



Council Meeting Agenda

Tuesday 16 December 2025
Commencing at 7.00 PM

Council Chamber
Hobsons Bay Civic Centre
115 Civic Parade, Altona

HOBSONS
BAY CITY
COUNCIL



OUR MISSION

We will listen, engage and work with our community to plan, deliver and advocate for Hobsons Bay to secure a happy, healthy, fair and sustainable future for all.

OUR VALUES

Respectful

Community driven and focused

Trusted and reliable

Efficient and responsible

Bold and innovative

Accountable and transparent

Recognised

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 and present.

CONDUCT OF COUNCIL MEETINGS

Meetings of Hobsons Bay City Council are to be conducted in accordance with Council's Governance Rules, which can be viewed at:

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Members of the public attending Council meetings must abide by the standards of behaviour set out in section 15 of the Governance Rules. Any person engaging in disruptive or disorderly behaviour may be required by the Chairperson to leave the meeting in accordance with the Governance Rules.

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1 Welcome and Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners

The Chair will welcome members of the gallery and acknowledge that Council is gathered on the traditional land of the Bunurong People of the Kulin Nation and offers its respect to elders past and present.

2 Apologies

The Chair will call for apologies received from Councillors who are unable to attend this meeting.

3 Disclosure of Conflicts of Interest

In accordance with sections 127 and 128 of the *Local Government Act 2020* Councillors and staff are required to disclose a general or material conflict of interest. A conflict of interest must be disclosed in accordance with rule 18.1 of the Hobsons Bay Governance Rules.

Disclosure must occur immediately before the matter is considered or discussed.

4 Confirmation of Minutes

Confirmation of the minutes of the Council Meetings of Hobsons Bay City Council held on 14 November 2025 (Election of the Mayor and Deputy Mayor) and 18 November 2025, and the confidential minutes of meetings held on 29 July 2025 and 7 October 2025.

Unconfirmed Minutes,
which are to be
confirmed at the
Council Meeting on
16 December 2025.

Council Meeting

Agenda

Election of the Mayor and Deputy Mayor

Friday 14 November 2025
Commencing at 7.00 PM

COUNCIL CHAMBER

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Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 14 November at 7pm.

Present

Chairperson

Ms Kerry Thompson

Interim Chief Executive Officer

Councillors

Cr Daria Kellander

Altona Ward

Cr Diana Grima

Altona Meadows Ward

Cr Rayane Hawli

Altona North Ward

Cr Paddy Keys-Macpherson

Laverton Ward

Cr Kristin Bishop

Spotswood Ward

Cr Lisa Bentley

Williamstown Ward

Cr Michael Disbury

Williamstown North Ward

Officers

Ms Allison Kenwood

Interim Director Corporate Services

Ms Elyse Rider

Interim Director Sustainable Communities

Mr Matthew Irving

Director Infrastructure and City Services

Ms Marlo Emmitt

Acting Manager Corporate Integrity

Ms Michelle Cardamone

Acting Coordinator Governance

Ms Beti Flaherty

Governance Officer and Timekeeper

Other

Mr John Tanner AM

Municipal Monitor

1 Council Welcome and Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners

The Chair declared the meeting open at 7.00pm.

The Chair welcomed members of the public and acknowledged the Bunurong People of the Kulin Nation as the Traditional Owners of these municipal lands and waterways.

2 Apologies and Leaves of Absence

The Chair called for apologies received from Councillors who were unable to attend this meeting.

In accordance with rule 19 of the Hobsons Bay Governance Rules 2025, the Interim Chief Executive Officer assumed the role as temporary Chairperson for proceedings relating to the election of the Mayor.

3 Business

3.1 Determination of Mayoral Term

In accordance with section 26(3) of the Act, Council must determine by resolution whether the Mayor is to be elected for a one (1) or two (2) year term. This decision must be made before the election of the Mayor.

Motion

Moved: Cr Kellander, seconded Cr Bentley:

That Council resolves that the Mayor be elected for a term of one year.

Outcome: Carried unanimously

3.2 Election of Mayor

The Interim Chief Executive Officer invited nominations for the office of Mayor.

Cr Disbury nominated Cr Grima which was seconded by Cr Grima.

Cr Grima accepted the nomination.

The Interim Chief Executive Officer invited any further nomination.

Cr Bishop nominated Cr Hawli which was seconded by Cr Keys-Macpherson.

Cr Hawli accepted the nomination.

The Interim Chief Executive Officer invited Councillors to cast their votes.

Councillor Grima received the majority of votes and was therefore declared elected as Mayor of Hobsons Bay City Council for the 2025-2026 Mayoral term

For: Cr Bentley Cr Grima, Cr Disbury, Cr Kellander

The Mayor was presented with the robe and chains. The Mayor was then invited to address the Council and assume the role of Chair.

3.3 Establishment of the Office of Deputy Mayor and Determination of Deputy Mayoral Term

In accordance with section 20A of the Local Government Act 2020 (the Act), Council may establish the office of Deputy Mayor. If this office is established, section 26 of the Act applies to the election of the Deputy Mayor as though any reference to the Mayor were a reference to the Deputy Mayor. Accordingly, Council must determine by resolution whether the Deputy Mayor is to be elected for a one (1) or two (2) year term, and this decision must be made prior to the election of the Deputy Mayor.

Motion

Moved: Cr Kellander, seconded Cr Keys-Macpherson:

1. That Council resolves:

1.1. To establish the Office of Deputy Mayor.

1.2. That the Deputy Mayor be elected for a term of one year.

Outcome: Carried unanimously

3.4 Election of Deputy Mayor

The Mayor invited nominations for the office of Deputy Mayor.

Cr Kellander nominated Cr Bentley, which was seconded by Cr Disbury.

Cr Disbury accepted the nomination.

The Mayor invited any further nomination.

Cr Hawli nominated Cr Keys-Macpherson which was seconded by Cr Bishop.

Cr Keys-Macpherson accepted the nomination.

The Mayor invited Councillors to cast their votes.

Councillor Bentley received the majority of votes and was therefore declared elected as Deputy Mayor of Hobsons Bay City Council for the 2025-2026 Mayoral term.

For: Cr Bentley, Cr Grima, Cr Disbury, Cr Kellander

4 Close of Meeting

There being no further business, the Chair declared the meeting closed at 7.33pm.

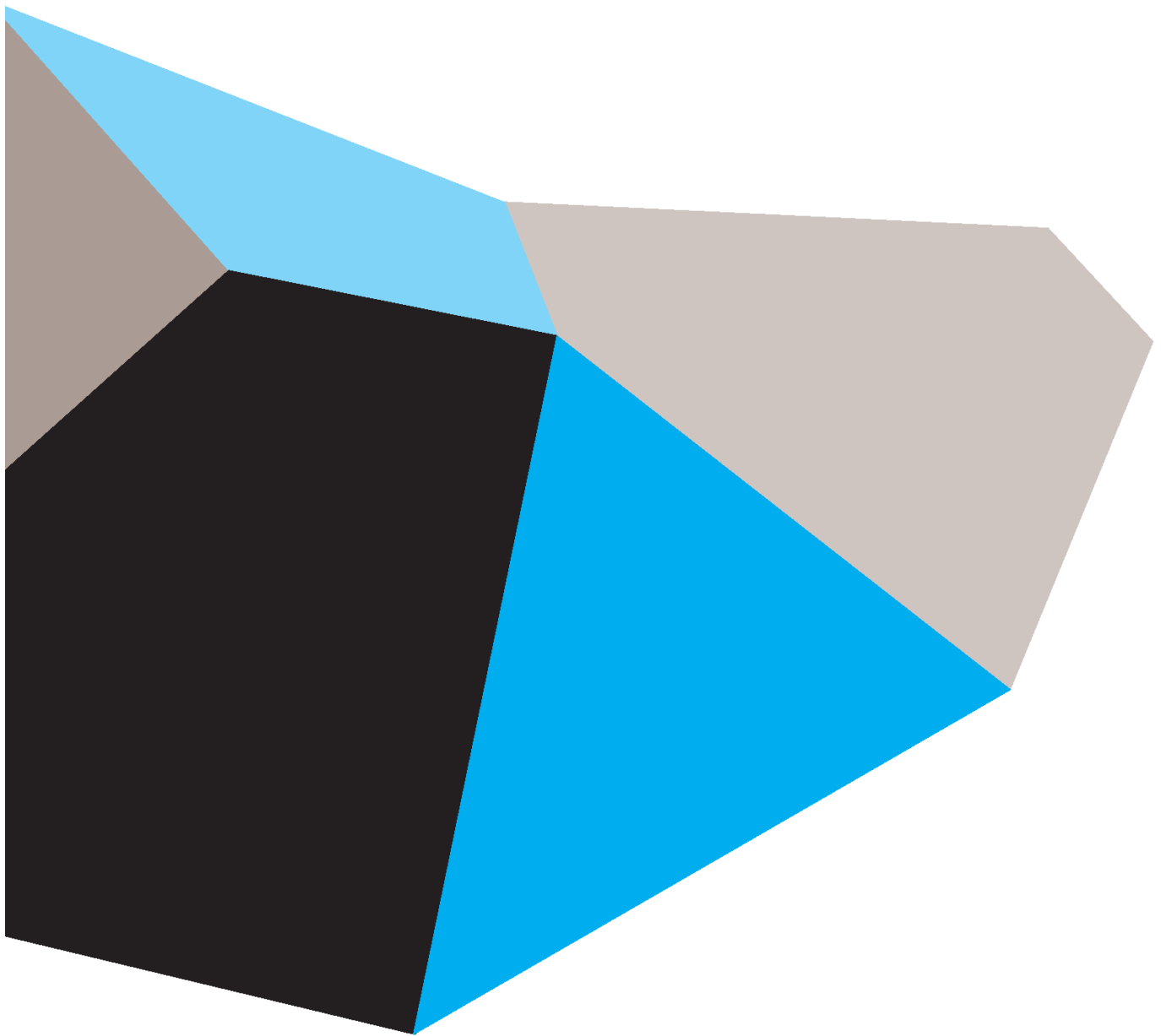
Chair: _____

Signed and certified as having been confirmed

Date: _____

HOBSONS
BAY CITY
COUNCIL





HOBSONS BAY CITY COUNCIL

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which are to be
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Council Meeting on
16 December 2025.

Council Meeting Minutes

18 November 2025

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Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 18 November at 7pm.

Present

Chairperson

Cr Diana Grima (Mayor)

Altona Meadows Ward

Councillors

Cr Daria Kellander

Altona Ward

Cr Rayane Hawli

Altona North Ward

Cr Paddy Keys-Macpherson

Laverton Ward

Cr Kristin Bishop

Spotswood Ward

Cr Lisa Bentley (Deputy Mayor)

Williamstown Ward

Cr Michael Disbury

Williamstown North Ward

Officers

Kerry Thompson

Interim Chief Executive Officer

Allison Kenwood

Interim Director Corporate Services

Elyse Rider

Interim Director Sustainable Communities

Matthew Irving

Director Infrastructure and City Services

Marlo Emmitt

Acting Manager Corporate Integrity

Beti Flaherty

Governance Officer and Timekeeper

Jessica Maunder

Proof Reading Officer and Minute Secretary

Other

John Tanner AM

Municipal Monitor

1 Council Welcome and Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners

The Chair declared the meeting open at 7.00pm.

The Chair welcomed members of the public and acknowledged the Bunurong People of the Kulin Nation as the Traditional Owners of these municipal lands and waterways.

2 Apologies and Leaves of Absence

There were no apologies.

Acknowledgement

The Chair made a special acknowledgement of the work of Chevalier (Chev.) Joe Attard, founder and president of the Maltese Association of Hobsons Bay since 1992, who had recently announced his resignation after years of dedicated service and outstanding contribution.

3 Disclosure of Conflicts of Interest

In accordance with sections 127 and 128 of the *Local Government Act 2020* Councillors and staff are required to disclose a general or material conflict of interest. A conflict of interest must be disclosed in accordance with rule 18.1 of the Hobsons Bay Governance Rules.

There were no disclosures of conflict of interest.

4 Confirmation of Minutes

Motion

Moved: Cr Bentley, seconded Cr Kellander:

That Council confirms the open and closed minutes of the meeting of the Hobsons Bay City Council held on 28 October 2025.

Outcome: Carried

5 Public Question Time

Electric vehicle charging

Jeremy Tennant

- Q Residents of Hobsons Bay who have or would like to purchase an Electric Vehicle may not have (a) Access to a garage to charge their EVs (b) Access to suitable power in their garage. To "encourage uptake of EVs" residents need access to public EV charging infrastructure.**

According to the Hobsons Bay City Council website, the Council is committed to encouraging the uptake of electric vehicles. While other councils in Victoria are trialling charging mechanisms like kerbside parking, or have made available public charging facilities, Hobsons Bay Council's commitment appears to be limited to implementing a single charging site in Altona and is guided by a 7 year old decision paper from 2018 (the link to this 2018 paper is currently broken on the council's website). What has the council undertaken in 2025, and plans to undertake in 2026 to support residents with the uptake of EVs?

- A** Council is in the process of developing an Integrated Transport Strategy, with expected implementation in the second half of 2026. This strategy will formalise Council's position on EV charging across the municipality, including kerbside charging and heritage considerations. Extensive community consultation will be undertaken early in 2026 on all components of this strategy, and residents will have a chance to put forward their priorities and desires in this space.

Separate to this, Council is in the process of reviewing its Heritage Guidelines across private landholdings to ensure sustainability including consideration of EV Charging is addressed more broadly in this space.

- Q Will you commit to a 2026 trial of kerbside EV parking for residents, and deploying public charging infrastructure such as light post EV charging in neighbourhoods outside of Altona.**

- A** Council officers would be recommending that a trial at this stage cannot be committed to without the work of the Integrated Transport Strategy being undertaken. There are a lot of unknowns in these trials around use of public land and liability, and it is recommended that a strategic direction of Council formed before this type of approach is pursued.

Williamstown Swimming and Life Saving Club redevelopment

Paul Austin and Robert Ferris (multiple questions with combined reply)

- Q PA: At the September Council meeting, Council officer Mr Irving said Council had committed \$3m to the proposed redevelopment of the Williamstown lifesaving club. But in a media release in June last year, the State MP for Williamstown, Ms Horne, said Council had committed \$5.5m to the redevelopment. Who is right – Mr Irving or Ms Horne – and do councillors know how much ratepayer money they have allocated to this proposed enormous overdevelopment on Williamstown beach?**
- Q PA: The Council's budget says Council has committed \$5.5m to the proposed redevelopment of the Williamstown lifesaving club. But Council officer Mr Irving has subsequently said Council has committed \$3m to the proposed redevelopment.**

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Asked to explain this \$2.5m budget black hole, a Council spokesman told The Westsider newspaper: "The \$5.5m figure referenced reflects part of the total project budget allocated for this financial year, with funds from both Council/state government contribution." Can anyone here explain what that means?

Q RF: At the September Council meeting, Council officer Mr Irving said the estimated budget for the proposed redevelopment of the Williamstown Swimming and Life Saving Club was \$16.6 million. At the October meeting, Mr Irving said the final cost "will not be known until the procurement process is facilitated". Then, in the November edition of the local Westsider newspaper, a Council spokesman said, "The total budget is \$14,529 m". Does Council know how much this redevelopment will cost, and if so, could you please tell the ratepayers of Hobsons Bay?

A The total current budget allocation towards this project, which has and will continue to span across multiple financial years is \$14.529 million. This is made up of \$11.349 million from the state through a grant, \$3 million as a Council contribution and \$180,000 from the Williamstown Swimming and Life Saving Club.

As per previous answers regarding how much the redevelopment will cost, these are budget figures used by Council for purposes of budgeting and forecasting; the exact cost of the project will be worked through in a procurement process once approvals are obtained, and that is when the exact cost will be known.

Josephine Cafagna

Q The Williamstown lifesaving club withdrew its previous redevelopment plans after internal membership objections. Will Council now rethink its latest redevelopment plans given the widespread community concern that it will be detrimental to community amenity and the history and heritage of Williamstown Beach?

A Significant community engagement has been undertaken to progress the designs for the redevelopment of the Swimming and Life Saving Club including consultation with the club and the broader community.

While acknowledging that objections have been raised, this consultation identified a broad and strong community support towards the design that forms the current redevelopment plans. Consideration of the planning permit application will be considered by Council in due course.

Q Council is proposing to gift beachfront public land to the Williamstown lifesaving club for its proposed redevelopment. When did Council make that decision to give the club more than 19 public carparking spaces; do all councillors agree with the decision; and does Council think the community supports this gifting of public land to a fenced-off, members-only club?

A The Statutory Planning team is undertaking an assessment of the proposal, including the car parking provision and its impact on public parking, with this being included in the officer's assessment report which will be made public when the application is ready for decision. This application will likely go to the council meeting for a decision and that is when councillors will make their views and decision known on that matter.

Hick Street pedestrian crossing and Brunel Street proposed bike path

Rowena Joske

- Q In the May 2022 Council meeting Council adopted the Planning Scheme amendment for Precinct 16 west in South Kingsville. As discussed in that report, the agreed plan is that is that when the residential development there is built the pedestrian path on VicTrack land that currently connects from Morseby Street corner to the Hick Street Crossing will be removed. An acoustic wall is planned to be built along the boundary blocking access to the VicTrack land. An opening in the acoustic wall will be built that leads directly from the crossing and south into the new development. However, the is currently no plan to reinstate the path to connect to the existing South Kingsville neighbourhood to the west.**

The Officer response in the May 2022 report supported the reinstatement of a path and stated that that the design and location of a new path connecting to this existing neighbourhood needed to be resolved though discussion with stakeholders.

Given this context, can I please hear from the Sustainable Communities directorate what is the Planning team's understanding of this issue and Planning's advice on how the connection between Moresby Street and the Hick Street crossing should be addressed.

- A The Precinct 16 West Framework Plan incorporated in the Hobsons Bay Planning Scheme indicates the footpath within the Brooklyn-Newport Railway line adjacent to Moresby Street exists and forms a key pathway network. There is no suggestion in the Framework Plan this is to be removed.**

The Framework Plan also indicates a new connection from Precinct 16 West directly to the railway crossing which heads to Hick and Birmingham Streets. Any changes to the path and railway crossing will be at the discretion of VicTrack.

- Q Tonight's council report on the Hick Street crossing discussed a council "Greenline Vision" to build a bike path down Brunel Street. This Vision directly contradicts the Comprehensive Development Plan (CDP) for the Altona North Precinct 15 development which has been incorporated into the Planning Scheme. The CDP requires bike routes at Aloha Street and Watson Street, which would both connect to the Hick Street crossing, and specifies that Brunel Street must be a bus priority street including in-lane bus stops. The development plan clearly specifies no bike infrastructure on Brunel Street.**

Can I please get an explanation from the Planning team regarding this contradiction between the planning scheme and the Greenline Vision and clarity on which Council should be following.

- A The Altona North Comprehensive Development Plan (CDP) applies to the developable area of Precinct 15. It indicates that connections through the precinct should connect to an "on-road bike lane" on Aloha Street and an "off-road shared path" on Watson Street. While the CDP shows Brunel Street as a proposed bus route, there is nothing in the plan stating that an "off-road" bike path can't be built on Brunel Street. Any proposed bike path on Brunel Street will need to align with the Local Area Traffic Management Study (LATM) for RD-05 and ensure Brunel Street remains bus-capable.**

6 Petitions and Joint Letters

6.1 Petitions and Joint Letters Received

6.1.1 Petition: Stronger Oversight of Local Building Site Compliance Motion

Moved: Cr Keys-Macpherson, seconded Cr Disbury:

That Council:

- 1. Receives and notes the petition in relation to stronger oversight of local building site compliance.**
- 2. Receives a further report on this matter at a future Council meeting.**

Outcome: Carried unanimously

6.2 Responses to Petitions and Joint Letters

6.2.1 Response to Resolution: Hick Street Pedestrian and Bike Crossing

Directorate: Infrastructure and City Services
Responsible Officer: Manager Engineering Services
Attachments: Nil

Purpose

To respond to the resolution made on 23 September 2025 Council meeting, which referenced the Hick Street Pedestrian Crossing petition.

Motion

Moved: Cr Bishop, seconded Cr Hawli:

That Council:

- 1. Notes that the relevant authority who owns the land in question is VicTrack, and that the land is leased and managed by Australian Rail Track Corporation (ARTC).**
- 2. Continues its support for the retention of the Hick Street pedestrian and bike rail crossing and writes to ARTC and VicTrack to consider the potential upgrade of this infrastructure for the provision of a 3.5m shared pathway to better accommodate both pedestrians and cyclists.**
- 3. Seek for VicTrack to provide an annual update on any emerging issues regarding railway land holdings within the municipality.**
- 4. Notes the future options for cycling connections in this area, that are strategically supported and how they interact with the Hick Street pedestrian and bike rail crossing.**
- 5. Writes to the lead petitioner with this outcome.**

Outcome: Carried unanimously

7 Officer Reports

7.1 Statutory Planning

Nil reports

7.2 Matters for Decision

7.2.1 State-led Rezoning of Industrial Land (SUZ2, SUZ3 & SUZ4): October 2025 Update and Council Response

Directorate: Sustainable Communities

Responsible Officer: Manager Strategy, Economy and Sustainability

Attachments:

1. DTP Correspondence - Draft Rezoning Documentation (October 2025) [7.2.1.1 - 2 pages]
2. Council Correspondence - Response to Draft Rezoning Documentation (October 2025) [7.2.1.2 - 9 pages]

Purpose

To seek Council's endorsement of its formal position on the Department of Transport and Planning's (DTP) October 2025 draft Planning Scheme Amendment for Special Use Zone – Schedules 2, 3 and 4 (SUZ2, SUZ3 and SUZ4) and authorise continued collaboration to ensure Council's objectives, including the Environmental Significance Overlay (ESO), the Design and Development Overlay (DDO) and the Buffer Area Overlay (BAO) controls, are reflected in the final amendment.

Motion

Moved: Cr Hawli, seconded Cr Bentley:

That Council:

1. **Endorses the Interim CEO's correspondence and technical matrix as Council's formal position on the State-led rezoning of Special Use Zone – Schedules 2, 3 and 4 (SUZ2, SUZ3 and SUZ4).**
2. **Notes the inclusion of SUZ2 (Williamstown North) in the draft amendment and requests targeted consultation and application of Buffer Area Overlay (BAO) controls to manage Major Hazard Facility (MHF) interface risks.**
3. **Reaffirms the need for Environmental Significance Overlay (ESO) and Design and Development Overlay (DDO) controls, minimum lot size provisions, and infrastructure contribution mechanisms to be incorporated into the final amendment.**
4. **Requests the Department of Transport and Planning (DTP) progress the amendment under Section 20(4) of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*, with targeted consultation enabled under Section 20(5), to ensure the amendment and Council's local controls (ESO, DDO and BAO) are considered prior to gazettal.**
5. **Authorises officers to continue engagement with DTP to secure these outcomes.**

Outcome: Carried unanimously

7.2.2 Aquatic Strategy Review

Directorate: Sustainable Communities

Responsible Officer: Manager Recreation and Leisure

Attachments: HBCC Aquatic Strategy Action Plan Report (Draft) 311025 V4
ELT Briefing [7.2.2.1 - 46 pages]

Purpose

To seek Council endorsement of the Draft Hobsons Bay Aquatic Strategy – Review and Action Plan 2025-30, for the purpose of commencing a community engagement period.

Motion

Moved: Cr Kellander, seconded Cr Hawli:

That Council:

1. **Supports the draft Aquatic Strategy Review and Action Plan 2025-30 to commence community consultation in accordance with Council's Community Engagement Policy.**
2. **Receives a report at a future Council meeting, summarising the feedback from the community consultation period and determining next steps.**

Outcome: Carried

For: Cr Kellander, Cr Bishop, Cr Bentley, Cr Hawli

Against: Cr Grima, Cr Keys-Macpherson, Cr Disbury (abstained)

7.2.3 Councillor Appointments to Internal and External Committees

Directorate: Corporate Services
Responsible Officer: Acting Coordinator Governance
Attachments: Nil

Purpose

To appoint Councillor representatives to internal and external committees that are scheduled to meet in early December 2025, and to note that appointments to the remaining committees will be considered at a future Council Meeting.

Motion

Moved: Cr Kellander, seconded Cr Bentley:

That Council:

- 1. Appoints Cr Disbury and Cr Bishop to Council's Audit and Risk Committee.**
- 2. Appoints Cr Keys-Macpherson as the proxy for Council's Audit and Risk Committee.**
- 3. Appoints Cr Hawli as delegate to the LeadWest Joint Delegated Committee.**
- 4. Appoints Cr Keys-Macpherson as the proxy for the LeadWest Joint Delegated Committee.**
- 5. Appoints Cr Bentley as the alternative delegate for Melbourne 9 (M9).**
- 6. Appoints Cr Keys-Macpherson as delegate of the Metropolitan Transport Forum Committee.**
- 7. Notes that the Mayor, by virtue of their position, is the appointed delegate of Melbourne 9 (M9), in accordance with the M9 Memorandum of Understanding.**
- 8. Notes that all Councillors are appointed to the Chief Executive Officer Employment Matters Committee, as set out in the Terms of Reference.**
- 9. Notes that a report recommending the appointment of Councillors to the remaining internal and external committees will be considered at a future Council meeting.**

Outcome: Carried unanimously

7.2.4 Establishment of the Hearing of Submissions Committee

Directorate: Corporate Services
Responsible Officer: Acting Manager Corporate Integrity
Attachments: Hearing of Submissions Committee Terms of Reference
[7.2.4.1 - 3 pages]

Purpose

To establish a Hearing of Submissions Committee which will facilitate the hearing of public submissions on various matters, including statutory planning, budget, traffic, transport and policy related matters and propose an amendment to Council's Governance Rules.

Motion

Moved: Cr Hawli, seconded Cr Disbury:

That Council:

- 1. Establishes the Hearing of Submissions Committee and adopts the attached Terms of Reference.**
- 2. Approves the following proposed amendment to Hobsons Bay City Council's Governance Rules, for the purposes of community engagement for the period 20 November to 3 December 2025 (inclusive):**

2.1. Change the first paragraph of Clause 11.2 to read:

"Members of the public can make submissions to Council on any Statutory and/or Strategic Planning items on the meeting agenda, where an opportunity to be heard at a Hearing of Submissions Committee meeting has not been provided."

Outcome: Carried unanimously

7.2.5 Council Meeting Dates 2026

Directorate: Corporate Services
Responsible Officer: Acting Coordinator Governance
Attachments: Nil

Purpose

To set the dates, times and venue for meetings of the Council for 2026.

Motion

Moved: Cr Kellander, seconded Cr Bentley:

That Council:

1. Approves the schedule of Council meeting dates for 2026, as detailed below.

Meeting	Date	Time
Council meeting	Tuesday 24 February 2026	7pm
Council meeting	Tuesday 24 March 2026	7pm
Council meeting	Tuesday 28 April 2026	7pm
Council meeting	Tuesday 26 May 2026	7pm
Council meeting (Includes adoption of budget 2026-27)	Tuesday 23 June 2026	7pm
Council meeting	Tuesday 28 July 2026	7pm
Council meeting	Tuesday 25 August 2026	7pm
Council meeting	Tuesday 22 September 2026	7pm
Council meeting	Tuesday 27 October 2026	7pm
Council meeting (Election of Mayor and Deputy Mayor)	Friday 13 November 2026	7pm
Council meeting	Tuesday 24 November 2026	7pm
Council meeting	Tuesday 15 December 2026	7pm

2. Determines that all Council meetings will be held at Hobsons Bay Civic Centre, 115 Civic Parade, Altona and livestreamed, unless otherwise advertised.
3. Provides public notice of the Council meeting dates, including publication on Council's website and display at Council's Customer Service Centres, in accordance with the Hobsons Bay Governance Rules 2025.

Outcome: Carried unanimously

7.2.6 Capital Works Progress Report Q1 FY2025-26

Directorate: Infrastructure and City Services

Responsible Officer: Manager Capital Works

Attachments: Capital Works Q1 FY 25-26 [7.2.6.1 - 23 pages]

Purpose

To provide Council with the first quarter status update on the delivery of the 2025–26 Capital Works Program (CWP).

Motion

Moved: Cr Hawli, seconded Cr Bentley:

That Council:

- 1. Receives the Quarterly Capital Works Program Status Report as at 30 September 2025 (Attachment 1).**
- 2. Notes the identified forecast adjustments to projects within the 2025–26 Capital Works Program, in accordance with the Capital Works Framework.**

Outcome: Carried unanimously

7.2.7 First Quarter Financial Report - Period ended 30 September 2025

Directorate: Corporate Services
Responsible Officer: Chief Financial Officer
Attachments: Financial Report September 2025 [7.2.7.1 - 21 pages]

Purpose

To present Council with the financial results for the period ended 30 September 2025 and the revised 2025-26 annual forecast projections following completion of the September quarterly forecast review.

Question taken on notice

Cr Disbury noted that Council is currently understaffed by 70 officers, and asked what has driven the employee costs over budget by \$1.79 million and whether this included the cost of the municipal monitor.

Interim CEO Kerry Thompson said she would take the question on notice, and said she could not advise whether the monitor's salary was included, but would check this.

Motion

Moved: Cr Hawli, seconded Cr Kellander:

That Council:

- 1. Notes the financial report for the period ended 30 September 2025.**
- 2. Endorses the revised 2025-26 annual forecasts.**

Outcome: Carried

For: Cr Kellander, Cr Bishop, Cr Bentley, Cr Keys-Macpherson, Cr Hawli, Cr Grima

Against: Cr Disbury

7.3 Matters for Noting

7.3.1 First Quarter Major Initiatives Progress Update 2025-26

Directorate: Corporate Services
Responsible Officer: Manager Community and Council Plan Development
Attachments: Quarter 1 2025-26 - Council Plan Initiatives Progress Report attachment V3 [7.3.1.1 - 6 pages]

Purpose

To provide Council with the first quarter update (1 July to 30 September 2025) on the progress of the major initiatives that are included in the annual budget 2025-26.

Motion

Moved: Cr Hawli, seconded Cr Keys-Macpherson:

That Council notes progress made on the major initiatives during the first quarter of 2025-26.

Outcome: Carried unanimously

8 Other Reports

8.1 Committee Reports

Nil reports

8.2 Delegate Reports

Motion

Moved Cr Hawli, seconded Cr Bentley:

That Council receives and notes the recent delegate reports:

1.1 Hobsons Bay Local Safety Committee - 21 October 2025

1.2 M9 (Melbourne 9) - 3 October 2025.

Outcome: Carried unanimously

9 Reports of Informal Meetings of Council

Motion

Moved Cr Kellander, seconded Cr Bishop:

That Council receives the reports of informal meetings of Council for:

1.1 Williamstown Mechanics Institute site visit – 14 October 2025

1.2 Pre Council Meeting Briefing – 28 October 2025

1.3 Councillor Briefing – 5 November 2025

1.4 Councillor Briefing – 11 November 2025.

Outcome: Carried unanimously

10 Notices of Motion

No notices of motion were received.

11 Councillor Questions

Cr Keys-Macpherson referred to the May 2025 theft of the “Walking Man” artwork from Bladin Street in Laverton, along with the theft (or removal to prevent theft) of other artwork elements, and asked for an update on the investigation into the theft, the potential recasting and return of the artworks, and what the community can expect for the remaining artworks and at the sites which now feel empty.

Elyse Rider, Interim Director Sustainable Communities, said that as two of the three “Linking Laverton” artworks by Dean Bowen had been stolen, and other elements had also been stolen, damaged, replaced or relocated in recent years, officers do not recommend further replacement of those specific artworks and it is planned to decommission the plinths and reinstate the sites.

It is recommended to relocate the remaining artwork (the bus) to a location with surveillance. A location in Laverton has been identified that still has relevance for the work, and this will be worked through with the artist.

Ms Rider said that Council has made a successful insurance claim and that the funds will support the relocation costs and any future proposal for public art in Laverton.

12 Urgent Business

There was no urgent business.

13 Close of Meeting

There being no further business, the Chair declared the meeting closed at 8.24pm.

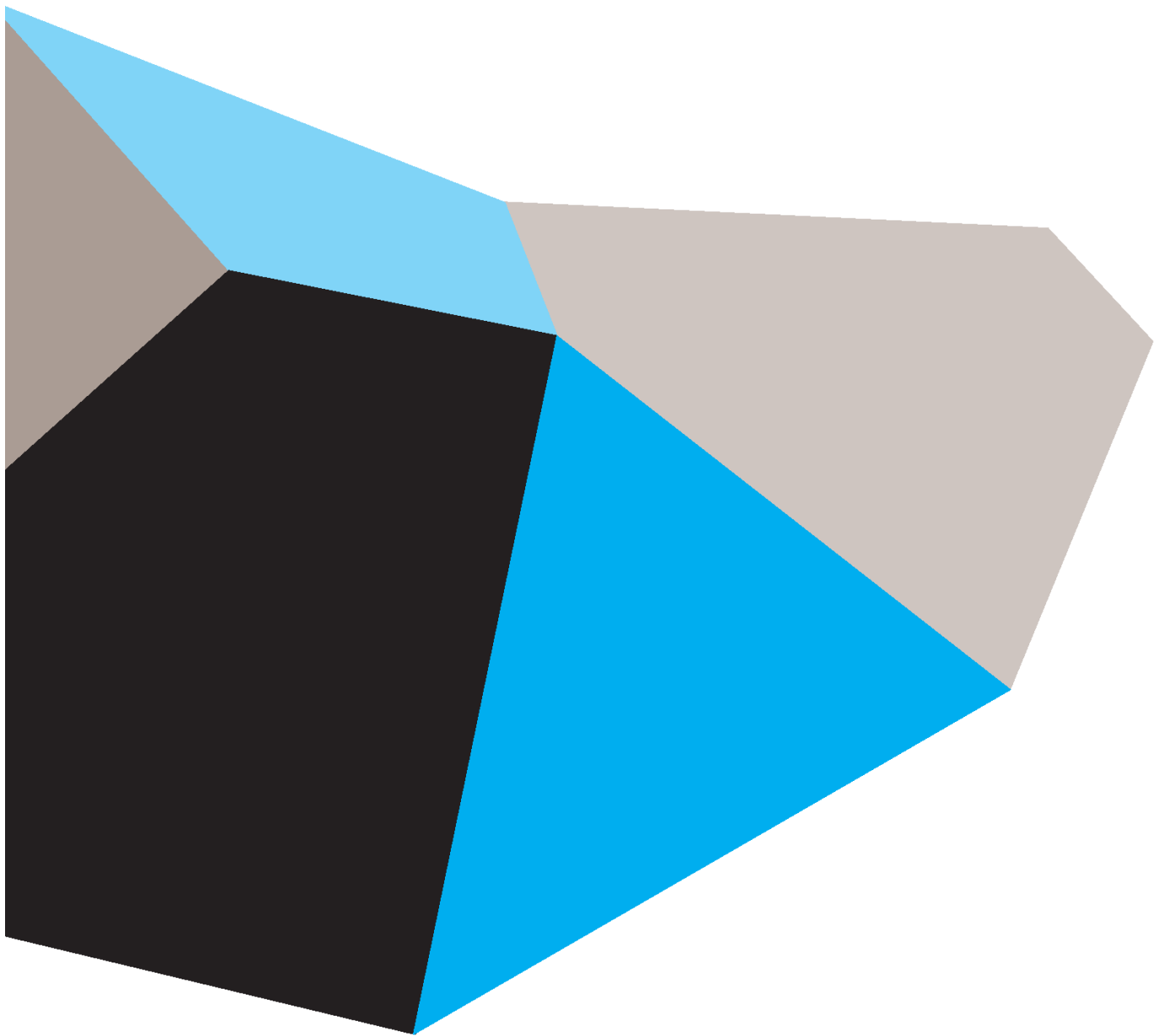
Chair: _____

Signed and certified as having been confirmed

Date: _____

HOBSONS
BAY CITY
COUNCIL





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5 Public Question Time

Public Question Time provides an opportunity for the public to ask questions related to items on the agenda of the Council Meeting or any other matter within Council's responsibility.

Questions must be put in writing and received by 12pm on the day before the Council Meeting. Submitters may read out their own questions at the meeting or may request the Chair to read the question out on their behalf.

6 Petitions and Joint Letters

6.1 Petitions and Joint Letters Received

6.1.1 Joint Letter: Concern regarding Metro Trains' proposed fence along Railway Place, Williamstown between Cole Street and Thompson Street

Documentation in relation to this item will be made available as soon as practicable.

6.2 Responses to Petitions and Joint Letters

There are no responses to petitions or joint letters in this agenda.

7 Officer Reports

7.1 Statutory Planning

There are no statutory planning items for consideration.

7.2 Matters for Decision

7.2.1 Council Plan 2025-29 and strategic documents – for adoption

Directorate: Sustainable Communities

Responsible Officer: Manager Community and Council Plan development

Reviewer: Interim Director Corporate Services
Interim Director Sustainable Communities
Director Infrastructure and City Services

Attachments:

1. Council Plan 2025-29 including Community Vision 2040 - for adoption [7.2.1.1 - 76 pages]
2. Health, Wellbeing and Safety Plan 2025-29 - for adoption [7.2.1.2 - 92 pages]
3. Asset Plan 2025-35 - for adoption [7.2.1.3 - 74 pages]
4. Financial Plan 2025-35 - for adoption [7.2.1.4 - 112 pages]
5. HBCC Annual Action Plan Year 1 2025-26 - for adoption [7.2.1.5 - 4 pages]

Purpose

To update Council on the final round of community engagement and to seek adoption of the Council Plan 2025-29 including Community Vision 2040, Health Wellbeing and Safety Plan 2025-29, Asset Plan 2025-35, Financial Plan 2025-35 and Annual Action Plan Year 1 at the December Council Meeting.

Recommendation

That Council:

1. **Adopts the Hobsons Bay Council Plan 2025-29, including the Community Vision 2040, and Annual Action Plan Year 1 (2025-26).**
2. **Adopts the Hobsons Bay Health, Wellbeing and Safety Plan 2025-29 as Council's municipal public health and wellbeing plan, including the items outlined in the Annual Action Plan Year 1.**
3. **Adopts the Hobsons Bay Asset Plan 2025-35.**
4. **Adopts the Hobsons Bay Financial Plan 2025-35.**
5. **Notes that officers will write to and provide copies of the above adopted plans to the relevant statutory bodies.**

Summary

This report presents for adoption the four key strategic documents that inform Council's planning and decision making over the current period to 2029.

These four plans – the Council Plan 2025-29 including the Community Vision 2040, Health, Wellbeing and Safety Plan 2025-29, Asset Plan 2025-35 and Financial Plan 2025-35 – were

developed and reviewed using a robust deliberative community engagement methodology including a final public exhibition period over October and November 2025, and address the statutory requirements for each plan.

Feedback received during this final public exhibition period has been considered and included into the Annual Action Plan Year 1 (also presented for adoption), noting this feedback did not warrant significant changes to the intent or direction of any of the four plans.

Background

This suite of strategic documents was developed using a robust deliberative engagement process over 2025 and involved community, staff, stakeholder and Councillor input.

The Stage 1 (broad) and Stage 2 (deliberative) engagement process and feedback was documented and published in September 2025 and is available on Council's Participate page.

Based on this input, the drafts were presented to Council on 28 October 2025, where Council resolved to place them on public exhibition. This final round of community engagement ran from 29 October to 26 November 2025.

As part of the aligned and transparent approach to community engagement, in addition to the four plans, the public exhibition period also explicitly invited feedback on:

- the updated Community Vision 2040 (within the draft Council Plan)
- a compiled list of advocacy priorities (contained within the draft Council Plan)
- the proposed revised approach to the annual budget development process.

Discussion

Council invited community feedback on the draft plans through its Participate website, with additional promotion via the main Council website and social media channels. Community members could respond through an online survey on the four strategic plans, and in addition were explicitly invited to provide feedback on the Community Vision 2040, advocacy priorities and the proposed revised approach to the annual budget process.

The Participate site had specific pages and ratings for each topic, and respondents could provide feedback on one, some or all of the items.

Feedback from community during public exhibition

Fourteen respondents participated in the formal process via Participate.

Four additional submissions were received via email (notably a community member, Newport Traders Association, Neighbourhood Watch and SunSmart Victoria – the former three had also responded via the Participate survey).

Council Plan 2025-29 (including Community Vision and advocacy priorities)

Fourteen responses were received regarding the Council Plan. Respondents were asked to provide a score for each theme out of 5, with 5 being most agreeable.

Overall sentiment

Overall, respondents support for the plan averaged 3.1 out of 5.

Respondents were encouraged by the draft plan's direction. Key feedback priorities: environmental resilience, mental health services, fair funding, and maintaining Altona's unique liveability, a stronger focus on advocacy alignment, approach and outcomes.

Theme 1, well supported (Avg 3.5/5)

Partnerships and programming responses on:

- Mental health & youth support
- Health access for vulnerable groups, particularly seniors, Veterans and people with a disability
- Community safety & harm reduction

Theme 2, well supported (Avg 3.4/5)

Ongoing leadership and advocacy encouraged particularly on:

- Air quality & industrial legacy
- Waste & recycling
- Resilient housing & planning

Theme 3, well supported (Avg 2.9/5)

Suggestions around advocacy and alignment to the Asset Plan:

- Transport & connectivity
- Flood management and further investment
- Neighbourhood character & housing balance

Theme 4, well supported (Avg 2.9/5)

Minimal feedback on this theme, with some general sentiment about the necessity for operational priorities to be contained in the plan, and others positive of the transparency for decision making. Overall, the community was welcoming of greater transparency and communication on council's progress and achievements of the plan.

Subsequent changes to the draft Council Plan 2025-29

- Community feedback received is considered in the Year 1 Action Plan and will be considered in the following three years of annual action plans.
- Internal feedback has resulted in additions to key to partners and updated relevant measures across the themes/ actions to ensure they are deliverable and reportable.
- For transparency, communications and reporting, an Annual Action Plan Year 1 is provided alongside the Council Plan 2025-29 and Health Wellbeing and Safety Plan 2025-29 to outline the intended deliverables in year one of the Council Plan. For each future year of the plans (Year 2, 2026-27; Year 3, 2027-28; Year 4, 2028-29), an Annual Action Plan will be developed to outlined scheduled delivery alongside the annual budget process.

Health, Wellbeing and Safety Plan 2025-29

Twelve responses were received regarding the Health, Wellbeing and Safety Plan. Respondents were asked to provide a score for each theme out of 5, with 5 being most agreeable.

Overall sentiment

Overall, respondents support for the plan averaged 3.1/5.

Fewer comments were provided for this plan than the Council Plan, with many cross-referencing comments. These have been captured largely under Theme 1 and 2 in the Council Plan summary.

Of those who left commentary, respondents were mostly constructive and supportive, with actionable suggestions for advocacy and environmental improvements. Key feedback priorities included support for sustainability and environmental improvements linked to health and wellbeing outcomes, encouragement for Council to continue strong advocacy on issues outside its direct control (e.g., soft plastic packaging, public transport, health services investment by other levels of government), and specific feedback for greater support for vulnerable groups including young people, seniors, veterans and people with a disability.

Subsequent changes to the draft Health, Wellbeing and Safety Plan 2025-29

- No changes have been made to the plan.
- Community feedback received is considered in the Year 1 Annual Action Plan and will be considered in the following three years of annual action plans.

Asset Plan 2025-35

Six responses were received regarding the Asset Plan. Respondents were asked to provide feedback on the plan.

Overall sentiment

Respondents were generally constructive with strong interest in improving asset management, transparency, and environmental considerations. There was a positive tone toward the draft plan's intent, with request for more information and clarity on some items.

Feedback provided encouragement for the plan as well as some areas of concern or requiring further information:

- Asset Renewal and Infrastructure, with a focus on renewing ageing assets, safety, property values and climate resilience (e.g. sea-level rise, drainage, erosion control).
- Service Levels and Growth, future-focused with greater community engagement, and standardised expectations of performance such as dashboards and for public communications of 3-5 year planned works schedule.
- Community Facilities investment and the funding shortfall on facilities particularly for seniors and young people.
- Concern was centred on natural environment and biodiversity being undervalued as assets, lack of transparency on some projects and need for investment in some locations.

Subsequent changes to the draft Asset Plan 2025-35

- No changes have been made to the plan.
- Community feedback received is considered in the Year 1 Annual Action Plan and will be considered in the following three years of annual action plans.

Financial Plan 2025-35

Four responses were received regarding the Financial Plan. Respondents were asked to provide feedback on the plan.

Overall Sentiment

Respondents were constructive, with appreciation for the clarity of the draft plan and recognition of financial challenges.

Generally, the feedback focused on financial sustainability, heavy reliance on residential rates and the need for diversity of income, borrowing strategy, and suggestions about the impact of cost-shifting from other levels of government (particularly legacy obligations – e.g. school crossing supervisors, defined benefits scheme).

Support for asset renewal and cross-commentary with the Asset Plan regarding climate-resistant infrastructure, service levels and community outcomes, community engagement, communications and transparency opportunities over the next ten years.

Subsequent changes to the draft Financial Plan 2025-35

- No changes have been made to the plan.
- Community feedback received is considered in the Year 1 Annual Action Plan and will be considered in the following three years of annual action plans.

Proposed approach to Annual Budget consultation

No responses were received to the proposed change to the annual budget consultation process.

Strategic Alignment

This report specifically addresses priorities from the following strategic documents:

Hobsons Bay 2030 Community Vision

This report relates to all priorities within the Hobsons Bay 2030 Community Vision.

The draft Council Plan 2025-29 provides an updated Community Vision 2040, developed through a deliberative community engagement process. This refreshed Community Vision underpins the aspirations of all four plans.

"By 2040 we are a safe, sustainable and healthy community supported by an accountable, efficient and transparent Council."

This Community Vision 2040 within the Council Plan supersedes the Community Vision 2030, providing an updated and refreshed vision that honours and respects the previous work undertaken by the community.

Council Plan 2021-25

The Council Plan 2025-29 will supersede the Council Plan 2021-25.

(Integrated) Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-25

The Health Wellbeing and Safety Plan 2025-29 will supersede the previously integrated Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan which was integrated into the previous Council Plan 2021-25.

Policies and Related Council Documents

Existing and required policies and strategies are taken into account during the development of these strategic documents and has contributed to the formulation of the Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework (IPRF), which supports the monitoring and accountability of adopted plans. All four plans are important items in Council's IPRF.

Additional and specific alignment/impact includes:

- Council's social policy framework **A Fair Hobsons Bay for All 2024-28** (inclusive of the Disability Action Plan) has been incorporated into the Health, Wellbeing and Safety Plan.
- The Financial Plan is aligned to the **Annual Budget 2025-26**, which forms the basis for the first four years of the plan.
- The Financial Plan is also aligned to the **Asset Plan** and **ten-year capital works program**, which has been reduced in line with current financial limitations outlined in the Financial Plan.
- The public exhibition process also invited community feedback on a **revised proposed consultation process for future annual budget development**. The revised approach is a more streamlined, aligned approach to these strategic documents to enable the successful delivery of the actions within. No feedback was received specifically on this item through the public exhibition period.

Legal/Statutory Obligations and Risk

The plans meet their statutory requirements under the relevant legislation:

Council Plan 2025-29

Legislative requirement: Local Government Act 2020, section 90: Council Plan

Requires Council to prepare and adopt a Council Plan within twelve months following the general election, effective from 1 July the year following election. The plan must:

1. Encompass a deliberative engagement approach.
2. Apply strategic planning principles.
3. Cover the four financial years following election.
4. Include strategic objectives, strategies, strategic indicators and a strategic resource plan.

Compliance status: To address statutory obligations and mitigate legal risk, the Interim CEO wrote to the Hon. Nick Staikos, Minister for Local Government, in June 2025 and November 2025 respectively proposing and providing update on the revised delivery timeframe and confirming Council's commitment to deliver the plans by 30 January 2026.

Risk mitigation:

1. Ministerial correspondence provides documented approval pathway.
2. Extended but thorough process ensures robust deliberative engagement.
3. Four-week exhibition period meets Community Engagement Policy requirements.
4. December 2025 adoption maintains compliance with revised timeframe.
5. Final public exhibition validates the priorities and approach.

Health, Wellbeing and Safety Plan 2025-29

Legislative requirements:

Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008, sections 26-28

Requires Council to prepare a municipal public health and wellbeing plan (MPHWP) every four years. The MPHWP must:

1. Identify goals and strategies for creating a local community in which people can achieve maximum health and wellbeing.
2. Include measures to prevent family violence.
3. Have regard for climate change impacts on health and wellbeing.
4. Be consistent with the Council Plan.
5. Be developed in consultation with the community.

Disability Act 2006, section 38

Requires Council to prepare a Disability Action Plan (DAP) every four years. The DAP must:

1. Reduce barriers to accessing goods, services, facilities and employment.
2. Promote inclusion and participation in community life.
3. Achieve change in attitudes and practices that discriminate against people with disability.
4. Must report on DAP implementation through Council's Annual Report.

Compliance status: The draft HWS Plan 2025-29 meets all statutory requirements. The plan incorporates the Disability Action Plan through integration of A Fair Hobsons Bay for All 2024-28 (Council's Social Policy Framework), which includes disability inclusion as a core component. This approach ensures disability planning is embedded across all health, wellbeing and safety initiatives rather than treated as a standalone document.

Risk mitigation:

1. Deliberative engagement included health and wellbeing stakeholders.
2. Family violence prevention measures explicitly addressed.
3. Climate change considerations integrated throughout.
4. Alignment with Council Plan ensured through concurrent development.
5. DAP integration provides stronger outcomes than standalone approach.
6. Final public exhibition validates priorities and approach.

Asset Plan 2025-35

Legislative requirement: Local Government Act 2020, section 92

Requires Council to prepare, adopt and maintain an Asset Plan that:

1. Describes the non-financial resources needed to achieve strategic objectives in the Council Plan.
2. Includes strategic objectives and strategies for asset maintenance, renewal, acquisition, expansion, upgrade, disposal and decommissioning.
3. Projects Council's asset expenditure needs over the next 10 years.

Compliance status: The draft Asset Plan 2025-35 meets all statutory requirements. This is the first scheduled four-year review of the original Asset Plan 2022-32, aligned with the Council election cycle.

Risk mitigation:

1. 10-year capital and maintenance forecasts aligned with Financial Plan.
2. Asset condition data current as of 30 June 2025.
3. Integration with Council Plan ensures strategic alignment.
4. Community engagement including final public exhibition validates priorities and approach.

Financial Plan 2025-35

Legislative requirement: Local Government Act 2020, section 91

Requires Council to adopt a Financial Plan in the format, manner and form prescribed by the regulations. The plan must:

1. Describe the financial resources needed to achieve strategic objectives in the Council Plan.
2. Include financial statements (comprehensive income statement, balance sheet, statement of changes in equity, statement of cash flows, statement of capital works, statement of human resources).
3. Project Council's financial performance and position over the next 10 years.
4. Identify financial risks and strategies to address them.

Compliance status: The draft Financial Plan 2025-35 meets all statutory requirements and prescribed format. The plan provides 10-year forecasts based on the adopted Annual Budget 2025-26 and demonstrates financial sustainability while delivering Council Plan commitments.

Risk mitigation:

1. Financial statements in prescribed regulatory format.
2. Conservative assumptions used for projections.
3. Alignment with Asset Plan ensures capital works affordability.
4. Performance measures track financial sustainability indicators.

5. Regular review through quarterly reporting and annual budget processes (noting through the public exhibition process no feedback was explicitly received regarding the proposed new annual budget development process).

6. Final public exhibition validates priorities and approach,

Applicable to all plans

Gender Equality Act 2020, sections 9-12

Requires public entities (including councils) to promote gender equality and conduct Gender Impact Assessments (GIAs) when developing or reviewing policies, programs and services that have significant impact on the public

Compliance status: Gender Impact Assessments have been completed for the suite of draft plans. GIAs systematically consider how policies, programs and services will meet the different needs of women, men and gender diverse people, ensuring equitable outcomes and identifying opportunities to advance gender equality.

Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006

Requires public authorities to act compatibly with human rights and give proper consideration to human rights when making decisions.

Compliance status: The plans have been developed with consideration to relevant human rights including:

1. Right to take part in public life (participation in decision-making).
2. Cultural rights (recognition of diverse cultural needs).
3. Right to education, health services and social security.
4. Right to protection of families and children.

Risk summary: The comprehensive engagement approach, legislative compliance framework, and alignment across all four plans demonstrates Council's commitment to meeting statutory obligations while managing legal and reputational risks effectively. The concurrent review of budget engagement approaches extends this proactive risk management to annual financial decision-making processes.

Financial and Resource Implications

Council Plan 2025-29 and Health, Wellbeing and Safety Plan 2025-29

The plans have been developed in context to the resource plans below and are deemed to be feasible within financial and resource constraints. Annual Action Plans will be developed aligned to financials (including annual budget development) and resources available.

Asset Plan 2025-35

The total projected capital and operational maintenance expenditure for Council's infrastructure assets over the next 10 years is approximately \$645 million based on the adopted Annual Budget 2025-26 and Financial Plan. These outlays have been determined based on the affordability assessments made in Council's Financial Plan and represent the investment that is required to maintain, renew and upgrade Council's existing infrastructure assets and provide new assets.

Financial Plan 2025-35

The Financial Plan provides for operating surpluses each year, although these are reducing throughout the duration of the Financial Plan.

Operational surpluses do not include Council's significant investment in capital expenditure and are required to fund current and future commitments, including the Ten-Year Capital Works Program. There is a shortfall in the funding available for the Ten-Year Capital Works Program, so the program has been reduced in line with the current financial limitations to ensure that Council remains financially viable over the duration of the plan.

The Financial Plan Statements present ten-year forecasts on the comprehensive income statement, balance sheet, statement of changes in equity, statement of cash flows, statement of capital works and statement of human resources. The forecasts are based on the assumptions described in the plan and minimal changes to the way Council currently operates.

The Financial Plan is intended to provide guidance, rather than commit Council to a future financial direction. It is based on a point in time and acknowledges that Council will continue to review the way it operates which will impact on future financial outcomes. Council will therefore re-evaluate its financial performance, position and direction on an ongoing basis, including through the normal quarterly financial reporting and annual budget processes.

Annual Budget development: From Year 2, the development of the Annual budget will have a clear and explicit focus on the delivery of the Council Plan 2025-29 and Health Wellbeing and Safety Plan 2025-29 actions, ensuring the successful delivery of these strategic plans.

Environmental, Social and Economic Impacts

The four strategic plans and the review of budget engagement approaches have been developed with comprehensive consideration of environmental, social and economic impacts on the Hobsons Bay community.

Council Plan 2025-29

Environmental impacts:

1. **Sustainable Environment theme** establishes goals and actions for climate change mitigation and adaptation, biodiversity protection, waste reduction, and sustainable resource management.
2. Commits Council to reducing greenhouse gas emissions and transitioning to renewable energy.
3. Promotes urban greening, tree canopy coverage and protection of coastal and waterway environments.
4. Supports circular economy principles and waste minimisation.

Social impacts:

1. **Healthy Community theme** prioritises community connections, safety, and physical and mental wellbeing.
2. Promotes equity, inclusion and access for all community members regardless of age, ability, gender, cultural background or socioeconomic status.
3. Supports diverse, connected and resilient communities through infrastructure, programs and partnerships.
4. Addresses social isolation and promotes belonging.

Economic impacts:

1. **Liveable City theme** supports local economic development, employment opportunities and business viability.
2. Infrastructure investment creates local employment and economic activity.
3. Supports vibrant commercial precincts and business innovation.
4. Promotes sustainable economic growth aligned with community values.

Health, Wellbeing and Safety Plan 2025-29

Social impacts:

1. Strengthening community connections reduces social isolation and builds social capital, improving mental health outcomes and community resilience.
2. Reducing harm and building safer communities addresses family violence, road safety, emergency management, and creates safer public spaces, improving quality of life and reducing social costs.
3. Promoting physical and mental wellbeing supports active living, healthy eating, mental health services, and preventative health, reducing long-term healthcare costs and improving productivity.

Economic impacts:

1. Preventative health approaches reduce healthcare system burden and associated costs.
2. Safer communities attract residents and businesses, supporting economic vitality.
3. Social connection and wellbeing programs improve workforce participation and productivity.
4. Investment in community facilities and programs creates local employment.

Environmental impacts:

1. Recognition of climate change impacts on health and wellbeing.
2. Promotion of active transport and physical activity in natural environments.
3. Connection between environmental quality and community health outcomes.

Asset Plan 2025-35

Environmental impacts:

1. Sustainable asset management reduces environmental footprint through energy-efficient infrastructure, renewable energy installations, and water-sensitive urban design.
2. Asset renewal and upgrade opportunities incorporate climate adaptation measures (flood resilience, heat mitigation, stormwater management).
3. End-of-life asset disposal considers circular economy principles and waste reduction.
4. Open space and recreation assets support biodiversity, urban cooling and environmental amenity.
5. Infrastructure planning considers climate change risks and adaptation requirements over asset lifecycles.

Social impacts:

1. Safe, accessible and fit-for-purpose infrastructure supports community participation, social connection and quality of life.
2. Universal design principles ensure facilities are accessible to people of all ages and abilities.
3. Well-maintained assets reduce safety risks and liability.
4. Strategic asset planning ensures equitable distribution of facilities across the municipality.
5. Community consultation on asset priorities ensures investment reflects community needs and values.
6. Recreation and open space assets support physical activity, mental health and community gathering.

Economic impacts:

1. Planned asset maintenance and renewal is more cost-effective than reactive repairs, ensuring value for money
2. Infrastructure investment supports local employment and economic activity.
3. Well-maintained assets attract residents, businesses and visitors, supporting economic vitality.
4. Strategic capital works programming optimises funding and ensures financial sustainability.
5. Asset management planning provides certainty for long-term budgeting and financial planning.
6. Infrastructure enables business operations, employment and economic development.

Financial Plan 2025-35

Economic impacts:

1. Financial sustainability ensures Council can continue delivering services and infrastructure for current and future generations.
2. Operating surpluses provide funding for capital investment without increasing debt to unsustainable levels
3. Responsible financial management maintains Council's credit rating and borrowing capacity.
4. Strategic revenue and expenditure management balances service delivery with affordability.
5. Exploration of diverse funding sources maximises investment in community infrastructure and services.
6. Financial planning provides certainty for businesses, investors and community organisations.

Social impacts:

1. Resource allocation decisions directly impact service levels, program delivery and community outcomes.
2. Affordable fees and charges ensure services remain accessible to all community members.
3. Investment in community infrastructure supports social connection, health and wellbeing.
4. Financial planning enables delivery of Council Plan commitments and community priorities.
5. Transparent financial reporting builds community trust and accountability.

Environmental impacts:

1. Financial planning enables investment in sustainability initiatives and climate action.
2. Capital works budget includes funding for environmental infrastructure (renewable energy, water-sensitive urban design, tree planting).
3. Long-term financial sustainability supports ongoing environmental stewardship.
4. Financial capacity to adapt infrastructure to climate change impacts.
5. Enhanced engagement may identify innovative approaches or partnerships that improve economic outcomes.

Integrated Impact Assessment

The four strategic plans work together to achieve balanced environmental, social and economic outcomes:

Plan	Primary focus	Key integration
Council Plan	Strategic direction across all domains	Provides overarching framework for balanced outcomes
HWS Plan	Social wellbeing and safety	Recognises social determinants of health include environmental quality and economic opportunity
Asset Plan	Infrastructure sustainability	Balances environmental sustainability, social access and economic efficiency in asset management
Financial Plan	Economic sustainability	Ensures financial capacity to deliver environmental and social outcomes

Triple bottom line approach: The suite of plans demonstrates Council's commitment to triple bottom line decision-making, considering environmental, social and economic impacts holistically rather than in isolation.

Long-term sustainability: By integrating environmental, social and economic considerations across all planning levels – from 10-year strategic plans to annual budget decisions – Council ensures sustainable outcomes for current and future generations of Hobsons Bay residents.

Consultation and Communication

A robust deliberative community engagement methodology has informed the development of these four strategic plans, with broad and deliberative engagement occurring between May and August 2025. This feedback shaped the plans and priorities, which were presented for public exhibition on 28 October 2025.

Council endorsed a final round of consultation and public exhibition of the draft plans were available from 29 October to 26 November 2025, in line with Council's Community Engagement Policy 2023. Feedback from this final round is outlined above and considered into the final plans, and an Annual Action Plan Year 1, being presented for adoption.

Declaration of Conflict of Interest

Section 130 of the *Local Government Act 2020* requires members of Council staff to disclose any general or material conflict of interest in matters to be considered at a Council meeting.

Council staff involved in the preparation of this report have no conflict of interest in this matter.

Hobsons Bay City Council

Council Plan 2025-29



Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the
Bunurong People of the
Kulin Nation as the
Traditional Owners of the
lands, rivers and coastal
areas in Hobsons Bay. We
recognise the First Nations
peoples' relationship to
this land and offer our
respect to their Elders
past and present.





How to read this plan

The Council Plan 2025-29 should be read alongside the Hobsons Bay Health, Wellbeing and Safety Plan 2025-29. Together, these plans detail how Council will work towards the community aspirations outlined in the Community Vision.

When reading this plan, you can use the contents page to go to the sections that interest you most or jump straight to page 37 to see a summary of the plan on one page. You can also go directly through to the themes, goals and actions from page 41.



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Introduction





A message from our Councillors

As a Council, our community is at the heart of everything we do. Every decision we make and every service we provide aims to enhance or protect the lives of people who live, work or play in Hobsons Bay.

To do that effectively, we need to know our community – who we are, what we value, what our vision is for Hobsons Bay and how we want to get there.

We are proud to present Council Plan 2025–29. It is the roadmap for our city, and will guide our decisions and priorities over this period.

More importantly, it's the path our community wants us to take.

Months of consultation with residents, community groups and Council staff have identified the priorities our community wants its council to focus on for the next four years.



Broadly, we want to be a healthy community, with a sustainable environment, in a liveable city run by an accountable council.


These four themes will become the foundations of our efforts over the course of this council term.

They are also reflected in our updated long-term Community Vision, which is now that:

“By 2040, we are a safe, sustainable and healthy community supported by an accountable, efficient and transparent Council.”

More than 1,300 people have played a part in helping develop this plan. To all of them we are thankful. Not just that they gave their time, energy and expertise to this important project, but because it shows their passion for making sure Hobsons Bay is the best it can be.

It's a passion we all share. We look forward to working with our community over this four-year period to deliver the Hobsons Bay we all want to see.

Your Hobsons Bay Councillors 

1.2.0.

A message from our Council leaders

Hobsons Bay continues to grow and evolve. Within 20 years, we will have almost another 20,000 residents. The opportunities in front of us are exciting and we will be working to ensure people of all ages and from all walks of life can continue to live happy, healthy and safe lives here.

It's why we must continue to provide and maintain spaces and opportunities for people to get out and about, be active and socially connected.

That's why it's so important we continue to nurture and protect the beautiful and diverse environment around us – from beaches to wetlands, parks, reserves and sporting fields.

It's why we need to meet the challenges climate change will bring to a bayside municipality with such a precious and unique environment.

It's why we must continue to focus on doing the basics well – collecting waste; maintaining streets, footpaths and drains; and supporting community and cultural events.

And it's why our Council must operate as efficiently and effectively as possible – to provide these services our community relies on in a way that makes the best use of its money, while also providing an enriching and safe workplace for the staff that serve Hobsons Bay every day.

In challenging economic times, this is more important than ever, but we are committed to continuing to provide for our community.

We must also continue to be the voice for our community when it comes to advocating to other levels of government about the issues and services that matter to Hobsons Bay.

Our path for the next four years has been set by the considered and passionate response of our community – the community our organisation works for day in, day out.

Kerry Thompson, Interim CEO,
March 2025 to January 2026

Phu Nguyen, CEO,
January 2026

1.3.1.

About Hobsons Bay City Council

The unique municipality

The Yalukit Willam clan of the Bunurong People were the first people who lived in the area now known as Hobsons Bay and had strong connections to land and sea. A number of sites of significance to the Aboriginal community are located throughout the municipality, particularly along the coastal trail.

Hobsons Bay is situated at the northern end of Port Phillip Bay, about 10 km west of central Melbourne, and includes the suburbs of Altona, Altona Meadows, Altona North, Brooklyn, Laverton, Newport, Seabrook, Seaholme, South Kingsville, Spotswood, Williamstown and Williamstown North. Each suburb has its own unique character, from the historic seaport of Williamstown with its range of heritage buildings, to the more recently developed residential areas of Altona Meadows and Seabrook.

In 2024, Hobsons Bay had an estimated resident population of 95,633 which is forecast to increase to 113,134 by 2046.

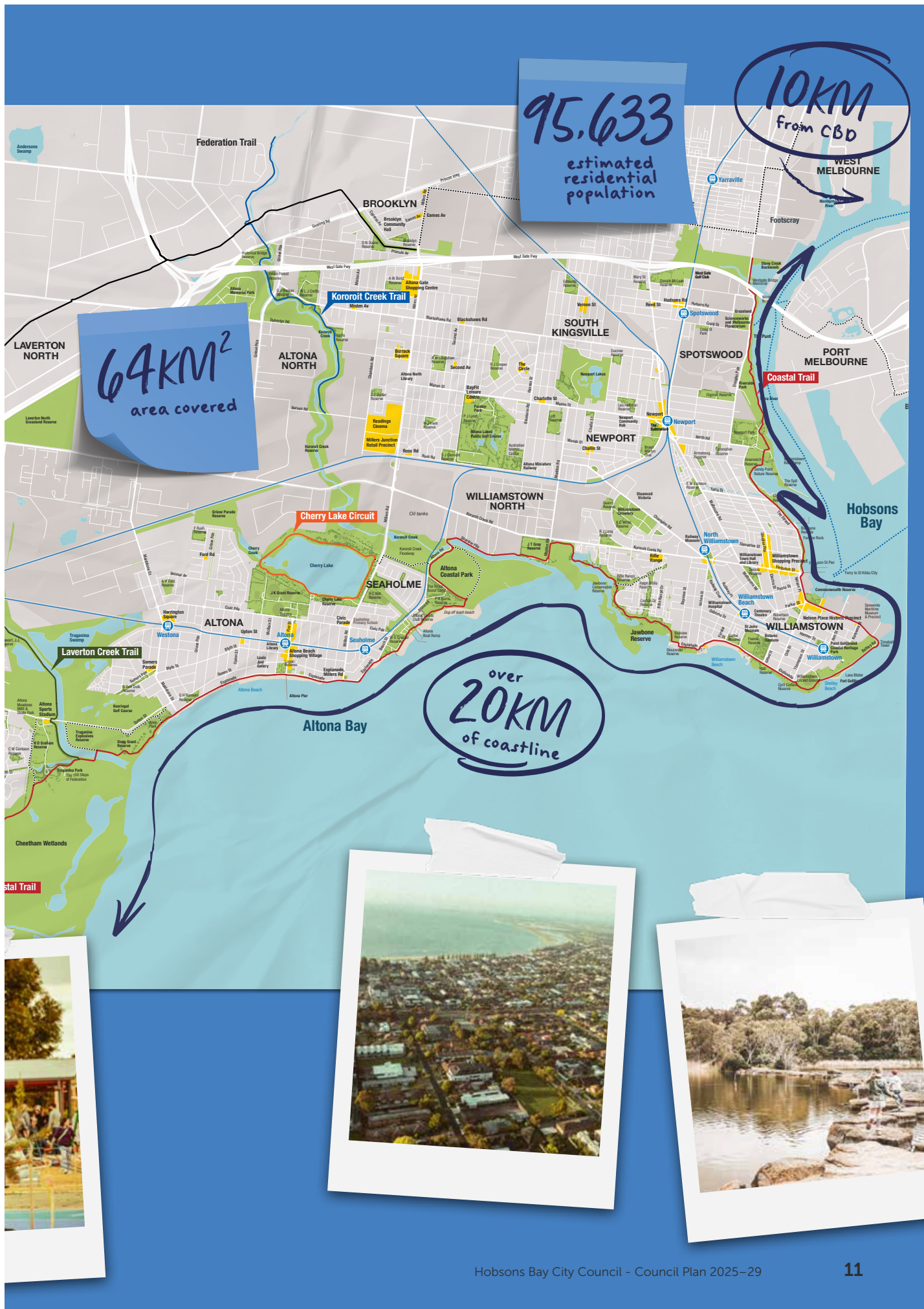
Hobsons Bay covers an area of about 64 km² and has more than 20 km of coastline.

It is also home to significant coastal wetlands, five creek systems, remnant native grasslands, and important flora and fauna habitats, which make up 24 per cent of the city's total land area.

Hobsons Bay has a range of major industrial complexes which contribute significantly to the economy of Victoria. It has good access to regional transport facilities such as the West Gate Freeway, the Western Ring Road, CityLink, the National Rail Line, and the ports and airports of Melbourne and Avalon.

These features contribute to the city's culture, which is strongly linked to its maritime heritage, rich natural environment, industry and lifestyle.







Altona North Ward
Cr Rayane Hawli



Laverton Ward
Cr Paddy
Keys-Macpherson



Altona
Meadows



Altona Meadows Ward
Cr Diana Grima

Altona



Altona Ward
Cr Daria Kellander



1.3.2.

Our Councillors

The Council is elected to provide good governance in its municipal district for the benefit and wellbeing of its community.

On 26 October 2024 the residents and ratepayers of Hobsons Bay elected this Council for a four-year term. Seven councillors were elected to a new single-councillor ward structure.

1.3.3.

Our Community



In 2024, Hobsons Bay had an estimated resident population of 95,633 which is forecast to increase to 113,134 by 2046. The proudly diverse community speaks more than 80 languages and practises more than 40 faiths.

95,633

residents in 2024 ¹

2.02%

population growth rate ¹

Population growth in Greater Melbourne was 2.74%

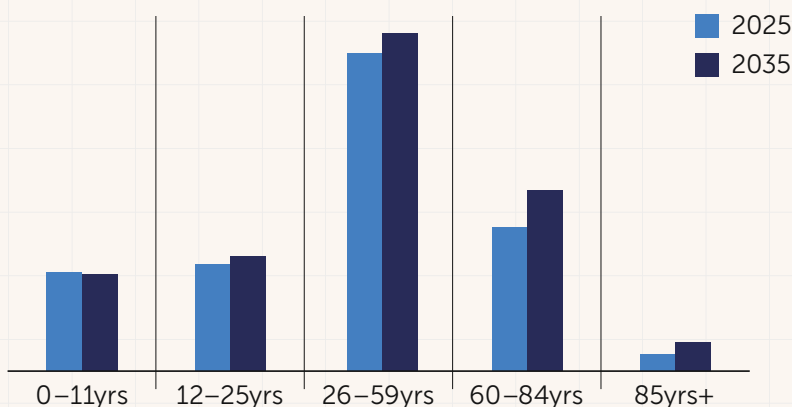
51% 49%

Females ² Males ²

Greater Melbourne was 52% females and 49% males

10,000 residents

increase in Hobsons Bay's population over the next 10 years ²



1. Australian Bureau of Statistics (2023-24), Regional population.

2. Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), 2021 Census of Population and Housing.

Priority populations



We recognise that there are groups in the community who are more likely to experience social and economic barriers that contribute to poorer health and social outcomes. These priority populations have distinct needs that have been considered in the development of this plan.

More information about priority populations can be found in the Hobsons Bay Health, Wellbeing and Safety Plan 2025–29.

0.7%



628 residents are First Nations³
Compared to 0.7% of people
in Greater Melbourne

13.3%



of residents identify as LGBTIQ+⁴
Compared to 11% of people across Victoria

27%



of residents speak a language
other than English at home³
Compared to 34% of people
in Greater Melbourne

The top three spoken languages
other than English are:

1. Arabic 3%
2. Greek 2.5%
3. Vietnamese 2.1%

30.1%



of residents are born overseas³
Compared to 35.7% of people
in Greater Melbourne

Top three overseas countries
of birth are:

1. United Kingdom 4.2%
2. India 2.7%
3. New Zealand 2.1%

13.2%



11,372 residents live in
low-income households⁴
Compared to 13.4% of people
in Greater Melbourne

13.3%

9,963 residents provide unpaid
assistance for someone in need of care⁴
Compared to 12.6% of people
in Greater Melbourne

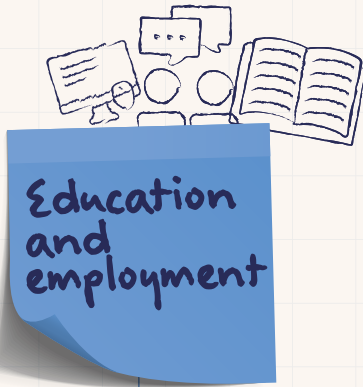
21.3%



of residents have a disability³
Compared to 21.4% of people across Australia

3. Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), 2021 Census of Population and Housing.

4. Victorian Agency for Health Information (2025), Victorian Population Health Survey 2023, Victorian Government.



33%

of residents have a bachelor's degree or higher ⁵

Compared to 34% of people in Greater Melbourne

3.3%

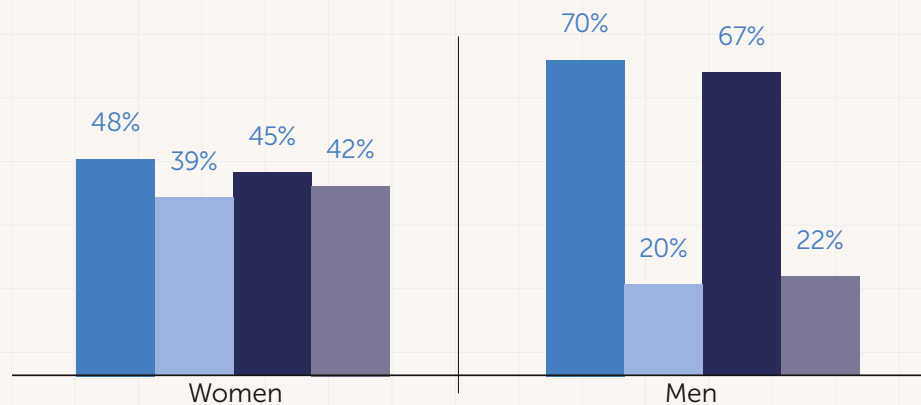
was the unemployment rate in Hobsons Bay in the 2025 March quarter ⁶

Compared to a rate of 4.5% in Greater Melbourne

Workforce participation rates for residents ⁶

■ Full-time (Hobsons Bay)
■ Part-time (Hobsons Bay)

■ Full-time (Greater Melbourne)
■ Part-time (Greater Melbourne)



5. Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), 2021 Census of Population and Housing.

6. Australian Bureau of Statistics, Labour force survey and Department of Employment, Small Area Labour Markets.

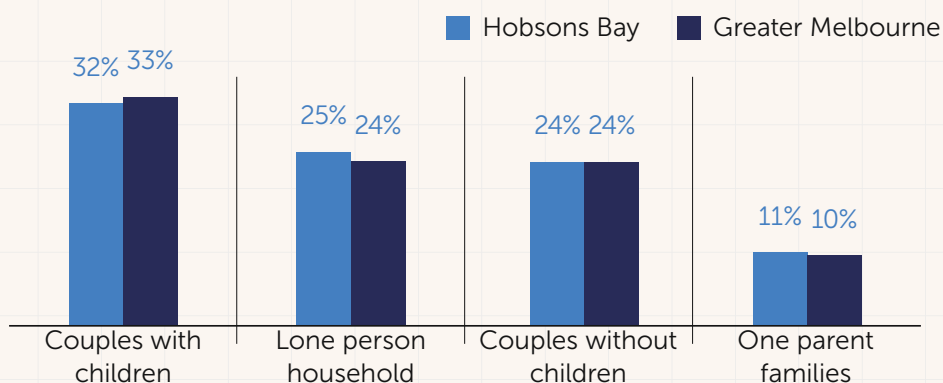
Housing



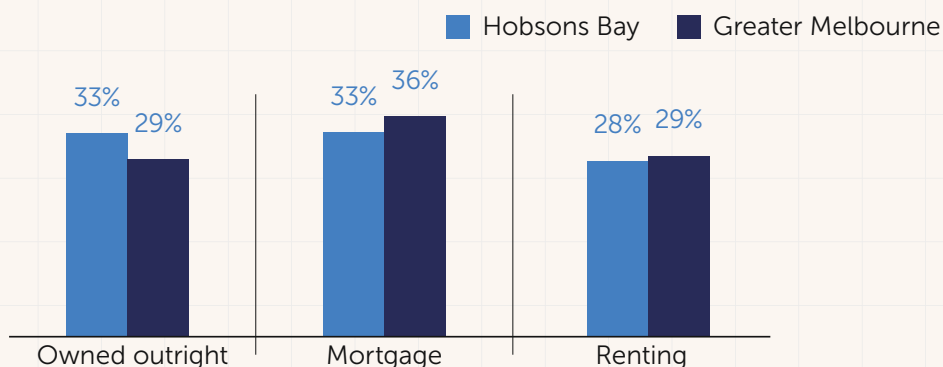
36,153 households

in Hobsons Bay ⁷

Household types ⁸



Housing tenure ⁸



24.1%

291

(or 2,221) households in private rentals in Hobsons Bay are in rental stress ⁸ people were experiencing homelessness on census night in 2021 ⁹

Compared to 26.8% of households in Greater Melbourne

7. Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), 2021 Census of Population and Housing.

8. id Consulting (2025), Hobsons Bay Housing Profile.

9. Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021), Estimating Homelessness: Census

About the Council Plan



02



2.1.0.

Purpose statement



The *Local Government Act 2020* sets out the rules for how Council must operate, make decisions and report to the community. It helps make sure we're always working in the best interests of Hobsons Bay.

When developing this plan, we also considered a number of other important laws that guide how we plan and deliver services, including:

- *Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*
- *Disability Act 2006*
- *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008*
- *Climate Change Act 2017*
- *Gender Equality Act 2020*

These laws help make sure Council's work supports fairness, inclusion, health, sustainability and equality across our community.

This plan aims to align the strategies and actions that support Hobsons Bay's diverse community to the Council's strategic direction and community vision.

2.1.1.

Our commitment to strong governance and culture

Hobsons Bay City Council is committed to strong governance and culture, ensuring we run effectively, transparently and accountably while serving the best interests of our community.

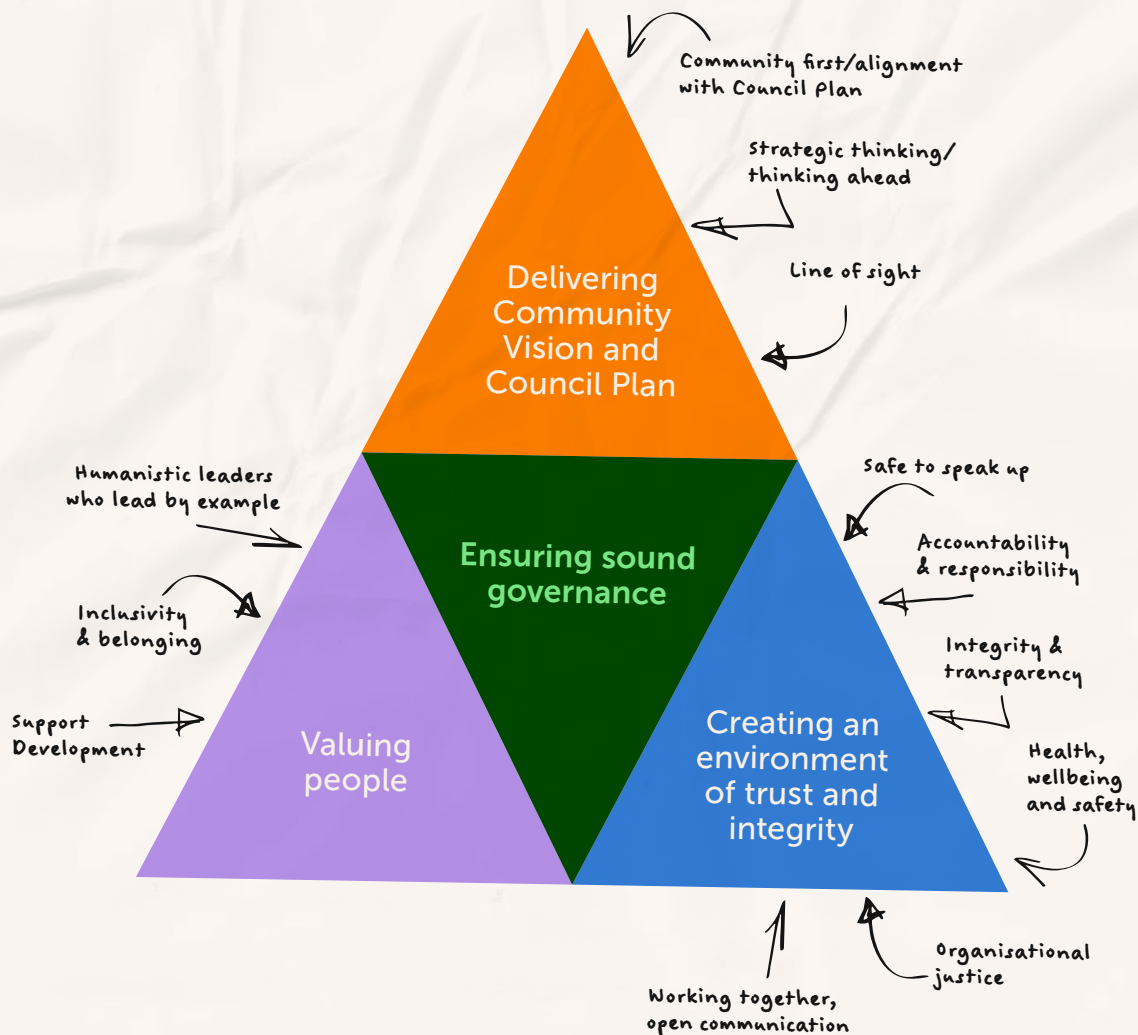


Image from the Rebuilding Culture and Governance Action Plan 2025

“...It’s been a very community oriented process and it’s been great to be able to talk directly to Council people including Councillors, how willing everybody was to talk and also listen and to understand.

...the Council does actually care and they are trying to make things better out here and I’d like to see that follow through after this.”

Community representative,
Adrienne, July 2025



2.1.2.

Our commitment to strong partnerships

Council's role in realising the Community Vision 2040

Council plays a vital role in bringing the Community Vision 2040 to life. Recognising the diverse needs of our community, Council adapts its approach, stepping into different roles to achieve the best possible outcomes.

Council plays different roles in delivering community outcomes — we provide, we partner, we educate and we advocate.

Regardless of the role we undertake, Council remains committed to fostering strong relationships — with residents, local organisations, businesses, and all levels of government — to deliver the best outcomes for our community.

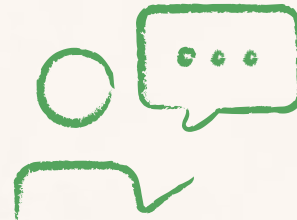
These relationships are founded on trust, shared objectives and transparent governance.

Together, they enable us to address both current and future community needs over the next four years and beyond.



Provider

We deliver essential services that meet community needs and enhance everyday life in Hobsons Bay.



Educator

We share valuable information to build knowledge, promote wellbeing, and keep the community well-informed.



Advocate

We represent Hobsons Bay's interests, collaborating with other levels of government and investors to secure additional support and resources for our area.



Partner

We collaborate with various stakeholders to ensure that the benefits of all projects and services are shared widely and sustained over time.

2.2.0.

Strategic context

2.2.1.

The integrated planning and reporting framework

The Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework provides the strategic direction and activities required to ensure Council's work is informed, well considered and aligned across the diversity of responsibilities and services that we offer the community. In line with our commitment to strong governance, the framework sets the systems and processes to ensure decision making — both day-to-day and in the Council chamber — deliver the best outcomes for our community.

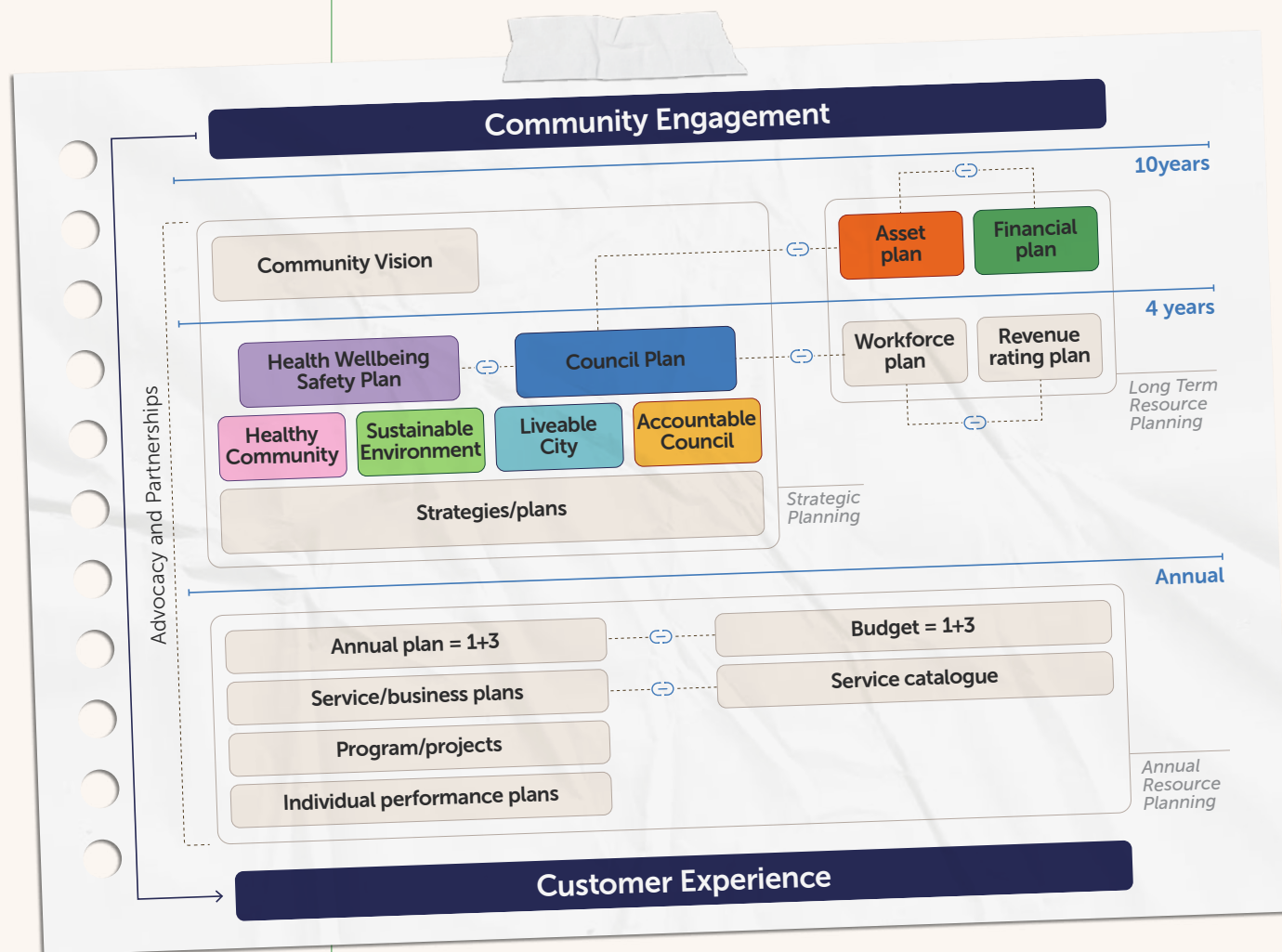
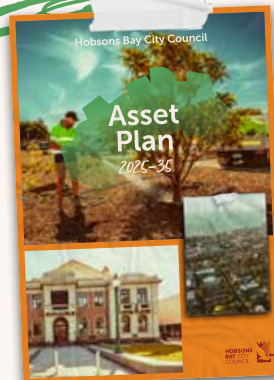


Image: Hobsons Bay Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework 2025–29

strategic four-year plans

strategic ten-year resourcing plans



The Council Plan aligns with other key strategic documents — the Health Wellbeing and Safety Plan 2025-29, the Asset Plan 2025-35 and the Financial Plan 2025-35.

2.3.0.

An informed plan for our future

2.3.1.

The legislative requirements

In accordance with the legislative requirements of the *Local Government Act 2020*, the Council Plan and other strategic documents were developed through community consultation and a deliberative engagement process. The process followed Council's Community Engagement Policy (2023).

Community engagement

How the plan was developed

To ensure a purposeful, inclusive and transparent engagement process, Council conducted a phased community engagement approach to develop the plan. A detailed community engagement report is included in the appendices.

1. Council surveyed the municipality to identify the top service and program priorities, asset and budget priorities, and health and wellbeing priorities for the next four years, as well as review the Community Vision. In this phase, engagement happened online and in person at community drop-in sessions. A total of 1,063 participants provided their feedback between 30 April and 6 June 2025.
2. The findings of the broad community engagement were further explored by a group of 36 community members. The participants were selected from 117 expressions of interest to represent the demographics of the Hobsons Bay community as closely as possible.
3. The feedback was presented to Council staff across three staff workshops and were modified each time to reflect feedback.
4. Public exhibition of the plan allowed for final community review prior to adoption by Council.

This group met three times in July 2025 to provide specific feedback on a range of topics relevant to the Council Plan, the Health, Wellbeing and Safety Plan and other important strategic focus areas of Council. Themes, goals and actions were then drafted considering the inputs received.



①

Broad engagement

Broad community engagement to identify priority areas

Drafting & testing

②

Community engagement

Series of workshops with community representatives to explore and refine the broad community priorities and sentiments

Drafting & testing

③

Stakeholder engagement

Council staff and health and wellbeing stakeholder engagement workshops

Drafting & testing

④

Public exhibition

Exhibition of the draft Council Plan 2025–29 for community review

A hope or
goal I have
for the
future is...

"A safer and active community
where people love to be living in
that space and they feel proud
that we are part of this area."

Community representative,
Mann, July 2025

A hope or
goal I have
for the
future is...

"Just a healthier place where people
are less sitting in cars but more
out and about and enjoying
the beautiful environment that
we've got in Hobsons Bay."

What stood
out for me in
the workshop
process...

"Was really just how like minded
people are. Even though we come
from all different suburbs or
different age groups and all, you
know, all different lived experiences
that we're just very much on the
same...Very inclusive, very supportive
and just a very positive experience."

Community representative,
Kate, July 2025



2.3.3.

Gender Impact Assessment

As per the requirements of the *Gender Equality Act 2020*, Council is required to prepare a Gender Impact Assessment (GIA) for all new and updated programs, policies and services that have a direct and significant public impact.

Through the development of this plan, a “gender lens” has been applied to ensure the impact of gender norms, behaviours and roles are considered, and a broad range of genders and population groups have been consulted.

The themes and goals included in the plan take account of people of different genders, particularly in relation to advocacy, programs, and education and awareness. More specifically, the themes and goals have been developed to ensure they address the broad needs of different genders by:

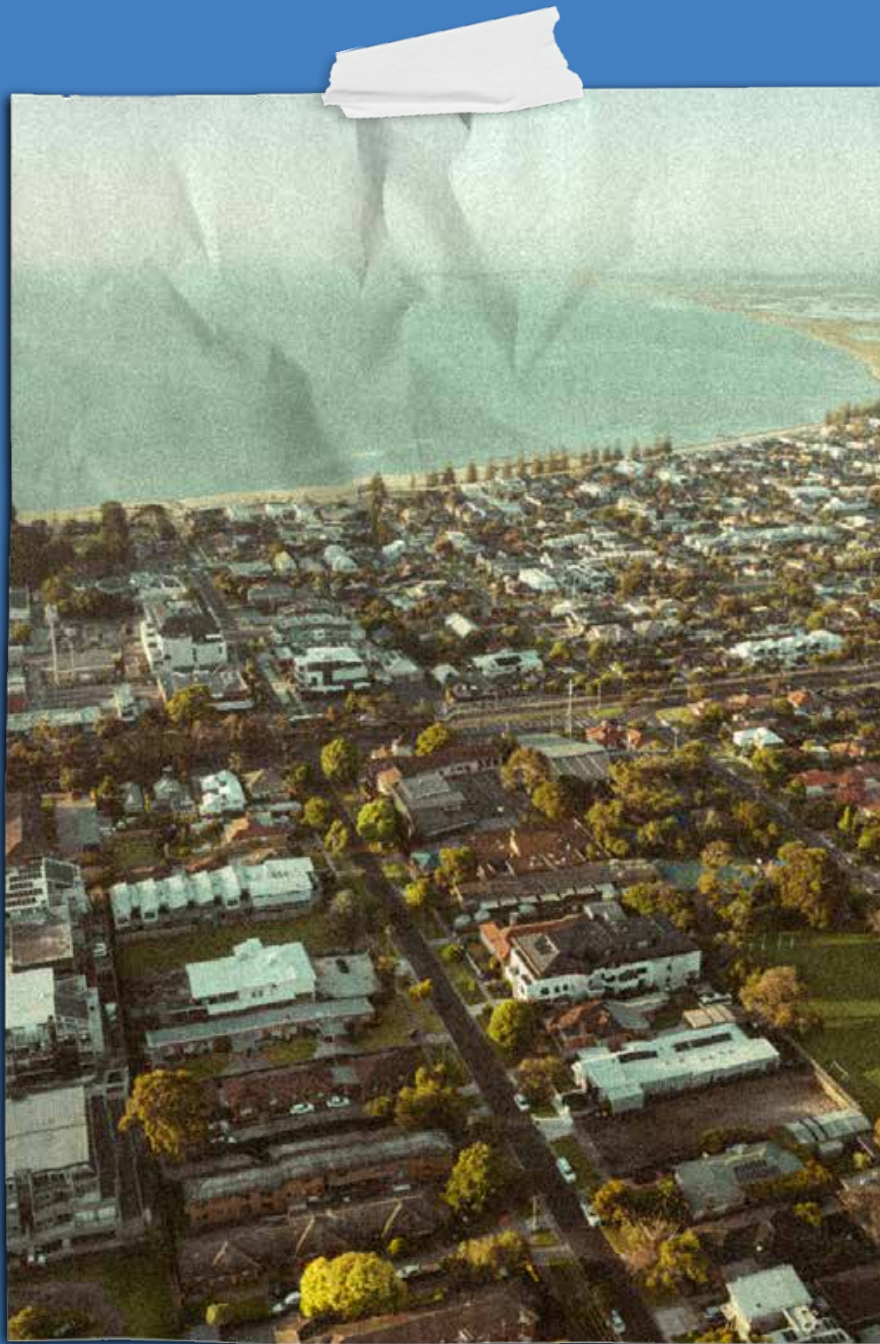
- considering community safety as a health and wellbeing outcome, including both safety in the home as well as in the community
- considering the priorities that ranked highest for women, young people and people with a disability, including health and wellbeing community services, services for children, youth and/or families, and sporting facilities
- creating better social and community connection opportunities to address mental health issues and raise awareness and understanding around family violence
- supporting health and wellbeing through the built environment and open space to improve, maintain or expand public open space and facilities.



The Council Plan







3.1.0.

Hobsons Bay Council Plan 2025–29

Plan on a page

Theme

①

Healthy Communities

②

Sustainable Environment

③

Liveable City

④

Accountable Council

Goals

1. Strengthen community connection
2. Reduce harm and build a safer community
3. Promote physical and mental wellbeing

1. Respond effectively to climate change by reducing emissions and managing risk.
2. Support the community to respond to climate change
3. Promote and deliver recycling and waste management services that divert waste from landfill.
4. Promote the conservation and enhancement of our unique natural environments

1. Provide equitable and inclusive community infrastructure
2. Increase access to jobs, education and housing
3. Deliver and advocate for a safe and accessible transport network
4. Foster community through events and arts
5. Address drainage, flooding and stormwater concerns

1. Strengthen governance practices and systems
2. Increase staff satisfaction and safety
3. Improve financial performance of Council
4. Increase effective communications and community engagement
5. Develop strategic partnerships to deliver on community needs

Four-year actions

(summarised)

15 actions

Programs
Service delivery
Infrastructure and places
Education
Events
Planning, policy and regulation
Advocacy
Capacity building

11 actions

Programs
Infrastructure and places

20 actions

Infrastructure and places
Planning, policy and regulation

17 actions

Planning, policy and regulation

Annual Action Plans

(to be developed)

Year 1

Year 2

Year 3

Year 4



3.2.0.

Hobsons Bay Community Vision 2040

As part of the development of the Council Plan 2025-29, the deliberative engagement process revisited the Community Vision 2030 to ensure the direction and aspirations of the community in the current and future context were being met.

"By 2040 we are a safe, sustainable and healthy community supported by an accountable, efficient and transparent Council."

Priorities to achieve Vision

1. Sustainable, safe and accessible urban planning
2. Building community wellbeing by engaging with all residents of Hobsons Bay
3. Increased access to local jobs and education
4. Continuous improvement and conservation of the natural environment
5. Maintain and expand sustainable practices
6. Better and more accessible transport options



Hobsons Bay City Council

Council Plan 2025-29

Themes,
Goals and
Actions



Theme 1: Healthy Community

Goals

- 1 Strengthen community connection.
- 2 Reduce harm and build a safer community.
- 3 Promote physical and mental wellbeing.

Key outcome indicators

1. Community satisfaction with community and cultural activities (Local Government Community Satisfaction Survey).
2. Lower rate of incidents of family violence.
3. Higher life satisfaction of adults and adolescents.
4. Higher proportion of adults, adolescents and children who:
 - » consume sufficient fruit and vegetables
 - » are sufficiently physically active
 - » with very good or excellent self-rated health
5. Higher proportion of adults:
 - » who feel valued by society
 - » feel safe walking in their street at night
6. Lower proportion of adults:
 - » experiencing loneliness
 - » at risk of harm from alcohol-related disease or injury
 - » worried about food insecurity
 - » sitting for seven or more hours on an average weekday
7. Lower proportion of adults and adolescents:
 - » who smoke daily
 - » who vape daily
 - » with psychological distress
8. Lower proportion of adults, adolescents and children:
 - » with one or more long-term health condition (Census of Population and Housing)
 - » who consume sugar-sweetened beverages daily
 - » who are overweight and obese.

All key outcome indicators align with the Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Outcomes Framework and the sources therein, unless an alternative source is listed.

Relevant plans

- Community Services and Infrastructure Plan (2020–30)
- Sports Needs Analysis (2018–28)
- Aquatic Strategy (2019–30)

Key partners

- Community health services
- Local health and human service organisations
- Victoria Police
- Sport and Recreation Victoria
- State sporting associations
- State Government Department of Families, Fairness and Housing
- State Government Department of Health
- State Government Department of Education
- Federal Government Department of Social Services
- Federal Government Department of Health
- Peak bodies for health and human services
- Traditional Owners and First Nations community and groups
- Local sports clubs and organisations
- Local arts and culture organisations
- Local community centres and neighbourhood houses
- Creative Victoria
- Victorian Multicultural Commission
- Neighbourhood Houses Victoria
- North Western Melbourne Primary Health Network
- Western Health Public Health Unit

Advocacy priorities

- Additional mental health services – particularly for young people.
- Increased prevention-focused funding and resources to strengthen community safety.
- Improved access to health and human services for vulnerable groups.
- Improved funding models and service management across aged and community care, youth services, and maternal and child health.
- Stronger harm-reduction policy and regulation of harmful industries (gambling, alcohol, tobacco/vaping), including Electronic Gaming Machine reduction, product, pricing, marketing and outlet controls.

