



Agenda

Scheduled Council Meeting

Tuesday 19 December 2023 at 6:30 pm

You are advised that a Meeting of Council has been called by the Chief Executive Officer on Tuesday 19 December 2023 at 6:30 pm for the transaction of the following business.

This meeting will be held in the Council Chamber at Civic Centre, 25 Ferres Boulevard, South Morang and will be [livestreamed via Council’s website](https://www.whittlesea.vic.gov.au/about-us/council/council-meetings/).

**C Lloyd**

**Chief Executive Officer**

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 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

Emma Appleton Director Planning & Development

Agata Chmielewski Director Community Wellbeing

Sarah Renner Director Customer & Corporate Services

Debbie Wood Director Infrastructure & Environment

Frank Joyce Executive Manager Strategy & Insights

Janine Morgan Executive Manager Public Affairs

Jacinta Stevens Executive Manager Office of Council & CEO

Order of Business

[1 Opening 6](#_Toc256001176)

[1.1 Meeting Opening and Introductions 6](#_Toc256001177)

[1.2 Apologies 6](#_Toc256001178)

[1.3 Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners Statement 6](#_Toc256001179)

[1.4 Diversity and Good Governance Statement 6](#_Toc256001180)

[1.5 Acknowledgements 7](#_Toc256001181)

[2 Declarations of Conflict of Interest 7](#_Toc256001182)

[3 Confirmation of Minutes of Previous Meeting/s 7](#_Toc256001183)

[4 Public Questions, Petitions and Joint Letters 8](#_Toc256001184)

[4.1 Public Question Time 8](#_Toc256001185)

[4.2 Petitions 8](#_Toc256001186)

[4.3 Joint Letters 8](#_Toc256001187)

[5 Officers' Reports 9](#_Toc256001188)

[5.1 Proposed Amendment C275 - Local Policies Update to Clause 13.07-1L - Display Homes, Clause 19.02-1L - Medical Centres and Clause 19.03-5L - Materials Recycling Centre 9](#_Toc256001189)

[5.2 Integrated Strategies - Connected Community, Long Term Infrastructure Plan and Liveable Neighbourhoods 18](#_Toc256001190)

[5.3 Contract 2023-100 Construction of Plenty Road and Everton Drive Signalise Intersection 37](#_Toc256001191)

[5.4 Community Engagement Policy 43](#_Toc256001192)

[5.5 Council Policies for Rescission 48](#_Toc256001193)

[5.6 Unconfirmed Minutes of the Audit and Risk Committee 59](#_Toc256001194)

[5.7 Informal Meetings of Administrators 62](#_Toc256001195)

[6 Notices of Motion 63](#_Toc256001196)

[7 Urgent Business 63](#_Toc256001197)

[8 Reports from Council Representatives and CEO Update 63](#_Toc256001198)

[9 Confidential Business 63](#_Toc256001199)

[9.1.1 Growling Frog Lease Extension 63](#_Toc256001200)

[9.1.2 2023-1 Garden Bed Contract Variation 63](#_Toc256001201)

[10 Closure 63](#_Toc256001202)

**Note:**

At the Chair of Council’s discretion, the meeting may be closed to the public in accordance with Section 66(2)(a) of the *Local Government Act 2020*. The provision which is likely to be relied upon to enable closure is set out in each item. These reports are not available for public distribution.

**Question Time:**

Council will hold public question time for up to 30 minutes at each Scheduled Council Meeting to allow for public questions, petitions or joint letters from our community to be read out by the Chief Executive Officers delegate and responses will be provided by the Chief Executive Officer.

Questions are required to be submitted in writing no later than 12 noon on the day prior to a Scheduled Council Meeting.

Priority will be given to questions or statements that relate to agenda items. Any questions submitted after 12 noon the day prior will be held over to the following Council Meeting.

The Public Question form can be downloaded from Council’s website. Refer: <https://www.whittlesea.vic.gov.au/about-us/council/council-meetings/>

Council is committed to ensuring that all residents and ratepayers of the municipality may contribute to Council’s democratic process and therefore, if you have special requirements, please telephone the Governance Team prior to any Council Meeting on (03) 9217 2170.

**1 Opening**

**1.1 Meeting Opening and Introductions**

The Chair of Council, Lydia Wilson will open the meeting and introduce the Administrators and Chief Executive Officer:

Administrator, Peita Duncan;

Administrator, Christian Zahra; and

Chief Executive Officer, Craig Lloyd.

The Chief Executive Officer, Craig Lloyd will introduce members of the Executive Leadership Team:

Emma Appleton, Director Planning and Development;

Agata Chmielewski, Director Community Wellbeing;

Sarah Renner, Director Corporate and Customer Services;

Debbie Wood, Director Infrastructure and Environment;

Frank Joyce, Executive Manager Strategy and Insights;

Janine Morgan, Executive Manager Public Affairs; and

Jacinta Stevens, Executive Manager Office of Council and CEO.

**1.2 Apologies**

**1.3 Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners Statement**

The Chair of Council, Lydia Wilson will 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.”*

**1.4 Diversity and Good Governance Statement**

The Chair of Council, Lydia Wilson will 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.*”

**1.5 Acknowledgements**

**2 Declarations of Conflict of Interest**

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

# Recommendation

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

**Scheduled Meeting of Council held on 21 November 2023**

**4 Public Questions, Petitions and Joint Letters**

**4.1 Public Question Time**

**4.2 Petitions**

No Petitions

**4.3 Joint Letters**

No Joint Letters

**5 Officers' Reports**

5.1 Proposed Amendment C275 - Local Policies Update to Clause 13.07-1L - Display Homes, Clause 19.02-1L - Medical Centres and Clause 19.03-5L - Materials Recycling Centre

**5.1 Proposed Amendment C275 - Local Policies Update to Clause 13.07-1L - Display Homes, Clause 19.02-1L - Medical Centres and Clause 19.03-5L - Materials Recycling Centre**

**Director/Executive Manager:** Director Planning & Development

**Report Author:** Strategic Planner

**In Attendance:** Manager Strategic Futures  
Coordinator Planning Policy and Implementation

# Executive Summary

Amendment C275 proposes changes to the following three local policies in the *Whittlesea Planning Scheme* (scheme): Clause 13.07-1L-Display homes, Clause 19.02-1L - Medical centres and Clause 19.03-5L - Materials recycling centre. This proposal implements 3 of 37 recommendations made in the *Planning Scheme Review 2018* (PSR). The proposed policies are included as Attachment 1 of this report.

