



Maroondah Arts Advisory Committee – Minutes

Meeting Details:

Date: Wednesday 4 March 2026

Optional Pre Tour	Time: 6:30pm -7:00pm	Location: Realm Building
Committee Meeting	Time: 7:00pm - 8.30pm	Location: Realm Meeting Rooms 1 & 2

Attendees:

Councillors

Cr Nathaniel Henderson (Chair)
Cr Kylie Spears (Deputy Chair)
Cr Paul Macdonald (Deputy Mayor)

Council Officers:

Andrew Fuaux, Director City Growth and Precincts
Chris Zidak, Manager Business & Precincts
Elissa Bates, Manager Creative Places
Elise Murphy, Coordinator Arts and Culture
Brit Josephs, Theatre Programs and Events Coordinator
Joanne Ellis, Governance Officer (Minute Taker)

Community and Creative Industries Representatives:

Caitlyn Lyons-Wood - Director of Strategic Design and Insights, AUSTRAC
Denise Warren - Ringwood Arts Society President and Artist
Grace Kop - Box Office Administration, MSO and Administration Officer, NGV
Joanne Watt - Multi-Arts and Community Development
Katie Stackhouse - Independent Artist
Kim Meadowcroft - Art Guide - Publisher and Editor
Kimberley Meagher - Historian
Lynette Orzowski - Professional Artist and Arts Educator
Paul Janssen - President of the Croydon Citizens' Band and Musician
Willow Woodman - Maroondah Symphony Orchestra Committee Member and Musician
Zya Kane - Independent Performer, Director, Producer and Theatre Maker

Apologies:

Councillors:

Nil

Council Officers:

Nil

Community and Creative
Industries Representatives:

Maryanne Leavey - Theatre and Events Manager,
Aquinas College

Sharyn Mullens Taylor OAM - Executive Director, Fresh Theatre for Social Change and Head of Arts, Luther College Wendy Catling - Independent Artist and Visual Arts Faculty Coordinator, Wesley College
--

Conflict of Interest Disclosure:

Councillors:	Nil
Council Officers:	Nil
Community and Creative Industries Representatives:	Nil

Items Discussed

1. OPENING OF MEETING AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Cr Henderson opened the meeting and read an Acknowledgement of Country.

2. WELCOME

Cr Henderson welcomed all to the meeting.

CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES - WEDNESDAY, 15 OCTOBER 2025 ITEM 3

The minutes of the October 2025 meeting were moved by consensus.

4. ITEMS

MEMBER INTRODUCTIONS - QUICK ROUND TABLE ITEM 4.1

The group went around the table to introduce themselves.
Members were asked to update their contact details for Council records.

MAAC TERMS OF REFERENCE - OVERVIEW AND ADOPTION ITEM 4.2

The 2026 MAAC Terms of Reference were moved by consensus.

SERVICE PROFILE PRESENTATION - Q&A ITEM 4.3

Chris Zidak introduced the item.

Elissa Bates provided a PowerPoint presentation outlining the Creative Places Service Profile and links to the Council Plan.

Brit Josephs discussed the Venue Operations including Karralyka, Federation Estate, Hall Hire and Café services at Maroondah venues.

Elise Murphy discussed Arts and Cultural Services in Maroondah.

Members asked a variety of questions about service delivery and engagement, and Elissa provided the information as requested.

DRAFT CREATIVE MAROONDAH STRATEGY 2026-2030 FINAL CONSULTATION WORKSHOP - PRIORITY ACTIONS

ITEM 4.4

Elissa Bates advised the Committee that the Creative Maroondah Strategy 2026-2030 is in its second and final stage of community consultation, with the draft strategy now available for review by the community. This strategy replaces the Arts & Cultural Development Strategy 2020-2025, and will inform Creative Places service delivery for the next four years.

Elissa provided the timeline for the second round of consultation which closes on 2 April with the Strategy being presented to Council for approval on 18 May and commencing on 1 July 2026 through until 30 June 2030.

The Committee were divided into 3 groups to discuss the outcome areas from the Creative Maroondah Strategy 2026-2030 and to rate their importance.

Group 1 discussed Outcome Area One: **Creative Community** and determined the priority actions for Year 1 and 2 implementation to be:

- **1.1** Support First Peoples community-led arts and cultural development through resource sharing, joint initiatives and collaboration with Aboriginal services, artists, and organisations.
- **1.3** Review operational grants to ensure all Council funding is in line with industry best practice for public funding and aligned with council's adopted grant policies and guidelines.
- **1.4** Connect our creative community groups through joint programming, co-tenancies, arts events and activations.
- **1.5** Engage young people and LGBTQI+ communities through responsive arts initiatives, training and mentorship programs.
- **1.7** Deliver accessible arts and cultural development projects that enhance wellbeing, creativity and social inclusion for those experiencing barriers to participation including those living with disability.

