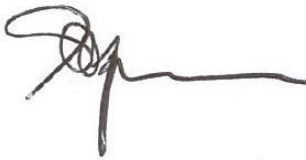


Councillor
(as addressed)

The next Council Meeting will be held in the Council Chamber, on Monday 9 December 2024, commencing at 7:30pm and your presence is requested.

Yours faithfully



Steve Kozlowski
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Note:

***This meeting is being streamed live on the internet and recorded.
Every care is taken to maintain privacy and attendees are advised they may be recorded.***

This meeting of Council can be viewed on Council's website via:

<https://www.maroondah.vic.gov.au/Live-Council-Meetings>

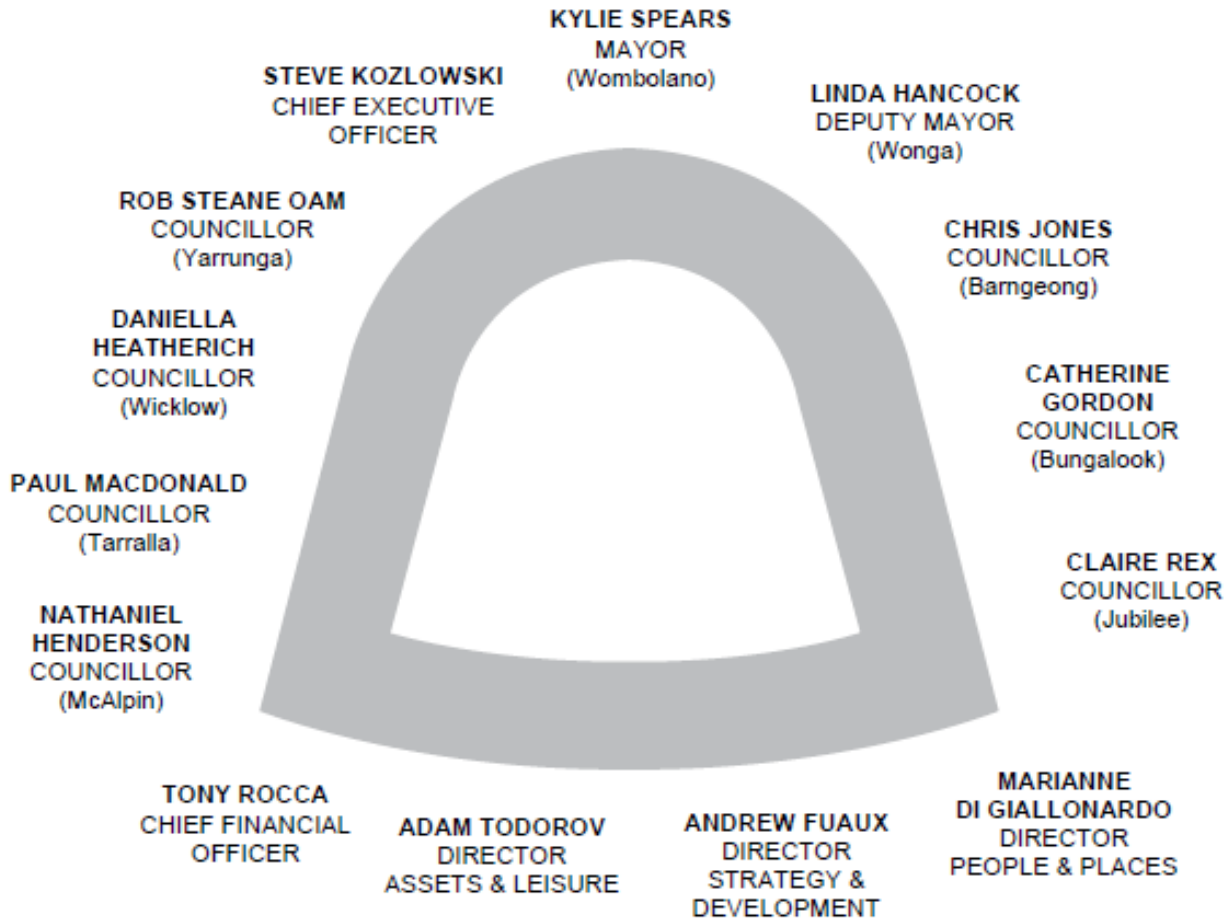


COUNCIL CHAMBER
IS FITTED WITH A HEARING AID
INDUCTION LOOP

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

Realm	179 Maroondah Hwy, Ringwood, 3134
Postal	PO Box 156, Ringwood 3134 DX 38068, Ringwood
Telephone	1300 88 22 33 Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS): 131 450 National Relay Service (NRS): 133 677
Facsimile	(03) 9298 4345
Email	maroondah@maroondah.vic.gov.au
Web	www.maroondah.vic.gov.au
Service Centres	Croydon: Civic Square, Croydon 3136 Realm: 179 Maroondah Hwy, Ringwood 3134

Council Chamber Seating



Public Gallery



ORDER OF BUSINESS

1. Prayer and Councillor Pledge
2. Acknowledgment of Country
3. Apologies
4. Declaration of Interests
5. Confirmation of Minutes of the Ordinary Council Meeting held on Monday 25 November 2024.
6. Public Questions
7. Officers' Reports
 - Chief Financial Officer
 1. Attendance Report 5
 2. Reports of Councillor Briefings 7
 3. Councillor Representation Reports 9
 4. Council Representation 2024/25 11
 5. Council Meeting Schedule 2025 17
 6. Council Advisory Committees - Report on 2024 Activities 20
 7. Glass Only Household Service - Research Findings and Collective Advocacy 33
 - Director Assets & Leisure
 1. Arterial (Main) Road Roadside Maintenance Issues 36
 - Director Strategy & Development
 1. Mullum Mullum Creek Biolink Action Plan 2025-2035 41
 - Director People & Places
 1. Local Government Women's Charter - Final Update 47
8. Documents for Sealing
 1. Volunteer Years of Service Recognition 56
9. Motions to Review
10. Late Items
11. Requests for Leave of Absence

12. In Camera

Chief Financial Officer

1. Chief Executive Contract

Director Strategy & Development

1. Tender Evaluation Report - Contract 21083 Victoria Street Road Rehabilitation

ATTENDANCE REPORT

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 2021-2025 (Year 4: 2024-2025) 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 actively engaged in local decision making, led by an innovative community inspired Council that collaborates regionally and proactively champions local needs.

Key Directions 2021 – 2025:

- 8.1 Provide community inspired 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 since the last Ordinary Meeting of Council on 25 November 2024 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 REPORT Cont'd

ITEM 1

ATTACHMENTS

Not applicable

CONFIDENTIALITY

Not applicable

RECOMMENDATION

THAT COUNCIL RECEIVES AND NOTES THE REPORTS AS PRESENTED BY COUNCILLORS

PURPOSE

To present the ‘Public Record’ of those Councillor Briefings which are attended by Councillors and generally held on Monday evenings at Realm, 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 2021-2025 (Year 4: 2024-2025) 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 actively engaged in local decision making, led by an innovative community inspired Council that collaborates regionally and proactively champions local needs.

Key Directions 2021 – 2025:

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

BACKGROUND

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, Councillor Briefings are conducted.

Councillor Briefings 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.

A Councillor Briefing is a non-decision-making forum, and as per past good governance practice, is deemed to be a scheduled or planned meeting comprising a majority of Councillors (at least 5) and one (1) Council employee, for the purpose of discussing 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 a Councillor Briefings may include:

- On-site inspections,
- Consultative Meetings with residents, developers, consultants
- Meetings with local organisations, Government Departments, statutory authorities, and local politicians.

REPORTS OF COUNCILLOR BRIEFINGS Cont'd

ITEM 2

ISSUE / DISCUSSION

Councillor Briefings are generally held twice a month, on Monday evenings at Realm, usually two (2) weeks prior to, and on the night of a formal Council meeting.

The intent of this report is to present a 'Public Record' of those Councillor Briefings which are generally attended by all Councillors and typically held on Monday evenings, and to note the items discussed.

The 'Public Record' of the Councillor Briefings held on the 25 November 2024 and 2 December 2024 are attached for information.

FINANCIAL / ECONOMIC ISSUES

Not applicable

ENVIRONMENTAL / AMENITY ISSUES

Not applicable

SOCIAL / COMMUNITY ISSUES

Not applicable

COMMUNITY CONSULTATION



Not applicable

CONCLUSION

Councillor 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 Councillor Briefings, 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 Councillor Briefings, which are attended by a majority of Councillors, i.e., at least five (5) Councillors and one (1) employee of Council, be noted.

ATTACHMENTS

1.  2024 November 25 - Councillor Briefing Public Record
2.  2024 December 02 - Councillor Briefing Public Record

CONFIDENTIALITY

Not applicable

RECOMMENDATION

THAT COUNCIL RECEIVES AND NOTES THE PUBLIC RECORD OF THE COUNCILLOR BRIEFINGS HELD ON 25 NOVEMBER 2024 AND 2 DECEMBER 2024

PURPOSE

To receive and note meeting minutes from the following organisations, boards and/or advisory committees where Council is represented:

- Maroondah Business Advisory Committee held on 11 September 2024
- Eastern Transport Coalition held on 15 August 2024, 19 September 2024 and 17 October 2024

STRATEGIC / POLICY ISSUES

The following directions contained in Maroondah 2040: Our Future Together and the Council Plan 2021-2025 (Year 4: 2024-2025) 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 actively engaged in local decision making, led by an innovative community inspired Council that collaborates regionally and proactively champions local needs.

Key Directions 2021 – 2025:

- 8.1 Provide community inspired 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, boards and advisory committees where Council is represented.

ISSUE / DISCUSSION

Council is represented on numerous internal and external bodies.

Internal advisory committees have been initiated by Council and are serviced administratively. They typically consider in-depth issues that are related to Council policy or activities.

External bodies operate under their own charter and determine their own procedures, policies and practices. In these instances, Council involvement is to participate and influence the activities of those external organisations, boards and committees where those activities are in the interests of Maroondah residents.

Representation on these internal and external bodies is reviewed on an annual basis at the commencement of the new Mayoral term.

COUNCILLOR REPRESENTATION REPORTS Cont'd

ITEM 3

Council representatives for the bodies providing reports for this item are noted below:

Cr Damante, Spears and Steane are Council's Representatives on the Maroondah Business Advisory Committee during the 2023/2024 Councillor representation term.

Cr Dib as Council's Representative with Cr Damante as Substitute Representative on the Eastern Transport Coalition during the 2023/2024 Councillor representation term.

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 and the community are formally updated on the actions and activities of the various organisations, boards and advisory committees where Council is represented. Recent meeting minutes from a number of these bodies are tabled for noting.

