

Councillor  
(as addressed)

The next Council Meeting will be held in the Council Chamber, Braeside Avenue, Ringwood, on Monday 21 September 2015, commencing at 7:30pm and your presence is requested.

Yours faithfully



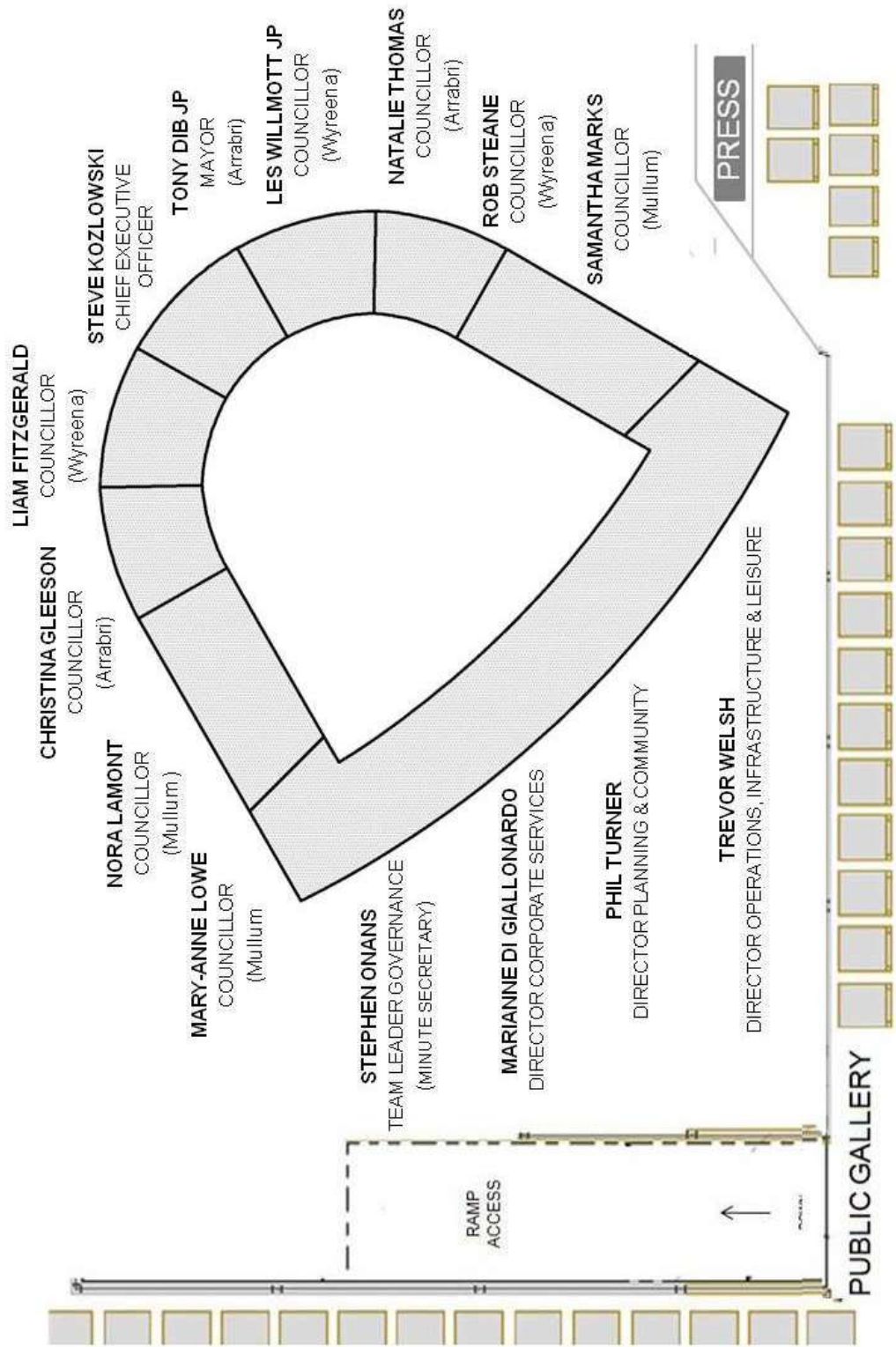
Steve Kozlowski  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER



COUNCIL CHAMBER  
IS FITTED WITH A HEARING AID  
INDUCTION LOOP

**SWITCH HEARING AID TO 'T' FOR  
RECEPTION**

City Offices	Braeside Avenue, Ringwood, 3134
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Web	www.maroondah.vic.gov.au
Service Centres	Croydon: Civic Square
	Ringwood: 1 Civic Place, Ringwood



## ORDER OF BUSINESS

1. Prayer
2. Acknowledgment of Country
3. Apologies – Cr Fitzgerald
4. Declaration of Interests
5. Confirmation of Minutes of the Ordinary Council Meeting held on Monday 24 August 2015.
6. Public Questions
7. Officers' Reports
  - Director Corporate Services
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    2. Reports of Assembly of Councillors 7
    3. Councillor Representation Reports 10
    4. Municipal Association of Victoria State Council Meeting - Motions 12
    5. Submission - Local Government (General) Regulations 2015 - Exposure Draft 18
  - Director Operations, Infrastructure & Leisure
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    2. Physical Activity Strategy 2015 - 2020 30
    3. Maroondah Festival 2015 33
  - Director Planning & Community
    1. Annual Report 2014/15 39
    2. Active and Healthy Ageing Initiative - Towards an Age-friendly Maroondah 42
    3. Dog Park Feasibility Options for Maroondah 45
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8. Motions to Review
9. Late Item
10. Requests / Leave of Absence
11. In Camera
  - Director Operations, Infrastructure and Leisure
    1. Tender Evaluation Report - Contract 20745 Provision of Asphaltting Services

2. Tender Evaluation Report - Contract 20750 Cleaning Services for Public Toilets & Barbeques

Director Planning & Community

1. QIC Town Centre Contract

**ATTENDANCE REPORTS**

**ITEM 1**

**PURPOSE**

To provide an opportunity for Councillors to report on Council activities undertaken since the last Ordinary Meeting of Council and forthcoming ward activities.

**STRATEGIC / POLICY ISSUES**

The following directions contained in Maroondah 2040: Our Future Together and the Council Plan 2013-2017 (Year 3: 2015-2016) provide the strategic framework that underpins the purpose of this report.

Outcome Area: A well governed and empowered community

Our Vision: Maroondah is an effectively empowered community that is actively engaged in Council decision making through processes that ensure their voice is heard and considered. Council provides strong and responsive leadership, ensures transparent processes and works with the community to advocate and champion their needs

Key Directions 2014 – 2015:

- 8.1 Provide enhanced governance that is transparent, accessible, inclusive and accountable

**BACKGROUND**

Not Applicable

**ISSUE / DISCUSSION**

It is intended that the Mayor and Councillors be given the opportunity to present a verbal or written report updating Council on the activities they have undertaken in their role as Councillors and forthcoming ward activities.

**FINANCIAL / ECONOMIC ISSUES**

Not Applicable

**ENVIRONMENTAL / AMENITY ISSUES**

Not Applicable

**SOCIAL / COMMUNITY ISSUES**

Not Applicable

**COMMUNITY CONSULTATION**

Not Applicable

**CONCLUSION**

It is appropriate that Councillors formally report to Council upon the activities they have undertaken in their role as Councillors.

**ATTENDANCE REPORTS Cont'd**

**ITEM 1**

**ATTACHMENTS**

Not Applicable

**CONFIDENTIALITY**

Not Applicable

**RECOMMENDATION**

**THAT COUNCIL RECEIVES AND NOTES THE REPORTS AS PRESENTED BY COUNCILLORS**

**REPORTS OF ASSEMBLY OF COUNCILLORS**

**ITEM 2**

**PURPOSE**

To present the 'Public Record' of those Assembly of Councillors briefings which are attended by all Councillors and generally held on Monday evenings at the City Offices Ringwood, usually two weeks prior to the formal Council Meeting, and to note the issues discussed.

**STRATEGIC / POLICY ISSUES**

The following directions contained in Maroondah 2040: Our Future Together and the Council Plan 2013-2017 (Year 3: 2015-2016) provide the strategic framework that underpins the purpose of this report.

Outcome Area: A well governed and empowered community

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Key Directions 2014 – 2015:

- 8.1 Provide enhanced governance that is transparent, accessible, inclusive and accountable

**BACKGROUND**

An Assembly of Councillors, as defined under the Local Government Act 1989 [s.3], is a planned or scheduled meeting, comprising at least five (5) Councillors and one (1) member of Council staff, that considers matters that are intended or likely to be:

- the subject of a decision of the Council; or
- subject to the exercise of a delegated function, duty or power of Council

Examples of an Assembly of Councillors may include:

- Councillor Briefings (which are attended by all Councillors and generally held on Monday evenings),
- On-site inspections,
- Consultative Meetings with residents, developers, consultants,
- Panel Hearings conducted under s223 of the Act,
- Meetings with local organisations, Government Departments, statutory authorities, and local politicians

**ISSUE / DISCUSSION**

As part of decision making processes at Maroondah, it is essential that Councillors are briefed on a range of issues which come before Council for consideration. As a means of providing this information, Assembly of Councillors briefings are conducted.

**REPORTS OF ASSEMBLY OF COUNCILLORS Cont'd**

**ITEM 2**

Assemblies are also attended by Council Officers, and sometimes other specific advisors, to provide Councillors with a detailed knowledge and understanding of issues under consideration to a level of detail that would inhibit timely decision-making, that would not be possible in an open Council meeting, where decision-making related debate is governed by strict meeting procedures.

The intent of this report is to present the 'Public Record' of those Assembly of Councillors briefings which are attended by all Councillors and generally held on Monday evenings, and to note the items discussed. This information is already available to the public upon request in accordance with the Local Government Act [s.80A].

This report and attachments formally table the information items previously covered by Councillors.

The 'Public Record' of the Assembly of Councillors briefings held on 24 August and 7 September and 14 September 2015 are attached for information.

The items contained therein were noted.

**FINANCIAL / ECONOMIC ISSUES**

Not Applicable

**ENVIRONMENTAL / AMENITY ISSUES**

Not Applicable

**SOCIAL / COMMUNITY ISSUES**

Not Applicable

**COMMUNITY CONSULTATION**

Not Applicable

**CONCLUSION**

Assembly of Councillors briefings are important forums for advice and discussion, on what are often complex issues facing the municipality, in the lead up to formal decisions being made by Councillors at Council Meetings. At Assemblies, or outside them, Councillors also have the opportunity of requesting additional information to assist in the decision making process.

It is appropriate that the 'Public Record' of those Assembly of Councillors briefings which are attended by all Councillors and generally held on Monday evenings at the City Offices Ringwood, usually two weeks prior to the formal Council Meeting, be noted at a formal meeting of Council.

**ATTACHMENTS**

1. 2015 August 24 - Assembly of Councillors - Public Record
2. 2015 September 7 - Assembly of Councillors - Public Record
3. 2015 September 14 - Assembly of Councillors - Public Record



**REPORTS OF ASSEMBLY OF COUNCILLORS Cont'd**

**ITEM 2**

**CONFIDENTIALITY**

Not Applicable

**RECOMMENDATION**

**THAT COUNCIL RECEIVES AND NOTES THE PUBLIC RECORD OF THE ASSEMBLY OF COUNCILLORS BRIEFINGS HELD 24 AUGUST, AND 7 SEPTEMBER AND 14 SEPTEMBER 2015**

**COUNCILLOR REPRESENTATION REPORTS**

**ITEM 3**

**PURPOSE**

To receive and note the following meeting minutes and to provide an opportunity for Council's representative to provide a further verbal report.

- Minutes of the Metropolitan Local Government Waste Forum on 13 August 2015

**STRATEGIC / POLICY ISSUES**

The following directions contained in Maroondah 2040: Our Future Together and the Council Plan 2013-2017 (Year 3: 2015-2016) provide the strategic framework that underpins the purpose of this report.

Outcome Area: A well governed and empowered community

Our Vision: Maroondah is an effectively empowered community that is actively engaged in Council decision making through processes that ensure their voice is heard and considered. Council provides strong and responsive leadership, ensures transparent processes and works with the community to advocate and champion their needs

Key Directions 2013 – 2017:

8.1 Provide enhanced governance that is transparent, accessible, inclusive and accountable.

**BACKGROUND**

As part of Council's commitment to the principles and practice of good governance, it is appropriate that Councillors and the Community are formally updated on the actions and activities of the various organisations bodies/advisory groups upon which it is represented.

