



# Agenda

## Council Meeting

Monday 16 March 2026, 7:00 pm  
Dandenong Civic Centre, 225 Lonsdale Street,  
Dandenong, Victoria 3175



## Council Meeting Details

At the time of printing this Agenda, the Council Meeting to be held on Monday 16 March 2026, will be open to the public to attend in person but will be subject to venue seating capacity. This will be a hybrid meeting consisting of Councillors attending in person and remotely.

If we are unable to accommodate you indoors, you will still be able to watch the webcast live on the Urban Screen in Harmony Square. To view the webcast and stay informed about the status of Council Meetings please visit Council's [website](#).

***The Civic Centre basement carpark will be opened to all members of the public during library opening hours. Any parking in this area will be subject to availability and time limits as notified by any signage posted.***

## Your Councillors

[Mayor Sophaneth \(Sophie\) Tan](#)

[Cr Bob Milkovic](#)

[Deputy Mayor Phillip Danh](#)

[Cr Sean O'Reilly](#)

[Cr Isabella Do](#)

[Cr Loi Truong](#)

[Cr Lana Formoso](#)

[Cr Melinda Yim](#)

[Cr Rhonda Garad](#)

[Cr Alice Phuong Le](#)

[Cr Jim Memeti](#)



We acknowledge the Traditional Owners and Custodians of this land, the Bunurong People, and pay respect to their Elders past and present.

We recognise and respect their continuing connections to climate, Culture, Country and waters.

 (03) 8571 1000

 [council@cgd.vic.gov.au](mailto:council@cgd.vic.gov.au)

 [greaterdandenong.vic.gov.au](http://greaterdandenong.vic.gov.au)



TTY: 133 677

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Acknowledging  
Bunurong Country

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## COUNCIL OBLIGATIONS AND AGENDA REPORTS

Council has several obligations in relation to its Community Vision, Council Plan, Instruments of Legislation and Council policy. These are summarily considered in each Agenda report and further details are added as required. The obligations are as follows:

### **Community Vision 2040 (Community Vision | Greater Dandenong Council)**

After consultation with the Greater Dandenong community on what kind of future they wanted for themselves and our city, the Greater Dandenong People's Panel developed a new Community Vision for 2040:

*The City of Greater Dandenong is a home to all.  
It's a city where you can enjoy and embrace life through celebration and equal opportunity.  
We harmonise the community by valuing multiculturalism and the individual.  
Our community is healthy, vibrant, innovative and creative.  
Our growing city is committed to environmental sustainability.  
Welcome to our exciting and peaceful community.*

Reports in this Agenda will identify when any of the above principles are relevant.

### **The Council Plan 2025-29 (Council Plan 2025-29 | Greater Dandenong Council)**

The Council Plan describes the kind of future the Council is working for, and how Council will do this over four years. The Council Plan has the following key strategic objectives:

- *A socially connected, safe and healthy city*
- *A city that respects and celebrates diversity, our history and the arts*
- *A city of accessible, vibrant centres and places*
- *A green city committed to a sustainable future*
- *A city that supports business, entrepreneurship, quality education and employment outcomes*
- *A Council that demonstrates leadership, responsible use of public resources, and a commitment to investing in the community.*

Reports in this Agenda will identify when any of the above principles are relevant.

### **The Overarching Governance Principles of the Local Government Act 2020**

Section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* states that a Council must in the performance of its role give effect to the overarching governance principles. These are:

- a) Council decisions are to be made and actions taken in accordance with the relevant law;
- b) priority is to be given to achieving the best outcomes for the municipal community, including future generations;
- c) the economic, social and environmental sustainability of the municipal district, including mitigation and planning for climate change risks, is to be promoted;
- d) the municipal community is to be engaged in strategic planning and strategic decision making;
- e) innovation and continuous improvement are to be pursued;
- f) collaboration with other Councils and Governments and statutory bodies is to be sought;
- g) the ongoing financial viability of the Council is to be ensured;
- h) regional, state and national plans and policies are to be taken into account in strategic planning and decision making;
- i) the transparency of Council decisions, actions and information is to be ensured.

Also, in giving effect to the overarching governance principles above, a Council must take into account the following supporting principles:

- a) the community engagement principles (section 56);
- b) the public transparency principles (section 58);
- c) the strategic planning principles (section 89);
- d) the financial management principles (section 101);
- e) the service performance principles (section 106).

Reports in this Agenda will identify when any of the above principles are relevant.



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## The Gender Equality Act 2020

The *Gender Equality Act 2020* came into operation on 31 March 2021 and requires councils to take positive action towards achieving workplace gender equality and to promote gender equality in their policies, programs and services. The objects of the Act are as follows:

- a) to promote, encourage and facilitate the achievement of gender equality and improvement in the status of women; and
- b) to support the identification and elimination of systemic causes of gender inequality in policy, programs and delivery of services in workplaces and communities; and
- c) to recognise that gender inequality may be compounded by other forms of disadvantage or discrimination that a person may experience on the basis of Aboriginality, age, disability, ethnicity, gender identity, race, religion, sexual orientation and other attributes; and
- d) to redress disadvantage, address stigma, stereotyping, prejudice and violence, and accommodate persons of different genders by way of structural change; and
- e) to enhance economic and social participation by persons of different genders; and
- f) to further promote the right to equality set out in the Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

Council is obligated to think about how its programs and services affect different people and different communities and how we can avoid reinforcing unintentional inequalities. Reports authors must consider the requirements of the *Gender Equality Act 2020* and Council's Diversity, Access and Equity Policy when asking Council to consider or review any issues which have a direct or significant impact on members of the Greater Dandenong community.

## Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities

Council, Councillors and members of Council staff are a public authority under the *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006* and, as such, are all responsible to act in accordance with the *Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities 2006* (the Charter). The Charter is founded on the following principles:

- human rights are essential in a democratic and inclusive society that respects the rule of law, human dignity, equality and freedom;
- human rights belong to all people without discrimination, and the diversity of the people of Victoria enhances our community;
- human rights come with responsibilities and must be exercised in a way that respects the human rights of others;
- human rights have a special importance for the Aboriginal people of Victoria, as descendants of Australia's first people, with their diverse spiritual, social, cultural and economic relationship with their traditional lands and waters.

Given this municipality's diversity and inclusiveness, when developing or preparing a report for Council consideration, report authors are required to ensure their report is consistent with the standards set by the Charter.



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## Consideration of Climate Change and Sustainability

One of the overarching governance principles of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that the economic, social and environmental sustainability of the municipal district, including mitigation and planning for climate change risks, is to be promoted.

In January 2020, this Council joined a growing number of cities around Australia and declared a “Climate and Ecological Emergency” and committed this Council to emergency action on climate change. Council has developed a Climate Change Emergency Strategy and Action Plan 2020-30 to help the City of Greater Dandenong become a resilient, net zero carbon emission city with an active community prepared for the challenges of changing climate.

When developing or preparing a report for Council consideration, report authors are required to consider what impacts their issue has on Council's Declaration on a Climate and Ecological Emergency, Council's Climate Change Emergency Strategy and the requirements of the *Local Government Act 2020* in relation to the overarching principle on climate change and sustainability.

### Related Council Policies, Strategies or Frameworks

Report authors will consider how their report aligns with existing Council policies, strategies, frameworks or other documents, how they may affect the decision of this report or are relevant to this process.



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## 1 MEETING OPENING

### 1.1 OPENING OF MEETING BY CHAIR

### 1.2 ATTENDANCE

#### **Apologies**

Cr Isabella Do (LoA)



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### 1.3 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF TRADITIONAL CUSTODIANS OF LAND

*Those who wish to stand for the acknowledgement to country are welcome to do so.*

We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of this land, the Bunurong People, and pay respect to their Elders past and present.

We recognise and respect their continuing connections to climate, Culture, Country and waters and we also pay our respect and acknowledge all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and their Elders present here today, in acknowledging their journey.

### 1.4 OFFERING OF PRAYER, REFLECTION OR AFFIRMATION

As part of Council's commitment to recognising the cultural and spiritual diversity of our community, the prayer, reflection or affirmation this evening will be offered by Roz Blades AM, a member of the Jewish Community.



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## 1.5 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

Meeting of Council held 16 February 2026.

### Recommendation

**That the Minutes of the Meeting of Council held 16 February 2026 be confirmed.**

## 1.6 DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

Any interest that a Councillor or staff member has deemed to be significant and has disclosed as either a material or general interest is now considered to be a conflict of interest. Conflict of Interest legislation is detailed in Division 2 – Conflicts of Interest: sections 126, 127, 128, 129 & 130 of the *Local Government Act 2020*. This legislation can be obtained by contacting the Greater Dandenong Governance Unit on 8571 5216 or by accessing the Victorian Legislation and Parliamentary Documents website at [www.legislation.vic.gov.au](http://www.legislation.vic.gov.au).

If a Councillor discloses any interest in an item discussed at any Council Meeting (whether they attend or not) they must:

1. complete a disclosure of interest form prior to the meeting;
2. advise the chairperson of the interest immediately before the particular item is considered (if attending the meeting); and
3. leave the chamber while the item is being discussed and during any vote taken (if attending the meeting).

The Councillor will be advised to return to the chamber or meeting room immediately after the item has been considered and the vote is complete.



## 2 OFFICERS REPORTS - PART 1

### 2.1 STATUTORY PLANNING APPLICATIONS

#### 2.1.1 Planning Delegated Decisions Issued – February 2026

**Responsible Officer:** Executive Director City Futures

**Attachments:** 1. Planning Delegated Decisions Issued – February 2026.pdf  
[2.1.1.1 - 11 pages]

#### Officer Recommendation

**That the listed items in Attachment 1 to this report be received and noted.**

#### Executive Summary

1. This report provides Council with an update on the exercise of delegation by Council officers.
2. It provides a listing of Town Planning applications that were either decided or closed under delegation or withdrawn by applicants in February 2026.
3. It should be noted that where permits and notices of decision to grant permits have been issued, these applications have been assessed as being generally consistent with the Greater Dandenong Planning Scheme and Council's policies.
4. Application numbers with a PLA#, PLN#.01 or similar, are applications making amendments to previously approved planning permits.
5. The annotation 'SPEAR' (Streamlined Planning through Electronic Applications and Referrals) identifies where an application has been submitted electronically. SPEAR allows users to process planning permits and subdivision applications online.

## Planning Delegated Decisions Issued from 1/02/2026 to 28/02/2026

## City of Greater Dandenong

Application ID	Category	VicSmart	Property Address	Applicant Name	Description	Notes	Authority	Decision	Decision Date	Ward
PLA25/0234	PlnAppAmd	No	4 Princess Avenue SPRINGVALE VIC 3171	K Singh, N Singh, MISK Design	AMENDMENT TO: Development of the land for three (3) double storey dwellings (PLN20/0432)	Amend endorsed plans	Delegate	AmendPerm	04/02/2026	Springvale South
PLA25/0242	PlnAppAmd	No	1/6 Albert Avenue SPRINGVALE VIC 3171	K Lay	AMENDMENT TO: Development of the land for two (2) double storey dwellings (PLN22/0145)	Amend endorsed plans	Delegate	AmendPerm	05/02/2026	Keysborough
PLA25/0245	PlnAppAmd	No	511-517 Cheltenham Road KEYSBOROUGH VIC 3173	Keysborough Properties Pty Ltd	AMENDMENT TO Construction of buildings and works and use of land for the purpose of a service station and shop with associated internally illuminated business identification signage (347/90)	Amend permit preamble and conditions	Delegate	AmendPerm	27/02/2026	Keysborough South
PLA25/0251	PlnAppAmd	No	323 Cheltenham Road KEYSBOROUGH VIC 3173	Canter Town Planning	Amendment to the Existing Medical Centre to allow twelve (12) practitioners and ten (10) bicycle parking (Permit No. 233/87 (amended))	amend permit preamble and conditions	Delegate	AmendPerm	02/02/2026	Keysborough

ATT 2.1.1.1 Planning Delegated Decisions Issued – February 2026.pdf

Application ID	Category	VicSmart	Property Address	Applicant Name	Description	Notes	Authority	Decision	Decision Date	Ward
PLA25/0255	PlnAppAmd	No	849 Princes Highway SPRINGVALE VIC 3171	Bunnings Properties Pty Ltd	AMENDMENT RECEIVED Use of the land for the purpose of a restricted retail premises and trade supplies; the erection and display of business identification signage; a reduction in car parking requirements for a Restricted Retail Premises; the reduction in bicycle spaces pursuant to Clause 52.34 of the Greater Dandenong Planning Scheme; the creation and alternation of access to a road in Transport Zone 2; and, the removal of Native Vegetation. (PLN11/0906)	Amend Condition 10	Delegate	AmendPerm	02/02/2026	Springvale North
PLA25/0259	PlnAppAmd	No	1 Assembly Drive DANDENONG SOUTH VIC 3175	Wend Australia Pty Ltd	AMENDMENT TO: Use and development of the land for two (2) convenience restaurants, one (1) service station and one (1) car wash; Display of signs (including internally illuminated signs, pole signs, sky sign and business identification signs); Alteration of access to a Road Zone Category 1; Reduction of car parking requirements (PLN18/0641.01)	Amend endorsed plans and permit conditions	Delegate	AmendPerm	19/02/2026	Dandenong
PLA25/0262	PlnAppAmd	No	2/6 Theodore Avenue NOBLE PARK VIC 3174	Install a Veranda Pty Ltd	AMENDMENT RECEIVED To construct two (2) double storey dwellings PLN15/0138	Amend endorsed plans	Delegate	Lapsed	26/02/2026	Noble Park
PLA25/0262	PlnAppAmd	No	6 Theodore Avenue NOBLE PARK VIC 3174	Install a Veranda Pty Ltd	AMENDMENT RECEIVED To construct two (2) double storey dwellings PLN15/0138	Amend endorsed plans	Delegate	Lapsed	26/02/2026	Noble Park

ATT 2.1.1.1 Planning Delegated Decisions Issued – February 2026.pdf

Application ID	Category	VicSmart	Property Address	Applicant Name	Description	Notes	Authority	Decision	Decision Date	Ward
PLA25/0266	PlnAppAmd	No	3 Kitchen Road DANDENONG SOUTH VIC 3175	Safety Steel Structures	AMENDMENT TO: Development of the land for a canopy to an existing building (PLN24/0214)		Delegate	AmendPerm	26/02/2026	Dandenong
PLA26/0005	PlnAppAmd	No	87 Clow Street DANDENONG VIC 3175	Lprojects	AMENDMENT TO The development of the land for nine (9) double storey dwellings (PLN20/0572)	Amend endorsed plans	Applicant	Withdrawn	26/02/2026	Cleeland
PLN25/0030	PlnApp	No	53 Albert Avenue SPRINGVALE VIC 3171	DP Ly, Abacus Design and Planning	Development of the land for four (4) triple storey, and one (1) double storey dwelling, and the reduction of car parking	General Residential 3 Zone, 663sqm	Delegate	PlanPermit	12/02/2026	Springvale North
PLN25/0086	PlnApp	No	3-4/19-21 Pickett Street DANDENONG VIC 3175	Draft Wing	Use of the land for a Function Centre, and a reduction in the car parking requirements DECLARED AREA	Mixed Use Zone	Delegate	PlanPermit	18/02/2026	Dandenong
PLN25/0128	PlnApp	No	9 Leonard Avenue NOBLE PARK VIC 3174	Nazco Group Pty Ltd	Development of the land for eight (8) dwellings (comprising of four (4) double storey dwellings and four (4) triple storey dwellings)	General Residential 2 Zone, 937sqm	Delegate	NOD	19/02/2026	Noble Park
PLN25/0199	PlnApp	No	164 Foster Street DANDENONG VIC 3175	Urban Planning Collective	Use and development of the land for a Place of Assembly and Group Accommodation DECLARED AREA	Residential Growth 1 Zone	Delegate	PlanPermit	09/02/2026	Dandenong

ATT 2.1.1.1 Planning Delegated Decisions Issued – February 2026.pdf

Application ID	Category	VicSmart	Property Address	Applicant Name	Description	Notes	Authority	Decision	Decision Date	Ward
PLN25/0226	PlnApp	No	9 David Street DANDENONG VIC 3175	ALDI Foods Pty Ltd	Development of the land for a supermarket, the display of business identification and electronic promotional signage and the removal of native vegetation	Commercial 2 Zone	Applicant	PlanPermit	04/02/2026	Cleeland
PLN25/0228	PlnApp	No	720 Frankston Dandenong Road BANGHOLME VIC 3175	Albadale Pty Ltd	For the purpose of earthworks	Proposal fails to meet Clause 11.01-1R, Clause 11.01-1L, Clause 12.01-2S, Clause 13.03-1S, Clause 13.03-1L, Clause 14.01-1S, Clause 35.04, Clause 52.17, Clause 42.02 and Clause 51.02	Delegate	Refusal	05/02/2026	Keysborough South
PLN25/0238	PlnApp	No	841 Princes Highway SPRINGVALE VIC 3171	D Singh	Construct Buildings and Works (grease trap) and to alter access to a road in a Transport Zone 2 under Clause 52.06 of the Greater Dandenong Planning Scheme	Industrial 1 Zone	Delegate	PlanPermit	06/02/2026	Springvale North
PLN25/0240	PlnApp	No	367A Springvale Road SPRINGVALE VIC 3171	Priority Planning Pty Ltd	Use of the land for a place of assembly (shisha lounge)	Proposal fails to meet Clause 13.05-1S, Clause 13.07-1L and Clause 65	Delegate	Refusal	12/02/2026	Springvale North
PLN25/0289	PlnApp	No	1 Glendale Road SPRINGVALE VIC 3171	Marchi Design Group Pty Ltd	Development of the land for a double storey dwelling to the rear of an existing single storey dwelling	General Residential 1 Zone, 703sqm	Delegate	PlanPermit	26/02/2026	Springvale North
PLN25/0298	PlnApp	No	251 Hutton Road KEYSBOROUGH VIC 3173	Eastar Group Pty Ltd	Staged subdivision of the land into forty (40) lots adjacent to a road in a Transport Zone 2 and alteration of access to a road in a Transport Zone 2	Residential	Delegate	PlanPermit	27/02/2026	Keysborough South

ATT 2.1.1.1 Planning Delegated Decisions Issued – February 2026.pdf

Application ID	Category	VicSmart	Property Address	Applicant Name	Description	Notes	Authority	Decision	Decision Date	Ward
PLN25/0304	PlnApp	No	155 Lonsdale Street DANDENONG VIC 3175	P Truong	Building and works for an office and to display business identification signage	Comprehensive Development 2 Zone	Delegate	PlanPermit	03/02/2026	Dandenong
PLN25/0314	PlnApp	No	173-213 Clarke Road SPRINGVALE SOUTH VIC 3172	Blizzard Winds Pty Ltd	Development of the land for forty-seven (47) dwellings and removal of native vegetation	General Residential 1 Zone, 7831sqm	Delegate	PlanPermit	16/02/2026	Springvale South
PLN25/0344	PlnApp	No	2-8 Pacific Drive KEYSBOROUGH VIC 3173	ApproveAll Town Planning	Change of Use (Food Production) and reduction in car parking requirements	Industrial 1 Zone	Delegate	Lapsed	23/02/2026	Keysborough South
PLN25/0350	PlnApp	No	7 Bess Court DANDENONG VIC 3175	Archiscape Consulting Pty Ltd	Development of the land for two (2) double storey dwellings	General Residential 1 Zone, 610sqm	Delegate	PlanPermit	18/02/2026	Cleeland
PLN25/0351	PlnApp	No	2-12 Discovery Road DANDENONG SOUTH VIC 3175	Stephen D'Andrea Pty Ltd	Development of the land for one (1) warehouse building and a reduction in the car parking requirements	Industrial 1 Zone	Delegate	PlanPermit	16/02/2026	Dandenong
PLN25/0361	PlnApp	No	20 Hilton Street DANDENONG VIC 3175	AS Planning	Use of the land for a material recycling	Industrial 1 Zone	Delegate	PlanPermit	13/02/2026	Dandenong

ATT 2.1.1.1 Planning Delegated Decisions Issued – February 2026.pdf

Application ID	Category	VicSmart	Property Address	Applicant Name	Description	Notes	Authority	Decision	Decision Date	Ward
PLN25/0367	PlnApp	No	290 Thomas Street DANDENONG VIC 3175	Priority Planning Pty Ltd	Use and development of the land for a Function Centre, development of the land for a Supermarket, display internally illuminated business identification signage and reduce the car parking requirements DECLARED AREA	Comprehensive Development 2 Zone	Delegate	PlanPermit	12/02/2026	Dandenong
PLN25/0371	PlnApp	No	2 Clay Court NOBLE PARK NORTH VIC 3174	Leftturn	Development of the land for two (2) double storey dwellings to the rear of the existing single storey dwelling and alterations to the existing dwelling	Neighbourhood Residential 1 Zone, 710sqm	Delegate	PlanPermit	25/02/2026	Noble Park North
PLN25/0374	PlnApp	No	17/10 Assembly Drive DANDENONG SOUTH VIC 3175	SH Qambari	Use of the land as an indoor recreation facility (pool hall)	Commercial 2 Zone, Pool Hall	Delegate	PlanPermit	03/02/2026	Dandenong
PLN25/0377	PlnApp	No	21-23 Red Gum Drive DANDENONG SOUTH VIC 3175	Dandy Vic Pty Ltd	Use of the land for materials recycling (vehicle recycling) and transfer station	Industrial 2 Zone, 4851sqm, Car Parts	Delegate	PlanPermit	10/02/2026	Dandenong
PLN25/0381	PlnAppVic	Yes	34 McFees Road DANDENONG NORTH VIC 3175	Architekton Ltd	Subdivision of the land into two lots VICSMART	Residential	Delegate	PlanPermit	10/02/2026	Cleeland
PLN25/0384	PlnApp	No	99 Springvale Road SPRINGVALE VIC 3171	Feviat Nominees Pty Ltd	To construct a building or construct or carry out works	Commercial 1 Zone	Delegate	PlanPermit	26/02/2026	Springvale North

ATT 2.1.1.1 Planning Delegated Decisions Issued – February 2026.pdf

Application ID	Category	VicSmart	Property Address	Applicant Name	Description	Notes	Authority	Decision	Decision Date	Ward
PLN25/0418	PlnApp	No	Mordialloc Creek 336 Perry Road KEYSBOROUGH VIC 3173	ABK C/O South East Water	Native vegetation removal	Public Use 1 Zone, Urban Floodway Zone	Delegate	NOD	16/02/2026	Keysborough South
PLN25/0419	PlnAppVic	Yes	20 Attenborough Street DANDENONG VIC 3175	Jova Drafting Consultants Pty Ltd	Buildings and Works (Shipping Container) VICSMART	The proposal is not an appropriate response to Clause 15.01-1S, Clause 15.01-1L and Clause 15.01.1L. Unsafe pedestrian movement around the built form.	Delegate	Refusal	17/02/2026	Dandenong
PLN25/0423	PlnApp	No	3/260 Frankston Dandenong Road DANDENONG SOUTH VIC 3175	Biondo Rentals	Use of the land for trade supplies	Industrial 1 Zone	Delegate	PlanPermit	27/02/2026	Dandenong
PLN25/0427	PlnAppVic	Yes	50 Gray Street SPRINGVALE VIC 3171	Property Subdivision	Development of the land for two (2) double storey dwellings VICSMART	General Residential 1 Zone, 735sqm	Delegate	PlanPermit	12/02/2026	Springvale North
PLN25/0429	PlnAppVic	Yes	36-42 Hydrive Close DANDENONG SOUTH VIC 3175	Airstream* Architects	Construct a building or construct or carry out works VICSMART	Industrial 1 Zone	Delegate	PlanPermit	16/02/2026	Dandenong
PLN25/0435	PlnAppVic	Yes	23 Jellicoe Street NOBLE PARK VIC 3174	LV Noble Pty Ltd	Development of a single storey dwelling and alterations and additions to an existing dwelling VICSMART	General Residential 1 Zone, 642sqm	Delegate	PlanPermit	12/02/2026	Yarraman

ATT 2.1.1.1 Planning Delegated Decisions Issued – February 2026.pdf

Application ID	Category	VicSmart	Property Address	Applicant Name	Description	Notes	Authority	Decision	Decision Date	Ward
PLN25/0454	PlnApp	No	7 Amberley Crescent DANDENONG SOUTH VIC 3175	KTT Victoria Pty Ltd	Buildings and Works (Warehouse Alterations)	Industrial 1 Zone	Delegate	Lapsed	26/02/2026	Dandenong
PLN25/0456	PlnApp	No	32 Cutler Avenue KEYSBOROUGH VIC 3173	WWJ Van Wyk	Subdivision x 2 SPEAR	Residential	Delegate	PlanPermit	26/02/2026	Keysborough South
PLN25/0460	PlnApp	No	19 Wedge Street DANDENONG VIC 3175	M.J.Reddie Surveys Pty Ltd	Subdivision of the land into two (2) lots SPEAR	Residential	Delegate	PlanPermit	09/02/2026	Dandenong
PLN25/0461	PlnApp	No	42 Jones Road DANDENONG VIC 3175	Nobelius Land Surveyors Pty Ltd	Subdivision of the land into four (4) lots SPEAR	Residential	Delegate	PlanPermit	04/02/2026	Yarraman
PLN25/0474	PlnApp	No	12 Webster Street DANDENONG VIC 3175	MA Samadi	Subdivision of the land into two (2) lots with common property SPEAR	Commerical	Delegate	PlanPermit	13/02/2026	Dandenong
PLN25/0475	PlnAppVic	Yes	51-95 Greens Road DANDENONG SOUTH VIC 3175	Colliers Urban Planning	Building and Works (Earthworks) VICSMART	Industrial 1 Zone	Delegate	PlanPermit	06/02/2026	Dandenong

ATT 2.1.1.1 Planning Delegated Decisions Issued – February 2026.pdf

Application ID	Category	VicSmart	Property Address	Applicant Name	Description	Notes	Authority	Decision	Decision Date	Ward
PLN25/0481	PlnAppVic	Yes	20 Pinewood Avenue DANDENONG NORTH VIC 3175	RD Design and Drafting Pty Ltd	Development of the land for two (2) double storey dwellings and the removal of boundary canopy trees VICSMART	Neighbourhood Residential 1 Zone, 603sqm	Delegate	PlanPermit	18/02/2026	Noble Park North
PLN25/0482	PlnApp	No	82 Ann Street DANDENONG VIC 3175	Integrative Health Pty Ltd	Buildings and Works (Car Park)	General Residential 1 Zone	Applicant	Withdrawn	17/02/2026	Cleeland
PLN25/0483	PlnAppVic	Yes	1 Gwent Street SPRINGVALE SOUTH VIC 3172	Architekton Ltd	Development of the land for two (2) double storey dwellings and subdivide the land into two (2) lots VICSMART	General Residential Zone 1	Delegate	PlanPermit	06/02/2026	Springvale South
PLN25/0486	PlnAppVic	Yes	27 Brady Road DANDENONG NORTH VIC 3175	Bob Vrankovic Design	Development of the land for one (1) double storey dwelling to the rear of an existing single storey dwelling and alterations to the existing dwelling VICSMART	Neighbourhood Residential Zone 1	Delegate	PlanPermit	04/02/2026	Dandenong North
PLN25/0488	PlnAppVic	Yes	33 Parramatta Crescent NOBLE PARK VIC 3174	Redback Tree Services	Remove one (1) canopy tree VICSMART	Neighbourhood Residential 1 Zone	Delegate	PlanPermit	03/02/2026	Noble Park
PLN25/0506	PlnApp	No	24 Logis Boulevard DANDENONG SOUTH VIC 3175	AFS Logistics	Use of land for retail and reduction in car parking requirements	Industrial 3 Zone	Delegate	PlanPermit	24/02/2026	Dandenong

ATT 2.1.1.1 Planning Delegated Decisions Issued – February 2026.pdf

Application ID	Category	VicSmart	Property Address	Applicant Name	Description	Notes	Authority	Decision	Decision Date	Ward
PLN25/0511	PlnApp	No	40 Ambrie Crescent NOBLE PARK VIC 3174	Greater Melbourne Surveyors Pty Ltd	Subdivision of the land into five (5) lots SPEAR	Residential	Delegate	PlanPermit	25/02/2026	Yarraman
PLN25/0516	PlnApp	No	1/4 Wayne Court DANDENONG VIC 3175	Uberti Nominees Pty Ltd	Subdivision of the land into two (2) lots and creation of easements SPEAR	Residential	Delegate	PlanPermit	27/02/2026	Dandenong
PLN26/0017	PlnAppVic	Yes	13-17 Manning Drive NOBLE PARK NORTH VIC 3174	A Macallister	Buildings & Works (school) VICSMART	General Residential Zone 1	Delegate	PlanPermit	23/02/2026	Noble Park North
PLN26/0035	PlnAppVic	Yes	36-38 Lewis Street SPRINGVALE VIC 3171	Moussauoi Pty Ltd	Building and Works (Storage Container) VICSMART	General Residential 1 Zone	Delegate	PlanPermit	23/02/2026	Springvale North
PLN26/0037	PlnAppVic	Yes	927-937 Springvale Road KEYSBOROUGH VIC 3173	V Town Planning & Co	to develop a modular building containing two classrooms and associated works VICSMART	General Residential 1 Zone	Delegate	PlanPermit	24/02/2026	Keysborough South
PLN26/0042	PlnAppVic	Yes	1/3 French Street NOBLE PARK VIC 3174	Benchmark Land Surveyors	Subdivision of the land into two (2) lots SPEAR VICSMART	Residential	Delegate	PlanPermit	20/02/2026	Yarraman

ATT 2.1.1.1 Planning Delegated Decisions Issued – February 2026.pdf

Application ID	Category	VicSmart	Property Address	Applicant Name	Description	Notes	Authority	Decision	Decision Date	Ward
PLN26/0046	PlnAppVic	Yes	21 Fifth Avenue DANDENONG VIC 3175	Y Yawari	Subdivision of the land into two (2) lots SPEAR VICSMART	Residential	Delegate	PlanPermit	23/02/2026	Yarraman

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### 3 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

**Question Time at Council meetings provides an opportunity for members of the public in the gallery to address questions to the Councillors, Delegates and/or officers of the Greater Dandenong City Council. Questions must comply with s. 4.5.8 of Council's Governance Rules.**

#### QUESTIONS FROM THE GALLERY

Questions are limited to a maximum of three (3) questions per individual. Where time constraints deem it likely that not all questions can be answered within the time allowed for Question Time, the Mayor at his/her discretion may determine only the first question may be presented verbally with others deferred to be managed in the same manner as public questions not verbally presented.

Priority will be given to questions that relate to items on the Council Agenda for that meeting. Questions including any preamble should not exceed 300 words.

- a) All such questions must be received in writing on the prescribed form or as provided for on Council's website and at Ordinary meetings of Council. Where there are more than three (3) questions received from any one individual person, the Chief Executive Officer will determine the three (3) questions to be considered at the meeting.
- b) All such questions must clearly note a request to verbally present the question and must be received by the Chief Executive Officer or other person authorised for this purpose by the Chief Executive Officer no later than:
  - i) the commencement time (7.00pm) of the Ordinary meeting if questions are submitted in person; or
  - ii) noon on the day of the Ordinary meeting if questions are submitted by electronic medium.
- c) A question can only be presented to the meeting if the Chairperson and/or Chief Executive Officer has determined that the question:
  - i) does not relate to a matter of the type described in section 3(1) of the *Local Government Act 2020* (confidential information);
  - ii) does not relate to a matter in respect of which Council or a Delegated Committee has no power to act;
  - iii) is not defamatory, indecent, abusive or objectionable in language or substance, and is not asked to embarrass a Councillor, Delegated Member or Council officer; and
  - iv) is not repetitive of a question already asked or answered (whether at the same or an earlier meeting).
- d) If the Chairperson and/or Chief Executive Officer has determined that the question may not be presented to the Council Meeting or Delegated Committee, then the Chairperson and/or Chief Executive Officer:
  - i) must advise the Meeting accordingly; and
  - ii) will make the question available to Councillors or Members upon request.
  - iii) The Chairperson shall call on members of the gallery who have submitted an accepted question to ask their question verbally if they wish.
- e) The Chairperson, Chief Executive Officer or delegate may then direct that question to be answered by a nominated Councillor or member of Council staff.



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- f) No debate on, or discussion of, a question or an answer will be permitted other than for the purposes of clarification.
  - g) A Councillor, Delegated Committee Member or member of Council staff nominated to answer a question may:
    - i) seek clarification of the question from the person who submitted it;
    - ii) seek the assistance of another person in answering the question; and
    - iii) defer answering the question, so that the answer may be researched and a written response be provided within ten (10) working days following the Meeting (the question thereby being taken on notice).
  - h) Question time for verbal presentations is limited in duration to not more than twenty (20) minutes. If it appears likely that this time is to be exceeded then a resolution from Council will be required to extend that time if it is deemed appropriate to complete this item.
  - i) The text of each question asked and the response will be recorded in the minutes of the Meeting.



## 4 OFFICERS REPORTS - PART 2

### 4.1 POLICY AND STRATEGY

#### 4.1.1 Draft Our Bright Green Future Strategy

<b>Responsible Officer:</b>	Executive Director City Futures
<b>Attachments:</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Response to Councillor Alternate Motion - Draft Our Bright Green Future [4.1.1.1 - 7 pages]</li><li>2. Consultation Submission Summary - Draft Our Bright Green Future [4.1.1.2 - 8 pages]</li><li>3. Draft Our Bright Green Future Strategy [4.1.1.3 - 56 pages]</li><li>4. Draft Our Bright Green Future Action Plan [4.1.1.4 - 15 pages]</li></ol>

#### Officer Recommendation

That Council:

1. **NOTES** the significant number of existing sustainability related strategies and associated action plans currently adopted by Council;
2. **NOTES** that officers have consolidated these strategies and aligned them with the Council Plan 2025-29's Integrated Planning Framework to develop the draft *Our Bright Green Future Strategy and Action Plan 2026-36*;
3. **NOTES** the feedback received during the community consultation and subsequent changes to the draft *Our Bright Green Future Strategy and Action Plan 2026-36*;
4. **NOTES** and **ADOPTS** the officer recommendations in response to the alternate motion resolved at the 10 November 2025 Council meeting; and
5. **ADOPTS** the *Our Bright Green Future Strategy and Action Plan 2026-36*.

#### Executive Summary

1. Council has a long history of commitment to climate action through sustainability and environmental stewardship. This was reflected in 2020 when Council declared a climate and ecological emergency, and through its adoption of various sustainability related strategies.
2. The Council Plan 2025-29 establishes a new Integrated Planning Framework (IPF) to guide the development of Council's 'priority strategies' to ensure their alignment with both strategic and operational priorities.
3. To align with the IPF, the draft *Our Bright Green Future Strategy and Action Plan 2026-36* (the Strategy) has been developed by consolidating Council's eight (8) sustainability-related strategies and seven (7) action plans into one strategy document. The draft Strategy reduces duplication, sets one strategic direction, builds on Council's existing commitments to act on the climate and ecological emergency and ensures our actions are clear, measurable and relevant.



4. The purpose of the draft Strategy is to develop a coordinated and focused strategy that builds upon Council's commitment, leads our community's sustainability action and fosters environmental stewardship. It provides the direction needed to deliver Council's vision of a green city committed to a sustainable future through practical action, Council leadership, and community collaboration.
5. The draft Strategy has been organised into ten (10) themes. Each theme has an objective and actions to set out the steps Council will take to cut emissions, adapt to the climate emergency and deliver better community health outcomes. It builds on Council's existing commitments to act on the climate and ecological emergency.
6. The Action Plan presents a direction that is clear, measurable and relevant by consolidating the current five hundred and forty-four (544) separate actions to seventy-seven (77) actions by removing or reviewing duplications, standard business as usual activities, ambiguous actions, and no longer relevant actions.
7. At the 10 November 2025 Council meeting, Council supported an alternate motion and resolved to:
  - a. Note the draft Our Bright Green Future Strategy 2025–35 and commend the work undertaken to consolidate Council's environmental and sustainability frameworks under the Integrated Planning Framework;
  - b. Request that officers investigate the inclusion of the following additions to:
    - Amend the Strategy prior to adoption to strengthen alignment with the Victorian Climate Change Act 2017 and ensure measurable outcomes, by including the following additions:
      - Emissions baseline and reduction trajectory aligned with State targets;
      - Climate adaptation and health resilience indicators;
      - Equity and inclusion lens in planning and evaluation;
      - Establishment of a Community Climate Advisory Group;
      - Funding and partnership framework; and
      - Quantified, transparent public reporting of performance data.
  - c. Provide approval to undertake a community engagement process on the Our Bright Green Future Strategy and Action Plan; and
  - d. Request officers to table a Council report responding to the items in 2 and community feedback following the community engagement process, along with incorporate these amendments and return a revised Strategy for Council endorsement at a subsequent meeting.
8. Officers have since undertaken a community consultation process seeking feedback on the draft Strategy and Action Plan and investigated the inclusion of the six items included in the alternate motion. This report outlines a response to both.
9. Officers are now seeking Council to note the submissions and adopt the responses to the alternate motion and the revised Strategy (noting that the Strategy will be graphically designed following adoption).



## Background

10. Climate change is no longer a distant issue, it is shaping our lives, our health, our finances and the places we call home. In the City of Greater Dandenong, we are seeing these impacts worsen every year through increasing demands on our natural resources, more frequent extreme weather events, and rising cost of living placing pressure on our community's ability to adapt.
11. In 2020 Council declared a climate and ecological emergency and has been laying the foundations for long-term sustainability action. The climate and ecological crises bring an urgent need to strengthen our journey of sustainability and climate action.
12. The Council Plan 2025-29 places a strong emphasis on the importance of climate change and sustainability, with one of its strategic objectives being '*A green city committed to a sustainable future*'.
13. In addition, the Victorian Climate Action Act 2017, and Local Government Act 2020 requires Council to consider climate change in all its decision making.
14. Since 2019, Council has achieved approximately 80 percent reduction in its emissions. This has partially been achieved through the Victoria Energy Collaboration (VECO) Power Purchase Agreement. Contributing actions include installing 600kW of Solar PV panels, replacing over 20 fleet vehicles to low emission alternatives and electrifying end of life small gas assets to support the transition away from fossil fuels. A further considerable reduction will be achieved in the short term with the replacement of Oasis with the all-electric Dandenong Wellbeing Centre.
15. The Council Plan 2025-29 has established a new Integrated Planning Framework (IPF) to guide the development of Council's key documents.
16. To align with the IPF, Council officers have consolidated the eight (8) existing and draft sustainability related strategies and seven (7) action plans across Council into one 'Priority Strategy' and Action Plan. This draft strategy is called *Our Bright Green Future* (the Strategy). As per the IPF, the purpose of the Strategy and associated Action Plan is to create a coordinated and focused document that reduces duplication, sets one direction, and ensures our actions are clear, measurable and relevant.
17. The eight (8) sustainability related strategies and seven (7) action plans that have been consolidated into the draft Strategy are:
  - Climate Emergency Strategy 2020-30.
  - Greater Dandenong Sustainability Strategy 2016-30.
  - Greater Dandenong's Biodiversity Action Plan 2023-25.
  - Urban Forest Strategy 2021-28 (overarching document for the two greening strategies, which consists of the following strategies).
    - Greening our City Urban Tree Strategy 2021-28.
    - Greening our Neighbourhoods 2021-28.
  - Draft Waste and Litter Strategy 2021-26.
  - Draft Climate Change Community Engagement and Mobilisation Plan (CEMP) 2024-2029.
18. The Strategy was organised into nine (9) themes, with an additional one (1) being added post-consultation, as outlined below. Each theme has an objective and clear, measurable and relevant actions.
  - Advocacy



- Circular Economy and Waste
  - Transport and Active Travel
  - Biodiversity
  - Trees and Greening
  - Water and Waterways
  - Energy and Net Zero Transition
  - Sustainable Design, Assets and Infrastructure
  - *Community Mobilisation and Resilience (added post consultation)*
  - Sustainability across Greater Dandenong.
19. Currently, the strategies' action plans contain five hundred and forty-four (544) separate actions. Many of these actions across the action plans are duplicated, ambiguous, no longer relevant or standard business as usual activities which do not belong in strategic action plans. Despite the ongoing work and progress towards these, the volume of actions has presented challenges in monitoring and reporting.
  20. To align with the IPF and address the need to ensure the actions are clear, measurable and relevant, Council officers conducted a critical review of all five hundred and forty-four (544) actions.
  21. This review included multiple workshops with relevant departments and a gap analysis to identify the key priorities and actions out of the existing actions. The workshops assessed each action to determine whether it was Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-bound (SMART), completed, business as usual, duplicated and its current relevance.
  22. As a result, the actions were reduced to seventy-four (74) by merging similar actions and removing duplicated, irrelevant, and business as usual actions. While business as usual actions have been removed, their function will remain as per department operational work plans.
  23. Following consultation, there are now seventy-seven (77) actions, with three new actions being added. This will be discussed further under Key Issues and Discussion.
  24. The revised Action Plan seeks to ensure Council can achieve its strategic objective of being 'a green city committed to a sustainable future', aligns with the IPF and meet its Climate Action Act and Local Government Act obligations.
  25. The revised Action Plan is clear, measurable and relevant and will move Council towards more adaptive, sustainable operations and decision making in the face of climate change and sustainability related challenges.
  26. Importantly, the consolidation of actions does not reduce Council's commitment to addressing climate change, and rather having one coordinated and focused strategy will enhance our ability to meet this challenge.
  27. Following the Council resolution on 10 November 2025, officers undertook community consultation on the draft Strategy and Action for a period of four weeks. Overall, the feedback received was supportive and provided suggestions for improvement. The outcomes of this are discussed in detail in Attachment 2 and at a higher level under the Key Issues and Discussion section below.
  28. Officers have also investigated the additional items included in the alternate motion adopted on 10 November 2025. These are discussed in detail in Attachment 1 and at a higher level under the Key Issues and Discussion section below.



29. Officers are seeking Council to note the submissions and adopt the responses to the alternate motion and the revised Strategy (noting that the Strategy will be graphically designed following adoption).

## Key Issues and Discussion

30. As discussed in the Background section, the revised Strategy aligns with the Council Plan 2025-2029 and the IPF.
31. While the number of strategies and actions have been consolidated, Council's action will not be reduced. Rather it is intended that the draft Strategy and Action Plan will be the driver for Council to further its climate action, building on the work already undertaken in a coordinated and focused manner.
32. The Strategy commits to sustainability initiatives that lead innovation, deliver direct benefits to the community, including our residents and business sector, and strengthen Council's and the community's resilience to the climate emergency.
33. There are six key considerations that have informed the development of the revised Strategy and Action Plan which are discussed further below.
- Response to alternate motion resolved on 10 November 2025
  - Response to feedback received during consultation
  - Clarifying monitoring and reporting
  - Consolidation of existing strategies and actions and preparation of a new Action Plan
  - Revised Net Zero target of 2035 (subject to funding)
  - Financial Implications - Additional budget required to deliver the draft action plan

### *Response to alternate motion resolved on 10 November 2025*

34. At the Council meeting on 10 November 2025 Council supported an alternate motion and requested officers to strengthen the draft Strategy's alignment with Victorian Climate Change Act 2017 and to investigate the inclusion of the following additions:
- Emissions baseline and reduction trajectory aligned with State targets
  - Climate adaptation and health resilience indicators
  - Equity and inclusion lens in planning and evaluation
  - Establishment of a Community Climate Advisory Group
  - Funding and partnership framework
  - Quantified, transparent public reporting of performance data.
35. Officers have investigated the inclusion of the items above. A full response to all items is provided at Attachment 1: Response to Councillor Alternate Motion. Table 1 provides a summary of the officer response and recommendation.

**Table 1: Summary of officer response and recommendation to Alternate Motion 10 November 2025**

Item	Officer Response and Recommendation
Emissions baseline and reduction trajectory aligned with State targets	<p>Officers recommend that Council continues to pursue a more ambitious target than the Victorian State Government target, noting that Council has already achieved approximately 80 percent reduction in emissions, and also acknowledging that some of the remaining emissions are costly to remove, and will most likely be subject to external funding being made available.</p> <p>Officers have been working on a net zero transition plan to inform tangible actions Council can take to achieve net zero by 2035. Officers will present the direction and options on how to effectively remove emissions to Councillors at a future date.</p>
Climate adaptation and health resilience indicators	<p>Officers recognise the importance of strengthening this area, especially given the social, health and economic implications of climate risks.</p> <p>In response, the revised Strategy will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Introduce a new theme, 'Community Mobilisation and Resilience' to outline the community's role in climate action and Council's role in enabling communities to prepare for, respond to, and recover from climate change impacts.</li><li>• Address increasing risks to community health, social wellbeing, and access and inclusion.</li><li>• Revise actions to reflect the new theme and strengthen community resilience.</li></ul>
Equity and inclusion lens in planning and evaluation	<p>The Strategy and Action Plan embed climate change considerations across all themes. It applies an equity and inclusion lens throughout planning and evaluation by incorporating actions and associated measures that prioritise both understanding and working with vulnerable groups, ensuring accessible communication, fostering inclusive and diverse participation in climate action.</p> <p>This approach recognises Greater Dandenong's diversity and enables Council to respond to the differing needs of our diverse community based on the action review process. It ensures climate action is fair, inclusive and responsive to the needs of those most at risk.</p> <p>In response, the revised Strategy will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Introduce a new theme, 'Community Mobilisation and Resilience'.</li></ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Revise the climate change, challenges and community snapshot section to acknowledge the impacts and better reflect the barriers for vulnerable communities.</li><li>• Adopt a clearer position of community led adaptation to strengthen health equity and resilience.</li></ul>
Establishment of a Community Climate Advisory Group	<p>Officers recommend progressing with the Sustainability Advisory Committee (SAC) as adopted at the 27 October 2025 Council meeting.</p> <p>The SAC will play an important role in engaging with community on sustainability matters, including climate change impacts and the implementation of actions set out in the Strategy.</p>
Funding and partnership framework	<p>Sustainability action is a shared responsibility across Council. This internal partnership approach is already well established and supports strong collaboration between all teams.</p> <p>The Action Plan balances Council's climate obligations with financial responsibility. Officers recognise that while the net zero actions proposed represent a considerable financial commitment overall, timely action is critical given worsening global climate conditions. Transitioning to net zero emissions is a key principle of this Strategy and will require long-term financial planning and additional funding. It is acknowledged that external funding is likely to be required to be able to implement some of the more costly actions.</p> <p>In response, officers have revised the Strategy and Action Plan to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• acknowledge partnerships in key advocacy items</li><li>• outline the role of grant funding and opportunities to maximise funding opportunities</li><li>• promote the importance of inter-departmental collaboration.</li></ul>
Quantified, transparent public reporting of performance data.	<p>As a priority strategy under the IPF, the revised Strategy and Action Plan will be reviewed every four (4) years. This review will report the status of all actions, ensure alignment with the Council Plan and theme objectives, and confirm the actions and objectives remain clear, measurable, and relevant.</p> <p>In addition, an annual update will share achievements of the past 12 months and progress on actions undertaken in that year, including key advocacy work completed. These annual reports will include quantified performance data against progressed actions where relevant and available.</p> <p>A full review of the revised Strategy and Action Plan will occur in 2036.</p>



	<p>In response to this item, the Strategy and Action Plan has been revised to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Update the Monitoring and Review section to better reflect duration and review cycles.</li><li>• Add a new action to investigate opportunities to enhance digital reporting of sustainability performance data.</li><li>• Review all baselines, measures, commencement and delivery years.</li></ul>
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### **Community consultation**

36. This project supports and reinforces the extensive community consultation already undertaken to inform the existing sustainability related strategies and the Council Plan 2025-29. We know our community care about climate change and want Council to lead action. While the existing strategies have been consolidated, Council's action will not be reduced. Rather, the revised Strategy builds on this progress and the expectations from the community by developing a transformative plan of action for the future.
37. A Communication and Engagement Plan informed and guided the process of consulting the community on the draft Strategy and Action Plan.
38. The level of influence was based on IAP2 Public Participation Spectrum 'consult'.
39. As per the IAP2 Framework, the Consult approach is used to gather information and have discussions with the community. Feedback is provided to the community on the outcome of those discussions.
40. The consultation ran for a four-week period from 17 November to 12 December 2025 and attracted 248 page views and eight formal submissions. Although participation numbers were modest, submissions were detailed and high quality.
41. Overall, the feedback received was supportive and provided suggestions for improvement. Consistent themes emerged from the feedback, and can be summarised into the following categories:
- Reporting and accountability
  - Visibility of on-ground action and the relationship to core services
  - Consolidation of multiple strategies into a single document
  - Climate change adaptation and community resilience
  - Implementation, governance and timeframes
42. Attachment 2 provides a description of the feedback received and an officer response. Officers have revised the Strategy and Action Plan in response to the community feedback. The key changes have:
- strengthened the climate change adaptation, community resilience, and health elements of the Strategy.
  - introduced a new theme 'Community Mobilisation and Resilience' to outline the community's role in climate action and Council's role in enabling communities to prepare for, respond to and recover from climate impacts.
  - clarified the role between operational and strategic actions throughout the Strategy to reassure submitters that necessary on-ground action will not be changing.



- added a new action to investigate opportunities to enhance digital reporting of sustainability performance metrics
- clarified how the Action Plan will deliver transparency and be implemented.
- enhanced monitoring and reporting commitments

#### ***Clarifying monitoring and reporting***

43. Both the alternate motion and consultation feedback asked for greater clarity on the Monitoring and Reporting section for the draft Strategy. A full response to this is provided in Attachments 1 and 2.
44. While the Action Plan has been developed in accordance with Council's current monitoring capabilities, a new action has been included in the revised Action Plan to investigate opportunities for digital reporting of sustainability performance metrics. This action will support enhanced monitoring of the Action Plan in the future.
45. As a Priority Strategy under the Integrated Planning Framework, the proposed Action Plan will be reviewed every four (4) years. This process will:
  - Report the status of all actions
  - Ensure alignment with the Council Plan and the objectives of each theme
  - Confirm the actions and objectives remain clear, measurable and relevant
46. In addition, an annual update will share achievements of the past 12 months and progress on actions undertaken in that year, including key advocacy work completed. These annual reports will include quantified performance data against progressed actions where relevant and available. Both reviews will be published on the Council's website.
47. The Action Plan will be incorporated into Council's annual Council Plan reporting process to assist with the timely implementation.
48. These commitments help support transparency and accountability by ensuring key progress made against the actions is reported annually, and the Action Plan is reviewed every four years. The Strategy and Action Plan has been revised to better reflect this approach.
49. Officers have incorporated responses to the community feedback and alternate motion to the revised Strategy and Action Plan at Attachments 3 and 4 respectively.

#### ***Consolidation of existing strategies and actions and preparation of a new Action Plan***

50. Consolidating the strategies and action plans will enable Council to bring together the key messages from all eight (8) strategies into one shared vision and targeted approach.
51. The Strategy establishes a strategic framework to deliver an integrated approach to climate, sustainability and the environment. Over the last ten years as technologies have evolved and policies changed, Council has established a better understanding of what can be quantified and what is accessible. This growth has identified that several of the original objectives or actions of existing strategies are simply not quantifiable in a meaningful way.
52. There are many overlapping, duplicated and business as usual actions within the existing Action Plans. As a result, this made many of the actions redundant or no longer relevant for Council. This has led to challenges reporting meaningful results and progress, despite the significant achievements Council has made to date.
53. As mentioned above, the consolidating of actions does not reduce Council's commitment to addressing climate change, and rather having one coordinated and focused strategy will enhance our ability to meet this challenge.
54. By supporting the Strategy and Action Plan, Council is further cementing their commitment to action on climate change and presenting a coordinated and focused approach to sustainability.



### Net Zero Target

55. As set out in the Climate Emergency Strategy 2020-2030, Council initially sought to be a net zero emissions Council by 2025. Council has achieved an approximately 80 percent reduction in its emissions since 2019. This has ensured that Greater Dandenong is one of the leading performing Council's in terms of emissions reductions (see Table 1 below).
56. When the 2025 net zero target was established Council had only broad understanding of the required works and associated cost involved. Additionally challenges and limitations during COVID-19 pandemic prevented Council from achieving net zero by 2025. This was an ambitious target and recognised the urgent need to reduce our contribution to and limit the effects of climate change on our community.
57. Since then, extensive research and planning have clarified future capital project needs, enabling more informed net zero planning. Officers are recommending an updated target of 2035 (subject to appropriate funding being made available) to account for the significant financial resources required to remove remaining emissions.
58. To achieve net zero target, based on current estimates Council officers estimate an additional \$17 million in capital investment would be required.
59. While it is acknowledged that a considerable financial investment is required, the importance of meeting the challenge of climate change in a timely manner is becoming more important with the continually worsening climate conditions across the planet.
60. It is also important to note continuing the 'status quo' with gas infrastructure will likely see utility costs skyrocket in coming years. As such, taking action sooner rather than later will see long-term financial savings for Council.
61. To ensure we can continue our transition to net zero and fund the required works, multiple funding sources such as grants, other external sources and Council budget will need to be pursued.
62. The draft Strategy and Action Plan continue Council's efforts to reduce emissions and targeting shifts in the approach(es) taken that deliver good value for money.
63. In terms of other Councils, no metropolitan Melbourne Council has achieved net zero without relying heavily on offset payments. Below is a list of Councils showing stronger progress toward net zero, based on available data.

**Table 2: Comparison list of better performing Councils in progressing towards net zero**

Council	Remaining emissions
Greater Dandenong	3,827t-CO <sub>2</sub> e
Maribyrnong	3,181t-CO <sub>2</sub> e (net zero through offsets)
Melbourne	12,162t-CO <sub>2</sub> e (net zero through offsets)
Yarra	7,072t-CO <sub>2</sub> e (net zero through offsets)
Kingston	5,000t-CO <sub>2</sub> e
Knox	8,163t-CO <sub>2</sub> e
Merri-bek	69% reduction on 2011-12 figures
Hobsons Bay	2,106t-CO <sub>2</sub> e
Stonnington	4,847t-CO <sub>2</sub> e



64. While some Councils are achieving net zero, as Table 2 above demonstrates it is due to purchasing offsets. Officers recommend that Council needs to seek to reduce emissions as the primary action, to mitigate its direct contribution to climate change, rather than purchase offsets.
65. The revised approach recognises the need to reduce emissions and remains more ambitious than the Victorian State Government and Federal Government net zero targets which are 2045 and 2050 respectively. While officers are recommending a more ambitious target, the proposed Strategy aligns with the Victorian Climate Change Strategy 2026-30 objectives by recognising the need for urgent action, advocating for stronger sustainable building requirements, promoting and adopting the use of renewable energies in Council operations and the community, and supporting business and community climate action.

#### ***Financial Implications - Additional budget required to deliver the draft action plan***

66. A key principle of the Action Plan is to be relevant. Being relevant means, it is an option available to Council with current technology, knowledge and data. Furthermore, the actions have been developed to deliver direct and indirect benefits relevant to our community.
67. Being relevant also means the actions can be achieved with existing budget where possible. The vast majority of actions from the Action Plan can be accommodated within existing budgets and staff resourcing as outlined in the Operating Budget Implications section of this report.
68. However, one key principle of this Strategy is to transition to net zero emissions. As discussed above, long-term financial planning and additional funding will be required to ensure Council can transition to net zero.
69. Officers are working on a net zero transition plan to inform tangible actions on how to achieve net zero within the target timeframe. This will include an informed cost benefit analysis of different scenarios available to Council. This will be presented to Council at a future date.
70. To deliver the Action Plan, excluding the net zero actions and the Active Transport Priority Program (see below), the financial resourcing needed over the ten (10) year period is approximately \$1,100,000. This equates to an average of \$110,000 per year.
71. The Active Transport Priority Program action included in the Action Plan has a cost associated with it of \$650,000 per year over 10 years. Its implementation may be subject to available funding through grants or other means.
72. As stated above, the draft Action Plan has been developed to not only ensure Council can meet its climate change obligations and expectations, but also that it is financially responsible, with only a very small number of actions requiring a significant investment.

## **Governance Compliance**

### ***Human Resource Implications (consider Workforce Planning and Service Statements)***

73. Each action in the Action Plan has identified the level of resourcing required. Based on the staff resourcing identified in the Action Plan, an additional 1 EFT is expected to be required across Council department teams.
74. The draft Strategy and Action Plan will be implemented by staff from a wide variety of departments. Across Council, sustainability is core consideration and commitment by all staff. Each action has an assigned department and expected delivery date.



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***Financial/Asset Resource Implications (consider Service Statements, Budget, Long Term Financial Strategy and Asset Plan)***

***Operating Budget Implications***

75. Each action has identified the relevant additional resourcing required.
76. Based on the financial resourcing needed for each action over the next ten years to 2036 the estimated cost to deliver the Strategy, including capital and operational actions is approximately \$24,600,000.
77. Included in this estimated cost is approximately \$17,000,000 to fund the transition of council assets and facilities to net zero emissions, including removal of gas assets.
78. A further \$6,500,000 is needed to fund the Active Transport Priority Program.
79. The remaining actions will require \$1,100,000 to be delivered over the next ten years (to 2036).
80. Delivery of the draft Action Plan is subject to Council support in future annual budgets and the Long-Term Financial Plan, as well as the ability to obtain grant funding and other external funding sources.

***Asset Implications***

81. Adopting *Our Green Bright Future Strategy and Action Plan* does not directly affect any existing assets at this stage.
82. Delivery of the Action Plan will have implications for existing assets. However, these are subject to future Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) and annual budget bids being supported as part of the budget process.

***Legal/Risk Implications***

83. In 2025, the Australian Government released the National Adaptation Plan (the Plan) based on the findings of the National Climate Risk Assessment. The Plan provides a framework and clear guidance for adaptation, responsibilities, and priorities to build resilience to climate impacts. Council's approach aligns, and in some instances, exceeds the measures in this Plan by supporting targeted, evidence-based, and collaborative adaptation actions in communities. This is evident in our commitment to be Net Zero by 2035, as outlined in the Action Plan.
84. The Victorian Government has legislated a net zero target by 2045 under its Climate Action Act 2017. The draft Strategy outlines how Council will work towards transitioning to net zero emissions by 2035. As Council is seeking a more ambitious targets, there are no known legal risks.
85. The revised Strategy builds upon Council's existing commitments and enables Council to focus on adaptation measures and sustainable decision making in greater detail. This approach meets its legal obligations to consider climate change in its decision making and aligns with the IPF.
86. Council officers have been working to establish baseline data and refine objectives to better understand what can be measured and what information is accessible.
87. This process revealed risks within the original objectives and action plans of Council's various sustainability related documents, including overlapping, duplicated, and business-as-usual actions that diverted attention from initiatives with measurable outcomes and the potential to drive meaningful change.
88. This has impacted the ability to report meaningful results and progress despite the significant action and achievements Council has made to date.



89. The review of the existing sustainability related actions has led to the development of a new action plan that is clear, measurable and relevant. Clear, as the actions are easy to understand, and targeted in their direction. Measurable, as the actions can be monitored and reported on with meaningful and quantifiable information. Relevant, as the actions provide direct and indirect benefits relevant to our community and can be delivered by Council with funding and resources.
90. The revised Strategy and Action Plan address the challenges posed above and will lead to improved monitoring, more efficient action and better reporting.

### **Environmental Implications**

91. Since 2020 Council has committed to emergency action on the climate and ecological crisis. This revised Strategy further cements Council's role as a leader in sustainability. It ensures we prioritise strengthening community resilience to deliver health benefits of adapting to the impacts of climate change.
92. Transition to net zero emissions remains a key target of the draft Strategy and the Action Plan. Council is exploring opportunities to proactively remove emissions from Council's operations rather than purchasing offsets. We understand that removing emissions has greater impact than offsetting.
93. Council will continue to work closely with State and Federal Governments, industry and community to support and empower the transition away from fossil fuels and to reduce emissions. This action is supported by the draft Strategy.

### **Gender Impact Assessment**

94. The *Our Bright Green Future Strategy* demonstrates commitment to sustainability initiatives and delivers direct benefits to all members of our community regardless of gender, age and abilities.
95. The commitments within the revised Action Plan prioritise building the capacity of our most vulnerable community members, in turn ensuring equitable access to mitigation and adaption measures for all.
96. Engagement, educational programs and materials associated with the community consultation were delivered and presented in a clear, gender inclusive language that is accessible to all.

## **Community Engagement**

<b>Purpose</b>	To inform and consult the community on the draft of <i>Our Bright Green Future Strategy and Action Plan</i> .
<b>Engagement period</b>	4-week period from 17 November to 12 December 2025
<b>Level of Influence:</b>	Consult
<b>Engagement Activities:</b>	Engagement methods used: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Posters</li> <li>- Social media posts</li> <li>- Website content</li> <li>- Our Bright Green Future E-newsletter</li> </ul>
<b>Communication reach and engagement numbers:</b>	Project page received 248 views and eight formal submissions were received. While overall participation numbers were modest the submissions were detailed and high quality.



<b>Summary of feedback:</b>	<p>Overall feedback was constructive and supportive of Council's sustainability direction.</p> <p>Key themes included a need for stronger and more transparent monitoring and reporting.</p> <p>Submissions highlighted the need for a stronger focus on climate change adaptation and community resilience, particularly in supporting vulnerable communities.</p> <p>Attachment 2 contains a full summary of the feedback and officer response.</p>
<b>Proposed changes</b>	<p>In response to community feedback, officers have revised the Strategy and Action Plan. A key change in response to feedback is the introduction of a new theme of Community Mobilisation and Resilience to strengthen the focus on climate change adaptation, community resilience and health aspects. Further, the Strategy has been revised to provide clarity on the role between operational and strategic actions to reassure submitters that necessary on-ground action will not be reduced. The revised Strategy also addresses the submissions by clarifying and enhancing monitoring and reporting commitments.</p>

### Links to Community Vision, Council Plan, Strategy, Notice of Motion

97. This report is consistent with the following principles in the Community Vision 2040:

- Sustainable environment.
- Mind, body and spirit.

98. This report is consistent with the following strategic objectives from the Council Plan 2025-29:

- A socially connected, safe and healthy city.
- A city that respects and celebrates diversity, our history and the arts.
- A city of accessible, vibrant centres and places.
- A green city committed to a sustainable future.
- A city that supports business, entrepreneurship, quality education and employment outcomes.
- A Council that demonstrates leadership, responsible use of public resources, and a commitment to investing in the community.



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## Legislative and Policy Obligations

99. This report has considered Council's legislative and policy obligations (where applicable) as outlined in the Report Considerations section detailed in the front of this Agenda. The applicable obligations considered and applied are:

- The Overarching Governance Principles of the *Local Government Act 2020*.
- The Gender *Equality Act 2020*.
- Victorian *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities 2006*.
- Climate Change and Sustainability.
- Related Council Policies, Strategies or Frameworks.

## Officer's Response to Councillor Alternate Motion (10 November 2025)

At the Council meeting on 10 November 2025, Councillors resolved to:

**Requests that officers investigate the inclusion of the following additions to amend the Strategy prior to adoption to strengthen alignment with the Victorian Climate Change Act 2017 and ensure measurable outcomes, by including the following additions:**

### **1. Emissions baseline and reduction trajectory aligned with State targets**

In 2020 Council declared a climate and ecological emergency and adopted a net zero operational emissions target of 2025. This was an ambitious target and recognised the urgent need to reduce our contribution to and limit the effects of climate change on our community. Since then, Council has achieved approximately eighty (80) percent reduction in operational emissions in line with the *Climate Emergency Strategy 2020-30*. This has positioned Greater Dandenong as one of the leading performing Council's in terms of emissions reductions.

Recognising the target's ambition, Council officers have continued finding cost effective ways to reduce our emissions. As we get closer to net zero operational emissions, we are challenged with high costs and technological barriers. While Council could achieve net zero as planned, our understanding of offsetting emissions has evolved since the target was set. Offsets are not seen as a financially valuable or impactful option given the increasing and ongoing costs of offsets. Officer preference is to seek emission reduction as the primary action to mitigate our direct contribution to climate change. Officers are recommending an updated target of 2035 (subject to appropriate funding being made available) to account for the significant financial resources required to remove remaining emissions.

The revised approach recognises the need to reduce emissions and remains more ambitious than the Victorian State Government and Federal Government net zero targets which are 2045 and 2050 respectively. While officers are recommending a more ambitious target, the proposed target aligns with the *Victorian Climate Change Strategy 2026-30* objectives by recognising the need for urgent action, advocating for stronger sustainable building requirements, promoting and adopting the use of renewable energies in Council operations and the community, and supporting business and community climate action. The Victorian State Government targets apply across Victoria as a whole, and local governments are both required and encouraged to act in ways that address local risks and embrace opportunities. The *Climate Change Act 2017* and the *Local Government Act 2020* support councils to adopt stronger climate action to protect long term community wellbeing. By setting a target ahead of the Victorian State Government trajectory and net zero target, Council is recognising the need for stronger commitments, contributing positively to Victoria's broader transition and reinforcing statewide climate objectives. -term community wellbeing. By

Officers recommend that Council continues to pursue a more ambitious target than the Victorian State Government target, noting that Council has already achieved approximately 80 percent reduction in emissions, and also acknowledging that some of the remaining emissions are costly to remove, and will most likely be subject to external funding being made available.

To better inform Council's transition to zero emissions, and in response to a Councillor request, officers have been working on a net zero transition plan. This project will inform tangible actions on how we are to achieve net zero in the target timeframe, including an informed cost benefit analysis of different scenarios available to Council. As the analysis for this project is still underway, trajectory targets at this stage would not be fully informed. Officers plan to come back to Council and present the direction and options on how to reduce emissions over the next 10 years.

This approach ensures tangible decisions are made towards net zero, while allowing flexibility based on project relevance, long term asset planning and renewals, and funding opportunities through Councils budget and grant opportunities.