ATTACHMENTS

1.  2024 September 11 - Maroondah Business Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes
2.  2024 August 15 - Eastern Transport Coalition meeting papers
3.  2024 September 19 - Eastern Transport Coalition meeting papers
4.  2024 October 17 - Eastern Transport Coalition meeting papers

CONFIDENTIALITY

Not applicable

RECOMMENDATION

THAT COUNCIL RECEIVES AND NOTES MINUTES OF THE FOLLOWING BODIES

1. **MAROONDAH BUSINESS ADVISORY COMMITTEE HELD ON 11 SEPTEMBER 2024**
2. **EASTERN TRANSPORT COALITION HELD ON 15 AUGUST 2024, 19 SEPTEMBER 2024 AND 17 OCTOBER 2024**

PURPOSE

To formally appoint Council representation to internal and external organisations for the period December 2024 to December 2025.

STRATEGIC / POLICY ISSUES

The following directions contained in Maroondah 2040: Our Future Together and the Council plan 2021-2025 (Year 4: 2024-2025) provide the strategic framework that underpins the purpose in this report.

Outcome Area: A well governed and empowered community.

Our Vision: In 2040, Maroondah will be an empowered community actively engaged in local decision making, led by an innovative community inspired Council that collaborates regionally and proactively champions local needs.

Key Directions 2021 – 2025:

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

BACKGROUND

Council on an annual basis appoints Council delegates to internal and external organisations. These appointments provide clear communication and delegate identification for Councillors, the community and the organisations or bodies/advisory groups to which a Councillor is a delegate.

There are two types of bodies requiring formal Council representation, either internal or external. Internal bodies/advisory groups have been initiated by Council and are serviced administratively. They typically consider and provide advice on issues that are related to Council policy or activities.

External bodies are outside the control of Council as they operate under their own charter and determine their own procedures, policies and practices. In these instances, Council involvement is to participate, influence and advocate for the Maroondah community on the activities of those external groups where those activities are in the Maroondah public's interest.

ISSUE / DISCUSSION

Convention indicates that where the Mayor is a member of an internal Committee of Council, they automatically act as the Chair, unless they relinquish that role, other than the Audit and Risk Committee which is required to have an Independent Chair.

Additionally, in accordance with good governance practice where the Mayor is not a specific member of a Committee – they may exercise the option to attend any Committee in an ex-officio capacity.

The Internal Advisory Committees are to contribute towards reference panels, and assist with consultation, whether towards the Council Plan, Budget and provide representation of community-based issues that should be considered when making decisions.

Internal Advisory Committees:

Internal Advisory Committee	Brief Description	Councillor Rep #
Maroondah Access, Inclusion and Equity Advisory Committee	The role of the Maroondah Access, Inclusion and Equity Advisory Committee is to provide advice to Council and inform service delivery, advocacy and partnerships on a range of social policy matters relating to community access, inclusion and equity.	Three
Maroondah Arts Advisory Committee	The role of the Maroondah Arts Advisory Committee is to provide advice and expertise that assists Council in realising the community's vision for a creative and culturally vibrant Maroondah as outlined in Maroondah 2040 and key Council cultural policies and strategies.	Three
Maroondah Business Advisory Committee	The role of the Maroondah Business Advisory Committee is to provide a framework for the collaborative sharing of local business intelligence, and sector specific opportunities and challenges, that will shape and enhance the future role of Council to impact positively on local businesses.	Three
Maroondah Community Health and Wellbeing Committee	The role of the Maroondah Community Health and Wellbeing Advisory Committee is to provide advice to Council and inform service delivery, advocacy and partnerships on a range of community health and wellbeing matters.	Three
Maroondah Disability Advisory Committee	The role of the Maroondah Disability Advisory Committee is to provide advice to Council and inform service delivery, advocacy and partnerships on a range of matters relating to people with a disability, their carers and families.	Three
Maroondah Environment Advisory Committee	The role of the Maroondah Environment Advisory Committee is to establish a collaborative partnership between Council and key community stakeholders, to inform and advise Council on environmental sustainability issues.	Three
Maroondah Liveability, Safety and Amenity Committee	The role of the Maroondah Liveability, Safety and Amenity Advisory Committee is to provide advice to Council and inform service delivery, advocacy and partnerships on a range of community liveability, safety and amenity matters.	Three

CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER – TONY ROCCA

COUNCIL REPRESENTATION 2024/25 Cont'd

ITEM 4

Other Internal Committees that are statutory in nature but do not consist of Community Members, are the following:

Other Internal Committee	Brief Description	Councillor Rep #
Maroondah Audit and Risk Committee	The role of the Audit and Risk Committee in line with the Local Government Act 2020 is to oversee, monitor and report upon the effectiveness of Council in carrying out its responsibilities for accountable financial management, good corporate governance, maintaining a system of internal control and risk management, and fostering an ethical environment.	Mayor and Councillor representative plus designated substitute

External Bodies with Council Representation

Council also is represented by Councillors and Council employees on a range of External Committees and networks at Local, State and National levels. In these instances, Council involvement is to participate, advocate and influence the activities of these external groups on behalf of the Maroondah community.

External Committees and Networks:

Committee	Local/Regional/ State/National	Brief Description	Councillor Rep #
Eastern Regional Group – Mayors and CEO’s	Regional	The Eastern Regional Group (ERG) collaborates on common issues facing Council for its five representative Councils, comprising of - Knox, Manningham, Maroondah, Whitehorse and Yarra Ranges.	Mayor, Deputy Mayor, CEO, plus designated substitute
Eastern Alliance for Greenhouse Action	Regional	The Eastern Alliance for Greenhouse Action (EAGA) is a formal collaboration of eight Councils in Melbourne’s east, working together on regional programs that reduce greenhouse gas emissions and facilitate regional adaptation.	One, plus designated substitute
Your Library Limited	Regional	Your Library Limited is a co-operative venture of three outer eastern metropolitan councils – Knox, Maroondah and Yarra Ranges. The Corporation Board provides leadership for the good governance of Your Library and consists of two appointed Councillors from each of the member Councils. The Board meet quarterly during the year to discuss library issues and receive reports from library management. There is also an Audit and Risk Committee to which Board Members are able to nominate which meets a couple of times a year.	Two, plus designated substitute

CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER – TONY ROCCA

COUNCIL REPRESENTATION 2024/25 Cont'd

ITEM 4

Committee	Local/Regional/ State/National	Brief Description	Councillor Rep #
METEC (Metropolitan Training Education Centre Inc.)	Regional	Metropolitan Training Education Centre Inc (METEC) Driver Training is a not-for-profit road safety organisation dedicated to improving road safety. Located in Colchester Road in Bayswater North, a board representative from Council has been in place in recent years.	One, plus designated substitute
Municipal Association of Victoria State Council	State	The State Council operates as the governing body of the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV). It is made up of single representatives from all member councils who formulate, debate, and vote on the operations of the MAV.	One, plus designated substitute

FINANCIAL / ECONOMIC ISSUES

Not applicable

ENVIRONMENTAL / AMENITY ISSUES

Not applicable

SOCIAL / COMMUNITY ISSUES

Not applicable

COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

Not applicable

CONCLUSION

Council annually considers the appointment of delegates to Committees/Bodies/Advisory Groups to develop, review, advocate and support the needs and aspirations of the Maroondah community as outlined in the Maroondah 2040 Community Vision and Council Plan.

ATTACHMENTS

Not applicable

CONFIDENTIALITY

Not applicable

RECOMMENDATION

THAT WITH RESPECT TO COMMITTEES/BODIES/ADVISORY GROUPS REQUIRING A FORMAL COUNCIL DELEGATE, COUNCIL

1. NOTES THAT THE MAYOR IS ABLE, AS EX-OFFICIO, TO ATTEND ANY OF THE BODIES/ADVISORY GROUPS WHERE THEY ARE NOT A SPECIFIC MEMBER AS A DELEGATE; AND

2. MAKES THE FOLLOWING APPOINTMENTS:

Maroondah Access, Inclusion and Equity Advisory Committee

CRS. _____, _____ AND _____ AS COUNCIL'S REPRESENTATIVES ON THE MAROONDAH ACCESS, INCLUSION AND EQUITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE.

Maroondah Arts Advisory Committee

CRS. _____, _____ AND _____ AS COUNCIL'S REPRESENTATIVES ON THE MAROONDAH ARTS ADVISORY COMMITTEE.

Maroondah Business Advisory Committee

CRS. _____, _____ AND _____ AS COUNCIL'S REPRESENTATIVES ON THE MAROONDAH BUSINESS ADVISORY COMMITTEE.

Maroondah Community Health and Wellbeing Committee

CRS. _____, _____ AND _____ AS COUNCIL'S REPRESENTATIVES ON THE MAROONDAH COMMUNITY HEALTH AND WELLBEING COMMITTEE.

Maroondah Disability Advisory Committee

CRS. _____, _____ AND _____ AS COUNCIL'S REPRESENTATIVES ON THE MAROONDAH DISABILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE.

Maroondah Environment Advisory Committee

CRS. _____, _____ AND _____ AS COUNCIL'S REPRESENTATIVES ON THE MAROONDAH ENVIRONMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE.

Maroondah Liveability, Safety and Amenity Committee

CRS. _____, _____ AND _____ AS COUNCIL'S REPRESENTATIVES ON THE MAROONDAH LIVEABILITY, SAFETY AND AMENITY COMMITTEE.

Maroondah Audit and Risk Committee

THE MAYOR AND CR. _____ AS COUNCIL'S REPRESENTATIVES WITH CR. _____ AS SUBSTITUTE REPRESENTATIVE ON THE AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE.

Eastern Regional Group – Mayors and CEO's

THE MAYOR, THE DEPUTY MAYOR, THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER AS COUNCIL'S REPRESENTATIVES WITH CR. _____ AS SUBSTITUTE REPRESENTATIVE TO THE EASTERN REGIONAL GROUP – MAYORS AND CEO'S.

Eastern Alliance for Greenhouse Action

CR. _____ AS COUNCIL'S REPRESENTATIVE WITH CR. _____ AS SUBSTITUTE REPRESENTATIVE TO THE EASTERN ALLIANCE FOR GREENHOUSE ACTION.

Your Library Limited

CRS. _____ AND _____ AS COUNCIL'S REPRESENTATIVES WITH CR. _____ AS SUBSTITUTE REPRESENTATIVE TO YOUR LIBRARY LIMITED.

METEC (Metropolitan Training Education Centre Inc.)

CR. _____ AS COUNCIL'S REPRESENTATIVE WITH CR. _____ AS SUBSTITUTE REPRESENTATIVE TO METEC.

Municipal Association of Victoria – State Council

CR. _____ AS COUNCIL'S REPRESENTATIVE WITH CR. _____ AS SUBSTITUTE REPRESENTATIVE TO THE MUNICIPAL ASSOCIATION OF VICTORIA.

PURPOSE

To adopt the Council Meeting schedule for 2025 in line with Council’s practice of one Council meeting per month, which is usually held on the third Monday, dependent upon Public Holidays and other Council commitments.

STRATEGIC / POLICY ISSUES

The following directions contained in Maroondah 2040: Our Future Together and the Council Plan 2021-2025 (Year 4: 2024-2025) 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 actively engaged in local decision making, led by an innovative community inspired Council that collaborates regionally and proactively champions local needs.

