

MINUTES

Meeting of Council

Held at the
Civic Centre
511 Burwood Highway
Wantirna South
On

Monday 29 September 2025



The Agenda for the Meeting of Council, Monday 29 September 2025, forms part of these Minutes and is attached in full at the end of the Minutes.

These Minutes are considered draft until adopted and confirmed at the next Meeting of Council.

The meeting commenced at 7:00pm.

PRESENT:

Cr Lisa Cooper (Mayor)	Scott Ward
Cr Glen Atwell (Deputy Mayor)	Tirhatuan Ward
Cr Chris Duncan	Collier Ward
Cr Robert Williams	Dinsdale Ward
Cr Meagan Baker	Dobson Ward
Cr Parisa Considine	Friberg Ward
Cr Peter Lockwood	Baird Ward
Cr Susan Pearce	Taylor Ward
Cr Paige Kennett	Chandler Ward
Bruce Dobson	Chief Executive Officer
Grant Thorne	Director – Infrastructure
Jonathan McNally	Acting Director - City Livability
Judy Chalkley	Director – Connected Communities
Matt Kelleher	Interim Director - Customer and Performance
Navec Lorkin	Chief Financial Officer
Andrew Dowling	Manager, Governance and Risk
Saskia Weerheim	Head of Governance

THE MEETING OPENED WITH A STATEMENT OF ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND A STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT

Council acknowledges the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people and Bunurong people of the Kulin Nation as Traditional Custodians of the land, and meets on the traditional lands of the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people. We pay our respects to elders both past and present.

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1 Apologies And Requests For Leaves Of Absence

Nil.

2 Declarations Of Conflict Of Interest

Nil.

3 Confirmation Of Minutes

The Chairperson, Councillor Lisa Cooper invited Councillors to raise any opposition to the Minutes of the Meeting of Council held on Monday 25 August 2025. There being none, the Chairperson declared the Minutes be confirmed.

4 Presentations, Petitions And Memorials

NATIONAL POLICE REMEMBRANCE DAY

The Chairperson acknowledged that today is National Police Remembrance Day noting the following:

On 29 September every year, Australia marks National Police Remembrance Day, an opportunity for our nation to honour the lives and service of fallen police officers who have made the ultimate sacrifice while on duty, or as a result of their duties.

It is appropriate that we pause for a moment to pay tribute to their courage, commitment, and dedication, and to acknowledge the ongoing service of those who protect our community each and every day.

This year's reflections feel particularly close, as we recently acknowledged the tragic loss of police officers at Porepunkah. Their passing reminds us, in the most sobering way, of the risks and challenges that police officers willingly face in the service of our communities.

National Police Remembrance Day is not only an opportunity to honour those who have died, but also a time to extend our respect and gratitude to their families, colleagues, and the wider policing community. We recognise the enduring grief carried by loved ones, and the impact such losses have on those who continue to serve with courage and commitment despite the risks.

On behalf of Council, we express our deep appreciation to all police officers for their service, their bravery, and their commitment to the safety and wellbeing of our community.

MEMORIAL - ED LEMARCHAND

Councillor Pearce extended Council's condolences to the wife and family of Ed Lemarchand who recently passed away.

Councillor Pearce highlighted that Ed was a well-loved and active member of the Rowville Men's Shed and joined in 2014. Councillor Pearce noted she spoke to him when the Men's Shed presented to Council.

Ed was an active member of the Rowville Men's Shed and he was described by Councillor Pearce as a true gentleman with a witty sense of humour who will be sadly missed.

MEMORIAL - GRAEME McEWIN

Councillor Pearce extended Council's condolences to the family of Graeme McEwin OAM who recently passed away peacefully surrounded by his family on 27 August 2025 after a long illness.

Councillor Pearce outlined that Graeme:

- Was a long term resident of Rowville with his wife Maureen and was an active member of the Rowville Uniting Church and the Liberal Party.
- Supported the Melbourne Football Club and was the Chairman of the Rowville-Ferntree Gully Bendigo Bank.
- Was recognised for his tireless volunteer work in 2016 when he was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia for his services to the Rowville community. His generosity will be remembered for years to come.

Councillor Pearce conveyed Council's condolences to Graeme's wife, 4 children (Glynis, David, Andrew and Iain) and 10 grandchildren.

5 Reports By Councillors

5.1 Councillor Baker

Councillor Baker reported attending the following:

- 1st Ferntree Gully ARAP meeting
- Ferntree Gully Cemetery Masterplan Onsite Engagement with Officers from the Governance team, Cr Pearce and Cr Duncan
- Special Olympics Australia Eastern Ranges Bocce Fundraising Night at the Knox Italian Club
- Knox Active Ageing Committee Meeting
- Ray Priestly Awards Night for the Ferntree Gully Football and Netball Club
- Knox Scouts ARAP Meeting
- Knox Historical Society Annual General Meeting at Ambleside
- Municipal Association Victoria Masterclass - Councillor's Role in CEO Performance Masterclass

5.2 Councillor Kennett

Councillor Kennett reported attending the following:

- 'Food is Free' Project Annual General Meeting which provides free locally grown food for residents.
- The Basin Wildcats Basketball 50th Anniversary Event.
- Meeting with Transit Police with Cr Duncan, Cr Lockwood and the Director Infrastructure to discuss antisocial behaviour near the Boronia Train Station, noting that work between Council officers and Transit Police to improve safety around the station is continuing, and work to upgrade the station is about to commence.
- The Boronia Basin Newspaper Event with Cr Lockwood where bound copies of the last 4 years of The Basin-Boronia Newspaper were donated with Boronia Library.
- Knox Environment Advisory Committee Meeting.
- Meeting with residents to discuss antisocial behaviour and a rise in crime and graffiti in The Basin.
- Meeting with The Basin Temple and Council Traffic and Transport staff to discuss safety improvements at the site.

- Meeting with Boronia Police officers with the Acting Director City Liveability and Council officers to look at strengthening Council's relationship with Boronia Police. Councillor Kennett also:
- Advised residents to report any suspicious behaviour and take precautions in locking doors, windows and entrances to houses to prevent opportunistic crime.
- Received enquiries from residents regarding graffiti, parking issues, fines and questions regarding the Domestic Animal Management Plan.
- Also received a number of enquiries and complaints about the current kindergarten enrolment process which is being investigated for improvements.

5.3 Councillor Atwell

Councillor Atwell reported attending the following:

- Sharespace Spring Market at Arcadia Reserve in Rowville which was a great form of community engagement with hundreds in attendance. Cr Atwell thanked volunteers and stallholders for bringing the Market to life with food trucks (such as Cypriot Street Grill and Sundays and Chill Soft Serve), the Lizard Wizard who brought snakes and turtles, live music, Angi Craft Creations, Izzy Bicky Dog Treats, Rowville Swim School and Rowville Hawks Junior Football Club.
- Wellington Village Grand Final Community Celebration which was well attended with presence from the Rowville CFA, Rowville and Lysterfield Rotary Club. There was a sausage sizzle, cupcake decorating and face painting along with artwork from Rowville Primary School.
- Opening of the new Yarning Circle built by students at the West Campus of Rowville Secondary College with a fantastic Smoking Ceremony led by Indigenous Elder, Perry Wandin. The Yarning Circle will serve as a place to share wisdom and knowledge for students and staff.
- National Citizenship Day on 17 September with 280 new Australian citizens, attended by Mary Doyle MP, Daniela De Martino MP, Assistant Minister for Citizenship Julian Hill and Cr Peter Lockwood, noting the delight of seeing the smiling faces of families who have chosen Knox and Australia as their home.

Councillor Atwell also:

- Congratulated Rowville Primary School who had two sold-out nights of their School Production 'Moana Jnr' at the Drum Theatre in Dandenong, with The Hon Kim Wells MP in attendance.
- Congratulated Scoresby Football Club for winning the Division 3 Grand Final in the Eastern Football Netball League for back-to-back flags, congratulating Coach Craig McKenzie and captain Tim De Geest, along with the Rowville Hawks Reserves winning their Premiership.

