AGENDA

Meeting of Council

To be held at the

Civic Centre

511 Burwood Highway

Wantirna South

On

Monday 23 November 2026 at 7:00 PM

This meeting will be conducted as a hybrid meeting

Order of Business

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13 Confidential Items 498

Bruce Dobson

Chief Executive Officer

1 Apologies And Requests For Leaves Of Absence

2 Declarations Of Conflict Of Interest

3 Confirmation Of Minutes

Confirmation of Minutes of Meeting of Council held on Monday 26 October 2026.

4 Presentations, Petitions And Memorials

5 Reports By Councillors

6 Planning Matters

6.1 Report of Planning Applications Decided Under Delegation 1 October 2026 to 31 October 2026

Final Report Destination: Council
Paper Type: For Noting
Author: Manager City Planning & Building, Paul Dickie
Manager: Manager City Planning & Building, Paul Dickie
Executive: Director, City Liveability, Jonathan McNally

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 October 2026 to 31 October 2026 as set out in the officers' report.

1. REPORT
Details of planning applications decided under delegation from 1 October 2026 to 31 October 2026 are attached. The applications are summarised as follows:

Application Type		**No.**
Building & Works:	Residential	3
	Other	5
Subdivision		8
Units		16
Tree Removal / Pruning		13
Single Dwelling		3
Removal of Easement		1
Small Second Dwelling		2
Change of Use		2
TOTAL		**53**

2. CONFIDENTIALITY
There is no content in this report that meets the definition of confidential information from the Local Government Act 2020.

ATTACHMENTS
Nil

Knox City Council

Report of Planning Planning Applications Decided Under Delegation

1 October 2026 to 31 October 2026

Ward	No/ Type	Address	Description	Decision
Baird	2026/6208	13 Aubrey Grove BORONIA VIC 3155	Construction of three (3) double storey dwellings to the rear of the existing dwelling, including canopy tree removal	23/10/2026 Refused
Baird	2026/9123	37 Cinerea Avenue FERNTREE GULLY VIC 3156	Construction of two (2) dwellings and removal of canopy trees	28/10/2026 Approved
Baird	2026/6029	1&2/ 22 Brunsdon Street BAYSWATER VIC 3153	Construction of two warehouse buildings and reduction in the car parking provision	15/10/2026 Approved
Baird	2026/6237	8 Cypress Avenue BORONIA VIC 3155	Construction of six (6) double storey dwellings	20/10/2026 Approved
Baird	2026/9084	40 Lightwood Drive FERNTREE GULLY VIC 3156	The construction of two single storey dwellings	08/10/2026 Approved
Baird	2026/6209	1-3/59 Power Road BAYSWATER VIC 3153	The use of the land for Materials Recycling	16/10/2026 Approved
Baird	2026/6351	40 Wattletree Road FERNTREE GULLY VIC 3156	Construction of a new double-storey dwelling to the rear of the existing and two lot subdivision	22/10/2026 Approved
Chandler	2026/6161	1/23 Parker Avenue BORONIA VIC 3155	Construction of a double storey dwelling on the land and vegetation removal	15/10/2026 Approved
Chandler	2026/6448	9 Sycamore Crescent BORONIA VIC 3155	Buildings and works (construction of a single dwelling)	16/10/2026 Notice of Decision
Chandler	2026/6402	45 Old Forest Road THE BASIN VIC 3154	Construction of a Small Second Dwelling and tree removal	16/10/2026 Approved
Chandler	2026/6474	2 Taranto Court BORONIA VIC 3155	Buildings and works within the TPZ of protected trees (swimming pool and associated cut)	28/10/2026 Approved
Chandler	2026/6525	94 Albert Avenue BORONIA VIC 3155	Two Lot Subdivision (approved unit development)	09/10/2026 Approved

Ward	No/ Type	Address	Description	Decision
Chandler	2026/6349	13 Verbena Avenue THE BASIN VIC 3154	Development of a double storey dwelling on a lot	27/10/2026 Approved
Collier	2026/6454	7-8/6 Benwerrin Drive WANTIRNA VIC 3152	Removal of one (1) Acacia implexa (Lightwood)	02/10/2026 Approved
Collier	2026/6444	9 Templeton Street WANTIRNA VIC 3152	Pruning of two (2) Eucalyptus radiata (Narrow Leaved Peppermint)	16/10/2026 Approved
Collier	2026/6281	226 Mountain Highway WANTIRNA VIC 3152	The development of seven (7) dwellings, create or alter access to a road in a Transport Zone 2 and removal of canopy trees	12/10/2026 Approved
Collier	2026/9140	22 St Davids Drive WANTIRNA VIC 3152	Removal of seven (7) Cupressus macrocarpa (Monterey Cypress) and one (1) Ficus carica (Fig Tree)	20/10/2026 Approved
Collier	2026/6489	12 Alderford Drive WANTIRNA VIC 3152	Removal of two (2) Melaleuca linariifolia (Narrow Leaved Paperbark), one (1) Pittosporum undulatum (Sweet Pittosporum), three (3) Ligustrum lucidum (Glossy Leaved Privet) and one (1) Melaleuca styphelioides (Prickly-Leaved Paperbark)	14/10/2026 Approved
Dinsdale	2026/6260	21 Maida Avenue BAYSWATER VIC 3153	Construction of two (2) single storey dwellings on a lot	14/10/2026 Approved
Dinsdale	2026/6484	3 Carina Close WANTIRNA SOUTH VIC 3152	Removal of one (1) Corymbia citriodora (Lemon Scented Gum), one (1) Corymbia maculata (Spotted Gum) and one (1) Fraxinus excelsior (European ash)	14/10/2026 Approved
Dinsdale	2026/6459	8 Westham Crescent BAYSWATER VIC 3153	Three lot subdivision (approved unit development)	14/10/2026 Approved
Dinsdale	2026/9139	6 Derwent Drive BAYSWATER VIC 3153	Two lot subdivision (approved unit development)	16/10/2026 Approved
Dinsdale	2026/6480	12 Kirrawee Avenue WANTIRNA SOUTH VIC 3152	Removal of four (4) Cupressus × leylandii (Leyland cypress) and one (1) Fraxinus sp.	09/10/2026 Approved

Ward	No/ Type	Address	Description	Decision
Dinsdale	2026/9085	49 Somerset Street WANTIRNA SOUTH VIC 3152	Construction of two dwellings and a two-lot subdivision	26/10/2026 Approved
Dinsdale	2026/9135	16 Willison Street BAYSWATER VIC 3153	Two lot subdivision (approved unit development)	16/10/2026 Approved
Dinsdale	2026/6465	20 Kingsford Street BAYSWATER VIC 3153	Removal of easement	01/10/2026 Approved
Dinsdale	2026/9134	21 Wadhurst Drive BORONIA VIC 3155	Buildings and works (construction of two sheds)	09/10/2026 Approved
Dinsdale	2026/6519	28 Coolibah Crescent BAYSWATER VIC 3153	Removal of two (2) Betula pendula (Silver Birch), one (1) Pittosporum undulatum (Sweet Pittosporum), one (1) Olea europaea (Olive), one (1) Ficus macrophylla (Moreton Bay fig) and one (1) Melaleuca sp.	22/10/2026 Approved
Dinsdale	2026/9132	1-2/62 Scoresby Road BAYSWATER VIC 3153	Two lot subdivision (approved unit development)	09/10/2026 Approved
Dinsdale	2026/6451	13 Arbroath Road WANTIRNA SOUTH VIC 3152	Four lot subdivision (approved unit development)	02/10/2026 Approved
Dinsdale	2026/9107	15 Mingana Road WANTIRNA SOUTH VIC 3152	Construction of two double storey dwellings	07/10/2026 Approved
Dinsdale	2026/6294	305 Boronia Road BORONIA VIC 3155	The construction of eight (8) double storey dwellings on the land and the creation and alteration of access to a road in a Transport Zone 2	01/10/2026 Approved
Dinsdale	2026/6436	35 Armstrong Road BAYSWATER VIC 3153	Construction of two (2) dwellings, Buildings and works within a Land Subject to Inundation Overlay and removal of boundary canopy trees	27/10/2026 Approved
Dinsdale	2026/9104	6 Ozone Road BAYSWATER VIC 3153	Construction of two (2) dwellings on a lot	30/10/2026 Approved
Dobson	2026/9126	7 Francis Crescent FERNTREE GULLY VIC 3156	Buildings and works (construct a small second dwelling)	02/10/2026 Approved
Dobson	2026/9128	6 Drake Street FERNTREE GULLY VIC 3156	Removal of one (1) Corymbia citriodora (Lemon Scented Gum)	06/10/2026 Approved

Ward	No/ Type	Address	Description	Decision
Dobson	2026/9122	40 Alma Avenue FERNTREE GULLY VIC 3156	Construction of a fence	01/10/2026 Approved
Dobson	2026/6512	1 Beilby Close UPPER FERNTREE GULLY VIC 3156	Removal of one (1) Brachychiton populneus (Kurrajong) and one (1) Prunus sp.	28/10/2026 Approved
Dobson	2026/9129	16 Glenfern Road FERNTREE GULLY VIC 3156	Construction of an outbuilding	16/10/2026 Approved
Dobson	2026/6470	21 Myrtle Crescent FERNTREE GULLY VIC 3156	Habitat Prune on a Eucalyptus Sp.	01/10/2026 Approved
Dobson	2026/6320	3 Bergner Court LYSTERFIELD VIC 3156	Three subdivision and removal of associated removal of vegetation	19/10/2026 Approved
Friberg	2026/6217	1/1821 Ferntree Gully Road FERNTREE GULLY VIC 3156	Use of the land for car sales, buildings and works, display of signage and reduce the minimum number of parking spaces	14/10/2026 Approved
Friberg	2026/6252	6 Otira Road KNOXFIELD VIC 3180	Construction of two (2) double storey dwellings on a lot and tree removal	15/10/2026 Approved
Friberg	2026/6112	34 Kathryn Road KNOXFIELD VIC 3180	The construction of a double storey dwelling to the rear of the existing dwelling	09/10/2026 Approved
Friberg	2026/6277	38 David Street KNOXFIELD VIC 3180	Development of the land for four (4) double storey dwellings and removal of vegetation	14/10/2026 Approved
Scott	2026/6461	4 Bunnett Road KNOXFIELD VIC 3180	Three (3) lot subdivision (approved development site)	22/10/2026 Approved
Scott	2026/6483	12 Fonteyn Drive WANTIRNA SOUTH VIC 3152	Removal of two (2) Eucalyptus saligna (Sydney Blue Gum) and one (1) Fraxinus angustifolia (Desert Ash)	09/10/2026 Approved
Scott	2026/9142	Waverley Christian School 1248 High Street Rd WANTIRNA SOUTH VIC 3152	Buildings and works - alterations to existing windows	19/10/2026 Approved
Scott	2026/6478	20 Helpmann Street WANTIRNA SOUTH VIC 3152	Removal of one (1) Pittosporum eugenioides 'Variegatum' (Variegated Pittosporum) and one (1) Stenocarpus sinuatus (Fire wheel Tree)	01/10/2026 Approved

Ward	No/ Type	Address	Description	Decision
Taylor	2026/6503	3 Balmoral Court ROWVILLE VIC 3178	Removal of one (1) Pittosporum tenuifolium (Kohukohu)	28/10/2026 Approved
Tirhatuan	2026/6251	46-48 Henderson Road ROWVILLE VIC 3178	Construction of a hardstand area to the rear of the site	02/10/2026 Approved
Tirhatuan	2026/6047	24 Laser Drive ROWVILLE VIC 3178	Construct a building (portable building)	12/10/2026 Approved
Tirhatuan	2026/6287	13 Avril Street SCORESBY VIC 3179	Construction of two (2) double storey dwellings to the rear of the existing dwelling	22/10/2026 Approved

7 Public Question Time

8 Officer Reports

8.1 Quarterly Performance Report for the Period Ended 30 September 2026

Final Report Destination:	Council
Paper Type:	For Noting
Author:	Head of Strategy and Business Intelligence, Kate McInnes Coordinator Finance Operations, James Morris Coordinator Capital Works Planning, John Bixby Head of Portfolio and Enterprise Change, Shona Richards
Manager:	Manager Strategy and Transformation, Tom Scanlan
Executive:	Chief Financial Officer, Navec Lorkin Director Customer and Performance, Matt Kelleher

SUMMARY

Quarterly Performance Report – Quarter 1, 2026-–2027

The Quarterly Performance Report for Quarter 1 (2026-27) provides the following updates:

- **Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan Progress Report and Financial Performance Report**
- Provides an overview of performance against the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 and the Annual Budget 2026-2027 for the quarter ending 30 September 2026.
- **Capital Program Progress Report**
- Outlines the status and progress of projects within the 2026-2027 Capital Works Program for the quarter ending 30 September 2026.
- **Transformation Report**
- Summarises progress of Customer and Performance capital and operational projects for the month ending 30 September 2026.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council resolve to note the:

1. Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan Progress Report for the quarter ended 30 September 2026 (Attachment 1).
2. Financial Performance Report for the quarter ended 30 September 2026 (Attachment 2).
3. Capital Program Progress Report for the quarter ended 30 September 2026 (Attachment 3).
4. Transformation Report for the month ending 30 September 2026 (Attachment 4).

1. DISCUSSION

1.1 Introduction

The provision of the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan Progress Report, Financial Performance Report, Capital Program Progress Report and Transformation Report ensures that associated processes are accountable and transparent to support responsible decision making and reporting on the delivery of the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 and Annual Budget 2026-2027.

1.2 Council and Health and Wellbeing Progress Report

The Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029, adopted on 23 June 2025, represents Council's commitment to the Knox community and outlines how Council will deliver on the community's aspirations and needs. The Plan is structured around six strategic themes supporting the Community Vision and eight health and wellbeing priorities aimed at improving the health, wellbeing and quality of life of the local community.

To remain responsive to evolving community needs and priorities, the actions for this financial year are set out in the Annual Budget 2026-2027. The Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan Progress Report for Quarter 1 (Attachment 1) provides detailed progress against each of these actions, in addition to year-to-date progress against the performance measures set out in the plan.

There are 39 actions to be delivered in 2026-2027. Of these:

- One action has been completed.
- Thirty-five actions are on schedule.
- Two actions are behind schedule.
- One action has not started.

1.3 Financial Performance Report

The Financial Performance Report (Attachment 2) has been prepared in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards and contains the following financial statements:

- Comprehensive Income Statement.
- Balance Sheet.
- Cash Flow Statement.
- Statement of Capital Works.

The Financial Performance Report is designed to identify major variations against Council's year to date financial performance (actual results) and the Adopted and Amended Budgets. Council adopted its 2026-2027 Annual Budget at its Council Meeting held on 22 June 2026. The Amended Budget was tabled to Council at its Council Meeting held on 28 September 2026. The year-to-date position is compared with the amended budget position. The forecast end of year position is compared to the Amended Budget and the Adopted Budget.

The Amended Budget enables Council to review and approve variances to revenue and expenditure resulting primarily from external factors, ensuring accountability and optimal budget control for management reporting purposes. The Annual Report will detail performance against the original Budget as adopted by Council as the Budget.

The financial year-end position of Council is anticipated by way of forecasts. The full year Adopted and Amended Budgets are compared against the projected financial year-end position as reflected by the Forecast. The 2026-2027 forecast includes the following details:

- The 2026-2027 Adopted Budget.

- Carry forward funding from 2025-26 into 2026-27 for both operational and capital works expenditure items. These funds are required for the successful completion and delivery of key outcomes and projects.
- Adjustments to forecasts as a result of officers periodically assessing Council's budgetary performance considering emerging events and matters.

General discussion in regard to the Financial Performance Report (Attachment 2) is detailed under Section 6 – Financial and Resource Implications.

1.4 Capital Program Progress Report

The Capital Program Progress Report (Attachment 3) outlines the status of each project within the 2026-2027 Capital Works Program. This is in addition to the Statement of Capital Works shown in Attachment 2.

The following table provides a summary of project expenditure progress and project status.

Program	Amended Budget	YTD Actual Expenditure	Actual YTD Commit.	Projects Complete	Projects in Progress	Projects not Started
Asset renewal	$36,055,222	$6,373,352	$11,417,897	4	46	4
Legal requirements	$255,009	$119,199	$34,824	0	1	0
Major projects	$623,750	$61,003	$-	0	1	0
New/upgrade projects	$17,915,686	$2,885,975	$5,346,985	6	100	3
Total:	$54,849,667	$9,439,528	$16,799,707	10	148	7

Note: Only includes infrastructure projects

1.5 Transformation Report

The Transformation Report (Attachment 4) provides an overview of the Customer and Performance capital and operational projects for the month ending 30 September 2026. Transformation reporting occurs internally monthly, with every third month reported to Council as part of the Quarterly Performance Report.

There are currently 12 projects in progress:

- Nine projects are reporting on track.
- Three projects are reporting at risk.
- No projects are reporting off track.
- Three projects are on hold.
- Three projects have been completed since the last report.

2. ENGAGEMENT

Significant community engagement was incorporated into the development of the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 and Budget 2026-2027. This report summarises Council's financial performance and progress against the delivery of the Council and Health and Wellbeing

Plan 2025-2029. A copy of the quarterly Financial Performance Report has been provided to Council's Audit and Risk Committee.

3. SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Information about Council's achievements and aspirations for the community and social impacts are contained in the quarterly performance report.

4. CLIMATE CHANGE CONSIDERATIONS

Council's achievements and progress working towards Council's Net Zero 2030 target and the Community Net Zero 2040 are contained in the quarterly performance report.

5. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

Information about Council's achievements and aspirations for the environment are contained in the quarterly performance report. Producing the report in a primarily electronic format saves paper resources and printing costs.

6. FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

The overall financial position as at 30 September 2026 is satisfactory with a working capital ratio of 4.31 to 1, indicating that after taking into consideration carry forward funding requirements from 2025-2026 into 2026-2027, Council is on track to meet the operational targets for this financial year established in the 2026-27 Amended Budget. The major watch point for the year will be the timing of land sale proceeds, together with the timing of receipt and recognition of capital grants.

For the period ended 30 September 2026, Council has achieved an operating surplus of $121.570 million. This is $6.020 million favorable to the year to date (YTD) Amended Budget, made up of favourable variances of $2.557 million for income and $3.463 million for expenditure. The favourable variance for YTD income includes a favourable variance of $2.310 million for capital grants (both timing and permanent Variances). There is a favourable timing variance of $3.202 million for materials and services.

Council expects to deliver an operating surplus of $1.492 million for the financial year, which at the end of September is as per the Amended Budget.

The total capital works expenditure for the period ended 30 September 2026 is $9.459 million. This is $1.289 million less than the YTD Amended Budget. The asset classes with the greatest underspend against budget are Buildings ($1.481 million), and Roads ($0.544 million), while there has been an overspend in Footpaths and Cycleways ($0.547 million). These are all timing variances.

The Amended Budget capital works expenditure totaling $52.622 million includes $2.843 million in capital works carried forward from 2025-26 into 2026-27. The forecast capital works expenditure for the year at this stage is the same as the Amended Budget.

Council's cash and financial assets are $40.995 million as at 30 September 2026, while interest bearing loans and borrowings total $77.703 million.

Further detail and discussion of the financial performance of Council for the period ended 30 September 2026 is provided in the attached Financial Performance Report (Attachment 2).

7. RISKS

The development of the quarterly performance report prioritised the assessment of risk throughout the process.

8. COUNCIL AND HEALTH AND WELLBEING PLAN 2025-2029

Leading, listening and governing responsibly

Strategy 4.1 - Council demonstrates its accountability through transparent and responsible decision-making and working together productively.

9. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The officers contributing to and responsible for this report have no conflicts of interest requiring disclosure under Chapter 5 of the Governance Rules of Knox City Council.

10. STATEMENT OF COMPATIBILITY

There are no legislative obligations under the Human Rights Charter, Child Safe Standards or the Gender Equity Act that are incompatible with the recommendation in this report.

11. CONFIDENTIALITY

There is no content in this report that meets the definition of confidential information from the Local Government Act 2020.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Attachment 1 - 2026-2027 Q1 Council Health and Wellbeing Plan progress report [**8.1.1** - 25 pages]
2. Attachment 2 - Financial Performance Report - September 2026 [**8.1.2** - 27 pages]
3. Attachment 3 - Capital Works Program - Project Status Report Q 1 2026 27 [**8.1.3** - 18 pages]
4. Attachment 4 - Transformation Report September 2026 [**8.1.4** - 3 pages]

Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025–2029

Progress report quarter 1: 2026–2027



knox

Knox City Council

About the plan

The Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 was adopted on 23 June 2025 and is our promise to the Knox community. It sets out what we will do to respond to changing needs and has been shaped by our aspirations, needs, values and priorities. It informs long term financial planning with annual actions and performance measure targets represented in each Annual Budget.

To develop the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 we engaged over 1,100 community members to make sure the plan reflects the vision, values and aspirations of the people of Knox.

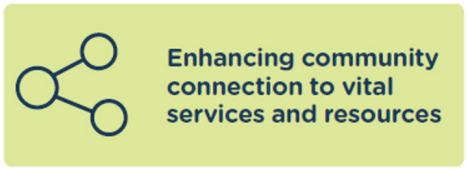
Our Community Vision 2035

Our Community Vision describes our collective long-term hopes and aspirations for Knox. It helps us to plan for the needs of our community now and into the future.

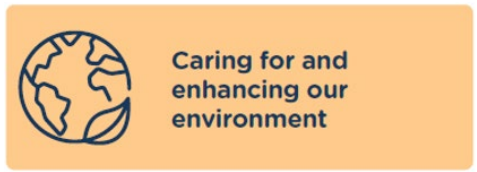
> **"Knox: where we connect with our people and our environment, ensuring they are safe, supported and have every opportunity to thrive."**

Our themes

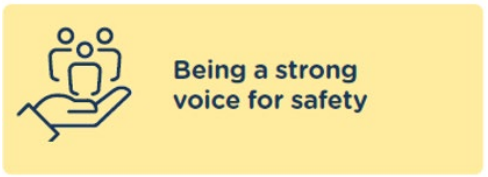
We have 6 key themes to focus on that help achieve our Community Vision. These themes reflect the priorities and aspirations of our community.



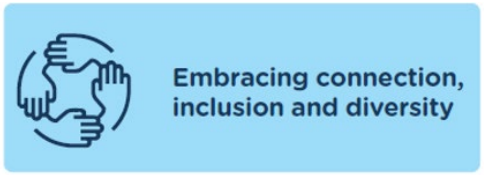
Our community can access important local services and resources through Council's delivery, advocacy and partnerships.



Our environment is greener, healthier and sustainable through Council's environmental protection and enhancement, working in collaboration with our community.



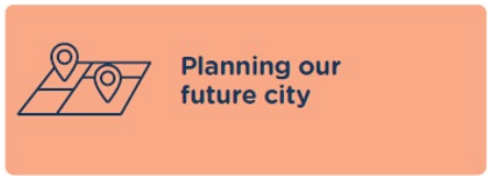
Our community feels safe, respected and supported in public spaces and at home through Council's delivery, advocacy and partnerships.



Our diverse and connected community is strengthened by creating opportunities to actively participant, connect and learn.



Our community feels empowered, heard and has trust in Council through responsible governance, proactive communication and engagement, and transparent decision making.



Our neighbours, housing an infrastructure meet the needs of our changing community through effective planning, delivery and advocacy.

Our health and wellbeing priorities

We understand that the health and wellbeing of our community is essential for our collective prosperity and quality of life. By measuring and addressing wellbeing, we can identify areas of need, track progress, and implement targeted interventions to create a healthier, more resilient community.



How to read this report

Actions

This report details the progress of the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 actions that are funded in the current financial year. These are the major initiatives that will be delivered during this financial year.

Progress status is reported based on the following colour coding:

Complete	On schedule	Behind schedule	Not started
✔			

Performance measures

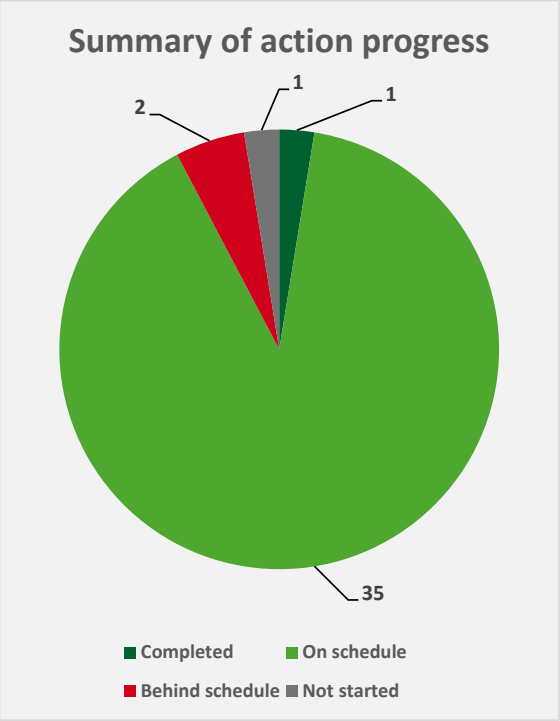
The Quarter 2 and Quarter 4 reports will include the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 performance measures which demonstrate progress towards achieving each Strategic Objective. Each performance measure is tracked against its annual target as set out in the Annual Budget.

Progress Report Quarter 1, 2026–2027

2026-2027 actions summary

There are 39 actions to be delivered in 2026-2027. As of the latest reporting period, the overall implementation of these actions is progressing well, with 1 action complete, 35 actions on schedule, 2 actions behind schedule and 1 action has not started.

Theme	Complete	On schedule	Behind schedule	Not started	Grand total
Enhancing community connection to vital services and resources		6			**6**
Embracing connection, inclusion and diversity		8			**8**
Caring for and enhancing our environment	1	5		1	**7**
Leading, listening and governing responsibly		4	2		**6**
Being a strong voice for safety		6			**6**
Planning our future city		6			**6**
Total	**1**	**35**	**2**	**1**	**39**



Theme 1: Enhancing community connection to vital services and resources

Actions

Action	Progress	Comments	Status	
Continue to actively promote Your Library's activities, programs, and events that foster lifelong learning, strengthen social connections, and improve access to technology.	**25%**	Council and Your Library worked collaboratively throughout the quarter to deliver a range of activities that support lifelong learning and social connection, including Saturday Storytime and planning for future initiatives such as Move Your Way. Community consultation pop-up sessions were also held at libraries to gather feedback from the community. Council continued to promote Your Library programs through Knox News, website articles and social media channels. Preparation is underway for the installation of quiet meeting pods at Boronia and Ferntree Gully libraries, with installation planned for later this year.	**On Schedule**	

Action	Progress	Comments	Status	
Implement Economic Development's 2026-2027 events program to strengthen capacity building for local businesses.	**25%**	The Economic Development 2026-2027 Events Program commenced during the quarter, with four events delivered to support local business capability and networking opportunities. These included Business National Tree Day, delivered in partnership with Council's Biodiversity Team, which attracted 200 business participants for tree planting and networking activities; the Secrets to Award-Winning Customer Experience networking event, attended by 45 local business representatives; the Council Tendering for Small Business Workshop, attended by 70 local business representatives; and The 2% Difference: How Small Commitments Create Better Businesses networking event, attended by 20 local business representatives. Additional networking events and workshops have been scheduled throughout the remainder of the financial year to continue supporting business capability, fostering connections and driving economic growth within the municipality.	**On Schedule**	

Action	Progress	Comments	Status	
Implement the Community Development Grants Program for 2026-2027.	**25%**	During this quarter, applications for the 2026-2027 Community Development Fund were assessed by the Grants Assessment Panel, with a report and recommendations prepared for consideration by Council in October. Council received 61 applications across seven funding categories: • Active Ageing • Active Communities • Arts and Events • Community Strengthening • Cultural Celebrations and Community Events • Environment and Sustainability • Small Equipment Grants Of the 50 eligible applications assessed, 42 are recommended for funding, including 34 for full funding and eight for partial funding, representing 84 per cent of eligible applications.	**On schedule**	
Progress the implementation of the Cemetery Landscape Masterplan, ensuring it aligns with community need and enhances the cemetery's existing character.	**25%**	Implementation of the Ferntree Gully Cemetery Masterplan continued during the quarter, with procurement completed to engage a landscape architect to develop detailed concept designs for the first stage of the Masterplan, the Foothills Precinct. Initial concepts are being finalised with consideration being given to the proposed layout, landscaping, access, memorialisation and other elements identified in the Masterplan. Community engagement on the concept design is planned for early 2027 to inform the next stage of implementation. Funding opportunities and project delivery priorities are also being explored.	**On schedule**	

Action	Progress	Comments	Status	
Lead and deliver the Knox Food Relief Taskforce and actively participate and contribute to the Knox Emergency Relief Network.	**30%**	The Knox Food Relief Taskforce focuses on food security and food relief in Knox by developing partnerships, improving collaboration and the sharing of resources, and advocating for investment from State and Federal Governments to address growing community need. The winter tinned food donation drive was a successful initiative supported by Taskforce members, resulting in more than 2,000 food items being donated by community members and Council staff. Council remains an active participant in the Knox Emergency Relief Network and continues to support collaboration, information sharing and networking across the sector.	**On schedule**	
Finalise the Transport Asset Management Plan to ensure sustainable ongoing management of council's road and transport network.	**25%**	The draft Transport Asset Management Plan (TAMP) is progressing well following community engagement and presentation to Council this year. The project timeline has been extended to incorporate a new Road Condition Audit to update underpinning models and inform the final draft with current data. The TAMP is on schedule to be presented to Council in 2027.	**On schedule**	

Theme 2: Embracing connection, inclusion and diversity

Actions

Action	Progress	Comments	Status	
Deliver the Year 1 actions of the Preventing Harm from Gambling Policy which aims to reduce gambling-related harm and support community wellbeing.	**25%**	Between July and September, a range of activities were undertaken to support implementation of the Gambling Harm Prevention Policy, including: • Two Knox eNews articles, generating 204 click-throughs. • Publication of Council's advocacy priorities relating to gambling harm prevention on the new Advocacy webpage. • Delivery of a short presentation on the Knox Gambling Harm Prevention Policy at the August All Staff Briefing. • Participation by the Mayor as a signatory to the Alliance for Gambling Reform advocacy letter, It's Time for Overdue Action on Gambling Harm. • Co-delivery with Gambler's Help of the Going for Broke staff capacity-building event during Gambling Harm Awareness Week, attended by 14 staff. • Delivery of a short presentation on the new Gambling Support Helpcards to the Knox Community Safety, Health and Wellbeing Committee, attended by approximately 15 people. • Development of an infographic using the latest data on electronic gaming machine losses in Knox. • Development of the Gambling Harm Prevention Action Plan to operationalise the 2026 Knox Gambling Harm Prevention Policy. • Meetings with Gambler's Help/Each and the Alliance for Gambling Reform to discuss collaboration opportunities.	**On schedule**	

Action	Progress	Comments	Status	
Undertake community engagement to gather insights on the priorities and preferences of services delivered to young children and their families to support future service planning and advocacy	**25%**	Community engagement was undertaken with families, service providers and community partners to better understand priorities and service needs. Feedback gathered will inform the planning of future parent education and engagement activities, and input from service providers will inform future program delivery and advocacy.	**On schedule**	
Consolidate and embed the Child Friendly Cities Principles into organisational work practices that support the inclusion of the voice of the child.	**25%**	Stage 2 of the Child Friendly Cities Education Plan is progressing, with a focus on building staff capability and awareness. A cross-organisational working group continues to meet to share and coordinate children's voice initiatives occurring across the organisation, and key resources are being developed to support staff in their understanding and application of child-friendly principles across Council services and decision-making.	**On schedule**	
Finalise the 2026-2030 Reconciliation Action Plan to strengthen respectful relationships, Care of Country and create meaningful opportunities with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.	**90%**	The draft Knox Reconciliation Action Plan, covering 21 actions with 76 deliverables, received conditional approval from Reconciliation Australia and was subsequently endorsed by Council on 28 September 2026. The plan will now progress to design, launch and implementation activities.	**On schedule**	

Action	Progress	Comments	Status	
Continue to source strategic partnerships and sponsorships to enhance the delivery of Council-led festivals and events.	**25%**	A sponsorship database is being developed to support sponsorship opportunities for Knox Fest and Pets in the Park, with initial outreach and discussions planned later this year.	**On schedule**	
Identify opportunities to increase participation of older adults, carers and people with a disability in Council and community activities by building strategic partnerships and applying targeted engagement strategies.	**25%**	The Positive and Healthy Ageing team's virtual reality pop-up sessions continued to gain momentum this quarter, with four sessions attracting 132 community members. Delivered in partnership with the libraries across Knox, the sessions engaged members of the community aged over 55 who have not previously participated in Council programs. Dementia awareness was also promoted in partnership with Your Library, with robotic companion sensory animals and Dementia Australia resources provided to libraries for distribution during Dementia Action Week. Council also acknowledged Dementia Action Week through a line-dancing event at Rowville Community Centre supported by University of the Third Age (U3A) instructors and attended by more than 60 community members. Engagement with seniors' clubs and groups across Knox continued throughout the quarter, including promotion of Council grant opportunities and Seniors Festival funding. Fourteen clubs and groups received support to deliver community events as part of the 2026 Knox Seniors Festival.	**On schedule**	

Action	Progress	Comments	Status	
Partner with our diverse and multicultural community, key services and networks to support and celebrate our diversity, including the coordination of the Knox Multicultural Advisory Committees.	**25%**	Council continues to strengthen engagement with multicultural communities through partnerships, networks and the Knox Multicultural Advisory Committee. A joint Advisory Committee meeting was held in July 2026, providing members with an opportunity to contribute feedback on key Council initiatives, including the Annual Budget 2027-2028, community safety, the Integrated Transport Plan, the Green Streets Policy and the Heart of Knox (Knox Central). The Knox Multicultural Advisory Committee is scheduled to meet again in October 2026 to co-design content for a proposed Knox Multicultural eNewsletter. Members also supported Council's Communication team by helping connect residents from diverse backgrounds for Council's photo library, with images used across a range of communication materials. Council maintained strong engagement with the Knox Interfaith Network and is planning a joint meeting with Knox Multicultural Advisory Committee in November 2026 to further strengthen connections across Knox's multicultural and multifaith communities.	**On schedule**	
Continue delivering volunteer training sessions and promoting opportunities that strengthen social and community networks, helping to reduce loneliness.	**25%**	During the quarter, Council delivered a community training session, Managing Conflict, which was attended by 27 participants. This session supported local community groups, volunteers and organisations to build their knowledge and capability. Planning and promotion of future training opportunities also continued throughout the quarter, supported by distribution of the Community Strengthening e-bulletin.	**On schedule**	

Theme 3: Caring for and enhancing our environment

Actions

Action	Progress	Comments	Status	
Implement the priority initiatives of the Open Space Strategy (2025 2040).	**0%**	Review of the Open Space Strategy currently under way. Implementation of any actions will commence on endorsement of the final strategy in 2027.	**Not started**	
Implement Year 3 Funded actions from the Knox Biodiversity Resilience Strategy 2024-2034 which outlines the visions and goals for sustaining biodiversity resilience, a nature positive future and connection to Country over the upcoming decade.	**25%**	Council continued delivery of Year 3 actions under the Biodiversity and Resilience Strategy 2024-2034. Activities included biodiversity-sensitive design workshops, Gardens for Wildlife planning to embed the approach into our model and a National Tree Day event attended by almost 200 community members who planted 3,800 indigenous plants.	**On schedule**	
Provide education to community, local businesses and staff on waste avoidance, waste reduction and resource recovery with easily accessible and engaging programs.	**30%**	In addition to responding to daily waste and recycling enquiries, the Waste and Kerbside Reform team delivered two guided community tours of Council's recycling and Food Organics and Graden Organics (FOGO) processing facilities. During the quarter, multiple online webinars and in-person workshops on a range of waste and sustainability topics were delivered, and online and printed educational materials were distributed across the community.	**On schedule**	

Action	Progress	Comments	Status	
Begin a strategic review on the future operations of the Knox Transfer Station.	**100%**	Strategic Review of KTS completed with Council supporting continuation of a transfer station being provided at the site, via an overarching long term lease agreement. Lease agreement currently being finalised and negotiated with the current provider.	**Complete**	✔
Implement the Knox Climate Response Plan (2021-2031) by delivering the annual sustainability initiatives to support Council working towards its net zero emissions target.	**25%**	Projects completed in this reporting quarter include the expansion of solar and batteries to the Knox Operations Centre and the completion of the community engagement for the Climate Response Plan review.	**On schedule**	●
Finalise the Green Streets Policy and broader tree management framework.	**80%**	The review of the Green Streets Policy has been completed and a draft Urban Tree Management Policy has been developed. Consultation with advisory committees has been undertaken, informed by findings from the Community Satisfaction Survey. The draft policy is scheduled to be considered by Council in November.	**On schedule**	●
Progressively replace fleet vehicles with zero/low emission vehicles to reduce environmental impact, lower operating costs, and improve sustainability.	**40%**	All dedicated pool vehicles have been replaced with electric vehicles. Renewal of the fleet assets continues to consider low emission options, including hybrid and electric vehicles. Council plans to trial an electric truck later in 2026.	**On schedule**	●

Theme 4: Leading, listening and governing responsibly

Actions

Action	Progress	Comments	Status	
Introduce performance measures for application of the Community Engagement Policy to drive consistent and transparent practice in line with the agreed Principles.	**10%**	Work has commenced on developing performance measures to support implementation of the Community Engagement Policy. Progress has been affected by resourcing changes; however, work is continuing to develop appropriate performance measures and support future implementation.	**Behind schedule**	
Improve Council's website by expanding self-service options, making it faster and easier for customers to access the information they need.	**20%**	Multiple initiatives are underway to expand self-service options and make it easier for customers to find information and complete transactions online. These include a new address search tool that will allow residents to check burning off permit requirements and apply for the permit online, as well as a website chatbot to help customers find information more quickly. Both these initiatives are currently in development phase. Website content has also been improved, making it easier to discover parks, playgrounds and sport and recreation facilities across Knox.	**On schedule**	

Action	Progress	Comments	Status	
Commence implementation of a new Financial System to improve cyber security and provide contemporary functionality.	**20%**	Council has commenced the implementation of a new financial system to modernise a critical business application, strengthen cyber security controls, and improve the long-term sustainability of the technology environment. The new platform will replace the ageing financial system with a more secure, integrated and contemporary solution that supports efficient financial operations, enhanced reporting capabilities, improved compliance, and better user experiences. The project represents a key step in Council's digital transformation journey, reducing technology risks associated with legacy applications while establishing a modern foundation that can adapt to future business needs, automation opportunities, and evolving regulatory and cyber security requirements. In Quarter 1, Council worked with the successful vendor to design how the new system will operate to support Council services. Council also confirmed what information will be transferred from the existing systems into the new platform and began planning how the new solution will connect with other Council systems.	**On schedule**	

Action	Progress	Comments	Status	
Uplift our approach to managing customer requests to improve customer experience and drive operational efficiencies.	**20%**	A project to uplift and improve staff capability within Council's existing Pathway environment is currently underway. The project is expected to improve customer data quality and governance, enhance business rules and processes, and ultimately improve customers' experience as they engage with Council. Detailed project planning has commenced however recruitment of a dedicated resource to drive this work has been slightly delayed due to resourcing constraints. It is expected this work will be back on schedule next quarter.	**Behind schedule**	
Develop and endorse Council's Annual Budget 2027-2028.	**20%**	Public consultation for the 2027-2028 Annual Budget has taken place with feedback being received from 413 participants, providing valuable insights into community priorities and perceptions of Council services. There were eight written submissions, with six community members requesting to attend the Public Submission Meeting to be held on Monday 5 October 2026. The community engagement report will be tabled at the 26 October 2027 Council Meeting.	**On schedule**	
Deliver the initiatives within the Continuous Improvement roadmap to improve customer experience and drive operational efficiencies.	**25%**	The Better Ways Continuous Improvement program was launched towards the end of last financial year. The initial rollout stage in Quarter 1 2026-2027 has focused on building awareness of the program and the associated improvement toolkit and resources. Following initial engagement across the organisation, three active initiatives are underway with the pipeline of further works being built.	**On schedule**	

Theme 5: Being a strong voice for safety

Actions

Action	Progress	Comments	Status	
Partner with key stakeholders to deliver community safety programs and initiatives that improve perceptions of safety and neighbourhood connection.	**25%**	Four Knox eNews articles were published during the quarter, generating a combined total of 868 click-throughs. A consultation session was undertaken as part of the July Multi-Advisory Committee meeting, attended by approximately 50 members across Council's Advisory Committees. A Community Safety presentation was also delivered to the Active Ageing Advisory Committee, attended by 14 participants. A short presentation on the new Community Safety Helpcard was delivered to the Knox Community Safety, Health and Wellbeing Advisory Committee at its September meeting, attended by approximately 15 people. Council staff also attended two Cuppa with a Cop sessions in partnership with Victoria Police. Council continued to respond to community safety concerns raised by community members.	**On schedule**	

Action	Progress	Comments	Status	
Deliver Year 3 of the Free From Violence project that aims to promote gender equality and prevent family violence.	**25%**	Training was delivered by The Institute of Non-Violence to 22 library staff on 29 July, to equip staff with the skills to support community members who may be experiencing family violence. Council partnered with Your Library to deliver Saturday Storytime, which ran for nine weeks between 18 July and 12 September. Typically offered during the week, Storytime provides a range of benefits to families, and the Saturday session removed a barrier for working parents and carers to attend. Sessions averaged 93 attendees, with increased participation from fathers and male carers. During the quarter, planning also commenced for the 16 Days of Activism campaign, with community activities planned for November and December.	**On schedule**	
Implement Year 1 actions of the Domestic Animal Management Plan 2025-2029.	**70%**	Year 1 actions of the Domestic Animal Management Plan 2025-2029 are ongoing. The investigation into how a community cat desexing program could be implemented is nearing completion, with a report scheduled to be presented to Council in November 2026. Dog containment and dog waste infringement provisions were reviewed through the 2026 Local Law Review, which has now been adopted by Council.	**On schedule**	

Action	Progress	Comments	Status	
Lead and co-facilitate safety initiatives in partnership with the Local Safety Committee and Victoria Police to foster a culture of safety, wellbeing, and community connection.	**25%**	The first Knox Local Safety Committee meeting with the new Local Area Commander for Knox was held in August and attended by 19 members. The Committee's Terms of Reference were reviewed and refined, and an Expression of Interest process was completed to refine Committee membership. A report on the outcomes of the May Roundtable is progressing through the approvals process and is expected to be presented to Council later this year.	**On schedule**	
Establish local partnerships to work collaboratively in engaging young people, focussing on strengthening protective factors and reducing risk factors associated with youth crime.	**25%**	Youth Services are working to establish partnerships with local community organisations and services to broaden reach and engagement with young people. Activities to date have included participation in the Knox Local Safety Advisory Committee, strengthening the relationship with local police. Youth Services have also worked collaboratively with Headspace Knox and Your Library to deliver a range of programs and activities that build social connection and support engagement with young people.	**On schedule**	
Continue to participate in the Eastern Metropolitan Council's Emergency Management Partnership in order to deliver a collaborative approach to regional emergency preparation and preparedness.	**25%**	Council continues to participate in the Eastern Metropolitan Councils Emergency Management Partnership (EMCEMP), including attending regular partnership meetings and working closely with the City of Boroondara to organise and host Exercise East 2026, an all-day collaborative emergency management event to be held in October.	**On schedule**	

Theme 6: Planning our future city

Actions

Action	Progress	Comments	Status	
Undertake community engagement on the future Knox Central civic, community and arts precinct.	**25%**	A specialist arts and cultural consultant team was engaged during the quarter to support the design of the community engagement process. Work has also been undertaken to inform a community services needs analysis and information on future community service needs will be gathered through the engagement.	**On schedule**	
Deliver the Year 4 actions of the Social and Affordable Housing Strategy 2023-2027 which seeks to increase housing options for Knox's most vulnerable community members.	**30%**	The Social and Affordable Housing Strategy and Action Plan 2023-2027 includes 24 Year 4 actions, all of which remain on schedule. Several actions are expected to continue beyond the life of the current Strategy. Planning has commenced for the next phase of Council's commitment to social and affordable housing, which will be aligned with the development of Council's Housing Strategy and ongoing work to support diverse housing options that meet changing community needs.	**On schedule**	
Report on housing development approvals in Knox through Council's annual Housing Monitoring Program.	**25%**	The 2026 Housing Monitoring Report is on track to be presented to Council for adoption by 30 June 2027.	**On schedule**	

Action	Progress	Comments	Status	
Expand the audit of facility infrastructure and incorporate these assets in future renewal programs.	**65%**	Draft 2027- 2028 renewal programs have been developed for additional building infrastructure not previously included in the Building Asset Condition Audit, including lifts and solar systems. These assets will be incorporated through the Capital Works Program process.	**On schedule**	
Finalise the draft Knox Housing Strategy which responds to the current and future housing needs of our community.	**25%**	A draft Housing Strategy is on schedule for end of financial year. The background work has progressed extensively with context statements prepared. The information is currently being developed into a shorter form background report.	**On schedule**	
Ensure statutory and strategic planning services align with and respond to the State Government's Planning Reform Agenda.	**10%**	Project planning for the implementation of planning reform has commenced with a project group established and project resourcing underway. Details of Planning Regulations have not yet been released by State Government.	**On schedule**	

Incomplete 2025-2026 Action as at 30 June 2026

Action	Progress	Comments	Status	
Undertake the Knox Aquatics Feasibility Study.	**60%**	An updated report is currently being prepared for Council. Completion of Stage 2 is now expected in the second half of 2026-27.	**Behind schedule**	
Deliver the year one actions of Council's Organisation Strategy 2025-29.	**100%**	Our Organisation Strategy focuses on five key themes. It encourages our people to be customer centric, people focused, financially sustainable, change ready and outcomes driven. Nine of the ten actions within the Organisation Strategy were completed during 2025-26. The remaining action was completed in Quarter 1 2026-27.	**Complete**	

Financial Performance Report

For year to date ended 30 September 2026



knox

Knox City Council

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Financial Performance Report for year to date ended 30 September 2026

Knox City Council

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Executive Summary

Financial Performance Report for the year to date ended 30 September 2026

Introduction and Purpose

This report is aimed and designed to identify major variations against Council's year to date financial performance (actual results) and the amended budget, reflect the amended budget which reflects changes which have occurred since the adoption of the annual budget, and anticipate the financial position of Council as at financial year end by way of forecasts.

The amended budget aligns with the 'Amended Budget Principle' financial strategy adopted as part of the 2026-27 Budget. The principle states Council will amend the Budget for internal management reporting purposes to ensure prudent and transparent budgeting and financial planning. The 2026-27 Amended Budget was approved by Council on 28 September 2026.

The full year adopted budget and amended budget is compared against the full year projected position as reflected by the forecast. The 2026-27 forecast includes carry forward funding from 2025-26 into 2026-27 for both operational and capital works expenditure items. These funds are required for the successful completion and delivery of key outcomes and projects.

Financial Performance

Summary

Summary	Year to Date					Full Year				
	Adopted Budget $'000's	Amended Budget $'000's	Actual $'000's	Amended Variance $'000's	Adopted Variance $'000's	Adopted Budget $'000's	Amended Budget $'000's	Forecast $'000's	Amended Variance $'000's	Adopted Variance $'000's
Operating										
Income	172,147	171,824	174,381	2,557	2,234	212,026	213,183	213,183	0	1,157
Expense	57,325	56,274	52,810	3,463	4,514	203,361	211,692	211,692	0	(8,331)
Surplus (Deficit)	**114,822**	**115,550**	**121,570**	**6,020**	**6,748**	**8,665**	**1,492**	**1,492**	**0**	**(7,174)**
Capital Works	10,007	10,748	9,459	1,289	548	54,609	52,622	52,622	0	1,987
Cash and Investments	19,032	27,226	40,995	13,769	21,963	37,241	45,435	45,435	0	8,194

The overall financial position at 30 September 2026 is satisfactory with a working capital ratio of 4.31 to 1.

The year-to-date favourable variance of $6.0M compared to the amended budget is driven by the receipt of capital grants (a mix of permanent and timing variances), together with an underspend in materials and services (largely timing variances) , and lower than budgeted employee costs (a mix of permanent and timing variances) against the amended budget.

The forecast surplus at 30 September 2026 is based on the full year amended budget and includes carry forward income and expenditure from 2025-26 into 2026-27. The forecast currently aligns with the 2026-27 amended budget.

The forecast capital works expenditure totalling $52.6M is also based on the full year amended budget, and includes carry forward capital expenditure totalling $2.8M from 2025-26 into 2026-27.

Executive Summary (continued)

Financial Performance Report for the year to date ended 30 September 2026

Knox City Council

Operating

Operating Results	Year to Date					Full Year				
	Adopted Budget $'000's	Amended Budget $'000's	Actual $'000's	Amended Variance $'000's	Adopted Variance $'000's	Adopted Budget $'000's	Amended Budget $'000's	Forecast $'000's	Amended Variance $'000's	Adopted Variance $'000's
Income	172,147	171,824	174,381	2,557	2,234	212,026	213,183	213,183	0	1,157
Expense	57,325	56,274	52,810	3,463	4,514	203,361	211,692	211,692	0	(8,331)
Surplus (Deficit)	**114,822**	**115,550**	**121,570**	**6,020**	**6,748**	**8,665**	**1,492**	**1,492**	**0**	**(7,174)**

Year-to-Date

There is a $6.0M favourable variance between the YTD actual result and the amended budget. The variance primarily relates to:

Revenue

- $2.3M favourable variance for capital grants through a combination of unbudgeted capital grants, and the timing of capital project activities;
- $0.3M favourable variance for operating grants; and
- $0.2M favourable variance for interest income.

Expenditure

- $3.2M favourable variance in materials and services, including $1.3M in the Customer and Performance directorate; $0.8M in the Connected Communities directorate; $0.3M in the City Liveability directorate; and $0.8M for capital expenditure that is operational in nature due to the timing of capital activities; and
- $0.3M favourable variance for employee costs and oncosts across the organisation.

Forecast

The forecast surplus of $1.5M is based on the full year amended budget and includes carry forward income and expenditure from 2025-26 into 2026-27. The amended budget includes:

Revenue

- Operational and capital grants received totalling $0.8M ($0.4M operational and $0.4M capital) were treated as unearned income in 2025-26 and carried forward to 2026-27 in accordance with accounting standards; and
- An additional $0.3M in funding to be received from the Victorian Grants Commission.

Expenditure

- $4.8M increase in depreciation due to updates to the capital works program, and taking into account the net asset revaluation increment at 30 June 2026;
- $2.6M in carry forward expenditure from 2025-26 into 2026-27 required for the completion and delivery of key operational projects and to deliver key Council Plan initiatives; this includes $0.4M in carry forward expenditure related to unearned operating grants that have been recognised as carry forward income;
- $0.5M in information technology expenditure carried forward from the 2025-26 capital works program but to be expended and recognised as operational expenditure in 2026-27; and

Executive Summary (continued)

Financial Performance Report for the year to date ended 30 September 2026

Knox City Council

- $0.4M net increase in employee costs after taking into account adjustments required for the implementation of the new Enterprise Agreement.

Capital

Capital Works Expenditure	Year to Date					Full Year				
	Adopted Budget $'000's	Amended Budget $'000's	Actual $'000's	Amended Variance $'000's	Adopted Variance $'000's	Adopted Budget $'000's	Amended Budget $'000's	Forecast $'000's	Amended Variance $'000's	Adopted Variance $'000's
Property	3,684	4,366	2,885	1,481	799	13,855	15,096	15,096	0	(1,241)
Plant and Equipment	870	825	513	312	357	6,209	3,228	3,228	0	2,981
Infrastructure	5,452	5,557	6,061	(504)	(609)	34,546	34,298	34,298	0	248
Total Capital Works Expenditure	**10,007**	**10,748**	**9,459**	**1,289**	**548**	**54,609**	**52,622**	**52,622**	**0**	**1,987**

Year-to-Date

The capital works underspend against the amended budget at the end of September 2026 is mainly within Property (Buildings), while there has been a slight overspend year-to-date within Infrastructure (The underspend in Roads has been offset by overspends in Footpaths and Cycleways, Drainage, and Recreation, Leisure, Parks and Playgrounds). There are favourable timing variances for projects such as the Carrington Park Pavilion ($0.7M), reconstruction activities for Acacia Road, Upper Ferntree Gully ($0.5M) and Borg Crescent, Scoresby ($0.4M), and the Early Years Hubs Playspace Works ($0.4M). There are unfavourable timing variances for projects such as the Footpath Renewal Program ($0.8M), and the Road Surface Renewal Program ($0.6M).

Forecast

The forecast capital expenditure includes $2.8M in capital expenditure carried forward from 2025-26, while at this stage no capital expenditure included in the amended budget has been identified to be carried forward to 2027-28.

Balance Sheet

Balance Sheet	Year to Date					Full Year				
	Adopted Budget $'000's	Amended Budget $'000's	Actual $'000's	Amended Variance $'000's	Adopted Variance $'000's	Adopted Budget $'000's	Amended Budget $'000's	Forecast $'000's	Amended Variance $'000's	Adopted Variance $'000's
Current Assets	180,048	188,242	202,525	14,283	22,477	63,236	71,430	71,430	0	8,194
Non-Current Assets	2,603,598	2,688,258	2,688,178	(79)	84,581	2,616,596	2,701,256	2,701,256	0	84,660
Total Assets	**2,783,646**	**2,876,500**	**2,890,703**	**14,204**	**107,058**	**2,679,832**	**2,772,686**	**2,772,686**	**0**	**92,854**
Current Liabilities	39,256	39,068	46,979	(7,911)	(7,723)	47,620	47,432	47,432	0	188
Non-Current Liabilities	75,909	75,753	76,042	(288)	(132)	77,790	77,634	77,634	0	156
Total Liabilities	**115,165**	**114,821**	**123,021**	**(8,199)**	**(7,855)**	**125,410**	**125,066**	**125,066**	**0**	**344**
Net Assets	**2,668,480**	**2,761,678**	**2,767,683**	**6,004**	**99,202**	**2,554,422**	**2,647,620**	**2,647,620**	**0**	**93,198**
Accumulated Surplus	890,913	892,498	898,744	6,246	7,831	772,646	774,231	774,231	0	1,585
Asset Revaluation Reserve	1,769,295	1,860,907	1,860,907	0	91,612	1,769,295	1,860,907	1,860,907	0	91,612
Other Reserves	8,272	8,273	8,032	(241)	(240)	12,481	12,482	12,482	0	1
Total Equity	**2,668,480**	**2,761,678**	**2,767,683**	**6,005**	**99,203**	**2,554,422**	**2,647,620**	**2,647,620**	**0**	**93,198**
Working Capital Ratio	**4.59**	**4.82**	**4.31**			**1.33**	**1.51**	**1.51**		

Executive Summary (continued)

Financial Performance Report for the year to date ended 30 September 2026

The Balance Sheet as at 30 September 2026 indicates a sustainable result. A comparison of total Current Assets of $202.5M with total Current Liabilities of $47.0M continues to depict a sustainable financial position (Working Capital Ratio of 4.31 to 1). The Working Capital Ratio for the same period last year was 4.05. Current Assets primarily comprises Cash, Cash Equivalents and Other Financial Assets ($41.0M) and Trade and Other Receivables ($159.2M). Trade and Other Receivables includes $155.2M of rates debtors (of which $17.1M relates to arrears pre July 2026) and $2.6M in other debtors.

The working capital ratio of 4.31 is down on the Amended Budget working capital ratio of 4.82 due to the increase in trust funds and deposits held (due to the collection of the Emergency Services and Volunteers Fund levy on behalf of the State Revenue Office). The Working Capital Ratio is anticipated to continue to reduce over the course of the financial year, reflecting the utilisation of funds by Council to deliver on its operating programs and capital works. The forecast working capital ratio is anticipated to be 1.51 at year end, as per the Amended Budget.

Trade and Other Receivables	Ageing				
	Current - 30 Days $'000	31 Days - 60 Days $'000	61 Days - 90 Days $'000	More than 90 Days $'000	Total $'000
Rates Debtors	138,047	0	0	17,119	155,166
Special Rate Assessment	0	0	0	52	52
Parking and Animal Infringement Debtors	278	228	190	745	1,441
Other Debtors	1,298	79	560	615	2,552
Total Trade and Other Receivables	**139,623**	**307**	**750**	**18,531**	**159,211**

Rate amounts owing are a charge over the property and therefore Council has recourse to collect these debts. Rates Notices for the current financial year were delivered in August, with the first instalment due on 30 September 2026. The due date for rates being paid in full is 15 February 2027, while the last instalment due date is 31 May 2027.

As at 30 September 2026, Knox has collected 18.96% of outstanding rates debt. This is an improvement on collection levels at the same point for the previous three financial years, and follows the implementation of Payble as a rates payment option from 1 July 2026.

Collection of Rates and Other Charges	2026-27 Sep	2025-26 Sep	2024-25 Sep	2023-24 Sep
Percentage Collected of Rates and Other Charges	18.96%	15.83%	15.43%	16.05%

The total value of rates outstanding from prior years is $17.1M, which is $1.4M higher than at the same time last year.

Aging of Outstanding Rates and Other Charges	Current 2026-27	2025-26	2024-25	2023-24	2022-23 Prior	Total
Outstanding Rates and Other Charges	88.98%	5.60%	2.17%	1.13%	2.12%	100.00%

Reduction of prior year debt levels is a continued focus.

Executive Summary (continued)

Financial Performance Report for the year to date ended 30 September 2026

Knox City Council

Investment Analysis

Investment	Year to Date					Full Year				
	Adopted Budget $'000's	Amended Budget $'000's	Actual $'000's	Amended Variance $'000's	Adopted Variance $'000's	Adopted Budget $'000's	Amended Budget $'000's	Forecast $'000's	Amended Variance $'000's	Adopted Variance $'000's
Cash and Cash Equivalents	19,032	27,226	38,495	11,269	19,463	37,241	45,435	45,435	0	8,194
Other Financial Assets	0	0	2,500	2,500	2,500	0	0	0	0	0
Total Funds Invested	**19,032**	**27,226**	**40,995**	**13,769**	**21,963**	**37,241**	**45,435**	**45,435**	**0**	**8,194**
Earnings on Investments	**223**	**223**	**394**	**171**	**171**	**1,064**	**1,064**	**1,064**	**0**	**0**

The earnings on investments for the period ended 30 September 2026 were greater than budgeted due to higher than budgeted cash and investment balances.

Financial Performance Indicators

as at 30 September 2026

Knox City Council

The following table highlights Council's current and forecasted performance across a range of key financial performance indicators. These indicators provide a useful analysis of Council's financial position and performance and should be interpreted in the context of the Council's objectives.

Indicator	Calculation of Measure	Full Year Expected Bands	Full Year Amended Budget	Full Year Forecast	Notes
Operating Position - Measures whether a council is able to generate an adjusted underlying surplus.					
Adjusted Underlying Result Indicator of the broad objective that an adjusted underlying surplus should be generated in the ordinary course of business. A surplus or increasing surplus suggests an improvement in the operating position. The adjusted underlying surplus and the adjusted underlying revenue exclude the following types of income: grants - capital (non-recurrent), contributions - monetary (capital) and contributions - non-monetary.	[Adjusted Underlying Surplus (Deficit) / Adjusted Underlying Revenue] x 100	(20%) to 20%	(1.08%)	(1.08%)	1
Liquidity - Measures whether a council is able to generate sufficient cash to pay bills on time.					
Working Capital Indicator of the broad objective that sufficient working capital is available to pay bills as and when they fall due. High or increasing level of working capital suggests an improvement in liquidity.	[Current Assets / Current Liabilities] x 100	100% - 400%	150.59%	150.59%	2
Unrestricted Cash Indicator of the broad objective that sufficient cash which is free of restrictions is available to pay bills as and when they fall due. High or increasing level of unrestricted cash suggests an improvement in liquidity.	[Unrestricted Cash / Current Liabilities] x 100	10% - 300%	88.89%	88.89%	3
Obligations - Measures whether the level of debt and other long term obligations is appropriate to the size and nature of the Council's activities.					
Loans and Borrowings Indicator of the broad objective that the level of interest bearing loans and borrowings should be appropriate to the size and nature of a council's activities. Low or decreasing level of loans and borrowings suggests an improvement in the capacity to meet long term obligations.	[Interest Bearing Loans and Borrowings / Rate Revenue] x 100	0% - 70%	50.15%	50.15%	4
Debt Commitments Defined as interest and principal repayments on interest bearing loans and borrowings as a percentage of rate revenue.	[Interest and Principal Repayments / Rate Revenue] x 100	0% - 20%	8.93%	8.93%	5
Indebtedness Indicator of the broad objective that the level of long term liabilities should be appropriate to the size and nature of a Council's activities. Low or decreasing level of long term liabilities suggests an improvement in the capacity to meet long term obligations	[Non Current Liabilities / Own Source Revenue] x 100	2% - 70%	40.53%	40.53%	6

Financial Performance Indicators

as at 30 September 2026

Knox City Council

Indicator	Calculation of Measure	Full Year Expected Bands	Full Year Amended Budget	Full Year Forecast		Notes
Asset Renewal Indicator of the broad objective that assets should be renewed as planned. High or increasing level of planned asset renewal being met suggests an improvement in the capacity to meet long term obligations	[Asset Renewal and Upgrade Expenditure / Depreciation] x 100	40% - 130%	125.93%	125.93%	!	7
Stability - Measures whether a council is able to generate revenue from a range of sources.						
Rates Concentration Indicator of the broad objective that revenue should be generated from a range of sources. High or increasing range of revenue sources suggests an improvement in stability.	[Rate Revenue / Adjusted Underlying Revenue] x 100	30.00% - 80.00%	77.09%	77.09%	!	8
Treasury Corporation of Victoria - Undertakings to obtain and maintain loans						
Indebtedness The aggregate Interest Bearing Loans and Borrowings at all times must not exceed 60% of Own Source Revenue	[Interest Bearing Loans and Borrowings / Own Source Revenue] x 100	0% - 60%	47.48%	47.48%	!	9
Interest Cover Ratio The Interest Cover Ratio at all times must not be less than 2.00:1.00	[EBITDA / Interest Expense]	2.00 - 100.00	10.41	10.41	!	10

✓ Forecasts improvements in Council's financial performance / financial position indicator compared to the Amended Budget position.
! Forecasts that Council's financial performance / financial position indicator will be reasonably steady and is within Expected Bands.
✗ Forecasts deterioration in Council's financial performance / financial position indicator compared to the Amended Budget position.

Notes:

1	**No Variance:** - The adjusted underlying result ratio is within the expected bands
2	**No Variance:** - The working capital ratio is within the expected bands
3	**No Variance:** - The unrestricted cash ratio is within the expected bands
4	**No Variance:** - The loans and borrowings ratio is within expected bands
5	**No Variance:** - The loans and borrowings ratio is within expected bands
6	**No Variance:** - The indebtedness ratio is within expected bands
7	**No Variance:** - The forecast asset renewal is within the expected bands
8	**No Variance:** - The rates concentration ratio is within the expected bands
9	**No Variance:** - The TCV indebtedness ratio is within the expected bands
10	**No Variance:** - The TCV interest cover ratio is within the expected bands

Summary of Net Income and Expenditure by Department

for year to date ended 30 September 2026

Knox City Council

Net (Income) / Expenditure	Notes	Year-to-Date Amended Budget $000'S	Year-to-Date Actual $000'S	Year-to-Date Variance Fav/(Unfav) $000'S	Year-to-Date Variance Fav/(Unfav) %	Full Year Adopted Budget $000'S	Full Year Amended Budget $000'S	Full Year Forecast $000'S	Full Year Amended Variance Fav/(Unfav) $000'S	Full Year Adopted Variance Fav/(Unfav) $000'S
Rates										
Rates and Valuation		(131,075)	(131,096)	21	0.02% ✓	(131,175)	(131,175)	(131,175)	0	0
Net (Income) / Expense - Rates		**(131,075)**	**(131,096)**	**21**	**0.02%**	**(131,175)**	**(131,175)**	**(131,175)**	**0**	**0**
CEO										
Chief Executive Office		180	181	(1)	(0.53%) !	693	693	693	0	0
Chief Financial Office		716	627	89	12.49% ✓	3,664	3,669	3,669	0	(5)
Net (Income) / Expense - CEO		**896**	**808**	**89**	**9.88%**	**4,357**	**4,362**	**4,362**	**0**	**(5)**
City Liveability										
Directorate City Liveability		157	200	(43)	(27.47%) ✗	620	627	627	0	(7)
City Futures	1	1,162	947	215	18.53% ✓	4,289	4,618	4,618	0	(329)
City Planning and Building	2	528	810	(282)	(53.39%) ✗	2,453	2,519	2,519	0	(66)
City Safety and Health	3	1,317	1,086	230	17.48% ✓	2,171	2,283	2,283	0	(112)
City Projects		133	115	19	13.94% ✓	529	533	533	0	(5)
Net (Income) / Expense - City Liveability		**3,297**	**3,158**	**139**	**4.22%**	**10,061**	**10,581**	**10,581**	**0**	**(519)**
Connected Communities										
Directorate Connected Communities		248	234	14	5.62% ✓	852	861	861	0	(9)
Community Access and Support		876	876	(0)	(0.04%) !	3,475	3,520	3,520	0	(46)
Community Strengthening		2,305	2,284	21	0.92% ✓	8,964	9,091	9,091	0	(126)
Active and Creative Communities	4	972	479	493	50.71% ✓	4,338	4,281	4,281	0	57
Early Years	5	645	195	451	69.86% ✓	2,441	2,273	2,273	0	168
Net (Income) / Expense - Connected Communities		**5,046**	**4,068**	**978**	**19.39%**	**20,070**	**20,026**	**20,026**	**0**	**44**
Customer and Performance										
Directorate Customer and Performance		94	112	(17)	(18.14%) ✗	373	378	378	0	(5)
Chief People Office	6	1,274	1,055	219	17.20% ✓	4,875	4,999	4,999	0	(124)
Governance and Risk		2,972	3,004	(32)	(1.06%) !	4,977	4,993	4,993	0	(16)
Chief Information Office	7	7,492	6,268	1,224	16.34% ✓	16,174	19,683	19,683	0	(3,509)
Strategy and Transformation		661	637	24	3.66% ✓	2,812	2,688	2,688	0	124
Customer and Communications		1,489	1,486	3	0.18% ✓	6,103	6,063	6,063	0	40
Net (Income) / Expense - Customer and Performance		**13,983**	**12,562**	**1,421**	**10.16%**	**35,314**	**38,803**	**38,803**	**0**	**(3,489)**
Infrastructure										
Directorate Infrastructure		(814)	(904)	90	11.02% ✓	789	(3,256)	(3,256)	0	4,045
Strategic Infrastructure	8	1,450	1,305	145	9.99% ✓	5,852	5,844	5,844	0	7
Green Spaces & Environment		(20,232)	(19,757)	(475)	(2.35%) !	15,753	16,601	16,601	0	(849)
Engineering Services & Operations		2,083	2,165	(83)	(3.97%) !	6,747	9,059	9,059	0	(2,311)
Major Projects & Facilities	9	1,448	1,030	419	28.92% ✓	3,879	5,590	5,590	0	(1,710)
Net (Income) / Expense - Infrastructure		**(16,065)**	**(16,161)**	**96**	**0.60%**	**33,020**	**33,838**	**33,838**	**0**	**(818)**

Indicators of the variances between year to date (YTD) Amended Budget and Actual results:

✓ 0% or greater.

! Less than 0% and greater than negative 5%.

✗ Negative 5% or less.

Notes have been provided for these variances:

1. Favourable variances between year to date (YTD) Amended Budget and Actual results are equal to or greater than positive $100K and equal to or greater than positive 5%.
2. Unfavourable variances between year to date (YTD) Amended Budget and Actual results are equal to or less than negative $100K and equal to or less than negative 5%.

Summary of Net Income and Expenditure by Department

for year to date ended 30 September 2026

Knox City Council

Notes:

1	**Permanent Variance:** - $55K favourable variance for unbudgeted operating grants received (to be offset by corresponding expenditure) **Timing Variance:** - $99K favourable variance in City Strategy and Planning, including $38K for the Knox Erosion Management Study and $28K for Planning Scheme Amendments
2	**Timing Variance:** - $154K unfavourable variance in statutory fees and fines, including an unfavourable variances in statutory planning application fees ($121K), supervision fees ($55K), plan checking fees ($21K), and building lodgement fees ($20K), partially offset by favourable variances for statutory fees ($74K) and amendment fees ($30K) - $83K unfavourable variance for employee costs and oncosts across the department, including the backfilling of roles due to sick leave - $76K unfavourable variance for user fees
3	**Timing Variance:** - $203K favourable variance in employee costs and oncosts across the department, including $136K for School Crossings - $86K favourable variance for the recovery of legal costs, partially offset by a $21K unfavourable variance for lodgement filing costs - $53K favourable variance for the pound contract - $121K unfavourable variance for traffic enforcement fines and $45K unfavourable variance for the bad debt provision, partially offset by a $105K favourable variance for infringement court recoveries
4	**Timing Variance:** - $387K favourable variance for Leisure Facilities, with a $354K favourable variance for expenditure (including $191K for Knox Leisureworks due to the timing of invoices, $67K for the Knox Regional Netball Centre and $44K for the Rowville Community Centre) - $70K favourable variance for Arts and Cultural Services, including $27K for user fees and $23K for employee costs and oncosts - $58K favourable variance for Sport and Leisure Services, with a $54K favourable variance for expenditure (including $26K for employee costs and oncosts and $22K for the Minor Recreation Grant Scheme)
5	**Timing Variance:** - $155K favourable variance for Early Years Hubs, with a favourable variance of $56K for fee income, and $85K for expenditure (including a $40K favourable variance for employee costs and oncosts) - $150K favourable variance for Early Years Partnerships, including $86K for grant income and $32K for facility costs - $115K favourable variance for Early Years Health and Wellbeing, including $87K for grant income - $30K favourable variance in Early Years Municipal Planning
6	**Timing Variance:** - $116K favourable variance in Organisation Development, including $34K for Leadership Development and $34K for Organisation Development - $55K favourable variance in employee costs and oncosts
7	**Timing Variance:** - $1,132K favourable variance in Operational Programs, including $624K for the Core Business System, and $228K for Pathway projects - $68K favourable variance for software maintenance/licencing/extensions - $52K favourable variance in employee costs and oncosts
8	**Timing Variance:** - $63K favourable variance in Traffic and Transport, including $20K for the Mobility Plan Implementation - $45K favourable variance for Asset Management, including $46K for survey/condition ratings - $25K favourable variance in employee costs and oncosts
9	**Timing Variance:** - $335K favourable variance for Building Maintenance - Reserves, including $262K for water, $39K for vandalism, and $22K for cleaning - $54K favourable variance for Toilets, including $59K for cleaning

Comprehensive Income Statement

for year to date ended 30 September 2026

Knox City Council

Description	Notes	Year-to-Date Amended Budget	Year-to-Date Actual	Year-to-Date Variance Fav/(Unfav)		Full Year Adopted Budget	Full Year Amended Budget	Full Year Forecast	Amended Variance Fav/(Unfav)	Adopted Variance Fav/(Unfav)
		$000'S	$000'S	$000'S	%	$000'S	$000'S	$000'S	$000'S	$000'S
Income										
Rates and Charges		159,632	159,659	27	0.02%	161,461	161,461	161,461	0	0
Statutory Fees and Fines		1,578	1,584	6	0.39%	5,961	5,961	5,961	0	0
User Fees		5,566	5,447	(119)	(2.13%)	14,882	14,882	14,882	0	0
Grants - Operating		3,246	3,499	253	7.78%	17,242	17,984	17,984	0	742
Grants - Capital	1	208	2,518	2,310	1,109.12%	3,783	4,198	4,198	0	415
Contributions - Monetary		1,131	1,035	(95)	(8.44%)	4,604	4,604	4,604	0	0
Contributions - Non-Monetary		0	0	0	0.00%	2,000	2,000	2,000	0	0
Increment on investment in associates		0	0	0	0.00%	7	7	7	0	0
Other Income		462	637	175	37.94%	2,086	2,086	2,086	0	0
Total Income		**171,824**	**174,381**	**2,557**	**1.49%**	**212,026**	**213,183**	**213,183**	**0**	**1,157**
Expenses										
Employee Costs		19,296	18,975	321	1.66%	80,591	80,972	80,972	0	(381)
Materials and Services	2	24,594	21,392	3,202	13.02%	84,980	88,111	88,111	0	(3,131)
Depreciation		9,035	9,034	1	0.01%	31,300	36,141	36,141	0	(4,841)
Amortisation - Intangible Assets		151	152	(0)	(0.04%)	628	606	606	0	22
Amortisation - Right-of-Use Assets		320	264	56	17.40%	1,280	1,280	1,280	0	0
Contributions and Donations		1,748	1,679	69	3.95%	6,548	6,548	6,548	0	0
Borrowing Costs		877	877	0	0.00%	3,648	3,648	3,648	0	0
Finance Costs - Leases		84	84	1	0.81%	338	338	338	0	0
Bad and Doubtful Debts		88	127	(39)	(44.59%)	360	360	360	0	0
Other Expenses		183	242	(59)	(31.94%)	828	828	828	0	0
Net (Gain) Loss on Disposal of Property, Infrastructure, Plant and Equipment		(104)	(16)	(88)	(84.84%)	(7,140)	(7,140)	(7,140)	0	0
Total Expenses		**56,274**	**52,810**	**3,463**	**6.15%**	**203,361**	**211,692**	**211,692**	**0**	**(8,331)**
Surplus (Deficit)		**115,550**	**121,570**	**6,020**	**5.21%**	**8,665**	**1,492**	**1,492**	**0**	**(7,174)**
Total Comprehensive Income for the Year		**115,550**	**121,570**	**6,020**	**5.21%**	**8,665**	**1,492**	**1,492**	**0**	**(7,174)**

Indicators of the variances between year to date (YTD) Amended Budget and Actual results:

- 0% or greater.
- Less than 0% and greater than negative 10%.
- Negative 10% or less.

Notes have been provided for the following variances:

1. Favourable variances between year to date (YTD) Amended Budget and Actual results are equal to or greater than positive $500K and equal to or greater than positive 10%.
2. Unfavourable variances between year to date (YTD) Amended Budget and Actual results are equal to or less than negative $500K and equal to or less than negative 10%.

Comprehensive Income Statement

for year to date ended 30 September 2026

Knox City Council

Notes:

1	**Permanent Variance:** - $0.620M favourable variance for the receipt of grant income towards the Tormore Reserve facility development, previously budgeted to be received during the 2026 financial year - $0.200M favourable variance for the receipt of grant income towards the Wantirna Reserve masterplan, previously budgeted to be received during the 2026 financial year - $0.180M favourable variance for the receipt of grant income towards the Gilbert Park new safety netting - $0.075M favourable variance for the receipt of grant income towards the Kings Park Reserve masterplan **Timing Variance:** - $0.900M favourable variance for the recipt of grant income towards the Carrington Park pavilion redevelopment - $0.300M favourable variance for the receipt of Roads to Recovery grants
2	**Timing Variance:** - $1.130M favourable variance in the Chief Information Office, with a favourable variance of $1.072M for operational programs including $0.662M for the Core Business System project - $0.842M favourable variance for capital expenditure that is operational in nature due to the timing of capital activities and due to the capital works undertaken by internal staff instead of external parties - $0.779M favourable variance in the Connected Communities directorate, including $0.335M in Active & Creative Communities (including $0.192M for facilities costs), $0.186M in Early Years, and $0.148M in Community Access & Support (including $0.101M for Community Care Services) - $0.302M favourable in the City Liveability directorate, including $0.171M for City Futures - $0.206M favourable variance in the Customer and Performance directorate (excluding the Chief Information Office), including $0.164M in the Chief People Office - $0.082M unfavourable variance for the Infrastructure directorate, with a $0.418M favourable variance in Facilities offset by a $0.503M unfavourable variance in Green Spaces and Environment

Comprehensive Income Statement Converted to Cash

for year to date ended 30 September 2026

Knox City Council

Description	Notes	Full Year Adopted Budget $000'S	Amended Budget $000'S	Forecast $000'S	Amended Variance Fav/(Unfav) $000'S	Amended Variance Fav/(Unfav) %	Adopted Variance Fav/(Unfav) $000'S	Adopted Variance Fav/(Unfav) %
Comprehensive Income Statement								
Income		212,026	213,183	213,183	0	0.00%	1,157	0.55%
Expenditure		203,361	211,692	211,692	0	0.00%	(8,331)	-4.10%
Surplus (Deficit)		**8,665**	**1,492**	**1,492**	**0**	**0.00%**	**(7,174)**	**-82.78%**
Add (Less) Non-Cash Items								
Depreciation		31,300	36,141	36,141	0	0.00%	(4,841)	-15.47%
Amortisation - Intangible Assets		628	606	606	0	0.00%	22	3.50%
Amortisation - Right-of-Use Assets		1,280	1,280	1,280	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
Contributions - Non-Monetary		(2,000)	(2,000)	(2,000)	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
Increment on investment in associates		(7)	(7)	(7)	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
Written Down Value of Assets Disposed		1,332	1,332	1,332	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
Total Non-Cash Items		**32,533**	**37,352**	**37,352**	**0**	**0.00%**	**(4,819)**	**-14.81%**
Less (Add) Non-Operating Cash Items								
Capital Works Expenditure		48,210	49,080	49,080	0	0.00%	(870)	-1.80%
Transfers to/(from) Reserves		(2,792)	(2,582)	(2,582)	0	0.00%	(210)	-7.51%
New Loan Borrowings		(11,500)	(11,500)	(11,500)	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
Loan Repayments		10,766	10,766	10,766	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
Lease Repayments		1,144	1,144	1,144	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
Total Non-Operating Cash Items		**45,828**	**46,907**	**46,907**	**0**	**0.00%**	**(1,079)**	**-2.35%**
Cash Surplus (Deficit)		**(4,629)**	**(8,063)**	**(8,063)**	**0**	**0.00%**	**(3,434)**	**-74.17%**
Total Comprehensive Income for the Year		**(4,629)**	**(8,063)**	**(8,063)**	**0**	**0.00%**	**(3,434)**	**-74.17%**

Notes have been provided for the following variances:

1. Favourable variances between full year Amended Budget and Forecast results are equal to or greater than positive $500K and equal to or greater than positive 10%.
2. Unfavourable variances between full year Amended Budget and Forecast results are equal to or less than negative $500K and equal to or less than negative 10%.

Notes:

The Comprehensive Income Statement is prepared on an accrual basis and in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards. However it contains several items which are "non-cash" in nature such as depreciation/amortisation and the written down value of assets disposed, while it excludes non-operating cash items such as capital expenditure, new borrowings, loan repayments and transfers to/from reserves.

The above Comprehensive Income Statement Converted to Cash aims to provide an accurate indication of the forecast surplus/deficit cash position for the financial year by providing a management cash result for the period which removes non-cash items and adds back cash items that are excluded from the Comprehensive Income Statement.

Balance Sheet

as at 30 September 2026

Knox City Council

Description	Notes	Year-to-Date Amended Budget	Year-to-Date Actual	Year-to-Date Variance Fav/(Unfav)		Full Year Amended Budget	Full Year Forecast	Full Year Variance Fav/(Unfav)
		$000'S	$000'S	$000'S	%	$000'S	$000'S	$000'S
Current Assets								
Cash and Cash Equivalents	1	27,226	38,495	11,269	41.39%	45,435	45,435	0
Other Financial Assets	2	0	2,500	2,500	100.00%	0	0	0
Trade and Other Receivables		159,563	159,211	(352)	(0.22%)	22,007	22,007	0
Other Current Assets		0	850	850	100.00%	3,975	3,975	0
Non-Current Assets classified as Held for Sale		1,440	1,440	(0)	0.00%	0	0	0
Inventories		13	30	17	127.54%	13	13	0
Total Current Assets		**188,242**	**202,525**	**14,283**	**7.59%**	**71,430**	**71,430**	**0**
Non-Current Assets								
Investment in Associates		3,078	3,078	0	0.01%	3,085	3,085	0
Property, Infrastructure, Plant and Equipment		2,676,228	2,677,646	1,418	0.05%	2,690,634	2,690,634	0
Right-of-Use Assets		7,116	6,224	(892)	(12.53%)	6,156	6,156	0
Intangible Assets		1,836	1,230	(606)	(33.01%)	1,381	1,381	0
Total Non-Current Assets		**2,688,258**	**2,688,178**	**(79)**	**0.00%**	**2,701,256**	**2,701,256**	**0**
Total Assets		**2,876,500**	**2,890,703**	**14,204**	**0.49%**	**2,772,686**	**2,772,686**	**0**
Current Liabilities								
Trade and Other Payables		6,469	6,568	(99)	(1.53%)	13,847	13,847	0
Trust Funds and Deposits	3	2,764	10,984	(8,220)	(297.41%)	2,764	2,764	0
Unearned Income		636	544	92	14.48%	0	0	0
Provisions - Employee Costs		17,038	17,332	(295)	(1.73%)	17,520	17,520	0
Defined Benefits Superannuation		0	0	0	0.00%	0	0	0
Provision - Landfill Rehabilitation		530	530	0	0.08%	530	530	0
Interest-Bearing Loans and Borrowings		10,793	10,435	358	3.32%	11,686	11,686	0
Lease Liabilities		838	585	253	30.16%	1,085	1,085	0
Other Provisions		0	0	0	0.00%	0	0	0
Total Current Liabilities		**39,068**	**46,979**	**(7,911)**	**(20.25%)**	**47,432**	**47,432**	**0**
Non-Current Liabilities								
Provisions - Employee Costs		1,153	1,122	31	2.66%	1,153	1,153	0
Interest-Bearing Loans and Borrowings		66,910	67,268	(357)	(0.53%)	69,291	69,291	0
Provision - Landfill Rehabilitation		1,708	1,708	(0)	(0.01%)	1,708	1,708	0
Defined Benefits Superannuation		0	0	0	0.00%	0	0	0
Lease Liabilities		5,982	5,944	38	0.64%	5,482	5,482	0
Other Provisions		0	0	0	0.00%	0	0	0
Total Non-Current Liabilities		**75,753**	**76,042**	**(288)**	**(0.38%)**	**77,634**	**77,634**	**0**
Total Liabilities		**114,821**	**123,021**	**(8,199)**	**(7.14%)**	**125,066**	**125,066**	**0**
Net Assets		**2,761,678**	**2,767,683**	**6,004**	**0.22%**	**2,647,620**	**2,647,620**	**0**
Equity								
Accumulated Surplus		892,498	898,744	6,246	0.70%	774,231	774,231	0
Asset Revaluation Reserve		1,860,907	1,860,907	0	0.00%	1,860,907	1,860,907	0
Other Reserves		8,273	8,032	(241)	(2.91%)	12,482	12,482	0
Total Equity		**2,761,678**	**2,767,683**	**6,005**	**0.22%**	**2,647,620**	**2,647,620**	**0**

Balance Sheet

as at 30 September 2026

Knox City Council

Notes have been provided for items with the following variances:

1. Favourable variances between year to date (YTD) Amended Budget and Actual results are equal to or greater than positive $1M and equal to or greater than positive 10%.
2. Unfavourable variances between year to date (YTD) Amended Budget and Actual results are equal to or less than negative $1M and equal to or less than negative 10%.

Notes:

1	**Timing Variance:** - $13.769M favourable variance across cash and cash equivalents includes a favourable variance of $12.858M from net cash provided by operating activities and $1.261M for cash from payments for Property, Infrastructure, Plant & Equipment
2	**Timing Variance:** - Other financial assets are term deposits currently held with an original maturity date of more than 90 days
3	**Timing Variance:** - Trust funds and deposits primarily reflects the cash holdings for refundable deposits - This includes $8.456M collected for the emergency services and volunteers fund levy; this amount is payable to the State Revenue Office by the 28th October 2026

Cash Flow Statement

for year to date ended 30 September 2026

Knox City Council

Description	Notes	Year-to-Date Amended Budget	Year-to-Date Actual	Year-to-Date Variance Fav/(Unfav)		Full Year Amended Budget	Full Year Forecast	Full Year Variance Fav/(Unfav)
		$000'S	$000'S	$000'S		$000'S	$000'S	$000'S
Cash Flows from Operating Activities								
Receipts								
Rates and Charges		27,726	28,101	376	1.36%	165,605	165,605	0
Statutory Fees and Fines		1,578	1,584	6	0.39%	5,961	5,961	0
User Fees		7,892	7,906	14	0.18%	14,319	14,319	0
Grants - Operating		2,858	3,336	478	16.72%	17,604	17,604	0
Grants - Capital	1	84	2,410	2,326	2,769.77%	3,840	3,840	0
Contributions - Monetary		1,131	1,035	(95)	(8.44%)	4,613	4,613	0
Interest Received		223	394	171	76.89%	1,064	1,064	0
Other Receipts		239	243	4	1.67%	1,022	1,022	0
Net Movement in Trust Deposits	2	(1,033)	7,188	8,220	796.12%	(1,033)	(1,033)	0
Employee Costs		(19,278)	(18,693)	585	3.03%	(80,472)	(80,472)	0
Materials and Services		(37,666)	(36,909)	758	2.01%	(95,228)	(94,151)	1,077
Contributions and Donations		(2,476)	(2,402)	74	2.99%	(6,907)	(7,984)	(1,077)
Short Term, Low Value and Variable Lease Payments				0	0.00%	(25)	(25)	0
Other Payments		(183)	(242)	(59)	(31.94%)	(803)	(803)	0
Net Cash Provided by /(Used in(Operating Activities		**(18,906)**	**(6,048)**	**12,858**	**68.01%**	**29,560**	**29,560**	**0**
Cash Flows from Investing Activities								
Payments for Property, Infrastructure, Plant and Equipment	3	(9,863)	(8,602)	1,261	12.78%	(49,080)	(49,080)	0
Proceeds from Sales of Property, Infrastructure, Plant and Equipment		292	40	(251)	(86.16%)	9,912	9,912	0
Payments for investments	4	0	(2,500)	(2,500)	(100.00%)	0	0	0
Proceeds from sale of investments		5,000	5,000	0	0.00%	5,000	5,000	0
Net Cash Used in Investing Activities		**(4,571)**	**(6,062)**	**(1,491)**	**(32.61%)**	**(34,168)**	**(34,168)**	**0**
Cash Flows from Financing Activities								
Proceeds of Borrowings		0	0	0	0.00%	11,500	11,500	0
Repayment of Borrowings		(2,539)	(2,539)	(0)	0.00%	(10,766)	(10,766)	0
Finance costs		(877)	(884)	(7)	(0.76%)	(3,701)	(3,701)	0
Interest Paid - Lease Liability		(84)	(84)	1	0.81%	(338)	(338)	0
Repayment of Lease Liabilities		(286)	(378)	(92)	(32.33%)	(1,144)	(1,144)	0
Net Cash Provided by/(Used in) Financing Activities		**(3,787)**	**(3,886)**	**(98)**	**(2.60%)**	**(4,448)**	**(4,448)**	**0**
Net increase / (decrease) in Cash and Cash Equivalents		**(27,265)**	**(15,996)**	**11,269**	**41.33%**	**(9,056)**	**(9,056)**	**0**
Cash and Cash Equivalents at the Beginning of the Financial Year		54,491	54,491	0	0.00%	54,491	54,491	0
Cash at the End of the Year		**27,226**	**38,495**	**11,269**	**41.39%**	**45,435**	**45,435**	**0**

Notes have been provided for items with the following variances:

1. Favourable variances between year to date (YTD) Amended Budget and Actual results are equal to or greater than positive $500K and equal to or greater than positive 10%.
2. Unfavourable variances between year to date (YTD) Amended Budget and Actual results are equal to or less than negative $500K and equal to or less than negative 10%.

Cash Flow Statement

for year to date ended 30 September 2026

Knox City Council

Notes:

1	**Permanent Variance:** - $0.620M favourable variance for the receipt of grant income towards the Tormore Reserve facility development, previously budgeted to be received during the 2026 financial year - $0.200M favourable variance for the receipt of grant income towards the Wantirna Reserve masterplan, previously budgeted to be received during the 2026 financial year - $0.180M favourable variance for the receipt of grant income towards the Gilbert Park new safety netting - $0.075M favourable variance for the receipt of grant income towards the Kings Park Reserve masterplan **Timing Variance:** - $0.900M favourable variance for the recipt of grant income towards the Carrington Park pavilion redevelopment - $0.300M favourable variance for the receipt of Roads to Recovery grants
2	**Timing Variance:** - Trust funds and deposits primarily reflects the cash holdings for refundable deposits - This includes $8.456M collected for the emergency services and volunteers fund levy; this amount is payable to the State Revenue Office by the 28th October 2026
3	**Timing Variance:** - $1.527M underspend for capital works expenditure against budget as detailed in the Statement of Capital Works - Partially offset by a $0.029M reduction in capital expenditure that is operational in nature due to the timing of capital activities
4	**Timing Variance:** - Payments for investments are term deposits taken out during the financial year and still held with an original maturity date of more than 90 days

Statement of Capital Works

for year to date ended 30 September 2026

Knox City Council

Description	Notes	Year-to-Date				Full Year				
		Amended Budget	Actual	Variance Fav/(Unfav)		Adopted Budget	Amended Budget	Forecast	Amended Variance Fav/(Unfav)	Adopted Variance Fav/(Unfav)
		$000'S	$000'S	$000'S	%	$000'S	$000'S	$000'S	$000'S	$000'S
Expenditure - Capital Works Program										
Property										
Land		0	0	0	0.00%	0	0	0	0	0
Buildings	1	4,366	2,885	1,481	33.92%	13,855	15,096	15,096	0	(1,241)
Total Property		**4,366**	**2,885**	**1,481**	**33.92%**	**13,855**	**15,096**	**15,096**	**0**	**(1,241)**
Plant and Equipment										
Artworks		123	30	93	75.58%	386	386	386	0	0
Plant, Machinery and Equipment		639	467	173	27.00%	2,592	2,592	2,592	0	0
Fixtures, Fittings and Furniture		0	0	0	0.00%	0	0	0	0	0
Computers and Telecommunications		62	16	46	74.35%	3,231	250	250	0	2,981
Total Plant and Equipment		**825**	**513**	**312**	**37.82%**	**6,209**	**3,228**	**3,228**	**0**	**2,981**
Infrastructure										
Roads (including Kerb and Channel)	2	2,420	1,875	544	22.50%	11,138	11,016	11,016	0	121
Drainage		170	424	(254)	(149.83%)	3,536	3,345	3,345	0	191
Bridges		45	90	(45)	(98.90%)	1,015	1,015	1,015	0	0
Footpaths and Cycleways	3	1,282	1,829	(547)	(42.68%)	7,151	7,272	7,272	0	(122)
Off Street Car Parks		133	130	3	2.60%	1,361	1,361	1,361	0	0
Recreation, Leisure, Parks and Playgrounds		1,395	1,591	(196)	(14.05%)	9,716	9,646	9,646	0	70
Other Infrastructure		112	122	(10)	(8.70%)	629	642	642	0	(13)
Total Infrastructure		**5,557**	**6,061**	**(504)**	**(9.06%)**	**34,546**	**34,298**	**34,298**	**0**	**248**
Total Expenditure - Capital Works Program		**10,748**	**9,459**	**1,289**	**12.00%**	**54,609**	**52,622**	**52,622**	**0**	**1,987**
Represented by:										
Extension / Expansion		125	38	87	69.71%	428	428	428	0	0
Legal Requirements		0	0	0	0.00%	0	0	0	0	0
New		801	385	415	51.90%	3,324	3,467	3,467	0	(143)
Renewal		6,435	6,426	8	0.13%	39,648	36,741	36,741	0	2,907
Upgrade		3,388	2,610	778	22.98%	11,209	11,986	11,986	0	(776)
Total Expenditure - Capital Works Program		**10,748**	**9,459**	**1,289**	**12.00%**	**54,609**	**52,622**	**52,622**	**0**	**1,987**
Funding Source for Capital Works Program										
External Funding										
Contributions - Monetary - Capital		0	4	4	100.00%	104	104	104	0	0
Grants - Capital	4	208	2,518	2,310	1,109.12%	3,783	4,198	4,198	0	415
User Fees - Capital		0	0	0	0.00%	0	0	0	0	0
Proceeds from Loan Borrowings		0	0	0	0.00%	11,500	11,500	11,500	0	0
Other Income - Capital		0	0	0	0.00%	0	0	0	0	0
Total External Funding		**208**	**2,522**	**2,314**	**1,110.88%**	**15,387**	**15,802**	**15,802**	**0**	**415**
Internal Funding										
Proceeds from Sale of Property, Infrastructure, Plant and Equipment		292	40	(251)	(86.16%)	8,472	8,472	8,472	0	0
Reserves		1,559	2,001	442	28.36%	5,664	5,664	5,664	0	0
Rate Funding	5	8,690	4,896	(3,794)	(43.66%)	25,087	22,684	22,684	0	(2,403)
Total Internal Funding		**10,540**	**6,937**	**(3,603)**	**(34.19%)**	**39,222**	**36,820**	**36,820**	**0**	**(2,403)**
Total Funding Source for Capital Works Program		**10,748**	**9,459**	**(1,289)**	**(12.00%)**	**54,609**	**52,622**	**52,622**	**0**	**(1,987)**
Less Operating Projects Expenditure										
Operating Projects Expenditure		885	857	29	3.27%	6,399	3,542	3,542	0	(2,857)
Net Capital Works (Capitalised Expenditure Excluding Operating Projects Expenditure)		**9,863**	**8,602**	**1,261**	**12.78%**	**48,210**	**49,080**	**49,080**	**0**	**870**
Summary										
2025-26 Capital Budget		7,932	7,959	(28)	(0.35%)	49,778	49,779	49,779	0	(1)
Carried Forward Capital Budget		2,817	1,499	1,317	46.77%	4,831	2,843	2,843	0	1,988
Total Expenditure - Capital Works Program		**10,748**	**9,459**	**1,289**	**12.00%**	**54,609**	**52,622**	**52,622**	**0**	**1,987**

Statement of Capital Works

for year to date ended 30 September 2026

Knox City Council

Indicators of the variances between year to date (YTD) Amended Budget and Actual results:

- 0% or greater.
- Less than 0% and greater than negative 10%.
- Negative 10% or less.

Notes have been provided for the following variances:

1. Favourable variances between year to date (YTD) Amended Budget and Actual results are equal to or greater than positive $500K and equal to or greater than positive 10.00%.
2. Unfavourable variances between year to date (YTD) Amended Budget and Actual results are equal to or less than negative $500K and equal to or less than negative 10%.

