

## 8 August 2023 Council Meeting Attachments

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Chief Executive Officer

# REPORT ON OPERATIONS

July 2023

## Issue 74

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*Presented at the Council Meeting of Council on 8 August 2023*

The CEO Report on Operations is a regular report that is published by the Hobsons Bay City Council.

The purpose of this report is to inform Council and the community of recent issues, initiatives and projects undertaken across Council. The report is provided on a monthly basis.



## CEO update

During July, the Chief Executive Officer participated in a number of events, meetings and discussions about a range of matters relevant to Hobsons Bay and the local government sector.

Many of the events and meetings attended by the CEO during this period were related to regional initiatives and collaboration such as:

- attendance at the M9 meeting of CEOs and Mayors and a meeting with M9 CEOs;
- attendance at a meeting with the Hon. Melissa Horne MP, Member for Williamstown together with Mayor Cr Antoinette Briffa to discuss Councils advocacy priorities;
- attendance at the Western Metropolitan Partnership (WMP) meeting;
- attendance at the Western Region CEOs meeting, hosted by Wyndham City Council; and
- attendance at Open House Melbourne, presenting on Altona Civic Centre development and design.



Aaron van Egmond  
Chief Executive Officer

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## Community Experience Transformation (CX2.0)



### Hobsons Bay Community Experience 2.0

Council’s Community Experience (CX2.0) transformation plan is focused on *making it easier for the Hobsons Bay community to access Council services and interact with Council*. Key areas covered by CX 2.0 include information, communication channels and process.

#### Information



##### MITI project

Over three months during late 2022 and early 2023, Council hosted some incredible students from Monash University as part of the Monash Industry Team Initiative (MITI) program. Students Diya Nambiar and Wei Heng Ho worked closely with the Service Transformation team to explore expanding Council+ by incorporating broader services at each site. This project included meeting with stakeholders across Council, and in-depth analysis of our services and customer experience. Diya and Wei worked incredibly hard over the three months and their work culminated in a very successful presentation where they put through five recommendations following their findings.



Image: Wei Heng Ho, Sartaz Shupto, Aaron van Egmond CEO, Diya Nambiar, Kashish Raina

#### Communication channels



##### Council+ launches

During the first half of the year, Council celebrated with the community to launch our remaining service centres as Council+ sites. Launches were hosted at Laverton, Newport, Altona and Seabrook and included amazing programs and activities for families and children, coffee and food stalls and unique entertainment and programming for community members of all ages. The four launches saw an amazing 5,600 attendees combined and were well received by the community.

#### Process

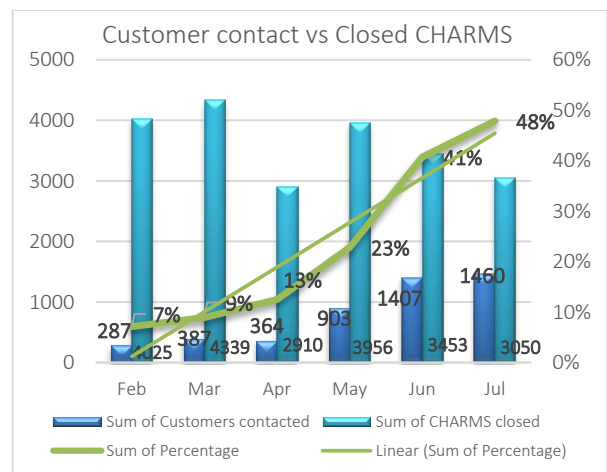


##### CSBA (Customer Service Benchmarking Association)

Council’s quality assurance program CSBA recently released their most recent Benchmarking results and Hobsons Bay ranked fifth in the Local Government sector, out of a total of 53 participating local governments.

##### Close the Loop

The Close the Loop program was implemented to improve customer satisfaction through an enhanced CHARM closure process, by introducing CHARM closure auditing officers to support providing satisfactory outcomes to customers. In doing this, Council has strengthened our customer relationships and achieved improved operational outcomes. The Close the Loop program ensures that Council is following up on a high percentage of enquiries and giving community members assurance that their issue has been resolved.



## Delivering for our community

### Library services



#### Libraries

##### July 2023

Physical loans (books etc.): 24,652

eLibrary loans (eBooks etc.): 8,495

Renewals: 8,580

Total: 41,727

Library visits: 39,928

Loans have increased 0.4 per cent compared to June 2023.

Year to date loans have decreased 5.1 per cent compared to July 2022.

eLibrary loans have increased 3.3 per cent compared to June 2023.

Year to date eLibrary loans have decreased 1 per cent compared to July 2022.

### Community Hubs and Centres



#### Laverton Community Hub

There were 405 bookings at Laverton Community Hub during July. There were 1,145 people who took part in the active program.

#### Seabrook Community Centre

There were 122 bookings at Seabrook Community Centre during July.

#### Newport Community Hub

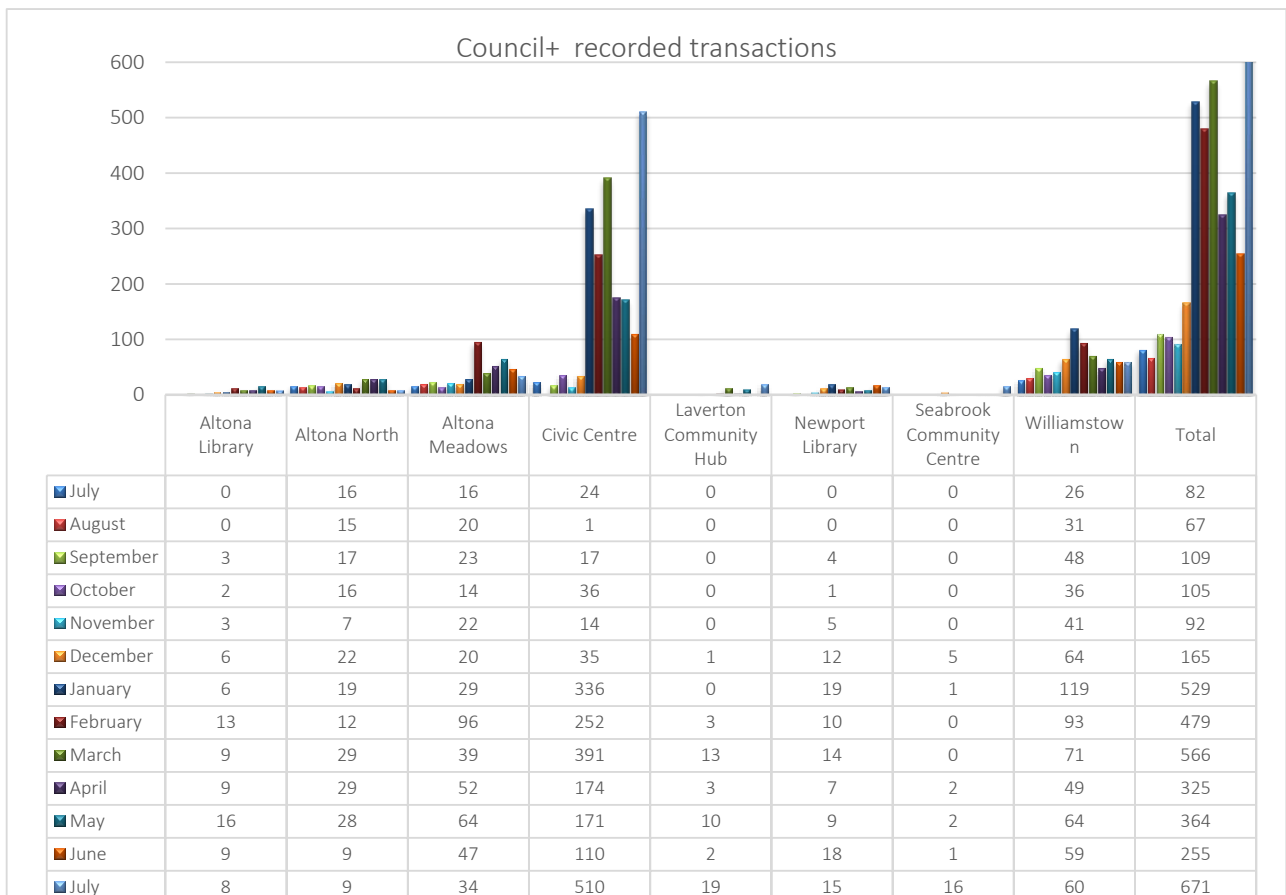
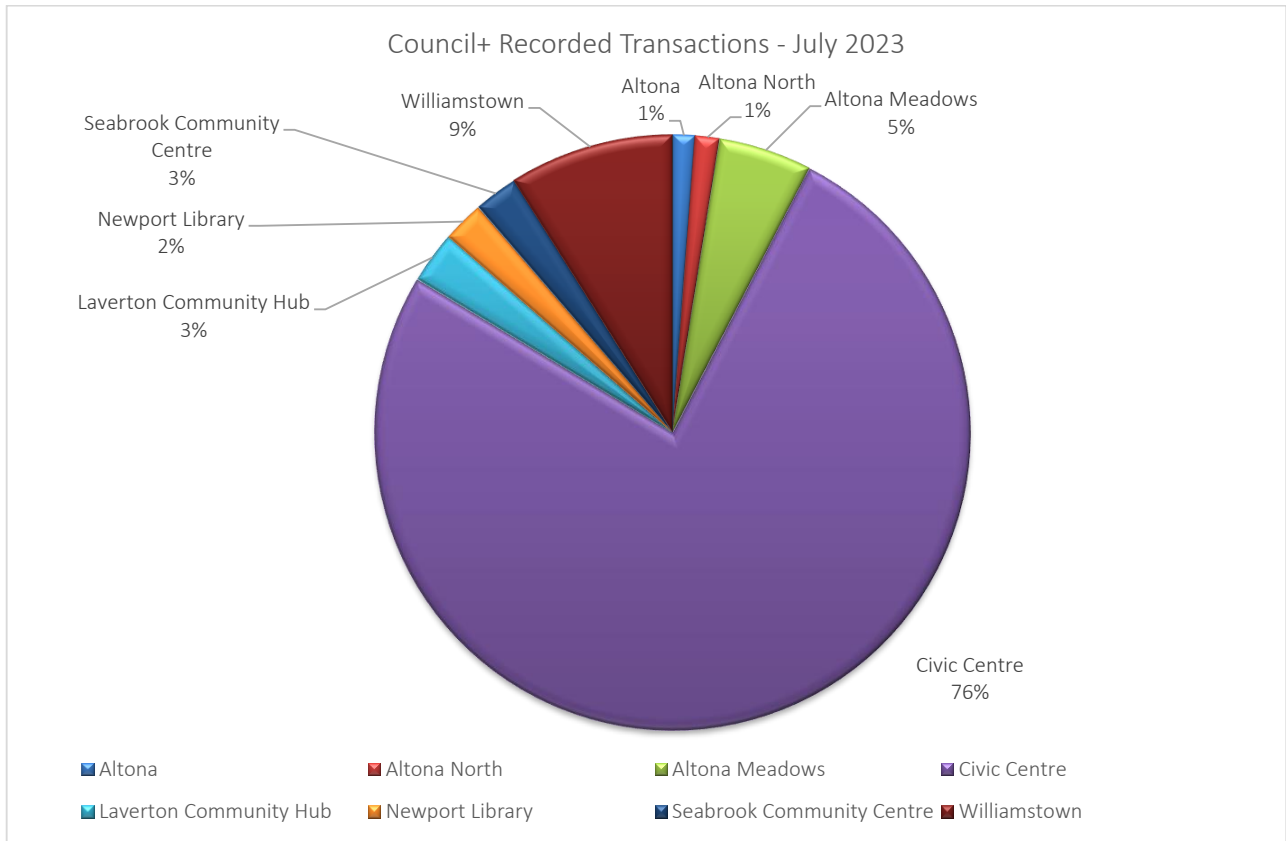
There were 175 bookings at Newport Community Hub during July. The Mechanics Hall has now been carpeted which has improved the look and feel and the acoustics for our community.



Image: New carpet at the Mechanics Hall



**Council+**



## Youth services



### Youth Counselling

Council's generalist youth counselling service delivered 12 face-to-face and online counselling sessions this month to 11 young people. Due to planned staff leave and the unavailability of locum staff, a reduced number of counselling sessions were delivered in July. At the end of the month there was a 10 week waiting period for a young person to access youth counselling services. Whilst a locum commenced in late July to alleviate some of the waiting list pressures, increasing demand for this service will result in an ongoing wait list.

### Youth programs and activities

Council ran 15 program and activity sessions, with 135 contacts with young people. This included the FReeZA Committee, Young Ambassadors group and Youth Change Makers Challenge and the School Holiday program.

### Youth-focussed capacity building programs

Four sessions were held for 34 parents and stakeholder contacts to support and empower young people. Sessions this month included Tuning Into Teens, Youth Mental Health First Aid and parent webinars.

## Immunisations



### Immunisations

In July Council's immunisation team held 16 immunisation sessions plus two home visit sessions, administering 785 immunisations to 385 clients.

## Early years and family services



### Maternal and Child Health (MCH)

In July, there were 92 infants born to Hobsons Bay families. The highest numbers of infants born were in Newport. The Universal MCH Service completed 1,017 consultations.

The Enhanced MCH Service received 11 new referrals and provided 63 ongoing consultations for vulnerable families. Sixteen families received support packages from either St Kilda Mums or the Victorian Government Nursery Equipment Program for vulnerable families. Council continued to provide families with welfare phone calls due to babies affected by COVID-19.

### Parenting programs

The following parenting support programs were delivered:

- 23 first time parenting groups
- 4 sleep support groups
- 32 sleep support outreach appointments
- 12 breast feeding support sessions
- 3 Circle of Security sessions

### Family/Social work support (MCH)

Council's MCH social worker responded to one new family violence referral. Eight further consults were conducted in relation to family violence.

### Preschool Field Officer

The Preschool Field Officer (PSFO) Program supports Kindergarten Educators to develop capacity and skills in delivering inclusive programs to all children and those with additional needs. The PSFO program provided 43 consultations to educators.

### Kindergarten registration

Thirty-two three-year-old and 92 four-year-old registrations for kindergarten were processed.

### Four-year-old kindergarten registration

This year families can choose their kindergarten and group preferences. The change has provided families with the opportunity to choose groups (days/times) rather than just the kindergarten. Offers for four-year-old kindergarten for 2024 commenced in July. Ninety-four per cent of children living in Hobsons Bay eligible for four-year-old kindergarten in 2024 received their first preference.

### Occasional Care

Nineteen children (between 0-5 years) attended Council's Occasional Care program on Thursdays and Fridays, totalling 50 sessions.

### Supported playgroups

Twenty-one smalltalk groups, nine supported playgroups and four one-to-one sessions were provided to vulnerable families in July.

### Services for older residents and residents with disabilities



#### Planned Activity Groups (PAG)

Thirty-three Planned Activity Group sessions were provided to 77 clients.

#### Community Transport

Seniors transport provided 31 return trips to 26 clients. Three social transport trips were provided to 10 clients.

#### Aged assessment

The Assessment team undertook 70 assessments and 143 support plan reviews for services required by older residents.

#### Delivered meals

One hundred and forty-four residents received a meal delivered to their home in July. In total 2,008 meals were provided to eligible residents.

#### Home maintenance

Eleven residents received a service through Council's Home Maintenance program.

### Arts, Culture and Events



#### Old Laverton School

July user groups included Laverton Community and Education Centre, Altona Brooklyn Kyokushin Karate, Sound Spa Yoga and El-Shaddai Samoan Church group.

#### Altona Theatre

During July, the Altona City Theatre Company presented *Beautiful - The Carole King Musical*. The season had nine performances, drawing approximately 1,800 patrons.



Image: Altona City Theatre Company's production of 'Beautiful – The Carole King Musical'

#### Williamstown Town Hall

During July, a performance hosted by E-Talent International was held at Williamstown Town Hall. Featuring popular Filipino band December Avenue, the performance was attended by approximately 700 patrons.

Other events this month included a cultural concert by Diamond Pujabi Productions, dance competition World Supremacy Battlegrounds, a bingo fundraiser by Williamstown Women's Lacrosse Club and the Seabreeze Quilters annual Quilt-In Conference.

Council hosted a Citizenship Ceremony, as well as Emma Donovan and The Putbacks as part of *Arts at Your Doorstep*. The Town Hall was also open for self-guided tours as part of the Open House Melbourne program.

Regular immunisation sessions were held as well as meetings by The Williamstown Toastmasters, the All Aboard Club, Williamstown Historical Society and Williamstown Film Society.



Image: 'December Avenue' at Williamstown Town Hall



Image: 'December Avenue' at Williamstown Town Hall



Image: Emma Donovan and The Putbacks

### Woods Street Arts Space

During July, Council announced the Woods Street Arts Space August to December 2023 program. The program features over 215 creative workshops, events and activities.

Woods Street Arts Space is operated by Council as a free shopfront style facility for local creatives and community groups to host exhibitions, creative projects and facilitate workshops while celebrating all we love about Laverton.

Council is working towards introducing some regular opening hours at Woods Street Arts Space, to further contribute to activation in the precinct.

### Brooklyn Community Hall

The renovated and extended Brooklyn Community Hall will re-open shortly. Expressions of Interest have gone out to the Brooklyn community, looking for team members to form a group that will support the operating model and activation of the hall. A call out to the community occurred in July, with 14 community members responding to the invitation.

Operational and leadership workshops for the community group will form part of this program.



Image: Brooklyn Community Hall facade

### Event applications and permits

Six Expressions of Interest applications for event permits were received and two event permits were issued during July.

### Filming

Four filming permit applications were received. Four filming permits were issued during July, which included a TAC commercial.

### Markets

Produce and food markets held this month included the Regional Farmers Market in Altona Meadows on 2 July 2023 and Williamstown on 9 July 2023, as well as the Spotswood Slow Food Market on 22 July 2023. The Altona Lions Club Cherry Lake Market was held on 2 July 2023, while every Tuesday during July the Altona Beach Market returned to the streets. The Williamstown Craft Market was held at Commonwealth Reserve on 16 July 2023.

### Airtime

*Airtime's* August 2023 to July 2024 program was announced in July.

Four young artists were selected with exhibitions aligning with International Women's Day, World Environment Day and exploring topics such as intergenerational relationships and the environment. Applicants showcased a vibrant mix of identities including LGBTQIA+ and culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. Geographically 57 per cent of the applicants were from Melbourne's west, while 43 per cent were residents of Hobsons Bay.