5.4 Councillor Considine

Councillor Considine reported attending the following:

- Opening of the Recreation for All Expo alongside volunteers from the Knox Disability Advisory Committee, Active Aging Advisory Committee, senior exercise park champions and stallholders at Carrington Park Leisure Centre which provides recreational and leisure activities in Knox for people of all ages and abilities to foster community connection, health and wellbeing.
- Knox Churches Soccer and Cricket Clubs Volunteer Thank You Dinner to recognise and celebrate the contributions of their passionate volunteers.
- Knox Baseball Club Grand Finals with 3 senior flags, 2 junior flags and 2 junior runners-up results for teams within Knox.
- Knox Active Ageing and Advisory Committee Meeting with Cr Baker where the Knox Draft Mobility Access and Action Plan were presented. The Draft Plan aims to create a safer and more connected community - the presentation was engaging and insightful.

5.5 Councillor Duncan

Councillor Duncan reported attending the following:

- Knox Recreation and Leisure Sub-Committee Meeting with Cr Atwell.
- Ferntree Gully Cemetery Masterplan Community Engagement Event with Cr Pearce and Cr Baker.
- 'Recreation For All' Expo at Carrington Leisure Centre to speak to clubs; noting the Special Olympic Swimming Squad attended with a raft of medals.
- Meeting with officers to look at the options regarding a pavilion upgrade at Templeton Reserve.
- Public Speaking Event at the Youth Advisory Committee Meeting with Cr Williams.
- Meeting with Jackson Taylor MP to discuss sporting club funding arrangements.
- Wantirna South Junior Football Club Best and Fairest Awards with Jackson Taylor MP.

Councillor Duncan also:

- Noted that Carrington Park and Rowville Leisure Centre are hosting basketball clinics with basketballs donated by the Ferntree Gully Falcons Basketball Club.

5.6 Councillor Williams

Councillor Williams reported attending the following:

- Knox Junior Football Club Presentation Day, with exciting news regarding the growth of teams.
- Youth Advisory Committee Meeting.

- Meeting with the Executive of the Eastern Football Netball League.
- Bayswater Library Opening, praising the work of the Connected Communities team.
- Orana Neighbourhood House Annual General Meeting.
- ARAP Rowville Scouts Meeting with Cr Pearce and Cr Baker.
- Bayswater Strikers Junior Presentation Night, presenting the Club Member of the Year award to Allan Clark at this growing club.
- Knox Historical Society Annual General Meeting with Cr Cooper, Cr Baker and Cr Pearce to look at their new merchandise.
- Eastern Football Netball League Final at Bayswater Oval with Cr Lockwood where Balwyn won the Premier Division Grand Final.
- Meeting with CHAMPION representatives Martina and Manager Nicole Seymour (former Councillor).

Councillor Williams also:

- Noted he has received parks requests from residents which have been passed to the Director Infrastructure.
- Noted the daylight robbery at Fran's Bakery, highlighting growing concerns about local crime, with several similar incidents reported in Studfield in recent months. Acknowledged the work of The Hon Kim Wells MP who will be soon be stepping down as the Member for Rowville.
- Acknowledged the 10 years of public service of Jackson Taylor MP.

5.7 Councillor Lockwood

Councillor Lockwood reported attending the following:

- Boronia Basin Newspaper Event presentation where bound copies of the last 4 years of The Basin-Boronia Newspaper was launched. Meeting with Transit Police at Boronia Police Station to discuss issues such as young offenders.
- Your Library Board Meeting.
- National Citizenship Day with Mary Doyle MP, Daniela De Martino MP and the Assistant Minister for Citizenship, Julian Hill.
- Environment Advisory Committee Meeting which included a presentation and lively discussions.
- Eastern Transport Coalition Meeting which is finalising advocacy submissions to the Government
- ANZAC underground train station.
- Eastern Affordable Housing Alliance Meeting which is forming advocacy for affordable housing.
- Knox Arts and Culture Advisory Committee Meeting.

- Meeting with the Eastern Raptors Rugby League team regarding break-ins where offenders have used wheelie bins to conceal and remove stolen items. Meeting with local residents to discuss the Domestic Animal Management Plan.
- Premier Division Eastern Football Netball League Grand Final.

Councillor Lockwood also:

- Noted he is looking forward to the opening of the new metropolitan underground train lines.
- Congratulated the Melbourne Storm and Brisbane Lions for their football success.
- Congratulated Kim Wells MP and Jackson Taylor MP for their service, recognising that he was the first opponent of Kim in 1992.

5.8 Councillor Pearce

Councillor Pearce reported attending the following:

- Knox Audit and Risk Committee Meeting, with our new member, Suzie Thoroval.
- Rowville Knights Gala Dinner at the Rowville Italian Club. Rowville Knights continues to grow with boys and girls teams. Councillor Pearce congratulated the Committee and John Boccari for the Volunteers Award being named in his honour.
- Meeting with the Rowville Hawks Junior Football Club to discuss maintenance and lighting concerns at Seebeck Hall and the Number 2 Reserve.
- Ferntree Gully Cemetery Masterplan Community Engagement, which is a fantastic historical Cemetery.
- Rowville Quarry Community Reference Group.
- Rowville Scouts ARAP with Cr Williams, Cr Baker, The Hon Kim Wells MP and Jackson Taylor MP; recognising the meetings of scout members from all over the world where Rowville members attended.
- Knox Historical Society Annual General Meeting with Cr Baker, Cr Williams, and Cr Cooper.

Councillor Pearce also:

- Encouraged people to attend a Rowville Quarry Safari Open Day on 16 November 2025 with face painting and consultation regarding the quarry.
- Noted she had been contacted by former Councillor Tony Kamitsis who raised issues relating to Council arborists, street sweeper frequency, trees and the representation of Taylor Ward members on Committees which have been referred to Council officers.
- Noted there have been complaints regarding parking, trees and waste collection, including rubbish being left over her own yard which has been reported and is widespread in Taylor Ward.

5.9 Councillor Cooper

Councillor Cooper reported attending the following:

- 'Feed One Feed All' event hosted by Lillie Giang, acknowledging the amount of work undertaken by the team and the level of resources, volunteers and spacing needed to serve a vast number of people in the community.
- Knox Historical Society 60th Annual General Meeting with Cr Williams, Cr Baker and Cr Pearce, noting they received a small grant from the State Government for digital scanning.
- Municipal Association of Victoria Masterclass: Councillor's Role in CEO Performance Masterclass with Cr Baker.

Councillor Cooper also:

- Noted the Opening of the Knox Seniors Festival is coming up at Carrington Park Leisure Centre on 1 October.
- Acknowledged the Public Budget submissions are coming up on 1 October.
- Outlined that Inflatable World will be operating out of the State Basketball Centre.
- Acknowledged that upcoming consultations will be held in October where participation and feedback can be booked through Council's 'Have Your Say' online portal, including engagement on the following:
 - Community Signage on Councils Open Spaces Policy
 - Draft Domestic Animal Management Plan
 - Marie Wallace Playground
 - Ferntree Gully Train Station Shared Path options
 - Draft Mobility Access and Action Plan
 - Draft Stormwater Asset Management Plan (closing soon)
 - Draft Road Management Plan (closing soon)
- Acknowledged the years of service from The Hon Kim Wells MP and Jackson Taylor MP in the Knox community.

6 Planning Matters

6.1 Report of Planning Applications Decided Under Delegation 1 August 2025 to 31 August 2025

SUMMARY

Details of planning applications considered under delegation are referred for information. It is recommended that the items be noted.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council note the planning applications decided under 1 August 2025 to 31 August 2025 as set out in the officer report.

RESOLUTION

MOVED: Councillor Williams

SECONDED: Councillor Baker

That Council note the planning applications decided under 1 August 2025 to 31 August 2025 as set out in the officer report.

CARRIED

7 Public Question Time

Question Time commenced at 7:40pm.