## **2. Climate adaptation and health resilience indicators**

Officers recognise the importance of strengthening this area, especially given the social, health and economic implications of climate risks. In response, the revised Strategy will introduce a new theme, '**Community Mobilisation and Resilience**'. This theme will outline the community's role in climate action and Council's role in enabling communities to prepare for, respond to and recover from climate change impacts. This theme will bring together actions that support and empower community adaptation and resilience.

Actions that support community mobilisation and resilience have been revised or reallocated where relevant for this theme. Some examples of relevant actions include:

*Advocacy 1: Advocate for increased investment in climate resilient infrastructure that reduces the impact of climate change on the community health and wellbeing.*

Community Mobilisation and Resilience Action:

*3. Develop partnerships with community organisations to focus on leadership and capacity building of community members.*

*4. Review and strengthen council's climate change hazard preparedness and emergency management response planning of more frequent and extreme weather events and increase involvement of the community in these planning processes to improve community resilience.*

*8. Engage young people on Council programs and activities relating to climate change and sustainability*

*12. In partnership with the South East Business Network (SEBN) and South East Melbourne Manufacturers Alliance (SEMMA), proactively identify and implement*

*measures within existing forums to enhance local business awareness and preparedness for the impacts of climate change.*

This updated structure aims to provide stronger visibility of the social and health related impacts of climate change and mobilise community-focused climate adaptation. In addition, it ensures a coordinated and integrated approach across all aspects of Community Mobilisation and Resilience in Council's decision-making.

Officers have revised the Strategy to:

- Address increasing risks to community health, social wellbeing, and access and inclusion throughout the Strategy.
- Introduce a new Community Mobilisation and Resilience section to:
  - Highlight the community's role in climate action.
  - Outline Council's role in mobilising community action
  - Provide clearer guidance on adaptation measures.
- Revise actions under the Sustainability across Greater Dandenong to reflect the new Community Mobilisation and Resilience theme in the Action Plan.
- Revise the Sustainability Across Greater Dandenong theme to have a governance focus, moving the people and community context to the newly created 'Community Mobilisation and Resilience' theme.

### **3. Equity and inclusion lens in planning and evaluation**

Climate adaptation is not only an environmental issue but also a significant public health and social equity priority. This is especially true for communities more exposed to climate change risks and those with less ability and fewer resources available to adapt. Greater Dandenong is the most culturally diverse community in Australia, bringing rich stories and lived experience. It is also one of the most socially disadvantaged municipalities in Victoria, with our community facing significant vulnerability to climate change due to high socio-economic disadvantage, barriers of access, health inequities and poor housing conditions. These factors increase the impact of climate change related risks on those in our community, including people living with disabilities, low- income households, renters, recently arrived refugees and asylum seekers, and multicultural communities.

The Strategy and Action Plan has applied an equity and inclusion lens throughout planning and evaluation by incorporating actions and associated measures that prioritise both understanding and working with vulnerable groups, ensuring accessible communication, fostering inclusive and diverse participation in climate action. This approach recognises Greater Dandenong's diversity and enables Council to respond to the differing needs of our diverse community based on the action review process. It ensures climate action is fair, inclusive and responsive to the needs of those most at risk.

While the Strategy embeds climate change considerations across all themes, Officers have revised the Strategy to strengthen its focus on equity and inclusion by:

- Revising the Climate Change, Community Snapshot and Challenges sections to acknowledge the impacts of climate change and better reflect the barriers faced by vulnerable groups.
- Revising the Strategy to adopt a clearer position on community led adaptation that strengthens health equity and resilience.
- Introduce a new theme: '**Community Mobilisation and Resilience**'. This theme aims to address the community's role in climate adaptation and how Council can support community mobilisation.
  - It will address the expected climate impacts on community health, social wellbeing and demonstrate how Council and the community can support populations most at risk of climate impacts.
  - The theme will include actions that improve Council's understanding of the different impacts climate related risks have on diverse groups (some examples are listed below). This knowledge will be used in Action Plan reviews to ensure actions are delivering equitable health and resilience outcomes.

Examples of Community Mobilisation and Resilience actions that support understanding of climate related risks and impacts on diverse groups:

- *Action 2: Enable opportunities for consultation and engagement on sustainability and climate change with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations to increase Council's awareness of their needs and priorities.*
- *Action 6: Council to increase its understanding of the unique needs of different members of the community, and to facilitate strategic partnerships, including with the multicultural community, young people, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, people with a disability, and the business sector to inform climate related engagement.*
- *Action 7: Collaborate with key partners to ensure information regarding sustainability and climate change is translated into community languages, to improve accessibility.*

#### **4. Establishment of a Community Climate Advisory Group**

Council adopted the revised Terms of Reference for the Sustainability Advisory Committee (SAC) on 27 October 2025. The SAC is a platform for community members to actively contribute to projects focused on sustainability, climate action, biodiversity, circular economy and community engagement. The primary objective of the SAC is to support Council's vision of being a green city committed to a sustainable future.

SAC members will:

- Champion, advocate and promote sustainability across the City of Greater Dandenong, highlighting Council and community achievements
- Provide Council with balanced advice and support on sustainability matters relevant to the local community.
- Engage and build the capacity of community stakeholders to support climate mitigation and adaptation.

- Foster meaningful partnerships between community groups, businesses and all levels of government.

Climate adaptation and resilience are critical priorities for the proposed Strategy and are not treated as standalone matters. In developing the proposed Strategy, officers have integrated climate change considerations across the entire document, rather than insulating them within a single theme. Instead, these are connected across all themes.

A key intention of the proposed Strategy was to bring all of Council's climate, sustainability and environmental approaches under one umbrella. This approach recognises climate change affects all aspects of community life and Council operations. Members of the SAC will play an integral role in supporting Council to deliver a broad range of actions under the proposed Strategy and Action Plan, including actions specific to climate change adaptation and resilience.

Officers recommend progressing with the SAC as adopted at the 27 October 2025 Council meeting. The SAC will play an important role in engaging with community on sustainability matters, including climate change impacts and the implementation of actions set out in the Strategy.

## **5. Funding and partnership framework**

Sustainability action is a shared responsibility across Council staff and Councillors. Each action in the proposed Action Plan has a lead and support team identified for its successful implementation. This internal partnership approach is already well established and supports strong collaboration between all teams. In addition, actions under Advocacy clearly identify the purpose, enabling Council to take opportunities to advocate in a variety of formats to deliver these actions.

The proposed Action Plan has been drafted to be clear, measurable and relevant. It recognises to deliver these actions and transition to net zero Council requires significant forward planning. In response it presents a structured approach with clearly defined milestones, realistic timeframes, defined performance measures, shared priorities and clear responsibilities.

The proposed Strategy and Action Plan ensure Council meets its climate change obligations while remaining financially responsible. Most actions require minimal investment, with only a small number needing significant funding.

- Delivery of the Action Plan (excluding net zero actions and the Active Transport Priority Program): approximately \$1.1 million over 10 years (average \$110,000 per year). Currently, this can be funded through existing department operational budgets.
- Active Transport Priority Program: estimate cost \$650, 000 per year over 10 years.
- Achieving net zero emissions: estimated additional \$17 million in capital investment.

Officers recognise that while this represents a considerable financial commitment overall, timely action is critical given worsening global climate conditions. Transitioning to net zero emissions

is a key principle of this Strategy and will require long-term financial planning and additional funding.

It is also acknowledged that external funding is likely to be required to be able to implement some of the more costly actions. To this extent, several actions provide opportunities for Council to partner with government and/ or the private sector to achieve the outcomes sought by the actions. Examples of these include:

- advocating to State and Federal government for increased investment in batteries and other renewable energy sources for both public infrastructure and private properties (Advocacy 6)
- partnering with the Victorian Energy Collaboration to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from Council's streetlights and buildings (Sustainable Design, Asset and Infrastructure Planning 1).
- enhance local business awareness and preparedness for the impacts of climate change in partnership with the South East Business Network (SEBN) and South East Melbourne Manufacturers Alliance (SEMMA) (Community Mobilisation and Resilience 12).

Further potential partnership opportunities will be identified when detailed work commences on the relevant actions.

In addition, the Strategy and Action Plan has been updated to:

- Revise the Action Plan to identify agencies or roles to target in advocacy actions
- Update the Sustainability across Greater Dandenong and Advocacy themes to outline the role of grant funding in the Action Plan. This section will identify the significant financial barriers to achieve net zero in Council operations and highlight how Council can best position itself to maximise funding opportunities from external sources.
- Update the Sustainability across Greater Dandenong theme to highlight the importance of inter-departmental collaboration to achieve the vision of the proposed Strategy.

## **6. Quantified, transparent public reporting of performance data.**

The Monitoring and Reporting section of the proposed Strategy outlines the approach that will be taken to ensure quantified, transparent public reporting throughout the implementation of the proposed Action Plan.

The Action Plan has been developed to be clear, measurable and relevant, ensuring each action includes defined performance measures to monitor its implementation and outcome. As a Priority Strategy under the Integrated Planning Framework, the proposed Action Plan will be reviewed every four (4) years.

This process will:

- Report the status of all actions
- Ensure alignment with the Council Plan and the objectives of each theme
- Confirm the actions and objectives remain clear, measurable and relevant

In addition, an annual update will share achievements of the past 12 months and progress on actions undertaken in that year, including key advocacy work completed. These annual reports will include quantified performance data against progressed actions where relevant and available. The Action Plan will be incorporated into Council's annual Council Plan reporting process to assist with the timely implementation.

These commitments help support transparency and accountability by ensuring key progress made against the actions is reported annually, and the Action Plan is reviewed every four years. This progress will be published on Council's website for the community to monitor.

One action under the Sustainability across Greater Dandenong theme demonstrates there will be an internal working group established to oversee the implementation of the proposed Action Plan.

A full review of the proposed Strategy and Action Plan will occur in 2036 and will evaluate the effectiveness of the objectives and actions. This approach ensures Council remains progressive, flexible and adaptable over the ten-year lifetime to broader influences such as new technology, opportunities to link projects, available funding, and changing priorities caused by external impacts.

To address concerns raised, officers will:

- Update the Monitoring and Reporting section to:
  - clarify the duration and review cycle of the Action Plan.
  - Outline the role of the Action Plan as a strategic decision-making framework for operational planning.
- Add a new action to Sustainability across Greater Dandenong to investigate opportunities to improve reporting of performance data
- Review the Baselines, Measures, Commencement and Completion dates in the Action Plan to support clear implementation and accountability.

## Community Consultation Feedback

Council would like to thank all community members who engaged with the draft *Our Bright Green Future (OBGF) Strategy and Action 2026-36*. Your time, expertise and passion for sustainability in Greater Dandenong is highly valued, and the feedback received has played an important role in refining the draft Strategy and Action Plan.

This document provides a detailed summary of what we heard from the community, the key themes that emerged, and how Council has responded.

### **About the consultation**

Public consultation on the draft *Our Bright Green Future Strategy and Action Plan 2026-36* (the draft Strategy and Action Plan) was undertaken through Council's Have Your Say platform. Consultation was open for a period of four weeks from 17 November to 12 December 2025. The consultation was promoted through Council's Have Your Say page, social media platforms, Our Bright Green Future e-newsletter, Council News, posters in our Customer Service Centres and libraries, and directly to various community groups.

- The project page received 248 views
- Eight formal submissions were received

While the number of submissions was modest, the quality of feedback was high. Submissions demonstrated a strong understanding of sustainability policy, local government responsibilities and the challenges of delivering long-term environmental outcomes in a growing and diverse municipality.

Council carefully reviewed all submissions in detail. Several consistent themes emerged, particularly around implementation, reporting, community led climate adaptation, and the relationship between strategic direction and on-ground delivery.

## What we heard

### 1. Reporting and accountability

The strongest and most consistent theme across submissions related to reporting and accountability.

Community members highlighted the importance of moving beyond reporting achievements alone and called for:

- Clear progress updates on actions
- Quantified performance data against agreed measures
- Publicly accessible reporting that enables the community to track progress over time

Feedback reflected a desire for transparency that demonstrates not only success, but also challenges, delays and areas where further resourcing may be required.

### What is being done?

As a Priority Strategy under Council's Integrated Planning Framework, the Strategy establishes a ten-year direction for Council and provides a clear strategic context for decision-making and operational planning.

The Monitoring and Reporting section ensure the Action Plan aligns with the objectives of the Greater Dandenong Council Plan 2025-29 and reflects Council and community priorities for the 2025–29 period. The Action Plan has been developed to be clear, measurable and relevant, ensuring each action in the Action Plan includes defined performance measures to monitor its implementation and outcome. The proposed monitoring and reporting commitments help support transparency and accountability by ensuring key progress made against the actions is reported annually, and the Action Plan is reviewed every four years.

The annual update will share achievements of the past 12 months and progress on actions undertaken in that year, including key advocacy work completed. These annual reports will include quantified performance data against progressed actions where relevant and available. The Action Plan will be incorporated into Council's annual Council Plan reporting process to assist with the timely implementation.

The Action Plan will be reviewed every four years align to with each updated Council Plan (and incorporated Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan). As part of this review, the status of all actions will be reported on, and the Action Plan will be updated to support continued implementation of the Strategy and Council priorities through to

2036. This information, along with each yearly update will be published on Council's website for the community to monitor.

This approach enables Council to stay flexible and adapt to broader influences such as new technology, opportunities to link projects, available funding, and changing priorities caused by external impacts.

Council is committed to strengthening reporting and transparency and will investigate available tools and options to track Action Plan progress and provide clearer, publicly accessible reporting over time.

The revised Strategy will:

- Update the Monitoring and Reporting section to:
  - Clarify the duration and review cycle of the Action Plan
  - Outline the content of the annual update report
- Add a new action in the 'Sustainability across Greater Dandenong' theme to investigate opportunities to improve reporting of performance data.

## **2. Visibility of on-ground action and the relationship to core services**

A consistent theme across submissions was concern that the draft Strategy appeared to include less detail about practical, on-ground actions compared to previous plans. This was noted particularly in relation to biodiversity programs such as tree planting, habitat restoration and urban greening, but also referred to waste management and circular economy initiatives. Submissions noted that the absence of explicit reference to these activities created uncertainty about their ongoing status, with some expressing concern that important environmental work could be perceived as being reduced, given less priority or discontinued.

The submissions indicated that the distinction between strategic actions and business-as-usual functions was not always clear. The feedback highlighted a strong expectation that strategic documents clearly demonstrate how high-level objectives translate into tangible, on-ground outcomes. Submissions also questioned how strategic direction, operational planning and day-to-day delivery work together to achieve long-term environmental outcomes.

### **What is being done?**

The proposed Strategy and Action Plan has been informed by:

- *Growing Nature Together, Council's Biodiversity Action Plan 2023-25* (the Biodiversity Action Plan)
- *Draft Greater Dandenong Waste and Litter Strategy 2020-25*
- *Greater Dandenong Urban Forest Strategy 2021-28*; and
- Councils existing and draft climate, sustainability and environmental strategies and plans.

The Action Plan has captured the strategic objectives of these documents, and integrated actions relating to circular economy, and preserving and enhancing biodiversity and tree canopy in Greater Dandenong. The Strategy is intended as a strategic framework, guiding our long-term priorities and strategic objectives. The proposed actions focus on strengthening our regional partnerships, monitoring and enhancing tree canopy and biodiversity, fostering care and connection with the community, promoting circular economy principles and investigating opportunities to establish new wildlife links.

For these topics, Council's strategic decision making will now be informed by the proposed Strategy and Action Plan. This has not changed the day-to-day established activities (such as waste education, revegetation, habitat restoration, and tree planting). These actions remain a core function of Council's operational plans.

Biodiversity was a key concern for submitters. Council will continue protecting and enhancing our biodiversity through our operational programs, maintenance and enhancement of our open spaces and streets. We are committed to being a City that cares for and connects with nature.

In response to the submissions that spoke to biodiversity, the revised Action Plan will provide updates to the following actions under the Biodiversity theme:

Action Number	Proposed Change
5	Update wording of Baseline section - Investigation of opportunities complete by 2029
5	Update wording of Measure section – Review measurement once baseline established in 2029.
4	Updated wording to “Develop a monitoring and evaluation framework to measure biodiversity within Greater Dandenong, <u>including the establishment of baseline biodiversity metrics</u> ”
4	Updated Baseline to “Implementation of framework by 2028”
4	Updated Measure to “Review measurement once baseline established in 2028”

### **3. Consolidation of multiple strategies into a single document**

Feedback was provided on the decision to consolidate seven (7) previously endorsed or draft strategies into one strategy.

Some community members expressed concern that combining multiple topic-specific strategies may reduce the level of detail or ambition that existed in earlier documents, particularly in areas such as biodiversity, climate action, trees and greening, and community mobilisation.

Submissions noted that while consolidation can improve clarity and alignment, it must be balanced with sufficient detail to maintain confidence in Council's commitments and delivery.

#### **What is being done?**

We acknowledge by consolidating the seven (7) existing or draft Strategies and Action Plans that it could appear to be reducing the level of detail or ambition.

The intent of developing one overarching strategy was not to step back from ambition. Rather, the Strategy has directly responded to the Council endorsed Integrated Planning Framework and become a Priority Strategy that positions sustainability as a critical focus area for Council. It consolidates Council's climate change, environment and sustainability intentions under one umbrella to provide strategic guidance and ensure actions are clear, measurable and relevant.

As a Priority Strategy, the Strategy represents the next step in Council's response to the declared climate emergency, maintaining a strong level of ambition while remaining grounded in strategic direction. It sets clear, long-term priorities for each theme, ensuring Council remains committed to action on climate change.

Business-as-usual approaches will continue to be addressed through operational plans. By focusing on a strategic level, the Strategy provides a framework for coordinated decision making. This is supported by clear, measurable and relevant actions that enable transparent monitoring and reporting and ensure accountability over the life of the Strategy and Action Plan.

Previous existing and draft strategies and action plans included more than 500 actions. A significant proportion of these actions are considered business-as-usual activities embedded within everyday operations. Retaining all actions within a single document

was therefore assessed as impractical and reduced Council's ability to effectively prioritise actions, monitor progress, and deliver meaningful outcomes.

The revised Strategy will update the Monitoring and Reporting section to improve understanding on how the Strategy's objectives are being implemented in practice. This will include an explanation on relevant supporting plans and reporting mechanisms that support the Strategy and Action Plan.

#### **4. Climate change adaptation and community resilience**

Climate change adaptation and resilience emerged as a key area of interest, particularly in relation to community impacts.

Submissions emphasised Council's role in mobilising the community to adapt to climate change as the level of government closest to the community. The feedback highlighted Council's responsibility to support residents, especially vulnerable and disadvantaged groups to respond to climate impacts such as extreme heat, health risks, cost-of-living pressures and the social disruption caused by these events.

Feedback suggested that a more visible or dedicated focus on community climate adaptation and resilience could strengthen the Strategy's clarity, ambition and alignment with best practice.

#### **What is being done?**

Climate adaptation and resilience are critical priorities, especially in addressing health, social and economic impacts on disadvantaged and vulnerable communities.

A key intention of developing this Strategy was to bring Council's climate change, environmental and sustainability related objectives under one umbrella, with a consistent vision. This process recognised climate change as a consistent underlying challenge being addressed by these documents. In response we have taken a best-practice approach by integrating climate change considerations across all themes rather than isolating them within a single theme. This approach is intended to ensure that climate resilience is considered across community wellbeing, infrastructure, planning, services and the natural environment, reflecting the integrated nature of climate risks and responses.

That said, we acknowledge the feedback that a dedicated focus on community climate adaptation and resilience may enhance clarity, ambition and visibility, particularly in relation to community health, social equity and ecosystem resilience.

The revised Strategy will:

- Include a new theme, titled 'Community Mobilisation and Resilience' that will outline the community's role in climate action and Council's role in enabling communities to prepare for, respond to and recover from climate impacts.
- Revise the Action Plan to bring together actions that support and empower community adaptation and resilience.
- Revise the Sustainability Across Greater Dandenong theme to have a governance focus, moving the people and community context to the newly created 'Community Mobilisation and Resilience' theme.
- Strengthen the climate emergency context for Greater Dandenong by addressing risks to community health, social wellbeing, and access and inclusion.

### **5. Implementation, governance and timeframes**

Overall, submitters supported a long-term strategic approach, while seeking clearer explanations of how actions will be prioritised and delivered, including whether the Action Plan has sufficient budget to be delivered in full.

Specifically, submissions raised questions about:

- How the Strategy and Action Plan will be implemented
- The naming and structure of themes, objectives and actions
- Council's internal capacity and resourcing to deliver the Strategy
- The structure of the Strategy and Action Plan

### **What is being done?**

A key intention in developing the Strategy was to strengthen the strategic framework for Council's climate and sustainability action. Accordingly, the Action Plan has been drafted to provide a strategic decision-making framework that guides operational planning and delivery. This approach enables Council to stay flexible and adapt to broader influences such as new technology, opportunities to link projects, available funding, and changing priorities caused by external impacts. The use of 'objectives' and 'actions' in the Our Bright Green Future Strategy is consistent with Council's Integrated Planning Framework.

Implementation of the proposed Strategy and Action Plan is a whole-of-Council responsibility, reflecting sustainability as a critical focus area across all departments. Each action has an assigned lead department and expected delivery timeframe. The Action Plan has been developed to be clear, measurable and relevant. The majority of

actions can be delivered within existing budgets and staff resourcing, with only a small number requiring significant additional investment.

In response to the level of operational resourcing required, over recent years Council has increased capacity within the Strategic and Environmental Planning department through the addition of a Senior Climate Change Action Officer, Senior Sustainability Planner, Principal Strategic Waste Management Officer and Project Officer Kerbside Waste Reform. This expansion has strengthened the diversity of skills within the team and increased the range of priority projects that can be delivered. However, responsibility for the Action Plan falls to multiple departments, including the Strategic and Environmental Planning department and will be monitored by an internal working group made up of key responsible officers.

The proposed Action Plan balances Council's climate change obligations and community expectations with financial responsibility. Delivery remains subject to Council endorsement through future annual budgets, the Long-Term Financial Plan, and the availability of grant funding and other external funding sources.

The revised Strategy will:

- Update the Monitoring and Reporting section to:
  - Clarify the duration and review cycle of the Action Plan
  - Outline the role of the Action Plan as a strategic decision-making framework for operational planning
- Review the Baselines, Measures, Commencement and Completion dates in the Action Plan to support clear and accountable delivery.

## Next Steps

Council has reviewed all submissions in detail and considered how community feedback can be incorporated to strengthen the clarity, accountability and effectiveness of the *Draft Our Bright Green Future Strategy and Action Plan 2026-36*.

A final version of the proposed Strategy and Action Plan that considers and responds to the feedback received will be presented to Council for adoption in March 2026.

We sincerely thank all community members who participated in the consultation process. Your feedback has helped ensure *Our Bright Green Future* provides a clear, strong, measurable, and relevant framework to guide sustainability outcomes for Greater Dandenong over the coming decade.



**\*STRATEGY TO BE GRAPHICALLY DESIGNED FOLLOWING COUNCIL ADOPTION**

## Acknowledgement of Country

Greater Dandenong City Council acknowledges and pays respects to the Bunurong people of the Kulin Nation, as the Traditional Custodians of the lands and waters in and around Greater Dandenong.

We value and recognise local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultures, heritage, and connection to land as a proud part of a shared identity for Greater Dandenong.

Greater Dandenong City Council pays respect to Elders past and present and recognises their importance in maintaining knowledge, traditions, and Culture in our Community.

Greater Dandenong City Council also respectfully acknowledges the Bunurong Land Council Aboriginal Corporation (BLCAC) as the Registered Aboriginal Party responsible for managing the Aboriginal Cultural heritage of the land and waters where Greater Dandenong is situated.

*Front cover photo credit: Jarrah Simao*

Greater Dandenong Draft Our Bright Green Future Strategy

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## Mayors Message

TBA

## Junior Mayor Message

TBA

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## Introduction

Climate change is no longer a distant issue. It is shaping our lives, our health, our finances, and the places we call home. In the City of Greater Dandenong, we are seeing these impacts worsen every year through increasing demands on our natural resources, more frequent extreme weather events, and rising cost of living placing growing pressure on our community's ability to adapt.

Council has a long history of commitment to climate action through sustainability initiatives and environmental stewardship. Council declared a climate and ecological emergency in 2020 and has been laying the foundations for long-term sustainability action. The climate and ecological crises bring an urgent need to strengthen our journey of sustainability and climate action.

*Our Bright Green Future* (the Strategy) builds on that progress and expectations from the community by establishing a clear direction that represents Council's next step in responding to the declared climate and ecological emergency.

The Council Plan 2025-29 sets a new Integrated Planning Framework to guide the development of Council's key documents. To align with this Framework, Council has consolidated our previous sustainability related strategies into one. This approach reduces duplication, sets one direction, and ensures our actions are clear, measurable, and relevant. By focusing our efforts, we can take timely and decisive action to deliver stronger outcomes for both the community and the environment.

*Our Bright Green Future* vision is for the City of Greater Dandenong to be:

*A green city committed to a sustainable future.*

The purpose of *Our Bright Green Future* is to build upon Council's commitment, lead our community's sustainability action and foster environmental stewardship. It provides the direction needed to bring this vision to life through practical action, Council leadership, and community collaboration.

This Strategy is both a roadmap and an invitation. A roadmap because it sets out the measurable steps we will take to cut emissions, adapt to the climate emergency, deliver better community health and wellbeing outcomes, and protect our natural assets. An invitation because it calls on everyone in our community to care for the environment, and to be part of the solution. Together, we can shape a bright, green, sustainable future.

## Integrated Planning Framework

Council’s Integrated Planning Framework (IPF) outlines Council’s planning in the long, medium, and short term. The *Local Government Act 2020 (LG Act)* requires all Councils to adopt an integrated approach to planning, monitoring, and performance reporting to achieve the best outcomes for the community and consistency in planning. The Act also requires Councils to mitigate and plan for climate change risks in its decision making.

The IPF (Figure 1) guides the creation of strategies and plans, ensuring their alignment with both strategic and operational priorities.

Our Bright Green Future (the Strategy) is a ‘Priority Strategy’ for Council. This means it provides strategic guidance on a critical focus area for Council. It enables Council to achieve its long-term vision and objectives and service commitments with sustainability recognised as a critical part of decision making.

A Priority Strategy includes an Action Plan that aligns with Council’s Long Term Financial Plan and 10-year Asset Plan. The Strategy links directly to the Community Vision that:

- *Our community is healthy, vibrant, innovative, and creative; and*
- *Our city is committed to environmental sustainability.*

The Strategy responds to the strategic objectives of the Council Plan 2025-29, and adopts one objective as its vision:

- *a green city committed to a sustainable future.*

It addresses the key health and wellbeing aspirations of our community by:

- *increasing community resilience and the health co-benefits of adapting to the impacts of climate change.*

Through the Greater Dandenong People’s Panel, we heard that our community want:

- *A Council that demonstrates leadership, responsible use of public resources, and a commitment to investing in the community.*

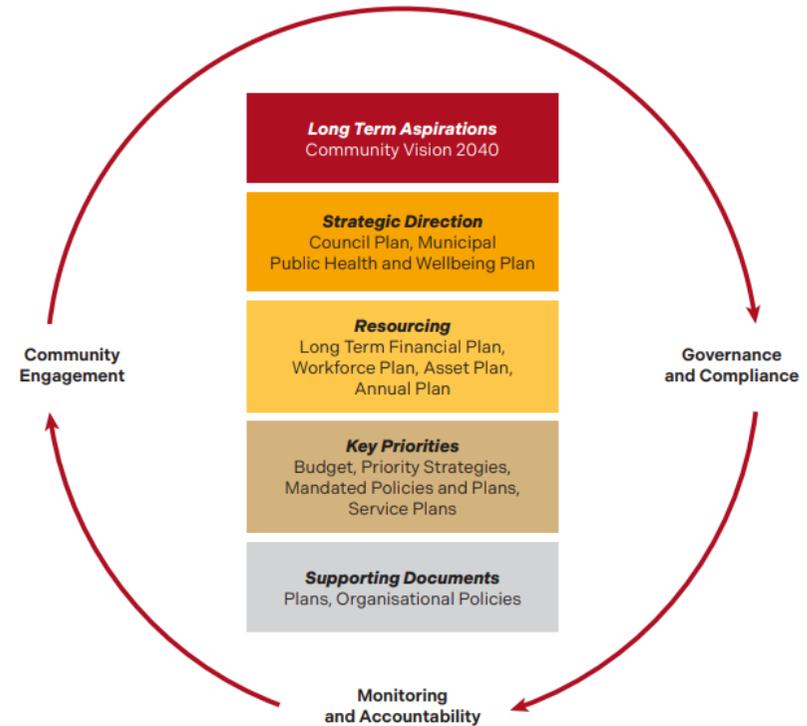


Figure 1. Integrated Planning Framework

The Strategy addresses this by committing to sustainability initiatives that lead innovation, deliver direct benefits to community, including our business sector, and strengthen Council's and the community's resilience to the climate emergency.

## Consolidating Council's Sustainability Response

Since Council declared a climate and ecological emergency in 2020, a lot has happened. With the adoption of a new Council Plan, Council has reaffirmed its commitment to being a green city with a sustainable future. This means we consider the environment and climate change in every decision we make to deliver a sustainable and resilient future for our community and our natural environment.

To align with the new Integrated Planning Framework (IPF), Council has consolidated its previous eight sustainability-related strategies into one (see Figure 2). This approach delivers a consistent direction for Council's commitment and enables it to better lead and mobilise our communities' response, to overall



Figure 2: Existing sustainability related strategies consolidated to inform Our Bright Green Future

### ATT 4.1.1.3 Draft Our Bright Green Future Strategy

environmental sustainability. The Action Plan shifts from an operational to strategic focus to align with the IPF, reduces duplication and ensures our actions are clear, measurable, and relevant.

Table 2 outlines the purpose of these strategies. With the guidance of these previous adopted strategies, Council has:

- Switched our electricity to renewable energy.
- Delivered greater biodiversity outcomes, environmental protection and enhancement.
- Greatly improved our energy and resource efficiency.
- Improved the look and feel of our streets through urban greening.
- Increased canopy cover across the municipality.
- Supported community action through Council's climate change grant stream
- Delivered programs and campaigns to inform, educate and empower our community to act on climate change.

Since the adoption of Council's first Environmental Sustainability Strategy in 2010, Council has strengthened its understanding and implementation of sustainability approaches and reporting. In this time, there have been significant advances in technology and changes to policy for Local Government. Council has been establishing baseline data and refining objectives to develop a deeper understanding of what can be quantified and what data is accessible. We have identified challenges with the previous objectives and action plans, including many overlapping, duplicated and business as usual actions. These were taking attention away from objectives and actions that drove strategic action, could be quantified and lead to meaningful change. This has led to challenges reporting meaningful results and progress, despite the significant sustainability progress and achievements Council has made to date.

This Strategy represents a consolidated and strengthened version of Council's existing and draft commitments. Combining the previous strategies supports Council to undertake targeted work and report on key actions that progress Council towards its targets.

**Table 1: Summary of previous sustainability related strategies subject to consolidation.**

PREVIOUS STRATEGY	DESCRIPTION
Sustainability Strategy 2016-30	Provides the strategic framework to achieve our vision of being one of the most sustainable cities in Australia, by informing decision-making and helping to shape the plans and activities undertaken across the municipality and region. This was done by setting strategic organisational and community priorities with clear objectives across holistic social, economic and environmental categories.
Climate Emergency Strategy 2020-30	To guide Council to become a resilient, net zero carbon city with an active community prepared for the challenges of a changing climate. This Strategy was Council’s declaration of the climate emergency and commitment to embedding sustainable practice across the whole organisation.
Biodiversity Action Plan 2023-25	To provide guidance on how to care for nature and how Council will manage, protect and improve biodiversity in the municipality. It is also a call to action for every resident to play their role locally.
Urban Forest Strategy 2021-28	To provide a holistic approach to delivering a healthy, green and resilient urban forest. It is an overarching document to link Greening our City and Greening our Neighbourhoods. Both strategies guide Council’s approach to achieving 15 percent canopy cover by 2028. As this document is overarching, it has not been counted in the seven strategies.
Greening Our City – Urban Tree Strategy 2018-28	Considers the status, issues and opportunities for Council managed trees. It sets a strategic planting plan to ensure trees are planted in locations of greatest need and following a set of best practice technical and management guidelines.
Greening Our Neighbourhoods Strategy 2021-28	Considers trees on privately-owned land, and the role the City of Greater Dandenong community plays in protecting and enhancing canopy cover. It describes the immense social, economic and environmental benefits greening our neighbourhoods can bring.
Draft Waste and Litter Strategy 2021-26	This draft strategy has not been adopted by Council. The draft strategy guides Council’s approach to sustainable waste management. It seeks to reduce the amount of waste sent to landfill, increase community awareness and uptake of resource recovery and waste minimisation, and create clean and litter-free public places.
Draft Climate Change Community Engagement and Mobilisation Plan 2024-29 (CEMP)	This draft plan has not been adopted by Council. A draft framework, guiding Council’s efforts to enhance community engagement and mobilise effective action on climate change. It aimed to increase awareness, engage and support, and empower and encourage community members to take action.

## Climate Change in Greater Dandenong

Climate change is already affecting the people, environment and infrastructure of the City of Greater Dandenong, and these impacts are not experienced equally across the community. Increasingly hot weather, more frequent extreme events, black outs, heatwaves, and environmental degradation are placing growing pressure on community health, local ecosystems and essential services. These pressures are intensified in Greater Dandenong due to existing social and economic inequities, including higher levels of disadvantage, poorer housing quality, and inequitable access to cooling, green spaces and transport.

While climate change affects everyone, it disproportionately impacts vulnerable community members, including older people, children, people with disabilities, culturally and linguistically diverse communities, low-income households and those experiencing social isolation. Many residents face structural barriers that reduce their capacity to prepare for, respond to or recover from worsening climate-related risks.

In response to these escalating and disproportionately distributed risks, Greater Dandenong City Council declared a climate and ecological emergency in 2020. This declaration recognises both the immediate threat climate change poses to community wellbeing and the significant decline in biodiversity locally and across Australia. By declaring a climate and ecological emergency Council acknowledges its responsibility to prioritise those most at risk.

Extreme heat, prolonged dry periods and severe weather are damaging trees, waterways, transport networks, homes and energy systems. These impacts disrupt services, impact resource supply, increase living costs and place additional strain on households already experiencing financial stress, insecure housing or limited access to support.

Climate change is therefore not only an environmental issue, but a growing social and economic challenge that risks widening existing inequalities if not addressed through inclusive and targeted action.

With temperatures rising and climate change impacts already being experienced and expected to worsen, urgent and equitable action is required. Addressing the climate emergency is essential to protect the health and wellbeing of our community, especially our most vulnerable residents. By reducing vulnerability, we aim to ensure all members of the community can access a safe, liveable and thriving future for Greater Dandenong. Council is committed to leading climate action that strengthens resilience and supports those most affected by climate change.

As seen in Figures 3 and 4, the effects of climate change are affecting our local environment and health outcomes.

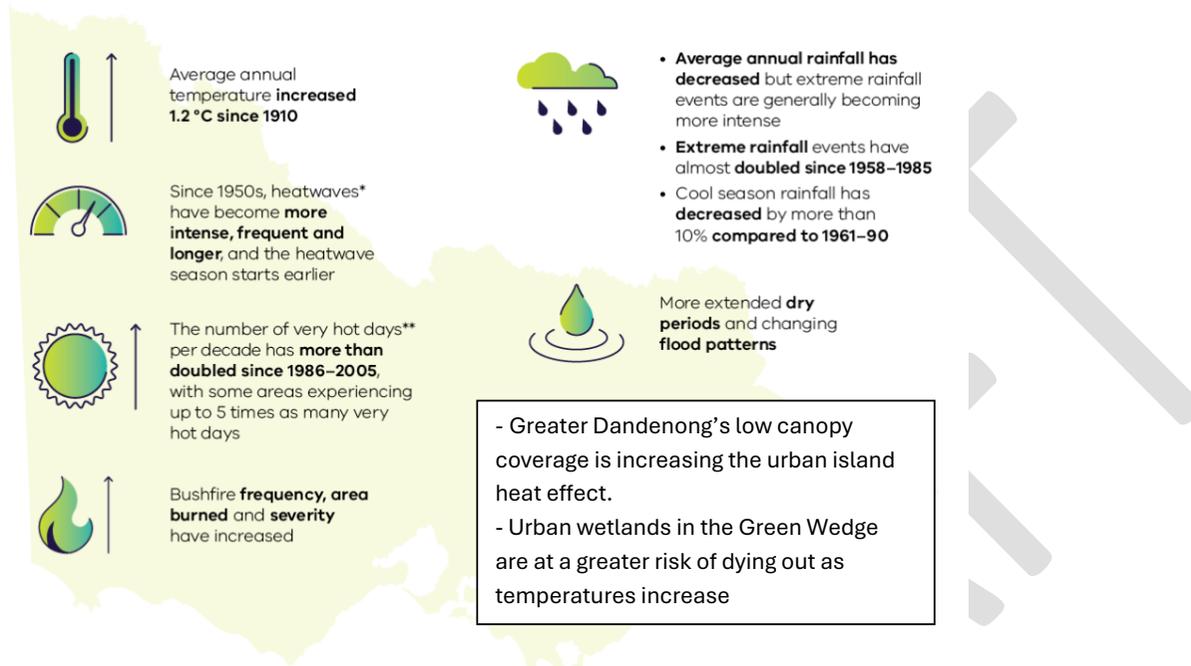


Figure 3: CLIMATE CHANGE IN VICTORIA

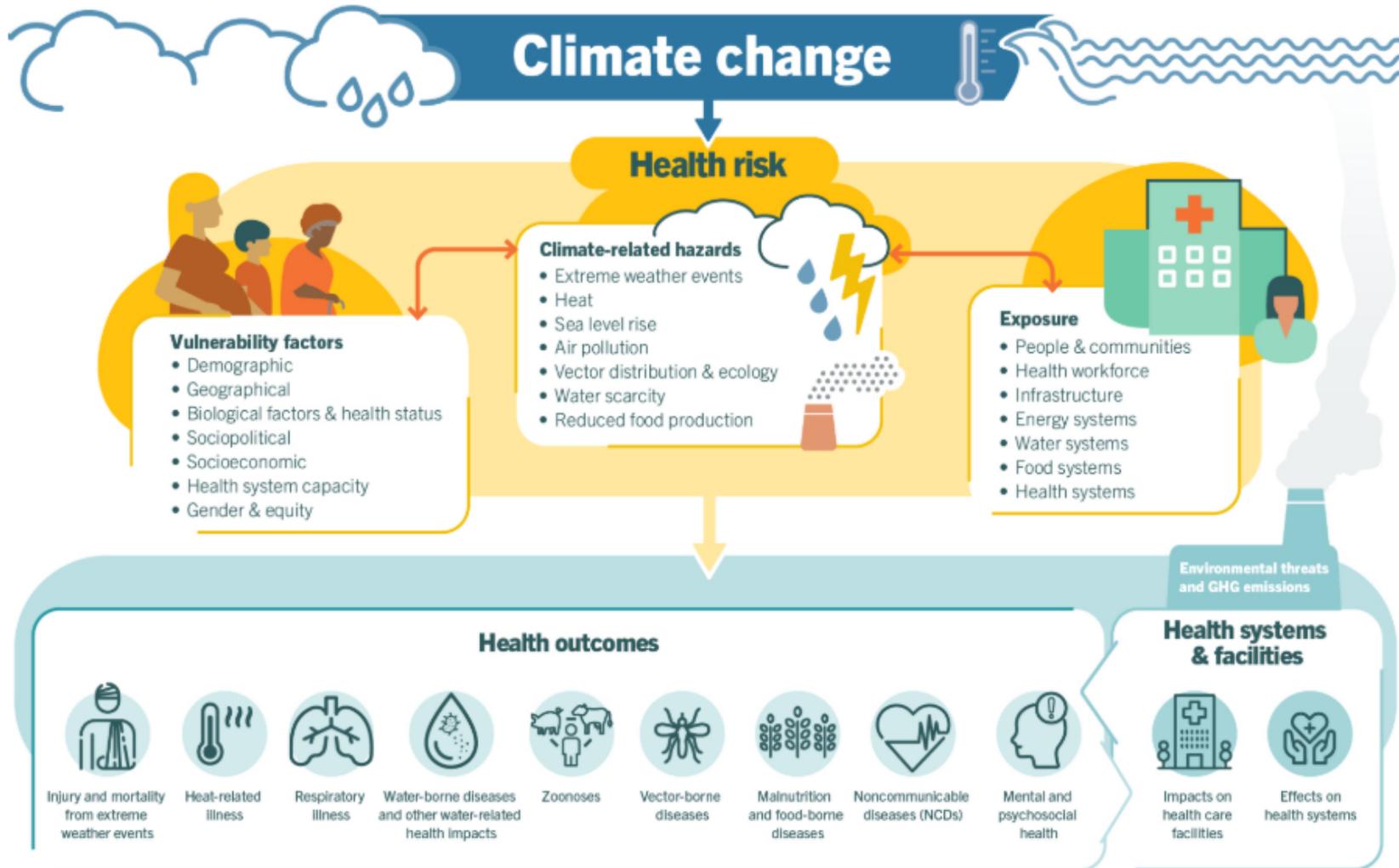
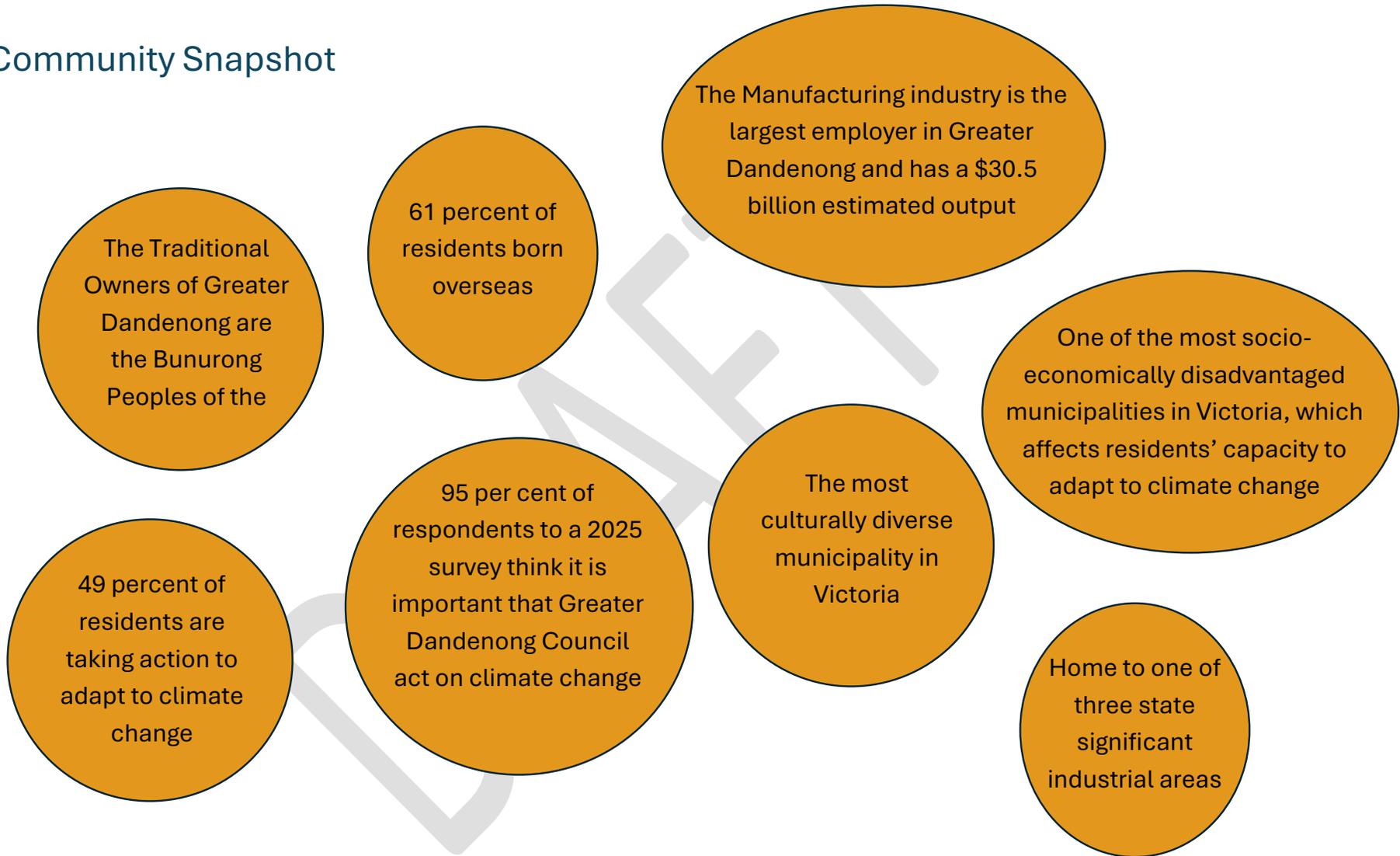


Figure 4: Climate Change Health Impacts

## Community Snapshot



## Challenges

Working towards a sustainable future is not without challenges, especially during uncertain times. This section outlines some of the challenges that Council and our community are facing or will face as climate-related impacts increase.

<b>Challenge snapshot</b>	<b>Detailed description</b>
<b>Heightened climate risk in a disadvantaged community</b>	Our community are at a greater risk to the short and long-term effects of a changing climate. As one of the most socio-economically disadvantaged municipalities in Victoria, our community are struggling to mitigate and adapt to climate change.
<b>Disproportionate impacts on vulnerable people</b>	We know that climate change has a disproportionate impact on vulnerable people. More extreme weather events, increasing temperatures, lack of cool spaces, and poorly insulated housing are all impacts that will be felt more by vulnerable people. This can lead to increased impacts on health and wellbeing, financial stability, equitable access, and social cohesion
<b>Increased risk for people with disabilities and health conditions</b>	Many in our community living with disabilities or health conditions are at a greater risk of illness, serious injury or death during extreme weather events.
<b>Climate change and cost-of-living pressures</b>	The climate emergency is strongly connected to the cost-of-living crisis felt by our community. Our community are feeling the pressure of the cost-of-living crisis. Locally, young people in Greater Dandenong highlighted cost of living and climate change as key concerns in the 2024 Youth Survey. For many, this means the pressure of paying bills and putting food on the table limits the capacity to adapt to long-term environmental issues like climate change.
<b>Long-term behaviour change</b>	Shifting behaviours within our community is a long-term commitment. It takes time to build new habits and pass on knowledge. This requires patience, consistent communication, and community trust.
<b>Uncertainty around rebate schemes</b>	Uncertainty and ease-of-access to rebates and schemes for residents and businesses also poses a challenge to access funding support where needed.
<b>Rising operating costs for local businesses</b>	Rising costs of energy, insurance and goods and services are impacting operational budgets, especially for small and medium businesses. This makes it harder for businesses to invest in sustainable upgrades or transition to renewable energy sources, or infrastructure and equipment that operate with lower emissions.
<b>Resource scarcity and supply chain disruption</b>	Resource scarcity is impacting businesses through supply chain disruptions and higher costs; this is particularly evident during periods of extreme weather.

<b>Challenge snapshot</b>	<b>Detailed description</b>
<b>Climate risk to business operations and assets</b>	Businesses are experiencing increased risk from climate change related impacts such as flooding and heatwaves causing damage to infrastructure and equipment, supply chain disruptions and higher insurance premiums.
<b>Economic and regulatory uncertainty</b>	Evolving regulatory frameworks and uncertainty in global markets and trade, including supply chain disruptions and inflation act as a disincentive and make it harder for businesses to plan long-term investments in sustainability and climate resilience.
<b>Increased demand on Council services</b>	Increased frequency of extreme weather events and emergencies are putting greater strain on Council services. This extends from our Community Care team providing in home care and support for our elderly, young families, and unwell residents, to our libraries and aquatic centres providing cool spaces during heat waves.
<b>Limitations in planning controls</b>	Recent changes to planning laws are limiting Council’s ability to require environmentally sustainable design of higher quality in new developments.
<b>Challenges in transitioning from fossil fuels</b>	Transitioning from fossil fuels presents ongoing financial and technological challenges for hard-to-abate sectors. This includes Council’s fleet of operational and heavy-duty machinery, such as road sweepers, cricket rollers and trucks.
<b>Insufficient government funding support</b>	Limited grant and funding support from State and Federal Governments makes it difficult to complete Council’s transition to net zero and strengthen our action.
<b>Climate impacts on Council assets and infrastructure</b>	Council is experiencing impacts to important assets like roads, trees, water, stormwater drains, and community facilities from extreme weather, rising temperatures and insufficient resource supply. In some instances, this has led to service disruptions, increased costs and pressure on existing assets.
<b>Time lag in urban cooling benefits</b>	While Council is continuing efforts to grow and support our urban forest, the canopy and greening benefits delivered by trees to cool our neighbourhoods is often not realised for ten (10) or more years.

## Opportunities

Despite the challenges, implementing sustainability initiatives presents exciting and meaningful opportunities for the people of Greater Dandenong. By taking strong and targeted sustainability action, we can enjoy benefits that go beyond just environmental protection. Such opportunities are detailed in the table below.

<b>Opportunities snapshot</b>	<b>Detailed description</b>
<b>Improved climate adaptation and wellbeing</b>	Improving the community’s ability to adapt to the effects of climate change leads to better health and wellbeing outcomes, for example staying cool and safe during a heatwave.
<b>Urban canopy improving liveability</b>	Council is working to increase canopy cover. Shaded streets provide cooler and safer streets for active transport to improve physical fitness and mental wellbeing.
<b>Strength in community diversity</b>	Our diversity brings a wealth of knowledge, lived experience and care and connection to the environment.
<b>Equitable access to climate action</b>	Council can harness the strengths of our local community by reducing barriers for our community to participate, such as language and access. Ensuring equitable access can enhance our community’s capacity to prepare for, respond to, and recover from climate related risks.
<b>Community-lead climate action benefits</b>	Climate action by residents contributes to the wider community through social cohesion, improved health and wellbeing and economic benefits for individuals and local businesses.
<b>Resilient infrastructure and services</b>	Embedding sustainability and climate risk considerations into infrastructure planning and decision-making will strengthen resilience to climate related impacts. Proactive action reduces the likelihood and severity of damage, lowers long-term financial costs, and minimises service disruptions, helping to ensure continuity of essential community services.
<b>Empowerment through sustainability action</b>	Being involved in sustainability action empowers people, giving them a platform to actively influence their future which can assist in combating climate anxiety. It also offers valuable skills and experiences, fostering a sense of purpose and responsibility.
<b>Local action delivering healthier places</b>	Direct local action by Council and the community delivers cleaner, cooler and more pleasant spaces, improved physical and mental health, and reduced isolation and loneliness.
<b>Health benefits of low carbon transport</b>	Increased use of low carbon forms of transport will reduce carbon emissions, congestion on the road and air pollution. This can lead to cleaner air and better health, especially for children, the elderly, and those living with health conditions.
<b>Cooling and resilience through greening</b>	Greening and incorporating water sensitive urban design into our neighbourhoods provide cooling benefits, improve biodiversity, increase the community’s resilience to extreme heat events, fosters connection to nature and can increase carbon storage levels.
<b>Sustainable practices supporting local jobs</b>	Supporting local businesses to adopt sustainable practices will reduce costs, reduce emissions, help support local jobs and maintain a thriving, resilient local economy.
<b>Industrial innovation and emissions reduction</b>	Supporting local businesses, particularly our industrial sector to prepare for and innovate new sustainable technologies and approaches can significantly contribute to reducing the overall carbon footprint of the municipality.
<b>Leadership opportunity in low-carbon manufacturing</b>	Greater Dandenong is a leader in manufacturing, and home to one of the State’s Significant Industrial Precincts, the Dandenong South Industrial Area. The sector is the region’s largest employer and has a \$30.5 billion estimated output. This gives Greater

**Opportunities snapshot**

**Detailed description**

**Waste reduction and pollution prevention**

Dandenong a unique opportunity to lead in renewable technology, low-carbon manufacturing, and sustainable practices that have lasting benefits to our local economy, as well as Victoria and Australia.

Reducing waste will help reduce pollution entering our environment, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and help ensure efficient use of our natural resources.

**Benefits of a circular economy**

Shifting to a more circular economy will help redefine waste as a resource, leading to opportunities in resource recovery, reduction of embodied carbon and less waste going to landfill.

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## What has Council done?

Some key highlights include:



## Progressing Sustainability

Climate change and sustainability action are closely linked but have distinct differences.

Climate change refers to the long-term changes in weather patterns caused mainly by human activities like burning fossil fuels. Sustainability is about making choices that protect the environment, build our community's resilience, and ensure resources are available for future generations.

Climate change is a global problem felt locally. Sustainability is action we can all take in our communities, like saving energy, reducing waste, and caring for nature, which all contribute to a greener and more equitable future. With the effects of climate change already being felt by our community and environment, the focus must be on how we respond. This is where sustainability comes in. Sustainability defines the practical steps we can all take at home, in our community, and as a Council.

The encouraging news is that many proven sustainable solutions are already available, with ongoing research continuing to improve best practices. Investing in sustainable solutions like solar panels and electric hot water and air conditioning systems, can deliver greater long-term financial benefits than keeping the inefficient, high-pollution systems running.

Council has a long history of sustainability action with our first Environmental Sustainability Strategy adopted in 2010. With this established history, we remain committed to action by implementing these solutions, embracing innovation through new builds such as the Keysborough Community Hub and the inclusion of electric trucks into our operational fleet. Our focus is on taking meaningful action today using what we know works, while embracing new technologies and approaches that can strengthen our long-term response. The Strategy guides this by setting out a clear, measurable and relevant approach.

For our community, taking action may look different. The initial investment for sustainable infrastructure is still a challenge for many in the community. That's why Council is committed to leading and supporting our community in making changes, no matter how small to live more sustainably. Choosing to do more with less, draught-proof your home, bin it right, or encouraging wildlife back into your garden are all valuable ways to progress towards a bright green future.

### **Taking an integrated approach to mitigation and adaption**

Implementing sustainability initiatives is often a direct response to the risks posed by climate change. Responses to climate change risks are broadly defined as either:

#### ATT 4.1.1.3 Draft Our Bright Green Future Strategy

- Mitigation – Reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions that cause climate change; or,
- Adaptation – Responding to and preparing for the risks of climate change.

There is often overlap between what may be considered as a climate change mitigation or adaptation action. For example, increasing insulation in a building to reduce energy usage and associated carbon emissions (a mitigation action) will also help increase the thermal comfort for the building's occupants, increasing their resilience to climate change impacts of higher temperatures and heatwave events on their health (an adaptation outcome). Rather than developing separate adaptation and mitigation strategies, the development of this Strategy has taken a best practice approach. By considering adaptation and mitigation in an integrated way we maximise efficiencies and minimise risks.

Council will continue to work hard to implement sustainability across all themes described in the Strategy. Each of the themes in this Strategy outline how Council will continue to build upon the work that has been achieved and to implement the next steps in our adaptation pathway.

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## Council's carbon emissions inventory

Figure 5 demonstrates Council's operational greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions inventory for 2024/25. These results are based on the available energy bill data that Council is responsible for. This includes leisure and aquatic centres. The total emissions for 2024/25 were estimated to be 3,827 t-CO<sub>2</sub>-e\*, as shown in Figure 6.

Fleet emissions include gasoline, diesel and LPG internal combustion engines. This ranges from garbage trucks and cricket rollers all the way to hedge trimmers. Council expects there will be limitations to transitioning our fleet network due to the limited availability of electric heavy-duty vehicles and machinery, and significant financial cost of upgrading our buildings and facilities, including the cost to upgrade the required electrical capacity to cater for electric vehicle charging infrastructure. - 'Buildings gas emissions' in Figure 5 includes over 500 of Council's sites and facilities across the municipality.

'Leisure centre gas emissions' in Figure 5 includes the four leisure centres owned by the Council, including Oasis, Noble Park Aquatic Centre (NPAC), Springers Leisure Centre and Dandenong Basketball Stadium. These account for approximately half of all emissions. These are large, complex buildings and transitioning them to fully electric operations require substantial upgrades to electrical supply and building infrastructure. Due to their age, and size, the transition is a significant investment, but one that this Strategy recognises as an essential step to achieve net zero.

Water emissions have been calculated based on the water used to maintain our open spaces, sports fields and trees.

\*Carbon dioxide equivalent or CO<sub>2</sub>-e is a standardised unit of measurement to measure greenhouse gas emissions. This is measured in tonnes (t).

Figure 5: Operational emissions (t-CO2-e) by category for 2024/25

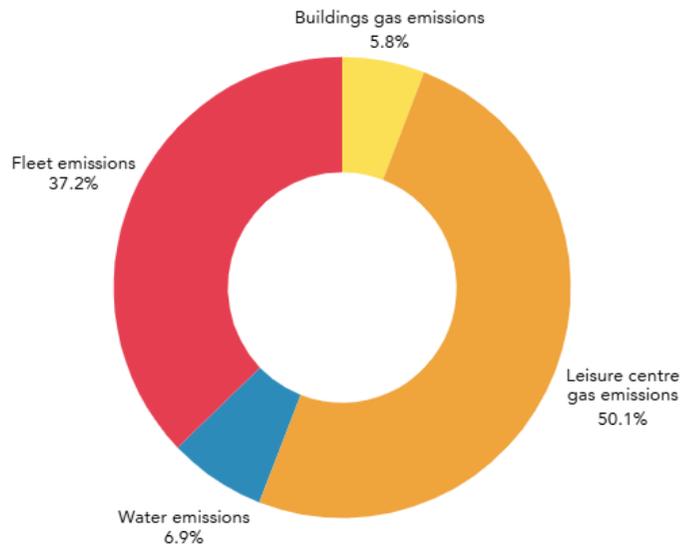
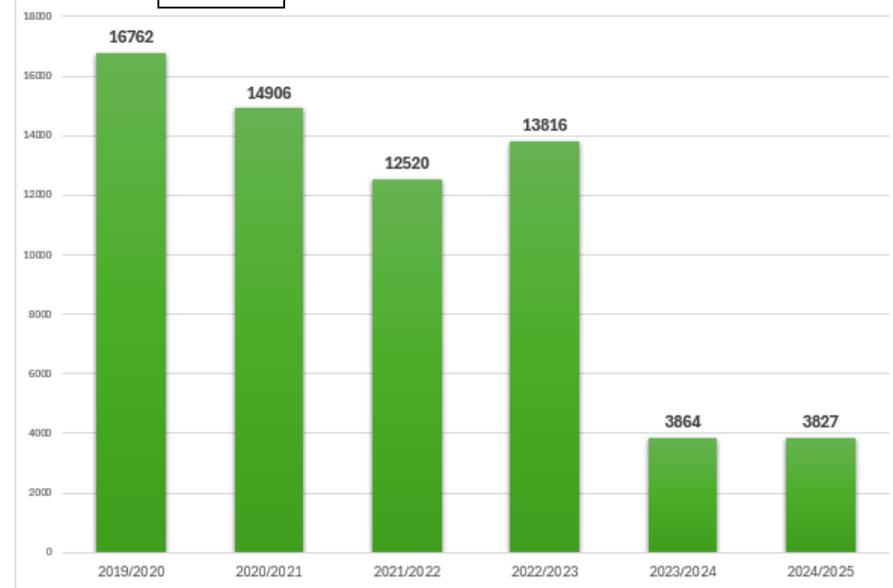


Figure 6: Total GHG emissions (tCO2-e) since 2019



## Relevant Legislation

The Federal and Victorian Governments' legislation that help shape local government sustainability response include:

- Corporations Act 2001
- Sustainability Victoria Act 2005
- Climate Action Act 2017
- Climate Change Adaption Plan 2017
- Local Government Act of Victoria 2020
- Planning and Environment Act 1987
- Emergency Management Act 2013
- Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008
- Australian Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999
- Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988
- Wildlife Act 1975
- Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994
- Fisheries Act 1995
- Environment Protection Act 2017
- Circular Economy (Waste Reduction and Recycling) Act 2021

The Council policies implemented to address sustainability and are supported by this strategy include:

- Community Vision 2040
- Council Plan and Wellbeing Plan 2025-29
- Emergency Management Plan
- Long Term Financial Plan
- Procurement Policy
- Single Use Plastic Policy
- Asset Management Plan 2025-35

## Roles and Responsibilities

This diagram highlights some key stakeholders and what their ‘piece’ entails. When compared to the Federal and State governments, local Councils have relatively limited levers of control and resources. However, we all have a role to play in responding to and actioning sustainability initiatives. By taking a leadership role and mobilising our community, we can collectively make a significant difference.

### Global Commitments

Climate change is a global problem, requiring global action to lead a more sustainable future through international collaboration and agreement. In 2015, the Paris Agreement was adopted and aimed to strengthen the global response to the threat of climate change by keeping the global temperature rise to below 2°C and pursue efforts to limit the rise to 1.5°C. The latest Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report found based on recent projections it is likely warming will exceed 1.5° C, making it harder to limit warming below 2° C. The policy measures to meet mitigation reductions set by these agreements are implemented at the national or regional level.

### Federal Government

The Commonwealth Government has committed to achieving Net Zero emissions by 2050 and is responsible for setting Australia’s national policy direction on climate action and sustainability. This includes establishing an interim national emissions reduction target of 62 percent reduction by 2030, mandating corporate climate-related disclosures, and regulating emissions through evolving Federal reporting frameworks. The Australian Government also leads national environmental protection through major legislative reforms, and sets minimum building standards, national waste and packaging targets, and other regulatory mechanisms that shape long-term sustainability outcomes.

In 2025, the Australian Government released the National Adaptation Plan (the Plan), informed by the findings of the National Climate Risk Assessment (NCRA). The Plan provides coordinated national guidance on climate adaptation, clarifying responsibilities, priority risks, and pathways for building resilience across sectors and communities. Council’s approach aligns with, and in some areas exceeds these national directions by supporting targeted, evidence-based collaborative adaptation actions at the local level. This leadership is reflected in Council’s commitment to achieving net zero operational emissions by 2035, as set out in the Action Plan.

### State Government

The Victorian State Government is responsible for managing Victoria’s environmental, social and economic sustainability. The State Government has set a net zero target of 2045. To support this the State Government, provide access to schemes and rebates for energy upgrades that can be accessed by the community. State policy has influenced Council’s action and recent changes to legislation have been made to reduce emissions generated by the community. These include:

- Victoria’s Gas Road Map
- Victorian Biodiversity Strategy 2017-2037
- Bans on single use plastic
- Recycling Victoria Policy and 10-year action plan to build circular economy
- Victoria’s Housing Statement: The Decade Ahead 2024-34
- Statewide Housing Targets

### Council’s role

Local governments are widely recognised for leading sustainability action around the world. With local governments’ strong connections to their communities and their local knowledge, they play a critical role in helping their communities reduce carbon emissions, adapt to climate change and protect and enhance the local environment. This includes ensuring local initiatives are responsive to local needs and priorities. The Council Plan 2025-29 demonstrates Council has many roles in achieving its objectives. **Table 3** demonstrates Council’s role in different capacities to achieve its vision of being a green city committed to a sustainable future.

Council has an obligation under the Victorian Local Government Act 2020, and Climate Action Act 2017 to prepare for and respond to climate change risks for the health and wellbeing of our community and the longevity of our economy. Council takes this responsibility seriously and will drive and lead action, but real change requires everyone. From residents, businesses, schools, community groups and government partners, we can all work collaboratively towards our common sustainability objectives. Every action, no matter how small, helps build momentum. The Our Bright Green Future Action Plan has been developed to support Council’s action.

Council's role	Meaning
<b>Inform</b>	Increase awareness of sustainability among Councillors, Council staff, and community members. To engage and encourage the community, including businesses to take meaningful action towards a sustainable future. This is achieved through the annual Sustainability Festival, various engagement and educational programs, and Council's e-newsletter Our Bright Green Future.
<b>Empower</b>	Council plays a leading role in supporting the community to implement sustainability initiatives. By demonstrating leadership, raising awareness, and taking visible action, Council helps create the conditions for meaningful local action. Council is committed to empowering everyone to contribute to reducing emissions, while ensuring equitable access to available resources. This means providing all community members, regardless of their background, income, ability, or location with the support and opportunities needed to prepare for, adapt to, and recover from the impacts of climate change, with a strong focus on supporting those most vulnerable.
<b>Intervene</b>	While Council's ability to intervene on private land is somewhat limited, it can however influence local planning decisions for private developments and activities on Council land. This includes implementing environmentally sustainable design requirements in the planning scheme and a local law for tree protection.  Council has direct control over its operations and processes. It can intervene by upgrading facilities to fully electric, or renewable sources, embedding sustainability considerations into Council processes including procurement and design, and implementing innovative best practice technologies and methods that reduce and avoid emissions. Council can also implement its Single Use Plastic Policy to minimise plastic use at events and activities held on Council owned or managed land.  Council applies best practice standards to its own operations and design outcomes for our built environment and advocates for stronger policies for private developments. This is evident through the sustainable buildings Council has built as described in this Strategy.
<b>Partner</b>	Council has strong partnerships with a variety of external agencies, community groups and government departments. These partnerships support short- and long-term mitigation and adaptation measures. For instance, Council partners with Melbourne Water and South East Water to deliver better managed waterways and infrastructure to handle increased floods and stormwater runoff. Council supports and partners with businesses, community groups, sporting clubs, and individuals to deliver sustainability related projects, including through the Community Grants program. Council will continue to partner with State and Federal Government where possible to deliver infrastructure upgrades and environmental programs that enhance our sustainability action and climate resilience.
<b>Advocate</b>	Council has a key role to play in advocating for its community. As a local government, Council hold strong connections and knowledge to the local area and community. This enables Council to advocate to State and Federal Government, as well as external agencies for greater action on sustainability and environmental initiatives. This includes advocating for stronger environmental commitments, greater support for businesses and residents to become more sustainable, grants for funding, improved environmentally sustainable design measures in the planning and building regulations, and greater action on climate change to improve the health and wellbeing of all.
<b>Monitor</b>	Council will continue to monitor its progress on all actions and its progress to net zero. This includes our impact on the environment and our operational emissions. Council will also monitor legislation, technology advancements and industry best practice to ensure we mitigate our impact and are prepared for the lasting impacts of a changing climate.