Notes:

1	**Timing Variance:** - Favourable variance relating to the timing of activities for the Carrington Park Pavilion Design ($0.692M); the Early Years Hubs Playspace Works ($0.375M); the Building Renewal & Rehabilitation Program ($0.277M); and the Demolition of Redundant Buildings ($0.153M)
2	**Timing Variance:** - Favourable variance relating to timing of reconstruction activities for Acacia Road, Upper Ferntree Gully ($0.516M); Borg Crescent, Scoresby ($0.379M); Cathies Lane, Wantirna South ($0.246M); and Hakea Place, Rowville ($0.129M) - Unfavourable variance due to the timing of activities for the Road Surface Renewal Program ($0.550M)
3	**Timing Variance:** - Favourable variance relating to the timing of activities for the Mountain Highway, The Basin Shared Path ($0.212M); and the Ferny Creek Trail, Upper Ferntree Gully Shared Path ($0.134M) - Unfavourable variance due to the timing of activities for the Footpath Renewal Program ($0.801M)
4	**Permanent Variance:** - $0.620M favourable variance for the receipt of grant income towards the Tormore Reserve facility development, previously budgeted to be received during the 2026 financial year - $0.200M favourable variance for the receipt of grant income towards the Wantirna Reserve masterplan, previously budgeted to be received during the 2026 financial year - $0.180M favourable variance for the receipt of grant income towards the Gilbert Park new safety netting - $0.075M favourable variance for the receipt of grant income towards the Kings Park Reserve masterplan **Timing Variance:** - $0.900M favourable variance for the recipt of grant income towards the Carrington Park pavilion redevelopment - $0.300M favourable variance for the receipt of Roads to Recovery grants
5	**Timing Variance:** - Council generates cash from its operating activities which is used as a funding source for the capital works program - it is forecast that $22.684M will be required from operations to fund the 2025-26 capital works program (inclusive of projects carried forward from 2024-25)

Detailed Capital Works Program Expenditure

for year to date ended 30 September 2026

Knox City Council

Capital Works Program Expenditure	Year-to-Date				Full Year				
	Amended Budget	Actual	Variance Fav/(Unfav)		Adopted Budget	Amended Budget	Forecast	Amended Variance Fav/(Unfav)	Adopted Variance Fav/(Unfav)
	$'000	$'000	$'000	%	$'000		$'000		$'000
Land and Buildings									
Peregrine Reserve, Rowville - New Public Toilet	50	40	10	19.1%	459	459	459	0	0
Replacements of components for all Council owned buildings based on Building Asset Management Systems	1,279	1,002	277	21.7%	6,287	6,287	6,287	0	0
Demolition of Redundant Buildings	202	49	153	75.6%	396	396	396	0	0
Carrington Park, Knoxfield - Pavilion Upgrade	*1,576*	*885*	*692*	*43.9%*	*3,672*	*3,660*	*3,660*	*0*	*12*
Park Ridge Reserve - Pavilion Refurbishment	*327*	*238*	*90*	*27.4%*	*0*	*327*	*327*	*0*	*(327)*
HV Jones Community Hall, Ferntree Gully - Bathroom Upgrade & New Accessible Toilet Design	18	2	15	86.1%	28	28	28	0	0
Templeton Reserve, Wantirna - Pavilion Upgrade - Design (this will only be funded if Federal funding is confirmed)	0	16	(16)	(7,821.7%)	176	176	176	0	0
Energy Retrofits in Rowville Community Centre	15	32	(17)	(112.4%)	250	250	250	0	0
Building Compliance Works - Various	56	119	(63)	(112.2%)	255	255	255	0	0
Coonara Community House, Upper Ferntree Gully - Kitchen Refurbishment Design	0	1	(1)	(100.0%)	11	11	11	0	0
Knox Community Gardens, Boronia - Shed	0	0	(0)	(100.0%)	6	6	6	0	0
Stamford Park Homestead, Rowville - New Accessible Parking Space	15	3	12	82.4%	30	30	30	0	0
Community Toilet Replacement Program	*50*	*0*	*50*	*100.0%*	*240*	*197*	*197*	*0*	*43*
Knox Regional Netball Centre, Ferntree Gully - Outdoor Netball Posts Upgrades	53	59	(6)	(11.9%)	59	59	59	0	0
Tormore Reserve - Facility Redevelopment	0	2	(2)	(100.0%)	0	0	0	0	0
Indoor Leisure Sites Security Upgrades	0	6	(6)	(100.0%)	66	66	66	0	0
Early Years Hubs - Playspace works	*591*	*216*	*374*	*63.4%*	*300*	*1,204*	*1,204*	*0*	*(904)*
Scoresby Recreation Reserve, Scoresby - Feasibility & design of future projects	0	0	0	0.0%	29	29	29	0	0
Knox Regional Netball Centre, Ferntree Gully - Air Handling	0	38	(38)	(100.0%)	434	434	434	0	0
Knoxfield Early Years Centre, Knoxfield - Building Refurbishment	10	9	1	5.9%	107	107	107	0	0
Playgroup Sites - Storerooms Shelving Improvements	0	1	(1)	(100.0%)	11	11	11	0	0
The Basin Early Years Centre, The Basin - Building Refurbishment Scoping	0	1	(1)	(100.0%)	11	11	11	0	0
Carrington Park, Knoxfield - New Shade & Weather Protection Facility (Radio Controlled Car Track)	0	1	(1)	(100.0%)	15	15	15	0	0
Ferntree Gully Community Centre, Ferntree Gully - Pottery Room Extension	50	31	19	37.7%	353	353	353	0	0
Solar panels in Community Facilities	*64*	*68*	*(4)*	*(6.7%)*	*0*	*64*	*64*	*0*	*(64)*
Updates of Signage at Early Years Sites	0	5	(5)	(100.0%)	55	55	55	0	0
Rosa Benedikt Community Centre, Scoresby - Outdoor Area Revitalisation Design	0	2	(2)	(100.0%)	28	28	28	0	0
Knox Community Arts Centre, Bayswater - Hearing Loop Installation	0	0	0	0.0%	20	20	20	0	0
Knox Community Arts Centre, Bayswater - Lighting Console Replacement	0	0	0	0.0%	22	22	22	0	0
Lewis Park, Wantirna South - Pavilion Upgrade	10	40	(30)	(304.8%)	457	457	457	0	0
Lewis Park, Wantirna South - New Playspace & Toilets	0	16	(16)	(100.0%)	80	80	80	0	0
Total Buildings	**4,366**	**2,885**	**1,481**	**33.9%**	**13,855**	**15,096**	**15,096**	**0**	**(1,241)**
Total Property	**4,366**	**2,885**	**1,481**	**33.9%**	**13,855**	**15,096**	**15,096**	**0**	**(1,241)**
Plant and Equipment									
Artworks									
Lupton Way, Boronia - New Public Art Lighting	100	30	70	70.0%	242	242	242	0	0
Kings Park, Upper Ferntree Gully - Playground Artwork	0	0	0	0.0%	54	54	54	0	0
Artwork Renewal	23	0	23	100.0%	90	90	90	0	0
Total Artworks	**123**	**30**	**93**	**75.6%**	**386**	**386**	**386**	**0**	**0**

Detailed Capital Works Program Expenditure

for year to date ended 30 September 2026

Knox City Council

Capital Works Program Expenditure	Year-to-Date				Full Year				
	Amended Budget	Actual	Variance Fav/(Unfav)		Adopted Budget	Amended Budget	Forecast	Amended Variance Fav/(Unfav)	Adopted Variance Fav/(Unfav)
	$'000	$'000	$'000	%	$'000		$'000		$'000
Plant, Machinery and Equipment									
Plant and Machinery Replacement Program	639	467	173	27.0%	2,558	2,558	2,558	0	0
New Vehicle for Community Laws Team	0	0	0	0.0%	34	34	34	0	0
Total Plant, Machinery and Equipment	**639**	**467**	**173**	**27.0%**	**2,592**	**2,592**	**2,592**	**0**	**0**
Computers and Telecommunications									
Expansion Projects	0	0	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0	0
New Projects	0	0	0	0.0%	11	0	0	0	11
Renewal Projects	62	16	46	74.4%	3,035	250	250	0	2,785
Upgrade Projects	0	0	0	0.0%	185	0	0	0	185
Total Computers and Telecommunications	**62**	**16**	**46**	**74.4%**	**3,231**	**250**	**250**	**0**	**2,981**
Total Plant and Equipment	**825**	**513**	**312**	**37.8%**	**6,209**	**3,228**	**3,228**	**0**	**2,981**
Infrastructure									
Roads (including Kerb and Channel)									
Road Surface Renewal Program - Multiple Locations	500	1,050	(550)	(110.0%)	5,212	5,212	5,212	0	0
Industrial Road Renewal Program - Multiple Locations	20	18	2	7.9%	209	209	209	0	0
High Risk Road Failure Program - Multiple Locations	45	45	0	0.4%	418	418	418	0	0
Cathies Lane, Wantirna South	350	104	246	70.2%	606	580	580	0	26
Lewis Road, Wantirna South	0	0	0	0.0%	776	700	700	0	76
Marlborough Road, Bayswater - Design	3	4	(0)	(2.5%)	40	40	40	0	0
Borg Crescent , Scoresby	450	71	379	84.1%	810	810	810	0	0
Acacia Road, Upper Ferntree Gully	710	194	516	72.6%	760	760	760	0	0
Hakea Place, Rowville (Design)	150	21	129	85.9%	240	240	240	0	0
Sassess Avenue, Bayswater	82	84	(2)	(2.5%)	950	950	950	0	0
Shannon Avenue, Ferntree Gully	33	38	(5)	(15.1%)	404	385	385	0	19
Janine Street, Scoresby - Design	2	2	(0)	(2.5%)	20	20	20	0	0
Keith Campbell Court, Scoresby - Design	2	2	(0)	(2.5%)	20	20	20	0	0
Jersey Road, Bayswater - Design - Malvern to 38 Jersey	11	4	8	69.2%	40	40	40	0	0
Jersey Road, Bayswater - Design - Mountain to 58 Jersey	12	13	(1)	(5.9%)	45	45	45	0	0
Lewis Road, Wantirna South - Design - Eastgate to Bridgewood	0	4	(4)	(100.0%)	0	0	0	0	0
Murrindal Drive, Rowville - Local Area Traffic Management Treatment	25	37	(12)	(49.9%)	425	425	425	0	0
Wallace Road, Wantirna South - Local Area Traffic Management Treatment - Design	15	1	14	91.2%	15	15	15	0	0
Cambden Park Parade, Ferntree Gully - Local Area Traffic Management Treatment - Design	5	1	4	73.6%	15	15	15	0	0
Henderson Road, Rowville - New Refuge Island	5	5	(0)	(0.2%)	51	51	51	0	0
Forest Road & Hutton Avenue, Ferntree Gully - Improved Pedestrian Access	0	5	(5)	(100.0%)	61	61	61	0	0
Tormore Road & Penrith Street, Bayswater - Raised Pavement - Scoping	0	1	(1)	(100.0%)	10	10	10	0	0
Dawson Street, Upper Ferntree Gully - Cyclist/Pedestrian Crossing - Scoping	0	1	(1)	(100.0%)	10	10	10	0	0
Albert Avenue, Boronia – New Roundabout & Raised POS Crossing (Design and Construct)	0	46	(46)	(100.0%)	0	0	0	0	0
Forest Road, Ferntree Gully – New Roundabout Pedestrian Crossings	0	36	(36)	(100.0%)	0	0	0	0	0
Blind Creek Trail, Ferntree Gully & Boronia – New Raised Crossings	0	42	(42)	(100.0%)	0	0	0	0	0
Ashton Road/Kingston Street, Ferntree Gully – New Roundabout	0	15	(15)	(100.0%)	0	0	0	0	0
Maryborough Road/Woodvale Road, Boronia – New Roundabout	0	15	(15)	(100.0%)	0	0	0	0	0
Stradbroke Road/Pine Crescent, Boronia – New Roundabout	0	15	(15)	(100.0%)	0	0	0	0	0

Detailed Capital Works Program Expenditure

for year to date ended 30 September 2026

Knox City Council

Capital Works Program Expenditure	Year-to-Date				Full Year				
	Amended Budget	Actual	Variance Fav/(Unfav)		Adopted Budget	Amended Budget	Forecast	Amended Variance Fav/(Unfav)	Adopted Variance Fav/(Unfav)
	$'000	$'000	$'000	%	$'000		$'000		$'000
Total Roads (including Kerb and Channel)	**2,420**	**1,875**	**544**	**22.5%**	**11,138**	**11,016**	**11,016**	**0**	**121**
Drainage									
Peregrine Reserve - New Wetland Design	*0*	*1*	*(1)*	*(100.0%)*	*7*	*38*	*38*	*0*	*(32)*
Kings Park, Upper Ferntree Gully - Water Sensitive Urban Design Floodway	0	13	(13)	(100.0%)	146	146	146	0	0
Drainage Renewal Program - Multiple Locations	130	333	(203)	(156.4%)	2,390	2,390	2,390	0	0
Water Sensitive Urban Design System Renewal Program - Multiple Locations	35	17	18	52.0%	150	150	150	0	0
Monterey Estate, Ferntree Gully - Water Sensitive Urban Design	0	0	(0)	(100.0%)	5	5	5	0	0
Forest Road to Koolunga Reserve, Ferntree Gully - Wetland	*0*	*0*	*0*	*0.0%*	*316*	*93*	*93*	*0*	*223*
Stormwater Catchment Master Planning Stage 2 Scoping	0	4	(4)	(100.0%)	50	50	50	0	0
Kevin Avenue Ferntree Gully - Flood Investigation Design	0	1	(1)	(100.0%)	7	7	7	0	0
Flood Mitigation Reactive Upgrade Works	5	31	(27)	(587.3%)	200	200	200	0	0
Herbert Street, Boronia - Flood Mitigation Works Design	0	1	(1)	(100.0%)	9	9	9	0	0
Llewellyn Reserve, Wantirna South - Flood Mitigation Works Design	0	1	(1)	(100.0%)	7	7	7	0	0
Boronia Retarding Basin - Upgrade & Renewal scoping	0	3	(3)	(100.0%)	40	40	40	0	0
Stamford Homestead - Water Sensitive Urban Design Swale & Pond	0	19	(19)	(100.0%)	212	212	212	0	0
Total Drainage	**170**	**424**	**(254)**	**(149.8%)**	**3,536**	**3,345**	**3,345**	**0**	**191**
Bridges									
Pedestrian Overpass Renewal - Forest Road, Ferntree Gully	0	6	(6)	(100.0%)	70	70	70	0	0
Bridge Renewal Program - Multiple Locations	45	79	(34)	(75.4%)	895	895	895	0	0
Bridge Renewal - Hancock Drive - Ferntree Gully	0	4	(4)	(100.0%)	50	50	50	0	0
Total Bridges	**45**	**90**	**(45)**	**(98.9%)**	**1,015**	**1,015**	**1,015**	**0**	**0**
Footpaths and Cycleways									
Mountain Highway, Boronia - South side, Weyburn Road to Baldwin Avenue - Footpath Design	0	2	(2)	(100.0%)	20	20	20	0	0
Forest Road, The Basin - Nyora Avenue to Harrison Street - Footpath Design	3	3	(0)	(2.5%)	30	30	30	0	0
Mountain Highway, Wantirna - North side, 117 Mountain Highway to Petalnina Drive - Footpath Design	4	4	(0)	(0.2%)	40	40	40	0	0
Veronica Street, Ferntree Gully - South side between Underwood Road and 20 Veronica Street - Footpath	11	11	(0)	(2.5%)	130	130	130	0	0
Mountain Highway, The Basin - West side, Wicks Road to Claremont Avenue - Footpath	*79*	*69*	*9*	*11.6%*	*440*	*577*	*577*	*0*	*(137)*
Llewellyn Park Drive, East side, Somes Street to George Street - Footpath	0	0	(0)	(100.0%)	0	0	0	0	0
Highmoor Avenue, Bayswater - East side, 4 Highmoor to Myrtle Street - Footpath Design	1	1	(0)	(2.5%)	15	15	15	0	0
Lewis Road, Wantirna South - 77 to 79 Lewis Road - Footpath Design	1	1	(0)	(2.5%)	15	15	15	0	0
601 Boronia Road, Wantirna - North side, Footpath and Pram Crossing Design	1	1	(0)	(2.5%)	15	15	15	0	0
Alfred Street, Upper Ferntree Gully - Dawson Street to Rollings Road - Footpath Scoping	0	1	(1)	(100.0%)	10	10	10	0	0
William Street, Wantirna South (Alfred to Rollings) - Footpath Scoping	0	1	(1)	(100.0%)	10	10	10	0	0
Footpath Mobility Works - Multiple Locations	25	10	15	58.7%	117	117	117	0	0
Dorset Road, Boronia - 455 Dawson Road to Mountain Highway - Footpath Scoping	0	1	(1)	(100.0%)	10	10	10	0	0

Detailed Capital Works Program Expenditure

for year to date ended 30 September 2026

Knox City Council

Capital Works Program Expenditure	Year-to-Date				Full Year				
	Amended Budget	Actual	Variance Fav/(Unfav)		Adopted Budget	Amended Budget	Forecast	Amended Variance Fav/(Unfav)	Adopted Variance Fav/(Unfav)
	$'000	$'000	$'000	%	$'000		$'000		$'000
Dorset Road, Boronia - 387 to 389 Mountain Highway - Footpath Scoping	0	1	(1)	(100.0%)	10	10	10	0	0
Amay Crescent, Ferntree Gully - Footpath Scoping	0	1	(1)	(100.0%)	10	10	10	0	0
Parker Avenue, Boronia - Hastings Avenue to West side of Parker Avenue - Footpath Design	1	1	(0)	(0.2%)	15	15	15	0	0
Gillford Avenue, Ferntree Gully - Burwood Highway to Kevin Avenue - Footpath Design	0	1	(1)	(100.0%)	15	15	15	0	0
Kings Park, Upper Ferntree Gully (Playspace) - Sharedpath Design	0	2	(2)	(100.0%)	25	25	25	0	0
Burwood Highway, Wantirna South - Blindcreek Trail to Lynne Avenue - Sharedpath Design	0	2	(2)	(100.0%)	20	20	20	0	0
Ferny Creek Trail, Upper Ferntree Gully - East side, Acacia Road from Ferny Creek Trail and Kings Park Driveway - Sharedpath	147	13	134	91.2%	147	147	147	0	0
Burwood Highway (Dorset Road to Glenfern Road), Ferntree Gully - New Shared Path (Scoping)	0	2	(2)	(100.0%)	20	20	20	0	0
Liverpool Road, The Basin - North West side, Mountain Highway to The Basin Retarding Basin - Sharedpath	300	88	212	70.6%	904	904	904	0	0
Green Spine Corridor - Landscaping	0	61	(61)	(100.0%)	624	624	624	0	0
Railway Trail (Upper Ferntree Gully CFA to Dandenong Tourist Road Intersection) - Sharedpath Design	0	0	0	0.0%	15	0	0	0	15
Burwood Highway (Ferntree Gully Road to Dorset Road), Ferntree Gully - New Shared Path (Scoping)	0	2	(2)	(100.0%)	20	20	20	0	0
Footpath Mobility Renewal Works	0	18	(18)	(100.0%)	0	0	0	0	0
Footpaths Renewal Program - Multiple Locations	650	1,451	(801)	(123.3%)	3,666	3,666	3,666	0	0
Shared Path Renewal Program - Multiple Locations	59	80	(21)	(36.6%)	809	809	809	0	0
Total Footpaths and Cycleways	**1,282**	**1,829**	**(547)**	**(42.7%)**	**7,151**	**7,272**	**7,272**	**0**	**(122)**
Off Street Car Parks									
Program for asphalt resurfacing, patching, linemarking and kerb and channel renewal	87	79	8	9.2%	819	819	819	0	0
The Basin Shops, The Basin - Accessible Carpark & Outdoor Dining Design	5	8	(3)	(69.8%)	60	60	60	0	0
Wantirna Reserve, Wantirna - Carpark Upgrade	3	3	(0)	(2.5%)	35	35	35	0	0
Mens Shed/Rowville Recreation Reserve, Rowville - Carpark Upgrade	35	36	(1)	(2.5%)	412	412	412	0	0
Talaskia Reserve, Upper Ferntree Gully - Carpark Upgrade Design	3	3	(0)	(2.5%)	35	35	35	0	0
Total Off Street Car Parks	**133**	**130**	**3**	**2.6%**	**1,361**	**1,361**	**1,361**	**0**	**0**
Recreation, Leisure, Parks and Playgrounds									
Arcadia Reserve, Rowville - Playspace Expansion	75	7	68	91.2%	75	75	75	0	0
Knox Gardens Reserve, Wantirna South - Tennis Court Renewal	150	87	63	41.8%	990	990	990	0	0
Significant Passive Open Space Sites Renewal	35	43	(8)	(22.0%)	242	242	242	0	0
Irrigation Infrastructure Renewal	45	23	22	48.8%	167	167	167	0	0
Sporting Oval Fencing Renewal Program - Multiple	20	20	0	1.7%	91	91	91	0	0
Millers Reserve, Boronia - Tennis Court Renewal	150	108	42	27.9%	1,225	1,225	1,225	0	0
Kings Park Oval 1, Upper Ferntree Gully - Sportsfield	10	17	(7)	(75.3%)	18	18	18	0	0
Lakesfield Reserve, Lysterfield - Cricket Net Renewal	155	247	(92)	(59.4%)	418	418	418	0	0
Carrington Park, Knoxfield - Sportsfield Renewal	65	263	(198)	(304.7%)	2,477	2,477	2,477	0	0
Bayswater Bowls Club, Bayswater - Bowling Green 2	100	26	74	73.6%	300	300	300	0	0
Scoresby Recreation Reserve, Scoresby - Cricket Net	17	21	(5)	(27.3%)	24	24	24	0	0
Reserve/Court/Playground Renewal Programs	0	33	(33)	(100.0%)	0	0	0	0	0
The Basin Triangle Reserve, The Basin - Playground	0	19	(19)	(100.0%)	219	219	219	0	0
Marie Wallace Bayswater Park, Bayswater -	15	79	(64)	(429.1%)	900	900	900	0	0
Riddell Reserve, Wantirna - Playground Renewal	0	22	(22)	(100.0%)	233	233	233	0	0
Attenborough Park, Wantirna - Playground Renewal	0	4	(4)	(100.0%)	43	43	43	0	0
Alchester Court, Boronia - Playground Renewal	22	4	18	83.0%	42	42	42	0	0
Yarran Reserve, Bayswater - Playground Renewal	13	33	(20)	(161.5%)	33	33	33	0	0
Whitehaven Reserve, Wantirna - Playground	9	17	(8)	(85.5%)	17	17	17	0	0

Detailed Capital Works Program Expenditure

for year to date ended 30 September 2026

Knox City Council

Capital Works Program Expenditure	Year-to-Date				Full Year				
	Amended Budget	Actual	Variance Fav/(Unfav)		Adopted Budget	Amended Budget	Forecast	Amended Variance Fav/(Unfav)	Adopted Variance Fav/(Unfav)
	$'000	$'000	$'000	%	$'000		$'000		$'000
Somes Reserve, Wantirna South - Playground	19	15	4	20.6%	34	34	34	0	0
Cobain Reserve, Wantirna - Playground Renewal	18	34	(16)	(91.7%)	33	33	33	0	0
Nathan Street Reserve, Ferntree Gully - Playground Renewal	0	15	(15)	(100.0%)	174	174	174	0	0
Katandra Reserve, Bayswater - Playground Renewal	4	4	(0)	(0.8%)	6	6	6	0	0
Graham Reserve, Knoxfield - Playground Renewal (Design)	3	3	(0)	(11.4%)	6	6	6	0	0
Reserves' Utility Meter Separations - Multiple	0	4	(4)	(100.0%)	40	40	40	0	0
Walker Reserve, Wantirna South - Floodlighting Renewal	100	68	32	31.5%	350	350	350	0	0
Colchester Reserve - New Perimeter Fencing	58	65	(7)	(12.2%)	70	70	70	0	0
Miller Park, Boronia - Floodlight Renewal Design	14	16	(2)	(15.2%)	24	24	24	0	0
The Basin Triangle Reserve - Accessible Path	0	12	(12)	(100.0%)	139	139	139	0	0
Koolunga Native Reserve, Boronia - Revegetation	0	2	(2)	(100.0%)	22	22	22	0	0
David Cooper Park - New Reserve Lighting	31	12	20	62.6%	125	125	125	0	0
Knox Skate & BMX Park - Rectification & Upgrade Design	0	4	(4)	(100.0%)	50	50	50	0	0
Dobson Park, Ferntree Gully - Oval 1 Floodlight Renewal Design	14	16	(2)	(15.2%)	24	24	24	0	0
Quarry Reserve, Ferntree Gully - New Solar Lighting	25	4	21	82.4%	50	50	50	0	0
Mountain Gate Shopping Centre Lighting	0	22	(22)	(100.0%)	0	0	0	0	0
Saefty & Accessability The Basin Triangle	0	5	(5)	(100.0%)	0	0	0	0	0
Gilbert Park, Knoxfield - New Safety Netting	0	15	(15)	(100.0%)	0	0	0	0	0
Dirt Jump Facility - Design and Construction	*0*	*0*	*0*	*0.0%*	*42*	*42*	*42*	*0*	*0*
Carrington Park Access Improvements	0	1	(1)	(100.0%)	0	0	0	0	0
Kings Park Reserve - Masterplan Implementation	*65*	*3*	*62*	*95.1%*	*0*	*65*	*65*	*0*	*(65)*
Eildon Park, Rowville - Oval 1 Floodlighting Upgrade	140	131	9	6.3%	468	333	333	0	135
Lewis Park, Wantirna South - Stormwater Harvesting Scoping	0	2	(2)	(100.0%)	22	22	22	0	0
Walker Reserve, Wantirna South - Landscape Plan Design	6	14	(8)	(128.8%)	56	56	56	0	0
August Auer Reserve, Wantirna South - Landscape Plan Design	3	6	(3)	(97.3%)	45	45	45	0	0
Wally Tew Reserve, Ferntree Gully - New Public Basketball Facility	4	5	(1)	(15.6%)	15	15	15	0	0
Kings Park Reserve, Upper Ferntree Gully - New Playground (Stage 3)	12	37	(25)	(210.7%)	400	400	400	0	0
Carrington Park, Knoxfield - New Liberty Swing Design	0	1	(1)	(100.0%)	10	10	10	0	0
Total Recreation, Leisure, Parks and Playgrounds	**1,395**	**1,591**	**(196)**	**(14.1%)**	**9,716**	**9,646**	**9,646**	**0**	**70**
Other Infrastructure									
Knox Leisureworks - Strategic Review	*41*	*19*	*21*	*52.4%*	*60*	*60*	*60*	*0*	*0*
Carrington Park, Knoxfield - Wayfinding Signage Design	0	0	0	0.0%	15	15	15	0	0
Immerse Biennieal Winter Arts Program	22	37	(15)	(70.9%)	50	50	50	0	0
Albert Avenue, Boronia - New Speed Limit LED Flashlights	15	10	5	33.2%	115	115	115	0	0
Street Furniture Renewal Program - Multiple Locations	5	31	(26)	(527.2%)	188	188	188	0	0
Parking Management Plan Implementation	10	4	6	64.7%	40	40	40	0	0
Meridian Parade, Wantirna South - Additional Lighting	0	9	(9)	(100.0%)	80	80	80	0	0
Knox Park, Knoxfield - Directional Signage	*20*	*0*	*20*	*100.0%*	*81*	*94*	*94*	*0*	*(13)*
Bayswater Bowls Club - Lighting Upgrade	0	12	(12)	(100.0%)	0	0	0	0	0
Total Other Infrastructure	**112**	**122**	**(10)**	**(8.7%)**	**629**	**642**	**642**	**0**	**(13)**
Total Infrastructure	**5,557**	**6,061**	**(504)**	**(9.1%)**	**34,546**	**34,298**	**34,298**	**0**	**248**
Total Expenditure - Capital Works Program	**10,748**	**9,459**	**1,289**	**12.0%**	**54,609**	**52,622**	**52,622**	**0**	**1,987**

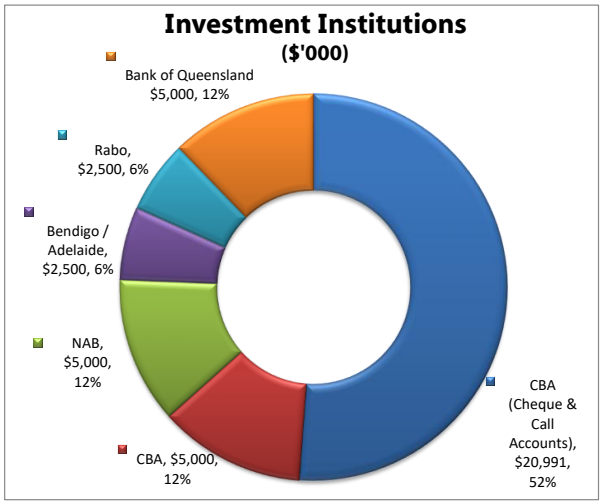
Items in Italics contain carry forward funds from 2025-26 into 2026-27. A total of $2.843M has been carried forward from 2025-26 into 2026-27.

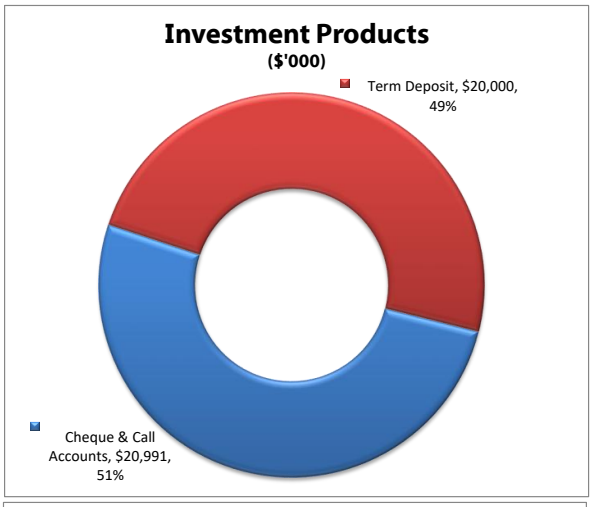
Investment Analysis

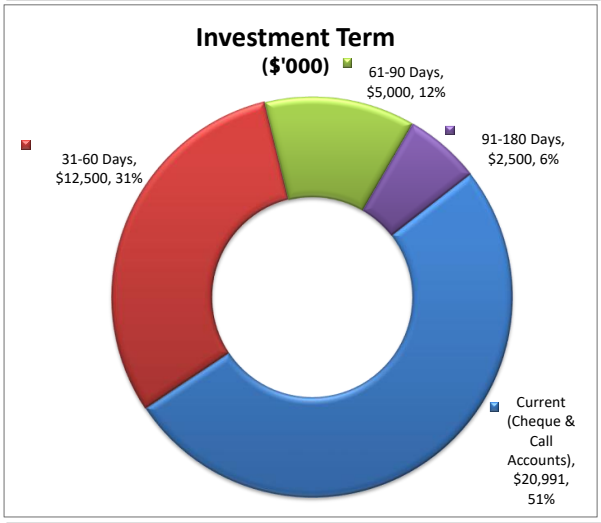
as at 30 September 2026

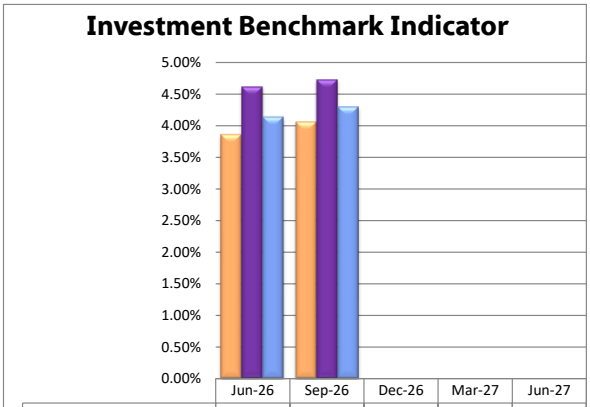
Knox City Council

A total amount of $40.99 million in funds were invested with various financial institutions as at 30 September 2026

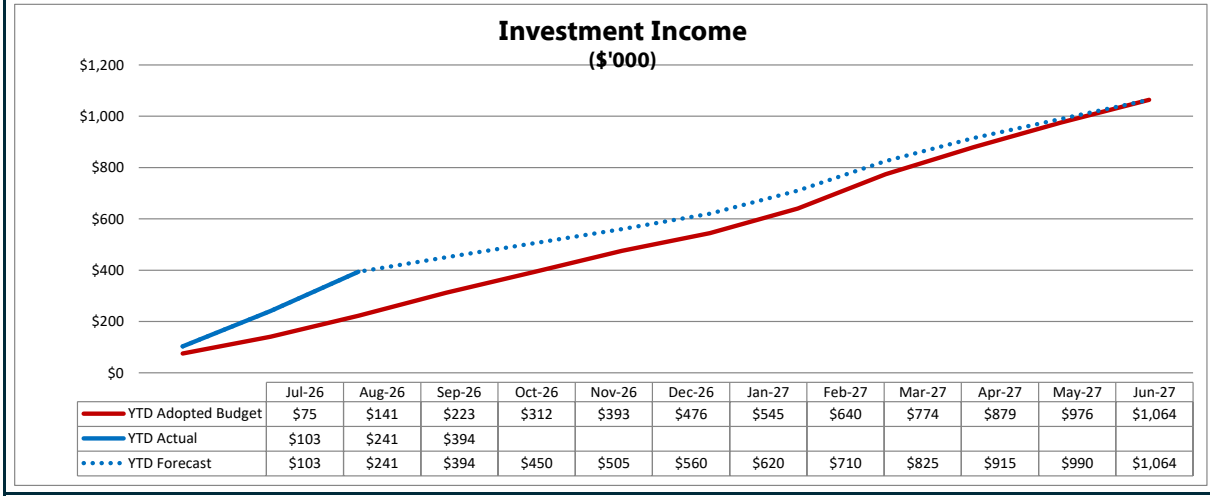








	Jun-26	Sep-26	Dec-26	Mar-27	Jun-27
Bloomberg AusBond Index	3.86%	4.06%			
YTD Actual Return	4.62%	4.73%			
Rolling Average Rate (12 mths)	4.14%	4.30%			



	Jul-26	Aug-26	Sep-26	Oct-26	Nov-26	Dec-26	Jan-27	Feb-27	Mar-27	Apr-27	May-27	Jun-27
YTD Adopted Budget	$75	$141	$223	$312	$393	$476	$545	$640	$774	$879	$976	$1,064
YTD Actual	$103	$241	$394									
YTD Forecast	$103	$241	$394	$450	$505	$560	$620	$710	$825	$915	$990	$1,064

Councillor Expenses

for the quarter ended 30 September 2026

Knox City Council

Councillor expenses

Councillors are entitled to have paid, or be reimbursed for, any necessary out-of-pocket expenses incurred while performing their duties. Council is also required to make available a 'minimum toolkit' of resources for councillors, including computers, phones and a vehicle for the Mayor.

Quarterly Expenses: September 2026

Ward	Performance of the Role	Professional Development	Travel	Total
Baird	$153.80	$0.00	$0.00	**$153.80**
Chandler	$1,039.05	$400.00	$4,874.04	**$6,313.09**
Collier	$605.45	$0.00	$77.52	**$682.97**
Dinsdale	$1,328.41	$9,700.00	$0.00	**$11,028.41**
Dobson	$423.86	$204.55	$0.00	**$628.41**
Friberg	$195.14	$0.00	$0.00	**$195.14**
Scott	$423.86	$0.00	$0.00	**$423.86**
Taylor	$258.04	$0.00	$0.00	**$258.04**
Tirhatuan	$173.86	$0.00	$0.00	**$173.86**
Total	**$4,601.47**	**$10,304.55**	**$4,951.56**	**$19,857.58**

Vehicle Expenses

Cr Paige Kennett (Chandler Ward) Mayor	Monthly Vehicle Expenses: 1 July 2026 – 30 September 2026	**Total $4,802. 01**

Councillor travel expenses include expenses for a fully maintained vehicle provided for the Mayor.

Knox City Council Project Status Report

08-Oct-2026

Project Number	Project Name	Total Adjusted Budget
1	**Bridges Renewal Program**	**$895,000**
All Wards	Works for the design and construction of compliant guardrails including C30 Dobsons Lane, C35 Acacia Road, C84 Karoo Road, B42 Waters Ave, C92 George St and B88 Bunjil Way have been awarded and commenced. Scoping currently underway for the beaching renewal for B88 Bunjil Way. Program is currently on track.	
4	**High Risk Road Failures - Patch & Resurface**	**$418,000**
All Wards	Asphalt patching completed in Alderford Drive, Wantirna. Various severe footpath displacements have also been rectified around the municipality. Crack Sealing program currently being scoped for completion in early 2027. Program is on track.	
7	**Road Surface Renewal Program**	**$5,211,800**
All Wards	Package 1 of the road resurfacing program has commenced in various locations around Wantirna and is on track to be completed by 9th October. Package 2 is set to commence on 9th October within various locations in Rowville. Program is currently on track.	
8	**Drainage Renewal Program**	**$2,390,000**
All Wards	Various high risk drainage works have been completed around the municipality. CCTV currently being completed to support the Road Resurfacing works with additional packages expected to be awarded later in 2026. Program is currently on track.	
9	**Footpath Renewal Program**	**$3,466,004**
All Wards	The footpath renewal program currently has two contractors in Rowville (Tirhatuan) and Ferntree Gully (Baird). The program is tracking ok with 42% current expenditure.	
10	**Bicycle and Shared Path Renewal Program**	**$808,500**
All Wards	Completed Kelletts Rd shared path SP704 from reserve to Karoo Rd Rowville. About to commence Burwood Hwy shared path SP147 from Milpera Crescent to Templeton St Wantirna.	

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Project Number	Project Name	Total Adjusted Budget
16	**Building Renewal Program**	**$6,287,005**
All Wards	The renewal program for FY26/27 has been determined by asset data verified against the BAMP, ongoing consultation with internal and external stakeholders, Buildings Renewal Officer, Project Officers and Facilities Officers. Consultation with stakeholders and officers is ongoing throughout the year to determine the best times to deliver works to avoid facility closures during peak times and if this can't be avoided, determine what will be acceptable work around or temporary relocation. Reactive renewal of assets will be ongoing throughout the year as items are identified either through stakeholder feedback, routine and reactive maintenance. Control of these works and the need to proceed at the present time will be considered and reviewed against the current program and the future Renewal and Capital works program. Notable ongoing renewal projects underway include:- Bayswater Senior citizens roof replacement is complete, there are some structural elements that need to be resolved in the Storeroom, a root barrier is to be installed first and monitoring for several months before remediation works commence, Wattle Seniors window replacement wall cladding and structural works is near completion with some defect works identified to be completed soon. New Renewal projects have commenced for this year several projects that were prepared for last year are underway these include roof design works at 6 locations, amenities and associated works at Knox Gardens construction to commence 31st August. Pool and Plant renewal works at Knox Leisure works have commenced, roof cladding works at Ambleside and associated internal plaster works at Ambleside are underway subject to weather. 3 year contract for Timber flooring Renewals has progressed through evaluation and is now at sign of stage. RFQ for new lift to access the stage at Rowville Community Centre is out to the market. Reactive renewal work to occur at the Basin Progress Hall, sections of wall cladding to be replaced.	
24	**Carpark Renewal Program**	**$799,000**
All Wards	Works on the 2026/27 program have commenced.	
25	**Replacement of Small Plant, Heavy Utility, Passenger & Utility Vehicle Fleet**	**$2,557,500**
All Wards	Fleet Renewal Program under way. To date 23% of funds committed & 10% of funds expended.	
104	**Miscellaneous Roadside Furniture Renewal/Replacement**	**$188,000**
All Wards	Retaining wall renewal at Coonara Community House is completed. Scoping is currently underway for renewal of 34-38 Clematis Avenue Retaining Wall.	
147	**Rowville Community Centre, Rowville - Energy Retrofits & New Solar**	**$250,000**
Tirhatuan	Final design and specifications completed, with work underway to prepare for procurement of an installation contractor, with procurement expected to be completed by mid-November 2026.	

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Project Number	Project Name	Total Adjusted Budget
345	**Building Compliance Works - Various Sites**	**$255,009**
All Wards	The Building Compliance Program will be continuing to look for and address non-compliance across our building portfolio to reduce risks associated with those non conformances. Priority items so far this year:- A new contract established in 25/26 with a new single fire services contractor has identified several non-conformances that need to be addressed as a priority. A new contract for servicing and Inspection of Back Flow prevention devices has also identified nonconformance issues and will be rectified. Division 5 audits were completed at sites with known asbestos last year, this year we will review the buildings that were previously cleared of asbestos and carry out further audits to confirm that they are asbestos free. Damaged asbestos sheeting has been removed from Bell Bird Senior Citizens was completed in early July. During roof works at Ambleside asbestos fragments were found in the roof space and needed to be removed prior to other maintenance works resuming. Grease trap required at Coonara house, investigating the requirements and suitable location	
347	**Industrial Road Failures - Patch & Resurface**	**$209,000**
All Wards	Industrial Roads program is currently being scoped with expected commencement in early 2027.	
412	**Minor Drainge (WSUD) Renewal Works**	**$105,000**
All Wards	- Harcrest Estate raingarden augmentation & partial renewal at concept stage - Wicks Reserve raingarden assessment and concept design underway - Llewellyn Reserve woody weed management within WSUD swale awarded - EMS civil audit of Council's WSUD portfolio scheduled to be delivered in April - Liberty Reserve floodway establishment works continue - Service proving to support WSUD swale within Kings Park complete - Algae management within Harcrest Estate and Wantirna Rise Estate to commencement to align with warmer weather - Consideration of algae treatment for the Grammar Parade wetland over the coming summer	
441	**Garden Bed Renewal at Significant Sites**	**$241,560**
All Wards	Decking renewal completed at Tim Neville Arboretum war memorial.	
566	**Artwork Renewal - Various Locations**	**$90,000**
All Wards	Contractors sought to complete essential renewal work on artworks at Rowville Community Centre and Ferntree Gully Village. Annual renewal activities underway as per renewal schedule.	

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Project Number	Project Name	Total Adjusted Budget
951	**Community Toilet Replacement Program**	**$197,419**
All Wards	Upper Ferntree Gully Public Toilet: Building Permit extended, still awaiting the approval from MTM for site construction works.	
1124	**Sportsfield Fencing Renewal**	**$90,585**
All Wards	Golf cages soft netting replaced at Knox Park	
1176	**Solar in Community Facilities**	**$63,867**
All Wards	Installation of additional Solar and Batteries completed.	
1180	**Forest Road to Koolunga Reserve, Ferntree Gully - New Gross Pollutant Trap**	**$210,794**
Chandler	Revised detailed design plans complete. Construction contractor awarded and their submission for the remaining works has been accepted. Construction to recommence October-November.	
1183	**Peregrine Reserve, Rowville - New Wetland (Design)**	**$38,070**
Taylor	Investigation and survey complete. Wetland-bushland irrigation channel detailed design 60% complete. Minor works occur from November to June include tree removal, weed control within bushland area, and replanting of bushland area.	
1300	**Parking Management Plan Implementation**	**$40,000**
All Wards	Draft Parking Management Plan for Mountain Gate and Rowville to be carried out in November. Consultation on the draft plan to occur in early 2027.	
1308	**Kevin Avenue, Ferntree Gully - Flood Mitigation Works**	**$6,500**
Dobson	Overland flow path concept design and modelling are approximately 30% complete. Council arborist has also provided a report to locate, identify species and nominate Tree Protection Zones which can then be integrated into proposed flowpath design.	
1310	**Flood Mitigation Unprogrammed Upgrade Works**	**$127,407**
All Wards	7 & 8 Hassett Court – Construction completed. Robert & McIver Streets – Detailed design completed. Llewellyn Reserve (Minor levee Works adjacent to Coppelia St)– The project has been awarded with pre-commencement meeting/site visit to occur. Construction is expected to commence in early October. Silverton Drive/Fitzgerald Street – Detailed design completed, and construction quotations have been received from the contractor. Currently awaiting the CCTV report to assess the possibility of reducing the project scope to help lower the overall project cost.	
1321	**Miller Park Reserve, Boronia - Tennis Court Renewal (Courts 4-6)**	**$1,225,000**
Chandler	Project combined with 1008-1458 Knox Gardens Reserve Tennis Court renewal works as a tender package. Tender closed on 19 August 2026 and successful tenderer appointed in late September. Construction anticipated to commence following Knox Gardens Reserve Tennis Court works.	

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Project Number	Project Name	Total Adjusted Budget
1413	**Kings Park Reserve, Upper Ferntree Gully - Basketball Court & Picnic Area (Stage 2)**	**$140,000**
Dobson	Construction due to re-commence in early October 2026 following delay due to saturated soils.	
1458	**Knox Gardens Reserve, Wantirna South - Tennis Court Renewal (Courts 4 & 5)**	**$990,000**
Scott	Project combined with 1008-1321 Miller Park Reserve Tennis Court renewal works as a tender package. Tender closed on 19 August 2026 and successful tenderer appointed in late September. Construction anticipated to commence in October 2026.	
1483	**Signage Upgrades to Various Early Years Sites**	**$55,000**
All Wards	Design for six early years sites underway.	
1533	**Kings Park (Oval 1), Upper Ferntree Gully - Sportsfield Renewal (Design)**	**$18,118**
Dobson	The project has now been completed.	
1544	**Sportsfield Irrigation System Renewal**	**$166,624**
All Wards	Council seeking quotes for the pump at Batterham, as well as the scheduling of the rewiring works to begin	
1550	**Park Ridge Modular Changerooms & Existing Pavilion Refurbishment**	**$327,493**
Taylor	Construction completed.	
1560	**Liverpool Road, The Basin - New Shared Path**	**$903,500**
Chandler	Receive execution copy of the licence agreement from Salvo. Council Manager and Director are reviewing and preparing to sign-off. Construction will continue from existing northern section down to retarding basin access for the next stage. New cost estimation is being prepared.	
1573	**Lupton Way, Boronia - New Public Art**	**$242,000**
Baird	Technical Specification report to be submitted to Council for approval before moving to fabrication. Project is on time	
1588	**Carrington Park, Knoxfield - Pavilion Upgrade**	**$3,660,258**
Friberg	Project in Construction Phase. Concrete slab extension works complete. Structural steel frame complete. Wall and roof framing approximately 98% complete. Roof sheeting, gutters and fascia/cladding works currently progressing. Building services rough-in works underway, including electrical, mechanical and plumbing services. Internal wall framing and associated building works progressing. Fire hydrant extension works complete. Temporary facilities and site arrangements removed, estimated handover Mar 2027.	

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Project Number	Project Name	Total Adjusted Budget
1624	**Green Spine Corridor, Boronia - Landscaping (Stage 3)**	**$623,750**
Chandler	Consultant about to be awarded for Pocket Park design works with a view to having a design ready for construction, early in 2027.	
1632	**Knox Leisureworks, Boronia - Strategic Review**	**$60,000**
Baird	The strategic review continues. A report will go to Council before the end of the year. Engaged consultant is developing a report to present findings of the research and exploring opportunities to discuss with Council.	
1635	**Borg Crescent Reconstruction, Scoresby**	**$841,457**
Tirhatuan	Project combined with 1001-1641 Hakea Place and 1001-1642 Sasses Avenue as a tender package. Successful contractor appointed in mid-August 2026 and construction is imminent. Anticipated completion by May 2027.	
1636	**Acacia Road Reconstruction, Upper Ferntree Gully**	**$617,978**
Dobson	Project combined with 4009-1767 Ferny Creek share path construction and 1011-24 Kings Park carpark renewal as a package. Successful contractor appointed in July 2026. Construction commenced in early August 2026 and is well underway and approximately 50% completed. Anticipated completion by November 2026.	
1641	**Hakea Place Reconstruction, Rowville**	**$262,821**
Tirhatuan	Project combined with 1001-1635 Borg Crescent and 1001-1642 Sasses Avenue as a tender package. Successful contractor appointed in mid-August 2026 and construction is imminent. Anticipated completion by May 2027.	
1642	**Sasses Avenue Reconstruction, Bayswater**	**$1,077,744**
Dinsdale	Project combined with 1001-1635 Borg Crescent and 1001-1641 Hakea Place as a tender package. Successful contractor appointed in mid-August 2026 and construction anticipated to commence in October 2026. Expected completion by May 2027.	
1645	**Lakesfield Reserve, Lysterfield - Cricket Net Renewal**	**$403,694**
Dobson	Construction is progressing well, with completion scheduled for November 2026.	
1650	**Indoor Leisure Centres - Security Upgrades**	**$66,000**
All Wards	Finalizing project scope of works.	
1653	**Early Years Hubs - OHS Playspace Works**	**$1,204,079**
Collier	The waterproofing component has been slightly delayed due to weather conditions with an expected completion date of early October 2026. Further outdoor landscape works are scheduled to recommence in early October 2026	
1654	**H.V. Jones Reserve, Ferntree Gully - Bathroom Upgrade & New Accessible Toilet (Design)**	**$27,500**
Friberg	Council seeking quotations to appoint an architect.	

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Project Number	Project Name	Total Adjusted Budget
1659	**Veronica Street, Ferntree Gully - New Footpath**	**$129,800**
Dobson	Construction works planned to be tendered in February 2027. Anticipated completion by June 2027.	
1660	**Mountain Highway, Wicks Road to Claremont Avenue - New Footpath**	**$576,666**
Chandler	Detail design and engineer's estimate complete. A report detailing findings from design investigation as well as recommendations of options towards delivery of this project was presented to the September Council meeting. Subsequently Council resolved to proceed with Stage 2A between Wick Road and No. 1401, as well as Stage 2b between No. 1401 and Claremont Avenue, subject to successful funding application to the Active Transport Fund. It is expected to receive a funding application outcome in January 2027 and project is scheduled to be tendered in accordance with the funding application timeline. Anticipate to commence construction in March 2027.	
1667	**New Dirt Jump Facility (Design)**	**$42,000**
Scott	Finalise the concept design scope and supporting documentation to enable the request for quote process to commence, while continuing to work with the communications and engagement team to develop the community consultation approach, key messages and indicative timing.	
1668	**Stormwater Catchment Master Plan - Stage 2 (Scoping)**	**$50,000**
All Wards	Scoping of "Stage 2" of catchment masterplanning awaiting final results and discussion of proposed flooding hotspots identified in Stage 1. Once we have finalised our list of areas of interest, Stage 2 (which investigates the viability of flood mitigation) can begin.	
1671	**Cathies Lane Reconstruction, Wantirna South**	**$580,000**
Collier	Project combined with 1001-1674 Shannon Avenue renewal as a tender package. Successful tenderer appointed in September 2026. Construction anticipated to commence in early 2027.	
1672	**Lewis Road Reconstruction (Burwood Highway to Eastgate Court), Wantirna South**	**$650,000**
Dinsdale	The project is yet to commence. Potential opportunities to combine the works with a future stage are being explored to improve project efficiencies and delivery outcomes.	
1674	**Shannon Avenue Reconstruction, Ferntree Gully**	**$385,000**
Dobson	Project combined with 1001-1671 Cathies Lane renewal as a tender package. Successful tenderer appointed in September 2026. Construction anticipated to commence in early 2027.	
1678	**Carrington Park, Knoxfield - Sportsfield Renewal**	**$2,477,291**
Friberg	Construction has started.	
1680	**Scoresby Recreation Reserve, Scoresby - Future Projects Telecommunications Tower Fund (Design)**	**$28,700**
Tirhatuan	Council working with tennis club on detailed design of proposed Disability Discrimination Act 'DDA' toilet upgrade. Investigating football/cricket club scoreboard upgrade.	

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Project Number	Project Name	Total Adjusted Budget
1681	**Knox Park Directional Signage, Knoxfield**	**$94,424**
Friberg	Final stages of Design with contractor. Delivery expected February.	
1683	**Lewis Park, Wantirna South - Pavilions Upgrade (Design)**	**$457,200**
Dinsdale	Evaluation Plan endorsed to appoint 'AVOR Architecture'. Preparing Contract.	
1686	**Rowville Recreation Reserve (Men's Shed), Rowville - Formalisation of Nth Gravel Carpark**	**$412,050**
Taylor	Construction works planned to be tendered in October 2026. Anticipated completion by May 2027.	
1689	**Immerse 2026**	**$49,500**
All Wards	NAIDOC Immerse artworks to be extended, Reporting completed and scoping for future Immerse activations underway	
1691	**Knox Regional Netball Centre, Ferntree Gully - Air Handling Improvements**	**$433,828**
Dobson	A Request For Quotation 'RFQ' was sent to market for mechanical engineering design. It will be awarded by the end of October and design completed by the beginning of December.	
1694	**Rosa Benedikt Community Centre, Scoresby - Outdoor Area Revitalisation (Design)**	**$27,500**
Tirhatuan	Works under review	
1701	**Murrindal Drive, Rowville - LATM Treatment**	**$425,000**
Taylor	Final shared path design alignment to be determined. Detailed Design expected to be completed in Nov. Notification letter indicating concept location of treatments have been sent to the community and awaiting feedback.	
1710	**Janine Street Reconstruction, Scoresby (Design)**	**$20,000**
Tirhatuan	Feature and level survey and geotechnical investigation completed. Service proving quotes sought and will commence soon. Design underway with 20% complete.	
1711	**Keith Campbell Court Reconstruction, Scoresby (Design)**	**$20,000**
Tirhatuan	Feature and level survey and geotechnical investigation completed. Service proving quotes sought and will commence soon. Design underway with 20% complete.	
1712	**Marlborough Road Reconstruction, Bayswater (Design)**	**$40,000**
Dinsdale	Feature and level survey and geotechnical investigation completed. Design underway and is 15% complete.	
1713	**Lewis Road Reconstruction (Eastgate Court to Bridgewood Court), Wantirna (Design)**	**$50,000**
Dinsdale	Feature and level survey and geotechnical investigation underway. Design will commence soon after completion of survey.	

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Project Number	Project Name	Total Adjusted Budget
1714 Baird	**Jersey Road Reconstruction (Malvern Street to 38 Jersey Road), Bayswater (Design)** Feature and level survey complete. Geotechnical investigation underway and expect to receive the report by October 2026. Design underway with 10% complete.	$40,000
1715 Baird	**Jersey Road Reconstruction (Mountain Highway to 58 Jersey Road), Bayswater (Design)** Feature and level survey complete. Geotechnical investigation underway and expect to receive the report by October 2026. Design underway with 10% complete.	$45,000
1716 Dobson	**Forest Road Pedestrian Overpass, Ferntree Gully - Renewal (Scope & Design)** Scope and design have commenced	$70,000
1717 Dobson	**Hancock Drive Bridge, Ferntree Gully - Renewal (Scope & Design)** Scope and design have commenced	$50,000
1718 Friberg	**Monterey Estate, Ferntree Gully - WSUD Renewal** Scope and design have commenced	$5,000
1719 All Wards	**Footpath Mobility Renewal Works** Traffic & Transport team have met with Civil Construction Team to plan and schedule the works for FY26/27.	$200,000
1720 Dinsdale	**Bayswater Bowls Club (Green 2), Bayswater - Bowling Green Renewal** Construction is scheduled to commence in January 2027. We are currently awaiting the fabrication and delivery of the synthetic turf.	$300,000
1721 Scott	**Walker Reserve, Wantirna South - Floodlighting Renewal** Installation of the footings is scheduled to commence in early October, with the poles and lights to be installed shortly thereafter.	$350,000
1722 Baird	**Miller Park, Boronia - Floodlighting Renewal (Design)** Project is complete.	$24,156
1723 Dobson	**Dobson Park (Oval 1), Ferntree Gully - Floodlighting Renewal (Design)** Project is complete.	$24,156
1724 Tirhatuan	**Scoresby Recreation Reserve, Scoresby - Cricket Net Renewal (Design)** The project is now completed.	$24,156

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Project Number	Project Name	Total Adjusted Budget
1725	**The Basin Triangle Reserve, The Basin - Playground Renewal**	**$219,095**
Chandler	Community consultation scheduled to commence in mid-October.	
1726	**Marie Wallace Bayswater Park, Bayswater - Playground Renewal**	**$900,000**
Dinsdale	Design phase continues in conjunction with procurement planning.	
1727	**Riddell Reserve, Wantirna - Playground Renewal**	**$232,809**
Scott	The draft tender documentation is being finalised following internal review.	
1728	**Attenborough Park, Wantirna - Playground Renewal**	**$42,966**
Collier	Project under review	
1729	**Alchester Court, Boronia - Playground Renewal**	**$41,503**
Chandler	The Alchester slide and rubber softfall works will proceed once the quotation is received.	
1730	**Yarran Reserve, Bayswater - Playground Renewal**	**$32,670**
Dinsdale	Works have been completed.	
1731	**Whitehaven Reserve, Wantirna - Playground Renewal**	**$16,940**
Collier	Works have been completed.	
1732	**Somes Reserve, Wantirna South - Playground Renewal**	**$34,485**
Scott	Works have been completed.	
1733	**Cobain Reserve, Wantirna - Playground Renewal**	**$32,670**
Collier	Works have been completed.	
1734	**Nathan Street Reserve, Ferntree Gully - Playground Renewal**	**$173,697**
Dobson	Nathan Street Reserve is in the concept design stage, with the playground renewal, shared path and associated landscape works being coordinated.	
1735	**Katandra Reserve, Bayswater - Playground Renewal (Design)**	**$6,050**
Dinsdale	The Comms and Engagement Plan has been finalised. Community consultation is expected to take place in late October.	
1736	**Graham Reserve, Knoxfield - Playground Renewal (Design)**	**$5,500**
Friberg	The Comms and Engagement Plan has been finalised. Community consultation is expected to take place in late October.	

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Project Number	Project Name	Total Adjusted Budget
1737 Chandler	**Colchester Reserve, Boronia - New Perimeter Fencing (Southern and Eastern Boundaries)** Project is complete	$70,000
1738 Collier	**Templeton Reserve, Wantirna - Pavilion Upgrade (Design)** Tender evaluation for Detailed Design is nearing completion. Currently preparing to award.	$176,000
1739 Dobson	**Talaskia Reserve, Upper Ferntree Gully - Formalisation of Eastern Gravel Carpark (Design)** Currently three carpark projects within Talaskia Reserve - renewal of existing asphalt carpark, upgrade of existing gravel carpark, and construction of new additional carpark at the Children & Family Centre footprint. The additional carpark project is to be presented to for Council decision. Scope of Project 1739 is subject to that Council decision and will be confirmed following that.	$35,000
1740 Collier	**Wantirna Reserve (Tennis Club), Wantirna - Formalisation of Sth-West Gravel Carpark (Design)** Feature and level survey and geotechnical investigation completed. Design underway and is 30% complete. Functional layout plan complete and is currently under consultation with internal stakeholders.	$35,000
1741 Dobson	**Ferntree Gully Community Arts Centre, Ferntree Gully - Pottery Room Extension** Quotation process is due by the end of September; evaluation has been scheduled to be finalized by mid-October.	$353,138
1742 Dinsdale	**Knox Community Arts Centre, Bayswater - Hearing Loop Installation** Project is on track, still currently investigating supplier options. Anticipated installation in December 2026.	$20,000
1743 Dinsdale	**Knox Community Arts Centre, Bayswater - Grand MA (Lighting Console) Replacement** Project is on track. Purchase Order has been raised and awaiting delivery of items for a December installation.	$22,000
1744 Dobson	**Kings Park, Upper Ferntree Gully - Playground Artwork** Stage 2 of procurement process is underway. Commission on schedule to be contracted by December 2026 and installed by May 2027.	$54,450
1745 Dobson	**Knox Regional Netball Centre, Ferntree Gully - Outdoor Netball Posts Upgrade** 16 of the 18 courts have had the new poles and footings installed. The remaining two courts are scheduled to be completed shortly. The concrete footings will be painted with court paint in October/November.	$58,500
1746 Friberg	**Knoxfield Early Years Centre, Knoxfield - Building Refurbishment (Playgroup)** Scope of works has been agreed, concept design is scheduled to be completed by mid October.	$106,700

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Project Number	Project Name	Total Adjusted Budget
1747	**Storeroom Shelving Improvements at Various Playgroup Sites (Scoping)**	**$11,000**
All Wards	Scope of works confirmed. Concept design for each centre will be completed by end of December 2026	
1748	**The Basin Early Years Centre (Playgroup), The Basin - Building Refurbishment (Scope)**	**$11,000**
Chandler	Scope of works confirmed this week. Architect will be engaged to do site visit for concept design in October.	
1749	**Knox Community Gardens, Boronia - Shed Replacement (including Stormwater and Path Works) (Design)**	**$5,500**
Dinsdale	Site meeting for scope of works has been postponed to October.	
1750	**Coonara Community House, Upper Ferntree Gully - Kitchen Refurbishment (Scoping)**	**$11,000**
Dobson	Scope of works site meeting has been set up by Community Wellbeing on 10/11/26.	
1751	**Forest Road (between Nyora Avenue and Harrison Street), Boronia - New Footpath (Design)**	**$30,000**
Chandler	Consultation with stakeholders underway. Feature and level survey will commence after completion of consultation.	
1752	**Highmoor Avenue, Bayswater - New Footpath (Design)**	**$15,000**
Dinsdale	Feature and level survey underway. Design will commence after completion of survey.	
1753	**Lewis Road, Wantirna South - New Footpath (Design)**	**$15,000**
Dinsdale	Feature and level survey underway. Design will commence after completion of survey.	
1754	**601 Boronia Road, Wantirna - New Footpath (Design)**	**$15,000**
Collier	Feature and level survey as well as title re-establishment survey completed. Consultation with private property owner underway with potential lease of private land.	
1755	**Alfred Street, Upper Ferntree Gully - New Footpath (Scoping)**	**$10,000**
Dobson	Survey scope completed. Quotes sort from surveyor to undertake survey.	
1756	**William Street, Upper Ferntree Gully - New Footpath (Scoping)**	**$10,000**
Dobson	Survey scope completed. Quotes sort from surveyor to undertake survey.	
1757	**New Footpath Mobility Works**	**$117,000**
All Wards	Traffic & Transport Team working with Construction Team to schedule the mobility works across Knox.	

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Project Number	Project Name	Total Adjusted Budget
1758 Chandler	**Mountain Highway (between Weyburn Road and Baldwin Avenue), Boronia - New Footpath (Scoping)** Onsite inspection have been carried out. Further investigation on build material, future maintenance regime, and liaise with Biodiversity for viable options.	$20,000
1759 Baird	**455 Dorset Road to Mountain Highway, Boronia - New Footpath (Scoping)** Survey scope completed. Quotes sort from surveyor to undertake survey.	$10,000
1760 Baird	**387-389 Dorset Road, Boronia - New Footpath (Scoping)** Traffic and Transport to engage with land owner.	$10,000
1761 Friberg	**Amay Crescent, Ferntree Gully - New Footpath (Scoping)** Survey scope completed. Quotes sort from surveyor to undertake survey.	$10,000
1762 Collier	**Mountain Highway (117 to Petalnina Drive), Wantirna - New Shared Path (Design)** Consultation with stakeholders underway. Feature and level survey will commence after completion of consultation.	$40,000
1763 Chandler	**Parker Avenue, Boronia - New Footpath (Design)** Scoping confirmed with internal stakeholders. Feature and level survey to underway.	$15,000
1764 Dobson	**Gifford Avenue, Ferntree Gully - New Footpath (Design)** Consultation with stakeholders underway. Feature and level survey will commence after completion of consultation.	$15,000
1765 Scott	**Wallace Road, Wantirna South - LATM Treatment (Design)** Community Engagement Plan to be developed prior to consultation. Consultation in Oct/Nov.	$15,000
1766 Friberg	**Cambden Park Parade, Ferntree Gully - LATM Treatment (Design)** First stage of consultation letter has been sent to residents.	$15,000
1767 Dobson	**Ferny Creek Trail, Upper Ferntree Gully - New Shared Path** Project combined with 1001-1636 Acacia Road renewal and 1011-24 Kings Park carpark renewal as a package. Successful contractor appointed in July 2026. Construction commenced in early August 2026 and is well underway. Anticipated completion by November 2026.	$127,200
1768 Dobson	**Kings Park, Upper Ferntree Gully - Shared Path Extension** Design phase continues in conjunction with procurement planning.	$25,000

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Project Number	Project Name	Total Adjusted Budget
1769 Collier	**Burwood Highway, Wantirna South - New Shared Path (Scoping)** Scoping works commenced	$20,000
1770 Dobson	**Burwood Highway (Dorset Road to Glenfern Road), Ferntree Gully - New Shared Path (Scoping)** Survey scope completed. Quotes sort from surveyor to undertake survey.	$20,000
1771 Baird	**Burwood Highway (Ferntree Gully Road to Dorset Road), Ferntree Gully - New Shared Path (Scoping)** Survey scope completed. Quotes sort from surveyor to undertake survey.	$20,000
1772 Friberg	**Henderson Road, Rowville - New Refuge Island** Feature and level survey underway. Design will commence after completion of survey.	$51,200
1773 Dobson	**Forest Road & Hutton Avenue Intersection, Ferntree Gully - Improved Pedestrian Access** Traffic & Transport to liaise with Construction Team on the location and infrastructure to ensure any design requirement needed during construction	$61,300
1774 Chandler	**Albert Avenue, Boronia - New 40km p/h LED Flashing Lights** Liaise with Department of Transport and Planning to organise the installation of the LED signs.	$115,200
1775 Scott	**Meridian Parade, Wantirna South - New Lighting Conditions** Engaging with United Energy to update quotation provided. Letter dropped residents with installation plan.	$80,000
1776 Tirhatuan	**Stamford Park Homestead, Rowville - New Accessible Parking Space (Design)** Liaising with accessibility consultant on the scope of the assessment.	$30,000
1777 Baird	**Tormore Road & Penrith Street Intersection, Boronia - Raised Pavement (Scoping)** Survey scope completed. Quotes sort form surveyor to undertake survey.	$10,000
1778 Dobson	**Dawson Street, Upper Ferntree Gully - Cyclist/Pedestrian Priority Crossing (Scoping)** Survey scope completed. Quotes sort form surveyor to undertake survey.	$10,000
1779 All Wards	**New Parking Officer Vehicle** Vehicle purchase is yet to commence	$34,000
1780 Chandler	**The Basin Triangle, The Basin - New Accessible Path (Stage to Public Toilets)** Preparations are underway for community consultation on a number of projects in The Basin.	$139,150

Knox City Council Project Status Report 08-Oct-2026

Project Number	Project Name	Total Adjusted Budget
1781	**Koolunga Native Reserve, Boronia - Revegetation**	**$21,960**
Chandler	Scoping and planning of works underway	
1782	**David Cooper Park, Wantirna South - New Reserve Lighting**	**$125,000**
Scott	Project on schedule for procurement in early October for the design and construct of both David Cooper Park and Quarry Reserve solar lighting.	
1783	**Quarry Reserve, Ferntree Gully - New Solar Lighting**	**$50,000**
Dobson	Project on schedule for procurement in early October for the design and construct of both David Cooper Park and Quarry Reserve solar lighting.	
1784	**Arcadia Reserve, Rowville - Playspace Expansion**	**$75,000**
Tirhatuan	The Scouts group has agreed to the design proposal. Open Space is currently finalising the drawing documentation required for Major Projects and Facilities to procure and deliver the works.	
1785	**Carrington Park, Knoxfield – New Liberty Swing (Scoping)**	**$10,000**
Friberg	A feature survey covering the potential sites for the new Liberty Swing has been requested. The Open Space team is currently working on the draft plan to identify the final location.	
1786	**Wally Tew Reserve, Ferntree Gully - New Public Basketball Facility (Design)**	**$15,000**
Dobson	The feature survey has been completed, and the project is now progressing to concept design.	
1787	**Carrington Park, Knoxfield – New Shade & Weather Protection Facility at RC Car Track (Design)**	**$15,000**
Friberg	A meeting was organised with the clubs and Leisure to determine the needs of the shelter. However, the clubs were doing earth works and remodelling the track and piling soil that impacted the area where the shelter was proposed to be. The clubs are required to rectify the site by mid October. Another meeting will then be organised to establish the scope.	
1788	**Lewis Park, Wantirna South - New Playspace and Public Toilet (Design)**	**$80,000**
Dinsdale	Council is preparing to seek quotations through a Request for Quotation (RFQ) process to engage a suitably qualified consultant to undertake the detailed design and documentation of the new playspace and public toilet. The Request for Quotation (RFQ) is scheduled to be advertised in early October. Following consultant engagement, the design phase will commence.	
1789	**Knox Skate & BMX Park, Knoxfield - Rectification and Upgrade Works (Scoping)**	**$49,500**
Dinsdale	Works have not commenced	
1790	**Walker Reserve, Wantirna South - Landscape Plan for Former Tennis Courts (Scoping)**	**$56,100**
Scott	The feature survey has been obtained. Community consultation is expected to take place in early 2027. The Strategic Open Space Planning team will work with Comms to finalise the Comms and Engagement Plan.	

Knox City Council Project Status Report 08-Oct-2026

Project Number	Project Name	Total Adjusted Budget
1791 Chandler	**The Basin Shopping Strip, The Basin - New Accessible Car Parking & Outdoor Dining Area (Design)** The feature survey and engagement plan have been completed. Preparations are now underway for community consultation.	**$60,000**
1792 Friberg	**Carrington Park, Knoxfield - New Wayfinding Signage (Design)** Comms is liaising with the contractor regarding the scoping/design quote. The Open Space team is identifying the final locations of facilities across the reserve.	**$15,000**
1793 Dinsdale	**August Auer Reserve, Wantirna - Landscape Plan Development (Design)** The feature survey has been obtained. Community consultation is expected to take place in early 2027. The Strategic Open Space Planning team will work with Comms to finalise the Comms and Engagement Plan.	**$45,000**
1794 Baird	**Herbert Street, Boronia - Flood Mitigation Works (Design)** Analysis of existing site data underway, New feature and level survey to go out to quote within the next month.	**$8,500**
1795 Scott	**Llewellyn Reserve, Wantirna South - Flood Mitigation Works (Design)** Initial investigation complete, functional design approximately 20% complete. Arboricultural survey awarded and to be completed within next two weeks. Internal stakeholder meetings with the likes of Biodiversity, Waste and Leisure teams are occurring on a regular basis to ensure no conflicts.	**$6,500**
1796 Baird	**Boronia Retarding Basin, Boronia - Upgrade & Renewal (Scoping)** Quotations have been received from four surveying companies. Further discussion and confirmation with the surveying companies to determine which one to proceed with are currently underway.	**$39,500**
1797 All Wards	**Utility Meter Separations at Knox Reserves (Scoping)** There was initial quotations done on the separations of water meters at various sites. We are obtaining quotes on Kings Park with the view to separating the water meters.	**$40,000**
1798 Taylor	**Peregrine Reserve, Rowville - New Public Toilet** Concept design is underway to be completed by end of October.	**$459,000**
1799 All Wards	**Demolition of Redundant Buildings** Permit for demolition is approved for both sites. Electricity abolishment is completed on both sites. Temporary fencing was installed to both sites on 24/09. Asbestos removal will commence at Mossfield site this week.	**$396,000**
1800 Dinsdale	**Lewis Park, Wantirna South - Stormwater Harvesting Scheme Investigation -Scope** Data gathering and preliminary investigation processes currently underway.	**$21,500**

Knox City Council Project Status Report

08-Oct-2026

Project Number	Project Name	Total Adjusted Budget
1801 Dobson	**Kings Park, Upper Ferntree Gully - New WSUD Floodway** Design being finalised in conjunction with procurement planning.	**$145,598**
1802 Tirhatuan	**Stamford Homestead, Rowville - WSUD Swale & Pond Upgrade** The planning permit application has been submitted and is awaiting approval.	**$211,874**
1804 Chandler	**Albert Avenue, Boronia – New Roundabout & Raised POS Crossing (Design & Construct)** Design underway with concept design completed and shared with Department of Transport Planning (DTP) for approval. Functional layout design completed and under consultation with internal stakeholders. Detail design will commence once initial approval obtained from DTP.	**$523,000**
1805 Chandler	**Forest Road, Ferntree Gully – New Roundabout Pedestrian Crossings** Design underway with concept design completed and shared with Department of Transport and Planning (DTP) for approval. Detail design will commence once initial approval obtained from DTP.	**$403,000**
1806 Chandler	**Blind Creek Trail, Ferntree Gully & Boronia – New Raised Crossings** Design underway with concept design completed. Approval from Department of Transport and Planning (DTP) obtained in late August 2026. Detailed design underway.	**$475,000**
1807 Friberg	**Ashton Road/Kingston Street, Ferntree Gully – New Roundabout** External design consultant appointed. Feature and level completed. Design underway and is approximately 30% complete. Anticipate to complete design by February 2027.	**$174,000**
1808 Baird	**Maryborough Road/Woodvale Road, Boronia – New Roundabout** External design consultant appointed. Feature and level completed. Design underway and is approximately 30% complete. Anticipate to complete design by February 2027.	**$174,000**
1809 Baird	**Stradbroke Road/Pine Crescent, Boronia – New Roundabout** External design consultant appointed. Feature and level completed. Design underway and is approximately 30% complete. Geotechnical investigation also underway to determine pavement rehabilitation options. Anticipate to complete design by February 2027.	**$174,000**
1810 Taylor	**Eildon Park (Oval 2), Rowville - Floodlighting Renewal, Rowville** The conduits and pits have been installed. Installation of the footings is scheduled to commence in early October, with the poles and lights to be installed shortly thereafter.	**$332,749**
1811 Dobson	**Kings Park Reserve, Upper Ferntree Gully - New Playground (Stage 3)** Design phase advancing in conjunction with procurement planning.	**$400,000**

Knox City Council Project Status Report 08-Oct-2026

Project Number	Project Name	Total Adjusted Budget
1812	**Gilbert Park, Knoxfield - New Safety Netting**	**$200,000**
Tirhatuan	The project is to be completed by the end of November.	
1813	**Rowville Recreation Reserve – Oval No. 2 New Lighting and Drainage Improvements**	**$20,000**
Tirhatuan	The new lighting design and perimeter drainage design have been completed on time, in accordance with the grant requirements.	

Customer and Performance
Monthly Transformation Portfolio Report

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Knox City Council

Portfolio & Project Health Update – Overview

Overview

Executive Summary:

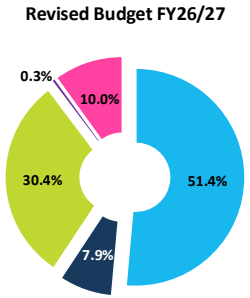
The financial summary chart shows portfolio expenditure tracking slightly below budget at this stage of the financial year. As of the end of September 2026, the portfolio spend to date is $1.110m.

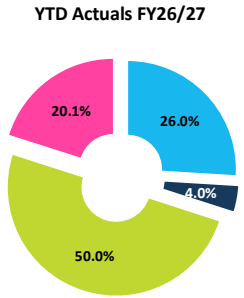
The health of the portfolio has improved slightly this month with progress having been made to projects previously reporting health issues (red status). Of the twelve active projects in the portfolio, nine are reporting good health (green); three are reporting at risk health (amber); and none are reporting health issues (red). Two projects have closed in the period (Governance, Compliance and Integrity & Healthy and Safe Workplaces Framework); and Service Review has commenced reporting.

The risks related to FY2025/26 to FY2026/27 carry forwards; risk of malicious attack, and the new risk escalated to the portfolio last month from the Fleet Management System project have now been closed and one new risk has been added this month. As a result, there are currently 18 active risks being managed at the portfolio level, all of which are currently On Plan. Once all mitigation activities are completed, the residual risk position is expected to reduce to high for one risk, medium for ten risks and low for the remaining seven.

Organisation Strategy Goal	Revised Budget FY26/27	YTD Actuals FY26/27
Change ready	$4.015m	$0.289m
Customer centric	$0.616m	$0.044m
Financially sustainable	$2.375m	$0.555m
Outcomes driven	$0.024m	$0.0m
People focused	$0.0m	$0.0m
Portfolio	$0.778m	$0.223m
TOTAL	**$7.808m**	**$1.110m**

NOTE: The portfolio stream structure has been adjusted to focus on strategic outcomes rather than departmental ownership, grouping projects based on how they deliver to the organisational strategic goals





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Knox City Council

Portfolio & Project Health Update – Project Highlights

	Green	Amber	Red	Completed	On hold	Total
Portfolio funded	5	3	0	1	2	11
Operationally funded	4	0	0	2	1	7

KEY	
Green	Project on track to deliver to time, cost and quality
Amber	Time, cost and / or quality at risk, project has a plan to address
Red	Project off track in terms of time, cost, and / or quality
Completed	Project delivery is complete; project is closed or in closure
On hold	Work has been paused on the project

Portfolio	Operational	Key Organisation Strategy Outcome	Executive summary (progress, challenges and upcoming activities)
	1	**Change ready** "We are informed, adaptive and challenge the norm"	Core Business Systems continues to make strong progress, with an integrated Knox schedule now in place, the data migration RFQ issued, and the Test Lead and Integration Specialist having joined the team. Current activity is managed re-sequencing against the fixed date rather than slippage. Change management resourcing is the main area needing attention, as the interim change specialist is finishing and a permanent appointment is yet to be confirmed. The Service Review program has now commenced with the first Service Review of 2026-2027 focusing on Customer Service – in particular, our customer contact channels.
1			
1	1		
1	1	**Customer centric** "We put customers at the centre of everything we do"	Facilities Booking has improved from Red to Amber status following approval of the solution for Indoor Leisure – work is continuing at pace to meet the target go live dates across three sites, starting on 26 October – focusing on the integration with Computron and preparing employees for the new solution. Recruitment is scheduled to commence for Pathway CRMS Uplift in October after a short delay. Work has focused on customer data – quality and governance. Configuration of online advertising for Report and Consent applications via ePathway is set to complete in October; and the Planning Team is set to commence using the Pathway Smart Mobile App.
1			
3	1		
4	2	**Financially sustainable** "We plan and manage our resources responsibly"	The Pathway SaaS Migration project is progressing well, with Role Based Access Controls still set for go live on the existing platform on 19 October; and technical workshops having commenced for the SaaS Migration phase – with the internal project team also having undertaken a high-level assessment of the technical and business impacts of the custom integrations / scripts and reports that have been built for Knox within the Pathway Ecosystem. Building File Digitisation will now run to the end of the year following guidance from the DTF consultant that funding is GST exempt, releasing funding to digitise more records. Fleet Management System remains at amber status pending confirmation of the internal resource charging principles to be applied to the project impact forecast vs budget. Vendor kick-off is expected to commence in November, and existing process mapping has concluded and is in review. Cyber and Data programs; Disposals Phase 1; and the AMIS SAM & Renewals project are progressing to plan.
1			
2			
7	2		
		Outcomes driven "We deliver on meaningful, realistic goals and celebrate success"	The Draft Compliance Policy was considered by the Audit and Risk Committee on 27 August 2026 and has been approved by the CEO. The project has been closed. Integrated Planning Framework Implementation remains on hold due to capacity constraints.
	1		
	1		
	2		
		People focused "We connect and empower each other to grow, excel and be safe"	Year 2 Health and Safe Workplaces Plan is agreed, and individual initiatives are now actively managed as Business As Usual, including Policy reviews and enhancement. As a result, this project is being closed. Any initiatives that meet the threshold for light touch reporting will be incorporated into portfolio reporting as they are defined and initiated.
	1		
	1		

8.2 Lease and Licensing Omnibus Report

Final Report Destination:	Council
Paper Type:	For Decision
Author:	Coordinator Property Management, Flora Westcott
Manager:	Manager Strategic Property & Procurement, Tim Lawson
Executive:	Chief Financial Officer, Navec Lorkin

SUMMARY
Under the Leasing and Licensing Policy ("the Policy") which was endorsed by Council in July 2025, all occupancy arrangements that exceed four years require a Council resolution. The Policy also establishes the standard duration of a lease or license as five years, meaning most agreements will proceed to Council to be entered, varied or extended.

To manage this process, the Property team brings several agreements to Council up to three times a year, seeking endorsement for several agreements at a time, a process referred to as the 'omnibus report'.

The cover report provides an overview of the agreements to be considered and background on the proposed leases and licenses (Table 1). An attachment is provided for each agreement which details the proposed tenant and any deviations from the standard agreement templates or the Policy.

This report contains ten agreements for consideration.

RECOMMENDATION
That Council resolves to

1. Enter into a lease with **KTS Recycling** at the Transfer Recycling Station, **251 George Street, Wantirna South**, for the purposes of a transfer station, under the conditions outlined in Attachment 1 and Confidential Attachment 2, including
    a. The annual rent as contained in Confidential Attachment 2, per annum, increasing on the anniversary date of the agreement by 4%.
    b. The commencement date of this agreement is 3 February 2027, for a period of ten years with two extensions of five years each.
    c. Authorize the Chief Executive Officer (or such person as the Chief Executive Officer nominates) to negotiate and execute all documents required to give effect to the further terms.
2. Enter into a lease with **Life Activities Club Knox** at **160 Underwood Road, Ferntree Gully**, for the purposes of social, recreational and wellbeing activities for people aged 55 and over, under the conditions outlined in Attachment 3, including
    a. The annual rent is $487 per annum, increasing on the anniversary date of the agreement by 4%.
    b. The commencement date of this agreement is 1 December 2026, for a period of five years with one extension of four years.

   c. Authorise the Chief Executive Officer (or such person as the Chief Executive Officer nominates) to negotiate and execute all documents required to give effect to the further terms.
3. Enter into a Deed of Variation to an existing lease with **Ferntree Gully 3 Year Old Pre-school Inc** at **278 Windermere Drive, Ferntree Gully** for the purposes of early childhood education and care services under the conditions outlined in Attachment 4, including
   a. The annual rent as at 2026/27 is $487, increasing on the anniversary date of the agreement by 4%.
   b. The commencement date of this variation is 1 January 2027, for a period of 1 years with two extensions of one year each remaining on the lease.
4. Enter into a Deed of Variation to an existing lease with **Liberty Avenue 3YO Kindergarten Inc** at **77 Liberty Avenue, Rowville**, for the purposes of early childhood education and care services under the conditions outlined in Attachment 5, including
   a. The annual rent as at 2026/27 is $487, increasing on the anniversary date of the agreement by 4%.
   b. The commencement date of this variation is 1 January 2027, for a period of 1 years with two extensions of one year each remaining on the lease.
5. Enter into a Deed of Variation to an existing license with **Knox & District Woodworkers Club Inc** at **45 Glenfern Road, Ferntree Gully**, for the purposes of additional storage under the conditions outlined in Attachment 6, including
   a. The annual rent as at 2026/27 is $284.90, increasing on the anniversary date of the agreement by 4%.
   b. The commencement date of this variation is 1 December 2026, for the remainder of the existing license.
6. Enter into a lease with **Golden Cobra Martial Arts Inc** at **33 Kingston Street, Ferntree Gully,** for the purposes of a martial arts group under the conditions outlined in Attachment 7, including
   a. The annual rent is $10,928 (excluding GST) per annum, increasing on the anniversary date of the agreement by 4%.
   b. The commencement date of this agreement is 14 December 2026, for a period of five years.
7. Enter into a lease with **Oonah Health and Community Services Aboriginal Corporation** at **1 Rollings Road, Ferntree Gully**, for the purposes of a health and community services, under the conditions outlined in Attachment 8, including
   a. The annual rent is $487 per annum, increasing the anniversary date of the agreement by 4%.
   b. The commencement date of this agreement is 21 December 2026, for a period of ten years with two extensions of five years each.
   c. Authorise the Chief Executive Officer (or such person as the Chief Executive Officer nominates) to negotiate and execute all documents required to give effect to the further terms.
8. Enter into a lease with **Knox Infolink Inc** at **134 Boronia Road, Boronia** for the purposes of emergency relief and community services, under the conditions outlined in Attachment 9, including

a. The annual rent is $487 per annum, increasing on the anniversary date of the agreement by 4%.
b. The commencement date of this agreement is 3 December 2026, for a period of five years with one extension of four years.
c. Authorise the Chief Executive Officer (or such person as the Chief Executive Officer nominates) to negotiate and execute all documents required to give effect to the further terms.

9. Enter into a lease with **We Are One Club** at **46-78 Argyle Way, Wantirna South** for the purposes of multicultural and community services under the conditions outlined in Attachment 10, including
    a. The annual rent is $487 per annum, increasing on the anniversary date of the agreement by 4%.
    b. The commencement date of this agreement is 14 December 2026, for a period of five years with no extensions.
    c. Authorise the Chief Executive Officer (or such person as the Chief Executive Officer nominates) to negotiate and execute all documents required to give effect to the further terms.
10. Enter into a lease with **Caladenia Dementia Care** at “Millers Homestead”, **corner Melrose Court and Dorrigo Drive, Boronia**, for the purposes of a dementia-friendly community hub, under the conditions outlined in Attachment 11, including
    a. The annual rent is $12,210 (excluding GST) per annum, increasing on the anniversary date of the agreement by 4%.
    b. The commencement date of this agreement is 1 December 2026, for a period of five years with one extension of four years.
    c. Authorise the Chief Executive Officer (or such person as the Chief Executive Officer nominates) to negotiate and execute all documents required to give effect to the further terms.
11. Authorise the Chief Executive Officer (or such person as the Chief Executive Officer nominates) to negotiate and execute the lease agreement/s for each site, generally in accordance with the above resolutions, with any minor or administrative amendments deemed necessary and appropriate at the discretion of the Chief Executive Officer or their nominee.
12. Pursuant to Section 125 of the Local Government Act 2020, to authorise the confidential information in the officers’ report and these resolutions to be publicly available for the limited purpose of communicating the effect of these resolutions to the extent necessary to give effect to it.
13. To authorize the Chief Executive Officer (or such person the Chief Executive Officer selects) to communicate the effect of these resolutions to the extent necessary at their discretion, including for the purpose of informing the community about the content of the report or Council’s decision.

1. DISCUSSION

1.1 Administrative and regulatory background

Under Council's Leasing and Licensing Policy, occupancy arrangements exceeding four years require a Council resolution. As the standard term for leases and licenses is five years, most agreements fall within this requirement.

Template occupancy agreements are maintained by the Property team and used by property advocates during negotiations.

A summary of the agreements included in this omnibus is provided in Table 1 at Section 1.3 of this report, with further details on each agreement outlined in Attachment 1, Confidential Attachment 2, and Attachments 3–11.

1.2 Statutory Requirements

Section 115 of the *Local Government Act* 2020 outlines Council's power to lease land and the associated requirements. Additional requirements are in effect where:

- the rental income is over $100,000; or
- the current market rental value of the land is over $100,000; or
- the lease is for ten years or more.

Should the proposed lease reach these thresholds, it must either:

- have been included in the budget or
- undergo a community engagement process in line with Councils Community Engagement Policy.

Community engagement was required at two sites where officers considered a lease term of ten years or more may be appropriate, of which one site would like also likely attract a rental income per annum over $100,000. This engagement was undertaken as an "Inform" process in line with Council Community Engagement Policy. Refer to Section 2 of this report for details.

1.3 Agreements for consideration

There are ten agreements proposed in this omnibus report, as outlined in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Agreements for Consideration

Attachment	Agreement type	Tenant	Term	Property Address	Annual Fee in 2026/27
Existing tenants entering into new agreements (direct negotiations)					
1 and Confidential Attachment 2	Lease	KTS Recycling	10 years +5 years +5 years	Transfer Recycling Station, 251 George Street, Wantirna South	Ref Confidential Attachment 2
3	Lease	Life Activities Club Knox Inc.	5 years + 4 years	Wattle Hall, 160 Underwood Road, Ferntree Gully	$487
Existing tenants variation to, or extension of, an existing agreement					
4	Lease Extension	Ferntree Gully 3 Year Old Pre-school Inc	Take up a 1 year option	Windermere Kindergarten, 278 Windermere Drive, Ferntree Gully	$487

Attachment	Agreement type	Tenant	Term	Property Address	Annual Fee in 2026/27
5	Lease Extension	Liberty Avenue 3YO Kindergarten Inc	Take up a 1 year option	Liberty Avenue Kindergarten, 77 Liberty Avenue, Rowville	$487
6	Variation to License	Knox & District Woodworkers Club Inc	5 years	"Placemakers" 45 Glenfern Road, Ferntree Gully	$284.90
New tenants via a public expression of interest					
7	Lease	Golden Cobra Martial Arts Inc	5 years	HV Jones Hall, 33 Kingston Street, Ferntree Gully	$10,928 (ex. GST)
8	Lease	Oonah Health and Community Services Aboriginal Corporation	10 years + 5 years + 5 years	1 Rollings Road, Ferntree Gully	$487
9	Lease	Knox Infolink Inc	5 years + 4 years	Boronia Progress Hall, 134 Boronia Road, Boronia	$487
10	Lease	We Are One Club	5 years	Knox Gardens Community Hall, 46-78 Argyle Way, Wantirna South	$487
11	Lease	Caladenia Dementia Care	5 years + 4 years	Millers Homestead, Corner Melrose Court and Dorringo Drive, Boronia	$12,210 (ex. GST)

2. ENGAGEMENT

In accordance with Section 115 of the Local Government Act 2020, and in line with Councils Engagement Policy, Council informed the community of the proposal to lease the following two sites for a term exceeding ten years and/or on commercial market rates (which are likely to exceed $100,000 per annum at one site). The sites included:

- Waste Transfer Station, 251 George Street, Wantirna South
- The community building at 1 Rollings Road, Upper Ferntree Gully

A public notice was published to Council's website between 14 September and 5 October, inviting any questions. No questions were recieved and no feedback was provided.

Council's property advocates have directly engaged with the proposed tenants to discuss and negotiate the leases.

Tenants at five of the proposed agreements were selected after a public expression of interest process. These agreements are identified in table 1. These EOI occurred in April and July 2026, and included:

- A dedicated information page and application form
- A web-page and e-news article
- Articles in key Councils e-newsletters including Leisure and Community Strengthening
- Posters and flyers at key Council locations
- A paid Facebook advert specifically for the Miller's Homestead EOI

3. SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Of the ten tenants presented in this report, nine are either "Community Groups" or "Community Service Organisations" under the Lease and Licensing Policy. These groups provide important social benefits for Knox citizens, and have limited or very limited capacity to raise income in excess of expenditure. Please refer to the relevant attachments for details of the activities to be carried out at each facility and further analysis of the social implications of each agreement.

4. CLIMATE CHANGE CONSIDERATIONS

Implementation of the recommendation is considered to have no direct implications or has no direct impacts upon Council's Net Zero 2030 target, the Community Net Zero 2040, exposure to climate risks or climate change adaptation.

5. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

Implementation of the recommendations is considered to have no direct implications or has no direct impacts on the environment.

6. FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

As Community Groups and Community Service Organisations, the rental returns for the majority of the tenants are peppercorn rates, or significantly discounted rates, reflecting Council's commitment to supporting our community.

Community Groups must be not-for-profit organizations with more than 50% of their workers as volunteers. Under the Leasing and Licensing Policy, Community Group tenants do not pay the Emergency Services and Volunteers Fund (ESVF). Their rental rate is set at the peppercorn rate in the Annual Budget applicable to that year.

Community Service Organisations are also not for profit organisations, but the majority of their workers are paid employees and they often charge market based fees. Under the Leasing and Licensing Policy this tenant category is required to pay any ESVF connected to the premises. Their rental rate is assessed individually.

Council also enters into commercial occupancy agreements with selected commercial tenants. These sites are managed by a commercial property manager, to ensure Council is able to meet its statutory requirements under the *Retail Leases Act* 2003 in its capacity as landlord. A management fee of 7% of rental income is payable to the property manager. This fee has been assessed as being in line with standard market rates for comparable property management services.

7. RISKS

Risks associated with individual agreements are outlined in Attachments 1 –11.

8. COUNCIL AND HEALTH AND WELLBEING PLAN 2025-2029

Leading, listening and governing responsibly

Strategy 4.5 - Council is financially sustainable through long-term strategic, financial and asset planning, and the responsible prioritisation, allocation and use of resources.

Planning our future city

Strategy 6.2 - High quality, integrated community services and facilities are available through the planning, design and maintenance of multifunctional places that promote connection and utilisation.

9. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The officers contributing to and responsible for this report have no conflicts of interest requiring disclosure under Chapter 5 of the Governance Rules of Knox City Council.

10. STATEMENT OF COMPATIBILITY

There are no legislative obligations under the Human Rights Charter, Child Safe Standards or the *Gender Equity Act* that are incompatible with the recommendation in this report.

11. CONFIDENTIALITY

Attachment 2 is included in the confidential agenda, as it contains confidential information pursuant to Council's Governance Rules and Section 66 of the Local Government Act 2020, as it relates to:

- private commercial information, that if released, would unreasonably expose KTS to disadvantage because it would release financial information about the business that is not generally available to their competitors and would impact Council's negotiating position.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Attachment 1 - Lease Agreement - Waste Transfer Station - 251 George St [**8.2.1** - 5 pages]
2. Attachment 3 - Lease Agreement - Life Activities Club - 160 Underwood Road, Ferntree Gully [**8.2.2** - 3 pages]
3. Attachment 4 - Lease option - Ferntree Gully 3 year old Kindergarten - 278 Windermere Drive, Ferntree Gully [**8.2.3** - 3 pages]
4. Attachment 5 - Lease option - Liberty Ave 3YO Kindergarten - 77 Liberty Avenue, Rowville [**8.2.4** - 3 pages]
5. Attachment 6 - Licence agreement - Knox District Woodworkers Club - 45 Glenfern Road, Ferntree Gully [**8.2.5** - 2 pages]
6. Attachment 7 - Lease Agreement - Golden Cobra - 33 Kingston Street, Ferntree Gully [**8.2.6** - 3 pages]
7. Attachment 8 - Lease Agreement - Oonah Health - 1 Rollings Road, Upper Ferntree Gully [**8.2.7** - 4 pages]
8. Attachment 9 - Lease Agreement - Knox Infolink Inc - 134 Boronia Road, Boronia [**8.2.8** - 3 pages]

9. Attachment 10 - Lease Agreement - We Are One Club - 46-78 Argyle Way, Wantirna South [**8.2.9** - 3 pages]
10. Attachment 11 - Lease Agreement - Caladenia Dementia Care - Millers Homestead [**8.2.10** - 3 pages]

Attachment 1 – KTS Recycling – Knox Transfer Station, 251 George Street, Wantirna South

Summary

This attachment sets out the details of the proposed lease with KTS Recycling PTY LTD ('tenant') at the Knox Transfer Station at 251 George Street, Wantirna South. The lease is for a 20-year term (10+5+5). The annual rent will be the negotiated commercial rate (refer to Confidential Attachment 2). The tenant is responsible for all outgoings including maintenance and utility costs.

The Knox Transfer Station is a significant waste and resource recovery centre that supports residents, businesses and Council waste services, while contributing to Council's objective of reducing waste sent to landfill through recycling, reuse and resource recovery activities. Entering into this agreement will ensure that this facility continues to perform its important local, regional and state role, processing significant volumes of material and supporting waste diversion outcomes that align with Council's strategic objectives.

Tenant	KTS Recycling PTY LTD
Location	251 George Street, Wantirna South
Rental per annum	Refer Confidential Attachment 2
Term	Ten years with two additional options of five years each
Casual Hire allowed?	No
Key special conditions	Refer Confidential Attachment 2

A market approach was initially considered for this site; however, following further consideration, a direct negotiation approach was pursued in accordance with the provisions of Council's Leasing and Licensing Policy, which supports direct negotiations in appropriate circumstances. This approach recognised KTS's established operating history, satisfactory performance and fulfilment of its obligations under the existing agreements. Retaining the existing operator also provides operational continuity and avoids the potential disruption and uncertainty associated with a change of operator.

1. Discussion

1.1 Knox Transfer Station (Facility Profile)

The Knox Transfer Station is located at 251 George Street, Wantirna South and provides waste disposal, recycling and resource recovery services to residents, businesses and local government waste programs. The facility accepts a range of waste streams and supports

activities including waste transfer, resource recovery, mattress recycling, e-waste processing and product re-use.

The incumbent tenant, KTS, has invested significantly in infrastructure, equipment, environmental controls and resource recovery operations, enabling the facility to expand beyond a traditional transfer station to include mattress recycling, e-waste recovery, product re-use and other resource recovery activities. This has increased the site's contribution to waste diversion and resource recovery outcomes for both Knox and the broader region.

In early 2026, Councillors considered the future operation of the site through the Contract and Land Usage Review, which supported the continuation of transfer station operations under a lease arrangement, and emphasised the importance of maintaining a public facing transfer station along with suitable ancillary services.

1.2 Tenant Profile

KTS has operated the Knox Transfer Station since 2007 and, over that period, has developed the site into a significant waste and resource recovery facility supporting both the Knox community and the broader region.

In 2024/25, the facility processed more than 71,000 tonnes of material, received over 84,000 customer visits and recovered more than 19,000 tonnes of recyclable material. Resource recovery rates increased from 24% to 27% over the review period, demonstrating a continued focus on waste diversion and improved environmental outcomes. The site has expanded beyond a traditional transfer station to include mattress recycling, e-waste recovery, product re-use and other resource recovery activities. The facility now processes more than 280,000 mattresses annually and has become an important component of Victoria's broader resource recovery network.

KTS has developed substantial site-specific knowledge, infrastructure and operational capability over almost two decades. This experience, combined with the significant investment made in the facility, provides a strong foundation for the continued operation of the site under a long-term lease arrangement.

1.2 Agreement Details

1.2.1 Current agreement

Contract 1651 was originally established as a services contract for the management and operation of the Knox Transfer Station. At the time, this was an appropriate structure given Council's objective of engaging an operator to manage a Council-owned waste facility under detailed service, operational and performance requirements.

Over time, however, the operation has evolved significantly. KTS has occupied the site on a long-term basis, retains revenue generated from the operation, bears the associated

commercial risks, funds infrastructure improvements and operates a substantial waste and resource recovery business from the premises. In practice, the leased and contracted portions of the site operate as a single integrated facility.

While a services contract is primarily concerned with the delivery of defined services, a lease is principally concerned with the occupation and use of land. The current operating model increasingly reflects the latter, with KTS occupying the site and operating the business in its own right.

1.2.2 Proposed Agreement

Legal advice has confirmed that the operation of the Knox Transfer Station falls within the scope of the Retail Leases Act 2003. As such, the rights and obligations of Council and the tenant are subject to the requirements of that Act, and cannot be excluded or overridden by the terms of the lease. The lease will therefore be documented using a standard retail lease, supplemented by appropriate special conditions, to provide a clear and comprehensive record of the parties' respective responsibilities. Key terms and conditions will be:

- Rental fees will commence at the negotiated commercial rate per annum (refer Confidential Attachment 2).
- Ten-year term, with two options for a further five-year term.
- Additional special conditions outlined in 1.3 below and in Confidential Attachment 2.

An in-principle agreement for this lease has been reached with KTS.

1.3 Deviations from the Leasing and Licensing Policy
In line with Councils Leasing and Licensing Policy, the standard Real Estate Institute of Victoria retail lease template will be used.

While the lease formalises the operator's responsibility for the day-to-day management of the facility, it also includes a range of special conditions designed to protect Council's interests and ensure the continued operation of the site as a waste transfer station and resource recovery facility. Detailed special conditions are contained in Confidential Attachment 2.

Key conditions include requirements for:

- operation of a publicly accessible waste transfer station and resource recovery facility throughout the lease term;
- Adherence to all statutory requirements
- Management of environmental impacts
- Continued strong stakeholder relations between Council and the tenant
- End-of-term hand back requirements.

Collectively, these conditions ensure that Council retains oversight of the environmental, operational and community outcomes it seeks to achieve, while allowing the operator flexibility in the day-to-day management of the facility. The conditions have been developed to reflect the unique nature of the site, lessons learnt through almost 20 years of operation, and Council's ongoing waste diversion, environmental and community service objectives.

2. Social Implications

The Knox Transfer Station provides an important service to residents, community groups and businesses by offering a convenient and accessible location for waste disposal, recycling and resource recovery activities. The facility supports a range of waste streams that would otherwise be more difficult or costly for the community to manage and plays a significant role in Council's waste management network. The ongoing operation of the transfer station supports local employment and associated economic activity through waste management, resource recovery, recycling and reuse initiatives while maintaining community confidence in Council's waste management services.

Importantly, the transfer station is not only a waste disposal facility but also a key piece of environmental infrastructure. The operation supports regional waste management capacity, provides essential services to the community, creates local employment opportunities and contributes to the resilience of Victoria's broader waste and resource recovery network. As waste management challenges continue to evolve, the strategic value of a well-established and proven resource recovery facility within Knox will only continue to increase.

In addition, the lease includes conditions relating to environmental management, regulatory compliance, fire risk management and site maintenance to ensure the facility continues to operate in a safe, efficient and environmentally responsible manner. Retaining an experienced operator also reduces the risks associated with transitioning to a new provider, including potential service disruption, loss of operational knowledge and delays in establishing environmental management systems and regulatory approvals.

3. Financial & Resource Implications

The proposed lease will provide Council with a market rental return from a strategically important waste and resource recovery asset, with the tenant maintaining responsibility for day-to-day operation, maintenance and management of the facility. The tenant will remain responsible for operational costs associated with the facility, including staffing, utilities, maintenance, environmental compliance, regulatory approvals and ongoing site management.

A close working relationship between Council officers and the tenant will be supported by the requirement for ongoing regular meetings, Council’s inspection rights and regular reporting.

The lease will generate an annual commercial rental income, and any costs associated with

preparation and administration of the lease will be accommodated within existing operating budgets.

4. Risks

Risk	Treatment
Failure to finalise and execute the agreed lease	Manage. In-principal agreement has been achieved. The remaining steps involve finalising minor matters, completing the necessary documentation, approvals and execution processes to formalise the arrangement.
Disruption to waste transfer station operations	Manage. The agreed lease retains KTS as the experienced operator of the facility, maintaining operational continuity and minimising the risks associated with a change of operator, including transition, establishment and regulatory risks.
Environmental and operational risks associated with waste transfer station activities	Transfer/Manage. Responsibility for day-to-day operation of the facility remains with the tenant. The lease establishes requirements relating to environmental management, regulatory compliance, reporting, maintenance and risk management, with Council retaining appropriate oversight and enforcement rights.
Failure of the tenant to maintain compliance with regulatory obligations	Manage. The lease includes obligations relating to regulatory compliance, incident notification, reporting and maintenance, together with Council's inspection and monitoring rights. The tenant remains responsible for obtaining and maintaining all relevant permits, licences and approvals, and complying with applicable statutory requirements.
Failure to achieve value for Council	Manage. Independent rental valuation advice has informed the agreed commercial terms. The lease has been negotiated in accordance with Council's Leasing and Licensing Policy, providing a documented basis for the agreed rental and other commercial arrangements.

Attachment 3 – Life Activities Club – Wattle Hall 160 Underwood Road, Ferntree Gully

Summary

This attachment sets out the details of the proposed lease with Life Activities Club Knox Inc. ('tenant') at Wattle Hall, 160 Underwood Road, Ferntree Gully. The proposed lease is for a five (5) year term, with the option for a further four (4) year term. The annual rent is $487, increasing by 4% on the anniversary of the agreement. The tenant is responsible for all outgoings relevant to Community Groups. Entering into this agreement will ensure that Life Activities Club Knox Inc. continues to provide social, recreational and wellbeing activities for people aged 55 and over in the Knox community.

Tenant	Life Activities Club Knox Inc.
Location	Wattle Hall, 160 Underwood Road, Ferntree Gully
Rental per annum	$487 increasing 4% per annum
Term	Five years with one option of four years
Casual Hire allowed?	Yes
Key special conditions	Council may use the hall up to 6 times per year at no cost, with time and dates mutually arranged.

A direct negotiation with Life Activities Club was pursued in accordance with the provisions of Council's Leasing and Licensing Policy, which supports direct negotiations in appropriate circumstances. This approach recognised Life Activities Club's history at at the site, community presence and fulfilment of its obligations under the existing agreements.

1 Discussion

1.1 Tenant and Facility Profile

Life Activities Club Knox Inc. was formed in 1986 and is affiliated with Life Activities Clubs Victoria Inc., a state network of around 5,000 members. It is a not-for-profit, non-political and non-religious club managed and organised by volunteer members, and is one of the larger seniors clubs in the City of Knox. Annual membership averages 200 people, mostly Knox residents aged 55 and over. Membership costs $25 per person per year. The club runs more than 20 activities on a regular basis, including cards, coffee and chat groups, badminton, fitness, walking, golf, armchair travel, talks, dine-outs and extended tours.

The club had no premises for its first 35 years. In December 2021, the club entered into a Licence agreement with Council for 160 Underwood Road, Ferntree Gully (known as "Wattle Hall"), and in January 2022 it officially opened its clubrooms to its members. The hall is fully accessible for people with disabilities and allows the club to host indoor activities that were previously held in members' homes. The club sub-lets the hall to small local community groups, who would otherwise not have a regular location for their members to meet.

The tenant is categorised as a “Community Group” under the Leasing and Licensing Policy, as they are a volunteer-based, not-for-profit group.

- The rental rate has been set in accordance with Councils Fees and Charges as per the Adopted Budget 2026-2027.
- The tenant is responsible for all operational expenses such as utilities, phone, cleaning, sanitary services, security and waste.
- The tenant is responsible for maintenance responsibilities as established in the Maintenance Schedule.

The tenant is up to date with all requirements of the existing agreement (annual tenancy reporting, Certificate of Currency, Child Safe reporting and annual fees). There are no identified breaches of the current agreement.

1.2 Agreement Details

Life Activities Club Knox Inc. have occupied this site since December 2021 under a Licence agreement. In accordance with Councils endorsed Leasing & Licencing Policy, as the tenant has exclusive use of the property, a lease is the most appropriate agreement. The lease is proposed to be provided with the following terms and conditions:

- Rental fees will commence at $487 per annum, increasing on the anniversary of the commencement date by 4%.
- 5 (five) year term, with the option for a further term of 4 years available. Commencement of five year term is 1 December 2026; expiry date 30 November 2031.
- The tenant takes on maintenance responsibilities in line with the Maintenance Schedule and in line with what they have been undertaking to date.
- Key special conditions are that Council may use the hall up to 6 times per year at no cost, with time and dates mutually arranged.
- Casual hire is permitted under the agreement.

An in-principle agreement for this lease has been reached with the proposed tenant.

1.3 Deviations from the Leasing and Licensing Policy
Council’s Property Team maintains a template licence agreement, which the property advocates use to negotiate with licensees. There are no substantive deviations from the standard template.

2. Social Implications

Life Activities Club Knox provides social, recreational and wellbeing activities for people aged 55 and over, helping members stay connected and physically active through walking, fitness, badminton and coffee and chat groups. The club aims to reduce the loneliness and isolation that can follow retirement or a change in personal circumstances. A low annual fee

($25) and a ‘try before you join’ offer of up to three activities keep participation accessible. Secure premises supports the club to keep hosting activities at Wattle Hall and to open the hall to the wider community.

3. Financial & Resource Implications

The annual rent payable by Life Activities Club Knox Inc. is $487.00, increasing by 4% on the anniversary of the agreement. The below outgoings are the responsibility of the tenant:

- Operational expenses such as utilities, phone, cleaning, sanitary services, security and waste.
- Maintenance items as specified in the maintenance schedule.

As a Community Group, Life Activities are not required to pay the Emergency Services and Volunteer Levy.

Council will continue to pay the Essential Safety Measures in line with the lease and Councils statutory responsibilities.

4. Risks

No major risks have been identified with the proposed lease. The tenant is a volunteer-run, low-fee organisation (membership is $25 per person per year, about 200 members), who have demonstrated their ability to meet their contractual obligations for Wattle Hall over the last five years.

4Attachment 4 - Ferntree Gully 3-Year-Old Kindergarten – 278 Windermere Drive Ferntree Gully

Summary

This attachment sets out the details of the proposed extension by one year of the current lease of Ferntree Gully 3-Year-Old Preschool Inc. at 278 Windermere Dr, Ferntree Gully VIC. The extension is to take up the first of three - one year term extensions. The annual rent at the commencement of the agreement was $450, with a 4% increase each anniversary of the agreement. The tenant is responsible for all outgoings, including maintenance and utility costs. Since commencement, this kindergarten has experienced strong demand for enrolments and met all requirements under the lease. Executing this one-year term extension ensures that Ferntree Gully 3-Year-Old Preschool Inc will secure the continued availability of sessional kindergarten services for children in Ferntree Gully and the wider Knox community.

Tenant	Ferntree Gully 3-Year-Old Preschool Inc.
Location	278 Windermere Dr, Ferntree Gully
Rental per annum as at 2026/27	$487 per annum increasing 4% per annum
Term	One year extension
Casual Hire allowed?	No
Key special conditions	Several relating specifically to the operation of Early Childhood Education and Care

1 Discussion

1.1 Tenant and Facility Profile

Ferntree Gully 3-Year-Old Preschool Inc. is an independent kindergarten provider who have been reviewed by the Victorian Government Department of Education as a suitable approved provider. The service currently holds funding approval to provide free sessional kindergarten.

Ferntree Gully 3-Year-Old Preschool Inc. is governed by a parent-led Committee of Management (CoM), which operates in accordance with its constitution. The Tenant operates 3- and 4-year-old sessional Kindergarten and continues to be a highly sought-after service, reflected in consistently high registration numbers for both 3- and 4-year-old kindergarten programs, currently sitting at 66 children.

The tenant is categorised as a Community Group under the Leasing and Licensing Policy, as they are largely a volunteer-based, not-for-profit group.

- The rental rate was set in accordance with Councils Fees and Charges as per the Adopted Budget 2023/24.
- The tenant is responsible for all outgoings, including operational expenses and any applicable rates and taxes.
- The tenant is responsible for maintenance responsibilities as established in the Maintenance Schedule.

The tenant is up to date with all other requirements of the existing agreement. There are no identified breaches of the current agreement.

1.2 Agreement Details

Ferntree Gully 3-Year-Old Preschool Inc. currently operates at this site offering sessional kindergarten under a current executed lease agreement.

- Rental fees commenced at $450 per annum, increasing on the anniversary of the commencement date by 4%.
- The tenant has met all maintenance responsibilities in line with the Maintenance Schedule.
- Option for a further two, one-year term extensions (for a total of five years)
- The tenant is not able to sub-lease or hire the facility

Additional special conditions have been incorporated to address the additional regulatory requirements applicable to kindergarten service providers. This includes:

1. Maintain a Provider Approval and Service Approval to provide Education and Care services with the Victorian Department of Education
2. Prioritise funded kindergarten programs
3. Participate in the Central Registration Scheme managed by Council

An in-principle agreement for this one-year term extension of the current lease has been reached with the tenant.

1.3 Deviations from the Leasing and Licensing Policy

Council maintains a template kindergarten lease agreement, which the Early Years property advocate uses to negotiate with lessees. There are no substantive deviations from the standard kindergarten lease template.

2. Social Implications

The provision of sessional kindergarten is fundamental to supporting the long-term development and future success of young children within Knox. Ensuring equitable access to high-quality kindergarten and pre-prep programs provides children with a strong foundation for lifelong learning and holistic development. Extending the current lease for another one-

year term with Ferntree Gully 3-Year-Old Preschool Inc continues to offer a mixed market approach to sessional kindergarten provision across the municipality offering families a diverse range of options, empowering them to choose programs that best meet their children's unique needs and preferences.

3. Financial & Resource Implications

The annual rent payable by the kindergarten service provider (tenant) is $450, increasing by 4% on the anniversary of the agreement, plus outgoings.

The below outgoings are the responsibility of the tenant:

- Utilities, cleaning and gardening.
- Maintenance, rates (emergency service levy), rubbish and waste removal
- Central Registration licence and participation fees

Council will continue to pay the Essential Safety Measures in line with the Leasing and Licencing Policy and Councils statutory responsibilities.

4. Risks

No major risks have been identified with the proposed one-year term extension to the current lease.

Attachment 5 - Liberty Ave 3-Year-Old Kindergarten Inc – 77 Liberty Avenue, Rowville

Summary

This attachment sets out the details of the proposed extension by one year of the current lease of Liberty Avenue 3-Year-Old Kindergarten Inc. at 77 Liberty Avenue, Rowville, Victoria, 3178. The extension is to take up the first of three - one year term extensions. The annual rent at the commencement of the agreement was $450, with a 4% increase each anniversary of the agreement. The tenant is responsible for all outgoings, including maintenance and utility costs. Since commencement, this kindergarten has experienced strong demand for enrolments and met all requirements under the lease. Executing this one-year term extension ensures that Liberty Avenue 3-Year-Old Kindergarten Inc will secure the continued availability of sessional kindergarten services for children in Rowville and the wider Knox community.

Tenant	Liberty Avenue 3-Year-Old Kindergarten Inc.
Location	77 Liberty Avenue, Rowville
Rental per annum as at 2026/27	$487 per annum increasing 4% per annum
Term	One year extension
Casual Hire allowed?	No
Key special conditions	Several relating specifically to the operation of Early Childhood Education and Care

1 Discussion

1.1 Tenant and Facility Profile

Liberty Avenue 3-Year-Old Kindergarten Inc. is an independent kindergarten provider who have been reviewed by the Victorian Government Department of Education as a suitable approved provider. The service currently holds funding approval to provide free sessional kindergarten.

Liberty Avenue 3-Year-Old Kindergarten Inc. is governed by a parent-led Committee of Management (CoM), which operates in accordance with its constitution. The Tenant operates 3 and 4-year-old sessional Kindergarten and continues to be a highly sought-after service, reflected in consistently high registration numbers for both 3 and 4-year-old kindergarten programs, currently sitting at 100 children.

The tenant is categorised as a Community Group under the Leasing and Licensing Policy, as they are largely a volunteer-based, not-for-profit group.

- The rental rate has been set in accordance with Councils Fees and Charges as per the Adopted Budget 2023/24.
- The tenant is responsible for all outgoings, including operational expenses and any applicable rates and taxes.
- The tenant is responsible for maintenance responsibilities as established in the Maintenance Schedule.

The tenant is up to date with all other requirements of the existing agreement. There are no identified breaches of the current agreement.

1.2 Agreement Details

Liberty Avenue 3-Year-Old Kindergarten Inc. currently operates at this site offering sessional kindergarten under a current executed lease agreement.

- Rental fees commenced at $450 per annum, increasing on the anniversary of the commencement date by 4%.
- The tenant has met all maintenance responsibilities in line with the Maintenance Schedule.
- Option for two further one-year term extensions
- The tenant is not able to sub-lease or hire the facility

Additional special conditions have been incorporated to address the additional regulatory requirements applicable to kindergarten service providers. This includes:

1. Maintain a Provider Approval and Service Approval to provide Education and Care services with the Victorian Department of Education
2. Prioritise funded kindergarten programs
3. Participate in the Central Registration Scheme managed by Council

An in-principal agreement for this one-year term extension of the current lease has been reached with the tenant.

1.3 Deviations from the Leasing and Licensing Policy

Council's Property Team maintains a template kindergarten lease agreement, which the Early Years property advocate uses to negotiate with lessees. There are no substantive deviations from the standard kindergarten lease template.

2. Social Implications

The provision of sessional kindergarten is fundamental to supporting the long-term development and future success of young children within Knox. Ensuring equitable access to high-quality kindergarten and pre-prep programs provides children with a strong foundation for lifelong learning and holistic development. Extending the current lease for another one-

year term with Liberty Avenue 3-Year-Old Kindergarten Inc continues a mixed market approach to sessional kindergarten provision across the municipality offering families a diverse range of options, empowering them to choose programs that best meet their children's unique needs and preferences.

3. Financial & Resource Implications

The annual rent payable by the kindergarten service provider (tenant) is $450, increasing by 4% on the anniversary of the agreement, plus outgoings.

The below outgoings are the responsibility of the tenant:

- Utilities, cleaning and gardening.
- Maintenance, rates (emergency service levy), rubbish and waste removal
- Central Registration licence and participation fees

Council will continue to pay the Essential Safety Measures in line with the Leasing and Licencing Policy and Councils statutory responsibilities.

4. Risks

No major risks have been identified with the proposed one-year term extension to the current lease.

Attachment 6 - Knox & District Woodworkers Club, 45 Glenfern Road, Ferntree Gully

Summary

This attachment outlines the proposed variation to the licensed area occupied by Knox & District Woodworkers Club Inc. at Placemakers, 45 Glenfern Road, Ferntree Gully. The Club has requested the inclusion of approximately 2 meters square of adjoining unused land to address space constraints. They will use the space for storage.

The Club will be responsible for any costs associated with using the additional area, including obtaining any necessary permits and approvals should they wish to install storage. All other terms and conditions of the existing five-year licence agreement (2023–2028), including the current annual licence fee of $284.90 for 2026/27, will remain unchanged.

Tenant	Knox & District Woodworkers Club Inc
Location	45 Glenfern Road, Ferntree Gully
Rental per annum as at 2026/27	$284.90 increasing at 4% per annum
Term	Five years with the current licence concluding in 2028
Casual Hire allowed?	Yes
Key special conditions	Nil

1 Discussion

1.1 Tenant and Facility Profile

Knox & District Woodworkers Club Inc. is a volunteer-based, not-for-profit community organisation providing a local workshop for people interested in wood crafts. The Club is categorised as a Community Group under Council's Leasing and Licensing Policy.

The Club occupies a building at Placemakers, 45 Glenfern Road, Ferntree Gully, together with a small rear yard, under an existing five-year Council licence from 2023 to 2028. The Club has requested a variation of its licensed area to include unused ground between the eastern wall of the Placemakers workshop and the eastern boundary fence, north of its current boundary fence.

The proposed variation relates solely to the area occupied by the Club and does not change the permitted use of the facility or the term of the existing agreement. The area is not used by other tenants. The Club is up to date with all requirements of its existing licence agreement, including annual tenancy reporting, insurance, applicable child safety requirements and payment of fees and invoices. There are no identified breaches of the current agreement.

1.2 Agreement Details

Knox & District Woodworkers Club Inc. currently occupies a building and the adjoining rear yard at Placemakers, 45 Glenfern Road, Ferntree Gully, under a five-year licence agreement (2023–2028). The current annual licence fee for 2026/27 is $284.90, with annual increases of 3%. The permitted use is a not-for-profit community woodworking workshop, operating Monday to Sunday between 8.30 am and 9.30 pm. The existing agreement prohibits third-party hire.

The proposed variation will expand the licensed area to incorporate the adjoining unused land behind the Council events shed, between the eastern wall of the workshop and the eastern boundary fence, north of the Club's existing boundary fence. This will provide additional space for woodworking storage.

The variation will apply for the remainder of the existing agreement term, ending in 2028, with no additional rental increase proposed beyond the existing annual adjustments.

The Club will be responsible for the costs and undertaking of any associated works, subject to the standard Council approval processes under their license.

1.3 Deviations from the Leasing and Licensing Policy

Council’s Property Team maintains a template licence agreement, which the property advocates use to negotiate with the licensee. There are no substantive deviations from Council's Leasing and Licensing Policy or the existing licence agreement.

2. Social Implications

The additional space will provide the Club with dedicated storage for equipment and materials, reducing pressure on the existing workshop area.

3. Financial & Resource Implications

The annual licence fee payable by Knox & District Woodworkers Club Inc. is $284.90 as at 2026/27 with annual increases at 4%. The proposed variation of the licensed area will not result in any change to the existing licence fee arrangements.

The Club will continue to be responsible for services and maintenance as specified in the existing licence agreement and maintenance schedule. Council's existing maintenance responsibilities will remain unchanged.

No additional Council expenditure is anticipated as a result of the proposed variation.

4. Risks

No major ongoing risks have been identified in relation to the proposed variation of the licensed area.

Attachment 7 – Golden Cobra - HV Jones Community Hall, 33 Kingston Street, Ferntree Gully

Summary

This attachment sets out the details of the proposed lease with Golden Cobra Martial Arts Incorporated ('tenant') at 33 Kingston Street, Ferntree Gully (HV Jones Community Hall). The proposed lease is for a 5-year term, with no option for a further term. The annual rent is $10,928.00 (GST exc.), increasing by 4% on the anniversary of the agreement. The tenant is responsible for all outgoings including maintenance, utilities and service costs. Entering into this agreement will provide an opportunity for Golden Cobra Martial Arts (which is a not-for-profit community group) to deliver inclusive, all abilities martial arts training to the Knox community.

Tenant	Golden Cobra Martial Arts Inc
Location	33 Kingston Street, Ferntree Gully
Rental per annum	$10,928 per annum increasing 4% per annum
Term	Five years
Casual Hire allowed?	Yes
Key special conditions	The tenant must adhere to the requirements of the Control of Weapons Act 1990 and any Martial Arts exemptions

A public open market approach selection process (Expression of Interest) was undertaken to determine a suitable new tenant. Following a competitive process and objective panel assessment, Golden Cobra were identified as the preferred applicant.

1 Discussion

1.1 Tenant and Facility Profile

Golden Cobra Martial Arts is a not-for-profit organisation that delivers accessible, inclusive and high-quality martial arts training. The club caters to participants of all ages and abilities and has a particular focus on neurodivergent members of the community. Its programs promote physical fitness, self-defence skills, confidence and discipline, while fostering respect, personal development and a strong sense of community. Training is available to all members of the community on a fee for service basis with the group offering a competitive fee structure that aims to make martial arts accessible for as many people as possible. The school has been operating in the Knox area for the last 40 years and 11 years as a not-for-profit organisation.

1.2 Agreement Details

The Council facility at 33 Kingston Street, Ferntree Gully is proposed to be occupied under lease by Golden Cobra Martial Arts Incorporated with the following terms and conditions:

- The rental rate has been set at $10,928 per annum, increasing by 4% each year in accordance with Councils Fees and Charges as per the Adopted Budget 2025/26
- The tenant is responsible for all outgoings, including operational expenses and any applicable rates and taxes.
- The tenant takes on maintenance responsibilities in line with the Maintenance Schedule.