**ISSUE / DISCUSSION**

Council is represented on numerous Boards and Organisations. Appointments are made annually by Council at the commencement of the new Mayoral term in November.

Cr Willmott is Council's representative on the Metropolitan Local Government Waste Forum.

**FINANCIAL / ECONOMIC ISSUES**

Not Applicable

**ENVIRONMENTAL / AMENITY ISSUES**

Not Applicable

**SOCIAL / COMMUNITY ISSUES**

Not Applicable

**COUNCILLOR REPRESENTATION REPORTS Cont'd**

**ITEM 3**

**COMMUNITY CONSULTATION**

Not Applicable

**CONCLUSION**

It is appropriate that Councillors and the Community are formally updated on the actions and activities of the various organisations bodies/advisory groups upon which Council is represented.

**ATTACHMENTS**

1. Minutes - Metropolitan Waste Management Group 13 August

**CONFIDENTIALITY**

Not Applicable

**RECOMMENDATION**

**THAT COUNCIL RECEIVES AND NOTES THE MINUTES OF THE METROPOLITAN LOCAL GOVERNMENT WASTE FORUM HELD ON 13 AUGUST 2015**

**MUNICIPAL ASSOCIATION OF VICTORIA STATE COUNCIL  
MEETING - MOTIONS**

**ITEM 4**

**PURPOSE**

To consider the 3 Maroondah motions for submission to the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) State Council Meeting to be held on Friday 23 October 2015.

**STRATEGIC / POLICY ISSUES**

The following directions contained in Maroondah 2040: Our Future Together and the Council plan 2013-2017 (Year 3: 2015-2016) provide the strategic framework that underpins the purpose in this report.

Outcome Area: A well governed and empowered community

Our Vision: Maroondah is an effectively empowered community that is actively engaged in Council decision making through processes that ensure their voice is heard and considered. Council provides strong and responsive leadership, ensures transparent processes and works with the community to advocate and champion their needs.

Key Directions 2015–2016:

8.1 Provide enhanced governance that is transparent, accessible, inclusive and accountable

**BACKGROUND**

The Municipal Association of Victoria's State Council Meeting will be held on Friday 23 October 2015. The 3 proposed Maroondah motions are viewed as being of significance across the Victorian Local Government sector and therefore of importance for debate and consideration by the State Council Meeting.

The Municipal Association of Victoria together with local members of parliament provides significant advocacy to the State Government on behalf of Maroondah residents and ratepayers.

**ISSUE / DISCUSSION**

The motion and rationale for each of the 3 motions is identified below:

**Motion 1: Municipal Association of Victoria Advocacy**

**Motion:** That the Municipal Association of Victoria State Council adopt a protocol to escalate its representations to Government to the level of a sector wide campaign when legitimate concerns/issues impacting the Local Government sector constantly fail to gain any recognition at Government level.

**Rationale:** The Municipal Association of Victoria State Council adopts many motions each year that require representations to primarily State but also Federal level of Government. A number of these motions continually fail to gain any acceptance by Governments with the outcome being a continuation of the status quo, which frustrates the sector.

**MUNICIPAL ASSOCIATION OF VICTORIA STATE COUNCIL  
MEETING - MOTIONS Cont'd**

**ITEM 4**

As an illustration, Maroondah has constantly raised the issue of an annual increase in Planning fees as opposed to the current ad hoc process. It is heartening to note that the Minister for Planning has at long last committed to reviewing the planning and subdivision fees. A stakeholder reference group comprising of representatives of Councils, the Municipal Association of Victoria and industry will meet in September 2015 and a regulatory impact assessment process is anticipated in 2016.

The outcome is an excellent one and long overdue given the previous review was initiated in 2008 and regrettably failed to produce any changed results. It is indeed an accolade to Councils within the sector that have maintained the focus on this issue and the resulting representations to Government by the Municipal Association of Victoria. An easier process and mechanism however should be in place to aid future such issues.

**Motion 2: Social Housing**

**Motion:** That the Municipal Association of Victoria State Council calls on the State Government to allocate a portion of stamp duty revenue to social housing.

**Rationale:** Victoria is experiencing considerable declines in housing affordability both in the rental and owner occupier markets. This is resulting in increasing housing stress, particularly for those most vulnerable in society.

Victoria has the lowest percentage (3.4%) of social housing of all Australian states and territories. The State Government of Victoria (through DHHS) manages a total stock of approximately 65,000 properties. This compares with a public housing waiting list of 35,000 households of whom approximately 10,000 are in the highest priority category.

Social housing needs reflect the increasing value and lack of affordability of the property market.

The Victorian State Government's 2015/16 budget has identified overall stamp duty revenue at \$5 billion, up by 13 per cent from 2014-15. This tax on property transfers accounts for more than 20% of revenue collected by the Government.

It is contended that there is merit in allocating a small percentage of stamp duty revenue (eg 5%) to social housing.

Social housing needs reflect the increasing value and lack of affordability of the property market and therefore redirecting a portion of stamp duty receipts will help to provide 'balance'. There is a clear nexus between this revenue stream and the further funding of critical social housing infrastructure.

**Motion 3: Drugs, Alcohol & Gambling**

**Motion:** That the Municipal Association of Victoria State Council calls on the State Government to provide stronger support for primary prevention measures associated with the harms of drugs, alcohol and gambling.

MUNICIPAL ASSOCIATION OF VICTORIA STATE COUNCIL  
MEETING - MOTIONS Cont'd

ITEM 4

**Rationale:** Whilst the State Government supports a range of measures designed to reduce the harms of drugs, alcohol and gambling, more needs to be done. Evidence from organisations such as VicHealth suggests that associated harms are increasing and this comes at a significant community cost.

*Drugs*

Illicit drug use can result in injuries, overdoses and poisonings, while unsafe means of administration can spread blood borne viruses from dirty needles, and cause septicemia. Drug use can also cause dependence and the associated withdrawal symptoms and treatment costs. Social harms, such as loss of employment and impairment of personal relationships, can also be a function of the combined effects of a long-term pattern of heavy use, frequent episodes, and time and resources expended acquiring drugs (NDRICAH, 2004).

Exposure to drug dealing or drug use in public, inappropriate disposal of syringes and anti social behaviour reduces amenity and enjoyment for others. The relationship between substance use in terms of both illicit and legal drugs (such as alcohol and pharmaceuticals) and crime has at least four potential intersections (Federation of Community Legal Centres, 2013):

1. People who are prosecuted for possessing drugs for personal use but are not otherwise involved in crime
2. People involved in drug dealing, trafficking, production and related offences
3. People who commit crimes to support drug habits
4. People who use drugs and commit crimes but their activities are not causally related.

No single factor causes crime. Often the underlying factors that contribute to drug abuse and drug related anti social behaviour are a lack of housing, employment, education, mental health and family support.

With particular reference to the drug Ice, the State Government's Ice Action Plan (released on 5 March 2015) is applauded as is the fact that this issue is a State Government priority.

The Plan notes that between 2011-12 and 2012-13, the number of methamphetamine related ambulance attendances increased by 88 per cent in metropolitan Melbourne and nearly 200 per cent in regional Victoria. During this time, methamphetamine related emergency department presentations rose 20 per cent. Acute drug toxicity deaths involving methamphetamine have increased from one in 25 deaths in 2010, to one in 11 deaths in 2012.

It is encouraging that the Plan addresses urgent issues, including more support for families, expanding drug treatment services, protecting frontline workers, closing down manufacturers and making communities safer. Whilst \$45.5 million has already been announced to assist with the delivery of the Ice Action Plan, more funding is sought given the growing magnitude of the harms associated with this drug. That said, additional funds to support 'upstream' primary prevention measure are also required.

**MUNICIPAL ASSOCIATION OF VICTORIA STATE COUNCIL  
MEETING - MOTIONS Cont'd**

**ITEM 4**

*Alcohol*

With respect to alcohol, research by the Foundation for Alcohol Research and Education (FARE) has found that alcohol harm in Australia is significant. More than 5,500 lives are lost every year and more than 157,000 people hospitalised, making alcohol one of our nation's greatest preventive health challenges. FARE goes on to conclude that the devastation doesn't stop there; the high personal and financial toll extends well beyond the individual drinker. Each year nearly 400 people die, and 70,000 Australians are victims of alcohol-related assaults, including 24,000 victims of alcohol-related domestic violence. All these harms cost the nation an estimated \$36 billion annually.

New Research released by FARE in August 2015 revealed that Australians are spending more on alcohol than personal care or education, with many struggling financially as a result. This research into Australian spending habits shows households that spend more on alcohol were more likely to report experiencing financial hardship, such as being unable to pay bills on time or going without meals. The study found that Australian households spent an average of \$32.20 each week on alcohol, which is more than tobacco (\$12.50), personal care (\$24) and education (\$30.60), and similar to the amount spent on fuel and power (\$32.50).

Of particular concern, research literature has found links between packaged liquor outlet density and consumption and drinking patterns, drink driving and traffic accidents, child abuse and neglect, and sexually transmitted diseases, in addition to the other impacts above. A University of Melbourne and VicHealth study found that Victorian residents with eight or more takeaway alcohol outlets within one kilometre of their homes are twice as likely to binge drink (VicHealth, 2011). Another VicHealth study has found there is a higher density of alcohol outlets in lower socio-economic areas, with the poorest areas having up to six times more bottle shops than wealthier neighbourhoods (Livingston, 2011). Accordingly more needs to be done to develop a consistent approach to the assessment of the cumulative impact of licensed premises.

*Gambling*

The harms associated with gambling are also increasing and again, there is a need for a stronger State Government action.

In particular, Victorians lost almost \$70 million more on gaming machines in 2014/15 compared to 2013/14. This is the single biggest increase in losses since 2008-2009. Recent figures released by the Victorian Commission for Gambling and Liquor Regulation show current arrangements in place to help slow losses incurred by gaming machine users are no longer effectual.

There is strong evidence that high losses from poker machines concentrated in areas of socioeconomic disadvantage, combined with the localised nature of gambling behaviour and its ripple effects, are indicators of a public health issue. While many people who play the pokies do so without becoming addicted, research has shown that 15% of regular (at least weekly) players are 'problem gamblers' and their share of total spending on poker machines is estimated to be around 40% (Productivity Commission, 2010). There is a significant social cost of problem gambling in addition to the financial losses. Harms include relationship breakdown, child neglect, mental illness, homelessness, crime and bankruptcy. In recent years, the majority of applications for electronic gaming machine licences in Victoria have

**MUNICIPAL ASSOCIATION OF VICTORIA STATE COUNCIL  
MEETING - MOTIONS Cont'd**

**ITEM 4**

been granted. This is despite initial refusals by local government authorities, usually out of concern for community wellbeing.

*Conclusion*

In summary, this motion has considered matters relating to the harms of drugs, alcohol and gambling and argues that a much stronger focus on primary prevention measures is required. These measures should have regard to supporting the following:

- Promoting opportunities for people to get involved in their local communities
- Promoting healthy lifestyles
- Improving the safety of streets and open spaces
- More opportunities for physical activity
- Ensuring there is equal access to services
- Promoting access to healthy food
- Promoting local employment
- Actions to prevent violence against women
- Promoting the safer consumption of alcohol
- Increased access to diverse and affordable housing

Accordingly this motion call for the strengthening of ongoing financial investment in primary prevention programs in partnership with local government.

**FINANCIAL / ECONOMIC ISSUES**

Refer to rationale as highlighted under Issue / Discussion.

**ENVIRONMENTAL / AMENITY ISSUES**

Refer to rationale as highlighted under Issue / Discussion.

**SOCIAL / COMMUNITY ISSUES**

Refer to rationale as highlighted under Issue / Discussion.

**COMMUNITY CONSULTATION**

Council, through various forums, consultations and strategies, has engaged the Maroondah community regarding these various issues. This report further demonstrates Council's preparedness to advocate to the State Government on behalf of Maroondah residents.



**MUNICIPAL ASSOCIATION OF VICTORIA STATE COUNCIL  
MEETING - MOTIONS Cont'd**

**ITEM 4**

**CONCLUSION**

The proposed motions have a statewide significance throughout the Local Government sector and therefore should be discussed at the State Council Meeting.