Key Directions 2021 – 2025:

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

BACKGROUND

Council must set the Council Meeting dates from February to December 2025, which will include a date for the election for a new Mayor and Deputy Mayor for 2025/2026.

ISSUE / DISCUSSION

The proposed schedule is based upon the adopted practice of one Council Meeting per month, which is usually held on the third or fourth Monday, dependent upon Public Holidays and other Council commitments.

The proposed Council Meeting on 23 June 2025 will include the adoption of the Budget and Council Plan (and other required documents), a Council Meeting on 20 October 2025 to adopt the Annual Report and a Statutory Council Meeting on the 12 November 2025 to elect the Mayor and Deputy Mayor.

All Council Meetings are held in the Council Chamber at Realm and are live streamed via Council’s website.

FINANCIAL / ECONOMIC ISSUES

Costs associated with this item are within Council’s current budget.

ENVIRONMENTAL / AMENITY ISSUES

Not applicable

SOCIAL / COMMUNITY ISSUES

This meeting schedule provides the proposed dates for meetings of Council for the forthcoming twelve-month period.

COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

Council meetings are a requirement under the *Local Government Act 2020* for Council to make decisions for the democratic well-being of residents, ratepayers, members of the public, visitors, businesses, community and sporting groups, the not-for-profit sector, Members of Parliament and others associated directly with the City of Maroondah.

CONCLUSION

In line with legislative obligations and Council practice it is appropriate that Council considers and adopts a meeting schedule for 2025.

ATTACHMENTS

Not applicable

CONFIDENTIALITY

Not applicable

COUNCIL MEETING SCHEDULE 2025 Cont'd

ITEM 5

RECOMMENDATION

THAT THE COUNCIL MEETING SCHEDULE FOR FEBRUARY TO DECEMBER 2025 BE ADOPTED AS FOLLOWS:

<u>2025</u>	<u>Day</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>
FEBRUARY	Monday	17	7:30PM
MARCH	Monday	17	7:30PM
APRIL	Monday	28	7:30PM
MAY	Monday	26	7:30PM
JUNE	Monday	23	7:30PM
JULY	Monday	21	7:30PM
AUGUST	Monday	25	7:30PM
SEPTEMBER	Monday	22	7:30PM
OCTOBER	Monday	20	7:30PM
<i>(For the purpose of adopting the Annual Report)</i>			
NOVEMBER	Wednesday	12	7:00PM
<i>(Statutory Meeting - Election of Mayor & Deputy Mayor)</i>			
NOVEMBER	Monday	24	7:30PM
DECEMBER	Monday	15	7:30PM

**COUNCIL ADVISORY COMMITTEES - REPORT ON 2024
ACTIVITIES**

ITEM 6

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to provide an update to Council on the activities of its advisory committees during the 2024 calendar year.

STRATEGIC / POLICY ISSUES

The following directions contained in Maroondah 2040: Our Future Together and the Council Plan 2021-2025 (Year 4: 2024-2025) 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 actively engaged in local decision making, led by an innovative community inspired Council that collaborates regionally and proactively champions local needs.

Key Directions 2021 – 2025:

- 8.1 Provide community inspired governance that is transparent, accessible, inclusive and accountable.
- 8.4 Work in partnership to deliver innovative, accessible and evidence informed services that are people focused, proactive, integrated and responsive.
- 8.9 Undertake inclusive engagement and consultation using accessible and tailored approaches to consider the needs and aspirations of people of all ages, abilities and backgrounds.
- 8.12 Foster local and regional partnerships with individuals, community groups, businesses, service providers, agencies and all levels of government.

BACKGROUND

Council has a number of advisory committees that provide advice and recommendations to Maroondah City Council on matters relating to the delivery of strategies, services and activities in working towards the community vision outlined in *Maroondah 2040: Our future together*. These committees comprise:

- Maroondah Access, Inclusion and Equity Advisory Committee
- Maroondah Arts Advisory Committee
- Maroondah Business Advisory Committee
- Maroondah Community Health and Wellbeing Committee
- Maroondah Disability Advisory Committee
- Maroondah Environment Advisory Committee

**COUNCIL ADVISORY COMMITTEES - REPORT ON 2024
ACTIVITIES Cont'd**

ITEM 6

- Maroondah Liveability, Safety and Amenity Committee

These seven committees collectively inform the policy agenda of Council, are linked to regional networks and provide authoritative advice on Council services and initiatives.

The committees consist of a mix of Councillors, relevant service providers, community groups, and community members. The chair of the Committee is a Councillor as appointed by Council. Council officers provide administrative support and technical advice.

Advisory committee meetings are held 3-4 times a year and are conducted in accordance with the Terms of Reference for each individual committee.

OUTCOMES

Maroondah Access, Inclusion and Equity Advisory Committee

The Maroondah Access, Inclusion and Equity Advisory Committee was established in 2020 to holistically consider the accessibility, social inclusion and equity needs of all population groups in the municipality.

The role of the Maroondah Access, Inclusion and Equity Advisory Committee is to advise Council on the development, implementation and review of the Maroondah Liveability, Wellbeing and Resilience Strategy and its embedded action plans, and to build partnerships that enhance community wellbeing, promote social inclusion, equity and belonging, and address social harms. The Committee also provides input into the development of strategy, policy, partnership activities and advocacy efforts in relation to a range of social policy issues impacting specific population groups including LGBTIQ+ people, First Peoples, culturally and linguistically diverse communities, people experiencing adversity such as homelessness, poverty and social isolation, people impacted by family violence, and people of faith. Policy issues for discussion may include gender equity and identity, social inclusion, social and affordable housing and the needs of different age groups.

In 2024, the Committee consisted of 20 members. This comprised of 10 agency representatives from local community services, four community representatives, three Councillors and three Council Officers. The Committee chairperson for 2024 was former Cr Suzy Stojanovic. The other delegated representatives were Cr Chris Jones and Cr Kylie Spears.

During 2024, the Maroondah Access, Inclusion and Equity Advisory Committee met three times to provide valuable input and perspectives on access, inclusion and equity considerations relating to a broad range of Council strategic work, program development and delivery, and other projects as described below:

Input on Council strategic work

- Reconciliation Plan - Themes emerging from stakeholder engagement
- Development of the Maroondah 2050 Community Vision.

**COUNCIL ADVISORY COMMITTEES - REPORT ON 2024
ACTIVITIES Cont'd**

ITEM 6

Input on Council programs

Presentations on the following Council programs were provided with opportunities for Committee input:

- Aged and Disability Services - the Re-Imagine and Re-Design Project
- Inclusion of the LGBTIQ+ community in Council's social and recreational activities
- Free From Violence Project - raising awareness in the community

Other presentations

Committee members provided brief updates regarding their current activities at each meeting.

At the final meeting of the year, Council Officers facilitated a discussion to determine the issues that the Committee would like to discuss in 2025. The top priorities were:

- Advancing gender equality and greater inclusion, particularly for LGBTQIA+ communities, faith based and multicultural communities.
- Impacts of racism on faith-based groups, young people, multicultural communities, and First Peoples.
- Inclusion of the Chinese community with a focus on seniors.
- Social and affordable housing, particularly for older women, and emergency accommodation.
- Increasing social connection for younger age groups of multicultural communities.

Maroondah Arts Advisory Committee

The Maroondah Arts Advisory Committee was established in 2018 to provide advice and expertise to assist Council in realising the community's vision for a creative and culturally vibrant Maroondah.

The role of the committee is to provide advice and support for the development of key strategic directions for arts and cultural development in Maroondah, advocate for arts in Maroondah, provide advice on key cultural policy and planning considerations and provide input into areas such as major public art commissions or acquisitions.

The committee consists of up to 20 members. This comprises a maximum of twelve local community and creative industry representatives, three Councillors and up to five Council Officers. The committee chairperson for 2024 was former Cr Mike Symon. The other delegated Council representatives for 2024 were former Cr Suzy Stojanovic and Cr Paul Macdonald.

**COUNCIL ADVISORY COMMITTEES - REPORT ON 2024
ACTIVITIES Cont'd**

ITEM 6

During 2024, the committee met three times, at Council arts and cultural venues including EVs, Realm and Maroondah Federation Estate, to inform Council's vision for the arts in Maroondah as highlighted below:

Input on Council strategic work

During 2024, the Committee was consulted and provided input on the following Council strategies and plans:

- Maroondah 2050 Community Vision
- Reconciliation Plan
- Public Art Policy
- Art Collection Policy

Input on Council programs

Presentations on the following Council programs were provided with opportunities for Committee input:

- VicHealth Partnership Funded Youth Arts Programs
- 2025 Karrayka Theatre Program Planning

Input on Council projects

The Committee provided input on a range of key Council projects either being planned or already underway:

- Croydon Community Wellbeing Precinct - Black Box Theatre Preliminary Design Scope
- Creative Places Services Planning
- Realm and Ringwood Town Square Precinct Activation
- Maroondah Federation Estate Service Planning

Agency presentations

The Committee also received presentations from agency representatives relating to initiatives being undertaken:

- Karen Milward, First Nations consultant - Maroondah City Council's Reconciliation Plan - Themes emerging from Stakeholder Engagement

**COUNCIL ADVISORY COMMITTEES - REPORT ON 2024
ACTIVITIES Cont'd**

ITEM 6

Other opportunities

The Committee were provided with the opportunity to have input on a range of other activities during the year including:

- An invitation to participate in an Art Collection Working Group to provide a more detailed review of the public art and civic art policies and practices.
- An invitation to Maroondah art exhibition openings and Maroondah Arts Collective activities.

Maroondah Business Advisory Committee

The Maroondah Business Advisory Committee (MBAC) was established in 2017 to provide a vehicle for the collaborative sharing of local business intelligence, sector specific opportunities and challenges to enhance the role of Council's positive impact on local businesses.

The role of the committee includes providing a formal link between business leaders and Council, provides an opportunity for creative ideas, contributions, and solutions to local business issues, provides feedback and direction on local economy and challenges. The committee acts as sounding board for future Council funded proposals and projects and also informs the development of services provided by Council to local businesses.

The Committee consists of up to 19 members comprising three Councillors; five Council officers including Chief Executive Officer, Director People & Precincts, Manager Business & Precincts; President of the Maroondah Business Group; and eight Maroondah Business Leaders.

The Committee chairperson for 2024 was Cr Kylie Spears (Mayor). The other delegated Council representatives during 2024 were Cr Rob Steane and former Cr Tasa Damante.

During 2024, the committee held three scheduled meetings.

