

MINUTES

Meeting of Council

Held at the
Civic Centre
511 Burwood Highway
Wantirna South
On
Monday 27 October 2025



The Agenda for the Meeting of Council, Monday 27 October 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 7:07pm.

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.

The Mayor proposed a change to the Order of Business where Item 8.10 – Outdoor Dining – Parklets would be considered immediately after Item 7 – Public Question Time and before Item 8.1 – Planning Delegation Review. The Mayor invited Councillors to raise any objections to this proposition. There being no objection, the order of business was changed accordingly.

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1 Apologies And Requests For Leaves Of Absence

Nil.

2 Declarations Of Conflict Of Interest

Councillor Pearce foreshadowed declaring a general conflict of interest in Item 8.7, Community Development Fund Program Assessment Panel Recommendations 2025-2026.

Councillor Williams foreshadowed declaring a general conflict of interest in Item 8.7, Community Development Fund Program Assessment Panel Recommendations 2025-2026.

Councillor Duncan foreshadowed declaring a material conflict of interest in Item 8.7, Community Development Fund Program Assessment Panel Recommendations 2025-2026.

Councillor Baker foreshadowed declaring a general conflict of interest in Item 8.7, Community Development Fund Program Assessment Panel Recommendations 2025-2026.

Councillor Cooper foreshadowed declaring a general conflict of interest in Item 8.7, Community Development Fund Program Assessment Panel Recommendations 2025-2026.

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 29 September 2025. There being none, the Chairperson declared the Minutes be confirmed.

4 Presentations, Petitions And Memorials

4.1 Petition – Early Childhood Education

Councillor Lockwood sought leave of Council to consider the following Petition to which there was no objection.

Councillor Lockwood presented an e-petition via change.org with 185 signatures as at 27 October 2025 calling for Council to apply for funding offered by the Federal Government to enable services to give a temporary 15% above-award wage increase to eligible Council staff (over 2 years).

The petition was circulated to all Councillors and was presented for noting.

In submitting the petition, the lead petitioner argues that educators in Council-run centres deserve the same recognition and financial support as those in private and community centres and this Federal funding can also address the wage gaps in this female-dominated sector.

It is understood that the petitioners are still actively collecting signatures and updates to the petition may yet be received.

The Petition has been circulated to all Councillors and was presented for noting only.

As the Chief Executive Officer has statutory responsibility for all staffing matters, this is not an issue Council can determine; and so the petition has been referred to the CEO for consideration and response.

4.2 Petition – Parklet at Paddy’s Tavern

Councillor Baker presented a petition with 103 signatures as at 27 October 2025 to support keeping the parklet located at the front of Paddy’s Tavern in Ferntree Gully.

The petition was circulated to all Councillors and was presented for noting.

In submitting the petition, the lead petitioner argued that removing the parklet would negatively impact the experience of customers and would take away a valued feature that brings people together and encourages them to enjoy the venue.

It is understood that the petitioners are still actively collecting signatures and updates to the petition may yet be received.

Councillor Baker noted the petition does not raise any matters which can be considered as items of urgent business on the agenda. The petition will be referred to the Acting Director City Liveability who will provide a response to the lead petitioner in due course.

4.3 Petition – Parklet at Studfield Shopping Centre

Councillor Williams received a petition with 138 signatures as at 27 October 2025 calling for the parklet to be maintained in front of Schokolade and the Charcoal Chicken Shop at Studfield Shopping Centre.

The petition has been circulated to all Councillors and was presented for noting.

In submitting the petition, the lead petitioner argues that the parklet serves as a great space for local traders and for the community and its removal would adversely affect local businesses as less outdoor seating would be provided.

It is understood that the petitioners are still actively collecting signatures and updates to the petition may yet be received.

Councillor Williams noted the petition does not raise any matters which can be considered as items of urgent business on the agenda. The petition will be referred to the Acting Director City Liveability who will provide a response to the lead petitioner in due course.

4.4 Memorial - Noel and Bev McNamara

Councillor Lockwood paid tribute to Noel and Bev McNamara who recently passed away. Noel and Bev were keen activists for victims of crime and were keen volunteers who dedicated their lives to supporting victims of crime.

Councillor Lockwood shared the following tribute from their daughter Kelly:

Bev & Noel McNamara, moved to Knox from Port Melbourne in 1964, with their first child Tracey.

Followed by Kelly in 1965, and Anthony in 1968, they quickly became part of St Joseph’s Parish Boronia. In the 1990’s they became parishioners of St John the Baptist Catholic Church Ferntree-Gully.

Their daughter Tracey was a local hairdresser who was murdered in 1992. Because of that tragedy, Bev and Noel became involved in a victims' group and later starting their own victims of crime group campaigning for tougher sentencing.

Because of their work with victims, they were presented with Knox Local Community Awards, one being the Knox Local Hero's award. They were both awarded an OAM in the Queen's birthday honours of 2004.

They were very well known and respected in the local community--Bev was an active member of St John the Baptist Catholic Church and was a long serving member of St Vincent de Paul.

Bev and Noel were married for 65 years with their final years were at Murrenda Residential Aged Care in Wantirna. Noel passed away on the 26th of August, followed by Bev on 22nd September.

They are survived by their daughter Kelly, son Anthony, 4 grandchildren and their partners, as well as a great granddaughter.

May they both rest in peace.

Councillor Lockwood then provided his own memories of Bev and Noel:

I first met Noel and Bev when I was on council in my second stint in 2000. I found them to be very keen activists in advocating for victims of crime. They were compulsive volunteers, are on our honour board in Knox, and Noel was a part of the Commonwealth Games Baton Relay in Knox.

In 1993, Noel McNamara established the Crime Victims Support Association with his wife where he was an outspoken critic of the Australian Justice System and lobbied the government on criminal law reform and greater support for victims of crime; frequently airing his views in the Australian news media. His 'hardline approach to crime often conflicted with the views and actions of civil liberties advocates, the parole board, members of the legal profession and judges; advocating for harsher jail sentences for people convicted of murder, rape, paedophilia, culpable driving and other violent crimes - views which resonate today.

He also advocated for the abolition of minimum sentences within the penal system, the abolition of double jeopardy laws which came to pass and the abolition of crimes compensation payments to the families of murdered criminals.

Noel was outraged after his eldest daughter Tracey McNamara was murdered in 1992 and the killer only received a 10-year minimum jail term, which is low for ending a life.

Since that time, Noel actively supported victims of violent crime and often personally attended court cases on behalf of victims.

They were great achievers.

The Mayor, Councillor Cooper also extended her condolences to the McNamara family on behalf of Council.

5 Reports By Councillors

5.1 Councillor Baker

Councillor Baker reported attending the following:

- Budget Public Submissions Hearing.
- Occupational Health and Safety Training.
- Knox Disability Advisory Committee Meeting.
- Bayswater Library Official Opening

5.2 Councillor Kennett

Councillor Kennett reported attending the following:

- BBCN and Bayswater Seniors Annual General Meeting – both are valued community organisations
- Outer East Foodshare Celebrations to mark their 5 year anniversary with Cr Cooper, Cr Duncan and Cr Lockwood. The organisation provides food to 45 organisations throughout Knox.
- Bayswater Library Opening with Cr Cooper, Cr Lockwood, Cr Baker and the Minister for Local Government, The Hon. Nick Staikos MP, who noted there are more local libraries in Melbourne than McDonald's franchises.
- Launch of the Boronia-Bayswater Community Directory - a booklet to support residents to find the services they need, supported by the State Government and Your Library.