This report recommends that Council approves the proposed amendment for submission to the Department of Transport and Planning (DTP) to seek authorisation from the Minister for Planning to exhibit the proposed amendment.

While the review found that the scheme is generally operating effectively, it makes several recommendations to update and further improve its efficiency. This included a program to amend or update 5 local policies that had not been reviewed for some time. This amendment focuses on 3 local policies, with the remaining two local policies to be the subject of future amendments.

Following consultation with relevant internal Council departments and external stakeholders, including the Environment Protection Agency (EPA), the 3 policies were redrafted to update existing content, objectives, strategies, guidelines and include new policy documents. In summary, the proposed changes seek to focus greater attention on the offsite impacts of the 3 land uses, for example through strategies to minimise potential negative amenity impacts like noise and dust. The changes are also aimed at improving useability for users of the scheme.

The amendment will ensure the scheme is up to date with current policy and community expectations.

The three policies with proposed changes (shown in track-changes) are included at Attachment 1.

# Officers’ Recommendation

**THAT Council Approves the proposed Amendment C275 for submission to the Department of Transport and Planning for authorisation from the Minister for Planning, to formally prepare and exhibit Amendment C275 to the Whittlesea Planning Scheme, as outlined within Attachment 1.**

# Background / Key Information

Planning Scheme Review 2018

The *Whittlesea Planning Scheme Review 2018* (PSR) was prepared in accordance with Planning Practice Note 32: *Review of Planning Schemes and the requirements* under the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*. In summary, Council must review the scheme within one year of approval of the Council Plan, unless otherwise determined by the Minister for Planning. The Council Plan (Community Plan) was adopted in 2021, and a second informal review of the scheme was undertaken in 2022.

In accordance with the Practice Note, the review assessed whether provisions, such as local planning policies, zones, overlays and schedules have been effective and efficient in achieving the objectives and strategies of the scheme.

Informed by previous audit recommendations, internal consultations, Planning Panel reports and VCAT decisions, changes to state planning policy and other strategic work, the review found that the scheme is generally operating well. It also made 37 recommendations to update and further improve the efficiency of the scheme. Five recommendations (6, 7, 8, 19 and 20) have been addressed within Amendment C249wsea, which was approved for submission to Department of Transport and Planning (DTP) at the Council meeting on 27 June 2023. Amendment C249 was lodged on 22 August 2023 and is currently with DTP, awaiting ministerial authorisation to proceed with the amendment.

Of the 15 local policies included in the scheme at the time of the review, it was recommended that five required updating to ensure they adequately address the needs of Council and the community. Of the other 10, four were relatively new; four had recently been reviewed and two were no longer relevant and were removed as part of Amendment C249.

This proposed amendment implements the recommendation to update three of these five local policies, with the remaining two reviews of the Development Contribution Plan and Industrial Development policies to be the subject of future amendments.

The need to review these three policies was based on a combination of officer experience utilising the policies, implications of relevant VCAT decisions, and in the case of the Materials recycling centres policy, the impact of regulatory (EPA) guidelines that needed to be taken into account.

Project timing

Implementation of the PSR recommendations has been delayed by the implementation of the Planning Policy Framework translation.

While this was a policy neutral change, it involved a significant restructuring of the Scheme required by the (then) Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning. It should be noted that due to this State Government Planning Policy Framework translation, the three policies are now found in different parts of the Scheme to the clause numbers noted in the original recommendations of the review.

Where does this amendment apply?

The proposed amendment applies to all land in the municipality. However, it is important to note that as per all local policies, they are only applicable where new planning permit applications are made for the specific uses of display homes, materials recycling centres and medical centres.

No transitional arrangements have been proposed given the minor nature of the proposed changes. The amendment will not change the requirement for a permit for the three subject land uses, which is determined by relevant zones and overlays of the scheme. Instead, the amendment seeks to change how the discretionary elements of these land use are assessed by Council officers and other users of the scheme where a planning permit is required.

**Proposed Amendment C27**

The proposed amendment updates three local policies - Display homes, Materials recycling Centre and Medical centres, which had not kept pace with current state government policy, VCAT decisions and community expectations. These proposed changes are summarised briefly in the following sections and addressed in more detail in Attachment 2.

Display homes policy

Key issues addressed through the updates to the Display homes policy include the preference to locate them closer to the development site to which they relate, to minimise traffic and other impacts on residents. Further, the policy encourages consideration of the design and use of display homes so they can transition to a residential use once they are no longer required as a display home.

This was achieved through the addition of two new policy objectives, a new strategy and policy guideline, and two new policy documents that addressed relevant location, design, landscape and traffic considerations when assessing a planning permit application for display homes.

Medical centres policy

Updates to this policy were primarily informed by a number of VCAT decisions in relation to medical centres, which relate to potential negative amenity impacts and incorporation of ancillary uses, such as chemists, so that they are integrated with the primary use. Additionally, a number of other issues relating to built form and traffic management were raised through internal consultation with statutory planning.

While there are several proposed changes to this policy, many replicate those made as part of Amendment C250 - Child care centre policy in 2020 and therefore improves policy consistency across the scheme. A number of changes, including three new policy objectives, 13 new strategies, two new policy guidelines and two new policy documents are proposed to address issues identified.

Materials recycling centres policy

Proposed changes to this policy were informed through Council officer feedback, and subsequent EPA advice in response to the draft policy. Issues raised were primarily in relation to potential negative visual and other amenity impacts. Additionally, the EPA advised that the policy should reflect updated EPA policy and guideline documents.

Changes were made through five new strategies and guidelines, and updates to four existing strategies. These related to location of Materials recycling centres, management of amenity impacts and land use outcomes. These changes will encourage better located facilities, improved landscaping and building orientation. Amenity management outcomes, including noise, air quality including dust suppressant management, traffic and car parking, visual appearance and site maintenance, and hours of operation have also been addressed.