Table 2: The roles of Council

**Community's Role**

Greater Dandenong is shaped by deep cultural heritage, resilience, and a growing commitment to sustainability action. As Australia's most culturally diverse municipality, our community bring a wealth of knowledge, lived experience, and care for the environment. We know our community cares about sustainability.

Here are some great examples of what our community has been doing to contribute towards and demonstrate commitment to a sustainable future.

- In 2023 CERES partnered with Council to deliver a Student Leadership Summit for local schools which empowers students to lead their school in making meaningful change to reduce their impact on the environment.
- Participants in Gardens for Wildlife continues to engage residents to plant native and indigenous plants in their gardens to attract wildlife including birds and pollinators.
- In 2025 the Greater Dandenong Environment Group revegetated nature strips in Dandenong North to enhance the ecological diversity of the area and encourage pollinators back to the neighbourhood.
- Dandenong Market partnered with Council to implement a Borrow-a-bag initiative aimed at reducing plastic waste.
- Dandenong Cricket Club at Shepley Oval recently took part in the Cricket4Climate initiative and had solar panels and a battery installed at the club rooms at Shepley Oval to reduce their emissions and electricity bills.
- Noble Park Junior Football Club are reducing their plastic waste by switching to cans at the canteen and raising money for the club through the Container Deposit Scheme.
- University of Melbourne partnered with Council to deliver a long-term planting program installing Woody Meadows in Greater Dandenong. These meadows form part of a network across Australia of diverse plantings to promote flowering and dense canopies to exclude weeds and encourage biodiversity.

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- Council has partnered with local indigenous nurseries, Melbourne Water, Federation University, Maroondah City Council, Knox City Council and Greater Dandenong City Council to create three (3) Climate Future Plots in Greater Dandenong. A climate future plot is a diverse planting of shrubs and trees from hotter and drier climate regions to help inform our future planting programs.
- Council has partnered with Bunurong Land Council Aboriginal Corporation, Kingston City Council and Greater Dandenong City Council to protect and enhance Coomoora Reserve through Bush to Bay: Linking Landscapes on Bunurong Country.
- UGLY Vodka were awarded the 2025 Dandenong Chamber of Commerce Innovation, Environmental and Sustainability Award and Business Excellence Award. UGLY Vodka transforms food waste into premium spirits, showcasing innovation in circular economy practices and sustainability.
- Rethink Recycling were awarded the 2025 Greater Dandenong Australia Day Sustainability Award. Rethink Recycling promote responsible recycling, sustainability education, and advancing the circular economy in the local community.
- Heat Health Awareness workshops. These workshops promoted heatwave awareness and preparation to increase resilience amongst our vulnerable community members. This saw a collaboration between different agencies and community organisations and was led by the City of Greater Dandenong.
- The City of Greater Dandenong Sustainability Festival. Running since 2014, this festival has seen fantastic engagement from local community organisations, businesses, schools and community members.
- 'Bring Your Bill' days have been held across Dandenong and Noble Park since 2024. The day provides much needed support and energy billing relief information for community members and is led by South East Community Links (SECL).

## Themes

The Strategy has been organised into ten themes, represented in Table 1. Each theme has an objective and clear, measurable, and relevant actions.

THEME	OBJECTIVES
Advocacy	A City that advocates for a sustainable future
Community Mobilisation and Resilience	A City prepared for a changing future
Circular Economy and Waste	A Circular City: Reducing our waste and redefining our resources
Transport and Active Travel	A City well connected through active and low carbon transport
Biodiversity	A City that cares for and connects with nature
Trees and Greening	A healthy, green, and resilient City
Water and Waterways	A City with well-managed water, clean and healthy waterways
Energy and Transition to Zero Emissions	A net zero, efficient City that prioritises low carbon and renewable energy
Sustainable Design, Assets, and Infrastructure	A City that leads by example through a resilient built environment and assets that are planned for the future
Sustainability across Greater Dandenong	A Council and Community committed to a bright green future

Table 3: Themes and Objectives

## Advocacy

**Objective:** A City that advocates for a sustainable future

Some key highlights include:
Council's first ever Heatwave Preparedness forum ran in 2023. The forum engaged with multiple local government, community and State government organisations on heat vulnerability and response planning for the community for future heatwaves. This is supported by Council's Emergency Management Plan and associated sub-plans.
Collaborated with over 24 other councils to lodge a planning scheme amendment to the Victorian Government seeking to introduce planning policy that elevates sustainability targets to promote net zero, climate resilient new development.
Supported the development of the Planning for a Safe Climate advocacy project in 2021 that reported on the current state of the Victorian Planning Scheme and its ability to respond to climate change. A number of recommendations were provided, leading to amendments to Victoria's Planning and Environment Act in 2024 addressing greenhouse gas emissions and climate resilience in decision making.

Advocacy is a vital pillar of Council's sustainability work. While Council can influence sustainability outcomes, it cannot tackle them alone. Many of the environmental challenges we face, like climate change, biodiversity loss, and access to renewable energy, require change at all levels.

### **Working collaboratively**

We must work alongside and influence State and Federal governments, regional planning bodies, infrastructure agencies, private industry and our local community to deliver the scale of change needed. Advocacy enables Council to champion the needs and priorities of Greater Dandenong within these broader systems. It ensures our community's voice is heard when decisions are being made that affect our environment, liveability and long-term resilience. Through advocacy, we can secure stronger policy settings, improved access to funding, and greater alignment between local priorities and regional and national action.

This is especially important in a fast-growing, diverse city like Greater Dandenong, where many sustainability issues are complex and interlinked. The way we manage our natural assets, design our neighbourhoods, plan our infrastructure, and power our homes and businesses all has an impact on environmental and social wellbeing outcomes. For example, achieving cleaner air, cooler streets and healthier waterways requires coordinated action across land use planning, transport, energy, waste and urban design. These are areas where strong advocacy to State and Federal Governments, as well as external agencies such as Melbourne Water can influence direction and unlock opportunities.

### **Advocating for the community**

Council has a responsibility to advocate on behalf of its community to ensure equitable outcomes for those most at risk, including our culturally and linguistically diverse communities. Advocacy enables Council to push for sustainability leadership and accountability that reflect our objectives, like reducing emissions, protecting green spaces, and supporting a circular economy. In doing so, we not only advocate on behalf of our residents, but we also advocate with them, strengthening partnerships and collective efforts across the municipality.

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Council's advocacy efforts are grounded in evidence, collaboration, and a long-term vision. This Strategy aligns with Council's Advocacy Priorities and aims to present a clear case for why sustainability matters to our environment, health, economy and society. Council will advocate for investment in infrastructure and stronger policy that supports our community's mitigation and adaptation initiatives.

As local government, Council is uniquely placed to observe how the effects of climate change impact our community, our environment and our economy. Council recognises and is experiencing the impacts of a changing climate such as extreme weather, poor air quality, heat stress, and increase flooding. Council also witnesses the benefits of nature in our neighbourhoods, and the enthusiasm of our community to create positive change. Advocacy bridges the gap between these local insights and the decisions being made. Advocacy is how Council ensures Greater Dandenong is best placed to achieve lasting, large-scale sustainable outcomes tailored for our community.

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## Community Mobilisation and Resilience

**Objective:** A City prepared for a changing climate

Some key highlights include:
Purchased Council’s first electric educational van for community engagement and promotion of electric vehicles.
Plastic Free July social media campaign to educate the community about plastic use and waste reduction principles.
Partnered with Mornington Peninsula Shire, Jesuit Social Services, and the Australian Urban Observatory and the Centre for Just Places to implement the Health and Wellbeing Municipal Scan to inform the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-2025 which included analysis of climate change and health issues.
Council’s Municipal Emergency Management Plan 2024- 2027 was developed collaboratively with local emergency services and agencies to outline Council’s risks and role in emergency management. This includes extreme weather events (e.g. storms, fires, flooding and heatwaves) accelerated by climate change. The plan includes Sub-Plans for heatwaves, floods and subsequent community impacts.

### Community’s role in climate action

Our community is at a heightened risk of climate related impacts. We understand that the risks of a changing climate disproportionately affect our vulnerable residents, placing them in a more vulnerable state. To combat this, we recognise our role as a Council is to support and mobilise community action to mitigate and adapt to climate change and prioritise the health and wellbeing of our community.

Strengthening community resilience in Greater Dandenong through social connection, healthy ecosystems and inclusive approaches support health, wellbeing, safety and access to services. People, place and environment are deeply interconnected, and community action is essential as climate-related risks worsen.

All members of the community are affected and have a role in climate action, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People, children and young people, older residents, people with disabilities, culturally and linguistically diverse communities, first-generation immigrants, households, local businesses and community service organisations. Neighbourhood-level action helps reduce isolation, strengthen social cohesion and support equitable health and resilience outcomes.

Emergency preparedness will be approached as a shared responsibility. Council will work with community members, and service providers to support person-centred emergency planning that reflects lived experience and community strengths. Accessible and tailored information will be supported to enable people with vulnerabilities including those living with disabilities to develop and share emergency plans with their support networks, while efforts to strengthen social connectedness across multicultural communities will help reduce isolation and improve collective readiness.

### Council’s role in mobilising community action

Council will work to mobilise community climate action by embedding resilience, equity and inclusion across its programs, services and decision-making, ensuring all community members can access information, resources and opportunities to participate. This action will foster environmental stewardship and climate awareness and action.

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Partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People, including the Bunurong Land Council Aboriginal Corporation, will guide climate and environmental planning through the inclusion of cultural values, knowledge and priorities. Ongoing engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations will strengthen Council's understanding of community needs. Council will also deepen engagement with multicultural communities, young people, people with disabilities, older residents, businesses and community service organisations to better understand diverse experiences and remove barriers to participation.

Council will work with community organisations to build leadership and local capacity, support culturally responsive engagement and improve access to sustainability and climate information through translation and community-based delivery. Schools will be supported as trusted community hubs for education of our future generations.

Young people will be actively engaged in Council programs and supported to participate in projects that address environmental sustainability and climate impacts, strengthening intergenerational learning and long-term community resilience. Council will also support businesses and community service organisations to build resilience, collaborate and remain connected during disruptions.

Through collaboration, inclusive engagement and strong partnerships, Council will help ensure communities remain informed, connected and supported.

#### **Guidance on adaptation measures**

Adaptation prioritises protecting community health, social wellbeing and equitable access to services as climate impacts intensify. Adaptation activities are a shared responsibility across Council, community, businesses, service providers and Traditional Owners.

Key directions include:

- reviewing and strengthening climate hazard preparedness and emergency management planning for more frequent and extreme weather events, with greater community involvement
- supporting person-centred emergency planning that reflects lived experience, cultural context and community strengths
- providing accessible and translated information to support people with disabilities, older residents, multicultural communities, young people and those with limited support networks
- strengthening social connectedness and neighbourhood networks to reduce isolation and improve readiness
- integrating Traditional knowledge and Caring for Country into adaptation planning with the Bunurong People
- supporting green spaces, waterways and neighbourhood environments as protective assets for cooling, biodiversity, mental health and community connection

These measures will support equitable health and resilience outcomes for all members of the Greater Dandenong community as climate risks continue to grow.

## Circular Economy and Waste

**Objective:** A Circular City: Reducing our waste and redefining our resources

Some key highlights include:
2023 Finalist – Tidy Towns and Cities Sustainability Award for the “Keep it Clean” Community Education and Engagement Campaign: This campaign focused on raising awareness and promoting community action to tackle dumped rubbish in the municipality.
Since its inception in 2017, over 580 tonnes of waste have been collected for recycling, re-use or safe disposal.
68 Community Education Sessions held in 2024-25. Held at venues like Noble Park Community House, Dandenong Market, and Chisholm Institute. These sessions covered a range of topics such as recycling right at home, understanding circular economy, and waste education.
52 School Program Sessions in 2024-25 that focused on topics like waste minimisation, recycle right at school and at home, and setting up recycling and composting programs at schools.

Council recognises the role we play in efficient waste management to support our growing community and to protect our environment. Waste recovery and recycling is a key part of sustainable waste management that provides environmental and economic benefits for our community and mitigates climate change. The State and Federal Government has set ambitious targets to reduce waste going to landfill, redefine the way we use our resources, and progress towards a circular economy. There are two guiding principles that lay the foundation of waste policy in Australia. These are:

- Circular Economy
- Waste Hierarchy

Council has adopted these principles to ensure our waste management practices align with National Waste Policy, State Government Recycling Victoria Policy, and other State and Federal policies, strategies, plans and legislations to improve resource recovery.

### Waste hierarchy

The waste hierarchy states that waste should be managed in order of preference: avoid and reduce, reuse, recycle, recover, treat and dispose of as a last resort. Figure 7 shows the waste management hierarchy.

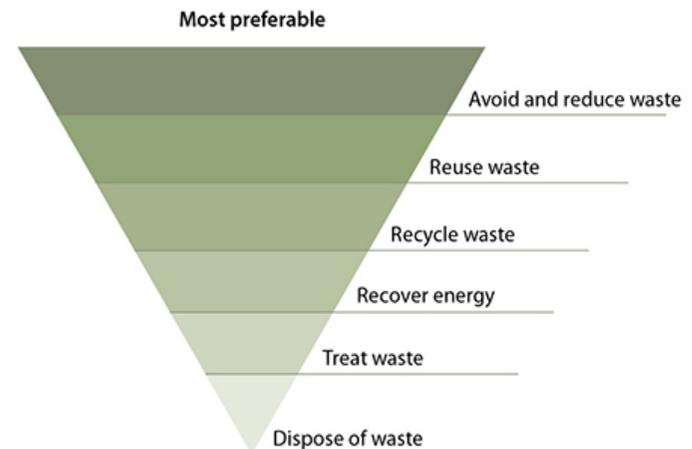


Figure 7: Waste Management Hierarchy (TO BE GRAPHICALLY DESIGNED)

**Circular Economy**

A circular economy is one where resources are valued, used efficiently and only discarded when their component materials have no further use. This principle embeds the avoid, reduce and reuse methods of the waste hierarchy. A circular economy changes the way we manage waste, by valuing resources, instead of the current model of ‘take—make—throw’. A circular economy removes waste and pollution, keeps materials in use as long as possible, and returns materials to the economy through efficient recycling processes (Figure 8).

Council aims to deliver a circular city with low waste by embedding the principles above into everyday operations and ensuring efficient use of resources.

Council is conscious of the environmental, economic, and social impacts of waste and resource recovery systems and seeks to identify best practice waste management solutions for our community. This extends to strengthened community waste education programs, investigating alternative solutions to waste management and identifying ways to reduce illegally dumped rubbish.

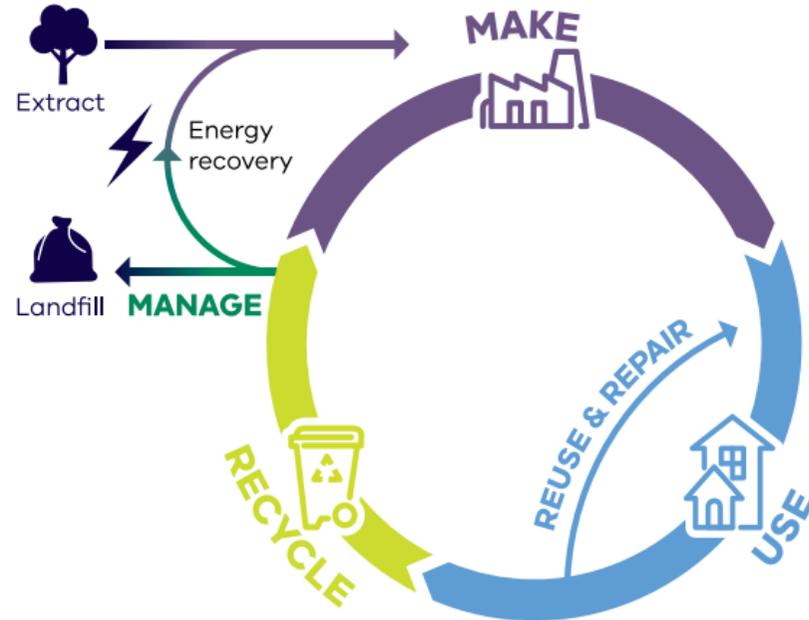


Figure 8: Circular Economy for Victoria (TO BE GRAPHICALLY DESIGNED)

## Transport and Active Travel

**Objective:** A City well connected through active and low carbon transport

Some key highlights include:
Council has introduced two electric vans to its fleet, over 20 electric passenger vehicles, as well as 38 other electric plant equipment since 2016. Electric vehicles now represent 10% of the total fleet.
Did you know there are 26 public charging stations in Greater Dandenong? Council is working with private partners to increase the availability of vehicle chargers.
Completed major road cycle lane projects, including Gladstone Road, Corrigan Road and Herbert Street.
Between 2017 and 2021, the Active Transport Infrastructure Prioritisation Program delivered approximately \$2 million worth of “missing link” paths within the municipality, improving connections for pedestrians.

Transport is at the heart of how we live, work, and connect in Greater Dandenong. It shapes our access to opportunity, our health, our environment, and the character of our neighbourhoods. As our city continues to grow and evolve, the way we move around must also change. This Strategy provides direction towards a transport system that prioritises active movement, clean energy, and sustainable choices.

### Active Transport

Many residents, particularly young people, older adults, and newly arrived migrants do not have access to a private vehicle. For these groups active transport (walking, cycling, and public transport) are not just lifestyle choices; they are essential means of accessing education, employment, healthcare, connection, and community life. Yet, much like metropolitan Melbourne, Greater Dandenong has been shaped by car dependency. Vehicles using petrol and diesel fuel generate significantly more carbon emissions per person as opposed to using active transport or electric vehicles powered by renewable energy.

Recognising these challenges, Council is committed to transforming the way transport works in our city. The actions embed sustainability into the transport hierarchy and prioritises active and low carbon modes of movement to deliver a well-connected city. These changes help us become resilient to a changing climate. To achieve this objective, we are investing in active transport infrastructure to deliver safe and accessible footpaths and bike lanes, further encouraging active and sustainable travel. Council will lead the way by encouraging staff to adopt more sustainable travel behaviours through its Green Travel Plan and showcase success stories and practical examples to inspire more staff and the community.

### Low-carbon vehicles

A smart, well-connected city goes beyond the day-to-day movements of residents. As a hub of logistics, the State Significant Dandenong South Industrial Precinct relies on heavy trucks to transport goods across Victoria. Innovations in logistics are key to use more sustainable modes of transport to move goods efficiently and reduce carbon emissions. Increased use of low carbon forms of transport will reduce carbon emissions and provide a range of other benefits, such as reducing congestion on the road, and reduced pollution. This leads to improved local air quality and improved health and well-being of the local community.

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Council is delivering our Fleet Transition Plan to replace petrol and diesel fleet vehicles with electric and hybrid alternatives. Electrification and emission reduction form a key consideration in our procurement processes. This not only reduces our operational emissions but ensures Council is demonstrating its commitment to innovation and climate leadership.

To contribute to the broader community's transition to active and sustainable modes of transport, Council has developed policies to support the expansion of the network of public electric vehicle (EV) charging stations across the municipality. As EVs become more affordable and widespread, access to convenient charging infrastructure will be essential. By investing now, we are helping to future-proof our city and support residents who want to make the switch.

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## Biodiversity

**Objective:** A City that cares for and connects with nature

Some key highlights include:
Council is supporting community action through plant giveaways. In 2024-25, Council gave away over 13,000 indigenous plants to residents including over 3,600 native and indigenous plants and trees to Green Wedge residents.
2024 saw the return of the inland Sugar Glider to restored sections of Dandenong Creek – a first for the municipality.
98 environmental engagement events held with a total attendance of 3000+ (2024-25).

Greater Dandenong was once home to large grassy woodlands, forests near rivers and flood areas, wetlands with native grasses, and healthy waterways with many different plants and animals. But after more than 150 years of farming, land clearing, building cities and towns, and the impacts of a changing climate, less than five (5) percent of the native plants that were present in this area prior to European colonisation are still found in Greater Dandenong.

### Benefits of biodiversity

Biodiversity has fundamental value to humans as we are dependent on it for our cultural, social, economic and environmental well-being. This includes both its intrinsic value (i.e. species are worth protecting regardless of their value to humans) along with the range of benefits that it produces, including:

- Supply of ecosystem services – water, nutrients, clean air, climate change mitigation, pollination
- Life Resources – food, medicine, energy, and raw materials
- Improved mental and physical health and wellbeing
- Landscape distinctiveness and cultural heritage
- Direct economic benefits from biodiversity resources and added value through local economic activity and tourism
- Educational, recreational and amenity resources.

### On-the-ground action

Council cares for over 600 hectares of indigenous plants, wildlife habitat areas and wetland systems. Habitat restoration, waterway management, tree planting and urban greening are embedded in Council operations. This on the ground action is a core part of Council’s function and is supported by the strategic programs and initiatives included in the Action Plan.

Many of these natural areas create connections across the municipality for wildlife habitat and refuges. The natural environment in Greater Dandenong is under serious pressure. As our city grows, we are seeing more buildings, roads and factories. This is leading to natural habitats being broken up into small, separate patches. These small areas are like islands and are often too small to fully support wildlife over the long term.

As the weather changes due to climate change, hotter days and less predictable rain mean it's even more important that animals can move around and gain access to specific habitats and corridors to survive. If we don't carefully plan where these safe green corridors are, and take care of them, we will lose more species and natural areas.

**Moving to protect our biodiversity assets**

One of the biggest opportunities to protect and grow our natural environment is the Green Wedge, as seen in Figure 9. The Green Wedge is an area of about 600 hectares inside the municipality characterised by large remnant River Red Gums and grassy plains. It home to important natural features and is culturally significant to Traditional Owners and local communities. This area was mostly kept for rural and farming use meaning it is characterised by large areas of grassland, which holds strong potential for large-scale environmental action.

Council strives to be a city that cares for and connects with nature developing its data and engaging with the community directly. Council is working to update its GIS (Geographic Information System) biodiversity maps to provide a more detailed understanding our natural systems. Furthermore, Council is developing a consistent method for monitoring biodiversity that can be used by Council and the community. This will ensure Council can continue monitor biodiversity, building on the work already done, improve existing wildlife corridors and establish new connections.



Figure 9: The Green Wedge area in the City of Greater Dandenong (TO BE GRAPHICALLY DESIGNED)

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## Trees and Greening

**Objective:** A healthy, green and resilient City

Some key highlights include:
3,500 young trees maintained annually (watering, mulching, health checks).
Almost 40,000 inspections and proactive maintenance on over 24,000 trees (2024-25) valued at \$182 million, storing 16,000 tonnes of carbon, and removing 11 tonnes of air pollution annually.
Over 80 hectares of weeds controlled annually.
Revegetated almost 3 hectares of habitat and planted over 22,000 indigenous plants (2024-25).

Our city is changing. Summers are getting hotter, extreme heat days are becoming more frequent, and some of our neighbourhoods are already feeling the effects. It is clear climate change will worsen heatwave events and will increasingly affect the health and wellbeing of our community. Trees and green spaces are no longer just a “nice to have”, they are essential infrastructure for a healthy and liveable city.

### Urban heat

Low canopy cover means more hard surfaces like concrete and asphalt are exposed to the sun, absorbing and radiating heat throughout the day and night. This is known as the urban heat island effect, as seen in Figure 10. There is strong evidence demonstrating that this artificial heat build-up is impacting human health and compromising the quality of the environment that people live in. It also means fewer birds, fewer pollinators, fewer shade-giving trees, and less access to cool and inviting green spaces where people can rest, walk, play, or connect with nature.

Greater Dandenong was ranked as the seventh (7<sup>th</sup>) hottest municipality in metropolitan Melbourne in a 2024 study by the Centre for Urban Research at Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology. The study used a Heat Vulnerability Index to demonstrate how heat exposure, sensitivity to heat and capacity to adapt leads to communities being more vulnerable to heat. Our older residents, young children, people with disabilities or health conditions, and those living alone are especially vulnerable to heat-related illness. Communities that suffer from heat stress are more likely to experience:

- social isolation due to increased barriers to exercise or movement
- heat related illnesses, particularly for the elderly or those living with chronic health conditions
- impacts to medications and food storage if kept in warm environments

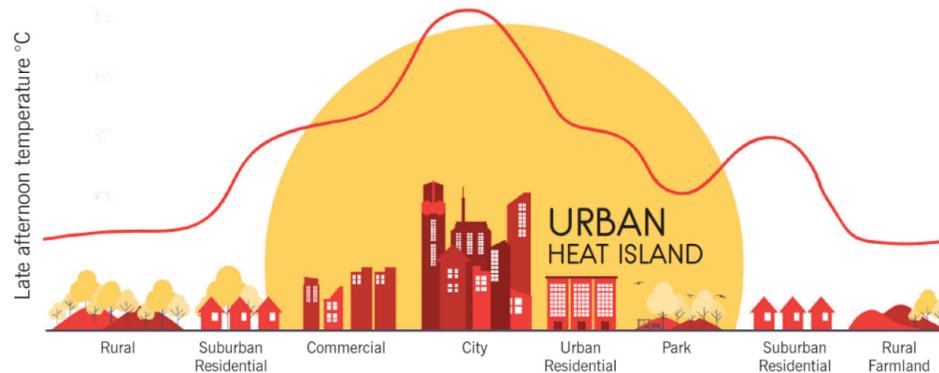


Figure 10: Urban Heat Island (TO BE GRAPHICALLY DESIGNED)

- financial struggles due to a higher reliance on air conditioning (often due to poorly designed housing including lack of air circulation, poor insulation or a lack of environmentally sustainable design principles implemented).

If not managed, the increased daytime temperatures and reduced ability of land and homes to cool during the evening contribute to respiratory difficulty, heat exhaustion, heat stroke and heat-related mortality.

#### **Working towards a greener city**

Council has been working hard to increase our tree canopy. We are proud to report that Greater Dandenong had a canopy coverage of 14.6 percent in 2025. This is a significant achievement since our first measurement of 9.9 percent in 2016.

Council is committed to increasing canopy cover to fifteen (15) percent by 2028 and will continue leading the way on land it manages through annual planting programs, open space masterplans, and ensuring we select the right species for the right places. This work is a core function of Council's operational services and is supported by the strategic planting actions in the Action Plan.

With seventy-three (73) percent of land privately owned, success depends on the whole community. We all share a responsibility to cool and green our environment and reduce urban heat island impacts by planting ground covers, shrubs and trees. Council will work with residents, schools, businesses, and developers through events, education, and planting days to make greening part of everyday life. Together, we can grow an urban forest that cools our suburbs, supports our health and wellbeing, provides wildlife habitat, and creates a healthier, more resilient city for all.

#### **Protecting our trees**

Council has many tools available to manage and protect trees. For trees owned and managed by Council, such as those on our streets and in our parks, Council conducts proactive and reactive maintenance to keep our trees healthy. This approach ensures regular tree audits, watering, mulching and pruning are undertaken to monitor safety and health across streets and public spaces. Extra care is taken during periods of heat stress in our natural environment and is given to young trees to help trees establish well and remain resilient.

During extreme weather events, Council is required to manage risk and address storm damage to trees. This extends to additional watering during periods of heat stress and weed management during periods of high rainfall and looking for opportunities to utilise fallen or damaged trees as hollows for wildlife or in open space projects. These actions prioritise community safety, while supporting the ongoing health of our tree canopy cover.

For trees on private land, Council can protect trees through its Tree Protection Local Law and requirements in the Planning Scheme. Council's local law prevents the illegal removal or damage of canopy trees, while planning controls can prevent removal of canopy trees or guide development to retain trees of significance.

Together these tools help protect neighbourhood character, biodiversity and provide shade to cool our neighbourhoods.

## Water and Waterways

**Objective:** A City with well-managed water, clean and healthy waterways

Some key highlights include:
Council participates in the Living Links Partnership, which recognises that the benefits of a healthy ecosystem doesn't stop at our boundary. By partnering with other land managers, the partnership ensures an interconnected network of natural spaces and recreational assets.
Enforcement of water sensitive urban design requirements, such as rainwater tanks and permeable paving in all new developments since 2015.
Two 20,000 litre rainwater tanks were installed at Ross Reserve and Thomas Carrol Reserve. These rainwater tanks will be used for irrigation and to capture stormwater which will then be used to maintain the reserves.
The installation of a Gross Pollutant Trap (GPT) at Olinda Reserve is making a significant impact by intercepting large volumes of pollutants that would otherwise flow into our precious waterways. This proactive measure is a vital step in preserving local ecosystems and improving water quality for future generations.
Council hosts an annual Discover Dandenong Creek Festival which is focused on engaging residents to learn about the Dandenong Creek Catchment, its wildlife and conservation, along with practical steps the community can take to reduce our impacts and protect our waterways.

Water is one of our most valuable natural resources, it is essential to our community, environment, and way of life. As Greater Dandenong grows and our climate changes, we must manage water more efficiently.

Victoria is already experiencing warmer days, less rainfall and more intense storm events. This makes water scarcer and presents challenges for stormwater, irrigation, and maintaining green spaces. In built-up areas, hard surfaces limit natural absorption, increasing runoff, pollution, and flood risk. Reliable access to water is critical for maintaining tree canopy and open space planting.

Council's approach is guided by sustainability and integrated water management. This ensures water is managed in a way that supports current and future needs and protects our waterways from pollutants and waste.

### Stormwater

Stormwater is rainwater that runs off roads, driveways and roofs. Without effective management, it can cause flooding, erosion and pollution. Council recognises that as stormwater infrastructure reaches the end of its service life, it is increasingly challenged by more frequent and intense rainfall driven by climate change. In addition, ongoing urban development has increased the extent of hard, impermeable surfaces, resulting in higher volumes and faster flows of runoff than older infrastructure such as stormwater drains and underground pipes were designed to accommodate. Together, these pressures increase flood risk across our suburbs and inform contemporary flood mapping that reflects the combined impacts of climate change and urbanisation on local flood behaviour.

With less rainfall and more extreme weather already occurring, Council is focused on adapting infrastructure, using stormwater as a resource, protecting local waterways like Mile Creek and Dandenong Creek, and preparing for future climate shocks. Council has an effective partnership with Melbourne Water to identify flood-prone areas and ageing infrastructure, undertaking upgrades and maintenance. Council also goes beyond traditional drainage by using nature-based

solutions such as wetlands, swales, and green spaces to slow and filter stormwater. These solutions are efficient, cost-effective, improve biodiversity, reduce pollution, and make neighbourhoods more attractive.

Adaptation measures range from tree planting to reduce urban heat and stormwater runoff, to major upgrades of stormwater systems to prevent flooding, manage pollution and climate-resistant assets. Council is committed to valuing every drop of water and ensuring its efficient management to protect water as an asset and protect our waterways.

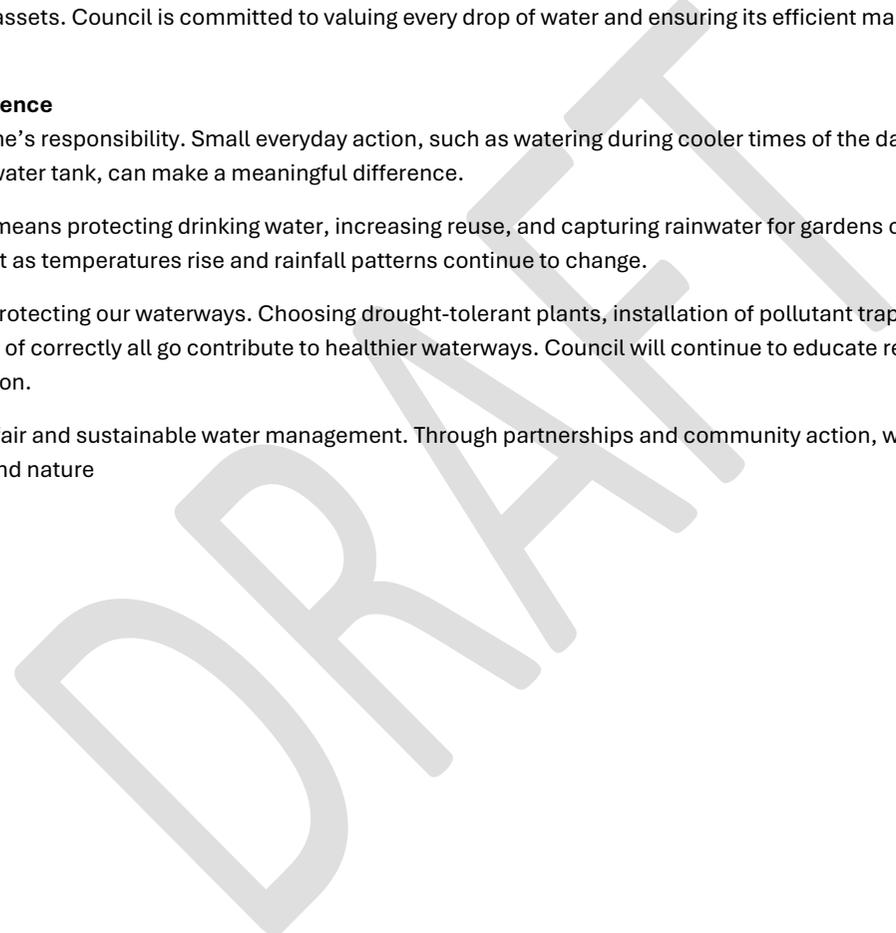
**Community and Climate Resilience**

Using water efficiently is everyone's responsibility. Small everyday action, such as watering during cooler times of the day, shortening shower times, washing your car on the grass, and using rainwater tank, can make a meaningful difference.

Using water at its highest value means protecting drinking water, increasing reuse, and capturing rainwater for gardens or flushing toilets. These practices are becoming increasingly important as temperatures rise and rainfall patterns continue to change.

Climate resilience also means protecting our waterways. Choosing drought-tolerant plants, installation of pollutant traps on commercial premises and ensuring oils and chemicals are disposed of correctly all go contribute to healthier waterways. Council will continue to educate residents and businesses on drainage, flood prevention and pollution reduction.

Council is committed to smart, fair and sustainable water management. Through partnerships and community action, we are building a resilient, water-sensitive city that supports both people and nature



## Energy and Transition to Zero Emissions

**Objective:** A net zero, efficient City that prioritises low carbon and renewable energy

Some key highlights include:
600kw of solar panels (over 1900 panels) across Council’s assets.
The Heating, ventilation and air-conditioning system at 39 Clow Street is on track to be fully electric, significantly reducing the building’s emissions.
Utilising the VEEC Scheme (Victorian Energy Efficiency Certificates) Scheme, Council has replaced approximately 40 gas water boilers with electric heat pumps in our buildings.
Council has reduced our annual emissions by over 12,000 tonnes since 2019. This represents approximately an 80 percent reduction in Council’s operational emissions.

Energy is something we all use every day. We use it for lighting and cooling our homes, charging our phones, cooking meals, and travelling to work or school. However, the way we use energy is changing, and it must change for a healthier, more efficient, and more energy secure future.

Council is committed to being part of the solution. This means moving away from fossil fuels and shifting to renewable energy sources such as solar, wind, and battery storage. These technologies are already available and working well. Council has installed 600kW of rooftop solar on its facilities, replaced gas appliances in our buildings for more efficient, electric alternatives and purchased over twenty (20) electric fleet vehicles.

While Council is committed to transitioning to more efficient, low carbon energy sources, the challenge is to ensure everyone in our community can access and benefit from these changes as well. This will support our target for our community to be net zero by 2040.

### What is net zero and why does it matter?

‘Net zero emissions’ is when the amount of emissions released balances with the amount of emissions removed from the atmosphere. For Council this means actively removing as many greenhouse gas emissions as possible. It is a key step in slowing down climate change and protecting our health, environment and future generations.

Council has reduced its emissions by 80 percent without the use of carbon offset credits. This significant achievement has been through Council’s ongoing commitment to action on the climate and ecological emergency. Council remains committed to achieving net zero and is seeking new opportunities to proactively remove emissions, rather than offset.

Building upon our work to date, Council commits to reaching net zero operational emissions by 2035, and to supporting the whole community, households, businesses, industries and community organisations included, to reach net zero by 2040. In 2019, the Greater Dandenong community’s emission was estimated at 3,665,000 tCO<sub>2</sub>-e. This highlights the scale of transformation required beyond Council operations alone. In response, Council will continue to use advocacy, education and community mobilisation and engagement to support and empower the community to reduce emissions, alongside ongoing efforts to lower its own operational footprint. These targets have been informed by Council’s emissions reduction journey to date and the significant hurdles experienced overtime.

As Council gets closer to our target, reducing emissions becomes more challenging. This is due to limited technologies available for more complex emissions or limited financial resources available to support the transition away from fossil fuels. Regardless of these challenges, Council is consistently seeking ways to reduce and remove our emissions at all stages of Council's operations. This target reflects Council's role as both a leader and a partner in building a more efficient and climate-resilient city.

**How will we get there?**

Transitioning to net zero takes more than technology. It requires strong partnerships, smart planning and inclusive leadership. Council cannot do this alone. Council will work closely with Federal and State Governments, industry and the local community to share knowledge, attract funding and make the transition away from fossil fuels affordable and achievable for everyone.

As an individual or business you can support this transition by installing solar panels on your roof and connecting battery storage to retain solar energy for evening use, switch to an electric vehicle, replace gas appliances such as your gas oven or stove with an electric oven and cooktop, switching gas hot water systems to more efficient heat pumps or solar, and switching gas heaters to electric split systems.

In addition, Council is investigating the uptake of real-time energy monitoring across all Council facilities. These systems will provide greater visibility over energy use and allow for ongoing optimisation, helping to drive further savings and emissions reductions.

This Strategy is a roadmap for how we will do that together. It sets out the role Council will play, how we will support our community, and the changes needed across our City.

## Sustainable Design, Assets and Infrastructure

**Objective:** A City that leads by example through a resilient built environment that is planned for the future

Some key highlights include:
A high-efficiency air-cooled propane (R290) heat pump provides centralised heating and cooling to the new Keysborough Community Hub. This pioneering system is a first-of-its-kind in Australia. This is powered by 150 solar panels.
Implementation of ESD measurements has led to a 58 percent reduction in greenhouse gas emissions on average in new residential developments since 2015.
Decommissioning planned for Dandenong Oasis to tackle one of Council’s biggest emitters. This facility will be replaced by the Dandenong Wellbeing Centre which is registered for Green Star accreditation and will be a fossil fuel free development.
Active partnership and participation in workshops with the Council Alliance for Sustainable Built Environment (CASBE) and the State Government that promote higher quality environmentally sustainable design requirements in the planning scheme.

Infrastructure is the basic facilities our community needs to live in our modern society. It includes physical assets which provide our transport, water, energy and communications needs, as well as assets that support our social needs, such as parks, community buildings and recreational facilities. Whilst these assets have high costs, they are vital to our community’s needs.

### Planning for climate change across Council

A key role for Local Government is to plan for, prepare, and adapt to the impact of climate change. This ensures Council can understand the risks associated with climate change and its effect on Council assets and services. Climate change already has a direct and indirect impact on council’s assets, infrastructure and the ability to deliver it services.

As such, it is imperative to understand how the risks can be avoided, or reduced, allowing Council to continue providing critical services to the community.

Climate risk is understood to be the negative impacts of climate change on our community, environment and economy. The higher the expected impact and likelihood of it occurring, the greater the risk. It is therefore important to target the highest risks to reduce their impact on the community. By doing so it will help keep the community safe and allow the infrastructure to function with little disruption.

DIRECT	INDIRECT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Damage to buildings and critical infrastructure such as roads, paths, drains and signs and lighting due to heatwaves or extreme weather.</li> <li>• Damage to sporting grounds due to drought or flooding.</li> <li>• Loss of street trees and damage to parks, gardens and playgrounds due to heatwaves, storms, flooding.</li> <li>• Safety of staff working outdoors during heatwaves.</li> <li>• Staff unable to travel from their homes to work to do their job due to road closures or damage to council facilities or their homes.</li> <li>• Facilities unable to operate due to power outages.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased maintenance cost due to frequent failures from extreme weather</li> <li>• Reduced ability to deliver services</li> <li>• Disrupting staff operations during extreme weather events</li> <li>• Increased demand for community support services during and after extreme weather events</li> <li>• Threat to long term financial liability and insurability due to associated risks</li> </ul>

Council's role is to demonstrate leadership by embedding sustainability and climate resilience into assets and infrastructure delivery and management practices. This means, Council needs to make important decisions about how and where it invests in critical infrastructure. Early and ongoing consideration of sustainability measures and climate resilience across the full lifecycle of buildings, open space and civil infrastructure assets will future proof assets and infrastructure to maximise the environmental, social and economic benefits.

### **Sustainable Design**

Considering the lifecycle of materials and incorporating sustainability measures into our infrastructure and asset planning will prepare our infrastructure for climate change risks.

Some examples of sustainable design that Council, businesses and the community can implement include:

- Passive solar design – using window orientation, shading, thermal mass and natural ventilation to regulate indoor temperatures.
- Insulation and glazing – keeping heat in during winter and out during summer by installing insulation in ceilings, walls and floors, and sealing gaps in doors and windows.
- Water-sensitive design – reducing water use and managing stormwater through landscaping, water tanks and water-efficient fixtures.
- Low-emissions materials – using recycled, non-toxic or low-carbon materials during construction.
- Full electric developments – ensuring all future infrastructure projects are designed to be low emissions before construction.
- Efficient appliances and systems – reducing ongoing energy and water demand by selecting appliances with WELS ratings of 4 or above.

### **Where do we go from here?**

Enforcing strong sustainability standards in Council's capital projects and master planning means Council will use less energy, reduce both operational and embodied emissions over time, and protect residents from the health impacts and costs of a changing climate. Embodied emissions are the greenhouse gas emissions produced throughout the whole life cycle of a building or infrastructure asset. There is a growing need for Council to develop its understanding of embodied emissions associated with its assets and infrastructure. This knowledge will support more informed investment, design and procurement decisions.

Council will invest in critical infrastructure to avoid significant future costs and impacts, while working with other public infrastructure owners and operators to improve the resilience of their assets.

It is important that climate resilience extends beyond just the resilience of council assets and services but also includes community resilience. By ensuring council assets are resilient to climate change, this will support business continuity for residents, businesses and other members of the community.

## Sustainability across Greater Dandenong

**Objective:** A Council and Community committed to a sustainable future

Partnership with Kingston Council, BLCAC Aboriginal Corporation and Greater Dandenong City Council to protect and enhance Coomoora Reserve through Bush to Bay: Linking Landscapes on Bunurong Country.
Embedding climate risk into Council operations, consideration for capital works projects, procurement, open space design, assets, infrastructure and maintenance contracts.
Continue to embed sustainable practice and policy into everyday council operations. Examples include the updated Plastic Policy, new sustainability requirements in Council’s Procurement Policy and strict sustainability criteria for capital projects.
Long standing partnership with the Dandenong Market to implement policies promoting waste avoidance. An example of this is the Borrow-a-bag initiative aimed at reducing plastic waste.
Partnership with Melbourne Water, Federation University, Maroondah Council, Knox Council, Greater Dandenong and local indigenous nurseries to create five (5) Climate Future Plots (three in Greater Dandenong).

Sustainability is a driving principle of this Strategy.

Local governments like Greater Dandenong City Council play a critical role in advancing sustainability by leading initiatives that address climate change, protect our environment, and embed sustainable practices across our operations and decision making. Council is a vital part of the solution, driving practical action that helps our city do more with less and build a resilient, climate-ready future.

### Embedding sustainability

Council has a unique and powerful role to play in addressing sustainability challenges and opportunities through leadership, strategic planning, procurement and partnership with our community. This Strategy sets a clear direction for coordinated action across all areas of Council operations, policies, and influence. It provides a shared framework to guide how we respond to the changing climate, through both reducing our impact (mitigation) and preparing for future change (adaptation). Council has laid the foundations for long-term sustainability action by embedding sustainability objectives into its core operations, risk assessments, procurement policies and decision-making.

The Strategy recognises that effective action starts with Council’s own leadership. Council has developed an Action Plan that is clear, measurable and relevant. It will move Council towards more adaptive, sustainable operations and decision making in the face of climate change. Implementing the objectives of this Strategy is a whole of Council responsibility, and effective collaboration between teams will drive its success.

Building staff and community capacity is central to this work. That’s why Council will continue to develop staff skills, knowledge and responsiveness to sustainability matters. We know our staff are committed to responding to climate change and are seeking opportunities to lead change and be more adaptable. However, Council cannot do it alone, Council recognises the need to mobilise our community to prepare for a changing climate.

### Empowering the community

The Strategy aims to empower our community to take local sustainability action that delivers better health and wellbeing outcomes and increased resilience to the

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threats of climate change. This extends to working regionally with neighbouring councils, government partners, local industry and grassroots community groups. These partnerships will identify opportunities to mitigate our environmental impact, adopt infrastructure adaptation measures, and unlock funding mechanisms to overcome barriers. There are significant financial challenges ahead to achieve the ambitious net zero targets. Council will continue seeking opportunities for partnerships, program funding, co-contributions and grant funding through Federal, State and other mechanisms.

There is not one single solution to implementing sustainability. It is a way of thinking, working, and living. The actions for this theme support sustainability across all sectors of Greater Dandenong, with Council and the community committing to a sustainable future.

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## Monitoring and Reporting



An Action Plan has been prepared that aligns with the objectives of the *Greater Dandenong Council Plan 2025-29* and the objectives developed for this Strategy. Implementation of the Action Plan is critical to Council's commitment and ability to lead our community's sustainability action and to foster environmental stewardship. To understand Council's ability to influence change, the Strategy has outlined the role of Council, community and other stakeholders. The Action Plan responds to the objectives for each theme by setting actions that contribute to its delivery. It includes a commencement date, baseline and measure, and an intended completion date where appropriate. Delivery of the Action Plan is subject to the annual budget and long-term financial plan.

The use of objectives and actions in the *Our Bright Green Future Strategy and Action Plan* is consistent with the Integrated Planning Framework adopted by Council. A clear intention of the development of this Strategy was to improve the strategic framework for Council's climate and sustainability action. The Action Plan provides that strategic framework to guide operational decision making. This enables Council to remain adaptable and responsive over the life of the Strategy.

The Action Plan has been developed to be clear, measurable, and relevant, ensuring each action includes defined performance measures to monitor its implementation and outcome. Progress on the Action Plan will be reported annually. The annual update will share achievements from the past 12 months and progress on actions undertaken in that year, including key advocacy work completed. These annual reports will include quantified performance data against progressed actions where relevant and available to track the effectiveness of the Action Plan over time and respond accordingly. The Action Plan will be incorporated into Council's annual Council Plan reporting process to assist with the timely implementation.

As the Strategy is a Priority Strategy under the Integrated Planning Framework, the objectives and actions of the Action Plan will be reviewed every four (4) years to ensure they align with the Council Plan. As part of this review, the status of all actions will be reported on, and the Action Plan will be updated to support continued implementation of the Strategy and Council priorities through to 2036.

These commitments ensure progress made against the actions is reported annually, and the Action Plan is reviewed every four years. This progress will be published on Council's website for the community to monitor.

A full strategic renewal of *Our Bright Green Future Strategy and Action Plan* will commence in 2036.

## Glossary

Term	Definition
Adaptation	The process of adjusting to actual or expected climate impacts to reduce harm or exploit beneficial opportunities.
Biodiversity	The variety of all life-forms, plants, animals, fungi, protists (including algae) and bacteria, their encoded genes, and the ecosystems of which they form part.
BLCAC	BLCAC (BLCAC) are a Traditional Owner organisation that represent the Bunurong people of the South-Eastern Kulin Nation. They aim to preserve and protect the sacred lands and waterways of our ancestors, their places, traditional cultural practices, and stories.
Built Environment	Human-made surroundings that provide the setting for human activity, such as buildings, parks, and transportation systems.
Canopy cover	The measure of the area of tree canopy when viewed from above and is recorded as a percentage of total land area.
Canopy tree	Defined as any tree above 3m.
Capacity	The maximum amount that something can contain or produce; in sustainability, often refers to the ability to manage or respond to environmental issues.
Capacity building	The process of developing and strengthening skills, abilities, and resources to adapt and respond to challenges.
Carbon	A chemical element (C) that is the basis of all known life and a key component in fossil fuels.
Carbon dioxide	A colourless, odorless gas (CO <sub>2</sub> ) produced by burning carbon and organic compounds and by respiration, contributing to the greenhouse effect.
Carbon emissions	The release of carbon, particularly carbon dioxide, into the atmosphere from human activities such as burning fossil fuels.
CASBE	CASBE is a group of Victorian councils that work together to make buildings more environmentally friendly. CASBE helps councils improve how buildings use energy, water, and materials, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. It also supports better building design that is healthier, more comfortable, and cheaper to run.
Circular Economy	An economic system aimed at eliminating waste and the continual use of resources through reuse, repair, remanufacturing, and recycling.
Climate and ecological emergency	Recognition that climate change is causing significant damage to the economy, society and the environment, and that action is required urgently to avoid potentially irreversible environmental damage resulting from it.
Climate change	The long-term change in the Earth's weather patterns as a result of global warming, resulting in fluctuating temperatures and more frequent extreme weather events
Cost-of-living	The amount of money needed to cover basic expenses such as housing, food, taxes, and healthcare.
Dandenong Wellbeing Centre	The Dandenong Wellbeing Centre will replace the ageing Dandenong Oasis and aligns with Council's vision of getting "more people, more active, more often. It will be a space for people to connect, socialise and take care of their health year-round and offer fun, culturally safe programs, health therapies, rehabilitation and much more.
Ecological diversity	The variety of ecosystems in a given place, including the diversity within and between ecosystems.
Embodied emissions	Greenhouse gas emissions associated with materials and construction processes throughout the whole life cycle of a building or infrastructure being the sum of upfront carbon, in-use embodied carbon, and end-of-life embodied carbon, measured by CO <sub>2</sub> e.
Environmentally Sustainable Design (ESD)	A design approach that reduces negative impacts on the environment through efficient and sustainable building practices.

Fossil fuels	Fuels such as coal, oil, and gas, formed from the remains of living organisms over millions of years. The main contributor towards climate change.
Gardens for Wildlife	Gardens for Wildlife is a free program supporting residents, businesses, schools and community groups to attract and support wildlife with indigenous plants and wildlife gardening practices.
Global warming	The long-term heating of Earth’s climate system due to human activities, primarily fossil fuel burning.
Grants	Funds provided by a government, organization, or institution for a specific purpose, often without repayment.
Green Star	An Australian sustainability rating system for buildings and communities managed by the Green Building Council of Australia.
Greenhouse gas emissions (GHG)	Gases such as carbon dioxide and methane that trap heat in the atmosphere and contribute to global warming.
Heat pumps	Devices that transfer heat from one place to another for heating or cooling purposes, often using electricity efficiently.
Heat wave	Defined as three or more days of high maximum and minimum temperatures that are unusual for that location (Bureau of Meteorology, 2020).
Integrated water management	A collaborative approach to planning that brings together all elements of the water cycle including sewage management, water supply, stormwater management and water treatment, considering environmental, economic and social benefits. It is the integration of the water cycle into urban planning and design by recognising all water streams in the urban environment as a potential resource e.g. rainwater, stormwater, grey water and blackwater.
IoT-enabled energy monitoring	Refers to the use of internet-connected devices, sensors, and software to track, analyse, and optimize energy consumption in real-time. This technology allows users to gain insights into their energy usage patterns, identify areas of waste, and implement strategies for greater efficiency and cost savings.
IPCC	The IPCC is an international group of scientists supported by the United Nations. It studies climate change and provides trusted information about its causes, impacts, and solutions. Governments around the world use IPCC reports to plan actions to reduce climate change and prepare for its effects.
Keysborough Community Hub	The Keysborough Community Hub, previously informally known as the Keysborough South Community Hub, provides a wide range of quality services, programs and flexible meeting spaces for our community.
Living Links	Living Links is a program that protects and connects natural areas such as parks, waterways, and wildlife habitats. It helps plants and animals move safely between green spaces. Living Links also supports healthier ecosystems and creates greener, cooler places for people to enjoy.
Local Law	A Local Law is a rule made by Council to manage local issues. Local Laws help keep the community safe, healthy, and respectful. They can cover things like waste, pets, parking, noise, and the use of public spaces
Planning Scheme	The Planning Scheme is a set of rules that guide how land is used and developed. It explains what can be built, where it can be built, and under what conditions. The Planning Scheme helps protect neighbourhood character, support jobs and housing, and manage environmental impacts.
Mitigation	Efforts to reduce or prevent the emission of greenhouse gases; limiting the magnitude of future climate change.
Net Zero Carbon Emissions	Achieving a balance between the amount of carbon emitted and the amount removed from the atmosphere.
Our Bright Green Future	The branding used by Council for all sustainability programs, events, newsletter and initiatives.
Paris Agreement	A global accord within the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change aimed at limiting global warming.

Power Purchase Agreement	To achieve its target of zero net carbon emissions, Greater Dandenong Council has worked together with 46 other councils combined purchasing power to purchase its electricity needs from 100% renewable resources at a reduced cost. Further information about Greater Dandenong’s Renewable Power Purchasing Agreements can be found at the <a href="#">Victorian Energy Collaboration (VECO) website</a> .
Resilience	The ability of a system, community, or individual to withstand and recover from adverse situations like climate impacts.
Scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions	Categories of greenhouse gas emissions: direct emissions (Scope 1), indirect from energy (Scope 2), and other indirect emissions (Scope 3). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scope 1 emissions for Council include fleet vehicles and gas usage in our community facilities.</li> <li>• Scope 2 emissions for Council include emissions from sources of electricity in our buildings and streetlights. Council sources all its electricity from renewable energy sources as part of the VECO Power Purchase Agreement.</li> <li>• Scope 3 emissions for Council include community emissions, emissions from landfill and procured goods and services.</li> </ul>
Stormwater	Rainwater that flows over surfaces such as roads and roofs, often collected in drainage systems.
Sustainability	Actions and decisions that are capable of being maintained at a steady level without exhausting natural resources or causing significant ecological damage.
tCO2e	Tonne of carbon dioxide equivalent; a standard unit for measuring carbon footprints across different greenhouse gases.
Urban heat island	When urban areas are warmer than surrounding rural areas due to heat retention in hard surfaces. These occur due to the increased hard surfaces that absorb and radiate heat, limited vegetation to shade and cool, heat production from machines and activities and air pollution creating local greenhouse effects. The analysis has demonstrated that Greater Dandenong is already experiencing these effects with the most serious effects being experienced in major activity centres such as Dandenong, Springvale and Noble Park. The most cost effective and efficient mitigation tool is an increase in tree canopy cover.
VECO	Victorian Energy Collaboration; a collective of local governments in Victoria purchasing renewable energy together.
WELS Rating	An Australian government scheme that rates the water efficiency of products such as taps, showers, toilets, washing machines and dishwashers. Products are assigned a star rating (typically 1–6 stars) and a water consumption figure, helping households, businesses and organisations compare options and choose appliances that use less water.

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**THEME 1      ADVOCACY****OBJECTIVE**      *A City that advocates for a sustainable future.*

#	ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	MEASURE	COMMENCEMENT YEAR
1	Advocate for increased investment in climate resilient infrastructure that reduces the impact of climate change on community health and wellbeing.	Climate and Open Space Planning Community Advocacy	Advocacy measures undertaken	ONGOING
2	Advocate to relevant stakeholders to protect and enhance biodiversity, including developing new wildlife corridor links.	Parks	Advocacy measures undertaken	ONGOING
3	Advocate to Melbourne Water to improve waterway health and data bases, including revised flood modelling and supporting resources and tools.	Transport and Civil Development Strategic Planning	Advocacy measures undertaken	ONGOING
4	Advocate for improved consideration of Greater Dandenong stormwater priorities within regional asset and infrastructure plans.	Transport and Civil Development Strategic Planning	Advocacy measures undertaken	ONGOING
5	Advocate to State and Federal government, landowners, developers and other key stakeholders to improve the understanding of the benefits of trees, and facilitate the enhancement of canopy coverage and greening at a local and regional level.	Strategic Planning Parks	Advocacy measures undertaken	ONGOING
6	Advocate to State and Federal government, and other relevant stakeholders for increased investment in batteries and other renewable energy sources for both public infrastructure and private properties.	Climate and Open Space Planning	Advocacy measures undertaken	ONGOING
7	Continue to advocate for the earliest possible closure of the Lyndhurst landfill site.	Strategic Planning Climate and Open Space Planning	Advocacy measures undertaken	ONGOING
8	Advocate to State and Federal government and other relevant stakeholders for increased programs, education and activities to promote a circular economy by reducing waste and improving opportunities for reuse.	Climate and Open Space Planning Waste & Cleansing	Advocacy measures undertaken	ONGOING

**THEME 1      ADVOCACY**

**OBJECTIVE**      *A City that advocates for a sustainable future.*



#	ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	MEASURE	COMMENCEMENT YEAR
9	Advocate to State and Federal governments, and relevant stakeholders to improve green travel options, including public transport, cycling, walking and uptake of electric vehicles.	Transport and Civil Development	Advocacy measures undertaken	ONGOING
10	Advocate with key stakeholders and government on the importance of maintaining an appropriate level of regional air quality.	Planning Compliance Climate and Open Space Planning	Advocacy measures undertaken	ONGOING
11	Advocate to and support the business sector and wider community regarding the importance of reducing emissions through electrification, energy efficiency upgrades and other methods.	Climate and Open Space Planning Business Development and Investment	Advocacy measures undertaken	ONGOING
12	Actively seek external funding to strengthen Council's environmental programs.	Climate and Open Space Planning	Advocacy measures undertaken including grant applications as relevant	ONGOING
13	Advocate to partners to identify opportunities to enhance urban ecology and integrated water management outcomes to mitigate the impact of the urban heat island effect.	Climate and Open Space Planning Transport and Civil Development Parks	Opportunities identified and advocacy measures undertaken	ONGOING
14	Advocate alongside CASBE to State Government for the implementation of the Elevating Environmentally Sustainable Design Targets Planning Scheme Amendment.	Climate and Open Space Planning	Advocacy measures undertaken	ONGOING

## THEME 2 COMMUNITY MOBILISATION AND RESILIENCE

### OBJECTIVE *A City prepared for a changing climate.*



#	ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	MEASURE	COMMENCEMENT YEAR	DELIVERY YEAR
1	Develop partnerships with Traditional Custodians, including the Bunurong Land Council Aboriginal Corporation, to include cultural values, wisdom and ecological knowledge in environment, sustainability and climate planning and management in significant Council projects and programs.	Climate and Open Space Planning	Traditional custodians values, wisdom and knowledge embedded in relevant projects and programs by 2030	2027/28	2029/30
2	Enable opportunities for consultation and engagement on sustainability and climate change with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations to increase Council's awareness of their needs and priorities.	Climate and Open Space Planning	Increased staff knowledge of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations needs and priorities	ONGOING	
3	Develop partnerships with community organisations to focus on leadership and capacity building of community members.	Climate and Open Space Planning	Strong and positive relationships with community organisations	ONGOING	
4	Review and strengthen Council's climate change hazard preparedness and emergency management response planning of more frequent and extreme weather events and increase involvement of the community in these planning processes to improve community resilience.	Emergency Management Climate and Open Space Planning	Review complete by 2028	2026/27	2027/28
5	Council to facilitate collaboration between local schools and external stakeholders, including delivery of the CERES Student Environmental Leadership Summit.	Climate and Open Space Planning Youth and Family Services	Programs implemented by 2028	2026/27	2027/28
6	Council to increase its understanding of the unique needs of different members of the community, and to facilitate strategic partnerships, including with the multicultural community, young people, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, people with a disability, and the business sector to inform climate-related engagement.	Climate and Open Space Planning	Increased engagement with all members of the community	2026/27	2035/36

## THEME 2 COMMUNITY MOBILISATION AND RESILIENCE

### OBJECTIVE *A City prepared for a changing climate.*



#	ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	MEASURE	COMMENCEMENT YEAR	DELIVERY YEAR
7	Collaborate with key partners to ensure information regarding sustainability and climate change is translated into community languages, to improve accessibility.	Climate & Open Space Planning Parks Communications and Customer Experience	Information translated into relevant languages by 2028	2026/27	2027/28
8	Engage young people on Council's programs and activities relating to climate change and sustainability.	Climate & Open Space Planning Youth and Family Services	Engagement with young people in sustainability and environmental projects	ONGOING	
9	Facilitate opportunities for young people to engage in projects that support the environment and promote sustainability, including addressing the impacts of climate change.	Youth and Family Services Climate & Open Space Planning	Engagement with young people in sustainability and environmental projects	2027/28	2035/36
10	Continue to provide funding through Council's Community Grants Program (Climate Action Stream) to support community projects that mobilise climate action and contribute to healthier, more sustainable and climate resilient ways of living.	Community Partnerships and Volunteers Climate & Open Space Planning	Continue to provide funding to the Climate Action Stream of the Community Grants Program	ONGOING	
11	Continue to recognise and promote the achievements of the community through initiatives such as the annual Australia Day Awards (Sustainability category) and use of Council's publications and social media.	Climate & Open Space Planning Communications and Customer Experience	Australia Day Award in Sustainability category continuing to be awarded	ONGOING	
12	In partnership with the South East Business Network (SEBN) and South East Melbourne Manufacturers Alliance (SEMMA), proactively identify and implement measures within existing forums to enhance local business awareness and preparedness for the impacts of climate change.	Climate & Open Space Planning Business Development and Investment	Promote engagement and awareness on climate change impacts	2026/27	2035/36

### THEME 3 CIRCULAR ECONOMY AND WASTE



#### OBJECTIVE *A Circular City: Reducing our waste and redefining our resources*

#	ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	BASELINE	MEASURE	COMMENCEMENT YEAR	DELIVERY YEAR
1	Identify and implement opportunities to improve community waste education programs and initiatives to reduce waste going to landfill, and more resources recovered and recycled.	Climate and Open Space Planning Waste and Cleansing	29,713 tonnes of waste sent to landfill - 2024/25	Reduction of waste going to landfill by 10% by 2030	2026/27	2029/30
2	Investigate and support industry partnerships to develop alternative resource recovery solutions beyond kerbside system to improve diversion of “other” household waste materials from landfill.	Climate and Open Space Planning Business Development and Investment Waste and Cleansing		Investigation of opportunities completed by 2029	2027/28	2028/29
3	Increase resource recovery across Council facilities and operations by applying best practice waste management processes, and trialling new technologies.	Climate and Open Space Planning Waste and Cleansing	29,713 tonnes of waste sent to landfill - 2024/25 12,222 tonnes of recycling - 2024/25	Reduction in waste going to landfill by 10% and increase recycling tonnages by 2030	2026/27	2029/30
4	Identify and implement opportunities to reduce litter and dumped rubbish across the municipality.	Climate and Open Space Planning Waste and Cleansing	952 tonnes of dumped rubbish collected - 2024/25	Reduction in dumped rubbish by 20% by 2035	2026/27	2034/35
5	Align Council waste services with Recycling Victoria Policy by working with the Victorian government to implement key actions mandated under the circular economy policy and action plan - Recycling Victoria: a new economy.	Climate and Open Space Planning Waste and Cleansing		Roll out and implementation of kerbside glass bin by 2027 Increase in containers being deposited at CDS facilities by 10% by 2030 and an overall decrease in glass and CDS materials in commingled recycling by 2030	2026/27	2029/30

**THEME 3      CIRCULAR ECONOMY AND WASTE**

**OBJECTIVE      *A Circular City: Reducing our waste and redefining our resources***



#	ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	BASELINE	MEASURE	COMMENCEMENT YEAR	DELIVERY YEAR
6	Support alternatives to landfill, through participation in the South East Melbourne Advanced Waste Processing (SEMAWP) project.	Climate and Open Space Planning Waste and Cleansing	29,713 tonnes of waste sent to landfill - 2024/25	Implement SEMAWP contract by 2028	2026/27	2027/28
7	Review the provision of waste services and the scope of service to: Residential properties, commercial properties, schools and children's services and sporting clubs.	Climate and Open Space Planning Waste and Cleansing		Review complete by 2030	2026/27	2029/30

**THEME 4      TRANSPORT AND ACTIVE TRAVEL****OBJECTIVE**      *A City well connected through active and low carbon transport.*

#	ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	BASELINE	MEASURE	COMMENCEMENT YEAR	DELIVERY YEAR
1	Support and promote Council's Green Travel Plan, including success stories, that result in increased use of low emission transport by Council staff and the community.	Transport & Civil Development Climate & Open Space Planning	11% of staff use green travel options - (Staff Travel Survey 2023)	Green Travel Plan updated and increase of staff using green options to 20% by 2030	2026/27	2029/30
2	Implement the Active Transport Infrastructure Priority Program improving pedestrian and cycling infrastructure.	Transport & Civil Development		Generate benchmark for active transport (based on Physical Activity Participation Survey) and set 2030 target	2026/27	2026/27
3	Continue to implement the Fleet Transition Plan to increase Council's use of low emissions vehicles and drive accelerated uptake.	Works and Fleet Transport & Civil Development Climate & Open Space Planning	27 vehicles (made up of 11 electric passenger vehicles, 1 electric van, 15 hybrid passenger vehicles (Fleet - 2025)	Transition Council's passenger vehicle fleet to low-emissions vehicles by 2030	ONGOING	2029/30
4	Work with partners to increase the number of public electric vehicle charging stations across the municipality.	Transport & Civil Development	28 public charging stations (PlugShare -2025)	Increase number of public electric vehicle charging stations in the municipality to 50 by 2030	2026/27	2029/30