Councillor Kennett also:

- Met with residents to discuss the Domestic Animal Management Plan, dogs off lead, mental health impacts, parklets, Knox Youth Services and the upcoming Poppy appeal.
- Visited Miller's Homestead which hosted a new free Art Exhibition with 37 unique pieces of art produced by 24 artists.
- Congratulated Boronia Rotarian, Ray Siegersma, who was recognised for his outstanding volunteer service through a Westfield Knox Local Hero competition. Ray runs a skills development program for young people to introduce them to trades and is starting a new Men's Mental Health Hub in Boronia.

5.3 Councillor Atwell

Councillor Atwell reported attending the following:

- Scoresby CFA Open Day with over 600 people attending to raise awareness about fire preparedness with a behind the scenes look of the Station. Cr Atwell congratulated the Scoresby CFA leaders and 'Heavenly Sweets and Treats' who supported the event.
- Rowville Lysterfield Makers and Bakers Rotary Market that showcased the strength of our local creative economy and social enterprises. It provided an excellent platform for supporting artisans and local food producers such as The Greatest Domes, The Source Candle Co., and The Basin Backyard. Council looks forward to continuing its support for Rotary President Bob and the organisers each month as the market grows and strengthens community connections.

Councillor Atwell also:

- Appreciated the support and assistance from officers for a resident after a street tree incident in Selwood Court, Rowville.

- Congratulated Boronia Rotarian, Ray Siegersma, who was recognised for his outstanding volunteer service through a Westfield Knox Local Hero competition.
- Recognised the local Knox Scouts for attending a 'Kangaree' camp for Joey Scouts in Mt Martha, with many experiencing their first time away from home, including his 5 year old son Max who shared adventures, developed independence, learned life skills and made friends; thanking the volunteers and scout leaders who made the event possible.

5.4 Councillor Considine

Councillor Considine reported attending the following:

- Knox United Cycling Club Junior Presentation Day with Cr Pearce.
- Knox Multicultural Advisory Committee Meeting.

Councillor Considine also:

- Noted that Knox Off-Road Radio Control Car Racing Club will be hosting a major event at Carrington Park from October 31 to November 2.

5.5 Councillor Duncan

Councillor Duncan reported attending the following:

- Budget Public Submissions Hearing.
- Services Workshop with all Councillors.
- Attended the Ferntree Gully Falcons 60th Anniversary Past Players event.
- Attended Ferntree Gully Falcons 60th Celebration Day with Cr Baker at the Rowville Community Centre.
- Outer East Food Share: 5 year Lease celebration event with Cr Cooper, Cr Lockwood, Cr Kennett and Council officers.
- Meeting between Mary Doyle MP, Jackson Taylor MP, Templeton Cricket Club, Wantirna South Jr Football Club regarding the Federal Government's financial commitment to the pavilion upgrade at Templeton Reserve.
- Met with Wantirna Senior Football Club President and Cr Williams to discuss ongoing pavilion strategy and future needs alignment.
- Attended the Westfield Community Safety Day at Knox Shopping Centre with Cr Williams and Cr Kennett.

Councillor Duncan also:

- Responded to enquiries from residents regarding parking, fencing and footpaths.

5.6 Councillor Williams

Councillor Williams reported attending the following:

- Bayswater Sharks Cricket Club Comedy Night.
- Westfield Community Day with Cr Duncan and Cr Kennett.
- Meeting with Kevin from Wantirna South Football Club.
- Knox Community Gardens Open Day.
- Meeting with business owners regarding parklet issues.

- Meeting with Opposition Leader Brad Battin MP in Bayswater.
- Bayswater Strikers Soccer Club Annual General Meeting and Presentation Night.

Councillor Williams also:

- Noted upcoming Haunted House and Halloween events in Bayswater and invited people to attend the Knox Historical Society Cemetery Tour at the Ferntree Gully Cemetery, along with an upcoming Youth Advisory Committee Meeting.
- Noted he was disappointed with the raising of pet registration fees by State Government.
- Celebrated his daughter's graduation.

5.7 Councillor Lockwood

Councillor Lockwood reported attending the following:

- Your Library Board Committee Meeting.
- Council Budget Submissions.
- Boronia- The Basin Handbook Event at Boronia Library with Cr Kennett.
- Eastern Raptors Meeting to address break-in problems with Cr Kennett and Council staff.
- Knox Multicultural Advisory Committee Meeting.
- Outer East Foodshare Event with Cr Cooper, Cr Duncan and Cr Kennett.
- Bayswater Library Official Opening with Cr Cooper, Cr Baker, Cr Kennett, Jackson Taylor MP and Local Government Minister, The Hon, Nick Staikos MP.
- Westfield Community Safety Day which was attended by Bayswater and Boronia CFA members and the local Ambulance services.
- Haering Road Kindergarten 50 Year Anniversary – outlining it was amazing to note the generations of families and original Committee members attending along with the warm atmosphere.
- Homelessness Forum in Manningham set up by the Eastern Affordable Housing Alliance, noting there are 400,000 homeless people in Australia at the moment and 123,000 of those (with an average of over 53,000 per year) have been turned away from services due to a lack of capacity and indicated Governments are not doing enough to address homelessness.

5.8 Councillor Pearce

Councillor Pearce reported attending the following:

- Budget Public Submissions where she heard from Knox Infolink, Rowville Hawks Football Club and Waverley Soccer Club.
- Knox United Soccer Club Presentation Day with Cr Considine, and awarded the runners-up trophy to the Under 14C team – congratulated Felice and the team for the event.
- Knox Business Awards, acknowledging the following winners:
 - Excellence in Sustainability and Environment - Yellowstone Landscaping
 - Outstanding Young Business Leader – Josiah Coluccio – Lexity Plumbing and Electrical
 - Health Care and Wellness Industries - True Hearing
 - Retail and Professional Services - The Basin Backyard
 - Tourism, Recreation and Hospitality - 1961 Coffee Roasters
 - Business and Professional Services – Training Services – Barry Plant Wantirna
 - New Business – The Hair Networkand encouraged people to place their submissions for the Knox Business Awards next year.

- Municipal Association of Victoria State Council Meeting with Knox City Council CEO, Bruce Dobson, where Council motions relating to school connections and community Police services resourcing were put forward by Council and adopted by State Council.

Councillor Pearce also:

- Met with residents to discuss issues regarding trees, footpaths, planning, football and soccer club allocations and repairs.
- Encouraged people to attend the Quarry Safari Open Day on Sunday 16 November 2025 from 10am, where there is face painting and a Quarry Tour which requires booking beforehand.