Relevant services we provide

- Aged and disability services
- Early years
- Maternal and child health
- Immunisations
- Youth services
- Libraries
- Community centres and hubs
- Community development
- Social planning and research
- Public health
- Sport and recreation

Theme 1: Healthy Community

Actions	Role ^	Measures
Goal 1.1: Strengthen community connection		
1.1.1 Deliver health and wellbeing initiatives that enable social connection.*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide • Partner 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of programs/events delivered. • Participant satisfaction/impact of programs/ events.
1.1.2 Support opportunities to promote First Nations reconciliation.*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide • Partner 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural and community development programs/ events delivered. • Engagement with Traditional Owners and First Nations community..
1.1.3 Recognise, support and celebrate the diversity of Hobsons Bay.*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide • Partner • Educate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of programs/events delivered and supported. • Participant satisfaction and impact of programs/ events.
1.1.4 Foster partnerships with community groups and organisations that support community connection, wellbeing and capacity building.*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide • Partner • Educate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organisations and partners that Council has worked with and/or supported. • Number and value of community grants awarded.
1.1.5 Work in partnership with older people, community organisations, service providers and other stakeholders to provide and support programs, services and initiatives that respond to their needs and aspirations.*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide • Partner • Advocate • Educate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clients report that services helped them live safely and independently at home. • Deliver and embed service-improvement initiatives that lift client participation and experience and improve value for money.
1.1.6 Partner with young people, families, schools, and service providers to co-design initiatives that respond to their needs and aspirations.*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide • Partner • Advocate • Educate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation and reach of programs to engage young people. • List of partners that Council has worked with and/or supported.
1.1.7 Provide and support safe, inclusive and accessible services, programs, facilities and public spaces.*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide • Partner • Advocate • Educate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • List of changes made to services, programs, events and/or infrastructure to make them more accessible and responsive. <p>LGPRF:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LB2 – Recently purchased library collection • LB5 – Cost of library service • LB6 – Library loans per population • LB7 – Library membership • LB8 – Library visits per population

Theme 1: Healthy Community

Actions	Role ^	Measures
Goal 1.2: Reduce harm and build a safer community		
1.2.1 Support and deliver harm prevention initiatives to reduce harm from gambling, tobacco, vaping, alcohol and other drugs.*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide • Partner • Advocate • Educate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • List of initiatives Council has delivered or supported. • Implementation and evaluation of the impact of the Gambling Harm Prevention Policy Statement and the Alcohol Harm Prevention Policy.
1.2.2 Prevent and respond to family violence by promoting gender equity and advocating for local access to services.*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide • Partner • Advocate • Educate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of Gender Impact Assessments developed. • Family violence service engagement and partnership initiatives delivered.
1.2.3 Provide public places and infrastructure that enhance perceptions of safety and strengthen partnerships to deliver community safety initiatives.*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partner • Advocate • Educate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of open space and activity centre projects that have been subject to a Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) review. • List of partners that Council has worked with and/or supported.
Goal 1.3: Promote physical and mental wellbeing		
1.3.1 Apply a life-course approach to identify service gaps, guide future life-stage action plans, and strengthen advocacy and partnerships to improve equitable access to health and community services.*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide • Partner • Advocate • Educate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete life-course service reviews and partner mapping; implement the recommendations; submit consolidated lists of system improvements, advocacy actions and partner organisations. <p>LGPRF:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MC2 – Infant enrolments in the MCH service • MC3 – Cost of MCH service • MC4 – Participation in the MCH service • MC5 – Participation in the MCH service by Aboriginal children • MC6 – Participation in four-week key age and stage visit
1.3.2 Deliver and support equitable and inclusive programming of open space, libraries, community hubs, arts, and sport and recreation facilities to promote wellbeing.*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide • Partner • Educate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of programs/events delivered or supported. • Number of community groups and organisations providing programs in Council facilities. <p>LGPRF:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AF6 – Utilisation of aquatic facilities • AF7 – Cost of aquatic facilities

Theme 1: Healthy Community

Actions	Role ^	Measures
1.3.3 Upgrade community facilities such as libraries, community hubs, sport and recreation facilities when aligned to feasible strategy to increase participation in physical and mental activities with a focus on attracting under-represented cohorts.*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of community facilities that have been upgraded to promote greater participation. • Increased participation and reach of active and engaging programs for physical and mental health and wellbeing.
1.3.4 Support healthy eating and access to nutritious food through education and capacity-building community initiatives.*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide • Partner • Advocate • Educate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community partnerships delivered and supported
1.3.5 Support and deliver services and initiatives that support mental health.*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide • Partner 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of programs/events, initiatives and/or services delivered and/or supported. • List of partners that Council has worked with and/or supported.

* Goal reflected in the Health, Wellbeing and Safety Plan 2025-29

^ See section 2.1.2 for role definitions

LGPRF = Local Government Planning and Reporting Framework measures



3.3.2.

Theme 2: Sustainable Environment

Goals

1

Respond effectively to climate change by reducing emissions and managing risk.

3

Promote and deliver recycling and waste management services that divert waste from landfill.

2

Support the community to respond to climate change.

4

Promote the conservation and enhancement of our unique natural environments.

Key outcome indicators

1. Reduction in:

- » gross and net emissions
- » fossil fuel use
- » overall waste generated
- » waste sent to landfill
- » contamination in mixed recycling, food and garden and glass bins.

2. Community satisfaction with:

- » waste services
- » environmental sustainability initiatives and services
- » the appearance of public areas.

Relevant plans

- Waste and Recycling Strategy (2025)
- Biodiversity Strategy (2024-34)
- Hobsons Bay Response to Climate Change Action Plan (2022)
- Urban Forest Strategy (2020)

Key partners

- Environmental Protection Authority
- Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action
- Parks Victoria
- Melbourne Water
- Recycling Victoria
- Sustainability Victoria
- Council Alliance for a Sustainable Built Environment
- Western Alliance for Greenhouse Action
- Department of Transport and Planning
- Victorian Planning Authority
- "Friends of" nature and environment groups

Advocacy priorities

- Tighter air-pollution controls and better monitoring to protect community health.
- Improved financial support and policy settings for Council to effectively manage waste and recycling services across the community.
- Investment in new collection and recycling facilities.
- Reduction of unnecessary packaging waste including soft plastics.
- Expansion of product stewardship schemes.
- Increase the quality and efficiency of new homes and ensure they withstand changing weather conditions.
- Funding for rehabilitation of former industrial sites.
- Ensure sustainable development in strategic land use planning.
- Significant external partner funding towards the construction of the Hobsons Bay Wetlands Centre as a regional attraction.

Relevant services we provide

- Environment and sustainability
- Waste and recycling
- Open space, parks and conservation

Theme 2. Sustainable Environment

Actions	Role	Measures
Goal 2.1: Respond effectively to climate change by reducing Council emissions and managing risk		
2.1.1 Reduce Council's gross greenhouse gas emissions related to energy use across its buildings and facilities portfolio.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emissions from energy use within buildings.
2.1.2 Maintain carbon neutral accreditation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual greenhouse gas inventory
Goal 2.2: Support the community to respond to climate change		
2.2.1 Provide education, advice and support to the community to reduce emissions and respond to a changing climate.*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide • Educate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of programs/events delivered. • Reach of communication and education materials.
2.2.2 Promote energy-efficient and sustainable residential, commercial and industrial development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of environmental sustainable design referrals on planning permit applications. • Sustainability objectives included in delivered planning initiatives.
2.2.3 Increase the tree canopy to increase natural shade and reduce the urban heat island effect.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of new trees planted within the municipality by suburb. • Survival rate of trees planted.
Goal 2.3: Promote and deliver recycling and waste management services that divert waste from landfill		
2.3.1 Develop and implement the new Waste and Recycling Strategy (2025) incorporating confirmation of service levels, community education, and enforcement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waste and Recycling Strategy developed and adopted. • Reported instances of illegally dumped rubbish. <p>LGPRF:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WC1 – Kerbside collection waste diverted from landfill. • WC2 – Kerbside collection bins missed • WC3 – Cost of kerbside garbage bin collection service • WC4 – Cost of kerbside recyclables bin collection service
2.3.2 Provide education and support to residents and businesses to support effective use of kerbside collection bins and reduction of waste to landfill.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide • Partner • Educate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Results of contamination audits. • Education and awareness initiatives delivered.

Theme 2. Sustainable Environment

Actions	Role	Measures
2.3.3 Manage waste and recycling contractual arrangements to maximise environmental outcomes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amount spent from waste reserve. • Tonnes of waste diverted from landfill.
2.3.4 Pursue use of sustainable materials within infrastructure projects to facilitate greater uptake of recycling of waste products.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of Capital Works projects that have a landfill reduction plan. • Number of Capital Works projects that include recycled content materials.
Goal 2.4: Promote the conservation of our unique natural environments		
2.4.1 In partnership with relevant groups and organisations, promote and protect the city's unique local environments including coastal areas, wetlands and grasslands.*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide • Partner • Educate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of initiatives delivered from the biodiversity strategy. • Number of upgrade initiatives delivered from key conservation reserve master plans.
2.4.2 Strengthen and embed land-contamination management practices.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of public sites where decontamination works were undertaken. • Percentage of sites that received compliance sign-off when contaminated land was requiring appropriate management.

* Goal reflected in the Health, Wellbeing and Safety Plan 2025-29

^ See section 2.1.2 for role definitions

LGPRF = Local Government Planning and Reporting Framework measures

3.3.3.

Theme 3: Livable City

Goals

- 1 Provide equitable and inclusive community infrastructure.
- 2 Deliver and advocate for an accessible transport network.
- 3 Increase access to jobs, education and housing.
- 4 Foster community through events and arts.
- 5 Address drainage, flooding and stormwater concerns.

Key outcome indicators

1. Reduction in:
 - » level of unemployment and underemployment
 - » number of reported floods.
2. Increased community satisfaction with:
 - » recreational facilities
 - » the appearance of public areas
 - » local streets and footpaths
 - » business development
 - » community and cultural activities.

Relevant plans

- Community Services and Infrastructure Plan (2020–30)
- Economic Development Strategy (2023–28)
- Integrated Transport Plan (2017–30)
- Open Space Strategy (2018–28)
- Public Toilet Strategy (2023–33)

Key partners

- Housing Victoria
- Heritage Victoria
- Department of Families, Fairness and Housing
- Public Transport Victoria
- Department of Transport and Planning
- Department of Education
- Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions
- Western Melbourne Tourism Board
- West of Melbourne Economic Development Alliance
- Creative Victoria
- Local arts and culture organisations
- Traders associations

Advocacy priorities

- Improved public transport services across the city.
- Funding to manage increased risk of stormwater flooding and impacts of rising sea levels across the municipality.
- Improved state government maintenance of their assets (including roads and the city gateways) to meet community expectations.
- Balanced approach to meeting housing targets while considering neighbourhood character and community needs.
- Connection of active transport corridors with those in neighbouring municipalities and major destinations.
- Advocate for partnership funding (state/federal/private) to revitalise major tourism attractions through site acquisition, renewal and new infrastructure.
- Advocate for sustained funding to expand arts and culture infrastructure and programs to drive visitation, strengthen place identity and build local creative industries.

Relevant services we provide

- Economic development and tourism
- Arts and culture
- Strategic land use planning
- Statutory planning
- Planning and building compliance
- Asset management and maintenance
- Capital works
- Traffic and transport
- Engineering services

Theme 3. Livable City

Actions	Role	Measures
Goal 3.1: Provide equitable and inclusive community infrastructure		
3.1.1. Review under-utilised Council properties, buildings and land to identify possible disposal, investment or activation opportunities to meet community need.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review completed. • Percentage of properties and buildings under full utilisation.
3.1.2 Renew and upgrade key activity centres to deliver accessible, safe and welcoming streetscapes that reflect suburb identities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of activity centre/streetscapes subject to upgrade or major renewal works.
3.1.3 Provide accessible and well-maintained community facilities that meet community expectations and needs.*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide • Partner 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of community facilities that have been subject to accessibility improvements via upgrades. • Change in asset renewal gap for building assets.
3.1.4 Enhance the existing provision of open space across the municipality through renewal and upgrade to meet community expectations in accordance with the Open Space Strategy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of parks that have been subject to upgrade or major renewal works. • Change in asset renewal gap for open space assets.
3.1.5 Respond to the impacts of the predicted rise in sea level including erosion of the coastline and loss of usable recreation space.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide • Partner 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completion of Adapt West - Shaping our Shores work to guide future adaptation work along the coastline. • Number of projects delivered that resolve high-risk erosion issues on the coastline.
Goal 3.2: Increase access to jobs, education and housing		
3.2.1 Deliver a kindergarten upgrade program to meet increased demand.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide • Partner 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation of the approved Kindergarten Infrastructure and Service Plan. • Proportion of kindergarten programs at capacity.
3.2.2 Activate retail and service precincts, with a focus on supporting local business, attracting investment and creating vibrant community hubs across the city.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide • Partner 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of initiatives provided or supported. • Participant and stakeholder satisfaction with initiatives.

Theme 3. Livable City

Actions	Role	Measures
3.2.3 Attract commercial and industrial investment that supports sustainable local employment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide • Partner • Advocate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of promotional activities undertaken. • Amount of appropriately located new commercial and industrial investments.
3.2.4 Develop and implement the Plan for Hobsons Bay to guide land use planning for future housing growth, employment, land protection, environmental resilience and heritage outcomes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan for Hobsons Bay developed and adopted.
3.2.5 Develop and implement a housing strategy to reflect supply forecasts and review the Neighbourhood Character Study.*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing strategy developed and adopted. • Neighbourhood Character Study completed.
3.2.6 Deliver and support education and training initiatives that increase employment pathways, education and skill development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide • Partner 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of employment, training and volunteer initiatives delivered or supported.
3.2.7 Develop and implement the Hobsons Bay Tourism Strategy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide • Partner 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hobsons Bay Tourism Strategy developed and adopted. • Number of actions from the tourism strategy completed or underway.

Goal 3.3: Deliver and advocate for a safe and accessible transport network

3.3.1 Review and implement the Integrated Transport Strategy and deliver infrastructure to improve movement and accessibility outcomes across the municipality.*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrated Transport Strategy reviewed and adopted. • Number of actions from the Integrated Transport Strategy completed or underway. <p>LGPRF:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • R1 – Sealed local roads below the intervention level • R3 – Cost of sealed local road reconstruction • R4 – Cost of sealed local road resealing • R5 – Satisfaction with sealed local roads • C3 – Population density per length of road
3.3.2 Develop and implement a Parking Management Action Plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parking Management Action Plan developed and adopted. • Number of actions from the Parking Management Action Plan completed or underway.

Theme 3. Livable City

Actions	Role	Measures
Goal 3.4: Foster community through events and arts		
3.4.1 Develop and implement a Heritage Strategy to protect, manage and celebrate our diverse heritage.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heritage Strategy developed and adopted. • Number of actions from the Heritage Strategy completed or underway.
3.4.2 Develop and implement the Hobsons Bay Creative City Arts and Culture Strategy, incorporating the Public Art Strategy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategy developed and adopted. • Partnerships and arts development initiatives identified and delivered.
3.4.3 Provide and support an events and festivals program that showcases the unique features of Hobsons Bay and responds to and celebrates community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide • Partner 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation and reach of festivals and events in the municipality. • Community satisfaction with community and cultural activities.
3.4.4 Activate and invest in existing under-utilised spaces and infrastructure to support arts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide • Partner 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • List of initiatives or upgrades delivered.
Goal 3.5: Address drainage, flooding and stormwater management concerns		
3.5.1 Develop and implement a Drainage Strategy that considers the impacts of climate change.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drainage Strategy developed and adopted. • Number of actions from the Drainage Strategy completed or underway.
3.5.2 Review and increase the standards for drainage maintenance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drainage maintenance program and standards reviewed. • Maintenance program delivered in line with newly endorsed standards.

* Goal reflected in the Health, Wellbeing and Safety Plan 2025-29

^ See section 2.1.2 for role definitions

LGPRF = Local Government Planning and Reporting Framework measures



3.3.4.

Theme 4: Accountable Council

Goals

- 1 Strengthen governance practices and systems.
- 2 Increase staff satisfaction and safety.
- 3 Improve financial performance of Council.
- 4 Increase effective communications and community engagement.
- 5 Develop strategic partnerships to deliver on community needs.

Key outcome indicators

1. Improved financial performance.
2. Improved partnership development and maturity.
3. Increased staff satisfaction.
4. Increased community satisfaction with:
 - » how Council informs the community
 - » Council consultation and engagement
 - » Council's overall performance
 - » value for money delivered by Council
 - » Council direction
 - » customer service
 - » emergency and disaster management
 - » decisions made in the interest of the community.

Relevant plans

- Community and Local law (2025)
- Governance Rules (2025)
- Rating Strategy (2024–25)
- Listening & Support Integrated Action Plan (2025)
- Gender Equality Action Plan (2025–29)
- Community Engagement Policy (2023)

Advocacy priorities

- Fair funding arrangements and cessation of unfunded mandates from state and federal governments, including cost shifting of services and responsibilities.
- Increased federal and state infrastructure funding to address the growing asset renewal gap.
- Review of rate-capping policies, or alternative revenue mechanisms and funding sources.

Key partners

- Victoria Police
- Fire Rescue Victoria
- Country Fire Authority (CFA)
- Victorian State Emergency Services (SES)
- Ambulance Service
- Emergency Management Victoria
- Federal government departments and agencies
- Victorian state government departments and agencies
- Neighbouring councils and regional council alliances
- Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV)
- Local Government Victoria
- Regional Development Victoria
- Federal and state parliamentarians (local members)
- Staff unions and professional associations

Relevant services we provide

- Governance and council support
- Corporate services
- Finance and revenue management
- Communications and community engagement
- Emergency management
- Locals laws and compliance

Theme 4. Accountable Council

Actions	Role	Measures
Goal 4.1: Strengthen governance practices and systems		
4.1.1 Improve the transparency of Council decisions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compliance with transparency policy. <p>LGPRF:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • G1 – Council resolutions made at meetings closed to the public. • G3 – Councillor attendance at Council meetings. • G4 – Cost of elected representation. • G5 – Satisfaction with Council decisions.
4.1.2 Implement an integrated corporate, strategic planning and reporting framework.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual progress reporting against Council Plan published. • Quarterly organisational performance reporting published.
4.1.3 Conduct a review of Council policies and deliver a rolling program of updates.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of Council policies completed and timetable for review of policies developed.
4.1.4 Embed best-practice governance and compliance across all Council regulatory, governance and corporate services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Best practice frameworks developed and implemented and evaluated. • Number of staff completing compliance training programs. <p>LGPRF:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SP2 – Planning applications decided within required timeframes • SP3 – Cost of statutory planning service • SP4 – Council planning decisions upheld at VCAT • AM1 – Time taken to action animal management requests • AM2 – Animals reclaimed • AM7 – Animal management prosecutions successful • AM6 – Cost of animal management service • FS1 – Time taken to action food complaints • FS2 – Food safety assessments • FS3 – Cost of food safety service • FS4 – Critical and major non-compliance outcome notifications • FS5 – Food safety samples

Theme 4. Accountable Council

Actions	Role	Measures
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SP1 – Time taken to decide planning applications • SP3 – Cost of statutory planning service • SP4 – Council planning decisions upheld at VCAT
4.1.5 Enhance emergency management preparedness and community resilience through updated planning and emergency services coordination.*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide • Partner • Educate • Advocate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emergency Management Plan reviewed and updated annually. • Business continuity plans updated and tested annually.
4.1.6 Strengthen the delivery of the Gender Equality Action Plan by embedding the Gender Impact Assessment process and providing gender equity training for staff.*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide • Educate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender Equality Action Plan implementation milestones achieved. • Annual Gender Equality Action Plan reporting compliance. • Number of Gender Impact Assessments completed across all relevant projects. • Percentage of staff completing gender equality training. • Gender equality policy compliance monitoring results.
4.1.7 Strengthen Council's commitment to child safety by embedding the Child Safe Standards across policies, services, and facilities, and building staff capability.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percentage of staff completing mandatory child safety training. • Child Safe Standards compliance audit results child safety incident reporting and response timeframes.
Goal 4.2: Increase staff satisfaction and safety		
4.2.1 Implement the actions from the Integrated Action Plan (2025) relating to valuing people, sound governance and trust and integrity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of actions from the Integrated Action Plan completed against planned timelines. • Staff feedback on plan implementation effectiveness.
4.2.2 Establish an Employee Value Proposition to retain and attract high-performing talent.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employee Value Proposition framework developed and launched. • Organisational values refreshed and embedded. • Staff retention rate. <p>LGPRF:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • C7 – Percentage of staff turnover

Theme 4. Accountable Council

Actions	Role	Measures
Goal 4.3: Improve the financial performance of Council		
4.3.1 Deliver a comprehensive program of service reviews to improve efficiency and public value and clearly communicate the outcomes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service catalogue review undertaken. • Number of service reviews completed. • Financial implications of service review findings.
4.3.2 Deliver digital transformation initiatives and monitor for continual improvement to increase efficiency.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of digital transformation initiatives implemented.
4.3.3 Reduce the asset renewal gap.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change in asset renewal gap. <p>LGPRF:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • L1 – Current assets compared to current liabilities • Q5 – Asset renewal compared to depreciation • C2 – Infrastructure per head of population
4.3.4 Develop strategies to diversify income streams.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategies identified. • Percentage increase in non-rates revenue. • Revenue diversification as percentage of total revenue. <p>LGPRF:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • E2 – Expenses per property assessment • E4 – Rates compared to adjusted underlying revenue • L2 – Unrestricted cash compared to current liabilities • O2 – Loans and borrowings compared to rates • O3 – Loans and borrowings repayments compared to rates • O4 – Non-current liabilities compared to own source revenue • OP1 – Adjusted underlying surplus • C1 – Expenses per head of population • C4 – Own source revenue per head of population • C5 – Recurrent grants per head of population • C6 – Relative socio-economic disadvantage • S2 – Rates compared to property values

Theme 4. Accountable Council

Actions	Role	Measures
Goal 4.4: Increase effective communications and community engagement		
4.4.1 Develop and implement a communications strategy and associated policies with a focus on methods, language, frequency, transparency and closing the loop.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communications strategy developed, adopted and embedded across Council. • Community satisfaction with Council communication. • Percentage of priority populations receiving Council communications.
4.4.2 Review and adopt the community engagement strategy and embed across Council.*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Engagement Strategy reviewed and adopted. • Number of actions from Community Engagement Strategy completed or under way. • Number of internal process improvements. <p>LGPRF:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • G2 – Satisfaction with community consultation and engagement
Goal 4.5: Develop strategic partnerships to deliver on community needs		
4.5.1 Deliver intergovernmental relations and stakeholder engagement alliances to respond to advocacy priorities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide • Partner 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of partnerships and alliances formed. • Number of joint advocacy initiatives. • Media coverage and community awareness of advocacy priorities.
4.5.2 Establish a partnerships framework and map existing and new collaborations to achieve the Community Vision 2040.*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide • Partner 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnerships framework developed. • Mapping exercise undertaken. • Number of new collaborations.

* Goal reflected in the Health, Wellbeing and Safety Plan 2025-29

^ See section 2.1.2 for role definitions

LGPRF = Local Government Planning and Reporting Framework measures

Related Documents





4.1.0.

Health Wellbeing and Safety Plan 2025–29

The Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008 sets out Council's responsibility to protect and improve health and wellbeing outcomes for the community.



All councils are required to prepare and report on a Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan. In response to strong input from the community, we have also included a focus on safety – hence the Hobsons Bay City Council Health, Wellbeing and Safety Plan 2025–29.

When developing the Health, Wellbeing and Safety Plan, we also focused on our obligations to the following:

- Responding to the Victorian state government health and wellbeing priorities.
- Addressing the health impacts of climate change.
- Responding to the rising incidence of family violence and considering preventative measures.
- Meeting the needs of our most vulnerable community members by integrating Council's social policy framework, A Fair Hobsons Bay for All 2024–28, including the Disability Action Plan.
- Meeting the standards and requirements of the *Gender Equality Act 2020*.

4.2.0.

Asset Plan 2025–35

Section 92 of the *Local Government Act 2020* requires councils to develop an Asset Plan.

An Asset Plan provides an overview of the infrastructure owned or controlled by Council, allowing from strategic financial decisions to be made over the next 10 years.

The purpose of Asset Plan is to:

- show how Council will manage its assets responsibly in a cost-effective way to meet the service delivery needs of the Hobsons Bay community now and in the future.
- ensure there is integration between asset management planning outcomes and the Council Plan, Resource Plan and Financial Plan.
- forecast capital and maintenance expenditure requirements for Council's assets over the next 10 years.
- provide an improvement action plan for implementation over the next four-year Council plan term.
- ensure that Council complies with its legislative obligations.



4.3.0.

Financial Plan 2025–35

Section 91 of the *Local Government Act 2020* requires councils to develop a Financial Plan. A Financial Plan outlines the resources required to deliver the Council Plan and other strategic documents.



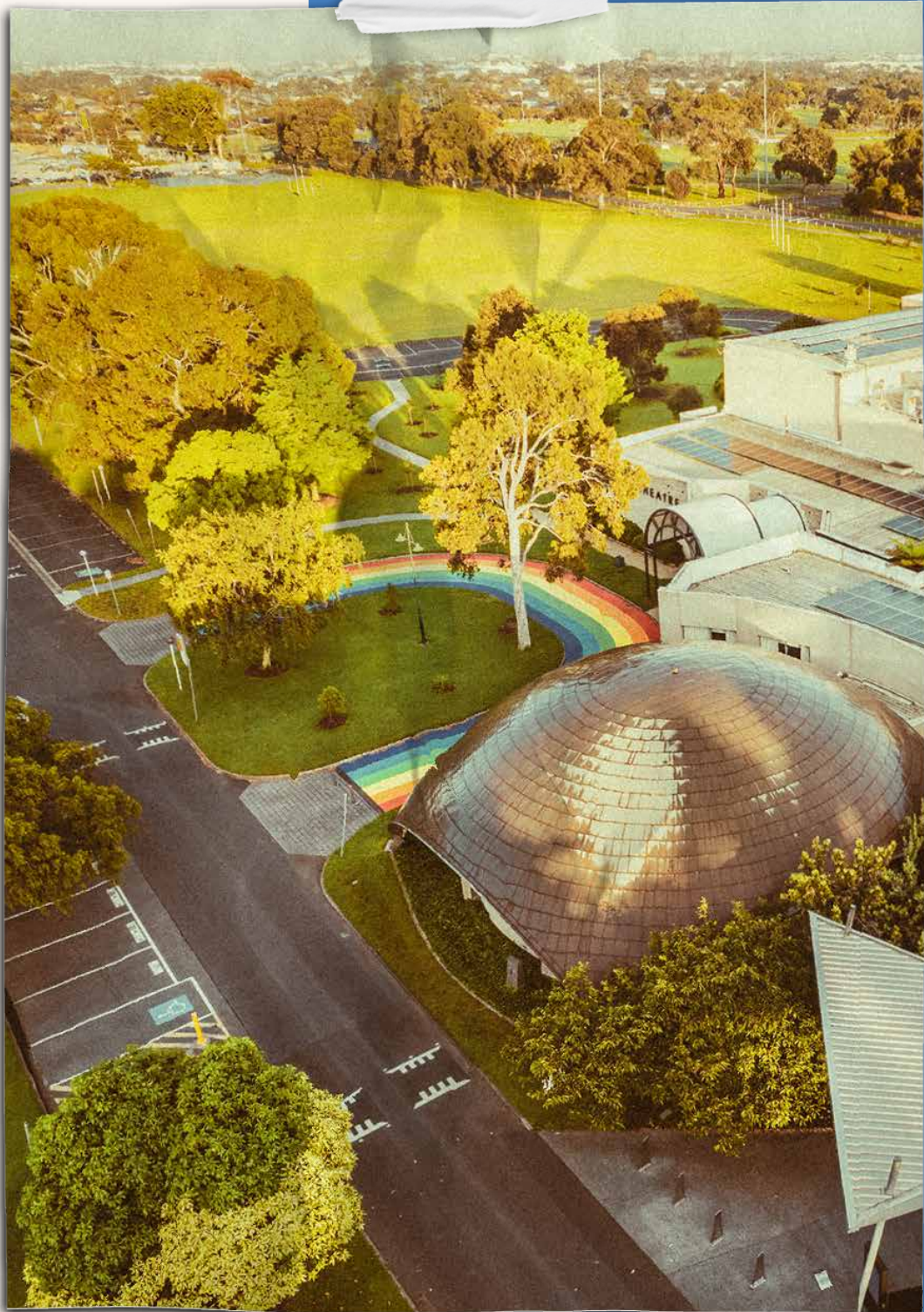
Covering a minimum period of 10 years, the Council Plan must also explain the assumptions and decisions that Council makes when estimating the resources they'll require.

The development and implementation of the Financial Plan 2025–35 supports Council's commitment to a well-planned and governed organisation that works towards the realisation of the Community Vision 2040. The Financial Plan also outlines the financial considerations and strategic outcomes needed for the organisation to deliver the Council Plan 2025–29.



Appendices

05



List of community representatives

Over 1400 community members helped shaped our Council Plan 2025–29 and Health, Wellbeing and Safety Plan 2025–29.

Deliberative community engagement is a fundamental component of the development of the plan and Hobsons Bay City Council would like to acknowledge and thank the following community members who participated in our Community Representative Workshops in July 2025:

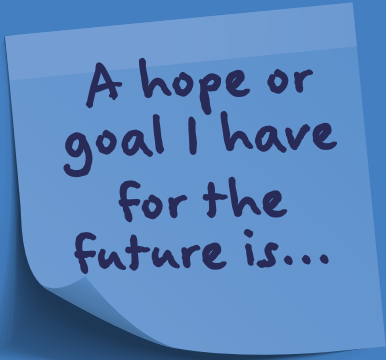
James Adams	Kim Hai Ha
Perla Alcalá Chávez	Jasmine Harris
Stacey Anne	Hugh Jones
Melissa Bandara	Siobhan Korbut
Gerardo Berbeglia	Bella Krbaleski
Andrew Blackstock	Jeff Lawrence
Jeff Bogensberger	Dorothy MacKechnie
Amornta Banjongluesak	Manu Mathew Tom
Michael Casha	Tara Meadows
Liz Cyarto	Cassandra Morton
Sandra Rita Daly	Eleanor Naldoza
Kate Douglas	Madelyn Pickersgill
Michael Drozdek	Evangeline Sands
Farzad Daneshgar	Keith Sheridan
Monica Elloso	Diane Willis
Adrienne Emmett	Lance Wilson
Anthony Farrugia	Alexis Winslow
Michelle Galea	
Bea Gerada	

5.2.0.

Supporting documents and links

- Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework
- Hobsons Bay Health Profile
- Hobsons Bay Health Profile: 2025 Summary
- Community Engagement Summary Report (August 2025)
- Health Wellbeing and Safety Plan 2025–29
- Asset Plan 2025–35
- Financial Plan 2025–35

All are available at:
www.hobsonsbay.vic.gov.au



A hope or
goal I have
for the
future is...

“a better community - that would
be a goal or a vision for Hobsons
Bay, a better working community
among all the different cultural
communities in the council”

Community representative,
Eleanor, July 2025

“to preserve and celebrate the history
of our area and in particular the
Williamstown area being one of the first
settlements that we had in in Victoria”

Community representative,
Andrew, July 2025




HOBSONSBAY CITY COUNCIL



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HOBSONSBAY LANGUAGE LINE

9932 1212

INTERPRETER SERVICE FOR ALL LANGUAGES

Your Council in your language

Telephone interpreting service

Arabic	خدمة الترجمة الهاتفية
Burmese	တယ်လီဖုန်းဖြင့် စကားပြန် ဝန်ဆောင်မှု
Cantonese	电话口译服务
Croatian	Telefonska služba tumača
Greek	Τηλεφωνική Υπηρεσία Διερμηνέων
Italian	Servizio telefonico interpreti
Karen	လိတံမိ တာ်ကတိလ်တီးတာ် တာ်မ
Macedonian	Телефонска преведувачка служба
Maltese	Servizz ta' Interpretar bił-Telefon
Mandarin	电话口译服务
Vietnamese	Dịch vụ Thông dịch qua Điện thoại



For further information regarding this plan please contact the Community and Council Plan development team at cp@hobsonsbay.vic.gov.au

Hobsons Bay City Council

Health, Wellbeing & Safety Plan

2025-29



HOBSONSBAY
CITY
COUNCIL



Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the
Bunurong People of the
Kulin Nation as the
Traditional Owners of the
lands, rivers and coastal
areas in Hobsons Bay. We
recognise the First Nations
peoples' relationship to
this land and offer our
respect to their Elders
past and present.





How to read this plan

The Health, Wellbeing and Safety Plan 2025-29 should be read alongside the Hobsons Bay Council Plan 2025-29. Together, these plans detail how Council will work towards the community aspirations outlined in the Community Vision.

When reading this plan, you can use the contents page to go to the sections that interest you most or jump straight to page 44 to see a summary of the plan on one page.

You can also go directly through to the themes, goals and actions from page 45.



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Introduction





1.1.0.

A message from our Councillors

We're proud to share the Health, Wellbeing and Safety Plan 2025-29. This plan builds on the goals in the Community Vision 2040 and Council Plan 2025-29.

It shows our commitment to creating a healthier, safer, and more connected city where everyone can thrive. Over the next four years, this plan will guide actions that improve health and wellbeing across Council's four priority areas.

It is based on key principles: understanding the social factors that affect health, working in partnership, promoting fairness, and considering the health impacts of climate change.

These principles will help us tackle the bigger issues that influence health, wellbeing and safety in Hobsons Bay.



The plan also recognises the diversity of our community and the unique needs of groups who face more barriers to being healthy, happy and safe. It addresses challenges such as climate change, access and inclusion equity, economic pressures, and changing demographics.

We've combined Council's previous social policy framework, A Fair Hobsons Bay for All (including the Disability Action Plan), into this new plan. This strengthens our focus on inclusion and equity as central to health, wellbeing and safety.

Thank you to the community members, partners, organisations and staff who shared their ideas and priorities during development. Your input shaped this plan and will guide its delivery.

As Councillors, we're committed to working with you to make Hobsons Bay a place where everyone feels supported, connected, and safe.

Your Hobsons Bay Councillors



1.2.1.

About Hobsons Bay City Council

The unique municipality

The Yalukit Willam clan of the Bunurong People were the first people who lived in the area now known as Hobsons Bay and had strong connections to land and sea. A number of sites of significance to the Aboriginal community are located throughout the municipality, particularly along the coastal trail.

Hobsons Bay is situated at the northern end of Port Phillip Bay, about 10 km west of central Melbourne and includes the suburbs of Altona, Altona Meadows, Altona North, Brooklyn, Laverton, Newport, Seabrook, Seaholme, South Kingsville, Spotswood, Williamstown and Williamstown North. Each suburb has its own unique character, from the historic seaport of Williamstown with its range of heritage buildings, to the more recently developed residential areas of Altona Meadows and Seabrook.

In 2024, Hobsons Bay had an estimated resident population of 95,633 which is forecast to increase to 113,134 by 2046.

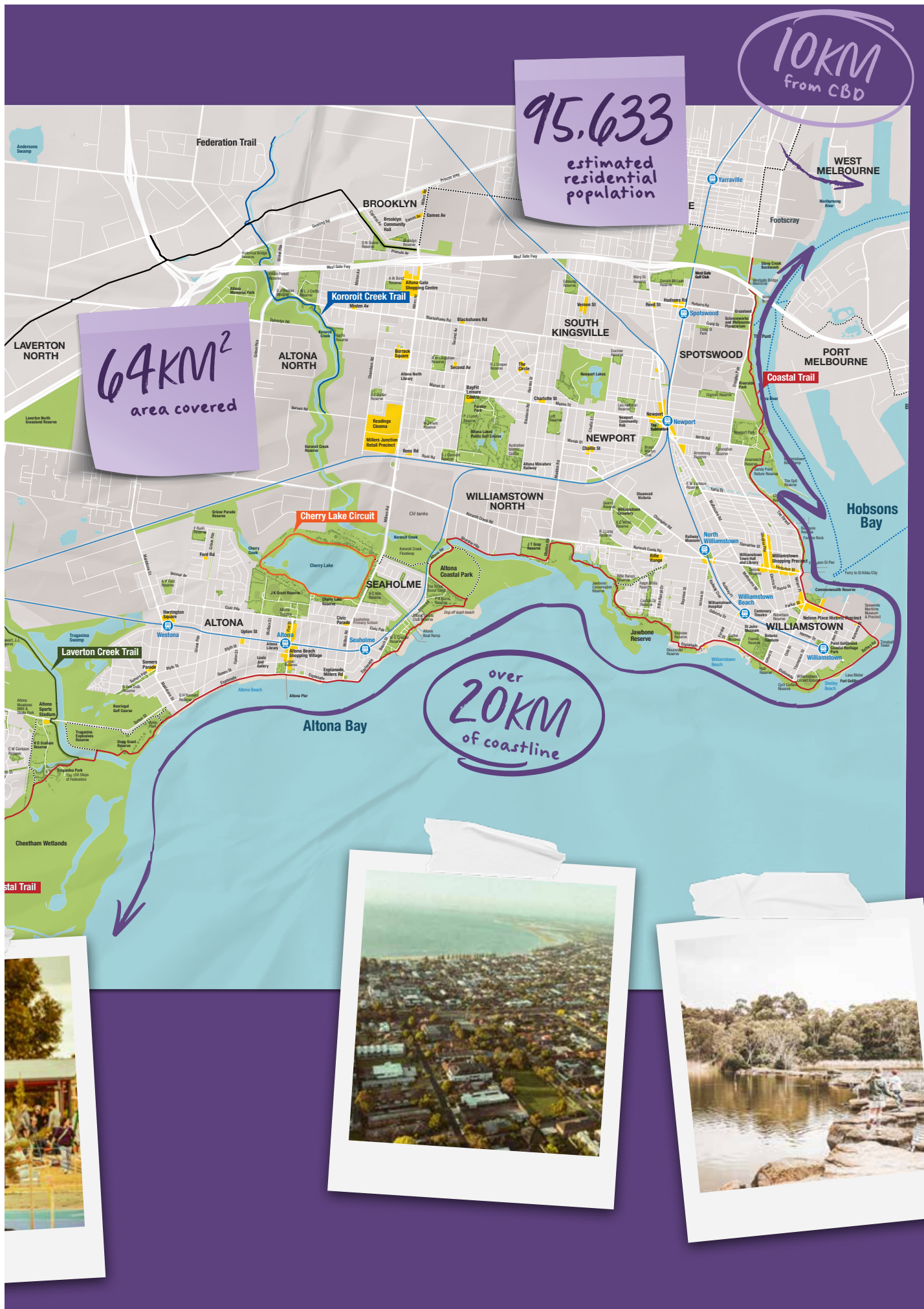
Hobsons Bay covers an area of about 64.20 km² and has more than 20 km of coastline.

It is also home to significant coastal wetlands, five creek systems, remnant native grasslands, and important flora and fauna habitats, which make up 24 per cent of the city's total land area.

Hobsons Bay has a range of major industrial complexes, which contribute significantly to the economy of Victoria. It has good access to regional transport facilities such as the West Gate Freeway, the Western Ring Road, CityLink, the National Rail Line, and the ports and airports of Melbourne and Avalon.

These features contribute to the city's culture, which is strongly linked to its maritime heritage, rich natural environment, industry and lifestyle.









1.2.2.

Our councillors

The Council is elected to provide good governance in its municipal district for the benefit and wellbeing of its community.

On 26 October 2024 the residents and ratepayers of Hobsons Bay elected this Council for a four-year term. Seven councillors were elected to a new single-councillor ward structure.

1.2.3.

Our Community

Population



In 2024, Hobsons Bay had an estimated resident population of 95,633 which is forecast to increase to 113,134 by 2046. The proudly diverse community speaks more than 80 languages and practises more than 40 faiths.

95,633

residents in 2024 ¹

2.02%

population growth rate ¹

Population growth in Greater Melbourne was 2.74%

51% 49%

Females ² Males ²

Greater Melbourne was 52% females and 49% males

10,000 residents

increase in Hobsons Bay's population over the next 10 years. Over half this growth will be residents aged over 60 years. ³

13.4%

9,963 residents provide unpaid assistance for someone in need of care. ²

Compared to 12.6% of people in Greater Melbourne

25%

lone person households ²

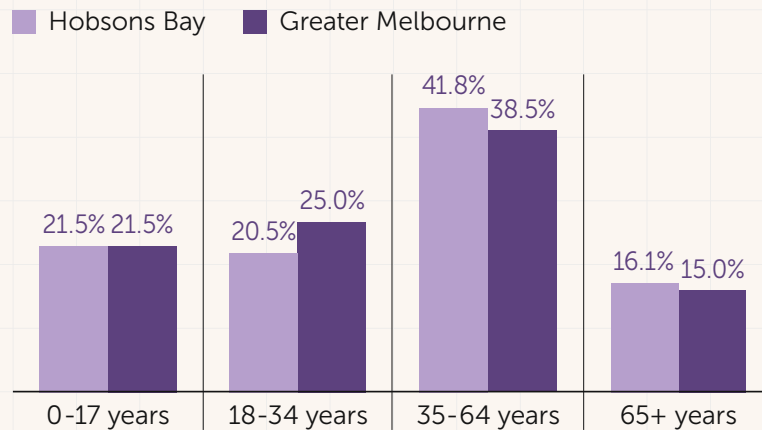
Compared to 24% of people in Greater Melbourne

1. Australian Bureau of Statistics (2023-24), Regional population.

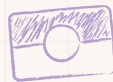
2. Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), 2021 Census of Population and Housing.

3. i.d Consulting (2024), Hobsons Bay population and household forecasts, National Forecasting Program.

% of residents in
Hobsons Bay ⁴



0.7%



628 residents are First Nations ⁴

Compared to 0.7% of people
in Greater Melbourne

30.1%



of residents are born overseas ⁴

Compared to 35.7% of people
in Greater Melbourne

13.2%



11,372 residents live in
low-income households ⁴

Compared to 13.4% of people
in Greater Melbourne

47.8%



of residents report very good
or excellent health ⁵

Compared to 39.6% of people
in Greater Melbourne



13.3%



of residents identify as LGBTQIA+ ⁵

Compared to 11% of people across Victoria

21.3%



of residents have a disability ⁵

Compared to 21.4% of people
in Greater Melbourne

4. Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), 2021 Census of Population and Housing.

5. Victorian Department of Health (2024), Victorian Population Health Survey 2023, unpublished.

1.2.4.

Priority populations

Recognising the principle of equity, this plan considers the distinct needs of our priority populations – those groups in the community who are more likely to experience social and economic barriers that contribute to poorer health and social outcomes.

Nine priority populations are identified in this plan. Each of these groups contribute to the diversity and vibrancy of the Hobsons Bay community.

People may identify with multiple priority groups throughout their lives. We acknowledge that the experience of people who identify with any particular group/s varies from person to person.

Some health, wellbeing and safety information for each group is highlighted on the following pages:

Children (0–11 years)

People with a disability and carers

Young people (12–25 years)

Women and girls

Older people (60 years and over)

Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer, asexual (LGBTIQ+) and gender diverse communities

People from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities

People in low-income households

First Nations people



Children (0-11 years)

In 2020-21, the rate of emergency department presentations for mental and behavioural conditions in Hobsons Bay children aged 0-14 was 33 per cent higher than the Greater Melbourne average.

9.3%

of Hobsons Bay children have one or more long-term health conditions.

Asthma

is the most prevalent long-term health condition.

1 in 5

Hobsons Bay children are vulnerable in one or more key development area, e.g. physical health and wellbeing, emotional maturity, language and cognitive skills.

This varies across the municipality from 13 to 24.8 per cent.

25%

of all Hobsons Bay NDIS participants are aged 0-14 years.



Young people (12-25 years)

- Across Victoria, young adults aged 18-24 years included the highest proportion of LGBTIQ+ people (12.2%), more than four times higher than people aged 45-54 (3.8%) and nearly ten times higher than for people aged 85+ (1.3%).
- Victorians aged 18-24 reported the highest rate of loneliness out of all adult age groups.
- Most prevalent long-term health conditions are asthma and mental health conditions, both occurring at higher rates than the Greater Melbourne average.
- Young people in Hobsons Bay experience psychological distress at higher rates compared to western Melbourne and Victoria.

21.1%

of Hobsons Bay young people have one or more long-term health conditions.

7.9%

of local young people aged 15-24 years are not engaged in education or employment.



older people (60+ years)

The rate of disability increases in people as they age, with 9.9 per cent of Hobsons Bay residents aged 65-69 needing assistance with daily living, with that rate jumping to 59.2 per cent in people aged 85+.

Top 3 health conditions

1. arthritis
2. diabetes
3. heart disease

63.9%

of Hobsons Bay people aged 65+ have one or more long-term conditions.

1 in 6

older Australians experience elder abuse in any given year.

26.0%

of Hobsons Bay people aged 65+ live alone.

58.5%

of Hobsons Bay people aged 65+ are dependent on the age pension.



Women and girls

Women are around three times as likely to be the victim-survivors of family violence than men.

29%

of Hobsons Bay women live in the lowest income households

Compared to 22% of men

28.5%

of Hobsons Bay women do more than 15 hours of unpaid domestic work per week

Compared to 10.9% of men

Top 3 long-term health conditions

1. mental health conditions (10%)
2. arthritis (10%)
3. asthma (9%)

all more prevalent than for males.

15.6%

of women provide care to someone with a disability, long term illness or old age

Compared to 11.1% of men in Hobsons Bay.



People with a disability and their carers

The Australian Human Rights Commission receives more complaints about disability discrimination than about any other form of discrimination.

Top 3 health conditions

1. arthritis (16%)
2. mental health (13%)
3. diabetes (10%)

6.6%

of Hobsons Bay residents live with a severe or profound disability

40%

of carers nationwide have a disability themselves.

1 in 2

households with at least one person with a disability were in the lowest income group (50%)

Carers are less likely to be in the labour force and are more likely to have a lower income than those not providing any unpaid care.



Low-income households

47%

of people in low-income households have at least one long-term health condition

compared to people living in other households (29%).

48.9%

of older people (60+ years) make up low-income households but just 21.4 per cent of the total population



First Nations People

First Nations Victorians experience high or very high psychological distress.

Top 3 health conditions

1. mental health (17%)
2. asthma (13%)
3. arthritis (7%)

2 in 3

First Nations Australians are estimated to be impacted by everyday racism

1 in 2

First Nations Victorians report living with disability

30y/o

is the median age of First Nations people in Hobsons Bay compared with 39 for the total population

40%

First Nations residents are more likely to have a long-term health condition
Compared to non-First Nation residents (32%).



LGBTIQA+ communities

State and national data show people within LGBTIQA+ communities are more likely to attempt self-harm and experience family violence.

58%

of LGBTIQA+ Victorians faced discrimination based on their sexual orientation.

77.7%

of LGBTIQA+ Victorians were treated unfairly due to their gender identity.

Lesbian, gay or bisexual people drink alcohol at riskier levels, exceeding lifetime risk guidelines (by 1.5 times) and monthly single occasion guidelines (by 1.4 times), compared to the broader population.



Culturally + linguistically diverse communities

- Access to health and community services can be more difficult for people who don't speak, read, write or understand English well.
- Women and young people from migrant and refugee backgrounds face challenges finding and maintaining employment, including language and communication barriers, complex systems and poor support, and difficulties gaining work experience.
- Compared to residents who only speak English, Hobsons Bay residents speaking a language other than English are less likely to be employed and are more likely to live in low-income households.
- People that speak a language other than English (but are not of northern European or North American origin) are the most likely to experience racism in Victoria.

Top 3 health conditions

1. arthritis (8.1%)
2. diabetes (7.3%)
3. mental health condition (5.3%)

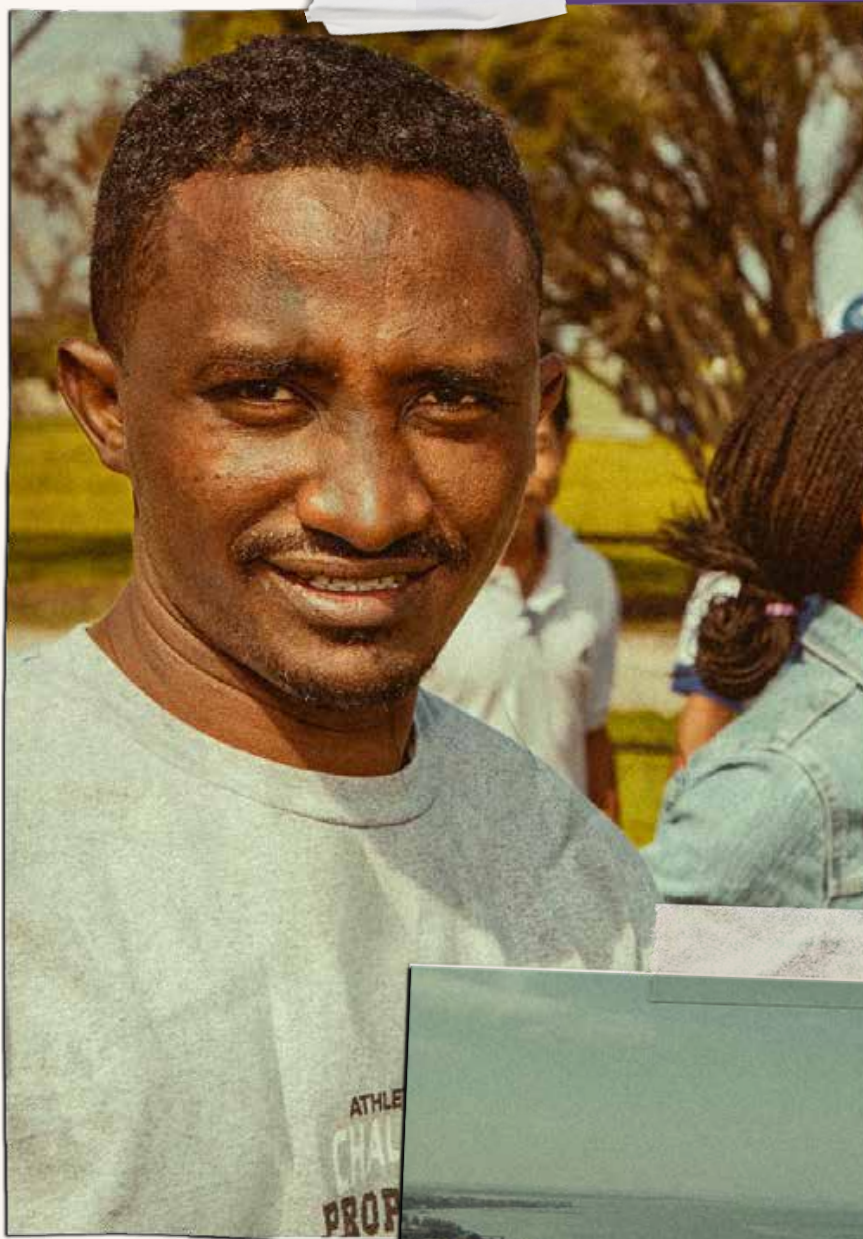
Language groups with the lowest English proficiency

1. Karen (55%)
2. Vietnamese (27%)
3. Cantonese (25%)



About the Health, Wellbeing and Safety Plan





2.1.0.

Purpose statement

The *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008* sets out Council's responsibility to protect and improve health and wellbeing outcomes for the community.

All councils are required to prepare and report on a Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan.

In response to strong input from the community, we have also included a focus on safety – hence the Hobsons Bay City Council Health, Wellbeing and Safety Plan 2025–29.

When developing this plan, we also focused on:

- *Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*
- *Disability Act 2006*
- *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008*
- *Climate Change Act 2017*
- *Gender Equality Act 2020*

2.1.1.

Our commitment to strong governance and culture

Hobsons Bay City Council is committed to strong governance and culture, ensuring we run effectively, transparently and accountably while serving the best interests of our community.

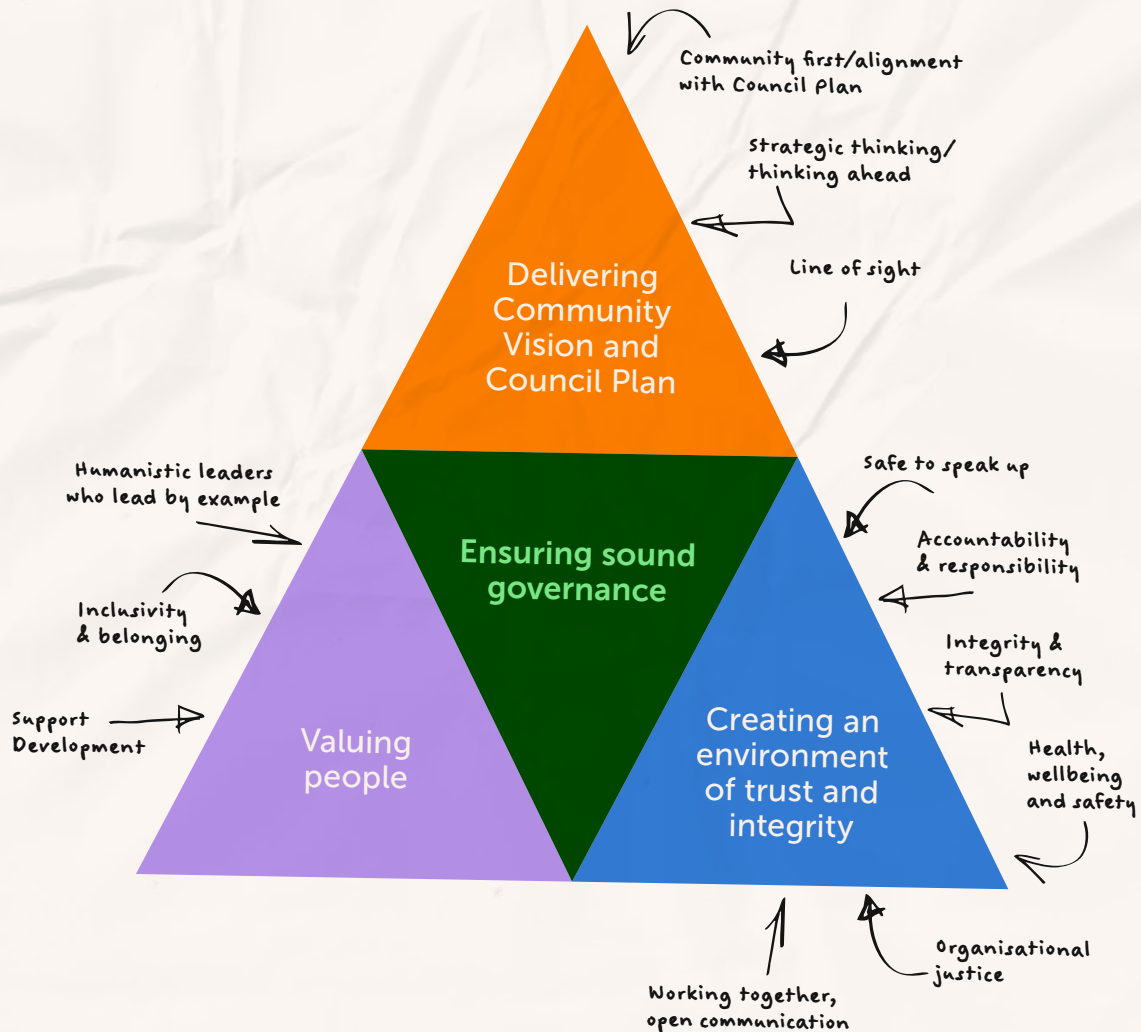


Image from the Rebuilding Culture and Governance Action Plan 2025

2.1.2.

Our commitment to strong partnerships

Council's role in health, wellbeing and safety

Council has a responsibility under the *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008* to protect and improve health and wellbeing of the community. The plan outlines how Council will do this over the coming four years.

Council plays four key roles in promoting the health, wellbeing and safety of the community:

Provider

We deliver essential services that meet community needs and enhance everyday life in Hobsons Bay.

Educator

We share valuable information to build knowledge, promote wellbeing, and keep the community well-informed.

Advocate

We represent Hobsons Bay's interests, collaborating with other levels of government and investors to secure additional support and resources for our area.

Partner

We collaborate with various stakeholders to ensure that the benefits of all projects and services are shared widely and sustained over time.

We undertake these roles with consideration of the following principles:



Determinants of health

Addressing the social determinants of health



Partnership

Building partnerships and working collaboratively



Equity

Achieving fairer and more equitable health outcomes



Climate change

Responding to the health impacts of climate change

These principles guide the development and implementation of health, wellbeing and safety initiatives:

- We consider the broader factors influencing health including income, secure housing, the built environment, and employment.
- We acknowledge and embrace the need to work in partnership to address the community's needs and aspirations regarding health, wellbeing and safety. We acknowledge that some groups in the community experience greater barriers to safety, good health and wellbeing, and commit to implementing the plan with consideration of the distinct needs of these priority populations.
- Finally, we consider the significant implications of climate change on the health and wellbeing of the Hobsons Bay community, and consider how we may assist the community to address those challenges.

2.2.0.

Strategic context

2.2.1.

The integrated planning and reporting framework

The Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework provides the strategic direction and activities required to ensure Council's work is informed, well considered and aligned across the diversity of responsibilities and services that we offer the community. In line with our commitment to strong governance, the framework sets the systems and processes to ensure decision making— both day-to-day and in the Council chamber— deliver the best outcomes for our community.

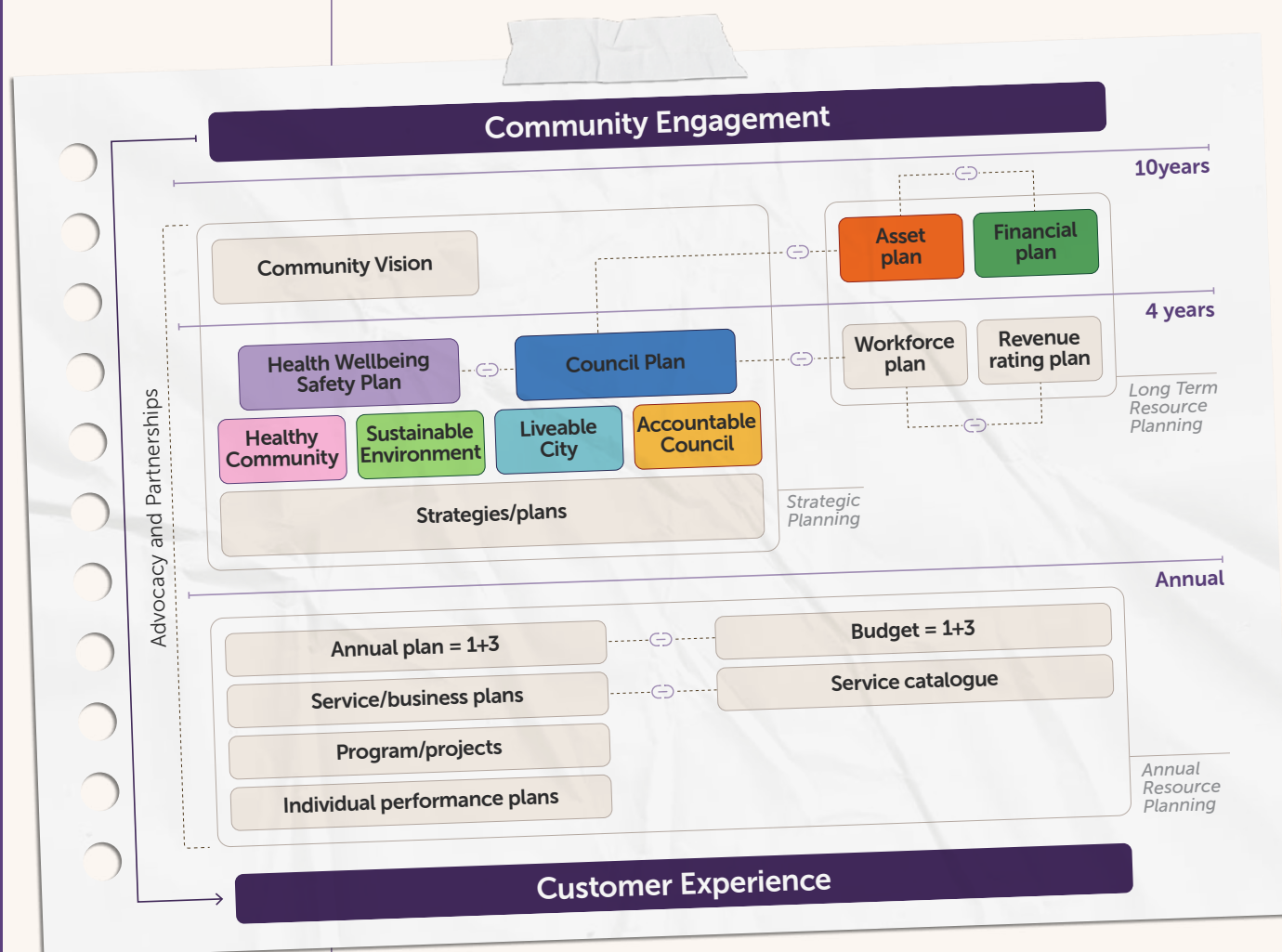
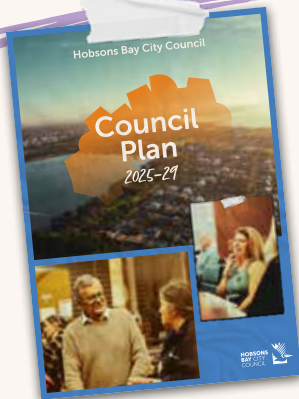


Image: Hobsons Bay Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework 2025–29

strategic four-year plans



strategic ten-year resourcing plans



The draft Health, Wellbeing and Safety Plan 2025-29 aligns to the draft Hobsons Bay Council Plan 2025-29, forming the first theme of the Council Plan: Health Community. It is also aligned to the Asset Plan 2025-35 and the Financial Plan 2025-35.



2.2.1.

Hobsons Bay Community Vision 2040

As part of the development of the Council Plan 2025-29, the deliberative engagement process revisited the Community Vision 2030 to ensure the direction and aspirations of the community in the current and future context were being met.

"By 2040 we are a safe, sustainable and healthy community supported by an accountable, efficient and transparent Council."

Priorities to achieve Vision

1. Sustainable, safe and accessible urban planning
2. Building community wellbeing by engaging with all residents of Hobsons Bay
3. Increased access to local jobs and education
4. Continuous improvement and conservation of the natural environment
5. Maintain and expand sustainable practices
6. Better and more accessible transport options

2.2.2.

Alignment with other Council plans and strategies

The Health, Wellbeing and Safety Plan is one of Council's key strategic documents. Council's work is driven by the Community Vision which describes the aspirations of the community for Hobsons Bay by 2040.

The Council Plan and this plan together outline how Council will work towards the Community Vision over the coming four years. The long-term Financial Plan, Revenue and Rating Plan, the Budget, the Asset Plan and the Workforce Plan are the supporting plans that outline how Council will allocate and manage the resources required to implement the actions outlined in the Community Vision, Council Plan and this Plan.

Integration of the Disability Action Plan

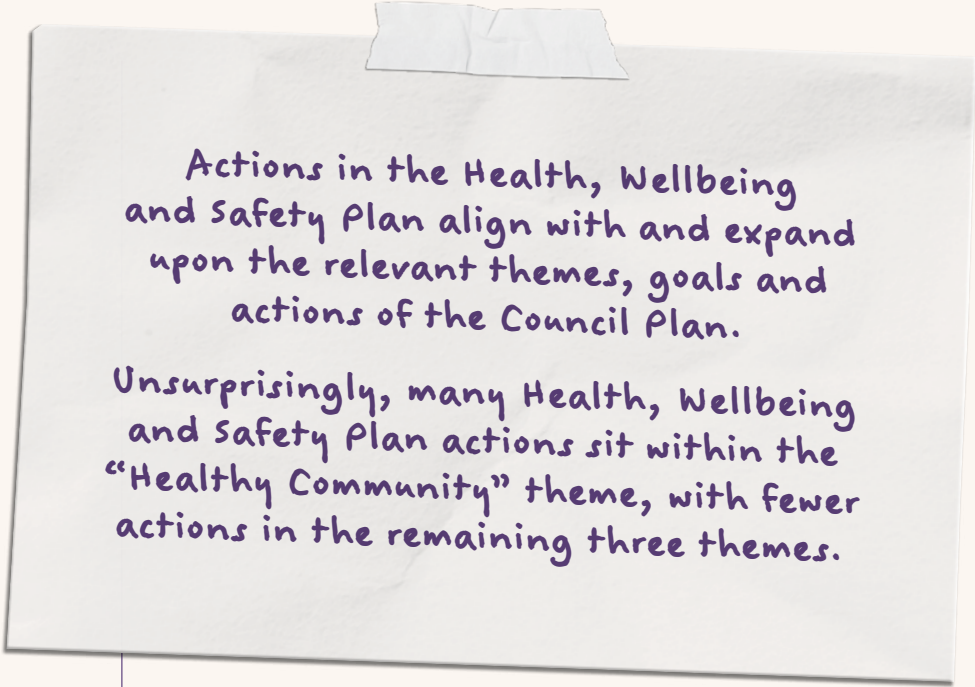
The *Disability Act 2006* requires Council to prepare a Disability Action Plan and to report on progress annually.

The Disability Action Plan outlines how Council will reduce barriers and promote inclusion of people with disability in accessing services, programs, initiatives and employment.

This plan integrates A Fair Hobsons Bay for All, Council's integrated social policy framework (inclusive of the Disability Action Plan). This decision reflects the commitment of Council to elevate equity and

inclusion to be a key element of its higher profile strategic documents. It also reflects that disability access and inclusion requires a whole-of-Council approach.

Disability Action Plan actions are denoted by the letters DAP in brackets. The alignment of this plan's DAP actions to the outcomes framework of the state disability plan is outlined in Appendix C.



Actions in the Health, Wellbeing and Safety Plan align with and expand upon the relevant themes, goals and actions of the Council Plan.

Unsurprisingly, many Health, Wellbeing and Safety Plan actions sit within the “Healthy Community” theme, with fewer actions in the remaining three themes.

2.3.0.

An informed plan for our future

2.3.1.

The legislative requirements

In accordance with the legislative requirements of the *Local Government Act 2020*, the Council Plan, Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan, and other strategic documents were developed through community consultation and a deliberative engagement process. The requirements of this process must follow Council’s Community Engagement Policy (2023).

Community engagement

How the plan was developed

1. An in-depth analysis of health and social data was undertaken to identify issues impacting the Hobsons Bay community. This has been documented in the Health Profile 2025 (see the link in Appendix D).
2. To better understand these issues and identify others, we asked for community input. Broad community engagement was conducted via online surveys and community drop-in sessions. A total of 1,063 participants provided their feedback.
3. Themes, goals and actions were then drafted considering the inputs received. These were presented to Council staff across three staff workshops and were modified each time to reflect feedback.
4. Health and wellbeing stakeholders were engaged via an initial workshop to provide input into priorities and potential actions. These stakeholders were then invited to provide feedback on draft themes, goals, and actions at a second workshop following staff engagement.

The findings of the health and social data analysis and the broad community engagement were further explored by a group of 36 community members selected to broadly represent the demographics of the Hobsons Bay community. This group met three times to provide specific feedback on a range of topics relevant to the Council Plan, the Health, Wellbeing and Safety Plan and other important strategic focus areas of Council.

5. Public exhibition of the plan allowed for final community review prior to adoption by Council.

Further details on the community engagement process can be found in the Council Plan 2025-29, the Community Engagement Summary Report and the Health and Wellbeing Stakeholders Workshop Outcomes report which can be found on the Council website.

The plan was developed via an iterative process involving community, Council staff and health and wellbeing stakeholders.



What did community & stakeholders tell us?

Broad community engagement results identified the following as priority health and wellbeing issues (in order of importance):

Council staff workshops

- Connected community
- Homelessness
- First Nations engagement
- Inclusion and accessibility
- Food security
- Community capacity building
- Mental health
- Substance abuse
- Increased support for key groups
- Violence
- Cost of living
- Social media
- Advocacy

Community representative workshops

- Safety in the home
- Social connection
- Active living
- Mental health





Broad community engagement

- Feeling safe in your community
- Social and community connections
- Access to mental health and wellbeing support advice
- Affordable and healthy food
- Access to physical health and wellbeing support
- Family violence
- Homelessness/rough sleeping
- Health impacts of climate change
- Alcohol and other drugs
- Tobacco and vaping

Health and wellbeing stakeholders

- Community connections and mental wellbeing
- Preventing family violence
- Healthy eating
- Active living
- Access to housing and preventing homelessness
- Harm from alcohol and drugs
- Early childhood development
- Sexual and reproductive health
- Health impacts of climate change
- Harm from tobacco/vaping
- Reducing injury
- Antimicrobial resistance across human and animal health



There was strong agreement across all forums that the following issues were priorities for the Hobsons Bay community:

Community
Healthy eating
and access to food

Active
living

Social
connection

safety

Housing and
homelessness

Mental
Health

Access to
services

Priorities identified through engagement

Community members, Council staff, and stakeholders were asked to suggest strategies to address priority health issues.

There was again broad agreement on the types of strategies that could be employed across multiple priority areas:



2.3.3.

Gender Impact Assessment

As per the requirements of the *Gender Equality Act 2020*, Council is required to prepare a Gender Impact Assessment (GIA) for all new and updated programs, policies and services that have a direct and significant public impact.

Through the development of this plan, a “gender lens” has been applied to ensure the impact of gender norms, behaviours and roles are considered, and a broad range of genders and population groups have been consulted.

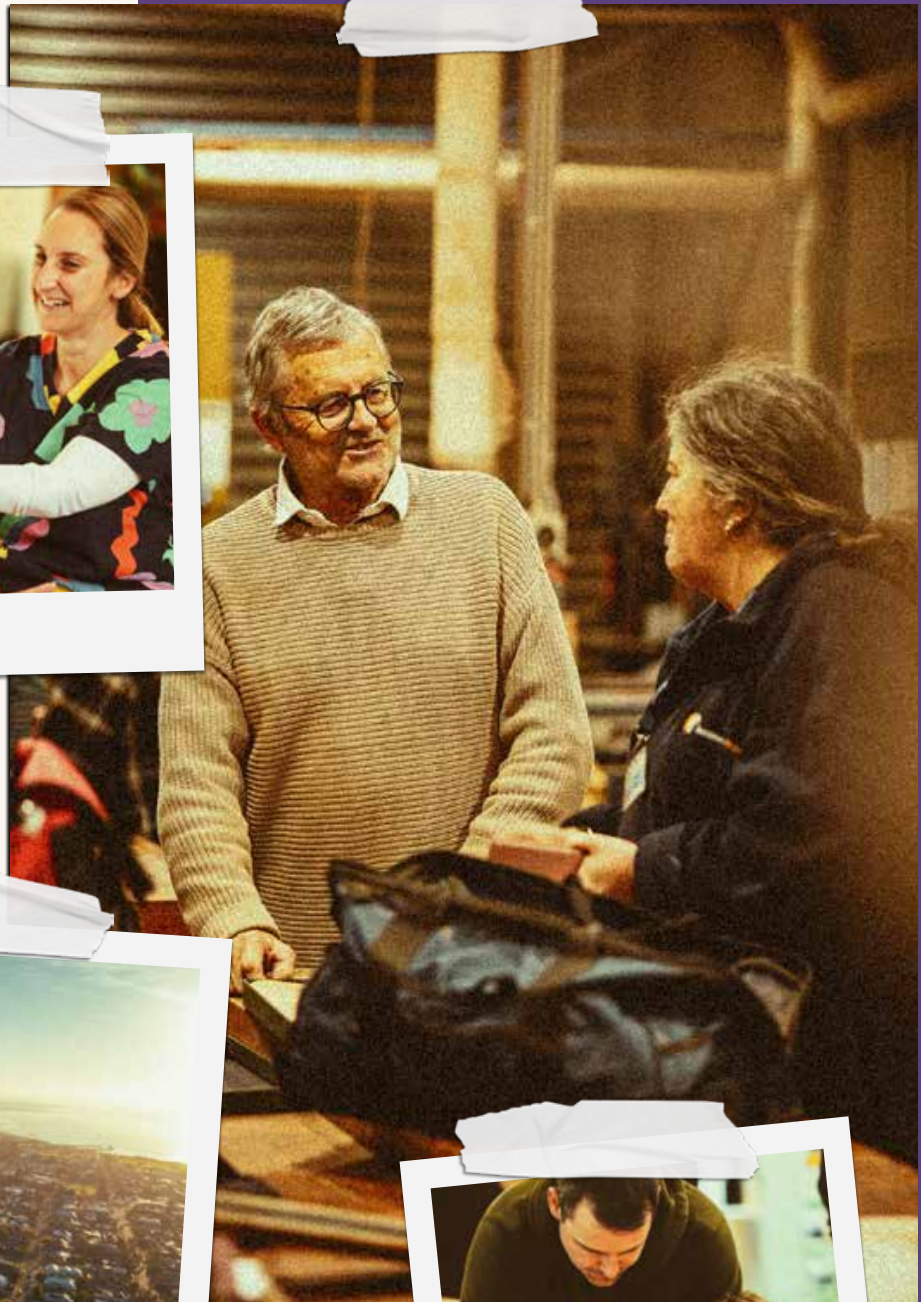
The themes and goals included in the plan take account of people of different genders, particularly in relation to advocacy, programs, and education and awareness. More specifically, the themes and goals have been developed to ensure they address the broad needs of different genders by:

- considering community safety as a health and wellbeing outcome, including both safety in the home as well as in the community
- considering the priorities that ranked highest for women, young people and people with a disability, including health and wellbeing community services, services for children, youth and/or families, and sporting facilities
- creating better social and community connection opportunities to address mental health issues and raise awareness and understanding around family violence
- supporting health and wellbeing through the built environment and open space to improve, maintain or expand public open space and facilities.



Health, Wellbeing and Safety Plan 2025–29





3.1.0.

Hobsons Bay Health Wellbeing and Safety Plan 2025–29

Plan on a page

Theme

①

Healthy Communities

②

Sustainable Environment

③

Liveable City

④

Accountable Council

Goals

- 1.1 Strengthen community connection
- 1.2 Reduce harm and build a safer community
- 1.3 Promote physical and mental wellbeing

- 2.2 Support the community to respond to climate change
- 2.4 Promote the conservation and enhancement of our unique natural environments

- 3.1 Provide equitable and inclusive community infrastructure
- 3.2 Increase access to jobs, education and housing
- 3.3 Deliver and advocate for a safe and accessible transport network

- 4.1 Strengthen governance practices and systems
- 4.4 Increase effective communications and community engagement
- 4.5 Develop strategic partnerships to deliver on community needs

Four-year actions (summarised)

39 actions

Programs
Service delivery
Infrastructure and places
Education
Events
Planning, policy and regulation
Advocacy
Capacity building

4 actions

Programs
Infrastructure and places

3 actions

Infrastructure and places
Planning, policy and regulation

5 actions

Planning, policy and regulation
communications and engagement

Annual Action Plans (to be developed)

Year 1

Year 2

Year 3

Year 4

Hobsons Bay City Council

Health, Wellbeing & Safety Plan

2025-29

Themes, Goals
and Actions



Theme 1: Healthy Community

A healthy community can only be created where people are strongly connected and supported. They also need the skills and resources to meet their needs, easy access to required services, and access to safe and healthy environments in which they live, work, study and play.

Health and social data shows us that many in the Hobsons Bay community enjoy good or very good health.

To maintain this, and to see improvements in health across the community over the next four years, Council will focus on the following health-related goals:

1. Creating strong community connections to reduce social isolation and improve support networks.
2. Reducing harm from alcohol, gambling, tobacco and vaping and other drugs, and promoting a sense of community safety, with a focus on prevention and early intervention approaches.
3. Promoting improvements in physical and mental health with a focus on active living, healthy eating and supporting positive mental health outcomes.

"It is really important to me to have liveable, walkable and safe outdoor areas for my family."

Community member

Our Services

- Aged and Disability Services
- Early Years
- Maternal and Child Health
- Immunisations
- Youth Services
- Libraries
- Community Centres and Hubs
- Community Development and Social Planning
- Public Health
- Sport and Recreation

Key outcome indicators

1. Greater proportion of adults, adolescents and children with very good or excellent self-rated health.
2. Higher proportion of adults, adolescents and children who consume sufficient fruit and vegetables.
3. Lower proportion of adults:
 - » experiencing loneliness.
 - » at risk of harm from alcohol-related disease or injury.
4. Lower proportion of adults and adolescents:
 - » smoking and vaping daily.
 - » with psychological distress.
5. Lower rate of incidents of family violence.
6. Lower proportion of adults, adolescents and children with one or more long-term health conditions.

"[We need] services for various groups within our community which may be disadvantaged or where services are lacking."

Community member

Goal 1.1

Strengthen community connections

Volunteering ¹

In Hobsons Bay, one in eight people aged 15+ do voluntary work for an organisation or group, similar to the rate for Greater Melbourne. However, rates are lower for people with a disability (6 per cent), people born overseas (10) and people living in low-income households (10).

Loneliness ²

In Hobsons Bay, slightly fewer residents experience loneliness (22 per cent), compared to the Greater Melbourne average (24). Victorian data shows that one in three young adults experience loneliness, with Greater Melbourne data showing that women are more likely to experience loneliness than men.

Life satisfaction ²

In Hobsons Bay, fewer residents have very high life satisfaction, compared to the Greater Melbourne (23.9 per cent compared to 25.1 per cent). When combined with people reporting high life satisfaction, the results were almost identical (76.5 compare to 76.4).

1. ABS, Census of Population and Housing 2021.

2. Department of Health, Victorian Population Health Survey 2023

Goal 1.2

Reduce harm and build a safer community

Gambling ³

In Hobsons Bay, more than \$50 million was lost on electronic gaming machines in 2024-25, which is an average of \$137,500 per day.

Alcohol ²

In Hobsons Bay, a higher proportion of adult residents are at increased risk of alcohol-related disease or injury, compared to Greater Melbourne (12.5 per cent compared to 11.8 per cent).

Smoking ²

In Hobsons Bay, about one in 10 people smoke (slightly below the Greater Melbourne average) and one in 20 people vape (slightly above the Greater Melbourne average). In Greater Melbourne, men are more likely to smoke or vape, compared to women (22 per cent compared to 15 per cent).

Family Violence ⁴

In Hobsons Bay, there were 1,078 family violence incidents in 2024-25, a 4.9 per cent increase on the previous year. Women account for eight in 10 victims of family violence (79%), while children are a witness or victim in 32 per cent of cases.

3. Victorian Gambling and Casino Control Commission (2025)

4. Crime Statistics Agency (2025)

Goal 1.3

Promote physical and mental wellbeing

Mental health condition ⁵

In Hobsons Bay, women are significantly more likely to have been diagnosed with a mental health condition (1,005 per 10,000 population), compared to men (662 per 10,000 population).

Sedentary behaviour ⁶

Hobsons Bay, almost half of the adults sit for six or more hours on an average weekday (49 per cent), higher than the rate for Greater Melbourne (46). In Greater Melbourne, men are more likely to sit for six or more hours, compared to women (47 per cent compared to 44 per cent).

Physical activity ⁶

In Hobsons Bay, four in 10 adults meet physical activity guidelines (i.e. at least 150 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity per week), higher than the rate for Greater Melbourne (35 per cent). In Greater Melbourne, women are less likely to meet the guidelines, compared to men (33 per cent compared to 37 per cent).

Soft drinks ⁶

In Hobsons Bay, one in three residents consume sugar-sweetened beverages daily or several times per week, almost identical to Greater Melbourne. In Greater Melbourne, men consume at substantially higher rates, compared to women (41 per cent compared to 27 per cent).

Fruit and vegetables ⁷

In western Melbourne, the proportion of children (aged four to 12 years) eating the recommended daily serve of fruit fell from 81 per cent in 2013 to 69 per cent in 2023. At the same time, just 3.2 per cent of children eat the recommended daily serve of vegetables, albeit higher than the Victorian rate (2.7 per cent).

5. ABS, Census of Population and Housing 2021.

6. Department of Health, Victorian Population Health Survey 2023

7. Department of Education 2023, Victorian Child Health and Wellbeing Survey.

Why is this important?

Volunteering ⁵

In Hobsons Bay, one in eight people aged 15+ do voluntary work for an organisation or group, similar to the rate for Greater Melbourne.

However, rates are lower for people with a disability (6 per cent), people born overseas (10 per cent) and people living in low-income households (10 per cent).



Loneliness ⁶

In Hobsons Bay, slightly fewer residents experience loneliness (22 per cent), compared to the Greater Melbourne average (24).

Victorian data shows that one in three young adults experience loneliness, with Greater Melbourne data showing women are more likely to experience loneliness than men.

Priority populations ^{6,8}

Around 40 per cent of LGBTIQ+ people report social exclusion. People with a disability, their carers, people that identify as LGBTIQ+ and First Nations people experience higher rates of psychological distress and mental health conditions.



Mental health condition ⁵

In Hobsons Bay, women are significantly more likely to have been diagnosed with a mental health condition (1,005 per 10,000 population), compared to men (662 per 10,000 population).

Life satisfaction ⁶

In Hobsons Bay, fewer residents have very high life satisfaction, compared to the Greater Melbourne (23.9 per cent compared to 25.1 per cent). When combined with people reporting high life satisfaction, the results were almost identical (76.5 per cent compared to 76.4 per cent).



8. Private Lives 3: The health and wellbeing of LGBTIQ people in Australia.

Multiculturalism ⁹



In Hobsons Bay, a slightly greater proportion of residents agree that multiculturalism makes life in the area better, compared to the Victorian average (67.3 per cent compared to 66.5 per cent).

Obesity ⁹



Over half the population (18 years and over) of Hobsons Bay is overweight or obese, a rate similar to the Greater Melbourne average (52 per cent compared to 52.3 per cent).

Alcohol ⁹



Hobsons Bay has a slightly higher rate of people at risk of alcohol related disease or injury, compared to Greater Melbourne (12.5 per cent compared to 11.8 per cent).

Greater Melbourne data shows men have more than double the rate of risk of harm from alcohol than women (16.5 per cent compared to 7.4 per cent).

Vaping ¹⁰



In 2019, only 9.6 per cent of people aged 14 to 17 in Australia had ever used e-cigarettes; by 2022–23, this number had nearly tripled.

Vaping and smoking ⁹

The rate of smoking and/or vaping in Hobsons Bay is similar to the Greater Melbourne average (18.4 per cent compared to 18.5 per cent).



9. Department of Health, Victorian Population Health Survey 2023

10. National Drug Strategy Household Survey 2022–23.



Gambling ^{11, 12}

In Australia, more than one in four young people (18–24 years) reported experiencing at least one type of gambling harm.

In 2024–25, more than \$50 million was lost on electronic gaming machines, at an average of \$137,500 per day.

Physical Activity ⁹

More people in Hobsons Bay are sufficiently physically active compared to the Greater Melbourne average (39.4 per cent compared to 34.8 per cent), although this does mean that three in five adults are not meeting physical activity guidelines.



Long-term health conditions ¹³

One in three Hobsons Bay residents have one or more long-term health conditions, a rate slightly higher than the Greater Melbourne average (33.3 per cent compared to 31.6 per cent).

Mental health condition ¹³

One in 10 Hobsons Bay residents has been diagnosed with a mental health condition, similar to the Greater Melbourne rate (10.1 per cent compared to 9.9 per cent).



11. Victorian population gambling and health study 2023
12. Victorian Gambling and Casino Control Commission (2025)
13. ABS, Census of Population and Housing 2021.

Theme 1: Healthy Community

Council Plan action	HWSP Action	Council role	Implementation measure/s
Goal 1.1: Strengthen community connection			
1.1.1 Deliver health and wellbeing initiatives that enable social connection.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop and support arts, cultural, sport, recreation and social activities to promote social connection for the diverse Hobsons Bay community (including priority populations). (DAP) 2. Investigate how under-utilised infrastructure could be used to provide opportunities for social connection. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide • Partner 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of programs/ events delivered. • Participant satisfaction and impact of programs/ events.
1.1.2 Support opportunities to promote First Nations reconciliation.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Work collaboratively across Council to promote and support the process of reconciliation. 2. Engage with First Nations people and organisations to support the understanding, preservation and acknowledgement of cultural heritage and appropriate land management practices in Hobsons Bay. 3. Support programs and events that recognise and support First Nations and diverse communities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide • Partner 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural and community development programs/ events delivered to support reconciliation and First Nations people. • Engagement with Traditional Owners
1.1.3 Recognise, support and celebrate the diversity of Hobsons Bay.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Support events and programs that celebrate diversity and provide an opportunity for learning and promote a shared community identity (DAP) 2. Deliver accessible and inclusive media and communication materials that reflect and celebrate Hobsons Bay's diverse community (including priority populations). (DAP) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide • Partner • Educate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of programs/ events delivered and supported. • Participant satisfaction and impact of programs/ events.
1.1.4 Foster partnerships with community groups and organisations that support community connection, wellbeing and capacity building.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Support community groups and organisations to create opportunities for social connection, intergenerational and cross-cultural activities, and community capacity-building through grants and non-monetary means. 2. Build the capacity of priority populations and local community organisations to increase the diversity of community leadership in Hobsons Bay. (DAP) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide • Partner • Educate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organisations and partners that Council has worked with and/or supported. • Number and value of community grants awarded. • Participant satisfaction and impact of programs/ events.

Theme 1: Healthy Community

Council Plan action	HWSP Action	Council role	Implementation measure/s
1.1.5 Work in partnership with older people, community organisations, service providers, and other stakeholders to provide and support programs, services, and initiatives that respond to their needs and aspirations.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Work collaboratively across Council to support older people. 2. Support programs and events that respond to the needs of older people. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide • Partner • Advocate • Educate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clients report that services helped them live safely and independently at home • Deliver and embed service-improvement initiatives that lift client participation and experience, and improve value for money.
1.1.6 Partner with young people, families, schools, and service providers to co-design initiatives that respond to their needs and aspirations.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Work collaboratively across Council to support young people. 2. Support programs and events that respond to the needs of young people. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide • Partner 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural and community development programs/ events delivered to support reconciliation and First Nations people. • Engagement with Traditional Owners
1.1.7 Provide and support safe, inclusive and accessible services, programs, facilities and public spaces.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Support events and programs that celebrate diversity and provide an opportunity for learning and promote a shared community identity (DAP) 2. Deliver accessible and inclusive media and communication materials that reflect and celebrate Hobsons Bay's diverse community (including priority populations). (DAP) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide • Partner • Advocate • Educate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organisations and partners that Council has worked with and/or supported. • Participation and reach of programs to engage young people.
1.1.7 Provide and support safe, inclusive and accessible services, programs, facilities and public spaces.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Work collaboratively across Council to ensure that services, programs, events, and infrastructure are safe, welcoming, accessible, and responsive to the needs of our diverse community (including priority populations). (DAP) 2. Improve the promotion of Council and community activities, programs, and services to ensure that the community can easily find information on relevant services and activities. (DAP) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide • Partner • Educate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • List of changes made to services, programs, events and/or infrastructure to make them more accessible and responsive. • LGPRF indicators as specified in the Council Plan

Theme 1: Healthy Community

Council Plan action	HWSP Action	Council role	Implementation measure/s
Goal 1.2: Reduce harm and build a safer community			
1.2.1 Support and deliver harm prevention initiatives to reduce harm from gambling, tobacco, vaping, alcohol and other drugs.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Implement a range of approaches to reduce harm, including policy development, service delivery, infrastructure provision and management, advocacy, and the use of contractual levers. 2. Implement the Gambling Harm Prevention Policy Statement 2023. 3. Implement the Alcohol Harm Prevention Policy (in development). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide • Partner • Educate • Advocate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • List of initiatives Council has delivered or supported. • Implementation and evaluation of the impact of the Gambling Harm Prevention Policy Statement and the Alcohol Harm Prevention Policy (subject to adoption).
1.2.2 Prevent and respond to family violence by promoting gender equity and advocating for local access to services.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Promote and support positive gender representation, respectful relationships and the consideration of people of all genders in Council's operations. 2. Map existing family violence services to assist planning and advocacy. (DAP) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide • Partner • Educate • Advocate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of Gender Impact Assessments developed. • Mapping of existing services to assist engagement, partnership, and advocacy activities.
1.2.3 Provide public places and infrastructure that enhance perceptions of safety, and strengthen partnerships to deliver community safety initiatives.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Consider crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED) principles when planning and delivering open space and activity centre projects. 2. Advocate and partner with relevant organisations and agencies to address community safety issues. 3. Provide programs and initiatives that promote a sense of safety. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide • Partner • Educate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of open space and activity centre projects that have been subject to a CPTED review. • List of partners that Council has worked with and/or supported.

Theme 1: Healthy Community

Council Plan action	HWSP Action	Council role	Implementation measure/s
Goal 1.3: Promote physical and mental wellbeing			
1.3.1 Apply a life-course approach to identify service gaps, guide future life-stage action plans, and strengthen advocacy and partnerships to improve equitable access to health and community services.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Partner with other agencies to undertake a mapping exercise of existing services and to identify service gaps. (DAP) 2. Deliver coordinated advocacy for local service needs. (DAP) 3. Foster opportunities to partner with health and community services and community organisations to provide a more integrated local service system. (DAP) 4. Develop, implement and review coordinated processes within Council to support residents experiencing or at risk of homelessness, to access available services and support. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide • Partner • Educate • Advocate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete life-course service reviews and partner mapping; implement the recommendations; submit consolidated lists of system improvements, advocacy actions and partner organisations. • LGPRF indicators as specified in the Council Plan.
1.3.2 Deliver and support equitable and inclusive programming of open spaces, libraries, community hubs, arts, and sport and recreation facilities to promote wellbeing.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Pursue opportunities to activate sport and recreation facilities and open spaces to increase participation with a focus on priority populations. (DAP) 6. Provide support and training to front-line staff on inclusive practice and assisting people in crisis. 7. Deliver diverse and responsive community programs and activities in Council facilities. (DAP) 8. Support community groups and organisations to provide community programs and activities in Council facilities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide • Partner • Educate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of programs/ events delivered or supported. • Number of community groups and organisations providing programs in Council facilities. • LGPRF indicators as specified in the Council Plan.

Theme 1: Healthy Community

Council Plan action	HWSP Action	Council role	Implementation measure/s
1.3.3 Upgrade community facilities when aligned to feasible strategy to increase participation in physical and mental activities with a focus on attracting under-represented cohorts.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Engage priority populations in the planning of facility upgrades. 2. Work with partners to support increased participation of priority populations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of community facilities that have been upgraded to promote greater participation. • b) Increased participation and reach of active and engaging programs for physical and mental health and wellbeing.
1.3.4 Support healthy eating and access to nutritious food through policy development, advocacy, education, and capacity-building community initiatives.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Promote healthy eating and access to nutritious food through policy development, advocacy and procurement. 2. Support healthy and fresh food initiatives such as community gardens, local food programs, cooking programs and food-sharing opportunities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide • Partner • Advocate • Educate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community partnerships delivered and supported.
1.3.5 Support and deliver services and initiatives that support mental health.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Undertake a mapping of mental health services to assist planning and advocacy. (DAP) 4. Identify, plan and deliver initiatives to address the social determinants of mental health. (DAP) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide • Partner 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of programs/ events, initiatives and/or services delivered and/ or supported. • List of partners that Council has worked with and/or supported.



Theme 2: Sustainable Environment

Climate change is one of the most significant public health challenges facing communities in the 21st century. There are many impacts of climate change on health, and these will be experienced more significantly by some groups in the community.

From a health perspective, Council plays a role in ensuring built and natural environments are resistant to climate change as well as supporting the community to respond to the challenges of a changing climate.

For the next four years, Council will focus on the following health-related priorities:

1. Supporting the community to live more sustainably, respond to climate-related emergencies, and reduce the impact of climate change on health, with a focus on population groups that may be more vulnerable to the health impacts of climate change.
2. Protecting and promoting our natural spaces that are so important for active living, social connection and mental health.

"We are very concerned about the health of the environment and how that impacts our health. One thing we'd love to have more of is (native) trees in the parks and along main roads to improve air quality."

Community member

Our Services

- Environment and sustainability
- Waste and recycling
- Open space, parks and conservation

Key outcome indicators

1. Reduction in overall waste generated.
2. Reduction in waste sent to landfill.
3. Reduction in contamination in mixed recycling, food and garden and glass bins.
4. Community satisfaction with waste services.
5. Community satisfaction with environmental sustainability initiatives and services

"Climate change places the community in danger in so many ways – extreme heat, flash flooding, coastal inundation, food insecurity and cost rises. We need to urgently build resilience both in public places and households."

Community member

Why is this important?

Populations most affected

Some groups of people are more vulnerable to the health impacts of climate change including: children and young people, pregnant women, older people, people experiencing homelessness or living in inappropriate housing, people experiencing financial hardship, First Nations communities, people with a disability or chronic health conditions, culturally and linguistically diverse communities and new migrants, people living alone, outdoor workers, and people without access to reliable transport.



Hot weather ¹

In Greater Melbourne, the number of days over 35°C are expected to increase from the current average of 8.3 per year to between 13 and 21 days per year by the 2050s.

Tree canopy ²

In Hobsons Bay, tree canopy is just six per cent, substantially lower than Greater Melbourne (15 per cent) and Melbourne's eastern suburbs (26).



1. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Sixth Assessment Report (AR6)
2. Hurley et al (2019) Melbourne Urban Vegetation Cover: 2018 Western Region
3. Tract and OneMap (2024) Climate Resilience Index

Climate resilience ³



Impact of extreme weather ⁴

In Hobsons Bay, Williamstown (69.3) and Altona Meadows (62.3) have the highest Climate Resilience Index Scores (out of 100). Brooklyn (42.1), Williamstown North (43.0) and Seabrook (46.9) have the lowest scores.



Extreme weather events such as floods, droughts and bushfires can lead to psychological distress, including PTSD, anxiety, depression, vicarious trauma, substance abuse and suicidal ideation.

Impact of climate-related events ⁴

There is also an association between an increase in the frequency and severity of events such as bushfires, floods and droughts due to climate change, and an increase in family violence.



Impact of extreme weather ⁵

It is estimated there may be an extra 402 deaths per year in Victoria by 2050 due to heatwaves if no adaptation measures are taken.



4. Guidance for local government 2024

5. Victorian Department of Health, Tackling climate change and its impacts on health through municipal public health and wellbeing planning: Guidance for local government 2024

Theme 2. Sustainable Environment

Council Plan action	HWSP Action	Council role	Implementation measure/s
Goal 2.1: Respond effectively to climate change by reducing Council emissions and managing risk			
No health, wellbeing and safety actions related to this goal			
Goal 2.2: Support the community to respond to climate change			
2.2.1 Provide education, advice and support to the community to reduce emissions and respond to a changing climate.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Support and deliver programs and activities to reduce and prevent the health impacts of climate change within priority populations. (DAP) 2. Provide educational resources for priority populations to prepare for and manage emergency situations relating to climate change. (DAP) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide • Educate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of programs/ events delivered. • Reach of communication and education materials.
Goal 2.3: Promote and deliver recycling and waste management services that divert waste from landfill			
No health, wellbeing and safety actions related to this goal			
Goal 2.4: Promote the conservation of our unique natural environments			
2.4.1 In partnership with relevant groups and organisations, promote and protect the city's unique local environments including coastal areas, wetlands and grasslands.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Implement the Biodiversity Strategy 2024–34, Council's key strategic document to guide the preservation and enhancement of biodiversity in Hobsons Bay. 2. Promote and protect natural spaces for active and passive recreation, connection to nature, and improved mental health. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide • Partner • Educate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of initiatives delivered from the Biodiversity Strategy. • Number of upgrade initiatives delivered from key conservation reserve master plans.

DAP = Disability Action Plan action

^ See section 2.2.3 for role definitions

LGPRF = Local Government Planning and Reporting Framework measures



Theme 3: Livable City

The places where we live, work, play and connect with others, have a direct impact on our health, wellbeing and safety.

A liveable city is one where people have equitable access to housing, jobs, education, transport and recreation, while also fostering social connection through inclusive public spaces, arts, culture and events.

From a health perspective, Council plays a role in shaping built environments that are safe, inclusive and supportive of community life.

Over the next four years, Council will focus on the following health-related priorities:

1. Ensuring community facilities, infrastructure and open spaces are accessible, inclusive and responsive to community needs.
2. Improving transport networks to support active and safe movement across the city.
3. Planning for appropriate housing for a changing demographic.

Our Services

- Economic development and tourism
- Arts and culture
- Strategic land use planning
- Statutory planning
- Planning and building compliance
- Capital works
- Engineering services
- Traffic and transport
- Asset management and maintenance

“Ensure good urban and building design as our city increases in density and population, e.g. short distances and easy access to open spaces and community facilities including shops”

Community member

Key outcome indicators

1. Increased community satisfaction with recreational facilities.
2. Increased community satisfaction with the appearance of public areas.
3. Increased community satisfaction with local streets and footpaths.

Why is this important?



Housing affordability ¹

In Hobsons Bay, only 30.9 per cent of homes sold in 2024 were affordable for a moderate-income household. For low-income households, only 5.4 per cent were affordable.



Housing affordability ¹

In Hobsons Bay, 85.5 per cent of rental properties listed in 2024 were affordable for a moderate-income household. For low-income households, only 39 per cent were affordable.

Housing affordability ²

In the 2021 Census, 9 per cent of households with a mortgage and 24.1 per cent of rental households in Hobsons Bay reported experiencing housing stress.



Unemployment ³

In the March 2025 quarter, the unemployment rate in Hobsons Bay was 3.3 per cent compared with an average of 4.5 per cent for Greater Melbourne.



1. .id (informed decisions), Affordability Monitor Hobsons Bay City.

2. Australian Bureau of Statistics, Australian Census of Population and Housing 2021.

3. Australian Bureau of Statistics, Labour force survey catalogue number 6202.0, and Department of Employment, Small Area Labour Markets



Travel for work ²

71.2 per cent of Hobsons Bay residents travel outside of the municipality for work. Driving a private car is the most common method of travel to work for Hobsons Bay residents.

Active transport

There are more than 50km of shared off-road trails in Hobsons Bay for cycling, running and walking.



Community facilities ⁴

Council owns 28 community centres, three fitness centres, four libraries, 59 sporting pavilions and 15 kindergartens.



Open space ⁵

87 per cent of housing lots in Hobsons Bay are within a 400m walking distance to open space, compared with a target of 95 per cent.



4. Hobsons Bay Asset Plan 2022-2032.

5. Hobsons Bay Open Space Strategy 2018-2028.

Theme 3. Livable City

Council Plan action	HWSP Action	Council role	Implementation measure/s
Goal 3.1: Provide equitable and inclusive community infrastructure			
3.1.3 Provide accessible and well-maintained community facilities that meet community expectations and needs.	1. Assess whether community facilities meet the needs of priority populations and the broader community, considering changing demographics and community expectations. (DAP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide • Partner 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of community facilities that have been subject to accessibility improvements via upgrades. • Change in asset renewal gap for building assets.
Goal 3.2: Increase access to jobs, education and housing			
3.2.5 Develop and implement a Housing Strategy to reflect supply forecasts and review the Neighbourhood Character Study.	1. Ensure that priority populations are engaged in the development of the Housing Strategy. (DAP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing Strategy developed and adopted. • Neighbourhood Character Study completed.
Goal 3.3: Deliver and advocate for a safe and accessible transport network			
3.3.1 Review and implement the Integrated Transport Strategy and deliver infrastructure to improve movement and accessibility outcomes across the municipality.	2. Deliver active transport initiatives in line with the Integrated Transport Strategy. (DAP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrated Transport Strategy reviewed and adopted. • Number of actions from the Integrated Transport Strategy completed or under way. • LGPRF indicators as specified in the Council Plan.
Goal 3.4: Foster community through events and arts			
No health, wellbeing and safety actions related to this goal			
Goal 3.5: Address drainage, flooding and stormwater management concerns			
No health, wellbeing and safety actions related to this goal			

DAP = Disability Action Plan action

^ See section 2.2.3 for role definitions

LGPRF = Local Government Planning and Reporting Framework measures



Theme 4: Accountable Council

An accountable council is one that operates with transparency, integrity and responsiveness, ensuring decision-making processes are open and inclusive.

Building trust with the community requires clear communication, responsible use of resources, and genuine opportunities for residents to participate in shaping the services and policies that affect their lives. Council is committed to providing strong, strategic leadership and delivering services that are transparent, sustainable and equitable.

From a health, wellbeing and safety perspective, Council will focus on the following health-related priorities:

1. Embedding gender equity and inclusive practice across Council's plans, policies, services and programs.
2. Improving communication and engagement to ensure all community members can easily engage with Council.
3. Working in partnership with other levels of government, health and community services and community groups to deliver health, wellbeing and safety outcomes.

“[The part of the Council Plan process that I am most excited about is] accountability and a community focus.”

Council staff member

Our Services

- Governance and Council Support
- Corporate Services
- Finance and Revenue Management
- Communications and Community Engagement
- Emergency Management
- Local Laws and Compliance

Key outcome indicators

1. Increased community satisfaction with
 - » how Council informs the community
 - » Council consultation and engagement
 - » emergency and disaster management
 - » decisions made in the interest of the community.
2. Improved partnership development and maturity.

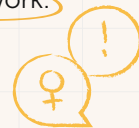
“[The part of the Council Plan process that I am most excited about is] the recognition of [the] importance of services for our most vulnerable communities.”

Council staff member

Why is this important?

Gender and violence ¹

More than 60 per cent of Victorian women have experienced some type of gendered violence and have felt at risk at work.



Gender and physical activity ²

Older women are less likely to play sport. For Victorian women aged over 65, 6.3 per cent take part in sport activities three times a week. For men aged over 65 in Victoria, it is 17.2 per cent.

Gender and poverty ³

Older women without children are the fastest growing group of people experiencing poverty, with 38.7 per cent living below the poverty line.



Gender and disaster ⁴

Evidence shows women have more of the emotional and psychological burden during and after disasters. They are more often expected to sacrifice their paid work to take on more unpaid caregiving for vulnerable family members and children. Gendered violence also increases in the aftermath of disasters.



1. Victoria Trades Hall Council, Stop gendered violence at work: women's rights at work report.

2. Australian Sports Commission, AusPlay Data Portal

3. CPA Australia, 2020, Security in old age for older single women without children.

4. Department of Families, Fairness and Housing, 2023, Our Equal State Victoria's gender equality strategy and action plan 2023-2027.



Civic engagement ⁵

Civic engagement tends to be higher among people with higher education, higher income and other social advantages. Because of this, the wellbeing benefits of participation are not evenly distributed.

Community engagement ⁶

In 2023–24, Hobsons Bay City Council was rated 53/100 regarding community satisfaction with community consultation and engagement, similar to the average of all Victorian councils (54/100).