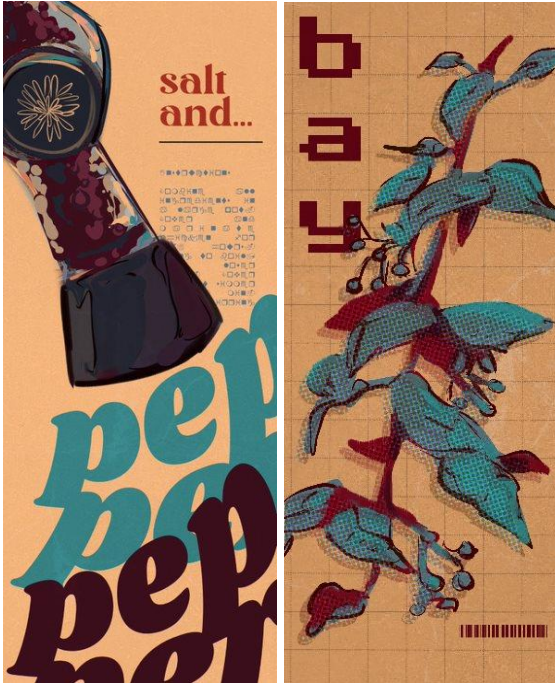


Image: flag designs from 'Made with Love, lola' by Alyssa Cunanan

### Laneway Gallery

During July, Council announced its August 2023 to February 2024 Laneway Gallery Exhibition program.

From 11 submissions, three artists were selected to exhibit artworks that align with Science Week, Melbourne Fringe Festival and Midsumma Festival. Applicants demonstrated a diverse range of identities, including 36 per cent identifying as LGBTQIA+, 73 per cent as culturally and linguistically diverse and nine per cent with a disability.

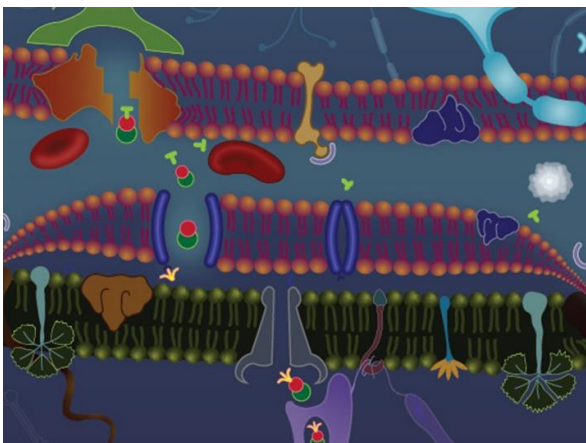


Image: 'Phospholipid Bilayers' by Priyanka Jain

### Hobsons Bay Visitor Information Centre (VIC)

A total of 982 visitor contacts were made in July, 58 per cent were visiting from Victoria, 11 per cent were international visitors, 14 per cent were from interstate and 17 per cent were locals.

An Experience Hobsons Bay Information stall was held at the Seabreeze Quilters conference at the Williamstown Town Hall.

Three new volunteers were inducted into the team.

### The Substation

The Substation called for Expressions of Interest for resident artists, across multiple disciplines for its 2024 program.

The Substation hosted Williamstown High School's *War Child* annual concert, a fundraiser to aid families impacted by war.

During July programming at The Substation also included [Sonorous](#) - a series of commissioned concerts, and the installation of *Recomposed* by artist Caitlin Franzmann on the outdoor billboards. Local carers and babies were invited to be part of the development of [The Composers](#), a project that translated babies' movement into music.

### Open House Melbourne

Council helped to deliver the Open House Melbourne (OHM) program in Hobsons Bay, an annual event providing perspectives on design and city life. The Hobsons Bay program featured Altona Homestead, Blunt's Boatshed in Williamstown, Gantry House Newport, Hobsons Bay Civic Centre in Altona, Modscape in Brooklyn, Seaworks the former Williamstown Morgue and the Williamstown Town Hall.



Image: Gantry House Newport

## Heritage markers

An annual audit of the Bay Tail heritage markers has resulted in the replacement of 15 damaged or worn information panels and the inclusion of text recognising First Nations People.

## Harrington Square street art project

A new art project at Harrington Square, *Westona*, was completed as part of Council's temporary street art program. The work was undertaken by western region artist Justine Mc Allister, commissioned through a partnership with Juddy Roller. The design concept came from engagement with local traders and references the natural environment and the rare Altona skipper butterfly.



Image: Harrington Square street art project

## NAIDOC Week

NAIDOC Week took place between 2 and 9 July 2023 and was recognised by Council through several events.

Council hosted a flag raising ceremony and morning tea at Hobsons Bay Civic Centre on 4 July 2023.

To celebrate this year's theme, *For Our Elders*, the Newport Community Hub hosted *A special day For Our Elders about Our Elders* which included a performance by the Yarrabah Cultural Dancers, attended by approximately 60 children and their families.

Council also supported Louis Joel Arts and Community Centre to present *The Colour and Sound of Our Totem*. The exhibition was launched on 1 July 2023 by Maxine Briggs Taungwurrung Yorta Yorta Elder with music by Bart Willoughby Kokatha /Mirning. Artists featured were Taungwurrung Yorta Yorta Elder Glennys Briggs, Hartley Briggs Taungwurrung Yorta Yorta and Scott Hansen Yorta Yorta/Tungurung and Wiradjuri.

To accompany the exhibition, a creative children's workshop was held on 5 July 2023. Twelve participants joined dancer, Yvonne Rigney Ngarrindjeri/Kokatha, and local visual artist Frances Lorient as they guided them through the story of *How the Turtle Got His Shell* by David Unaipon. Participants explored the story through movement and gestures to the music of Bart Willoughby Kokatha /Mirning, and made collages based on an animal totem from the story.



Image: 'The Colour and Sound of Our Totem' exhibition



Image: Totem created by workshop participants



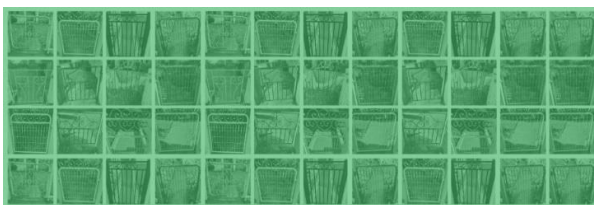
Image: Yarrabah Cultural Dancers at the Newport Community Hub

### Wunder Gym’s Recollection program

Twenty-three western region creatives were selected to participate in Wunder Gym’s 2023 program, *Recollection*, with mentor Elvis Richardson. The program received 30 applications.

The project is a partnership between Hobson Bay and Wyndham City Councils. Through workshops and shared resources, participants will create work for an exhibition across multiple sites within the municipalities of Hobsons Bay and Wyndham during the Melbourne Fringe Festival program, between 3 and 22 October 2023.

This project is presented as part of Council’s Creative Exchange Lab. Creative Exchange Lab supports western region artists to develop skills, share ideas and resources, and produce artistic outcomes within Hobsons Bay and beyond.



**RECOLLECTION** WUNDER GYM • MELBOURNE FRINGE FESTIVAL  
WESTERN REGION ENVIRONMENT AS CREATIVE PLAYGROUND

Image: Recollection by Wunder Gym

### Capacity building workshops

As part of Council’s commitment to supporting events and festivals, a series of workshops for community event organisers have been delivered. The third and final workshop focusing on emergency management was held on 13 July 2023, hosted by industry risk and safety expert Emily O’Brien. The final workshop was attended by 16 people.

All sessions have received positive feedback with participants expressing an eagerness to use the information when producing their future events.



Image: Emily O’Brien facilitating an events capacity building workshop at Hobsons Bay Civic Centre

### Cherry Lake Cultural Series

The Cherry Lake Cultural Series returned to the Lions Club Cherry Lake Market on 2 July 2023, supported by Council’s Make It Happen grants program.

## Community Partnerships



### WLASN Meeting

Council hosted the Western Homelessness Network July meeting at Hobsons Bay Civic Centre on 21 July 2023. The network brought together local and state government, services and organisations working in the homelessness sector in the west.

### Volunteer engagement

Council coordinates volunteers who assist with the delivery of numerous services including delivered meals, community transport and visitor information. Volunteer programs provide essential benefits and social connections for the community.

During July, training and development sessions took place through the Better Impact volunteer management system, supporting consistent communication, effective rostering and ensuring capture of relevant data.

### **Volunteer Expo 2023**

Following the recent Hobsons Bay Volunteer Expo, stallholders are being engaged for feedback. Findings will inform future event and program planning, as well as continuing to strengthen connections with organisations and volunteers.

### **Daughters of the West**

Daughters of the West commenced the week starting 10 July 2023. The 10-session, weekly program operates in the afternoon at Laverton on Mondays and Wednesday evenings at Newport. The program is run in partnership with the Western Bulldogs Community Foundation. Over 50 women are attending each week across both sites.



*Image: Daughters of the West Laverton boxing session*

### **The Voice Referendum and Uluru Statement from the Heart**

Activities to encourage the community to become informed on the upcoming referendum about The Voice are continuing. Council is working to support local events and has updated Council's website to include resources and a recording of the Mayor of Yarrabah Aboriginal Shire Council, Councillor Ross Andrews (member of the Referendum Engagement Group).

### **Homestead Coffee, a pop-up coffee cart in Seabrook**

Supported by Council's Pitch Your Project, a pop-up coffee cart will be positioned at Homestead Run in Seabrook, to provide a regular gathering spot for the local community.

Commencing 13 August 2023 the pop-up coffee cart will be located near the cottage and herb garden at Homestead Run, between 10am and 12pm, on a monthly basis until June 2024.



## Strategy, Economy and Sustainability

### Economic development



#### Tourism in Hobsons Bay: building a visitor economy

Businesses from the tourism sector came together on 17 July 2023 for a half-day event focused on shining a light on tourism in Hobsons Bay. Speakers included Richard Ponsford from Western Melbourne Tourism and Karin Scherma from Visit Victoria.

A workshop was also facilitated by Despina Katazias from Tourism Tribe which outlined strategies for building a customer-centric visitor economy through collaboration.

Attendees had an opportunity to network with one another and enjoyed lunch at Pelican's Landing.



Image: Attendees at tourism in Hobsons Bay event



Image: Attendees at tourism in Hobsons Bay event

#### Business networking

The July Business Networking morning was held at Tick Tok in Williamstown on 4 July 2023. Business representatives from across Hobsons Bay attended the morning for the opportunity to promote their business and network with others.



Image: Business networking morning at Tick Tok

#### Outdoor Trading: engagement on new framework

Following Council consideration of a draft new framework for outdoor trading in early July 2023, engagement is underway with businesses and the broader community. Businesses currently utilising outdoor trading have been contacted and advised of the engagement and an EOI process for the future parklets program. A community survey is also open, seeking feedback on the use of the outdoor trading spaces across Hobsons Bay. Feedback is being provided via Council's Participate Hobsons Bay website, which is being promoted through social media and direct correspondence with key stakeholders.

## Meet the Economic Development team

The Economic Development team have been working from different Council+ sites across Hobsons Bay each month. During July the team operated from Newport Community Hub where they welcomed businesses who came in for a chat, to ask questions and provide feedback.



Image: Economic Development team at Newport Community Hub

## Environmental sustainability



### Schools engagement

Council ran its inaugural *Environmental Schools Outreach Week*, delivering 17 waste education sessions in schools across the municipality. The program was linked to the Victorian curriculum and tailored for grade 5, grade 6 and secondary school students to encourage learning and family conversations about waste, recycling and the environment.

Council also ran five waste education sessions to younger students in prep to grade 4, and one session to a local kindergarten.

Across these waste education sessions, Council engaged with approximately 585 young people in July.

### Sustainability events

Council ran five events for the community in July, engaging over 300 residents. This included:

- four events as part of *Plastic Free July* across Altona, Seaholme and Laverton. Events included BYO bottle refill stations, DIY beeswax wrap workshops and a low-waste planting day where coffee was served in reusable mugs
- an *Upcycle in Style* workshop in Laverton. The hands-on sewing and mending workshop taught residents the life-long skill of upcycling and creatively mending textiles

### Shared business waste space for Pier Street

Council engaged with 20 businesses located in the Pier Street business precinct about setting up a shared waste space to improve amenity and divert more waste from landfill.

In-person visits gave businesses a chance to ask questions about the project and for Council to assess the site for suitability and to inform implementation recommendations.

This initiative is part of the *Circular Resources Practices in Retail Business Precincts Project*, a joint project funded by Sustainability Victoria involving 14 councils.

### My Smart Garden workshops

Twenty-five residents gathered at Laverton Community Garden to participate in a Pruning espalier fruit trees workshop. Participants also contributed to a working bee to restore the garden's fruit trees and plant an understory of herbs and flowers.

### Electric vehicles webinar

Eighty-five people registered to attend Council's free, online webinar to gain practical information about electric vehicles including key purchase, set-up and running considerations.



## Strategic Planning

### **Consultation on Council's Draft Affordable Housing Policy Statement**

During July, Council sought feedback on its Draft Affordable Housing Policy Statement. Consultation commenced on 17 July 2023 and will continue until 28 August 2023. The purpose of the Draft Policy Statement is to guide Council's ongoing efforts to increase the supply of affordable housing in Hobsons Bay.

Feedback is being provided via Council's Participate Hobsons Bay website, which is being promoted through social media and direct correspondence with key stakeholders. Feedback will be reviewed in the development of a final draft, which will be considered for adoption by Council at a future Council meeting.

### **Spotswood Heritage Amendment C137**

Amendment C137 seeks to protect heritage properties in Spotswood by introducing new and revised heritage overlays into the Hobsons Bay Planning Scheme. Public exhibition for the Amendment occurred between 23 February and 6 April 2023. Following consideration of all submissions, an independent planning panel was appointed to consider submissions and make recommendations to Council on how to proceed with the Amendment. A Directions Hearing was held on 30 June 2023 with a panel hearing held on 24 and 25 July 2023.

### **Industrial Land Management Strategy and Design Guidelines**

Public consultation on the Draft Industrial Land Management Strategy and Design Guidelines closed on 2 July 2023. The consultation ran for six weeks and included face to face drop-in sessions, meetings with industry representatives and an online feedback survey. The feedback obtained during the consultation will be used to inform an update of the strategy and guidelines that will be presented to Council for consideration and adoption later this year. Following which, a Planning Scheme Amendment will be prepared to implement the strategy and guidelines via a new land use planning framework.

## Planning, Building and Health Update

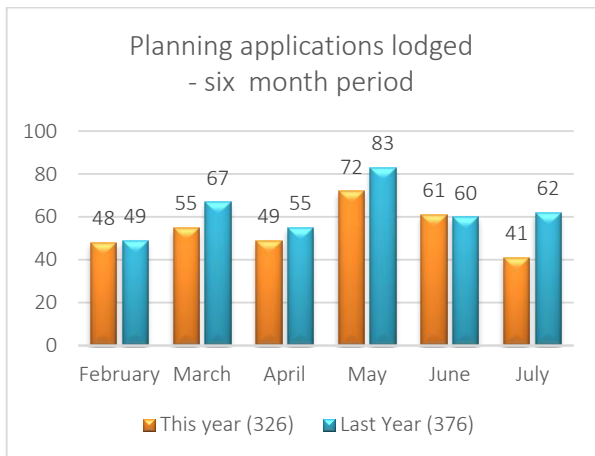
### Planning



#### Planning applications received

Council received 41 planning permit applications for the month of July.

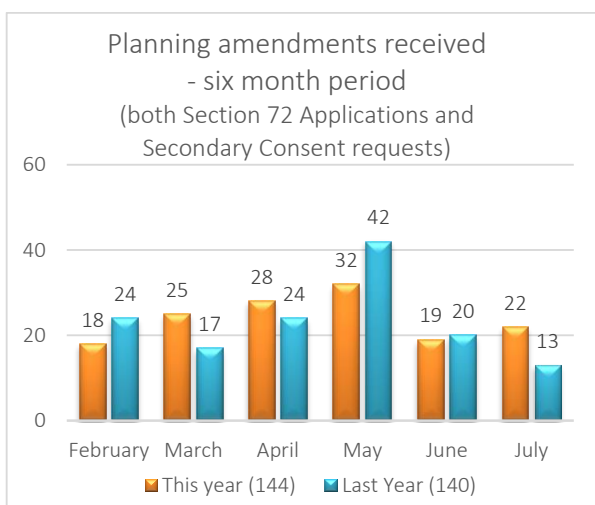
For the six-month period from February to July 2023, 326 planning permit applications were received, a 13 per cent decrease from the same period last year.



#### Amended permit applications lodged

Council received 22 planning permit amendment applications for the month of July.

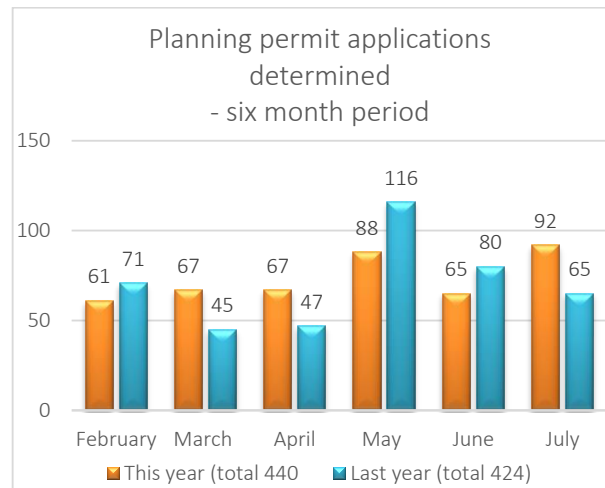
For the six-month period from February to July 2023, 144 planning permit amendment applications were received, a three per cent increase from the same period last year.



#### Planning applications determined

Council completed 92 planning permit applications for the month of July.

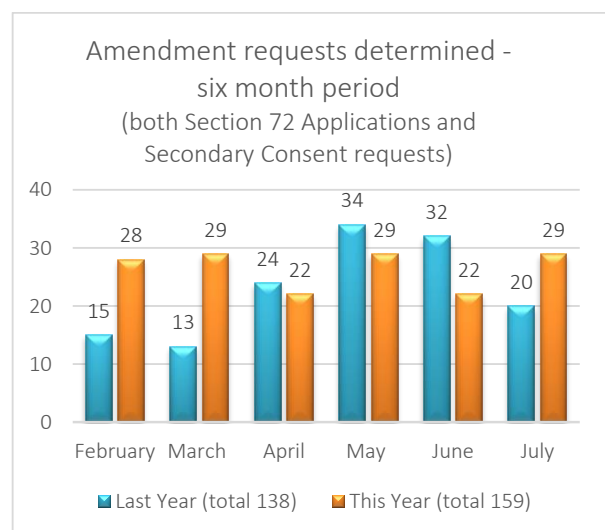
For the six-month period from February to July 2023, 440 planning permit applications were completed, a four per cent increase from the same period last year.



#### Planning amendment requests determined

Council completed 29 planning amendment applications for the month of July.

For the six-month period from February to July 2023, 159 planning amendment applications were determined, a 15 per cent increase from the same period last year.



