

12.9**Governance Report August 2024****Directorate**

People, Partnerships and Performance

Director

Georgie Hill

Manager

Danny Bilaver

Attachment(s)

1. Record of Informal Meeting of Councillors [**12.9.1** - 8 pages]
2. Delegates and Representatives Report [**12.9.2** - 1 page]
3. Councillor Expenses 2023-2024 [**12.9.3** - 1 page]
4. Brimbank City Council Submission - Proposed Circular Economy Waste Reduction [**12.9.4** - 5 pages]
5. Brimbank City Council Submission - Inquiry into Food Security [**12.9.5** - 16 pages]
6. Draft Model Councillor Code of Conduct [**12.9.6** - 5 pages]
7. Draft Mayoral and Councillor Training Framework [**12.9.7** - 8 pages]
8. Draft Internal Resolution Procedure [**12.9.8** - 2 pages]

Purpose

For Council to consider:

- A summary of recent Governance activity.
- Contracts entered into, and works orders approved in accordance with the S7 Instrument of Sub Delegation.
- Councillor Declarations of Representations by Members of Parliament.
- Councillor Support Expenses for Financial Year 2023/2024.
- Submission to the Victorian Government's proposed Circular Economy (Waste Reduction and Recycling) (Mandatory Service Provision and Other Matters) Regulations 2024 and proposed Household Waste and Recycling Service Standard 2024.
- Inquiry into Food Security in Victoria.
- Federal Funding Grants.
- Delegating powers to an officer for an upcoming VCAT matter.
- Stage 2 Local Government Reforms 2024.

Council Recommendation**That Council:****a. Notes the:**

- i. **Governance Report August 2024.**
- ii. **Contracts entered into, and works orders approved, in accordance with S7 Instrument of Sub Delegation (24/3491Q; 24/3471A; 24/3478; 24/3492; 24/3493; and 24/3538).**
- iii. **Records of Informal Meetings of Councillors, at Attachment 1 to this report, for incorporation in the minutes of this meeting.**
- iv. **Delegate's and Representative's Reports, at Attachment 2 to this report, for incorporation in the minutes of this meeting.**
- v. **Councillor Declarations of Representations by Members of Parliament.**
- vi. **Councillor Support Expenses for Financial Year 2023/2024, at Attachment 3 to this report.**

- b. **Notes and endorses the officer submission shown at Attachment 4 which was submitted to the Victorian Government on behalf of Council as part on the proposed Circular Economy (Waste Reduction and Recycling) (Mandatory Service Provision and Other Matters) Regulations 2024 and proposed Household Waste and Recycling Service Standard 2024.**
- c. **Notes and endorses the officer submission shown at Attachment 5 which was submitted to the Victorian Legislative Council Legal and Social Issues Committee as part of the inquiry into food security in Victoria.**
- d. **Supports the submission to:**
 - i. **The Federal Government's Urban Precincts and Partnerships Program for \$450,000 funding to develop a delivery strategy for Sunshine Energy Park and business case for stage 1 and notes that Council would contribute \$100,000 which is accounted for in the forward capital budget.**
 - ii. **The Federal Government's Thriving Suburbs Program for 50% funding to deliver the Welcome Plaza project (estimated total project cost \$1,000,000) and agrees to allocate Council's contribution in the forward capital budget.**
 - iii. **The Federal Government's Thriving Suburbs Program for 50% funding to deliver the Glengala Village Revitalisation project (estimated total project cost \$2,900,000) and notes Council's contribution is accounted for in the forward capital budget.**
- e. **In the exercise of the powers conferred by the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*, resolves that there be delegated to the Manager City Development Services the powers, duties and functions under section 61(1) for planning application P381/2023 for 2A Roseleigh Boulevard, Sydenham, for the upcoming compulsory conference at VCAT.**
- f. **Notes that feedback is being sought in relation to Stage 2 of the 2024 Local Government Reforms.**

Background

The monthly governance report is a standing report to Council, in accordance with best practice and good governance principles, and to ensure compliance with the requirements of the *Local Government Act 2020 (the Act)*, Councillor Code of Conduct 2021 (Code), and Councillor Support (Major) Policy 2020.

Matters for Consideration

Exercise of Delegated Authority

Council delegates powers, duties and functions to the Chief Executive Officer in order to support efficient operation and delivery of Council services. The Chief Executive Officer has sub-delegated some authority to Directors (and other Council officers). Significant decisions made, or actions undertaken exercising delegated authority, are reported to Council as a transparency and accountability measure.

The Chief Executive Officer has been delegated authority by Council to award contracts up to \$2,000,000 (exclusive of GST) through an Instrument of Delegation made on 23 April 2024 (S5 Instrument of Delegation to the Chief Executive Officer). The Chief Executive Officer has sub-delegated authority to Directors to award contracts up to \$200,000 (inclusive of GST) through an Instrument of Delegation made on 12 December 2023 (S7 Instrument of Sub-Delegation by the Chief Executive Officer).

Contracts entered into, and works orders approved, in accordance with S7 Instrument of Sub-Delegation

Contracts entered into, and works orders approved, under delegation since reporting to the last Council Meeting are:

Contract No.	Description	Successful Tenderer	Contract Amount (inc GST)	Date Awarded
24/3491Q	WSUD Audit Update	Jamie Comley Consulting	\$109,700	28/6/2024
24/3471A	Construction of Skate Park and Associated Facilities – Balmoral Park Derrimut	Grind Projects Pty Ltd	\$533,241.50	3/7/2024
24/3478	Suburban Park Upgrade – Odessa Avenue Reserve Keilor Downs	Rainscapes Pty Ltd	\$630,356.89	3/7/2024
24/3492	Renewal of Insurance Policies 2024-25	JLT	\$1,294,905	15/6/2024
24/3493	Security and Cash Collection Services	Authentic Security Pty Ltd	\$150,000	22/7/2024
24/3538	MAV Public Liability and Professional Indemnity Insurance	Municipal Association of Victoria	\$1,603,622	29/5/2024

Records of Informal Meetings of Councillors

An Informal Meeting of Councillors includes meetings that are:

- Scheduled or planned for the purpose of discussing the business of Council or briefing Councillors,
- Attended by at least one member of Council staff, and
- Not Council meetings, Delegated Committee meetings or Community Asset Committee meetings.

Written records of Informal Meetings of Councillors are kept and include the names of all Councillors and Council officers attending, the matters considered, any conflict of interest disclosures made, and whether a Councillor who has disclosed a conflict of interest leaves the meeting.

These records, as soon as practicable, will be reported at a Council Meeting, and incorporated in the minutes of that Council Meeting.

Records of Informal Meetings of Councillors (**Attachment 1**) were received for the following meetings:

Date	Event
19 July 2024	Western Melbourne Tourism Board
23 July 2024	Briefing
13 August 2024	Council Meeting Briefing
13 August 2024	Planning Forum

Delegate's and Representative's Reports

The participation on a range of local, specific issues, committees established by Council, peak body/sector associations, and local and regional forums, is an essential part of the representative role Council plays. Council nominates Councillors as delegates and representatives to these committees annually.

The role, as the Council delegate or Council representative on these committees, is to represent the position of Council, and report back to Council at a Council Meeting on the issues or progress of the committees, and any recommendations made by the committees.

Delegate's and Representative's Reports (**Attachment 2**) were received for the following meetings:

Date	Event	Councillor/s
19 July 2024	Western Melbourne Tourism Board	Cr Tachos

Councillor Declarations of Representations by Members of Parliament

Councillors have a legitimate role in advocating on behalf of their communities. At times, this may include the receiving of representations by a Member of State or Federal Parliament, to Council or Councillors. Councillors will declare and record any representations made to a Councillor by a Member of Parliament or their staff representative.

Councillor Declarations of Representations by Members of Parliament were received for the following meetings.

Date	Councillor	Member of Parliament	Matter Discussed
16 July 2024	Cr David	Dr Daniel Mulino MP Hon Clare O'Neil MP	Senior Citizens Cyber Security

Councillor Support Expenses for Financial Year 2023/2024

The Councillor Support Policy 2020 requires a report of individual Councillor support expenses to be presented to an open session of a Council Meeting. *The Act* requires details of reimbursement to Council's Audit and Risk Committee.

Support expenses for the annual total of Financial Year 2023/2024 are included at **Attachment 3**. In accordance with the Councillor Support Policy 2020, the support expenses will also be made available on Council's website.

Brimbank Council Submission - Proposed Circular Economy (Waste Reduction and Recycling) (Mandatory Service Provision and Other Matters) Regulations 2024 and proposed Household Waste and Recycling Service Standard 2024

The Victorian Government's announcement that consultation was open on proposed Circular Economy (Waste Reduction and Recycling) (Mandatory Service Provision and Other Matters) Regulations 2024 and proposed Household Waste and Recycling Service Standard 2024.

The proposed regulations and service standard have been prepared to support the roll out by councils and Alpine Resorts Victoria (ARV) of a standardised 4-stream waste and

recycling system to households across Victoria and will be regulated by Recycling Victoria.

The proposed regulations set out the dates by which councils and ARV must provide the 4 services (4-Bin Service Model).

The regulations also prescribe matters under the Circular Economy (Waste Reduction and Recycling) Act 2021 relating to the appointment and functions of auditors and infringement offences and penalties.

The proposed service standard, prepared by the Head, Recycling Victoria, details how councils and ARV must provide the four services to households, supporting councils and ARV to provide a high quality, consistent service across the state.

The opportunity to provide feedback is offered through an on-line survey that closes on 14 August 2024 at 11:59 pm.

As the survey closes on 14 August, and the next Council meeting was not until after that date, officers were unable to present a draft submission to Council for formal consideration. As a result, Council's Officers completed the on-line survey on 13 July 2024 that consisted of the responses at **Attachment 4**, which is presented for Council endorsement as part of this report.

Should Council determine not to support, or to alter, the submission made by Council officers on their behalf, Recycling Victoria will be informed of this.

Brimbank Council Submission- Inquiry into Food Security- Victorian Legislative Council Legal and Social Issues Committee

On 29 November 2023, the Victorian Legislative Council resolved to inquire into, consider and report on the impacts, drivers of and solutions for food security in Victoria including the impact of food insecurity on physical and mental health, poverty and hardship and the options available to lower the cost of food and improve access to affordable, nutritious and culturally appropriate food.

The Legislative Council Legal and Social Issues Committee is now inviting public submissions from individuals and organisations addressing the terms of reference. All submissions are treated as public documents unless confidentiality is requested and granted by the Committee. While submissions formally closed on 26 July, Council was successful in seeking an extension until 8 August 2024. Given the short timeframe, it was not possible to present the draft submission to a Council Meeting for endorsement; this submission will therefore be incorporated into the governance report for the August Ordinary Council Meeting.

Food insecurity is a significant problem for the Brimbank community. Data collected in 2019 and 2020 respectively shows that only 3.4% of Brimbank adults consume sufficient fruit and vegetables and 10.4% of the community experienced food insecurity, which is significantly higher than the greater Melbourne average of 5.9%.

The draft submission (**Attachment 5**) was prepared by the Community Strengthening and Social Planning department, with input provided by relevant internal and external stakeholders.

The draft submission is framed around the following focus areas / themes:

- Food insecurity and health and wellbeing data
- Poverty and food insecurity
- Emergency food relief

- Key population groups: children, young families, young people and CALD communities
- Role of third spaces (i.e. libraries and neighbourhood houses)
- Role of urban environments
- Community gardens

The draft submission lists the following recommendations to the Victorian government:

1. Collect and disseminate robust localised data on food insecurity over time to inform evidence-based practice.
2. Advocate to the Federal Government to raise social security payments in line with recommendations of the Interim Economic Inclusion Advisory Committee.
3. Adequately fund food relief services to meet acute need.
4. Support strategic collaboration between food relief and other community services to address underlying causes of food insecurity by connecting vulnerable community members to support services.
5. Recognise the crucial and unique role of maternal child health services in supporting adequate nutrition and food security for young children through dedicated funded training and resourcing.
6. Recognise the importance of 'third spaces,' including neighbourhood houses and libraries, in addressing food insecurity by adequately resourcing to implement long-term food security initiatives.
7. Recognise the role of schools and early years services in providing food relief and addressing food insecurity and provide adequate resourcing for this vital service.
8. Build off existing best practice examples and evidence-base in early childhood and school settings to implement initiatives that address food security in the long-term.
9. Engage meaningfully with CALD communities to ensure food security measures are appropriate for their needs.
10. Fund and support community gardens as a tool to address food insecurity and social isolation, with a focus on areas where communities experience socio-economic disadvantage.