Council decisions ⁶

In 2023–24, Hobsons Bay City Council was rated 55/100 regarding community satisfaction with Council decisions, similar to the average of all Victorian councils (53/100).



5. POLIS: The Centre for Social Policy Research, 2025, Trends in Civic Engagement in Australia.
6. State Government of Victoria, Know Your Council comparison dashboard.

Theme 4. Accountable Council

Council Plan action	HWSP Action	Council role	Implementation measure/s
Goal 4.1: Strengthen governance practices and systems			
4.1.5 Enhance emergency management preparedness and community resilience through updated planning and emergency services coordination.	1. Ensure the needs of priority populations are considered in the development of the updated Emergency Management Plan. (DAP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide • Partner • Educate • Advocate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emergency Management Plans and Business Continuity Plans reflect the needs of priority populations.
4.1.6 Strengthen the delivery of the Gender Equality Action Plan by embedding the Gender Impact Assessment process and providing gender equity training for staff.	1. Ensure that intersectionality is considered in Gender Impact Assessments. (DAP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide • Educate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender Equality Action Plan implementation milestones achieved. • Annual Gender Equality Action Plan reporting compliance. • Number of Gender Impact Assessments completed across all relevant projects. • Percentage of staff completing gender equality training. • Gender equality policy compliance monitoring results.
Goal 4.2: Increase staff satisfaction and safety			
No health, wellbeing and safety actions related to this goal			
Goal 4.3: Improve the financial performance of Council			
No health, wellbeing and safety actions related to this goal			
Goal 4.4: Increase effective communications and community engagement			
4.4.1 Develop and implement a Communications Strategy and associated policies with a focus on methods, language, frequency and closing the loop.	1. Ensure that the needs of priority populations are considered in the development of the Communications Strategy. (DAP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional considerations regarding the needs of priority populations included in strategy and/or other relevant documents.
4.4.2 Review and adopt the Community Engagement Strategy and embed across Council.	1. Ensure the needs of priority populations are considered in the development of the Community Engagement Strategy. (DAP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1. Additional considerations regarding the needs of priority populations included in strategy and/or other relevant documents.

Theme 4. Accountable Council

Council Plan action	HWSP Action	Council role	Implementation measure/s
Goal 4.4: Increase effective communications and community engagement			
4.5.2 Establish a partnerships framework and map existing and new collaborations to achieve the Community Vision.	1. Develop and foster partnerships with health, wellbeing and safety stakeholders. (DAP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide • Partner 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of new health, wellbeing and safety collaborations.

DAP = Disability Action Plan action

^ See section 2.2.3 for role definitions

LGPRF = Local Government Planning and Reporting Framework measures

How the plan will be implemented and reviewed





Implementation

The actions of this plan are intended to be implemented across four years. Each year, annual action plans will be developed which specifically outline the tasks to be undertaken to achieve the action by the end of the four-year period.

This plan is a whole-of-Council plan with multiple teams responsible for any specific action.

Each year, a review of the plan and achievements of the previous year will be undertaken before the development of the next annual plan.

Addressing health, wellbeing and safety issues requires a partnership approach across different levels of government, health and community services and community groups. Council will maintain ongoing engagement with stakeholders in the development, implementation and review of the annual action plans.

Review

Implementation measures for each action have been identified and listed in the plan. Each year, progress towards those measures will be reviewed and summarised prior to the development of the next annual action plan.

Outcome indicators have also been identified for each theme. These are the long-term outcomes we seek to influence through our work to promote health, wellbeing and safety. Changes in these indicators

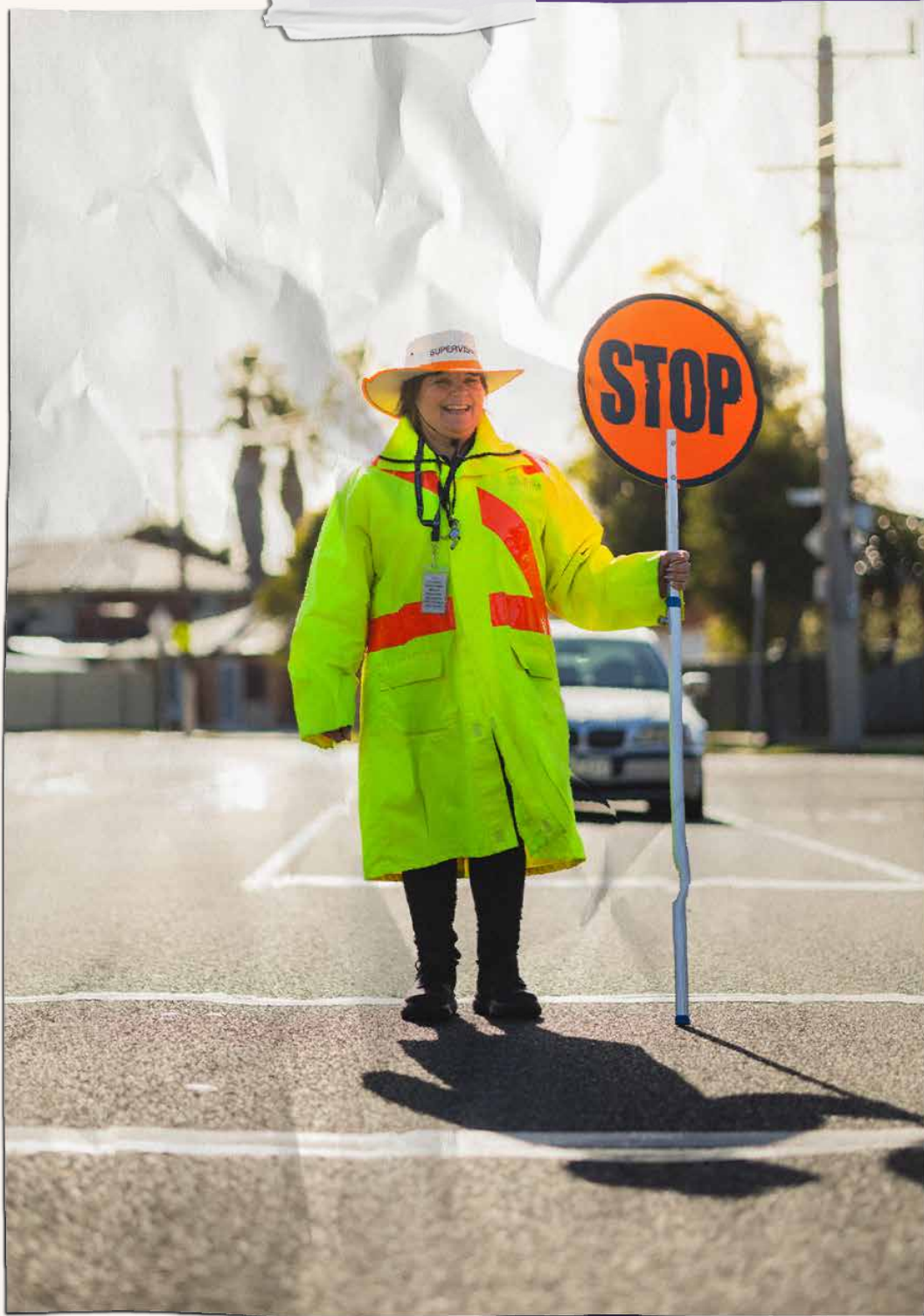
are unlikely to be achieved over a four-year period and will not occur solely through the actions of Council, but Council plays a key role in the collaborative effort to achieve these long-term outcomes.

Disability Action Plan reporting

Actions designated as Disability Action Plan actions will be reported on each year in the Hobsons Bay City Council Annual Report.

Appendices

05



Appendix A:

Legislative requirements

Council has responsibility under the *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008* to protect and improve health and wellbeing outcomes for the community. The Act requires Council to develop a Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan every four years that:

- is based upon an examination of data about the health status and health determinants of the community
- involves the local community in the development, implementation and evaluation of the plan
- identifies evidence-based goals and strategies to protect and promote health and wellbeing
- considers the Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Plan and responds to the Victorian health and wellbeing priorities
- specifies how Council will work in partnership with the Victorian Department of Health and other agencies to meet goals and strategies in the plan
- addresses the health impacts of climate change
- considers how Council can prevent and respond to family violence
- is consistent with the Council Plan and Municipal Strategic Statement
- applies a gender lens to the plan to promote gender equality.

Relevant legislation includes the following:

- *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008*
- *Local Government Act 2020*
- *Gender Equality Act 2020*
- *Climate Change Act 2017*
- *Disability Act 2006*

Appendix B:

Alignment with Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2023–27

State priorities	Addressed in the Health, Wellbeing and Safety Plan
Improving sexual and reproductive health	No
Reducing harm from tobacco and e-cigarette use	Yes
Improving wellbeing	Yes
Increasing healthy eating	Yes
Increasing active living	Yes
Reducing harm from alcohol and drug use	Yes
Tackling climate change and its impacts on health	Yes
Preventing all forms of violence	Yes
Decreasing antimicrobial resistance across human and animal health	No
Reducing injury	No

Appendix C:

Disability Action Plan

Under section 38 of the *Disability Act 2006*, public sector bodies (including Councils) are required to prepare a Disability Action Plan (DAP) and report on implementation through their Annual Report. Under the Act, a DAP is prepared for the purpose of:

- a) reducing barriers to persons with a disability accessing goods, services and facilities
- b) reducing barriers to persons with a disability obtaining and maintaining employment
- c) promoting inclusion and participation in the community of persons with a disability
- d) achieving tangible changes in attitudes and practices which discriminate against persons with a disability.

The following table presents the alignment of relevant actions against the four legislated purposes of a Disability Action Plan.

Purpose	Relevant Health, Wellbeing and Safety Plan actions
Accessing goods, services and facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Map existing family violence services to assist planning and advocacy (Action 1.2.2.2). • Partner with other agencies to undertake a mapping exercise of existing services and to identify service gaps (Action 1.3.1.1). • Deliver coordinated and intentional advocacy for local service needs (Action 1.3.1.2). • Foster opportunities to partner with health and community services and community organisations to provide a more integrated local service system (Action 1.3.1.3). • Undertake a mapping of mental health services to assist planning and advocacy (Action 1.3.5.1). • Support and deliver programs and activities to reduce and prevent the health impacts of climate change within priority populations (Action 2.2.1.1). • Assess whether community facilities meet the needs of priority populations and the broader community, considering changing demographics and community expectations (Action 3.1.3.1). • Deliver active transport initiatives in line with the Integrated Transport Strategy (Action 3.3.1.1).
Obtaining and maintaining employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build the capacity of priority populations and local community organisations to increase the diversity of community leadership in Hobsons Bay (Action 1.1.4.2). • Identify, plan and deliver initiatives to address the social determinants of mental health (Action 1.3.5.2). • Develop and foster partnerships with health, wellbeing and safety stakeholders (Action 4.5.2.1).

Purpose	Relevant Health, Wellbeing and Safety Plan actions
Inclusion and participation in the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and support arts, cultural, sport, recreation and social activities to promote social connection for the diverse Hobsons Bay community (including priority populations) (Action 1.1.1.1). • Work collaboratively across Council to ensure that services, programs, events, and infrastructure are safe, welcoming, accessible and responsive to the needs of our diverse community (including priority populations) (Action 1.1.7.1). • Improve the promotion of Council and community activities, programs, and services to ensure that the community can easily find information on relevant services and activities (Action 1.1.7.2). • Pursue opportunities to activate sport and recreation facilities and open space to increase participation with a focus on priority populations (Action 1.3.2.1). • Deliver diverse and responsive community programs and activities in Council facilities (Action 1.3.2.3). • Provide educational resources for priority populations to prepare for and manage emergency situations relating to climate change (Action 2.2.1.2). • Ensure that the needs of priority populations are considered in the development of the Housing Strategy (Action 3.2.5.1).
Changes in attitudes and practices which discriminate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support events and programs that celebrate diversity and provide an opportunity for learning and promote a shared community identity (Action 1.1.3.1). • Deliver accessible and inclusive media and communication materials that reflect and celebrate Hobsons Bay's diverse community (including priority populations) (Action 1.1.3.2). • Ensure that the needs of priority populations are considered in the development of the updated Emergency Management Plan (Action 4.1.5.1). • Ensure that intersectionality is considered in Gender Impact Assessments (Action 4.1.6.1). • Ensure that the needs of priority populations are considered in the development of the Communications Strategy (Action 4.4.1.1). • Ensure that the needs of priority populations are considered in the development of the Community Engagement Strategy (Action 4.4.2.1).

Appendix D:

Supporting documents and links

- Hobsons Bay Health Profile
- Hobsons Bay Health Profile 2025: Summary
- Council Plan 2025–29
- Community Engagement Summary Report (August 2025)
- Health and Wellbeing Stakeholder workshop summary (June 2025)

All are available at:
www.hobsonsbay.vic.gov.au



Appendix E:

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**HOBSONS BAY
LANGUAGE LINE**

9932 1212

INTERPRETER SERVICE FOR ALL LANGUAGES

Your Council in your language

Telephone interpreting service

Arabic	خدمة الترجمة الهاتفية
Burmese	တယ်လီဖုန်းဖြင့် စကားပြန် ဝန်ဆောင်မှု
Cantonese	电话口译服务
Croatian	Telefonska služba tumača
Greek	Τηλεφωνική Υπηρεσία Διερμηνέων
Italian	Servizio telefonico interpreti
Karen	လီတမ် တံကတိကျိတံ တံဗါ
Macedonian	Телефонска преведувачка служба
Maltese	Servizz ta' Interpretar bił-Telefon
Mandarin	电话口译服务
Vietnamese	Dịch vụ Thông dịch qua Điện thoại



For further information regarding
this plan please contact the
Community and Council Plan
development team at
cp@hobsonsbay.vic.gov.au

Hobsons Bay City Council

Asset Plan 2025-35

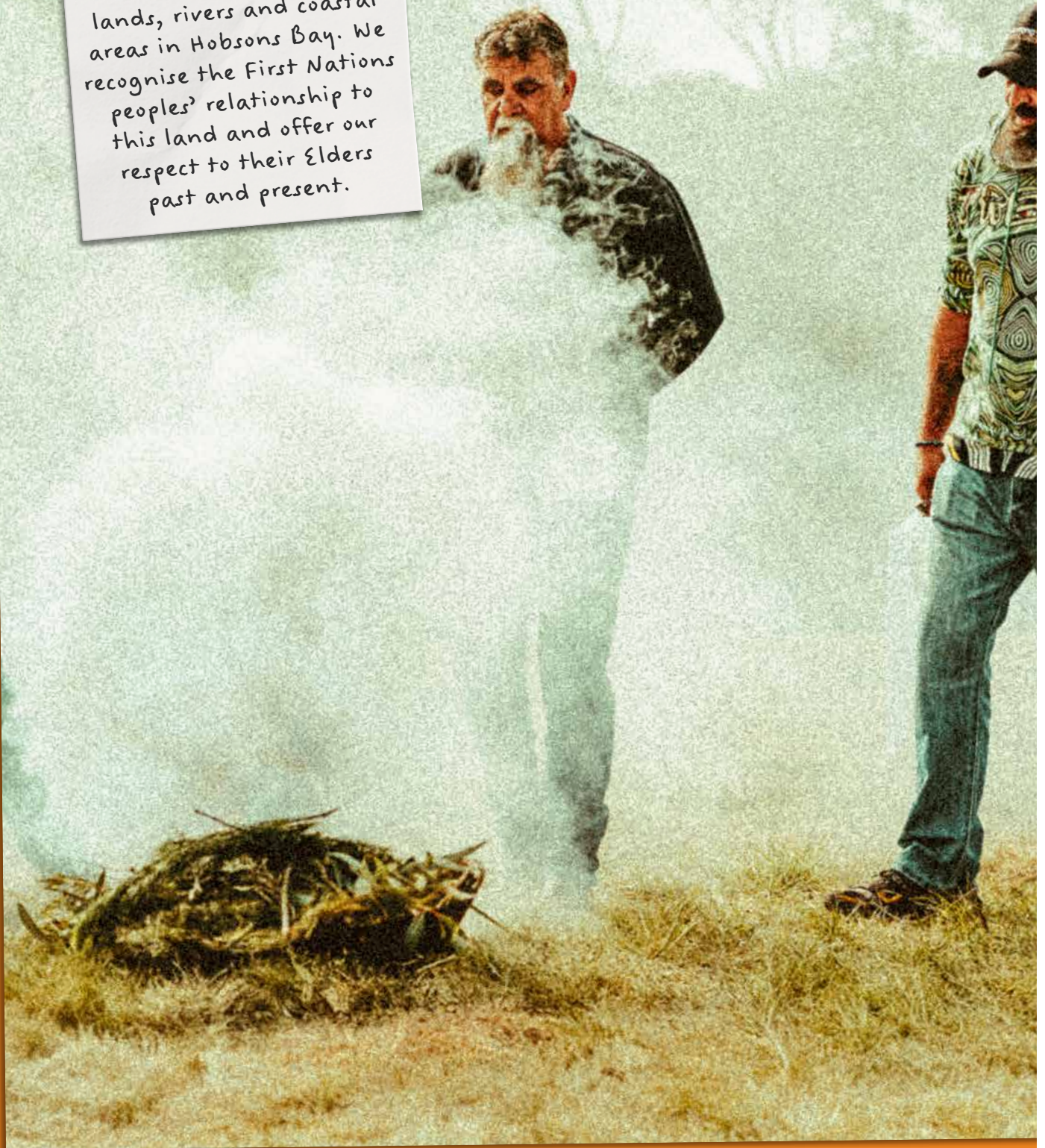


**HOBSONS
BAY CITY
COUNCIL**



Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the
Bunurong People of the
Kulin Nation as the
Traditional Owners of the
lands, rivers and coastal
areas in Hobsons Bay. We
recognise the First Nations
peoples' relationship to
this land and offer our
respect to their Elders
past and present.







How to read this plan

The Asset Plan 2025-35 should be read alongside the Hobsons Bay Council Plan 2025-29 and Health, Safety and Wellbeing Plan 2025-29, and in the context of the Financial Plan 2025-35. Together, these plans detail how Council will work towards the community aspirations outlined in Community Vision 2040.

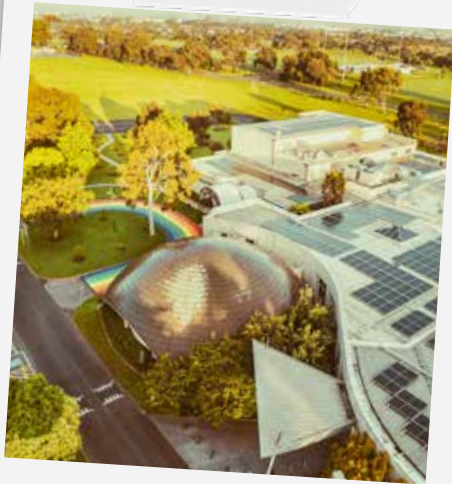
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Introduction







Introduction

The effective management of assets now and into the future is a key obligation of Hobsons Bay City Council.

The Hobsons Bay Asset Plan 2025–35 (the asset plan) is a proactive approach combining the management of public assets with financial, engineering and technical considerations to ensure an appropriate level of services is provided at the most economical cost to the community. The asset plan guides the way Council protects public assets to lengthen their lifespan, and to ensure maintenance and renewal of all assets is undertaken and completed at the appropriate time.

The Asset Plan 2022–32 was developed and adopted by Council in 2022. The asset plan is a 10-year strategic document, reviewed every four years in alignment with Council election cycles. Asset Plan 2025–35 is a first scheduled review and update.

1.1.0.

Asset plan purpose

This asset plan has been prepared to meet the legislative requirements of section 92 of *Local Government Act 2020*. It provides a long-term strategic planning and financial view of the infrastructure assets owned or controlled by Council over the next 10 years.

The purpose of the Asset Plan 2025–35 is to:

- show how Council will manage its assets responsibly in a cost-effective way to meet the service delivery needs of the Hobsons Bay community now and in the future
- ensure there is integration between asset management planning outcomes with the Council Plan, Financial Plan and Capital Works Program
- forecast capital and maintenance expenditure requirements for Council's assets over the next 10 years
- provide an improvement action plan for implementation over the next four-year Council Plan term
- ensure Council complies with its legislative obligations.

1.2.0.

Asset plan scope

The scope of this asset plan includes all infrastructure assets that are under the control of Hobsons Bay City Council. These include roads, bridges, drainage, pathways, car parks, buildings, open space and recreation assets that are valued at approximately \$1.85 billion as of 30 June 2025.

Strategic context

02



2.0.0.

Strategic context

This plan is a critical strategic document that ensures Council's assets will be maintained and renewed appropriately to ensure the delivery of community services as documented in the Hobsons Bay's Community Vision 2040 and Council Plan 2025–29.

The asset plan also has a strong interrelationship with the financial plan that informs Council's annual budget and other strategies and policies that form Council's asset management approach.

2.1.0

The integrated planning and reporting framework

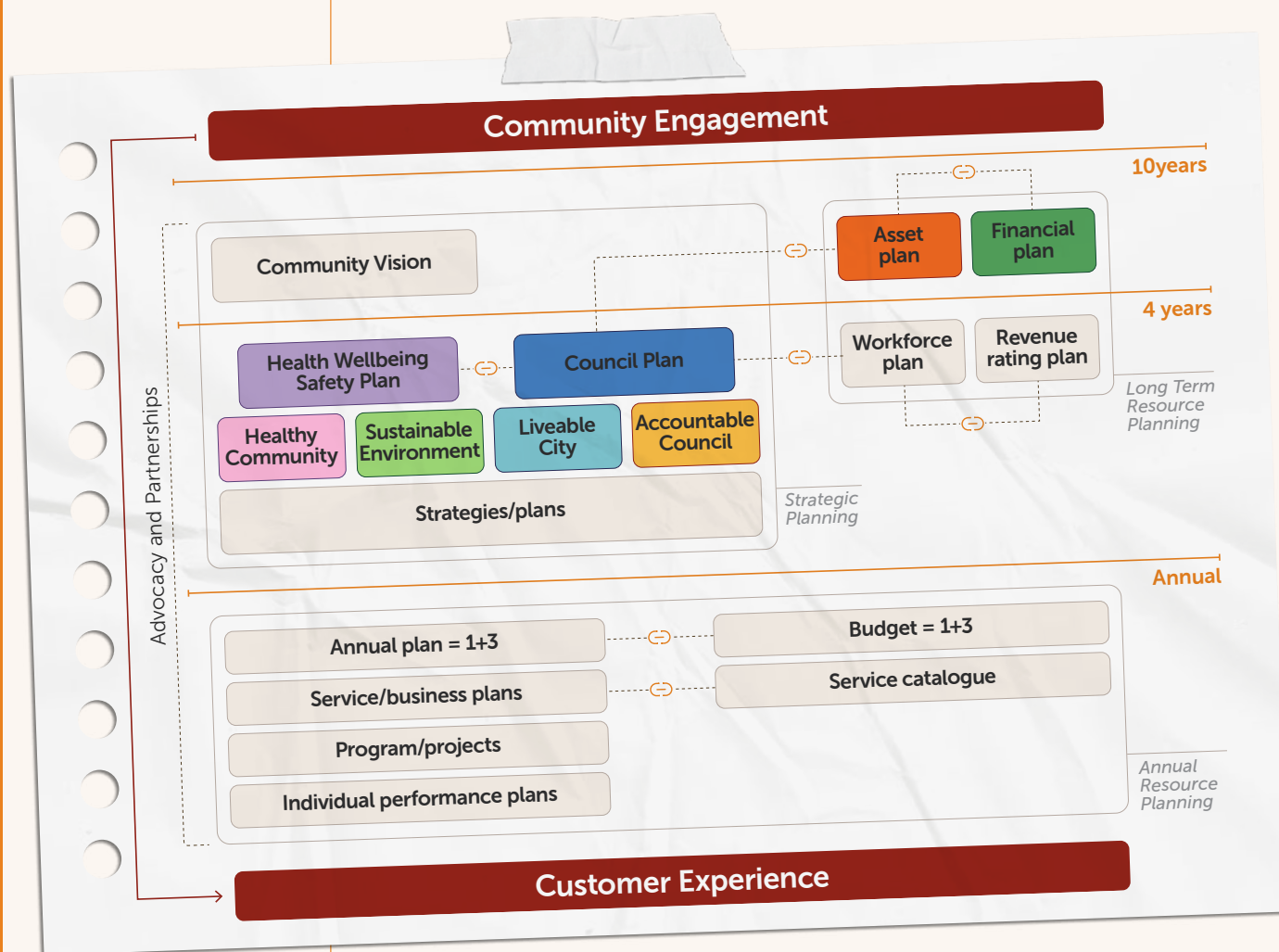


Image: Hobsons Bay Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework 2025–29

The Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework provides the strategic direction and activities required to ensure Council's work is informed, well considered and aligned across the diversity of responsibilities and services that we offer the community. In line with our commitment to strong governance, the framework sets the systems and processes to ensure decision making — both day-to-day and in the Council chamber — deliver the best outcomes for our community.

The Asset Plan aligns with other key strategic documents – the Council Plan 2025–29, Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025–29, and the Financial Plan 2025–35.

Strategic four-year plans



Strategic ten-year resourcing plans





2.2.0.

Community Vision and Council Plan

Hobsons Bay Community Vision 2040 captures the community's aspirations for the future of Hobsons Bay. This vision is translated into the Council Plan that guides Council's work over the following four years. The Asset Plan is closely aligned with the Council Plan on community infrastructure.

"By 2040 we are a safe, sustainable and healthy community supported by an accountable, efficient and transparent Council."

Priorities to achieve Vision

1. Sustainable, safe and accessible urban planning
2. Building community wellbeing by engaging with all residents of Hobsons Bay
3. Increased access to local jobs and education
4. Continuous improvement and conservation of the natural environment
5. Maintain and expand sustainable practices
6. Better and more accessible transport options

Source Hobsons Bay City Council Community Vision 2040

2.3.0.

Financial Plan

The Financial Plan 2025–35 is a 10-year financial framework that supports Council achieving the Community Vision and Council Plan.

This asset plan is integrated with the financial plan to ensure that future funding is allocated in a manner that supports service delivery and the effective management of Council's assets into the future.

The asset plan has been developed to inform the financial plan by identifying the future asset renewal and maintenance funding requirements over the life of each

asset type.

The level of funding required is informed from a number of factors including asset condition, risk assessment issues, and the intervention and service levels for each asset class.

2.4.0.

Best practice asset management

The asset plan reinforces Council's commitment to best practice asset management, ensuring the asset management goals are achieved to:

- provide affordable assets that best meet the community's current and future needs and expectations
- make informed decisions about the management of Council's assets incorporating social, economic and environmental factors that influence the health and wellbeing of the community
- maintain assets throughout their lifecycle to deliver appropriate levels of service and optimise the use of available resources in a sustainable way
- ensure that funding for the maintenance, operation and renewal of existing assets is prioritised above the funding of new assets
- ensure that asset investment decisions consider all cost-benefit options including provision of new assets by retiring, disposing, rationalising and consolidating existing assets to reduce lifecycle costs and climate change risk
- implement best practice asset management in compliance with the Australian Standards ISO55000 and National Asset Management Frameworks.

2.5.0.

Other related strategic documents

The asset plan is informed by and supports the Council Plan and the Financial Plan. These documents are shaped by various infrastructure provision strategies of Council. Any future strategies that affect infrastructure and assets must consider the implications of the asset plan.

To support these strategies, infrastructure service plans are necessary to ensure infrastructure provision and service levels meet community needs.

The following infrastructure service plans that support this include:

- Road Management Plan

An improvement action within this plan outlines the need to complete these service plans for remaining asset classes across the portfolio.

Several other policies and strategic documents support this plan, including but not limited to:

- Asset management plans for each asset class
- Community Services and Infrastructure Plan 2020–30
- Sports Needs Analysis 2018–28
- Aquatic Strategy 2019–30
- Waste and Recycling Strategy 2025
- Biodiversity Strategy 2024–34
- Hobsons Bay Response to Climate Change Action Plan 2022
- Urban Forest Strategy 2020
- Economic Development Strategy 2023–28
- Integrated Transport Plan 2017–30
- Open Space Strategy 2018–28
- Public Toilet Strategy 2023–33

Community engagement





Community engagement

The Local Government Act 2020 requires Councils to undertake deliberative engagement when reviewing the asset plan.

In 2025, as part of the development of Council Plan, Community Vision and other key strategies, Council developed a program of deliberative engagement with three community representative workshops held. A total of 35 participants joined the first workshop where asset management was included as part of the workshop.

During the asset management session, participants were provided with an overview of Council's current approach to infrastructure asset management. This included an introduction to key concepts such as asset value, lifecycle planning, condition assessments, and long-term renewal and maintenance strategies. The session aimed to build a shared understanding of how Council manages its assets over time, the challenges associated with ageing infrastructure, and the importance of balancing investment, risk, and community need.

Two asset management activities were carried out during the workshop. The first activity consisted of determining how important each of the existing guiding principles are, then recording each participant's opinion on how Council is performing in those areas. In the second activity, the participants were invited to demonstrate their preferred investment by asset class.

The asset management engagement results are summarised in the deliberative engagement report.



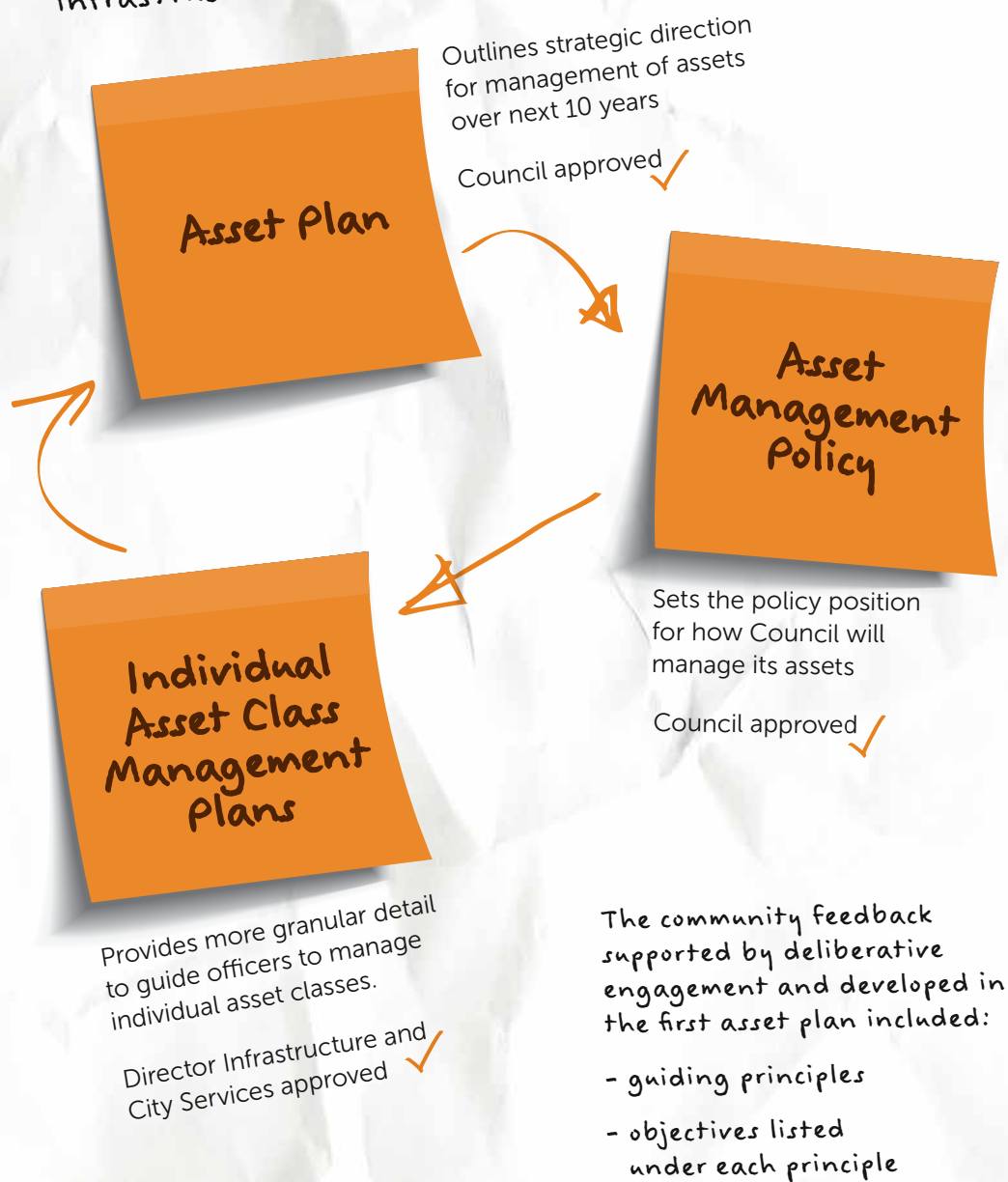
Asset Plan framework





This plan sets the strategic direction to optimising Council infrastructure and community assets for the next 10 years.

The diagram below shows the asset management framework Council uses to manage its significant infrastructure asset portfolios.



4.1.0.

Guiding principles

Transparency

All asset management principles and planning, including expenditure, are clearly documented and accessible to the community.

Safety

Keep everyone safe while also protecting the community's assets and infrastructure.

Sustainability

Prioritise sustainability in asset management from an economic, social and environmental perspective that also includes climate change consideration.

Relevance

Provide assets that remain contemporary and relevant to community requirements.

Technical

Utilise best practice, innovative methods and engineering techniques to achieve quality, compliant, cost-effective asset management solutions.

Equity

Ensure all suburbs have equal access to high-quality, well-maintained assets with resources allocated to most critically needed areas.

Inclusivity + accessibility

Ensure all assets are designed and maintained to provide universal use and accessibility for all members of the community.

Community engagement

Undertake community engagement for major maintenance and renewal projects to ensure community needs are considered.

Eight guiding principles have been developed to guide asset management decisions on the renewal and maintenance of Council's assets. These principles have been shaped through the deliberative community engagement sessions.

Objectives

In addition to the guiding principles that set the high-level aspirations of the asset plan, a number of objectives have been developed within each principle.

The objectives build on the existing asset management practices and place increased emphasis on adopting key service delivery planning principles and practices.

Transparency

All asset management principles and planning, including expenditure, are clearly documented and accessible to the community.

- Make the asset plan and all strategic documents available on Council's website for easy access of information by the community.
- Consult with the community when preparing the annual capital works program that includes renewal budget allocations for each asset class.
- Communicate the asset renewal gap to the community as part of Council's annual state of asset reporting.

Technical

Utilise best practice, innovative methods and engineering techniques to achieve quality, compliant, cost-effective asset management solutions.

- Manage and maintain Council's assets in a manner that ensures compliance with relevant legislation and regulations.
- Allocate appropriate budget to respond to legislation or regulation changes to ensure compliance occurs in a timely manner.
- Monitor the maintenance of roads and related assets to ensure ongoing compliance with the road management plan.
- Conduct asset condition assessments proactively to monitor the condition and performance of Council's asset portfolio.
- Use an integrated asset management system to deliver monitoring and forecasting, development of long-term maintenance and renewal programs, risk management and financial reporting of assets.
- Continuously monitor and improve asset data, and maintain the asset register to include maintenance inspections and works histories.
- Undertake the valuation of Council's assets in accordance with the standards set by the Australian Accounting Standards Board applicable for Victorian local governments, and ensure asset lifecycles reflect the service potential of the relevant category.

Inclusivity and accessibility

Ensure all assets are designed and maintained to provide universal use and accessibility for all members of the community.

- Provide assets that are fit for their intended purpose and that adequately support service provision.
- Maintain, renew and upgrade assets to ensure they can be used by all members of the community.

Equity

Ensure all suburbs have equal access to high quality and well-maintained assets with resources allocated to most critically needed areas.

- Proactively inspect and monitor the condition and performance of Council's asset portfolio through a periodic asset condition assessment program.
- Implement asset renewal programs that prioritise the renewal or replacement of assets that are in poor and very poor condition.
- Recognise the needs of the future generations, especially those most vulnerable to the potential impacts of climate change.

Safety

Keep everyone safe while also protecting the community's assets and infrastructure.

- Prioritise the provision of funding for legal compliance, renewal, maintenance and operation of existing assets in preference to financing new works or asset upgrades.
- Implement a risk-based evaluation when prioritising works that understands the consequence of asset failures and develop mitigating strategies that reduce potential risks.
- Establish and deliver maintenance standards that maintain assets to the agreed level of service and mitigate any safety or risk issues.
- Continuously improve Council's risk management techniques and processes to minimise insurance premiums and claims.
- Maintain occupancy agreements with all tenants that clearly identify who is responsible for maintenance and renewal.

Sustainability

Prioritise sustainability in asset management from an economic, social and environmental perspective that also includes climate change consideration.

- Ensure assets are designed and utilised to maximise environmental, economic and social benefits while also considering future repurposing, recycling, and end-of-life impacts.
- Review asset lifecycles based on reliable asset condition, performance data and the best practicably available information about the potential impacts of climate change.
- Provide appropriate lifecycle funding for renewal, maintenance and operations within the capital works and operational budget when approving new or upgraded capital works projects.

Relevance

Provide assets that remain contemporary and relevant to community requirements.

- Provide asset maintenance and renewal funding in the annual budget and financial plan consistent with this asset plan.
- Investigate the use of latest construction materials, methods and technology to prolong the useful life of assets.

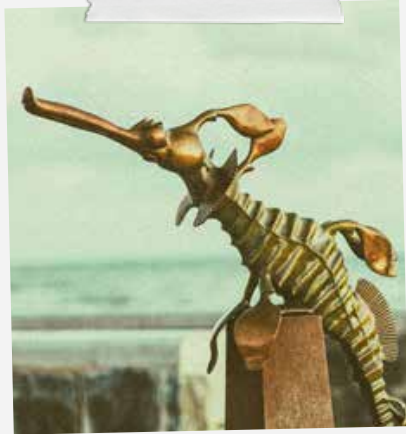
Community engagement

Undertake community engagement for major maintenance and renewal projects to ensure community needs are considered

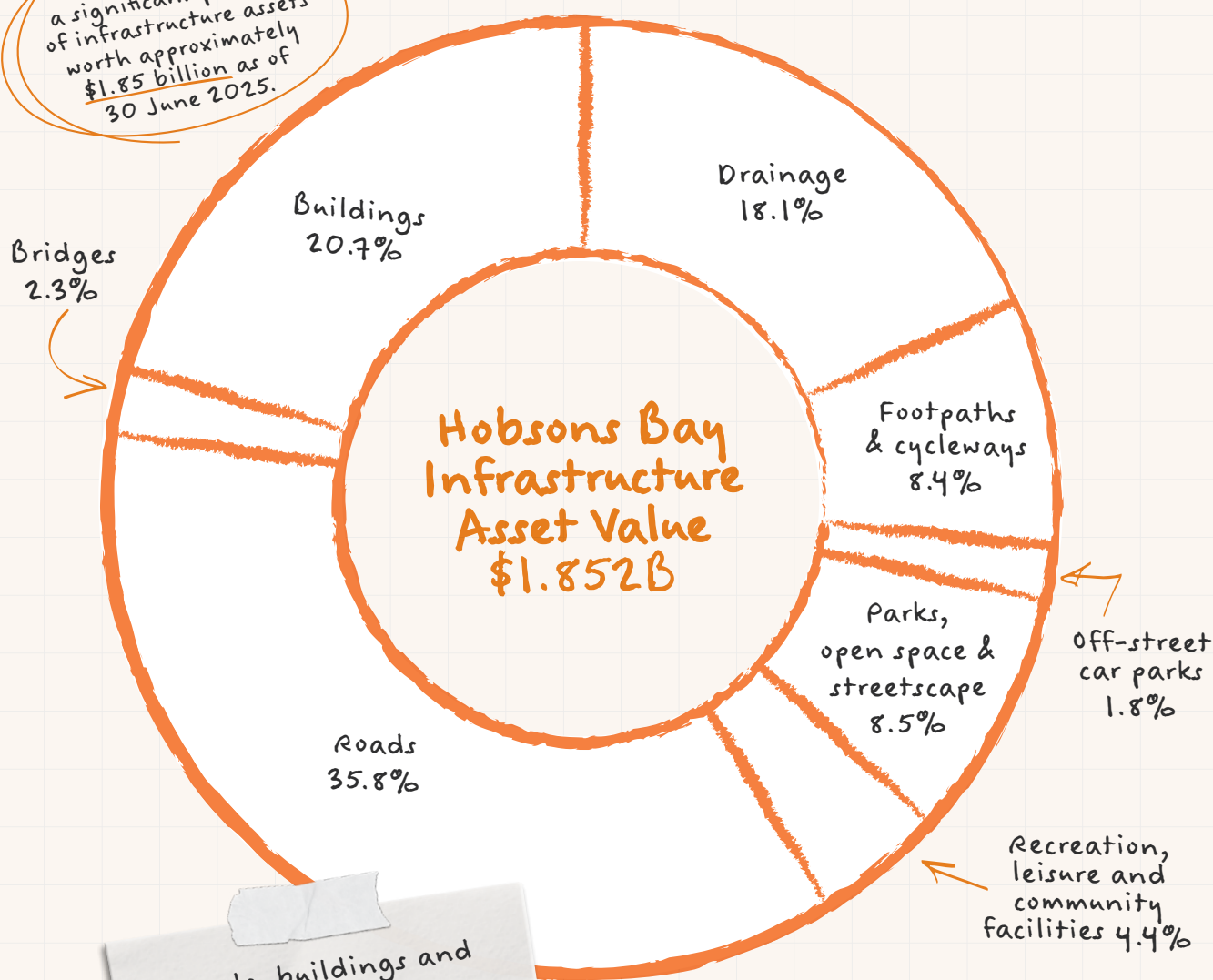
- Continue to monitor community satisfaction regarding asset performance.
- Review and improve community engagement processes for major maintenance and renewal projects.

Council's assets

05



Council manages a significant portfolio of infrastructure assets worth approximately \$1.85 billion as of 30 June 2025.



Roads, buildings and drainage are the three largest asset types, adding up to about 74.6 per cent of Council's total asset value.

Asset Type	Replacement Value
Bridges	\$42,139,168
Buildings	\$383,206,693
Drainage	\$336,181,103
Footpaths and cycleways	\$154,982,561
Off-street car parks	\$33,578,355
Parks, open space and streetscape	\$157,523,596
Recreation, leisure and community facilities	\$81,773,060
Roads	\$663,526,984
Total	\$1,852,911,520



5.1.0.

State of Council's assets

The condition of Council's asset portfolio is regularly monitored with the development of asset management plans for each asset class. Asset management plans provide the following technical information related to each asset type:

- Asset portfolio with levels of service
- Demand forecasts
- Lifecycle analysis
- Risk management
- Any climate change impact
- Financial forecasts
- Operation and maintenance levels, renewal and disposal

The asset management plans will be updated for each asset class following the completion of a whole of asset condition audit that is completed every four or five years.

A state of assets report is completed annually in September, taking information from asset management plans for each asset class. It provides a summary of each asset type, the asset description, quantity and value, condition, and the required renewal expenditure and recommended 10-year renewal budget. The 2025 State of Assets Report (Appendix 1) provides a summary of the current state of Council's infrastructure assets at 30 June 2025.

Disposal and decommissioning of infrastructure assets may occur when there is no longer any use of the asset or justification for the asset's continued existence. At the end of each financial year, Council will record all assets that have been disposed and decommissioned as part of the end of year asset valuation.

A summary of each asset type is provided in the following pages.



Bridges

64 bridges

with a total length of 1,479m

\$42.14 million

replacement value



Condition ratings:

- Excellent and good: 69.51%
- Moderate: 28.10%
- Poor or very poor: 2.39%

\$200,000

annual renewal requirement
over 10 years

\$1.0 million

value to renew current backlog
(including components)



Buildings

219

buildings

\$383 million

replacement value



Condition ratings:

- Excellent and good: 70.53%
- Moderate: 27.73%
- Poor or very poor: 1.74%

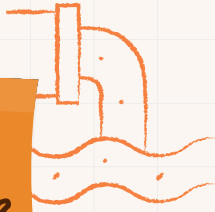
\$6.0 million

annual renewal requirement
over 10 years

\$46 million

value to renew current backlog of
building and building components

Drainage



Condition ratings:

- Excellent and good: 77.3%
- Moderate: 19.75%
- Poor and very poor: 2.95 %

21,220 drainage pits

and 597km of drainage pipes

\$1.1* million

annual renewal requirement over 10 years

\$1.1 million per year over the four years and then \$500,000 per year from year five to year 10.

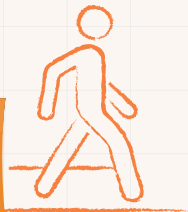
\$336 million

replacement value

\$9.93 million

value to renew current backlog

Footpaths and cycleways



Condition ratings:

- Excellent and good: 35.78%
- Moderate: 63%
- Poor and very poor: 1.22%

781 km

of footpaths and cycleways

\$1.2 million

annual renewal requirement over 10 years

\$155 million

replacement value

\$2.0 million

value to renew current backlog



off-street car parks

130

off-street car parks



Condition ratings:

- Excellent or good: 75.27%
- Moderate: 17.7%
- Poor or very poor: 7.03%

\$200,000

Annual renewal requirement over 10 years

\$33 million

replacement value

\$2.36 million

Value to renew current backlog



Parks, open space and recreation

18,000

parks, open spaces and recreation assets (excluding buildings)



Condition ratings:

- Excellent or good: 78.14%
- Moderate: 13.5%
- Poor or very poor: 8.36%

\$2.9 million

Annual renewal requirement over 10 years

\$239 million

replacement value

\$20 million

Value to renew current backlog

Roads

442 km

of roads

Condition ratings:

- Excellent or good: 45.19%
- Moderate: 42.11%
- Poor or very poor: 12.70%

\$15 million

Annual renewal requirement
over 10 years

\$663 million

replacement value

\$84 million

Value to renew current backlog

5.1.0. State of assets summary

The 2025 state of Council's asset portfolio and current renewal demand is summarised below.

State of assets summary				
Asset Class	Replacement Value	Poor and very poor condition	Backlog	Annual Renewal Demand
Bridges	\$42,139,168	2.39%	\$1,004,820	\$200,000
Buildings	\$383,206,693	1.74%	\$6,685,857	\$6,000,000
Drainage	\$336,181,103	2.95%	\$9,929,598	\$1,100,000
Footpath and cycleways	\$154,982,561	1.22%	\$1,901,218	\$1,200,000
Parks, open space and streetscape (excluding trees)	\$157,523,596	9.02%	\$14,205,295	\$1,900,000
Recreation, leisure and community facilities (excluding buildings)	\$81,773,060	7.08%	\$5,789,557	\$1,000,000
Roads	\$663,526,984	12.70%	\$84,279,883	\$15,000,000
Off-street car parks	\$33,578,355	7.03%	\$2,358,797	\$200,000
TOTAL	\$1,852,911,520		\$126,155,024	\$26,600,000

The total backlog of poor and very poor asset is 6.8 per cent of the total infrastructure asset value.

Financial expenditure forecast →

06



Expenditure on Council infrastructure assets is categorised as follows:

Activity	Description
Maintenance	Repair and service works required to keep assets operational, e.g. roof leak repairs, road pothole patching.
Operational	Regular activities to provide public health, safety and amenity, e.g. street sweeping, grass mowing.
Renewal	Replacing an existing asset to its original capacity, e.g. resurfacing a road.
Upgrade/expansion	Enhancing an existing asset to provide higher levels of service, e.g. widening an existing pathway to allow for cyclists.
New	Creating a new asset to meet additional service level requirements, e.g. new building, new sportsground.

The projected expenditure requirements for Council infrastructure assets over the next 10 years is as shown in the table below. The figures for renewal, new, upgrade and expansion works were extracted from Council's 2025–26 Capital Works Budget and Long Term Financial Plan. These outlays have been determined based on the affordability assessments made in

Council's Financial Plan and represent the investment that is required to maintain and renew Council's existing infrastructure assets.

The operation and maintenance budget are based on the adopted 2025–26 budget with a projection of a 3% increase per year for the next 10 years.

Asset Plan Financial Forecast 2025–26 to 2034–35 (Allocated Budget \$'000)

Bridges			2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29
Operation and Maintenance			129	132	136	141
Renewal			20	250	250	250
New, Upgrade and Expansion			0	0	0	0
2029-30	2030-31	2031-32	2032-33	2033-34	2034-35	Total
145	149	154	158	163	168	1,474
250	250	250	250	250	250	2,270
0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Buildings			2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29
Operation and Maintenance			6,431	6,624	6,822	7,027
Renewal			3,378	1,954	1,970	1,962
New, Upgrade and Expansion			4,467	6,406	7,160	1,058
2029-30	2030-31	2031-32	2032-33	2033-34	2034-35	Total
7,238	7,455	7,679	7,909	8,146	8,391	73,720
1,962	4,040	4,040	4,040	4,040	4,040	31,426
1,058	4,590	4,590	4,590	4,590	4,590	43,099

Drainage			2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29
Operation and Maintenance			1,337	1,377	1,419	1,461
Renewal			1,350	950	950	950
New, Upgrade and Expansion			1,030	5,800	4,340	4,970
2029-30	2030-31	2031-32	2032-33	2033-34	2034-35	Total
1,505	1,550	1,597	1,645	1,694	1,745	15,332
950	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	10,150
8,800	5,100	5,100	5,100	5,100	5,100	50,440

Footpaths and Cycleways			2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29
Operation and Maintenance			1,605	1,653	1,703	1,754
Renewal			1,150	950	1,000	1,000
New, Upgrade and Expansion			565	3,490	12,230	250
2029-30	2030-31	2031-32	2032-33	2033-34	2034-35	Total
1,806	1,860	1,916	1,974	2,033	2,094	18,398
1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	10,100
200	250	250	250	250	250	17,985

Parks, Open Space and Streetscape (excl. trees)			2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29
Operation and Maintenance			6,495	6,690	6,891	7,098
Renewal			713	700	731	707
New, Upgrade and Expansion			6,751	2,397	3,875	5,305
2029-30	2030-31	2031-32	2032-33	2033-34	2034-35	Total
7,311	7,530	7,756	7,988	8,228	8,475	74,462
817	685	685	685	685	685	7,093
4,115	4,025	4,025	4,025	4,025	4,025	42,568

Recreation, Leisure and Community Facilities (excl. buildings)			2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29
Operation and Maintenance			2,100	2,163	2,228	2,295
Renewal			140	100	120	715
New, Upgrade and Expansion			150	1,400	590	1,435
2029-30	2030-31	2031-32	2032-33	2033-34	2034-35	Total
2,364	2,434	2,508	2,583	2,660	2,740	24,074
415	480	480	480	480	480	3,890
160	120	120	120	120	120	4,335

Roads			2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29
Operation and Maintenance			2,402	2,474	2,548	2,624
Renewal			13,092	13,295	13,141	17,030
New, Upgrade and Expansion			5,083	1,725	2,519	2,030
2029-30	2030-31	2031-32	2032-33	2033-34	2034-35	Total
2,703	2,784	2,868	2,954	3,042	3,134	27,533
16,765	17,930	17,930	17,930	17,930	17,930	162,973
950	1,450	1,450	1,450	1,450	1,450	19,557

Off-street Car Parks			2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29
Operation and Maintenance			134	138	142	146
Renewal			200	250	250	250
New, Upgrade and Expansion			300	0	0	0
2029-30	2030-31	2031-32	2032-33	2033-34	2034-35	Total
151	155	160	165	170	175	1,535
250	300	300	300	300	300	2,700
0	0	0	0	0	0	300

Renewal and New/Upgrade and Expansion figures extract from the adopted 2025–26 Capital Works Program and Long Term Financial Plan.

Operation and maintenance budget is based on the 2025–26 budget with a projection of 3% increase per year for the next 10 years.

The second table on the following pages considers potential change in funding profile based on new renewal demand and Council Plan initiatives.

This will be further discussed during the development of FY2026–27 Annual budget and Long Term Financial Plan.

Asset Plan Financial Forecast 2025–26 to 2034–35 (Budget \$'000)

Bridges			2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29
Operation and Maintenance			129	132	136	141
Renewal			20	200	200	200
New, Upgrade and Expansion			0	0	0	0
2029-30	2030-31	2031-32	2032-33	2033-34	2034-35	Total
145	149	154	158	163	168	1,474
200	200	200	200	200	200	1,820
0	0	0	0	0		0

Buildings			2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29
Operation and Maintenance			6,431	6,624	6,822	7,027
Renewal			3,378	7,000	6,400	6,000
New, Upgrade and Expansion			4,467	1,650	2,900	450
2029-30	2030-31	2031-32	2032-33	2033-34	2034-35	Total
7,238	7,455	7,679	7,909	8,146	8,391	73,720
6,000	6,000	6,000	6,000	6,000	6,000	58,778
450	450	450	450	450	450	12,167

Drainage			2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29
Operation and Maintenance			1,337	1,377	1,419	1,461
Renewal			1,350	1,100	1,100	1,100
New, Upgrade and Expansion			1,030	900	900	2,500
2029-30	2030-31	2031-32	2032-33	2033-34	2034-35	Total
1,505	1,550	1,597	1,645	1,694	1,745	15,332
1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	11,250
1,950	1,950	1,950	1,950	1,950	1,950	17,030

Footpaths and Cycleways			2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29
Operation and Maintenance			1,605	1,653	1,703	1,754
Renewal			1,150	1,200	1,200	1,200
New, Upgrade and Expansion			565	4,500	13,200	1,500
2029-30	2030-31	2031-32	2032-33	2033-34	2034-35	Total
1,806	1,860	1,916	1,974	2,033	2,094	18,398
1,200	1,200	1,200	1,200	1,200	1,200	11,950
1,300	2,300	2,300	2,300	2,300	2,300	32,565

Parks, Open Space and Streetscape (excl. trees)			2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29
Operation and Maintenance			6,495	6,690	6,891	7,098
Renewal			713	3,400	3,400	3,400
New, Upgrade and Expansion			6,751	3,270	3,270	3,720
2029-30	2030-31	2031-32	2032-33	2033-34	2034-35	Total
7,311	7,530	7,756	7,988	8,228	8,475	74,462
3,400	3,400	3,400	3,400	3,400	3,400	31,313
3,720	3,720	3,720	3,720	3,720	3,720	39,331

Recreation, Leisure and Community Facilities (excl. buildings)			2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29
Operation and Maintenance			2,100	2,163	2,228	2,295
Renewal			140	1,000	1,000	1,000
New, Upgrade and Expansion			150	1,400	1,400	2,500
2029-30	2030-31	2031-32	2032-33	2033-34	2034-35	Total
2,364	2,434	2,508	2,583	2,660	2,740	24,074
1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	9,140
2,500	4,000	4,000	4,000	4,000	4,000	27,950

Roads			2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29
Operation and Maintenance			2,402	2,474	2,548	2,624
Renewal			13,092	15,000	15,000	15,000
New, Upgrade and Expansion			5,083	1,000	1,000	1,200
2029-30	2030-31	2031-32	2032-33	2033-34	2034-35	Total
2,703	2,784	2,868	2,954	3,042	3,134	27,533
15,000	15,000	15,000	15,000	15,000	15,000	148,092
1,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	19,283









Off-street Car Parks			2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29
Operation and Maintenance			134	138	142	146
Renewal			200	200	200	200
New, Upgrade and Expansion			300	300	300	500
2029-30	2030-31	2031-32	2032-33	2033-34	2034-35	Total
151	155	160	165	170	175	1,535
200	200	200	200	200	200	2,000
500	500	500	500	500	500	4,400

Note: Renewal and New/Upgrade and Expansion figures considers potential change in funding profile based on new renewal demand and Council Plan initiatives. Operation and maintenance budget is based on the 2025–26 budget with a projection of 3% increase per year for the next 10 years.

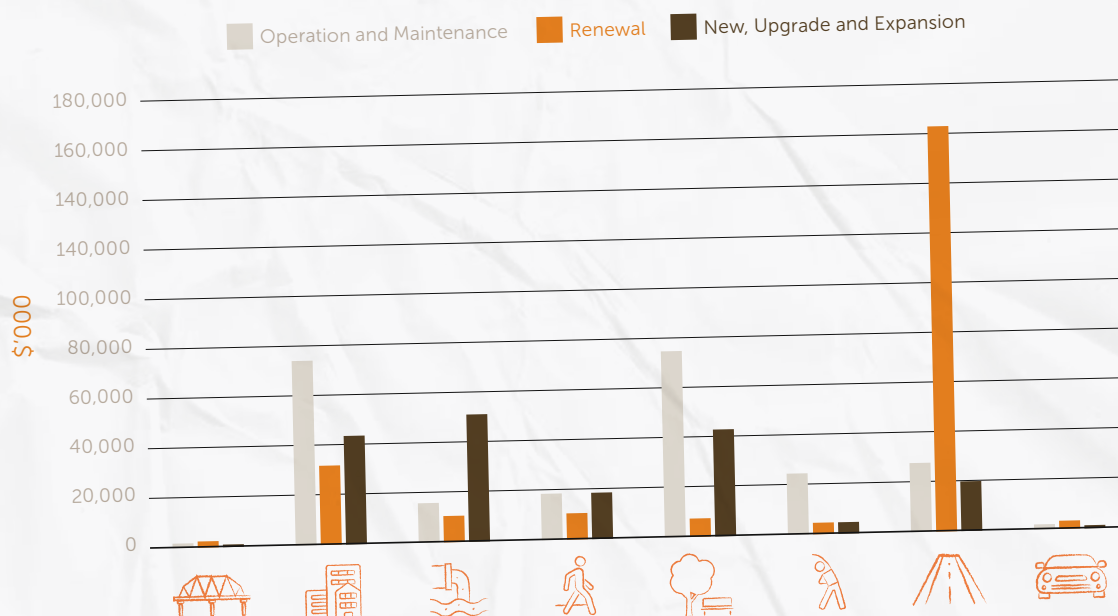
Over the next 10 years, for each asset class, the below estimated amounts are required for operation and maintenance, renewal and provide new, upgrade and expansion based on the adopted 2025–26 Capital Works Program and Long Term Financial Plan.

Asset Plan Financial Forecast 2025–26 to 2034–35 (\$'000, 10 Years Total)

State of assets summary

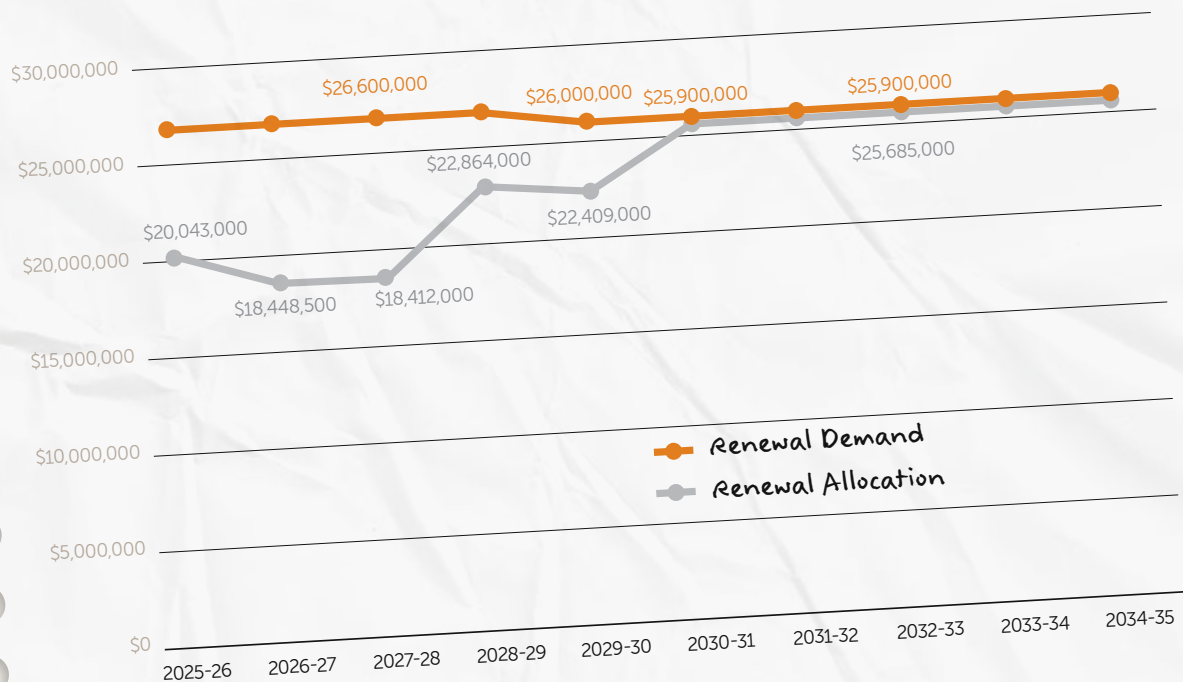
Asset Class		Operation and Maintenance	Renewal	New, Upgrade and Expansion	Total
Bridges		1,474	2,270	0	3,744
Buildings		73,720	31,426	43,099	148,245
Drainage		15,332	10,150	50,440	75,922
Footpaths and cycleways		18,398	10,100	17,985	46,483
Parks, open space and streetscape (excluding trees)		74,462	7,093	42,568	124,122
Recreation, leisure and community facilities (excluding buildings)		24,074	3,890	4,335	32,299
Roads		27,533	162,973	19,557	210,063
Off-street car parks		1,535	2,700	300	4,535
TOTAL		236,528	230,602	178,284	645,413

Financial Forecast 2025 to 2035



The below graph compares the annual renewal gap of Council's assets based on current condition, and the current annual renewal allocation in Council's adopted 2025-26 Capital Works Program and Long Term Financial Plan. The asset renewal gap is projected to keep narrowing over the next five years and is expected to close from the 2030-31 financial year onwards.

Renewal Gap



Renewal gap is the gap between renewal allocation and renewal demand and doesn't take into account new and upgrade requirements

The renewal allocation is the budget allocated for the renewal of assets based on adopted 2025-26 Capital Works Program and Long Term Financial Plan.

Renewal demand accounts for the asset backlog and the rate of deterioration over the next decade, as determined through the condition audit of each asset.

The CPI of 3% has been allowed in the renewal demand computation.

The renewal demand figures have not accounted for a significant increase in asset valuation to meet new standards. Future renewal demand modelling will need to be taking this into account.

Actions

07



4.2.0.

Objectives

The table below lists the actions that have been implemented under each guiding principle since the adoption of the first Asset Plan in 2022.

It shows what Council has been doing and will continue to do so in future. It also lists Council's commitment on new initiative for the next four years with respect to each guiding principle.

Transparency

What we have been doing and will continue to do:

- Include the State of Assets report in the Asset Plan, detailing an overview of asset quantity, condition, required renewal expenditure, and a recommended ten-year renewal budget, accessible for all.
- Maintain and update the State of Assets dashboard report for all infrastructure assets on the Council's website under Council Reporting.
- Publish the Road Management Plan and Road Register on the Council website for public access.
- Make available the Annual Capital Works Program on the Council website.
- Communicate the asset renewal gap to the community through Asset Plan.

Future Commitment on New Initiative:

- Communicate the asset renewal gap to the community through annual State of Asset reporting.

Technical

What we have been doing and will continue to do:

- Design, construct and maintain assets in accordance with Australian Standards such as, Infrastructure Design Manual (IDM), Austroads Guidelines, VicRoads Supplement, AS/NZ Standards, IPWEA Guidelines, HBCC Design Standards and Guidelines and all upgrades are ensured to comply with these standards.
- Allocate an appropriate budget to respond to legislation or regulation changes to ensure compliance occurs in a timely manner.
- Monitor the inspection and maintenance of roads and footpaths on road reserves to ensure ongoing compliance with the Road Management Plan.
- Develop long-term maintenance plans for all the major assets and forward them to the relevant asset maintenance manager.
- Conduct condition audit of all major assets in a regular cycle and facilitate effective lifecycle planning and management of these assets to the highest standards.
- Revise and update individual asset management plans for bridges, buildings, drainage, footpaths, open space and recreation, and roads, following the condition audit. These plans outline information on the lifecycle management of these assets, including level of service, future demand, lifecycle management plan, risk management plan, operation and maintenance, financial summary, asset management practices, improvement plan and their link to the Asset Plan.
- Prepare a Five-Year Renewal Program for each of the infrastructure asset types including bridges, buildings, drainage, footpaths, open space and recreation, off-street carpark, and roads to address all the poor and very poor assets.
- Allocate budget for renewal needs identified during condition audits, which are also reflected in the Long-Term Financial Plan (LTFP). This ensures the assets are financially as well as technically fit and relevant.
- Monitor, update and improve asset data, and maintain the asset register to include maintenance inspections and works history.
- Review and implement asset capitalisation and handover process for receiving asset handover from internal and external stakeholders.
- Undertake the valuation of Council's assets in accordance with the standards set by the Australian Accounting Standards Board applicable for local governments within the State of Victoria.
- Conduct market research and collaborate with neighbouring councils to remain informed of industry's best practices and emerging technologies. For instance, the Council recently used AI-driven analysis to identify and categorise traffic signs using archived street imagery.

Future Commitment on New Initiatives:

- Plan for transition to Microsoft Dynamics as Council's Asset Management System, with completion expected within the next two years. Microsoft Dynamics will serve as a unified system for asset management, operations and maintenance, financial management, property management and rates.
- Explore using Microsoft Dynamics for predictive and financial modelling.
- Explore opportunities on streamlining the asset handover process in MS Dynamics.
- Continue to explore the use of AI technology to monitor the condition of council assets.

Community Engagement

What we have been doing and will continue to do:

- Conduct the annual community satisfaction survey and monitor the satisfaction levels under the community level of service in the individual asset management plan. This ensures that survey results meet or exceed the established thresholds for each asset class.
- Carry out deliberative engagement while updating Asset Plan, which guides the Council's approach to best practice asset management.
- Manage a community engagement website, "Participate Hobsons Bay", to publish information on asset renewals, upgrades, and new constructions to gather community feedback during the budget development phase.
- Conduct extensive community consultations during the design phase to gather feedback on the design. This gives community members an opportunity to comment on the project design and suggest changes to better meet their needs.
- Conduct additional community engagement during the construction phase, including drop-in sessions and letter distribution as needed, to keep the community informed about the construction timeline, potential disruptions, detours and parking impacts.

Future Commitment on New Initiatives:

- Explore opportunities to better engage and connect with community on all areas of asset management lifecycle.
- Research on innovative construction practices to minimise inconvenience to the community where possible.

Equity

What we have been doing and will continue to do:

- Develop a building prioritization matrix to identify high-risk projects needing renewal, ensuring equity in the allocation of renewal budgets by addressing the most critical needs first.
- Identify disadvantaged and high-need areas and their assets needing renewal or upgrades and address them through the "Better Places" program. To date, Council has identified and is implementing Better Places projects in Spotswood, Brooklyn, Altona North, Laverton, and South Kingsville.
- Target specific problem areas for footpath and kerb & channel renewals by renewing assets in 20-metre chainages. This approach focuses on critical areas and achieves better value for money.

Future Commitment on New Initiatives:

- Develop road resurfacing and rehabilitation prioritisation matrix to identify high-risk projects needing renewal, ensuring equity in the allocation of renewal budgets by prioritizing the most critical needs.
- Develop service plans for individual asset classes similar to Council's Road Management Plan to ensure infrastructure service provision is provided equitably across the municipality.

Inclusivity & Accessibility

What we have been doing and will continue to do:

- Ensure renewed assets are inclusive and accessible for people of all abilities by complying with current standards. Council has developed a Universal Design Building Manual 2022 to guide all building renewals, ensuring they meet the needs of the entire community.
- Ensure assets are maintained to comply with the level of service specified in individual asset management plans.

Future Commitment on New Initiatives:

- Review the level of service while updating individual asset management plan to ensure that the assets can provide universal use and accessibility for all members of the community.

Sustainability

What we have been doing and will continue to do:

- Commit to environmental sustainability, which is also included in each individual asset management plan.
- Include latest climate data and best practice adaptation principles in Council's operations, particularly asset management plans as they are updated.
- Develop a sustainable building toolkit design manual which provides a framework for the application of environmentally sustainable design across the lifecycle of Council buildings, from master planning and site selection through to decommissioning. The implementation of this manual has resulted in cost-effective building operations and maintenance, better environmental and operational outcomes, healthier indoor and outdoor environments and reduced climate change-related risk.
- Use recycled crushed rock in road construction and maintenance where possible. For example, using recycled crushed rock for unsealed laneways and footpaths and reuse asphalt by milling the existing asphalt surfaces into the new asphalt during road construction.
- Explore the use of recycled material in road construction to reduce the carbon footprint. For example, the Council collaborated with RMIT University to research low-carbon emission polymer road incorporating plastics, recycled tyres and fibre-reinforced asphalt.
- Perform a comprehensive life cycle analysis of the assets, establish the projected budget requirements, existing gap for the next decade of asset management and secure the necessary funding to meet these needs.

Future Commitment on New Initiatives:

- Increase Council staff's knowledge of the impacts of climate change on asset renewal demand.
- Conduct climate vulnerability assessments and financial risk modelling of Council's assets within the individual asset class plans, prioritising those in high-risk areas.

Relevance

What we have been doing and will continue to do:

- Investigate the use of the latest construction materials, methods, and technologies to extend asset lifespan. For example, introducing a primer layer in asphalt road construction helps to seal cracks and prevent water penetration into the pavement layer, significantly enhancing road durability.
- Provide asset maintenance and renewal funding in the Annual Budget and Financial Plan consistent with this Asset Plan.

Future Commitment on New Initiative:

- Investigate the use of latest construction materials, methods and technology to prolong the useful life of assets.

Safety

What we have been doing and will continue to do:

- Develop a risk-based building prioritisation matrix to identify high-risk projects and address the most critical renewal needs first.
- Include a detailed risk management plan within each individual asset management plans outlining the identified risks and the corresponding mitigation measures. This will also help to minimise insurance premiums and claims.
- Review and update the Road Management Plan (RMP) once every four years. Proactive inspections are conducted, work orders are raised, and maintenance is performed when defects exceed the intervention level. This process ensures Council's compliance with the RMP and supports the continued safety of road and footpath users.
- Maintain occupancy agreements with all tenants that clearly identify who is responsible for maintenance and renewal.

Future Commitment on New Initiative:

- Prioritise the provision of funding for legal compliance, renewal, maintenance and operation of existing assets in preference to financing new works or asset upgrades.



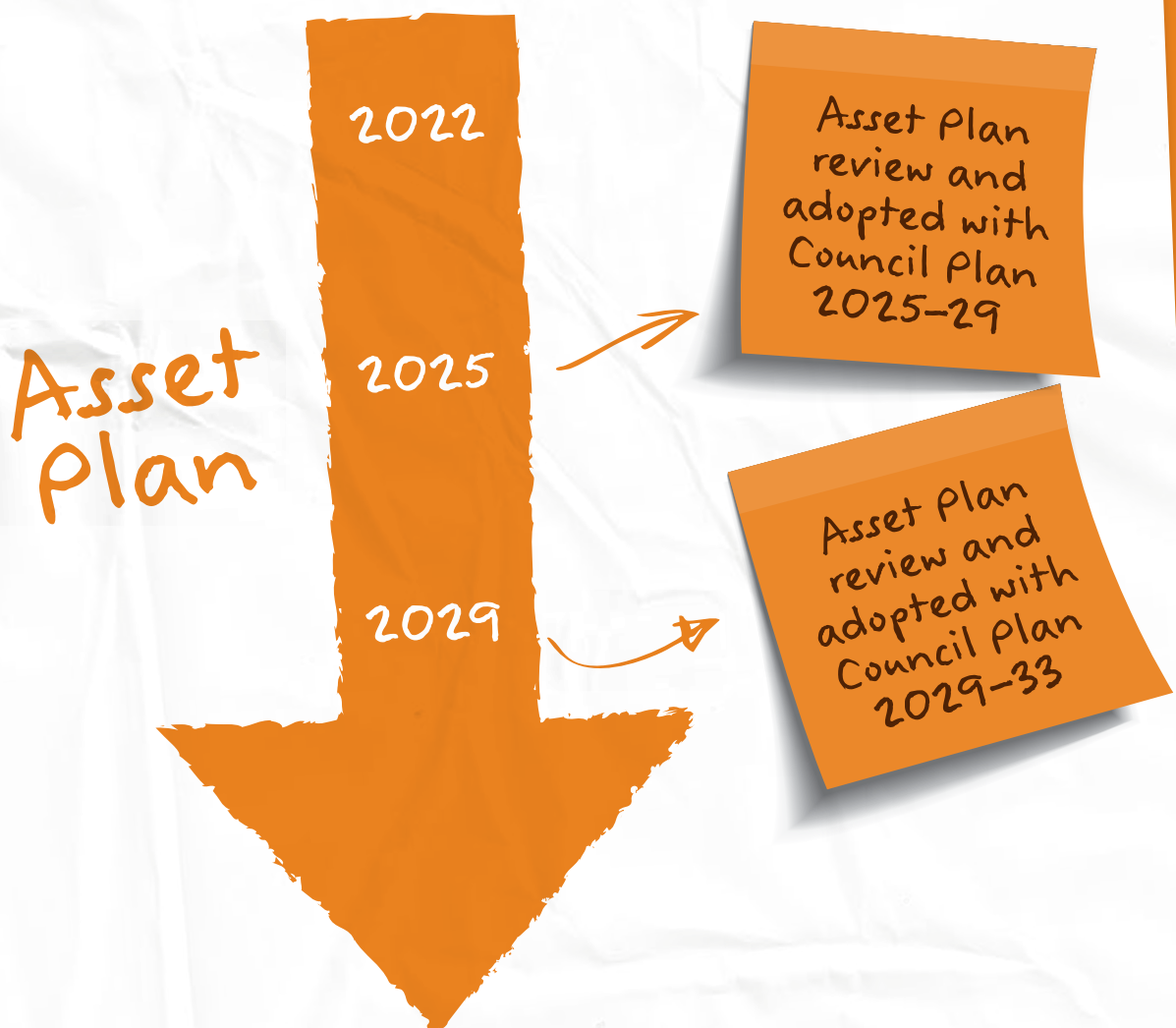
Asset Plan Review







The Asset Plan is a 10-year strategic document, reviewed every four years in alignment with Council election cycles. Future asset plans will continue to be reviewed and adopted alongside the Council Plan, with the next review scheduled for 2029.



The Asset Plan review will include consultation with the community, an update on asset data to ensure it reflects current conditions, and updated implementation actions.

Appendices





9.1.0.

Appendix 1

2025 state of assets report

2025 STATE OF ASSETS REPORT

Summary report on Council's major
infrastructure assets at 30 June 2025

Asset
Management

HOBSONS
BAY CITY
COUNCIL

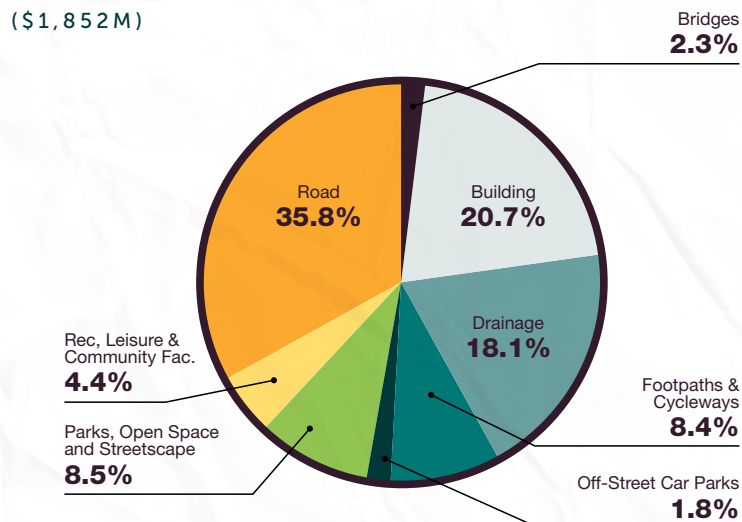


Infrastructure Asset Value

AS OF 30 JUNE 2025

Hobsons Bay Infrastructure Asset Value

(\$1,852 M)



Asset Type	Replacement Value	Asset Type	Replacement Value
Bridges	\$42,139,168	Off-Street Car Parks	\$33,578,355
Building	\$383,206,693	Parks, Open Space and Streetscape	\$157,523,596
Drainage	\$336,181,103	Rec, Leisure & Community Facilities	\$81,773,060
Footpaths & Cycleways	\$154,982,561	Road	\$663,526,984

Asset Management

02



STATE OF ASSETS Bridges

Bridges are all those structures carrying a road, pathway etc to provide safe access across waterways, roads or other obstacles.

Asset Quantity and Value

As shown in the table below, Council manages a total of 64 bridge structures within the municipality, with an estimated replacement value of approximately \$42 million as of 30 June 2025.

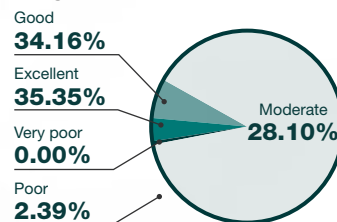
Asset Type	No.	Value
Boardwalk	9	\$822,436
Foot Bridge	41	\$14,491,126
Jetty	1	\$183,443
Road Bridge	13	\$26,642,163
Total	64	\$42,139,168

Asset Condition

A condition audit was completed in FY24/25 to capture the asset attribute information such as actual lengths, widths, square metres, material types, replacement values and condition of bridge and bridge components. The data will be used to inform the development of a long-term renewal works program.

The following chart presents the current overall condition of Council's bridges as of 30 June 2025, which is an average condition of all the individual components that make up each bridge such as foundations, deck, beams, railings etc.

Bridge Condition Chart



The majority of the bridges (97.61 per cent) are in excellent to moderate condition with only 2.39 per cent in poor condition.

Five years of renewal and maintenance programs have been developed to address all the poor bridge components. The priority renewal works will address risk and safety issues such as replacement of missing or damaged handrails, guards and timber decking.

Required Renewal Expenditure

The current backlog of poor condition bridge components is approximately \$1 million. \$200,000 is required per annum in order to eliminate the current backlog over the next 10 years and keep up with the annual rate of deterioration.

Recommended 10 Year Renewal Budget

It is recommended that for FY25/26 and beyond that \$200,000 per annum be allocated in the capital works program for the renewal of bridges in a timely manner.



STATE OF ASSETS Buildings

Council has a large building portfolio which comprises commercial premises, sports pavilions, libraries, kindergartens, community centres, public toilets, theatres and civic buildings.

Asset Quantity and Value

Building Name	Replacement Value (\$)	Area(m2)	No.
Children and family services	\$52,403,721	16,406	22
Community facility	\$91,783,340	20,750	34
Council administration	\$18,045,932	5,906	7
Council depot	\$4,203,004	3,344	16
Fitness centre	\$37,243,758	9,567	3
Garage storage	\$2,419,169	2,272	25
Library	\$22,182,761	4,951	4
Public toilet	\$8,573,830	1,715	37
Sporting pavilion	\$146,351,179	41,251	62
Grand Total	\$383,206,693	106,161	219

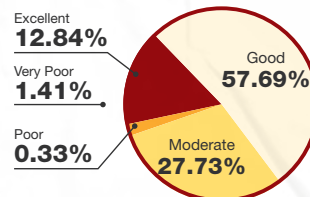


The replacement value of the building portfolio is approximately \$383 million as of 30 June 2025.

Asset Condition

A condition audit was completed in 2023 to determine the physical condition and remaining useful life of the building assets, with the data used to inform the development of a long-term renewal works program.

The chart below shows the overall condition of buildings as of 30 June 2025.



The majority of the buildings (98.26 per cent) are in excellent to moderate condition. The remaining 1.74 per cent of buildings are in poor and very poor condition and have been scheduled on the Draft Five Year Capital Works Program to be renewed.

Required Renewal Expenditure

Based on the current condition, the total renewal expenditure required is \$46 million for the next 10 years to address buildings and their components that are in poor and very condition and to keep up with the rate of deterioration.

Recommended 10 Year Renewal Budget

It is recommended that for FY25/26 and beyond that \$6 million per annum be allocated in the Draft 10-Year Capital Works Program for the renewal of buildings and their components as well as essential safety components.

STATE OF ASSETS Off-street car parks

Car parks service community facilities, sports reserves and public open space etc. Council's off-street car parks range from cement stabilised compacted crushed rock to formalised car park with asphalt surfacing.

Asset Quantity and Value

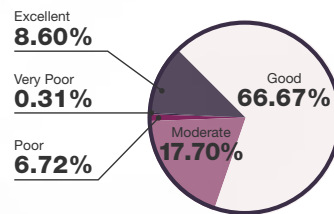
There are 130 off-street car parks in the municipality. The total replacement value of all off-street car parks is approximately \$32 million as of 30 June 2025.

Asset Type	Replacement Value (\$)	Length (m)	Area (m2)
Carpark Pavement	25,465,841		218,043
Carpark Surface	5,834,964		205,846
Carpark Kerb	2,277,549	19,440	
Grand Total	33,578,355	19,440	423,890

Asset Condition

A road and carpark asset audit was completed in 2024 to determine the physical condition and remaining useful life of the assets, with the data used to inform the development of a long-term renewal works program.

Carpark Condition as of 30 June 2025



92.97 per cent of off-street car parks are in excellent to moderate condition. 7.03 per cent of the off-street car parks are in poor and very poor condition and will be prioritised for renewal in the next five years.

Required Renewal Expenditure

The current backlog of poor condition car parks is approximately \$2.36 million. To eliminate the current backlog over the next 10 years and keep up with the annual rate of deterioration an amount of \$200,000 per annum is required.

Recommended 10 Year Renewal Budget

It is recommended that for FY25/26 and beyond that \$200,000 per annum be allocated in the Draft 10-Year Capital Works Program for the renewal of off-street carpark assets in a timely manner.



STATE OF ASSETS Drainage

The drainage assets within Hobsons Bay consists of stormwater pits and pipes, end walls, gross pollutant trap (GPT) and detention tank.

Asset Quantity and Value

Asset Type	Number	Length (m)	Area (sqm)	Replacement Value(\$)
Drainage pipes		597,602		279,376,946
Drainage pits	21,220			52,612,405
End walls	234			2,343,616
Garden beds			644	122,410
Gross pollutant traps	46			1,267,789
Trench		4		4,737
Water tank	8			453,200
Grand Total	21,508	597,606	644	336,181,103

The replacement value of drainage assets is approximately \$336 million as of 30 June 2025.

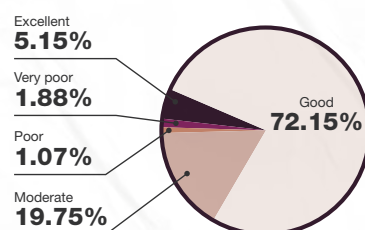


Asset Condition

A condition audit was completed in 2023 to determine the physical condition and remaining useful life of the drainage assets, with the data used to inform the development of a long-term renewal works program.

The following chart presents the overall condition of drainage asset as of 30 June 2025.

Drainage Condition Chart



The majority of the drainage assets (97.05%) are in excellent to moderate condition. A small proportion of about 2.95 per cent of assets are in poor and very poor condition. These poor condition assets have been planned for renewal within the next five years.

Required Renewal Expenditure

The required expenditure to address the current backlog of renewal works over the next 10 years is approximately \$9.93 million. To eliminate the current backlog over the next ten years and keep up with the annual rate of deterioration, an amount of \$1.1 million per annum is required.

Recommended 10 Year Renewal Budget

It is recommended from FY25/26 that \$1.1 million be allocated in the Draft Five Year Capital Works Program for the renewal of drainage assets.

STATE OF ASSETS Footpaths

Council has a program to renew footpath and shared trails that are in poor condition. The majority of existing footpaths and shared trails are either concrete or asphalt.

Asset Quantity and Value

Council has a large network of 781 km of existing footpaths and shared trails with a replacement value of approximately \$155 million as of 30 June 2025.

Footpath	Area (Sqm)	Replacement Value (\$)
Footpath	117,336,283	1,046,603
Pathway	23,540,906	188,536
Shared Trail (>2.5m wide)	14,105,372	133,659
Grand Total	154,982,561	1,368,798



**Asset
Management**

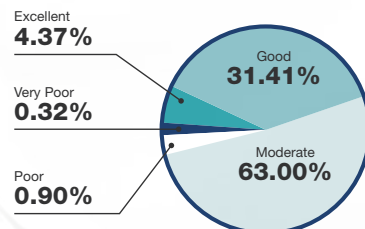


Asset Condition

A condition audit was completed in FY24/25 to determine the physical condition and remaining useful life of the building assets, with the data used to inform the development of a long-term renewal works program

The following chart shows the current condition of footpath as of 30 June 2025.

Footpath Asset Condition Chart 2025



The majority of footpaths and shared trails (98.78 per cent) are in excellent to moderate condition. The remaining 1.22 percent of assets are in poor and very poor conditions and have been scheduled in the Draft Five Year Capital Works Program to be renewed.

Required Renewal Expenditure

The current backlog of poor and very poor condition footpaths and shared trails is approximately \$2 million. The required expenditure to address backlog and rate of deterioration is \$12 million in the next 10 years.

Recommended 10 Year Renewal Budget

It is recommended that for FY25/26 and beyond that \$1.2 million per annum be allocated in the Draft 10-Year Capital Works Program for the renewal of footpaths in a timely manner in order to provide the required level of service to the community.

07

STATE OF ASSETS Open space & recreation

The portfolio of open space and recreation assets includes Parks, Open Spaces and Streetscape & Recreation Leisure and Community facility.

The table below shows the assets that have been included:

Asset Quantity and Value

Parks, Open Space, and Streetscape

Asset Type	Area (m2)	Length (m)	No.	Replacement Value (\$)
Access points	1,512			334,045
Art installations			1	67,500
Automated gates			3	15,000
BBQs			45	591,450
Bicycle racks			537	408,775
Bollard fence			2,707	580,675
Bollards			2,440	572,655
Cage			11	73,200
Charging point			15	720,000
Christmas decorations			134	316,400
Controllers			118	725,700
Dog agility equipment			10	16,700
Dog bag dispenser			68	20,400
Drinking fountains			163	880,300
Edging		20,157		1,108,652
Exercise equipment			62	390,050
Fences		140,565		23,379,119
Fences (area)	2,035			122,094
Fish cleaning station			3	20,250
Flag pole			83	253,150
Garden beds	317,563			10,797,154
Gas testing bore			30	153,000
Gates			1,156	2,997,010
Irrigation line		40,681		2,644,283
Irrigation pipes		5,236		46,491
Luminaire			940	5,655,890



Asset Type	Area (m2)	Length (m)	No.	Replacement Value (\$)
Ornamental fountain			6	18,000
Park furniture			629	923,550
Parking meters			42	728,700
Picnic setting			326	1,726,675
Plaque			261	182,700
Playgrounds - equipment			813	8,671,825
Poles			4,491	1,190,115
Ponds & lakes	300			287,578
Raised planter			125	162,975
Ramps	1,552			310,010
Retaining walls	2,298			1,321,252
Root cells	353			86,497
Seats			1,616	5,296,365
Shelters	4,982			3,458,993
Shelters (each)			20	206,400
Sign panel	3,836			3,633,263
Specialised equipment			2	11,100
Stairs	995			624,490
Switchboard			18	227,850
Valves			310	916,200
Viewing area	1,111			231,536
Wall	976			628,120
Water barrier structure	24,910			72,696,561
Water tank			65	1,065,600
Water tap			91	27,300
Total				157,523,596

STATE OF ASSETS Open space & recreation

Recreation, Leisure, and Community facility

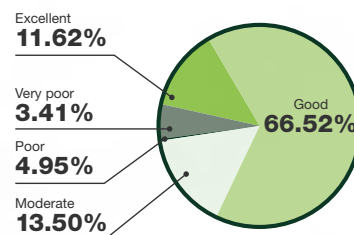
Asset Type	Area (m2)	Length (m)	No.	Replacement Value (\$)
Access points	555			1,110,640
Athletics fields	19,794			3,071,393
BMX park	4,978			572,445
Cricket nets	7,121			1,851,564
Cricket wicket	11,101			832,357
Floodlight pole		467		9,969,300
Gates			10	14,600
Goal posts and rings			173	674,400
Half court	3,837			651,883
Luminaire			1,006	2,766,500
Pontoons	1,012			3,341,052
Scoreboards			18	174,300
Seats			14	128,800
Shelters (each)			118	1,861,800
Skate park	3,258			2,525,190
Sports court	11,744			2,236,057
Sportsgrounds	853,573			44,297,334
Tennis enclosures	28,612			5,677,845
Valves			6	15,600
Total				81,773,060
Grand Total				239,296,656

The replacement value of open space and recreation assets is estimated to be \$239 million as of 30 June 2025. This value does not include trees. The \$239 million includes the replacement value of approximately \$157 million of the parks, open space, and streetscape category and approximately \$82 million of the recreation, leisure and community facility category as recorded in Council's asset management system.

Asset Condition

A condition audit was completed in 2022 to determine the physical condition and remaining useful life of the open space and recreation assets, with the data used to inform the development of a long-term renewal works program.

The following chart presents the open space and recreation asset condition as of 30 June 2025.



The majority of open space and recreation assets (91.64 per cent) are in excellent to moderate condition. The remaining 8.36 per cent of assets are in poor and very poor condition and have been scheduled on the Draft Five Year Capital Works Program to be renewed or replaced.

Required Renewal Expenditure

The required expenditure to renew the poor and very condition open space and recreation assets in a timely manner is approximately \$29 million over the next 10 years which includes the rate of deterioration.

Recommended 10 Year Renewal Budget

It is recommended that \$2.9 million per year be allocated in FY25/26 and Draft 10-Year Capital Works Program to renew poor and very poor condition open space and recreation assets.



STATE OF ASSETS Roads

Road assets are all those roads owned by Council and have been declared as public roads on the road register. Sealed roads are those that have a bituminous, concrete or paver surface to them. Unsealed roads have a gravel or unformed surface.

Condition inspection for roads is done every four years while defect inspections are carried out in accordance with the Road Management Plan.

Asset Quantity and Value

Road assets are broken up into Access, Collector and Link roads with the subgroups of Pavement, Surface and Kerb and Channel. Council maintains a large network of 442 km of road. The replacement value of the road assets is approximately \$663 million as of 30 June 2025.

Class	Length km
Access	379
Collector	48
Link	15
Total	442

Asset Type	Length (m)	Area (m2)	Number of	Replacement Value (\$)
Pavement	3,490,975			414,280,253
Surface	3,405,374			111,531,091
Kerb & channel		822,064		121,575,650
Traffic islands	32,212			7,454,783
Thresholds	12,501			3,903,403
Traffic calming			1,299	2,670,455
Pedestrian crossing	5,978			2,090,351
Traffic calming apron	114			20,998
				663,526,984

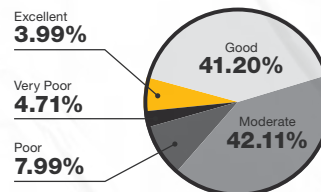


Asset Management

Asset Condition

A condition audit was completed in 2024 to determine the physical condition and remaining useful life of the road and carpark assets, with the data used to inform the development of a long-term renewal works program. The following chart shows the overall condition of road assets as of 30 June 2025.

Road Condition Chart



The majority of road assets (87.3 per cent) are in excellent to average condition. The remaining 12.7 per cent of assets are in very poor and poor condition and have been scheduled in the Draft 10-Year Capital Works Program to be renewed.

Required Renewal Expenditure

The current backlog of poor condition road assets based on condition as of 30 June 2024 is approximately \$84 million. In order to reduce the current backlog over the next 10 years and keep up with the annual rate of deterioration, an amount of \$15 million per annum is required.

Recommended 10 Year Renewal Budget


It is recommended that for FY25/26 and beyond that \$15 million per annum be allocated in the Draft 10-Year Capital Works Program for the renewal of road assets in a timely manner to provide the required level of service to the community.


**HOBSONS
BAY CITY
COUNCIL**



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 www.facebook.com/HobsonsBayCityCouncil



**HOBSONS BAY
LANGUAGE LINE**

9932 1212

INTERPRETER SERVICE FOR ALL LANGUAGES

Your Council in your language

Telephone interpreting service

Arabic	خدمة الترجمة الهاتفية
Burmese	တယ်လီဖုန်းဖြင့် စကားပြန် ဝန်ဆောင်မှု
Cantonese	电话口译服务
Croatian	Telefonska služba tumača
Greek	Τηλεφωνική Υπηρεσία Διερμηνέων
Italian	Servizio telefonico interpreti
Karen	လိတမ် တာကတီးကျီးတာ တာဗာ
Macedonian	Телефонска преведувачка служба
Maltese	Servizz ta' Interpretar bił-Telefon
Mandarin	电话口译服务
Vietnamese	Dịch vụ Thông dịch qua Điện thoại

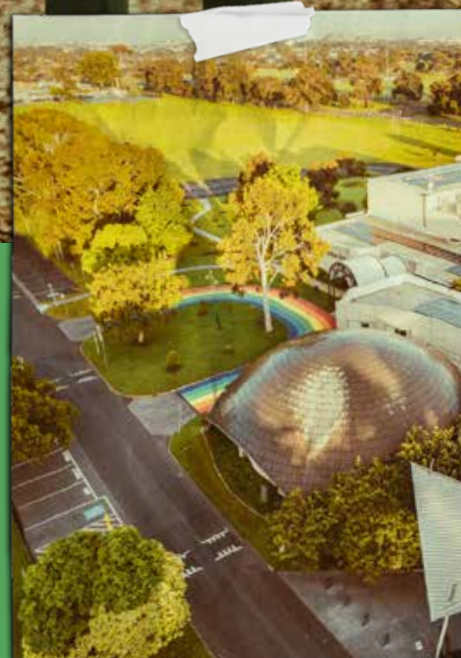
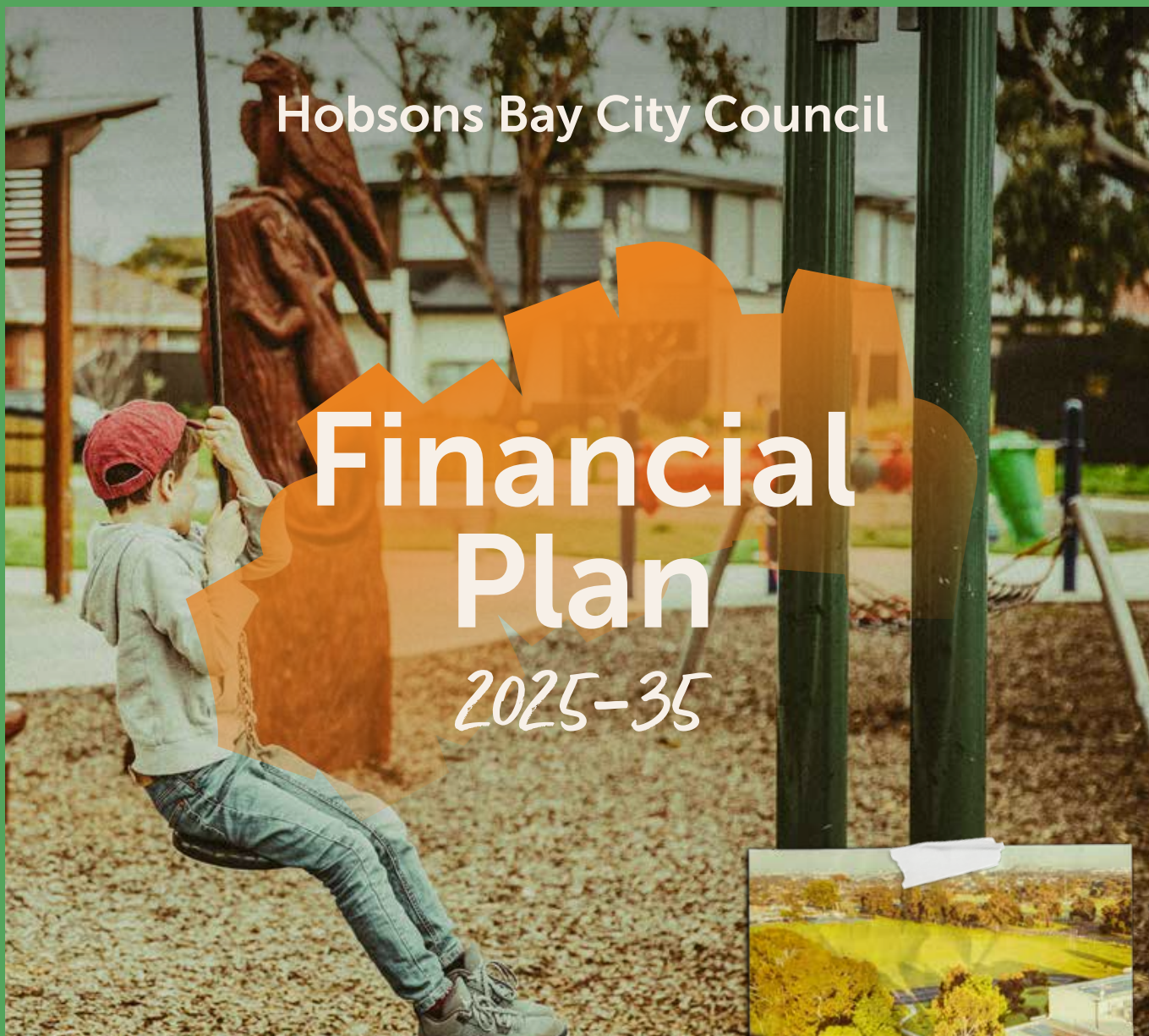


For further information regarding
this plan please contact the
Community and Council Plan
development team at
cp@hobsonsbay.vic.gov.au

Hobsons Bay City Council

Financial Plan

2025-35



**HOBSONS
BAY CITY
COUNCIL**



Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the
Bunurong People of the
Kulin Nation as the
Traditional Owners of the
lands, rivers and coastal
areas in Hobsons Bay. We
recognise the First Nations
peoples' relationship to
this land and offer our
respect to their Elders
past and present.







How to read this plan

The Financial Plan 2025-35 should be read alongside the Hobsons Bay Council Plan 2025-29 and Health, Safety and Wellbeing Plan, and in context of the Asset Plan 2025-35. Together, these plans detail how Council will work towards the community aspirations outlined in Community Vision 2040.



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3. Legislative requirements	18
4. Key objectives underpinning the financial plan	24
5. Financial Plan context	30
6. Financial Plan statements	58
7. Financial performance indicators	92
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Introduction





1.1.0.

Financial Plan purpose

The development and implementation of the Financial Plan 2025–35 ('the plan') supports Council's commitment to a well planned and governed organisation that works towards the realisation of the Community Vision 2040.

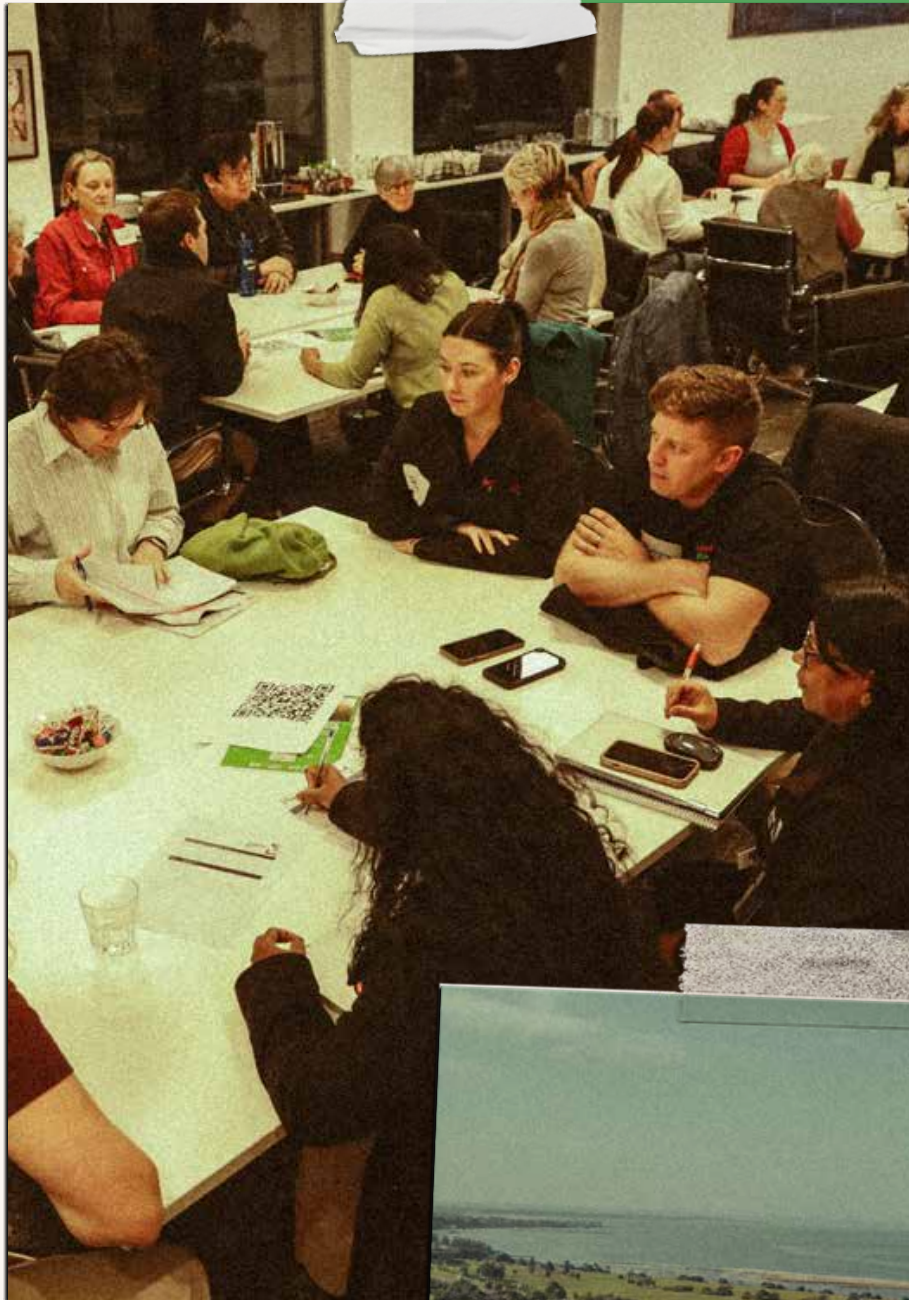
The plan outlines the financial considerations and strategic outcomes for the organisation to deliver outcomes for a healthy community, sustainable environment, liveable city and accountable council, as themed in the DRAFT Council Plan 2025–29.