Input on Council strategic work

During 2024, the Committee was consulted and provided input on the following Council strategies and plans:

- Development of the Maroondah 2050 Community Vision, with a business focus
- Bayswater Business Precinct Transformation Strategy

Input on Council programs

Presentations on the following Council programs were provided with opportunities for Committee input:

- BizMonth (formerly BizWeek)
- Maroondah Business Excellence Awards

**COUNCIL ADVISORY COMMITTEES - REPORT ON 2024
ACTIVITIES Cont'd**

ITEM 6

- Women In Business
- Shopping Centre Capital Works

Input on Council projects

The committee provided input on a range of key Council projects either being planned or already underway:

- BizHub State Government partnership
- People for Business project - Skill linkages
- Bayswater Business Precinct Spatial Planning
- Outdoor Dining
- Business Customer Relationship Management Tool (CRM)
- Placemaking and outdoor activations
- Level Crossing Removal Projects
- Investment Attraction

Agency presentations

The Committee also received presentations from member businesses on their respective sectors.

Maroondah Community Health and Wellbeing Advisory Committee

The Maroondah Community Health and Wellbeing Advisory Committee has been established for over 20 years to inform a broad range of community health and wellbeing matters within the municipality, along with supporting Council's obligations under the Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008.

The role of the committee is to provide advice to Council and inform service delivery, advocacy and partnerships on a range of community health and wellbeing matters. Areas of focus may include physical activity, volunteering, healthy eating, gambling, mental health, emergency management and community recovery, impacts of climate change, and drugs and alcohol.

The committee consists of up to 17 members. This comprises of a maximum of eight agency representatives from local community service agency partners, a maximum of four representatives from not-for-profit community groups, three Councillors and two Council Officers. The committee chairperson for 2024 was former Cr Tasa Damante. The delegated Council representatives during 2024 was former Cr Tony Dib and Cr Chris Jones.

**COUNCIL ADVISORY COMMITTEES - REPORT ON 2024
ACTIVITIES Cont'd**

ITEM 6

During 2024, the committee met three times to inform Council's social policy, community service delivery, and health and wellbeing partnership work as highlighted below:

Input on Council strategic work

During 2024, the Committee was consulted and provided input on the following Council strategies and plans:

- Development of the Maroondah 2050 Community Vision
- Reconciliation Plan
- Communications Strategy
- Customer Service Strategy

Input on Council projects

The committee provided input on the following key Council project either being planned or already underway:

- Community Grants Review
- Update of the Maroondah Community Health and Wellbeing Terms of Reference
- Workshop on how Council and Partners can increase Volunteering in Maroondah
- Consulting Children and Young People in Maroondah

Agency presentations

The committee also received presentations from agency representatives and initiatives being undertaken including:

- North-Eastern Public Health Unit (NEPHU)
- Communities of Wellbeing
- Radical Wellness Program
- Eastern Volunteers - Research on Volunteering
- NEAMI National
- EACH Prevention and Population Team

**COUNCIL ADVISORY COMMITTEES - REPORT ON 2024
ACTIVITIES Cont'd**

ITEM 6

Maroondah Disability Advisory Committee

The Maroondah Disability Advisory Committee was established in 2010. Since that time, it has provided important linkages between Council and people with disabilities and their carers. Through the advice and advocacy, the Committee promotes social inclusion and participation of people with a disability in the community.

The Committee consists of up to 14 members. This comprises of a maximum of six positions for people with a disability, two positions for carers of people with a disability (including one carer of a child), a minimum of three service providers, three Councillors and at least one Council Officer.

The Committee acts in an advisory capacity to Council and has no delegated authority to make decisions. Meetings are held three/four times a year and are conducted in accordance with the Terms of Reference for each committee.

The Chair of the Committee is a Councillor as appointed by Council. The Committee Chairperson for 2024 was Cr Linda Hancock. The other delegated Council representatives during 2024 were Cr Kylie Spears and former Cr Tony Dib.

In 2024, the Maroondah Disability Advisory Committee met three times with two-hour meetings held in February, May, and August.

Input on Council strategic work

During 2024, the Committee was consulted and provided input on the following Council strategies and plans:

- Input and feedback on Draft Maroondah Transport Strategy 2024-2034
- Discussion on Council's Aged and Disability Services - Reimagine and Redesign Project
- Review of Maroondah's Disability Policy & Action Plan 2022-2026
- Consultation on Communication Strategy and Customer Service Strategy
- Consultation on the Maroondah 2050 Community Vision and Council Plan
- The Reconciliation Plan with a focus on emerging themes

Input on Council projects

The committee provided input on a range of key Council projects either being planned or already underway:

- Collaboration Opportunities with Disability Service Providers
- Overview on 'Porn is not the Norm' project
- Input on International Day of People with Disabilities event for 2024 with this year's topic to be on transport with a focus on better access.

Other opportunities

The Committee were given the opportunity to be involved in a range of other activities during the year:

- Opportunity to attend 'Take charge of your financial future' presentation and financial counselling workshops
- Attendance at the formal opening of Jubilee Park Changing Places Facility
- Participation in a Maroondah 2050 Community Vision stakeholder workshop
- Invitation to the Public Transport Victoria's 'Try before your ride' program
- Opportunity to participate in the Victorian Government's survey 'A Plan for Victoria - A voice from the East'
- Invitation to attend Council's Volunteer Recognition Evening

Maroondah Environment Advisory Committee

The Maroondah Environment Advisory Committee (MEAC) has held meetings since 2014. Its purpose is to establish a collaborative partnership between Council and key community stakeholders to inform and advise Council on environmental sustainability issues. The goals of the Committee are to:

1. To advance the environmental sustainability 'Key Directions' of Maroondah 2040.
2. To advise Council on the implementation and review of the Maroondah Sustainability Strategy and related strategies and actions.
3. To involve others in sustainability initiatives

The committee's focus is upon matters of a strategic interest. This is supplemented at the end of each meeting by providing opportunity for the community members to bring to the attention of Council any ideas, issues or concerns regarding environmental matters.

The formal meetings are held quarterly, and community members also participate in out of cycle sessions to workshop draft strategies with Council officers.

In 2024, the committee consisted of 14 members. This comprised of three Councillors and 10 community representatives. The committee chairperson for 2024 was former Cr Suzy Stojanovic. The other delegated Council representatives during 2024 were Cr Paul Macdonald and Cr Chris Jones.

**COUNCIL ADVISORY COMMITTEES - REPORT ON 2024
ACTIVITIES Cont'd**

ITEM 6

Input on Council strategic work

During 2024, the Committee was consulted and provided input on the following Council strategies and plans:

- Draft Maroondah Transport Strategy
- Maroondah 2050 Community Vision
- Reconciliation Plan

Input on Council projects

The committee provided input on a range of key Council projects either being planned or already underway:

- Staley Gardens Landscape Masterplan
- Community Net Zero and Adaptive Community Assets
- Maroondah Eco Gathering post event feedback

In addition, at each meeting the committee received a written report on the projects and programs being undertaken across Council that are contributing to the focus areas of the Sustainability Strategy. These reports have advised the Committee on the following:

- Maroondah Planning Scheme Review
- Maroondah Eco Gathering
- Business Reviewable Buying Group Project
- Maroondah Vegetation Strategy 2020-2030
- City Nature Challenge 2024
- Eastern Alliance on Greenhouse Action (EAGA)
- Solar & Energy Savers programs
- Resource Smart Schools
- Eastern Alliance of Sustainable Learning
- Resource Smart Schools
- Maroondah Transport Strategy
- Eastern Transport Coalition
- National Ride2School Day

**COUNCIL ADVISORY COMMITTEES - REPORT ON 2024
ACTIVITIES Cont'd**

ITEM 6

- Ready 2 Ride
- Maroondah Bicycle Network Review
- Greening the Greyfields
- Climate Change Plan
- Trellis Utility management software
- Great Southern Bioblitz 2024
- State Government Consultation on Plan for Victoria and Ringwood Activity Centre

Maroondah Liveability, Safety and Amenity Advisory Committee

The role of the committee is to provide advice to Council and inform service delivery, advocacy and partnerships on a range of community liveability, safety and amenity matters. Areas of focus generally include community safety, local amenity, and access to services, place-based planning, community facilities and infrastructure, development of local neighbourhoods, precinct planning, management of anti-social behaviour, and the periodic review of local laws.

The committee consists of 19 members. This comprises of seven agency and organisation representatives, five community representatives, three Councillors and four Council Officers. The committee chairperson for 2024 was Cr Rob Steane. The other delegated Council representatives during 2024 were former Cr Tasa Damante and Cr Linda Hancock.

During 2024, the committee met three times to inform Council's response to community safety issues, enhancement of local amenity and promotion of liveability as highlighted below:

Input on Council strategic work

The Committee were consulted and provided input on the following Council strategies and plans:

- Maroondah 2050 Vision
- Reconciliation Plan, with a focus on emerging key themes

Input on Council projects

The committee provided input and discussion on a range of key Council projects either being planned or already underway:

- Staley Gardens Landscape Masterplan
- Circular Resource Practices in Business Precincts
- Housing and Homelessness

**COUNCIL ADVISORY COMMITTEES - REPORT ON 2024
ACTIVITIES Cont'd**

ITEM 6

During 2024, the Committee were also provided updates on operational matters aligned to the scope of the Committee, including:

- Arterial Road and Roadside Maintenance
- Graffiti program
- Housing reforms
- Small second dwellings
- Decriminalising sex work
- Community safety matters in Croydon Town Square and new railway precinct (MetroTrains)
- Local Community Safety meetings – issues and planned responses (Victoria Police)

FINANCIAL / ECONOMIC ISSUES

As noted under the Issue / Discussion section.

ENVIRONMENTAL / AMENITY ISSUES

As noted under the Issue / Discussion section.

SOCIAL / COMMUNITY ISSUES

As noted under the Issue / Discussion section.

COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

Council is committed to engaging with the Maroondah community in a meaningful, accountable, responsive and equitable way. Our community and stakeholders play a vital role in shaping the City of Maroondah. Council's seven advisory committees form a key role in how Council seeks to effectively engage with the Maroondah community. Committees comprise members from community service agencies, local businesses, community organisations, people with lived experience and local residents.

CONCLUSION

Over the past twelve months, Council's Advisory Committees have provided invaluable information and advice to Council and the community on a range of strategic, service delivery, policy and capital works matters. The Committees have contributed to the Maroondah community being a more liveable, healthy, safe, prosperous, vibrant, accessible and inclusive place for people of all ages and abilities.

ATTACHMENTS

Not applicable

**COUNCIL ADVISORY COMMITTEES - REPORT ON 2024
ACTIVITIES Cont'd**

ITEM 6

CONFIDENTIALITY

Not applicable

RECOMMENDATION

THAT COUNCIL

- 1. ACKNOWLEDGES THE SIGNIFICANT CONTRIBUTIONS MADE BY COUNCIL'S
ADVISORY COMMITTEES DURING THE 2024 CALENDAR YEAR**
- 2. RECOGNISES THE CONTRIBUTIONS MADE BY ALL THE EXTERNAL COMMITTEE
MEMBERS DURING THE 2024 CALENDAR YEAR**

**GLASS ONLY HOUSEHOLD SERVICE - RESEARCH
FINDINGS AND COLLECTIVE ADVOCACY**

ITEM 7

PURPOSE

For Council to consider advocacy in relation to the reconsideration of the need for the mandatory household glass only service, in collaboration with a collective of Victorian Local Governments, to the Minister for Environment.