Changes to the three policies cannot be considered in isolation and the impacts on other parts of the scheme need to be addressed. The relationship between the proposed policy changes and relevant clauses in the scheme that have been reviewed is summarised below.

**Policy Strategy and Legislation**

**Clause 02.03-3 – Environmental Risk and Amenity**

Notes the importance of Display homes to the municipality, but also provides the following advice: ‘Site and design display homes so that they do not detrimentally impact residential amenity’. The changes to the display homes policy are consistent with this existing policy. The Materials recycling policy and the Medical centres policy will not impact upon this clause.

**Clause 02.03-9 – Infrastructure**

Notes the importance of medical centres to the municipality. The policy also seeks to differentiate centres that are located in activity centres and those that are found in a residential context. The intent of this clause is to ensure the size and intensity of the use is consistent with the surrounding context.

The Medical centres policy has been drafted to support this differentiation, by linking land use intensity to activity centres, traffic circulation and design guidelines to ensure the centre responds to its urban context.

**Clause 13.07 – Amenity, Human Health and Safety**

The Display homes policy is nested broadly within this heading at Clause 13.07-1L, under Clause 13.07-1S – Land use compatibility (state policy). The proposed changes to the local policy are in keeping with this mandatory state policy. The updated Display homes policy responds appropriately to this Clause.

**Clause 19.02 – Community Infrastructure**

The Medical centres local policy is nested within this heading at Clause at 19.02-1L, under Clause 19.02-1S – Health facilities (the state policy) and Clause 19.02-1R – Health precincts - Metropolitan Melbourne (the regional policy). The proposed changes to the local policy are consistent with the intent of the mandatory state and regional policies.

**Clause 19.03 - Development Infrastructure**

The Materials recycling centre local policy is nested within this heading at Clause 19.03-1L, within 19.03-5S - Waste and resource recovery (state policy). The proposed changes to the Materials recycling centre policy are consistent with the applicable state policy.

**Clause 53.14 - Resource Recovery**

Outlines a state policy that is applicable to Materials recycling centres. The Particular Provisions are implemented via the state government. The provision sets out requirements to be met for a materials recycling centre. The proposed local policy will not duplicate this particular provision. It will also complement the discretionary parts of this state policy.

**73.03 - Land use terms**

Outlines the following relevant definitions:

* **Display home centre** - One or more buildings constructed as a dwelling, but used for display, to encourage people to buy or construct similar dwellings. It may include a sales office.
* **Materials recycling** - Land used to dismantle, treat, process, store, recycle, or sell refuse, used or surplus materials. The clause also notes that Materials recycling is a sub-category of the broader “industry” land use.
* **Medical centre** - Land used to provide health or surgical services (including preventative care, diagnosis, Medical centre medical and surgical treatment, pathology services, and counselling) to out-patients only. This clause also notes medical centres are a sub-category of the broader “office” land use.

The proposed changes will not impact upon the definitions as outlined in Clause 73.03 Land Use Terms. As outlined above, the proposed changes will not impact upon the permit triggers and have been written to respond to state and regional policies.

The aim of the changes is to improve how decision makers exercise their discretion during planning permit assessment to deliver better outcomes for the community. It is also aimed at improving usability for end users of the Scheme.

# Alignment to Community Plan, Policies or Strategies

Alignment to Whittlesea 2040 and Community Plan 2021-2025:

**Connected Communities**   
We work to foster and inclusive, healthy, safe and welcoming community where all ways of life are celebrated and supported.

**Liveable Neighbourhoods**   
Our City is well-planned and beautiful, and our neighbourhoods and town centres are convenient and vibrant places to live, work and play.

**Strong Local Economy**   
Our City is a smart choice for innovation, business growth and industry as well as supporting local businesses to be successful, enabling opportunities for local work and education.

# Considerations of *Local Government Act (2020)* Principles

Financial Management

There is no budget required to send the proposed Amendment C275 for submission to the Department of Transport and Planning for authorisation from the Minister for Planning.

Community Consultation and Engagement

Consultation on this proposed amendment was primarily undertaken with relevant Council officers with limited engagement with key external stakeholders, including the Environment Protection Agency. This consultation process and its outcomes is outlined in Attachment 2 to this report.

This Planning Scheme Amendment will be subject to the normal public exhibition process as per the requirements of the *Planning and Environment Act, 1987*. This will involve notification of the general public, key stakeholders and state agencies through a combination of locally circulated newspapers, direct written notification, the government gazette and Council’s website. This notification will inform interested parties of the proposed amendment and details for making a submission.

# Other Principles for Consideration as per the *Local Government Act (2020)*

**Overarching Governance Principles and Supporting Principles**

(a) Council decisions are to be made and actions taken in accordance with the relevant law.

(b) Priority is to be given to achieving the best outcomes for the municipal community, including future generations.

(c) The economic, social and environmental sustainability of the municipal district, including mitigation and planning for climate change risks, is to be promoted.

(d) The municipal community is to be engaged in strategic planning and strategic decision making.

(h) Regional, state and national plans and policies are to be taken into account in strategic planning and decision making.

Public Transparency Principles

N/A

# Council Policy Considerations

**Environmental Sustainability Considerations (including Climate Emergency)**

The proposed amendment seeks to improve guidance to users of the scheme on matters, including environmental impact, that already require consideration within the policies. Many of the proposed changes seek to minimise potential negative impacts of the three uses on amenity, through the provision of vegetation, screening and onsite waste management practices.

**Social, Cultural and Health**

The proposal will have no impact upon cultural, or cultural issues within the municipality. However, the proposal may have indirect public health benefit (particularly the Materials recycling local policy) as a result of improved management of potential negative amenity impacts. Additionally, the policies also aim to facilitate services within walking distances of dwellings which will have a public health benefit.

**Economic**

The proposal will have intangible economic benefits, by improving planning outcomes in the municipality. It is also anticipated that the improved useability of the provisions will support investment in the municipality, albeit indirectly.

**Legal, Resource and Strategic Risk Implications**

No implications.