**ATTACHMENTS**

Not Applicable

**CONFIDENTIALITY**

Not Applicable

**RECOMMENDATION**

**THAT COUNCIL SUBMIT THE FOLLOWING 3 MOTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION AND DEBATE AT THE MUNICIPAL ASSOCIATION OF VICTORIA STATE COUNCIL MEETING:**

- **MUNICIPAL ASSOCIATION OF VICTORIA ADVOCACY**

**Motion: THAT THE MUNICIPAL ASSOCIATION OF VICTORIA STATE COUNCIL ADOPT A PROTOCOL TO ESCALATE ITS REPRESENTATIONS TO GOVERNMENT TO THE LEVEL OF A SECTOR WIDE CAMPAIGN WHEN LEGITIMATE CONCERNS/ISSUES IMPACTING THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT SECTOR CONSTANTLY FAIL TO GAIN ANY RECOGNITION AT GOVERNMENT LEVEL.**

- **SOCIAL HOUSING**

**Motion: THAT THE MUNICIPAL ASSOCIATION OF VICTORIA STATE COUNCIL CALLS ON THE STATE GOVERNMENT TO ALLOCATE A PORTION OF STAMP DUTY REVENUE TO SOCIAL HOUSING.**

- **DRUGS, ALCOHOL & GAMBLING**

**Motion: THAT THE MUNICIPAL ASSOCIATION OF VICTORIA STATE COUNCIL CALLS ON THE STATE GOVERNMENT TO PROVIDE STRONGER SUPPORT FOR PRIMARY PREVENTION MEASURES ASSOCIATED WITH THE HARMS OF DRUGS, ALCOHOL AND GAMBLING.**

**SUBMISSION - LOCAL GOVERNMENT (GENERAL)  
REGULATIONS 2015 - EXPOSURE DRAFT**

**ITEM 5**

**PURPOSE**

To consider the proposed submission to the State Government in response to the Local Government (General) Regulations 2015 – Exposure Draft and a Regulatory Impact Statement.

**STRATEGIC / POLICY ISSUES**

The following directions contained in Maroondah 2040: Our Future Together and the Council Plan 2013-2017 (Year 3: 2015-2016) provide the strategic framework that underpins the purpose in this report.

Outcome Area: A well governed and empowered community

Our Vision: Maroondah is an effectively empowered community that is actively engaged in Council decision making through processes that ensure their voice is heard and considered. Council provides strong and responsive leadership, ensures transparent processes and works with the community to advocate and champion their needs.

Key Directions 2015 – 2016:

8.1 Provide enhanced governance that is transparent, accessible, inclusive and accountable

**BACKGROUND**

Local Government Victoria has advised that the Local Government (General) Regulations 2004 are due to expire on 25 October 2015 and have released for comment draft Regulations together with a detailed Regulatory Impact Statement; with submissions being required by 25 September 2015. The Department has also separately provided a discussion paper on a major review to the Local Government Act itself for which submissions are due in December 2015. We understand that the State Government is seeking to reduce the administrative burden of local government authorities while at the same time balancing the increased requirement for increased transparency and accountability to local communities.

**ISSUE / DISCUSSION**

The Regulatory Impact Statement is divided into 5 sections with the first and last sections being overviews of Local Government and the implementation process for the regulations: These sections require no comment as they deal with process only.

Suggested responses to the issues raised within sections 2 to 4, both inclusive, are provided as follows.

**SUBMISSION - LOCAL GOVERNMENT (GENERAL)  
REGULATIONS 2015 - EXPOSURE DRAFT Cont'd**

**ITEM 5**

**Section 2 - Public Accountability**

This section deals with three types of documentation available for inspection via registers that are available for public scrutiny.

- Register of Interests;
- Conflict of interests; and
- Public Register - Documents for Inspection.

2.1 Register of Interests

The current system has:- all Councillors; members of Council Audit (and Risk) Committee; members of Special Committees - unless exempted, as is the case for Maroondah; all Senior Officers; and other nominated employees, complete a register of interest twice a year. The system appears to work quiet well in providing accountability for potential conflict of interests.

Prescribed forms are utilised to compile the requisite information and these are completed twice a year. The information on the forms is transcribed to the register. Any person wishing to inspect the register must make application in terms of prescribed form as that person may have access to private information about an official.

The Regulations are merely proposing a set of forms to replace the current set of three. It is not considered that Maroondah need to comment on this proposed alteration as it is a machinery provision only and streamlines current inefficiencies.

2.2 Conflict of Interest

Currently, a conflict of interest arises when a person has a personal or other interest in a matter in which they have a public duty. Legislation/regulation as to what forms a conflict is detailed and prescriptive, including a number of exemptions. Provisions pertaining to a declaration of an interest - by a Councillor or an Officer - at Council or an Assembly, have altered over the years, from having to absent oneself from the room/chamber as soon as consideration given to the item, to being able to participate in debate and leave for the vote, back again to leaving as soon as consideration given to the item.

It is proposed that three additional exemptions to conflicts be included, namely:-

- Where a Councillor has been appointed by the Council to be on the board of a waste management body;
- Where a Councillor is a member of the governing body of the Country Fire Authority; and
- Where a Councillor is a member of the governing body of a referral authority under the Planning and Environment Act and Council is considering a matter that was referred to that body.

**SUBMISSION - LOCAL GOVERNMENT (GENERAL)  
REGULATIONS 2015 - EXPOSURE DRAFT Cont'd**

**ITEM 5**

In all of these three cases Local Government Victoria has understood from the sector's comments that the perceived benefits in participation by the relevant Councillor will outweigh any proposed risk concerning a conflict.

For Maroondah the first point/scenario is relevant with Cr Les Willmott having gained extensive expertise in being a member and Chair of the Metropolitan Waste and Resource Recovery Board that to which Council is a member. To have him excluded from any discussion and vote on waste issues appears to be a non use of his extensive expertise and understanding of the subject. The proposal permits Council to tap into this knowledge. There would be similar examples across the sector.

The second and third scenarios are not relevant to this Council – being more associated with municipalities outside of the metropolitan area.

Council should endorse the three proposed changes relative to conflict of interest provisions.

2.3 Public Register

Background:- Currently the Regulations (Regulation 11) requires Council to maintain 17 registers that are to be available for public inspection. This has been a requirement for the Local Government sector since 1990 - well prior to amalgamation.

Maroondah's experience is that only 4 of these registers are ever inspected, or information sought from them, namely:-

- Mayoral & Councillors Allowances
- Interstate and Overseas Travel; and
- Senior Officers' remuneration

Even these 3 are only spasmodically viewed by the media or by potential candidates in the run up to Council elections. The fourth register accessed is that of Council agenda's and minutes of ordinary and special meetings of Council, and these are available at anytime via Council's website. There is little doubt that this is accessed most frequently. It is the only one of the 17 registers that is on the website as the others still require physical inspection at the Council Offices. The majority of information contained in the registers is available in various sources organisational wide such as Annual Report or website.

The remaining 13 registers are only ever looked at by auditors and or members of the Local Government Inspectorate for compliance to the Act purposes.

Regulatory Impact Statement:- the review of these registers is most welcome as there is a substantive use of resources involved in maintaining all 17 registers for very little benefit. Criteria used to assess each of the registers by Local Government Victoria was

- Information important for public accountability
- Information available elsewhere
- Cost factors that outweigh the benefits

**SUBMISSION - LOCAL GOVERNMENT (GENERAL)  
REGULATIONS 2015 - EXPOSURE DRAFT Cont'd**

**ITEM 5**

Proposed Recommendation - after assessing each register on the basis of the criteria the Department recommends in the Regulatory Impact Statement that :-

Proposed to Continue – register to be available for public inspection (7)

The following registers have significant accountability aspects for the community.

- Agendas and Minutes of Council Meetings - *very high accountability*
- Minutes of Special Committee Meetings - *important for accountability*
- the Register of Delegations - *high accountability*
- the register of Authorised Officers - *important public record*
- details of overseas travel by Councillors and Officers - *provides transparency about uses of public resources that not available elsewhere*
- details of Council donations and grants - *important for accountability*
- details of leases over Council land - *important for accountability & not available elsewhere*

Registers proposed to be discontinued (11)

The following registers are duplicated in standard material available to the community via Council's home page or are extremely pedantic with little value.

- Councillor Allowances - available elsewhere (Annual Report, Statutory Meeting reports & minutes)
- Senior Officer Remuneration - available elsewhere (Annual Report)
- list of officers who have lodged interest returns (date received)- little accountability value
- list of Councillors who have lodged interest returns (date received) - little accountability value
- list of Special Committees established - minimal value to existing documentation (contained in Council Report & Minutes)
- list of special committees abolished - minimal value to existing documentation (contained in Council Report & Minutes)
- section 223 submissions - on the whole limited accountability value - but seeks further input on the matter. (These are available as part of Council consideration through the Council Meeting and associated papers)
- Regional Library Agreements - little accountability value (These are available through Council Reports when they are reviewed)

**SUBMISSION - LOCAL GOVERNMENT (GENERAL)  
REGULATIONS 2015 - EXPOSURE DRAFT Cont'd**

**ITEM 5**

- Non-property Leases - little accountability value & available elsewhere (Nb the current requirement is for all leases and therefore this requirement has been split between non property and also property leases)
- Council Memberships - little accountability value (These are also available in the Annual Report located on the website)
- Contracts contrary to section 186 - minimal value as more complete information elsewhere (These are also listed in the Annual Report located on the website)

Officer Comment - Council should agree with the proposals for continuance and also discontinuance of registers. Those to be discontinued add little if any value to the notion of accountability or overall value to the transparency of Council decision making or the information is available in other sources than the formal registers.

As stated in the Regulatory Impact Statement the registers were introduced in 1990 and have not been reviewed since - merely rolling over into the next lot of Regulations when they were renewed. Modes of conveying information has dramatically changed since initially introduced eg website and the increasing requirements for the annual report and also budget documentation to publish information within these registers.

None of the proposals are contentious or any that Council should oppose given their nature and current availability in other Council information sources. There are a few that Council could make available on an ongoing basis to provide increased transparency and accountability and these are:-

- Regional Library Agreements - should be available elsewhere eg Annual Report or Council website; or Council Report when changes are proposed.
- Council Memberships - should be available elsewhere eg Annual Report or Council website; and
- Contracts contrary to section 186 - should be available elsewhere eg Annual Report or Council website;

Section 223 submissions. Local Government Victoria has requested further information regarding section 223 submissions.

Across the Local Government sector treatments of this requirement tends to differ quite markedly. The register requirement was established prior to privacy legislation being introduced and abiding by the intent of privacy legislation causes the variation across the sector. Maroondah does not publish any of the names or addresses or mobile numbers (identifying features) of those persons making a submission - whereas other Council's tend to do so. Additionally Maroondah provides only a summary of the issues raised in the submissions when reporting to Council on the outcomes of the submission & hearing process (if required), rather than copy the submission as part of the Council Notice Papers. Councillors receive full copies of the submissions separately.

**SUBMISSION - LOCAL GOVERNMENT (GENERAL)  
REGULATIONS 2015 - EXPOSURE DRAFT Cont'd**

**ITEM 5**

It is therefore proposed that Maroondah would see little merit in continuing the section 223 submissions being part of a publicly available register as the issues are the pertinent part of any submission and these will be dealt with by Council via Committee and ultimately Council itself in a public arena and with a publicly available record that provides transparency and accountability.

The issue that should be made crystal clear is that of submissions under section 223 as they relate to privacy issues. It is suggested that the Department outline the exact process so that all persons making submissions should be aware that their submissions are part of a public process and that all submissions including all personal information will therefore be available to the public.

**Section 3 – Information Provision**

3.1 Notice of Rates and Charges

Background - This section of the draft is looking at the information Council must provide in a notice of rates and charges and any shortcomings between the Act and the 2004 Regulations and how easily accessible this information is for ratepayers that do not know the Act; should there be no regulation of this information, maintaining any existing arrangement or modifying the existing arrangement to direct ratepayers to Council's website?

Proposed Recommendation and Response: The draft suggests "maintaining the existing arrangement as it ensures ratepayers have enough information to know the basis on which they have been required to pay a rate or charge and the different types of mechanisms open to them if they want to dispute the rate or charge."

Further to this the draft states "it should be noted that the proposed 2015 Regulations include updated provisions to reflect the current requirements of the Act, particularly in regard to differential rates. The Act now requires Councils to publish information for ratepayers about the basis of any differential rates it levies."

It is suggested that Maroondah support this proposed outcome. Maroondah's Rate and Valuation notice already contains the necessary information surrounding the charges, the payments options and deadlines and the consequences of late payments. It also clearly indicates the valuations and the objection processes and deadline. Additionally Maroondah's information is supported by the Rate and Budget brochure sent with each notice. Further, any information stated on a notice at the time of issue is available on a duplicate notice whereas any change to our website could involve a loss of this information leaving Council exposed.