1.3 Deviations from the Leasing and Licensing Policy

Council's Property Team maintains a template lease agreement, which the property advocates use to negotiate with tenants.

Special conditions to be included in this agreement are the following:

- The tenant must adhere to the requirements of the Control of Weapons Act 1990 and any Martial Arts exemptions.
- Casual hire is permitted under the lease.

2. Social Implications

Golden Cobra Martial Arts provide a martial arts training service that provide many benefits to the Knox Community including: an increase in physical activity, promotion of a healthy lifestyle, social engagement and community participation. The group's focus on neurodiverse members provides equal participation opportunities and supports diversity within the community, offering strong alignment with many of the priorities in the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan. Golden Cobra Martial Arts intend to utilise the facility 6 days per week (and on some occasions 7 days per week).

HV Jones Community Hall is co-located in a sports reserve which includes other tenants such as cricket/soccer, netball/basketball courts and Mullum Mullum Indigenous Gathering Place, offering many mutual opportunities for collaborative activity.

Golden Cobra's activities and purpose align with many of Council's Health and Wellbeing priorities including enhancing community connections to vital services and resources, and embracing connection, inclusion and diversity.

3. Financial & Resource Implications

The annual rent payable by Golden Cobra Martial Arts is $10,928 (excluding GST), increasing by 4% on the anniversary of the agreement.

The below outgoings are the responsibility of the tenant:

- Utilities and services
- Applicable rates and taxes
- Maintenance items as specified in the maintenance schedule.

Council will continue to fund the Essential Safety Measures in line with the lease and Council's statutory responsibilities.

Sources of income for Golden Cobra Martial Arts include membership and training fees and community grants.

An in-principle agreement for this lease has been reached with the proposed tenant.

4. Risks

The current tenant's (Knox Gardens Community Group) operations consist of managing the casual hire of HV Jones Community Hall to the community. This hiring has included regular hirers (who have ongoing bookings on a weekly or monthly basis) and one-off "casual hires" such as bookings for events, celebrations and gatherings. Currently there are six existing community groups that use the facility through a regular hire agreement. Throughout lease negotiations, Golden Cobra Martial Arts have indicated that they would be unable to continue to offer either regular or casual hire of the facility to the broader community, due to the need for equipment to remain set up for training purposes and strict storage requirements related to some training equipment. Golden Cobra have indicated that they would like to offer hire of the facility to some suitable groups, whose activities will align with the way the building will be set up.

Whilst the hall will continue to be used by a not-for-profit community organisation delivering services and benefits to the Knox community, under the new proposed lease, the hire arrangements and the facility's use would differ from the current arrangements.

Officers have maintained contact with current regular hirers who have been kept informed throughout the Expression of Interest and the lease negotiation process regarding proposed changes to the tenancy and use of the facility. Existing hirers have been notified that early negotiations with a proposed new tenant indicate the venue will no longer be available for hire (pending a Council decision) and have been provided alternative venue options. Officers are continuing to work with each of these groups to support them to locate an alternative venue to meet their requirements.

As a martial arts group, Golden Cobra conduct invited training for suitably qualified individuals with weapons that are subject to the Weapons Control Act. Storage, management and ongoing risk assessment will be managed via the lease.

Attachment 8 – Oonah Health and Community Services Aboriginal Corporation - 1 Rollings Road, Upper Ferntree Gully

Summary

This attachment sets out the details of the proposed lease with Oonah Aboriginal Health and Community Services at 1 Rollings Road, Upper Ferntree Gully. The lease is proposed for a 10-year term, with two options for a further term of five years each. The annual rent is $487.00, increasing by 4% on the anniversary of the agreement. The tenant is responsible for all outgoings including maintenance, utilities and service costs. Entering into this agreement will ensure Oonah Aboriginal Health and Community Services has a dedicated facility to offer culturally focused community health services and associated activities to the Knox Community.

Tenant	Oonah Health and Community Services Aboriginal Corporation
Location	1 Rollings Road, Upper Ferntree Gully
Rental per annum	$487 per annum increasing 4% per annum
Term	Ten years with two further option of five years
Casual Hire allowed?	Yes
Key special conditions	The adjacent car park is VicTrack land and does not belong to Council. The tenant will be required to lease the car parking area by entering into an agreement with Victrack, who have indicated in-principle agreement. The facility is offered for lease in its current condition. Any facility upgrades approved by Council must be undertaken and funded by the tenant at the tenant's own expense and must not proceed without prior written approval from Council.

An open-market approach selection process (Expression of Interest) was undertaken to determine a suitable new proposed tenant. Following a competitive process and thorough panel assessment, Oonah Aboriginal Health and Community Service were identified as the preferred tenant.

1 Discussion

1.1 Tenant and Facility Profile

1 Rollings Road, Upper Ferntree Gully was previously used as a kindergarten, Playgroup and Maternal and Child Health Centre. The building has been vacant for approximately four years.

Oonah Aboriginal Health and Community Service is a not-for-profit Indigenous Health Service providing welcoming and culturally affirming services to the Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people of Melbourne's Inner and Outer East. These services include Paediatrics, Mental Health, Social and Emotional Wellbeing, Podiatry, Optometry, Audiology, NDIS support, Elder Care, food relief, and youth programs, aiming to build a strong, healthy community with services focused on respect and holistic care.

Knox currently does not have First Nations Health service and the broad base of services and supports provided by Oonah is an opportunity for Council to elevate and reflect this need within the community. Oonah will use the facility to create a culturally focused hub and increase Indigenous health services within the Knox area.

The site is close by to retail, tourism, health, transport and Country. The proximity to other health services such as the Angliss Hospital creates referral and gateway opportunities for Oonah clients, with the nearby Angliss Maternity Ward the second highest place of birth for First Nations babies in Melbourne's east. Other features making this facility suitable for Oonah include access to public transport (train and bus), and access and proximity to Country (close to the 1,000 steps, trails and remnant bush).

1.2 Agreement Details

The Council facility at 1 Rollings Road, Upper Ferntree Gully is proposed to be occupied exclusively Oonah and is therefore proposed as a lease agreement with the following terms and conditions;

- Rental fees will commence at $487.00 per annum, increasing on the anniversary of the commencement date by 4%.
- Ten-year term, with two options for a further term of 5 years each.
- The tenant takes on maintenance responsibilities in line with the Maintenance Schedule.

An in-principle agreement for this lease has been reached with the proposed tenant.

1.3 Deviations from the Leasing and Licensing Policy

Council's Property Team maintains a template lease agreement, which the property advocates use to negotiate with tenants. Below is a list of the deviations from the standard template for this particular lease.

Item	Template	Deviation	Notes
1	Standard 5-year term	10-year term with two options for a further term of 5 years each	Oonah have indicated that they intend to apply for the Aboriginal Community Infrastructure Grant to fund future upgrades to the facility. A requirement of this application is a minimum occupancy agreement of 10 years. Additionally, there are no future plans by Council to use this site for an alternative purpose.
2	-	-	The adjacent car park is VicTrack land and does not belong to Council. The tenant will be required to lease the car parking area by entering into an agreement with Victrack, who have indicated in-principle agreement.
3	-	-	The facility is offered for lease in its current condition. Any facility upgrades approved by Council must be undertaken and funded by the tenant at the tenant's own expense and must not proceed without prior written approval from Council.

2. Social Implications

According to the 2021 Census there are over 1,000 Aboriginal and or Torres Strait Islanders living in the City of Knox, this being the second largest Aboriginal and or Torres Strait Islander population in the Melbourne Eastern Metropolitan region. The data also suggests that the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community is growing with a 38% increase in population between 2016 and 2021. Young people aged 25-34 account for 23.1% of the First Nations population in Knox and Ferntree Gully has the highest population of First Nations residents within Knox. Oonah currently offers services to the Aboriginal and or Torres Strait Islander Community within Knox in an outreach capacity however there is no physical location present in the area.

Knox currently does not have First Nations Health service and the broad base of services and supports provided by Oonah would reflect the needs within the community. The physical presence of Oonah Aboriginal Health and Community Services within Knox will improve access to culturally safe health and community services for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people within the Knox Community. The services offered by Oonah will support children, families and Elders through culturally grounded programs that strengthen identity, health and connection. Knox currently does not have First Nations Health service and this is an opportunity for Council to elevate the needs of our First Nations population.

Additionally, this proposal offers strong alignment with Council's Reconciliation Action Plan and the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan. Alignment with Council's Health and Wellbeing priorities include enhancing community connections and embracing connection, inclusion and diversity.

3. Financial & Resource Implications

As a Community Group, the annual rent payable by Oonah Aboriginal Health and Community Service is $487.00, increasing by 4% on the anniversary of the agreement. The below outgoings are the responsibility of the tenant:

- Utilities and services
- Maintenance items as specified in the maintenance schedule.

Council will continue to pay the Essential Safety Measures in line with the lease and Councils statutory responsibilities. As a Community Group, Oonah are also not required to pay the Emergency Services and Volunteer Levy.

Sources of income for Oonah Aboriginal Health and Community Service include Federal, State and Local Government funding and grants.

Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (ACCOs) can access various state funds that could be used to fit out this facility to meet a more general purpose after operating as a kindergarten. Oonah has indicated they would be willing to enter a lease for the site in its current condition with the intention to upgrade it using grant funding to improve the asset and make the building fit for purpose. One available funding stream is the Aboriginal Community Infrastructure Program which provides funding of up to $1.6 million for Aboriginal organisations to build, renovate, repair, refurbish, or expand facilities. It should be noted that eligibility requirements for this grant program, include that the group must provide evidence of owning the project site or having the right to use and develop the project site for a minimum of ten-years (e.g., certificates of title, a ground lease or tenancy agreements). The value to Council of tenant funded improvements to a vacant, Council owned asset include both the asset improvement as well as potentially decreased ongoing maintenance costs.

4. Risks

No major risks have been identified with the proposed lease.

Attachment 9 – Knox Infolink - Boronia Progress Hall,134 Boronia Road, Boronia

Summary

This attachment sets out the details of the proposed lease with Knox Infolink Incorporated ('tenant') at 134 Boronia Road, Boronia (Boronia Progress Hall). The proposed lease is for a 5-year term, with one option for a further term of 4 years. The annual rent is $487.00, increasing by 4% on the anniversary of the agreement. The tenant is responsible for all outgoings including maintenance and utility costs. Entering into this agreement will allow Knox Infolink to maintain current use of the hall for the free community Breakfast Program and also ensure the venue is available for use and casual hire by the Knox Community.

Tenant	Knox Infolink
Location	134 Boronia Road, Boronia
Rental per annum	$487 per annum increasing 4% per annum
Term	Five years with one further option of four years
Casual Hire allowed?	Yes
Key special conditions	-

A public open market approach selection process (Expression of Interest) was undertaken to determine a suitable new tenant. Following a competitive process and objective panel assessment, Knox Infolink were identified as the preferred applicant. It is also noted that the current tenant did not apply to continue managing the facility and also provided a letter of support to Knox Infolink to include with their Expression of Interest application.

1 Discussion

1.1 Tenant and Facility Profile

Knox Infolink Incorporated are a not-for-profit organisation that has been operating in the Knox area since 1992. Knox Infolink provide confidential, practical and impartial information and emergency relief to the Knox community with the aim of improving their health and wellbeing and enhance their quality of life. All services offered by Knox Infolink are free and offered on a drop-in basis, including the Community Breakfast Program which operates four days per week from the Boronia Progress Hall via a hire arrangement with the current tenant.

There are currently six community groups that regularly use the facility through a hire agreement. Knox Infolink are committed to making the facility available to current and future hirers and intend to use income generated from hire to further support the local community. All hirers have been well informed throughout the expression of interest and

the lease negotiation process regarding proposed changes to the tenancy of the facility. If the proposed lease is endorsed, both The Basin Community House and Knox Infolink have committed to working collaboratively to manage the transfer of hirers and hiring processes and have already commenced initial preparations and handover discussions.

Knox Infolink are also a tenant of the adjacent Council property, at 136 Boronia Road, Boronia where the Infolink Community Support Officer operates from. In this existing agreement, the tenant is up to date with all compliance requirements and there are no identified breaches of the current agreement.

1.2 Agreement Details

The Council facility at 134 Boronia Road, Boronia is proposed to be occupied exclusively by Knox Infolink and thus is proposed as a lease agreement with the following terms and conditions:

- Rental fees will commence at $487.00 per annum, increasing on the anniversary of the commencement date by 4%.
- Five-year term, with one option for a further term of 4 years.
- The tenant takes on maintenance responsibilities in line with the Maintenance Schedule.
- Casual Hire is permitted

An in-principle agreement for this lease has been reached with the proposed tenant.

1.3 Deviations from the Leasing and Licensing Policy

Council's Property Team maintains a template lease agreement, which the property advocates use to negotiate with tenants. Below is a list of the deviations from the standard template for this lease.

Item	Template	Deviation	Notes
1	Standard 5-year term	5-year term with 1 option for a further 4 years.	Knox Infolink provides valuable services to the Knox community particularly the Community Breakfast Program. Offering a further term will provide Knox Infolink with a long-term venue option for this program.
2	-	-	Should the Tenant wish to use the premises for an event outside of that described under Permitted Use or outside the hours of operation, written approval must be received from Council.

2. Social Implications

Knox Infolink provide essential services to the Knox Community, particularly those who are vulnerable, disadvantaged, isolated or homeless. The services provided recognise the specific needs of those escaping or experiencing family violence, mental health or addiction issues while providing a fair and equitable service irrespective of gender, ethnicity, religion, sexual preference, disability or age.

Knox Infolink's activities and purpose align with Council's Health and Wellbeing priorities including enhancing community connection and embracing connection, inclusion and diversity and being a strong voice for safety.

3. Financial & Resource Implications

The annual rent payable by Knox Infolink is $487.00, increasing by 4% on the anniversary of the agreement. The following outgoings are the responsibility of the tenant:

- Utilities and services
- Applicable rates and taxes
- Maintenance items as specified in the maintenance schedule.

Council will continue to fund the Essential Safety Measures in line with the lease and Council's statutory responsibilities. As a Community Group, Infolink are not required to pay the Emergency Services and Volunteer Levy.

Sources of income for Knox Infolink include Knox Council Community Partnership funding, local, state and federal government grants, emergency relief funding, donations and income generated from venue hire.

4. Risks

No major risks have been identified with the proposed lease.

Attachment 10 – We Are One Club – Knox Gardens Community Hall, 46 –78 Argyle Way, Wantirna South Argyle Way, Wantirna South

Summary

This attachment sets out the details of the proposed lease with We Are One Club Incorporated ('tenant') at 46-78 Argyle Way, Wantirna South (Knox Gardens Community Hall). The proposed lease is for a 5-year term, with no option for a further term. The annual rent is $487.00, increasing by 4% on the anniversary of the agreement. The tenant is responsible for all outgoings including maintenance, utilities and service costs. Entering into this agreement will ensure that We Are One Club has a dedicated site to deliver multicultural, wellbeing and social connection activities for seniors in the Knox community and the facility is available to the wider Knox community for hire.

Tenant	We Are One Club Inc
Location	46-78 Argyle Way, Wantirna South
Rental per annum	$487 per annum increasing 4% per annum
Term	Five years
Casual Hire allowed?	Yes
Key special conditions	-

A public open market approach selection process (Expression of Interest) was undertaken to determine a suitable new tenant. Following a competitive process and objective panel assessment, We Are One Club was identified as the preferred applicant.

1 Discussion

1.1 Tenant and Facility Profile

We Are One Club Inc. is a not-for-profit multicultural seniors organisation that was established in 2024. Through inclusive activities and events, We Are One brings together older adults from diverse cultural backgrounds to build social connections, improve wellbeing and celebrate multicultural community life. We Are One Club has many members living in the Knox area and seek to establish a local place to connect with members. The group seeks to use the facility to run weekly activities including Tai Chi, multicultural dances, karaoke, Mahjong, cultural sharing, social support and community events that promote inclusion, positive ageing and cross-cultural understanding.

Membership to the club is available for a low-cost fee and is open to all community members. We Are One Club actively supports and collaborates with a wide range of multicultural senior communities across the Knox and south-east region.

There are currently eight community groups that regularly use the facility through a hire agreement with the current tenant. We Are One Club are committed to making the facility available to current and future hirers and intend to use income generated from hire to further support the local community. All hirers have been well informed throughout the expression of interest and the lease negotiation process regarding proposed changes to the tenancy of the facility. Officers have been working with We Are One Club to support them to prepare to manage the casual hire of the facility and help. We Are One Club to retain all the existing regular hirers for the facility.

1.2 Agreement Details

The Council facility at 46-78 Argyle Way, Wantirna South is proposed to be occupied exclusively by We Are One Club and therefore is proposed as a lease agreement with the following terms and conditions:

- Rental fees will commence at $487.00 per annum, increasing on the anniversary of the commencement date by 4%.
- Five-year term, with no option for a further term.
- The tenant takes on maintenance responsibilities in line with the Maintenance Schedule.
- Casual hire is permitted

An in-principle agreement for this lease has been reached with the proposed tenant.

1.3 Deviations from the Leasing and Licensing Policy

Council's Property Team maintains a template lease agreement, which the property advocates use to negotiate with tenants. There are no substantive deviations from the standard template.

2. Social Implications

We Are One Club provides an opportunity for people across generations and cultural backgrounds to join a vibrant community that celebrates unity, diversity, and care. The activities and events run by the club support social cohesion, cultural awareness, inclusion and community participation. The club is inclusive of all cultures and celebrates diversity. They are committed to partnering and collaborating with other community groups and existing hirers to deliver activities that add value to the community.

We Are One Club's activities and purpose align with Council's Health and Wellbeing priorities including enhancing community connection to vital services and resources and embracing connection, inclusion and diversity.

4. Financial & Resource Implications

The annual rent payable by We Are One Club is $487.00, increasing by 4% on the anniversary of the agreement. The following outgoings are the responsibility of the tenant:

- Utilities and services
- Maintenance items as specified in the maintenance schedule.

Council will continue to fund the Essential Safety Measures in line with the lease and Councils statutory responsibilities. As a Community Group, We Are One are not required to pay the Emergency Services and Volunteers Levy.

Sources of income for We Are One Club include membership fees, community grants and, if the lease is endorsed, income generated from venue hire.

Risks

No major risks have been identified with the proposed lease.

Attachment 11 – Caladenia Dementia Care - Miller's Homestead, Melrose Court and Dorrigo Drive, Boronia

Summary

This attachment sets out the proposed occupancy arrangement with Caladenia Dementia Care (Caladenia) at Millers Homestead, corner Melrose Court and Dorrigo Drive, Boronia. The lease is for a five (5) year term, with the option for a further four (4) year term, commencing on 1 January 2027. The proposed annual rent is $12,210 and will increase by 4% on the anniversary of the agreement. The tenant is responsible for all outgoings including maintenance and utilities relevant to Community Service Organisations. Entering into this agreement with Caladenia would activate the Homestead through specialist services and community participation while protecting the heritage character of the building and gardens. Caladenia proposes to establish a dementia-friendly community hub delivering specialist dementia services, respite, carer support, education and wider community activities.

Tenant	Caladenia Dementia Care
Location	Millers Homestead, corner Melrose Court and Dorrigo Drive, Boronia
Rental per annum	$12,210 per annum increasing 4% per annum
Term	Five years with one extension option of four years
Casual Hire allowed?	Yes
Key special conditions	The gardens will be provided under a licence to ensure ongoing public access and continued Council maintenance, while supporting the tenants use of the site.

An open-market approach selection process (Expression of Interest) as undertaken to determine a suitable new proposed tenant. Following a competitive process and thorough panel assessment, Caladenia Dementia Care was identified as the preferred tenant.

1 Discussion

1.1 Tenant and Facility Profile

Caladenia Dementia Care is a registered not-for-profit charity structured as a company limited by guarantee. Established in 1983, it has more than 40 years' experience delivering specialist community-based support for people living with dementia, including younger onset dementia, and their families and carers. Services include centre-based and community outing programs, respite, counselling, education, information and referral, carer support and allied health partnerships. Caladenia is governed by a volunteer Board of Directors and supported by an executive and management team.

Since 1991, Caladenia has operated from Meadowbank House in Mooroolbark, a Yarra Ranges Council-owned heritage property. This demonstrates relevant experience in operating community services from a heritage facility. Caladenia's proposed tenancy would activate the Homestead through specialist services and community participation while protecting the heritage character of the building and gardens.

1.2 Agreement Details

Caladenia Dementia Care will have exclusive use of the building at Miller's Homestead. The lease will be provided with the following terms and conditions:

- Rental fees will commence at $12,210 per annum, increasing on the anniversary of the commencement date by 4%.
- 5 (five) year term, with the option for a further term of 4 (four) years.
- The tenant takes on maintenance responsibilities in line with the Maintenance Schedule.
- Casual hire is permitted.
- A license for use of the gardens to ensure they remain maintained by Council and open to the public, while supporting Caladenia's programming.

1.3 Deviations from the Leasing and Licensing Policy

There are no substantive deviations from the standard template.

Item	Template	Deviation	Notes
1	5 year standard agreement	5 years + 4-year option	Caladenia Dementia Care have expressed a preference for a longer-term occupancy to ensure they can provide continuity to the Knox community.

2. Social Implications

The proposed tenancy would expand local access to dementia-specific programs, social activities and respite for people living with dementia and their carers. Community education, volunteer roles, intergenerational activities and open community programs are intended to reduce social isolation and dementia-related stigma. Use of the gardens and heritage property would support community connection, participation and wellbeing. Caladenia forecasts approximately 200 Knox residents participating each week by the end of its first year.

Caladenia proposes to operate Monday to Saturday, approximately 8.30 am to 5.30 pm, with additional evening and weekend activities. It estimates around 200 Knox residents participating in programs and activities each week by the end of the first year and

approximately 60–65 hours of weekly facility utilisation. Caladenia states that approximately 20% of its existing members reside in Knox.

3. Financial & Resource Implications

The annual rent payable by Caladenia Dementia Care will be $12,210 (excluding GST), increasing by 4% on the anniversary of the agreement.

The below outgoings are the responsibility of the tenant:

- Operational expenses such as utilities, phone, cleaning, sanitary services, security and waste services.
- The tenant is responsible for any applicable rates and taxes.
- Maintenance items as specified in the maintenance schedule.

Council will continue to pay the Essential Safety Measures in line with the lease and Council's statutory responsibilities.

4. Risks

No major risks have been identified in relation to the proposed tenancy.

8.3 Your Library Limited Annual Report 2025-2026

Final Report Destination:	Council
Paper Type:	For Noting
Author:	Community Strengthening Property Partnerships Officer, Belinda Boord
Manager:	Manager Community Strengthening, Kerryn Jansons
Executive:	Director Connected Communities, Judy Chalkley

SUMMARY
This report seeks to present the Your Library Limited Annual Report 2025-2026 for noting (see Attachment 1).

Your Library Limited (Your Library) delivers Knox Council's Library service at each of its five Library sites (Bayswater, Boronia, Ferntree Gully, Knox Library – Ngarrgoo and Rowville). Library services are also offered from Millers Homestead under a separate contract, which concludes at the end of 2026.

Libraries are valued community assets that provide safe spaces for connection and wellbeing, offering books as well as a wide range of free services, programs and resources that cater to people of all ages, backgrounds and life stages. Knox Libraries scored measurably higher than average satisfaction levels in the 2026 Customer Satisfaction Survey, increasing by two percentage points to 8.7 out of 10, which remains an "excellent" level of satisfaction.

As a registered charity and not-for-profit organisation limited by guarantee, Your Library operates through a cooperative partnership between Knox, Maroondah and Yarra Ranges Councils. Strategic oversight is provided by the Your Library Board, which includes two Councillors appointed by each member council to act as company directors. The role of the directors is to provide leadership for the good governance of the company.

The annual statewide benchmarking report on public library activity revealed that Your Library was ranked number one for library visits, total members, active borrowers, digital collection and Storytime attendance. Serving a combined population of more than 440,000 residents, including over 163,000 Knox residents, the organisation provides services that support literacy, learning, digital participation and community wellbeing.

Demand for library services continued to grow in 2025-26, with digital borrowing continuing to grow at 26% per annum. Total checkouts increased by 8.9%, library visits rose by 1.7%, and Your Library achieved a 0.5% increase in new members overall.

Knox's six libraries recorded more than 628,000 physical checkouts, over 788,000 visits, exceeding recorded checkouts and visits achieved in 2024-25. An additional 17,078 new members were recorded (a similar figure to 2024-2025). These statistics demonstrate the strong and ongoing use of Knox Libraries across the Your Library network.

RECOMMENDATION
That Council resolve to receive and note the Your Library Limited 2025-2026 Annual Report (see Attachment 1).

1. DISCUSSION
The Your Library Annual Report 2025-26 provides a comprehensive overview of library operations, services and initiatives across its member councils, including Knox. It details the organisation's performance and achievements during the financial year and incorporates the annual financial statements.

1.1 Background
As the designated provider of public library services in Victoria, local government plays a key role in ensuring communities have access to library facilities and programs. Knox City Council supports this commitment by funding and maintaining five library branches located throughout the municipality (as well as Millers Homestead until the end of 2026).

Knox Council libraries offer residents access to a broad range of free services, programs and resources that encourage literacy, learning, digital inclusion, and community connection. Initiatives including home delivery services, technology training and social engagement programs help create a more connected, inclusive and resilient community while supporting lifelong learning and wellbeing.

Demand for library services in Knox remains strong, with increasing levels of participation and engagement across the network during 2025-2026.

1.2 Performance of Service
The Your Library Annual Report for 2025-2026 (see Attachment 1) has been prepared by Your Library and approved by the Your Library Board.

1.3 Council's Board Representatives
1.3.1 Knox City Council Board Representatives
The Your Library Board is comprised of two Councillors from each of the Member Councils, appointed as directors of the company. Councillors representing Knox City Council during the 2025-2026 financial year were initially Councillor Meagan Baker (until November 2025) and Councillor Peter Lockwood (until February 2026). Councillor Baker and Councillor Lockwood were replaced by Councillor Glen Atwell and Mayor Paige Kennett during the 2025-26 year. Details of these changes were:

- Councillor Glen Atwell replaced Councillor Meagan Baker as elected at the November 2025 Meeting of Council; and
- Mayor Paige Kennett replaced Councillor Peter Lockwood as elected at the February 2026 Meeting of Council.

1.4 Key Service Highlights

Key service highlights included:

- July 2025 - Launch of the revised Technology Support Program offering greater digital literacy support through three monthly service offerings at each location – Tech Basics, Teach Me Tech and Troubleshoot Tech Hour.
- August 2025 - Launch of Your Library, Leading Change 2025-2029 Strategic Plan – Your Library, Leading Change 2025-2029 - developed in consultation with the Board, Staff, Member Councils and community.
- November 2025 - Your Library ranked number one in six categories in the annual statewide benchmarking report on public library activity. Your Library was number one for library visits, total members, active borrowers, digital collection and Storytime attendance.
- Storytimes in German, Italian, Persian and Singhalese - In addition to the longstanding Chinese-language Storytimes delivered fortnightly at Knox Library Ngarrgoo, Rowville and Realm, Your Library has expanded its multilingual early literacy offerings to better reflect the diversity of our communities. Through the dedication of volunteers, the support of bilingual staff and local branch initiatives, Storytimes are now also offered in German, Italian, Persian and Sinhalese.

1.5 Key Knox Highlights

The Annual Report features several key Knox highlights and stories which capture the diverse services that are offered to the Knox community, including:

- Launch of the Community Directory for Boronia and The Basin produced with a Suburban Revitalisation grant and providing a comprehensive listing of local services and programs for residents.
- Bayswater Library Relocation – the new library offers a larger footprint and improved amenities including meeting rooms, small study rooms, flexible community spaces as well as an accessible bathroom.
- Secret World of Food (Boronia and Ferntree Gully) - The Secret World of Food display was installed at Boronia Library for a week as children learned about the lifecycle of food in a fun, interactive environment. The installation was later moved to the Ferntree Gully library and was available during Knox Fest.
- Libraries After Dark 2.0 - In 2025, Libraries After Dark 2.0 introduced small grants for libraries in areas with high gambling losses to deliver free evening programs within existing opening hours. Your Library secured funding to deliver programs at Boronia and Knox Ngarrgoo libraries. Over the funding period, a total of 33 events were delivered, attracting 575 attendees across the two locations.
- Funding from the Office for Social Cohesion (Department of Home Affairs) of $9,900 to Your Library delivered the Community Cohesion Program at Knox Library – Ngarrgoo between August 2025 and April 2026. The initiative strengthened community connection, cultural understanding, and social cohesion through inclusive programs that fostered belonging and democratic resilience. Engaging 98 participants, it expanded the library's reach to culturally and linguistically diverse communities while building staff capability in culturally responsive programming. Activities included Chinese-language Technology Support, Persian Storytime, Stories of Food, Indigenous art and storytelling workshops, Persian Calligraphy, and the Captured Moments Youth Photography Competition and Exhibition.

- Artwork for Bayswater Library - As part of the Bayswater Library redevelopment, commissioned artist Angharad Neal Williams transformed local children's drawings of "what Bayswater means to me" into six vibrant mural installations. Celebrating community identity and sense of place, the original drawings are also displayed in the library's children's area, creating a lasting connection between the community and the space. Images of the artwork appear on page 27 of the Annual Report.

Below is a snapshot of the Knox statistics for the 2024-2025 and 2025-2026 financial years[1][2]:

Location	Members		Visits		Checkouts		PC Sessions	
	2024-25	2025-26	2024-25	2025-26	2024-25	2025-26	2024-25	2025-26
Bayswater	13,550	15,478	*109,376	*96,584	74,490	75,158	9,740	8,206
Boronia	16,688	17,844	61,363	63,360	95,294	84,052	9,311	7,737
Ferntree Gully	14,739	16,000	56,466	64,039	65,787	75,369	5,356	5,969
Knox - Ngarrgoo	58,088	67,749	395,276	404,813	252,974	264,615	23,771	23,074
Miller's Homestead	164	227	**n/a	**n/a	6,252	6,362	399	172
Rowville	30,759	32,975	143,890	149,796	125,021	123,000	23,622	18,526
Total	133,988	150,273	766,371	778,592	619,818	628,556	72,199	63,684

Some libraries recorded a decline in PC sessions between 2024-25 and 2025-26. This may be associated with increased use of visitors bringing their own devices. BYO device usage is not currently measured, making it difficult to validate this assumption.

Comparatively, below is snapshot of the 2024-2025 regional statistics:

	Physical Checkouts	Physical Reservations	Library Visits	New Members
Knox Council	628,556	183,043	788,592	17,078
Maroondah Council	436,436	128,492	539,922	10,363
Yarra Ranges Council	426,170	150,860	425,904	9,476

Further statistics and analysis are available on Page 36 of the Annual Report.

2. ENGAGEMENT

Your Library have presented the 2025-26 Annual Report to the Your Library Board of Directors for feedback and comment.

3. SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Libraries deliver significant social benefits by offering safe, inclusive and accessible community spaces where people can connect, learn, and participate. They play an important role in reducing

[1] * Your Library staff have advised that door counter data from the former Bayswater Library site may not be fully reliable, which could have resulted in inaccuracies in the 2024/25 visitation figures.
[2] **Door counter not installed.

social isolation, particularly for vulnerable groups such as older adults, young people, newly arrived residents and those experiencing disadvantage.

Libraries offer free access to information, technology, educational resources, community programs, and social activities. They promote literacy, digital inclusion, lifelong learning, and community wellbeing as well as strengthening social cohesion by bringing together people from diverse backgrounds, fostering a sense of belonging, and creating opportunities for cultural exchange, and community engagement.

As trusted public institutions, libraries contribute to more resilient, connected and equitable communities by ensuring all residents have access to resources and opportunities that support personal growth and social inclusion

4. CLIMATE CHANGE CONSIDERATIONS

Implementation of the recommendation is considered to have no direct implications or has no direct impacts upon Council's Net Zero 2030 target, the Community Net Zero 2040, exposure to climate risks or climate change adaptation.

5. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

Your Library is committed to a Green Procurement approach by supporting the principles of sustainable procurement within the context of purchasing on a value for money basis.

Sustainability remained a priority in 2025-26, with a cross-functional Green Team established to embed sustainable practices across the organisation.

6. FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

The Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) website notes that Councils currently provide around 80% of the operational funding required to cover the daily running costs of libraries (including paying staff, facility related costs, purchasing new books and other resources, and providing internet access and computers for community use). The Victorian Government contributes approximately 20% of the costs through the Public Libraries Funding program.

Other public library funding programs include the Victorian State Government's Living Libraries Infrastructure Program which supports Council's to deliver new or renewed library infrastructure. Knox Council was the recipient of funding under this program which provided a contribution towards Bayswater Library Relocation and Open Access Project for $57,244 which was delivered in September 2025.

Knox Councils' contribution to Your Library for delivery of the library service was $4,643,394.40 for the 2025-26 Financial Year. In addition to the Library Contribution amount, Knox Council provides and maintains library facilities to host the library services.

A detailed Annual Financial Report from Your Library commences on page 45 of the Annual Report (see Attachment1).

7. RISKS

There are no major risks anticipated as a result of this report.

8. COUNCIL AND HEALTH AND WELLBEING PLAN 2025-2029

Enhancing community connection to vital services and resources

Strategy 1.2 - Our community can access diverse training and life-long learning opportunities through delivery, promotion and partnerships with relevant organisations.
Strategy 1.5 - Our community's health and wellbeing is improved through proactive planning, delivery, partnerships and advocacy that enable access to services, education and programs.

Embracing connection, inclusion and diversity

Strategy 2.2 - Cultural diversity is celebrated through assisting, participating in, facilitating and delivering accessible programs, initiatives and events in partnership with our community, community groups and service providers.
Strategy 2.4 - There are opportunities for social connection and active living through planning, provision of facilities, program delivery and support for local groups.

9. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The Officers contributing to and responsible for this report have no conflicts of interest requiring disclosure under Chapter 5 of the Governance Rules of Knox City Council.

10. STATEMENT OF COMPATIBILITY

There are no legislative obligations under the Human Rights Charter, Child Safe Standards or the Gender Equity Act that are incompatible with the recommendation in this report.

11. CONFIDENTIALITY

There is no content in this report that meets the definition of confidential information from the Local Government Act 2020.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Attachment 1 - Annual Report - Your Library - 2025-2026 - 2026-11-04 [**8.3.1** - 79 pages]

Knox City Council

Maroondah City Council

Yarra Ranges Council

Attachment 1



YOUR LIBRARY | ANNUAL REPORT 2025/2026

Acknowledgement

Your Library acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of Country throughout our Member Councils' municipalities and across Australia. We pay respect to their cultures, and Elders past, present, and emerging.

The Traditional Custodians of Country always have been, and always will be, an integral part of the region.

Cover image:
Pocket Stories, a series of three-dimensional mural installations by artist Angharad Neal-Williams, located at the entrance to Bayswater Library.

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Year in Review

JULY 2025

Launch of revised Technology Support Program

Offering greater digital literacy support through three monthly service offerings at each location – Tech Basics, Teach Me Tech and Troubleshoot Tech Hour.

AUGUST 2025

Launch of *Your Library, Leading Change 2025-2029*

Launch of our new Strategic Plan – *Your Library, Leading Change 2025-2029* - developed in consultation with the Board, Staff, Member Councils and community.

SEPTEMBER 2025

Opening of new Bayswater Library

Opening of new Bayswater Library – a short walk within the shopping centre but a big improvement in amenity and working conditions. The new library has more space, small study rooms, flexible community rooms, proper staff facilities and a toilet within the library.

OCTOBER 2025

Launch of the Community Directory for Boronia and The Basin

Official launch of the Community Directory for Boronia and The Basin produced with a Suburban Revitalisation grant and providing a comprehensive listing of local services and programs for residents.

NOVEMBER 2025

YL ranked number one in six categories – statewide benchmarking report

The annual statewide benchmarking report on public library activity revealed that Your Library was number one for library visits, total members, active borrowers, digital collection and storytime attendance.

DECEMBER 2025

Healesville Library – 50th anniversary

Community, staff and councillors came together to mark 50 years since the Healesville library first opened in unprepossessing premises.

JANUARY 2026



Secret World of Food – Boronia and Ferntree Gully

The Secret World of Food was installed at the Boronia Library for a week of School Holiday enjoyment as children learned about the lifecycle of food in a fun, interactive environment. The installation was later moved to the Ferntree Gully library in time for Knox Fest.

FEBRUARY 2026



Reader's Choice announced – Feb 14 Library Lovers Day

Our annual Reader's Choice survey revealed that Onyx Storm was the most popular book read by Your Library members in 2025. This is the first time a fantasy novel has won the award.

MARCH 2026



Love your Library in your Language

We received cards in 17 languages.

APRIL 2026



Fully accessible PC installed at Realm

Our first fully accessible PC was installed at Realm in consultation with the Community Capacity Building Team at La Trobe Community Health Service.

MAY 2026



Partnership with Corrections Victoria launched

Launched program to donate good quality withdrawn stock to Corrections Victoria for distribution to inmates and visiting families.

JUNE 2026



Temporary Mooroolbark Express launched

Mooroolbark Library closed for three months and Mooroolbark Express opened. Mooroolbark Library moved to temporary accommodation at the Mooroolbark Community Centre while a new roof, heating and cooling systems and structural improvements are implemented.

Message from the Chair

It is my privilege to present the 2025–2026 Annual Report as Chair of Your Library Limited.



I would like to begin by acknowledging the significant contribution of Cr Linda Hancock, who served as Chair throughout 2024–25 and into this financial year. Linda provided thoughtful leadership during a period of significant organisational change, including the appointment of our Chief Executive Officer and the commencement of a new strategic direction. On behalf of the Board, I sincerely thank Linda for her dedication to Your Library and to the communities we serve.

As I stepped into the role of Chair, I did so with confidence in an organisation that is well governed, financially responsible and strongly positioned for the future. The Board's role is to provide strategic oversight, ensure sound governance and support the long-term sustainability of the organisation. Throughout the year, these responsibilities remained at the centre of our decision-making.

This year marked the first year of implementing Your Library: Leading Change 2025–2029, establishing the foundations for the organisation's future. The Board worked closely with the Executive Leadership Team to ensure the Strategic Plan was supported by strong governance, effective performance reporting and responsible financial management. The introduction of an organisation-wide Operational Plan and strengthened performance reporting has improved the Board's ability to monitor progress, measure outcomes and make informed decisions.

The Board also continued its focus on governance maturity. During the year we reviewed and adopted a range of policies that strengthen accountability, risk management and decision-making, while continuing to build a governance framework that reflects best practice and supports the organisation as it continues to grow.

As community expectations continue to evolve, so too must public libraries. The Board remains committed to ensuring Your Library is well positioned to respond to future opportunities while remaining financially sustainable and responsive to the needs of our Member Councils and communities. This includes supporting innovation, maintaining strong partnerships and ensuring decisions are guided by evidence, good governance and long-term community benefit.

On behalf of the Board, I thank Dr Karina Lamb for her leadership during the first year of implementing the Strategic Plan. Karina and the Executive Leadership Team have demonstrated a clear commitment to organisational excellence, continuous improvement and collaborative leadership. I also extend my sincere thanks to every member of the Your Library team, whose professionalism and commitment underpin the organisation's ongoing success.

Finally, I acknowledge our Member Councils—Knox, Maroondah and Yarra Ranges—for their continued trust and partnership. The success of Your Library is built on a shared commitment to delivering high-quality public library services that create lasting value for our communities.

As we look ahead, the Board remains committed to ensuring Your Library continues to be a well-governed, innovative and sustainable organisation. Together, we will continue to strengthen the foundations established this year while supporting the organisation to embrace new opportunities and deliver meaningful outcomes for the communities we serve.

Thank you for your continued support of Your Library.

Cr Kylie Spears

Message from the CEO

There is a simple truth that continues to guide everything we do at Your Library: libraries change lives.



Every day, I see this reflected in the work we do: a child discovering the joy of reading, someone gaining confidence with new technology, a student preparing for their future, a family connecting with their community, or a person simply finding a safe and welcoming place to belong. These moments rarely appear in statistics, yet they are the truest measure of our success.

For many years, we have said that Your Library is more than books, and that remains true. Today, our libraries are places for learning, digital access, creativity, wellbeing and community connection. Yet, in an age of artificial intelligence (AI), misinformation and rapid technological change, this year has reinforced something equally important: books and literacy have never been more vital.

Literacy is about far more than the ability to read. It is the foundation for lifelong learning, digital capability, research skills, critical thinking, and informed decision-making. It empowers people to evaluate information, participate confidently in democracy, embrace emerging technologies, and engage meaningfully in society. These capabilities remain at the very heart of the public library purpose.

The trust our communities place in Your Library is reflected in another year of strong growth. Membership reached almost 393,000 people, borrowing increased by 8.9 per cent, and more than 156,000 people participated in 8,607 programs and events across our network. As many continue to experience cost-of-living pressures, our libraries remain places where everyone can access trusted information, technology, learning opportunities and welcoming community spaces free of charge.

This year also marked the first year of our Strategic Plan, Your Library: Leading Change 2025–2029. Throughout the year we focused on turning that vision into action by aligning our people, planning and resources, introducing organisation-wide operational planning and performance reporting, and progressing our five strategic directions.

As technology continues to reshape society, Your Library strengthened its leadership in digital literacy and the responsible adoption of AI through the introduction of our AI Principles and AI Policy, investment in staff capability, and contributions to state and national conversations on AI, ethics and leadership. We also expanded partnerships, strengthened sustainability initiatives, improved accessibility through new technologies, and continued to evolve our collections, services and spaces to meet changing community needs.

Of everything we have achieved this year, I am most proud of the passion, expertise and generosity of the people who make Your Library what it is: our staff. Every day they inspire curiosity, create welcoming spaces, support lifelong learning, embrace innovation and help people navigate change with confidence and compassion. Their commitment to service is the foundation of our success.

I extend my sincere thanks to our Board of Directors for their leadership and governance, our Member Councils for their ongoing partnership and support, our volunteers, and the many organisations that work alongside us to strengthen our communities.

As I reflect on the past year, I remain optimistic about the future of public libraries. In a world of constant change, they remain trusted places where knowledge is shared, opportunities are created, communities are strengthened and everyone has the opportunity to learn, participate and thrive.

I am incredibly proud of what we have achieved together during the first year of our Strategic Plan, and I look forward with confidence to the opportunities ahead as we continue to lead change for our communities and for the future of public libraries.

Dr. Karina Lamb

Governance

About Your Library

Your Library is more than a place for books.

We are a platform for community connection, learning, creativity and opportunity. Every day, our libraries connect people with knowledge, technology, culture and one another, creating welcoming spaces where everyone can belong, participate and thrive.

Across our library branches and through outreach services, we continue to see strong community engagement, with increasing visitation, borrowing and participation in programs. Our communities rely on us for much more than access to collections—they turn to Your Library for digital access, lifelong learning, employment support, creative experiences, health and wellbeing initiatives, and opportunities to connect with others.

As technology continues to reshape our world, Your Library is leading the public library sector in digital literacy, responsible artificial intelligence (AI) and ethical innovation. We are building the confidence and capability of our communities to navigate an increasingly digital future, while ensuring emerging technologies are implemented responsibly, transparently and in ways that strengthen human connection.

Through sector leadership, staff capability and community education, we are helping shape the future role of public libraries in the digital age.

Our library spaces continue to evolve to meet changing community needs—supporting quiet study, collaboration, creative practice, local celebrations and inclusive programs for people of all ages and abilities. At the same time, we remain committed to reducing barriers to participation by providing free access to technology, digital resources and learning opportunities that promote equity and inclusion.

Guided by our Strategic Plan, we are building a future-ready library service founded on innovation, sustainability, strong governance and meaningful partnerships. Together with our Member Councils and collaborators across education, health, technology, business and the arts, we are delivering services that respond to today's challenges while preparing our communities for tomorrow's opportunities.

As our communities continue to change, so too does Your Library—leading with purpose, embracing innovation and ensuring our libraries remain essential places of knowledge, connection and opportunity for generations to come.

Our vision

Literacy and access for all – no one left behind!

Our mission

To provide something indispensable or enriching every day – for free – to everyone in the community.

Our partners

Your Library realises its vision and mission by working alongside our Member Councils, all levels of government, businesses, educators, charities, and other not-for-profit organisations. These partnerships are built on a shared commitment to stronger, more connected communities.

Together, we extend reach, amplify impact, and create meaningful engagement across diverse populations — ensuring our collective efforts deliver lasting benefits for the people we serve.

GOVERNANCE

Our values

Our plans, decisions, and actions are grounded in the values that guide everything we do:

Fairness and Equity – We work to ensure fairness and equity for all, promoting equal access and opportunity.

Social Responsibility – We actively contribute to our community, embracing both corporate and social responsibility.

Diversity and Inclusion – We respect and celebrate the diversity of our communities, with acceptance and inclusion at the heart of our work.

Sustainability – We embed the four pillars of sustainability into every aspect of our operations.

Agility and Innovation – We respond swiftly to changing community needs and create opportunities for innovation through our services, spaces, and collections.

Child Safe Organisation

Your Library is committed to providing a safe, welcoming and inclusive environment for every child and young person who visits our libraries. As a Child Safe Organisation, we maintain a comprehensive framework of policies, procedures and practices aligned with the Victorian Child Safe Standards, supported by a team of five dedicated Child Safety Officers.

Child safety is embedded across the organisation and is recognised as the responsibility of every employee. All staff complete mandatory annual Child Safe training through the Litmos learning platform, ensuring knowledge remains current and consistent. Throughout the year, Child Safety Officers also provide practical guidance through short video updates on the Intranet, addressing common scenarios and reinforcing best practice in creating safe, respectful and child-focused library environments where children's voices are heard.

GOVERNANCE

Our Region

As a not-for-profit and registered charity, Your Library is a co-operative venture of three outer eastern metropolitan councils – Knox, Maroondah and Yarra Ranges – focused on promoting literacy, learning, digital inclusion, and community wellbeing, underpinned by strong local partnerships and a commitment to equity and innovation.

Three municipalities span a large area of outer metropolitan Melbourne, serving a combined population of over 440,000 people across diverse and vibrant communities, on the traditional land of the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung and Bunurong people of the Kulin Nation.

Your Library Limited is a not-for-profit company limited by guarantee and is registered as a charity with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission.

MUNICIPALITY	ESTIMATED RESIDENT POPULATION	AREA (KM2)
Knox	163,820	114
Maroondah	120,257	61
Yarra Ranges	160,906	2,468
Total	**444,983**	**2,643**



GOVERNANCE

Statutory compliance

This section provides details of Your Library compliance with its statutory and fiduciary requirements and responsibilities. Commentary is provided with traffic lights to show compliance and risks.

COMPLIANCE		RISK	
TRAFFIC LIGHT	DEFINITION	TRAFFIC LIGHT	DEFINITION
🟢	Complies	🟢	Low risk rating
🟡	The issue has an unresolved matter but action is being taken to resolve this	🟡	Medium risk rating
🔴	Issue requires remedial action	🔴	High risk rating

LEGISLATION	STATUS	COMPLIANCE	RISK
Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)	Your Library did not receive any privacy requests for the year.	🟢	🟢
Gender Equality Act 2022 (Vic)* * This Act does not apply to YLL.	Your Library will still pursue the objectives of the Act, although we do not have to report formally on our outcomes to the Victorian Government. We will report on our actions and outcomes on gender equality through our quarterly reports and annual report to the Board.	🟢	🟢
Health Records Act 2001 (Vic)	Your Library did not receive any health records requests for the year.	🟢	🟢
Protected Disclosure Act 2012	Your Library has not received any disclosures directly nor has it received any referrals from the Ombudsman or the Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission for the year.	🟢	🟢
Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005	Your Library has not had to respond to, or report, any allegations of child abuse in the year.	🟢	🟢
Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006	No complaints received in the year.	🟢	🟢
Workplace Injury Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2013	One WorkCover claim received in the year.	🟢	🟢
Equal Opportunity Act 2010	No complaints received in the year.	🟢	🟢
ACNC Act 2012	Company registered as a charity. ACNC report is due yearly on 31 December.	🟢	🟢
Corporations Act 2001	Company registered and Directors appointed. Accounts are due yearly on 30 June.	🟢	🟢
Audit Act 1994 (Vic)	Working with HLB Mann Judd and VAGO Auditor (RSM).	🟢	🟢

GOVERNANCE

Your Library Board

The Your Library Limited Board consists of two councillors from each of the member councils, appointed as directors of the company.

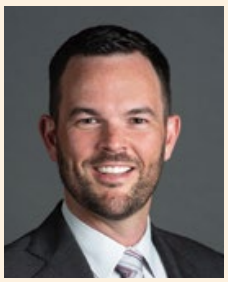
The role of the directors is to provide leadership for the good governance of the company. In a rapidly changing environment, the Your Library Limited Board is flexible and responsive to meet current needs and to prepare our company to face future challenges.

The responsibilities of the Your Library Limited Board include:

- **Policy development:** Establishing policies that govern the library's operations, including usage policies, collection development and community engagement.
- **Budget oversight:** Overseeing the library's budget and ensuring financial stability, including approving budgets, monitoring expenditures and sometimes participating in fundraising activities.
- **Strategic planning:** Setting long-term goals and strategies for the library to ensure it meets the evolving needs of the community, including assessing community needs, technology trends and library services.
- **Advocacy and public relations:** Acting as advocates for the library in the community and with government, including raising the library's profile, securing funding and building partnerships with other organisations.
- **Evaluation and accountability:** Assessing the performance of the library and ensuring that the library meets legal requirements, like those in the *Corporations Act 2001*, and other standards.
- **Appointment and evaluation of the Library CEO:** Hiring and evaluating the performance of the CEO, who is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the library services.
- **Compliance with legal and ethical standards:** Ensuring that the library operates in compliance with relevant laws, regulations and ethical guidelines.



Cr Kylie Spears (Chair)
Maroondah City Council



Cr Glen Atwell (Deputy Chair)
Knox City Council
(Board member from Nov 2025)



Cr Jim Child
Yarra Ranges Council



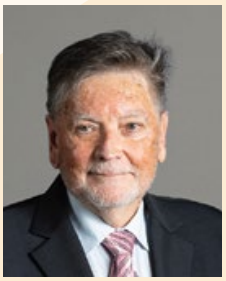
Cr Linda Hancock
Maroondah City Council



Cr Paige Kennett
Knox City Council
(Board member from Feb 2026)



Cr Mitch Mazzarella
Yarra Ranges Council



Cr Peter Lockwood
Knox City Council
(Board member until Feb 2026)



Cr Meagan Baker
Knox City Council
(Board member until Nov 2025)

GOVERNANCE

Board meetings

The Board met seven times during 2025–26 and, with the support of the Executive Leadership Team, met all statutory deadlines. Board meetings are also attended by Council Directors and Managers responsible for library portfolios from each member Council.

COUNCIL	COUNCILLOR	NUMBER OF MEETINGS	NUMBER OF MEETINGS ATTENDED
Knox	Cr Baker	4	2
	Cr Lockwood	5	4
	Cr Atwell	3	3
	Cr Kennett	2	2
Maroondah	Cr Hancock	7	7
	Cr Spears	7	7
Yarra Ranges	Cr Child	7	6
	Cr Mazzarella	7	7

Board achievements

The Board has achieved the following:

MEASURE	ACHIEVEMENTS
Board Meetings	July 2025 (Special Board Meeting), September 2025, November 2025, November 2025 (Special Board Meeting), December 2025, February 2026, April 2026
Reports	Adopted/reviewed: Annual Financial Report 2024–25, Annual Report 2024–25, Budget 2026–27
Policies and strategies	Reviewed and endorsed the following policies: Your Library Strategic Plan – Your Library, Leading Change: 2025–2029, Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy, Your Library Delegations, Membership, Access and Use, Extended Hours Access, Crisis Management Plan - Communications Plan, Information Collection Statement, Information Privacy
Board actions	Adopted the Your Library Ethical Decision-Making Framework. Held the organisation's Annual General Meeting (AGM). Appointment of the Your Library Ltd Board Chair & Deputy Chair. Audit Risk Advisory Committee (ARAC) and ARAC Chair. Appointment of CEO Employment and Remuneration Advisory Committee. Annual CEO performance appraisal completed in accordance with the CEO Employment Remuneration Policy. Board planner/calendar adopted.

GOVERNANCE

Your Library: Leading Change: 2025–2029

OUR FIVE KEY DIRECTIONS

1 Leaders in libraries	Positioning the library as a forward-thinking, innovative service that leads in its diverse collection and keeps up with community needs and continually changing technology.	Your Library is recognised as a leader in library services, offering creative, efficient and responsive solutions. All supported by diverse physical and digital collections that meet the community's evolving needs. We will continue to build strong partnerships for success.	
2 Take action on climate	Responding directly to environmental challenges and supporting our communities to build climate resilience and preparedness.	The Library plays an active role in climate action and community resilience, with environmentally responsible practices and safe, supportive spaces during times of disruption and climate stress.	
3 Partnerships and collaborations	Building strong, respectful relationships and collaborative partnerships to strengthen benefits across our community.	Strategic partnerships will enrich our programs, collections, spaces and memberships, deepen community impact and strengthen long-term sustainability.	
4 Build digital literacy	Helping the community build digital skills and adapt to new technologies.	People of all ages and backgrounds have the digital access, skills, and confidence to fully participate in a connected world supported by trusted library resources and programs.	
5 Champion diversity and inclusion	Creating safe, welcoming libraries where all people feel included, represented, and supported.	Your Library will be a welcoming, inclusive space for all. Programs will reflect community diversity and be accessible. Underrepresented groups will feel a sense of belonging. Staff will be diverse and confident in creating culturally safe spaces, with truth-telling at the core of our work.	

ENABLERS AND CONTRIBUTORS. OUR BUILDING BLOCKS

 Exceptional people

 Thriving business model

 Partnering for impact

 Excellence in brand

GOVERNANCE

Sustainable Development Goals

The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are at the core of the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. They are an urgent call for action to end poverty, improve health and education, reduce inequality, and foster economic growth. They also highlight the importance of addressing climate change and protecting the environment.

Your Library uses the SDGs to guide the planning of our services, programs, collections, collaborations, and partnerships. We address each goal directly and practically through our actions and also provide our users with the information and resources they need to act themselves.



Implementation of the Strategic Plan

The 2025/26 financial year marked the first year of delivering *Your Library, Leading Change 2025–2029,* establishing a strong foundation for the organisation's future. Throughout the year, strategic priorities were embedded across the organisation, guiding investment, decision-making and service delivery while continuing to deliver outstanding library services to the community. The introduction of integrated planning connected the Strategic Plan with the Operational Plan, Branch Action Plans and employee performance plans, ensuring that every team contributed to the delivery of the organisation's long-term vision.

Strong progress was achieved across all five Strategic Directions, with initiatives focused on leadership, sustainability, partnerships, digital literacy, diversity and inclusion. Significant achievements included the introduction of the Litmos Learning Management System, adoption of Your Library's Artificial Intelligence Principles and Policy, completion of the Workforce Plan and Customer Experience Strategy, expansion of technology learning programs, implementation of sustainability initiatives, and strengthened partnerships with education providers, community organisations and Member Councils. These projects were delivered while branches continued to provide high-quality customer service, innovative programs and growing digital services across the region.

Year One also demonstrated the organisation's ability to balance strategic transformation with operational excellence. Community engagement continued to grow, with increased use of digital services, expanded technology programs, stronger community partnerships and continued investment in inclusive and accessible library services. The achievements of the first year provide a strong platform for Year Two, where the focus will shift from establishing new initiatives to embedding them across the organisation and delivering measurable outcomes for the communities Your Library serves.

GOVERNANCE

1	LEADERS IN LIBRARIES	/ #1 in PLV benchmarking survey
2	TAKE ACTION ON CLIMATE	/ Libraries as havens during extreme heat – January 2026 / James Bennett Sustainability project re-launched to recycle withdrawn library books
3	PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATIONS	/ Libraries After Dark 2.0 / Community Cohesion program
4	BUILD DIGITAL LITERACY	/ Greater reach through revamped Technology Support program / AI Principles and Policy adopted and staff training launched
5	CHAMPION DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION	/ First fully accessible PC installed





Your Library has strengthened its position as a leading public library service in Victoria and a recognised contributor at a national level. This is reflected in strong performance outcomes, with Your Library achieving #1 ranking across key Public Libraries Victoria (PLV) measures, including:

/ Library visits
/ Total membership
/ Active borrowers
/ Digital collections, and
/ Storytime attendance

These results demonstrate both the efficiencies, scale and effectiveness of service delivery and the Your Library model.



Strategic Planning and Improvement

During 2025/26, Your Library significantly strengthened its organisational planning framework following the adoption of Your Library, Leading Change 2025-2029. For the first time, a whole-of-organisation Operational Plan was implemented, creating a clear line of sight from the Strategic Plan through to Branch Plans and Individual Performance Plans for every employee.

The organisation also introduced strategic performance dashboards to support informed decision-making by the Executive and Board, while delivering key initiatives including a Workforce Plan, Customer Experience (CX) Strategy, and Ways of Working framework. Together, these initiatives have strengthened organisational capability, consistency, and long-term planning.

Advocacy

Your Library Limited continues to play a leadership role in strengthening public libraries through sector collaboration, governance, advocacy, and innovation at both the state and national levels.

Leadership in ALIA

In 2025/26, our CEO served as an Institutional Board Director for the Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA), Australia's peak body for the library and information profession. The CEO also chaired ALIA's Finance Committee and served as Board Liaison to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Expert Group, contributing to national governance, financial oversight, and advocacy while ensuring Your Library remains connected to emerging priorities and best practice across the sector.

Public Libraries Victoria

Your Library continued to actively contribute to Public Libraries Victoria (PLV) through CEO, Executive and staff participation in state-wide working groups, advocacy initiatives, and collaborative projects.

Collaboration and Professional Leadership

Our employees continued to contribute to sector-wide Special Interest Groups, professional networks, and collaborative initiatives, sharing expertise in areas including digital services, community engagement, collections, technology, and customer experience. These partnerships support continuous improvement and help deliver innovative, responsive library services.





Advocacy

Your Library continued to advocate for strong, sustainable public libraries through active engagement with government, industry partners, and key stakeholders. On 17 March 2026, our Executive participated in Public Libraries Victoria's advocacy program at Parliament House, meeting face to face with local representatives to promote the value and impact of public libraries. This was supported by letters to Ministers and ongoing sector advocacy, including the release of a media statement on 11 May 2026 highlighting the need for greater State Government investment in public libraries following the 2026/27 Victorian State Budget.

Take Action on Climate

Sustainability remained a key focus throughout 2025/26, with initiatives that strengthened environmental responsibility while supporting resilient communities.



During the year, Your Library established a cross-functional Green Team, with representatives from every branch working together to embed sustainable practices across the organisation through a coordinated action plan.

New partnerships also expanded opportunities to reduce waste and extend the life of library resources. Through the James Bennett Sustainability Project, weeded collection materials are now being recycled, while a new partnership with Corrections Victoria will enable suitable withdrawn library materials to be repurposed for prison libraries, supporting learning opportunities while reducing waste.



Your Library also continued to play an important role in community resilience during periods of extreme weather. Throughout the January heatwave and fire conditions, library branches provided safe, climate-controlled spaces offering access to power, Wi-Fi, information and support for people affected by the conditions. The Senior Leadership Team further strengthened organisational preparedness through participation in emergency management planning with Member Councils and Disaster Relief Australia, reinforcing Your Library's role as essential community infrastructure during times of crisis.

Building Digital Literacy: Artificial Intelligence (AI), Ethics and Leadership



Your Library continued to demonstrate sector leadership in the responsible adoption of artificial intelligence (AI), recognising its growing impact on libraries, the workforce and the communities we serve.

This work led to the delivery of an AI workshop for the Leadership Team and the development of Your Library's first AI Principles and AI Policy, adopted by the Board. Beyond the organisation, Your Library helped lead national conversations on AI through the nationally delivered Raeco webinar, AI, Ethics and Leadership in Libraries, sharing practical and ethical approaches to AI integration across the library sector.

As AI continues to reshape the way people work, learn and access information, Your Library is positioning both the organisation and its employees to support the community through ongoing changes in digital literacy, workforce capability and lifelong learning. These initiatives ensure our staff are equipped to help people confidently navigate emerging technologies while maintaining a responsible, ethical and community-focused approach to AI.

A focus on online safety for Community

Your Library has continued to support community awareness and capability in online safety, delivering targeted programs focused on scam awareness and safe digital practices. A total of 23 Technology sessions on Scam Safety were delivered across Bayswater, Boronia, Croydon, Ferntree Gully, Healesville, Knox and Realm libraries.

In addition, eight online scam education sessions were delivered in partnership with Be Connected, extending reach and accessibility for community members. These programs play an important role in equipping individuals with the knowledge and confidence to navigate online environments safely, particularly in response to increasing risks associated with digital engagement.

Connecting with our community

Your Library continues to demonstrate strong responsiveness to community needs, with high levels of participation and engagement across programs and services.



A strong program of events and public programming has continued to drive community engagement and reinforce libraries as vibrant, inclusive spaces.

Over 8,600 programs were delivered between July 2025 and June 2026, attracting more than 156,000 attendees, reinforcing the role of libraries as active and inclusive community spaces. Major initiatives such as Libraries After Dark, the Dandenong Ranges Literary Festival, and Children's and Science Week programming have enhanced the organisation's cultural and community impact.

Other key initiatives included the delivery of Reader's Choice 2025, which attracted over 400 participant votes and strong engagement, alongside Library Lovers Day activations across branches.

The Big Summer Read expanded to a national program, with strong local participation supported by partnerships with local businesses and prize contributions. This initiative reinforced the importance of reading engagement during school holidays and strengthened Your Library's role in supporting literacy outcomes.

The Summer School Holiday Programs delivered 90 activities covering a diverse range, including partnerships with organisations such as CFA and VicHealth. Highlights included:

- *The Secret World of Food* interactive exhibition at Healesville, Ferntree Gully and Boronia
- NGV Kids on Tour at Croydon Library and Miller's Homestead
- New Lunchbox ideas with Eary Prevention and Population Health Council Teams at Ferntree Gully and Realm
- Poolside Storytime with Yarra Centre in Yarra Junction

These programs and the public response demonstrate a continued shift toward interactive, experiential and partnership-based programming.

CONNECTING WITH OUR COMMUNITY



The celebration of Healesville Library's 50-year milestone during this period highlighted the enduring role of libraries as trusted community spaces. The anniversary event held in December 2026, brought together families, long-term residents, former staff and community partners, reinforcing the deep connection between the library and its community and recognising the contribution of staff and volunteers over generations.

This milestone reflects both the strength of local relationships and the organisation's ongoing commitment to providing inclusive, accessible and forward-looking library services.

The reopening of Bayswater Library in a new, purpose-built facility has further strengthened accessibility, flexibility and the ability to deliver contemporary library services.

Continued strong usage across all services, with an increase in library visits across all Council areas, reflects sustained community demand and quality in our services.



Boronia, The Basin and Surrounds Community Directory

The launch of the Boronia, The Basin and Surrounds Community Directory in October 2025 represents a significant initiative in strengthening community connection and improving access to local services. Developed in house with support from the Victorian Government's Suburban Revitalisation Program, the directory provides a free, easy-to-use guide to local services, programs and facilities, with a focus on helping residents understand what support is available, particularly during times of need.

By highlighting low-cost and accessible opportunities within the community, the initiative supports social inclusion, reduces barriers to access and reinforces the role of the library as a trusted connector between community members and essential services.

CONNECTING WITH OUR COMMUNITY

Celebrations and Events







Knox Fest

Ferntree Gully Library delivered a vibrant program as part of the Knox Festival in March. The Secret World of Food provided inspiration for a Fruit and Vegetable theme that engaged families across multiple spaces.

The newly renovated deck hosted two high-energy performances by Paul Jamieson – The Music Man, creating a lively, inclusive atmosphere and connecting the library to the rest of the festival outside.

Inside, the Secret World of Food installation—delivered in partnership with VicHealth and Knox City Council's health promotion team—provided an interactive learning experience on the food lifecycle, from farm to plate and finally to composting. More than 1,100 children and parents participated during the festival and the following week, highlighting strong community interest in hands-on, educational programming.

Additional activities included craft and creative play, interactive displays, and a voting system for the most popular fruit or vegetable (equal first place to carrots and watermelon). The Very Hungry Caterpillar provided a literary refence for displays, colouring activity as well as another story about what can happen to all that fruit and veg.

The Ferntree Gully staff were happy to return to library duties at the end of their week playing farmer, after delivering a highly attended and successful community event.

Harmony Day Mooroolbark

During Harmony Week, Mooroolbark Library, in partnership with Yarra Ranges Council, delivered a series of inclusive community events that celebrated cultural diversity and strengthened local connections.

On 17 March (Harmony Day), the library hosted members of the local Burmese community for a children's event at Hookey Park. The program brought together families and local services in a welcoming outdoor setting, fostering connection, play, and shared cultural experiences. Storytime featured multilingual storytelling in English and Hakha Chin, alongside songs delivered in Tagalog and other community languages. Participants were also encouraged to share greetings from their home languages, supporting cultural exchange and a sense of belonging.

This collaborative program was enriched by contributions from local partners, including Mooroolbark Early Childhood Education Centre and Yarra Ranges Council Supported Playgroups, highlighting the value of cross-sector engagement in delivering inclusive early years programming.

Harmony Day is all about inclusion and belonging, and there's no better way to celebrate than through stories and community.

CONNECTING WITH OUR COMMUNITY

Celebrations and Events



International Day of People with a Disability

Your Library was pleased to participate in Yarra Ranges Council's International Day of People with a Disability event, with staff members Mykaela and Katie representing the organisation.

On 2 December, Your Library supported the Council in launching its Disability Action Plan 2025–2029 at a community expo held at the Council Offices. The event provided a valuable opportunity to engage directly with community members and Council staff, while promoting the library's accessible services and resources.

Members of the Technical Support team showcased a range of inclusive offerings, including Reader Pens—adaptive technology available for loan—and demonstrated the customisable accessibility features incorporated into many standard library programs. The Dementia Resource Collection was also promoted, generating strong interest from attendees.

Community engagement was high, with particular interest in the Reader Pens, many attendees expressing surprise that such technologies are available for borrowing through the library. The Dementia Resource Collection also attracted significant attention, with all promotional materials distributed by the conclusion of the event.

The expo provided a meaningful platform to strengthen partnerships with Council staff, who engaged in discussions about the library's services and explored opportunities for future collaboration. Overall, participation in this initiative was both rewarding and impactful, reinforcing Your Library's commitment to accessibility, inclusion, and community connection.

CONNECTING WITH OUR COMMUNITY

Connecting with Adults







Libraries After Dark 2.0

In 2025, Libraries After Dark 2.0 introduced small grants for libraries in areas with high gambling losses to deliver free evening programs within existing opening hours.

Your Library successfully secured funding to deliver programs at Boronia and Knox Ngarrgoo libraries. Grants could be used for all aspects of program delivery except staffing.

Boronia focused on weekly, low-cost activities supervised by rostered staff, while Knox Ngarrgoo engaged external presenters requiring minimal staff involvement. Program design was informed by consultation with participants in the Living Our Best Life programs at Boronia and Westfield Knox, ensuring activities were relevant and appealing for evening participation.

Initial sessions were scheduled in the lead-up to Christmas—a traditionally quieter period for library programming, but one that can heighten feelings of loneliness. Early attendance was modest, with four participants at the first Boronia session and three attending the first monthly chair yoga class in December. By the next chair yoga session in January, attendance had grown significantly, with 18 participants arriving, and attendance remained steady through to the program's conclusion in April.

Over the funding period, a total of 33 events were delivered, attracting 575 attendees across the two locations.

Women in History

Women in History Month, celebrated each March, highlights the lives and achievements of remarkable Australian women whose contributions have shaped our nation. These presentations help preserve and share stories that may otherwise be overlooked, ensuring their legacies continue to inspire future generations.

Over recent years, the series has explored the lives and achievements of Elizabeth Gould, acclaimed bird artist and collaborator of John Gould; Elizabeth Austin, philanthropist and founder of Austin Hospital; Edith Cowan, pioneering suffragist, politician and advocate for education, children and women's rights; Edith Dickenson, journalist and Australia's first female war correspondent; and Dame Nellie Melba, internationally renowned opera singer.

In 2025, the series expanded to include Edna Walling, one of Australia's most influential landscape designers. A long-time resident of Mooroolbark, Walling forged a successful career in gardening and landscape design at a time when the profession was largely considered unsuitable for women. Through her innovative garden designs, community-building efforts, and advocacy for the use of native plants, she helped shape Australia's gardening culture. Her books and magazine columns inspired generations of Australians to create harmonious and sustainable landscapes, leaving a lasting legacy across the country.

Future talks on Madame Brusels and Margaret Tucker are being developed.

CONNECTING WITH OUR COMMUNITY

Community Cohesion Program



Knox Library – Ngarrgoo

With funding of $9,900 from the Office for Social Cohesion, Department of Home Affairs, Your Library delivered the Community Cohesion Program at Knox Library – Ngarrgoo between August 2025 and April 2026. The initiative strengthened community connection, cultural understanding and social cohesion through a diverse program of inclusive activities designed to foster belonging and democratic resilience.

The program engaged 98 participants, extending the library's reach to culturally and linguistically diverse communities, including people from non-English speaking backgrounds. It also enhanced staff capability in designing and delivering culturally responsive programs, creating a strong foundation for future community-building initiatives.

Programs included:

- Chinese-language Technology Support
- Persian Storytime
- Stories of Food exploring cultural traditions from India, Japan, Malaysia and Iran
- Indigenous art and storytelling workshops during the School Holiday Program
- Persian Calligraphy
- Captured Moments Youth Photography Competition and Exhibition, delivered in partnership with the Knox Youth Team

The program introduced many participants to library services for the first time, while providing opportunities for others to engage with new cultures, languages and experiences.

Feedback highlighted the impact of the initiative, with many participants commenting, *"I've never done anything like this before"* and *"This was completely new for me."*

As trusted community hubs, libraries play an important role in creating welcoming spaces where people can connect, learn and build relationships. The Community Cohesion Program strengthened participants' sense of belonging while celebrating the diversity that enriches our local communities.

"We are going to live in Australia for the rest of our life. We must settle down by continuing to learn, so that we can communicate with local people and live well in Australia."

– Chinese Language Technology Support participantCommunity Cohesion Program

CONNECTING WITH OUR COMMUNITY

Connecting with Children, Young People and Families





Big Summer Read

The Big Summer Read reached a significant milestone in 2025–26, expanding from a Victorian initiative coordinated by Public Libraries Victoria to a national reading program involving libraries across Australia. The program provided children with a range of opportunities to maintain reading engagement over the summer school holidays through shared reading logs, major prize draws and nationally branded promotional materials.

Participants registered through the ReadBooks platform, where they recorded their reading progress online, earned virtual badges and contributed book reviews. Children could also participate using paper reading journals submitted through their local library, ensuring the program remained accessible to all members of the community.

Your Library's Children's Services team enhanced local participation through the support of community partners, securing a range of prizes donated by local businesses. In addition, one Your Library member received a state-wide prize donated by Zoos Victoria.

Although changes to the program's participation reporting methodology make direct comparison with previous years difficult, community engagement remained strong. A total of 858 children from across Your Library participated in the program, collectively reading 11,792 books over the summer period.

Staff observed a high level of enthusiasm and engagement throughout the program. Children actively shared their reviews, tracked their reading achievements and demonstrated a strong commitment to reading for pleasure. Libraries reported increased participation through paper journals and a noticeable sense of excitement within branches, highlighting the program's success in encouraging literacy, fostering reading habits and strengthening community connection.

The Big Summer Read continues to be a valuable initiative in supporting children's literacy development, helping young readers maintain and build their reading skills during the school holiday period while promoting a lifelong love of reading.

CONNECTING WITH OUR COMMUNITY

Connecting with Children, Young People and Families







Artworks for Bayswater Library

As part of the Bayswater Library redevelopment, a series of community-inspired artworks were commissioned by Knox City Council, creating a welcoming and engaging entrance to the new library space. Artist Angharad Neal-Williams, transformed drawings created by local children into six vibrant three-dimensional mural installations.

The artworks were inspired by a school holiday activity in which children were invited to draw what "Bayswater means to me". Neal-Williams reinterpreted these designs using a colour palette that complements the library's interior, creating a collection of visual "pocket stories" that celebrate the local community and sense of place.

The six installations include Mountains & Flowers, Bird & Worm, Clouds, Library Bag, Book Stack & Flowers, and Caterpillar on a Leaf, each positioned throughout the library entrance and foyer areas to inspire curiosity and welcome visitors.

In recognition of the young artists' contributions, the 19 original drawings are also displayed within the children's area of the library, providing a lasting connection between the community and the space. Together, these artworks reflect the creativity, identity and stories of Bayswater, reinforcing the library's role as a vibrant community hub.

CONNECTING WITH OUR COMMUNITY

Connecting with Children, Young People and Families







Children's Book Week is a wonderful opportunity to celebrate storytelling, whether through sharing and promoting the new books selected for an award, or re-visiting old favourites and indulging in some cosplay to mark the occasion. The engagement of the children and families who participated—whether by attending Storytime, dressing up, or simply visiting the library is central to the success of these celebrations. We also acknowledge the dedication of our library staff, whose enthusiasm and creativity brought stories to life and ensured a memorable experience for all.

Book Week Fun!

August marked Children's Book Week, with the Children's Team once again demonstrating exceptional creativity through their costumes and programming. The entire Realm team dressed as characters from The Wizard of Oz when Cr Kylie Spears visited for her storytime session.

Throughout the week, teams delivered a diverse range of activities, including Storytimes, craft sessions, and outreach visits to community services. These initiatives provided meaningful opportunities to share the joy of reading and celebrate the enduring power of books within the community. This year was particularly significant, marking the 80th anniversary of Children's Book Week.

We were joined by a number of other Councillors to deliver storytimes across the week:

- Cr Glen Atwell at Rowville
- Cr Linda Hancock at Croydon
- Cr Peter McIlwain at Belgrave
- Cr Rober Williams at Knox-Ngarrgoo
- And our CEO as Pig the Rebel at Mooroolbark

Storytimes in German, Italian, Persian and Singhalese

In addition to the longstanding Chinese-language Storytimes delivered fortnightly at Knox Library-Ngarrgoo, Rowville and Realm, Your Library has expanded its multilingual early literacy offerings to better reflect the diversity of our communities. Through the dedication of volunteers, the support of bilingual staff and local branch initiatives, Storytimes are now also offered in German, Italian, Persian and Sinhalese.

While demand for Storytimes in community languages often exceeds available scheduling and budget capacity, staff and volunteer enthusiasm has enabled the introduction of these additional programs alongside 46 weekly English-language Storytimes delivered across 14 library locations.

The expanded multilingual program attracts approximately 100 additional families to our libraries each month, strengthening community connections, supporting early literacy and celebrating the rich cultural diversity of the municipalities we serve.

Communications

Effective communication across all design and delivery channels remains essential in connecting with our diverse library community. By using both print and digital marketing, we engage people of all ages, ensuring everyone can connect in the way that best suits them.

Communication Channels

Social media performance demonstrates strong growth and high levels of engagement across all channels:

- Facebook continues to provide broad reach, with over 1.2M views and more than 848,000 people reached, supported by consistent posting and an engagement rate of 5.92%.
- Instagram has shown particularly strong growth, with a 43% increase in followers and over 1.8M views. This period also saw the organisation's first "viral" reel, significantly increasing reach, shares and engagement, and strengthening brand visibility. To date, this reel has been viewed over 519,000 times with over 24,000 reactions.
- TikTok continues to grow as an emerging platform, with over 226,000 views and increasing engagement, supporting connection with new and younger audiences.
- LinkedIn engagement has also increased, supporting professional visibility and sector positioning, with a 23% growth in followers in the period.

Across all platforms, content has achieved strong engagement rates, with high levels of interaction, sharing and audience participation. The continued growth in digital engagement, combined with increased media interest, positions the organisation strongly for future advocacy, partnerships and community connection.

Social Media Channels

SOCIAL PLATFORM	FOLLOWERS 25/26	FOLLOWERS 24/25
Facebook	11,922 (+4.4%)	11,418
Instagram	5,223 (+42.6%)	3,663
Tiktok	1,820 (+23%)	1,479
LinkedIn	688 (+23.96%)	555

COMMUNICATIONS

eNewsletter Performance

NEWSLETTER TYPE	SUBSCRIBERS 25/26	SUBSCRIBERS 24/25	OPEN RATE AVERAGE 25/26	OPEN RATE AVERAGE - 24/25	CLICK THROUGH AVERAGE - 25/26	CLICK THROUGH AVERAGE - 24/25
Monthly – all members	150,727 **(+4.23%)**	144,480	23.38% **(+5.4%)**	17.93%	7.4% **(+1.6%)**	5.8%
Children's – Opt in	2,327 **(+10.91%)**	2,098	36.06% **(+6.13%)**	29.93%	23.33% **(+7.76%)**	15.57%
Job Alert – Opt in	1,043 **(+31.85%)**	791	70.99% **(+7.49%)**	63.5%	12.2% **(-3.53%)**	15.73%

Top viewed events

Our Events calendar provides insight into digital traffic around the events program, although the correlation between website hits and bookings is not as clear as we would like. The events that attracted most interest online illustrate the wide range of interests among our community:

NUMBER	EVENT	LOCATION
1.	Low Cost DIY Tips for Energy Efficiency and Mini Market	Montrose
2.	Puppet Show with Elk Puppets	Rowville
3.	How's Your Hearing?	Mooroolbark

Library App

The Your Library App is a key tool for enhancing accessibility, convenience, and community engagement. With its user-friendly and intuitive interface, the App provides seamless access to a wide range of library resources and services, from event bookings and program registrations to borrowing services, account management, catalogue searches, and item reservations. By placing these services directly at users' fingertips, the App ensures our community can connect with the library anytime, anywhere.

APP LAUNCHES	INCREASE	NUMBER OF NEW DEVICES	CHANGE
630,886	**+18.8%**	9,564	**+16.6%**

Website

Our website is the central digital repository for community information, providing convenient access to online resources, event information, news, and key library services. Since the launch of the library app, user engagement is shifting from the website, resulting in lower website traffic and increase launches of the app.

WEBSITE HITS	INCREASE	UNIQUE VISITORS	INCREASE
1,111,525	**-12.7%**	351,934	**-17.5%**

COMMUNICATIONS

In Print – What's On

Demand for our seasonal What's On events guide remains consistently strong, demonstrating the community's keen interest in our programming. Each season, 9,000 copies are printed and distributed, ensuring our events and services are accessible to a wide audience. The printed guide continues to be an essential tool for connecting with community members—particularly those who prefer physical copies or are less engaged through digital platforms.







What's On Performance

The digital 'What's On', available on our website and Issuu.com, continues to attract significant impressions.

WHAT'S ON ISSUE	IMPRESSIONS
Spring 2025	1,994
Autumn 2026	3,558
Winter 2026*	2,439

* Note: At the time of writing, the Winter What's On 2026, had been in distribution for one month.

Media Releases

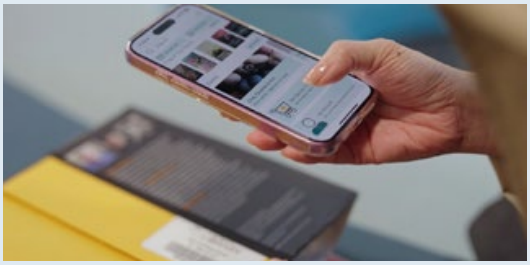
Your Library issued nine media releases during the year, generating eight editorial features and interview opportunities across a range of topics, including:

- Launch of 'Your Library, Leading Change: 2025-2029' our new strategic plan
- Launch of the Boronia and The Basin Community Directory
- PLV benchmarking survey results
- Healesville Library 50th birthday
- 'Captured Moments' Youth Photography Competition
- Vinnies CEO Sleepout – Second year of our participation
- Need for investment in Victorian public libraries following State budget
- Re-commitment to 'Respect is Non-negotiable' campaign

COMMUNICATIONS

New Films Produced and Launched

A key focus this year was the production and distribution of films and digital content that tell the story of Your Library – who we are, what we do, and why it matters. This approach has strengthened brand identity, improved community connection, and increased engagement across platforms. Films can be viewed on the Your Library You Tube channel and via our website at yourlibrary.vic.gov.au/about.







THEME	PLATFORM	ENGAGEMENT	REACH	VIEWS	LIKES/REACTIONS	CLICK-THROUGH RATE
ADULT LITERACY	Instagram	6.18%	356	454	19	-
	Facebook	6.51%	721	1,015	24	-
	LinkedIn	15.96%	-	631	25	10.94%
EARLY LITERACY	Instagram	5.42%	571	734	28	
	Facebook	7.03%	825	1,295	22	
	LinkedIn	10.36%	-	178	16	6.47%
DIGITAL LITERACY	Instagram	7.43%	484	677	33	
	Facebook	10.41%	816	1,227	30	
	LinkedIn	13.62%	-	756	30	9.72%

Collections

Your Library's diverse collection of books, DVDs, CDs, audiobooks, and console games continues to be highly valued by our community.

Innovation has been evident through collaborative initiatives such as the Boobook consortium, which has improved access to digital collections, reduced wait times and strengthened alignment between purchasing and user demand.

Digital borrowing continues to grow at 26% p/a. Investment in digital infrastructure, including the rollout of new devices across branches, has further supported contemporary service delivery and improved user experience.

CHECKOUTS	RESERVATIONS
+8.9%	+9.6%
3,786,221	865,983
ACTIVE BORROWERS AS PERCENTAGE OF POPULATION	PICTURE BOOKS
38.89%	Most Popular Collection by amount of loans
174,859	450,395






Library of Things

A Library of Things is a collection of items beyond traditional books that can be borrowed free of charge through the library. While many public libraries offer collections such as kitchen equipment, tools or sporting gear, Your Library has focused on resources that support reading, learning and sustainable living.

Our Library of Things includes:

- Laptops
- Powerbanks
- Reader Pens
- Energy and Water Saver Kits

The collection continues to support both digital inclusion and environmental sustainability. During the year, the 28 laptops were borrowed more than 280 times, while the 20 Energy and Water Saver Kits recorded over 300 loans. The 13 Reader Pens were borrowed 80 times, supporting literacy and accessibility outcomes. In addition, 90 powerbanks were borrowed approximately 1,500 times for in-branch device charging, demonstrating strong demand for practical technology support.

We will soon be launching borrowable Kobo eReaders, compatible with our ebook collection from both Bolinda and Overdrive.

Together, these resources extend access to technology, support learning and literacy, and help community members make informed and sustainable choices.

COLLECTIONS





Seed Library

Your Library's Seed Library continues to support sustainable gardening, community knowledge-sharing and local resilience. Established as a community seed-swap program in branches hosting gardening groups, the initiative has expanded over time and is now available at Bayswater, Belgrave, Boronia, Croydon, Ferntree Gully, Miller's Homestead, Mooroolbark, Rowville and Yarra Junction Libraries.

The Seed Library enables community members to borrow up to three packets of seeds free of charge, grow them at home and, where possible, return harvested seeds for others to use. Community members can also donate seeds saved from their own gardens or unused seeds from purchased packets.

By encouraging seed saving, gardening skills and the exchange of knowledge, the Seed Library fosters environmental sustainability, self-reliance and community connection. The program is complemented by a range of gardening events and workshops that support lifelong learning and inspire local gardeners.

Laptop Loans

The introduction of the Laptop Loan Program in April 2025 has been a highly successful initiative in improving equitable access to technology across the community, with 339 loans recorded since implementation. As part of the Library of Things, the program provides free access to laptops for members who may otherwise face barriers due to cost-of-living pressures or limited access to digital devices.

The laptops support a wide range of needs, including education, job seeking and building digital confidence, and are complemented by access to technology support sessions. This initiative directly responds to community need and reinforces the organisation's role in bridging the digital divide and supporting inclusive participation in a connected world.

Regional Statistics

Your Library snapshot

EVENT ATTENDEES	E-RESOURCE USAGE	APP LAUNCHES	PUBLIC WI-FI USERS
156,357	1,754,375	630,886	521,205

TOTAL CHECKOUTS	TOTAL RESERVATIONS	LIBRARY VISITS	NEW MEMBERS
+8.9%	+9.6%	+1.7%	+0.5%
3,786,221	865,983	1,744,418	36,923

KNOX CITY COUNCIL			
PHYSICAL CHECKOUTS	PHYSICAL RESERVATIONS	LIBRARY VISITS	NEW MEMBERS
628,556	183,043	788,592	17,078
MAROONDAH CITY COUNCIL			
PHYSICAL CHECKOUTS	PHYSICAL RESERVATIONS	LIBRARY VISITS	NEW MEMBERS
436,436	128,492	539,922	10,363
YARRA RANGES COUNCIL			
PHYSICAL CHECKOUTS	PHYSICAL RESERVATIONS	LIBRARY VISITS	NEW MEMBERS
426,170	150,860	425,904	9,476

Activity

LOCATION	MEMBERS		VISITS		CHECKOUTS		PC SESSIONS	
	24-25	25-26	24-25	25-26	24-25	25-26	24-25	25-26
KNOX								
Bayswater	13,550	15,478	109,376	96,584	74,490	75,158	9,740	8,206
Boronia	16,688	17,844	61,363	63,360	95,294	84,052	9,311	7,737
Ferntree Gully	14,739	16,000	56,466	64,039	65,787	75,369	5,356	5,969
Knox - Ngarrgoo	58,088	67,749	395,276	404,813	252,974	264,615	23,771	23,074
Miller's Homestead	164	227	*n/a	*n/a	6,252	6,362	399	172
Rowville	30,759	32,975	143,890	149,796	125,021	123,000	23,622	18,526
Total	133,988	150,273	766,371	778,592	619,818	628,556	72,199	63,684
MAROONDAH								
Croydon	41,518	44,587	170,473	182,202	259,650	257,240	22,772	22,250
Realm	80,410	86,674	358,242	357,720	185,070	179,196	47,866	43,601
Total	121,928	131,261	528,715	539,922	444,720	436,436	70,638	65,851
YARRA RANGES								
Belgrave	21,607	23,805	105,371	112,809	88,819	89,419	8,846	7,391
Flexi	2,379	2,464	*n/a	*n/a	7,296	7,809	**n/a	**n/a
Healesville	11,287	12,425	73,239	78,176	43,242	40,252	6,548	6,557
Lilydale	23,516	25,496	80,444	81,031	75,640	77,069	7,122	6,758
Monbulk (CRR)	1,517	1,819	*n/a	*n/a	9,692	9,084	**n/a	**n/a
Montrose	5,962	6,322	25,249	24,466	24,610	25,326	691	563
Mooroolbark	16,868	18,267	70,261	63,625	102,599	99,355	7,979	6,486
Mt Evelyn (CRR)	2,922	3,240	*n/a	*n/a	16,403	15,746	944	844
Yarra Glen (CRR)	1,164	1,297	*n/a	*n/a	2,609	2,320	**n/a	**n/a
Yarra Junction	13,715	14,637	65,489	64,797	59,878	59,790	6,770	7,810
Total	100,937	109,772	420,053	425,904	430,788	426,170	38,900	36,409
OTHER								
Admin	1,573	1,578	n/a	n/a	1031	927	n/a	n/a
Digital Library	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1,201,724	1,515,019	n/a	n/a
Web	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	777,793	779,113	n/a	n/a
Total	1,573	1578	n/a	n/a	1,980,548	2,295,059	n/a	n/a
REGIONAL TOTAL	358,426	392,884	1,715,139	1,744,418	3,475,874	3,786,221	181,737	165,944

* Door counter not installed
** Public PCs not offered

Customer Satisfaction



Your Library continues to achieve outstanding results in Council Customer Satisfaction surveys across all member Councils, rating highly for both importance and satisfaction. These results highlight the strong regard in which our services are held and reinforce our role as a trusted, valued, and integral part of the community.

In 2025/2026 Maroondah City Council engaged JWS Research to conduct their survey, Knox City Council used Metropolis Research and Yarra Ranges Council used Klein Research. In the JWS survey, libraries were grouped with arts centres, whereas in the Metropolis and Klein surveys libraries are measured as a stand-alone service.

COUNCIL	RATING	SIMILAR COUNCILS	COMPARED TO STATE	RANKING AMONG COUNCIL SERVICES
Knox*	8.7	8.7	n/a	1
Maroondah**	78	77	69	1 (equal with Customer Service)
Yarra Ranges***	72	72	75	1

* Metropolis Research – rating is out of 10
* Satisfaction with libraries only
** JWS Research – rating is out of 100
** Satisfaction is with Arts Centres and Libraries
*** Klein Research – rating is out of 100
*** Satisfaction with libraries only

Across all three Councils, libraries ranked **first** among council services, underscoring the exceptional value and satisfaction we deliver to our communities year after year.

Technology

Spydus upgrade

On 11 November, Your Library successfully upgraded its Library Management System (LMS) to Spydus 11. As the LMS underpins a range of customer-facing services, including printing, public computers, online databases and the library app, the upgrade required careful planning to minimise disruption.

While the upgrade was expected to take a full day, the system was restored and operational by lunchtime, significantly reducing the impact on customers. The enhancements delivered through Spydus 11 are primarily behind the scenes, providing improved administration, streamlined workflows and enhanced security.

The transition was completed seamlessly, with no customer complaints or adverse feedback received. This successful outcome reflects the expertise and dedication of Your Library's ICT team, whose exceptional work ensured a smooth and efficient implementation.

PC Roll-out

In July, 293 new devices—including PCs, laptops, docks and monitors—were deployed across the region following a successful month-long trial at Rowville Library. The rollout included a reduction in the overall number of devices to better align with current usage patterns, increasing utilisation and reducing idle equipment. This reflects a broader shift in customer behaviour, with declining use of fixed computers and growing reliance on Wi-Fi access. All replaced devices were securely wiped and recycled through our supplier, with eligible units refurbished and resold to extend their useful life and reduce environmental impact.





Accessible PC Launched at Realm

A key milestone during this period was the launch of the organisation's first accessible workstation at Realm in April 2026, improving access to technology for community members with additional needs and supporting more inclusive service delivery. This initiative reflects a practical commitment to accessibility and equitable access to digital services.

Print Credit integration

To improve the customer experience and reduce staff intervention, Your Library launched a new print credit solution in February that integrates PaperCut directly with Spydus, the Library Management System. The bespoke software replaced a complex third-party system that had been in use since the organisation transitioned to cashless printing in 2020.

The project also gave new life to 13 redundant payment kiosks. By installing the new software on the existing hardware and refreshing the units with updated branding, Your Library transformed the kiosks into simple, self-service payment stations that are easy for customers to use independently.

The impact was immediate, with a 23% increase in print income in the first quarter of implementation. The new system has significantly streamlined the printing process for both customers and staff, reducing support requirements and improving ease of access.

In addition to delivering operational efficiencies, the project demonstrates Your Library's commitment to innovation and sustainability by repurposing existing hardware and creating a locally developed solution with potential application across the Australian public library sector.

Our People

At Your Library, our greatest strength is our people—the dedicated, skilled, and passionate staff who bring our services and programs to life.

Our People and Culture strategy is designed to foster a supportive, inclusive, and high-performing workplace where every team member can thrive.

We invest in our staff by providing the training, resources, and support they need to grow professionally and personally. By prioritising collaboration, wellbeing, and development, we not only enhance staff satisfaction but also strengthen the quality and innovation of the services we deliver.

Our workplace culture reflects our core values of fairness, inclusion, and community connection, ensuring that both our team and our community benefit from a positive and inspiring environment.



Employee profile

	24-25	25-26
Total staff members	130	134
Equivalent full-time	90	90
Longest years of service	44	45
Average age	47	48

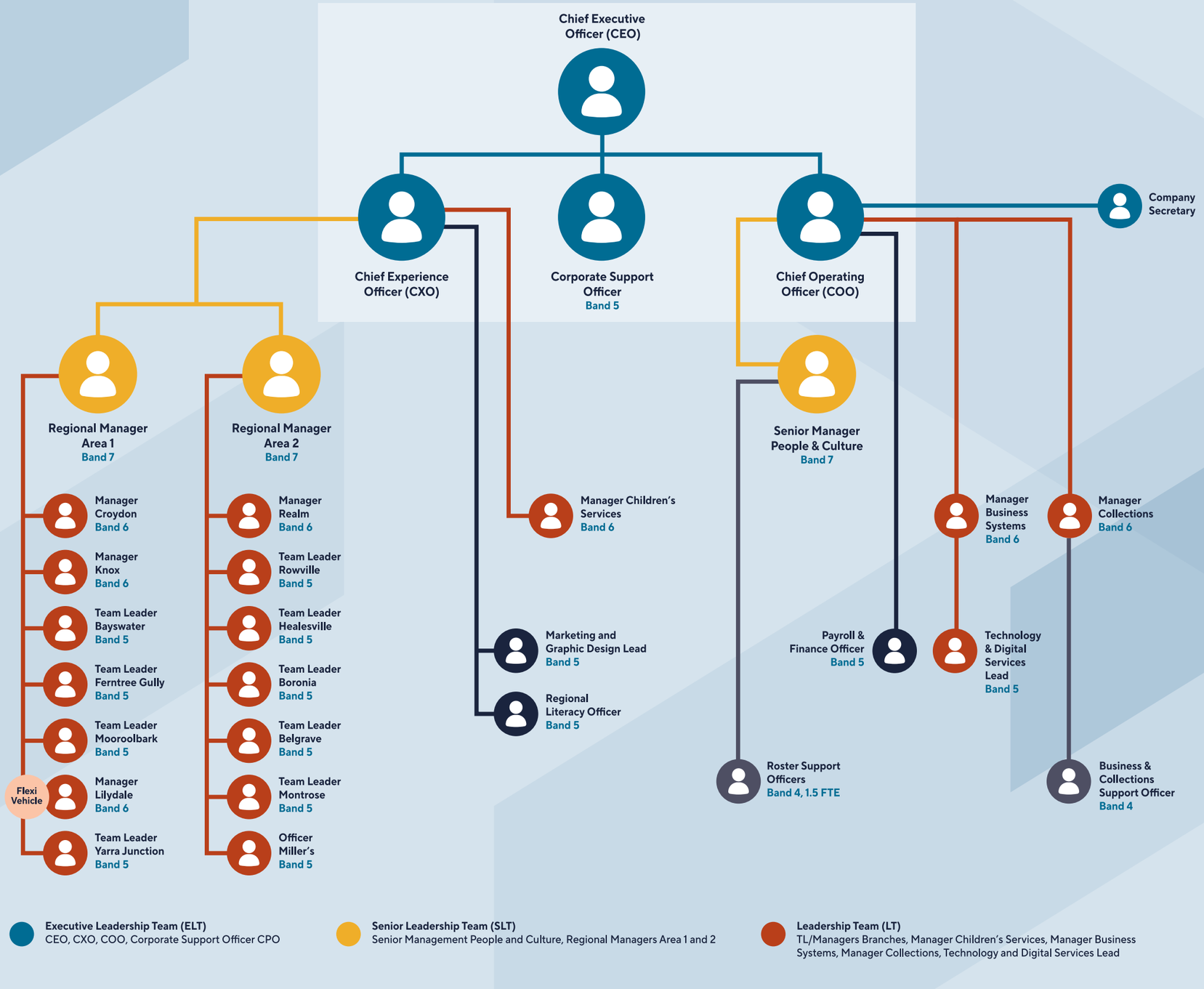
Staff movements

Resignations	11
Appointments	14
Secondments/temp appointments	7
Support pre-retirement arrangements	3
Support study leave	0
Parental leave	2

Volunteers

Total number of volunteers	92
Home Library	31
Conversation Circle	11
Leap into Literacy	19
Dungeons and Dragons	2
Origami	3
Chat and Connect	3
Other	23

Organisational Structure



OUR PEOPLE





Professional Development

Our third all-staff training day commenced with a Welcome to Country and a smoking ceremony delivered by Stacey Piper from the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation. Staff reflected positively on the experience, with many highlighting the ceremony and Stacey's heartfelt introduction as a memorable and meaningful part of the day. The event also provided a valuable opportunity for our geographically dispersed workforce to connect, share ideas and strengthen relationships. As always, the staff showcase was a highlight, with employees sharing their diverse talents and skills, celebrating the breadth of expertise and creativity across the organisation.

It's really inspiring to see what amazing things we do in the branches, meeting up with other staff and reinforcing that we are one big organisation all working together.
- Staff member feedback

Litmos

Our staff have completed 1,084 training courses through our online learning platform, Litmos. Training activities were focused on building staff capability through a combination of compliance, policy, and procedural learning, ensuring employees maintained their knowledge, developed their skills, and met organisational and regulatory obligations.

To further strengthen child safety awareness and understanding, the Child Safety Officers recorded a live FAQ session addressing common and nuanced questions about identifying concerns, recognising indicators of harm, and understanding when reporting obligations may apply. This resource provides practical guidance and supports staff to confidently fulfil their child safety responsibilities.

OUR PEOPLE





Conferences and Professional Development

This year provided valuable opportunities to engage with leading international and Australian experts in public librarianship. The Executive Leadership Team attended the Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA) Conference, where internationally recognised expert in trauma-informed librarianship, Beth Wahler, delivered a keynote address. Beth also led a symposium at the State Library of Victoria exploring the impact of trauma on public behaviour and strategies for supporting staff while maintaining safe, welcoming, and inclusive library environments. Her work reinforced the effectiveness of the systems and practices already in place at Your Library.

Members of the Senior Leadership Team, Reader Development, and Children's Services teams attended the Reading Matters Symposium to deepen their understanding of the relationship between socioeconomic disadvantage, literacy, and reading engagement. Discussions focused on the role libraries play in reducing barriers to literacy, promoting equitable access to reading opportunities, and advocating for lifelong learning. The symposium also examined the growing impact of misinformation on public perceptions of literacy and informed citizenship, highlighting the complexity of these challenges and the absence of simple solutions.

Respect is Non-Negotiable

Creating safe, inclusive and welcoming spaces remained a key priority throughout 2025/26. In May 2026, Your Library re-launched its Respect is Non-Negotiable campaign, reaffirming the organisation's commitment to ensuring every library branch is a place where employees, volunteers and community members are treated with dignity and respect.

The campaign reinforced the expectations outlined in the Library Users Code of Conduct, reminding the community that aggressive, abusive or threatening behaviour will not be tolerated. It also encouraged respectful and constructive feedback through established channels while highlighting the important role libraries play as trusted places for learning, connection and wellbeing.

The campaign complemented Your Library's ongoing commitment to employee wellbeing, psychological safety and respectful workplaces, ensuring our libraries continue to be welcoming environments where everyone can learn, connect and belong.

OUR PEOPLE





Commitments to Leadership

Strong leadership continued to underpin Your Library's success throughout 2025/26. The introduction of Leadership and Branch Team Charters reinforced a shared commitment to collaboration, accountability and organisational values, providing a consistent framework for leadership across the organisation.

The strength of Your Library's leadership was further recognised through the selection of Regional Manager and Senior Leadership Team member Emma Jahn as one of only 18 participants in the inaugural State Library Victoria Senior Leadership Program. Emma's participation reflects both her individual leadership and Your Library's commitment to fostering leadership excellence and contributing to the future of the public library sector.



Staff Engagement and Wellbeing

Supporting the health, wellbeing and connection of our people remained an important focus throughout 2025–26. A range of wellbeing and team initiatives encouraged collaboration, resilience and a strong sense of belonging across the organisation.

Highlights included participation in the Vinnies CEO Sleepout for a second consecutive year, the Tough Mudder 2026 fundraising challenge and the Push-Up Challenge. These initiatives not only promoted physical and mental wellbeing but also reflected Your Library's commitment to supporting the broader community through fundraising, advocacy and shared purpose.



YOUR LIBRARY

FINANCIAL REPORT 2025/2026

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Directors' Report

The directors present the financial statements of Your Library Ltd (the Company) for the financial year ended 30 June 2026.

Information on Directors

The following persons were directors of the Company during the whole of the financial year and up to the date of this report, unless otherwise stated:

Cr Jim Child
Yarra Ranges Council
Experience:
Your Library Ltd Directorship: 03/10/2022 - present.
First elected as a Councillor with the Upper Yarra Shire in 1982 – 1988.
Shire President during 1985.
First elected as a Councillor at Yarra Ranges Council in 2012 – present.
Mayor in 2012/13, 2021/22, 2022/23 and 2024/25.
Special responsibilities:
Board Chair: 08/02/2024 – 16/12/2024
Audit & Risk Advisory Committee Member: 16/12/2024 - 15/12/25.
Audit & Risk Advisory Committee Chair: 28/03/2025 - 15/12/25.

Cr Kylie Spears
Maroondah City Council
Experience:
Your Library Ltd Directorship: 03/10/2022 - present.
First elected as a Councillor at Maroondah City Council in October 2016 - present.
Mayor in 2020/21, 2023/24 and 2024/25. Deputy Mayor in 2018/19.
Special responsibilities:
Board Chair: 28/02/2019 – 27/02/2020, 24/02/2022 – 16/02/2023, 15/12/25 - present.
Audit & Risk Advisory Committee Member: 16/12/2024 - present.

Cr Linda Hancock
Maroondah City Council
Experience:
Your Library Ltd Directorship: 20/02/2023 - present.
First elected as a Councillor Maroondah City Council in March 2022 - present.
Special responsibilities:
Special responsibilities: Board Chair: 16/12/2024 - 15/12/2025.
CEO Employment & Remuneration Advisory Committee: 16/12/2024 - present.

Cr Mitch Mazzarella
Yarra Ranges Council
Experience:
Your Library Ltd Directorship: 16/12/2024 - present.
First elected as a Councillor at Yarra Ranges Council on 09/11/2024 - present.
Special responsibilities:
CEO Employment & Remuneration Advisory Committee: 16/12/2024 - 15/12/25.
Audit & Risk Advisory Committee Chair: 15/12/2025 - present.

Cr Glen Atwell
Knox City Council
Experience:
Your Library Ltd Directorship: 15/12/2025 - present.
First elected as a Councillor at Stonnington City Council in October 2016 - September 2020.
Elected as a Councillor at Knox City Council in October 2024 - present.
Deputy Mayor in 2024/2025.
Special responsibilities:
Audit & Risk Advisory Committee Member: 15/12/2025 - present.
Deputy Board Chair: 19/02/2026 – present.

Cr Paige Kennett
Knox City Council
Experience:
Your Library Ltd Directorship: 10/02/2026 - present.
First elected as a Councillor at Knox City Council in October 2024 - present.
Mayor in 2025/26.
Special responsibilities:
CEO Employment & Remuneration Advisory Committee: 19/02/2026 - present.

Cr Meagan Baker	Knox City Council
Experience:	Your Library Ltd Directorship: 16/12/2024 – 20/11/2025 First elected as a Councillor at Knox City Council on 09/11/2020 - present.
Special responsibilities:	CEO Employment & Remuneration Advisory Committee: 16/12/2024 - 20/11/2025
Cr Peter Lockwood	Knox City Council
Experience:	Your Library Ltd Directorship: 16/12/2024 - 20/01/2026 First elected as a Councillor at Knox City Council in 1993-1994, 2000-2002,
Special responsibilities:	2012-2020, 2024 - present. Mayor in 2014-15. Deputy Mayor in 2018-2019. Deputy Board Chair: 16/12/2024 - 20/01/2026. Audit & Risk Advisory Committee Member: 16/12/2024 - 15/12/2025.

Company Secretary

Premal Niranjan has held the position of Company Secretary of Your Library Ltd since 16 December 2024. Premal has been with the company as the Corporate Manager, Business & Technology since 2 September 2019 and Chief Operating Officer since 4 December 2024.

Principal Activities

The principal activities of the Company are to:

- provide or ensure the provision of, subject to any conditions attached to any State government library subsidies and grants to the Company or the Councils, a public library service for Councils' municipal districts as determined by the Board; and
- provide resources and programs aimed at meeting the information, recreation, educational and cultural needs of the diverse communities of Knox, Maroondah and Yarra Ranges in an equitable, effective, efficient, responsive and forward-looking manner in accordance with the values and objectives of the Library Plan; and
- perform any other functions which are conferred on the Company under the constitution and the Your Library agreement or the Act, including defining overall policy objectives, developing strategic policy, letting tenders for the provision of services, monitoring contracts under which services are provided, and approving a library plan and budget.

Review of Operations

During the year, Your Library Ltd generated total income of $16.022 million, primarily sourced from Member Council contributions amounting to $12.347 million, and State Government grants totalling $3.004 million.

Total operating expenditure for the year was $15.770 million, with the major components being:

- Employee costs: $10.853 million
- Depreciation and amortisation: $2.425 million
- Materials and services: $2.435 million

As a result, the organisation recorded a net surplus of $252,000 for the financial year, reflecting prudent financial management and increasing other revenue streams.

Objectives

Libraries are more than just books. They contribute to social cohesion and connections.

Your Library Ltd has a huge front door, both physically and virtually. We provide valuable services to the wide range of our community members, at all ages and stages of their life. From Storytime for babies and their caregivers, to homework clubs for teenagers, job search services for adults and delivery services to older residents in aged care, we cater for everyone.

The *Your Library, Leading Change Strategic Plan 2025–2029* establishes the organisation's long-term vision and strategic priorities, guiding investment, decision-making and service delivery over four years. The 2025/26 financial year marks the first year of implementation and the first time the organisation has reported against an integrated planning and performance framework.

For the first year of implementation of the Your Library, Leading Change Strategic Plan 2025–2029, the organisation introduced an integrated planning and performance framework designed to align strategic objectives with operational delivery and individual accountability. This framework establishes a clear line of sight from the Strategic Plan to annual Operations Plans, Branch Plans and Individual Performance Plans, ensuring that organisational priorities are translated into measurable actions at every level of the business.

Performance is monitored through regular reporting, progress reviews and annual performance assessments, enabling the Executive Team and Board to evaluate achievement against strategic outcomes, service delivery targets and organisational goals. This structured approach strengthens accountability, supports continuous improvement and ensures that resources are directed towards initiatives that deliver the greatest value to the communities served by Your Library Ltd.

The long-term objectives of the Company are:

/ DIRECTION 1: Leaders in Libraries

We are focused on making sure that Your Library remains a contemporary not-for-profit, delivering forward-thinking library services that align to community needs. That means being open to new ideas, using technology in smart ways, and continuing to build a collection that reflects the diversity of the people we serve. As part of this strategy, we will keep looking for better ways to deliver services—both in our physical spaces and online—so the library stays useful, relevant, and one step ahead in a fast-changing world.

Our priorities:

1. Explore new and creative service models

Reimagine how library services are delivered - both in-person and online - by making it easier and more engaging to access collections, programs, and spaces in ways that suit changing community needs.

2. Use technology to improve Services

Invest in technology and digital tools that improve operations and enhance the library experience. This includes streamlining processes and enabling staff to focus on meaningful community engagement.

3. Build a great workplace that attracts talented staff

Foster a supportive, inclusive, and values-driven workplace where staff are equipped, recognised, and inspired. A strong team culture helps attract and retain the people who bring the Your Library vision to life.

4. Keep making operations more efficient.

Continuously review and improve systems, workflows, and processes to deliver better outcomes. Make decisions based on good data and use resources wisely to increase impact.

/ DIRECTION 2: Take Action on Climate

We are actively responding to environmental challenges by reducing our own impact and assisting the community to prepare for and adapt to climate change. Through sustainable practices, safe spaces, and trusted information, we support local resilience and climate action.

Your Library plays an active role in climate action and community resilience, with environmentally responsible practices and safe, supportive spaces during times of disruption and climate stress.

Our priorities:

1. Manage books and resources more sustainably

Adopt practices that reduce waste and promote reuse, recycling, and responsible disposal of materials, making Your Library's physical and digital collections more environmentally sustainable.

2. Support emergency preparedness in communities

Develop and share practical information, tools, and programs to help communities prepare for and respond to emergencies such as bushfires, floods, and heatwaves.

3. Provide safe, comfortable spaces during extreme weather

Work with Council partners to support climate-resilient library buildings that are equipped to serve as welcoming, flexible and accessible spaces for community members seeking relief during heatwaves, cold snaps, disruption or other extreme weather events.

4. Reduce and track our environmental footprint

Support Council members and work towards measuring energy use, emissions, and resource consumption across library operations, and take deliberate steps to reduce impact and continuously improve sustainability performance.