5.9 Councillor Cooper

Councillor Cooper reported attending the following:

- Interviews with Cr Pearce for a new Independent Member of Council's Audit and Risk Committee which ensures Council's strong governance and compliance framework and was impressed with the calibre of applicants and their diverse working backgrounds.
- Eastern Regional Group Committee Meeting where a Memorandum of Understanding was signed relating to increasing efficiencies, reduced duplication and improved services delivery via a shared service agreement with other Councils.
- Outer East Foodshare Event– noting the dedication and positivity of volunteers in Knox, Maroondah and Yarra Ranges supplying to over 50 food relief agencies and supporting 50 to 100 families per week, with food security serving as a major issue - a collaboration between Council and the community.
- Bayswater Library Opening with the Minister for Local Government, The Hon. Nick Staikos MP, noting it is a modern and welcoming space with up to date technology.
- Rowville Community House Annual General Meeting noting that this organisation fosters community connection through lifelong learning and community engagement.

Councillor Cooper also:

- Acknowledged in the 'Real Impact' report which highlights the work of neighbourhood houses. There are 5 neighbourhood houses in Knox (Coonara Community House, Orana Community House, The Basin Community House, Rowville Neighbourhood Learning Centre and Mountain District Learning Centre). Neighbourhood Houses Victoria recently released a report that highlights that neighbourhood houses have generated \$3.5 million in income and delivered \$22.6 million of value including \$3.3 million toward social connection, \$1.2 million for volunteer contributions, \$43,000 for emergency relief, 1284 kg of food distributed, and 690 meals per month through community frozen lunches.
- Endorsed the 'Happy Smiley People' business on Boronia Road in Wantirna where there is a play-based early intervention program for children with a former guide dog who is loved by the children and interacts with them. Cr Cooper encouraged people to reach out to Council if they wish to be involved.
- Noted the upcoming The Basin Community House Annual General Meeting.

6 Planning Matters

6.1 Report of Planning Applications Decided Under Delegation 1 September 2025 to 30 September 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 delegation 1 September 2025 to 30 September 2025 as set out in the officers' report.

RESOLUTION

MOVED: Councillor Williams

SECONDED: Councillor Atwell

That Council note the planning applications decided under delegation 1 September 2025 to 30 September 2025 as set out in the officers' report.

CARRIED

7 Public Question Time

Question Time commenced at 7:45pm.

The following questions were raised with Council:

7.1.1 Question One – Sarah Jago

Can Knox Council please explain why they have chosen to risk losing valuable, exceptional Educators by refusing to apply for the Australian government funded Early Childhood Education and Care Temporary Retention Program, despite being eligible and despite the pleas from their staff and the union to apply? I ask this question directly at the council meeting as my, and many other correspondence to Knox City Council has gone unanswered.

The Director Connected Communities, Judy Chalkley responded:

- We recognise and support the need for an increase to the children’s services industry award. This commitment is reflected in our long-standing practice of paying our early years educators above the award rate under the Knox City Council Enterprise Agreement.
- Following careful consideration of staff feedback and further analysis, we determined not to submit an application for the retention payment funding. This decision based on several factors including:
 - ongoing uncertainties with the funding model,
 - the unequal application of the grant across the Early Childhood Education and Care workforce,
 - restrictions on fee growth, and
 - the temporary nature of the funding
- We understand these concerns are shared by many other Victorian local governments, with the majority of local governments also not applying.
- We highly value our early years educators and remain committed to supporting them through continued above-award remuneration, generous leave entitlements, professional learning and development opportunities, and other employee benefits that are part of the Knox Enterprise Agreement.
- I can also confirm that all correspondence officers have received from staff and families have been responded to.

7.1.2 Question Two - Alexandra Klazinga

Given the Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) Worker Retention Payment's objective of addressing historic gender-based wage inequity, how does Knox City Council justify using the existence of internal inequalities as a reason to forgo applying for the Worker Retention Payment?

The Director Connected Communities, Judy Chalkley responded:

- We agree that the Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) Worker Retention Payment is an initiative designed to help address historic gender-based pay inequities within the early childhood sector.
- Following careful consideration of staff feedback and further analysis, we determined not to submit an application for the retention payment funding. This decision was based on several factors including:
 - ongoing uncertainties with the funding model
 - the unequal application of the grant across the Early Childhood Education and Care workforce
 - restrictions on fee growth
 - the temporary nature of the funding
- We understand these concerns are shared by many other Victorian local governments, with the majority of local governments also not applying.
- We highly value our early years educators and remain committed to supporting them through continued above-award remuneration, generous leave entitlements, professional learning and development opportunities, and other employee benefits that are part of the Knox Enterprise Agreement.

7.1.3 Question Three - Alexandra Klazinga

Has the Council considered how refusing to apply for the Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) Worker Retention Payment reflects poorly on its priority of 'leading, listening and governing responsibly', eroding trust and satisfaction among parents who support these services and ratepayers?

The Director Connected Communities, Judy Chalkley responded:

- As indicated in the previous answer, we carefully considered the Worker Retention Payment and staff feedback before deciding not to apply.
- While I appreciate that you do not support the outcome, we have sought to be transparent in communicating the decision with both early years staff and with any enquiries received from families and outlining key factors contributing to the decision.

7.1.4 Question Four - Justine Salanitri

In regard to the parklet outside Schokolade Cafe, do you think there is any benefit to the community in removing the structure immediately as opposed to leaving it while all parties work out how to come to a solution to make it compliant?

The Acting Director City Liveability, Jonathan McNally responded:

- This item is being considered as part of this evening's agenda.
- The building inspection advice that is included as an attachment to the officer's report for outdoor dining identifies a number of structural issues with the Parklet located outside of Schokolade café.
- The officer's recommendation is to remove the structure based on this building advice due to the safety risks identified. The benefit of its immediate removal, is to minimise safety risks to the community as a result of the non-compliance and safety issues associated with the structure. The structure is also located within an active car parking area and service road without adequate traffic barriers to provide separation that would normally be required at a location such as this.

7.1.5 Question Five - Justine Salanitri

On behalf of Boronia Rotary, where do you suggest moving the community book library that is currently inside the Schokolade Parklet if that was to be removed?

The Acting Director City Liveability, Jonathan McNally responded:

- Council acknowledges the value of the community book library currently located within the Schokolade Parklet.
- Council officers will work with Boronia Rotary to identify a suitable temporary location within the Studfield shopping precinct. This location would aim to reflect the accessibility and visibility of other Rotary book libraries in Boronia and Wantirna, to support continued community benefit and ease of access of this facility.

Question Time Concluded at 8:00pm.