# Implementation Strategy

Communication

Should DTP authorise the proposed amendment, the *Planning and Environment Act, 1987* outlines the requirements for public exhibition. This has been discussed above.

Critical Dates

This report is intended to go to a Council Meeting on 19 December 2023.

# Declaration of Conflict of Interest

Under Section 130 of the *Local Government Act 2020*officers providing advice to Council are required to disclose any conflict of interest they have in a matter and explain the nature of the conflict.

The Responsible Officer reviewing this report, having made enquiries with relevant members of staff, reports that no disclosable interests have been raised in relation to this report.

# Attachments

1. Local policies [**5.1.1** - 7 pages]
2. Summary of policy formulation and development [**5.1.2** - 6 pages]

5.2 Integrated Strategies - Connected Community, Long Term Infrastructure Plan and Liveable Neighbourhoods

**5.2 Integrated Strategies - Connected Community, Long Term Infrastructure Plan and Liveable Neighbourhoods**

**Director/Executive** **Manager:** Director Community Wellbeing  
Director Planning and Development

**Report** **Author:** Social Planning & Project Officer

**In** **Attendance:** Manager Strategic Future  
Manager Community & Place  
Acting Manager Strategic Projects

# Executive Summary

This report seeks endorsement of the Connected Community Strategy 2023-2033 (CCS), the Long-Term Community Infrastructure Plan 2024-2033 (LTCIP), and the Liveable Neighbourhood Strategy 2023 –2033 (LNS) (the Strategies), following community consultation on the draft documents.

Council’s Integrated Planning Framework guides the development of integrated Council Strategies to ensure alignment, efficiency, effectiveness and to avoid duplication. The three Strategies under consideration are closely aligned and, together, identify priorities to enable liveable neighbourhoods and connected communities, through the provision of community infrastructure and community programs and services, and the planning and design of great places for people.

The CCS outlines the Council’s commitment to fostering inclusive, healthy, safe, and welcoming places where all community members are celebrated and supported. The CCS articulates shared community outcomes that provide a focus towards strengthening social connections and building community.

The LNS outlines the City of Whittlesea’s approach to creating and maintaining liveable neighbourhoods that are attractive and well-planned with open spaces and town centres that are convenient and vibrant places for all.

The LTCIP uses guiding principles to prioritise community infrastructure for the City of Whittlesea over the next ten years, considering a climate of significant population growth, a diverse and changing community, and state government policy reform.

As the Strategies are closely aligned, community and stakeholder consultation was undertaken on the three Strategies together from May to October 2023.

This consultation sought feedback to ensure priorities in each of the Strategies were aligned with community and stakeholder expectations, and that the draft Strategies were informed by community and stakeholder input.186 community contributions were received during the consultation period with over 90 per cent of participants supportive of the Strategies.

# Officers’ Recommendation

**THAT Council:**

**1. Notes the feedback received during the integrated community consultation process, run from May to October 2023, for the Connected Community Strategy 2023-2033, Liveable Neighbourhoods Strategy 2023-2033, and Long-Term Community Infrastructure Plan 2024-2033 at Attachment 1.**

**2. Endorses the Connected Community Strategy 2023-2033 at Attachment 2.**

**3. Endorses the Liveable Neighbourhoods Strategy 2023-2033 at Attachment 3.**

**4. Endorses the Long-Term Community Infrastructure Plan 2024-2033 at Attachment 4.**

**5. Acknowledges and thanks the community and stakeholders who have contributed to the development of the Connected Community Strategy 2023-2033, Long Term Community Infrastructure Plan 2024-2033, and Liveable Neighbourhoods Strategy 2023-2033.**

# Background / Key Information

Achieving positive community outcomes requires a multidisciplinary and integrated approach. The three Strategies have been developed in close alignment to reflect the interconnection of community infrastructure, liveable neighbourhoods and community connection. Together, the Strategies outline priority areas to increase community wellbeing through well-functioning, vibrant neighbourhoods, inclusive of well-integrated community infrastructure and the provision of targeted and appropriate community programs and services.

The three Strategies are closely aligned to the long-term community vision *Whittlesea 2040: A Place for All* (Whittlesea 2040).

To support this long-term vision, an integrated planning approach focuses on the delivery of outcomes for the community, reducing complexity, increasing transparency, and removing duplication. In addition to the targeted community consultation undertaken for these specific Strategies, each has also been informed by extensive research and engagement undertaken since 2020 across several Council projects, including the City of Whittlesea Connected Communities Background Research Report, Whittlesea 2040, and Community Plan 2021–2025.

The key purpose of each Strategy is summarised below:

**The Connected Community Strategy 2023-2033 (CCS)**

The CCS (Attachment 2) outlines the City of Whittlesea’s commitment to fostering a connected, inclusive, healthy, safe, and welcoming place where all community members are celebrated and supported.

The CCS recognises the importance of fostering a positive sense of identity and belonging and aims to meet the diverse needs and aspirations of the community by supporting access to appropriate services and programs, ensuring that people of all backgrounds, ages and abilities feel safe and part of our community.

The CCS set out the challenges, opportunities, and priorities for action under the following Key Focus Areas:

* Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities: building better relationships in our local community and promoting cultural identity.
* Arts, Culture and Events: creating community connections by providing opportunities to participate in arts programs, cultural and community events.
* Multicultural Communities: celebrating and supporting a rich diversity of cultures and backgrounds.
* Access, Inclusion and Discrimination: supporting people of all backgrounds and abilities to feel safe and have equitable access to services and facilities.
* Physical and Mental Health: providing access to sporting activities and working with our partners to increase access to health services.
* Life Stages: providing services and facilities to support the distinct stages in a person’s life and promoting intergenerational connections that enhance wellbeing and create a sense of belonging.
* Community Safety: addressing safety concerns, promoting gender equity, and partnering with emergency services to support our community to be prepared for, respond to, and recover from emergencies.
* Community Participation: promoting and enabling participation in community life through information, education, and volunteering.