## THEME 5 BIODIVERSITY

**OBJECTIVE** *A City that cares for and connects with nature.*



#	ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	BASELINE	MEASURE	COMMENCEMENT YEAR	DELIVERY YEAR
1	Continue Council's participation in regional alliances to facilitate increased consideration and protection of local biodiversity, connection of green space and pest animal control.	Parks		Active participation in regional alliances	ONGOING	
2	Increase community awareness, education and involvement in ecological improvements within the Greater Dandenong Green Wedge.	Parks Strategic Planning	Annual Green Wedge newsletter	Increased targeted communications to Green Wedge Residents	ONGOING	
3	Engage and strengthen the community's awareness on the ecological value of the parks, plants and wildlife in Greater Dandenong through programs such as Gardens for Wildlife.	Parks	Pilot Gardens for Wildlife program	Continue to deliver environmental education programs and establish the Gardens for Wildlife program	2026/27	2035/36
4	Develop a monitoring and evaluation framework to measure biodiversity within Greater Dandenong, including the establishment of baseline biodiversity metrics.	Parks		Implementation of framework by 2028	2026/27	2027/28
5	Investigate opportunities to improve existing wildlife corridor links and establish new ones where appropriate.	Parks		Investigation of opportunities complete by 2029	2027/28	2028/29
6	Review and update GIS map data for existing biodiversity values across all land tenures.	Parks		GIS map data updated by 2028	2026/27	2027/28

## THEME 6 TREES AND GREENING

### OBJECTIVE *A healthy, green and resilient City*



#	ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	BASELINE	MEASURE	COMMENCEMENT YEAR	DELIVERY YEAR
1	Increase canopy coverage across the municipality.	Climate and Open Space Planning Parks	14.6% canopy coverage across municipality (Canopy Coverage Audit - 2025)	Canopy coverage increased to 15% by 2028	ONGOING	2027/28
2	Further develop opportunities for engagement and education to increase the community's awareness of the benefits of greener and cooler environments.	Parks Climate and Open Space Planning	Delivery of current Environmental Education programs	Develop and implement an environmental engagement schedule	ONGOING	
3	Regularly source tree canopy and urban heat island data for Greater Dandenong, and actively work to increase canopy cover to reduce impacts of the urban heat island effect and inform strategic planting plans for the municipality.	Climate and Open Space Planning Parks		Prepare an urban heat island map to inform the tree planting plans by 2028	2026/27	2027/28
4	Continue to deliver and review Environmental Education programs such as community planting days and the Adopt-A-Park program, to build and improve community awareness of the importance of our natural environment. This includes supporting local community groups to undertake their own activities.	Parks	Delivery of Environmental Education programs (8 programs)	Continue to deliver environmental education programs and support local community groups to undertake their own activities	ONGOING	
5	Undertake an audit of the Native Vegetation Precinct Plan to determine status of identified trees.	Strategic Planning		Audit complete by 2027	2026/27	2026/27
6	Implement the 15 year tree planting program.	Parks		Tree planting program complete	ONGOING	2032/33

**THEME 7 WATER AND WATERWAYS****OBJECTIVE** *A City with well-managed water, clean and healthy waterways.*

#	ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	MEASURE	COMMENCEMENT YEAR	DELIVERY YEAR
1	Collaborate with Melbourne Water to identify and investigate flood mitigation opportunities, including reviewing drainage capacity and nature-based solutions.	Transport and Civil Development	Flood mitigation opportunities identified	2026/27	2035/36
2	Review and develop drainage capital works programs based on risk, priority and cost-benefit analysis with a focus on flood mitigation and integrated water management.	Transport and Civil Development	Update Drainage Capital Works Programs following review of updated Melbourne Water flood mapping by 2027	2026/27	2027/28
3	Continue to collaborate with key stakeholders through participation in the Dandenong Integrated Water Management Forum.	Transport and Civil Development Climate and Open Space Planning	Ongoing participation in forum	ONGOING	
4	Strengthen the community's awareness on best practice for the responsible use of water.	Climate and Open Space Planning	Run multiple community awareness education programs per annum	ONGOING	
5	Incorporate water sensitive urban design (WSUD) initiatives and use passive storm water irrigation in new tree planting areas where possible. Establish irrigation water requirements and water budgets for urban trees and landscapes.	Transport and Civil Development Parks	Implement WSUD and passive storm water irrigation initiatives by 2032	2026/27	2031/32

**THEME 8****ENERGY AND TRANSITION TO NET ZERO****OBJECTIVE**

*A net zero, efficient City that prioritises low carbon and renewable energy.*



#	ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	BASELINE	MEASURE	COMMENCEMENT YEAR	DELIVERY YEAR
1	In collaboration with key partners, continue to support programs that facilitate the uptake of energy efficiency, renewable energy and financial support for upgrades for residential properties (including low-income households) and the industrial and commercial sectors.	Climate and Open Space Planning Business Development and Investment		Increasing promotion of renewable energy upgrades and available financial supports	ONGOING	
2	Facilitate and help support efforts of local community service organisations to seek opportunities through State and Federal government funding to pilot renewable energy networks aimed at supporting continuity of services during power blackouts, particularly in emergency situations.	Climate and Open Space Planning Community Advocacy Community Partnerships and Volunteers		Identify and promote infrastructure and grant opportunities	2027/28	2035/36
3	Investigate opportunities for community renewable energy, and distributed energy projects, including neighbourhood batteries.	Climate and Open Space Planning		Opportunities identified by 2030	2028/29	2029/30
4	Investigate mechanisms such as Virtual Power Networks, Energy Performance Contracts and upgrades through the Victorian Energy Upgrade Program to reduce Council's energy use and greenhouse gas emissions.	Climate and Open Space Planning Procurement		Opportunities identified by 2030	2028/29	2029/30
5	Net zero emissions for Council operations.	Climate and Open Space Planning	3,827 tCO <sub>2</sub> -e emitted by Council facilities in 2024/25	Council's operations result in net zero emissions by 2035	ONGOING	2034/35
6	Net zero emissions for the municipality.	Climate and Open Space Planning	3,598,000 tCO <sub>2</sub> -e (2016/17)	Community emissions net zero by 2040	ONGOING	2040/41
7	Phase out the use of natural gas across Council facilities.	Climate and Open Space Planning Building Projects	42,103 GJ gas used across Council facilities (2023)	Gas usage phased out of all Council facilities by 2035	ONGOING	2035/36

**THEME 8 ENERGY AND TRANSITION TO NET ZERO**



**OBJECTIVE** *A net zero, efficient City that prioritises low carbon and renewable energy.*

#	ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	BASELINE	MEASURE	COMMENCEMENT YEAR	DELIVERY YEAR
8	Support the facilitation of 100% renewable energy Power Purchasing Agreements for local businesses.	Climate and Open Space Planning Business Development and Investment		Investigate additional opportunities to facilitate Power Purchasing Agreements.	2027/28	2035/36
9	Investigate and improve the monitoring of energy consumption and associated greenhouse gas emissions across all Council facilities, including through uptake of real-time (IOT-based) monitoring capabilities.	Climate and Open Space Planning		Improved monitoring processes implemented by 2030	ONGOING	2029/30

## THEME 9 SUSTAINABLE DESIGN, ASSETS AND INFRASTRUCTURE



**OBJECTIVE** *A City that leads by example through a resilient built environment and assets that are planned for the future.*

#	ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	BASELINE	MEASURE	COMMENCEMENT YEAR	DELIVERY YEAR
1	Continue to utilise renewable energy Power Purchasing Agreements (PPAs) to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from Council's streetlights and buildings.	Climate and Open Space Planning Procurement	All electricity use by Council sourced from renewable energy	Maintain renewable energy source for electricity	ONGOING	
2	Review and update Council's Civil Engineering Standards and associated standard design drawings to ensure consideration of climate change impacts.	Transport and Civil Development Climate and Open Space Planning		Updated standards and design drawings implemented by 2028	2026/27	2027/28
3	Reduce Council's energy usage and costs through an increased focus on optimising Council's buildings, fixtures and appliances, and control systems to the most energy efficient available.	Climate and Open Space Planning Building Projects		Undertake energy efficiency upgrades as identified	ONGOING	
4	Continue to ensure all new Council buildings and other infrastructure utilise renewable electricity as their only energy source.	Climate and Open Space Planning	All new buildings and other infrastructure use renewable electricity	All new buildings and other infrastructure continue to use renewable electricity	ONGOING	
5	Embed climate resilience into Council's asset management strategies and plans as they are reviewed and updated in accordance with most up to date standards in relation to climate risk and adaptation.	Asset Management Climate and Open Space Planning		Consideration of climate resilience embedded into relevant strategies and plans as they are reviewed and updated	ONGOING	
6	Develop a program to undertake climate change vulnerability assessments of Council's key assets and infrastructure to increase understanding of physical, financial and workforce impacts and develop a budgeted implementation plan including priorities for future asset plans and capital expenditure program.	Climate and Open Space Planning Asset Management		Develop a program to undertake climate change vulnerability assessments by 2028	2026/27	2027/28
7	Investigate opportunities to improve understanding of Council's embodied emissions.	Climate and Open Space Planning		Opportunities investigated by 2028	2027/28	2027/28

**THEME 10 SUSTAINABILITY ACROSS GREATER DANDENONG****OBJECTIVE** *A Council and Community committed to a bright green future.*

#	ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	MEASURE	COMMENCEMENT YEAR	DELIVERY YEAR
1	Establish a single internal working group for oversight of Our Bright Green Future Strategy implementation.	Climate and Open Space Planning	Working group established by 2026	2026/27	2026/27
2	Review and embed the climate change risks relevant to all themes within this strategy as part of the review and update of Council's Risk Register. This includes assigning identified risks to responsible risk owners.	Climate and Open Space Planning Governance, Legal and Risk	Updated climate change risks embedded into Council's corporate risk register by 2027	2026/27	2026/27
3	Continue to assess and strengthen Council's adaptive capacity to respond to the climate emergency and improve environmental outcomes by increasing staff capacity and increased resilience.	Climate and Open Space Planning Organisational Development	Implement program of staff training activities	2027/28	2035/36
4	Work collaboratively with local government partners and key stakeholders to identify regional infrastructure adaptation projects and consider potential funding mechanisms to help address financial barriers.	Climate and Open Space Planning	Ongoing identification of environmental, sustainability and climate change related regional projects and supporting funding mechanisms	2026/27	2035/36
5	Implement the sustainability objectives of Council's procurement policy, and incorporate sustainability criteria into procurement evaluation processes.	Procurement Climate and Open Space Planning	Procurement Policy updated by 2027 to strengthen sustainability objectives	2026/27	2026/27
6	Investigate opportunities to improve digital reporting of sustainability related performance metrics.	Climate and Open Space Planning Digital and Data Transformation	Opportunities identified by 2027	2026/27	2026/27
7	Develop a program to undertake climate change vulnerability assessments of Council's service delivery to increase understanding of physical, financial and workforce impacts and develop a budgeted implementation plan including priorities.	Climate and Open Space Planning Asset Management	Develop a program to undertake climate change vulnerability assessments by 2028	2026/27	2027/28



## 4.1.2 Policy Review - Abolition of Operational Policies

<b>Responsible Officer:</b>	Chief Executive Officer Manager Governance, Integrity, Legal & Risk Executive Director Strategy & Corporate Services
<b>Attachments:</b>	1. Abolish - Records Management Policy - 2018 07 [4.1.2.1 - 8 pages] 2. Abolish - Prosecutions Policy - 2015 11 [4.1.2.2 - 2 pages] 3. Abolish - Use of Fireworks Policy - 2021 01 [4.1.2.3 - 3 pages]

### Officer Recommendation

#### That Council:

1. **ABOLISH** the three (3) Policies as listed in and attached to this report;
2. **NOTES** that the operational content of these policies will be retained, updated and adopted by the Chief Executive Officer in accordance with section 46 of the *Local Government Act 2020* as part of Council's Policy Framework; and
3. **NOTES** that the Council will continue to consider and adopt all strategic or legislative required polices under section 28 (1)(c) of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

### Executive Summary

1. A recent review of Council's Policy framework by the Executive Team has identified three (3) policies that are considered operational and more appropriately adopted by the Chief Executive Officer due to their operational nature.
2. In line with contemporary governance practices and legislative provisions, it is recommended that Council formally abolishes the identified policies with operational content and the policies be maintained by the Chief Executive Officer moving forward, in accordance with their responsibilities under section 46 of the *Local Government Act 2020*.
3. The Council remains the responsible authority for the management and adoption of all strategic and legislative required policies in accordance with section 28 (1)(c) of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

### Background

4. Council maintains a policy framework that distinguishes between:
  - Council adopted strategic policies that guide long-term direction, statutory responsibilities and governance oversight; and
  - Operational policies and procedures that govern administrative functions and are the responsibility of the Chief Executive Officer.
5. The Executive Team has undertaken a review of its policy framework that identified several policies better classified as operational. These policies do not set strategic direction and relate solely to administrative processes.



6. Section 46 of the *Local Government Act 2020* formally designates the Chief Executive Officer as responsible for the overall management of council operations, ensuring effective and efficient day-to-day operations. Given the CEO's statutory responsibilities, the policies identified for abolition appropriately fall within the CEO's operational domain rather than Council's strategic governance role.
7. Reclassifying the policies as operational will:
  - Strengthen alignment with Council's adopted Policy Framework;
  - Clarify delineation between strategic and operational responsibilities; and
  - Enable the Executive Team to update operational procedures efficiently.

## Proposal

8. That Council abolish the three (3) policies listed in and attached to this report for the purpose of providing clear separation between governance and administration and ensuring only strategic policies are escalated to Council.
9. The Council will continue to adopt all policies that set strategic direction or are a requirement under the *Local Government Act 2020*.
10. Operational policies continue to be managed and adopted by the Executive Team and maintained in accordance with legislative requirements and internal audit processes.

The following policies be abolished and reclassified as operational policies:

- Records Management Policy;
- Prosecutions Policy; and
- Use of Fireworks Policy

## Governance Compliance

### *Financial/Asset Resource Implications (consider Service Statements, Budget, Long Term Financial Strategy and Asset Plan)*

#### *Operating Budget Implications*

11. There are no direct financial implications arising from abolishing the policies listed in this report. Operational responsibilities will continue within existing departmental budgets.

#### *Asset Implications*

12. This item does not affect any existing assets.

#### *Legal/Risk Implications*

13. The recommendation in this report is consistent with:
  - Section 28 of the *Local Government Act 2020*, which assigns Council the strategic responsibilities of developing and reviewing key council documents;
  - Section 46 of the *Local Government Act 2020*, which assigns operational management to the Chief Executive Officer; and
  - Council's Policy Framework, which differentiates between strategic and operation policies.

#### *Environmental Implications*

14. There are no environmental implications relevant to this report.



## Community and Stakeholder Consultation

15. The three (3) policies were reviewed by the Executive Team, Governance and relevant Department Manager.
16. Stakeholder consultation supported the transfer of these policies from a strategic classification to an operational classification.

## Links to Community Vision, Council Plan, Strategy, Notice of Motion

17. This report is consistent with the following strategic objectives from the Council Plan 2025-29:
  - A Council that demonstrates leadership, responsible use of public resources, and a commitment to investing in the community.

## Legislative and Policy Obligations

18. This report has considered Council's legislative and policy obligations (where applicable) as outlined in the Report Considerations section detailed in the front of this Agenda. The applicable obligations considered and applied are:
  - The Overarching Governance Principles of the *Local Government Act 2020*.
  - Related Council Policies, Strategies or Frameworks.



# Greater Dandenong Policy

## Records Management Policy

Policy Endorsement:	Endorsement required by Council		
Directorate:	Corporate Services		
Responsible Officer:	Coordinator Records Management		
Policy Type:	Compliance		
File Number:	A4560758	Version:	004
1 <sup>st</sup> Adopted by Council	24 January 2011 Minute No. 733	Last Adopted by Council:	24 July 2017 Minute No. 318
Review Period:	Annually	Next Review:	July 2018

### 1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that Council's commitment to and legislative obligations in maintaining full and accurate records of all business activities is achieved and all staff are aware of their obligations when creating and managing corporate records.

### 2. Policy Statement

The records of City of Greater Dandenong are a strategic corporate asset and will be managed as such, from point of creation or capture through to their eventual disposal.

Creation, use, and disposal of business records will be managed in accordance with all legislative and business requirements, including, but not limited to, the *Public Records Act 1973* and the mandatory Public Records Office of Victoria (PROV) Recordkeeping Standards (*Ref: Pros 10/10 Strategic Management Standard*).

The management of information and records owned by or in the custody of City of Greater Dandenong will be strategically planned, implemented and managed.

The Records Management Policy ensures that records reasonably likely to be required as evidence in current or future legal proceedings are not destroyed, concealed, rendered illegible, undecipherable or incapable of identification.



# Greater Dandenong Policy

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## 3. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All employees: whether permanent or temporary, including contractors and volunteers;
- All Councillors: in undertaking their duties as elected representatives of Council;
- All Records: created on behalf of Council, across all media or formats (e.g. hardcopy, digital, email fax and websites), in all business systems and across all Council functions (including core and administrative);
- 

## 4. References

### Legislation

- Public Records Act 1973
- Freedom of Information Act 1982
- Evidence Act 2008
- Crimes Act 1958
- Electronic Transaction Act 2000
- Local Government Act 1989
- Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014
- Civil Procedures Act 2010 (specifically sections 55A to 55C)
- Health Records Act 2001
- Building Act 1993
- Planning and Environment Act 1987
- Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008

### Standards

- Australian Standards AS ISO 15489 (Records Management)
- Public Records Office of Victoria (PROV) Standards available at <http://prov.vic.gov.au/government/standards-and-policy>

### Council Policies and Codes of Conduct

(to be read in conjunction with this Records Management Policy)

- Privacy and Personal Information Policy
- Freedom of Information Policy
- Information Security Policy 2015
- Risk Management
- Digitisation Plan 2014
- Staff and Councillor Codes of Conduct

*All of the above Council Policies, Codes of Conduct and Digitisation Plan can be found either on the Intranet (Webstar) or on the procedures area in Objective.*

## 5. Definitions

*For a full glossary of Records and Information Management terms see Appendix 1 (page 7-8)*



# Greater Dandenong Policy

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## 6. Council Policy

### Responsibilities

(Ref: Pros 10/10 Strategic Management Standard)

**Chief Executive Officer** under Section 13 of the Public Records Act 1973 as administrative head of Council has specific legislative responsibility for records management. Section 13 states he:

- Must ensure that full and accurate records of the business of that office are made;
- Is responsible for the establishment of a program of records management within the office in accordance with Standards set by the keeper of Public Records;

**Directors** are responsible for corporate decisions which ensure the Records Management Strategy and Policy supports and complements the broader Strategic and Corporate planning activities.

**Manager of Information Management Services** is responsible for:

- Providing and maintaining secure systems for the capture, storage and retrieval of records, including regular backup and business continuity planning considerations;
- And has strategic responsibility for recordkeeping;

**Records Coordinator** is responsible for:

- Implementing the Records Management Strategy;
- The day-to-day running of the systems, practices and processes related to the records management function, including the training of Records Management staff to enable them to support Council officers in their record keeping duties;
- Responsible for implementing a program of quality assurance checking and compliance monitoring of record keeping activities;

**Department /Business Managers and Supervisors** are responsible for monitoring staff under their supervision to ensure that they understand and comply with records management policies and procedures. Managers and supervisors are also responsible for fostering and supporting a culture within their work group that supports good recordkeeping.

**All Staff** are responsible for keeping full and accurate records of their business activities and are accountable for compliance with this policy and the requirements within it.

**Councillors** are responsible for keeping full and accurate records of their business activities and are accountable for compliance with this policy and the requirements within it.

**Volunteers** are responsible for keeping full and accurate records of their business activities where necessary and are accountable for compliance with this policy and the requirements within it.

**Contracts Manager** is responsible for managing record keeping obligations of contractors by including records management clauses in contracts with organisations performing activities on behalf of Council or providing services to Council.

**External Contractors and service providers** are responsible for keeping full and accurate records of their business activities and are accountable for compliance with this policy and the requirements within it. All documents and files must be returned to Council as set out in contractual agreements.



# Greater Dandenong Policy

## Recordkeeping Systems

### **Creation Capture and Storage of Records**

(Ref: Pros 11/07 Capture Standard - PROS 11/01 Storage Standard - PROS 10/02 Digitization requirements)

- Official records must be created in all instances where there is a need for Council or an individual to be accountable for, and/or provide evidence of, decisions made and actions taken.
- Hardcopy records must be digitised as soon as possible.
- Records of corporate value including records that commit council to a course of action or records that state a council opinion, created when using social media applications or mobile devices, must be captured into Objective.
- Information received from another organisation must be handled in accordance with agreed procedures (e.g. Memorandums of Understanding) or in line with specific security classification handling requirements.
- Official records must be captured into corporate recordkeeping systems upon creation or receipt, in a controlled and systematic manner. Appropriate catalogue selected and mandatory metadata populated (*PROS 11/09 Control 2.1 Metadata*).
- Council's primary Electronic Documents and Records Management System (EDRMS) is Objective. All incoming correspondence of corporate value (hardcopy, emails and faxes) received by Council should be saved into Objective by the recipient.
- Council also maintains some 'line of business' applications that store data or records. In some instances these system may have recordkeeping functionality and integrate with Objective. Where this functionality does not exist, records generated from 'line of business' applications must be captured into Objective.
- The following systems/tools do not provide adequate recordkeeping functionality and must not be used to capture or maintain corporate records:
  - Hard copy systems not controlled by Council's EDRMS;
  - Email folders;
  - Local PC drives;
  - Portable storage devices (USB sticks);
  - Shared (network) drives;
- Hardcopy records must be stored in appropriate containers and environments (*Ref: PROS 11/01 Storage*).

### **Retention and Disposal of Records:**

(Ref: *Disposal Standard PROS 10/13*)

- All official records of Council must only be disposed of in accordance with the provisions set out in the Public Records Act (Vic) 1973. All official records in all formats have retention timeframes associated to them under this Act.
- Except under N.A.P. (Normal Administrative Practice) staff should not dispose of records without the approval of the Records Management Unit. Disposal includes destruction, transfer to secondary storage, transfer ownership or custody to another party.
- Unauthorised destruction of corporate records is an offence under the Evidence Act 2008 and may expose Council to a range of risks including:
  - An inability to comply with regulatory and legislative responsibilities such as Freedom of Information Act 1982 and the Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014;



# Greater Dandenong Policy

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- Inability to provide access to information requested by legal discovery;
- All official records must be able to be found on demand or within a timeframe appropriate to business needs.

## **Access, Protection and Security**

*(Ref: Pros 10/10 Access Standard and Pros 11/09 Control Standard)*

- An open access policy applies, so unless a restriction is necessary, all records' metadata must be available
- All access to official records must take place in a managed and controlled manner and in accordance with PROV Standards and Council's Information Privacy and Health Records and Freedom of Information Policies.
- All staff must ensure the reliability of their official records as evidence of their business. Official records must be a reliable source of what has been said, done or approved to be done.
- The security, privacy and confidentiality of Council records must be maintained at all times.

## Records Management

### **Contract Management**

*(Ref: Pros 10/10.G2 Managing Records of Outsourced Activities)*

Any contract that leads to the creation or transfer of council records must include recordkeeping clauses that ensure:

- full and accurate records of the activity are created;
- ownership and custody of records is clear;
- records are not disposed of without proper authorisation;
- Government access to records is assured; and
- records are stored appropriately and kept secure

Contractors must be trained in the record management requirements.

Before a contract is completed, terminated or expires, all records must be returned to Council custody and saved to the appropriate recordkeeping system.

### **Business Process Management**

*(Ref: Pros 10/17 Operations Management Standard)*

- All department and business unit processes and procedures must include instructions to manage the records created, received, viewed or shared during the process.

### **Records Management Training**

*(Ref: Pros 10/10 Strategic Management Standard)*

- All staff including contractors and volunteers must receive Records Management Training appropriate to their role within one month upon commencing employment.



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## **Records Management Reporting**

*(Ref: Pros 10/10 Strategic Management Standard)*

- The Executive Management Team must receive regular updates on records management progress and the operations of Council's Records Management Unit processes and practices including the creation, capture and disposal of records, the disclosure of information and any potential risk management issues.

## **Monitor, Review and Endorsement**

*(Ref: Pros10/10 Strategic Management Pros10/17 Operations Management Standards)*

- This policy will be monitored and reviewed by the Records Management Coordinator, annually or earlier should events dictate. Post review and prior to adoption it should be endorsed by Council.

## **Communications**

*(Ref: Pros 10/17 Operations Management Standard)*

- This policy is to be made available to all directors, managers, coordinators, staff contractors and volunteers of City of Greater Dandenong via one or more of the following:
  - Induction training
  - Records Management Procedural training
  - EDRMS training
  - Intranet (Webstar)
  - Reference in procedures

## **Compliance and Exemptions**

*(Ref: Pros10/10 Strategic Management Pros10/17 Operations Management Standards)*

- Compliance with the Records Management policy will ensure that City of Greater Dandenong can demonstrate evidence and accountability in addition to providing information about decisions made and activities undertaken for as long as is required.
- Adherence to this policy is mandatory (refer City of Greater Dandenong Code of Conduct) for all City of Greater Dandenong staff, Councillors, Contractors and Volunteers. No exemptions exist for this policy.



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## Appendix 1

### Glossary of Records and Information Management Terms

<b>Archives</b>	Those public records which have been appraised as having continuing value for reference and research purposes. Sometimes called 'corporate memory'.
<b>Archiving</b>	The generic term used to describe the sentencing and disposal or retention of records.
<b>Capture</b>	A deliberate action, which results in the registration of a record into a recordkeeping system. The process includes registering a document or record, deciding which class it is to be classified to in a file plan, adding further metadata to it, and storing it in the system, e.g. an electronic document & records management system (EDRMS).
<b>Classification</b>	The intellectual process of grouping together records which have some elements of similarity. The term refers to both the total concept and individual working processes.
<b>Content management</b>	Managing the information content of enterprise portals, intranets, and extranets to internet sites.
<b>Disposal</b>	The removal of records from Council custody either through authorised disposal or by transfer to the custody of the Public Record Office.
<b>Disposition</b>	The range of processes associated with implementing records retention, destruction or transfer decisions.
<b>Document</b> (noun)	Recorded information or object that can be treated as a unit. A document may be on paper, microform, magnetic or any other electronic medium. It may include any combination of text, data, graphics, sound, moving pictures or any other forms of information. Documents precede <i>records</i> in the information life cycle. Records are formed by <i>declaration</i> of documents.
<b>Document management</b>	The management and control of documents with emphasis on their dynamic and transactional nature including indexing and retrieval, revision and version control, work flow and information content.
<b>EDRMS</b>	Electronic Document & Records Management System A system with the functionality of a document management and records management system combined in one system. Sometimes referred to as a Content Management System.
<b>File or folder</b>	A collection of records physically brought together in a recognisable context.
<b>Information management</b>	Information management describes the means by which an organisation efficiently plans, collects, creates, organises, uses, controls, disseminates and disposes of its information, both documents deemed as records and information.
<b>Information systems</b>	Ways of providing human-readable information to users such that it is relevant to their business objectives.
<b>Knowledge management</b>	Managing tacit knowledge (held in an individual's brain in the form of know-how and experience) and explicit knowledge (recorded independently of humans).
<b>Local Government RDA</b>	A Retention and Disposal Authority authorised by the PROV, to guide the retention and disposal of function specific Local Government records.



# Greater Dandenong Policy

<b>Metadata</b>	Descriptive and cataloguing data which systematically identifies various attributes of a class of items such as file/folder and documents.
<b>N.A.P.</b>	The destruction of some public records is permitted under normal administrative practice (NAP). NAP covers the destruction of ephemeral material of a facilitative or duplicate nature created, acquired or collected by public sector employees during the course of their duties.
<b>Public Records</b>	A public record is any record made or received by a person employed in a public office in the course of his or her duties.
<b>Record</b>	Recorded information in any form, on any medium (paper or electronic) created or received and maintained by an organisation or person in the transaction of business or the conduct of affairs and kept as evidence of such activity.
<b>Recordkeeping</b>	Making and maintaining complete, accurate, reliable evidence of business transactions in the form of recorded information.
<b>Recordkeeping System (RKS)</b>	Refers to the system used to register record and house business information.
<b>Records Management</b>	Field of management responsible for the efficient and systematic control of the creation, receipt, maintenance, use and disposition of records, including processes for capturing and maintaining evidence of and information about business activities and transactions in the form of records.
<b>Registration</b>	The act of giving a record a unique identity in a record management system.

## Reference Materials:

- ECM Step Program for Records Management Maturity Report 2015
- Records Management Strategy 2015-2017
- Information Security Policy 2015



# Greater Dandenong Policy

## PROSECUTION POLICY

Policy Endorsement:	Endorsement required by Council		
Objective ID:	A1166230	Authority:	Council
Directorate:	Development Services	Responsible Officer:	Manager Regulatory Services
Policy Type:	Compliance	Version No:	004
First Adopted by Council	13 November 2006 Minute No. 370	Last Adopted by Council	11 November 2013 Minute No. 382
Review Period:	Every 2 years	Next Review	

### 1. Purpose

To provide a clear and transparent prosecution procedure which will meet public scrutiny, provide just outcomes and clearly define responsibilities for Authorised Council staff.

### 2. Background

The City of Greater Dandenong recognises the importance of good compliance management, including the provision and enforcement of parking restrictions.

Council acknowledges that in some circumstances, the issuing of fines or initiation of court proceedings will be necessary to ensure ongoing compliance.

### 3. Scope

This Policy applies to all Council staff, including Senior Executive Officers who perform a regulatory or enforcement function that involves:

- the writing of infringement or compliance notices;
- The processing of requests for review of infringement notices;
- The processing and collection of unpaid infringements;
- the authorisation and/or issuing of summonses to appear before courts or tribunals; or
- any function that has the propensity to go before a Magistrates Court or other tribunal for resolution.



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## 4. References

- Infringements Act 2006 and Regulations made there-under
- Road Safety Act 1986
- Local Government Act 1989
- Criminal Procedure Act 2009
- Magistrates Court Act 1989
- Adopted at the ordinary Council meeting of 13 November 2006

## 5. Definitions

Not applicable

## 6. Council Policy

Council will prosecute breaches of the law within its jurisdiction, in a manner which is clear and transparent to the community.

Prosecution procedures will:

- meet public scrutiny;
- provide just outcomes; and
- clearly define responsibilities for Authorised Council staff.

All matters of unpaid infringement notices will be prosecuted, provided that:

- there is no request for internal review upheld; and
- sufficient evidence is available to satisfy Council's prosecutors that the matter can be proven.

In all other matters, the decision to prosecute will be based on the recommendation of the relevant delegated officer as set out in the Code of Practice for Infringements and Prosecution.

## 7. Related Documents

Code of Practice for Infringements and Prosecution.



# Greater Dandenong Policy

## USE OF FIREWORKS

Policy Endorsement	Endorsement Required by Council		
EDRMS Object id:	A747160	Authority:	Council
Directorate:	Development Services	Responsible Officer:	Manager Regulatory Services
Policy Type:	Discretionary	Version No:	003
1st Adopted by Council	11 October 2010 Minute No. 631	Last Adopted by Council:	29 January 2019 Minute No. 930
Review Period:	Every 2 years	Next Review:	January 2021

### 1. Purpose

To establish clear guidelines for the legitimate use of fireworks within the City of Greater Dandenong.

### 2. Background

Council is concerned about the potential impact of fireworks on local amenity. As result of this, an operational policy has been in place for some time, to assist officers and fireworks operators in ensuring that fireworks displays do not unreasonably impact on residential amenity.

The operational policy created restrictions on when, where and for how long fireworks displays could occur. It also placed some very clear responsibilities on operators, in terms of notifying residents about events. The safety aspects of fireworks displays are dealt with through state legislation, which is administered by Worksafe Victoria, so the operational policy did not address those issues.

Over time, the operational policy moved to a formal Council policy, to reinforce Council's commitment to effectively managing the use of fireworks in this municipality.

In 2013, the policy was reviewed, to further clarify the types of events at which Council would support fireworks displays.



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## 3. Scope

This policy will apply to all decisions or approvals made by Council Officers, in respect of fireworks displays within the City of Greater Dandenong.

## 4. References

- Local Government Act 1989
- Summary Offences Act 1966 Section 4 (j)

## 5. Definitions

### ***Non Profit organisation means:***

An organisation that is not operating for the profit or gain of its individual members, whether these gains would have been direct or indirect.

### ***'Public events' means:***

Events conducted by 'non profit' organisations that occur in public places within the City of Greater Dandenong, and which are open to all members of the public, whether upon payment of a fee or not.

### ***'Public Place' means:***

The same as is set out in the Summary Offences Act 1966.

## 6. Council Policy

- Fireworks displays are only allowed in connection with public events.
- All fireworks displays must be approved in writing by Council.
- Fireworks displays may generally only occur up to 9.30 pm and operators must ensure that:-
  - All residential properties within a 1.5 kilometre radius of the site must receive a notice of the display in their letterboxes no earlier than seven and no later than three days before the display commences. Evidence of notice delivery must be submitted to Council in the form of a receipt from a distribution company engaged to undertake delivery or a statutory declaration.
  - This notice should disclose the nature, duration and times of the display.



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- It should also advise residents to ensure that their pets are secured within their homes to prevent escaping due to fear of the fireworks display.
- The notice should also include a staffed contact phone number for event organisers for the period 7 days before, during and seven days after the event, should residents have any questions or concerns.
- Contents of the letterbox notice must be approved by Council prior to circulation.
- A Public Notice providing the same information as set out above, and approved by the Council, must be placed in a minimum of 2 local newspapers circulating in the area of where the event is to be held, at least seven days prior to the event.

## 7. Related Documents

Nil.



### 4.1.3 Rates Hardship and Assistance Policy 2026

<b>Responsible Officer:</b>	Chief Financial Officer
<b>Attachments:</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Summary of Changes from Existing Policy [4.1.3.1 - 2 pages]</li><li>2. Rates Hardship and Assistance Policy 2026 (Proposed) [4.1.3.2 - 16 pages]</li><li>3. Rates and Charges Hardship Policy 2022 (Existing) [4.1.3.3 - 6 pages]</li></ol>

#### Officer Recommendation

**That Council:**

1. **APPROVES** the Rates Hardship and Assistance Policy 2026;
2. **NOTES** that the 2026 policy complies with the **Gazetted Ministerial Guidelines on the Payment of Rates and Charges (December 2025)** issued under the *Local Government Act 1989* and replaces the Rates and Charges Hardship Policy 2022; and
3. **ACKNOWLEDGES** that decisions relating to individual hardship applications, waivers, deferrals and recovery actions will continue to be determined by authorised officers in accordance with delegated authority.

#### Executive Summary

1. Council is required to maintain a hardship, payment plan and recovery policy that complies with the Ministerial Guidelines on the Payment of Rates and Charges gazetted in December 2025.
2. The proposed Rates Hardship and Assistance Policy 2026 has been developed in response to these mandatory Guidelines and represents a comprehensive update of Council's existing 2022 policy.
3. The revised policy introduces clearer definitions and eligibility criteria, including a distinction between hardship and financial hardship, strengthens governance and documentation requirements, and embeds additional protections for vulnerable ratepayers, including family violence considerations.
4. The policy modernises Council's recovery approach by prioritising early engagement with ratepayers, maintaining access to hardship assistance at all stages of the recovery process, and clearly positioning legal action and sale of land as measures of last resort.
5. Adoption of the policy will reduce Council's legal, compliance and reputational risk, while continuing to balance compassionate treatment of ratepayers experiencing hardship with Council's obligation to maintain financial sustainability and deliver essential services.

#### Background

6. In December 2025, the Minister for Local Government gazetted mandatory guidelines relating to the payment of rates and charges under section 181AA of the *Local Government Act 1989*.
7. Councils are required to ensure that their policies and practices relating to hardship assistance, payment plans, interest, recovery processes and sale of land are consistent with these Guidelines.



8. Council's existing Rates and Charges Hardship Policy (2022) no longer reflects current legislative requirements, Ministerial expectations or contemporary hardship and debt-management practice.
9. Retaining the existing policy would expose Council to non-compliance with the Ministerial Guidelines, legal challenge, adverse Ombudsman findings, and increased reputational risk in hardship and recovery matters.
10. The proposed Rates Hardship and Assistance Policy 2026 replaces the existing policy and ensures compliance with legislative and Ministerial obligations.

## Key Issues and Discussion

11. The 2026 Policy is a material uplift, not a minor update.
12. Given the extent of change, a 'tracked changes' version was not practical. Instead, a summary of material changes from the 2022 policy is provided as an attachment to this report.
13. Key enhancements include:
  - a. Legislative compliance with the *Local Government Act 1989*, *Local Government Act 2020* and the 2025 Ministerial Guidelines;
  - b. Clear definitions and eligibility criteria distinguishing hardship from financial hardship.
  - c. An increase in the maximum annual hardship waiver from \$500 to \$750;
  - d. Structured, transparent and documented decision-making processes;
  - e. Improved governance, delegations and internal controls;
  - f. Enhanced protections for vulnerable ratepayers, including family violence considerations; and
  - g. A staged recovery process that prioritises engagement and maintains access to hardship assistance prior to legal escalation.
14. The policy balances compassionate treatment of ratepayers experiencing hardship with Council's obligation to maintain financial sustainability and continue delivering essential services.

## Governance Compliance

### *Human Resource Implications (consider Workforce Planning and Service Statements)*

15. The policy requires ongoing capacity to meet enhanced engagement, documentation and compliance obligations.
16. The operational requirement for permanent resourcing will be addressed through the 2026-27 budget process and is noted for Council's information.

### *Financial/Asset Resource Implications (consider Service Statements, Budget, Long Term Financial Strategy and Asset Plan)*

#### *Operating Budget Implications*

17. The financial implications associated with adoption of the policy include:
  - a. An estimated increase of approximately \$20,000 per annum in hardship waivers due to the increased maximum waiver threshold, which is within the existing budget and represents a small proportion of total rate revenue; and



- b. The requirement for ongoing resourcing associated with maintaining compliance, driven engagement and monitoring requirements will be considered through the 2026-27 budget process.

18. Improved early engagement and structured recovery processes have contributed to stabilising arrears levels and supporting Council's overall cash position.

#### **Asset Implications**

19. This item does not affect any existing assets.

#### **Legal/Risk Implications**

20. This policy materially reduces Council's exposure to legal, compliance and reputational risk by ensuring alignment with the Gazetted Ministerial Guidelines (2025), the *Local Government Acts 1989 and 2020*, and contemporary procedural fairness expectations.

#### **Environmental Implications**

21. There are no environmental implications relevant to this report.

#### **Gender Impact Assessment**

22. A gender impact assessment is not required.

### **Community Consultation**

23. Community consultation was not undertaken as the policy implements mandatory Ministerial Guidelines and does not reduce existing entitlements available to ratepayers.

### **Links to Community Vision, Council Plan, Strategy, Notice of Motion**

24. This report is consistent with the following principles in the Community Vision 2040:

- Not Applicable

25. This report is consistent with the following strategic objectives from the Council Plan 2025-29:

- A Council that demonstrates leadership, responsible use of public resources, and a commitment to investing in the community.

### **Legislative and Policy Obligations**

26. This report has considered Council's legislative and policy obligations (where applicable) as outlined in the Report Considerations section detailed in the front of this Agenda. The applicable obligations considered and applied are:

- The Overarching Governance Principles of the *Local Government Act 2020*.
- *Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities 2006*.
- Related Council Policies, Strategies or Frameworks.

## Summary of Changes from Existing Policy

Theme / Area	Existing Policy (2022)	Updated Policy (Feb 2026)
Policy Scope & Structure	Narrow focus on hardship, deferrals and waivers	Expanded, end to end framework covering collection, recovery, hardship, payment plans, deferrals, waivers and reporting
Alignment with Legislation & Guidelines	Based on Local Government Act 1989 only	Explicitly aligned with Local Government Acts 1989 & 2020 and Dec 2025 Ministerial Guidelines
Policy Objective	Focused on rate relief for hardship	Broader objective balancing compassion with Council's financial sustainability
Definitions & Clarity	Limited definitions	Comprehensive definitions (hardship, financial hardship, payment plans, arrears, interest, etc.)
Hardship vs Financial Hardship	Not clearly differentiated	Clear distinction aligned to legislation (deferrals vs waivers)
Application Accessibility	Primarily written applications	Written applications with assistance provisions; clearer guidance for vulnerable applicants
Family Violence & Confidentiality	General confidentiality only	Explicit recognition of family violence, confidentiality safeguards for joint owners
Payment Plans	Secondary option; penalty interest continued	Formalised payment plans with interest frozen while plans are adhered to
Deferrals – Residential & Commercial	Longer deferral periods (up to multiple years for commercial)	Short term, tightly controlled deferrals; clearer criteria and safeguards
Interest Treatment	Discounted “market rate” interest on deferrals	No interest during approved deferrals; structured interest waiver categories

## Summary of Changes from Existing Policy

Theme / Area	Existing Policy (2022)	Updated Policy (Feb 2026)
Waiver Limits	Waivers capped at \$500	Waivers capped at \$750 with clear delegation limits
Delegations	Older role titles and split approval pathways	Updated delegations aligned to current organisational structure
Debt Recovery Process	High level recovery references	Detailed, staged recovery process with hardship checkpoints
Sale of Property (s181)	Referenced but limited procedural detail	Explicit criteria, safeguards and last resort positioning
Review & Appeals	No formal internal review process	Explicit internal review rights and separation of decision maker
Reporting & Oversight	No formal reporting framework	Monthly Executive reporting; monitoring and review embedded
Human Rights & Governance	Minimal reference	Explicit compliance with Charter, Privacy, Gender Equality and Child Safety

# Rates Hardship and Assistance Policy February 2026



## Document Control

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Date Created: [2 February 2026](#)

Objective ID: [A13459856](#)

Date of Endorsement: [16 March 2026](#)

Version No: [4](#)

Policy Superseded by this Policy: [Rates and Charges Hardship Policy](#)

Responsible Department: [Financial Services](#)

Responsible Directorate: [Chief Financial Officer](#)

Policy Type: [Discretionary](#)

Next Review: [February 2029](#)

## Document Compliance

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Council acknowledges the legal responsibility to comply with the *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006* and the *Equal Opportunity Act 2010*. The *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006* is designed to protect the fundamental rights and freedoms of citizens. The Charter gives legal protection to 20 fundamental human rights under four key values that include freedom, respect, equality and dignity.

Greater Dandenong City Council Policies comply with the Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities, the *Gender Equality Act 2020*, the *Climate Change Act 2017*, the Child Safe Standards contained in the *Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005*, (Amended) the *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014* and the Overarching Governance Principles specified in 9(2) of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

## Acknowledgment of Country

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Greater Dandenong City Council acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of this land, the Bunurong People and pays respect to their Elders past and present. We recognise and respect their continuing connections to climate, Culture, Country and waters.

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## 1. POLICY OBJECTIVE (OR PURPOSE)

This Policy outlines Council's commitment to supporting Ratepayers experiencing genuine financial hardship. It provides a clear framework for offering financial relief—such as deferrals or waivers of rates and charges—while ensuring transparency, fairness, and confidentiality in all decisions.

Council recognises the importance of balancing individual support with its broader responsibility to the community. This Policy ensures that assistance is provided equitably and efficiently, in line with the principles of integrity, capacity to pay, and legislative compliance under the *Local Government Acts 1989* and *2020*.

By guiding Council Officers in their decision-making, the Policy helps maintain consistent and compassionate responses to hardship, without compromising Council's ability to fund essential services and operations.

## 2. BACKGROUND

This Policy includes a review of the existing Policy in the context of current legislation. It also considers recommendations from the Ombudsman's Report on Financial Hardship within Victoria alongside the Ministerial Guidelines Relating to the Payment of Rates and Charges (December 2025) which provides guidance on hardship, payment plans and the charging of interest.

The Policy aims to ensure that all Ratepayers who are experiencing difficulties in the payment of their rates and charges are aware of the entitlements and options available to them.

## 3. SCOPE

This Policy applies to Greater Dandenong City Council property owners for rateable properties in accordance with the following sections of the *Local Government Act 1989*: Deferred payment (s170), Waiver (s171), Waiver by application - financial hardship (s171A), and Payment plans for unpaid rates or charges (s171B).

This Policy also applies to all Council staff who have responsibility to ensure collection of Council's rates and charges.

## 4. DEFINITIONS

Term	Definition
<b>The Act</b>	The <i>Local Government Act 1989</i> and the <i>Local Government Act 2020</i> or any other legislative Act listed in section 8 of this Policy.
<b>Owner</b>	A person, company, or entity that holds legal title to land or buildings within a local government area and is therefore responsible for obligations such as paying rates and complying with local regulations.
<b>Ratepayer</b>	<p>For the purpose of this Policy the Ratepayer can be the person or persons, business or company within whose name the rates, charges, special rates and charges debt applies.</p> <p>The director of a company who is responsible for payment of rates, the occupier who is responsible for payment of rates or a nominated third party who is responsible for payment of rates.</p>
<b>Hardship</b>	Defined as a difficult or challenging circumstance/s which can encompass personal, emotional, financial, or physical difficulties that make life less comfortable for individuals.
<b>Long Term Hardship</b>	Hardship as defined above is likely to continue for an indefinite period, longer than one year.
<b>Financial Hardship</b>	Is challenging circumstances specific to a person's finances which result in or have the potential to result in difficulty in meeting basic needs, pay bills or meet financial obligations for themselves and/or their dependants. An inability to afford necessities of life. Factors that can trigger financial hardship can include loss of employment, unexpected expenses, or insufficient income.
<b>Deferral</b>	<p>Deferral is a postponement of payment in whole or in part and can be for a specified period and subject to any conditions determined by Council. Rates and charges are deferred until such time as the Ratepayer's circumstances improve, or the property is sold or transferred to another entity.</p> <p>Rates and charges are deferred for a specified period. In accordance with the <i>Local Government Act 1989</i> and Ministerial Guidelines, interest will not be charged on deferred amounts during the deferral period unless otherwise permitted by legislation. However, a partial interest waiver may be granted.</p>
<b>Payment Plan/Payment Arrangement</b>	Is an agreement between Council and the Ratepayer which sets the start date, duration, frequency, and amount to pay for any overdue rates and charges.

Term	Definition
<b>Payment Plan/Payment Arrangement Instalment</b>	Is an instalment set under a payment plan/payment arrangement.
<b>Principal Place of Residence</b>	Is a property where a person resides, occupies, and lives in as their home.
<b>Substantial assets</b>	Items of value, property, investments, and other things or entities that can be sold or disposed of to realise funds, valued in excess of \$10,000. This excludes items considered necessary for participation in economic, social and civic life, such as one vehicle per Ratepayer, the property where the applicant resides and other household items deemed necessary.
<b>Financial counsellor</b>	<p>Financial counsellors are qualified professionals employed by financial counselling agencies to provide information, advice, assistance, advocacy and support to people experiencing or vulnerable to financial difficulty and/or with debt problems, to empower them to make informed choices.</p> <p>Financial counsellors have extensive knowledge in a range of areas of law and Policy including consumer law, credit law, debt enforcement practices, the bankruptcy regime, hardship policies and practices in a range of industries, internal and external dispute resolution schemes and government concession frameworks, and other specific areas. Financial counsellors are also highly skilled in working with people experiencing vulnerability in a supportive and empowering framework. A fundamental tenet is a focus on person-centred practice. This places the person at the centre of the engagement with control over the process and decisions.</p> <p>Financial counsellors are employed by agencies – typically not-for-profit community organisations – that operate under specific sub-regulations of the <i>Corporations Regulations 2001</i> and the <i>National Consumer Credit Protection Regulations 2010</i>. These sub-regulations permit the organisations to provide financial counselling services without holding a financial services or credit licence, subject to services being provided by trained, qualified and professionally accredited financial counsellors.</p> <p>The conditions of the exemption require the financial counselling service to be free, independent and without conflict. The requirement for no conflict means industry cannot directly fund financial counselling positions, which are primarily funded by state or federal governments, or through philanthropic sources.</p>

Term	Definition
	<p>A financial counsellor is not a:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• financial planner</li> <li>• financial advisor</li> <li>• accountant</li> <li>• finance broker</li> <li>• legal advisor</li> <li>• business advisor</li> <li>• therapeutic counsellor</li> <li>• case manager.</li> </ul>
<b>Waiver</b>	A waiver of a debt permanently exempts payment of the rate, charge, special rate or charge or legal cost under discussion. It may include the whole or part of any rate, charge, interest or legal costs accumulated.
<b>Interest</b>	A financial charge imposed by a Council on unpaid rates and charges, calculated at a rate set by the Minister, and applied from the due date until the amount is paid or recovered.
<b>Interest Waiver</b>	A waiver of a debt permanently exempts payment of the interest charge under discussion.
<b>Current Overdue</b>	A rate or charge raised and overdue within the same financial year.
<b>Arrears</b>	Any amount of rates, charges, or other monies that remain unpaid past their due date beyond the current financial year and may be subject to interest or recovery actions by the Council.
<b>Distributional Effect</b>	Where rates and charges being waived on one property result in a higher rating burden being applied to other properties to raise the same level of rates revenue.

## 5. POLICY

### 5.1 Rates and Charges Collection

Arrangements for the payment of rates and charges are detailed in the *Local Government Act 1989* (Section 167). The current instalment due dates for rates and charges are:

- First instalment                      30th September
- Second instalment                    30th November
- Third instalment                      28th February
- Fourth instalment                    31st May

Flexible payment options are available for the payment of rates and charges on a weekly, fortnightly and monthly basis and are outlined in the Council annual and instalment notices as well as via the Council website ([Home | Greater Dandenong Council](#)).

In circumstances where a payment arrangement is not agreed to with Council, interest will be charged on all overdue amounts in accordance with the *Local Government Act 1989* (Section 172) at the rate set under the Penalty Interest Rates Act 1983.

### 5.2 Rates and Charges Recovery Process

At every stage of the recovery process, Council will invite the Ratepayer to contact us to discuss payment difficulties or request hardship assistance.

In the circumstances where the rates and charges are not paid by the due dates, Council may undertake the below steps to recover the debt owed:

1. Council Reminder Letters
  - a. After 2nd instalment has fallen due
  - b. After 3rd instalment has fallen due
  - c. After 4th instalment has fallen due
2. If an overdue balance remains after the reminder notices and no arrangement has been made, Council will undertake the following steps to attempt to engage with the Ratepayer:
  - a. Soft Debt Letter
  - b. SMS Reminder of Debt
  - c. Email Contact of Overdue Rates
  - d. Phone Call

3. If Council is unable to make satisfactory arrangements directly with the Ratepayer, the overdue account may be referred to a recovery agency. The agency may issue:
  - a. Reminder Notice
  - b. Letter of Demand
  - c. Council will suspend accounts from recovery agencies where a genuine hardship circumstance is identified or declared, or the debt is repaid in full.
  - d. Complaint lodged with the Magistrates Court
  - e. Obtaining Default Judgement with the Magistrates Court
    - i. A Default Judgement may affect the Ratepayer's credit rating. Council will continue to accept and assess hardship applications during this stage of recovery.
  - f. Following the Judgement, Council may undertake one or more of the following enforcement actions:
    - i. Summons of oral examination – Ratepayer to present financials to Magistrates Court.
    - ii. Application for attachment of earnings.
    - iii. Title search to see if the property has a mortgage and write to the Mortgagee.
    - iv. Apply to have a Caveat on the title to the subject property.
    - v. Bankruptcy – Commercial/Industrial Ratepayers only (Pty Ltd Businesses)
    - vi. Warrant to seize goods – Sheriff's Office is instructed to seize goods for sale to pay debt

#### 4. Sale of Property under s181 of *Local Government Act 1989*

As a last resort, and only after all other reasonable recovery options have been exhausted, Council may commence proceedings to sell land under s181 of the *Local Government Act 1989*.

Council can only take this action when all of the following criteria are met:

- a. The amount owed exceeds three years of unpaid rates and charges
- b. No current payment or hardship arrangement exists
- c. Council has obtained a Court Order requiring payment

Prior to selling land, Council must:

- a. Serve notice to all persons with an interest in the land at least 4 weeks before the sale
- b. Publish a public notice of intention to sell the property at least 4 weeks before sale
- c. Provide at least 14 days' notice of the auction (where applicable)

Sale proceeds will be applied to:

- a. Costs associated with the sale
- b. Enforcement costs and interest
- c. Any other amounts owing to Council
- d. Payment of any mortgages or encumbrances
- e. Any remaining balance remitted to the property owner or person with legal entitlement

Council will not pursue a sale under s181 where a valid hardship application is in place, or the Ratepayer is actively engaging with Council to resolve the debt.

### 5.3 Application and Eligibility for Rates Hardship Assistance

- **Eligible Applicants:** Applicants must be the legal property owner or hold a life tenancy of the property as prescribed by a valid legal document. The property must be the applicant's primary place of residence. Applications submitted by tenants of residential, commercial, or industrial properties will not be considered, as applications may adversely affect the property owner, who retains the legal obligation for rate payments under the *Local Government Act 1989*.
- **Application Process:** All hardship applications must be submitted in writing by the property owner, either via the online application form or by completing the Rates Hardship Application Form.  
<https://forms.greaterdandenong.vic.gov.au/public-forms/rates-and-charges-hardship-application-waiver-of-rates-and-charges/>

Applicants who are unable to complete a written application due to language barriers, limited access to technology, disability, or other personal circumstances may apply verbally, either by phone or in person. Verbal applications may be made with the assistance of a relative, support person, friend, or Council officer, who may record the application on the applicant's behalf. Any information provided verbally will be documented by Council to ensure accuracy, fairness, and the integrity of the application process.

Ratepayers may request an interpreter and/or translator to assist with communication under this Policy.

All applications will be required to be submitted with supporting evidence to substantiate the hardship.

- **Review Criteria:** When Council assesses hardship applications, there are a number of criteria that are used as a reference to ensure consistency, integrity and no biases. The criteria includes, but is not limited to:
  - Is the property an investment property?
  - Is the owner unemployed?
  - Has the owner supplied a letter of support from a financial counsellor?
  - Is the owner suffering from illness or medical impairment?
  - Is the owner impacted by family violence?
    - If yes, and the property is jointly owned, Council will adhere to confidentiality and operational safeguards.
  - Is the owner a pensioner?
  - Is there a mortgage on the property?
  - Does the owner own more than one property?
  - Does the owner have a Health Care Card?
  - Does the owner have dependants or is a carer?

Council will endeavour to review hardship applications within a 10-business day timeframe and will make contact within this timeframe should further information be required for assessment. Only information that is reasonably necessary for the assessment of the hardship application will be requested from the applicant.

All correspondence regarding hardship will be provided in writing via email (where email is specified on the application) as well as via post if appropriate.

No further debt recovery enforcement will be undertaken for those who have pending hardship applications under review, or when hardship has been granted.

Applicants may request an internal review of a hardship decision. Requests for review must be made in writing within 28 days of the decision. Reviews will be conducted by an authorised officer who was not involved in the original decision and who holds appropriate delegation. The review will assess whether the decision was made fairly, consistently and in accordance with this policy and relevant legislation. The outcome of the review will be communicated in writing.

#### 5.4 Rates Waivers

Council will only consider the waiving of rates and charges in extreme circumstances.

1. All applications for a waiver of rates and charges due to financial hardship need to be lodged in writing with supporting evidence/documentation as per section 5.3 of this Policy.
2. Applications will be evaluated by the Rates and Revenue Coordinator, Manager Financial Services and/or Chief Financial Officer using the review criteria listed in 5.3 of this Policy.

3. Waivers are only offered on rates and charges that are levied by Council and not State Government charges (Emergency Services and Volunteers Fund / Fire Services Property Levy).
4. The maximum amount of any waiver in one 12-month period.
5. Waivers are limited to \$750.00 where the maximum waiver is considered under exceptional circumstances, unless Council resolves that exceptional circumstances warrant an exception to this Policy framework.
6. Any waiver is a one-off credit applied to Council rates and/or charges and is in response to circumstances presented at the time and will only be applied in the current financial year and will not be back dated to previous financial years.
7. Incomplete applications, including applications submitted without evidence will not be assessed until all documentation is submitted. If not submitted within 1 month of application, the application will be cancelled.
8. Any decision to grant or deny a waiver will be communicated to the applicant in writing.

## 5.5 Interest Waivers

Interest waivers may be granted under two distinct categories:

- **Administrative Waivers (for Administrative Reason/Error)**

Ratepayers may be eligible for an interest-only waiver where a delay in payment has occurred due to a Council administrative issue, error, or omission. This includes circumstances where incorrect information or processing delays have contributed to the late payment.

- **Waivers on Compassionate Grounds**

Ratepayers may be eligible for an interest-only waiver where compassionate grounds have been demonstrated for the late payment. This may include situations involving serious illness, bereavement, or other exceptional personal circumstances.

Requests for interest waivers related to financial hardship will be assessed under the relevant provisions of the Rate Deferral or Rate Waiver sections of this Policy, rather than under the interest waiver provisions above.

## 5.6 Rate Payment Plans and Arrangements

Council understands that it can be challenging to pay rates on time, especially during periods of financial stress or personal hardship. To support Ratepayers in managing their obligations, Council offers Payment Plans as an alternative for those who do not qualify for a rate deferral or rate waiver.

These plans allow Ratepayers to pay outstanding rates over an agreed period, without the risk of legal debt recovery action being initiated by Council whilst the plan is being adhered to.

While the plan is active and repayments are made in accordance with the agreement, the accrual of penalty interest on the outstanding balance will be temporarily frozen, helping to ease the financial burden.

Ratepayers who wish to apply for a Payment Arrangement Plan are encouraged to complete the Rates Payment Plan Form on our website: <https://forms.greaterdandenong.vic.gov.au/public-forms/rates-payment-plan-request/> or contact Council's Customer Service team or Property and Revenue team by phone or in person for assistance.

Council will endeavour to review payment plan applications within a 10-business day timeframe and will make contact within this timeframe should further information be required for assessment.

Council will proactively review and communicate with Ratepayers to ensure payment arrangements and plans are adhered to or adjusted should circumstances change.

Debt recovery may commence should the Ratepayer default in making their payments as per their agreed plan.

As any unpaid rates will ultimately be a charge on the property, no rate payment plan will be entered into without the written consent of the property owner.

Where property ownership changes on any property with a rate deferral and/or a rate payment plan agreement in place, all rates and charges must be fully paid at the point of this change. Rate deferral and rate payment plan agreements are not transferable and will be cancelled upon a change in property ownership.

## 5.7 Rate Deferral Arrangements (Industrial and Commercial Properties)

The City of Greater Dandenong acknowledges that a significant proportion of its rate revenue is derived from the commercial and industrial sector, and the present economic climate is difficult for these properties.

Consequently, this Policy makes provision for commercial and industrial Ratepayers to make application for a rate deferral agreement. Each application will be considered on an individual basis with Council taking the following criteria into account in considering whether to accept the application:

- a) Evidence from the applicant that financial hardship is being experienced via a written Hardship Application with supporting documentation; and
- b) A deferral of rates will assist in keeping employment in Greater Dandenong; and
- c) A commitment from the applicant to an agreed timeframe in which the deferred rates will be paid.

Deferrals of rates and charges will only be granted under extreme circumstances and are strictly limited to a maximum period of three (3) months. Rates that accrue during this interim period must also be paid by the extended payment date, however interest will be paused during the deferral period.

It is acknowledged that many industrial/commercial businesses may be tenants and not in fact directly paying Council rates. Council will only consider applications from property owners including on behalf of tenants or managing agents.

As any unpaid rates will ultimately be a charge on the property, no rate deferral agreement will be entered into without the written consent of the property owner.

## 6. RESPONSIBILITIES

All applications for waiver of rates and charges will be considered by the Rates and Revenue Coordinator, Manager Financial Services and/or Chief Financial Officer in line with the delegation limits below.

### 6.1 Delegation limits

Position	Amount
Chief Financial Officer	\$750.00
Manager Financial Services	\$300.00
Rates and Revenue Coordinator	\$200.00

Applications for rate payment plans/arrangements for residents will be considered by the Rates and Revenue Coordinator in conjunction with a payment plan reviewed by the Property and Rating Administration team.

Applications for rate deferral for Commercial and Industrial Ratepayers will be considered jointly by both the Rates and Revenue Coordinator, Manager Financial Services and/or the Chief Financial Officer.

Applications for Interest Rate Waivers will be considered and approved by either the Rates and Revenue Coordinator or the Chief Financial Officer.

## 7. REPORTING, MONITORING AND REVIEW

<b>Reporting</b>	Monthly reporting on hardship applications, payment plans and deferrals will be provided to the Executive Team.
<b>Monitoring</b>	Fortnightly monitoring of active payment plans/arrangements is undertaken but the Property and Revenue team to ensure adherence and assistance.
<b>Review</b>	Monthly monitoring and reporting by the Rates and Revenue Coordinator being reported to the Chief Financial Officer.
<b>Stakeholder Engagement</b>	Property and Revenue Team, Customer Service Team, Financial Services, Executive Team.

## 8. REFERENCES AND RELATED DOCUMENTS

### Legislation

- [Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006](#)
- [Gender Equality Act 2020](#)
- [Climate Change Act 2017](#)
- [Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 \(Amended\)](#)
- [Freedom of Information Act 1982](#)
- [Local Government Act 1989](#)
- [Local Government Act 2020](#)
- [Local Government Legislation Amendment \(Rating and Other Matters\) Act 2022](#)
- [Penalty Interest Rates Act 1983](#)
- [Valuation of Land Act 1960](#)
- [Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014](#)
- [Public Records Act 1973](#)
- [Planning and Environment Act 1987](#)
- [Fire Services Property Amendment \(Emergency Services and Volunteers Fund\) Act 2025](#)

### Related Council and Other Policies, Procedures, Strategies, Protocols, Guidelines

- [Greater Dandenong Website – Sustainability, Climate and Energy](#)

### Administrative Updates

It is recognised that from time to time, circumstance may change leading to the need for minor administrative changes to this document. Where an update does not materially alter this document, such a change may be made administratively. Examples include a change to the name of a Council department, the change to an existing policy or document referred to in this Policy and minor updates to legislation and the like which does not have a material impact. All changes or updates which materially alter this Policy must be by resolution of Council.

Date	Update



# Greater Dandenong Policy

## Rates and Charges Hardship Policy

Policy Endorsement:	Endorsement required by Council		
Policies superseded by this Policy	Not Applicable		
Directorate:	Corporate Services		
Responsible Officer:	Manager Finance and IT		
Policy Type:	Discretionary		
File Number:	A5758554	Version No:	004
1 <sup>st</sup> Adopted by Council	11 May 2009 Minute No. 141	Last Adopted by Council:	24 June 2019 Minute No. 1100
Review Period:	Every 3 Years	Next Review:	September 2022

### 1. Purpose

Council must consider its overall revenue requirements from a strategic perspective taking into account the needs of the community as a whole, it is important that Council have a further mechanism to consider the needs of individuals and businesses who are suffering financial hardship. The purpose of this Rates and Charges Hardship Policy is to provide Council with a policy framework to provide rate relief to individuals who need assistance.

Under the Local Government Act Council may waive a whole or part of any rate or charge or interest if a person is suffering financial hardship. The Act goes on to say Council may defer, in whole or part, any payment due on the grounds of hardship.

The difference between a waiver and a deferral is that a deferral suspends payment for a period of time whereas a waiver permanently exempts payment of the fee or charge under discussion.

Applications for waiver and deferral will be individually assessed against the criteria stated in this policy.

This policy defines the process for considering applications for deferment or waiver of rates and charges.

### 2. Background

This Policy includes a review of the existing policy in the context of current legislation.



# Greater Dandenong Policy

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## 3. Scope

This policy will apply to all rateable assessments within the City of Greater Dandenong.

## 4. References

- *Local Government Act 1989* (Section 170, 171 & 171A)

## 5. Definitions

A “**deferral**” of payment can be provided in whole or in part and be for a specified period and subject to any conditions determined by Council. When rates are deferred, payment is not required until the Council sends the person a notice requiring payment.

A “**waiver**” removes the liability to pay and may be offered to include the whole or part of any interest or where applicable part of rates and charges as set down in section 6.2.

The “**market rate**” of interest referred to in 6.1, “Deferring Rates and Charges and Interest”, will be the official 180 day bank bill rate as at 1 July each year and will be the interest rate used to levy interest on properties with an approved deferral agreement for that particular year.

## 6. Legislative Provisions

The following legislative provisions apply with regard to the deferral and waiver of rates, charges and interest.

### Local Government Act 1989

Section 170. Deferred payment (1) A Council may defer in whole or in part the payment by a person of any rate or charge which is due and payable for a specified period and subject to any conditions determined by the Council if it considers that an application by that person shows that the payment would cause hardship to the person.

Section 171. Waiver (1) The Council may waive the whole or part of any rate or charge or interest.

Section 171A. Waiver by application-financial hardship (1) A person who-

- (a) is suffering financial hardship; or
- (b) would suffer financial hardship if that person paid the full amount of a rate or charge for which he or she is liable - may apply to a Council for the waiver of the whole or part of any rate or charge or of any interest imposed for late payment.



# Greater Dandenong Policy

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## 7. Council Policy

### 7.1 Deferring Rates, Charges and Interest (applies to Residential Properties only)

Ratepayers may have rates and charges, or part thereof, deferred although rates and charges will continue to be levied subject to compliance with the following conditions:

- a) The ratepayer is either a pensioner and is eligible to claim a pensioner rate rebate or is unemployed; or
- b) The ratepayer is able to evidence severe financial hardship as certified by an assessment carried out by a financial counsellor; and
- c) An application is submitted to the Property Revenue Administrator by the ratepayer or the ratepayer's representative providing evidence of such circumstances referred to in a) or b) above.

In all applications for rate deferrals, the applicant will be encouraged to continue to pay the portion of rates that is affordable given their individual circumstances. This will be mutually agreed on a case by case basis.

Interest on deferred rates will be levied at the "market rate" rather than the penalty interest rate. This discounted interest rate will only apply to rates deferred through this application process and not to any existing rate arrears from previous rating years.

### 7.2 Rate Deferral Arrangements (applies to Industrial and Commercial Properties only)

The City of Greater Dandenong acknowledges that a significant proportion of its rate revenue (53% as at June 2019) is derived from the commercial and industrial sector and the present economic climate is particularly difficult for these properties.