The following questions were raised with Council:

7.1.1 Question One - Ashlley Morgan-Shae

Why has the Knox Domestic Animal Management Plan (DAMP) Agenda 8 Sept 2025, not included the scientific evidence on Community Cat Programs, which was in the public submissions emailed from residents' group Knox AdvoCats, and from The Australian Pet Welfare Foundation?

The Australian Pet Welfare Foundation is the peak research body and advocate for pet welfare in Australia, specialising in evidence-based solutions to prevent euthanasia of healthy and treatable companion-animals in shelters and pounds, and the associated mental-health damage to staff and community residents.

Wherever Community Cat Programs (CCP) are used in Australia, they prove to be effective, low-cost, and saving many animals' lives - including wildlife, and also preventing harm to human lives.

Banyule ran a Community Cat Program for eight years during 2013 to 2021 - successfully decreasing cat intake: by 66%, euthanasia: 82%, complaints: 51% in the target-area, 36% citywide. Increasing reclaimed cats by 10%. After managerial staff had left, Banyule went backwards - tripling cat-impounds within two years, and rising costs to Council.

CCP is used successfully across the USA, and in Europe.

Free desexing has to be intensive and targeted specifically to the most-affected postcodes. Examples of successful programs are from the Australian Pet Welfare Foundation and also in peer-reviewed science papers in international MDPI Animals.

The Acting Director City Liveability, Jonathan McNally responded:

- Acknowledged the question regarding the publication of submissions from earlier phases of the Domestic Animal Management Plan (DAMP) consultation. Noted that the phase 1 consultation for the development of the draft DAMP 2026-2029 included a number of channels for community members and organisations to share their views. As part of that, Council's standard privacy collection and terms of use were in force as part of the 'Have Your Say' site. Council's Terms of Use specifically say: *"Information that identifies you will typically be removed from your responses when they are being analysed and before your responses are shared in any way. If your responses will be personally identifiable, we are committed to informing you of this."* Submitters were not specifically informed that Council would be sharing their personally identifiable data.
- Council was therefore provided with a de-identified summary of the key issues and engagement report for this reason, to support Council in making its decision in relation to endorsing the draft DAMP, which it endorsed at the 8 September 2025 Council Meeting. While it may be possible that the two organisations referenced are comfortable to have their submissions published, we had another 20 or so submitters who may not be

comfortable and the expectation their submissions would be published has not been established. It would also be inappropriate to publish just two of the submissions received.

7.1.2 Question Two - Ashlley Morgan-Shae

Why are all the Domestic Animal Management Plan (DAMP) 2026-2029 questions only on dogs?

Rather than continue Knox's punitive, expensive, divisive, direction, AdvoCats urge you to consider the Australian Pet Welfare Foundation's One-Welfare approach - which optimises the well-being of people, animals and their environment.

Community Cat Programs reduce the number of stray cats in pounds and shelters, and free up more resources to care for and re-home dogs.

Community Cat Programs are low-cost, help both dogs and cats, rescuers, shelter volunteers, and Council's own Animal Management Officers.

Please consider the enormous cost-savings of a Community Cat Program. Casey Council currently spends an estimated \$1.8million annually on 24-hr cat curfew. Impoundments in Casey have risen 680percent - more than double the rate of human population growth, and complaints have increased.

Community Cat Programs are evidence-based, science-proven, effective cat management; and are low cost.

The Acting Director City Liveability, Jonathan McNally responded:

- The questionnaire currently published on Council's Have Your Say page as part of consultation on the draft Domestic Animal Management Plan (DAMP) is targeted at gaining feedback on specific significant actions that have been included in the draft DAMP 2026-2029. The draft DAMP has been developed following considerable community involvement in the Phase 1 consultation completed in March and April 2025 which identified specific opportunities to review programs that relate to dogs within our community.

7.1.3 Question Three – Drazenka Ostojic

For over two and a half years our elderly parent has been on a waiting list for Aged Care gardening services, to no avail. The numerous private providers we've contacted claim they receive no funding, their books are full, they're not accepting referrals and cannot help. They apparently turn away numerous people in need and have done so for the last 3 years at least. Knox City Council stopped providing services in question to the detriment of its elderly population. They are now in the hands of private providers whom aren't providing the services our government claims are available to the eligible elderly population.

Why did Knox City council stop providing this essential service to its vulnerable elderly?

What is Knox Council planning on doing to address this matter affecting their rate payers?

My Aged Care and the providers LINK, United Age Well and all the many other providers say "Sorry we can't help," does Knox City Council care to help?

The Director Connected Communities, Judy Chalkley responded:

- Acknowledged the question regarding access to aged care gardening services and also acknowledged the frustration and difficulty experienced while seeking supports for their parent.
- Knox City Council ceased direct delivery of home support services, but this did not include gardening services, as Knox has never been funded to provide this service. Knox does still provide Home Maintenance which includes a one-off garden service when there are identified safety issues.
- Council acknowledges that demand for services such as gardening currently exceeds provider capacity, and that this is creating long wait times and difficulties for older residents and their families.
- Council has been actively advocating to the Commonwealth Government to highlight these service gaps and the significant impact they have on our community.
- While Council no longer provides the majority of aged care services directly, we remain committed to supporting our older community members. This includes through:
 - Advocacy
 - Information and referral – through our Short-Term Support Team.
 - Community connections – we continue to invest in programs and initiatives that reduce isolation, promote wellbeing, and help older residents stay connected and supported
- We encourage you to remain in contact with My Aged Care as they are the gateway to funded aged care services. We can reach out to you with our Short-Term Support Team's details and they can also assist by providing further guidance on navigating the system.
- Council will continue to advocate strongly for improved access and outcomes for older residents in Knox.

Question Time Concluded at 7:54pm.

8 Officer Reports

8.1 Community Engagement Feedback for the Annual Budget 2026-2027

SUMMARY

The Annual Planning Cycle for 2026-27 is currently underway. In August 2025, a Community Engagement Program was undertaken to offer insights into the services most valued by the community and actions required to better align with community needs and desires.

Engagement activities included an online survey, pop-ups at locations across the municipality and targeted activities including engagement at our Childhood and Family Centres and representation from all nine Advisory Committees through a Multi-Advisory Committee Workshop.

The engagement process resulted in 594 responses from the community, with eight members of the community seeking to make formal submissions to councillors.

The Annual Budget and Action Plan 2026-27 Community Engagement Report (Attachment 1) and formal submissions (Attachment 2) will provide input into the next annual planning cycle, including the Annual Budget 2026-27, the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan Year Two Actions and Performance Measure targets and annual organisation service planning.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council resolve to:

1. Receive and note the Annual Budget and Action Plan 2026-27 Community Engagement Report (Attachment 1).
2. Receive and note the eight formal submissions received (Attachment 2).

RESOLUTION

MOVED: Councillor Atwell

SECONDED: Councillor Baker

That Council resolve to:

1. Receive and note the Annual Budget and Action Plan 2026-27 Community Engagement Report (Attachment 1).
2. Receive and note the eight formal submissions received (Attachment 2).

CARRIED

8.2 Knox Reconciliation Action Plan 2023-2025 Review and Development of Reconciliation Action Plan 2026-2028

SUMMARY

Knox has the second largest First Nations population in Melbourne's east and is home to places of historical significance to the Kulin Nation, which is a nation of Aboriginal Tribes with territory extending across Victoria and beyond. For thousands of years, the creeks, hills and plains now known as the City of Knox have been cared for by the Traditional Custodians. Important cultural and historical sites within Knox hold both the Traditional Knowledge of the First Peoples and the traumatic stories of colonisation. Cultural sites in Knox include campsites, stone tools, scar trees, travelling routes, and song lines that would have been a place of meeting between the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung and Bunurong people before settlement.

In 2020, Council consulted with members of the local First Nations communities as part of the Knox Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Needs Analysis. A key recommendation was to develop a Reconciliation Action Plan. Reconciliation Action Plans (RAPs) are developed and monitored within a framework supplied by Reconciliation Australia, the lead body for reconciliation nationally.