**Liveable Neighbourhoods Strategy 2023-2033 (LNS)**

The LNS (Attachment 3) sets out the challenges, opportunities, and priorities for well-designed, vibrant, and accessible neighbourhoods for our community. It establishes a framework for a place-based approach to planning for the services, facilities, and infrastructure that people need to meet most of their daily needs, close to home. It does this through the following four themes:

* Public space and infrastructure
* Activity centres
* Integrated transport
* Housing

The LNS acknowledges the great diversity within our community and the need to plan for these diverse needs, now and into the future as our community changes. It also acknowledges the importance of balancing the needs of communities in established areas, where there are existing services and infrastructure, that may be outdated, as well as the needs of new communities in need of the basic and essential elements to support their daily needs. The LNS seeks to implement the goal established in Whittlesea 2040, for well-planned and beautiful neighbourhoods, with town centres that are convenient and vibrant places to live, work and play.

**Long Term Community Infrastructure Plan 2024-2033 (LTCIP)**

The LTCIP (Attachment 4) establishes an evidence-based framework for the prioritisation of Council’s investment in community infrastructure across the municipality. It outlines the guiding principles for the planning, design, delivery, and activation of community facilities and ensures that proposed projects can effectively respond and adapt to the changing needs of the City of Whittlesea's growing community.

The guiding principles include:

* **Service led:** Community infrastructure planning is based on community needs, include demand for Council services.
* **Local responses:** Community infrastructure provision considers the distinct characteristics of the local community and place and involves community in the design and development process.
* **Welcoming, safe, inclusive, and accessible:** A focus on equity, inclusion, cultural safety, and accessibility in how spaces are designed and integrated into local neighbourhoods so they are places where all community members can connect and participate.
* **Flexible and multipurpose:** Creating multipurpose community hubs that provide complementary services, recreation, leisure, and cultural experiences on a single site or in close proximity.
* **Collaboration and partnership driven:** Designing and resourcing hubs to provide convenience for visitors and opportunities to users to explore complementary programs/services.
* **Optimised investment:** Seeking opportunities to repurpose existing facilities, as well as investing in new infrastructure.
* **Sustainable:** Reducing Council’s environmental impact through designing and building facilities to be resource efficient, easy to maintain and long-lasting.

Using the above guiding principles, and in close consultation with relevant internal and external stakeholders, the LTCIP identifies community infrastructure priorities and projects for delivery in the short and medium term. Short-term actions are those that are already

underway or expected to commence in the next 5 years. Medium and long-term actions are expected to commence in the next 5 to 10 years.

# Alignment to Community Plan, Policies or Strategies

Alignment to Whittlesea 2040 and Community Plan 2021-2025:

**Connected Community**  
We work to foster and inclusive, healthy, safe and welcoming community where all ways of life are celebrated and supported.  
  
**Liveable Neighbourhoods**  
Our City is well-planned and beautiful, and our neighbourhoods and town centres are convenient and vibrant places to live, work and play.  
  
**Strong Local Economy**  
Our City is a smart choice for innovation, business growth and industry as well as supporting local businesses to be successful, enabling opportunities for local work and education.

# Considerations of *Local Government Act (2020)* Principles

**Financial Management**

**Connected Community Strategy and Liveable Neighbourhood Strategy**

The CCS and LNS include priorities for action to support implementation over the next 10 years. Development of two-yearly action plans over the life of the two Strategies will involve consideration of Community Plan Actions, the potential to access external grant funding, and partnership approaches with community and relevant stakeholders from the public and private sectors. Endorsement of Action Plans, including prioritisation and cost of actions, will form part of Council’s annual budget process.

**Long Term Community Infrastructure Plan 2024-2033**

The LTCIP includes action plan priorities for projects over the next 10 years. As part of the prioritisation process, ‘financial viability’ was one of the assessment criteria, considering the potential to access funding, land, works-in-kind, developer contributions, public/private funding, or other resources to contribute to project planning and delivery. As each of the projects identified in the LTCIP are at differing stages in their project life cycle, the cost of each project will be determined as part of Council’s Project Management Framework, including budget and business case approvals.

**Community Consultation and Engagement**

Community and stakeholder engagement was undertaken in an integrated way to reflect the close alignment of the three Strategies. Community wellbeing is supported by the provision of services, programs and activities, community infrastructure and well-designed neighbourhoods. The consultation and engagement undertaken reflected the close alignment of these different but connected aspects of community life.

Consultation and engagement activities also aligned with Council’s place-based approach, which recognises and appreciates demographic and geographic diversity of our community.

The first stage of consultation, conducted May to August 2023, established community priorities and informed the development of the draft Strategies and considered the existing consultation undertaken as part of the following engagement projects.

* **Whittlesea 2040: A place for all -** engagement with over 4,000 people, through submissions, workshops, and forums to inform the development of Whittlesea 2040.
* **Community Plan: 2021–2025** –engagement with more than 1,300 people.
* **Household Survey 2021** –a total of 1,545 residents answered 54 questions about a range of topics relevant to the CSS, LNS and LTCIP.
* **Community priorities focus group 2023-** a community priorities focus group was established and attended by 17 residents from a diverse age groups, genders, abilities, cultural backgrounds, suburbs and household structures in June and October 2023.

The group were asked targeted questions relating to key themes of the 3 Strategies to help identify, assess, and prioritise community interests.

Following Council endorsement of the draft Strategies, stage 2 of community consultation was conducted between 22 September – 29 October 2023. This engagement included numerous pop-up events, focus groups for community and relevant stakeholders, business, and youth; online and hard copy surveys; online engagement; and promotion through local media.

To ensure that community members across the City of Whittlesea were provided with the opportunity to have their say, the engagement approach provided access to Council staff across the municipality, at a variety of locations, attendance at advisory and network Group meetings and through reconvening the community priorities focus group.