This plan works within a strategic context and to the legislative requirements of the *Local Government Act 2020*.



Strategic Context





2.1.0.

The integrated planning and reporting framework

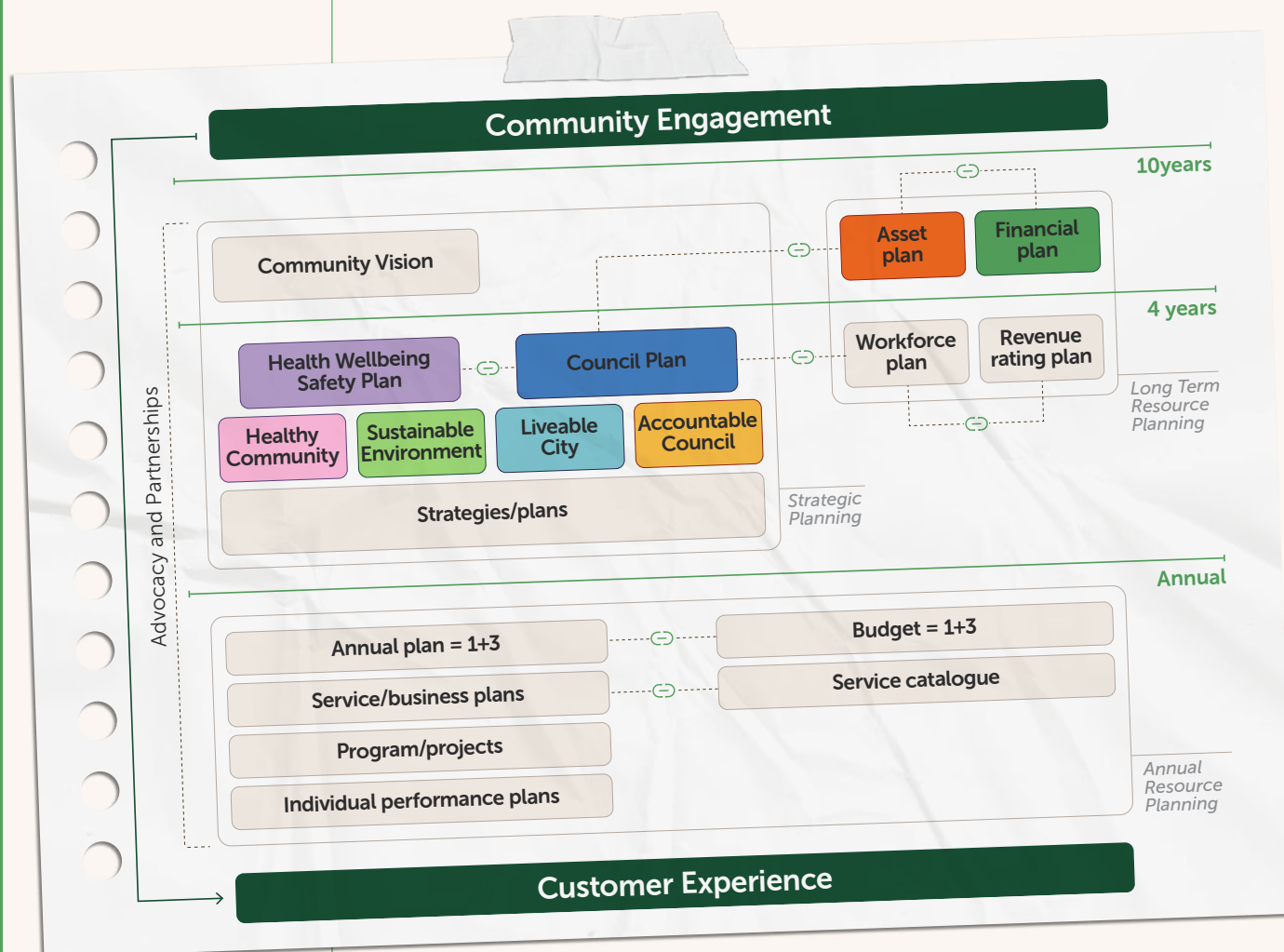


Image: Hobsons Bay Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework 2025-29

The Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework provides the strategic direction and activities required to ensure Council's work is informed, well considered, and aligned across the diversity of responsibilities and services we offer the community. In line with our commitment to strong governance, the framework sets the systems and processes to ensure decision making – both day-to-day and in the Council chamber – deliver the best outcomes for our community. The financial plan aligns with other key strategic documents – the DRAFT Council Plan 2025-29, Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-29, and the Asset Plan 2025-35.

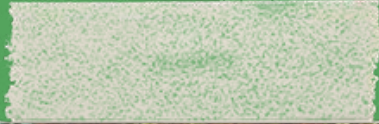
2.2.0.

Strategic planning principles

The financial plan provides a 10-year financially sustainable projection about how the actions of the Council Plan may be funded to achieve the Community Vision.

This plan is developed in the context of the following strategic planning principles:

1. Council has an integrated approach to planning, monitoring and performance reporting.
2. The plan addresses the Community Vision by funding the aspirations of the Council Plan. The Council Plan aspirations and actions are formulated in the context of the Community Vision.
3. The plan statements articulate the 10-year financial resources necessary to implement the goals and aspirations of the Council Plan to achieve the Community Vision.
4. Council's strategic planning principles identify and address the risks to effective implementation of the plan. The financial risks are included at section 3.2.
5. The plan provides for the strategic planning principles to monitor progress of progress monitoring and regular reviews to identify and adapt to changing circumstances.



2.3.0.

Hobsons Bay Community Vision 2040

Hobsons Bay Community Vision 2040 captures the community's aspirations for the future of Hobsons Bay. This vision is translated into the Council Plan that guides Council's work over the following four years. The Financial Plan is closely aligned with the Council Plan and sets out how delivery of both the Council Plan and the Community Vision will be resourced.

"By 2040 we are a safe, sustainable and healthy community supported by an accountable, efficient and transparent Council."

Priorities to achieve Vision

1. Sustainable, safe and accessible urban planning
2. Building community wellbeing by engaging with all residents of Hobsons Bay
3. Increased access to local jobs and education
4. Continuous improvement and conservation of the natural environment
5. Maintain and expand sustainable practices
6. Better and more accessible transport options

2.4.0.

Key related strategic documents

In addition to supporting the delivery of the Community Vision through the actions outlined in the Council Plan and Health, Wellbeing and Safety Plan, this plan has implications on other resource plans:

2.4.1.

Asset Plan

Integration with the Asset Plan is a key principle of the Council's strategic financial planning principles. The purpose of this integration is designed to ensure that future funding is allocated in a manner that supports service delivery in terms of the plans and the effective management of Council's assets into the future.

The Asset Plan identifies the operational and strategic practices that will ensure Council manages assets across their life cycle in a financially sustainable manner. The Asset Plan, and associated asset management policies, provide Council with a sound base to understand the risk associated with managing its assets for the community's benefit.

The Asset Plan is designed to inform the 10-year financial plan by identifying the amount of capital renewal, backlog and maintenance funding that is required over the life of each asset category. The level of funding will incorporate knowledge of asset condition, risk assessment issues, as well as the impact of reviewing and setting intervention and service levels for each asset class.

The Asset Plan also quantifies the asset portfolio and the financial implications of those practices. Together, the financial and asset plans seek to balance projected investment requirements against projected budgets.

2.4.2.

Revenue and Rating Plan

Integration to the Revenue and Rating Plan is a key principle of the Council's strategic financial principles. The purpose of this integration is to ensure that Council's revenue is raised from the community in a manner that supports Council's longer term financial plans and broader plans as set out in the Council Vision.

The revenue raised by a local government is for delivering services and infrastructure that benefit those providing the revenue – the local community. The Revenue and Rating Plan is therefore linked to planned expenditure in the annual budget and strategic financial planning. They cannot be separated as any increase in spending by a council must be matched by revenue. The Revenue and Rating Plan provides the framework for the setting of fees and charges, statutory charges, rates, and other Council income sources. It also makes assumptions regarding the levels of non-controlled revenues that Council expects to generate over the four-year period, such as grants, subsidies, and contributions.

Additionally, it defines the amounts of rates to be generated either through a uniform rate, or from different ratepayer/property classes through municipal charges, differential rates, service rates and charges, and special rates and charges (where they have been adopted).

The Revenue and Rating Plan therefore defines what each source of revenue is, how income will be raised, and the policy rationale/assumptions for each, to fund Council's proposed expenditure detailed in its budget.

Legislative Requirements





3.1.0.

Community engagement

Local Government Act 2020 requires councils to undertake deliberative engagement when reviewing the financial plan.

In 2025, as part of the development of Council Plan and Community Vision, Council developed a program of deliberative engagement including three community representative workshops.

A total of 35 participants joined the first workshop where financial management was included as part of the workshop.

During the financial management session, participants were provided with an overview of Council's current approach to financial management, and the challenges and opportunities facing Council

over the next 10 years. The session aimed to build a shared understanding of how Council manages its finances, and the importance of balancing investment, risk and community need.

The community engagement results are summarised in the deliberative engagement report [<add link>](#).

3.2.0.

Financial management principles

Council must comply with sound financial management principles under the *Local Government Act 2020*, with particular adherence to “promote social, economic and environmental viability and sustainability of the municipal district” (Section 9(2)(c) and “maintaining the ongoing financial viability of Council” (Section 9(2)(g)).

The financial plan demonstrates the following financial management principles:

- Revenue, expenses, assets, liabilities, investments and financial transactions are managed in accordance with Council’s financial policies and strategic plans.
- Council maintains accounts and records that explain its financial operations and financial position (refer section 6: Financial Statements)
- Financial policies and strategic plans are designed to provide financial stability and predictability to the community.
- Management of the following financial risks:
 - » Council’s financial viability (refer to section 5.1 Financial Policy Statements).
 - » The management of Council’s current and future liabilities. The estimated 10-year liabilities are disclosed in section 6.2: Balance Sheet projections.
 - » The beneficial enterprises of Council (where appropriate).

3.3.0.

Service performance principles

Council services are designed to be purposeful, targeted to community needs and value for money.

The service performance principles are:

1. Services are provided in an equitable manner and are responsive to the diverse needs of the community. Council Plan is designed to identify the key services and projects to be delivered to the community. The financial plan provides the mechanism to demonstrate how the service aspirations within Council Plan may be funded.
2. Services are accessible to the relevant users within the community.
3. Council provides quality services that provide value for money to the community. The Local Government Performance Reporting Framework is designed to communicate Council's performance regarding the provision of quality and efficient services.
4. Council is developing a performance monitoring framework to continuously improve its service delivery standards.
5. Council is developing a service delivery framework that considers and responds to community feedback and complaints regards service provision.



Key Objectives





4.1.0.

Key objectives underpinning the financial plan

The following six key objectives have been determined to further develop Financial Plan 2025–35:

4.1.1.

Financial sustainability

Objective

Hobsons Bay City Council will be a financially sustainable organisation in the short and long term with the ability to ensure that affordable good quality services and well-maintained facilities and infrastructure are available to the community now and into the future.

What is it and why is it important?

Council's long-term financial performance and position is sustainable where planned long-term service and infrastructure levels and standards are met without unplanned increases in rates or disruptive cuts to services.

The financial plan should assist to ensure financial sustainability by providing a long-term outlook in relation to Council's financial performance and position, cash and equity levels, as well as other key financial performance indicators. These measures should then be monitored and evaluated on an ongoing basis.

4.1.2.

Comprehensive financial inclusion

Objective

The financial and inter-generational implications associated with all of Council's services, policies, strategies, acquisitions and initiatives are available holistically and transparently to Council and the community of Hobsons Bay, now and in the future.

What is it and why is it important?

The financial implications of all decisions and strategies adopted by Council should be included within and aligned to the financial plan. This will lead to a more effective financial plan, with more accurate financial predictions based on Council decisions, rather than general assumptions based on current financial results.

4.1.3.

Informed decision making

Objective

Through informed modelling, financial analysis and evaluation, this plan will be used by Council as a central decision-making tool to accompany social and ecological considerations.

What is it and why is it important?

The financial plan should be used by Council to assist in the decision-making process with all financial implications modelled within it. This will allow the financial implications of every decision, policy or strategy to be considered in relation to the entire entity, rather than in isolation.

4.1.4.

Contained operational expenditure

Objective

Council will ensure its long-term success through regular evaluation and adjustment of services, priorities and programs to determine the most appropriate and efficient allocation of affordable funding provided to the community.

What is it and why is it important?

Future expenditure levels within the financial plan should be based on the range and level of services provided to the community that are most appropriate to be provided directly by Council. Due to the significant cost pressures on local government these levels should be reviewed on an ongoing basis to ensure that adequate funding is available for capital works.

4.1.5.

Exploration of all funding sources

Objective

Council will relieve its dependence on rates by becoming financially self-reliant through prioritised pursuit of 'own source revenue' opportunities. All funding sources will be considered to ensure decisions are made, and actions are taken having regard to their financial effects on future generations.

What is it and why is it important?

Council should investigate further generation of 'own source revenue' by exploring alternative revenue streams outside of rates and grants. Additional revenue can then be used to provide further services or infrastructure to the community. Alternative revenue streams should reduce Council's high reliance on rate revenue, which is currently approximately 80 per cent and one of the highest in the state.

4.1.6.

Provision of community infrastructure

Objective

Sufficient yet affordable funding is available to develop and maintain new and existing community infrastructure to service levels deemed acceptable by Council and the community of Hobsons Bay.

What is it and why is it important?

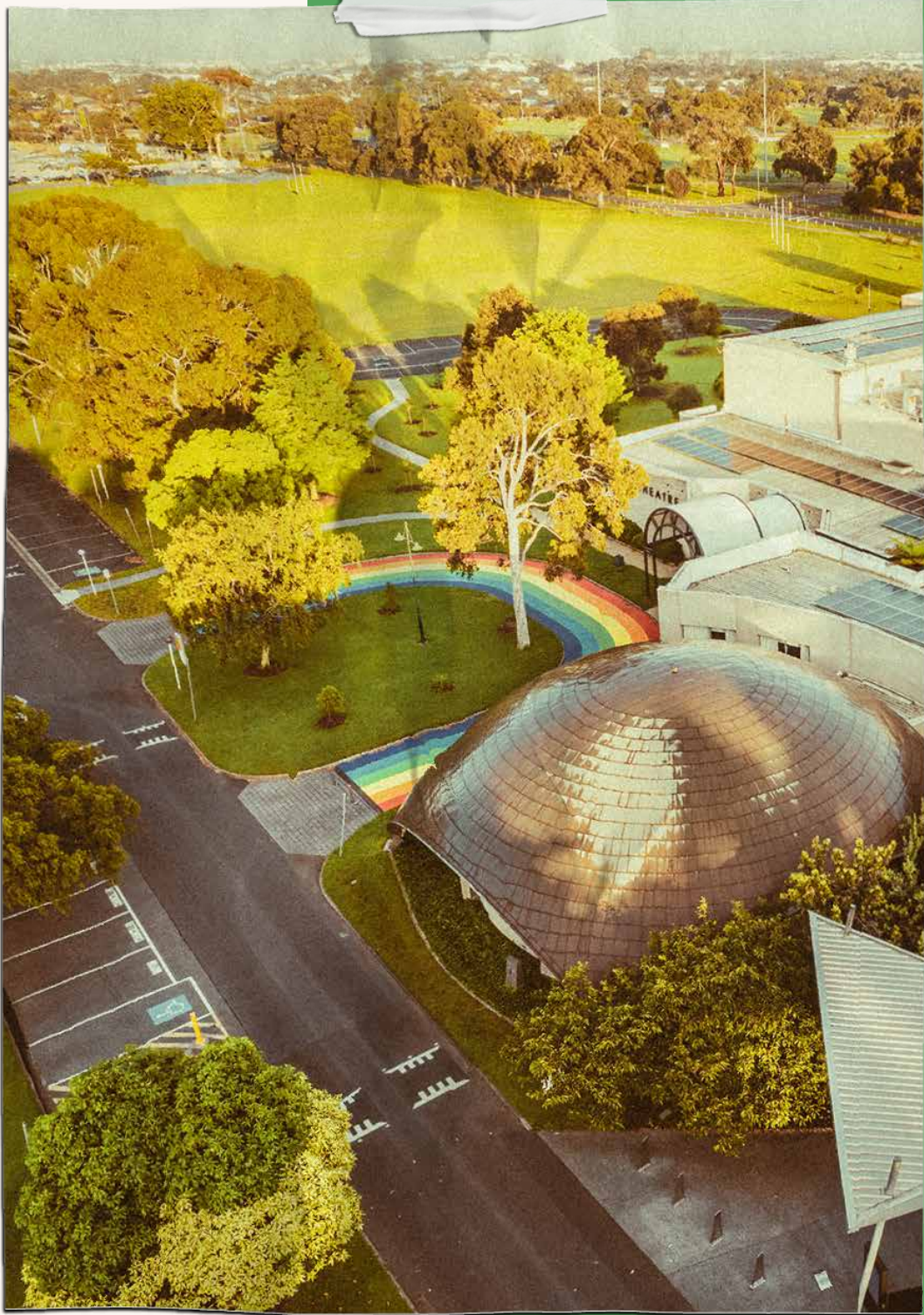
The provision of community infrastructure relates to the renewal of existing assets and the delivery of new and upgraded community infrastructure. This should not be limited to Council's own assets, rather the provision of community infrastructure should consider a number of different models to develop a capital works program that meets the growing needs of the community.

The renewal of existing assets should be the priority to reduce the infrastructure gap, while community expectations should also be balanced against affordability.



Financial Plan Context

05



5.1.0.

Financial policy statements

This section describes the context, and the external and internal environments and considerations in determining the 10-year financial projections and assumptions.

This section defines the policy statements and associated measures that demonstrate Council's financial sustainability to fund the aspirations of the Community Vision and Council Plan.

The seven financial indicators used by the Victorian Auditor-General's Office (VAGO) to assess councils' financial sustainability risks have all been included as measures. Other measures, determined by Council have also been included and all are linked to the various policy statements. The measures will be used to assess Council's financial performance, capital works or financial position. The indicators should be considered collectively and are more useful when assessed over time as part of a trend analysis.

Policy Statement Financial Performance

1. Achieve strong operational surpluses to ensure that there is adequate funding available for current and future capital works as well as other ongoing and future commitments.

Measure: Net Result Margin greater than 0% to achieve a low VAGO financial sustainability risk rating

Target: > 0%

2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2029/30	2030/31	2031/32	2032/33	2033/34	2034/35	2035/36
12.1%	8.5%	6.7%	9.5%	5.1%	4.4%	3.7%	2.8%	1.4%	0.9%	0.0%

Measure: Adjusted Underlying Result greater than 5% to achieve a low VAGO financial

Target: > 5%

2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2029/30	2030/31	2031/32	2032/33	2033/34	2034/35	2035/36
10.3%	3.6%	5.1%	5.3%	4.8%	4.4%	3.6%	2.8%	1.4%	0.8%	0.0%

2. Consider all funding source to reduce the high dependence on rates and become more financially self-reliant by prioritised pursuit of own source revenue opportunities.

Measure: Rates Revenue Ratio less than 80%

Target: > 80%

2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2029/30	2030/31	2031/32	2032/33	2033/34	2034/35	2035/36
74.1%	79.4%	82.1%	80.5%	83.8%	84.0%	83.9%	83.9%	83.9%	83.9%	83.9%

3. Manage employee labour costs at an appropriate percentage of operating revenue.

Measure: Labour Utilisation Ratio (Revenue) less than 43%

Target: > 40%

2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2029/30	2030/31	2031/32	2032/33	2033/34	2034/35	2035/36
33.5%	36.2%	37.5%	36.8%	39.1%	39.7%	40.3%	40.8%	41.5%	42.1%	42.7%

The net result margin (VAGO) measures the net result of Council as a percent of revenue.

It is calculated by:

$$\frac{\text{Net result}}{\text{Total income}}$$

The adjusted underlying result (VAGO) measures an entity's ability to generate surpluses in the ordinary course of business – excluding non-recurrent capital grants, non-monetary asset contributions, and other contributions to fund capital expenditure from net result. A surplus or increasing surplus suggests an improvement in the operating position.

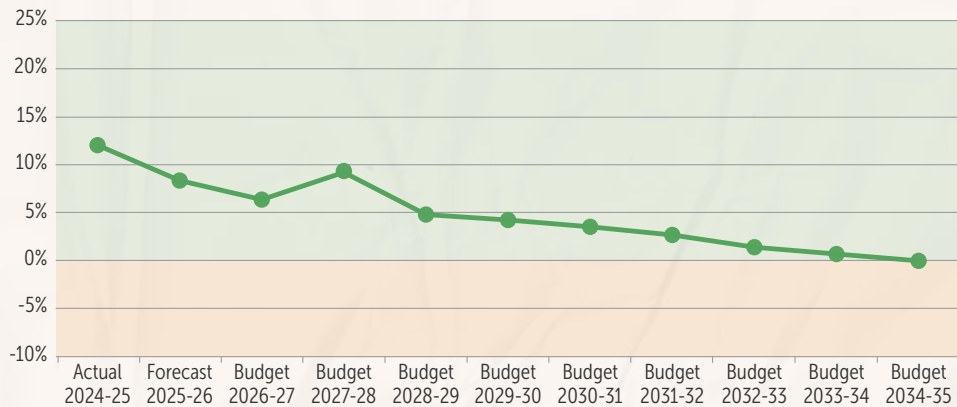
It is calculated by:

$$\frac{\text{Adjusted underlying surplus (or deficit)}}{\text{Adjusted underlying revenue}}$$

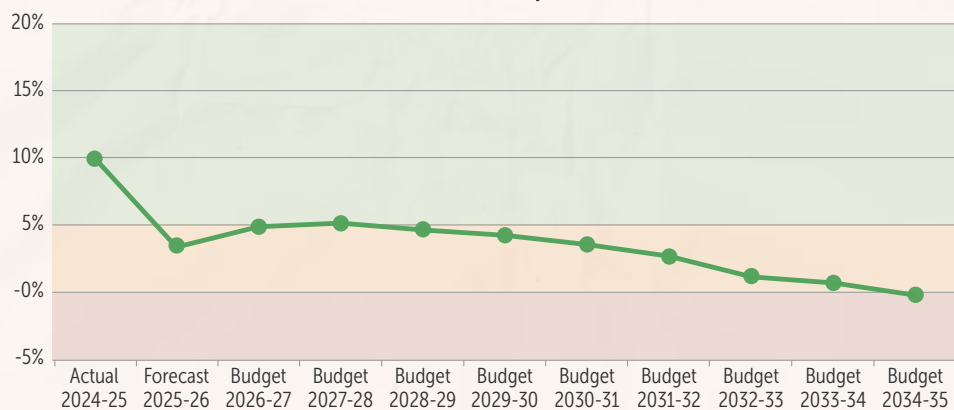
The table on the previous page and graphs below indicate that Council's low VAGO financial sustainability risk ratings in relation to its net result margin and adjusted underlying result are projected to decline over the duration of this plan. This is consistent with projections that Council's operational surpluses are declining. The declining trend increases the risk of ensuring there is adequate funding available for ongoing and future commitments, including the capital works program.

Council will need to closely monitor the trends of these indicators, as the results start to decline, moving into medium risk categories.

Net Result Margin (VA60)



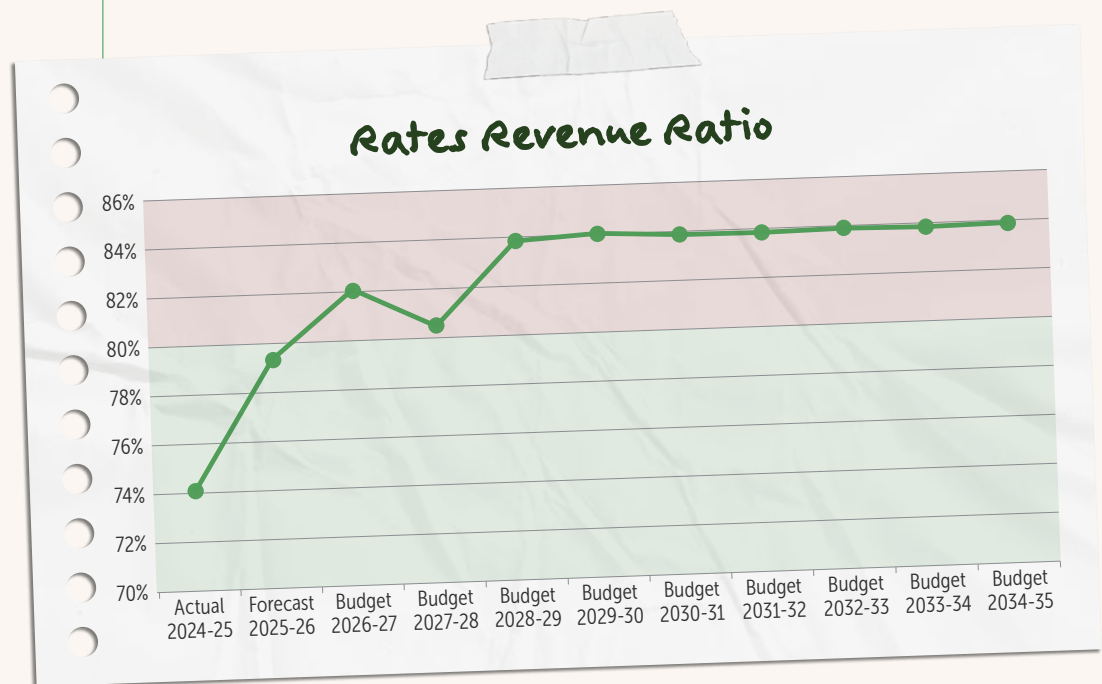
Adjust Underlying Results (VA60)



The rates revenue ratio indicates Council's ability to generate rates and its dependence on rates, when compared to total revenue.

It is calculated by:
$$\frac{\text{Rates and charges}}{\text{Total operating income}}$$

The table on the previous page and graphs below indicate that Council will not achieve its targets in relation to its revenue ratio. Current projections indicate that Council will not reduce its current high dependence on rates and will not become more financially self-reliant by prioritised pursuit of other revenue sources and opportunities outside of rates.

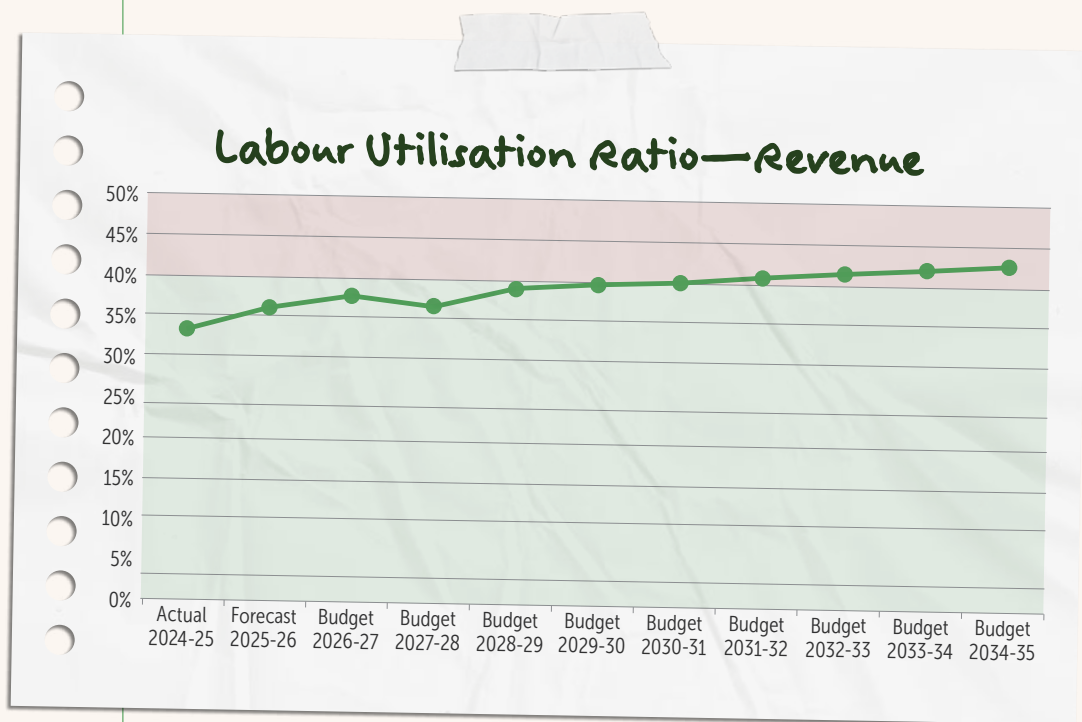


The labour utilisation ratio – revenue provides an overview of the organisation's expenditure on internal labour as a proportion of total revenue. It is used to monitor and manage affordable internal employee costs and indicates the Council's sensitivity to changes in income.

It is calculated by:
$$\frac{\text{Employee costs}}{\text{Total income}}$$

The table on the previous page and the graph below indicate a trend where Council will not continue to achieve its targets in relation to its labour utilisation ratio - revenue. Current projections indicate that Council will not achieve its aim of managing employee labour costs at an appropriate percentage of operating revenue.

The labour utilisation ratio (revenue) will need to be closely monitored as the trend indicates that the results will start to decline. The projected decline is a result of employee cost being predicted to increase at a greater rate than revenue. Employee cost predictions are based on assumed (yet to be determined) future enterprise agreement increases. Increases in WorkCover premiums and the superannuation guarantee have also impacted this ratio over previous years.



4. Ensure enough cash is being generated from operations to fund new assets.

Measure: Internal Financing greater than 100% to achieve a low VAGO financial sustainability risk rating

Target: > 100%

2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2029/30	2030/31	2031/32	2032/33	2033/34	2034/35	2035/36
116.4%	94.7%	119.8%	112.9%	120.7%	123.2%	111.0%	110.2%	107.0%	107.3%	106.3%

5. Ensure sufficient spending on asset renewal and Council's asset base.

Measure: Capital replacement greater than 150% to achieve a low VAGO financial sustainability risk rating

Target: > 150%

2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2029/30	2030/31	2031/32	2032/33	2033/34	2034/35	2035/36
137.1%	173.8%	123.0%	143.5%	113.0%	108.0%	113.5%	110.8%	108.1%	105.4%	102.9%

Renewal Gap greater than 100% to achieve a low VAGO financial sustainability risk rating

Target: > 100%

2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2029/30	2030/31	2031/32	2032/33	2033/34	2034/35	2035/36
130.7%	140.0%	110.7%	109.6%	109.4%	104.4%	110.0%	107.4%	104.7%	102.2%	99.7%

Internal financing (VAGO) measures the ability of an entity to finance capital works from generated cashflow. The higher the percentage, the greater the ability for the entity to finance capital works from their own funds.

This ratio is about affordability. Can Council afford its capital works program, based on its ability to generate cashflow?

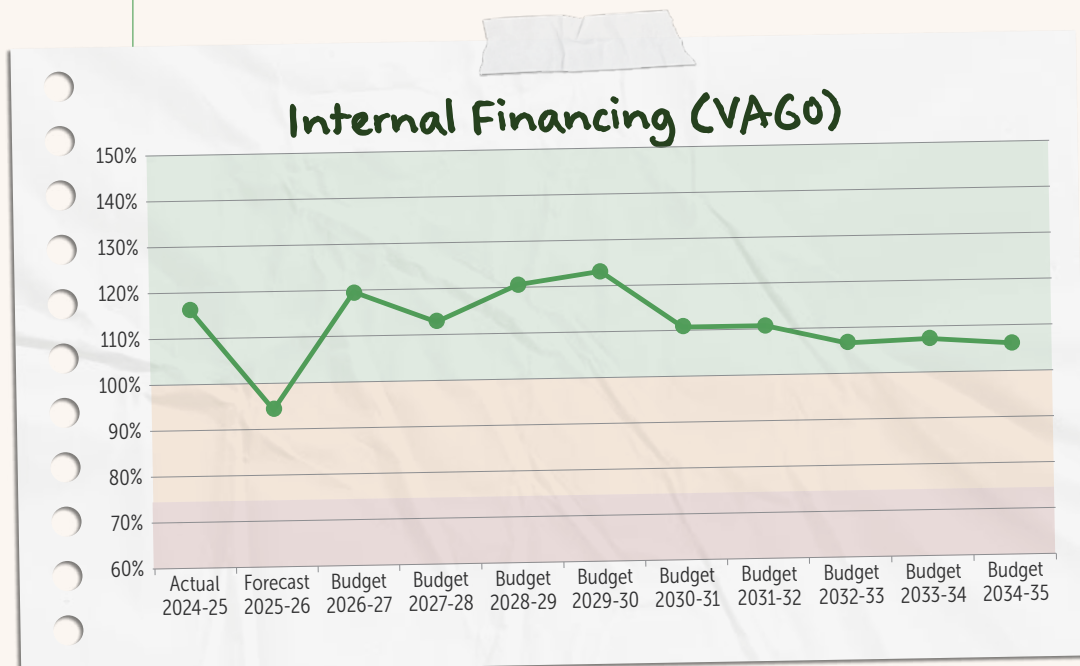
It is calculated by:

Net operating cashflow

Net capital expenditure

The table above and the graph below indicate that Council will achieve its target to have low VAGO financial sustainability risk ratings in relation to internal financing from 2026–27. Future capital works programs have been set, based upon financial affordability, rather than capital works requirements, or community expectations.

The medium risk rating in 2025–26 is caused by the significant carried over capital expenditure required to complete the 2024–25 capital works program.



Capital replacement (VAGO) compares the rate of spending on new infrastructure, property, plant and equipment with its depreciation. Ratios higher than 100 per cent indicate that spending is faster than the depreciating rate. This is a long-term indicator, as capital expenditure can be deferred in the short term if there are insufficient funds available from operations and borrowing is not an option.

It is calculated by:

$$\frac{\text{Cash outflows for the addition of new infrastructure, property, plant and equipment}}{\text{Depreciation}}$$

The renewal gap (VAGO) compares the rate of spending on existing assets through renewing, restoring, and replacing existing assets with depreciation. Ratios higher than 100 per cent indicate that spending on existing assets is faster than the depreciation rate.

It is calculated by:

$$\frac{\text{Renewal and upgrade expenditure}}{\text{Depreciation}}$$

These graphs indicate whether Council is spending enough on its capital works program, particularly to maintain its existing assets

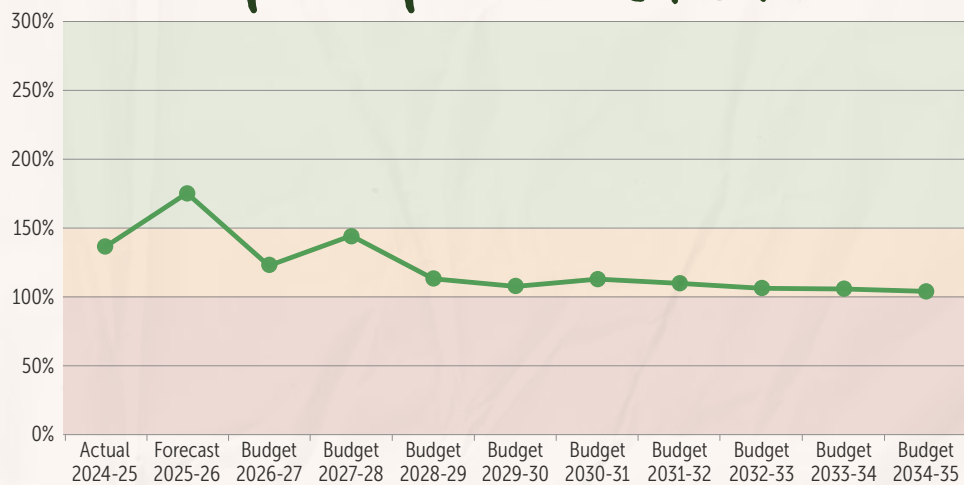
The table on the previous page and the capital replacement (VAGO) graph below indicate that Council will not achieve its targets to have low VAGO financial sustainability risk ratings in relation to capital replacement from 2026–27. Council will need to increase its capital spend to achieve its capital replacement targets to ensure sufficient spending on Council's asset base.

The table on the previous page and the renewal gap (VAGO) graph below indicate that Council will

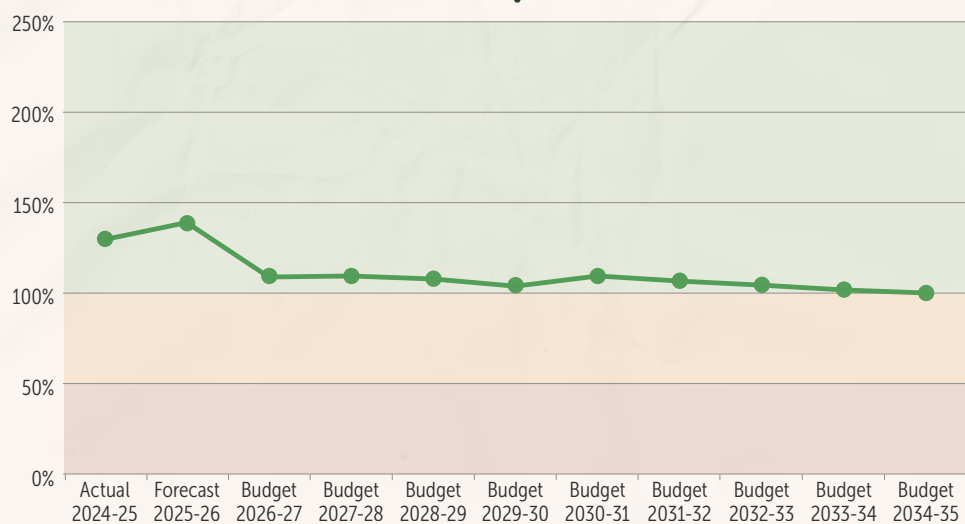
achieve its targets to have low VAGO financial sustainability risk ratings in relation to the renewal gap up until 2033–34. The predicted results of the renewal gap ratio highlights Council's decision to prioritise renewing existing assets, despite limited funding available for the capital works program. This prioritisation is consistent with the key objective number six underpinning this plan (outlined on page 26), Council's Asset Plan and capital works framework.

It should also be noted that both graphs have been negatively impacted by the increased valuations of Council's assets over the past few years, which has led to increased annual depreciation charges.

Capital Replacement (VA60)



Renewal Gap (VA60)



The three capital works measures highlight the difficult situation faced by Council in relation to balancing what it can afford to spend on its assets, with spending enough to maintain and upgrade its existing assets.

6. Ensure there are no immediate issues with repaying short-term liabilities as they fall due.

Measure: Liquidity Ratio greater than 100% to achieve a low VAGO financial sustainability risk rating

Target: > 100%

2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2029/30	2030/31	2031/32	2032/33	2033/34	2034/35	2035/36
141.6%	118.8%	123.5%	124.6%	131.4%	140.5%	146.7%	153.9%	156.6%	130.4%	162.5%

7. Ensure that rate income is being collected and that rates debt is reduced to acceptable levels.

Measure: Rates Debt Collection ratio less than 5%

Target: > 5%

2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2029/30	2030/31	2031/32	2032/33	2033/34	2034/35	2035/36
15.0%	11.0%	9.0%	7.0%	6.0%	5.0%	5.0%	5.0%	5.0%	5.0%	5.0%

8. Ensure loan commitments can be repaid from own source revenue, including:

Measure: Indebtedness less than 40% to achieve a low VAGO financial sustainability risk rating

Target: > 40%

2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2029/30	2030/31	2031/32	2032/33	2033/34	2034/35	2035/36
10.4%	8.8%	6.8%	4.9%	3.4%	1.8%	1.1%	1.2%	1.1%	1.0%	1.3%

Measure: Debt Commitment Ratio less than 15%

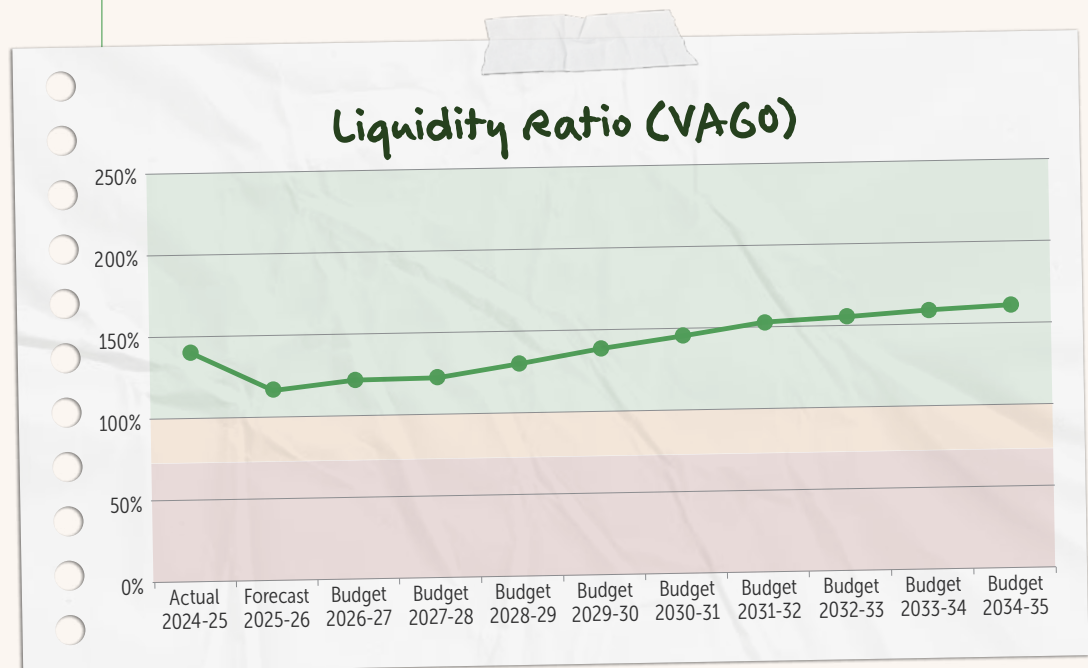
Target: > 10%

2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2029/30	2030/31	2031/32	2032/33	2033/34	2034/35	2035/36
2.4%	5.7%	2.1%	2.0%	2.0%	1.9%	1.5%	0.8%	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%

The liquidity ratio (VAGO) measures the ability to pay existing liabilities in the next 12 months and is a key indicator of financial position. A ratio of 100 per cent or more means there are more cash and liquid assets than short-term liabilities.

It is calculated by:
$$\frac{\text{Current assets}}{\text{current liabilities}}$$

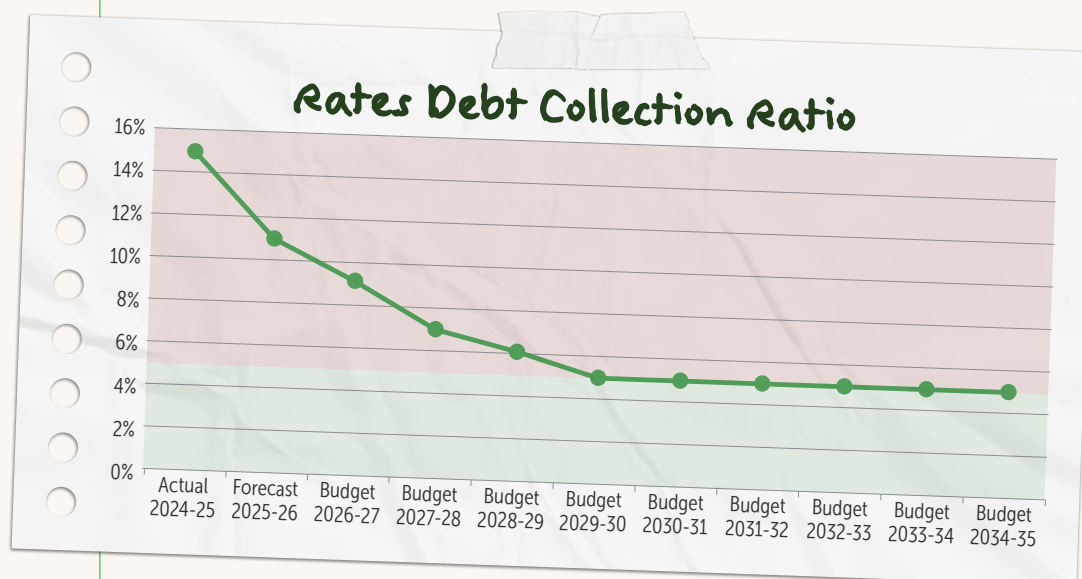
The table above and the graph below indicates that Council will achieve its targets and have low VAGO financial sustainability risk ratings in relation to the liquidity ratio. This indicates that under the current financial plan results and assumptions, Council will achieve its aim to ensure there are no immediate issues with repaying short-term liabilities as they fall due.



The rates debt collection ratio measures the ability to collect rate payments and recover overdue payments. The lower the ratio, the more rates revenue is being collected.

It is calculated by:
$$\frac{\text{Rates debtors}}{\text{Rates and charges revenue}}$$

The table on the previous page and the graph below indicates that Council is not achieving its target in relation to rates debt collection until 2029–30. The trend indicates that rates collections will increase, which will result in a decrease to rates debt. While the predicted results indicate that rate income is being collected and that rates debt is reduced to acceptable levels by 2029–30, this is heavily based on assumptions.



Indebtedness (VAGO) assesses an entity's ability to pay the principal and interest on outstanding loans, as and when they fall due, from the funds it generates. The lower the ratio, the less revenue the entity is required to use to repay its loans. Own-sourced revenue is used, rather than total revenue, because it does not include grants or contributions.

It is calculated by:

$$\frac{\text{Current assets less outstanding loans}}{\text{Current liabilities}}$$

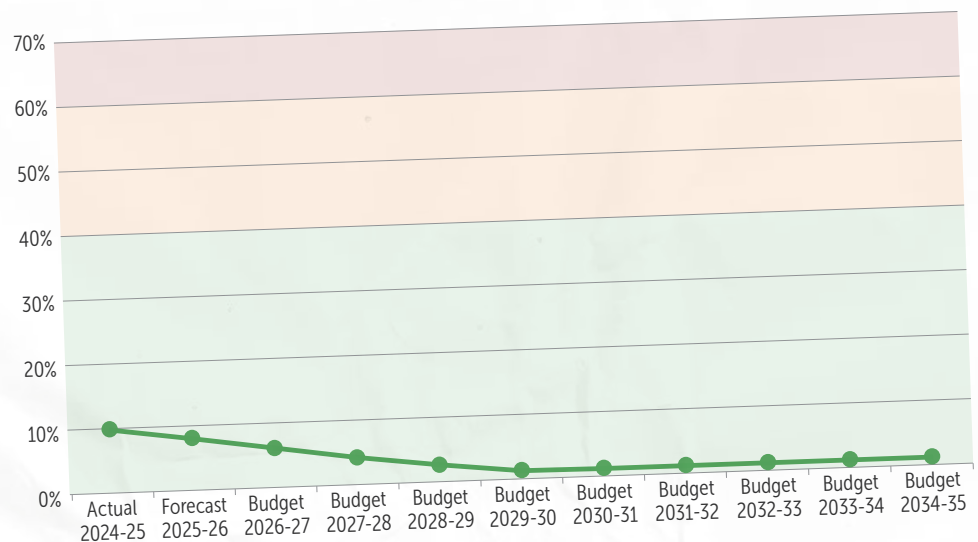
The debt commitment ratio assesses an entity's ability to pay the principal and interest on outstanding loans, as and when they fall due, from rate revenue.

It is calculated by:

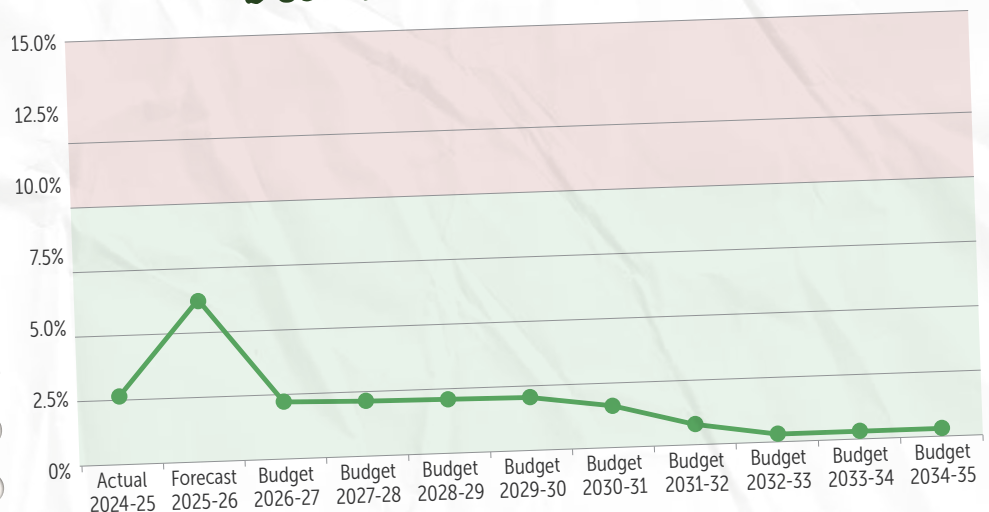
$$\frac{\text{Borrowing costs + loan repayments}}{\text{Rate revenue}}$$

The table on the previous page and graphs below indicate that Council will achieve its targets in relation to indebtedness ratio and the debt commitment ratio. This indicates that under the current financial plan results and assumptions, Council will achieve its aim to ensure loan commitments can be repaid from own-source revenue, including interest and principle, as they fall due.

Indebtedness (VA60)



Debt commitment Ratio



5.2.0.

Strategic actions

This plan has been developed to be more than just a plan that meets the legislative requirements under *Local Government Act 2020*.

Some of the targets are aspirational and are a 'call to action' that challenges the status quo and encourages Council to review the way it operates by investigating different approaches that could lead to improved financial performance.

Improved financial performance would benefit the community by being used to directly fund additional capital works (and reduce the existing funding gap) and/or be redirected into other operational expenditure within the priority service areas of Council.

Following a series of community engagement activities, Council has identified the following strategic actions that will support the aspirations of Council Plan and lead to improved financial performance.

5.2.1.

Financial performance

1. Council will achieve strong operational surpluses to ensure there is adequate funding available for current and future capital works, as well as other ongoing and future commitments.
 - » identifying new and different ways of generating further own-source revenue outside of rates, including user fees and returns in relation to Council's commercial property portfolio.
2. Council will consider all funding sources to reduce the high dependence on rates and become more financially self-reliant by prioritised pursuit of own-source revenue opportunities. This will be achieved by:
 - » engaging with commercial enterprises, community groups and sporting organisations to build strong partnerships and to explore alternative funding models for the replacement and upgrade of community facilities.

5.2.2.

3. Council will manage employee labour costs at an appropriate percentage of operating revenue. This will be achieved by:

- » constantly reviewing services to determine the most effective and cost efficient way they are provided to the community
- » reviewing service delivery methods, which could mean adjustments to the services provided directly by Council.

Capital works

4. Council will ensure enough cash is being generated from operations to fund new assets.
5. Council will ensure sufficient spending on asset renewal and Council's asset base. This will be achieved by:
 - » maintaining the renewal of existing assets as a high priority in future capital works programs

- » including whole-of-life cost considerations in planning for capital works projects
- » critically reviewing (including a full assessment on the impact on the financial plan) any proposals for new or expanded services, ensuring they are funded in a responsible way and focused on Council priority areas.

5.2.3.

Financial position

6. Council will ensure there are no immediate issues with repaying short-term liabilities as they fall due. This will be achieved by maintaining Council's liquidity ratio at levels exceeding 100 per cent.
7. Ensure that rate income is being collected and that rates debt is reduced to acceptable levels. This will be achieved by reducing Council's rates debt collection ratio to below 5 per cent.

8. Council will ensure loan commitments can be repaid from own-source revenue, including interest and principle, as they fall due. This will be achieved by considering its level of debt by having regard to key debt servicing indicators being indebtedness, and the debt commitment ratio.

5.3.0.

Assumptions to the financial plan statements

This section presents information regarding the assumptions to the comprehensive income statement for the 10 years from 2025–26 to 2034–35. The assumptions comprise the annual escalations or movement for each line item of the comprehensive income statement.

Escalation Factors % Movement

	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	2031/32	2032/33	2033/34	2034/35
CPI	3.0%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%
Growth	0.7%	0.7%	0.7%	0.7%	0.7%	0.7%	0.7%	0.7%	0.7%	0.7%

Major income and expense line items:	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	2031/32	2032/33	2033/34	2034/35
Rates and charges	3.0%	2.0%	2.0%	2.0%	2.0%	2.0%	2.0%	2.0%	2.0%	2.0%
Rates and charges: waste	10.0%	10.0%	10.0%	2.0%	2.0%	2.0%	2.0%	2.0%	2.5%	2.5%
Statutory fees and fines	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%
User fees	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%
Grants: Operating	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%
Grants: Capital	Capital grants are identified when funding is confirmed and secured.									
Contributions: monetary	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Contributions: non-monetary	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Other income	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%
Other income (Interest rate)	4.0%	3.5%	3.5%	3.5%	3.5%	3.5%	3.5%	3.5%	3.5%	3.5%
Employee costs										
Materials and service: general	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%
Materials and services: external contracts	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%
Materials and services: utilities	3.5%	3.5%	3.5%	3.5%	3.5%	3.5%	3.5%	3.5%	3.5%	3.5%
Depreciation & Amortisation	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Other expenses	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%

5.3.1.

Rates and charges

Base rate revenue is forecast to increase by 3 per cent for the 2025–26 financial year, based on the current state government rate cap. From 2026–27 and for the ensuing years of the financial plan, the estimated future annual increase is 2 per cent per annum, which is slightly below the estimated consumer price index (CPI). In addition, it is expected that in each year of the plan a further increase of \$500,000 per annum will be received for growth (additional properties) because of supplementary rates.

Other rate assumptions include interest on rates (\$900,000), pensioner rebates (\$550,000 refund), rate waivers (\$100,000) and revenue in lieu of rates (\$410,000). The amounts have been applied consistently across each year within the plan.

Waste service charges have been increased by 10 per cent in 2025–26 until 2027–28, although the charges do not currently cover the cost of providing the waste service. Council has decided to progressively recover its considerable investment in the expansion of its waste services over future years. The increased waste charges have been applied so that the waste reserve, currently in deficit, can move into a small surplus during the duration of the financial plan.

5.3.2.

Statutory fees and fines

Statutory fees and fines are those Council collects under the direction of legislation or other government directives. The fees charged for statutory fees and fines are generally advised by the state government department responsible for the corresponding services or legislation, and generally Council has limited discretion in applying these fees. Examples include planning and subdivision fees, building and inspection fees, infringements and fines, land information certificate fees and animal registrations.

Details of statutory fees and fines for the 2025–26 budget year can be found in Council's schedule of fees and charges that is adopted

in conjunction with the budget. Income received from statutory fees and fines was impacted significantly by the COVID-19 pandemic. The recovery of these statutory fees and fines has been slow. Income budgeted in 2025–26 for statutory fees and fines is still slightly below actual income received in 2018–19.

This plan includes estimated future annual increases of 3 per cent each year. While statutory fees are set by legislation and generally indexed according to the estimated annual rate of CPI, the 3 per cent increases are a prediction of the total statutory fees and fines revenue generated, inclusive of the fee increases that will be applied.

5.3.3.

User fees

User fees relate mainly to the recovery of service delivery costs through charging fees to users of Council's services. These include community care service contributions from clients (i.e. food services, planned activity groups, respite, family day care and occasional care), use of parks, recreation facilities and sporting reserves. Details of user fees for the 2025–26 budget year can be found in Council's schedule of fees and charges that is adopted in conjunction with the budget.

Income received from user fees was impacted significantly by the COVID-19 pandemic. The recovery of these user fees has been slow. Income budgeted in 2025–26 for user fees is still well below actual income received in 2018–19.

This plan includes estimated future annual increases of 3 per cent each year. The 3 per cent increases are a prediction of the total user fees revenue generated, inclusive of the fee increases that will be applied.

5.3.4.

Grants

Operating grants include all monies received from state and federal sources for the purposes of funding the delivery of Council's services to ratepayers.

Council currently received operational grants for tied (specific purpose grants) and un-tied financial assistance grant (FAG) funding received via the Victorian Local Government Grants Commission.

Operating grants in 2024–25 were higher than anticipated due to the timing of the FAG payment and community care funding retained from previous financial years. All other operational grant funding in 2025–26 is relatively consistent with the prior year. This plan estimates future annual increases of 2.5 per cent each year.

Capital grants include all monies received from state, federal and community sources for the purposes of funding the capital works program. Capital grants are identified in this plan only after funding is confirmed and secured.

5.3.5.

Contributions

Contributions relate to monies paid by developers regarding specific developer contribution plans, recreation, drainage and car parking, in accordance with planning permits issued for property development. Other contributions are made by corporations and organisations for specific capital programs. These contributions represent funds to enable Council to provide the necessary infrastructure and improvements to accommodate development growth. The contributions are for specific purposes and often require Council to outlay funds for infrastructure works before receipt of this income source. These contributions are statutory contributions and are transferred to a restricted reserve until used for a specific purpose through the capital works program or delivered as works in-kind by developers.

5.3.6.

Other income

Revenue from other income relates mainly to property and other facilities rentals, as well as interest on investments.

Rental income is predicted to increase by 3 per cent per annum. The 3 per cent increases are a prediction of the rental income revenue generated, inclusive of the rent increases that will be applied.

Interest on investments estimates are based on predicted cash balances and interest rates expected to be received on Council's cash investments. Investment income is based on interest rates of 4 per cent over the duration of this plan.

5.3.7.

Employee costs

Employee costs include all labour-related expenditure such as wages and salaries and on-costs such as allowances, leave entitlements, employer superannuation, rostered days off, etc.

Future employee cost predictions are generally based on existing staff and service levels for the duration of this plan. Minor adjustments have been made in relation to a small number of temporary positions for some short-term projects. Council's enterprise agreement expired on 30 June 2025.

5.3.8.

Materials and services

Materials and services include the purchases of consumables and payments to contractors for the provision of services and utility costs.

General material and service costs are predicted to increase by 2.5 per cent from 2026–27, while contracts are predicted to increase by 3 per cent and utilities by 3.5 per cent.

Adjustments have been made for any known costs related to specific years. This includes expenses associated with:

- conducting Council elections and the subsequent legislative requirement to review the Council Plan and other documents (every four years)

- conducting a review of Council's service catalogue in 2026–27 and 2027–28
- Business Excellence Awards (every two years)
- internal budget bids and external community submissions
- information communication technology (ICT) strategy until 2027–28
- operational projects being transferred from the capital works program.

5.3.9.

Depreciation and amortisation

Depreciation is an accounting measure which attempts to allocate the value of an asset over its useful life for Council's property, plant and equipment, including infrastructure assets such as roads and drains. The predicted increase in 2025–26 is mainly due to asset purchases through the capital works program during 2024–25.

Future depreciation estimates from 2026–27 are based on the projected capital spending contained within this plan. Future depreciation predictions do not consider revaluations that will occur throughout the duration of this plan.

Amortisation is an accounting measure that allocates the value of leased assets over the period of the lease.

The budget in 2025–26 is based on current lease contracts and a consistent service level is assumed in future years.

5.3.10.

Borrowing costs

Borrowing costs comprise the interest expense to service Council's loan portfolio that is described in Section 6.1 Borrowing Plan. Borrowing costs are based on an expected decrease in each year of this plan as Council continues to pay down its loan borrowings. No additional loan borrowings have been drawn down since 2023–24 and no further borrowings are included in the plan.

5.3.11.

Other expenses

Other expenses relates to a range of unclassified items including leases, rentals, audit fees and councillors' allowances. This plan includes estimated future annual increases of 2.5 per cent each year.



5.4.0.

Other matters impacting the 10-year financial projections

There are a number of key financial issues and challenges facing Hobsons Bay over the next few years, which could impact on this plan and the 10-year financial projections.

The COVID-19 pandemic had a significant impact on Council's finances. The ongoing impact in relation to the significant loss in income is still being felt, with Council's non-rate income still below pre-COVID levels. The previous financial plan predicted a slow and conservative recovery, but unfortunately this has been slower than anticipated. The recovery is now expected to occur during the duration of this plan, but it is acknowledged that this is difficult to predict.

It is a balancing act to maintain financial sustainability under the state government's rate capping policy, while ensuring rates and charges remain at acceptable levels. Council has applied the inflation-based rate cap overseen by the Essential Services Commission, in each year since the Fair Go Rates System was introduced in 2016–17.

Council recently adopted its Revenue and Rating Plan 2025–26 to 2028–29, which determines an appropriate strategy and an integrated approach to the setting of its rating structure, user fees and charges. The plan attempts to determine an appropriate mix of rates, while justifying the burdens placed on the residential and non-residential sectors.

One of the key objectives of this plan is to explore all funding sources to relieve Council's heavy dependence on rates, which is its most significant income item, accounting for approximately 80 per cent of all revenue. Expanding Council's existing revenue base will be a challenge but will assist in ensuring financial sustainability in the medium to long term.

Council does not generally generate significant income from operational or capital grants. Council is predicting capital grants of \$9.858 million in 2025–26. Future years of this plan predict minimal increases in operational grants and generally few capital grants after 2025–26. It is expected that additional capital grants, over and above what is identified in this plan will be received, and they will be included in forecasts and budgets when funding is confirmed and secured.

Local government is a forever changing landscape, so it will be an ongoing challenge for Hobsons Bay to continue to ensure that an appropriate range and level of services are available to the community. This means constant evaluation, according to the community's needs and determining what services are most appropriate to be provided directly by Council. When the private sector provides a service traditionally provided by Council, it needs to be determined if they can provide the same (or higher) level of service for a cheaper price. If so, Council should consider the financial and other benefits of exiting from the service.

Cost-shifting occurs when the federal or state governments transfer program or service responsibilities to local government with insufficient funding or provide grants that don't keep pace with the actual delivery costs incurred. This can happen through additional compliance requirements, under funding and direct transfer of responsibilities. Cost-shifting needs to be carefully managed as it diverts scarce Council dollars to fund a function imposed on Council by another level of government.

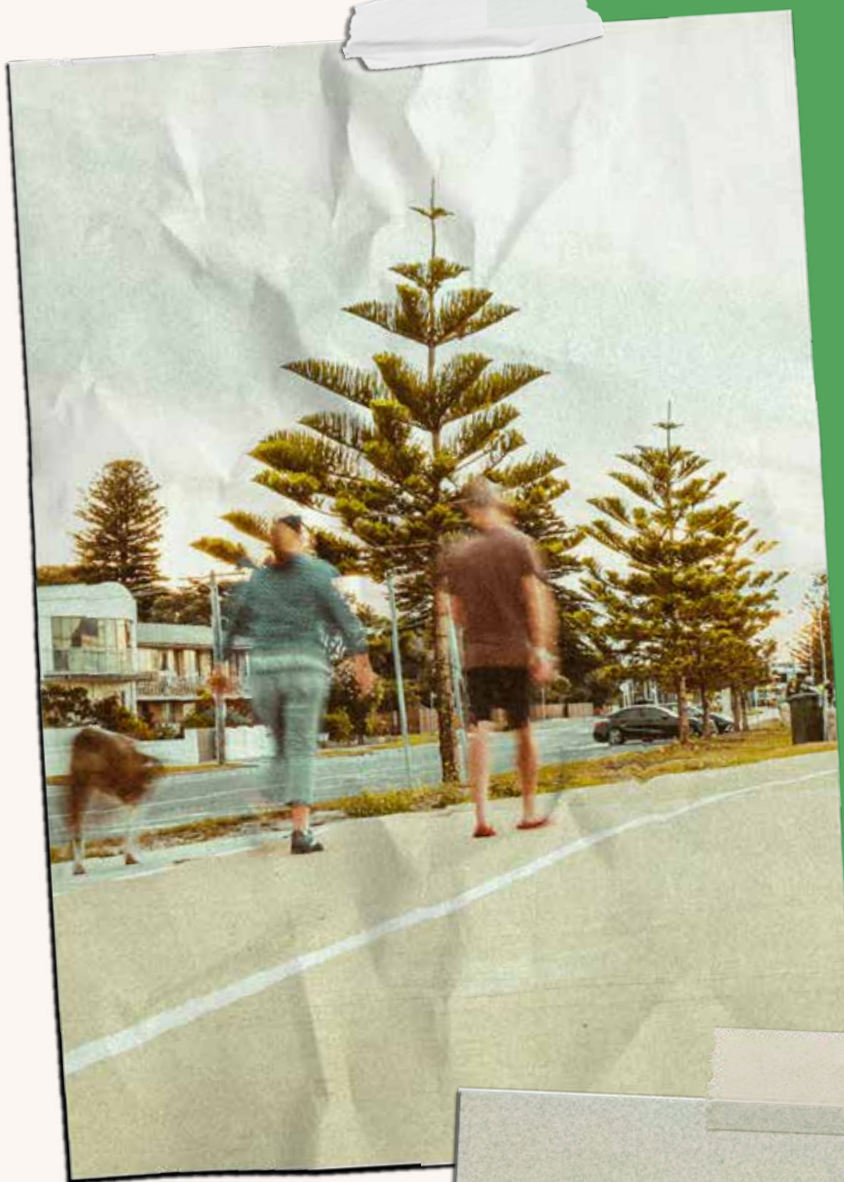
Council will need to manage and plan for potential significant defined benefits superannuation shortfall calls. The most recent vested benefit index (VBI) result of 105 per cent (March 2025), is above the minimum 100 per cent requirement. The defined benefit plan for local government employees was a compulsory scheme set up by the Victorian Government in 1982 and was closed in 1993, but Council must continue to allocate funds to ensure benefits owed to members can be paid now and into the future.

Council has a legal obligation and has previously been required to borrow to fund these compulsory contributions. In 2013, Council was required to pay approximately \$9.2 million towards its share of the shortfall to the closed Local Authorities Superannuation Fund Defined Benefit Plan following an actuary review by the scheme's trustee, Vision Super.

Possibly the biggest challenge facing Hobsons Bay and many other councils is the ability to fund rapidly expanding capital needs in a financially constrained environment. Community expectations are growing, and it is difficult to provide sufficient funding to renew existing assets to ensure they continue to meet community needs, while delivering new and upgraded community infrastructure to address the demands of a growing and changing community.

Financial Plan Statements

06



This section presents information regarding the Financial Plan statements for the 10 years from 2024-25 to 2034-35.

- Comprehensive income statement
- Balance sheet
- Statement of changes in equity
- Statement of cash flows
- Statement of capital works
- Statement of human resources
- Planned human resource expenditure



6.1 Comprehensive income statement

Income/Revenue	Actual 2024/25 \$'000	2025/26 \$'000	2026/27 \$'000	2027/28 \$'000
Rates and charges	139,887	146,025	150,916	156,073
Statutory fees and fines	4,944	5,185	5,340	5,500
User fees	6,161	5,554	5,867	6,043
Grants - operating	12,539	9,408	9,340	9,574
Grants - capital	4,402	9,858	3,870	3,870
Contributions - monetary	5,216	3,076	3,807	2,549
Contributions - non-monetary	10,374	-	-	-
Net gain on disposal of property, plant etc.	-	194	194	194
Fair value adjustments for investment property	-	-	-	-
Share of net profits (or loss) of associates	-	-	-	-
Other income	5,211	4,675	4,555	4,886
Total income / revenue	188,734	183,974	183,888	193,989

2028/29 \$'000	2029/30 \$'000	2030/31 \$'000	2031/32 \$'000	2032/33 \$'000	2033/34 \$'000	2034/35 \$'000
159,941	163,894	167,935	172,267	176,290	180,724	185,264
5,665	5,835	6,010	6,191	6,377	6,568	6,765
6,224	6,411	6,603	6,801	7,005	7,216	7,432
9,813	10,058	10,310	1,0567	10,832	11,102	11,380
1,269	692	677	677	677	677	676
2,549	2549	2,549	2549	2386	2,371	2,371
-	-	-	-	-	-	-
194	194	194	194	194	194	194
-	-	-	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	-	-	-
5,148	5,490	5,867	6,092	6,348	6,594	6,853
190,803	195,123	200,146	205,338	210,107	215,446	220,934

Expenses			Actual 2024/25 \$'000	2025/26 \$'000	2026/27 \$'000	2027/28 \$'000
Employee costs			63,263	66,590	68,900	71,356
Materials and services			59,477	60,992	61,231	62,071
Depreciation			36,666	37,928	38,877	39,849
Amortisation - intangible assets			-	-	-	-
Depreciation - right of use assets			310	329	344	344
Allowance for impairment losses			416	549	549	549
Borrowing costs			1,001	894	588	474
Finance costs - leases			18	27	40	19
Other expenses			719	1,004	947	971
Net loss on disposal of property, infrastructure, plant etc.			4,066	-	-	-
Total expenses			165,937	168,314	171,476	175,632
Surplus/(deficit) for the year			22,797	15,661	12,412	18,357
2028/29 \$'000	2029/30 \$'000	2030/31 \$'000	2031/32 \$'000	2032/33 \$'000	2033/34 \$'000	2034/35 \$'000
74,567	77,549	80,651	83,877	87,232	90,722	94,350
63,345	64,945	67,160	69,616	72,754	74,581	77,086
40,845	41,866	42,913	43,985	45,085	46,212	47,367
-	-	-	-	-	-	-
344	344	344	344	344	344	344
549	549	549	549	549	549	549
354	228	110	34	1	-	-
27	40	19	27	40	19	27
995	1,020	1,045	1,071	1,098	1,126	1,154
-	-	-	-	-	-	-
181,025	186,541	192,791	199,503	207,103	213,552	220,878
9,778	8,582	7,355	5,835	3,004	1,894	56

6.2 Balance Sheet

Current Assets	Actual 2024/25 \$'000	2025/26 \$'000	2026/27 \$'000	2027/28 \$'000
Cash and cash equivalents	20,188	10,712	10,385	10,967
Trade and other receivables	24,988	20,424	18,249	15,871
Other financial assets	28,000	26,000	33,000	37,000
Inventories	34	34	34	34
Prepayments	1,922	1,922	1,922	1,922
Non-current assets classified as held for sale	-	-	-	-
Other assets	355	355	355	355
Total current assets	75,487	59,447	63,944	66,149

2028/29 \$'000	2029/30 \$'000	2030/31 \$'000	2031/32 \$'000	2032/33 \$'000	2033/34 \$'000	2034/35 \$'000
10,763	10,490	10,750	10,803	10,500	10,453	10,897
14,790	13,648	14,123	14,626	15,127	15,665	16,223
44,000	52,000	55,000	59,000	63,000	67,000	70,000
34	34	34	34	34	34	34
1,922	1,922	1,922	1,922	1,922	1,922	1,922
-	-	-	-	-	-	-
355	355	355	355	355	355	355
71,865	78,449	82,184	86,739	90,938	95,429	99,431

Non-current assets	Actual 2024/25 \$'000	2025/26 \$'000	2026/27 \$'000	2027/28 \$'000
Trade and other receivables	16	16	16	16
Other financial assets	-	-	-	-
Non-current assets classified as held for sale	-	-	-	-
Property, infrastructure, plant & equipment	1,766,538	1,792,347	1,799,334	1,814,328
Right-of-use assets	110	809	465	121
Investment property	14,880	14,880	14,880	14,880
Total non-current assets	1,781,544	1,808,052	1,814,695	1,829,345
Total assets	1,857,031	1,867,498	1,878,639	1,895,495

2028/29 \$'000	2029/30 \$'000	2030/31 \$'000	2031/32 \$'000	2032/33 \$'000	2033/34 \$'000	2034/35 \$'000
16	16	16	16	16	16	16
-	-	-	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	-	-	-
1,816,858	1,817,644	1,820,475	1,821,812	1,822,373	1,821,540	1,819,108
809	465	121	809	465	121	809
14,880	14,880	14,880	14,880	14,880	14,880	14,880
1,832,563	1,833,005	1,835,492	1,837,517	1,837,734	1,836,557	1,834,813
1,904,428	1,911,453	1,917,676	1,924,256	1,928,672	1,931,986	1,934,243

6.2 Balance Sheet

Liabilities	Actual 2024/25 \$'000	2025/26 \$'000	2026/27 \$'000	2027/28 \$'000
Trade and other payables	22,929	23,502	24,090	24,692
Trust funds and deposits	9,748	9,992	10,241	10,498
Unearned income/revenue	1,435	1,435	1,435	1,435
Provisions	11,589	12,111	12,656	13,225
Interest-bearing liabilities	7,475	2,585	2,699	2,819
Lease liabilities	115	429	660	435
Total current liabilities	53,291	50,053	51,781	53,103

2028/29 \$'000	2029/30 \$'000	2030/31 \$'000	2031/32 \$'000	2032/33 \$'000	2033/34 \$'000	2034/35 \$'000
25,309	25,942	26,591	27,255	27,937	28,635	29,351
10,760	11,029	11,305	11,587	11,877	12,174	12,478
1,435	1,435	1,435	1,435	1,435	1,435	1,435
13,820	14,373	14,948	15,546	16,168	16,814	17,487
2,943	2,402	1,299	122	-	-	-
429	660	435	429	660	435	429
54,697	55,841	56,012	56,375	58,076	59,493	61,180

Non-current liabilities			Actual 2024/25 \$'000	2025/26 \$'000	2026/27 \$'000	2027/28 \$'000
Provisions			1,357	1,418	1,482	1,549
Interest-bearing liabilities			14,869	12,284	9,585	6,767
Lease liabilities			-	569	206	134
Total non-current liabilities			16,226	14,271	11,273	8,449
Total liabilities			69,517	64,324	63,054	61,552
Net assets			1,787,514	1,803,174	1,815,586	1,833,943
2028/29 \$'000	2029/30 \$'000	2030/31 \$'000	2031/32 \$'000	2032/33 \$'000	2033/34 \$'000	2034/35 \$'000
1,618	1,683	1,750	1,820	1,893	1,969	2,048
3,823	1,421	122	(0)	-	-	-
569	206	134	569	206	134	569
6,010	3,310	2,006	2,389	2,099	2,103	2,616
60,707	59,151	58,018	58,764	60,175	61,596	63,797
1,843,721	1,852,303	1,859,658	1,865,493	1,868,497	1,870,390	1,870,447

Equity			Actual 2024/25 \$'000	2025/26 \$'000	2026/27 \$'000	2027/28 \$'000
Accumulated surplus			665,773	700,755	711,790	731,316
Reserves			1,121,741	1,102,419	1,103,796	1,102,627
Total equity			1,787,514	1,803,174	1,815,586	1,833,943
2028/29 \$'000	2029/30 \$'000	2030/31 \$'000	2031/32 \$'000	2032/33 \$'000	2033/34 \$'000	2034/35 \$'000
738,966	744,770	752,486	758,025	761,289	763,302	764,161
1,104,755	1,107,533	1,107,172	1,107,467	1,107,208	1,107,088	1,106,286
1,843,721	1,852,303	1,859,658	1,865,493	1,868,497	1,870,390	1,870,447

6.3 Statement of changes in equity

2024-25 Actual	Total \$'000	Accumulated surplus \$'000	Revaluation reserve \$'000	Other reserves \$'000
Balance at beginning of the financial year	1,658,641	645,435	983,193	30,013
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	(2,021)	(2,021)	-	-
Opening balance adjustment	22,797	22,797	-	-
Net asset revaluation gain/(loss)	108,097	-	108,097	-
Transfers to other reserves	59,465	29,514	-	29,952
Transfers from other reserves	(59,465)	(29,952)	-	(29,514)
Balance at end of the financial year	1,787,513	665,773	1,091,289	30,451

2025-26	Total \$'000	Accumulated surplus \$'000	Revaluation reserve \$'000	Other reserves \$'000
Balance at beginning of the financial year	1,787,513	665,773	1,091,289	30,451
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	15,661	15,661	-	-
Opening balance adjustment	-	-	-	-
Transfers to other reserves	42,896	31,109	-	11,787
Transfers from other reserves	(42,896)	(11,787)	-	(31,109)
Balance at end of the financial year	1,803,174	700,755	1,091,289	11,129

2026-27	Total \$'000	Accumulated surplus \$'000	Revaluation reserve \$'000	Other reserves \$'000
Balance at beginning of the financial year	1,803,174	700,755	1,091,289	11,129
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	12,412	12,412	-	-
Opening balance adjustment	-	-	-	-
Transfers to other reserves	11,575	5,099	-	6,476
Transfers from other reserves	(11,575)	(6,476)	-	(5,099)
Balance at end of the financial year	1,815,585	711,790	1,091,289	12,506

2027-28	Total \$'000	Accumulated surplus \$'000	Revaluation reserve \$'000	Other reserves \$'000
Balance at beginning of the financial year	1,815,585	711,790	1,091,289	12,506
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	18,357	18,357	-	-
Opening balance adjustment	-	-	-	-
Transfers to other reserves	13,732	7,450	-	6,281
Transfers from other reserves	(13,732)	(6,281)	-	(7,450)
Balance at end of the financial year	1,833,942	731,316	1,091,289	11,337

2028-29	Total \$'000	Accumulated surplus \$'000	Revaluation reserve \$'000	Other reserves \$'000
Balance at beginning of the financial year	1,833,942	731,316	1,091,289	11,337
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	9,778	9,778	-	-
Opening balance adjustment	-	-	-	-
Transfers to other reserves	10,656	4,264	-	6,392
Transfers from other reserves	(10,656)	(6,392)	-	(4,264)
Balance at end of the financial year	1,843,720	738,966	1,091,289	13,465

2029-30	Total \$'000	Accumulated surplus \$'000	Revaluation reserve \$'000	Other reserves \$'000
Balance at beginning of the financial year	1,843,720	738,966	1,091,289	13,465
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	8,582	8,582	-	-
Opening balance adjustment	-	-	-	-
Transfers to other reserves	11,401	4,312	-	7,090
Transfers from other reserves	(11,401)	(7,090)	-	(4,312)
Balance at end of the financial year	1,852,302	744,770	1,091,289	16,243

2030-31	Total \$'000	Accumulated surplus \$'000	Revaluation reserve \$'000	Other reserves \$'000
Balance at beginning of the financial year	1,852,302	744,770	1,091,289	16,243
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	7,355	7,355	-	-
Opening balance adjustment	-	-	-	-
Transfers to other reserves	10,930	5,645	-	5,285
Transfers from other reserves	(10,930)	(5,285)	-	(5,645)
Balance at end of the financial year	1,859,657	752,486	1,091,289	15,882

2031-32	Total \$'000	Accumulated surplus \$'000	Revaluation reserve \$'000	Other reserves \$'000
Balance at beginning of the financial year	1,859,657	752,486	1,091,289	15,882
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	5,835	5,835	-	-
Opening balance adjustment	-	-	-	-
Transfers to other reserves	9,558	4,631	-	4,927
Transfers from other reserves	(9,558)	(4,927)	-	(4,631)
Balance at end of the financial year	1,865,492	758,025	1,091,289	16,178

2032-33	Total \$'000	Accumulated surplus \$'000	Revaluation reserve \$'000	Other reserves \$'000
Balance at beginning of the financial year	1,865,492	758,025	1,091,289	16,178
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	3,004	3,004	-	-
Opening balance adjustment	-	-	-	-
Transfers to other reserves	9,372	4,816	-	4,556
Transfers from other reserves	(9,372)	(4,556)	-	(4,816)
Balance at end of the financial year	1,868,496	761,289	1,091,289	15,918

2033-34	Total \$'000	Accumulated surplus \$'000	Revaluation reserve \$'000	Other reserves \$'000
Balance at beginning of the financial year	1,868,496	761,289	1,091,289	15,918
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	1,894	1,894	-	-
Opening balance adjustment	-	-	-	-
Transfers to other reserves	9,490	4,805	-	4,685
Transfers from other reserves	(9,490)	(4,685)	-	(4,805)
Balance at end of the financial year	1,870,390	763,302	1,091,289	15,798

2034-35	Total \$'000	Accumulated surplus \$'000	Revaluation reserve \$'000	Other reserves \$'000
Balance at beginning of the financial year	1,870,390	763,302	1,091,289	15,798
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	56	56	-	-
Opening balance adjustment	-	-	-	-
Transfers to other reserves	10,071	5,437	-	4,634
Transfers from other reserves	(10,071)	(4,634)	-	(5,437)
Balance at end of the financial year	1,870,446	764,161	1,091,289	14,996

6.4 Statement of cash flows

Cash flows from operating activities	Actual 2024/25 Inflows/ (Outflows)	2025/26 Inflows/ (Outflows)	2026/27 Inflows/ (Outflows)	2027/28 Inflows/ (Outflows)
Rates and charges	137,894	150,912	153,396	158,731
Statutory fees and fines	4,503	5,185	5,346	5,500
User fees	6,608	5,231	5,562	5,763
Grants - operating	11,085	9,878	9,574	9,813
Grants - capital	4,402	3,858	3,970	3,964
Contributions - monetary	2,549	2,549	2,549	2,549
Interest received	1,999	1,900	1,518	1,679
Trust funds and deposits taken	866	-	-	-
Trust funds and deposits repaid	(1,915)	-	-	-
Other receipts	4,282	4,675	4,555	4,886
Net GST refund/payment	9,552	9,552	9,552	9,552
Employee costs	(62,596)	(66,008)	(68,291)	(70,719)
Materials and services	(63,387)	(61,423)	(61,590)	(62,439)
Short-term, low value and variable lease payments	-	-	-	-
Trust funds and deposits repaid	-	-	-	-
Other payments	-	-	-	-
Net cash provided by/(used in) operating activities	58,509	62,414	57,272	64,532

2028/29 Inflows/ (Outflows)	2029/30 Inflows/ (Outflows)	2030/31 Inflows/ (Outflows)	2031/32 Inflows/ (Outflows)	2032/33 Inflows/ (Outflows)	2033/34 Inflows/ (Outflows)	2034/35 Inflows/ (Outflows)
161,270	165,296	167,733	172,050	176,089	180,502	185,037
5,665	5,835	6,010	6,191	6,377	6,568	6,765
5,977	6,151	6,331	6,515	6,705	6,900	7,101
10,058	10,310	10,567	10,832	11,102	11,380	11,664
3,959	3,954	3,949	3,944	3,939	3,934	3,929
2,549	2,549	2,549	2,386	2,371	2,371	2,371
1,917	2,187	2,301	2,443	2,572	2,711	2,711
-	-	-	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	-	-	-
5,148	5,490	5,867	6,092	6,348	6,594	6,853
9,552	9,552	9,552	9,552	9,552	9,552	9,552
(73,902)	(76,932)	(80,009)	(83,209)	(86,538)	(89,999)	(93,599)
(63,723)	(65,332)	(67,557)	(70,023)	(73,171)	(75,008)	(77,524)
-	-	-	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	-	-	-
55,745	55,724	54,099	53,711	52,146	52,280	51,770

Cash flows from investing activities	Actual 2024/25 Inflows/ (Outflows)	2025/26 Inflows/ (Outflows)	2026/27 Inflows/ (Outflows)	2027/28 Inflows/ (Outflows)
Payments for property	(50,270)	(65,914)	(47,820)	(57,170)
Proceeds from sale of property	421	394	394	394
Payments for investments	(6,000)	2,000	(7,000)	(4,000)
Proceeds from sale of investments	-	-	-	-
Loans and advances made	-	-	-	-
Payments of loans and advances	-	-	-	-
Net cash provided by/(used in) investing activities	(55,849)	(63,520)	(54,427)	(60,777)

2028/29 Inflows/ (Outflows)	2029/30 Inflows/ (Outflows)	2030/31 Inflows/ (Outflows)	2031/32 Inflows/ (Outflows)	2032/33 Inflows/ (Outflows)	2033/34 Inflows/ (Outflows)	2034/35 Inflows/ (Outflows)
(46,170)	(45,220)	(48,720)	(48,720)	(48,720)	(48,720)	(48,720)
394	394	394	394	394	394	394
(7,000)	(8,000)	(3,000)	(4,000)	(4,000)	(4,000)	(3,000)
-	-	-	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	-	-	-
(52,777)	(52,827)	(51,327)	(52,327)	(52,327)	(52,327)	(51,327)

Cash flows from financing activities	Actual 2024/25 Inflows/ (Outflows)	2025/26 Inflows/ (Outflows)	2026/27 Inflows/ (Outflows)	2027/28 Inflows/ (Outflows)
Finance costs	(988)	(894)	(588)	(474)
Proceeds from borrowings	-	-	-	-
Repayment of borrowings	(2,370)	(7,475)	(2,585)	(2,699)
Interest paid - lease liability	(18)	-	-	-
Repayment of lease liabilities	(319)	-	-	-
Net cash provided by/(used in) financing activities	(3,695)	(8,369)	(3,173)	(3,173)
Net increase/(decrease) in cash & cash equivalents	(1,035)	(9,475)	(327)	582
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the financial year	21,222	20,187	10,712	10,385
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the financial year	20,187	10,712	10,385	10,967

2028/29 Inflows/ (Outflows)	2029/30 Inflows/ (Outflows)	2030/31 Inflows/ (Outflows)	2031/32 Inflows/ (Outflows)	2032/33 Inflows/ (Outflows)	2033/34 Inflows/ (Outflows)	2034/35 Inflows/ (Outflows)
(354)	(228)	(110)	(34)	(1)	-	-
-	-	-	-	-	-	-
(2,819)	(2,943)	(2,402)	(1,299)	(122)	-	-
-	-	-	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	-	-	-
(3,172)	(3,172)	(2,512)	(1,333)	(123)	-	-
(204)	(274)	261	52	(303)	(46)	443
10,967	10,763	10,490	10,750	10,803	10,500	10,453
10,763	10,490	10,750	10,803	10,500	10,453	10,897

6.5 Statement of capital works

Property	Actual 2024/25 \$'000	2025/26 \$'000	2026/27 \$'000	2027/28 \$'000
Land	-	-	-	-
Buildings	10,902	14,018	8,650	9,300
Heritage buildings	115	773	400	400
Total buildings	11,018	14,791	9,050	9,700
Total property	11,018	14,791	9,050	9,700

2028/29 \$'000	2029/30 \$'000	2030/31 \$'000	2031/32 \$'000	2032/33 \$'000	2033/34 \$'000	2034/35 \$'000
-	-	-	-	-	-	-
6,450	6,450	6,450	6,450	6,450	6,450	6,450
400	400	400	400	400	400	400
6,850	6,850	6,850	6,850	6,850	6,850	6,850
6,850	6,850	6,850	6,850	6,850	6,850	6,850

Plant and equipment	Actual 2024/25 \$'000	2025/26 \$'000	2026/27 \$'000	2027/28 \$'000
Heritage plant and equipment	8	-	100	100
Plant, machinery and equipment	1,771	5,678	2,700	2,700
Fixtures, fittings and furniture	2,994	20	400	400
Computers and telecommunications	477	1,170	1,200	1,200
Library books	738	1,000	900	900
Total plant and equipment	5,988	7,868	5,300	5,300

2028/29 \$'000	2029/30 \$'000	2030/31 \$'000	2031/32 \$'000	2032/33 \$'000	2033/34 \$'000	2034/35 \$'000
100	100	100	100	100	100	100
2,700	2,700	2,700	2,700	2,700	2,700	2,700
400	400	400	400	400	400	400
1,200	1,200	1,200	1,200	1,200	1,200	1,200
900	900	900	900	900	900	900
5,300	5,300	5,300	5,300	5,300	5,300	5,300

Infrastructure	Actual 2024/25 \$'000	2025/26 \$'000	2026/27 \$'000	2027/28 \$'000
Roads	10,853	22,637	16,000	16,000
Bridges	2,798	685	200	200
Footpaths and cycleways	2,699	2,825	5,700	14,400
Drainage	2,881	3,948	2,000	2,000
Recreational, leisure and community facilities	1,261	317	2,400	2,400
Waste management	832	328	-	-
Parks, open space and streetscapes	12,104	11,409	6,670	6,670
Off street car parks	595	1,057	500	500
Other infrastructure	-	50	-	-
Total infrastructure	34,023	43,255	33,470	42,170v
Total capital works expenditure	51,029	65,914	47,820	57,170

2028/29 \$'000	2029/30 \$'000	2030/31 \$'000	2031/32 \$'000	2032/33 \$'000	2033/34 \$'000	2034/35 \$'000
16,200	16,000	17,000	17,000	17,000	17,000	17,000
200	200	200	200	200	200	200
2,700	2,500	3,500	3,500	3,500	3,500	3,500
3,600	3,050	3,050	3,050	3,050	3,050	3,050
3,500	3,500	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000
-	-	-	-	-	-	-
-	7,120	7,120	7,120	7,120	7,120	7,120
700	700	700	700	700	700	700
-	-	-	-	-	-	-
34,020	33,070	36,570	36,570	36,570	36,570	36,570
46,170	45,220	48,720	48,720	48,720	48,720	48,720

Property	Actual 2024/25 \$'000	2025/26 \$'000	2026/27 \$'000	2027/28 \$'000
New asset expenditure	3,117	12,805	4,800	13,500
Asset renewal expenditure	19,533	32,275	34,800	34,200
Asset upgrade expenditure	28,379	20,834	8,220	9,470
Total capital works expenditure	51,029	65,914	47,820	57,170

2028/29 \$'000	2029/30 \$'000	2030/31 \$'000	2031/32 \$'000	2032/33 \$'000	2033/34 \$'000	2034/35 \$'000
1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,500
33,800	33,800	33,800	33,800	33,800	33,800	33,800
10,870	9,920	13,420	13,420	13,420	13,420	13,420
46,170	45,220	48,720	48,720	48,720	48,720	48,720

Plant and equipment	Actual 2024/25 \$'000	2025/26 \$'000	2026/27 \$'000	2027/28 \$'000
Grants	4,402	9,858	3,870	9,169
Contributions	204	178	178	178
Council cash	46,423	55,877	43,772	47,823
Borrowings	-	-	-	-
Total capital works expenditure	51,029	65,914	47,820	57,170

2028/29 \$'000	2029/30 \$'000	2030/31 \$'000	2031/32 \$'000	2032/33 \$'000	2033/34 \$'000	2034/35 \$'000
1,269	692	677	677	677	677	676
178	178	178	15	-	-	-
44,723	44,350	47,865	47,865	48,028	48,043	48,044
-	-	-	-	-	-	-
46,170	45,220	48,720	48,720	48,720	48,720	48,720



6.6 Statement of human resources

Staff Expenditure		2024/25 \$'000	2025/26 \$'000	2026/27 \$'000	2027/28 \$'000
Employee costs – operating		63,263	66,590	68,900	71,356
Employee costs – capital		3,071	4,646	4,855	5,073
Total staff expenditure		66,334	71,236	73,755	76,429

2028/29 \$'000	2029/30 \$'000	2030/31 \$'000	2031/32 \$'000	2032/33 \$'000	2033/34 \$'000	2034/35 \$'000
74,567	77,549	80,651	83,877	87,232	90,722	94,350
5,301	5,513	5,734	5,963	6,202	6,450	6,708
79,868	83,063	86,385	89,841	93,434	97,172	101,058

Staff Number		2024/25 FTE	2025/26 FTE	2026/27 FTE	2027/28 FTE
Employees		587.1	587.3	582.3	578.3
Total staff numbers		587.1	587.3	582.3	578.3

2028/29 FTE	2029/30 FTE	2030/31 FTE	2031/32 FTE	2032/33 FTE	2033/34 FTE	2034/35 FTE
578.3	578.3	578.3	578.3	578.3	578.3	578.3
578.3	578.3	578.3	578.3	578.3	578.3	578.3

Department	Total \$'000	Permanent Full Time \$'000	Part Time \$'000	Casual \$'000	Temporary \$'000
Chief Executive's Office	2,779	2,512	83	154	30
Corporate Services	21,570	14,255	3,498	2,242	1,576
Strategic Development	22,689	14,600	5,617	867	1,606
Infrastructure & City Services	18,992	16,797	364	86	1,745
Total permanent staff expenditure	66,031	48,164	9,562	3,349	4,957
Other employee related expenditure	559	-	-	-	-
Capitalised labour costs	4,646	-	-	-	-
Total staff expenditure	71,236	-	-	-	-

Department	Total	Permanent Full Time	Part Time	Casual	Temporary
Chief Executive's Office	18.7	16.0	0.8	1.7	0.2
Corporate Services	180.7	114.2	33.3	21.4	11.7
Strategic Development	177.8	111.4	48.4	6.0	12.0
Infrastructure & City Services	175.0	160.4	3.1	0.9	10.6
Total staff	552.2	402.1	85.6	30.1	34.5
Capitalised labour costs	35.1	-	-	-	-
Total staff expenditure	587.3	-	-	-	-

6.7 Planned human resource expenditure

Chief Executive's Office		2025/26 \$'000	2026/27 \$'000	2027/28 \$'000	2028/29 \$'000
Permanent – Full time		2,512	2,599	2,692	2,813
Women		1,134	1,174	1,215	1,270
Men		1,010	1,045	1,083	1,131
Persons of self-described gender		-	-	-	-
Vacant		368	380	394	412
Permanent – Part time		83	86	89	93
Women		83	86	89	93
Men		-	-	-	-
Persons of self-described gender		-	-	-	-
Vacant		-	-	-	-
Total Chief Executive's Office		2,596	2,686	2,781	2,907
2029/30 \$'000	2030/31 \$'000	2031/32 \$'000	2032/33 \$'000	2033/34 \$'000	2034/35 \$'000
2,926	3,043	3,164	3,291	3,423	3,560
1,321	1,374	1,429	1,486	1,545	1,607
1,177	1,224	1,273	1,324	1,376	1,432
-	-	-	-	-	-
428	445	463	482	501	521
97	101	105	109	114	118
97	101	105	109	114	118
-	-	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	-	-
3,023	3,144	3,270	3,400	3,536	3,678

Corporate Services		2025/26 \$'000	2026/27 \$'000	2027/28 \$'000	2028/29 \$'000
Permanent – Full time		14,616	15,123	15,662	16,367
Women		8,390	8,681	8,991	9,395
Men		5,481	5,671	5,873	6,137
Persons of self-described gender		-	-	-	-
Vacant		745	771	798	834
Permanent – Part time		3,587	3,711	3,844	4,017
Women		2,167	2,242	2,322	2,426
Men		770	796	825	862
Persons of self-described gender		-	-	-	-
Vacant		650	673	697	728
Total Corporate Services		18,203	18,834	19,505	20,383
2029/30 \$'000	2030/31 \$'000	2031/32 \$'000	2032/33 \$'000	2033/34 \$'000	2034/35 \$'000
17,021	17,702	18,410	19,147	19,913	20,709
9,771	10,162	10,568	10,991	11,431	11,882
6,382	6,638	6,903	7,179	7,467	7,765
-	-	-	-	-	-
868	902	939	976	1,015	1,056
4,177	4,344	4,518	4,699	4,887	5,072
2,523	2,624	2,729	2,839	2,952	3,070
896	932	970	1,008	1,049	1,091
-	-	-	-	-	-
757	788	819	852	886	921
21,199	22,046	22,928	23,845	24,799	25,791

Sustainable Communities		2025/26 \$'000	2026/27 \$'000	2027/28 \$'000	2028/29 \$'000
Permanent - Full time		14,924	15,442	15,992	16,712
Women		8,044	8,323	8,620	9,007
Men		4,712	4,875	5,049	5,276
Persons of self-described gender		-	-	-	-
Vacant		2,169	2,244	2,324	2,429
Permanent - Part time		5,742	5,941	6,154	6,430
Women		5,078	5,254	5,441	5,686
Men		153	158	164	171
Persons of self-described gender		-	-	-	-
Vacant		512	530	548	573
Total Sustainable Communities		20,667	21,384	22,146	23,142
2029/30 \$'000	2030/31 \$'000	2031/32 \$'000	2032/33 \$'000	2033/34 \$'000	2034/35 \$'000
17,381	18,076	18,799	19,551	20,333	21,146
9,368	9,742	10,132	10,537	10,959	11,397
5,487	5,707	5,935	6,172	6,419	6,676
-	-	-	-	-	-
2,526	2,627	2,732	2,841	2,955	3,073
6,687	6,955	7,233	7,522	7,823	8,136
5,914	6,150	6,396	6,652	6,918	7,195
178	185	192	200	208	216
-	-	-	-	-	-
596	620	645	671	697	725
24,068	25,031	26,032	27,073	28,156	29,282

Infrastructure & City Services		2025/26 \$'000	2026/27 \$'000	2027/28 \$'000	2028/29 \$'000
Permanent - Full time		17,237	17,835	18,471	19,302
Women		3,142	3,251	3,367	3,519
Men		12,996	13,446	13,925	14,552
Persons of self-described gender		-	-	-	-
Vacant		1,099	1,138	1,178	1,231
Permanent - Part time		373	386	400	418
Women		221	229	237	248
Men		152	157	163	170
Persons of self-described gender		-	-	-	-
Vacant		-	-	-	-
Total Infrastructure & City Services		17,611	18,222	18,871	19,720
2029/30 \$'000	2030/31 \$'000	2031/32 \$'000	2032/33 \$'000	2033/34 \$'000	2034/35 \$'000
20,074	20,877	21,712	22,581	23,484	24,423
3,660	3,806	3,958	4,117	4,281	4,452
15,134	15,740	16,369	17,024	17,705	18,413
-	-	-	-	-	-
1,280	1,332	1,385	1,440	1,498	1,558
435	452	470	489	509	529
258	268	279	290	302	314
177	184	191	199	207	215
-	-	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	-	-
20,509	21,329	22,182	23,070	23,992	24,952

Other	2025/26 \$'000	2026/27 \$'000	2027/28 \$'000	2028/29 \$'000
Casuals, temporary and other expenditure	7,514	7,775	8,052	8,414
Capitalised labour	4,646	4,855	5,073	5,301
Total staff expenditure	71,236	73,755	76,429	79,868

2029/30 \$'000	2030/31 \$'000	2031/32 \$'000	2032/33 \$'000	2033/34 \$'000	2034/35 \$'000
8,751	9,101	9,465	9,844	10,237	10,647
5,513	5,734	5,963	6,202	6,450	6,708
83,063	86,385	89,841	93,434	97,172	101,058



Chief Executive’s Office		2025/26 FTE	2026/27 FTE	2027/28 FTE	2028/29 FTE
Permanent - Full time					
Women		8.0	8.0	8.0	8.0
Men		5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0
Persons of self-described gender		-	-	-	-
Vacant		3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0
Permanent - Part time					
Women		0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8
Men		-	-	-	-
Persons of self-described gender		-	-	-	-
Vacant		-	-	-	-
Total		16.8	16.8	16.8	16.8
2029/30 FTE	2030/31 FTE	2031/32 FTE	2032/33 FTE	2033/34 FTE	2034/35 FTE
8.0	8.0	8.0	8.0	8.0	8.0
5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0
-	-	-	-	-	-
3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0
0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8
-	-	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	-	-
16.8	16.8	16.8	16.8	16.8	16.8

Corporate Services		2025/26 FTE	2026/27 FTE	2027/28 FTE	2028/29 FTE
Permanent - Full time					
Women		68.2	68.2	68.2	68.2
Men		39.0	39.0	39.0	39.0
Persons of self-described gender		-	-	-	-
Vacant		7.0	7.0	7.0	7.0
Permanent - Part time					
Women		23.0	23.0	23.0	23.0
Men		6.4	6.4	6.4	6.4
Persons of self-described gender		-	-	-	-
Vacant		3.9	3.9	3.9	3.9
Total		147.6	147.6	147.6	147.6
2029/30 FTE	2030/31 FTE	2031/32 FTE	2032/33 FTE	2033/34 FTE	2034/35 FTE
68.2	68.2	68.2	68.2	68.2	68.2
39.0	39.0	39.0	39.0	39.0	39.0
-	-	-	-	-	-
7.0	7.0	7.0	7.0	7.0	7.0
23.0	23.0	23.0	23.0	23.0	23.0
6.4	6.4	6.4	6.4	6.4	6.4
-	-	-	-	-	-
3.9	3.9	3.9	3.9	3.9	3.9
147.6	147.6	147.6	147.6	147.6	147.6

Sustainable Communities		2025/26 FTE	2026/27 FTE	2027/28 FTE	2028/29 FTE
Permanent - Full time					
Women		60.7	60.7	60.7	60.7
Men		34.6	34.6	34.6	34.6
Persons of self-described gender		-	-	-	-
Vacant		16.0	16.0	16.0	16.0
Permanent - Part time					
Women		42.8	42.8	42.8	42.8
Men		1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3
Persons of self-described gender		-	-	-	-
Vacant		4.3	4.3	4.3	4.3
Total		159.8	159.8	159.8	159.8
2029/30 FTE	2030/31 FTE	2031/32 FTE	2032/33 FTE	2033/34 FTE	2034/35 FTE
60.7	60.7	60.7	60.7	60.7	60.7
34.6	34.6	34.6	34.6	34.6	34.6
-	-	-	-	-	-
16.0	16.0	16.0	16.0	16.0	16.0
42.8	42.8	42.8	42.8	42.8	42.8
1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3
-	-	-	-	-	-
4.3	4.3	4.3	4.3	4.3	4.3
159.8	159.8	159.8	159.8	159.8	159.8

Infrastructure & City Services		2025/26 FTE	2026/27 FTE	2027/28 FTE	2028/29 FTE
Permanent - Full time					
Women		27.4	27.4	27.4	27.4
Men		124.0	124.0	124.0	124.0
Persons of self-described gender		-	-	-	-
Vacant		9.0	9.0	9.0	9.0
Permanent - Part time					
Women		1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8
Men		1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2
Persons of self-described gender		-	-	-	-
Vacant		-	-	-	-
Total		163.5	163.5	163.5	163.5
2029/30 FTE	2030/31 FTE	2031/32 FTE	2032/33 FTE	2033/34 FTE	2034/35 FTE
27.4	27.4	27.4	27.4	27.4	27.4
124.0	124.0	124.0	124.0	124.0	124.0
-	-	-	-	-	-
9.0	9.0	9.0	9.0	9.0	9.0
1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8
1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2
-	-	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	-	-
163.5	163.5	163.5	163.5	163.5	163.5

Other		2025/26 \$'000	2026/27 \$'000	2027/28 \$'000	2028/29 \$'000
Casuals, temporary and other expenditure		64.6	59.6	55.6	55.6
Capitalised labour		35.1	35.1	35.1	35.1
Total staff		587.3	582.3	578.3	578.3
2029/30 \$'000	2030/31 \$'000	2031/32 \$'000	2032/33 \$'000	2033/34 \$'000	2034/35 \$'000
55.6	55.6	55.6	55.6	55.6	55.6
35.1	35.1	35.1	35.1	35.1	35.1
578.3	578.3	578.3	578.3	578.3	578.3



Financial Performance Indicators

07



The following table highlights Council's projected performance across a range of key financial performance indicators. These indicators provide an analysis of Council's 10-year financial projections and should be interpreted in the context of the organisation's objectives and financial management principles.