Based around the core pillars of relationships, respect and opportunities, RAPs provide tangible and substantive benefits for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Nations, increasing economic equity and supporting First Nations self-determination.¹

The Knox City Council, "Innovate" Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) 2023-2025 (refer to Attachment 1) was endorsed by Council in June 2023 to strengthen relationships between First Nations and the wider community through meaningful steps to advance reconciliation. The RAP was developed with the local First Nations community and Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung and Bunurong Elders.

This report provides a review of the Knox RAP 2023–2025 achievements and provides recommendations for developing the next iteration of Knox's Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) 2026–2028 as indicated in the current RAP Action 20, "Continue our reconciliation journey by developing our next RAP". This is again reflected in our current Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan under Theme 2, "Embracing connection, inclusion and diversity" as a 2025-2026 action, "Review the RAP 2023-2025 and develop the next iteration of the Plan."

RECOMMENDATION

That Council resolve to:

1. Receive and note the review of the Reconciliation Action Plan 2023–2025.
2. Approve the recommendations for developing the Reconciliation Action Plan 2026–2028 as set out in the officers report.

¹ Reconciliation Australia

RESOLUTION

MOVED: Councillor Kennett

SECONDED: Councillor Atwell

That Council resolve to:

1. Receive and note the review of the Reconciliation Action Plan 2023–2025.
2. Approve the recommendations for developing the Reconciliation Action Plan 2026–2028 as set out in the officers report.

CARRIED

8.3 Waste Services Community Engagement Plan

SUMMARY

At the Council meeting held on 26 May 2025, Council resolved to request officers prepare a proposal for a community-wide engagement process relating to waste services. This report presents an approach to this engagement process for Council endorsement including:

- Survey scope.
- Supporting information within the survey.
- Survey questions.
- Delivery methodology.
- Timeframes for communicating, conducting and completion the survey.

A further report will be presented at a Council meeting in early 2026 detailing the results of this engagement process.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council resolve to:

1. Endorse the community engagement process for the Waste Services Survey, including:
 - a. The proposed scope and methodology
 - b. The supporting information within the survey
 - c. The timeline as outlined in section 1.2.
2. Approve the survey questions detailed in Attachment 1.
3. Note that the engagement results will be presented to Council in early 2026.

RESOLUTION

MOVED: Councillor Baker

SECONDED: Councillor Atwell

That Council resolve to:

1. Endorse the community engagement process for the Waste Services Survey, including:
 - a. The proposed scope and methodology
 - b. The supporting information within the survey
 - c. The timeline as outlined in section 1.2.
2. Approve the survey questions detailed in Attachment 1.
3. Note that the engagement results will be presented to Council in early 2026.

CARRIED

A Division was called by Councillor Baker.

For the motion: Councillor Baker, Councillor Atwell, Councillor Kennett, Councillor Cooper, Councillor Considine and Councillor Duncan.

Against the motion: Councillor Pearce.

Abstention: Councillor Lockwood and Councillor Williams

CARRIED 6:1:2

PROCEDURAL MOTION

ADJOURNMENT

MOVED: Councillor Cooper

SECONDED: Councillor Atwell

That Council adjourn the Meeting until 8:40 pm.

CARRIED

The Meeting was adjourned at 8:28pm and resumed at 8:40pm with all Councillors present.

8.4 2026 Council Meeting Schedule

SUMMARY

The current arrangements for meetings are set out in Council's Meeting Structures and Cycles Policy. This report outlines the proposed meeting schedule for the 2026 calendar year, in alignment with this Policy.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council resolve to adopt the proposed 2026 Council Meeting Schedule set out in Attachment 1.

RESOLUTION

MOVED: Councillor Baker

SECONDED: Councillor Duncan

That Council resolve to adopt the proposed 2026 Council Meeting Schedule set out in Attachment 1.

CARRIED

8.5 Knox Child, Youth and Seniors Plan 2021-2025 - Final Report

SUMMARY

The Knox Child, Youth and Seniors Plan 2021-2025 (Knox CYS Plan) was approved by Council in February 2022. The Plan responded to the five key directions outlined in the Knox Council Plan 2021-2025, applying a life course lens to identify the differing interests, needs and priorities of children, young people and seniors. The Plan reached the end of its life cycle in June 2025.

The report provides details of all actions and key achievements from July 2021 to June 2025 with the plan now at conclusion (refer Attachment 1). All actions within the Knox CYS Plan have been completed, successfully delivering important outcomes for each of the targeted life stage cohorts.

The final Knox CYS Plan report provides an overview of how outcomes aligned with community needs have been delivered, showcasing the breadth of work undertaken across the 4-year term.

The Knox Child Youth and Seniors Plan was our commitment to an integrated and intergenerational approach to services. The Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029, which has been shaped by our community and reflects the vision, values and aspirations of the people of Knox, has been developed with the awareness of the importance of the key life stages of the community. The Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 will guide where we focus our services and support the Knox community, with the life stages of children, youth and seniors represented in this Plan.

While the formal lifespan of the Child Youth and Seniors Plan concluded in June 2025, Council remains committed to ongoing actions that address issues impacting the community across all life stages – children, young people, and seniors. However, with these life stage cohorts embedded in the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 as well as Service Plans for Early Years, Youth and Seniors, a new standalone plan is not required. These Service Plans will be an integral part of guiding the way in which we continue to deliver programs and services that meet the needs of Knox residents, demonstrating our shared commitment to long term outcomes for children, young people and seniors.

To ensure accountability in achieving the goals outlined in the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 and associated service plans, a biennial report aligning with the financial year will be completed and presented to Council. The report will provide transparency and demonstrate progress across each cohort, reinforcing our commitment to delivering measurable outcomes for children, young people and seniors.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Note the final report of the Knox Child, Youth and Seniors Plan 2021-2025, provided as Attachment 1.
2. Endorse that Officers provide to Council a report every two years to demonstrate the ongoing impact of our services and share insights into effective service delivery, regarding Child, Youth and Seniors.

RESOLUTION

MOVED: Councillor Atwell

SECONDED: Councillor Baker

That Council:

- 1. Note the final report of the Knox Child, Youth and Seniors Plan 2021-2025, provided as Attachment 1.**
- 2. Endorse that Officers provide to Council a report every two years to demonstrate the ongoing impact of our services and share insights into effective service delivery, regarding Child, Youth and Seniors.**

CARRIED

8.6 Knox Mental Health Action Plan 2021-2025 Review

SUMMARY

The Knox Mental Health Action Plan 2021-2025 (Action Plan) was developed in response to results from the “Knox COVID-19 Household Impact Survey” which was conducted in July 2020. The Survey showed that poor mental health and social isolation resulting in feelings of loneliness to be the most pressing issue for the community. The purpose of the Action Plan was to provide a once-off strategic framework to address the then current and emerging mental health needs of the Knox community during the COVID-19 Pandemic, and the years immediately following, and to assist in the coordination of interventions moving forward. The Action Plan is, therefore, not ongoing as any incomplete recommendations have been elevated to the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 to ensure a whole-of-Council response.

The Action Plan is comprised of 30 recommendations, sub-categorised into the four key areas of:

- Health Promotion;
- Community Education;
- Sector Coordination and Collaboration; and
- Advocacy.

The sub-categories were identified by partner organisations in Mental Health forums held in December 2020 and February 2021. The aim of the Action Plan was that it would form the basis of strong partnership efforts, collective goals, and actions that would improve the mental health of residents and ensure that poor mental health is prevented at the earliest stage.

This report provides a summary of key achievements of the Action Plan across its lifespan, and an insight into the future direction of work to support mental health and wellbeing in Knox.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council resolve to receive and note the final report for the Knox Mental Health Action Plan 2021-2025.

RESOLUTION

MOVED: Councillor Baker

SECONDED: Councillor Lockwood

That Council resolve to receive and note the final report for the Knox Mental Health Action Plan 2021-2025.

CARRIED

8.7 Knox Disability Advisory Committee Membership Recruitment and Annual Report

SUMMARY

The Knox Disability Advisory Committee assists Council by advising on strategic disability related issues, contributing to inclusive policy development, ensuring Council practices consider the needs and rights of people with disabilities and their carers and promoting disability awareness in the community.