## VCAT

The Town Planning department received the following appeal decisions:

**Application Number:** PA230637

**Address:** 7 Lenore Crescent, Williamstown

**Proposal:** construction or carrying out of works for the purpose of a vehicle crossing and driveway under clause 43.01-1 (Heritage Overlay) in accordance with the endorsed plans

**Delegate Decision:** refusal

**DPC Decision:** N/A

**VCAT Decision:** approval

**Made by consent order?** no

**Application Number:** PA2047474-1

**Address:** 47 Hudsons Road, Spotswood

**Proposal:** construction of a dwelling to the rear of the existing dwelling under clause 32.08-6 and reduction in the car parking requirements under clause 52.06-3. In accordance with the endorsed plans

**Delegate Decision:** refusal

**DPC Decision:** N/A

**VCAT Decision:** approval

**Made by consent order?** no

**Application Number:** PA220177

**Address:** 21 Stewart Street, Williamstown

**Proposal:** demolition of the existing dwelling and the construction of buildings and carrying out of works for two dwellings in Heritage Overlay Schedule 34 in accordance with the endorsed plans

**Delegate Decision:** refusal

**DPC Decision:** N/A

**VCAT Decision:** approval

**Made by consent order?** no

**Application Number:** PA220203

**Address:** 80A Elizabeth Street, Newport

**Proposal:** construction of two or more dwellings on a lot under clause 32.07-5 (two dwellings) in accordance with the endorsed plans

**Delegate Decision:** Notice of Decision

**DPC Decision:** N/A

**VCAT Decision:** approval (varied)

**Made by consent order?** yes

**Application Number:** PA220319

**Address:** 6 Keeshan Court, Altona

**Proposal:** construction of two dwellings on a lot under clause 32.09-6 In accordance with the endorsed plans

**Delegate Decision:** refusal

**DPC Decision:** N/A

**VCAT Decision:** approval

**Made by consent order?** no

## Delegated Planning Committee (DPC)

There were no applications considered at the Delegated Planning Committee for the month of July.

## Planning applications of interest

There were no applications of interest to report this month.

## Major Hazard Facilities

There are nine Major Hazard Facilities (MHF) in Hobsons Bay. WorkSafe Victoria (WSV) are the authority that provides advice to Council on planning applications for use and development in proximity to an MHF.

Council developed and adopted the Interim Management of Land Use Planning Around Major Hazard Facilities Guidelines (the Guidelines) to guide planning decisions. The Guidelines outline the Inner and Outer Advisory Areas around MHFs to determine whether an application should be referred to WSV.

Since 1 July 2022, Council's Statutory Planning team have referred 67 planning permit applications to WSV. WSV have provided the following responses:

- opposed 24 applications
- supported 43 applications (13 of which were subject to conditions)



An analysis of these responses has confirmed that WSV has requested either the removal of any use that proposes a significant attraction of people or have requested placing significant limits on the number of people that can work at or visit these sites.

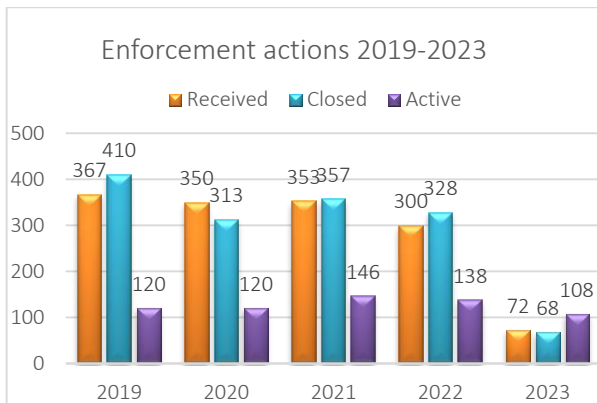
Of the 67 applications referred to WSV, 27 involve warehouses or other low intensity industrial uses. There is a very small population expectation at these properties.

Whilst it appears that WSV in raw statistics supports development, the analysis of the response has confirmed that WSV generally opposes any use which seeks to significantly increase population growth and population attracting uses around MHF's.

The expansion of the Inner and Outer Advisory Areas would favour MHF operations.

### Active and significant enforcement matters

Council received 11 planning enforcement issues for the month of July and closed 23.



## Building



### Permits and consents

- Council's Municipal Building Surveyor issued one building permit
- 78 building permits were issued by private building surveyors
- 12 report and consent dispensation requests were determined

### Inspections and enforcement

- 5 building notices/orders were issued
- 26 notices/orders were resolved/completed/cancelled
- 154 inspections occurred during the month

### Building information requests

Council processed 187 requests for information and 49 general enquiries during July.

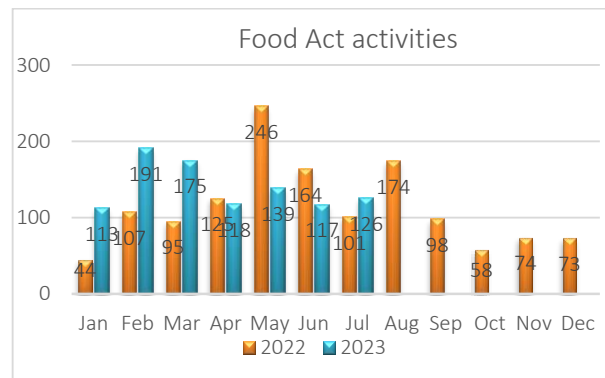


## Health

### Food Act activities

The following activities were recorded in July 2023 with the main activities being:

- 33 mandatory food assessments and inspections (Class one = 0, Class two = 25, Class three = 8)
- 10 new food premises registration inspections
- 15 plans assessments
- 8 progress inspections



### Client Managed Premises

Council has 24 client managed premises.

### Food sampling

Thirty-five samples were taken from Class one and Class two premises during July 2023.

### Food recalls

Three food recalls were received in July 2023 due to undeclared allergens (1. cashew, 2. milk, 3. sesame, tree nut (almond), peanut).

### Outbreaks

One outbreak investigation was conducted in July 2023.

### Foodtrader

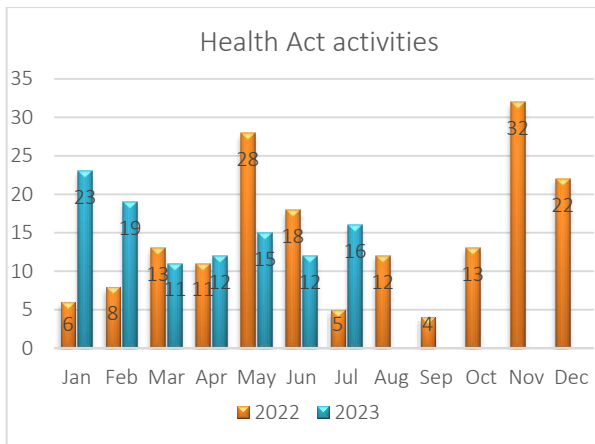
On 19 June 2023, Foodtrader officially replaced Streatrader. Customers have continued to apply for registrations and Statements of Trade.

- 69 Statements of Trade lodged with Council
- 3 new registrations issued

### Public Health and Wellbeing Act activities

The following activities were recorded during July 2023:

- 8 mandatory public health inspections
- 3 new premises registration inspections
- 2 progress inspections
- 1 assessment of plans



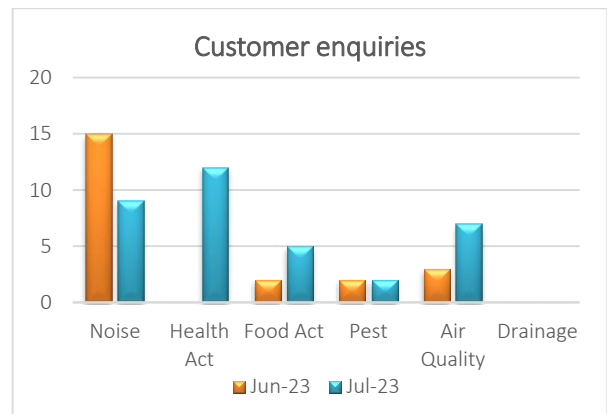
### Tobacco Act activities

During July 2023, one tobacco education visit was conducted.

### Customer enquiries

During July 2023, 35 customer requests were received relating to:

- noise (9)
- Health Act (12)
- Food Act (5)
- pest control (2)
- air quality (7)
- drainage (0)



## Governance

### Governance



#### Councillor delegates to Council and Community Committees

Councillors attended the following meetings of Council and Community Committees held between 1 July and 31 July 2023:

- Cr Jonathon Marsden attended the meeting of the Metropolitan Transport Forum held on 5 July 2023.

#### Citizenship Ceremony

One hundred and eleven Hobsons Bay residents gained Australian citizenship at the citizenship ceremony conducted by Mayor Cr Antoinette Briffa at the Williamstown Town Hall on 25 July 2023.

#### Record of Meetings attended by Councillors

Councillors attended the following meetings held between 1 July and 31 July 2023:

- 4 July 2023 Councillor Briefing Session attended by Cr Antoinette Briffa, Cr Diana Grima, Cr Peter Hemphill, Cr Daria Kellander, Cr Jonathon Marsden, Cr Pamela Sutton-Legaud and Cr Matt Tyler. No conflicts of interest were disclosed
- 11 July 2023 Pre-Council Meeting Agenda Briefing attended by Cr Antoinette Briffa, Cr Diana Grima, Cr Peter Hemphill, Cr Daria Kellander, Cr Jonathon Marsden, Cr Pamela Sutton-Legaud and Cr Matt Tyler. No conflicts of interest were disclosed
- 18 July 2023 Councillor Briefing Session attended by Cr Antoinette Briffa, Cr Diana Grima, Cr Jonathon Marsden, Cr Pamela Sutton-Legaud and Cr Matt Tyler. Apologies - Cr Peter Hemphill and Cr Daria Kellander. No conflicts of interest were disclosed.

#### Documents for Sealing

There were no documents that required sealing during the period.

## Local Laws



### Permits

- issued 0 disabled parking permits
- issued 242 residential permits
- issued 56 visitor permits
- issued 1,022 ticket machine permits
- logged 246 CHARM assignments
- impounded 0 derelict/abandoned vehicles
- issued 3 local law infringements

### Parking

- 255 logged CHARM assignments
- issued 1,348 parking infringements
- issued 160 warnings
- percentage of warnings issued were 9 per cent

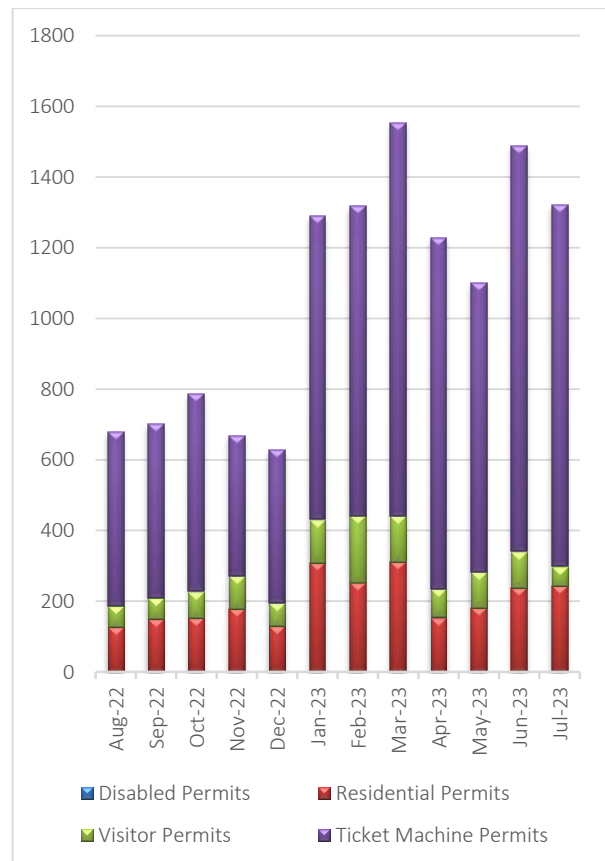


Image: The graph above illustrates the number of permits issued for July 2023



### Animal management

- logged 201 CHARM assignments
- 14,379 animals registered
- impounded animals at Lost Dogs Home for (as at 30 June 2023)
  - o dogs – 7dogs impounded, 2 released
  - o cats – 25 impounded, 2 released
- 10 animals returned to their owners by Council officers
- issued 13 animal infringement notices

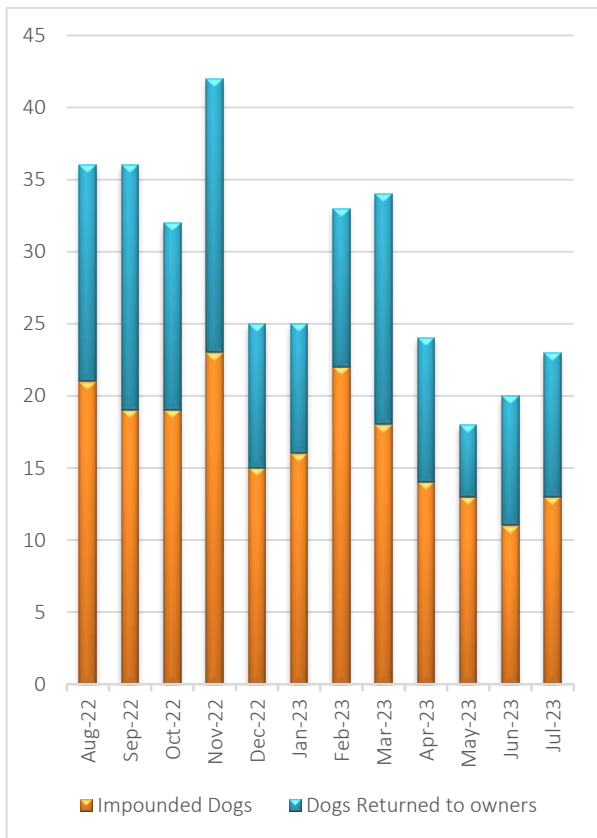


Image: The graph above reflects the number of dogs impounded and the number of dogs returned home by Council Rangers

# Communications and Engagement



## Communications

### July 2023

Council manages corporate social media accounts on Facebook, LinkedIn and Instagram.

Social media is measured as below:

- Reactions: like, love, angry, haha, wow, sad



- Impressions: number of times our content is displayed in someone’s newsfeed
- Reach: total number of people who saw that content
- Engagement: number of times someone engaged with our content through clicks, reactions, shares comments

### Total performance summary across all corporate social media accounts

#### Performance Summary

View your key profile performance metrics from the reporting period.

<u>Impressions</u> <b>357,216</b> ↗ 48.1%	<u>Engagements</u> <b>17,601</b> ↗ 28.5%	<u>Post Link Clicks</u> <b>3,321</b> ↘ 23.9%
<u>Engagement Rate (per Impression)</u> <b>4.9%</b> ↘ 13.3%		

### Follower growth across all corporate social media accounts

Audience Metrics	Totals	% Change
<u>Total Audience</u>	35,992	↗ 0.8%
<u>Total Net Audience Growth</u>	274	↗ 40.5%
<u>Facebook Net Follower Growth</u>	129	↗ 67.5%
<u>Instagram Net Follower Growth</u>	46	↗ 31.4%
<u>LinkedIn Net Follower Growth</u>	99	↗ 19.3%

### Total followers per social media accounts

#### Facebook

Audience Metrics	Totals	% Change
<u>Followers</u>	20,744	↗ 0.7%
<u>Net Follower Growth</u>	129	↗ 67.5%
<u>Fans</u>	18,448	↗ 0.4%
<u>Net Page Likes</u>	44	↗ 4.8%
<u>Organic Page Likes</u>	60	↗ 9.1%
<u>Paid Page Likes</u>	0	→ 0%
<u>Page Unlikes</u>	16	↗ 23.1%

## Instagram

Audience Metrics	Totals	% Change
<b>Followers</b>	7,607	↗ 0.6%
<b>Net Follower Growth</b>	46	↗ 31.4%
Followers Gained	78	↘ 14.3%
Followers Lost	32	↘ 42.9%

## LinkedIn

Audience Metrics	Totals	% Change
<b>Followers</b>	7,641	↗ 1.2%
<b>Net Follower Growth</b>	99	↗ 19.3%
Organic Followers Gained	100	↗ 20.5%
Paid Followers Gained	0	→ 0%
Followers Lost	1	↗ —

## Performance per social media account

### Facebook

#### Performance Summary

View your key profile performance metrics from the reporting period.

Organic and Paid ▾

<u>Impressions</u> <b>286,924</b> ↗ 86.7%	<u>Engagements</u> <b>15,698</b> ↗ 58.5%	<u>Post Link Clicks</u> <b>2,687</b> ↗ 31.2%
--	---	---

Engagement Rate (per Impression)

**5.5%** ↘ 15.1%

### Instagram

#### Performance Summary

View your key profile performance metrics from the reporting period.

Organic and Paid ▾

<u>Impressions</u> <b>58,395</b> ↘ 17.5%	<u>Organic Engagements</u> <b>1,022</b> ↘ 4.4%	<u>Profile Actions</u> <b>298</b> ↗ 31.3%
---	---	--

Engagement Rate (per Impression)

**1.8%** ↗ 15.8%

## LinkedIn

### Performance Summary

View your key profile performance metrics from the reporting period.

Impressions <b>11,897</b> ↘ 28.8%	Engagements <b>881</b> ↘ 67.7%	Post Clicks (All) <b>634</b> ↘ 72.6%
Engagement Rate (per Impression) <b>7.4%</b> ↘ 54.6%		

## Highest engagement posts for 1 to 31 July 2023

### Facebook

 **Hobsons Bay City Council**  
 Mon 7/17/2023 10:12 pm PDT

We're seeking expressions of interest from residents and traders to join two Level Crossing Removal Community Interest...




<b>Total Engagements</b>	<b>2,762</b>
Reactions	136
Comments	80
Shares	21
Post Link Clicks	168
Other Post Clicks	2,357



 **Hobsons Bay City Council**  
 Sun 7/30/2023 5:25 pm PDT


Have your say on the new draft framework for outdoor trading in Hobsons Bay. We're seeking feedback from the community and...



<b>Total Engagements</b>	<b>2,643</b>
Reactions	40
Comments	58
Shares	4
Post Link Clicks	453
Other Post Clicks	2,088


 **Hobsons Bay City Council**  
 Mon 7/3/2023 4:41 pm PDT

 Seabrook and Altona Meadows, we've got something for you to see.  After months of extensive research, consultation...




<b>Total Engagements</b>	<b>1,617</b>
Reactions	32
Comments	12
Shares	4
Post Link Clicks	582
Other Post Clicks	987


## Instagram

 **hobsonsbaycc**  
Tue 7/18/2023 11:15 pm PDT


Barbie and Oppenheimer might be taking the limelight but remember when our Mad Max was the toast of Hollywood? 🚗...




<b>Total Engagements</b>	<b>197</b>
Likes	181
Comments	7
Saves	9

 **hobsonsbaycc**  
Mon 7/17/2023 10:12 pm PDT


We're seeking expressions of interest from residents and traders to join two Level Crossing Removal Community Interest...