/ DIRECTION 3: Partnership and Collaborations

We will cultivate respectful, values aligned partnerships with businesses, community organisations, cultural and educational institutions, philanthropic trusts and other bodies that share Your Library's purpose. To future-proof services and maintain innovation, we will explore alternate revenue streams and strategic partnerships.

Strategic partnerships will enrich our programs, collections, spaces and memberships, deepen community impact and strengthen long-term sustainability.

Our priorities:

1. Expand our reach through strategic partnerships

Collaborate with businesses, government agencies, councils and community organisations to extend the Impact of Your Library. By offering sector placements, training opportunities, and shared service models, we can foster knowledge exchange and strengthen service delivery across regions. Partnering with philanthropic funders and not-for-profit organisations will further expand our services to a broader audience, ensuring sustainable growth and innovation.

2. Continue to deepen partnerships with Council services

Your Library branches are a safe, inclusive and welcoming space where everyone feels represented and supported. Our facilities, programs and collections will reflect the diversity of the communities we serve.

3. Engage and build effective relationships with business and industry to continue innovation

Forge mutually beneficial relationships with the private sector that drives innovation, revenue and service growth.

4. Advance the library profession

Partner with organisations that develop the Library and Information Management sector through shared learning and capacity building initiatives.

/ DIRECTION 4: Build Digital Literacy

We support our community to build digital skills and adapt to new technologies by providing access to devices, trusted information and practice learning opportunities. Through inclusive programs and small group support, we empower people of all ages to grow their confidence, stay connected and safely navigate an increasingly changing digital world.

People of all ages and backgrounds have the digital access, skills, and confidence to fully participate in a connected world, supported by trusted library resources and programs.

Our priorities:

1. Expand access to technology for people who need it

Ensure everyone has access to essential digital tools by providing free Wi-Fi, public computers, device loans, and printing services at all branches. This helps to close the digital divide and supports people who may not have access or the ability to acquire devices at home.

2. Offer diverse digital programs

Run a broad range of digital workshops and learning opportunities, designed for different age groups, learning styles, and confidence levels. This includes everything from basic technical support and online safety to creative digital skills and job-ready tools.

3. Help people better understand and use new developments like AI

Support community members to explore and make sense of emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI). Through simple, inclusive sessions, support understanding on tools, systems and programs – what they do, how they are used, and what they mean for daily life, work and learning.

4. Help community members better navigate and use digital information

Equip people with the skills and support to access and use important digital services – government forms, job applications, health services, and school platforms – so they can confidently engage in digital life.

5. Support people to think critically and safely about digital content

Provide trusted programs and resources that build media and information literacy. Help people recognise misinformation, protect their privacy, and stay safe online, giving them the confidence to engage critically and responsibly with digital content.

/ DIRECTION 5: Champion Diversity and Inclusion

Your Library branches are a safe, inclusive and welcoming space where everyone feels represented and supported. Our facilities, programs and collections will reflect the diversity of the communities we serve. We will build relationships with Traditional Owners and cultural organisations to ensure our library spaces and services honour diverse knowledge and culture, fostering multicultural understanding and belonging for all.

Your Library will be a welcoming, inclusive space for all. Programs will reflect community diversity and be accessible. Underrepresented groups will feel a sense of belonging. Staff will be diverse and confident in creating culturally safe spaces, with truth-telling at the core of our work.

Our priorities:

1. Engage meaningfully with Traditional Owners.

Develop long-term respectful relationships with Traditional Owners that go beyond acknowledgements. Ensure there are genuine opportunities to share programs, advise on cultural matters, and contribute to the future direction of library services.

2. Support truth-telling and recognition of history

Create space for honest storytelling and education on Victorian history. Support the sharing of literacy to promote healing and understanding throughout communities.

3. Deliver public programs that are inclusive and accessible

Deliver a wide range of public programs that reflect the diversity of our community and are welcoming to all. This includes culturally relevant and First Nations content, multilingual or Auslan-interpreted sessions, events tailored for different age groups and abilities, and programs that promote connection, inclusion and understanding.

4. Provide safe spaces for people to connect and feel a sense of belonging

Design library environments that are physically, emotionally, and culturally safe. Libraries should offer people a place to feel comfortable, supported, and able to participate fully, whether they are attending programs, accessing services, or simply seeking a quiet space.

5. Better connection with people from underrepresented communities

Actively engage with groups who may face barriers to using Your Library. Work closely with these communities to understand their needs and adapt services to ensure they feel seen, heard, and welcomed.

6. Cultural Safety and Diversity in Employment.

Ensure our staff are trained and aware of the need to create culturally safe spaces to encourage membership and the use of our Library spaces. We will support opportunities for diversity in employment. We will actively look at ways to increase awareness of the importance of employment of culturally diverse and First Nations people within the Library and Information sector.

Indemnification of Officers

During the financial year, Your Library Ltd has paid a premium in respect of a contract insuring the Directors and Executives of Your Library Ltd against a liability incurred as such a Director or Executive to the extent permitted by the *Corporations Act 2001.*

The company has not otherwise, during or since the end of the financial year, except to the extent permitted by law, indemnified or agreed to indemnify an officer or auditor of the company against a liability incurred as an officer or auditor.

Meetings of Directors

The number of meetings of the Company's Board of Directors (the Board) and of each Board committee held during the year ended 30 June 2026, and the number of meetings attended by each director were:

	FULL BOARD		AUDIT & RISK ADVISORY COMMITTEE		CEO EMPLOYMENT AND REMUNERATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE	
DIRECTOR	**ATTENDED**	**HELD**	**ATTENDED**	**HELD**	**ATTENDED**	**HELD**
Cr Jim Child	6	7	3	3	2	2
Cr Kylie Spears	7	7	6	6	N/A	N/A
Cr Linda Hancock	7	7	N/A	N/A	6	6
Cr Mitch Mazzarella	7	7	3	3	4	4
Cr Glen Atwell	3	3	3	3	N/A	N/A
Cr Paige Kennett	2	2	N/A	N/A	2	2
Cr Meagan Baker	2	4	N/A	N/A	0	4
Cr Peter Lockwood	4	5	3	3	N/A	N/A

Notes:

- **Held:** Represents the number of meetings held during the time the director held office or was a member of the relevant committee.
- N/A: director was not a member of the Committee.
- Board Planning Day is not included in these attendance figures.
- Directors and Managers from Member Councils with responsibility for library services also attended Board and ARAC meetings to support the Directors as observers.

Contributions on Winding Up

In the event of the Company being wound up, ordinary members are required to contribute a maximum of $1.00 each.

The total amount that members of the Company are liable to contribute if the Company is wound up is $1.00, based on 3 current ordinary members.

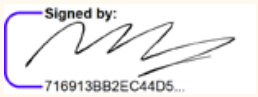
Auditor's Independence Declaration

The auditor's independence declaration for the year ended 30 June 2026 has been received and can be found on page 53 of the financial report.

ASIC Corporations Instrument 2026/193 Rounding of Amounts

The Company is an entity to which ASIC Corporations (Rounding in Financial/Directors' Report) Instrument 2026/193 applies and, accordingly, amounts in the financial statements and directors' report have been rounded to the nearest thousand dollars.

This report is made in accordance with a resolution of directors:



Cr Mitch Mazzarella

ARAC Chair and Director



Cr Kylie Spears

Board Chair and Director

Dated: 15/09/2026

Scoresby

VAGO
Victorian Auditor-General's Office

Auditor-General's Independence Declaration

To the Directors, Your Library Ltd

The Auditor-General's independence is established by the *Constitution Act 1975*. The Auditor-General, an independent officer of parliament, is not subject to direction by any person about the way in which his powers and responsibilities are to be exercised.

Under the *Audit Act 1994*, the Auditor-General is the auditor of each public body and for the purposes of conducting an audit has access to all documents and property, and may report to parliament matters which the Auditor-General considers appropriate.

Independence Declaration

As auditor for Your Library Ltd for the year ended 30 June 2026, I declare that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, there have been:

- no contraventions of auditor independence requirements of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012* in relation to the audit.
- no contraventions of any applicable code of professional conduct in relation to the audit.

MELBOURNE
15 September 2026

Travis Derricott
as delegate for the Auditor-General of Victoria

Level 31 / 35 Collins Street, Melbourne Vic 3000
T 03 8601 7000 enquiries@audit.vic.gov.au www.audit.vic.gov.au

Independent Auditor's Report

Victorian Auditor-General's Office

To the Directors of Your Library Ltd

Opinion	I have audited the financial report of Your Library Ltd (the company) which comprises the: • statement of financial position as at 30 June 2026 • statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income for the year then ended • statement of changes in equity for the year then ended • statement of cash flows for the year then ended • notes to the financial statements, including material accounting policy information • directors' declaration. In my opinion the financial report is in accordance with Division 60 of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012,* including: • giving a true and fair view of the financial position of the Company as at 30 June 2026 and of its financial performance and its cash flows for the year then ended • complying with Australian Accounting Standards - Simplified Disclosures and Division 60 of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Regulations 2022.*
Basis for Opinion	I have conducted my audit in accordance with the *Audit Act 1994* which incorporates the Australian Auditing Standards. I further describe my responsibilities under that Act and those standards in the *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report* section of my report. My independence is established by the *Constitution Act 1975*. My staff and I are independent of the company in accordance with the auditor independence requirements of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012* and the ethical requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 *Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants (including the Independence Standards)* (the Code) that are relevant to my audit of the financial report in Victoria. My staff and I have also fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code. I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion.
Other Information	The Directors of the company are responsible for the Other Information, which comprises the information in the company's annual report for the period ended 30 June 2026, but does not include the financial report and my auditor's report thereon. My opinion on the financial report does not cover the Other Information and accordingly, I do not express any form of assurance conclusion on the Other Information. However, in connection with my audit of the financial report, my responsibility is to read the Other Information and in doing so, consider whether it is materially inconsistent with the financial report or the knowledge I obtained during the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If, based on the work I have performed, I conclude there is a material misstatement of the Other Information, I am required to report that fact. I have nothing to report in this regard.

Level 31 / 35 Collins Street, Melbourne Vic 3000
T 03 8601 7000 enquiries@audit.vic.gov.au www.audit.vic.gov.au

Directors' responsibilities for the financial report	The Directors of the company are responsible for the preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards - Simplified Disclosures and the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*, and for such internal control as the Directors determines is necessary to enable the preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view and is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error. In preparing the financial report, the Directors are responsible for assessing the company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless it is inappropriate to do so.
Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial report	As required by the *Audit Act 1994*, my responsibility is to express an opinion on the financial report based on the audit. My objectives for the audit are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial report as a whole is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes my opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of this financial report. As part of an audit in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards, I exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. I also: • identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control. • obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the company's internal control • evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the Directors • conclude on the appropriateness of the Directors' use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the company's ability to continue as a going concern. If I conclude that a material uncertainty exists, I am required to draw attention in my auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial report or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify my opinion. My conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of my auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the company to cease to continue as a going concern. • evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial report, including the disclosures, and whether the financial report represents the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial report (continued)	I communicate with the Directors regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that I identify during my audit. I also provide the Directors with a statement that I have complied with relevant ethical requirements regarding independence, and to communicate with them all relationships and other matters that may reasonably be thought to bear on my independence, and where applicable, related safeguards.



MELBOURNE
15 September 2026

Travis Derricott
as delegate for the Auditor-General of Victoria

Statement of Profit or Loss and Other Comprehensive Income

for the year ended 30 June 2026

	Note	2026 $'000	2025 $'000
Revenue and other income			
User charges, fees and fines		185	163
Grants	4.1	3,030	3,025
Contributions	4.2	12,347	11,909
Other income	4.3	460	452
Total revenue and other income		**16,022**	**15,549**
Expenses			
Employee costs	5.1	10,853	10,472
Materials and services	5.2	2,435	2,099
Depreciation	5.3	2,292	2,104
Amortisation - intangible assets		4	4
Depreciation - right of use assets		129	129
Finance costs - leases		17	23
Audit expenses		40	30
Total expenses		**15,770**	**14,861**
Surplus for the year		**252**	**688**
Total other comprehensive income		-	-
Total comprehensive result		**252**	**688**

The above Statement of Profit or Loss and Other Comprehensive Income should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Statement of Financial Position

for the year ended 30 June 2026

	Note	2026 $'000	2025 $'000
Assets			
Current assets			
Cash and cash equivalents	6	4,257	4,170
Trade and other receivables		96	100
Other assets		152	145
Total current assets		**4,505**	**4,415**
Non-current assets			
Plant, furniture, equipment and library materials	7	6,951	6,624
Right-of-use assets		225	354
Intangible assets		15	19
Total non-current assets		**7,191**	**6,997**
Total assets		**11,696**	**11,412**
Liabilities			
Current liabilities			
Trade and other payables	8	852	782
Provisions	9	743	686
Income in advance		184	80
Lease liabilities		147	135
Total current liabilities		**1,926**	**1,683**
Non-current liabilities			
Provisions	9	1,202	1,266
Lease liabilities		107	254
Total non-current liabilities		1,309	1,520
Total liabilities		**3,235**	**3,203**
Net assets		**8,461**	**8,209**
Equity			
Members' Contribution	10	6,816	6,816
Accumulated surplus	11	1,645	1,393
Total equity		**8,461**	**8,209**

The above Statement of Financial Position should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Statement of Changes in Equity

for the year ended 30 June 2026

2026	Note	Total $'000	Accumulated Surplus $'000	Members' Contribution $'000
Balance at beginning of the financial year	10, 11	8,209	1,393	6,816
Surplus for the year		252	252	-
		8,461	1,645	6,816
Balance at end of the financial year		**8,461**	**1,645**	**6,816**

2025	Note	Total $'000	Accumulated Surplus $'000	Members' Contribution $'000
Balance at beginning of the financial year	10, 11	7,521	705	6,816
Surplus for the year		688	688	-
		8,209	1,393	6,816
Balance at end of the financial year		**8,209**	**1,393**	**6,816**

The above Statement of Changes in Equity should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Statement of Cash Flows

for the year ended 30 June 2026

	Note	2026 Inflows/ (Outflows) $'000	2025 Inflows/ (Outflows) $'000
Cash flows from operating activities			
User charges, fees and fines		293	163
Grants		3,030	3,025
Contributions		12,347	11,909
Interest received		202	205
Other receipts		258	327
Net GST receipt		10	257
Employee costs		(10,779)	(10,334)
Materials and services		(2,456)	(2,099)
Other receipt/(payments)		(64)	59
Net cash provided by operating activities	17	**2,841**	**3,512**
Cash flows from investing activities			
Payments for plant, furniture, equipment and library materials		(2,636)	(2,606)
Proceeds from plant, furniture, equipment and library materials		17	-
Net cash used in investing activities		**(2,619)**	**(2,606)**
Cash flows from financing activities			
Repayment of lease liabilities		(135)	(124)
Net cash used in financing activities		**(135)**	**(124)**
Net increase in cash and cash equivalents		87	782
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the financial year		4,170	3,388
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the financial year	6	**4,257**	**4,170**

The above Statement of Cash Flows should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Notes to the Financial Report

Note 1 OVERVIEW

1.1 Introduction

The financial report covers Your Library Limited (the Company) as an individual entity. Your Library Limited is a not-for-profit company limited by guarantee, incorporated on 3 October 2022 and domiciled in Australia.

The Company's main office is located at 10 Caribbean Drive, Scoresby, Victoria, 3179.

1.2 Statement of Compliance

These general purpose financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*, Australian Accounting Standards - Simplified Disclosures and other authoritative pronouncements issued by the Australian Accounting Standards Board (AASB), and comply with other requirements of the law.

The Company does not have 'public accountability' as defined in AASB 1053 *Application of Tiers of Australian Accounting Standards* and is therefore eligible to apply the 'Tier 2' reporting framework under the AAS.

These financial statements comply with the recognition and measurement requirements of AAS, the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*, and the presentation requirements in those AAS as modified by AASB 1060 *General Purpose Financial Statements – Simplified Disclosures for For-Profit and Not-for-Profit Tier 2 Entities* and the disclosure requirements of AASB 1060. Accordingly, the financial statements comply with Australian Accounting Standards – Simplified Disclosures.

Note 2 MATERIAL ACCOUNTING POLICY INFORMATION

2.1 Basis of Accounting

Accounting policies are selected and applied in a manner which ensures that the resulting financial information satisfies the concepts of relevance and reliability, thereby ensuring that the substance of the underlying transactions or other events is reported. Accounting policies applied are disclosed in sections where the related balance or financial statement matter is disclosed.

The financial statements, except for the cash flow information, have been prepared on an accruals basis and are based on historical costs, modified, where applicable, by the measurement of fair value of selected non-current assets, financial assets and financial liabilities.

The presentation currency used in these financial statements is Australian dollars ($). Amounts in these financial statements are stated in Australian dollars unless otherwise noted.

The financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis.

2.2 Goods and Services Tax (GST)

Income and expenses are recognised net of the amount of associated GST. Receivables and payables are stated inclusive of the amount of GST receivable or payable. The net amount of GST recoverable from, or payable to, the taxation authority is included with other receivables or payables in the Statement of Financial Position.

2.3 Adoption of New and Revised Accounting Standards and New Accounting Standards for Application in Future Periods

The Company has adopted all new and revised Standards and amendments thereof and Interpretations effective for the current year that are relevant to the Company. None of these have had a material impact on the Company's financial statements.

AASB 18 Presentation and Disclosure in Financial Statements has been issued and is effective for annual reporting periods beginning on or after 1 January 2027. The Standard will introduce changes to the structure and presentation of the statement of profit or loss, including new defined subtotals and enhanced disclosure requirements. While the Company is still assessing the detailed impact of AASB 18, it is expected that the Standard will primarily affect presentation and disclosure within the financial statements, with no material impact on the recognition or measurement of underlying transactions.

Unless otherwise stated, all accounting policies are consistent with those applied in the prior year. Where appropriate, comparative figures have been amended to accord with current presentation, and disclosure has been made of any material changes to comparatives.

Note 3 JUDGEMENTS AND KEY SOURCES OF ESTIMATION UNCERTAINTY

Judgements, estimates and assumptions are required to be made about the carrying values of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and associated judgements are based on professional judgement derived from historical experience and various other factors that are believed to be reasonable under the circumstances. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

The estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised if the revision affects only that period or in the period of the revision and future periods if the revision affects both current and future periods. Judgements and assumptions made by management in the application of AAS's that have significant effects on the financial statements and estimates relate to:

- the determination of depreciation for plant, furniture, equipment and library materials (refer to Note 7).
- the determination of employee provisions (refer to Note 9).
- the determination of whether performance obligations are sufficiently specific so as to determine whether an arrangement is within the scope of AASB 15 *Revenue from Contracts with Customers* or AASB 1058 *Income of Not-for-Profit Entities* (refer to Note 4)
- the determination, in accordance with AASB 16 Leases, of the lease term, the estimation of the discount rate when not implicit in the lease and whether an arrangement is in substance short-term or low value.

The accounting policies and significant management judgements and estimates used, and any changes thereto, are identified at the beginning of each section where applicable and disclosed in further detail throughout these financial statements.

Note 4 REVENUE

The Company recognises income from its main revenue streams: User charges and fees, Grants and Contributions

In cases where the consideration is solely performance obligations under an enforceable contract and sufficiently specific to enable determination as to when the obligations are satisfied, the transaction is accounted for under AASB 15 Revenue from Contracts from Customers.

4.1 Grants

	2026 $'000	2025 $'000
Grants were received in respect of the following:		
Summary of grants		
State funded grants	3,004	3,004
Other grants	26	21
Total grants received	**3,030**	**3,025**
(a) Operating Grants		
Recurrent - State Government		
Public Libraries Grant Program	2,946	2,946
Premier's Reading Challenge	58	58
Total recurrent operating grants	**3,004**	**3,004**
Non-recurrent - Other		
Other	26	21
Total non-recurrent operating grants	26	**21**
Total operating grants	**3,030**	**3,025**

When the Company receives government grants that are in the scope of AASB 1058 *Income of Not-for-Profit Entities* (being a transaction where the consideration paid to acquire an asset is significantly less than fair value principally to enable the Company to further its objectives), it performs an assessment to determine if the contract is 'enforceable' and contains 'sufficiently specific' performance obligations.

Where the consideration to acquire an asset is significantly less than the fair value principally to enable the Company to further its objectives, the transaction is accounted for under AASB 1058 where the Company:

- Recognises the asset in accordance with the requirements of other relevant applicable Australian Accounting Standards (e.g. AASB 9 *Financial Instruments*, AASB 16 *Leases*, AASB 116 *Property, Plant and Equipment* and AASB 138 *Intangible Assets*).
- Considers whether any other financial statement elements should be recognised ('related amounts') in accordance with the relevant applicable Australian Accounting Standard including:
  - Contributions by owners (AASB 1004 *Contributions*)
  - A lease liability (AASB 16 *Leases*)
  - Revenue, or a contract liability arising from a contract with a customer (AASB 15)
  - A financial instrument (AASB 9 *Financial Instruments*)
  - A provision (AASB 137 *Provisions, Contingent Liabilities and Contingent Assets*).
- Recognises income immediately in profit or loss for the excess of the initial carrying amount of the asset over any related amounts recognised.

4.2 Contributions

	Note	2026 $'000	2025 $'000
Monetary	13(a)	12,347	11,909
Total contributions		**12,347**	**11,909**

Consideration for monetary contributions received from Member Councils is solely a performance obligation under an enforceable contract (Library Agreement) and is sufficiently specific to enable determination as to when the obligation has been satisfied. Monetary contributions are therefore accounted for under AASB 15 and are recognised as revenue as the performance obligation is satisfied over time.

4.3 Other Income

	2026 $'000	2025 $'000
Interest	202	205
Software Licencing	132	105
Other	126	142
Total other income	**460**	**452**

Interest is recognised as it is earned.

Other income is measured at the fair value of the consideration received or receivable and is recognised when the Company gains control over the right to receive the income.

Note 5 EXPENSES

Expenses are recognised as they are incurred and reported in the financial year to which they relate.

5.1 Employee Costs

	Note	2026 $'000	2025 $'000
Wages and salaries		8,590	8,223
WorkCover		100	77
Superannuation			
Superannuation Funds	18	1,059	962
Defined Benefit Plans (Vision Super)	18	85	92
Fringe benefits tax		5	9
Annual leave		753	738
Long service leave		180	245
Other leave		81	126
Total employee costs		**10,853**	**10,472**

Employee Costs include all costs related to employment including wages and salaries, fringe benefit tax, all leave entitlements and WorkCover premiums.

Wages and salaries include payments to key management personnel, permanent and casual employees as salaries, allowances, overtime, weekend penalties, casual loading and termination payments.

Refer to Note 12 for further information relating to key management personnel and refer to Note 18 for further information relating to the Company's superannuation obligations.

5.2 Materials and Services

	2026 $'000	2025 $'000
Office administration	773	743
Information technology	848	617
Library consumables	462	427
Contract payments	153	151
Insurance	94	84
Repairs and maintenance	55	32
Consultants	44	43
Utilities	6	2
Total materials and services	**2,435**	**2,099**

5.3 Depreciation

	2026 $'000	2025 $'000
Library materials	1,970	1,874
Furniture and equipment	312	220
Plant	10	10
Total depreciation	**2,292**	**2,104**

Note 6 CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS

	2026 $'000	2025 $'000
Cash at bank	4,257	4,170
Total cash and cash equivalents	**4,257**	**4,170**

Cash and cash equivalents include cash on hand, deposits at call, and other highly liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less, net of outstanding bank overdrafts.

Note 7 PLANT, FURNITURE, EQUIPMENT AND LIBRARY MATERIALS

SUMMARY OF PLANT, FURNITURE, EQUIPMENT AND LIBRARY MATERIALS

	2026 $'000	2025 $'000
Library materials - at cost	14,550	13,860
Less: Accumulated Depreciation	(9,252)	(8,801)
	5,298	**5,059**
Furniture and equipment - at cost	3,151	3,162
Reconciliation of the opening and closing balances of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment for 2026	(1,569)	(1,679)
	1,582	**1,483**
Plant - at cost	104	104
Less: Accumulated Depreciation	(33)	(22)
	71	**82**
Total Plant, Furniture, Equipment and Library Materials	**6,951**	**6,624**

RECONCILIATION OF THE OPENING AND CLOSING BALANCES OF PROPERTY, INFRASTRUCTURE, PLANT AND EQUIPMENT FOR 2026

As at 1 July 2025	**Library materials** $'000	**Furniture and IT equipment** $'000	**Plant** $'000	**Total** $'000
At cost	13,860	3,162	104	17,126
Accumulated depreciation	(8,801)	(1,679)	(22)	(10,502)
Total as at 1 July 2025	**5,059**	**1,483**	**82**	**6,624**
Movements in cost				
Additions	2,209	441	-	2,650
Disposal	(1,519)	(83)	-	(1,602)
	690	**358**	**-**	**1,048**
Movements in accumulated depreciation				
Depreciation and amortisation	(1,970)	(312)	(11)	(2,293)
Accumulated depreciation of disposals	1,520	53	-	1,573
	(450)	**(259)**	**(11)**	**(720)**
Total as at 30 June 2026 represented by:				
At cost	14,550	3,151	104	17,805
Accumulated depreciation	(9,252)	(1,569)	(33)	(10,854)
Total as at 30 June 2026	**5,298**	**1,582**	**71**	**6,951**

Acquisition

The purchase method of accounting is used for all acquisitions of assets, being the fair value of assets provided as consideration at the date of acquisition plus any incidental costs attributable to the acquisition. Fair value is the price that would be received to sell an asset (or paid to transfer a liability) in an orderly transaction between market participants at the measurement date.

In accordance with the Company's policy, the threshold limits have applied when recognising assets within an applicable asset class and unless otherwise stated are consistent with the prior year.

Asset recognition thresholds and depreciation periods	**Depreciation Period**	**Threshold Limit**
		$'000
Plant, furniture, and equipment		
Furniture and equipment	3 - 10 years	5
Plant	6 - 10 years	5
Library materials		
Paperbacks	3 years	
eBooks	3 years	
Audio books	4 years	
Games	4 years	
Music CDs	5 years	
Videos and DVDs	6 years	
Library books and other hardbacks	8 years	
Adult and junior reference	10 years	

Library books

Library books and other materials withdrawn from circulation and consequently disposed are written back against accumulated depreciation and cost based on an average cost of books.

Depreciation and amortisation

All plant, furniture, equipment, library materials and intangible assets having limited useful lives are systematically depreciated over their useful lives to the Company in a manner which reflects consumption of the service potential embodied in those assets. Estimates of remaining useful lives and residual values are made on a regular basis with major asset classes reassessed annually. Depreciation rates and methods are reviewed annually.

Where assets have separate identifiable components that are subject to regular replacement, these components are assigned distinct useful lives and residual values and a separate depreciation rate is determined for each component.

Straight line depreciation is charged based on the residual useful life as determined each year.

Depreciation periods used are listed above and are consistent with the prior year unless otherwise stated.

Impairment of assets

At each reporting date, the Company reviews the carrying value of its assets to determine whether there is any indication that these assets have been impaired. If such an indication exists, the recoverable amount of the asset, being the higher of the asset's fair value less costs of disposal and value in use, is compared to the asset carrying value. Any excess of the asset carrying value over its recoverable amount is recognised as an impairment loss in the statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income.

Repairs and maintenance

Where the repair relates to the replacement of a component of an asset and the cost exceeds the capitalisation threshold the cost is capitalised and depreciated. The carrying value of the replaced asset is expensed.

Note 8 TRADE AND OTHER PAYABLES

	2026 $'000	2025 $'000
Current		
Non-statutory payables		
Trade payables	95	118
Accrued expenses	32	30
Salaries accruals	322	291
Superannuation payable - defined benefits	41	1
Superannuation payable	60	56
Statutory payables		
PAYG withholding payable	85	79
FBT instalment payable	2	2
Net GST payable	215	205
Total current trade and other payables	**852**	**782**

Note 9 PROVISIONS

	2026 $'000	2025 $'000
Employee provisions		
Current		
Annual leave	607	591
Long service leave	136	95
Total current provisions	**743**	**686**
Non-current		
Long service leave	1,202	1,266
Total non-current provisions	**1,202**	**1,266**

Annual leave

A liability for annual leave is recognised in the provision for employee benefits as a current liability because the Company does not have an unconditional right to defer settlement of the liability. Liabilities for annual leave are measured at:

- nominal value if the Company expects to wholly settle the liability within 12 months
- present value if the Company does not expect to wholly settle within 12 months.

Liabilities that are not expected to be wholly settled within 12 months of the reporting date are recognised in the provision for employee benefits as current liabilities, measured at the present value of the amounts expected to be paid when the liabilities are settled using the remuneration rate expected to apply at the time of settlement.

Long service leave

Liability for long service leave (LSL) is recognised in the provision for employee benefits. Unconditional LSL is disclosed as a current liability as the Company does not have an unconditional right to defer settlement. Unconditional LSL is measured at nominal value if expected to be settled within 12 months or at present value if not expected to be settled within 12 months. Conditional LSL that has been accrued, where an employee is yet to reach a qualifying term of employment, is disclosed as a non-current liability and measured at present value.

Discount rates are based on Group of 100 Discount Rate published by Milliman Research.

Key assumptions - Annual leave:	**2026**	**2025**
Weighted average discount rate	3.96%	3.15%
Weighted average index rate	2.31%	2.51%
Key assumptions - Long service leave:		
Weighted average discount rate - current	5.00%	4.51%
Weighted average discount rate - non-current	5.22%	4.28%
Weighted average index rate - current	2.27%	2.33%
Weighted average index rate - non-current	2.31%	2.51%

Note 10 MEMBERS' CONTRIBUTION

	2026 $'000	2025 $'000
Members' Contribution	6,816	6,816
The percentage share of the Members' Contribution is as follows:	%	%
Yarra Ranges Shire Council	38.72	38.72
Knox City Council	36.39	36.39
Maroondah City Council	24.89	24.89
	100.00	100.00

These percentages align with the councils' initial contributions and equity balances from the Eastern Regional Libraries Corporation that were transferred on 1 July 2023 to Your Library Limited. As outlined in the Your Library Agreement, member councils retain certain rights regarding the net assets contributed. Specifically, in the event of a council exiting the company, they have the right to direct the transfer of their proportionate share of net assets held for the benefit of their respective Local Government Areas, subject to the terms of the agreement.

There have been no changes to member contributions or percentage allocations during the 2026 financial year.

Your Library Ltd assumed responsibility for providing library services previously managed by Eastern Regional Libraries Corporation on 1 July 2023. This transition was as result of the Local Government Act 2020, which required all library corporations to be wound up within ten years from 1 July 2021.

As outlined in the Your Library Agreement, the net assets of the Eastern Regional Libraries Corporation as at midnight on 30 June 2023, totalling $6.816 million, were recognised as 'Members' Contribution' in the balance sheet of Your Library Ltd as of 1 July 2023.

Note 11 ACCUMULATED SURPLUS

	2026 $'000	2025 $'000
Balance at beginning of the financial year	1,393	705
Surplus for the year	252	688
Balance at end of the financial year	**1,645**	**1,393**

The closing balance at 30 June 2026 reflects the net accumulated surplus of Your Library Limited since operations commenced on 1 July 2023.

Note 12 KEY MANAGEMENT PERSONNEL

This note sets out the information about the remuneration of key management personnel. Apart from the details disclosed in this note, no key management personnel has entered into a material contract with the Company and there were no material contracts involving any key management personnel's interest existing at year end.

Key management personnel (KMP) are those people with the authority and responsibility for planning, directing and controlling the activities of the Company.

The Company's directors and Chief Executive Officer are considered as KMP. The Company's directors do not receive any remuneration for their services as Board members.

Remuneration comprises employee benefits including all forms of consideration paid, payable or provided by the Company, or on behalf of the Company, in exchange for services rendered. Remuneration of Key Management Personnel and Other senior staff is disclosed in the following categories.

Short-term employee benefits include amounts such as wages, salaries, annual leave or sick leave that are usually paid or payable on a regular basis, as well as non-monetary benefits such as allowances and free or subsidised goods or services.

Other long-term employee benefits include long service leave, other long service benefits or deferred compensation.

Post-employment benefits include pensions, and other retirement benefits paid or payable on a discrete basis when employment has ceased.

Termination benefits include termination of employment payments, such as severance packages.

	2026 $'000	2025 $'000
The remuneration of key management personnel included in "employee costs" (see Note 5.1) are as follows:		
Short-term employee benefits	255	215
Other long-term employee benefits	14	5
Post-employment benefits	29	25
Total	**298**	**245**

Note 13 RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS

	2026 $'000	2025 $'000
(a) Transactions with related parties		
During the period, the Company entered into the following transactions with related parties:		
Contributions		
Monetary contributions		
Knox City Council	4,644	4,430
Yarra Ranges Shire Council	4,493	4,362
Maroondah City Council	3,210	3,117
Total monetary contributions	**12,347**	**11,909**

Contributions from the above three Councils are received in approximately equal quarterly instalments throughout the year. Contributions are received during the months of July, October, January and April.

Monetary and non-monetary contributions are recognised as revenue when the Company obtains control over the contributed asset.

Library Branch Premises

The three Member Councils provide and maintain the library branch premises within their respective municipalities at no cost to Your Library Limited. The annual operating costs incurred by each Member Council to support and maintain these facilities are outlined below:

	2026 $'000	2025 $'000
Knox City Council	1,555	1,354
Yarra Ranges Shire Council	774	839
Maroondah City Council	179	110
Total	**2,508**	**2,303**

(b) Outstanding balances with related parties

There were no reportable balances outstanding at the end of the reporting period in relation to transactions with related parties. (2025: Nil)

(c) Loans to/from related parties

No loans have been made, guaranteed or secured by the Company to a related party during the reporting year. (2025: Nil)

(d) Commitments to/from related parties

No transactions other than the Council contributions, remuneration payments or the reimbursement of approved expenses were entered into by the Company with key management personnel or related parties during the reporting year. (2025: Nil)

Note 14 CONTINGENT ASSETS AND LIABILITIES

Contingent assets and contingent liabilities are not recognised in the Statement of Financial Position, but are disclosed and if quantifiable, are measured at nominal value. Contingent assets and liabilities are presented inclusive of GST receivable or payable, respectively.

Contingent liabilities

Contingent liabilities are:

- possible obligations that arise from past events, whose existence will be confirmed only by the occurrence or non-occurrence of one or more uncertain future events not wholly within the control of the Company; or
- present obligations that arise from past events but are not recognised because:
- it is not probable that an outflow of resources embodying economic benefits will be required to settle the obligation; or
- the amount of the obligation cannot be measured with sufficient reliability.

Contingent liabilities arising from public liability

The Company is occasionally met with claims and demands allegedly arising from incidents that occur on premises used by the Company. The Company carries $600 million of public liability insurance and has an excess of $2,500 per claim on this policy. Therefore, the maximum liability of the Company in any single claim is the extent of the excess. The primary insurer is MAV insurance. There are no claims that the Company is aware of which would fall outside the terms of the Company's policy.

The Company is not aware of other contingent liabilities or contingent assets as at 30 June 2026 (2025: None).

Defined benefit superannuation scheme

The Company has obligations under a defined benefit superannuation scheme that may result in the need to make additional contributions to the scheme. As a result of the volatility in financial markets the likelihood of making such contributions in future periods exists. At this point in time, it is not known if additional contributions will be required, their timing or potential amount. The Company has not received a funding request as at the date of this report.

Note 15 FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS

	Note	2026 $'000	2025 $'000
Categories of financial instruments			
Financial assets			
Financial assets held at amortised cost			
Cash and cash equivalents	6	4,257	4,170
Trade and other receivables (excluding statutory receivables)		96	100
Total financial assets held at amortised cost		**4,353**	**4,270**
Total financial assets		**4,353**	**4,270**
Financial liabilities			
Financial liabilities measured at amortised cost			
Trade and other payables (excluding statutory payables)	8	550	496
Lease liabilities		254	389
Total financial liabilities measured at amortised cost		**804**	**885**
Total financial liabilities		**804**	**885**

Note 16 COMMITMENTS

Commitments are not recognised in the Statement of Financial Position. Commitments are disclosed at their nominal value and presented inclusive of the GST payable.

The Company has entered into the following commitments:

	2026 $'000	2025 $'000
Rent		
Less than one year	172	167
More than one year and less than two years	121	172
More than two years and less than five years	-	121
Total rent commitment	**293**	**460**
Subscriptions		
Less than one year	235	225
Total subscriptions commitment	**235**	**225**
Summary of commitments		
Less than one year	407	392
More than one year and less than two years	121	172
More than two years and less than five years	-	121
Total commitments	**528**	**685**

Note 17 RECONCILIATION OF CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES TO SURPLUS

	2026 $'000	2025 $'000
Surplus for the year	252	688
Items not involving cash		
Depreciation/amortisation	2,425	2,237
Change in assets and liabilities:		
(Increase)/decrease in trade and other receivables	4	52
(Increase)/decrease in other assets	(7)	35
Increase/(decrease) in trade and other payables	70	314
(Decrease)/increase in other liabilities	104	80
(Decrease)/increase in provisions	(7)	106
Net cash provided by operating activities	**2,841**	**3,512**

Note 18 SUPERANNUATION

The Company makes the majority of its employer superannuation contributions in respect of its employees to the Local Authorities Superannuation Fund (the Fund). This Fund has two categories of membership, accumulation and defined benefit, each of which is funded differently. The Company also makes employer contributions to various other funds of employees' choice. Obligations for contributions to these Funds are recognised as an expense in the Statement of Profit or Loss and Other Comprehensive Income when they are made or due.

Accumulation

The Fund's accumulation category, Vision MySuper/Vision Super Saver, receives both employer and employee contributions on a progressive basis. Employer contributions are normally based on a fixed percentage of employee earnings (for the year ended 30 June 2026, this was 12% as required under Superannuation Guarantee (SG) legislation (2025: 11.5%)).

Defined benefit

The Company does not use defined benefit accounting for its defined benefit obligations under the Fund's Defined Benefit category. This is because the Fund's Defined Benefit category is a pooled multi-employer sponsored plan. There is no proportional split of the defined benefit liabilities, assets or costs between the participating employers as the defined benefit obligation is a floating obligation between the participating employers and the only time that the aggregate obligation is allocated to specific employers is when a call is made. As a result, the level of participation of Your Library Ltd in the Fund cannot be measured as a percentage compared with other participating employers. Therefore, the Fund Actuary is unable to allocate benefit liabilities, assets and costs between employers for the purposes of AASB 119. Your Library Ltd makes superannuation contributions to the defined benefit category of the fund at rates determined by the Trustee on the advice of the fund's actuary.

Defined Benefit plans are required by law to have an actuarial investigation at least once every three years. The vested benefit position is reviewed on a quarterly basis and The Vested Benefit Index (VBI) of the Defined Benefit category was 111.4% as at 31 Dec 2025.

Note 19 SUBSEQUENT EVENTS

No matters have occurred after balance date that require disclosure in the financial report.

Directors' Declaration

for the year ended 30 June 2026

The Directors of Your Library Ltd declare that in our opinion:

a) there are reasonable grounds to believe that Your Library Ltd will be able to pay its debts as and when they become due and payable; and

b) the attached financial statements comply with the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012* and comply with Australian Accounting Standards - Simplified Disclosures; and

c) the attached financial statements and notes give a true and fair view of the Company's financial position as at 30 June 2026 and of its performance for the financial year ended on that date.

Signed in accordance with subsection 60.15(2) of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Regulations 2022*.



Cr Mitch Mazzarella

ARAC Chair and Director



Cr Kylie Spears

Board Chair and Director

Dated: 15/09/2026

Scoresby

YOUR LIBRARY

Visit us

KNOX LIBRARIES

Bayswater Library
Shop 43, Mountain High Shopping Centre
7-13 High Street, Bayswater

Boronia Library
Park Crescent, Boronia

Ferntree Gully Library
1010 Burwood Hwy
Ferntree Gully

Knox Library | Ngarrgoo
Level 3, Westfield Knox
425 Burwood Hwy
Wantirna South

Miller's Homestead
Dorrigo Dr & Melrose Ct
Boronia

Rowville Library
Stud Park Shopping Centre
Stud Road, Rowville

MAROONDAH LIBRARIES

Croydon Library
5 Civic Square
Croydon

Realm Library
Ringwood Town Square
179 Maroondah Hwy
Ringwood

YARRA RANGES LIBRARIES

Belgrave Library
Reynolds Lane, Belgrave

Healesville Library
110 River Street, Healesville

Lilydale Library
Building L5, Box Hill Institute
Lilydale Lakeside Campus
Jarlo Drive, Lilydale

Montrose Library
935 Mount Dandenong Tourist Road, Montrose

Mooroolbark Library
7 Station Street
Mooroolbark

Yarra Junction Library
1A Hoddle Street
Yarra Junction

COMMUNITY READING ROOMS

Mt Evelyn Reading Room
50 Wray Crescent
Mount Evelyn

Monbulk Reading Room
Monbulk Living and Learning Centre
21 Main Road, Monbulk

Yarra Glen Reading Room
45 Bell Street, Yarra Glen

Contact us

ADMINISTRATION
10 Caribbean Drive
Scoresby

CALL
1300 737 277

ONLINE
yourlibrary.vic.gov.au

8.4 Domestic Animal Management Plan Action – Community Cat Program and Desexing Report

Final Report Destination:	Council
Paper Type:	For Noting
Author:	Coordinator Community Laws and Emergency Mgt., Paul Anastasi Team Leader Community Laws, Jaimee Corcoran
Manager:	Manager City Safety & Health, Tania Triantafilopoulos
Executive:	Director, City Liveability, Jonathan McNally

SUMMARY

This report responds to item B) 2. of Notice of Motion No. 187, adopted by Council on 29 September 2025 (Attachment 1), which required the Knox Domestic Animal Management Plan 2026–2029 (DAMP) to include an investigation into how a community cat program or cat desexing program could be implemented in Knox. The investigation was to consider Australian Pet Welfare Foundation and other peer-reviewed evidence, proactive microtargeted desexing initiatives such as the program previously implemented by Banyule City Council, potential animal management cost savings, and completion by December 2026. The requirements of Notice of motion No. 187 were incorporated into Action 4.0.4 of the DAMP.

Community Cat Programs (CCPs) refer to various approaches aimed at managing owned, semi-owned and unowned free-roaming cats. They may include targeted desexing, microchipping, registration, owner support, rehoming and, in some jurisdictions, Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR). This report examines these approaches alongside Knox's current framework, relevant research, legislative, financial and resource considerations, and consultation with Animal Welfare Victoria, the Australian Pet Welfare Foundation (APWF) and Banyule City Council.

The investigation found that program outcomes depend on design, local circumstances, community participation and sustained resourcing. Research and stakeholder feedback identify potential benefits from targeted desexing, microchipping, registration, owner support and lawful rehoming. However, the additional benefits and savings of a broader Community Cat Program in Knox have not been established.

Knox already requires mandatory desexing before registration, microchipping, and 24-hour cat containment, and provides subsidised desexing and case management for recurring issues. In 2025–26, 386 cats entered Council's pound. Council's 2026 "Snip and Chip" program was fully booked and desexed 20 cats, 19 of which were not previously microchipped. These figures demonstrate ongoing demand and interest in targeted assistance, but available data does not reliably establish the wider population of semi-owned and unowned cats or the likely population-level impact of a broader initiative.

Three options were considered: continue the existing approach and current DAMP actions; enhance targeted desexing and ownership support; or develop a broader Community Cat Program. Traditional Trap-Neuter-Return models face significant legislative constraints in Victoria, while responsible ownership, targeted assistance and Capture-Desex-Adopt approaches are more

consistent with the Domestic Animals Act 1994 (Vic) (DAA) and the Victorian Cat Management Strategy.

Given Knox's existing framework, limitations in local data and uncertainty about the additional benefits and costs of a broader program, the preferred option is to continue the current approach while pursuing targeted improvements where appropriate. No additional program funding has been allocated; any new initiative would require further assessment through Council's budget process and would need to comply with Victorian legislation and complement existing cat management measures.

RECOMMENDATION
That Council note:

1. The findings of the investigation into how a community cat program or cat desexing program could be implemented in Knox, including the relevant evidence and legislative requirements, stakeholder, financial and resource considerations outlined in this report.
2. Knox's existing cat management framework includes mandatory desexing before registration, microchipping, 24-hour cat containment, limited desexing assistance and targeted case management for recurring cat management issues.
3. That Council will continue implementing the Domestic Animal Management Plan 2026–2029 and existing cat management measures, while considering targeted desexing initiatives where demonstrated need and funding opportunities exist. Any new initiative would require further assessment through Council's budget process.

1. DISCUSSION

1.1 Community Cat Programs

Community Cat Programs (CCPs) are a broad term used to describe various approaches to managing free-roaming, stray, semi-owned and, in some cases, unowned cats.

Depending on the model, CCPs may include subsidised or free desexing, microchipping and registration, community education, owner support, rehoming, and assistance to transition semi-owned cats into formal ownership. Some programs also address unowned cats through trapping and assessment, with outcomes determined by the cat's health, temperament, ownership status and relevant legislative requirements. Programs are commonly delivered through partnerships between councils, veterinary providers, animal welfare organisations and community groups.

For the purposes of this investigation, it is important to distinguish between traditional Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) models, which involve trapping free-roaming cats, desexing them and returning them to the location where they were found, and prevention focused programs that instead support desexing, identification, formal ownership, adoption and rehoming. This distinction is particularly relevant in Victoria, where legislative requirements relating to the seizure, identification, holding, ownership and disposal of cats mean that a program involving the trapping and return of unowned cats would need to be assessed separately from one focused on subsidised desexing, microchipping, registration, rehoming and owner support.

CCPs may seek to reduce unplanned litters, free-roaming cat populations, shelter or pound intake, nuisance complaints and other animal management impacts, while supporting cat welfare and

responsible ownership. Outcomes vary depending on program design, the cats targeted, the level and duration of intervention, community participation and the broader regulatory environment.

Reflecting these different design and delivery considerations, Victorian councils have adopted varied approaches to cat management, with many offering desexing programs, particularly to support disadvantaged and low-income residents. Among those with specific Community Cat Programs, Banyule City Council previously operated a program but no longer does so.

A current example of a more established model is the City of Greater Bendigo which operates a Community Cat Program through the Bendigo Animal Relief Centre (BARC). It offers eligible residents caring for acquired or community cats access to low-cost desexing, vaccination, microchipping, flea and worm treatment, and council registration from $20. Cats participating in the program may be required to stay at BARC for up to eight days. This program has received significant government grant funding, including $15,725 in 2021 and $75,000 in 2022.

BARC has offered cat desexing programs for more than five years, during which over 1,100 cats have been desexed. These programs have contributed to a 28% reduction in cat admissions compared with 2022–23 with the outcomes attributed to the combined impact of the Community Cat Program and other measures, including 24-hour cat containment. These initiatives have likely prevented a substantial number of unwanted litters as well, helping to reduce cat overpopulation and the associated demand on animal welfare services.

A smaller scale and more recent example is in Towong Shire Council which in 2025-26, offered a fully subsidised program providing desexing, microchipping and registration for eligible residents caring for semi-owned and unowned cats, to support their transition into formal ownership. The program subsequently closed after reaching capacity and exhausting its allocated funding.

These examples indicate that Community Cat Programs may improve access to desexing, reduce unplanned breeding, strengthen identification and registration, support owners and carers, and provide rehoming pathways. However, outcomes depend on program design, community participation, veterinary capacity, sustained funding, clear ownership and accountability, and compliance with Victorian legislation.

Against this background, in its submission on the draft DAMP and during stakeholder engagement, the APWF advocated targeted interventions to reduce unplanned breeding and free-roaming cat populations, with the longer-term aim of reducing cat impoundments and associated animal management impacts. Its proposed approach also seeks to improve cat welfare by increasing access to desexing, identification and responsible ownership support. Accordingly, for Knox, the key consideration is whether these interventions would deliver additional benefits beyond existing cat management measures, and whether those benefits could be achieved at a reasonable cost and within the applicable legislative framework.

1.2 Current cat management approach in Knox

Council recently reviewed and adopted its Domestic Animal Management Plan 2026–2029, which includes actions to strengthen cat management, promote responsible cat ownership and address issues associated with cats in the community.

These actions include:

- Applying for grants to support low-cost desexing programs;
- Working with Council's pound provider on early intervention strategies to address animal overpopulation and euthanasia;
- Increasing animal registration and identification through proactive compliance audits and clearer information about desexing and registration; and
- Promoting cat containment and educating the community about the impacts of semi-owned cats on sensitive natural areas.

As at June 2026, approximately 6,300 cats are registered with Knox City Council. Despite the relatively stable number of cat registrations across Victoria over the past decade, there remains a significant gap between cat ownership and registration. In 2023, an estimated 913,629 cats were owned in Victoria, compared with 224,382 registered cats. This disparity highlights the ongoing challenge of achieving registration compliance and promoting responsible cat ownership.

Under the Domestic Animals Act 1994 (Vic), cats three months of age and over are required to be registered with Council and must be microchipped before first registration. Knox has had a Council order requiring the compulsory desexing of cats prior to registration since 10 April 2011, unless an exemption under the Act applies.

Council also has a 24-hour cat containment order requiring all cats to be securely contained on their owner's property at all times. The order was adopted by Council in 2021 and took effect on 10 April 2022. Council also requires a Local Law permit where a resident wishes to keep more than two cats at the same property.

In addition to these requirements, the *Domestic Animals Act 1994* provides mechanisms for Council to manage nuisance cats and address repeated trespass by cats onto another person's property.

Within the regulatory framework, Knox manages cat-related issues through compliance activity, animal services, desexing assistance and case management of properties associated with recurring cat management issues.

Cats generally come into Council's care when a resident traps a cat in response to an ongoing cat-related issue, or when a resident finds a cat and safely contains it for Council collection. Where the owner of a registered cat can be identified and contacted, Council may return the cat directly to its owner without it being impounded. Where the cat is not registered, or the owner cannot be identified or contacted, Council will impound the cat in accordance with legislative requirements. Impounded cats are subject to a statutory holding period of at least eight days, providing an opportunity for the owner to reclaim the cat before it becomes eligible for rehoming or another lawful outcome. This process ensures that cats are managed consistently with legislative requirements, provides legal certainty regarding ownership, and maximises opportunities for reunification while supporting appropriate animal welfare outcomes.

Microchipping plays an important role in enabling the identification and reunification of cats with their owners. For microchipping to be effective, owner contact details associated with the microchip need to remain accurate and up to date. Where details are outdated or inaccurate, Council, pounds and veterinary practices may be unable to locate or contact the owner. In

addition, identification of an owner does not necessarily result in the cat being reclaimed, as some owners may choose not to reclaim their cat.

Knox's cat impoundments have fluctuated over the past five years, averaging approximately 374 cats per year and peaking in 2023–24 with 436 cats impounded. In 2025–26, 386 cats entered Council's pound. Of these, 232 found a new home, 36 were reclaimed by their owners, 69 were euthanised and the outcomes for the remaining 49 cats have yet to be confirmed.

In 2024–25, 59 of the 205 adult cats entering the pound were recorded as having identification. Of the 58 adult cats reclaimed, 57 had identification, indicating that it is highly probable that almost all reclaimed cats were identifiable. In 2025–26, the number of adult cats entering the pound with identification increased substantially, from 59 to 129; however, the number of adult cats reclaimed decreased from 58 to 33. This indicates that, while identification is an important enabler of reunification, identification alone does not necessarily result in a cat being reclaimed. Council is seeking further information from the pound provider regarding the outcomes for identified cats that were not reclaimed, including whether owners were able to be contacted, whether the owner details associated with the identification were current, and whether a reason for non-reclaim was recorded. This information may assist Council in understanding whether financial, practical or other factors are contributing to non-reclaim outcomes.

The cost of providing Council's animal collection and impoundment service was $177,577 in 2025–26, covering 624 animals, primarily cats and dogs. The contracted rate for 2025–26 was $190.91 per animal, excluding GST. However, the effective cost per animal can vary from year to year as the Pound contract is subject to an annual minimum spend. Where animal intake numbers are insufficient to meet the minimum contract value, Council makes a gap payment, which increases the effective cost per animal. In 2025–26, this resulted in an effective cost of approximately $285 per animal.

Taken together, the available data confirms that cat impoundment remains an ongoing animal management activity, but it does not establish how many impounded cats were owned, semi-owned or unowned, reliably estimate the wider free roaming cat population, or identify all locations where additional intervention may be beneficial. These limitations make it difficult to determine the scale of any additional need or the likely effectiveness of a broader program. During consultation on the draft DAMP, some respondents supported Community Cat Programs and targeted desexing to address issues associated with semi-owned and unowned cats. Some of these respondents also called for Council to remove its 24-hour cat containment requirement. Targeted desexing and cat containment address different aspects of cat management and can operate together. Desexing helps prevent unwanted litters, while containment limits cats' roaming and potential impacts on wildlife and the community. Any additional desexing initiative would therefore need to complement Knox's existing containment requirements and responsible ownership measures.

Against this background, the following analysis considers whether alternative or additional interventions could reduce unplanned breeding and cat impoundments, improve cat welfare and responsible ownership, and support more effective use of Council resources.

1.3 Council's desexing activities

Council has historically provided subsidised desexing assistance through a range of initiatives, including through the MAV/AVA desexing voucher scheme, which provided financial assistance to

eligible concession and pension card holders to desex their cats and dogs. The MAV/AVA scheme is no longer operating.

In 2021, Council received a $25,000 State Government grant to support a discounted desexing program for vulnerable and disadvantaged residents. The program assisted with the desexing of 103 animals, comprising 78 dogs and 25 cats. While the funding has been fully expended, Council may have opportunities to provide similar assistance through future grant funding, should funding become available.

In 2026, Council partnered with The Vet Project to deliver a subsidised "Snip and Chip" day, with Council contributing $119 per cat and owners contributing $50. The program included free microchipping and registration, was fully booked, and resulted in 20 cats being desexed. The program also provided a significant microchipping benefit, with 19 of the 20 cats not previously microchipped. The uptake of the “Snip and Chip” program indicates demand for affordable cat desexing and shows how partnerships and subsidies can also increase microchipping and registration.

Council also partners with Animal Aid which provides low-cost desexing for eligible Knox residents. Pensioner Concession Card and Health Care Card holders can currently access a $40 package that includes cat desexing, microchipping and a health check.

In addition to broader subsidised desexing programs, Council provides targeted assistance through its case management of properties associated with recurring or significant cat management issues. These cases may involve multiple cats at a single property. Depending on the circumstances, Council may assist with desexing, microchipping and registration, together with owner education and support aimed at reducing cat numbers.

Together, these initiatives and community feedback provide a basis for considering further opportunities to support affordable cat desexing. More than 51 per cent of respondents to the DAMP consultation indicated that it was very important for Council to provide reduced-rate desexing services.

1.4 Legislative considerations

Cats in Knox may be owned, semi-owned or unowned, with no current evidence available to Council indicating a significant population of true feral cats, as distinct from unowned or semi-owned domestic cats.

Any Community Cat Program (CCP) implemented in Knox would need to comply with the *Domestic Animals Act 1994* (DAA), and Council's existing cat management orders. Key considerations include registration, identification, ownership, seizure, statutory holding, rehoming and the ongoing management of cats within the community.

Under section 10 of the DAA, cats over three months of age must be registered with the relevant Council. In Knox, registration requires cats to be microchipped and desexed, unless an exemption applies under the DAA. Registrations must also be renewed annually before 10 April. These requirements would need to be considered in any CCP, particularly where the program proposes to assist with the desexing, identification or registration of cats that are currently unregistered.

The DAA also provides a statutory process for cats found at large. Sections 84 and 84A allow a person to seize a cat found outside its owner's premises in certain circumstances. Under section 84D, a seized cat must then be delivered to a Council authorised officer, Council pound, animal shelter or consenting veterinary practitioner. These provisions are relevant to any CCP involving community members trapping or taking possession of cats.

Determining ownership is particularly important. Many community cats are cared for or fed by residents who may consider themselves the cat's carer, while the cat may still have a lawful owner. Regularly feeding or caring for a cat does not, by itself, establish that the cat is unowned or provide the person with the authority to bypass the statutory process. A CCP would therefore need to establish clear processes for determining whether a cat is owned, semi-owned or unowned and ensure that cats are managed in accordance with the DAA before they are transferred, adopted or otherwise dealt with.

Section 84M requires a seized cat to be held for a statutory period of eight days to provide the owner with an opportunity to reclaim the animal. The owner must provide evidence of ownership and meet the applicable requirements for reclaiming the cat. In circumstances where the cat is required to be registered, this includes meeting the relevant registration requirements, including microchipping and desexing. Section 84O provides that where a cat is not reclaimed, it may then be rehomed or adopted in accordance with the Act. This means that, where a CCP involves cats that are required to be seized under the DAA, the cats would still need to enter Council's pound and be held for the 8-day statutory period before they can be lawfully adopted to a new owner.

A CCP could support the identification of a suitable new owner during this process but would not remove the existing statutory requirements for seizure, holding, ownership assessment and lawful rehoming. Accordingly, the costs associated with pound intake and statutory holding may still apply to cats managed through a CCP and should not be assumed to be avoided or available for direct reallocation to the CCP.

These provisions create an important distinction between a CCP and the traditional TNR model used in some overseas programs. A conventional TNR approach generally involves trapping an unowned or free-roaming cat, desexing it and returning it to the location where it was found, without requiring the cat to enter a statutory impoundment or ownership assessment process. The DAA does not provide a mechanism for Council to simply trap, desex and return a cat without consideration of the statutory requirements relating to seizure, ownership, holding periods and lawful disposal. As a result, a traditional TNR model could not be directly adopted in Knox without legislative change or an alternative lawful mechanism being established.

Council's 24-hour cat containment order is also relevant. The order requires cats to be securely contained on their owner's property at all times. Any CCP would therefore need to consider how cats are managed following desexing and whether returning a cat to the location where it was found is consistent with the existing legislative and regulatory framework. This is particularly relevant for cats that are not able to be linked to an owner or are being cared for by a community member. The DAA also provides a mechanism for managing cats that repeatedly enter private property without the permission of the owner or occupier. Under section 23, where a cat has been found on private property without permission on more than one occasion, the property owner, occupier or an authorised officer may seize and ultimately impound the cat.

Collectively, these legislative requirements mean that the implementation of a CCP in Knox would need to be carefully designed to complement, rather than circumvent, Council's existing responsibilities under the DAA. A CPP could potentially include subsidised desexing, microchipping, registration, community education, support for cat carers and assistance with rehoming. However, any component involving the trapping, seizure and return of cats would need to comply with the requirements of the DAA and could not bypass the statutory requirements relating to seizure, identification, holding, registration and ownership.

The key consideration for Council is whether a CCP can achieve the intended cat population management and animal welfare outcomes while operating within Victoria's legislative framework.

1.5 Stakeholder Engagement

As part of preparing this report, Council engaged Stubbs Consulting to facilitate stakeholder interviews and consolidate the feedback into a summary report outlining the key findings
In response to the Notice of Motion three key stakeholders were consulted:
- Banyule City Council;
- the Australian Pet Welfare Foundation (APWF); and
- Animal Welfare Victoria within Agriculture Victoria.

Officers provided each stakeholder with a prepared questionnaire before the interview to guide the discussion. Stubbs Consulting consolidated the feedback received and prepared a report summarising the outcomes provided at Attachment 2 – Stakeholder Interview Report of Outcomes.

The stakeholder engagement identified a range of perspectives on cat management, highlighting the importance of responsible pet ownership, clear accountability for cats, accessible desexing and other practical support, and appropriate responses for owned, semi-owned and unowned cats.

Benchmarking against other Councils in the eastern region indicates Knox's approach to cat management is broadly consistent with those of our neighbouring Councils. No Councils in the eastern region currently operates a targeted cat desexing program or CCP.

Council	Containment	Mandatory Desexing	Desexing Programs
Knox	24 hour	Yes	Animal Aid- $40 for Health care/pension cards Council - Snip and Chip Day
Maroondah	Night-time sunset to sunrise	No	Animal Aid- $40 for Health care/pension cards
Yarra Ranges	24 hour	Yes	Animal Aid- $40 for Health care/pension cards
Casey	24 hour	Yes	50% off Cat Desexing from 30/10/2024 and free microchipping. This program may be discontinued.
Dandenong	Night-time dusk to dawn	No	Council - Subsidised desexing for cats owned by pensioners and registered.
Monash	Night-time sunset/7pm to sunrise	Yes	Animal Aid- $40 for Health care/pension cards

Council	Containment	Mandatory Desexing	Desexing Programs
Whitehorse	Night-time 8pm-6am	Yes	Animal Aid- $40 for Health care/pension cards Council - Subsidised desexing scheme for dogs and cats owned by pensioners.

The stakeholder interviews provide practical and policy perspectives on available program models, but do not constitute a comparative evaluation demonstrating that one approach would necessarily produce better outcomes in Knox. The findings have therefore been considered alongside Council's local data, existing services and legislative obligations.

In its 2025 submission on the Casey DAMP 2026–2029, the APWF estimated Casey City Council's annual cat management costs at approximately $1.83 million, or close to $1,000 per impounded cat. The estimate appears to include pound fees, officer and vehicle time responding to complaints, and impoundment costs. The submission described this as the annual cost of enforcing Casey's 24-hour cat curfew, the submission presents it as a broader cat management estimate and does not separately calculate curfew enforcement costs. During exhibition of the Knox DAMP in October 2025 several submissions were received that also quote these figures. Any potential savings for Knox must account for differing impoundment volumes. Casey recorded 1,987 cat impoundments in 2023–24 and 2,058 in 2024–25, compared with 386 cats entering Knox's pound in 2025–26. Casey's estimate therefore should not be applied directly to Knox, whose pound costs have not increased since 24-hour cat containment was introduced. A targeted desexing or Community Cat Program would not remove the need for collection and statutory impoundment. Given Knox's minimum annual pound contract expenditure, lower cat intake may not reduce Council's costs.

1.5.1 Banyule City Council

Banyule City Council previously operated a Community Cat Program before 2021 but advised that it has not operated such a program for several years. Information available about the former program was limited.

Banyule's historical cat impoundment numbers were substantially lower in the years preceding 2021, with reported impounds increasing from 2021–22 onwards. This period also coincided with changes in staffing, cat management processes and operating arrangements, including the departure of staff involved in the former Community Cat Program.

Banyule's current approach is mandatory cat desexing for newly registered cats from 1 July 2026, as well as a night-time cat curfew from 1 February 2025. Its current regulatory approach is broadly similar to Knox's, although Banyule's curfew operates during specified hours rather than Knox's 24-hour cat containment requirement. Banyule is currently in the second year of a 7.00 pm to 7.00 am cat curfew trial, scheduled to report back to Council by February 2027.

Its current approach combines support for desexing and registration of owned cats with free resident trapping and statutory impoundment and rehoming arrangements through its pound. Free desexing is available to Banyule residents through a free voucher for use at vets in Banyule, with residents required to provide proof of pet registration and microchipping.

Banyule advised that its current desexing support is focused on assisting with desexing and is not a desex-and-return model.

Its approach supports responsible cat ownership by assisting owners with desexing, microchipping and registration, while the trapping and impoundment pathway is focused on reunifying identifiable cats with their owners and rehoming others rather than returning unowned cats to the environment.

Banyule reported uptake of its current desexing assistance has been low, with unused bookings and limited voucher claims identified. Staff identified promotion and community understanding as areas where greater effort may be required to improve participation.

Residents with nuisance cat issues can borrow traps free of charge from Council. Banyule also identified service accessibility, community communication, staff continuity and data quality as important considerations in program delivery.

Recent cat impoundment data provides some context for comparing the cat management circumstances of Banyule and Knox. Between 2021–22 and 2023–24, Banyule recorded consistently higher cat impoundments than Knox, with annual intakes of 439 to 482 cats compared with 367 to 436 in Knox. This occurred despite Banyule having a significantly smaller population, resulting in a higher cat impoundment rate relative to population in each year. This pattern continued in 2025–26, when Banyule recorded 508 cats entering its impoundment pathway compared with 386 in Knox, approximately one-third fewer.

Banyule also recorded fewer registered cats than Knox, although registration levels were broadly similar when adjusted for population.

Knox has required compulsory cat desexing prior to registration since 2011 and has had 24-hour cat containment since April 2022, compared with Banyule's current 7.00 pm to 7.00 am curfew. These differences provide context when considering the different cat intake rates recorded by the two municipalities, but do not establish a causal relationship between particular management measures and impoundment outcomes.

This comparison is relevant to Knox because Banyule’s current approach is not a traditional desex-and-return Community Cat Program. It is more accurately characterised as a combination of desexing support, registration and microchipping requirements, curfew arrangements, free trap access, statutory impoundment and rehoming. Banyule’s experience also indicates that desexing support alone does not necessarily result in high participation or lower impoundment rates.

1.5.2 Australian Pet Welfare Foundation

The Australian Pet Welfare Foundation proposed a targeted, prevention-focused Community Cat Program that distinguishes its approach from traditional TNR. Its proposed model involves engaging with people already feeding or caring for cats and, where appropriate, assisting them to become the identified owner of the cat. Under this approach, cats would be provided with free or no-barrier desexing, microchipping and registration and returned to the owner's home, subject to Knox's existing 24-hour containment requirements.

Where a person is unwilling to assume ownership, or circumstances require seizure, the cat would proceed through Council's existing trapping, statutory holding, assessment and lawful adoption or rehoming processes. APWF proposed that prevention and assistance operate alongside, rather than replace, enforcement.

APWF emphasised the importance of addressing financial and practical barriers to participation, including access to veterinary services and transport. It proposed using Council complaints, impoundment and surrender data to identify higher-need suburbs and then targeting known problem locations within those areas.

For multi-cat properties, APWF recommended prioritising desexing and microchipping of all cats and negotiating gradual reduction in cat numbers through adoption, rather than limiting assistance to two cats.

APWF also recommended sufficient program intensity and duration to achieve measurable outcomes, with a multi-year approach and performance measures including complaints, impoundments, surrenders, reclaim, rehoming, euthanasia and total pound intake.

1.5.3 Animal Welfare Victoria – Victorian Government

Animal Welfare Victoria advised that there is no current legal pathway to desex an unowned or semi-owned cat and return it to the location where it was captured. The State emphasised the importance of clear ownership and accountability for cats, including responsibility for their care and welfare. The State supports lawful alternatives centred on establishing clear ownership and accountability, or capturing, desexing and moving cats into adoption, rehoming or other lawful outcomes. The State identified targeted affordable desexing, containment support, education, improved data and Capture, Desex and Adopt approaches as consistent with the direction of the Victorian Cat Management Strategy 2025-2035.

The Strategy promotes cat welfare and responsible ownership, while recognising the value of cats as companion animals and seeking to balance their wellbeing with protection of wildlife, the environment and the community.

The Victorian Government's Targeted Cat Desexing Grants Program supports free or low-cost desexing in priority areas, including for people caring for semi-owned and unowned cats, and encourages people who feed cats to take responsibility for their care, including registration, vaccination and microchipping. The program is also intended to support reductions in impoundment and euthanasia, although its evaluation is not yet complete.

A common theme emerging from the stakeholder discussions was the importance of responsible pet ownership and clear accountability for cats, while recognising that different approaches may be required for owned, semi-owned and unowned cats.

Stakeholders also identified the importance of reducing practical and financial barriers to desexing and responsible ownership, together with appropriate identification, registration, containment, rehoming and adoption pathways. The discussions also highlighted the importance of recognising the welfare and value of cats as companion animals while maintaining clear responsibilities for their care and management and considering impacts on wildlife, community amenity and the environment.

The discussions also highlighted that cat management is a complex issue that is unlikely to be addressed through a single measure. Prevention, targeted desexing, identification, registration, ownership support, containment, community education, enforcement and appropriate adoption or rehoming pathways may each have a role, depending on the circumstances and the cats being targeted. The destination and accountability for each cat are important considerations, particularly where a cat is semi-owned or unowned and there is no clearly identified person responsible for its ongoing care and management.

The stakeholder discussions also highlighted the importance of supporting cat welfare while maintaining clear responsibilities for those who own or care for cats.

1.6 Peer reviewed research

Supporters of Community Cat Program (CCP) approaches argue they can address underlying causes of free-roaming cat populations by increasing access to desexing, reducing breeding and supporting responsible cat management. Reported benefits include potential reductions in cat-related complaints, impoundments and euthanasia, while reducing reliance on enforcement alone. Education and community engagement are also identified as important to achieving sustainable outcomes.

Conversely, concerns include the welfare of cats that may not receive ongoing veterinary care, continued impacts on native wildlife, nuisance behaviours and the potential for programs to be inconsistent with responsible pet ownership if they do not include registration, identification, containment and owner education.

Traditional approaches have largely relied on legislation, containment, enforcement and removal. However, recent Australian research suggests these measures may have limited effectiveness in addressing the underlying causes of cat overpopulation, particularly where financial barriers, limited access to veterinary services and unowned or semi-owned cats contribute to the problem. A 2025 study advocates a “One Welfare” approach, combining subsidised desexing and microchipping with education and support for owners and carers. Evaluations of CCPs in several Australian locations have reported reductions in shelter intake, euthanasia and cat-related complaints.

While views vary on the role of TNR and the management of community cats, reducing breeding among free-roaming cats is a commonly identified objective across the approaches considered. The approaches considered differ in the relative emphasis placed on containment, removal, desexing, targeted assistance, education and support for responsible ownership. This suggests that a combination of targeted assistance, education and compliance measures could be considered alongside existing enforcement measures rather than as a replacement for them.

1.7 Victorian Cat Management Strategy

The Victorian Cat Management Strategy 2025–2035 provides a State-wide framework for improving cat management and was developed following extensive consultation, including 1,858 survey responses and written submissions from 41 individuals and 38 organisations representing a broad range of stakeholders, including councils, veterinary organisations, animal welfare and rescue groups, conservation organisations, pounds and shelters, land managers and Traditional Owner organisations.

The Strategy takes a broader approach to cat management, encompassing cat welfare and responsible ownership, desexing, containment, semi-owned and unowned cats, feral cat management, collaboration and information sharing, and legislative and process reform.

A key focus of the Strategy is increasing cat desexing, particularly through targeted approaches that address areas with higher populations of semi-owned and unowned cats.

The Strategy supports initiatives such as targeted desexing and Capture, Desex and Adopt programs, rather than approaches that return unowned cats to the location where they were captured, alongside measures to improve registration, identification, containment, responsible ownership and community education.

The Strategy recognises that cat management needs to balance cat welfare, responsible pet ownership, community amenity and protection of native wildlife and the environment. It provides a relevant policy framework for considering a targeted desexing or community cat program in Knox; however, the suitability and effectiveness of any approach would need to be considered in the context of Knox's existing mandatory desexing and 24-hour containment requirements, local cat management data, legislative requirements and available Council resources. Accordingly, a Knox program focused on targeted desexing, microchipping, registration, owner support and rehoming would be more closely aligned with the State's current policy direction of capture, desex and adopt, than with a traditional TNR or return-to-field model.

1.8 Options & Costing

As part of the engagement undertaken with the Australian Pet Welfare Foundation (APWF), Council was provided with the following indicative program targets considered necessary for a CCP to be effective in reducing cat impoundments and, over time, influencing cat reproduction and population levels:

- 60 cats per 1,000 residents – a high-intensity intervention designed to achieve measurable results within 1–2 years. This approach would target problematic suburbs rather than microtargeting specific locations;
- 30 cats per 1,000 residents – a moderate-intensity intervention targeting problematic suburbs, with measurable results anticipated within 3–4 years; and
- 10 cats per 1,000 residents – a lower-intensity intervention targeting problematic suburbs and microtargeting known locations within those areas where cat impoundments, complaints and/or unplanned litters of kittens are most likely to originate.

APWF recommends identifying the highest-ranked suburbs for intervention and targeting those areas at a rate of 30 cats desexed per 1,000 residents in the first year, subject to the available program budget. In practice, this would involve progressively targeting priority areas rather than applying the intervention rate across the whole municipality at once.

The intervention rates provided by APWF are intended to inform the scale and intensity of interventions in identified priority areas. While these rates can be used to illustrate potential program costs, applying them across the entire Knox municipality would not reflect the proposed approach of progressively targeting priority suburbs and specific locations with identified cat management issues.

The number of cats requiring intervention and the associated cost would depend on the locations selected, the estimated number of eligible cats in those areas, the intervention rate applied and the level of community participation. The available information does not currently establish the number of cats in Knox that would be eligible for or likely to participate in such a program.

Based on an indicative cost of $193 per cat for desexing and microchipping, applying APWF's low- to moderate-intensity intervention rates across the entire Knox municipality would equate to approximately $318,450 to $955,350. These figures are illustrative whole-of-municipality scenarios and do not represent the cost of a targeted program. A targeted program would focus on specific areas and depend on the priority locations selected, the intervention rate and the level of participation. The $193 unit cost is based on recent mobile veterinary clinic costings and may change.

The funding model would also need to balance reducing barriers to desexing with ensuring that available appointments are used effectively. APWF recommends free desexing to make the service as accessible as possible; however, a fully subsidised service may not provide the same incentive for owners to attend a booked appointment. A modest owner co-payment may help encourage attendance and reduce missed appointments, while also reducing the overall cost to Council.

The intervention levels proposed by APWF would represent a substantial increase on Council's previous desexing activities. The feasibility of a targeted program would depend on the number of eligible cats identified, the willingness of owners to participate, and the capacity to deliver desexing services.

A smaller-scale program would have limited capacity to achieve measurable population-level outcomes, particularly where there are insufficient numbers of cats being targeted within the priority areas selected, however may still be of benefit to the community.

Based on the complaint, impoundment and case management data reviewed by Council, a number of properties associated with recurring or significant cat management issues are already known to Council. These properties are managed through Council's existing case management processes and involve multiple cats at a single property. Generally, in these instances, Council can provide assistance with desexing, microchipping and registration, as well as owner education and support to reduce the number of cats.

The available data has not identified a large number of additional geographic hotspots beyond those currently being managed. However, limitations in registration data and the identification of unowned and semi-owned cats mean that Council data may not capture all free-roaming cat populations.

This suggests that a targeted program may initially overlap with Council’s existing case management activities. However, limitations in available data mean that the extent of any additional need in other locations is not fully known. Before considering a broader program, Council would need to establish whether targeted intervention could reach additional eligible cats and deliver outcomes beyond those achievable through existing enforcement, case management and desexing support activities.

Having regard to the intervention levels, indicative costs, local data limitations and existing cat management arrangements outlined above, three potential approaches are available for Knox. These are summarised below, including their benefits, limitations and financial implications.

Option	Benefits	Limitations and considerations	Financial implications
1. Continue the existing approach and implement the actions identified in the DAMP	Maintains existing cat management and desexing initiatives, including Animal Aid partnerships and current DAMP actions. Continued data analysis will help identify priority locations and inform future decisions.	Semi-owned and unowned cats will follow existing lawful pound processes. Expanded desexing initiatives may depend on external grant funding.	No new program funding required. Existing actions within current budgets; grant-funded activities depend on funding availability.
2. Enhance targeted desexing and ownership support	Builds on existing initiatives, targeting priority locations and households to improve desexing, identification, registration and responsible ownership.	Requires further assessment of local need, participation and delivery capacity. Any ownership-transition pathway requires legal review, including ownership, consent, statutory requirements and 24-hour containment. Outcomes would need to be monitored.	Additional costs to run program. Cost is dependent on the number of cats to be desexed, subsidy level, service model and program duration. Grant funding or partnerships may offset some costs.
3. Develop a broader Community Cat Program	Coordinates targeted desexing, ownership support, education and lawful rehoming pathways.	Greater complexity and potentially substantial ongoing resource requirements. Effectiveness in Knox is uncertain, and any ownership-transition model requires 8-day statutory holding, establish clear ownership, consent, registration and compliance with Knox's 24-hour cat containment requirements.	Potentially significant expenditure, depending on program intensity, duration and number of cats targeted. No funding allocated.

1.9 Key findings

Overall, targeted desexing and ownership support may help manage cat populations, while recognising that the evidence for broader Community Cat Program approaches is mixed and dependent on program design and local circumstances. Knox already has measures addressing cat breeding, identification, registration and roaming, including mandatory desexing and 24-hour cat containment.

A traditional TNR or return-to-field model presents significant legislative constraints under the current Victorian framework, while targeted desexing and Capture, Desex and Adopt approaches are more consistent with the direction of the Victorian Cat Management Strategy.

The intervention levels proposed by APWF would represent a substantial increase on Council's previous desexing activity and require significant investment and participation.

Banyule's experience also indicates that providing desexing assistance does not necessarily result in high levels of participation, with Banyule reporting low take-up of its current desexing voucher program. A smaller targeted program or pilot could provide an opportunity to generate local evidence and assess outcomes before any broader commitment is considered.

The Victorian Government's evaluation of targeted desexing programs being delivered by Victorian councils may also provide further evidence to inform future decision-making. Any future program would benefit from clearly defined eligibility criteria, measurable outcomes, a defined budget and an evaluation period to determine whether the program is achieving meaningful animal welfare, community, environmental and animal management outcomes.

The local context is also important when considering the evidence from other jurisdictions. Knox already has mandatory desexing, microchipping and registration requirements, together with 24-hour cat containment.

The comparison with Banyule also indicates that higher levels of cat intake can occur in a municipality with a smaller population, despite the availability of subsidised desexing, and that participation in desexing assistance does not necessarily occur at a level sufficient to produce substantial population-level effects.

As a result, the potential additional benefit of introducing a CCP may differ from jurisdictions where these regulatory measures are not in place.

Implementation of an intensive desexing program has the potential to reduce the number of cats impounded by Council. Evidence and stakeholder advice considered in this report indicate that some CCPs have reported reductions in shelter or pound intake and associated animal management costs. However, the extent to which these outcomes could be achieved in Knox would depend on the design of the program, the cats targeted, participation levels and the interaction with Knox's existing legislative and regulatory framework.

The investigation considered whether a reduction in cat impoundments could generate animal management cost savings. Any reduction in cat impoundments would not necessarily result in a corresponding reduction in Council's current pound costs. Council's existing pound contract includes a minimum annual spend, and animal intake has remained within the level covered by this minimum in recent years. Consequently, a reduction in cat intake would not, under the current contract arrangements, necessarily create an immediate financial saving. Any future saving would depend on the extent of the reduction in animals requiring the service and the terms of the applicable contract.

Council would continue to be required to administer and enforce the *Domestic Animals Act 1994* and local laws, including requirements relating to registration, identification, containment and the

number of cats that may be kept at a property. For example, Knox's local laws generally limit households to keeping no more than two cats without an excess animal permit. While a program may assist in reducing unplanned litters and supporting responsible ownership, it would not remove Council's responsibility to respond to nuisance, unregistered, roaming or excess cats, or allow residents to keep large numbers of cats on their properties.

Any future program would therefore need to operate alongside Council's existing regulatory and enforcement responsibilities and support, rather than replace, the principles of responsible pet ownership. The extent to which a program could reduce cat impoundments and translate these outcomes into measurable animal management and financial benefits for Council would need to be evaluated.

2. ENGAGEMENT

No community engagement was undertaken specifically to inform the preparation of this report. Council did, however, undertake targeted engagement with relevant stakeholders, including Banyule City Council, the Australian Pet Welfare Foundation (APWF) and Animal Welfare Victoria, within Agriculture Victoria. The findings and information obtained through these stakeholder discussions are incorporated throughout the report and have informed the consideration of the options presented.

3. SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The report considers potential impacts on cat owners, semi-owned and unowned cat carers, and the broader community. A targeted desexing or community cat program may improve access to affordable veterinary services and support responsible pet ownership, particularly for residents experiencing financial barriers. Conversely, eligibility, program targeting and the use of Council resources may generate differing community views regarding the appropriate role of Council in subsidising private animal ownership. Any future program would need to consider accessibility, equity, community expectations and impacts on community amenity and animal welfare.

4. CLIMATE CHANGE CONSIDERATIONS

Implementation of the recommendation is considered to have no direct implications or has no direct impacts upon Council’s Net Zero 2030 target, the Community Net Zero 2040, exposure to climate risks or climate change adaptation.

5. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATION

Cat management has potential impacts on native wildlife and biodiversity. Increased desexing and responsible ownership may reduce unplanned litters and free-roaming cats, while Council’s existing 24-hour containment requirements seek to minimise wildlife impacts. Any future program would need to consider these impacts and align with the *Domestic Animals Act 1994* and Victorian Cat Management Strategy.

6. FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

The preparation of this report was completed within existing operational budget for the Community Laws service including significant officer effort. A small consultant spend of $3000 was allocated for external support in analysing engagement feedback.

The report outlines indicative costs associated with potential cat management program options, including targeted desexing and broader Community Cat Program models. With the exception of

programs already being delivered through the DAMP, none of the options considered in this report are currently funded. Any decision to implement a new program would be subject to further consideration through Council's budget process, with funding required to be identified through budget savings or other available funding sources.

Were Council to proceed with a targeted desexing campaign based on the low- to moderate-intensity intervention rates proposed by APWF, indicative costs would range from approximately $318,450 to $955,350 if applied across the entire Knox municipality. The actual cost of a targeted program would depend on the priority areas selected and the number of eligible cats identified. Council's fixed costs, including the Pound contract would remain largely unchanged resulting in negligible cost savings. Accordingly, officers do not recommend proceeding with this model.

7. RISKS

The report identifies a range of risks associated with potential cat management program options, including legislative compliance, financial and resource requirements, program effectiveness, community expectations and animal welfare. A Community Cat Program may also create perceptions of inconsistent enforcement, exemptions from local law requirements, or expectations for ongoing Council support and funding. There is a risk that the program may not achieve the anticipated reductions in roaming, nuisance or impounded cats, given Council's continuing obligations under the Domestic Animals Act 1994 and local laws. Any future program would therefore need to be carefully designed to ensure legislative compliance, support consistent and equitable enforcement, establish clear eligibility criteria, and include appropriate monitoring and evaluation. No new risks arise from the report itself, as it does not recommend implementation of a specific program.

8. COUNCIL AND HEALTH AND WELLBEING PLAN 2025-2029

Being a strong voice for safety

Strategy 5.2 - Safety and liveability are prioritised through the planning, delivery and enforcement of local laws and regulatory services.

9. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The officers contributing to and responsible for this report have no conflicts of interest requiring disclosure under Chapter 5 of the Governance Rules of Knox City Council.

10. STATEMENT OF COMPATIBILITY

There are no legislative obligations under the Human Rights Charter, Child Safe Standards or the Gender Equity Act that are incompatible with the recommendation in this report.

11. CONFIDENTIALITY

There is no content in this report that meets the definition of confidential information from the Local Government Act 2020.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Attachment 1 - Notice of Motion 187 [**8.4.1** - 3 pages]
2. Attachment 2 - Stakeholder Interview Report of Outcomes [**8.4.2** - 18 pages]

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
      b. would require an increase in community education and engagement;
      c. Considering any animal management cost savings generated by such a program; and
      d. 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

Community Cat Program Options

Stakeholder Interview Outcomes Report

August 2026

Stakeholders interviewed

- Banyule City Council
- Australian Pet Welfare Foundation
- Animal Welfare Victoria

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Executive Summary

This report provides analysis of the three stakeholder interview responses against the project objective, to identify practical community cat and desexing options for Knox. This includes policy fit, legal constraints, animal welfare implications, community impacts and compatibility with Knox's 24-hour cat confinement requirement.

What each stakeholder said

Stakeholder	Summary outcome
Banyule City Council	Banyule's current "Cat Containment Program" is an owned-cat desexing and registration support program combined with free resident trapping and statutory impoundment/rehoming through the Cat Protection Society. It is not a current return-to-territory model. Free trap access has increased resident led intake and reduced officer handling of routine cat complaints.
Australian Pet Welfare Foundation	APWF defines a Community Cat Program as a pre-seizure, prevention focused ownership pathway rather than Trap Neuter Release. Residents already caring for cats are assisted to become formal owners, and cats are desexed, microchipped, registered and returned home subject to local containment. APWF argues that programs must be targeted, free or no barrier, multi-year and sufficiently intensive.
State Government / Animal Welfare Victoria	The State rejects Trap Neuter Release style return of unowned or semi-owned cats and advised there is no current legal pathway for it. It supports lawful alternatives centred on clear ownership, capture-desex-adopt/rehoming, targeted grants, affordable desexing, containment, education and future legislative/process reform under the Victorian Cat Management Strategy.

Key themes

Theme	Overall finding
1. Ownership and accountability	All three responses ultimately place value on an identifiable person being responsible for the cat. Feeding alone is not a sufficient basis to assume lawful ownership.
2. Targeting and barrier removal	There is strong convergence around using complaint/intake data to focus effort and removing financial, transport and access barriers for priority households and locations.

Theme	Overall finding
3. Containment is complementary	Containment remains a legal and policy requirement for owned cats in Knox. It does not, by itself, create an owner for semi-owned/unowned cats or prevent breeding.
4. Delivery capability matters	Veterinary capacity, shelter/pound arrangements, transport, community engagement capability, partner roles, staff continuity and data systems are core program dependencies.
5. Community licence is fragile	Cat management is highly polarising. Early, ongoing and balanced communication is essential, particularly around trapping, welfare, wildlife and the distinction between assistance and enforcement.

Matters to note

A return-to-territory pathway for cats without a confirmed lawful owner should not be progressed on the supplied State advice. The statutory seizure, holding, reclaim and disposal requirements continue to apply once a cat is seized or enters the pound/shelter system.

APWF's proposed ownership-transition model is materially different from TNR, but the supplied materials do not constitute a definitive legal design for Knox. Any such pathway would require formal legal review, documented ownership checks, clear consent and liability, registration/microchipping, a containment plan, and a statutory fallback process.

Banyule should not be used as evidence of a current desex-and-return model. Its present program is an owned cat desexing scheme plus free trapping and CPS-managed impoundment, reclaim and rehoming.

The Victorian Cat Management Strategy provides a practical policy pathway for lawful action now: affordable targeted desexing, containment support, education for people caring for semi-owned cats, Capture, Desex, Adopt in hotspots, improved data sharing and future law/process reform.

Any future pilot should begin with a robust Knox baseline and by suburb analysis. Minimum measures include complaints, trap demand, impoundments, surrenders, reclaim, rehoming, euthanasia, length of stay, registration, desexing, microchipping, containment compliance, uptake, no shows and total cost.

Program duration and continuity are material. APWF advised that trust takes more than a year to build; Banyule and the State both identified staff turnover, low promotion and broadbrush delivery as risks to effectiveness.

1. Purpose and Context

1.1 Project purpose

Knox is undertaking an evidence informed review of practical community cat program and desexing initiative options. The project brief specifically asks that options be assessed against Knox's 24-hour cat confinement requirement and that policy fit, limitations, risks, animal welfare considerations and community impacts be identified. The interview component was intended to test evidence, clarify practical program considerations and capture sector perspectives.

1.2 Legislative and policy frame

The supplied legislative summary and State Government response establish the following decision points. These are summarised for strategic context and do not replace formal legal advice.

Decision point	Context for option design
Registration	Cats over three months must be registered. In Knox, registration requires microchipping and desexing, and renewal is annual.
Seizure and delivery	A cat found at large or not securely confined may be seized in specified circumstances. A person who seizes a cat under sections 84 or 84A must deliver it to an authorised officer, pound, shelter or consenting veterinary practitioner.
Ownership cannot be assumed	A person feeding or caring for a cat may be a de facto owner, but the cat may also have another lawful owner. Feeding alone does not allow a resident to bypass Council processes or assume the cat is unowned.
Holding and reclaim	Once seized/admitted, the statutory holding and reclaim requirements apply There is an eight day holding period and the need for the reclaiming owner to meet registration, microchipping and desexing requirements.
Disposal and adoption	An unclaimed cat may be adopted or rehomed only through the lawful disposal pathway after the statutory period.
Knox confinement	Knox requires cats to be confined to the owner's property at all times. This applies to any cat brought into formal ownership.

1.3 Terminology used in this report

The interviews demonstrate that terminology is not neutral. To avoid conflating models, this report uses the following distinctions:

Term	Meaning
Return-to-territory / TNR-style model	An unowned or semi-owned cat is captured/desexed and returned to an outdoor location without a clearly established lawful owner responsible for its welfare, behaviour and containment.
Ownership-transition / assistance pathway	Before seizure or pound admission, Council engages with a person already caring for the cat, checks the circumstances and supports that person to become the formal owner. The cat is desexed, microchipped and registered and returns to that owner's home, with containment obligations.
Capture, Desex, Adopt	The cat enters a lawful capture/impound or surrender pathway, is assessed and desexed, and is then adopted, rehomed or transferred to a responsible owner.
Banyule Cat Containment Program	Banyule's current named program: free desexing for eligible resident-owned cats, linked to microchipping and registration, operating alongside free trapping and CPS-managed pound/rehoming services.

2. Banyule City Council: Summary of Outcomes

Outcome snapshot

Banyule's current model demonstrates an accessible, largely outsourced trapping and owned cat desexing pathway. It is not a current capture-desex-return or return-to-territory program. The operating changes have shifted routine work from Council officers to residents and the Cat Protection Society, increased cat intake, and reportedly reduced officer-managed cat complaints. Long term population, compliance and causal outcome data remain incomplete.

2.1 Current operating model

Free desexing is available to Banyule residents for up to two cats per household through participating local veterinary clinics. Cats must be microchipped and registered; Council refunds the difference between the entire and desexed registration fee.

Banyule is in the second year of a 7.00 pm to 7.00 am cat curfew trial, scheduled to report back to Council by February 2027.

Residents can borrow traps free of charge from the Cat Protection Society (CPS). Residents generally collect the trap, undertake the trapping and transport the cat to CPS; limited assistance is available in special circumstances.

CPS stores and distributes most traps, accepts impounded cats, manages statutory holding, reclaim and rehoming, and reportedly holds cats beyond the minimum period where capacity permits.

The objective described by Banyule is to reunify identifiable cats with owners and rehome others through CPS, not to return unowned cats to the environment.

Delivery is supported by one team leader and four multifunction field officers. The CPS relationship has operated for more than 20 years under a service based contract renewed every three years. Participating vets invoice Council directly for voucher work.

2.2 Reported activity and outcomes

For 2025-26, Banyule figures show substantial rehoming activity, but 80 cats remained in care, so the percentages below are interim rather than final outcome rates.

2025-26 status	Number / share	Comment
Total recorded impounds and surrenders	508	71 Council impounds; 268 resident impounds; 17 Council surrenders; 152 resident surrenders
Reclaimed by owner	49 (9.6%)	Relatively low reclaim compared with rehoming.
Rehomed	354 (69.7%)	Strong reported rehoming volume through CPS

2025-26 status	Number / share	Comment
Euthanised	19 (3.7%)	Reported as unclaimed and not rehomed
Dead on arrival / died in care	6 (1.2%)	One DOA and five deaths in care
Still in care	80 (15.7%)	Final outcome rate not yet known

Banyule reported that removing the previous trap fee and bond, and transferring trap management to CPS, made trapping more accessible. This led to substantially more resident led impoundments. At the same time, officer managed cat complaints reportedly fell because routine trap matters were redirected to CPS and officers attended mainly where a resident could not physically access the service.

The annual desexing budget was estimated at approximately $30,000, excluding microchipping. Only 22 voucher claims outside CPS were identified for the most recent financial year, and staff described general take up as low, with unused bookings and insufficient promotion. Registration renewal and longer term compliance data were still outstanding.

2.3 Implementation lessons and constraints

Promotion and community understanding were identified as the main implementation gaps. Banyule would like to invest more heavily in early and ongoing education, program promotion and stakeholder engagement.

Cat management and trapping are highly polarising. Environmental supporters and cat advocacy groups may hold strongly opposing views, requiring balanced, ongoing communication.

Curfew enforcement can be difficult where the exact time a cat entered a private trap cannot be established, and neighbourhood disputes create confidentiality and evidentiary concerns.

Data systems are not granular. Council receives outcome information and pays invoices but does not have real time visibility of cats in care or a complete longitudinal dataset for program evaluation.

The current program is not hotspot targeted. Banyule identified future value in focusing on areas of disadvantage, underreporting and environmentally sensitive locations.

Historical knowledge of the pre 2021 program was incomplete. Current staff could not confirm key design details or provide a complete budget and outcome comparison for the earlier period.

2.4 Transferability to Knox

Banyule considered that the following elements could transfer to Knox without displacing the 24-hour confinement framework: local veterinary partnerships for free or low cost desexing; accessible trap distribution; strong shelter/pound integration; and resident support to resolve nuisance matters. These elements align with responsible ownership and capture/adoption pathways.

However, the Banyule interview establishes that a current desex-and-return program is not operating or that such a model in the past caused historic improvements. Its most transferable lessons relate to service accessibility, outsourced delivery, community communication and the need for better program data.

3. Australian Pet Welfare Foundation: Summary of Outcomes

Outcome snapshot

APWF proposes a sustained, targeted and assistance led ownership-transition program, explicitly distinguishing it from TNR. Its model works with people already caring for cats, removes financial and practical barriers, formalises ownership, and keeps statutory trapping/impoundment available where ownership cannot be established or accepted.

3.1 Program model

Use Council complaints, impoundment and surrender data by suburb to identify high cost and high intake hotspots, then micro target known problem locations within those suburbs.

Provide free, no barrier desexing and microchipping rather than general subsidies. APWF argued that subsidies are often used by owners who were already intending to desex and do not reach the semi-owned population driving breeding and intake.

Engage directly with people feeding or caring for cats. Determine whether the cat has an existing owner and whether the carer is willing to take full responsibility. If so, assist with desexing, microchipping, registration and compliance.

If the resident is unwilling to assume ownership, or the circumstances require seizure, the cat proceeds through Council's existing trapping, statutory holding, assessment and lawful adoption/rehoming processes.

Operate prevention and assistance alongside enforcement, not as a replacement for it. APWF recommended practical mediation and support as a first response where appropriate, with enforcement retained for genuine nuisance, welfare and legal matters.

3.2 Legal and confinement position

APWF's position is that its CCP can operate within the Domestic Animals Act because it does not bypass the statutory process after seizure. It describes a pre seizure engagement pathway in which a resident already caring for a cat becomes the identified owner. The cat then returns to that owner's home as an owned pet after desexing, microchipping and registration, rather than being returned as an unowned cat to an outdoor territory.

Once ownership is formalised, APWF accepts that Knox's 24-hour containment requirement applies in the same way as it does for any other owned cat. APWF views containment and CCP as complementary but different interventions: containment regulates an identifiable owner, while ownership-transition and desexing address breeding and cats that currently have no recognised owner.

Legal design dependency

APWF's conceptual distinction is important, but it would need to be translated into a legally reviewed operational flow. Critical questions include when a cat is considered seized, how an existing lawful owner is excluded, what evidence establishes ownership, how consent and liability are documented, and what happens if registration or containment cannot be achieved.

3.3 Reported experience, scale and performance measures

APWF reported experience with more than 800 cats desexed through community based programs and stated that people who have fed cats for extended periods are commonly willing to assume responsibility when practical and financial assistance is available. APWF stated that the primary objectives were reduced breeding, complaints, pound intake and poor pound outcomes.

APWF supplied the following indicative intensity benchmarks. These should be treated as respondent practitioner guidance rather than independently validated thresholds for Knox.

Indicative approach	Desexing intensity	APWF guidance
High intensity	About 60 cats per 1,000 residents	Target problem suburbs; measurable results stated as 1-2 years
Moderate intensity	About 30 cats per 1,000 residents	Target problem suburbs; measurable results stated as 3-4 years
Micro targeted	About 10 cats per 1,000 residents	Focus on known locations generating complaints, impoundments or unwanted litters

Recommended performance measures were complaints, impoundments, owner surrenders, reclaim, rehoming/adoption, euthanasia and total pound intake, analysed by suburb and compared before, during and after implementation. APWF recommended incorporating these measures into the Domestic Animal Management Plan and acknowledged that direct municipal measures of overall cat welfare and wildlife impact are not currently straightforward.

3.4 Delivery requirements and risks

The program should be multi-year. APWF advised that community trust can take more than a year to develop, particularly where officers are initially perceived only as enforcers.

Delivery can be integrated into existing field work rather than requiring a large new structure, but it needs a clearly accountable program lead, consistent officer capability and sufficient veterinary capacity.

Arbitrary household caps, pension card only eligibility, upfront payment, short duration and low program intensity may leave a substantial breeding population untreated.

Partnerships with housing providers, welfare organisations, veterinarians, volunteer groups and local service providers are necessary to address transport, insecure housing, containment and financial barriers.

For multi cat properties, APWF recommended prioritising desexing and microchipping of all cats and negotiating gradual reduction through adoption, rather than limiting assistance to two cats.

Communication must clearly explain that the program creates formal ownership and responsibility; it is not permission for unowned cats to remain at large.

3.5 Evidence and attribution issues

APWF attributed Banyule's post 2021 increase in cat impoundments to the end of a no barrier desexing program, loss of experienced staff, staff turnover and a return to enforcement focused management. It cited changes from 125 impounds in 2020-21 to 324 in 2021-22 and 299 in 2022-23. Banyule, however, could not confirm the earlier program design and instead highlighted free trap access, transfer of trap management to CPS and the curfew as major drivers of increased intake.

APWF also suggested that containment mandates do not improve complaint, impoundment or euthanasia outcomes after socioeconomic factors are considered.

4. State Government: Summary of Outcomes

Outcome snapshot

The State Government provided a clear policy and legislative position against TNR-style return of unowned or semi-owned cats. It supports programs that establish clear ownership and accountability, or that capture, desex and move cats into lawful adoption, rehoming or transfer pathways. The State's current strategic direction also supports targeted affordable desexing, containment assistance, education, data sharing and future reform.

4.1 Legislative and policy position

The State advised that there is no current legal pathway under Victoria's framework to desex an unowned or semi-owned cat and return it to its place of origin. This position applies whether or not the statutory holding period has been applied.

The State linked its position to the responsible ownership purpose of the Domestic Animals Act, the abandonment prohibitions in the Domestic Animals Act and Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, and the welfare, nuisance, disease, wildlife and liability risks of leaving cats without a legally responsible owner.

Once a cat is seized or admitted to a pound or shelter, identification checks, the statutory holding/reclaim process and lawful disposal under section 84O remain applicable. The State advised that a local containment exemption would not resolve the broader legal issues.

The State has not developed minimum safeguards for a return-to-territory pilot because it does not regard the model as lawful. Any future consideration would require legislative change and detailed assessment of ownership, welfare, biosecurity, nuisance, wildlife, monitoring, liability and compliance.

The State emphasised that clear ownership, care and accountability should be established through reclaim, adoption, rehoming or transfer.

4.2 Lawful alternatives and current program direction

The State supports targeted Capture, Desex, Adopt approaches rather than return to origin. The current grants trial provided $300,000 to 14 councils, with at least half of funding required to focus on semi-owned and unowned cats. Cats were not permitted to be returned; suitable cats were to move into adoption or other lawful outcomes. The trial had not concluded or been formally evaluated at the time of interview.

Preliminary feedback was that targeted grants can shift councils away from broad desexing vouchers toward hotspot and priority cohort delivery, but council capability varies. The State identified staff turnover, inadequate targeting and limited operational guidance as major risks. It expects future programs to need clearer templates and examples, subject to State budget funding.

The State highlighted the Bendigo Animal Relief Centre as an innovative case study. The Victorian Cat Management Strategy describes affordable desexing, microchipping, vaccination and registration for low income residents and people feeding stray cats, free microchipping, registration incentives, relinquish-and-re-adopt, farm cat pathways and surrender prevention. These initiatives remain within an ownership/adoption framework rather than returning unowned cats to the environment.

4.3 Relevant Victorian Cat Management Strategy actions

Strategy area	State Government interview update
Action 9: responsibility for semi-owned cats	A specific program is not yet developed. The intent is ongoing education encouraging full responsibility: desexing, microchipping, registration, containment and veterinary care. Timing is budget and working group dependent.
Action 10: shorter holding for unidentified cats	The State is considering options such as reducing the period from eight days to three days. Legislative amendment, Code changes and welfare safeguards would be required. The State indicated an indicative 2-5 year process, depending on priorities.
Action 12: targeted Capture, Desex, Adopt	The $300,000 / 14 council grants trial is the current precursor. Evaluation is pending. Future delivery is expected to be more guided and remains dependent on budget allocation.
Actions 5-8: affordability and containment	The Strategy supports affordable desexing for vulnerable Victorians, containment education, simplified enclosure guidance and local partnerships to help residents construct enclosures.
Actions 18-24: data and reform	The Strategy establishes a working group, centralised data sharing, practice exchange, review of the cat management framework, and potential registration and process reforms.

4.4 Evidence and implementation observations

The State notes that it had not identified robust, directly transferable Australian evidence that consistently proves or disproves TNR, and that international studies are mixed and difficult to compare because program designs and success measures vary. The State therefore relied heavily on first principles: legal purpose, responsible ownership, welfare, community amenity and environmental protection.

The State also noted the need for careful, non polarising communication. It considered that long term social licence depends on valuing cats as companion animals and avoiding messages that could normalise abandonment or shared responsibility without accountability.

4.5 Implications for Knox

Do not progress a model that deliberately returns an unowned or semi-owned cat to the environment under the current framework and State advice.

Align near term work with the Strategy's lawful components: targeted affordable desexing, full ownership education, containment assistance, Capture, Desex, Adopt, data improvement and collaboration.

Monitor the grants evaluation and any Action 10 legislative work before assuming shorter holding periods or new disposal pathways will become available.

Seek formal legal advice on any pre seizure ownership-transition workflow, including its interaction with the definition of ownership, seizure, microchip transfer, registration, excess animal permits and Knox's confinement order.

5. Integrated Analysis

5.1 Areas of convergence

The underlying problem is not solely roaming by already responsible owners. Semi-owned and unowned cats, unplanned breeding, low identification/registration, affordability and access barriers all contribute to demand.

Targeting is preferable to blanket delivery. Complaint, trap, impoundment and surrender data should be analysed by suburb and location to identify priority cohorts and hotspots.

Desexing is most useful when combined with microchipping, registration, ownership and ongoing responsibility rather than delivered as an isolated procedure.

Cats that are seized or cannot be brought into lawful ownership must continue through statutory reclaim, adoption, rehoming or transfer pathways.

Sustained education and engagement are essential. Programs must balance welfare, wildlife, amenity and responsible ownership messages without demonising cats or community groups.

Partnerships and delivery capacity are fundamental: vets, pound/shelter providers, rescue/foster networks, housing providers, local organisations and community volunteers all have roles.

No stakeholder presented a single intervention as sufficient. Effective cat management requires a coordinated package of prevention, ownership, containment, enforcement, rehoming, data and communication.

5.2 Material differences and unresolved questions

Unresolved matter	Why it matters for Knox
Legal status of ownership-transition assistance	APWF considers it lawful when ownership is established before seizure and statutory pathways remain available. The State response did not directly test a fully specified workflow of this kind, but strongly requires clear ownership and accountability. Formal legal review is therefore essential.
Effect of containment	APWF questions whether curfews reduce municipal outcomes. The Strategy and State emphasise containment for welfare, nuisance and wildlife. Knox-specific outcome data were not supplied to resolve the issue.
Cause of Banyule intake changes	APWF attributes increases to loss of the earlier assistance program and experienced staff. Banyule highlights free trap access, CPS delivery and the curfew. Historic program details and a controlled time series were not available.

Unresolved matter	Why it matters for Knox
Program scale and duration	APWF proposes multi-year intensity benchmarks and no arbitrary cat limits. Banyule currently limits free desexing to two cats per household and reports low uptake. The State trial varies by council and is not yet evaluated.

5.3 Evidence limitations

The interview material is valuable for policy and operational insight, but it does not provide a complete comparative evaluation. Banyule data is incomplete; APWF did not provide participant renewal data; the State grants trial has not been evaluated; and no complete Knox baseline analysis was included.

The strongest basis for further work is the convergence around targeted, lawful prevention and ownership measures, combined with a rigorous evaluation design. The least supported basis is an undifferentiated claim that a generic "CCP" will reduce intake or costs without first defining the model, legal pathway, delivery intensity and performance measures.

6. Matters for Further Council Consideration

The interviews point to a staged decision framework. The categories below distinguish actions that are broadly consistent with the current policy direction, actions not supported on the supplied advice, and matters that require resolution before any pilot or service change.

Can be explored within the current direction	• By suburb hotspot and cost analysis using complaints, traps, intake, surrender and outcome data. • Targeted free or low cost desexing, microchipping and registration for priority residents and cats. • Assistance for a resident to take lawful ownership, subject to legal design, registration and 24-hour containment. • Capture, Desex, Adopt / rehome / transfer through the pound and shelter system. • Containment education and practical enclosure support, especially for vulnerable households. • Veterinary, shelter, housing, welfare and local community partnerships.
Not supported on the supplied advice	• Returning an unowned or semi-owned cat to an outdoor territory without a confirmed lawful owner. • Bypassing the statutory holding and disposal process after seizure or pound/shelter admission. • Assuming that feeding alone establishes ownership or that the cat has no other lawful owner. • Creating a local exemption that would undermine Knox's 24-hour confinement order or the broader State framework.
Resolve before any pilot	• Independent legal advice and an end to end decision flow defining ownership, seizure, consent, microchip transfer, registration, permits, containment and fallback pathways. • A Knox baseline, target cohort definition, program intensity, duration, evaluation method and transparent KPIs. • Veterinary capacity, transport, shelter/pound capability, contract impacts, data access and per cat/whole program costs. • Governance, officer training, partner agreements, privacy and evidentiary procedures, and an escalation pathway for complex multi cat or hoarding cases. • A communication and engagement plan that clearly distinguishes assistance, ownership, enforcement and adoption pathways.

7. Conclusion

The stakeholder engagement confirms that Knox is dealing with a complex problem that cannot be resolved by a single measure. There is broad support for prevention, targeted desexing, identification, ownership, containment, accessible services, community engagement and strong adoption/rehoming pathways. There is also broad recognition that semi-owned and unowned cats require a different response from already compliant owned cats.

The decisive issue is the destination and accountability for each cat. On the State Government's advice, a return-to-territory model for an unowned or semi-owned cat is not lawful or supported and is not compatible with Knox's 24-hour confinement setting. APWF's proposed model is different: it seeks to establish a lawful owner before the cat returns home. That distinction warrants careful consideration, but only through a formally reviewed legal and operational design.

The current evidence most strongly supports further assessment of a staged, data led and lawful prevention package: targeted no/low cost desexing, microchipping and registration; ownership assistance with containment; Capture, Desex, Adopt for cats requiring statutory intervention; practical containment support; partner delivery; and transparent evaluation.

8.5 Green Street Policy Review – Draft Urban Tree Management Policy

Final Report Destination: Council
Paper Type: For Decision
Author: Manager Green Spaces & Environment, Andrew Dodd
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SUMMARY
This report provides an update on the review of Council's Green Streets Policy (the Policy), (Attachment 1), informed by targeted community engagement, benchmarking, operational data analysis, and the development of the draft Urban Tree Management Policy (draft Policy) (Attachment 2). The report also responds to matters raised through feedback from all advisory committees, comments from the recent Community Satisfaction Survey (Attachment 3), and feedback provided by the Environmental Advisory Committee on the draft Policy (Attachment 4) and how this feedback has been addressed within the draft Policy.

The review found that the existing the Policy and broader Tree Management Framework are strongly focused on street trees and do not provide sufficient guidance for trees in reserves, parks and other Council-managed public spaces. It also identified opportunities for the draft Policy to strengthen decision-making criteria, improve clarity around removal, pruning, inspections and infrastructure impacts, and consolidate key operational provisions currently spread across various related documents. Benchmarking with neighbouring and eastern region councils supports a policy approach that combines clear policy principles with practical criteria for day-to-day tree management decisions, including tree removal and pruning criteria that align with a common regional approach.

Recent operational data highlights that over the past ten years, Council has planted an average of 2,417 trees annually and removed an average of 1,100 trees, resulting in an average annual net gain of 1,316 trees. Council also receives an average of 3,609 trees and vegetation-related requests/complaints each year. Complaint escalation data indicates a low escalation rate, with an average 157 annual complaints raised over the past three years of which forty-eight escalate to an internal review process. This represents approximately 0.4% of total requests/complaints received by Council related to trees on public land. This indicates that while tree management is a high-volume and highly visible service, formal escalations remain limited.