As a consequence, this Policy makes provision for commercial and industrial ratepayers to make application for a rate deferral agreement. Each application will be considered on an individual basis with Council taking the following criteria into account in considering whether to accept the application:

- a) Evidence from the applicant that financial hardship is being experienced; and
- b) A deferral of rates will assist in keeping employment in Greater Dandenong; and
- c) A commitment from the applicant to an agreed timeframe in which the deferred rates will be paid.

Rate deferral agreements will be for a maximum of two financial years, with applicants having a maximum of three further financial years in which to fully repay all rates deferred. Rates that accrue during this interim period must also be paid by the extended payment date.



# Greater Dandenong Policy

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It is acknowledged that many industrial/commercial businesses may be tenants and not in fact directly paying Council rates. Council will consider applications from landlords on behalf of tenants.

As any unpaid rates will ultimately be a charge on the property, no rate deferral agreement will be entered into without the express consent of the property owner.

## 7.3 Rate Deferral Agreements (Change of Ownership)

Where property ownership changes on any assessment with a rate deferral agreement in place, all rates and charges must be fully paid at the point of this change. Rate deferral agreements are not transferable.

## 7.4 Waiving Rates and Charges

Council will only consider the waiving of rates and charges in extreme circumstances.

All applications for a waiver of rates and charges due to financial hardship need to be lodged in writing and will be evaluated by the Manager Finance & Information Technology and the Director Corporate Services.

The maximum amount of any waiver in one financial year will be limited to \$500, unless Council resolves that exceptional circumstances warrant an exception to this policy framework.

Any waiver is a one off waiver in response to circumstances presented at the time.

## 7.5 Waiving Interest

Interest waivers fall under two categories which are:

- Administrative waivers
- Waiver on compassionate grounds

**7.5.1** Waiver for Administrative Reason/Error - Ratepayers may have interest only waived in the event of an administrative issue, error or omissions

**7.5.2** Waiver on Compassionate Grounds - Ratepayers may have interest only waived where they have demonstrated compassionate grounds for a payment being late.

Requests for interest rate waivers in respect of financial hardship will be considered under the parameters of either the rate deferral or rate waiver sections above.



# Greater Dandenong Policy

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## 7.6 Rate payment arrangements

Any ratepayer who does not qualify for either a rate deferral or rate waiver arrangement may still apply to pay outstanding rates by way of a payment arrangement. Payment arrangements will attract penalty interest rates on outstanding balances but allow ratepayers the required time to make payments without any legal action being undertaken by Council to recover rates and charges. Any ratepayer requiring a payment arrangement is urged to contact Council's Property Revenue Unit.

## 7.7 Delegated Authority to Waive Rates, Charges and/or Interest

All applications for waiver of rates and charges will be considered by the Manager Finance & IT and the Director Corporate Services.

Applications for waiver of rates and charges may be approved by the Director Corporate Services to a maximum of \$500.

Applications for rate deferral for residents will be considered by the Property Revenue Administrator and approved by the Manager of Finance and IT.

Applications for rate deferral for Commercial and Industrial ratepayers will be considered jointly by both the Manager Finance & IT and the Economic Development Manager and approved by the Manager Finance & IT.

Applications for Interest Rate Waivers under 7.5.1 will be considered and approved by either the Property Revenue Administrator or the Manager Finance & IT. 7.5.1 refers to the reversal of interest incorrectly raised (based on either an administrative issue, error or omission) rather than a waiver of Council revenue from penalty interest.

Applications for Interest Rate Waivers under 7.5.2 will be considered within the following financial ceiling limits:

Property Revenue Administrator	\$100
Manager Finance & IT	\$300

Any interest waiver, under 7.5.2 in excess of \$500 may be approved by the Director Corporate Services.



# Greater Dandenong Policy

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## **7.8 Confidentiality**

Any information provided in accordance with this Policy will be treated as strictly confidential.

## **8. Related Documents**

Nil.



## 4.2 OTHER

### 4.2.1 Reconciliation Action Plan (pre Community Consultation)

**Responsible Officer:** Executive Director Strategy & Corporate Services  
**Attachments:** **Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan July 2026 - July 2028**

#### Officer Recommendation

##### That Council:

1. **NOTES** that the Draft Third Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) 2026-28 has been provisionally endorsed by Reconciliation Australia on 18 February; and
2. **APPROVES** that public and targeted consultation of the graphic version of the Draft RAP (Attachment 1) can commence on Tuesday 17 March until Tuesday 14 April.

#### Executive Summary

1. This report is to provide Councillors an update on the RAP redevelopment and seek approval of the draft designed document for public exhibition and consultation beginning 17 March.
2. Public exhibition and targeted consultation is scheduled for a period of 28 day in accordance with the endorsed Community Engagement Policy.
3. Councillors and community consultation feedback will be incorporated into the final graphic draft version and submitted to Reconciliation Australia for final endorsement.
4. It is anticipated an endorsed version will be available for Council endorsement at the 18 May Council Meeting. The RAP launch event is currently scheduled for 27 May.

#### Background

##### RAP redevelopment

5. Reconciliation Australia (RA) is the authorising body for approved Reconciliation Action Plans, and the Draft RAP includes the mandated priority areas, actions and deliverables as stipulated in RA's Innovate RAP template.
6. The development of the Draft RAP has been in accordance with the approached endorsed by Council at the 9 December 2024 Council Meeting. The approach detailed the proposed timeline, the strengthened governance structure, the Terms of Reference for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Reference Group, and composition of the Internal RAP Steering Committee.
7. Council's last Reconciliation Action Plan 2021-23 expired in December 2023 with some actions and deliverables not being completed. These, where still relevant, have been carried forward into the Draft RAP 2026-28.



8. The Draft has been informed by an intensive consultation process involving deliberative engagement with Traditional Custodians, the Bunurong Land Council, and the RAP Reference Group, as representatives of the wider Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. The priorities, actions and deliverables also reflect municipal data and current legislative requirements
9. Key themes identified from the deliberative consultation were Truth-telling, Cultural Safety and Cultural Awareness, and Communication & Community Engagement.
10. These key themes have been used to influence the priorities reflected in this plan and the projects to be undertaken each year.
11. Reconciliation Australia provided extensive feedback on the first Draft RAP version in December 2025 and provided further feedback in February 2026 with their provisional endorsement. Their recommendations have been implemented into the current designed Draft that is scheduled for public consultation.
12. This broader municipal wide engagement will provide socialisation of the Draft RAP and provide an opportunity for further feedback.
13. All feedback received will be collated, and where appropriate, incorporated into the draft version to be submitted to Reconciliation Australia for their final endorsement.
14. It is anticipated that RA's final endorsed version will be available for Council's endorsement at the 18 May Council Meeting. The RAP launch event is provisionally scheduled for 27 May in Harmony Square.

## Key Issues and Discussion

### Resource constraints

15. Reconciliation Australia has mandatory actions and deliverables detailed in their four RAP types and organisations need to complete all mandatory deliverables before they can progress to a higher type.
16. In the development of this Draft RAP some resource constraints were identified for specific deliverables, both RA mandatory items and Bunurong Land Council specific items, that are not RA mandated and therefore termed discretionary.
17. The constraints are being existing budget dependent, new funding dependent, or dependent on identified Aboriginal staff members being available to engage with.
18. Additionally, two mandatory deliverables have been identified that are conditional upon a related primary deliverable being fulfilled.
19. These resource constraints for each deliverable are outlined in the *Operating Budget Implications* section that follows below. The numbering refers to the designated action and associated deliverables in order.

## Governance Compliance

### *Human Resource Implications (consider Workforce Planning and Service Statements)*

20. This item does have an impact on existing human resources. While the majority of the Draft RAP deliverables can be achieved within existing staff allocation there are some deliverables that are dependent on identified staff being available to engage with. Council currently does not have any identified Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander staff.



## **Financial/Asset Resource Implications (consider Service Statements, Budget, Long Term Financial Strategy and Asset Plan)**

### **Operating Budget Implications**

21. There are financial implications associated with this report. A summary is provided in Table 1 below.

Table 1.

<b>Action &amp; deliverables</b> <b>M= RA mandatory</b> <b>D= Discretionary</b>	<b>Resource deficit</b>	<b>Estimated \$ value (if applicable)</b>
<b>Relationships</b> Action 4 Deliverable M3	Identified staff dependent	Not applicable
<b>Respect</b> Action 6 Deliverables M1-4	Funding dependent	\$15,000
<b>Opportunities</b> Action 10 Deliverable M2 Action 10 Deliverable M3 Action 11 Deliverable M3 Action 11 Deliverable M4 Action 12 Deliverable D2 Action 12 Deliverable D4	Identified staff dependent Funding dependent Conditional on A11DM1 Conditional on A11DM1 Funding dependent Funding dependent	Not applicable \$10,000 Not applicable Not applicable \$5,000 No estimation available

22. This table indicates that either existing budgets within Departmental budgets need to be reprioritised to adjust for the estimated reallocation or new funding obtained. An estimate of \$30,000 need to be allocated or reallocated by the relevant departments for deliverables to be fulfilled.

### **Asset Implications**

23. This item does not affect any existing assets.

### **Legal/Risk Implications**

24. Final approval by RA is not conditional on full resources being allocated prior. RA has provisionally approved the Draft RAP with the knowledge that some resource constraints had been identified by Council for the Actions and Deliverables detailed in Table 1.

25. It should be noted however there may be a longer-term reputational risk, as seen by our community, should all mandated deliverables not be achieved through insufficient resource allocation for specific items.

### **Environmental Implications**

26. The RAP Plan incorporates the priorities of the Bunurong Land Council, as Traditional Custodians of the lands and water also known as Greater Dandenong. It also prioritises the implementation of Bunurong peoples Cultural Land Management practises.



### Gender Impact Assessment

27. As per Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Protocols the consultations, development, proposed implementation and evaluation of the key measurables of the plan, have strongly considered the Cultural implications in relation to Men and Women's business and Lore.

### Community Consultation - Planned

<p><b>Purpose</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To review and provide feedback on the Draft RAP</li> <li>• To ensure the views of the community are included and are reflected in the Draft RAP</li> <li>• To ensure Council staff are involved with and committed to the outcomes identified in the Plan.</li> <li>• That the priority themes identified via the deliberative consultation, are identifiable and embedded within the plan.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Engagement period</b></p>	<p>17 March to 14 April (28 days)</p>
<p><b>Level of Influence:</b></p>	<p><b>Consult:</b> To obtain community feedback on alternatives or decisions and acknowledge any potential concerns. Council's promise is to keep the community informed and provide feedback on how the community's input influenced the final form of the RAP that is submitted to Reconciliation Australia as the final approving authority.</p>
<p><b>Engagement Activities:</b></p>	<p>Source article Council News Website Media Release Social Pinpoint</p>
<p><b>Communication reach and engagement numbers:</b></p>	<p>Engagement will be conducted in accordance with the approved Community Engagement Policy.</p>
<p><b>Summary of feedback:</b></p>	<p>The first deliberative consultation with Bunurong Land Council and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander RAP Reference Group identified three key themes that have been included in the RAP Draft. They are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- History – truth telling</li> <li>- Cultural safety and cultural awareness</li> <li>- Communication and community engagement</li> </ul> <p>Feedback from the formal community consultation will be gathered alongside Councillor feedback and targeted agency feedback and collated. Where appropriate, it will be incorporated into the version submitted to RA as the final approving authority.</p>



## Links to Community Vision, Council Plan, Strategy, Notice of Motion

28. This report is consistent with the following principles in the Community Vision 2040:

- Safe and peaceful community.
- Embrace diversity and multiculturalism.
- Sustainable environment.
- Mind, body and spirit.
- Art and culture.

29. This report is consistent with the following strategic objectives from the Council Plan 2025-29:

- A socially connected, safe and healthy city.
- A city that respects and celebrates diversity, our history and the arts.
- A green city committed to a sustainable future.
- A city that supports business, entrepreneurship, quality education and employment outcomes.
- A Council that demonstrates leadership, responsible use of public resources, and a commitment to investing in the community.

## Legislative and Policy Obligations

30. This report has considered Council's legislative and policy obligations (where applicable) as outlined in the Report Considerations section detailed in the front of this Agenda. The applicable obligations considered and applied are:

- The Overarching Governance Principles of the *Local Government Act 2020*.
- *Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities 2006*.
- Related Council Policies, Strategies or Frameworks.



# Innovate

## Reconciliation Action Plan

July 2026 – July 2028



## Acknowledgement of Country

Greater Dandenong City Council acknowledges and pays respects to the Bunurong people of the Kulin Nation, as the Traditional Custodians of the lands and waters in and around Greater Dandenong.

We value and recognise local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultures, heritage, and connection to land as a proud part of a shared identity for Greater Dandenong.

Greater Dandenong City Council pays respect to Elders past and present and recognises their importance in maintaining knowledge, traditions, and Culture in our Community.

Greater Dandenong City Council also respectfully acknowledges the Bunurong Land Council Aboriginal Corporation (BLCAC) as the Registered Aboriginal Party responsible for managing the Aboriginal Cultural heritage of the land and waters where Greater Dandenong is situated.

## Greater Dandenong City Council's Statement of Commitment

**The Council of the City of Greater Dandenong acknowledges that indigenous Australians are the first people of this land. They have survived over two centuries of persecution and neglect.**

We acknowledge and grieve for the losses of the indigenous Australian people, their land, their children, their health and their lives. We acknowledge the right of indigenous Australians to live according to their own values and customs.

The newly created City of Greater Dandenong is a diverse community of people, many of whom have immigrated from all over the world to make their home here. Others have sought refuge in this land, finding it a safe haven. They share with indigenous Australians the experience of dispossession, the loss of land, family and livelihood.

As the Council of this new City, we pledge to continue working to create a community where all may feel welcome, free and accepted.

We commit ourselves to work for the elimination of every form of racism or discrimination in our community.

We commit ourselves to respect identified Aboriginal sacred sites and special places and assist with the education of the broader community about Aboriginal heritage and culture and the facts of non-indigenous settlement in this country.

On behalf of this multicultural city, we commit ourselves to support and work with our indigenous community for the building of a truly just and free society to which we all aspire.

We honour the wisdom and strength of the aboriginal culture and spirit, to which we look in shaping the future. (7 July 1995)



Koorie Youth Will Shake Spears dance group- 2024 NAIDOC event CGD and Dandenong Market

## Acknowledgements

Greater Dandenong City Council would like to thank all that have been involved in the creation of Council's Third Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan.

We could not have created this document without the voice and partnership of many. We would like to thank the following who helped derive the content of this plan and guided us to its creation.

- Bunurong Land Council for their partnership and leadership
- Council's Internal Steering Committee
- Council's Reconciliation Working Group
- RAP Reference group members consisting of:
  - Aunty Eileen Taylor
  - Uncle Mark Brown
  - Kylie Bell
  - Jacarla Blow
  - Glenn Pellegrin
  - Sharon Blow
  - Drucilla Morgan
  - Alicia Morris

To all local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community and stakeholders who engaged with our public exhibition and to all City of Greater Dandenong residents who took their time to provide us with their feedback.

To Auntie Heather Kennedy for her amazing artwork, which will be enjoyed by all as a reflection of Council's vision for this RAP Plan.



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## About the artist

### Auntie Heather Kennedy – Coming together as one

#### About the artwork:

The artwork tells a story of connection, resilience, and the enduring relationship between community and Country. It celebrates unity and the inclusion of diverse communities and cultures coming together as one people, all sharing a common goal: Reconciliation. It includes flora and gum leaves to represent the cyclical nature of life, change, healing, and spiritual cleansing. Gum nuts symbolise regeneration, as they release their seeds even when burned—speaking to the resilience and rebirth inherent in Country, a story of ongoing growth and renewal.

Circles in the corners of the artwork represent ripples of knowledge, illustrating the ongoing transmission of wisdom and the continuation of Cultural learning across generations. Footprints throughout the piece signify people of all backgrounds walking together towards the central circle, symbolising Greater Dandenong as a meeting place — a shared space where community unites.

The artwork reflects stories of connection and unity, Elders and knowledge, relationship and Country, resilience and survival, flora and regeneration, heritage and legacy. It honours the past, embraces the present, and seeks to protect the future of these lands and communities. It is filled with vibrant colours to catch the eye.

#### About the artist:

My name is Heather Kennedy. I am a proud Aboriginal woman and Elder. I descend from my father's people. A Palawa Khani woman. My clans are Trawoolway, Pliermernier Northeast Tasmania & Bunurong Port Phillip Vic. I am Saltwater people. My Language name Metubeener Black Possum.

I am very strong in my culture. I have been painting for well over 40 years. I have a lifelong passion for painting and creating stories. I blend contemporary design with Traditional indigenous elements. When it comes to creating art, I would say that its authentic as it's part of me I am putting on the canvas. My paintings are known for their vibrant layers and bold hues, captivating attention and bringing the stories to life. Painting is deeply personal to me, as each piece represents a part of my identity and heritage. I have always taken great pride in sharing my knowledge and Culture. Through my art, I educate and communicate with people of all ages and cultures to foster a deeper understanding and appreciation of my aboriginal heritage. My art serves as bridge to pass on Cultural wisdom to future generations.



## A Message from the Mayor

The City of Greater Dandenong is proud to be home to one of Australia's most vibrant and diverse communities. For all who live, work and contribute to the City of Greater Dandenong, we walk together on the lands of the Bunurong People of the Kulin Nation, whose deep knowledge, Culture and connection to Country continue to guide us.

Council acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of this land, the Bunurong people, and pay respect to their Elders past and present.

It is with great pride that I present Greater Dandenong City Council's third Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) 2026-2028.

This plan reflects our commitment to embedding reconciliation across all aspects of Council's work.

This RAP was created within a newly formed governance structure, consisting of an Internal Steering Committee, a RAP Reference Group, Bunurong Land Council, and an operational internal staff group.

In the essence of self-determination, Council ensured the voices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities was heard and they were directly consulted in relation to matters that affect them. We value our

continued partnership and I extend my sincere thanks to all who contributed to this process.

Their voices have guided Council priorities including truth-telling, Cultural awareness and Cultural safety, and meaningful engagement. We remain committed to walking together with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples towards a future grounded in respect, equity and shared understanding.

I invite all members of our community to join us on this journey towards a Greater Dandenong that celebrates and respects Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, Cultures, histories and knowledge.

**Mayor Cr Sophie Tan**



## A Message from the CEO

I am proud to present the Greater Dandenong City Council Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan August 2026–28. This is our third Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan, and it will guide our continued work towards reconciliation and a more inclusive future.

The Reconciliation Action Plan is our formal commitment to strengthening relationships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and the wider community. It provides a practical framework for how we build respectful partnerships, deepen cultural understanding, and create meaningful opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples both within our organisation and across Greater Dandenong.

Importantly, the RAP is not just a document, it is a living plan that shapes our everyday decisions. How we work alongside community, how we design our services and public places, and how we recognise and respect the world's oldest continuing Cultures.

In October 2025, Victoria made history by passing the Statewide Treaty Bill 2025, the first legislation in Australia to enact a Treaty between the State and First Peoples. The legislation establishes three public institutions under a new authority, Gellung Warl, embedding truth telling, Cultural recognition and structural reform into law. This new framework reflects a shift towards shared decision making and self-determination, principles that sit at the heart of reconciliation.

As a local government, we recognise our vital role in supporting the pathway to Treaty. As a council directly and deeply connected to our community, we have a unique opportunity to influence and promote reconciliation. We do this by creating opportunities for residents to connect with Bunurong Culture and by fostering safe, inclusive spaces for truth telling, storytelling and Cultural celebration.

Our ongoing relationship with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members provides a foundation from which we can continue to listen, learn, and walk alongside community as this transformative new chapter unfolds.

We invite you to explore our Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan 2026–28. My heartfelt appreciation goes to the community members and staff who have played a key role in shaping this plan and guiding our next steps towards reconciliation.

**Chief Executive Officer  
Jacqui Weatherill**



## Our Vision for Reconciliation

**“We are a safe, unified, and respectful community that values truth-telling and celebrates local Aboriginal history, culture, and experiences. We value our continued partnerships and strive to create opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to lead self-determining lives by listening, respecting, and working together to advance inclusive policies and practices.”**

Aboriginal cultures are central to the municipality’s identity. We acknowledge, respect, and embrace this by collaborating with Traditional Custodians, Bunurong Land Council and other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members towards a shared vision for reconciliation.

Council is committed to truth-telling and acknowledges the significant and enduring trauma of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities due to colonisation and past government policies. We acknowledge the wrongdoings of the past and support healing for all community. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community have and will continue to be supported to fully participate in the social, economic and political fabric of the City.

We aim to create a more inclusive community for all by coming together in mutual respect and working with the whole community. We will do this work by engaging meaningfully with Traditional Custodians the Bunurong people – and wider Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities - to support self-determination across all Council matters and business. We will listen and learn, seeking genuine understanding of their wishes and aspirations while respectfully elevating their knowledge.

## Message from the Bunurong Land Council

The Bunurong Land Council Aboriginal Corporation (BLCAC) represents Bunurong people’s rights and interests and manages the statutory responsibilities of the Corporation. Bunurong people are once again recognised as the rightful custodians of much of what is now known as greater Melbourne. **We pay our respects to and thank our Ancestors and Elders for their words and stories of Country as passed down through the families.**

Over the last 35,000 years Bunurong people have adapted to a range of significant changes within their Country. Our stories of the Bay flooding with water, asteroid impacts near Cranbourne, Arthurs Seat once being an island, volcanic activity in the western suburbs; the great floods, fires and earthquakes all speak of such events. Around 10,000 years ago, before the Bay flooded with water, the Birrarung extended all the way out to the heads and out via a large waterfall which covered the entire area in mist. This is how the river earned its early name ‘the river of mist’. This part of the river, up to the point where the river became fresh water, was the Bunurong Country.

Bunurong people were amongst the first Indigenous people in Victoria that were involved in cross-cultural entanglements with Europeans, and though reduced to just a handful of individuals by the mid-1800s, we are still here, and we continue to maintain our cultural obligations to care for the people, the flora and fauna, the lands and the waters within the Bunurong cultural landscape, which is alive with our stories.

Over 2000 generations of our people have been here before us. Archaeological excavation within our Country has already demonstrated about 30,000 years’ worth of occupation. These sites can show us how our ancestors interacted with their environment and how that interaction

changed over time. We regard all evidence of our people’s occupation as sacred.

All our Country is highly significant, every square inch, every rock, every leaf, every dune and every artefact. If we could attribute the cause of this blanket high significance rating of our Country to any one thing, it would be that in Melbourne especially, so much has been destroyed and lost as the city grew, and so quickly. If you lose enough of something, what little you have left becomes so much more important. Similarly, when someone passes, their earthly possessions become more important to those they are left behind.

Every part of our Country is of high significance to our people past and present.

**The Bunurong Land Council  
Aboriginal Corporation**





## A message from the CEO, Reconciliation Australia

Reconciliation Australia commends City of Greater Dandenong (CGD) on the formal endorsement of its inaugural Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP).

Commencing an Innovate RAP is a crucial and rewarding period in an organisation's reconciliation journey. It is a time to build strong foundations and relationships, ensuring sustainable, thoughtful, and impactful RAP outcomes into the future.

Since 2006, RAPs have provided a framework for organisations to leverage their structures and diverse spheres of influence to support the national reconciliation movement.

This Innovate RAP is both an opportunity and an invitation for CGD to expand its understanding of its core strengths and deepen its relationship with its community, staff, and stakeholders.

By investigating and understanding the integral role it plays across its sphere of influence, CGD will create dynamic reconciliation outcomes, supported by and aligned with its business objectives.

An Innovate RAP is the time to strengthen and develop the connections that form the lifeblood of all RAP commitments. The RAP program's framework of relationships, respect, and opportunities emphasises not only the importance of fostering consultation and collaboration with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities, but also

empowering and enabling staff to contribute to this process, as well.

With close to 3 million people now either working or studying in an organisation with a RAP, the program's potential for impact is greater than ever. CGD is part of a strong network of more than 2,200 corporate, government, and not-for-profit organisations that have taken goodwill and intention, and transformed it into action.

Implementing an Innovate RAP signals CGD's readiness to develop and strengthen relationships, engage staff and stakeholders in reconciliation, and pilot innovative strategies to ensure effective outcomes.

Getting these steps right will ensure the sustainability of future RAPs and reconciliation initiatives, and provide meaningful impact toward Australia's reconciliation journey.

Congratulations CGD on your Innovate RAP and I look forward to following your ongoing reconciliation journey.

**Karen Mundine**  
Chief Executive Officer  
Reconciliation Australia

Vanessa Murdoch and Uncle Mark Brown Bunurong Elder  
- 2025 NAIDOC CGD and Dandenong Market event



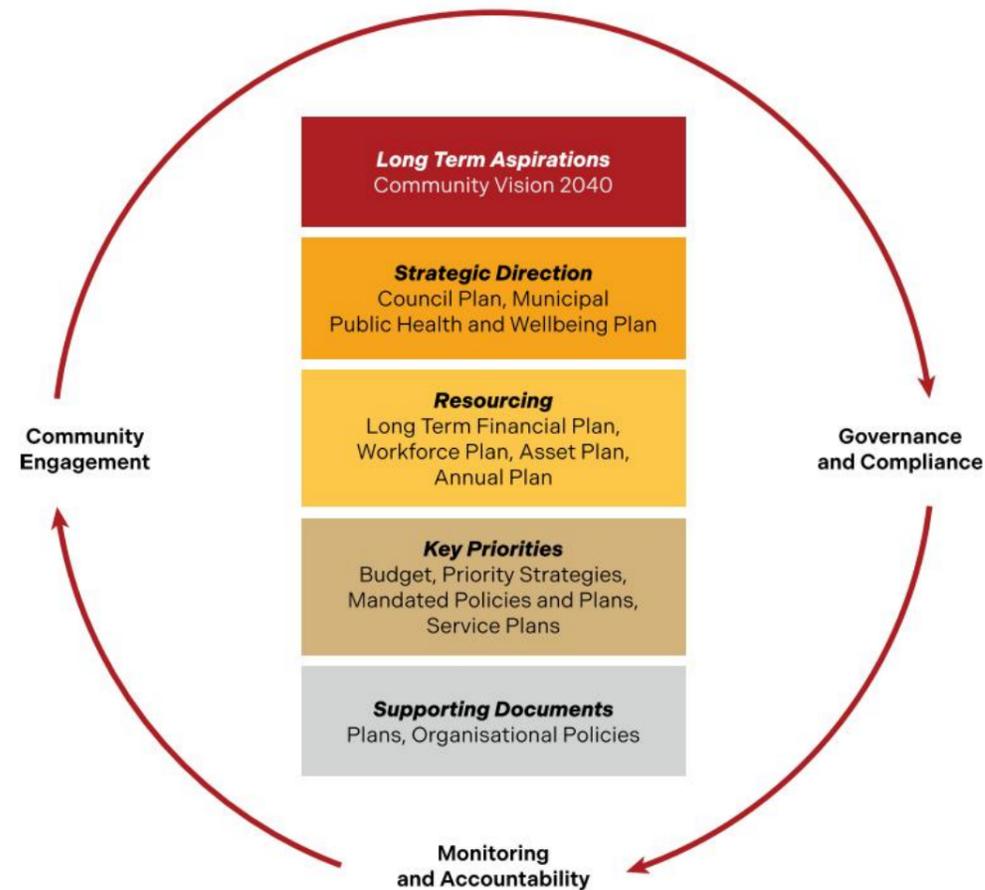


## Our strategic framework

This RAP is a whole of Council document and aligns with Greater Dandenong City Council's Integrated Planning Framework which outlines Council's approach to strategic and operational planning. It considers the key priority areas for Council and the resourcing required to

effectively implement the community's vision for our city. It also ensures effective monitoring and reporting mechanisms to ensure accountability and community engagement processes to capture and meet the needs and aspirations of our residents and business owners.

The RAP also aligns with the Council's strategic objectives that form the Council Plan 2025-29 and reflect the hopes and aspirations of the community as expressed in the community vision and accompanying principles.



## Our Municipality

**City of Greater Dandenong is the most culturally diverse municipality in Australia, with residents migrating from over 150 countries.**

The city spans an area of 129 square kilometres in Melbourne's south-east. The city is bounded by Police Road in the north, Dandenong Creek and South Gippsland Highway to the east, Thomson's Road to the south and by Westall and Springvale Roads to the west. It includes the residential suburbs of Bangholme, Dandenong, Dandenong North, Springvale, Springvale South, Noble Park, Noble Park North, Keysborough, and Lyndhurst.

Greater Dandenong is a place where people from all cultures and nations belong, with their achievements recognised and proudly celebrated. We provide a range of services to improve quality of life for all residents. We are committed to ensuring that people have access to quality services that address the many needs of individuals and families of all ages.

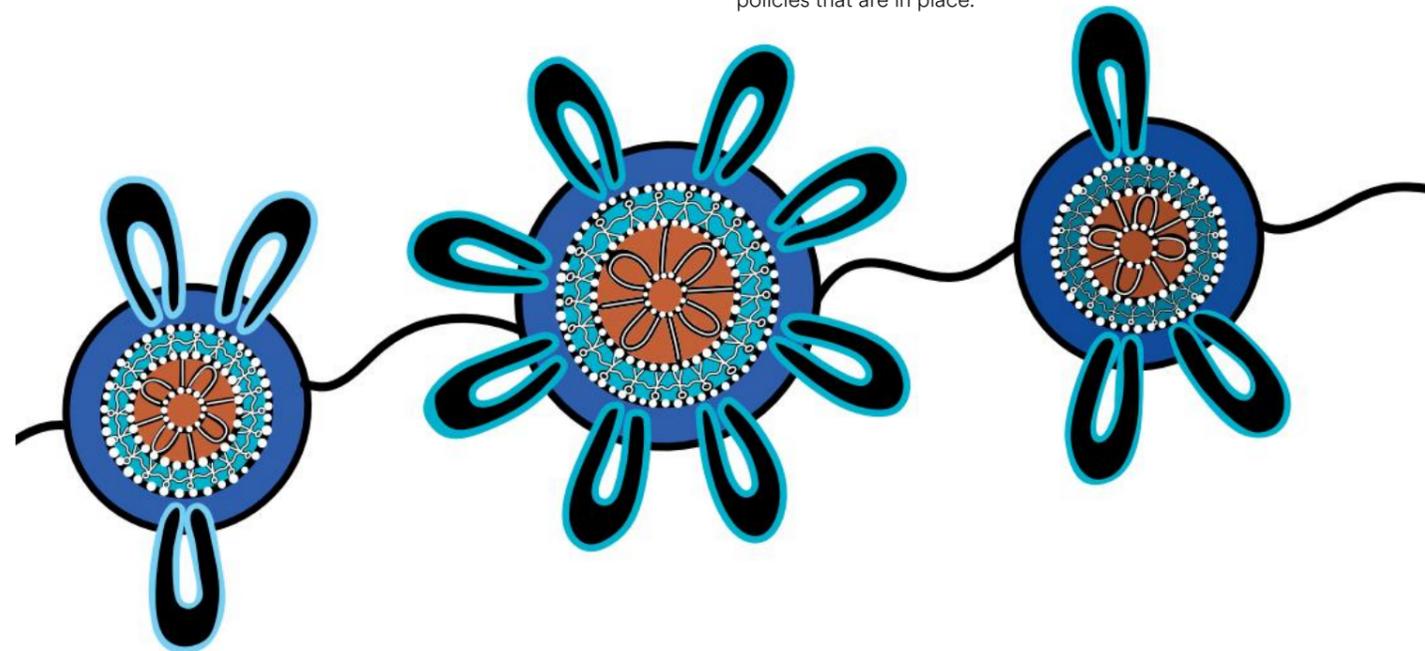
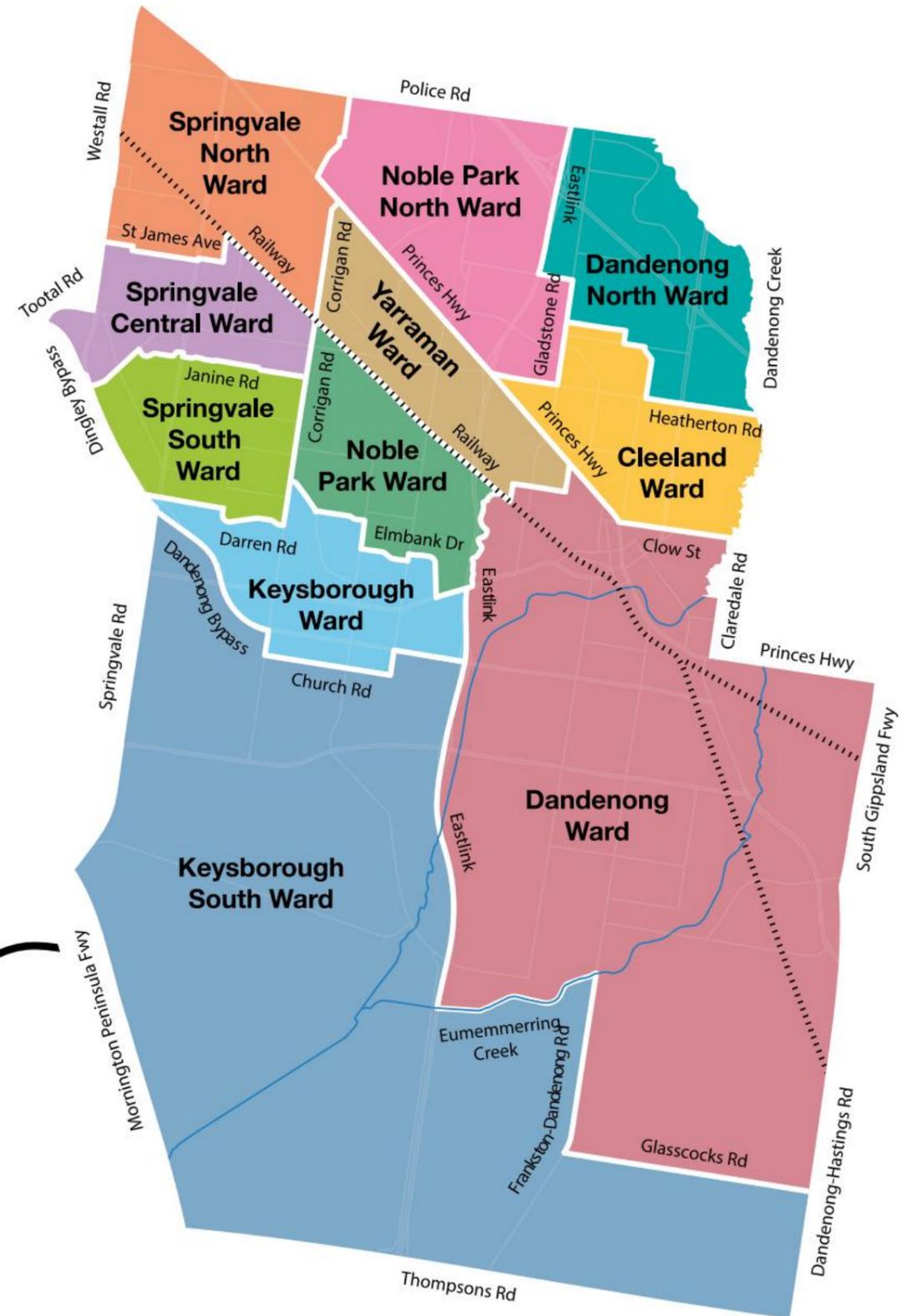
These services include:

Children, Youth and Family services, Waste services, Aged care and Disability services, Environmental services, Festivals and Events, Building and Planning services, Library services, Community Grants, Sport and Recreation services.

Council has three customer service centres, located at Dandenong Civic Centre, Parkmore shopping centre and Springvale Community Hub, along with a call centre to service the needs of the community.

Council has five offices located across the municipality for its operations and staff.

938 staff are employed at Council, with one identified Aboriginal staff member. Council does not have the ability to capture such data, due to diversity and inclusivity policies that are in place.



# Our Community

## Great people

Over  
**150,000**  
residents from **157**  
birthplaces

**51%**  
of residents from  
non-English speaking  
backgrounds

More than  
**95,000**  
people employed locally

Over **400**  
local community  
groups and  
service clubs

## Great place

Land area of  
**129.5**  
square kilometres



Recognised as the capital  
of the south-east

Renowned cultural precincts



## Great times



Largest basketball  
and volleyball  
stadium in  
the southern  
hemisphere

Over  
**200**  
active sports clubs

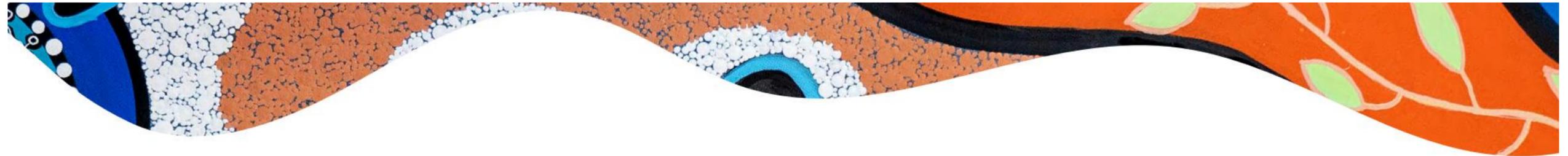
Art events and  
festivals held monthly

## Great place to work

More than  
**114,000**  
local jobs

Over  
**19,000**  
registered businesses





## Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander profile

### Population

- 615 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders live in Greater Dandenong.
- 7,076 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander residents live in Greater Dandenong and its neighbouring municipalities (Casey, Frankston, Kingston, Knox and Monash).

### Education

- 42% of Australian prep. pupils of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander heritage are vulnerable in one or more domains of development<sup>1</sup> – nearly twice the corresponding proportion of 22%, among all prep. pupils.
- Nearly a third (30%) of 20-24-year-old Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander residents had left school before completing year 11 – over three times the corresponding level among non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander residents.

### Employment

- 13% of 25-64-year-old Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander residents are unemployed, compared with 4% of the general population.
- Nearly half (47%) of local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families with children have no parent in paid employment, compared with 32% across all families with children.

<sup>1</sup> These were physical, emotional, social, language and communication.  
Source: Australian Early Development Census 2021

### Families

- Two-thirds (66%) of couple and single-parent families with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander members are one-parent families – over twice the level of 28% among other families.

### Housing

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander residents Greater Dandenong are less than half as likely to own, or be purchasing, their homes (26%) as the general population (63%).
- Twenty-seven per cent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander residents rent from government or community agencies, compared with 3% of non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander residents.

### Disability and Health

- 14% among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander residents are living with severe or profound disability – nearly twice the corresponding rate of 7.7% among the general population.
- 21% of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander residents have experienced mental health conditions in the previous 12 months, compared with 6% of non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander residents.

## Reconciliation Australia RAP framework

Our RAP is based on Reconciliation Australia's framework and provided advice.

According to Reconciliation Australia's vision, a reconciled Australia is based on progressing five key dimensions: race relations; equality and equity; institutional integrity; unity; and historical acceptance.

### 1. Race Relations:

Positive two-way relationships built on trust and respect exist between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians throughout society.

### 2. Equality and Equity:

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians participate equally and equitably in all areas of life and the distinctive individual and collective rights and cultures of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are universally recognized and respected.

### 3. Institutional Integrity:

Political, business, and community institutions actively support all dimensions of reconciliation.

### 4. Unity:

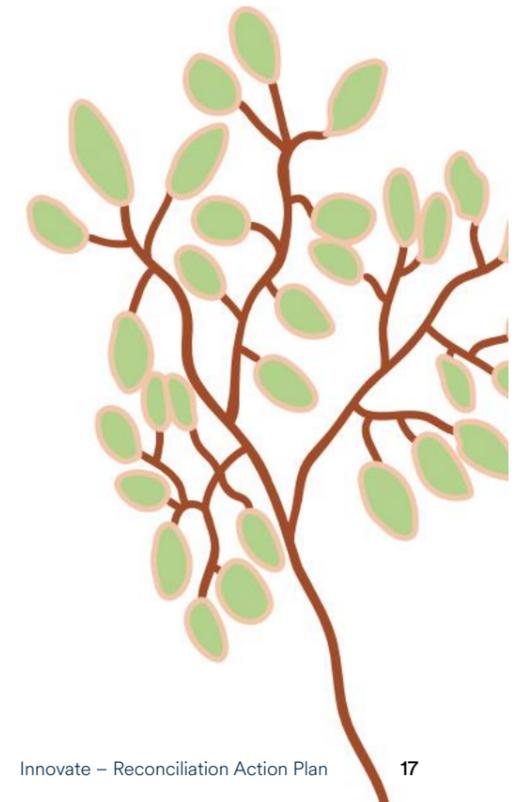
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures and rights are a valued and recognized part of a shared national identity and, as a result, there is national unity.

### 5. Historical Acceptance:

There is widespread acceptance of our nation's history and agreement that the wrongs of the past will never be repeated — there is truth, justice, healing and historical acceptance.

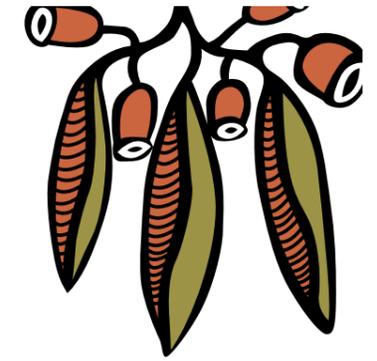
The RAP gives Council a strategic and structured approach to progress on its reconciliation journey. This is done both internally and externally through building respectful relationships and meaningful opportunities with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Reconciliation Australia provides four types of Raps which include: Reflect, Innovate, Stretch, and Elevate.





Koorie Youth Will Shake spears dance group 2024 CGD & Dandenong Market NAIDOC event



## Self-determination

We acknowledge that through reconciliation the concept of self-determination is a core aspect of all work in this space.

The Victorian Aboriginal and Local Government Action Plan explains: "At its core, self-determination is about Aboriginal people being at the centre of decision-making around the issues that directly affect their lives. In practice, this means a substantive transfer of decision-making power from government to Aboriginal peoples. A policy of self-determination recognises that the ongoing impact of colonisation is still being felt today; that Aboriginal people themselves are best positioned to address issues in their communities; and that the resilience, strength and resourcefulness of Aboriginal Victorians represent an enormous opportunity to build a healthy and prosperous future."

### Legislative and policy context

- The City of Greater Dandenong Reconciliation Strategy is informed by key legislation, policies and plans at the International, Australian, Victorian, and municipal levels. Outlined below is a brief overview of some of these key documents.

### International

- **United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples** - The declaration establishes a universal framework of minimum standards for the survival, dignity, and wellbeing of the Indigenous peoples of the world. It elaborates on existing human rights standards and fundamental freedoms as they apply to the specific situation of Indigenous peoples.

### Australian Government

- **The National Agreement on Closing the Gap** - The Agreement aims to enable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and governments to work together to overcome the inequality experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and achieve equality in life outcomes. The Agreement is between the Australian, state and territory governments, the Australian Local Government Association and the Coalition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peak Organisations. As a signatory to the National Closing the Gap Agreement, the Australian Local Government Association has developed a Closing the Gap Implementation Plan, which was released in September 2021 and outlines the role local government plays in supporting this work.
- **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice** - The proposals for an Indigenous Voice would provide a way for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians to provide advice and input on matters that are important to improve their lives. The Australian Government undertook consultation with the community on the proposal made up of two parts: a National Voice and Local and Regional Voices, which would provide an avenue to work with all levels of government at a local level. The feedback from the consultation is being considered by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander co-design groups to further develop and refine the proposals so final recommendations can be made to the Australian Government.



## Victorian Government

- **Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006 and Aboriginal Heritage Regulations 2018** - The Act's purpose is to protect Aboriginal cultural heritage in Victoria. The Regulations prescribe standards and set out the circumstances in which a Cultural Heritage Management Plan should be prepared and set fees and charges
- **The Victorian Aboriginal Affairs Framework 2018-23** - This is the Victorian Government's overarching framework for working with Aboriginal Victorians, organisations, and the wider community to drive action and improve outcomes for and with Aboriginal Victorians.
- **Victorian Aboriginal and Local The Government Action Plan** – The Plan provides a framework to help councils engage with Aboriginal communities and promote reconciliation. The Action Plan is being reviewed through an Aboriginal self-determination approach to enable a strong voice and engagement between Aboriginal communities and Victorian councils.
- **The Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities 2006** - Set out the basic rights, freedoms, and responsibilities of all people in Victoria, including the right to culture for minority groups. Under s.19 (2), four distinct rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are recognised including: the right to enjoy identity and culture; the right to maintain and use language; the right to maintain kinship ties; and the right to maintain a distinctive spiritual, material and economic relationship with the land and waters and other resources with which there is a connection under traditional laws and customs.
- **Advancing the Treaty Process with Aboriginal Victorians Act 2018**  
This was the first law in Australia to formally commit a government to Treaty with First Peoples.
  - It established the First Peoples' Assembly of Victoria as the Aboriginal Representative Body.
  - It set out the principles of self-determination, equal partnership, and good faith in Treaty negotiations.
- **Statewide Treaty Bill 2025**
  - Passed in October 2025, this is Australia's first legislation to enact a Statewide Treaty.
  - Establishes Gellung Warl, a new statutory body with three key components:
    - ◇ First Peoples' Assembly of Victoria – a democratic representative body.
    - ◇ Nginma Ngainga Wara – an accountability body aligned with Closing the Gap.
    - ◇ Nyerna Yoorrook Telkuna – a truth-telling body to embed local truth-telling and education.
  - Embeds truth-telling, cultural recognition, and structural reform into law.
  - Treaty is framed as a binding agreement between the State and First Peoples, with mechanisms for ongoing negotiation, transparency, and reform
- **Yoorrook Justice Commission**
  - Established in 2021 as Australia's first formal truth-telling commission.
  - Its findings and 100 recommendations (2025) are legally and morally linked to the Treaty process.

The Commission's work is embedded in the Treaty framework through Nyerna Yoorrook Telkuna, ensuring truth-telling continues at the local level.



## Challenges and Opportunities

**There is significant reform occurring across the government and community sectors, all of which impact our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. This presents both challenges and opportunities for Local Governments and councils will need to be responsive and adaptive.**

As such, Council is a member of the LGPro RAP special interest group which has representatives of the 79 councils across the State. This engagement provides space to explore ongoing opportunities for partnership and collaboration to support Council's Cultural Competence to champion reconciliation within our municipality.

On 11 October 2025, Australia's first Treaty between First Peoples in Victoria and the Victorian Government was passed in the Victorian Upper House. This will reset the relationship between First Peoples and the State, and provide a mechanism for ongoing reform.

Treaty is a significant opportunity for us all to acknowledge the past, heal and move forward together, moving towards a more reconciled nation. Treaty recognises that Aboriginal people are experts in their communities and will enable self-determination and the development of local practical solutions to improve health, education and housing outcomes.

### Our reconciliation journey

Greater Dandenong City Council began its formal reconciliation journey in July 1995 with the adoption of a Statement of Commitment to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. This declaration acknowledged their right to self-determination and marked a symbolic step toward reconciliation.

Council deepened its commitment in 2008, by issuing a formal apology for the historical injustices caused by past

governmental policies, including the forced removal of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.

Building on these foundations, Council launched its first Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) in November 2017. This two-year plan aimed to enhance understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, engage staff and stakeholders in reconciliation efforts, and foster respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's Culture and knowledge.

While implementation of some initiatives presented challenges, they were embraced as learning opportunities. Council staff demonstrated a strong willingness to adapt and ensure that actions were authentic, collaborative, and community led.

In late 2019, the Council endorsed the development of a second Innovate RAP (2021–23), with a focus on embedding reconciliation across all areas of Council operations. A significant milestone during this period was the Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Council's recognition of the Bunurong people as the Traditional Custodians of all land within the City of Greater Dandenong. This boundary realignment increased the responsibilities of the Bunurong Land Council, and the Council actively supported their growth and capacity building, ensuring meaningful consultation across all Council business. Key achievements from the second RAP are detailed below and also showcased on Council's website, reflecting the progress made in reconciliation efforts.

## Our 2021- 23 RAP Highlights

**Council has been recognised for its reconciliation work at National, State and Local Government levels illustrating best practice in the work done with both Traditional Custodians and the wider Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community. Awards and other important highlights from the last RAP include:**

Winner of the National Local Government Award - Indigenous Category Wominjeka flags project.

Winner of the LG Pro 2024 Local Government Award - Indigenous Category service delivery - Balit Balit Narrkwarren Indigenous Health Partnerships Initiative program.

Winner of the 2024 Reconciliation Victoria Maggollee Awards- Indigenous Category for the Balit Balit Narrkwarren Indigenous Health Partnerships Initiative program.

The Waa and Bulln Fire Pit was awarded the 2023 LG Pro Award for Excellence in First Nations Community Partnership Initiative. This initiative was in partnership with the Bunurong and Wurundjeri Land Councils.

Notice of Motion endorsed by Council declaring support of the Uluru Statement from the Heart in its entirety and affirming support of YES Vote for the National referendum on an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice to Parliament.

### Other key deliverables completed and achievements Cultural Recognition:

- Council erected acknowledgement plaques across all main Council buildings with a statement endorsed by Bunurong Land Council.
- Acknowledgment of Country lanyards for 500+ staff produced and meeting room cards created.
- Over 68 ceremonial Welcome to Country and Smoking Ceremonies held during the last RAP.

### Community Engagement:

- Annual Reconciliation Week events held (300+ attendees),
- National Indigenous Australians Agency (NIAA) NAIDOC grant partnership with Bunurong Land Council and wider community
- Providing for community led NAIDOC Week celebrations and Blak Market.
- Council partnered with Ethnic Communities Council of Victoria (ECCV), Multicultural Communities of Victoria and Nairm Maa Djambana, in holding a National Referendum YES Campaign forum.

### Health & Wellbeing:

- Mums and Bubs Antenatal Yarning Circle program rolled out with Nairm Maa Djambana and Dandenong and District Aborigines Cooperative (DDACL) across two Local Government Areas (LGA's).
- Community engagement partnership with Quit Victoria and Aboriginal health services, in delivery of smoking cessation initiatives.
- Creation of Children's Acknowledgment films.

### Youth & Sports:

- 2023 Inaugural Koorie Statewide Junior Basketball Carnival held at Dandenong Stadium in partnership with Bunurong Sports Association.
- Statewide Koorie Senior Netball/ Football Carnival (5,000+ participants) delivered in partnership with the Victorian Aboriginal Community Services Association Limited (VACSAL) held at Tatterson Park and Springers Leisure Centre.

### Arts & Culture:

- Link Road, Noble Park formally renamed and Gazetted to Muderra Way.
- Muderra Way art project.
- Wominjeka Flag project.
- Railway Parade Public Arts project.
- Exhibitions e.g., WILAM BIIK with 3,200+ attendees.
- Performances by Aboriginal creatives, Kutcha Edwards and the Sapphires at the Drum Theatre.

### Caring for Country and Environmental Collaboration:

- Contracting of the Bunurong Bushlands Ranger team, twice a week to support two-way capacity building and creation of urban forests.
- Sponsorship of eight local Aboriginal young men, to attend the Dardimunwurro Cultural exchange program for youth.



Bunurong James Brown- 2024 NAIDOC event Dandenong Market and CGD



## Development of Our RAP

The priorities outlined in Council's Third Innovate RAP are the result of an intensive community consultation process, an examination of municipal data, legislative requirements and Council's ongoing commitment to reconciliation. With Self-determination the underpinning framework, it was important for Council that our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community were directly consulted in relation to matters that affect them and that their voices were forefront to decision making.

The consultation process was split into two phases:

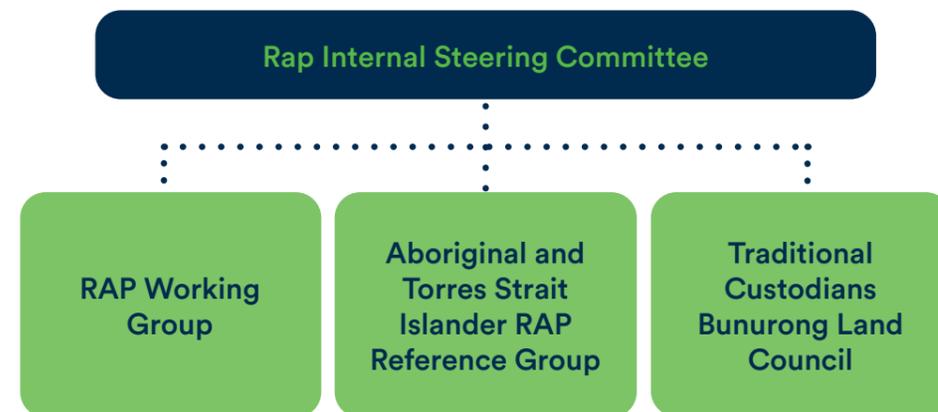
1. A deliberative consultation with the Bunurong land Council, as Traditional Custodians and the RAP Reference Group as representatives of the wider Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.
2. A broader municipal wide engagement providing socialisation of the draft RAP and an opportunity for feedback.

Key themes identified from the deliberative consultation were: Truth-telling, Cultural safety and Cultural Awareness, and Communication & Engagement. These key themes have been used to influence the priorities reflected in this plan and the projects to be undertaken each year



## RAP Governance

Council's endorsement of its third RAP was supported by a strengthened governance framework to guide its development and implementation. Two key additions to this framework include the formation of an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander RAP Reference Group and the establishment of an Internal RAP Steering Committee.



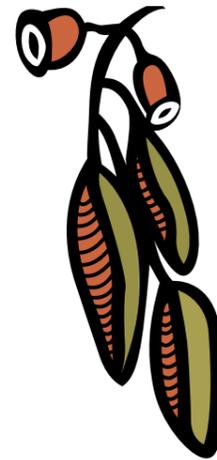
### How will we report to our community on the plan?

Every three months, Council will update its progress against this plan's priorities via its Quarterly Performance Report. This is presented at a Council meeting and is available on the Council's website for our community to read. Council will also hold half yearly yarning circles to meet with the Local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community and stakeholders, to hear their experiences and aspirations on the continued development of the plan and

implementation. In doing so, Council will be transparent in supporting the building of trust within our local Aboriginal community and enabling self-determination by providing a space to hear their voices in relation to matters that directly impact them.

Every Year Council is required to report on the progress of our Reconciliation Action Plans, to Reconciliation Australia. Reconciliation Australia are an independent not-for profit organisation, the lead body for reconciliation in Australia.

Far left: Uncle Mark Brown Bunurong Elder  
Top and bottom left: 2025 CGD and Dandenong Market NAIDOC event



## Relationships

Council deeply values the relationships we hold with our communities, recognising that these connections are fundamental to our growth and success.

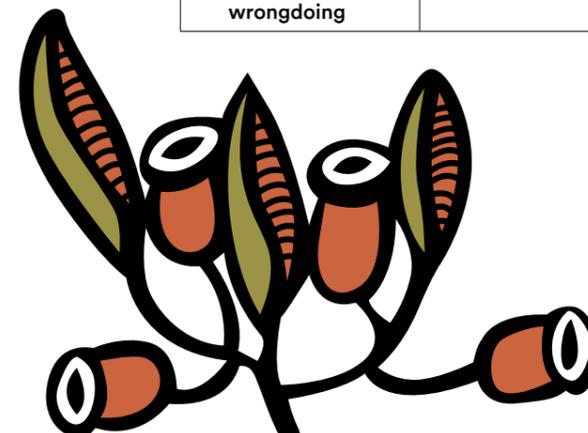
We are dedicated to strengthening relationships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and non-Indigenous communities. This includes fostering meaningful partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander individuals and organisations and enhancing consultation and communication across all community groups.

Council acknowledges that relationships built on mutual respect and trust empower Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to lead self-determined lives. We commit to acting with honesty and integrity, and to confronting racism and discrimination in all aspects of our work.

We also recognise the vital role of truth-telling in deepening our shared understanding of the impacts of colonisation and dispossession. Truth-telling offers Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples the opportunity to share their histories, heritage, and culture with the broader community, and to voice and document their experiences. It is a powerful means of imparting knowledge of thousands of years of rich histories, languages, and stories, while also serving as a form of restorative justice—acknowledging the enduring effects of dispossession and inequity.

Action	Deliverables	Timeline	Responsibility
<b>1. Establish and maintain mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.</b>	Meet with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations to develop guiding principles for future engagement.	Oct 2027	Coordinator Advocacy
	Develop and implement an engagement plan to work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	Jul 2027	RAP Advocacy Officer
	Build stronger relationships with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders to support the ongoing health and well-being of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth across the region.	April 2027 April 2028	Manager Community Wellbeing
	Identify and establish potential partnerships with local Aboriginal Youth Services.	April 2027	Manager Community Wellbeing
<b>2. Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW).</b>	Circulate Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources and reconciliation materials to Council staff.	Mar 2027 Mar 2028	RAP Advocacy Officer
	RAP Working Group members to participate in an external NRW event.	Feb 2027 Feb 2028	People and Change Lead
	Encourage and support staff and senior leaders to participate in at least one external event to recognise and celebrate NRW.	Mar 2027 Mar 2028	Chief Executive Officer
	Organise at least one NRW event each year.	Jan 2027 Jan 2028	RAP Advocacy Officer
	Register all our NRW events on Reconciliation Australia's NRW website.	May 2027 May 2028	RAP Advocacy Officer

Action	Deliverables	Timeline	Responsibility
<b>3. Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence.</b>	Develop and implement a staff engagement strategy to raise awareness of Reconciliation across our workforce.	Jan 2027	RAP Advocacy Officer
	Communicate our commitment to reconciliation publicly.	May 2027 May 2028	RAP Advocacy Officer
	Explore opportunities to positively influence our external stakeholders to drive reconciliation outcomes.	Jan 2027 Jan 2028	RAP Advocacy Officer
	Collaborate with RAP organisations and other like-minded organisations to develop innovative approaches to advance reconciliation.	Jan 2027 Jan 2028	RAP Advocacy Officer
<b>4. Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination strategies.</b>	Support community organisations and groups to develop reconciliation projects through grants)	Jan 2027	Team Leader Community Partnership and Volunteers
	Conduct a review of HR policies and procedures to identify existing anti-discrimination provisions, and future needs.	Jan 2027	People and Change Lead
	Develop, implement, and communicate an anti-discrimination policy for our organisation.	Jan 2027	People and Change Lead
	Engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advisors to consult on our anti-discrimination policy.	Jan 2027	People and Change Lead
<b>5. Provide Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people opportunities for deliberate sharing of histories and experiences, inclusive of injustice and wrongdoing</b>	Educate senior leaders on the effects of racism.	Apr 2027	People and Change Lead
	Provide opportunities for truth-telling and community connection through community-led exhibitions, programs, and events.	Jan 2027	Manager Creative and Engaged City
	Hold public truth-telling talks and discussions to enable a greater understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's experiences (past and present)	Sep 2027 Sep 2028	RAP Advocacy Officer



## Respect

The City of Greater Dandenong is enriched by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures. Council accepts the historical impacts of colonisation and is committed to fostering a deeper understanding and respect of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and diversity. We will do this by undergoing Cultural learning, observing Cultural protocols, and participating in Cultural events.

Council acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the land that we operate on, the Bunurong people. We are committed to respectful practices that demonstrate our shared community identity with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, free of racism and discrimination.

Council is committed to advancing truth-telling and Treaty. We will provide opportunity for education and learning from these processes within our wider community.

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
<b>6. Increase understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultures, histories, knowledge, and rights through Cultural learning.</b>	Conduct a review of Cultural learning needs within our organisation.	Oct 2027	Chief People Officer
	Consult local Traditional Owners and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advisors to inform our Cultural learning strategy.	Oct 2027	Chief People Officer
	Develop, implement, and communicate a cultural learning strategy document for our staff.	Oct 2027	Chief People Officer
	Provide opportunities for RAP Working Group members, HR managers, and other key leadership staff to participate in formal and structured Cultural learning.	Oct 2027	Chief People Officer
	Increase staff understanding of the difference between Cultural Safety and Cultural Awareness to ensure Cultural safety for staff and community across Council departments.	Jan 2027	Chief People Officer
<b>7. Demonstrate respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait</b>	Increase staff is understanding of the purpose and significance behind Cultural protocols, including Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols.	Jul 2027	RAP Advocacy Officer
<b>8. Islander peoples by observing cultural protocols.</b>	Develop, implement, and communicate a Cultural protocol document, including protocols for Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country.	Jul 2027	RAP Advocacy Officer
	Invite a Traditional Custodian to provide a Welcome to Country or other appropriate Cultural protocol at (a minimum of six) significant Council events each year.	Jan 2027 Jan 2028	Coordinator Festival and Events
	Include an Acknowledgement to Country or other appropriate protocols included at the commencement of important meetings, as well as appropriate external print and digital communications of Council.	Jan 2027	Manager Strategic Engagement and Communications
	Council to explore creation of a naming policy and consider expanding opportunities of naming rights with Bunurong Land Council.	Jan 2027	Manager Creative and City
<b>9. Build respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC Week.</b>	RAP Working Group and Internal Steering Committee, to participate in an external NAIDOC Week event.	Jul 2027 Jul 2028	People and Change Lead
	Promote and encourage participation in external NAIDOC events to all staff.	Apr 2027 Apr 2028	People and Change Lead
	Review HR policies and procedures to remove barriers to staff participating in NAIDOC Week.	Apr 2028 Apr 2028	People and Change Lead





## Opportunities

The Bunurong people’s deep spiritual connection to land and waters remains a source of strength and identity, despite the impacts of colonisation. This connection reminds us that caring for Country—its land, water, flora, fauna, and Cultural heritage—is not only vital for environmental health but also an opportunity to strengthen communities and livelihoods through ongoing Cultural engagement.

The City of Greater Dandenong is enriched by the enduring cultures of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Their knowledge systems, experiences, and Cultural practices present opportunities to innovate, learn, and grow together. Council is committed to turning these opportunities into action by:

- Employment and Professional Development: Creating pathways for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to thrive within our workforce.
- Procurement and Partnerships: Building mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal businesses and organisations.

- Access and Inclusion: Ensuring systems and processes are accessible, equitable, and Culturally safe.
- Retention and Growth: Supporting long-term engagement and career progression.

We believe opportunity is the foundation of inclusion. By embracing diversity and fostering environments where every voice is valued, we create spaces for innovation, collaboration, and shared success—benefiting the entire community.

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
<b>10. Improve employment outcomes by increasing the recruitment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff, with a focus on retention and professional development.</b>	Build understanding of current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staffing to inform future employment and professional development opportunities.	April 2027	Chief People Officer
	Engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to consult on our recruitment, retention, and professional development strategy.	April 2027	Chief People Officer
	Develop and implement an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention, and professional development strategy.	April 2027	Chief People Officer
	Advertise job vacancies to effectively reach Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders.	Jan 2027	Chief People Officer
	Review HR and recruitment procedures and policies to remove barriers to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation in our workplace.	Apr 2027	Chief People Officer

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
<b>11. Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes.</b>	Develop and implement an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander procurement strategy	Jan 2027	Manager Procurement
	Investigate Supply Nation membership.	Oct 2026	Manager Procurement
	Develop and communicate opportunities for procurement of goods and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses to staff.	Jan 2027	Manager
	Review and update procurement practices to remove barriers to procuring goods and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses.	Jan 2027	Manager Procurement
	Develop commercial relationships with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander businesses.	Apr 2027	RAP Advocacy Officer
	Promote and facilitate opportunities for local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses to grow their capacity and capability to improve economic and social outcomes.	Jan 2027	Manager Business Development and Investment Business and Employment
<b>12. Implement Bunurong Cultural Land Management practices for Caring for Country</b>	Regularly attend formal BLCAC and CGD bimonthly meetings to engage with and discuss open space and other relevant projects.	May 2027	Manager Strategic and Environmental Planning
	Implement Caring for Country initiative, Shoreham reserve On Country Workshops delivered by BLCAC to 15 key staff annually from the following council areas: Civil engineers Landscape architects Environmental officers Urban planners Waterway management staff	May 2027	People Chief Officer
	Work in collaboration with BLCAC Bunurong Rangers and the Parks Team, with support from internal stakeholders such as Open Space Planning, to deliver a prototype Bunurong Forest Garden within a Council managed reserve and a plan to manage its ongoing care and maintenance.	May 2027 May 2028	Coordinator Conservation
	In collaboration with Bunurong Rangers, explore opportunity to implement the Bunurong Forest Garden prototype within further open spaces across the municipality.	May 2028	Manager Strategic and Environmental Planning
	Explore the opportunity for a contribution to an overarching regional Bunurong Traditional Custodian Caring for Country Fund to enable and continue to support the ongoing capacity building partnership of Council and Bunurong Caring for Country Land Management practices.	May 2028	Manager Strategic and Environmental Planning

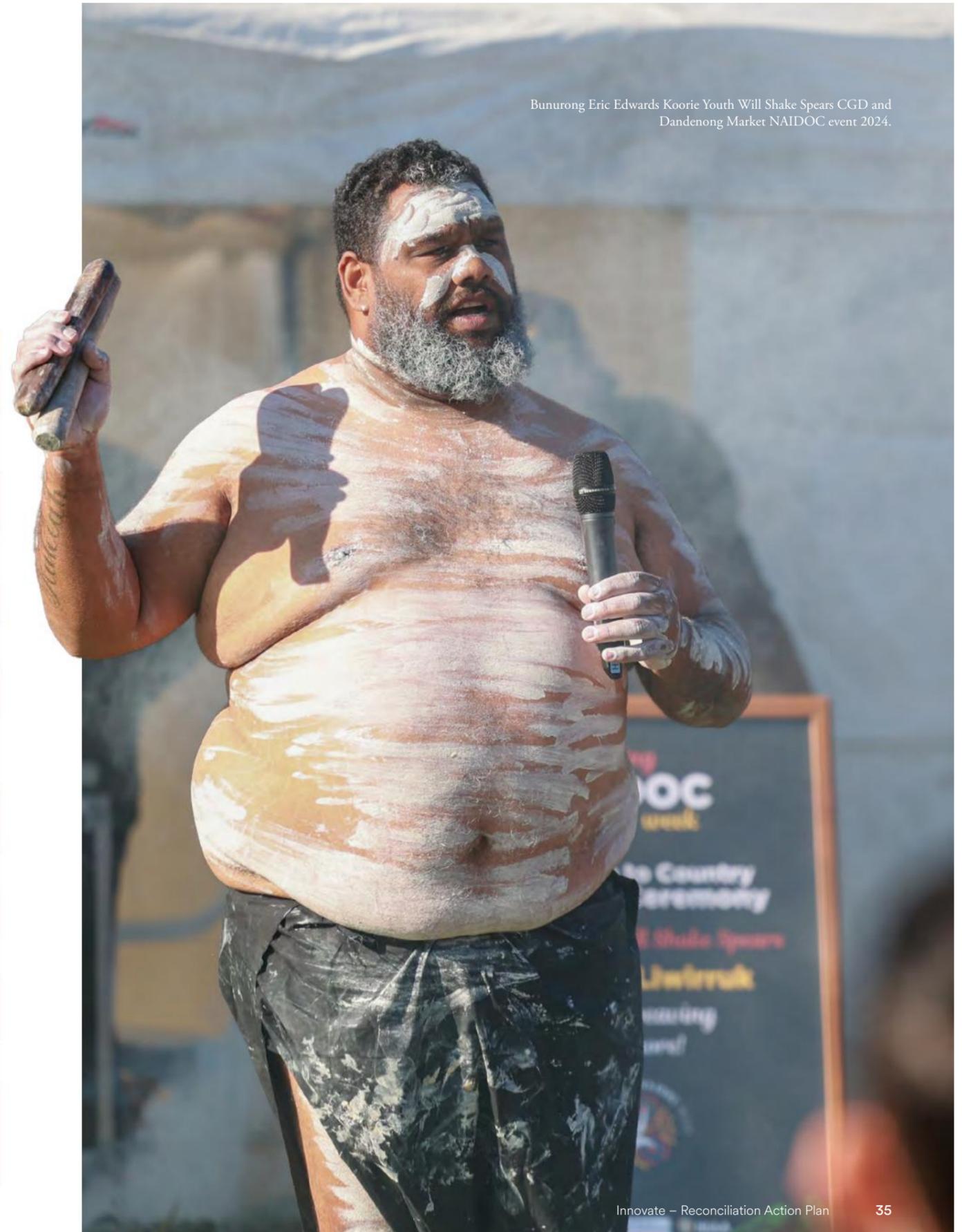
## Governance

Council will regularly monitor the progress of our RAP, ensuring accountability to our communities and using tracking tools to strengthen our commitment to reconciliation. We will embed reconciliation priorities and RAP deliverables into Council's strategic direction and core documents.