STRATEGIC / POLICY ISSUES

The following directions contained in Maroondah 2040: Our Future Together and the Council Plan 2021-2025 (Year 4: 2024-2025) 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 2021 – 2025:

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

BACKGROUND

In February 2020, the Victorian Government released 'Recycling Victoria, a new economy' (RV Policy), a 10-year circular economy policy aimed at strengthening the Victorian waste and recycling sector.

Action 5.1 of the RV policy; *Household recycling reforms*, introduces the requirement of local councils and Alpine Resorts Victoria to provide:

- Access for all Victorian households to a four-stream waste and recycling system including combined food and garden organics by 2030 (now 2027), separated glass by 2027, combined paper, plastic, and metals (existing mixed recycling bin) and residual waste (existing garbage bin).
- Standardisation of bins (including bin lid colours to AS 4123.7-20063) by 2030 (now 2027) and the standardisation of kerbside services (including items accepted).

In August this year, the Department of Energy, Environment & Climate Action (DEECA) consulted on the proposed waste service standard which will govern what services council can provide, how Councils are to provide them, and what materials we must accept.

The impact analysis of the proposed standards revealed a significant cost impact to Maroondah households.

A submission was made in response to the proposed waste service standard on Wednesday 14 August 2024 which detailed Maroondah's concerns, including Councillors' concern for the cost impact of the proposed standards.

**GLASS ONLY HOUSEHOLD SERVICE - RESEARCH
FINDINGS AND COLLECTIVE ADVOCACY Cont'd**

ITEM 7

One of the main issues with the proposed standards, and the broader reforms at large, is the lack of a business case for the glass only service, and the misalignment between the data presented in the Regulatory Impact Statement (RIS) and Councils' reality of the cost of the service.

ISSUE / DISCUSSION

To properly understand the costs and benefits of a glass only service, Maroondah led a collaboration of 22 Councils to undertake a research project which would model the actual costs to the community from the implementation of the household glass only service. The research also modelled the costs and benefits of a glass only service against an expanded Container Deposit Scheme (CDS) which included wine and spirit bottles - as predicated by discussions to nationally harmonise CDS schemes across the states and territories.

An independent consultant was appointed to undertake the research. The initial findings have revealed that the RIS does in fact underestimate a range of costs to Council, and the RIS claims that Councils will save an average of \$10 million dollars from implementing the reforms is not flowing through.

The modelling found that the implementation costs alone, for the 22 participating Councils, would be in the order of \$75 million dollars, and this is not offset by the amount of funding available to Councils to deliver the reforms.

FINANCIAL / ECONOMIC ISSUES

The proposed glass only service would have a significant cost impact to the Maroondah community, for little benefit, at a time where cost of living pressures are increasing.

ENVIRONMENTAL / AMENITY ISSUES

The purported benefits of a glass only service to the environment, namely reduced contamination, which requires less mechanical sorting, in turn reducing production costs of recycled cullet, is minimal compared to the status-quo, where bottle to bottle recycling is already occurring. In fact, the environmental benefits would be greater, if glass was collected via CDS, where no further mechanical sorting is necessary. Other purported benefits, such as reduced embedment of glass into paper and cardboard products, leading to increased commodity prices for that product, is not being realised by industry either.

SOCIAL / COMMUNITY ISSUES

Not applicable

COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

The community have not been formally consulted by the Victorian Government on whether they want, need or can afford the household glass only service.

GLASS ONLY HOUSEHOLD SERVICE - RESEARCH FINDINGS AND COLLECTIVE ADVOCACY Cont'd

ITEM 7

CONCLUSION


The findings of the research aligns with Council's assessment that implementing the glass only service and ongoing collection costs have little return for investment, particularly when compared to utilising the existing CDS infrastructure.

As such, the group of Councils participating in the collective research project, are seeking to sign a joint letter to the Minister for Environment, requesting the reconsideration of the need for the glass only service, given the successful uptake of the CDS, and the cost of implementation having minimal returns to the community.

The proposed service standards, which will enact the requirement for Councils to provide a glass only service, are being finalised by the end of 2024. Therefore, the letter needs to be received by the Minister for Environment prior to the end of December. Not all of the 22 participating Councils will be able to brief their Councils in time to make this deadline, however, it is anticipated that these Councils will submit their own letters, referencing the collective research, to the Minister for Environment in early 2025.

Attachment One provides a copy of the proposed letter for submission to the Minister for Environment.

ATTACHMENTS

1.  Glass service advocacy request - Minister for Environment

CONFIDENTIALITY

Not applicable

RECOMMENDATION

THAT COUNCIL CONSIDERS AND ADOPTS THE ADVOCACY POSITION OUTLINED IN THIS REPORT AND THE ADVOCACY APPROACH OF SUBMITTING A JOINTLY SIGNED LETTER BY COUNCIL CEOS, TO THE MINISTER FOR ENVIRONMENT, RESPECTFULLY REQUESTING RECONSIDERATION OF THE NEED FOR THE GLASS ONLY SERVICE

ARTERIAL (MAIN) ROAD ROADSIDE MAINTENANCE ISSUES

ITEM 1

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to highlight the ongoing issues associated with the inadequate maintenance levels of service associated with the arterial (main) road roadside areas in the City of Maroondah.

STRATEGIC / POLICY ISSUES

The following directions contained in Maroondah 2040: Our Future Together and the Council Plan 2021-2025 (Year 4: 2024-2025) provide the strategic framework that underpins the purpose of this report.

Outcome Area: An accessible and connected community

Our Vision: In 2040, Maroondah will be accessible for all ages and abilities with walkable neighbourhoods, sustainable transport options, and a safe integrated transport network.

Key Directions 2021 – 2025:

5.7 Advocate and work in partnership to enhance Maroondah’s road network, including planning for increased automated vehicles and emerging transportation technologies.

BACKGROUND

The City of Maroondah (Maroondah) has an extensive road network, consisting of approximately 486km of local roads that are maintained and managed by Council, and consisting of arterial (main) roads that are maintained and managed by the Department of Transport and Planning (DTP).

The following is a list of the arterial (main) roads in Maroondah:

- Bayswater Road
- Canterbury Road
- Croydon Road
- Dorset Road
- Hull Road
- Maroondah Highway
- Mt Dandenong Road
- Plymouth Road
- Ringwood Bypass
- Wantirna Road

ARTERIAL (MAIN) ROAD ROADSIDE MAINTENANCE ISSUES Cont'd

ITEM 1

- Warrandyte Road
- Warranwood Road
- Wicklow Avenue
- Wonga Road (between Warranwood Road and Croydon Road)
- Yarra Road (between Plymouth Road and Maroondah Highway)

In accordance with the Road Management Act 2004, and the associated regulations and codes of practice, DTP is responsible for all maintenance activities associated with the roadway (ie pothole repairs, patching, resurfacing, street sweeping, stormwater drain pit clearing, line marking etc), and the roadside areas (grass cutting/mowing, weed and litter management, tree and vegetation maintenance etc).

ISSUE / DISCUSSION

There is a significant difference between the maintenance levels of service applied by Council, for its local road network, and those applied by DTP, for the arterial (main) road network. In particular, the difference in maintenance levels of service for the arterial (main) road roadside areas is substantial. The below photos are examples of the current state.



**ARTERIAL (MAIN) ROAD ROADSIDE MAINTENANCE
ISSUES Cont'd**

ITEM 1

DTP has historically undertaken four (4) grass cuts per year for the median strips associated with the arterial (main) road network, which results in the grass, and weeds, growing to lengths that severely impact the amenity and the sight distance for drivers, in some instances. In addition, the growth creates a potential fire hazard, particularly during the warmer summer months.

DTP however, has recently further reduced its maintenance levels of service associated with grass cutting, in some instances to two (2) grass cuts per year. Despite some recent efforts by DTP to address some of the median strips in Maroondah, many of the arterial (main) road roadside areas still contain significant weed growth and litter.

Council Officers have attempted, for several years, to obtain an increased maintenance level of service for the arterial (main) road roadside areas, however, DTP Officers have continued to highlight budget constraints as the primary reason for the current inadequate maintenance level of service. Council Officers have also undertaken discussions with DTP senior management in relation to potential maintenance agreement options, including options for Council to undertake the maintenance on behalf of DTP at their full cost.

DTP has previously indicated a willingness to enter into a potential maintenance agreement for the whole of the arterial (main) road roadside areas, however, the funding proposed by DTP (approx. \$100k) was grossly inadequate to facilitate a reasonable maintenance level of service. Hence, Council has not entered into any such agreement to maintain the whole of the arterial (main) road roadside areas.

It should be noted that Council has some site-specific maintenance agreements in place for some sections of Maroondah Highway (through the Ringwood Major Activity Centre), Mt Dandenong Road, and the median strips that accommodate municipal entry signs and landscaping, with DTP contributing to the costs associated. In addition, Council undertakes some graffiti management associated with DTP assets, with DTP providing approx. \$23k funding per annum, to Council.

For reference, to facilitate a maintenance level of service for the arterial (main) road roadside areas that is similar to the level of service applied to the local road network (including twelve (12) grass cuts per year, weed and litter management), Council Officers have estimated that the cost would be approx. \$1 million per year (note that this does not include any maintenance of the actual road surface, stormwater drainage infrastructure, street sweeping, or any additional graffiti management).

Council continues to receive significant feedback from the community in relation to the current state of the arterial (main) road roadside areas and continues to forward this feedback through to DTP for appropriate action. Council Officers also encourage residents to contact DTP directly, to further assist advocacy efforts associated with the required maintenance levels of service improvements.

Council has continued to advocate to the State Government for increased funding and improved maintenance levels of service for the arterial (main) road roadside areas, on behalf of the community. Council has also previously gained overwhelming support from local government organisations across Victoria, via the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV), for this advocacy position.

**ARTERIAL (MAIN) ROAD ROADSIDE MAINTENANCE
ISSUES Cont'd**

ITEM 1

FINANCIAL / ECONOMIC ISSUES

DTP has continued to highlight that budget constraints are the primary reason for the current, inadequate maintenance level of service associated with arterial (main) road roadsides in Maroondah.

The current state of the arterial (main) road roadside areas will also likely have a detrimental economic impact on the region, given that the arterial (main) road network in Maroondah provides a gateway for many visitors to the Yarra Valley.

ENVIRONMENTAL / AMENITY ISSUES

The current state of the arterial (main) road roadside areas creates significant detrimental impacts on the amenity of Maroondah.

SOCIAL / COMMUNITY ISSUES

Council continues to receive significant negative feedback from the community in relation to the current state of the arterial (main) road roadside areas.

COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

Not applicable

CONCLUSION

As highlighted in this report, the current DTP maintenance levels of service for the arterial (main) road roadside areas in Maroondah is grossly inadequate, with the current state of the arterial (main) road median strips causing significant detrimental impacts to the amenity of Maroondah, and creating various other risks (including impacting sight distance for drivers, and fire related risks).