The report also highlights the strategic importance of tree management in supporting Council's canopy, climate, environmental and health and wellbeing objectives. Knox's most recent canopy measure was 18% in 2018, compared with Council's strategic canopy cover target of 30% by 2050. The report notes that canopy losses from tree removals have an immediate impact, while canopy benefits from new plantings take 10–15 years to be fully realised. The draft Policy supports clearer decision-making around canopy protection, public safety, infrastructure impacts and service expectations, while recognising that tree risk cannot be fully eliminated and must be managed through a proportionate risk-management approach aligned with Council's risk management framework.

Engagement feedback confirmed strong interest in a transparent and consistent approach to tree management. Across the feedback received, the most common themes were transparency and clarity, species selection, and safety and risk. Advisory committee survey results also indicated broad support for the proposed policy direction, with 77% of respondents either supporting or strongly supporting the proposal. The Community Satisfaction Survey recorded satisfaction with street tree provision and maintenance at 7.5, up from 7.2 in 2025, with 61% of respondents very satisfied. The draft Policy (replacing the current Green Streets Policy) has been prepared to respond to all feedback where practical, while balancing community expectations, canopy protection, public safety and risk, infrastructure impacts, environmental outcomes, and current and future funding and resourcing allocations.

The proposed approach has no immediate financial impact, with the policy review undertaken within existing operational budgets and the draft Policy developed with consideration of current and future funding and resourcing allocations. Development of a future Urban Forest Strategy would provide a higher-level strategic framework for long-term canopy targets.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council

1. Note the information within this report, including outcomes of the targeted community engagement process.
2. Adopt the Urban Tree Management Policy as per Attachment 2.

1. DISCUSSION

1.1. Background

At the Council meeting held 26 May 2025, two reports were presented to Council in response to Notice of Motions relating to street tree management.

- Response to Notice of Motion 156 - Proposed Street Tree Replacement in Kavanagh Court, Hicks Court, Buckingham Drive, Trisha Drive and in Front of Taupo Court, Rowville.
- Response to Notice of Motion 179 - Street Trees Bristol Place.

As part of the resolution for both reports, Council resolved to:

‘Note the Green Streets Policy and broader tree management framework will be reviewed over the next eighteen months.’

An initial review carried out by Council Officers, assessed the adequacy, clarity and alignment of Council’s existing tree related strategies, policies and procedures in the current framework relating to tree management on public land and identified opportunities to strengthen strategic direction, consistency and transparency in the management of trees on public land.

The review identified that the existing framework is heavily focused on street trees, with limited guidance for the management of trees in other Council managed public spaces such as reserves, and parks. It also found that the Policy combines strategic intent with operational detail, relies heavily on related documents for key decision-making elements, and lacks clarity in some areas such as infrastructure impacts, inspection regimes and pruning criteria.

To address these issues, the establishment of a clear, three tier Tree Management Framework, consistent with recognised local government best practice was considered the most appropriate approach.

This framework comprises:

- The development of a new Urban Forest Strategy to set long term vision, goals, targets and performance measures, supported by full community engagement.
- A new Urban Tree Management Policy (updating the current Green Streets Policy) to articulate Council's policy positions and decision-making principles for the management of all trees on Council owned and managed land; and
- A reviewed suite of operational guidelines and procedures to provide clear, consistent direction for day-to-day delivery.

The immediate focus to implement the above framework, is the review of the current Green Streets Policy (Policy) as this had expired, and the review formed part of the previous Council resolutions.

An initial assessment of the Policy carried out by Council Officers, to review its scope, purpose and overall intent with the below key points identified;

- The Policy currently provides the platform for decision making for two Council assets: street trees and private planting on nature strips.
- The bulk of the Policy sets out decision making framework in relation to Council owned and managed trees within road reserves.
- This includes considerations when maintaining trees within the public realm, including inspecting, planting and removing trees, with a focus on protecting and enhancing canopy cover and aligning to industry standard, Australian Standards and legislation.

Also identified was that the current Policy needed to be read in conjunction with the Street Tree Asset Management Plan (STAMP), which contained a number of operational clauses related to management of trees on public land within road reserves.

The initial assessment concluded that, whilst the Policy currently sets a strong position on the management of Council owned street trees, some initial gaps were identified, listed in Table 1. Required improvements also listed in Table 1, aim to address these gaps and provide a clearer, more transparent document on operational aspects of public tree management. The draft Urban Tree Management Policy (draft Policy), (Attachment 2) aims to address the current gaps and improvements identified during the initial assessment (Attachment 3).

Table 1 – Initial Gaps Assessment

Current Gap	Improvements Required
The current Policy is solely focused on street trees, resulting in no clarity around how Council manages other trees on public land such as in reserves.	Expand the policy to cover all trees managed by Council on public land under a broader banner of "Urban Tree Management Policy."

Combines minor strategic elements with operation guidelines, clouding the intent of the policy	Elevate strategic elements into a higher-level Urban Forest Strategy as referenced in Section 1.2, and have the Policy focus specifically on tree management elements.
The current Policy lacks detail around street tree pruning with only Australian Standards referenced.	Strengthen by introducing pruning criteria, making it clearer on what is considered when assessing property line clearance pruning etc
Proactive, scheduled inspection frequencies are not referenced within the current document.	Reference inspection frequencies within the updated policy for transparency.
Unclear within the Policy how decisions are made around impacts of trees on infrastructure.	Add more detailed clauses on how decisions are reached in this space.
Policy is heavily reliant on being read in conjunction with the STAMP for some key street tree management elements creating clarity issues.	Bring the elements covered within the STAMP as listed in Table 3, into the Policy, introducing a “one document” approach.
The coverage of the process relating to private plantings and landscaping within nature strips, draws the document away from its core intent relating to tree management.	Separate nature strip elements out of the Policy, to be managed through separate guidelines.

1.2. Benchmarking

As part of reviewing the Policy, a benchmarking process was carried out with neighbouring and Eastern Region Councils, relating to two key elements;

- Policy methodology – This measured how each Council approached the format and general methodology of their Tree Management policies.
- Policy criteria – These measured specific criteria provided within each Councils policy, including those related to removal, pruning and general strategic position.

Councils that formed part of the benchmarking exercise were;

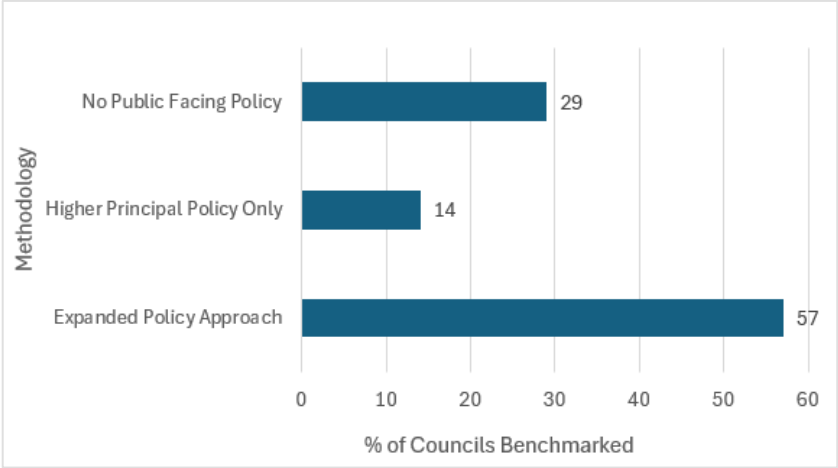
- Maroondah City Council
- Monash City Council
- Yarra Ranges Council
- City of Casey
- City of Greater Dandenong
- Whitehorse City Council
- Manningham City Council

1.2.1 Policy Methodology

The general view of a policy methodology is that it should provide higher level principles for a specific service or function aligning to supporting a strategic position, with a procedure then providing technical detail related to the policy. Many Councils, however, are moving to a policy relating to public tree management that presents similarly to a procedure and provides not only the principles but also combines operational detail surrounding them, expanding on what a standard policy may provide. This is due to the complicated nature of managing trees on public

land, balanced with providing a clear and transparent document and the recommended approach for Knox, through the draft Policy. Image 1 contains that breakdown of policy methodology relating to those Councils benchmarked.

Image 1 – Policy Methodology of Councils Benchmarked



1.2.2 Policy Criteria

There are many criteria that inform a broader decision-making framework related to managing trees on Council land. All Councils operate under key tree management criteria guiding how trees are managed in specific circumstances.

Benchmarking compared key criteria, aligning to management practices including;

- Tree removal
- Tree pruning
- Tree inspections
- Tree planting

Two main public tree management practices relate to tree removal and pruning. Table 2 compares the main criteria of each Council on circumstances in which trees will be removed, assessing the majority adhering to a specific criterion as a “regional approach” and the broader recommended approach for Knox.

Table 2 – Criteria Benchmarking (Tree Removal)

Council Name	Litter/ Debris	Shade	Tree Health	Tree Structure	Impact Infra	Medical
Knox City Council (Current)	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes Parameter	Yes Allergy (GP)*
Regional Approach	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes - Parameter	Yes (GP or Specialist)*
Knox - Draft Urban Tree Management Policy	**No**	**No**	**Yes**	**Yes**	**Yes - Parameter**	**Yes Medical Condition (Medical Specialist)**

*If it can be proven to be the cause of a specific tree

NOTE: Parameter generally relates to ongoing significant damage related to public infrastructure or significant impacts on private infrastructure that have been substantiated through a claims process. For both public and private infrastructure, no other viable means would exist to rectify the situation before removal would be considered.

Whilst the approach to tree removal within the draft Policy remains aligned to the regional approach, medical grounds criteria have been slightly expanded from the approach within the current Policy, to consider more than just allergy related conditions and consider medical specialist support that can be related solely to a tree or trees.

Whilst expanding removal criteria in relation to leaf/debris drop requests was considered, it was deemed as falling to far outside of the current regional approach and would significantly impact both;

- Financially: Requiring significant additional investment in tree management budget allocation.
- Environmentally: Impacting Council's current strategic position in this space to increase canopy cover to 30% by 2050 and more broadly, to protect and enhance vegetation. Pruning criteria have been expanded in this space, however.

Table 3 compares main criteria of each Council on circumstances in which trees will be pruned assessing the majority adhering to a specific criterion as a "regional approach" and the broader recommended approach for Knox.

Table 3 – Criteria Benchmarking (Pruning)

Council Name	Litter/ Debris	Shade	Tree Structure	Property Line	Views	Roosting Birds
Knox City Council (Current)	No	No	Yes	Yes (Over Dwelling)	No	No
Regional Approach	No	No	Yes	Yes – (Over Dwelling)	No	No
Knox - Draft Urban Tree Management Policy	**Yes**	**No**	**Yes**	**Yes – 2m Dwelling**	**No**	**No**

Whilst the approach to tree pruning within the draft Policy remains largely aligned to the regional approach, property line clearance criteria has been slightly expanded from the approach within the current policy, to increase clearance thresholds from strictly over the property dwelling, to a 2m clearance from roofline. Criteria have also been included in instances of leaf drop, to consider minor pruning where practical to reduce impact on private property. This aligns anecdotally with feedback received from cohorts of the community and can be achieved within current budgetary and resource allocation.

1.3. Tree Planting and Removal Statistics

An important statistic relating to Council's strategic canopy cover target of 30% by 2050, is the annual "net gain" figure. This is calculated by taking the number of trees planted annually and subtracting those removed. Over the past ten years, Council has planted an average of 2,417 trees annually (currently 2,300) and removed an average of 1,100. This equates to an annual net gain figure of an average 1,316 over this time. Table 4 provides annual details of tree planting versus removal.

Table 4 – Annual Net Gain Data

Year	Trees Planted	Trees Removed	Net Gain
16/17	2,253	428	1,825
17/18	1,954	1,460	494
18/19	3,119	1,870	1,249
19/20	2,583	1,394	1,189
20/21	2,574	1,325	1,249
21/22	2,462	1,042	1,420
22/23	2,449	838	1,611
23/24	2,248	867	1,381
24/25	2,152	706	1,446
25/26	2,372	1,074	1,298
Total	**24,166**	**11,004**	**13,162**
Average	**2,417**	**1,100**	**1,316**

Reasons for tree removal range from pro-active removals, where issues have been identified during proactive inspection and those that are removed in relation to inspections conducted based on a community request. This data is also important in identifying that, whilst there is perception within some sections of the community that Council do not remove trees, this data would suggest that, whilst tree removal is seen as a last resort, a large number are removed annually.

1.4. Tree Request/Complaint Data

Over the past five years Council has received on average 3,609 requests/complaints relating to trees and vegetation annually. These range from topics including removal, pruning, inspection, planting and reporting fallen limbs. Table 5 provides a breakdown of annual tree-related requests.

Table 5 – Resident Requests Trees and Vegetation

Year	No Requests
21/22	3,472
22/23	2,843
23/24	4,159
24/25	3,822
25/26	3,748
Average	**3,609**

As part of Council's complaints procedure, residents not satisfied with an initial outcome, can escalate an issue to a complaints process. Council's complaints process is a three-tiered system, with Tiers 1 and 2 escalating to a higher level for review, than that of the original Council Officer who managed a specific request. Over the past three years, Council received on average 157 Tier 1 and 2 complaints annually as shown in Table 6, equating to 5% of total requests received.

Table 6 – Total Complaint Data

Year	No Requests
23/24	131
24/25	133
25/26	208
TOTAL	472
Average	**157**

If a complainant remains dissatisfied with an outcome, the complaint then escalates to a Tier 3 – Internal Investigation process. This investigation is generally carried out by a Manager or Director, not involved in the previous review outcomes. An average of sixteen Tier 3 Escalations annually occurred over the past three years as per Table 7, equating to 27% of total complaints received (Table 6) and 0.4% of total requests/complaints received (Table 5) by Council. This would be considered a very low escalation rate suggesting a broad level of satisfaction within the community related to the current vegetation management policy position.

Table 7 – Tier 3 Escalation Data

Year	No Requests
23/24	16
24/25	10
25/26	22
TOTAL	48
Average	**16**

2. ENGAGEMENT

A targeted consultation process was conducted that helped inform the draft Policy. More broadly, this was limited to seeking feedback on policy principles and direction from all Community Advisory Committees. Results and comments received through the most recent Community Satisfaction Survey relating to public tree management were also utilised to help inform the draft Policy.

Details on verbatim comments and feedback received from all engagement avenues listed above and the initial gaps identified in Table 1 and where the draft Policy addresses these, can be found in Attachment 3.

All feedback received has been categorized into key themes listed below, to gain a higher-level determination of priorities.

- Safety/Risk
- Transparency/Clarity
- Flexibility/Community Concern
- Benefits of Trees
- Impacts on Infrastructure
- Species Selection
- Pruning
- Tree Removal
- Impacts from Development
- Tree Inspections
- Strategic Alignment
- General Maintenance

2.1. Advisory Committee Feedback

Direct feedback was received from all Community Advisory Committees on the principles and future direction of the Policy, at the Multi Advisory Committee Meeting held 22 July 2026. 62 separate pieces of feedback were received, containing 69 theme outcomes (as some submissions had multiple feedback items), with Image 2 summarises the key themes.

The top three themes from the Advisory Committees were;

1. Transparency/Clarity
2. Strategic Alignment
3. Species Selection

Participants were also surveyed to gauge support for the proposed principles and general direction of the future Urban Tree Management Policy. There were 64 respondents with 77% either strongly supporting or supporting the proposal and 11% either opposing or strongly opposing it. 12% of respondents neither supported nor opposed the proposal.

2.2. Community Satisfaction Survey Feedback

Satisfaction with the provision and maintenance of street trees within the most recent Community Satisfaction Survey was 7.5 (“Very Good”), up from 7.2 (“Good”) in 2025, with 61% of respondents “Very Satisfied” with this service.

When analysing direct comments within the survey, for the provision and maintenance of street trees section under “Reasons for Dissatisfaction” 59 comments were received, equating to just over 10% of participants. Within Appendix One of the surveys, 3 comments were received relating to trees. Image 2 summarises the key themes.

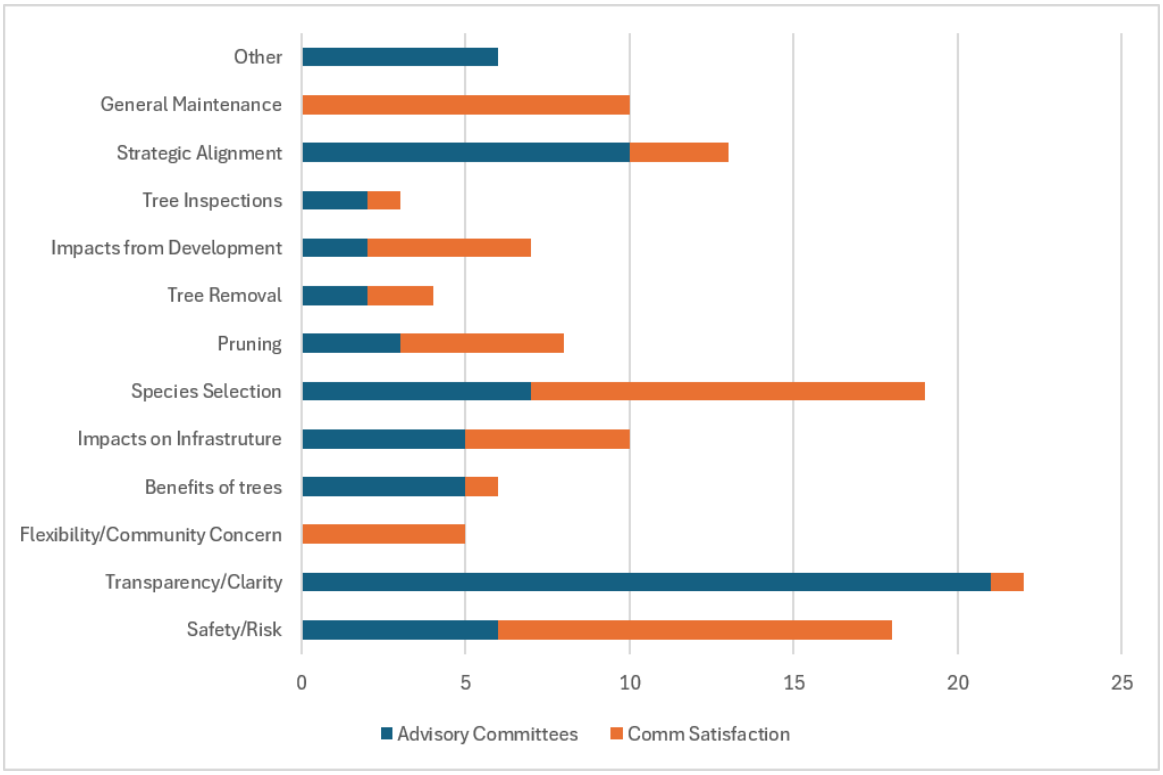
The top three themes from the Community Satisfaction Survey were;

1. Safety/Risk
2. Species Selection
3. General Maintenance

2.3. Feedback Summary

When analysing the feedback received throughout the engagement process (Advisory Committees and Community Satisfaction Survey), 124 separate pieces of feedback were received (resulting in 131 theme outcomes). Image 2 summarises the key themes.

Image 2 – Combine Feedback Themes



The top three themes from external feedback received were;

1. Transparency/Clarity
2. Species Selection
3. Safety/Risk

In general terms comments relating to species selection ranged from the desire to plant more usable (fruit trees), planting more flowering colourful trees and the size of trees (gum trees etc). Comments relating to safety and risk ranged from accessibility issues, visual obstruction, falling limbs, slip/trip hazards and general perceptions that trees are unsafe.

Whilst the draft Policy aims to address all feedback where practical (Attachment 3), the top three themes relating to external feedback mentioned above have been addressed within the draft Policy as per the below;

1. Transparency and Clarity
    i. Draft Policy now covers all trees on public land and not just street trees
    ii. Relative information from the STAMP is now imbedded in the draft Policy
    iii. Greater detail now provided on decision making framework relating to tree management on public land including tree removal and tree pruning etc.
    iv. Complaints process now outlined as per Council's complaints policy.

2. Species Selection
    i. Section 10.2 (point 8) added to the draft Policy, referencing species selection considerations including available room vs tree size, growth habits of trees including roots, branch and fruit growth that may pose issues when mature.
    ii. Section 10 also sets out relevant information related to tree planting more broadly.

3. Safety/Risk
    i. Section 5 added as a designated risk section providing greater information on Councils risk methodology related to tree management on public land, aligning to Council's risk management framework.
    ii. Risk methodology is also referenced in Section 6 – Tree Inspections, Section 7 – Tree Removal and Section 8 – Tree Pruning.

2.4. Environmental Advisory Committee Feedback – draft Urban Tree Management Policy
The draft Policy was provided to the Environmental Advisory Committee for feedback. 4 submissions were received from the committee, containing 33 separate pieces of feedback.

Overall, the draft Policy was seen as a sound document and broadly supportive of its overall framework, with its success seen as dependent on clear accountability and consistent day-to-day implementation. Feedback also identified opportunities to strengthen the draft Policies ecological and environmental focus, reference to strategic alignment, and clarity around implementation.

This feedback assisted in strengthening the final draft Policy. Detail on the specific feedback provided and where the draft Policy aims to address this can be found in Attachment 4.

3. SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS
Studies have demonstrated a clear link between the physical and mental health of communities and that of individuals through contact with the natural environment. Studies also suggest that street trees provide valuable shade cooling the streets, improving community experience as well as increasing property values.

Trees and vegetation, while offering many benefits, can impact communities socially due to the maintenance demands they create, particularly the need to regularly clean fallen leaf litter and debris which can be viewed as nuisance. While Council recognises that leaf fall can create inconvenience, Council policy does not currently support tree removal on this basis alone, as leaf litter is considered an ordinary, inherent and unavoidable characteristic of street trees in an

outdoor environment and does not, in isolation, constitute an unacceptable safety risk warranting tree removal.

4. CLIMATE CHANGE CONSIDERATIONS

The subject of this report has been considered in the context of climate change and its relevance to the Knox Climate Response Plan 2021 – 2031. Implementation of the recommendation will:

- Positively/impact on Council's Net zero 2030 target by responding directly to several of the Plan's actions through the increase in tree canopy targets and vegetation cover. This will support urban cooling carbon sequestration and habitat corridor connectivity.

5. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

Canopy trees provide many benefits to the community and the natural environment. Some of the important environmental/amenity values are:

- Climate adaptation: trees sequester carbon, reducing the overall concentration of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere.
- Mitigating urban heat as shading from trees can reduce surface temperatures by 20 degrees Celsius, as well as reducing wind speeds and reducing glare.
- Energy conservation: shading from trees means that air conditioner use can often be reduced, decreasing energy costs for households and businesses.
- Water filtration and retention: trees capture rainfall and intercept runoff, reducing flooding and stormwater management costs, and decrease the flow of polluted water into our waterways by intercepting and using nutrients that would otherwise be discharged to waterways; and
- Wildlife habitat: trees provide important habitats for numerous bird, insect and animal species and create habitat connectivity or 'steppingstones' between key habitat areas for fauna to disperse, such as through avenues of trees along road corridors and open space.

The most recent canopy measure was conducted in 2018 and showed Knox municipality had a total coverage of 18%. This was a 5% decrease in canopy cover from 2014, with the study showing that over 80% of this loss was on residential land. To address this, the state government has introduced new tree protection laws under Clause 52.37 of the planning scheme aimed at;

- Protecting and enhancing canopy tree cover to support greener and cooler residential areas
- Maximising the retention of existing canopy tree cover where no development is proposed
- Ensuring that development is designed to maximise the retention and long term health of canopy trees to increase canopy cover
- Balancing the retention of existing canopy trees and residential development to meet housing needs
- Encouraging canopy cover that is site and climate responsive and supports local environments.

The highest contributing area on Council land was road reserves, contributing a loss of 9.6 hectares of canopy or 8% of the total canopy lost between 2014 and 2018. Most trees lost were between 5m-10m tall.

Every tree removed at a height of between 5m-10m, results in a canopy loss of approximately 70m2. Over the past ten years, trees removed on Council land (Table 5) have contributed to approximately 6% canopy loss across the municipality. Whilst with those trees planted each year

resulting in a strong 'net gain' figure as highlighted in Section 1.2.3, providing an additional 6% potential canopy increase, these benefits take 10-15 years to be realised. Trees need to establish to semi-maturity before providing full canopy benefits. This means that Knox would only be gaining full canopy benefits from trees planted in 2016-2017, this financial year.

6. FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

The recommendations related to this report have no immediate financial impact on Council or the community. The review of the Green Streets Policy, to the draft Policy has been undertaken utilising existing operational budgets. The draft Policy has been developed with consideration of current and future available funding and resourcing allocations.

Developing a higher-level strategic document would cost an estimated $60,000-$80,000 and could be considered in future annual budget processes.

7. RISKS

Trees provide a significant benefit for the community, however, can also be a liability. In some cases, it is necessary to determine the risks posed by trees and whether any action is required to mitigate or avoid that risk.

Public tree management must consider public safety and the need to maintain public trees at an acceptable level of risk. Risk management is a core component of Council's approach to street tree management, and while it is not possible to eliminate all risks associated with trees, Council endeavours to identify, assess and mitigate risks through appropriate and proportionate measures in line with Council's Risk Management Policy and Procedures.

Through the draft Policy, Council has adopted a risk management approach in alignment with AS/NZS ISO 31000:2018 to mitigate the risks associated with trees and our community. This approach requires Council to identify, evaluate and mitigate risk associated with trees including assessment of the location and condition of the tree, public use within the vicinity of the tree, consideration of impacts to surrounding infrastructure, the likelihood of failure, and the consequence if failure were to occur. This, combined with Council's legal and regulatory obligations relating to vegetation management, forms a rigorous process for identifying and mitigating risk.

8. COUNCIL AND HEALTH AND WELLBEING PLAN 2025-2029

Caring for and enhancing our environment

Strategy 3.1 - Our environment is healthy and sustainable by considering environmental factors when planning for and making decisions.
Strategy 3.2 - Green spaces and waterways are protected, enhanced and enjoyed through planning, promotion and maintenance of our built and natural environment.

9. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The officers contributing to and responsible for this report have no conflicts of interest requiring disclosure under Chapter 5 of the Governance Rules of Knox City Council.

10. STATEMENT OF COMPATIBILITY

There are no legislative obligations under the Human Rights Charter, Child Safe Standards or the Gender Equity Act that are incompatible with the recommendation in this report.

11. CONFIDENTIALITY

There is no content in this report that meets the definition of confidential information from the Local Government Act 2020.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Attachment 1 - Green Streets Policy [**8.5.1** - 9 pages]
2. Attachment 2 - Draft Urban Tree Management Policy [**8.5.2** - 15 pages]
3. Attachment 3 - Summary of Consultation Feedback [**8.5.3** - 18 pages]
4. Attachment 4 - Summary of Environmental Advisory Committee Feedback [**8.5.4** - 18 pages]

Green Streets Policy

Green Streets Policy 2019

Policy Number:	2019/01	Directorate: Engineering & Infrastructure
Approval by:	Council	Responsible Officer: Coordinator Open Space and Landscape Design
Approval Date:	23/9/2019	Version Number:1
Review Date:	3 Years from Meeting Date	

1. Purpose

The purpose of this Policy is to provide a clear and concise decision making platform to both Council and the community with regard to the planning, management and maintenance of street trees and nature strips i.e. green streets.

2. Context

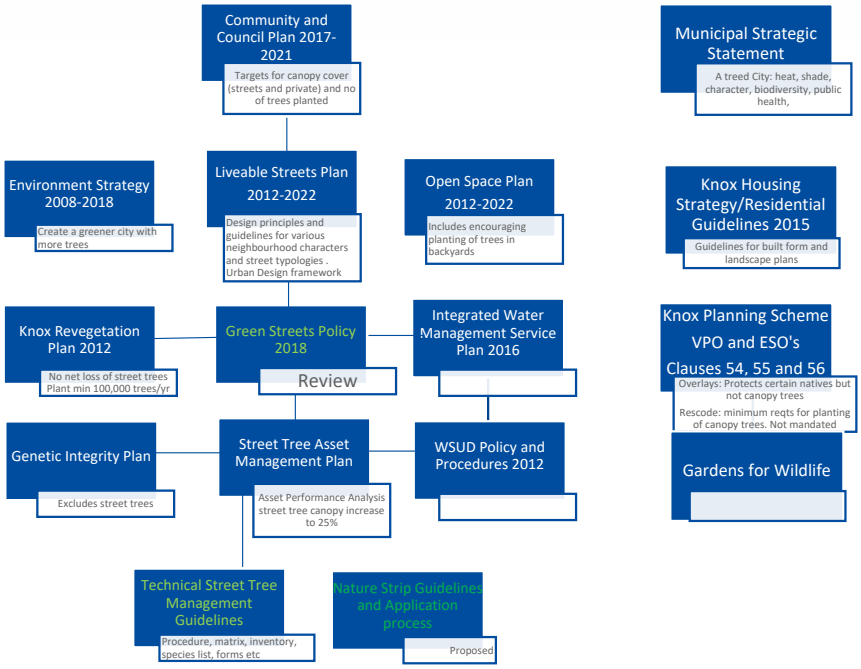
The Green Streets Policy 2019 succeeds the Green Streets Policy 2014. The Policy should be referred to when planning for or carrying out works on new or existing streets.

The Green Streets Policy provides the platform for decision making for two Council assets: street trees and nature strips. Whilst it is recognised that both are managed via different programs and decision making frameworks, Council considers their influence on each other and towards Councils' existing priorities strong enough to warrant their continued inclusion in the same Policy.

The Policy reflects Council's current strategic priorities, in relation to the management of street trees and nature strips as key assets within Knox's Liveable streets.

In the broader ecological context, Knox City Council is a signed partner to the strategic and visionary document; Living Melbourne- our metropolitan urban forest. This document was launched on 5 June 2019 and presents a transformative approach to respond to urban challenges with nature

The Green Streets Policy will fit into the below hierarchy of documents:



The Council Plan 2017-2021, The Municipal Strategic Statement and the Liveable Streets Plan 2012-2022 together provide a comprehensive strategic context around the importance and benefits of street trees, urban vegetation and nature strips for the future of Knox.

These high level documents provide clear links between urban greening and liveability, urban heat island reduction, biodiversity, human health and wellbeing, sense of place, community connection and active transport.

The Green Streets Policy outlines the key principles and position of Council around decision making for street trees and nature strips, which are the Green Streets component of Liveable Streets.

The Street Tree Asset Management Plan regularly reviews the performance of the street tree management program in ensuring quality assets, risk mitigation, and progress towards targets as set in the Community and Council Plan.

The newly formed Technical Street Tree Management Guidelines provides the day-to-day procedures, tools, inventory and standards required to manage street tree assets within the boundaries of the Green Streets Policy.

3. Scope

The Green Streets Policy 2019 outlines the key principles and decision making platform for planning and management of street trees and nature strips.

The scope of this Policy includes management statements for street trees and nature strips to be relied upon by:

- Staff;
- Councillors;
- Developers;
- Civil contractors;
- Event organisers; and
- The community.

4. References

4.1 Community & Council Plan 2017-2021

- Goal 1: We value our natural and built environment.

  Strategy 1.1: Protect and enhance our natural environment (plan for water sensitive urban design in Council projects)

  Strategy 1.2: Create a greener city with *more large trees*, indigenous flora and fauna.

  Targets: Increase tree canopy along streets
  Increase tree canopy on private land
  Increase in no of indigenous plant species in Knox
  An increase in local Knox resident's biodiversity awareness

4.2 Relevant Legislation

- Local Government Act 1989 – Conflict and Interest Provisions

4.3 Charter of Human Rights

This Policy has been assessed against and complies with the charter of Human Rights.

4.4 Related Council Policies

- WSUD Policy and Procedures 2015
- Sustainable Buildings and Infrastructure Policy 2019

4.5 Related Council Procedures

- Knox City Council Standard Drawings

4.6 Related Council Plans

Liveable Streets Plan 2012-2022

Theme 1: Streets as Places (character and neighbourhood amenity)

Action 2.1: Implement planting of Knox's key streets

Theme 2: Streets for travel (encourage pedestrian and cycling activity)

Action 1.3: Increase shade along active transport routes

Action 2.1: Implement green streets

Action 2.3: Separation of pedestrians and traffic through plantings

Theme 3: Streets for environment (habitat, shade, connectivity)
Action 2.3: Increase street tree planting across the municipality to provide shade and reduce summer heat gain
Action 3.1: Promote edible streetscapes within the Street Tree and Nature Strip Policy

Theme 6: Streets for community (community pride and connection)
Action 1.3: Initiate community consultation of the neighbourhood green streets in identified priority suburbs.
Action 3.1: Work with community groups and residential street groups to create edible streets and private edible gardens

Theme 7: Streets for Infrastructure (balance of parking, water sensitive urban design)
Action 1.1: Develop plan for undergrounding power lines
Action 3.1: Develop street renewal program
Action 4.1: Design of new streets must incorporate all requirements such as road widths and adequate nature strip width for required trees. It should also consider stormwater infrastructure protection, passive irrigation of street trees and reductions in stormwater runoff volumes.
Action 5.1: Ensure the design and location of on-street car parking is responsive to the needs of pedestrians and cyclists and the space requirements for street tree and nature strip planting.

Environment Strategy 2008-2018: (due for review)

Goal 1: To improve biodiversity and health of ecosystems
Approach 1.3: Establish a *network of habitat corridors* to join sites of significance with other areas of indigenous vegetation
Approach 1.7: Create a greener city with *more trees* and indigenous vegetation *in public spaces*, and thriving iconic species

Goal 3: To lead engaged and empowered community
Approach 3.2: Provide opportunities for community members to participate in meaningful ways *(Gardens for Wildlife)*
Approach 3.3: Provide effective resources to the community to facilitate behaviour change

Goal 5: To increase liveability of the City and develop sustainably
Approach 5.3: Create a city where people can live, work and recreate locally *(reduce the urban heat Island effect)*

Knox Revegetation Plan 2013
Open Space Plan 2012-2022
Street Tree Asset Management Plan 2016
Knox Housing Strategy and Residential Guidelines 2015

5. Definitions

Detail any definitions within the Policy.

Amenity value	The monetary value of an urban tree based on factors such as species, size, condition and local environment.
Biodiversity	In this context, refers to local (indigenous) flora and fauna.
Community Group(s)	means a legal entity who provide services, support or activities to the Knox community.
Council	means Knox City Council, whether constituted before or after the commencement of this Policy.
Green streets	An important component of liveable streets and includes both street trees and nature strips.
Individual(s)	means a resident(s) of the Knox Municipality.
Liveable streets	As defined in the Liveable Streets Plan.
Naturestrip	Council owned land between the property boundary and the road adjacent to a footpath. It is typically covered by either mown grass or low plantings.
Street tree	Trees situated within, or selected by Council for the purpose of planting within, the Road Reserve or Tree Reserve.
Water Sensitive Urban Design	Water Sensitive Urban Design is a land planning approach based on scientific analysis and engineering design which integrates the urban water cycle (including the management of stormwater, groundwater, wastewater and drinking (potable) water supply into urban design to minimise environmental degradation and improve aesthetic and recreational appeal.

6. Council Policy

In setting out the Policy, Knox City Council recognises that:

- street trees, nature strips and water are integral to Knox's green, leafy image and local landscape character;
- green streets are one of the core components of Liveable Streets which aim to enhance health and wellbeing, encourage active transport, improve urban ecology and encourage integrated planning and design;
- there are opportunities to create cooler spaces within the urban environment;
- collaboration and engagement with the community is important in proactively managing green streets;
- nature strips can form an important part of the city's biodiversity through habitat provision and connectivity;
- nature strips can form an important part of the city's flood mitigation, stormwater treatment, and waterway protection;
- urban development and maintaining Knox's leafy green image is a careful balance that requires evidence based, integrated planning and management;
- private realm, park and reserve trees and vegetation strengthen the diversity, health and resilience of the network of green streets;
- street trees are planted, owned, managed and maintained by Council; and
- nature strips are owned by Council yet planted and maintained by residents.

Street Tree Policy:

6.1 Tree Protection

6.1.1 All street trees will be protected from construction or development works that adversely affect their health and/or structure in accordance with Australian Standard *AS 4970- Protection of trees on development sites*.

6.1.2 Trees must not be pruned in any form and branches or roots may not be removed unless authorised by a Council arborist. Any pruning undertaken on Council street trees must conform to *AS 4373 Pruning of amenity trees* will only be undertaken by appropriately sufficiently qualified and insured personnel engaged by Council.

6.2 Street Tree Removals

6.2.1 Council will manage and monitor all street trees throughout their lifecycle and remove and replace them as appropriate.

6.2.2 Street trees will not be removed unless in accordance with Council's Street Tree Assessment or relevant Technical Street Tree Management Guidelines.

6.2.3 The assessment of street tree retention or removal will include consideration of tree retention values, monetary value of the asset, liabilities, public risk, public benefit, impact to the environment and biodiversity, and existing risk to infrastructure.

6.2.4 Any street tree removed as part of construction works will be replaced wherever possible.

6.2.5 Council will seek to minimise the visual and environmental impact of the loss of groups of street trees through the staggered removal and replacement of trees where appropriate.

6.2.6 Where planning applications request the removal of street trees, Council's arborist will accord with the Street Tree Asset Management Plan or Technical Street Tree Management Guideline to determine whether the removal is supported.

6.2.7 Council's relevant planning overlays and permit conditions cover the protection and removal of native vegetation.

6.2.8 Council will seek to inform the Community of proposed tree removals prior to the works occurring, although trees posing an immediate risk to the public may be removed without notification.

6.2.9 Council will generally not remove a street tree to reduce the extent of leaf/flower/fruit drop, improve views, increase light to adjacent residences or gardens or due to a dislike of species. Council's arborist will follow the Street Tree Assessment Workflow to determine whether the removal is supported.

6.2.10 Alternative options may be explored to enable retention of the trees and employed where practical in consideration of 6.2.3.

6.3 Street tree valuation

6.3.1 When the removal of a Council tree asset is deemed necessary for construction, development or works, all associated costs must be paid by the property owner, developer or applicant prior to removal.

6.3.2 Total cost for street tree removal includes amenity value of the tree plus tree and stump removal costs plus planting and maintaining a new tree for two years, as per the City of Melbourne method of tree valuation.

6.4 Street Tree Management

6.4.1 Council will regularly update tree management and maintenance standards and procedures to ensure they reflect legislative requirements and industry best practice.

6.4.2 Council will maintain an up to date street tree inventory that will be used to formulate cyclic tree management and maintenance programs.

6.4.3 The tree inventory will be updated every five years but will also record results of proactive tree inspections.

6.4.4 All tree pruning will be in accordance with *AS 4373 Pruning of amenity trees.*

6.4.5 Council will maintain vegetation clearance from above ground electrical conductors under the Electrical Safety Act 1998 and most recent Electricity Safety (Electric Line Clearance) Regulations.

6.4.6 Council will undertake reactive maintenance of street trees as a result of extreme weather events, change in tree condition or from customer requests.

6.4.7 Council will monitor and appropriately treat pest and disease incursions that threaten the viability of street trees in consideration of the long-term viability of the species as a street tree and the resource available.

6.5 Street Tree Planting

6.5.1 Council is responsible for selecting and planting the most appropriate species for a location based on site suitability, aesthetic, functional and environmental attributes and the potential to contribute to the predominant or preferred landscape character as set out in the Liveable Streets Plan 2012 and Residential Housing Guidelines 2015.

6.5.2 Street tree planting will aim to enhance canopy cover across the Municipality and be implemented by an annual tree planting and renewal programs.

6.5.3 All tree stock must meet *AS 2303 Tree stock for landscape use*.

6.5.4 Trees will be planted in accordance with Councils tree planting technical guidelines.

6.5.5 Council will maintain an up to date and evidence based preferred species list suitable for planting within the municipality.

6.5.6 Where planting of street trees is adjacent to a Site of Biological Significance, preference will be for use of local provenance indigenous species.

6.6 Street trees, Infrastructure and public safety

6.6.1 Should there be a possibility of public or private infrastructure damage that could be influenced to an adjacent street tree(s), Council will undertake a risk assessment that accords with the Street Tree Asset Management Plan or the Technical Street Tree Management Guidelines.

6.6.2 Knox Council will undertake appropriate and regular street tree inspections to maintain public safety through the use of an industry recognised tree assessment method.

Street Tree Re-use

6.6.3 Council will develop a tree re-use guideline to maximize the benefits of tree removals and minimize waste.

6.7 Community Consultation

6.7.1 Council will consult with residents regarding relevant street tree and nature strip works.

6.7.2 This Policy and associated relevant documentation will be included on Councils website.

6.8 Street Trees and Water

6.8.1 Council will adhere to the Water Sensitive Urban Design Policy, WSUD & Stormwater Management Strategy 2010 and integrate stormwater collection for the benefit of street trees where possible to meet the objectives of the Liveable Streets Plan.

6.9 Biodiversity

6.9.1 Street trees along bush boulevards will be planted to enhance local biodiversity where possible in alignment with the Liveable Streets Plan and any other Council plan for urban biodiversity.

6.9.2 The planning and delivery of street trees will aim to reflect the adopted Living Melbourne – Urban Forest Strategy.

6.10 Private trees

6.10.1 Council will continue to review and implement the planning scheme to strive to protect canopy trees and allow space for future trees on private land.

6.10.2 Council will continue to encourage the protection and planting of trees in the private realm through education, active programs like Gardens for Wildlife and any future strategic biodiversity work.

6.10.3 Private trees will be considered as a contributory part of the streetscape during street tree planting programs where applicable.

Nature Strips:

6.11 Existing Nature Strip plantings

6.11.1 Existing landscaping to nature strip areas as of the date of this Policy can be retained provided that the landscaping;

- is deemed to not present a risk to the community;
- allows for the safe and unencumbered movement of pedestrians along adjacent footpaths;
- meets the requirements outlined in Councils Nature Strip Guidelines; and
- is maintained to the satisfaction of Council.

6.11.2 Naturestrips that are deemed not to meet Council Policy are to be modified by the resident within thirty (30) days of being notified. Nature strips that are not modified after thirty (30) days, will be removed or modified by Council at the resident's expense.

6.11.3 Trees that have been planted by residents in the road reserve that do not meet Council's approved species including environmental weeds, or that are deemed unsuitable based on growing characteristics that will cause damage to Council infrastructure or public utilities are to be removed by the resident within thirty (30) days of being notified. Nature strips that are not modified after thirty (30) days, will be removed or modified by Council at the resident's expense.

6.12 Nature strip plantings

6.12.1 Watering systems are not to be installed to nature strips

6.12.2 Artificial turf is not to be installed on nature strips

6.12.3 Council approval is not required to grow mown grass on the nature strip

6.12.4 Trees are not to be planted by residents in their nature strips

6.12.5 Resident initiated landscaping to nature strips will only be permitted through an application and Council approval process. Considerations in allowing residents to plant nature strips will include:

- Erosion prevention
- Public safety enhancement
- Contribution to local landscape character
- Contribution to biodiversity and Gardens for Wildlife program
- Benefits or impacts of proposed planting on existing trees
- Where evidence of a resident's inability to maintain a grass nature strip can be demonstrated
- Ensuring that existing services and maintenance requirements are prioritised e.g. waste collection and drainage.
- Tenant/owner status of the applicant
- If edibles are to be planted *in situ* whether soil contaminant testing has been undertaken

6.12.6 A written request to Council is to be submitted as per the Nature strip Application Procedure, addressing the Nature Strip Guidelines which at a minimum, outline the design, landscape enhancement, species selection and ongoing maintenance of the proposed planting.

6.12.7 Council will not be responsible for repair, replacement or reinstatement of naturestrip garden beds/plants should they be disrupted by asset renewal/repair works from Council or other parties.

Other:

6.13 Management of greens streets

6.13.1 Council will continue to administer an internal stakeholder working group to effectively manage the implementation of this Policy.

7. Administrative Updates

From time to time, circumstances may change leading to the need for minor administrative changes to this Policy. Where an update does not materially alter this Policy, such a change may be made administratively. Examples of minor administrative changes include changes to names of Council departments or positions, change to names of Federal or State Government departments or a minor amendment to legislation that does not have material impact. Where any change or update may materially change the intent of this Policy, it must be considered by Council.

Urban Tree Management Policy

Policy Number:	TBC	**Directorate:**	Infrastructure
Approval by:	Council	**Responsible Officer:**	Manager Green Spaces and Environment
Approval Date:	*	**Version Number:**	*
Review Date:	*		

1. Purpose

The Urban Tree Management Policy (Policy) has been developed to guide the ongoing management of trees on public land within Knox City Council (Council), in line with Council's Climate Response Plan, Biodiversity Resilience Strategy and Open Space Asset Management Plan.

2. Context

Knox City Council (Council) values its open spaces as a valuable living network that benefits the community. Due to the increasing community reliance on public land for outdoor and social activity, Council considers all areas that contribute to its open space network under the banner of "Our Collective Backyard".

Council's urban forest plays a vital role in contributing to the collective backyard network, more specifically through trees within the urban environment. Trees provide value to the community in many ways, including enhancing neighbourhood character, supporting biodiversity (including habitat for wildlife), improving urban cooling, and contributing to community wellbeing. The area is widely recognised for its green, leafy image, extending toward the foothills of the picturesque Dandenong Ranges, which reinforces local identity and sense of place.

More broadly, Council's current strategic position adopts clear objectives to increase tree canopy cover across the municipality, as outlined in the Climate Response Plan and Biodiversity Resilience Strategy, with a target set of 30% coverage by 2050. These objectives aim to mitigate urban heat, improve amenity, and enhance environmental resilience by prioritising the retention and planting of large, drought-tolerant trees in suitable locations. The Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029, contains a performance measure highlighting the net change in Council trees (planted vs removed), aiming for a positive net gain to support canopy targets.

The Knox community highly value trees for providing positive environmental outcomes and creating a green and leafy environment that enhances liveability. It is acknowledged however, that others view trees differently relating to potential impacts they may have on property and lifestyles. Despite these differing perspectives, the Urban Tree Management Policy must adopt a broader, municipality-wide view, recognising that the collective environmental, social and economic benefits of trees extend beyond individual properties and contribute significantly to the

long-term health, resilience and amenity of the community as a whole.

The Policy aims to provide a balanced approach to the management of trees on public land, considering public risk, positive environmental outcomes relating to Council's strategic position, community needs and expectations, and available funding and resource allocation to provide related services.

3. Scope

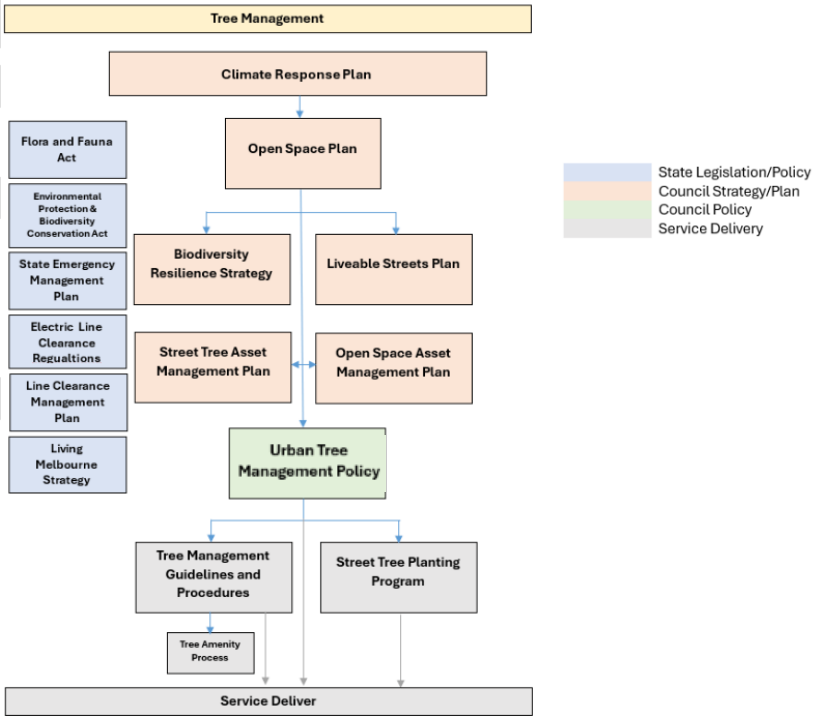
This policy applies to all trees on public land managed by Council, including street trees, park trees and trees within Council facilities. This policy does not apply to trees on private land or trees managed by other authorities.

This policy applies to all internal staff, external stakeholders, private developers, contractors, property owners and residents in relation to trees managed by Council on public land.

4. Tree Management Framework

The Policy is part of a broader hierarchy of strategic and operational documents, legislation and processes that reference tree management on public land (both enhancement and protection) and reference targets around canopy coverage as shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1

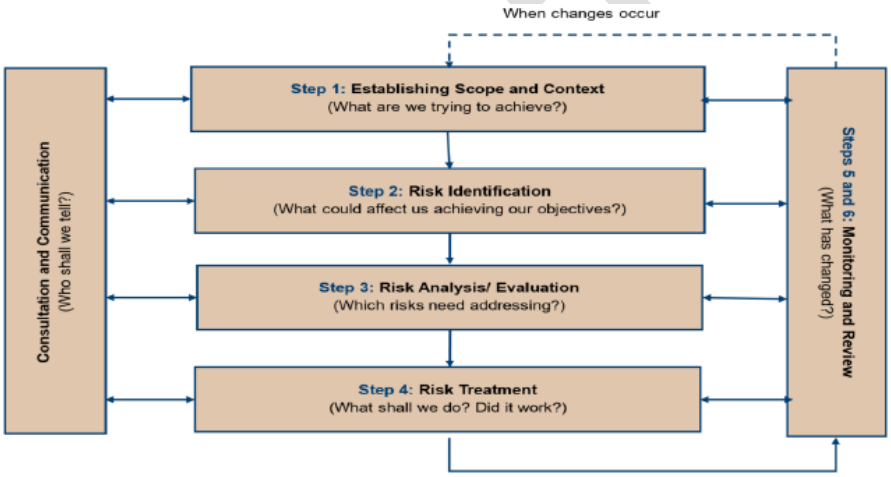


5. Risk Management

Public tree management also considers public safety and the need to maintain public trees at an acceptable level of risk. Risk management is a core component of Council's approach to street tree management, and while it is not possible to eliminate all risks associated with trees, Council endeavors to identify, assess and mitigate risks through appropriate and proportionate measures in line with Council's Risk Management Policy and Procedures.

Council has adopted a risk management approach in alignment with AS/NZS ISO 31000:2018 to mitigate the risk/s associated with trees and our community. This approach requires Council to identify, evaluate and mitigate risk as shown in Figure 2:

Figure 2



The risk associated with trees includes an assessment of the location and condition of the tree, public use within the vicinity of the tree, consideration of impacts to surrounding infrastructure, the likelihood of failure, and the consequence if failure were to occur. This, combined with Council's legal and regulatory obligations relating to vegetation management, forms a rigorous process for identifying and mitigating risk.

6. Tree Inspections

Council uses a risk management approach to determine priorities for works and allocate resources effectively. Inspections and risk assessments require standardised and documented procedures to maintain public safety using an industry-recognised tree assessment method. These are undertaken by suitably qualified and experienced arborists. All inspections are recorded and stored within Council's asset management system.

6.1. Proactive Tree Inspection

Council inspects all trees proactively, through a programmed approach based on risk methodology

that considers the location and visitation of different areas. Inspection frequencies are listed in Table 1.

Table 1

Type	Cycle	Comments
Major Reserve	5 Years	Trees with Medium / high target areas inspected (close to walking tracks, picnic areas, etc.)
Bushland Reserve	5 Years	Trees with Medium / high target areas inspected (close to walking tracks, picnic areas, etc.)
Minor Reserve	5 Years	All trees inspected
Playgrounds	2 Years	All trees inspected
Council Building (Grounds Kindergartens)	2 Years	All trees inspected
Significant Sites	2 Years	All trees inspected
Street Trees (General)	2 Years	All trees inspected
Trees Under Powerlines (HBRA/High Voltage)	1 Year	All trees in declared area inspected
Trees Under Powerlines (Other)	2 Year	All trees in declared area inspected

6.2. Reactive Tree Inspection

Reactive tree inspections and subsequent works occur in response to reports from Council staff, residents, members of the public, or other organisations advising Council of concerns or potential hazardous relating to public trees.

7. Tree Removal

The assessment of tree retention or removal will include consideration of tree retention values, monetary value of the asset, liabilities, public risk, public benefit, impact to the environment and biodiversity, and existing and potential future risk to infrastructure. All requests are managed on a case-by-case basis.

7.1. Tree Removal Criteria

Trees will only be removed if one or more of the following Tree Removal Criteria are met.

- **The tree is dead**
  More than 50% of the tree is dead and the tree is no longer capable of sustaining a full, healthy structure and assessed as in irreversible decline by Council Arborists.
- **The tree is dying**
  More than 50% of the tree is dying and the tree is no longer capable of sustaining a full, healthy structure and assessed as in irreversible decline by Council Arborists.
- **The tree is hazardous**

A tree poses an unacceptable risk to the community in accordance with Council's risk management principles and it cannot be maintained by pruning or other risk reduction options.

- **The tree is causing significant damage to public infrastructure**
  A tree is causing significant ongoing risk to Council infrastructure and no other viable means exist to rectify the situation, as assessed by Council Arborists.
- **The tree is causing significant damage to private infrastructure**
  A tree is causing significant ongoing risk to private infrastructure, has been substantiated by a Council arborist or through a claims process and no other viable means exist to rectify the situation.
- **Prevention of access or movement**
  Where a tree may be preventing access or movement that does not align with Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (DDA), including on footpaths, within public reserves and facilities.
- **Medical Reasons**
  Generally related to serious allergy or other medical condition that can be linked specifically and solely to a tree or trees, by a medical specialist only.
- **The tree does not comply with Electrical Line Clearance Regulations**
  The tree cannot be practically pruned to comply with Electrical Line Clearance Regulations through appropriate pruning techniques.
- **The tree has been approved for removal as part of a planning permit application**
  The tree has been endorsed for removal as part of a Planning Permit relating to an adjacent private property development plan approved by a Council Arborist.
- **The tree is located within a Council project site**
  The tree is located within a new Council project site that will provide community benefits through improved green space or infrastructure, which would not be possible without the removal of the tree with no design alternatives available. A planning permit may be required in some cases, which will be assessed through a standard planning process.
- **The tree is declared a noxious or environmental weed**
  The tree is declared a noxious or environmental weed and Council Biodiversity officers and Council Arborists, have determined its removal will have environmental benefits.

Declaration of a dead, dying or hazardous tree will only be determined by Council's qualified Arborists. Council will inform the resident of properties that a public tree removal directly impacts (tree located in front of or adjacent to).

Any tree removed under the above criteria will be replaced with the same or a more appropriate species where, and as soon as possible, aligning to clauses within Section 10 – Tree Planting.

In some instances, a tree may be retained for strategic environmental purposes including providing habitat for wildlife. This is achieved through habitat pruning of a dead or declining tree.

Trees will not be removed for the following reasons:

- **Dropping of leaves, bark, twigs, fruit or sap**
  Whilst Council recognises that leaf litter and debris can create inconvenience, removal on this basis alone is not supported as litter and debris are considered an ordinary, inherent

and unavoidable characteristic of trees in an outdoor environment and does not in isolation, constitute an unacceptable safety risk warranting removal.

Some minor pruning may be provided where practical, to reduce leaf and debris drop into private properties.

- **Shading**
  Including shading of solar panels, garden beds or lawn areas.
- **Obstruction of views**
  Including existing views or potential new views created through development.
- **Advertising or signage**
  Including providing space for construction of advertising signs or increasing site lines.
- **Unsubstantiated property damage**
  Any property damage claims that have not been substantiated through a claims process.
- **Minor allergic or irritant responses**
  Including hay fever, hives or any other minor medical reaction.
- **To reduce the impact from any bird/ bat/other animal, waste or noise**
  Including noise of animals, droppings or general debris caused by them.
- **The dislike of a species**
  Including concerns around size or perceived risk.

7.2. Tree Amenity Valuation

When the removal of a Council tree is deemed necessary for private construction, development or works, all associated costs will be paid by the property owner, developer or applicant prior to removal, including amenity value. The total cost for street tree removal includes the amenity value of the tree, plus costs for Council to remove the tree and stump, planting and maintaining the new tree for two years. Council utilises the City of Melbourne method of tree amenity valuation.

7.3. Tree Stump Removal

Stumps that require removal through grinding are recorded in Council's database and will be completed within up to 8 weeks after a tree is removed.

8. Tree Pruning

Pruning activities may be identified through pro-active or reactive tree inspection processes as referenced in Section 6. Pruning is carried out on trees to;

- Remove identified hazards.
- Remove or reduce risk by improving structure or form.
- Comply with Electrical Line Clearance Regulations as referenced in Section 8.4.
- Comply with clearance thresholds as referenced in Sections 8.2 and 8.3.
- Prevent obstruction of movement or access, as described in Section 7.1.
- Limbs significantly blocking lighting in streets and parks.

Trees are not pruned to;

- Preserve, create or enhance views.
- Reduce shade.
- Reduce leaf litter and debris that would not meet Australian Standards. Some minor pruning may be provided where practical, to reduce leaf and debris drop into private properties.
- Deter roosting birds or any other animal activity.
- Provide clearance thresholds outside of those referenced in this Policy.

All pruning conducted by, or on behalf of, Council on public trees is to be undertaken by a qualified arborist and in accordance with the Australian Standard for Pruning of Amenity Trees (AS 4373).

8.1. Formative Pruning

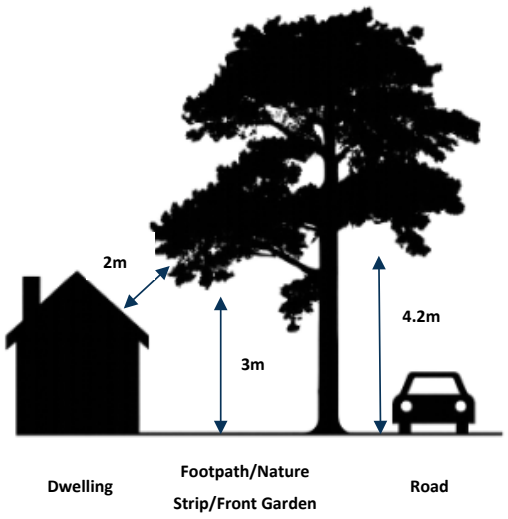
Young trees in an urban environment will eventually compete for above and below-ground space with other trees, as well as infrastructure such as buildings, footpaths, roads and powerlines. Trees require formative pruning to achieve and maintain clearance from this infrastructure and for the development of a strong scaffold branch structure.

To protect and enhance its tree population, Council sets and maintains very high standards for pruning of its trees. All tree pruning shall be carried out in line with Australian Standards.

8.2. Street Tree Pruning

Where possible, pruning shall be undertaken to achieve clearances as shown in Figure 3, unless pruning would have an adverse effect on the health and structure of the subject tree. All requests will be inspected by Council's Arborists and assessed on a case-by-case basis.

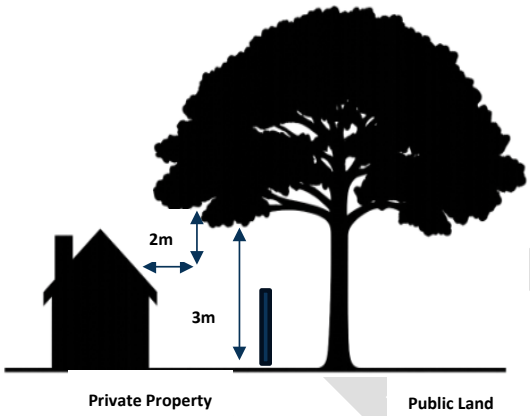
Figure 3



8.3. Property Line Clearance

Residents may request Council to prune street or park tree branches or foliage away from their private buildings. Where possible, pruning shall be undertaken to achieve clearances as shown in Figure 4, unless pruning would have an adverse effect on the health and structure of the subject tree. All requests will be inspected by Council's Arborists and assessed on a case-by-case basis.

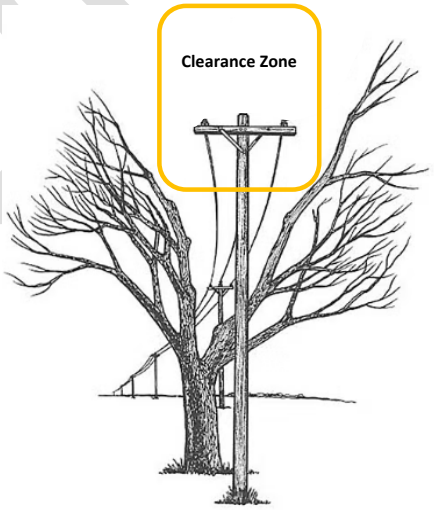
Figure 4



8.4. Pruning Around Powerlines

Council must comply with the Electricity Safety (Electric Line Clearance) Regulations. The regulations stipulate clearance requirements between trees and power lines that Council must maintain. This includes all trees on public land, within road reserves, parks and Council-owned facilities. Council will prune trees around overhead electrical distribution supply lines to achieve compliance with legislation and Council's Electric Line Clearance Management Plan. Figure 5 indicates what this pruning typically looks like in practice.

Figure 5



9. Managing Tree Roots and Infrastructure Impacts

Tree roots are vital for tree health, survival and stability. It is acknowledged that tree roots can, on occasion, impact public and private infrastructure such as footpaths, roads, stormwater pipes and buildings.

Council maintains publicly managed assets, identifies ongoing remedial measures, and responds to service requests for damaged infrastructure such as footpaths. Remedial solutions including root pruning, non-destructive hydro excavation, and root barriers will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

9.1. Infrastructure Impacts on Public Land

Council will assess all impacts from tree roots on infrastructure. This includes assessments on the impact and damage on infrastructure at the time of inspection. If damage is identified, then the following treatments will be considered, informing management processes moving forward.

- Treatment utilising standard maintenance practices such as asphalt wedging, concrete grinding or root pruning.
- The installation of a root barrier to prevent further root growth into an area that may impact infrastructure.

Tree removal will only be considered in instances where the above treatments are not feasible for any reason or where historic significant infrastructure damage has been ongoing and regular, and future cost of managing infrastructure damage outweighs the cost and benefits of retaining or removing the tree.

9.2. Infrastructure Impacts on Private Property

In instances of private property damage claims relating to a Council tree, an initial inspection carried out by a Council arborist will occur, to determine if tree roots are a contributing factor to damaged infrastructure. If this cannot be determined, applicants may require a claims process to be initiated that includes, but is not limited to;

- The provision of an arborist report detailing the reasons the tree is causing the damage identified and the reasons this may be occurring.
- The provision of a plumbers or engineer's report detailing the potential reasons identified damage is being caused by the tree.
- Detailed photographic evidence relating to any, or all, of the above reports.

Once received, Council will determine whether there is sufficient information to proceed with the claims process.

Tree removal will only be considered in instances where a level of liability has been accepted by Council through the initial arborist inspection or a claims process and the cost of ongoing remedial work is more than the value of the tree, all other practical measures to mitigate damage have been exhausted, the cost to maintain the tree and mitigate further damage outweighs the value of the tree, and there is no reasonable alternative to resolve ongoing property damage.

10. Tree Planting

Council has an extensive tree planting program that usually occurs between May and October each year, although the period can vary to take advantage of optimal planting conditions.

10.1. General Planting Conditions

General conditions followed during this program include;

- Tree planting will aim to enhance canopy cover across the municipality and be implemented through annual tree planting and renewal programs, aiming for a positive net gain in Council trees as per the performance measure in Theme 3 of the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029.
- Tree planting will consider the most suitable species for specific locations including assessing the impacts on the space available for the tree to grow, impacts on surrounding infrastructure and services both above and below ground and the existing character of an area.
- All tree stock must meet AS 2303 Tree stock for landscape use.
- Trees will be planted in accordance with Council's tree planting technical guidelines.
- Council will maintain an up-to-date and evidence-based preferred species list suitable for planting within the municipality, considering species that will provide a more climate resilient and diverse urban forest.
- Where planting of trees is within or adjacent to a Site of Biological Significance, bushland reserves or habitat corridors (as specified within the Biodiversity Resilience Strategy), preference will be for use of indigenous species in streetscapes and local provenance indigenous species in declared reserves.

10.2. Tree Planting in Streets and Road Reserves

When planting trees in streets and road reserves, constraints of these locations are considered including the following condition;

- 2.5 metres from driveways and crossovers (Including splays)
- 4.0 metres from power poles
- 3.0 Metres from light poles
- 5.0 metres from local road intersections
- 10.0 metres from main road intersections
- 5.0 metres from stop signs
- 2.5 metres form bus shelters
- 2.0 metre from fire hydrants/storm water pits
- 1.0 metre from utility service pits
- Trees will not be planted over known gas or water services or legal points of discharge to private properties where possible.
- In some cases, a nature strip may not be able to have a tree planted due to physical constraints such as insufficient room, presence of underground services (that would be directly impacted by root growth) or traffic sight distances.

- Species selection will be based on available room vs tree size, growth habits of trees including root, branch and fruit growth etc, that may pose issues when mature.

10.3. Tree Planting Under Powerlines

When planting trees under powerlines, special considerations will be applied to minimise impact on power lines and minimise future maintenance requirements in line with Electrical Line Clearance Regulations.

- Where planting is undertaken directly under powerlines, smaller tree species less than 10m tall at mature height will typically be used unless part of an existing avenue or clearance pruning can be achieved. Additional smaller trees will be planted to maximise canopy potential.
- Where planting is undertaken not directly under powerlines, large canopy trees greater than 10m tall at mature height will be used.
- Where space is available Council will select large canopy trees to maximise canopy potential.

11. Pest and Disease Management

Council will monitor and appropriately treat pest and disease incursions that threaten the viability of public trees in consideration of the long-term viability of the species and the resource available.

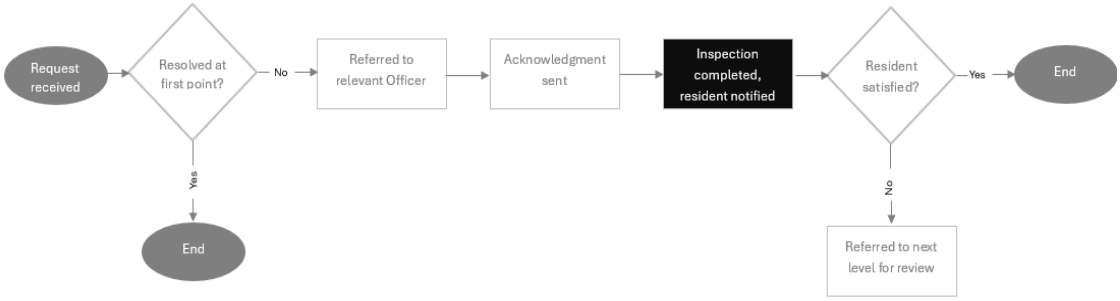
12. Complaints Process

All requests and complaints made to Council are managed in line with Council's Customer Charter and Complaints Policy.

12.1. Request for Service

The first stage of requesting a tree inspection proceeds as per Figure 6.

Figure 6

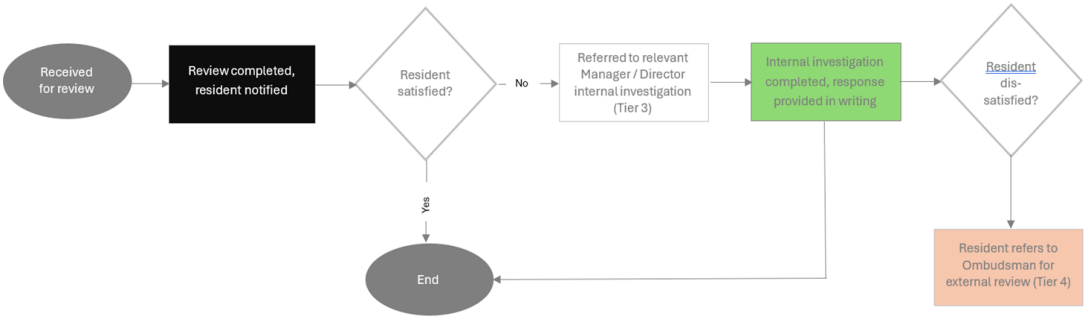


As per Council's Customer Charter, all requests relating to tree management will be responded to within a maximum of 5 business days. Emergencies will be responded to within 24 hours. Rectification timelines will be provided post-inspection and are prioritised based on risk and safety.

12.2. Complaints Process

Following on from the process highlighted in Section 12.1 and once an initial decision has been made, if a complainant is dis-satisfied with the outcome, the option exists to proceed to a complaints process as per Figure 7.

Figure 7



As per Council's Customer Charter and Complaints Policy, all complaints will be responded to within 20 business days. For Tier 3 – Internal Reviews, response will be provided within 20 business days of escalation.

13. General Tree Protection

All publicly owned and managed trees are protected under Knox City Council's Amenity Local Law and specific planning overlays. It is illegal to remove, damage or kill public trees including poisoning, removing, vandalising or cutting in any way. Where an instance of vandalism has occurred;

- An investigation into the incident will occur by Council Officers and may involve the Victorian Police
- Advertising signage will be installed, with the tree/s retained and made safe whilst the investigation occurs.
- All attempts will be made to retain the tree, however if the tree dies, it may be pruned and remain as a habitat tree for a number of years.
- It is the intent that parties found responsible for the un-permitted removal of public trees will be held responsible. Prosecution for damaged and removed public trees can occur.
- Fines are applicable and costs for loss of asset value, amenity value, required works and replacement planting can be sought from the offending party where applicable.
- Any tree requiring removal will be replaced through Council's annual tree planting program.

14. Managing Trees During Development

All trees will be protected from construction, or development works that adversely affect their health and/or structure in accordance with Australian Standard AS 4970 – Protection of trees on

development sites. More specifically;

- Trees must not be pruned in any form, and branches or roots may not be removed unless authorised by a Council arborist. Any pruning undertaken on Council trees must conform to AS 4373, Pruning of amenity trees, and will only be undertaken by appropriately qualified and insured personnel engaged by Council.
- Where planning applications request the removal of trees, Council's arborist will assess the request in accordance with the Street Tree Asset Management Plan or Technical Street Tree Management Guideline to determine whether the removal is warranted.
- Any tree removed as part of construction works will be replaced wherever possible.
- Council's relevant planning overlays and permit conditions cover the protection and removal of native vegetation relating to development.
- When the removal of a Council tree asset is deemed necessary for construction, development or works, all associated costs must be paid by the property owner, developer or applicant prior to removal.
- Total cost for tree removal includes amenity value of the tree as per the City of Melbourne method of tree valuation, tree and stump removal costs and costs for planting and maintaining a new tree for two years. All funds are utilised within Council's operational budget for tree management services including tree planting, establishment and broader maintenance activities.
- For Council managed projects, any tree identified for removal where the amenity value exceeds $10,000, will require the approval of Director Infrastructure to proceed.

15. References

15.1. Related Council Plans and Strategies

- Knox Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025–2029
  Theme 3: Caring for and enhancing our environment.
  Strategy 3.1: Our environment is healthy and sustainable by considering environmental factors when planning for and making decisions.
  Strategy 3.2: Green spaces and waterways are protected, enhanced and enjoyed through planning, promotion and maintenance of our built and natural environment.
- Knox Planning Scheme
- Climate Response Plan
- Open Space Plan
- Biodiversity Resilience Strategy
- Liveable Streets Plan
- Street Tree Asset Management Plan (STAMP)
- Open Space Asset Management Plan
- Road Management Plan
- Amenity Local Law

15.2. Related State Strategies

- Plan for Victoria
- Living Melbourne Strategy

15.2. Relevant Legislation

- Flora and Fauna Act 1988
- Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 2025
- Planning and Environment Act 1987
- Electrical Line Clearance Interim Regulations 2025
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992
- State Emergency Management Plan

14.5. Charter of Human Rights

- This policy has been assessed against and complies with the Charter of Human Rights.

14.5. Related Council Policies and Procedures

- Native Vegetation Net Gain Policy
- Native Vegetation Genetic Integrity Policy
- Tree Management Procedures

16. Definitions

Term	Definition
Amenity Value	The assessed social, environmental and aesthetic value of a tree, including its contribution to streetscape, shade, character and wellbeing as designed by Melbourne City Council.
Arborist	A suitably qualified and experienced professional trained in the assessment, care and management of trees.
Bushland Reserve	A reserve designated as containing environmental benefits providing positive bushland and biodiversity outcomes.
Canopy Cover	The proportion of land area shaded or covered by tree canopy when viewed from above.
Development	Any works associated with larger estate development, smaller one block developments or any other construction project including Council managed.
Habitat Pruning	The selective cutting of dying, dead, or hazard trees to make them safe while preserving critical features like hollows, deadwood, and decaying limbs for local wildlife
Hazardous Tree	A tree assessed as posing an unacceptable level of risk to people, property or infrastructure.
HBRA	Hazardous Bushfire Risk Area
Major Reserve	Areas with a total land area of more than 2 hectares providing substantial open space for recreation, or general community use.

Minor Reserve	Areas with a total land area of more than 2 hectares or less providing open space for recreation, or general community use
Nature Strip	The area of land within the road reserve between the kerb and the property boundary.
Public Land	Land owned, managed or controlled by Council, including streets, reserves, parks and Council facilities.
Significant Infrastructure Damage	Damage that materially affects the safety, structural integrity, functionality, or serviceability of infrastructure and cannot be reasonably managed through maintenance, engineering solutions, or arboricultural treatments.
Significant Site	Areas that experience or are expected to experience increased pedestrian or visitor pedestrian traffic as a result of specialised facilities, infrastructure, community activities, or organised events.
Street Tree	A tree located within a road reserve or nature strip on public land managed by Council.
Urban Forest	The network of trees and vegetation across the municipality that contributes to canopy cover, biodiversity, cooling and amenity.

17. Administrative Updates

From time to time, circumstances may change leading to the need for minor administrative changes to this Policy. Where an update does not materially alter this Policy, such a change may be made administratively on approval of the Director Infrastructure. Examples of minor administrative changes include change to names of Council departments or positions, change to names of Federal or State Government departments or a minor amendment to legislation that does not have material impact. Where any change or update may materially change the intent of this Policy, it must be considered by Director Infrastructure.

Amendment details	Approved by	Date of approval
[Detail administrative amendments made]	[Name of Approver]	[Date approved]

DRAFT

Number	Gaps/Findings/Feedback	Source	Response
1	The current Policy is solely focused on street trees, resulting in no clarity around how Council manages other trees on public land such as in reserves.	Initial Assessment	Policy now covers all trees on public land within Knox, with name changed to Urban Tree Management Policy and scope (Section 3) clearly articulated.
2	Combines minor strategic elements with operation guidelines, clouding the intent of the policy	Initial Assessment	Have removed specific strategic references and guidance, now policy articulates alignment to strategic position through other various plans and strategies including Liveable Streets Plan, STAMP, Biodiversity Resilience Strategy and Climate Response Plan. (Section 1 - Context, Section 4 - Tree Management Framework).
3	The current Policy lacks detail around street tree pruning with only Australian Standards referenced.	Initial Assessment	Section 8 - Tree Pruning, now provides detail on pruning criteria and clearances for street and reserve trees relating to property lines, front yards and dwellings, footpaths, road reserves and power lines, with diagrams highlighting clearances for clarity.
4	Proactive, scheduled inspection frequencies are not referenced within the current document.	Initial Assessment	Section 6.1 - Proactive Tree Inspection, now references proactive, scheduled inspection frequencies.
5	Unclear within the Policy how decisions are made around impacts of trees on infrastructure.	Initial Assessment	Section 9 - Managing Tree Roots and Infrastructure Impacts highlights the assessment process and potential outcomes relating to infrastructure damage both private and public.
6	Policy is heavily reliant on being read in conjunction with the STAMP for some key street tree management elements creating clarity issues.	Initial Assessment	All relative elements have from the STAMP have now been included within the UTMP. • Street tree removal from allergic reactions (Section 7.1 - Tree Removal Criteria) • Damage to infrastructure from tree roots (Section 9 - Managing Tree Roots and Infrastructure Impacts) • Detailed pruning information, processes and criteria (Section 8 - Tree Pruning) • Detail on tree inspections including re-active and pro-active inspections (Section 6 - Tree Inspections)
7	The coverage of the process relating to private plantings and landscaping within nature strips, draws the document away from its core intent relating to tree management.	Initial Assessment	Removed from the Urban Tree Management Policy, to be managed via separate guidelines.

8	• Properties with the built townhouses find it difficult to put the bins on the collection day. Space is occupied by trees on the nature strip. • Big trees on the nature strip on busy main roads are a vision obstruction for drivers wishing to come out on the road.	Multi Advisory Committee	Section 10.2 (point 7) added referencing certain instances where trees may not be planted including insufficient room, presence of underground services or traffic sight distances.
9	Strongly Support	Multi Advisory Committee	N/A
10	Sooner rather than later	Multi Advisory Committee	N/A
11	If trees are planted with citrus type flowers, then may be not on main walking tracks as they are a slipping hazard.	Multi Advisory Committee	Section 10.2 (point 8) added referencing species selection considerations including available room vs tree size, growth habits of trees including root, branch and fruit growth etc, that may pose issues when mature.
12	• Accessibility of footpaths with trees. • Root growth can make the footpath difficult to use for wheelchairs, prams, walkers etc • The shade provided by trees is good for keeping the heat away from the footpaths in general	Multi Advisory Committee	• Section 7.1 (point 6) added referencing tree removal criteria in instances where access or movement is prevented by issues relating to a tree in line with Disability and Discrimination Act 1992. • Section 9.1 added highlighting how tree roots impacting infrastructure will be managed and under what circumstances they would be removed.
13	I think the policy is good. I think Council should look after the trees on Council land.	Multi Advisory Committee	N/A
14	Potentially consider imposing stricter regulations regarding deforestation and habitat destruction.	Multi Advisory Committee	A more strategic comment that would more align to the Biodiversity and Resilience Strategy, Amenity Local Law and planning overlays etc

15	• A bit more of an explanation on point 7, is needed to outline the purpose/need for separate policy. • The one document approach might be too long winded. One document / digital document	Multi Advisory Committee	• Section 1 outlines purpose • Section 2 Outlines Context • Section 3 added to identify the specific scope of policy.
16	• Trees should always be kept rather than removed • Canopy trees are an urgent priority • Too many rubbish trees are planted into nature strips • Words like RISK, should be avoided because this reinforces the perception that trees are dangerous. People are quick to label trees as dangerous which is a self-fulfilling prophecy because as a living thing they will eventually die thus meaning that becomes inevitable. Positive words should be used.	Multi Advisory Committee	• Strategic position of Council is to protect and enhance vegetation as well as canopy targets, which is highlighted in Section 2 of the policy. • Section 10.2 (point 8) added referencing species selection considerations including available room vs tree size, growth habits of trees including root, branch and fruit growth etc, that may pose issues when mature.
17	Nature strip trees to be monitored and replaced as needed. We have been waiting 38 years for our street to have trees planted in all nature strips. Years go by without dead trees being replaced. Use mature trees that have a chance to grow. We are in a street that was rezoned and told it would be a priority but no change.	Multi Advisory Committee	Covering risk is important as set out in Section 5, as Council have a legal obligation relating to this.

18	• The safety of residents needs to be top priority, foliage shrubs etc which impede clear vision when reversing from driveways needs moving. • Encourage indigenous planting in nature strips and in private/public reserves, parks, gardens. • Update residents on decisions in a timely manner, not just online. • Large gum trees are unsuitable for suburban streets. Encourage biodiversity through corridors for wildlife. • What are the endangered species in Knox? These need to be addressed.	Multi Advisory Committee	• Section 5 covers risk management and Councils responsibilities etc, with Section 7 highlighting tree removal criteria included identified hazards and Section 8 highlighting pruning criteria including hazards and clearance thresholds referenced in section 8.2 and 8.3. • Whilst general species selection would not form part of a Policy, Section 10.1 (Point 6) highlights where planting of trees is adjacent to a Site of Biological Significance or habitat corridors, preference will be for use of local provenance indigenous species. • Section 12 added to highlight the request and complaint process and steps behind these. • Section 7 provides detail on removal criteria • Section 10.2 (point 8) added referencing species selection considerations including available room vs tree size, growth habits of trees including root, branch and fruit growth etc, that may pose issues when mature.
19	You've got this, Knox!!	Multi Advisory Committee	N/A
20	Illegal cutting of trees for development	Multi Advisory Committee	Section 14 highlights responsibilities of parties relating to tree management during development.
21	Transparency is key to managing expectation and education	Multi Advisory Committee	The methodology of this policy is to provide a clearer more transparent policy
22	I think it should be taken into considerations connections people may have with certain plants and trees and to seek permission if they do intend to control plants even on personal property	Multi Advisory Committee	More a strategic position aligning to vegetation on private land and planning scheme controls etc.
23	Looks OK so far	Multi Advisory Committee	N/A

24	Yes, agree with transparency on tree inspection and assessment on impact to infrastructure	Multi Advisory Committee	• Section 6 steps out relevant information relating to Tree Inspections • Section 9 steps out relevant information relating to Managing Tree Roots and Infrastructure Impacts
25	On the fifth point, even though as it is just a proposal, I did not really understand about how or what STAMP was.	Multi Advisory Committee	Referenced in Section 15
26	Increase tree canopy and native plants	Multi Advisory Committee	Section 2, added wording around Knox's current targets and strategic position around trees and vegetation.
27	I would like to see a broader and much more specific policy towards the conservation of trees and flora important to biodiversity.	Multi Advisory Committee	More aligned to Biodiversity and Resilience Strategy and work being done through this document.
28	Pruning needs more attention	Multi Advisory Committee	Section 8 provides detailed information on pruning methodology in different circumstances and criteria for when pruning may occur.
29	Tree roots damage the property driveway	Multi Advisory Committee	Section 9 steps out relevant information relating to Managing Tree Roots and Infrastructure Impacts.
30	They are not all clear when read in isolation, with reference to multiple policies and different aspects of tree management, so it's a little difficult to understand what will be managed where	Multi Advisory Committee	The one document approach associate with this policy addresses this concern.
31	Timeliness of processing the changes will be important	Multi Advisory Committee	N/A
32	Tree root damage property	Multi Advisory Committee	Section 9 steps out relevant information relating to Managing Tree Roots and Infrastructure Impacts.
33	Plant beautiful flowering trees sustaining all seasons	Multi Advisory Committee	Section 10 steps out relevant information relating to tree planting.

34	Gum nuts cause tripping hazards	Multi Advisory Committee	• Section 7 steps out relevant information relating to tree removal. (Some minor pruning may be provided where practical, to reduce leaf and debris drop into private properties). • Section 8 steps out relevant information related to tree pruning. (Some minor pruning may be provided where practical, to reduce leaf and debris drop into private properties).
35	Increasing number of native trees and vegetation	Multi Advisory Committee	N/A
36	Having separate guidelines for front yard pruning regulations, and regulations for gardens overhanging back/side fences	Multi Advisory Committee	Relating to private gardens aligning more to the Amenity Local Law.
37	Not enough detail	Multi Advisory Committee	N/A
38	What and where is the private planting on nature strips guideline going to be and moved to	Multi Advisory Committee	Will be managed through separate guidelines.
39	Frame trees as an asset not a liability for the community. The approach needs to value the benefit of trees	Multi Advisory Committee	Section 2 sets out Councils strategic position and the vital role vegetation plays to community wellbeing.
40	I fully support the notion to not damage trees by cutting branches, but I also think there needs to be consideration around public trees hanging over private property and what to do in that situation.	Multi Advisory Committee	Section 8.2 and 8.3 specifically covers clearance zones of tree hanging over property lines.
41	Consider impact of old large trees on nature strips and how they affect footpaths and driveways	Multi Advisory Committee	Section 9 steps out relevant information relating to Managing Tree Roots and Infrastructure Impacts.
42	Promotion of wildlife and natural species; particularly insects	Multi Advisory Committee	More aligned to Biodiversity and Resilience Strategy and work being done through this document.

43	I think it is very good that there are clear criteria in the new policy. However, I remembered being told a tree blocking a bike path would be resolved within 120 days, perhaps better timelines?	Multi Advisory Committee	Section 12 added to highlight the request and complaint process and steps behind these.
44	All good	Multi Advisory Committee	N/A
45	I think it's important to have an easy and accessible way of displaying these when they are approved. Not a lengthy doc. Something simple and easy to understand with less cognitive load.	Multi Advisory Committee	Policy may be somewhat lengthy, however out if this information sheets on specific topics will be developed for ease and clarity.
46	I'd like more specific examples to make a better decision	Multi Advisory Committee	The one document approach associate with this policy addresses this concern.
47	Making the information clear and accessible is a positive change.	Multi Advisory Committee	The one document approach associate with this policy addresses this concern.
48	Proposed updates make sense and seem well thought through	Multi Advisory Committee	N/A
49	Usable trees in nature strips. Eg fruit trees	Multi Advisory Committee	More a strategic position related to a future strategy as the key element of tree management at present is increasing canopy coverage etc.
50	Other considerations - trees in certain communities might have sentimental value to community members such as old age of tree etc and proposed updates should also take into account connection to trees	Multi Advisory Committee	More a strategic position related to a future strategy as the key element of tree management at present is increasing canopy coverage etc.
51	Consider type of trees to be planted- less maintenance, safer. Not dropping leaves or limbs	Multi Advisory Committee	Section 10 steps out relevant information relating to tree planting.
52	No update, well thought after	Multi Advisory Committee	N/A

53	Number 7 remove provision is the most important area that appropriate for my need	Multi Advisory Committee	Section 7 steps out relevant information relating to tree removal. (Some minor pruning may be provided where practical, to reduce leaf and debris drop into private properties).
54	Tree inspections and focusing on trees not just on the street, both very good things to focus on	Multi Advisory Committee	Section 6.1 - Highlights relevant information related to tree inspections.
55	The one document incorporating the sections of STAMP is a great approach. The improved transparency on decisions is also a wonderful improvement.	Multi Advisory Committee	N/A
56	I think council should heavily involve organisations like the KES and other native focused environmental orgs in the specifics of the policy and planning for the future	Multi Advisory Committee	Consultation for Policy purposes is a targeted process aimed solely at Advisory Committees due to the operational nature of the policy. The strategy when developed in future years will go through a full community consultation process, where all community members and community groups will have an opportunity to provide feedback submissions etc.
57	Consideration of expansion of tree canopy cover but within consideration of all storey layers. Biodiversity of species considered. What's good about trees? The impact infrastructure has on trees	Multi Advisory Committee	More aligned to strategic position. The Living Melbourne strategy and Plan for Victoria Policy currently sets Knox's canopy targets of 30% tree canopy by 2050 and 20% shrub canopy (understory) by 2050. These will all be visited in the development of a strategic document in future years.
58	I think the clarification and transparency is a great idea, ensuring integrity and maximising safety. Maybe just make sure that all trees are checked as often as possible so there's no risk.	Multi Advisory Committee	• Section 6 - Highlights relevant information related to tree inspections. • Section 5 covers risk management and Councils responsibilities etc, with Section 7 highlighting tree removal criteria included identified hazards
59	Well considered updates. Seem sensible and wide ranging	Multi Advisory Committee	N/A
60	Ensure the trees do not block streetlights for safety and security reason	Multi Advisory Committee	• Section 8 steps out relevant information related to tree pruning. (Point 6 - Significantly blocking lighting in streets and parks.).

61	Council tree loppers make ugly alterations and don't consider the aesthetic result	Multi Advisory Committee	As set out in the Policy, all pruning must comply with Australian Standards for tree pruning.
62	I feel that the policy should be a part of the urban forest strategy. I can imagine there'd be a lot of overlap and potential confusion and lack of coherence between the strategies if stand alone	Multi Advisory Committee	More related to development of a strategic document in future years.
63	Better use of the council facilities. More public toilets and better lighting and signage	Multi Advisory Committee	N/A
64	Trees are an asset the framing of this policy is approaching	Multi Advisory Committee	Section 2 provides context behind the policy and outlines the benefits of trees and vegetation.
65	The household owner should be allowed to choose type of tree on the nature strip on their house	Multi Advisory Committee	Section 10 steps out relevant information relating to tree planting.
66	Climate proof. Biodiversity. All layers to be considered	Multi Advisory Committee	N/A
67	More consultation	Multi Advisory Committee	Consultation for Policy purposes is a targeted process aimed solely at Advisory Committees due to the operational nature of the policy. The strategy when developed in future years will go through a full community consultation process, where all community members and community groups will have an opportunity to provide feedback submissions etc.
68	Regularly monitor conditions of nature's trip trees and replace as needed	Multi Advisory Committee	Section 6 - Highlights relevant information related to tree inspections.
69	I would like the street trees to be reviewed more regularly and proper established trees planted. 38 years living in Rowville still waiting for our street to have trees planted uniformly on all nature	Multi Advisory Committee	• Section 6 - Highlights relevant information related to tree inspections. • Section 10 steps out relevant information relating to tree planting.

70	Overgrown	Community Satisfaction Survey	N/A
71	Overgrown	Community Satisfaction Survey	N/A
72	Trees are not trimmed around here	Community Satisfaction Survey	Section 8 steps out relevant information related to tree pruning.
73	Trees are not trimmed around here	Community Satisfaction Survey	Section 8 steps out relevant information related to tree pruning.
74	A lot of chopping	Community Satisfaction Survey	Section 8 steps out relevant information related to tree pruning.
75	Because a lot of trees on nature trip are very big, they do not do the trimming very regularly	Community Satisfaction Survey	Section 8 steps out relevant information related to tree pruning.
76	Concerns on improperly managed street trees have not been addressed or resolved	Community Satisfaction Survey	N/A
77	I maintain my trees, but I have to get permits to trim them	Community Satisfaction Survey	Related to trees on private land aligning to Amenity Local Law and Planning Scheme controls.
78	Infrequent maintenance of big trees	Community Satisfaction Survey	Policy sets out management practices relating to tree inspections, pruning, removal, planting, impacts on infrastructure, complaints processes and tree management relating to development.
79	Maintained better	Community Satisfaction Survey	Policy sets out management practices relating to tree inspections, pruning, removal, planting, impacts on infrastructure, complaints processes and tree management relating to development.

80	There are too many trees and too big	Community Satisfaction Survey	Policy sets out management practices relating to tree inspections, pruning, removal, planting, impacts on infrastructure, complaints processes and tree management relating to development.
81	They are chopping too many trees	Community Satisfaction Survey	Policy sets out management practices relating to tree inspections, pruning, removal, planting, impacts on infrastructure, complaints processes and tree management relating to development.
82	They are not kept well. They never allow is too cut it	Community Satisfaction Survey	Policy sets out management practices relating to tree inspections, pruning, removal, planting, impacts on infrastructure, complaints processes and tree management relating to development.
83	They chopped down trees there is no consulting about it, it would be good to at least suggest what to be removed	Community Satisfaction Survey	Policy sets out management practices relating to tree inspections, pruning, removal, planting, impacts on infrastructure, complaints processes and tree management relating to development.
84	They do not water them	Community Satisfaction Survey	Policy sets out management practices relating to tree inspections, pruning, removal, planting, impacts on infrastructure, complaints processes and tree management relating to development.
85	They only look after what they want. Not all of them	Community Satisfaction Survey	Policy sets out management practices relating to tree inspections, pruning, removal, planting, impacts on infrastructure, complaints processes and tree management relating to development.
86	You have to call them for them to react	Community Satisfaction Survey	Policy sets out management practices relating to tree inspections, pruning, removal, planting, impacts on infrastructure, complaints processes and tree management relating to development.
87	Gum trees	Community Satisfaction Survey	Policy sets out management practices relating to tree inspections, pruning, removal, planting, impacts on infrastructure, complaints processes and tree management relating to development.
88	Gum trees	Community Satisfaction Survey	Policy sets out management practices relating to tree inspections, pruning, removal, planting, impacts on infrastructure, complaints processes and tree management relating to development.
89	Gum trees they lift the footpaths	Community Satisfaction Survey	Section 9 steps out relevant information relating to Managing Tree Roots and Infrastructure Impacts.

90	Gum trees they lift the footpaths	Community Satisfaction Survey	Section 9 steps out relevant information relating to Managing Tree Roots and Infrastructure Impacts.
91	It is gum tree and if left longer would be hazardous for street users	Community Satisfaction Survey	Policy sets out management practices relating to tree inspections, pruning, removal, planting, impacts on infrastructure, complaints processes and tree management relating to development.
92	Gum trees not maintained	Community Satisfaction Survey	Policy sets out management practices relating to tree inspections, pruning, removal, planting, impacts on infrastructure, complaints processes and tree management relating to development.
93	Gum trees throw and drop branches and other rubbish	Community Satisfaction Survey	Policy sets out management practices relating to tree inspections, pruning, removal, planting, impacts on infrastructure, complaints processes and tree management relating to development.
94	Gum trees too big	Community Satisfaction Survey	Policy sets out management practices relating to tree inspections, pruning, removal, planting, impacts on infrastructure, complaints processes and tree management relating to development.
95	It is gum tree hanging over the streets	Community Satisfaction Survey	Section 8 steps out relevant information related to tree pruning broadly, more specifically section 8.2. added relating to clearance zones of street trees.
96	The gum trees drop things, and they refuse to solve the issue	Community Satisfaction Survey	• Section 5 covers risk management and Councils responsibilities etc, with Section 7 highlighting tree removal criteria included identified hazards and Section 8 highlighting pruning criteria including hazards and clearance thresholds referenced in section 8.2 and 8.3. • Section 12 added to highlight the request and complaint process and steps behind these. • Section 10.2 (point 8) added referencing species selection considerations including available room vs tree size, growth habits of trees including root, branch and fruit growth etc, that may pose issues when mature.

97	They get rid of gum tree	Community Satisfaction Survey	• Section 5 covers risk management and Councils responsibilities etc, with Section 7 highlighting tree removal criteria included identified hazards and Section 8 highlighting pruning criteria including hazards and clearance thresholds referenced in section 8.2 and 8.3. • Section 12 added to highlight the request and complaint process and steps behind these. • Section 10.2 (point 8) added referencing species selection considerations including available room vs tree size, growth habits of trees including root, branch and fruit growth etc, that may pose issues when mature.
98	Fallen branches	Community Satisfaction Survey	Section 12 added to highlight the request and complaint process and steps behind these.
99	Fallen branches	Community Satisfaction Survey	Section 12 added to highlight the request and complaint process and steps behind these.
100	Fallen branches	Community Satisfaction Survey	Section 12 added to highlight the request and complaint process and steps behind these.
101	It makes a lot of litter	Community Satisfaction Survey	• Section 5 covers risk management and Councils responsibilities etc, with Section 7 highlighting tree removal criteria included identified hazards and Section 8 highlighting pruning criteria including hazards and clearance thresholds referenced in section 8.2 and 8.3. • Section 12 added to highlight the request and complaint process and steps behind these. • Section 10.2 (point 8) added referencing species selection considerations including available room vs tree size, growth habits of trees including root, branch and fruit growth etc, that may pose issues when mature.

102	It makes a lot of litter	Community Satisfaction Survey	• Section 5 covers risk management and Councils responsibilities etc, with Section 7 highlighting tree removal criteria included identified hazards and Section 8 highlighting pruning criteria including hazards and clearance thresholds referenced in section 8.2 and 8.3. • Section 12 added to highlight the request and complaint process and steps behind these. • Section 10.2 (point 8) added referencing species selection considerations including available room vs tree size, growth habits of trees including root, branch and fruit growth etc, that may pose issues when mature.
103	It makes a lot of litter	Community Satisfaction Survey	• Section 5 covers risk management and Councils responsibilities etc, with Section 7 highlighting tree removal criteria included identified hazards and Section 8 highlighting pruning criteria including hazards and clearance thresholds referenced in section 8.2 and 8.3. • Section 12 added to highlight the request and complaint process and steps behind these. • Section 10.2 (point 8) added referencing species selection considerations including available room vs tree size, growth habits of trees including root, branch and fruit growth etc, that may pose issues when mature.
104	Pine trees in the backyard have big branches	Community Satisfaction Survey	Related to trees on private land aligning to Amenity Local Law and Planning Scheme controls.
105	Rubbish in garden	Community Satisfaction Survey	• Section 5 covers risk management and Councils responsibilities etc, with Section 7 highlighting tree removal criteria included identified hazards and Section 8 highlighting pruning criteria including hazards and clearance thresholds referenced in section 8.2 and 8.3. • Section 12 added to highlight the request and complaint process and steps behind these. • Section 10.2 (point 8) added referencing species selection considerations including available room vs tree size, growth habits of trees including root, branch and fruit growth etc, that may pose issues when mature.

106	The small nuts that drop	Community Satisfaction Survey	• Section 5 covers risk management and Councils responsibilities etc, with Section 7 highlighting tree removal criteria included identified hazards and Section 8 highlighting pruning criteria including hazards and clearance thresholds referenced in section 8.2 and 8.3. • Section 12 added to highlight the request and complaint process and steps behind these. • Section 10.2 (point 8) added referencing species selection considerations including available room vs tree size, growth habits of trees including root, branch and fruit growth etc, that may pose issues when mature.
107	Trees drop branches on top of properties	Community Satisfaction Survey	• Section 5 covers risk management and Councils responsibilities etc, with Section 7 highlighting tree removal criteria included identified hazards and Section 8 highlighting pruning criteria including hazards and clearance thresholds referenced in section 8.2 and 8.3. • Section 12 added to highlight the request and complaint process and steps behind these. • Section 10.2 (point 8) added referencing species selection considerations including available room vs tree size, growth habits of trees including root, branch and fruit growth etc, that may pose issues when mature.
108	Car was destroyed by branch	Community Satisfaction Survey	N/A
109	Car was destroyed by branch	Community Satisfaction Survey	N/A
110	Dangerous / not safe trees	Community Satisfaction Survey	Section 5 covers risk management and Councils responsibilities etc.
111	Dangerous / not safe trees	Community Satisfaction Survey	Section 5 covers risk management and Councils responsibilities etc.

112	Concerned that it might become dangerous	Community Satisfaction Survey	Section 5 covers risk management and Councils responsibilities etc.
113	I am scared they are going to fall on the house	Community Satisfaction Survey	Section 5 covers risk management and Councils responsibilities etc.
114	Safety issue. Physical risk to resident	Community Satisfaction Survey	Section 5 covers risk management and Councils responsibilities etc.
115	The tree outside my house has been dead for 9 months, they should drive around and check them	Community Satisfaction Survey	N/A
116	Not too good	Community Satisfaction Survey	N/A
117	Not very beautiful	Community Satisfaction Survey	N/A
118	Plant proper council trees	Community Satisfaction Survey	Section 10 steps out relevant information relating to tree planting.
119	The trees are too big	Community Satisfaction Survey	N/A
120	They are planting a lot of big trees in suburban areas	Community Satisfaction Survey	Section 10 steps out relevant information relating to tree planting.
121	They could plant better trees	Community Satisfaction Survey	Section 10 steps out relevant information relating to tree planting.

122	Big roots causing footpaths to crack	Community Satisfaction Survey	Section 9 steps out relevant information relating to Managing Tree Roots and Infrastructure Impacts.
123	The roots block drains	Community Satisfaction Survey	Section 9 steps out relevant information relating to Managing Tree Roots and Infrastructure Impacts.
124	They are coming up through footpaths	Community Satisfaction Survey	Section 9 steps out relevant information relating to Managing Tree Roots and Infrastructure Impacts.
125	Close to power line	Community Satisfaction Survey	Section 8 steps out relevant information related to tree pruning, more specifically Section 8.4 references relevant information for pruning around power lines.
126	They are overgrown and pull your wires down	Community Satisfaction Survey	Section 8 steps out relevant information related to tree pruning, more specifically Section 8.4 references relevant information for pruning around power lines.
127	Streets trees should be removed	Community Satisfaction Survey	Section 7 steps out relevant information relating to tree removal.
128	Because of high pollen trees in house areas	Community Satisfaction Survey	N/A
129	They are cutting down too many trees	Community Satisfaction Survey	Section 7 steps out relevant information relating to tree removal.
130	The trees are not patrolled, what needs to be cut or taken away. I think those are really important	Community Satisfaction Survey	Section 6 - Highlights relevant information related to tree inspections.
131	Need more focus on trees	Community Satisfaction Survey	N/A

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Number	Gaps/Findings/Feedback	Response
1	P5 "The tree has been approved for removal as part of a planning permit application". The planning permit removal criteria are not specified.	Conditions will vary during the planning process depending on the tree location in relation to Planning Zones and Overlays relating to vegetation, as well as any special conditions that may be placed on a permit relating to vegetation. These processes are managed outside of this policy and need only to be referenced.
2	P5 "The tree is declared a noxious or environmental weed. The tree is declared a noxious or environmental weed and Council officers have determined its removal will have environmental benefits." Which officers? Who are deemed to have the qualifications and experience to make this call.	**Council Biodiversity Officers and Arborists**. This has been added for clarity.
3	P6 - 7.2 "Tree Amenity Valuation " The total cost for street tree removal includes the amenity value of the tree, plus tree and stump removal costs, plus planting and maintaining the new tree for two years." Who is responsible for the planting and maintenance? Council or the developer? If it is the developer, it likely won't happen.	In these instances, Council collects the amenity value funds and will plant and maintain any replacement trees related to the income. Wording has been updated for clarity as per the below; *The total cost for street tree removal includes the amenity value of the tree, plus costs **for Council** to remove tree and stump, planting and maintaining the new tree for two years.*
4	P6 - 8 Tree Pruning "Pruning is carried out on trees to; -Remove or reduce risk by improving structure or form" What is meant by this? Do you mean improving structural integrity? Dead branches should not be removed on their own as they are preferred roosting sites for birds. Ecosystem support aspects should be considered when pruning trees and these should be specified in the document	Section 8 states that pruning is carried out to remove identified hazards and reduce risk which would be based on the risk management framework (Section 5). Removal of dead branches/wood has purposefully been excluded from the wording as in some circumstances these do not pose a risk or hazard and provide benefits such as hollows and perching access etc.
5	P7 8.1 Formative Pruning "To protect and enhance its tree population, Council sets and maintains very high standards for pruning of its trees. All tree pruning shall be carried out in line with Australian Standards" The tree pruning standards focus on structural integrity and prevention of tree death. How will the tree's ecosystem services be considered when pruning trees? Eg birds prefer roosting on small dead branches	Section 8.1 states that formative pruning pertains to young trees, to create a healthy, well-structured mature specimen. This will increase all benefits trees provide and decrease the risk of potential future tree removal due to poor form/structure posing risk to the community.

6	P10 Tree Planting General Planting Conditions "Where planting of trees is adjacent to a Site of Biological Significance (SoBS), bushland reserves or habitat corridors, preference will be for use of indigenous species in streetscapes and local provenance indigenous species in declared reserves" Only adjacent SoBS? What about within? How do you define a habitat corridor? Most of the foothills have been classified as a habitat corridor. Why not across the municipality generally given that all trees (even isolated trees) are important habitat for local wildlife that so many of our local resident's value highly.	Whilst native tree planting is prioritised, diversity of species is required to create a resilient tree stock municipal wide. This results in some non-native species been selected (that are known drought resilient etc), in areas outside of those specified. The areas specified within the policy set clear, non-negotiable parameters that native species will be planted in locations adjacent to the areas specified. The Biodiversity Resilience Strategy requires native and endemic species of trees to be planted within these specified areas as well as identifies habitat corridors. Wording has been added to clarify as per the below; *Where planting of trees is within or adjacent to a Site of Biological Significance, bushland reserves or habitat corridors* ***(as specified in the Biodiversity Resilience Strategy),*** *preference will be for use of indigenous species in streetscapes and local provenance indigenous species in declared reserves.*
7	P13 General Tree Protection "Prosecution for damaged and removed public trees can occur" This does not provide guidance around the circumstances where person should and should not be prosecuted and is likely to result in the current scenario where no one is prosecuted which is unacceptable.	This section states that protections fall within Councils Amenity Local Law and specific planning overlays. There are many different scenarios that prosecution would occur that are set out in these documents/processes, with reference to them only being required in this policy.
8	P13 General Tree Protection "Infringements are applicable and costs for loss of asset value, amenity, required works and replacement planting can be sought from the offending party" Should say amenity value as per the definition in this document	Amenity value cannot be applied for fines related to the Amenity Local Law (based on penalty units) but can be applied through other mechanisms such as planning controls. Wording amended as per the below; *Infringements are applicable and costs for loss of asset value, amenity* ***value****, required works and replacement planting can be sought from the offending party* ***where applicable****.*
9	P13 General Tree Protection "Infringements are applicable and costs for loss of asset value, amenity, required works and replacement planting can be sought from the offending party" Can be sought? The	This section states that protections fall within Councils Amenity Local Law and specific planning overlays. There are many different scenarios that prosecution would occur that are set out in these documents, with reference to them only being required in this policy.

	circumstances under which this will occur should be more specific or this will never as occur as per the current situation	
10	Support of wildlife is not mentioned in the document except related to tree stump removal	This is referenced at a higher level throughout the document as "Biodiversity Outcomes". More specifically; Section 2 - *Trees provide value to the community in many ways, including enhancing neighbourhood character, **supporting biodiversity**.....* Section 7 - impact to the environment and **biodiversity**..... Section 16 - A reserve designated as containing environmental benefits providing positive bushland and **biodiversity outcomes**. Section 16 - The network of trees and vegetation across the municipality that contributes to canopy cover, **biodiversity**, cooling and amenity. Have added to the wording in Section 2 for clarity, so this is highlighted at the beginning of the document as per the below: *supporting biodiversity **(including habitat for wildlife)**.....*
11	Support of wildlife is not mentioned in the document except related to tree stump removal It would be good to have a strong statement about the value of managing trees to support and enhance Knox's wildlife - the locality's flora and fauna, which is significant and also contributes greatly to people's sense of wellbeing here in Knox. You could include such a reference easily into the Context discussion at the start instead of repeating the usual 'green, leafy image' label.	This is referenced at a higher level throughout the document as "Biodiversity Outcomes". More specifically; Section 2 - *Trees provide value to the community in many ways, including enhancing neighbourhood character, **supporting biodiversity**.....* Section 7 - impact to the environment and **biodiversity**..... Section 16 - A reserve designated as containing environmental benefits providing positive bushland and **biodiversity outcomes**. Section 16 - The network of trees and vegetation across the municipality that contributes to canopy cover, **biodiversity**, cooling and amenity. Have added to the wording in Section 2 for clarity, so this is highlighted at the beginning of the document as per the below: *supporting biodiversity **(including habitat for wildlife)**.....*

12	6.2 Reactive Tree Inspection Reactive tree inspections and works occur in response to staff, residents, members of the public, or other organisations advising Council of a potentially hazardous tree. These often occur for issues including limb failure, branches hanging over a property line, leaf or debris drop, concerns regarding tree health, or property damage caused by tree roots. Can this be reworded? The above introductory text suggests that 'issues including …, branches hanging over a property line, leaf or debris drop,' are considered as valid grounds for removal. Then, at 7.1 these factors are indicated as not being grounds for removal (or later p. 6-7, for pruning): Trees will not be removed for the following reasons: • Dropping of leaves, bark, twigs, fruit or sap Whilst Council recognises that leaf litter and debris can create inconvenience, removal on this basis alone is not supported as litter and debris are considered an ordinary, inherent and unavoidable characteristic of trees in an outdoor environment and does not in isolation, constitute an unacceptable safety risk warranting removal. Some minor pruning may be provided where practical, to reduce leaf and debris drop into private properties. • Shading Including shading of solar panels, garden beds or lawn areas. • Obstruction of views Including existing views or potential new views created through development. Why not just leave it at Reactive tree inspections and works occur in response to staff, residents, members of the public, or other organisations advising Council of a potentially hazardous tree. Or,	Original wording aimed to capture common themes of why reactive inspections occur for clarity, however the suggested wording change is more concise. Wording changed to the below; *Reactive tree inspections and works occur in response to staff, residents, members of the public, or other organisations advising Council of* ***concerns or potentially hazardous relating to public trees.***

	just merge that sentence with 6.1 and have the heading 'Proactive and reactive inspection.'	
13	7.2. Tree Amenity Valuation When the removal of a Council tree is deemed necessary for private construction, development or works, all associated costs will be paid by the property owner, developer or applicant prior to removal, including amenity value. The total cost for street tree removal includes the amenity value of the tree, plus tree and stump removal costs, plus planting and maintaining the new tree for two years. Council utilises the City of Melbourne method of tree amenity valuation. The City of Melbourne tree valuation is getting quite old now – the current information available at the City of Melbourne website (https://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/tree-policy) dates from 2013 (as the most recent), and that policy and valuation method is based on a method and formula developed in the 1990s (itself derived from a 1980s European context). Knox and other Councils should really start looking to revise this valuation approach and incorporate additional factors, such as the value of a tree in a diminishing local canopy context, or the value of the tree species as habitat for local wildlife (not just lifespan and growth rate, which are the dominant criteria in the Species category for the City of Melbourne valuation method).	The City of Melbourne Methodology is widely used within the Local Government Industry and is seen as a strong tool to calculate amenity value of trees. The base cost associated with trees is updated by CPI annually from an industrial perspective, which may not align with what is currently on the Melbourne City Council Webpage. The methodology works on a base value for trees at certain sizes measures at DBH (diameter at breast height), with weightings then applied taking into consideration Species, Aesthetics, Locality, Condition to determine the amenity value. This generally ranges between $10,000 and $20,000+ for mature trees. The lower cost referenced in general relates only to the application fee for a permit.