A total of 186 people participated in the community consultation activities, as detailed below:

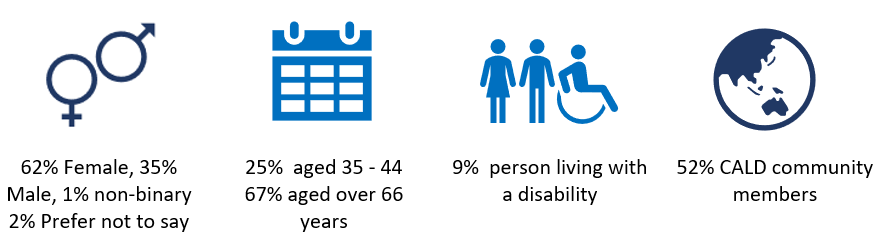
* **Face to face** - A total of 14 community-based pop-ups were held in popular locations across the municipality where Council officers discussed the draft Strategies with 167 people face to face.
* **Online** - The draft Strategies were available for consideration and feedback on the Engage Whittlesea website. During the consultation period, there were 386 visitors to the page and a total of 19 people completed the survey. Ten people made written comments.
* **Targeted stakeholders** - Council approached community and CALD groups for feedback on the Strategies. Targeted consultation was also undertaken with our local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community through a series of tailored engagement activities that included drop-in sessions, yarns, and stakeholder meetings with Whittlesea Reconciliation Group (WRG), the Whittlesea Aboriginal Gathering Place Advisory Group (WAGPAG), Traditional Owners (Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation), Bubup Wilam Aboriginal Child and Family Centre. Input was also sought from other local stakeholders by Council and WRG members.
* **Advisory groups** - in accordance with the recommendation from Council at the 19 September 2023 meeting, Council advisory groups were provided with the opportunity to provide feedback on the draft Strategies through direct contact with Council officers.

These advisory groups and networks included:

* Whittlesea Disability Network
* Whittlesea Interfaith Network
* Whittlesea Reconciliation Group
* Youth Advisory Committee
* Whittlesea Community Futures Partnership
* Child Friendly Cities and Communities Advisory Group
* Best Start Partnership Group
* Whittlesea Early Years Partnership Meeting
* Community Leadership Program participants
* Local service providers operating out of Epping Services Hub
* Local sporting clubs
* Regular users of Council Community Centres
* Yarra Plenty Regional Library staff and visitors
* **The community priorities focus group -** was reconvened in October 2023. At this session the participants were asked to provide feedback on the draft Strategies to confirm alignment with their expectations and identify any gaps.
* **State government** **departments** - relevant state government departments were notified about the development of the draft Strategies

**Response to Community Feedback**

Council received valuable feedback on the draft Strategies from the community and stakeholders during the consultation. The people that participated in the consultation process represented a diverse cross-section of our community.



A full analysis of the feedback provided on the draft Strategies and how this informed the final document is provided at Attachment 1. A summary of the feedback from this final phase of consultation and how this informed finalisation of the strategies is discussed in the following:

**Connected Community Strategy**

Responses by the community during the consultation period were overwhelmingly supportive of the CCS. This is evidenced by 90% of participants indicating support of the draft CCS, 9% indicated they were not sure and 1% indicated they were not supportive.

Themes raised in the feedback were identified and the draft CCS reviewed to ensure they were adequately addressed in line with community expectations.

Feedback provided during the community consultation period will be particularly relevant to and will be further inform the development of the CCS Action Plan once the CCS is endorsed by Council.

This feedback included consideration of the LGBTQIA+ community, enhanced support for young people, communication and information regarding services and programs that support community participation and will be further addressed in the development of the CCS Action Plan through:

* Equitable access to council services, facilities, and programs for all
* Supporting older adults to live safely and independently
* Enabling participation, across all life stages
* Supporting families, children, and young people to thrive.

Feedback received resulted in the following amendments to the draft CCS:

* Providing additional information in the Executive Summary and Making it Happen sections to improve readability
* Provision of information on how to access translation services at the fore of the document
* Articulating Council’s role more clearly in supporting priority actions.

**Liveable Neighbourhoods Strategy**

In general, feedback from the community during the consultation period was supportive of having long term strategies, including a vision for liveable neighbourhoods. This is evidenced by the 90 per cent of participants that supported the draft LNS, with only 2 per cent not supporting it, and 8 per cent saying they were unsure.

Many comments received were more focused on specific detail of the LNS. Rather than responding to individual comments, the themes raised in the feedback were identified. The draft LNS was reviewed considering these themes to ensure they were adequately addressed in line with community expectations.

Below is a summary of these themes and the changes that were made in the final LNS to better reflect community priorities.

**Timeliness of infrastructure delivery**

A strong theme, particularly within the community priorities focus group, was the lag in community infrastructure delivery in growth areas leaving the community without the ability to access programs, services, and connection within their neighbourhood.

Consequently, two new priorities for action were added to the public space and infrastructure section, under the heading of ‘Timely infrastructure delivery’.

These focus on firstly, Council’s responsibility for infrastructure delivery, and secondly, our role in advocating to state government and relevant authorities to meet their responsibilities in this area.

**Public space infrastructure**

Much of the face-to-face feedback provided during the pop-up events related to requests for infrastructure in specific locations, for example a request for additional toilet facilities at Red leap Reserve. While this level of detail is not captured in the LNS, it reflected the need for our public spaces to include the infrastructure required to meet the diversity of needs across our community.

The draft LNS addresses the importance of public infrastructure at several levels, from the outcomes and outcome indicators through to the discussion around the pressures created by our rapidly growing and diverse community. Minor edits were also made to clarify the need to plan and deliver public infrastructure in line with delivery of homes.

**Maintenance**

Maintenance of public spaces and infrastructure was identified as important to people’s perception of safety and sense of pride in their local neighbourhood. The importance of the appearance and functionality of our places and spaces was reflected in the text of the draft LNS as well in as in the outcomes and outcome indicators. Additionally, asset management is covered comprehensively in the High Performing Organisation Strategy, which is cross referenced in the infographic on page 9 of the Strategy.

Given the importance of this issue to the community, a number of changes were made to the Strategy to give more weight to this theme. These include a slightly amended outcome relating to the appearance and function of public space and infrastructure and new text in the public space and infrastructure section.

**Accessibility**

Many comments were received from people that have specific physical needs due to age, disability or other factors. These comments related to issues including a lack of accessible housing, poor accessibility of activity centres including a lack of adequate, appropriately located disabled parking, public transport, and transport infrastructure.