This report seeks approval for the reappointment of five Committee members for a two-year term from September 2025 to September 2027.

This report also provides an overview of the Committee's achievements over the past 12 months.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Appoint the following current Knox Disability Advisory Committee member for a second term for the period September 2025 to September 2027 as presented in Confidential Attachment 2.
2. Note the achievements of the Committee over the past 12 months.
3. Thank the outgoing member of the Knox Disability Advisory Committee for their valuable contribution: Vicki Morrow – Community Representative.

RESOLUTION

MOVED: Councillor Baker

SECONDED: Councillor Pearce

That Council:

1. **Appoint the following current Knox Disability Advisory Committee members for a second term for the period September 2025 to September 2027 as presented in Confidential Attachment 2.**
2. **Note the achievements of the Committee over the past 12 months.**
3. **Thank the outgoing member of the Knox Disability Advisory Committee for their valuable contribution: Vicki Morrow – Community Representative.**

Name	Category
1. Dean Niven	Community Representative
2. Emily Dive	Community Representative
3. Carmen Wang	Community Representative
4. Rachel Holmes	Service Provider / Industry Representative
5. Bronwyn Stephen	Service Provider / Industry Representative

CARRIED

8.8 Knox Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Policy

SUMMARY

Council first adopted a Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Policy and Procedure at the Council Meeting held on 24 June 2019. Revisions to the Policy and Procedure were adopted at the Council Meeting held on 22 March 2021. The Policy was first introduced to establish a strategic framework for addressing homelessness and rough sleeping in Knox. It outlines the Council's commitment to proactive leadership through awareness, education, and cross-sector collaboration to prevent homelessness, enhance access to housing and deliver essential support services to those experiencing homelessness.

This report also outlines the current situation for people sleeping rough in Knox, Council's response, and the complex challenges involved in supporting this vulnerable community.

The last Census occurred in 2021 when states and territories were under COVID-19 Pandemic related restrictions. State and territory governments, including the Victorian government, also worked with service providers to give temporary accommodation to people sleeping rough or in crisis situations to help protect them and the community from pandemic spread.

As such, 2021 homelessness estimates reflect the unique accommodation circumstances of those experiencing homelessness at the time of the Census. Despite this, homelessness in Knox increased by nearly 20% from the 2016 Census. Additionally, 2025 has seen a substantial increase in demand for food and essential items, driven by increasing cost-of-living pressures, including rent and mortgage stress, increasing rates of family violence, rising use of alcohol and other drugs, and more mental health needs; factors also reported by local agencies and members of the Knox Emergency Relief Network.

The current Policy and Procedure had a review date of March 2024, at which point a review was initiated. A cross-Council Working Group was established to review the documents and provide input to enhance the process for those responding to individuals sleeping rough. This resulted in clear, coordinated guidance tailored to the diverse responsibilities across Council, and other agencies.

The review identified the current Policy and Procedure did not clearly articulate the responsibilities for specific Council Departments and teams when responding to notifications for people sleeping rough and was not clear on circumstances that can trigger an Amenity Local Law 2020 response for public amenity and safety issues. Throughout 2024 to now, the Working Group focused on the procedure supporting Policy implementation. As a result of the Working Group's efforts, there has been a more coordinated approach to responding to notifications of people sleeping rough.

The Short Term Support team have led the pilot of these proposed revisions in 2025 and now collaborate more closely with stakeholder Council teams including: Community Laws, Open Space, Facilities Maintenance and Sport and Leisure Services to ensure a more integrated and effective response.

Only minor updates are proposed for the drafted Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Policy. (Refer to Attachment 1 with tracked changes and Attachment 2 – draft Policy with revisions included).

Through this review process it was identified it has been an anomaly for Council to adopt an operational procedure. As such, Council is now requested to rescind the current Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Procedure included for reference as Attachment 3.

Operational procedures exist to provide organisation guidance on the means to affect implementation of the policy. Through the review of the Policy, the updated operational procedure now outlines a coordinated and best -practice response, informed by benchmarking with other councils and stakeholder agencies.

Upon endorsement of the revised Policy, communication will occur to impacted Departments and teams to share this information.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Endorse the Knox Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Policy provided as Attachment 2.
2. Rescind the Knox Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Procedure provided as Attachment 3.
3. Note Council's ongoing commitment to a coordinated and best practice response in responding to homelessness and rough sleeping.

RESOLUTION

MOVED: Councillor Lockwood

SECONDED: Councillor Williams

That Council:

1. Endorse the Knox Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Policy provided as Attachment 2.
2. Rescind the Knox Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Procedure provided as Attachment 3.
3. Note Council's ongoing commitment to a coordinated and best practice response in responding to homelessness and rough sleeping.

CARRIED

8.9 2025-26 Amended Budget

SUMMARY

The 2025-26 Amended Budget is presented for consideration. This report recommends Council adopt the 2025-26 Amended Budget, including updates to capital works, for management reporting purposes.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Adopt the Amended Budget (Attachment 1), which will be used for management reporting purposes.
2. Allocate the funding identified for the “Pavilion Upgrade” project in the 2025-26 Capital Works Program to the development of the detailed design for the Lewis Park Pavilion.

Councillor Williams requested that the motion be put in separate parts under Governance Rule 34. The Chairperson agreed under Governance Rule 35 and put the motion to the vote in separate parts.

RESOLUTION

MOVED: Councillor Atwell

SECONDED: Councillor Baker

That Council:

1. **Adopt the Amended Budget (Attachment 1), which will be used for management reporting purposes.**

CARRIED

A Division was called by Councillor Cooper

For the motion: Councillor Cooper, Councillor Lockwood, Councillor Williams, Councillor Duncan, Councillor Considine, Councillor Atwell, Councillor Kennett and Councillor Baker.

Against the motion: Councillor Pearce.

Abstention: Nil.

CARRIED 8:1

RESOLUTION

MOVED: Councillor Atwell

SECONDED: Councillor Baker

That Council:

2. Allocate the funding identified for the “Pavilion Upgrade” project in the 2025-26 Capital Works Program to the development of the detailed design for the Lewis Park Pavilion.

LOST

A Division was called by Councillor Duncan.

For the motion: Councillor Cooper, Councillor Baker and Councillor Considine.

Against the motion: Councillor Kennett, Councillor Atwell, Councillor Duncan, Councillor Williams, Councillor Lockwood and Councillor Pearce.

Abstention: Nil.

LOST 3:6

8.10 Infrastructure Capital Works Program Annual Report 2024-25

SUMMARY

This report provides an update on the delivery outcomes of the 2024/25 Infrastructure Capital Works Program. A total of 157 projects and renewal programs were scheduled for delivery. Of these, 133 projects (85 per cent) have been completed or remain on schedule, while 24 projects are behind schedule. The amended program budget was \$67.79 million, with expenditure of \$55.04 million.

Key highlights from the program include an investment of \$6.9 million across 419 community building renewal projects and \$9.1 million directed to improvements in Council's network of local roads. A further \$5.4 million was allocated to the major upgrade at the Knox Athletics Track, and \$4.1 million was invested in footpath and shared path improvements. Environmental outcomes were also achieved through the creation of new wetlands at Gilbert Park and Egan Lee Reserve, and the conversion of 1,657 major road streetlights to energy-efficient LED technology.

Program performance reflects strong delivery outcomes and effective financial management. Asset renewal achieved a 98 per cent completion rate, with 95 per cent of the budget expended. Overall project delivery indicates that 84.7 per cent of projects and programs have been completed or remain on schedule, with project expenditure reaching 81.2 per cent of the amended budget. Both delivery performance and expenditure outcomes continue to demonstrate steady improvement since 2021.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council receive and note the Infrastructure Capital Works Annual Report for 2024/25.

RESOLUTION

MOVED: Councillor Baker

SECONDED: Councillor Lockwood

That Council receive and note the Infrastructure Capital Works Annual Report for 2024/25.