Group 1 also discussed Outcome Area Two: **Creative Places** and determined the priority actions for Year 1 and 2 implementation to be:

- **2.1** Continue to optimise Karralyka as a regionally significant performing arts and function centre through facility, program and audience development
- **2.4** Deliver an annual free and low cost "Arts in the Park" program featuring unique arts events and ephemeral installations to increase participation, activation and vibrancy of arts precincts.
- **2.6** Continue to realise the Wyreena Master Plan including completion and re-activation of the upgraded Conservatory Café to position this regional community arts centre for success.

- **2.7** Integrate creative way finding and public arts elements into urban and infrastructure design projects within current and future major arts and community facilities and precincts.
- It was noted that all items relating to Maroondah Federation Estate revitalisation and the development of Croydon Community Wellbeing Hub were already established as a Council priority for years one and two.

Group 2 discussed Outcome Area Three: **Creative Programs** and determined the priority actions for Year 1 and 2 implementation to be:

- **3.3** Expand the offering of low-cost and free arts initiatives that target and support arts engagement by those with financial barriers to participation.
- **3.6** Explore an ongoing framework for children and young people to inform creative programming for their peers within arts venues.
- **3.7** Support youth-led initiatives, mentorship programs, and youth representation on arts working groups and committees.
- **3.8** Further develop creative opportunities for older adults to engage with community, including inter-generational arts initiatives.
- **3.14** Explore joint exhibition programs with local arts groups where there is a broader community benefit upheld by an equitable engagement process.

Group 2 also discussed Outcome Area Four: **Creative Partnerships** and determined the priority actions for Year 1 and 2 implementation to be:

- **4.2** Continue to develop the Maroondah Arts Network to connect artists, arts workers, businesses, services and enthusiasts through relevant and engaging networking and training opportunities
- **4.5** Support cross-sector collaborations and joint projects with key social, cultural and community service providers using the arts as a tool for targeted engagement.
- **4.6** Encourage and provide professional advice to external arts and community groups, schools and arts organisations about opportunities, industry links and best practice and
- **4.7** Work in partnership with Mullum Mullum Aboriginal Gathering Place and other First Peoples service providers on First Peoples led arts projects that support Reconciliation principles.
- **4.11** Working in partnership with Your Library, continue to explore and deliver collective programs that support learning and engagement with arts- literature initiatives.
- **4.13** Continue to nurture and develop relationships with local arts groups through program partnerships, tenancies, community facility hire rates, and cross-promotion to steward local arts staying within Maroondah.

Group 3 discussed Outcome Area Five: **Creative Industry** and determined the priority actions for Year 1 and 2 implementation to be:

- **5.2** Advocate for affordable creative workspaces and studios within Maroondah, including co-working and maker-space models.
- **5.7** Develop and deliver artist-in-residence and mentoring programs at Wyreena and Maroondah Federation Estate, prioritising local and emerging artists to help grow and strengthen their practice.
- **5.10** Work with commercial and community stakeholders to explore the potential to attract major creative services/organisations to locate within Maroondah to boost local cultural economy.

- **5.11** Develop educational partnerships with tertiary institutions to enable community-based learning through formal placements and mentorship programs for disciplines such as theatre production, curatorial, public art and arts management disciplines.
- **5.12** Continue to deliberatively engage with industry and community representatives of the Maroondah Arts Advisory Committee to guide local creative service priorities; harness opportunities; and discover emerging trends.

Group 3 also discussed Outcome Area Six: **Creative Communications** and determined the priority actions for Year 1 and 2 implementation to be:

- **6.5** Use data-metrics and data collected from attendance, participation, sales, engagement and feedback mechanism to continuously refine and improve creative services and reach.
- **6.6** Establish a partnership model to promote local community arts activities within Council venues, and artistic achievements through Creative Places media channels.
- **6.7** Establish easy to use feedback loops such as surveys, polls, online engagement platforms etc that encourage quick and simple ways to provide feedback on creative services at events and arts venues.

Elissa advised the Committee she will distribute the link to the “Your Say” page for feedback on the Strategy and encouraged all Committee members to take the time to make a submission.

ACTION: Elissa to distribute the link to the “Your Say” page for feedback on the Strategy which closes on 2 April 2026.

OTHER BUSINESS

ITEM 4.5

Denise Warren queried how to obtain further information about the draft Strategy. Elissa advised the link to the “Your Say” page contains information about the background of the Strategy, and invited members to make contact if they would like a follow up consultation meeting.

Elissa Bates advised she would send information to committee members about how to follow the arts in Maroondah including social networks and mailings lists to subscribe to, noting the importance of members being informed of current service offerings.

ACTION: Elissa to send members the links to social networks and mailing lists.

CLOSE OF MEETING - NEXT MEETING: WEDNESDAY 22 APRIL 2026,
KARRALYKA

ITEM 4.6

Cr Henderson closed the meeting and thanked everyone for their attendance.

The Meeting concluded at: 8:39pm