The current state of the arterial (main) road roadside areas is completely unacceptable and reflects poorly on State Government. DTP must dramatically increase its maintenance levels of service to meet the current and future needs of the community, and Council will continue to advocate on behalf of the community, in this regard.

ATTACHMENTS

Not applicable

CONFIDENTIALITY

Not applicable

**ARTERIAL (MAIN) ROAD ROADSIDE MAINTENANCE
ISSUES Cont'd**

ITEM 1

RECOMMENDATION

THAT

- 1. COUNCIL NOTES THE ONGOING ISSUES ASSOCIATED WITH INADEQUATE MAINTENANCE OF THE ARTERIAL (MAIN) ROADS ROADSIDE AREAS IN THE CITY OF MAROONDAH**
- 2. COUNCIL WRITES TO THE MINISTER FOR ROADS AND ROAD SAFETY, THE HON. MELISSA HORNE, REQUESTING IMPROVED MAINTENANCE OF THE ARTERIAL (MAIN) ROADS ROADSIDE AREAS IN THE CITY OF MAROONDAH**

MULLUM MULLUM CREEK BIOLINK ACTION PLAN 2025-2035

ITEM 1

PURPOSE

To seek Council’s adoption of the Mullum Mullum Creek Biolink Action Plan 2025-2035.

STRATEGIC / POLICY ISSUES

The following directions contained in Maroondah 2040: Our Future Together and the Council Plan 2021-2025 (Year 4: 2024-2025) provide the strategic framework that underpins the purpose of this report.

Outcome Area: A clean, green and sustainable community

Our Vision: In 2040, Maroondah will be a resilient community committed to sustainable living, enhancing our natural environment, and providing leadership in responding to climate change.

Key Directions 2021 – 2025:

- 4.4 Create and foster a culture within our community that is committed to protecting and enhancing the unique features of Maroondah’s landscape, including our ridgelines, waterways, canopy vegetation, green open space and bushland reserves.
- 4.5 Preserve and enhance Maroondah’s parklands, bushlands, gardens, canopy vegetation and open spaces.
- 4.6 Work in partnership to protect and restore biodiversity and habitat corridors for local plants and animals.
- 4.7 Plan for increased vegetation and green spaces within activity centres and major development sites to link the built environment to the natural landscape and better connect people to nature.

Priority Action 2024-2025:

Prepare and implement a series of Biolink Action Plans that implement the Maroondah Habitat Connectivity Study.

BACKGROUND

The Maroondah Vegetation Strategy 2020-2030, adopted by Council in March 2020, provided an important foundation for the Mullum Mullum Creek Biolink Action Plan 2025-2035. In particular, it called for:

“More vegetation, in the form of a well-connected network of indigenous trees, shrubs and understorey plants providing a wide range of habitat elements such as the food, shelter, and opportunities to move through the landscape that indigenous flora and fauna in Maroondah need to flourish, and simultaneously create more opportunities for people to encounter and connect with nature close to where they live, work and play.”

MULLUM MULLUM CREEK BIOLINK ACTION PLAN 2025-2035 Cont'd

ITEM 1

It included the following policy backing:

Key Direction 2.3 *Restore/create new habitat in key locations.*

Priority Action: 2.3(b)

Review the 2005 Habitat Corridor Strategy to confirm priority linkage routes and align with this strategy's focus on habitat for a suite of 'focal' species, and accurately depict their spatial extent and arrangement on Council's GIS system.

To assist with the preparation of the Mullum Mullum Creek Biolink Action Plan, a specialist consultant was engaged to identify the strategically most important routes and measures for improving indigenous flora and fauna habitat connectivity and function across Maroondah and to optimise the potential for spreading more nature throughout the municipality.

A spatial modelling process used dispersal parameters of three focal fauna species, and resistance scores for land cover categories to model 'paths of least resistance' through the Maroondah landscape, comprised of:

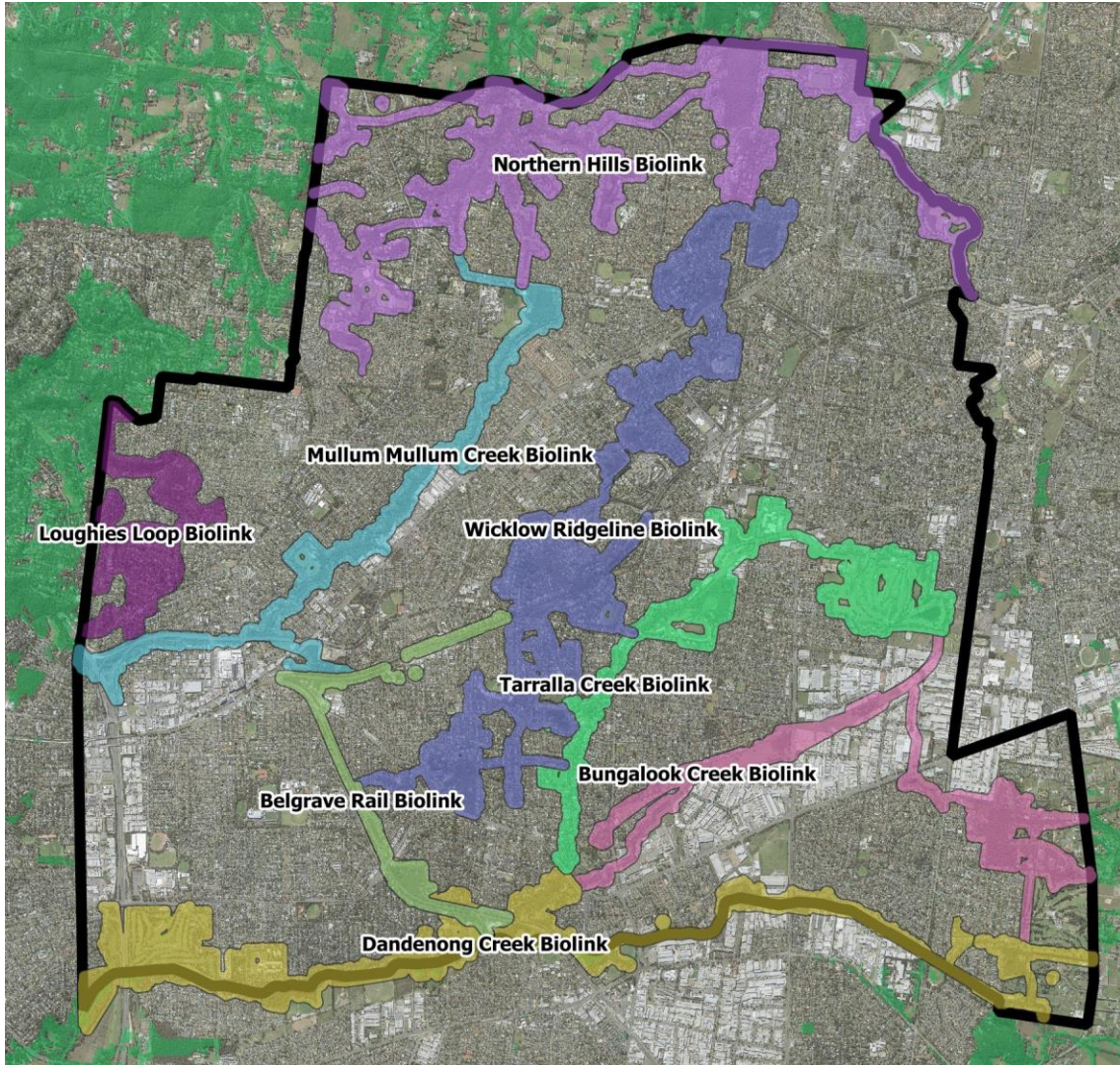
- Core habitat patches to be protected
- Potential habitat patches to be improved
- Connecting pathways to be created

The method and results are provided in the Maroondah Habitat Connectivity Plan that is publicly available on Council's website.

MULLUM MULLUM CREEK BIOLINK ACTION PLAN 2025-2035 Cont'd

ITEM 1

Eight 'biolinks' were identified and depicted on a map as per the below:



ISSUE / DISCUSSION

Mullum Mullum Creek Biolink

The Mullum Mullum Creek Biolink was selected as the first of eight biolinks to go through the next level of more detailed planning.

A key stakeholder group comprising a mix of representatives from external organisations and teams within Council was formed to oversee development of the draft Mullum Mullum Creek Biolink Action Plan. This group discussed and agreed on:

- A vision for the Mullum Mullum Creek Biolink
- Seven focal fauna species (selected on the basis that providing for their needs will also provide for the needs of a much wider range of fauna)

MULLUM MULLUM CREEK BIOLINK ACTION PLAN 2025-2035 Cont'd

ITEM 1

- Actions needed to meet the needs of the focal species, as well as actions needed to support, sustain and connect people to the biolink

The draft Mullum Mullum Creek Biolink Action Plan presented a range of actions identified as being needed to build and sustain the Mullum Mullum Creek Biolink as a functioning wildlife corridor, and was released for public consultation between the 6th November and the 10th December 2023.

A Maroondah Your Say webpage “Help establish the Mullum Mullum Creek Biolink” was established and through an online survey posed the questions:

- Have we got the vision right?
- Do you support the proposed actions?

A detailed summary report of the consultation process and findings accompanies this report.

Community feedback summary

Q. To what extent do you support the creation of biolinks in Maroondah?
94.8% responded with ‘High level of support’ or ‘Support’

Q. To what extent do you support pursuit of the vision for the Biolink?
96.5% responded with ‘High level of support’ or ‘Support’

Q. To what extent do you endorse the proposed actions?:

- 86.2% responded with ‘All actions’ for the Blotched Bluetongue Lizard
- 91.4% responded with ‘All actions’ for the Golden Whistler
- 87.9% responded with ‘All actions’ for the Gang-gang Cockatoo
- 93.1% responded with ‘All actions’ for the Sword-grass Brown
- 89.7% responded with ‘All actions’ for the Platypus
- 91.4% responded with ‘All actions’ for the Powerful Owl
- 91.4% responded with ‘All actions’ for the Spotted Marsh Frog
- 87.9% responded with ‘All actions’ for the Actions that support the biolink
- 86.2% responded with ‘All actions’ for the Actions that sustain the biolink
- 77.6% responded with ‘All actions’ for the Actions that connect the community to the biolink

In addition, 60 specific comments were received, and a tailored response statement has been prepared as well as noting whether or not the action plan was changed as a result of the comment.

MULLUM MULLUM CREEK BIOLINK ACTION PLAN 2025-2035 Cont'd

ITEM 1

The Mullum Mullum Creek Biolink Action Plan 2025-2035 articulates what is needed to create the Mullum Mullum Creek biolink and make it a functioning wildlife corridor through parts of Maroondah. It is expected to provide the direction for more specific implementation actions for 10 years or more.

