

# **Ordinary Council Meeting**

## **Minutes**

**Monday 17 May 2021**

**Commenced at 7:00 PM**

**Council Chambers  
20 Siding Avenue, Officer  
Victoria**

<b>Members:</b>	Cr Brett Owen	Mayor
	Cr Jeff Springfield	Deputy Mayor
	Cr Stephanie Davies	
	Cr Jack Kowarzik	
	Cr Graeme Moore	
	Cr Collin Ross	
	Cr Tammy Radford	
	Cr Carol Ryan	
<b>Officers:</b>	Carol Jeffs	Chief Executive Officer
	Peter Benazic	General Manager Infrastructure and Environment
	Nigel Higgins	General Manager Liveable Communities
	Debbie Tyson	Acting Executive Manager Office of the CEO
	Gary Dore	Acting General Manager Customer, People and Performance
	Bruce Walker	Acting Manager Governance
	Jack Coogan	Governance Officer

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## **1 Opening And Prayer**

Almighty God we humbly request that you bestow your blessings upon this Council, direct and prosper our deliberations to the advancement of your glory and to the betterment of the peoples of Cardinia Shire. Amen.

Meeting opened at 7:00pm.

## **2 Acknowledgements**

Cardinia Shire Council acknowledges that we are on the traditional land of the Bunurong and Wurundjeri people and pay our respects to their elders past, present and emerging.

## **3 Apologies**

Nil.

The Mayor called for a motion to bring forward Community Question time. Multiple questions were submitted relating to an item listed for discussion on tonight's agenda. The rearrangement of the agenda is to enable full consideration of the item in question.

Moved by Councillor Davies, Seconded Councillor Kowarzik.

Carried.

## **4 Adoption And Confirmation Of Minutes**

Moved Cr Graeme Moore, seconded Cr Carol Ryan

That minutes of the following meetings be confirmed:

- General Council meeting 19 April 2021
- Town Planning Committee 3 May 2021

Carried

## **5 Declaration Of Interests**

Nil.

## 6 Ordinary Business

### 6.1 General Reports

#### 6.1.1 South Eastern Australia Transport Strategy Membership

**Responsible GM:** Debbie Tyson  
**Author:** Debbie Tyson

##### Recommendation(s)

That Council support the membership proposal to re-join South Eastern Australia Transport Strategy (SEATS).

##### Attachments

Nil

##### Executive Summary

South Eastern Australia Transport Strategy (SEATS) has approached Council to re-join the organisation. Cardinia was a member of SEATS for a number of years prior to a Council resolution in 2011 to not renew the membership. As a Council resolution was undertaken, to re-establish the membership, a motion from Council is required.

##### Background

SEATS is an advocating body for local government transport infrastructure and has been operating for over 25 years. They have developed the South East Transport Strategy which collectively identifies a number of Priority Projects that go beyond the boundaries of individual local councils and benefits the entire region. Their goal is to advocate for an effective integrated transport network that stimulates economic growth that is sustainable and sensitive to the environment and enhances communities.

In 2011, Council left SEATS, primarily due to our transport needs relating to metropolitan Melbourne rather than the south east seaboard corridor. However with the current advocacy needs for Cardinia, such as Thomson Road extension and the South East Airport, and the change of scope for SEATS, it is considered that a year prescription would allow Council to establish the value of participating. If considered a beneficial partnership, further years can be joined.

SEATS has indicated that they can assist Cardinia Shire in advocacy such as:

- Federal Election advocacy – Monash and La Trobe electorates
- advocating for “Active Transport” including rail trail, walking tracks, bike lanes.
- advocating for EV charging networks
- advocating for Princes Highway road upgrades
- advocating for the South Gippsland Highway
- advocating for road safety
- advocating for south east airport

In joining SEATS, Council will work with them on Cardinia’s aspiration and direct advocacy requirements.

### **Policy Implications**

There are no Policy Implication with this membership proposal.

### **Relevance to Council Plan**

#### **3.2 Our Environment - Transport linkages connecting towns**

3.2.5 Advocate for and facilitate improved public transport options and major arterial roads to help link employment, educational, recreational and retail activities between the Shire's rural and growth areas.

#### **5.4 Our Governance - Appropriate funding and support from all levels of government**

5.4.1 Advocate on behalf of the community to ensure it receives a fair share of funding and support from the Australian and Victorian governments for infrastructure, facilities and services.

5.4.2 Work with both interface and regional Councils to strengthen advocacy campaigns to Australian and Victorian governments aimed at increasing awareness and support for joint issues.

### **Climate Emergency Consideration**

There is no Climate Emergency consideration with this membership proposal.

### **Consultation/Communication**

There is no requirement for consultation with this membership proposal.

### **Financial and Resource Implications**

Based upon Cardinia Shire population size and Gross Regional Product, the membership fee is \$7280.00 including GST per annum.

This amount can be absorbed within budget.

### **Conclusion**

It is considered that SEATS will strengthen Councils advocacy campaigns in relation to infrastructure, it is therefore recommended that Council re-joins SEATS.

**Resolution**

Moved Cr Graeme Moore, seconded Cr Collin Ross.

That Council support the membership proposal to re-join South Eastern Australia Transport Strategy (SEATS).

Carried



## 6.1.2 Sealing the Hills - Caroline Avenue, Cockatoo Catchment - Special Charge Scheme Notice of Intention

**Responsible GM:** Peter Benazic  
**Author:** Ken White

### Recommendation(s)

That Council:

1. Acknowledge the majority landowner support as set out in this report to contribute to the construction of Caroline Avenue, Boronia Crescent and Rouen Road, Cockatoo, (as shown in attachment 2), including sealed pavement, kerb & channel and associated drainage and incidental works;
2. Approve the assessment of the benefit ratio for the proposed special rate and charge scheme as set out in attachment 3 of this report.
3. Adopt the proposed area of the scheme and method of apportionment as set out in attachments 2 and 4 respectively.
4. Give notice of intention to declare a special charge scheme in accordance with the proposed declaration set out in attachment 5 to fund the construction of Caroline Avenue, Boronia Crescent and Rouen Road, Cockatoo.
5. Consider the declaration (attachment 5) at its meeting of 19th July, 2021, or such later date as necessary.
6. Appoint the Mayor and/or ward Councillor and/ General Manager Infrastructure and Environment as a Council committee with a quorum of one to consider submissions received to Section 223 of the Local Government Act with respect to this scheme.
7. Authorise the General Manager Infrastructure and Environment to determine the administrative arrangements to enable submissions to be heard and considered.
8. Approve the public notice as set out in attachment 6 to be advertised in the Pakenham-Berwick Gazette and Hills Trader as newspapers that service the area.

### Attachments

1. SCS Process Check list - Sealing the Hills Program [6.1.2.1 - 2 pages]
2. SCS included properties plan - Caroline Ave Cockatoo Catchment [6.1.2.2 - 1 page]
3. SCS Benefit Unit Calculation Caroline Ave Cockatoo catchment [6.1.2.3 - 3 pages]
4. SCS Apportionment Sheet - Caroline Ave Cockatoo catchment [6.1.2.4 - 3 pages]
5. SCS declaration Caroline Ave Cockatoo catchment [6.1.2.5 - 2 pages]
6. SCS Public Notice Caroline Ave Cockatoo catchment [6.1.2.6 - 2 pages]

### Executive Summary

This report proposes giving 'notice of intention to declare' a special charge to part fund the construction of Caroline Avenue, Boronia Crescent and Rouen Road, Cockatoo. This notice

begins the formal consultation process at the commencement of the statutory process that enables Council to levy a special charge, (refer attachment 1).

The Caroline Avenue, Cockatoo catchment is included in the Australian Government funded "Sealing the Hills" program. A recent survey of the landowners in this catchment indicated 65% landowner support to contributing to a scheme from the responses received. Included landowners will receive special benefit as a result of the works including improved resident amenity, reduction in dust and associated health issues, improved drainage, less wear and tear on vehicles, reduced road maintenance costs and overall improved liveability.

The preliminary estimated cost of the proposed works is \$2,019,400 of which \$598,500 is proposed to be funded via the proposed special charge contribution received from the included landowners. This will leave an approximate balance of \$1,420,900 to be funded from the Australian Government grant.

Property owner contributions have been assessed on the basis of the benefit gained by each existing developed or vacant allotment, capped by Council at \$7,000 per benefit unit, (refer to benefit unit definition below). Councils special rates and charges policy provides for levies to be paid in quarterly instalments that include principle and interest. For the Sealing the Hills program it has been decided that a maximum seven (7) payment period be adopted. The financial hardship provisions of this policy provides further relief to those owners demonstrating genuine financial hardship.

## Background

The Caroline Avenue, Cockatoo catchment that includes Caroline Avenue, Boronia Crescent and Rouen Road is included for construction in Councils Sealing the Hills program. The properties included are shown on the plan included as attachment 2 to this report.

A survey of the property owners within the scheme boundary, (total of 77), was undertaken asking if they were in support of contributing to a special charge scheme at a capped contribution rate of \$7,000 per benefit unit, with a benefit unit being defined as:

- Existing lots, either developed or vacant, that gain, or will gain, primary (vehicular) access from a road being constructed would generally be required to contribute one benefit unit (\$7,000) towards the cost of construction.
- Existing lots, either developed or vacant, with side or rear abuttal to a road being constructed would generally be required to contribute one half benefit unit (\$3,500) towards the cost of construction.
- Existing lots, either developed or vacant, that gain, or will gain, primary access and also have side or rear abuttal to roads being constructed would generally be required to contribute one benefit unit (\$7,000) in total
- Existing lots that have the potential to be further subdivided or developed may be allocated a multiple development benefit unit charge.

Of the seventy seven properties surveyed Council received fifty, (50), responses, (or 65%). Thirty seven, (65%), of these responses indicated support to contributing to the scheme, while thirteen, (35%), indicated opposition. Both sections of Caroline Avenue, (east and west of Bell Street), and Boronia Crescent had a higher percentage of supporting owners verses opposing owners. Of the four properties in Rouen Road, one owner indicated support, two owners indicated opposition and one owner did not respond. Following consideration of the survey responses a special charge scheme has been prepared to part fund the construction of Caroline Avenue, Boronia Crescent and Rouen Road. Although Rouen Road does not have majority support, it is considered that it should remain within the scheme to reduce future maintenance costs to Council.

The Cockatoo Primary School also lies within the scheme boundary. Given the level of traffic and parking demand generated by the school it is considered that the State Education Department should be contributing to the scheme. Feedback through the community consultation and questionnaire processes raised this as one of the major issues for the owners opposing the scheme. Although there is no statutory obligation for the Education Department to contribute, a notice will be sent requesting that they contribute a minimum of \$63,000 based on the nine existing titles that make up the school site, ie: nine x \$7,000 = \$63,000. Council has a historic letter on file from the Education Department indicating their preparedness to contribute to a scheme and this will be included with the proposed request/notice to demonstrate their prior commitment.

### **Policy Implications**

The proposed special charge scheme has been developed in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Act, Cardinia Councils Special Rate and Charge Policy and the adopted Sealing the Hills program. It is based on community benefit, health, safety, amenity and landowner support.

Section 163 of the Local Government Act provides that Council may not recover a greater portion of the cost of the works than calculated in accordance with the statutory 'benefit ratio' as set out in attachment 3 to this report. Given that Council has capped the property owner contribution at \$7,000 per benefit unit, the proposed scheme is compliant.

### **Relevance to Council Plan**

#### **3.2 Our Environment - Transport linkages connecting towns**

3.2.1 Upgrade Council roads to improve safety while considering the traffic demand of the community.

3.2.2 Continue the use of special charge schemes to finance road, drainage and footpath improvement programs.

### **Climate Emergency Consideration**

The Sealing the Hills project will consider climate emergency reduction issues such as:

- Minimising tree removal through innovative road design.
- Use of LED lighting to reduce energy emissions.
- Utilising local contractors and local road & drainage construction materials to minimise travel.
- Investigating the reuse and use of recycled road construction materials.

### **Consultation/Communication**

A letter was sent in January of this year to the landowners of Caroline Avenue, Boronia Crescent and Rouen Road outlining specifics in relation to their inclusion in the Sealing the Hills program and the associated special charge scheme proposal. A subsequent face to face community consultation session was held at the Cockatoo Community Centre in early February, from 4.00pm to 7.00pm in the evening, to give owners and residents an opportunity to view plans and comment of the proposal. Approximately 25 people attended.