Additional Proposed Recommendation and Response: Further to this the draft states "it should be noted that the proposed 2015 Regulations include updated provisions to reflect the current requirements of the Act, particularly in regard to differential rates. The Act now requires Councils to publish information for ratepayers about the basis of any differential rates it levies."

Maroondah's general rate is currently raised by the application of a differential rate based on Vacant or Improved land and if the change is legislated, Maroondah we will need to incorporate this Regulation into its publications.

**SUBMISSION - LOCAL GOVERNMENT (GENERAL)  
REGULATIONS 2015 - EXPOSURE DRAFT Cont'd**

**ITEM 5**

It is considered that this is a reasonable change to the Regulation and should be supported.

3.2 Land Information Certificate (LIC)

Background - An LIC primarily contains information about the rate and charges on a property, the valuation information of the property and the financial status of a property. The LIC also includes flood level information on a property.

Proposed Recommendation and Response: The proposed changes to the Regulation are to remove the flood level information from a Land Information Certificate as this information is more accurate by way of Building regulations.

Maroondah has already taken action on this matter as flood level information noted on our LIC's was not as accurate as pre-existing data held by the organisation. As a result, operationally any reference to flood levels were removed from the LIC's in July this year.

Maroondah should support this change.

3.3 Fee for Land Information Certificate (LIC)

Background - The Act provides that an application for a LIC must be accompanied by the prescribed fee and such is currently \$20.00. The proposed change to the regulation looked at the different fee options and to ensure that Councils were able to meet their costs to produce a certificate

Proposed Recommendation and Response: The new regulations propose that the fee for a land information certificate be by 'specifying a fee in fee units' (indexed annually). In 2015-16 the specified is 1.82 fee units, equating to \$24.71

Officer Comment – the only possible misgiving perceived is around receiving the correct sum from the various applicants, especially as it is such an odd amount. It is, however, believed with greater awareness, this should become easier to manage year by year.

Overall Maroondah should support this change.

**Section 4 – Council Functions**

4.1 Legal Services

Background - The Act requires a council to undertake an open competitive process for services valued at \$150,000 or more (or goods to the value of \$200,000 or more). This framework ensures that Council resources are used efficiently and effectively and in accordance with Best Value principles. Further, a public tender process ensures that Council contracts are awarded through open and fair competition.

The Act recognises that in some circumstances, the requirement to tender is not the optimum sourcing strategy for the Council involved. It therefore allows certain contracts to be exempted by the Minister for Local Government, or a type of contract exempted under regulations. Such exemptions are not intended to be a means for Councils to avoid open and



**SUBMISSION - LOCAL GOVERNMENT (GENERAL)  
REGULATIONS 2015 - EXPOSURE DRAFT Cont'd**

**ITEM 5**

effective competition, rather they are intended to operate in exceptional circumstances where the integrity of the procurement can be maintained or not unreasonably compromised.

Exemptions from the Minister are generally granted for individual contracts where the council demonstrates that the proposed arrangement represents best value for money. Types of contracts exempted by regulations on the other hand are limited to those where the very nature of the service being sought is not best served by a public tender process, for reasons including (but not limited to) the inherent uncertainty about its ultimate cost and the urgency required in the service's acquisition.

The nature of Council business sometimes requires a Council to obtain legal services. These services may be required at short notice and lacking certainty about how high the costs will be.

Conclusion – On balance the Department concludes that the risks to Councils' ability to access legal services outweigh the risks to probity and the exemption for legal services should be remade.

Proposed Recommendation and Response: the Department proposes no change to the current arrangements which exempt legal services from the provisions of section 186 Local Government Act.

Officer Comment – given the nature of legal services and their use in Local Government Authorities this recommendation is supported.

4.2 Property Sales Information

Proposed Recommendation and Response: The Department's proposed regulation requires the person acquiring land, or their agent, to lodge a Notice of Acquisition with the relevant Council and for the practice of lodging a disposition to be discontinued. The proposal is for the new notice to contain additional information such as up to date property codes and information on the purchaser's place of residence, along with information on the vendor's legal practitioner or agent.

In broad terms Maroondah should support in principle the proposed regulation of one 'mandatory' notice and as future dealings will be with the new owner of a property, it stands to reason that a Notice of Acquisition would/should contain more accurate data by way of more personal information regarding the purchaser.

It is suggested changes would have more 'accountability' by placing an emphasis on the accuracy of the data contained on a Notice of Acquisition. Regrettably, no mention has been made of the \$1,000 penalty currently in place for failing to submit a notice of Disposition within 30 days of transfer. Currently the time to process a property transfer is being blown out due to continual follow up with solicitors/agents on inaccurate/incomplete information on new owners.

It is strongly suggested that this component of the Notices of Disposition - \$1,000 penalty (escalating with CPI each year) - be included within changes to the Notices of Acquisition.

**SUBMISSION - LOCAL GOVERNMENT (GENERAL)  
REGULATIONS 2015 - EXPOSURE DRAFT Cont'd**

**ITEM 5**

**FINANCIAL / ECONOMIC ISSUES**

Not Applicable

**ENVIRONMENTAL / AMENITY ISSUES**

Not Applicable

**SOCIAL / COMMUNITY ISSUES**

Not Applicable

**COMMUNITY CONSULTATION**

Not Applicable

**CONCLUSION**

The proposed Local Government (General) Regulations 2015 Exposure Draft provides on the whole changes that are a balance between providing information to the community and processes that are more timely and cost effective. It also demonstrates Council willingness to participate in strengthening the overall good governance of Council while reducing unnecessary bureaucratic processes which add little real value.

**ATTACHMENTS**

Not Applicable

**CONFIDENTIALITY**

Not Applicable

**RECOMMENDATION**

**THAT WITH RESPECT TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (GENERAL) REGULATIONS 2015 – EXPOSURE DRAFT AND REGULATORY IMPACT STATEMENT - COUNCIL MAKES A SUBMISSION IN TERMS OF THE COMMENTS MADE WITHIN THIS REPORT NAMELY:**

- 1. PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY – CONCURS WITH THE CHANGES PROPOSED PERTAINING TO REGISTER OF INTERESTS AND CONFLICT OF INTERESTS, SUPPORTS THE GIST OF PROPOSALS TO DISCONTINUE REGISTERS THOUGH NOTING THAT REGIONAL LIBRARY AGREEMENTS, COUNCIL MEMBERSHIPS AND CONTRACTS CONTRARY TO SECTION 186 SHOULD BE AVAILABLE ELSEWHERE EG ANNUAL REPORT OR COUNCIL WEBSITE**
  - i. SECTION 223 SUBMISSIONS NOT TO BE PART OF A PUBLIC REGISTER AND IT SHOULD BE MADE CLEAR THAT SUBMISSIONS INCLUDING PERSONAL INFORMATION WILL BE AVAILABLE TO THE PUBLIC**

**SUBMISSION - LOCAL GOVERNMENT (GENERAL)  
REGULATIONS 2015 - EXPOSURE DRAFT Cont'd**

**ITEM 5**

- 2. INFORMATION PROVISION – SUPPORT PROPOSED CHANGES TO NOTICE OF RATES AND CHARGES, LAND INFORMATION CERTIFICATE AND FEE FOR SUCH CERTIFICATE**
- 3. COUNCIL FUNCTIONS – LEGAL SERVICES AND PROPERTY SALES INFORMATION**
  - i. SUPPORTS THE NO CHANGE TO THE CURRENT LEGAL SERVICES OPTION; AND**
  - ii. SUPPORTS PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE PURCHASE OF PROPERTY SALE INFORMATION WITH AN ADDITION OF INFORMATION REGARDING A PENALTY BEING INCORPORATED FOR NON PROVISION OF INFORMATION.**

**CROYDON SOUTH PRIMARY SCHOOL SITE PETITION**

**ITEM 1**

**PURPOSE**

To report on a petition/submission Council received relating to the former Croydon South Primary School site.

**STRATEGIC / POLICY ISSUES**

The following directions contained in Maroondah 2040: Our Future Together and the Council Plan 2013-2017 (Year 3: 2015-2016) provide the strategic framework that underpins the purpose of this report.

Outcome Area: A safe, healthy and active community

Our Vision:

Maroondah will ensure maximum opportunities for choice, involvement in and access to quality cultural and leisure experiences and encourage the community to adopt healthy lifestyles.

Key Directions 2013 – 2017:

Enhance and maintain an integrated and connected network of passive and active open space to promote community health and wellbeing; and

Provide a range of integrated recreation and leisure facilities that meet the needs of all ages and abilities.

**BACKGROUND**

A petition was received on 6 July 2015 with 27 signatures calling on Council to retain the former Croydon South Primary School site for the purposes of public open space for local community activities.

**ISSUE / DISCUSSION**

The land is owned by the State Government and is managed through the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD). Council has been advised by the DEECD that it intends on disposing the site and that it has commenced the process for rezoning of the land prior to the sale through public tender or auction.

Council is continuing to strongly advocate with DEECD for a portion of the land to be available as public open space for the community.

**FINANCIAL / ECONOMIC ISSUES**

Not Applicable

**ENVIRONMENTAL / AMENITY ISSUES**

Council is committed to working with the DEECD, and any future owner of the land, to preserve the connections to Woodland Reserve and to obtain a suitable and appropriate open space contribution.

**CROYDON SOUTH PRIMARY SCHOOL SITE PETITION Cont'd      ITEM 1**

**SOCIAL / COMMUNITY ISSUES**

The site is currently used as a social meeting place for dog walkers and a habitat for wild life. This use further complements the existing open space and associated facilities of the adjacent Woodland Park.

**COMMUNITY CONSULTATION**

DEECD has not advised of the specific process it will follow in relation to community consultation. Council will however, advocate for an appropriate public process.

**CONCLUSION**

Council will continue to advocate strongly for a portion of the land to be made available as public open space for the community.

**ATTACHMENTS**

Not Applicable

**CONFIDENTIALITY**

Not Applicable

**RECOMMENDATION**

**THAT COUNCIL**

- 1. RECEIVES THE PETITION CONTAINING 27 SIGNATURES**
- 2. ADVOCATES TO THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT (DEECD) THAT THE VIEWS OF THE RESIDENTS BE HEARD AND CONSIDERED**
- 3. CONTINUES TO ADVOCATE TO THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT (DEECD) FOR AT LEAST A PORTION OF THE LAND TO BE AVAILABLE AS PUBLIC OPEN SPACE FOR THE COMMUNITY**
- 4. ADVISES THE LEAD PETITIONER ACCORDINGLY**

MAROONDAH PHYSICAL ACTIVITY STRATEGY 2015 - 2020

ITEM 2

**PURPOSE**

The purpose of this report is to seek Council endorsement of the Maroondah Physical Activity Strategy 2015 – 2020.

**STRATEGIC / POLICY ISSUES**

The following directions contained in Maroondah 2040: Our Future Together and the Council Plan 2013-2017 (Year 3: 2015-2016) provide the strategic framework that underpins the purpose of this report.

Outcome Area: Maroondah is a safe, healthy and activity community with local opportunities provided for people of all ages and abilities to have high levels of social, emotional and physical wellbeing.

Our Vision: In 2040, Maroondah will be a safe, healthy and activity community with local opportunities provided for all people of all ages and abilities to have high levels of social, emotional and physical wellbeing.

Key Directions 2015 – 2016:

- 1.14 Ensure that all young people and their families in Maroondah have access to affordable childcare, education, health and leisure services.
- 1.17 Promote healthy eating and physical activity by supporting education initiatives and providing a diverse range of accessible open spaces and recreation facilities and services.
- 1.18 Enhance and maintain an integrated and connected network of passive and active open space to promote community health and wellbeing.

Maroondah City Council: Council Plan 2013-2017 (Year 2: 2014/2015)

**Priority Action 2014/15** - Develop a Physical Activity Strategy 2015-2016

**BACKGROUND**

In 2009, Council developed the 2009 – 2013 Leisure Services Strategic Plan which guided the service delivery of the Leisure Services Team, with a specific focus of increasing participation in sport and recreation. In response to the recommendations of Maroondah's 2013 – 2017 Community Wellbeing Plan and the Maroondah 2040 Vision and to address increasing levels of sedentary activity, a Physical Activity Strategy was developed to provide a whole of Council approach.

In order to increase Maroondah's participation levels in physical activity, Maroondah Council has undertaken extensive research to highlight the barriers preventing or inhibiting active participation. The strategy focuses Council Priorities which highlight opportunities for Council to impact physical activity levels.