	In real terms, the valuation for a street tree seems to be stuck on about $800 – which is really negligible, too low to be any kind of deterrent or incentive to preserve a tree during development. This is the typical paragraph which features in so many Council development permit Notices of Decision: • The street tree can be removed upon receipt of **$804.60**. Total cost for street tree removal includes; amenity value (using the *City of Melbourne- Amenity Value Formula*), cost of tree & stump removal and planting and maintaining a new tree for 2 years, in accordance with Council's Green Streets Policy. For details regarding the cost and/or the timing of the removal and replacement of the street tree/s, please contact Council's Active Open Space Team on (03) 9298 8425.	
14	9.1. Infrastructure Impacts on Public Land Council will assess all impacts from tree roots on infrastructure. This includes assessments on the impact and damage on infrastructure at the time of inspection. If damage is identified, then the following treatments will be considered, informing management processes moving forward. • Treatment utilising standard maintenance practices such as asphalt wedging, concrete grinding or root pruning. • The installation of a root barrier to prevent further root growth into an area that may impact infrastructure. Tree removal will only be considered in instances where the above treatments are not feasible for any reason or where historic significant infrastructure damage has been ongoing and regular, and future cost of managing infrastructure damage outweighs the cost and benefits of retaining or removing the tree. This last part about tree removal sounds like a 'last resort' action but is it really? When South East water or similar are called out for a water leak on the footpath and nature strip and a large street tree is	Yes, removal in these instances is a last resort. In instances relating other authorities such as South East Water, under legislation, these authorities do not have to seek permission or permit to remove trees within easements and road reserves. Council work closely with these authorities to prevent removal, and for non-invasive digging methods to be utilised. Authorities such as these fall outside the scope (Section 3) of this Policy.

	'in the way' what scope do Council officers or the arborist really have to enter into the decision or prevent removal? Is implying, in a policy like this, that tree removal will be a last resort setting an expectation that Council cannot really meet?	
15	10.1. General Planting Conditions Where planting of trees is adjacent to a Site of Biological Significance, bushland reserves or habitat corridors, preference will be for use of indigenous species in streetscapes and local provenance indigenous species in declared reserves. [Same as Robyn M.'s feedback point] "Only adjacent SoBS? What about within? How do you define a habitat corridor? Most of the foothills have been classified as a habitat corridor. Why not across the municipality generally given that all trees (even isolated trees) are important habitat for local wildlife that so many of our local resident's value highly." To this I would add there has been considerable canopy tree loss in the SOBS outside the foothills, also coinciding with the NRZ5 zones (so called 'bush suburban outside the foothills') and recent engagement with the biodiversity team at EAC emphasised the importance of building connecting corridors between these various spots, and connecting these to the foothills; a major – perhaps the major - part of that connection will be fulfilled by improving vegetation and canopy tree coverage.	Whilst native tree planting is prioritised, diversity of species is required to create a resilient tree stock municipal wide. This results in some non-native species been selected (that are known drought resilient etc), in areas outside of those specified. The areas specified within the policy set clear, non-negotiable parameters that native species will be planted in locations adjacent to the areas specified. The Biodiversity Resilience Strategy requires native and endemic species of trees to be planted within these specified areas as well as identifies habitat corridors. Wording has been added to clarify as per the below; *Where planting of trees is within or adjacent to a Site of Biological Significance, bushland reserves or habitat corridors* ***(as specified in the Biodiversity Resilience Strategy),*** *preference will be for use of indigenous species in streetscapes and local provenance indigenous species in declared reserves.*
16	10.2. Tree Planting in Streets and Road Reserves • Trees will not be planted over known gas or water services or legal points of discharge to private properties where possible. • In some cases, a nature strip may not be able to have a tree planted due to physical constraints such as insufficient room, presence of underground services or traffic sight distances.	Physical constraints are becoming more of a restrictive factor for tree planting within road reserve. This clause relates more to situations where root growth would directly impact underground services. Most are at a level that this would not be the case. Wording has been adjusted to clarify as per the below; *In some cases, a nature strip may not be able to have a tree planted due to*

	The presence of underground services… Wouldn't that be nearly all nature strips?	*physical constraints such as insufficient room, presence of underground services* ***(that would be directly impacted by root growth)*** *or traffic sight distances.*
17	11. Pest and Disease Management Council will monitor and appropriately treat pest and disease incursions that threaten the viability of street trees in consideration of the long-term viability of the species as a street tree and the resource available. Why does this focus only on street trees? Isn't this policy also encompassing trees in parks, reserves, public places administered by Council etc.?	This should be for all public trees and not just street trees. Wording has been amended within the policy as per the below; *Council will monitor and appropriately treat pest and disease incursions that threaten the viability of* ***public*** *trees in consideration of the long-term viability of the species and the resource available.*
18	13. General Tree Protection First dot point is missing a word - involve? • An investigation into the incident will occur by Council Officers and may the Victorian Police 4th dot point seems very weak: • Prosecution for damaged and removed public trees can occur. Couldn't this be reworded to a more active and assertive statement? • It is Council's intention that parties responsible for damaged and removed public trees will be prosecuted. • Council will pursue prosecutions against parties found responsible for damaged and removed public trees. 5th dot point • Infringements are applicable and costs for loss of asset value, amenity, required works and replacement planting can be sought from the offending party. Wording is odd - Infringements are the actions done by the offending party – do you mean infringement penalties or fines?	**Involved** added in wording related to Victorian Police. Prosecution relates to criminal charges and may not apply in all circumstances. Stronger wording relating to the intent of the policy to hold those who remove trees is supported. The wording has been strengthened as per the below; ***It is the intent that parties found responsible for the un-permitted removal of public trees will be held responsible.*** *Prosecution for damaged and removed public trees can occur.* The term infringement applies to a fines issued for breaking the law. For clarity, this has been replaced with the word **"fines"**.
19	14. Managing Trees During Development All trees will be protected from construction, or development works	City of Melbourne's policy is referred to in relation to Tree Amenity Value methodology only, not a strategic position related to the collection of

	that adversely affect their health and/or structure in accordance with Australian Standard AS 4970 – Protection of trees on development sites. More specifically […]; City of Melbourne has a bond system to help protect trees in public places during developments (City of Melbourne Tree Policy 2021 – still current) 1. Bonds and Payments 1.1. Where any works have the potential to impact public trees, a tree protection bond must be provided to the City of Melbourne. 1.2. The bond will be held for the duration of the works against the successful implementation of a City of Melbourne approved Tree Protection Plan (TPP), as confirmed by a Project Arborist Completion Report and released when any outstanding invoices for remedial works have been paid. Knox defer to the City of Melbourne for other aspects of this Knox Urban Tree Management Policy – was a bond system considered as part of this latest review? If it was, why was it deemed unsuitable to become policy? Second dot point: …. to determine whether the removal is supported the choice of word 'supported' suggests council supports and facilitates removals for development. Perhaps 'is warranted' or 'is necessary' would work better? Also 4th dot point: • Council's relevant planning overlays and permit conditions cover the protection and removal of native vegetation. This statement seems out of place here in the list – would be better to incorporate it into the opening paragraph as it is a general, overarching policy position.	bonds related specifically to public trees. This is currently not a position held by Knox City Council. The word **'warranted'** has replaced the word supported. Statements relating to overarching planning overlays have been referenced elsewhere in the policy also. They are relevant in this instance as they relate specifically to removal of public trees relating to development. Wording has been changed for clarity as per the below; *Council's relevant planning overlays and permit conditions cover the protection and removal of native vegetation* ***relating to development.***
20	15. References 15.2. Related State Strategies	These references are other relevant pieces of legislation, state policy, and other Council Strategies and Policies not specific process's etc.

	• Plan for Victoria • Living Melbourne Strategy Given you have cited the City of Melbourne's tree valuation at several points shouldn't it be included here in the references?	
21	17. Administrative Updates From time to time, circumstances may change leading to the need for minor administrative changes to this Policy. Where an update does not materially alter this Policy, such a change may be made administratively on approval of the Director Infrastructure. Examples of minor administrative changes include change to names of Council departments or positions, change to names of Federal or State Government departments or a minor amendment to legislation that does not have material impact. Where any change or update may materially change the intent of this Policy, it must be considered by Director Infrastructure. This isn't very clear – so, the Director of Infrastructure can make or approve updates which 'do not materially alter this Policy' and can also consider (and presumably then make or approve?) 'any change or update may materially change the intent of this Policy'. What distinction are you trying to set out in this paragraph about the decision-making process? Looks like the you could simply state (after the first sentence) any changes or updates made to this policy will be subject to the approval of the Director Infrastructure. And the policy Responsible Officer is given at the start as Manager Green Spaces and Environment – so wouldn't they also be indicated here in this policy as involved in updates? In terms of policy structure – why doesn't the policy list the various Council work teams which are involved? (Arborist, Planning/inspections, Parks, Bushland, Biodiversity…?)	This statement is standard across all Council policies and provides more clarity around what constitutes "administrative changes". Whilst the Manager Green Spaces and Environment is the responsible Officer for this policy, any changes need to be approved by the Director as a higher level, independent of the officer responsible for the development of it. All relevant officers involved in decisions relating to the policy have been referenced throughout it (in relation to decision making responsibilities).

22	My overall thoughts are that as a general document the Urban Tree Management Policy is a good overarching document that puts into a framework all the main points to do with the management of Council Trees. As with all of these things it will be how that is then used at a departmental level and by workers out on the streets in the day to day working with our Urban trees.	N/A
23	This outlines the commitment of Knox to its trees and the protection of its 'green and leafy' image and uses the Climate Response Plan and Biodiversity Resilience Strategy as reference points but not the importance they place on local indigenous species for the protection of genetic material and the survival of our local habitat. In other words, the KES believes that Knox should commit to these species as a focus for Urban Trees as a priority and not as an afterthought around Sites of Biol.	Whilst native tree planting is prioritised, diversity of species is required to create a resilient tree stock municipal wide. This results in some non-native species been selected (that are known drought resilient etc), in areas outside of those specified. The areas specified within the policy set clear, non-negotiable parameters that native species will be planted in locations adjacent to the areas specified. The Biodiversity Resilience Strategy highlights Councils position on the importance they place on local indigenous species for the protection of genetic material and the survival of our local habitat. Councils commitment to requires native and endemic species of trees to be planted within these specified areas as well as identifies habitat corridors. Wording has been added to clarify as per the below; Where planting of trees is within or adjacent to a Site of Biological Significance, bushland reserves or habitat corridors **(as specified in the Biodiversity Resilience Strategy),** preference will be for use of indigenous species in streetscapes and local provenance indigenous species in declared reserves.
24	Section 7 Tree Removal Trees do not always need to be removed as even dead trees can provide habitat for many of our wildlife and should be assessed for the potential to be habitat pruned and retained where appropriate.	Section 7.4 references that in some instances, a stump may be retained for strategic environmental purposes including providing habitat for wildlife. This is achieved through habitat pruning of a dead or declining tree. Trees cannot always be replanted immediately post removal, as trees are

	There should also be a commitment that if a tree is to be removed it is replaced almost immediately. Once a tree is removed the longer that space is left empty the more people expect it to remain so.	removed all years round, with optimal planting periods within cooler periods. Generally planting is prioritised for the following financial years planting program.
25	Section 10 Tree Planting As mentioned before a greater priority needs to be given to local plants and a wider list of indigenous or locally native should be developed and used whenever possible. in areas where the Council expects residents to 'do the right thing' like in the Foothills zone then Council should also and set a good example for local residents. Planting things like Crepe Myrtles and other unsuitable species should not be allowed.	As per the above response.
26	Section 14 Managing trees during development · Any tree removed as part of construction works will be replaced wherever possible. Statements like this are disappointing as misleading. A 50-year-old remnant indigenous species with all its genetic material, its habitat value and its visual amenity cannot simply be 'replaced' unless it is with another suitably aged tree. It makes it seem that tree removal is OK and just a $50 replacement tree makes everything OK. · Total cost for tree removal includes amenity value of the tree as per the City of Melbourne method of tree valuation, tree and stump removal costs and costs for planting and maintaining a new tree for two years. Does the money derived from the amenity value get put back directly into tree planting? Green Streets Policy Review / Draft Urban Tree Management Policy	In context, the policy is supporting Councils overarching strategic position of protecting and enhancing vegetation with the canopy cover target of 30% by 2050. This statement provides the principle and commitment to replace trees that have been removed through development. Money derived from the amenity value, does go directly back to services related to managing and maintaining trees. The Urban Forest Strategy tainted in future years, will be developed specific to the Knox community needs relating to current and future opportunities and challenges.

	Very broad and difficult to comment on but make all the right noises but as usual the proof of the pudding will be in the detail. · Development of a new Urban Forest Strategy to set long term vision, goals, targets and performance measures, supported by full community engagement, to be delivered in future years. This is good but we seem very quick to adopt the plans of the City of Melbourne without necessarily recognising the difference and uniqueness of the Knox area. Careful consideration should be given to developing something to cater for and enhance our unique position within Melbourne.	
27	Section 3: The policy is broadly strong on tree retention, canopy and risk management, but there are some areas where the wording could create ambiguity, implementation problems or community concerns. Section 3- Scope: says the policy applies to: "all internal staff, external stakeholders, private developers, contractors, property owners and residents." But the policy itself applies to trees on public land managed by Council. It would be clearer to distinguish between: • the trees/assets covered by the policy, and • the people/organisations whose activities or interactions are subject to the policy. Otherwise, residents could interpret this as the policy regulating trees on private property, which Section 3 explicitly says it does not cover.	Wording has been amended with Section 3 as per the below, for clarity on stakeholder scope; *This policy applies to all internal staff, external stakeholders, private developers, contractors, property owners and residents* ***in relation to trees managed by Council on private land.***
28	Section 7 and 9: The balance between canopy targets and risk management needs stronger safeguards The policy sets a 30% canopy target by 2050, while also allowing tree removal for safety, infrastructure and other reasons.	Section 2 states that the current canopy target of 30% by 2050 is a strategic position set within Councils Biodiversity Resilience Strategy and highlight the broader benefits of this. This section also references the need for a balanced approach relating to public tree management between

	The policy should make explicit that canopy targets are strategic objectives and do not override individual tree risk assessments, but equally, tree removal should not become the default response to infrastructure conflicts. The hierarchy in Sections 7 and 9 is generally good because it prioritises pruning, root barriers and other mitigation before removal. However, it could be strengthened by explicitly stating: • Tree removal is a last resort where reasonable alternatives have been assessed and found not feasible. • That principle should appear consistently throughout the policy. "Significant damage" and "significant risk" are not sufficiently defined. There should ideally be objective criteria or thresholds covering: • extent and severity of damage; • safety implications; • cost of repair; • frequency of recurring damage; • expected future damage; • feasibility and cost of alternatives; • ecological/amenity value of the tree. Otherwise, two similar cases could potentially receive different outcomes depending on individual assessment.	public risk, positive environmental outcomes and available funding. The Policy is structures that tree removal is not the default of all requests, including conflicts with infrastructure. Whilst it is difficult to set a Policy that removes all subjectiveness within decision making, various sections aim to mitigate this; Section 5 sets out Councils risk management approach that align to its risk management Policy and Procedures. All risk relating to tree removal etc would be assessed by this framework, providing consistency of decision making when assessing risk. Section 9 references significant damage as damage that has been ongoing and regular, and future cost of managing infrastructure damage outweighs the cost and benefits of retaining or removing the tree.

29	Section 9.2 requires residents making a tree-related property damage claim to provide: • an arborist report; • an engineer's report; and • photographic evidence. This could be expensive and potentially inaccessible for some residents. There is a community equity issue here: a resident who suspects Council-owned tree roots are damaging their property may need to spend substantial money before Council even determines whether the claim has merit. I would question: “Does Council provide any preliminary assessment before requiring residents to commission both an arborist and engineer's report?” A staged process might be more equitable—for example, an initial Council assessment followed by independent reports only where there is sufficient evidence of a potentially substantiated claim.	Generally, these claims would be for costs relating to damages associated with a public tree, and determined through an insurance process, which requires this information to proceed.
30	The policy could provide stronger protection for mature and significant trees The policy refers to: • “tree retention values” • "monetary value of the asset” • "public benefit” • “environment and biodiversity” But it does not clearly establish a retention hierarchy. For example, a mature tree with substantial canopy, habitat value and cooling benefits could potentially be treated similarly to a younger tree once a particular infrastructure problem is established. Consider explicitly recognising:	The criteria stated would be considered retention hierarchy more broadly. Generally, a larger tree would have higher retention values, monetary values and environmental and biodiversity outcomes so would be considered at higher value than a smaller, less mature tree. This is how assessments relating to public tree management are applied.

	• mature trees; • large-canopy trees; • habitat trees; • trees forming significant avenues; • trees in areas with low canopy; • trees with high biodiversity value; • culturally or locally significant trees. This would better connect individual decisions to the 30% canopy target and biodiversity objectives.	
31	Replacement planting does not necessarily replace canopy loss This point has received quiet a discussion and Ffequently raised by other committee member during our meetings. The policy frequently says a removed tree will be replaced “where possible”. However, replacing a large, mature tree with a small tree does not provide an equivalent environmental or cooling benefit for many years. I would recommend distinguishing between: “tree replacement and canopy replacement.” For significant tree removal, the policy could consider: • replacement canopy objectives; • multiple replacement trees where appropriate; • appropriate species and mature size; • planting elsewhere where the original location cannot support equivalent canopy. This would make the 30% canopy objective more meaningful.	In context, the policy is supporting Councils overarching strategic position of protecting and enhancing vegetation with the canopy cover target of 30% by 2050. This statement provides the principle and commitment to replace trees that have been removed through development. The policy is aimed at supporting Councils current strategic position relating to public trees and vegetation. Council currently has no strategic position relating to offsets for replacement canopy on public land, which would be covered in the development of the Urban Forest Strategy in future years. The Council Plan does contain a performance measure that is reported on annually, relating to net gain of public trees within Knox. This measure requires a higher annual net gain of trees in Knox (public trees removed vs planted). A reference of this has been added into the policy as per the below; Section 2 ***The Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029, contains a performance measure highlighting the net change in Council trees (planted vs removed), aiming for a positive net gain to support canopy targets*.**

		Section 10.1 *Tree planting will aim to enhance canopy cover across the municipality and be implemented through annual tree planting and renewal programs,* ***aiming for a positive net gain in Council trees as per the performance measure in Theme 3 of the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029.***
32	The policy should address cumulative canopy loss The policy considers individual tree removal case by case, but the municipality's canopy target is cumulative. A series of individually justified removals could nevertheless produce significant canopy loss in a particular neighbourhood. Consider introducing monitoring of: • trees removed; • trees planted; • canopy lost; • canopy gained; • net canopy change; • canopy distribution by suburb/neighbourhood. This would allow Council to identify areas experiencing cumulative canopy decline, even where individual removals were justified.	The policy is aimed at supporting Councils current strategic position relating to public trees and vegetation. Council currently has no strategic position relating to offsets for replacement canopy on public land, which would be covered in the development of the Urban Forest Strategy in future years. The Council Plan does contain a performance measure that is reported on annually, relating to net gain of public trees within Knox. This measure requires aims for higher annual net gain of trees in Knox (public trees removed vs planted). A reference of this has been added into the policy as per the below; Section 2 ***The Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029, contains a performance measure highlighting the net change in Council trees (planted vs removed), aiming for a positive net gain to support canopy targets.*** Section 10.1 *Tree planting will aim to enhance canopy cover across the municipality and be implemented through annual tree planting and renewal programs,* ***aiming for a positive net gain in Council trees as per the performance measure in Theme 3 of the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029.***

33	. Community engagement could be stronger. The policy recognises differing community views, but there is relatively little detail about how residents will be informed or involved in significant tree-management decisions. As personal observation – a tree on nature strip was removed and as residents we had no prior information, and we were not aware of its removal. For example: • How will residents be notified about significant removals? • Will reasons for removal be published? • Will inspection outcomes be available? • How can residents challenge or request review of a decision? • Is there a timeframe for responding to complaints? • How will recurring complaints be monitored? The complaints section refers to the broader Council Complaints Policy, but the tree policy could provide clearer customer-facing information.	For general tree removal, Council inform the property that removal directly impacts (tree is located in front of or adjacent to). With significant trees, where a permit may be required, a consultation process is followed to inform the community within a defines vicinity, where it is a requirement of that process. Wording in Section 7.1 has been updated to reflect Council process aligning to directly impacted properties as per the below; *Declaration of a dead, dying or hazardous tree will only be determined by Council's qualified Arborists.* ***Council will inform the resident of properties that a public tree removal directly impacts (tree located in front of or adjacent to).***

8.6 Knox Public Art Policy and the Knox Civic Art Policy Review

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Paper Type: For Decision
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SUMMARY
The Knox Public Art Policy and Knox Civic Art Policy provide the overarching framework for Council's management of its public art and civic art collections. Together, they guide how Council acquires, manages, maintains, deaccessions and promotes these collections.

Both policies were new four years ago and are now due for review (November 2026).
The proposed updates reflect current Council practices, strategic priorities and industry best practice.

The review also introduces a new Knox Civic Art and Heritage and Memorabilia Collection Management Framework, which establishes the detailed procedures for acquisition, deaccession and disposal.

RECOMMENDATION
That Council endorse the Knox Public Art Policy and Knox Civic Art and Heritage and Memorabilia Policy as set out in Attachments 2 and 4

1. DISCUSSION

The Knox Public Art Policy and Knox Civic Art Policy are due for review in November 2026.
The policies provide the overarching framework for how Council develops, acquires, manages, maintains and where appropriate, deaccessions artworks held on behalf of the Knox community.

As part of the scheduled review, both policies have been assessed against current Council practices and processes, changes implemented since the policies were last adopted, relevant Council strategies and plans and developments in arts and cultural sector practice.

Council’s art collections contribute to the cultural identity and character of Knox, support creative placemaking and community connection, and enhance public and civic spaces. The collections support local artists, preserve the cultural and civic history of Knox, and contribute to cultural tourism and a sense of place.

The Knox Public Art Policy and Knox Civic Art Policy establish Council’s policy framework for the management of its art collections. This review provides an opportunity to refine the approach based on implementation experience, procurement requirements, and evolving best practice.

Council currently manages two distinct art collections under these policies.

The Public Art Collection comprises artworks located within public spaces across Knox. These works contribute to the identity and character of places, support community connection and cultural expression, and form part of Council's broader investment in the public realm.

The Civic Art Collection comprises artworks and culturally significant items held or displayed within Council buildings and facilities. The collection reflects aspects of Knox's cultural, civic and social history and includes works acquired, commissioned, donated or gifted to Council over time.

Council also holds a Heritage and Memorabilia Collection comprising objects, documents and records associated with the history of Knox and Knox City Council. This collection is not currently governed by a dedicated management framework. The proposed revisions to the Civic Art Policy will formally incorporate the Heritage and Memorabilia Collection, establishing a consistent approach to its management.

Together, the policies provide a consistent framework for decision-making and ensure Council's collections are developed and managed responsibly, transparently, and in accordance with contemporary industry practice.

The review has also been informed by the Significance Assessment of Council's art collections completed in late 2025 and presented to the Executive Leadership Team in April 2026. The Significance Assessment examined the cultural, historic, social, and artistic value of the collections and included consultation with key stakeholders and community members. Recommendations arising from this work have been incorporated into the revised policies where relevant.

The reviewed policies can be found at Attachments 1 and 3 (with clean versions of each updated policy located at Attachment 2 and 4 respectively).

The key changes proposed through the policy review are outlined below.

1.1. Knox Public Art Policy

1.1.1. Public Art Procurement and Commissioning

The public art procurement process has been revised to align with Council's strategic procurement framework while recognizing the specialist requirements of commissioning public art.

The revised policy provides project specific assessment panels, with membership determined according to the nature, scope, and technical requirements of each project. Councillors will not participate in procurement assessment panels, consistent with the approach to procurement governance and the separation of assessment and decision-making responsibilities.

Councillors will continue to be informed of significant projects through appropriate mechanisms.

1.1.2. Percent for Art Program

The Percent for Art provisions have been refined to provide greater clarity around the allocation and delivery of Public Art associated with major capital works projects.

For new and upgraded projects valued over $2 million, the policy provides for a Public Art allocation calculated at 2.5% of Council's contribution to the capital construction budget with a maximum allocation of $500,000 for any single artwork.

Wherever practicable, Public Art should be integrated into the original capital project or delivered within the immediate project site. Where this is not appropriate, consideration may be given to an alternative location within the surrounding precinct, activity centre or another location with a clear geographical or strategic connection to the original project.

Any alternative outcome must align with Council's broader Public Art priorities and be capable of delivery within two years of the original capital project's completion. Where a suitable Public Art outcome cannot be identified, the percent for Art allocation will not be applied.

1.1.3. First Nations Art and Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property

The revised policy now includes reference to Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property (ICIP) and the commissioning of First Nations artwork into the collection. This supports culturally appropriate practice when working with First Nations artists and communities and aligns with Council's Reconciliation Action Plan.

1.2. Knox Civic Art Policy

1.2.1. Inclusion of the Heritage and Memorabilia Collection

The revised policy formally incorporates Council's Heritage and Memorabilia Collection which comprises documents, objects, photographs, and civic memorabilia associated with the history of Knox and Knox City Council.

The Heritage and Memorabilia Collection is designated as a Closed Collection and is not intended to be actively expanded or developed. New acquisitions will generally not be accepted, except in special circumstances where an item meets the established acquisition criteria and is not accepted by an appropriate collecting institution such as a museum or historical society.

This approach ensures Council retains items of genuine civic, cultural or historical significance while minimising the risk of the Collection expanding beyond Council's capacity to appropriately manage it.

1.2.2. Collection Management Framework

The review has also resulted in the development of a new Knox Civic Art and Heritage and Memorabilia Collection Management Framework.

The Framework establishes the detailed assessment, approval and disposal procedures for both collections, including acquisition and deaccession criteria, approval responsibilities, cooling off periods and methods of disposal.

1.2.3. Changes to Art Assessment Panel Membership

The Art Assessment Panel Membership has been revised to align with Council's strategic procurement framework while recognizing the specialist requirements of recommendations for the acquisition and deaccession of Collection items. Councillors will be informed of changes to Collections through the Councillor Bulletin.

2. ENGAGEMENT

A range of engagement activities have informed the review of the Knox Public Art Policy and Knox Civic Art Policy.

In the development of the Significance Assessment, which has informed aspects of the revisions to the Knox Public Art and Knox Civic Art Polices, key stakeholders were consulted in person and online, individually, and in workshops. Online surveys were also distributed to three key stakeholder groups: Knox Arts and Culture Advisory Committee members, Knox Staff from Active and Creative Communities and Senior Leadership team and Local Arts Community Members and Creatives.

The outcome of this engagement showed that the community feels that Council's art collections should:

- Enrich our indoor and outdoor public spaces;
- Reflect the community's character; and
- Offer imaginative insights into an area's history, diversity, and local identity.

Respondents were asked to rank six benefits of the Public Art program to the Knox City Council community in order of importance. "Connection to Place" (46%) and "Community Safety" (26.75%) were the two highest ranking items.

In addition to the Significance Assessment engagement, Council's established arts and cultural networks have been utilised throughout the policy review to test current practice and ensure the revised policies reflect contemporary sector approaches.

Specialist advice has also been sought to support the integration of Council's Heritage and Memorabilia Collection into the Knox Civic Art Policy. This has informed the proposed approach to the collection, management, storage, and preservation of heritage material and memorabilia.

Ongoing consultation has also been undertaken with Council's Arts and Culture Advisory Committee throughout the review process. The Committee has provided input on the proposed policy changes and broader considerations relating to the management and development of Council's art collections.

Together, these engagement activities have helped ensure the revised policies reflect community values, operational requirements and current arts, cultural and collections management practice.

3. SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

ICIP (Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property) ensures that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples retain collective ownership, control, and protection over their heritage, traditional knowledge, and cultural expressions. The policies represent best practice in respect to cultural safety when commissioning and acquiring First Nations art and respect ICIP rights.

4. CLIMATE CHANGE CONSIDERATIONS.

Implementation of the recommendation is considered to have no direct implications or has no direct impacts upon Council's Net Zero 2030 target, the Community Net Zero 2040, exposure to climate risks or climate change adaptation.

5. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

The environmental impact of the policies is low. Council's procurement of Public Art will continue to align with procurement guidelines for environmental, local and social economic sustainability and will continue to apply the mandatory minimum evaluation weighting of 10% to at least one of these criteria.

6. FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

The revised Knox Public Art Policy establishes indicative funding arrangements for the acquisition and renewal of Council's Public Art collection. All allocations are subject to Council's annual budget processes and broader organisational priorities.

The proposed funding arrangements are outlined below:

- Public Art Projects: an indicative annual capital works allocation of approximately $200,000 will be sought to support the delivery of annual Public Art projects.
- Major Infrastructure Projects: A Percent for Art allocation of 2.5% of Council's contribution to the capital construction budget applies to eligible new and upgrade projects valued over $2 million, with a maximum allocation of $500,000. Where a suitable Public Art outcome cannot be identified, the allocation will not be applied.
- Artwork Renewal: an indicative annual capital works renewal allocation of approximately $90,000 will be sought to support the ongoing maintenance and renewal of Council's Public Art collection.
- Partnerships and Grants: Seeking external funding opportunities and collaborating with developers on public art projects when applicable.

7. RISKS

Asset Management

Without clear policy guidance, there is an increased risk of deterioration, loss or damage to Council's art, heritage and memorabilia collections.

Governance

Outdated policies may result in inconsistent decision-making regarding acquisitions, commissions and collection management.

Cultural and Reputational Risk

Inadequate guidance for First Nations artworks may create cultural or reputational risk for Council.

8. COUNCIL AND HEALTH AND WELLBEING PLAN 2025-2029

Embracing connection, inclusion and diversity

Strategy 2.2 - Cultural diversity is celebrated through assisting, participating in, facilitating and delivering accessible programs, initiatives and events in partnership with our community, community groups and service providers.

Strategy 2.4 - There are opportunities for social connection and active living through planning, provision of facilities, program delivery and support for local groups.

9. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The officers contributing to and responsible for this report have no conflicts of interest requiring disclosure under Chapter 5 of the Governance Rules of Knox City Council.

10. STATEMENT OF COMPATIBILITY

There are no legislative obligations under the Human Rights Charter, Child Safe Standards or the Gender Equity Act that are incompatible with the recommendation in this report.

11. CONFIDENTIALITY

There is no content in this report that meets the definition of confidential information from the Local Government Act 2020.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Attachment 1 - Policy Review - Knox Public Art Policy - V 4 [**8.6.1** - 13 pages]
2. Attachment 2 - Knox Public Art Policy - V 4 -(clean version) [**8.6.2** - 10 pages]
3. Attachment 3 - Knox Civic Art and Heritage and Memorabilia Policy (formerly Knox Civic Art Policy) ([**8.6.3** - 11 pages]
4. Attachment 4 - Knox Civic Art and Heritage and Memorabilia Policy (formerly Knox Civic Art Policy) - [**8.6.4** - 8 pages]

Attachment 1

Knox Public Art Policy

Policy Number:	2023/11	**Directorate:**	Connected Communities
Approval by:	Council	**Responsible Officer:**	Manager Active & Creative Communities
Approval Date:	TBC	**Version Number:**	~~3~~4
Review Date:	TBC		

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide a framework to guide the management of Public Art in Knox, including resourcing, acquisition, asset management, deaccession and promotion of public artworks owned by Knox City Council, as well as provisions for guiding community and private investor led ~~p~~Public ~~a~~Art in Knox.

2. Context

Public Art is a form of creative placemaking, through the introduction of outdoor artworks that contribute to the aesthetics, sense of safety and community identity, cultural tourism and a strong sense of positive community connection to spaces in the public realm. Public ~~art~~ Art also promotes human centered design through addressing community needs, beyond the functionality of a space.

Local Government plays a key role in guiding the development and integration of Public Art within the community, often as part of placemaking, renewal and infrastructure redevelopment projects, to contribute to a sense of place for the community. Artworks can include temporary and permanent installations, and a wide variety of dimensions and mediums. Public Art is generally site specific, responsive to the local environment, community or future vision of the location in which they are placed.

Knox has a strong history with Public Art, including past programs such as the Knox Placemakers projects which has left a legacy of community focused public artworks across the municipality. In recent years, Public Art has transformed into large scale, iconic and contemporary works, installed as part of major redevelopment projects, as well as socially engaged arts that support cultural development and neighbourhood renewal.

Public Art often involves complex project and risk management, long term financial planning, and collaboration across many areas of Council to deliver safe and impactful works. These projects play a key role in local and regional ~~arts development, and~~arts development and is a significant source of employment for many artists.

Community led and investor initiated Public Art in Knox also requires guidance by Council, as projects trigger a range of community engagement, risk, safety and reputational elements, supported through this policy framework.

Public Art strengthens the social, cultural and economic development of a community through building vibrant spaces hinged upon strong local partnerships within retail precincts, reserves, sporting facilities, community hubs, public amenity and urban development areas.

3. Scope

The Policy provides a scope for:

- The value and rationale for Council's role in leading and investing in ~~p~~Public ~~a~~Art.
- Resourcing ~~Public~~ public ~~Art~~ art through a sustained financial framework.
- The submission, assessment and approvals process for acquisition and deaccession.
- Asset management of Public Art including maintenance, insurance and asset registration.
- The deaccession framework for the disposal, sale, return or removal of public art.
- Development of cultural tourism and public participation models.
- Council's role in supporting and moderating community led and investor initiated public art.

4. Knox Public Art Policy

4.1 Objectives

The objectives of the Knox ~~Civic~~ Public Art Policy are as follows:

- To provide a clear framework for a sustained financial investment in Public Art.
- To provide a clear framework for the acquiring of Public Art in Knox through acquisition or commission.
- To manage Public Art as a valued civic asset, using a best practice model.
- To inform a clear rationale for deaccession of Public Art.
- To support arts and cultural development, placemaking and civic pride.
- To support cultural tourism, placemaking and community engagement with Public Art.
- To harness innovation and arts development in Knox.
- To guide external stakeholders, particularly those who are planning Public Art in Knox.

4.2 The Art Assessment Panel (AAP)

The Art Assessment Panel (AAP) is a working group that assesses and makes recommendations for the acquisition and deaccession of ~~p~~Public ~~a~~Art in Knox, alongside the Knox Public Art Policy. This group is also responsible for recommendations related to the Knox Civic Art and Heritage and Memorabilia Policy.

Membership and processes of the AAP are as follows:

- Up to four community members from the current Knox Arts and Culture Committee, nominated at the commencement of their term and reflected in the Committee Terms of Reference; plus
- Council officers, including relevant Arts and Cultural Services officers and other officers as required based on the functions and expertise needed.

For each procurement process, a project-specific assessment panel will be established,

with Stage 1 and Stage 2 panel membership determined according to the nature, scope and technical requirements of the project.

Stage 1 – Initial Assessment

The Stage 1 panel may include:

- Arts and Cultural Services staff;
- Relevant Council officers;
- Procurement Officer – non-scoring; and
- A project-specific technical or subject matter advisor, where relevant – non-scoring.

Stage 2 – Final Assessment

The Stage 2 panel may include:

- Arts and Cultural Services staff;
- Relevant Council officers;
- The authorised delegate for sign off – non-scoring;
- External industry representatives drawn from the AAP membership – non-scoring; and
- A project-specific technical or subject matter advisor, where relevant – non-scoring.

Final panel composition may vary between projects to ensure the appropriate mix of operational, technical, industry and subject matter expertise is represented.

Meetings will be scheduled on an ad-hoc basis as required. Assessment consultation and recommendations for projects may also be undertaken via email communications.

Assessment undertaken by the AAP will be alongside Item 4.4, and recommendations of the AAP will be captured in a group consensus Public Art Acquisition or Deaccession Report.

- ~~Up to six internal officers from a range of relevant service areas across Connected Communities, City Liveability, and Infrastructure Directorates; plus~~
- ~~Between two and four community members from the current Knox Arts and Culture Committee, nominated at the commencement of their term, and reflected in the Committee Terms of Reference; plus~~
- ~~At least one Councillor will be nominated from the Arts and Culture Committee, who will take on the role of Chair. Where multiple Arts and Culture Committee Councillors' wish to take part in the AAP, the role of Chair will be given to the Mayor or Deputy Mayor, or negotiated where this does not apply.~~

  ~~Meetings will be scheduled on an ad-hoc basis as required. Assessment, consultation and recommendations for projects may also be undertaken via email communications.~~
- ~~Assessment undertaken by the AAP will be alongside Item 4.4, and recommendations of the AAP will be captured in a group consensus Public Art Acquisition or Deaccession Report.~~

4.3 Resourcing Public Art

Public Art is funded in a variety of ways, with project budgets informed by the scope and requirements of each project and relevant industry standards, including the National Association for the Visual Arts (NAVA) Fee Schedules. ~~Public Art is funded in a variety of ways, with budget allocations reflecting benchmarks set by other Local Government Authorities with a committed Public Art portfolio, National Association of Visual Arts Fee Schedules.~~

4.3.1 Public Art Projects (Council Capital Works Annual Budget)

An annual capital works allocation of approximately $200,000 will be sought to deliver Council's Public Art Program, subject to Council's annual budget processes and broader organisational priorities. Council will seek to maintain a level of annual investment that supports a sustainable and ongoing Public Art Program.

The Arts and Cultural Services managed allocation will fund stand-alone Public Art projects that respond to identified community and place-based priorities, including neighbourhood renewal, community safety, retail activation and placemaking. The annual allocation will be inclusive of project management and administration costs (estimated 10%) and contingency (estimated 10%).

~~The annual Arts and Culture - Public Art Projects capital works allocation is based on approximately 1.0% of the total annual new and upgrade Capital Works Project Budget, with a minimum annual allocation of $200,000 towards this program reviewed annually alongside budget cycles.~~

~~This Arts and Culture managed allocation funds stand- alone projects that respond to identified community needs for neighbourhood renewal, community safety, retail activation and placemaking, on a case by case basis. This budget also supports the funding of the Public Art Project Officer project management fee for these projects (E10-20%) and allocation for contingency (E10%) of project budgets.~~

4.3.2 Major New and Upgrade Infrastructure Projects "Percent for Art" (Council Capital Works Project Budgets)

A project based 'percent for art' investment in Public Art is applied to major new and upgrade capital works infrastructure and open space projects valued over $2 million. The allocation is calculated at 2.5% of Council's contribution to the capital construction budget, with a maximum allocation of $500,000 for any single public artwork, with larger investments only applied in response to a Council directive. This percent for art approach reflects industry best ~~practice, and~~practice and allows for a scalable model where the scope of artwork included reflects the scope of the development initiative.

The percent for art allocation will cover the end to end design, fabrication and installation of public artwork (estimated 80%), project management fee (estimated 10~~-20~~%) and contingency (estimated 10%)~~, with the public art project budget managed by Arts and Culture and spent against the Major Initiatives project budget code.~~ Public Art project budgets will be managed by Arts and Cultural Services in collaboration with the relevant capital project team.~~Arts and Culture will provide a project manager, usually the Public Art Projects Officer, who will liaise with project control group.~~

Projects are to be planned in collaboration with Arts and Cultural Services at capital works business case initiation stage, to enable integrated design and resource planning.

Wherever practicable, the artwork should be integrated into the capital project or delivered within the immediate project site. Where the scale, location or nature of a capital project does not support a meaningful or appropriate Public Art outcome, consideration may be given to delivering an artwork within the surrounding precinct, activity centre or another location with a clear geographical or strategic

connection to the original capital project, provided it aligns with Council's broader Public Art priorities and can be delivered within two years of the original capital project's completion.

Alternative approaches will be determined in consultation with the relevant project lead and subject to available Council budget.

Where a suitable Public Art outcome cannot be identified within these parameters, the Percent for Art allocation will not be applied.

~~Where significant artwork already exists on a site, or the type of capital upgrade is deemed unsuitable for public art, Arts and Culture will negotiate with the project lead to consider an alternate approach, which may include no public art, a reduced scale of work, renewal, relocation or deaccession of an existing work, with such works funded within the project percent for allocation.~~

4.3.3 Artwork Renewal (Capital Works Renewal Annual Budget)

Existing and new permanent public artworks will be included on Council's Asset Register, together with an appropriate asset maintenance schedule funded through the Artwork Renewal capital works program.

An annual capital works renewal allocation of approximately $90,000 will be sought to support the ongoing care and management of Council's Public Art collection, subject to Council's annual budget processes and broader organisational priorities. The proposed allocation will be indexed annually and periodically reviewed against the size, condition and total asset value of the Public Art collection to ensure funding remains appropriate to its ongoing maintenance, conservation and renewal requirements.

The Artwork Renewal allocation will support the inspection, maintenance, conservation, repair, renewal, relocation and deaccession of public artworks listed on Council's Asset Register.

~~Existing and new permanent public artworks will be included on Council's Asset Register, along with an asset maintenance schedule funded through the Artwork Renewal capital works program. The renewal funding provision will be an annual allocation of 0.8% of the total market value of the current Public Art asset register pool, with a minimum of $80,000 per year. This provides for the appropriate asset management, maintenance and deaccession of public artworks listed in the asset register collection, and reviewed annually alongside Council budget cycles.~~

4.3.4 Partnership and Engagement Initiatives (Council Operational Budget)

From time to time, projects may be funded through operating budgets where public artworks or public art engagement programs are developed in collaboration across Council and contribute to festivals, events or other keynote projects. These ~~one off~~one-off projects will be planned on an annual basis, and will either be funded through Arts and Cultural Services~~e~~, the initiating lead Unit, or a cost sharing model, as deemed viable. Where Public Art is initiated outside of Arts and Cultural Services, the team will provide guidance, support and a project management toolkit to inform a process that reflects this policy framework.

4.3.5 Special Projects (External Grant Funding)

Council will seek opportunities ~~to apply~~ for State, Federal, Private and Philanthropic grants to contribute to planned projects, or enable new projects outside of the current Council Funded allocations, and be prompted by opportunities that support the objectives of this policy. Where Council is embarking on funding advocacy campaigns for major new and upgrade infrastructure

projects, the percent for art is to be included as part of the proposed budget for State or Federal funding.

4.3.6 Developer Contributions (Externally Funded)

Council may~~will~~ negotiate with developers the inclusion of Public Art within major developer led infrastructure projects, aiming for a financial allocation of 1.5% of the estimated total construction budget for projects over $2million. This would~~ill~~ be negotiated at the time of planning permit applications to Council. Where such projects are situated in outdoor publicly accessible spaces, the design proposal will be assessed by the AAP, with a recommendation presented to the developer for their consideration.

4.3.7 Community Led Projects (Externally Funded or via Council's Grant Programs)

Community led projects are those initiated and funded by groups outside of Council, including those funded through Council's grant programs. Community led projects in the public realm must follow this policy, and Council will provide guidance, support and a project management toolkit to inform a process that reflects this policy framework.

4.4 Acquisition Framework

Acquisition of ~~p~~Public ~~a~~Art may take place by way of a purchase of an existing public artwork, or more often, the commission of a new artwork that is designed for a specific site. Artwork acquisition is implemented using the following framework.

4.4.1 Initiating Public Art Projects

Public Artworks will be initiated alongside the resourcing framework outlined in Item ~~6~~4.3 including:

- Annually planned ~~p~~Public ~~a~~Art projects that respond to identified community need~~s~~ for neighbourhood renewal, community safety, retail activation and placemaking, on a case by case basis.
- Major new and upgrade infrastructure and open space projects prompted through capital works initiatives.
- Public artworks developed in collaboration across Council that~~and~~ contribute to festivals, events or other keynote projects, and are usually of a temporary or ephemeral nature.
- Community and Private led ~~p~~Public ~~a~~Art projects, where Council plays a role in the guidance, assessment and approval of works in public space.
- The Ward Councillor will be notified of the intended artwork acquisition.

4.4.2 ~~Submission and Artwork Assessment Process~~~~Procurement and Contracting Process~~Artwork Procurement Process

Public Art acquisition will be undertaken through the following procurement process ~~submission and assessment~~~~procurement and contracting process~~:

- A Procurement Plan and ~~n~~ Artistic Brief will be developed that provides project objectives, artistic themes, site requirements, scope and submission requirements, and will sit alongside the necessary strategic procurement documents and framework.
- A project-specific procurement panel will be established for each project, with Stage 1 and Stage 2 panel membership determined according to the nature, scope and technical

requirements of the project. ~~All applications will be individually assessed by AAP members alongside a Public Art Assessment Matrix with weighted criteria, with individual scores combined to establish a total score for each submission.~~

- Stage 1 assessment will be undertaken by the nominated scoring panel against a Public Art Assessment Matrix with weighted criteria. Individual scores will be combined to establish a total score for each submission. Non-scoring advisors may participate where relevant to the project.
- ~~Where more than eight submissions are received, the Stage 1 panel will shortlist no more than the eight highest scoring submissions. Arts and Culture Officers will undertake an initial scoring and seek AAP assessment for no more than the top scoring eight applications.~~
- For projects valued at $50,000 and above, ~~over $100~~50,000, up to ~~three~~four shortlisted ~~the top three (maximum) scored~~ submissions will be invited to progress to Stage 2 and prepare a developed design submission, with an appropriate design fee paid in accordance with relevant NAVA guidance.~~move to a second stage of developed design submission, inclusive of a NAVA approved design fee. The AAP assessment will be repeated, and further advice sought from other stakeholders as needed.~~
- Stage 2 assessment will be undertaken by the nominated Stage 2 scoring panel, with input from non-scoring AAP members, technical advisors and other relevant stakeholders as required.
- Following the Stage 2 assessment, a~~A~~ procurement report will be completed, and the successful ~~submission~~commission will be contracted. The approval of ~~p~~Public ~~a~~Art projects will follow the applicable financial delegation levels. ~~progress to contracting. Final artwork selections will be documented in then be presented within a recommendation report and progressed , for progressing for financial approval as per Item 4.5.~~

~~4.5 Approval Process~~

~~4.5.1 Financial Approval~~

~~Once a design has been selected, the procurement of services and/or capital works will be undertaken in accordance with Council's strategic follows the strategic procurement framework and supported by the level , and supported by the required levels of procurement planning and reporting required for the value of the project. prompted by financial values. The approval of public art projects will follow the applicable follows the financial delegation levels outlined below.~~

~~Financial Delegation Limit~~	~~Procurement framework~~	~~Financial Approval Levels~~
~~Up to $10,000~~	~~Minimum of one simple written quote~~	~~Team Leader Creative Placemaking~~
~~$10,001 - $50,000~~	~~Three simple written quotes~~	~~Team Leader Creative Placemaking~~
~~$50,001 - $100,000~~	~~Three detailed written quotes~~	~~Coordinator Arts and Cultural Services~~
~~$50,001 - $250,000 (Goods & Services)~~ ~~$50,000 - $500,000 (ICT & Works)~~	~~Three detailed written quotes~~	~~Manager Active & Creative Communities Executives and Councillors may be consulted.~~

~~Up to $1,500,000~~	~~Public tender process projects over $500,000 and goods and services over $250,000.~~	~~Director Connected Communities~~ ~~Other Executives and Councillors may be consulted.~~

~~4.5.2 Written Agreement~~

~~The procurement of a public artwork will require a written form of agreement, whereby works up to $100,000 will be supported by an Artists Agreement, and works over $100,000 will prompt a formal Commission Contract developed using Council's standard contract template, plus current arts law practice, co-signed by the supplier and the financial approver in line with the delegation limits provided by the procurement framework.~~

4.5 ~~4.6~~ Copyright and Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property Rights

4.~~6~~5.1 Copyright

This Policy upholds artists rights under the Copyright Act 1968 (Cth), including copyright ownership and moral rights. Artists retain copyright, while Council receives a limited, non-exclusive licence for promotional and archival use. All alterations, relocation, or conservation of artworks will involve artist consultation, and ICIP will be respected through meaningful engagement with Traditional Owners and communities. Under the Copyright Act 1968 (Cth), copyright protection applies equally to the creative works of both Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians.

4.~~6~~5.2 Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property (ICIP)

Council recognises the collective and perpetual rights of First Peoples to their cultural knowledge, expression and heritage. Council will seek informed consent before using any Indigenous cultural content and will work in genuine partnership with Traditional Custodians to ensure respectful consultation, attribution, and protection of ICIP.

Council will not alter, reproduce or repurpose material containing Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property (ICIP) without informed consent from the original artist and relevant Traditional Custodians, regardless of copyright ownership.

4.6 Asset Management of Public Art

4.6.1 Insurance and Asset Registration

All completed artworks will be accessioned into the collection and recorded in the asset register and listed onto Council's insurance based on the value of the work at the time of accession, and reviewed annually alongside Council's insurance policy.

4.6.2 Lifespan of Public Art Works

In order to effectively manage the existing public artworks in Knox City Council's Public Art Collection three categories of expected life span are identified, at which time an assessment is undertaken to determine future life span:

- ~~10 year~~10-year **life span**: Public Art that is sculptural in form and/~~-~~or made of durable materials that can withstand weather and time for a reasonable period and have minimal maintenance. Most public artworks will require a ~~ten year~~ten-year life space within the written agreement with the artist/supplier.

- ~~2-5 year~~2–5-year **life span**: Public Art in the form of public sculptures, murals, pavement designs, mosaic panels, that are made of non-durable, non-weathering materials that have a life span that is reduced and where the integrity of the work is no longer achieved due to this, and/or maintenance costs are deemed excessive, the expected life span is 2-5 years.
- **Ephemeral or less than two years' life span**: Public Art in the form of sculptural elements, outdoor projections, street art projects, flag installations, billboards and light boxes are ephemeral projects that provide opportunities for participation from numerous artists and or groups and are enhanced by the opportunity to change regularly, have an expected life span of less than two years, and are assessed on a case to case basis.

4.6.3 Maintenance

Council recognises that Public Artworks are a valuable asset and will undertake maintenance and review with the aim to preserve the value and lifespan of the works. Public Art will receive planned maintenance attention including regular condition reviews, cleaning and maintenance. This will include the systemic recording of assets, development of maintenance manuals as part of the Artists Agreement/Contract, condition reports and maintenance assessment criteria. Renewal of the ~~p~~Public ~~a~~Art collection is resourced by the Capital Works renewal budget., ~~and approved as per Item 4.5.~~

4.6.4 Deaccession

A deaccession process for Public Art will be assessed alongside a Deaccession Matrix, and will enable those works either in extremely poor condition, have exceeded their expected lifespan, be of no value to Council, or assessed as no longer reflective of Council's values, to be removed from the register and from Council's collection, or where an artwork is intact and of value and requires removal for other reasons, such as site redevelopment, the process for safe removal with the intent for sale or relocation.

Artworks for deaccession from the collection must undergo a transparent and consistent assessment and approvals process, as follows:

- Arts and Cultural Services will identify and respond to the need for artwork deaccession, and prepare a deaccession brief to the AAP, including an initial assessment based on the Deaccession Matrix, the risk implications of keeping or removing the work/s, and the proposed method of deaccession.
- The AAP must reach majority consensus (over 51%) for a proposed deaccession of artwork, which will be captured in a Public Art Deaccession Report ~~to support the approval process, as per Item 4.5.~~
- Where the work is of cultural heritage value, perceived community value, is not posing a public safety risk, requires removal due to site development, and is beyond restoration as per the deaccession matrix, the Ward Councillor and Council's Communications team will be consulted to discuss community engagement before deaccession process commences.
- The Deaccession Report must be approved by the delegated authority, based on the artwork value at the time of deaccession. ~~following the same approval process as per item 4.5.~~

- Items cannot be proposed for deaccessioning purely aesthetic grounds, if they have been in the collection for less than five years, or if they have a legal encumbrance that prohibit them being deaccessioned.
- Deaccession costs will be funded through the Artwork Renewal, or if part of a redevelopment site, costed as part the 'percent for art' budget.

4.6.5 Private and Community Public Art Assets

Council will not be responsible for the maintenance or deaccession of Public Art on land not owned by Council, unless it is considered culturally significant, is on the Council asset register, or is considered to be a good financial or planning decision for Council to do so. This will be assessed on a case by case basis in collaboration with the AAP. ~~and alongside the approvals process in Item 4.5.~~

4.7 Communications and Engagement

All completed public artworks will be announced to Council staff and Councillors through internal publications. Council will also deliver initiatives that promote active enjoyment, education, visitation and engagement with Public Art in Knox. This will be achieved through leading and supporting the following:

- Local creative placemaking initiatives.
- Cultural tourism initiatives.
- Cultural asset mapping.
- Public ~~a~~Art trails.
- Arts and cultural events.
- Regional visitor strategies.
- Community and private investor led projects.
- ~~Online resource kit and enquiry portal.~~

Many of these activities are reflected as Council priorities through a variety of plans, policies and strategies, requiring a collaborative approach to planning, communications, engagement and reporting.

5. References

5.1 ~~Council Plan 2021 - 2025~~Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-29
- ~~Goal: Connection, Resilience and Wellbeing~~
- ~~Goal: Neighborhoods, Housing and Infrastructure~~
- Theme 2: Embracing connection, inclusion and diversity

5.2 Relevant Legislation
- Local Government Act 2020
- Copyright Amendment Act 2000
- Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 (Vic)
- Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2017 (Vic)
- Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 ~~Worksafe Victoria regulations~~

- ~~National Association of Visual Arts Code of Conduct~~

5.3 Charter of Human Rights

- This policy has been assessed against and complies with the charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006~~.~~

5.4 Industry Standards and Guidelines

- National Association for the Visual Arts (NAVA) Code of Practice for Visual Arts, Craft and Design
- National Association for the Visual Arts (NAVA) Fee Schedules
- Creative Australia's Protocols for using First Nations Cultural and Intellectual Property in the Arts

~~5.4~~5.5 Related Council Policies

- Knox Civic Art Policy
- Model Councillor Code of Conduct
- Graffiti Management Policy
- Strategic Procurement Policy
- Community Facility Planning Policy

~~5.5~~5.6 Related Council Plans, Strategies & Resources

- ~~Knox Arts and Culture Plan~~
- Arts and Cultural Services Service Plan
- Festivals and Events Service Plan
- Open Space Strategy (in development)
- Retail Activation Strategy
- Various Neighbourhood Renewal and Structure Plans
- ~~Livable Streets Plan~~
- ~~Open Space Plan~~
- ~~Play Space Plan~~
- ~~Strategic Procurement Framework~~
- Terms of Reference, Knox Arts and Culturale~~e~~ Committee
- Gender Impact Assessment Framework
- Public Art Assessment Matrix and Report (AAP templates)
- Public Art Deaccession Matrix and Report (AAP templates)
- Asset Register and Asset Management Plan
- Reconciliation Action Plan

6. Definitions

Term	Definition
Public Art	A public artwork is an artwork in any medium, such as sculpture, projection, murals or new media, planned and executed as a site specific work, usually outdoors in the public realm
Accession	An accession is an acquisition that an institution formally adds to its collection and is administered through the collection policy.
Deaccession	The removal, sale, relocation or disposal of an existing artwork,

	including information sharing with the artist/s and key stakeholders, where items are to be deaccessioned.
Acquisition	Purchase of a pre-existing artwork
Arts and Cultural Development	Utilising the arts as a means for community engagement and development, usually with a Public Art outcome that contributes to placemaking.
Creative Placemaking	Increasing community wellbeing and cultural tourism by introducing Public Art that improves the aesthetics, safety, connection and interest in a public space.
Public Realm	An outdoor public space where the community can access, visit or view.
Permanent Art	A public artwork that has at least a two - five year life space at the installation site.
Ephemeral Art	Temporary artwork that is either installed or presented in a space for up to two years.
Artistic Brief	A document that supports a Public Art Expression of Interest process, providing a design theme, project scope, budget and assessment criteria for submissions.
Public Art Assessment Matrix	A combination of Council's standard procurement assessment matrix, plus a series of weighted criteria specific for ~~p~~Public ~~a~~Art design submissions to reflect best industry practice.
Intellectual Property (IP)	A legal term for creations of the mind, such as ideas, designs, written or artistic works, inventions, branding and other original material that may be protected by law.
Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property (ICIP)	Refers to the rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to protect and control their cultural heritage, knowledge, cultural expressions, stories, designs, symbols, language and other traditional cultural material.

7. Administrative Updates

From time to time, circumstances may change leading to the need for minor administrative changes to this Policy. Where an update does not materially alter this Policy, such a change may be made administratively on approval of the [Chief Executive Officer / Director]. Examples of minor administrative changes include change to names of Council departments or positions, change to names of Federal or State Government departments or a minor amendment to legislation that does not have material impact. Where any change or update may materially change the intent of this Policy, it must be considered by Council.

[Where an administrative update has been made – delete if not applicable]

Amendment details	Approved by	Date of approval
[Detail administrative amendments made]	[Name of Approver]	[Date approved]

Attachment 2

Knox Public Art Policy

Policy Number:	2023/11	**Directorate:**	Connected Communities
Approval by:	Council	**Responsible Officer:**	Manager Active & Creative Communities
Approval Date:	TBC	**Version Number:**	4
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1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide a framework to guide the management of Public Art in Knox, including resourcing, acquisition, asset management, deaccession and promotion of public artworks owned by Knox City Council, as well as provisions for guiding community and private investor led Public Art in Knox.

2. Context

Public Art is a form of creative placemaking, through the introduction of outdoor artworks that contribute to the aesthetics, sense of safety and community identity, cultural tourism and a strong sense of positive community connection to spaces in the public realm. Public Art also promotes human centered design through addressing community needs, beyond the functionality of a space.

Local Government plays a key role in guiding the development and integration of Public Art within the community, often as part of placemaking, renewal and infrastructure redevelopment projects, to contribute to a sense of place for the community. Artworks can include temporary and permanent installations, and a wide variety of dimensions and mediums. Public Art is generally site specific, responsive to the local environment, community or future vision of the location in which they are placed.

Knox has a strong history with Public Art, including past programs such as the Knox Placemakers projects which has left a legacy of community focused public artworks across the municipality. In recent years, Public Art has transformed into large scale, iconic and contemporary works, installed as part of major redevelopment projects, as well as socially engaged arts that support cultural development and neighbourhood renewal.

Public Art often involves complex project and risk management, long term financial planning, and collaboration across many areas of Council to deliver safe and impactful works. These projects play a key role in local and regional arts development and is a significant source of employment for many artists.

Community led and investor initiated Public Art in Knox also requires guidance by Council, as projects trigger a range of community engagement, risk, safety and reputational elements, supported through this policy framework.

Public Art strengthens the social, cultural and economic development of a community through building

vibrant spaces hinged upon strong local partnerships within retail precincts, reserves, sporting facilities, community hubs, public amenity and urban development areas.

3. Scope

The Policy provides a scope for:

- The value and rationale for Council's role in leading and investing in Public Art.
- Resourcing public art through a sustained financial framework.
- The submission, assessment and approvals process for acquisition and deaccession.
- Asset management of Public Art including maintenance, insurance and asset registration.
- The deaccession framework for the disposal, sale, return or removal of public art.
- Development of cultural tourism and public participation models.
- Council's role in supporting and moderating community led and investor initiated public art.

4. Knox Public Art Policy

4.1 Objectives

The objectives of the Knox Public Art Policy are as follows:

- To provide a clear framework for a sustained financial investment in Public Art.
- To provide a clear framework for the acquiring of Public Art in Knox through acquisition or commission.
- To manage Public Art as a valued civic asset, using a best practice model.
- To inform a clear rationale for deaccession of Public Art.
- To support arts and cultural development, placemaking and civic pride.
- To support cultural tourism, placemaking and community engagement with Public Art.
- To harness innovation and arts development in Knox.
- To guide external stakeholders, particularly those who are planning Public Art in Knox.

4.2 The Art Assessment Panel (AAP)

The Art Assessment Panel (AAP) is a working group that assesses and makes recommendations for the acquisition and deaccession of Public Art in Knox, alongside the Knox Public Art Policy. This group is also responsible for recommendations related to the Knox Civic Art and Heritage and Memorabilia Policy.

Membership and processes of the AAP are as follows:

- Up to four community members from the current Knox Arts and Culture Committee, nominated at the commencement of their term and reflected in the Committee Terms of Reference; plus
- Council officers, including relevant Arts and Cultural Services officers and other officers as required based on the functions and expertise needed.

For each procurement process, a project-specific assessment panel will be established, with Stage 1 and Stage 2 panel membership determined according to the nature, scope and technical requirements of the project.

Stage 1 – Initial Assessment

The Stage 1 panel may include:

- Arts and Cultural Services staff;
- Relevant Council officers;
- Procurement Officer – non-scoring; and
- A project-specific technical or subject matter advisor, where relevant – non-scoring.

Stage 2 – Final Assessment

The Stage 2 panel may include:

- Arts and Cultural Services staff;
- Relevant Council officers;
- The authorised delegate for sign off – non-scoring;
- External industry representatives drawn from the AAP membership – non-scoring; and
- A project-specific technical or subject matter advisor, where relevant – non-scoring.

Final panel composition may vary between projects to ensure the appropriate mix of operational, technical, industry and subject matter expertise is represented.

Meetings will be scheduled on an ad-hoc basis as required. Assessment consultation and recommendations for projects may also be undertaken via email communications.

Assessment undertaken by the AAP will be alongside Item 4.4, and recommendations of the AAP will be captured in a group consensus Public Art Acquisition or Deaccession Report.

4.3 Resourcing Public Art

4.3.1 Public Art is funded in a variety of ways, with project budgets informed by the scope and requirements of each project and relevant industry standards, including the National Association for the Visual Arts (NAVA) Fee Schedules. Public Art Projects (Council Capital Works Annual Budget)

An annual capital works allocation of approximately $200,000 will be sought to deliver Council's Public Art Program, subject to Council's annual budget processes and broader organisational priorities. Council will seek to maintain a level of annual investment that supports a sustainable and ongoing Public Art Program.

The Arts and Cultural Services managed allocation will fund stand-alone Public Art projects that respond to identified community and place-based priorities, including neighbourhood renewal, community safety, retail activation and placemaking. The annual allocation will be inclusive of project management and administration costs (estimated 10%) and contingency (estimated 10%).

4.3.2 Major New and Upgrade Infrastructure Projects "Percent for Art" (Council Capital Works Project Budgets)

A project based 'percent for art' investment in Public Art is applied to major new and upgrade capital works infrastructure and open space projects valued over $2 million. The allocation is calculated at 2.5% of Council's contribution to the capital construction budget, with a maximum allocation of $500,000 for any single public artwork, with larger investments only applied in response to a Council directive. This percent for art approach reflects industry best practice and allows for a scalable model where the scope of artwork included reflects the scope of the development initiative.

The percent for art allocation will cover the end to end design, fabrication and installation of public artwork (estimated 80%), project management fee (estimated 10%) and contingency (estimated 10%). Public Art project budgets will be managed by Arts and Cultural Services in collaboration with the relevant capital project team.

Projects are to be planned in collaboration with Arts and Cultural Services at capital works business case initiation stage, to enable integrated design and resource planning.

Wherever practicable, the artwork should be integrated into the capital project or delivered within the immediate project site. Where the scale, location or nature of a capital project does not support a meaningful or appropriate Public Art outcome, consideration may be given to delivering an artwork within the surrounding precinct, activity centre or another location with a clear geographical or strategic connection to the original capital project, provided it aligns with Council's broader Public Art priorities and can be delivered within two years of the original capital project's completion.

Alternative approaches will be determined in consultation with the relevant project lead and subject to available Council budget.

Where a suitable Public Art outcome cannot be identified within these parameters, the Percent for Art allocation will not be applied.

4.3.3 Artwork Renewal (Capital Works Renewal Annual Budget)

Existing and new permanent public artworks will be included on Council's Asset Register, together with an appropriate asset maintenance schedule funded through the Artwork Renewal capital works program.

An annual capital works renewal allocation of approximately $90,000 will be sought to support the ongoing care and management of Council's Public Art collection, subject to Council's annual budget processes and broader organisational priorities. The proposed allocation will be indexed annually and periodically reviewed against the size, condition and total asset value of the Public Art collection to ensure funding remains appropriate to its ongoing maintenance, conservation and renewal requirements.

The Artwork Renewal allocation will support the inspection, maintenance, conservation, repair, renewal, relocation and deaccession of public artworks listed on Council's Asset Register.

4.3.4 Partnership and Engagement Initiatives (Council Operational Budget)

From time to time, projects may be funded through operating budgets where public artworks or public art engagement programs are developed in collaboration across Council and contribute to festivals, events or other keynote projects. These one-off projects will be planned on an annual basis, and will either be funded through Arts and Cultural Services, the initiating lead Unit, or a cost sharing model, as deemed viable. Where Public Art is initiated outside of Arts and Cultural Services, the team will provide guidance, support and a project management toolkit to inform a process that reflects this policy framework.

4.3.5 Special Projects (External Grant Funding)

Council will seek opportunities for State, Federal, Private and Philanthropic grants to contribute to planned projects, or enable new projects outside of the current Council Funded allocations, and be prompted by opportunities that support the objectives of this policy. Where Council is embarking on funding advocacy campaigns for major new and upgrade infrastructure projects, the percent for

art is to be included as part of the proposed budget for State or Federal funding.

4.3.6 Developer Contributions (Externally Funded)

Council may negotiate with developers the inclusion of Public Art within major developer led infrastructure projects, aiming for a financial allocation of 1.5% of the estimated total construction budget for projects over $2million. This would be negotiated at the time of planning permit applications to Council. Where such projects are situated in outdoor publicly accessible spaces, the design proposal will be assessed by the AAP, with a recommendation presented to the developer for their consideration.

4.3.7 Community Led Projects (Externally Funded or via Council's Grant Programs)

Community led projects are those initiated and funded by groups outside of Council, including those funded through Council's grant programs. Community led projects in the public realm must follow this policy, and Council will provide guidance, support and a project management toolkit to inform a process that reflects this policy framework.

4.4 Acquisition Framework

Acquisition of Public Art may take place by way of a purchase of an existing public artwork, or more often, the commission of a new artwork that is designed for a specific site. Artwork acquisition is implemented using the following framework.

4.4.1 Initiating Public Art Projects

Public Artworks will be initiated alongside the resourcing framework outlined in Item 4.3 including:

- Annually planned Public Art projects that respond to identified community need for neighbourhood renewal, community safety, retail activation and placemaking, on a case by case basis.
- Major new and upgrade infrastructure and open space projects prompted through capital works initiatives.
- Public artworks developed in collaboration across Council that contribute to festivals, events or other keynote projects, and are usually of a temporary or ephemeral nature.
- Community and Private led Public Art projects, where Council plays a role in the guidance, assessment and approval of works in public space.
- The Ward Councillor will be notified of the intended artwork acquisition.

4.4.2 Artwork Procurement Process

Public Art acquisition will be undertaken through the following procurement process:

- A Procurement Plan and Artistic Brief will be developed that provides project objectives, artistic themes, site requirements, scope and submission requirements, and will sit alongside the necessary strategic procurement documents and framework.
- A project-specific procurement panel will be established for each project, with Stage 1 and Stage 2 panel membership determined according to the nature, scope and technical requirements of the project. Stage 1 assessment will be undertaken by the nominated scoring panel against a Public Art Assessment Matrix with weighted criteria. Individual

scores will be combined to establish a total score for each submission. Non-scoring advisors may participate where relevant to the project.

- For projects valued at $50,000 and above, up to four shortlisted submissions will be invited to progress to Stage 2 and prepare a developed design submission, with an appropriate design fee paid in accordance with relevant NAVA guidance.
- Stage 2 assessment will be undertaken by the nominated Stage 2 scoring panel, with input from non-scoring AAP members, technical advisors and other relevant stakeholders as required.
- Following the Stage 2 assessment, a procurement report will be completed, and the successful commission will be contracted. The approval of Public Art projects will follow the applicable financial delegation levels.

4.5 Copyright and Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property Rights

4.5.1 Copyright

This Policy upholds artists rights under the Copyright Act 1968 (Cth), including copyright ownership and moral rights. Artists retain copyright, while Council receives a limited, non-exclusive licence for promotional and archival use. All alterations, relocation, or conservation of artworks will involve artist consultation, and ICIP will be respected through meaningful engagement with Traditional Owners and communities. Under the Copyright Act 1968 (Cth), copyright protection applies equally to the creative works of both Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians.

4.5.2 Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property (ICIP)

Council recognises the collective and perpetual rights of First Peoples to their cultural knowledge, expression and heritage. Council will seek informed consent before using any Indigenous cultural content and will work in genuine partnership with Traditional Custodians to ensure respectful consultation, attribution, and protection of ICIP.

Council will not alter, reproduce or repurpose material containing Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property (ICIP) without informed consent from the original artist and relevant Traditional Custodians, regardless of copyright ownership.

4.6 Asset Management of Public Art

4.6.1 Insurance and Asset Registration

All completed artworks will be accessioned into the collection and recorded in the asset register and listed onto Council's insurance based on the value of the work at the time of accession, and reviewed annually alongside Council's insurance policy.

4.6.2 Lifespan of Public Art Works

In order to effectively manage the existing public artworks in Knox City Council's Public Art Collection three categories of expected life span are identified, at which time an assessment is undertaken to determine future life span:

- **10-year life span**: Public Art that is sculptural in form and/or made of durable materials that can withstand weather and time for a reasonable period and have minimal maintenance. Most public artworks will require a ten-year life space within the written agreement with the artist/supplier.

- **2–5-year life span**: Public Art in the form of public sculptures, murals, pavement designs, mosaic panels, that are made of non-durable, non-weathering materials that have a life span that is reduced and where the integrity of the work is no longer achieved due to this, and/or maintenance costs are deemed excessive, the expected life span is 2-5 years.
- **Ephemeral or less than two years' life span**: Public Art in the form of sculptural elements, outdoor projections, street art projects, flag installations, billboards and light boxes are ephemeral projects that provide opportunities for participation from numerous artists and or groups and are enhanced by the opportunity to change regularly, have an expected life span of less than two years, and are assessed on a case to case basis.

4.6.3 Maintenance

Council recognises that Public Artworks are a valuable asset and will undertake maintenance and review with the aim to preserve the value and lifespan of the works. Public Art will receive planned maintenance attention including regular condition reviews, cleaning and maintenance. This will include the systemic recording of assets, development of maintenance manuals as part of the Artists Agreement/Contract, condition reports and maintenance assessment criteria. Renewal of the Public Art collection is resourced by the Capital Works renewal budget.

4.6.4 Deaccession

A deaccession process for Public Art will be assessed alongside a Deaccession Matrix, and will enable those works either in extremely poor condition, have exceeded their expected lifespan, be of no value to Council, or assessed as no longer reflective of Council's values, to be removed from the register and from Council's collection, or where an artwork is intact and of value and requires removal for other reasons, such as site redevelopment, the process for safe removal with the intent for sale or relocation.

Artworks for deaccession from the collection must undergo a transparent and consistent assessment and approvals process, as follows:

- Arts and Cultural Services will identify and respond to the need for artwork deaccession, and prepare a deaccession brief to the AAP, including an initial assessment based on the Deaccession Matrix, the risk implications of keeping or removing the work/s, and the proposed method of deaccession.
- The AAP must reach majority consensus (over 51%) for a proposed deaccession of artwork, which will be captured in a Public Art Deaccession Report
- Where the work is of cultural heritage value, perceived community value, is not posing a public safety risk, requires removal due to site development, and is beyond restoration as per the deaccession matrix, the Ward Councillor and Council's Communications team will be consulted to discuss community engagement before deaccession process commences.
- The Deaccession Report must be approved by the delegated authority, based on the artwork value at the time of deaccession.

- Items cannot be proposed for deaccessioning purely aesthetic grounds, if they have been in the collection for less than five years, or if they have a legal encumbrance that prohibit them being deaccessioned.
- Deaccession costs will be funded through the Artwork Renewal, or if part of a redevelopment site, costed as part the 'percent for art' budget.

4.6.5 Private and Community Public Art Assets

Council will not be responsible for the maintenance or deaccession of Public Art on land not owned by Council, unless it is considered culturally significant, is on the Council asset register, or is considered to be a good financial or planning decision for Council to do so. This will be assessed on a case by case basis in collaboration with the AAP.

4.7 Communications and Engagement

All completed public artworks will be announced to Council staff and Councillors through internal publications. Council will also deliver initiatives that promote active enjoyment, education, visitation and engagement with Public Art in Knox. This will be achieved through leading and supporting the following:

- Local creative placemaking initiatives.
- Cultural tourism initiatives.
- Cultural asset mapping.
- Public Art trails.
- Arts and cultural events.
- Regional visitor strategies.
- Community and private investor led projects.

Many of these activities are reflected as Council priorities through a variety of plans, policies and strategies, requiring a collaborative approach to planning, communications, engagement and reporting.

5. References

5.1 Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-29
- Theme 2: Embracing connection, inclusion and diversity

5.2 Relevant Legislation
- Local Government Act 2020
- Copyright Amendment Act 2000
- Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 (Vic)
- Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2017 (Vic)

5.3 Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 Charter of Human Rights
- This policy has been assessed against and complies with the charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006

5.4 Industry Standards and Guidelines
- National Association for the Visual Arts (NAVA) Code of Practice for Visual Arts, Craft and Design

- National Association for the Visual Arts (NAVA) Fee Schedules
- Creative Australia's Protocols for using First Nations Cultural and Intellectual Property in the Arts

5.5 Related Council Policies

- Knox Civic Art Policy
- Model Councillor Code of Conduct
- Graffiti Management Policy
- Strategic Procurement Policy
- Community Facility Planning Policy

5.6 Related Council Plans, Strategies & Resources

- Arts and Cultural Services Service Plan
- Festivals and Events Service Plan
- Open Space Strategy (in development)
- Retail Activation Strategy
- Various Neighbourhood Renewal and Structure Plans
- Terms of Reference, Knox Arts and Cultural Committee
- Gender Impact Assessment Framework
- Public Art Assessment Matrix and Report (AAP templates)
- Public Art Deaccession Matrix and Report (AAP templates)
- Asset Register and Asset Management Plan
- Reconciliation Action Plan

6. Definitions

Term	Definition
Public Art	A public artwork is an artwork in any medium, such as sculpture, projection, murals or new media, planned and executed as a site specific work, usually outdoors in the public realm
Accession	An accession is an acquisition that an institution formally adds to its collection and is administered through the collection policy.
Deaccession	The removal, sale, relocation or disposal of an existing artwork, including information sharing with the artist/s and key stakeholders, where items are to be deaccessioned.
Acquisition	Purchase of a pre-existing artwork
Arts and Cultural Development	Utilising the arts as a means for community engagement and development, usually with a Public Art outcome that contributes to placemaking.
Creative Placemaking	Increasing community wellbeing and cultural tourism by introducing Public Art that improves the aesthetics, safety, connection and interest in a public space.
Public Realm	An outdoor public space where the community can access, visit or view.

Permanent Art	A public artwork that has at least a two - five year life space at the installation site.
Ephemeral Art	Temporary artwork that is either installed or presented in a space for up to two years.
Artistic Brief	A document that supports a Public Art Expression of Interest process, providing a design theme, project scope, budget and assessment criteria for submissions.
Public Art Assessment Matrix	A combination of Council's standard procurement assessment matrix, plus a series of weighted criteria specific for Public Art design submissions to reflect best industry practice.
Intellectual Property (IP)	A legal term for creations of the mind, such as ideas, designs, written or artistic works, inventions, branding and other original material that may be protected by law.
Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property (ICIP)	Refers to the rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to protect and control their cultural heritage, knowledge, cultural expressions, stories, designs, symbols, language and other traditional cultural material.

7. Administrative Updates

From time to time, circumstances may change leading to the need for minor administrative changes to this Policy. Where an update does not materially alter this Policy, such a change may be made administratively on approval of the [Chief Executive Officer / Director]. Examples of minor administrative changes include change to names of Council departments or positions, change to names of Federal or State Government departments or a minor amendment to legislation that does not have material impact. Where any change or update may materially change the intent of this Policy, it must be considered by Council.

[Where an administrative update has been made – delete if not applicable]

Amendment details	Approved by	Date of approval
[Detail administrative amendments made]	[Name of Approver]	[Date approved]

Attachment 3

Knox Civic Art and Heritage and Memorabilia Policy

Policy Number:	2018/06	**Directorate:**	Connected Communities
Approval by:	Council	**Responsible Officer:**	Manager Active & Creative Communities
Approval Date:	TBC	**Version Number:**	~~2~~3
Review Date:	TBC		

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide a framework to guide the acquisition, management, exhibition, conservation and deaccession of items within Council's ~~management of the Knox~~ Civic Art and Heritage and Memorabilia Collection~~, including artwork acquisition, asset management, exhibition, conservation and deaccessioning of an indoor collection of artworks owned by Council.~~

2. Context

Local Governments play an important role in collecting, displaying and managing artworks that reflect the unique history, social character, cultural heritage and contemporary vision for a municipality. Civic Art Collections encourage community access to, and appreciation of the arts and support arts, generate discussion and contribute to a positive connection to place. Collections support arts development, placemaking and build a unique identity of a municipality. Overtime, artwork collections build in cultural, historical, social and economic value, presenting an excellent financial investment opportunity for Council, and can reflect the values held by the organisation.

The Knox Civic Art and Heritage and Memorabilia Collection ('the Collection') currently comprises of a variety of paintings, photographs, ceramics, textiles, and works on paper (Civic Art) and objects, photographs and portraits related to the history of Council (Heritage and Memorabilia). The Collection is an investment made by Council in the Arts, and is managed and insured as a Council asset, with the intention to be enjoyed by the Knox Community.

This Knox Civic Art and Heritage and Memorabilia Policy ('the Policy') outlines the purpose, scope, objectives and processes related to managing the Collection in line with industry practice. It also provides guidance for Council when making a selection of artworks that are relevant to Knox in terms of reflecting the shared history, culture, unique character and contemporary aspects of community life, as well as supporting good investment practices in ~~high quality~~high-quality arts assets.

Knox has a limited capacity to exhibit and display the Collection, with no current civic gallery, and is also limited by restricted storage. The majority of Collection items are currently displayed in indoor, public spaces in Council owned buildings, with semi-regular rotation with works in storage.

3. Scope

The Policy provides a framework for:

- The assessment and approval process for acquiring artworks into the Knox Civic Art and Heritage and Memorabilia Collection through purchase, commission, donation or bequest
- The accession, cataloguing, maintaining, insuring and storing items in the Collection
- The exhibition and display of Collection items
- The deaccession framework for the disposal, sale, return or removal of Collection items
- Council's investment and financial management of the Collection
- ~~Unless acquired into the Civic Art Collection in accordance with Section 6.3, management of Heritage and Memorabilia items and the Heritage and Memorability Collection are outside the scope of this policy~~

4. Knox Civic Art and Heritage and Memorabilia Policy

The following provides a framework for the Knox Civic Art and Heritage and Memorabilia Collection management including processes that support good governance and a ~~high-quality~~high-quality collection that can be enjoyed by the Knox community.

4.1 Collection Objectives

The objectives of the Knox Civic Art and Heritage and Memorabilia Policy are as follows:

- To provide a clear framework for the acquisition of items into the Collection.
- To manage the Collection assets using a best practice model.
- To support access and enjoyment of the Collection through public exhibition and display.
- To inform a clear rationale for deaccession of works from the Collection.
- To guide sound financial management, investment and resourcing of the Collection.
- To support arts and cultural development, placemaking and civic pride.

4.2 The Art Assessment Panel (AAP)

The Art Assessment Panel (AAP) is a working group that makes recommendations about the acquisition and deaccession of items in the ~~-~~ Civic Art and Heritage and Memorabilia ~~civic art collection items~~Collection, ~~items,~~ alongside the Knox Civic Art and Heritage and ~~Policy~~Memorabilia Policy. This group is also responsible for recommendations related to the Knox Public Art Policy.

Membership of the AAP comprises:

- Up to four community members from the current Knox Arts and Culture Committee, nominated at the commencement of their term and reflected in the Committee Terms of Reference; plus
- Council officers, including relevant Arts and Cultural Services officers and other officers as required based on the functions and expertise needed.
- ~~Up to six internal officers from a range of relevant service areas across Connected Communities, City Strategy & Integrity, and Infrastructure Directorates; plus~~

~~Between two and four community members from the current Knox Arts and Culture Committee, nominated at the commencement of their term, and reflected in the Committee Terms of Reference; plus~~

- ~~At least one Councillor will be nominated from the Arts and Culture Committee, and will take on the role of Chair. Where multiple Arts and Culture Committee Councillors' wish to take part in the AAP, the role of Chair will be given to the Mayor or Deputy Mayor, or negotiated where this does not apply.~~

Meetings will be scheduled on an ad-hoc basis as required. Consultation and recommendations of the AAP may also be undertaken via email communications. Recommendations of the AAP will be captured in a group consensus Civic Art and Heritage and Memorabilia Acquisition or Deaccession Report.

4.3 Acquisition Framework

Acquisitions may take place by way of purchase, commission, donation or bequest. Artworks may be purchased from reputable galleries or directly from the artist (if not represented by a gallery), legal owner, by commission, or via Council initiated art projects and programs. Items purchased for the Knox Civic Art Collection are procured through the Knox Civic Art Collection budget, which is reviewed annually. Artwork acquisition is implemented using the below selection criteria. ~~the following framework.~~ The Heritage and Memorabilia Collection does not have a dedicated acquisition budget, and items are not acquired through purchase. Councillor's will be notified of the intended artwork acquisition.

~~The Heritage and Memorabilia Collection is a Closed Collection (ie. is not actively being expanded) and does not have a budget. Acquisition of items for this Collection are not made via purchase.~~

Artwork acquisition for the Knox Civic Art Collection is implemented using the following selection criteria. ~~framework.~~

~~Knox~~

4.3.1 Civic Art Collection Acquisition Selection Criteria

All artworks must meet the following **essential criteria:**

- Be in a sound condition, with no extraordinary conservation, restoration or storage requirements.
- Complement the existing Collection items without duplication of existing Collection items.
- Be an authentic/original item, with detailed documentation of the provenance of the item confirming legal ownership.
- Be offered unconditionally and without restriction, including the Council's right to deaccession.
- Be suitable for safe, accessible and culturally respectful display in public and civic spaces, free from discriminatory, offensive or harmful content.
- ~~Have the capacity for safe and accessible display in public and civic spaces.~~
- Have standard and achievable storage and maintenance requirements.

All artworks must meet at least one of the following **assessment criteria**:

- Increases the representation of works in the collection by Victorian based First Nations artists, with additional preference for Wurundjeri and Bunurong artworks.
- A work of excellence that contributes to contemporary and innovative arts practice.
- Is significant to the local history and unique character of Knox.

- Is a high calibre work by respected emerging, mid-career or established artists who have or had a connection to Knox (live, work, study in the area).
- Reflects current social, cultural and environmental issues that relate to Knox.
- Contributes to the existing collection in a way that builds on future exhibition theming.

4.3.2 Heritage and Memorabilia Collection Acquisition Selection Criteria

~~The~~ The Heritage and Memorabilia Collection is a Closed Collection and is not intended to be actively expanded or developed. New acquisitions will generally not be accepted, except where special circumstances warrant consideration.

Objects or items pertaining to the history of Knox and Knox City Council should be offered in the first instance to an appropriate collecting institution, such as a museum or historical society. Where an item is not accepted by these institutions, Council may consider its inclusion in the Heritage and Memorabilia Collection, subject to meeting the following essential criteria:

~~Heritage and Memorabilia Collection is a Closed Collection. It is not to be expanded or developed, and further acquisitions will not to be accepted, except under special circumstances. Objects/items pertaining to the history of Knox and Knox City Council must be offered in the first instance a collecting institution such as museum or historical society. If the object/item is not accepted by these bodies, it may be considered for the Heritage and Memorabilia Collection if it meets the following essential criteria.~~

~~All objects/items must meet the following **essential criteria**:~~

- Not acquiring the item will result in a significant aspect of Knox and Knox City Council's history not being preserved.
- Is significant to the local history and unique character of Knox.
- Reflects current social, cultural and environmental issues that relate to Knox
- The physical item/object is unable to be preserved through digitisation.
- Be in a sound condition, with no extraordinary conservation, restoration or storage requirements.
- Complement the existing Collection items without duplication of existing Collection items.
- Be an authentic/original item, with detailed documentation of the provenance of the item confirming legal ownership.
- Be offered unconditionally and without restriction, including the Council's right to deaccession.
- Have standard and achievable storage and maintenance requirements.
- Acceptance of the item aligns with the Gifts and Hospitality Policy (2004/3).
- The item/object has been declared and added to the Council Gifts register, where appropriate.

Ceremonial and Official gifts are the property of Council, irrespective of value. Acceptance of such gifts does not ensure their inclusion in the Heritage and Memorabilia Collection.

~~4.3.2~~4.3.3 Civic Art and Heritage and Memorabilia Collection Acquisition Approval Framework

Acquiring artwork into the collection must undergo a transparent and consistent assessment and approval ~~process, as follo~~process as per Item 2 - ~~of~~ the Knox Civic Art and Heritage and Memorabilia

Collection Management Framework.

~~ws:~~

- ~~Civic Art and Heritage and Memorabilia Collection Arts and Cultural Services will identify and respond to opportunities for artwork acquisition, and where items are identified as suitable for acquisition, will prepare an acquisition brief to the AAP, providing an initial selection criteria assessment.~~
- ~~The acquisition brief shall include a discussion of the financial implications of the proposed acquisition, and the estimated valuation of the acquisition, noting for proposed acquisitions:~~
  - ~~a) of $5,000 and over, an independent market valuation must be obtained from Council's preferred art valuation service, or the artist's represented gallery;~~
  - ~~b) below $5,000, the market value will be determined through recent sales prices of a similar work by the artist or works of comparable artist at same career stage.~~
- ~~For works in specialised fields of art, the AAP may invite recommendations from specialists with acknowledged expertise in the area, when deemed beneficial.~~
- ~~The AAP must reach a majority consensus for a proposed acquisition of artwork into the collection, which will be captured in an Acquisition Report.~~
- ~~The Manager of Active and Creative Communities will approve the Acquisition Report and may elect to consult, inform or seek endorsement from the Mayor or Councillors at their own discretion.~~
- ~~The financial acquisition process will be undertaken in accordance with Council's Strategic Procurement Framework; or where an acquisition is rejected, the relevant stakeholders will be informed with a written rationale.~~
- ~~If artwork is donated, A~~a ~~Deed of Gift Form will be completed by council and signed by both the donor and the Council to transfer ownership of item/s.~~

~~*Heritage and Memorabilia items:*~~

- ~~Refer to the definition of Heritage and Memorabilia Collection in this Policy as per Item 5.~~
- ~~Heritage and Memorabilia items are not governed by the Civic Art Policy or acquired into the Civic Art Collection unless determined by the AAP as meeting the acquisition criteria and formally acquired into the collection in accordance with this section.~~

4.4 ~~objects/items~~Deaccession Framework~~Framework~~

Deaccession is the process by which the Council may formally remove items from its Collection as part of responsible collection management. The deaccession ~~process, and~~process will be undertaken in accordance with the ~~and implemented using the deaccession~~ criteria and approval framework outlined in Item 3 of the ~~3~~ Knox Civic Art and Heritage and Memorabilia Collection Management Framework. Councillors will be notified of the intended artwork or artworks for deaccession. ~~:~~

~~following framework.~~

~~Deaccession Criteria~~

~~Artworks for deaccession from the collection must meet at least one of the following criteria:~~

Poor condition or have suffered irreparable damage.

No known provenance.

Have a legal ownership other than that of Knox City Council.

Pose a risk to public safety, which cannot be mitigated.

Is an item that cannot be effectively stored, maintained or installed within current resource.

Lost or stolen without possibility of recovery.

Copies, duplicate or reproductions of items already in the collection.Works that no longer reflect Councils' values.

Items cannot be proposed for deaccessioning:

On purely aesthetic grounds.

If they have been in the collection for less than five years.

If they have a legal encumbrance that prohibit them being deaccessioned.

Deaccession Approval Framework

Artworks for deaccession from the collection must undergo a transparent and consistent assessment and approvals process, as follows:

- Arts and Cultural Services will identify and respond to the need for artwork deaccession, and prepare a deaccession brief to the AAP, including an initial assessment based on the deaccession criteria, and the financial and risk implications of keeping or removing the work/s.
- For works in specialised fields of art, the AAP may invite deaccession advice from specialists with acknowledged expertise in the area, when deemed beneficial.
- The AAP must reach a majority consensus for a proposed deaccession of artwork, which will be minuted and include a Deaccession Report.
- The Deaccession Report must be approved and signed by the Director Connected Communities, who may elect to consult, inform or seek endorsement from the Mayor or Councillors at their own discretion.
- After obtaining formal written approval, the deaccession will be implemented as per Item 4.4.3.

4.4.24.4.1 Deaccession Cooling Off PeriodCivic Art Collection Method of disposal

Items aArtworks approved by the Director for deaccession from either the Civic Art Collection or Heritage and Memorabilia Collection will be identified as will be marked in the collection storage as a 'Deaccessioned Item' and retained in collection storage for a 'cooling off period' of 12 months or three (3 months where an item has previously if an item has been identified for deaccession but the process has not been actioned. in a previous report and not actioned).months. This period allows time is provided to allow for any any fadditional urther information regarding the item's significance, value or about the items that mayto come to light, such as relevance, value and provenance to be considered prior to disposal, consistent with best , and follows a best practice collection management principles. methodology.

After the cooling off period, disposal by the following methods:

- Return the item to the donor, if donor can be found and in agreement.

- ~~Return artwork to artist or, if deceased, their direct descendants.~~
- ~~Gifting the item to another collecting institution if one can be located and willing to accept the item.~~
- ~~Sell the item at public auction or by tender. Funds to be reinvested as per Council's Asset Management Strategy.~~
- ~~Destruction will only be considered for an item if it were in very poor condition and had irreparable damage or cannot be housed in another Collection.~~

4.4.2 ~~All decisions and actions related to the deaccession and disposal process must be fully documented and recorded on the collection database.~~Heritage and Memorabilia ~~Collection Method of disposal~~Method of Disposal

~~Objects/items approved by the Director for deaccession will be marked in the collection storage as a 'Deaccessioned Item' for a 'cooling off period' of 12 months (3-months if an item has been identified for deaccession in a previous report and not actioned). This time is provided to allow any further information about the item to come to light, such as relevance, value and provenance, and follows a best practice methodology.~~The disposal of items deaccessioned from the Civic Art Collection and Heritage and Memorabilia Collection will be undertaken in accordance with the procedures outlined in Item 4 of the Knox Civic Art and Heritage and Memorabilia Collection Management Framework.

~~After the cooling off period, disposal by the following methods:~~

- ~~Physical copies of documents and photographs able to be effectively preserved via digitisation will be offered to Knox Historical Society (and in rare instances, subject to cultural significance and/or value, to either Museum Victoria or State Library Victoria). Council will document and retain digital versions.Should these collections refuse the physical item/s it will be returned to the donor/subject, if the donor/subject can be found and in agreement.If the donor/subject cannot be found and/or is not in agreement, the object/item will be detstroyed after digitisation.All decisions and actions related to the deaccession and disposal process must be fully documented and recorded on the collection database.~~

4.5 Access to the Knox Civic Art and Heritage and Memorabilia Art Collection

The Knox Civic Art and Heritage and Memorabilia Collection aims to be accessible and enjoyed by the community through implementing:

- Displays in public areas within C~~c~~ouncil owned, managed or tenanted venues.
- Exhibited, where relevant, as part of broader Council exhibition programs.
- Listed as a comprehensive online gallery collection, available for viewing on Knox City Council's website.
- Where viable, ~~offer~~ artworks offered as outward loans, as detailed in Item 4.6.
- Online enquiry portal for donations, bequests and research.

4.6 Loans

The C~~c~~ollection is available for loan outwards to accredited institutions, professional g~~G~~alleries, Service

Agreement Partners, and/or museums, whereby the following is achieved:

- A loan contract, value of works and condition report shall be issued and co-signed by Coordinator Arts and Cultural Services and the Manager of the loaning institution.
- The borrowing institution shall accept all responsibility for wall-to-wall insurance, crates, shipping, and repair costs associated with the loan unless otherwise specified in the loan contract.
- Inwards loans may be undertaken for short term projects and exhibitions conducted by Knox City Council. An inward loan contract must be completed and all specifications approved by the lender.
- Conditional long-term loans will not be accepted.

4.7 Maintenance and Storage

Council is committed to the preventative conservation of the Collection according to recognised museum standards. Council only engages qualified and accredited conservators and approved contractors to advise and work on the care, repair and maintenance of the Cc~~o~~llection.

The nominated officer from the Arts and Cultural Services Unit will be responsible for the ~~day to day~~day-to-day preventative conservation protocol.

An audit of the Cc~~o~~llection will be conducted every 4 years or otherwise in accordance with relevant Council policies and procedures.

Council's collection items not on display are housed in ~~purpose built~~purpose-built storage. Identification labels will be placed on storage boxes and shelves and linked to the collection records to further reduce handling, as per industry best practice.

~~The~~ The costs associated with storing and maintaining the Civic Art Collection will be supported through the Artwork Renewal capital allocation, subject to Council's annual budget processes. Maintenance and storage requirements for the Heritage and Memorabilia Collection will be managed within available Council resources.~~costs associated with storing and maintaining the Cc~~ollection will be covered through the capital allocation for Artwork Renewal, and reviewed annually.~~

4.8 Insurance

All works in the Cc~~o~~llection are covered under Knox City Council's insurance policy, to the value at the time of acquisition, with options for revalue as required as part of the annual insurance policy. Artworks on loan for exhibition will be registered with Knox City Council's Insurance ~~Officer, and~~Officer and reviewed alongside the Insurance Policy requirements on an annual basis.

5. References

5.1 ~~Community & Council Plan 2021-2031~~Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-29

- Theme 2: Embracing connection, inclusion and diversity~~Goal: Connection, Resilience and wellbeing~~
- ~~Knox is a place to call home. Our community is strong, healthy and we support and respect each other.~~

5.2 Relevant Legislation

- Local Government Act 2020 ~~– Conflict and Interest Provisions~~
- Copyright Amendment Act 2000

- Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 (Vic)
- Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2017 (Vic)
- ~~National Association of Visual Arts Code of Conduct~~

5.3 Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 Charter of Human Rights

- This policy has been assessed against and complies with the charter of Human Rights Responsibilities Act 2006.

5.4 Industry Standards and Guidelines

- National Association for the Visual Arts (NAVA) Code of Practice for Visual Arts, Craft and Design
- National Association for the Visual Arts (NAVA) Fee Schedules
- Creative Australia's Protocols for using First Nations Cultural and Intellectual Property in the Arts

~~5.4~~5.5 Related Council Policies

- Knox Public Art Policy
- Model Councillor Code of Conduct
- Graffiti Management Policy
- Strategic Procurement Policy
- Community Facility Planning Policy
- Gifts and Hospitality Policy
- ~~Public Art Policy~~
- ~~Election Period Policy~~
- ~~Councillor Code of Conduct~~

~~5.5~~5.6 Related Council Plans, Strategies and Procedures

- Arts and Cultural Services Service Plan
- Festivals and Events Service Plan
- Open Space Strategy (in development)
- Retail Activation Strategy
- Various Neighbourhood Renewal and Structure Plans
- Terms of Reference, Knox Arts and Cultural Committee
- Gender Impact Assessment Framework
- Asset Register and Asset Management Plan
- Reconciliation Action Plan
- ~~Knox Arts & Cultural Plan~~
- ~~Reconciliation Action Plan~~
- ~~Relevant Neighbourhood Renewal and Structure Plans~~
- ~~Open Space Strategy~~
- ~~Retail Activation Strategy~~
- ~~Strategic Procurement Framework~~
- ~~Asset Management Strategy~~
- ~~Terms of Reference, Knox Arts and Culture Committee~~
- ~~Gender Impact Assessment Framework~~
- Civic Art Condition Report
- Civic Art Acquisition Report Template
- Civic Art Deaccession Report Template
- Civic Art Deed of Gift Template
- Civic Art Loan Agreement Templates

6. Alignment with Sector Standards and Best Practice

This policy has been developed in alignment with established national and international best practice for the care and management of collections, including:

- National Standards for Australian Museums and Galleries (2nd Edition, 2023)
- ICOM (International Council of Museums) Code of Ethics for Museums (2026)
- Guidelines on Deaccessioning of the International Council of Museums (2019)
- Protocols for using First Nations Cultural and Intellectual Property in the Arts (Terri Janke, Australia Council for the Arts [now Creative Australia], 2019)
- First Peoples: A Roadmap for Enhancing Indigenous Engagement in Museums and Galleries (Terri Janke and Company, AMaGA [Australia Museums and Galleries Association], 2019)

~~6.~~7. Definitions

Term	Definition
Civic Art	Indoor c~~C~~ollection of artworks owned by Council.
Commission	Purchase of an artwork that is to be designed and fabricated for a specific purpose.
Public Art	Temporary or permanent artwork situated within a public, outdoor realm.
Acquisition	~~Purchase of a pre-existing artwork.~~The process of obtaining an item for inclusion in the Collection through purchase, commission, donation or bequest.
Deaccession	A process by which Council may legally and formally remove items from its collection.
Accession	An accession is an acquisition that an institution formally adds to its collection and is administered through the collection policy.
Arts and Cultural Development	Utilising the arts as a means for community engagement and development, usually with a Public Art outcome that contributes to placemaking.
Conservation	Is the preservation of art and items of cultural importance through examination, documentation, treatment and prevention of deterioration measures.
Restorations	The act of restoring or the condition of being restored.
Maintenance	The process of preserving the condition of an item or the situation or the state of being preserved.
Heritage and Memorabilia Collection	This includes commemorative plaques, Mayoral attire, (including but not limited to robes ~~,~~ and chains), printed photos of Council projects and programs, ceremonial gifts, Councillor ~~photos~~ and Mayoral photos, certificates and awards.

Donations	A process by which an existing or commissioned artwork is gifted to a collection at no cost to the institution.

~~7.~~8. Administrative Updates

From time to time, circumstances may change leading to the need for minor administrative changes to this Policy. Where an update does not materially alter this Policy, such a change may be made administratively on approval of the [Chief Executive Officer / Director]. Examples of minor administrative changes include change to names of Council departments or positions, change to names of Federal or State Government departments or a minor amendment to legislation that does not have material impact. Where any change or update may materially change the intent of this Policy, it must be considered by [Council / Chief Executive Officer].

[Where an administrative update has been made – delete if not applicable]

Amendment details	Approved by	Date of approval
[Detail administrative amendments made]	[Name of Approver]	[Date approved]

Attachment 4

Knox Civic Art and Heritage and Memorabilia Policy

Policy Number:	2018/06	**Directorate:**	Connected Communities
Approval by:	Council	**Responsible Officer:**	Manager Active & Creative Communities
Approval Date:	TBC	**Version Number:**	3
Review Date:	TBC		

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide a framework to guide the acquisition, management, exhibition, conservation and deaccession of items within Council's Civic Art and Heritage and Memorabilia Collection.

2. Context

Local Governments play an important role in collecting, displaying and managing artworks that reflect the unique history, social character, cultural heritage and contemporary vision for a municipality. Civic Art Collections encourage community access to, and appreciation of the arts and support arts, generate discussion and contribute to a positive connection to place. Collections support arts development, placemaking and build a unique identity of a municipality. Overtime, artwork collections build in cultural, historical, social and economic value, presenting an excellent financial investment opportunity for Council, and can reflect the values held by the organisation.

The Knox Civic Art and Heritage and Memorabilia Collection ('the Collection') currently comprises of a variety of paintings, photographs, ceramics, textiles, and works on paper (Civic Art) and objects, photographs and portraits related to the history of Council (Heritage and Memorabilia). The Collection is an investment made by Council in the Arts, and is managed and insured as a Council asset, with the intention to be enjoyed by the Knox Community.

This Knox Civic Art and Heritage and Memorabilia Policy ('the Policy') outlines the purpose, scope, objectives and processes related to managing the Collection in line with industry practice. It also provides guidance for Council when making a selection of artworks that are relevant to Knox in terms of reflecting the shared history, culture, unique character and contemporary aspects of community life, as well as supporting good investment practices in high-quality arts assets.

Knox has a limited capacity to exhibit and display the Collection, with no current civic gallery, and is also limited by restricted storage. The majority of Collection items are currently displayed in indoor, public spaces in Council owned buildings, with semi-regular rotation with works in storage.

3. Scope

The Policy provides a framework for:

- The assessment and approval process for acquiring artworks into the Knox Civic Art and Heritage and Memorabilia Collection through purchase, commission, donation or bequest
- The accession, cataloguing, maintaining, insuring and storing items in the Collection
- The exhibition and display of Collection items
- The deaccession framework for the disposal, sale, return or removal of Collection items
- Council's investment and financial management of the Collection

4. Knox Civic Art and Heritage and Memorabilia Policy

The following provides a framework for the Knox Civic Art and Heritage and Memorabilia Collection management including processes that support good governance and a high-quality collection that can be enjoyed by the Knox community.

4.1 Collection Objectives

The objectives of the Knox Civic Art and Heritage and Memorabilia Policy are as follows:

- To provide a clear framework for the acquisition of items into the Collection.
- To manage the Collection assets using a best practice model.
- To support access and enjoyment of the Collection through public exhibition and display.
- To inform a clear rationale for deaccession of works from the Collection.
- To guide sound financial management, investment and resourcing of the Collection.
- To support arts and cultural development, placemaking and civic pride.

4.2 The Art Assessment Panel (AAP)

The Art Assessment Panel (AAP) is a working group that makes recommendations about the acquisition and deaccession of items in the Civic Art and Heritage and Memorabilia Collection, alongside the Knox Civic Art and Heritage and Memorabilia Policy. This group is also responsible for recommendations related to the Knox Public Art Policy.

Membership of the AAP comprises:

- Up to four community members from the current Knox Arts and Culture Committee, nominated at the commencement of their term and reflected in the Committee Terms of Reference; plus
- Council officers, including relevant Arts and Cultural Services officers and other officers as required based on the functions and expertise needed.

Meetings will be scheduled on an ad-hoc basis as required. Consultation and recommendations of the AAP may also be undertaken via email communications. Recommendations of the AAP will be captured in a group consensus Civic Art and Heritage and Memorabilia Acquisition or Deaccession Report.

4.3 Acquisition Framework

Acquisitions may take place by way of purchase, commission, donation or bequest. Artworks may be purchased from reputable galleries or directly from the artist (if not represented by a gallery), legal owner, by commission, or via Council initiated art projects and programs. Items purchased for the Knox Civic Art Collection are procured through the Knox Civic Art Collection budget, which is reviewed annually. Artwork acquisition is implemented using the below selection criteria. The Heritage and Memorabilia Collection

does not have a dedicated acquisition budget, and items are not acquired through purchase. Councillor's will be notified of the intended artwork acquisition.

Artwork acquisition for the Knox Civic Art Collection is implemented using the following selection criteria.

4.3.1 Civic Art Collection Acquisition Selection Criteria

All artworks must meet the following **essential criteria:**

- Be in a sound condition, with no extraordinary conservation, restoration or storage requirements.
- Complement the existing Collection items without duplication of existing Collection items.
- Be an authentic/original item, with detailed documentation of the provenance of the item confirming legal ownership.
- Be offered unconditionally and without restriction, including the Council's right to deaccession.
- Be suitable for safe, accessible and culturally respectful display in public and civic spaces, free from discriminatory, offensive or harmful content.
- Have standard and achievable storage and maintenance requirements.

All artworks must meet at least one of the following **assessment criteria**:

- Increases the representation of works in the collection by Victorian based First Nations artists, with additional preference for Wurundjeri and Bunurong artworks.
- A work of excellence that contributes to contemporary and innovative arts practice.
- Is significant to the local history and unique character of Knox.
- Is a high calibre work by respected emerging, mid-career or established artists who have or had a connection to Knox (live, work, study in the area).
- Reflects current social, cultural and environmental issues that relate to Knox.
- Contributes to the existing collection in a way that builds on future exhibition theming.

4.3.2 Heritage and Memorabilia Collection Acquisition Selection Criteria

The Heritage and Memorabilia Collection is a Closed Collection and is not intended to be actively expanded or developed. New acquisitions will generally not be accepted, except where special circumstances warrant consideration.

Objects or items pertaining to the history of Knox and Knox City Council should be offered in the first instance to an appropriate collecting institution, such as a museum or historical society. Where an item is not accepted by these institutions, Council may consider its inclusion in the Heritage and Memorabilia Collection, subject to meeting the following essential criteria:

- Not acquiring the item will result in a significant aspect of Knox and Knox City Council's history not being preserved.
- Is significant to the local history and unique character of Knox.
- Reflects current social, cultural and environmental issues that relate to Knox
- The physical item/object is unable to be preserved through digitisation.
- Be in a sound condition, with no extraordinary conservation, restoration or storage requirements.

- Complement the existing Collection items without duplication of existing Collection items.
- Be an authentic/original item, with detailed documentation of the provenance of the item confirming legal ownership.
- Be offered unconditionally and without restriction, including the Council's right to deaccession.
- Have standard and achievable storage and maintenance requirements.
- Acceptance of the item aligns with the Gifts and Hospitality Policy (2004/3).
- The item/object has been declared and added to the Council Gifts register, where appropriate.

Ceremonial and Official gifts are the property of Council, irrespective of value. Acceptance of such gifts does not ensure their inclusion in the Heritage and Memorabilia Collection.

4.3.3 Civic Art and Heritage and Memorabilia Collection Acquisition Approval Framework

Acquiring artwork into the collection must undergo a transparent and consistent assessment and approval process as per Item 2 - the Knox Civic Art and Heritage and Memorabilia Collection Management Framework.

4.4 Civic Art and Heritage and Memorabilia Collection Deaccession Framework

Deaccession is the process by which the Council may formally remove items from its Collection as part of responsible collection management. The deaccession process will be undertaken in accordance with the criteria and approval framework outlined in Item 3 of the Knox Civic Art and Heritage and Memorabilia Collection Management Framework. Councillors will be notified of the intended artwork or artworks for deaccession.

4.4.1 Deaccession Cooling Off Period

Items approved for deaccession from either the Civic Art Collection or Heritage and Memorabilia Collection will be identified as a 'Deaccessioned Item' and retained in collection storage for a 'cooling off period' of 12 months or three months where an item has previously been identified for deaccession but the process has not been actioned. This period allows for any additional information regarding the item's significance, value or provenance to be considered prior to disposal, consistent with best practice collection management principles.

4.4.2 Method of Disposal

The disposal of items deaccessioned from the Civic Art Collection and Heritage and Memorabilia Collection will be undertaken in accordance with the procedures outlined in Item 4 of the Knox Civic Art and Heritage and Memorabilia Collection Management Framework.

4.5 Access to the Knox Civic Art and Heritage and Memorabilia Art Collection

The Knox Civic Art and Heritage and Memorabilia Collection aims to be accessible and enjoyed by the community through implementing:

- Displays in public areas within Council owned, managed or tenanted venues.
- Exhibited, where relevant, as part of broader Council exhibition programs.
- Listed as a comprehensive online gallery collection, available for viewing on Knox City Council's website.