<b>Total Engagements</b>	<b>80</b>
Likes	77
Comments	0
Saves	3


 **hobsonsbaycc**  
Mon 7/3/2023 4:41 pm PDT

Seabrook and Altona Meadows, we've got something for you to see. 🏡 After months of extensive research, consultation...




<b>Total Engagements</b>	<b>79</b>
Likes	68
Comments	4
Saves	7

## LinkedIn

 **Hobsons Bay City Council**  
Thu 7/27/2023 6:23 am UTC

Today we had the pleasure of listening to Council staff Marlon, from the engineering team, and Kasuni, from social planning, share their experience being Sri Lankan Australians and...




<b>Total Engagements</b>	<b>172</b>
Reactions	81
Comments	0
Shares	1
Post Clicks (All)	90

 **Hobsons Bay City Council**  
Tue 7/25/2023 1:47 am UTC


We recently welcomed residents, local councils and state government departments and agencies to the Civic Centre for an important discussion about local air quality. The quality of...



<b>Total Engagements</b>	<b>130</b>
Reactions	23
Comments	1
Shares	0
Post Clicks (All)	106

 **Hobsons Bay City Council**  
Tue 7/4/2023 3:49 am UTC

Today we celebrated the start of our NAIDOC Week events with a flag raising ceremony at the Civic Centre in Altona. NAIDOC Week, which runs from 2-9 July, celebrates and...



<b>Total Engagements</b>	<b>110</b>
Reactions	39
Comments	0
Shares	0
Post Clicks (All)	71

## Website top pages viewed

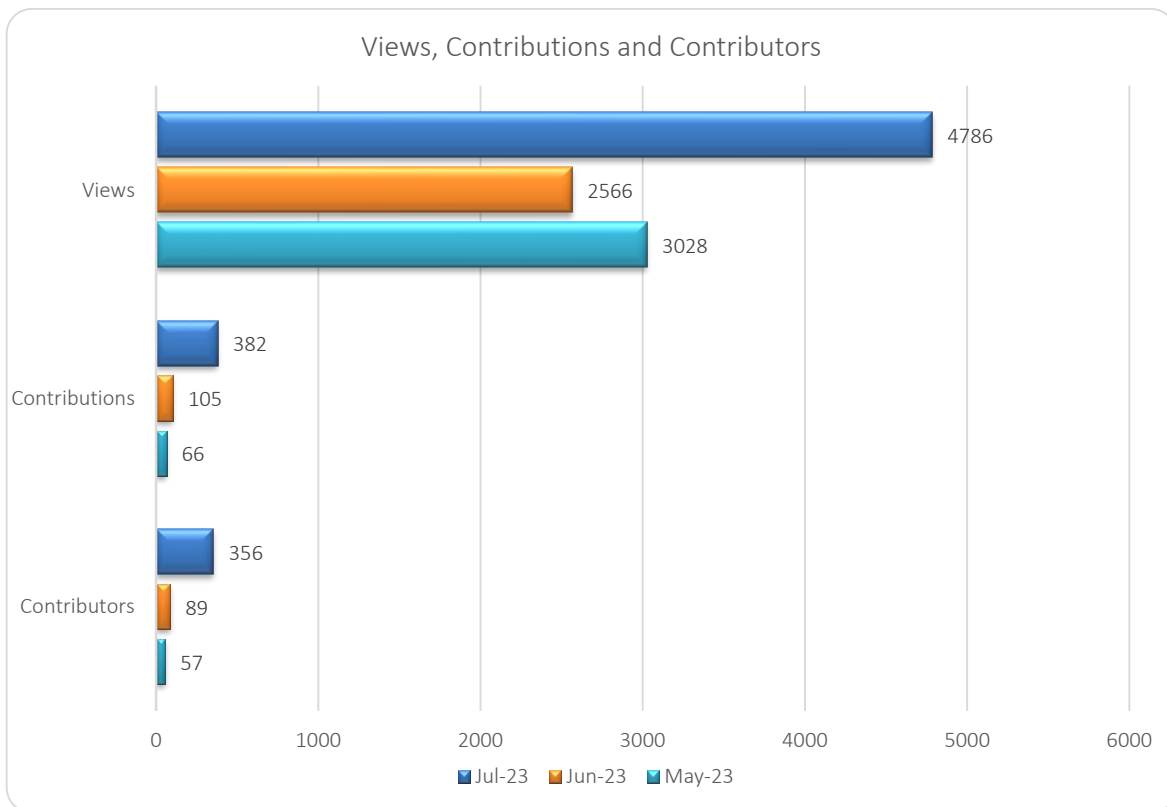
Page path and screen class	↓ Views	Users	Views per user	Average engagement time
	129,422 100% of total	37,481 100% of total	3.45 Avg 0%	0m 58s Avg 0%
1 /Home	21,383	12,340	1.73	0m 19s
2 /Libraries	9,705	4,296	2.26	0m 25s
3 /Website-Information/Search-Results	6,838	3,205	2.13	0m 39s
4 /Services/Planning-Building/Find-a-planning-application-in-Greenlight	3,284	1,657	1.98	0m 24s
5 /Services/Waste-Recycling/When-will-your-bins-be-collected	2,819	1,945	1.45	0m 26s
6 /Council/Work-Opportunities	2,773	1,797	1.54	0m 06s
7 /Services/Waste-Recycling/Hard-waste	2,716	1,639	1.66	0m 59s
8 /Community/Whats-On	2,548	704	3.62	1m 21s
9 /Services/Waste-Recycling	2,514	1,677	1.50	0m 21s
10 /Services/Payments-Permits/Parking-permits	2,473	1,502	1.65	0m 29s

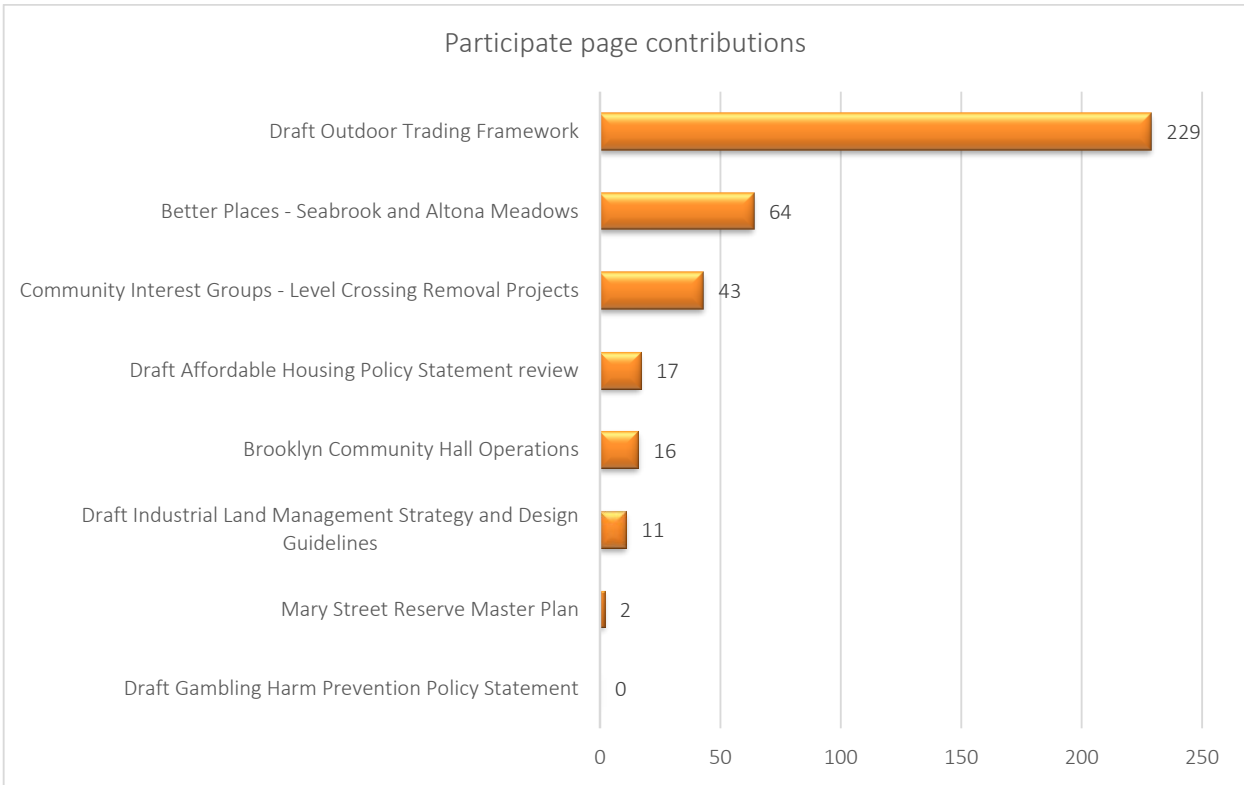
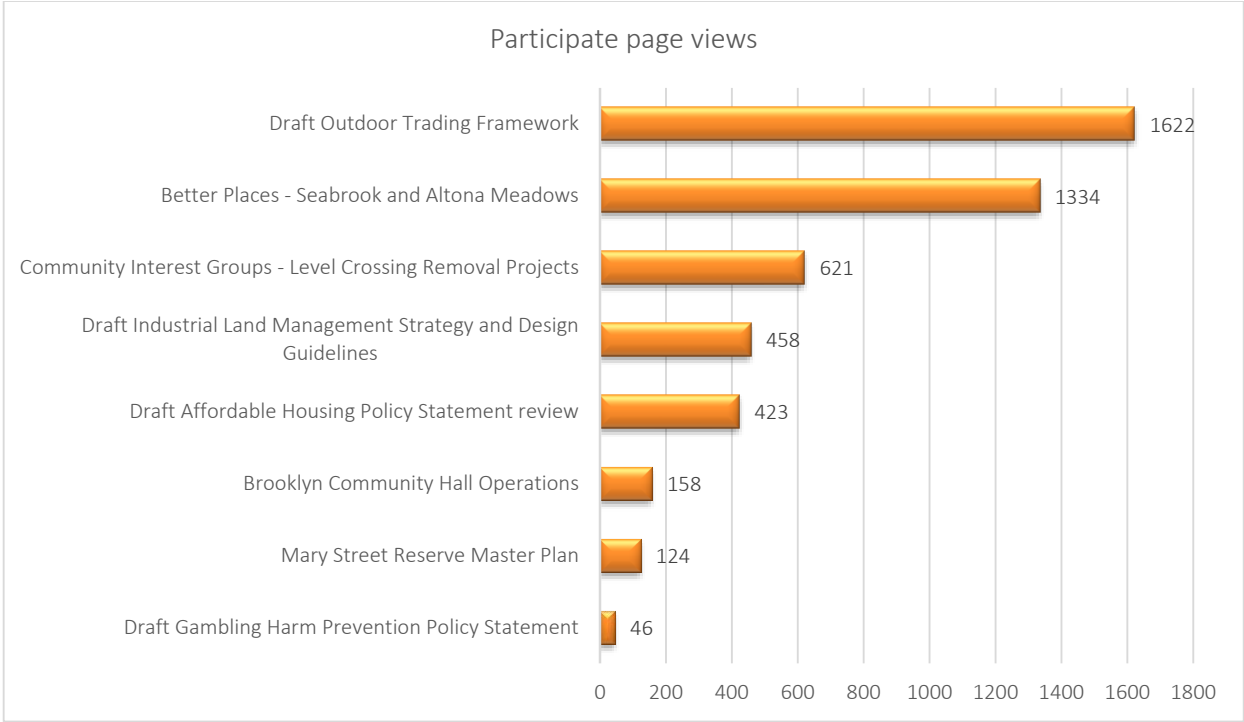


## Engagement

### Participate Hobsons Bay statistics

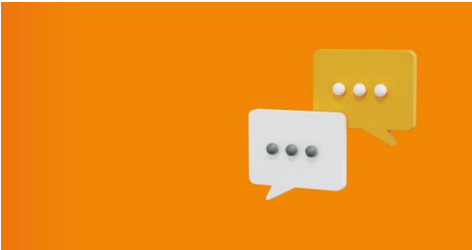
Participate Hobsons Bay, the online community engagement website [participate.hobsonsbay.vic.gov.au](https://participate.hobsonsbay.vic.gov.au) received the below highlights for July 2023.





## Current consultations – July 2023

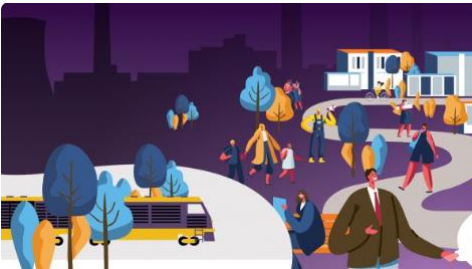
### Draft Gambling Harm Prevention Policy Statement



Council developed a Draft Gambling Harm Prevention Policy Statement for Hobsons Bay. It updated our 2015 policy and took a public health approach. We encouraged input from the community on the priority areas, proposed commitments, and any missed aspects.

Consultation dates: 22 May – 2 July 2023

### Draft Industrial Land Management Strategy and Design Guidelines



Council sought feedback on the Draft Industrial Land Management Strategy (ILMS) and Design Guidelines. This strategy will shape the future of industrial land in Hobsons Bay, impacting landowners, businesses, workers, industries, and the community. The input of the public was crucial in developing a policy framework for land use and development in industrial precincts.

Consultation dates: 22 May – 2 July 2023

### Better Places – Seabrook and Altona Meadows



We invited the community to provide feedback on the draft Place Guide for Seabrook and Altona Meadows. Feedback will directly impact the future of these areas.

Consultation dates: 21 June – 23 July 2023

### Brooklyn Community Hall Operations



Council was seeking a group of community members who had a vested interest in Brooklyn and the Brooklyn Community Hall to join the operations of the new facility. Council will support the group as they establish sustainable management, administration, and financial security of the hall and gardens.

Consultation dates: 20 June – 25 July 2023



## Mary Street Reserve Master Plan



The draft Master Plan to upgrade Mary Street Reserve was open for public comment. People were invited to view the Plan and share their comments on the Participate platform until 28 July.

Consultation dates: 28 June – 28 July 2023

## Community Interest Groups - Level Crossing Removal Projects



At the Ordinary Council Meeting on 11 July 2023, two-Level Crossing Removal Community Interest Groups were endorsed: one for Champion Road and Maddox Road in Newport and the other for Hudson Road in Spotswood. These groups aim to represent diverse local interests, review crossing removal principles, understand precinct contexts, and advocate for community outcomes. Nominations are [open on Participate](#).

Consultation dates: 11 July – 11 August 2023

## Draft Affordable Housing Policy Statement review



The Draft Affordable Housing Policy Statement is available for review, aiming to guide Hobsons Bay City Council's efforts in increasing Affordable Housing supply. It updates the 2016 policy and reflects the council's ongoing commitment to this cause since 2002. Community input is valued, and feedback on the draft can be provided [now on Participate](#).

Consultation dates: 17 July – 28 August 2023

## Draft Outdoor Trading Framework



Council seeks community and business feedback on a new outdoor trading framework. Initially launched in response to COVID-19 as Hobsons Bay Business has Heart (HBBhH) in 2020, the program included parklets and trading areas for hospitality businesses. Council officers have since revised the framework for a permanent outdoor trading program. The consultation, [open on Participate](#) until August, aims to gather input for the transition.

Consultation dates: 24 July – 31 August 2023



## Advocacy

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### **Youth Mental Health Services**

As part of Council's advocacy efforts for more youth mental health services in Hobsons Bay, Council commenced a community engagement advocacy campaign to seek feedback from the community and young people about how they access help for their mental health. This feedback will also demonstrate to the state and federal government the critical need for more services in Hobsons Bay. The campaign commenced on 10 July and will run until 13 August. The community and young people can leave their feedback at [www.youthmentalhealthinnerwest.com.au](http://www.youthmentalhealthinnerwest.com.au). At the end of July, there were over 500 visits to the campaign website.

### **Hobsons Bay Wetlands Centre**

In the Council Budget, Council allocated funding for the first stage of the Hobsons Bay Wetlands Centre. This funding will construct a temporary wetlands centre, café and walking paths. This first stage will orientate the site for the future Hobsons Bay Wetlands Centre and will assist our advocacy efforts to attract state and federal government investment in the centre.

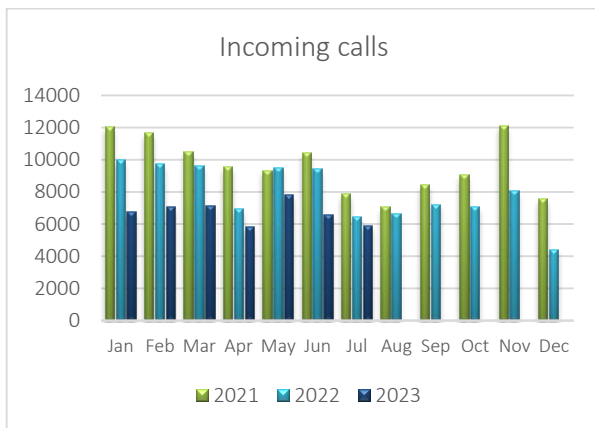
## Our Performance

### Customer Service



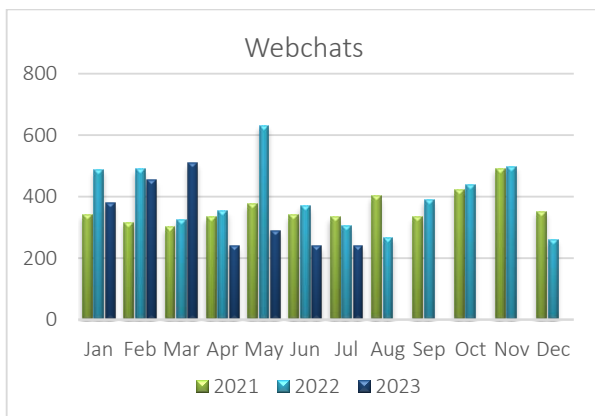
Hobsons Bay City Council is committed to improving our performance and better responding to our community needs.

One way in which we do this is to capture how our community approaches us to ensure we can make that process the best it can be to assist our customers with access to the information needed.