Our leadership will drive meaningful action, setting a path toward best practice. This approach will help embed reconciliation into all aspects of Council's work, ensuring Aboriginal and Torres

Straits Islander voices are central to decision-making and championing self-determination across the organisation.

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
<b>13. Establish and maintain an effective RAP Working group (RWG) to drive governance of the RAP.</b>	Maintain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on the RWG.	May 2027	Internal Steering Committee Chair
	Maintain and review the Terms of Reference for the Internal Steering Committee and RAP Reference Group.	May 2027	Internal Steering Committee Chair
	RAP reference Group and Internal Steering Committee meet at least four times per year to drive and monitor RAP implementation.	Mar, Jun, Sep, Dec 2027, 2028	Internal Steering Committee Chair
<b>14. Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments.</b>	Define resource needs for RAP implementation.	Nov 2027 Nov 2028	Internal Steering Committee Chair
	Engage our senior leaders and other staff in the delivery of RAP commitments.	July 2027	Internal Steering Committee Chair
	Define and maintain appropriate systems to track, measure and report on RAP commitments.	Sep 2027	Internal Steering Committee Chair
	Appoint and maintain an internal RAP Champion from senior management.	Jul 2026	Internal Steering Committee Chair
<b>15. Build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP achievements, challenges, and learnings both internally and externally.</b>	Contact Reconciliation Australia to verify that our primary and secondary contact details are up to date, ensuring we receive all important RAP correspondence.	Jul 2027	RAP Advocacy Officer
	Contact Reconciliation Australia to request our unique link to access the online RAP Impact Measurement Survey.	1 Aug 2026 1 Aug 2027	RAP Advocacy Officer
	Complete and submit the annual RAP Impact Measurement Survey to Reconciliation Australia.	Sep 2026 Sep 2027	RAP Advocacy Officer
	Report RAP progress to all staff and senior leaders quarterly.	Jul 2027	RAP Advocacy Officer
	Publicly report our RAP achievements, challenges, and learnings, annually.	Jul 2027	RAP Advocacy Officer
	Investigate participating in Reconciliation Australia's biennial Workplace RAP Barometer.	Feb 2028	RAP Advocacy Officer
	Submit a Traffic Light Report to Reconciliation Australia at the conclusion of this RAP.	Jun 2028	RAP Advocacy Officer
<b>16. Continue our reconciliation journey by developing our next RAP.</b>	Register via Reconciliation Australia's website to begin developing our next RAP.	Jan 2028	RAP Advocacy Officer



Bunurong Eric Edwards Koorie Youth Will Shake Spears CGD and Dandenong Market NAIDOC event 2024.



Contact details: Siobhan Meechan  
Position: RAP Advocacy Officer  
Phone: (03) 8571 1000  
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## 4.2.2 Domestic Animal Management Plan

**Responsible Officer:** Executive Director City Futures  
**Attachments:** 1. Draft DAMP 2025 (1) [4.2.2.1 - 28 pages]

### Officer Recommendation

#### That Council:

1. **APPROVES** the Domestic Animal Management Plan 2025–29 (per Attachment 1); and
2. **SUPPORTS** the continued implementation of the proposed actions and service improvements outlined in the Domestic Animal Management Plan, which aim to:
  - Increase responsible pet ownership.
  - Reduce nuisance behaviours.
  - Improve community safety and animal welfare outcomes.
  - Strengthen compliance with legislative requirements.
  - Enhance officer capability through targeted training.
  - Improve support for vulnerable residents, including those experiencing family violence or homelessness.

### Executive Summary

1. The Domestic Animal Management Plan (DAMP) 2025–29 sets out Council's strategic direction for managing dogs and cats in Greater Dandenong over the next four years, in accordance with the *Domestic Animals Act 1994*. The Plan has been developed through a detailed review of current services, legislative requirements, operational data, and extensive community consultation undertaken between June and July 2025, which gathered input from more than 200 residents, community organisations, domestic animal businesses, veterinarians, and animal welfare agencies.
2. The Plan responds to key issues raised by the community, including nuisance pet behaviours, dog attacks, cat containment, support for responsible pet ownership, and the need for clearer education and communication. It also incorporates emerging pressures such as increasing animal surrenders, population growth, housing density changes, and the impacts of family violence and homelessness on both people and pets.
3. The Plan outlines targeted actions across seven key focus areas: registration and identification, nuisance management, minimising dog attacks, dangerous and menacing dogs, authorised officer capability, domestic animal businesses, and animal emergency management. These actions aim to improve community safety, enhance animal welfare, strengthen regulatory compliance, and deliver a more proactive, accessible and community-centred animal management service.
4. Endorsing the DAMP 2025–29 will ensure Council continues to meet its legal obligations, remains responsive to the needs and expectations of a diverse and growing community, and is well-positioned to manage the complex and evolving nature of domestic animal management over the coming years.



## Background

5. The *Domestic Animals Act 1994* requires every Victorian council to prepare, implement, and annually review a Domestic Animal Management Plan (DAMP) to ensure responsible pet ownership, community safety, and animal welfare. The Domestic Animal Management Plan 2025–29 has been developed following extensive review of current services, industry trends, legislative obligations, community expectations, and emerging risks.
6. Greater Dandenong's animal management service continues to operate in an increasingly complex environment shaped by population growth, housing density changes, cultural diversity, increases in animal-related complaints, and heightened expectations for animal welfare and community safety. To ensure the service remains effective, modern, and aligned with the needs of our community, the Plan has been informed by comprehensive consultation undertaken in June–July 2025, engaging over 200 residents, animal welfare groups, veterinarians, domestic animal businesses, and community organisations.
7. The Plan outlines strategic priorities and targeted actions over the next four years, focusing on registration and identification, nuisance management, dangerous and menacing dogs, minimising dog attacks, authorised officer capability, domestic animal businesses, and emergency animal management. It reflects both operational realities and the expectations expressed by the community, while ensuring continued compliance with all statutory requirements.

## Key Issues and Discussion

8. The DAMP 2025–29 provides a clear and forward-looking strategy to address the evolving needs of Greater Dandenong's community and to meet Council's legislative responsibilities. The Plan is grounded in data, operational trends, and direct community input, ensuring that the actions proposed directly respond to the issues residents experience, including education needs, concerns about dog attacks, and support for managing nuisance behaviours.
9. Over recent years registration numbers for both dogs and cats have declined, influenced by several factors including cost-of-living pressures, changing demographics, and increased apartment living. Reduced registration limits Council's ability to reunite lost animals with owners, impacts revenue required to support services, and increases the risk of unregistered, unmanaged pets within the community.
10. Community complaints continue to rise, particularly for barking dogs, wandering cats, and aggressive dog behaviours. These issues impact neighbourhood amenity and require significant officer time to investigate, educate, and resolve.
11. Dog attack reports, including incidents within fully fenced off-leash areas, remain a concern for community safety. Managing aggressive dogs requires strong investigation skills, consistent enforcement, and timely decision-making to reduce harm.
12. The Plan strengthens Council's approach to responsible pet ownership through expanded education initiatives, enhanced use of digital and multilingual communication, targeted doorknocks, and improved registration pathways. This includes a continued shift toward digital engagement, supported strongly through consultation, and improved systems for registration reminders and online processes.
13. Family violence, homelessness, and rising surrender rates create additional pressures on Council services and the wider animal welfare system. Supporting vulnerable residents with pet-related needs is an emerging community expectation identified through consultation.
14. The Plan also recognises the increasing number of animal-related social issues and commits to strengthening partnerships with animal shelters, rescue services, and support organisations, particularly in relation to family violence and homelessness. This ensures services remain compassionate, inclusive, and responsive to vulnerable residents.



15. Animal management is a specialised field requiring advanced skills in investigation, conflict management, legislative knowledge, animal handling, and risk assessment. Continued investment in training is critical to officer safety, service quality, and compliance with legal obligations.
16. Operationally, the Plan invests in officer capability by outlining training expectations, professional development pathways, and a commitment to ongoing review of systems and practices. These improvements support consistent enforcement, increased officer safety, and greater community confidence.
17. Council must demonstrate full compliance with the *Domestic Animals Act 1994*, including annual reporting and a mandatory four-year review. Failure to meet these obligations creates legal and reputational risk.
18. By endorsing the Plan, Council supports a modernised and proactive animal management service that is well-aligned with community expectations, legislative requirements, and emerging operational pressures. The Plan ensures Council remains compliant, community-focused, and forward-thinking in its approach to animal management.

## Governance Compliance

### *Human Resource Implications (consider Workforce Planning and Service Statements)*

19. This item does not have an impact on existing human resources.

### *Financial/Asset Resource Implications (consider Service Statements, Budget, Long Term Financial Strategy and Asset Plan)*

#### *Operating Budget Implications*

20. There are no financial implications associated with this report. This plan will be delivered within the allocated operational budget.

#### *Asset Implications*

21. This item does not affect any existing assets.
22. The Domestic Animal Management Plan 2025–29 does not create, modify, or require capital works for any existing Council-owned assets. The Plan focuses on regulatory functions, education programs, officer capability, community engagement, compliance activities, and the delivery of statutory animal management services.

#### *Legal/Risk Implications*

23. The *Domestic Animals Act 1994* requires every Victorian council to prepare, implement, and annually review a Domestic Animal Management Plan. This is a legislative requirement, and failure to maintain a current Plan places Council at risk of non-compliance with State legislation. The Domestic Animal Management Plan 2025–29 ensures Council continues to meet these statutory obligations and demonstrates sound governance and accountability in the management of domestic animals.
24. In addition to legislative compliance, the Plan addresses several operational and community risks. These include increasing reports of dog attacks, nuisance behaviour, unregistered animals, and issues related to family violence, homelessness, and animal welfare. Without a contemporary, evidence-based Plan, Council would be exposed to both legal and reputational risks, particularly in relation to community safety, enforcement procedures, and the handling of dangerous or menacing dogs.
25. Endorsing and implementing the Domestic Animal Management Plan 2025–29 ensures Council complies with legislative requirements, manages operational and community risks proactively, and provides a safe, transparent and well-governed approach to domestic animal management.



### Environmental Implications

26. The Domestic Animal Management Plan 2025–29 influences several environmental factors within Greater Dandenong through its focus on responsible pet ownership, reduced nuisance behaviours, and proactive animal management practices. While the Plan does not directly alter physical assets or infrastructure, its implementation has indirect but meaningful implications for the urban environment, biodiversity, waste reduction, and community behaviour.
27. Uncontrolled or wandering domestic animals, particularly free-roaming cats, can have significant impacts on native wildlife, including birds, small mammals, and reptiles. The Plan’s education initiatives, enforcement of cat containment requirements, and actions to reduce wandering pets support improved biodiversity outcomes and protection of urban ecosystems.
28. Initiatives promoting responsible pet ownership, including compliance with dog waste disposal, directly reduce litter in parks, waterways, and open spaces. This contributes to cleaner public areas and reduces contamination risks in natural environments.
29. Improvements to the Animal Emergency Management component of the Plan support better preparedness during natural disasters (e.g. heatwaves, floods, storms). Effective planning reduces environmental degradation caused by displaced animals and supports safer evacuation and shelter processes.
30. This section has been selected because the actions within the DAMP have clear environmental flow-on effects, particularly relating to wildlife protection, litter reduction, and safe animal management practices. While no built assets are affected, the Plan influences behaviours and compliance outcomes that directly shape the quality of the urban environment

### Gender Impact Assessment

31. A gender impact assessment is not required.

### Community Consultation

<b>Purpose</b>	To understand community priorities, expectations and concerns regarding domestic animal management and responsible pet ownership, and to ensure these insights informed the development of the Domestic Animal Management Plan 2026–29. The engagement aimed to capture feedback from pet owners, non-pet owners, animal welfare stakeholders, domestic animal businesses, veterinarians, and culturally diverse community members.
<b>Engagement period</b>	30 June – 28 July 2025
<b>Level of Influence:</b>	Based on IAP2 Public Participation Spectrum: The community was invited to provide feedback, ideas and suggestions to inform the direction and priority actions within the DAMP. Final decision-making remained with Council
<b>Engagement Activities:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Online “Your Say” survey</b></li> <li>• <b>Dedicated email for submissions</b> (<a href="mailto:damp@cgd.vic.gov.au">damp@cgd.vic.gov.au</a>)</li> <li>• <b>SMS and email invitations</b> sent to all registered pet owners</li> <li>• <b>Social media advertising and boosted posts</b></li> <li>• <b>Articles in Greater Dandenong Council News</b></li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Digital screen advertisements</b> at Dandenong and Springvale Civic Centres</li><li>• <b>Posters and flyers</b> across key community locations</li><li>• <b>Ranger Pop-Up sessions at 16 dog parks</b> across the municipality</li><li>• <b>In-person engagement at the Snow Festival</b> (Council event with 20,000+ attendees)</li><li>• <b>Hard-copy surveys</b> available at Customer Service Centres</li></ul>
<b>Communication reach and engagement numbers:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>211 total survey responses</b> (online, paper and pop-up feedback combined)</li><li>• <b>Social media reach:</b> Thousands of impressions via boosted posts (exact figures can be added if available)</li><li>• <b>Council News readership</b> (distribution across municipality)</li><li>• <b>Snow Festival engagement:</b> Rangers interacted with thousands of attendees through pop-up stall and activities</li><li>• <b>SMS &amp; email campaign:</b> Reached registered pet owners (number depends on Council CRM data)</li><li>• <b>Large digital screens:</b> High-visibility daily foot traffic at both Civic Centres</li></ul>
<b>Summary of feedback:</b>	<p>Community feedback highlighted strong support for more education around dog attacks, nuisance behaviour, leash rules, and responsible pet ownership. Residents expressed a desire for clearer information on managing barking dogs, controlling wandering pets, and understanding the cat curfew and cat enclosure options.</p> <p>A majority of respondents supported increased education programs (85%), more information on lost pets, and assistance for cat containment.</p> <p>Feedback also highlighted the need for improved awareness of off-leash rules and stronger community enforcement, along with interest in subsidised programs such as low-cost desexing.</p> <p>Refer to Attachment 2 for the detailed engagement summary.</p>



## Links to Community Vision, Council Plan, Strategy, Notice of Motion

32. This report is consistent with the following principles in the Community Vision 2040:

- Safe and peaceful community.
- Education, training, entrepreneurship and employment opportunities.

33. This report is consistent with the following strategic objectives from the Council Plan 2025-29:

- A socially connected, safe and healthy city.

## Legislative and Policy Obligations

34. This report has considered Council's legislative and policy obligations (where applicable) as outlined in the Report Considerations section detailed in the front of this Agenda. The applicable obligations considered and applied are:

- The Overarching Governance Principles of the *Local Government Act 2020*.



Draft

# Domestic Animal Management Plan 2025-2029





### **Acknowledgement of Country**

We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of this land, the Bunurong people, and pay respects to their Elders past and present. Er recognise and respect their continuing connections to climate, Culture, Country and waters.

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## Introduction

Greater Dandenong Council recognises the value of pet ownership and its benefits for health and wellbeing.

The Domestic Animal Management Plan (DAMP) 2025–2029 has been developed in accordance with the requirements of the Domestic Animals Act 1994, which mandates that all Victorian councils prepare and review a domestic animal management plan every four years.

This plan outlines Council’s approach to managing dogs and cats within our municipality, focusing on responsible pet ownership, community safety, and animal welfare. It sets out the programs, services, and strategies Council will pursue to:

- Promote and encourage responsible pet ownership
- Protect the community and environment from nuisance dogs and cats
- Deliver effective domestic animal management services

The Domestic Animal Management Plan (DAMP) has been shaped by extensive community consultation, reflecting the values and priorities of Greater Dandenong residents. Council is committed to ongoing engagement, education, and enforcement to create a safe, supportive, and pet-friendly environment for everyone.

*The Domestic Animal Management Plan is an endorsed supporting strategy in the Greater Dandenong Council Plan.*



## Legislation Framework

Under the Domestic Animal Act 1994, every Council must develop and implement a Domestic Animal management plan every four years.

The plan must:

- Evaluate the adequacy of animal control services
- Provide training programs for authorised officers
- Include strategies to:
  - Promote responsible pet ownership of dogs and cats
  - Ensure compliance with legislation
  - Minimise the risk of dog attacks
  - Address overpopulation and euthanasia rates
  - Encourage pet registration and identification of cats and dogs
  - Reduce nuisance caused by cats and dogs
  - Identify and manage dangerous, menacing and restricted breed dogs
  - Review existing Orders and local laws
  - Monitor and evaluate the plan periodically
- Each Council must review its Domestic Animal Management Plan annually and publish an evaluation in its Annual Report.



## About Dandenong

Located 35km to the southeast of Melbourne, Greater Dandenong City Council covers 129 square kilometres and has a population of over 169,000 people. With the forecast construction of over 7,500 dwellings by 2031, the population is expected to surge to approximately 203,000. Over half of local, occupied private dwellings are fully owned or being purchased by their occupants, while most of the balance are rented. The extent of home ownership in Greater Dandenong – that is, fully-owned or being purchased – is substantially lower than the metropolitan average of 71%.

Greater Dandenong City Council is the most culturally diverse locality in Australia, with residents from over 150 different birthplaces, nearly two-thirds of whom were born overseas. In light of this, it is to be expected that Greater Dandenong Council would exhibit lower rates of pet ownership than the metropolitan or state average.

Our suburbs include:

- Dandenong, Dandenong North, Dandenong South
- Noble Park, Noble Park North
- Springvale, Springvale South
- Keysborough, Keysborough South
- Lyndhurst
- Bangholme



## Animal Management Service Snapshot 2024-2025

Greater Dandenong Compliance team have 11 field officers, 6 of those officers have some animal management tasks and 5 of those officer's deal with Animal Management issues solely as their work activity.

In addition to animal management all field officers also undertake local laws, parking enforcement and school crossings matters.

The animal management structure is set out below:



## Animal Registration

Dogs Registered	6187
Cats Registered	3232
Declared Dogs	4
Domestic Animal Businesses	10

## Animal Pound Results

Dogs Impounded	376
Dogs Rehomed	50
Dogs Reunited with owners	204
Cats Impounded	779
Cats Rehomed	222
Cats Reunited with owners	51

## Customer Service Requests

Animal requests received	2751
Barking Dogs	257
Wandering Dogs	66
Cats not contained	262
Cat trap hire Request	283
Aggressive Dog Reports	158



## Our Domestic Animal Management plan 2025- 2029

We have redrafted the exiting plan and identified parts of the expiring DAMP where the community have had their say on where we can develop a program of actions and initiatives throughout the life of the Domestic Animal Management Plan 2025- 2029.

This plan is designed to ensure that the animal management service in Greater Dandenong continue to meet the objective of the Domestic Animal Act 1994 and remain responsive to the needs of the community.

The plan reflects insights gathered through community consultation conducted in July 2025. This engagement captured a wide range of perspectives on animal management, animal welfare and the needs of pet ownership across Greater Dandenong. The feedback has helped identify both ongoing and emerging issues, informing the redraft of the targeted actions to meet current and future service demands.

This redraft is structured around a number of key areas which align with the Domestic Animals Act 1994.



## Key 1. Registration and Identification

Council currently engages in a range of activities aimed at encouraging the registration and identification of dogs and cats. These include:

- Website information
- Pet News annual publication
- Media Releases
- Facebook Lost & Found page
- Mandatory registration of animals prior to release from pound
- Annual Registration renewal follow-up's
- Microchip database comparison with Council registration records
- Proactive targeted doorknocks
- Proactive patrols of parks / reserves
- Educational displays at community events
- No fee for first registration period for pets registered before reaching 3 months of age
- No fee for first registration period for transfer of registration from another municipality /State
- No fee for first registration period for all animals adopted from a recognised adoption program
- Strays returned to owner where currently registered, and owner can be contacted.

### **Objectives:**

#### **Increase dog and cat registration**

<b>Activity</b>	<b>When</b>	<b>Evaluation</b>
Ensure all impounded animals are registered to their owners prior to release.	Prior to every release	Annually review of registration numbers. Review number of animals being impounded that are not registered.
Undertake door-knocking campaigns to follow up on un-renewed registration	Annually	Review numbers of unregistered animals found
SMS & Email registration renewal reminders to owners of un-renewed pets with mobile numbers and email addresses listed	Annually (March-April)	Review numbers of pets being registered after SMS & Email reminders sent
Investigate improvements to the online registration process	Year 4	Complete online registration process review.
Develop a communications plan to promote the need to update microchip details	Year 3	Communications plan completed and implemented.

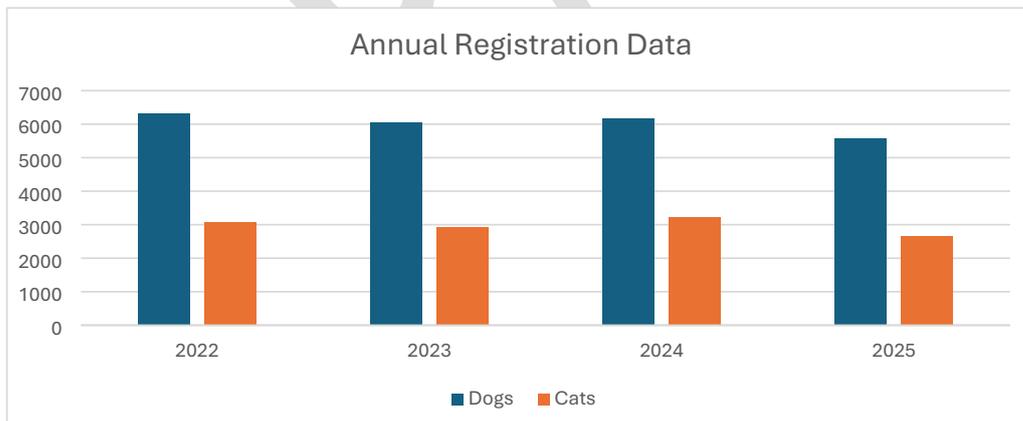
**Reduce the number of animals impounded**

Activity	When	Evaluation
Develop relationships with Rescue Agencies & Volunteer Enrolled Foster Cares as an alternative to impounding	ongoing	Reduction in impoundment numbers
Continually monitor and improve procedures to ensure animals are only impounded if there is no other alternative	Ongoing	Reduction in impoundment numbers
Investigate opportunities to provide low cost/subsidised cat desexing, microchipping & registration to move cats from semi-owned to fully owned	Ongoing	Number of cats desexed as part of program and number of cats impounded over duration of the plan
Investigate holding facilities for animals collected within workday	Ongoing	Reduction in impoundment numbers

**Current Situation**

All dogs and cats aged three months and over must be microchipped and registered with Council, with registration renewed annually by 10 April. In addition to being a legal requirement, animals found with current registration and a microchip are significantly more likely to be reunited with their owners.

While pet registration increased during COVID, annual registration numbers have declined at a consistent rate.



The decline in annual pet registration may be attributed to rising cost of living pressures and shifting population demographics, including an increase in smaller apartments and townhouses across the municipality.

Community consultation revealed that 68% of respondents had experienced wandering pets in their area.

The percentage of cats being rehomed has decreased due to the rise in the number of cats impounded that are not suitable for rehoming due to disease and temperaments test render them unsuitable for rehoming.

We will explore suggestions where feasible, taking into account the limitations imposed by overarching State Government legislations.

Key suggestions included:

- Enhanced education and promotion of registration requirements, targeting our CALD community in languages applicable.
- Investigate into cost related concerns

### **Action Plans & Current Activities**

The current education activities and programs that Greater Dandenong offer, aimed at promoting responsible pet ownership include:

- Fact Sheets in multi languages
- Brochure stands at all customer service areas, containing a broad range of information booklets (barking dogs etc) some in other languages
- Activities at local festivals and events
- Lost and Found Facebook pages
- Website information
- Annual publication of Pet news (now electronic format)



As indicated earlier there has been a decrease in dog registration from 7453 to 6187 and a decrease for cats from 3545 to 3232 over the last four years. Improved data collection and cleaning up of internal systems has resulted in more accurate reporting.

The number of registered domestic animal businesses (DAB) have continued to remain stable with 10 Dabs', comprising of 6 boarding kennels, 3 pet shops, and 1 shelter and 0 Dog training facilities.

There are currently no registered breeding DABs in Greater Dandenong.

Other activities that will be undertaken to increase registration rates include additional community education and engagement. These will be in person where appropriate and we will also continue to utilise more online, AI driven and digital media forms. Further pro-active patrolling to identify unregistered pets and research into ways of simplifying and expediting the process of registration will also be undertaken.

During the 2021-2025 DAMP projects undertaken to enable registration renewal reminders to be sent via email directly to the owners with a link for electronic payment was successfully implemented. This has streamlined the process for both the customer/owner and also administrative work for council. This has also enhanced the customer service experience and given them a simplistic approach to register their pet. This also aligns with Council sustainability strategies.

## Key 2. Nuisance Animals

**Objective:**

To understand the key issues impacting residents in relation to pet related nuisances and identify effective strategies to minimise their impact.

**Current Situation:**

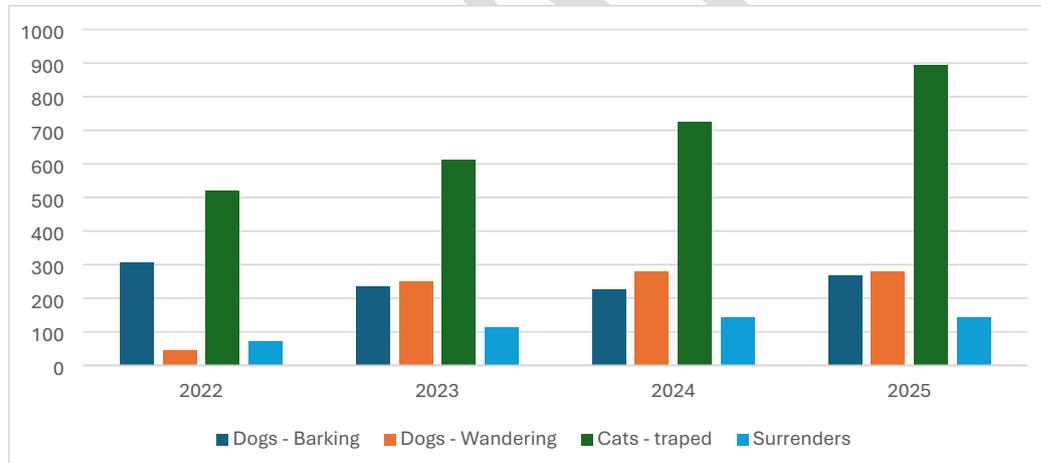
At Greater Dandenong the most common nuisance complaints for animals are wandering cats. The most significant increases during this period relate to:

- Barking dog complaints
- Cats in traps
- Animals not contained

Animal surrenders have also increased; however, these could be attributed to cost of living situation.

**Nature of Customer Complaints**

- **9.34% Barking Dogs**
- **9.52% cats not contained**
- **5.74% Aggressive dogs**



**Action Plans & Current Activities**

In relation to nuisance specifically, Council provides the following material:

- Fact Sheets and booklets in multi languages – Barking dogs, Nuisance cats
- Noise Diaries (electronic and hard copy)
- Direct contact with all stakeholders
- Council also provides generic information from State government sources.
- Information on Councils website

Council Rangers also attends community education sessions as well as local festival and events.

Animal Rangers also undertake direct contacts with the complainants and animal owners, assisting them in understanding the causes of concerns, remedies available and the process Council will follow to investigate and action complaints.



Activities undertaken at Greater Dandenong include, but are not limited to:

- Permit system to manage excess animal numbers
- Cat trap hire programs
- Patrols of parks and reserves as required to ensure dogs are under effective control
- Barking dog compliance process
- Enforcement of Local Law provisions governing the number of animals that can be kept on a property without a permit
- Online system for lodging complaints
- Enforcement of Cat confinement order, requiring cats to be confined to their property from dusk till dawn.



**Reducing dog nuisance complaints**

Activity	When	Evaluation
Investigate introduction of responsible pet ownership training programs, conducted by qualified trainers in partnership with CGD Domestic animal Businesses	Year 2	Programs in place
Investigate the benefits of the use of digital media in high traffic areas (including online)	Ongoing	Reduction in customer complaints

to increase awareness of dog confinement and key dog attack messages		
Review dog off leash strategy	Annually	Track progress and ensure priorities are still in line with community expectations and requirements.
Investigate the option of mandatory desexing of cats impounded and returned to owners prior to release	Year 3	Increase percentage of desexed registered cats
Review and enhance procedures for barking dog complaints	Year 2	Reduce average investigative time to barking complaints.
Strengthen community education in relation to feeding stray cats	Ongoing	Number of complaints regarding feeding strays. Number of impounded cats
Investigate opportunities to provide low cost / subsidised cat desexing & registration in targeted areas to move cats from semi-owned group to fully owned and prevent unwanted litters	Ongoing	Number of cat nuisance complaints Number of registered desexed cats Number of impounded cats

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## Key 3. Minimising Dog Attacks

**Objective:**

Implement targeted programs and strategies to promote responsible pet ownership to minimise the risk to the community and to Council from aggressive dogs on both people and animals.

**Current Situation:**

Greater Dandenong Council are committed to reducing the risk of dog aggression towards people and other animals in our municipality. To support this all-Animal Ranger officers, treat all reports of dog attacks and aggressive behaviours as a high priority and investigate each allegation thoroughly.

The Domestic Animal Act 1994 classifies attacks not three categories:

1. Rush – where a dog has approached a person to within less than 3 metres in an aggressive manner, displaying aggressive tendencies that may include snarling, growling and raised hackles.
2. Non-serious attack – where a dog has attacked and caused injuries that are not in the nature of a serious injury
3. Serious Attack – where a dog has attacked a person or other animal and caused an injury requiring medical or veterinary treatment in the nature of a broken bone, a laceration, partial loss of sensation or function in a part of the body or an injury requiring cosmetic surgery.

	Rush	Attack	Total
2023	11	63	74
2024	9	40	49
2025	10	41	51

Council has a firm policy of enforcement in cases of dogs wandering dog attacks and rush incidents. Action is taken in all cases of confirmed attacks, where a perpetrator can be identified.

Since the introduction of more fully fenced off-leash areas, Council has seen an increase in the number of attacks in these areas. More work needs to be done to identify how these areas can be made safer. Greater Dandenong have a number of small-breed specific off-leash areas to allow for smaller breed dogs to be exercised in a safer environment.

During the period 2021-2025, Council made 1 Menacing Dog declaration 9 Dangerous Dog Declarations, and no declarations for Restricted Breed dogs. During that period, Council found it necessary to issue 2 destruction orders for dogs that had attacked.

None of the Declared Dangerous Dogs have been recorded as committing further offences, post declaration. 1 Menacing Dog has recorded further offences thus resulting in an increased declaration to Dangerous.

**Action Plans & Current Activities**

Greater Dandenong Council activity promote:

- Fact Sheets and Brochures (in multi languages) – Dangerous / restricted breed dogs
- Dangerous, Restricted Breed Dog inspections
- Patrols of parks, reserves and paths
- Consistent use of Declaration/ destruction powers

- 24hours / 365 days response to dog attacks / rush complaints
- Education sessions in person at events
- Ongoing contact with all park / reserve users.
- Enforcement activities including official warnings, infringements, notice to comply and court prosecution.
- Collection of found animals.

**Reducing dog nuisance complaints**

Activity	When	Evaluation
Review dog attack / rush reports to simplify post investigation process in relation to declaration proposals	Ongoing	Accuracy of reports
Review reporting procedure to enable recording of numbers of dog attacks in off leash areas	Year 2	Number of attacks in fully fenced off leash areas compared to number in unfenced
Raise awareness of pet ownership responsibilities by communication the outcome of court proceedings	Year 4	Communication engagement metrics
Publicise key dog attack prevention messages through: - Regular media articles - Website info - Digital media displays	Ongoing	Number of media articles published  Number of displays conducted



## Key 4. Declared – Dangerous, menacing and restricted dogs

### **Objective:**

To ensure that owners of dangerous, menacing and restricted breed dogs are aware of their obligations and comply with all legislated requirements for the keeping of these identified dogs.

### **Current Situation:**

As of 2025, Greater Dandenong has 6 declared dogs living within its municipality. The declaration or deeming of a dog to be dangerous, menacing or restricted is regulated and managed via the *Domestic Animals Act*, this includes how the animal is housed and walked.

Menacing Dogs

Dangerous Dogs

Restricted Dogs

Council endeavours to minimise the risk to the community from declared dogs by administering and enforcing the relevant provisions of the *Domestic Animals Act*, responding to any reports involving declared dogs and conducting thorough investigation into animal aggression reports.

As part of our registration process, pet owners are required to disclose whether their dog is a restricted breed, has been declared menacing or is classified as dangerous.

### **Action Plans & Current Activities**

Whenever a dog has been declared in Greater Dandenong, Officers always supply:

- Fact sheets and Brochures (some in other languages) – housing requirements etc
- Examples in picture format of what is required when owning a declared dog
- Inspections by Rangers for approval requirements

Currently activities include, but are not limited to:

- Assess and declare dogs as dangerous, menacing or restricted breeds.
- Conduct annual compliance property inspections
- Supply and distribution of State Government fact sheets regarding keeping dangerous dogs
- Ensure all dogs declared by Council are recorded on the Victorian Declared Dog Registry
- Firm enforcement in relation to warning dogs
- Respond to complaints



Activity	When	Evaluation
Review policy on when to declare a dog	Ongoing	Policy to remain current with legislation and best practice
Conduct targeted inspections of industrial properties for dogs housed or kept for guarding purposes	Ongoing	Number of guard dogs registered in municipality
Conducted inspections of declared dog properties, check fencing, housing and signage	Annually	Number inspected



## Key 5. Training of Authorised Officers

### **Objective**

To ensure that all staff involved in animal management have the training opportunities that support all staff in developing the skills and knowledge required to perform their roles safety, effectively and in accordance with the requirements of the Domestic Animals Act.

### **Current & Planned Training**

To ensure that all staff involved in animal management have the knowledge and skills necessary to carry out their work, a set of minimum training qualifications has been established and is set out in officer role statements. Officers are also encouraged to identify and attend 'in-service' training programs applicable to their roles.

Each officer has an individual annual performance plan, which includes a section related to training and development. Plans are reviewed annually, with training requirements being updated at that time. Responsibility for ensuring that nominated training is completed then becomes a shared responsibility for the individual officer and their supervisor.

### **Goals**

- All staff required to hold a minimum Certificated IV in Animal Control & Regulations
- Staff encouraged and supported to attain higher level qualifications eg Diploma in Animal Management / Diploma in Business Management.
- Staff encouraged and facilitated to attend all in-service training days provided by relevant industry bodies.

### **Current Status**

The animal management team is currently located in the Community Compliance team with approximately 5 FTE authorised officers allocated to the animal management team. This team is supported by a shared administration team.

In 2024-2025, the team responded to 2751 animal management requests, this number continues to increase annually. Animal management services are provided Monday to Friday 8:15am – 5pm, Saturday to Sunday 9am – 5pm and an emergency afterhours service is provided by an on-call authorised officer to handle dog attacks, livestock wandering and emergency services calls.

Officers are also encouraged and supported to undertake other training that may assist them in providing improved services to the community and increase officer safety, situational awareness and conflict resolution.

**Corporate training areas:**

- Child safe standard
- Bullying and harassment
- Conflict of interest
- Fraud and corruption
- Information Privacy
- Occupational Health and Safety
- Code of conduct

**Specialised training areas:**

- Situational Awareness
- Conflict management
- First Aid and CPR
- Animal Handling and behaviour
- Aggressive dog handling
- Breed Identification
- Dog Bite safety training
- Law and investigation training



## Key 6. Domestic Animal Businesses

### **Objective:**

For Greater Dandenong to implement target programs to register and inspect operation of domestic animal businesses to ensure minimum requirements for animal welfare are met.

### **Current Situation:**

Greater Dandenong Council currently have 10 registered Domestic Animal Businesses, comprising:

- 3 x Pet Shops
- 6 x Boarding kennels
- 0 x Dog Training
- 1 x Shelter



Domestic Animal Businesses (DABs) are strictly regulated under the provisions of the Domestic Animal Act and Regulations, as well as specific Codes of Practices created by that legislation. The relevant codes of practice are enforceable under the legislation and are seen as very comprehensive and effective tool for managing such businesses.

Because of the effectiveness of the tools described above, Council does not have any orders or Local Laws in place in relation to DAB's. Councils Rangers inspect these facilities annually to ensure compliance with relevant legislation and codes of practice prior to registration. Council also responds to and investigate any concerns raised to the operation of these establishments.

The animal shelter operating within this municipality is the Australian Animal Protection Society (AAPS). Council has a formal agreement in place with the AAPS which enables it to operate as a pound. This arrangement allows the AAPS to receive unwanted / surrendered animals and then to provide such animals with veterinary care; to rehabilitate them and to re-home them.



Activity	When	Evaluation
Conduct annual compliance inspections on Domestic animal businesses	Annually	Number of Domestic animal business inspections annually
Provide online information, hard copies etc on registering a new domestic animal business	Year 4	Develop online information and information packs.
In consultation with Vets and DAB's, develop an inline "New Pet Pack".	Ongoing	Make available at participating DAB's and vets. – Stock levels at locations



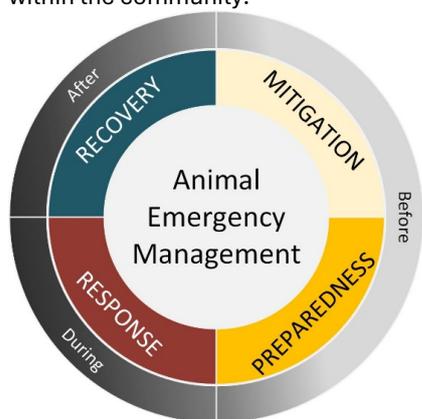
## Key 7. Other Matters

### **Animal Emergency Management Plan**

The Greater Dandenong Animal Emergency Management Plan is designed to ensure the safety and welfare of domestic animals during emergencies, such as natural disasters or significant incidents.

This plan outlines coordinated procedures for the safe evacuation, shelter, and care of animals, recognising the important role pets play in the lives of local residents. It also involves collaboration with local veterinary clinics, animal shelters, and emergency services to provide comprehensive support and resources in times of crisis.

The plan is regularly reviewed and updated to reflect best practices and to address emerging risks within the community.



**Family violence and homelessness**

Family violence and homelessness can significantly impact the welfare of Domestic Animals.

According to the Family Violence Database (FVDB), during the 2023/24 financial year, 325 clients received homelessness services due to family violence through general services, and 528 clients accessed homelessness services through specialist family violence services. In Dandenong alone, there were 2,313 incidents of family violence reported for that year.

In the same reporting period, RSPCA responded to 221 reports of animal cruelty in Greater Dandenong. Numerous studies have confirmed that in households with companion animals experiencing domestic violence and abuse, there is also a high probability of animal abuse.

A critical aspect of this issue is the role of pets in the lives of those experiencing family violence. Many individuals remain in violent situations out of fear for their pets' safety if they leave them with the perpetrator or due to the lack of access to shelters or accommodation options that will accommodate pets.

Greater Dandenong is committed to exploring and implementing strategies to support these individuals and their pets, ensuring they have safe and accessible options when seeking refuge from violence. By addressing these concerns, we aim to create a more supportive environment for members of our community experiencing family violence and to reduce incidents of animal cruelty.

Activity	When	Evaluation
----------	------	------------

Continue to explore and strengthen agreements with pounds, shelters and support organisations	Year 4	
Education and Awareness: Promote awareness of available services and support for pets affected by FV & more broadly on Council websites and social media	Year 4	Develop online information and information packs.



## Review and Evaluation

The Greater Dandenong Council develops both long and short term business plans. This includes annual business plans for each business unit of Council. Business plans are reported against quarterly, with these reports being presented directly to Council. Key activities and indicators are also included into Councils Annual report.

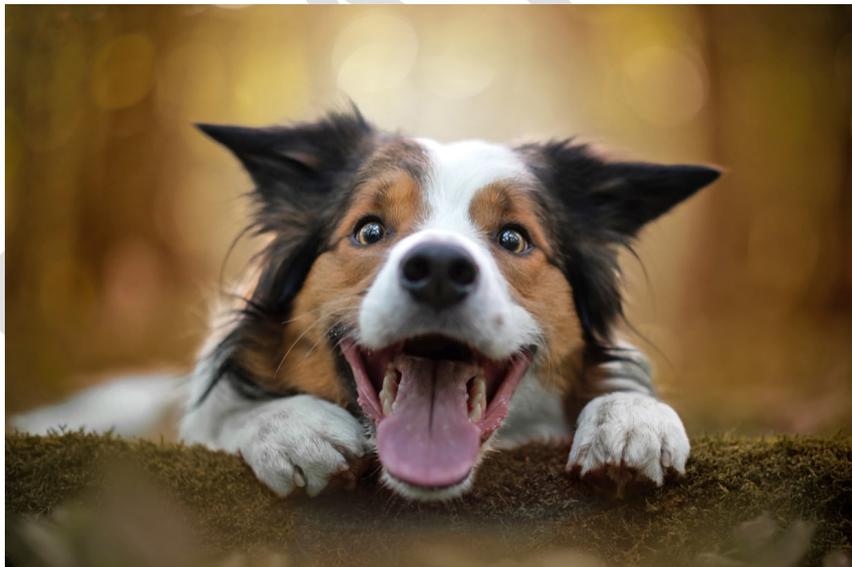
Under Section 68A (3) of the *Domestic Animal Act 1994* every Council must –

- (a) Review its domestic animal management plan annually and, if appropriate, amend the plan; and
- (b) Provide the Secretary with a copy of the plan and any amendments to the plan; and
- (c) Publish an evaluation of its implementation of the plan in its annual report.

### **Performance monitoring and evaluation process**

Council will monitor performance of the objectives that are detailed throughout the Domestic Animal Management Plan by reporting annually through the Council established reporting system, in accordance with the requirements of the Domestic Animal Act and the Local Government Performance Reporting Framework.

A full review of the plan will be conducted every four years. The Secretary of the DEDJTR will be consulted on the major review and then provided with a copy of the adopted plan.



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## 4.2.3 Large Grants Program 2026

<b>Responsible Officer:</b>	Executive Director Community Strengthening
<b>Attachments:</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Festivals and Events Sponsorship Grants 2026-27 and 2027-28 [4.2.3.1 - 2 pages]</li><li>2. Partnership Grants 2026-27 and 2027-28 [4.2.3.2 - 2 pages]</li><li>3. Strategic Project Grants 2026-27 and 2027-28 [4.2.3.3 - 3 pages]</li></ol>

### Officer Recommendation

#### That Council:

1. **APPROVES** the awarding of the Large Grants Program 2026-27 and 2027-28, for the Strategic Projects category, to recommended recipients as outlined in Attachment 1;
2. **APPROVES** the awarding of the Large Grants Program 2026-27 and 2027-28, for the Partnerships categories, to recommended recipients as outlined in Attachment 2; and
3. **APPROVES** the awarding of the Large Grants Program 2026-27 and 2027-28, for the Festivals and Events Sponsorship category, to recommended recipients as outlined in Attachment 3.

### Executive Summary

1. This report provides an overview of the Community Grants Panel funding recommendations for Large Grants Program, consisting of Strategic Projects, Partnerships, and Festivals and Events Sponsorship categories, for 2026-27 and 2027-28.

### Background

2. Councils Large Grants Program offers eligible non-profit organisations opportunity to apply for funding to support capacity-building of important local services, the delivery of projects that contribute to achievement of Councils Plans and Strategies, and initiatives that provide social and economic benefit to the City of Greater Dandenong.
3. The endorsed Large Grants Program has three (3) grant categories:
  - Strategic Project Grants - one-off grants up to \$80,000 per year for up to two (2) years of funding to support self-identified projects, initiatives and activities that directly contribute outcomes towards the delivery of Councils strategic objectives and health and wellbeing priorities as outlined in the Council Plan.
  - Partnership Grants - one-off grants of up to \$50,000 per year for up to two (2) years of funding to contribute to the operations of not-for-profit organisations that provide continuous and significant service to the community, where their programs align with Council strategic objectives and builds community capacity, social inclusion, and healthy partnerships.



4. Festivals and Events Sponsorship Grants - one-off grants up to \$40,000 per year for up to two (2) years of funding to support activities or projects that create social and/or environmental benefit, healthy partnerships and raise the profile of, and/or deliver clear economic benefit for the City of Greater Dandenong.
5. The grant round was widely promoted via electronic material, through Council networks and social media.
6. Grant information sessions were offered in person and via online platforms. Applicants also had opportunity to access face-to-face and remote support from Council officers to assist them develop grant applications. Past applicants were provided feedback on their previous applications to assist improved future applications. Applicants were also connected with relevant Council technical officers for specific advice on their proposals.

## Key Issues and Discussion

### *Eligibility Check*

7. Applications made to the Large Grants Program undergo an eligibility check by Council officers to ensure that applicants:
  - Are incorporated non-profit organisations.
  - Meet key compliance requirements of Consumer Affairs Victoria.
  - Have met past grants acquittal reporting requirements of Council.
8. Applications deemed *eligible* are progressed for assessment. *Ineligible* applications do not progress, and officers contact unsuccessful and ineligible applicants upon final allocation of funding to provide detailed feedback and to support applicants to submit improved future applications.

### *Community Grants Assessment Panels*

9. Community Grants Assessment Panels include three (3) community representatives, and two (2) council officers with broad experience and diverse knowledge.
10. Panels members are governed by a Terms of Reference and a signed code of conduct. Each member has completed a grants induction process, with officers available to support throughout the process. All identified conflicts of interest were managed in accordance with established processes and procedures.
11. For each grant category five (5) individual panel members were tasked to complete an initial online assessment. Assessment scores were consolidated and presented to a scheduled panel meeting for qualitative discussion and final recommendations.

### *Partnership Grants Timeline, Alignment, and NHCC Funding Allocation*

12. To realign the Partnerships stream with the Strategic Projects and Festivals and Events Sponsorship streams for 2026-27 and 2027-28, the application timeline was brought forward. This adjustment created a six-month overlap with existing Partnership Grant recipients. All current recipients were advised that, if awarded new funding for 2026-27 and 2027-28, Year One funding will be capped at six months (50% of the allocation). This change ensures consistency across all streams within the Large Grants Program.



13. In addition, following the Council resolution on 13 May 2024, Neighbourhood Houses and Community Centres (NHCC) were allocated funding from the existing grant pool totalling \$350,000 per annum (indexed). Each NHCC received \$50,000 per annum, and funding available through Strategic Project Grants was capped at a maximum of \$280,000 per annum.

#### **Strategic Projects Grants Applications and Assessment**

14. **Table 1 – Strategic Project Grants - summarising funding requests received, available funding and panel recommended funding allocations.**

	2026-27	2027-28
Total Funding requests received (49 applications)	\$3,510,986.52	\$3,378,748.52
Available Funding	\$1,000,000.00	\$1,000,000.00
<b>Panel recommended for funding</b>	<b>\$ 998,694.00</b>	<b>\$ 998,694.00</b>
<b>Underspent (or unallocated)</b>	<b>\$ 1,306.00</b>	<b>\$ 1,306.00</b>

15. A total of forty-nine (49) applications were submitted to the program requesting \$6,589,737.04, consisting requests of \$3,510,986.52 in 2026-2027 and \$3,378,748.52 in 2027-2028. Two (2) applications were withdrawn, and two (2) applications were ruled ineligible. The Community Grants Assessment Panel members individually assessed applications online from 5 November to 24 November 2025. The Panel convened on 25 November 2025 to discuss the consolidated applications and make final recommendations.

16. The panel has recommended funding:

- Seventeen (17) applications for total funding of **\$998,694** in 2026-27.
- Seventeen (17) applications for total funding of **\$998,694** in 2027-28.

17. The individual applications recommended for funding from the Community Grants Assessment Panel is included in the Attachment 1. The Assessment Criteria for the Strategic Projects Grants is also outlined as Attachment 1.

#### **Partnership Grants Applications and Assessment**

18. **Table 2 – Partnership Grants - summarising funding requests received, available funding and panel recommended funding allocations.**

	2026-27	2027-28
Total Funding requests received (12 applications)	\$558,212	\$542,146
Available Funding	\$170,000	\$170,000
<b>Panel recommended for funding</b>	<b>\$ 75,356</b>	<b>\$130,713.00</b>
<b>Underspent (or unallocated)</b>	<b>\$ 94,644</b>	<b>\$ 39,287</b>

19. A total of twelve (12) applications were submitted to the program requesting \$1,038,720, consisting requests of \$510,413 in 2026-27 and \$528,307 in 2027-28. Five (5) applications were ruled ineligible.

20. The Community Grants Assessment Panel members individually assessed applications online from 5 November to 24 November 2025. The Panel convened on 26 November 2025 to discuss the consolidated applications and make final recommendations.

21. The panel has recommended funding:

- Four (4) applications for total funding of **\$75,356** in 2026-27.
- Four (4) applications for total funding of **\$130,713** in 2027-28.



22. The individual applications recommended for funding from the Community Grants Assessment Panel is included in the Attachment 2. The Assessment Criteria for the Partnerships Grants is also outlined as Attachment 2.

### *Festivals and Events Sponsorship Grants Applications and Assessment*

23. **Table 3 – Festivals and Events Sponsorship Grants - summarising funding requests received, available funding and panel recommended funding allocations.**

	2026-27	2027-28
Total Funding requests received (22 applications)	\$952,006	\$918,380
Available Funding	\$237,778	\$237,778
<b>Panel recommended for funding *</b>	<b>\$211,500</b>	<b>\$194,000</b>
<b>Underspent (or unallocated)</b>	<b>\$ 26,278</b>	<b>\$ 43,056</b>

24. A total of twenty-two (22) applications were submitted to the program requesting \$1,790,386, consisting requests of \$952,006 in 2026-27 and \$918,380 in 2027-28. One (1) application was ruled ineligible.

25. **\*Note:** One application received was for an event scope and grant amount that far exceeds the parameters of this funding stream. This application is excluded from the Officer recommendation for the purposes of enabling a more detailed assessment of the proposed event, with a separate recommendation subject to future Council decision.

26. The Community Grants Assessment Panel members individually assessed applications online from 5 November to 24 November 2025. The Panel convened on 27 November 2025 to discuss the consolidated applications and make final recommendations.

27. The panel has recommended funding:

- Thirteen (13) applications for total funding of **\$211,500** in 2026-27.
- Thirteen (13) applications for total funding of **\$194,000** in 2027-28.

28. The individual applications recommended for funding from the Festivals and Events Sponsorship Grants Assessment Panel is included in the Attachment 3. The Assessment Criteria for the Partnerships Grants is also outlined as Attachment 3.

### *Grants Orientation Workshop*

29. Successful grant recipients under the Large Grants Program 2026-27 and 2027-28 will be required to attend a Grant Orientation workshop.

30. The workshop will include information on reporting requirements, promotion of success stories, advise of the process to invite councillors to appropriate activities, and an opportunity to collectively network.



## Governance Compliance

### *Human Resource Implications (consider Workforce Planning and Service Statements)*

31. This item does not have an impact on existing human resources.

### *Financial/Asset Resource Implications (consider Service Statements, Budget, Long Term Financial Strategy and Asset Plan)*

#### *Operating Budget Implications*

32. The funding recommendations made in this report can be achieved within the projected Large Grants budgets for 2026-27 and 2027-28.

	2026-27	2027-28
<b>Available Funding</b>	<b>\$1,407,7780</b>	<b>\$1,407,778</b>
Strategic Grants Recommended Funding	\$ 998,694	\$ 998,694
Partnership Grants Recommended Funding	\$ 75,356	\$ 130,713
Festival and Events Grants Recommended for Funding	\$ 211,500	\$ 194,000
<b>Total Funding Recommended</b>	<b>\$1,285,550</b>	<b>\$1,323,407</b>
<b>Underspend (or unallocated)</b>	<b>\$ 122,228</b>	<b>\$ 64,369</b>

#### *Asset Implications*

33. This item does not affect any existing assets.

#### *Legal/Risk Implications*

34. There are no legal / risk implications relevant to this report.

#### *Environmental Implications*

35. There are no environmental implications relevant to this report.

#### *Community Consultation*

36. Council's Community Grants Program is extensively promoted via electronic and printed material, through Council networks and social media. Grant information and writing workshops were offered both in person and online. In addition, community groups had the opportunity to access face-to-face and remote support from Council officers to assist them develop grant applications.

37. During the assessment process Council Officers consulted with staff from across the organisations to seek information and advice regarding the merits of all funding applications.

38. Officers conducted extensive eligibility checks of applications including compliance documentation, financial report, past grants acquittal history and other matters where relevant.

39. All eligible applications were assessed by Community Grants Assessment Panels. Panels include community representatives and Council officers with broad experience and diverse knowledge.

40. Community Grants Assessment Panel's recommendations of eligible applications for funding are presented for endorsement.



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## Links to Community Vision, Council Plan, Strategy, Notice of Motion

41. A consolidated Community Grants Policy provides funding to community groups, and individuals that deliver services and activities consistent with Council's strategic objectives as outlined in the Council Plan.

## Legislative and Policy Obligations

42. This report has considered Council's legislative and policy obligations (where applicable) as outlined in the Report Considerations section detailed in the front of this Agenda. The applicable obligations considered and applied are:

- The Overarching Governance Principles of the Local Government Act 2020.
- Related Council Policies, Strategies or Frameworks.

### Appendix 3

#### Festivals and Events Sponsorship Grants 2026-2027 and 2027-2028 - Recommended Applications

Applicant Name	Project Title	Recommended Amount Year 1 (2026-2027)	Recommended Amount Year 2 (2027-2028)	Total Amount Recommended
City of Greater Dandenong Band Inc	City of Greater Dandenong Band Performances	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$50,000
Dandenong Agricultural & Pastoral Society Inc	Dandy Show 26/27	\$30,000	\$25,000	\$55,000
Islamic Community Milli Gorus Dandenong Incorporated	ICMG Dandenong – Celebrating our Diversity	\$15,000	\$10,000	\$25,000
Sandro Demaio Foundation Ltd.	Little Food Festival - Greater Dandenong	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$50,000
South Eastern Melbourne Vietnamese Associations Council (SEMVAC Inc.)	Vietnamese Tet Festival	\$15,000	\$10,000	\$25,000
Southern Waters Ski Show Team Inc	Community Water Ski Shows and Come and Try Events	\$4,000	\$4,000	\$8,000
Springvale Asian Business Association Inc	2027 Springvale Lunar New Year Festival	\$30,000	\$30,000	\$60,000
Springvale Neighbourhood House Incorporated	Harmony Festival - Everyone Belongs	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$40,000
The Bright Events Australia Incorporated	Dandy Diwali 2026/27	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$20,000
Victorian Afghan Associations Network Incorporated	Nawroz Festival 2027 and 2028	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$40,000
Vietnamese Community in Australia - Victoria Chapter Inc	Children Lantern Festival	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$20,000
West Alchemy Collective Inc	Hidden Gem Festival and Market	\$7,500	\$5,000	\$12,500
<b>Total Recommended</b>	<b>13 Applications</b>	<b>\$211,500</b>	<b>\$194,000</b>	<b>\$405,500</b>

**Large Festivals and Events Grants 2026-2027 and 2027-2028 - Assessment Criteria**

Funding Streams	Weighting
<b>Community Benefit</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creates social and/or environmental benefit.</li> <li>• Is open to and accessible by the entire community.</li> </ul>	30%
<b>Raises profile of the City and/or delivers economic benefit</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Raises the profile of Greater Dandenong City Council.</li> <li>• Delivers clear economic benefit for the City of Greater Dandenong.</li> </ul>	30%
<b>Capacity to deliver</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Applicant demonstrates organisational governance and the capacity and knowledge to deliver project.</li> <li>• Application approach, project plan and support documents demonstrate planning capacity to deliver project.</li> <li>• Application details linkage to relevant stakeholders, partners and networks.</li> </ul>	25%
<b>Project represents value for money to Council</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Project budget is clear, fit-for-purpose and well-costed.</li> <li>• Budget includes required quotes.</li> <li>• Organisation has identified dollar contributions for project.</li> </ul>	15%

**Appendix 2**

**Partnership Grants 2026-2027 and 2027-2028 - Recommended Applications**

<b>Applicant Name</b>	<b>Project Title</b>	<b>Recommended Amount Year 1 (2026-2027)</b>	<b>Recommended Amount Year 2 (2027-2028)</b>	<b>Total Amount Recommended</b>
Afghan Women's Organisation Victoria Inc.	Ashiana: Afghan Women's Organisation Victoria Community Hub	\$20,356	\$40,713	\$61,070
Cambodian Association of Victoria Inc	Promoting integration and resilience of Cambodian Community in Victoria-Phase Two	\$10,000	\$20,000	\$30,000
Cornerstone Contact Centre Incorporated	Cornerstone Contact Centre support services for homeless and disadvantaged	\$25,000	\$50,000	\$75,000
Fusion Theatre Incorporated	Shared Light – Evolving the Art of Inclusive Theatre	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$40,000
<b>Total Recommended</b>	<b>5 Applications</b>	<b>\$75,356</b>	<b>\$130,713</b>	<b>\$206,070</b>

**Large Partnership Grants 2026-2027 and 2027-2028 - Assessment Criteria**

Funding Streams	Weighting
<b>Demonstrated need for support</b>	
The application demonstrates an established history of serving or responding to current/emerging needs within the City of Greater Dandenong, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A minimum of five years of service.</li> <li>• Open to the wider community or provide services and programs for diverse and vulnerable communities</li> <li>• Support social inclusion, community development and local learning opportunities for people at all stages of life.</li> <li>• Number of hours open to the community.</li> </ul>	15%
The application demonstrates that the service is essential to the health and wellbeing of the community and assists Council to fill a strategic gap.	15%
<b>Operational Sustainability</b>	
The application demonstrates a need for growth and/or support to become sustainable. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Require longer-term operation to maximise community and client engagement and/or.</li> <li>• May require a longer-term funding commitment to support the recruitment and/or retention of qualified personnel.</li> </ul>	15%
The application demonstrates a commitment to increasing efficiency and effectiveness through the delivery of strategies to support the organisation's sustainability.	10%
<b>Outcomes Focussed</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The application outlines outcome-focused key performance indicators and deliverables that are linked to the achievement of Council Plan Strategic Objectives.</li> <li>• The application outlines how evaluation of the deliverables will be undertaken.</li> </ul>	15%
The application demonstrates a commitment to working in partnership to support the values and initiatives of the City of Greater Dandenong.	10%
<b>Project represents value for money to Council</b>	
The application demonstrates that the operational budget is clear, fit-for-purpose and well-costed.	20%

**Appendix 1****Strategic Project Grants 2026-2027 and 2027-2028: Recommended Applications**

<b>Applicant Name</b>	<b>Project Title</b>	<b>Recommended Amount Year 1 (2026-2027)</b>	<b>Recommended Amount Year 2 (2027-2028)</b>	<b>Total Amount Recommended</b>
Afri-Aus Care Inc.	The UBUNTU Women's Project - Phase Two	\$40,000	\$40,000	\$80,000
Asylum Seeker Resource Centre Inc.	Refugee Resource Hub: Community Wellbeing and Food Security Expansion	\$80,000	\$80,000	\$160,000
Connection Arts Space Inc.	Programming and Studio Residency Takeover	\$30,000	\$30,000	\$60,000
Cornerstone Contact Centre Inc.	Improving Mental Health and Tackling Health Disparities for Homeless Locals	\$80,000	\$80,000	\$160,000
Dandenong Community and Learning Centre	Dandenong Family Learning Partnership Project	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$100,000
Diabetes Victoria	Vietnamese Peer Support Program	\$30,000	\$30,000	\$60,000
Keysborough Learning Centre	Strengthening Community Capacity (thorough community education & social cohesion)	\$35,000	\$35,000	\$70,000
Kidsafe Victoria	Greater Dandenong Childhood Injury Prevention Community Champions Program	\$38,666	\$38,666	\$77,332
Life Saving Victoria Limited	CoGD CALD & Seniors Aquatics and Settlement Project	\$65,233	\$65,233	\$130,466
Our Village Network Inc	Reach Every Child – supporting vulnerable families through essential items	\$65,000	\$65,000	\$130,000
SisterWorks Incorporated	EmpowerGreen: Pathways for Migrant Women in Sustainable Industry	\$80,000	\$80,000	\$160,000

<b>Applicant Name</b>	<b>Project Title</b>	<b>Recommended Amount Year 1 (2026-2027)</b>	<b>Recommended Amount Year 2 (2027-2028)</b>	<b>Total Amount Recommended</b>
South East Community Links	HomeLink: Navigating and Promoting Housing Stability	\$80,000	\$80,000	\$160,000
South-East Monash Legal Service Inc.	Mothers Legal Help (MLH)	\$80,000	\$80,000	\$160,000
Springvale Learning and Activities Centre	REAL Chance for homeless/disengaged youth to move onto better pathway	\$65,000	\$65,000	\$130,000
Springvale Neighbourhood House Inc	"Try It, Live Better" Healthy Lifestyle & Social Connection Project	\$64,795	\$64,795	\$129,591
St Kilda Gatehouse Incorporated	Young Women's Program (YWP) - building on strengths	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$100,000
Wellsprings For Women Incorporated	Dandenong West Community From Surviving to Thriving	\$65,000	\$65,000	\$130,000
<b>Total Recommended</b>	<b>17 Applications</b>	<b>\$998,694</b>	<b>\$998,694</b>	<b>\$1,997,388</b>

**Large Strategic Grants 2026-2027 and 2027-2028: Assessment Criteria**

Funding Streams	Weighting
<b>Community Need and Strength</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Application responds to a current or emerging need within the community.</li> <li>• Application builds on a strength within the community.</li> <li>• Application includes research and analysis of community need.</li> </ul>	30%
<b>Strategic Alignment</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Application specifically aligns with one or more actions in relevant Council plans, frameworks, and strategies.</li> <li>• Application demonstrates consultation with relevant Council Business Units in development of proposal.</li> <li>• Application demonstrates clear benefit or outcomes for the community.</li> </ul>	20%
<b>Capacity to deliver</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Applicant demonstrates organisational capacity and knowledge to deliver project.</li> <li>• Application approach, project plan and support documents demonstrate planning capacity to deliver project.</li> <li>• Application details linkage to relevant stakeholders, partners and networks.</li> </ul>	30%
<b>Project represents value for money to Council</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Project budget is clear, fit-for-purpose and well-costed.</li> <li>• Budget includes required quotes.</li> <li>• Organisation has identified dollar contributions for project.</li> </ul>	20%



## 4.2.4 Proposed MAV Notice of Motions

<b>Responsible Officer:</b>	Executive Director Strategy & Corporate Services
<b>Attachments:</b>	1. Proposed Notice of Motions to MAV State Council [4.2.4.1 - 8 pages]

### Officer Recommendation

That Council **APPROVES** the proposed motions to the next State Council Meeting of the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) per Attachment 1, noting that provision can be made for Council's CEO to authorise any minor changes to improve the wording of the motion and/or to update the motion relative to any changes to the issues that may have occurred between the scheduled Council meeting and the date of its lodgement with the MAV.

### Executive Summary

1. **Notice of Motions for MAV** - MAV has called for its member councils to submit motions to be considered for adoption at its State Council Meeting on 29 May 2026.