Liquidity	Measure	2024/25	2025/26
Working Capital (sufficient working capital is available to pay bills as and when they fall due)	Current assets compared to current liabilities Current assets / current liabilities	141.6%	118.8%
Unrestricted cash (sufficient cash that is free of restrictions is available to pay bills as and when they fall due)	Unrestricted cash compared to current liabilities Unrestricted cash / current liabilities	3.0%	(16.1%)

2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	2031/32	2032/33	2033/34	2034/35
123.5%	124.6%	131.4%	142.7%	146.7%	153.9%	156.6%	160.4%	162.5%
(19.1%)	(18.0%)	(18.4%)	(19.0%)	(19.3%)	(19.3%)	(19.8%)	(19.8%)	(19.1%)

Obligations	Measure	2024/25	2025/26
Loans and borrowings (level of interest bearing loans and borrowings is appropriate to the size and nature of Council's activities)	Loans and borrowings compared to rates Interest bearing loans and borrowings / rate revenue	16.0%	10.2%
Loans and borrowings (level of interest bearing loans and borrowings is appropriate to the size and nature of Council's activities)	Loans and borrowings repayments compared to rates Interest and principal repayments on interest bearing loans and borrowings / rate revenue	2.4%	5.7%
Indebtedness (level of long term liabilities is appropriate to the size and nature of a Council's activities)	Non-current liabilities compared to own-source revenue Non-current liabilities / own source revenue	10.4%	8.8%
Asset renewal (assets are renewed as planned)	Asset renewal compared to depreciation Asset renewal and upgrade expense / Asset depreciation	130.7%	140.0%

2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	2031/32	2032/33	2033/34	2034/35
8.1%	6.1%	4.2%	2.3%	0.8%	0.1%	-	-	-
2.1%	2.0%	1.9%	1.5%	0.8%	0.1%	-	-	-
6.8%	5.0%	3.4%	1.8%	1.2%	1.0%	1.0%	1.0%	1.3%
114.0%	106.0%	108.0%	110.0%	110.0%	104.0%	104.0%	102.2%	99.7%

Efficiency	Measure	2024/25	2025/26
Expenditure level (resources are used efficiently in the delivery of services)	Expenses per property assessment Total expenses / no. of property assessments	\$3,166	\$3,587
Revenue level (resources are used efficiently in the delivery of services)	Average rate per property assessment General rates and municipal charges / no. of property assessments	\$2,154	\$2,272

2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	2031/32	2032/33	2033/34	2034/35
\$3,637	\$3,687	\$3,737	\$3,787	\$3,837	\$3,887	\$3,937	\$4,046	\$4,566
\$2,343	\$2,421	\$2,502	\$2,587	\$2,674	\$2,764	\$2,857	\$2,952	\$2,719

Stability	Measure	2024/25	2025/26
Rates concentration (revenue is generated from a range of sources)	Rates compared to adjusted underlying revenue Rate revenue / adjusted underlying revenue	82.6%	85.1%
Rates effort (rating level is set based on the community's capacity to pay)	Rates compared to property values Rate revenue / CIV of rateable properties in the municipality	0.3%	0.3%

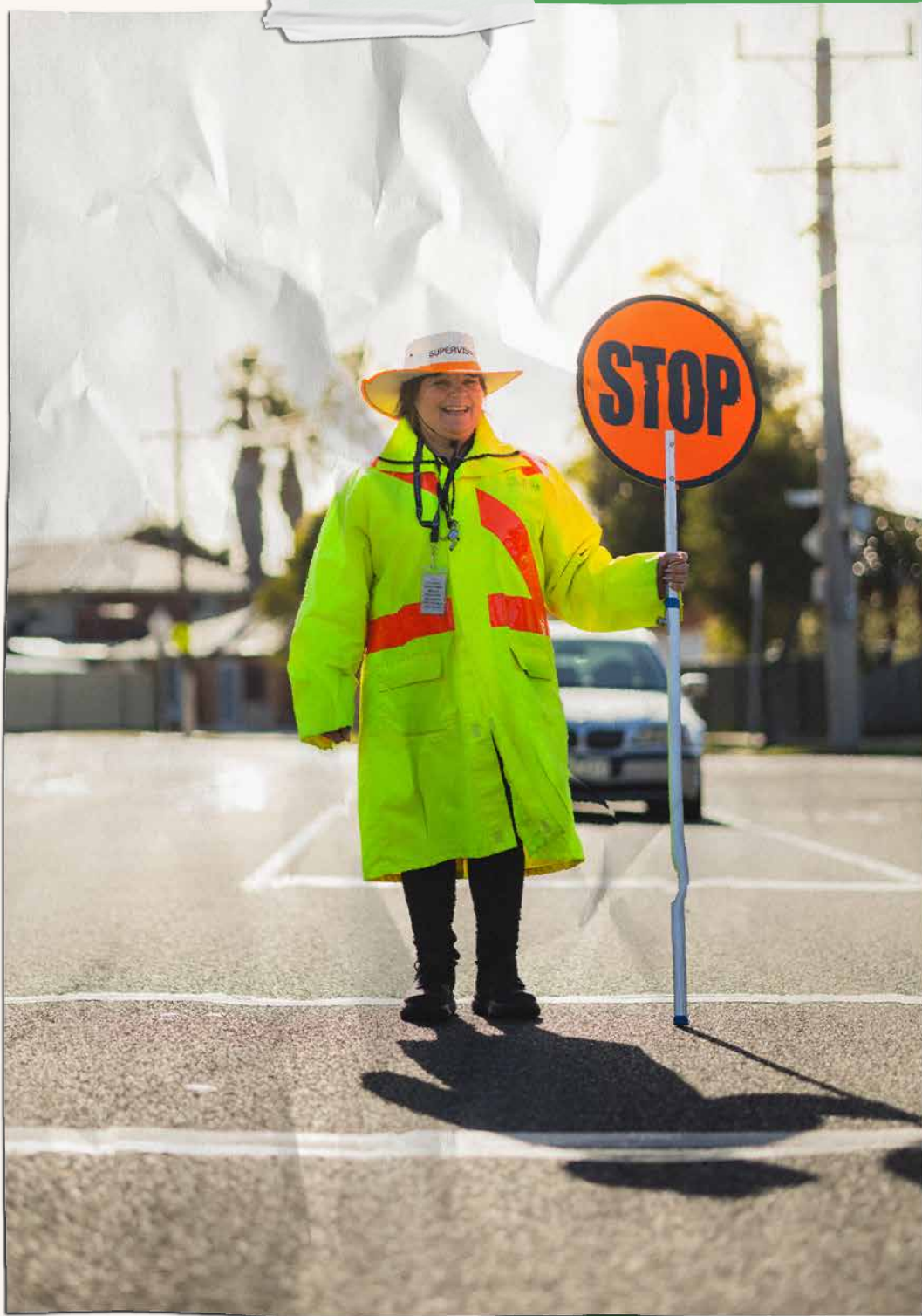
2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	2031/32	2032/33	2033/34	2034/35
86.4%	86.8%	86.8%	86.8%	86.8%	86.8%	86.8%	84.8%	84.8%
0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	0.4%	0.4%	0.4%

Operating position	Measure	2024/25	2025/26
Adjusted underlying result (an adjusted underlying surplus is generated in the ordinary course of business)	Adjusted underlying surplus (or deficit) Adjusted underlying surplus (deficit) / Adjusted underlying revenue	5.1%	3.7%

2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	2031/32	2032/33	2033/34	2034/35
5.2%	5.4%	4.9%	4.4%	3.7%	2.8%	1.4%	0.9%	0.0%

Strategies and Plans





This section describes the strategies and plans that support the 10-year financial projections included to the Financial Plan.

8.1.0.

Borrowing strategy

8.1.1.

Current debt position

The total amount borrowed as at 30 June 2025 is \$22.345 million and this is expected to be reduced to \$7.475 million by 30 June 2026.

Despite being within acceptable debt levels, this plan does not include any further borrowings.

8.1.2.

Future borrowing requirements

The following table highlights Council's projected loan balances, including new loans and loan repayments for the 10 years of this plan.

8.1.3.

Performance Indicators

The following table highlights Council's projected performance across a range of debt management performance indicators.

	Actual 2024/25 \$'000	2025/26 \$'000	2026/27 \$'000	2027/28 \$'000
Opening balance	24,715	22,344	14,869	12,284
Plus New loans	-	-	-	-
Less Principal repayment	2,370	7,475	2,585	2,699
Closing balance	22,344	14,869	12,284	9,585
Interest payment	1,001	864	588	474

2028/29 \$'000	2029/30 \$'000	2030/31 \$'000	2031/32 \$'000	2032/33 \$'000	2033/34 \$'000	2034/35 \$'000
9,585	6,767	3,823	1,421	122	-	-
-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2,819	2,943	2,402	1,299	122	-	-
6,767	3,823	1,421	122	-	-	-
354	228	110	34	1	-	-

Performance Indicator	Target	Actual 2024/25 \$'000	2025/26 \$'000	2026/27 \$'000	2027/28 \$'000
Total borrowings / Rate revenue	Below 60%	16.0%	10.2%	8.1%	6.1%
Debt servicing / Rate revenue	Below 5%	0.7%	0.6%	0.3%	0.2%
Debt commitment / Rate revenue	Below 10%	2.4%	5.7%	2.1%	2.0%
Indebtedness / Own source revenue	Below 40%	10.4%	8.8%	8.6%	4.9%

2028/29 \$'000	2029/30 \$'000	2030/31 \$'000	2031/32 \$'000	2032/33 \$'000	2033/34 \$'000	2034/35 \$'000
4.2%	2.3%	0.8%	0.1%	-	-	-
0.2%	0.1%	0.1%	0.0%	-	-	-
2.0%	1.9%	1.5%	0.8%	0.1%	-	-
3.4%	1.8%	1.1%	1.2%	1.1%	1.0%	1.3%

Council maintains its loan borrowing within prudent and management limits as demonstrated by the following performance indicators.

Total borrowings / rate revenue

The predicted ratio in this plan is well below target, indicating that Council is well within acceptable debt levels.

Debt commitment / rate revenue

The predicted ratio in this plan is well below target, indicating that Council is well within acceptable debt levels.

Debt servicing / rate revenue

The predicted ratio in this plan is well below target, indicating that Council is well within acceptable debt levels.

Indebtedness / own-source revenue

The predicted ratio in this plan is well below target, indicating that Council is well within acceptable debt levels.

8.2.0.

Reserves strategy

8.2.1.

Current reserves

Restricted reserves are financial reserves that must be used to meet contractual or statutory obligations.

Discretionary reserves are financial reserves that are determined and spent at the discretion of Council.

Waste management
reserve

Purpose: This reserve is used to reconcile waste income against waste expenditure incurred by Council. These should have some correlation as the income is generally generated by a service charge included on the rate notice. This is very difficult in an extremely volatile market, so the reserve ensures that waste income and expenditure will be balanced over a number of years.

Movements: Inflows to the reserve (inflows) relate to a surplus of waste income over waste expenditure. Transfers from the reserve (outflows) relate to a deficit where waste expenditure exceeds waste income.

Car park reserve

Purpose: This reserve relates to a car parking strategy for the commercial centre in Williamstown to address a number of car parking issues confronting Douglas Parade, Ferguson Street and Nelson Place.

Movements: Transfers to the reserve (inflows) comprise contributions from businesses in lieu of providing sufficient customer parking. Transfers from the reserve (outflows) fund additional parking spaces in designated areas.

Recreation land fund

Purpose: This reserve holds funds contributed by developers for works associated with developing and improving public open space and recreational facilities within Council. Funds are contributed in accordance with Section 18 of the Subdivision Act 1988 and transfers are restricted for the purpose of creating open space such as parks, playgrounds, pavilions and other such items where it is deemed that these works should occur at a later point than the initial development.

Movements: Transfers to the reserve (inflows) comprise contribution income from subdividers in lieu of the public open space requirement. Transfers from the reserve (outflows) fund open space capital projects annually.

Street tree planting reserve

Purpose: This reserve holds funds contributed by developers to be used towards street tree planting and maintenance.

Movements: Transfers to the reserve (inflows) comprise contribution income from subdividers and developers. Transfers from the reserve (outflows) contribute to the annual street tree planting program.

Port Phillip Woollen Mills developer contribution plan (DCP)

Purpose: This reserve holds funds received under Design and Development Overlay Schedule 1 of the Hobsons Bay Planning Scheme, relating to the former Port Phillip Woollen Mill development contributions plan. This plan covers land within Williamstown, roughly bounded by Nelson Place, Kanowna Street, Ann Street and Cecil Street and is associated with the former Port Philip Woollen Mills strategic redevelopment area.

Movements: Transfers to the reserve (inflows) comprise contribution income from developers. Transfers from the reserve (outflows) are for nominated capital works for development infrastructure projects and community infrastructure projects in accordance with the former Port Philip Woollen Mills development contributions plan.

Hobsons Bay
caravan park DCP

Purpose: This reserve holds community infrastructure levy funds received from the development of the former Hobson Bay caravan park site in Williamstown North. Funds are received via a section 173 agreement that is on the title to the land.

Movements: Transfers to the reserve (inflows) comprise community infrastructure levy income from the developers. Transfers from the reserve (outflows) will be for nominated community infrastructure projects that are within the proximity of the development site, and that has nexus to the development area.

Former Caltex site
DCP (Precinct 16
East)

Purpose: This reserve holds the community infrastructure levy funds received from the development of the former Caltex site at 38–48 Blackshaws Road in South Kingsville. Funds are received via the section 173 agreements that are on the title of the land.

Movements: Transfers to the reserve (inflows) comprise community infrastructure levy income from the developers. Transfers from the reserve (outflows) will be for nominated capital works for community infrastructure projects that are within the proximity of the development site, and that has nexus to the development area.

Loan repayment
reserve

Purpose: This reserve is designed to ensure that sufficient funds are available for future principle repayments of interest-only loans.

Movements: Transfers to the reserve (inflow) are equal to the deemed principal repayment of an interest-only loan in a given year. Transfers from the reserve (outflows) equal the final payment of an interest-only loan when they fall due.

Altona North DCP
(Precinct 15)

Purpose: This reserve holds funds received under the Development Contributions Plan Overlay Schedule 2 of the Hobsons Bay Planning Scheme, relating to the Altona North development contributions plan. This plan covers land generally bounded by Kyle Road, Blackshaws Road, New Street, the West Gate Freeway and Brooklyn Terminal Substation in Altona North and South Kingsville.

Movements: Transfers to the reserve (inflows) comprise contribution income from developers. Transfers from the reserve (outflows) will be for nominated capital works for development infrastructure projects and community infrastructure projects in accordance with the Altona North development contributions plan. Payments can also be made from this reserve for development or community infrastructure projects that have been undertaken by the developer under this program, also known as "works in kind."

Victorian Grants
Commission reserve

Purpose: This reserve holds funds received in advance from the Victorian Grants Commission for the financial assistance grant and local road funding relating to the next financial year.

Movements: Transfers to the reserve (inflows) comprise funds received in advance from the Victorian Grants Commission. Transfers from the reserve (outflows) are applied in the next financial year, for which the grant relates to.

General purpose
reserve

Purpose: This reserve is used to balance the available funding result and set aside funds for future capital works.

Movements: Transfers to the reserve (inflows) are mainly sourced from operational or capital budget savings. Transfers from the reserve (outflows) are aligned to Council's capital works program annually.

Capital works
carryover reserve

Purpose: This reserve is used to fund timing differences caused by projects being delayed (or brought forward) in the annual capital works program.

Movements: Transfers to the reserve (inflows) are equivalent to the amount of capital works delayed in the year that they are originally budgeted to be completed. Transfers from the reserve (outflows) fund capital works that have been delayed in the year that they will now be completed.

8.2.2.

Reserve usage projections

The following table discloses the balance and annual movement for each reserve over the 10-year life of this plan. Total amount of reserves for each year aligns with the statement of changes in equity.

Waste Management Sinking Fund (Restricted)	2024/25 \$'000	2025/26 \$'000	2026/27 \$'000	2027/28 \$'000
Opening balance	(3,471)	(3,803)	(4,371)	(3,381)
Transfer to reserve	370	137	990	2,006
Transfer from reserve	702	705	-	-
Closing balance	(3,803)	(4,371)	(3,381)	(1,375)

2028/29 \$'000	2029/30 \$'000	2030/31 \$'000	2031/32 \$'000	2032/33 \$'000	2033/34 \$'000	2034/35 \$'000
(1,375)	263	1,520	2,383	2,837	2,868	2,577
1,638	1,257	863	454	31	-	-
-	-	-	-	291	-	621
263	1,520	2,383	2,837	2,868	2,577	1,956

Car Park Reserve (Restricted)	2024/25 \$'000	2025/26 \$'000	2026/27 \$'000	2027/28 \$'000
Opening balance	222	222	222	222
Transfer to reserve	-	-	-	-
Transfer from reserve	-	-	-	-
Closing balance	222	222	222	222

2028/29 \$'000	2029/30 \$'000	2030/31 \$'000	2031/32 \$'000	2032/33 \$'000	2033/34 \$'000	2034/35 \$'000
222	222	222	222	222	222	222
-	-	-	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	-	-	-
222	222	222	222	222	222	222

Recreation Land Fund (Restricted)	2024/25 \$'000	2025/26 \$'000	2026/27 \$'000	2027/28 \$'000
Opening balance	2,102	2,690	2,390	2,390
Transfer to reserve	3,588	2,300	2,300	2,300
Transfer from reserve	3,000	2,600	2,300	2,300
Closing balance	2,690	2,390	2,390	2,390

2028/29 \$'000	2029/30 \$'000	2030/31 \$'000	2031/32 \$'000	2032/33 \$'000	2033/34 \$'000	2034/35 \$'000
2,390	2,390	2,390	2,390	2,390	2,390	2,390
2,300	2,300	2,300	2,300	2,300	2,300	2,300
2,300	2,300	2,300	2,300	2,300	2,300	2,300
2,390	2,390	2,390	2,390	2,390	2,390	2,390

Street Tree Planting Reserve (Restricted)	2024/25 \$'000	2025/26 \$'000	2026/27 \$'000	2027/28 \$'000
Opening balance	132	240	154	154
Transfer to reserve	191	60	60	60
Transfer from reserve	84	146	60	60
Closing balance	240	154	154	154

2028/29 \$'000	2029/30 \$'000	2030/31 \$'000	2031/32 \$'000	2032/33 \$'000	2033/34 \$'000	2034/35 \$'000
154	154	154	154	154	154	154
60	60	60	60	60	60	60
60	60	60	60	60	60	60
154	154	154	154	154	154	154

Port Phillip Woolen Mills DCP (Restricted)	2024/25 \$'000	2025/26 \$'000	2026/27 \$'000	2027/28 \$'000
Opening balance	1,013	329	176	176
Transfer to reserve	16	-	-	-
Transfer from reserve	700	154	-	-
Closing balance	329	176	176	176

2028/29 \$'000	2029/30 \$'000	2030/31 \$'000	2031/32 \$'000	2032/33 \$'000	2033/34 \$'000	2034/35 \$'000
176	176	176	176	176	176	176
-	-	-	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	-	-	-
176	176	176	176	176	176	176

Hobsons Bay Caravan Park DCP (Restricted)	2024/25 \$'000	2025/26 \$'000	2026/27 \$'000	2027/28 \$'000
Opening balance	-	-	11	23
Transfer to reserve	47	11	11	11
Transfer from reserve	47	-	-	-
Closing balance	-	11	23	34

2028/29 \$'000	2029/30 \$'000	2030/31 \$'000	2031/32 \$'000	2032/33 \$'000	2033/34 \$'000	2034/35 \$'000
34	45	56	68	79	90	101
11	11	11	11	11	11	11
-	-	-	-	-	-	-
45	56	68	79	90	101	113

Former Caltex Site DCP (Restricted)	2024/25 \$'000	2025/26 \$'000	2026/27 \$'000	2027/28 \$'000
Opening balance	33	52	52	52
Transfer to reserve	19	-	-	-
Transfer from reserve	-	-	-	-
Closing balance	52	52	52	52

2028/29 \$'000	2029/30 \$'000	2030/31 \$'000	2031/32 \$'000	2032/33 \$'000	2033/34 \$'000	2034/35 \$'000
52	52	52	52	52	52	52
-	-	-	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	-	-	-
52	52	52	52	52	52	52

Altona North DCP (Restricted)	2024/25 \$'000	2025/26 \$'000	2026/27 \$'000	2027/28 \$'000
Opening balance	4,182	5,302	5,769	7,027
Transfer to reserve	1,121	467	1,257	-
Transfer from reserve	-	-	-	-
Closing balance	5,302	5,769	7,027	7,027

2028/29 \$'000	2029/30 \$'000	2030/31 \$'000	2031/32 \$'000	2032/33 \$'000	2033/34 \$'000	2034/35 \$'000
7,027	7,027	7,027	7,027	7,027	7,027	7,027
-	-	-	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	-	-	-
7,027	7,027	7,027	7,027	7,027	7,027	7,027

Reserves Summary (Restricted)	2024/25 \$'000	2025/26 \$'000	2026/27 \$'000	2027/28 \$'000
Opening balance	4,213	5,033	4,403	6,662
Transfer to reserve	5,352	2,975	4,619	4,377
Transfer from reserve	4,533	3,605	2,360	2,360
Closing balance	5,033	4,403	6,662	8,679

2028/29 \$'000	2029/30 \$'000	2030/31 \$'000	2031/32 \$'000	2032/33 \$'000	2033/34 \$'000	2034/35 \$'000
8,679	10,328	11,596	12,471	12,936	12,978	12,698
4,009	3,628	3,234	2,825	2,402	2,371	2,371
2,360	2,360	2,360	2,360	2,360	2,651	2,981
10,328	11,596	12,471	12,936	12,978	12,698	12,089

Victorian Grants Commission Reserve (Discretionary)	2024/25 \$'000	2025/26 \$'000	2026/27 \$'000	2027/28 \$'000
Opening balance	-	1,768	1,812	1,857
Transfer to reserve	1,768	1,812	1,857	1,904
Transfer from reserve	-	-	-	-
Closing balance	1,768	1,812	1,857	1,904

2028/29 \$'000	2029/30 \$'000	2030/31 \$'000	2031/32 \$'000	2032/33 \$'000	2033/34 \$'000	2034/35 \$'000
1,904	1,952	2,000	2,050	2,102	2,154	2,208
1,952	2,000	2,050	2,102	2,154	2,208	2,263
-	-	-	-	-	-	-
1,952	2,000	2,050	2,102	2,154	2,208	2,263

General Purpose Reserve (Discretionary)	2024/25 \$'000	2025/26 \$'000	2026/27 \$'000	2027/28 \$'000
Opening balance	4,823	11,615	4,915	3,988
Transfer to reserve	8,296	-	-	431
Transfer from reserve	1,504	6,700	927	3,233
Closing balance	11,615	4,915	3,988	755

2028/29 \$'000	2029/30 \$'000	2030/31 \$'000	2031/32 \$'000	2032/33 \$'000	2033/34 \$'000	2034/35 \$'000
755	1,186	2,647	1,362	1,141	787	893
1,461	-	-	-	106	-	248
-	-	1,285	221	354	-	496
1,186	2,647	1,362	1,141	787	893	645

Capital Works Carryover Reserve (Discretionary)	2024/25 \$'000	2025/26 \$'000	2026/27 \$'000	2027/28 \$'000
Opening balance	16,477	7,036	-	-
Transfer to reserve	14,036	7,000	-	-
Transfer from reserve	23,477	14,036	-	-
Closing balance	7,036	-	-	-

2028/29 \$'000	2029/30 \$'000	2030/31 \$'000	2031/32 \$'000	2032/33 \$'000	2033/34 \$'000	2034/35 \$'000
-	-	-	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Loan Repayment Reserve (Discretionary)	2024/25 \$'000	2025/26 \$'000	2026/27 \$'000	2027/28 \$'000
Opening balance	4,500	5,000	-	-
Transfer to reserve	500	-	-	-
Transfer from reserve	-	5,000	-	-
Closing balance	5,000	-	-	-

2028/29 \$'000	2029/30 \$'000	2030/31 \$'000	2031/32 \$'000	2032/33 \$'000	2033/34 \$'000	2034/35 \$'000
-	-	-	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Reserves Summary (Total Discretionary)		2024/25 \$'000	2025/26 \$'000	2026/27 \$'000	2027/28 \$'000
Opening balance		25,800	25,419	6,727	5,846
Transfer to reserve		24,600	8,812	1,857	1,904
Transfer from reserve		24,981	27,504	2,739	3,009
Closing balance		25,419	6,727	5,846	2,659

2028/29 \$'000	2029/30 \$'000	2030/31 \$'000	2031/32 \$'000	2032/33 \$'000	2033/34 \$'000	2034/35 \$'000
2,659	3,138	4,647	3,412	3,243	2,941	3,101
2,383	3,461	2,050	2,102	2,154	2,314	2,263
1,904	1,952	3,285	2,271	2,456	2,154	2,456
3,138	4,647	3,412	3,243	2,941	3,101	2,908

Reserves Summary (Restricted & Discretionary)		2024/25 \$'000	2025/26 \$'000	2026/27 \$'000	2027/28 \$'000
Opening balance		30,013	30,452	11,130	12,507
Transfer to reserve		29,000	11,787	6,476	6,281
Transfer from reserve		29,513	11,709	5,099	4,264
Closing balance		30,452	11,130	12,507	11,338


2028/29 \$'000	2029/30 \$'000	2030/31 \$'000	2031/32 \$'000	2032/33 \$'000	2033/34 \$'000	2034/35 \$'000
11,338	13,466	16,244	15,883	16,179	15,919	15,799
6,392	7,090	5,285	4,927	4,566	4,685	4,634
4,264	4,312	6,465	4,631	4,186	4,805	5,437
13,466	16,244	15,883	16,179	15,919	15,799	14,997


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**HOBSONS BAY
LANGUAGE LINE**

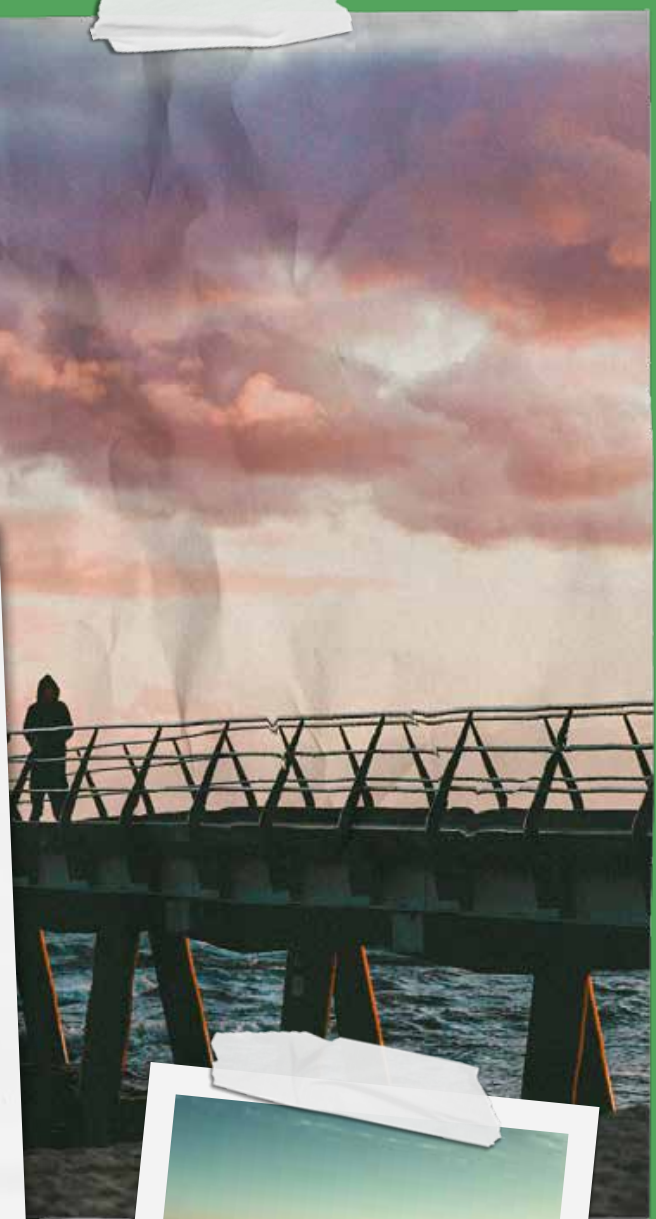
9932 1212

INTERPRETER SERVICE FOR ALL LANGUAGES

Your Council in your language

Telephone interpreting service

Arabic	خدمة الترجمة الهاتفية
Burmese	တယ်လီဖုန်းဖြင့် စကားပြန် ဝန်ဆောင်မှု
Cantonese	电话口译服务
Croatian	Telefonska služba tumača
Greek	Τηλεφωνική Υπηρεσία Διερμηνέων
Italian	Servizio telefonico interpreti
Karen	လိတံမိ တာ်ကတိလ်တိုးတာ် တာ်မ
Macedonian	Телефонска преведувачка служба
Maltese	Servizz ta' Interpretar bił-Telefon
Mandarin	电话口译服务
Vietnamese	Dịch vụ Thông dịch qua Điện thoại



For further information regarding
this plan please contact the
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Annual Action Plan Year 1 (2025-26)

1. Healthy Community

Goal	Council Plan Action	Health Wellbeing & Safety Plan Action	2025-26 Annual Actions
1.1: Strengthen community connection	1.1.2 Support opportunities to promote First Nations reconciliation.	1.1.2.1. Work collaboratively across Council to promote and support the process of reconciliation.	Scope and determine commitment to a Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP).
1.1: Strengthen community connection	1.1.3 Recognise, support and celebrate the diversity of Hobsons Bay.	1.1.3.1. Support events and programs that celebrate diversity and provide an opportunity for learning and promote a shared community identity (DAP)	Develop and implement a calendar of Significant dates that Council will observe.
1.1: Strengthen community connection	1.1.4 Foster partnerships with community groups and organisations that support community connection, wellbeing and capacity building.	-	Develop a business case for a pilot Community Recognition Awards program
1.1: Strengthen community connection	1.1.6 Partner with young people, families, schools, and service providers to co-design initiatives that respond to their needs and aspirations.	1.1.6.1. Work collaboratively across Council to support young people.	Develop a Communities of Practice (CoP) model to support collaborative programming and service delivery across Council.
1.2: Reduce harm and build a safer community	1.2.1 Support and deliver harm prevention initiatives to reduce harm from gambling, tobacco, vaping, alcohol and other drugs.	1.2.1.2. Implement the Gambling Harm Prevention Policy Statement 2023.	Socialise and align the Gambling Harm Prevention Policy Statement across Council
1.2: Reduce harm and build a safer community	1.2.1 Support and deliver harm prevention initiatives to reduce harm from gambling, tobacco, vaping, alcohol and other drugs.	1.2.1.3. Implement the Alcohol Harm Prevention Policy (in development).	Continue to research and prepare Council's position on Alcohol Harm Prevention
1.2: Reduce harm and build a safer community	1.2.2 Prevent and respond to family violence by promoting gender equity and advocating for local access to services.	-	See 1.1.3
1.2: Reduce harm and build a safer community	1.2.3 Provide public places and infrastructure that enhance perceptions of safety and strengthen partnerships to deliver community safety initiatives.	-	Per 4.1.3, Finalise Policy Position in relation to CCTV use in Hobsons Bay Per 4.1.3 Develop and finalise a policy for public lighting upgrades to guide future investment
1.2: Reduce harm and build a safer community	1.2.3 Provide public places and infrastructure that enhance perceptions of safety, and strengthen partnerships to deliver community safety initiatives.	1.2.3.2. Advocate and partner with relevant organisations and agencies to address community safety issues.	Establish and support a Local Safety Committee
1.3: Promote physical and mental wellbeing	1.3.1 Apply a life-course approach to identify service gaps, guide future life-stage action plans, and strengthen advocacy and partnerships to improve equitable access to health and community services.	1.3.1.4 Develop, implement and review coordinated processes within Council to support residents experiencing or at risk of homelessness, to access available services and support.	Commence research and development to inform Council's position and responsibilities.
1.3: Promote physical and mental wellbeing	1.3.3 Upgrade community facilities such as libraries, community hubs, sport and recreation facilities when aligned to feasible strategy to increase participation in physical and mental activities with a focus on attracting under-represented cohorts.	-	Develop Sport and Recreation Framework
1.3: Promote physical and mental wellbeing	1.3.4 Support healthy eating and access to nutritious food through policy development, advocacy, education, and capacity-building community initiatives.	1.3.4.1. Promote healthy eating and access to nutritious food through policy development, advocacy, and procurement.	Access Deakin University's infant healthy eating program and plan implementation through the MCH service

2. Sustainable Environment

Goal	Action	HWSP Action	2025-26 Annual Actions
2.1: Respond effectively to climate change by reducing Council emissions and managing risk	2.1.2 Maintain carbon neutral accreditation.	-	a. Compile greenhouse gas inventory for 2024-25. b. Purchase offsets. c. Register for Climate Active certification.
2.2: Support the community to respond to climate	2.2.1 Provide education, advice and support to the community to reduce emissions and respond to a changing climate.	2.2.1.1. Support and deliver programs and activities to reduce and prevent the health impacts of climate change within priority populations. (DAP)	Begin research for a municipal heat plan, to be developed in line with 4.1.3
2.3: Promote and deliver recycling and waste management services that divert waste from landfill	2.3.1 Develop and implement the new Waste and Recycling Strategy (2025) incorporating confirmation of service levels, community education, and enforcement.	-	Prepare new Waste and Recycling Strategy for Council endorsement
2.3: Promote and deliver recycling and waste management services that divert waste from landfill	2.3.3 Manage waste and recycling contractual arrangements to maximise environmental outcomes.	-	Confirm contract arrangements for kerbside collection services: a. Landfill b. Food and Garden c. Hard Waste
2.3: Promote and deliver recycling and waste management services that divert waste from landfill	2.3.4 Pursue use of sustainable materials within infrastructure projects to facilitate greater uptake of recycling of waste products.	-	Update procurement processes to prioritise use of recycled materials
2.4: Promote the conservation of our unique natural environments	2.4.1 In partnership with relevant groups and organisations, promote and protect the city's unique local environments including coastal areas, wetlands and grasslands.	2.4.1.1. Implement the Biodiversity Strategy 2024-34, Council's key strategic document to guide the preservation and enhancement of biodiversity in Hobsons Bay.	Develop a prioritised program of projects stemming from the Biodiversity Strategy
2.4: Promote the conservation of our unique natural environments	2.4.2 Strengthen and embed land-contamination management practices.	-	Review Management of Contaminated Land on Council Owned Property Framework in line with 4.1.3

3. Liveable City

Goal	Action	HWSP Action	2025-26 Annual Actions
3.1: Provide equitable and inclusive community infrastructure	3.1.3 Provide accessible and well-maintained community facilities that meet community expectations and needs.	-	a. Complete an Asset Management Plan for Williamstown Town Hall for best practice management of significant asset b. Complete a feasibility review to determine the appropriate actions for rehabilitation of the Williamstown Mechanics Institute.
3.1: Provide equitable and inclusive community infrastructure	3.1.3 Provide accessible and well-maintained community facilities that meet community expectations and needs.	-	Commence development of Facility Services Framework in line with 4.1.3
3.1: Provide equitable and inclusive community infrastructure	3.1.4 Enhance the existing provision of open space across the municipality through renewal and upgrade to meet community expectations in accordance with the Open Space Strategy.	-	a. Commence work to carry out dog off lead space review, b. Develop a prioritised program of activity centre upgrades, c. Review open space renewal/upgrade program which takes into consideration Open Space Strategy
3.1: Provide equitable and inclusive community infrastructure	3.1.5 Respond to the impacts of the predicted rise in sea level including erosion of the coastline and loss of usable recreation space.	-	Continue work as a partner for the DEECA led Adapt West - Shaping our Shores coastal management project
3.2: Increase access to jobs, education and housing	3.2.2 Activate retail and service precincts, with a focus on supporting local business, attracting investment, and creating vibrant community hubs across the city.	-	Deliver Economic Development Action Plan in line with 4.1.3. See also 3.2.3 and 3.2.6.
3.2: Increase access to jobs, education and housing	3.2.3 Deliver initiatives to Attract commercial and industrial investment that supports sustainable local employment.	-	Finalise Economic Development Action Plan in line with 4.1.3. See also 3.2.2 and 3.2.6.
3.2: Increase access to jobs, education and housing	3.2.4 Develop and implement the Plan for Hobsons Bay to guide land use planning for future housing growth, employment, land protection, environmental resilience and heritage outcomes.	-	Develop <i>Plan for Hobson's Bay</i> including community engagement In line with 4.4.2 and 4.4.2.2
3.2: Increase access to jobs, education and housing	3.2.5 Develop and implement a housing strategy to reflect supply forecasts and review the Neighbourhood Character Study.	-	Re-establish the Hobsons Bay Affordable Housing Trust Advisory Committee to strengthen Council's strategic leadership on local housing commitments.
3.2: Increase access to jobs, education and housing	3.2.5 Develop and implement a Housing Strategy to reflect supply forecasts and review the Neighbourhood Character Study.	3.2.5.1. Ensure that priority populations are engaged in the development of the Housing Strategy. (DAP)	Develop a <i>Housing Strategy</i> including community engagement In line with 4.4.2 and 4.4.2.2
3.2: Increase access to jobs, education and housing	3.2.6 Deliver and support education and training initiatives that increase employment pathways, education and skill development.	-	Finalise Economic Development Action Plan in line with 4.1.3. See also 3.2.2 and 3.2.3.
3.3: Deliver and advocate for a safe and accessible transport network	3.3.1 Review and implement the Integrated Transport Strategy and deliver infrastructure to improve movement and accessibility outcomes across the municipality.	3.3.1.1. Deliver active transport initiatives in line with the Integrated Transport Strategy. (DAP)	Commence review the Integrated Transport Strategy in line with 4.1.3
3.5: Address drainage, flooding and stormwater management concerns	3.5.1 Develop and implement a Drainage Strategy that considers the impacts of climate change.	-	Commence development of a Drainage Strategy including community engagement In line with 4.4.2 and 4.4.2.2

4. Accountable Council

Goal	Action	HWSP Action	2025-26 Annual Actions
4.1: Strengthen governance practices and systems	4.1.2 Implement an integrated corporate, strategic planning and reporting framework.	-	Framework developed along with supporting documentation/templates and key reporting timelines.
4.1: Strengthen governance practices and systems	4.1.3 Conduct a review of Council policies and deliver a rolling program of updates.	-	Policy framework developed, and a prioritised list of policies/documents for review/development.
4.1: Strengthen governance practices and systems	4.1.4 Embed best-practice governance and compliance across all Council regulatory, governance and corporate services.	-	Develop compliance register and a schedule for routine reviews and reporting to ARC
4.2: Increase staff satisfaction and safety	4.2.1 Implement the actions from the Integrated Action Plan (2025) relating to valuing people, sound governance and trust and integrity.	-	Rebuilding Governance and Culture Action Plan - Delivery of year 1
4.3: Improve the financial performance of Council	4.3.3 Reduce the asset renewal gap.	-	a. Completion of Asset Plan 2025-35, b. Adoption of Road Management Plan 2025, c. Complete the Open Space and Recreation Asset Audit d. Deliver rollout of new Road Asset Inspection Software
4.4: Increase effective communications and community engagement	4.4.1 Develop and implement a Communications Strategy and associated policies with a focus on methods, language, frequency and closing the loop.	4.4.1.1. Ensure that the needs of priority populations are considered in the development of the Communications Strategy. (DAP)	Complete Communications, Engagement and Advocacy service review in line with 4.3.1
4.4: Increase effective communications and community engagement	4.4.2 Review and adopt the Community Engagement Strategy and embed across Council.	4.4.2.1. Ensure the needs of priority populations are considered in the development of the Community Engagement Strategy. (DAP)	Review and align Community Engagement Plan to deliver on Council Plan actions
4.5: Develop strategic partnerships to deliver on community	4.5.2 Establish a partnerships framework and map existing and new collaborations to achieve the Community Vision.	4.5.2.1. Develop and foster partnerships with health, wellbeing and safety stakeholders. (DAP)	Develop an Advocacy and Partnerships Plan that identifies advocacy priorities

7.2.2 Annual Budget Consultation Process

Directorate: Corporate Services
Responsible Officer: Chief Financial Officer
Attachments: Nil

Purpose

To advise Council on the feedback received during the Annual Budget Community Engagement review and endorse the enhanced two-stage approach for Annual Budget Community Engagement.

Recommendation

That Council:

1. **Notes that no submissions were received specifically in relation to the proposed Annual Budget Community Engagement review.**
2. **Endorses the enhanced two-stage Annual Budget Community Engagement model.**

Summary

The Annual Budget is one of Council's most significant decisions, determining service levels, infrastructure investment, fees and charges, and resource allocation. It serves as the primary implementation tool for the Council Plan and must be developed in accordance with Council's Community Engagement Policy and the *Local Government Act 2020*.

Council made a commitment to review and enhance its Annual Budget community engagement and consultation approach to ensure genuine and deliberative engagement that meets community expectations. A proposed two-stage engagement model was presented to enable earlier community input on budget priorities before parameters are finalised, creating genuine opportunity for influence. This enhanced approach strengthens the alignment between Council's four-year strategic plans and annual budget decisions.

Community feedback was sought on the proposed Annual Budget engagement approach during a four-week consultation period. One submission was received, which related to a specific funding request rather than feedback on the engagement process itself. As no feedback was received on the proposed engagement approach, it is recommended that Council proceed with the enhanced two-stage model for the 2026-27 Annual Budget cycle.

Background

Annual Budget Community Engagement Review

The *Local Government Act 2020* requires Council to prepare and adopt an Annual Budget for each financial year (and the subsequent three financial years) by 30 June annually. The Act mandates that councils apply their Community Engagement Policy when developing the Annual Budget but does not prescribe specific consultation processes or timeframes.

Council's Community Engagement Policy (2023) aligns with the community engagement principles set out in section 56 of the *Local Government Act 2020*, requiring deliberate, genuine and inclusive engagement that enables the community to meaningfully participate in decisions that significantly impact them. The Annual Budget is one of Council's most significant decisions, determining service levels, infrastructure investment, fees and charges, and overall resource allocation to deliver on the Council Plan priorities.

Council made a commitment to review and enhance its approach to Annual Budget consultation to meet community expectations for genuine engagement and alignment with the deliberative engagement methodology successfully employed in developing Council's strategic plans. Council sought community feedback on Annual Budget engagement approaches concurrently with the exhibition of the Council Plan, Financial Plan and Asset Plan. This will allow Council to design a process which:

- provides essential strategic context for budget discussions
- enables earlier community input before budget parameters are set
- allows sufficient time to implement an enhanced process for the 2026-27 budget
- demonstrates alignment between four-year strategic commitments and annual budget decisions
- ensures compliance with legislative obligations and policy commitments to genuine community engagement

This proactive approach recognises that effective Annual Budget engagement requires both understanding of long-term strategic direction (provided by these strategic plans) and appropriate mechanisms for community participation in annual financial decision-making.

Public exhibition

Council's approach as outlined in the Community Engagement Policy (2023) aligns with the community engagement principles set out under section 56 of the *Local Government Act 2020*. The Policy recommends a four-week engagement phase to enable adequate community review and feedback.

The public exhibition period from 29 October to 26 November 2025 enabled the community to provide feedback on the proposed Annual Budget engagement approach.

Discussion

During the Annual Budget Community Engagement review, Council received one submission. The submission did not provide feedback on the proposed engagement process itself; instead, it was a budget-related request seeking additional funding. As this type of request falls outside the scope of the Annual Budget Community Engagement review, it was not considered as part of this process but was provided to the operational team for review.

As no other feedback was received relating to the Annual Budget Community Engagement review during the public consultation period, no changes have been made to the proposed Annual Budget engagement process.

Annual Budget engagement

The Annual Budget is the primary financial implementation tool for the Council Plan and is developed in accordance with the Financial Plan and Asset Plan. Under the *Local Government Act 2020*, Council must prepare and adopt a budget for each financial year by 30 June and apply its Community Engagement Policy in the budget development process.

Proposed enhanced approach

Council will apply a two-stage budget engagement model:

Stage 1: Early strategic engagement

- Targeted tailored engagement with key stakeholders (including sporting groups, community groups, traders and grant recipients) on budget priorities before the budget is prepared
- Engagement will be completed by late February to assist in early budget development
- Supporting a genuine opportunity to influence budget development.

Stage 2: Broader community consultation

- Consultation on budget priorities identified through Stage 1, conducted during April/May
- Community feedback on broad themes and priorities informed by early stakeholder engagement linked to delivery of Council Plan and in line with long term Financial and Asset plans.

Key benefits of the enhanced two stage approach

- Earlier engagement enabling genuine influence on budget priorities
- Better alignment between strategic plans and annual budget decisions
- Improved transparency about financial constraints
- Enhanced community understanding of Council's financial position and budget preparation processes
- Compliance with Community Engagement Policy and legislative obligations

Strategic Alignment

This report specifically addresses priorities from the following strategic documents:

Hobsons Bay 2030 Community Vision

This report does not relate to a specific priority of the Hobsons Bay 2030 Community Vision.

Council Plan 2021-25

Objective 5: A High Performing Organisation

Strategy 5.1: Improving the quality of our communication and engagement to ensure that our community is informed of and encouraged to contribute to issues in a diversity of ways most suited to them and to advocate for the areas of greatest need

Priority b) Increase targeted and relevant community engagement on key projects and initiatives of Council that will significantly impact the community

Strategy 5.4: Enhance transparency, accountability and good governance practice

Policies and Related Council Documents

Community Engagement Policy (2023)

The Community Engagement Policy provides the framework for how Council engages with the community on key decisions, including the development of the Annual Budget. The Policy aligns with section 56 of the *Local Government Act 2020* and commits Council to genuine, inclusive and deliberate engagement.

Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework (IPRF)

The Annual Budget sits at the operational level of the IPRF, implementing the strategic directions established in the four strategic plans through specific resource allocation, service delivery and infrastructure investment decisions each year. The enhanced Annual Budget engagement approach will strengthen the connection between community input on strategic direction and annual implementation decisions, ensuring genuine community participation throughout the planning and delivery cycle.

Legal/Statutory Obligations and Risk

The enhanced Annual Budget engagement process meets statutory requirements under the relevant legislation:

Legislative requirements:

Local Government Act 2020, section 94: The budget

Requires Council to prepare and adopt a budget for each financial year (and the subsequent three financial years) by 30 June. While the Act does not prescribe specific budget consultation requirements, it requires councils to apply their Community Engagement Policy in budget development.

Local Government Act 2020, section 56: The community engagement principles

Community engagement must be:

- Deliberate (with clear purpose and planning)
- Genuine (with commitment to consider community input)
- Inclusive and accessible (enabling diverse participation)
- Respectful (valuing community knowledge)
- Fit for purpose (using appropriate methods)

Community Engagement Policy (2023)

Compliance status: By seeking community feedback on the Annual Budget development, Council demonstrates compliance with legislative obligations and policy commitments. This proactive approach ensures the 2026-27 Annual Budget process will be informed by community preferences for engagement timing, methods and information needs.

Risk mitigation:

- Community feedback informs process design, reducing risk of inadequate consultation
- Sufficient lead time for implementation planning
- Alignment with deliberative engagement methodology proven successful for strategic plans
- Transparent communication about budget constraints and trade-offs
- Enhanced community understanding of budget context through strategic plans
- Documented process for considering and responding to community feedback

Legal risk management:

Failure to adequately engage the community in budget development could result in:

- Community dissatisfaction and complaints to Victorian Ombudsman
- Challenges to budget decisions based on inadequate consultation
- Reputational damage and loss of community trust
- Non-compliance with Community Engagement Policy

The enhanced two staged approach mitigates these risks by ensuring community preferences inform the engagement design, demonstrating Council's genuine commitment to meaningful participation in budget decision-making.

Financial and Resource Implications

No additional costs will be incurred. All community engagement activities will be delivered within Council's operational budget.

Environmental, Social and Economic Impacts

Social impacts:

- Enhanced community participation in budget development strengthens democracy, builds trust and improves social cohesion
- Inclusive engagement approaches ensure diverse voices are heard, promoting equity and reducing marginalisation
- Transparent budget processes improve community understanding of Council's financial position and constraints
- Meaningful engagement demonstrates respect for community knowledge and priorities, building social capital
- Community input ensures budget decisions reflect diverse community needs and values

Economic impacts:

- Informed community input on budget priorities improves resource allocation efficiency and effectiveness
- Early engagement on budget trade-offs enables better-informed decisions balancing competing priorities
- Community understanding of financial constraints supports realistic expectations and constructive dialogue
- Transparent budget processes reduce risk of costly community disputes or challenges
- Enhanced engagement may identify innovative approaches or partnerships that improve economic outcomes

Environmental impacts:

- Community engagement on budget priorities can elevate environmental considerations in resource allocation
- Budget consultation provides opportunity to discuss trade-offs between competing environmental and other priorities
- Transparent discussion of costs and benefits of sustainability initiatives builds community understanding and support
- Community input can identify environmental priorities for capital investment and operational programs

Governance and accountability impacts:

- Improved budget engagement strengthens democratic participation and accountability
- Demonstration of Council's commitment to genuine community participation in significant decisions
- Increased community capacity to engage meaningfully in complex financial and policy discussions
- Enhanced transparency and trust between Council and community
- Budget engagement aligned with deliberative engagement principles successfully employed for strategic plans

Consultation and Communication

Council endorsed the public consultation for the Annual Budget Community Engagement review, which was made available from 29 October to 26 November 2025, in line with Council's Community Engagement Policy 2023.

As no feedback was received relating specifically to the Annual Budget Community Engagement review, no changes will be made to the enhanced two stage approach of Annual Budget Community Engagement.

Declaration of Conflict of Interest

Section 130 of the *Local Government Act 2020* requires members of Council staff to disclose any general or material conflict of interest in matters to be considered at a Council meeting. Council staff involved in the preparation of this report have no conflict of interest in this matter.

7.2.3 Adoption of the Road Management Plan (RMP)

Directorate: Infrastructure and City Services

Responsible Officer: Manager City Operations

Attachments:

1. Road Management Plan 2025 - for adoption [7.2.3.1 - 25 pages]
2. Draft Road Management Plan 2025 public submissions [7.2.3.2 - 4 pages]

Purpose

To seek Council's endorsement of the Road Management Plan 2025 (RMP).

Recommendation

That Council adopts the Road Management Plan 2025.

Summary

The RMP has been developed to meet the legislative requirements of the *Road Management Act 2004* (the Act) and the strategic directions adopted by Council. Council, as the road authority, is responsible for the maintenance and operational activities of municipal roads which is covered by this RMP.

Council resolved to place Draft RMP on public exhibition for four weeks at the Council Meeting on 28 October 2025. The public exhibition was held from 29 October 2025 to 26 November 2025.

Eight responses were received during this period. One comment resulted in a minor change to the final RMP (Attachment 1) being presented for adoption.

Background

Council is responsible for the management of 442km of roads. The RM Act provides the opportunity for councils to develop a RMP to establish a management system to prioritise road functions.

In accordance with Sections 50 and 52 of the RM Act, the purpose of this RMP 2025 is to:

- establish a management system for the road management functions of Council which is based on policy and operational objectives and available resources
- specify the relevant standards or policies in relation to the discharge of duties in the performance of those road management functions
- detail the management systems that Council proposes to implement in the discharge of its duty to inspect, maintain and repair public roads for which Council is responsible.

Under the RM Act, Council must in accordance with the regulations conduct a review of its Road Management Plan at prescribed intervals. The Road Management (General) Regulations 2016 states that Council must review its RMP during the same period as it is preparing its Council Plan.

Council resolved to place Draft RMP on public exhibition for four weeks at the Council Meeting on 28 October 2025. The public exhibition was held from 29 October 2025 to 26 November 2025.

Discussion

A review of Council's RMP 2021 was undertaken in accordance with the Act and the Road Management (General) Regulations 2016. The review was conducted on the standards of inspection and maintenance for the road and footpath assets including inspection frequencies, defects intervention levels, response times and maintenance actions.

The RMP has been developed to establish a revised management system for the local road functions that are the responsibility of Council. The revised management system is based on policy and operational objectives and recognises resource limitations in undertaking the necessary levels of service and performance targets outlined in the RMP.

The draft RMP 2025 was made available for public feedback over a four-week exhibition period, from 29 October to 26 November 2025. The exhibition was promoted via Participate Hobsons Bay and Council's social media channels. During this time, 257 people visited the Participate webpage and 161 documents were downloaded. Eight public submissions were received, resulting in one minor amendment to the draft RMP. Details of the submissions and responses to each are provided in Attachment 2.

Strategic Alignment

This report specifically addresses priorities from the following strategic documents:

Hobsons Bay 2030 Community Vision

Priority 6: An accessible and connected community

Council Plan 2021-25

Objective 4: Visionary community infrastructure

Strategy 4.2: Ensure that our assets are properly maintained now and into the future at the most economical cost to the community and the environment

Priority c) Improve customer satisfaction with quality of sealed local roads and footpaths across the network

Asset Plan 2022-32

Guiding Principle – Safety

Establish and deliver maintenance standards that maintain assets to the agreed level of services and mitigate any safety or risk issues.

Policies and Related Council Documents

The inaugural RMP was adopted by Council in November 2004 with subsequent revisions in December 2006, June 2009, November 2013, April 2018, April 2020 and December 2021.

Legal/Statutory Obligations and Risk

A review of Council's RMP 2021 was undertaken in accordance with the RM Act and the Road Management (General) Regulations 2016.

The RM Act provides the opportunity for councils to develop a RMP to establish a management system to prioritise road functions. Sections 50 and 52 of the Act outline the purpose of the RMP.

Financial and Resource Implications

Implementation of the RMP activities will be funded through the existing Infrastructure and City Services operating budget allocation.

Environmental, Social and Economic Impacts

Council's strategic asset management approach has positive environmental, social and economic impacts. Long-term asset planning and timely maintenance of infrastructure assets ensure there is ongoing provision of facilities that are safe, accessible and fit for purpose for present and future communities.

Consultation and Communication

As part of the RMP revision process, internal consultation has been undertaken with service managers and key officers responsible for the implementation of the RMP and ongoing management of the roads and footpaths.

The draft RMP 2025 was placed on public exhibition for four weeks from 29 October 2025 to 26 November 2025 to obtain feedback from the community. The public exhibition period was hosted on Participate Hobsons Bay and advertised through Council's social media channels.

At the conclusion of the public exhibition period, a total of 257 people had visited Council's Participate webpage exhibiting the Draft RMP, with 161 documents downloaded. Eight responses were received from the public, but only one resulted in a minor change to the Draft RMP. The submissions and responses are included in Attachment 2.

Declaration of Conflict of Interest

Section 130 of the *Local Government Act 2020* requires members of Council staff to disclose any general or material conflict of interest in matters to be considered at a Council meeting.

Council staff involved in the preparation of this report have no conflict of interest in this matter.

ROAD MANAGEMENT PLAN 2025



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Hobsons Bay City Council's Road Network

Hobsons Bay City Council (HBCC) manages a road network covering 442 km. Assets that form a part of this network include the road pavement and road surface, road bridges and culverts, footpaths, drainage, road furniture and traffic control devices.

This plan documents the standards, strategies and management systems used by HBCC to manage its extensive road network.

Purpose of this Road Management Plan

The purpose of this document is to ensure Council has in place a plan to achieve the following objectives:

- To provide the community with an overview of how Council currently manages its road assets through addressing:
 - Road Business Issues;
 - Road User Obligations;
 - Explaining the network and surrounding boundaries;
 - Asset Value;
 - Management Tactics applied;
 - Levels of Service; and
 - Risk Management.
- To meet the statutory requirements of the Road Management Act, Road Management Regulations (the "Regulations") and relevant Ministerial Code of Practice (the "Codes"). Purposes defined in section 50 of the Act are quoted below –

"The purposes of a road management plan are having regard to the principal object of road management and the works and infrastructure management principles –

(a) to establish a management system for the road management functions of a road authority which is based on policy and operational objectives and available resources; and

(b) to set the relevant standard in relation to the discharge of duties in the performance of those road management functions."

- To support the road asset management system which will ensure that the public roads in the municipality:
 - Are capable of functioning as they were built to function;
 - Are able to meet future needs in a growth environment; and
 - Continue to meet the needs and expectations of the community and other key stakeholders.
- To adhere to good practice of achieving an appropriate level of statutory protection against civil liability claims under the Act.

This Road Management Plan (RMP) was developed using guidance outlined in the 'Ministerial Code of Practice – Road Management Plans'. It is intended that this document provides sufficient information to enable Council and the community to fully understand the value of the city's road assets and activities.

The RMP is an operational document that reflects the current management processes employed by HBCC. This plan is supported by strategic documents including the Council Plan, Asset Plan and Asset Management Plan.

Glossary of Terms

Responsible Road Authority - As defined in the *Road Management Act 2004*, the road authority assigned operational responsibility for undertaking tasks.

Public Road - Roadway or right of way that is declared as a public road by a road authority under the Road Management Act 2004.

Arterial Roads - Roads managed by VicRoads which have been declared to be arterial roads under the Road Management Act.

Municipal Roads - As defined in the *Road Management Act 2004* and refers to roads managed by Councils.

Pathways - As defined in the *Road Management Act 2004* and refers to footpaths, bicycle paths and shared use paths. This does not include bike lanes located on road.

Non-road infrastructure - As defined in the *Road Management Act 2004* and refers to such things as gas pipes, sewerage pipes, electricity poles, bus shelters and roadside furniture.

Road reserve - As defined in the *Road Management Act 2004* and generally refers to the entire parcel of land that a road is located in.

Roadway - As defined in the *Road Management Act 2004* and refers to the part of the road intended for driving motor vehicles on.

Road infrastructure - As defined in the *Road Management Act 2004* and refers to structures and materials forming part of the road, pathway or shoulder such as asphalt, gravel and lane markers.

Road related infrastructure - Infrastructure which is installed or constructed by the relevant road authority for road related purposes to facilitate the operation or use of the roadway or pathway or support or protect the roadway or pathway i.e. Traffic islands, traffic management signage, traffic control sign, traffic light, kerb and channel, a bridge, culvert or ford, road drain or embankment, a noise wall, gate, post or board installed on the road reserve.

Hobsons Bay's Road Asset Management Plan

HBCC has adopted an integrated management approach for the management of its road infrastructure. The Council has produced a Road Asset Management Plan (RAMP) that demonstrates in detail responsible stewardship, risk management, achieves savings by optimising whole of life costs and supports long term financial planning.

The RAMP provides extended information in support of this plan and plays an integral part in future asset planning.

Road Maintenance Management

The RMP inspections are carried out by Council's asset inspection officer throughout the year. Compliance with the maintenance standards within the response times identified in RMP are outsourced by contract, and all activities are undertaken in accordance with the standards stated in the Road and Drainage Maintenance Services Contract.

The current Road and Drainage Maintenance Services contract identifies the requirements of the contractor and includes maintenance standards of road infrastructure within the network.

The contract covers all road maintenance activities as well as:

- Re-sheeting gravel roads;
- Footpath replacement; and
- Kerb and channel replacement.

Road re-seals, asphalt overlays, re-constructions and rehabilitation works are undertaken through separate construction contracts.

The day-to-day maintenance of the network will be undertaken in accordance with the various Codes of Practice developed in accordance with Section 28 of the Road Management Act 2004.

Road Management Plan Coverage

The provisions of this RMP apply to those local roads identified on the Council's Register of Public Roads. Council is the Co-ordinating Road Authority for these roads.

Any agreements between the Council and other road authorities, made pursuant to Section 15 of the Act, are also referred to in the Register of Public Roads.

The Register of Public Roads is stored and maintained in the Council's corporate asset management system, 'CONFIRM'.

This RMP covers the following asset types located within the municipal road reserve:

- Road pavement and surface
- Kerb and channel
- Pathways
- Traffic control devices including traffic control signs and speed humps.

Council's Resources

Road management within Council is continuously improving and Council is active in this area. It must be noted however, that Council is doing the best it can given the resources it has to carry out road management activities.

Exclusions to the Plan

Exclusions to this RMP include:

- Nature strips, which are the areas between the edge of the road or back of the kerb and the property boundary not occupied by the footpath and private road crossings.
- Pathways in open spaces and reserves
- Off Street Car parks, which are defined under the Act as "ancillary areas"
- Nature strip trees and landscaped garden beds within the road reserve that are generally maintained by Council.
- Stormwater drainage

This RMP does not apply to arterial roads and freeways. VicRoads is the Co-ordinating Road Authority for these

roads. However, Council is responsible for those sections of arterial roads outside of the through traffic lanes (e.g. parking lanes and service roads). The Register of Public Roads identifies which roads or parts of roads Council is responsible for. Demarcation of responsibilities is defined through the 'Code of Practice – Operational Responsibility for Public Roads'. This includes clarification of the extent of responsibility at the intersection of arterial roads and Council roads.

Co-ordinating Road Authority

HBCC, under the Act is the "Co-ordinating Road Authority" for municipal roads within the City as set out in the Register of Public Roads.

Key Stakeholders

HBCC's approach to managing Council's road network, as portrayed in this plan, demonstrates responsible stewardship to its key stakeholders:

- State and Federal Governments;
- Road agencies of state and federal government;
- Councillors;
- Community;
- Road Users;
- Pedestrians;
- Users of a range of miscellaneous smaller, lightweight vehicles such as cyclists, mobility scooters, wheelchairs, prams;
- Emergency Authorities such as Police, Ambulance Victoria, CFA;
- Visitors;
- Adjacent municipalities;
- Transport Service Providers;
- Utilities/Developers including rail authorities;
- Other road authorities;
- Special interest groups e.g. RACV and Chambers of Commerce;
- Private Road owners;
- Employees/Volunteers;
- Service Providers/Suppliers; and
- Insurers.

Road Management Act 2004¹

The Road Management Act 2004 was passed on May 11 2004.

The Act was developed to provide a more efficient and safer Victorian road network and is the result of extensive stakeholder and community consultation.

The Road Management Act is based on the following key principles:

- Clear allocation of road asset ownership and management;
- Established processes and accountabilities for policy decisions and performance standards;
- Provision of operational powers to achieve targets and performance standards; and
- Clarification of civil liability laws for the management of roads.

Road Safety Act (1986) sets out the obligations of road users.

"Obligations of road users"

(1) A person who drives a motor vehicle on a highway must drive in a safe manner having regard to all the relevant factors, including (without limiting the generality) the—

- (a) physical characteristics of the road;*
- (b) prevailing weather conditions;*
- (c) level of visibility;*
- (d) condition of the motor vehicle;*
- (e) prevailing traffic conditions;*
- (f) relevant road laws and advisory signs;*
- (g) physical and mental condition of the driver.*

(2) A road user other than a person driving a motor vehicle must use a highway in a safe manner having regard to all the relevant factors.

(3) A road user must —

- (a) have regard to the rights of other road users and take reasonable care to avoid any conduct that may endanger the safety or welfare of other road users;*
- (b) have regard to the rights of the community and infrastructure managers in relation to road infrastructure and non-road infrastructure on the road reserve and take reasonable care to avoid any conduct that may damage road infrastructure and non-road infrastructure on the road reserve;*
- (c) have regard to the rights of the community in relation to the road reserve and take reasonable care to avoid conduct that may harm the environment of the road reserve."*

How the Road Management Act affects the community

The Road Management Act will affect the Victorian community in the following ways:

- Confirm the right of members of the public to travel on roads, and the right of property owners or occupiers or adjoining land to have access to the road;
- Provide a more efficient and safer road network across Victoria;
- Provide roads that best meet the needs and priorities of the community;
- Clarify the allocation of responsibility between road authorities for managing the different parts of the road reserve;
- Clearly define powers and obligations in regard to traffic management, the management of access to

¹ VicRoads Fact Sheet "The Road Management Act at a glance for the community".

roads, road works by service authorities, and maintenance of public transport infrastructure within road reserves;

- Continue to provide municipalities with responsibility for parking on arterial roads;
- Provide for VicRoads to implement clearways on declared arterial roads, subject to consultation with councils, affected land owners/occupiers, traders and the community in accordance with a Code of Practice;
- Impose an 'excess' (threshold amount) of \$1640 (as at 2024-25 financial year, indexed annually) on financial claims against a road authority for property damage that has resulted from road conditions; and
- Minimise disruption to traffic and ensure the safety of road users as a result of service authorities and others undertaking works on roads.

Demand and Growth

As population in the municipality increases, it will put pressure on existing road infrastructure and will result in the need for more road assets and upgrades.

Hobsons Bay's continuous growth means Council's management of its roads not only requires strategies to optimise existing assets, but Council's management approach must consider demand for new infrastructure and consequently address the pressures of a growing community within a large road network. Demand management impacts are addressed in the RAMP.

Financial Planning Process

Funding for roads must compete against a wide range of other services provided by Council. When allocating funds to road assets during the budget process the Council aims to:

- Maximise the life of the asset by timely routine maintenance and capital renewal;
- Ensure that risk defects are identified and are attended to;
- Proactively maintain the network to an agreed risk assessment rating;
- Progressively improve the condition of the local road network in accordance with community expectations.

Draft budgets and supporting documentation are prepared by March of each year. Council adopts the final budget in June.

Funding Sources

Council obtains funds from several sources to provide adequate roads to the community. These sources are identified below:

- General municipal rates;
- Special municipal rates or charges schemes;
- Development contributions; and
- Available grants, e.g. special purpose State Government grants.

Road User Obligations

Driving on the Road

The road users' obligations are set out in Section 17A of the Road Safety Act 1986 (as amended by the Road Management Act 2004) and are summarised below:

A person who drives a motor vehicle on a highway must drive in a safe manner having regard to all relevant factors including but not limited to The:

- Physical characteristics of the road;
- Prevailing weather conditions;
- Level of visibility;
- Condition of the motor vehicle;
- Prevailing traffic conditions;
- Relevant road laws and advisory signs; and
- Physical and mental condition of the driver.

A road user other than a person driving motor vehicle must use a highway in a safe manner having regard to all the relevant factors. A road user must have regard to the rights of other road users and the community, taking reasonable care to avoid conduct that may:

- Endanger the safety and welfare of other road users;
- Damage any infrastructure on the road reserve; and
- Harm the environment of the road reserve.

Access to Private Property

In new developments, the vehicle crossings are constructed as part of the initial civil construction works for the subdivision. The location and type of vehicle crossing is approved as part of the road and drainage drawings for the subdivision. These works are then supervised by Civil Works to ensure the works are constructed as per the approved plans.

For modifications to existing vehicle crossings the resident applies to Council's Roads and Drainage Team for approval. The modifications are assessed by the team to ensure that there are no safety issues or conflict with existing assets. If approved, a permit to undertake the works is issued. The works are supervised by the team with inspections undertaken before and after the concrete is poured.

Council does not accept any responsibility for the maintenance of private vehicle crossings.

Effect on Utility Infrastructure and Service Providers

As a condition of Road Opening Permits, the permit holder is responsible for backfilling and compacting the road opening with crushed rock up to the base of the sealed pavement. The contractor for the road and drainage maintenance service is then responsible for reinstating the road opening within the required timeframe of receiving notification from Council or within an earlier timeframe as directed by Council for safety reasons.

Road Management Act has affected utility infrastructure and service providers in a number of ways. These are detailed in a Code of Practice for utility infrastructure and service providers.

Contents of this Code of Practice are described in VicRoads Fact Sheet 'The Road Management Act at a glance for Utility Service Providers'.

Register of Roads

HBCC's register of roads defines the public roads and contains the classifications for all roads for which the Council is the responsible road authority. For each road, the register records the following:

- Street Name;
- Suburb; and
- Segment.

This up-to-date register is stored and maintained in Council's asset management system. The latest copy of road register is available on Council's website-

Road Hierarchy

The local road network is made up of sealed and unsealed roads. Formal hierarchies to assist with conducting risk assessments, determining inspection frequencies, setting maintenance regimes and formalising standards for new construction have been developed

Classification		Definition
Urban	Body Corp	Roads that are part of body corporate developments.
Urban	Link	Provides link between arterial roads and/ or significant residential, Industrial and commercial nodes.
Urban	Collector	Provides route between and through residential, industrial and commercial areas and convey traffic to link or arterial roads
Urban	Access	Provides direct access to abutting residential, industrial and commercial properties with minimal to no through traffic.
Urban	VicRoads Main Roads	Roads that are the responsibility of VicRoads.

Demarcation and Transfer of Responsibility

The process of handing over declared main roads to VicRoads took place on June 30, 2004. Council is not responsible for the following road types within the City:

- Body Corporate;
- Private;
- VicRoads; and
- VicTrack

Boundary Road

There are a number of roads which form the municipal boundary with adjoining municipalities. The municipal boundary is the centreline of these roads. Council has negotiated practical arrangements and/or Memorandum of Understandings (MoU) with those municipalities for the maintenance of boundary roads.

Council's Asset Portfolio

The road assets that Council is responsible for in this plan include road pavement and surface, kerb and channel, footpath and traffic control devices including signage, medians, roundabouts, traffic calming treatments etc. The up-to-date asset portfolio is maintained in Council's asset management system. Assets that are not the responsibility of Council include:

- Assets that are provided and maintained by the landowner/occupier for their purposes:

- Vehicle driveways connecting the roadway to private property - between the private property boundary to the footpath (if any) and from the footpath (if any) to the layback;
- Nature strip watering systems;
- Landscaping and garden beds;
- Private letterboxes;
- House and business signage; and
- Property drainage pipes (stormwater) connecting to Council's main drains or kerb and channel.



- Assets that are owned and maintained by service utility companies include:
 - Powerlines and poles (except for non-standard and metered lights);
 - Water mains;
 - Gas mains;
 - Sewer mains;
 - Telephone lines;
 - Letter boxes (Australia Post);
 - Signage;
 - Optical fibre cables;
 - Pits, pipes, poles, conduits, valves, cabling etc. and like structures associated with these services; or
 - Permanent survey markers and other non-road infrastructure of any kind

Service levels for Road Assets

Operations based levels of service (LOS) relate to the technical measures and the outputs the customer receives. These LOS are included in the Road and Drainage Maintenance Services Contract in the form of maintenance standards, intervention levels and prescribed activities and performance criteria. These items ensure that the road network and associated assets are maintained to an agreed level and consequently road related services are provided at the prescribed standard.

Customer Expectations

Council's customer research into satisfaction includes:

- Annual community satisfaction survey (LGA);
- Annual survey undertaken by roads contractor; and
- Customer Service Centre enabling one on one contact (letters, phone calls etc.) during normal working hours.

The feedback received from community consultation is used to improve council's understanding of asset performance.

Risk Management Process

HBCC's risk management process is consistent with the Australian and New Zealand Standard AS/NZS ISO 31000:2018 which defines risk assessment and management processes.

The major elements of the risk management process include:

- Risk Identification – identifies the risk and explains how these impact on the business;
- Risk Assessment – establishes a risk rating for all assets or asset groups, and identifies the assets that constitute the greatest business risk;
- Risk Treatment – identifies which actions are available to reduce risk to an acceptable level and identifies the most effective treatment option considering organisation, political, social, environmental and financial factors;
- Monitor and Review – the ongoing process to ensure risk levels remain acceptable; and
- Review and Improve – continual review and improvement of risk management processes.



The overall goal of risk management in the road environment is to ensure that tolerable defect targets are

not exceeded to create hazards in the road network and that these hazards are well managed to ensure that they are repaired/isolated within acceptable timeframes.

Risk Consequences

The key criteria and associated costs considered when assessing the consequences of identified risks include:

- Environmental and Public Health;
- Financial Loss;
- OH&S/Public Liability;
- Other;
- Professional Indemnity;
- Property and Infrastructure;
- Reputation;
- Natural Hazards;
- Information Technology;
- Political and Governance;
- Industrial Relations; and
- Contractual and Legal.

Mitigating Risk

The management tactics used to mitigate risk include:

- Inspections;
- Maintenance specifications;
- Intervention levels;
- Maintenance contracts;
- Community Road Safety Strategy;
- Customer Request System;
- Renewal Programs;
- Risk Management Processes; and
- Response to Incidents.

Managing Asset Information

The Council's asset information is stored on an electronic database known as the Asset Management System (AMS). This system is the repository for asset data and permits Council to record maintenance information against each asset allowing Council to more readily track and analyse work undertaken in the field.

Inspection information is recorded during each inspection undertaken by the asset inspection officer using hand held devices. The officer will record defects above intervention level with photo and mark the extent of defects on footpath/road that need to be rectified. This information is automatically uploaded onto the AMS and recorded against the asset.

Data is collected every four years by an external service provider who records condition of all road assets as well as collecting specific road related information. The condition collected as part of condition assessments is analysed for the purpose of developing long term renewal funding profile. The asset information collected is stored in the AMS.

Identifying Hazards through Inspections

Inspections are designed to identify hazards or defects that have the potential to create a risk of damage or inconvenience to the public. Inspections may result in the programming of maintenance work, asset renewals or changes to processes. The inspection regime for road and footpath assets is aligned with their hierarchies and criticality classification. The activities and frequencies are listed in Appendix 1.

Assessing Condition

The purpose of condition inspections is to assess the state of the asset allowing the remaining life of an asset to be understood. This is used for financial purposes (calculation of depreciation) and for planning and prioritising the HBCC Renewal Program. Condition is assessed every four years. The following assets are included in the condition assessment process:

- Roads;
- Footpaths; and
- Kerb and channel.

Operations, Maintenance and Renewal Activities

Examples of typical operational, maintenance and renewal activities undertaken as part of the management of Council's road assets include:

Operational activities:

- Street cleaning;
- Inspections;
- Vegetation removal; and
- Line marking.

Maintenance Activities:

- Pothole repairs;
- Surface defect repairs;
- Edge break repairs; and
- Maintenance grading (unsealed roads).

Renewal Activities:

- Reconstruction of sealed pavements;
- Reseals and overlays;
- Footpath replacement; and
- Reconstruction of kerb and channel.

Maintenance Contract

Council outsources most maintenance works to a service provider. Their work is monitored by the Civil Maintenance Unit who inspect works undertaken by the service provider. This includes operations and maintenance works. Renewals and new works are supervised by civil project managers. The management of these contracts is largely undertaken in house by the Engineering Services Department.

Standards of Maintenance

Council has a duty of care to road users and the community to maintain all public roads for which it is the responsible authority in a safe condition and to specified maintenance standards that meet community expectations having regard to relevant government transport and other policies, and available funds.

Council has implemented a regular program of inspections of the road network and drainage aimed at identifying and rating defects. Any repairs required are undertaken by the Council's Road Maintenance Contractor.

Additional inspections are conducted as deemed necessary:

- To investigate customer requests; and
- After emergency events.

Where required, incident inspections are carried out in accordance with Division 5 – Claims Procedure, Clause 116 of the Act.

Records of all inspections and maintenance works undertaken are kept to meet the requirements of the Act and this Plan. All defects requiring intervention are assessed and prioritised before rectification/ repair works are undertaken.

Response times are set out in the Contract documents for road maintenance and are aligned with Appendix 1. Where required, make safe temporary repair will be carried out first before permanent repair is completed. In

extreme events these response times may not be achievable due to resource limitations at the time.

Asset Criticality

Asset Criticality is used to identify the inspection frequencies, response times and proposed actions. It is defined as Low, Medium and High.

Road criticality is determined by the following parameters:

- Road hierarchy;
- Bus route; and
- Roads abutting to activity centres and services.

Services used are;

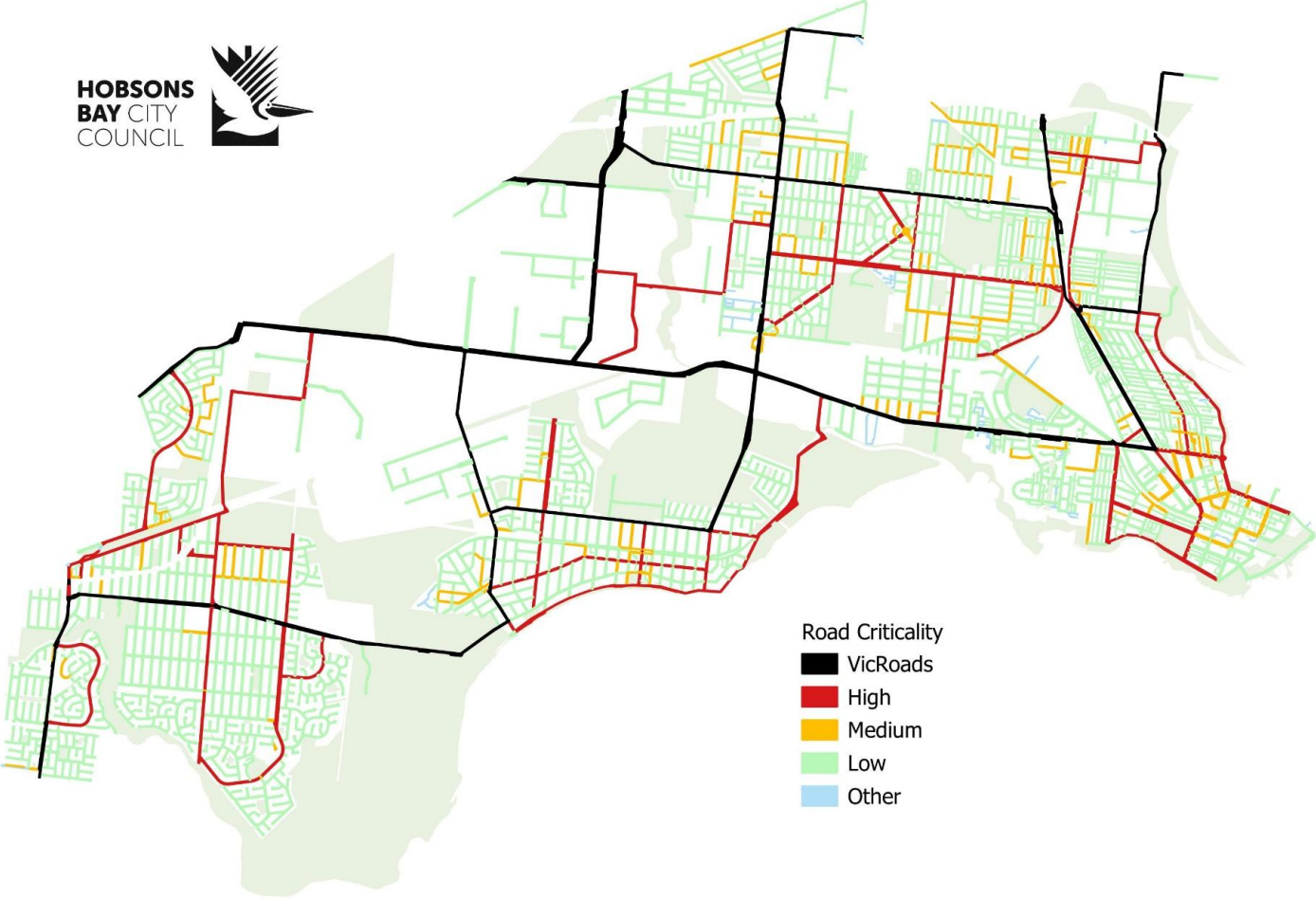
- Activity Centres
- Schools
- Aged Care Centres
- Medical Centres
- Child Care Centres
- Hospital
- Bus Routes (for roads)
- Bus Stops (for footpaths)

High criticality refers to all collector and link roads. Medium criticality refers to roads with bus routes and roads abutting all the services. Low criticality refers to all other roads.

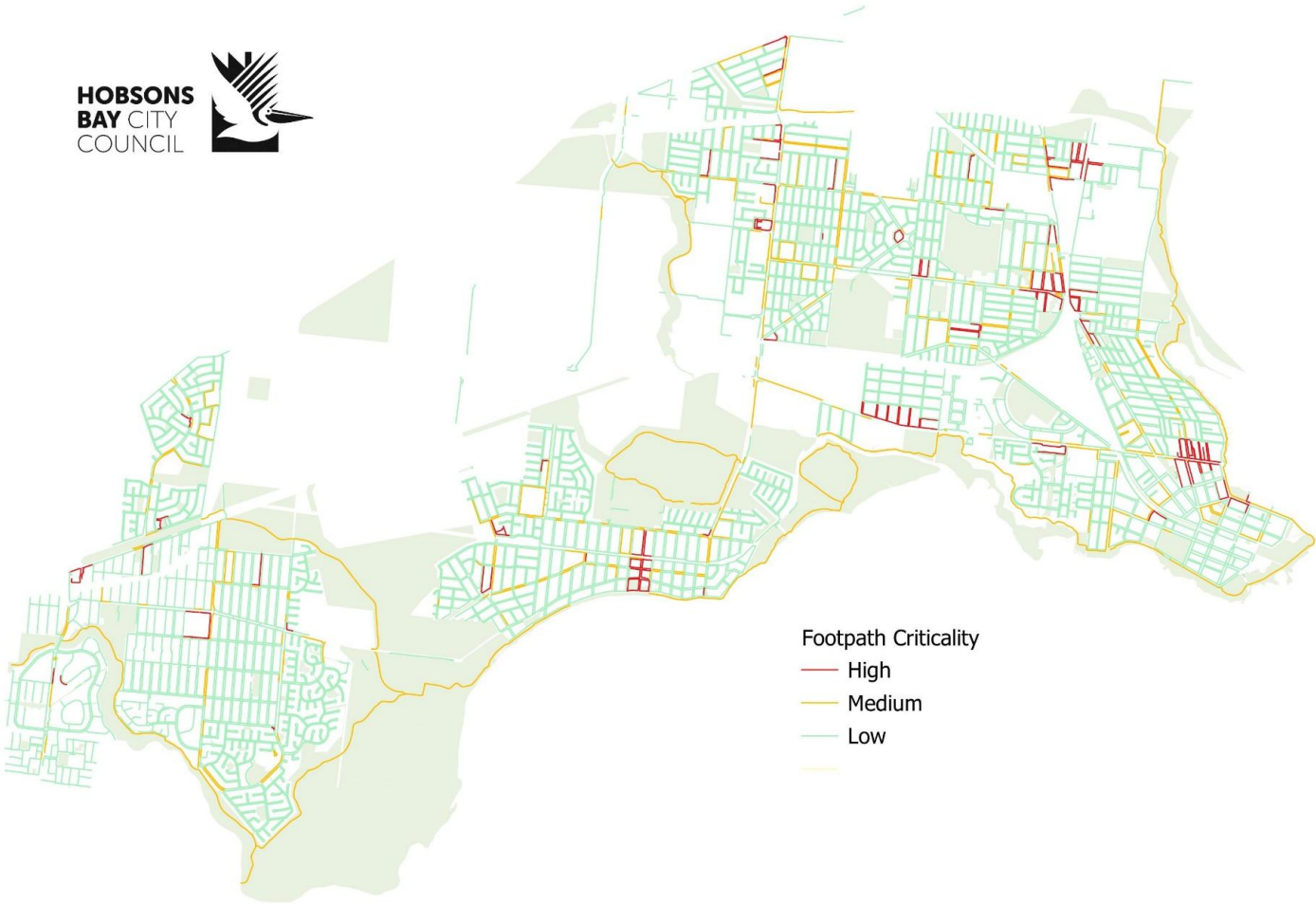
Footpath criticality is determined by footpaths abutting to activity centres and services. High criticality refers to those footpaths abutting activity centre. Medium criticality refers to footpaths abutting the other services. Low criticality refers to all other footpaths.

The road and footpath criticality are illustrated in the following maps with the actions provided in Appendix 1.

ROAD CRITICALITY



FOOTPATH CRITICALITY



Footpath Criticality

- High
- Medium
- Low

Maintenance Intervention Levels

Intervention levels support the quality of assets provided to the community as they define trigger points in determining the type of works to be carried out.

Having defined intervention levels also enable Council to organise maintenance works on a risk priority basis. This avoids being susceptible to carrying out works on a chronological basis, or as the result of pressure from individuals within the community. It is considered that their greatest benefit is served by assisting to provide a sound legal argument as to why certain works were, or were not, carried out. HBCC's maintenance intervention levels and response times are specified in Appendix 1.

Managing Customer Requests

Council operates a computerised Customer Request System "CRM" to log, track and monitor the process of service requests and complaints made by residents and other persons.

The process provides for the recording of:

- The nature, severity, location and time that the defect was brought to the Council's notice;
- Details of person(s) identifying/ reporting defects;
- Details of any remedial works required to resolve defect and specified response time;
- Details and date of any remedial works.

Council's customer service unit is the first point of contact for all persons making a complaint or requesting some form of action in relation to the road and drainage maintenance matters.

Upon receiving a request, Council's maintenance officer will prioritise the potential severity of the defect for inspection. They will conduct an inspection normally within a few working days (10 working days maximum) following report of a defect. The officer will raise a job action request to contractor where rectification is required.

Customer action requests concerning the road and drainage maintenance function are forwarded electronically to the Contractor, who shall respond to such requests and carry out the required works in accordance with the timeframes stipulated in the road and drainage maintenance services contract.

Asset Performance Monitoring

Performance monitoring is undertaken on a programmed basis generally as follows:

- Meetings within the Civil Maintenance Unit to review day-to-day operations.
- Monthly meetings of Coordinator Civil Maintenance with the Road & Drainage Maintenance Service Provider to review contract performance including handling of correspondence, programming of works, OH&S matters, etc.
- Monthly reports on performance to the Management.

Rail Crossings

Council, as road authorities, has taken a more proactive role in the management of rail crossings. This more proactive role will ensure risk and safety is managed in accordance with legislative requirements.

Under the Rail Safety Act 2006:

(1) A relevant road manager in relation to a public roadway or public pathway must—

(a) identify and assess, so far as is reasonably practicable, risks to safety that may arise from the existence or use of any rail or road crossing that is part of the road infrastructure of that public roadway or that is a public pathway because of, or partly because of, rail infrastructure operations;

(b) determine measures to manage, so far as is reasonably practicable, any risks identified and assessed.

(2) A relevant road manager must have regard to—
(a) the principal object of road management; and
(b) the works and infrastructure management principles; and
(c) the functions, powers and duties of infrastructure managers under the Road Management Act 2004—
when determining measures to manage risks identified under subsection (1).

(3) A relevant road manager must seek to enter into a safety interface agreement with any rail infrastructure manager whose rail infrastructure operations are identified as contributing to a risk identified under subsection (1) for the purposes of managing that risk.

Rail crossing safety is now seen to be a joint responsibility between road and rail authorities with clear boundaries between the Council and rail authority responsibility as displayed in the figure below. A service agreement has been put in place between both Council, the rail authority and in some cases VicRoads to clearly define responsibilities in regard to management of rail crossing safety and associated infrastructure.

Under the Rail Safety Act 2006 and Council Agreements with Metro Trains, ARTC and V/Line, road authorities either Local Councils or VicRoads are responsible for the maintenance of rail-road interfaces such as level crossings from greater than 3 metres from the outside rail. The Council is also required to cooperate with Rail Managers in performing any maintenance that affects traffic.

Response to Road Related Inquiry

Within the road and drainage maintenance contract the Contractor must provide a person for all emergency situations and callouts 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

The contractor must respond to all emergency situations and callouts within 12 hours of the initial contact from Council's representative. An emergency is defined as "a hazard reported that presents an immediate and significant risk to members of the public or property". Incidents and situations necessitating the call-out must be made safe and repairs undertaken in accordance with the timeframes and performance criteria stipulated in the road and drainage maintenance service contract. For each asset group, intolerable defects requiring immediate action will either be signed/barricaded or appropriate remedial action taken.

Planned Improvements

The RMP will be maintained as a public Council document and will be subject to continuous improvement. An up-to-date copy can be viewed at any stage on Council's website. When any significant changes to the RMP are required, the amended RMP will go through the Council approval and public consultation process required by the Road Management Act 2004.

Review

The road management plan will be reviewed every four years or earlier if required.

Suspension

Council will make every endeavour to meet all aspects of its Road Management Plan. However, in the event of natural disasters and other events including, but not limited to, fires, floods, droughts and the like, together

with human factors, such as lack of Council staff or suitably qualified contractors, because of section 83 of the Victorian Wrongs Act 1958, as amended, Council reserves the right to suspend compliance with its Road Management Plan.

In the event that the Chief Executive Officer of the Council has to, pursuant to section 83 of the above Act, consider the limited financial resources of the Council and its other conflicting priorities, meaning Council's Plan cannot be met, they will write to Council's officer in charge of its RMP and inform them that some, or all, of the timeframes and response times are to be suspended.

Once the events beyond the control of Council have abated, or if the events have partly abated, Council's Chief Executive Officer will write to Council's officer responsible for Council's Plan and inform them which parts of Council's Plan are to be reactivated and the timeframes for each part of the Plan to be reactivated.

Other References

Other sources of asset information within council include:

- Asset Plan;
- Road Asset Management Plan;
- Road and Drainage Maintenance Services Contract;
- VicRoads Fact Sheets (www.vicroads.vic.gov.au/rmb); and
- Road Register.

Legislation, including (but not limited to) the following:

- Road Management Act 2004
- Code of Practice - Operational Responsibility for Public Roads 2017
- Local Government Act 2020
- Road Management (General) Regulations 2016
- Road Management (Works and Infrastructure) Regulations 2015
- Road Safety Act 1986

Appendix 1 - Defect Response Times

ROAD

Crack (Longitudinal/Transverse)

Severity	Inspection Frequency			Response Time		
	Low	Medium	High	Low	Medium	High
>10mm	Annually	Annually	6 Months	60 working days	40 working days	20 working days

Crocodile Cracking

Severity	Inspection Frequency			Response Time		
	Low	Medium	High	Low	Medium	High
> 10 square metre per segment and crack > 10mm	Annually	Annually	6 Months	90 working days	60 working days	30 working days

Depression/Rutting

Severity	Inspection Frequency			Response Time		
	Low	Medium	High	Low	Medium	High
>100mm depth over 1 linear metre	Annually	Annually	6 Months	120 working days	90 working days	60 working days

Pothole

Severity	Inspection Frequency			Response Time		
	Low	Medium	High	Low	Medium	High
>50mm depth &/or >300mm diameter	Annually	Annually	6 Months	10 working days	10 working days	5 working days

Corrugation

Severity	Inspection Frequency			Response Time		
	Low	Medium	High	Low	Medium	High
> 50% of segment length	Annually	Annually	6 Months	120 working days	60 working days	30 working days

Paver Displacement

Severity	Inspection Frequency			Response Time		
	Low	Medium	High	Low	Medium	High
>50mm vertical displacement depth over 1 square metre	Annually	Annually	6 Months	60 working days	40 working days	20 working days

Edge Break

Severity	Inspection Frequency			Response Time		
	Low	Medium	High	Low	Medium	High
Horizontal fretting width >100mm	Annually	Annually	6 Months	120 working days	90 working days	60 working days

KERB and CHANNEL

Bluestone Misaligned (horizontal and Vertical)

Severity	Inspection Frequency			Response Time		
	Low	Medium	High	Low	Medium	High
>50mm	Annually	Annually	Annually	120 working days	90 working days	60 working days

Bluestone Missing

Severity	Inspection Frequency			Response Time		
	Low	Medium	High	Low	Medium	High
1 or more picher	Annually	Annually	Annually	120 working days	90 working days	60 working days

Concrete Misaligned (horizontal and vertical)

Severity	Inspection Frequency			Response Time		
	Low	Medium	High	Low	Medium	High
>50mm	Annually	Annually	Annually	120 working days	90 working days	60 working days

Concrete Damaged

Severity	Inspection Frequency			Response Time		
	Low	Medium	High	Low	Medium	High
Damaged > 300mm per 2.5m section	Annually	Annually	Annually	120 working days	90 working days	60 working days

FOOTPATH

Trip Hazard

Severity	Inspection Frequency			Response Time		
	Low	Medium	High	Low	Medium	High
>25 mm	Annually	Annually	6 Months	30 working days	15 working days	10 working days

Depression

Severity	Inspection Frequency			Response Time		
	Low	Medium	High	Low	Medium	High
>50mm over 1 linear metre	Annually	Annually	6 Months	30 working days	15 working days	10 working days

Cracks

Severity	Inspection Frequency			Response Time		
	Low	Medium	High	Low	Medium	High
>20mm	Annually	Annually	6 Months	30 working days	20 working days	10 working days

TRAFFIC CONTROL DEVICES

All traffic control sign and speed hump will be inspected at nighttime to determine the visibility of the asset from a road user perspective.

Visibility

Severity	Inspection Frequency			Response Time		
	Low	Medium	High	Low	Medium	High
Not Visible	Once every 4 years			40 working days	30 working days	20 working days

Draft Road Management Plan 2025 public submissions

No	Submission	Response	Change to Draft Plan
1	Does the HBCC have any control, responsibility, or application of the designated speed limits on residential roadways?	Council has a role in the management of the speed limits on local roads. Council is required to review and make recommendations regarding speed limits on local roads, however final approval for any changes sits with the Department of Transport and Planning.	No
2	I could not see where the non-bitumen section of roads in the Williamstown area will be maintained. This does not appear to be in the maintenance areas. Melbourne Rd Williamstown between Parker and Pascoe St is an untidy mess as weeds are growing through the stones.	Non-bitumen sections of road and on-street car parks are subject to the same inspection and maintenance requirements as sealed roads as outlined in the RMP.	No
3	<p>I appreciate that inspection frequencies and response times are outlined, but clearer timelines for local repairs are needed - for example, how quickly potholes or uneven footpaths in Altona will be fixed once identified. Local streets and shared paths used by children need renewal targets, not just major roads.</p> <p>Please share suburb-level investment breakdowns and a map or list of renewal projects planned for the next 3–5 years in Altona. Footpaths, shared paths, and school routes should be prioritised as critical assets.</p> <p>Given Altona’s coastal risks, renewal standards should reflect drainage and stormwater resilience, with shorter inspection cycles in flood-prone areas.</p> <p>Council should publish an annual performance dashboard, integrate community reports into planning, and consider a resident portal and regular forums to improve transparency and communication.</p>	<p>Inspection frequencies and response times in RMP are applicable for the whole municipality regardless of suburbs.</p> <p>This plan is specific about defects intervention and maintenance response times. Asset renewal and upgrade projects are considered as part of the budget development process.</p> <p>Some public dashboards are available on Council website to track performance. At this time there are no plans to add any additional dashboards, with resourcing being used to deliver on other priorities.</p>	No

4	<p>Maps & Accessibility: Final RMP must link to an interactive, public-facing GIS map on the Council's website, allowing users to overlay street names, suburb boundaries, and asset criticality ratings.</p> <p>Visual Risk Coding: Adopt the internationally recognized traffic light colour scheme (Low = Green, Medium = Amber, High = Red) for all asset criticality maps.</p> <p>Clarity on Responsibility: Include a dedicated, visual guide with images in the RMP to clearly identify who is responsible for different infrastructure (Council, VicRoads, Utility Providers, Rail Network Managers, and private property owners), along with their relevant contact details for issue reporting.</p>	<p>Council has on its website a map that shows the roads managed by other authorities including VicRoads, other maintaining authorities. At this point in time there are no plans to make it live and interactive.</p> <p>The visual colour coding in the maps will be updated as per the suggestion made within the feedback.</p>	Yes
5	<p>I've had a look and I can't see where the Newland Street exit from and entrance into Altona Meadows is being upgraded. It's an eye sore and looks terrible as a 'Welcome to Altona Meadows'. It needs maintenance and cleaning up. It needs to look welcoming. At the moment it looks like you are entering a ghetto. We have been asking to have this updated, cleaned up and rejuvenated for a long time.</p>	<p>The intent of the plan is to document defect intervention and maintenance response times for road assets and not to capture potential future upgrade considerations. These types of considerations are catered for in specific strategic plans of Council. Whilst this is the most appropriate avenue for these types of considerations, the area referenced in the submission is managed by the Department of Transport and Planning and is therefore an advocacy item for Council.</p>	No
6	<p>My feedback is less about the physical maintenance of the road network — which I believe has improved in recent years — and more about the pedestrian–vehicle interface. With the significant increase in vehicle numbers across Hobsons Bay, I do not believe pedestrian safety has been adequately addressed.</p>	<p>The intent of the plan is to document defect intervention and maintenance response times for road assets and not to capture these types of considerations. These types of considerations are catered for in specific strategic plans of Council, with work underway to review the Integrated Transport Strategy.</p>	No

7	<p>Why are there never any discussions, when future planning by Council to finally have a bridge over the railway line connecting Greive Parade with both the north and south sides. This will be beneficial to all residents, visitors and businesses, providing another Major Road link for Altona. Millers road is getting far congested on too many occasions even with Maidstone Street operational with a new bridge. There were plans many, many years ago to complete this overpass that is why the road reserve is so wide on the southern end of the railway line, Altona side of Greive Parade. With future population growth for both Melbourne and Altona, with numbers continuing to increase the current major roads in Altona, Miller Road and Maidstone Street in particular Millers Road will become a car park for road users with much more congestion. Linking Greive Parade provides a true South / North link alternative to Millers Road and will ultimately cut travel time for motorists benefiting all parties</p>	<p>The intent of the plan is to document defect intervention and maintenance response times for road assets and not to capture these types of considerations. These types of considerations are catered for in specific strategic plans of Council, with work underway to review the Integrated Transport Strategy.</p>	No
8	<p>Apart from a mention in the glossary, bike paths and lanes are not acknowledged.</p> <p>Include a section that discusses cycling and other active transport infrastructure, and how they are managed and prioritised under this plan.</p> <p>The "Demand and Growth" section suggests that an increasing population needs more car-based infrastructure. This is not consistent with modern urban planning or HBCC's Integrated Transport Plan. They emphasise a shift towards active and public transport. Especially in Alt Nth, Sth Ksvl, and Spotty, where mode shift is critical to managing car congestion.</p>	<p>The intent of the plan is to document defect intervention and maintenance response times for road assets and not to capture these types of considerations. These types of considerations are catered for in specific strategic plans of Council, with work underway to review the Integrated Transport Strategy.</p> <p>Cycling lanes are inspected and maintained in alignment with the road asset class and cycling/shared pathways are inspected and maintained in alignment with the footpath section.</p>	No

	<p>Modify the section to explicitly state the need for a mode shift away from roads being only for cars. eg:</p> <p>"As population increases, road assets need to be upgraded to give priority to buses and to active transport infrastructure. Council's approach to road infrastructure must consider the critical need for a mode shift away from private car use to address the transport pressures of a growing community."</p>	<p>The Demand and Growth section outlines the general need for Council to both optimise existing and consider new assets across all assets within the Roads portfolio. This includes assets for use by cyclists, pedestrians, public transport users and motorists.</p>	
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7.2.4 Revised Governance Rules and Community Feedback

Directorate: Corporate Services

Responsible Officer: Marlo Emmitt, Acting Manager Corporate Integrity

Attachments: 1. Community consultation feedback on proposed change to Council's Governance Rules [7.2.4.1 - 2 pages]

Purpose

To seek Council's endorsement of the revised Governance Rules 2025 following public consultation and recommend changes to the Hearing of Committee Terms of Reference.