8 Officer Reports

8.10 Outdoor Dining - Parklets

SUMMARY

This report responds to Council's resolution at its Mid-Month Meeting on 10 June 2025 in relation to the existing Outdoor Dining Parklets in Knox. Relevant to this report, the resolution, raised as an Alternate Motion is as follows:

That Council:

- 1) Approve the removal of the outdoor dining parklets located within Knox, with the exception of parklets currently in use by Paddy's Tavern (34 Forest Road, Ferntree Gully), Italianissimo (36 Forest Road, Ferntree Gully), Schokolade (213 Stud Road, Wantirna South) and Studfield Charcoal Chicken (215 Stud Road, Wantirna South).*
- 2) Approve the retention of the parklets benefitting Italianissimo, Paddy's Tavern, Charcoal Chicken and Schokolade on a temporary basis until 31 October 2025 to allow Council officers to prepare advice to Council on the following:*
 - a. a process to facilitate the ongoing or permanent provision of an outdoor dining parklet(s) benefiting the proprietors identified in Point 1, noting land ownership arrangements, statutory approvals, and other requirements;*
 - b. whether the existing outdoor dining parklet structures should be removed (noting the temporary nature of the structures) and rebuilt based on updated Building advice and other matters outlined in Point 2a);*
 - c. estimated cost for the removal and/or constructions of any new outdoor dining structure based on the Building advice noted in Point 2b);*
 - d. advice on any proposed governance arrangements that should be in place for the ongoing or permanent provision of an outdoor dining parklet(s) with respect to ongoing management, maintenance and operation of the parklets; and*
 - e. any other matters deemed relevant to Council's consideration of this matter.*
- 3) Authorise Council officers to write to the proprietors identified in Point 1 to advise that Council requires confirmation in writing of their intention to continue to operate a parklet at the current location over the longer term, and any associated costs that may be passed on to shop owners. This confirmation must be provided within 1 month from the date of Council's notice.*
- 4) Notes that officers will present a report at a future Council meeting no later than 31 October 2025 with advice on matters outlined in Points 2 and 3.*

Additionally, this report highlights an issue with respect to the parklet at "24 Spices" restaurant at 7/13 High Street, Bayswater. Council had resolved to remove a number of outdoor dining parklets including 24 Spices, as part of its 10 June 2025 resolution. All parklets have now been removed except 24 Spices following strong feedback from the proprietor that they now wish for the parklet to remain.

Officers have not acted to remove the 24 Spices parklet to date, noting their feedback. Should Council resolve to provide 'in-principle' support for the ongoing operation of Paddy's Tavern/Italianissimo and Schokolade/Studfield Charcoal Chicken parklet, it should consider offering the same to 24 Spices, noting that a final decision to allow a parklet to operate in any location is subject to separate statutory processes, and the officer recommendation is for the

existing structure to be removed regardless of whether a future parklet is approved and operational.

This report advises of the potential pathways available to Council and/or the affected business owners to continue to operate a parklet at 34 Forest Road and 36 Forest Road, Ferntree Gully and 213 Stud Road and 215 Stud Road, Wantirna South.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Resolve to remove the existing outdoor dining parklets currently in use by Paddy's Tavern (34 Forest Road, Ferntree Gully), Italianissimo (36 Forest Road, Ferntree Gully), Schokolade (213 Stud Road, Wantirna South) and Studfield Charcoal Chicken (215 Stud Road, Wantirna South).
2. Note the processes outlined in this report to facilitate outdoor dining at the locations listed in Point 1.
3. Note the intermediary role Council is required to undertake to facilitate an on-road dining permit from the Department of Transport and Planning (DTP) in support of an outdoor dining parklet on Stud Road, Wantirna South.
4. Resolve to uphold its resolution from 10 June 2025 meeting to remove the existing outdoor dining parklet currently utilised by 24 Spices (7/13 High Street, Bayswater) and notes that any future outdoor dining at this location would require a Licence Agreement.

MOTION

MOVED: Councillor Baker

SECONDED: Councillor Atwell

That Council:

1. Note the officers' recommendation to remove the existing outdoor dining parklets in use by Paddy's Tavern (34 Forest Road, Ferntree Gully), Italianissimo (36 Forest Road, Ferntree Gully), Schokolade (213 Stud Road, Wantirna South), Studfield Charcoal Chicken (215 Stud Road, Wantirna South) and 24 Spices (7/13 High Street, Bayswater) based on the Building Inspection Report.
2. Resolve to extend the existing outdoor dining parklets currently in use as listed at Point 1 until 1 March 2026 to allow the proprietor(s) time to apply and progress an application for outdoor dining at the current locations through the relevant statutory processes.
3. Provide a further extension to allow the operation of the outdoor dining parklets noted in Point 1 after 1 March 2026 and until 1 June 2026, should that be required, subject to the proprietor(s) having lodged the relevant statutory application for an ongoing outdoor dining parklet by 5.00pm 27 February 2026.
4. Instruct officers to commence the removal of the existing outdoor dining parklets from 2 March 2026 if the proprietor(s) have not lodged the relevant statutory application for an ongoing outdoor dining parklet by 5.00pm 27 February 2026.
5. If an extension has been granted in accordance with point 3 until 1 June 2026, instruct officers to remove the existing outdoor dining parklets noted in Point 2 from 1 June 2026 irrespective of the status of the relevant statutory application unless all works to the parklet structures have been completed to satisfy the requirements of the Department of Transport and Planning (DTP) and/or Council's Building Surveyor.

6. Request officers provide an update to Councillors by 13 February 2026 on progress on the statutory application and any compliance issues identified to date.

PROCEDURAL MOTION

MOVED: Councillor Duncan

SECONDED: Councillor Pearce

That Councillor Williams be permitted an extension of time to speak under Section 42 of the Governance Rules of Knox City Council.

CARRIED

The substantive motion was put and LOST.

A Division was called by Councillor Baker

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

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

Abstention: Nil.

LOST 4:5

Councillor Lockwood left the meeting at 8:41pm and returned to the meeting at 8:45pm before the following vote on item 8.10.

RESOLUTION

MOVED: Councillor Williams

SECONDED: Councillor Pearce

That Council:

1. **Note the officers' recommendation to remove the existing outdoor dining parklets in use by Paddy's Tavern (34 Forest Road, Ferntree Gully), Italianissimo (36 Forest Road, Ferntree Gully), Schokolade (213 Stud Road, Wantirna South), Studfield Charcoal Chicken (215 Stud Road, Wantirna South) and 24 Spices (7/13 High Street, Bayswater) based on the Building Inspection Report.**
2. **Resolve to extend the existing outdoor dining parklet currently in use by Schokolade (213 Stud Road, Wantirna South), Studfield Charcoal Chicken (215 Stud Road, Wantirna South) and 24 Spices (7/13 High Street, Bayswater), Paddy's Tavern (34 Forest Road, Ferntree Gully) and Italianissimo (36 Forest Road, Ferntree Gully) until 1 March 2026 to allow the**

respective proprietor(s) time to apply and progress an application for outdoor dining at the current locations through the relevant statutory processes.