In mid February a questionnaire was sent by registered mail to landowners asking them to indicate their support / opposition to contributing to a special charge scheme at the capped rate of \$7,000 per benefit unit. When Council became aware of mail delivery issues in Cockatoo a door knock / reminder letter drop was undertaken of properties who had not

responded to the questionnaire and the response date extended by one month. As outlined above 50 questionnaire responses from the 77 included properties were received.

Additionally, an on-site meeting with the owners of the properties in Caroline Avenue, east of Bell Street, was held in late March to further explain the concept construction plans and the benefit of the scheme to these owners.

### **Financial and Resource Implications**

The scheme funding arrangements are as follows:

PRELIMINARY ESTIMATED COST OF PROJECT	\$2,019,400
Total Council Contribution (70%)	\$1,420,900
Benefitting Landowner Contribution (30%)	\$598,500

Note: the estimated project cost includes an allowance of 15% for design, supervision and administration of the scheme.

The Australian Government 150 million dollar grant will be used to fund Councils contribution.

Landowners will be offered the option of paying their contribution in full, or by quarterly instalments over seven years. Instalment payments will include principle and interest, with interest calculated at the declaration of the scheme based on Councils borrowing rate at the time plus one percent.

Council will require the first payment, either in full or by instalment to be made within six months of the practical completion of the works.

### **Conclusion**

It is concluded that the majority of property owners support the construction of the Caroline Avenue, Cockatoo catchment and that Council should commence the formal consultation process to initiate a special charge scheme by proceeding to give notice of its intention to declare a special charge to part fund the works.

## Resolution

Moved Cr Jeff Springfield, seconded Cr Stephanie Davies.

That Council:

1. Acknowledge the majority landowner support as set out in this report to contribute to the construction of Caroline Avenue, Boronia Crescent and Rouen Road, Cockatoo, (as shown in attachment 2), including sealed pavement, kerb & channel and associated drainage and incidental works;
2. Approve the assessment of the benefit ratio for the proposed special rate and charge scheme as set out in attachment 3 of this report.
3. Adopt the proposed area of the scheme and method of apportionment as set out in attachments 2 and 4 respectively.
4. Give notice of intention to declare a special charge scheme in accordance with the proposed declaration set out in attachment 5 to fund the construction of Caroline Avenue, Boronia Crescent and Rouen Road, Cockatoo.
5. Consider the declaration (attachment 5) at its meeting of 19th July, 2021, or such later date as necessary.
6. Appoint the Mayor and/or ward Councillor and/ General Manager Infrastructure and Environment as a Council committee with a quorum of one to consider submissions received to Section 223 of the Local Government Act with respect to this scheme.
7. Authorise the General Manager Infrastructure and Environment to determine the administrative arrangements to enable submissions to be heard and considered.
8. Approve the public notice as set out in attachment 6 to be advertised in the Pakenham-Berwick Gazette and Hills Trader as newspapers that service the area.

Carried

## 6.1.3 Sealing the Hills - Princess Avenue, Emerald Catchment - Special Charge Scheme Notice of Intention

**Responsible GM:** Peter Benazic  
**Author:** Ken White

### Recommendation(s)

That Council:

1. Acknowledge the majority landowner support as set out in this report to contribute to the construction of Princess Avenue and Crichton Road, Emerald, (as shown in attachment 2), including sealed pavement, kerb & channel and associated drainage and incidental works;
2. Approve the assessment of the benefit ratio for the proposed special rate and charge scheme as set out in attachment 3 of this report.
3. Adopt the proposed area of the scheme and method of apportionment as set out in attachments 2 and 4 respectively.
4. Give notice of intention to declare a special charge scheme in accordance with the proposed declaration set out in attachment 5 to fund the construction of Princess Avenue and Crichton Road, Emerald.
5. Consider the declaration (attachment 5) at its meeting of 19th July, 2021, or such later date as necessary.
6. Appoint the Mayor and/or ward Councillor and/ General Manager Infrastructure and Environment as a Council committee with a quorum of one to consider submissions received to Section 223 of the Local Government Act with respect to this scheme.
7. Authorise the General Manager Infrastructure and Environment to determine the administrative arrangements to enable submissions to be heard and considered.
8. Approve the public notice as set out in attachment 6 to be advertised in the Pakenham-Berwick Gazette and Hills Trader as newspapers that service the area.

### Attachments

1. SCS Process Check list Sealing the Hills Program [XT3S] [6.1.3.1 - 2 pages]
2. SCS included properties plan - Princess Ave Emerald Catchment [6.1.3.2 - 1 page]
3. SCS Benefit Unit Calculation Princess Ave Emerald catchment [6.1.3.3 - 3 pages]
4. SCS Apportionment Sheet - Princess Avenue Emerald catchment [6.1.3.4 - 1 page]
5. SCS declaration Princess Ave Emerald catchment [6.1.3.5 - 2 pages]
6. SCS Public Notice Princess Ave Emerald catchment [6.1.3.6 - 2 pages]

### Executive Summary

This report proposes giving 'notice of intention to declare' a special charge to part fund the construction of Princess Avenue and Crichton Road, Emerald. This notice begins the formal

consultation process at the commencement of the statutory process that enables Council to levy a special charge, (refer attachment 1).

The Princess Avenue, Emerald catchment is included in the Australian Government funded "Sealing the Hills" program. A recent survey of the landowners in this catchment indicated approximately 90% landowner support to contributing to a scheme from the responses received. Included landowners will receive special benefit as a result of the works including improved resident amenity, reduction in dust and associated health issues, improved drainage, less wear and tear on vehicles, reduced road maintenance costs and overall improved liveability.

The preliminary estimated cost of the proposed works is \$972,900 of which \$70,000 is proposed to be funded via the proposed special charge contribution received from the included landowners. This will leave an approximate balance of \$902,900 to be funded from the Australian Government grant.

Property owner contributions have been assessed on the basis of the benefit gained by each existing developed or vacant allotment, capped by Council at \$7,000 per benefit unit, (refer to benefit unit definition below). Councils special rates and charges policy provides for levies to be paid in quarterly instalments that include principle and interest. For the Sealing the Hills program it has been decided that a maximum seven (7) payment period be adopted. The financial hardship provisions of this policy provides further relief to those owners demonstrating genuine financial hardship.

## Background

The Princess Avenue, Emerald catchment, that includes Princess Avenue and Crichton Road is included for construction in Councils Sealing the Hills program. The properties included are shown on the plan included as attachment 2 to this report.

A survey of the property owners within the scheme boundary, (total of 12), was undertaken asking if they were in support of contributing to a special charge scheme at a capped contribution rate of \$7,000 per benefit unit, with a benefit unit being defined as:

- Existing lots, either developed or vacant, that gain, or will gain, primary (vehicular) access from a road being constructed would generally be required to contribute one benefit unit (\$7,000) towards the cost of construction.
- Existing lots, either developed or vacant, with side or rear abuttal to a road being constructed would generally be required to contribute one half benefit unit (\$3,500) towards the cost of construction.
- Existing lots, either developed or vacant, that gain, or will gain, primary access and also have side or rear abuttal to roads being constructed would generally be required to contribute one benefit unit (\$7,000) in total
- Existing lots that have the potential to be further subdivided or developed may be allocated a multiple development benefit unit charge.

Of the twelve properties surveyed Council received ten, (10), responses, (or 83%). Nine, (90%), of these responses indicated support to contributing to the scheme, while one, (10%), indicated opposition. Following consideration of the survey questionnaire responses a special charge scheme has been prepared to part fund the construction of Princess Avenue and Crichton Road.

Nobelius Heritage Park adjoins a significant portion of the east side of Princess Avenue with access gained at to the park at the east end of Crichton Road. Councils contribution of approximately 93% of the cost of the works more than covers the contribution requirements from the traffic and usage demands created by the park.



## Policy Implications

The proposed special charge scheme has been developed in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Act, Cardinia Councils Special Rate and Charge Policy and the adopted Sealing the Hills program. It is based on community benefit, health, safety, amenity and landowner support.

Section 163 of the Local Government Act provides that Council may not recover a greater portion of the cost of the works than calculated in accordance with the statutory 'benefit ratio' as set out in attachment 3 to this report. Given that Council has capped the property owner contribution at \$7,000 per benefit unit, the proposed scheme is compliant.

## Relevance to Council Plan

### 3.2 Our Environment - Transport linkages connecting towns

3.2.1 Upgrade Council roads to improve safety while considering the traffic demand of the community.

3.2.2 Continue the use of special charge schemes to finance road, drainage and footpath improvement programs.

## Climate Emergency Consideration

The Sealing the Hills project will consider climate emergency reduction issues such as:

- Minimising tree removal through innovative road design.
- Use of LED lighting to reduce energy emissions.
- Utilising local contractors and local road & drainage construction materials to minimise travel.
- Investigating the reuse and use of recycled road construction materials.

## Consultation/Communication

A letter was sent in January of this year to the landowners of Princess Avenue and Crichton Road outlining specifics in relation to their inclusion in the Sealing the Hills program and the associated special charge scheme proposal. A subsequent face to face community consultation session was held at the Emerald Community Hub in early February, from 4.00pm to 7.00pm in the evening, to give owners and residents an opportunity to view plans and comment of the proposal. Disappointingly only two people attended.

In mid February a questionnaire was sent by registered mail to landowners asking them to indicate their support / opposition to contributing to a special charge scheme at the capped rate of \$7,000 per benefit unit. A follow up door knock / reminder letter drop was undertaken to properties who had not responded to the questionnaire by the nominated response date, with the response date extended by one month. As outlined above 10 questionnaire responses from the 12 included properties were received.

## Financial and Resource Implications

The scheme funding arrangements are as follows:

PRELIMINARY ESTIMATED COST OF PROJECT	\$972,900
Total Council Contribution (93%)	\$902,900
Benefitting Landowner Contribution (7%)	\$70,000

Note: the estimated project cost includes an allowance of 15% for design, supervision and administration of the scheme.



The Australian Government 150 million dollar grant will be used to fund Councils contribution.

Landowners will be offered the option of paying their contribution in full, or by quarterly instalments over seven years. Instalment payments will include principle and interest, with interest calculated at the declaration of the scheme based on Councils borrowing rate at the time plus one percent.

Council will require the first payment, either in full or by instalment, to be made within six months of the practical completion of the works.

### **Conclusion**

It is concluded that the majority of property owners support the construction of the Princess Avenue, Emerald catchment and that Council should commence the formal consultation process to initiate a special charge scheme by proceeding to give notice of its intention to declare a special charge to part fund the works.

## Resolution

Moved Cr Jeff Springfield, seconded Cr Stephanie Davies.

That Council:

1. Acknowledge the majority landowner support as set out in this report to contribute to the construction of Princess Avenue and Crichton Road, Emerald, (as shown in attachment 2), including sealed pavement, kerb & channel and associated drainage and incidental works;
2. Approve the assessment of the benefit ratio for the proposed special rate and charge scheme as set out in attachment 3 of this report.
3. Adopt the proposed area of the scheme and method of apportionment as set out in attachments 2 and 4 respectively.
4. Give notice of intention to declare a special charge scheme in accordance with the proposed declaration set out in attachment 5 to fund the construction of Princess Avenue and Crichton Road, Emerald.
5. Consider the declaration (attachment 5) at its meeting of 19th July, 2021, or such later date as necessary.
6. Appoint the Mayor and/or ward Councillor and/ General Manager Infrastructure and Environment as a Council committee with a quorum of one to consider submissions received to Section 223 of the Local Government Act with respect to this scheme.
7. Authorise the General Manager Infrastructure and Environment to determine the administrative arrangements to enable submissions to be heard and considered.
8. Approve the public notice as set out in attachment 6 to be advertised in the Pakenham-Berwick Gazette and Hills Trader as newspapers that service the area.

Carried

## 6.1.4 Upper Beaconsfield Recreation Reserve New Community Building Petition Response

**Responsible GM:** Nigel Higgins  
**Author:** Kristen Jackson

### Recommendation(s)

That Council:

1. Note the petition received requesting Council allocate funding in the 2021/22 FY budget for the development of proposed redevelopment of youth, community, and sporting facilities at the Upper Beaconsfield Reserve.
2. Note there is funding available in the 2020/21 and draft 21/22 FY budgets to prepare a Buildings Masterplan and concept design and associated cost estimate for the proposed new community, sport and scout facility at Upper Beaconsfield Reserve.
3. Note that there is funding towards the construction of the proposed new community, sport and scout facility at Upper Beaconsfield Reserve in future years of the draft 10 year capital works program.
4. Note Council officers will continue to work with the Upper Beaconsfield Reserve Committee of Management, reserve user groups and general community to finalise the Buildings Masterplan and develop a concept design and associated cost estimate for the proposed new community, sport and scout facility at Upper Beaconsfield Reserve.
5. Note the Buildings Masterplan and Concept Design for the proposed new community, sport and scout facility at Upper Beaconsfield Reserve will be brought to Council for approval before submission to the Reserve Committee and DELWP for landowner approval.
6. Inform the President of the Upper Beaconsfield Reserve Committee of Management of the above resolution.

