

# Minutes

Scheduled Council Meeting  
Tuesday 18 July 2023 at 6:30 pm

Council Chamber at Civic Centre,  
25 Ferres Boulevard, South Morang

# Administrators

Lydia Wilson                      Chair of Council

Peita Duncan                      Administrator

Christian Zahra AM              Administrator

On 19 June 2020 the Acting Minister for Local Government appointed the Panel of Administrators for the City of Whittlesea and appointed Lydia Wilson as Chair of the Panel. The Panel of Administrators comprises of Lydia Wilson, Peita Duncan and Christian Zahra AM who will undertake the duties of the Council of the City of Whittlesea until the October 2024 Local Government Election.

# Senior Officers

Craig Lloyd                      Chief Executive Officer

Agata Chmielewski              Director Community Wellbeing

Sarah Renner                      Director Customer & Corporate Services

Debbie Wood                      Director Planning & Development

Amanda Dodd                      Acting Director Infrastructure & Environment

Janine Morgan                      Executive Manager Public Affairs

Sarah Rowe                      Interim Executive Manager Office of Council & CEO

Andrew Mason                      Acting Executive Manager Strategy & Insights

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## **1 Opening**

### **1.1 Meeting Opening and Introductions**

The Chair of Council, Lydia Wilson opened the meeting at 6:30 pm.

“Welcome to this Council Meeting of 18 July 2023 which is being held in person in the Council Chamber at Civic Centre, 25 Ferres Boulevard, South Morang and also being live streamed.

I am Lydia Wilson, Chair of Council and I would also like to introduce my Panel colleague, Administrator Peita Duncan. I would also like to introduce our Chief Executive Officer, Craig Lloyd and ask that he in turn introduce the members of the Executive Leadership Team in attendance today.”

“Good evening everyone, we also have with us:

Director Community Wellbeing, Agata Chmielewski;  
Director Customer & Corporate Services, Sarah Renner;  
Director Planning & Development, Debbie Wood;  
Acting Director Infrastructure & Environment, Amanda Dodd;  
Executive Manager Public Affairs, Janine Morgan;  
Interim Executive Manager Office of Council & CEO, Sarah Rowe; and  
Acting Executive Manager Strategy & Insights, Andrew Mason.

These members of the Executive Leadership Team will join us during the meeting.”

### **1.2 Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners Statement**

The Chair of Council, Lydia Wilson read the following statement:

*“On behalf of Council, I recognise the rich Aboriginal heritage of this country and acknowledge the Wurundjeri Willum Clan and Taungurung People as the Traditional Owners of lands within the City of Whittlesea.*

*I would also like to acknowledge Elders past, present and emerging.”*

### **1.3 Diversity and Good Governance Statement**

The Chair of Council, Lydia Wilson read the following statement:

*“At the City of Whittlesea we are proud of our diversity and the many cultures, faiths and beliefs that make up our community. We strive to be an inclusive welcoming City that fosters active participation, wellbeing and connection to each other and this land. We commit as a Council to making informed decisions to benefit the people of the City of Whittlesea now and into the future, to support our community’s vision of A Place For All.”*

## **1.4 Acknowledgements**

The Chair of Council, Lydia Wilson made the following acknowledgements:

### **1.4.1 NAIDOC Week**

The unique role that Elders play in our communities was the focus of Council's NAIDOC Week civic event and morning tea held on 3 July. NAIDOC Week is held each year to celebrate the history, culture and achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

This year's theme was 'For Our Elders', which recognises the importance of Elders as knowledge holders, advocates, teachers, survivors and leaders.

We were really pleased that we had a number of special guests in attendance. We had Rob Mitchell MP, Member for McEwen and the Honourable Lily D'Ambrosio MP, Member for Mill Park alongside myself and our Chief Executive Officer. We were all collectively updated in relation to the Aboriginal Gathering Place and our Reconciliation Action Plan.

Additionally, throughout the week Council held and supported a number of NAIDOC Week-themed activities designed to help residents and our staff as well, increase their knowledge of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander customs, protocols and traditions.