CARRIED

8.11 Knox Gambling Harm Prevention Policy Review

SUMMARY

A draft Knox Gambling Harm Prevention Policy has been developed (refer to Attachment 1) following a review of Council's Electronic Gambling Machine Policy 2020 (refer to Attachment 2). This draft Policy was informed by community and stakeholder engagement, benchmarking, desktop data capture and analysis, as well as local and State policy context review.

The draft Policy adopts a public health approach and responds to the emerging needs in the community by broadening the focus from Electronic Gaming Machines (EGMs) to address other forms of gambling harm.

The draft Policy aligns with, and responds to, the key health and wellbeing priority "Reduce harm from alcohol, smoking, vaping and gambling" outlined in the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025–2029.

Council recognises that gambling is a legitimate form of entertainment in Australia and many people can participate without experiencing harm, however, research consistently shows that gambling can, and does, lead to significant harm for some individuals, families and the wider community.

Knox residents face greater financial losses from EGMs than Metropolitan Melbourne. In 2024-2025, \$79 million was lost to 771 EGMs across 11 venues, averaging \$217,000 per day. Gambling losses/amount lost is defined as the amount wagered (bet) by gamblers less the amount won by gamblers.

In Knox the average loss per adult per annum was \$586.24, which is higher than the Metropolitan Melbourne average of \$548.12 per adult. This highlights a greater prevalence of gambling-related harm in the region.

There is also growing concern about the harm caused by other forms of gambling such as sports betting and online gambling. In 2022–2023, the total losses in Victoria to all forms of gambling was \$7.4 billion, with 46% of gambling losses to EGMs and 35% from wagering.

Recent trends, such as the widespread availability of mobile internet devices, have exacerbated the risks of technology-based gambling, including online sports betting.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Endorses the draft Knox Gambling Harm Prevention Policy for the purposes of community consultation;
2. Notes that community consultation on the draft Policy will occur from the 30 September for a three-week period, and that feedback will be considered prior to finalising the Policy.

RESOLUTION

MOVED: Councillor Williams

SECONDED: Councillor Baker

That Council:

1. Endorses the draft Knox Gambling Harm Prevention Policy for the purposes of community consultation;
2. Notes that community consultation on the draft Policy will occur from the 30 September for a three-week period, and that feedback will be considered prior to finalising the Policy.

CARRIED

8.12 Biannual Report of the Audit and Risk Committee

SUMMARY

This report presents to Council, the Audit and Risk Committee Biannual Report – August 2025 in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government Act 2020, and the Audit and Risk Committee Charter.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council resolve to receive and note the Audit and Risk Committee Biannual Report - August 2025, as set out in Attachment 1 to the report.

Councillor Cooper noted that the Chairperson of the Knox Audit and Risk Committee meeting has, reluctantly, decided to resign from the Committee earlier than the end of their appointed term which was due to conclude at the end of next year. Council acknowledged their valuable contribution as a member and Chairperson of the Committee and thanked them for their service.

RESOLUTION

MOVED: Councillor Pearce

SECONDED: Councillor Cooper

That Council resolve to receive and note the Audit and Risk Committee Biannual Report - August 2025, as set out in Attachment 1 to the report.

CARRIED

8.13 Climate Response Plan Annual Report 2024/2025

SUMMARY

Local Government is identified as having a role and responsibility to respond to climate change and its impacts on our community through the following State Government legislation:

- *Local Government Act 2020*: Councils are required to promote the economic, social and environmental sustainability of the municipal district, including mitigation and planning for climate change risks
- *Climate Change Act 2017*: local government must consider climate change when preparing a municipal public health and wellbeing plan, including the potential impacts of climate change and potential contribution to Victoria's greenhouse gas emissions.
- *Planning and Environment Act 1987*: to provide explicit consideration of the policies and obligations of the State relating to climate change when decisions are made about the use and development of land.

In response to a community campaign in 2019 and an associated Notice of Motion, work on the latest Climate Response Plan began in 2020. A 10 year plan (Climate Response Plan 2021-2031) was subsequently adopted by Council on 27 September 2021. The Plan supports Council's effective planning, management and implementation of climate response actions over the 10 year period.

This report responds to a prior Council resolution to provide an Annual Report on Council's progress in implementing the Climate Response Plan 2021 – 2031 (CRP) actions. This report provides the fourth Annual Report.

Key updates from progress in implementing the CRP actions include:

- steady progress has been made in implementing the CRP actions, with 43 of the 55 actions completed or underway;
- progress is being made in Council meeting its emissions mitigation and net zero by 2030 target;
- based on the latest available data for the Knox community (2022/23) it shows a 12.6% reduction in community emissions since 2018/19; and
- there have been improvements in Council's adaptive capacity, with identified strengths in climate adaptation knowledge, governance, and decision making, as well as strategic response and organisational culture.

It should be noted that the mid-term Review of the Climate Response Plan is currently underway, and the outcome of the review will be presented to Council for consideration in early 2026 prior to the commencement of related community and stakeholder consultation.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council receive and note the Knox Climate Response Plan (CRP) 2021-31 Annual Report (Attachment 1) which provides an update on the implementation of CRP actions during the 2024/2025 financial year.

RESOLUTION

MOVED: Councillor Williams

SECONDED: Councillor Atwell

That Council receive and note the Knox Climate Response Plan (CRP) 2021-31 Annual Report (Attachment 1) which provides an update on the implementation of CRP actions during the 2024/2025 financial year.

CARRIED

8.14 School Focused Youth Service Advocacy

SUMMARY

On Friday, 5 September 2025, Council received notification from the Department of Education (DE), notifying Council that the School Focused Youth Service (SFYS) contract would not be renewed at the conclusion of the current contract period (31 January 2026). DE has provided the SFYS grant program for more than 25 years. Officers are seeking Council support to draft a letter to the Minister for Education, the Hon. Ben Carroll, seeking an immediate review and reversal of this decision. The SFYS funding provides essential support and targeted interventions to young people in Grades 5 to Year 12 who are at risk of disengaging from education. These vulnerable young people often fall through the gaps of other service provisions, with the SFYS program providing a unique opportunity to support schools to target and provide services to this cohort.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council resolve to authorise officers to draft a letter to the Minister for Education, the Hon. Ben Carroll, of behalf of Council, requesting a review and reversal of the decision by the State Government to cease funding the School Focused Youth Service program.

Councillor Lockwood left the meeting at 9:56pm before the vote on item 8.14

Councilor Lockwood returned to the meeting at 9:5pm before the vote on item 8.14

RESOLUTION

MOVED: Councillor Baker

SECONDED: Councillor Duncan

That Council resolve to authorise officers to draft a letter to the Minister for Education, the Hon. Ben Carroll, of behalf of Council, requesting a review and reversal of the decision by the State Government to cease funding the School Focused Youth Service program.

CARRIED

PROCEDURAL MOTION

ADJOURNMENT

MOVED: Councillor Cooper

SECONDED: Councillor Williams

That Council adjourn the Meeting for 10 Minutes.

CARRIED

The Meeting was adjourned at 10:05pm and resumed at 10:16pm with all Councillors present.

PROCEDURAL MOTION

MOVED: Councillor Duncan

SECONDED: Councillor Williams

That Council resolve to extend the Council Meeting to 11pm.

CARRIED

9 Supplementary Items

Nil.