Should Council determine not to support, or to alter, the submission made by Council officers on their behalf, Victorian Legislative Council Legal and Social Issues Committee will be informed of this.

Federal Funding Grants

It is proposed that Council submit three Expressions of Interest for funding being offered by two Federal Government Funding Programs.

For the Thriving Suburbs Program, there are two projects being submitted; the Welcome Plaza in Sunshine which will sit alongside the Vietnamese Museum of Australia; and the Glengala Village Revitalisation project. The funding for these projects is for construction. Council is required to provide 50% matched funding for each project and this can be addressed in Council's budgeting for 2025/26, noting both projects have been endorsed by Council in 2024.

For the Urban Precincts and Partnerships Program, Sunshine Energy Park is being submitted. The funding for this project would be for the development of further feasibility studies and business cases to guide the next steps of this project. These three projects fit the criteria of the programs and the next step, should the EOI's be successful, would be to submit detailed funding applications. This is in line with Council's adoption of the Sunshine Energy Park Vision Plan in 2024.

Delegation of powers to an officer for an upcoming VCAT matter

Planning application P381/2023 proposed the erection of a telecommunications facility at 2A Roseleigh Boulevard, Sydenham. 23 objections and two petitions opposing the application were received when it was advertised. The application was refused under delegation from Council in January 2024. The proponent has lodged an application for review of this decision with the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) and a compulsory conference has been scheduled on 4 September 2024.

Council officers wrote to VCAT requesting that the compulsory conference be cancelled, and the matter proceed directly to a merits hearing on the basis that officers do not have delegation to settle the matter given the number of objections received. The current S6 Instrument of Delegation only allows officers to approve applications that have less than 10 objections. VCAT scheduled a Practice Day to consider this matter, after which the Member issued an order that stated:

I have refused to vacate the compulsory conference for the following reasons:

- *Paragraph 11 of the Tribunal's order of 13 March 2024 requires:
All parties must attend the compulsory conference either in person or by a representative who has permission to settle the proceeding on their behalf.*
- *Council is a body corporate and just like any other corporation it can authorise an agent to attend the compulsory conference on its behalf.*

Indeed it is expected that as a responsible authority it will make all necessary arrangements and put in place all necessary authorisations to ensure that there is compliance with the Tribunal's orders. The limitations of Council's delegations to officers for the purposes of decision making on certain permit applications are not limitations to the conduct of a compulsory conference before the Tribunal.

To comply with the VCAT order, it is proposed that the Manager City Development Services be provided with delegation under section 61(1) of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* in relation to application P381/2023 for 2A Roseleigh Boulevard, Sydenham, for the upcoming compulsory conference at VCAT.

Local Government Reforms 2024 – Stage 2 Consultation

The Local Government Victoria (LGV) is currently seeking feedback and submissions regarding the Governance and Integrity reforms introduced under the *Local Government Amendment Act 2024*.

Feedback is being sought in relation to three draft documents for release for public consultation:

1. Model Councillor Code of Conduct (**Attachment 6**)
2. Mayoral and Councillor Training Framework (**Attachment 7**)
3. Internal Resolution Procedure (**Attachment 8**)

The Model Councillor Code of Conduct introduces significant changes to the standards of behaviour expected from Councillors. These standards will now apply at all times, not just during the performance of official duties. Additionally, the draft introduces new standards that align Councillor responsibilities with existing legislation, including the *Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005* and the *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004*.

The reforms also propose the introduction of two new policies. The proposed Confidentiality Policy will require councils to clearly define and securely manage sensitive internal documents. Similarly, the proposed Councillor Social Media Policy aims to guide Councillors on responsible social media use, ensuring it aligns with their obligations under the Model Councillor Code of Conduct while balancing the need for public communication.

The draft Mayoral and Councillor Training Framework outlines mandatory training requirements for Mayors, Deputy Mayors, and Councillors. This training will focus on key areas such as leadership, governance, and effective decision-making, ensuring that elected officials are well-equipped to fulfill their roles. Continuous professional development will also be required throughout a Councillor's term to ensure ongoing alignment with best practices.

Another component of the reforms is the introduction of an internal resolution procedure to address breaches of the Model Councillor Code of Conduct. This procedure promotes a constructive approach to conflict resolution within councils by encouraging informal discussions and facilitated resolutions.

These proposed reforms underscore the importance of accountability, transparency, and continuous improvement in leadership and conduct. The changes are set to take effect from 26 October 2024.

LGV is now inviting individual submissions for Stage 2 of the consultation process, which runs from 6 August to 4 September 2024. Councillors and all other stakeholders are encouraged to provide feedback through the Engage Victoria website.

Resource And Risk Implications

Resource requirements can be met within the Annual Budget 2023/2024.

Regulatory: legal, legislative or regulatory implications including the rights/obligations of stakeholders

- This report fulfils legislative governance obligations, to provide transparent and accountable reporting of governance activity.

There are no Community, Safety, Environmental or Financial risks identified.

Legislation/Council Plan/Policy Context

This report supports the Council Plan 2021-2025 strategic direction and objective of:

4. Leadership and Governance - A high performing organisation that enacts the vision and decisions of Council through the delivery of quality and innovative services - A fairer place for all

- High Performing and Accountable - Our workforce strives to enhance services and liveability for the Brimbank community.

This report complies with the *Local Government Act 2020*, *Local Government (Governance and Integrity) Regulations 2020*, Council Plan 2021-2025, S5 Instrument of Delegation to the Chief Executive Officer, S7 Instrument of Sub-Delegation by the Chief Executive Officer, Councillor Code of Conduct 2021 and Procurement Policy.

Council officers contributing to the preparation and approval of this report, have no conflicts of interests to declare.



Record of Informal Meeting of Councillors

Meeting details

Title:	Western Melbourne Tourism Board - Interim Budget Meeting		
Date:	19 July 2024	Time:	10am to 10:30am
Location:	Zoom		
Councillors in attendance:	☐ Cr Victoria Borg ☐ Cr Sarah Branton ☐ Cr Thuy Dang ☐ Cr Sam David JP ☐ Cr Maria Kerr ☐ Cr Bruce Lancashire ☐ Cr Jasmine Nguyen ☐ Cr Thomas O'Reilly ☐ Cr Jae Papalia (Deputy Mayor) ☐ Cr Ranka Rasic (Mayor) ☒ Cr Virginia Tachos		
Council Officers in attendance:	Jenny Mitten, Senior Economic Development Officer		
Other attendees:	WMT Board members x 10 WMT Officers x 2 Mooney Valley City Council officer x 1 Maribyrnong City Council officer x 1 Wyndham City Council officer x 1 Hobsons Bay City Council officer x 1		
Name of Council Officer completing Record of Informal Meeting:	Jenny Mitten, Senior Economic Development Officer		

Issues considered (if no conflicts of interest were disclosed, enter "nil" in name column. Add and delete rows as required)

No.	Brief description of issue/agenda item	Name of person(s) who disclosed a conflict of interest	Did the person(s) leave the meeting?
1.	Welcome	NIL	N/A
2.	Minutes of previous general meeting/Actions arising	NIL	N/A
3.	2024/25 Budget review and Draft 2024/25 Action Plan	NIL	N/A

Forward completed *Record of Informal Meeting of Councillors* to Governance within 48 hours of the meeting for Reporting to Council.



Record of Informal Meeting of Councillors

Meeting details

Title:	Briefing		
Date:	23 July 2024	Time:	6.00pm to 9:00pm
Location:	Council Chamber		
Councillors in attendance:	☒ Cr Victoria Borg ☒ Cr Sarah Branton ☐ Cr Thuy Dang ☒ Cr Sam David JP ☐ Cr Maria Kerr ☐ Cr Bruce Lancashire ☒ Cr Jasmine Nguyen ☒ Cr Thomas O'Reilly ☒ Cr Jae Papalia, Deputy Mayor ☐ Cr Ranka Rasic, Mayor ☒ Cr Virginia Tachos		
Council Officers in attendance:	Fiona Blair, Chief Executive Officer Lynley Dumble, Director Community Wellbeing Georgie Hill, Director People Partnerships and Performance Kelvin Walsh, Director City Futures		
Other attendees:	Municipal Monitors; Penny Holloway, Janet Dore Kate Oliver, Maddocks		
Name of Council Officer completing Record of Informal Meeting:	Georgie Hill, Director People Partnerships and Performance		

Issues considered (if no conflicts of interest were disclosed, enter "nil" in name column. Add and delete rows as required)

No.	Brief description of issue/agenda item	Name of person(s) who disclosed a conflict of interest	Did the person(s) leave the meeting?
1.	Monitors Meeting with Councillors		<Select one>
2.	Governance Refresher: • Councillors/Council's OHS obligations • Governance Rules including Notices of Motion and meeting procedures • Caretaker period refresher		<Select one>

Forward completed *Record of Informal Meeting of Councillors* to Governance within 48 hours of the meeting for Reporting to Council.



Record of Informal Meeting of Councillors

Meeting details

Title:	Council Meeting Briefing		
Date:	13 August 2024	Time:	6.00pm to 7.20pm
Location:	Zoom		
Councillors in attendance:	☒ Cr Victoria Borg ☒ Cr Sarah Branton ☒ Cr Thuy Dang ☒ Cr Sam David JP ☐ Cr Maria Kerr ☐ Cr Bruce Lancashire ☒ Cr Jasmine Nguyen ☒ Cr Thomas O'Reilly ☒ Cr Jae Papalia, Deputy Mayor ☐ Cr Ranka Rasic, Mayor ☒ Cr Virginia Tachos		
Council Officers in attendance:	Fiona Blair, Chief Executive Officer Lynley Dumble, Director Community Wellbeing Georgie Hill, Director People Partnerships and Performance Chris Leivers, Director Infrastructure and City Services Mark Stoermer, Director Corporate Services Kelvin Walsh, Director City Futures Danny Bilaver, Manager Governance and Risk Leanne Deans, Manager City Strategy Elie Khalil, Senior Advisor Strategic Advocacy & Engagement Lisa Davis, Manager Parks & Public Realm Tom Razmovski, Group Manager Operations Rachel Deans, Manager Customer Experience and Service Innovation		

Other attendees:	Janet Dore, Municipal Monitor Penelope Holloway, Municipal Monitor
Name of Council Officer completing Record of Informal Meeting:	Danny Bilaver, Manager Governance and Risk

Issues considered (if no conflicts of interest were disclosed, enter "nil" in name column. Add and delete rows as required)

No.	Brief description of issue/agenda item	Name of person(s) who disclosed a conflict of interest	Did the person(s) leave the meeting?
1.	Annual Report on Implementation of Economic Development Strategies and Plans	3.1 - Cr Thomas O'Reilly due to employment	Yes
2.	Annual Report on Implementation of Place Management Action Plans		<Select one>
3.	Annual Report on Implementation of Strategic Planning Strategies	3.3 - Cr Thomas O'Reilly due to employment	Yes
4.	Victorian Government Draft Housing Targets - Brimbank Submission		
5.	Governance Policies Review		
6.	Governance Report August 2024		
7.	Council Plan Action Plan Progress Report Y3Q4 (April-June 2024)	3.7 - Cr Thomas O'Reilly due to employment	Yes
8.	Federal Level Advocacy Initiatives		
9.	Municipal Maintenance Agreement (Department of Transport and Planning formerly VicRoads)		
10.	Contract No. 25/3522 - Supply, Delivery and Lease of Nine (9) Twenty-Four (24) Cubic Metre Side Loading Waste Compactors and four (4) Twenty-Four (24) Cubic Metre Side Loading Green Waste Compactors		
11.	Confidential - Federal Decision on Melbourne Airport's Third Runway		
12.	Municipal Maintenance Agreement (Department of Transport and Planning formerly VicRoads)		
13.	Customer Satisfaction Survey		

Forward completed *Record of Informal Meeting of Councillors* to Governance within 48 hours of the meeting for Reporting to Council.