### **1.4.2 Mill Park Leisure Aquatic Recreation Victoria Health Club Award**

We are excited to announce that Mill Park Leisure received the Aquatics Recreation Victoria Health Club Award, we are absolutely delighted that the award was received for exceptional performance and achievement.

The award recognises innovative and effective management practices to achieve excellence in health club operations. We know that we have got some 4,200 satisfied members of Mill Park Leisure, and we are really proud of this recognition of our facility.

I also just want to note that we need to congratulate Andrew, one of the Duty Managers at Thomastown Recreation and Aquatic Centre, for winning the Aquatics Recreation Victoria Most Valuable Employee Award. So, to Mill Park Leisure Centre and to Andrew, Duty Manager, we pass on our very sincere congratulations, and we are very proud of the team at Mill Park Leisure Centre.

Administrator Duncan made the following acknowledgements:

#### **1.4.3 National Tree Day**

I would just like to talk about National Tree Day that we will be celebrating on Sunday 30 July with a range of fun, family friendly activities at Tambo Conservation Reserve in Whittlesea.

In collaboration with the Whittlesea Scouts and Whittlesea Landcare authority, this event forms part of the Planting Trees for the Queen's Jubilee project and aims to enhance the biodiversity of the reserve through which Bruce's Creek and Plenty River run.

We encourage everyone to come along. It will be fantastic and help us plant trees and shrubs, and also getting up close and personal with some reptiles, learning about healthy waterways and enjoying some of the marshmallows on offer over the campfire or a sausage sizzle and something warm to drink. That sounds delightful to me, the marshmallows, you had me at that.

#### **1.4.4 Coffee with Council**

I would also just like to acknowledge that last Thursday we held our regular Coffee with Council in Epping North, at the Brewer Sisters Café. A thank you to them for allowing us to host what was a very busy Coffee with Council session.

I also wanted to just acknowledge a resident from the Lyndarum Lifestyle Village who came along to have a chat about things to do within Council, also advised me that on Mother's Day and on International Nurses Day the Velvet Bean Café at Pacific Epping Shopping Centre gave Mothers a free coffee all day on Mother's Day and then subsequently to the nurses and doctors from the Northern Hospital on International Nurses Day.

A thank you to both of those two venues for one, hosting us last week, but also for Velvet Bean on going above and beyond, and acknowledging those people, fantastic work.

## 1.5 Attendance

### Members:

Lydia Wilson, Chair of Council  
Peita Duncan, Administrator

### Officers:

Craig Lloyd, Chief Executive Officer  
Agata Chmielewski, Director Community Wellbeing  
Sarah Renner, Director Customer & Corporate Services  
Debbie Wood, Director Planning & Development  
Amanda Dodd, Acting Director Infrastructure & Environment  
Janine Morgan, Executive Manager Public Affairs  
Sarah Rowe, Interim Executive Manager Office of Council & CEO  
Andrew Mason, Acting Executive Manager Strategy & Insights

### Apology:

Christian Zahra AM, Administrator

The Chair of Council, Lydia Wilson noted an apology from Administrator Zahra:

*“On behalf of Council we offer our very sincere condolences to Administrator Zahra, who is unable to join us this evening as he deals with a matter of deep personal loss. Our thoughts and sympathies are with Christian and his family at this most difficult time.”*



## **2 Declarations of Conflict of Interest**

No declarations.

### 3 Confirmation of Minutes of Previous Meeting/s

<b>COUNCIL RESOLUTION</b>	
<b>Moved:</b>	<i>Administrator Peita Duncan</i>
<b>Seconded:</b>	<i>Chairperson Lydia Wilson</i>

THAT the following Minutes of the preceding meeting as circulated, be confirmed:

Scheduled Meeting of Council held on 27 June 2023.

**CARRIED**

## 4 Public Questions, Petitions and Joint Letters

### 4.1 Public Question Time

#### **Public Question from Robert Atkins, Kinglake**

Can lights be put in at Mernda skate park. Skating there at night is a hazard, there is already power and spots on the trainlines where lights could be easily attached without further infrastructure that would provide light to the skate park and surrounding features. With the new shopping centre block, having lights will encourage more users to the skate park and show great growth to the area. This will make people come to Mernda more often and less crime will happen there at night. I made a petition to get lights and got 180 signatures but it didn't follow the criteria for one.