### Attachments

Nil

### Executive Summary

At the Council meeting on 19 April 2021, the following petition was tabled:

*“We the undersigned, being residents in the Shire of Cardinia, do hereby humbly petition the Cardinia Council Chief Executive Officer and Councillors to accord the highest priority in 2021/2022 budget considerations for the proposed redevelopment of youth, community, and sporting facilities at Upper Beaconsfield Recreation Reserve. These facilities should meet all current Australian Standards, especially for female friendly changing facilities and toilets suitable for all current and future User Groups.”*

In response to this petition, it is recommended that Council:

1. Note the petition received requesting Council allocate funding in the 2021/22 FY budget for the development of proposed redevelopment of youth, community, and sporting facilities at Upper Beaconsfield Recreation Reserve.
2. Note there is funding available in the 2020/21 and draft 21/22 FY budgets to prepare a Buildings Masterplan and concept design and associated cost estimate for the proposed new community, sport and scout facility at Upper Beaconsfield Reserve.

3. Note that there is funding towards the construction of the proposed new community, sport and scout facility at Upper Beaconsfield Reserve in future years of the draft 10 year capital works program.
4. Note Council officers will continue to work with the Upper Beaconsfield Reserve Committee of Management, reserve user groups and general community to finalise the Buildings Masterplan and develop a concept design and associated cost estimate for the proposed new community, sport and scout facility at Upper Beaconsfield Reserve.
5. Note the Buildings Masterplan and Concept Design for the proposed new community, sport and scout facility at Upper Beaconsfield Reserve will be brought to Council for approval before submission to the Reserve Committee and DELWP for landowner approval.
6. Inform the President of the Upper Beaconsfield Reserve Committee of Management of the above resolution.

## Background

At the Council Meeting on 19 April 2021, the following petition was tabled:

“We the undersigned, being residents in the Shire of Cardinia, do hereby humbly petition the Cardinia Council Chief Executive Officer and Councillors to accord the highest priority in 2021/2022 budget considerations for the proposed redevelopment of youth, community, and sporting facilities at Upper Beaconsfield Recreation Reserve. These facilities should meet all current Australian Standards, especially for female friendly changing facilities and toilets suitable for all current and future User Groups.”

Upper Beaconsfield Reserve is Crown Land with a community Committee of Management appointed under the Crown Lands Reserves Act. Council has been working with the Committee of Management and reserve user groups regarding the proposed redevelopment of the existing sport, community and scout facility.

A draft Buildings Masterplan has been prepared for the provision of a new community, sport and scout facility. At the time of writing this report, the draft Buildings Masterplan is currently with the Committee of Management and Reserve user groups for comment.

Once the comments from the Reserve Committee and user groups have been received, the Buildings Masterplan will be revised and finalised for endorsement by Council, the Reserve Committee and the Department of Environment Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) as the land manager and owner.

Council officers will then work with the Reserve Committee, user groups and general community to prepare a concept plan and cost estimates for the proposed new community, sport and scout facility. This concept plan will also then be endorsed by Council, the Reserve Committee and DELWP.

## Policy Implications

The Buildings Masterplan and concept plan for the new community, sport and scout facility at Upper Beaconsfield Reserve will be prepared in accordance with Council’s Sports Facility Standards Policy July 2019.

## Relevance to Council Plan

### 1.1 Our People - Access to a variety of services for all

1.1.1 Continually review services to ensure those provided by Council meet community needs.

### 1.5 Our People - Variety of recreation and leisure opportunities

1.5.1 Provide active and passive recreation facilities to meet the needs of residents.

1.5.2 Increase opportunities for residents to participate in a range of sport, recreation and leisure activities.

### **Climate Emergency Consideration**

Minimising environmental impact of the construction and ongoing maintenance of the new community, sport and scout facility will be a key consideration in the design.

### **Consultation/Communication**

Council officers have been undertaking consultation and communication with the Upper Beaconsfield Reserve Committee of Management, reserve user groups and general community regarding the proposed redevelopment of the existing community, sport and scout facility.

### **Financial and Resource Implications**

There is funding available in the 2020/21 and draft 21/22 budgets to prepare a Buildings Masterplan and concept design and associated cost estimate for the proposed new community, sport and scout facility at Upper Beaconsfield Reserve.

There is also funding towards the construction of the proposed new community, sport and scout facility at Upper Beaconsfield Reserve in future years of the draft 10 year capital works program.

### **Conclusion**

At the Council meeting on 19 April 2021 a petition was tabled requesting Council to prioritise in the 2021/2022 FY budget considerations the proposed redevelopment of youth, community, and sporting facilities at Upper Beaconsfield Recreation Reserve. The petition stated that these facilities should meet all current Australian Standards, especially for female friendly changing facilities and toilets suitable for all current and future user groups.”

Council has already been working with the Reserve Committee of Management and user groups to develop a buildings masterplan for the proposed new community, sport and scout facility at Upper Beaconsfield Reserve. There is funding available in the 2020/21 and draft 21/22 FY budgets to prepare a Buildings Masterplan and concept design and associated cost estimate for this proposed new facility at Upper Beaconsfield Reserve. There is also funding towards the construction of the proposed new community, sport and scout facility at Upper Beaconsfield Reserve in future years of the draft 10 year capital works program.

1. Council officers will continue to work with the Upper Beaconsfield Reserve Committee of Management, reserve user groups and general community to finalise the Buildings Masterplan and develop a concept design and associated cost estimate for the proposed new community, sport and scout facility at Upper Beaconsfield Reserve. Council, Reserve Committee of Management and DELWP approval will be sought for the Buildings Masterplan and Concept Design as part of the process.

## Resolution

Moved Cr Jeff Springfield, seconded Cr Stephanie Davies.

That Council:

1. Note the petition received requesting Council allocate funding in the 2021/22 FY budget for the development of proposed redevelopment of youth, community, and sporting facilities at the Upper Beaconsfield Reserve.
2. Note there is funding available in the 2020/21 and draft 21/22 FY budgets to prepare a Buildings Masterplan and concept design and associated cost estimate for the proposed new community, sport and scout facility at Upper Beaconsfield Reserve.
3. Note that there is funding towards the construction of the proposed new community, sport and scout facility at Upper Beaconsfield Reserve in future years of the draft 10 year capital works program.
4. Note Council officers will continue to work with the Upper Beaconsfield Reserve Committee of Management, reserve user groups and general community to finalise the Buildings Masterplan and develop a concept design and associated cost estimate for the proposed new community, sport and scout facility at Upper Beaconsfield Reserve.
5. Note the Buildings Masterplan and Concept Design for the proposed new community, sport and scout facility at Upper Beaconsfield Reserve will be brought to Council for approval before submission to the Reserve Committee and DELWP for landowner approval.
6. Inform the President of the Upper Beaconsfield Reserve Committee of Management of the above resolution.

Carried

## 6.1.5 Report in Response to the Beaconsfield Reservoir Petition

**Responsible GM:** Peter Benazic  
**Author:** Peter Benazic

### Recommendation(s)

That Council:

1. Support Melbourne Water to take action to ensure that community safety is not compromised and the community are further consulted regarding preferred safety options.
2. Indicate support for the improved recreational facilities and greater access to the Reserve for the general public.
3. Advocate for the State Government to assign the Park Manager role to a State Government Agency for a significant reserve of regional importance.
4. Request that Melbourne Water provide and Environmental Impact Statements or documentation that considers the environmental and conservation impacts of the proposal to assist the community in any future advocacy plans.
5. Highly commends the work that the Cardinia Environment Coalition has undertaken in managing the reserve.

### Attachments

Nil

### Community Correspondence

Council acknowledges and notes that community correspondence has been received and considered as part of this report including.

- Email & attachments from Harry Jensen on behalf of Save the Beaconsfield Reservoir Action Group dated 26 November 2020
- Email & Rebuttal Paper from Harry Jensen & Andre Bokos from Save the Beaconsfield Reservoir Action Group dated 4 January 2021
- Email & Letter from Caroline Spencer, Upper Beaconsfield Associated dated 16 February 2021 (received 22 Feb)
- Email from Lindsay McNaught at Cardinia Environment Coalition dated 18 February 2021
- Letter from Officer and District Community Association dated 1 March 2021
- Email from Carol and Robert Porter dated 14 March 2021
- Letter & attachment (newspaper article) from Graeme J Taylor President Beaconsfield Progress Association Inc. dated 22 March 2021 and further email dated 12 April 2021
- Email & Letter from Ian Chisholm from Cardinia Environment Coalition dated 28 March 2021
- Email and copy of petition (unsigned) from Michael Petrovich & Robert Porter of Officer & District Community Association Inc. dated 8 April 2021
- Email from Paul Higgott dated 10 April 2021
- Email & Letter from Andre Bokos dated 16 April 2021
- Email from Harry Jensen (Member of the UBA) dated 28 April 2021
- Email from Jenny Pritchard dated 3 May 2021

## Executive Summary

This report considers Melbourne Water's proposal to undertake works at the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning managed Beaconsfield Nature Conservation Reserve. Within the reserve is the Beaconsfield Reservoir. Melbourne Water is responsible for the reservoir and proposes to decommission the existing reservoir dam wall as it allegedly fails to comply with the Australian National Committee on Large Dams (ANCOLD) guidelines. Coupled with the proposed dam wall reduction is the proposed installation of recreational assets and associated landscaping. The new assets necessitate a Park Manager for maintenance according to Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning.

The current land manager for the reserve is The Cardinia Environment Coalition funded by the State Government. The Cardinia Environment Coalition have an intimate knowledge of the reserve and are skilled in the provision of environmental services.

There is wide recognition of the environmental value of the reserve. There also appears to be broad support for increased public access to Beaconsfield Nature Conservation Reserve and for improved recreational assets such as, a perimeter walking circuit, BBQs, and picnic facilities. There are however divergent views on the proposal to reduce the dam wall and the current water level.

## Background

The Beaconsfield Nature Conservation Reserve (BNCR) is an approximately 171 Hectare reserve under the control of the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning see figure 1.1. The reserve is fully fenced and is not freely accessible to the general public. Within the reserve is the Beaconsfield Reservoir and associated water retention infrastructure which is managed by Melbourne Water (MW).





**Figure 1.1**

Information provided by Melbourne Water indicates that the Beaconsfield Reservoir was constructed in 1918 by the State Rivers and Water Supply Commission to principally supply potable water to the local Naval base. Prior to 1991, the reservoir had been managed by the Mornington

Peninsula & District Water Board (MP&DWB) and became the responsibility of MWC when the Board of Works was combined with MP&DWB and others to form Melbourne Water. The reservoir was decommissioned in 1991 due to water quality not meeting improving standards and Cardinia Reservoir coming online.

Melbourne Water retains responsibility for the integrity and safety of the dam embankment and associated infrastructure under their Statement of Obligations.

The reserve is crown land and administered by the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP). The Cardinia Environment Coalition CEC have been appointed as the committee of management (direct appointment via DELWP) for the Beaconsfield Nature Conservation Reserve (BNCR). The BNCR is not open to the public however, on select days throughout the year, limited access is managed the CEC.

A Historical account provided by the President of the Beaconsfield Progress Association posits that

"When Flinders Naval Base (now HMAS Cerberus) on the Mornington Peninsula required a reliable water source, Haunted Gully was chosen as a suitable site for a Reservoir. Land was compulsorily acquired and the State Rivers and Water Supply Commission began construction of the Bunyip Main Race and the Beaconsfield Reservoir. The earthen Dam Wall and the work shaping the Reservoir was completed in 1918 using sustenance labour.

Initially water was channelled from the Toomuc Creek by an Aqueduct requiring some tunnels through hilly areas to the Beaconsfield Reservoir. In the 1940's Bunyip River joined to the Toomuc Creek supply using open channels. In 1957 Tarago River and in 1969 the Tarago Reservoir were connected to the supply. When the Beaconsfield Reservoir reached its peak, there were pipelines to Berwick and Harkaway, other local areas, some outer metropolitan areas as well as the Mornington Peninsula. The completion of the Cardinia Reservoir replaced the water supply issues for these areas and the Beaconsfield Reservoir was decommissioned in 1988. In 1997, Melbourne Water decommissioned the Race between Beaconsfield Reservoir and Cannibal Creek in Tynong due to deterioration of water quality."