Record of Informal Meeting of Councillors

Meeting details

Title:	Planning Forum		
Date:	13 August 2024	Time:	7.31pm to 7.45pm
Location:	Online via Zoom		
Councillors in attendance:	☐ Cr Ranka Rasic, Mayor ☒ Cr Jae Papalia, Deputy Mayor ☒ Cr Victoria Borg ☒ Cr Sarah Branton ☒ Cr Thuy Dang ☒ Cr Sam David JP ☐ Cr Maria Kerr ☐ Cr Bruce Lancashire ☒ Cr Jasmine Nguyen ☒ Cr Thomas O'Reilly ☒ Cr Virginia Tachos		
Council Officers in attendance:	Kelvin Walsh, - Director City Futures Kristen Gilbert - Manager City Development Services Dhiraj Joti - Principal Development Planner Tony Vo - Coordinator Council Business		
Other attendees:	Applicant and developer for planning application		
Name of Council Officer completing Record of Informal Meeting:	Kristen Gilbert		

Issues considered (if no conflicts of interest were disclosed, enter "nil" in name column. Add and delete rows as required)

No.	Brief description of issue/agenda item	Name of person(s) who disclosed a conflict of interest	Did the person(s) leave the meeting?
1.	Application P392/2023 for approval of a development plan under Development Plan Overlay Schedule 16 for 179 Tilburn Road, Deer Park and surrounding land	Nil	<Select one>



Council Representative's Report

Report details

Representative/s: Cr Virginia Tachos

Committee/Event: Western Melbourne Tourism Board - Interim Budget Meeting

Meeting date: 19 July 2024

Report author: Jenny Mitten, Senior Economic Development Officer

Report

The meeting was held to review and approve the 2024/25 Budget and Draft 2024/2025 Budget Plan. Both items were approved.

Recommendations

There were no matters to be considered by Council.

Next meeting: 6 September 2024 at 10am - 12 noon, TBC (Brimbank location)

Councillor Expense Report 2023-2024

	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	Total
Cr Bruce Lancashire	\$1,850.75	\$449.18	\$269.64	\$96.83	\$2,666.40
Information and Communication Technology	\$159.54	\$159.54	\$159.54	\$53.18	\$531.80
Conference Functions and Training (Incl. accommodation and meals)	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$14.55	\$14.55
Travel	\$344.67	\$137.15	\$81.00	\$0.00	\$562.82
Conferences, Seminars and Training (Incl. accommodation and meals)	\$1,346.54	\$152.49	\$29.10	\$29.10	\$1,557.23
Cr Jae Papalia	\$402.30	\$278.75	\$267.02	\$53.18	\$1,001.25
Information and Communication Technology	\$159.54	\$159.54	\$159.54	\$53.18	\$531.80
Travel	\$162.76	\$49.21	\$82.48	\$0.00	\$294.45
Conferences, Seminars and Training (Incl. accommodation and meals)	\$80.00	\$70.00	\$25.00	\$0.00	\$175.00
Cr Jasmine Nguyen	\$159.54	\$343.18	\$341.04	\$334.09	\$1,177.85
Information and Communication Technology	\$159.54	\$159.54	\$159.54	\$53.18	\$531.80
Travel	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$181.50	\$0.00	\$181.50
Conferences, Seminars and Training (Incl. accommodation and meals)	\$0.00	\$183.64	\$0.00	\$280.91	\$464.55
Cr Maria Kerr	\$341.17	\$518.02	\$203.19	\$251.38	\$1,313.76
Information and Communication Technology	\$159.54	\$159.54	\$159.54	\$53.18	\$531.80
Travel	\$181.63	\$254.83	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$436.46
Conferences, Seminars and Training (Incl. accommodation and meals)	\$0.00	\$103.65	\$43.65	\$198.20	\$345.50
Cr Ranka Rasic	\$229.62	\$505.31	\$365.25	\$2,031.07	\$3,131.25
Information and Communication Technology	\$159.54	\$159.54	\$159.54	\$53.18	\$531.80
Travel	\$70.08	\$85.77	\$205.71	\$749.71	\$1,111.27
Conferences, Seminars and Training (Incl. accommodation and meals)	\$0.00	\$260.00	\$0.00	\$1,228.18	\$1,488.18
Cr Sam David	\$509.54	\$323.33	\$159.54	\$2,073.88	\$3,066.29
Information and Communication Technology	\$159.54	\$159.54	\$159.54	\$53.18	\$531.80
Travel	\$0.00	\$50.15	\$0.00	\$1,002.52	\$1,052.67
Conferences, Seminars and Training (Incl. accommodation and meals)	\$350.00	\$113.64	\$0.00	\$1,018.18	\$1,481.82
Cr Sarah Branton	\$159.54	\$159.54	\$159.54	\$53.18	\$531.80
Information and Communication Technology	\$159.54	\$159.54	\$159.54	\$53.18	\$531.80
Cr Thomas O'Reilly	\$5,593.97	\$646.81	\$566.03	\$217.94	\$7,024.75
Information and Communication Technology	\$159.54	\$159.54	\$159.54	\$53.18	\$531.80
Travel	\$668.20	\$233.63	\$406.49	\$164.76	\$1,473.08
Conferences, Seminars and Training (Incl. accommodation and meals)	\$4,766.23	\$253.64	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$5,019.87
Cr Thuy Dang	\$538.10	\$301.94	\$227.72	\$2,080.24	\$3,148.00
Information and Communication Technology	\$159.54	\$159.54	\$159.54	\$53.18	\$531.80
Travel	\$178.56	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,008.88	\$1,187.44
Conferences, Seminars and Training (Incl. accommodation and meals)	\$200.00	\$142.40	\$68.18	\$1,018.18	\$1,428.76
Cr Victoria Borg	\$595.62	\$409.78	\$331.13	\$128.87	\$1,465.40
Information and Communication Technology	\$159.54	\$159.54	\$159.54	\$94.09	\$572.71
Travel	\$0.00	\$136.60	\$146.59	\$34.78	\$317.97
Conferences, Seminars and Training (Incl. accommodation and meals)	\$436.08	\$113.64	\$25.00	\$0.00	\$574.72
Cr Virginia Tachos	\$1,088.17	\$1,152.32	\$1,134.12	\$962.15	\$4,336.75
Information and Communication Technology	\$159.54	\$159.54	\$159.54	\$53.18	\$531.80
Travel	\$514.62	\$849.15	\$758.67	\$756.12	\$2,878.56
Conferences, Seminars and Training (Incl. accommodation and meals)	\$414.01	\$143.63	\$215.91	\$152.85	\$926.40
Total	\$11,468.31	\$5,088.14	\$4,024.22	\$8,282.81	\$28,863.48

Are you making a submission as an individual or on behalf of an organisation?

Organisation.

Your name: Tom Razmovski, Group Manager Operations.

Email address: [REDACTED]

Do you wish for your submission to remain anonymous? No, the submission is on behalf of Brimbank City Council.

The proposed regulations prescribe dates on and from when councils and Alpine Resorts Victoria must provide the four-stream services.

The four-stream waste and recycling services are:

- general rubbish,
- mixed recycling,
- glass recycling, and
- food organics and garden organics (FOGO)

The proposed regulations also outline other matters relating to auditors and infringement offences.

Do you support the commencement date of 1 July 2027 for the mandatory provision of all four service streams by councils and Alpine Resorts Victoria? No

Please provide further details on your response:

Brimbank is one of a few remaining Council's that runs in-house residential kerbside waste and recycling collection services. The key impacts for Council of the earlier implementation of the FOGO service (by July 2027) will be the supply of mobile garbage bins and procurement of waste collection vehicles and recruitment of drivers.

Brimbank alone would need approx. 100,000 mobile garbage bins for its FOGO service (25,000) and separate glass service (75,000) and possibly an additional eight collection vehicles and drivers.

All Councils will be required to implement the 4-stream system by July 2027, so there is some potential for competitive demand at this time, which could lead to cost increases or scarcity of key resources (bins, trucks and drivers particularly).

Which option would be more appropriate?

- 2027 for glass services and 2030 for FOGO services (base case)

Please provide further details on why you consider this option more appropriate:

It should be noted that the delivery timeframes for waste collection vehicles are around 18 months and there is a skill shortage in waste collection vehicle drivers.

It should also be noted that the new service offerings will likely increase the waste charge cost per dwelling and with current cost of living pressures this will contribute to hardship for some in the community.

Do you have any comments regarding the infringement or auditor provisions of the proposed regulations?

The infringement system is proposed to be in effect as the start date of the 4-Bin Service Model of 1 July 2027.

It is noted that an acceptable items list hasn't been finalised and is still evolving.

The proposed infringement system includes fines for non-compliance to the Kerbside Reform.

The Regulatory Impact Statement references the Victorian Government working in partnership with councils and the recycling industry to minimise recycling service disruption to Victorian households, including a \$6.6 million relief package to alleviate financial pressure on councils that helped to reduce impacts on households and councils.

The referenced disruption to Victorian households and Council's was as a result international policy and recycling industry impacts, outside the control of local government. Whilst the intent of infringement and auditor provisions is clear to ensure the Kerbside Reform can be monitored and controlled for effective implementation, greater consideration should be given to a partnership model arrangement with greater collaboration with Council's in the first instance.

Do you have any other comments on the proposed regulations?

Whilst Brimbank Council understand the intent of the infringement and auditor provisions, greater consideration should be given to a model that embraces partnering and greater collaboration with Council's in the first instance.

Proposed Household Waste and Recycling Service Standard

The proposed service standard outlines the acceptable service arrangements, including:

- the approach to kerbside or drop-off services,
- consistent standard contents list that describes what materials can be placed into each waste and recycling stream, and
- consistent colours for each stream in relation to bin lids, labelling and signage.

Do you support the commencement date of 1 July 2027 for the service standard under section 62 of the Circular Economy Act? No.

Please provide further details on your response:

The key impacts for Council of the earlier implementation of the FOGO service (by July 2027) to align with the commencement of the separate glass collection service will be the supply of mobile garbage bins, procurement of waste collection vehicles and recruitment of drivers.

As indicated above: Brimbank alone would need approx. 100,000 mobile garbage bins for its FOGO service (25,000) and separate glass service (75,000) and possibly an additional eight collection vehicles and drivers. All Councils will be required to implement the 4-stream system by July 2027, so there is some potential for competitive demand at this time, which could lead to cost increases or scarcity of key resources (bins, trucks and drivers particularly).

The Good Practice Guidelines for Service Rates and Charges are made under Section 87 of the Local Government Act 2020. They set out what constitutes good practice by councils in the determination and declaration of Service Rates and Charges under Section 162 of the Local Government Act 1989 and any other matters related to compliance and accountability by councils. Community education and awareness programs will be an essential component to ensure the effective and efficient delivery of the proposed waste reforms, and critical to delivering on the shared objectives of the State and Local Governments in this regard. Consideration should be given to allow the costs to deliver waste education and awareness programs to be included in a separate Service Waste Charge for full cost recovery as these will have a specific and tangible benefit to each household. The Guidelines currently allow a separate waste charge for the management of waste, including transport, storage, processing and disposal and associated infrastructure, however community education and awareness programs are currently excluded.

Which option would be more appropriate?

- 2027 for glass services and 2030 for FOGO services (base case)

Please provide further details on why you consider this option more appropriate:

It should be noted that the delivery timeframes for waste collection vehicles are around 18 months and there is a skill shortage in waste collection vehicle drivers.

There would also likely be an increased cost to households for the provision of these extra services. Whilst the intent of the changes is supported, the financial impact on households must be recognised.

Do you agree with the proposed acceptable service arrangements for FOGO? Agree.

Please explain your answer:

The general requirements of Council providing a FOGO service, as a single service with combined collection of food organics and garden organics material unless this is not reasonably practicable, in accordance with section 2.1 of the Household Waste and Recycling Service Standard is considered reasonable.

Do you agree with the proposed acceptable service arrangements for kerbside collection? Agree

Please explain your answer:

The general requirements of Council providing each of the four streams of waste and recycling services as kerbside collection services unless this is not reasonably, in accordance with section 2.2.1 and 2.2.2 of the Household Waste and Recycling Service Standard is considered reasonable.

Do you agree with councils and Alpine Resorts Victoria being required to provide households with an option to opt-out of a FOGO kerbside collection service?

Strongly disagree.

Please explain your answer:

Council 'strongly disagrees' that it should be responsible for auditing and managing a FOGO Opt-out service. The preference is for Council to offer a 'universal' FOGO service that is provided to all households, where practical. It is considered a home composting system would complement a FOGO service, where the choice not to use the 'universal' FOGO service would be at the discretion of the household. An Opt-out service may be practical and appropriate in some areas, but Councils should not have the obligation for compliance or the administration of this.