### Background

2. **MAV State Council** - Formed in 1879, the MAV is a membership association and the legislated peak body for Victoria's 79 local councils. The type of support offered by the organisation to its members include specialist policy advice and advocacy, governance and legislative advice, sector development, insurance and procurement services.
3. The State Council Meeting provides Greater Dandenong City Council with an opportunity to draw state-wide attention across the local government sector to Council's advocacy and engagement priorities that have state-wide relevance.
4. MAV has called for its member councils to submit motions to be considered for adoption at its State Council Meeting on 29 May 2026. Motions are due to be submitted online no later than midnight on 30 March.
5. The proposed Notice of Motions conform to the requirements of MAV Guidance Notes.

### Key Issues and Discussion

6. Greater Dandenong City Council is part of a regional alliance of 13 councils, representing over 2 million residents across Melbourne's east and southeast, who have joined in a unified voice calling for urgent action for more social housing to end homelessness.
7. The Regional Local Government Homelessness and Social Housing Charter was established in 2020 and has guided collaborative advocacy and research efforts across the region in relation to homelessness and social housing advocacy.
8. In August 2025, Greater Dandenong City Council took on the role of Secretariat for the Charter Group, and in October 2025, the Charter Group convened a strategic forum to review and determine its key advocacy priorities moving forward.
9. The proposed Notice of Motions have been developed through extensive collaboration with the officer representatives of the Charter Group and has broad consensus.



10. The proposed titles of Notice of Motions for MAV State Council Meeting follow– refer to Attachment 1 for full details. The attachment provides the Notice Motion in full, accompanying rationale and the linkage of each motion to MAV's strategic priority areas.
11. **Motion 1** - Reforming the National Construction Code (NCC) to enable Modern Methods of Construction (MMC) for faster and more affordable housing
12. **Motion 2** - Exempting council owned land from the Windfall Gains Tax when rezoned for social or affordable housing
13. **Motion 3** - Prioritising social housing and housing for Very Low- and Low-Income Households across Victoria
14. **Motion 4** - A coordinated, measurable, whole of Government strategy to prevent and end homelessness in Victoria

## Governance Compliance

### *Human Resource Implications (consider Workforce Planning and Service Statements)*

15. This item does not have an impact on existing human resources.

### *Financial/Asset Resource Implications (consider Service Statements, Budget, Long Term Financial Strategy and Asset Plan)*

#### *Operating Budget Implications*

16. There are no financial implications associated with this report.

#### *Asset Implications*

17. This item does not affect any existing assets.

#### *Legal/Risk Implications*

18. There are no legal / risk implications relevant to this report.

#### *Environmental Implications*

19. There are no environmental implications relevant to this report.

#### *Gender Impact Assessment*

20. A gender impact assessment is not required.

## Community Consultation

21. There was no requirement for community consultation.

## Links to Community Vision, Council Plan, Strategy, Notice of Motion

22. This report is consistent with the following principles in the Community Vision 2040:

- Safe and peaceful community.

23. This report is consistent with the following strategic objectives from the Council Plan 2025-29:

- A socially connected, safe and healthy city.
- A green city committed to a sustainable future.
- A Council that demonstrates leadership, responsible use of public resources, and a commitment to investing in the community.



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## Legislative and Policy Obligations

24. This report has considered Council's legislative and policy obligations (where applicable) as outlined in the Report Considerations section detailed in the front of this Agenda. The applicable obligations considered and applied are:

- The Overarching Governance Principles of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

Greater Dandenong City Council – Motions for 2026 MAV State Council

1. Motion title:

**Reforming the National Construction Code (NCC) to enable Modern Methods of Construction (MMC) for faster and more affordable housing**

**Motion:**

That the MAV advocate to the Victorian Government to support:

1. Reforms to the National Construction Code (NCC) to enable fast, flexible and affordable housing models that meet local needs through emerging/ innovative technologies.
2. The creation of clear and predictable approval pathways for Modern Methods of Construction (MMC) - including modular, prefabricated, volumetric, and emerging technologies - supported by NCC aligned pattern-book reference designs and technical acceptance guidance to streamline assessment and reduce approval delays.
3. The establishment of state-supported pilot programs, planning guidance and building assessment pathways to accelerate the adoption of innovative housing technologies.
4. The provision of enabling funding, grants, and regulatory tools to reduce build times, lower construction costs, and expand delivery of fast, flexible, and affordable housing options across Victoria.

**Rationale:**

Victoria must build 800,000 new homes in the next decade, yet construction output continues to fall significantly short. In 2024, fewer than 60,000 homes were completed - 20,000 below the annual target - due to outdated construction processes, supply delays, and regulatory bottlenecks. Modern construction methods, including modular, volumetric, and 3D printed housing, offer faster, more cost effective, and sustainable alternatives capable of reducing delivery times by up to 50%.

The current National Construction Code (NCC) was designed around traditional onsite building practices, creating barriers for offsite manufacturing, including slow alternative solution pathways and unclear certification standards for modular and prefabricated builds.

Although Victoria has introduced broader planning reforms, such as - 'deemed to comply' standards and Development Facilitation pathways - these changes do not provide dedicated streamlined approval pathways for MMC. Current reforms focus on the type of dwelling (e.g., townhouses, low rise apartments, second dwellings) rather than how the dwelling is constructed.

This means that even as homeowners benefit from faster approvals, there is no explicit incentive or advantage for choosing modular, prefabricated, or 3D printed housing over traditional piecemeal construction. As a result, most builders default to conventional construction despite MMC offering greater speed, predictability, and reduced waste.

Examples from other Jurisdictions:

NSW's Modular Homes Pilot demonstrated that modular and prefabricated construction can deliver social housing around 20% faster, supported by the state's pattern book and streamlined approval tools.

WA's \$50 million Housing Innovation Fund invests in modular, prefabricated and automated construction technologies to accelerate supply and reduce costs.

The proposed NSW Building Productivity Reforms will create a single statewide approval pathway for prefabricated buildings, aiming to cut costs by up to 20% and halve construction times.

This motion supports **Intergenerational Infrastructure, Climate & Regenerative Design**, and **Connected Places** by enabling faster, low carbon modern construction and better integrated housing delivery aligned with long term community infrastructure needs.

Victoria has already taken a positive step toward supporting MMC through the Future of Housing Construction Centre of Excellence, however, without NCC reform and dedicated MMC approval pathways, the full potential of modern construction cannot be realised.

2. Motion title:

**Exempting council owned land from the Windfall Gains Tax when rezoned for social or affordable housing**

**Motion:**

That the MAV advocate to the Victorian Government to amend the *Windfall Gains Tax Act 2021* to:

1. Exempt council-owned land from the Windfall Gains Tax (WGT) when rezoned for the purpose of delivering social or affordable housing.
2. Apply this exemption where rezoning is initiated by councils for a clear public benefit, including:
  - a) Council-delivered or council-facilitated social or affordable housing;
  - b) Mixed-use developments that incorporate a mandated proportion of social or affordable housing; and
  - c) Community-oriented development outcomes.
3. Ensure that where councils retain or lease land for housing or community use, the land is not subject to WGT obligations, recognising that councils are public entities delivering community benefit - not private developers seeking uplift value.

**Rationale**

Councils play a critical role in unlocking land for social and affordable housing, yet the WGT creates a significant barrier when Council-owned land is rezoned for community-benefit purposes. When land is rezoned for housing, councils can incur WGT liabilities in the order of millions of dollars, making many otherwise viable social and affordable housing projects financially unfeasible. Although the tax was introduced to capture private rezoning windfalls, its application to Local Government undermines public policy goals, discouraging councils from repurposing surplus land even when such rezoning aligns with long-term community needs.

Under the *Windfall Gains Tax Act 2021*, land value uplifts above \$100,000 attract tax rates of 62.5% on uplifts between \$100,000 and \$500,000 and 50% on uplifts above \$500,000. However, council owned land rezoned for housing is not exempt unless it is moved into a public land zone. At the same time, the Victorian Government already recognises legitimate exemptions for other public benefit purposes - such as charitable land and university land - yet councils remain excluded despite acting in the public interest and reinvesting uplift into community outcomes.

This inequity is particularly problematic as councils are expected to help deliver Victoria's 800,000 new homes by 2034, including supporting social and affordable housing supply. The WGT acts as a disincentive to strategic rezoning, delaying or preventing project delivery and reducing the effectiveness of Local Government contributions to statewide housing targets. Exempting councils from WGT where rezoning is initiated for public benefit, and where land is retained or leased for social or affordable housing, would unlock more council owned land, reduce cost burdens for ratepayers, shorten project timelines, and support long term housing outcomes.

This motion advances **Intergenerational Infrastructure** by enabling councils to repurpose land for long term community benefit. It strengthens **Connected Places** by facilitating well planned neighbourhoods supported by appropriate community assets and infrastructure. It supports **Diversity, Equity & Inclusion** by removing barriers to delivering housing for low income and vulnerable households.

Exempting councils from WGT is an essential reform to unlock public land, reduce financial barriers, and support equitable, community led delivery of social and affordable housing across Victoria.

3. Motion title:

**Prioritising social housing and housing for Very Low- and Low-Income Households across Victoria**

**Motion:**

That the MAV advocate to the Victorian Government to ensure that all planning definitions, regulatory instruments, incentive frameworks, and housing policy mechanisms:

- Consistently prioritise and enable the delivery of Social Housing as the primary form of regulated affordable housing that supports households in greatest need.
- Clearly and explicitly prioritise outcomes for Very Low- and Low-income households, ensuring that these groups remain the central focus of all affordable housing obligations, contributions, subsidies, and planning agreements.
- Prevent the substitution of moderate-income or discounted market products where these do not meaningfully meet community need or support households experiencing the highest levels of housing stress.
- Ensure transparency, accountability and measurability across all relevant regulatory and funding settings so that councils can assess whether delivered “affordable housing” genuinely responds to need.
- Align definitions and regulatory settings across planning, housing, taxation, funding and reporting frameworks, ensuring that government, councils, developers and community housing providers operate with a consistent interpretation that strengthens delivery of housing for people with the highest need.

**Rationale:**

Victoria’s current regulatory and policy settings allow “affordable housing” to be delivered across a broad income range, including moderate income households, because the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* defines affordable housing as housing appropriate for very low-, low-, and moderate-income households. This broad definition enables developers to satisfy affordable housing obligations through moderate income or discounted market rental products rather than housing accessible to those in greatest need.

Evidence shows that Very Low- and Low-income households face the most severe barriers to securing appropriate housing, while moderate income households retain comparatively greater market access. The Victorian Government notes that although low to moderate income households may experience constrained choice, very low-income households often cannot access any affordable home, highlighting the inadequacy of current settings for those facing the highest housing stress.

The lack of meaningful affordability for Very Low- and Low-income households is further demonstrated in Anglicare Victoria’s 2025 Rental Affordability Snapshot, which found that only 0.8% of 16,219 rental listings statewide were affordable for people on income support, and that there were no affordable properties for singles relying on Youth Allowance or Jobseeker. This confirms that market-based “affordable” housing pathways rarely meet the needs of households most at risk of homelessness.

Affordable Housing Agreements under Section 173 also remain voluntary and commercially flexible, allowing developers to negotiate outcomes that do not prioritise Very Low- and Low-income households. MAV and the Community Housing Industry Association (CHIA) Vic

guidance shows these agreements permit broad interpretations without requiring alignment to documented community need.

Fragmented definitions across planning, taxation, funding and housing programs contribute to inconsistent outcomes, enabling moderate income products to dominate delivery where deeper affordability is required.

Strengthening regulatory instruments so they clearly prioritise social housing and outcomes for Very Low- and Low-income households will ensure affordability mechanisms address genuine community need, prevent substitution with moderate income products, improve accountability, and better align Victoria's housing system with homelessness prevention and social equity goals.

This reform also supports MAV's priorities by strengthening **Diversity, Equity & Inclusion**, enhancing **Connected Places**, and advancing **Resilience & Recovery** through reducing housing instability and homelessness risk.

4. Motion title:

**A coordinated, measurable, whole of Government strategy to prevent and end homelessness in Victoria**

**Motion:**

That the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) advocate to the Victorian Government to develop and implement a comprehensive, coordinated, and measurable whole-of-government homelessness strategy that:

- Establishes a clear statewide vision and guiding framework to prevent and end homelessness.
- Embeds measurable targets, transparent public reporting, and shared accountability across government and the service system.
- Clearly defines roles and responsibilities across State Government, local government, community housing providers, health, mental health, alcohol and other drug (AOD) services, justice, family violence services, and the broader community sector.
- Provides a long-term, integrated funding architecture spanning prevention, early intervention, crisis response, and pathways to permanent housing.
- Aligns statewide targets with national performance measures under the National Housing and Homelessness Agreement (NHHA) and Victoria's obligations under NHHA renegotiation.
- Ensures strong alignment with major State reforms, including the Housing Statement, mental health and wellbeing reforms, youth justice reforms, and family violence reforms.

Further, that the strategy be structured around five essential system pillars:

1. Strengthening homelessness prevention and early intervention to reduce inflow into homelessness.
2. Delivering timely, safe, and integrated crisis responses.
3. Significantly increasing social housing supply to enable sustainable exits from homelessness.
4. Increasing Specialist Homelessness Services funding to match demand and strengthen workforce capacity.
5. Embedding robust governance, data, reporting, and system alignment to ensure transparency, coordination, and measurable outcomes.

These pillars collectively form the core architecture required to deliver an effective statewide homelessness response.

**Rationale:**

Victoria's homelessness system is now at a critical juncture. The expiry of the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Action Plan, alongside major housing and service system reforms and significant fiscal pressures, creates both risk and opportunity. Without renewed statewide leadership and strategic direction, fragmentation, duplication and inefficiency will deepen, driving higher costs across emergency departments, policing, justice and crisis accommodation systems.

For example, homelessness across South East Metropolitan Melbourne is increasing at a rate that local services can no longer absorb. Councils and community organisations are seeing growing numbers of people sleeping in cars, tents and improvised shelters, couch surfing, or presenting for help for the first time in their lives. These are older women who have exhausted their savings, young people disengaging from school, families pushed out by rent increases, and people leaving hospital or prison with nowhere safe to go.

Behind these figures are human consequences: deteriorating health, loss of safety, disrupted education and employment, and profound instability. Yet there is a consistent and well evidenced message from across the region - homelessness is preventable when risks are addressed early, and it is solvable when governments invest in evidence based, coordinated approaches.

An independent economic evaluation of Victoria's Advance to Zero (AtoZ) initiative demonstrates that coordinated, data driven, Housing First approaches deliver strong net benefits to government. For every dollar invested, between \$14.66 and \$16.34 is returned in avoided costs, while rough sleeping and repeat homelessness are measurably reduced. Crucially, the evaluation confirms that whole-of-government coordination, real-time data and clear accountability are not only effective, but they are also fiscally responsible.

With strong statewide leadership and targeted, evidence-based investment, the Victorian Government can significantly reduce homelessness, strengthen community wellbeing, and deliver sustained economic savings across health, justice, housing and emergency response portfolios.

This advocacy aligns with MAV priorities including **Health & Wellbeing**, by recognising stable housing as foundational to physical, mental and social wellbeing; **Resilience & Recovery**, by reducing vulnerability and crisis demand; and **Connected Places**, by supporting coordinated, place-based responses across councils and services.



## 4.2.5 Canopy Cover Audit 2025

**Responsible Officer:** Executive Director City Futures  
**Attachments:** Nil

### Officer Recommendation

**That Council:**

1. **NOTES** the outcome of the 2025 canopy cover mapping audit; and
2. **SUPPORTS** the promoting of the canopy cover mapping audit results with the community via Council's communication channels.

### Executive Summary

1. The 2025 canopy cover mapping audit results has shown progress towards Council's target of 15 percent canopy cover for the municipality by 2028.
2. Since the previous audit in 2023, canopy cover across the municipality increased by 0.5 percent to 14.6 percent. Canopy cover has also increased in most suburbs and major activity centres compared to the previous audit.

### Background

3. The *Greater Dandenong Urban Forest Strategy* was adopted in 2021 and is supported by the *Greening Our City: Urban Tree Strategy 2018-28* and the *Greening our Neighbourhoods 2021-2028*. The strategies aim to increase canopy coverage across the municipality to 15 percent by 2028.
4. The first canopy cover mapping audit was conducted using canopy cover data in 2016. It measured Greater Dandenong's canopy cover at 9.9 percent. This measurement was adopted as the baseline for Greater Dandenong's canopy cover to inform the future target of 15 percent by 2028.
5. As per the Monitoring and Review action of *Greater Dandenong's Urban Forest Strategy*, to track Council's progress towards the 2028 target, a consultant has been engaged to conduct a canopy cover mapping audit every two years (audits have been completed in 2021, 2023, and 2025).
6. The draft *Our Bright Green Future Strategy and Action Plan 2025-35* (the draft Strategy) was presented to Council on 10 November 2025. At this meeting, Council resolved to provide in principle support for the draft Strategy and approve undertaking a community engagement process on the draft Strategy.
7. The draft Strategy has incorporated the *Greater Dandenong Urban Forest Strategy 2021-28* and supporting documents. Subsequently, the 2028 canopy coverage target has been incorporated into the draft Strategy. The draft Strategy's theme of Trees and Greening has an objective to be a *healthy, green, and resilient City*. If adopted the draft Strategy would continue to support Council's objective to achieve a 15 percent canopy cover by 2028.



## Key Issues and Discussion

8. Council officers engaged an independent consultant to conduct a measurement of canopy cover, consistent with the measurement taken previously. The measurement used a point sampling method to measure canopy across three main categories: the municipality, on private land and on public land. The analysis also looked at suburb and major activity centres to provide further insights.
9. The results shown in Table 1 below were determined using 1000 points in each category.

Area	Percentage Measurement			
	Canopy Cover 2016	Canopy Cover 2021	Canopy Cover 2023	Canopy Cover 2025
Municipality	9.9	9	14.1	14.6
Private Land	-	7	10.3	11.8
Public Land	-	16	16.7	18.0

Table 1: Canopy cover mapping audit results 2016-2025

10. As demonstrated in Table 1, the 2025 audit showed an improvement in canopy cover across the municipality.
11. The increase in canopy cover is within the expected trend of canopy growth since 2016. Given the seasonality change of tree growth, it is not unusual to see highs and lows when measuring canopy cover over time. Climate research has forecasted we will continue to see drier and hotter conditions across Australia. As expected, after experiencing a period of El Nino, the canopy increase was modest compared to previous years. However, canopy should be monitored as an overall trend from 2016 to our target date in 2028. A consistent increase in canopy cover with the objective of achieving 15 per cent coverage as a baseline in the drier years, should be aimed for. It is in these hot and dry conditions, that continuing to grow our canopy becomes vitally important to the wellbeing of our community.
12. The 2025 results bring Council closer to meeting its 2028 target of 15 percent canopy coverage. In addition, canopy cover across most suburbs and major activity centres have seen an increase on the 2023 audit. There are several reasons for this significant improvement which are outlined in points 13 to 18 below.
13. Council's Parks and Open Space team have planted more than 31,000 street trees since 2014. The team have an ongoing target of planting 2,000 street trees per year. This number of street trees planted does not include the trees planted as part of public open space and capital works projects.
14. In addition, over 22,000 indigenous plants were planted in revegetation projects across Greater Dandenong in the 2024-25 financial year. Council teams also gave away over 13,000 plants to residents, including a targeted campaign for residents in the Green Wedge.
15. Furthermore, Council has a ten (10) year planting program in place for the three major activity centres. This program has realised additional trees and vegetation being planted as part of the Ian Street and Leonard Avenue streetscape upgrades and the Frank Street open space project within the Noble Park Activity Centre as well as the Springvale Road Boulevard project in the Springvale Activity Centre.
16. Every year Council undertakes numerous educational programs to improve our community's knowledge and appreciation about the benefits of trees. These programs range from social media, articles, planting days, to festivals and events (i.e. Sustainability Festival and Discover Dandenong Creek Festival). Through this work, we are now seeing the positive influence these activities are having with the community.



17. In 2018, Council introduced new planning requirements for the planting of additional trees with new residential developments. These trees are now starting to grow into canopy trees, which are not only assisting in the increase in canopy coverage, but also improving the liveability of these new dwellings through reduced house temperatures and energy bills.
18. The canopy cover mapping audit also coincides with the second year of the Tree Protection on Private Land Local Law 2023. The local law requires landowners to obtain a permit to remove any tree with a diameter of 40cm or larger as measured 1.4 metres from the ground.
19. The steady increase in canopy cover is a positive outcome for the municipality and positions Council well to reach its target of 15 percent by 2028. Officers will continue seeking opportunities for improved planting and canopy outcomes as part of operational plans and future master plans.

## Governance Compliance

### *Human Resource Implications (consider Workforce Planning and Service Statements)*

20. This item was able to be absorbed within the current staffing arrangements.

### *Financial/Asset Resource Implications (consider Service Statements, Budget, Long Term Financial Strategy and Asset Plan)*

#### *Operating Budget Implications*

21. This item impacts the current operating budget of the Strategic and Environmental Planning Unit (SEP) by \$9,400 for the current financial year. The project will impact the SEP Unit's operational budget again in 2027-28 by \$10,000 for the final canopy cover measurement. The overall anticipated budget amount required for all canopy cover mapping audits from 2021 to 2028 is \$28,200. This can be accommodated in the current SEP budget allocations.

#### *Asset Implications*

22. This item does not affect any existing assets.

#### *Legal/Risk Implications*

23. There are no legal / risk implications relevant to this report.

#### *Environmental Implications*

24. The project supports Council's commitment to emergency action on climate change.
25. By monitoring canopy cover, Council can prioritise planting in areas of need and ensure the work completed across Council is delivering greater canopy cover.

## Community Consultation

26. The outcomes of the audit will be promoted through various Council communication channels including:
  - Council News
  - Our Bright Green Future e-newsletter
  - Council website
  - Social media, and
  - Council's intranet
27. The updated canopy cover figures will be incorporated into an updated version of the *Our Bright Green Future Draft Strategy and Action Plan 2025-35* before being presented to Council for adoption.



## Links to Community Vision, Council Plan, Strategy, Notice of Motion

28. This item does not change the level of service that we are providing to the community.
29. This item directly relates to the Monitoring and Review action of the *Greater Dandenong Greening our Neighbourhoods 2021-28* to measure Greater Dandenong's canopy cover as a percentage across the municipality to inform Council's progress towards the targeted 15 per cent canopy cover by 2028.
30. If adopted, this item will support the implementation, and monitoring and review of the *Our Bright Green Future Draft Strategy and Action Plan 2025-35*.
31. This report is consistent with the following principles in the Community Vision 2040:
  - Sustainable environment.
32. This report is consistent with the following strategic objectives from the Council Plan 2025-29:
  - A green city committed to a sustainable future.

## Legislative and Policy Obligations

33. This report has considered Council's legislative and policy obligations (where applicable) as outlined in the Report Considerations section detailed in the front of this Agenda. The applicable obligations considered and applied are:
  - Climate Change and Sustainability.
  - Related Council Policies, Strategies or Frameworks.



## 4.2.6 DTP Activity Centres Program - Draft Council Submission

<b>Responsible Officer:</b>	Executive Director City Futures
<b>Attachments:</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Greater Dandenong Activity Centres Program - Draft Maps [4.2.6.1 - 4 pages]</li><li>2. DTP Train and Tram Zone Activity Centres Program - Council submission (draft) [4.2.6.2 - 25 pages]</li></ol>

### Officer Recommendation

#### That Council:

1. **NOTES** that the draft maps for the Victorian Governments 'Train and Tram Zone Activity Centres Program' have been released and are currently on consultation until 22 March 2026;
2. **APPROVES** the draft Council submission in response to the consultation, as set out in Attachment 2; and
3. **APPROVES** Council officers submitting the Council submission to the Department of Transport & Planning (DTP) prior to 22 March 2026.

### Executive Summary

1. On 28 February 2025, Plan for Victoria (PFV) was released. PFV identified 50 activity centres to be included in the Department of Transport and Planning (DTP) 'Train and Tram Zone Activity Centres Program' (the Program). Four of these activity centres are located in Greater Dandenong, being Springvale, Noble Park, Yarraman and Dandenong.
2. The Program seeks to increase density through increasing building heights in areas which have established services and infrastructure.
3. DTP's planning for the Greater Dandenong centres commenced in August 2025. Phase 1 consultation was undertaken by DTP between 20 October and 30 November 2025.
4. On 11 February 2026, DTP released the draft plans for each of the Greater Dandenong activity centres. Phase 2 of the community consultation also commenced on this date and closes on 22 March 2026.
5. Council has the opportunity to make a submission in response to these draft plans. It is recommended that Council approves the draft Council submission as set out in Attachment 2 and approves Council officers submitting the submission on behalf of Council.

### Background

6. The Victorian Government released 'Victoria's Housing Statement, The Decade Ahead 2024-2034' on 24 September 2023. The Housing Statement focuses on addressing housing supply and affordability in Victoria, with a target of building 800,000 new homes in the next decade.
7. A key action from the Housing Statement is increasing housing choice in activity centres by implementing the Train and Tram Zone Activity Centre Program. This was piloted across 10 activity centres within Melbourne: Broadmeadows, Camberwell Junction, Chadstone, Epping, Frankston, Moorabbin, Niddrie (Keilor Road), North Essendon, Preston (High Street) and Ringwood, with a goal of creating a total of an additional 60,000 homes.



8. Plan for Victoria (PFV) was then released on 28 February 2025. The plan sets out a long-term vision for Victoria's future across five pillars: housing, accessibility to employment and services, great places, sustainable environments and self-determination and caring for country. The plan supersedes Plan Melbourne 2017 – 2050 and Regional Growth Plans.
9. The plan outlines a target of building 2.24 million homes across Victoria in the next 30 years. To achieve this, a housing target has been set for each municipality. Greater Dandenong has a housing target of 52,500 new homes.
10. To encourage housing and provide greater opportunity for all Victorians, PFV nominated a further 50 Train and Tram Zone Activity Centres to be included in the Program. Four centres in Greater Dandenong were selected: Springvale, Noble Park, Yarraman and Dandenong.
11. In early 2025, DTP announced the commencement of work on these next 50 centres. The centres were halved into two tranches, with Greater Dandenong being in the second tranche.
12. The Program is proposed to be implemented through the following planning controls:
  - For each activity centre a 'core' will be established, and the Built Form Overlay (BFO) will be applied to this core. The BFO provides urban design guidance and as well as the allowable building heights. Heights of 6-12 stories are permitted with 16 stories in some centres on larger sites.
  - Surrounding the core, will be the 'inner catchment' and 'outer catchment', which will be rezoned to a new residential zone called the Housing Choice and Transport Zone (HCTZ).
  - The HCTZ- Schedule 1 will be located on the 'inner catchment' and replace existing residential zoning in this area. It will allow for a height of up to four stories and up to six stories on larger sites. It will apply for 400 metres from the boundary of the core.
  - The HCTZ- Schedule 2 will be located on the 'outer catchment' and replaces the residential zoning in this area. It will allow for a height of up to three stories with the inclusion of four stories for larger sites. This will apply 400 metres from the boundary of HCTZ – Schedule 1.

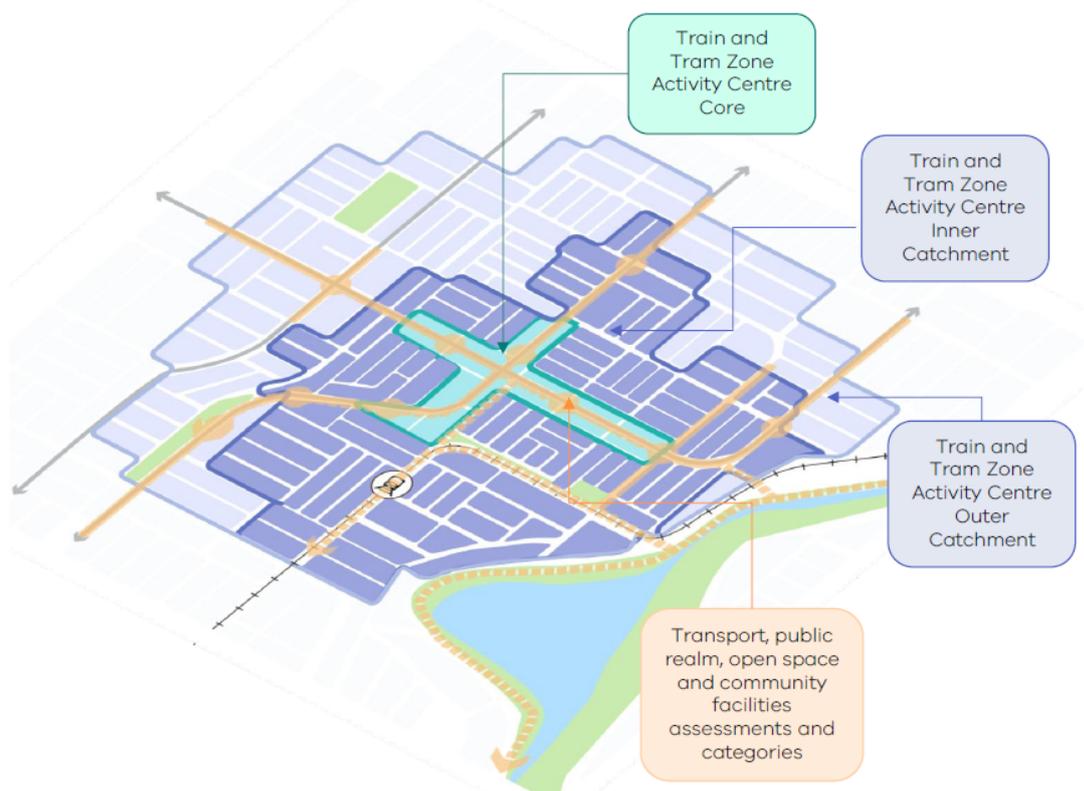


Diagram 1: Example map of 'Core', 'Inner Catchment' and 'Outer Catchment'



13. The planning controls implemented by the Program will supersede most existing controls in the subject activity centres.
14. The first round of community consultation for the four activity centres in Greater Dandenong occurred from 20 October to 30 November 2025. This consultation sought feedback from the community on what they value about their local areas. The common themes received from this consultation included:
  - Importance of local character
  - High value on open and green space
  - Local infrastructure issues
  - Need for greater housing choice
  - Transport, traffic and parking issues
15. Following this consultation, DTP developed the draft plans, which are now out for consultation.

## Key Issues and Discussion

16. The draft activity centre plans for the four activity centres in Greater Dandenong will play a key role in the development of our activity centres over the next few decades, and as such Council needs to ensure that they will achieve appropriate outcomes for our existing and future communities.
17. It is recommended that Council acknowledges and supports the principle of providing increased housing stock in the right locations, and advises that Council welcomes and encourages appropriate housing development across the municipality. This housing growth should be appropriately balanced with continuing to provide high levels of amenity and liveability to residents, businesses and visitors of these centres.
18. The full draft Council submission is included in Attachment 2, with an overview as follows:

### General Comments

19. The Program will result in the loss of most of the activity centre planning policies, controls and structure plans (particularly in Springvale & Noble Park) that Council, in partnership with DTP and the community, have been developed over many years. This work ensured that our activity centres can accommodate significant housing growth, while also protecting and enhancing the amenity and livability of these centres, which aligns with the intentions of this Program. Furthermore, Council understands that it has more than sufficient capacity in the existing zoning to meet its housing targets.
20. Therefore, Council would welcome further consideration of this work, that both supports housing growth, and protects and enhances the characteristics of our activity centres that are strongly valued by our community. We would encourage DTP to review the activity centre planning for Springvale and Noble Park, with a view to including all of the key elements of the structure plans and supporting planning controls, such as heights, setbacks, laneways and interfaces.
21. The draft plans and supporting documentation lack information and detail that will be vital for the community and Council to make an informed assessment of the Program. The community have only been provided with proposed building heights and maps depicting boundaries of the 'core' areas and 'inner and outer catchments'. No detailed planning control information has been provided.



22. For example, the Program proposes to remove the Design & Development Overlays (DDO) entirely from Dandenong and Noble Park activity centres, and partially from Springvale. In addition, the Comprehensive Development Zone (CDZ) and Comprehensive Development Plan (CDP) will be altered. This will be replaced by new planning controls including the Built Form Overlay (BFO), however we have only been provided with a template document for this new control which does not contain any detail of the proposed replacement controls for each activity centre.
23. The BFO template that is proposed to be implemented in the 'core' contains 'Deemed to Comply' provisions, meaning where a proposal meets various criteria, including building height and setbacks, it will be required to be automatically approved, even if there are other concerns.
24. In addition, the BFO will remove third party appeal rights for certain elements of proposed developments in the 'core'. As a result of the level of information made available, the full extent of this is not known.
25. Council is concerned that the community will not understand the full suite of changes that are proposed, and recommend that DTP make all of the relevant planning controls and proposed changes available for the community to review and provide comment on.
26. While not specific to this consultation, the Program does include the potential for the introduction of an Infrastructure Contributions Plan (ICP), which will levy developments to assist in the provision of supporting infrastructure. In addition, rezonings resulting from this Program may also trigger windfall gains tax. Council supports and acknowledges the need for infrastructure improvements to support a growing community, however any additional levies or taxes resulting from the Program will further compromise new investments, in an already challenging market. As such, Council strongly objects to the inclusion of any new levies or taxes that may result from this Program.
27. To achieve genuine housing growth, Council is of the view that the government will need to pursue additional opportunities to improve the viability of apartment development across Melbourne. Council encourages the State Government to investigate opportunities to reduce the financial costs associated with apartment construction, as well as investing in programs to increase the number of workers in the construction industry.

### **Dandenong Activity Centre**

28. In the 'core' of Dandenong, heights have generally remained uncapped (as per currently planning controls), with some sites along the western edge of the core having a maximum height of eight storeys to provide transitioning to the abutting residential areas. Council supports the proposed outcomes in Dandenong, subject to some further changes, including:
  - Amending some of the uncapped heights on the edge of the 'core', abutting the 'inner catchment', to ensure development tappers down appropriately as it moves away from the centre
  - Amending heights south of Dandenong Station to be uncapped given the areas proximity to the station, and physical separation from nearby residential development
  - Retaining the five-storey minimum height in the 'core' area
  - Retaining the frontage controls within the 'core' area as per existing planning controls
  - Retaining the signage controls as per existing planning controls
  - Reducing the inner and outer catchment areas



### **Springvale Activity Centre**

29. In the 'core' of Springvale, the Program will result in a number of key changes to the planning outcomes in the adopted Springvale Activity Centre Structure Plan and supporting planning controls. This structure plan has only been completed in recent years, and was the result of strong collaboration between Council, DTP and the community. The structure plan achieved a balance between supporting housing growth, ensuring the amenity and liveability of the area was maintained, and protecting the unique character of Springvale that is highly valued by the community.
30. Some of the key changes proposed by the Program include:
- Building heights are proposed to be increased from current planning controls by between two and six storeys, with heights up to 16 storeys.
  - Existing site specific setbacks to create a pedestrian scale, and minimise overshadowing, visual mass and wind impacts have been replaced by a set of standard requirements that have the potential to adversely impact on the amenity of the area.
  - The structure plan requires several laneways to be created or widened to ensure pedestrian and vehicular movement can flow appropriately as development increases, however a number of these have not been translated into the Program. This creates a risk to movement capability as the activity centre grows.
  - Several interfaces and typologies have been altered. This will result in interfaces between buildings on the edge of the 'core' and the 'inner catchment' having significant variations in height in a number of instances, which would be detrimental to the amenity of residents, particularly those in the 'inner catchment'.
  - The catchment areas are very large, and spread the activity centre into areas that don't naturally lend themselves to being part of this Program.
31. In response to this, Council recommends:
- The outcomes of the Springvale Activity Centre Structure Plan and supporting planning controls are fully translated into this Program to ensure housing growth can occur in Springvale, while also protecting and enhancing the unique character of the area that is highly valued by the community.
  - The inner and outer catchment areas be reduced as set out in Attachment 2.

### **Noble Park Activity Centre**

32. In the same manner as Springvale, the Program will result in a number of key changes to the planning outcomes in the adopted Noble Park Activity Centre Structure Plan and supporting planning controls. This is a new structure plan that was also the result of a strong collaboration between Council, DTP and the community.
33. The community of Noble Park have a strong connection to the 'village' character of the area, and along with Council, are keen to see this protected and enhanced.
34. The structure plan achieved a balance between supporting housing growth, ensuring the amenity and liveability of the area was maintained, and protecting the 'village' character of Noble Park that the community have a strong connection to.



35. Some of the key changes proposed by the Program include:

- Building heights are proposed to be increased from current planning controls by between one and six storeys, with heights up to 12 storeys.
- Existing site specific setbacks to create a pedestrian scale, and minimise overshadowing, visual mass and wind impacts have been replaced by a set of standard requirements that have the potential to adversely impact on the amenity of the area.
- The structure plan requires several laneways to be created or widened to ensure pedestrian and vehicular movement can flow appropriately as development increases, however a number of these have not been translated into the Program. The implementation of these laneways is key to ensuring the activity centre operates efficiently as it grows.
- Several interfaces and typologies have been altered. This will result in interfaces between buildings on the edge of the 'core' and the 'inner catchment' having significant variations in height in a number of instances, which would be detrimental to the amenity of residents, particularly those in the 'inner catchment'.
- Noble Park is one of the smaller activity centres in the Program, and as such the catchment areas should be determined in light of this. There are also a number of natural barriers that need to be considered when determining the catchments.

36. In response to this, Council recommends:

- The outcomes of the Noble Park Activity Centre Structure Plan and supporting planning controls are fully translated into this Program to ensure housing growth can occur in Noble Park, while also protecting and enhancing the 'village' character that provides a strong sense of connection for the local community.
- The inner and outer catchment areas be reduced as set out in Attachment 2.

### **Yarraman Activity Centre**

37. Yarraman is proposed to have the 'outer catchment' (HCTZ – Schedule 2) applied, which is likely to result in the same planning outcome as exists under the current planning controls.

38. As such, Council makes no comments on this activity centre.

### **Summary**

39. Council supports the intent of the Program to deliver more housing in the right location, and in fact welcomes and encourages appropriate housing across Greater Dandenong. Council also acknowledges the challenges DTP face in creating site specific controls for 60 activity centres, and the resulting standardised approach that has been taken.
40. Council supports the plans for the Dandenong Activity Centre (subject to some alterations).
41. With regard to Springvale and Noble Park, there are existing planning controls that achieve the housing growth aims of the Program, while also protecting the amenity and character of these areas. As such, Council recommends that DTP further review the proposed controls for these activity centres and retain the existing structure plan and supporting planning controls.
42. Council looks forward to continuing to work positively with DTP to achieve the best outcome for both existing and future residents, businesses and visitors to the four Greater Dandenong Activity Centres.



## Governance Compliance

### *Human Resource Implications (consider Workforce Planning and Service Statements)*

43. This item has impacted on human resources within the Strategic and Statutory Planning teams, and other teams across Council, however, has been able to be managed with existing resources.

### *Financial/Asset Resource Implications (consider Service Statements, Budget, Long Term Financial Strategy and Asset Plan)*

#### *Operating Budget Implications*

44. There are no financial implications associated with this report.

#### *Asset Implications*

45. This item does not affect any existing assets.

#### *Legal/Risk Implications*

46. There are no legal / risk implications relevant to this report.

#### *Environmental Implications*

47. There are no environmental implications relevant to this report.

#### *Gender Impact Assessment*

48. A gender impact assessment is not required.

## Community Consultation

49. DTP undertook the first round of community consultation from 20 October to 30 November 2025. This consultation sought feedback from the community on what they value about their local areas. The common themes received from this consultation included:

- Importance of local character
- High value on open and green space
- Local infrastructure issues
- Need for greater housing choice
- Transport, traffic and parking issues

50. The second round of consultation is being undertaken by DTP from 11 February to 22 March 2026. This consultation is seeking feedback on the draft maps. The consultation activities include:

- Postcard and letterbox drop
- Social media advertising
- Digital screen, poster, billboard etc. advertising
- Email update to previous participants
- Multicultural engagement – translating information into relevant languages, and engaging with multicultural groups and interfaith groups
- Online Q&A session – Thursday 26 Feb (6.30-7.30pm)
- Community drop-in sessions – Tuesday 10 March (3-6pm) at St James Anglican Church, Dandenong & Saturday 21 March (12pm-3pm) at The Crescent Centre Hall, Springvale



- Walk by sessions – Tuesday 10 March (3-5pm) at Dandenong Square & Saturday 21 March (10.30am-12.30pm) at Springvale Woolworths
- Facilitation of a Community Reference Group

### Links to Community Vision, Council Plan, Strategy, Notice of Motion

51. This report is consistent with the following principles in the Community Vision 2040:

Not Applicable

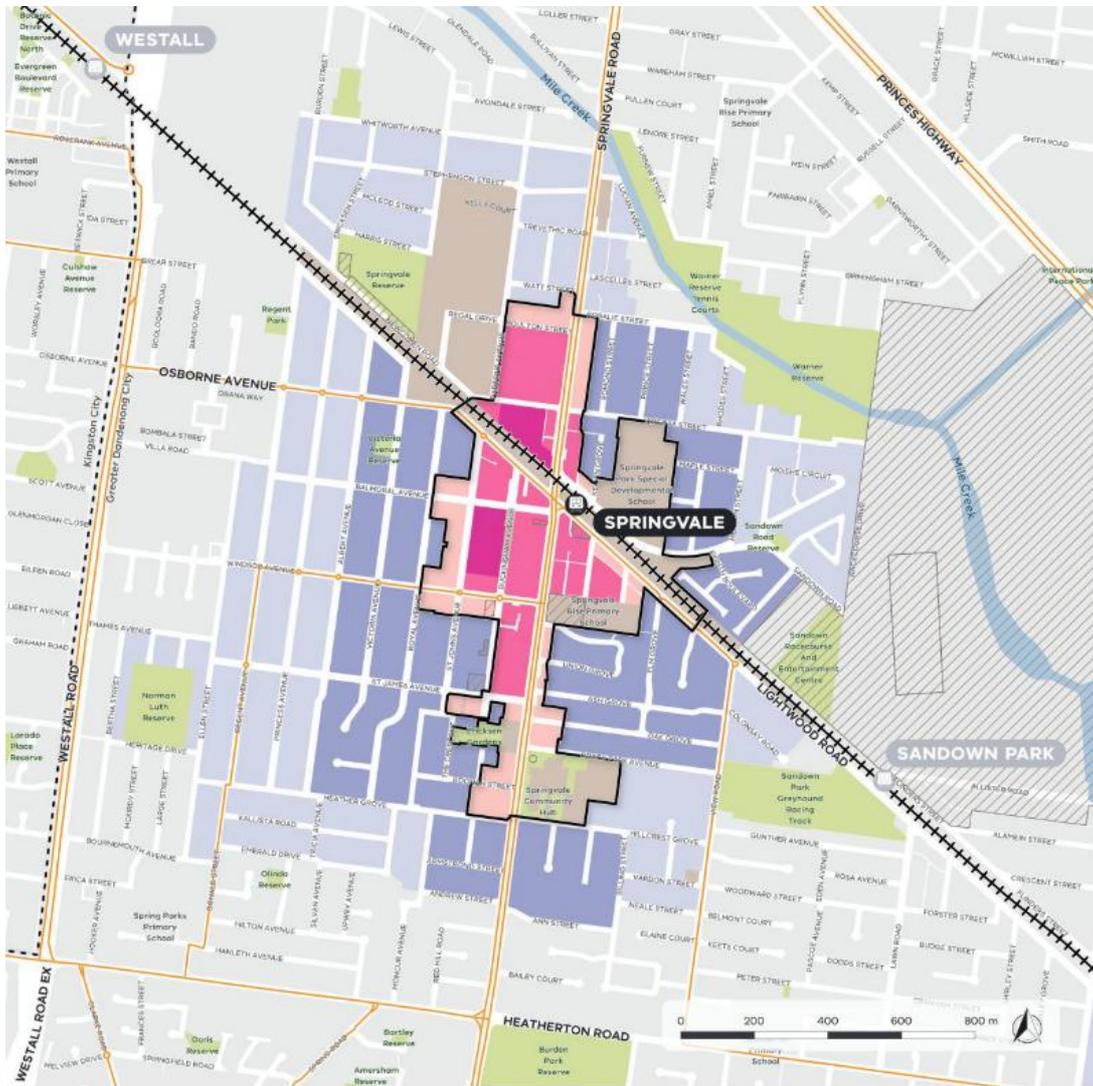
52. This report is consistent with the following strategic objectives from the Council Plan 2025-29:

Not Applicable

### Legislative and Policy Obligations

53. This report has considered Council's legislative and policy obligations (where applicable) as outlined in the Report Considerations section detailed in the front of this Agenda. The applicable obligations considered and applied are:

Not Applicable



**LEGEND**

- Train and tram zone core boundary
- Train line and station
- Bus route
- Heritage Overlay
- LGA boundary
- Waterbody
- Park / open space
- Generally non-residential land use  
*(includes commercial areas / public uses / schools)*

**PROPOSED BUILDING HEIGHTS**

- Up to 8 storeys
- Up to 12 storeys
- Up to 16 storeys

**CATCHMENTS**

- Inner Catchment  
Up to 4 storeys  
6 storeys on large sites
- Outer Catchment  
Up to 3 storeys  
4 storeys on large sites

*Note: heights shown on Council-owned land subject to Council consideration.*  
*Note: proposed changes on Homes Victoria or Department of Families, Fairness and Housing land do not imply future redevelopment.*



**LEGEND**

- Train and tram zone core boundary
- Train line and station
- Bus route
- Buildings setback further from the street

- Heritage Overlay
- Waterbody
- Park / open space
- Generally non-residential land use  
*(Includes commercial areas / public uses / schools)*

**PROPOSED BUILDING HEIGHTS**

- Up to 6 storeys
- Up to 8 storeys
- Up to 10 storeys
- Up to 12 storeys

**CATCHMENTS**

- Inner Catchment**  
Up to 4 storeys  
6 storeys on large sites
- Outer Catchment**  
Up to 3 storeys  
4 storeys on large sites

*Note: heights shown on Council-owned land subject to Council consideration.*  
*Note: proposed changes on Homes Victoria or Department of Families, Fairness and Housing land do not imply future redevelopment.*



**LEGEND**

-  Train line and station
-  Bus route
-  Heritage Overlay
-  Waterbody
-  Park / open space
-  Generally non-residential land use  
*(includes commercial areas / public uses / schools)*

**CATCHMENTS**

-  Outer Catchment
-  Up to 3 storeys
-  4 storeys on large sites

*Note: heights shown on Council-owned land subject to Council consideration.*  
*Note: proposed changes on Homes Victoria or Department of Families, Fairness and Housing land do not imply future redevelopment.*



**LEGEND**

- Train and tram zone core boundary
- Train line and station
- Bus route
- New road under construction
- Heritage Overlay
- LGA boundary
- Waterbody
- Park / open space
- Generally non-residential land use  
*(includes commercial areas / public uses / schools)*

**PROPOSED BUILDING HEIGHTS**

- Up to 8 storeys
- Existing height controls  
*Central Dandenong Comprehensive Development Plan*

**CATCHMENTS**

- Inner Catchment  
Up to 4 storeys  
6 storeys on large sites
- Outer Catchment  
Up to 3 storeys  
4 storeys on large sites

*Note: heights shown on Council-owned land subject to Council consideration.  
Note: proposed changes on Homes Victoria or Department of Families, Fairness and Housing land do not imply future redevelopment.*

## **DTP Train and Tram Zone Activity Centres Program - Greater Dandenong City Council submission**

Greater Dandenong City Council appreciates the opportunity to provide comments on the Train and Tram Zone Activity Centre Program (the Program), and in particular the draft plans for the four activity centres in Greater Dandenong – Dandenong, Springvale, Noble Park and Yarraman.

Council acknowledges and supports the principle of providing increased housing stock in appropriate locations throughout Melbourne. Further, Council encourages and welcomes increased housing stock in the Greater Dandenong activity centres. However, Council does seek to ensure this housing achieves a high quality outcome, and has a positive impact on the amenity and liveability of these areas for residents, businesses and visitors.

The available draft plans and supporting information has been reviewed with the view of providing the Greater Dandenong community with the best possible housing outcome without sacrificing amenity, aesthetics or liveability.

This review has included an assessment and comparison of the proposed planning controls and of those that are currently existing in the Greater Dandenong Planning Scheme. Set out below for each activity centre are Council's comments and recommendations to enhance the housing and liveability outcomes of the Program.

### **General comments**

#### **1. Loss of existing policies, planning controls and structure plans**

Over the last two decades Council has worked in partnership with DTP and the community to develop an extensive suite of planning policies, controls and structure plans to support housing growth, and protect and enhance the amenity and character of our activity centres.

These policies, planning controls and structure plans were the outcome of significant research and planning, including building height and setback studies, wind analysis studies and place and movement studies.

Specifically, studies that informed the planning controls for Noble Park and Springvale include:

- Noble Park Activity Centre Building Heights and Setbacks Study
- Noble Park Pedestrian and Traffic Count
- Noble Park Activity Centre Residential Demand Study

- Noble Park Activity Centre Floor Space Projections Final
- Noble Park Activity Centre Structure Plan Review
- SAC Structure Plan 2017 Pedestrian Level Wind Considerations
- Springvale Activity Centre Building Heights and Setbacks Report
- Springvale Activity Centre Housing Demand and Capacity Study

These structure plans and associated planning controls are recent work that is still current and relevant, and have been developed to encourage opportunities for high density residential buildings that can also provide space for retail, commercial and service businesses for residents and visitors to each of the activity centres. The overriding objective of the structure plans and planning controls is to create liveable urban spaces that provide the attractive open space areas connected by pedestrian scale streets with minimal shadowing from the built form.

Council is concerned at the loss of this work, which will be replaced by planning that does not appear to be supported by the same level of research and planning. Technical reports supporting the Program such as setback studies, streetscape, overshadowing or wind assessments have not been completed or shared with Council.

Council acknowledges the challenges DTP face in creating site specific controls, backed by detailed analysis, for 60 activity centres. However, in the instance of Springvale and Noble Park there are existing planning controls that have only recently been developed that support the housing growth aims of the Program, while also protecting the amenity and character of the activity centres. Therefore, Council strongly recommends that these existing planning controls be retained and utilised.

Attached are copies of the relevant DDO mapping in the appendices to assist DTP (Appendix 1). The mapping shows building heights, frontages, setbacks and existing and proposed laneways as set out in the current planning controls.

## **2. Level of information available**

The draft plans and supporting documentation contain limited information and detail that will be vital for the community and Council to make an informed assessment of the Program. The community has only been shown proposed building heights and maps depicting boundaries of Core areas and Inner and Outer Catchment areas.

There have been no detailed planning controls published as part of the engagement to implement the plans, and no detailed Activity Centre Plans have been provided, as was the case with the pilot centres (such as Moorabbin, Broadmeadows or Chadstone).

For example, the Program proposes to remove the Design & Development Overlays (DDO) entirely from Dandenong and Noble Park activity centres, and partially from Springvale. In addition, the Comprehensive Development Zone (CDZ) and

Comprehensive Development Plan (CDP) will be altered. This will be replaced by new planning controls including the Built Form Overlay (BFO), however we have only been provided with a template document for this new control which does not contain any detail of the proposed replacement controls for each activity centre.

Council recommends that the full suite of changes be consulted on, and the community made aware of all proposed changes, including those discussed below.

### **3. Deemed to Comply approach of likely controls**

Proposals within the BFO that meet the building height, street wall height, overshadowing and setback requirements are likely to be assessed against a Deemed to Comply planning application pathway.

If an application meets the Deemed to Comply standards, then that planning application cannot be refused based on those standards.

Council is concerned with the nature of changes proposed through the Program, with most of the consultation focused on building heights for centres. The Deemed to Comply provisions have had limited consultation with affected residents. As discussed above, Council has not been provided with a set of draft planning controls and it is likely that residents will be unaware of these proposed changes.

As a result, Council recommends that:

1. DTP engage directly with residents of all centres to ensure that they understand the proposed Deemed to Comply controls. In addition, a full set of planning controls should be provided.
2. The exemption for Deemed to Comply standards does not apply to an application within 30 metres of land which is in a Housing Choice and Transport Zone (HCTZ) or another residential zone.

If these Deemed to Comply standards will remove or reduce notification provisions, Council opposes this, as it is vital that the community are able to have input into local planning decisions.

### **4. Third party appeal rights**

Council understands that when the BFO is applied to land within the Core of the activity centres, there will be no third-party notice and review related to matters such as heights and setbacks. Draft planning controls should be provided as part of the consultation material explaining when third-party notice and review would be exempt in order to provide a meaningful consultation process. This information should be made easily discoverable.

Council is opposed to removing third party notice and review rights, which are vital for maintaining community input in local planning decisions.

### **5. Application of the Inner Catchment and Outer Catchments**

The existing residential zones have been applied to the areas surrounding the activity centres and throughout the municipality following two comprehensive planning scheme amendment processes. In preparing both Planning Scheme Amendment C182 and C213, Council undertook extensive analysis of its residential zones including the preparation of detailed planning and housing analysis reports and applied the most appropriate zoning. The amendments were made to improve the quality and design of new housing and to make sure the right type of housing is built in the right place without compromising on Council's ability to meet significant forecast housing growth for the municipality.

The proposed Housing Choice and Transport Zone - Schedule 1 and 2 will directly impact on the existing Residential Growth Zone (RGZ1 and 2) (13.5 metres) and the General Residential Zone (GRZ1 & GRZ3) and GRZ2 (11 metres or 3 storeys). The proposed controls allow for higher built form within residential areas and seek to extend heights in areas in the Inner Catchment of centres with limited consideration of existing matters such as amenity, solar access and heritage.

In February 2026, DTP wrote to Council to inform that there is likely sufficiently zoned residential land within the municipality to address the housing target set for Greater Dandenong. While the letter is limited and cannot provide further discussion until the Program has concluded, it states that *“based on the Housing Choice Assessment Platform assessment, DTP considers that your council's planning scheme will be likely to have sufficient capacity to meet its housing target.”*

As such, Council recommends that the proposed Inner and Outer Catchment areas be amended to align with the existing residential zoning. This will be discussed further through a centre based analysis with accompanying maps provided in the appendix.

### **6. Infrastructure Contributions Levy and Windfall Gains Tax**

It is acknowledged that while infrastructure contributions levies and potential windfall gains tax implications are not direct considerations of this consultation, Council wishes to note its strong opposition to the inclusion of an Infrastructure Contributions Plan in our activity centres, or any rezoning that may trigger windfall gains tax.

While Council supports and acknowledges the need for infrastructure improvements to support a growing community, there is concern that the introduction of an Infrastructure Contributions Plan will further compromise new investment, given the current state of the property market and ever-increasing construction costs.

In the mid 2000's, an Infrastructure Recovery Charge (IRC) was introduced in the Dandenong activity centre, which had a negative impact on development. This levy was subsequently withdrawn in recent years. Council is concerned that the re-introduction of a levy potentially similar to the IRC will again negatively impact on development in the four Greater Dandenong activity centres. Council is of the view that such a model should only be triggered when development potential matures, rather than a one size fits all approach that will further deter development. In the meantime, the required infrastructure upgrades should be funded through the state government, as the responsible agency for the Program.

Council also seeks to ensure that any rezonings undertaken as a result of the Program do not inadvertently trigger landowners, either private or public, to pay windfall gains tax. If this was to be the case, it would again further impact on the viability of development occurring in Greater Dandenong, which is contrary to the intent of the Program.

#### **7. Improving the viability of apartment buildings**

As mentioned above, Council supports the principle of the Program, however to ensure it is truly successful, Council is of the view that the State Government need to also pursue additional opportunities to make apartment development more viable.

In addition to this Program, Council recommends that the State Government investigates options to reduce the financial costs associated with apartment construction, as well as investing in programs to increase the number of workers involved in the construction industry.

## **Activity Centre Analysis**

### **Dandenong**

Council supports the proposed outcomes in Dandenong, subject to the following:

#### **1. Opportunity for higher density living directly south of Dandenong Station**

The land located south of Dandenong Station is currently proposed to be in the Fringe area, and limited to a maximum building height of eight (8) storeys, with requirements for a landscape setback of 4.5m. Given the precinct's strategic position directly adjoining the railway station, this land represents a significant opportunity for transit-oriented development. Imposing such a restrictive height limit may constrain the site's potential and could ultimately discourage further investment and growth within this key area.

Works are currently underway through Victoria's Big Build to remove the Webster Street Level Crossing and construct a new underpass along Cheltenham Road, extending from Hammond Road to Princes Highway. These upgrades will significantly improve traffic flow, provide increased shared path connections and reduce congestion along this corridor. To the south of the subject land lies open space and Dandenong Creek, which provide a natural barrier to existing residential areas located further south of the creek. This separation creates opportunities for greater building setbacks and reduces planning constraints, further supporting the suitability of the land for higher density development.

Given the amenity of the area and its strong access to transport and services, the site is well positioned to accommodate more intensive development outcomes. Council therefore recommends retaining the existing controls for this land and amending the typology from Fringe to Limited Sensitivities (including having uncapped maximum building heights), and remove the proposed landscape buffer, with the exception of the land west of Station Street, which should remain as the Fringe typology to allow a transition to the residential land to the west.

#### **2. Retention of the five (5) storey height minimum in the BFO**

The Greater Dandenong Planning Scheme currently outlines a minimum of five (5) storeys in height within the Dandenong activity centre to ensure under-development does not occur in the activity centre.

Council recommends that the existing five (5) storey minimum requirement be retained in the Core by inclusion in the BFO.

#### **3. Retention of key policy objectives in the BFO**

Frontages

A review of the Design & Development Overlay – Schedule – 2 (DDO2), which is proposed to be removed, has identified that the following frontages have either been removed or downgraded.

	<b>Frontage</b>
Priority activity frontage have not been translated into the proposed frontages map	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• South side of Halpin Way</li> <li>• East side of Palm Plaza (Dandenong Plaza)</li> </ul>
Priority activity frontages which have been downgraded to secondary frontages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• McCrae Street</li> <li>• Langhorne triangle site</li> <li>• Clow Street (opposite the Dandenong Market)</li> </ul>

Council recommends that these frontages be included in the BFO to align with the existing DDO2 requirements.

#### Signage Controls

The DDO2 provides detailed guidance on signage controls within the Dandenong activity centre, which are vital to ensure the visual amenity of the activity centre is appropriately managed.

Council recommends that all signage controls contained in the DDO2 are translated into the BFO to ensure no policy has been lost or weakened as a result of the Program.

#### **4. Large Opportunity Sites on the edge of the Core**

There are several Large Opportunity Sites which are proposed on the edge of the Dandenong Core.

Council is concerned that these sites with uncapped building heights abutting sites in the Inner Catchment with a maximum height of four storeys may result in unacceptable amenity impacts to residents in this adjoining catchment area.

Council recommends that the Large Opportunity Site at the western end of the Core along Railway Parade be amended to the Fringe Precinct with a maximum height of eight storeys to ensure an appropriate transition.

The remaining Large Opportunity Sites along the northern and eastern edge of the Core should have specific controls built into the BFO to ensure they provide an appropriate interface to adjoining land, and transition down in an acceptable manner. Without controls built in, it will be very difficult for the Responsible Authority to ensure an appropriate transition and interface at the planning permit application stage.

## **5. Inner and Outer Catchment**

Council considers the proposed Inner and Outer Catchments to be very large, and as such, Council recommends that the catchment areas be reduced.

These areas include:

- Land south of Dandenong Creek currently shown as Outer Catchment should be removed from the activity centre area given the physical separation created by Dandenong Creek
- Land west of Potter Street should be amended to Outer Catchment in line with current zoning

Council has provided documentation which it considers will address some of the concerns detailed above in Appendix 2. Council would welcome the opportunity to further discuss this with DTP.

## **6. Temporary Land Use and Development Proposals**

Council receives various 'interim land use and development' planning applications within the Dandenong activity centre while landowners wait for market conditions to change. Examples include uses such as food trucks. The proposed BFO will need to ensure there is consideration and allowance for interim buildings and works, provided they don't prejudice future development of a higher density outcome.

## **Springvale**

### **1. Proposed building heights, setbacks and overshadowing**

The Program proposes that the building heights in the Springvale Core are to be increased by between two (2) storeys and six (6) storeys, with heights of up to 16 storeys.

Council undertook significant strategic work including a Building Heights and Setback Study and a Wind Impact Study to justify the building heights outlined in the Springvale Activity Centre Structure Plan and supporting planning controls. Detailed design assessments were also made of all roads and laneways to ensure building heights, setbacks and shadowing resulted in the optimum street level liveability and amenity being achieved.

Council is concerned about the impact the proposed increased building heights may have on the amenity of the centre and surrounding area, particularly given that there does not appear to have been any site specific work undertaken to justify these proposed new heights and setbacks.

The BFO outlines generic overshadowing controls, however Council has concerns regarding the proposed overshadowing controls and how they differ from existing policy and potentially weaken existing controls in the Design & Development Overlay – Schedule 6 (DDO6).

Council also seeks to ensure that the overshadowing requirements for Springvale Rise Primary School are accommodated through the new planning controls given the need to maintain existing sunlight. It is also critical that existing sunlight is maintained to public open space with limited parks and reserves located within the Program area.

To minimise some of the impact on the amenity of the area, it is recommended that the area bounded by Royal Avenue to the west and St Johns Avenue to the east of the Core be reduced to six (6) storeys to improve the transition from the Core to the Inner Catchment. Further consideration should be given to upzoning properties fronting Springvale Road and how these sites transition from the Core to Inner and Outer Catchments. Existing residential subdivision and lot layout will create difficulties as land is developed in the Core and transitioning building heights need to consider this in future planning controls and scenarios.

Council has provided documentation which it considers will address some of the concerns detailed above in Appendix 2. Council would welcome the opportunity to further discuss this with DTP.

## **2. Laneways**

All laneways and widening locations identified in the Springvale Activity Centre Structure Plan and supporting planning controls should be reflected in the proposed new controls for the Core.

The location of laneways as well as locations for laneway or street widening are required to preserve amenity and allow development to occur through increasing access as demonstrated through the Springvale Activity Centre Structure Plan which states:

- *“A number of 3 metre wide laneways exist within and around the Springvale Activity Centre. Any laneways intended to facilitate vehicular access to dwellings must be widened to 5.5 metres in order to comply with Road Management and Planning Scheme requirements. Guidance on which laneways are intended to remain as public roads and whether vehicular access is supported would assist development.”*

Council has attached copies of the relevant DDO mapping in the appendices to assist DTP (Appendix 1). Council would welcome the opportunity to further discuss this with DTP.

## **3. Frontages**

The draft plans identify frontages for streets within the Core which differ from the Springvale Activity Centre Structure Plan.

Council considers where a lower level of frontage is proposed, for example if the structure plan identifies a street having a primary frontage but is shown as a secondary or lower frontage in the draft plans, this should be upgraded to match existing policy. This includes (but is not limited to):

- Springvale Road around Union Grove – draft plans propose a secondary frontage, whereas the structure plan identifies it as a primary frontage; and
- Sections of Windsor Avenue – draft plans propose a tertiary frontage, whereas the structure plan identifies it as a primary frontage.

Council has attached copies of the relevant DDO mapping in the appendices to assist DTP (Appendix 1). Council would welcome the opportunity to further discuss this with DTP.

#### **4. Inner and Outer Catchment**

Council considers the proposed Inner and Outer Catchment areas to be very large, and extend the activity centre into areas that don't naturally lend themselves to being part of the Program. Examples of where the catchments should be amended include:

- GRZ1 land surrounding Norman Luth Reserve should be removed from the Outer Catchment
- The Inner Catchment extends too far south and should be reduced; and
- The eastern boundary of the Inner and Outer Catchment near Sandown Park should be reviewed
- The land north-west of the industrial zoned land to north of the activity centre should be removed from the Outer Catchment given the separation created by the industrial land

Council has provided documentation which it considers will address some of the concerns detailed above in Appendix 2. Council would welcome the opportunity to further discuss this with DTP.

#### **5. Other Policy Changes**

Careful consideration was given when drafting the Springvale Activity Centre Structure Plan and DDO6 to ensure the wind impacts of development within the activity centre were carefully managed including the preparation of a detailed wind assessment. Council is concerned around the changes proposed including the removal of the following objective in DDO6:

- *“To ensure the height and setbacks of development delivers a high quality public realm which maintains sunlight and comfortable wind conditions”.*

This should be added as a precinct specific development objective in the BFO.

#### **6. General Comments**

##### Warner Reserve

Council notes that a subdivision pattern is shown on the draft plans across Warner Reserve to the north east of the Springvale activity centre.

Council has no intention to develop this reserve and therefore no subdivision boundaries should be shown.

#### Mapping Errors

Council has also reviewed the interactive mapping tool at [spatial.planning.vic.gov.au](http://spatial.planning.vic.gov.au) and has identified that there are potential mapping errors including:

- Part of Warner Reserve and other PPRZ land including Springvale Reserve and Norman Luth Reserve are shown as Housing Choice and Transport Zone 2; and
- Industrial 1 Zone Land is shown as Housing Choice and Transport Zone 2.

These mapping errors must be corrected to avoid ongoing confusion. If this is not a mapping error Council does not support the rezoning of this land and the existing zoning should apply.

Council, working in collaboration with DTP and the community, undertook extensive research and planning to develop the Springvale Activity Centre Structure Plan and supporting planning controls only recently. This structure plan also reflects the unique nature of the Springvale community.

The structure plan and supporting planning controls also ensure that there is considerable housing growth available in Springvale, aligning with the Program.

Given this, Council strongly advocates that DTP further consider this work, and utilise these existing planning controls when finalising the plans for Springvale activity centre.

## **Noble Park**

### **1. Proposed building heights, setbacks and overshadowing**

The Program proposes that the building heights across Noble Park Core are to be increased by between one (1) storey and six (6) storeys, with heights of up to 12 storeys.

The development of planning controls for Noble Park over many years has been predicated on the communities feeling and pride that it is a small and vibrant activity centre and has the characteristics of a 'village'. As one of the smaller activity centres in the Program, Council is confident in its view that Noble Park should and can maintain the village character while achieving greater housing density.