In February 2021, Melbourne Water Project Officers provided Council officers with a presentation of the proposed works and the rationale for the works. Principally, Melbourne Water proposed works that included a preferred project option. The option presented identified a significant reduction to the existing dam wall and the opportunity for the creation of passive recreation facilities. The Melbourne Water Officers indicated that the main driver for the works was to address risk issues associated with the integrity of the existing dam wall structure. They contended that the dam wall:

- Does not meet current safety requirements and risk guidelines in terms of stability, internal erosion (piping) protection and general design deficiencies.
- Was built over 100 years ago and does not meet current Australian National Committee on Large Dams (ANCOLD) guidelines.
- Dam managers are required to achieve a level of dam safety which is tolerable and where this is not the case, undertake further measures to reduce the risk.
- Retaining the dam in its current state would not comply with national dam safety regulations.
- The driver of the Beaconsfield Reservoir Dam Safety project is to reduce the risk of Beaconsfield Reservoir failing, protecting properties and community located downstream of the dam.
- While the likelihood of dam failure is low, the consequence is significant.

To address the safety concerns identified, four options were considered by Melbourne Water:

- Option 0: Do nothing, not considered as a feasible option, because the risk was too High.
- Option 1: Partial decommission, embankment and reservoir reduction.
- Option 2: Full decommission, removal of all dam infrastructure and a return to previous state before dam was built.
- Option 3: Full dam safety upgrade, this would involve buttressing the dam wall but maintaining the water level.

These were assessed against four criteria:

- Improve dam safety.
- Cost.
- Community impacts.
- Environmental and conservation impacts.

Melbourne Water Officers considered that option 1 to be the most appropriate. The following concept drawings were provided that depict the proposed works see figure 1.2 and 1.3.



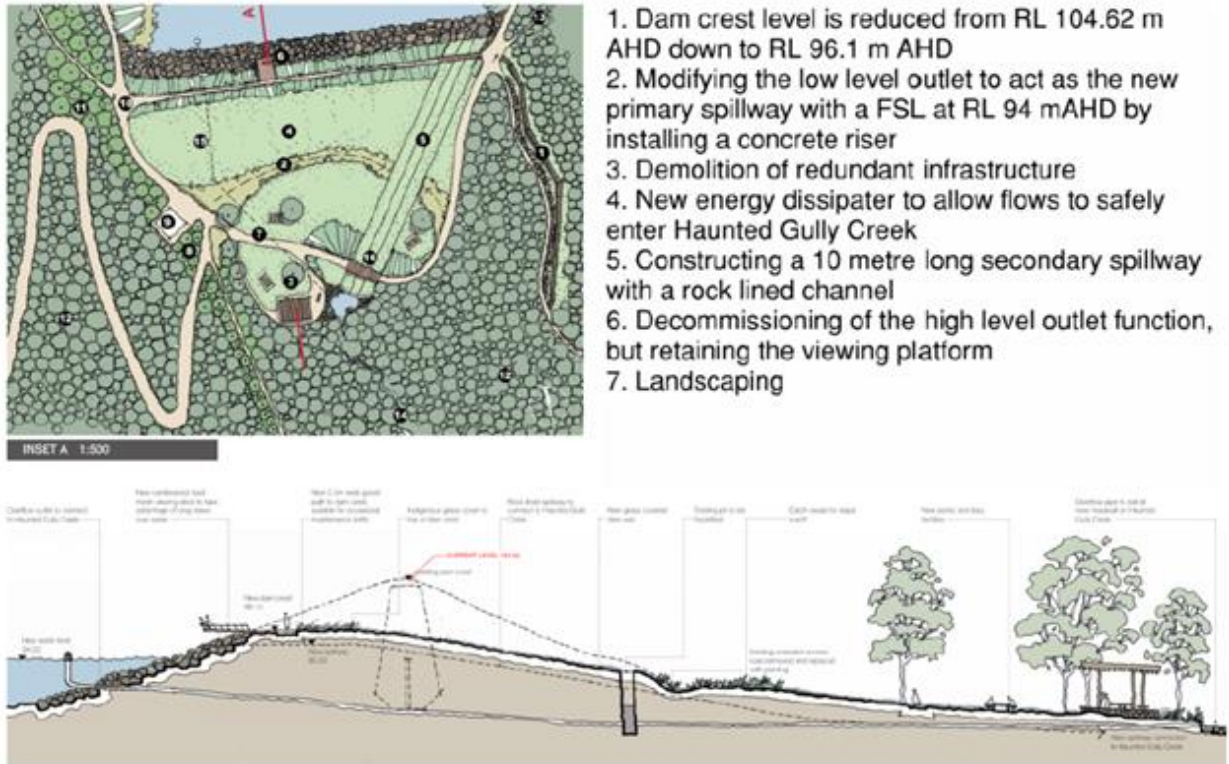


Figure 1.2

The following concept drawing provides further details of the proposed landscape improvements see figure 1.3. Works include installation boardwalks, planted swale, open lawn area, picnic tables BBQ's and shelter, toilet, viewing platforms, new rock lined spillway to Haunted Gully Creek, path connections and maintenance vehicle access. No parking facilities are proposed.

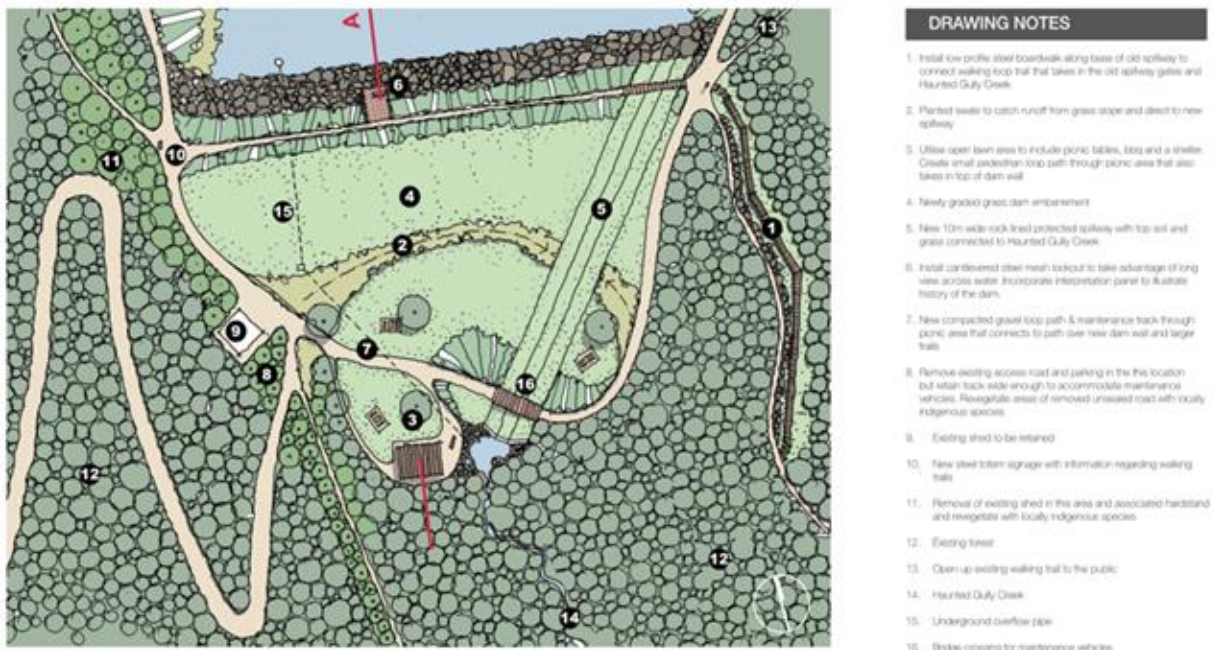


Figure 1.3

Melbourne Water also identified a number of challenges with the implementation of the project.

- Process to make decision on opening the site up to the public.
- Ongoing maintenance responsibility of recreation infrastructure, role of a Parks Manager.
- Balancing nature conservation with public access.
- Management of community expectations.
- Impact on site during the works.
- Weed management when water levels are drawn down.

The challenges were not resolved in the meeting with Council Officers.

As part of the Melbourne Water's ongoing consultation process, the Melbourne Water Project Officers offered to meet with the Mayor and Councillors on site. The offer was accepted, and the meeting occurred on the 23rd of March 2021. The meeting was attended by the Councillors that did not have prior engagements. The participants at the meeting included DELWP representatives, Melbourne Water Project and Technical staff, Melbourne Water community consultation officers and Council maintenance and engineering officers. The current land managers, the CEC, were unintentionally omitted from the meeting invite but in hindsight would have provided valuable input into the discussion.

The purpose of the meeting was to enable Councillors to visit the dam wall and gain a deeper understanding of the physical extent of the proposed works. Melbourne Water's technical team provided an overview of their cost and risks concerns for the reservoir wall. They spoke to the liveability opportunity with the potential to expand recreational assets and ultimately provide public access. Melbourne Water officers emphasised that the installation of recreational assets was contingent on identifying a responsible agency to assume the Park Manager role to take on ongoing maintenance and renewal responsibility for the recreational assets.

The meeting enabled a forum for Councillors to ask clarifying questions. The topics discussed included construction methodology, land management agreements, consultation processes, other government agency support, strategic trail connections to mention a few. Councillors were also able to flag concerns raised by various community interest groups relating to funding, heritage, fire risk, catchment and environmental impacts.

Councillors also attended community organised meetings and events to listen to the varied perspectives espoused from community members. It was evident that divergent views exist in the community as to how Melbourne Water and DELWP should approach the management of the Dam wall and access to the reserve.

## Discussion

As previously highlighted the Beaconsfield Nature Conservation Reserve is not currently open for public access or use. Whilst Officers acknowledge the high ecological and environmental value of the BNCR and recognize that the proposed additional recreation facilities would benefit the Cardinia Shire community, it is the officers' view that there are adequate existing recreational opportunities within this vicinity and the Shire more broadly. However, there appears to be broad community support for access and improved recreational facilities in the reserve.

In terms of the dam wall, officers appreciate that segments of the community have attached an historical value to the wall and have a preference for the retention of both the wall and the current water level. On face value, from the information presented by Melbourne Water's technical officers, the dam wall needs attention due to its' age and condition and based on the requirement to meet the current Australian National Committee on Large Dams (ANCOLD) guidelines. Melbourne Water advised that risk was being actively managed through regular

assessments and presents no immediate risk to the community. They also emphasised that the consequence of failure of the wall could result in significant impact to the community.

Council officers are supportive of works that protects the community from unnecessary risks. Council officers are reliant on the technical expertise of the Melbourne Water asset managers to assess the appropriate solution and risk appetite for their assets. Officers were advised that if the existing wall was to be retained, that it would require significant engineering work and would necessitate the importation of large volumes of material to buttress the wall. The option according to MW staff was considered cost prohibitive and could result in unnecessary damage to the reserve due to the need to install heavy duty civil works access tracks. The relative cost estimate information of the options was not provided to Council officers.

The Officer and District Association and the Save the Beaconsfield Reservoir Action group are seeking Council's support for a full safety upgrade of the dam wall and have a preference to retain water levels at the current datum point, retain the current dam wall height and linking of existing walking tracks into the reservoir reserve. Following the Officer Community Association public meeting on Wednesday March 24th and the Reservoir Open Day on Sunday March 28th, a petition was signed by two hundred and sixty-two people. The petition is to be presented to the Legislative Assembly of Victoria. Conversely the Upper Beaconsfield Association (UBA) have indicated that they unanimously support the development and would like the State Government, including Melbourne Water and DELWP, Cardinia Shire and the community to work collaboratively to develop the BNCR.

Council officers have no significant concerns relating to the proposed works (based on our limited involvement). The Melbourne Water project managers have built features into the plan that are considerate of the site's environmental constraints. The proposed lowering of the water level and creation of 'steppingstone ponds' will provide aquatic habitat suitable for many native species. These will dry out over summer and will result in a greater variety of environmental habitats when compared to the single lake water body. It is possible that by reducing the dam capacity, water levels may reduce in a severe long-term drought. This could result in water reducing to a new low level which could, in such instances, reduce biodiversity for this period of time.

The reserve is currently managed by the CEC in a direct relationship with DELWP. The environmental services provided by the CEC are funded through the provision of State Government grants. It is the officers' understanding that no recurrent funding budgets exist in the State Departments and the CEC ongoing relationship is contingent on grants being made available annually and successful applications. Council officers would prefer that DELWP consider the establishment of recurrent budget allocation and consider a longer-term service agreement with the CEC for this important regional reserve.