Ensuring the accessibility of our neighbourhoods was a significant consideration in the drafting of the LNS and is incorporated into a number of the outcomes and outcome indicators. The LNS supports a universal design approach to planning and building our neighbourhoods, so that they are accessible to people regardless of age, ability, or other factors. It aims to address barriers to participation by creating places and spaces that can be used by the maximum number of people possible.

This will be implemented through relevant outcome indicators, and through the detailed design of community infrastructure with progress against these measured and reported on annually.

**High density housing**

Three out of the 10 comments received in response to the draft LNS via the Engage Whittlesea were not supportive of high-density residential development. The need for increased medium- and high-density housing in appropriate locations is supported by the *City of Whittlesea Housing Diversity Strategy 2013–2033*, which guides housing growth to areas in proximity to the principal public transport network and activity centres, with housing growth to be minimised areas outside these areas. Furthermore, the *Residential Demand and Capacity Analysis* completed by SGS Economics and Planning as an input to the LNS found that in order to meet the future housing demand within the municipality, and to support service provision and economic activity, increased supply of higher density housing in established areas is required.

The recently released *Victoria’s Housing Statement*, also aims to deliver an additional 60,000 homes around ten activity centres, including the Epping Metropolitan Activity Centre. The LNS supports increased provision of medium and high-density housing in appropriate locations, for example around activity centres and public transport. The Strategy includes an outcome indicator to increase implementation of best practice building design for all new housing, to ensure it is well designed and sustainable and that the housing contributes to high quality neighbourhoods and places.

The consequences of population growth on our neighbourhoods are acknowledged in the LNS, with actions to improve the timely delivery of community infrastructure. The LNS also discusses the increased pressure on public spaces as a result of our growing population and the requirement for them meet a wide range of needs as people increasingly rely on them for a range of recreational use. This will be explored in more detail in the forthcoming *Open Space Plan* and the masterplans currently in preparation for a number of open spaces across the municipality.

**Other minor changes**

A number of minor changes have been made to the final LNS. In summary, these are as follows:

* Updates to a number of images to better represent the range of urban environments within the City of Whittlesea, and their contribution to the liveability of our neighbourhoods.
* Edits to a number of priorities for action in the public space & infrastructure and integrated transport sections, to ensure they are at a strategic level appropriate to a ten-year strategy, and to ensure they have a stronger focus on implementation, as well as planning.
* Corrections and clarifications of some of the open space and infrastructure data.
* Minor edit to the smart, connected transport network outcome, to ensure it appropriately reflects the need to plan for sustainable transport options, in addition to building and maintaining our roads.

**Long Term Community Infrastructure Plan 2024-2033**

A total of 93% of participants indicated they support the LTCIP*,* with 107 respondents taking the opportunity to provide additional comments in relation to their feedback (98 in-person and 9 online).

The feedback received has been collated and categorised into the following key themes and responses in relation to the final LTCIP.

| **Key theme** | **Response** |
| --- | --- |
| Infrastructure not addressed in  the LTCIP, e.g., roads, toilets,  parks and playgrounds. | As outlined on page 12 of the LTCIP, parks and playgrounds, public toilets, Council offices and transport infrastructure, including roads, car parks and footpaths, are not included in the scope of the LTCIP. However, they are captured in other Council strategies and plans including the Open Space Strategy, Parks and Open Space Asset Management Plan, Public Toilet Amenities Plan, Buildings and Facilities Asset Management Plan, Walking and Cycling Plan 2022-2027, and the Transport Asset Management Plan. |
| Comments relating to  infrastructure that is not the  responsibility of Council, e.g.,  schools and hospitals. | As schools and hospitals are a State Government responsibility, they have been omitted from the scope of the LTCIP, however their locations have been considered for co-location opportunities. |
| Support for multipurpose  facilities and co-  location/integration of  services. | The principles used to guide the prioritisation, planning, design, operation, and activation of community infrastructure focus on multipurpose facilities and co-location/integration of services. |
| Comments that relate to  maintenance and renewal of  existing facilities. | As per page 43 of the LTCIP, routine maintenance and renewal is out of scope as it is considered in Council’s Asset Plan. |
| Optimising facilities to meet  urgent community need  (Operational or school  agreements) | The LTCIP addresses the comments relating to optimisation in a number of sections, including the following planning process steps and priorities for action:   * Opportunities are explored to optimise operation and management of existing facilities to accommodate additional demand for community services and activities (Detailed on Page 20). * Council is moving away from delivery of single sports grounds to promote club sustainability and co-location of facilities for formal and informal sports participation and wider community use. Multi-use sports precincts are identified in multiple growth suburbs, whilst infrastructure renewal in established areas will be focused on fair access for all and optimising utilisation of existing access. Furthering partnerships with schools and retaining open space are also key features in ensuring community sport and leisure needs can continue to be met in the long-term (Detailed on Page 35). * Speaking directly to schools, partner with Sport and Recreation Victoria and the Department of Education to develop a standardised Joint User Agreement policy to benefit schools and communities through the provision of increased access to meeting and activity spaces. (Detailed on Page 35). |
| Increased need for Ageing Well services and facilities. | The LTCIP commits to supporting infrastructure and services to support positive ageing, including the following priorities for action:   * Evaluate the Mernda Social Support Centre model to ascertain learnings and applicability to other Council community centres. (Details on Page 29). * In the long term, investigate the feasibility of delivering wellness hubs designed to support partnership approaches with other aged care providers and community groups for co-location of a range of complementary health and wellbeing services.   Potential sites include the Barry Road Community Centre in Lalor, expansion of the Mernda Social Support Centre and a planned for community centre in the north of the municipality (Details on Page 29).  Once specific projects/sites have been identified and approved as part of the above priority actions, the LTCIP will be updated accordingly as part of its annual review. |
| Seeking accessible facilities and increased support for people with a disability. | As described on Page 19 of the LTCIP, one of the guiding principles of the LTCIP is ‘Welcoming, safe, inclusive and accessible’. The prioritisation process therefore considered the following tenets in developing the action plan.   * A focus on equity, inclusion, cultural safety, and accessibility in how spaces are designed and integrate into local neighbourhoods so they are places where all community members can connect and participate. * Locating community infrastructure to optimise community access, including proximity to other services and amenities within town or neighbourhood activity centres close to where people live, and easily reached by public transport and active travel such as walking or bike riding * Reducing barriers to access public buildings and spaces for people with a disability. |
| Timing of infrastructure to align better with community  need/development. | As the City of Whittlesea has, and is expected to continue to experience unprecedented growth, the LTCIP puts measures in place to provide temporary infrastructure solutions to align with service need. As per Page 19 of the LTCIP, temporary spaces, such as pop-ups, will provide short-term solutions to address gaps in infrastructure provision, to test diverse types of space and uses and to activate town and neighbourhood centres in emerging communities. An example of this in practice is the activation of a temporary library at Mernda Town Centre, put in place to address immediate service need until a permanent library facility is built. |
| Support for Neighbourhood House infrastructure. | The ‘Community Activation’ section of the LTCIP highlights Council’s focus on creating facilities and spaces to best meet the needs for informal gathering and social/wellbeing activities. As per Page 31, the LTCIP commits to the following priorities for action:   * Review Council’s relevant community infrastructure strategies, policies, and guidelines to ensure they provide best practice functional understanding of flexible, adaptable space design and service delivery aligned with the community infrastructure principles. * Deliver new multipurpose community centres in the northern growth areas that provide complementary services, recreation, leisure, and cultural experiences on a single site, including investigating the scope of selected community centres to deliver neighbourhood house services in partnership with a local service provider. * In consultation with local stakeholders, review and implement community hall, neighbourhood house and community centre renewal, taking into consideration: facility condition and fitness for purpose; compliance; emerging community needs; opportunities for optimisation and expansion, as well as service co-location and integration.   The LTCIP’s infrastructure priorities identify new and existing sites for feasibility review. Any additional sites identified and approved as part of the above priority actions will be updated within the LTCIP as part of its annual review. |