Recommendation

That Council:

1. Thank submitters for their feedback on the proposed change to Clause 11.2 of Council's Governance Rules.
2. Having considered the written submissions:
 - 2.1. Endorses the revised Clause 11.2 of Council's Governance Rules, which reads:

"Members of the public can make submissions to Council on any Statutory and/or Strategic Planning items on the meeting agenda, where an opportunity to be heard at a Hearing of Submissions Committee meeting has not been provided.

The process for lodging submissions is the same as for public questions and community statements above. The time permitted for each verbal submission is up to three (3) minutes. Councillors will have the right to ask questions of submitters."
 - 2.2. Amends the Hearing of Submissions Committee Terms of Reference to provide any submitter making a verbal submission up to three (3) minutes to address the Committee.
3. Notes that the changes will come into effect on the day following the passing of this resolution.

Discussion

Clause 11.2 of Hobsons Bay City Council's Governance Rules currently provides an opportunity for members of the public to make verbal submissions at Council meetings on statutory and strategic planning matters. However, Council meetings are limited to three (3) hours, with only one possible 30-minute extension permitted.

On 18 November 2025, Council established a Hearing of Submissions Committee to ensure structured and adequate opportunities for public input (on a broad range of matters), prior to Council decision-making. To avoid duplication (and for the purpose of public consultation), the Council resolved to amend Clause 11.2 of Council's Governance Rules to continue to

provide members of the public with an opportunity to make submissions to Council on statutory or strategic planning matters, but only where an opportunity to be heard at a Hearing of Submissions Committee meeting had not been provided.

Section 60(4) of the Act requires Council to ensure that a process of community engagement is followed in developing or amending its Governance Rules. Community consultation was therefore undertaken for a two-week period between 20 November and 3 December 2025.

Feedback received

Four (4) written submissions were received in response to the consultation. These are outlined in the Attachment 1. The key themes from the feedback include increasing speaking time from two (2) minutes and holding meetings in person rather than online.

Responses to community feedback

- Officers agree the time permitted for a verbal submission is not long enough and recommends increasing to up to three (3) minutes.
- The three (3) minute allocation is for the submitter to make a verbal submission in support of their written submission. It does not include questions from Councillors (and responses provided).
- Holding the Hearing of Submission's Committee meeting online offers the following advantages:
 - They are more efficient and cost effective than face to face meetings.
 - More people can attend.
 - Everyone can see and hear the presenters equally.
 - Saves time (including travel time).
 - You can attend from anywhere (more participative).
 - Provides more flexibility regarding when meetings can be scheduled.
- All meetings of the Hearings of Submissions Committee will be livestreamed and recorded.
- Council can provide support to individuals who wish to participate in the online Hearing of Submissions Committee meeting but may not have access to a computer or internet.
- The Hearing of Submissions Committee replaces the previous Delegated Planning Committee (although it doesn't have authority to make decisions). Unlike the former Delegated Planning Committee, the Hearing of Submissions Committee can hear from submitters on Planning matters, as well as other community engagement items.

The Hearing of Submissions Committee will provide a dedicated mechanism for applicants, submitters and community members to present views on planning, budgets, policy development and traffic and transport matters before decisions are made. All Councillors will serve as members, with the Mayor as Chair. The Committee is advisory in nature and will not have decision-making powers.

Public submissions at Council meetings for statutory and strategic planning matters will only be permitted where submitters have not had an opportunity to present to the Committee, ensuring clarity and avoiding duplication.

Strategic Alignment

This report specifically addresses priorities from the following strategic documents:

Hobsons Bay 2030 Community Vision

This report does not relate to a specific priority of the Hobsons Bay 2030 Community Vision.

Council Plan 2021-25

Objective 5: A High Performing Organisation

Strategy 5.4: Enhance transparency, accountability and good governance practice

Policies and Related Council Documents

Hobsons Bay Governance Rules 2025

Legal/Statutory Obligations and Risk

Under section 60 of the *Local Government Act 2020*, Council may amend its Governance Rules following an appropriate community engagement process. The proposal to amend Clause 11.2 required public consultation, which was undertaken from 20 November to 3 December 2025.

There are minimal legal or statutory risks associated with establishing an advisory committee. The amendment aligns with Council's statutory obligations and maintains decision-making authority with Council.

Financial and Resource Implications

Any costs will be accommodated within existing budgets and resources, with no additional funding required.

Environmental, Social and Economic Impacts

The establishment of the Hearing of Submissions Committee enhances social inclusion and civic participation by offering a structured and accessible way for community members to have their views heard on significant matters affecting Hobsons Bay.

By improving community engagement and transparency, the change also supports economic confidence and trust in Council processes, which may foster more constructive dialogue between developers, residents and other stakeholders.

Consultation and Communication

The proposal was publicly exhibited on Council's community engagement portal between 20 November and 3 December 2025. Community feedback received through this process has been considered and informed the final recommendations.

Following adoption, Council will update its website, communication channels and submitter information to explain how and when the Hearing of Submissions Committee will operate, including details on meeting format and speaking arrangements.

Declaration of Conflict of Interest

Section 130 of the *Local Government Act 2020* requires members of Council staff to disclose any general or material conflict of interest in matters to be considered at a Council meeting.

Council staff involved in the preparation of this report have no conflict of interest in this matter.

Community Consultation Feedback on Proposed Change to Council's Governance Rules

Submitter A	<p>The time of two (2) minutes permitted for a verbal submission is inadequate. Two minutes is reasonable for a question but unrealistic to present a point of view in this limited time. I would suggest 5 minutes is more appropriate for a submission (especially as Councillors have the right to ask questions of the submitter).</p> <p>To conduct these meetings remotely (by zoom?) is questionable. Not everyone is computer literate to do this and some wanting to participant may not have a computer. A face to face public meeting with the Committee members is required if Council is genuine in their aim to 'give community members a dedicated forum to share their views on a range of issues'.</p> <p>Whatever forum is decided upon, the entire meeting should be recorded, with transcripts available to community members.</p>
Submitter B	<p>It is good that the council will provide a forum for regular community engagement. However, it has not been the council's practice to allow community members to give verbal submissions on planning matters (or any other matter) at Council meetings.</p> <p>All submissions are required in writing the day before the meeting. There has been a separate planning forum (not in a council meeting) where petitioners for or against a planning matter could make their submissions in front of 3 councillors who would deliberate on the planning outcome.</p> <p>Is this latter process no longer being followed? It would be useful to provide clarity about this, about the option to respond verbally in a council meeting and finally, how both of these processes will work with the newly proposed forum.</p>
Submitter C	<p>I appreciate council is attempting to improve its system of consultation and would like to make the following suggestions for improving this proposal.</p> <p>I believe the council meeting being proposed should be held in person with everyone involved attending the meeting at council rooms. An online hearing only makes it more difficult for participants to be heard as many people do not have the technical ability to participate via Zoom. Furthermore, some suburbs (particularly Williamstown) are notorious for bad internet connection. The best form of communication is face to face, where those speaking truly feel they are being listened to and where the listeners can truly see and hear the views and sentiments being expressed.</p> <p>I submit such a hearing should be held with all persons present and the allocated speaking time be 3 minutes. It is unrealistic to expect members of the public to finesse and articulate their views and submissions in two minutes.</p>
Submitter D	<p>Council is to be congratulated for seeking to improve community consultation and engagement on major matters. There is much room for improvement -- for example, the community consultation on Council's proposed redevelopment of the Williamstown Swimming and Life Saving Club has been little more than a sham -- a 'box ticking' exercise designed and implemented in such a way as to basically ensure residents and ratepayers are kept in the dark and kept at bay so as not to disturb council officers and councillors.</p> <p>This proposal to hold community meetings is a welcome advance. But it's a flawed proposal, for two main reasons.</p> <p>First, a two-minute limit on residents' contributions is too tight -- it amounts to consultation by speed dating. Council should be able to find a way to enable more meaningful and deeper engagement with community members about major 'legacy' proposals.</p> <p>And second, it is a mistake to make these meetings online rather than in person. Some residents will be excluded from the process because they don't have the technology or</p>

	<p>don't know how to use it well. Many parts of Hobsons Bay, notably Williamstown, have poor internet connections. It is not difficult to foresee a meeting where council officials, the councillors, the Mayor, and the 'attendees' are all getting frustrated, can't hear one another, or get disconnected. Far better would be to organise a face-to-face meeting, in the council chamber, or elsewhere at the council offices, or indeed at a large venue such as the Williamstown Town Hall, so that there is human contact between the councillors and their constituents. Anything less than this will be an inadequate and frustrating compromise which will prevent council getting to the best, most-informed decision.</p> <p>Thank you for your time, and again, congratulations on making an effort to improve a deeply flawed consultation 'infrastructure'.</p>
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7.2.5 The Planning Amendment (Better Decisions Made Faster) Bill 2025

Directorate: Sustainable Communities

Responsible Officer: Manager Strategy Economy and Sustainability

Attachments:

1. Local Government Position, Planning Amendment Bill 2025 [7.2.5.1 - 46 pages]
2. Sample letter sent to The Hon Melissa Horne - Planning Amendment Bill 2025 [7.2.5.2 - 3 pages]

Purpose

To seek endorsement of Council's position on the Planning Amendment (Better Decisions Made Faster) Bill 2025 and recommend support for the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) and the Council Alliance for Sustainable Built Environment (CASBE) advocacy campaigns and Local Government position.

Recommendation

That Council:

1. **Supports the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) Planning Reform Advocacy Campaign and the Council Alliance for Sustainable Built Environment (CASBE) advocacy efforts in response to the Planning Amendment (Better Decisions Made Faster) Bill 2025.**
2. **Notes that advocacy correspondence from the Mayor was sent on 25 November 2025 to eight State Members of Parliament with jurisdiction within the Hobsons Bay City Council area, advocating for Hobsons Bay City Council's position and supporting MAV's campaign (Attachment 2).**

Summary

The Bill proposes major changes to the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*, introducing a three-stream approval system to expedite planning decisions. Key reforms include:

- reduced public notification requirements
- limited appeal rights
- expanded Ministerial powers

These changes will have major implications for Council's statutory responsibilities, strategic planning functions, community engagement processes, and operational capacity.

At this stage, the State Government has not released detailed guidance or undertaken consultation on the Bill.

The Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) and Council Alliance for a Sustainable Built Environment (CASBE) are currently the only avenues for Hobsons Bay City Council to influence the legislation. MAV has raised concerns about transparency, democratic oversight and environmental protections. CASBE has raised concerns about the dilution of requirements that protect future residents from the impacts of changing weather.

Council officers recommend supporting both campaigns and advocating for reforms that balance efficiency with accountability, community input and sustainable development.

It is also important to note that the housing crisis cannot be resolved through planning reform alone. Broader systemic issues such as project financing, developer land banking, skilled labour shortages and rising construction costs remain significant barriers to housing delivery.

Council has also taken proactive advocacy steps. On 25 November 2025, letters aligned with MAV's feedback on the Bill were sent under the Mayor's signature to eight State Members of Parliament which have jurisdiction within the Hobsons Bay City Council area. Details of recipients are provided in the Consultation and Communication section of this report, and a sample letter is included at **Attachment 2**.

Background

At the Council meeting on 11 June 2024, Council endorsed Hobsons Bay's submission to Plan for Victoria. The submission highlighted Council's commitment to aligning local strategic initiatives with the housing and growth targets set by the State Government, while also identifying a range of local issues and recommendations.

On 28 February 2025, the Plan for Victoria was released setting the housing target of 22,500 dwellings by 2051 for Hobsons Bay City Council. As outlined in the submission, Council officers have commenced the review of Housing, Activity Centre and Neighbourhood Character Strategies, which will inform and support delivery of the housing target.

Since the release of Plan for Victoria, the State Government has introduced a series of planning reforms aimed at streamlining permit processes. These include the removal of public notification requirements, expanded Ministerial powers, reduction in Environmentally Sustainable Design (ESD) and increased performance and reporting expectations for Councils. These reforms have significant implications for both Statutory and Strategic Planning functions.

The MAV established a Housing Taskforce in September 2023 (which Hobsons Bay representatives attend), following the release of the Victorian Government's Housing Statement. Since then, MAV has actively advocated on behalf of Councils to ensure that planning reforms reflect and support Local Government roles and responsibilities.

The Council Alliance for Sustainable Built Environment (CASBE) is an alliance of Victorian councils working together to promote ESD) and climate resilient urban design.

Council set its current position on ESD when it endorsed a joint Planning Scheme Amendment under the CASBE Elevating ESD Targets project. The proposed amendment strengthened ESD objectives and standards and was submitted to the Minister by a collaborative group of councils in July 2022. The Minister has yet to make a decision on the amendment.

As a member council, CASBE has asked Hobsons Bay City Council to participate in advocacy to:

- reinstate the ESD provisions that have been removed by the recent changes.
- authorise the Elevating ESD Targets Planning Scheme amendment from July 2022.

On 5 November 2025, MAV released its Planning Reform Campaign outlining the Bill's shortcomings. The section below provides further detail on these shortcomings and implications for Hobsons Bay.

Discussion

The Bill narrative and MAV recommendations

The Planning Amendment (Better Decisions Made Faster) Bill 2025 seeks to introduce a new three-stream approval system which will replace current permit processes under the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*.

The table below summarises the three streams, excluding the height thresholds separating Stream 2 (low-rise apartments) and Stream 3 (higher-density developments). These details are expected to be released in forthcoming implementation guidance or Ministerial Directions as the reforms progress.

Table 1: Proposed three-stream approval system

Stream	Development Type	Decision Timeframe	Appeal Rights / Notice
Stream 1	Standalone houses and duplexes	10 days (auto-approved if missed)	No notice No third-party appeal
Stream 2	Townhouses and low-rise apartments	30 days	No notice Limited appeal
Stream 3	High-rise and large developments	60 days	Notice only to direct neighbours

Additionally, the reform seeks to expand Ministerial powers and remove the Victorian Parliament's power to revoke Ministerial amendments, eliminating scrutiny of such amendments.

The MAV campaign identifies five themes and 32 recommendations to be considered before the Bill is passed by the Victorian Parliament. The table below summarises the MAV position and should be referenced in conjunction with the MAV Local Government Position Paper (Attachment 1).

Table 2: Summary of MAV's position

Theme	Key comments
Theme 1: Big Change Needs Public Trust	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Bill deletes “fair” from the objectives of planning in Victoria (Section 4(1) of the Act). • The Bill also removes Parliament's power to review statewide planning changes, e.g. major rezoning of land, removing democratic checks and balances. • Winding back public notice provisions would eliminate a crucial quality control mechanism. • The Bill introduces a new framework requiring planning scheme amendment submitters and political parties to declare reportable gifts and donations. The issue is that these requirements do not align with existing Local Government conflict-of-interest provisions, creating uncertainty about when disclosures are necessary.
Theme 2: Planning Reform Alone Won't Deliver	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Bill fails to address multiple barriers beyond the land use planning system. • Key non-planning factors include construction finance, skilled labour, infrastructure coordination, tax settings and material costs. • A review of residential development codes is suggested with an aim of avoiding deemed to comply approval of proposals near Activity Centres that constitute an unacceptable under-development. • A review of residential codes should be undertaken so that their performance can be measured, including their impact on design quality and public realm outcomes.
Theme 3: The Missed Opportunity on Affordable Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the Bill does not include a mandatory contribution mechanism for the provision of affordable housing. • The Bill does not provide any clear targets or accountability measures for delivering affordable housing outcomes, leaving implementation entirely voluntary.
Theme 4: Homes Ready for the Extremes to Come	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Bill strips out environmental protection objectives including the “ecological and genetic diversity” and “safe living and working environment” objectives. These are important because they provide the legal basis for managing risks such as flooding, bushfire and Major Hazard Facilities, critical for ensuring community safety in areas like Hobsons Bay. • One-size-fits-all residential codes require decision-makers to disregard known flood, bushfire, erosion and land contamination risks.
Theme 5: Partnership Delivers Better Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Bill was developed without any local government input. • 10-day decisions for many applications or an automatic approval without consultation will impact Council's resources, systems and will be administratively difficult. • Reforms will strip councils of up to 40% of planning fee revenue while increasing workloads and resourcing pressure.

Implications for Hobsons Bay City Council

The position detailed by MAV identifies a range of implications for all Victorian councils. Key issues relevant to Hobsons Bay City Council, the community and development industry are summarised as follows:

- Significant pressure on Statutory Planning timeframes and resourcing (10 to 60-day decision timeframes).
- Reduced scope for public notification and Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) appeals within the municipality.
- Potential erosion of community trust and transparency in planning processes.
- Increased Ministerial oversight of planning schemes and planning scheme amendments rather than local context considerations by Council planners.
- Significant pressure on the Strategic Planning team to update Hobsons Bay City Council's strategic work (such as Industrial Land Management Strategy, Housing Strategy, Flood/Environmental Overlays) to align with State Government expectations.
- Potential conflicts where infrastructure and services have not been provided to support housing development.
- Faster approval processes for compliant proposals may benefit the development industry by reducing the perceived "red tape", but at the potential expense of quality development outcomes.
- Loss of planning fee revenue (up to 40 per cent) with no identified compensation mechanism.
- Risk of poor design and amenity outcomes due to codified residential codes and deemed-to-comply provisions.
- Risk of reduced sustainability and increased exposure to contaminated soil, Major Hazard Facilities and flooding.

Key Points for Council Decision

- The Bill introduces a mandatory three-stream permit approval system, reducing public notice and appeal rights.
- Expanded Ministerial powers remove parliamentary oversight.
- MAV and CASBE advocacy campaigns provide the only current avenue for Local Government input.
- Council endorsement is required to support these campaigns and authorise continued advocacy actions.
- The reforms will have significant operational and financial impacts, including compressed statutory timeframes and loss of planning fee revenue.

Strategic Alignment

This report specifically addresses priorities from the following strategic documents:

Hobsons Bay 2030 Community Vision

Priority 4: Proactive enrichment, expansion and conservation of the natural and urban environment

Priority 5: Activate sustainable practices

The proposed changes to the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* may have implications for the community given that public notification for planning permit applications has been condensed. In addition, Council's decision-making on planning permit applications has been reduced, which can potentially affect the quality of development approved.

Council Plan 2021-25

Objective 2: Environment

Strategy 2.2: Enhance protection, preservation and promotion of our coastal environment and wetlands/waterways, biodiversity and natural areas

Given the significance of the changes proposed by the Bill, Strategy 3.5 may require review to align with the Bill.

Policies and Related Council Documents

The Bill has implications for Council's preparation of the local planning framework, particularly policies related to housing such as the Housing Strategy, Activity Centre Strategy and Neighbourhood Character Study.

It may also impact the preparation of the Heritage, Employment Land, Environmental Resilience, and Flood/Sea-Level Rise strategies.

Legal/Statutory Obligations and Risk

Until the Bill is passed, it is difficult to ascertain legal risks for Hobsons Bay. Council officers recommend that additional legal work is undertaken by a suitable planning advocate, particularly around the changes and processes, to ensure a correct administration and governance structure is implemented as a result of the changes.

Financial and Resource Implications

Should the Bill be passed by the Victorian Parliament, planning timeframes for the assessment of planning permit applications will be significantly reduced, creating pressure on Council's planning department resources, systems and processes. This may require additional resourcing or process redesign to meet statutory obligations.

Environmental, Social and Economic Impacts

The Bill seeks to strip environmental protection from the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* by removing “safe living environments” from the planning objectives. For Hobsons Bay specifically, these changes are likely to result in considerable impact on the natural environment and environmental risks such as flooding, land contamination and Major Hazard Facilities.

Winding back public notice provisions may also have implications for the community and could result in social impacts.

Economically, the MAV estimates that the reforms will strip councils of up to 40 per cent of planning fee revenue while increasing workload.

Consultation and Communication

The Bill has been developed without local government consultation, including Hobsons Bay City Council. Given that local government is required to implement the changes proposed by the Bill, consultation would have been beneficial for direct and informative feedback to be provided.

Council has also undertaken advocacy to ensure Hobsons Bay’s position is communicated to relevant decision-makers of Victoria’s Parliament. On 25 November 2025, letters aligned with MAV’s feedback on the Bill were sent under the Mayor’s signature to the following State Members:

- David Ettershank
- Ingrid Stitt
- Lizzie Blandthorn
- Mathew Hilakari
- Melissa Horne
- Moira Deeming
- Sarah Connolly
- Trung Luu

A sample of the letter issued is provided at **Attachment 2**.

Declaration of Conflict of Interest

Section 130 of the *Local Government Act 2020* requires members of Council staff to disclose any general or material conflict of interest in matters to be considered at a Council meeting.

Council staff involved in the preparation of this report have no conflict of interest in this matter.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT POSITION: PLANNING AMENDMENT BILL 2025



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF TRADITIONAL OWNERS

The Municipal Association of Victoria acknowledges the Traditional Owners of Country throughout Victoria, and recognise their continuing connection to lands, waters, and culture. We pay our respect to Elders past and present who carry the memories, traditions, cultures, and aspirations of First Peoples, and who forge the path ahead for emerging leaders.

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Our position

Public trust in planning matters.

When you overlook **environmental risks**, abolish the **right to know about proposals**, remove **Parliamentary oversight**, and demand **impossible approval timelines** — communities lose confidence that the right decisions are being made.

We're not going to build community support for rapid housing growth this way.

Victoria's 79 Councils strongly support reforming the planning system to make it more efficient and to approve more homes.

We don't support cutting corners that will eliminate public trust and create expensive problems for the next generation.

If this Bill is going to produce the *Better Decisions* it promises, it must be improved.

The Bill

The *Planning Amendment (Better Decisions Made Faster) Bill 2025* has been introduced to Parliament.

Despite Victoria's 79 councils being the primary users of the Planning and Environment Act and the primary decision-makers on planning proposals in Victoria, the first time councils saw the 238-page Bill was when it was published late on 29 October 2025. Neither councils nor the community have been consulted on the Bill.

In the week since, council planners have come together to seek to understand the Bill and set out a Local Government position. This document is heavily reliant on their work, and on the Local Government sector submission published earlier this year:

[Reforming Victoria's Planning System.](#)

Victoria needs more homes.

Local Government strongly supports this goal. New homes require more than planning approvals alone: they need infrastructure, development finance, and construction labour and materials. The planning system plays a critical role: it ensures new homes are well-located, affordable and ready for the environmental extremes to come.

Victoria also needs comprehensive planning reform.

Local Government has been leading the calls for comprehensive planning reform: reform that considers all land uses and environments throughout Victoria, and what it takes to improve efficiency, quality of outcome and public trust in decisions.

This Bill is not comprehensive reform, and it won't spontaneously build more homes.

The Bill sacrifices too much in pursuit of speed, creating too many new problems that will outlast the current housing crisis. It switches off local community and Parliamentary oversight, fails to properly implement IBAC's anti-corruption recommendations, and severely limits the capacity of government – any government – to support communities through the rapid change that will be necessary if Victoria is to reach its housing targets.

This is the largest and most complicated expansion of the Planning and Environment Act since 1987, but it is the least scrutinised.

We are asking the Parliament to do what the Government has not, and allow these reforms to be tested before they are imposed.

This is a once-in-a-generation opportunity to get it right.

Recommendation 1:

That the Bill be referred to a public inquiry.

BIG CHANGE NEEDS PUBLIC TRUST

At this scale of housing delivery, where choices governments are making now will have consequences for generations, Victorians need confidence that decisions are being made properly and quality standards are not being severely compromised.

Winding back public notice provisions will eliminate a crucial quality control mechanism: local knowledge often identifies issues that are missed when decisions are made without public scrutiny.

The ability to express a view about plans for the future of cities, towns and regions, and the right to be informed about individual proposals, are key pillars that hold up public trust in the planning system.

Ultimately, we rely on the Parliament to ensure that the Government of the day is managing the planning system well. When democratic checks and balances are removed at every level, public trust evaporates.

WHAT THE BILL GETS WRONG ...	WHAT CAN FIX IT ...
It reduces the right to know about proposals, and the opportunity to help decision-makers address mistakes in applications.	A requirement that 'type 2 applications' that seek to build new homes be subject to the 'notice requirements'. Make it easier to give notice in higher density areas. See recommendations 20 and 21
It removes the Parliament's ability to hold the Government to account over improperly made planning scheme amendments.	Delete from the Bill the revocation of Parliament's right to disallow planning scheme amendments of all types. See recommendation 11
Its new donation disclosure rules aren't tied to local government conflict-of-interest tests, creating new risks and confusion.	Remove Part 6 of the Bill and reconsider it in 2026, once there is agreement on how to fix it. See recommendation 27

HOMES READY FOR THE EXTREMES TO COME

The Bill removes “safe living and working environment” from the objectives of planning in Victoria, flying in the face of the 2009 Bushfires Royal Commission and decades of planning policy seeking to preserve human life.

New one-size-fits-all residential codes introduced earlier in 2025 require decision-makers to approve new homes on land with known flood, bushfire, erosion and contamination risks, without the authority to impose conditions to mitigate those risks. The Bill will just require that these decisions be made faster and hopes that the Building system will pick up the pieces.

When homes are approved ignoring environmental risks, insurers won't cover them. One in four regional properties may already be uninsurable by 2030 due to climate risk – these reforms make that worse by waving through planning approval without adequate protections.

The government is making its priorities clear: speed over safety, and quantity over quality. We know we have to build more homes. But they have to be ready for the extremes to come.

WHAT THE BILL GETS WRONG ...	WHAT CAN FIX IT ...
It deletes “safe living and working environment” from the objectives of planning in Victoria that guide all planning decisions.	Reinstate the “safe living and working environment” objective. See recommendation 5
It requires faster decisions for codified residential development while allowing the consideration of known flood, fire, land-slip, coastal erosion and contamination risks to be ‘switched off’.	Limit the ability of planning schemes to ‘switch off’ decision-making requirements for ‘type 2 and 3 applications’ where environmental and natural disaster risks are present. See recommendation 25
It risks the automatic approval of ‘high risk’ applications under the ‘low risk’ pathway, because of the impossibly short time-frame for ‘application checks’.	Add some safety nets that allow the responsible authority to move ‘type 2 or 3 applications’ out of a ‘type 1’ pathway without compromising speed. See recommendations 17, 18, 19 and 26

THE MISSED OPPORTUNITY ON AFFORDABLE HOUSING

There isn't any affordable housing contribution mechanism in the Bill, despite the Government promising to explore this in *Plan for Victoria* (Action 4, p76).

Right now, the Government is fast-tracking the rezoning of 60 Activity Centres, to concentrate new homes in areas well supported by public transport – and this Bill will prevent the Government from requiring that a fair share of new homes in those Activity Centres are affordable.

If affordable housing isn't going to be required in Activity Centres, where will it ever be required?

The Bill is rewriting the planning system. It needs to do so in a way that anticipates the return of market confidence in apartment construction. And it needs to provide *actual mechanisms to deliver* social and affordable housing, not just virtue signalling.

WHAT THE BILL GETS WRONG ...	WHAT CAN FIX IT ...
It fails to provide any mechanisms to require affordable homes – not even in the 60 new Activity Centres – despite affordable housing being an objective of planning in Victoria.	Create a new head of power to enable affordable housing requirements in areas that need it, giving the Government the ability to require affordable housing contributions in future. See recommendation 31
It adds 'the facilitation of social housing' to the objectives of planning in Victoria but fails to provide any new mechanisms to support social housing.	Require funds collected under the new affordable housing head of power to contribute to the construction of new social housing in the same community. See recommendation 31
The 'type 1 and 2 application' streams will force the approval of new homes even if it's an under-development of the site, potentially constraining housing supply.	Commit to a review of residential development codes to avoid deemed approval of proposals near Activity Centres that are an unacceptable under-development. See recommendation 32

PARTNERSHIP DELIVERS *BETTER* OUTCOMES

When councils are genuine partners rather than perceived as obstacles, housing happens faster, better, and with community support. Too many mistakes have already been made because top-down planning reforms fail to consider what it takes to make complete planning decisions.

The Bill slices up planning assessments into a series of deadlines, with decisions 'taken to have been made' once deadlines pass. As most deadlines will be left to the regulations, the design of those regulations will be pivotal. They must be co-designed with local government - the primary administrators of the planning system - or we risk making the system less efficient, not more.

Despite the rushed and secretive nature of these reforms to date, **we want to make them succeed**. This will only be possible if the Parliament creates a mechanism that requires it. It's a mechanism that the Victorian Auditor General has been calling for since 2008, and a Select Committee endorsed unanimously in May this year.

Partnership isn't optional – it's the only way to meet housing targets without creating communities that lack infrastructure, affordable homes, good design and environmental protections. **It's the only way to build a planning system that works, and that the public will trust.**

WHAT THE BILL GETS WRONG ...	WHAT CAN FIX IT ...
It leaves most of the important details to the regulations without a commitment to co-designing the regulations with those who will need to implement them.	Create a new Planning Regulations Advisory Committee to monitor planning system performance and ensure all regulations required by the Bill achieve efficiency. See recommendations 13 and 30
It takes away council revenue by locking in Ministerial approval pathways while still requiring councils to do the work.	Commit to retiring the Development Facilitation Program pathways when the Bill comes into effect. Ensure councils are funded whenever Ministerial applications are referred to councils for assessment. See recommendations 22 and 23
It requires the expensive overhaul of 79 councils' systems because it is not accompanied by any commitment to support a consistent statewide solution.	Secure a Victorian budget allocation in 2026-27 to build a statewide permit applications lodgement system, tailored to meet the diverse needs of councils. See recommendation 14

Detailed Bill Brief

The process to develop the Bill

The *Planning Amendment (Better Decisions Made Faster) Bill 2025* ("the Bill") is 238 pages long and, if agreed, will add over 100 pages to the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*, which currently stands at 649 pages.

This is not a Bill that 'deregulates' the planning system. On the contrary, it proposes the largest expansion of the principal Act since its inception. The regulatory burden will mostly fall on councils, requiring more resources with less planning fee revenue (see Part 5 – Planning permits).

The regulatory burden has not been measured and no councils have been consulted on the Bill.

As the MAV identified in writing to the Government on 23 April, 21 July, 19 August and 16 September, this is a breach of the [Victorian State-Local Government Agreement](#):

10. Where the Victorian Government intends for local government to administer or enforce new primary legislation, or new or revised regulation, the relevant lead department shall, subject to exceptional circumstances, consult with local government in accordance with the Victorian Guide to Regulation. In doing so, the relevant department shall consider the impacts of the regulation on local governments, including any cost and resource impacts on local governments of administering the regulation.

About this brief

In the four business days available between publication of the Bill and the publication of this document, the MAV has conducted targeted local government sector consultation and sought to analyse the Bill and its effects.

Given the speed with which this brief was compiled, we may wish to clarify or add to our analysis later. If that is necessary, we will publish supplementary briefs alongside this document.

Part 1—Preliminary

Clauses 1 to 3

Clause 2 provides the commencement date for the amending Act. The proposed default commencement date of 29 October 2027 in clause 2 will only be achievable if:

- the Regulations that will be necessary to give effect to the Bill are co-designed with local government,
- a new statewide consistent planning applications and permits system is in place, and
- some specific provisions are commenced early.

We address these matters in recommendations in other parts of this brief.

Recommendation 2:

Amend Clause 2 to give effect to the other recommendations in this brief.

Part 2—Planning objectives and strategies

Clause 5

Clause 5 is the most consequential in the Bill, because the objectives of planning in Victoria are called upon when amending, making and reviewing planning schemes (sections 12 and 12B) and when making significant decisions about permit applications (sections 14 and 60).

The objectives are therefore not only the objectives of the Act, they also carry significant statutory weight whenever important planning proposals are determined.

Councils have not been consulted on the changes to the objectives, despite local government being the primary users of the Act.

Our recommendation in *Reforming Victoria's Planning System* (MAV April 2025, pp39-42) to review the objectives of planning (section 4(1)) and the objectives of the planning framework (section 4(2)) together was not responded to by the Government. There are objectives of the planning framework that ought to be added at this time (for example "to provide for integrity, accountability and transparency in decision-making" and "to ensure that the effects on Victoria's food security are considered") and it is unfortunate that section 4 of the Act will not be reviewed in a comprehensive fashion.

The explanatory memorandum simply states that the clause "refines the objectives of planning in Victoria to promote the strategic direction of decisions made". This 'refinement' deletes the objective of providing a safe living and working environment for Victorians, among other things.

The current and proposed section 4(1) objectives should be considered side-by-side:

Current objectives in Act	Proposed objectives in Bill	Comment (*see recommendation)
(a) to provide for the fair, orderly, economic and sustainable use, and development of land	(a) to enhance the State's liveability and prosperity by facilitating the orderly and economically, socially and environmentally sustainable use and development of land	"fair" has been deleted.* Important concepts (the orderly and economically, socially and environmentally sustainable use and development of land) are now qualified by another objective (to enhance the State's liveability and prosperity), which is nebulous.
(none)	(b) to ensure that the use and development of land is planned and designed to respond and adapt to climate change	Supported.
(none)	(c) to recognise, protect and promote the rights, interests and values of traditional owners and respect their ongoing cultural, spiritual and custodial relationship to country, including land, sky and waters	Supported, subject to the objective not undermining the primacy of the Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006 and the self-determination expressed under that Act, when non-Aboriginal decision-makers are required to call on this objective and adjudicate the meaning of its terms.

(Cont.)

Current objectives in Act	Proposed objectives in Bill	Comment (*see recommendation)
(b) to provide for the protection of natural and man-made resources and the maintenance of ecological processes and genetic diversity	(d) to protect natural resources and maintain ecological and genetic diversity	"ecological processes" has been deleted, with the objective now being concerned only with ecological diversity. The natural flow of water over land (just one example of an ecological process) is an essential planning consideration.*
(none)	(e) to plan for population change while protecting those aspects that make Victoria an attractive place to live and work	Supported.
(c) to secure a pleasant, efficient and safe working, living and recreational environment for all Victorians and visitors to Victoria	(f) to facilitate well-designed and high amenity places that are safe and accessible and that enhance the health and wellbeing of Victorians and visitors to Victoria	The new objective addresses safety only in the context of "well-designed and high amenity places", not in living and working environments generally. The concept of "efficient" has also been deleted.*
(fa) to facilitate the provision of affordable housing in Victoria	(g) to increase housing supply, diversity and affordability and facilitate the provision of social and affordable housing in Victoria	Contradicts new objective (e) to 'plan for population change' because it encourages 'increase' in housing supply regardless of location. Conflates planning (approvals) with supply (which is also driven by the market, finance and construction). Addition of 'social housing' is supported, but Bill does not provide mechanisms to facilitate social housing.*
(d) to conserve and enhance those buildings, areas or other places which are of scientific, aesthetic, architectural or historical interest, or otherwise of special cultural value	(h) to conserve and enhance those buildings, areas and places that are historically, architecturally, culturally, aesthetically, scientifically or socially significant or otherwise of special significance	Replacement of "special cultural value" with "special significance" has not been explained.
(e) to protect public utilities and other assets and enable the orderly provision and co-ordination of public utilities and other facilities for the benefit of the community	(i) to facilitate the efficient, timely, integrated and orderly provision of public utilities and infrastructure, public spaces and other facilities for the benefit of the community	Supported.
(f) to facilitate development in accordance with the objectives set out in paragraphs (a), (b), (c), (d) and (e)	Delete.	Supported.
(g) to balance the present and future interests of all Victorians	(j) to balance the present and future interests of all Victorians	Supported.

*We recommend improvements to four of the proposed objectives as follows:

- **Fairness should not be removed from objective (a)**

Recommendation 3:

Amend clause 5 so that, in proposed objective (a), "fair," is reinstated before "orderly".

Rationale: The removal of the concept of fairness from the objectives of planning in Victoria without justification is not acceptable. Planning schemes must be reviewed against the objectives: such reviews should aim for a suite of controls and policies that are *fair*.

- **Ecological processes should not be removed from objective (d)**

Recommendation 4:

Amend clause 5 so that, in proposed objective (d), the words "ecological and genetic diversity" are replaced with "ecological processes and genetic diversity".

Rationale: The removal of the concept of ecological processes from the objectives of planning in Victoria without justification is not acceptable. Ecological processes, such as the natural flow of water over land, are foundational land use and development considerations.

- **Safe homes and workplaces must not be deleted from objective (f)**

Recommendation 5:

Amend clause 5 so that proposed objective (f) is split into two objectives, with a view to reinstating the paramount importance of securing safe homes and workplaces:

(f) to facilitate well-designed and high amenity places that are safe and accessible; and
(fa) to secure a safe, healthy and efficient living, working and recreational environment for all people in Victoria; and

Rationale: The proposed objective (f) only discusses safety in the context of *well-designed and high amenity places*. Not all places are designed; not all places are well-designed, and not all places are high amenity. Safety must not only be considered in the context of such places – it is relevant to all land use and development in all of Victoria.

It is a primary consideration of planning that the regulation of land use and development secures the **safety of people**. This primary consideration has been deleted between the current Act and the proposed Bill.

It is also a consideration of planning that land use and development is **efficient**. This is the head of power that supports the reduction of unnecessary or excessive energy costs in new development. Efficiency has also been deleted between the current Act and the proposed Bill.

If the Bill is not amended, the new objectives of the Act will fly in the face of the **Bushfires Royal Commission 2009**, which recommended (recommendation 39) that the "State amend the Victoria Planning Provisions relating to bushfire to ensure that the provisions give priority to the protection of human life, adopt a clear objective of substantially restricting development in the areas of highest bushfire risk – giving due consideration to biodiversity conservation – and provide clear guidance for decision makers." The Royal Commission noted that the CFA and councils were not assisted by the insufficiently directive planning controls in place prior to the 2009 fire season.

Following the Royal Commission, the statewide Planning Policy Framework was amended, and new controls were created, giving primacy to the objective of preserving human life. The framework was significantly reviewed in 2014 and 2017.

Those amendments to the Planning Policy Framework and relevant overlays all rely, in substantial part, on the objective that has existed in the Act since 1987: **“to secure a safe living environment for all Victorians”**.

Also noteworthy is amendment VC193, gazetted 21 October 2020. That amendment applied temporary planning scheme and permit condition exemptions across the state, to enable outdoor dining and facilitate the reopening and safe operation of restaurants and other food and drink businesses during the COVID-19 pandemic. This amendment, like others that sought to authorise the safe ‘opening up’ of the economy, relied in substantial part on the objective “to secure a safe working environment for all Victorians”.

On moving the motion to read the Bill a first time, the Minister stated that “The bill will align the objectives of planning in the Act with community aspirations identified during the development of a *Plan for Victoria*.” We note that *Plan for Victoria*, in the “What you told us section”, includes: “With housing density increasing, you said it’s important to consider environmental hazards (such as flood and bushfire risks) when building new homes.” *Plan for Victoria* also devotes Action 19 to addressing flood, fire and erosion risks.

The general objective to secure human safety must not be deleted.

- **The housing supply objective (g) should be improved**

Recommendation 6:

Amend clause 5 so that proposed objective (g) is replaced with:

(g) to meet the housing needs of Victorians and to facilitate the provision of social and affordable housing in Victoria; and

Rationale: The planning system can do two important things to facilitate housing supply: it can identify where new homes should be built, and it can provide permission to build them. The planning system alone cannot do the building: such matters are also influenced by finances and taxes, the availability of materials and labour, and market confidence and trends.

Read alongside new objective (e) (to plan for population change), new objective (f) as proposed (to increase housing supply) appears to answer the question about how population should be planned for: *in every location in Victoria, housing supply should be increased*. This is another objective written for middle Melbourne in mind. We strongly support the housing settlement objectives of *Plan for Victoria* to concentrate new development inside the metropolitan area, but this new objective has to work for all parts of the State, including economically depressed regions where jobs and not houses are in shortest supply, and areas that are unsuitable for development due to catastrophic environmental risk.

We urge that this proposed objective be amended, in a way that will still achieve the most urgent need of the day (to build more homes) but that will not create a new type of objective that gives rise to interpretational conflict.

The Act needs to cater for all land uses in Victoria.

Clause 6 (and 4)

Clause 6 inserts new Part 1AA of the Act: “State and regional planning strategies”.

It is not clear why the Part is necessary, given the ability of the Victoria Planning Provisions to accommodate all State and regional plans inside the Planning Policy Framework.

The Planning Policy Framework was substantially restructured in 2018 at great expense, on the recommendation of a 2013 planning system review. It resulted in the hierarchical expression of state, regional and local policies by policy theme. The aim was to consolidate policy into a single instrument in the interests of efficiency: an aim that clause 6 could work against.

Provided the new Part 1AA is not intended to do away with the full use of the Planning Policy Framework to express State and regional-level plans, we do not object to making State planning strategies and regional planning strategies separate instruments.

We welcome the suggestion that regional-level plans, to complement *Plan for Victoria*, will be developed. All Regional Growth Plans and the plan for metropolitan Melbourne were deleted from the Planning Policy Framework on 2 September 2025 (amendment VC283). We seek clarity about the Government's intentions to develop new regional-level policy for each of Victoria's regions and metropolitan Melbourne. Regional plans are essential to implementing state plans, because they make sense of state plans at the regional scale and foster regional-level organisation and knowledge-sharing.

One effect of the new Part 1AA of the Act is to create new instruments (State and regional planning strategies) that other instruments (planning schemes) must implement. Clause 15 of the Bill, for example, will require that all planning schemes be reviewed to give effect to any State and regional planning strategy.

Given the higher-order importance of the planning strategies, the absence of any requirement to consult Victorians when they are written appears to be an oversight.

As municipal planning authorities must ensure that the instruments that they are responsible for (planning schemes) give effect to the higher order instruments, they too must be consulted on the higher order instruments. This is especially important in light of clause 15, which gives the Minister a new power to direct a council to review a planning scheme to ensure it is consistent with a State or regional planning strategy, even outside the ordinary 4 year review cycle.

And as the Bill's clause 5 creates a new objective of the Act "to recognise, protect and promote the rights, interests and values of Traditional Owners", the very next clause should not overlook a requirement that Traditional Owners be consulted on State and regional planning strategies.

Recommendation 7:

Amend clause 6 such that:

- In new section 4AD there is a requirement to complete a program of consultation with the First Peoples' Assembly, municipal planning authorities and Victorians, prior to adopting a State planning strategy.
- In new section 4AH there is a requirement to complete a program of consultation with registered Aboriginal parties, municipal planning authorities and Victorians within the region, prior to adopting a regional planning strategy.

The recommendation aims to improve public trust in planning in Victoria as well as State-Local Government policy alignment.

Part 3—Victoria Planning Provisions and planning schemes

Note: Part 3 of the Bill also addresses *planning scheme amendments*.

Clauses 7, 8, 11, 13, 14 and 17

The clauses insert new definitions and make other necessary consequential amendments to give effect to reforms discussed elsewhere in this Part.

Clause 9

Recommendation 8:
Delete clause.

See clause 39.

Clause 10

The clause introduces a new requirement on the Minister to give at least 30 days notice of any amendment to the Victoria Planning Provisions where councils will be required to administer the new provisions.

This clause implements the recommendation of the [Select Committee inquiring into Victoria Planning Provisions VC257, VC267 and VC274](#), which found that “Where local councils are expected to implement new planning provisions introduced under amendments to the Victoria Planning Provisions, it is reasonable that they be given notice of the full detail of those provisions with enough time to prepare for their commencement. This did not occur in relation to amendment VC267.”

The Select Committee asked that the practice of giving 28 days notice commence by 30 June 2025; that has not occurred. Instead, the practice of making changes to the Victoria Planning Provisions without notice has continued, in ways that continue to disrupt municipal responsible authorities. A notable example was amendment VC289 (new tree controls), 15 September 2025.

We therefore strongly support new section 4K and trust that it will act to avoid a repeat of the events of 6 March 2025, when amendment VC267 was gazetted (introducing the new ‘townhouse and low-rise code’) without warning, throwing many councils into a period of chaos while complicated new provisions needed to be understood and applied, live applications needed to be reviewed, public and applicant enquiries needed to be fielded, and systems needed to be updated – all simultaneously and immediately.

As the new provisions under clause 10 may not commence until the default commencement date (29 October 2027), but as the Government intends to amend the Victoria Planning Provisions immediately following the last day of Parliamentary sitting for the year (to introduce the new ‘mid-rise code’), we recommend that the Parliament ensure that this provision commences as soon as possible.

Recommendation 9:
Require that new section 4K commences on the day after Royal Assent.

We further note that new subsection 4K(3) allows the Minister to be exempt from the requirement to give 30 days notice if the amendment is ‘technical or administrative’ or ‘relates to an environmental or other risk and should be implemented without delay’. We support these exemptions, but note that ‘environmental risks’ are made less prominent by clause 5 of the Bill.

Clause 12

The clause clarifies the content of municipal (and other) planning strategies and is supported.

Clauses 15 and 16

Subclause 3 is not supported, for the reason that councils are already required to review planning schemes on a four-year cycle, and subsection 12B(2) already provides that councils may be directed to review planning schemes at other times.

It is evident from the absence of support from the higher levels of Government for the current four-year cycle of municipal planning scheme reviews (due 31 October 2026) that there is a lack of appreciation at the State level of the time and resources required to conduct a municipal planning scheme review properly. (This criticism does not extend to those parts of the Department that provide rural councils with support to conduct planning scheme reviews: this support is invaluable.)

New subsection 12B(2A) does not impose reasonable limitations on the Minister's power to direct that a planning scheme review be conducted within a specified time period. Clause 16 empowers the Minister to take over the municipal planning review if it is not conducted within the specified time.

While we can see some benefit in the new provisions under clauses 15 and 16 if the Ministerial powers are used to assist councils to acquit their duties as planning authorities, we also see some problems if the Minister applies an unreasonable time period for reviewing a planning scheme.

The time period should generally not be less than 18 months, for the reason that any other strategic planning projects underway will need to be delayed to facilitate a meaningful planning scheme review or, if the review is additional to the work underway, it must be resourced. Councils allocate resources to such projects as part of council budgets adopted in June of each year.

Recommendation 10:

In relation to clause 15 subclause (3), amend new subsection 12B(2A) to require that the 'time specified' be no less than 18 months.

Clauses 18 to 25, 27 to 38, 40, and 42 to 64

These clauses amend Part 3 of the Act, "Amendment of Planning Schemes". Some of these clauses amend new sections inserted by the *Consumer and Planning Legislation Amendment (Housing Statement Reform) Act 2025*, which are yet to commence and so do not appear in the authorised version of the Act.

Note: a marked up version of the authorised version of the Act, as though both the Bill and the *Consumer and Planning Legislation Amendment (Housing Statement Reform) Act 2025* have been agreed and commenced, can be found on the MAV website.

These clauses are supported by local government, for they restructure the planning scheme amendment process such that planning scheme amendments are allocated to different statutory pathways proportionate to risk and complexity. The efficiency gains that could be made under a restructured Part 3 of the Act are significant.

The provisions also have the potential to improve the clarity and speed of decisions to be made in those parts of the planning scheme amendment process that currently experience very significant delays: the authorisation to prepare an amendment, and the approval of an adopted amendment.

While many local government recommendations about how to streamline the planning scheme amendment process were either not taken up or not considered (MAV April 2025), we broadly support the approach proposed in the Bill.

Significant improvements will be required to Government's *Amendment Tracking System* and *Planning Scheme Amendments Online* to give effect to the new provisions ahead of commencement.

Clause 39

The clause revokes section 38 of the Act, the power of either House of Parliament to disallow a planning scheme amendment. It is a power that has been present since the Act since 1987.

This power is an essential check and balance on the Executive, able to be called upon if a planning scheme amendment – including one that makes very substantial changes to the Victoria Planning Provisions – does not properly implement the objectives of planning in Victoria found in the Act.

As a matter of principle, such matters should be the subject of Parliamentary debate.

The power extends to planning scheme amendments that give effect to major decisions on other Acts of Parliament too, such as the Mineral Resources (Sustainable Development) Act 1990 and the Petroleum Act 1998.

The disallowance power is only very rarely called upon. It is the potential use of this power that places some pressure on the Government of the day to ensure that planning scheme amendments conform with the requirements and objectives of the Act.

The Bill's proposed alternative mechanism to the disallowance power, a referral of planning scheme amendments to the Scrutiny of Acts and Regulations Committee, a committee of 8 members with a Government majority, is entirely inadequate. Such a mechanism places no real pressure on the Government of the day to ensure that amendments conform with the requirements and objectives of the Act.

At least 71 current Acts enable the disallowance of instruments made under them by a vote of either House of Parliament. It would be absurd to retain the power under the Royal Botanic Gardens Act 1991 to disallow prohibition of laser pointers within the Royal Botanic Gardens, for example, while removing the ability to disallow statewide changes to the overarching planning provisions dictating all planning schemes.

We have no objection to subjecting amendments to the Scrutiny of Acts and Regulations Committee, but not at the expense of the revocation of the general disallowance power. Revoking the power will only serve to undermine public trust in the planning system. It is in the interests of this and future Governments that the Parliamentary check on the Executive be retained.

There are two pathways to reinstating the disallowance power:

1. Delete clause 38 and make some consequential amendments to clauses 9 and Part 12 of the Bill (retaining the up-to-20-sitting-days period for disallowance).
2. Amend clause 38 to rewrite section 39 of the Act, to provide a simpler disallowance power, by subjecting planning scheme amendments including amendments to the Victoria Planning Provisions to the standard disallowance provisions found at section 25C of the Subordinate Legislation Act 1994 (applying an up-to-36-sitting-days period for disallowance).

Recommendation 11:

Retain the power of each House of Parliament to disallow any planning scheme amendment, in the interests of public trust in planning and the democratic legitimacy of the planning framework.

Clause 41

We strongly support the insertion of new "Division 4A – Performance reporting on amendments" into the Act. Only with a robust evidence base can Government be confident about the likely success of future changes to the framework governing planning scheme amendments.

The objectives of the new 'performance reporting scheme' for planning scheme amendments are "to seek to improve the monitoring [and] efficient performance of the planning scheme amendment process; and ... to improve transparency and promote public confidence in the planning system by publicly reporting information about the planning scheme amendment process" (see proposed section 42A(2)). The 'performance reporting scheme' excludes the Minister, where the Minister is the planning authority for an amendment, or in the Minister's capacity to make decisions to authorise amendments and approve adopted amendments.

Any 'performance reporting scheme' will be most valuable if it accurately records the performance of all planning authorities and decision-makers. We recommend amendments to clause 41 to ensure that the 'performance reporting scheme' is comprehensive.

Recommendation 12:

Amend clause 41 to insert, after proposed section 42A subsection (4):

- (5) The scheme must also require the reporting on amendments for which the Minister is the planning authority, to the same standard as provided for under subsection (4).

Part 4—Distinctive areas and landscapes

Clauses 65 to 73

Part 4 of the Bill is supported, including slowing down the time to be taken in preparing, approving and endorsing a Statement of Planning Policy from one year to two, because it will produce Better Decisions.

The MAV referred Part 4 of the Bill to a selection of planners at all five councils with declared 'distinctive areas and landscapes' (Macedon Ranges, Bass Coast, Geelong, Surf Coast and Queenscliffe), these councils having the most relevant local government experience in relation to the development of 'Statements of Planning Policy'. We offer no objections following this process.

We note that the Bill will not address a core problem with the distinctive areas and landscapes provisions: the many un- or under-funded initiatives found in Statements of Planning Policy that are approved by the Minister but are expected to be delivered by others, especially regional councils.

Part 5—Planning permits

Application streaming

Part 5 of the Bill is the most significant: a restructure of the planning permit process based on streaming of planning permit applications into three types.

The Bill does not specify which classes of application will be allocated to which of the three types, or the timelines associated with assessing each type: those matters are proposed to be left to the regulations. However, before introducing the Bill, the Premier and Minister for Planning **announced** that the streams would cater for the following classes of application and timeframes:

Application type	Type 1	Type 2	Type 3
Timeframe	10 days	30 days	60 days
Example of residential application	Stand-alone homes and duplexes	Townhouses and low-rise developments	Larger apartment buildings

Some very large and complicated applications have always taken substantially longer than 60 days to assess. The Bill does not facilitate more certain assessment pathways for such applications.

The Government press release does not indicate if these days are ordinary days or business days. We seek clarity that they are, in fact, business days – to align with the standard in the Bill and Act.

Application streaming by type will apply to all applications, not just residential development, despite commentary on the Bill focusing only on homes. Local Government is concerned that the Bill has been developed with a middle-Melbourne building typology in mind, without adequately considering the full range of matters the Victorian planning system must consider in all parts of the State, whether urban or not.

Despite this, **Local Government strongly supports streaming applications by risk and complexity.**

In the sector submission [Reforming Victoria's Planning System](#) (MAV April 2025, see section 6.6), local government called for best practice planning system design where different types of planning outcomes are anticipated and allocated to different assessment responses and decision-makers, with the aim of freeing up as much time as possible to spend on those more complicated matters that need the most careful judgment.

The local government solution was to audit the system to understand all types of *outcomes* that the Victorian planning system needs to cater for, and then codify all simple, low-risk and uncontroversial matters and remove the need for obtaining a permit entirely. That is, we aimed to 'remove from the system' (unless enforcement is required) a significant proportion of simple matters that currently require a permit. This would have resulted in three streams but only the 'higher' two would require an application for a permit.

The Victorian Government did not respond to the Local Government submission.

The Bill is informed not by an audit of the system – the last audit was in 2017 – and it redesigns the permit system based on *process* ('how fast can each *outcome* be decided?') rather than *outcome* ('what outcomes do we want and how can we facilitate them'). It leaves the allocation of outcomes to streams to a process that will come after the Bill receives Royal Assent, and which must conclude by October 2027 (see clause 2 of the Bill).

Both the Local Government solution (MAV April 2025) and State Government solution (the Bill) take the Victorian planning system closer to the best practice principles for planning system reform proposed by the National Housing Supply and Affordability Council (see [State of the Housing System 2025](#), section 7.3.1).

However, we say the Local Government solution is superior to the Bill because:

- It focuses on outcomes and efficiency, not only speed;
- It would radically reduce the number of decisions required about simple, low-risk matters;
- It therefore has no need for the dangerous mechanism whereby the applicant must nominate an assessment stream with their application, may choose the 'low-risk' stream in error, and may later effectively award itself a permit under that stream within a fortnight if the error is not spotted – which will be inevitable in a small rural council with fewer than 2.0EFT planners on staff. (See clauses 83 and 115.)

Instead of considering the Local Government submission – which supported permit streaming as a concept – the Victorian Government has designed permit streaming mechanisms without testing them with those who will have to implement them: council planners.

The mechanisms rely on a series of deemed decisions (decisions that are 'taken to have been made'): none of these have undergone any consultation with councils.

The Government now wants to rush these untested mechanisms through Parliament, to avoid a meaningful opportunity to scrutinise them and improve them. This is dangerous. The Government says that this Bill is designed to “help councils”. This is inaccurate.

The Victorian planning system – and all the outcomes it needs to provide for in the decades to come – is far too important to be redesigned on the run without talking to those whose duties it will be to administer it.

Given the absence of consultation on the primary legislation, Local Government currently has very little trust that consultation over the course of the next two years will see an improvement. The time allowed for that consultation is set by clause 2 of the Bill: less than 2 years. While that may seem like a long time, within that time:

- The entire Victoria Planning Provisions and all permit triggers found throughout all planning schemes will need to be amended;
- Most new regulations prompted by the Bill will need to be consulted on and made; and
- All 80 responsible authority IT systems, forms, practices and policies will need to be significantly updated.

To do this well, consultation will not need to simply be ‘more’ than the absence of consultation in 2025, it will need to be *radically improved and reimagined*. Significant resources will be required for collaboration and the overhaul of systems: no budget has yet been created for this.

We have little confidence that any of this will be done in a satisfactory way unless the Parliament requires it to happen, and start happening immediately.

Recommendation 13:

Establish the Planning Regulations Advisory Committee, a body to ensure that the many new regulations required under the Bill can be designed to maximise the efficiency of the planning system within the two years available, and to oversee the performance of the system thereafter. (See recommendation 30 for more detail and some suggested terms for the Committee.)

Recommendation 14:

That the Government provide an undertaking that, if the Bill passes, a budget allocation will be made in the 2026-27 Victorian Budget to build and commence a statewide planning permits lodgement system, to provide for consistent and cost-saving approaches for all responsible authorities, referral authorities and applicants. Over time, the portal may extend to facilitating more consistent storage, assessment and performance-monitoring of permits and applications. The specifications for any new system must be carefully selected in consultation with councils to ensure efficiency.

If that undertaking is not forthcoming, that the Parliament amend clause 2 of the Bill to provide for a substantially longer period before the commencement of amending Act.

Clauses 74 to 77

The clauses establish the framework for three types of application (streaming), and provides that – if an application triggers multiple types, the application must be assessed under the stream associated with the highest number.

Despite our serious misgivings about the strategy for this Part of the Bill (see above), the clauses accurately implement the Government’s intentions.

The clauses are supported subject to our recommendation to establish a Planning Regulations Advisory Committee, found at the end of this brief.

Clauses 78, 80 and 81

Clause 78 allows the applicant to nominate the application type. Later clauses lock the application into that type even if the nomination is incorrect.

Clause 78 – specifically in relation to new subsection (ba) in section 47(1) of the Act – is **opposed** unless additional safety nets are applied (see clauses 83 and 115).

The Bill creates an entirely new way of making planning applications. Instead of the implied positive duty on responsible authorities to assess applications under the correct pathway, the *applicant* is entitled to nominate the application type in the first instance, and the onus is on the responsible authority to conduct an initial 'application completeness' check within the first five days to check that the nomination is correct, and address the error if it is not.

This mechanism poses significant risks (see clauses 83 and 115), but does not provide greater efficiency. On the contrary, it provides significant confusion, especially for those applicants who do not rely on professional advice to make simple planning applications. The administrative process to address incorrectly nominated application types within the first five days is cumbersome and prone to error.

Municipal responsible authorities will always work to assist applicants to navigate the planning system as best they can. It is important to acknowledge that, years after the 10 day VicSmart stream commenced, the VicSmart pathway remains fiendishly difficult for many applicants to navigate (with or without professional assistance), and requires substantial resourcing commitment from councils to field questions and assist applicants to make compliant applications. Introducing a three-speed permit system will compound that confusion unless the subordinate legislation is drafted very clearly.

Subordinate legislation that is drafted extremely very clearly will also assist the accuracy of artificial intelligence tools to support applicants who wish to understand the type of application they wish to make.

Section 47(1) of the Act would benefit from a note to remind applicants – including those who are acting without the assistance of professional consultants and are seeking to understand 'type 1 applications' – that the information to be provided for in applications must not be false or misleading. This may assist to mitigate the risk of incorrect nominations of application types by applicants, including on those occasions where applicants may wish to nominate 'type 1' if they are not sure of the correct stream.

Recommendation 15:

that a note be added to the principal Act after section 47(1):

"Note

It is an offence to provide false or misleading information in an application. See section 126A."

For a discussion about restrictive covenants, see the end of this Part.

Clause 79

The clause sets out the process for traditional owner notices, providing a new mechanism which aims to clarify for applicants whether or not a cultural heritage management will be required, where there may be ambiguity. The intent is welcome.

Clause 82

The clause requires a responsible authority to keep a register of approvals of documents required by permit conditions, and other matters. We welcome the provision.

Clause 83

New section 49A of the principal Act requires that every application be published. We support it, and note that it reflects the existing provisions at section 51 of the Act. However, we suggest the minimum requirement should extend a short period *after* the final decision on an application, so that interested parties can make sense of the decision. This is important in the context of the significant winding back of third party notice and review provisions (see later in this Part).

Recommendation 16:

in new section 49A(2) for "until" substitute: "until 10 business days have passed following"

New section 49B of the principal Act allows responsible authorities to amend applications in relation to application types, but only within the first five business days after an application is received – or a longer period if prescribed. New section 49C clarifies 49B.

New section 49B allows a responsible authority to move an application from a 'type 1' assessment pathway (meant for low-risk matters to be determined within 10 days) to a 'type 2' or 'type 3' pathway (meant for more substantial matters to be determined within 30 or 60 days respectively). However, it only allows it within the first five business days upon receipt of an application (or a longer period to be prescribed). After that, the assessment pathway is set unless the applicant requests a change.

If the application is locked into a 'type 1' pathway in error, it may result in an automatic approval after 10 days (see clauses 83 and 115 below).

This is dangerous. Not all councils have planners on duty on every business day of the year. Some small rural councils have a single planner on staff, performing all statutory and strategic planning functions including enforcement.

There is no commitment accompanying this Bill to ensure that these critical resourcing gaps can be filled. It will fall to small rural councils to employ an additional planner or procure consultant services – not because the applications are increasing, but just to correct errors in applications on the off chance an application is made while a planner is absent. As the Government failed to assess the regulatory impacts of this Bill on Local Government, the scale of the risks have not been measured.

There is also a risk in councils that receive a very high volume of applications: if a very high proportion of applications are received on a single day, and all then must be thoroughly checked within 5 business days to avoid a situation where applications are not locked into the incorrect assessment pathway, mistakes will be made. It is rare, but still possible, for a single applicant **to lodge 81 applications on a single day**.

More generally, though, there will always be a small proportion of applications that will not have identified all of the planning permit triggers upfront. While the discovery of a permit trigger mid-way through an assessment is unusual, it is still common enough that the new 'application type is set after 5 business days' mechanism will pose a problem. There must be a mechanism to correct errors when they are discovered after 5 business days, and before the issuing of the permit or refusal.

We therefore urgently request four 'safety net' mechanisms to address these unacceptable risks.

All recommendations are simple enough, and all avoid imposing delays on applicants. That is, they can still ensure that the Government's objectives for the Bill are met, while greatly reducing the risk that 'higher risk' applications will be locked into a 'low risk' pathway and potentially be automatically approved, while avoiding an unacceptable administrative burden on councils to address those risks.

• **Safety net 1: the ability to move applications allocated 'type 1' in error into a 'type 2 or 3' assessment pathway between days 5 and 10 of the assessment process**

Recommendation 17:

after subsection (3) in proposed section 49B, add subsection (4):

"(4) A notice under subsection (2) may also be given before the time prescribed under section 66A(1)."

• **Safety net 2: stop the clock over the Christmas and New Year period**

Recommendation 18:

add a definition of "business day" for the purposes of Part 4 of the Act that excludes any day that falls between 23 December of a year and 2 January of the next year.

• **Safety net 3: allow the smoothing of applications over one or two days where unusually high numbers of applications are received on a single day**

Recommendation 19:

add a provision to Part 4 of the Act that provides that where more than a prescribed number of applications are received on a single day, the responsible authority may determine that any of those applications are taken to have been received on the next business day, or the business day following the next business day.

See clause 115 for safety net 4.

Clause 84

The clause amends section 50 of the Act ("Amendment to application at request of applicant") to include the ability to amend the application type. It is supported.

Clause 85

The clause amends section 50A of the Act ("Amendment of application by responsible authority" with the consent of the applicant) to include the ability to amend the application type. It is supported.

Clause 86

The clause is a substantial (8 pages) rewrite of the provisions governing notice requirements for applications. The first part, subdivision 3, relates to notice requirements for specified type 2 applications, and the second part, subdivision 4, relates to notice requirements for type 3 applications.

(The latter subdivision is tied to third party appeal rights, for it is proposed that only decisions on type 3 applications may be appealed by third parties in certain circumstances. We note that the exclusion of the possibility of third party appeal on type 1 and 2 applications is mostly consistent with the status quo, because codified residential development has extinguished the right to appeal wherever all standards have been met, and types 1 and 2 applications will generally be reserved for codified development.)

Subdivision 3

The proposed provisions allow for notice to be issued in relation to all type 3 applications, and some type 2 applications, subject to Ministerial guidelines. An exposure draft of those guidelines, or an articulated strategy for the extent of notice intended to be given under those guidelines, have not been published. The effect of clause 86 on the planning system is therefore entirely speculative, and will not be known until well after the Bill is passed.

Local Government is anxious to ensure that notice provisions remain broad enough to maintain a satisfactory level of public trust in the planning system and decisions made under it.

Notice is what creates the right to know about a proposal. It is also the mechanism to guarantee that third parties have access to applications and can identify errors, and bring them to the attention of the decision-maker before a decision is made.

They are therefore an essential quality control mechanism.

They will be an even more important quality control mechanism after the Bill is carried, because of the speed involved in assessing type 1 and 2 applications: **site visits by the decision-maker will be increasingly difficult.**

In urban areas, third party notice is what gives decision-makers access to the facts about an impact of an application on a neighbouring property. Applicants and decision-makers alike do not have the right to enter a neighbouring property and, inevitably, it will be the owner or occupier of the neighbouring property that will know for sure whether the assumptions in application drawings about ground levels and 'habitable rooms' are correct. This information is essential to ensure accurate decisions are made in respect of a range of considerations, including sunlight, daylight and overshadowing.

Nothing in the Bill guarantees that such quality control mechanisms will be kept. A simple change to new section 50B of the Act would correct this. Again, we note that notice of a type 2 application can never lead to appeal; the effect of this recommendation is to ensure quality control *during the assessment process*, not to cause a decision to be delayed in any way.

Recommendation 20:

that new words be added to the end of section 50B:

A planning scheme must specify that a class of type 2 applications to develop land for a dwelling or dwellings is a class for which notice is required.

Subdivision 4

We welcome the modernisation of notice requirements under this new subdivision. The new provisions have the potential to reduce the incidence of procedural failure where notice is given but postage fails (for whatever reason).

These provisions invite the possibility of expanding notice provisions in higher density areas where the Government has increasingly extinguished the right to know about proposals, starting in the central city in the early 1990s and now applied to the first 10 Activity Centres.

If the Government were to provide, for example, that notice must be given in these higher density areas, that notice is not tied to the right to appeal, and that notice on the owners corporation is taken to be notice to all property owners associated with that owners corporation, then it would be possible for the Government to claim that, under this Bill, *notice is being restored* and the 'right to know' about proposals will be *broader* in future than it is now.

General third party notice in the central city and Activity Centres is not easily facilitated under the current Act, which no doubt has contributed to the decision of the Government to extinguish notice requirements. The difficulties come from serving notice on strata titled properties (owners and occupiers) in higher density areas by mail: such processes are time-consuming, expensive and prone to error (and orders by the Tribunal of the same).

Under the proposed provisions under the Bill, it would be straightforward for the Government to issue guidelines for notice that allow, in higher density areas, for the serving of notice to an owners corporation (instead of every owner and occupier in a strata titled building), and pursue modern notice methods (as opposed to mail), all without reinstating the third party appeal right – and the 'right to know about proposals' would be restored in the central city, all Activity Centres and other suitable locations. This would reverse three decades of frustration by communities and responsible authorities about the selective nature of notice provisions in higher density areas, and provide clarity and confidence to the public about the decision-making process.

Recommendation 21:

that the Government commit to reinstating notice requirements in all Activity Centres and the central city, now that it has provided a way of doing this that is inexpensive, straightforward, and avoids procedural error and delays.

More generally, we think it would be better for the guidelines about when and how to give notice for type 3 applications to be prescribed in the regulations, rather than set out in Ministerial guidelines. This would enable greater accountability to the Parliament to ensure that one of the objectives of the Act (at section 4(2)(i)) "to ensure that those affected by proposals for the use, development or protection of land ... receive appropriate notice" is being implemented.

There is a significant risk that the new provisions will excessively limit the extent of "direct notice" that must be given – the right of a third party to appeal is tied to "direct notice" under this Bill. While we acknowledge the policy aims of the Government to reduce the extent of delays on applications where third parties have sought review of a notice of decision, we also submit that the best way to limit improper use of the appeal right is to draft better planning controls, and that the presence of a general third party appeal right provides an important anti-corruption function.

Clauses 87 to 91

The clauses provide for a new approach to requests for further information and a 'concerns notice' process. These replace the current provisions, mostly set out in the 2015 regulations, which allow for the 'clock to be stopped' (and, in the case of a request for more information, the restarting of the clock from day 0).

This is a very substantial change to the way 'type 3 applications' will be assessed, greatly reducing the time available to exercise professional judgment about complicated proposals and make complete assessments of all matters that must be considered, together.

It is vital therefore that the matters to be prescribed in the regulations, such as the 'prescribed response period', the 'extended lapse date', the 'time by which a concerns notice must be given' and the 'time by which a response to the concerns notice must be provided' – all within the overall prescribed time for a type 3 application assessment – are carefully considered, through a robust program of consultation with municipal responsible authorities and referral authorities.

These clauses are therefore only supported subject to our recommendation to establish a Planning Regulations Advisory Committee, found at the end of this brief.

Clause 92

The clause provides for the referral of type 3 applications to referral authorities. The Bill precludes the referral of matters to referral authorities under type 1 or 2 applications. This is another significant change, but one which has the potential to be successful subject to careful consultation with referral authorities, and with responsible authorities who will need to make decisions about some difficult matters that previously would be assisted by advice from referral authorities.

Clause 93

The clause provides for the ability of a referral authority to charge a fee of an applicant. The intention, we assume, is to ensure that referral authorities are funded to the extent necessary to fulfil their statutory obligations to provide timely and highly consequential advice about applications.

If the referral authorities that sit outside the Department which experience the highest volume of referrals, and which must provide advice about mitigating risks to human life, have been consulted on this new provision and are content, then we offer no objection.

We do observe, however, that the 'fee for referral' provision creates an unacceptable inconsistency in the planning system. Since 20 September 2023, the Government has created three new 'Development Facilitation Pathway' fast-track provisions under clauses 53.22, 53.23 and 53.25 of the Victoria Planning Provisions. Each allow for greater development potential than would otherwise be provided in planning schemes, but each make the Minister the decision-maker. The effect, which we have documented in [Victoria's Housing Statement – Two Years On](#), has been to create a two-tier planning system, and 'forum shopping' by applicants for certain classes of development. Applicants who take up the Ministerial pathways regularly spend a full year in 'pre-application' processes.

The effect on councils of these three pathways was not considered by the Government before they were introduced, despite the requirements of the Victorian State-Local Government Agreement. Councils must still provide services to the 'Development Facilitation Program' team inside the Department, to ensure that permits contain accurate conditions of the type that only municipal authorities can provide, because the assessment of elements of the applications requires expertise held only within Local Government.

In short, councils are still assessing applications and providing permit conditions, but receiving none of the fees. Some councils have lost 40% of their statutory planning fee revenue since the introduction of the Development Facilitation Pathways.

The work is not only uncompensated, it is informal: the Minister has not made councils 'referral authorities' under the three particular provisions.

Now that the Government is ensuring, through this Bill, that referral authorities may be compensated for the work they do, the precedent should be expanded to councils, wherever councils are acting as referral authorities. This single action could remedy the failure of Government to consider the Local Government regulatory impacts of the 'Development Facilitation Pathways'.

Recommendation 22:

that the Government commit to retiring the Development Facilitation Program pathways when the Bill comes into effect, to preserve the integrity of the new planning framework. If no commitment is forthcoming, commit instead to making all councils recommending referral authorities under the Development Facilitation Program pathway particular provisions.

Recommendation 23:

that the Government commit to ensuring that whenever municipal responsible authorities are required to conduct partial-assessments of applications or provide conditions for permits for which the Minister is the responsible authority, the council receives fair reimbursement for the services provided.

Allowing existing referral authorities to charge a fee is no substitute for comprehensive review of the extent of referral triggers and the allocation of 'recommending' and 'determining' referral authority status, and for properly resourcing referral authorities.

Clauses 94 and 95

Clause 94 deems that referral authorities are taken not to have objected to the granting of a permit (and therefore void any appeal right) if they do not respond within the prescribed time. This is a substantial change.

If the referral authorities that sit outside the Department which experience the highest volume of referrals, and which must provide advice about mitigating risks to human life, have been consulted on this new provision and are content, then we offer no objection in principle.

If the referral authorities have not been consulted, this new deeming provision must be scrutinised closely. The aim of the Parliament should be to ensure that risks to human life of the type referral authorities seek to mitigate (e.g. when applications are referred to the CFA or a water catchment management authority) are not increased.

Recommendation 24 :

that the Parliament closely scrutinise the proposed deeming provision whereby referral authorities are taken not to have objected to an application, in order to ensure that any risks to human life will be mitigated to its satisfaction.

Clause 95 provides an extension of time provision for referrals.

Clause 96

Clause 96 clarifies that 'objectors' and 'objections' now only carry meaning in relation to type 3 applications. These clarifications are necessary to make sense of other clauses.

A new provision provided under subclause (5) to allow the rejection of objections that are frivolous, vexatious or wholly irrelevant, is supported.

Clauses 97 to 100 and 102

These are consequential amendments. We offer no objection.

Clauses 101 and 106

The clause enshrines current practice, whereby if the subject matter in an application for a permit requires a permit to be obtained under more than one provision of the planning scheme, the responsible authority must consider the application for a permit to have been made in relation to all such provisions.

The comprehensive nature of the provision may lead to unintended consequences, however we have not had the opportunity to consider them. We are concerned that the new provision could potentially place even greater pressure on the responsible authority when assessing the 'completeness' of applications within the first 5 business days, beyond that which was intended by the drafters.

Clause 103

The clause provides the 'decision making criteria' for type 1 applications, being a very narrow subset of the old section 60 'decision making criteria'.

Given the purpose of type 1 assessments, being very simple and low-risk matters, the clause is acceptable.

Clause 104

The clause is a substantial amendment to section 60 of the Act, being the 'decision making criteria' for all applications.

For a discussion about restrictive covenants, see the end of this Part.

Section 60 of the Act is the section that requires the responsible authority to consider planning schemes and a range of other matters before making a decision in relation to a permit. It calls upon the objectives of planning in Victoria. It is a lynchpin of the Act.

Section 60 was an important consideration of the Select Committee inquiry into three statewide planning reforms earlier this year, for it is section 60 that allows the responsible authority to consider contaminated land and landfill gas, and evidence of flood, fire, land-slip and coastal erosion risks where that evidence has not yet found its way into a gazetted overlay. **Not all such risks are adequately identified in planning schemes.**

We refer to these risks hereafter as "the environmental protections".

The Select Committee found that the new Townhouse and Low-Rise Code (1-3 storey codified residential development), a Code that the Government on 28 October 2025 effectively announced would facilitate type 2 applications (see introductory text at start of this Part), had inappropriately 'switched off' the environmental protections.

The Parliament should be aware that the Government intends to copy and paste these 'switching off' provisions in the new Mid-Rise Code (4-6 storey codified residential development), which is expected to be gazetted shortly after Parliament adjourns for the year (see section 4 of the [MAV submission on the draft Mid-Rise Code](#) for details).

The 'switching off' of the environmental protections has been a disaster. Without them, the responsible authority is powerless to make conditions about remediation of contaminated land prior to construction, and the landowner is left in a very difficult position to understand their rights and responsibilities in spite of holding a piece of paper stating that planning permission has been granted.

Similarly, permits may be granted to build a dwelling on land with a known flood risk. If that known risk has not been translated into a gazetted planning scheme amendment (even if such an amendment has been adopted and is awaiting final approval from the Minister), the responsible authority has no ability to give regard to that risk. This inevitably leads to the approval of homes with ground floor levels below the modelled flood level, and creates a conflict with the Building system: a surveyor may still issue a building permit *subject to*

raising the ground floor, or a municipal building surveyor may refuse to give consent to build a home, and if those decisions are inconsistent with the planning permit, the only way to resolve the situation is to apply to amend the planning permit.

None of this is efficient, and none of it leads to Better Decisions Made Faster.

The 'switching off' of these environmental protections relies on the power of the Minister to amend planning schemes and to do so in accordance with section 6(2)(kcb) of the Act:

Section 6 - What can a planning scheme provide for?

...

(2) Without limiting subsection (1), a planning scheme may—

...

(kcb) set out classes of applications for permits that are exempted wholly or in part from the requirements of section 60(1)(b) to (f), (1A) and (1B);

...

In other words, despite the environmental protections existing in section 60 of the Act (specifically at subsections (1)(e) and (1A)(h)), and despite the Bill not amending those subsections, the Government has been 'switching them off' through the subordinate legislation (planning schemes) in relation to codified residential development. Most such codes will be translated to a 'type 2' application assessment stream once the Bill commences.

Just as we argue strongly in relation to Part 2 of the Bill and the unacceptable changes to the objectives of planning in Victoria (the deletion of the "safe living and working environments" objective), so to do we submit here that the Government should not be switching off vital environmental protections in relation to codified residential development where a planning permit is required.

The Parliament can address this with a simple amendment to section 6 of the Act and we urge them to do so.

Environmental risks are only going to increase. They are best mitigated at the planning permit stage, not after.

Recommendation 25:

that Parliament amend the Bill so as to amend section 6 of the principal Act so as to insert, after (2A):

"(2B) Despite subsection (2)(kcb), any type 2 or type 3 application that is a class of application requiring a permit to construct a dwelling or dwellings must not be exempted wholly or in part from:

- (a) the requirements of section 60(1)(e); and
- (b) the requirements of section 60(1A)(g) and (h) insofar as they relate to evidence of risk of flood, fire, land-slip, erosion or other natural hazard."

Clause 105

These are consequential amendments. We offer no objection.

Clauses 107 and 108

The clauses clarify what conditions may be placed on permits, imposing a new rule 'not to include a condition on a permit' other than as provided in section 61B and 62 of the Act.

Again, this has the potential to succeed only if designed well. If the new Ministerial guidelines about what may or may not be included as a condition on a permit is too narrow, because

too many potential outcomes have not been considered in the drafting of those guidelines or the 'discretionary power' (currently found at clause 65 of all planning schemes) is substantially amended, the stricture will produce planning decisions that are unacceptable to applicants and Victorians.

As responsible authorities, councils can provide valuable input into the content of the conditions and clearly define standard conditions which apply. Whatever legislative instruments apply should be clear about which contents of a standard condition can be varied, but also take into consideration differences between urban and rural contexts.

The clauses are acceptable subject to meaningful consultation with all responsible authorities and our recommendation for a new Planning Regulations Advisory Committee being taken up.

Clauses 109 to 114

The clauses are consequential and commonsense amendments.

Clause 115

The clause creates the new deemed approval of a permit for a type 1 application, including any type 2 or 3 application that has been left in the type 1 assessment pathway in error.

The mechanism allows for a 'conditional permit notice' to be issued on the responsible authority by the applicant and, if a decision is not made within the prescribed time, the permit is taken to have been issued. All timelines and the form of the notice are left to the regulations.

No consultation has occurred with municipal responsible authorities about these provisions. They are unacceptable in their current form.

We request deletion of the deemed approval mechanism (with a reversion to the right of an applicant to ask the Tribunal to determine the matter if the responsible authority has failed to do so within the prescribed time, which the Minister implied on 28 October 2025 would be 10 days).

Failing that, we request that the four 'safety net' provisions be imposed. The first three are set out at clause 83. Please see the discussion there.

- **Safety net 4: allow one final opportunity to refer a type 2 or 3 application that was locked into a type 1 assessment pathway in error into a type 2 or 3 assessment pathway, without imposing any burden on the applicant**

Recommendation 26:

amend clause 115 of the Act such that, in new section 66A, an option is given to the responsible authority to determine that the type 1 application should more properly have been assessed as a type 2 or 3 application, and to refer it to the correct stream accordingly, and to issue an explanatory notice to the applicant without delay.

As this amendment would only ever refer an application to a pathway with a longer assessment timeframe, it would impose no additional burden on the applicant.

Clauses 116 to 118

The clause rewrites the 'extension of time' provisions. We welcome the incorporation of the Kantor principles in the principal Act (clause 118).

Clause 119

The clause rewrites the permit condition approval provisions and includes another deeming provision that has undergone no consultation with responsible authorities.

The clause is acceptable subject to our recommendation in relation to a new Planning Regulations Advisory Committee being taken up.

Clauses 120 to 125

The clauses rewrite the permit amendment provisions. We offer no objection to these clauses.

Clauses 126 to 143

The clauses amend those parts of the Act relating to the matters which the Tribunal may review, and how it is to occur. Most amendments are necessary to mirror other clauses. We offer no objection.

Note that clause 130 narrows the extent of third party appeal only to those who received "direct notice" of an application. The extent of "direct notice" will be determined by the regulations; it is essential that these be drafted carefully. See

Clauses 144 to 153

The clauses amend provisions relating to combined permit and amendment processes and Ministerial powers. Most amendments are necessary to mirror other clauses. We offer no objection.

Clause 154

The clause makes useful modifications to the regulation-making powers. We support them.

Restrictive Covenants (provisions found throughout Part 5 of the Bill)

Throughout Part 5 of the Bill, changes are made to provisions governing restrictive covenants.

Restrictive covenants are private contractual rights. Whether the planning system (specifically councils) is suited to consider and adjudicate breaches of private contractual rights has been the subject of extensive debate over many years.

Councils normally have no control on the implementation of covenants and have been burdened by requirements to administer covenants. This is particularly true with respect to housing matters, where a large number of covenants which are imposed by developers will restrict the number of dwellings on a lot, the building materials, minimum floor area, and other requirements of single dwellings where there are no such requirements in the Scheme.

Currently, permits may not be issued if they breach a restrictive covenant. The Bill proposes amendments to the Act that will expressly allow permits to be granted where they authorise the breach of a restrictive covenant. The covenant stands, but the matters in it are no longer a concern of the planning permit process.

These changes should drive significant time and cost savings for applicants and councils, and they are welcome. The changes bring Victoria into line with other states, will reduce the excessive reliance on legal advice by applicants and councils, and will allow councils to focus on the planning merits of applications.

Care will be needed to ensure that changes to this system are understood by parties to restrictive covenants, especially to clarify that parties are not freed from their obligations under a restrictive covenant when granted a planning permit. Without this care, the Government risks pitting neighbour against neighbour.

We anticipate that there will be nothing stopping a responsible authority from placing a note on a permit where it is conscious of a breach, to assist the permit-holder to understand their obligations, if such a note is considered helpful under the circumstances.

The Bill also provides easier provisions to remove or amend restrictive covenants, and remove the effective right of beneficiaries to veto the granting of a permit to remove or amend a covenant. These changes are also welcome.

Part 6—Gifts and donations

Clauses 155 to 174

Part 6 of the Bill seeks to establish a framework for the declaration of reportable gifts and donations that have been made to specified persons, including decision-makers on planning scheme amendments and planning applications.

The framework is entirely new and has not undergone any consultation with councils.

Unfortunately, there are significant problems with the proposed framework.

• Donation disclosure thresholds are unrelated to conflict-of-interest tests

The Bill attempts to implement recommendation 7 of IBAC's Operation Sardon Special Report:

Recommendation 7: IBAC recommends that the Minister for Planning develops and introduces to Parliament amendments to the Planning and Environment Act 1987 (Vic) and/or amends ministerial guidance to require every applicant and person making submissions to a council, the Minister for Planning or Planning Panels Victoria to disclose reportable donations and other financial arrangements that parties have made or have with relevant decision-makers in relation to that planning matter (with reference to the New South Wales provisions).

Part 4.3.5.2 of the Operation Sardon Report provides relevant context to assist with determining the meaning of the term "reportable donations" in Recommendation 7 (our emphasis):

*Although the LGA 2020 already requires councillors to declare gifts, political donations, primary interests and conflicts about particular matters, these requirements should be strengthened for planning matters by requiring that an applicant, when seeking a particular council decision, fully discloses any gifts, political donations, primary interests or any other arrangements with councillors **that would give rise to a councillor having a conflict of interest**. Any disclosures by an applicant or the councillor should be included in an officers' report to the council.*

*Even if donation laws are reformed to require real-time donation reports, **this specific disclosure is necessary for decision-makers to be aware of relevant donations and other financial arrangements that may have a bearing on the matter before they make their decision. It would also encourage councillors to make a full declaration on such matters**, knowing that the applicant must also do so. This approach is already partly in place in New South Wales, where a political donations disclosure must be made in applications or public submissions to the Minister or a council.*

...

*Transparency and accountability in the planning decision-making process should be strengthened by requiring details of donations and other benefits and conflicts of interest to be recorded and declared in planning applications and submissions. This would make all decision-makers aware of the details of donations and other benefits at the time of making their decision. **It would also prevent them from later denying knowledge of declared donations or other benefits.***

That is, the purpose of Sandon Recommendation 7 was to require the disclosure of donations that would give rise to a councillor having a conflict of interest.

The threshold at which a conflict of interest is created for a councillor is determined by S128 of the *Local Government Act 2020*. This threshold is \$500 (received in the 5 years preceding a decision before the council), though the threshold may be increased by regulation.

The Bill, however, has chosen as the donation threshold the threshold in the Electoral Act 2002. This threshold is \$1,000 in one financial year. The explanatory memorandum is plain: "A donor must provide to the Commission a disclosure return for each political donation made by the donor during a financial year that is equal to or exceeds \$1000 (the disclosure threshold) within 21 days of the making of the political donation."

The Bill therefore fails to adequately respond to Sandon Recommendation 7, because it creates a disclosure framework that is unrelated to the Local Government conflict-of-interest tests.

It follows that the Bill does not require the disclosure of many donations that would, in fact, create conflicts of interest for councillors where the council is the decision-maker. The onus will remain on the councillor to identify such occasions.

The purpose of the new Part 5A of the Act includes "to minimise the risk of, or perception of, undue influence in the making of planning decisions". We think that a reasonable person will assume that the disclosure statements associated with applications, objections and submissions will constitute a complete account of the presence of donation-related conflicts of interest. They would be misled.

We also think that Councillors will find it difficult – or at least counter-intuitive – to identify conflicts of interest beyond those that are implied to exist due to the presence of a disclosure statement, AND to understand where a disclosure statement identifies a donation that does not, in fact, create a conflict of interest. The *Local Government Act 2020* material and general conflicts of interest tests are already difficult to navigate in relation to complicated planning scheme amendments, and it may be difficult to reinforce the message to both councillors and the general public that the disclosure statements are not a proxy for conflicts of interest.

These problems can be substantially resolved if Council and State donation thresholds are aligned, or if the definition of disclosure threshold at clause 155 is split into local and state components. But this is a complicated process that would significantly challenge the purpose and structure of the new Part 5A of the Act, and will need to be done with care.

More time is needed to develop a more robust gifts and donations framework.

• The political party donation disclosures are flawed

The Bill's inclusion of donations to a political party that a decision-maker is a member of is welcome. However, the Bill makes an error at clause 172 where it seeks to establish new section 113B of the Act: subsection (b) requires the disclosure of reportable gifts or donations to the registered political party of (ii) a Councillor, "where the registered political party of the Councillor is known". Known by who?

If known by the person making the declaration – that would be so difficult to enforce as to render the provision unworkable. *If known because the political party has been disclosed in accordance with Victorian law* – there is no requirement in Victorian law for a councillor to disclose the membership of their political party. This too leads to interpretational dispute.

The closest Victorian law gets to requiring the disclosure of a councillor's political party membership is to prompt a candidate for election to a Council to voluntarily disclose the political party that has endorsed them. This is not the same thing as voluntarily disclosing the political party that they are a member of. These disclosures ('candidate questionnaires') are removed from publication after the election. Some councillors declare their political party membership in their personal interest returns, and others do not – there is no automatic requirement to do so.

In short, the requirement of new Part 5A of the Act – to disclose donations to a councillor's political party *if known* – is built on weak foundations. The Bill may be doing nothing more than requiring a person to disclose donations to political parties of those councillors who have disclosed their party membership, and not disclosing donations to political parties of those councillors who *have not* disclosed their party membership – which seems hardly fair.

It is also the case that some Councillors are members of groups that are not registered political parties under the Electoral Act, because those groups do not contest state elections. The Bill avoids requiring the disclosure of donations to those groups.

We note that the Victorian Electoral Commission has been tracking public frustration with the *Local Government Act 2020* provisions relating to voluntary disclosure of candidates' party affiliations. See page 68 of its [report into the 2024 council elections](#), tabled in Parliament on 14 October 2025.

These problems can be substantially resolved if a new requirement was created (preferably in the *Local Government Act 2020*) for a councillor to disclose their political party memberships, and for the council to publish those disclosures. There are many implications to consider before applying this solution.

Alternatively, a relevant person could be required to disclose donations to all registered political parties, for completeness. This may be an unreasonable impost on the person making the disclosure.

These solutions would be policy on the run. More time is needed to develop a more robust gifts and donations framework.

- **The burden on submitters to planning scheme amendments is significant**

The Part also requires that members of the public who wish to make a submission on a planning scheme amendment file a donation disclosure statement with their submission – even if they do not have a financial interest in the amendment. The sort of amendment where these requirements would pose an excessive burden on the submitter include vision-based amendments (a new Municipal Planning Strategy, for example), where a council will seek to maximise public participation in the process to express a view about the future of local communities. It would be unfortunate to provide a barrier so significant that it discourages the making of submissions.

Submissions are also not the only way that people engage in a planning scheme amendment process. Submissions could be made directly to a council meeting considering the application – if that submission is not a formal submission on the amendment, it would not need to be accompanied by any donation disclosure statement. But the real risk comes when donors to decision-makers simply opt out of the formal submissions process, and seek to influence in other ways.

The Bill may inadvertently be shifting any real or perceived corruption risk away from the formal processes (applications, objections and submissions) and into informal processes away from the disclosure scheme. All of this needs to be carefully considered before the solution is chosen – but no councils have been consulted.

Due to their significance, and the difficulty of addressing them prior to the introduction of the Bill, we recommend the deletion of Part 6 of the Bill entirely, and a reintroduction shortly after the passage of the remainder of the (amended) Bill.

In the intervening period, the MAV stands ready to assist the Government to design a new gifts and donations disclosure framework that implements *Sandon* recommendations 7 and 9 properly, without creating new confusion and corruption risks.

Recommendation 27:

Remove Part 6 from the Bill and reconsider the matters after the passage of the remainder of the Bill. In the intervening period, work with local government to improve the proposed gifts and donations disclosure framework, with a view to more accurately implementing IBAC Operation *Sandon* recommendations 7 and 9.

Part 7—Compliance and enforcement

Clauses 175 to 191

The Bill reviews the Act's compliance, monitoring and enforcement provisions, penalties and sanctions.

The new monitoring, compliance and enforcement policy provisions, a new Division 6 of Part 6 of the Act, is welcome. The requirement to consult all responsible authorities on the development or review of the policy may lead to a stronger statewide understanding of the reality of enforcement challenges in Victoria, especially where there are insufficient resources to conduct comprehensive enforcement activities.

The changes are acceptable.

Part 8—Compensation

Clauses 191 to 214

Local government has not had adequate time to consider the effects of Part 8 of the Bill.

We note that the explanatory memorandum does not adequately explain the need, in clause 194 and elsewhere, to replace the "financial loss suffered" test with "actual financial loss suffered" under a right to compensation. It is unclear how "actual financial loss" can be calculated without selling the property. The issue is compounded for agricultural land where the drop in productive capacity is year on year.

We would draw some comfort from knowing the extent of consultation with affected parties and representative bodies prior to the drafting of the Bill.

Councils will be affected parties when acting as 'compensating authorities'. We request a briefing from the Department about the purposes and desired effects of Part 8 of the Bill.

Part 9—Infrastructure contributions

Piecemeal reform to infrastructure contributions carries significant risks, primarily the delaying of long overdue comprehensive reform. Broader infrastructure contributions reform was [announced in October 2024](#) but has not yet progressed to identifying options for comprehensive reform, or consultation with councils about those options.

If broader infrastructure contributions reform is now being pushed off until 2027 or later, the infrastructure funding gap will continue to grow. New homes require infrastructure at the point of construction, not years later.

The MAV has published an [interim submission on infrastructure contributions reform](#) providing a statewide overview of DCP, ICP, GAIC and Open Space Contribution schemes, and '10 essential considerations for reform'. Entrenching the Victorian Government as collection agency, with an ever-greater proportion of collected funds being reserved for state infrastructure, poses significant risks for the planning and delivery of essential council-delivered infrastructure. Part 9 of the Bill is no substitute for comprehensive reform.

Clauses 215 to 222

The Bill seeks greater cost recovery and financial sustainability for the State in the facilitation of ICP areas, including activity centres, by providing the opportunity for infrastructure contributions plans to fund:

- plan administration costs (clauses 215 and 216 of the Bill amending sections 46GA and 46GD(2) of the Act);

- works, services or facilities outside the ICP plan area that relate to significant infrastructure that is intended or expected, at least in part, to facilitate development opportunities in the ICP plan area; and
- works, services or facilities that cannot reasonably be provided in the ICP plan area but are related to development in the ICP plan area (clause 217 of the Bill amending section 46GG(1) of the Act).

The Explanatory Memorandum states in relation to clause 217 that it may not be feasible for a land component to be included in plans for “high density precincts”.

Clauses 223 to 231

For growth area councils, Section 223 of the Bill introduces new Section 201S(5) of the Act, which may facilitate a marginal increase in development feasibility and new housing and jobs by stating that only on new “child lots” created rather than all land identified on a plan of subdivision, including balance lots created, is subject to GAIC.

Section 229 of the Bill amending Section 201VA of the Act renames the Growth Areas Public Transport Fund to the Growth Areas Transport Fund, suggesting that GAIC could fund State road projects. Growth area councils will welcome GAIC funding precinct-enabling State road infrastructure to unlock development, as there often exist strict staging controls in new precinct structure plans that require the delivery of this enabling infrastructure before the development of a precinct can commence.

However, Section 229 of the Bill does not amend Section 201VA(a)(i) and appears to retain the need for the renamed Growth Areas Transport Fund to fund capital works for State funded public transport infrastructure. The clause appears to create a contradiction.

Section 229 of the Bill again seeks cost recovery and financial sustainability for the State by introducing new Section 201VA(d) of the Act allowing GAIC to fund the payment of the costs and expenses incurred by the Department in administering Part 9B of the Act.

The changes may be acceptable subject to the clarification of the apparent contradiction created by section 229.

Part 10—Transitional provisions

Clause 232

Support.

Part 11—Amendment of Subordinate Legislation Act 1994

Clause 233

Recommendation 28:

Consider any consequential amendments required pursuant to the recommendation at clause 39.

See clause 39.

Clause 234

Support, on the understanding that all VPP versions and amendments, and all planning scheme versions and amendments, are public records, and will be recorded and archived in accordance with the *Public Records Act 1973*.

Part 12—Consequential amendments to the Act and other Acts

Clauses 235, 249, 255, 256(2), 257(2), 258(2), 259(2), 261(2) and 262(2)

Recommendation 29:

Delete clauses or subclauses as each case requires pursuant to the recommendation at clause 39.

See clause 39.

Planning Regulations Advisory Committee

Note: This proposed Committee is referred to throughout the detailed Bill brief above. See especially the introductory text under Part 5 – Planning permits.

In May 2025, a Select Committee of the Legislative Council inquiring into three statewide planning reforms **found** that:

The Victorian Government failed to implement the recommendations of the Victorian Auditor General in 2008 and 2017 to create a performance and continuous improvement mechanism for the Victoria Planning Provisions. This has contributed, in part, to the problems with the planning system that the amendments are trying to solve

The Committee's majority report was adopted unanimously. The Committee recommended:

That, after consultation with relevant stakeholders, the Victorian Government act on the recommendations of the Victorian Auditor General from 2008 and 2017 in relation to the performance and continuous improvement of the Victoria Planning Provisions.

The Government has chosen not to implement the VAGO recommendations from planning system audits in **2008** (see first recommendation) and **2017** (see recommendation 2), or the Select Committee recommendation, in the Bill.

Local Government calls on the Parliament to implement the Select Committee recommendation in this Bill.

A useful precedent is found in statute, in Division 4 of Part 12 of the *Building Act 1993*: the Building Regulations Advisory Committee. We rely on that precedent in proposing specific words and sections below, including where the proposed provisions call on external bodies to nominate members.

For the purposes of a Planning Regulations Advisory Committee, we propose **a forum of the regulators**, to address the biggest barrier to planning system design and efficiency today: **the absence of shared understanding between planning system designers in the Victorian Government and planning system administrators in Local Government**. If the Parliament wishes to create a broader regulator and industry advisory mechanism, we ask that that be a separate consideration to our recommendation below.

The purpose of the Committee is to forge a shared understanding between State and Local Government planning system designers and users and advise the Minister about how the system can be made as efficient as possible. It would rely on confidential and constructive participation, to maximise its usefulness, and it could not possibly bind the Minister of the day.

Recommendation 30:

- Insert into the principal Act after section 4J or elsewhere:

“Division 2—The Planning Regulations Advisory Committee**4K Planning Regulations Advisory Committee**

There is established by this Act a Committee to be called the Planning Regulations Advisory Committee.

4L Membership and procedure

(1) The members of the Planning Regulations Advisory Committee are to be appointed by the Secretary to the Department.

(2) Of those members—

(a) four are to be nominated by the Secretary to the Department from among the employees of the Department;

(b) four are to be nominated by the Municipal Association of Victoria from among the employees of all municipal councils in Victoria;

(c) two are to be nominated by the Planning Institute of Australia (Victoria) from among its members who are not employees of Department or any municipal council or a business involved in making planning applications.

(3) The Secretary to the Department will appoint a chairperson from among the members.

(4) If there is or there is to be a vacancy in the membership of the Committee, the Secretary to the Department may request the relevant person or organisation specified at subsection (2) to submit a name or names within a period specified in the request.

(5) The Secretary to the Department may appoint an otherwise eligible person to be a member of the Committee without a nomination, if that request is not complied with.

4M Functions of committee

(1) The purpose of the Planning Regulations Advisory Committee is to oversee the continuous review and improvement of the Victoria Planning Provisions and other subordinate instruments and to maintain a structured approach to planning system user feedback and engagement.

(2) The following are the ongoing functions of the Planning Regulations Advisory Committee—

(a) to oversee the establishment and monitoring of a framework for measuring the performance of the Victorian planning system and decisions made under it; and

(b) to oversee the establishment and monitoring of a program for obtaining planning system user feedback about the operation of the planning system, so that opportunities for improvement can be identified and pursued, and emerging issues requiring attention may be identified; and

(c) to advise the Minister on the strategy for reviewing the Victoria Planning Provisions; and

(d) to advise the Minister on the efficiency and efficacy of proposals to amend the Victoria Planning Provisions; and

(e) to advise the Minister on the administration of this Act and the regulations; and

(f) to advise the Minister on any matter referred to it by the Minister.

(3) The following are the additional functions of the Planning Regulations Advisory Committee until such time as the Planning Amendment (Priority Reforms) Act 2025 is repealed—

- (a) to advise the Minister on new and revised subordinate instruments that will be needed following the passage of the Planning Amendment (Priority Reforms) Act 2025, and a program of consultation for the same; and
- (b) to advise on options to develop a single system for permit applications in Victoria.
- (4) The Planning Regulations Advisory Committee must adhere to any reasonable procedures and protocols imposed on it by the Secretary to the Department.
- (5) The Secretary to the Department must ensure that the Planning Regulations Advisory Committee has the administrative support it requires to fulfil its functions."
- Further, ensure that these new sections commence the day after Royal Assent.

This new statutory body would give effect to each of the VAGO 2008 and 2017 recommendations, the Local Government recommendation (MAV April 2025) and the Select Committee recommendation (May 2025).

It is necessary if the Government's objectives for a more efficient planning system that produces greater speed and certainty are to succeed.

Affordable Housing

A head of power to require affordable housing contributions

The Bill does not include the creation of a new head of power in the Act to require affordable housing contributions with planning permission.

Action 4 of [Plan for Victoria](#) is to "Increase the number of social and affordable homes". The Action has two components: "consider developing locally specific targets for social and affordable housing for inclusion in planning schemes" and "explore simpler rules for affordable housing as part of the review of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* so the Minister for Planning and councils can obtain a fair and equitable affordable housing contribution as part of a new development."

The Bill progresses neither of these.

Plan for Victoria was a weaker policy than its precursor plan, *Plan Melbourne 2017-2050*, which identified a "pressing need to increase the supply of social and affordable housing for households unable to afford market-rate housing." That plan identified the legislative barriers to requiring affordable housing contributions and made a clear commitment:

The planning system will be reformed to facilitate the delivery of more social and affordable housing. These reforms will clearly define social and affordable housing, create a clear head of power for affordable housing contributions, and clarify the role the planning system has to play in the delivery of new housing. These reforms will explore inclusionary zoning and mechanisms to capture and share value created through planning controls.

Instead of progressing this commitment, the Government replaced the commitment with *Plan for Victoria*'s action to "consider" and "explore".

We are heading in the wrong direction.

The Government aims to complete planning for 60 Activity Centres by June 2026, in accordance with the budget commitment this financial year.

If affordable housing isn't going to be required in Activity Centres, where will it ever be required?