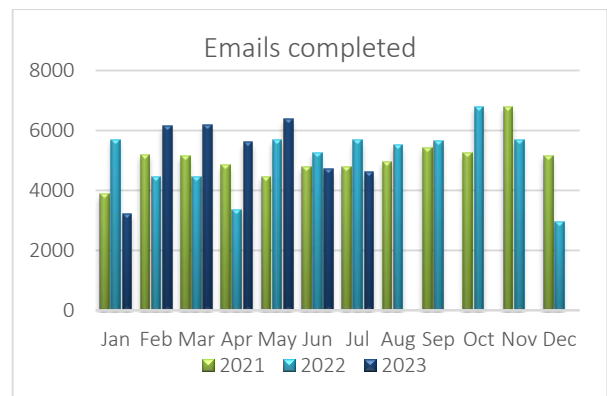
Top enquiries coming from incoming calls are for the following service areas:

- Rates (855)
- Waste (651)
- Local Laws (625)
- Town Planning (428)
- Assets (351)
- Animals (292)
- City Works & Amenities (127)
- Facilities (127)



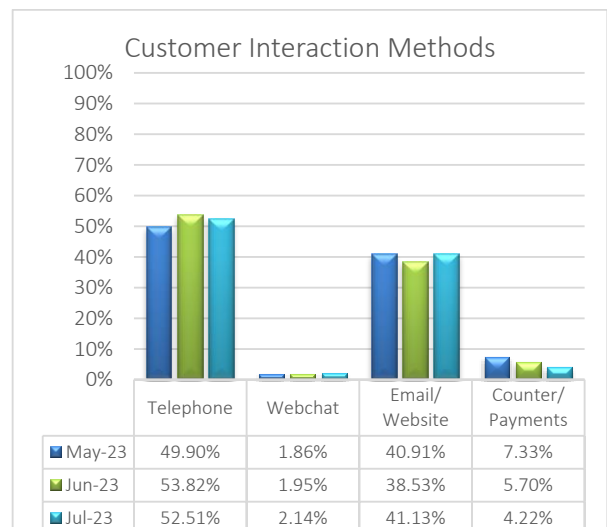
Top reasons our customers contacted Council via Web Chat related to the following service areas:

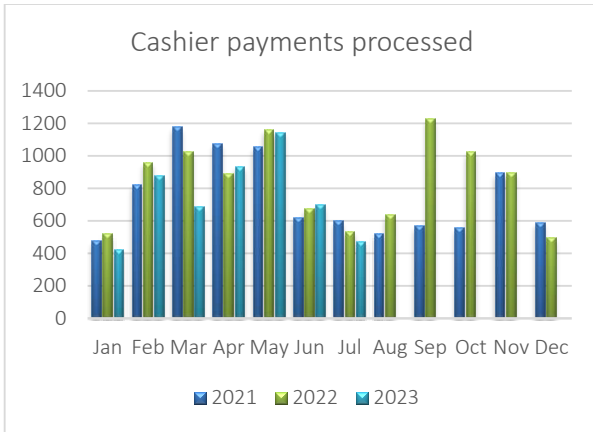
- Waste (48)
- Rates (28)
- Local Laws (24)
- City Works & Amenities (18)
- Assets (17)
- Parking Permits (14)
- Town Planning (12)
- Building (8)



Top enquiries coming from emails are for the following service areas:

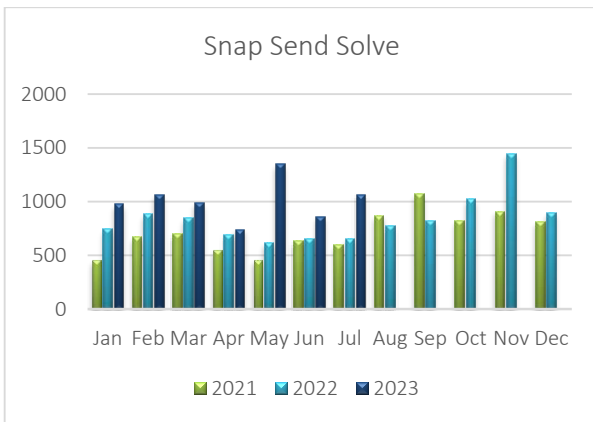
- City Works & Amenities (665)
- Local Laws (405)
- Waste (362)
- Cashier inbox (261)
- Rates (208)
- Animals (124)
- Facilities (70)
- Town Planning (65)



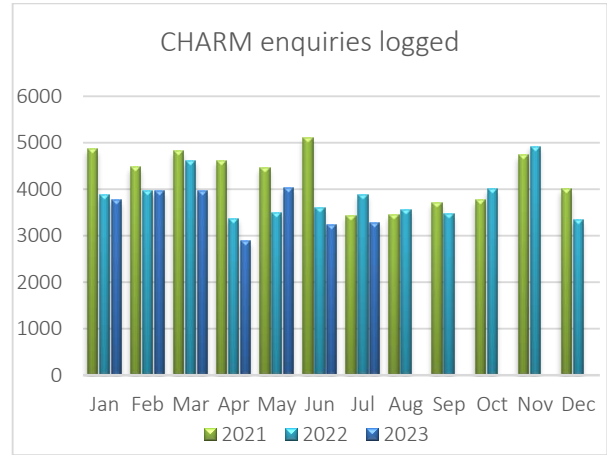


\*A recent system change has resulted in a different form of counter statistics. Data has been slightly amended from total counter visits to payment interactions. We are working with Digital Services for an alternative solution.

**Snap Send Solve** is a free app for iPhone or Android devices that allows visitors and residents of Hobsons Bay to easily report issues to Council by capturing a photo of an issue and having this information sent directly to Council for review.

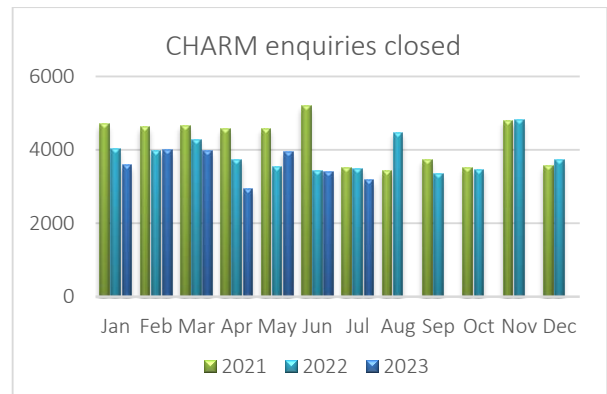


Council's Customer Help and Resolution Management (CHARM) system is used to record customer requests, which are primarily received via phone, Snap Send Solve and email.



Top CHARM requests logged related to the following service areas:

- Garbage (349)
- Council building maintenance (288)
- Parking (254)
- Dumped rubbish (226)
- Animals (200)
- Green waste (187)



Top CHARM requests closed related to the following service areas:

- Garbage (363)
- Council building maintenance (289)
- Dumped rubbish (217)
- Parking (208)
- Animals (199)
- Green waste (198)

## Financial Management

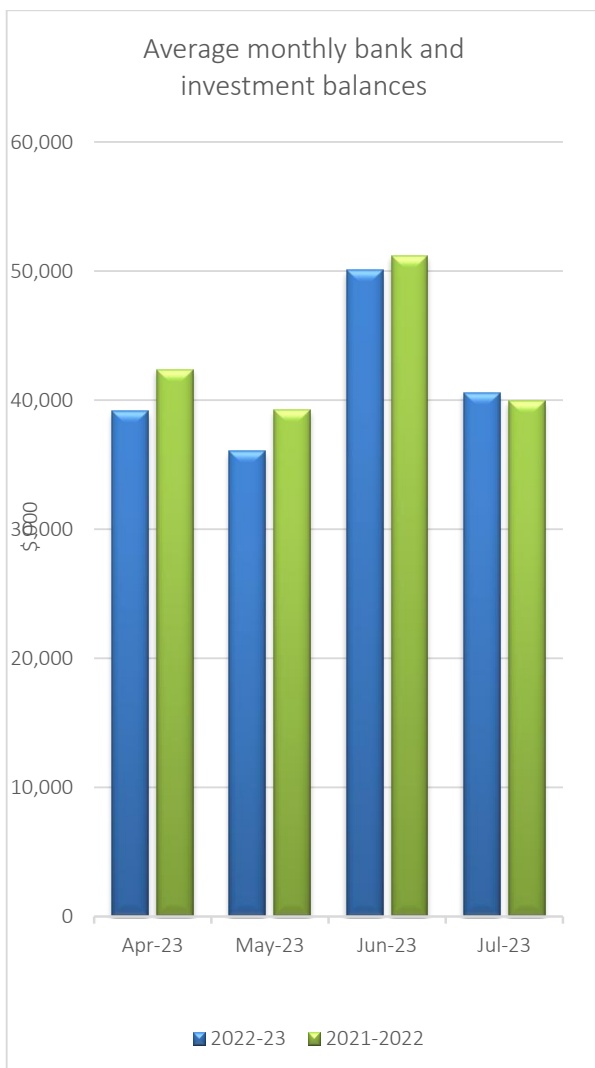
### Financial statistics



The average balance of cash and investments during July 2023 was \$40.333 million. This compares to the average balance of \$50.102 million in June 2023 and an average balance of \$36.072 million in May 2023.

The closing balance of cash and investments at the end of July 2023 was \$34.836 million. Compared to \$45.832 million at the end of June 2023 and \$47.314 million at the end of May 2023.

Council investments at the end of July 2023 included cash and at call investments of \$6.836 million and term deposits of \$28.000 million, with an average date to maturity of 84 days and an average interest rate of 4.60 per cent.



The balance of outstanding debtors for July 2023 was \$2.062 million compared to an average balance of \$2.86 million over the last twelve months.

The value of receivables invoices issued in July 2023 was \$1.072 million compared to \$1.666 million in June 2023.

Amounts outstanding over 90 days at the end of July 2023 total \$658,000 representing 31.9 per cent of total debts.

The most significant debtor groups over 90 days include Property and Parks & Recreation.

The provision for doubtful debts at the end of July 2023 is \$711,000 or 34.4 per cent of total debts.

### Hardship Policy



Any person who currently requires financial assistance can apply on-line and may be invited to enter into an interest free repayment plan and /or assessed for a waiver of rates if they provide evidence for consideration and meet the criteria as set out in Council's hardship policy.

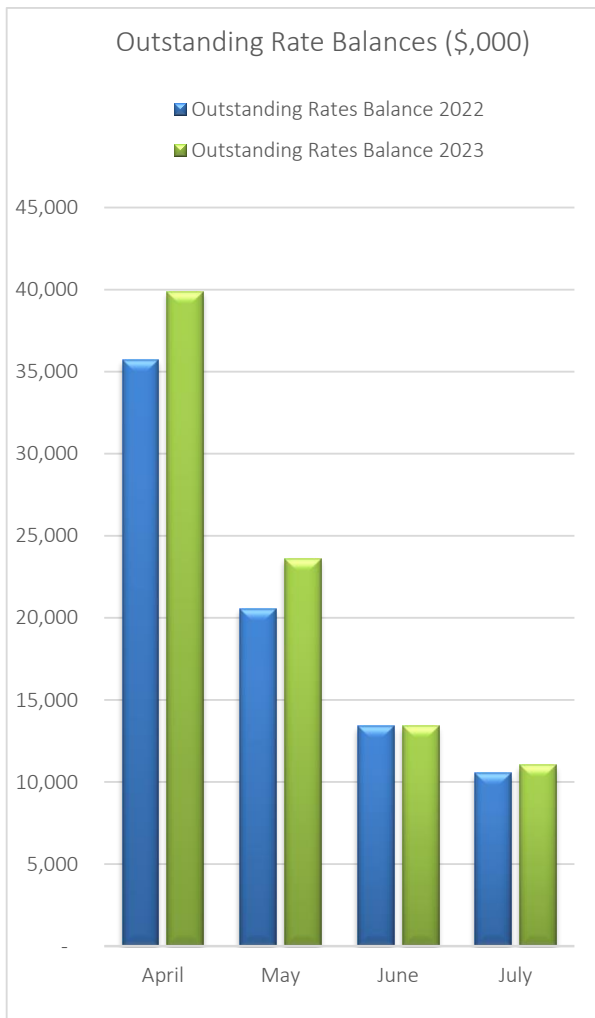
As of 31 July 2023, there is a total of 333 ratepayers, with arrears totaling \$1.7 million, listed on the Council's interest free repayment register. Council has waived over \$10,712 in interest charges since the start of the 2023/24 financial year. Council continued to receive regular payments in the month of July following reminding ratepayers of outstanding balances, and the total amount of arrears outstanding as of 30 June 2023 is just over \$13.7 million.

## Revenue statistics



Rates income as of 31 July 2023 was \$10.832 million compared to the year-to-date budget of \$10.492 million. This is made up of general rates (\$9.37 million), waste collection charges (\$1.085 million), and interest on rates (\$10,116). To date there have been no COVID-19 rate waivers or Council rebates.

The Outstanding Rates Balance as of 31 July 2023 was \$11.033 million. This is made up of general rates (\$10.630 million) and hardship group (\$.403 million).



## Procurement



Tenders have been called for the following:

- 2023.14 – Road and Carpark Audit
- 2023.26 – Management and Operation of Laverton Swim and Fitness Centre
- 2023.29 – Recycling 2.0 Contamination Audits (Q1 Only)

The following tenders have been closed and are being evaluated:

- 2023.14 – Road and Carpark Audit
- 2023.29 – Recycling 2.0 Contamination Audits (Q1 Only)

The following contracts awarded under Council resolution:

- No contracts \$1m plus have been awarded in July 2023

The following contracts have been awarded under financial delegation:

- 2021.74 – PA Burns Amenities Block has been awarded to GR Design & Construct for \$313,905.58
- 2023.29 – Recycling 2.0 Contamination Audits (Q1 Only) has been awarded to EC Sustainable for \$122,430.00

## Enhancing our community

The Infrastructure and City Services Directorate has delivered and continues to deliver a range of projects and services across the municipality.

### West Gate Tunnel Project



Works on widening the West Gate Freeway from eight lanes to 12 is nearing completion. Works continue at the tunnel portals including ventilation structures, the freeway interchange areas, the Hyde Street ramps and the various paths and landscaping. Reinstatement work on local roads along the freeway verge is nearing completion.



Image: Works at the M80 interchange showing new Geelong Road outbound overpass



Image: Construction of the Kororoit Creek shared path

Both tunnel boring machines are being dismantled and removed with the ventilation structure starting to take shape on the tunnel portal site.



Image: Tunnel fitout underway

### West Gate Neighbourhood Fund (WGNF)

The West Gate Neighbourhood Fund is a \$10 million community grants program established by WGTP MTIA to support communities in Melbourne's inner west, prioritising those who are most affected by the construction of the West Gate Tunnel Project.

Applications for WGNF Partnerships (Round 2) and Active Community Grants closed on 1 August 2023. The WGNF Partnerships provide funding for larger projects seeking over \$50,000 that deliver a lasting benefit for the community. The Active Community Grants will fund up to \$100,000 for grassroots community sports groups, scout clubs and girl guides. Applications are now being assessed with announcements of successful projects expected in the coming months.

### Level Crossing Removal projects

In response to the Victorian Governments recent announcement of additional level crossing removals, Hobsons Bay City Council has lodged a preliminary submission. This includes objecting to the proposed Champion Road closure and recommending that consideration be given to the Council adopted principles in the planning, design, consultation, and implementation of any grade separation project, to ensure level crossing removals are well integrated with the local area and that community amenity is protected.

Hobsons Bay is also seeking expressions of interest from residents and traders to join one of two Level Crossing Removal Community Interest Groups (CIG's):

- Champion Road and Maddox Road, Newport
- Hudson Road, Spotswood

Applications close 5pm Friday 11 August 2023. For more information, visit

<https://participate.hobsonsbay.vic.gov.au/community-liaison-groups-level-crossing-removal-projects>

## Pavilion and Reserves update



### HC Kim Reserve upgrade

HC Kim Reserve in Altona is being upgraded. The upgrade will include the demolition of the existing pavilion and construction of an improved facility with the assistance of a \$500,000 grant from the State Government.

In addition, Council was also successful in receiving \$300,000 in 2022 through the Victorian State Government's Local Sports Infrastructure Fund to redevelop the sports grounds at HC Kim Reserve. Council has undertaken full design work to upgrade three soccer pitches to improve their quality and usability.

Works have commenced on site for the rebuild of Pitch one, including the fencing and goal storage. The project is scheduled for completion by early 2024 and will remain closed to the public while works are underway.



Image: Works currently underway on Pitch one



Image: Works currently underway on Pitch one

### W.L.J Crofts Reserve improvements

The new playground at Crofts Reserve in Altona North is now open to the public. The playground includes new play equipment, a large sand pit, park seating, lawns and landscaping. The temporary fencing in the northern areas of the reserve has been removed completing the implementation of the site masterplan including ovals, pavilion and open space.



Image: New playground at Crofts Reserve



Image: New sandpit at Crofts Reserve



The southern end of the pavilion landscaping along with pathway access onto Blackshaws Road are progressing well and are expected to be completed by end of August 2023.



Image: Pathway works (pavilion to playground)

### KC White Reserve irrigation update

KC White Reserve irrigation upgrade works are in progress. The upgrade includes installation of a tank to store water, a pump to supply water pressure and a valve style bench seating to control the irrigation system. Additionally, new irrigation lines and sprinklers are being set up to ensure effective watering of the reserve.

The completion of the irrigation upgrade is targeted for the end of August 2023. Works are not expected to affect the pre-season training program or the beginning of the season.



Image: KC White Reserve, Williamstown

### Greenwich Reserve cricket net upgrade

The Greenwich Reserve cricket net upgrade is progressing well and on track for completion by September 2023.

The project will enhance the cricket facilities at the reserve, providing improved amenities for players and visitors. The initial demolition works have been completed. Some of the ongoing works include:

- installation of three new cricket lanes
- turf installation and a new shed for equipment storage
- installation of new posts and laying the foundation for the construction of cricket lanes.



Image: Installation of new posts at Greenwich Reserve

### WJ Irwin Reserve playground upgrade

The upgrade at WJ Irwin Reserve in Altona North is well underway. The project includes the installation of new playground equipment, a picnic shelter and a perimeter footpath around the playground area. Works are on track for completion by mid-August 2023.



Image: Playground at WJ Irwin Reserve

## Bruce Comben Reserve open space

The Bruce Comben Reserve southern open space project is moving forward with the contractors now having site possession and initiating the set up for the planned works. Some of the key points of progress include:

- demolition, which has commenced and includes the removal of the existing non-working lights at the tennis courts
- soil removal, including any contaminated soil, adhering to the guidelines specified in the Contamination Management Plan
- closure of parts of the reserve and pedestrian paths that cut through the car park at the corner of Henry Drive and Macneil Drive in Altona Meadows have been closed to facilitate the car park upgrade works
- to inform and direct pedestrians, site and traffic signs have been installed



Image: Signage at Bruce Comben Reserve

## Drainage, Footpaths & Roads works



### Kerb and channel works

Kerb and channel works were recently completed on Railway Place Williamstown, Croker Street Newport and Station Road in Williamstown.



Image: Railway Place Williamstown

## Road Resurfacing Program

The 2022/23 Road Resurfacing Program for 13 streets in Altona Meadows and eight streets in Seabrook is now complete.



Image: Hall Avenue Altona Meadows

## Local Area Traffic works



### Mills Street Altona North

The construction of two raised platforms at the intersection of Mills/May Street and Mills/Cresser Street in Altona North have been recently completed which is a great outcome of the Transport Safety Improvement Program - Altona North LATM (Local Area Traffic Management). The Transport Safety Improvement Program aims to improve safety and traffic in specific areas, focusing on Altona North.