- Where viable, artworks offered as outward loans, as detailed in Item 4.6.
- Online enquiry portal for donations, bequests and research.

4.6 Loans

The Collection is available for loan outwards to accredited institutions, professional galleries, Service Agreement Partners, and/or museums, whereby the following is achieved:

- A loan contract, value of works and condition report shall be issued and co-signed by Coordinator Arts and Cultural Services and the Manager of the loaning institution.
- The borrowing institution shall accept all responsibility for wall-to-wall insurance, crates, shipping, and repair costs associated with the loan unless otherwise specified in the loan contract.
- Inwards loans may be undertaken for short term projects and exhibitions conducted by Knox City Council. An inward loan contract must be completed and all specifications approved by the lender.
- Conditional long-term loans will not be accepted.

4.7 Maintenance and Storage

Council is committed to the preventative conservation of the Collection according to recognised museum standards. Council only engages qualified and accredited conservators and approved contractors to advise and work on the care, repair and maintenance of the Collection.

The nominated officer from the Arts and Cultural Services Unit will be responsible for the day-to-day preventative conservation protocol.

An audit of the Collection will be conducted every 4 years or otherwise in accordance with relevant Council policies and procedures.

Council's collection items not on display are housed in purpose-built storage. Identification labels will be placed on storage boxes and shelves and linked to the collection records to further reduce handling, as per industry best practice.

The costs associated with storing and maintaining the Civic Art Collection will be supported through the Artwork Renewal capital allocation, subject to Council's annual budget processes. Maintenance and storage requirements for the Heritage and Memorabilia Collection will be managed within available Council resources.

4.8 Insurance

All works in the Collection are covered under Knox City Council's insurance policy, to the value at the time of acquisition, with options for revalue as required as part of the annual insurance policy. Artworks on loan for exhibition will be registered with Knox City Council's Insurance Officer and reviewed alongside the Insurance Policy requirements on an annual basis.

5. References

5.1 Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-29
- Theme 2: Embracing connection, inclusion and diversity

5.2 Relevant Legislation
- Local Government Act 2020

- Copyright Amendment Act 2000
- Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 (Vic)
- Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2017 (Vic)

5.3 Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 Charter of Human Rights
- This policy has been assessed against and complies with the charter of Human Rights Responsibilities Act 2006.

5.4 Industry Standards and Guidelines
- National Association for the Visual Arts (NAVA) Code of Practice for Visual Arts, Craft and Design
- National Association for the Visual Arts (NAVA) Fee Schedules
- Creative Australia's Protocols for using First Nations Cultural and Intellectual Property in the Arts

5.5 Related Council Policies
- Knox Public Art Policy
- Model Councillor Code of Conduct
- Graffiti Management Policy
- Strategic Procurement Policy
- Community Facility Planning Policy
- Gifts and Hospitality Policy

5.6 Related Council Plans, Strategies and Procedures
- Arts and Cultural Services Service Plan
- Festivals and Events Service Plan
- Open Space Strategy (in development)
- Retail Activation Strategy
- Various Neighbourhood Renewal and Structure Plans
- Terms of Reference, Knox Arts and Cultural Committee
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- Asset Register and Asset Management Plan
- Reconciliation Action Plan
- Civic Art Condition Report
- Civic Art Acquisition Report Template
- Civic Art Deaccession Report Template
- Civic Art Deed of Gift Template
- Civic Art Loan Agreement Templates

6. Alignment with Sector Standards and Best Practice

This policy has been developed in alignment with established national and international best practice for the care and management of collections, including:

- National Standards for Australian Museums and Galleries (2nd Edition, 2023)
- ICOM (International Council of Museums) Code of Ethics for Museums (2026)
- Guidelines on Deaccessioning of the International Council of Museums (2019)
- Protocols for using First Nations Cultural and Intellectual Property in the Arts (Terri Janke, Australia Council for the Arts [now Creative Australia], 2019)
- First Peoples: A Roadmap for Enhancing Indigenous Engagement in Museums and Galleries (Terri Janke and Company, AMaGA [Australia Museums and Galleries Association], 2019)

7. Definitions

Term	Definition
Civic Art	Indoor collection of artworks owned by Council.
Commission	Purchase of an artwork that is to be designed and fabricated for a specific purpose.
Public Art	Temporary or permanent artwork situated within a public, outdoor realm.
Acquisition	The process of obtaining an item for inclusion in the Collection through purchase, commission, donation or bequest.
Deaccession	A process by which Council may legally and formally remove items from its collection.
Accession	An accession is an acquisition that an institution formally adds to its collection and is administered through the collection policy.
Arts and Cultural Development	Utilising the arts as a means for community engagement and development, usually with a Public Art outcome that contributes to placemaking.
Conservation	Is the preservation of art and items of cultural importance through examination, documentation, treatment and prevention of deterioration measures.
Restorations	The act of restoring or the condition of being restored.
Maintenance	The process of preserving the condition of an item or the situation or the state of being preserved.
Heritage and Memorabilia Collection	This includes commemorative plaques, Mayoral attire, (including but not limited to robes and chains), printed photos of Council projects and programs, ceremonial gifts, Councillor and Mayoral photos, certificates and awards.
Donations	A process by which an existing or commissioned artwork is gifted to a collection at no cost to the institution.

8. Administrative Updates

From time to time, circumstances may change leading to the need for minor administrative changes to this Policy. Where an update does not materially alter this Policy, such a change may be made administratively on approval of the [Chief Executive Officer / Director]. Examples of minor administrative changes include change to names of Council departments or positions, change to names of Federal or State Government departments or a minor amendment to legislation that does not have material impact. Where any change or update may materially change the intent of this Policy, it must be considered by [Council / Chief Executive Officer].

[Where an administrative update has been made – delete if not applicable]

Amendment details	Approved by	Date of approval
[Detail administrative amendments made]	[Name of Approver]	[Date approved]

8.7 Rates and Charges Payment Assistance Policy

Final Report Destination: Council
Paper Type: For Decision
Author: Zoran Krstevski, Co-ordinator Rates and Valuations
Executive: Chief Financial Officer, Navec Lorkin

SUMMARY
The Rates and Charges Payment Assistance Policy (the Policy) has been comprehensively reviewed to align with the Ministerial Guidelines relating to the Payment of Rates and Charges issued in December 2025 under section 181AA of the Local Government Act 1989. The review modernises Council's approach to supporting ratepayers experiencing hardship, while maintaining an appropriate balance between compassionate assistance and Council's responsibility to collect its primary source of revenue.

Key changes include the introduction of a broader hardship definition, enhanced payment assistance options, formal application and review processes and strengthened governance arrangements.

The updated Policy does not materially change the circumstances and eligibility for hardship; rather it aims to provide greater clarity.

RECOMMENDATION
That Council adopt the revised Rates and Charges Payment Assistance Policy (Attachment 3).

1. DISCUSSION
The Policy was last approved by Council in 2021. The timing of the current review has largely been influenced by the introduction of the Ministerial Guidelines for Service Rates and Charges (the Guidelines).

The *Local Government Legislative Amendment (Rating and Other Matters) Act 2022* amended the *Local Government Act 1989* to introduce section 181AA, which provides for the Minister to issue guidelines relating to the payment of rates and charges. Under section 181AA(3), councils are required to comply with any guidelines issued under this provision.

It should be noted that the legislative provisions governing Council rates and their application continue to be contained within the *Local Government Act 1989*. While the *Local Government Act 2020* replaced much of the former legislative framework for Victorian local government, the provisions relating to the declaration, administration and collection of rates and charges were retained within the *Local Government Act 1989*. Accordingly, the *Local Government Act 1989* remains the principal legislation governing Council's rating functions, including the payment of rates and charges, the application of interest, payment arrangements and the recovery of unpaid rates.

While the legislative framework enabling the Guidelines was introduced in 2022, the final Guidelines were not gazetted until 23 December 2025. Their gazettal provided the appropriate basis for officers to undertake a review of the Policy to align it with the finalised requirements.

Consistent with section 181AA of the *Local Government Act 1989*, the Guidelines define hardship and set out the circumstances, processes and considerations that councils must take into account when developing policies to support ratepayers experiencing hardship or financial hardship.

The Guidelines recognise that councils may provide a range of payment options and processes for the payment of rates and charges. This provides Knox with flexibility to offer payment arrangements that respond to the needs of its community, having regard to Council's operational capability, available resources and the effective administration of rates and charges.

1.1 Ministerial Guidelines relating to payment of rates and charges

The Guidelines (Attachment 1) establish a framework for councils in managing the payment and recovery of rates and charges, including arrangements for ratepayers experiencing hardship.

The objectives of the Guidelines are to:

- encourage a more consistent approach across local government policies relating to debt management for the payment of rates and charges;
- provide guidance and support to councils and ratepayers in relation to hardship and financial hardship; and
- support councils to recover unpaid rates and charges in a fair and equitable manner, consistent with Victorian Government, community and stakeholder expectations.

The revised Policy has been reviewed and updated to incorporate the requirements of the Guidelines. Several supporting processes and resources have also been developed or updated to support implementation of the Policy and compliance with the Guidelines.

The Guidelines have a strong focus on hardship definitions, policies, and procedures. To support implementation of the Policy, new hardship application forms and processes have been developed. Consistent with the Guidelines, applications will be available both online and in hard copy, with ratepayers also able to apply verbally over the phone or in person. Regardless of the method of application, the same information will be requested to provide a consistent and equitable assessment process.

Applications may be made directly by the ratepayer or by another person acting on their behalf. Council's Payble payment arrangement functionality has also been configured to align with the requirements of the Guidelines and support the administration of payment arrangements under the Policy.

The Guidelines also establish expectations regarding the assessment and communication of hardship applications. Applicants must be advised of the outcome in writing, and information about expected assessment timeframes is to be made available through Council's website and application forms. While the Guidelines encourage councils to consider applications within 14 days, the proposed timeframe in the revised Policy is 20 business days for assessment. Officers will aim to assess applications well within this timeframe; however, there may be periods of heightened workload, particularly following the issue of rate notices, when this is not achievable. The 20-business-day timeframe provides a realistic service standard that can be maintained during peak periods while supporting the timely assessment of applications.

Consistent with the Guidelines, a review process has also been developed to provide applicants with an avenue to request a review of a decision.

The information provided to ratepayers about external support services has also been reviewed and expanded. The Guidelines recognise that applicants may benefit from referral to services such as financial counselling, community legal services, government-funded assistance programs and specialist family violence support services. A new webpage has therefore been developed to provide ratepayers with information about organisations they can contact for independent advice and assistance. Collectively, these changes provide the supporting processes, information and access pathways required to implement the revised Policy and provide a more consistent and accessible approach for ratepayers seeking assistance.

1.2 Key change in the updated policy

The review has resulted in a number of changes to the Policy to reflect the Ministerial Guidelines, clarify Council's approach to payment assistance and hardship, and improve the overall accessibility and administration of the Policy. The underlying principles of the financial sustainability of Council and supporting Knox citizens experiencing hardship remain unchanged. A summary of the key changes between the current Policy (Attachment 2) and the revised Policy (Attachment 3) is provided below.

Key changes to the updated policy:

- Policy renamed to focus specifically on on rates and charges hardship assistance.
- Sundry debtor provisions removed as these are managed through operational procedures and CEO delegation.
- Expanded the definition of hardship to comply with the Guidelines.
- Enhanced payment plan support through longer repayment periods and suspension of penalty interest whilst payment plans are adhered to.
- Deferral of rates and charges broader access and more favourable terms through removal of deferment interest during approved deferral period.
- More transparent and structured assessment process and service standard.
- Simplified approach to waiving both interest and legal costs for who demonstrate hardship.
- Provides a clear policy position that rates will not be waived and the rational for this.
- Introduces a formal review mechanism.
- Establishes criteria before land sale may be considered, including debts unpaid for at least three years, exhausted recovery attempts and no hardship arrangement in place with Council resolution required to proceed with a sale.
- Specific commitment to compliance with Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 and privacy principles.
- Removed the COVID addendum which is no longer applicable.

The draft Rates and Charges Financial Policy modernises Council's approach to rates and charges payment assistance by aligning it with current legislation and Ministerial Guidelines, strengthening governance arrangements, introducing formal assessment and review processes, expanding recognition of hardship circumstances, and enhancing support options available to ratepayers. The underlying principles have not changed, and the Policy will continue to support Council's financial sustainability as well as Knox citizens facing hardship.

2. ENGAGEMENT

Given the Policy is primarily legislative in nature and is intended to ensure Council meets its statutory obligations and establishes a framework for compliance, there is limited scope for community input or influence over its content. Accordingly, community engagement is not proposed for this Policy review.

3. SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The revised Policy has positive social implications by providing a clearer, more flexible and more compassionate framework for supporting ratepayers experiencing hardship. The Policy recognises that financial hardship can arise from a range of circumstances, including unemployment, illness, disability, family violence, caring responsibilities, bereavement and other significant life events, and allows applications to be assessed on a case-by-case basis rather than through a one-size-fits-all approach.

The Equity Impact Assessment identified that some groups may be more vulnerable to financial hardship or may face additional barriers in accessing assistance, including women, older people, carers, people with disability, culturally and linguistically diverse communities, low-income households and people experiencing family violence. The Policy responds to these differing needs through a range of assistance options, including flexible payment arrangements, deferrals and the waiver or suspension of penalty interest.

The Policy also strengthens procedural fairness and accessibility by providing clearer eligibility criteria, individual assessment, a formal internal review pathway and protection from debt recovery action while an initial hardship application or review is being considered. These measures are intended to support earlier engagement with council, reduce the risk of debt escalating unnecessarily and provide more consistent and transparent outcomes for ratepayers experiencing hardship. These principles have underpinned Council's approach within the current Policy.

Overall, the Equity Impact Assessment concluded the policy improves equitable access to hardship assistance while ensuring Council can continue providing services to the wider community.

4. CLIMATE CHANGE CONSIDERATIONS

Implementation of the recommendation is considered to have no direct implications or has no direct impacts upon Council's Net Zero 2030 target, the Community Net Zero 2040, exposure to climate risks or climate change adaptation.

5. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

Not applicable to this report.

6. FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Income from rates and charges is Council's primary source of revenue, accounting for over 70% of total income each financial year. The effective collection of rates and charges is therefore critical to Council's ongoing financial sustainability and its capacity to fund services, infrastructure and asset renewal.

The Policy seeks to appropriately balance Council's responsibility to collect rates and charges with the need to provide reasonable and compassionate assistance to ratepayers experiencing hardship. It provides a range of assistance options that support ratepayers to meet their

obligations over time, while recognising the importance of maintaining an equitable and sustainable revenue base for the broader community.

As the revised Policy clarifies processes and eligibility, as opposed to materially changing them, implementation of the revised Policy is not expected to result in any additional financial implications for Council.

Whilst writing off interest is avoided as a general rule, there are cases of hardship where it is appropriate to apply waivers. The Policy provides a structured approach to assessing these cases and will aid in the consistent application of principles.

7. RISKS

Risk	Rating	Treatment
Non-compliance with the Ministerial Guidelines or legislative requirements resulting in governance, audit or regulatory issues.	Low	Manage through adoption of the revised policy, staff training, updated application forms and ongoing monitoring of legislative changes.
Increased financial impact from expanded hardship arrangements, including deferred payments, suspension of interest and additional payment assistance measures.	Medium	Manage through formal assessment criteria, evidence-based decision making, delegated approval limits, monitoring of hardship arrangements and regular reporting on outstanding rates and charges.
Increased demand for hardship assistance resulting in delays in assessing applications and customer dissatisfaction.	Low	Manage through implementation of online and paper-based application processes, clear service standards, workload monitoring and resourcing adjustments where required.
Personal and sensitive information provided as part of hardship applications being mishandled or subject to privacy breaches.	Low	Manage through compliance with the Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014, secure storage of information and restricted access controls.
Reduced recovery of outstanding rates and charges impacting Council's cashflow and long-term financial sustainability.	Medium	Manage through active monitoring of payment arrangements, regular review of arrears, appropriate debt recovery processes and maintaining a balanced approach between hardship support and revenue collection obligations.

8. COUNCIL AND HEALTH AND WELLBEING PLAN 2025-2029

Leading, listening and governing responsibly
Strategy 4.1 - Council demonstrates its accountability through transparent and responsible decision-making and working together productively.
Strategy 4.5 - Council is financially sustainable through long-term strategic, financial and asset planning, and the responsible prioritisation, allocation and use of resources.

9. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The officers contributing to and responsible for this report have no conflicts of interest requiring disclosure under Chapter 5 of the Governance Rules of Knox City Council.

10. STATEMENT OF COMPATIBILITY

There are no legislative obligations under the Human Rights Charter, Child Safe Standards or the Gender Equity Act that are incompatible with the recommendation in this report.

11. CONFIDENTIALITY

There is no content in this report that meets the definition of confidential information from the Local Government Act 2020.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Attachment 1 - Ministerial Guidelines Payment of Rates and Charges [**8.7.1** - 24 pages]
2. Attachment 2 - Current Payment Assistance Policy [**8.7.2** - 8 pages]
3. Attachment 3 - Revised Payment Assistance Policy [**8.7.3** - 7 pages]

VICTORIA State Government | Government Services

Ministerial guidelines relating to payment of rates and charges

December 2025

OFFICIAL

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1. Introduction

Every year, Councils collect rates and charges from ratepayers in accordance with the *Local Government Act 1989* (the LG Act 1989). Rates are an important source of revenue for Councils that contribute significantly to delivering local community infrastructure and services.

Timely payment of rates and charges allow Councils to be more financially sustainable and provide continuity for Councils to effectively plan for the delivery of services throughout the year.

Most ratepayers across the State pay their rates and charges in a timely manner. However, ratepayers may need assistance to manage the payment of rates and charges. This could be due to prolonged hardship or unforeseen circumstances including but not limited to, loss of employment, illness, and change of family circumstances. Most Councils have policies in place around debt management and collection.

Ratepayers experiencing hardship and financial hardship must be treated fairly, compassionately and proportionately.[1]

1.1 Objectives of guidelines

These Guidelines provide direction to Councils to review and update (as necessary) their existing hardship and debt management policies in relation to the payment of rates and charges.

The objectives of these Guidelines are to:

- encourage a more consistent approach across local government policies relating to debt management for the payment of rates and charges;
- provide guidance and support to Councils and ratepayers in relation to hardship and financial hardship; and
- empower Councils to recover debt from unpaid rates and charges in a fair and equitable way, consistent with Victorian Government, community and stakeholder expectations.

The Guidelines contain matters that must be considered in a Council's policy formation, whilst not being prescriptive about models for implementing council policies.

By proactively working with ratepayers who may be in hardship or financial hardship, Councils may ultimately minimise additional organisational costs, in addition to costs to ratepayers, associated with debt management. This may enable Councils to continue to be financially sustainable.

[1] 1 Second Reading Speech for the *Local Government Legislation Amendment (Rating and Other Matters) Bill 2022*, Legislative Assembly, 8 June 2022.

1.2 Legal Framework

The Minister for Local Government has issued these Guidelines under section 181AA of the LG Act 1989. Councils are required to comply with these Guidelines under section 181AA(3).

Where the Minister has been advised by particular bodies and is satisfied that a Council's governance processes and policies require improvement, the Minister may direct a Council to amend or replace its governance processes and policies.[2]

Subject to the requirements of the LG Act 1989 and the *Local Government Act 2020*, Councils must develop policies, practices and processes associated with the payment of rates and charges in accordance with these Guidelines[3].

Councils must recover overdue rates and charges from ratepayers in an effective and fair way, prior to undertaking any debt collection action, which can be costly to the Council and ratepayer.

1.3 Scope of guidelines

Under section 181AA(1), the Minister may issue guidelines in relation to:

(a) the meaning of hardship for the purposes of section 170 (*deferred payment*); and

(b) the meaning of financial hardship for the purposes of sections 171 (*waiver*), 171A (*waiver by application*) and 172A (*maximum rate of interest*); and

(c) the content of hardship policies and financial hardship policies; and

(d) the circumstances in which a Council may apply the hardship policies and financial hardship policies; and

(e) the process for applying for a payment plan; and

(f) the waiver of interest on unpaid rates or charges under sections 171, 171A and 172 (*interest on unpaid rates*); and

(g) any other matters covered by sections 170, 171, 171A, 171B (*payment plans*), 172, 180 (recovery of *unpaid rates or charges*) and 181 (*Council may sell land*).

Consistent with section 181AA of the LG Act 1989, these Guidelines outline the meaning of hardship and financial hardship, together with the circumstances, processes and relevant considerations Councils must take into account when developing their policies for ratepayers experiencing hardship or financial hardship.

[2] Section 175, *Local Government Act 2020*.

[3] Section 181AA(3), LG Act 1989.

Many Councils already have multiple payment options and processes in place for payment of rates and charges. As every local community has different needs and requirements, Councils **may implement flexible payment options and processes which align with their local community needs and within Council capability and resources**.

These Guidelines support Councils to proactively work with ratepayers, to explore the arrangement most suitable in a person's situation. This approach is consistent with the Second Reading Speech for the amendments inserting section 181AA into the LG Act 1989. The Second Reading Speech states that:

> *The Ministerial Guidelines will require councils to proactively work with ratepayers experiencing financial hardship to explore different arrangements and solutions, and more punitive actions such as legal actions and the application of penalty interest will be only available when ratepayers refuse to engage and all other approaches are exhausted…*[4]

It is intended that these Guidelines will discourage Councils from charging interest for those who are under hardship arrangements. These Guidelines reflect that legal action and the application of penalty interest should only be pursued when ratepayers do not engage, and all other approaches are exhausted.

These Guidelines commence on publication and Councils are required to update their policies for ratepayers experiencing hardship or financial hardship within a reasonable timeframe.

[4] Second Reading Speech for the *Local Government Legislation Amendment (Rating and Other Matters) Bill 2022*, Legislative Assembly, 8 June 2022.

2. Mandatory Principles

Councils must review their policies for ratepayers experiencing hardship or financial hardship. In doing so, Councils must reflect the following principles within their own hardship and debt management policies and procedures.

Flexible, place-based approach: Councils must have modern and flexible payment options and methods for payment of rates and charges that align with local community expectations, needs and hardship circumstances.

Clear and accessible communication: Councils must provide easy to understand and multiple methods of communication about payment of rates and charges that align with local community expectations, needs and hardship circumstances.

Fair, equitable, and compassionate treatment: Councils must treat all ratepayers equitably, compassionately and proportionately in relation to payment of rates and charges, including any applications relating to hardship or financial hardship.

Protect privacy and confidentiality: Councils must treat all information provided by applicants in accordance with relevant privacy legislation.

3. Principles Councils are strongly encouraged to consider

Councils are strongly encouraged to reflect the following principles within their own hardship and debt management policies and procedures.

Reduce costs associated with debt collection: Councils should consider options for proactive management of payment of rates and charges that can minimise costs to Council and ratepayers in relation to debt management.

Continuous improvement: Councils should consider measuring the impact of debt management and hardship policies and should commit to regular review and improvement of policies to continually adapt and align to community needs and expectation.

Place-based approach: Councils should consider their local community by taking a place-based approach to hardship and financial hardship, such as the consideration of local issues, engaging with local community organisations, designing processes with the make-up of the local community in mind.

4. Proactive management for the payment of rates and charges

4.1 Current rates and charges notices

Section 158(4) of the LG Act 1989, requires that a notice:

(a) contain the prescribed information; and

(b) state—

(i) in the case of general rates, municipal charges, service rates and service charges, the dates when the instalments of the rates or charges are due, and, if those rates and charges may be paid in a lump sum, the date when that lump sum is due; or

(ii) in any other case, when the rates or charges are due; and

(c) specify any other options for payment determined by the Council; and

(d) be issued at least 14 days before the date on which the first payment of the rates or charges is due.

In addition, regulation 6 of the *Local Government (General) Regulations 2025* prescribes a range of technical and financial information that must be included on a rates and charges notice, which may be summarised as:

- the name and address of the person who is liable to pay, but if that person is not the oner of the land, the name of the owner
- a description of the land in respect of which the rate or charge is levied
- the amount for which the person is liable:
  - If the rate is based on the value of the land— the system of valuation the Council used, the value of the land and the current level of value date
  - if the rate is raised by the application of a differential rate— the type or class of the person's land, and where information in relation to the differential rate is available, and various details about the class and type of land in the municipal district.
- the method of calculating the rate or charge
- the penalties for failing to pay
- the manner in which the rate or charge may be paid
- a statement that the person may apply to the Council for a payment plan
- the manner, in order of priority, in which the Council intends to allocate money received
- the rights of the person to apply for a review in relation to a differential rating, or a rate or charge, or a special rate or charge.
- the rights of a person to object in relation to a valuation under the *Valuation of Land Act 1960*

- a statement regarding whether Council has made a rate cap application, the outcome of the application and the impact on a person's property.

Some ratepayers struggle to understand the complex and detailed information required on rates notices. In addition to providing this information, Councils are encouraged to use easy to understand language and accessible communication methods.

Councils are encouraged to include additional information on:

- flexible payment options
- any concessions that are available
- where to go for further information (including Council's hardship policy); and
- how to contact Council by phone, email or in person.

Councils are also encouraged to consider the demographic and socioeconomic environment of their communities and whether additional aids to assist with understanding notices are required, including translation services and, alternative formatting of notices.

4.2 Flexible payment options

Consistent with the LG Act 1989, Councils determine the schedule of payment for rates and charges in 4 instalments. Some Councils provide the option to pay in a lump sum.

Use of technology has created an environment where ratepayers expect modern and flexible payment options for all types of payments and charges.

Many Councils already offer multiple ways to pay rates and notices and are encouraged to continually review and revise payment methods that keep up with advances in technology.

Flexible ways to pay include, but are not limited to:

- in person at Council offices (cheques, money orders, EFTPOS, credit/debit cards and cash),
- direct debit for periodic payments/bill smoothing (on instalment due dates, monthly or fortnightly)
- Centrepay
- BPAY
- Australia Post (over the counter, over the phone by credit card and on the internet)
- by mail (cheques and money orders only).

4.3 Current discounts and subsidies

In the development of hardship and financial hardship policies, as well as debt management policies, Councils must consider current discounts and subsidies applied to rates and charges notices. Often, those receiving a subsidy or discount may be more vulnerable to hardship and financial hardship. If a ratepayer is receiving a subsidy, including a rebate or concession, this does not preclude them

from being assessed as being in hardship or financial hardship and eligible for deferred payment or waiver (as appropriate).

Pensioner and Veteran Affairs

Holders of an eligible Centrelink or Veteran Affairs Pension Concession Card (PCC) or a Veteran Affairs Gold card which stipulates 'TPI' or 'War Widow' may claim a rebate on their sole or principal place of residence.

Following an initial application for a PCC, ongoing eligibility is maintained, unless rejected by Centrelink or the Department of Veteran Affairs during the annual verification procedure. After being granted a PCC, pensioners can then apply for the rebate at any time throughout the rating year.

Retrospective claims up to a maximum of one previous financial year can be approved by Council on verification of eligibility criteria.

Incentives for prompt payment

Under section 168 of the LG Act 1989, the Council may declare that incentives are to be given by it for the payment of those rates and charges before the due date and must include in the declaration details of the circumstances in which an incentive will be given. This information must be included on the rates and charges notice.

4.4 Measuring Council performance

Performance reporting is a key program promoting Council transparency, accountability and performance.

The Local Government Performance Reporting Framework is a mandatory system of performance reporting for all Victorian Councils. It ensures that Councils are measuring and reporting on their performance in a consistent way to promote transparency and accountability in the local government sector.

The framework is made up of 59 measures from a range of service areas, including roads, planning, animal management and waste. It is complemented by a Governance and Management checklist of 27 items, which shows the policies, plans and procedures in place at each Council. Together, they build a comprehensive picture of Council performance.

You can find these reports on the local government (www.localgovernment.vic.gov.au) or Know Your Council websites (www.vic.gov.au/know-your-Council).

Currently the State Government does not mandate reporting in relation to outstanding rates and charges. However, Councils are strongly encouraged to record and report this information to demonstrate transparency and improvement.

5. Hardship and financial hardship in the Local Government Act 1989

Hardship and financial hardship are identified as 2 separate terms under the LG Act 1989 (section 170 and sections 171 to 171A respectively). The Guidelines explain these terms and how Councils can apply deferrals, payment plans and waivers to rates and charges when hardship or financial hardship is experienced by a ratepayer.

While situations of hardship may cause financial hardship, the 2 situations are not always present together. Under the legislation, a ratepayer does not need to demonstrate financial hardship to be applicable for support when applying for deferral of rates and charges, or when applying for a payment plan. Rather, the ratepayer must show that payment would cause hardship to them in their circumstances, at the time the rates and charges are payable.

By contrast, when applying for waiver of rates and charges, the ratepayer will need to demonstrate that payment would likely result in financial hardship.

Determination of whether a ratepayer is in 'hardship' or 'financial hardship', will always be dependent on an individual's circumstances.

A non-exhaustive definition:

Hardship (including financial hardship) can arise from a variety of causes which may include but are not limited to:

- employment difficulties, loss of employment or unemployment of the ratepayer or family member
- reduced, insufficient or lack of income
- medical issues, injury, illness or mental illness of the ratepayer or family member
- alcohol, drug or substance use
- death of a family member or loved one
- family circumstances
- family violence or economic abuse
- elder abuse
- gambling
- scams or fraud
- incarceration
- natural disaster
- barriers to accessing essential services including event-based circumstances and systemic and market-based factors, which result in economic and/or social exclusion or harm.

5.1 The concept of hardship in the Local Government Act 1989

When is hardship applicable?

The concept of 'hardship' is referenced in section 170 of the LG Act 1989. Hardship will depend on a person's particular circumstances. Hardship may include financial

or economic hardship but also includes a diverse range of other personal circumstances and events which may be detrimental to a person's quality of life.

What does section 170 require?

Section 170 of the LG Act 1989 empowers a Council to defer, either in full or in part, any rate or charge which is payable, for a specific period and subject to any conditions determined by the Council, if an application by a ratepayer shows that payment would cause hardship to the person.

Deferrals under section 170

Rates and charges can be deferred in full or in part by the Council.

A deferral will enable payment to be made at a future agreed date, giving the ratepayer a grace period where no payments are made. A deferral in this way can assist a rate payer in a wide range of circumstances where hardship may be immediate, unexpected, and/or shorter-term in nature and will ease an immediate obligation or financial pressure.

Charging interest on deferrals

Section 170 makes clear that a deferral can include particular conditions determined by the Council.[5] When a Council approves an application for deferred payment, it must not charge interest on the unpaid rate or charge. A ratepayer approved for a deferred payment is no longer liable for payment[6] and therefore cannot be charged interest[7] until the ratepayer is sent a notice by Council making them liable and requiring payment.[8]

At the time of sending a notice, the Council may elect to calculate any interest on the deferred payment in accordance with the conditions of the deferment, however Councils are discouraged from applying interest in circumstances of hardship or financial hardship.

Deferrals with a payment plan under section 170

Councils may also elect to apply deferred payments under the condition that a payment plan is subsequently put in place.

Where a Council chooses to apply a payment plan following a deferral of payment interest must not be charged on any amount of the unpaid rates and charges. This is because the due date for payment had been deferred and there is no 'late payment' as such.

[5] Section 170(1), LG Act1989.

[6] Section 170(2), LG Act 1989.

[7] Otherwise required to be paid under section 172(1)(a), LG Act 1989.

[8] Section 170(3)(b), LG Act 1989.

5.2 The concept of financial hardship in the Local Government Act 1989

When is financial hardship applicable?

The concept of 'financial hardship' is referenced in sections 171 and 171A of the LG Act 1989, which allow a Council to waive the whole or part of a payment of any rate, charge or interest, where it considers that the person is suffering financial hardship, or payment would cause financial hardship to the person.

As with hardship, financial hardship can arise from a variety of causes, which may include:

- employment difficulties, loss of employment or unemployment of the ratepayer or family member
- reduced, insufficient or lack of income
- medical issues, injury, illness or mental illness of the ratepayer or family member
- alcohol, drug or substance use
- death of a family member or loved one
- family circumstances
- family violence or economic abuse
- elder abuse
- gambling
- scams or fraud
- incarceration
- natural disaster
- barriers to accessing essential services including event-based circumstances and systemic and market-based factors, which result in economic and/or social exclusion or harm.

For the purposes of sections 171 and 171A of the LG Act 1989, if a ratepayer is experiencing any of the circumstances above and the payment of rates and charges means that they would not be able to afford the necessities of life for themselves or their dependants, they will be in financial hardship.

Examples of necessities of life may include (but are not limited to):

- essential medical treatments or supplies
- essential utility services (including water, energy, internet)
- access to basic living needs, including:
    - food
    - accommodation
    - clothing
    - childcare and education
    - transport
    - insurance.

Councils are encouraged to consider innovative approaches to supporting ratepayers in financial hardship. *What does section 171 require?*

Section 171 provides that a Council may waive the whole or part of any rates, charges or interest to:

- an eligible recipient within the meaning of the *State Concessions Act 2004*; or
- any other class of persons determined by the Council for the purpose of waiving rates or charges on the grounds of financial hardship.

What does section 171A require?

Section 171A provides that when a ratepayer applies for a waiver of unpaid rates and charges due to financial hardship.[9]

The Council may grant a waiver application if the Council is satisfied that ratepayer is suffering, or will suffer, financial hardship if that person paid the full amount of the rate or charge for which they are liable.

Where a Council requires an applicant to provide (or verify) further details as a part of their waiver application,[10] the Council must clearly state:

- what further particulars are required; and
- how an applicant can verify these particulars.

Many Councils currently waive interest where a ratepayer is in hardship or financial hardship. Other Councils have reported waiver policies based on a capped amount or up to 50% of rates. Councils should consider a range of options in line with community needs.

For more information on assessing hardship or financial hardship applications, see section 7.

Charging interest on waivers

A ratepayer approved for a waiver is no longer liable for payment and therefore cannot be charged interest.[11]

Penalties for false or misleading information

Rates are an important part of Council revenue to fund vital local services and facilities. By granting a waiver on the grounds of financial hardship, ratepayers will no longer be legally liable for the full payment, or the amount agreed to by the Council. To ensure appropriate safeguards are in place, section 171A provides penalties for providing false and misleading information and failure to provide notice of any change in circumstances.[12]

[9] Section 171A, LG Act 1989.

[10] Section 171A(2), LG Act 1989.

[11] Otherwise required to be paid under section 172(1)(a), LG Act 1989.

[12] Sections 171(6) & 171A(4), LG Act 1989.

6. Applying for a payment plan in section 171B of the LG Act 1989

Section 171B of the LG Act 1989 allows payment plans to be made in relation to unpaid rates and charges. This applies to rates and charges:

- that are being paid in instalments
- for which payment was deferred under section 170
- that were waived in part under sections 171 or 171A

Payment plans should be available for any ratepayer regardless of whether they are experiencing hardship or financial hardship. Councils must provide easy and efficient application processes for payment plans as ratepayers expect Councils to provide flexible options that consider different needs and circumstances.

Early engagement with ratepayers by enabling payment plans will support continuity of contact with that ratepayer over the longer term.

6.1 Application forms

An application form for a payment plan must be available on a Council's website, as well as a physical copy at customer service points, and provide details of how a customer can contact the Council. The application form must clearly state (but is not limited to):

- what a ratepayer may be required to submit (including information or particulars)
- that Council may request further information or particulars if relevant
- in what timeframe the Council will notify if an application has been accepted or rejected

Where ratepayers who have previously applied for deferral of payment or partial waiver, the ratepayer's previous information may be used to support a payment plan application, to streamline the application process. The ratepayer in this instance may only be required to provide information in relation to any change in their circumstances, if relevant.

Councils must also offer the ability for ratepayers to apply for a payment plan verbally instead of by a written application. Information requested in a verbal application should be identical to what is requested in a written application, as only information relevant to consideration of an application should be collected by a Council. Verbal applications should be supported by council's existing evidentiary requirements to confirm personal details of applicants.

6.2 Approval process for payment plans

When approving a payment plan, a Council must determine:

- the duration of the payment plan
- the amount of each payment plan instalment
- any other terms

When a payment plan is being arranged, the Council must work with the applicant to ensure the plan is realistic in terms of the applicant's capacity to pay. Consistent with financial hardship policies in other sectors, many Councils approve payment plans for nominal amounts as an early, compassionate response which prevents costly escalation later.

Councils may also consider incentives and options including forgiveness of debt where a ratepayer has entered into a payment plan and has met all obligations for a certain period, for example, 12 months or more.

In most cases, payment plans for ratepayers should be approved however, in the rare instance where a ratepayer has failed to pay multiple debts or has previously not been able to comply with a payment plan, Council may reject an application. Councils should clearly communicate the reasons for the decision and how to access the Council's internal review process or other dispute resolution services.

6.3 Reminder notices and payment schedules

Without limiting section 171B of the LG Act 1989, a payment plan must clearly state the schedule of payments, including amount and length of time. Council must also clearly communicate the process for which a payment plan will be cancelled, and how a ratepayer will be informed of the cancellation.

In accordance with section 171B(7), a payment plan may be cancelled if the ratepayer fails to comply with their plan.

If the ratepayer fails to comply with their payment plan, or does not contact Council about failure to pay, Council should send a reminder notice to make payment or contact the Council to discuss alternative arrangements. Reminder notices and cancellation notices should include clear guidance on support options available for ratepayers on payment plans.

Council should provide a timeframe for the ratepayer to respond and inform the ratepayer that their payment plan may be cancelled if they do not respond. If Council determines that the payment plan is cancelled, a cancellation notice should be sent to the ratepayer formally notifying them in writing that the payment plan has been cancelled and the debt will be subject to Council's regular debt recovery process.

7. Assessing applications of hardship or financial hardship

7.1 How applications are to be assessed

Information on how Councils assess hardship applications, how decisions are made, how to contact Council, and resources, such as hardship factsheets and application forms, must be easily accessible on the Council website and in person to allow ratepayers to apply.

Applications must be able to be submitted online, over the phone, or in person, by the ratepayer or by another person on their behalf. Applications should be supported by council's existing evidentiary requirements to confirm personal details of applicants.

Each application must be assessed on a case-by-case basis, and on the information provided by the ratepayer.

Factors to be considered may include, but are not limited to, whether the ratepayer:

- has provided appropriate evidence including but not limited to:
  - circumstances of hardship (whether short term or prolonged) from the list provided in the introduction of this section, and
  - an indication that paying rates and charges means that they would be unable to afford necessities of life for themselves and/or dependants
- receives Centrelink or other benefits
- is on a low or fixed income such as pension or superannuation payment
- has been referred by an accredited financial counsellor, welfare agency or legal assistance service, or
- has a payment history that indicates they have difficulty in meeting payments in the past.

Councils must only request and collect information directly relevant and necessary in order to make a decision on financial hardship. All information should be collected and held in line with privacy legislation and Council's privacy policies.

Examples of what may be considered relevant includes (but is not limited to) the below:

- **Government agency documentation:** Centrelink, ATO, NDIA, Victoria Police, Victorian Courts
- **Certified documentation:** medical certificates, referral from financial counsellors, legal documentation, statutory declarations
- **Personal information:** payslips, evidence of job loss or reduced hours, unpaid bills or repayment notices, bank statements (only where necessary, not mandatory).

7.2 Engaging a third party to assist in assessing hardship and financial hardship

Applicant ratepayers may benefit from a referral by a Council to a financial counsellor, a community lawyer, a government-funded assistance program or specialist family violence support service. Councils must provide details to applicants that request these services.

Financial counsellors can offer a range of support, depending on someone's eligibility for the service. Ratepayers may be eligible for in-depth financial counselling if they:

- are on a Centrelink benefit
- have no income
- are vulnerable due to personal circumstances
- are exposed to family violence.

If a ratepayer is in financial difficulty, they may receive free, confidential and independent advice from a financial counsellor by:

- calling the National Debt Helpline (Victoria) on 1800 007 007, Monday to Friday, 9:30 am – 5:00 pm
- visiting the National Debt Helpline's Financial Counselling page
- calling a community agency that provides financial counselling in the area where the ratepayer lives or works. To find the nearest agency, go to Financial counselling providers.

A council may refer a ratepayer to, or a ratepayer may choose to directly engage with, a financial counsellor. Financial counsellors can assist in providing ratepayers with a professional opinion regarding an application for hardship or financial hardship.

However, Councils must not require an applicant to engage a professional to support the preparation or verification of an application.

7.3 Hardship application decisions and reviews

The applicant must be informed of the Council's decision in writing within a reasonable timeframe after making the application and should be given reasons for the decision.

Councils must specify the timeframes required to make a decision on hardship applications and state this information on its website, hardship factsheets and application forms.

Councils are encouraged to adopt a best practice approach to providing timeframes for processing a decision. For example, a Council may specify that a hardship application will be processed within 14 days of receipt of a complete application. A Council may also specify timeframes for responding to a query in relation to a hardship application that is on foot and timeframes for reviewing a decision on an application.

A Council must not take recovery or enforcement action for unpaid rates, charges or interest whilst an application is being assessed.

In the event that an applicant is denied a waiver or deferment, council should refer applicants to other support measures such as financial counselling.

If not satisfied with the outcome, an applicant should be able to request the Council to review the decision. Councils should proactively provide applicants on their internal review processes at the time of the decision outcome. Information on the review process and timeframes for review should also be available online and in person.

Councils should ensure that a review of a decision is undertaken by a person not involved in the original decision and the person has authority to:

- review the decision-making process to ensure it was fair and transparent
- assess whether the decision was based on relevant evidence and considerations
- evaluate the decision's compliance with relevant laws
- determine whether the decision was reasonable and justifiable in the circumstances.

8. Council Hardship and Financial Hardship policies

Council hardship policies and financial hardship policies regarding the payment of rates and charges must be easily accessible to all ratepayers and be available:

- on a Council's website;
- as a physical copy at customer service points;
- to be posted as a physical copy to ratepayers on request; and
- to be emailed as an electronic copy to ratepayers on request.

This must include information on how Councils assess hardship applications, how decisions are made, how to contact Council.

Resources, such as hardship factsheets and application forms, must be easily accessible on the Council website and in person to allow ratepayers to apply.

Council policies must state that ratepayers can request that a Council or their representatives use an interpreter and/or translator to communicate with them and such a request must not be denied.

8.1 Consideration of family violence or economic abuse

In circumstances where a ratepayer has identified circumstances of family violence or economic abuse (including in relation to other joint owners of the property), Councils must implement measures to prevent each owner from accessing confidential information regarding the other's personal details and detail these measures in their policies. Councils should also avoid seeking repayment solely from victim-survivors of family violence or economic abuse where there is shared ownership or joint liability.

Councils should consider implementing training and processes that assist council staff to support ratepayers that have identified circumstances of family violence or economic abuse. This should include processes that reduce the need for ratepayers to repeat disclosure of their family violence to council staff.

9. Any other matters covered by sections 172, 180 and 181 of the Local Government Act 1989

9.1 Section 172: Council may charge interest on unpaid rates and charges

A Council may choose to charge interest on any amount of unpaid rates and charges up to the maximum rate fixed by the Minister for Local Government.[13]

However, Councils are encouraged to consider an applicant's circumstances and whether they are in hardship before imposing interest on unpaid rates and charges.

Councils must specify in relevant policies and plans what interest rates they are setting on unpaid rates and charges, and detail under what situations they will apply either a lesser rate or, apply no interest. Councils must ensure that ratepayers are able to reasonably access this information and are informed of, how and when interest is applied.

Ratepayers that have successfully applied for deferred payments on their unpaid rates and charges cannot not be charged any amount of interest by Councils during the period of deferment.

If a Council had determined that the ratepayer has provided false or misleading information in regard to an application for a waiver of interest,[14] a Council cannot reinstate any interest that was waived but may choose to enforce the relevant penalty units set out in the LG Act 1989.

9.2 Section 180: Unpaid rates or charges

Where a Council has informed a ratepayer of unpaid rates and charges and the payment options available, and a payment option is not agreed, the Council may recover the amount owing in the Magistrates' Court or by taking action to recover the debt, subject to the requirements of section 180A of the LG Act 1989. Without limiting Part 8 of the LG Act 1989, it is encouraged that Councils exhaust all other options before seeking recovery from the Magistrates' Court.

A Council's policies must clearly state under which circumstances recovery of unpaid rates and charges will occur. A Council must not take recovery or enforcement action for unpaid rates, charges or interest whilst an application is being assessed.

If a Council intends to recover an unpaid rate or charge a Council must, subject to the requirements of section 180 and 180A of the LG Act 1989:

[13] Section 172, LG Act 1989.

[14] Sections 171A(4) & 171(6), LG Act 1989.

- contact the ratepayer in writing, notifying them of the outstanding debt and the intention to recover the unpaid rates, charges and any interest;
- confirm the timing of debt recovery action, including what portion of debt is considered recoverable; and
- make reasonable attempts to contact the ratepayer with details they have provided to Council, regarding the unpaid rates, charges and any interest.

Councils must specify on their websites any costs of debt recovery that may be added to ratepayer's unpaid rates and charges. These charges must only be added after a Court Order is obtained.

If a council locates a ratepayer during the process to recover rates and charges, whether directly or via a third party, a hardship assessment must be made by council prior to undertaking debt recovery action.

9.3 Section 181: Council may sell land or recover unpaid rates or charges

Once a Court Order has been obtained requiring payment of unpaid rates and charges, any unpaid amount is more than 3 years overdue, and provided that no current arrangement, including a payment plan, exists for the payment of the amount to the Council, a Council may determine to sell or cause the land to be transferred into Council ownership.

A Council must prepare policies which:

- outline what a Council considers to be a "current arrangement"[15] for the payment of an amount due for or in respect of rates or charges (the Act stipulates that a "current arrangement" includes a payment plan); and
- state:
    - the process for which land is evaluated every financial year for sale or transfer by Council;
    - where a sale or transfer is approved, the Council's process to complete the transaction;
    - how the Council's decisions regarding the sale or transfer of the land will be recorded and made public.

If the Council intends to use land transferred to itself for public purposes, then relevant policies must clearly explain how this type of land will be utilised for the benefit of the community.

[15] Section 181(1)(b), LG Act 1989.

10. Transparency and Disclosure

Where Councils make decisions regarding the payment of rates and charges, this process must be transparent except when dealing with information that is confidential by virtue of the LG Act 1989 or any other Act.

Policy

Payment Assistance Policy

Policy Number:	2007/04	Directorate:	City Development - Finance and Governance
Approval by:	Council	Responsible Officer:	Chief Financial Officer
Approval Date:	23 August 2021	Version Number:	8
Review Date:	28 February 2022 (Addendum to be reviewed on or before 31 March 2022)		

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide Council with a framework to make available payment assistance to individuals. This Policy provides details of the assistance available to those currently experiencing, or at the risk of experiencing, financial hardship. Council is committed to assisting the community in meeting their financial obligations to Council by providing payment support, including arrangements, for property and service based debts.

The Policy includes a special addendum (addendum 1) in response to the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic; with the purpose of establishing the policy framework to provide assistance to those in the Knox community experiencing financial hardship due to the impacts of the Coronavirus pandemic.

2. Context

Part 8 Division 1 of the Local Government Act 1989 (the Act) establishes the power of Council to declare Rates and Charges. Sections 170-172 of the Act discusses the deferment and waiver provisions when considering financial hardship.

Whilst Rates and Charges are the largest source of Council's income, payment assistance may be sought for other fees and charges including the request for payment arrangements.

3. Scope

This Policy applies to balances outstanding from ratepayers and sundry debtor customers who are currently, or are at risk of, experiencing financial hardship.

4. References

4.1 Community & Council Plan 2017-2021

- Goal 8- We have confidence in decision-making

4.2 Relevant Legislation

- Local Government Act 1989 – Conflict and Interest Provisions

4.3 Charter of Human Rights
- This policy has been assessed against and complies with the charter of Human Rights

4.4 Related Council Policies
- Payment Assistance Addendum COVID-19 Pandemic Payment Relief

4.5 Related Council Procedures
- Nil

4.6 Other Guidance
- Hardship Policy Guidelines (November 2013) – Municipal Association of Victoria

5. Definitions

Detail any definitions within the policy.

Council	means Knox City Council, whether constituted before or after the commencement of this Policy.
Deferment	means the postponement of payment in completely or in part and can be for a specified period and subject to any conditions. When Rates and Charges are deferred payment is not required until the Council issues a Notice requiring payment, the property is sold, there is a change in ownership or there is a change in ratepayer. Deferred Rates and Charges remain a charge on the property.
Deferment Interest Rate	means the official 180 day bank bill rate sourced from Council's contracted banking services provider as at 1 July each year and will be the net penalty interest rate levied against overdue amounts where Rates and Charges have been deferred, rounded to 1 decimal place, plus 2.0% per annum
Waiver	means the relinquishment or the removal of the liability to pay and may include the whole or part of any Rate and Charges, interest charge, fee or other charge.

6. Council Policy

Council, in applying this policy, will ensure that wherever possible, all outstanding debts will eventually be recovered.

6.1 Rates and Charges

Rates and Charges, including interest and legal costs, are a charge on the property. Council has the power under Section 181 of the Local Government Act 1989 to sell land (the property) to recover unpaid rates and charges.

Interest and Interest Waivers

6.1.1 Unless otherwise specified in this Policy, penalty interest will be charged on overdue rates and charges in accordance with Section 172 of the Local Government Act 1989. Penalty interest is calculated at the annual fixed rate as declared by the Attorney General under Section 2 of the Penalty Interest Rate Act 1983.

6.1.2 Interest charges may be waived, in part or in full, under the following circumstances:

6.1.2.1 Administrative Waiver – interest charges may be waived in the event of an administrative issue, error or omission which caused or significantly contributed to the failure to pay rates and charges by the due date.

6.1.2.2 Waiver on Compassionate Grounds – interest charges may be waived where the ratepayer has demonstrated compassionate grounds for the late payment of rates and charges.

6.1.2.3 Waiver of Interest due to Financial Hardship – ratepayers experiencing financial hardship may apply to have interest charges waived subject to the following conditions:

a) The ratepayer must be experiencing undue financial hardship. Ratepayers who are eligible pensioners or who can prove temporary unemployment may apply for current year rates and charges to be paid within 12 months from the date of issue of the Rates Notice, interest free. Such interest free arrangements only remain in place while agreed payments are being received. Applications should be directed to the Coordinator Rates and Valuations.

b) All other ratepayers (not eligible ratepayers or unable to prove temporary unemployment) may apply in writing to the Manager Financial Services detailing the circumstances affecting the ratepayer's ability to pay current rates and charges by the due date. If approved, the waiver of interest in full or in part will not exceed a period of 12 months from the date of issue of the Rates Notices.

Payment of Rates and Charges by Arrangement

6.1.3 Any ratepayer may request to pay outstanding rates and charges by way of a payment arrangement. Payment arrangements will attract penalty interest on outstanding balances but allow ratepayers additional time to make payments. Council will not take any legal action to recover rates and charges provided conditions of the payment arrangements are honoured.

Payment arrangements generally provide support to settle current rates and charges within 12 months. Payment arrangements beyond 12 months require approval of the Coordinator Rates and Valuations.

Deferral of Rates and Charges

6.1.4 The deferral of rates and charges and/or interest is available to Residential and Retirement Village property owners only. Rates and charges will not be deferred for Commercial, Industrial, Vacant Land or Cultural and Recreational Land properties.

6.1.4.1 Residential and Retirement Village property owners may apply to have rates and charges and/or interest in full or in part, deferred. Rates and charges including interest will continue to be levied. Applications for deferral will only be considered under the following circumstances:

a) The ratepayer must be experiencing, and be able to demonstrate, undue and unavoidable hardship; and

b) The ratepayer is either an eligible pensioner or a current recipient of unemployment benefits for at least 3 consecutive months; and

c) The ratepayer is both the legal owner of, and resides in, the property; and

d) The total amount of rates and charges, including any interest, to be deferred should not exceed 10% of the capital improved value of the subject property.

6.1.4.2 Interest charged on overdue rates and charges, including any interest, that are deferred will be set at the Deferment Interest Rate rather than the penalty interest rate. The Deferment Interest Rate only applies after the approval of the deferment. Previous interest charges at the penalty interest rate remain.

6.1.4.3 Deferrals may be offered for a period of up to three (3) years, at which time the ratepayer may apply for a further deferral subject to the assessment of personal circumstances prior to the continuation of any deferral agreement.

6.1.4.4 All deferral agreements must be approved by the Manager Financial Services.

Waiver of Rates and Charges

6.1.5 Rates and charges will not generally be waived. This is to ensure that payment assistance offered to one ratepayer does not have a redistribution effect on Council's rate base.

The Local Government Act 1989 is specific in relation to the grounds for the consideration of waiving rates and charges under financial hardship. The Local Government Act 1989 will be the basis for the consideration of any application for waiver.

Applications for the waiver of rates and charges must be addressed to the Chief Executive Officer. Applications must be supported by evidence of necessitous circumstances causing or likely to cause financial hardship. The waiver of rates and charges must be approved by Council.

Termination of Payment Assistance

6.1.6 Payment assistance support is terminated in the event of the sale or transfer of ownership of the subject property afforded payment support provided in 6.1.1 through 6.1.5 inclusive.

6.2 Sundry Debtor

The principles of this Policy will apply to sundry debtors. Requests for the waiver of a fee or charge must be submitted to the Manager of the relevant service for consideration. Recommendations for the waiver of fees and charges in full or in part must be forwarded to the Manager Financial Services for approval and processing.

Requests for payment arrangements for Sundry Debtor accounts should be submitted to the Manager Financial Services. Payment arrangements will generally not exceed a period of 12 months from the date of the original invoice. Penalty interest may be charged on overdue amounts during the payment arrangement period.

6.3 All information provided in accordance with this Policy will remain confidential.

7. Administrative Updates

From time to time, circumstances may change leading to the need for minor administrative changes to this policy. Where an update does not materially alter this policy, such a change may be made administratively. Examples of minor administrative changes include changes to names of Council departments or positions, change to names of Federal or State Government departments or a minor amendment to legislation that does not have material impact. Where any change or update may materially change the intent of this policy, it must be considered by Council.

Policy updated 27 April 2020.

Addendum 1 to Policy updated 23 August 2021.

Knox Payment Assistance Policy – Addendum

COVID-19 Pandemic Payment Relief

Policy Number:	2007/04	Directorate:	Office of the CEO
Approval by:	Council	Responsible Officer:	Chief Financial Officer
Approval Date:	23 August 2021	Version Number:	4
Review Date:	1 March 2022		

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy addendum is to provide Council with a framework to make available payment assistance to individuals, businesses and other community members currently experiencing, or at the risk of experiencing, financial hardship as a result of impacts from the COVID-19 pandemic

2. Context

Part 8 Division 1 of the Local Government Act 1989 (the Act) establishes the power of Council to declare Rates Council recognises that the effects of social distancing and Australia's response to Coronavirus will, and already has, led to significant impacts on the entire community including local businesses and households. Some of these impacts include people losing their jobs, people being employed for reduced hours, businesses shutting down and businesses reducing their operations.

Part 8 Division 1 of the Local Government Act 1989 (the Act) establishes the power of Council to declare Rates and Charges. Sections 170-172 of the Act discusses the deferment and waiver provisions when considering financial hardship.

Rates and charges are a critical source of revenue that Council uses to deliver services to the community. In addition, other service charges being, fees, licensing and lease income are also an important source of revenue.

Council is constantly assessing the impact of the COVID-19 and will be reviewing its approach to how it supports the community through the pandemic regularly. This policy addendum provides the framework for how Council implements these decisions with regard to payment assistance.

3. Scope

To provide direction to Council's Officers when collecting and providing for debts owed and ensure Council takes into consideration the financial hardship on debtors caused by COVID-19.

Council will provide assistance to those in financial hardship in accordance with the Local Government Act 1989, while ensuring it does not jeopardise the funding of its operations.

This policy addendum will be guided by the principles of transparency, efficiency, capacity to pay and equity by treating all debtors consistently and in a fair manner.

4. References

- Refer to the Knox Payment Assistance Policy above 2007/04.

5. Definitions

Review Date	means on or before 31 March 2022

6. Council Policy

Council, in applying this addendum policy, will ensure that wherever possible, all outstanding debts will be recovered.

6.1 Financial Hardship – Rates and other services including, fees charges, licenses, leases

Financial hardship is a circumstance of experiencing a lack of financial means, which may be either ongoing or temporary.

This policy addendum is to address temporary financial hardship due to impacts of COVID-19.

Who can apply for hardship?

Any individual, business or community member that has or will experience a loss (or reduced income) of employment or a decrease in sales revenue because of COVID-19 can apply for a payment plan.

People must request assistance from Council **in writing**, providing full details of the circumstances preventing them from meeting their financial obligations to Council.

6.2 Payment Plans

All ratepayers have the option to apply to enter into a payment arrangement to pay off their outstanding rates and charges and Council will not levy interest during this period (refer 6.3 below)

Ratepayers will have the ability to enter into zero payment plans for the period 1 July 2021 to 31 March 2022.

If any debt is still outstanding at 1 April 2022, Council's Payment Assistance Policy may apply.

6.3 Zero Interest

Interest will not be charged on overdue debts effective from 1 July 2021, until 31 March 2022. Interest already accrued and charged prior to 31 March 2020 for overdue debts will remain.

Financial thresholds for the waiving of interest (per payment plan or arrangement) are as follows:

a) Up to $250.00 - Coordinator Rates and Valuations
b) Up to $500.00 – Chief Financial Officer
c) Up to $750.00 - Director City Strategy and Integrity
d) d) Up to $1,000.00 - CEO

6.4 Debt Recovery

Council will make a reasonable attempt to contact debtors during the term of the Addendum, to reassess COVID-19 applications for financial hardship.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Council will hold off on all legal action for the collection of debts.

7. Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

Council officers will monitor Council's cash flow position and will include this report in the monthly finance paper to Executive Management Team and Council.

In the event that the State of Emergency is extended beyond the review date, Council will reassess financial relief and this addendum updated accordingly and/or when Council's cash flow position has been compromised; whichever is the earliest event.

All personal information provided in accordance with this Policy will remain confidential.

8. Administrative Updates

Nil.

Rates and Charges Payment Assistance Policy

Policy Number:	2007/05	**Directorate:**	CEO
Approval by:	Council	**Responsible Officer:**	Chief Financial Officer
Approval Date:	TBC	**Version Number:**	9
Review Date:	4 years from approval date		

1. Purpose

The Rates and Charges Payment Assistance Policy (the Policy) sets out the principles guiding how Knox City Council (Council) responds to hardship in the administration of municipal rates and charges.

The Policy supports a fair, transparent and consistent approach to the consideration of hardship, enabling Council to comply with its obligations under the *Local Government Act 1989* and the Ministerial Guidelines issued under section 181AA.

Council is committed to assisting members of the community who may need support to meet their financial obligations by providing appropriate payment options and arrangements for property and service-based debts.

2. Context

Rates and charges represent the primary source of revenue for Council and are levied in accordance with the Local Government Act 1989. The *Local Government Act 1989* continues to provide the legislative framework for Council rates and their application, alongside the broader governance framework established by the *Local Government Act 2020*.

Timely collection of rates ensures that Council can continue delivering essential services, maintaining community infrastructure and undertaking planned capital works.

Council recognises that residents and businesses may experience periods of financial difficulty due to changing economic conditions, personal circumstances, or unexpected life events. Council also acknowledges that hardship can disproportionately affect priority populations, including women experiencing family violence. Council is committed to supporting ratepayers experiencing hardship through assistance that is accessible, fair, consistent and compassionate, and responsive to individual circumstances. Any ratepayer experiencing hardship, or seeking to apply, can request an interpreter or translator to aid in communication with Council.

Council currently offers a range of flexible payment options to support ratepayers in managing their rates and charges. These existing options include:

- **Online payments**, such as BPAY, Post Billpay, and credit/debit card payments via Council's website.

- **In-person payments**, including cash, cheque or EFTPOS, available at the Civic Centre and Australia Post.
- **Direct debit**, through Payble enables automatic payments on a weekly, fortnightly, monthly, quarterly or annual basis, providing greater flexibility and supporting ratepayers with budgeting.

These payment pathways support diverse needs and preferences and reflect Council's ongoing commitment to providing accessible and flexible service delivery across the municipality.

However, Council acknowledges that residents and businesses will occasionally require additional, tailored support beyond standard payment methods, particularly during periods of financial or personal hardship.

This Policy provides those further supports by setting out clear assistance options designed to help ratepayers who are experiencing genuine hardship.

This Policy reflects Council's broader commitment to social inclusion, responsible financial management, and transparent service delivery by providing clear pathways for ratepayers to seek support when they need it most.

3. Scope

The Policy applies to ratepayers within Knox City Council who are liable for the payment of municipal rates and charges and who are experiencing hardship. It establishes the context in which Council may provide support to eligible ratepayers who are unable to meet their rate obligations due to hardship.

4. Policy

This section outlines the assistance options available to ratepayers experiencing hardship. All information provided in applications will be handled with care and in accordance with the *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014* to ensure confidentiality and compliance with privacy obligations**.** Council aims to provide fair and consistent support while encouraging applicants to submit detailed information and supporting documents.

4.1 Assistance Options

4.1.1 Hardship Payment Plan (Beyond a standard 12 month payment period and up to 24 months)

An agreed arrangement between council and the ratepayer to pay outstanding rates and charges over an extended period of up to 24 months. Penalty interest will be suspended for the duration of the payment plan, provided payments are made in accordance with agreed terms. This option helps residents manage payments without compromising basic living necessities.

4.1.2 Deferral of Rates and Charges – only available to Residential and Retirement Village rate payers

Postponement of payment of rates and charges for an agreed period, during which penalty interest will not accrue, and debt recovery or legal action will be suspended. Deferred amounts will eventually need to be paid when the ratepayer's financial circumstances improve or when the property changes ownership. Deferral arrangements are only available for a ratepayer's principal place of residence and do not apply to investment properties.

Each deferral may be granted for a maximum period of three years. At the end of the deferral period, a new application may be submitted and will be assessed against the applicable eligibility criteria at that time.

4.1.3 Waiver of Penalty Interest and/or Legal Costs

Council may exercise its discretion to waive accrued penalty interest and/or legal costs associated with overdue rates and charges. This option is considered in cases of hardship.

Non-receipt of a rate notice, travelling overseas, forgetfulness, failure to contact Council prior to the due date to advise of financial difficulty, a failure to advise of a change of residential or mailing address, or previous Payment Arrangements not being maintained are not deemed to be extenuating circumstances.

4.1.4 Waiver of Rates and Charges

The *Local Government Act 1989* provides Council with discretionary powers to waive rates and charges in cases of hardship. Council will not waive any portion of rates and charges under this Policy.

Council operations, services, and infrastructure are funded primarily through rates and charges paid by property owners within the municipality. Waiving rates for a select group of ratepayers would effectively shift the financial burden onto the broader community, which is considered inequitable and inconsistent with principles of fairness.

Instead, Council provides alternative hardship assistance options—such as flexible payment plans, deferrals, and suspension of penalty interest to support ratepayers in genuine need without compromising the sustainability of essential services for the entire community.

4.2 Eligibility Criteria

Each application will be assessed on a case-by-case basis, having regard to the individual circumstances of the ratepayer.

Applicants must complete the hardship application form with supporting documentation (where applicable) to demonstrate circumstances of hardship or financial hardship (refer to Definitions table) that are currently preventing payment.

When assessing an application for hardship, Council may consider a range of factors relevant to the ratepayer's current financial circumstances. These may include, but are not limited to the ratepayer's:

- income and financial resources (e.g. payslips, unpaid bills, bank statements)
- essential living expenses
- assets and liabilities
- capacity to meet financial commitments
- expected duration, nature and severity of the hardship circumstances
- supporting documentation and/or independent financial advice, including advice from financial counsellors
- actions taken to date to manage or address their current financial situation.
- supporting medical certificates
- supporting government agency documentation (e.g. from Centrelink, NDIA, ATO, Victoria Police, Victorian Courts)

Council may request reasonable supporting documentation where necessary to assess an application.

Council seeks to balance compassionate support for ratepayers experiencing hardship with its responsibility to ensure the fair and sustainable collection of rates and charges for the benefit of the broader community.

Please note that mere inconvenience or difficulty in making a payment is not considered as hardship.

4.2.1 Assessment and Decision

Hardship applications will be assessed on a case-by-case basis, having regard to the information provided by the ratepayer in their Hardship Assistance Application and any relevant evidence of their circumstances. Assessment may consider factors such as hardship, income and benefits, access to essential living expenses, referrals from financial or support services, and payment history.

Council will only collect information that is necessary to assess the application and will handle all information in accordance with privacy legislation and Council's privacy policies.

Applicants will be advised of Council's decision in writing, including the reasons for the decision.

A decision about a hardship applications will be made within 20 business days of receipt of the Hardship Assistance Application.

4.2.2 Appeal - Internal Review

Where an applicant is dissatisfied with the outcome of their hardship application, they may request a review of the decision by lodging an Appeal Against Decision – Hardship Assistance application.

The review will be undertaken by an appropriate Council officer who was not involved in the original decision and will consider whether the decision was fair, reasonable and consistent with relevant evidence, policy and legislative requirements.

An internal review will be finalised within 20 business days on receipt of an Appeal Against Decision – Hardship Assistance.

Applicants will be advised of Council's decision in writing, including the reasons for the decision.

4.3 Interest

Unless otherwise specified in this Policy, penalty interest will be charged on overdue rates and charges in accordance with Section 172 of the Local Government Act 1989. Penalty interest is calculated at the maximum rate allowable.

4.4 Debt Recovery

Council will take reasonable steps to recover unpaid rates and charges in accordance with the Local Government Act 1989.

Where payment plans are not maintained and no hardship assistance is in place, council may commence debt recovery action, which may include the use of external collection agencies or legal proceedings.

Where a payment plan has not been successfully completed within the agreed term, any request for a subsequent payment plan will be considered having regard to the ratepayer's circumstances, previous payment history and compliance with prior arrangements. Council may require an alternative arrangement or other appropriate action where a further payment plan is not considered suitable.

Council will not undertake recovery or enforcement action for unpaid rates, charges or interest while a hardship application is being assessed, or where an Appeal Against Decision – Hardship Assistance application has been received. This protection will apply once in relation to an application and will not prevent Council from taking recovery or enforcement action in relation to any subsequent outstanding amount or further period of non-payment.

4.4.1 Sale of Land for Unpaid Rates (Section 181)

Under Section 181 of the Local Government Act, Council has the power to sell land to recover unpaid rates and charges.

Council will only consider exercising this power as a final step, and only where:

- Rates and charges have remained unpaid for at least 3 years ;
- Reasonable attempts to recover the debt have been unsuccessful; and
- No payment plan or hardship assistance is in place.

Any proposal to sell land for unpaid rates will require approval by Council resolution.

5. References

5.1 Knox Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029

5.2 Relevant Legislation

Local Government Act 2020
Local Government Act 1989
Ministerial Guidelines Relating to Payment of Rates and Charges 2025
Penalty Interest Rates Act 1983
Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014

5.3 Charter of Human Rights

This policy has been assessed against and complies with the charter of Human Rights.

5.4 Relevant Council Policies

Instruments of Delegation from Chief Executive Officer to Council Staff
Privacy and Data Protection Policy
Health Records Policy

6. Definitions

Term	Definition
Annual rates and charges	Charges levied on properties annually by Council to fund municipal services. These include property rates, waste service charges, and State Government levy to fund emergency services.
Basic Necessities	Essential daily items and services such as food, housing, and utilities.
Council	Knox City Council, the local government authority responsible for municipal governance and services.

Term	Definition
Deferral of rates and charges	Postponement of payment of rates and charges for an agreed period without penalty interest accruing during the deferral.
Financial Counsellor	A qualified professional providing advice and support to residents experiencing financial hardship. This is a free, independent and confidential service.

Financial Hardship (Person)	Financial difficulty that prevents a resident from paying annual rates and charges without compromising basic necessities for themselves and/or their dependants. Examples of basic necessities are:
	• Essential medical treatment or supplies
	• Essential utility services (including water, energy, internet)
	• Assess to basic living needs including:
	  ○ Food
	  ○ Accommodation
	  ○ Clothing
	  ○ Childcare and education
	  ○ Transport
	  ○ Insurance

Hardship	A broad term that refers to any situation in which a person is struggling. The circumstance may be financial, but can also be social, health, emotional, or situational. The following are some examples of such circumstances: • Medical issues, injury, illness or mental illness of a ratepayer or family member; • Family violence or economic abuse; • Alcohol, drug or substance use; • Family circumstances; • Bereavement; • Natural disasters; • Elder abuse; • Gambling; • Scrams or fraud; • Incarceration. Not all hardship situations result in an inability to pay bills, but it may impact a person's capacity to engage with managing daily life.
Legal Costs	Expenses incurred by Council in recovering unpaid rates and charges through legal proceedings.
Payment Plan	An agreed schedule of regular payments between Council and a ratepayer to clear outstanding rates and charges over an extended period.
Penalty Interest	Interest charged on overdue rates and charges as prescribed under the *Local Government Act 1989*.
Ratepayer	A person or entity liable for the payment of municipal rates and charges under the *Local Government Act 1989 (Vic).*
Residential Properties	Land that is used, or intended to be used, primarily for domestic living purposes. Examples are houses, apartments, townhouses, units, and other dwellings that serve as a person's principal or secondary place of residence.

7. Administrative Updates

From time to time, circumstances may change leading to the need for minor administrative changes to this Policy. Where an update does not materially alter this Policy, such a change may be made administratively on approval of the Chief Financial Officer. Examples of minor administrative changes include change to names of Council departments or positions, change to names of Federal or State Government departments or a minor amendment to legislation that does not have material impact. Where any change or update may materially change the intent of this Policy, it must be considered by Council.

8.8 Procurement Policy

Final Report Destination: Council
Paper Type: For Decision
Author: Procurement Lead, Josh Peroni
Manager: Manager Strategic Property & Procurement, Tim Lawson
Executive: Chief Financial Officer, Navec Lorkin

SUMMARY
Under the Local Government Act 2020, Knox City Council is required to adopt a Procurement Policy that promotes open and fair competition and provides value for money. This Policy is guided by the requirements of section 108 of the Local Government Act 2020 (the Act), which further requires that Council review its Procurement Policy at least once during each 4-year term of the Council. Council's Procurement Policy was last reviewed and endorsed in December 2021.

Officers have undertaken a review of the current Procurement Policy to ensure a revised policy incorporates contemporary practice, while continuing to enable the efficient delivery of Council's services to the community, and develop and maintain infrastructure. The revised Policy, at Attachment 1, continues and strengthens Council's ability to:

- support honest, competitive, fair and transparent procurement;
- deliver best value for money outcomes; and
- incorporate appropriate consideration of Council's social, environmental, economic, and governance objectives.

As part of the Policy review, a Strategic Procurement Framework has been developed to provide operational guidance to staff on end-to-end procurement processes. The Framework will support the practical application while enabling the Policy itself to remain principles-based and focused on governance, legislative obligations and strategic direction. This approach also avoids the need for a formal Council policy amendment process when operational procedures, templates or guidance materials require updating. The Framework will operate as an operational document, allowing it to be updated as required to respond to changing circumstances.

Consultation has been undertaken with key teams and leaders across Council. The draft Policy was also presented to the Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) at its meeting on 27 August 2026, where the Committee expressed its support for the Policy and recommended no amendments.

RECOMMENDATIONS
That Council adopt the revised Procurement Policy as set out in Attachment 1.

1. DISCUSSION

1.1 Legislative context

Section 108 of the Local Government Act 2020 requires Council to adopt a Procurement Policy that governs the purchase of goods and services (including works). The Policy must establish the principles, processes and procedures that apply to procurement activities across the organisation.

The Act requires the Procurement Policy to promote open and fair competition and achieve value for money, and that it specifies:

- The contract value threshold above which a public tender or Expression of Interest is required;
- Circumstances in which goods or services may be sought without a public tender or expression of interest process;
- The process to be followed when conducting a public tender or expression of interest.
- The criteria to be used to assess value for money; and
- How opportunities for collaboration with other councils and public sector bodies will be sought

The Act further requires Council to review its Procurement Policy at least once during each four-year Council term. This provides for a periodic opportunity to ensure the Policy remains contemporary, compliant and aligned with best practice procurement principles.

Whilst under the Act the policy is required to be reviewed every four years, an earlier review may be undertaken as a result of work being undertaken through the Eastern Region Group (ERG) that could result in a proposal for all ERG Councils to adopt the same procurement policy. The ERG Councils comprise five local government areas; Knox, Manningham, Maroondah, Whitehorse and Yarra Ranges. The ERG acts as a unified voice for the area on regional priorities and seeks opportunities for collaborative action.

1.2 Current Procurement Policy

Council's current Procurement Policy (Attachment 2) was adopted in June 2022 and establishes the principles, governance framework, procurement thresholds and procedures governing the procurement of goods, services and works. The Policy applies to all procurement and contracting activities undertaken on behalf of Council and seeks to ensure procurement is conducted in an honest, competitive, fair and transparent manner, while delivering best value for money outcomes and supporting Council's objectives.

While the existing Policy is fit for purpose, the review has highlighted administrative, procedural and process detail in the current Policy. The review has been an opportunity to simplify the Policy by focusing on core principles, with guidance, procedures and process detail incorporated into internal guidance for Council staff.

1.3 Review process and key references

The current Policy has provided an effective governance framework for procurement activities since its adoption. The review has therefore provided an opportunity to refine the Policy. In particular, the current Policy was adopted prior to the release of the Municipal Association of Victoria's updated Victorian Local Government Best Practice Procurement Guidelines (released in 2024). These updated guidelines support Councils to meet legislative obligations under the Local Government Act 2020 while promoting procurement best practice, including value for money,

open and fair competition, accountability, and sustainability. They also support a more consistent approach to procurement activities across the Victorian local government sector. The draft Procurement Policy is a stand-alone document, suitable for Knox Council's specific context, but has been developed with regard to these guidelines.

In addition, the revised Procurement Policy has been informed by:

- Procurement officer expertise and experience;
- Officer review of Policies at comparable Councils;
- Detailed workshops within the strategic procurement team and subject matter experts; and
- Wide organisational consultation with contract managers, key stakeholders and the wider leadership cohort.

These processes have helped shape the draft Procurement Policy (Attachment 1) to reflect better practice, respond to operational requirements across the organisation, and provide a clear governance framework for Council's procurement activities.

1.4 The Procurement Policy and the Eastern Regional Group of Councils
The Eastern Regional Group of Councils (ERG) is looking to standardise key documents and templates across the Councils within the region.

One of those templates up for standardisation is the Procurement Policy. By the next Council term, it is hoped that Council will be moving towards a shared policy with standardised tendering and quotation thresholds with its neighbouring Councils. Standardised procurement can deliver lower costs, lower risk and less duplication of effort across Councils. It can improve value for money through aggregated purchasing power, reduce administrative duplications and strengthen governance, while providing a more consistent and efficient experience for suppliers. This in turn allows Council to focus resources on service delivery rather than procurement processes.

The new policy presented in this report to Council, with its principal-based approach, is a step towards this standardised document.

1.5 Key changes in the draft Procurement Policy
1.5.1 Thresholds and Whole of Life costs
The thresholds for procurement activities were of key interest in the consultation. This was expected, as these thresholds impact the procurement method. The below sets out the differences between the current and proposed thresholds included in the draft Policy.

Procurement Method	Current Policy (2022) (Inclusive of GST)	Draft Policy (Exclusive of GST)	Change
Simple Quotation Process	$0-$10,000	$0-$15,000	Increase of $5,000
Simple Written Quotation Process	$10,001-$50,000	$15,001-$50,000	Lower threshold increased by $5,000
Detailed Written Quote Process	$50,001-Tender Threshold	$50,001-Tender Threshold	No change
Public Tender Process (Goods & Services)	>$250,000	>$250,000	No change

Procurement Method	Current Policy (2022) (Inclusive of GST)	Draft Policy (Exclusive of GST)	Change
Public Tender Process (ICT & Works)	>$500,000	>$500,000	No change

Officers propose increasing the low-value procurement threshold from $10,000 to $15,000 to balance procurement administrative costs against risk and value. Officers present these recommended thresholds and consider they represent a balanced approach, which will improve operational efficiency for lower-value procurements while maintaining appropriate governance controls.

The revised low-value threshold recognises the increasing costs of goods and services since the Policy was last reviewed. This change primarily affects relatively low-risk, routine purchases where administrative effort of obtaining and documenting quotations can outweigh the procurement risk. Raising this improves efficiency without materially changing Council's risk exposure. The draft Policy also proposes GST-exclusive procurement thresholds, aligning with Council's financial systems and procurement practices. As the current Policy uses GST-inclusive thresholds, this change effectively increases the equivalent threshold values by approximately 10% across all procurement categories. This adjustment also recognises changes in the value of money and procurement costs since the thresholds were last set in 2022.

Higher procurement thresholds have been retained as they continue to provide the appropriate level of governance, transparency and market approach methods for medium and high-value procurement activities. Retaining these thresholds ensures Council maintains robust value for money assessments and appropriate oversight for procurements with greater financial, operational and reputational risk. They remain broadly in-line with other eastern regional Councils . This benchmarking also indicates the proposed $15,000 single quotes threshold is consistent with contemporary local government practice, with most comparable councils applying a single-quote procurement threshold of $15,000 or greater.

Additionally, the draft Policy provides more detailed guidance regarding the calculation of procurement value, reinforcing the requirement to consider the total whole-of-life cost of a procurement, including contingencies, implementation costs, optional contract provisions and other costs that may arise over the life of the contract. This is intended to support a more consistent approach to determining procurement values and the appropriate procurement method.

1.5.2 Other key strategic changes proposed in the revised Procurement Policy

Proposed Change	Description and rationale
Policy Framing and Intent	The Purpose and Context sections have been updated to more clearly articulate the role of procurement in enabling delivery of Council's services to the community and develop and maintain infrastructure while conducted in an honest, competitive, fair and transparent manner, delivering best value for money outcomes with consideration of Council's social, environmental, economic and governance objectives.
Updated procurement principles	The principles section remains largely contemporary and appropriate. It has been expanded to reinforce Council's expectations for ethical, sustainable, and effective procurement practices. Key examples include: - Recognising the value of respectful, transparent and constructive engagement with suppliers ("Healthy Supplier Relationships") - Further support for continuous improvement and contract management practices. The Policy has been updated having regard to the MAV Victorian Local Government Best Practice Procurement Guidelines (2024) and contemporary local government procurement practices.
Refocused governance approach	The Policy has been restructured to focus on procurement principles, governance requirements and legislative obligations, with detailed operational procedures relocated to the Strategic Procurement Framework (see section 1.4.4 for details on the Framework). Key examples include: - Where appropriate removal of detailed process requirements where they are administrative in nature rather than principle based. - Stronger emphasis on procurement principles and governance framework underpinning procurement decision making - Direct links to Council's contemporary broader governance framework (such as Conflict-of-Interest procedures, records management and fraud and corruption controls) - Formal establishment of the Strategic Procurement Framework as the primary document for operational procurement guidance, processes and templates, enabling these documents to be updated as required without the need for formal Council policy amendment.
Modernised exemption framework	Exemption provisions have been reviewed and updated to improve clarity, consistency, and alignment with contemporary procurement practices. Key examples include: - clearer exemption categories and supporting descriptions to assist officers in determining when an exemption may be appropriate; - introduction of a dedicated sole-source procurement category, with specific requirements relating to documentation, value for

Proposed Change	Description and rationale
	money and probity considerations; and - expansion of exemption categories to reflect contemporary procurement requirements, including cyber security and digital technology procurements.
Contemporary legislative and governance framework	The Policy has been updated to reflect current legislative requirements and the Council's contemporary governance framework. Key examples include: - continuing and strengthening the established alignment with the Local Government Act 2020, including procurement-related governance and election period obligations; - inclusion of additional legislative references, including the Modern Slavery Act 2018, Worker Screening Act 2020, Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic) and Child Safe Standards 2023; - explicit recognition of Council's fraud and corruption prevention obligations within the procurement governance framework; - introduction of a dedicated policy breaches section to clarify compliance expectations and management of non-compliance; - expansion of child safety obligations for suppliers and third parties engaged by Council; and - stronger alignment with Council's broader governance framework, including conflict of interest, risk management and records management requirements.

1.5.3 Administrative Changes

The revised Policy also incorporates several administrative and housekeeping improvements to enhance clarity, consistency and usability, including:

- Council's contemporary policy template;
- updating policy structure, headings and formatting to improve readability and navigation;
- conversion of monetary values from GST-inclusive to GST-exclusive to align with Council's financial systems and practices;
- updating legislative, policy and governance references throughout the document;
- updating terminology, definitions and procurement language for consistency with contemporary procurement practice;
- replacing references to superseded or outdated Council policies, procedures and governance documents;
- removal of specific delegation limits, with reference instead made to Council's Instruments of Delegation and Register of Delegations to ensure ongoing accuracy; and
- general drafting, formatting and administrative amendments to improve consistency across the document.

1.5.4 Strategic Procurement Framework

During the review of the Procurement Policy, it was noted a lot of procedural information existed in the Policy unnecessarily.

The decision was made to form a separate Strategic Procurement Framework document to assist officers at a more practical, operational level. This allows for greater detail, breakdown of processes and internal document management system references to exist in the document to better support contract managers and the business.

The current Procurement Policy references a 'Strategic Procurement Framework' however, this is a compilation of several Intranet pages rather than a single document.

The Strategic Procurement Framework details:

- Procurement Principles
- Procurement Procedures
    a. Determining thresholds
    b. Timeframes
    c. Process for purchases for each threshold amount
    d. Process for panel contracts established by Council
    e. Process for external panels, including those established by Procurement Australia and the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) and other aggregated panels
    f. Contract Renewal Process
    g. Exemption Process
    h. Any other procedures that are subsequently identified as requiring detailed guidance
- Detailed description of each stage of the procurement process: Planning to Contract Award:

The relocation of operational content to the Strategic Procurement Framework does not remove procurement controls. Rather, it separates strategic policy settings from day-to-day procurement procedures, enabling operational guidance, templates and processes to be updated in response to legislative, organisational and industry changes without requiring a formal Council policy review and adoption process.

Content relocated to the Framework from the Policy

Content Currently in Procurement Policy	**Rationale for Relocation to Strategic Procurement Framework**
Procurement planning requirements, including procurement plans, market approach planning and approval requirements	Operational processes are more appropriately managed through a framework document that can be updated as procurement practices evolve without requiring Council policy amendments.
Market engagement procedures, including quotation and tender administration requirements	These are procedural requirements that require flexibility to respond to changing business needs, technology platforms and procurement practices.
Evaluation methodology, including evaluation criteria, weightings and scoring approaches	Detailed evaluation requirements are operational in nature and are best maintained within supporting procurement guidance and templates. The key governance principles underpinning procurement evaluation remain within the Policy. This includes requirements relating to probity, conflicts of interest,

Content Currently in Procurement Policy	Rationale for Relocation to Strategic Procurement Framework
	confidentiality, value for money, transparency, accountability and compliance with procurement thresholds and approval processes.
Evaluation panel composition requirements	Panel composition should be determined based on procurement risk, complexity and subject matter expertise. Housing this guidance within the Framework provides greater flexibility while maintaining appropriate governance controls.
Tender evaluation and recommendation report requirements	Administrative and operational requirements are more appropriately contained within standard templates, procedures and guidance documents.
Best and Final Offer (BAFO) provisions	BAFO processes represent a procurement methodology rather than a policy position and are therefore more appropriately addressed within operational procurement guidance.
Supplier debriefing requirements	Operational procurement activities are better supported through the Framework, allowing processes to be refined over time without requiring policy amendments.
Contract management requirements	Detailed contract management practices are operational in nature and are better managed through the Framework and associated tools and templates.
Contract variation requirements, including escalation thresholds and approval pathways	Variation management procedures require a level of detail and flexibility more suited to the Framework than a Council Policy.
Panel contract administration requirements	These requirements are subject to changing panel arrangements, supplier markets and procurement methodologies and are therefore more appropriately managed operationally.
Detailed record-keeping requirements	Record-keeping obligations remain within the Policy, while detailed procedural requirements are maintained in operational guidance documents.

2. ENGAGEMENT

The Audit and Risk Committee were provided with the draft Policy at the 27 August 2026 meeting where the Committee expressed its support for the Policy and recommended no amendments.

Given the Policy is primarily legislative in nature and is intended to ensure Council meets its statutory obligations and establishes a framework for compliance, there is limited scope for community input or influence over its content. Accordingly, community engagement is not proposed for this Policy review.

3. SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The revised Procurement Policy supports positive social and economic outcomes through Council's procurement activities. The Policy continues to encourage consideration of local suppliers, social enterprises, Indigenous businesses and broader sustainable procurement outcomes, enabling

Council's purchasing decisions to contribute to community, social and economic benefits where appropriate.

The Policy also supports community confidence in Council's decision-making by reinforcing expectations relating to transparency, accountability, probity and ethical conduct in procurement activities. Updated governance provisions relating to fraud and corruption prevention, child safety obligations and election period requirements further support community expectations that procurement activities are undertaken fairly, consistently and in the public interest.

Improved policy clarity, alignment with contemporary procurement practices and stronger integration with Council's governance framework will assist officers to apply procurement requirements consistently across the organisation, supporting effective stewardship of public funds and delivery of value-for-money outcomes for the community.

4. CLIMATE CHANGE CONSIDERATIONS

Implementation of the recommendation is considered to have no direct implications or has no direct impacts upon Council's Net Zero 2030 target, the Community Net Zero 2040, exposure to climate risks or climate change adaptation.

5. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no environmental impacts directly linked to the recommendation of this report to endorse the draft Procurement Policy.

6. FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

The revised Procurement Policy is not expected to have a material impact on Council's budget or financial position. The proposed increase to the low-value procurement threshold from $10,000 to $15,000 is expected to reduce administrative effort associated with routine, lower-value procurement activities, while maintaining appropriate governance and oversight controls.

The draft Policy also proposes GST-exclusive procurement thresholds, aligning with Council's financial systems and procurement practices. As the current Policy uses GST-inclusive thresholds, this change effectively increases the equivalent threshold values by approximately 10% across all procurement categories. This adjustment also recognises changes in the value of money and procurement costs since the thresholds were last set in 2022 and that this policy has a four-year term.

Any resource impacts associated with implementation of the revised Policy will be managed within existing budgets and staffing resources.

7. RISKS

Risk	Likelihood	Consequ-ence	Treatment
Policy does not adequately meet legislative requirements	Low	Medium	Policy developed with consideration of the LGA, informed by MAV Victorian Local Government Best Practise Procurement Guidelines and benchmarking of comparable Councils. ARC review prior to Council.

Risk	Likelihood	Consequ-ence	Treatment
Policy is not sufficiently clear, resulting in inconsistent procurement practices	Medium	Low	Separate operational framework, staff training, procurement support and guidance.
New procurement thresholds are misunderstood or applied inconsistently	Medium	Low	Internal communications and training and strong guidance in the Procurement Framework. Threshold changes are not materially different from current.
Removal of operational content from the policy creates uncertainty during transition	Medium	Low	Release Procurement Framework concurrently with the policy and provide implementation support.
Changes reduce governance controls or create unintended consequences	Low	High	Benchmarking undertaken, ARC review, ongoing monitoring of procurement outcomes.
Officers continue to rely on previous procurement practices rather than the revised policy	Medium	Medium	Communication, updated templates and procedures, monitoring of compliance. Communication and training associated with the Procurement Framework.

8. COUNCIL AND HEALTH AND WELLBEING PLAN 2025-2029

Leading, listening and governing responsibly
Strategy 4.1 - Council demonstrates its accountability through transparent and responsible decision-making and working together productively.
Strategy 4.5 - Council is financially sustainable through long-term strategic, financial and asset planning, and the responsible prioritisation, allocation and use of resources.

9. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The officers contributing to and responsible for this report have no conflicts of interest requiring disclosure under Chapter 5 of the Governance Rules of Knox City Council.

10. STATEMENT OF COMPATIBILITY

There are no legislative obligations under the Human Rights Charter, Child Safe Standards or the Gender Equity Act that are incompatible with the recommendation in this report.

11. CONFIDENTIALITY

There is no content in this report that meets the definition of confidential information from the Local Government Act 2020.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Attachment 1 - Revised Procurement Policy [**8.8.1** - 17 pages]
2. Attachment 2 - Current Procurement Policy [**8.8.2** - 16 pages]

Procurement Policy

Policy Number:	2009/09	**Directorate:**	Chief Financial Office
Approval by:	Council	**Responsible Officer:**	Manager Strategic Procurement & Property
Approval Date:	TBC	**Version Number:**	Version 11.2
Review Date:	4-years from approval date		

1. Purpose

The Procurement Policy (the "Policy") applies to all procurement activities undertaken by Knox City Council ("Council") and ensures that procurement activities are conducted in an honest, competitive, fair and transparent manner, delivering best value for money outcomes with consideration of Council's social, environmental, economic and governance objectives, to enable the efficient delivery of Council's services to the community and develop and maintain infrastructure.

Council is committed to best value for money, efficient use of resources, transparency, accountability, and continuous improvement in all procurement activities.

2. Context

This Policy provides a structured approach governing procurement activities at Council as required under sections 108 and 109 of the Local Government Act 2020 ("the Act").

Council is committed to full compliance with its obligations under the Act. This Policy specifies Council's principles that govern Council's procurement activities.

In accordance with section 109 of the Act, Council must comply with its Procurement Policy before entering into a contract for the purchases of goods, services or the carrying out of works.

This Policy has been informed by MAV Best Practice Guidelines and aligns with contemporary practice.

3. Scope

3.1 This Policy applies to all procurement activities undertaken by Council and is binding upon all Council Officers, Councillors, Contractors, Consultants and third parties acting on behalf of Council.

3.2 In accordance with the Act, this Policy seeks to ensure open and fair competition and value for money whilst upholding the principles of transparency, probity and accountability.

3.3 Purchases made using a Corporate Purchasing Card are subject to the additional requirements of Council's Corporate Purchasing Card Policy and, where applicable, must also comply with the requirements of this Policy.

3.4 Travel-related goods or services are subject to the requirements of Council's Code of Conduct and Staff Travel Policy and must also comply with the requirements of this Policy.

3.5 All monetary values in this Policy are exclusive of GST.

3.6 This Policy does not apply to:

- salaries, wages, direct payroll payments, superannuation and taxation;
- petty cash reimbursements;
- Leave balance transfers between Councils; or
- The purchase of land or property.

4. Procurement Principles

4.1 In accordance with section 108 of the Act and in line with MAV best practice guidelines, Council has set out the following principles that must be applied to the procurement of goods, services and works in a planned and systematic manner:

- Probity, accountability and transparency
- Value for money
- Consider collaborative procurement opportunities
- Risk management
- Social and sustainable procurement practices
- Healthy supplier relationships
- Continuous improvement.

4.2 Non-allowable items

4.2.1 Council funds must not be used for:

- Travel, entertainment or goods and services for family members and personal associates of staff or councillors
- Personal expenses or purchases of a private nature, including the settlement of parking or traffic infringements.

4.2.2 Election Period

In accordance with section 69 of the Act and Council's Election Period Policy, Council must not make major or inappropriate decisions during the election period for a general election. This includes major procurement decisions that could reasonably be deferred. In particular, Council cannot commit to expenditure exceeding one per cent of the Council's income from general rates, municipal charges and service rates and charges in the preceding financial year.

5. Procurement Activity Thresholds

5.1 In accordance with section 108 of the Act, Table 1 sets out the minimum process(es) to be followed when making a purchase or entering into a contract. If a purchase is deemed as high risk, the goods, services or works are unknown or uncommon, or if a better procurement outcome can be achieved through a higher threshold process, it is recommended a higher threshold process be considered.

The purchase value must consider whole of life costs. The whole of life cost is the full cost across all of

the years of a potential contract, and is inclusive of but not limited to the following:

- Contingencies
- Optional add-ons listed in evaluation recommendation
- External costs associated with contract implementation
- Ongoing management throughout the life of the contract (where applicable)
- Disposal or decommissioning and transition where this is part of the contracted works.

Example: When considering the above for a works contract where an asset is being built, whole of life should include but is not limited to:

- Contingency applied at contract award
- Provisions that could be exercised
- Contract award sum
- Costs that could be incurred in the scope of the works contract.

Table 1: Procurement Method relative to spend

Purchase Value (excl. GST)	Procurement Method Minimum Requirement
$0-$15,000	Simple Quotation Process Minimum of 1 written quote
$15,001-$50,000	Simple Written Quotation Process Minimum of 3 written quotes
$50,001- relevant tender threshold	Detailed written quote process Minimum of 3 detailed quotes in consultation with Strategic Procurement. Procurements up to $100,000 assessed as low-risk by Strategic Procurement may follow the three-quote self-service process.
>$250,000 Goods and Services >$500,000 ICT & Works	Public tender

5.2 General principles

- Thresholds refer to the total contract sum, including extension options and recurrent spend with the same supplier for the same contract.
- Thresholds represent the minimum standards – Council officers may choose a more rigorous approach if it is in the best interests of Council.
- Procurement transactions must not be split to circumvent the above thresholds.
- Where Council has established panels, alternate thresholds and methodologies may apply as approved at the time of panel formation.
- Where it is difficult to obtain sufficient quotations (e.g. due to limited suppliers or specialised work), an approved Procurement Exemption may be applied in accordance with Section 9 of this Policy.

6. Purchase Orders

6.1 A Purchase Order should be used as the method of payment for all purchases other than those exempted below. The purchase order must be raised and approved prior to receipt of any goods or services and invoices should state the purchase order number. All purchases must be raised on Council's finance system. When Council staff are preparing a Purchase Order, unit price amounts must be exclusive of GST.

6.2 Purchase orders are not required for:

- Purchases paid for by corporate credit card;
- Utilities – water, telephone, mobiles, gas, electricity, sewerage charges and Dial before you dig;
- Couriers;
- Australia Post;
- Medical accounts;
- Advertising;
- Ausdoc;
- Legal fees*
- Memberships;
- Subscriptions (excluding ICT);
- Building Regulations Lodgement Fees;
- Temporary Labour Hire;

*Not all legal fees are able to be anticipated; where possible, a quote for legal fees should be sought prior to engagement to effectively manage spend.

7. Procurement Procedures

The Strategic Procurement Framework sits beneath this Policy and provides guidance for procurement activities. Procurement activities must be undertaken in accordance with the value and risk-based requirements provided in this Policy and the Framework.

For tenders, the following process must be followed in line with the Strategic Procurement Framework.

7.1 Planning

The objectives of the planning phase are to ensure:

- Procurement activity meets Council's business needs with consideration of Council's strategic objectives.
- Proper internal and market analysis is undertaken, adequately reflecting market capability and capacity.
- Procurement strategy is defined inclusive of market approach, evaluation criteria and risk management.
- Ensure both the legislative requirements and Council's procurement related policies, framework and procedures are followed and a successful value for money outcome is achieved

- Appropriate authorisation to procure is attained.

7.1.1 Collaboration

In accordance with Section 108 (c) of the Act, Council will actively seek opportunities to collaborate with other councils and public bodies in the procurement of goods, services or works, where such collaboration can deliver economies of scale, improved value for money, or other strategic benefits.

Council officers must give due consideration to collaborative procurement opportunities as part of the planning phase for all procurement activities.

Where a procurement recommendation is brought before Council, the accompanying report must include:

An outline of any potential collaborative procurement opportunities identified, including the public bodies or councils involved; and

A statement outlining the reasons for pursuing, or not pursuing, identified opportunities for collaboration in relation to the procurement process.

7.1.2 Evaluation Criteria and Panel

Council is committed to environmental, local and social economic sustainability and will apply a mandatory minimum evaluation weighting of 10% to at least one of these criteria.

The evaluation criteria, weightings and the evaluation panel must be established prior to market engagement. The criteria must clearly set out the mandatory, commercial and non-mandatory evaluation criteria and meet with Council's value for money requirements.

7.1.3 Value for Money Criteria

In line with the Victorian Auditor General's Office definition of value for money, Council considers value for money as the optimum combination of quality, quantity, risk, timeliness and cost on a whole-of-contract basis.

Value for money is not limited to the cheapest monetary value, Council officers must take into account lifecycle cost such as transaction costs associated with acquiring, implementation, using, storing, maintaining and disposing of goods, services or works, where relevant. As well as non-cost factors that support Council's strategic direction such as:

- fitness for purpose,
- quality and performance,
- timely delivery,
- post-delivery support,
- effective warranty,
- broader community benefits: procurement outcomes that generate positive social, economic, and environmental impacts, including through support of local, social, Indigenous, and inclusive suppliers,
- minimise environmental impact: resource consumption, emissions, waste, and environmental degradation,
- sustainable and ethical procurement: engaging suppliers who demonstrate compliance with fair, ethical, and socially responsible labour practices, and who meet legislative and regulatory

obligations, including workplace safety and modern slavery to employees

- support innovation and reduce duplication.

7.2 Engagement

Public tenders must be published on Council's online tendering portal. All public tenders may also be advertised through additional channels such as state or local newspapers, industry publications, and web-based forums depending on the scale and audience of the procurement.

Suppliers pre-qualified under a panel contract, approved purchasing scheme or collaborative contract (e.g. MAV, Procurement Australia, State Purchase Contracts, Other prescribed arrangement) may be published through another approved third-party system (MAV Portal, Procurement Australia portal and/or another method specified by the Strategic Procurement team.

7.3 Evaluation

Where an evaluation panel is required, the panel must consist of a minimum of 3 Council staff. The panel composition should reflect the scale, complexity and value of the procurement activity. Where the procurement is a tender, the evaluation panel must include a Council staff member from a team that is not responsible for the contract. All members of the evaluation panel must complete a 'Conflicts of Interest and Confidentiality Statement'.

7.4 Award

An evaluation report is required at the completion of a procurement event (awarded or not) in accordance with the Strategic Procurement Framework, that explains the process undertaken and identifies the preferred respondent(s).

Council standard contract terms and conditions should be used wherever possible. Where standard terms and conditions are not suitable or possible, approval must be obtained from the appropriate financial delegate to proceed. The financial delegate should consider if legal advice is required.

All contract negotiations must be finalised prior to the acceptance of the works, goods or services being procured.

In accordance with the Local Government Act 2020, Council must publish details of awarded tenders that meet or exceed prescribed thresholds on its public website to ensure legislative compliance, transparency, and community awareness.

7.5 Contract Management

Contracts must be managed in accordance with Council's OHS policies and procedures, the Strategic Procurement Framework and this Policy.

All procurement contracts must have a Council staff member assigned as the contract manager. All contract variations must be managed in Council's contract management system, against the original contract.

7.6 Panel Contracts

Council may use contracts established by other councils, government/public bodies, tender agents such as Procurement Australasia (PA) and Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) and contracts established in-house. These are all collectively referred to as Panel Contracts; Contract Managers must abide by the Rules of Use, Buyers Guide or Council's Procurement Framework, whichever is relevant, in the use of the Panel.

Panel contracts cannot be used to purchase works, goods or services that fall outside the scope of the original arrangement. Any other service outside of the original scope would need to be procured via a

different procurement process.

When establishing a new panel contract, a procurement business partner is required to assist in developing rules for utilising the panel on a case-by-case basis, demonstrating how value for money is achieved and consideration given to Council's social, environmental, economic, strategic and governance objectives in the use of the panel and for how long the panel will be used.

8. Procurement Governance

Impartiality must be maintained throughout the procurement process so it can withstand independent scrutiny.

8.1 Conflicts of interest

Conflicts of Interest are defined in sections 127, 128 and 129 of the Act. All persons engaged in procurement activities - including planning, market approach, evaluation of competitive bids and/or the management of contractors - must adhere to this Policy, Council's Governance Rules and *Conflict of Interest Guidelines* and complete a Procurement Conflict of Interest declaration.

In line with Council's Governance Rules and Conflict of Interest Guidelines, Council officers must always act in the public interest. A conflict of interest occurs if a Council officer has a private or personal interest that could improperly influence, or be seen to influence, their decisions or actions. Council officers are responsible for identifying and declaring conflicts of interest.

8.2 Confidentiality - Disclosure of Information

Anyone involved in a procurement activity must maintain confidentiality of the Commercial in Confidence information and confidential information as defined in section 3 of the Act. The commercial interests of existing and potential suppliers must be protected. Confidentiality of information provided by existing and prospective suppliers must be maintained at all times, particularly commercially sensitive material such as, but not limited to prices, discounts, rebates, profit, cost base, manufacturing and sensitive/proprietary product information.

8.3 Probity

Council's procurement activities are to be conducted with integrity and transparency and will:

- Treat potential and existing suppliers with equality and fairness;
- Use consistent and transparent processes;
- Not seek or receive personal gain or advantage;
- Maintain confidentiality of Commercial in Confidence information such as contract prices and other sensitive information;
- Present the highest standards of professionalism and probity;
- Deal with suppliers in an honest and impartial manner;
- Provide all suppliers and prospective suppliers with the same information and equal opportunity;
- Be able to account for all decisions and provide feedback on them so that all decisions are understood and can be subsequently justified;

- Ensure their actions embody the principles of sound financial and risk management; and
- Comply with all legal and policy requirements.

Council staff that are responsible for managing or supervising contracts are prohibited from performing any works under the contract they are supervising.

Discussion with potential suppliers during tender evaluations should not go beyond the extent necessary to resolve doubts on what is being offered by that supplier.

At no stage should any discussion be entered into which could improperly influence the procurement process or negotiation of a contract.

8.4 Probity Advisor

For procurement activities deemed to be of material significance or deemed to be of high risk, a Probity Advisor may be appointed by Strategic Procurement.

Where a requirement for Probity Advisor is nominated in the Procurement Plan, the Probity Advisor will be engaged prior to the commencement of the procurement process.

Where a requirement for Probity advice is nominated during the procurement process, the process will be put on hold and only recommence following the engagement and advice of the Probity Advisor.

8.5 Probity Audit

Any procurement process may be nominated to be the subject of a Probity Audit by suitably qualified independent auditors at the discretion of the CEO or Director.

The Probity Auditors will provide a full report to both the Director and CEO at the conclusion of the Audit, as appropriate.

8.6 Fraud and Corruption Prevention

Council has a zero tolerance for corrupt conduct or fraudulent activities. Procurement activities are recognised as a high-risk area and are subject to heightened oversight and controls. Council is committed to preventing, deterring and detecting fraudulent and corrupt behaviour in the performance of Council activities, as set out in Council's *Fraud and Corruption Control Framework*. Any suspected instances of fraud or corruption must be reported in accordance with Council's established reporting processes.

8.7 Child Safe

In accordance with Council's *Child Wellbeing & Safety Policy*, Council is committed to providing children with a safe, inclusive, and supportive environment in which they can thrive. All Council Staff (i.e. employees, contractors, volunteers, students and Councillors engaged by Council) and third parties engaged by Council, including contractors, agency staff and funded bodies (e.g. grant recipients), are required to comply with the Council's *Child Wellbeing & Safety Policy*, as part of their contractual agreements with Council and are legally responsible for ensuring children and young people are valued, heard and protected from abuse, in accordance with the *Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic)* and the *Child Safe Standards 2023*. Suppliers of services to Council who may have direct or incidental contact with children will be required to comply with child safety legislation and training required by the organisation to meet legislative compliance.

8.8 Record Keeping

All documents and records associated with the purchase of goods, services or works must be uploaded into Council's document management system and managed in line with Council's *Records Management Policy*.

The appropriate detail of documentation should be commensurate with the scale, scope and risk of the procurement.

9. Responsibilities

The Strategic Procurement team is responsible for oversight of procurement activity to ensure compliance with this Policy.

Council staff undertaking procurement must:

9.1 ensure that any purchase orders are generated and approved at the point of commitment to purchase goods, services or building and construction prior to invoice;

9.2 ensure expenditure is recorded in a timely manner i.e. once the services or building and construction have been completed, or the goods have been received, the appropriate Council staff must ensure that the invoice is processed in a timely manner against the relevant purchase order in Council's Finance system;

9.3 ensure all records are stored appropriately in the relevant file in accordance with the Records Management Policy.

9.4 not authorise procurement activities in excess of their financial delegation;

9.5 not split or divide procurement activity to avoid authorisation processes or financial delegation approvals; and

9.6 not approve expenditure that relates to themselves (for example: training, professional development, etc). Expenditure of this nature must be referred to the next higher level of authority for approval;

10. Exemptions

Council recognises that in defined and limited circumstances, procurement activities may be exempt from the standard requirements to seek tenders, quotations or expressions of interest. Exemptions can arise in the following circumstances:

- Where Council expenditure is funded from State or Federal Government grant monies the requirement to comply with Division 2 Section 108 of the Act remains unless there are grant conditions which provide alternative arrangements.
- Should the nature of the requirement and the characteristics of the market be such that it is considered the minimum procurement method required (as per section 5 Procurement Activity Thresholds) is not possible, an exemption may be sought from the Chief Executive Officer.
- Emergency events and post-emergency procurement activities are as defined by the Manager Strategic Procurement and Property or Council's Executive Leadership Team.
- If a state of emergency/disaster/pandemic event is in place within Victoria or Knox, an exemption can be approved by the Chief Executive Officer.

Other circumstances where exemptions can apply:

Exemption	Explanation
Compulsory Statutory Bodies, including Service Authorities	Includes Workcover, third party motor vehicle insurance and common infrastructure managed by monopoly service authorities (including telecommunication, utility infrastructure and VicRoads).
Continuation of supply while Council is at market to ensure continuation of supply of goods, services and works	Allows the continuation of existing supply where the procurement activity to replace the contract has commenced (or is imminent) and where the establishment of an interim short-term arrangement with an alternative supplier would lead to Council achieving lesser value for money or an adverse effect on public interest
Genuine Emergency or Hardship	Allows a contract to be entered into where the CEO or an internally delegated officer, considers it necessary because of an emergency (e.g., to provide immediate response to a natural disaster, declared emergency, etc.)
Professional Services unsuitable for tendering	Allows the procuring of the following engagements: - Legal Services, utilities, Purchase of Land or other as agreed with the Manager Strategic Procurement and Property.
Novated Contract	Where the initial contract was entered into in compliance with the Act and due diligence has been undertaken in respect to the new party
Operating Leases	Where a lessor leases an asset (generally a vehicle or plant and equipment) to the Council and assumes the residual value risk of the vehicle
Information technology resellers and software developers	The expenditure related to purchases from information technology resellers and software developers (e.g. for renewal of software licences/upgrades, etc.) where there is a sole supplier who holds the intellectual property rights to the software
Sole Sourcing	The engagement of a single supplier without seeking competitive offers, permitted only in defined and exceptional circumstances such as where: (a) the market is restricted (e.g. IP ownership, licensing, regulation); (b) no viable alternatives exist following a failed tender; (c) a joint IP arrangement exists; or (d) direct negotiation has been deemed necessary based on a documented market analysis. Sole sourcing must be approved in line with Council's Financial Delegations, fully documented, and demonstrate alignment with value for money, probity, and public interest.

Exemption	Explanation
Cyber Security Digital Technology	Cyber security goods or services where application of standard procurement requirements could reasonably compromise the security of Council's systems, networks or data, or delay the response to an identified security threat or vulnerability. The exemption may also apply to the renewal, extension, upgrade or additional functionality of an established ICT application or system where the system remains fit for purpose and changing providers would result in disproportionate implementation costs, operational disruption, integration or compatibility risks, or other costs that would mean a competitive procurement process is not in the public interest.
Prescribed State and Federal Government Services	For Government services and statutory fees and charges that are mandated, compulsory or legislated.
Other specific Council exemptions	– Engagement of Traditional Owners where the primary purpose is to gather information relating to Aboriginal culturally sensitive issues, including land management considerations pursuant to the Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006 – Additional delivery of goods, services and works that are intended either as replacement parts, extensions or continuing services for existing equipment

10.1 Approval of Exemptions

To obtain an exemption, an Exemption Request must be submitted to the Strategic Procurement team in the appropriate format. The Strategic Procurement team may seek further information from the person requesting the exemption. Where an exemption is sought, no commitment to a supplier may be made until the request is approved. Strategic Procurement must review and endorse the exemption prior to the appropriate delegate reviewing the exemption. Final approval must be made by a Director or CEO depending on value.

11. Delegation Limits

In accordance with the Act, delegations empower the CEO and staff with the authority to make decisions on behalf of Council.