PS I am only 15 and started doing this when I was 14. You might recognise me from the plant a tree day posters around Whittlesea. Even though I don't live in the Whittlesea Shire, I attend Scouts there and my friends who I skate with live there. I would be very grateful if you were to help me out.

#### **Chief Executive Officer, Craig Lloyd**

Thank you Robert for your question and we acknowledge the significant commitment you have made in organising the petition.

The Mernda Skate Park was built by the Level Crossing Removal Authority and the land is owned by VicTrack but leased and maintained by the City of Whittlesea.

As is the case with other skate parks in the municipality, the Mernda Skate Park is designed to be used during daylight hours only. However, Council recognises the Mernda Skate Park is located in a town centre and many users would support evening use under lights.

Currently, the City of Whittlesea does not install lighting in parks and recreation areas outside of our Major Community Parks.

However, we will soon conduct a review into the provision of lighting in parks and open space facilities and the Mernda Skate Park will be included in this investigation. If Council decided to install lights at the park, it would then apply to VicTrack for permission to do so.

#### **Additional comments from Chair of Council, Lydia Wilson**

Can I also thank Robert for his question this evening and acknowledge his obvious leadership for someone so young. He is only 15. Congratulations to Robert.

**4.2 Petitions**

No Petitions

**4.3 Joint Letters**

No Joint Letters

## 5 Officers' Reports

### 5.1 Connected Communities

#### 5.1.1 Petition - Assessment of Street Trees along Wingspan Avenue & Plenty Road, South Morang

**Responsible Officer:** Acting Director Infrastructure & Environment

**Author:** Senior Arborist Planning & Risk

**In Attendance:** Senior Arborist Planning and Risk

#### Purpose

The purpose of this report is to outline the response to a petition received from 25 residents, requesting that Council assess the debris created by the street trees along Wingspan Avenue and 1045-1063 Plenty Road, South Morang. The petitioner felt leaf and twig drop from the street trees was excessive and the maintenance requirement for them was unreasonable.

#### Recommendation

**THAT Council in response to the petition received from 25 residents of Wingspan Avenue and 1045-1063 Plenty Road, South Morang, write to the Head Petitioner to advise that:**

1. An independent arboricultural report has been completed on all trees concerned in Wingspan Avenue and Plenty Road, South Morang. None of the trees posed any safety risks that required their removal.
2. Minor canopy pruning will be carried out to 11 trees in the next 12 months and all trees will continue to be monitored and maintained as part of Council's biennial inspection program.
3. Street sweeping is carried out every 8-12 weeks and the program will be monitored to ensure debris will not pose issues to road and guttering.

#### COUNCIL RESOLUTION

<b>Moved:</b>	<i>Chairperson Lydia Wilson</i>
<b>Seconded:</b>	<i>Administrator Peita Duncan</i>

**THAT Council adopt the recommendation in relation to the petition requesting Council assess the street trees along Wingspan Avenue and Plenty Road, South Morang.**

**CARRIED**

### 5.1.2 Trunk Services Infrastructure & Civil Works – Quarry Hills Regional Park

**Responsible Officer** Acting Director Infrastructure & Environment

**Author** Senior Project Manager

**In Attendance** Unit Manager Community Infrastructure Delivery

#### Purpose

The purpose of this report is to seek endorsement of the award of Contract Number 2022-107 for the construction of Trunk Services Infrastructure and Civil Works for the Granite Hills Major Community Park and Aboriginal Gathering Place at the Quarry Hills Regional Parkland.