The Bill is rewriting the planning system. It needs to do so in a way that anticipates the return of market confidence in apartment construction. The Bill proposes as an objective of planning in Victoria to “facilitate the provision of social and affordable housing in Victoria”. But the Bill does nothing to progress that objective.

A useful precedent for a clear head of power to enable affordable housing contributions can be found in Division 7.2 of Part 7 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (NSW).

The Parliament should create the head of power, to give the Government the tools it needs to require affordable housing contributions in areas where development potential is proposed to be substantially increased.

Recommendation 31:

Create a new head of power in the Act to enable affordable housing requirements in areas that need it, giving the Government the ability to require affordable housing contributions in future – such as in Activity Centres.

Require that funds collected in lieu of affordable housing contributions under the new affordable housing head of power are committed to the construction of new social housing.

Monitoring underdevelopment

The new Townhouse and Low-Rise Code is not performing as intended. Unfortunately, the Government has not put in place a performance monitoring framework for the Code, and its outcomes are not easily measured.

The MAV has been informed by some Councils that the Code is facilitating the under-development of well-located sites proximate to public transport in the Housing Choice and Transport Zone and other Zones. This is despite the purposes of those Zones, to facilitate in-fill development and in turn to contribute to Victoria’s housing settlement strategy.

Clause 55 (the Townhouse and Low-Rise Code) requires development that meets all standards as ‘deemed-to-comply’ and therefore cannot be negotiated, and the purposes of the Zone (“to provide housing at increased densities”) are ‘switched off’: they cannot be considered by the responsible authority.

While there are also other important market, finance and confidence factors encouraging developers to produce townhouses rather than strata-titled low- and mid-rise apartment blocks, the regulatory design of clause 55 should not be overlooked, for it provides no remedy to the under-development of well-located sites. These problems may be compounded with the new Mid-Rise Code, expected to be approved in December 2025.

The Bill is expected to facilitate the Townhouse and Low-Rise Code and the Mid-Rise Code in a type 2 application stream. The design of these Codes, and other Codes that will be necessary to give the Bill its full effect, are important to get right. If they are not accompanied by clear and consistent performance measurement, it will be exceptionally difficult to improve them later.

Recommendation 32:

Secure a commitment from the Government to a comprehensive review of residential development codes, including with an aim of avoiding deemed approval of proposals near Activity Centres that constitute an unacceptable under-development. The review should also aim to create a performance measurement framework for residential codes, to ensure that the *outcomes* produced under the Code – and not just the *speed of decisions* – can be measured.



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Office of the Mayor

HOBSONS
BAY CITY
COUNCIL



25 November 2025

The Hon. Melissa Horne MP
State Member for Williamstown
melissa.horne@parliament.vic.gov.au

Dear Minister Horne,

On behalf of **Hobsons Bay City Council**, I write to raise urgent concerns about the *Planning Amendment (Better Decisions Made Faster) Bill 2025*.

The Bill will create a significant regulatory burden on local government, and we are alarmed that our council was not consulted on the Bill.

We respectfully urge you to refer the Bill to a Parliamentary Inquiry, and to support the amendments outlined below and in [the MAV's published Local Government Position on the Bill](#) that restore transparency and oversight; safeguard safety and environmental risk; and ensure genuine consultation and resourcing for councils across all Victoria.

Of most concern to us are:

1. 'Higher risk' applications may be locked into a 'low risk' pathway and risk automatic approval

The Bill proposes to make the applicant for a planning permit responsible for nominating a type 1, 2 or 3 assessment pathway when lodging their application (clause 78 of the Bill). The Bill also provides for the automatic approval of type 1 applications after 10 days. The Bill proposes only one opportunity for the council to move a type 2 or 3 application that has been nominated for a type 1 assessment pathway in error into the correct pathway: and that must occur within five days of the lodgement of the application (clause 83).

As a **council that may experience very high numbers of applications** lodged at particular times, we are very concerned about the demands on planners to conduct five day application completeness checks to the accuracy needed to ensure that the type 1, 2 or 3 assessment pathway has been correctly identified.

The onus should be on the responsible authority to assess an application under the correct assessment pathway type, and to determine whether a permit should be issued.

The Bill reverses the roles of the applicant and the responsible authority and is not something that should occur without careful consultation with responsible authorities – in this case, Victoria's 79 councils. There has been no such consultation.



Please note that [the Municipal Association of Victoria has proposed](#) solutions that will significantly reduce the risks involved with applicants nominating the assessment pathway and initiating automatic approval of a type 1 permit, and we request that all of them be implemented.

2. Public notice will be switched off by default for all type 2 applications

Public notice is the mechanism that councils rely on to ensure local communities know about proposals, and to ensure that local knowledge can add value to the decision-making process. It is the mechanism that provides public trust in the planning system and decisions made under it.

The Bill provides that type 2 applications will not undergo any public notice unless new Ministerial guidelines allow it (clause 86). We understand that type 2 applications will include codified residential development for two or more dwellings on a lot, including in all residential zones across metropolitan areas, regional cities and rural townships.

We seek a guarantee that public notice will be required for type 2 applications that benefit from public notice – including all residential development.

3. Environmental protections may be overlooked

We seek a guarantee that the ability to consider and address known environmental risks will be ‘switched on by default’ in the case of all type 2 and 3 applications.

As the new codified residential development pathways all ‘switch off’ the environmental protections found at Section 60 of the Act (specifically the ability of the decision-maker to consider the presence of contaminated land, or the known risk of floods, fires or land-slips where a relevant overlay is yet to be applied to the land), the Bill would appear to only require that decisions that overlook environmental protections be made *faster*.

This once again suggests that the Bill has been drafted with one land use in mind, without adequate consideration of regional and environmental variation.

4. The rewrite of the objectives of the Act has deleted important concepts

The rewrite has removed “safe working, living and recreational environment for all Victorians” and “ecological processes” from the ‘objectives of planning in Victoria’, as well as the concepts of “fair” and “efficient”.

We request that all of these be reinstated.

5. The donation disclosure requirements will create new problems

Part 6 of the Bill creates new donation disclosure rules that are not tied to local government conflict-of-interest tests, despite Recommendation 7 of IBAC’s Operation Sardon report clearly identifying that one of the purposes of the new donation disclosure scheme is to allow councillors to understand if a conflict of interest is present.

The Bill also requires the disclosure of donations to political parties of councillors “if known”. The political party of a councillor is not always knowable in Victorian law, and – even if disclosed – does not necessarily create a conflict of interest.

The new provisions are likely to make it more difficult for councillors, applicants, submitters and members of the public to understand the local government conflict of interest tests.



Part 6 of the Bill should be withdrawn until the State Government and Councils can be confident that the donation disclosure scheme will provide greater clarity, rather than confusion.

6. Most details are left to the regulations without any guarantee of consultation

The Bill provides over 100 instances where matters are to be prescribed in the regulations.

Given the absence of consultation with councils on the Bill, we are concerned that the consultation that will be necessary to ensure that the new regulations result in a more efficient planning system will also be inadequate, particularly by the proposed commencement date of October 2027.

The Municipal Association of Victoria has recommended a mechanism (at recommendation 30 of the [Local Government Position paper](#)) to improve the efficiency and speed of State and Local Government cooperation on planning system design and oversight, in a form that also implements the recommendations of the Victorian Auditor General from 2008 and 2017.

We request that you implement it, with a view to ensuring that the new planning system proposed in the Bill has the potential to succeed.

7. Permit streaming will require the overhaul of IT systems, but no support has been provided to do this

The implementation of a three-tier permit applications and assessment system will require significant local government resources. There is no state funding commitment alongside the Bill to assist councils to implement this proposed permit streaming in a consistent statewide system. We seek clarity about the guidance and resources that will be provided to councils.

8. The Bill does not provide any mechanisms for affordable housing

Despite Action 4 of *Plan for Victoria*, the Bill does not provide a new head of power to require affordable housing in future, where development potential is proposed to be greatly increased.

This may see the completion of planning for Activity Centres, and the rezoning and lifting of planning control, without requiring any affordable housing contributions in return.

This is a significant missed opportunity. We strongly urge the Parliament to add to the Act a new head of power to enable mandatory affordable housing contributions in well-located areas targeted for 'upzoning'.

The ambition to introduce planning reforms which balances speed with quality, fairness, safety and the faster delivery of housing is welcome.

However, if the Bill proceeds without addressing the above flaws, it risks undermining the very goal it sets out to achieve, namely efficient approvals and good outcomes.

Yours sincerely,

Councillor Diana Grima
Mayor of Hobsons Bay

7.2.6 Balance of Councillor Appointments to Committees 2026

Directorate: Corporate Services
Responsible Officer: Acting Coordinator Governance
Attachments: Nil

Purpose

To appoint Councillor representatives to the remaining internal and external committees for 2026.

Recommendation

That Council:

1. Appoints Councillor _____ to the Hobsons Bay Local Safety Committee.
2. Appoints Councillor _____ to the Association of Bayside Municipalities.
3. Appoints Councillor _____ as the proxy for the Association of Bayside Municipalities.
4. Appoints Councillor _____ to the Brooklyn Community Representative Group.
5. Appoints Councillor _____ to the Hobsons Bay Community Fund.
6. Appoints Councillor _____ as proxy for Hobsons Bay Community Fund.
7. Appoints Councillor _____ to the Local Government Working Group on Gambling.
8. Appoints Councillor _____ as proxy for the Local Government Working Group on Gambling.
9. Appoints Councillor _____ to the Mayoral and Councillor Taskforce Supporting People Seeking Asylum.
10. Appoints Councillor _____ as the proxy for the Mayoral and Councillor Taskforce Supporting People Seeking Asylum.
11. Appoints Councillor _____ to the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV).
12. Appoints Councillor _____ as the proxy for the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV).
13. Appoints Councillor _____ to The Substation Board.

14. Appoints Councillor _____ to the Western Melbourne Tourism Board.
15. Appoints Councillor _____ as the proxy for the Western Melbourne Tourism Board.
16. Appoints Councillor(s) _____ to the VLGA Women's Charter Champion.

Summary

At the Council Meeting on 18 November 2025, Councillors were appointed to a number of committees requiring immediate representation due to upcoming meeting schedules. At that time, Council resolved that a further report would be presented at a future Council meeting to appoint Councillors to the remaining committees not covered in the initial report.

This report now recommends appointments to those remaining committees, which provide important opportunities for advocacy, collaboration and partnership development across key environmental, social and economic areas. Finalising these appointments ensures Council continues to be effectively represented across its full range of governance and external engagement responsibilities.

Background

The *Local Government Act 2020* acknowledges the need for various committees, both internal and external, to support Council in undertaking its functions effectively.

Council participates in a broad range of committees and networks to advocate for community priorities and foster collaboration with partner councils, government agencies and peak bodies. Many of these committees operate under their own charters, governance frameworks and procedural arrangements.

At the Council meeting on 18 November 2025, Councillor appointments were made to the following committees:

Committee	Councillor appointments
Audit and Risk Committee	Councillor Michael Disbury Councillor Kristin Bishop Councillor Paddy Keys-Macpherson (proxy)
LeadWest Joint Delegated Committee	Councillor Rayanne Hawli Council Paddy Keys-Macpherson (proxy)
Melbourne 9 (M9)	Mayor Diana Grima (by virtue of position) Councillor Lisa Bentley (alternate)
Metropolitan Transport Forum	Councillor Paddy Keys-Macpherson

Council also resolved that remaining committee appointments would be provided to Council through a subsequent report.

Internal Committees

Internal committees support Council's governance functions and strengthen collaboration between Councillors, officers and community representatives on local issues of shared concern.

The remaining internal committee requiring Councillor appointment is:

1. Hobsons Bay Local Safety Committee.

This Committee provides a forum for collaboration between Council, Victoria Police and key stakeholders to support community safety initiatives.

External Committees

Council also participates in a series of external committees and boards that strengthen advocacy and regional collaboration across areas such as coastal management, tourism, sector governance, community wellbeing and support for people seeking asylum.

The remaining external committees requiring Councillor appointment are:

1. Association of Bayside Municipalities
2. Western Melbourne Tourism Board
3. Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV)
4. Mayoral and Councillor Taskforce Supporting People Seeking Asylum
5. Brooklyn Community Representative Group
6. Hobsons Bay Community Fund
7. Local Government Working Group on Gambling
8. The Substation Board
9. VLGA Women's Charter Champion.

Appointments to these committees ensure Councillors continue to represent the community's interests and contribute to regional and sector-wide initiatives aligned with Council's strategic objectives.

Discussion

Councillors have been provided with detailed information regarding committee roles, meeting schedules, governance structures and responsibilities to support informed decision-making about nominations.

These committees offer Councillors critical avenues to influence policy, strengthen partnerships and advocate for community needs in regional and statewide forums.

Strategic Alignment

This report specifically addresses priorities from the following strategic documents:

Hobsons Bay 2030 Community Vision

Priority 2: Community wellbeing and inter-connection

Council Plan 2021-25

Objective 5: A High Performing Organisation

Policies and Related Council Documents

1. 18 November 2025 Hobsons Bay Council Meeting Agenda and Minutes – Item 7.2.3 Councillor Appointment to Internal and External Committees
2. Hobsons Bay Governance Rules 2025.

Legal/Statutory Obligations and Risk

Councillor appointments are made in accordance with the requirements of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

Financial and Resource Implications

Committee memberships, administrative support and participation costs are provided for within existing operational budgets.

Environmental, Social and Economic Impacts

Councillor representation on these committees supports:

1. Community safety, wellbeing and social inclusion
2. Environmental sustainability and coastal management
3. Local economic development, tourism and cultural initiatives
4. Advocacy for vulnerable communities, including people seeking asylum
5. Community health and gender equity, including gambling harm minimisation

These impacts align with Council's broader sustainability, equity and community wellbeing priorities.

Consultation and Communication

Internal consultation was undertaken with the relevant directorates and officers responsible for servicing or liaising with each committee.

Following Council resolving on these appointments, Council's website and relevant stakeholders will be updated accordingly.

Declaration of Conflict of Interest

Section 130 of the *Local Government Act 2020* requires members of Council staff to disclose any general or material conflict of interest in matters to be considered at a Council meeting.

Council staff involved in the preparation of this report have no conflict of interest in this matter.

7.2.7 Library Collections and Equipment Procurement Australia Agreement

Directorate: Corporate Services
Responsible Officer: Acting Manager Community Learning and Service Centres
Attachments: Nil

Purpose

To confirm the outcome of the Procurement Australia tender process relating to library collections and associated requirements, and to seek Council endorsement to participate in the Procurement Australia Library Collections, Furniture, Equipment & Associated Requirements collaborative panel agreement.

Recommendation

That Council:

- 1. Approves participation in the Procurement Australia Library Collections, Furniture, Equipment & Associated Requirements Panel collaborative agreement under its schedule of rates, up to a maximum cumulative value of \$4,620,000 (four million, six hundred and twenty thousand dollars) including GST, for the initial contract period of two years, with two one-year options to extend.**
- 2. Delegates authority to the Chief Executive Officer to approve any purchase order up to the maximum value of \$500,000 (five hundred thousand dollars) including GST, per financial year for each individual supplier on the panel.**
- 3. Delegates authority to the Chief Executive Officer to approve variations and contingencies to individual (discrete) purchase orders raised for panel members under the PA Library Collections, Furniture, Equipment & Associated Requirements Panel, within the maximum cumulative value.**
- 4. Receives a further report should a contract extension be sought.**

Summary

Hobsons Bay Libraries has sourced library materials and equipment predominantly through Procurement Australia shared purchasing arrangements since 2010. This report seeks approval for Council to transition to the newly established Procurement Australia panel to ensure continuity of supply and contract compliance.

Under the panel arrangement:

- Council is not obligated to purchase from all suppliers or categories and retains the ability to purchase outside of the agreement to maintain collection diversity and responsiveness to local community needs.
- Purchase orders will be issued annually to preferred suppliers within existing thresholds.
- Each order will be governed by the Deed of Standing Offer, ensuring compliance with Council's Procurement Policy.

- Procurement Australia's evaluation ensures that all suppliers meet minimum insurance, financial and quality assurance standards.

Suppliers are approved across key categories including:

- Printed Material (English)
- Printed Materials (Community Languages)
- Digital Collections
- Cataloguing and Processing Services
- RFID & Access Systems

Council's evaluation panel and Tender Review Board have endorsed this arrangement as providing best value and ensuring compliance with Council's Procurement Policy.

Background

Since 2010, Hobsons Bay Libraries has sourced library materials and equipment through Procurement Australia arrangements, which replaced multiple independent supplier agreements and delivered significant efficiency gains.

These contracts have:

- Enabled shelf-ready processing and reduced staff handling
- Improved supply consistency across printed, digital, and multimedia collections
- Secured competitive discounts through consortium purchasing
- Provided access to advance releases and best-seller lists
- Supported Council's commitment to equity of access, diversity, and literacy development

The renewed panel ensures continuity of these benefits while expanding access to emerging categories such as digital collections, RFID, and access systems.

Hobsons Bay Libraries takes pride in maintaining a high-quality, contemporary, and community-responsive collection. Council's ongoing commitment to keeping the collection fresh and relevant has resulted in consistently high satisfaction and value-perception from the community.

Discussion

Procurement Australia conducted Tender 2706/0848 to establish a refreshed panel for the provision of library collections, equipment and associated services. The tender was advertised on 20 November 2024 and closed on 18 December 2024.

A total of 52 suppliers registered, with 44 conforming responses received and evaluated.

The evaluation process, undertaken by Procurement Australia and a Tender Reference Group of industry specialists, assessed all submissions against mandatory and qualitative criteria including:

- Compliance with specification and insurances

- Customer focus and service delivery model
- Corporate social responsibility and sustainability practices
- Pricing and value for money

Following this process, 44 suppliers were recommended across 13 service categories, including printed and digital collections, cataloguing and processing, furniture and shelving, and RFID/unattended access systems.

Council's participation in this collaborative procurement will ensure continued access to high-quality materials and services, consistency of supply and strong value for money.

Strategic Alignment

This report specifically addresses priorities from the following strategic documents:

Hobsons Bay 2030 Community Vision

Priority 2: Community wellbeing and inter-connection

Priority 3: Growth through innovation, access to local jobs, technology and education

Council Plan 2021-25

Objective 1: Healthy, equitable and thriving communities

Strategy 1.1: Celebrate the diversity of our community and provide equitable opportunities for all

Priority d) Enhance library physical and digital collections that reflect diversity of the changing community – incorporating collections of things beyond books

Policies and Related Council Documents

Hobsons Bay Procurement Policy 2021

Legal/Statutory Obligations and Risk

The tender has been conducted in accordance with Procurement Australia's probity standards and in line with Council's Procurement Policy. Procurement Australia has undertaken financial and reference checks for all recommended suppliers.

No conflicts of interest were declared by evaluation panel members.

Financial and Resource Implications

The total estimated cumulative contract value is \$4,620,000 (four million, six hundred and twenty thousand dollars) including GST, over four years, with most funding allocated under the capital works program, and the remainder through operational expenditure for IT-related items. The contract delivers economies of scale through consolidated procurement, offering

discounts of 5% to 35% depending on category, and removes the administrative burden of managing multiple supplier tenders.

Environmental, Social and Economic Impacts

Procurement Australia's evaluation criteria included environmental sustainability, ethical supply chains and social procurement practices. Suppliers were required to demonstrate recycling practices, diversity in workforce and local supply capabilities where possible.

Consultation and Communication

Consultation occurred with Procurement Australia, participating councils and internal stakeholders from the Community Learning and Service Centres team. Outcomes of the tender evaluation were reviewed by the Tender Review Board and endorsed for Council consideration.

Declaration of Conflict of Interest

Section 130 of the *Local Government Act 2020* requires members of Council staff to disclose any general or material conflict of interest in matters to be considered at a Council meeting.

Council staff involved in the preparation of this report have no conflict of interest in this matter.

7.2.8 Contract 2025.05 Drainage Cleaning and Investigation

Directorate: Infrastructure and City Services

Responsible Officer: Manager Engineering Services

Attachments: Nil

Purpose

This report summarises the process undertaken to source a supplier for the completion of drainage investigation, cleaning and repair work in accordance with Council's planned renewal and maintenance programs. It details the stages of Procurement from Planning, through Market Engagement, Evaluation of Tender Submissions and the Evaluation Panel recommendation based on their findings.

Recommendation

That Council:

1. **Awards Contract 2025.05 for Drainage CCTV Investigation, Cleaning and Repair to a panel of four suppliers, under their schedule of rates, with a maximum cumulative spend of \$2,750,000 inclusive GST (\$550,000 including GST per year) for a contract period of three years, with two one-year options to extend to:**
 - 1.1 **Total Drain Cleaning Services**
 - 1.2 **Rangedale VIC**
 - 1.3 **AME Group**
 - 1.4 **Plumbtrax**
2. **Delegates authority to the Interim Chief Executive Officer to execute the formal agreement for Contract 2025.05 for each panel member.**
3. **Receives a further report should a contract extension be sought.**

Summary

The tender process, which opened on 12 September and closed on 10 October 2025, attracted 16 submissions from 28 interested companies. After initial assessment, four tenderers were shortlisted based on their high scores and were further evaluated through interviews, where they demonstrated a solid understanding of the requirements and capability to deliver the services. The evaluation panel determined these four suppliers were suitably qualified and recommended awarding contracts to them to support the three-year works program.

Background

The project aims to improve Council's stormwater drainage system by undertaking CCTV inspections and the rectification of issues identified during these assessments, such as clearing debris removal from pipes and pits.

Investigations undertaken last year found that many pipes were heavily obstructed by debris and tree roots, significantly compromising flow.

The contract will commence with an annual budget of \$500,000 and is planned to run over the next five years. Contractors will also provide recommendations for repairing damaged pipes and pits to ensure long-term functionality.

Based on information from previous investigations, as well as Council officers' knowledge of historic flooding events, a works program has been developed to prioritise the highest risk sites first. It is anticipated that the first year of the contract will be focused on clearing a list of known blockages.

It is noted that these works are separate to works scheduled to be undertaken by Council's new eductor truck. This truck, managed by the Civil Maintenance team, will focus on a proactive approach of clearing blocked pits across the municipality, as well as having the capacity to react quickly to requests from the community regarding blockages. The two programs will work hand in hand to ensure the greatest efficiency and impact on flooding.

Council sought to approach the market because the previous contract covered only a limited number of major sites identified in the 2018 flood modelling and was based on a fixed-price model. This model proved unsuitable, as many pipes were in worse condition than expected, preventing completion of all planned work. A key lesson learned is that when underground conditions are uncertain, a flexible per-day pricing model is more effective than fixed pricing. This approach enables Council to complete required cleaning and inspections without compromising quality.

A panel arrangement provides flexibility and efficiency for ongoing drainage maintenance. It enables Council to respond quickly to urgent issues, distribute work across multiple suppliers to avoid delays, and maintain competitive pricing and quality. The number of suppliers has been set to ensure adequate capacity while keeping administration manageable, offering choice and resilience without introducing unnecessary complexity.

Work orders will be issued to panel members based on specific areas in the municipality, with allocation determined by pricing and contractor availability. A Council Project Engineer will act as the primary liaison during the works, providing timely responses to contractor queries, monitoring progress and tracking time and productivity, as pricing is based on daily or hourly rates. This arrangement supports transparency, cost control and timely delivery of services.

Discussion

Civil Works and Procurement collaboratively developed the tender documentation, commencing in February 2025. Several planning meetings and stakeholder discussions were held with key Council staff during the discovery to inform the development of the scope and technical specification.

Following collation and analysis of all planning-stage information, it was determined that the most appropriate approach for these works was to issue a public tender to establish a panel of suppliers under a deed of standing offer.

The tender was endorsed for release on 12 September 2025. During the market engagement phase, 28 companies downloaded and reviewed the tender package. Several requests for information were lodged during this phase, all of which were responded to. The tender closed on 10 October 2025 with 16 submissions received.

Initial scoring identified four tenderers with total weighted scores above 60 per cent. The evaluation panel reached consensus that these four tenderers would be further evaluated with a view to forming the preferred supplier panel. Three tenderers scoring between 50 and 60 per cent would remain in consideration but were not to be evaluated further, while the remaining nine tenderers were excluded from further consideration. The panel confirmed that the submissions from the four shortlisted tenderers required no clarifications and contained no exclusions, assumptions or departures.

The four shortlisted tenderers were invited to interviews on 10 November 2025 to present their methodology and respond to any questions regarding their submission. No material queries were raised by either the tenderers or the evaluation panel. The panel agreed that all four demonstrated a clear understanding of the tender requirements and were well positioned to deliver the services.

Following the interviews, the evaluation panel confirmed that the four shortlisted tenderers were well qualified and had sufficient capacity to undertake the required services. The panel agreed that the number of shortlisted tenderers was adequate to meet the needs of the projected three-year programme of works and recommended proceeding with awarding contracts to the four tenderers.

Strategic Alignment

This report specifically addresses priorities from the following strategic documents:

Hobsons Bay 2030 Community Vision

Priority 6: An accessible and connected community

Council Plan 2021-25

Objective 4: Visionary community infrastructure

Strategy 4.2: Ensure that our assets are properly maintained now and into the future at the most economical cost to the community and the environment

Policies and Related Council Documents

The awarding of contract 2025.05 through a public tender process complies with Council's Procurement Policy.

Section 3.3.1 of the Hobsons Bay Procurement Policy 2021 (the Policy) states that that a public tender process must be used for all procurement valued at \$300,000 (GST inclusive) and above for goods, services or works. Council conducted a [Request For Tender] process consistent with the Policy.

Section 3.4.2.1 of the Policy states that the Chief Executive Officer's delegation, (currently \$1 million including GST), is determined by Council annually under an Instrument of Delegation. The amount of \$1 million is consistent with the S5 Instrument of Delegation adopted by Council on 10 October 2023. Therefore a resolution is required by Council to award this contract.

Legal/Statutory Obligations and Risk

Section 108 of the *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act) outlines Council's responsibilities in relation to preparing and adopting a Procurement Policy including the contract value above which the Council must invite a tender or seek an expression of interest.

Section 109 of the Act outlines that a Council report that recommends entering into a procurement agreement must include information in relation to any opportunities for collaboration with other Councils or public bodies which may be available.

Financial and Resource Implications

The works are funded through the capital works budget commencing 2025-26 through to 2030-31.

Environmental, Social and Economic Impacts

This supply panel contract establishes a financial and resource efficient approach as it enables Council together with contractors to program forward works reducing down time. The works resulting from these contracts will improve Hobsons Bay by assisting in renewing Council's drainage assets addressing community interests.

Consultation and Communication

The tender was publicly advertised from 29 September 2025 and closed on 10 October 2025. The tender evaluation report for Contract 2025.05 was presented to Council's tender board on 14 November 2025. The tender board endorsed the tender evaluation panels recommendation.

Declaration of Conflict of Interest

Section 130 of the *Local Government Act 2020* requires members of Council staff to disclose any general or material conflict of interest in matters to be considered at a Council meeting.

Council staff involved in the preparation of this report have no conflict of interest in this matter.

7.2.9 WGTP - The Avenue Powerline Commitment Update

Directorate: Infrastructure and City Services
Responsible Officer: Strategic Projects Specialist
Reviewer: Director Infrastructure and City Services
Attachments: Nil

Purpose

To consider advice and a proposal put forward by the CPB Contractors and John Holland Joint Venture (JV) in lieu of meeting its 2018 commitment to underground powerlines along the AusNet easement on the northern boundary of Precinct 15, Altona North and relocate temporary poles within The Avenue Reserve, Spotswood.

To note that a report will put to the December Council Meeting recommending that Council:

Recommendation

That Council:

1. **Notes the CPB John Holland Joint Venture (JV) advice that they cannot feasibly deliver on their commitment to underground powerlines along the AusNet easement on the northern boundary of Precinct 15, Altona North and to relocate temporary poles within The Avenue Reserve, Spotswood.**
2. **Notes the open space enhancement works that the JV are proposing to deliver in the area in response to non-delivery of the earlier commitment.**
3. **Responds to the JV to provide support for the proposed works that generally aligns with its current open space strategy and seek for engagement to be held with the community as this work is delivered upon.**
4. **Notes that negotiations are ongoing to secure an appropriate figure as compensation or the occupation and creation of an easement over the power poles and lines within The Avenue Reserve.**
5. **Writes to the West Gate Tunnel Project (WGTP) advising of Council's response to the matter.**
6. **Receives a future report once this work is delivered to close out the matter.**

Summary

In recent months, discussions have been occurring between Council officers and CPB Contractors and John Holland Joint Venture (JV) to resolve the failure of the JV in not delivering their 2018 commitment to underground powerlines at the rear of Precinct 15 and relocate temporary poles within The Avenue Reserve.

The JV provided Council with a presentation in August 2025 outlining the lack of feasibility that they did not think it was feasible to deliver on its commitment made in 2018. The main

reasons provided by the JV are outlined under the “Discussion” section of this report including underground services constraints, construction and timing impacts.

In November 2025 the JV wrote to Council and presented their final position and proposal to Council. The proposal put forward includes the following outcomes:

1. Open space enhancement works landscaping, low level plantings, hydroseeded grass areas around the Watson Street precinct
2. Unrestricted public access to the easement areas (open space) with a well-connected path network linking with existing paths
3. Construction of a new shared user path (SUP) that connects to the new WGTP SUP at the playground to Edwards Reserve path network
4. Receipt of appropriate compensation for the creation of easement on the Avenue Reserve

It is recommended that Council consider this offer from the JV for not delivering its commitment to underground power and for failing to remove the temporary poles, as it generally aligns with open space strategies of Council.

Background

Following the release of the reference design for WGTP in 2017, a scope change relocated the 66KV power lines from the north side to the south side of the freeway, impacting some roads and reserves in Hobsons Bay.

This included the construction of 22 new poles and powerlines in an easement between the rail lines and the Brooklyn Terminal Station along the northern boundary of the Precinct 15 development site – Refer to Figure 1 and six new large poles in The Avenue Reserve, Spotswood (refer to Figure 2). The easement is GPU PowerNet Pty Ltd freehold land which has a registered easement in favour of Jemena for its 66kV infrastructure.



Figure 1: Plan showing 22 new HV poles (yellow dots) and wires in AusNet easement. Green dots indicate the existing poles.



Figure 2: Existing location of poles and wires in southern section of The Avenue Reserve

At the 9 October 2018 Council meeting, Council resolved to:

1. *Approve in principle the use of The Avenue Reserve, South Kingsville by the JV for cable head poles and wires in accordance with the submitted design on a temporary basis only until a permanent more appropriate location can be established prior to September 2022, subject to a detailed agreement between Council and the JV, which defines the creation of easements and compensation to Council.*
2. *Approve the proposed temporary overhead relocated 66KV power lines within the SPAusNet easement between the Newport rail line and the Brooklyn Terminal Station in the submitted design on the condition that it is placed underground by the JV prior to September 2022.*

In addition, Council entered into a licence agreement with the JV for the temporary occupation of the Council reserve which expired on 31 August 2022 to coincide with the original expected WGTP completion date of 2022.

Council initially in 2018 and has since retained a position of objection to the Jemena-owned powerlines becoming permanent overhead structures due to the future amenity impacts on the area, however agreed to a temporary arrangement to allow time for the JV to explore alternative arrangements.

The JV wrote to Council in October 2022 advising of delays with the Project and that the September 2022 Project completion date (referred to in the Council resolution) could not be achieved. They also stated that “the final alignment of the power poles is highly dependent on circumstances beyond their control”.

The relocation of the powerlines was not covered in the Project EES considerations, and a specific Project contractual or environmental requirement does not exist for the JV to relocate the Jemena assets to support Council’s original requirements.

The JV submitted a Design Change Request to WGTP to allow the existing arrangement to become permanent on the basis that a feasible solution to underground the power is not achievable in the easement due to the existence of various underground utility services and the service supply risks of removing a critical circuit during the relocation.

The JV has also advised that the six overhead poles in The Avenue Reserve should remain in the current location with an easement created to avoid the high costs of relocation, road

closures during relocation and associated impacts on the proposed WGTP playground and landscaping plans if relocated to the north.

At its 10 September 2024 meeting, Council reconfirmed its 9 October 2018 resolution requiring the relocation of the electricity assets and that the CEO be authorised to negotiate an appropriate monetary amount with the JV as compensation for the loss of any open space, recreation and other opportunities in The Avenue Reserve. Council also resolved to write to the Minister for Transport and Infrastructure, WGTP, Transurban and CPBJH Joint Venture expressing its concern that the JV is not delivering on the commitment made in 2018 in relation to the electricity assets relocation in a timely and satisfactory manner.

Meetings were held with the Project partners in relation to this issue and Council officers officially confirmed the adopted position of Council when requested to make comment on the design change request.

Officers have continued to advocate to WGTP for the original Council position to be upheld based on the 2018 JV commitment and that compensation be payable to Council for the ongoing occupation of the Council reserve. It is noted that the Comprehensive Development Plan developed by the Victorian Planning Authority for Precinct 15 identifies the easement as a linear open space to be publicly accessible, containing a shared use path and landscaped in the future.

Discussion

The following interactions have been carried out between Council officers and the JV over recent months to gain further understanding on the matter. These include:

1. JV advice and presentation regarding feasibility to underground powerlines and relocate power poles within The Avenue Reserve.
2. JV Letter to Council received August 2025
3. Council Letter to The JV August 2025
4. JV Letter to Council October 2025
5. Council response to the JV October 2025
6. JV Letter to Council November 2025 with their final position on the matter.

1. JV advice and presentation regarding feasibility to underground powerlines and relocate power poles within The Avenue Reserve

In August 2025 the JV has communicated that the undergrounding of powerlines and relocation of towers within the Avenue Reserve is unfeasible.

The JV outlined the lack of feasibility to deliver on its commitment with following summary information provided below:

1. Maintaining the current location of the cable head poles in The Avenue Reserve prevents an additional set of cable head poles in Parcel 485 (2 New Street). A set of cable head poles would still be required in The Avenue Reserve.
2. Maintaining the current location of the cable head poles in The Avenue Reserve prevents another lengthy closure of The Avenue.
3. Undergrounding of the Jemena 66kV assets along Watson Street would not remove the existing CitiPower 22kV overhead powerlines and associated poles.

4. The Watson Street alignment is not within HBCC jurisdiction and has already been approved by AusNet.
5. Undergrounding of the Jemena 66kV assets along Watson Street is not possible due to the presence of other utilities and the lack of available land space.
6. The risk of disruption of Jemena service through outages and removal of contingent supply would not be an acceptable risk to this authority.

As a result, the JV feasibility review identified that it would not be able to facilitate the delivery of its commitment made in 2018.

2. JV letter to Council received August 2025

Following receipt of this information, the JV subsequently wrote to Council with the following approach to resolve the non-delivery of their commitment due to the reasons outlined earlier in the report:

1. The JV will develop proposed concepts for amenity improvement with input from Council, with a particular focus on the Watson Street area and improved bicycle and pedestrian connectivity.
2. Following the development of the amenity improvements concepts, JV will undertake community consultation with local residents.
3. The outcomes of the community consultation will then be provided back to Council for agreement and close out.
4. JV and Council will concurrently continue the land valuation process for the creation of an easement within the Avenue Reserve, with acknowledgement that the current design solution provides the least impact to the local community.

The JV requested that Council confirm the above understanding is correct and provide agreement to the above process.

3. Council letter to JV August 2025

Council officers wrote to the JV in response to their letter received in August 2025, saying that Council had not had the opportunity to develop and resolve on a position for the matter and that this would need to be considered at a future meeting.

Council officers emphasised that it remains of the opinion that alternative options could have been investigated and delivered by the JV as outlined below.

Overhead Powerlines AusNet Easement

- The JV presented that undergrounding the power is not feasible due to underground services constraints within the easement and provided a plan showing the sewer and water mains. Council believes that there are two redundant sewers (the old Melbourne outfall sewer) that could be removed (subject to any heritage requirements) to create space for the underground lines.
- Alternatively, the HV lines could be placed underground along the northern side of the easement within the Project acquired land. This would impact some proposed landscaping and a path which could either be relocated over the HV lines or shifted further north. As has been done in Fogerty Avenue, The Avenue, Paringa Road and Beevers Street where the powerlines were bundled up and placed underground beneath the road pavement, Council believes that a similar outcome could be achieved between the Newport freight line and the Brooklyn Terminal.

Relocation of The Avenue Reserve Power Poles

- Council's preference is for the poles to be relocated away from the properties and positioned in the northwest corner of the reserve. This would provide greater opportunity and flexibility for Council to develop the reserve in the future and to improve the amenity of the open space.
- The JV presented that the northwest relocation would impact the proposed playground by crossing the lines over it. However, in earlier discussions with the project partners, Council advised that this was not the preferred location for a playground and provided alternative locations. In addition, JV design plans for the landscaping and playground in that area include a clear note stating that the design is subject to the decision regarding the relocation of the poles within The Avenue Reserve.

To assist in resolving this issue, Council officers advised that it was prepared to consider any proposals the JV develops to offset the loss of amenity and future use opportunities and to seek to achieve a satisfactory outcome for both Council and the community.

To progress this matter further, Council officers proposed the following steps:

1. The JV to meet with Council officers to discuss options, and possible improvements in the surrounding area. Potential improvement options JV could consider included:
 - Provision of an off-road shared path along the easement with landscaping and drainage improvements, connecting to proposed links to Precinct 15, the Federation Trail and an additional link to Edwards Reserve along Watson Street and alongside the rail line.
 - Construction of the unconstructed section of Watson Street and associated landscaping, following community consultation.
 - Further beautification and landscaping of The Avenue Reserve.
 - Potential additional works within Edwards Reserve.
2. Subject to these discussions, engagement by the JV with the community may be appropriate. It was noted that any engagement would need to clearly identify that the engagement will be used to support Council in making a final decision on the matter, with no decision reached on the issue.
3. JV and Council to concurrently continue the land valuation process for the creation of an easement within The Avenue Reserve.

4. JV Letter to Council October 2025

In October 2025 the JV wrote to Council officers in response to the letter sent in August 2025.

The JV noted Council officers' opinion that "alternative options", as outlined in the August Letter, "could have been investigated and delivered by the JV". They reconfirmed that extensive effort had been made to progress the items put forward by Council officers, as well as many other options not put forward, but the risks of pursuing those options were not feasible or acceptable to the JV.

The JV recognised that the current arrangement of transmission services is not Council's preferred options and appreciated a willingness to consider any proposals the JV present "*to offset the loss of amenity and future use opportunities*" of Council land.

The JV advised they are equally committed to reaching an outcome which satisfies Council, the community, and the other Project Parties. They agreed to the process proposed in Council's Letter to progress the matter further. The steps of that process reiterated below:

- JV to meet with Council officers to discuss options, and possible improvements in the surrounding area. Potential improvement options JV could consider in consultation with Council include:
 - provision of an off-road shared path along the easement with landscaping and drainage improvements, connecting to proposed links to Precinct 15, the Federation Trail and an additional link to Edwards Reserve along Watson St and alongside the rail line.
 - construction of the unconstructed section of Watson Street and associated landscaping, following community consultation.
 - further beautification and landscaping of The Avenue Reserve; and
 - Exploration of other open space works in the area.

The JV also advised the following:

- that subject to these discussions, engagement by JV with the community may be appropriate. They also noted that any engagement would need to clearly identify that the engagement will be used to support Council in making a final decision on the matter, with no decision reached on the issue.
- JV and Council to negotiate appropriate compensation and a works delivery process; and to concurrently continue the land valuation process for the creation of an easement within The Avenue Reserve.

5. Council response to the JV October 2025

In October 2025 Council officers wrote to the JV in response to the letter received.

Council acknowledged that the JV proposal was generally in alignment with the strategic priorities of Hobsons Bay City Council, particularly in relation to improving local amenity, connectivity, and community outcomes. The suggested enhancements such as the provision of an off-road shared paths, landscaping improvements along Watson Street, further beautification of The Avenue Reserve and community access to open space at rear of Precinct 15 were welcomed and consistent with Council's objectives for the area.

However, Council officers advised there were several issues that will need to be carefully considered as the proposal progresses:

- 1. Community engagement:** For Council to form an appropriate position on the matter engagement with the community from the JV is sought. Council seek that the engagement work is clearly framed to ensure Council's decision-making process can be adequately informed, with transparency that no final decision has yet been made.
- 2. Access to open space along the powerline easement:** This is a critical component of the JV proposal and an aspect that Council identifies as very beneficial to the community. Delivery on this aspect will play a significant part in delivering an appropriate resolution to this matter.
- 3. Detailed design considerations:** While overall the proposal is supported, Council officers seek for the following aspects to be progressed as part of the design development:
 - Seeking for shared pathways to be sealed and constructed a minimum width of 2.5m

- plantings and landscaping work to align with standard schedule of Council
 - request for open green space to have some areas fenced for potential future dog off-lead areas.
4. **Loss of amenity:** While these additions proposed are welcomed, the overall loss of amenity in the area due to the failure from the JV's delivery of its commitment is significant. As a result of this loss Council also sees further compensatory support towards the upgrade of the Edwards Reserve playing ovals as a critical local community need that could be funded.
5. **Land valuation and easement creation:** An aspect of the project that has never been disputed was the requirement for the JV to adequately compensate Council for the creation of an easement over the power lines within The Avenue Reserve. Council officers provided valuation information to the JV for their consideration.

6. JV Letter to Council November 2025 with their final position on the matter

In November 2025 the JV wrote to Council and presented their final position on the matter. In summary, the JV's final position on each of the items is provided under the corresponding headings below:

Community Engagement

- The JV is aware of Council's request for JV to engage the local community and agree to develop a Community Consultation Plan, which JV will share with Council for review and comment prior to implementation.
- The JV will ensure that "the engagement work is clearly framed to ensure Council's decision-making process can be adequately informed" with respect to the enhancement options proposed by the JV. That is, JV's community consultation will be limited to obtaining resident feedback on the proposed enhancement options only. The JV will not canvas community views on the permanency of the transmission lines, as they do not consider those views material to negotiations between Council and the JV.

Access to Open Space Along the Powerline Easement

- The JV propose the following enhancement options which are still subject to the review and formal acceptance of the key stakeholders:
 - JV will facilitate unrestricted public access to the following areas which together will form one large, connected open space:
 - the AusNet easement between New Street and the Brooklyn Terminal Station (**Easement A1**).
 - the AusNet easement between New Street and the Newport rail line (**Easement A2**).
 - the Transurban leased area between the AusNet easement and the West Gate Freeway (Transurban land).
- The JV advised the open space will not be compartmentalised by fencing and will afford the community the ability to move freely across the entire open space. However, the fencing along the northern boundary of the Transurban Land will remain as documented in the West Gate Tunnel Project IFC documentation to provide appropriate demarcation between the open space and the freeway.
- The JV will remove the existing access track in Easement A1 and the land will be hydroseeded to provide a grass topping which will enhance the visual amenity, functionality and overall public enjoyment of the easement.

- Importantly, the land will be prepared and finished in a manner which will preserve unimpeded light vehicle and all-terrain equipment access for routine and reactive maintenance of easement assets by AusNet and Jemena.
- The existing swale drain in Easement 1 will be verified for functional compliance with its pre-WGTP construction condition.
- The JV will also enhance Easement A2 by landscaping the area with a combination of hydroseeded grass and low-level planting. The enhancement of Easement A2 will be compliant with Council's standard landscaping schedules and the standard easement conditions applicable to AusNet and Jemena.
- Transurban will continue to provide care and maintenance of the Transurban Land in accordance with their Code of Maintenance. The Transurban maintenance schedule may be at a lesser frequency than Council deems necessary for a public-use space. In that instance, Transurban is open to consultation with Council about Council undertaking additional care and maintenance of the Transurban Land at Council's discretion and account.
- AusNet and Jemena will continue to perform routine maintenance on the land and assets in Easements A1 and A2 in accordance with their standard easement maintenance protocols. However, they will not repair or reinstate grass or landscaping that may be damaged during their routine and reactive maintenance practices, which includes the use of their all-terrain access equipment. In those instances, AusNet and Jemena are open to consultation with Council about Council performing reinstatement works to the landscaping at Council's discretion and account.

Detailed design considerations

Seeking for shared pathways to be sealed and constructed a minimum of 2.5m

- The JV is agreeable to sealing the new shared user path that connects the playground to Edwards Reserve
- The JV is also agreeable to investigating the widening of the new path, which connects the playground to Edwards Reserve, from 1.5m to 2.5m. However, the JV note that the widening works are subject to the final design confirming accessibility and confirmation from JV's designers that the widening is not unreasonably constrained by existing fittings, fixtures and services.
- The JV considers the new path connecting the playground to Edwards Reserve to be requisite for resolution of the power line matter between JV and Council. However, the JV do not view the width of the path, which may be constrained beyond their reasonable control, as a condition for resolving the power line issue.

Plantings and landscaping work to align with standard schedule of Council

- The JV is agreeable to the planting and landscaping works on Council-owned land being aligned with Council's standard schedule.
- Planting and landscaping works within AusNet freehold land will also be subject to compliance with AusNet's easement conditions. Upon receipt of AusNet's consent for the easement to be made accessible for public use, the JV will develop a landscape design which complies with Council's standard schedule, but which may also be constrained by AusNet easement requirements. The final design will be shared with Council for compliance review and comment prior to implementation.

Request for open green space to have some areas fenced for potential future dog off lead areas

- JV has consulted the existing landowners about the installation of fencing for future dog off-lead areas.
- The installation of fencing for dog off-lead areas in the easement is not agreed by AusNet or Jemena due to the access constraints the fencing would impact on the inspection and maintenance of their assets.
- Transurban have advised that they are open to further consultation with Council about the potential of fencing for dog off-lead areas, but they cannot provide a definitive position on that matter at this stage.
- The JV considers the provision of fencing for future dog off-lead areas to be secondary to obtaining approval for public access to the Open Space. As such, and although JV have progressed the request for permission, they do not regard the fencing of dog off-lead areas to be a requisite condition for resolving the power line matter between Council and themselves.

Further commentary may be provided as more detail is forthcoming, and the design is progressed

- The JV advised they will continue to maintain positive lines of communication with Council and appreciate the positive approach the Council has adopted in recent interactions with them, but they also reiterate the importance to the Project of JV and Council finalising the scope of the enhancement options in a timely manner. The JV advise the pending completion of the Project does not lend itself to a lengthy negotiation or progressive design development. As such, they advise that the enhancement options articulated in their letter and in the Revised Enhancement Proposal represents the JVs best and final offer to reasonably resolve the power line matter with Council.

Land valuation and easement creation

- The JV acknowledged Council's valuation, however, advised that based on their independent advice a revised compensatory amount was appropriate when considering the current zoning of the reserve. Officers are in the final stages of negotiating this amount which will seek to ensure a fair outcome is achieved whilst seeking to avoid costly legal pursuits on the matter.

The JV confirmed that the enhancement options outlined above, represents their best and final position to resolve all aspects of the Jemena power lines matter.

Council officer assessment on this position

Council officers have assessed the final JV position outlined above. Whilst the works proposed by the JV are welcomed, the overall loss of amenity and open space development opportunities in the area due to the failure from the JV's delivery of its commitment is significant. Throughout the discussions with the JV, Council officers have sought to achieve a fair outcome for the community through a practical and pragmatic approach.

The position put forward from the JV does deliver improved open space amenity outcomes in the area. The ability for Council to seek further outcomes is limited with no formal contract in place between Council and the JV and legal pursuits of the matter could be costly and more than likely not result in any additional gains.

Taking this into consideration officers would recommend that Council support the JV in delivering the open space enhancement works proposed by the JV including:

- landscaping, low-level plantings, hydroseeding of grass areas
- facilitation of unrestricted public access to the easement areas (open space)
- Construction of a new 2.5m wide shared user path that connects the WGTP playground to Edwards Reserve pathway network

Officers finalising the compensation amount for the occupation and creation of an easement over the power poles and lines within The Avenue Reserve.

Strategic Alignment

This report specifically addresses priorities from the following strategic documents:

Hobsons Bay 2030 Community Vision

Priority 6: An accessible and connected community

Council Plan 2021-25

Objective 4: Visionary community infrastructure

Strategy 4.1: Ensure the transport network is safe and efficient for all users with a focus on pedestrians and cyclists

Strategy 4.2: Ensure that our assets are properly maintained now and into the future at the most economical cost to the community and the environment

Policies and Related Council Documents

On 26 August 2016, Council adopted the Hobsons Bay City Council's Adopted Position and Recommendations for what was then known as the Western Distributor Project:
<https://www.hobsonsbay.vic.gov.au/files/assets/public/documents/council/currentprojects/victorian-government-major-projects/160825-council-endorsed-adopted-position-incwd-principles-objectives-and-performance-measures-august-2016.pdf>

Several Council policies and strategies were considered in establishing the adopted position on the Project and have been considered to inform Council's response to the Project design and the Environmental Effects Statement (EES). Council has received reports regarding officer assessments of the Project design development, construction activities, community engagement and advocacy activities undertaken in response to the Project.

Legal/Statutory Obligations and Risk

Legal and statutory obligations and risks have been identified throughout Council's review and input to the Project and will continue to be monitored and assessed. A report and formal submission on the preferred design and EES was adopted by Council at the Council Meeting on 27 June 2017. This report considered legal, risk and statutory obligations for the Project.

The relocation of the powerlines was not covered in the Project EES considerations, and a specific Project contractual or environmental requirement does not exist for the JV to relocate the Jemena assets to support Council's original requirements.

Financial and Resource Implications

Officers are continuing to negotiate appropriate compensation from the JV for placement of overhead powerlines. Whilst it is anticipated that a reasonable outcome will more than likely be achieved on this matter, should an unsatisfactory outcome result, legal avenues through the Supreme Court are available. Pursuit of these avenues would be costly and resolution of the matter outside of this legal pursuit would be preferable for Council and the community.

Significant officer time has been invested on this matter over the years, with this increasing in recent months.

The open space improvements that are proposed by the JV will increase ongoing maintenance requirements for Council, with this needing to be considered in future budget considerations. Whilst this ongoing maintenance requirements will lead to higher costs for Council, the benefit to the community through enhanced open space in areas of the municipality which have the lowest levels of open space provision at this time, delivers significant value for the community.

Environmental, Social and Economic Impacts

Failure to underground high voltage powerlines and leaving overhead poles and HV lines close to residential properties exposes communities to preventable environmental, social and economic impacts.

The proposal put forward from the JV will deliver increased environmental and social benefits for the communities of Altona North, Spotswood and South Kingsville. Provision of enhanced open space offering in these communities is a core strategy pursuit of Council, and this proposal delivers on this.

Consultation and Communication

There have been several discussions held between Council officers and the WGTP about Transurban's commitment to resolve the temporary relocation of power lines within the Avenue Reserve and undergrounding of powerlines at the rear of Precinct 15.

WGTP advised they held discussions with Transurban and emphasised the need to fulfil their commitment before the project is completed. WGTP advised that failure to deliver on this commitment was not an option for Transurban and they will coordinate with Transurban and all stakeholders, including Council, to find a solution.

Over the last five months, interactions and communications have been held between Council officers and the JV as detailed within this report to seek a resolution on the matter.

A core requirement for satisfactory resolution of the matter is the completion of community engagement by the JV on any proposed approach to resolve the matter.

Declaration of Conflict of Interest

Section 130 of the *Local Government Act 2020* requires members of Council staff to disclose any general or material conflict of interest in matters to be considered at a Council meeting.

Council staff involved in the preparation of this report have no conflict of interest in this matter.

7.3 Matters for Noting

7.3.1 Response to Notice of Motion 1278 and 1249 (Part 7)

Directorate: Corporate Services
Responsible Officer: Chief Financial Officer
Attachments: Nil

Purpose

To respond to Notice of Motion 1278 passed at the Council meeting held on 26 August 2025 regarding Council's Human Right Obligations and (part 7 of) Notice of Motion 1249 passed at the Council meeting held on 13 February 2024 regarding Support for Hobsons Bay residents Impacted by Overseas Conflict.

Recommendation

That Council:

- 1. Notes that its vendor (procurement) and financial investment records have been compared to the list of business enterprises on the Human Rights Council database and that there are no businesses on the database that are used by Council in its procurement or financial investment activities.**
- 2. Reaffirms its commitment to considering human rights implications in relation to choosing suppliers and service providers.**
- 3. Notes that best-practice human rights protections and risk mitigation are being incorporated into the draft Hobsons Bay Procurement Policy to be presented to Council for adoption in February 2026.**

Summary

Notice of Motion 1278 calls for a report to Council on any contracts or investments between Council and any entities listed on a Human Rights Council (HRC) report raising human rights violation concerns, and a report on incorporating best-practice human rights protections and risk mitigation into Council policies.

Council has reviewed its vendor (procurement) and financial investment records, comparing them to the list of business enterprises on the HRC database. There are no business enterprises on the HRC database that are used by Council in its procurement or financial investment activities.

Best-practice human rights protections and risk mitigation are currently being incorporated into the draft Hobsons Bay Procurement Policy 2026. The new policy is scheduled to be presented to Council for adoption in February 2026.

Background

Resolutions to be addressed

Notice of Motion 1278 was passed at the Council meeting held on 26 August 2025 regarding Council's Human Rights Obligations. The motion included:

- Requests (for) a report to Council by December 2025, detailing all existing contracts and investments through financial institutions between Council and any entity identified in a specified database produced by the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.
- As part of its ongoing review into Council's procurement practices, requests a report to Council by December 2025 on the incorporation of best-practice human rights protections and risk mitigation into procurement, investment and related policies, so as to reduce the use of Council resources to aid, abet, or materially contribute to human rights violations, including but not limited to discrimination, modern slavery, and international crimes including crimes against humanity, war crimes, and genocide.

Notice of Motion 1249 was passed at the Council meeting held on 13 February 2024 regarding Support for Hobsons Bay residents Impacted by Overseas Conflict. Part 7 of the motion resolved that Council reaffirms its commitment to considering human rights implications in relation to choosing suppliers and service providers. It was initially determined that the most appropriate way of reaffirming this commitment would be to include appropriate references in the next Hobsons Bay Procurement Policy. While this will still occur, it is appropriate to take the opportunity to reaffirm Council's commitment in line with the recent Notice of Motion 1278.

United Nations Human Rights Council

The Human Rights Council (HRC) is an intergovernmental body within the United Nations system responsible for strengthening the promotion and protection of human rights around the globe and for addressing situations of human rights violations and making recommendations on them.

On 24 March 2016, the HRC adopted resolution 31/36, entitled "Israeli settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and in the occupied Syrian Golan". Paragraph 17 requests the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to produce a database of all business enterprises involved in certain specified activities (summarised as "raising particular human rights concerns") related to the Israeli settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem. A further resolution 53/25 in 2023 requests that the database be updated yearly.

The database is available online at: <https://www.ohchr.org/en/business/bhr-database> (OHCHR being the Office of the High Commissioner of Human Rights).

The listed business enterprises have directly or indirectly enabled, facilitated and profited from the construction and growth of the settlements. Business activities and related issues have been identified that raise human rights violations concerns. Specifically "activities detailed in paragraph 96" referred to in the title are:

- The supply of equipment and materials facilitating the construction and the expansion of settlements and the wall, and associated infrastructures
- The supply of surveillance and identification equipment for settlements, the wall and checkpoints directly linked with settlements

- The supply of equipment for the demolition of housing and property, the destruction of agricultural farms, greenhouses, olives groves and crops
- The supply of security services, equipment and materials to enterprises operating in settlements
- The provision of services and utilities supporting the maintenance and existence of settlements, including transport
- Banking and financial operations helping to develop, expand or maintain settlements and their activities, including loans for housing and the development of businesses
- The use of natural resources, in particular water and land, for business purposes
- Pollution, and the dumping of waste in or its transfer to Palestinian villages
- Captivity of the Palestinian financial and economic markets, as well as practices that disadvantage Palestinian enterprises, including through restrictions on movement, administrative and legal constraints
- Use of benefits and reinvestments of enterprises owned totally or partially by settlers for developing, expanding and maintaining the settlements.

As of the September 2025 update, there are 158 enterprises listed on the database.

Discussion

Council's Procurement team has reviewed Council's vendor records, comparing them to the list of business enterprises on the HRC database. There are no business enterprises on the HRC database that are used by Council in its procurement activities.

Council's Financial Accounting team has reviewed Council's financial investment records, comparing them to the list of business enterprises on the HRC database. There are no business enterprises on the HRC database that Council holds any financial investments with.

The incorporation of best-practice human rights protections and risk mitigation into procurement and investment has been included in section 5.3 (Value for Money and Quadruple Bottom Line) of the draft Hobsons Bay Procurement Policy 2026. The new policy is scheduled to be presented to Council for adoption in February 2026. Further details will also be included in the Procurement Guidelines to provide further direction to Council staff in relation to compliance with this part of the policy.

Strategic Alignment

This report specifically addresses priorities from the following strategic documents:

Hobsons Bay 2030 Community Vision

This report relates to all priorities within the Hobsons Bay 2030 Community Vision.

Council Plan 2021-25

Objective 5: A High Performing Organisation

Strategy 5.3: Deliver value for money – continuous improvement while safeguarding the

long-term financial sustainability of Council

Strategy 5.4: Enhance transparency, accountability and good governance practice

Policies and Related Council Documents

Council's contracts are procured in line with the Hobsons Bay Procurement Policy 2021, adopted by Council at the meeting held on 14 December 2021.

Legal/Statutory Obligations and Risk

Section 8(1) of the *Local Government Act 2020* states that the role of a Council is to provide good governance in its municipal district for the benefit and wellbeing of the municipal community.

Contracts are procured in line with section 108 and 109 of the *Local Government Act 2020*. Section 108 outlines the requirement for Council to adopt a Procurement Policy and what is required to be included within the policy. Section 109 outlines that Council must comply with its Procurement Policy before entering into a contract.

Investments with financial institutions are invested in line with section 103 of the *Local Government Act 2020*. It provides a broad outline of where Council may invest money. This is consistent with Council's Investment Policy.

Financial and Resource Implications

The First Quarter Financial Report – Period ended 30 September 2025 forecasts that Council will spend nearly \$120 million procuring goods, services and capital items during 2025-26. It also forecasts that Council will generate income of \$1.4 million in interest on investments during the financial year and will have \$38.5 million in cash and investments on 30 June 2026.

Environmental, Social and Economic Impacts

The incorporation of human rights considerations into Council's procurement and investment practices supports broader environmental, social and economic outcomes for the Hobsons Bay community.

Social impacts: By ensuring procurement and investment decisions align with human rights principles, Council demonstrates its commitment to ethical governance and social responsibility. This approach reinforces community trust and reflects the diverse values of Hobsons Bay residents. The consideration of human rights in supplier selection helps prevent Council resources from contributing to discrimination, modern slavery or human rights violations, thereby upholding the dignity and wellbeing of affected communities globally.

Economic impacts: The integration of best-practice human rights protections into procurement policies supports sustainable and ethical business practices. This approach encourages suppliers to maintain high standards of human rights compliance, which can contribute to more stable and responsible supply chains. By adopting comprehensive due diligence processes, Council mitigates reputational and operational risks associated with unethical business practices.

Environmental impacts: Human rights considerations in procurement complement Council's existing environmental sustainability objectives. Many businesses that demonstrate strong human rights commitments also tend to exhibit responsible environmental practices. The quadruple bottom line approach outlined in the draft Procurement Policy ensures that environmental, social, governance and economic factors are considered holistically in procurement decisions.

Consultation and Communication

Internal consultation was undertaken with Council's Procurement team and Financial Accounting team to review vendor and financial investment records against the Human Rights Council database. The Procurement team was engaged in the development of best-practice human rights protections and risk mitigation measures to be incorporated into the draft Hobsons Bay Procurement Policy 2026. Cross-departmental collaboration ensured alignment between procurement practices, financial management, and Council's broader human rights obligations as outlined in the notices of motion.

Declaration of Conflict of Interest

Section 130 of the *Local Government Act 2020* requires members of Council staff to disclose any general or material conflict of interest in matters to be considered at a Council meeting.

Council staff involved in the preparation of this report have no conflict of interest in this matter.

7.3.2 West Gate Tunnel Project Update (WGTP) - December 2025

Directorate: Infrastructure and City Services
Responsible Officer: Strategic Projects Specialist
Reviewer: Director Infrastructure and City Services
Attachments: Nil

Purpose

To provide a quarterly update report on the West Gate Tunnel Project and associated initiatives, projects and advocacy activities.

Recommendation

That Council notes this update on the status of the West Gate Tunnel Project and Council's advocacy on aspects of the Project.

Summary

This report includes an overview of the West Gate Tunnel Project (the Project), progress updates on Project works, traffic impacts and strategic advocacy items, the West Gate Neighbourhood Fund and other associated initiatives.

Background

The \$10 billion Project was proposed by Transurban in 2014. In December 2015 the Victorian Government announced it would proceed with the Project and in late 2017 planning approval was granted. Major construction commenced in early 2018 and is to be completed in December 2025.

The Project will upgrade and widen the West Gate Freeway, linking to CityLink at Docklands via a tunnel beneath Yarraville. It aims to relieve M1 congestion, provide an alternative river crossing to the West Gate Bridge and provide direct access to the freeway from the port. Sections of the Project, including the tunnels, Hyde Street ramps, city connections (morning peak only) and trucks on the West Gate Freeway section will be tolled. Truck bans will be introduced on some surrounding roads at the opening of the tunnels, including Blackshaws Road and Hudsons Road in Hobsons Bay.

The project includes an upgraded and extended Wurundjeri Way (now open to traffic) and will link up to the West Gate Tunnel when open. It includes a new bridge over Dudley Street and a 1.5 km, four-lane connection to Dynon Road, providing a city bypass and a more direct connection from the inner west to Docklands, the CBD and onto the southeast suburbs.

The Project is delivered through a partnership between the Victorian Government and Transurban (Project Co), managed by the West Gate Tunnel Project – Major Road Projects Victoria (WGTP) and built by construction contractors CPB Contractors and John Holland as a joint venture (JV).

Council adopted a position document that enabled Council to advocate on behalf of its community to ensure that community needs were heard during the design and construction process. A link to Council's endorsed position on the WGTP can be found in the Related Documents section of the report. Council has been actively engaged in responding to the detailed plans and designs for the Project, the Traffic Management Plans and is represented on the Community Liaison Group and the Traffic Management Liaison Group. Throughout the design and construction stages, Council has negotiated outcomes and improvements wherever possible that are consistent with its adopted position.

Recent construction activities in the western section have been focused on finishing asphalt road surfacing works, completing the tunnel portal structures, intelligent transport systems (ITS), signage and lighting and surrounding landscaping works.

Reports providing updates on various aspects of the Project have been tabled through Council meetings since early 2018. The previous report was presented at the October 2025 Council meeting.

Previous reports can be accessed via the Council website at:

<https://www.hobsonsbay.vic.gov.au/Council/Council-Meetings/Minutes-and-Agendas>

Discussion

Major works in the west zone have continued over the past three months on road surfacing of the West Gate Freeway, including works at the inbound and outbound tunnel portals, the Williamstown Road and M80 interchange areas including completion of final gantry, barrier, signage, freeway management systems, tolling infrastructure and the various paths and landscaping. Refer to figures 1 to 4.

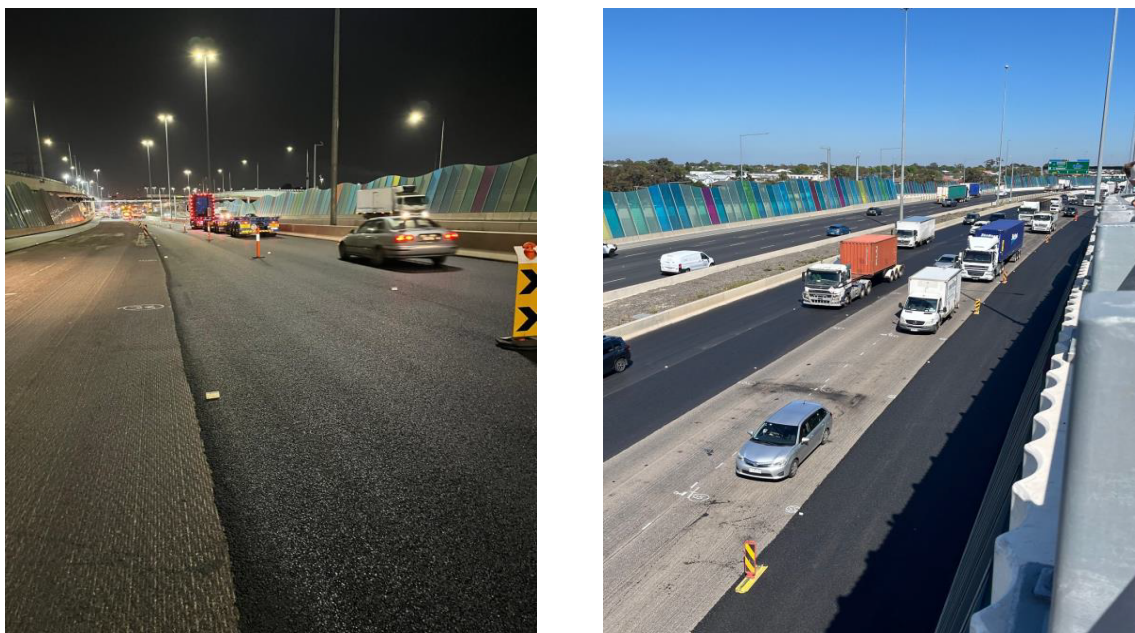


Figure 1: Final asphaltting on the West Gate Freeway inbound lanes



Figure 2: Erection of signage and ITS commissioning

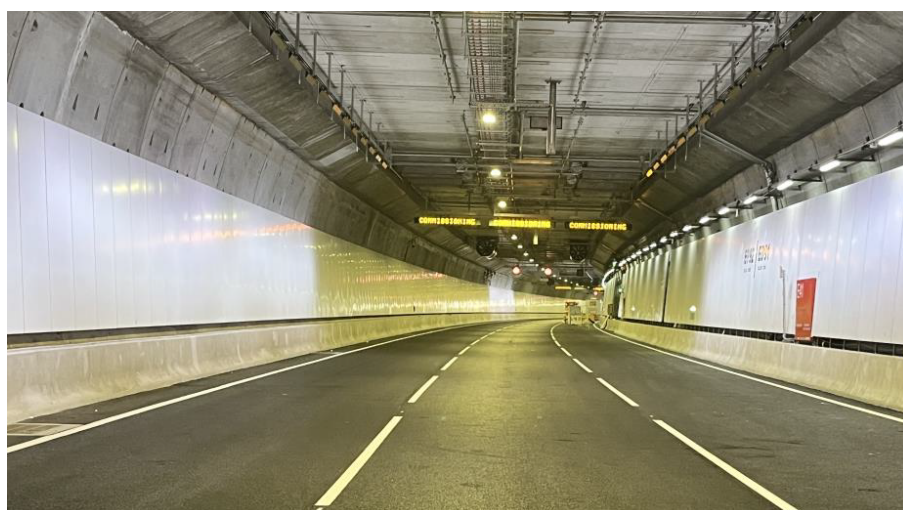


Figure 3: Final tunnel fitout being completed



Figure 4: Southern tunnel portal tower crane removal in October

Landscaping works are being finalised around the outbound tunnel exit site at the West Gate Freeway, including the installation of a new playground north of Watson Street, Altona North. Council is in discussion with the JV on ensuring that appropriate open space, connections and landscaping treatment is undertaken in the GPU PowerNet easement north of Precinct 15 and along Watson Street. Officers continue to seek a satisfactory outcome from the Project partners in lieu of the JV decision to not underground the power lines in this area. Further information will be provided in future update reports.

Ongoing water sampling and groundwater monitoring will be carried out as part of monitoring requirements to confirm that groundwater movement is as expected along the tunnel alignment.

Under the environmental performance requirements for the Project, WGTP undertakes traffic monitoring at 25 sites in selected streets at six-monthly intervals during construction and up to two years after construction is complete. Data collected is compared to baseline data from October and November 2017 prior to construction.

Up-to-date information on planned road closures and detours can be found at the Victoria's Big Build website: <https://bigbuild.vic.gov.au/disruptions>

Air quality and tunnel filtration

Council, at its meeting on 10 December 2024, considered a notice of motion and resolved:

That Council:

1. *Acknowledges that residents of Hobsons Bay have the same right to breathe clean air as people in other parts of Melbourne and that there are health implications for Hobsons Bay residents from relatively high levels of air pollution in our local government area, including particulate matter.*
2. *Re-affirms its position that the State Government must install filtration stacks on the West Gate Tunnel project traversing the Spotswood and Altona North Wards, to protect the health and wellbeing of all Hobsons Bay residents.*
3. *Resolves that a letter be sent from Council to the relevant State Government authorities, including the Minister for Transport Infrastructure, Minister for Planning, Minister for Roads and Road Safety, Minister for Environment, and the Environmental Protection Agency, seeking that new community consultation be conducted in relation to air pollution arising from the project.*

Council received responses from (i) the Minister for Health Infrastructure, Ports and Freight and Roads and Road Safety on 31 January 2025 and (ii) the Chief Executive Officer, EPA Victoria on 4 February 2025, (iii) the Minister for Transport Infrastructure on 12 March 2025 and the Executive Project Director West Gate Tunnel Project on 13 March 2025.

The responses to the Council letters were summarised in the March 2025 Council report.

In 2017, the project's government-appointed advisory committee recommended pollution filters be fitted. The planning minister was not convinced they were justified or cost-effective and did not require it in the approved EES. The EPA agreed and approved the works with a requirement that the vents be built to allow for future installation of filters if warranted.

Air quality data will be published monthly on the EPA website from the end of November.

Tree Planting and Trail Upgrades

The new walking and cycling path along Kororoit Creek between Grieve Parade and Geelong Road and the resurfaced Federation Trail between Millers Road and Kororoit Creek have been completed. Additional works including interpretative art, cultural heritage planting and wayfinding signage have now been installed along both paths.

Reinstatement and landscaping of occupied sites has largely been completed by the JV who will maintain them for the next two years from the time of practical completion and handover. An offset tree plan has been developed with input from Council and community stakeholder groups that identifies suitable locations for offset tree planting outside the designated Project area. Five new trees are required to be planted by the Project for every tree removed for construction. Recent planting has been completed in Riverside Park, Newport and Bruce Comben Reserve, Altona Meadows.

Community Liaison Group

The Community Liaison Group (CLG) was established at the commencement of the Project to provide an avenue for community representatives to learn more about the Project, share community insight with the project team and help support community engagement activities. The most recent meeting of the CLG was held on 23 October 2025 hosted by Transurban at the freeway control centre with presentations on:

- Project construction update
- Preparing for road opening
- Project opening activities

CLG meeting documents can be obtained at:

<https://westgatetunnelproject.vic.gov.au/community/community-liaison-groups>

No Truck Zones

When the West Gate Tunnel opens, large trucks will not be allowed in the inner west on six key roads:

- Francis Street, Yarraville
- Somerville Road, Yarraville
- Buckley Street, Footscray
- Moore Street, Footscray
- Hudsons Road, Spotswood
- Blackshaws Road, Altona North

Exceptions apply for trucks requiring access to destinations within the no-truck zones for deliveries, construction or maintenance work, vehicle repairs or sales, and other situations prescribed in supporting regulations. This means local homes and businesses in the no-truck zones can still have the trucks they need for deliveries and services such as garbage collection, grocery deliveries and moving house.

New ramps to and from Hyde Street will cater to trucks carrying dangerous goods or restricted from using the new tunnels, such as very high or placard loads.

On 16 November 2025, the State Government announced an additional no-truck zone for Williamstown Road.

It has been announced that once the West Gate Tunnel opens next month, the Government will implement a night-time and weekend No-Truck Zone on Williamstown Road.

Williamstown Road will be added to the above list of residential streets designated as No-Truck Zones.

The night-time and weekend No-Truck Zone will be enforced on Williamstown Road between Geelong Street in Seddon and the West Gate Freeway in Yarraville on weekdays from 8pm to 6am, and over weekends from 8pm Friday to 6am Monday.

Heavy vehicles entering No-Truck Zones will be monitored by smart roadside cameras that can detect and categorise a vehicle's exemption status with fines automatically issued to vehicles not permitted in the zones.

To get more trucks off local roads, the State Government is rezoning land in Brooklyn and Tottenham to encourage container parks to relocate to better-connected industrial land and has leased the 29-hectare Old Melbourne Market site on Footscray Road to the Port of Melbourne for uses including container storage and truck marshalling.

The Transport Victoria website contains more information about No-truck Zones, exemptions and how they will be enforced: [No truck zones in Melbourne's inner west - Transport Victoria](#)

Truck tolls and the West Gate Tunnel

There will be four new toll points. Toll charging and prices will vary depending on the type of vehicle. Heavy vehicles will pay a single total toll when travelling on the upgraded West Gate Freeway, new tunnels and city connections. Cars, motorcycles and light commercial vehicles will pay tolls when travelling using the motorway's new tunnels and city connections.

All heavy vehicles will pay a single toll on the West Gate Freeway section that applies from Williamstown Road and Millers Road, regardless of whether they use the tunnel, the West Gate Bridge, or the Hyde Street ramps. Toll discounts and daily caps for truck operators using the West Gate Tunnel will be available for the freight industry. Special tolls will apply for frequent users and port shuttle trips.

All Transurban toll prices can be found at: <https://www.transurban.com/west-gate-tunnel-tolls>

West Gate Neighbourhood Fund

The West Gate Neighbourhood Fund is a \$10 million community grants program established by WGTP to support communities in Melbourne's inner west, which consisted of two partnerships and two community grants rounds. The Fund has now awarded its \$10 million of grants to support over 260 community-led projects with more than 140 projects already delivered in the inner west.

Two funded projects involving a partnership agreement between Council and WGNF were the upgrade of the bluestone bridge over Kororoit Creek, Altona North (Figure 5) and the "Greening Brooklyn" project which included upgrades and planting in the Pipeline Reserve beside Federation Trail between Geelong Road and Millers Road, Brooklyn (Figure 6). Both projects were recently completed.



Figure 5: Bluestone bridge upgrade



Figure 6: Greening Brooklyn

Strategic Alignment

This report specifically addresses priorities from the following strategic documents:

Hobsons Bay 2030 Community Vision

Priority 6: An accessible and connected community

Council Plan 2021-25

Objective 4: Visionary community infrastructure

Strategy 4.1: Ensure the transport network is safe and efficient for all users with a focus on pedestrians and cyclists

Policies and Related Council Documents

On 26 August 2016, Council adopted the Hobsons Bay City Council's Adopted Position and Recommendations for what was then known as the Western Distributor Project. Council's endorsed position on WGTP can be found here:

<https://www.hobsonsbay.vic.gov.au/files/assets/public/documents/council/current-projects/victorian-government-major-projects/160825-council-endorsed-adopted-position-inc-wd-principles-objectives-and-performance-measures-august-2016.pdf>

Several Council policies and strategies were considered in establishing the adopted position on the Project and have been considered to inform Council's response to the Project design and the Environmental Effects Statement (EES). Council has received reports regarding officer assessments of the Project design development, construction activities, community engagement and advocacy activities undertaken in response to the Project.

Legal/Statutory Obligations and Risk

Legal and statutory obligations and risks have been identified throughout Council's review and input to the Project and will continue to be monitored and assessed. A report and formal submission on the preferred design and EES was adopted by Council at the Council Meeting on 27 June 2017. This report considered legal, risk and statutory obligations for the Project.

With the finalisation of works in the west zone, formal transfer agreements for some land and works contained in the Project area from the Project to Council are being undertaken. Council has been requested to become Committee of Management (CoM) of some Crown land near the Project including a section of the Kororoit Creek shared use path. A Deed Poll agreement has been prepared by WGTP for Council to access sections of the SUP for maintenance purposes. Also, an agreement is being prepared to allow Transurban future access to its assets on Council-managed land for maintenance purposes.

Financial and Resource Implications

A Memorandum of Understanding has been established between Council and WGTP to provide for Council staff to assist in the management and delivery of the Project. Updated design packages and final "as-built" plans are being reviewed by Council for handed-over land and works. Handback of relevant assets and land from WGTP to Council are being undertaken in areas where Project works are completed.

Environmental, Social and Economic Impacts

The environmental, social and economic impacts of the Project to the Hobsons Bay community have been described in detail through the EES. They are monitored and mitigated through the implementation of the Environmental Performance Requirements for the Project and audited by the Independent Reviewer and Environmental Auditor (IREA).

The IREA has been appointed to provide independent oversight of design engineering, construction, program and environmental performance of the Project. The IREA undertakes audits and surveillance of Project activities to assess conformance with Project requirements. The latest (fourteenth) IREA report covers the six-monthly audit of the Environmental Management Strategy, quarterly Construction Environmental Management Plan audits, and monthly audits of the Worksite Environmental Management Plans for the construction period from September 2024 to February 2025. No adverse findings were raised with Project Co during the audit. The report states that Project Co / D&C Subcontractor is generally compliant with the Environmental Performance Requirements.

The latest report summarising the environmental audit findings of the IREA is available on the Project website at:

<https://bigbuild.vic.gov.au/library/west-gate-tunnel-project/planning-documents>

Air quality monitoring for the Project has been established at six Ambient Air Quality Monitoring Stations adjacent to the Project works. The latest available Project air quality monitoring for July 2025 reported no exceedances of the air quality objective at the six stations for the reporting period. The report is available at:

<https://bigbuild.vic.gov.au/library/west-gate-tunnel-project/air-quality-monitoring-reports>

The tunnel vents have been designed to allow filtration to be added in the future if required. There will be two independent risk assessments done on the real data during operation. Six testing stations were initially installed to monitor air quality near the stacks once the tunnel

opens and an additional three monitors were installed recently. Council continues to advocate for air filtration to be installed in the tunnel vents. Information on tunnel ventilation and air quality, including the latest air quality monitoring reports can be found online at: <https://bigbuild.vic.gov.au/library/west-gate-tunnel-project/fact-sheets/tunnel-ventilation-and-air-quality>

Consultation and Communication

Council has assisted in sharing information on the Project including planned traffic disruptions through its website and social media. Council officers continue to assist the community where possible in responding to or referring requests and issues relating to the Project.

Community stakeholder and business engagement communications were issued by the JV on Project activity in the west section over the past reporting period, including notification of works requiring temporary freeway lane and ramp closures and the relevant detours.

Council officers meet regularly with the WGTP team and Executive meetings are held monthly. A site tour for Councillors and the Executive led by the JV Project Director was held on Friday 12 September.

An opportunity to explore the project before it opens to traffic in December was made available on Sunday 16 November. The West Gate Tunnel Discovery Day was a community event where participants could run, walk and discover the new roads, tunnels and paths.

In preparation for the opening of the Project at the end of the year, a range of resources has been released by WGTP to help drivers navigate the new road network before it officially opens. These include an interactive map to help plan trips, route explainer videos and other key information. WGTP has also published several videos that demonstrate the various new travel options, along with a Road User Guide, refer to:

<https://bigbuild.vic.gov.au/use-west-gate-tunnel/for-drivers>

Latest construction and disruption notifications from WGTP can be found at:

<https://westgatetunnelproject.vic.gov.au/construction/work-notifications>

Declaration of Conflict of Interest

Section 130 of the *Local Government Act 2020* requires members of Council staff to disclose any general or material conflict of interest in matters to be considered at a Council meeting.

Council staff involved in the preparation of this report have no conflict of interest in this matter.

7.3.3 Level Crossing Removal Project Update (LXRP) - December 2025

Directorate:	Infrastructure and City Services
Responsible Officer:	Strategic Projects Specialist
Reviewer:	Director Infrastructure and City Services
Attachments:	1. Oct 2025 LXRP HBCC Communications Register Working [7.3.3.1 - 3 pages]

Purpose

To provide an update on the state government level crossing removal projects at Champion Road and Maddox Road, Newport; Maidstone Street, Altona; Hudsons Road, Spotswood; and the Sunshine Superhub project.

Recommendation

That Council notes this update report on the proposed level crossing removals at Champion Road and Maddox Road, Newport; Maidstone Street, Altona; Hudsons Road, Spotswood and the Sunshine Superhub Project, and Council's advocacy on aspects of the projects.

Summary

This report provides an update on the Victorian Government's proposed level crossing removals at Champion Road and Maddox Road in Newport, Maidstone Street in Altona, and Hudsons Road in Spotswood along with Council's related advocacy and community support. The report also discusses Victorian Infrastructure Delivery Authority (VIDA) Rail's response to Council's submission to the consultation process for the Sunshine Superhub Project and the draft Environmental Management Framework.

VIDA Rail, formerly known as the Level Crossing Removal Project (LXRP) is removing the **Maddox Road level crossing** by building a rail bridge over the road and closing the level crossing at **Champion Road**, with a new pedestrian and cycling bridge to be constructed over the rail lines. A new link road is being constructed connecting Champion Road to Maddox Road via Akuna Drive to open before the level crossing is closed in 2026. VIDA Rail released the latest designs on 12 November 2025.

In July 2024, initial concept plans were released by VIDA Rail for community comment for the **Maidstone Street level crossing** removal which include building a new road bridge over the railway line by 2027. Final designs were released in July 2025.

The **Hudsons Road level crossing** will be removed by building a rail bridge over the road together with a proposed new Spotswood station, programmed to open by 2028. While early community consultation has commenced on the project, design concepts have not yet been released by VIDA Rail.

To view designs and read more about the projects refer to:

<https://bigbuild.vic.gov.au/projects/level-crossing-removal-project/projects/newport>

<https://bigbuild.vic.gov.au/projects/level-crossing-removal-project/projects/maidstone-street-altona>

<https://bigbuild.vic.gov.au/projects/level-crossing-removal-project/projects/hudsons-road-spotswood>

On 27 August 2025 Council wrote to VIDA Rail with a submission as part of the Clause 52.03 planning consultation process for the Sunshine Superhub Project. This project includes major changes to the rail network around Sunshine Station to enable a rail line to the airport and pave the way for electrification to Melton. A program of works across more than 6km from West Footscray to Albion will include:

- two new dedicated regional platforms and an extended concourse at Sunshine Station
- three new rail bridges
- new and upgraded tracks (including to Newport Station along the freight line)
- new signalling technology
- realigned passenger and freight lines.

A response from the Program Director was received on 7 November 2025 advising that VIDA Rail has considered the matters raised by Council and has submitted the Clause 52.03 Consultation Report and Project Boundary to Department of Transport and Planning (DTP). VIDA Rail advised that it acknowledges and appreciates the issues raised by Council including environmental management, vegetation impacts, heritage, local amenity and construction impacts. Council has responded to the Environmental Management Framework (EMF) for the Project.

Background

The Victorian Government intends to remove 110 dangerous level crossings around Melbourne by 2030 with 87 removed so far. Three of the 15 level crossings in Hobsons Bay have now been grade-separated:

- Kororoit Creek Road, Altona (adjacent to Mobil site)
- Aviation Road, Laverton (adjacent to Aircraft Station)
- Ferguson Street, Williamstown North (adjacent to North Williamstown Station)

In October 2022, the Victorian Government announced five additional level crossing removal projects on the Werribee line before 2030, located at:

- Maddox Road, Newport by 2026
- Maidstone Street, Altona by 2027
- Hudsons Road, Spotswood by 2028
- Champion Road, Newport (closure)
- Anderson Street, Yarraville (closure)

VIDA Rail has appointed the Southern Project Alliance (SPA) to deliver the Maddox Road and Champion Road level crossing removal projects. SPA consists of Lendlease, Acciona, Coleman Rail, WSP Australia Pty Ltd and Metro Trains Melbourne (MTM). The project

includes construction of the Akuna Drive extension link road which is the responsibility of the Metropolitan Roads Program Alliance (MRPA) comprising LXP, Fulton Hogan and MTM. VIDA Rail has also appointed MRPA to deliver the Maidstone Street level crossing removal project.

Community Interest Groups (CIGs)

At the Council Meeting on 12 July 2023, Council established Level Crossing Removal Community Interest Groups (CIGs) for the Champion and Maddox Roads project and Hudsons Road project. The Groups contain diverse community representation from the local areas to assist Council in its advocacy efforts on these significant infrastructure projects with key objectives to:

- revisit Council's grade separation principles and how they apply to the three sites
- establish a detailed understanding of the precinct context and issues and opportunities for the crossings
- establish a detailed understanding of the LXP objectives and deliverables for the crossings
- formulate input specific to the level crossing removal sites for Council's consideration
- inform Council's final positions and become community contacts and advocates for the best community outcomes for the crossing removal sites.

At the 15 October 2025 meeting of the Newport Community Interest Group (NCIG), chaired by Cr Michael Disbury, the following key items were discussed:

- HBCC-VIDA Rail communications register
- engagement by VIDA Rail with local traders
- community campaigning and advocacy
- infrastructure and construction updates including construction staging
- vegetation removal and traffic management issues
- Council works including an update on the Ross Road works and the Maddox Road Safety Plan.

The CIG raised several questions and concerns for consideration as the project progresses. These have been referred to VIDA Rail and are outlined below.

Community information

The CIG has requested for the community to be informed via a status update for project works with a detailed timeline or construction program to inform of any future work, noting that limited information is being provided.

Landscaping matters

The CIG has advised that there was a previous commitment for community to be engaged as landscaping design is developed for the project and are seeking an understanding if this commitment will be honoured to ensure good community outcomes are achieved from this work, particularly plans to upgrade AJ Fine Reserve and Edwards Reserve that align with Council's strategies and plans. They also request that VIDA Rail collaborate with Council and the community to identify suitable locations along the project site for the reuse of logs obtained from tree removals.

Challis Street and surrounding works

The CIG has raised queries regarding the reinstatement of roads following the completion of works. Officers have requested that VIDA Rail provide any dilapidation surveys undertaken that assess the current condition of road pavements in the area, particularly Challis Street, prior to construction commencing.

Railway Parade retaining wall

CIG members have raised concerns that there has been no follow-up engagement with community relating to the proposed Railway Parade retaining wall, with only a render released showing a general concept. Council has requested the opportunity for both Council officers and the community to provide input on the design of the precast wall facing Railway Parade.

Council has expressed disappointment to VIDA Rail in having to fill the void in community engagement on this project and has requested that community be better informed and be availed of an opportunity to shape improved outcomes from this project work.

The next Newport CIG meeting is scheduled for early 2026.

Spotswood Community Interest Group

The Spotswood Community Interest Group (SCIG) has met three times in 2024. At the October Council meeting, Council resolved to reconvene the CIG with Cr Bishop as Chair. The next meeting is scheduled for 19 November 2025 with the following proposed agenda items:

- Purpose of the CIG
- Draft Specific Site Principles
- Summary of presentation to Councillors on 11 November and the VIDA Rail / Council officer workshop held on 7 November 2025, including key Council plans and strategies.

Revised approach to communications with VIDA Rail

On 25 February 2025 Council considered a report on proposed revised governance approach options to managing communications on local infrastructure interface issues with VIDA Rail and resolved to endorse:

A revised approach to communicating with LXR that will seek for all formal requests from LXR relating to design review, asset management demarcation or information sharing regarding traffic disruptions or amenity impacts to be directed via the Director Infrastructure and City Services and for these communications to be reported to Council as part of the regular quarterly update.

In accordance with the revised approach, Attachment 1 presents a table of the communications between VIDA Rail and Council between 1 August and 31 October 2025.

Discussion

Champion and Maddox Roads Projects

The final designs have been released, providing more detail on the new pedestrian and cycling bridge that will be built over the rail line at Champion Road. VIDA Rail advise that the designs showcase the community selected themes, including Newport's industrial heritage

and the unique natural environment along the Hobsons Bay coast. These themes will be represented at the bridge resting stops as well as improved safety features. The final designs also include new images of the pedestrian and cycling path on Railway Parade and the new connection to the existing cycling path on Maddox Road.

The final design renders were released by VIDA Rail on 12 November and are shown in Figure1 below.





Figure 1: Latest design images from VIDA Rail website. Artist impression only, subject to change.

Designs for improvements to local open space are still being developed, with more information to be provided next year.

The two passenger rail bridges – one for citybound trains and the other for Werribee-bound trains – will be built first. Once the passenger rail bridges are built and trains are running on them, the freight rail bridge will be constructed. To keep freight trains operating during construction, they will be moved to one of the former passenger train tracks in the centre of the project area.

Early works started in March 2025 to prepare the area for major construction. Work crews set up site offices, removed vegetation and relocated underground services such as gas, water and power on Maddox Road. The team has also completed minor signalling upgrades to allow seamless connection to the new rail bridges. Major construction began in August to build the new rail and pedestrian bridges and lay the foundations for the new Akuna Drive link road.

Over the past three months, VIDA Rail continued building the new Akuna Drive link road, the new pedestrian and cycling bridge at Champion Road, and commenced structural work to build the rail bridges over Maddox Road. These works (shown in Figures 2 and 3) include:

- continue building the new rail bridges and walking and cycling bridges at Maddox and Champion roads
- remove passenger rail tracks
- install beams in the rail corridor near Newport
- demolishing three warehouses on Maddox Road for the new link road
- drainage and kerb and road pavement works for the new link road
- tree and vegetation trimming and removal.



Figure 2: Maddox Road construction site

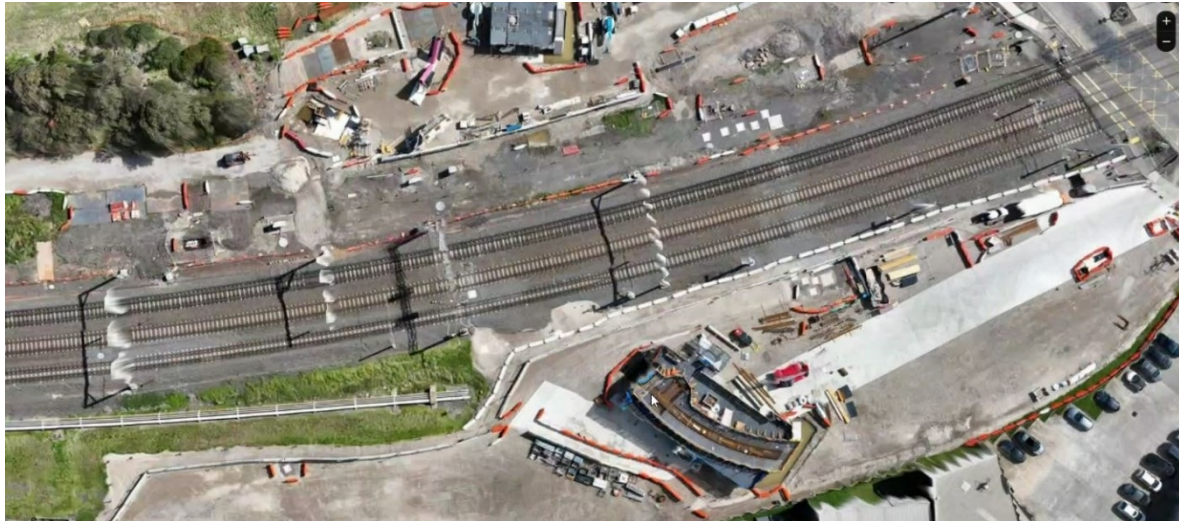


Figure 3: Champion Road construction site

VIDA Rail has been in touch with directly impacted residents and traders about impacts and disruptions, including advising on:

- general working hours from 7am to 6pm Monday to Friday and 7am to 3pm Saturdays, unless notified otherwise (7am to 6pm on Saturdays during August)
- reduced speed limits and traffic management around work areas, including some detours required
- temporary footpath closures and some changes to street parking on local roads.
- increase in construction vehicles, delivery trucks and machinery moving around the area
- some local parking restriction changes
- an increase in construction noise, vibration and dust.

To keep trains running and allow space to build the passenger rail bridges, Werribee Line trains will operate on a single line between Newport and Laverton from mid November to late April 2026. During this time there will be timetable changes to the Werribee and Williamstown lines. Werribee-bound services will operate via the Altona Loop, with city bound services travelling express from Laverton Station to Newport Station. Extra services will operate on the Williamstown Line during morning peak on weekdays to cater for additional demand.

Shuttle buses will transport passengers travelling to the city from Seaholme, Altona and Westona stations to Newport Station. From there, city-bound passengers will continue their journey by train.

When train services return to normal, Werribee Line trains will travel on the new rail bridges over Maddox Road. Freight trains will move to a temporary track to allow construction of the freight rail bridge.

Changes to the Werribee Line

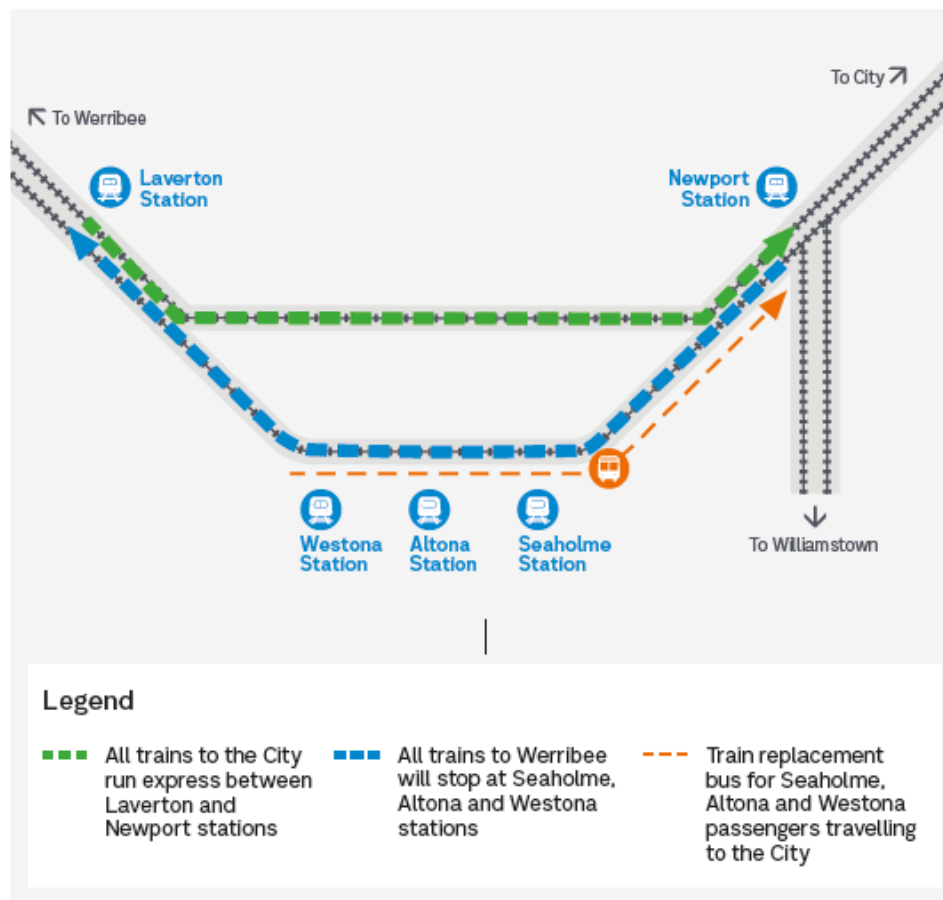


Figure 4: Changed train operations on Werribee rail line until April 2026

On 20 October 2025 VIDA Rail provided Council with notice of intention to enter, occupy, use and carry out works under Section 167 of the MTPF Act at 131 Park Crescent, Williamstown North, in addition to the previous notice of the project works area. The area in Quarry Reserve, shown in blue in Figure 5 below, is required by the Project for footpath construction and associated activities and works, including installing temporary fencing and tree protection zones.



Figure 5: Additional Project area

Council has expressed concern about the significant tree removal within the overall Project area. A further removal of 13 trees in Maddox Street near the new Akuna Drive intersection occurred in November, shown in green in Figure 6 below.



Figure 6: Maddox Road tree removal

To help offset the loss of established trees VIDA Rail has proposed the supply of 50 trees to be planted by Council in areas adjacent to the rail corridor to increase tree canopy coverage.

Council officers have been reviewing the Project scope and designs and meet regularly with VIDA Rail to ensure Council standards and requirements are met. Monthly executive coordination meetings are held to discuss any items escalated for further discussion and consideration. VIDA Rail has commenced discussions with Council on the final allocation of land and assets and responsibilities upon completion of the Project.

Maidstone Street Project

In July 2025, updated designs were released showing the colours and textures of the new road bridge, the new pedestrian path on the west side of the bridge and new landscaping in the area with new lighting along the road bridge and an extended pedestrian path (Figure 7).



Figure 7: The new Maidstone Street Road Bridge looking towards Kororoit Creek.
Artist impression only, subject to change

VIDA Rail has completed site establishment, including setting up for construction and carrying out early works to prepare for major construction to start, refer to Figure 8. These works include:

- setting up site offices and facilities
- relocating utility services and undertaking drainage works
- realigning Maidstone Street to allow for bridge construction
- removing trees and vegetation that will be impacted by the project

To construct the new road bridge across the rail line, VIDA Rail has temporarily closed Ajax Road at the Maidstone Street intersection until mid-2027. Vehicles entering or exiting Ajax Road are now detoured via Slough Road via a new temporary road connection between Slough Road and Ajax Road

VIDA Rail has commenced discussions with Council on the final allocation of land and assets and responsibilities upon completion of the project. A number of assets proposed to be allocated to Council for future ownership and maintenance are disputed by Council and further information will be provided in future reports as discussions progress.



Figure 8: Works at the Maidstone Street level crossing.

Hudsons Road Project

VIDA Rail has advised they are commencing with early planning of the Level Crossing Removal Project for Hudsons Road, Spotswood (Figure 9). This project will involve the construction of a rail bridge over Hudsons Road and an elevated Spotswood railway station to be completed by 2028.



Figure 9: Existing level crossing at Hudsons Road

In its promotion of the Project, VIDA Rail advise that a rail bridge provides:

- **Improved connections:** Elevating the rail will create better connections across the rail line between Hope Street and Hall Street. Travel times will be more reliable and access will be easier and safer for pedestrians and cyclists to move through the area, including to the local shops.
- **Rejuvenated station precinct:** An elevated station provides the opportunity to enhance urban design through creative station design, as well as more trees and greenery and new open space created by raising the rail line.
- **Reduced noise:** Existing rail noise will be reduced by getting rid of the boom gate bells, installing new rail tracks and sleepers and removing tyre and vehicle noise, as drivers will no longer have to stop at and cross the tracks at the level crossing
- **Reduced local impacts:** Elevating rail uses the available space within the existing rail corridor, minimising impacts to surrounding homes and businesses, as well as impacts to underground services.

Early Consultation

In September 2025, VIDA Rail provided an opportunity for the community to provide input into the proposed level crossing removal works in Hudson Road. Council officers have provided detailed information to VIDA Rail in required timeframes with another opportunity to be facilitated through the planning process for a future formal Council-endorsed submission.

VIDA Rail further advise they will release the project design and ask for community feedback to help refine key elements of the design.

VIDA Rail also provided a presentation on the Project to the 11 November Council Briefing.

VIDA Rail Planning Workshop

A workshop for Council officers was facilitated by VIDA Rail on 7 November 2025 to gather information about Council's strategic vision and plans for the area, including:

- Spotswood Precinct Structure Plan
- GreenLine Project
- Hudsons Road Streetscape Masterplan Report

The most recent meeting of the Spotswood CIG was held on 19 November 2025.

Heritage Victoria Notice

On 11 November 2025, Council received a notice from Heritage Victoria (HV) regarding their decision to refuse an exclusion determination by LXP for the Spotswood Railway Station Complex at Hudsons Road, Spotswood.

The notice advises that on 8 September 2025, HV received an application (LXP advised it was theirs) for an Exclusion Determination for the railway station. After considering the application, under section 36C(1)(a) of the *Heritage Act 2017*, HV has refused an Exclusion Determination for the place.

An Exclusion Determination may be made on the basis that the place or object has no reasonable prospect of inclusion in the Victorian Heritage Register. In this instance, HV were not satisfied that the place has no reasonable prospect of inclusion in the Victorian Heritage Register. It is noted that a person who has a real and substantial interest in the place has the right to request HV for a review of an Exclusion Determination. HV must determine a review within 40 days of receiving a request. At this stage Council is not aware of any review currently being undertaken.

Sunshine Superhub Project

VIDA Rail has considered the matters raised and provided a response to Council's submission to the project, which is included in their Consultation Report referred to the DTP.

VIDA Rail advised that the project is aligned with the intention to create better transport outcomes in the region. In particular, it will deliver major changes to the rail network around Sunshine Station, enabling a rail line to the airport and future electrification to Melton. The following comments are included in their response to key points raised in the Council submission:

The Project Boundary includes roads where construction vehicle movement is anticipated and will endeavour to minimise disruptions to local residents and businesses as much as possible including ensuring appropriate early works alerts and traffic management. LXP will continue to liaise with Council on Project works including any proposed use of parks and reserves throughout the development, delivery and completion of the Project.

Removal of trees will be minimised through design and construction methodology, and an arborist will be engaged for advice, with the overarching objective of retaining trees.

Replacement vegetation will be made wherever possible to maintain biodiversity within the Project Boundary. The Project will additionally be governed by the LXP Urban Design Framework (UDF) which includes landscape measures that aim to enhance

ecological vegetation communities, build a coherent corridor landscape, minimise loss of mature trees, maximise tree canopy cover, selection of resilient plant species and use of indigenous, native and exotic species where appropriate. Further details around tree replacement will be developed during the detailed design process as part of a comprehensive landscape design.