Council has many powers, duties and functions. It is impossible to exercise all these powers through meetings and resolutions. This means Council can choose to delegate the CEO and staff to make decisions and act on its behalf in routine matters.

Financial delegations detail what financial limit (threshold) Council officers are authorised to spend when engaging suppliers. Financial delegations are included in the following:

- Instrument of Delegation from Council to Chief Executive Officer; and

- Instrument of Delegation from the Chief Executive Executive Officer to Council Staff (Sub-Delegation) as detailed in the Register of Delegations found on Council's Website.

The CEO has delegation of $3,000,000.

Council maintains a framework of internal controls over procurement processes including regular internal audit review. Without exception, all transactions above $2,000 must involve at least two council officers.

12. References

12.1 Knox Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029

Theme 4: Leading, listening and governing responsibly

12.2 Relevant Legislation

- Local Government Act 2020
- Modern Slavery Act 2018
- Worker Screening Act 2020
- Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic)
- Child Safe Standards 2023

12.3 Charter of Human Rights

- This Policy has been assessed against and complies with the charter of Human Rights.
- An Equity Impact Assessment has been completed to guide the development of this Policy.

12.4 Related Council Policies and Procedures

- Governance Rules
- Election Period Policy
- Staff Travel Policy
- Councillor Expenses and Support Policy
- Staff Gifts, Benefit's and Hospitality Policy
- Risk Management Policy and Framework
- Corporate Purchasing Card Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Conflict of Interest Guidelines
- Fraud and Corruption Control Framework
- Child Wellbeing & Safety Policy
- Records Management Policy
- Public Register of Delegations
- Disciplinary Policy & Procedure

13. Definitions

Term	Definition
Best Practice	As defined in the MAV Local Government Best Practice Procurement Guidelines or any other document specified by Council.
Chief Executive Officer	As defined in the Local Government Act 2020.
Collaborative procurement	Refers to a pre-established arrangement with a panel of suppliers or contractors, formed through a public tender process in accordance with the Local Government Act 2020 (Vic), associated regulations and relevant procurement thresholds. These arrangements may be established by: • Individual Councils; • A group of Councils or public bodies working collaboratively; or • Recognised external agents such as Procurement Australia, Municipal Association of Victoria or State Government Agencies. Collaborative procurement allows Councils to procure goods, services, or works without undertaking a full tender process, provided the engagement complies with the scheme's terms and conditions.
Commercial in confidence information	Information that, if released, may prejudice the business dealings of a party (for example, discounts, rebates, profits, methodologies and process information). It is information provided for a specific purpose that is not to be used for any other purpose than set out in the initial document.
Competitive bid	A structured procurement process where multiple suppliers or contractors submit offers to provide goods, works or services based on a defined scope.
Confidential Information	As defined in the Local Government Act 2020.
Conflicts of Interest	Any general or material conflict as defined in sections 127–128 of the Local Government Act 2020, where personal, professional or financial interests may, or may appear to, influence impartial decision-making.
Contract Management	The process that ensures all parties to a contract fully meet their respective obligations as efficiently and effectively as possible, to deliver the contract objectives.
Corruption	The dishonest activity in which a person to whom the Policy applies acts contrary to the interests of Council and abuses their position of trust in order to achieve some personal gain or advantage for themselves or for another person or entity or to disadvantage Council.
Council	Knox City Council

Council Officer	Any employee of Council, whether permanent, temporary, full-time, part-time or casual, and any volunteer, student, contractor, consultant or anyone who works in any other capacity for Council.
Councillor	The individuals holding the office of a member of Knox City Council as defined in the Local Government Act 2020.
Election Period	As defined in the Local Government Act 2020, means the period that- a) Starts at the time that nominations close on nomination day; and b) Ends at 6 pm on election day.
Financial Delegation	Financial delegations detail what financial limit (threshold) Council Staff are authorised to spend when engaging suppliers. Financial delegations are an instrument of delegation.
Fraud	The dishonest activity causing actual or potential loss to the Council (including theft of money or other property) and where deception is used at the time, immediately before or following the activity. Inclusive of the deliberate falsification, concealment, destruction or use of (or intention to use) falsified documentation and the improper use of information or position for personal financial benefit.
Goods	Tangible items or property that can be purchased, supplied or contracted for. This includes everything from office supplies, IT equipment, and furniture to vehicles, machinery, and real property.
Goods and Services Tax (GST)	The Goods and Services Tax, as defined by *A New Tax System Act 1999*
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
Market Approach	The process used to invite offers from suppliers, including a request for quotation, expression of interest, request for tender, request for information or similar process.
Panel contract	A panel contract (or standing offer arrangement) is a procurement method where a Council selects multiple suppliers through a tender process for works, goods and services on a regular basis over a specified time. They allow Council staff to purchase from these panel suppliers without a public procurement process for each individual purchase.
Probity	Probity is the evidence of ethical behaviour, and can be defined as complete and confirmed integrity, uprightness, and honesty in a particular process. Probity is a defensible process which can withstand internal and external scrutiny, which achieves both accountability and transparency, providing respondents with fair and equitable treatment.

Procurement activities	Refers to the end-to-end processes of acquiring external goods, services, and works. It encompasses the entire lifecycle, from initial planning and concept development through to contract completion, asset disposal, or the conclusion of a service. Procurement also includes the organisational structures, governance, and compliance frameworks that support and guide procurement activities within the Council operations.
Purchase order	A purchase order is a formal document Council sends to a supplier to authorise a purchase. It outlines what Council would like to receive and ensures the goods and/or services ordered are the ones delivered. A purchase order matches a tax invoice and helps an efficient approval and payment process.
Services	Activities, programs or functions delivered by a Council or on behalf of Council for the benefit of the community.
Superintendent	The officer appointed to the position as the superintendent in a contract overseeing Council's interests. The Superintendent is the financial delegate unless the financial delegate is Council or the CEO, in which case the Superintendent will be the Director of the corresponding area.
The Act	The Local Government Act 2020
The Policy	The Procurement Policy
Value for money	The optimum combination of quality, quantity, risk, timeliness and cost on a whole-of-contract and whole-of-asset-life basis with consideration of Council's social, environmental, economic, strategic and governance objectives.
Whole of Life Costs	Including transitioning-in, the contract term and the transitioning-out phases of the relationship between the Council and the respondent.
Works	Construction, demolition or maintenance of infrastructure or physical improvements carried out by or on behalf of Council. Such as roads, bridges, retaining walls, installation of fittings (electrical wiring, heating, ventilation, drainage), tiling, plumbing, carpentry, roofing and guttering. As per the Department of Treasury and Finance, Public Construction – Guidance 1.3b, Design, engineering, surveying, architectural services construction and project management services directly tied to delivering construction works are considered "Construction Services" and fall under the works procurement category, whereas unrelated services (e.g., legal or commercial advice) do not.

14. Breaches

Minor or administrative non-compliance will be addressed by relevant Council staff in leadership positions, with a focus on education and corrective action.

Where serious or repeated breaches to Procurement Policy or published procurement processes, or matters involving probity, integrity, or public interest concerns are identified, these will be escalated to the appropriate Senior Leadership Team member for investigation and action. Corrective action will be taken immediately where appropriate in accordance with the Code of Conduct for Employees. Where conduct involves suspected fraud, corruption, bribery breaches of applicable legislation, the matter may be referenced to the relevant authority and result in civil or criminal penalties.

15. Administrative Updates

This Policy will be reviewed at least once every four (4) years in accordance with the Local Government Act 2020 (Vic), or earlier if required.

From time to time, circumstances may change leading to the need for minor administrative changes to this Policy. Where an update does not materially alter this Policy, such a change may be made administratively on approval of the Chief Financial Officer. Examples of minor administrative changes include change to names of Council departments or positions, change to names of Federal or State Government departments or a minor amendment to legislation that does not have material impact. Where any change or update may materially change the intent of this Policy, it must be considered by Council.

Policy

Procurement Policy

Policy Number:	2009/08	Directorate:	Chief Financial Office
Approval by:	Council	Responsible Officer:	Manager Strategic Procurement & Property
Approval Date:	27 June 2022	Version Number:	Version 11.1
Review Date:	27 June 2026		

1 Purpose

This Policy ensures that the procurement activity of Knox City Council is conducted in an honest, competitive, fair and transparent manner, delivering best value for money outcomes with consideration of Council's social, environmental, economic and governance objectives; the quadruple bottom line.

Knox City Council is committed to the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people. All employees, contractors and volunteers engaged by Knox City Council are legally responsible for ensuring children and young people are valued, heard and protected from abuse, in accordance with the Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic) and the Child Safe Standards 2023. Suppliers of services to Knox City Council who may have direct or incidental contact with children will be required to comply with child safety legislation.

2 Scope

This Policy applies to all procurement and contracting activities for and on behalf of Council and is binding upon Councillors and Council staff, including temporary employees.

All values in this Policy are to be inclusive of GST.

ICT Workstation purchases (including PCs, laptops and related equipment, but not furniture) must be made through the IT Service Desk including copier, printer and scanner purchases, unless an exemption has been provided by the Chief Information Officer (CIO). All information technology software, hardware or services purchased for Council must comply with the ICT processes and be endorsed by the CIO prior to purchase.

This policy does not apply to:

- salaries, wages, direct payroll payments, superannuation and taxation;
- petty cash reimbursements;
- corporate card use;
- Travel related goods or services, (purchases must be made in accordance with the Staff Travel Policy)
- Novated contracts, where the initial contract was entered into in compliance with this policy and due diligence has been undertaken in respect to the new party;
- Leave balance transfers between councils; or
- The purchase of land and property.

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4 Council Policy

4.1 Procurement Principles

The procurement of goods and services is to occur in a planned and systematic manner and must:

4.1.1 deliver value for money taking into account life cycle cost, fitness for purpose, timely delivery, post-delivery support and effective warranty;

4.1.2 meet probity and ethical conduct requirements as specified in relevant Council policies;

4.1.3 promote the principles of continuous improvement in conjunction with sustainability values;

4.1.4 consider collaboration opportunities with other councils and/or public bodies;

4.1.5 embed risk management in the procurement process.

4.2 Non-allowable items

Council funds must not be used for:

4.2.1 travel, entertainment or goods and services for family members and personal associates of staff, unless approved in accordance with the Council Travel Policy.

4.2.2 personal expenses or purchases of a private nature, including the settlement of parking or traffic infringements.

4.3 Purchase Orders

Purchases paid for by corporate credit card must be undertaken in accordance with the Corporate Purchasing Card Policy.

A Purchase Order should be used as the method of payment for all purchases other than those exempted below. The purchase order must be raised and approved prior to receipt of any goods or services and invoices should state the purchase order number. All purchases must be raised on Council's finance system.

When Council staff are preparing a Purchase Order, unit price amounts must be exclusive of GST.

Purchase orders are not required for:

- Utilities – water, telephone, mobiles, gas, electricity, sewerage charges and Telstra Dial before you dig;
- Couriers;
- Australia Post;
- Medical accounts;
- Advertising;
- Ausdoc;
- Legal fees*
- Memberships;
- Subscriptions;
- Building Regulations Lodgement Fees;

- Temporary Labour Hire engaged through Comensura;

*Not all legal fees are able to be anticipated; where possible, a quote for legal fees should be sought prior to engagement to effectively manage spend.

4.4 Procurement Procedures

Strategic Procurement provides a Strategic Procurement Framework that sits beneath the policy and provides guidance with processes and templates for procurement processes. Procurement activities must be undertaken in accordance with the value and risk-based requirements provided in the Strategic Procurement Framework.

4.4.1 Planning

The expected life cycle cost of a procurement activity is required to be estimated before a decision on the procurement method is made (Whole of Life). The expected life cycle cost is the maximum value of the proposed contract, including options, extensions, renewals, licences or other mechanisms that may be executed over the life of the contract.

Procurement activity must consider the most appropriate manner to approach the potential supply market (market approach) in accordance with the guidance provided in the Strategic Procurement Framework and the thresholds listed in Item 5 of this Policy: 'Procurement Activity Thresholds'. A procurement activity must not be divided into separate parts or 'split' to avoid a market approach process or to reduce the level of delegation authorisation.

A procurement plan must be approved prior to commencing a market approach process, in accordance with the Strategic Procurement Framework. All procurement activity must be within the current/adopted budget. The plan must include the evaluation criteria, weighting, the evaluation panel, the anticipated value of the engagement, market engagement strategy and the procurement process. All procurement plans must state consideration to Quadruple Bottom Line (Item 4.7) as well as Collaboration (Item 4.6).

Procurement plans are to be approved by Strategic Procurement and the relevant department Manager unless the relevant Director elects to review and approve it.

4.4.2 Procurement Engagement

All purchases requiring a tender are to be facilitated in conjunction with the Strategic Procurement team.

Council's standard market approach documents must be used unless approval for the use of other documentation is granted by Strategic Procurement. Documents must be developed in accordance with the requirements of the Procurement Framework.

Any market approach request greater than $50,000 must be released and managed through Council's e-tender portal.

All responses to a market approach received by Council must be:

1. uploaded to Council records management system;
2. evaluated in accordance with the pre-established evaluation criteria; and
3. evaluated according to methodology as per the Strategic Procurement Framework.

4.4.3 Evaluation Criteria

The evaluation criteria, weightings and the evaluation panel must be established prior to market engagement. The criteria must clearly set out the mandatory, commercial and non-mandatory evaluation criteria. Council is not obligated to consider submissions that do not meet the mandatory criteria.

The aim of the evaluation process is to select a tender and/or quotation that offers the 'best value for money' to Council while ensuring that all respondents are treated in a fair, equitable and impartial manner.

Council will ensure that the evaluation of tenders and quotations is undertaken on a systematic basis using evaluation criteria identified in the tender documentation.

Council can negotiate with a preferred respondent or bidder to achieve an acceptable outcome, provided it is reflective of the brief or scope advertised.

4.4.4 *Evaluation*

Where an evaluation panel is required, the panel must consist of a minimum of 3 council staff. The panel composition should reflect the scale, complexity and value of the procurement activity. Where the procurement is a tender, the evaluation panel must include a Council staff member from a department that is not responsible for the contract. All members of the evaluation panel must complete a 'Conflicts of Interest and Confidentiality Statement' in accordance with the Strategic Procurement Framework.

Where external technical expertise is required to assist with the evaluation, the expert is able to provide the evaluation panel with advice and input only as a non-voting panel member (Technical Advisor). Any Technical Advisor must sign a conflict of interest declaration and confidentiality agreement, prior to sighting any procurement response documentation.

Council may conduct a shortlisting process. Shortlisted respondents may be invited by the Council to submit a Best and Final Offer.

4.4.5 *Award*

An evaluation report is required at the completion of a procurement event (awarded or not) that explains the process undertaken and identifies the preferred respondent(s).

This report must be approved by the appropriate financial delegate and include:

- the scope of any procurement requirements;
- the internal and external stakeholders;
- the evaluation panel composition;
- declaration/disclosure of conflicts of interest of panel members;
- the procurement process undertaken (market approach);
- a summary of responses received;
- demonstrate diligence and completeness of evaluation against the evaluation criteria;
- assessment of commercial considerations;
- assessment of financial considerations, including budget impacts;
- commercial considerations including contract negotiations;
- any relevant transitional issues; and
- recommendation.

All respondents must have access to a debriefing at an appropriate point in the procurement process. Debriefings are the responsibility of the Council staff member leading and/or facilitating the procurement activity.

Council standard contract terms and conditions should be used wherever possible. Where standard terms and conditions are not suitable or possible, approval must be obtained from the appropriate financial delegate to proceed. The financial delegate should consider if legal advice is required.

All contract negotiations must be finalised prior to the acceptance of the works, goods or services being procured.

4.5 Procurement Governance

Impartiality must be maintained throughout the procurement process so it can withstand public scrutiny.

4.5.1 Conflicts of Interest

Conflicts of Interest are defined in sections 127, 128 and 129 of the Local Government Act 2020. All persons engaged in purchasing- including planning, market approach, evaluation of quotations or tenders and/or the management of contractors- must adhere to this policy and complete a Conflict of Interest and Confidentiality declaration in accordance with the Strategic Procurement Framework.

4.5.2 *Confidentiality*

Anyone involved in a procurement activity must maintain confidentiality of the Commercial in Confidence information. The commercial interests of existing and potential suppliers must be protected. Confidentiality of information provided by existing and prospective suppliers must be maintained at all times, particularly commercially sensitive material such as, but not limited to prices, discounts, rebates, profit, cost base, manufacturing and sensitive/proprietary product information.

4.5.3 *Probity*

Council's procurement activities are to be conducted with integrity and transparency and will:

- treat potential and existing suppliers with equality and fairness;
- use consistent and transparent processes;
- not seek or receive personal gain or advantage;
- maintain confidentiality of Commercial in Confidence information such as contract prices and other sensitive information;
- present the highest standards of professionalism and probity;
- deal with suppliers in an honest and impartial manner;
- provide all suppliers and prospective suppliers with the same information and equal opportunity;
- be able to account for all decisions and provide feedback on them so that all decisions are understood and can be subsequently justified;
- ensure their actions embody the principles of sound financial and risk management; and
- comply with all legal and policy requirements.

Council staff that are responsible for managing or supervising contracts are prohibited from performing any works under the contract they are supervising.

Consultants and contractors that are paid from Council's accounts payable system and not engaged through temporary labour hire or on payroll, are prohibited from undertaking procurement activity on behalf of Council.

Staff previously employed by Council are unable to be engaged as a Contractor for a minimum of 12 months after their last paid date, unless exempted by the CEO.

All staff must complete probity, procurement, contract management and system training prior to undertaking procurement activities, including contract management.

4.5.4 *Probity Advisor*

For tenders deemed to be of material significance or deemed to be of high risk, a Probity Advisor may be appointed by Strategic Procurement.

Where a requirement for Probity Advisor is nominated in the Procurement Plan, the Probity Advisor will be engaged prior to the commencement of the procurement process.

Where a requirement for Probity advice is nominated during the procurement process, the process will be put on hold and only recommence following the engagement and advice of the Probity Advisor.

4.5.5 *Probity Auditor*

Any procurement process may be nominated to be the subject of a Probity Audit by suitably qualified independent auditors at the discretion of the CEO or department Director.

The Probity Auditors will provide a full report to both the Director and Chief Executive Officer at the conclusion of the Audit, as appropriate.

4.6 Collaboration

In accordance with Section 108 (c) of the Act, the Council will give consideration to collaboration with other councils and public bodies or utilise Collaborative Procurement Arrangements when procuring goods, services and works to achieve such things as economies of scale, local, social and environmental outcomes and standardising the market approach. This is to be considered within the planning stages of the procurement activity. Collaboration opportunities may be identified by the Strategic Procurement team.

Collaborative procurement is the centralisation of the procurement of goods, services or works which are repetitive and common to multiple organisations, or that are highly complex and benefit from specialisation.

All procurement reports must include explanation if a collaboration activity was not undertaken.

4.7 Quadruple Bottom Line

Council is committed to environmental, local and social economic sustainability and will apply a mandatory minimum evaluation weighting of 10% to at least one of these criterion.

Council officers must consider how to apply the weighting to their purchase and are encouraged to apply as many of these considerations as possible.

Where appropriate, Council will target organisations to participate in selective quotation processes e.g. ensuring local, social, indigenous or green enterprises. Strategic Procurement will progressively develop these procurement channels for the organisation.

Council evaluation will give preference to:

4.7.1 purchase or use of recycled and environmentally preferable products;

4.7.2 goods with relevant ecolabels and certification.

4.7.3 purchase of goods, machinery or material manufactured in Australia and New Zealand;

4.7.4 purchases from social enterprises;

4.7.5 positive gender equality and diversity impacts;

4.7.6 indigenous suppliers; and

4.7.7 local suppliers.

For all procurement processes valued at less than $50,000, Council purchasers are to endeavour to engage a local, social or indigenous supplier in the first instance.

4.8 Contract Development, Execution and Management

Contract periods for procurement activities of a long-term nature should generally be set at three years, with two further one-year extensions. Wherever possible, contract extensions defined in contracts must be set to occur at the sole discretion of Council.

Contracts must be managed in accordance with Council's OHS policies and procedures, the Council Contract Management Manual and this Policy.

All procurement contracts must have a Council staff member assigned as the contract manager.

All contract variations must be managed in Council's contract management system, against the original contract.

4.8.1 *Variations*

The financial delegations must be complied with when approving and executing a variation or amendment to a contract. Variations must not be deliberately split to avoid delegation approval. The Delegate must ensure that budget is available for the variation.

Variations to contracts are to be managed in Councils contract management system, following the appropriate internal processes.

Regular reporting on contract variation activity will be provided to the executive management team by Strategic Procurement.

Variations that change the scope of contract by ≥20% may require a new contract to be established.

Activity	Action
The cumulative contract value (all variations + original contract sum) exceeds the original delegation approval authority	The next highest delegation authority must review the contract and approve the variation in order to proceed.
The cumulative contract value (all variations + contract sum) exceeds the threshold for the procurement process undertaken	The delegated authority must review and determine if the variation may proceed
The cumulative contract variations exceed 20% of the contract sum	Where the original contract value is <$250,000, the department manager must review the variations in consultation with Strategic Procurement to determine if a scope change has occurred. Where the original contract value is >$250,000, the Director must review the variations in consultation with Strategic Procurement to determine if a scope change has occurred.
The variation is unbudgeted	The delegated authority must determine if the variation may proceed; following appropriate internal consultation, including the CFO.

4.8.2 *Panel Contracts*

Council may use contracts established by other councils, government/public bodies, tender agents such as Procurement Australasia (PA) and Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) and contracts established in-house. These are all collectively referred to as Panel Contracts.

When establishing a new panel contract, a procurement report is required, demonstrating value for money is achieved in the use of the panel and for how long the panel will be used.

Where Council has established access to a panel contract, staff must seek and obtain a minimum of three quotes within the panel and provide sufficient justification for the selection of the supplier – such as price and availability, within Council's finance system.

Where the panel consists of less than three suitable suppliers, a quote should be obtained from all suppliers on the panel. Sufficient justification for the selection of the supplier is required to be provided within Council's finance system.

4.9 Responsibilities

The Strategic Procurement team is responsible for oversight of procurement activity to ensure compliance with this Policy.

Staff undertaking purchasing must:

4.9.1 not authorise procurement activities in excess of their financial delegation;

4.9.2 not split or divide purchasing activity to avoid authorisation processes or financial delegation approvals;

4.9.3 not approve expenditure that relates to themselves (for example: training, professional development, etc). Expenditure of this nature must be referred to the next higher level of authority for approval;

4.9.4 ensure that any purchase orders are generated and approved at the point of commitment to purchase goods, services or building and construction – prior to invoice;

4.9.5 Expenditure must be recorded in a timely manner i.e. once the services or building and construction have been completed, or the goods have been received, the appropriate Council staff must ensure that the invoice is processed in a timely manner against the relevant purchase order in Council's Finance system; and

4.9.6 Ensure all records are stored appropriately in the relevant file in accordance with the Records Policy

All council staff are responsible for ensuring that they comply with this Policy.

4.10 Exemptions

A Director or CEO may grant exemptions to the procurement requirements, upon receipt of a completed Exemption Request, in the following circumstances:

4.10.1 there is only one available supplier in Australia, where specialist expertise is required, or where the goods or services can only be supplied by a particular supplier and no reasonable alternative or substitute goods or services exist;

4.10.2 engagement of Traditional Owners where the primary purpose of the procurement activity involves services or information relating to Aboriginal culturally sensitive issues, including land management considerations pursuant to the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006 (Vic)*;

4.10.3 no responses from a market approach process are received from suppliers, or responses do not conform to the request documentation, or are deemed to be unsuitable;

4.10.4 the goods or services cannot be obtained in time under the required processes because they are urgently required ('urgent' applies to health, security or safety consequences or

critical incidents, unforeseen events or occurrences only);

4.10.5 software upgrades or licensing of proprietary IT software or products (i.e. where a change in supplier would necessitate the procurement of goods and services that do not meet current operability or changeability requirements) - provided a review of performance and suitability has been conducted by the IT department and is included with the exemption request;

4.10.6 a State Government purchasing contract, approved purchasing schemes, aggregated supplier or tender agent contracts, such as Procurement Australasia and Municipal Association Victoria. This includes Councils and public bodies, the Construction Supplier Register (CSR) and e-Services panel- provided that the market approach complies with The Act;

4.10.7 The procurement of goods or services from a particular supplier is specified as part of a government grant or similar arrangement;

4.10.8 Professional services unsuitable for tendering – e.g. legal services and insurances (excluding brokerage services); however, quotation engagement is still required; and

4.10.9 or other exceptional circumstances as determined by the Chief Executive Officer.

Exemption from the Procurement policy and procedure requirements only applies to the market approach process, and does not exempt the procurement activity from financial delegation, legal, commercial, risk management or approval processes.

A record of approved exemptions is to be maintained and regularly reported to the CEO.

4.11 Approval of Exemptions

To obtain an exemption, an Exemption Request must be submitted to the Strategic Procurement team in the appropriate format.

The Strategic Procurement team may seek further information from the person requesting the exemption.

Strategic Procurement must endorse the exemption prior to the appropriate delegate reviewing the exemption.

Where an exemption is sought, no commitment to a supplier may be made until the request is approved.

4.12 Record Keeping

All documents and records associated with the purchase of goods or services must be uploaded into Council document management system.

The appropriate detail of documentation should be commensurate with the scale, scope and risk of the procurement. Documentation should provide accurate and concise information on the following as a minimum:

4.12.1 the requirement for the procurement;

4.12.2 the process that was followed;

4.12.3 the market approach documents and any supplier responses to a market approach;

4.12.4 how value for money was considered and achieved;

4.12.5 reports containing relevant decisions and the basis of those decisions;

4.12.6 the contract;

4.12.7 all communications, including debriefings, with suppliers during the procurement activity; and

4.12.8 all communication and decisions during the term of the contract.

Council must maintain appropriate documentation with the supplier, such as a written contract or purchase order.

5 Procurement Activity Thresholds

The following table sets out the minimum process(es) to be followed when making a purchase or entering into a contract. If a purchase is deemed as high risk, the goods or services are unknown or uncommon, or if a better procurement outcome can be achieved through a higher threshold process, it is recommended a higher threshold process be followed.

The purchase value must consider Whole of Life costs.

Value of Purchase (incl. GST)	Procurement Method Minimum requirement
$0-$10,000	Simple Quotation Process Minimum of 1 quote
$10,001-$50,000	Simple Written Quotation Process Minimum of 3 written quotes
$50,001-tender threshold	Detailed written quote process Minimum of 3 detailed quotes conducted through the Council tender portal
>$250,000 Goods and Services >$500,000 ICT & Works	Public tender process

6 Delegation Limits

Council approves the delegations to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO). The CEO authorises delegations to Council officers, which are recorded in the delegation register, separate to this document.

The CEO has delegation of $3,000,000.

Council maintains a framework of internal controls over procurement processes including regular internal audit review. Without exception, all transactions above $2,000 must involve at least two council officers.

7 Definitions

For the purpose of this Policy:

Act	The *Local Government Act* 2020.
Best and Final Offer	A stage of a multi-stage procurement process where respondents submit their best and final offer. A Best and Final Offer can only occur once in a procurement process.
Collaborative Procurement	The procurement process involving other Councils or public bodies, conducted by or on behalf of Council.
Council	Means Knox City Council, whether constituted before or after the commencement of this Policy.
Community Group(s)	Means a legal entity who provide services, support or activities to the Knox community.
Goods and Services	The supply of equipment, consumables and like items, or the provision of services.
Director	A member of the Executive Management Team
ICT	Information and Communications Technology.
Indigenous Business	The Victorian Government defines an Indigenous business as a business that is "at least 50% owned by Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islands person(s), undertaking a commercial activity and the main business location is in Victoria."
Individual(s)	Means a resident(s) of the Knox Municipality.
Local Business	A commercial business operating within the Knox municipality.
Market Approach	the process used to invite offers from suppliers, including a Request for Quotation, Expression of Interest, Request for Tender, Request for Information or similar process.
Probity	The integrity, completeness and honesty in the context of procurement process; ensuring transparency and accountability for the outcomes.
Probity Advisor	A suitably knowledgeable person or organisation that provides advice on probity considerations. The advisor may be an internal or external resource, depending on the skill and knowledge required.
Probity Auditor	A suitably qualified or experienced person or organisation that checks and confirms the procurement process has been managed in a transparent and fair manner. The auditor may be an internal or external resource, depending on the skill and knowledge required.
Procurement Plan	The written plan detailing the evaluation process, criteria, weightings and panel for the proposed procurement activity. A template is provided in the Strategic Procurement Framework.
Procurement Report	The written report detailing the consideration and evaluation of the procurement activity undertaken in accordance with the Procurement Plan and seeks approval of a panel recommendation. A template is provided in the Strategic Procurement Framework.
Respondent	An external individual, partnership or company submitting a response or quote for a Council procurement process.

Social Enterprise	The Victorian Government defines Social Enterprises as "businesses that trade to intentionally tackle social problems, improve communities, provide people access to employment and training, or help the environment. They derive most of their income from trade (not donations or grants) and use the majority of their profits (at least 50%) to contribute to their social mission."
Strategic Procurement	The team/service area that coordinates the Councils strategic procurement activities and acts as an advisory body for procurement matters.
Strategic Procurement Framework	Strategic Procurement provides a Strategic Procurement Framework sits beneath the policy and provides guidance with processes and templates for procurement processes. Procurement activities must be undertaken in accordance with the value and risk-based requirements provided in the Strategic Procurement Framework.
Supplier	an external individual, partnership or company engaged to provide goods and services to Council.
Technical Advisor	Provides technical advice to the evaluation panel to consider as part of their evaluation. The technical advisor is non-voting.
Value for Money	a process for assessing the best outcome from a market approach activity that assesses the capabilities and competencies of each supplier against the price submitted by each supplier. It takes into account financial and non-financial factors including price, the total life cycle consideration, environmental, social and economic factors.
Works	Where the purchase relates to the construction of fixed assets and infrastructure, such as roads, gardens and
Whole of Life	the full cost of the goods or services purchased including but not limited to planning, development, implementation, ongoing management, maintenance, disposal, decommissioning and transition. The life cycle cost is the full cost across all of the years of a potential contract.

8 References

Community Plan 2021-2031 and Council Plan 2021-2025

- Strategy 5.3 – Ensure our processes are transparent and decisions are accountable

Relevant Legislation

- Local Government Act 2020
- Competition and Consumer Act 2010
- Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006
- Goods Act 1958

Charter of Human Rights

- This policy has been assessed against and complies with the charter of Human Rights.

Related Council Policies

- Corporate Purchasing Card Policy
- Child Safe Policy
- Fraud Policy
- Gifts and Hospitality (Staff and Official Representatives of Council) Policy
- Protected Disclosure Policy

- Staff Travel Policy
- Funding Allocation Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Disciplinary Policy
- Records Management Policy

Related Council Procedures

- Employment of Labour Hire Services Procedures
- Protected Disclosure Procedures
- Capital Works Program Authorisation Process

Other Documents

- Strategic Procurement Framework
- Authorisation Register
- Delegations Register
- Victorian Local Government Best Practice Procurement Guidelines
- Council Climate Response Plan 2021-2031

9 Administrative Updates

From time to time, circumstances may change leading to the need for minor administrative changes to this policy. Where an update does not materially alter this policy, such a change may be made administratively. Examples of minor administrative changes include changes to names of Council departments or positions, change to names of Federal or State Government departments or a minor amendment to legislation that does not have material impact. Where any change or update may materially change the intent of this policy, it must be considered by Council.

8.9 Sale of Council Land and Buildings Policy Review

Final Report Destination: Council
Paper Type: For Decision
Author: Coordinator Property Management, Flora Westcott
Manager: Manager Strategic Property & Procurement, Tim Lawson
Executive: Chief Financial Officer, Navec Lorkin

SUMMARY
Knox City Council manages a significant portfolio of land and buildings that supports community services, open space, infrastructure and operational requirements. Decisions regarding retention or disposal of these assets require careful consideration of service needs, community benefit, environmental and amenity outcomes, financial implications, risks and legislative requirements.

The Sale of Land and Buildings Policy was last revised in 2021. Officers have completed a comprehensive review to ensure the Policy remains aligned with current legislative requirements, contemporary governance practices and Council's strategic objectives. The review found that the existing Policy remains fit for purpose, with only targeted amendments required to improve clarity, refine the assessment principles and reflect the contemporary legislative context.

The draft Policy retains the core intent of the existing Policy, while introducing several refinements. Key changes include:

- Consolidation and clarification of the principles-based assessment framework, including integration of the tree reserve criteria,
- Consideration of rezoning and Windfall Gains Tax implications, and
- Removal of mandatory reliance on the 2009 Local Government Best Practice Guidelines for the Sale, Exchange and Transfer of Land.

The revised Policy does not identify any property for sale. Decisions regarding individual properties will continue to be made by Council following assessment against the Policy and completion of applicable statutory and community engagement requirements.

This report presents the revised Sale of Council Land and Building Policy for Council adoption.

RECOMMENDATION
That Council adopt the revised Sale of Council Land and Building Policy as set out in Attachment 1.

1. DISCUSSION

1.1 Background
Council's current Sale of Land and Buildings Policy (“the Policy”) was last reviewed in 2021. The Policy provides a framework for Council to assess whether land and buildings should be retained for current or future Council purposes or considered for disposal. It establishes the principles and decision-making process used to evaluate land and building assets, ensuring all relevant considerations are taken into account and Council’s legislative obligations are met when making decisions.

A review of the existing Policy found it remains fit for purpose and continues to provide an appropriate framework for the assessment and disposal of Council-owned land and buildings. As such, the revised Policy largely retains the intent and operation of the existing Policy, with the fundamental considerations informing Council's decision-making remaining substantially unchanged.

A number of opportunities were identified to improve clarity, refine the assessment principles and reflect the contemporary legislative context. These amendments are intended to improve the usability and application of the Policy while maintaining Council's existing approach to assessing whether land and buildings are required for current or future Council purposes.

The revised Policy incorporates targeted amendments. The principal changes are:

- Consolidation and clarification of the principles-based assessment framework, including integration of the tree reserve criteria,
- Consideration of rezoning and Windfall Gains Tax implications, and
- Removal of mandatory reliance on the 2009 Local Government Best Practice Guidelines for the Sale, Exchange and Transfer of Land.

The remaining amendments are primarily administrative, legislative and structural in nature.

The Policy remains supported by operational and procedural guidance maintained by the Property team, including the Strategic Property Prioritisation Framework, adopted by Council in August 2024, which provides the detailed assessment information to evaluate individual properties.

1.2 Key changes from existing policy

1.2.1 Updated Principles

The updated principles continue to reflect the considerations contained in the current Policy (Attachment 2), with revisions primarily focused on consolidating related criteria, reducing duplication and updating terminology. While the structure of the principles has been refined, the underlying intent and assessment considerations remain substantially unchanged.

Table 1 Comparison of Principles from current to updated policy

Current Principle	Updated Principle(s)	Commentary
Economic	1) Economic Efficiency	Refocused from a predominantly financial assessment to consideration of both financial efficiency and public value, recognising that retention decisions should balance financial outcomes with community benefit.
Change in Service Delivery Needs	2) Current Service Need; 6) Future Provision	Split into separate principles to distinguish between current operational needs and longer-term service, infrastructure and strategic requirements, ensuring both are considered independently.
Building Condition	2) Current Service Need; 3) Future Provision	Integrated into the assessment framework to ensure asset condition is considered in the context of both current service requirements and future maintenance, renewal and upgrade needs.

Current Principle	Updated Principle(s)	Commentary
Environment	4) Environmental Value	Retained, with clearer articulation of the environmental values that may justify retention of land, including trees, vegetation, habitat and other environmental outcomes. This value also reflects the considerations previously used exclusively for considering tree reserves (see section 1.2.2 for additional information on changes to considerations around tree reserves)
Physical Works	3) Future Provision	Expanded beyond planned physical works to consider the future role of land in supporting infrastructure, service delivery and strategic objectives.
Recreation	2) Current Service Need; 3) Future Provision	Incorporated into broader consideration of current and future community needs, recognising that recreation is one of a range of community outcomes supported by Council land.
Land Use Planning	6) Legal, Statutory and Planning Considerations	Incorporated into a broader assessment of legal, planning, title and statutory constraints that may affect the retention, use or disposal of land.
Social	2) Current Service Need; 5) Public Realm, Heritage and Amenity 3) Future Provision;	Broadened the focus from identifying alternative social uses to recognise the many social impacts Council owned land and buildings can have.
Intergenerational Needs	3) Future Provision;	Retained and broadened to add in consideration of the future role of land in supporting infrastructure, service delivery and strategic objectives.
Heritage and Cultural Value	5) Public Realm, Heritage and Amenity	Retained and expanded to ensure Council can consider a wide range of potential impacts
Risk	7) Risks, Constraints and Obligations	Expanded to recognise that retention and disposal decisions may give rise not only to risks, but also to legal, statutory, contractual and other obligations and constraints.

1.2.2 Principles relating to the sale of Tree Reserves

Tree Reserves are typically created on a Plan of Subdivision and set aside for the purpose of retaining, protecting, or managing trees and vegetation. A reserve is a parcel of land that has been set aside for a specific purpose, rather than as an ordinary private lot. Tree reserves are created for a variety of reasons, including:

- Visual screening between residential land and other areas (e.g. industrial or commercial use)

- Noise buffering, where vegetation helps soften the impact of major roads
- Retention of established trees that existed before subdivision
- Environmental protection including biodiversity and habitat values
- Neighbourhood character and amenity

Figure 1 shows a Tree Reserve created as part of a residential subdivision. While the title does not describe the purpose of the reserve beyond its identification as a Tree Reserve, the reservation of this land has provided visual screening and noise attenuation from Wellington Road, retained existing vegetation, contributed to environmental protection, and enhanced neighbourhood amenity.

Figure 1 – GIS image of tree reserve behind 1-11 Yvette Drive, Rowville



The sale of Tree Reserves is relatively uncommon and, given they are created for specific purposes, requires careful consideration of the role the reserve continues to perform. Council may consider the disposal of a Tree Reserve where it determines that the land is no longer required for the purpose for which it was reserved (for example, where the trees the reserve was intended to protect have been lost through decline, disease or storm damage), or where the public benefits of disposal outweigh the benefits of retention (for example, where disposal of a small isolated parcel would facilitate a broader project delivering a demonstrable community benefit).

The existing Policy contains a separate set of assessment criteria for Tree Reserves in recognition of the environmental, amenity and land use considerations commonly associated with this type of land. These criteria include a number of detailed technical assessment questions (see Table 2). As part of the review, officers considered both the purpose of the Tree Reserve provisions and the nature of the assessment criteria themselves. This review identified that the criteria were primarily directed towards broader considerations such as environmental value, neighbourhood amenity, public safety, access, infrastructure requirements, future service needs and strategic planning outcomes. While these matters commonly arise in relation to Tree Reserves, they are not unique to Tree Reserves and may arise in relation to any Council-owned land.

The review also identified that Tree Reserves are only one category of reserve land held by Council. Other reserves may be held for purposes such as drainage, access, open space, conservation, infrastructure or other public purposes. Applying a separate assessment framework to Tree Reserves meant that issues such as environmental value, amenity, access and future service needs were assessed differently depending on the classification of the land, rather than through a consistent framework applied to all Council-owned land.

The draft Policy has therefore been developed to ensure that the factors previously considered through the Tree Reserve provisions continue to be assessed through a broader principles-based framework that applies consistently to all Council-owned land. Table 2 demonstrates how each of the former Tree Reserve criteria is addressed through one or more of the revised assessment principles. The revised Policy does not diminish consideration of the issues historically assessed through the Tree Reserve provisions. Instead, it integrates those considerations within a broader principles-based framework that applies consistently to all Council-owned land.

Table 2 Tree reserve criteria

Existing Tree Reserve Criteria	Nature of the Criteria	Principle in Updated Policy
Will it create blind areas? Will it increase natural surveillance?	Site-specific public safety and amenity assessment.	5. Public Realm, Heritage and Amenity; 7. Risks, Constraints and Obligations
Do VicRoads object? Will it create traffic safety issues? Will it result in additional crossovers?	Traffic, access, safety and statutory assessment.	5. Public Realm, Heritage and Amenity; 6. Legal, Statutory and Planning Considerations; 7. Risks, Constraints and Obligations
Does it support preferred neighbourhood character?	Strategic planning and amenity assessment.	5. Public Realm, Heritage and Amenity
What role does it play in the open space network?	Assessment of current and future community function and strategic land use value.	2. Current Service Need; 3. Future Provision
What is the significance of street trees?	Environmental and landscape value assessment.	4. Environmental Value; 5. Public Realm, Heritage and Amenity
Will it result in additional infrastructure or maintenance costs?	Financial and asset management assessment.	1. Economic Efficiency; 3. Future Provision
Is it required for future infrastructure?	Strategic infrastructure and service planning assessment.	3. Future Provision
Does it involve loss of vegetation or habitat?	Environmental impact assessment.	4. Environmental Value
Is it consistent with Council strategies and plans?	Strategic, policy and statutory assessment.	2. Current Service Need; 6. Legal, Statutory and Planning Considerations; 3. Future Provision
Is existing access already adequate?	Access, connectivity and functional assessment.	5. Public Realm, Heritage and Amenity; 6. Legal, Statutory and Planning Considerations

1.2.3 Updated approach to applying Local Government Best Practice Guidelines for the Sale, Exchange and Transfer of Land (2009).

The draft Policy removes the requirement to comply with the Local Government Best Practice Guidelines for the Sale, Exchange and Transfer of Land (2009) ("the Guidelines") as part of every sale process. The Guidelines remain available as a reference resource and may be consulted where relevant.

The Guidelines were developed in 2009 and pre-date the Local Government Act 2020. While they continue to provide useful guidance, they do not reflect the current legislative and governance framework within which Council land disposals occur. They also do not address a range of more contemporary considerations that may arise during land transactions and materially affect the viability or financial outcomes of a proposed disposal, such as the Windfall Gains Tax (which commenced July 2023).

The removal of the requirement to comply with the Guidelines does not result in the removal of the governance principles to which they refer. Matters such as public process, market value, transparency, accountability and the strategic assessment of land proposed for disposal continue to be addressed through the draft Policy and Council's broader legislative and governance framework.

The Guidelines also contain detailed operational guidance relating to the administration of individual property transactions, including valuation practices, sale processes, consultant engagement, due diligence and contaminated land investigations. While these matters remain important, they are operational matters more appropriately managed through procurement processes, professional standards, and transaction-specific legal, valuation and technical advice. Their removal from the Policy does not diminish the governance, due diligence or risk management controls applying to Council land disposals. The Policy has been drafted so that compliance with it is consistent with, and gives effect to, Council's obligations under the Local Government Act 2020.

1.2.4 Other changes from existing Policy

Remaining changes are summarised in Table 3. These primarily comprise legislative updates, clarification of existing requirements, and targeted refinements to support contemporary property governance and decision-making.

Table 3 – Other Changes from Existing Policy

Change Area	Commentary
Differentiation between Market Value and Reserve Price	The draft Policy differentiates between the two concepts and identifies factors Council will consider when setting a reserve price, while maintaining flexibility for Council to respond to the circumstances of individual transactions.
Rezoning and Windfall Gains Tax	Ensures Council can appropriately consider the financial, planning and taxation implications of rezoning when determining the most appropriate disposal strategy.
Decision-Making Process	The draft provides a clearer two-stage decision-making process, to aid in distinguishing between Council determining land is surplus and Council making a final decision to proceed with disposal following completion of statutory requirements.

Change Area	Commentary
Valuation Provisions	The draft provides for valuations to consider both rezoned and existing zoning scenarios, where appropriate.

2. ENGAGEMENT

Community consultation is not proposed as part of the Policy Review. Council's Community Engagement Policy establishes that engagement occurs where feedback has the potential to influence an outcome. The draft Policy is primarily concerned with establishing Council's governance framework and ensuring alignment with legislative requirements, and while there have been some revisions to the wordings of the principles there has been no change to the basic underlying principles guiding disposal assessments. As the Policy does not propose the sale of any specific land and many of its provisions are informed by statutory obligations and governance requirements, the scope for community input to materially influence the content of the Policy is limited.

Community engagement requirements will continue to apply to individual land disposal proposals in accordance with the Local Government Act 2020; this presents an opportunity for the community to have input into the decision-making process for individual disposal decisions.

3. SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The proposed Policy provides a framework for assessing future land and building disposals and does not directly impact any particular community group. Individual disposal proposals will continue to be assessed on their own merits and will remain subject to statutory community engagement requirements where applicable.

The Policy strengthens consideration of current and future community needs by requiring assessment of service delivery impacts, community benefit and long-term public value before disposal is considered. It also retains consideration of environmental, amenity and neighbourhood character outcomes, particularly in relation to Tree Reserves. These requirements support community participation, social cohesion and responsible stewardship of community assets.

4. CLIMATE CHANGE CONSIDERATIONS

Implementation of the recommendation is considered to have no direct implications or has no direct impacts upon Council's Net Zero 2030 target, the Community Net Zero 2040, exposure to climate risks or climate change adaptation.

5. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

The proposed Policy does not directly result in environmental impacts, as it establishes a governance framework rather than authorising the disposal of any specific land or building. Individual disposal proposals will continue to be assessed on a case-by-case basis and in accordance with relevant legislation, including the Planning and Environment Act 1987 and Local Government Act 2020.

The Policy retains consideration of environmental values as part of the assessment process and includes specific principles relating to environmental value, public realm outcomes and neighbourhood amenity when considering disposals. This supports the ongoing protection and consideration of environmental assets as part of Council's decision-making processes.

6. FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

The proposed Policy does not directly result in expenditure, savings or changes to Council's resource requirements. Any financial implications associated with the disposal of individual land or building holdings will be considered and reported to Council on a case-by-case basis.

The Policy provides a consistent framework for assessing land and buildings that are no longer required for current or future Council purposes. Where assets are ultimately disposed of, sale proceeds are available for reinvestment in Council priorities, subject to future Council decisions.

7. RISKS

The proposed Policy supports the management of governance and decision-making risks associated with the disposal of Council-owned land and buildings. The Policy provides a principles-based framework for assessing potential disposals, supported by the Strategic Property Prioritisation Framework, and documents the key assessment and decision-making considerations relevant to disposal proposals. Together, these measures support a consistent, transparent and evidence-based approach to disposal decisions.

Proposals involving the disposal of Council-owned land and buildings may present reputational and community confidence risks, particularly where assets are perceived to have strategic, environmental or community value. The Policy supports management of these risks through compliance with the requirements of the Local Government Act 2020, statutory public notification and submissions processes, consideration of community feedback, and transparent Council decision-making.

Market conditions, planning considerations and taxation arrangements may also influence the outcomes of future disposal proposals. The Policy addresses these matters by providing guidance on valuation requirements, reserve price setting, disposal methods, and planning and taxation considerations, including potential Windfall Gains Tax implications. This supports informed decision-making while allowing Council to respond to the circumstances of individual transactions.

8. COUNCIL AND HEALTH AND WELLBEING PLAN 2025-2029

Leading, listening and governing responsibly

Strategy 4.1 - Council demonstrates its accountability through transparent and responsible decision-making and working together productively.

9. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The officers contributing to and responsible for this report have no conflicts of interest requiring disclosure under Chapter 5 of the Governance Rules of Knox City Council.

10. STATEMENT OF COMPATIBILITY

There are no legislative obligations under the Human Rights Charter, Child Safe Standards or the Gender Equity Act that are incompatible with the recommendation in this report.

11. CONFIDENTIALITY

There is no content in this report that meets the definition of confidential information from the Local Government Act 2020.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Attachment 1 - Draft sale of land and building policy (Nov 2026) [**8.9.1** - 7 pages]
2. Attachment 2 - Current Sale of Land and Buildings Policy [**8.9.2** - 5 pages]

Sale of Land and Buildings Policy

Policy Number:	2024/07	**Directorate:**	CFO
Approval by:	Council	**Responsible Officer:**	Manager Strategic Procurement and Property
Approval Date:	TBC	**Version Number:**	6
Review Date:	4 years from approval date		

1. Purpose

This Sale of Land and Buildings Policy ("Policy") defines Knox City Council's approach to the sale of Council owned property, with or without improvements. It supports Council to:

1.1 optimise the value of property assets to the community, including the evaluation of unused or redundant land or buildings and the realising of the funds tied up in these in order to acquire, develop or improve other assets.

1.2 guide the strategic management of Council's property portfolio for the long-term best interests of the community.

1.3 define the process for identifying and proceeding with the sale of any Council owned land and to identify how the proceeds from land sales are to be allocated.

1.4 ensure sales are in accordance with statutory and legislative requirements.

2. Context

The process for the sale, exchange and transfer of Council land is subject to the *Local Government Act 2020.* This Policy reflects those statutory requirements.

3. Scope

This Policy applies to:

- any Council-owned land or buildings proposed for disposal, with or without improvements.
- all Council staff involved in proposed disposals.

This Policy does not apply to:

- leasing, licensing, or temporary occupation of Council land or buildings.

- property sold by the Council because of non-payment of rates.
- roads, private roads, and right of ways, or road discontinuances prior to a decision about the sale of the discontinued road.
- the sale or disposal of non-land or building assets.

4. Council Policy

4.1 Policy statement

4.1.1. All sales, exchanges and transfers of land are required to comply with the provisions of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

4.1.2 The decision to sell Council owned land is made carefully, considering the current and future needs of the municipality, and maximising public value (both financial and non-financial).

4.1.3 As such, Council owned land will be assessed against the principles in Table 1 to determine whether the land is surplus to Council's current and future requirements and whether disposal is appropriate, having regard to the overall community benefit and public value of retaining or disposing of the land.

4.2 Principles

Council land and buildings must be assessed against the following principles, which provide the rationale for sale or transfer of Council Land and Buildings.

Table 1: Assessment Principles for the Retention or Disposal of Council Land

No.	Principle	Key Considerations
1	**Economic Efficiency**	Whether the financial and opportunity costs of retaining the property are justified by its current or future public value, and whether disposal would enable resources to be redirected to higher priority community outcomes
2	**Current Service Need**	Whether the property is required to support Council's current service delivery, operational activities or statutory functions. Council will consider the current condition of the land and any improvements.
3	**Future Provision**	Whether the property is required to support identified future service delivery, infrastructure, community outcomes or strategic objectives. Council will consider the future maintenance, renewal and upgrade requirements. Council may also consider the context of the surrounding land.
4	**Environmental**	Whether the property provides significant environmental value

No.	Principle	Key Considerations
	Value	through existing trees, vegetation, and habitat, or other environmental outcomes. Council may also consider the context of the surrounding land.
5	**Public Realm, Heritage and Amenity**	Whether retaining or disposing of the land would impact public safety, visibility, pedestrian connectivity, streetscape quality, neighbourhood character, and heritage or cultural values. Council may also consider the context of the surrounding land.
6	**Legal, Statutory and Planning Considerations**	Whether any legal, planning or title or statutory restrictions affect the ability to retain, use, or dispose of the property.
7	**Risks, Constraints and Obligations**	Whether ownership or disposal creates material financial, environmental, safety, heritage, contractual or other risks or obligations, and whether these can be appropriately managed.

4.3 Council Reporting and Decision making

4.3.1 Council will consider a report addressing the principles outlined in Table 1 of this Policy before resolving that:

- the land is surplus to Council's needs, and
- to proceed with the statutory requirements under the *Local Government Act 2020* prior to a potential disposal.

4.3.2 A public notification and consultation process will be undertaken in accordance with the Act and Council's Community Engagement Policy.

4.3.3 Following completion of all statutory processes, a second report will be presented to a Council meeting outlining the outcomes of statutory processes. This report will seek a decision on whether to proceed with the disposal.

4.4 Considerations Prior to the Sale of Land

Prior to the sale of any land, Council will consider whether it is appropriate to address or remove restrictions or any encumbrances from the title so that the highest possible return is achieved.

Any decision regarding rezoning should balance planning outcomes, timing, costs, taxation implications and likely market response. In particular, Council will consider the implications of any applicable Windfall Gains Tax, including whether the potential uplift in value resulting from rezoning justifies the associated tax liability. Accordingly, whether to rezone land prior to disposal will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Council may elect to dispose of land without rezoning where this is considered to achieve the best overall outcome for the community and ratepayers.

4.5 Market Value and Reserve Price

Section 114 of the *Local Government Act 2020* requires that Council obtains a valuation of the land within 6 months of a disposal. The valuation must be prepared by a person who holds the qualifications or experience specified under section 13DA(2) of the *Valuation of Land Act 1960*, and must be made not more than six months prior to the proposed transaction. This will establish the Market Value of the land.

Dependent on the circumstances of the land, Council may request that the valuation includes:

- the highest and best use of the land permitted by applicable planning controls and
- the value of the land if rezoned, and if not rezoned.

Council will set a Reserve Price at or above the Market Value unless Council resolves there is a clearly demonstrated reason not to. In setting the Reserve Price, Council will have regard to:

- the Market Value;
- the impacts of the Windfall Gains Tax (and any other tax, charge or rate incurred by Council to sell); and
- any other factors it considers material.

Council will generally seek to achieve the best financial return reasonably available from the disposal of property. However, Council may determine that a disposal at less than market value, or through an alternative disposal method, provides a greater overall community benefit. This may include, but is not limited to, disposal to a not-for-profit or community organisation, or the sale of a small or irregular parcel of land to an adjoining landowner.

4.6 Disposal Method

Council will ordinarily dispose of land and buildings through a competitive public process, such as public auction, public tender or an expression of interest process. The method of disposal will have regard to the nature and circumstances of the property and seek to achieve the best overall outcome for Council and the community.

Council may resolve to dispose of property other than through a competitive public process where the circumstances justify an alternative approach and the proposed method is consistent with the *Local Government Act 2020* and other applicable legislative requirements.

Small or irregular parcels of land may be sold directly to an adjoining landowner where Council considers that a direct sale represents the most appropriate, efficient and beneficial outcome and a competitive public process is unlikely to deliver a superior outcome.

Proposals involving the exchange of land will be considered by Council on a case-by-case basis and assessed against the principles set out in Table 1.

4.7 Proceeds from Sale of Land

Net proceeds from the sale of Public Open Space land are subject to the requirements of the Subdivision Act 1988 and must be held in Council's Open Space Reserve. Replacement land may be identified prior to the sale of any Public Open Space.

Net proceeds from the sale of all other land that is not Public Open Space land are to be treated as consolidated revenue. These funds may be allocated to capital projects within the municipality as part of the annual budget process and in accordance with Council's strategic priorities of the day.

5. References

5.1 Knox Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029

5.2 Relevant Legislation includes, but is not limited to:

- Local Government Act 2020
- Planning and Environment Act 1987
- Property Law Act 1958
- Retail Leases Act 2003
- Sale of Land Act 1962
- Subdivision Act 1988
- Transfer of Land Act 1958
- Windfall Gains Tax Act 2021
- Valuation of Land Act 1960

5.3 Charter of Human Rights

- This policy has been assessed against and complies with the charter of Human Rights.

5.4 Related Council Policies and Procedures

- Community engagement Policy
- Knox Open Space Plan
- Knox Affordable Housing Action Plan
- Strategic Property Prioritisation Framework

5.5 Other resources

- The Local Government Best Practice Guidelines for the Sale, Exchange and Transfer of Land ("Best Practice Guidelines") (2009)
- Strategic Property Prioritisation Framework

6. Definitions

Term	Definition
Act	The Local Government Act 2020
Building	Means a permanent structure owned by Council, whether located on Council-owned land or other land where Council has the legal right to own the structure.
Council	Knox City Council
Disposal	The sale, exchange, transfer or other divestment of Council owned land or buildings.
Improvements	Means any building, structure, fixture, landscaping, infrastructure, service connection or other physical works on land that enhance its use, functionality or value.
Land	Means land that is owned by Council, being land for which Council is the registered proprietor on the Certificate of Title. It excludes land where Council is the Committee of Management of Crown Land, or where land is vested in Council where Council does not hold the title.
Market Value	The market value of the land or building as obtained from a person who holds the qualifications or experience specified under section 13DA(2) of the Valuation of Land Act 1960.
Public Open Space	As defined in the Subdivision Act 1988, land set aside in a plan, or land in a plan zoned or reserved under a planning scheme: - For public recreation or public resort; or - As parklands, or - For similar purposes
Public Process	Refers to any process that is open to the public, including but not limited to auction, tender or expressions of interest.
Reserve Price	The minimum amount Council will accept for the sale of the land or building.
Tree Reserve	An area of land formally established under statutory instrument, land title, planning approval or other legal mechanisms for the retention, preservation and management of trees.
Windfall Gains Tax	A Victorian State tax that may apply when the value of land increases

as a result of rezoning. The tax is assessed on the uplift in value attributable to the rezoning and is payable by the owner of the land at the time the rezoning takes effect, subject to applicable exemptions and exclusions.

7. Administrative Updates

From time to time, circumstances may change leading to the need for minor administrative changes to this Policy or the Strategic Property Prioritisation Framework. Where an update does not materially alter this Policy, such a change may be made administratively on approval of the Chief Financial Officer. Examples of minor administrative changes include change to names of Council departments or positions, change to names of Federal or State Government departments or a minor amendment to legislation that does not have material impact. Where any change or update may materially change the intent of this Policy, it must be considered by Council.

Policy

Sale of Land and Buildings Policy

Policy Number:	2004/06	Directorate:	CEO
Approval by:	Council	Responsible Officer:	Chief Financial Officer
Approval Date:	27 January 2021	Version Number:	5
Review Date:	12 February 2023		

1. Purpose

1.1 The purpose of this policy is to:

1.1.1 Optimise the value of property assets to the community, including the evaluation of unused or redundant assets and realising the funds tied up in these assets in order to acquire, develop or improve other assets.

1.1.2 To guide the strategic management of its property portfolio for the long-term best interests of the community.

1.1.3 Define the process for identifying and proceeding with the sale of any Council owned land (with or without improvements) and to identify how the proceeds from land sales are to be allocated.

2. Context

2.1 The process for the sale, exchange and transfer of Council land is subject to comprehensive Government Guidelines and requirements of the Local Government Act. This Policy reflects those Guidelines and statutory requirements.

3. Scope

3.1 This Policy applies to any land owned and identified as surplus by Council that is being considered for sale or transfer.

4. References

4.1 Community & Council Plan 2017-2021

- Goal 8 – We have confidence in decision making

4.2 Relevant Legislation

- Local Government Act 1989 (proposed rescinded date July 2021)
- Local Government Act 2020 (proposed effective date July 2021)
- Planning and Environment Act 1987
- Subdivision Act 1988
- Sale of Land Act 1962
- Local Government Best Practice Guideline for the Sale, Exchange and Transfer of Land 2009

4.3 Charter of Human Rights

- This policy has been assessed against and complies with the Charter of Human Rights.

4.4 Related Council Policies

- Community Engagement Policy (2007/10)
- Sale of Council Owned Tree Reserves Policy (2003/20)
- Knox Affordable Housing Action Plan 2015-2021
- Knox Open Space Plan 2012-2022

4.5 Related Council Procedures

- Sale of Land and Buildings Procedure (2006/11)
- Sale or Access Over Council Owned Tree Reserves Procedure (2003/23)

5. Definitions

Council	means Knox City Council.
Council Owned Land	means land that is owned or vested in Council, excluding when Council is the Committee of Management of Crown Land.
Land and Buildings	means land of any tenure, and buildings or parts of buildings (including facilities and other structures) (whether the division is horizontal, vertical or made in any other way) and any other corporeal hereditaments; and also an undivided share in land and any estate or interest in land.
Public Open Space	means land set aside in a plan, or land in a plan zoned or reserved under a planning scheme: • for public recreation or public resort; or • as parklands, or • for similar purposes • as defined in the Subdivision Act 1988.
Public Process	means the sale of any land by way of public auction, public tender or registration of expression of interest.
Tree Reserve	an area of land created by subdivision or by other means to act as a buffer between roads and other land to restrict crossover access and/or provide opportunities for landscaping, recreation and/or community infrastructure (e.g. shared pathways).
Value	means financial, social and environmental outcomes provided to the community and/or Council.

6. Council Policy – Sale of Council Owned Land and Buildings

6.1 Sale of Land Principles

6.1.1 All sales, exchanges and transfers of land are required to comply with the provisions of the Local Government Act. Council also complies with the Local Government Best Practice Guideline for the Sale, Exchange and Transfer of Land 2009 which is a government guideline for Victorian Councils providing information on the practices used when transacting land.

6.1.2 The decision to sell Council owned land is made carefully, considering the current and future needs of the municipality, and maximising public value (both financial and non-financial).

Council land must be assessed against the following principles, which provide the rationale for sale and transfer of Council Land and Buildings.

Table 1: Sale of Land and Buildings Principles

Component	Principle
Economic	Council evaluation of surplus property will consider the value of the land as well as the cost of retaining the land; utilities and any foregone revenue; as well as any potential return available from sale for alternative purposes.
Change in Service(s) Delivery Needs	Does not or will not support, facilitate or contribute to current or future service delivery outcomes as identified in the Council Plan.
Building Condition	Council will consider the current building asset condition, maintenance, renewal and upgrade considerations.
Environment	Council will consider the sale of surplus land where retention will not enhance or protect its environmental value.
Physical Works	Council will consider the sale of surplus land where it has not been identified in the Council Plan for the development of new assets or the improvements of existing assets.
Recreation	Council will consider the sale of surplus land where it is not required by the Council Plan for recreational purposes.
Land Use Planning	Council will consider the sale of surplus land where there are no compelling land use planning grounds for retention.
Social	Council will consider the sale of surplus land where alternative social uses have not been identified.
Intergenerational needs (future needs)	Council will consider social, environmental and economic future needs of the asset (10-year and 20-year impacts) by considering how the land sale today benefits current and future generations in the municipality.
Heritage and Cultural Value	Council will consider the assets heritage and cultural values to the community.
Risk	Identify and assess risks associated with holding or disposing of the asset.

Table 1

7. Other Considerations Prior to the Sale of Land

7.1 Prior to the sale of any land, Council will take appropriate steps to address or remove restrictions or any encumbrances from the title so that the ultimate use of the land is determined by that zone and the highest possible return is achieved.

7.2 Prior to the sale of any land, optimum development of the land must be considered, including subdivision, in order to enhance the return.

8. Council Decision

8.1 Council will consider a report addressing the principles outlined in Table 1 to ensure that any proposed disposition of land is in the best interests of Council and the community prior to resolving to proceed with the public consultation process to sell land.

9. Public Notification and Consultation Process

9.1 Following Council's resolution to set the asset aside and commence the statutory process, Council will conduct a public advertising and submissions process in accordance with the requirements set out in the Local Government Act.

10. The Sale Process

10.1 The sale of land will occur through a public process (public auction, public tender or an expression of interest process) unless Council resolves that circumstances exist that justify an alternate method of sale, and in accordance with Local Government Best Practice Guideline for the Sale, Exchange and Transfer of Land 2009.

10.2 The public process selected will be determined by the Chief Executive Officer on recommendation from the appropriate Director and based on achieving the optimum return to Council and the community.

10.3 Proposals for the exchange of land will be considered by Council on a case-by-case basis and will be subject to the principles established in Table 1.

10.4 This Policy does not prevent Council from determining to sell small parcels of land directly to abutting landowners on the best terms achievable.

11. Value of Land

11.1 Council must sell Council owned land at a price that is not less than the current market value as assessed by an independent valuer, unless Council can justify the circumstances to sell the land at less than market value. Council comply with all valuation requirements as set out in the Local Government Act.

12. Proceeds from Sale of Land

12.1 Net proceeds from the sale of Public Open Space land are subject to the requirements of the Subdivision Act 1988 and must be held in Council's Open Space Reserve. Replacement land may be identified prior to the sale of any Public Open Space land.

12.2 Net proceeds from the sale of all other land that is not Public Open Space land are to be treated as consolidated revenue. These funds may be allocated to capital projects within the municipality or the retirement of debt as part of the annual budget process and in accordance with Council's strategic priorities of the day.

12.3 Council may, by resolution, determine that net proceeds from the sale of other land that is not Public Open Space land are to be allocated to a specific program or infrastructure project.

13. Council Policy - Sale of Council Owned Tree Reserves

13.1 The following principles and guidelines shall apply when considering requests for the sale of all or part of Council Tree Reserves.

13.1.1 It is Council policy that Tree Reserves should be protected and retained for the purpose that they were originally established for.

13.1.2 Land forming part of the tree reserves will not be sold unless the sale is considered to result in net community benefit and the criteria below are satisfied.

14. Criteria for the Sale (part or all) of Tree Reserves

14.1 For a request to be approved, it must be demonstrated that the sale will result in a net community benefit (e.g. facilitate a major community facility or employment generator).

14.2 For a request to be approved, it must also satisfactorily address the following issues:

14.2.1 Public safety and security issues – e.g. will it result in the creation of 'blind areas' not visible to the public? Will it sever a shared pathway? Will it result in increased natural surveillance?

14.2.2 Traffic management – e.g. do VicRoads object to access? Will it create traffic safety issues? Is the reserve required for a future road widening? Will it result in additional crossovers? Consider access issues it could introduce.

14.2.3 Neighbourhood Character – Would it allow development that supports the preferred neighbourhood or 'bush boulevard' streetscape character?

14.2.4 Open space – e.g. what is the current role or potential of the land to contribute towards a public open space network?

14.2.5 Street trees – What is the significance of any street trees located within the reserve? Are there native vegetation or net gain/offset issues?

14.2.6 Existing infrastructure – e.g. will it result in additional infrastructure (footpaths, drains) or maintenance costs for Council?

14.2.7 Potential or proposed future infrastructure – e.g. How does it support or hinder potential or proposed future infrastructure such as shared pathways, drainage, landscaping etc? Does it impact on infrastructure that runs through the reserve, below ground or above?

14.2.8 Flora and fauna – e.g. does it involve the potential loss of significant vegetation and/or fauna habitat?

14.2.9 Council strategies, policies and plans – e.g. is it consistent with and assist in the implementation of relevant Council policies and plans, including any structure plan, zone or overlay, and all Related Documents in Section 6 (as relevant)?

14.2.10 Existing access – e.g. is the current level of road access to the site to benefit from the proposed purchase of the tree reserve already adequate?

15. Administrative Updates

15.1 From time to time, circumstances may change leading to the need for minor administrative changes to this policy. Where an update does not materially alter this policy, such a change may be made administratively. Examples of minor administrative changes include changes to names of Council departments or positions, change to names of Federal or State Government departments or a minor amendment to legislation that does not have material impact. Where any change or update may materially change the intent of this policy, it must be considered by Council.

8.10 Council Resolutions Progress Report - July to September 2026

Final Report Destination: Council
Paper Type: For Noting
Author: Governance Officer, Damian Watson
Manager: Manager Governance and Risk, Andrew Dowling
Executive: Director Customer and Performance, Matt Kelleher

SUMMARY
This report provides Council with an update on the implementation of all Council resolutions from July to September 2026, along with resolutions with a status of in-progress from the balance of the current Council term; offering a clear overview of the progress made on decisions made by Council. By providing this information, the report supports transparency and accountability, enabling both Council and the community to monitor the effective implementation of Council decisions.

RECOMMENDATION
That Council note the Council Resolutions Progress Report as set out in Attachments 1 and 2 to the officers' report.

1. DISCUSSION

In accordance with the Local Government Act, the Chief Executive Officer is responsible for ensuring that Council resolutions are implemented in a timely manner. This report outlines the progress of the implementation of Council decisions and is intended to support ongoing transparency and accountability to Council and the community. The information contained in this Report is current as at 13 November 2026.

1.1 Overview of Status of Council Resolutions

The first table in Attachment 1 of this report includes all matters considered by Council in the period, July-September 2026 – 40 in total including items for noting. Of the decisions made over the three-month period, 33 have been completed or implemented, and seven are in progress.

A second table is included in Attachment 2 detailing matters considered in the current Council term that were still in progress at the end of the prior reporting period – 11 in total, 5 of which have since been completed and 6 which remain in progress.

2. ENGAGEMENT

No community engagement was necessary for the preparation of this report.

3. SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

This report provides transparency on the status of the implementation of Council decisions and supports community confidence in the accountability and responsiveness of Council. Ongoing reporting in this manner ensures that decisions affecting the community are monitored and actioned, reinforcing Council's commitment to good governance and timely delivery of outcomes.

4. CLIMATE CHANGE CONSIDERATIONS

Implementation of the recommendation is considered to have no direct implications or has no direct impacts upon Council's Net Zero 2030 target, the Community Net Zero 2040, exposure to climate risks or climate change adaptation.

5. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no environmental implications associated with this report.

6. FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct financial implications associated with this report. However, it is noted that maintaining the register of Council decisions requires officers to update implementation progress and closure commentary. While this represents a modest resource impact, it is incidental and forms part of normal business processes that should already be occurring.

7. RISKS

Failure to action Council resolutions in a timely manner carries reputational and governance risks, including reduced community trust, perceptions of inaction or poor accountability, and potential non-compliance with legislative and policy obligations. Delays may also impact service delivery, stakeholder relationships, and Council's ability to demonstrate effective decision-making.

8. COUNCIL AND HEALTH AND WELLBEING PLAN 2025-2029

Leading, listening and governing responsibly

Strategy 4.1 - Council demonstrates its accountability through transparent and responsible decision-making and working together productively.

9. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The officers contributing to and responsible for this report have no conflicts of interest requiring disclosure under Chapter 5 of the Governance Rules of Knox City Council.

10. STATEMENT OF COMPATIBILITY

There are no legislative obligations under the Human Rights Charter, Child Safe Standards or the Gender Equity Act that are incompatible with the recommendation in this report.

11. CONFIDENTIALITY

There is no content in this report that meets the definition of confidential information from the Local Government Act 2020.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Attachment 1 - All Council Resolutions July to September 2026 [**8.10.1** - 9 pages]
2. Attachment 2 - Council Resolutions Previously Reported as In Progress [**8.10.2** - 3 pages]

Table 1: All Council Resolutions: July – September 2026

Meeting Date	Item No.	Item	Council Resolutions	Action Taken	Status
13-07-2026	4.1	Minor Grants Program 2025-2026 Monthly Report and Individual Excellence Grants Update (Quarter 4)	That Council resolve to: 1. Approve in full, fourteen applications under the Minor Grants Program for a total of $25,510.00 (excluding GST); 2. Partially approve one applications under the Minor Grants Program for a total of $1,041.82; 3. Defer three applications under the Minor Grants Program; 4. Note two ineligible applications under the Minor Grants Program requesting a total of $3,850.00rants Program requesting a total of $5,536.00; 5. Note that should the recommended Minor Grants be approved by Council, the remaining budget for 2026-27 will be $131,289.45 after GST adjustments; 6. Note the Excellence Grants for Individuals awarded in Quarter 4 of the 2025-2026 financial year as set out in Attachment 2, with a total value of $1,150.00.	All applicants notified of the outcome of their application and funding agreements sent to those who were successful.	Completed
13-07-2026	4.2	Appointment of External Independent Members for the Transformation Advisory Committee	That Council appoint the three recommended independent Committee members to the Transformation Governance Committee for a two-year period until 30 June 2028, as presented in Confidential Attachment 1.	Contracts have been signed and new independent members onboarded. First Committee meeting occurred on 31st of September.	Completed
13-07-2026	4.3	July Omnibus - Leasing and Licensing	That Council resolves to: 1. Enter into a Lease with Comlink Australia Limited at Carrington Park Multipurpose Facility (20 O'Connor Road, Knoxfield) for the purposes of a creative hub under the conditions outlined in Attachment 1, including: a. The annual rent is $35,000 (excluding GST) per annum, increasing on the anniversary date of the agreement by 4%. b. The commencement date of this agreement is 1 August 2026, for a period of 5 years with no extension option. 2. Enter into a Lease with at Work Australia at 88 Station Street, Ferntree Gully, for the purposes of employment services under the conditions outlined in Attachment 2, including: a. The annual rent is $20,610 (excluding GST) per annum, increasing on the anniversary date of the agreement by 4%. b. The commencement date of this agreement is 5 August 2026, for a period of two years and three months, with one extension option of two years (a total of four years and three months). c. Authorise the Chief Executive Officer (or such person as the Chief Executive Officer delegates) to negotiate and execute all documents required to give effect to the further terms. 3. Authorise the Chief Executive Officer (or such person as the Chief Executive Officer nominates) to execute the lease agreements for each site, in accordance with the resolutions 1 and 2 of this report.	Leases have been prepared and are out for signature.	Completed
13-07-2026	4.4	Basin-Olinda Road, The Basin - Special Rates & Charges Contributory Scheme Policy	That Council resolve to: 1. Receive and note the outcomes of officer investigations into residents' views on a proposed Contributory Scheme along Basin-Olinda Road, The Basin. 2. Not proceed with the proposed Contributory Scheme; and 3. Advise all affected owners and occupiers, and any party which had registered an interest in the Contributory Scheme, in writing of Council's decision. 4. Continue to maintain Basin-Olinda Road in accordance with Council's Road Management Plan.	Resolution has been followed.	Completed

Meeting Date	Item No.	Item	Council Resolutions	Action Taken	Status
13-07-2026	4.5	Instrument of Authorisation - Planning and Environment Act	That Council resolves, in the exercise of the powers conferred by the legislation referred to in the Instrument of Appointment and Authorisation set out in Attachment 1 to the Officers' report, that: 1. The members of Council staff referred to in the instrument set out in Attachment 1 to the Officers' report be appointed and authorised as set out in the instrument. 2. The instrument comes into force immediately once it is signed by Council's Chief Executive Officer and remains in force until Council determines to vary or revoke it.	Implemented in accordance with the Council Resolution.	Completed
27-07-2026	6.1	Report of Planning Applications Decided Under Delegation 1 June 2026 to 30 June 2026	That Council note the planning applications decided under delegation 1 June 2026 to 30 June 2026 as set out in the officers' report.	Noted by Council.	Completed
27-07-2026	8.1	Our Customer Strategy 2026-2028	That Council: 1. Adopt "Our Customer Strategy 2026-2028" as provided at Attachment 1. 2. Note that the updated 'Roadmap 2026-2028' and the associated projects, programs and actions are subject to the regular service planning and budgeting prioritisation processes.	Resolution has been followed, new Customer Strategy published.	Completed
27-07-2026	8.2	Leisure Minor Capital Works Grant Scheme 2026-2027	That Council resolve to: 1. Approve a funding allocation of $64,562.93 (including GST) from the 2026-2027 Leisure Minor Capital Works Grant Scheme Program to the applicant clubs nominated in Attachment 1. 2. Specify that additional grant conditions are required for the sporting organisations listed in Attachment 2. 3. Authorises the Chief Executive Officer (or such person as the Chief Executive Officer selects) to inform applicant Clubs of Council's decision.	Notified recipients via email of funding outcome and any special conditions. E News article A Note From Leisure article	Completed
27-07-2026	8.3	Climate Response Plan Mid-Term Review	That Council: 1. Note the outcomes of the Knox Climate Response Plan (CRP) 2021-2031 mid-term review, and the draft revised Climate Response Plan 2021-2031 (Attachment 1). 2. Endorse the draft revised CRP for the purpose of community and stakeholder engagement throughout August and September. 3. Note that the 2025-2026 CRP annual report will be deferred and tabled at a future Council meeting along with the final CRP review report in late 2026.	The draft revised Climate Response Plan is currently available for public comment through the Have your Say platform, with a drop-in session at Knox Library on 15th September. Consultation will close on September 23, 2026.	Completed
27-07-2026	8.4	Preliminary Erosion Management Assessment for Knox	That Council: 1. Endorse the Knox Landslide Susceptibility Study (Attachment 1). 2. Note that a detailed landslide susceptibility assessment will now be undertaken in accordance with the adopted Council budget for 2026/27. 3. Note that officers will present a report to Council on the findings, recommendations and next steps of the detailed assessment in due course.	Detailed landslide susceptibility assessment is now underway with a specialist consultant.	In Progress
27-07-2026	8.5	Contract 3674 - Sportsfield Maintenance	That Council: 1. Note the outcome of the tender process for Contract 3674 – Sportsfield Maintenance. 2. Award Contract 3674 – Sportsfield Maintenance to the recommended tenderers, as shown below, in accordance with their submitted schedule of rates, for a period of three (3) years commencing 1 September 2026 and concluding 31 August 2029, with an option to extend the contract for a further period of up to two (2) years at the discretion of the Chief Executive Officer or delegate. 3. Note that expenditure under the contract will be based on operational requirements and funded through Council's approved operational and capital works budgets. 4. Authorise the Chief Executive Officer, or delegate, to finalise, execute and manage all necessary contractual documentation, including the exercise of any extension options associated with Contract 3674 – Sportsfield Maintenance.	Contract endorsed by Council.	Completed

Meeting Date	Item No.	Item	Council Resolutions	Action Taken	Status
27-07-2026	8.6	Boronia Station Redevelopment	That Council resolve to: 1. Note the progress of negotiations undertaken to date regarding the Memorandum of Understanding, Land and Asset Agreement and Transfer Deed associated with the Boronia Station Upgrade. 2. Advise Victorian Infrastructure Delivery Authority for Rail (VIDA Rail) and Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA) that Council accepts appointment as Crown Land Manager (Committee of Management) for the new Boronia Station Plaza following completion of the project. 3. Assume ongoing management and maintenance responsibilities for the Boronia Station Plaza as part of its role as Crown Land Manager. 4. Support the delivery of a shared user path/shared zone along Lupton Way as part of the Boronia Station Upgrade. 5. Assume future maintenance responsibilities for Lupton Way following the excision of the road from the Metropolitan Infrastructure Lease (MIL) boundary and its declaration as a municipal road in accordance with the Road Management Act. 6. Delegate the authority to the Chief Executive Officer to act on Council's behalf in relation to finalising and actioning the Memorandum of Understanding (Confidential Attachment 2), Land and Asset Agreement (Confidential Attachment 3), Transfer Deed (Confidential Attachment 4) and other documents as appropriate relating to the above resolutions for the new Boronia Station Plaza.	VIDA Rail was advised regarding Council's resolutions. Awaiting further correspondence from VIDA Rail and or DEECA about resolution 2. Awaiting further correspondence from VIDA Rail regarding resolutions 5 and 6.	Waiting on Third Party (In Progress)
27-07-2026	8.7	Knox City Council Attendance at the Australian Local Government Association National General Assembly 2026	That Council receive and note: 1. This report on the Australian Local Government Association National General Assembly 2026. 2. Reports provided by Councillors at the Meeting on 27 July 2026.	As this report was presented for noting there is no further implementation action required.	Completed
10-08-2026	8.1	Appointment of Independent Member to the Audit and Risk Committee	Confidential Item.	Reappointed member has been advised of the Council decision. The decision will be included in the public minutes in line with the resolution of Council.	Completed
10-08-2026	4.1	Minor Grants Program 2026-2027 Monthly Report	1. Approve in full, six applications under the Minor Grants Program for a total of $13,227.28 (excluding GST); 2. Partially approve one application under the Minor Grants Program for a total of $969.00 (excluding GST); 3. Defer two applications under the Minor Grants Program requesting a total of $4,300.00; 4. Note four ineligible applications under the Minor Grants Program requesting a total of $7,700.00; 5. Note that should the recommended Minor Grants be approved by Council, the remaining budget for 2026-27 will be $117,093.18 after GST adjustments.	All applicants notified of the outcome of their application and funding agreements sent to those who were successful.	Completed
10-08-2026	4.2	Draft Public Toilet Management Policy and Public Toilet Management Plan	That Council: 1. Endorse the draft Knox Public Toilet Management Policy as set out in Attachment 1 to the Officers report for the purpose of community engagement. 12 of 15 2026-08-10 - Mid Month Meeting Of Council 2. Note that public consultation will include liaison with the Knox Disability Advisory Committee, the Active Ageing Advisory Committee and the Knox Multicultural Advisory Committee. 3. Note that following public engagement, a further report will be presented to Council outlining community feedback, any recommended amendments and seeking final adoption of the Policy. 4. Note the Public Toilet Management Plan, as an internal operational document.	Presentation and engagement with Knox Multicultural Advisory Committee undertaken. Presentation and engagement with Knox Youth Advisory Committee scheduled for 28th October 2027.	In Progress

Meeting Date	Item No.	Item	Council Resolutions	Action Taken	Status
24-08-2026	6.1	Report of Planning Applications Decided Under Delegation 1 July 2026 to 31 July 2026	That Council note the planning applications decided under delegation 1 July 2026 to 31 July 2026 as set out in the officers' report.	Noted by Councillors.	Completed
24-08-2026	8.1	Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan Progress Report Q4 2025-2026	That Council note the Council and Health and Wellbeing Plan Progress Report for the period ended 30 June 2026 (Attachment 1).	Noted. Report published on website.	Completed
24-08-2026	8.2	Local Law Review	That Council resolve to: 1. Receive and note the Local Law Review report. 2. Note the results of the exhibition of the draft Amenity local Law 2026 that was undertaken. 3. Note the Certificate by a qualified person, Mark Hayes from Maddocks Lawyers, under section 74 of Local Government Act 2020 stating that they are of the opinion that the Amenity Local Law 2026, as contained in Attachment 5, is consistent with the local law requirements. 4. Approve and adopt the Amenity Local Law 2026 as contained in Attachment 4, with a commencement date of 1 January 2027. 5. Approve and incorporate the Use of Waste Collection Services Policy in the Amenity Local Law 2026, as contained in Attachment 7. 6. Approve and incorporate the List of Environmental Weeds in the Amenity Local Law 2026, as contained in Attachment 8. 7. Authorise the Chief Executive Officer to give notice of the making of the Amenity Local Law 2026 in the Government Gazette and public notice in accordance with the Local Government Act 2020. 8. Send a copy of the Amenity Local Law 2026 to the Minister for Local Government.	The Amenity Local Law 2026 has been adopted and will commence on 1 January 2027. Gazettal is scheduled for December 2026. The resolution remains pending finalisation of the required notifications and submission of a copy to the Minister for Local Government.	In Progress
24-08-2026	8.3	Council Property - 68 McIver Street Ferntree Gully	That Council: 1. Having considered the findings of the assessment undertaken in accordance with Council's Sale of Land and Buildings Policy, declare the land at 68 McIver Street, Ferntree Gully to be surplus to Council's requirements. 2. Approve commencing the statutory requirements under Section 114 of the Local Government Act 2020 to sell the site for no less than market value, including a. Public notice of the proposed sale on Council's internet site; b. Undertaking a community engagement process in line with Council's Community Engagement Policy. 3. Note a further report will be presented to Council to enable considerations of all community feedback prior to making a final determination on the matter.	Community engagement has closed and officers are considering the feedback received.	In Progress
24-08-2026	8.4	Council Resolutions Progress Report - April to June 2026	That Council note the Council Resolutions Progress Report as set out in Attachment 1 to the officers' report.	Report noted and will be used to inform the next Quarterly report.	Completed
14-09-2026	4.1	2025-26 Annual Financial Statements and Performance Statement	That Council resolve to: 1. Receive and note the draft 2025-26 Annual Financial Statements (Attachment 1) and Performance Statement (Attachment 2) for the year ending 30 June 2026. 2. Approve in principle the 2025-26 Annual Financial Statements (Attachment 1) and Performance Statement (Attachment 2) for the year ending 30 June 2026 being provided to the Auditor-General for audit sign off; 3. Authorise the Chief Financial Officer to make changes to the Financial Statements as determined by the Auditor-General; and that the Audit and Risk Committee members be consulted prior to making any	No changes were required to the draft Financial Accounts or Performance Statement. The certification for both documents have been signed, and both documents were subsequently lodged with VAGO. Final sign-off from VAGO has been received.	Completed

Meeting Date	Item No.	Item	Council Resolutions	Action Taken	Status
			material amendments to these Statements as determined by the Victorian Auditor-General's office; and that any material amendments be communicated to Council as soon as possible. 4. Nominate and authorise Councillor Kennett and Councillor Cooper to certify (on behalf of Council) the 2025-26 Annual Financial Statements and the 2025-26 Performance Statement, in their final form.		
14-09-2026	4.2	Minor Grants Program 2026-2027 Monthly Report - September 2026	That Council resolve to: 1. Approve in full, seven applications under the Minor Grants Program for a total of $16,272.27 (excluding GST); 2. Partially approve two applications under the Minor Grants Program for a total of $1,165.90 (excluding GST); 3. Defer three applications under the Minor Grants Program requesting a total of $7,500.00; 4. Refuse five ineligible applications under the Minor Grants Program requesting a total of $8,369.90; 5. Note that should the recommended Minor Grants be approved by Council, the remaining budget for 2026-2027 will be $100,028.35 after GST adjustments.	All applicants notified of the outcome of their application and funding agreements sent to those who were successful.	Completed
14-09-2026	4.3	Amendment C196Knox - Vegetation Protection Overlay (VPO) Stage 1 to the Knox Planning Scheme - Outcomes from Public Exhibition	That Council resolve to: 1. Adopt Amendment C196knox provided at Attachment 1 pursuant to Section 29 of the Planning and Environment Act 1987. 2. Submit Amendment C196knox to the Minister for Planning for approval in accordance with Section 31(1) of the Planning and Environment Act 1987. 3. Authorise the Chief Executive Officer (or such person as the Chief Executive Officer nominates) to undertake administrative changes to Amendment C196knox and associated planning controls that do not change the intent of the controls.	Following the Council Resolution at the Council Meeting on 14 September 2026 to adopt and submit Amendment C196Knox, officers have lodged the amendment to the Minister for Planning for adoption on 15 October 2026. Officers will now wait for an outcome on Amendment C196Knox from the Minister for Planning.	Completed
14-09-2026	4.4	Ferntree Gully Cemetery Trust Annual Report for the Year Ended 30 June 2026	That Council, as the Trustee for the Ferntree Gully Cemetery Trust, resolve to: 1. Receive and adopt in principle the draft audited Financial Statements for the Ferntree Gully Cemetery Trust for the year ended 30 June 2026 (Attachment 1). 2. Authorise the Mayor and Councillor Duncan and Councillor Baker to sign the draft audited Financial Statements for the Ferntree Gully Cemetery Trust for the year ended 30 June 2026 (Attachment 1). 3. Approve in principle the draft audited Financial Statements for the Ferntree Gully Cemetery Trust for the year ended 30 June 2026 (Attachment 1) being provided to the Independent Auditor for audit sign off. 4. Note the Independent Auditor's Report to the Trustees of the Ferntree Gully Cemetery Trust will be provided to the Trust upon completion and formal sign-off by the appointed auditor. 5. Receive and adopt the Abstract of Accounts from the Trust Members of the Ferntree Gully Public Cemetery for the 2025-2026 financial year (Attachment 2) and authorise the Mayor and Councillor Duncan and Councillor Baker to sign the Abstract of Accounts on behalf of the Trust for submission to the Department of Health. 6. Note other work undertaken supporting the operations of Ferntree Gully Cemetery in the 2025-2026 financial year in as set out in the officers' report.	The draft audited Financial Statements for Ferntree Gully Cemetery Trust for the year ended 30 June 2026 were signed by the authorised Councillors. The documents were lodged with the Independent Auditor for audit sign-off. The Abstract of Accounts for the 2025–2026 were signed by the authorised signatories, and lodged with the Department of Health along with the audited Financial Statements.	Completed

Meeting Date	Item No.	Item	Council Resolutions	Action Taken	Status
14-09-2026	5.1	Notice of Motion No. 197 - Wellington Rd – Advocacy for Road Safety Improvements	1. Write to the Department of Transport and Planning (DTP) requesting: a. an update on the safety improvements along Wellington Road previously advocated for in April 2025; and b. that DTP give further consideration to the installation of advanced warning signs and lights at the intersection of Wellington Road and Braeburn Parade, recognising the significant community support for these road safety improvements.. 2. Write to the Department of Justice and Community Safety (DJCS) requesting that it review the suitability of installing a fixed road safety camera at the intersection of Wellington Road and Braeburn Parade, having regard to the level of community support expressed for this measure. 3. Write to The Hon. Kim Wells MP, Member for Rowville, and The Hon. Paul Hamer MP, Minister for Roads and Road Safety, providing copies of the above correspondence and seeking their support in advocating for: a. the delivery of the requested safety improvements along Wellington Road; and b. the installation of a fixed road safety camera at the intersection of Wellington Road and Braeburn Parade.	Letters signed and sent by the Mayor, and are on Council's advocacy webpage Advocacy | Knox	Completed
28-09-2026	6.1	Report of Planning Applications Decided Under Delegation 1 August 2026 to 31 August 2026	That Council note the planning applications decided under delegation 1 August 2026 to 31 August 2026 as set out in the officers' report.	Noted by Councillors. No further updates required.	Completed
28-09-2026	8.1	Biannual Report of the Audit and Risk Committee - August 2026	That Council resolve to receive and note the Audit and Risk Committee Biannual Report - August 2026, as set out in Attachment 1 of this report.	Report already approved by Audit and Risk Committee and noted by Councillors. Has been saved in KX.	Completed
28-09-2026	8.2	2026-27 Amended Budget	That Council: 1. Adopt the 2026-27 Amended Budget (Attachment 1), which will be used for management reporting purposes. 2. Rescind the Mid-Year Budget Review Policy as the Policy predates the Local Government Act 2020 and its purpose is now addressed through established Budget Principles, quarterly performance reporting and year-end processes.	The 2026/27 Amended Budget has been updated in the system and will be reported against as part of the Quarterly Performance Reports.	Completed
28-09-2026	8.3	Capital Works Program 2025/26 Annual Report	That Council notes the outcomes and performance of the 2025-26 Capital Works Program (excluding Information and Communication Technology projects) as outlined in this report.	Noted that Council has carried the outcomes and performance of the 2025-26 Capital Works Program (excluding Information and Communication Technology projects) as outlined in this report.	Completed

Meeting Date	Item No.	Item	Council Resolutions	Action Taken	Status
28-09-2026	8.4	Knox Reconciliation Action Plan 2026-2030	That Council resolve to: 1. Endorse the Knox City Council Reconciliation Action Plan 2026-2030 (Attachment 1). 2. 2. Note that Reconciliation Australia has conditionally endorsed the Knox City Council Reconciliation Action Plan 2026-2030, including its proposed four-year term, subject to completion of the design and final endorsement process. 3. Authorise the Chief Executive Officer, or delegate, to make any minor administrative, formatting or design amendments required to ensure final endorsement from Reconciliation Australia.	A First Nations graphic designer has been engaged to complete a Knox and Reconciliation Australia brand compliant document for full endorsement and use.	In Progress
28-09-2026	8.5	Community Signage on Council Open Space Policy	That Council: 1. Notes the Summary Report on Community Engagement and feedback by officers. 2. Approves the updated draft Community Signage on Council Open Space Policy, as set out in Attachment 1.	New Policy updated and reflected in the Policy Register and in KX.	Completed
28-09-2026	8.6	Proposed footpath Mountain Highway, Wicks Road to Claremont Avenue, The Basin	That Council resolve to: 1. Approve the delivery of Stage 2a of the Mountain Highway Footpath Project, being the construction of a footpath connection between the existing footpath near Wicks Road and the existing Claremont Avenue walkway, including the extension of the footpath to the bus stop located outside 1405 Mountain Highway, The Basin 2. Allocate funding for Stage 2a of the Mountain Highway Footpath Project, comprising the utilisation of the existing $400,000 allocation in the 2026/27 Capital Works Program and the inclusion of the balance of funding required in the 2027/28 Capital Works Program to enable completion of Stage 2a 3. Authorise the Chief Executive Officer, or delegate, to seek and apply for external funding opportunities to support the delivery of Stage 2a of the Mountain Highway Footpath Project, including the Australian Government Active Transport Fund. 4. Advise residents of Mountain Highway between Wicks Road and Claremont Avenue, and residents within the Claremont Avenue and Inverness Avenue catchment, of Council's decision.	The decisions in Parts 1 & 2 are noted. A funding application was submitted in line with Part 3 - the outcome of that application is expected to be known in Jan/Feb 2027. The letter to residents was sent on 12 November 2026 in line with Part 4	Completed
28-09-2026	8.7	Rooming House advocacy and State Government response - further to NoM 192	That Council resolve to receive and note the actions taken to advocate for Rooming House reform as detailed in this report.	Council resolution for noting only. No further action required.	Completed
28-09-2026	8.8	Respectful Workplace Policy	That Council: 1. Adopt the Respectful Workplace Policy in Attachment 1. 2. Rescind the following Policies: a. Councillor Workplace Bullying and Violence Policy; and b. Councillor Equal Opportunity and Sexual Harassment Policy.	New Policy updated and reflected in the Policy Register and in KX.	Completed

Meeting Date	Item No.	Item	Council Resolutions	Action Taken	Status
28-09-2026	8.9	Revised Instruments of Delegation to Members of Council Staff - September 2026	In the exercise of the powers conferred by the legislation referred to in the attached Instrument of Delegation – Domestic Animals and Food Acts (Attachment 1), Instrument of Delegation – Planning (Attachment 2), and Instrument of Delegation – Road Management Responsibilities (Attachment 3), Council resolves to: 1. Delegate its powers, duties, and functions outlined in the Instrument of Delegation – Domestic Animals and Food Acts (Attachment 1); Instrument of Delegation – Planning (Attachment 2); and Instrument of Delegation – Road Management Responsibilities (Attachment 3) to the Council staff who hold, act in, or perform the duties of the specified positions, subject to the acceptance of tracked changes and the conditions stated in each Instrument. 2. 2. Note that the Instrument of Delegation – Domestic Animals and Food Acts (Attachment 1), Instrument of Delegation – Planning (Attachment 2), and Instrument of Delegation – Road Management Responsibilities (Attachment 3) will take effect once the tracked changes are accepted and the documents are signed by the Chief Executive Officer and the Mayor. 3. Revoke the previous version of the Instrument of Delegation – Domestic Animals and Food Acts, Instrument of Delegation – Planning, and Instrument of Delegation – Road Management Responsibilities effective upon the new Instruments coming into force. 4. Note the duties and functions set out in the Instruments 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 from time to time adopt.	Instruments of Delegation uploaded on Council website and updated in KX and in the Delegations Register.	Completed
28-09-2026	8.10	Appointment to the CEO Employment and Renumeration Committee	That Council resolve to appoint Councillor Parisa Considine to the CEO Employment and Remuneration Committee effective from 29 September 2026 and until 30 November 2026 or Council resolves otherwise.	Committee Register and website in relation to list of Councillors updated.	Completed
28-09-2026	10.1	Notice of Motion No. 198 - Impacts of Recent State Government Planning Scheme Amendments	That Council resolve to: 1. Note that since 1 September 2026 the Victorian Government has notified Knox of 10 Victorian Council Planning Scheme amendments without prior consultation with Council or the Knox community, including: • VC319 which expands the number of dwellings eligible for the VicSmart assessment pathway from two to a maximum of four dwellings in all residential zones except the Low Density Residential Zone; and • VC314 which changes the definition of 'garden area' to remove the requirement for garden areas to have a minimum dimension of one metre and allows uncovered driveways and uncovered areas set aside for car parking to be counted as a garden area. 2. Note the Minister for Planning can gazette each of the amendments within 30 days after the notification date, providing little time for Council to review and implement the amendments including changes to systems and processes that may be required. 3. Note the significant implications of the amendments to Council and the Knox community including: • The broad scale impact of the changes on local amenity and liveability, with no consultation; • The removal of third-party notice and appeal rights in planning applications of up to four dwellings on a lot, further eroding the community's ability to have their say on applications that meet the Townhouse and Low-Rise Code clause 55 criteria; • An expedited decision-making process for councils as a result of the proposed expansion of the VicSmart 'fast-track' assessment pathway and the consequential significant impact to Council's administrative and financial resourcing; and • A continued loss in Council's ability to ensure the planning scheme appropriately takes local context into account. 4. Write to the Victorian Premier, Minister for Planning, Shadow Minister for Planning and local State Members:	A letter has been prepared and sent to all nominated parties in the Notice of Motion. As of 4 November 2026 no responses have been received. The State Government has now entered the Caretaker period prior to the November election, and as such no response is expected.	Completed

Meeting Date	Item No.	Item	Council Resolutions	Action Taken	Status
			• Expressing concern with the significant volume of reform that has been notified to Council since 1 September 2026; • Highlighting the lack of consultation with Council and the community; • Raising the specific concerns noted in points 2 and 3 above; and • Seeking a response regarding these matters and the impact on the liveability of Knox residents.		
28-09-2026	13.1	Property Matter	Confidential.	Council did not make a resolution on this item. A vote was put and lost – and no alternative resolution was adopted. The matter is anticipated to presented to Council again at the Council meeting on 9 November.	Completed
28-09-2026	13.2	Memorial Request	Confidential.	A letter advising of Council's decision was sent by the Manager Governance and Risk on 24 October 2026.	Completed

Table 2: Council Resolutions previously reported as in progress - November 2024 to September 2026

Meeting Date	Item No.	Item	Council Resolution	Action Taken	Status
26-05-2025	8.9	Response to Notice of Motion 156 - Proposed Street Tree Replacement in Kavanagh Court, Hicks Court, Buckingham Drive, Trisha Drive and in Front of Taupo Court, Rowville	That Council: 1. Note the information contained in this report 2. Note the removal of one tree at 7 Hicks Court within the next twelve months 3. Note the investigation, over the next twelve months of tree root issues with one tree at 7 Hicks Court and one in 28 Woodside Drive, fronting Kavanagh Court. 4. Continue to manage the street trees in Kavanagh Court, Hicks Court, Taupo Court, Buckingham Drive and Trisha Drive in accordance with the Green Streets Policy. 5. Note the Green Streets Policy and broader tree management framework will be reviewed over the next eighteen months.	Draft Urban Tree Management Policy developed and presented to the Environmental Advisory Committee for feedback which informed the final draft Policy. The final draft policy was presented at the Issues Briefing on 19 October 2026, with feedback received informing the finalised draft policy, to be presented at the November Council meeting for final endorsement.	In Progress
26-05-2025	8.10	Response to Notice of Motion 179 - Street Trees Bristol Place	That Council resolve to: 1. Note the information contained in this report. 2. Note that the street tree in front of 13 Bristol Place Rowville is scheduled to be removed by August 2025. 3. Continue to manage the street trees in Bristol Place in accordance with the Green Streets Policy. 4. Note the Green Streets Policy and broader tree management framework will be reviewed over the next eighteen months.	Draft Urban Tree Management Policy developed and presented to the Environmental Advisory Committee for feedback which informed the final draft Policy. The final draft policy was presented at the Issues Briefing on 19 October 2026, with feedback received informing the finalised draft policy, to be presented at the November Council meeting for final endorsement.	In Progress
25-08-2025	8.6	Proposed footpath Mountain Highway, Wicks Road to Claremont Avenue, The Basin	That Council: 1. Notes this report which highlights the opportunities and benefits along with challenges and complexities in delivering the next stage(s) of the new footpath along Mountain Highway, which connects with The Basin shops; and 2. Continue the design work and in line with Option 2 as set out in the officers' report, receive a further Report to be presented to a Council Meeting in Financial Year 2025-26 (to be determined in consultation with the Mayor) to provide a detailed design proposal; information regarding construction feasibility; outcomes of landowner engagement; and estimated project cost; to enable Council to consider referring the project to the Capital Works Program.	A report was presented to the 28 September 2026 Council meeting, with Council resolving to construct Stage 2A and apply for Active Transport funding and if that application is successful construct Stage 2B.	Completed
24-11-2025	6.2	Proposed Sale of Kingston Links / Bankside Land Sale - post-engagement	That Council: 1. Note the feedback received during the community consultation undertaken between 28 October and 11 November 2025 for the proposed sale of 14A Corporate Avenue, Rowville via private treaty to Pask Group at Attachment 1. 2. Having complied with the requirements of Section 114 of the Local Government Act 2020, resolve to sell 14A Corporate Avenue, Rowville. 3. Authorises the Chief Executive Officer (or such person that the Chief Executive Officer appoints for the purpose of giving effect to this resolution) to proceed with the sale of the property at 14A Corporate Avenue, Rowville; Lot A on Plan of Subdivision 830610S and contained in Certificate of Title Volume 12546 Folio 383 by private treaty to Pask Group (or related nominated entities) at the price set out in Confidential Attachment 2. 4. Authorises the Chief Executive Officer (or other such person that the Chief Executive Officer appoints for the purpose of giving effect to the resolution) to finalise negotiations for, and subsequently sign, the Contract of Sale and all other necessary documents associated with the sale. 5. Pursuant to Section 125 of the Local Government Act 2020, to authorise the confidential information in the confidential attachments to be publicly available for the limited purpose of communicating the effect of these resolutions to the extent necessary to give effect to them. 6. To authorise the Chief Executive Officer (or such person the Chief Executive Officer appoints for the purpose of giving effect to the resolutions) to communicate the content of the confidential attachments to the extent necessary at their discretion, including for the purpose of informing the community about the content of the report or Council's decision.	Further negotiations underway following requested changes to the Contract of Sale and Section 173. Officers continue to engage with PASK and legal representation to progress matters.	In Progress

Meeting Date	Item No.	Item	Council Resolution	Action Taken	Status
24-11-2025	8.2	Review and Update of the Knox Parking Policy	That Council: 1. Endorse the draft Knox Parking Policy (attachment 1) for community consultation subject to an amendment to the following paragraph as indicated below: 4.2.3.2 Endorsement On an annual basis, new or revised Parking Management Plans will be presented to Council for consideration and endorsement as required. 2. Note that following the community consultation the feedback will be assessed and the Knox Parking Policy modified, where appropriate, with the updated draft Knox Parking Policy to be presented to at a future Council meeting for approval.	Community engagement has been completed. A Draft Council report is scheduled in early 2027 reporting on the result of the engagement. It seeks Council to endorse the draft Knox Parking Policy.	In Progress
27-01-2026	10.1	Notice of Motion No. 192 Rooming Houses	That Council, having heard from local residents in Ferntree Gully in December regarding their concerns about a Rooming House planning application and the management of existing Rooming Houses: 1. Notes that Rooming Houses play an important role in Victoria's housing system, often accommodating vulnerable residents; being provided by both government, not for profit and private operators; and primarily regulated under a complex state regulatory framework involving multiple agencies. 2. Acknowledges the increasing pressure on local governments to manage the impacts of Rooming Houses through registration, inspections, compliance and community response. 3. Advocates to the Victorian State Government for: a. Strengthened minimum standards and resident protections, including: Improved safety, amenity, and liveability standards; i. Stronger enforcement mechanisms and penalties for non-compliance by operators; ii. Enhanced protections for residents relating to privacy, security of tenure, rent setting and eviction processes; and iii. More proactive and regular compliance inspections, rather than reliance on complaints-based enforcement. b. Review of registration triggers to more appropriately address community concerns and welfare of local residents; c. Improved local government input into existing planning controls, including reforms to clause 52.23 of the Victorian Planning Provisions to require planning permits for all Rooming Houses; not just those above a defined scale or impact threshold, along with stronger community consultation (notice) and appeal rights in relation to new or expanded Rooming House developments. d. Funding and/or increased funding and support for Rooming House regulation, including: i. State funded regional managers, employed by the State Government, to monitor privately owned rooming houses, and non-compliant rooming houses, across the state at no cost to tenants, to ensure improved management and tenant welfare; ii. Training and workforce support for local government compliance officers; iii. State–local coordination to address unregistered and/or unsafe rooming houses; iv. Funding for wrap-around support services for rooming house residents, and v. Work with well managed rooming houses to promote broader affordable housing and homelessness strategies. 4. Writes to the Minister for Housing, the Minister for Planning, the Minister for Consumer Affairs, and the Knox local State Members of Parliament outlining Council's advocacy position for Rooming Houses. 5. Receives a follow-up report to be presented to Council within six (6) months updating council on the actions taken by the local State Members and relevant Ministers in response to Council's advocacy; and any policy, funding or legislative developments relevant to Rooming Houses arising from this advocacy.	All actions of resolution as relevant to former DCL have been completed, including providing letters to Ministers and meeting with Minister for Planning. Have briefed interim DCL on status of actions and need for future Council report as per the NOM resolution. Actions completed.	Completed
23-02-2026	13.1	Property Matter (Confidential)	Property Matter (Confidential)	Subsequent paper prepared and recommended next steps will proceed to a Council meeting in September.	Completed

Meeting Date	Item No.	Item	Council Resolution	Action Taken	Status
10-03-2026	5.3	Talaskia Childcare Centre - Future Options	That Council resolve to: 2. Note that 1A Edwards Street, Upper Ferntree Gully has been declared surplus to Council's requirements. 3. Note the complexities and estimated costs associated with the potential sale, or leasing out, of 1A Edwards Street, Upper Ferntree Gully. 4. Subject to the allocation of funding through the 2026/27 Budget Process: a. Demolish the Talaskia Family and Children's Centre located at 1A Edwards Street; b. Remove the fencing surrounding the currently enclosed rear yard associated with the Talaskia Family and Children's Centre at 1A Edwards Street, and return that area to open space; and c. Note that should the Budget be approved, it is anticipated that the demolition will occur by December 2026. 5. Approve officers to progress investigations into the installation of car parking within the remaining footprint of the Talaksia Family and Children's Centre at 1A Edward Street, with a further report to be presented to Council by 21 December 2026 (unless deferred in consultation with the Mayor) outlining any feedback from clubs who use the facilities within Talaskia Reserve, the investigation findings, the proposed way forward and indicative timeframes for delivery.	Demolition has been completed. Engagement and investigations into potential future car parking options have been completed and are on track to return as a report to Council in December 2026	In Progress
25-05-2026	6.4	Kingston Links (Bankside) Revised Section 173 Agreement	That Council resolve to: 1. Note the report and the current status of the revised Section 173 Agreement, as provided at Confidential Attachment 2. Authorise the Chief Executive Officer to finalise negotiations with Pask Group and execute a Section 173 Agreement generally in accordance with this report and Confidential Attachment 2 and within the following negotiating conditions: a. The arrangements for the sale of Council Land are to be consistent with Council's most recent decision, namely November 2025. b. The values of Development Contributions are not reduced. c. The triggers for payment, transfer, handover or completion of works continue to be via a specified date or specified lot release, whichever is earlier.	Negotiations to finalise the terms of the S173 Agreement are continuing, with the most recent version of the Agreement provided to PASK Group in late July 2026	In Progress (Note there are two action items, see also 24/11/2025)
25-05-2026	10.1	Notice of Motion No. 194 - Proposed Outdoor Dining Parklet Policy	That Council resolve: 1. Note that the attached Report 8.2, Potential Municipal Wide Outdoor Dining Policy (Attachment 1 to this Notice of Motion) was tabled at the 27 April 2026 Council Meeting, presenting options for a potential municipal wide outdoor dining policy in response to Council's resolution of 27 October 2025. 2. Note Council's decision at the Council Meeting on 27 April 2026 was: That Council note: 1. The 3 options officers have identified to support outdoor dining parklets in Knox. 2. That if supported, Option 3 - preparation of an Outdoor Dining Parklet Policy (including the recommended pre-Policy engagement) can commence in the second half of 2026/27 subject to budget allocation. An estimated budget allocation of $48,000 (approximately) would be required as well internal staff resources from a number of Council departments. 3. Note that Option 2 in the above report presented to the Council Meeting on 27 April 2026 was (in summary): Prepare a standalone Outdoor Dining Parklet Policy that refers to the existing policies and process in Option 1 but adds policy guidance based on recent learnings from the extension of existing parklets. 4. Request officers present a report at a future Council Meeting prior to November 2026 with a proposed Outdoor Dining Parklet Policy developed in line with Option 2 as presented to the 27 April 2026 Council Meeting.	A report was presented to the 26 October Council Meeting outlining a response to NOM 194 and providing a draft Outdoor Dining Parklet Policy and a pathway forward for consideration of applications for outdoor dining parklets. The Outdoor Dining Parklet Policy was considered and endorsed by Council. The Policy will be published on Council's website and will be used to inform future applications for outdoor dining parklets on Council controlled land.	Completed
22-06-2026	8.3	Early Years Advisory Committee (EYAC) Recruitment	That Council: 1. Thank the outgoing Committee Members for their contribution over the past two or four years. 2. Appoint the following candidates to the Early Years Advisory Committee for the period from 1 July 2026 to 30 June 2028 as presented in Confidential Attachment 1.	All Candidates volunteer checks are complete. Induction scheduled for first meeting in August 2026.	Completed

9 Supplementary Items

10 Notices Of Motion

11 Urgent Business

12 Questions Through the Chair

13 Confidential Items