In relation to the installation of the recreational infrastructure, as depicted in figure 1.3, DELWP and MW indicated the requirement to assign a "Park Manager" to assume the ongoing service provision and asset management responsibility. The Park Manager would assume the cost of providing services to the community users and for surveillance, maintenance and repair of assets. The initial capital installation cost for the creation of the recreational assets and associated landscaping would be borne by MW as part of the dam wall reduction project. The Park Manager would be required to enter into an ongoing agreement with DELWP and accept the legal committee of the management status.

Through the consultation process undertaken in 2018 by MW the community raised concerns regarding the use of the dam for firefighting purposes. MW indicated that their advice provided by the DELWP Chief Fire officer stated that *"while the Dam could potentially be used for firefighting purposes, it was more likely that nearby Lysterfield Lake, Aura Vale Lake and Cardinia Reservoir - all designated with pre-approval as water pickup locations in the cockpit*



*handbook issued to pilots of aerial firefighting aircraft would be considered more appropriate water sources".* Further, the dam was not precluded from use but required the aviation operators to undertake a risk assessment on a case by case basis.

Council officers are generally supportive of the proposal to create additional recreational assets and access for the general public. Officers are of the view that the Cardinia Shire rate revenue should not be used to fund the ongoing asset and service cost for the reserve. The State agencies such as Parks Victoria would be better equipped to assume the Park Manager role for the State-owned reserve. Officers are however fully supportive of an ongoing and longer-term relationship for CEC at the BNCR. The CEC are competent and efficient service providers for matters and projects pertaining to fauna and flora. It is the view of the officers that they are not currently resourced to manage and service the proposed new recreational assets. This view is consistent with the correspondence received from the CEC.

There are two areas that need further exploration with Melbourne Water and DELWP. Given the prominence of the BNCR as a potential regional destination and the strategic linkage to the Aqua Duct Trail, the impacts of potential visitation need to be understood. The operating hours / days will have an impact on the repair and servicing cost and there are differing views on what would constitute manageable and sustainable visitation. The access points have been identified as O'Neil Road and Dickie Road and no parking is currently proposed in the reserve. Further work is required to determine how parking and traffic matters will be attended to which has a correlation to operating hours. Council Officers will continue discussion to understand the impacts.

### **Heritage Considerations**

There is some discussion amongst the community, questioning the heritage value of the dam wall.

Council officers have been in contact with Heritage Victoria to understand the status of the dam wall. Heritage Victoria have advised, the site was previously listed on the Victorian Heritage Inventory. The Victorian Heritage Inventory (VHI) contains places which have the potential to contain artefacts of archaeological significance related to the former use of the site and are protected by State legislation in the Heritage Act 2017.

In the late 90's and early 2000's many places that have some form of heritage value were listed on the Heritage Inventory. Subsequently Heritage Victoria undertook a review of the Heritage Inventory and it was determined that sites that do not demonstrate archaeological potential should be removed or de-listed from the Heritage Inventory. It was determined the Beaconsfield Reservoir did not contain strong enough archaeological potential to justify a listing on the Heritage Inventory and hence, was delisted. This does not necessarily mean that there are no other heritage values at the site. This only relates to the sites potential to contain archaeological features, deposits or artefacts. There is currently no local heritage overlay on the site.

### **Policy Implications**

Open Space Asset Management Plan:

If council was to assume the Park Manager responsibility the assets would need to be included on council's asset register for the provision of funds for future maintenance renewal.

### **Relevance to Council Plan**

#### **3.3 Our Environment - Enhanced natural environment**

3.3.8 Preserve and improve our bushland and natural environment by implementing weed management programs and continuing work on high conservation bushland reserves and roadsides.

### **Consultation/Communication**

Melbourne Water are the lead agency for the project. MW advised that they commenced a consultation process in 2016 and have undertaken a number of communication and engagement activities. This has included conducting workshops with local friends groups, council officers and the CEC, door knocking residents who live down and adjacent to the dam to discuss the project, attending public meeting, responding to articles in the Village Bell. In October 2018 a meeting between MW and GHD with a number of “technical experts’ from the community occurred to go through the proposals and technical aspects of the proposals explaining the water levels and height of the dam wall. Community sessions were held and advertised in Pakenham Gazette where Digital engagement with survey and feedback was undertaken following the sessions. MW have consulted with Council officers, predominately for recreation and environment technical expertise.

### **Financial and Resource Implications**

Should Council consider the entering into an agreement to assume the Park Manager role, the Council would need to consider a financial budget allocation for the required management resources. As the project scope has not be fully ratified it is difficult to provide accurate costings. A very preliminary budget estimate for maintenance activities would require an estimated allocation of \$90,000.00 per annum as a minimum for the maintenance of proposed asset. The budget estimate would need to be reviewed on the confirmation of the project scope and may result in additional cost. The estimate does not account for the works provided by the CEC. It would be preferable if MW, DELWP or another State Government agency fully funded the required resources. It should be noted that currently there is no budget allocation in Councils 10 year draft budget for the BNCR. Allocation of a budget will place further pressure on the existing rate capped revenue base. It is the view of Officers that the appropriate State Government Agency should fund on maintenance and renewal costs for this significant regional public reserve.

### **Conclusion**

In conclusion Melbourne Water's proposal to install additional recreation assets in the BNCR and enable public access appears to have broad community and Council Officer support. Council Officers also support action to address the risk issues concerning the dam wall. The issue where there is no clear consensus includes the safety treatment of the dam wall and the identification of the Park Manager for the ongoing maintenance and servicing for the reserve. The dam wall technical solution needs to minimise the impact to the reserve and to the amenity of the residents during the civil works process. It is envisaged that discussions are required by Melbourne Water's Project team to resolve the outstanding matters.

## Resolution

Moved Cr Jeff Springfield, seconded Cr Tammy Radford.

That Council:

1. Note the officers report.
2. Recognises the Beaconsfield reservoir and nature conservation reserve as a place of highly significant environmental, community and cultural importance for our region. A wonderful natural asset that has great potential for community and environmental benefit into the future.
3. Requests that all responsible State Government authorities work together with the local community to develop a long term strategic plan that delivers the best outcomes for the environment and community interests.
4. Requests that no further works are to be considered or proceed with the reservoir's dam wall until such time this future strategic document is developed and created.
5. Advocate to the relevant State Government departments to undertake a thorough environmental assessment of the reservoir and the greater BNCR including a report on the impact that any future developments would have on the environment within.
6. Request that Melbourne Water make publicly available the safety assessment report which has identified the potential risk of the reservoir wall failing.
7. Acknowledges the petition which is currently before the State Government of Victoria which is requesting the retention of the current reservoir water level.
8. Highly commends the work that the Cardinia Environment Coalition has undertaken in managing the reserve and advocates for ongoing recurrent funding to manage the BNCR into the future.
9. Advocate for the State Government to assign the Park Manager role to a State Government Agency for a significant reserve of regional importance.
10. Indicates support for the improved recreational facilities and greater access to the Reserve for the general public.
11. Is supportive of Melbourne Water taking necessary action to ensure the safety of our community and we ask that thorough community consultation and communication is undertaken regarding any future plans or developments for this site.
12. Requests a future report be presented to Council responding to the additional information to be provided by the Victorian Government and Melbourne Water and a further report to respond to Notice of Motion 1058 when the information is made available.

Carried



## 6.2 Activity Reports

### 6.2.1 Environment Quarterly Report

**Responsible GM:** Peter Benazic  
**Author:** Desiree Lovell and Jacqui Kelly

#### **Recommendation(s)**

That Council note this report

#### **Executive Summary**

This report provides a summary of some key projects, services and actions delivering environmental benefits across the work of Council. Projects have been categorised according to the Sustainable Environment Policy (SEP) 2018–28 themes of:

- Biodiversity
- Climate change
- Water
- Waste and resource recovery

The SEP is the roadmap for the future direction of Council's environmental and sustainability strategies, plans and activities.

A similar report will be presented each quarter highlighting new programs or projects that have achieved significant milestones.

#### **Background**

There are a broad range of projects, services and actions delivering environmental benefits throughout the organisation. While many of these occur within or are led by the Assets and Services Division, the vast majority of the organisation is involved in environmental sustainability to some degree. Below is a highlight of some of the key projects currently being undertaken.

All actions fall within the Council Plan 2020–21 under the key performance area of Environment 'we will continue to plan and manage the natural and built environment for present and future generations'.

#### ***Project update***

Projects and updates are included in the attached report.

**Resolution**

Moved Cr Stephanie Davies, seconded Cr Collin Ross.

That Council note this report

Carried

## 6.2.2 Performance and Growth Reports - Q3

### Recommendation(s)

The Performance and Growth Reports for Quarter 3 2020-21 be received and noted.

### Attachments

1. Performance Report 2020-21 [6.2.2.1 - 14 pages]
2. Council Plan Action - Progress Report [6.2.2.2 - 50 pages]
3. Growth Report 2020-21 [6.2.2.3 - 6 pages]

### Executive Summary

Council has committed to undertake work on 131 Council Plan actions during the 2020-21 financial year. 18 actions have already been completed, and 98 actions are on-track to be completed by their due date. There are 15 actions that are currently off-track.

The organisation service request performance for the quarter is 76%, below our target of 90% of service requests completed within service standard. The Customer Support service level (percentage of calls answered within 90 seconds) is 51% for the quarter. This result is better than last quarter, despite a much higher than expected number of calls into the contact centre this quarter, significant amounts of staff training, and a very high level of unplanned leave coinciding with the delivery of animal registration notices.

There are 5 Local Government Performance Reporting Framework (LGPRF) service measures; Animals Reclaimed, Councillor Meeting Attendance, Missed Bins, Planning Application Decisions in 60 Days and Waste Diverted from Landfill, where we have observed some variation in results, while all other metric results remain relatively stable.

Population growth within the Shire has also declined. There are three households moving to the area per day, for the quarter. Subdivision land activity is also slowing, and the construction of sealed roads and footpaths has slowed low due to the reduction in completed estate development.

## Background

### **CEO Report**

Cardinia Shire Council progressed a number of key projects and strategies during the third quarter of 2020–21 while continuing to support our community, deliver essential services and achieve results across all areas of our Council Plan.

### **Shaping the future of Cardinia Shire**

We took significant steps in the development of a new *Community Vision, Council Plan, Financial Plan* and *Council Budget* this quarter. Almost 1,300 community contributions received as part of our Imagine Cardinia first round of consultation in late 2020 were presented to our People's Panel in February. The panel, a representative group of residents who helped guide the development of the plans, developed a survey to check their work and recommendations with the broader community.

We thank everyone who has participated in the community consultation process to date and we look forward to receiving feedback on the draft plans as part of the final round of consultation next quarter. Council is expected to consider the draft plans at its June Council meeting.

### **COVID-19 recovery**

Council is continuing to work hard to support our community in light of the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Members of the COVID-19 Community Recovery Committee are working together towards addressing a range of issues as a result of the pandemic including mental health and social isolation issues, as well as employment and financial insecurity.

### **Advocacy**

Council continues to work with all levels of government to advocate for action on important local issues and to influence government priorities for the benefit of our community. To date this financial year, we have lodged 28 grant applications worth \$29 million for a range of projects. We also continue to work with other groups of councils, such as the South East Melbourne and Interface groups, to facilitate investment in the broader region.

The staged implementation of the *Local Government Act 2020* continues, and the *Gender Equality Act 2020* took effect on 31 March 2021. The latter requires us to measure, report on, plan for and progress gender equality within the organisation, and in the policies, programs and services that we deliver.

### **Infrastructure for a growing shire**

Progress was made on a number of roads projects across the shire this quarter as part of Our Better Local Roads program. Work also continues on a number of key projects; construction of the new pavilion at Comely Banks Recreation Reserve was completed, work started on the Rix Road (Officer South) Integrated Child and Family Centre and we officially opened our first fully-fenced dog park at Don Jackson Reserve, Pakenham.

Further information regarding Council's progress this quarter can be found on the following pages.

### **Carol Jeffs**

Chief Executive Officer  
Cardinia Shire Council

## ***Government Interaction***

### **Government Advocacy**

Council continues to work collaboratively with the State Government in responding to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic and is closely following advice being received while the situation is rapidly evolving.

Our primary concerns are to support the health and wellbeing of our staff and community, and the continuation of essential services.

Council works with all levels of Government to lobby for action on important local issues and works hard to influence government priorities that will benefit our local communities. Council also works with other groups of Councils, such as South East Melbourne and Interface Groups, to facilitate investment into the broader region.

The South East Melbourne Group of Councils is in discussions with both the State and Federal Government in developing a 'City Deal' for the region.

