2025-2029 (Attachment 2 of this report), subject to the following change:
 - 1.1 For the 2025-26 financial year:
 - a) Allocate \$10,000 in the strategic priorities for grants for faith, cultural and asylum seeker organisations to assist in their support of recently arrived families from Palestine in Merri-bek.
 - b) Allocate \$60,000 in the capital works program for fencing at Shore Reserve.
 - c) Offset point a - b) by:
 - i. Removing the strategic priority Lygon street gallery hop from \$30,000 to \$0.
 - d) Allocate an additional \$75,000 in the strategic priorities for the social worker program at the libraries.
 - e) Offset by reducing the capital works program for resurfacing program (roads) from \$2,700,000 to \$2,600,000.
 - f) Brings forward the \$3.5 million from the 2026-27 capital works program for McDonald Reserve hockey pitch – stage 1.

- g) Offsets the above, by reducing the transfer to the significant projects reserve by \$3.5 million.
 - h) Brings forward the allocation of \$10,000 in the capital works program for ATC Cook Shelter – drainage issues in the quarterly forecast process, if surplus funds are available.
- 1.2 For the 2026-27 financial year:**
- a) Allocate \$85,000 in the strategic priorities for the social worker program at the libraries.
 - b) Allocate \$120,000 in the capital works program for Morris Reserve cricket nets.
 - c) Allocates \$150,000 in the strategic priorities for the stage 2 feasibility study for McDonald Reserve.
 - d) Allocates \$150,000 in the strategic priorities for the Coburg basketball feasibility study.
 - e) Allocate \$50,000 in the capital works program for a shade sail at Glenroy Bowls Club.
 - f) Allocate \$100,000 in the capital works program for a catch net at Jackson Reserve.
 - g) Allocate \$10,000 in the capital works program for ATC Cook shelter – drainage issues.
 - h) Allocate \$20,000 in the capital works program for a shade sail at Brentwood Kindergarten.
 - i) Allocates \$75,000 in the capital works program for the Glenroy Men's Shed upgrade.
 - j) Increase the transfers to the significant projects reserve by \$3.5 million.
- 2. Notes the financial impact on 2026-27 financial year (as per 1.2 above) is a net additional expenditure of \$25,000, resulting in a forecasted unrestricted surplus of \$463,953.**
- 3. Retains the surplus of \$503,971 in 2025-26 with a view to it being allocated by a future Council resolution in 2025-26 to:**
- b) The Glenroy Mens shed (\$15,000) in the event they are successful in the Men's shed funding program and require a 20% co-contribution
- 4. Formally declares the Rates Levies and Annual Service Charges for the 2025-26 rating year as follows:**
- a) **Declaration of Rates and Charges:**
In accordance with section 158 of the *Local Government Act 1989*, the following rates and charges are declared for the rating year commencing 1 July 2025 and ending 30 June 2026.
 - b) **Amount intended to be raised:**
An amount of \$200,522,426 (or such other amount as is lawfully raised as a consequence of this resolution) be declared as the amount which Council intends to raise by general rates and the annual service charge, which is calculated as follows:

Category	Amount
Residential properties	\$157,125,438
Commercial properties	\$9,990,013
Industrial properties	\$7,054,169
Municipal charge	\$0
Service charges	\$26,338,626
Charge in lieu of rates on cultural and recreational lands	\$14,180
Total	\$200,522,426

Rates Information:

i. General rates:

A general rate to be declared for the 2025-26 financial year. The rateable amount per property will be determined by multiplying the Capital Improved Value of each rateable property by the rate in the dollar indicated in the following table:

Category	Rate
Residential properties	0.0023883 (0.23883 cents in the dollar of Capital Improved Value)
Commercial properties	0.0023883 (0.23883 cents in the dollar of Capital Improved Value)
Industrial properties	0.0023883 (0.23883 cents in the dollar of Capital Improved Value)

ii. No amount is fixed as the minimum amount payable by way of general rate in respect of each rateable property within the municipal district.

c) Municipal charge:

No municipal charge is declared in respect of the 2025-26 financial year.

d) Annual service charge:

- i. An annual service charge, for the collection and disposal of refuse, be declared in respect of the 2025-26 financial year.**
- ii. The annual service charge be in the sum of, and be based on the criteria, set out below:**

Category	Rate
Household Rubbish - Shared	\$108.10
Household Rubbish - 80 litre	\$166.31
Household Rubbish - 120 litre	\$374.20
Household Rubbish - 160 litre	\$457.36
Household Rubbish - 200 litre	\$498.94
Household Rubbish - 240 litre	\$582.09
Household Rubbish - 160 litre (concession)	\$228.68

Household Rubbish - 200 litre (concession)	\$249.47
Household Rubbish - 240 litre (concession)	\$291.05
Household Rubbish – Fortnightly – Shared	\$88.16
Household Rubbish – Fortnightly – 80 litre	\$101.73
Household Rubbish – Fortnightly – 120 litre	\$135.64
Household Rubbish – Fortnightly – 240 litre	\$305.18
Household Rubbish – Fortnightly – 360 litre	\$474.73
Household Rubbish – Fortnightly – 240 litre (concession)	\$135.64
Household Rubbish – Fortnightly – 360 litre (concession)	\$305.18
Mixed Recycling - Shared	\$36.14
Mixed Recycling - 120 litre	\$41.70
Mixed Recycling - 240 litre	\$55.61
Mixed Recycling - 360 litre	\$125.11
Food & Garden Organics - Shared	\$61.10
Food & Garden Organics - 120 litre	\$94.00
Food & Garden Organics - 240 litre new services	\$211.49
Glass Recycling - Shared	\$11.57
Glass Recycling - 120 litre	\$17.81
Glass Recycling - 240 litre	\$40.06

e) Cultural and recreational land:

In accordance with section 4(4) of the *Cultural and Recreational Lands Act 1963*, the following amounts be declared as a charge in lieu of the general rate (which would otherwise be payable):

Glenroy Road, Glenroy	Northern Golf Club	12,300
Outlook Road, Coburg	Vic Amateur Basketball Association	1,881
Total:		14,180

f) Incentives:

No incentives are declared for the payment of general rates (and annual service charge described earlier in this resolution) before dates fixed or specified for their payment under section 167 of the *Local Government Act 1989*.

g) Interest on rates and charges:

- i. Interest is to be charged in accordance with section 172 of the *Local Government Act 1989*, on any amounts of rates and charges which have not yet been paid by the instalment dates fixed by the Minister in accordance with section 167 of the *Local Government Act 1989*;
- ii. That the interest to be charged is at the rate fixed under section 2 of the *Penalty Interest Rates Act 1983*, that applied on the first day of July immediately before the due date for payment; and
- iii. Interest on rates and charges is to be calculated from the date on which the instalment was due.

- h) **Interest on unpaid monies:**
- i. **Interest is to be charged on any amounts of money (other than rates and charges) which a person owes to the Council, and which has not been paid by the due date;**
 - ii. **The interest rate shall be determined by Council from time to time and shall not exceed the rate fixed from time to time by the Order-in-Council; and**
 - iii. **That such interest is to be applied in accordance with the provisions of section 120 of the *Local Government Act 2020*.**
5. **Notes that the fees and charges in the Annual Budget 2025-2029 have been updated from the Proposed Annual Budget 2025-2029 with the following changes. Statutory Fees and Charges have been increased by 3.00 per cent due to the fees and fines being set as part of the Victorian State Budget and gazette 22 May 2025.**
6. **In accordance with Section 87(4) of the Road Safety Act 1986, resolves to fix at 0.5 penalty units the penalty for those parking infringements specified as Item 1 to 11 in Column 1 of Schedule 6 of the Road Safety (General) Regulations 2019 effective 12 June 2025, unless otherwise resolved**
7. **Advises submitters that Council has considered their submissions relating to the Proposed Annual Budget 2025-2029 and that the submitters be advised of the outcome of the consideration as it relates to their specific submission through this council report, and they be thanked for their contributions.**
8. **Authorises the Director Business Transformation to finalise the Merri-bek Council Annual Budget 2025-2029, including any amendments as a result of the adoption of the Budget 2025-2029 and or/minor administrative changes, including making the final documents available for public inspection.**

Carried unanimously

4.2 ENDORSEMENT OF DRAFT MERRI-BEK COMMUNITY VISION AND DRAFT COUNCIL PLAN 2025-2029 FOR PUBLIC CONSULTATION

Executive Summary

This report seeks Council endorsement to release the 4-year draft Merri-bek Council Plan, incorporating the Community Vision and Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan, for public exhibition and community feedback (as provided in Attachment 1).

The draft Community Vision and Council Plan 2025-29 have been developed through a comprehensive and collaborative engagement process, which has supported both to reflect the values, aspirations and priorities of the Merri community.

The existing Community Vision was independently reviewed and refined by Community and Youth Panels (the Panel), broadly representing the community's diversity. Through a series of workshops and working groups, panel members considered feedback and developed a revised Community Vision statement, which was endorsed by a majority of the Panel. The Panel also identified key community priorities, with each priority refined and tested for broad support.

Advice from the Panel ensured that both the revised Community Vision and the identified priorities informed the development of the draft Council Plan 2025-29.

The draft Council Plan 2025-29 sets out Council's priorities for the next four years, structured around five strategic directions:

1. Care for Nature and Climate Resilience
2. Healthy and Inclusive Communities
3. Beautiful and Liveable City
4. Thriving Economy and Culture
5. Engaging and Responsible Council.

Each strategic direction is supported by clear objectives, strategies, initiatives and performance indicators. The Council Plan is fully integrated with the Community Vision and the Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan and aligns with legislative requirements.

Implementation of the Council Plan will be supported by annual action plans, aligned with the budget process, enabling Council to remain flexible and responsive to emerging needs and opportunities. Progress will be tracked through regular performance reporting, supporting ongoing accountability and adaptability.

Officer Recommendation

That Council:

1. Endorses the draft Merri-bek Community Vision and the draft Council Plan 2025–29 (as provided in Appendix 1) for public exhibition commencing 25 June until 22 July 2025.
2. Establishes a Hearing Committee, consisting of all Councillors, and appointing the Mayor as Chair, to be held on Tuesday, 29 July 2025 commencing at 6.00pm at the Coburg Civic Centre, and invites those wishing to be heard in support of their submission to the Hearing Committee.
3. Acknowledges and thanks the deliberative Merri-bek Community Panel members for their participation and the preparation of the draft Merri-bek Community Vision.

Resolution

Cr Abboud moved, Cr Bolton seconded -

That Council:

1. **Endorses the draft Merri-bek Community Vision and the draft Council Plan 2025–29 (as provided in Appendix 1) for public exhibition commencing 25 June until 22 July 2025.**
2. **Establishes a Hearing Committee, consisting of all Councillors, and appointing the Mayor as Chair, to be held on Tuesday, 29 July 2025 commencing at 6.00 pm at the Coburg Civic Centre, and invites those wishing to be heard in support of their submission to the Hearing Committee.**
3. **Acknowledges and thanks the deliberative Merri-bek Community Panel members for their participation and the preparation of the draft Merri-bek Community Vision.**

Carried

The Special Council meeting closed at 7.25 pm.

Confirmed

Cr Helen Davidson
MAYOR