**MAROONDAH PHYSICAL ACTIVITY STRATEGY 2015 - 2020**

**ITEM 2**

**Cont'd**

The five year action plan will guide the development of new policies, infrastructure improvements, programs and initiatives which will improve practices, respond to demonstrated need, increase access and encourage residents to prioritise physical activity in their daily routine. The plan contains 45 actions to be implemented over a 5 year period from a wide range of Council service areas which link back to the Maroondah 2040 Community Indicators of Progress. Reporting will be undertaken annually under the facilitation of Council's Sport and Recreation Team.

**ISSUE / DISCUSSION**

The majority of Maroondah residents do not undertake enough physical activity.

Increasing the level of physical activity in the Maroondah Community is likely to have a major impact on public health and therefore Maroondah City Council will prioritise the development and/or improvement of environments to support physical activity. Active living is incorporating regular activity into daily routines. It includes active travel, play, gardening, incidental exercise, as well as competing in a sport or participating in an activity class or pursuit for pleasure and fitness. Prioritising physical activity as an individual, an organisation and as a community has multiple benefits to overall health, as well as social, economic and environmental benefits.

**FINANCIAL / ECONOMIC ISSUES**

Increasing the physical activity levels of Maroondah residents will result in economic benefit. A more physically active community reduces health care costs, workplace injury and absenteeism and supports local business, boosting productivity and job growth.

Research supports that the walkability and cyclability of an area translates into substantial increase in the value of retail, office and residential property. Homes and work places situated in more walkable neighbourhoods have more pleasant amenity, better accessibility, provide greater transport opportunities and are more desirable places to live, work, study and recreate.

**ENVIRONMENTAL / AMENITY ISSUES**

Not Applicable

**SOCIAL / COMMUNITY ISSUES**

There are different factors that affect the physical activity levels of specific populations and therefore different strategies required to overcome. The Strategy highlights the challenges and opportunities for the general community and then focuses on six different specific populations in order to target specific actions which will have a positive impact on participation.

**MAROONDAH PHYSICAL ACTIVITY STRATEGY 2015 - 2020**

**ITEM 2**

**Cont'd**

**COMMUNITY CONSULTATION**

In preparation for the development of Council's Physical Activity Strategy 2015 - 2020, a range of consultation methods were undertaken to establish a clear picture of Maroondah's current participation levels, reasons for non-participation and community needs. In addition related feedback from other recent community engagement initiatives has also been collated to inform the development of the Physical Activity Strategy.

The draft Physical Activity Strategy document was placed on public exhibition from July 21 – August 18 2015, which was advertised via Council's website and the Maroondah Leader Newspaper, Tuesday 21 July. The document was available for inspection on Council's website, at Council Service Centres and at the Croydon and Ringwood Libraries.

The opportunity to make a submission was available until Wednesday 18 August 2015. In total six submissions were received from the community during the consultation period. These were from five local residents and one internal Council Officer.

All the submissions were supportive of the overall principles of the draft Physical Activity Strategy. In addition to the general support of the strategy, the submissions raised specific pedestrian access issues and activity program ideas. The specific access issues have been forwarded to Council's engineering team for their response. Activity program ideas will be tabled as part of action plan development.

**CONCLUSION**

The Maroondah City Council Physical Activity Strategy 2015 – 2020 has been developed through detailed consultation and research to create a Strategy that prioritises the development and/or improvement of environments to support increased participation in physical activity.

The Strategy highlights the challenges and opportunities for the general community and then focuses on specific populations in order to target actions which will have a positive impact on participation.

**ATTACHMENTS**

1. Community Consultation Feedback Table
2. Maroondah Physical Activity Strategy 2015 - 2020

**CONFIDENTIALITY**

Not Applicable

**RECOMMENDATION**

**THAT COUNCIL, HAVING CONSIDERED SUBMISSIONS TO THE PUBLIC EXHIBITION OF THE MAROONDAH PHYSICAL ACTIVITY STRATEGY 2015-2020, HEREBY ADOPTS THE STRATEGY AS ATTACHED TO THIS REPORT (ATTACHMENT 2)**



**MAROONDAH FESTIVAL 2015**

**ITEM 3**

**PURPOSE**

In order to facilitate the operations of the 2015 Maroondah Festival on Sunday 8 November, this report seeks formal Council endorsement to temporarily:

- Close sections of roads/streets within the Croydon precinct;
- Prohibit smoking within the Town Park precinct;
- Prohibit the consumption of liquor or possession of any liquor not in a sealed container within Town Park and
- Ban dogs within the Town Park precinct.

**STRATEGIC / POLICY ISSUES**

The following directions contained in Maroondah 2040: Our Future Together and the Council Plan 2013-2017 (Year 3: 2015-2016) provide the strategic framework that underpins the purpose of this report.

Outcome Area: A vibrant and culturally rich community

Our Vision: In 2040, Maroondah is a creative cosmopolitan community recognised for its celebration and promotion of arts and culture. There are a broad range of engaging entertainment options, diverse cultural activities and the creation and display of contemporary and traditional forms of art.

Key Directions 2013 – 2017:

- 3.2 Provide a diverse range of engaging entertainment spaces, events and activities
- 3.3 Support festivals and events that celebrate local arts, diversity and produce

**BACKGROUND**

Road Closures

The proposed road closures for the 2015 Maroondah Festival are:

- Norton Road - Mt Dandenong Road to Jesmond Road; and
- Civic Square - at south entrance to Arndale Shopping Centre car park to the south west corner of the Aquahub car park.

It is proposed for Mt Dandenong Road to remain open to traffic. The closure of roads surrounding the Festival site will ensure a safe environment for Festival participants.

Smoke Free

The Smoking in Public Places discussion paper was brought to CMT in November 2012. The discussion paper and the suggestions for action were endorsed by CMT at this time.

**MAROONDAH FESTIVAL 2015 Cont'd**

**ITEM 3**

In 2013, one of the suggestions for action was that Council-run events are advertised as smoke-free. Council's major public event 'Maroondah Festival' was highlighted as a good starting point to adopt the smoke free arrangement. It is proposed to continue endorsing Maroondah Festival as a smoke free event in 2015.

Alcohol Free

Council's Local Law No.8 restricts alcohol consumption on Council land without a permit.

A ban on liquor consumption was enforced for the first time at the 1996 Maroondah Festival.

It is proposed that the ban for 2015 continue to apply for the Council owned land in and around the Festival site as there will be large numbers of people participating in activities at this location.

The declaration of alcohol free areas ensures a safe environment for Festival participants and provides the Victoria Police and the security company with the ability to adequately control large crowds.

Dog Free

Following the 1998 Festival, a number of complaints were received from residents and Festival visitors regarding the number of dogs that were present throughout the event in Croydon Park and the surrounding streets. Health and safety issues were raised with Council due to the number of dangerous dog breeds present and not adequately controlled by their owners, particularly in a crowded and extremely noisy environment. It was decided that with large crowds present on the day, Festival visitors, particularly young children, may be placed in danger if dogs are allowed. As such Council endorsed a recommendation to ban dogs from the Festival site

It is proposed that these measures imposed in past years to restrict dogs on site are retained for the 2015 event at Town Park. However, the Croydon and District Dog Obedience Club's demonstration team will be allowed to perform at the 2015 Maroondah Festival under the following guidelines:

- Demonstration times are provided to the Croydon and District Dog Obedience Club where there is minimal conflict with the remaining Festival program, i.e. the demonstration space does not have additional activities in the area at the time of the dog obedience demonstration;
- All participants must meet at a designated time and place within 30 minutes of the allocated demonstration time and proceed to the demonstration area together. All participants must leave the Festival Site together at the completion of the demonstration;
- Dogs are to be brought on and off the site on leads at all times;
- No dogs are to be walked through the general Festival site at any time;

**MAROONDAH FESTIVAL 2015 Cont'd**

**ITEM 3**

- During the demonstration, advanced participants or agility displays are only allowed to display with their dogs off the lead, however they must remain under the owner's control at all times;
- All members and the dogs participating in the demonstration must be clearly identified as members of the Croydon & District Dog Obedience Club, i.e. T-shirt, name tag, dog collars; and
- Whilst on the Festival Site all members of Croydon & District Dog Obedience Club participating in the demonstrations are to act on all instructions given by Council and Festival Staff.

**ISSUE / DISCUSSION**

Road Closures

It is proposed that the following road closures to vehicular traffic with the exception of emergency vehicles, be approved from 6.00am to 8.00pm on Sunday 8 November 2015:

- Norton Road - Mt Dandenong Road to Jesmond Road; and
- Civic Square - at south entrance to Arndale Shopping Centre car park to the south west corner of the Aquahub car park.
- All other roads will remain open for the duration of the Festival.

Approval from relevant organisations such as VicRoads and the Victoria Police will be sought on the proposed road closures. Approval will also be sought from VicRoads to extend the timing for Festival participants to cross at the pedestrian lights on Mt Dandenong Road (opposite the Croydon Senior Citizens building) and to reduce speed on Mt Dandenong Road from Alfrick Road to James Kerr Way. Road signs will be placed on the day of the Festival advising of the road closures and speed reductions.

Smoke Free

It is proposed to ban smoking within the Festival site for Sunday 8 November 2015.

Alcohol Free

It is proposed to ban the consumption, or possession, of alcohol within Town Park for Sunday 8 November 2015

Dog Free

It is proposed to ban dogs, with the exception of guide dogs and the Croydon and District Dog Obedience Club's demonstration team, at the Festival site during the hours from 10.00am to 600pm inclusive on Sunday 8 November 2015.

To declare a defined area as 'dog free' Council may by resolution make an order under Part 26 - 2a of the Domestic Animals Act 1994 with the right to:

**MAROONDAH FESTIVAL 2015 Cont'd**

**ITEM 3**

"Prohibit the presence of dogs and cats in any public area of the municipal district of the Council."

The Festival site includes the following areas:

- Town Park including Athletics track;
- Norton Road (from Mt Dandenong Road to Leigh Road);
- Civic Square (from Arndale Shopping centre lower car park entrance to car park located behind the Civic Centre).

The following process will be undertaken in order to ensure a safe Festival and that the general public are aware that dogs are not to be brought to the event.

1. All the promotion and marketing in the lead up to the 2015 Maroondah Festival will contain information indicating that it is a dog free event.
2. In the event that visitors bring their dogs to the 2015 event they will be handed a letter outlining the reasons behind the ban and asked to remove their dog from the site.
3. If a dog is displaying a dangerous temperament and/or the owner refuses to follow the instruction, the owner will again be asked to remove the dog off the Festival site immediately and may be fined.

Council may appoint any person other than a Councillor to be an Authorised Officer for the purposes of the administration and enforcement of any Act, regulations or Local Laws that relate to the functions and powers of the Council.

Two Officers nominated from Local Laws will be employed to patrol the Festival site between 10.00am - 6.00pm on Sunday 8 November 2015 ensuring dogs are removed immediately by the owners.

**FINANCIAL / ECONOMIC ISSUES**

Road Closures

The overall associated costs of road closures and effective traffic management will be approximately \$9,000 (plus GST) for advertising, signage and staff. This expenditure is incorporated into the recurrent Festival budget.

Smoke Free

The costs associated with the non smoking ban would be approximately \$300 (plus GST) for signage to be displayed at the Festival.

Alcohol Free

Not applicable

**MAROONDAH FESTIVAL 2015 Cont'd**

**ITEM 3**

Dog Free

Two Local Laws Officers will be employed on the day to ensure compliance with Local Law provisions, with associated costs of approximately \$1,000 (plus GST). This expenditure is incorporated into the recurrent Festival budget.

**ENVIRONMENTAL / AMENITY ISSUES**

The Maroondah Festival is promoted as a family celebration with expectations that over 20,000 people will attend the event. Maintaining a safe celebration for visitors is of paramount importance and actions such as the closure of roads, the banning of smoking and alcohol and creating a dog free festival is a responsible exercise of Council's duty of care.

**SOCIAL / COMMUNITY ISSUES**

Not Applicable

**COMMUNITY CONSULTATION**

A public notice will be placed in the Maroondah Leader in the week commencing 19 October 2015 including a listing of the exact roads that will be closed and duration of the closure. The public notice will invite submissions from the public on the proposed road closures to be conducted on Sunday 8 November 2015. Letters will also be delivered to local businesses and residents within the Festival site informing them of the access restrictions and an Access Pass will be provided so that they will have access to their business and houses on the day of the Festival.