The Kerbside Reform proposes the FOGO to be offered as opt-out service, where residents would only be allowed to opt-out subject to an approved and audited home composting system administered by Council. The rationale is that those residents that have a compliant home composting system would not require a FOGO service. The Opt-Out FOGO service will be problematic for Councils to administer and regularly audit any home composting system; Bendigo for example, has indicated their auditing process is resource intensive and time consuming. Furthermore, residents may not understand that approval is required, based on agreed criteria, to opt-out, which may create tension with Council officers seeking to ensure compliance.

This change will be problematic and a resource burden, as Councils will need to confirm eligible households has an appropriate composting system in place that is maintained regularly.

The general requirements of Council providing a household opt-out option for FOGO service, in accordance with section 2.2.3 of the Household Waste and Recycling Service Standard are **not** considered reasonable.

Do you agree with the proposed acceptance arrangements for drop-off services? Agree. 12 of 54

Please explain your answer:

The general requirements of Council providing a drop off service, in accordance with section 2.3 of the Household Waste and Recycling Service Standard are considered reasonable, if required.

Do you agree with the standard content lists for each waste and recycling stream?

Agree

Please explain your answer:

The standard contents list for glass recycling service, mixed recycling service, FOGO service and general rubbish service included in section 2.4.2, 2.4.3, 2.4.4 and 2.4.5 of the service standard and the list of items not accepted in any service at section 2.4.6 are considered reasonable, with the noted exceptions below:

Long-life cartons (e.g. soy milk, long-life milk, soup, stock, juice boxes) and soft plastics are acceptable items in accordance with Table 3 Section 2.4.3, however under processing contract arrangements, these are considered contaminants.

Should the lists be accepted, these items would require negotiations for variation to contract conditions, to ensure compliance with the service standard is achieved.

We note this may also come at a cost to residents and may not be possible to accommodate as accepted materials by some processors.

Do you have any other comments regarding the proposed service standard?

The Kerbside Reform proposes to exclude any form of plastic or cornstarch caddie bin liners and that only paper (newspaper etc..) or paper towel would be the allowable material. The rationale provided was that other than paper all other material is considered as contamination by processors.

The caddie bin liner requirements are not considered significant and can be communicated through community awareness/education programs which are currently undertaken by in-house resources.

This change is not considered significant and could be managed through education and awareness programs.

Whilst the proposed waste reforms apply to councils and Alpine Resorts Victoria (ARV) and service providers who carry out the provision of the service or services on behalf of councils or ARV, consideration should be given to regulate private waste collection service providers that provide waste collection services to households.

Setting out quality and performance standards for the private sector will enable a greater holistic approach for the objectives of a circular economy to be achieved.

Excluding private collection services from these standards sets up a two-tiered system, is inequitable and could be a perverse incentive to engage private collections rather than a Council service, in some circumstances. It also fails to achieve the circular economy objectives that have driven this change in Councils and ARV.

Regulatory Impact Statement

The Regulatory Impact Statement outlines the range of regulatory options considered to help Victoria set the standard for better recycling at home, as well as assessing the impacts of each option. A multi-criteria analysis was used to assess and consider the costs and benefits of each option. The analysis and broader context describe why the Victorian Government's proposed regulations and service standard are the preferred option.

Do you support 'Option 4 – 2027 commencement with kerbside services where reasonably practicable' as the preferred option? Yes, of the available options.

Please explain your answer:

Option 4 - 2027 commencement with kerbside services where reasonably practicable is the preferred option of the available options. Notwithstanding that Option 4 is the preferred options, it should be noted that the earlier implementation of the FOGO service (by July 2027) will be the supply of mobile garbage bins and procurement of waste collection vehicles and recruitment of drivers.

In addition, the delivery timeframes for waste collection vehicles are around 18 months and there is a skill shortage in waste collection vehicle drivers that may impact the earlier commencement of the FOGO service to align with the commencement of the separate glass collection service.

Do you have any other comments on the Regulatory Impact Statement?

The Regulatory Impact Statement could be perceived as deficient as it is based on current technology and practices and does not contemplate new technologies or approaches; that is, in future, it may be possible to collect comingled material (glass with recyclables, or FOGO with Waste) and separate and recover the materials at the point of processing. The current RIS assumes 4 streams in 4 bins only.

Submit



Inquiry into Food Security in Victoria

Submission - Brimbank City Council

July 2024

Council respectfully acknowledges and recognises the Wurundjeri and Bunurong Peoples as the Traditional Custodians of the land in the City of Brimbank, and pays respect to Elders past, present and future. For the Traditional Custodians, the lands in the City of Brimbank have always been a significant trading and meeting place.



Preamble

Brimbank City Council ('Council') welcomes the opportunity to provide a submission to the Inquiry into food security by the Victoria Legislative Council Legal and Social Issues Committee.

This submission addresses relevant questions for consideration by the Victorian Legislative Council Legal and Social Issues Committee by providing analysis of the key issues and presenting recommendations for consideration. It is informed by the knowledge of Council staff and engagement with local stakeholders, including agencies who support food insecure community members.

Contemporary and localised (i.e. postcode and local government area specific) quantitative data relating to food insecurity is largely unavailable. Therefore, the submission places a strong emphasis on sharing stories and anecdotes from Council staff and community workers that help illuminate the true experiences and consequences of food insecurity.

Council is grateful to our community service partners and staff who have generously shared their experiences and helped inform this submission.

Summary of recommendations

1. Collect and disseminate robust localised data on food insecurity over time to inform evidence-based practice.
2. Advocate to the Federal Government to raise social security payments in line with recommendations of the Interim Economic Inclusion Advisory Committee.
3. Adequately fund food relief services to meet acute need.
4. Support strategic collaboration between food relief and other community services to address underlying causes of food insecurity by connecting vulnerable community members to support services.
5. Recognise the crucial and unique role of maternal child health services in supporting adequate nutrition and food security for young children through dedicated funded training and resourcing.
6. Recognise the importance of 'third spaces,' including neighbourhood houses and libraries, in addressing food insecurity by adequately resourcing to implement long-term food security initiatives.
7. Recognise the role of schools and early years services in providing food relief and addressing food insecurity and provide adequate resourcing for this vital service.
8. Build off existing best practice examples and evidence-base in early childhood and school settings to implement initiatives that address food security in the long-term.
9. Engage meaningfully with Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) communities to ensure food security measures are appropriate for their needs.
10. Fund and support community gardens as a tool to address food insecurity and social isolation, with a focus on areas where communities experience socio-economic disadvantage.



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Introduction

The City of Brimbank ('Brimbank') is situated on the traditional lands of the Wurundjeri and Bunurong peoples, who have cared for this country for generations.

Brimbank is located in the western and north-western suburbs of Melbourne, between 11 and 23 kilometres from the Central Business District. It is a growing residential area, with substantial industrial and commercial areas. Brimbank encompasses a total land area of 123 square kilometres. Brimbank is an established middle-ring municipality with an estimated resident population of 196,046 as of June 2023.¹ It is set to grow gradually over the next 20 years. The municipality continues to attract families, with a relatively high proportion of households with children.

Brimbank is one of Australia's most culturally diverse communities, with 48% of our residents born outside Australia, and 57% speaking a language other than English at home. The proportion of Brimbank residents born in Vietnam, India, Philippines, Malta, and North Macedonia (the five main countries of birth) is greater than for Melbourne and Australia. The number of residents who speak English not well or not well at all is 13.1%, compared to 5.4% for greater Melbourne.² Brimbank City Council ('Council') and the community are proud of our cultural diversity and considers it as one of our core strengths and greatest assets.

Many Brimbank residents experience entrenched structural disadvantage that persists across much of Melbourne's outer suburban areas due to a range of factors such as unemployment, low levels of educational attainment, high levels of homelessness and financial / housing stress compared to Greater Melbourne and Victoria. Brimbank residents also have higher levels of modifiable health risks such as diabetes and smoking,³ and consistently has experienced the highest losses from electronic gaming machines in Victoria⁴. Notably, Brimbank also has the highest incidence of homelessness in Melbourne's west and fifth highest in Victoria.⁵

Policy context

In alignment with the requirements of the Public Health and Wellbeing Act (2008), Council is required to develop and implement a Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan (MPHWP) every four years. Council's MPHWP (integrated into its Council Plan) is being renewed in 2025. Council's approach to public health and wellbeing is guided by the Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Plan (VPHWP), in addition to community need. The current and previous iterations of the VPHWP lists 'healthy eating' as a public health priority.⁶

The *Together We Are Brimbank Plan 2021-2025* (integrating the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan, Council Plan 2021-2025 and Community Vision 2040) lists 'Increase healthy eating, active living and physical activity' as one of five health and wellbeing priorities.

¹ .id (2021) City of Brimbank Community Profile, www.profile.id.com.au/brimbank, accessed July 2024

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2018) Census of Population and Housing: Estimating homelessness 2016, Cat. No. 2049.0

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Victorian Department of Health (2024) Victorian public health and wellbeing plan 2023–27. Melbourne: State Government of Victoria



The *Brimbank Children's Strategy 2020-2024* also articulates Council's commitment to "highlight the importance of food security" under its health and wellbeing priority.⁷

Food Insecurity in Brimbank

Food insecurity exists 'whenever the availability of nutritionally adequate and safe foods or the ability to acquire acceptable food in socially acceptable ways is limited or uncertain.'⁸ To this end, food insecurity can be based on having enough food (the quantity) or having inadequate quality and diversity of food and can be categorised into degrees of severity.

There is limited statistical information on food insecurity in Victoria, and no agreed approach on how food insecurity is measured across Australia.

The Victorian Population Health Survey collects some data relating to food insecurity; the 2019/20 data is displayed below. It is expected that since 2019 and 2020, food insecurity has worsened due to COVID-19 pandemic and cost-of-living crisis.

Food insecurity indicators

- **Proportion of Adults Who Consume Sufficient Fruit and Vegetables:** The proportion of adults consuming sufficient fruit and vegetables is notably low across all regions. Both Brimbank (3.4%) and the Western Public Health Unit ('WPHU') Catchment (3.2%) are slightly below the Victorian average (3.6%), indicating a widespread issue with adequate fruit and vegetable intake.
- **Ran Out of Money to Buy Food in the Last 12 Months:** In the 2020 Victorian Population Health Survey, a measure of food insecurity was the proportion of adults who ran out of money to buy food in the last 12 months (more contemporary data is unavailable). A significant proportion of Brimbank residents (10.4%) reported running out of money to buy food, which is substantially higher than both the WPHU catchment (6.3%) and the state average (5.9%). This suggests higher levels of economic hardship and food insecurity in Brimbank.⁹
- **Proportion of People Who Have Experienced Severe Food Insecurity:** The rate of severe food insecurity in the WPHU catchment (6.9%) is slightly lower than the Victorian average (8.1%). No specific data is provided for Brimbank in this category, but the high proportion of residents running out of money for food indicates potential severe food insecurity issues.

The lack of contemporary data is a significant concern to Council and its capacity to address local health and wellbeing needs. Council and its partners would greatly benefit from more recent localised (i.e. post-code specific where possible) data and research in relation to food security.

Recommendation: Collect and disseminate robust localised data on food insecurity over time to inform evidence-based practice.

⁷ Brimbank City Council (2020) *Brimbank Children's Strategy 2020–2024*. Melbourne: Brimbank City Council

⁸ Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations, Committee on World Food Security (2012) *Report on Food Security*. Rome: FAO, p. 5.

⁹ Victorian Department of Health and Human Services (2021) *Victorian Population Health Survey 2020: Food Security*. Melbourne: Victorian Department of Health and Human Services.



Health and wellbeing indicators

Evidence demonstrates correlations between food insecurity, poor nutrition and negative physical and mental health outcomes.¹⁰ Poor nutrition is a key modifiable risk factor correlated with cardiovascular disease, type II diabetes, cancers and dental caries.

Brimbank and WPHU Catchment residents reports poor health and wellbeing outcomes in comparison to greater Melbourne and Victoria; many of these indicators remain unchanged or have indeed worsened over time.¹¹

Addressing food insecurity has significant potential to improve the health and wellbeing of the Brimbank community, preventing chronic disease, premature death and the burden of disease of the health system in Victoria.

Some key indicators of health and wellbeing in Brimbank are presented below; these have been specifically chosen due to their correlation with food insecurity.