Accompanying the Mullum Mullum Creek Biolink Action Plan 2025-2035 will be a two-year rolling implementation plan that outlines the steps different stakeholders have committed to towards the actions in the Biolink Action Plan. This will be updated and reported on annually. The first of these covers the 2024/25 and 2025/26 financial years. (see attached)

FINANCIAL / ECONOMIC ISSUES

Considered in the action plan and implementation plan.

ENVIRONMENTAL / AMENITY ISSUES

Identified and addressed in the action plan.

SOCIAL / COMMUNITY ISSUES

Considered in the action plan.

COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

The draft Mullum Mullum Creek Biolink Action Plan was released for public consultation between 8th November and 10th December, 2023. A community consultation summary report accompanies this report. It summarises:



- How we consulted
- How we promoted the opportunity to comment
- What people told us
- What our responses were

CONCLUSION

The Mullum Mullum Creek Biolink Action Plan 2025-2035 is set to guide the first of several functioning wildlife corridors across the Maroondah landscape. It is built on a strong and well-supported strategic base, informed by input from a diverse group of key stakeholders and received strong community input and support.

The Mullum Mullum Creek Biolink Action Plan 2025-2035 provides clear direction and focus for Council, the community and external stakeholders to protect and improve the Mullum Mullum Creek corridor and increase the likelihood of seeing more nature in Maroondah.

ATTACHMENTS

1.  Mullum Mullum Creek Biolink Action Plan 2025-2035
2.  MMC Biolink Draft Action Plan 2023 - consultation report

MULLUM MULLUM CREEK BIOLINK ACTION PLAN 2025-2035 Cont'd

ITEM 1

CONFIDENTIALITY

Not applicable

RECOMMENDATION

THAT COUNCIL ADOPTS THE MULLUM MULLUM CREEK BIOLINK ACTION PLAN 2025-2035

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT WOMEN'S CHARTER - FINAL
UPDATE**

ITEM 1

PURPOSE

To provide an update and close our reporting on Maroondah City Council's participation in the Victorian Local Government Women's Charter. This report acknowledges activities that have taken place in Maroondah over the past twelve (12) months which support the Charter principles.

STRATEGIC / POLICY ISSUES

The following directions contained in Maroondah 2040: Our Future Together and the Council Plan 2021-2025 (Year 4: 2024-2025) provide the strategic framework that underpins the purpose of this report.

The organisation has a significant amount of activity relating to increasing female participation across all its operations.

Outcome Area: A safe, healthy and active community

Our Vision: In 2040, Maroondah will be a safe, healthy and active community where all people have the opportunity to experience enhanced levels of social, emotional and physical wellbeing.

Key Directions 2021-2025:

- 1.6 Promote the health and wellbeing of the community through accessible and affordable initiatives and services that respond to community needs.

Outcome Area: A prosperous and learning community

Our Vision: In 2040, Maroondah will be a thriving regional centre of economic activity and education, where the sustainable growth of local businesses is supported, and diverse lifelong learning opportunities are accessible for all community members.

Key Directions 2021-2025:

- 2.11 Facilitate and encourage the provision of positive learning environments, life-long learning opportunities and employment pathways for all ages, abilities and backgrounds.
- 2.12 Advocate for accessible and affordable education and childcare in Maroondah that responds to local needs and enhances individual wellbeing.
- 2.14 Promote connections between education providers, businesses and the broader community to support employment pathways, intergenerational connections and knowledge transfer.

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT WOMEN'S CHARTER - FINAL
UPDATE Cont'd**

ITEM 1

Outcome Area: An inclusive and diverse community

Our Vision: In 2040, Maroondah will be an inclusive and equitable community where all people are valued, supported and socially connected, and diversity is embraced and celebrated.

Key Directions 2021-2025:

- 7.1 Support people of all ages, abilities and backgrounds to be connected, valued and empowered within their local community through accessible and inclusive services, programming and facilities.
- 7.2 Ensure social inclusion principles inform the planning for local services, programs and community infrastructure.
- 7.6 Support community members to age in place, live in accessible neighbourhoods and remain socially connected.
- 7.8 Work in partnership to facilitate and promote sustainable social enterprises that create local community connections, inclusion and empowerment.

Outcome Area: A well governed and empowered community

Our Vision: In 2040, Maroondah will be an empowered community actively engaged in local decision making, led by an innovative community inspired Council that collaborates regionally and proactively champions local needs.

Key Directions 2021-2025:

- 8.1 Provide community inspired governance that is transparent, accessible, inclusive and accountable.
- 8.3 Nurture a continuous improvement council culture of being collaborative, strategic, sustainable and employing best practice, that positions Maroondah as a leader in local government.
- 8.11 Work in partnership to advocate for and champion the needs and aspirations of the community to Victorian and Australian levels of government, service providers and the business sector.

BACKGROUND

Formed in 1997 to work towards the equal participation of women and men in Victorian local government, the Victorian Local Government Women's Charter promotes the principles of:

- gender equity,
- encouraging diversity in representation and participation, and
- women's active citizenship.

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT WOMEN'S CHARTER - FINAL
UPDATE Cont'd**

ITEM 1

Council at its meeting in August 2010 endorsed the Victorian Local Government Women's Charter and, at the time, nominated two female Councillors as Charter Champions along with the Director Corporate Services. Council undertook a range of activities in the lead up to the 2012 Council elections to attract greater interest in civic affairs and increase participation in the number of female candidates for the 2012 elections. Following the 2012 and 2016 Council elections, Maroondah achieved majority female Councils with five women elected across the nine positions.

In 2018, the VLGA received funding from the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Community Primary Prevention Partnerships program to work with Councils to reactivate the Charter in their local government area, with a 12-month project entitled "Women's Charter 21". In November 2018, Council appointed five female Councillors as Women's Charter Champions in conjunction with the then Director Corporate Services and provided a report on activities over the previous 12 months that supported the Charter principles.

Following the Council election in October 2020, five female Councillors, together with the then Director Corporate Services, were appointed as Women's Charter Champions. Following the by-election for the Wonga Ward in March 2022, Cr Linda Hancock was also appointed as a Women's Charter Champion.

ISSUE / DISCUSSION

The Local Government Women's Charter is in its 25th year and has been adopted by 74 out of 79 Victorian Councils (as per the VLGA website).

Since endorsing the VLGA Women's Charter in August 2010, Council has undertaken a range of programs and projects to support the three key principles: gender equity; diversity; and active citizenship. A list of activities over the past 12 months is provided below:

Leadership and Accountability

- Council holds a gender balance at the Councillor level. During the 2023/24 Council term, Cr Kylie Spears held the position of Mayor, with Cr Paul Macdonald holding the position of Deputy Mayor.
- Senior leadership of the organisation is represented by a ratio of 9 women to 13 men, that is 41% women and 59% men.
- Council's Equal Opportunity Committee adopted a Terms of Reference and formalised employee resource groups / networks, which includes the lived experience perspective of employees from the LGBTIQ+ community, First Nations people and employees living with and/or caring for others with a disability, illness and/or those living with neurodiversity.

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT WOMEN'S CHARTER - FINAL
UPDATE Cont'd**

ITEM 1

Preventing Gender-based Harassment and Discrimination, Sexual Harassment, and Bullying

- Council previously implemented twelve (12) recommendations summarised in VAGO's Report into Sexual Harassment in Local Government 2020. Since then some significant achievements included:
 - Providing ongoing Equal Opportunity Contact Officer training
 - Undertaking sexual harassment prevention training for all new starters, leaders, EO Contact Officers and Health and Safety Representatives.
 - Continuing to deliver Ally training for employees who wish to gain a better understanding of why LGBTIQ+ inclusion is important to Maroondah and explore the challenges often faced by people who identify as LGBTIQ+. Training will be offered biannually and open to all employees across Council.
 - Commencing the development of a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Framework, which aims to facilitate inclusivity which will enable and accommodate greater diversity and equity to be sustainably achieved and maintained in the workplace.

Workforce Development, Gender Pay Equity and Support for Caring

The *2022-2025 Enterprise Bargaining Agreement* was approved by the Fair Work Commission in January 2023. It further enhanced the employment conditions supportive of females in the workforce including increased paid parental leave for primary and secondary carers; the facilitation of flexible working arrangements; continuation of Family Violence Leave entitlement, gender neutral language throughout the document better reflecting Maroondah's workplace language; increased commitment to diversity consistent with Council's Gender Equality Action Plan, and increased ex-gratia leave considerations on a range of health-related matters.

The *Gender Equality Action Plan 2021/2025* explains the results of the workplace gender audit, our key priorities, strategies for achieving workplace gender equality and our commitment to resourcing this, and undertaking gender impact assessments.

In February 2024, the *Gender Equity in the Public Sector Progress Report* for the period 1 July 2021 to 30 June 2023 was submitted to demonstrate Council's progress towards gender equality. The Commission for Gender Equality in the Public Sector has assessed Council's Report and confirmed in October 2024 that Council is compliant.

Driving Change in the Community

- In May 2022, Council received Victorian Government funding to implement the Free From Violence Local Government Pilot Program. Over three years, 15 Victorian Councils are implementing a whole-of-council framework to embed gender equality and family violence prevention practices. The framework focusses on Council's domains of influence as a workplace, a service provider, a connector, and as a community leader. Council has completed the second year of the program which spanned the 2023/2024 financial year, and commenced the third year of the program which spans the 2024/2025 financial year. All progress reports and project plans have been submitted to the Victorian Government funding body, Department of Families, Fairness and Housing. Eleven (11) initiatives were identified for years two and three of the program, two of which have been fully completed and one which was absorbed into existing initiatives within Council. The remaining initiatives are on track for completion by the end of year three as planned. Outcomes of particular note include
 - Development and commencement of a whole-of-Council Training Action Plan, which includes a combination of face-to-face learnings, e-learnings and online workshops. Training has been allocated to employees across all levels, from Officer to CMT. The training program focuses on understanding family violence as a workplace issue, being an active bystander and responding to disclosures.
 - Council is participating in the 'Put Her Name On It' project through the development of a Name Bank which highlights women and gender diverse people who have notable contributions to Maroondah. These names can be used for future place-naming in Maroondah to support a gender balance in street, place and feature naming.
 - Council collaborated with local partners to deliver the Love Bites Facilitator Training, developed and delivered by NAPCAN. Over three days of training, 17 professionals from the Maroondah learnt how to deliver the evidence-based respectful relationships program, targeted to young people from years 5 and 12. The Love Bites program is currently in pilot stage at a local alternative education program, with more programs scheduled and in planning stage for delivery in 2025.
 - Council partnered with Knox City Council, City of Monash and Safe and Equal to deliver a free online community webinar as part of the 'Are You Safe At Home? Day' Campaign in May. The webinar, 'Ask. Listen. Believe' had a wide reach across all 3 municipalities, as well as extending into other states and some viewers overseas.
 - Launch of resources, as well as the development and delivery of in-person training sessions for employees as part of the Re-Capture Equity program. This program supports Council to consider intersectionality and equitable practice when taking and selecting images for publication.
- Council is one of more than 30 partners participating in Together For Equality and Respect - the regional Strategy for Preventing Violence Against Women in Melbourne's Eastern Region. The Strategy outlines the case for action and sets out a strategic framework for 2021-2025. Council's involvement in this partnership continued during 2023 involving: regular attendance at Community of Practice forums along with partnering in activities of mutual benefit such as keeping safe online workshops.