"No smoking", "No alcohol" and "No dogs" information, as well as parking details will be included in Festival advertising material.

**CONCLUSION**

The proposed road closures and the dog and smoke and alcohol free areas are crucial to ensure the safe conduct of the 2015 Maroondah Festival.

**ATTACHMENTS**

Not Applicable

**CONFIDENTIALITY**

Not Applicable

**MAROONDAH FESTIVAL 2015 Cont'd**

**ITEM 3**

**RECOMMENDATION**

**THAT COUNCIL**

- 1. IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PROVISIONS OF SCHEDULE 11, CLAUSE 10(B) OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1989, RESOLVES TO TEMPORARILY CLOSE THE FOLLOWING ROADS ON SUNDAY 8 NOVEMBER 2015, FROM 6.00AM TO 8.00PM:**
  - i. NORTON ROAD - MT DANDENONG ROAD TO JESMOND ROAD**
  - ii. CIVIC SQUARE - AT SOUTH ENTRANCE TO ARNDALE SHOPPING CENTRE CAR PARK TO THE SOUTH WEST CORNER OF THE AQUAHUB CAR PARK**
- 2. SEEKS APPROVAL FROM VICROADS AND VICTORIA POLICE FOR PROPOSED CHANGES TO TRAFFIC CONDITIONS**
- 3. PROHIBITS THE CONSUMPTION OR POSSESSION OF OPENED CONTAINERS OF ALCOHOL ON SUNDAY 8 NOVEMBER 2015, AT THE FESTIVAL**
- 4. PROHIBITS SMOKING ON SUNDAY 8 NOVEMBER 2015, AT THE FESTIVAL**
- 5. APPROVES THE PROHIBITION OF DOGS DURING THE MAROONDAH FESTIVAL ON SUNDAY 8 NOVEMBER 2015 BETWEEN 10.00A.M. AND 6.00P.M. EXCEPT FOR THE CROYDON AND DISTRICT DOG OBEDIENCE CLUB'S DEMONSTRATION TEAM IN THE FOLLOWING AREAS:**
  - i. TOWN PARK**
  - ii. NORTON ROAD (FROM MT DANDENONG ROAD TO LEIGH ROAD)**
  - iii. CIVIC SQUARE (SOUTH ENTRANCE TO ARNDALE SHOPPING CENTRE CAR PARK TO THE SOUTH WEST CORNER OF AQUAHUB CAR PARK)**
- 6. PROMOTES INFORMATION REGARDING ROAD CLOSURES, ALCOHOL AND SMOKE FREE EVENT AND DOG BAN ON ALL FESTIVAL MARKETING MATERIAL PRIOR TO THE EVENT**

**PURPOSE**

To consider the Maroondah City Council Annual Report 2014/15 prior to submission to the Minister for Local Government and release to the community.

**STRATEGIC / POLICY ISSUES**

The following directions contained in Maroondah 2040: Our Future Together and the Council Plan 2013-2017 (Year 3: 2015/16) provide the strategic framework that underpins the purpose of this report.

Outcome Area:

A well governed and empowered community

Our Vision:

In 2040, Maroondah will be an empowered community that is actively engaged in Council decision making through processes that consider the needs and aspirations of all ages and population groups. Council will provide strong and responsive leadership, ensuring transparency, while working with the community to advocate for and 'champion' local needs.

Key Directions 2013 – 2017:

- 8.1 Provide enhanced governance that is transparent, accessible, inclusive and accountable
- 8.2 Ensure responsible and sustainable management of Maroondah's resources, assets, infrastructure and natural environment

Priority Action 2015/16:

Not applicable

**BACKGROUND**

The Annual Report provides a comprehensive report on Council operations to meet its commitment of open, responsive, consultative and accountable government. Within this report, Council meets all its statutory obligations under the Local Government Act 1989 (the Act).

The Annual Report is Council's highest-level comprehensive report to the community outlining how the Council has met its annual objectives as articulated in the Council Plan Annual Budget. For Council's report on operations for the 2014/15 financial year, these objectives are derived from *Maroondah 2040: Our future together* and Council's long-term financial plan.

The primary objective of the 2014/15 Annual Report is to inform the Maroondah community and stakeholders of Council's performance during the 2014/15 against the objectives and priorities outlined in the Council Plan 2013-2017 (Year 2: 2014/15). Council's achievements, challenges and future directions are considered under each community outcome area.

**ANNUAL REPORT 2014/15 Cont'd**

**ITEM 1**

Key features of the Annual Report as required by section 131 of the Act, include the following matters:

- A report of Council's operations during the financial year;
- Audited financial statements for the financial year;
- Performance Statement prepared under section 132 of the Act;
- VAGO report on the Performance Statement prepared under section 133 of the Act; and
- Inclusion of relevant performance indicator results and checklist items from the Local Government Performance Reporting Framework as required by the Act.

Council is also required to provide a range of other statutory information through this report. This information can be found within the Corporate Governance and Statutory Information sections of the report.

**ISSUE / DISCUSSION**

Pursuant to section 131(6) of the Act, Council is required to prepare and submit an Annual Report to the Minister within three months of the end of each financial year. Section 134 of the Act also requires Council to hold a meeting to formally consider the report within one month of submission to the Minister and such meeting is to be advertised.

Submission of the Annual Report to the Minister and subsequent public exhibition of the document will follow this Council meeting. Statutory advertising is to be undertaken as required by the Act. Copies of this Annual Report will be made available from Council service centres and libraries, and on the Council website.

Council at its meeting on 24 August 2015 meeting approved in principle the 2014/15 financial statements as required by the Act. These have been signed unqualified by the Victorian Auditor General with statements included in this 2014/15 Annual Report.

**FINANCIAL / ECONOMIC ISSUES**

The cost of printing Council's 2014/15 Annual Report is met within the current budget. A relatively small number of Annual Report copies will be printed on recycled stock to meet statutory, administrative and community needs. The Annual Report will also be made available on Council's website for download.

**ENVIRONMENTAL / AMENITY ISSUES**

Not Applicable

**SOCIAL / COMMUNITY ISSUES**

Not Applicable



**ANNUAL REPORT 2014/15 Cont'd**

**ITEM 1**

**COMMUNITY CONSULTATION**

Pursuant to section 131 of the Act:

- Following the submission of the Annual Report to the Minister, Council must give public notice that the Annual Report has been prepared and can be inspected at the Council Offices.

Pursuant to section 134 of the Act, Council must:

- Consider the Annual Report at a meeting of the Council
- Advertise the report at least 14 days before the meeting is held
- Note the locations from which copies of the Annual Report can be obtained
- Keep the Council meeting open to the public while the Annual Report is discussed

In accordance with these provisions of the Act, the Council meeting to formally consider the report will be held on 19 October 2015 and a Public Notice will be published in The Age newspaper on 24 September 2015. This notice will also be placed in the Maroondah Leader newspaper on 29 September 2015.

Copies of the endorsed Annual Report will be made available to the public for inspection at the City Offices, Council's Customer Service Centres, and Council's website from 22 September 2015.

**CONCLUSION**

The Annual Report 2014/15 confirms that Council has made significant advances towards achieving the community vision articulated in *Maroondah 2040: Our future together* whilst maintaining responsible and sustainable management of Maroondah's resources, assets, infrastructure and the natural environment. The report also outlines how Council has continued to meet its legislative responsibilities under the Local Government Act 1989.

**ATTACHMENTS**

Not Applicable

**CONFIDENTIALITY**

Not Applicable

**RECOMMENDATION**

**THAT COUNCIL**

- 1. NOTES THE PREPARATION OF THE 2014/15 ANNUAL REPORT**
- 2. ENDORSES THE 2014/15 ANNUAL REPORT FOR SUBMISSION TO THE MINISTER FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT**
- 3. ENSURES COPIES OF THE 2014/15 ANNUAL REPORT ARE MADE AVAILABLE FOR PUBLIC INSPECTION FROM 22 SEPTEMBER 2015 AT COUNCIL SERVICE CENTRES AND ON COUNCIL'S WEBSITE**

**ACTIVE AND HEALTHY AGEING INITIATIVE - TOWARDS AN  
AGE-FRIENDLY MAROONDAH**

**ITEM 2**

**PURPOSE**

The purpose of this report is to present Council with *The Active and Healthy Ageing Initiative – Towards an Age-friendly Maroondah*, including the 2015-2020 Initiatives, for formal consideration and adoption following public exhibition and feedback.

Note: The public consultation period concludes on Friday 18 September, a verbal update will be provided to Council on any submissions received.

**STRATEGIC / POLICY ISSUES**

The following directions contained in Maroondah 2040: Our Future Together and the Council Plan 2013-2017 (Year 3: 2015-2016) provide the strategic framework that underpins the purpose of this report.

Outcome Area: An inclusive and diverse community

Our Vision: In the year 2040, Maroondah is an inclusive community where social connections are strong across generations and diversity is embraced and celebrated.

Key Directions 2013 – 2017:

7.8 Support all ages and population groups to be valued, connected, supported and empowered within their local community through the provision and coordination of accessible services, programming and facilities.

**BACKGROUND**

An Age-friendly City is defined by the World Health Organisation (WHO) as an inclusive and accessible urban environment that promotes active ageing. The Age-friendly initiative was created to make it easier for older people to age actively, to live in security, enjoy good health and continue to fully participate in society. According to the WHO Global Age Friendly Cities Framework there are 8 themes that influence the health and quality of older people in the community. These are;

- Outdoor Spaces and Buildings
- Transportation
- Housing
- Social Participation
- Respect and Social Inclusion
- Civic Participation and Employment
- Communication and Information
- Community Support and Health

**ACTIVE AND HEALTHY AGEING INITIATIVE - TOWARDS AN AGE-FRIENDLY MAROONDAH Cont'd** **ITEM 2**

Local governments that plan and take action to accommodate the changing needs of older residents can ensure that their communities remain attractive places to live with features that not only benefit seniors but support the health, safety and participation of residents of all ages.

A core aspect of age-friendly work is that it must include older people as active participants in the process.

On 1 December 2014, Maroondah was accepted as a member of the World Health Organisation Global Network of Age-friendly Cities and Communities in recognition of Council's commitment to becoming age-friendly.

**ISSUE / DISCUSSION**

The Active and Healthy Ageing (AHA) Initiative has been developed as the tool to guide Maroondah's journey to becoming an age-friendly city. The initiative aims to explore the 8 age-friendly themes listed above and to identify priority areas for Maroondah through discussions with the community and with a particular focus on Maroondah's population aged 45+ years.

**FINANCIAL / ECONOMIC ISSUES**

Council plays a key role in planning services for seniors with a range of services directly provided by Council and others coordinated and supported by Council. Council is also responsible for providing and maintaining facilities from which seniors programs operate. There are no additional direct financial costs incurred by Council through the implementation of this Initiative. The Initiative promotes increased community strengthening and capacity building to support the Maroondah community to respond to the needs of seniors through increased networking, relationship building and collaboration. Where new initiatives and opportunities have been highlighted, there may be potential to source additional and new funding or encourage resource sharing.

**ENVIRONMENTAL / AMENITY ISSUES**

Not Applicable

**SOCIAL / COMMUNITY ISSUES**

By 2030, over one quarter of Australia's population will be aged over 60. By 2020, over 40% of Maroondah's population will be aged over 45 years. Maroondah's current population aged over 60 is higher than the metropolitan average and has the highest proportion of people aged over 85 in the Eastern Region. The proportion of older people living alone and at increased risk of social isolation is increasing significantly.

Extensive community consultations with older people in Maroondah during the 2013 and 2014 Seniors Expo events, Maroondah Festival Cafe Consult, 2040 forums and through the extensive AHA Initiative consultation process have indicated that seniors wish to continue to reside in the Maroondah community, remaining as independent as possible and living within their own homes. Our ageing population wants to age healthily, continue to learn and remain connected to family and friends. They wish to be treated with respect and contribute to community life as they age.

**ACTIVE AND HEALTHY AGEING INITIATIVE - TOWARDS AN AGE-FRIENDLY MAROONDAH Cont'd** **ITEM 2**

Older people in Maroondah have identified that they are seeking opportunities to remain physically active and socially connected, to have a choice of accessible local services and businesses and to be able to access relevant and timely information. Decreased mobility and confidence as people age requires that consideration is given to the accessibility, safety and security of outdoor spaces and buildings.