Image: Mills/May and Mills/Cresser Streets intersection

## Other Projects



### Road and Carpark Condition Audit 2023

Council is undertaking a road and car park condition audit in 2023-24. Road and carpark audits are carried out every four years to assess the current condition of the assets and are a critical step to effectively manage the road and carpark network.

Council manages a significant network, consisting of 435 kilometres of roads and 214,075 square metres of carparks. These assets are constructed predominantly using asphalt, concrete and gravel, and they vary in condition.

Following the audit, a long-term renewal program will be developed along with separate reports that highlight asset condition, defects and maintenance priorities.

### Introduction of the POGO Turf Pro

The acquisition of the POGO Turf Pro by the Sports team is a great advancement in managing and maintaining sports fields effectively. This piece of equipment offers various capabilities on collecting (GIS) Geographic Information System data on assets, measuring temperature and electrical conductivity. In addition, by monitoring the data collected by the POGO Turf Pro, the team can identify any deficiency issues in the soil early on.

Overall, the POGO Turf Pro will assist with managing irrigation water use, planning seeding and fertilizing and improved turf management.

### Sutton Avenue Kindergarten

The new 66 place modular buildings have been installed at Sutton Avenue in Altona North. This prefab building is constructed offsite and will cater for 66 kindergarten children.

Works are underway to the outdoor areas, and it is anticipated that the site will be completed in September 2023. These works have been carried out by the VSBA with Council supporting the works. The current families from Emma McLean Kindergarten will relocate to this site in Term four while the works to the Emma McLean site are undertaken.

## Sporting projects



### Australian Cricket Infrastructure funding

Council has been successful in receiving funding via the Australian Cricket Infrastructure Fund (ACIF) to assist in funding two projects:

- purchase of a synthetic wicket cover for HD Graham Reserve, Altona Meadows
- replacing the synthetic wicket at AW Bond Reserve, Altona North.

The ACIF is an initiative led by Cricket Australia, in partnership with their State and Territory Association, and the Australian Cricketers' Association.

### Newport Athletics Track

The installation of hammer and discus cages at Newport Athletics Track are now complete. The works included installing IAAF standard Apollo Cage for discus throwing and THOR 10 Hammer and discus cage. The athletics track is now open for use and bookings.



Image: Newport Athletics hammer and discus cages



### Tree planting update

The planting crew has planted 407 advanced trees in Altona. In addition, 35 advanced trees have been planted in Long Reserve Williamstown North and 24 advanced street trees in Stevedore Street Williamstown.



Image: Long Reserve, North Williamstown

At the end of the financial year, the tree team had planted 300 street trees in the Wetlands ward with a further 800 to be planted between now and September 2023. Some of the key sites include:

- Point Cook Road, Seabrook
- South Terrace, Seabrook
- Homestead Run, Seabrook
- Central Ave, Altona Meadows.

### Coastal Corridor Partnership

The month of July sees the end of the first year of funding for the Peri-urban Weed Management Partnership Grant from the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action. As part of the program, the team facilitated weed control works on Parks Victoria Jawbone Flora and Fauna Reserve and Cheetham Wetlands. The program has proved to be a great opportunity for Council to work with project partners, Bunurong Land Council, Parks Victoria and Melbourne Water.

### Native nature strips

Through the Community Pitch Program, the Biodiversity team managed a project for the community on how to create native nature strips. The team developed designs that incorporate plants indigenous to the Hobsons Bay area and that are compliant with Council's Nature Strip Guidelines. Through the program, the residents who pitched the idea were offered the opportunity to turn their nature strips into display gardens.



Image: A nature strip turned into a native nature strip

### Habitat gardens in the Botanic Gardens

The Botanic Gardens team has just finished planting out the second Habitat Garden bed in the Pinetum inspired by Council's Habitat Gardens program. The bed continues the theme of demonstrating how indigenous plants can be used in your own gardens to support local wildlife.

The chosen species are indigenous to the area and include a combination of wildflowers, groundcovers, and grasses. Following on from the larger Habitat bed that was planted in March 2023, the design concept interprets an indigenous natural landscape with soil mounding, sand and rocks. It is hoped the garden beds will fill out over Spring and add a layer to the story of Williamstown Botanic Gardens by bringing 'the wild back into gardens'.



Image: The Pinetum at the Williamstown Botanic Gardens

### Succulent garden bed rejuvenation

The team have been rejuvenating the succulent garden at the Botanic Gardens. The garden bed has laid bare for a while whilst plants were sourced, and soil was improved. The new plants are a mix of cacti and succulents and will offer great textures and colour for visitors to enjoy.



Image: Succulent garden at the Botanic Gardens

### Palm collection in the Botanic Gardens

A number of new palms have been added to the Palm collection which has grown to more than 80 palms across 13 species. The new palms include *Brahea clara*, *Brahea* 'Super Silver' and *Jubea chilensis*. They are great additions and continue to build the gardens botanical interest.



Image: Palm collection in the Botanic Gardens



## Conservation news

### Greening Brooklyn revegetation project

Over 4,665 plants have been planted along the Federation Trail that adjoins Millers Road and Old Geelong Road as part of the Greening Brooklyn project.

In addition, 325 trees and shrubs to go within the central area of the site with the surrounding edges to be planted up with ground cover species. This project is aiming to provide more green space with conservation values for the community to enjoy. The species selected provide habitat for native wildlife, an array of wildflower's and overall increase the biodiversity of the area.



Image: The Greening Brooklyn team planting out garden beds

### Rabbit-proof fencing at Buffer Mound Reserve

Cherry Lake Buffer Mound located in Altona is a large conservation reserve that acts as an environmental buffer between Cherry Lake and the industrial estate to the north. Ecologically this reserve provides a great corridor of different environments and ecosystems for a variety of wildlife. The team will create a rabbit-proof fence using the existing fence around the site. This area has high infestations of rabbits and reducing rabbits will give native plant species a better chance at survival, especially during revegetation works.

### Habitat logs for Explosive Reserve

The Truganina Explosives Reserve contains several different ecosystems for our plants and wildlife through to grasslands, open woodlands, and saltmarsh. The team has brought in large tree stumps containing hollows to support wildlife and provide shelter for small mammals and marsupials. The use of large logs strategically placed around the reserve will enhance the reserve's biodiversity.



Image: Logs being moved within the reserve

## Community Events



### Friends Group activities

During July, Friends Group held the following planting events:

- on 2 July 2023, over 40 volunteers attended Kororoit Creek Reserve that was supported by Friends of Lower Kororoit Creek. The team planted 250 indigenous plants including groundcovers, trees and shrubs

- on 9 July 2023, the Conservation team assisted the Friends of Newport Lakes volunteers to plant 375 grasses and 25 shrubs in the northern bushland of the Lakes Reserve

### Walks and talks

The Conservation Rangers conducted two tours for the Hobsons Bay Walking Group. This is an active group open to any member of the Hobsons Bay community that do walks once or twice a week. The two walks, one at Newport Lakes and the other at Truganina Explosives Reserve, were the first time the group has had a 'guide' to help explain the area.

### National Tree Day (NTD)

This year the official day to celebrate National Tree Day was 30 July 2023. The Conservation team held its annual community planting activity at the Altona Coastal Park. 2,750 tube stock was planted with the help of around 300 community volunteers. As part of the Plant Giveaway Program 150 tube stock plants were given to participants.

Also, as part of National Tree Day staff from Dow Chemicals and Qenos assisted the Conservation team by planting around 1,500 indigenous grassland plants at Truganina Park on 27 July 2023. The not-for-profit group WEstjustice also celebrated National Tree Day and planted at Kororoit Creek Reserve on 31 July 2023.



Image: Altona Coastal Park

## Better Places Project

The Better Places model is focused on a design-led and place-based approach to projects. It helps provide a clear vision and understanding of the elements required to make better places and therefore provides better outcomes for the community.

It is about an approach where the whole “place” is considered and driven by a community vision for the suburb.

The Better Places Project is a unique program which provides an opportunity for the community to actively participate in helping shape the future direction of their suburb.

To date, three Place Guides have been shaped by community and endorsed by Council which are progressively being implemented:

- Laverton
- Spotswood & South Kingsville
- Brooklyn & Altona North

### Laverton

Laverton was the first suburb to experience the Better Places model.

The **Laverton Place Guide** was endorsed by Council in September 2020. A copy can be found at: [participate.hobsonsbay.vic.gov.au/better-places-laverton](https://participate.hobsonsbay.vic.gov.au/better-places-laverton)

Recent Place Guide project highlights include:

- **Project 7 SAFER PLACES - Laverton Schools Precinct Traffic Safety Improvement Works** – The Safer Places project is an intensive fast-tracked program to improve general safety and accessibility around key movement corridors in Laverton. The Laverton School precinct along Bladin Street includes St Martin de Porres Catholic primary school, Western Autistic School, Laverton Prep to 12 College, Western English Language, and the Jennings Street school. A safer 50 km/h speed limit on Bladin Street has been implemented, construction of six footpath crossing upgrades have been completed and work is underway on the remaining three Bladin Street school/pedestrian crossing upgrades.
- **Project 2 – LOVE LAVERTON PARKS, GREENING SMALL PARKS** – a key initiative towards making Laverton Cleaner and Greener, the Love Laverton Parks project has upgraded 6 of 8 local community parks with the remaining two to be delivered this financial year. A single co-ordinated and fast-tracked program which also includes ‘Greening Small Parks’. Four of Laverton’s smallest parks have recently had a makeover with more trees, footpaths and seating.
  - Thirty trees in total have been planted in Jamison Street Reserve, Tyquin Street Reserve, Williams Road Reserve and Alma Avenue Reserve.
  - The new trees in the small pockets of open space will help boost our urban forest canopy and cool residential streets on hot days.
  - For more info, visit [www.hobsonsbay.vic.gov.au/LoveLavertonParks](https://www.hobsonsbay.vic.gov.au/LoveLavertonParks).



*Image: BEFORE and AFTER photos of Williams Road Reserve (July 2023). New planting and footpath.*



### Spotswood and South Kingsville Place Projects

The [Better Places Spotswood + South Kingsville Place Guide](#) was endorsed by Council on 12 October 2021.

Recent Place Guide project highlights include:

- Project 13 - Better Villages** - The Hudsons Road Streetscape Master Plan report is now available. This is an overarching document proposing a vision for future streetscape improvement works. Community engagement to date has been positive. Future implementation stages are planned to align with the State Government lead Spotswood level crossing removal and new train station. For more information visit [hobsonsbay.vic.gov.au/Council/Current-projects/Roads-Streetscapes-Traffic-Projects/Hudsons-Road-Streetscape-Master-Plan](https://hobsonsbay.vic.gov.au/Council/Current-projects/Roads-Streetscapes-Traffic-Projects/Hudsons-Road-Streetscape-Master-Plan)
- Project 5.2 – Streets for People 40km zones** – The focus of this project is to lead a shift throughout Spotswood and South Kingsville towards creating ‘streets for people’ - reducing vehicle speeds and through traffic and undertaking works to make the villages and neighbourhood streets feel safer and more attractive and usable for pedestrians and cyclists. Over the coming weeks, existing 50km roads within the shaded section of the below map will change to 40km, as supported by the Department of Transport and Planning.

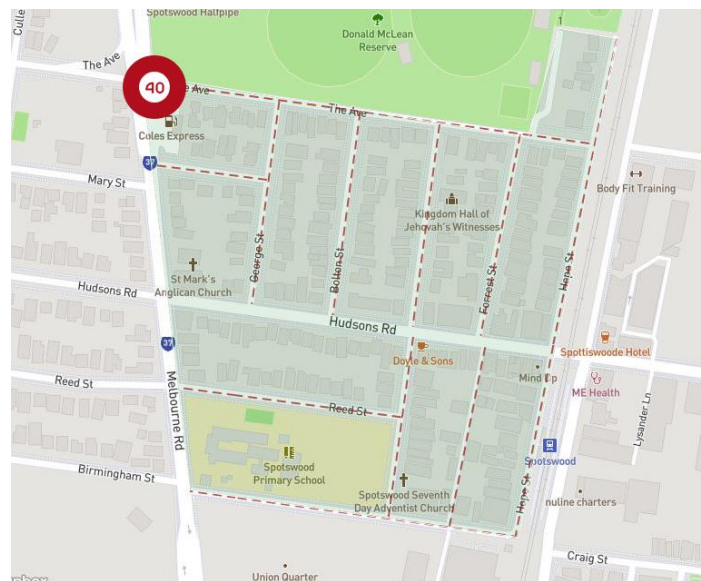


Image: Map of area in Spotswood that will change to 40km over the coming weeks.

### Better Places Brooklyn & Altona North

The Better Places [Brooklyn + Altona North](#) final Place Guide was endorsed by Council in December 2022.

A copy can be found at [participate.hobsonsbay.vic.gov.au/betterplaces-brooklyn-and-altona-north](https://participate.hobsonsbay.vic.gov.au/betterplaces-brooklyn-and-altona-north)

Three key themes were uncovered from thousands of pieces of community feedback:

### Key Themes

THEME ONE	THEME TWO	THEME THREE
<p>Improving the liveability and amenity of the area.</p> 	<p>A place that is easier and safer to move around.</p> 	<p>Bringing the community closer together.</p> 
<b>Liveability and Amenity</b>	<b>Move with safety</b>	<b>Closer Community</b>
<p>For many residents in the local area, their first priority is to reduce air, noise, and rubbish pollution, and focus on making the area a healthier, cleaner and greener place to live.</p>	<p>Making Brooklyn and Altona North more walkable and bike-friendly, and developing new initiatives and projects that will promote a shift towards public transport and active transport into the future.</p>	<p>Continuing to celebrate and strengthen the diversity and different characters Brooklyn and Altona North while finding new ways to bring the community closer together</p>

The abovementioned themes drive Place Guide projects for the community... by the community. A mix of both shorter-term projects that can be implemented quickly, as well as longer term projects that are larger and more complex and will require more extensive design and consultation. The programme spans from 2023 to 2028.

### Better Places Seabrook and Altona Meadows

The final DRAFT Seabrook & Altona Meadows Place Guide was on public exhibition from 21 June to 23 July 2023.

The DRAFT Place Guide provides 6 overarching projects in response to community feedback received through multiple stages of community engagement. A review of feedback received is underway with the final DRAFT Place Guide due for Council endorsement later this year.

A copy of the DRAFT Place Guide can be found at [participate.hobsonsabay.vic.gov.au/bpsam](https://participate.hobsonsabay.vic.gov.au/bpsam)



Image: Six projects identified for Better Places Seabrook & Altona Meadows



# Hobsons Bay

## Election Period Policy

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2023 Version 4.0

**Acknowledgment of Country**

Council acknowledges the Bunurong People of the Kulin Nation as the Traditional Owners of these municipal lands and waterways, and pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging.

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## 1. Purpose

The Election Period Policy ensures that during an election period for general council elections or any by-elections for Hobsons Bay City Council, the ordinary business of Council continues in a manner that:

- is responsible and transparent
- is ethical
- is fair and equitable
- accords with statutory requirements and established caretaker conventions

Election period provisions are intended to ensure that councils and Councillors will not use public resources in election campaigning or make major policy decisions that may bind the incoming Council.

The policy builds on the minimum statutory standards to enhance the transparency and accountability of Council, Councillors and Council staff during the election period.

Additionally, the policy addresses Councillors and staff standing as candidates in Council, state or federal elections.

## 2. Background

Section 69 of the *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act) requires Council to include an Election Period Policy in its Governance Rules. An Election Period Policy must prohibit any Council decision during the election period for a general election that:

- (a) relates to the appointment or remuneration of the Chief Executive Officer but not to the appointment or remuneration of an Acting Chief Executive Office or
- (b) commits the Council to expenditure exceeding one per cent of the Council's income from general rates, municipal charges and service rates and charges in the preceding financial year or
- (c) the Council considers could be reasonably deferred until the next Council is in place or
- (d) the Council considers should not be made during an election period

An Election Period Policy must also “prohibit any Council decision during the election period for a general election or by-election that would enable the use of Council resources in a way that is intended to influence, or is likely to influence voting at the election” (section 69 (3) of the Act).

Bearing in mind the provisions of section 69 (3), Council will continue, through the use of previously appointed Panels, to undertake its approved program of capital works and road maintenance/rehabilitation during the election period, where it believes that works are expected by and for the benefit of the Hobsons Bay community and not likely to influence voting at the election.

Section 123 of the Act (Misuse of Position) prescribes serious penalties for any Councillor who inappropriately makes use of their position or information obtained in their role, to gain an advantage, or disadvantage another.

These statutory requirements are minimum governance standards only. This policy, to be read in conjunction with the Councillor Code of Conduct and Employee Code of Conduct, further defines the expectations on Council, Councillors and Council staff during the period prior to the conduct of Council elections. The Election Period Policy also expands

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Document Owner: Coordinator Governance and Information Management

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on the list of matters Council will treat as prohibited decisions and provides a process for dealing with them.

### 3. Scope

This policy applies to all Council staff, Councillors and candidates during an election period.

In accordance with the definition of “election period” in the Act, the election period starts at the time that nominations for the election of Council close on nomination day, and ends at 6pm on Election Day.

#### 3.1. Council staff

Council staff are expected to comply with this policy and with the Employee Code of Conduct during an election period. The Code of Conduct states that “a conflict of interest exists where an employee’s public duty conflicts, or may be perceived to conflict, with their personal or political interests”. The provision of support to a candidate at an election for Hobsons Bay City Council would constitute a conflict of interest under this policy and is therefore prohibited.

Such support includes, but is not limited to:

- providing advice to a candidate
- distributing or preparing campaign material
- fundraising
- making a cash or in kind campaign donation
- permitting or placing electoral signage on their property

A member of Council staff may not support or participate in any campaign activity for any candidate standing for election at an election for Hobsons Bay City Council.

The Employee Code of Conduct does not limit the ability of a member of Council staff to support the candidacy of a person in a different municipal election or in state or federal elections. However, any member of Council staff who intends to support a candidate in any election must seek advice from the Manager Corporate Integrity and Legal Counsel with respect to appropriately managing any possible real or perceived conflicts of interest.

#### 3.2. Councillors

Councillors are expected to comply with this policy regardless of whether they have nominated as candidates for election.

#### 3.3. Candidates for election

##### 3.3.1. Members of Council staff standing for election

Members of Council staff who are candidates for election are expected to comply with this policy, including the specific provisions listed under section 16.

### 3.3.2. Members of Council committees and advisory groups standing for election

Members of Council committees and advisory groups (other than Councillors) who are candidates for election are expected to comply with this policy, including the specific provisions listed under section 17.

### 3.3.3. Other candidates

Other candidates for election are expected to voluntarily comply with the obligations of this policy where they apply.