- **Overweight or Obese (BMI $\geq$ 25):** Overweight and obesity rates in Brimbank (52.6%) are higher than the Victorian average (51.0%) WPHU catchment (48.9%).¹²
- **Type II Diabetes:** Brimbank has a significantly higher incidence rate of diabetes compared to broader regions.
The number of diabetes cases in Brimbank is 12,507, with a standardised ration (age-standardised rate) of 141, which is markedly higher than the Greater Melbourne standardised ratio (SR) of 103, the Victoria SR of 101, and the national SR of 100.¹³ This indicates that diabetes is more prevalent in Brimbank than in the wider Melbourne area, the state of Victoria, and Australia as a whole.
In addition, premature mortality from diabetes is approximately 44% higher than the Victorian average in Brimbank.¹⁴
- **High or Very High Psychological Distress:** Psychological distress levels are high across all regions, with Brimbank (25.3%) experiencing slightly higher rates than the WPHU catchment (24.4%) and Victoria (23.5%).
- **Dental caries:** Tooth decay is largely preventable by diet and good oral hygiene. In Brimbank, the average number of decayed, missing or filled teeth per child is more than double that of Victoria in children 0 to 5 years old, and 1.5 times more in children 6 to 12 years old.¹⁵

¹⁰ Gundersen, C. and Ziliak, J.P. (2015). Food insecurity and health outcomes. *Health Affairs*, 34(11), pp.1830-1839.

¹¹ Victorian Department of Health and Human Services (2021) Victorian Population Health Survey 2020: Food Security. Melbourne: Victorian Department of Health and Human Services.

¹² Victorian Department of Health and Human Services (2021) Victorian Population Health Survey 2020: Food Security. Melbourne: Victorian Department of Health and Human Services

¹³ Public Health Information Development Unit (PHIDU), Torrens University Australia (n.d.) Social Health Atlases of Australia: LGAs. Adelaide: PHIDU, Torrens University Australia

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Dental Health Services Victoria (2020) Oral health data by area 2017-2019 Profiles [Internet]. [cited 2023 May 22]. Available from: <https://www.dhsv.org.au/oral-health-programs/LGA-oral-health-profiles>



Role of poverty in food insecurity

The greatest predictor of food insecurity is financial distress, and food insecurity rarely exists in isolation from other vulnerabilities.¹⁶ Given the high rates of financial distress and high levels of socio-economic disadvantage in Brimbank, it is unsurprising that food insecurity impacts a significant proportion of community members.

Australia-wide survey shows that more than 60% of those facing financial stress reported higher levels of food insecurity than those who are financially stable. Of respondents aged 18 to 44, approximately 70% of those reporting high levels of financial stress also reported experiencing food insecurity. Women were more likely to report both eating less and skipping meals (12.2% for women and 8.6% for men), especially for those aged 18 to 44 (19% for women and 14.5% for men).¹⁷

Census data indicates Brimbank is the second most disadvantaged local government area (LGA) in greater Melbourne and the third most disadvantaged LGA in Victoria. Our residents are more socio-economically disadvantaged than residents in Victoria and Australia overall. In Brimbank, 40% of the population – nearly 77,000 people – live in the lowest decile of relative disadvantage for Australia.¹⁸

The ongoing cost of living crisis has intensified existing vulnerabilities, making it increasingly difficult for many residents to afford basic necessities, including food. Across the board, more people are turning to emergency food relief agencies and Council for support, and agencies are facing unprecedented demand.

Feedback from community service providers revealed that residents were being forced to choose between food and other basic necessities.

“There is also an example of a neighbour, has a wife and three children of school age, he lost his job and has to wait for six months for Centrelink to process his eligibility to be able to be entitled to go to the Food Bank. I directed him to a Food Bank, who was able to help and assured he was a genuine case. Again, there is a gap in the system, where people become unemployed and the length of time to process through Centrelink is long and what happens to the families in the meantime – it needs to be addressed.”

(Consultation participant)

“An example, a father that has six children and no sick leave and is working, having to take unpaid leave, the priority is paying the rent and bills, as well as feed the six children. Has had to come in and ask, as have not used Food Banks before, ask for assistance and help. There are gaps too, the working poor, if you are ill and have to stay home or you can’t stay home and you have small children, because somebody has to earn some money.”

(Consultation participant)

“Another example, one of the staff saw in a setting saw a parent had a food voucher, given by a family support services agency, this parent was wanting to sell their food voucher, in

¹⁶ Botha, F., Payne, A.A., & Gamarra Rondinel, A. (2023). Taking the Pulse of the Nation: Informing Australian Economic & Social Policy. Melbourne Institute & Roy Morgan.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ id (2021) City of Brimbank Community Profile, www.profile.id.com.au/brimbank, accessed July 2024



order to get the money and purchase pain killers, because the parent was in severe pain and did not have the money to buy medications.”

(Consultation participant)

“Witnessed one parent wanting to swap their food voucher (received from family services) for money in order to buy medicine. Basically, the parent wanted to sell their food voucher in order to buy medicine as they cannot afford.”

(Consultation participant)

The Inquiry must recognise the crucial role of increasing social security, notably Jobseeker and Youth Allowance, to adequate levels to ensure the risk of food insecurity in vulnerable communities is reduced. This aligns with recommendations of the Interim Economic Inclusion Advisory Committee, who state “all indicators available to the Committee show current rates of these payments are seriously inadequate, whether measured relative to the National Minimum Wage, in comparison with pensions, or against a range of income poverty measures. People on these payments face the highest levels of financial stress in Australia.”¹⁹

Recommendation: Advocate to the Commonwealth Government to raise social security payments in line with recommendations of the Interim Economic Inclusion Advisory Committee

Emergency food relief

Emergency food relief largely addresses the symptoms of food insecurity as opposed to the root causes. Ideally, food relief should be provided for short periods of acute need, or as a ‘stopgap’ instead of a solution to chronic food insecurity. Nevertheless, many communities in Brimbank rely on food relief and will continue to do so for as long as the root causes of food insecurity and entrenched disadvantage are not addressed.

As the cost-of-living crisis worsens, local agencies and food banks also reported an influx of community members accessing food banks for the first time. Council partners who supply food parcels report tightening their criteria for accessing food relief, leading to situations where they must turn away individuals and families in need.

Demand is growing all the time in the face of what really is a cost-of-living crisis. More and more people are inquiring and attending for food. Our policy is that we cannot afford to allocate any more resources to the Food Bank than we already do, and so our response has been to toughen eligibility criteria to keep the program the same size.

To this end we have now moved all of our pensioner families, aged, disability, and carers from a three week to a six-week rotation. We have kept three-week rotations for people in less fortunate circumstance such as people on jobseeker payments who are in private rentals or rooming houses etc.

The cost of purchasing food from Food Bank Victoria has also doubled in the past year as they receive less donated food and spend more to buy food in. It is always a struggle to get enough supplies of food to keep the program running. All agencies that provide

¹⁹ Commonwealth of Australia, 2023; Interim Economic Inclusion Advisory Committee 2023–24 Report to Government



this service are experiencing the same issues and many are cutting back services or stopping them all together.

About half of our Food Bank costs are funded with the other half coming directly from our bottom line.

(Consultation participant)

It is well documented that food relief acts as a critical connector to other services, as it often serves as the initial point of access to social services due to the immediate need to alleviate hunger.²⁰ When food relief services also offer holistic wraparound services, they also provide an important mechanism for early intervention by connecting individuals to essential services such as health care, emergency housing, and employment support.²¹

Case study: Tin Shed Emergency Relief Sessions

The Tin Shed in St Albans provides emergency food relief through the distribution of food parcels to vulnerable community members, including those with a healthcare card.

IPC Health, a local community health service, collaborates with Tin Shed to offer a monthly emergency relief and advice session in St Albans. This co-location approach invites community organisations, including health, legal, and housing services, as well as government agencies and Council, to participate in the sessions, providing holistic support to community members.

By bringing diverse services together in one place, this model simplifies access and encourages community engagement with essential resources. The initiative attracts a wide range of community members and volunteers, fostering a supportive environment where immediate needs are met, and underlying issues such as health, housing, and legal concerns may be addressed.

This integrated method demonstrates an effective strategy for tackling food insecurity by connecting individuals to the broader network of support services they require.

Reliance on food banks and third sector organisations amongst the Brimbank community ultimately does little to address underlying causes of food insecurity. However, it provides a vital service that should be sufficiently and adequately resourced, in addition to longer term solutions.

Recommendation: Adequately fund food relief services to meet acute need.

Recommendation: Support strategic collaboration between food relief and other community services to address underlying causes of food insecurity by connecting vulnerable community members to support services.

²⁰ Pollard, CM & Booth, S 2019. 'Food Insecurity and Hunger in Rich Countries-It Is Time for Action against Inequality'. International journal of environmental research and public health, 16, 10. 10.3390/ijerph16101804.

²¹ Department of Social Services (n.d.) Review of Commonwealth-funded Emergency and Food Relief Services. [Internet]. Available from: <https://www.dss.gov.au/review-of-commonwealth-funded-emergency-and-food-relief-services> [Accessed 24 Jul. 2024].

Key population groups

Young families

Adequate nutrition in early childhood is crucial for developmental and lifelong health outcomes. Food insecurity in early childhood contributes to adverse child development outcomes across cognitive and behavioural domains.²²

In Brimbank, many young families rely on third party organisations to provide adequate nutrition to infants. The price of formula is cost prohibitive to low-income families across Victoria. Reports indicate that some families water down the formula to make it last longer, which impacts an infant's nutritional intake, or they switch to cow's milk earlier than recommended before their developing digestive system can process the milk correctly. Third party organisations report to Council that they are currently unable to meet demand for formula, with 11% of requests not being able to be filled due to stock shortages.

Local governments are uniquely placed to engage with young families, due to their interface with young families through maternal child health and early years programs.

Maternal child health (MCH) nurses already play a crucial role in supporting infants and young children in their first 2000 days of life through provision of support with child and health development. They can support food security through providing support with breastfeeding, infant and child nutrition and screening for food insecurity.

While these activities already form part of their remit, there is further potential to support and resource MCH nurses to leverage established professional relationships and provide non-judgemental support to food insecure young families.

Case study: in-language resources to encourage healthy lifestyle habits

INFANT (INfant Feeding, Active play, and NuTrition) program is recognised by the US Center for Disease Control as a highly effective model for combating food insecurity and fostering community health through early intervention.

The Western Public Health Unit (WPHU) and Deakin University's Institute for Physical Activity and Nutrition (IPAN) collaborated to adapt and translate INFANT program resources for culturally and linguistically diverse families in Melbourne's west. The project translated resources into Punjabi, Hindi, Urdu, Arabic, Mandarin, and Vietnamese supporting CALD families to promote healthy lifestyle habits from infancy. 44% of the Western Health catchment speak a language other than English, meaning the initiative provides critical access to evidence-based nutrition and active play information for new parents.

Recommendation: Recognise the crucial and unique role of maternal child health services in supporting adequate nutrition and food security for young children through dedicated funded training and resourcing.

²² Gallegos D, Eivers A, Sondergeld P, Pattinson C. Food Insecurity and Child Development: A State-of-the-Art Review. Int J Environ Res Public Health. 2021 Aug 26;18(17):8990. doi: 10.3390/ijerph18178990. PMID: 34501578; PMCID: PMC8431639.



Young people

Young people's experiences of food insecurity are unique and require tailored solutions that address their specific needs.

Australia-wide research suggests that in 2021, 20.8% of young Australians had experienced food insecurity in the previous two years.²³ Council partners working directly with food insecure young people report that shame, embarrassment, and stigma present a barrier for young people accessing the necessary support they need; this reflects the wider evidence-base.²⁴ The ramifications for this avoidance are wide-reaching. Young people may resort to shoplifting to meet their basic needs, leading to criminalisation, and unnecessarily pushing young people into the youth justice system for "offences of necessity." Addressing this issue requires a paradigm shift in how authorities view and respond to these acts, advocating for a more compassionate approach that recognises and addresses the underlying crisis of food insecurity for young people.

Tailored solutions that address the specific needs of young people are essential in combating food insecurity. Schools can play a pivotal role by providing safe, stigma-free access to food for unaccompanied minors and those from culturally diverse backgrounds. Additionally, food programs should be adapted to respect cultural preferences, ensuring that children do not feel ashamed of the food they bring to school. By integrating these solutions, we can alleviate some of the mental health burdens faced by both children and parents, who may feel the weight of not being able to provide adequate food.