**COMMUNITY CONSULTATION**

As part of Council's unique approach to the community consultation and engagement process, community leaders, older residents, Council employees and Councillors were nominated to become part of Maroondah's pioneering Age-friendly Champions program. Discussions with older people in the Maroondah Community, lead by the Champions team, have also informed Council's AHA Initiative.

In line with the Age-friendly cities requirements older people have contributed to the development and proposed design of the community version. Council's draft community version of the draft initiative has been endorsed in principle by COTA Victoria, the peak body for seniors and approved by the World Health Organisation with regards to adopting a framework which appropriately meets the Age-friendly Cities criteria and reflects true collaboration with, and involvement by seniors in determining Maroondah's priority areas. The draft initiative was placed on public exhibition for a 3 week period. Two telephone responses were received providing positive feedback and commendation, no formal submissions were received.

**CONCLUSION**

There is a growing commitment from Federal, State and Local Governments and Community Service Organisations to proactively plan for and prioritise actions which will meet the needs of Australia's ageing population. Maroondah's AHA Initiative will drive age friendly concepts and actions to enable older people to continue to contribute significantly to their communities, their families, the economy and society. Following a period of public exhibition, the Active and Healthy Ageing Initiative – *Towards an Age-friendly Maroondah* is presented for formal Council consideration.

**ATTACHMENTS**

1. Draft Active and Healthy Ageing Initiative

**CONFIDENTIALITY**

Not Applicable

**RECOMMENDATION**

**THAT COUNCIL ENDORSES THE ACTIVE AND HEALTHY AGEING INITIATIVE – TOWARDS AN AGE-FRIENDLY MAROONDAH**

**DOG PARK FEASIBILITY OPTIONS FOR MAROONDAH**

**ITEM 3**

**PURPOSE**

To investigate the provision of dog parks in Maroondah and to provide a framework to guide planning, development and management of such facilities.

There are over 13,500 registered dogs in Maroondah. The recreational and exercise opportunities for dogs and owners in Maroondah are traditional on leash walking and off leash in the broad network of designated unfenced dog off leash areas. These options do not cater for all in our community and there is a rising demand for a fenced dog park facility for Maroondah residents to utilise.

This report proposes that Council consider the development of 1 to 2 sites in the near term to cater for the increasing demand and to ensure ease of geographic access to as many users as possible. These sites would ideally be situated in the north and south of the municipality, and by providing more than one site, there is flexibility in Council's ability to provide varying sizes and attributes of each park being developed, ie. a larger regional park and a smaller and more basic local park.

**STRATEGIC / POLICY ISSUES**

The following directions contained in Maroondah 2040: Our Future Together and the Council Plan 2013-2017 (Year 3: 2015-2016) provide the strategic framework that underpins the purpose of this report.

Outcome Area:

**A safe, healthy and active community**

In 2040, Maroondah is a safe, healthy and active community with local opportunities provided for people of all ages and abilities to have high levels of social, emotional and physical wellbeing.

Our Vision:

Maroondah will be a vibrant and diverse city with a healthy and active community, living in green and leafy neighbourhoods which are connected to thriving and accessible activity centres contributing to a prosperous economy within a safe, inclusive and sustainable environment

Key Directions 2013 – 2017:

**A HEALTHY COMMUNITY**

1.17 Promote healthy eating and physical activity by supporting education initiatives and providing a diverse range of accessible open spaces, and recreation facilities and services

**DOG PARK FEASIBILITY OPTIONS FOR MAROONDAH  
Cont'd**

**ITEM 3**

**AN ACTIVE COMMUNITY**

- 1.18 Enhance and maintain an integrated and connected network of passive and active open space to promote community health and wellbeing
- 1.19 Provide a range of integrated recreation and leisure facilities that meet the needs of all ages and abilities
- 1.21 Support and empower local community groups, sporting clubs and special interest groups across Maroondah

**AN INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY**

- 7.8 Support all ages and population groups to be valued, connected, supported and empowered within their local community through the provision and coordination of accessible services, programming and facilities

**A DIVERSE COMMUNITY**

- 7.11 Ensure the needs of community members from all ages, backgrounds and lifestyles are considered in planning for local services, programs and infrastructure

**BACKGROUND**

**1. COMMUNITY WELLBEING AND THE PROVISION OF DIVERSE RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES**

A recent park user survey of 100 Maroondah residents showed that the primary reasons for visiting our parks include -

- walking 15%
- children's play 14%
- dog exercise 10% (15% regionally)

Of these users, 64% drive to a district park and 80% to a regional park. The top three areas identified for improvement were bins, toilets and dog facilities/management.

Given Maroondah has some 13,500 registered dogs; it will come as no surprise that many people nominate their dog as their main form of recreation. There is also increasing recognition that dog owners can be encouraged to recreate and exercise further if their needs are planned, and facilities provided, in the same way that we plan for other recreation needs and demands.

Council and the community has long recognised the importance of pets to the general health and wellbeing of residents in our community, and dog parks can be seen as another manner in which Council can support community wellbeing.

**DOG PARK FEASIBILITY OPTIONS FOR MAROONDAH  
Cont'd**

**ITEM 3**

Research undertaken for the publication *Australians and Their Pets: The Facts* highlights the significant health and wellbeing benefits associated with owning a pet:

- People who own pets typically visit the doctor less often and use less medication.
- Pet owners on average have lower cholesterol and lower blood pressure and are less likely to report feeling lonely.
- Pet owners recover more quickly from illness and surgery and cope with stressful situations.
- Pet owners show lower levels of risk factors associated with heart disease.
- Pets have been shown to greatly increase quality of life for the elderly including reduced tension, fatigue and confusion and increased feelings of enthusiasm, interest and inspiration.
- Self-esteem has been shown to be higher in children or adolescents who have a pet.
- There is also a growing body of research that shows how dogs are likely to contribute to the health and wellbeing of dog owners and their families:
- Dog walkers are more likely to experience social contact and conversation than those that walk alone.
- Dogs motivate their owners to walk more often and meet recommended levels of physical activity.
- Children who own dogs are less likely to become overweight or obese.
- Young girls who own a dog spend more time per day in physical activity and as a result achieve half the recommended level of physical activity for children just through the activities they undertake with their dog.
- Five to six year olds are 50% less likely to be overweight or obese compared with those who did not own a dog.

Research also indicates that people aged over 65 who walk a dog walk very frequently. However the greater proportions of dog owners over the age of 65 do not walk their dog at all. This raises the opportunity for initiatives that focus on dog walking for physical fitness and social interaction for older age groups.

Pets are important in instigating contact between people. Pet owners are more likely to engage with other people, exchange favours and perceive their neighbourhood and community as friendlier than non-pet owners.

**DOG PARK FEASIBILITY OPTIONS FOR MAROONDAH  
Cont'd**

**ITEM 3**

**2. MAROONDAH DOG POPULATION**

There are 13,292 dogs registered in Maroondah with an even distribution of dog owners across the municipality. Dogs are in more households than any other type of pet, 36% of households own a dog.

Maroondah is also home to the Croydon and District Obedience Dog Club, one of the largest obedience dog clubs in the state, currently operating out of Silcock Reserve. Maroondah also hosts the German Shepherd Club of Victoria, one of the largest single breed clubs in the State, housed at JW Manson Reserve.

**3. DOG OFF LEASH AREAS IN MAROONDAH**

There are 35 designated off leash areas in Maroondah. These areas have been selected to provide a broad spread of geographical locations for community ease of access. They are unfenced and cater for a variety of visitors and activities, including dog owners.

**4 DOG PARKS**

**4.1 WHAT IS A DOG PARK?**

A dog park is a fully fenced area that may contain a number of activity areas including play space, training areas and natural rummaging environments.

Dog parks should include amenities for dog owners and other people to ensure it is an appealing social environment and a well used community space.

A dog park should be considered as one of a range of opportunities available to dog owners to exercise their dogs; a dog park does not replace the need for off-leash areas, walking trails and so on.

The size of a dog park may vary depending on the space available and the activities and equipment to be incorporated. Smaller parks (around 2,000m<sup>2</sup>) can provide off leash opportunities where they may not otherwise be available. Larger parks (up to 8,000m<sup>2</sup>) are more attractive to owners because of the range of activities they can incorporate.

Currently the nearest opportunities for Maroondah residents to visit a fenced dog park are in Knox and Manningham. Maroondah dog owners report that they regularly travel to these facilities.

**4.2 BENEFITS OF A DOG PARK**

There are numerous benefits from the provision of dog parks to both dogs and their owners and some of these include:

- Adding to the diversity of recreational opportunities for residents
- A social environment where a variety of people and their dogs can recreate together
- Provide a meeting place and activity hub for people and families



**DOG PARK FEASIBILITY OPTIONS FOR MAROONDAH  
Cont'd**

**ITEM 3**

- Provide older people and people with restricted mobility/disabilities with an accessible and safe place to exercise their dog
- Encourage people to exercise
- Dogs and their owners can be separate from people who do not want to interact with dogs
- Provide a venue for people to be able to socialize their dogs with other dogs
- Provide a focal point for community education and training around responsible pet ownership
- Can provide a separate space for dogs that does not conflict with other park activities
- Allows dogs access to parkland but protects sensitive environments such as bushland areas

**4.3 DOG MANAGEMENT IN A FENCED PARK**

There is a perception that there is a higher level of dog rushing and attacking incidents in dog parks given the large numbers of dogs that can congregate and or the unfamiliar people in the space. Research however, indicates that this is not the case, dog parks generally become self regulating as responsible dog owners put pressure on other dog owners. As a result responsible dog ownership behaviors are reinforced and less responsible owners tend to stop using the dog park.

**4.4 RESPONSIBILITIES OF DOG OWNERS**

Dog owners are subject to the same responsibilities when using a dog park as they are when using any off leash area which include:

- Cleaning up their dog's litter and carrying a device suitable for this purpose
- Having their dog under effective voice control
- Have their dog in visual and audible distance so it can be effectively recalled
- Not allowing their dog to worry or threaten another person or animal
- Must have a lead
- Dogs on leash within 15 metres of children's playground, BBQ or picnic facilities

**DOG PARK FEASIBILITY OPTIONS FOR MAROONDAH  
Cont'd**

**ITEM 3**

A fenced dog park could also have additional user regulations, that may be developed in consultation with the community and be specific to a particular site, some of which may include:

- Restrictions on the number of dogs that any one person may take into a dog park to ensure effective management of each dog
- Dog walkers must be inside the dog park with their dog
- Dogs using dog parks should be registered, desexed and vaccinated
- Dogs that are declared dangerous, menacing or restricted breed will not be permitted in dog parks
- Young dogs should not use the dog park because they will not be fully vaccinated and therefore open to infection.
- Children under the age of 13 are not to supervise dogs
- Children under the age of 5 should not be permitted in dog park
- Dog owners / carers should be discouraged from taking very young children into dog parks as they can be overwhelmed by boisterous dog play and possibly knocked over.
- Formal gatherings and use by commercial providers will be regulated to minimize conflict between these groups and residents wanting to use the park

**4.5 FACILITY MANAGEMENT AND MAINTENANCE**

Consideration will need to be given to the management and ongoing maintenance of the dog park and a facility management plan will need to address the following

- A risk management plan to manage and mitigate risk
- Maintenance and routine maintenance scheduling
- Cleansing costs including litter removal, general experience with dog parks is that users do mostly take responsibility for cleaning up after their dogs.
- Planning for increased use of the park which may result in increased usage of toilets, rubbish bins, picnic areas and other facilities in the park/reserve
- Vegetation management and replacement (particularly grassed areas)
- Infrastructure maintenance and replacement including seating, dog education/agility equipment, signage, fencing, toilets, carparks etc
- Monitoring and education of the site for compliance with regulations and dog park rules

**DOG PARK FEASIBILITY OPTIONS FOR MAROONDAH  
Cont'd**

**ITEM 3**

**5 DOG PARK PLANNING**

Maroondah's Open Space Strategy recognises that the design of open space infrastructure can affect how people will use it and whether they do so safely. Good design can build on our sense of identity and civic pride and therefore help with maintenance and sustainability issues. The Open Space Strategy also aims to ensure that:

- New open space is an appropriate size for its' intended function
- There is no net loss of open space
- In reserves, facilities are grouped together to improve safety and surveillance
- Reserves are designed to cater for families with one key reserve in each precinct for social family recreation
- Any upgrade of facilities will encourage participation by people with a disability
- Conflict between activities in large spaces will be minimised
- The whole community will be involved in open space planning and design processes

**5.1 DOG PARK PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS**

A fenced dog park may vary in size depending on the space available and any activities or equipment to be incorporated. They may include separately fenced areas for smaller dogs and a space where dogs can be taken for "time out" away from the excitement of the main fenced dog park area.