10 Notices Of Motion

10.1 Notice of Motion No. 187 - Domestic Animal Management Plan

The following notice of motion was lodged by Councillor Lockwood in accordance with Council's Governance Rules:

I hereby give notice that it is my intention to move the following motion at the Council Meeting on 29 September

That Council resolve:

- A) To note that Council resolved to endorse the Draft Knox Domestic Animal Management Plan (the draft DAMP) for phase 2 of community engagement at the Council meeting on 8 September 2025 and that phase 2 commenced on 15 September 2025; and
1. Note that verbatim community feedback from phase 1 of community engagement (conducted February to April 2025) was not included in the report to Council considered on 8 September 2025.
 2. To increase transparency, and subject to the removal of personal information to protect privacy, to request that copies of verbatim community feedback from phase 1 of community engagement be made available to the community as part of phase 2 of community engagement.
 3. Request officers extend phase 2 of community engagement by at least two weeks, recognising the delay in releasing verbatim community feedback from phase 1.
- B) In relation to the draft DAMP:
1. To note that the draft DAMP includes "Programs to address over-population rates and any high euthanasia rates" and "Dog attacks" as two of the nine areas of focus.
 2. To amend the draft DAMP to include an action to investigate how a community cat program or cat desexing program could be implemented at Knox:
 - a. Using evidence provided by the Australian Pet Welfare Foundation and other available peer reviewed evidence relating to cat containment and the welfare of cats;
 - b. Including proactive, microtargeted desexing initiatives as demonstrated in the City of Banyule;
 - c. Considering any animal management cost savings generated by such a program; and
 - d. With a target completion date of December 2026.
 3. To amend the draft DAMP to include an action to investigate pro-active dog programs:
 - a. As described in the Australian Pet Welfare Foundation's phase 1 submission, which would require an increase in community education and engagement;

- b. Considering any animal management cost savings generated by such a program; and
 - c. With a target completion date of December 2027.
4. To note that the objectives of the programs detailed in Resolutions B(2) and B(3) above are to:
 - a. Reduce attacks on local wildlife;
 - b. Increase compliance with registration and responsible pet ownership; and
 - c. Increase compliance relating to dogs
5. To note that the extension of phase 2 of community engagement will also allow community engagement on the proposed amendments to the DAMP in Resolutions B(2) and B(3) above; and to request officers to contact all existing phase 2 submitters to advise them of the amendments once released and invite further comment.

RESOLUTION

MOVED: Councillor Lockwood

SECONDED: Councillor Pearce

That Council resolve:

- A) To note that Council resolved to endorse the Draft Knox Domestic Animal Management Plan (the draft DAMP) for phase 2 of community engagement at the Council meeting on 8 September 2025 and that phase 2 commenced on 15 September 2025; and**
- 1. Note that verbatim community feedback from phase 1 of community engagement (conducted February to April 2025) was not included in the report to Council considered on 8 September 2025.**
 - 2. To increase transparency, and subject to the removal of personal information to protect privacy, to request that copies of verbatim community feedback from phase 1 of community engagement be made available to the community as part of phase 2 of community engagement.**
 - 3. Request officers extend phase 2 of community engagement by at least two weeks, recognising the delay in releasing verbatim community feedback from phase 1.**
- B) In relation to the draft DAMP:**
- 1. To note that the draft DAMP includes “Programs to address over-population rates and any high euthanasia rates” and “Dog attacks” as two of the nine areas of focus.**
 - 2. To amend the draft DAMP to include an action to investigate how a community cat program or cat desexing program could be implemented at Knox:**
 - a. Using evidence provided by the Australian Pet Welfare Foundation and other available peer reviewed evidence relating to cat containment and the welfare of cats;**
 - b. Including proactive, microtargeted desexing initiatives as demonstrated in the City of Banyule;**
 - c. Considering any animal management cost savings generated by such a program; and**
 - d. With a target completion date of December 2026.**
 - 3. To amend the draft DAMP to include an action to investigate pro-active dog programs:**

- a. As described in the Australian Pet Welfare Foundation's phase 1 submission, which would require an increase in community education and engagement;
 - b. Considering any animal management cost savings generated by such a program; and
 - c. With a target completion date of December 2027.
4. To note that the objectives of the programs detailed in Resolutions B(2) and B(3) above are to:
 - a. Reduce attacks on local wildlife;
 - b. Increase compliance with registration and responsible pet ownership; and
 - c. Increase compliance relating to dogs
5. To note that the extension of phase 2 of community engagement will also allow community engagement on the proposed amendments to the DAMP in Resolutions B(2) and B(3) above; and to request officers to contact all existing phase 2 submitters to advise them of the amendments once released and invite further comment.

CARRIED

A Division was called by Councillor Atwell

For the motion: Councillor Lockwood, Councillor Pearce, Councillor Williams, Councillor Duncan and Councillor Kennett.

Against the motion: Councillor Baker, Councillor Atwell, Councillor Considine and Councillor Cooper.

Abstention: Nil.

CARRIED 5:4

10.2 Notice of Motion No. 188 - Knox News

The following notice of motion was lodged by Councillor Lockwood in accordance with Council's Governance Rules:

I hereby give notice that it is my intention to move the following motion at the Council Meeting on 29 September 2025 :

That Council resolve:

1. That a report be provided to the Council meeting on 24 November 2025 (unless deferred to a later meeting in consultation with the Mayor) that explores cessation of the publication Knox News, including:
 - a. Detail of the funds that would be saved; and
 - b. How some of those funds saved could be redirected to utilising the four local community newspapers for Council and councillor information
2. To refer the content of this report to a subsequent budget discussion.

RESOLUTION

MOVED: Councillor Lockwood

SECONDED: Councillor Williams

That Council resolve:

1. That a report be provided to the Council meeting on 24 November 2025 (unless deferred to a later meeting in consultation with the Mayor) that explores cessation of the publication Knox News, including:
 - a. Detail of the funds that would be saved; and
 - b. How some of those funds saved could be redirected to utilising the four local community newspapers for Council and councillor information
2. To refer the content of this report to a subsequent budget discussion.

CARRIED

10.3 Notice of Motion No. 189 - Keeping Knox Safer Forum

The following notice of motion was lodged by Councillor Lockwood in accordance with Council's Governance Rules:

I hereby give notice that it is my intention to move the following motion at the Council Meeting on 29 September 2025

That Council resolve:

1. To note Victoria Police's Eastern Region Division 2 is establishing a new Local Safety Committee and Council's support for this Committee.
2. To note the Policy Brief included as Appendix 1 to this motion.
3. To note that safety issues are occurring nationally and are not restricted to Victoria and require local solutions and actions.
4. To note that young people are featuring strongly in crime reports,
5. In support of this new Local Safety Committee, to receive a report to the Council meeting on the 15 December 2025 with a proposal that Knox City Council hold a Keeping Knox Safer Round Table to properly understand the safety issues being experienced by the Knox community, residents and businesses alike:
 - i. Led by an independent facilitator.
 - ii. The independent facilitator will produce a report of the proceedings and recommendations flowing therefrom,
 - iii. That this forum consists of Council, Victoria Police (including Knox, Boronia, Rowville and Transit Police) emergency relief organisations, relevant Council departments (Community Laws, Youth Services Team, Schools, Community Strengthening) the State Government (especially the Department of Fairness Families and Housing), any local support agency with an interest and representatives from the community.
6. That this Forum focus on identifying issues and exploring possible solutions relating to youth counselling, family violence, substance abuse, the provision of rough sleeping, safe spaces, safe showers and safe food. It should also consider the experiences of affected individuals as well as the concerns raised by individuals and local traders who have made many complaints.
7. That the structure of this event should be decided with consultation that includes councillors informally.
8. To note that the information gathered and reported to Council will also be provided to all participants.

PROCEDURAL MOTION

MOVED: Councillor Cooper

SECONDED: Councillor Williams

That Council resolve to extend the Council Meeting until 11:30pm.

CARRIED

RESOLUTION

MOVED: Councillor Lockwood

SECONDED: Councillor Williams

That Council resolve:

1. To note Victoria Police's Eastern Region Division 2 is establishing a new Local Safety Committee and Council's support for this Committee.
2. To note the Policy Brief included as Appendix 1 to this motion.
3. To note that safety issues are occurring nationally and are not restricted to Victoria and require local solutions and actions.
4. To note that young people are featuring strongly in crime reports,
5. In support of this new Local Safety Committee, to receive a report to the Council meeting on the 15 December 2025 with a proposal that Knox City Council hold a Keeping Knox Safer Round Table to properly understand the safety issues being experienced by the Knox community, residents and businesses alike:
 - i. Led by an independent facilitator.
 - ii. The independent facilitator will produce a report of the proceedings and recommendations flowing therefrom,
 - iii. That this forum consists of Council, Victoria Police (including Knox, Boronia, Rowville and Transit Police) emergency relief organisations, relevant Council departments (Community Laws, Youth Services Team, Community Strengthening), Schools, the State Government (especially the Department of Fairness Families and Housing), any local support agency with an interest and representatives from the community.
6. That this Forum focus on identifying issues and exploring possible solutions relating to youth counselling, family violence, substance abuse, the provision of rough sleeping, safe spaces, safe showers and safe food. It should also consider the experiences of affected individuals as well as the concerns raised by individuals and local traders who have made many complaints.
7. That the structure of this event should be decided with consultation that includes councillors informally.
8. To note that the information gathered and reported to Council will also be provided to all participants.