3. Provide a further extension to allow the operation of the outdoor dining parklets noted in Point 2 after 1 March 2026 and until 1 June 2026, should that be required, subject to the respective proprietor(s) having lodged the relevant statutory application for an ongoing outdoor dining parklet by 5.00pm 27 February 2026.
4. Instruct officers to commence the removal of the existing outdoor dining parklets noted in Point 2 from 2 March 2026 if the respective proprietor(s) have not lodged the relevant statutory application for an ongoing outdoor dining parklet by 5.00pm 27 February 2026.
5. If an extension has been granted in accordance with point 4 until 1 June 2026, instruct officers to remove the existing outdoor dining parklets noted in Point 2 from 1 June 2026 irrespective of the status of the relevant statutory application unless all works to the parklet structures have been completed to satisfy the requirements of the Department of Transport and Planning (DTP) and/or Council's Building Surveyor.
6. Provide in-principle support for an outdoor dining parklet to benefit Schokolade and Studfield Charcoal Chicken at Stud Road, Wantirna South, noting that any outdoor dining provision in this location is subject to the Department of Transport and Planning's (DTP) approval.
7. Note that the proprietor(s) of Schokolade and Studfield Charcoal Chicken may apply to DTP via Council for approval to provide outdoor dining at the current parklet location and are responsible for costs associated with any statutory requirements to apply and establish outdoor dining benefiting their businesses.
8. Note that all proprietors are responsible for costs associated with any statutory requirements to apply and establish outdoor dining benefiting their businesses.
9. Request officers present a report to Council by end of April 2026 outlining a possible approach for a municipal-wide outdoor dining policy and potential timing to initiate the development of the policy.

CARRIED

PROCEDURAL MOTION

ADJOURNMENT

MOVED: Councillor Pearce

SECONDED: Councillor Duncan

That Council adjourn the Meeting for 10 Minutes.

CARRIED

The Meeting was adjourned at 9:05pm and resumed at 9:20pm with all Councillors present except Councillor Pearce.

8.1 Planning Delegations Review

SUMMARY

This report relates to the Planning Instrument of Delegation which was adopted by Council on 24 February 2025 and previously substantially reviewed in November 2021. This report recommends several changes to the Instrument of Delegation due to changes in officer titles and minor updates. The proposed Instrument of Delegation seeks to provide a balance with respect to what applications are determined by Council and the need to provide a timely and cost effective service.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council, in the exercise of the powers conferred by the legislation referred to in the attached Instrument of Delegation – Planning (Attachment 2 to the officers' report), resolve that:

1. There be delegated to the members of Council staff holding, acting or performing the duties of the offices or positions referred to in the Instrument of Delegation – Planning (Attachment 1) the powers, duties and functions set out in that instrument, subject to the conditions and limitations specified in that Instrument;
2. The Instrument of Delegation – Planning set out in Attachment 2 come into force immediately upon this resolution being made and, following the acceptance of tracked changes, the instrument being signed by the Mayor and Council's Chief Executive Officer;
3. On the coming into force of the above Instrument of Delegation – Planning, the respective previous Instrument of Delegation – Planning executed in February 2025 be revoked; and
4. The duties and functions set out in the Instrument of Delegation – Planning must be performed, and the powers set out in the instruments must be executed, in accordance with any guidelines or policies of Council that it may adopt from time to time.

Councillor Pearce returned to the meeting at 9.21pm before the vote on item 8.1.

RESOLUTION

MOVED: Councillor Baker

SECONDED: Councillor Duncan

That Council, in the exercise of the powers conferred by the legislation referred to in the attached Instrument of Delegation – Planning (Attachment 2 to the officers' report), resolve that:

1. There be delegated to the members of Council staff holding, acting or performing the duties of the offices or positions referred to in the Instrument of Delegation – Planning (Attachment 1) the powers, duties and functions set out in that instrument, subject to the conditions and limitations specified in that Instrument;
2. The Instrument of Delegation – Planning set out in Attachment 2 come into force immediately upon this resolution being made and, following the acceptance of tracked changes, the instrument being signed by the Mayor and Council's Chief Executive Officer;
3. On the coming into force of the above Instrument of Delegation – Planning, the respective previous Instrument of Delegation – Planning executed in February 2025 be revoked; and

- 4. The duties and functions set out in the Instrument of Delegation – Planning must be performed, and the powers set out in the instruments must be executed, in accordance with any guidelines or policies of Council that it may adopt from time to time.**

CARRIED

8.2 Review of Planning Consultative Committee Terms of Reference

SUMMARY

This report relates to the Terms of Reference for the Planning Consultative Committee. The Terms of reference are due for review, and given the increasing pressure to determine applications promptly as well as the ineffectiveness of the meetings to resolve issues, it is recommended that Council no longer hold Planning Consultative Committee Meetings as part of the Planning process and that the Terms of Reference not be renewed.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council resolve to:

1. No longer hold Planning Consultative Committee Meetings as part of the Planning Application assessment process; and
2. That the Planning Consultative Committee Terms of Reference not be renewed.

RESOLUTION

MOVED: Councillor Cooper

SECONDED: Councillor Baker

That Council resolve to:

1. Continue holding Planning Consultative Committee Meetings as part of the Planning Application assessment process; and
2. Receive a report to a future Council meeting (to be determined in consultation with the Mayor) to review the Planning Consultative Committee Terms of Reference.

CARRIED

8.3 Appeals Against VCAT Decisions Procedure Review

SUMMARY

This report relates to the internal procedure for the practice of consideration of appeals to the Supreme Court for a review of Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) decisions. The procedure is due for review, and it is recommended that Council adopt the procedure unchanged with a four-year review period.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council adopt the Knox Procedure – Appeals of Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal Decisions, as outlined in Attachment 1 of this report.

RESOLUTION

MOVED: Councillor Baker

SECONDED: Councillor Lockwood

That Council adopt the Knox Procedure – Appeals of Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal Decisions, as outlined in Attachment 1 of this report.

CARRIED

8.4 Councillor Notification Process for Planning Applications

SUMMARY

This report relates to the requirements for Councillor Notification of certain planning applications which are currently carried out in accordance with a Council decision of 12 June 2018. It is recommended that the current notification requirement for councillors be discontinued. The practice has not significantly influenced council decision making, it is becoming less relevant under recent planning reforms, and it creates unnecessary administrative workload for both officers and councillors.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council resolve to discontinue the practice of notifying councillors of specific planning applications, replacing the position adopted at the Strategic Planning Committee Meeting on 12 June 2018.

RESOLUTION

MOVED: Councillor Cooper

SECONDED: Councillor Pearce

That Council resolve to continue the practice of notifying councillors of specific planning applications in accordance with, the position adopted at the Strategic Planning Committee Meeting on 12 June 2018.

CARRIED

8.5 Asset Plan 2026-2035

SUMMARY

Section 92 of the Local Government Act 2020 requires Council to develop, adopt and keep in force an Asset Plan as a component of its Strategic Planning and Reporting Framework. The Asset Plan 2026 - 2035 sets out how we will acquire, build, look after, and use assets over the next 10 years and beyond. This version of the Asset Plan is a revision and update of the Asset Plan 2022-2032 adopted by Council in 2021. The revision has been completed in accordance with Council's deliberate engagement practices. At its meeting of Council on June 23, 2025, Council endorsed the draft Asset Plan for Stage 2 consultation with the broader community. This report provides feedback received via Council's Have Your Say website and pop-up sessions. The Stage 2 consultation has resulted in only minor administrative amendments to the Draft Asset Plan presented in this report.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Endorse the Draft Asset Plan 2026 - 2035, presented as Attachment 1, in accordance with the Local Government Act 2020 Section 92(4).
2. Note that the Draft Asset Plan 2026 – 2035 development has been informed by a two-phase deliberative engagement process in line with legislated requirements, comprising:
 - Phase 1: Two 25-member Community Panel workshops, utilising deliberative engagement principles.
 - Phase 2: Councils Have Your Say web portal consultation process.