Working with young people who, talking about the relationship between poverty and food insecurity, there is also a large relationship around attachment to shame. A lot of young people that I have talked to, do not want to be seen to be having to go to a food bank, or somewhere that labels or immediately identifies them visibly, as experiencing homelessness or experiencing poverty. Young people that I have been talking to, said they would potentially go and shoplift food, rather than have to stand in a line, to be seen and be visibly labelled. Moving into criminalisation then, simply because children and young people are trying to have their basic needs met, bringing them into the youth justice system, simply out of necessity. Crimes or offences of necessity shouldn't be happening and maybe if we can circumvent any of those shoplifting events, through alternate services, Council could have a voice in that, to be able to ensure that police are not looking at this purely through a punitive lens and looking at it through the lens that there is this crisis and there is food shortage and that potentially a young person is committing an offence of necessity. It should be treated as such and not penalised.

(Consultation participant)

Children

Children's experiences of food insecurity profoundly impact their health, development, and overall wellbeing. Poor nutrition due to inadequate intake of essential nutrients can hinder developmental milestones and lead to long-term health issues. Food insecure children are

²³ Waite, C., Gallo Cordoba, B., Walsh, L., Mikola, M., & Cutler, B. Realities of Food Insecurity for Young People: Insights from the 2021 Australian Youth Barometer. Monash University, Melbourne: Centre for Youth Policy and Education Practice; 2022. DOI: 10.26180/20128370

²⁴ Ibid.



more likely to consume cheap, energy-dense foods high in fat and sugar, resulting in increased risks of obesity and health problems, which are disproportionately prevalent in Brimbank.

Food insecurity amongst young families results in higher rates of absenteeism and low attendance in educational settings, as children without adequate food are less likely to attend school or kindergarten, impacting their learning and development.

Addressing food insecurity must also consider the unique experiences of unaccompanied minors. Agencies report that many of the systems aiming to support vulnerable cohorts are reliant on the assumption that a parent / caregiver / protective adult is present in their lives and able to access services and support on their behalf. This assumption results in children and young people not receiving the care and support that they need.

Leveraging schools and early childhood education services as key providers of food relief is an effective way of supporting food security. Schools can create environments where food is readily accessible without stigma, through initiatives like breakfast clubs, swap pantries, and collaborations with organisations such as OzHarvest. These programs not only ensure children receive nutritious meals but also foster a sense of community and support among families and communities. Activity-based food relief programs that engage children in positive and non-stigmatising ways can help mitigate feelings of shame and encourage them to seek the support they need.

Council heard numerous examples of activity-based food provision as an effective measure to address food insecurity by supporting young people to access a wide range of services.

Recommendation: Recognise the role of schools and early years services in providing food relief and addressing food insecurity and provide adequate resourcing for this vital service.

Recommendation: Build off existing best practice examples and evidence-base in early childhood and school settings to implement initiatives that address food security in the long-term.

CALD communities

Culturally and linguistically diverse communities are a key cohort that are vulnerable to food insecurity in Australia.²⁵ As highlighted, Brimbank is one of the most culturally diverse communities in Australia, with 48% of our residents born outside Australia, and 57% speaking a language other than English at home. Brimbank is also home to many newly arrived communities, including refugees and people seeking asylum; this demographic experience further barriers to accessing food relief and often do not have access to social security.

Consultation indicated that CALD families in Brimbank report not accessing foodbanks despite need, due to the lack of culturally appropriate food choices, transport barriers and knowledge of local support agencies.

²⁵ Bowden, M. (2009) Understanding food insecurity in Australia. [Internet]. Available from: https://aifs.gov.au/sites/default/files/publication-documents/2009_cfca_understanding_food_insecurity_in_australia_0.pdf [Accessed 24 Jul. 2024]



Meeting the specific needs of CALD will vary across Local Government Areas (LGAs) and cultural group's specific needs. Solutions to food insecurity must be sensitive to the needs of CALD communities and engage CALD communities deliberately and meaningfully to ensure appropriateness.

Recommendation: Engage meaningfully with CALD communities to ensure food insecurity measures are appropriate their needs.

The role of third spaces

The critical role of 'third spaces' cannot be understated, and Council plays a crucial role in providing these at a local level, in particular Neighbourhood Houses and Libraries.

These community facilities already play a critical role in supporting vulnerable communities to access free and low-cost support and activities. The benefit of libraries and neighbourhood houses lies in their ability to draw in groups that typically would not feel comfortable accessing emergency relief services, including food banks, potentially out of fear and shame.

The COVID-19 pandemic demonstrated how neighbourhood houses and libraries can be mobilised in times of crisis to address immediate emergency needs. They also highlighted the importance of 'third spaces' as trusted local community hubs for accessing essential services. There is further potential to utilise these services as tool for supporting long term solutions to food insecurity, not just during times of crisis.

As the level of government closest to community, local government presents a perfect opportunity to engage with vulnerable communities to address food insecurity. By adequately funding and mobilising these community resources, governments and local councils can enhance their capacity to provide timely and effective food relief.

Case study: Seed library

In collaboration with the Climate Emergency & Environment Team, Brimbank Libraries is launching a seed library on July 24, for borrowers keen to start a sustainable garden. The seed library works on the basic principles of *borrow, grow, harvest, donate* - enabling customers to borrow a packet of seeds they can grow at home in a pot, then harvest the seeds and donate them back to the library for other customers to borrow and enjoy, all while reaping the benefits of home grown produce. Each Brimbank library member will be able to borrow one packet of seeds per month. For each donation to the Brimbank Seed Library, members will be able to borrow an additional packet of seeds.

Case study: Neighbourhood Houses COVID-19 emergency food relief response

Council's Neighbourhood Houses Unit (NHU) played a key role in supporting emergency food relief to the Brimbank community during the pandemic. This was funded by the Department of Premier and Cabinet and coordinated by the Community Strengthening Unit.

In June 2021 the Neighbourhood House Unit worked in partnership with The Tin Shed, a local neighbourhood house, to increase emergency food relief to the residents of Brimbank. Through



that partnership, 120 families were assisted through the Tin Shed and 200 boxes a week were distributed via Council and non-Council Neighbourhood Houses and Community Centres to the local community. The partnership included the employment of three young Brimbank residents from disadvantaged backgrounds to pack the food boxes.

Recommendation: Recognise the importance of ‘third spaces,’ including neighbourhood houses and libraries, in addressing food insecurity by adequately resourcing to implement long-term food security initiatives.

Role of the urban environment and food insecurity

Urban spaces can play an important role in enhancing food security and creating healthy food environments by ensuring that all residents have reliable access to affordable, nutritious food. By strategically designing urban spaces, designers can integrate food production and distribution systems within the city infrastructure and avoid ‘food deserts’²⁶.

This may include creating community gardens, and farmers' markets that provide fresh produce locally. However, the Brimbank story demonstrates that proximity to fresh food alone is not sufficient in addressing food insecurity. In Brimbank, some of the areas with access to high numbers of independent fresh food outlets (i.e. St Albans) and public transport options, which are said to be indicators of healthy food environments also coincide with high levels of poverty, preventable disease and food insecurity. Conversely, suburbs in Brimbank with higher socio-economic advantage and lower rates of preventable disease (i.e. Keilor, Taylor's Lakes) would by most measures be considered to be unhealthy food environments and have limited access to fresh and diverse food options.

This is not to discredit the importance of creating supportive environments but highlights that structural approaches to addressing entrenched disadvantage needs to occur in tandem with urban design and localised food supply solutions.

Community gardens

Community gardens are a commonly cited solution to addressing food insecurity, and when implemented effectively have a range of benefits, including reducing food insecurity, improving dietary intake of fresh fruits and vegetables and preventing social isolation.

In the local government context, community gardens are often the key mechanism in which food insecurity is addressed. The strength of community gardens lies in their ability to enable people to grow their own food, and produce food in a wider community context, addressing the food needs of the community as a whole. Community gardens demonstrate the possibility of intensive, innovative urban agriculture to produce a significant amount of food from a small plot and support food systems.

However, community gardens are not a silver bullet, and are not a suitable solution for all community needs, nor do they address food insecurity on a mass scale. To be effective, they often require sustained and significant resourcing, access to suitable land and materials and

²⁶ ²⁶ Hector, D., Boylan, S. and Lee, A. (2016) Healthy food environment scoping review. Sydney: Physical Activity, Nutrition and Obesity Research Group..



volunteers. This can place cost burdens on local governments, who already operate in a financially limiting environment.

For LGAs like Brimbank, where socio-economic disadvantage is high, community gardens require dedicated resourcing and paid staff to operate, unlike some socio-economically advantaged neighbourhoods who may be able to rely on community volunteers and require less government support.

Case study: World Food Garden program – Growing Healthy Communities

The World Food Garden program was a short-term initiative designed to create a culturally diverse and inclusive food garden at Westvale Community Centre. Working with community members from diverse nations and cultures in Oceania, Pasifika and Africa, the program aimed to create an engaging, participatory and joyful space to grow food and share knowledge.

Through food growing, gardening education, artwork and inter-generational knowledge sharing the World Food Garden program created an opportunity to learn about diverse cultures and build social connections. The program was devised and funded by Brimbank City Council and delivered by Sustain: The Australian Food Network.

The Growing Healthy Communities (GHC) project, led by Brimbank City Council, aimed to enhance community engagement, social cohesion, and capability among young people, women, and culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities in Brimbank.

Through a community food sharing and garden program, GHC provided hands-on horticultural training to participants, enabling them to grow and harvest fresh produce. This produce was then used to prepare meals for themselves and vulnerable community members. The project engaged 113 locals, including 88 from CALD backgrounds, 90 women, and 18 young people. GHC's activities included constructing and maintaining a community garden, organising 89 community lunches, and offering horticultural, hospitality, and retail training through Jesuit Community College. The project also featured guest speakers from various organisations, addressing topics like drug and alcohol issues, respectful relationships, and other local services.

The GHC project successfully met most of its goals, with positive impacts on social cohesion and community engagement. Participants reported increased confidence, self-esteem, and a sense of connection with their local community. Practical training provided through the project helped 76 participants develop vocational skills, particularly in horticulture and food preparation. Over 1200 community members accessed the food and meals provided.

The strong partnership between Brimbank City Council and Jesuit Social Services was instrumental in achieving project goals, although sustaining the initiative beyond the project funding period requires ongoing funding and dedicated champions.

Recommendation: Fund and support community gardens as a tool to address food insecurity and social isolation, with a focus on areas where communities experience socio-economic disadvantage.



Conclusion

Food security is a significant issue for the Brimbank community, primarily due to the entrenched structural disadvantage that persists across much of the municipality. The current cost-of-living crisis has exacerbated this disadvantage and experiences of food insecurity and will continue to do so without intervention.

Addressing food insecurity requires a multifaceted approach that holistically identifies and addresses the root causes of food insecurity, not just the symptoms. While local governments are well placed to play a key role in addressing food insecurity at a local level, addressing the structural barriers requires government investment and support.

Council is committed to working with all stakeholders to develop and implement effective solutions to food insecurity. We welcome the opportunity to contribute to this vital inquiry.

Contact

Lynley Dumble
Director, Community Wellbeing





Draft Model Councillor Code of Conduct for feedback

Purpose of the Model Councillor Code of Conduct

Councillors are democratically elected to represent their communities and are expected to conduct themselves appropriately in all aspects of their public life.

The Model Councillor Code of Conduct (Model Code) sets out the individual standards of conduct expected to be observed by Councillors in the course of performing the role of a Councillor. Conduct that does not meet these standards can disrupt council business and prevent councils from serving the interests of their communities.

Background

From 26 October 2024, all Councillors must observe the Model Code made under section 139 of the *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act). The Model Code must be prescribed in regulations and ensure consistent standards of behaviour are observed across Councils.

Before assuming office, Councillors must make an oath or affirmation of office, declaring that they will faithfully and impartially carry out and exercise the functions, powers, authorities and discretions under the Act and any other Act to the best of their skill and judgement. Councillors must also declare that they will abide by the Model Code and uphold the standards of conduct contained in the Model Code.

The Model Councillor Code of Conduct should be read in conjunction with the relevant legislation and council policies referenced in this document.

Guidance material will also be provided to Councillors to support their understanding of the Model Code, including guidance on when a Councillor is considered to be performing the role of a Councillor, examples of the kinds of conduct that may amount to a breach of the Model Code, guidance on other conduct prohibited under the Act (including bullying, sexual harassment, misuse of position etc) and information about what resources and support are available to Councillors.

Design Principles

The following design principles have been developed to guide the development of the Model Councillor Code of Conduct:

- 1. A code of conduct is not just a statement of ethics. It must go beyond that and describe specific behaviours that are required and prohibited.**

Consistent with the current standards of conduct, it is intended that the Model Code not just set out high level principles of appropriate conduct but comprise of specific behaviours that councillors must comply with.