## 4. Definitions

Candidate	means a person: 1. who has been nominated as a candidate for an election under section 256 of the Act 2. who has either or both: (a) publicly expressed an intention to run as a candidate in the election (b) formally nominated as a candidate in the election with the election manager
Chief Executive Officer	means the member of Council staff appointed to be its Chief Executive Officer, and includes a person acting as Chief Executive Officer
Council	means Hobsons Bay City Council
Councillor candidate	means a current Councillor who has nominated, or is considering nominating, for election in a general council election or by-election
Council resources	includes but is not limited to Council staff, support staff, office space, hospitality services, equipment, stationery and use of Council-owned vehicles
Council staff	means any employee of Council whether permanent, temporary or casual, and includes contractors and volunteers carrying out work for or on behalf of Council
Electioneering	means any action, statement or publication that contains material directly related to, or likely to influence, a Councillor's re-election or a candidate's election

Election day	means the day of an election determined under section 257 or 260 of the Act
Election manager	means the Victorian Electoral Commission or the person appointed in writing by the Victorian Electoral Commission
Electoral material	means an advertisement, handbill, pamphlet or notice that contains electoral matter, but does not include an advertisement in a newspaper that is only announcing the holding of a meeting
Electoral matter	<p>means matter which is intended or likely to affect voting in an election but does not include any electoral material produced by or on behalf of the election manager for the purposes of conducting an election.</p> <p>Without limiting the generality of the definition of electoral matter, matter is to be taken to be intended or likely to affect voting in an election if it contains an express or implicit reference to, or comment on:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The election</li> <li>2. A candidate in the election</li> <li>3. An issue submitted to, or otherwise before, the voters in connection with the election</li> </ol> <p>Examples of electoral matter include material which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• publicises the strengths or weaknesses of a candidate</li> <li>• advocates the policies of Council or of a candidate</li> <li>• responds to claims made by a candidate</li> <li>• publicises the achievements of the elected Council</li> </ul>
Election period	means the period that starts at the time that nominations close on nomination day and ends at 6pm on election day
Functions and events	means gatherings of internal and external stakeholders to discuss, review, acknowledge, communicate, celebrate or promote a program, strategy or issue which is of relevance to Council and its community. Functions and events may

	<p>take the form of conferences, workshops, forums, launches, promotional activities and social occasions such as dinners, receptions and balls</p> <p>For the purposes of this policy, the meaning of "functions and events" does not include routine events and programs conducted as part of Council's day-to-day activities (e.g. immunisation sessions, gallery exhibitions, library programs).</p>
General election	in accordance with section 257 of the Act, means an election which is to be conducted in each ward of a Council, for all the offices of Councillor.
Nomination day	means the last day on which nominations to be a candidate at a Council election may be received
Prohibited decision	<p>means any Council decision, including decisions by delegated committees or members of Council staff acting under a delegation given by Council, during an election period for a general election that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) relates to the appointment or remuneration of the Chief Executive Officer but not to the appointment or remuneration of an Acting Chief Executive Officer</li> <li>(b) commits Council to expenditure exceeding 1% of Council's income from general rates, municipal charges and service rates and charges in the preceding financial year</li> <li>(c) Council considers could be reasonably deferred until the next Council is in place</li> <li>(d) Council considers should not be made during an election period</li> </ul> <p>Additionally, section 69 (3) of the Act requires Council to prohibit any decision that would enable the use of Council resources that is intended to or would likely influence voting at the election.</p>
Publication	means a published work in any form, including printed material, electronic information and web-based productions, or the act or process of publishing
Publish	means publish by any means including publication on the Internet

Public consultation	means a process that involves an invitation or invitations to individuals, groups or organisations, or the community generally, to comment on an issue, proposed action or proposed policy, and includes discussion of that matter with the public
Significant decisions	means any Council decision, including decisions by delegated committees or members of Council staff acting under a delegation given by Council, during an election period for a general election that: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. May irrevocably commit the incoming Council to substantial expenditure or to other significant actions</li> <li>2. May have an irrevocable or significant impact on the municipality or a significant section of the community</li> </ol>

## 5. Election Period

The election period for the 2024 general council elections will apply from 24 September 2024 until 6pm on Election Day (26 October 2024), inclusive.

## 6. Policy and principles

During an election period for a general council election, or longer if so resolved by Council, this policy covers:

- (a) Decisions made by Council, a delegated committee or a person acting under delegation by Council
- (b) Any material that is published by Council or on Council's behalf
- (c) Public consultation activities
- (d) Scheduling, attendance and participation in functions and events
- (e) The use of Council resources
- (f) Access to Council information
- (g) Media services

This policy additionally covers provisions relating to Councillors and staff standing as candidates in Council, state or federal elections.

Any such decisions or actions, if allowed at all, must only be made or taken subject to the guidelines set out in this policy.

## 7. Procedural guidelines

This policy must be complied with during an election period, or longer if resolved by Council. If:

- a decision of Council, a delegated committee of Council, or a person acting under delegation given by Council is being considered **Refer to Section 8**
- a decision that may bind the incoming Council is being considered **Refer to Section 8**
- written material is about to be published which contains reference to: **Refer to Section 9**
  1. A candidate (including sitting Councillors)
  2. The election
  3. An issue before the voters in connection with the election
- a Council publication is being created **Refer to Section 9**
- a public consultation process is being considered **Refer to Section 10**
- a sitting Councillor is planning to attend a function or event **Refer to Section 11**
- Council staff supply administrative or resource support to Councillors **Refer to Section 12**
- a Councillor requests access to Council information **Refer to Section 13**
- a sitting Councillor requests media advice or services **Refer to Section 14**
- election signage is to be placed on private or public land or affixed to a vehicle, trailer, bicycle, pram or similar **Refer to Section 15**
- a Council staff member is considering standing for election as a Councillor **Refer to Section 16**
- a member of a Council committee or advisory group is considering standing for election as a Councillor **Refer to Section 17**
- a Councillor or a Council staff member is considering standing for election in a state or federal government election **Refer to Section 19**

## 8. Decisions during the election period

### 8.1. Who does this part of the policy apply to?

This section of the Election Period Policy applies to decisions made by Council, a delegated committee of Council, or a person acting under delegation given by Council or sub-delegation from the Chief Executive Officer.

## 8.2. Decisions made under delegation

The prohibitions outlined in this section apply equally to decisions made by delegated committees and Council staff acting under delegation from Council or sub-delegation from the Chief Executive Officer. The ordinary day-to-day business of local government must continue throughout the election period, and must be conducted by Council, its delegates and staff in a responsible and transparent manner in accordance with statutory requirements.

Significant decision-making power is formally delegated to staff and the decision of a delegate is deemed to be a decision by Council. The same constraints that apply to decisions made in Council meetings therefore apply when decisions are made under the delegated authority of Council.

Delegates should give careful consideration to the exercising of their powers during the election period, including:

- whether the decision is significant
- whether the decision is urgent or can be deferred until the election period has concluded
- the possibility of financial repercussions if it is deferred
- whether the decision is likely to be controversial
- whether the decision is in the best interests of Council and the community

Should a delegate be required to make a decision(s) under delegation in the ordinary course of Council business during the election period, the delegate must satisfy themselves beforehand that the decision is not a prohibited decision.

Should a delegate require assistance in determining whether a decision is likely to be prohibited in the context of the Act or significant within the meaning of this policy, they should seek advice from the Manager Corporate Integrity and Legal Counsel in the first instance.

## 8.3. Scheduling consideration of decisions

In accordance with section 69 (2) (c) and section 69 (3) of the Act, Council must not make any decision during an election period for a general election or by-election that:

- could reasonably be deferred until the next Council is in place
- would enable the use of Council resources in a way intended or likely to influence voting at the election

Decisions should instead be either:

1. Considered by Council prior to the election period
2. Scheduled for determination by the incoming Council

Where items must be resolved by Council or a delegated committee during the election period, all agenda papers prepared for Council or delegated committee meetings will be carefully vetted by the Chief Executive Officer to ensure that no agenda item is included that could potentially influence voters at the election or encourage Councillor candidates to use the item as part of their electioneering. All items listed on an agenda during an election period will be prefaced with an election period statement in accordance with section 8.8 of this policy.



The requirements above do not preclude the implementation of a decision made by Council through a Council resolution prior to the commencement of the election period.

Councillors commit to refraining from moving motions or raising matters at a meeting that could potentially influence voting at the election. This extends to matters raised as urgent business during a meeting.

#### 8.4. Prohibited decisions during the election period

If a decision cannot be scheduled prior to or after the election period, refer to the list below to determine whether it is affected by this policy. If it is unclear whether a decision falls within the list below, contact the Manager Corporate Integrity and Legal Counsel, Coordinator Governance and Information Management, Director Corporate Services or Chief Executive Officer.

Under section 177 of the Act, an exemption from the Minister for Local Government may be sought for a decision that is prohibited under section 69 of the Act, if Council considers that extraordinary circumstances exist which require such a decision. The matter must first be approved by the Chief Executive Officer and a Council resolution made to seek ministerial exemption.

<b>Proposed decision</b>	<b>Is it allowed?</b>	<b>Source</b>
Employment or remuneration of a Chief Executive Officer under section 44, other than a decision to appoint an Acting Chief Executive Officer	No	Prohibited under section 69 (2) (a) of the Act
Committing Council to expenditure which exceeds 1% of Council's income from general rates, municipal charges and service rates and charges in the preceding financial year (estimated at \$1.118 million)	No	Prohibited by section 69 (2) (b) of the Act
Allocating community grants or other forms of direct funding for community organisations	No	Significant decision within the scope of this policy
Major planning scheme amendments	Generally no and only with approval from Chief Executive Officer	Significant decision within the scope of this policy
Changes to strategic objectives or strategies in the Council Plan	No	Significant decision within the scope of this policy
An irrevocable decision that significantly affects the municipality	Generally no and only with approval from Chief Executive Officer	Significant decision within the scope of this policy

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<b>Proposed decision</b>	<b>Is it allowed?</b>	<b>Source</b>
Adoption of any new policy, strategy or local law during an election period	No	Significant decision within the scope of this policy
Any other significant decisions not specified above which will bind the incoming Council	Only with approval from Chief Executive Officer	Significant decision within the scope of this policy

## 8.5. Invalid decisions

A Council decision made in contravention of 69 (2) (a) or (b) of the Act is invalid in accordance with section 69 (4) of the Act.

## 8.6. Compensation

In accordance with section 69 (5) of the Act, any person who suffers any loss or damage as a result of acting in good faith on a Council decision made during an election period that is invalid is entitled to compensation from Council for that loss or damage.

## 8.7. Considerations for the Chief Executive Officer in giving approval

In the case of a decision referred to the Chief Executive Officer which is not expressly prohibited under section 69 of the Act, in deciding whether to give approval, the Chief Executive Officer will need to have regard to a number of factors including:

- (a) Whether the decision is indeed significant
- (b) The urgency of the issue (that is, can it wait until after the election)
- (c) The possibility of financial or legal repercussions if it is deferred
- (d) Whether the decision would require the spending of unbudgeted monies
- (e) Relevant statutory obligations and timeframes
- (f) Whether the decision is in respect of the completion of an activity already commenced and endorsed by the incumbent Council
- (g) Whether the decision is likely to be controversial or affect voting in the election
- (h) Whether the disadvantage of avoiding or deferring the decision exceeds the benefit of making the decision
- (i) The best interests of Council and the community

## 8.8. Election period statement

During the election period, the Chief Executive Officer will ensure that an election period statement is included for every item listed on an agenda to be submitted to Council for a decision during the election period, including notices of motion. The election period statement will appear at the start of each item listed on the agenda and will take the following form:

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“This report is being considered by Council during an election period. The recommendations, if moved and carried by Council: *[select statement (a), (b), (c) or (d) as appropriate]*

- (a) Constitute neither prohibited decisions in accordance with section 69 (2) and (3) of the *Local Government Act 2020*, nor significant decisions within the meaning of Council’s Election Period Policy
- (b) Do not constitute a prohibited decision in accordance with section 69 (2) and (3) of the *Local Government Act 2020*, but do constitute a significant decision within the meaning of Council’s Election Period Policy. An exception is required for the following reasons: *[insert reasons for exemption]*
- (c) Seek an exemption from the Minister for Local Government because the matter requires a prohibited decision within the meaning of section 69 (2) and 69 (3) of the *Local Government Act 2020*
- (d) Constitute a prohibited decision within the meaning of section 69 (2) or 69 (3) of the *Local Government Act 2020*, but compliance exemption was sought from the Minister for Local Government in accordance with section 177 of the Act and was granted on *[insert date]*.

Councillors are reminded that, under the Hobsons Bay Election Period Policy 2023, they cannot make a decision during the election period that would be binding on the incoming Council.

Councillors are also not permitted to use the public forum provided by the Council Meeting for purposes of campaigning, or to use their position to gain electoral advantage or to disadvantage another candidate.”

If statement (a) is selected, the recommendation must include: “That Council notes that the recommended decisions constitute neither a prohibited decision in accordance with section 69(2) and section 69(3) of the *Local Government Act 2020*, nor significant decisions within the meaning of Council’s Election Period Policy.”

If statement (b) is selected, the recommendation must include: “That Council notes that the recommended decisions constitute a significant decision within the meaning of Council’s Election Period Policy, but do not constitute a prohibited decision in accordance with section 69(2) and 69(3) of the *Local Government Act 2020*, and further notes that an exception is required for the following reasons: *[insert reasons for exemption]*”

If statement (c) is selected, the recommendation must include: “That Council seeks an exemption from the Minister because the matter requires a prohibited decision within the meaning of section 69 (2) and (3) of the *Local Government Act 2020*.”

If statement (d) is selected, the recommendation must include: “That Council notes that despite the recommended decision constituting a prohibited decision in accordance with section 69 (2) or 69 (3) of the *Local Government Act 2020*, compliance exemption has been sought from the Minister in accordance with section 177 of the Act and Council’s prior resolution on *[insert date of Council resolution to seek exemption]* and was granted on *[insert date exemption granted]*.”

Due to the election period, Council will not make a decision on any matter or report that does not include an election period statement.

## 8.9. Announcement of decisions made prior to the election period

To avoid doubt, the policy applies only to the actual making of decisions, not the announcement of decisions which have been made prior to the election period. However, as far as practicable such announcements should be made before the election period begins.

## 9. Council publications during the election period

### 9.1. Prohibition on publishing materials during the election period

It is prohibited under section 304 of the Act for a Councillor or member of Council staff to:

- (a) Print, publish or distribute or
- (b) Cause, permit or authorise to be printed, published or distributed

any electoral material during the election period on behalf of, or purporting to be on behalf of, Council unless the electoral material only contains information about the election process or is otherwise required in accordance with, or under, any Act or regulation.

Any publications to be issued during the election period are to be approved by the relevant Director and then sent to the Governance unit for vetting for electoral matter. Once vetted, the publication will then be submitted to the Chief Executive Officer for approval.

Councillors can publish campaign material on their own behalf but must assume responsibility for compliance with the relevant sections of the Act and cannot purport for that material to be originating from, or authorised by Hobsons Bay City Council (e.g. by use of Council logos).

The Chief Executive Officer will ensure that information is provided to Councillors, Council staff and contractors prior to the election period to preclude unauthorised publication of materials during an election period.

### 9.2. Considerations of Chief Executive Officer in granting approval

Except as described more specifically elsewhere in this policy, in considering whether to grant approval for the publication of material during the election period, the Chief Executive Officer:

- (a) Must not permit any materials to be published which include reference to:
  - a candidate in the election
  - a current Councillor
  - the strengths or weaknesses of a candidate
  - response to claims made by a candidate
  - advocacy for, or criticism of, the policies of Council or of a candidate
  - publicity for the achievements of the incumbent Council
  - an issue before the voters in connection with the election
- (b) May approve publication of material which only contains:
  - information about the election process itself

- Council information that does not include any reference to a current Councillor and is otherwise not precluded by this policy

### 9.3. Hobsons Bay City Council websites

During the election period Council websites will not contain material precluded by this policy. Any references to the election will only relate to the election process. Information about Councillors will be restricted to names, portrait photographs, ward profile and contact details. Links to Councillors' private social media profiles will be removed during the election period.

### 9.4. Publication of Council agenda papers and minutes

Council agenda papers and minutes are considered to be part of normal Council business and do not require approval by the Chief Executive Officer.

Public Question Time will continue to be listed on the Council meeting agenda during a general election period, but questions will not be read out during the Council meeting and responses will be provided in writing.

### 9.5. Social media

The Chief Executive Officer will determine whether for the duration of the election period Council's social media channels will continue or be suspended. In the event that social media use continues, the Chief Executive Officer will determine the processes and resourcing necessary to moderate social media in accordance with this policy.

### 9.6. Email usage

The Chief Executive Officer will ensure that information is provided to Councillors, Council staff and contractors prior to the election period to preclude unauthorised distribution of materials via the Council email system during an election period.

The Chief Executive Officer will advise that all email communication during the election period that relates to the election must only contain information about the election process or information required in accordance with, or under, any Act or regulation. Any publications to be distributed via email during the election period are to be authorised by the Chief Executive Officer as required by section 9.1 of this policy.

### 9.7. Annual Report

Due to the publication date of the 2023-24 Annual Report occurring during the election period, it is affected by the legislative restrictions on publications. Information about Councillors will be restricted to what is required by the Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020 and membership of delegated committees and other bodies to which they have been appointed by Council.

Any publication of an extract or summary of the Annual Report should not contain information that could be considered electoral matter. Despite publication of the Annual Report during the election period, it is deemed appropriate that the Mayoral Message be included in the Annual Report for the preceding financial year.

## 9.8. Council publications

Any Council publication which is potentially affected by this policy will be reviewed by the Manager Corporate Integrity and Legal Counsel, the Director Corporate Services or the Chief Executive Officer to ensure that any circulated, displayed or otherwise publicly available material during the election period does not contain material that may be construed as electoral matter.

Any increase in the publication or distribution of a Council publication must be approved by the Chief Executive Officer.

## 9.9. Council noticeboards and buildings

During the election period Council noticeboards and buildings will only be used for display of material that contains:

- (a) Information about the election process itself
- (b) Information that would not reasonably be considered to be electoral matter

# 10. Public consultation during the election period

## 10.1. Prohibition

It is prohibited under this policy for public consultation (whether new consultation or existing) on a Council issue to be undertaken during the election period unless prior approval is given by Council or the Chief Executive Officer.

The requirements of this section do not apply to public consultation required under the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* or matters subject to section 223 of the *Local Government Act 1989*.

Where public consultation occurred prior to the election period but a report has not yet been submitted to Council or a delegated committee for consideration, the results of the consultation will not be reported to Council or a delegated committee until the election period has concluded.

## 10.2. Approval for public consultations

Due to the prohibition in section 10.1, Council will not commission or approve any public consultation that is likely to run into the election period unless prior approval is given by Council or the Chief Executive Officer.