Council undertook significant strategic work to justify the building heights and other controls outlined in the Noble Park Activity Centre Structure Plan including the Noble Park Activity Centre Building Heights and Setbacks Study. Based upon this strategic work, it is considered that the current controls are sufficient to accommodate future development within the activity centre.

In developing existing controls, detailed design assessments were undertaken for all roads and laneways regarding building heights, setback and shadowing allowing optimal street level liveability and amenity being achieved with the implementation of heights and setbacks detail in the Design & Development Overlay – Schedule 5 (DDO5).

In the same way as Springvale, Council is concerned about the impact the proposed increased building heights may have on the amenity of the centre and surrounding area, particularly given that there does not appear to have been any site specific work undertaken to justify these proposed new heights and setbacks.

The BFO template outlines overshadowing controls, however Council has concerns around how the proposed overshadowing controls differ from existing policy and potentially weaken existing controls in the DDO5. The existing overshadowing controls should remain in place to ensure high design and amenity outcomes.

Council also raises concern with the proposed height differences between properties at the interface of the edge of the Core and Inner Catchment. Current controls allow up to three (3) storeys in the RGZ and four (4) storeys in land

adjacent inside the activity centre boundary. The proposed interfaces will result in a transition in heights between neighbouring buildings of up to eight (8) storeys. This will result in detrimental outcomes to residents and users of the activity centre.

Council has provided documentation which it considers will address some of the concerns detailed above in Appendix 1 and 2. Council would welcome the opportunity to further discuss this with DTP.

## **2. Laneways**

As mentioned above, detailed design assessments were made of all laneways. The proposed locations and widenings shown in the DDO5 and structure plan were made to enable the use of the laneways for vehicular and pedestrian movement as well as space for street activity and activated frontages of building.

It is vitally important that all laneways and widening locations identified in the Noble Park Activity Centre Structure Plan and DDO5 be reflected in the new controls for the Core. The housing growth sought by the Program will increase pressure on traffic movement throughout the activity centre, and as such the identified laneways should be widened to ensure traffic can continue to move in an appropriate manner.

Council has attached copies of the relevant DDO mapping in the appendices to assist DTP (Appendix 1). Council would welcome the opportunity to further discuss this with DTP.

## **3. Inner and Outer Catchment**

Council considers the proposed Inner and Outer Catchment to be very large. Noble Park is a smaller activity centre, and this should be reflected in the catchment area. Examples of where the catchments should be amended include (but not limited to):

- Removal of the Outer Catchment area east of Mile Creek as Mile Creek is a significant barrier.
- Removal of the Outer Catchment area from Shepreth Avenue to Chandler Road given its distance from the Core

Council has provided documentation which it considers will address some of the concerns detailed above in Appendix 1 and 2. Council would welcome the opportunity to further discuss this with DTP.

#### **4. General Comments**

##### Ross Reserve

Council notes that a subdivision pattern is shown across Ross Reserve to the north of the Noble Park Activity Centre.

Council has no intention to develop this reserve and therefore no subdivision boundaries should be shown.

In the same manner as Springvale, Council working in collaboration with DTP and the community, undertook extensive research and planning to develop the Noble Park Activity Centre Structure Plan and supporting planning controls only recently. This structure plan also reflects the village character of Noble Park that is highly valued by its community.

The structure plan and supporting planning controls also ensure that there is considerable housing growth available in Noble Park, aligning with the Program.

Given this, Council strongly advocates that DTP further consider this work, and utilise these existing planning controls when finalising the plans for Noble Park activity centre.

## **Yarraman**

### **1. Proposed Outer Catchment**

Yarraman is proposed to be included in an Outer Catchment whereby the existing residential properties will be rezoned to Housing Choice & Transport Zone (HCTZ2).

The existing zoning is General Residential Zone (GRZ1) where development of three (3) storeys (and 11 metres) is allowed. The proposed HCTZ2 rezoning will allow up to three (3) storeys and four (4) storeys on larger sites.

As the proposed rezoning will only directly impact larger sites Council has no comments.

## **Conclusion**

Council welcomes and appreciates the continued partnership between State and Local Government in creating a more liveable and affordable Victoria.

Council supports the intent of the Program to deliver more housing in the right location, and in fact encourages appropriate housing across Greater Dandenong. Council also acknowledges the challenges DTP face in creating site specific controls for 60 activity centres, and the resulting standardised approach that has been taken.

In terms of the Greater Dandenong activity centres, Council supports the plans for the Dandenong activity centre, subject to a number of alterations as set out in this submission.

With regard to Springvale and Noble Park, there are existing planning controls that achieve the housing growth aims of the Program, while also protecting the amenity and character of these areas. As such, Council recommends that DTP review the proposed controls for these activity centres and retain the existing structure plan and supporting planning controls.

Council looks forward to continuing to work positively with DTP to achieve the best outcome for both existing and future residents, businesses and visitors to the four Greater Dandenong Activity Centres.

To assist the implementation of Council's submission and the Program, Council officers are available to provide further detail and workshop the recommendations contained in this submission with DTP.

**Appendix 1 – Existing Planning Control Plans**

**Springvale Activity Centre Structure Plan**

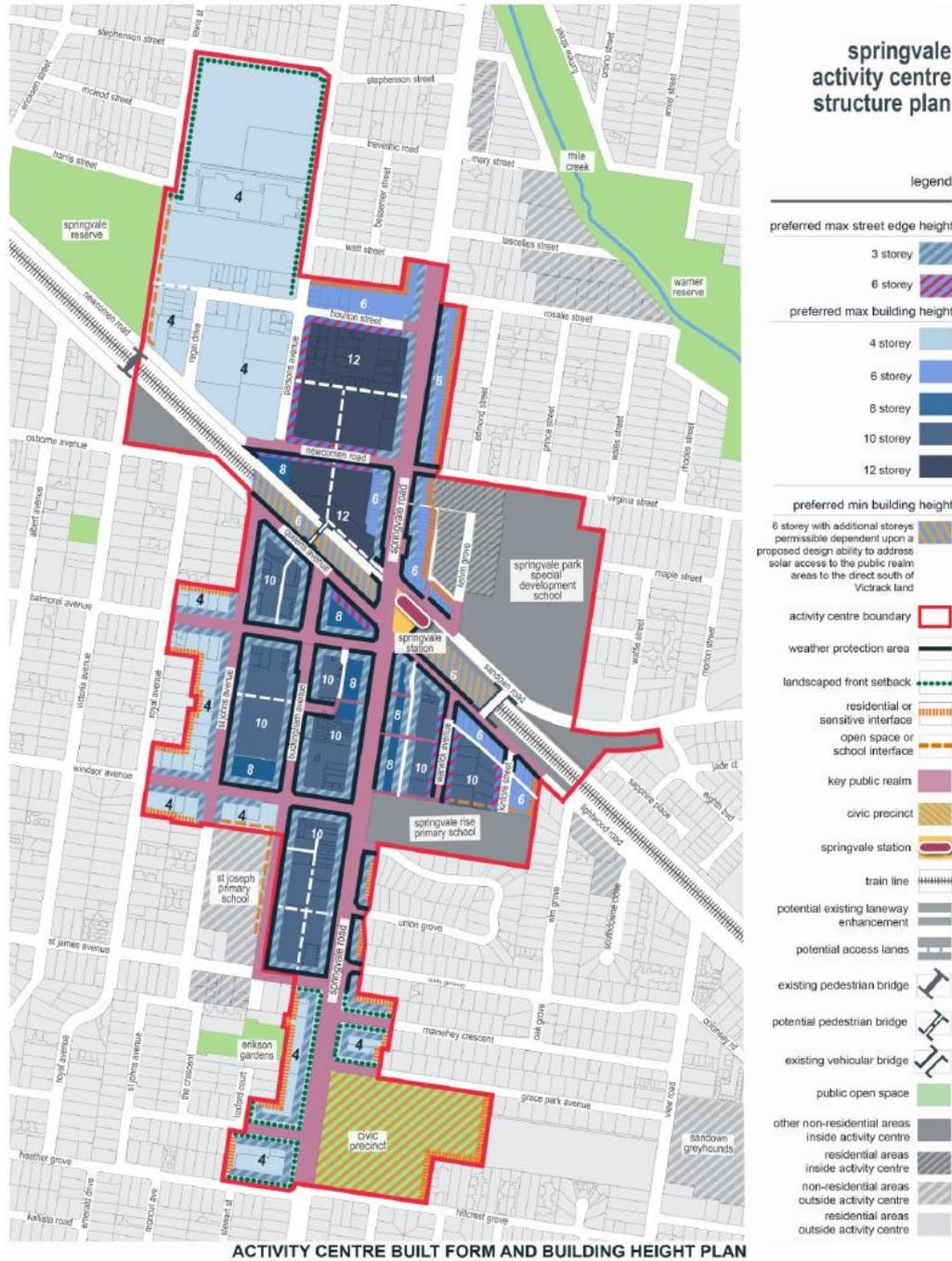
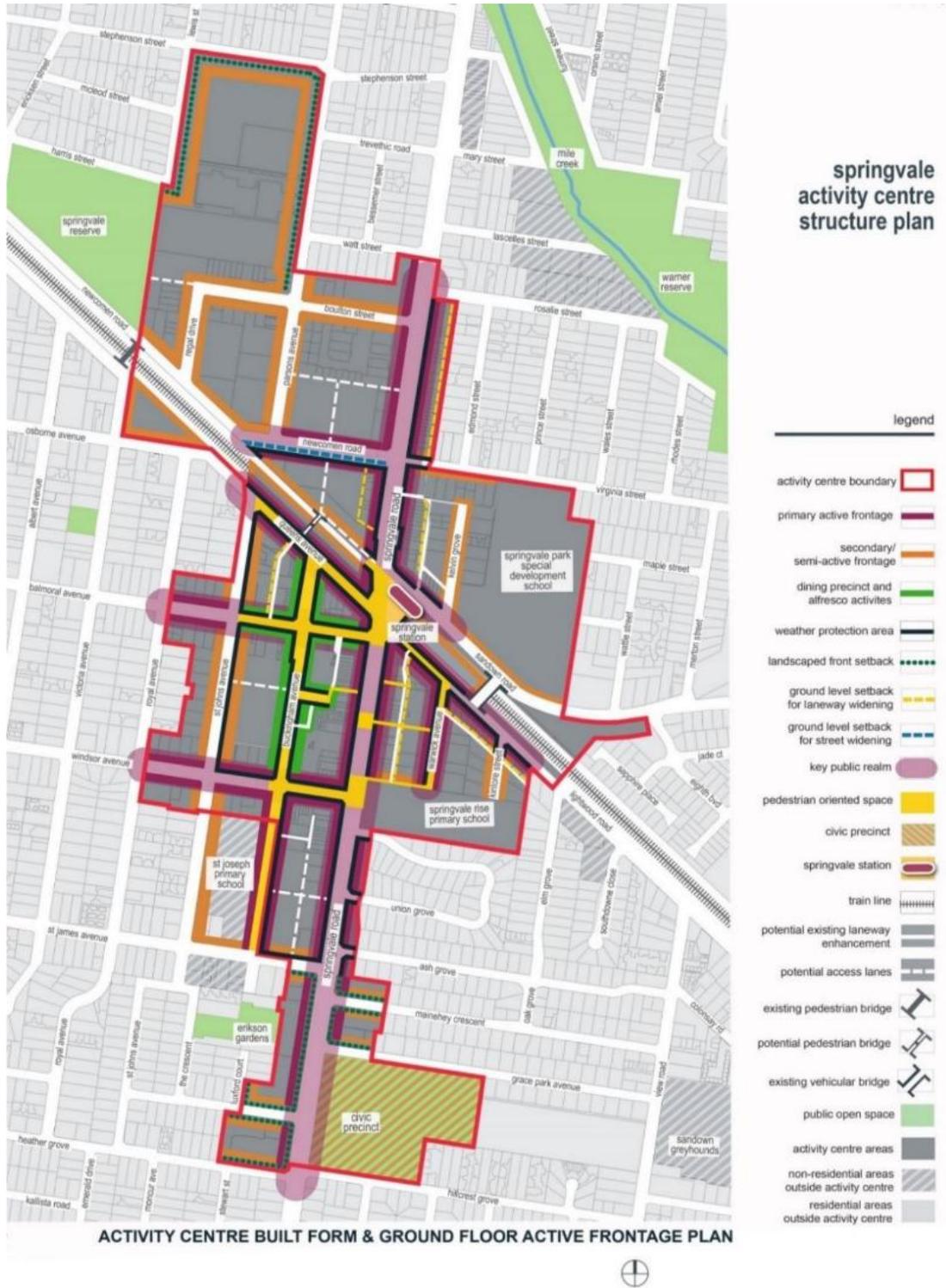
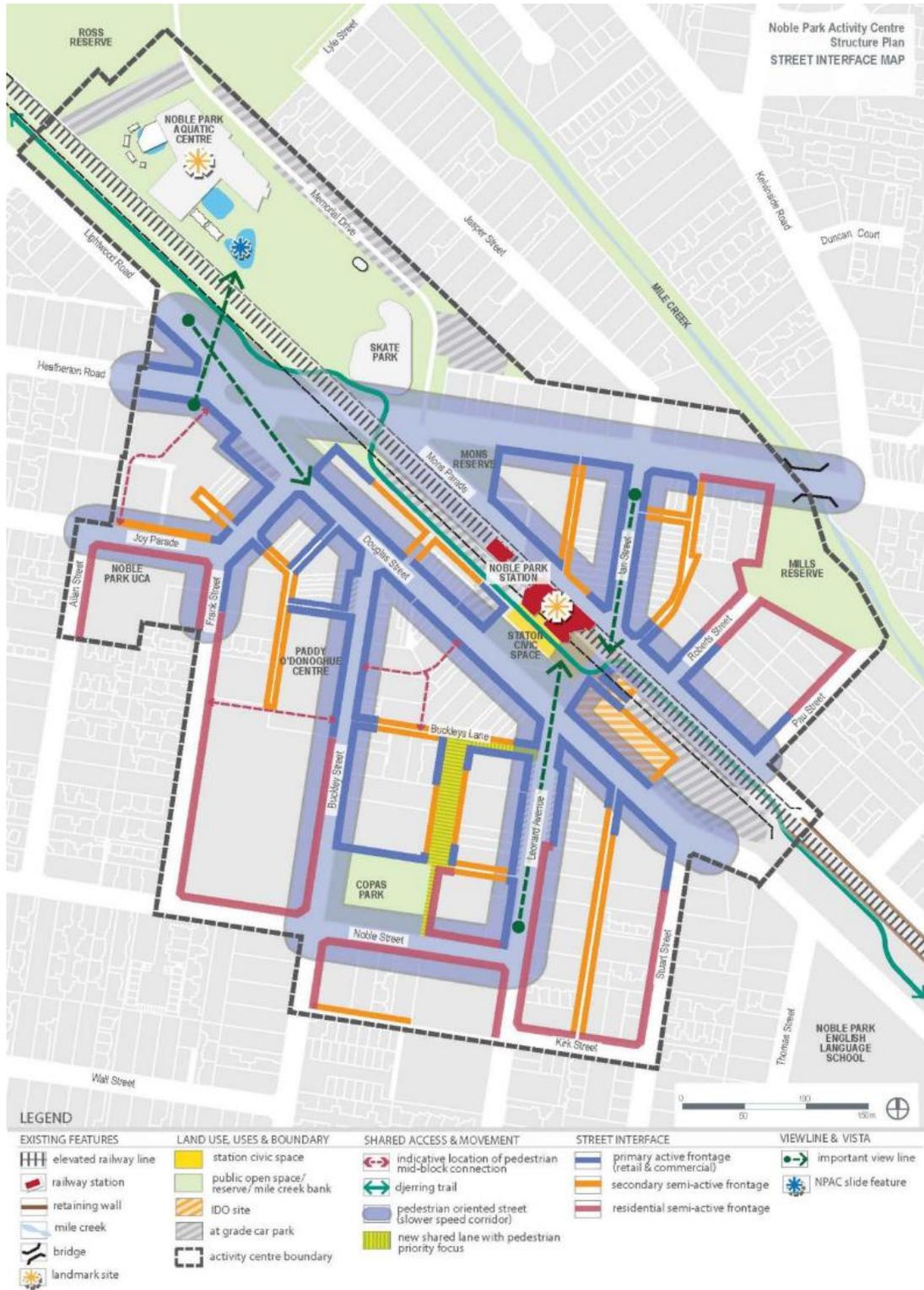


FIGURE 7: ACTIVITY CENTRE BUILT FORM AND BUILDING HEIGHT PLAN



### Noble Park Activity Centre Structure Plan



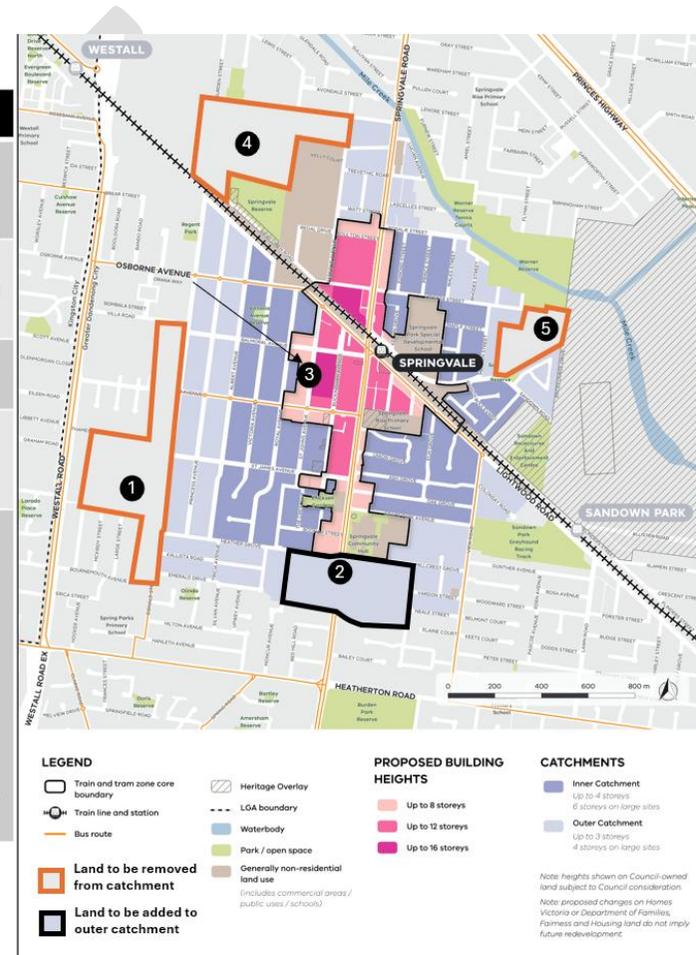




**Appendix 2 – Proposed Amended Boundaries**

**Springvale Activity Centre**

Change No	Change Type	Justification
1	Land to be removed from catchment	Extent of the outer catchment extending to west from the core. No justification is provided to include that land.
2	Catchment Change	Consistency with northern boundary to be outer catchment and being located a far distance from Springvale Train Station.
3	Height Reduction	Recommend 6 stories as abutting inner catchment transitions to 4 stories.
4	Land to be removed from catchment	This land is isolated abutting nearby industrial land uses.
5	Land to be removed from catchment	This land has a Development Plan Overlay (DPO) applying to it and in Dandenong any land with a DPO has been excluded from the project. In addition, an EAO applies to this land creating constraints, delayed development and financial constraints as applicants are needing to navigate planning contamination pathway for single dwellings on a lot.  To ensure consistency Council request the same for this land.



### Noble Park Activity Centre

Change No	Change Type	Justification
1	Catchment Reduction	Extent of the outer catchment extending to west from the core. No justification is provided to include that land. Consistency with northern boundary to be outer catchment and being located a far distance from Springvale Train Station.
2		
3	Land to be removed from catchment	Land extends to far from the core. Noble Park is a compact centre. No justification has been provided for inclusion.
4		
5		
6	Catchment Change	Miles Creek provides a natural barrier. Zoning should reflect this and outer catchment is recommended here.
7	Land to be removed from catchment	Land extends to far from the core. Noble Park is a compact centre. No justification has been provided for inclusion.



**LEGEND**

- Train and tram zone core boundary
- Train line and station
- Bus route
- Land to be removed from catchment
- Land to be added to outer catchment
- Heritage Overlay
- Waterbody
- Park / open space
- Generally non-residential land use (includes commercial areas / public uses / schools)

**PROPOSED BUILDING HEIGHTS**

- Up to 6 storeys
- Up to 8 storeys
- Up to 10 storeys
- Up to 12 storeys

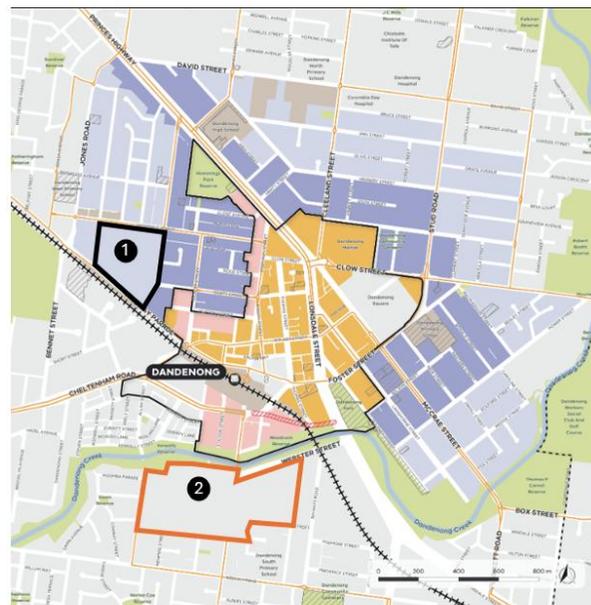
**CATCHMENTS**

- Inner Catchment: Up to 4 storeys, 6 storeys on large sites
- Outer Catchment: Up to 3 storeys, 4 storeys on large sites

Note: heights shown on Council-owned land subject to Council consideration  
Note: proposed changes on Homes Victoria or Department of Families, Fairness and Housing land do not imply future redevelopment

### Dandenong Activity Centre

Change No	Change Type	Justification
1	Catchment Change	The extent of the inner catchment should match the existing RGZ land.
2	Land to be removed from catchment	The Dandenong Creek provides a physical barrier to the core and development from the Dandenong Centre.



**LEGEND**

- Train and tram zone core boundary
- Train line and station
- Bus route
- New road under construction
- Heritage Overlay
- LGA boundary
- Waterbody
- Park / open space
- Generally non-residential land use (Includes commercial/office/ public uses/ school)

**PROPOSED BUILDING HEIGHTS**

- Up to 8 storeys
- Existing height controls (Central Dandenong, Commercial/Residential Development Plan)

**CATCHMENTS**

- Inner Catchment (Up to 4 storeys, 6 storeys on large sites)
- Outer Catchment (Up to 3 storeys, 4 storeys on large sites)

**Land to be removed from catchment** (Orange box)

**Land to be added to outer catchment** (Blue box)

*Note: Heights shown on Council owned land subject to Council consideration. Note: proposed changes on Homes Victoria or Department of Families, Fairness and Housing land do not imply future redevelopment.*

### **Appendix 3 - DDO Objectives**

Acknowledging the changes to DDO 5 and DDO 6, Council recommend that the following objectives are maintained in the BFO, as precinct-specific development objective.

#### **Springvale**

- To encourage higher density development, whilst maintaining the fine grain rhythm at street level, and achieve a transition down in scale to reduce amenity impacts to the surrounding established residential areas.
- To ensure the height and setbacks of development delivers a high quality public realm which maintains sunlight and comfortable wind conditions.

#### **Noble Park**

- To maintain the fine grain rhythm at street level and foster a prominent street wall edge, incorporating upper level setbacks and design features.
- To ensure a transition down in scale to reduce amenity impacts to the surrounding residential areas, including visual bulk, overlooking, and overshadowing.
- To ensure development provides a permeable and pedestrian friendly centre, supported by a network of new mid-block pedestrian connections, widened laneways, and the protection of footpaths and the public realm from loss of amenity through overshadowing.



## 4.2.7 Recommended Appointments for Membership of the Sustainability Advisory Committee

**Responsible Officer:** Executive Director City Futures  
**Attachments:** Nil

### Officer Recommendation

**That Council:**

- 1. APPROVES** the appointment of the following three applicants as independent community members of the Sustainability Advisory Committee for a two-year term from 1 April 2026 to 1 April 2028;
  - Graeme Pearman.
  - Peter O'Loughlin.
  - Dean Mastroianni.
- 2. APPROVES** the appointment of the following three applicants as independent community members of the Sustainability Advisory Committee for a three-year term from 1 April 2026 to 1 April 2029; *and*
  - Heath Evans.
  - Isabelle Nash.
  - Dinesh Jayasuriya.
- 3. NOTES** that the Mayor of the Greater Dandenong City Council will write to the proposed members to confirm their appointment to the Sustainability Advisory Committee.

### Executive Summary

1. This report outlines the process undertaken to appoint new members to the Sustainability Advisory Committee for a two- or three-year term between 2026-2029 and seeks endorsement of the six recommended applicants.

### Background

2. The Sustainability Advisory Committee (SAC) has been re-established following Council adoption of the revised Terms of Reference at the 27 October 2025 Council meeting.
3. The SAC was established in 2017 and ran for seven years. In 2025 the Terms of Reference were revised in light of a new Council Plan and the draft *Our Bright Green Future Strategy and Action Plan 2026-36*.
4. Going forward, the SAC will provide a formal mechanism for Council to consult with interested community members as key stakeholders, seek specialist advice and enable community participation in sustainability issues, initiatives, policies and strategies. The SAC will also support and facilitate the participation and engagement of the wider Greater Dandenong community in sustainability initiatives.



5. Establishment of the SAC aligns with the objectives of the Council Plan 2025-29 and the vision of the draft *Our Bright Green Future Strategy and Action Plan 2026-36* of being a *green city committed to a sustainable future* by seeking to champion, advocate and promote sustainability throughout the City of Greater Dandenong, as well as the sustainability achievements of Council and the broader community.
6. The SAC contributes to Council's strong commitment to engaging the community in a genuine and meaningful way by bringing together local knowledge, expertise and stakeholders to support Council's decision-making process.

## Key Issues and Discussion

7. The Terms of Reference set out the requirements for recruiting members to the SAC.
8. As per the Terms of Reference, the SAC will comprise of:
  - Up to one Councillor Representative – appointed at Council's Annual Statutory Meeting
  - Up to two Council Officers – from City Futures Directorate appointed by the Executive Director - City Futures
  - Up to six Community Representatives – appointed by resolution of Council.
9. At the Council meeting on 13 November 2025, Council resolved to appoint Councillor liaisons and representatives to all community reference groups. Councillor Isabella Do was appointed as the SAC Councillor Representative, with Councillor Melinda Yim as the alternate for the 2025-26 term.
10. To ensure future continuity of the SAC half of the members will be appointed for an initial term of two years, and the other half of members will be appointed for an initial term of three years. Following the establishment of the SAC, future members will hold office for a term of two years.
11. An Expression of Interest (EOI) process to recruit members for the SAC was conducted from 10 November to 12 December 2025. The EOI was promoted through multiple channels including Council's website, social media platforms, Our Bright Green Future e-news, local community groups, and targeted engagement via community groups and youth networks.
12. The selection process was undertaken in accordance with the Committee's Terms of Reference. A total of nine applications were received and assessed against the selection criteria.
13. A selection panel was convened to assess the applicants and make a recommendation to Council for consideration and endorsement. Interviews were conducted in January 2026, with six (6) successful applicants identified.
14. Officers recommend the following three applicants be appointed as independent community members of the SAC for a two-year term from 1 April 2026 to 1 April 2028:
  - Graeme Pearman
  - Peter O'Loughlin
  - Dean Mastroianni
15. Officers recommend the following three applicants are appointed as independent community members of the Sustainability Advisory Committee for a three-year term from 1 April 2026 to 1 April 2029:
  - Heath Evans
  - Isabelle Nash
  - Dinesh Jayasuriya



16. The six successful candidates represent a variety of cultural backgrounds, community perspectives and live across Greater Dandenong, with residents from Dandenong, Keysborough, Dandenong North, and Noble Park North.
17. The candidates bring a range of perspectives and skills in sustainability. With some members having experience as owners of businesses seeking to supply and implement sustainable solutions, teachers, community environment group members, or board members for large or climate related organisations.
18. The candidates have strong connections to diverse groups within the community, including schools, people living with disability, business owners, community gardens, and cultural groups.

## **Governance Compliance**

### ***Human Resource Implications (consider Workforce Planning and Service Statements)***

19. This item affects 2x EFT approximately 4 (four) hours per month while the SAC is active.
20. Resources required for this item can be absorbed within the current arrangement of the Sustainability Planning unit.

### ***Financial/Asset Resource Implications (consider Service Statements, Budget, Long Term Financial Strategy and Asset Plan)***

#### ***Operating Budget Implications***

21. There are no financial implications associated with this report.

#### ***Asset Implications***

22. This item does not affect any existing assets.

#### ***Legal/Risk Implications***

23. A potential conflict of interest has been identified due to the financial relationship between Council and a proposed member's business. A Conflict of Interest Management Plan (the Plan) has been developed and will be implemented upon appointment of the committee member to ensure public transparency and accountability.
24. As per the Terms of Reference and Plan conflicts of interest will be a standing agenda item at the start of every meeting and will be recorded as relevant. The Plan indicates that the candidate:
  - must leave the room and not participate in any discussions, deliberations or votes regarding their contract, company, or any related procurement matters,
  - must not receive any confidential information relating to their contract, and
  - must not promote their business through the committee.
25. There is a risk that confidential information shared during these committee meetings could be shared with external parties including media sources.
26. The Terms of Reference includes a clause prohibiting the sharing of confidential information with external parties, including media sources unless specifically authorised by a Council Representative.
27. The Terms of Reference enables Council to cease the membership of any committee member found in breach of the terms.



### **Environmental Implications**

28. The SAC will enable active and passionate community members an opportunity to engage with Council on sustainability matters. It will also enable Council an opportunity to hear and learn from our community with an active interest in sustainability.

### **Gender Impact Assessment**

29. The SAC is open to all genders, ages, and backgrounds. The interviewing process provided equal opportunity to all genders to apply by promoting the opportunity to a variety of networks across Greater Dandenong.

30. The recruitment process aimed to be representative of the Greater Dandenong community. Promotional materials were presented in clear, gender inclusive language that is accessible for all.

31. The selection panel also had a balanced representation of genders, and the interview included a question relating to working with others and engaging with a range of people.

32. In action, the committee members will create a safe space for all by creating an inclusive environment where everyone feels valued, safe, and comfortable to share and engage.

### **Links to Community Vision, Council Plan, Strategy, Notice of Motion**

33. This report is consistent with the following principles in the Community Vision 2040:

- Embrace diversity and multiculturalism.
- Sustainable environment.

34. This report is consistent with the following strategic objectives from the Council Plan 2025-29:

- A socially connected, safe and healthy city.
- A green city committed to a sustainable future.
- A Council that demonstrates leadership, responsible use of public resources, and a commitment to investing in the community.

### **Legislative and Policy Obligations**

35. This report has considered Council's legislative and policy obligations (where applicable) as outlined in the Report Considerations section detailed in the front of this Agenda. The applicable obligations considered and applied are:

- The Overarching Governance Principles of the *Local Government Act 2020*.
- The *Gender Equality Act 2020*.
- *Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities 2006*.
- Climate Change and Sustainability.
- Related Council Policies, Strategies or Frameworks.



## 4.2.8 Appointment of Council Representative to South East Leisure Pty Ltd

**Responsible Officer:** Executive Director Strategy & Corporate Services  
**Attachments:** Nil

### Officer Recommendation

**That, for the remainder of the 2025-2026 Mayoral term, Council appoints**

**Cr \_\_\_\_\_ as the Council Representative to South East Leisure Pty Ltd.**

### Executive Summary

1. This report seeks Council's endorsement to appoint a Council Representative to South East Leisure Pty Ltd (SEL) for the remainder of the 2025-2026 Mayoral term, following a vacancy arising in the current representative position.

### Background

2. In conducting the business of Council and representing Council's interests in the wider community, Greater Dandenong City Council maintains formal representation and liaison with a wide number of committees, peak industry bodies and regional and community associations.
3. SEL is a subsidiary company of the City of Greater Dandenong, established with responsibility to operate four of the City's aquatic and leisure facilities. SEL delivers health and wellbeing outcomes for the community through caring and sustainable leisure and wellness experiences.
4. The appointment of a Council Representative to SEL is ordinarily considered each year in November at the Annual Council Meeting, at which the Mayor and Deputy Mayor are also elected.
5. At the Annual Council Meeting held on 13 November 2025, Council appointed Cr Lana Formoso as its Representative to SEL for the 2025-2026 Mayoral term.

### Key Issues and Discussion

6. A vacancy has arisen in the position of Council Representative to SEL following Cr Formoso's decision to step down from the role.
7. Council is therefore required to appoint a new representative to fill the position for the remainder of the 2025-2026 Mayoral term.
8. The appointment of a Council Representative to SEL is important to ensure that Council's interests and governance obligations in respect of the subsidiary company continue to be effectively represented. Continuity of representation also supports SEL's ongoing operations and its delivery of community health and wellbeing outcomes.
9. It is recommended that Council appoint a new Council representative at this meeting to ensure there is no further gap in representation for the remainder of the 2025-2026 Mayoral term.



## Governance Compliance

### *Human Resource Implications*

10. This item does not have an impact on existing human resources.

### *Financial/Asset Resource Implications*

11. There are no financial implications associated with this report.

### *Legal/Risk Implications*

12. There are no legal / risk implications relevant to this report.

## Links to Community Vision, Council Plan, Strategy, Notice of Motion

13. This report is consistent with the following principles in the Community Vision 2040:

- Mind, body and spirit.

14. This report is consistent with the following strategic objectives from the Council Plan 2025-29:

- A socially connected, safe and healthy city.

## Legislative and Policy Obligations

15. This report has considered Council's legislative and policy obligations (where applicable) as outlined in the Report Considerations section detailed in the front of this Agenda. The applicable obligations considered and applied are:

- Not Applicable



## 4.2.9 S6A Instrument of Delegation by Council to Members of Council Staff under the Planning and Environment Act 1987

<b>Responsible Officer:</b>	Executive Director Strategy & Corporate Services
<b>Attachments:</b>	1. S6A Instrument of Delegation by Council to Members of Council Staff under the Planning and Environment Act 1987 [4.2.9.1 - 12 pages]

### Officer Recommendation

In the exercise of the powers conferred by the legislation referred to in the attached Instrument of Delegation, Greater Dandenong City Council (Council) **RESOLVES** that:

1. There be delegated to the members of Council staff holding, acting in or performing the duties of the offices or positions referred to in the *S6A Instrument of Delegation by Council to Members of Council Staff under the Planning and Environment Act 1987 (Attachment 1)*, the powers, duties and functions set out in that Instrument, subject to the conditions and limitations specified in that Instrument;
2. The Instrument comes into force immediately once the common seal of Council is affixed to the Instrument; and
3. The duties and functions set out in the Instrument must be performed, and the powers set out in the Instruments must be executed, in accordance with any guidelines or policies of Council that it may from time to time adopt.

### Executive Summary

1. This report recommends that Council adopt a new S6A Instrument of Delegation to ensure appropriate staff have the statutory authority to exercise powers under the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*, consistent with recent legislative updates and sector practice.

### Background

2. As the Council is not a “natural” person, it can only make decisions in two ways: by passing a formal resolution or by giving authority to others to act on its behalf. For anyone to make decisions for the Council, the Council must formally delegate those powers.
3. Most powers that the Council is allowed to delegate have been assigned to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO). Under the *Local Government Act 2020*, the CEO is permitted to further delegate these powers to other staff members.
4. Some powers given to the Council under specific legislation cannot be delegated through the CEO. These must be delegated directly to staff by a formal resolution of the Council.
5. The 2025 update to the S6A Instrument of Delegation reflects minor changes provided by Maddocks Lawyers, which the Council uses for legal advice as part of an annual delegation's subscription service. This update incorporates recent amendments to the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* introduced by the *Consumer and Planning Legislation Amendment (Housing Statement Reform) Act 2025*, which took effect on 25 November 2025. The updated Instrument of Delegation ensures that Council's delegations remain aligned with current legislative requirements.



## Key Issues and Discussion

6. The Council cannot practically directly exercise all the powers granted to it and must therefore act either through formal resolutions or through authorised officers. Section 11 of the *Local Government Act 2020* allows the Council to delegate any of its powers, duties or functions (except those specifically excluded) to a member of staff through an Instrument of Delegation.
7. Most of the Council's delegable powers have already been assigned to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO). Under this delegation, the CEO may further sub-delegate those powers to Council staff where permitted.
8. Certain powers given to the Council under specific legislation cannot be delegated through the CEO. These powers must be delegated directly by a Council resolution to the relevant officers. The Acts and Regulations listed in the S6 Instrument of Delegation by Council to Members of Council Staff include several powers that require this direct delegation.
9. This report seeks approval to delegate several Council powers and functions that require updating due to recent legislative changes. Maddocks Lawyers have issued a 2025 minor update that cannot be postponed until the next scheduled review. These changes relate to the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*, and the affected powers also cannot be sub-delegated by the CEO, as outlined in Section 11 of the Act. Direct delegation from Council is required to ensure staff are properly authorised to carry out their responsibilities.
10. The minor update incorporates amendments made to the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* by the *Consumer and Planning Legislation Amendment (Housing Statement Reform) Act 2025*, which commenced on 25 November 2025.
11. The S6A Instrument of Delegation will be incorporated into the S6 Instrument of Delegation as part of the next biennial review, scheduled for July 2026. At the conclusion of that review, the standalone S6A Instrument will no longer be required.

## Governance Compliance

### *Human Resource Implications (consider Workforce Planning and Service Statements)*

12. This item does not have an impact on existing human resources.

### *Financial/Asset Resource Implications (consider Service Statements, Budget, Long Term Financial Strategy and Asset Plan)*

#### *Operating Budget Implications*

13. There are no financial implications associated with this report. The costs associated with the annual Maddocks Lawyers delegations' subscription are included in the Operational Budget.

#### *Asset Implications*

14. This item does not affect any existing assets.

#### *Legal/Risk Implications*

15. Adopting the Instrument provides clarity and legal certainty by ensuring staff are properly authorised to exercise the statutory powers necessary to perform their duties, thereby reducing compliance risks for Council.
16. Failing to adopt the Instrument would prevent staff from exercising key planning-related powers, resulting in service delays and creating additional risks for Council's operational and statutory decision-making processes.



### ***Environmental Implications***

17. There are no environmental implications relevant to this report.

### ***Gender Impact Assessment***

18. A gender impact assessment is not required.

## **Community Consultation**

19. There was no requirement for community consultation.

## **Links to Community Vision, Council Plan, Strategy, Notice of Motion**

20. This report is consistent with the following principles in the Community Vision 2040:

Not Applicable.

21. This report is consistent with the following strategic objectives from the Council Plan 2025-29:

- A Council that demonstrates leadership, responsible use of public resources, and a commitment to investing in the community.

## **Legislative and Policy Obligations**

22. This report has considered Council's legislative and policy obligations (where applicable) as outlined in the Report Considerations section detailed in the front of this Agenda. The applicable obligations considered and applied are:

- The Overarching Governance Principles of the *Local Government Act 2020*.
- Related Council Policies, Strategies or Frameworks.



## INSTRUMENT OF DELEGATION

### S6A INSTRUMENT OF DELEGATION UNDER THE PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT ACT 1987

16 MARCH 2026

## Preamble

### Instrument of Delegation

In exercise of the powers conferred by the Planning and Environment Act 1987 (Act), the legislation referred to in the attached Schedule, and in accordance with section 188 of the Act, the Council:

1. delegates each duty and/or function and/or power described in column 1 of the Schedule (and summarised in column 2 of the Schedule) to the member of Council staff holding, acting in or performing the duties of the office or position described opposite each such duty and/or function and/or power in column 3 of the Schedule;
2. declares that:
  - 2.1. this Instrument of Delegation is authorised by a resolution of Council passed on 16 March 2026, and
  - 2.2. the delegation:
    - 2.2.1. comes into force immediately when the common seal of Council is affixed to this Instrument of Delegation or, where the Chief Executive Officer of Council is authorised under resolution, the Chief Executive Officer executes the Instrument of Delegation;
    - 2.2.2. remains in force until varied or revoked;
    - 2.2.3. is subject to any conditions and limitations set out in sub-paragraph 3.3, and the Schedule; and
    - 2.2.4. must be exercised in accordance with any guidelines or policies which Council from time to time adopts;
  - 2.3. the delegate must not determine the issue, take the action or do the act or thing:
    - 2.3.1. if the issue, action, act or thing is an issue, action or thing which Council has previously designated as an issue, action, act or thing which must be the subject of a Resolution of Council;
    - 2.3.2. if the determining of the issue, taking of the action or doing of the act or thing would or would be likely to involve a decision which is inconsistent with a
      - (a) policy; or
      - (b) strategyadopted by Council;
    - 2.3.3. if the determining of the issue, the taking of the action or the doing of the act or thing cannot be the subject of a lawful delegation; or
    - 2.3.4. if the determining of the issue, the taking of the action or the doing of the act or thing is already the subject of an exclusive delegation to another member of Council staff or delegated committee; and
  - 2.4. acknowledges that this delegation only affects the current S6 Instrument of Delegation to members of Council staff to the extent that the provisions in the Schedule are marked as 'amended' or 'repealed' as appropriate.

The **Common Seal of the Greater Dandenong** )  
**City Council** was hereunto affixed in the presence of:)

.....  
Signed by:  
Jacqueline Weatherill  
Chief Executive Officer

Instrument of Delegation – S6A Instrument of Delegation under the Planning and Environment Act 1987

In the presence of:

.....  
Witness: Michael Tonta  
Manager Governance, Integrity, Legal and Risk  
16 March 2026

.....  
Signed by:  
Mayor, Cr Sophaneth (Sophie) Tan

In the presence of:

.....  
Witness: Michael Tonta  
Manager Governance, Integrity, Legal and Risk  
16 March 2026

**Delegation Sources**

- Planning and Environment Act 1987

**Positions**

<b>Position</b>
Chief Executive Officer
Coordinator Climate & Open Space Planning
Coordinator Statutory Planning
Coordinator Strategic Planning
Executive Director City Futures
Manager City Development
Manager Strategic & Environmental Planning
Senior Planning Support Officer
Team Leader Planning Support

**Positions Groups**

<b>Positions Group</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Positions</b>
Principal Statutory Planners	Principal Statutory Planners	Principal Statutory Planner 1, Principal Statutory Planner 2, Principal Statutory Planner 3
Principal Strategic Planners	Principal Strategic Planners	Principal Strategic Planner 1, Principal Strategic Planner 2, Principal Strategic Planner 3
Senior Statutory Planners	Senior Statutory Planners	Senior Statutory Planner 1, Senior Statutory Planner (Project Planner), Senior Statutory Planner 2, Senior Statutory Planner 3

<b>Positions Group</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Positions</b>
Senior Strategic Planners	Senior Strategic Planners	Senior Strategic Planner 1, Senior Strategic Planner 2
Statutory Planners	Statutory Planners	Statutory Planner 1, Statutory Planner 2, Statutory Planner 3
Team Leader Statutory Planners	Team Leader Statutory Planners	Team Leader Statutory Planning 1, Team Leader Statutory Planning 2, Team Leader Statutory Planning 3, Team Leader Statutory Planning 4

S6A Instrument of Delegation under the Planning and Environment Act 1987

Planning and Environment Act 1987			
Provision	Power and Functions Delegated	Delegate	Conditions and Limitations
s 8A(2)	Power to prepare amendment to the planning scheme where the Minister has given consent under s 8A	Principal Strategic Planners, Senior Strategic Planners, Manager City Development, Coordinator Strategic Planning, Chief Executive Officer, Executive Director City Futures, Manager Strategic & Environmental Planning	This provision has been repealed, as of 25 November 2025, and should not be exercised.  Refer to section 231 for treatment of amendments on foot before the repeal of this section.
s 8A(3)	Power to apply to Minister to prepare an amendment to the planning scheme	Principal Strategic Planners, Senior Strategic Planners, Manager City Development, Coordinator Strategic Planning, Chief Executive Officer, Executive Director City Futures, Manager Strategic & Environmental Planning	This provision has been repealed, as of 25 November 2025, and should not be exercised.  Refer to section 231 for treatment of amendments on foot before the repeal of this section.
s 8A(5)	Function of receiving notice of the Minister's decision	Principal Strategic Planners, Senior Strategic Planners, Manager City Development, Coordinator Strategic Planning, Chief Executive Officer, Executive Director City Futures, Manager Strategic & Environmental Planning	This provision has been repealed, as of 25 November 2025, and should not be exercised.  Refer to section 231 for treatment of amendments on foot before the repeal of this section.

Planning and Environment Act 1987			
Provision	Power and Functions Delegated	Delegate	Conditions and Limitations
s 8A(7)	Power to prepare the amendment specified in the application without the Minister's authorisation if no response received after 10 business days	Principal Strategic Planners, Senior Strategic Planners, Manager City Development, Coordinator Strategic Planning, Chief Executive Officer, Executive Director City Futures, Manager Strategic & Environmental Planning	This provision has been repealed, as of 25 November 2025, and should not be exercised.  Refer to section 231 for treatment of amendments on foot before the repeal of this section.
s 8B(2)	Power to apply to the Minister for authorisation to prepare an amendment to the planning scheme of an adjoining municipal district	Principal Strategic Planners, Senior Strategic Planners, Manager City Development, Coordinator Strategic Planning, Chief Executive Officer, Executive Director City Futures, Manager Strategic & Environmental Planning	This provision has been repealed, as of 25 November 2025, and should not be exercised.  Refer to section 231 for treatment of amendments on foot before the repeal of this section.
16B	Duty (upon receiving a request to prepare an amendment to the planning scheme) to decide:  - to apply to the Minister for authorisation to prepare the amendment, with or without changes, under section 16F, or  - to refuse the request.  Note: see also sections 16A, 16D, 16E and 16K.	Manager City Development, Coordinator Strategic Planning, Chief Executive Officer, Executive Director City Futures, Manager Strategic & Environmental Planning	

Planning and Environment Act 1987			
Provision	Power and Functions Delegated	Delegate	Conditions and Limitations
16C(1)	Duty to give written notice of its decision under section 16B to the person who made the request within 10 business days of making the decision.  Note: The notice must contain prescribed information, and reasons if it is a refusal.	Manager City Development, Coordinator Strategic Planning, Chief Executive Officer, Executive Director City Futures, Manager Strategic & Environmental Planning	
16C(4)	Duty to give a copy of the request and the notice under subsection 16C(1) to the Minister.	Principal Strategic Planners, Senior Strategic Planners, Manager City Development, Coordinator Strategic Planning, Chief Executive Officer, Executive Director City Futures, Manager Strategic & Environmental Planning	
16F	Power to apply to the Minister for authorisation to prepare an amendment to the State standard provisions or the local provisions of a planning scheme in force in the municipal district.  Note: see also sections 16G and 16K.	Principal Strategic Planners, Senior Strategic Planners, Manager City Development, Coordinator Strategic Planning, Chief Executive Officer, Executive Director City Futures, Manager Strategic & Environmental Planning	

Planning and Environment Act 1987			
Provision	Power and Functions Delegated	Delegate	Conditions and Limitations
16F	Power to prepare an amendment to the planning scheme where the Minister has authorised Council to do so under section 16F	Principal Strategic Planners, Senior Strategic Planners, Manager City Development, Coordinator Strategic Planning, Chief Executive Officer, Executive Director City Futures, Manager Strategic & Environmental Planning	
16H	Power to prepare an amendment specified in an application without the Minister's authorisation if no response received after 10 business days  Note: see also section 16K.	Principal Strategic Planners, Senior Strategic Planners, Manager City Development, Coordinator Strategic Planning, Chief Executive Officer, Executive Director City Futures, Manager Strategic & Environmental Planning	Does not apply in relation to an application for the preparation of an amendment that will apply to land to which a Suburban Rail Loop planning area declaration applies.
16I	Power to apply to the Minister for authorisation to prepare an amendment to any part of the State standard provisions and local provisions of a planning scheme applying to an area adjoining its municipal district.	Principal Strategic Planners, Senior Strategic Planners, Manager City Development, Coordinator Strategic Planning, Chief Executive Officer, Executive Director City Futures, Manager Strategic & Environmental Planning	
16I	Power to prepare amendment to the planning scheme applying to an area adjoining Council's municipal district	Principal Strategic Planners, Senior Strategic Planners, Manager City Development, Coordinator Strategic Planning, Chief Executive Officer, Executive Director	

Planning and Environment Act 1987			
Provision	Power and Functions Delegated	Delegate	Conditions and Limitations
	<p>where the Minister has authorised Council to do so under section 16I.</p> <p>Note: see also sections 16D, 16G and 16J.</p>	City Futures, Manager Strategic & Environmental Planning	
23A(2)	<p>Power to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- change the amendment in the manner requested;</li> <li>- not change the amendment in the manner requested;</li> </ul> <p>or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- abandon the amendment or part of the amendment.</li> </ul>	Manager City Development, Coordinator Strategic Planning, Chief Executive Officer, Executive Director City Futures, Manager Strategic & Environmental Planning	<p>Where Council is the planning authority.</p> <p>After considering a submission which requests a change to a 'low-impact' amendment (as described in section 16N).</p>
28(1)	Duty to notify the Minister if abandoning an amendment, with a copy of any submission considered, and a statement of reasons for the decision.	Manager City Development, Coordinator Strategic Planning, Chief Executive Officer, Executive Director City Futures, Manager Strategic & Environmental Planning	Note: the power to make a decision to abandon an amendment cannot be delegated
28C	<p>Duty to comply with directions of the Minister after abandoning the amendment with respect to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- providing relevant documentation; and</li> </ul>	Principal Strategic Planners, Senior Strategic Planners, Manager City Development, Coordinator Strategic Planning, Chief Executive Officer, Executive Director City Futures, Manager Strategic & Environmental Planning	

Planning and Environment Act 1987			
Provision	Power and Functions Delegated	Delegate	Conditions and Limitations
	- providing assistance with steps to be taken for the amendment.		
48A	Power to notify an applicant that the application is incomplete  Note: The notice must set out any required fees or information, the date for payment or production, and the effect of non-compliance set out in section 48B(1).	Senior Planning Support Officer, Team Leader Statutory Planners, Senior Statutory Planners, Principal Statutory Planners, Statutory Planners, Coordinator Statutory Planning, Manager City Development, Chief Executive Officer, Executive Director City Futures, Team Leader Planning Support, Manager Strategic & Environmental Planning	Where Council is the responsible authority
48C	Power to refund a fee paid for an application which is void and of no effect under section 48B(1)	Senior Planning Support Officer, Team Leader Statutory Planners, Senior Statutory Planners, Principal Statutory Planners, Statutory Planners, Coordinator Statutory Planning, Manager City Development, Chief Executive Officer, Executive Director City Futures, Team Leader Planning Support, Manager Strategic & Environmental Planning	Where Council is the responsible authority
96A(2)	Power to agree to consider an application for permit concurrently with preparation of proposed amendment	Manager City Development, Coordinator Strategic Planning, Chief Executive Officer, Coordinator Climate &	The request to prepare the amendment must be made under section 16A.

Planning and Environment Act 1987			
Provision	Power and Functions Delegated	Delegate	Conditions and Limitations
		Open Space Planning, Executive Director City Futures, Manager Strategic & Environmental Planning	Delegate must not agree to consider the application for the permit concurrently with the preparation of the proposed amendment unless it has made a decision under section 16B(a) to apply to the Minister for authorisation to prepare the amendment, with or without changes, under section 16F.
96Z	Duty to keep levy certificates and levy exemption certificates given to it under ss 47 or 96A for no less than 5 years from receipt of the certificate	Principal Strategic Planners, Senior Strategic Planners, Manager City Development, Coordinator Strategic Planning, Chief Executive Officer, Coordinator Climate & Open Space Planning, Executive Director City Futures, Manager Strategic & Environmental Planning	
158F	Power to make submissions in response to a directions panel	Principal Strategic Planners, Senior Strategic Planners, Manager City Development, Coordinator Strategic Planning, Chief Executive Officer, Coordinator Climate & Open Space Planning, Executive Director City Futures, Manager Strategic & Environmental Planning	



## 4.2.10 Report on Matters Discussed at Councillor Briefing Sessions and Pre Council Meetings

**Responsible Officer:** Executive Director Strategy & Corporate Services

**Attachments:** Nil

### Officer Recommendation

That Council **RECEIVES** and **NOTES** the information contained in this report.

### Executive Summary

1. As part of Council's ongoing efforts to improve transparency in Council processes, matters discussed at Councillor Briefing Sessions & Pre-Council Meetings (other than those matters designated to be of a confidential nature) are reported on at Council meetings.
2. The matters listed in this report were presented to Councillor Briefing Sessions & Pre-Council Meetings during the period 9 February 2026 – 2 March 2026.

### Background

3. The Executive Team and associated staff at Greater Dandenong City Council host Councillor Briefing Sessions and Pre-Council Meeting on a regular basis (weekly) to inform Councillors about the work officers are undertaking, share information, obtain feedback and discuss strategies and options for current and future work.
4. To ensure transparency in this process matters discussed at Councillor Briefing Sessions and Pre-Council Meetings (other than those matters designated to be confidential under the *Local Government Act 2020*) are reported on at Council meetings. This report represents matters discussed at the Councillor Briefing Sessions & Pre-Council Meetings during the period 9 February 2026 – 2 March 2026.

### Matters Presented for Discussion

Item		Councillor Briefing Session/Pre-Council Meeting
1	<p><b><i>Audit and Risk Committee Biannual Activity Report</i></b> Councillors were briefed on the Audit and Risk Committee Biannual Activity Report. The agenda covered financial and performance reporting, risk management, internal audit outcomes, policy compliance, strategic risks, procurement, fraud controls and governance improvements arising from the Committee's findings and recommendations</p>	<p><b><i>Councillor Briefing Session (CBS) – 9 February 2026</i></b></p>



2	<p><b>Contract Tree Maintenance Services</b></p> <p>Councillors were briefed on Contract Tree Maintenance Services. Discussion focused on tender evaluation outcomes, recommended contractors across all service categories, contract terms, continuity of tree management services and ensuring compliance, risk mitigation and effective delivery of municipal tree maintenance activities.</p>	<p><b>Councillor Briefing Session (CBS) – 9 February 2026</b></p>
3	<p><b>Canopy Cover Audit 2025</b></p> <p>Councillors were briefed on Canopy Cover Audit 2025. Discussion focused on audit results, progress toward the 2028 canopy target, suburb-level increases, planned reporting to Council and community promotion of findings.</p>	<p><b>Councillor Briefing Session (CBS) – 9 February 2026</b></p>
4	<p><b>Planning Amendment (Better Decisions Made Faster) Bill 2025 and recent Planning Scheme Amendment VC277</b></p> <p>Councillors were briefed on Planning Amendment (Better Decisions Made Faster) Bill 2025 and recent Planning Scheme Amendment VC277. Discussion covered major planning system reforms, impacts on assessment processes, statutory timeframes, consultation requirements, and upcoming changes to car parking provisions.</p>	<p><b>Councillor Briefing Session (CBS) – 9 February 2026</b></p>
5	<p><b>Australian Local Government Association Draft Notice of Motions</b></p> <p>Councillors were briefed on Australian Local Government Association (ALGA) Draft Notice of Motions. Discussion focused on proposed motions for the 2026 National General Assembly, timelines for Councillor feedback, preparation of the submission for Council endorsement, and requirements for lodging motions with ALGA.</p>	<p><b>Councillor Briefing Session (CBS) – 9 February 2026</b></p>
6	<p><b>Australian Local Government Association 2026 National General Assembly, Canberra ACT</b></p> <p>Councillors were briefed on Australian Local Government Association 2026 National General Assembly, Canberra ACT. Discussion covered approval for Councillor and CEO attendance, event details and timing and the requirement for a post conference report to be presented at the August 2026 Council Meeting.</p>	<p><b>Councillor Briefing Session (CBS) – 9 February 2026</b></p>
7	<p><b>Overview of Professional Development Program</b></p> <p>Councillors were briefed on Overview of Professional Development Program. Discussion covered legislative PD requirements under the Local Government Act 2020, the need to complete training by 31 December 2026 and feedback on the proposed 2026 Professional Development Forward Plan.</p>	<p><b>Councillor Briefing Session (CBS) – 9 February 2026</b></p>



<b>8</b>	<p><b>General Discussion</b></p> <p>Councillors and Council officers briefly discussed the following items;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. 2026 Ramadan Night Market;</li><li>b. Employment Hub Agreement;</li><li>c. DMPL Market Update;</li><li>d. Instalment payments for infringements;</li><li>e. Upcoming GSEM Meeting;</li><li>f. Dandenong Wellbeing Centre Naming Process; and</li></ul> <p>Agenda items for the Council Meeting of 16 February 2026.</p>	<p><b>Councillor Briefing Session (CBS) – 9 February 2026</b></p>
<b>9</b>	<p><b>General Discussion</b></p> <p>Councillors and Council officers briefly discussed the following items:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. Young Leaders applications now open 2026;</li><li>b. Councillors' views on Communications and Engagement working with the office Coordinator to Mayor and Councillors;</li><li>c. Rate capping; and</li></ul> <p>Agenda items for the Council Meeting 16 February 2026.</p>	<p><b>Pre-Council Meeting (PCM) 16 February 2026</b></p>
<b>10</b>	<p><b>Presentation from Municipal Association Victoria (MAV)</b></p> <p>Councillors and Council officers observed a presentation from a representative from MAV in relation to Local Government Financial Matters.</p> <p>This covered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a. current issues/concerns in the Local Government Sector;</li><li>b. typical scenarios; and</li><li>c. opportunities.</li></ul>	<p><b>Councillor Briefing Session (CBS) – 23 February 2026</b></p>
<b>11</b>	<p><b>Long Term Financial Plan 2027-2036 and Financial Sustainability Update</b></p> <p>Councillors were briefed on Long Term Financial Plan 2027–2036 and Financial Sustainability Update, discussed long-term financial forecasts, the projected 2026–27 deficit, structural sustainability challenges, guiding financial principles and a staged approach to exploring financial levers and managing future cash positions.</p>	<p><b>Councillor Briefing Session (CBS) – 23 February 2026</b></p>



<b>12</b>	<b><i>Fees and Charges (City Futures)</i></b> Councillors were briefed on Fees & Charges by our City Futures Directorate. The Discussion covered potential fee options across Statutory Planning, Local Laws and Parking. Comparing minimal, recommended and higher estimate approaches to balance community impact and financial sustainability and identifying areas requiring further information or inclusion in the 2026/27 Budget.	<b><i>Councillor Briefing Session (CBS) – 23 February 2026</i></b>
<b>13</b>	<b><i>Dandenong Market Precinct Plan - Draft for Public Exhibition</i></b> Councillors were briefed on the Draft Dandenong Market Precinct Plan, its strategic directions and proposed actions relating to land use, urban design, economic opportunities, transport, public realm and community infrastructure and its readiness for public exhibition from 3 March to 10 April 2026.	<b><i>Councillor Briefing Session (CBS) – 2 March 2026</i></b>
<b>14</b>	<b><i>Reconciliation Action Plan (Pre Community Consultation)</i></b> Councillors were briefed on the Draft Third Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan 2026–28, its provisional endorsement, upcoming public and targeted consultation, and the process for incorporating feedback before final submission and endorsement.	<b><i>Councillor Briefing Session (CBS) – 2 March 2026</i></b>
<b>15</b>	<b><i>DTP Activity Centres Program</i></b> Councillors were briefed on the State Government's Train and Tram Zone Activity Centres Program, the release of draft maps, consultation timelines, increased density proposals and Council's recommended submission in response.	<b><i>Councillor Briefing Session (CBS) – 2 March 2026</i></b>
<b>16</b>	<b><i>General Discussion</i></b> Councillors and Council officers briefly discussed the following items; a. South East Leisure Board; and b. Upcoming closure of link road as part of the level crossing removal project.	<b><i>Councillor Briefing Session (CBS) – 2 March 2026</i></b>



## Apologies

5. Councillor Jim Memeti, Councillor Rhonda Garad, Councillor Lana Formoso, Councillor Isabella Do, Councillor Alice Phuong Le and Councillor Sean O'Reilly submitted apologies for the Councillor Briefing Session on 9 February 2026.
6. Councillor Rhonda Garad, Councillor Alice Phuong Le, Councillor Isabella Do, Councillor Lana Formoso and Councillor Loi Truong submitted apologies for the Pre-Council Meeting on 16 February 2026.
7. Councillor Jim Memeti, Councillor Lana Formoso, Councillor Alice Phuong Le and Councillor Isabella Do submitted apologies for the Councillor Briefing Session on 23 February 2026.
8. Councillor Isabella Do, Councillor Alice Phuong Le submitted apologies and Councillor Lana Formoso did not attend the Councillor Briefing Session on 2 March 2026.

## Legislative and Policy Obligations

9. Section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* (LGA2020) states that a Council must in the performance of its role give effect to the overarching governance principles.
10. Reporting on matters discussed at Councillor Briefing Sessions and Pre-Council Meetings gives effect to the overarching governance principles (in particular, section 9(i) of the *Local Government Act 2020*) in that the transparency of Council actions and information is ensured.



## 4.2.11 List of Registered Correspondence to Mayor and Councillors

**Responsible Officer:** Manager Governance, Integrity, Legal & Risk  
**Attachments:** 1. List of Registered Correspondence to Mayor and Councillors [4.2.11.1 - 2 pages]

### Officer Recommendation

**That the listed items for the period 2 February 2026 to 27 February 2026 provided in Attachment 1 to this report be received and noted.**

### Executive Summary

1. Consistent with Council resolutions regarding registered incoming correspondence addressed to the Mayor and Councillors, Attachment 1 to this report provides a list of this correspondence for the period 2 February 2026 to 27 February 2026.

# Objective

CONNECTED. COLLABORATIVE. COMMUNITY.

## Correspondences addressed to the Mayor and Councillors received between 02/02/2026 & 27/02/26 - for officer action - total = 3

Correspondence Name	Correspondence Dated	Date Record Created	Objective ID	User Assigned
An email from the owner of Bigfoot Clinical Podiatry requesting mayoral support to address safety, accessibility and maintenance issues at a council owned carpark.	12-Feb-26	12-Feb-26	fA378593	Mayor & Councillors Office
An email from a Yarraman Oaks Primary School teacher requesting the Mayor's attendance at the 2026 Student Leadership Assembly.	13-Feb-26	13-Feb-26	fA378809	Mayor & Councillors Office
A letter from DFAT's First Assistant Secretary providing an update on the Foreign Arrangements Scheme review and upcoming briefings for local government.	16-Feb-26	16-Feb-26	fA378947	Mayor & Councillors Office

NB: Users assigned may have changed by the time of the Council Meeting. Correct at time of report production only.

# Objective

CONNECTED. COLLABORATIVE. COMMUNITY.

## Correspondences addressed to the Mayor and Councillors received between 02/02/2026 & 27/02/2026 - for information only total = 15

Correspondence Name	Correspondence Dated	Date Record Created	Objective ID	User Assigned
A letter from the President of the Kashmiri Pandits' Cultural Association inviting the Mayor to attend the 2026 Maha Shivaratri Cultural Festival.	2-Feb-26	2-Feb-26	A13442157	Mayor & Councillors Office
An email from a representative of the Tajik Council of Australia requesting a meeting to discuss collaboration on community and cultural initiatives.	2-Feb-26	3-Feb-26	A13443578	Mayor & Councillors Office
A letter from the Executive Director, Health Protection Programs (Victorian Department of Health) responding to advocacy on Meningococcal B vaccination and PRIME reinstatement.	2-Feb-26	3-Feb-26	A13444140	Mayor & Councillors Office
An email from the President of the Teo Chew Chinese Association of Victoria inviting the Mayor and Councillors to a 2026 Lunar New Year luncheon celebration.	3-Feb-26	3-Feb-26	A13446275	Mayor & Councillors Office
A letter from the Mayor of Campaspe Shire Council seeking unified advocacy against the State-mandated glass only kerbside recycling service.	3-Feb-26	4-Feb-26	A13448518	Mayor & Councillors Office
A letter from the Victorian Minister for Planning providing an update on housing target implementation and council planning scheme review requirements.	4-Feb-26	4-Feb-26	A13449183	Mayor & Councillors Office
An email from a community member expressing concerns about proposed changes to the CGD Hubs Reference Committee and reduced Councillor involvement in community groups.	10-Feb-26	11-Feb-26	A13467307	Mayor & Councillors Office



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## 5 REPORTS FROM COUNCILLORS/DELEGATED MEMBERS AND COUNCILLORS' QUESTIONS

The principal purpose of this item in the Council Meeting Agenda is for Councillors to report on their attendance, observations or important matters arising from their liaison or representation with groups for which the Councillor has been formally appointed by Council. In accordance with the documented 'protocol' that applies to either liaisons or representatives, Councillors should raise matters of importance during this item. Other matters may also be reported.

If a Councillor chooses to speak, the name of the conference/event and the Councillor will be noted in the Minutes for that meeting. If a Councillor requires additional information on the conference/event to be listed in the Minutes, they must submit it in writing to a Governance staff member by 12.00pm the day following this Council Meeting.

Question time is provided to enable Councillors to address questions to members of Council staff. The guidelines for asking questions at a Council meeting are included in the current Governance Rules.

Councillors have a total of 15 minutes each to report on their attendances at meetings, conferences or events and to ask questions of Council staff.



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## 6 URGENT BUSINESS

No business may be admitted as urgent business unless it:

- a) relates to or arises out of a matter which has arisen since distribution of the Agenda; and
- b) cannot safely or conveniently be deferred until the next ordinary meeting and unless agreed to by a majority of those Councillors present at the meeting.



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## 7 CLOSE OF BUSINESS