2. The behaviours described in a code must be necessary for the proper and ethical performance of the role of a councillor. It should not just cover operational matters.

The Model Code needs to reflect the statutory role of a councillor as provided for under section 28 of the Act. It should also reflect community expectations of how those holding public office should conduct themselves ethically and professionally and provide a clear frame of reference of acceptable behaviour to promote high standards of conduct and effective decision-making.

3. The Model Code must be able to be readily understood by councillors and council staff.

The Model Code should clearly define the conduct that is required or prohibited. This will be further supported by guidance that will set out examples of what a breach of each of the elements involves.

4. The behaviours described in a Model Code must be capable of being enforced through an internal arbitration process. Councillors should be able to be held accountable for their conduct.

The conduct set out in the Model Code must be clearly defined so that a breach can be enforced by an Arbiter through internal arbitration processes.

Breach of the Model Councillor Code of Conduct

A failure to behave in the ways described in the Model Councillor Code of Conduct may lead to a finding of misconduct and the imposition of sanctions by an arbiter under section 147 of the Act.

Applications for an internal arbitration process can only be made by a council, a councillor or a group of councillors.

It is the responsibility of every councillor to promote compliance with the Model Councillor Code of Conduct and hold each other accountable.

Applications that are frivolous, vexatious, misconceived or lacking in substance will not be accepted by the Principal Councillor Conduct Registrar.

If council staff or community members have concerns about councillor conduct that is a potential breach of the Act, they can lodge a complaint with the Local Government Inspectorate.

If councillors, council staff or community members become aware of any suspected, potential or actual fraudulent, criminal, unethical or corrupt behaviour this should be reported, as soon as practicable, to the Chief Executive Officer and the appropriate integrity body (eg, the Local Government Inspectorate, the Ombudsman, IBAC).

Contents of the Model Councillor Code of Conduct

Feedback is sought on the below draft Model Councillor Code of Conduct.

1. Performing the role of a Councillor

- (1) Councillors must do everything necessary to ensure that they perform the role and responsibilities of a councillor effectively and responsibly, including by:
 - (a) representing the interests of the municipal community by considering and being responsive to the diversity of interests and needs of the municipal community;
 - (b) being fit to conscientiously perform the role of a Councillor when acting in that capacity or purporting to act in that capacity;
 - (c) diligently using Council processes to become informed about matters which are subject to Council decisions;
 - (d) recognising the role of a Councillor does not include the performance of the Chief Executive Officer and not seeking to interfere with operational matters that fall under the responsibility of the Chief Executive Officer; and
 - (e) recognising and supporting the mayor in the performance of the role of mayor.

2. Behaviours

- (1) Councillors must treat others with dignity, fairness, objectivity, courtesy and respect, including by:
 - (a) not engaging in demeaning, abusive, obscene or threatening behaviour or communications;
 - (b) not engaging in behaviour or communications that may perpetuate disadvantage, stigma, stereotyping, prejudice or aggression against a person;
 - (c) working respectfully and meaningfully with traditional owners, Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations and Aboriginal communities in the municipal district to progress Aboriginal self-determination and reconciliation;
 - (d) supporting the Council in fulfilling its obligation to achieve and promote gender equality; and
 - (e) ensuring behaviour and interactions with children are in line with the Council's policy and procedures and obligations as a child safe organisation.
- (2) Councillors must, as individuals in the workplace, take reasonable care to protect their own health and safety as well as the health and safety of others in the workplace by:
 - (a) adhering to the systems and policies put in place by the Chief Executive Officer to manage risks to health and safety in the workplace to the extent that it applies to councillors; and
 - (b) attending and participating in any required training provided by the Chief Executive Officer to manage risks to health and safety in the workplace.
- (3) Councillors must recognise that the Chief Executive Officer is responsible for council staff, which includes appointing, directing, and managing staff, and act in accordance with

any policy, practice or protocol developed and implemented by the Chief Executive Officer in accordance with section 46 of the Act for managing interactions between members of council staff and councillors.

- (4) Councillors must not harass, victimise, vilify or unlawfully discriminate against a person on the grounds of an attribute listed in section 6 of the *Equal Opportunity Act 2020*.

3. Good governance

- (1) Councillors must comply with the following Council policies and procedures required for delivering good governance for the benefit and wellbeing of the municipal community, by:
 - (a) adhering to the Council's Governance Rules developed, adopted and kept in force by the Council under section 60 of the Act in so far as they relate to:
 - (i) conduct in Council meetings or delegated committee meetings;
 - (ii) requesting and approval of attendance at Council meetings and meetings of delegated committees by electronic means of communication; and
 - (iii) adhering to the Council's Election Period Policy made under section 69 of the Act and ensuring that council resources, equipment, facilities and information are not misused for electoral purposes;
 - (b) acting in accordance with the Council's Councillor Gift Policy adopted under section 138 of the Act;
 - (c) using council resources responsibly in accordance with the Council Expenses Policy adopted and maintained under section 41 of the Act;
 - (d) ensuring that Council information provided in confidence is handled in accordance with the Council's policy for managing confidential information [Please note it is the intention that the regulations will require all Councils to adopt a Council Confidentiality Policy]; and
 - (e) complying with any directions of the Minister issued under section 175 of the Act.

4. Integrity

- (1) Councillors must act with integrity, exercise reasonable care and diligence and avoid any action which may diminish the public's trust and confidence in the integrity of local government, including by:
 - (a) ensuring that their behaviour does not bring discredit upon the Council;
 - (b) not misleading the Council or the public about any matter related to the performance of their public duties; and
 - (c) acting in accordance with the Council's Councillor social media policy [Please note it is the intention that the regulations will require all Councils to adopt a Councillor Social Media Policy].

- (2) Councillors must not seek preferential treatment in their private, personal or business dealings with the Council.

5. The Model Councillor Code of Conduct does not limit robust public debate

- (1) Nothing in the Model Councillor Code of Conduct is intended to limit, restrict or detract from robust public debate of issues in a democratic system.

Council policies relating to good governance

Feedback is also sought on whether all Councils should be required to have a confidentiality policy and a Councillor social media policy that are made mandatory through the Model Councillor Code of Conduct.

The purpose of a confidentiality policy is to protect council information that is provided to councillors to assist them in the performance of their role but that needs to be managed securely prior to a Council decision on the matter being made.

The purpose of a Councillor social media policy is to provide guidance to councillors on what is appropriate use of social media so that councillors can express their personal views without misleading the community or breaching the Model Councillor Code of Conduct.

1. Council required to develop, adopt and maintain policies relating to good governance

- (1) A Council must develop, adopt and maintain the following policies in relation to good governance on any prescribed matters to support a Councillor to perform their role in accordance with section 28:
 - (a) a confidentiality policy; and
 - (b) a councillor social media policy.
- (2) A Council's confidentiality policy must include procedures regarding access and non-disclosure of Council documents that must be managed securely as a matter of good governance.
- (3) A Council's Councillor social media policy must include:
 - (a) clear guidance on the appropriate use of social media by Councillors in the performance of the role of a Councillor consistent with their obligations under the Model Councillor Code of Conduct;
 - (b) the rights of a Councillor to express an independent view consistent with the *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*; and
 - (c) a requirement for Councillors to make it clear when they are expressing an independent view that their comment is their personal view and does not represent the Council.



Mayoral and councillor training

Overview

Purpose

Mandatory training is intended to ensure that mayors and councillors are equipped with the knowledge and skills they need to effectively perform their roles throughout the council term. Councillors are elected to represent their communities in long-term strategic planning and decision-making that often affects outcomes for the whole municipality.

Background

From 26 October 2024, the *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act) will require all councillors to complete councillor induction training within four months of being sworn in as councillor, and professional development training annually beginning in the first full calendar year after being elected. In addition, mayors (including acting mayors appointed for at least one month) and deputy mayors must complete mayoral training within one month of being elected to the position. The council's Chief Executive Officer (CEO) is responsible for ensuring that mandatory training is available as required. The matters to be addressed, completion timelines and the conduct of training is to be prescribed in regulations.

Design Principles

The following principles will inform the design and delivery of the training:

1. Alignment to key legislative requirements for councillors:

Training is aligned to the role of a council (sections 8 and 9), the role of a councillor (section 28) and the various statutory decisions councils are required to make under the Act. It is not intended to capture legislative requirements that rest with the CEO or council staff.

2. Balancing consistency with local needs

The training is flexible enough to ensure consistency across the sector while enabling councils to tailor training to their local needs.

3. Progressive learning and development

The training is designed to progressively equip councillors with the **information**, knowledge and skills they need over their term and to further develop and strengthen this capacity whilst ensuring councillors are up to date with current information relevant to their councillor role.

4. Cost effectiveness

The training can be designed and delivered within and using existing resources as much as is reasonably practicable, and supports access for councils with limited resources.

Proposed structure of the training

The following table provides an outline of the proposed structure of the training. More detail on the proposed structure for each type of training is included in subsequent sections.

Type of training	Overview
Mayoral training	Designed to equip mayors and deputy mayors with the knowledge and skills to effectively perform their leadership roles. Five topics, reflecting four themes, aligned to the key requirements of the role of mayor are proposed.
Councillor induction training	Designed to equip councillors with introductory knowledge and skills to understand and perform their roles and cultivate an environment of transparency, honesty, integrity and trust between councillors and between councillors and the CEO and senior staff. Eight topics, reflecting seven themes, aligned to the key requirements of the role of councillor are proposed.
Professional development training	Designed to ensure councillors can perform their roles and understand their responsibilities at the level expected by their communities. Fourteen topics, reflecting eight themes, aligned to the key requirements of the role of a councillor are proposed. It is proposed that councillors would complete the 15 topics across the term. This could be achieved either by councils determining which topics to address each year based on a minimum number of topics to be completed annually, or annual topics prescribed for all councils.

It is also proposed to enable councils to determine elective topics. This will include the option to undertake refresher training on any topic from induction, any other topics determined by the council, and mayoral training for other councillors who wish to complete it.

Mayoral training

Theme	Potential topics
1. Roles and responsibilities <i>Knowledge about the roles and responsibilities of the mayor and deputy mayor and support for the roles.</i>	1.1 Roles, responsibilities and support for the mayor and deputy mayor This may include: • Roles and powers of the mayor and deputy mayor • Working as a leadership team of the elected councillors • Support for performing the roles, including allowances
2. Chairing meetings <i>Knowledge and skills related to the mayor's role as the Chair of council meetings.</i>	2.1 Effectively chairing meetings This may include: • Assisting the CEO to develop the agenda • Preparing for the meeting • The role of the Chairperson • Supporting robust public debate • Managing time • Managing conflicts of interest • Using the casting vote • Applying the Council's Governance Rules
3. Engagement <i>Knowledge and skills related to the role as the principal spokesperson for the council and the leader</i>	3.1 Acting as the Council's principal spokesperson This may include: • Role in relation to the Council Plan • Communication and public speaking • Speaking to the media • Effective advocacy

Theme	Potential topics
<i>of civic and ceremonial duties.</i>	Performing civic and ceremonial duties
4. Leadership <i>Knowledge and skills related to the mayor's role as the leader of the elected body of councillors.</i>	4.1 Helping councillors understand and perform their role This may include: - Building and maintaining relationships between councillors, including: - Leading the councillors - Helping the councillor group work together - Helping resolve conflict and disputes - The role of the mayor in the Model Councillor Code of Conduct and the internal resolution procedure - Helping individual councillors, including: - Understanding the skills and challenges for a councillor - Demonstrating conduct that meets expected standards - Supporting a new councillor (including a first-term councillor or a councillor new to the Council) - Leadership skills needed to assist a councillor (e.g., coaching, mentoring and feedback techniques)
	4.2 The relationship between the mayor and CEO This may include: - The importance of the relationship - Establishing good communication and role clarity - Key mayoral responsibilities relating to the CEO (such as leading the performance review process)