Where public consultation is approved to occur during the election period:

- public consultation materials will be vetted for electoral matter and express or implicit links to the election
- the results of that consultation will not be reported to Council until after the election period, except where approved by the Chief Executive Officer

## 10.3. Postponing consultation

In view of the potential for a matter or issue to become contentious or politically sensitive in the course of the election period, Council reserves the right where possible and practicable to postpone public consultation and any associated decisions where the matter is likely to affect voting in the election.

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## 11. Attendance at functions and events during the election period

### 11.1. Public events staged by external bodies

Councillors, including those intending to run as a candidate at a state or federal election, may continue to attend events and functions during the election period. As a rule, any such attendance will not be represented as acting in an official capacity on behalf of Hobsons Bay City Council.

### 11.2. Council events and functions

Only Council organised events and functions that are essential to the operation of Council will be held during the election period.

This may be varied by a Council resolution or where prior approval has been given by the Chief Executive Officer.

Where Council organised events and functions are held during the election period, Councillors and candidates, including members of Council staff standing for election, must not use the forum for campaigning and must not distribute electoral matter.

### 11.3. Speeches and keynote addresses

Councillors should not act in an official capacity, including giving public speeches or addresses at Council organised or sponsored events and functions, during the election period.

### 11.4. Recording attendance at external meetings and functions

The presence of Councillors at external meetings and functions may be recorded in attendance records, except where this record of attendance is in conjunction with information and or promotional material (i.e. text or images) that may be considered as electoral matter.

### 11.5. Publication of promotional material

In preparing any material concerning a Council organised or sponsored function or event which will be published or distributed during the election period, such preparation must be consistent with the controls under section 9 of this Policy.

### 11.6. Council and community committees

Meetings of Council's advisory groups, community working groups and committees will not be held during the election period.

## 12. Council resources

Council will ensure that due propriety is observed in the use of all Council resources during the election period, and Council staff are required to exercise appropriate discretion in that regard.

Council staff should avoid assisting Councillors and members of Council staff or members of Council committees and advisory groups who are standing for election in ways that could create a perception that they are being used for electoral purposes.

In any circumstances where the use of Council resources might be construed as being related to a candidate's election campaign, advice must be sought from the Manager Corporate Integrity and Legal Counsel, the Director Corporate Services or the Chief Executive Officer.

## 12.1.Council resources

Council resources should be used exclusively for normal Council business during the election period, and must not be used in connection with a candidate's election campaign.

A Councillor must not use Council resources in connection with, or in any way that may be perceived as in connection with, an election campaign. This applies to a Councillor standing in council, state or federal government elections. Such use would constitute misuse of position by the Councillor.

## 12.2.Correspondence

Councillors will sign only necessary correspondence, if any, during the election period.

Correspondence addressed to Councillors that relates to operational matters will be referred to the relevant Director for a response.

Correspondence in respect to significant, sensitive or controversial matters, or to policy matters, should be signed by the Chief Executive Officer.

Replies will be prepared in all cases to protect Council staff from any perception of political bias.

## 12.3.Expenses incurred by Councillors

Payment or reimbursement of costs relating to Councillors' out-of-pocket expenses incurred during the election period should only apply to necessary costs incurred in the performance of normal Council duties, not expenses incurred as a result of campaigning or that could be perceived as supporting or being connected with any candidate's election campaign.

In the case of Councillor claims that cover a combination of Council and electoral business, the Chief Executive Officer may approve a partial reimbursement to cover Council activities.

## 12.4.Council branding and stationery

Council logos, letterheads, or other Hobsons Bay City Council branding must not be used for, or linked in any way to, a candidate's election campaign.

## 12.5.Photographs and images

Photographs and images taken by or provided by Council are not to be used by Councillors for the purpose of electioneering or in support of their election campaign. This applies equally to images on the Council website, which are subject to copyright and must not be reproduced.



## 12.6.Support to the Mayor and Councillors

Council staff, including support staff for the Mayor and Councillors, must not be asked to undertake any tasks connected directly or indirectly with an election campaign.

## 12.7.Forums

No local community forums, ward meetings or any other forums of the type identified in the Community Engagement Framework will be held by Councillors during the election period.

## 13. Access to Council information

All candidates have equal rights to access public information relevant to their election campaigns from the Council administration, subject to legislative constraints including the *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014* and section 123 of the Act.

Councillors will continue to receive information that is necessary to fulfil their elected role as Councillors.

Neither Councillors nor candidates will be provided information or advice from Council staff that might be perceived to support and advise them during the election period.

### 13.1.Information and briefing material

Information and briefing material prepared or secured by staff for a Councillor during the election period must be necessary to the carrying out of the Councillor's role and must not be related to election issues or to issues that might be perceived to be of an electoral nature.

### 13.2.Information Request Register

The Manager Corporate Integrity and Legal Counsel will maintain an Information Request Register during the election period commencing on the opening of nominations. This register will be a public document recording all requests for information by Councillors or candidates, and the response given to those requests. The Information Request Register will be made available on the Council website.

Council staff will be required to provide details of requests and responses to the Manager Corporate Integrity and Legal Counsel for inclusion in the register.

Any enquiries by staff regarding information requests or briefing material perceived to be of an electoral nature or related to election issues will be referred by staff in the first instance to the Manager Corporate Integrity and Legal Counsel for a determination.

## 14. Media and media services

Council's media services are intended to promote Council activities or initiatives and must not be used in any way that might favour a candidate.

### 14.1.Media advice

Any requests for media advice or assistance from Councillors during the election period will be channeled through the Chief Executive Officer or the Chief Executive Officer's delegate. No media advice or assistance will be provided in relation to election issues or

in regard to publicity that involves specific Councillors who intend to run for a local, state or federal election.

## 14.2. Media releases/spokespersons

Media releases will not refer to specific Councillors during an election period, including those Councillors that intend to run for state or federal election. Where it is necessary to identify a spokesperson in relation to an issue the Chief Executive Officer or Director Corporate Services will determine the appropriate person.

## 14.3. Publicity campaigns

During the election period, Council publicity will be restricted to communicating normal Council activities and initiatives, and publicity campaigns other than for the purpose of conducting the election will be avoided wherever possible. Where a publicity campaign is deemed necessary for a Council activity, it must be approved by the Chief Executive Officer or the Chief Executive Officer's delegate.

## 14.4. Councillors

Councillors will not use their position as an elected representative or their access to Council staff and other Council resources to gain media attention in support of an election campaign for a local, state or federal election.

## 14.5. Council staff

During the election period Council staff cannot make any public statement that relates to an election issue, unless the statements have been approved by the Director Corporate Services or the Chief Executive Officer.

# 15. Equity in assistance to candidates

All candidates for the Council election will be treated equally.

## 15.1. Candidate assistance and advice

Any assistance and advice to be provided to candidates as part of the conduct of the Council election will be provided equally to all candidates. The type of assistance available will be documented and communicated to all candidates in advance.

Candidates will complete and submit an election campaign donation return to the Chief Executive Officer in the prescribed form within 40 days after election day. The return must contain details of any campaign donation or gift valued at more than the gift disclosure threshold (currently \$500 as at June 2022) which was received between the date 30 days after the previous election and the date 30 days after the current election.

## 15.2. Election process enquiries

All election process related enquiries from any candidate, whether a sitting Councillor or not, will be directed to the Victorian Electoral Commission (VEC) appointed Election Manager or, where the matter is outside the responsibilities of the Election Manager, to the Manager Corporate Integrity and Legal Counsel or the Director Corporate Services.

### 15.3. Misuse of position

Using Council resources for campaigning may be a criminal misuse of a Councillor's position under section 123 of the Act. Serious penalties are prescribed for any Councillor who inappropriately makes use of their position or information obtained in their role as a Councillor, to gain an advantage for themselves or for any other person.

## 16. Council staff member standing for election as Councillor

In the event that a member of Council staff stands for election as a Councillor for Hobsons Bay City Council, they must:

- (a) Inform the Chief Executive Officer immediately on becoming a candidate for election
- (b) In accordance with sections 34 and 256 of the Act, take leave for the duration of the election period to stand for election to the office of Councillor (with leave commencing, at the latest, from the time of nominating as a candidate)
- (c) Return any Council equipment (including, but not limited to, motor vehicles, telephones and computers), documents or information that is not available to the public for the duration of the election period
- (d) If elected, resign as a Council staff member in accordance with section 34 and 256 of the Act immediately upon being declared elected

A member of Council staff may stand for election for another Council without being required to follow the above process, but must continue to comply with this policy and the Employee Code of Conduct as a Council staff member.

## 17. Member of Council committee or advisory group standing for election as Councillor

In the event that a member of a Council committee or advisory group (other than a Councillor) stands for election as a Councillor for Hobsons Bay City Council, they must:

- (a) Inform the Chief Executive Officer immediately upon becoming a candidate for election
- (b) Return any Council equipment, documents or information which is not available to the public for the duration of the election period
- (c) If elected, resign from the committee immediately upon being declared elected

## 18. Election signage

This part of the policy provides guidance in relation to the rules which apply to signage that promotes candidates in an election or relates to election issues.

The content of election signage must meet the requirements for election material under the Act.

## 18.1.Election signs on private land

Election signs may be displayed on private land with permission from the owner of the land, subject to the following restrictions which are set out in clause 52.05-10 of the Hobsons Bay Planning Scheme:

- (a) The advertisement area of the sign must not exceed five square metres
- (b) Only one sign may be displayed on the land
- (c) The sign must not be animated or internally illuminated
- (d) The sign must not be displayed longer than 14 days after the election is held

## 18.2.Election signs on public land

Election signs are prohibited on land that is owned or managed by Council (including but not limited to recreation reserves, halls, facilities, nature strips, median strips and road reserves) and instances will be dealt with as a breach of the Hobsons Bay Planning Scheme.

## 18.3.Election signs on vehicles, trailers, bicycles, prams or similar

Portable or moveable election signs that are attached to a vehicle, trailer, bicycle, pram or similar may be displayed on a road provided that:

- (a) The sign does not unreasonably restrict the use of the road or endanger the safety of members of the public
- (b) The relevant parking restrictions and requirements are observed

Election signs attached to a vehicle, trailer, bicycle, pram or similar cannot under any circumstances be displayed on a footpath.

## 18.4.Breach

A breach of any of the above conditions regarding election signage will result in a request that the sign be removed within 48 hours.

Failure to adhere to this request will result in Council removing the sign and holding it at Council. An infringement may be issued and the relevant costs to Council will be payable by the candidate to whom the signage belongs. All collateral signs retained by Council will be disposed of 48 hours after the election has taken place. Any costs related to this disposal will be borne by the candidate to whom the signage belongs.

# 19. State and federal government elections

## 19.1.Councillors

Councillors will ensure there is a demonstrable distinction between their obligations to Council and their personal interests as a candidate, or member of a political party, in an election period prior to a state or federal election.

Councillors will not use Council resources or participate in electioneering at Council meetings, functions or events in support of any candidate in a state or federal election.

## 19.2.Councillors to declare candidacy in a state or federal election

As soon as practicable after becoming an endorsed candidate of a registered political party or expressing their intention to run as an independent candidate in a state or federal election, a Councillor must advise the Chief Executive Officer in writing. The Chief Executive Officer must advise all Councillors in writing as soon as practicable.

A Councillor who is a candidate for a state or federal election should declare this at a Council meeting as soon as practicable after the formal nomination date.

A Councillor standing as a candidate in state or federal elections is encouraged to take a leave of absence from the formal nomination date until election day. During this time, the Mayor will not delegate any responsibility to represent the office of Mayor to any Councillor who is standing as a candidate.

In the case of a Mayor standing as candidate, the Deputy Mayor will undertake Mayoral responsibilities during the election period. In the case of a Mayor and Deputy Mayor both standing as candidates, the Mayor from the previous mayoral term will undertake Mayoral responsibilities during the election period.

A Councillor candidate must, if elected in a state or federal election, resign immediately upon being declared elected.

## 19.3.Members of Council staff standing as candidates in a state or federal election

As soon as practicable after becoming a candidate in a state or federal election, a member of Council staff must advise the Chief Executive Officer in writing.

Members of Council staff standing as candidates in state or federal elections are encouraged to take a leave of absence from the formal nomination date until election day.

Members of Council staff standing as candidates in a state or federal election must seek advice from the Manager Corporate Integrity and Legal Counsel to manage any possible real or perceived conflicts of interest.

## 19.4.Photographs and images

Photos of and references to Councillors standing as candidates will only feature in Council's publications where it is related to usual Council business, functions or events.

## 19.5.Advocacy by Council

It is recognised that the community expects that Council will advocate prior to a state or federal election for actions and projects for the benefit of the Hobsons Bay community.

In undertaking advocacy Council will avoid "party political" positions and will instead advocate in an apolitical manner, for the benefit of the Hobsons Bay community.

## 20. Notification and distribution of policy

A copy of the Election Period Policy must:

- (a) Be given to each Councillor as soon as possible after it is adopted
- (b) Be available for inspection by the public at the Hobsons Bay Civic Centre

(c) Be published on Council's website

Additionally, prior to the commencement of the election period, the Chief Executive Officer will ensure that all staff are informed of the requirements of this policy at least 30 days prior to the start of the election period.

## 21. Roles and Responsibilities

### 21.1. Chief Executive Officer

In addition to their statutory responsibilities, the Chief Executive Officer will:

- schedule decisions prior to the election period or for determination by the incoming Council
- ensure an election period statement in the form specified in section 8.8 of this policy is included for each item listed on a Council meeting agenda during the election period
- vet agendas for Council and delegated committee meetings to ensure no item is included that could potentially influence voters at the election or encourage Councillor candidates to use the item as part of their electioneering
- with the Director Corporate Services, Manager Corporate Integrity and Legal Counsel, and Coordinator Governance and Information Management, provide advice on whether proposed decisions which cannot be scheduled prior to or after the election period are prohibited or significant
- with the Director Corporate Services and Manager Corporate Integrity and Legal Counsel, review publications potentially affected by this policy for electoral matter
- Where required, provide approval for:
  - any significant decisions required to be made during the election period, such as major planning scheme amendments, irrevocable decisions that significantly affect the municipality and other decisions that would bind the incoming Council
  - a Council resolution to be sought to seek ministerial exemption in the case that a prohibited decision is required to be made during the election period
  - publications for distribution after they have been vetted for electoral matter by the Governance unit, in accordance with the controls provided in section 9.2 of this policy
  - any increase required for the publication or distribution of a Council publication during an election period
  - any public consultation required to be undertaken during an election period
  - Council events or functions to be held during an election period
  - partial reimbursement of Councillor claims that cover a combination of Council and electoral business to cover Council activities
  - publicity campaigns deemed necessary for a Council activity during the election period
  - where required, approve public statements relating to election issue

- determine the status and protocols regarding use of Council's social media channels during the election period
- provide information to Councillors, Council staff and contractors prior to the election period to preclude unauthorised distribution of materials via the Council email system during an election period
- with the Director Corporate Services and Manager Corporate Integrity and Legal Counsel, provide advice on whether a proposed use of Council resources could be construed as being related to a candidate's election campaign
- sign correspondence in respect to significant, sensitive or controversial matters or policy matters during the election period
- receive any requests for media advice or assistance from Councillors during the election period
- where a spokesperson needs to be identified for a media release during the election period, determine the appropriate spokesperson in relation to the issue
- receive election campaign donation returns, to be submitted in the prescribed form by candidates within 40 days after election day
- notify all Councillors in writing as soon as practicable upon being informed that a Councillor has become a candidate in a state or federal election
- ensure that all staff are informed of the requirements of this policy at least 30 days prior to the start of the election period

## 21.2. Director Corporate Services

The Director Corporate Services will:

- where a spokesperson needs to be identified for a media release during the election period, determine the appropriate spokesperson in relation to the issue
- where required, approve public statements relating to election issues

## 21.3. Directors

Directors will

- wherever possible, avoid scheduling decisions during the election period
- provide initial approval for any publications to be issued during the election period, and forward to the Governance unit to be vetted for electoral matter

## 21.4. Manager Corporate Integrity and Legal Counsel

The Manager Corporate Integrity and Legal Counsel will:

- along with the Chief Executive Officer, Director Corporate Services and Coordinator Governance and Information Management, provide advice on whether proposed decisions which cannot be scheduled prior to or after the election period are prohibited or significant

- provide advice to Council staff on the appropriate management of any possible real or perceived conflicts of interest in relation to their support of a candidate in another municipality, or for state or federal election
- with the Chief Executive Officer and Director Corporate Services, review any Council publications potentially affected by this policy for electoral matter
- with the Chief Executive Officer and Director Corporate Services, provide advice on whether a proposed use of Council resources could be construed as being related to a candidate's election campaign
- maintain the Information Request Register from the date on which nominations open

## 21.5.Coordinator Governance and Information Management

The Coordinator Governance and Information Management will:

- along with the Chief Executive Officer, Director Corporate Services and Manager Corporate Integrity and Legal Counsel, provide advice on whether proposed decisions which cannot be scheduled prior to or after the election period are prohibited or significant
- receive enquiries and provide further information about this policy
- ensure this policy is reviewed and updated in accordance with the requirements of the Hobsons Bay Governance Rules

## 21.6.Governance unit

The Governance unit will:

- support the Manager Corporate Integrity and Legal Counsel in maintaining the Information Request Register
- upon receiving initial approval for any publications to be issued during the election period, vet the publications for electoral matter and submit to the Chief Executive Officer for final approval.

## 22. Related documents

Councillor and Staff Interaction Protocol

Councillor Code of Conduct

Employee Code of Conduct

Hobsons Bay Planning Scheme

## 23. Related legislation

Hobsons Bay Community Local Law 2015

Local Government Act 2020

Local Government Act 1989

Planning and Environment Act 1987

Document Name: Hobsons Bay City Council Election Period Policy v4.0

Document Type: Council-endorsed policy

Document Owner: Coordinator Governance and Information Management

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## 24. Review date

This policy will be reviewed at least once in a Council term, and no later than 12 months prior to the commencement of a general council election in accordance with rule 16.2 of the Hobsons Bay Governance Rules, unless it is required to be updated sooner.

## 25. Further information

For further information concerning this policy please contact the Coordinator Governance and Information Management on 1300 179 944 or [governance@hobsonsbay.vic.gov.au](mailto:governance@hobsonsbay.vic.gov.au).

## 26. Document control

<b>Policy Name</b>	Hobsons Bay Election Period Policy 2023
<b>Object ID</b>	A
<b>Agility Document Number</b>	
<b>Responsible Directorate</b>	Corporate Services
<b>Policy Owner</b>	Coordinator Governance and Information Management
<b>Policy Type</b>	Council endorsed policy
<b>Date Adopted by Council</b>	
<b>Review Date</b>	

## 27. Version history

<b>Version Number</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Authorised by</b>
	24 April 2014	Adopted by Council (Caretaker Policy)
1.0	8 March 2016	Adopted by Council (A2333080)
1.1	27 April 2018	Transfer to new Policy document format
2.0	12 November 2019	Adopted by Council (A3196088)
3.0	25 August 2020	Adopted by Council (A)
4.0		