RESOLUTION

MOVED: Councillor Pearce

SECONDED: Councillor Baker

That Council:

1. Endorse the Draft Asset Plan 2026 - 2035, presented as Attachment 1, in accordance with the Local Government Act 2020 Section 92(4).
2. Note that the Draft Asset Plan 2026 – 2035 development has been informed by a two-phase deliberative engagement process in line with legislated requirements, comprising:
 - Phase 1: Two 25-member Community Panel workshops, utilising deliberative engagement principles.
 - Phase 2: Councils Have Your Say web portal consultation process.

CARRIED

8.6 Road Management Plan Review - Post Engagement

SUMMARY

The Knox Road Management Plan (RMP) sets out Council's approach to the inspection, maintenance and repair of its public roads and road related assets. If complied with, the RMP provides Council with a policy defence against civil liability claims associated with its management of the road network.

Under the Road Management (General) Regulations 2016, Council is obligated, following the election of a new Council, to formally review its Road Management Plan by 31 October 2025. The regulations state that the purpose of the review is to assess the appropriateness of levels of service for inspection, maintenance and repair of Council's Road related assets. To achieve this purpose Council has:

- Benchmarked its levels of service against other Councils,
- Investigated its level of service performance for inspection, maintenance and repair of its public roads and road related assets during the past four years, and
- Considered recommendations from its insurers
- Considered community feedback.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Note the community feedback received via Council's Have Your Say on the Road Management Plan review and the officer responses to this feedback.
2. Endorse the Road Management Plan Review Report – 2025-2036 (attachment 1)
3. Note that any amendment of the Road Management Plan will be managed in accordance with Road Management Act General Regulations 2016.

RESOLUTION

MOVED: Councillor Williams

SECONDED: Councillor Atwell

That Council:

1. **Note the community feedback received via Council's Have Your Say on the Road Management Plan review and the officer responses to this feedback.**
2. **Endorse the Road Management Plan Review Report – 2025-2036 (attachment 1)**
3. **Note that any amendment of the Road Management Plan will be managed in accordance with Road Management Act General Regulations 2016.**

CARRIED

8.7 Community Development Fund Program Assessment Panel Recommendations 2025-2026

SUMMARY

This report presents the recommendations of the Community Development Fund (CDF) Assessment Panel for Council's 2025-26 CDF Grants Program allocation to not-for-profit community groups operating within Knox.

Of the 100 applications that were received:

- 32 applications are recommended for funding in full (refer Attachment 1);
- 19 applications are recommended for partial funding (refer Attachment 2);
- 31 applications are not recommended for funding (refer to Attachment 3); and
- 18 did not meet eligibility requirements to proceed to Panel Assessment.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council resolve to approve the Community Development Fund Assessment Panel's recommendations for full, partial and not recommended applications for the 2025-2026 round.

RESOLUTION

MOVED: Councillor Cooper

SECONDED: Councillor Williams

That Council resolve to split Item 8.7 Community Development Fund Program Assessment Panel Recommendations 2025-2026 into two or more parts so that a quorum can be maintained for each separate part.

CARRIED

Pursuant to Section 130 of the Local Government Act 2020 (the Act) and Chapter 5 of the Governance Rules of Knox City Council, Councillor Cooper declared a general conflict of interest in this item on the grounds that she is a Network Manager for some of the Community Houses that are listed in this Report.

Councillor Cooper left the meeting at 10:04pm before the following discussion and vote.

The Deputy Mayor Councillor Atwell assumed the role as Chairperson of the Meeting.

RESOLUTION

MOVED: Councillor Williams

SECONDED: Councillor Baker

That Council resolve to:

1. Adopt the Community Development Fund Assessment Panel's recommendation to fully fund the following applicants in the 2025-2026 funding round:
 - Coonara Community House for 'She Connects – Equipment Component' for \$15,000.00.
 - Orana Neighbourhood House for 'Thriving in Knox: A local approach to wellbeing, connection and resilience for social housing residents' for \$14,780.00.
 - The Basin Community House for 'Men and Technology at The Basin' for \$10,991.00.
2. Adopt the Community Development Fund Assessment Panel's recommendation to partially fund the following applicants in the 2025-2026 funding round:
 - Coonara Community House for 'Knox Community Chess Enthusiasts (KCCE)' for \$2,237.94.
 - Glen Park Community Centre Inc for 'Project STORE (Supporting Timely Outreach & Resource Essentials)' for \$5,000.00.

CARRIED

Councillor Cooper returned to the meeting at 10:08pm and resumed as the Chairperson of the Meeting.

Pursuant to Section 130 of the Local Government Act 2020 (the Act) and Chapter 5 of the Governance Rules of Knox City Council, Councillor Baker declared a general conflict of interest in this item on the grounds that she has a family member on the Committee of the Ferntree Gully Falcons who are the subject of this resolution.

Pursuant to Section 130 of the Local Government Act 2020 (the Act) and Chapter 5 of the Governance Rules of Knox City Council, Councillor Duncan declared a material conflict of interest in this item on the grounds that he is a member of the Executive Committee of the Ferntree Gully Falcons in his capacity as Vice-President of the Club who the subject of this Resolution.

Councillor Baker left the meeting at 10:10pm before the following discussion and vote.

Councillor Duncan left the meeting at 10:10pm before the following discussion and vote.

MOTION

MOVED: Councillor Lockwood

SECONDED: Councillor Atwell

That Council resolve to adopt the Community Development Fund Assessment Panel's recommendation to not fund the Ferntree Gully Falcons in the 2025-2026 funding round.

LOST

RESOLUTION

MOVED: Councillor Lockwood

SECONDED: Councillor Kennett

That Council resolve to defer the application of the Ferntree Gully Falcons or the 2025-2026 funding round of the Community Development Fund to a future Meeting.

CARRIED

Councillor Baker returned to the meeting at 10:15pm.

Councillor Duncan returned to the meeting at 10:15pm.

Pursuant to Section 130 of the Local Government Act 2020 (the Act) and Chapter 5 of the Governance Rules of Knox City Council, Councillor Pearce declared a general conflict of interest in this item on the grounds that she is the Auditor of the Wantirna Jetbacks Basketball Club who are the subject of this Resolution.

Councillor Pearce left the meeting at 10:17pm before the following discussion and vote.

RESOLUTION

MOVED: Councillor Duncan

SECONDED: Councillor Baker

Adopt the Community Development Fund Assessment Panel's recommendation to partially fund Wantirna Jetbacks Basketball Club Inc for 'Community Coaching Equipment and Support Initiative' for \$399.80 in the 2025-2026 funding round.

CARRIED

Councillor Pearce returned to the meeting at 10:18pm.