### **Grant applications**

Council continues to rely heavily on rate revenue to fund the provision of infrastructure and services. Due to the Victorian Government's rate cap, Council is limited in the amount of revenue it can achieve through rates and is required to have a strong focus on seeking grants.

So far, this financial year 28 grant applications have been lodged under various programs totalling \$29M for a range of projects.

### **Legislative Program**

The staged implementation of the Local Government Act 2020 continues, a compliance timetable has been prepared to ensure that all policies, plans and new initiatives required will be implemented in accordance with this staged approach. The Audit Committee is monitoring this timetable.

The Gender Equality Act 2020 took effect on 31 March 2021. It requires Council to measure, report on, plan for and progress gender equality in the organisation. Importantly, the Gender Equality Act 2020 requires council to consider gender equality not only in the workforce but in policies, programs and services that the Council delivers.

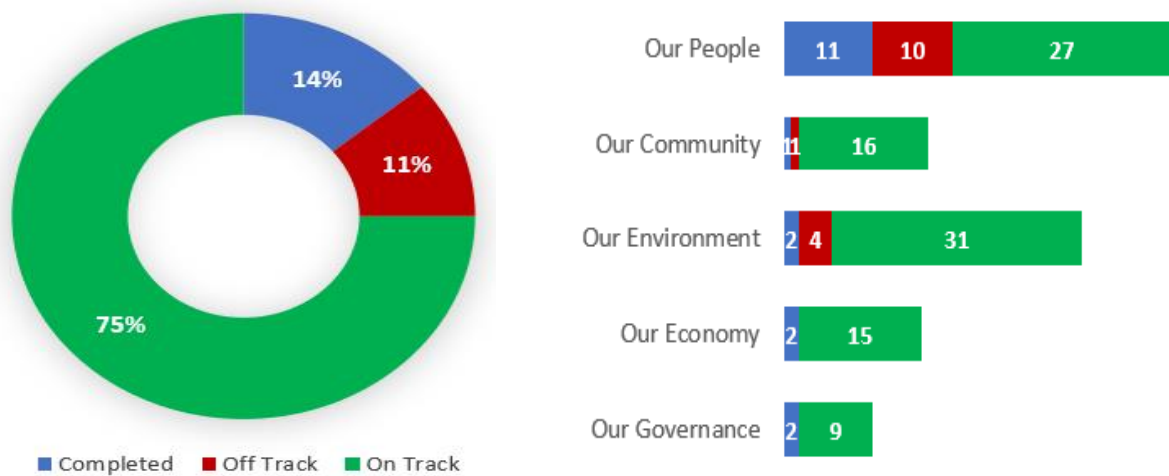
## Performance Summary

### Council Plan Performance

The Council Plan sets out a medium to long-term vision for how Council will respond to community needs and the opportunities and challenges facing Cardinia Shire. Council delivers the plan through a 4-year action plan which covers 5 Key Priority Areas (KPAs). The performance of the 5 KPAs and their Council Plan Actions is illustrated in Figure 1. For a more comprehensive account of the action progress, please refer to the Council Plan Action Progress Report attached.

There are 131 Council Plan actions due to be completed during the 2020-21 financial year, of which 18 actions (14%) have been completed. There are 15 actions (11%) that are currently not on track for delivery by their due dates. Please refer to Table 1 for further details.

**Figure 1. Council Plan Action Performance**



**Table 1. Off-track Council Plan Actions**

#	Action	Business Unit	Executive Comment
2.	1.4.4.1 CP - Finalise the design and start construction of MyPlace.	Buildings and Facilities	Report on recommended contractor for building works will be submitted to Council in April meeting for consideration. Start of construction will be early May 2021. Delay in achieving expected target date has been a combination of COVID impact and in re-working the design of this facility.
3.	1.5.1.6 CP - Start the construction and fit-out for opening of the Cora Lynn Reserve Pavilion.	Buildings and Facilities	No change - This action will remain off-track, as it does not reflect the current stage of this project. This project has had considerable delays, due to lack of appropriate responses from the funding body, impact from COVID19 restrictions and ongoing changing requirements from club committee. The 20/21FY will now see the full and complete design documentation for this project, which is progressing well and is on-track to finish accordingly. The construction stage for this project will commence in the 21/22FY and is expected to be completed in the 12-month period.

#	Action	Business Unit	Executive Comment
4.	1.5.1.3 CP - Complete civil works to enable access to Pepi's Land facilities in Emerald.	Infrastructure Services	Project delayed due to Council finalising designs of the external intersection works. Designs have been submitted to Department of Transport with feedback recently received requiring minor amendments. Tenders are expected to be called to enable works to commence after Easter and be completed by July 2021.
5.	3.1.4.1 CP - Review of Open Space Asset Management Plan	Infrastructure Services	Collating the relevant condition data to support the review of the plans has been further delayed during Covid, in turn delaying the completion of works. The plan is now being completed along with the review of the footpath and bridges asset management plans. Draft versions of these three plans are expected to be completed mid 2021.
6.	3.1.4.2 CP - Review of Road Asset Management Plan and Buildings Asset Management Plan.	Infrastructure Services	These plans have been delayed due to the collection of the relevant condition data which has been further delayed during COVID-19. Development of long-term modelling for building assets has commenced based on the 2019 condition assessments. The road asset plan is estimated for completion in May 2021 while the bridge asset plan is estimated for October.
7.	3.1.4.3 CP - Review of Drainage Asset Management Plan.	Infrastructure Services	The drainage asset management plan is in progress. Current data is being validated and missing information is currently being collected. This asset management plan has been scheduled to be completed following other asset management plans (road, buildings and open space), which have been delayed. The completion of this plan is on track for a scheduled for December 2021.
8.	3.2.1.1 CP - Commence construction of the Lang Lang Bypass from Westernport Road to McDonalds Track, including Milner's Road.	Infrastructure Services	The project has been delayed due to ongoing negotiations with quarry operators. A recent internal review has this project scheduled to commence in the 2022/23 financial year with a review of construction drawings anticipated in 2021/22 to validate the previous plans.
9.	1.5.1.1 CP - Prepare a master plan for Gin Gin Bin Reserve Officer	Active Communities	The project had been delayed, awaiting direction from the Victorian Department of Education and Training and Victorian School Building Authority.

#	Action	Business Unit	Executive Comment
10.	1.5.1.2 CP - Prepare a master plan for McMullen Recreation Reserve Officer	Active Communities	Project delayed due to waiting for land acquisition. Preparation of the McMullen Recreation Reserve master plan is on hold pending settlement of the purchase of land required to create the new reserve.
11.	1.5.1.5 CP - Present options to Council for the potential redevelopment and expansion of Cardinia Life. If approved, proceed with detailed design.	Active Communities	Feasibility study underway for Councillor briefing and Council report June 2021.
12.	1.5.1.6 CP - Complete design for Bunyip Indoor Stadium.	Active Communities	A feasibility analysis of the new site is being undertaken in consultation with the Committee of Management, reserve users and DELWP.
13.	1.5.1.7 CP - Complete the construction and fit-out of the KWR Bowls Club. This project is dependent on external funding confirmation.	Active Communities	The Concept Design for this new facility has been revised in consultation with the user groups. Funding applications have been submitted for the Growing Suburbs Fund 2020/21 Round 2 and Building Better Regions Fund Round 5.
14.	1.5.1.8 CP - Commence the construction and fit-out of the extension of the Bunyip Basketball Stadium. The timing of this project is subject to external funding confirmation.	Active Communities	The Crown Land Reserve Committee of Management has proposed an alternative site for the new Bunyip indoor stadium. A feasibility analysis of the new site will now be undertaken in consultation with the Committee of Management, reserve users and DELWP.
15.	1.5.1.11 CP - Continue to implement recommendations of the Recreation Reserves management and maintenance review.	Active Communities	Community Asset Committees Liaison Officer has commenced. Training session will be delivered in 2021.
16.	2.1.3.5 CP - Continue to develop and implement a Shire-wide Public Art Program which includes both permanent and ephemeral public art outcomes, including the implementation of a new public art commission for Port Ward.	Active Communities	Art concept presented to Lang Lang Traders Association.

### Service Request Performance

Service requests are recorded in Council's Customer Relationship Management System (CRMS) when a request for service is made to Council via an established channel, including telephone, Council's website, and web mail. Each request type is assigned a service standard, which is a target timeframe for completion. The term 'Service Level' refers to the percentage of requests completed within their target timeframe. Council's target Service Level is 90%.



**Organisation Performance:**

The overall Service Level for the organisation for the quarter was 76%, a 5% decrease from the previous quarter. Table 2 illustrates the top 5 service categories by volume and their service level, for the quarter. A focus on improving Service Levels across these service categories is expected to have a strong effect on the overall Service Level for the organisation.

**Table 2. Top 5 Service Request Categories by Volume, and their Service Levels**

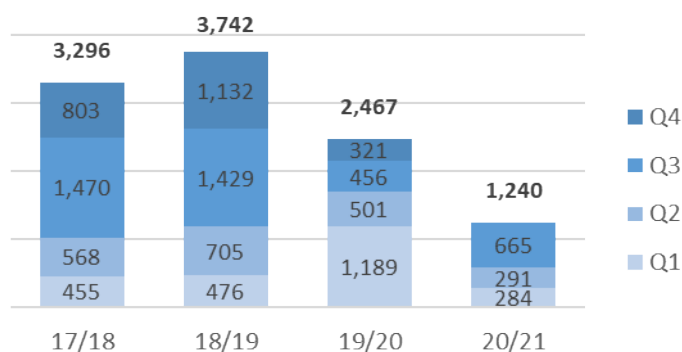
Rank	Service Category	Volume	Service Level	Visual Representation
1	Waste – Kerbside Bin	3,253	80%	[Bar chart showing 80% completion, with a 90% target line]
2	Waste – Kerbside Bin - Order/Cancel Service	1,339	98%	[Bar chart showing 98% completion, with a 90% target line]
3	Trees and vegetation on Public or Council land	703	40%	[Bar chart showing 40% completion, with a 90% target line]
4	Planning	690	90%	[Bar chart showing 90% completion, with a 90% target line]
5	Roads - Unsealed	665	31%	[Bar chart showing 31% completion, with a 90% target line]

**Operations Performance:**

Council maintains a large, unsealed road network. Maintenance works consist of both grading and resheeting done on a cyclic basis, along with response to defects caused by adverse weather conditions such as storms or long dry spells. All works are conducted in accordance with Council’s Road Management Plan, which ensures that the network is kept in a safe and trafficable condition. The number of hours grading roads has decreased by 19% compared to the same time last year. This outcome may be due to more favourable weather conditions this year, a noticeable reduction in traffic volumes due to COVID-19 travel restrictions, and a reduction in customer requests for inspections under the Road Management Plan. These factors combined with the efficiency of Operation’s predictive maintenance program has likely led to this steady result.

The current service level for unsealed road related requests is 31%. This low service level has triggered a review of the unsealed road service area. It has been identified that there has been a concerted effort by management and staff to reduce the number of unsealed road complaints over the past year. This is illustrated in Figure 2 below, where there has been a 42% decrease in the number of unsealed road services requests compared to the same time last year. That is, 1,240 service requests compared to 2,146 the year before. This significant decrease is due to changes in the unsealed road maintenance program enabling roads to be proactively graded before a complaint is lodged.

**Figure 2. Unsealed road service requests due**



Despite this positive result from the proactive maintenance program, only 31% of the 665 service requests that were lodged in quarter 3 were recorded as completed within the service

standard in the CRMS. Unsealed road service requests are recorded initially through the CRMS, however, the work to resolve the service request is handled through the inspection and maintenance management system called Reflect. There is a lag in time between the resolution of the work in Reflect and the subsequent update in the CRMS, resulting in a discrepancy of the in-time completion rate between the two systems. Compounding this issue is the variation of the service standards applied by each system, and this affects the weight that we should put on the current service level being reported through the CRMS.

To improve the confidence in the service level being reported in this area, it will be important to integrate the CRMS and Reflect systems. Integrating the Reflect system with the CRMS should result in a seamless workflow process that delivers accurate reporting of service levels. This integrated solution is complex and will take time to implement, yet the long-term benefits of time and cost efficiencies across Council will ultimately provide a better customer service to our community. This integration project is currently under review, and further details will be provided when available.

Council also maintains over 3000 km of open surface drains. These drains are cleaned out using a maintenance system that is driven by proactive inspections and reactive works and supplemented by responding to flooding issues following storms. Works are prioritised based on risk to property or person.