Councillor induction training

Theme	Potential topics (* = NEW topics not currently covered by councillor induction)
1. Working together <i>Introductory activities collectively determined by the councillor group to build relationships, connection and trust between councillors to support working as a cohesive group and holding each other to account.</i>	1.1 Councillor group commitment to work as a team* The activities collectively determined by a councillor group to build a positive dynamic may address the following matters: - Councillor group vision and values - Establishing effective working relationships (including with the CEO and senior staff) - Managing alternative viewpoints and resolving disputes between councillors - Reviewing and measuring councillor group performance - Communicating decisions to the community - Setting the tone at the top – creating a positive culture for the whole organisation
2. Key roles within a council <i>Knowledge and skills to support councillors to understand and differentiate between the roles of the Council, councillor and council staff.</i>	2.1 Overview of the council and its elected roles This may include: - The role and legislative context of the Council (including the electoral structure) - How councils are funded - The role of a councillor, including: - Understanding the 3 components of the role: Representative, Governance and Statutory Decision-Maker (i.e., reinforcing collective rather than individual decision-making) - Understanding the strategic rather than operational nature of the role - Key legislative obligations and responsibilities - Managing the transition from a community activist to a councillor - Need to consider the interests of the municipal community rather than ward issues - Allowances and support for councillors (including appropriate use of council resources) - The role of Council as a responsible authority

Theme	Potential topics (* = NEW topics not currently covered by councillor induction)
	- Understanding land and development use, planning controls and relevant processes - Understanding apprehension bias, integrity and scope of discretion in planning matters - Interactions with planning applicant and objectors - The roles of the mayor and deputy mayor, including: - The role of the mayor as the Chair of Council meetings and the Council's principal spokesperson - Helping councillors understand and perform their role - The election process
	2.2 Overview of non-elected roles This may include: - The role of the CEO and council staff - The difference between the role of CEO and councillor - Legislative prohibition on directing council staff - Managing councillor and staff interactions
3. Decision-making <i>Introductory knowledge and skills to support councillors to understand good governance, how councils make decisions, how council meetings work and to support ethical and lawful decision-making by councillors.</i>	3.1 Council decision-making and good governance This may include: - How councils make decisions (including Council meetings and delegations) - Council policies and processes to support decision-making (including councillor briefings, advisory committees, portfolios, etc.) - Good governance, including the overarching governance principles, supporting principles* - Conflicts of interest and the need to keep an open mind - How council meetings work - Reading and analysing council meeting papers - Appointing Chairs of Council delegated committees
4. Community representation <i>Introductory knowledge and skills to support councillors to understand and represent their municipality.</i>	4.1 Understanding and responding to the needs of the municipality* This may include: - Understanding the municipal community, including: - Demographic profile - Key social, environmental and economic concerns facing the community - Key community organisations, sectors and communities of interest - Responding to the municipal community, Including: - The Community Engagement Policy and legislative obligation to consult the community - Council systems and protocols for managing community interactions, requests and complaints
5. Strategic planning and financial management <i>Introductory knowledge and skills to support councillors to understand their role in setting the strategic direction for and ensuring the long-term financial sustainability of the Council.</i>	5.1 Introduction to strategic planning and financial management* This may include: - Overview of the integrated strategic planning framework - The development of the Community Vision and Council Plan - Understanding and analysing financial planning, budgets and reports (including capital expenditure) - Introduction to risk management - Introduction to revenue and rating (including the Revenue and Rating Plan) - Adopting a Financial Plan, Asset Plan, Revenue and Rating Plan and Annual Budget

Theme	Potential topics (* = NEW topics not currently covered by councillor induction)
6. Conduct <i>Introductory knowledge and skills to support councillors to understand the conduct expected of them when performing the role of councillor.</i>	6.1 The councillor conduct framework This may include: • Misconduct, serious misconduct and gross misconduct and related processes • The Model Councillor Code of Conduct, including standards of conduct • The Internal Resolution Procedure • Improper conduct (misuse of position, directing staff and confidential information) • Council policies and processes relating to councillor behaviour, including: ○ Conflict resolution processes ○ Social media policy ○ Occupational health and safety policy and processes
7. Integrity and accountability <i>Introductory knowledge and skills to support councillors to understand key integrity and accountability requirements associated with the role of councillor.</i>	7.1 Introduction to key integrity and accountability requirements* This may include: • Personal interests • Conflicts of interest • Managing confidential information • Managing council information (other than confidential information) • Expenses, gifts and donations • Any council policies to support good governance • Reporting breaches of integrity and accountability requirements • Any other matters relating to governance and integrity which the CEO has determined should be addressed

Professional development training

Theme	Potential topics
1. Working together <i>Further activities collectively determined by the councillor group to embed commitment between councillors to work as a cohesive group.</i>	1.1 Councillor group commitment to work as a team The activities collectively determined by a councillor group to build a positive dynamic may address the following matters:: • Renewing commitment to work together • Assessing where improved interactions are needed • Welcoming and supporting a new councillor (i.e., elected by countback or by-election during the Council term) • Reviewing and undertaking a self-assessment of past performance
2. Key roles within a council <i>Further knowledge and skills to support councillors to understand the role of councillor.</i>	2.1 The council and its elected roles This may include: • Building on the information, knowledge and skills relating to the role of the council addressed during induction • Building on the information, knowledge and skills relating to the role of a councillor addressed during induction • New information, knowledge and skills relating to the role of the council and councillor such as: ○ Supporting the role of the Mayor ○ Leadership and emotional intelligence ○ Chairing Community Advisory Committee meetings ○ Managing interests as a ratepayer while in the role of councillor ○ Updating knowledge based on any legislative or regulatory amendments 2.2 CEO recruitment and performance management This may include: • CEO Employment and Remuneration Policy • Effective performance management
3. Decision-making	3.1 Council decision-making and good governance This may include:

Theme	Potential topics
<i>Further knowledge and skills to support councillors to ensure good governance and participate effectively in council decision-making.</i>	- Building on the information, knowledge and skills relating to council decision-making and good governance - New information, knowledge and skills relating to council decision-making and good governance such as: - Ensuring unbiased democratic council decision-making - Delegating decision-making
	3.2 Effectively participating in council meetings This may include: - Preparing for Council meetings - Reading and understanding council meeting papers - Understanding and applying Governance Rules - Influencing and negotiating
4. Community representation <i>Further knowledge and skills to support councillors to represent their municipality.</i>	4.1 Representing the diversity, interests and needs of the community This may include: - Building on the information, knowledge and skills relating to community representation addressed during induction - New information, knowledge and skills relating to community representation such as: - Community and deliberative engagement - Giving effect to gender equality, diversity (including cultural and linguistic diversity) and inclusiveness (including unconscious bias) - Engagement and reconciliation with the traditional owners of land in the municipal district of the Council - Effective leadership and advocacy - Respectful interactions and dealing with difficult behaviours - Key issues affecting the community (such as public health and wellbeing, domestic, family and gendered violence, climate change, child safety and wellbeing, etc.)
5. Strategic planning and financial management <i>Further knowledge and skills to support councillors to set the strategic direction for the Council and ensure its long-term financial sustainability.</i>	5.1 Effective strategic planning This may include: - Building on the information, knowledge and skills relating to strategic planning addressed during induction - New information, knowledge and skills relating to strategic planning such as: - Setting and measuring outcomes - Service planning, innovation and continuous improvement - Collaborating with other agencies (such as joint priorities with other councils, governments and statutory bodies and regional, state and national plans and policies)
	5.2 Effective financial and risk management This may include: - Building on the information, knowledge and skills relating to financial and risk management addressed during induction - New information, knowledge and skills relating to financial and risk management such as: - The function and operation of the Audit and Risk Committee - Asset management - Setting rates
6. Conduct <i>Further knowledge and skills to support councillors to exhibit the conduct expected of them when performing the role of councillor.</i>	6.1 Effective communication This may include: - The appropriate use of social media - Public speaking - Engaging with the media (including council policies and processes) - Influencing and negotiation
	6.2 Introduction to other legislative responsibilities relating to the behaviour of councillors* This may include: <i>Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004</i> <i>Equal Opportunity Act 2010</i> <i>Racial and Religious Tolerance Act 2001</i>

Theme	Potential topics
	- Gender Equality Act 2020 - Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006
	6.2 Creating and maintaining a safe workplace This may include: - Occupational health and safety and psychosocial hazards - Diversity and inclusion - Managing conflict and disputes (including processes under the councillor conduct framework)
7. Integrity and accountability <i>Further knowledge and skills to enable councillors to meet key integrity and accountability requirements associated with the role of councillor.</i>	7.1 Complying with key integrity and accountability requirements This may include: - Building on the information, knowledge and skills relating to integrity and accountability requirements addressed during induction, including conflicts of interest to: - explain why a councillor cannot or should not participate in the decision-making process for a matter in which they have a conflict, during or outside council meetings - ensure that councillors understand their obligation to: i) familiarise themselves with donations and gifts from relevant persons ii) assess whether those donations or gifts give rise to a conflict of interest for particular council matters iii) provide details of the nature of the conflict when declaring a conflict of interest in accordance with the Governance Rules - New information, knowledge and skills relating to integrity and accountability requirements such as: - The roles of key integrity and accountability bodies for local government - The role and powers of the Minister for Local Government - Transparency and reporting requirements
	7.2 Preventing fraud and corruption This may include: - Victoria's fraud and corruption framework - How to identify and report fraud and corruption (including high risk activities such as lobbying) - Council policies and processes to prevent fraud and corruption
8. Statutory planning <i>Knowledge and skills to support a councillor to understand and perform the role of a councillor in Victoria's Planning System.</i>	8.1 Victoria's statutory planning system This may include: - Planning schemes - Amendments - Planning permits - Reviews and the role of VCAT - The Role of the Planning Minister and other bodies such as Planning Panels Victoria
	8.2 Council policies and procedures in relation to statutory planning This may include: - The Council's Planning Scheme - Delegated committee/s - Delegations to Council officers - Processes to trigger the determination of applications by the Council

Support

Consideration is being given to what resources are needed to support the training. This may include:

- Webinars / videos developed by integrity bodies such as the Local Government Inspectorate that could be incorporated into training

- The development of some standard training resources so key training content is consistent across all councils
- Consideration of the most appropriate delivery methodology (i.e., who and how) based on intended outcomes
- Opportunities for regional councils to share training
- Updating and using existing guidance such as the Good Governance Guide
- Adopting a staged approach to training to ensure it is delivered when needed
- Assessments to determine gaps in knowledge and skills
- Platform for sharing training resources



Draft Internal Resolution Procedure

Introduction

Section 140 of the *Local Government Act* 2020 (the Act) provides that for the purposes of ensuring good governance and ensuring the standards of conduct are observed and maintained by a Council, the Council must adopt and implement any prescribed procedures in relation to dealing with alleged breaches of the Model Councillor Code of Conduct.

It is not intended that the internal resolution procedures be mandatory, however where a complaint has been made or dispute has arisen concerning an alleged breach of the Model Councillor Code of Conduct, the councillors involved in the matter should, in accordance with the Council's internal resolution procedure, use their best endeavours to resolve the matter in a courteous and respectful manner with a view to maintaining effective working relationships.

If the councillors involved in the dispute cannot resolve the matter through the Council's internal resolution procedures, then an application may be made to the Principal Councillor Conduct Registrar for an internal arbitration process under section 143 of the Act. The application must set out any steps taken to resolve the matter and why the matter was not resolved through the Council's internal resolution procedures or alternatively, the reason why no steps were taken to resolve the matter. In examining an application, the Registrar can refer the matter back to the Council if the Registrar believes that the matter would be more appropriately dealt with by the Council.

The following Internal Resolution Procedures are intended as minimum requirements that councils must have in place and make available to councillors to deal with alleged breaches of the Model Councillor Code of Conduct.

Councils may adopt other policies or procedures that the Council considers appropriate including in relation to dealing with other types of complaints (e.g. perceived serious misconduct, interpersonal conflicts or complaints from council staff or community members).

Proposed Council Internal Resolution Procedures

The following internal resolution procedures are proposed to be prescribed for the purposes of section 140 of the Act:

1. The internal resolution procedure of a Council **must**:
 - a. provide a process for the councillors dealing with an alleged breach of the Model Councillor Code of Conduct to attempt to resolve the matter through informal discussions between themselves; and
 - b. provide a process for councillors dealing with an alleged breach of the Model Councillor Code of Conduct to attempt to resolve the matter through facilitated discussions with the mayor.

2. The process provided for under paragraph 1(b) must:
 - a. specify how the councillors involved in the matter may make a request for the matter to be resolved through this process;
 - b. specify the role the mayor is expected to undertake in conducting the process;
 - c. specify any support the Council is to make available to the mayor in respect of the process;
 - d. provide for the deputy mayor or another person to conduct the process if the mayor is involved in the matter or is unable to conduct the process for any other reason; and
 - e. provide for the mayor to document any outcome reached through the process.
3. The internal resolution procedure of a Council **may** include any other process that the Council considers appropriate.