Pursuant to Section 130 of the Local Government Act 2020 (the Act) and Chapter 5 of the Governance Rules of Knox City Council, Councillor Williams declared a general conflict of interest in this item on the grounds that he is a member of the Ferntree Gully Fire Brigade and the Knox Wind Symphony are clients of his business; both organisations are subjects of this resolution.

Councillor Williams left the meeting at 10:19pm before the following discussion and vote.

RESOLUTION

MOVED: Councillor Baker

SECONDED: Councillor Lockwood

That Council resolve to adopt the Community Development Fund Assessment Panel's recommendation to fully fund the following applicants in the 2025-2026 funding round:

- 1. Knox Wind Symphony Inc. for 'Purchase musical instrument' for \$ 5,000.00 in the 2025-2026 funding round.**
- 2. Ferntree Gully Fire Brigade for 'Portable Speaker set' for \$ 3,346.00 in the 2025-2026 funding round.**

CARRIED

Councillor Williams returned to the meeting at 10:21pm.

RESOLUTION

MOVED: Councillor Baker

SECONDED: Councillor Pearce

That Council resolve to approve the remaining Community Development Fund Assessment Panel's recommendations for full, partial and not recommended applications for the 2025-2026 round.

CARRIED

PROCEDURAL MOTION

MOVED: Councillor Baker

SECONDED: Councillor Pearce

That Council resolve to extend the Meeting until 11:00pm.

CARRIED

8.8 Contract 3444 - Recycling Processing

SUMMARY

This report details the procurement process and recommends a contractor for the delivery of Contract 3444 - Provision of Recyclables Processing Services. This contract will commence 1 December 2025 and replace the current contract for these services (2601), which expires 30 November 2025.

The scope of works includes the receipt, sorting, processing and marketing of recyclables (with and without the inclusion of glass), that are collected as part of council's kerbside collection services.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Awards Contract 3444 - Provision of Kerbside Recyclables Processing services to Re.Cycle Operations Pty Ltd (Regroup) (ABN 49984541896) for a schedule of rates-based contract, for an initial period of three years commencing 1 December 2025.
2. Authorise the Chief Executive Officer (or such person they nominate) to formalise and execute all required contract documentation.
3. Authorise the Chief Executive Officer (or such person they nominate) to execute all parts of this contract including extensions and annual CPI increase; and
4. Advise all tenderers accordingly.

RESOLUTION

MOVED: Councillor Pearce

SECONDED: Councillor Baker

That Council:

1. **Awards Contract 3444 - Provision of Kerbside Recyclables Processing services to Re.Cycle Operations Pty Ltd (Regroup) (ABN 49984541896) for a schedule of rates-based contract, for an initial period of three years commencing 1 December 2025.**
2. **Authorise the Chief Executive Officer (or such person they nominate) to formalise and execute all required contract documentation.**
3. **Authorise the Chief Executive Officer (or such person they nominate) to execute all parts of this contract including extensions and annual CPI increase; and**
4. **Advise all tenderers accordingly.**

CARRIED

8.9 Knox City Council 2024-2025 Annual Report

SUMMARY

Knox City Council's 2024-2025 Annual Report is presented to Council for consideration, in accordance with the Local Government Act 2020.

The 2024-2025 Annual Report showcases to the Knox community, Council's delivery on its services, initiatives and performance. It supports public transparency with Council's operations and shares the achievements and challenges faced during the financial year.

The Annual Report 2024-2025 includes the financial and performance information achieved for that year. Upon completion of the external audit of the financial and performance statements, the Victorian Auditor-General's Office report was received on 12 September 2025 and have received an unqualified report with the financial statements or the performance statement.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council resolve to:

1. Endorse the 2024-2025 Annual Report (Attachment 1) in accordance with Sections 98 and 99 of the Local Government Act 2020.
2. Note the 2024-2025 Annual Report will be made available via Council's website.

The Mayor spoke to the Annual Report, providing the following points:

- Our Knox community has much to be proud of as we review what has been achieved in the 2024–2025 financial year, where we worked together to deliver the Annual Budget and the final year of our Council Plan 2021-2025 (incorporating the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan). Our Annual Report provides an overview of the achievements from the 2024-2025 year and I would like to share some highlights.
- In 2024–2025, we continued to put our customers at the centre of everything we do. We engaged with over 1,100 community members to reaffirm our 10-year Community Vision and worked closely with a representative community panel to develop the new Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025–2029.
- October 2024 marked the election of our new Council. Councillors have begun working together using community insights to guide strategic direction and decisions including the 2025-2026 Annual Budget.
- We continued implementing actions under Our Customer Strategy to enhance service delivery. We improved online forms, updated complaints procedures, and built staff capability. Satisfaction with Council's overall performance remained at a good level.
- Knox residents maintained a strong 71% waste diversion rate, placing us among leading councils in reducing landfill. We installed an electric vehicle charging station at Studfield, completed the Major Road Streetlight light-emitting diode (LED) program, and added solar and battery systems to four community facilities. We also promoted the Business Energy Saver Program to the small and medium-sized businesses in Knox.

- In response to cost-of-living pressures, we provided funding to Knox Infolink, Ferntree Gully Village Pantry, and Ben's Place Food Pantry. In collaboration with partners, 67 residents were supported in submitting housing applications and affordable housing targets at Boral and Norvel Quarries were amended or are in the process of being amended to 10%, double the previous target.
- We delivered age awareness presentations and intergenerational programs connecting aged care residents with kindergarten students.
- To support residents living with dementia, the Haven Rewire Choir launched in Boronia and a sensory garden was developed in partnership with Knox Community Gardens.
- Council continues to be committed to the recognition of and respect for our First Nations community on whose land we live and work. We facilitated cultural competency training, supported First Nations businesses, and collaborated on cultural burns and site management. Over 200 people including stolen generation families and embers of the First Peoples' Assembly attended the Sorry Day Ceremony at Knox Civic Centre.
- The new Knox Library – Ngarrgoo has been a great success. Across the municipality we saw an 8% rise in membership, a jump of nearly 14,000 new members.
- Upgrades at Knox Regional Netball Centre, Rowville Community Centre and Knoxville Tennis Club support multisport venues and participation in sport.
- Despite cost pressures and rate capping, Council achieved operational savings and continues to prioritise spend based on community values.
- The 2024–2025 year reflects our shared commitment to a thriving, inclusive, and sustainable Knox. Thank you to our community, staff, and partners for your continued support and collaboration.

RESOLUTION

MOVED: Councillor Cooper

SECONDED: Councillor Atwell

That Council resolve to:

- 1. Endorse the 2024-2025 Annual Report (Attachment 1) in accordance with Sections 98 and 99 of the Local Government Act 2020.**
- 2. Note the 2024-2025 Annual Report will be made available via Council's website.**

PROCEDURAL MOTION

MOVED: Councillor Lockwood

SECONDED: Councillor Williams

That Councillor Pearce be permitted an extension of time to speak under Section 42 of the Governance Rules of Knox City Council.

CARRIED

The substantive motion was put and CARRIED

8.11 Transfer of Lease - 100 Station Street Ferntree Gully

SUMMARY

The current tenant of 100 Station Street, Ferntree Gully, Matta Associates Pty Ltd, has applied to transfer their lease to Hong (Winnie) Nguyen Thi Phan. This report recommends transferring the lease from Matta Associates Pty Ltd ('current tenant') to Hong (Winnie) Nguyen Thi Phan ('proposed tenant').