The Environmental Management Framework (EMF) will include measures to minimise impacts from construction, environment, waste, local traffic and congestion, noise and local amenity. The EMF will be supported by a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) or similar to ensure environmental risks are controlled and obligations with approvals, legislation, and the overarching environmental governance framework are met.

The EMF will guide the Project's design, delivery and management of construction works. It will outline the overarching delivery approach, identify and respond to the relevant environmental aspects and guide environmental risk identification and management of impacts of the works. The EMF will also form the framework for the preparation the CEMP (or equivalent document) to ensure environmental risks including noise, dust, protection of waterways and emissions) are controlled and obligations with approvals and relevant legislation are met.

LXRP will continue to liaise with Council through the Project Interface Manager throughout the development, delivery and completion of the Project to ensure that Council is aware of planned works.

Further information on this project will be provided in future update reports to Council.

Strategic Alignment

This report specifically addresses priorities from the following strategic documents:

Hobsons Bay 2030 Community Vision

Priority 6: An accessible and connected community

Council Plan 2021-25

Objective 4: Visionary community infrastructure

Strategy 4.1: Ensure the transport network is safe and efficient for all users with a focus on pedestrians and cyclists

Policies and Related Council Documents

Council adopted the Hobsons Bay Grade Separation Principles and Guidelines (March 2016) which have been integral in informing Council's response to the crossing removals and requests for community amenity improvements in the surrounding areas. The Newport and Spotswood Community Interest Groups have reviewed this document and considered site-specific principles for each of the Projects.

Officers have referred to various Council plans and strategies in preparing Council's project planning submission and design comments.

Legal/Statutory Obligations and Risk

Legal and statutory implications and risks associated with the design and construction will be further considered as the projects progress.

As a key stakeholder, Council has an interest in the VIDA Rail's scope of work and design, specifically in relation to the local transport network, property matters, assets owned and managed by Council, shared use paths, drainage and open space outcomes, heritage and cultural matters and impacts on conservation zones and trees.

Financial and Resource Implications

Council will negotiate a formal agreement with VIDA Rail for provision of resource support to Council to enable input to the project design development, temporary conditions during construction and review and approval of works on assets which Council will continue to manage. A draft Memorandum of Understanding between VIDA Rail and Council has been prepared and is currently under review.

Environmental, Social and Economic Impacts

Environmental, social and economic issues and opportunities will be considered in Council's responses to the projects and have been included in its submissions. The Hobsons Bay Grade Separation Principles and Guidelines acknowledge the environmental, social and economic values and opportunities of the level crossing removal sites in Hobsons Bay.

Consultation and Communication

VIDA Rail has a framework for community engagement that is applied to each of the level crossing removals, but each site is considered separately and modifications to this framework are adapted where required to address specific community needs or aspirations.

Council has advocated for VIDA Rail to establish Stakeholder Liaison Groups (SLGs) for the new projects and while VIDA Rail has not established an SLG for the Maidstone Street LXR, a Newport SLG was established which met five times with the final meeting of the Group held on 23 April 2025. VIDA Rail has advised that as they are now moving into major works, they will now directly engage with key stakeholders, residents, businesses and local community groups instead of continuing to facilitate the Newport SLG. Council's Newport Community Interest Group has met nine times. Regarding the Hudsons Road Project It is unknown at this stage if VIDA Rail intend on setting up a Spotswood SLG.

Council has advocated for VIDA Rail to better assist local businesses impacted by the Projects. Council will continue its advocacy to ensure there is:

- improved and transparent communication channels between VIDA Rail and local traders
- appropriate business support campaigns are offered in line with traders' needs and consistent with the types of campaigns delivered for other VIDA Rail projects across Melbourne
- responsiveness from VIDA Rail to the concerns of traders to minimise the negative impacts of the projects on the business community.

All community notifications on the projects can be found at:
<https://bigbuild.vic.gov.au/library/level-crossing-removal-project>

Declaration of Conflict of Interest

Section 130 of the *Local Government Act 2020* requires members of Council staff to disclose any general or material conflict of interest in matters to be considered at a Council meeting.

Council staff involved in the preparation of this report have no conflict of interest in this matter.

Attachment:

LXRP/HBCC Communications Register for period 1 August to 31 October 2025

DATE	ISSUE	COMMUNICATIONS / LXRP REQUEST	HBCC RESPONSE
Champion Road and Maddox Road			
4 August 2025	LXRP/HBCC - meeting to discuss Maddox Road traffic treatment safety plan	LXRP requested modifications to the bus stops and lane widths and advised of a proposal to provide Council funding for pedestrian operated signals in the plan.	Council agreed to consider requests and revise the plans for further review.
4 August 2025	Design workshop	Meeting for Southern Project Alliance (SPA) to take HBCC officers through proposed pavement design and SUP connection to Maddox Rd	Concerns expressed on design regarding SUP provision and connections not matching Council scope requests.
4 August 2025	Fact Sheet "Managing the Environment" released.	Information on vegetation removal and replacement, waste management and impacts, opportunities identified include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> providing logs and mulch for use in gardens and parks donating timber for use to local council, community groups and schools. 	Noted. Officers have agreed to receive suitable logs removed for future use. Mulch delivered to Newport Lakes and Miniature Railway land.
28 August 2025	Champion and Maddox Rd HBCC / LXRP Fortnightly Interface Meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Works update provided for Champion/Maddox Rd and Akuna Drive works LXRP presented further tree removal plans Communications and trader support initiatives 	Noted
29 August 2025	Works Notice to community	Works notice describing key activities and traffic impacts for September.	Noted
2 Sep 2025	SPA Champion & Maddox Rd- Monthly TMLG meeting.	September program presented and traffic management plans (TMP's).	Noted. TMP's approved by Council.
5 Sep 2025	HBCC/LXRP meeting on Maddox Road Traffic Safety Treatments	Further discussion on design and timing of works.	In principle agreement reached on design.
18 Sep 2025	HBCC/LXRP Champion/Maddox fortnightly interface meeting	Works update provided for Champion/Maddox Rd and Akuna Drive works	Noted
25 Sep 2025	Champion and Maddox Rd HBCC / LXRP Fortnightly Interface Meeting	Works update provided for Champion/Maddox Rd and Akuna Drive works	Noted
1 Oct 2025	Works Notice to community	Works notice describing key activities and traffic impacts for October.	Noted
2 Oct 2025	SPA Champion & Maddox Rd- Monthly TMLG meeting	October program presented and traffic management plans (TMP's)	Noted. TMP's approved by Council.
9 Oct 2025	Champion and Maddox Rd HBCC / LXRP Fortnightly Interface Meeting	Works update provided for Champion/Maddox Rd and Akuna Drive works	Noted
9 Oct 2025	Community Notice	The notice refers to the intermittent and temporary closure of a section of Champion Road and Akuna Drive from September.	Noted.
23 Oct 2025	Champion and Maddox Rd HBCC / LXRP	Works update provided for Champion/Maddox Rd and Akuna Drive works	Noted

DATE	ISSUE	COMMUNICATIONS / LXP REQUEST	HBCC RESPONSE
	Fortnightly Interface Meeting		
23 Oct 2025	Works Notice to community	Works notice describing key activities and traffic impacts for November.	Noted
31 Oct 2025	Meeting to discuss tree replacement	LXP requested meeting to discuss the projects contribution of 50 mature trees to be planted in the municipality	Council agreed to identify suitable locations for additional tree planting close to the project.
31 Oct 2025	Letter to LXP regarding items from CIG meeting	Request to LXP to follow up on matters raised at the 15 October Newport CIG meeting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Information • Landscaping Matters • Challis Street and Surrounding Works • Railway Parade Retaining Wall 	Waiting on LXP response.
Akuna Drive Link			
18 July 2025	Meeting to discuss permanent access driveways	To brief and seek feedback from Council on proposed locations and design details for proposed permanent access driveways to Hallmarc land abutting the new Akuna Drive link road.	Council required in writing agreement from Hallmarc and replacing proposed gravel driveways with concrete to Council standards.
28 August 2025	Joint Meeting with LXP and Williamstown Horse and Pony Club	To brief the Club and receive feedback on the design for works in the reserve.	General support for proposal to construct footpath through reserve linking Park Cres with Akuna Drive. Discussed provision of horse pens for use by the club.
16 Sept 2025	Meeting to discuss works in Quarry Reserve.	To brief Council of the project works within the Council owned land at 131 Park Crescent, Williamstown North (Quarry reserve) to support internal process to enable MRPA to access the land and undertake the works (new footpath and associated works).	Council noted the Project area has been extended to accommodate the new path works.
22 Sept 2025	Site meeting at Quarry Reserve with the Williamstown Horse and Pony Club	For LXP to provide an overview and timing of the upcoming works	Council indicated no objection to proposal subject to resolving the horse float parking requirements of the club.
14 Oct 2025	HBCC/LXP meeting	Footpath Works (Quarry Reserve), LXP presented final footpath alignment to Council.	Council indicated no objection.
21 Oct 2025	Letter from LXP	Notice of intention to enter, occupy, use and carry out works under Section 167 of the MTPF Act at 131 Park Crescent, Williamstown North (Quarry Reserve).	Noted, to support internal LXP process to enable MRPA to access the land and undertake the works (new footpath and associated works).
28 Oct 2025	Meeting to discuss parking design in Park Cres.	LXP HBCC Park Crescent Carpark LXP Design – LXP presented the design and seeking feedback from HBCC.	Council required LXP to address the horse float parking requirements of the club.
Maidstone Street			
6 August 2025	Traffic Management Liaison Group Meeting	To discuss: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traffic Management Staging • TMP look ahead • Rail Occupations • Project interfaces • Communications 	Noted.
7 August 2025	Works Notification from LXP	Works notice describing key activities and traffic impacts for August.	Noted
12 August 2025	Maidstone MRPA HBCC Interface Meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Works update provided for the Maidstone Street LXP works • LXP presented further tree removal plans • Communications and notices to surrounding area • Traffic impacts 	Noted
26 August 2025	Maidstone MRPA HBCC Interface Meeting	Works update provided for the Maidstone Street LXP works	Noted

DATE	ISSUE	COMMUNICATIONS / LXR REQUEST	HBCC RESPONSE
26 August 2025	Works Notification from LXR	Works notice describing key activities and traffic impacts for September.	Noted
3 Sep 2025	Traffic Management Liaison Group Meeting for Maidstone Street, Level Crossing Removal Project	September program and traffic management plans (TMP's) presented.	TMP's approved by Council.
9 Sep 2025	Maidstone MRPA HBCC Interface Meeting	Works update provided for the Maidstone Street LXR works	Noted
23 Sep 2025	Maidstone MRPA HBCC Interface Meeting	Works update provided for the Maidstone Street LXR works	Noted
24 Sep 2025	Maidstone' St MRPA October works notice	Works notice describing key activities and traffic impacts.	Noted.
1 Oct 2025	TMLG - Maidstone Street LXR	October program and traffic management plans (TMP's) presented.	Noted. TMP's approved by Council.
7 Oct 2025	Maidstone MRPA HBCC Interface Meeting	Works update provided for the Maidstone Street LXR works	Noted
21 Oct 2025	Maidstone MRPA HBCC Interface Meeting	Works update provided for the Maidstone Street LXR works	Noted
24 Oct 2025	MRPA Maidstone - Maintenance Access and Drainage Asset Allocation Workshop	Presentation on asset allocation and ultimate land plans and request for Council to close out comments.	Some comments closed and some remain open. Further discussions required on landscaping areas, drainage assets and property boundaries.
24 Oct 2025	Works Notification from LXR	Advising of major works starting at Maidstone Street and road closures in November	Noted.
General			
4/8/2025	LXR / HBCC Executive Meeting to discuss Maddox Road plans	LXR requesting Council changes to the Maddox Rd design.	Agreement reached on design changes to ensure safe bus, cycling and pedestrian movement.
20 August 2025	LXR / HBCC meeting to discuss Memorandum of Understanding (MoU).	LXR / HBCC MOU Comment Closeout – meeting to discuss MoU comments	Agreed to remove some Council concerns but some remain for further discussion.
25 August 2025	LXR / HBCC Executive Meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Operational Report Items for escalation Strategic Issues Communications process 	<p>Officers raised concerns about the proposed Maddox Road and Akuna Drive intersection treatment and requested a further review by LXR.</p> <p>Officers reiterated position that improved cycling and pedestrian facilities should be provided on the new Maidstone Street bridge.</p> <p>Officers provided comment on the proposed Memorandum of Understanding between LXR and Council.</p>
22 Sep 2025	LXR / HBCC Executive Meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Operational Report Items for escalation Strategic Issues Communications process 	<p>Officers raised concerns on the proposed approach for drainage management along the new Akuna Drive link road, regarding compliance with the Water Act. Officers have requested LXR to review and pursue a different solution than what is planned.</p> <p>Officers provided further comment on the proposed MoU.</p>

7.3.4 Point Cook Road Intersection Update (PCIU) - December 2025

Directorate: Infrastructure and City Services

Responsible Officer: Strategic Projects Specialist

Attachments: Nil

Purpose

To provide an update on the \$79 million Point Cook Road Central Avenue Intersection Upgrade Project (the Project) in Altona Meadows, facilitated by the Victorian Infrastructure Delivery Authority (VIDA).

Recommendation

That Council notes the update report on the status of the Point Cook Road Central Avenue Upgrade Project and Council's advocacy on aspects of the Project.

Summary

This report includes an overview of the Project, including a progress update on the early construction activities, strategic advocacy items and other associated initiatives.

The proposed Project (refer Figure 1 for a diagram) will reduce travel times, improve safety and create better walking paths and connections. To cater for population growth and increase the efficiency of the intersection, the upgrade will:

- remove the existing roundabout and replace it with a new traffic light intersection to improve traffic flow for Point Cook Road, Central Avenue and traffic coming off the Princes Freeway
- build a new outbound exit ramp that loops under Point Cook Road bridge and connects to the intersection, to reduce congestion and delays for vehicles travelling from the Princes Freeway to Point Cook Road, and improving access from the freeway to Central Avenue
- add new lanes on Point Cook Road and Central Avenue near the intersection
- add pedestrian crossings and upgrade footpaths at the intersection.

Construction works have commenced on the intersection. Over the past three months (mid-August to mid-November 2025), the roundabout has been removed and concrete barriers installed to keep drivers and workers safe while the new intersection is built. In addition, work has begun in the grass reserve near the Point Cook Road bridge to start construction of the new exit ramp and associated drainage and pathways works.

More information is available using the following link:

<https://bigbuild.vic.gov.au/projects/roads/point-cook-rd-and-central-ave-upgrades/sections>

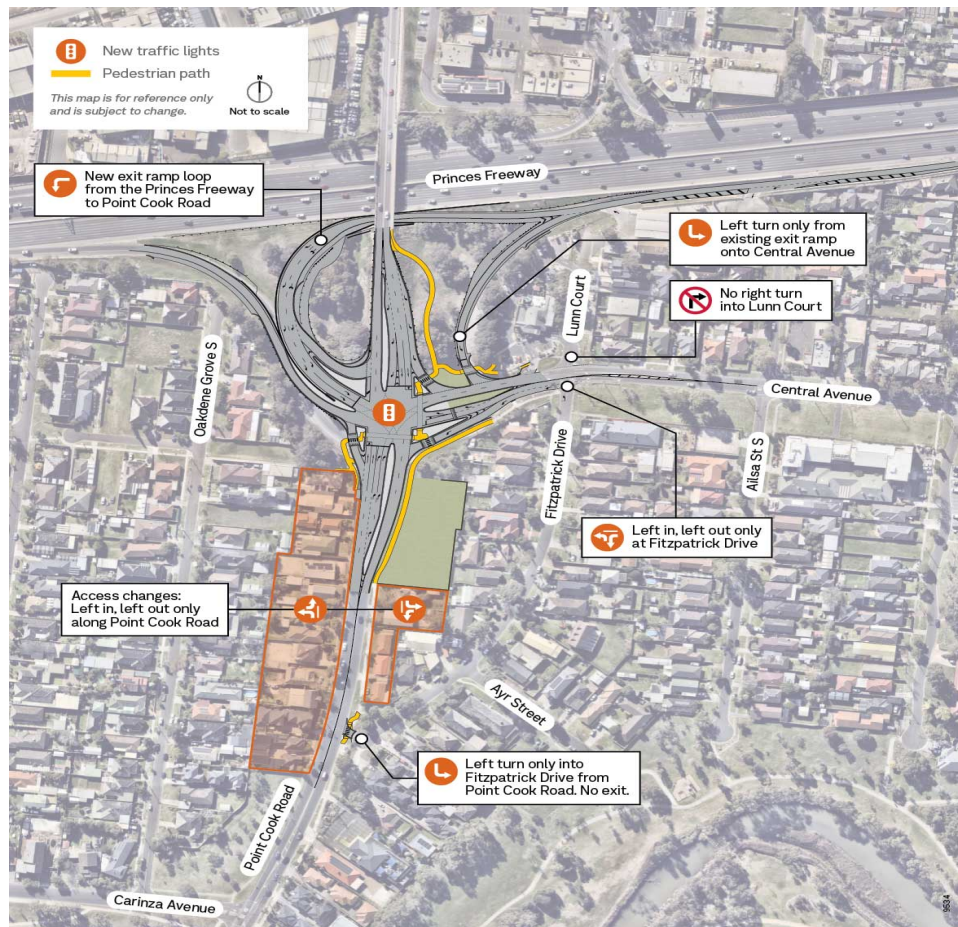


Figure 1: The proposed project

Background

In the 2023-24 State Budget, the Victorian Government committed \$79 million to upgrade the Point Cook Road and Central Avenue intersection as part of the Government's \$674 million Road Blitz program.

The Project is a significant infrastructure project aimed at improving safety and reducing congestion in Altona Meadows. The upgrade is part of a larger effort to support population growth and increased vehicle movements in the area.

The Project involves several key components, including the installation of traffic lights at the intersection, widening Central Avenue to Ailsa Street South, and enhancing pedestrian and cycling infrastructure. These improvements are expected to increase traffic capacity, reduce travel times and improve overall road safety for both motorists and pedestrians.

The Project is delivered by the Victorian Government and managed by VIDA with the design and construction delivered by contractors BMD Group. The planning and development phase (including traffic modelling, environmental and site investigations and detail design) has been completed and early construction works commenced in August 2025.

On 16 July 2024, VIDA presented an overview of the Project to the councillors. During this presentation, VIDA representatives provided insights and answered queries from the Councillors. VIDA will provide future presentations to the Council that will facilitate a comprehensive understanding of the project's scope, progress and future steps.

At the 1 July 2025 Council meeting, Council received an update on the project and was supportive of the proposed VIDA design option of a signalised intersection.

This signalised intersection option aligns with community expectations for signalisation, has strongest network performance, provides better active transport outcomes (including crossing points) and is future-proofed (more likely to cater for any potential interchange upgrades in future outside of project scope).

At the 23 September 2025 Council meeting, Council received and endorsed a further report on the project providing an update on the design, council advocacy items, project timelines and proposed site occupations.

Discussion

Project Timelines

The indicative timelines for the Project are presented below.

- **Preliminary Design Report** completed and package circulated to stakeholders on 12 March 2025.
- **Detail Design:** Detail design is completed with feedback provided by Council officers on various aspects such as road alignment, drainage, flood modelling, lighting and landscaping.
- **Current Phase – Delivery (Construction):** Site establishment commenced in late August 2025, with initial excavation and vegetation removal works and utility relocations occurring in the period September to October 2025.
- **Future completion:** At this stage VIDA is holding their committed completion date of mid-2027, however, their target is to reach practical completion in the first quarter of 2027 (February 2027).

With the recent announcement by the Federal Government committing \$55 million to duplicate and upgrade Central Avenue between Lunn Court and Skehan Boulevard in Altona Meadows, the above timelines may change to better coordinate the implementation and delivery of both projects and may also result in some changes to the current design. VIDA's plan is to commence the Central Avenue duplication as soon as possible following the completion of the Point Cook Road Intersection Upgrade to minimise disruption to the community.

Council Feedback – Key Advocacy Items

In May 2025, Council was invited to provide feedback on the detail design. The key feedback and items that remain a concern raised by Council officers include the following:

- **Lunn Court traffic island:** Council officers recommended the existing painted island in Lunn Court be raised to a concrete median to reduce the risk of vehicles cutting corners and help direct motorists to the proper travel lane at the intersection. Additionally, the current carriageway width accommodates a staging island as a median. This modification would provide a safer environment for pedestrians and motorists. VIDA has advised this will be considered as part of the Central Avenue duplication project that will tie in with the intersection upgrade works near this location.
- **Pathway to Point Cook Road bridge:** Officer raised concerns that the proposed new wide path from Central Avenue (future-proofed for a shared user path) leading up to the Point Cook Road bridge suddenly ends at the bridge, posing a risk for cyclists as

they will be forced onto the narrow road lanes on the bridge. VIDA has advised that the bridge cannot be widened, there are no options to maintain the SUP along the bridge as the road users have a regulated sighting distance and lane widths. Widening of the bridge is not in the scope of Point Cook Road intersection upgrade. Council officers will continue to advocate and work with VIDA to mitigate the risks at this location.

- **Increased pedestrian safety:** Officers are concerned with the high pedestrian volumes (including secondary school students) walking north-south along Point Cook Road through this busy intersection to access the Aircraft train station and the Aviation Road shopping precinct. The proposed slip lane pedestrian treatments do not provide the level of safety and service that is required to cater for and protect these high pedestrian volumes. To mitigate risks, Council's position is for all slip lanes to be signalised to allow pedestrians of all ability levels to cross through the entire intersection in one single phase. It is anticipated that the traffic volumes and pedestrian volumes will grow in response to this upgraded intersection further increasing risks for these vulnerable road users. Further information was requested to justify the exclusion of signalised pedestrian crossings at the slip lanes. VIDA has advised that the signalisation of the slip lanes is not currently being considered, but the slip lane from the freeway to Central Avenue will be signalised as this is a blind corner without safe sight lines for traffic or pedestrians. Pedestrian operated signals will be provided crossing the main traffic lanes of Central Avenue and Point Cook Road.
- **Increased street lighting:** Council officers are generally satisfied with the lighting design proposed. The standards, luminaire types, locations and adequacy of lighting levels generally is satisfactory. However, Council has recommended increasing the lighting levels in some locations. Particularly, (i) upgrading to a higher output light with back glare shield to ensure good coverage for the pedestrian crossing whilst reducing light spill into properties and (ii) upgrading to a higher output light to adequately service Lunn Court and the McDonalds access point with sufficient lighting. Council officers have also recommended additional lighting between Ailsa Street South and Fitzpatrick Drive to support motorists approaching the intersection. This will potentially be considered under the scope of the works for the Central Avenue duplication project.
- **Vegetation:** Council's position regarding vegetation replacement is replacing lost trees with landscaping following upgrade to the intersection, including with canopy trees where traffic sight lines allow. The proposed design includes 141 trees to be retained, 126 to be removed. Council has requested further information on the replacement strategy.

Site Occupations (Project Compounds)

On the 16 July 2025 Council received a site possession notification notice. Figure 2 shows the three sites to be occupied by the Project for the purpose of establishing site offices, material storage and carparking. VIDA have been liaising with adjacent businesses such as the Playmakers Early Learning Centre located on the corner of Fitzpatrick Drive and Central Avenue. The Centre's main concerns were around construction impacts such as dust and noise from plant and fleet entering and leaving the site.



Figure 2: Site occupations

Council does not object to the Project occupying the sites as they will not impact on sport and recreation or open space planning and maintenance activities. Regarding the occupation of the reserve in front of Bruce Comben Reserve, Council has requested the southern boundary of the Project compound be spaced at least three metres off the northern fence line of Bruce Comben Reserve to allow for pedestrian access and for Council mowers to maintain the space.

Construction Update

Works have commenced over the past three months (mid-August to mid-November 2025) including pavement removal, tree and vegetation removal, establishment of site compounds and offices, contractor parking areas and implementation of traffic management plans and pedestrian safety and management routes. (Figures 3 to 7)

Site 1 – Contractor Carpark: Construction has been completed of the temporary carpark site between Fitzpatrick Drive and Ailsa Street South adjacent and north of the Playmakers Early Learning Centre. (Figure 3)



Figure 3: Site 1 – Contractor Carpark

Site 2 – Contractor Site Offices: Construction of the contractor site offices has been completed, located between Ailsa Street South and Ascot Street South adjacent and north of the nursing home aged care facility. (Figure 4)



Figure 4: Site 2 – Contractor Site Offices

Site 3 – Storage of Materials: At present the site located between Ascot Street South and the entrance road to Bruce Comben Reserve has not been occupied. Before the site can be occupied, a better understanding by the Project is required regarding the usage and various users of the reserve, assets and facilities, such as peak usage times, number of teams or interest groups that use the reserve, split between driving versus walking or cycling to the reserve, and any seasonal variances such as football club usage versus cricket club.

Pavement Removal: The existing pavement of the roundabout and median island has been removed at the Point Cook Road and Central Avenue intersection. (Figure 5)



Figure 5: Pavement removal (median island and roundabout)

Vegetation Removal: The vegetation and trees have been removed in the area between the Point Cook bridge ramp, and the Princes Freeway exit ramp adjacent to McDonalds (Figure 6). The clearance of trees and vegetation works are in preparation for a variety of works including the construction of the new exit ramp, build-up of an embankment to support a shared path to the Point Cook Road bridge and construction of drainage detention basins to capture surface runoff.



Figure 6: Vegetation removal

Traffic and Pedestrian Management: To manage traffic flow and reduce congestion, traffic control and management plans are being implemented. (Figure 7)

VIDA and its construction partner investigated ways to improve pedestrian safety in the vicinity of the intersection during construction of the Project with a temporary signalised crossing now created.

VIDA has undertaken extensive community engagement throughout the planning phase and recognises pedestrian safety as a key community concern. A key benefit of the project, once complete, will be the addition of pedestrian crossings and upgraded footpaths at the intersection.



Figure 7: Traffic management

Strategic Alignment

This report specifically addresses priorities from the following strategic documents:

Hobsons Bay 2030 Community Vision

Priority 6: An accessible and connected community

The Project will provide new pedestrian and cyclist infrastructure to make walking and cycling safer, connects to the major cycle corridor and provides more appealing transport options.

Council Plan 2021-25

Objective 4: Visionary community infrastructure

Strategy 4.1: Ensure the transport network is safe and efficient for all users with a focus on pedestrians and cyclists

The Project will improve safety for all road users, including motorists, cyclists, and pedestrians at a highly congested intersection. It will reduce travel times, improve the reliability of travel times through the intersection and implement new traffic signals to better manage and regulate traffic flow at the intersection.

Policies and Related Council Documents

Officers have referred to several Council policies, strategies and plans to inform Council's response and feedback on the Project. These include:

- HBCC Integrated Transport Plan 2017
- Local Area Movement Plan – West 2020
- Hobsons Bay Strategic Bicycle Plan 2012 (shows on and off-road paths running through the intersection)
- Integrated Transport Cycling Corridors Plan 2019

In addition, the design criteria for this Project were developed in consultation with Council officers, establishing the design standards required for Project compliance.

Legal/Statutory Obligations and Risk

Legal and statutory implications and risks associated with the design and construction of the Project site will be further considered as the Project progresses.

Council, as a key stakeholder, has an interest in the VIDA design, specifically in relation to the local transport network, assets to be owned and managed by Council including shared use paths, drainage and open space outcomes including impacts on any conservation zones and significant trees.

Legal and statutory obligations and risks will further be considered as part of the asset demarcation and allocation process in which agreement will need to be reached on assets that will be owned and maintained by Council once the Project is complete, such as pathways, minor landscaping, drainage and open space areas.

Financial and Resource Implications

Like other State Government projects, Council will negotiate a monetary contribution by VIDA for Council input and services to assist with the Project including design reviews, temporary conditions during construction and review and inspection of works on assets which Council will continue to manage. A detail design report and packages were submitted to Council which officers have reviewed and provided feedback.

Environmental, Social and Economic Impacts

Environmental, social and economic issues and opportunities have been considered in Council's response to the Preliminary and Detail Design including:

- efficient transport with reduced travel times and congestion
- improved social connectivity
- improved drainage treatments and landscaping

Consultation and Communication

Public communications continued, with a ramp-up as the Project neared commencement of construction. Communications regarding upcoming works were provided via the following channels:

- Email and SMS subscribers
- Updates provided on Victoria's Big Build [project webpage](#)
- Letterbox drops
- Door knocks / meetings with some residents and businesses

The latest works update was provided by VIDA on 31 October 2025 to notify the community and residents that works have started on the intersection, with a summary of works completed and a look ahead for the forthcoming month.

Community pop-up session: VIDA hosted a community pop-up session at Sanctuary Lakes Shopping Centre on Wednesday 3 December, 10am to 6pm. The purpose was to meet the team from the Point Cook Road and Central Avenue Intersection Upgrade Project, ask questions about the project and find out more about major works starting in January 2026.

Project meetings and workshops: Fortnightly meetings between Council officers and the VIDA project interface team commenced in December 2024 and have continued since discussing technical and other issues and exchanging information to assist with planning and delivery of the Project. These meetings provide updates on progress, discussions on community concerns and notifications, and advice on the Project relating to elements such as engineering, design, traffic, planning matters and construction impacts.

Declaration of Conflict of Interest

Section 130 of the *Local Government Act 2020* requires members of Council staff to disclose any general or material conflict of interest in matters to be considered at a Council meeting.

Council staff involved in the preparation of this report have no conflict of interest in this matter.

7.3.5 Proposal of Hobsons Bay Community Recognition Awards

Directorate: Sustainable Communities
Responsible Officer: Manager Arts Culture Community
Attachments: Nil

Purpose

To present plans for the 2026 Hobsons Bay Community Recognition Awards, a refreshing of the former Hobsons Bay Citizen Awards, and creating a stronger alignment with Council's volunteer recognition and celebration program.

Recommendation

That Council:

- 1. Notes the proposed Hobsons Bay Community Recognition Awards to be held in May 2026, aligning with Council's volunteer recognition and celebration program.**
- 2. Notes the transition of the Hobsons Bay Citizen Awards into the Hobsons Bay Community Recognition Awards.**
- 3. Receives an evaluation report no later than three months following the Awards, to help inform future programs.**

Summary

Awards and recognition programs are a productive and positive way for Council and community to acknowledge achievements, to recognise people making a contribution and to enable ongoing community engagement, helping to build strong connections and networks across the city.

The Hobsons Bay Community Recognition Awards (the Awards) are designed as a new program, informed by a review of programs including the Hobsons Bay Citizen of the Year and Council-produced volunteer events, examining impact, reach and benefit.

The 2026 Awards program will enable a transition from the Citizen Awards to the Community Recognition Awards and is planned as the centrepiece of Council's National Volunteer Week activities in May. The Awards will recognise the achievements of community organisations, leaders and volunteers who deliver services and initiatives with positive social impact.

Background

The Hobsons Bay Community Recognition Awards are proposed in response to a review of existing Council programs including the Hobsons Bay Citizen Awards and Council's National Volunteer Week activities.

Current programs

The Hobsons Bay Citizen Awards (Citizen of the Year and Young Citizen of the Year), have operated since 1997. The nature of the Awards being two categories that are awarded to a single or individual recipient, inherently lessen the wider community impact and the opportunities to resonate more broadly across a diverse community.

Each May, Council delivers an event to recognise the contribution of volunteers during National Volunteer Week, which could be further enhanced to broaden its reach and participation. The review also included the success of Council programs that increase engagement, including the Hobsons Bay Volunteer Expo and Community Contributor event.

Benchmarking

Sector review indicates that many councils have transitioned from stand-alone “Citizen of the Year” programs to broader community recognition and awards. These include various award categories that enable individual and group achievements to be recognised. A commitment to supporting community participation including volunteering is noted.

Discussion

Engagement has been undertaken with other councils on effective models. Based on feedback, the Hobsons Bay Community Recognition Awards process would involve public nominations, a validation and assessment framework with criteria, shortlisting of awards, an announcement event and a community capacity building program supporting award winners.

Celebration Event

It is proposed that a Community Recognition Awards celebration event would be held in May as the centrepiece of Council’s National Volunteer Week program, enhancing volunteer acknowledgement and broadening opportunities for community participation, networking and engagement.

Evaluation

Following the 2026 program, officers will undertake a review and evaluation of the Community Recognition Awards, assessing participation, diversity of nominees, stakeholder and community feedback, delivery costs, alignment with Council objectives, and outcomes achieved. Findings and recommendations will be presented at a Councillor Briefing to inform planning and design of any subsequent programs.

Award categories

Six award categories are proposed, being:

- **Helping Others Award** – Recognising an individual or group going above and beyond to support others.
- **Change Maker Award** – Recognising an individual or group who has led positive change in the community.
- **Sporting Spirit Award** – Recognising a club, team or individual involved with community sport and recreation through playing, coaching or volunteering.

- **Community Strengthening Award** – Recognising an individual or group that has made an exceptional contribution to building a stronger, more connected and inclusive Hobsons Bay.
- **Young Leader Award** – Recognising a young person (under 25 years of age) who is making a real difference in the community.
- **Community Leader** – Recognising a person (25 years and over) who is making a real difference in the community.

Key points to note

- The process and criteria would be published to enable clear communication and to ensure transparency and accountability.
- The community would be invited to nominate individuals (who are volunteering or working for a not-for-profit or volunteer organisation, network or group), community groups, “friends of” groups, clubs, services, networks and not-for-profit organisations.
- Individuals would not be allowed to self-nominate, but group members would be able to self-nominate their group.
- Councillors and Council staff would not be able to nominate people, to maintain fairness.
- Councillors would not have a role in the assessment of nominations, to maintain fairness and to avoid any perception of bias.
- Councillors would be able to actively promote the awards and opportunities and have roles in the announcement event.
- A cross-Council staff panel would be assembled to assess nominations, ensure appropriate validation and documentation and make recommendations, based on similar protocols for the coordination of Council’s grants program, or a community panel could be assembled, made up of community representatives, supported by Council staff.
- The Hobsons Bay Community Recognition Awards Celebration is recommended to be planned as a Saturday brunch or lunch event at the Williamstown Town Hall.
- In addition to nominees and supporters, invitees and attendees would include Council volunteers, former Citizens of the Year and Young Citizens of the Year, people in the community who have been recognised through the Australia Day and King’s Birthday honours programs, supporting and growing an alumnus of community contributors.
- It is planned that winners would be able to choose a capacity building package to suit their needs, for example training, mentoring, promotion, attendance at a special interest event as their prize.

2026 Timeline

- **February:** The Awards process and details on criteria are announced
- **5 March through to 15 April:** Open for nominations, supported by the implementation of a communications and promotion plan
- **April and May:** Validations, assessments
- **Saturday 30 May:** Awards Celebration Event
- **July:** Evaluation and future planning

Strategic Alignment

This report specifically addresses priorities from the following strategic documents:

Hobsons Bay 2030 Community Vision

Priority 2: Community wellbeing and inter-connection

Council Plan 2021-25

Objective 1: Healthy, equitable and thriving communities

Strategy 1.1: Celebrate the diversity of our community and provide equitable opportunities for all

Strategy 1.4: Enable participation and contribution to community life, learning and inter-connection

Priority b) Boost the profile and awareness of opportunities for people to participate and contribute to community life

Policies and Related Council Documents

Legal/Statutory Obligations and Risk

The 2026 Community Recognition Awards are proposed as a pilot, to enable the evaluation of the process and outcomes before making decisions on future years.

Councillors would not have a role in nominating people for Awards, or in the assessment of nominations, to avoid any perception of bias.

Financial and Resource Implications

The budget estimate for the Hobsons Bay Community Recognition Awards is \$14,000. Funds allocated for National Volunteer Week (\$6,000) and the Citizen Awards program (\$4,000) would need to be reallocated to the Awards.

The estimated budget for the Awards program does not include ticket income for the event; the booking protocols for the Awards event may include entry by invitation, RSVP or through a small booking fee or a combination of these.

Environmental, Social and Economic Impacts

Awards and recognition programs are a productive and positive way for Council to acknowledge achievements, to recognise contribution and to enable ongoing engagement with the community. The Hobsons Bay Business Excellence Awards held in October 2025 demonstrated the value of a successful and diverse awards program.

There are many sectors across the municipality that depend on volunteering, community commitment and expertise to succeed. The diversity is great, from environmental groups to networks that support the most vulnerable; historical groups through to surf lifesaving

volunteers; emergency relief providers to people active in health and wellbeing. People make contributions to community life in myriad ways, including on committees of management, boards and “friends of” groups.

The report State of Volunteering published by Volunteer Victoria in 2020 noted that 2.3 million or 42.1% of Victorians volunteer, donating at least 500 million hours to the community and creating an estimated \$60 billion of value to Victoria. In the Hobsons Bay Volunteer Strategy, more than 12,000 Hobsons Bay residents identified as having volunteered in the community, with benefits stated as including a sense of purpose, social connections, skills development, improved health and wellbeing, professional connections, work experience and pathways to employment.

There is better value created in community awards that have a greater focus on groups and collective achievement, especially as a networking event and in linking and promoting opportunities to collaborate and connect.

Consultation and Communication

Council officers have met with staff and reviewed successful community awards programs established by other councils.

Officers have assessed feedback from previous Hobsons Bay Citizen Award programs.

A communications and engagement plan will be created in support of the Hobsons Bay Community Recognition Awards.

An evaluation of the program including participant experiences will help inform future activities.

Declaration of Conflict of Interest

Section 130 of the *Local Government Act 2020* requires members of Council staff to disclose any general or material conflict of interest in matters to be considered at a Council meeting.

Council staff involved in the preparation of this report have no conflict of interest in this matter.

7.3.6 Draft Ministerial Guidelines for Rates and Hardship

Directorate: Corporate Services

Responsible Officer: Coordinator Rates

Attachments:

1. 20251128 - Feedback Draft Ministerial Guidelines Hardship [7.3.6.1 - 1 page]
2. Draft Ministerial Guidelines for Councils relating to payment of Rates and Charges [7.3.6.2 - 24 pages]

Purpose

To advise Council of the response provided by the Interim Chief Executive Officer to Engage Victoria in relation to the draft Ministerial Guidelines for Councils relating to payment of Rates and Charges (Ministerial Guidelines).

Recommendation

That Council notes the response provided by the Interim Chief Executive Officer to Engage Victoria in relation to the draft Ministerial Guidelines for councils relating to payment of rates and charges.

Summary

The Department of Government Services invited Council to provide feedback on the draft Ministerial Guidelines for Councils relating to payment of Rates and Charges.

The Guidelines are based on the recommendations from the Victorian Ombudsman's 2021 review and have been updated with feedback from the community and stakeholders. They aim to ensure councils respond to financial hardship in a way that is fair, compassionate and proportionate.

The draft Ministerial Guidelines were open for public consultation from 10 November to 5 December 2025. Attached is the response provided by Council under the signature of the Interim Chief Executive Officer.

Background

Previous draft Ministerial Guidelines were released in September 2023. After feedback was received they were not adopted by the Minister.

The draft Guidelines are based on the recommendations from the Victorian Ombudsman's 2021 review and have been updated with feedback from the community and stakeholders. They aim to ensure councils respond to financial hardship in a way that is fair, compassionate and proportionate. The revised Guidelines aim to refine tone and language, expand the definition of hardship and financial hardship and provide clearer guidance on application and assessment processes.

Hobsons Bay City Council has been proactive in the application of best practice in responding to ratepayers facing financial difficulty and is already meeting the recommendations contained in the draft Ministerial Guidelines.

Discussion

The Interim Chief Executive Officer submitted a response endorsing the principles of the draft Guidelines while highlighting several administrative concerns, including:

- The need for clearer, directive language to ensure consistent application across councils.
- Issues with accepting verbal applications for financial hardship assistance.
- Potential confusion for ratepayers if debt recovery costs were published online, given their complexity and variability.

Council also recommended:

- Provision of standardised templates and best practice examples.
- Increased investment in preventative financial counselling services.
- Expansion of the Utilities Relief Grant to include councils, enabling limited financial waivers at no cost to Council.

Council continues to apply best practice in supporting ratepayers experiencing financial hardship and already meets the recommendations outlined in the draft Guidelines.

Strategic Alignment

This report specifically addresses priorities from the following strategic documents:

Hobsons Bay 2030 Community Vision

This report does not relate to a specific priority of the Hobsons Bay 2030 Community Vision.

Council Plan 2021-25

Objective 5: A High Performing Organisation

Strategy 5.4: Enhance transparency, accountability and good governance practice

Policies and Related Council Documents

Council maintains a Financial Hardship Policy. The existing policy does not fully align with contemporary best practice standards or the intent of the Ministerial Guidelines. During the COVID-19 pandemic, Council undertook a consultative approach by engaging a focus group of ratepayers to inform the application of the current policy. This introduced provisions allowing for the waiving of rates and charges in limited circumstances for eligible ratepayers. This initiative positioned Council positively in the sector and earned recognition from community support organisations and industry stakeholders.

Council has consistently demonstrated a proactive commitment to best practice in assisting ratepayers experiencing financial hardship. The organisation already meets many of the recommendations outlined in the draft Ministerial Guidelines. Officers within the Rates team maintain ongoing engagement with relevant external stakeholders to ensure that ratepayers receive a high standard of service and support when seeking assistance with financial difficulties.

The Financial Hardship Policy is currently undergoing a comprehensive review to incorporate best practice principles and align with the draft Ministerial Guidelines. The revised policy will expand upon existing measures to strengthen Council's approach to hardship management. Once the Ministerial Guidelines are formally adopted and gazetted, compliance will become mandatory, and Council will ensure that its Financial Hardship Policy fully meets these statutory requirements.

Legal/Statutory Obligations and Risk

Principles relating to Council's ability to develop a rating system remain active in the *Local Government Act 1989* in sections 154-181AA.

Section 181AA of the *Local Government Act 1989* gives the Minister the ability to issue guidelines on specific arrears regarding the collection of rates and charges. It is under this same section that it is stated that Council must comply with the issued guidelines once gazetted.

Sections 170-171B of the *Local Government Act 1989* allow Council to:

- Defer in part or whole, the payment of any rate or charge which is due and payable.
- Provide a financial waiver in part or full, if the Council is satisfied that the person who is suffering financial hardship if the person paid the full amount of the rate or charge that they are liable to pay.
- Enter into an interest free payment plan for the payment of rates and charges that are unpaid by the due date.

Financial and Resource Implications

Amendments to the *Local Government Act 1989* introduced in June 2023, specifically the insertion of section 180A, restrict Council from initiating legal proceedings for unpaid rates and charges unless the requirements outlined in sections 170-171B of the Act are satisfied. This legislative change has resulted in Council carrying a significantly higher proportion of outstanding debt compared to previous years.

To mitigate these impacts, Council has implemented a range of early intervention strategies designed to assist ratepayers in managing their obligations. These measures include proactive communication regarding outstanding balances and the provision of flexible payment arrangements, such as tailored instalment plans and deferral options. Despite these initiatives, a considerable number of ratepayers do not engage with the available support mechanisms, leaving Council with limited recourse. In such cases, legal action remains the only viable option for recovering unpaid debts.

Environmental, Social and Economic Impacts

The draft Ministerial Guidelines are designed to ensure that councils adopt a fair, compassionate and proportionate approach when responding to ratepayers experiencing financial hardship. These Guidelines aim to establish a consistent framework that promotes equity and transparency across all Victorian councils.

A key objective of the draft Guidelines is to reduce the risk of inconsistent or inequitable treatment of ratepayers by standardising decision-making processes. This includes ensuring that determinations regarding hardship applications, extensions and payment arrangements are guided by clear, uniform principles rather than individual discretion.

The Guidelines also emphasise the importance of clear and transparent communication. Councils are expected to provide ratepayers with comprehensive information regarding their rights and responsibilities, available support options, dispute resolution pathways, and the appropriate channels for seeking assistance. This approach is intended to empower ratepayers to make informed decisions and access support in a timely manner.

Furthermore, the draft Guidelines stipulate that legal action should only be pursued as a measure of last resort. Councils are required to exhaust all reasonable avenues of support before initiating debt recovery proceedings, thereby safeguarding ratepayers from unnecessary financial and legal burdens.

Hobsons Bay City Council has already implemented a significant number of the recommendations contained within the draft Guidelines and continues to align its practices with recognised best practice standards in the local government sector. Council remains committed to refining processes to ensure compliance with the forthcoming statutory requirements and to maintain a high standard of service delivery for ratepayers experiencing financial hardship.

Consultation and Communication

The Department of Government Services invited Council to provide feedback on the draft Ministerial Guidelines for Councils relating to payment of rates and charges from the 6 November 2025. Feedback was open until 5 December 2025.

Council subscribes to peak industry bodies, including the Revenue Management Association (RMA) and FinPro who are also providing submissions on the draft Ministerial Guidelines.

Declaration of Conflict of Interest

Section 130 of the *Local Government Act 2020* requires members of Council staff and persons engaged under contract to provide advice to Council, to disclose any direct or indirect interest in a matter to which the advice relates.

Council officers involved in the preparation of this report have no conflict of interest in this matter.



28 November 2025

Ms Lisa Gandolfo
Deputy Secretary
Consumer Affairs and Local Government
Department of Government Services

Email: lisa.gandolfo@dgs.vic.gov.au

Dear Ms Gandolfo

Re: Consultation on Draft Ministerial Guidelines for Councils relating to payment of rates and charges

Thank you for your email dated 6 November 2025 regarding the Draft Ministerial Guidelines for Councils on the payment of rates and charges. We appreciate the opportunity to provide feedback and offer the following comments in response to your consultation questions:

1. The current use of language such as “should” may imply that compliance is optional. To ensure consistency across the sector, we recommend adopting clearer directive language, such as “must consider.”

We have concerns about financial hardship applications being submitted verbally. Each application should be supported by evidence, and a written process would help prevent misunderstandings and ensure a transparent and consistent assessment method.

Requiring Councils to publish debt recovery costs on their websites may create confusion for ratepayers, as court costs are not determined by Councils and are subject to frequent changes. This could lead to inadvertently providing inaccurate information.

2. Standardised templates and best-practice examples—particularly for the sale of land policy—would be highly beneficial to the sector.
3. We encourage the State Government to increase investment in financial counselling services focused on prevention, as many individuals we encounter lack financial management skills, resulting in complex financial challenges.

We also recommend that the State Government consider including Councils in existing state-funded hardship relief programs, such as the Utilities Relief Grant, which enables eligible participants to access limited financial waivers at no cost to Councils.

Yours sincerely

Kerry Thompson
Interim Chief Executive Officer

Ministerial Guidelines for Councils relating to payment of Rates and Charges

November 2025 – **DRAFT**

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1. Introduction

Every year, Councils collect rates and charges from ratepayers in accordance with the *Local Government Act 1989* (the LG Act 1989). Rates are an important source of revenue for Councils that contribute significantly to delivering local community infrastructure and services.

Timely payment of rates and charges allow Councils to be more financially sustainable and provide continuity for Councils to effectively plan for the delivery of services throughout the year.

Most ratepayers across the State pay their rates and charges in a timely manner. However, ratepayers may need assistance to manage the payment of rates and charges. This could be due to prolonged hardship or unforeseen circumstances including but not limited to, loss of employment, illness, and change of family circumstances. Most Councils have policies in place around debt management and collection.

Ratepayers experiencing hardship and financial hardship should be treated fairly, compassionately and proportionately.¹

1.1 Objectives of guidelines

These Guidelines provide direction to Councils to review and update (as necessary) their existing hardship and debt management policies in relation to the payment of rates and charges.

The objectives of these Guidelines are to:

- encourage a more consistent approach across local government policies relating to debt management for the payment of rates and charges;
- provide guidance and support to Councils and ratepayers in relation to hardship and financial hardship; and
- empower Councils to recover debt from unpaid rates and charges in a fair and equitable way, consistent with Victorian Government, community and stakeholder expectations.

The Guidelines contain matters that must be considered in a Council's policy formation, whilst not being prescriptive about models for implementing council policies.

By proactively working with ratepayers who may be in hardship or financial hardship, Councils may ultimately minimise additional organisational costs, in addition to costs to ratepayers, associated with debt management. This may enable Councils to continue to be financially sustainable.

¹ 1 Second Reading Speech for the *Local Government Legislation Amendment (Rating and Other Matters) Bill 2022*, Legislative Assembly, 8 June 2022.

1.2 Legal Framework

The Minister for Local Government has issued these Guidelines under section 181AA of the LG Act 1989. Councils are required to comply with these Guidelines under section 181AA(3).

Where the Minister has been advised by particular bodies and is satisfied that a Council's governance processes and policies require improvement, the Minister may direct a Council to amend or replace its governance processes and policies.²

Subject to the requirements of the LG Act 1989 and the *Local Government Act 2020*, Councils must develop policies, practices and processes associated with the payment of rates and charges in accordance with these Guidelines³.

Councils should attempt to recover rates and charges from ratepayers in an effective and fair way, prior to undertaking any debt collection action, which can be costly to the Council and ratepayer.

1.3 Scope of guidelines

Under section 181AA(1), the Minister may issue guidelines in relation to:

- (a) the meaning of hardship for the purposes of section 170 (*deferred payment*); and
- (b) the meaning of financial hardship for the purposes of sections 171 (*waiver*), 171A (*waiver by application*) and 172A (*maximum rate of interest*); and
- (c) the content of hardship policies and financial hardship policies; and
- (d) the circumstances in which a Council may apply the hardship policies and financial hardship policies; and
- (e) the process for applying for a payment plan; and
- (f) the waiver of interest on unpaid rates or charges under sections 171, 171A and 172 (*interest on unpaid rates*); and
- (g) any other matters covered by sections 170, 171, 171A, 171B (*payment plans*), 172, 180 (*recovery of unpaid rates or charges*) and 181 (*Council may sell land*).

Consistent with section 181AA of the LG Act 1989, these Guidelines outline the meaning of hardship and financial hardship, together with the circumstances, processes and relevant considerations Councils must take into account when developing their policies for ratepayers experiencing hardship or financial hardship.

² Section 175, *Local Government Act 2020*.

³ Section 181AA(3), LG Act 1989.

Many Councils already have multiple payment options and processes in place for payment of rates and charges. As every local community has different needs and requirements, Councils **may implement flexible payment options and processes which align with their local community needs and within Council capability and resources.**

These Guidelines support Councils to proactively work with ratepayers, to explore the arrangement most suitable in a person's situation. This approach is consistent with the Second Reading Speech for the amendments inserting section 181AA into the LG Act 1989. The Second Reading Speech states that:

The Ministerial Guidelines will require councils to proactively work with ratepayers experiencing financial hardship to explore different arrangements and solutions, and more punitive actions such as legal actions and the application of penalty interest will be only available when ratepayers refuse to engage and all other approaches are exhausted...⁴

It is intended that these Guidelines will discourage Councils from charging interest for those who are under hardship arrangements. These Guidelines reflect that legal action and the application of penalty interest should only be pursued when ratepayers do not engage, and all other approaches are exhausted.

These Guidelines commence on publication and Councils are required to update their policies for ratepayers experiencing hardship or financial hardship within a reasonable timeframe.

⁴ Second Reading Speech for the *Local Government Legislation Amendment (Rating and Other Matters) Bill 2022*, Legislative Assembly, 8 June 2022.

2. Mandatory Principles

Councils must review their policies for ratepayers experiencing hardship or financial hardship. In doing so, Councils must reflect the following principles within their own hardship and debt management policies and procedures.

Flexible, place-based approach: Councils must have modern and flexible payment options and methods for payment of rates and charges that align with local community expectations, needs and hardship circumstances.

Clear and accessible communication: Councils must provide easy to understand and multiple methods of communication about payment of rates and charges that align with local community expectations, needs and hardship circumstances.

Fair, equitable, and compassionate treatment: Councils must treat all ratepayers equitably, compassionately and proportionately in relation to payment of rates and charges, including any applications relating to hardship or financial hardship.

Protect privacy and confidentiality: Councils must treat all information provided by applicants in accordance with relevant privacy legislation.

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3. Principles Councils are strongly encouraged to consider

Councils are strongly encouraged to reflect the following principles within their own hardship and debt management policies and procedures.

Reduce costs associated with debt collection: Councils should consider options for proactive management of payment of rates and charges that can minimise costs to Council and ratepayers in relation to debt management.

Continuous improvement: Councils should consider measuring the impact of debt management and hardship policies and should commit to regular review and improvement of policies to continually adapt and align to community needs and expectation.

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4. Proactive management for the payment of rates and charges

4.1 Current rates and charges notices

Section 158(4) of the LG Act 1989, requires that a notice:

- (a) contain the prescribed information; and
- (b) state—
 - (i) in the case of general rates, municipal charges, service rates and service charges, the dates when the instalments of the rates or charges are due, and, if those rates and charges may be paid in a lump sum, the date when that lump sum is due; or
 - (ii) in any other case, when the rates or charges are due; and
- (c) specify any other options for payment determined by the Council; and
- (d) be issued at least 14 days before the date on which the first payment of the rates or charges is due.

In addition, regulation 10 of the *Local Government (General) Regulations 2015* prescribes a range of technical and financial information that must be included on a rates and charges notice, which may be summarised as:

- the name and address of the person who is liable to pay, but if that person is not the owner of the land, the name of the owner
- a description of the land in respect of which the rate or charge is levied
- the amount for which the person is liable:
 - If the rate is based on the value of the land— the system of valuation the Council used, the value of the land and the current level of value date
 - if the rate is raised by the application of a differential rate— the type or class of the person's land, and where information in relation to the differential rate is available, and various details about the class and type of land in the municipal district.
- the method of calculating the rate or charge
- the penalties for failing to pay
- the manner in which the rate or charge may be paid
- a statement that the person may apply to the Council for a payment plan
- the manner, in order of priority, in which the Council intends to allocate money received
- the rights of the person to apply for a review in relation to a differential rating, or a rate or charge, or a special rate or charge.
- the rights of a person to object in relation to a valuation under the *Valuation of Land Act 1960*

- a statement regarding whether Council has made a rate cap application, the outcome of the application and the impact on a person's property.

Some ratepayers struggle to understand the complex and detailed information required on rates notices. In addition to providing this information, Councils are encouraged to use easy to understand language and accessible communication methods.

Councils are encouraged to include additional information on:

- flexible payment options
- any concessions that are available
- where to go for further information (including Council's hardship policy); and
- how to contact Council by phone, email or in person.

Councils are also encouraged to consider the demographic and socioeconomic environment of their communities and whether additional aids to assist with understanding notices are required, including translation services and, alternative formatting of notices.

4.2 Flexible payment options

Consistent with the LG Act 1989, Councils determine the schedule of payment for rates and charges in 4 instalments. Some Councils provide the option to pay in a lump sum.

Use of technology has created an environment where ratepayers expect modern and flexible payment options for all types of payments and charges.

Many Councils already offer multiple ways to pay rates and notices and are encouraged to continually review and revise payment methods that keep up with advances in technology.

Flexible ways to pay include, but are not limited to:

- in person at Council offices (cheques, money orders, EFTPOS, credit/debit cards and cash),
- direct debit for periodic payments/bill smoothing (on instalment due dates, monthly or fortnightly)
- Centrepay
- BPAY
- Australia Post (over the counter, over the phone by credit card and on the internet)
- by mail (cheques and money orders only).

4.3 Current discounts and subsidies

In the development of hardship and financial hardship policies, as well as debt management policies, Councils should consider current discounts and subsidies applied to rates and charges notices. Often, those receiving a subsidy or discount may be more vulnerable to hardship and financial hardship. A ratepayer receiving a discount or concession should remain eligible to access Council's hardship or financial hardship policies.

Pensioner and Veteran Affairs

Holders of an eligible Centrelink or Veteran Affairs Pension Concession Card (PCC) or a Veteran Affairs Gold card which stipulates 'TPI' or 'War Widow' may claim a rebate on their sole or principal place of residence.

Following an initial application for a PCC, ongoing eligibility is maintained, unless rejected by Centrelink or the Department of Veteran Affairs during the annual verification procedure. After being granted a PCC, pensioners can then apply for the rebate at any time throughout the rating year.

Retrospective claims up to a maximum of one previous financial year can be approved by Council on verification of eligibility criteria.

Incentives for prompt payment

Under section 168 of the LG Act 1989, the Council may declare that incentives are to be given by it for the payment of those rates and charges before the due date and must include in the declaration details of the circumstances in which an incentive will be given. This information must be included on the rates and charges notice.

4.4 Measuring Council performance

Performance reporting is a key program promoting Council transparency, accountability and performance.

The Local Government Performance Reporting Framework is a mandatory system of performance reporting for all Victorian Councils. It ensures that Councils are measuring and reporting on their performance in a consistent way to promote transparency and accountability in the local government sector.

The framework is made up of 59 measures from a range of service areas, including roads, planning, animal management and waste. It is complemented by a Governance and Management checklist of 27 items, which shows the policies, plans and procedures in place at each Council. Together, they build a comprehensive picture of Council performance.

You can find these reports on the local government (www.localgovernment.vic.gov.au) or Know Your Council websites (www.vic.gov.au/know-your-Council).

Currently the State Government does not mandate reporting in relation to outstanding rates and charges. However, Councils are encouraged to record and report this information to demonstrate transparency and improvement.

5. Hardship and financial hardship in the Local Government Act 1989

Hardship and financial hardship are identified as 2 separate terms under the LG Act 1989 (section 170 and sections 171 to 171A respectively). The Guidelines explain these terms and how Councils can apply deferrals, payment plans and waivers to rates and charges when hardship or financial hardship is experienced by a ratepayer.

While situations of hardship may cause financial hardship, the 2 situations are not always present together. Under the legislation, a ratepayer does not need to demonstrate financial hardship to be applicable for support when applying for deferral of rates and charges, or when applying for a payment plan. Rather, the ratepayer must show that payment would cause hardship to them in their circumstances, at the time the rates and charges are payable.

By contrast, when applying for waiver of rates and charges, the ratepayer will need to demonstrate that payment would likely result in financial hardship.

Determination of whether a ratepayer is in 'hardship' or 'financial hardship', will always be dependent on an individual's circumstances.

A non-exhaustive definition:


Hardship (including financial hardship) can arise from a variety of causes which may include but are not limited to:

- employment difficulties, loss of employment or unemployment of the ratepayer or family member
- reduced, insufficient or lack of income
- medical issues, injury, illness or mental illness of the ratepayer or family member
- alcohol, drug or substance use
- death of a family member or loved one
- family circumstances
- family violence or economic abuse
- elder abuse
- gambling
- scams or fraud
- incarceration
- natural disaster
- barriers to accessing essential services including event-based circumstances and systemic and market-based factors, which result in economic and/or social exclusion or harm.

5.1 The concept of hardship in the Local Government Act 1989

When is hardship applicable?

The concept of 'hardship' is referenced in section 170 of the LG Act 1989. Hardship will depend on a person's particular circumstances. Hardship may include financial



or economic hardship but also includes a diverse range of other personal circumstances and events which may be detrimental to a person's quality of life.

What does section 170 require?

Section 170 of the LG Act 1989 empowers a Council to defer, either in full or in part, any rate or charge which is payable, for a specific period and subject to any conditions determined by the Council, if an application by a ratepayer shows that payment would cause hardship to the person.

Deferrals under section 170

Rates and charges can be deferred in full or in part by the Council.

A deferral will enable payment to be made at a future agreed date, giving the ratepayer a grace period where no payments are made. A deferral in this way can assist a rate payer in a wide range of circumstances where hardship may be immediate, unexpected, and/or shorter-term in nature and will ease an immediate obligation or financial pressure.

Charging interest on deferrals

Section 170 makes clear that a deferral can include particular conditions determined by the Council.⁵ When a Council approves an application for deferred payment, it must not charge interest on the unpaid rate or charge. A ratepayer approved for a deferred payment is no longer liable for payment⁶ and therefore cannot be charged interest⁷ until the ratepayer is sent a notice by Council making them liable and requiring payment.⁸

At the time of sending a notice, the Council may elect to calculate any interest on the deferred payment in accordance with the conditions of the deferment, however Councils are discouraged from applying interest in circumstances of hardship or financial hardship.

Deferrals with a payment plan under section 170

Councils may also elect to apply deferred payments under the condition that a payment plan is subsequently put in place.

Where a Council chooses to apply a payment plan following a deferral of payment interest must not be charged on any amount of the unpaid rates and charges. This is because the due date for payment had been deferred and there is no 'late payment' as such.

⁵ Section 170(1), LG Act 1989.

⁶ Section 170(2), LG Act 1989.

⁷ Otherwise required to be paid under section 172(1)(a), LG Act 1989.

⁸ Section 170(3)(b), LG Act 1989.

5.2 The concept of financial hardship in the Local Government Act 1989

When is financial hardship applicable?

The concept of 'financial hardship' is referenced in sections 171 and 171A of the LG Act 1989, which allow a Council to waive the whole or part of a payment of any rate, charge or interest, where it considers that the person is suffering financial hardship, or payment would cause financial hardship to the person.

As with hardship, financial hardship can arise from a variety of causes, which may include:

- employment difficulties, loss of employment or unemployment of the ratepayer or family member
- reduced, insufficient or lack of income
- medical issues, injury, illness or mental illness of the ratepayer or family member
- alcohol, drug or substance use
- death of a family member or loved one
- family circumstances
- family violence or economic abuse
- elder abuse
- gambling
- scams or fraud
- incarceration
- natural disaster
- barriers to accessing essential services including event-based circumstances and systemic and market-based factors, which result in economic and/or social exclusion or harm.

For the purposes of sections 171 and 171A of the LG Act 1989, if a ratepayer is experiencing any of the circumstances above and the payment of rates and charges means that they would not be able to afford the necessities of life for themselves or their dependants, they will be in financial hardship.

Examples of necessities of life may include (but are not limited to):

- essential medical treatments or supplies
- essential utility services (including water, energy, internet)
- access to basic living needs, including:
 - food
 - accommodation
 - clothing
 - childcare and education
 - transport
 - insurance.

Councils are encouraged to consider innovative approaches to supporting ratepayers in financial hardship. *What does section 171 require?*

Section 171 provides that a Council may waive the whole or part of any rates, charges or interest to:

- an eligible recipient within the meaning of the *State Concessions Act 2004*; or
- any other class of persons determined by the Council for the purpose of waiving rates or charges on the grounds of financial hardship.

What does section 171A require?

Section 171A provides that when a ratepayer applies for a waiver of unpaid rates and charges due to financial hardship.⁹

The Council may grant a waiver application if the Council is satisfied that ratepayer is suffering, or will suffer, financial hardship if that person paid the full amount of the rate or charge for which they are liable.

Where a Council requires an applicant to provide (or verify) further details as a part of their waiver application,¹⁰ the Council must clearly state:

- what further particulars are required; and
- how an applicant can verify these particulars.

Many Councils currently waive interest where a ratepayer is in hardship or financial hardship. Other Councils have reported waiver policies based on a capped amount or up to 50% of rates. Councils should consider a range of options in line with community needs.

For more information on assessing hardship or financial hardship applications, see section 7.

Charging interest on waivers

A ratepayer approved for a waiver is no longer liable for payment and therefore cannot be charged interest.¹¹

Penalties for false or misleading information

Rates are an important part of Council revenue to fund vital local services and facilities. By granting a waiver on the grounds of financial hardship, ratepayers will no longer be legally liable for the full payment, or the amount agreed to by the Council. To ensure appropriate safeguards are in place, section 171A provides penalties for providing false and misleading information and failure to provide notice of any change in circumstances.¹²

⁹ Section 171A, LG Act 1989.

¹⁰ Section 171A(2), LG Act 1989.

¹¹ Otherwise required to be paid under section 172(1)(a), LG Act 1989.

¹² Sections 171(6) & 171A(4), LG Act 1989.

6. Applying for a payment plan in section 171B of the LG Act 1989

Section 171B of the LG Act 1989 allows payment plans to be made in relation to unpaid rates and charges. This applies to rates and charges:

- that are being paid in instalments
- for which payment was deferred under section 170
- that were waived in part under sections 171 or 171A

Payment plans should be available for any ratepayer regardless of whether they are experiencing hardship or financial hardship. Councils should provide easy and efficient processes for payment plans as ratepayers expect Councils to provide flexible options that consider different needs and circumstances.

Early engagement with ratepayers by enabling payment plans will support continuity of contact with that ratepayer over the longer term.

6.1 Application forms

An application form for a payment plan must be available on a Council's website, as well as a physical copy at customer service points, and provide details of how a customer can contact the Council. The application form should clearly state (but is not limited to):

- what a ratepayer may be required to submit (including information or particulars)
- that Council may request further information or particulars if relevant
- in what timeframe the Council will notify if an application has been accepted or rejected


Where ratepayers who have previously applied for deferral of payment or partial waiver, the ratepayer's previous information may be used to support a payment plan application, to streamline the application process. The ratepayer in this instance may only be required to provide information in relation to any change in their circumstances, if relevant.

Councils should also offer the ability for ratepayers to apply for a payment plan verbally instead of by a written application. Information requested in a verbal application should be identical to what is requested in a written application, as only information relevant to consideration of an application should be collected by a Council.

6.2 Approval process for payment plans

When approving a payment plan, a Council must determine:

- the duration of the payment plan
- the amount of each payment plan instalment
- any other terms



When a payment plan is being arranged, the Council should work with the applicant to ensure the plan is realistic in terms of the applicant's capacity to pay. Consistent with financial hardship policies in other sectors, many Councils approve payment plans for nominal amounts as an early, compassionate response which prevents costly escalation later.

Councils may also consider incentives and options including forgiveness of debt where a ratepayer has entered into a payment plan and has met all obligations for a certain period, for example, 12 months or more.

In most cases, payment plans for ratepayers should be approved however, in the rare instance where a ratepayer has failed to pay multiple debts or has previously not been able to comply with a payment plan, Council may reject an application. Councils should clearly communicate the reasons for the decision and how to access the Council's internal review process or other dispute resolution services.

6.3 Reminder notices and payment schedules

Without limiting section 171B of the LG Act 1989, a payment plan must clearly state the schedule of payments, including amount and length of time. Council should also clearly communicate the process for which a payment plan will be cancelled, and how a ratepayer will be informed of the cancellation.

A payment plan may be cancelled if:

- the ratepayer fails to comply with their plan and reasonable attempts to contact the ratepayer have failed
- the ratepayer no longer owns the land.

If the ratepayer fails to comply with their payment plan, or does not contact Council about failure to pay, Council should send a reminder notice to make payment or contact the Council to discuss alternative arrangements.

Council should provide a timeframe for the ratepayer to respond and inform the ratepayer that their payment plan may be cancelled if they do not respond. If Council determines that the payment plan is cancelled, a cancellation notice should be sent to the ratepayer formally notifying them in writing that the payment plan has been cancelled and the debt will be subject to Council's regular debt recovery process.

7. Assessing applications of hardship or financial hardship

7.1 How applications should be assessed

Information on how Councils assess hardship applications, how decisions are made, how to contact Council, and resources, such as hardship factsheets and application forms, should be easily accessible on the Council website and in person to allow ratepayers to apply.

Applications should be able to be submitted online, over the phone, or in person, by the ratepayer or by another person on their behalf.

Each application should be assessed on a case-by-case basis, and/or on the information provided by the ratepayer.

Factors to be considered may include, but are not limited to, whether the ratepayer:

- has provided appropriate evidence including but not limited to:
 - circumstances of hardship (whether short term or prolonged) from the list provided in the introduction of this section, and
 - an indication that paying rates and charges means that they would be unable to afford necessities of life for themselves and/or dependants
- receives Centrelink or other benefits
- is on a low or fixed income such as pension or superannuation payment
- has been referred by an accredited financial counsellor, welfare agency or legal assistance service, or
- has a payment history that indicates they have difficulty in meeting payments in the past.

Councils should only request and collect information directly relevant and necessary in order to make a decision on financial hardship. All information should be collected and held in line with privacy legislation and Council's privacy policies.

Examples of what may be considered relevant includes (but is not limited to) the below:

- **Government agency documentation:** Centrelink, ATO, NDIA, Victoria Police, Victorian Courts
- **Certified documentation:** medical certificates, referral from financial counsellors, legal documentation, statutory declarations
- **Personal information:** payslips, evidence of job loss or reduced hours, unpaid bills or repayment notices, bank statements (only where necessary, not mandatory).

7.2 Engaging a third party to assist in assessing hardship and financial hardship

Applicant ratepayers may benefit from a referral by a Council to a financial counsellor, or a community lawyer, a government-funded assistance program or specialist family violence support service. Councils should provide details to applicants that request these services.

Financial counsellors can offer a range of support, depending on someone's eligibility for the service. Ratepayers may be eligible for in-depth financial counselling if they:

- are on a Centrelink benefit
- have no income
- are vulnerable due to personal circumstances
- are exposed to family violence.

If a ratepayer is in financial difficulty, they may receive free, confidential and independent advice from a financial counsellor by:

- calling the National Debt Helpline (Victoria) on 1800 007 007, Monday to Friday, 9:30 am – 5:00 pm
- visiting the [National Debt Helpline's Financial Counselling page](#)
- calling a community agency that provides financial counselling in the area where the ratepayer lives or works. To find the nearest agency, go to [Financial counselling providers](#).

A Council or ratepayer may choose to engage a financial counsellor to assist in providing a professional opinion regarding an application for hardship or financial hardship.

However, Councils must not require an applicant to engage a professional to support the preparation or verification of an application if it will be at cost to the ratepayer who is experiencing hardship and/or financial hardship.


7.3 Hardship application decisions and reviews

The applicant should be informed of the Council's decision in writing within a reasonable timeframe after making the application and should be given reasons for the decision.

Councils must specify the timeframes required to make a decision on hardship applications and state this information on its website, hardship factsheets and application forms.

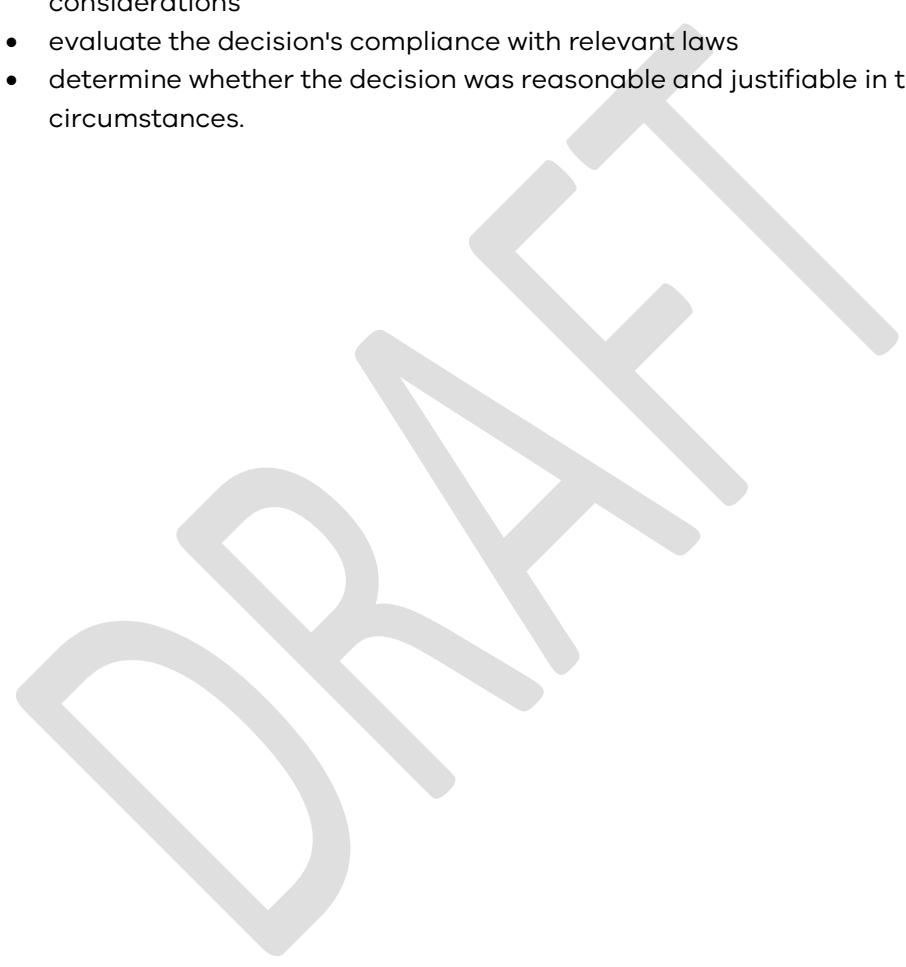
Councils are encouraged to adopt a best practice approach to providing timeframes for processing a decision. For example, a Council may specify that a hardship application will be processed within 14 days of receipt of a complete application. A Council may also specify timeframes for responding to a query in relation to a hardship application that is on foot and timeframes for reviewing a decision on an application.

A Council must not take recovery or enforcement action for unpaid rates, charges or interest whilst an application is being assessed.



If not satisfied with the outcome, an applicant should be able to request the Council to review the decision. Councils should proactively provide applicants on their internal review processes at the time of the decision outcome. Information on the review process and timeframes for review should also be available online and in person.

Councils should ensure that a review of a decision is undertaken by a person not involved in the original decision and the person has authority to:

- review the decision-making process to ensure it was fair and transparent
 - assess whether the decision was based on relevant evidence and considerations
 - evaluate the decision's compliance with relevant laws
 - determine whether the decision was reasonable and justifiable in the circumstances.
- 

8. Council Hardship and Financial Hardship policies

Council hardship policies and financial hardship policies regarding the payment of rates and charges must be easily accessible to all ratepayers and be available:

- on a Council's website;
- as a physical copy at customer service points;
- to be posted as a physical copy to ratepayers on request; and
- to be emailed as an electronic copy to ratepayers on request.

This must include information on how Councils assess hardship applications, how decisions are made, how to contact Council.

Resources, such as hardship factsheets and application forms, should also be easily accessible on the Council website and in person to allow ratepayers to apply.

Council policies must state that ratepayers can request that a Council or their representatives use an interpreter and/or translator to communicate with them and such a request must not be denied.

8.1 Consideration of family violence or economic abuse

In circumstances where a ratepayer has identified circumstances of family violence or economic abuse (including in relation to other joint owners of the property), Councils should implement measures to prevent each owner from accessing confidential information regarding the other's personal details and detail these measures in their policies.

9. Any other matters covered by sections 172, 180 and 181 of the Local Government Act 1989

9.1 Section 172: Council may charge interest on unpaid rates and charges

A Council may choose to charge interest on any amount of unpaid rates and charges up to the maximum rate fixed by the Minister for Local Government.¹³

However, Councils are encouraged to consider an applicant's circumstances and whether they are in hardship before imposing interest on unpaid rates and charges.

Councils must specify in relevant policies and plans what interest rates they are setting on unpaid rates and charges, and detail under what situations they will apply either a lesser rate or, apply no interest. Councils must ensure that ratepayers are able to reasonably access this information and are informed of, how and when interest is applied.

Ratepayers that have successfully applied for deferred payments on their unpaid rates and charges cannot not be charged any amount of interest by Councils during the period of deferment.

If a Council had determined that the ratepayer has provided false or misleading information in regard to an application for a waiver of interest,¹⁴ a Council cannot reinstate any interest that was waived but may choose to enforce the relevant penalty units set out in the LG Act 1989.

9.2 Section 180: Unpaid rates or charges

Where a Council has informed a ratepayer of unpaid rates and charges and the payment options available, and a payment option is not agreed, the Council may recover the amount owing in the Magistrates' Court or by taking action to recover the debt, subject to the requirements of section 180A of the LG Act 1989. Without limiting Part 8 of the LG Act 1989, is it encouraged that Councils exhaust all other options before seeking recovery from the Magistrates' Court.

A Council's policies must clearly state under which circumstances recovery of unpaid rates and charges will occur. A Council must not take recovery or enforcement action for unpaid rates, charges or interest whilst an application is being assessed.

If a Council intends to recover an unpaid rate or charge a Council must:

¹³ Section 172, LG Act 1989.

¹⁴ Sections 171A(4) & 171(6), LG Act 1989.

- contact the ratepayer in writing, notifying them of the outstanding debt and the intention to recover the unpaid rates, charges and any interest; and
- make reasonable attempts to contact the ratepayer with details they have provided to Council, regarding the unpaid rates, charges and any interest.

Councils must specify on their websites any costs of debt recovery that may be added to ratepayer's unpaid rates and charges. These charges must only be added after a Court Order is obtained.¹⁵

9.3 Section 181: Council may sell land or recover unpaid rates or charges

Once a Court Order has been obtained requiring payment of unpaid rates and charges, and any unpaid amount is more than 3 years overdue, a Council may determine to sell or cause the land to be transferred into Council ownership.

A Council must prepare policies which:

- outline what a Council considers to be a "current arrangement"¹⁶ for the payment of an amount due for or in respect of rates or charges (the Act stipulates that a "current arrangement" includes a payment plan); and
- state:
 - the process for which land is evaluated every financial year for sale or transfer by Council;
 - where a sale or transfer is approved, the Council's process to complete the transaction;
 - how the Council's decisions regarding the sale or transfer of the land will be recorded and made public.

If the Council intends to use land transferred to itself for public purposes, then relevant policies must clearly explain how this type of land will be utilised for the benefit of the community.

¹⁵ Section 156(6), LG Act 1989.

¹⁶ Section 181(1)(b), LG Act 1989.



10. Transparency and Disclosure

Where Councils make decisions regarding the payment of rates and charges, this process must be transparent except when dealing with information that is confidential by virtue of the LG Act 1989 or any other Act.

DRAFT

8 Other Reports

8.1 Committee Reports

There are no committee reports for consideration.

8.2 Delegate Reports

Purpose

To consider reports by Councillors who have been appointed as delegates to Council and community committees.

Recommendation

That Council receives and notes the recent delegate reports:

1.1 The Substation Board – 30 September 2025

1.2 Association of Bayside Municipalities – 29 October 2025

The Substation Board - 30 September 2025

Directorate: Sustainable Communities

Councillor Delegate: Cr Kristin Bishop

Date of Meeting: 19 September 2025 and 30 September 2025

At the Council Meeting of 26 August 2025, Cr Kristin Bishop was nominated as the Council delegate (non-voting) to The Substation Board.

The delegation is for the period of the extended Hobsons Bay City Council and The Substation Funding Agreement 2022-2025 (extension 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026).

Cr Bishop met with Substation representatives, Chair Ursula Dyer Lepporoli and CEO Nuala Furtado on 19 September 2025 as part of an induction to the role

Cr Bishop attended the Substation Board meeting on 30 September 2025. Agenda items included financial, programming, staffing, governance, administrative and other matters.

Updates on program

The Substation presented its Melbourne Fringe Festival program in September and October, including at The Substation and at Williamstown Beach.

The Outdoor Billboard Gallery at The Substation features artworks from Council's newly formed Newport Art Club based at the Newport Library.

Dates for the annual The Substation Art Sale were announced as being 17-29 November. The Art Sale is part of The Substation's engagement program, as an exhibition to visit, an online gallery, sales for artists and a fundraiser.

Planning is underway for The Street Dance Exchange, a new government-funded program linking the western suburbs of Melbourne and the western suburbs of Sydney through dance.

Future meetings

The next scheduled Board meeting is in December 2025.

Association of Bayside Municipalities - 29 October 2025

Directorate: Infrastructure and City Services

Councillor Delegate: Cr Rayane Hawli (proxy)

Date of Meeting: 29 October 2025

The Association of Bayside Municipalities (ABM) met online to discuss key governance and strategic matters. Cr Robert Szatkowski, ABM President, opened the meeting with an address to delegates.

Updates were provided on the financial statement, the development of an implementation plan, and proposed changes to the ABM Memorandum of Understanding.

Three notices of motion were tabled and endorsed, including changes to member fees, adoption of the updated ABM Charter, and adoption of the ABM Strategic Plan 2025–2029.

The Program Advisor Report outlined upcoming ABM projects and events. Of particular note is Hobsons Bay City Council's hosting of the "Impacts of Light on Marine and Coastal Wildlife" event at Altona Civic Centre on 20 November 2025.

Cr Max Patton from Mornington Peninsula Shire Council was nominated and appointed to the ABM Executive Team.

Delegates and officers shared updates from their respective councils. Shaun Young, Coastal Management Planner at Hobsons Bay City Council, provided updates on the Altona Beach entry opening, Laverton Creek spit and seawall erosion, and the Sandy Point Nature Reserve Ship Wake and Erosion Study.

9 Reports of Informal Meetings of Councillors

An internal process has been carried out and Council is required to table reports of informal meetings of Councillors.

Reports of informal meetings are provided as a final attachment in any agenda.

Council officers recommend that Council formally receive the relevant reports, as this is regarded as good governance practice.

Recommendation

That Council receives the following reports of informal meetings of Councillors:

- 1.1 Councillor Pre Council Meeting Briefing – 14 November 2025**
- 1.2 Councillors Pre Council Meeting Briefing – 18 November 2025**
- 1.3 16 Days of Activism Roundtable – 25 November 2025**
- 1.4 Councillors Briefing – 25 November 2025**
- 1.5 Councillors Briefing – 2 December 2025**
- 1.6 Councillors Briefing – 9 December 2025**

Record of Assembly of Councillors – Pre Council Meeting 14 November 2025



(Election of the Mayor and Deputy Mayor)

Start Time: 6:30 PM

End 6:35 PM

Attendance

Councillors	Present	Time	Left meeting
Cr Daria Kellander, Altona ward	Yes	6:30pm	6:35pm
Cr Diana Grima, Altona Meadows ward	Yes	6:30pm	6:35pm
Cr Kristin Bishop, Spotswood ward	Yes	6:30pm	6:35pm
Cr Lisa Bentley, Williamstown ward	Yes	6:30pm	6:35pm
Cr Michael Disbury, Williamstown North ward	Yes	6:30pm	6:35pm
Cr Paddy Keys-Macpherson, Laverton ward	Yes	6:30pm	6:35pm
Cr Rayane Hawli, Altona North ward	Yes	6:30pm	6:35pm

Council Officers	Present	Time	Left meeting
Kerry Thompson, Interim Chief Executive Officer	Yes	6:30pm	6:35pm
Matthew Irving, Acting Director Corporate Services	Yes	6:30pm	6:35pm
Allison Kenwood, Interim Director Corporate Services	Yes	6:30pm	6:35pm
Elyse Rider, Interim Director Sustainable Communities	Yes	6:30pm	6:35pm
Marlo Emmitt, Acting Manager Corporate Integrity	Yes	6:30pm	6:35pm
Clare Hogarth-Angus, Manager Communications, Engagement and Advocacy	Yes	6:30pm	6:35pm
John Tanner, Municipal Monitor	Yes	6:30pm	6:35pm

External Presenters - Nil

Meeting Agenda Topics

Agenda

1 Council Welcome and Acknowledgement

2 Apologies

3 Business

3.1 Determination of Mayoral Term

3.2 Election of Mayor

3.3 Establishment of the Office of Deputy Mayor and Determination of Deputy Mayoral Term

3.4 Election of Deputy Mayor

5 Close of Meeting

Interest Disclosures - Nil

Meeting movements - Nil

Record of Assembly of Councillors Pre Council Meeting Briefing 18 November 2025



Start Time: 6:30 PM

End Time 6:45 PM

Attendance

Councillors	Present	Time	Left meeting
Cr Daria Kellander, Altona ward	Yes	6:30pm	6:45pm
Cr Diana Grima, Altona Meadows ward	Yes	6:30pm	6:45pm
Cr Kristin Bishop, Spotswood ward	Yes	6:30pm	6:45pm
Cr Lisa Bentley, Williamstown ward	Yes	6:30pm	6:45pm
Cr Michael Disbury, Williamstown North ward	Yes	6:30pm	6:45pm
Cr Paddy Keys-Macpherson, Laverton ward	Yes	6:30pm	6:45pm
Cr Rayane Hawli, Altona North ward	Yes	6:30pm	6:45pm

Council Officers	Present	Time	Left meeting
Kerry Thompson, Interim Chief Executive Officer	Yes	6:30pm	6:45pm
Allison Kenwood, Acting Director Corporate Services	Yes	6:30pm	6:45pm
Elyse Rider, Interim Director Sustainable Communities	Yes	6:30pm	6:45pm
Matthew Irving, Director Infrastructure and City Services	Yes	6:30pm	6:45pm
Marlo Emmitt, Acting Manager Corporate Integrity	Yes	6:30pm	6:45pm
John Tanner, Municipal Monitor	Yes	6:30pm	6:45pm
Clare Hogarth-Angus, Manager Communications, Engagement and Advocacy	Yes	6:30pm	6:45pm

External Presenters - Nil

Meeting Agenda

1. Council Welcome and Acknowledgment
2. Apologies
3. Disclosure of interest
4. Confirmation of Minutes
5. Public Question Time
6. Petitions and Joint Letters
6.1. Petitions and Joint Letters Received
6.1.1. Petition Stronger Oversight of Local Building Site Compliance
6.2. Responses to Petitions and Joint Letters
6.2.1. Hick Street Pedestrian and Bike Crossing
7. Officer Reports
7.1. Statutory Planning - Nil

7.2. Matters for Decision
7.2.1. State-led Rezoning of Industrial land (SUZ2, SUZ3 and SUZ 4): October 2025 Update and Council
7.2.2. Aquatic Strategy Review
7.2.3. Councillor Appointments to internal and external Committees
7.2.4. Establishment of the Submission Hearing Committee
7.2.5. Council Meeting Dates 2026
7.2.6. Capital Works Progress Report Q1 FY2025-26
7.2.7. First Quarter Financial Report – Period ended 30 September 2025
7.3. Matters for Noting
7.3.1. First Quarter Major Initiatives Progress Update Report 2025 26
8. Other Reports
8.1. Committee Reports - Nil
8.2. Delegate Reports
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hobsons Bay Local Safety Committee – 21 October 2025 • M9 (Melbourne 9) – 3 October 2025
9. Reports of Informal meeting of Council
10. Notices of Motion - Nil
11. Councillor Questions
12. Urgent Business
13. Close of Meeting

Interest Disclosures - Nil

Councillors:

Officers:

External:

Meeting movements - Nil

Assembly of Councillors – 16 Days of Activism Roundtable. Tuesday 25 November 2025

Start Time: 4 PM

End 5.30 PM

Location: Meeting Room 3 Hobsons Bay Civic Centre Altona

Attendance

Councillors	Present	Time	Left meeting
Mayor Cr Diana Grima, Altona Meadows ward	Yes	4pm	5.30pm
Cr Rayane Hawli, Altona North ward	Yes	4pm	5.30pm
Cr Kristin Bishop, Spotswood ward	Yes	4pm	5.30pm
Cr Lisa Bentley, Williamstown ward	Yes	4.10pm	5.30pm

Council Officers	Present	Time	Left meeting
Elyse Rider Interim Director Sustainable Communities	Yes	4pm	5.30pm
Janet Dawes Manager Arts Culture Community	Yes	4pm	5.30pm
Kate Jeffery Coordinator Community Development	Yes	4pm	5.30pm
Angela Schmerl Community Development Officer	Yes	4pm	5.30pm

External Presenters

16 Days of Activism Working Group members

Faye Juetz Zonta Club Melbourne's West	Yes	4pm	5.30pm
Rebecca Cook Housing for the Aged Action Group	Yes	4pm	5.30pm
Michael Pernar Laverton Community Integrated Services	Yes	4pm	5.30pm
Ian Ferretta IPC Health Gambler's Help	Yes	4pm	5.30pm

Guest speakers

Rhonda Collins, Latitude Directions for Young People	Yes	4pm	5.30pm
Therese McKenney OAM, Newport Outlets Cooperative Neighbourhood House	Yes	4pm	5.30pm

Meeting Agenda Topics

Working Group speakers:

Ian Ferretta - Gambling harm and links to family violence

Faye Juetz - Ethos, primary prevention initiatives

Rebecca Cook - Wait times & capacity of services

Michael Pernar - The referral pathway story

Invited speakers:

Rhonda Collins - Response to young women / young people and homelessness

Therese McKenney OAM - Historical context & the benefits of locally connected support agencies

Lived experience advocate's story – excerpts read by Michael Pernar

Interest Disclosures

Councillors: Cr Bentley disclosed personal interest through experience in this advocacy piece.

Officers:

External:

Meeting movements - Nil

Record of Assembly of Councillors Councillor Briefing 25 November 2025



Start Time: 6:05 PM

End Time 9:36 PM

Attendance

Councillors	Present	Time	Left meeting
Cr Daria Kellander, Altona ward	Apology	-	-
Cr Diana Grima, Altona Meadows ward	Yes	6:05pm	9:36pm
Cr Kristin Bishop, Spotswood ward	Yes	6:05pm	9:36pm
Cr Lisa Bentley, Williamstown ward	Yes	6:05pm	9:36pm
Cr Michael Disbury, Williamstown North ward	Yes	6:05pm	9:36pm
Cr Paddy Keys-Macpherson, Laverton ward	Yes	6:05pm	9:36pm
Cr Rayane Hawli, Altona North ward	Yes	6:05pm	9:36pm

Council Officers	Present	Time	Left meeting
Kerry Thompson, Interim Chief Executive Officer	Yes	6:05pm	9:36pm
Allison Kenwood, Acting Director Corporate Services	Yes	6:05pm	9:36pm
Elyse Rider, Interim Director Sustainable Communities	Yes	6:05pm	9:36pm
Matthew Irving, Director Infrastructure and City Services	Yes	6:05pm	9:36pm
John Tanner, Municipal Monitor	Yes	6:05pm	9:36pm
Clare Hogarth-Angus, Manager Communications, Engagement and Advocacy	Yes	6:05pm	9:36pm
Janet Dawes, Manager Arts, Culture and Community	Yes	7:30pm	8:16pm
David Power, Manager Strategy, Economy and Sustainability	Yes	8:16pm	8:38pm
Lisa Paton, Coordinator Environment and Sustainability	Yes	8:16pm	8:38pm
Arthur Vatzakis, Manager Planning, Building and Health Services	Yes	8:38pm	9:00pm
Zoran Jovanovski, Coordinator Strategic Planning	Yes	8:38pm	9:00pm
Ben Pollard, Acting Manager Community Learning and Service Centre	Yes	9:00pm	9:10pm
Heidi Pettersen, Coordinator Service Development	Yes	9:00pm	9:10pm
Ed Elliott, Head of Enterprise Transformation, Systems and Strategy	Yes	9:10pm	9:15pm

External Presenters

Feyi Akindoyeni, Founding Partner, SEC Newgate.	6:05pm to 7:25pm
Ursula Lepporoli Chair Substation Nuala Furtado. CEO Substation	7:30pm to 8:16pm

Meeting Agenda

1	Briefing Presentations (for discussion)
1.1	Advocacy workshop #2 – External presenters
1.2	The Substation Presentation
1.3	Proposal Hobsons Bay Community Awards
1.4	Cherry Lake Stormwater Harvesting Funding Application
1.5	The Planning Amendment (Better Decisions Made Faster) Bill 2025
2	Council Briefing Reports (for Councillor info and noting)

Record of Assembly of Councillors Councillor Briefing 25 November 2025



2.1	Library Collections and Equipment Procurement Australia Agreement
2.2	Organisational Alcohol-Free Policy
3	Committee and Delegate Reports
3.1	Committee Reports
3.1.1	Nil Reports
3.2.	Delegate Reports
3.2.1	Substation Delegate report
4	CEO Update and Councillor Updates
4.1	Councillor Update and Discussion
4.2	CEO Confidential Verbal Update (as necessary)

Interest Disclosures

Councillors:

Officers:

External:

Meeting movements

Cr Diana Grima	6:08pm – 6:10pm
John Tanner	6:50pm – 7:30pm

Record of Assembly of Councillors – Councillor Briefing 2 December 2025



Start Time: 6:00 PM

End 8:43 PM

Attendance

Councillors	Present	Time	Left meeting
Cr Daria Kellander, Altona ward	Yes	6:00pm	8:43pm
Cr Diana Grima, Altona Meadows ward	Yes	6:00pm	8:43pm
Cr Kristin Bishop, Spotswood ward	Yes	6:00pm	8:43pm
Cr Lisa Bentley, Williamstown ward	Yes	6:00pm	8:43pm
Cr Michael Disbury, Williamstown North ward	Yes	6:00pm	8:43pm
Cr Paddy Keys-Macpherson, Laverton ward	Yes	6:00pm	8:43pm
Cr Rayane Hawli, Altona North ward	Yes	6:00pm	8:43pm

Council Officers	Present	Time	Left meeting
Kerry Thompson, Interim Chief Executive Officer	Yes	6:00pm	8:43pm
Matthew Irving, Acting Director Corporate Services	Yes	6:05pm	8:38pm
Allison Kenwood, Interim Director Corporate Services	Yes	6:00pm	8:38pm
Elyse Rider, Interim Director Sustainable Communities	Yes	6:00pm	8:38pm
Marlo Emmitt, Acting Manager Corporate Integrity	Yes	6:00pm	8:38pm
Clare Hogarth-Angus, Manager Communications, Engagement and Advocacy	Yes	6:00pm	8:38pm
Amanda Dunn, Property Advisor	Yes	6:00pm	6:33pm
John Tanner, Municipal Monitor	Yes	6:00pm	8:43pm

External Presenters - Nil

Meeting Agenda Topics

Agenda

1. Briefing Presentations (for discussion)
1.1. Property Presentation
1.2. Directors' update on strategic change management
1.3. Council's Risk Appetite
2. Council Briefing Reports (for Councillor info and noting)
2.1. West Gate Tunnel Project Update (WGTP) - December 2025
2.2. Level Crossing Removal Project Update (LXRP) - December 2025
2.3. Point Cook Road Intersection Update (PCIU) - December 2025
2.4. Contract 2025.05 Drainage Cleaning and Investigation
2.5. Balance of Councillor Appointments to Committees 2026
3. Committee and Delegate Reports
3.1. Committee Reports
3.2. Delegate Reports

4. CEO Update and Councillor Updates

4.1. Councillor Update and Discussion

4.2. CEO Confidential Verbal Update (as necessary)

Interest Disclosures - Nil

Councillors:

Officers:

External:

Meeting movements - Break 7:18pm to 7:27pm

Record of Assembly of Councillors – Councillor Briefing 9 December 2025



Start Time: 6:00 PM

End 8.39 PM

Attendance

Councillors	Present	Time	Left meeting
Cr Daria Kellander, Altona ward	Apology	-	-
Cr Diana Grima, Altona Meadows ward	Yes	6:00 pm	8:39 pm
Cr Kristin Bishop, Spotswood ward	Apology	-	-
Cr Lisa Bentley, Williamstown ward	Yes	6:00 pm	8:39 pm
Cr Michael Disbury, Williamstown North ward	Yes	6:00 pm	8:39 pm
Cr Paddy Keys-Macpherson, Laverton ward	Yes	6:00 pm	8:39 pm
Cr Rayane Hawli, Altona North ward	Apology	-	-

Council Officers	Present	Time	Left meeting
Kerry Thompson, Interim Chief Executive Officer	Yes	6:00 pm	8:39 pm
Matthew Irving, Acting Director Corporate Services	Yes	6:00 pm	8:39 pm
Allison Kenwood, Interim Director Corporate Services	Yes	6:00 pm	8:39 pm
David Power, Acting Director Sustainable Communities	Apology	-	-
Marlo Emmitt, Acting Manager Corporate Integrity	Apology	-	-
Hamish Munro, Chief Financial Officer	Yes	7:05pm	7.35pm
Michael Auciello, Coordinator - Strategic Communications	Yes	6:00pm	7:05pm
Marisa Uwarow, Manager Community and Council Plan development	Yes	7:35pm	7:45pm
April Chafer, Coordinator Rates	Online	7:05pm	7.35pm
John Tanner, Municipal Monitor	Yes	6:00pm	8:39 pm
Ian Butterworth, Senior Technical Advisor	Yes	7:45pm	7:57pm

External Presenters

Dr Neryl East	Yes	6:00 pm	7:05pm
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Meeting Agenda Topics

Agenda

1. Briefing Presentations (for discussion)	
1.1.	Councillor media/communication workshop with Dr Neryl East
1.2.	Budget Briefing 1: Finance Timetable 2025-26
1.3.	Budget Consultation Process
1.4	Council Plan 2025-29 and strategic documents – for adoption
1.5	WGTP - The Avenue Powerline Commitment Update
2. Council Briefing Reports (for Councillor info and noting)	
2.1.	Adoption of the Road Management Plan (RMP)
2.2.	Response to Notice of Motion 1278 and 1249 (Part 7)

Record of Assembly of Councillors – Councillor Briefing 9 December 2025



2.3. Revised Governance Rules and Community Feedback

2.4. Draft Ministerial Guidelines for Rates and Hardship

2.5. Councillor and Staff Remote Access to Meetings Policy

2.6. Councillor Community Engagement (Community Listening Posts)

3. Committee and Delegate Reports

3.1. Committee Reports

3.2. Delegate Reports

3.2.1 Association of Bayside Municipalities – 29 October 2025

3.3 Reports of Informal Meetings of Councillors

3.3.1 Reports of Informal Meetings of Councillors

4. CEO Update and Councillor Updates

4.1. Councillor Update and Discussion

4.2. CEO Confidential Verbal Update (as necessary)

Interest Disclosures

Councillors: Nil

Officers: Nil

External: Nil

Meeting movements

Mayor Diana Grima	6:12pm to 6:14pm
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10 Notices of Motion

No notices of motion were received.

11 Councillor Questions

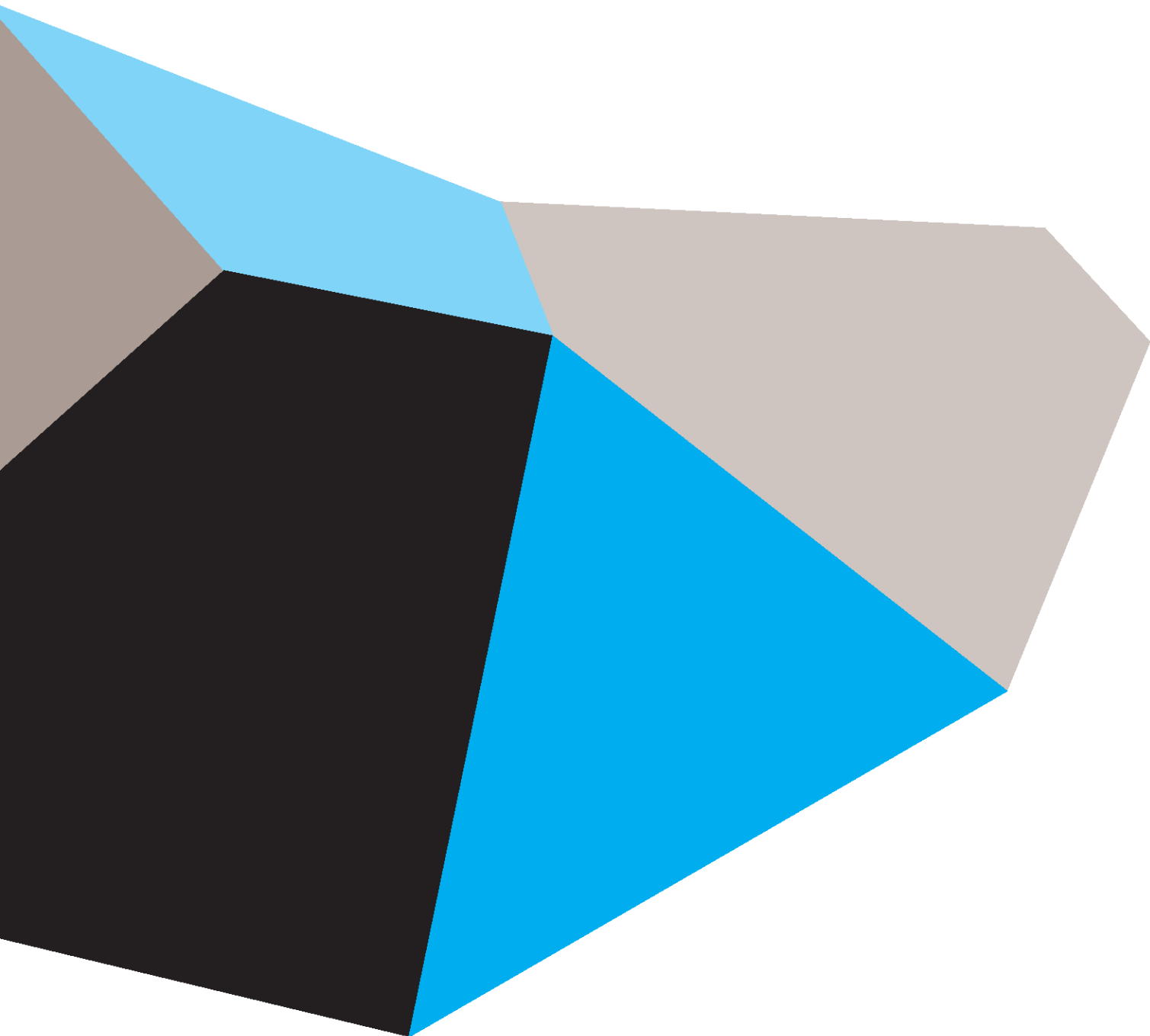
Councillors will have the opportunity to ask questions of Council officers.

12 Urgent Business

13 Close of Meeting

HOBSONS
BAY CITY
COUNCIL





HOBSONS BAY CITY COUNCIL

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