The number of linear metres of surface drains cleared is 155% higher than the same time last year. This significant increase is due to the availability of resources, a combination of both internal staff and contractors. The number of linear metres of underground drains cleared has decreased by 60% compared to the same time last year. The current service level for drainage related requests is 27%. As the drainage service requests are also managed through the Reflect system, it is expected that the integrated solution will also affect the service level results for this service area.

***Waste Management Performance:***

As the Shire's population continues to grow, the amount of waste generated is also growing. Cardinia Shire Council will continue to take advantage of recent advancements such as newer technologies and improved markets for products, resulting in improved financial outcomes for resource recovery. The impact of drought can also vary the tonnage of green waste recycling due to moisture content from wet or dry years.

The average volume of garbage to landfill per household is 515kg to date this financial year. This is a 6% drop from last year's annual average, a promising result. The amount of garbage waste to landfill is 6% lower than compared to the same time last year. The amount of recycled waste is 40% higher and the amount of green waste is 14% higher, both in comparison to the same time last year. The service level achieved for waste management requests this quarter was 84%, below the organisation's 90% target.

**Customer Support Call Performance**

The organisation's call centre is run by the Customer Support team. As these calls are largely the first interaction our community has with our organisation, it is important that we deliver a positive customer service experience. Monitoring the service level of the call centre is only one of many ways to tap into our customers' experience with Council.

We currently report our Service Level as the percentage of calls that are answered in 90 seconds. At Cardinia, our current Service Level target is 80%. The Service Level for the quarter is 51%, well below the target. The average wait time for a customer in the call queue last quarter was 147 seconds, which is 57 seconds above target. After Call Work Time is the average time taken by Customer Support officers to finalise call details. The result this quarter

was 104 seconds, achieving a reduction in wait time and is below target of 105 seconds. The Abandoned Call rate is 7.79% this quarter, which is above the 3% target.

Despite not reaching many of its performance targets this quarter, the Customer Support team's results showed improvement from last quarter. This result was delivered despite significant unplanned leave across the period when animal registration notices were delivered to residents, and a large amount of staff training that needed to be delivered, due to the implementation of a new telephony system. It is heartening to note that efforts to reduce after call work time have begun to bear fruit, and it is expected that this work will provide a strong base for maintaining efficiency into the future.

### **LGPRF Performance**

The Local Government Performance Reporting Framework (LGPRF) is a platform for key local government service and financial measures. The measures are reported annually in Council Annual Reports and published on the Know Your Council website. A selection of LGPRF service measures that can be reported on a quarterly basis are provided.

Council decisions closed to the public decreased to 3%. There have only been 4 matters considered at meetings closed to the public this year. Due to suspension of Council Meetings during the Election Period and new Council induction, the number of resolutions made at Council Meetings has fallen substantially, and this has adversely affected this statistic. Councillor attendance at meetings is 99%. Maternal and Child Health enrolments and the 4-week Key Ages and Stages (KAS) participation rates remain high. The time taken to action animal requests has increased slightly while the rate of animals reclaimed has dropped to 35%. The percentage of kerbside bins collection missed has increased to 10.74%, a notable increase from the last 3 years of results. At the same time, the percentage of waste diverted from landfill is 49%, a positive result. The percentage of planning applications decided in 60 days has dropped to 60%, primarily as a result of pandemic related disruptions and changes to our internal records management system this financial year. 67% of planning decisions made by Council have been upheld at VCAT. All other metrics remain relatively stable.

### ***Growth Summary***

Residential development activity drives much of the growth in demand for Council's services and facilities. There are 4 main precincts across the Shire in which residential land is currently in development. On 21 January 2021 the structure plan for the Pakenham East Precinct was approved and the development for this new precinct will begin shortly. There are over 19,000 lots still to be developed across the shire, the majority of which being within the Officer and the Pakenham East precincts. Residential land development in the Shire had varied results this quarter. The number of residential subdivision lot applications lodged is 5% higher compared to the same time last year. The number of residential lots issued a statement of compliance is 17% lower compared to the same time last year.

Activity within the property sector can help determine the growth rate within a municipality and therefore assist with future decision making. The number of building permits issued is 12% higher than the same time last year. Residential building completions continued to trend downwards, with 250 residential building completions processed this quarter. The number of residential building completions processed is 27% lower than the same time last year.

A new household garbage service is requested predominantly when a new home has been completed and is ready to be occupied. This indicator can therefore represent the growth of new households within the Shire. The number of new garbage bin requests received is 37% lower than the same time last year. The household growth rate in the Shire has dropped to three households per calendar day for the current financial year.

The Maternal and Child Health statistics are also a lead growth indicator. Birth notices are the number of notifications received from hospitals, for newborn babies in the municipality. There were 465 births in the shire this quarter. Birth notifications are 3% higher than the same time last year. Maternal and Child Health Enrolments include the number of babies and children, from birth to school age, that visit and enrol at an MCH centre, including children of families moving to Cardinia Shire. Enrolments are 3% lower than the same time last year.

The growth of the sealed road and footpath network provides insight into the progress of infrastructure activity within the Shire. Sealed road growth is due to a combination of subdivision development and Council's sealing of unsealed roads through special charge schemes or other external funding such as Roads to Recovery. There were 3.22 KMs of sealed roads constructed this quarter. Sealed road construction is 16% lower than the same time last year. Footpath growth is due to a combination of footpaths constructed from subdivision development and Council's capital works program. There were 5.04 KMs of footpaths constructed this quarter. The length of footpaths constructed is 28% lower than the same time last year. The construction of both sealed roads and footpaths has slowed due to the reduction in completed estate development.

### **Policy Implications**

Nil

### **Relevance to Council Plan**

#### **5.2 Our Governance - Open governance**

5.2.1 Embrace and demonstrate effective governance and transparency, notwithstanding that on occasions, matters under consideration will be confidential.

### **Climate Emergency Consideration**

Not Applicable

### **Consultation/Communication**

Relevant managers and officers, from all divisions across the organisation, provide updates and comments that feed into the Performance and Growth reports.

### **Risk Assessment**

Not Applicable

### **Financial and Resource Implications**

Nil

### **Conclusion**

Council has committed to undertake work on 131 Council Plan actions during the 2020-21 financial year, of which 14% have been completed. The organisation service request Service Level was 76% and the Customer Support call Service Level was 51% for the quarter. The LGPRF service measures results remain relatively stable.

**Resolution**

Moved Cr Stephanie Davies, seconded Cr Jack Kowarzik.

The Performance and Growth Reports for Quarter 3 2020-21 be received and noted.

Carried

## 6.2.3 Quarterly Financial Report

**Responsible GM:** Debbie Tyson  
**Author:** Richard Williams

### Recommendation(s)

That Council:

- Receives and notes the quarterly financial report for the period 1 July 2020 to 31 March 2021.
- Notes that the Chief Executive Officer, as required under Section 97(3) of the Local Government Act 2020, is of the opinion a revised budget is not required.

### Attachments

1. Financial Performance Report [6.2.3.1 - 18 pages]
2. Capital Works Report [6.2.3.2 - 11 pages]
3. Income Statement and Balance Sheet Glossary [6.2.3.3 - 3 pages]

### Executive Summary

This report summarises Council's financial performance for the nine months ended 31 March 2021.

### Background

The report is broken into a number of parts highlighting various components of Council's financial performance and includes the following financial statements:

- Income Statement – Analysed by income, expenditure and non-recurrent Items. A favourable budget variance is reported where actual income exceeds budget or actual expenditure is less than budget. An unfavourable budget variance is reported where actual income is less than budget or actual expenditure exceeds budget.
- Balance Sheet;
- Cashflow Statement; and
- Capital Works.

Also included is a summary of the COVID-19 impacts on the 2020-21 income statement and performance against the Victorian Auditor General's Office (VAGO) financial sustainability indicators.

### Policy Implications

Nil

### Relevance to Council Plan

#### 5.3 Our Governance - Long-term financial sustainability

5.3.3 Manage the municipality's finances and assets in a responsible way.

## Climate Emergency Consideration

Nil

## Consultation/Communication

Finance Business Partners within the Finance business unit meet monthly with Business Unit Managers to discuss their year-to-date progress against the budget for both the Operating and Capital Works programs. Results of these discussions provide input to the completion of the Monthly Financial Performance and Capital Works reports for further discussion with the relevant General Manager and at a monthly Capital Monitoring meeting of Senior Leadership Team members, Managers and Finance. These reports are subsequently presented monthly to the Senior Leadership Team and quarterly to Audit Committee and Council.

## Financial and Resource Implications

The analysis undertaken as part of the Financial Performance and Capital Works reports is based on the differences between the 2020-21 budget adopted in June 2020 and actual results as at 31 March 2021.

The adjusted underlying result at the end of March is a surplus of \$2.5m, which is \$5.7m favourable to the year-to-date budgeted deficit of (\$3.1m). The adjusted surplus excludes capital income and other abnormals, but includes recurrent capital grants. The unadjusted result is a surplus of \$56.6m, which is \$6.3m favourable to the year-to-date budgeted surplus of \$50.3m.

At the end of March, total income is \$3.9m favourable. Non-cash development levies are \$15.4m favourable, but have been offset by non-cash capital contributions which are (\$14.9m) unfavourable. Cash development levies are also currently unfavourable by (\$4.1m). Operating grant and capital grant revenue are \$4.1m and \$4.5m favourable respectively, partly due to recognition this financial year of grants received last financial year and recognition of unbudgeted grants. The major unbudgeted operating grants are for Working for Victoria, Sleep Settling Initiative, Recycling Processing and Peri Urban Project. The major unbudgeted capital grants are for the Princes Highway shared pathway, Local Councils Outdoor Eating & Entertainment Package and Comely Banks Recreation Reserve sport fields and car parks projects.

Expenditure is \$2.4m favourable. Employee benefits are \$1.3m favourable, mainly as a result of vacant positions within the organisation, planned delayed recruitment, and reduced overtime. Materials & services expenditure is \$1.1m favourable, primarily due to permanent and timing variances in contract payments and other major items of expenditure, including recreation reserve grants and community asset committee expenditure, partly offset by expensed capital works costs. Other expenses are also \$1.1m favourable, mainly due to timing. Depreciation expense is (\$1.4m) unfavourable primarily due to a one-off adjustment for drainage depreciation following an external review of drainage assets.

Detailed variance analysis is included in the attached Financial Performance report.

The year-end result forecast as at the end of March is an adjusted underlying surplus of \$3.7m, which is \$4.3m favourable to the adopted budget adjusted underlying deficit of (\$585k). The unadjusted result is forecast to be \$453k favourable to the adopted budget, with income forecast to be (\$1.7m) unfavourable and expenditure \$2.1m favourable.

Combined non-cash capital contributions and development levies are forecast to be \$1.5m favourable to budget, with capital contributions (\$15.0m) unfavourable and development



levies \$16.5m favourable. Cash development levies are forecast to be (\$4.9m) unfavourable. Operating grants are forecast to be \$3.4m favourable mainly due to recognition of unbudgeted grants. Rates and charges income is forecast to be \$385k favourable and cash contributions \$233k favourable.

These are partly offset by income forecasts under budget for: interest income (\$1.0m) due to lower interest rates; other revenue (\$509k) primarily due to lower cost recovery income; statutory fees & fines (\$383k) mainly due to the impact of COVID-19; and user fees (\$154k), also mainly due to the impact of COVID-19.

Materials and services and employee benefits expenditure are forecast to be \$1.8m and \$634k favourable, respectively. Other expenses are forecast to be \$280k favourable, and Finance costs \$126k favourable. These are partly offset by depreciation expense which is forecast to be (\$822k) unfavourable, mainly due to a one-off adjustment for drainage.

The total cash balance at the end of March 2021 is \$103.0m, which is \$26.5m more than budget due to a higher than anticipated cash holding at 30 June 2020, but nevertheless is (\$766k) lower than as at the end of June 2020. Council cash, which is \$6.3m higher, has been offset by DCP cash being (\$7.0m) lower. A total cash surplus at 31 March of \$6.9m is after external restrictions on cash of \$63.7m and intended allocations of \$32.4m. Council is currently forecasting a total cash balance including total financial assets of \$101.1m at 30 June 2021 compared to a budget of \$91.6m.

Total capital works project expenditure to 31 March 2021 is \$37.2m, which is (\$12.3m) lower than at the same time last year and (\$11.2m) lower than the year-to-date budget. The combined forecast capital works expenditure for 2020-21 of \$72.5m and carryover to 2021-22 of \$13.0m is \$3.1m lower than full year budget adjusted for actual carry-overs from 2019-20. Land assets projecting a forecast saving of \$3.0m, this is due to the accounting treatment of land recognition in prior year, but payment being made in current financial year. Further variance details are included in the attached Capital Works report.