RECOMMENDATION

That Council resolve to:

1. Agree to the transfer of the lease for 100 Station Street, Ferntree Gully from Matta Associates Pty Ltd (current tenant) to Hong (Winnie) Nguyen Thi Phan (proposed tenant) in accordance with the current terms and conditions of the lease (Confidential Attachment 1).
2. Authorise the Chief Executive Officer (or such person as the Chief Executive Officer selects) to execute all lease documentation required to execute the transfer of lease (Confidential Attachment 2); and
3. Authorise the Chief Executive Officer (or such person as the Chief Executive Officer selects) to negotiate and execute the extension option available on the lease of one further option of 4 years.

RESOLUTION

MOVED: Councillor Baker

SECONDED: Councillor Duncan

That Council:

1. **Agree to the transfer of the lease for 100 Station Street, Ferntree Gully from Matta Associates Pty Ltd (current tenant) to Hong (Winnie) Nguyen Thi Phan (proposed tenant) in accordance with the current terms and conditions of the lease (Confidential Attachment 1).**
2. **Authorise the Chief Executive Officer (or such person as the Chief Executive Officer selects) to execute all lease documentation required to execute the transfer of lease (Confidential Attachment 2); and**
3. **Authorise the Chief Executive Officer (or such person as the Chief Executive Officer selects) to negotiate and execute the extension option available on the lease of one further option of 4 years.**

CARRIED

9.1 Kingston Links/Bankside Land Sale and Section 173 Agreement

RESOLUTION

MOVED: Councillor Atwell

SECONDED: Councillor Duncan

That Council resolve to:

1. Note its decision of 12 November 2018 confirming the subject land being surplus to Council requirements.
2. Commence the statutory processes required under Section 114 of the Local Government Act 2020 for the sale of the subject land of 2.495 hectares known as 14A Corporate Avenue, Rowville, being Lot A on Plan of Subdivision 830610S and contained in Certificate of Title Volume 12546 Folio 383, via private treaty to Pask Group at no less than market value including:
 - a. giving public notice of the proposed sale and
 - b. undertaking community engagement
3. Note that prior to finalising the contract of sale for 14A Corporate Avenue, Rowville as outlined in this report, a further report will be presented at a future Council meeting to enable consideration of community feedback before making a final determination on the matter.
4. Note the current status of the Section 173 Agreement for the Kingston Links/Bankside development and the need for its review, with an updated Section 173 Agreement to be presented at a future Council meeting for endorsement.
5. Authorise officers to negotiate the redirection of funds identified for a future footbridge in the Section 173 Agreement towards the delivery of active open space works.

CARRIED

10 Notices Of Motion

Nil.

11 Urgent Business

Nil.

12 Questions Through the Chair

Councillor Atwell asked the following question:

In relation to an issue with a street tree in Rowville at Selwood Court, on behalf of a resident I have interacted with, can officers inform us when the Green Streets Policy is scheduled for a review and will it consider how the policy reflects community needs and concerns in balance with environmental responsibilities?

The Director Infrastructure, Grant Thorne, responded:

- As per the resolution from the 26 May 2025 Council meeting, the Green Streets Policy and broader tree management framework will be reviewed over the next eighteen months (from May 2025) meaning an overall deadline by November 2026.
- In considering the Green Streets Policy during this review, a broader consideration of an overall tree management framework will also be considered, balancing Council Policy position and how this aims to implement Council's strategic position on tree protection and tree canopy targets relating to general climate change mitigation.
- This work in its entirety aims to reflect environmental responsibilities, Council's strategic position, community needs and providing a balanced, financially sustainable service to the community.

Councillor Pearce asked the following question:

When is the Tree Scape Report going to Council?

The Director Infrastructure, Grant Thorne, responded:

- As per the resolution from the 26 May 2025 Council meeting, the Green Streets Policy and broader tree management framework will be reviewed over the next eighteen months (from May 2025) meaning an overall deadline by November 2026.

Councillor Lockwood asked the following question:

What has been the communication strategy to parents and staff in relation to recent early childhood education changes?

The Chief Executive Officer, Bruce Dobson responded:

- We have communicated with all Council staff in September 2025 when a decision was reached regarding the Federal Grant application, providing the factors that were in our minds after going through a detailed process of consideration and looking at feedback.
- We have responded to all questions that have been asked and that have come in by email. I may not have directly responded to every email, but every question has received a response, sometimes through the relevant Director or Manager.
- Our leaders are at the work sites on a regular basis and have interacted with staff, answering questions and providing clarification for staff around the matter.

Councillor Lockwood asked if this communication included the parents.

The Director Connected Communities, Judy Chalkley responded:

- Council also communicated with parents.
- The Union attended the site which some parents had commented was quite disturbing so an update for parents was provided about what the retention grant was about and why the Union was involved.
- A meeting was also organised at the Hubs for the staff, and had two staff attend.

Does the Staff Code of Conduct prevent staff from bringing up these issues?

The Director Connected Communities, Judy Chalkley responded:

- The Code of Conduct allows staff to raise any of their concerns as part of an open-door policy.
- Under the Code of Conduct staff cannot make a statement on behalf of Council without consultation.
- Staff can sign petitions which a few staff did, they can come to staff and the Chief Executive Officer with concerns as some did and this is not a Code of Conduct issue at all.

Looking at the Annual Report realignments, there has been some staff turnover over the last 2 to 3 years which costs money, do you fund that from discretionary reserves?

The Chief Executive Officer, Bruce Dobson responded:

- The staff turnover in 2024/25 was a bit higher than other years, associated with the change in the kindergarten provision from 1 January 2025 when Council stopped being the provider for all except two kindergarten services.
- The overall staff turnover was slightly over 20% but when you take away the Kindergarten turnover, it was around 11-12%, actually a bit lower than it has been in previous years.
- Staff turnover in recent years has been a number of percentage points lower than the average in the Local Government sector which is monitored.
- When staff leave there are then costs associated with recruitment. People leave for a variety of different reasons, and it is good to see people leaving to enhance their careers. It is also good to have a mix of experienced people and some new thinking in the organisation. There is a level of turnover that is a healthy level and we're within the range that we would consider healthy.

PROCEDURAL MOTION

MOVED: Councillor Cooper

SECONDED: Councillor Lockwood

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

CARRIED

- Any costs associated with turnover are funded through the normal operating budget. There is often a gap between a staff member leaving and a new staff member coming in, and some recruitment costs, but they are picked up in the overall operating budget.
- In relation to the cash reserves, at the end of the 2024/2025 financial year all those reserves under the definition we use, they are all backed, as at the end of June 2025. We also have a plan to ensure that is the case going forward.
- Councillors will receive more information as we get closer to the Budget process.

13 Confidential Items

Nil.

MEETING CLOSED AT 11:01pm

Minutes of Meeting confirmed at the
Meeting of Council
held on Monday, 24 November 2025

.....
Chairperson

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