CARRIED

A Division was called by Councillor Cooper.

For the motion: Councillor Baker, Councillor Atwell, Councillor Kennett, Councillor Cooper, Councillor Considine, Councillor Duncan, Councillor Lockwood, Councillor Williams and Councillor Pearce

Against the motion: Nil

Abstention: Nil

CARRIED 9:0

11 Urgent Business

Nil.

*Councillor Considine retired from the meeting at 11.02 pm at the commencement of Item 12.
Questions Through the Chair.*

12 Questions Through the Chair

Councillor Atwell asked the following questions:

Have we received questions or concerns from families in the community about the kindergarten registration process, particularly regarding how places are allocated?

The Director Connected Communities, Judy Chalkley responded:

We receive questions frequently each year regarding our allocation and registration process, particularly for families participating for the first time and do not understand the process. We work through these individually and respond as we get them.

How do we ensure that children currently attending a kindergarten, or with siblings already enrolled, are not disadvantaged in the allocation process?

The Director Connected Communities, Judy Chalkley responded:

Our current process meets the State Government Kindergarten Funding Guidelines. However, we are already reviewing this process as the kindergarten service delivery is changing as we move through the State Government reforms.

Per the State Government guidelines, kindergarten places must first be allocated to children who meet the Priority 1 Criteria which is set by the State Government.

Children who meet this priority must be offered a place at their first preference kindergarten regardless of where they live or where they may have previously attended.

Priority 2 criteria, which is set locally includes children who:

- Live within the local community area of the kindergarten
- Had an elder sibling who attended the 1st preference service within the last 5 years
- Child attended a 3 Year Old program at a service in Knox
- Child is currently utilising Council LDC on the same site as kindergarten preference (eg. The Hubs)

However should a kindergarten and particular group receive a high number of Priority 1 registrations, these children are offered a place first, including those children who are requiring an additional year of kindergarten before going to school which is approved by the Department. This reduces the number of places available to the children who have attended the 3 year old program and 4 Year Old program. New families moving into the area would also fall into Priority 2.

It can be difficult because the number of Priority 1 allocated, there are less Priority places that fall under Level 2.

Could Council explore alternative models that reduce reliance on a randomised ballot where multiple criteria are met?

The Director Connected Communities, Judy Chalkley responded:

Because of the way we look at the priority, we sometimes need randomised ballots because we have a low number of places available. We exited kindergarten services and we have established a collaborative working network inclusive of all our kindergarten providers across the municipality and work through needed changes to Council's Kindergarten Policy and Procedures, inclusive of our Central Registration process. We are looking at improvement opportunities over time.

When can Council expect an update or recommendations on potential refinements to the policy?

The Director Connected Communities, Judy Chalkley responded:

We will be bringing the Funded Kindergarten Policy to Councillors to discuss later this year and after refinement, the Policy will then be presented to Council for a decision.

Councillor Kennett asked the following questions:

Kindergarten Capacity - Based on the feedback from families received by councillors to date, and assuming there could be more, I wonder about the Knox sessional kindergarten capacity. Are there geographic disparities in capacity across Knox (The Basin, Rowville and Knoxfield), and how does council plan to manage these I.e working with providers to offer additional sessions, adjusting the local criteria for priority of access to smooth out demand?

The Director Connected Communities, Judy Chalkley responded:

As outlined in the recent review of Knox City Council's Kindergarten Infrastructure Services Plan that was presented to Council on 8 September 2025, Council supports access to kindergarten places across local community areas which reflect local patterns of service use.

Demand for kindergarten places in smaller geographical areas changes over time with the changing demographics of the community, local community areas that span suburb boundaries balances families ability to access local services whilst also supporting the viability of services in nearby areas. In practice, many families in Knox access kindergarten outside their immediate suburb, reflecting established patterns of cross-suburb enrolment and mobility.

Future demand - Given the capacity issues being currently experienced at a number of centres, has the Council completed future demand analysis considering the State Government two year kindergarten reforms, and what does that show? And how will council ensure sufficient places in kindergartens for all eligible children by 2028?

The Director Connected Communities, Judy Chalkley responded:

The Kindergarten Infrastructure Services Plan will establish where the needs are across the community. Some groups experience a high number of registrations, however this does not necessarily mean that the kindergarten is over-subscribed, it may just be that group.

As of today there are currently 85 more kindergarten places available across the municipality than those registered. There also remains some further capacity in group sizes at some kindergartens that could be enacted should the demand for those places present.

Based on current participation rates, population projections and existing service availability, kindergarten provision is expected to meet projected demand up to 2029 when taking into account kindergarten availability across local community areas.

Review of local criteria (not State based criteria) - Will the review of local criteria for the priority of access by council, consider weighting of local criteria, specifically children already enrolled in 3 Year Old Kinder that wish to continue kindergarten at the same facility?

The Director Connected Communities, Judy Chalkley responded:

As previously mentioned, a review of the Funded Kindergarten Policy and Kindergarten Registration Procedure is currently underway.

The review of the registration and allocation process is focused on ensuring Priority 2 criteria and accumulation of meeting multiple criteria, whilst also balancing the need to ensure families moving into Knox or those who choose not to attend 3 year old kindergarten are not unduly penalised. We will be looking at all areas and we will bring that back to Council.

Review of the enrolment process - What feedback and information is being considered through the review that Council are completing on the kindergarten process?

The Director Connected Communities, Judy Chalkley responded:

All feedback received from community members this year and in previous years is being considered as a part of the review process. As part of the review we have also undertaken benchmarking with

other Councils who have a central registration systems, reviewed the timing of our registration process with input from both our Early Years Advisory Committee and the kindergarten providers and reviewed our local Priority of Access criteria as well.

Multi-age kindergarten groups - Noting feedback received from one family and questions relating to composite classes. The Victorian State Government “Your Guide to Multi-age groups document’ states that intentional planning, differentiation and staffing must be in place to manage composite kindergarten cohorts to ensure all children thrive. Noting that current research suggests success of composite classes depends heavily on the quality of the program delivered, and the skill and resources of educators, how does Knox council currently manage and supervise this, and has this been considered for future years, particularly with the State reforms coming on board? And what is the view of the kindergarten service providers on composite kindergarten classes?

The Director Connected Communities, Judy Chalkley responded:

As you have indicated the State Government is the funding body for kindergartens. They manage the licencing requirements of these services and specifies the maximum number of children who are able to attend a service at any one time.

The Kindergarten Providers determine what groups they will be offering at their services, whether they be single or multi-age and it is their responsibility to provide a high quality kindergarten program as per State Government requirements.

We make available population data in relation to the overall numbers of children in community areas when they are setting their proposed groups for the year. It is up to the service providers to manage whether they will have composite groups or straight groups which is discussed with State Government. Council does not set this. We can look at it for our two sessional kindergartens we run but cannot be done for the providers. We can provide them with the population data information and what it can look like and they can then plan going forward.

Councillor Pearce left the meeting at 11:04 pm during item 12

Councillor Pearce returned to the meeting at 11:09 pm during item 12

13 Confidential Items

Nil.

MEETING CLOSED AT 11:18pm

Minutes of Meeting confirmed at the
Meeting of Council
held on Monday, 27 October 2025

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Chairperson

The Agenda for this meeting is attached in full at the end of the Minutes