Council has committed approximately 76% of the expenditure \$88.6m full year budget as at 31 March 2021, with 42% actually spent. Key projects to which Council has committed funds include: Comely Banks Recreation Reserve, Emerald netball building works completed in defects/maintenance stage, land acquisitions, plant replacement, Sealing the Hills program, works on footpaths replacement, bridges replacement/upgrade, roads resealing, unsealed roads resheeting program, and Gembrook Reserve.

Council was successful in receiving unbudgeted grant funding of \$0.99m for the Princes Highway (South Side) shared pathway, with \$999k from DCP funds to deliver the program. Council also received Local Sports Infrastructure funding from DJPER of \$0.86m and Off Leash dog parks funding of \$0.27m.

Further details are included in the attached Financial Performance Report and Capital Works Report.

## Conclusion

It is appropriate that Council receives and notes the quarterly financial report for the period 1 July 2020 to 31 March 2021.

**Resolution**

Moved Cr Stephanie Davies, seconded Cr Jack Kowarzik.

That Council:

- Receives and notes the quarterly financial report for the period 1 July 2020 to 31 March 2021.
- Notes that the Chief Executive Officer, as required under Section 97(3) of the Local Government Act 2020, is of the opinion a revised budget is not required.

Carried

## 6.2.4 Major Projects Report

**Responsible GM:** Peter Benazic

**Author:** Ben Wood, Kristen Jackson, and Walter Carmignani

### Recommendation(s)

That Council note this report.

### Attachments

1. Major Projects Report [6.2.4.1 - 11 pages]

### Executive Summary

As part of the reporting process to Council, this monthly report provides an update of the status of major projects in progress. It includes an update on major projects, capital works, special charge schemes and asset management current at the time of this report.

### Background

Projects and updates are included in the attached report

### Relevance to Council Plan

#### 3.1 Our Environment - Provision and maintenance of assets on a life-cycle basis

3.1.1 Maintain all Council roads and supporting infrastructure in accordance with the *Road Management Act 2004*.

3.1.2 Develop new and maintain existing parks, gardens and reserves in a sustainable way.

3.1.3 Provide accessible facilities to meet identified community needs.

3.1.4 Manage Council's assets like roads, drainage, footpaths and buildings, etc. in a way that ensures they are adequately maintained over their life.

#### 3.2 Our Environment - Transport linkages connecting towns

3.2.1 Upgrade Council roads to improve safety while considering the traffic demand of the community.

3.2.2 Continue the use of special charge schemes to finance road, drainage and footpath improvement programs.

3.2.4 Prioritise multi-use pathways, where practicable, to create networks that connect destinations.

### Conclusion

This regular activity report (as attached) is provided for Councillor's information

**Resolution**

Moved Cr Graeme Moore, seconded Cr Carol Ryan.

That Council note this report.

Carried

## 7 Reports Or Minutes Of Committees

The Mayor advised that minutes had recently been received from Committees and Briefing sessions and they were available for any interested Councillors.

## 8 Reports By Delegates

Cr Davies advised that the Cardinia Access and Inclusion Committee will have further commitment with a Council appointed officer to assist with community engagement. Cr Davies attended the 2021 Community Leadership Program with Cr Kowarzik and interacted with young members of the Cardinia community.

Cr Radford acknowledged that it is the start of National Volunteer Week and thanked the various volunteers of the community. Cr Radford also spoke to the Cardinia Community Recovery Committee that met as part of Cardinia's COVID19 response. Cr Radford spoke to the benefits of the 2021 Community Leadership Program that she had participated in, in previous years.

Cr Kowarzik advised that he attended the Ash Wednesday Bushfire Education Centre with Cr Radford and thanked the volunteers of the Centre who run the location. The Pakenham Art Show Opening Night will be on the 28<sup>th</sup> of May and asked for members of the community to attend. Cr Kowarzik advised of the upcoming Volunteer Reception and Stan Henwood awards.

Cr Ryan advised of the 4th Anniversary of the Women's Friendship Cafe in Pakenham. Cr Ryan attended a recent ANZAC Service and then spent time at the Pakenham RSL talking with veterans. She also visited, with Cr Ross the Cardinia Recreation Reserve where an Australia vs New Zealand rugby game was held.

Cr Ross advised that he went on a tour with the General Manager Infrastructure and Environment to inspect various matters in Pakenham.

The Mayor advised that he was looking forward to the upcoming Volunteer's reception. He also advised that the RedCross is coming to Pakenham and requested people make a booking to donate blood. The Mayor attended the Football game, with Councillor Springfield between Emerald and Gembrook for ANZAC Day. The Mayor also attended the Men's Shed Cluster Meeting for West and South Gippsland in Beaconsfield Upper. The Mayor also participated in the Online Heritage Festival created by the Casey Cardinia Local History Group and advised it was recorded for interested persons to view.

## 9 Presentation Of Petitions

Nil.

## 10 Notices of Motion

Nil.

## 11 Community Questions

The Mayor advised that Council had received one Question from Jennifer O'Brien.

The question read:

***What action has been taken to reinstate a fully operational Maternal and Child Health Service? When can we expect the service to be provided?***

The General Manager Liveable Communities responded with:

*Thank you Ms O'Brien for your question that was submitted to Council on 21 April 2021.*

*Cardinia Shire Council is in the process of transitioning post-COVID, to full service Maternity & Child Health for families, which includes exploring a number of strategies to increase the MCH workforce.*

*From 1st May all appointments are now available.*

The Mayor advised that Council had received two Questions from Rosa Santo:

- 1. What is the percentage of income from rates (not total revenue) that is required to fund all staff costs, salaries, wages, labour contracts, like sports administration, pools, basket, superannuation, and other costs. Including specialist staff on retainers such as legal professionals, and town consultant.***

The Acting Executive Manager Office of the CEO responded with:

The total Council employee costs as a percentage of total Council rates and charges (including the cost recovery based garbage charge, which is substantially driven by the State Govt Landfill Levy) is forecast at 41.92% for the Financial year ending 30 June 2021 and 42.74% Financial year ending 30 June 2022.

- 2. How many light vehicles are currently available to council staff, and please identify the number allocated to staff as full private usage and how many Fuel cards are issued to staff?**

The General Manager Infrastructure and Environment Responded with:

We have 103 light vehicles in the fleet of which 56 staff have private use and fuel cards (54.3%)

The Mayor advised that Council had received one Question from Tony Miller:

***What is the councils doing to adopt and enforce compliance with the council's "POINTER BOARD SIGNS POLICY" as drafted by Compliance Services in 2020?***

The General Manager Infrastructure and Environment Responded with:

During 2020, Compliance Services officers proposed changes to the use of pointer boards, and sought feedback from real estate agents. Some of the changes proposed would have required changes to the Local Law, and it was the intention to incorporate necessary changes into a review of the Local Law that was expected during 2020. The full review of the Local Law did not proceed, due to the pandemic.

However, the feedback of real estate agents has been of great assistance, and will form the basis of recommendations when the review of the Local Law is completed in the second half of 2021. This may involve some changes in respect of the use of pointer boards. Real estate agents will have a further opportunity to express their views about pointer board use (both supportive of them, or not) as part of the Local Law review in the second half of 2021.

The Mayor advised that Council had received one Question from Elissa Smith:

***As someone who has grown in the area and works as an aquatic educator in the area for 30 years why isn't the Beaconsfield Reservoir your responsibility to manage just like Emerald lake is . I am also curious as to why this council and listed stakeholders in the previous and future management of the Beaconsfield Reservoir haven't engaged with the Registered Aboriginal Group the Wurundjeri Woi Wurung for their knowledge of the area. I have recently discovered my own hidden connection to the First Nations people of the area and feel that issue of repairing the wall to maintain the water level has not had the full consultative engagement with the RAP or the community to just allow Melbourne water to remove such a valuable asset to the Cardinia shire. The water needs to stay as it is to maintain the ecology that has now developed there. This is a social, environmental, historical, educational and cultural gem that ALL stakeholders should be party to.***

The General Manager Infrastructure and Environment Responded with:

Council Officers recognise the value of the BCNR and the associated ecology. The BCNR is responsibility of the State Government and managed by DELWP, Emerald Lake Park is a council responsibility and forms part of our extensive open space network.

The RAP consultation occurred with all traditional owner groups linked to Cardinia, along with local community members.

In the case of The Beaconsfield Reservoir is managed by DELWP and falls out of the scope of the RAP's reach.

Officers will provide your question to DELWP for a response.



The Mayor advised that Council had received one Question from Cheryl Billing Smith:

*I do not believe it is at all reasonable for Councillors to suggest that decisions about the fate of the BNCR are not theirs to make. The BNCR is crown land, it is owned by us all. It may be managed by MW and DEWLP on behalf of all Victorians, however it is not theirs to own. Surely the BNCR is a valuable part of the Cardinia Bio Link. There are many community groups and individuals in Cardinia who wish this Reserve to be saved, and secured for its heritage and its beauty and for our enjoyment. What are Councils plans in relation to securing the historical BNCR for the benefit of all residents and ratepayers, and the flora and fauna that call it home?*

The General Manager Infrastructure and Environment Responded with:

The officers consider the BNCR as an important regional Reserve. It is the officers understanding that DELWP have the intention for the land to continue to be set aside as a nature reserve. Officers have indicated to Melbourne Water that further community consultation is required.

The officers have a preference that the State Government opens the reserve to the community and funds the ongoing maintenance activities given that it is likely to be of regional importance.

In relation to Councils Draft Biolinks Plan, the plan identifies the BNCR as a 'node', defined as 'a cluster of patches of vegetation considered to be crucial to supporting biodiversity and maintain landscape connectivity for a broad range of animal types'.

## 12 Urgent Business

### 12.1 Major Projects Report

The Mayor, Cr Owen called for a motion to admit an item as urgent business.

Carried Cr Jack Kowarzik, seconded Cr Stephanie Davies.

Carried.

#### **Item 12.1 - Urgent business to address the recent road fatalities within Cardinia Shire.**

This week, is National Road Safety Week.

Last week, our region – the area of Cardinia, Casey and Greater Dandenong - passed the grim and un-enviable milestone of 20 fatalities on its roads this year.

In addition to those who lost their lives in this period, another 271 community members sustained serious injuries from road incidents.

12 of those fatalities were in Cardinia Shire.

12 of those fatalities were on arterial roads.

NONE of those fatalities are acceptable in our community.

These are staggering and sorrowful numbers. And we know they are not just numbers. Any death from a road accident is too many for our community.

Our sincerest thoughts and condolences are with the families and friends of those who have lost a loved one.

As a council, we can - and do – support and undertake a range of programs and initiatives towards improving road safety in our shire.

This includes:

- Road safety and speed awareness campaigns
- Programs such as Looking After our Mates, Learner Driver Programs, and bike education
- Driver expo events, including the upcoming Senior's Driver Expo
- Ongoing joint operations with Victoria Police, including the 'Act Safe - Stay Safe' program
- School and student road safety education programs
- A range of road improvement works to council roads through our Better Local Roads program
- And advocating for further upgrades to arterial and major roads that will improve road safety for our community.

But, despite these efforts, road trauma is still an unacceptable and tragic presence in our community.

So, this National Road Safety Week, not only does Council support the road safety week pledge to “Drive so others survive” but I strongly encourage everyone in our community to take the pledge – to drive safely – to keep yourselves and others safe on the road.

I would also like to move the following motion: “That Council reaffirms its commitment to working, and advocating where necessary, towards improving road safety in Cardinia and that council officers explore how we can best respond to and support road safety initiatives with a report to be presented to Council that includes proposed actions for council’s consideration in regard to increasing awareness of road safety in Cardinia Shire”.

**National Road Safety Week Pledge:**

I pledge to drive as if my loved ones are on the road ahead.

I will remove all distractions and never use my mobile phone while driving.

I will not put other people at risk by speeding, driving while tired or under the influence of alcohol/drugs.

I will protect all vulnerable road users, especially those whose job places them in harm’s way, by slowing down and giving them the space they need to be safe.

**Resolution**

Moved Cr Brett Owen, seconded Cr Stephanie Davies.

That Council reaffirms its commitment to working, and advocating where necessary, towards improving road safety in Cardinia and that council officers explore how we can best respond to and support road safety initiatives with a report to be presented to Council that includes proposed actions for council's consideration in regard to increasing awareness of road safety in Cardinia Shire.

Carried

**13 Councillor Questions**

Nil.

**14 Meeting Closure**

Meeting closed at 09:12 pm.

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Minutes confirmed  
Chairman