#### Recommendation

**THAT Council:**

1. **Accept the tender submitted by MACA Civil Pty Ltd for the sum of \$3,979,749.26 (excluding GST) for the following contract:**

**Contract No: 2022-107**

**Title: Trunk Services Infrastructure & Civil Works**

**Subject to the following conditions:**

- a. **Tender to provide proof of currency of insurance cover as required in the tender documents.**
  - b. **Price variations to be in accordance with the provisions as set out in the tender documents.**
  - c. **Tenderer to provide contract security as required in the tender documents.**
2. **Approve the funding arrangements detailed in the confidential attachment.**

#### COUNCIL RESOLUTION

<b>Moved:</b>	<i>Administrator Peita Duncan</i>
<b>Seconded:</b>	<i>Chairperson Lydia Wilson</i>

**THAT Council adopt the recommendation accepting the tender submitted by MACA Civil Pty Ltd for Contract No. 2022-107 for the Trunk Services Infrastructure and Civil Works at Quarry Hills Regional Park.**

**CARRIED**

### 5.1.3 PRACE Lease Extension - Mernda Recreation Reserve

**Responsible Officer:** Director Customer & Corporate Services

**Author:** Unit Manager Strategic Property

**In Attendance:** Unit Manager Strategic Property

#### Purpose

The purpose of this report is to:

- inform Council of the outcome of the community consultation undertaken in relation to Council's intention to extend the current lease term with the Preston and Reservoir Adult Community Education (PRACE) from nine (9) years to twenty (20) years, ending in 2041 if all options for further terms are exercised by PRACE; and
- seek Council approval to extend the current lease term.

#### Recommendation

**THAT Council:**

1. Notes that public notice was given on 19 April 2023 in respect to the proposed extension of the current term of the Lease Agreement with PRACE from nine (9) years to twenty (20) years and ending in 2041 if all further-term options are exercised by PRACE, on part of Council's land located within the Mernda Recreation Reserve at 54-68 Schotters Road, Mernda pursuant to Section 115 of the *Local Government Act 2020*.
2. Notes that no submissions and/or requests to be heard by Council were received.
3. Resolves to grant PRACE a lease extension of eleven (11) years for a maximum lease period of twenty (20) years from the existing commencement date (July 2021).
4. Authorises the Chief Executive Officer to formalise and execute a deed of variation of lease between Council and PRACE for its premises located within the Mernda Recreation Reserve, 54-68 Schotters Road, Mernda.

#### COUNCIL RESOLUTION

<b>Moved:</b>	<i>Administrator Peita Duncan</i>
<b>Seconded:</b>	<i>Chairperson Lydia Wilson</i>

**THAT Council adopt the recommendation extending the lease for PRACE at Mernda Recreation Reserve.**

**CARRIED**

**5.2 Liveable Neighborhoods**

No reports

**5.3 Strong Local Economy**

No reports

**5.4 Sustainable Environment**

No reports



## 5.5 High Performing Organisation

### 5.5.1 Unconfirmed Audit and Risk Committee 25 May 2023 Meeting Minutes

**Responsible Officer:** Acting Executive Manager Strategy & Insights

**Author:** Unit Manager Risk & Assurance

#### Purpose

To enable Council to have oversight and understanding of the Audit and Risk Committee operations and as required under Council's Audit and Risk Committee Charter, this report presents the unconfirmed Minutes of the Audit and Risk Committee meeting held on 25 May 2023.

#### Recommendation

**THAT Council note the unconfirmed minutes of the Audit and Risk Committee meeting held on 25 May 2023.**

#### COUNCIL RESOLUTION

<b>Moved:</b>	<i>Chairperson Lydia Wilson</i>
<b>Seconded:</b>	<i>Administrator Peita Duncan</i>

**THAT Council adopt the recommendation noting the unconfirmed minutes of the Audit and Risk Committee Meeting held on 25 May 2023.**

**CARRIED**

**6 Notices of Motion**

No Notices of Motion

**7 Urgent Business**

No Urgent Business

## **8 Reports from Council Representatives and CEO Update**

### **8.1 Administrator, Peita Duncan**

Administrator Duncan's report was provided verbally at the 18 July 2023 Scheduled Council Meeting. Since the last Council meeting Administrator, Peita Duncan attended:

- Coffee with Council

### **8.2 Chair of Council, Lydia Wilson**

Chair Administrator Wilson's report was provided verbally at the 18 July 2023 Scheduled Council Meeting. Since the last Council Meeting Chair of Council, Lydia Wilson attended:

- Yarra Plenty Regional Library -Corporation
- Yarra Plenty Regional Library - CEO Employment Matters Sub Committee
- Northern Councils Alliance with Hon. Colin Brooks MP, Minister for Housing
- NAIDOC Week Event
- wat djerring Animal Facility Re-Launch with Craig Lloyd, Chief Executive Officer, Cr. Julie Williams, Mayor for Darebin, Cr. Angelica Panopoulos, Mayor for Merri-bek and Cathy Henderson, Chief Executive Officer of Merri-bek
- Two Citizenship Ceremonies with 140 Conferees at each

### **8.3 Chief Executive Officer, Craig Lloyd**

The Chief Executive Officer's report was provided verbally at the 18 July 2023 Scheduled Council Meeting:

#### **Condolences – Administrator Zahra**

Firstly, on behalf of our Executive and Staff we would like to offer our condolences to Administrator Zahra and his family during this difficult time as well.

#### **Mernda Social Support Centre**

We're looking forward to seeing a range of programs and services for our older residents following the opening of the new Mernda Social Support Centre earlier this month.

A number of accredited allied healthcare providers and community organisations will run programs from the centre including exercise classes for older adults with dementia and memory programs for those experiencing cognitive decline, as well as cultural, social and information-based events.

The \$2.69 million facility includes three activity rooms, kitchen, consulting room, staff office, outdoor barbecue area and accessible amenities as well as significant sustainability features.

The City of Whittlesea contributed \$1.45 million towards the project, whilst the Victorian Government provided \$1.24 million towards the project through the Growing Suburbs Fund.

### **Tree-Planting Program**

Our commitment to greening our City continues with 545 new trees planted across the municipality in the last two months to the end of June.

The new trees will help to grow canopy coverage in our parks and open spaces, which of course have a cooling effect, provide shelter and importantly improve biodiversity.

Another one of our programs in that space, which focuses on removing and replacing aged trees in residential areas, saw 461 new trees planted in 16 streets during that same time.

### **Artists for Annual Art Exhibition**

Each year Council holds an art exhibition to showcase and celebrate the work of artists who live, work or are connected to the City of Whittlesea.

Expressions of Interest are now open for the 2023 exhibition. The theme this year is “The webs we weave”.

Artists are invited to reflect on connections in our lives and our communities from local through to personal and from cultural to global. All art mediums, materials, processes, practices and interpretations are welcome.

Applications close on Monday 18 September and successful applicants will be notified in early October.

You will be able to see these artworks on exhibition here in the Great Hall from Friday 17 November.

### **Community Grants Information Sessions**

As you may be aware at last month’s Council Meeting, Council endorsed the new Community Grants Program.

Applications will open on 1 August and we will be offering six grant categories - small, medium, large, individual and unincorporated groups as well as emergency grants.

We are running a number of information sessions to ensure community groups and individuals have all the information on the new program and on how to apply. The first sessions are on tomorrow, Wednesday 19 July, at Lalor Library in the morning and then one at the Epping Memorial Hall in the evening.

There is a whole lot of other dates and locations which are all available on our website – visit [whittlesea.vic.gov.au/grants](http://whittlesea.vic.gov.au/grants).

### **Acknowledgment of Sarah Rowe, Interim Executive Manager Office of Council & CEO**

I would like to acknowledge Sarah Rowe who has been our Interim Executive Manager Office and Council & CEO for some months now and this is Sarah’s last meeting following a recent permanent appointment of that role. Thank you, Sarah.

**Chair of Council, Lydia Wilson's added:**

I echo your comments Craig, in relation to recognising Sarah's contribution over a number of months in that Governance role and providing enormous support to Administrators as well. We thank you for exhaustive efforts.

## **9 Confidential Business**

### **9.1 Confidential Connected Communities**

No Reports

### **9.2 Confidential Liveable Neighbourhoods**

No Reports

### **9.3 Confidential Strong Local Economy**

No Reports

### **9.4 Confidential Sustainable Environment**

No Reports

### **9.5 Confidential High Performing Organisation**

No Reports

## **10 Closure**

There being no further business the Chair of Council closed the 18 July 2023 Scheduled Council Meeting at 7:07 pm.

Confirmed this 15th day of August 2023.

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Lydia Wilson  
Chair of Council