Larger fenced dog parks are generally more attractive to dog owners because of the variety of activity opportunities they can incorporate training/agility equipment, ball play areas, running space and landscape areas for foraging/rock scramble/exploration. They also allow for social amenities such as car parking, seating trees and shelter.

However, smaller fenced dog parks can provide off leash opportunities where they may not otherwise be available.

When planning for a dog park, the area should be –

- An attractive place to visit and meet other people
- Be located in well used parks and reserves that are open and easily observed from streets and paths
- Be accessible with good footpath and trail access and car parking that also caters for the needs of people with disabilities as well as those with dogs.
- Be constructed so that the paths/surfaces within cater for arrange of accessibility needs
- Be well integrated with other open space and facilities

**DOG PARK FEASIBILITY OPTIONS FOR MAROONDAH  
Cont'd**

**ITEM 3**

**5.2 DOG PARK ATTRIBUTES**

Refer to Attachment 2

**5.3 PARK SIZE**

A dog park should have an area big enough for dogs to run around and space themselves out.

If there are not enough square metres available, a park can easily get crowded, leading to tension amongst dogs. A small area does not encourage people to walk with their dogs, but rather to stand around socializing. This increases the risk of inadequate supervision of dog behavior. Smaller parks can also become overused, leading to deterioration of ground surfaces. Both facilities at Knox and Manningham have at times had to be closed for resurfacing.

Larger parks provide for reduced overcrowding which is less stressful for dogs. They provide opportunities to provide different activity zones within the park and cater for more users. They do however, require better infrastructure and parking. Generally a larger park suffers less wear and tear of surfaces and may be sectioned off for maintenance rather than closing the whole space.

**6 SITE EVALUATION**

Given the Dog Park Planning considerations above, Council officers have undertaken a review of some sites in Maroondah to determine their suitability before the crucial step of engaging the community and existing users of the parks to obtain their feedback on the suitability of sites.

Attachment 1 provides an overview of the parks that have been considered and a brief commentary about each site.

Readiness of the site to accommodate a dog park in near future and available space without impacting on space available for other activities have been considered as key priorities.

**6.1 PARKS CONSIDERED**

Refer to Attachment 2 – Dog Park Feasibility Options Table.

**FINANCIAL / ECONOMIC ISSUES**

It is estimated that a regional style dog park at site such as Eastfield Park would cost in the region of \$200,000. This would include works to provide all weather suitable surfaces, provision for disabled access to and throughout the park, landscaping and beautification works, perimeter and internal fencing, signage, water fountains, seating and covered shelters.

A smaller facility at a site such as Quambee would require less structural works and would be a smaller facility and the estimated cost is in the region of \$80,000.

**DOG PARK FEASIBILITY OPTIONS FOR MAROONDAH  
Cont'd**

**ITEM 3**

The ongoing maintenance of these areas is also a matter that will require further analysis during the park design to ensure that the Council Depot is able to easily and readily maintain the spaces without unreasonable impost.

**ENVIRONMENTAL / AMENITY ISSUES**

Noted and considered in the discussion above.

**SOCIAL / COMMUNITY ISSUES**

Noted and considered in the discussion above.

**COMMUNITY CONSULTATION**

This report recommends that community consultation be undertaken to determine if the existing park users, and the wider community have feedback in relation to the need for such facilities and the suitability of the two sites identified as possible locations.

The result of the community consultation would be reported back to Council to allow further consideration and determination.

**CONCLUSION**

The two preferred sites that have been identified in this report are Eastfield Park and Quambee Reserve, as these sites have the potential to achieve the broad planning considerations taken into account for a fenced dog park facility. Planning considerations for a regional style of facility include car parking facilities, availability of space for the facility itself, other amenities such as children's playgrounds, toilets and picnic facilities. Both local and regional parks also benefit from good walking linkages.

Eastfield Park in particular has space and capacity to accommodate a fenced dog park and the park itself would benefit from reactivation. A dog park would fit well with plans to relocate playground equipment and to rebuild toilet facilities at this site. The park has the capacity to cater as a regional facility where visitors would be expected from other municipalities.

Quambee Reserve has capacity to cater for a smaller more localised fenced dog park with ample parking and potential to use part of the space available in or near the area currently occupied by the Ringwood Horse and Pony Club.

**ATTACHMENTS**

1. Attachment 1 - Dog Park Feasibility Attributes Table
2. Attachment 2 - Dog Park Feasibility Options

**CONFIDENTIALITY**

Not Applicable

**DOG PARK FEASIBILITY OPTIONS FOR MAROONDAH  
Cont'd**

**ITEM 3**

**RECOMMENDATION**

**THAT COUNCIL:**

- 1. UNDERTAKES COMMUNITY CONSULTATION FOR TWO FENCED DOG PARK OPTIONS; ONE AT EASTFIELD PARK AS A REGIONAL FACILITY, AND A SECOND AT QUAMBEE RESERVE AS A SMALLER MORE LOCALISED FACILITY**
- 2. CONSIDERS A FURTHER REPORT ON THE RESULTS OF THE COMMUNITY CONSULTATION TOGETHER WITH THE OPTIONS AND IMPLICATIONS FOR PROGRESSING THE CONSTRUCTION OF SUCH FACILITIES AT A FUTURE COUNCIL MEETING**

**MAROONDAH WATER SENSITIVE CITY STRATEGY**

**ITEM 4**

**PURPOSE**

The purpose of this report is to consider submissions to the Draft Maroondah Water Sensitive City Strategy, following public exhibition of the Strategy from 21 July to 21 August 2015, and to seek the Council's endorsement of the Strategy.

**STRATEGIC / POLICY ISSUES**

The Water Sensitive City Strategy encourages sourcing and using water wisely to ensure good long-term quality of life and liveability outcomes in Maroondah.

The following directions contained in the Council Plan 2013-2017 (Year 3: 2015-2016) underpins the purpose of this report:

Outcome Area: A Clean, Green and Sustainable community

Our Vision: In the year 2040, Maroondah will be a leafy, green community with high levels of waste diversion and sustainable approaches to infrastructure development, urban design and management of natural resources. Our community is resilient and has the knowledge, capacity and resources to make sustainable lifestyle choices.

Key Directions 2013 – 2017

- 4.1 Ensure the long term protection and rehabilitation of the city's waterways and wetlands to improve water quality and streamflow;
- 4.13 Advocate for increased stormwater harvesting and greywater reuse by households and businesses
- 6.5 Work in partnership to encourage the use of a water sensitive approach in the development and renewal of the built and natural environment.

**BACKGROUND**

The key aim of the Strategy is to help Council to develop an integrated water management culture across Maroondah. This involves improving the way we manage water now so that current and future generations can benefit from secure water supplies, healthy environments and safe and beautiful places to live.

Council has received strong support from Melbourne Water, Yarra Valley Water, the State Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning and the Maroondah Environment Advisory Committee in the preparation of the Strategy and will assist with its implementation.

Concurrently, a Council Water Sensitive City Group with cross-departmental and external membership was established to assist with Strategy preparation and implementation and will report progress annually to Council.

The Strategy consists of a 'Vision and Outcomes' document (Attachment 2) and 'Transition Toolkit' (Attachment 3)

At its meeting on July 20, Council agreed to place the Draft Water Sensitive City Strategy on public exhibition from 21 July 2015 to 21 August 2015.

**MAROONDAH WATER SENSITIVE CITY STRATEGY Cont'd**

**ITEM 4**

**ISSUE / DISCUSSION**

Traditionally, water has been managed in central 'silos', eg stormwater, potable water, sewage without holistic management of all water sources and end users.

However increasingly rapid change, population growth and uncertainty mean that a new approach is needed. Increasing demands for potable water; climate uncertainty resulting in greater rainfall variability and more frequent storm, drought and flood events mean that a more flexible approach to water management, including alternatives to potable water and more distributed (local and regional) water sources is needed.

The State Government, including Melbourne Water, supports and funds integrated water management strategies such as this one. In addition, all major water entities, including Council, are increasingly working together to solve complex water-related issues.

The Draft Strategy's key findings and recommendations include:

- Council is already pursuing a water sensitive approach. For example, water sensitive urban design projects (WSUDs) such as Croydon Civic Flood mitigation, carpark, WSUD and oval beautification works and Acacia Court flood mitigation and WSUD
- multiple benefits have been demonstrated through water sensitive projects
- mainstreaming water sensitivity through culture change, partnerships and demonstration projects
- Maroondah is at the headwaters of several catchments and this implies downstream responsibilities.

It is anticipated that over the ten years of the Draft Strategy's life, there will be many benefits associated with the adoption of water sensitive behaviours. These include:

- improved water security
- drought and flood resilience
- Improved water management practices in homes and buildings
- well-designed streets and green corridors safely convey flood waters
- Council delivers multiple benefits through continual improvement of the local water cycle in partnership with government, community and relevant authorities.

Seven submissions were received as a result of public exhibition of the Draft Water Sensitive City Strategy.

Submitters are:

- Croydon Conservation Society;
- Department of Environment, Land, Water & Planning (DELWP, 2 submissions);
- Dr Fiona Ede, member Maroondah Environment Advisory Committee;



**MAROONDAH WATER SENSITIVE CITY STRATEGY Cont'd**

**ITEM 4**

- Warranwood Reserve Special Committee of Council;
- Maroondah Bushlinks; and
- Heathmont Bushcare.

All submissions support the Strategy, as exemplified by the following examples:

- “The Strategy outlines a very sound and important direction for Maroondah City Council to pursue. It fits well with other key areas of activity that Council is developing, such as the revised Sustainability Strategy and the Carbon Neutral Strategy, and the overall direction of Council in embracing greater sustainability outcomes and improved environmental management” (Dr Ede); and
- “The Maroondah Water Sensitive City Strategy is a great example of progressive water planning occurring at the local level in metropolitan Melbourne, and Maroondah City Council should be proud of its efforts.” (DELWP)

There are no significant changes suggested to the content but numerous small ones.

The most significant change suggested is to improve the flow of the recommendations, targets, actions and opportunities. This can be done when the Vision & Outcomes document is designed for publication.

A table summarising the submissions, suggested changes and considered responses can be found in Attachment 1.

**FINANCIAL / ECONOMIC ISSUES**

Financial and economic issues are considered in the Strategy.

**ENVIRONMENTAL / AMENITY ISSUES**

Environmental and amenity issues are considered in the Strategy.

**SOCIAL / COMMUNITY ISSUES**

Social and community issues are considered in the Strategy.

**COMMUNITY CONSULTATION**

Significant targeted consultation with key stakeholders has already been undertaken to inform the Draft Strategy. Council consulted extensively internally and with representatives from Melbourne Water, Yarra Valley Water and the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning.

The Strategy was initially informed by community feedback received during the development of *Maroondah 2040 A Community Vision* in 2013 and 2014.

In addition, comments have been received from Council’s Maroondah Environment Advisory Committee (MEAC) and this feedback has been incorporated into the Strategy.

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**ITEM 4**

The community was provided with the opportunity to provide comments on the Draft Strategy between 21 July to 21 August 2015 and the feedback received has also been incorporated into the Strategy.

**CONCLUSION**

The final Water Sensitive City Strategy will help Council and the community to achieve the Maroondah 2040 Community Vision. Water is central to our current and future lives and we all have a role in ensuring this vital resource is wisely managed for the wellbeing of all. The Strategy is proposed to be implemented over 10 years and its recommended actions integrated into Council service delivery plans.

Achieving this vision of a water sensitive city will require a range of changes to be made to our neighbourhoods, our infrastructure and our way of doing things. To do so, Council will need support from our partners that influence different aspects of water management and from our local communities and businesses who live, work, play and visit Maroondah. The final Water Sensitive City Strategy provides a critical platform to make this happen.

**ATTACHMENTS**

1. Maroondah Water Sensitive City Strategy - Summary of public submissions
2. Maroondah Water Sensitive City Strategy Vision & Outcomes Document
3. Maroondah Water Sensitive City Strategy Toolkit

**CONFIDENTIALITY**

Not Applicable

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

**THAT COUNCIL, HAVING CONSIDERED SUBMISSIONS TO THE PUBLIC EXHIBITION OF THE MAROONDAH WATER SENSITIVE CITY STRATEGY, HEREBY ADOPTS THE STRATEGY AS ATTACHED TO THIS REPORT (ATTACHMENTS 2 & 3)**