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT WOMEN'S CHARTER - FINAL
UPDATE Cont'd**

ITEM 1

- As part of the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-based Violence, Council's financial contribution was supplemented with funding received by Safe + Equal. Maroondah is working in partnership with other LGA's and local organisations to deliver and support a range of initiatives including;
 - Two (2) billboards displayed in prominent locations in Maroondah. Messaging was been provided by Respect Victoria and supports the state-wide Campaign.
 - Participation and in a local Walk Against Family Violence, organised by Boorndawan William Aboriginal Healing Service.
 - Maroondah is partnering with Knox City Council and City of Monash to deliver the free community webinar "Start the Conversation – Family Violence Prevention is Everyone's Business". The event is moderated by Patricia Karvelas and features a panel of experts who will explore the impacts of family violence, what individuals can do to prevent it and the supports available.
 - An internal activation for employees with speeches, information and activities to encourage and motivate employees to take action to prevent gender-based violence.
 - Your library hosted a Beyond Sparkles and Superheroes storytime at Croydon Library on 29 November 2024, featuring books that challenge gender stereotypes and celebrate individuality. There were 62 attendees.
 - Your Library hosted a Gender Busting Storytime at Realm Library on 18 November 2024 and a Special Dad's and Bubs storytime on Saturday 30 November in partnership with FVREE and Level Playground where they promoted respectful relationships.
- Council's Maternal and Child Health service continues to develop strong partnerships to improve the mental health wellbeing of children and their families through improved referral pathways. Key partners include EACH; Eastern Health Mental Health Services; Eastern Community Legal Centre (ECLC); Eastern Health Perinatal Emotional Health Service (PEHS) for women experiencing emotional health issues including: postnatal depression and trauma impacting mental health during the first 12 months post birth; The O'Connell Centre providing early parenting support for vulnerable families; and Infant, Child and Youth Mental Health Services (ICYMHS). Maternal and Child Health continue to see issues and crisis situations and family violence issues exacerbated with corresponding increase in referrals to specialist services.
- In 2023 a pilot program commenced supported by a Maternal and Child Health Nurse, DadsConnect, initially partnering with a male facilitator from On The Line (previously called Mensline) offering 6-8 weekly sessions for new Dad's attending with their baby, aiming to provide support and connection, increase parenting confidence and reduce stress and aim to prevent family violence. On The Line were unable to continue the partnership due to staff resourcing, however the program has subsequently continued in partnership with Dads Group Inc. a not-for-profit local organisation and the program modified to 5 sessions. 70 dads have completed the program to date, with overwhelmingly positive feedback including greater connection to other dads and confidence in parenting, access to information and improved relationships and/or communication with their partner.

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT WOMEN'S CHARTER - FINAL
UPDATE Cont'd**

ITEM 1

- Council's Aged and Disability Services facilitate an LGBTI+ peer social support group, Mature Rainbows, for people 50 years of age or over who identify as LGBTI+ and their ally community. The group meets monthly with an average of 12 attendees a month over the past year, and over 20 members. The team also offer weekly Social Support Groups for older people for women-only, men-only and all-genders. The Men's Shed onsite is now referred to as The Shed to encourage all gender participation.
- Youth Services arranged for baby change facilities to be provided at EVs Youth Centre to support participation of a younger female parent in youth activities.

Diversity of Representation

- The October 2024 Maroondah Council Election saw a total of 22 candidates, with 11 women running for Council, resulting in five women elected to a nine seat Council. Maroondah continues to have a majority of five women in elected positions which is the fourth time this has occurred since 2012. For the 2024/25 Council term the position of Mayor and Deputy Mayor are held by Crs Kylie Spears and Linda Hancock.
- Between 2020 to 2024, Cr Kylie Spears has been the President of the Victorian Branch of the Australian Local Government Women's Association, since the 2024 AGM Cr Spears moves into a Past President role. Since 2023, Cr Kylie Spears has been the National President of the Australian Local Government Women's Association. ALGWA is an organisation that assists in furthering women's participation, knowledge and understanding of the function of Local Government.
- As President of the Victorian Branch of the Australian Local Government Women's Association, Cr Kylie Spears is a standing member of the Local Government Victoria Gender Equality Advisory Committee. This Committee was established in April 2021 in an effort to advance gender equality across Victoria's 79 Councils, and advises the Minister for Local Government and Minister for Women on how to deliver the Victorian Government's target of 50 per cent female Mayors and Councillors by 2025.

Recognising and Supporting the Active Citizenship of Women

- Council has completed a redevelopment of Aquahub's gymnastics facility, improving facilities and offerings available, aiming to increase female (and male) participation in gymnastics.
- Council continued its annual extended lighting program from June to October at Town Park Athletics Track in Croydon, giving women and girls the chance to exercise at night in a well-lit area, making them feel safer and comfortable.
- Council's indoor cricket training centre, Maroondah Edge, received the 2023/24 Cricket Australia Community Facility of the Year Award. The award highlighted the investment in women's cricket and providing a facility that is accessible, first class and appropriate for the women's team of Ringwood Cricket Club, who were established over 15 years go.

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT WOMEN'S CHARTER - FINAL
UPDATE Cont'd**

ITEM 1

- The annual International Women's Day breakfast at Karralyka was held in March 2024 - to a sell-out crowd. The keynote speaker was Dr Shona Bass. Shona has lived her life as a trailblazer, proudly wearing the mantle of an 'Original Matilda' – as a player in the inaugural Australian Women's Soccer Team and later a National Coach of the U/17 girls' team. She brings a unique model of strategy, resilience, and stamina developed through experiences in breaking through a male dominated sport environment, her academic and corporate leadership and traversing through prejudices in relation to women in sport, leadership, and women in the workplace.
- Maroondah City Council held a Women in Business event at Karralyka. The event encouraged women to 'uplift their financial wellbeing' and take time out to connect and learn with like-minded people. The key speakers were local professional women Caz Hendrie from The Hendrie Group and Darlene and Mel from The Money Collective.

Next Steps

In pursuing diversity and inclusion amongst democratically elected local government representatives, it is acknowledged that people from a range of backgrounds may benefit from additional promotion, encouragement and support as they consider whether to run for Council in future elections.

The Women's Participation in Local Government Coalition was formed in 1997 to work towards the equal participation of women and men in Victorian local government through the Victorian Local Government Women's Charter. By 2013, as the work for gender equity in local government became stronger, the Coalition dissolved itself and handed responsibility for this work to the statewide organisations, the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) and the Victorian Local Governance Association (VLGA).

Council will continue to facilitate opportunities to promote, encourage and support women and gender diverse people to stand for Local Government elections in the City of Maroondah, including working in partnership with Eastern Regional Group of Councils, the Municipal Association of Victoria, and the Victorian Local Governance Association; and in so doing continue to facilitate an elected Council and workplace that reflects the diversity of our Maroondah community.

Council is delighted at the strong support across the community and the organisation to ensure women have the opportunity to thrive and participate equally in all aspects of community and Council life. Due to this success it is felt by officers that since these activities are an ongoing part of business as usual having imbedded processes in place to ensure these outcomes are maintained in the short, medium and longer term the requirement to maintain Women's Charter Representation is no longer required.

FINANCIAL / ECONOMIC ISSUES

Advocacy and Council programs identified in this report are contained within the current budget.

ENVIRONMENTAL / AMENITY ISSUES

Not applicable

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT WOMEN'S CHARTER - FINAL
UPDATE Cont'd**

ITEM 1

SOCIAL / COMMUNITY ISSUES

This Report continues to recognise the positive work undertaken across the municipality by Council and its many partners in ensuring women in Maroondah are able to develop to their full potential and participate equally across all aspects of family, community and business life.

COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

Community consultation continues as part of a wide range of service area actions, and Council will consider feedback from the consultation undertaken as we develop the community vision, Maroondah 2050.

ATTACHMENTS

Not applicable

CONFIDENTIALITY

Not applicable

THAT COUNCIL

- 1. ACKNOWLEDGE THE ACHIEVEMENTS OVER THE PAST 12 MONTHS AS PART OF ITS SUPPORT OF THE VICTORIAN LOCAL GOVERNMENT WOMEN'S CHARTER**
- 2. NOTE THAT THE VICTORIAN LOCAL GOVERNMENT WOMEN'S CHARTER ACTIVITIES HAVE MOVED TO BUSINESS AS USUAL TO ENSURE WE CONTINUE TO FACILITATE AN ELECTED COUNCIL AND WORKPLACE THAT REFLECTS THE DIVERSITY OF OUR MAROONDAH COMMUNITY**

DOCUMENTS FOR SEALING

VOLUNTEER YEARS OF SERVICE RECOGNITION

ITEM 1

LETTERS UNDER SEAL

BACKGROUND

On the occasion of the Annual Volunteer Recognition Civic Reception to be held on Wednesday 11 December 2024, Council has much pleasure in recognising the valuable contribution to the community provided by our volunteers who provide significant assistance in a range of Council services and programs.

At this Reception, long serving volunteers are recognised with a Letter Under Seal presentation by the Mayor.

The names of the thirty (30) volunteers to be presented with Letters Under Seal are listed in the recommendation to this report.

ATTACHMENTS

Not applicable

CONFIDENTIALITY

Not applicable

RECOMMENDATION

THAT COUNCIL SIGNS AND SEALS THE 2024 VOLUNTEER YEARS OF SERVICE AWARD LETTERS IN RECOGNITION OF

50 YEARS OF SERVICE GIVEN BY:

- PATRICIA GAME

35 YEARS OF SERVICE GIVEN BY:

- DR GRAEME LORIMER

30 YEARS OF SERVICE GIVEN BY:

- LYNNE CHEERS
- MICHAEL CHEERS
- ROGER LORD
- DAVID POCKETT
- ROSE POCKETT
- LLOYD SMILEY

DOCUMENTS FOR SEALING

- OLWYN SMILEY
- THERESE STARLING
- ALAN KRAHE

25 YEARS OF SERVICE GIVEN BY:

- THERESA RODRIGUEZ

20 YEARS OF SERVICE GIVEN BY:

- PETER MILFORD
- SUZANNE MOSLEY
- RONALD STANFORD

15 YEARS OF SERVICE GIVEN BY:

- MEREDITH BRIGGS
- LISA FLEMING
- KEVIN SOUTHEY

10 YEARS OF SERVICE GIVEN BY:

- SUSAN BAILEY
- STEPHANIE DEAN
- CAROLYN GILPIN
- STEPHEN HICKMAN
- ANEESE MCGRATH
- CLIFFORD MCKEOWN
- HEATHER MORCOMB
- NEIL MORCOMB
- CHARLES PORTEOUS
- VINCENT SYMONS
- ROBERT TUCKER
- DUNCAN WAITE