Based on the feedback and key themes highlighted above, the following amendments have been made to the final LTCIP.

* The imagery has been updated to better reflect the infrastructure ‘in scope’ of the plan. Parks, playgrounds, and road infrastructure images have been omitted as they are not captured in the LTCIP.
* The timeline for the development of the kindergarten reform options paper and implementation plan has been updated. This is to ensure better alignment with the Department of Education’s processes and timelines for reform planning, in particular the Kindergarten Infrastructure Service Plan review (KISP).
* Community infrastructure list updated (Appendix 1 of LTCIP) to reflect review of Council’s assets register.

# Other Principles for Consideration as per the *Local Government Act (2020)*

**Overarching Governance Principles and Supporting Principles**

(a) Council decisions are to be made and actions taken in accordance with the relevant law.

(b) Priority is to be given to achieving the best outcomes for the municipal community, including future generations.

(c) The economic, social and environmental sustainability of the municipal district, including mitigation and planning for climate change risks, is to be promoted.

(d) The municipal community is to be engaged in strategic planning and strategic decision making.

(f) Collaboration with other Councils and Governments and statutory bodies is to be sought.

(h) Regional, state and national plans and policies are to be considered in strategic planning and decision making.

(i) The transparency of Council decisions, actions and information is to be ensured.

Public Transparency Principles

(c) Council information must be understandable and accessible to members of the municipal community.

(d) Public awareness of the availability of Council information must be facilitated.

# Council Policy Considerations

The Integrated Planning Framework (IPF) emphasises an integrated approach for development of Council strategies and future consideration and development of policies. Following endorsement of the Strategies a further review of Council’s policies, strategies and plans will be conducted. Current policy considerations include:

**Environmental Sustainability Considerations (including Climate Emergency)**

In line with the Sustainable Environment Strategy (SES) 2022-2032, the three Strategies integrate consideration of environmental sustainability, including addressing the Climate Emergency through supporting initiatives that contribute to climate change adaptation and mitigation.

* The CSS highlights that providing a safe environment to live, work and play builds and strengthens communities and leads to better physical and mental health and wellbeing. The CCS recognises that building a resilient community is one where strong community connections can minimise the impacts of disasters and build safer communities.
* Issues of environmental sustainability and climate change are integral to the LNS. For example, the LNS supports reducing the dependence on car use and increasing access to, and use of other modes of transport. This is to be achieved by creating neighbourhoods where the transport network is integrated with the built form in a manner where people can access most of their services and facilities locally. The LNS seeks to ensure that the planning and delivery of Council’s open space network and public realm provides for the greening and cooling for neighbourhoods as temperatures increase and also supports a built environment which is designed to be resilient to the changing climate.
* The LTCIP ensures that environmental considerations at the forefront of Council’s infrastructure planning and delivery, the LTCIP identifies ‘Sustainable’ as one of the seven guiding principles in the plan and commits to reducing Council’s carbon footprint through designing and building facilities to be resource efficient, easy to maintain and long-lasting. Additionally, Consideration to Council’s *Environmental Design Guidelines*, with all projects presenting the opportunity to maximise sustainability performance in design and construction.

**Social, Cultural and Health**

The strategies each contribute to the social, cultural and health outcomes for our community, as summarised below:

* The CCS demonstrates the connection to culture, health, and wellbeing by recognising the importance of fostering a positive sense of identity and belonging. The CCS aims to meet the diverse needs and aspirations of the community by supporting our community to access the services, programs, and facilities they need and by ensuring that people of all backgrounds, ages and abilities feel safe and part of our community.
* The LNS supports social connection by facilitating neighbourhood design that enables people to live locally and which create opportunities for incidental interactions that foster a sense of community within neighbourhoods. This also has positive health benefits for our community through the mental health benefits of community connection, in addition to increased walking and cycling for those that are able.

* The LTCIP highlights that community facilities such as community centres and sports infrastructure play a pivotal role in improving social, cultural, and health outcomes. They serve as focal points for social interaction, fostering a sense of belonging and unity among diverse community members. Activities and events hosted in these spaces promote understanding and appreciation for various traditions, contributing to a vibrant local culture.

Additionally, sports facilities not only encourage physical activity, promoting better health outcomes, but also serve as platforms for teamwork, reinforcing social bonds. Community infrastructure creates a supportive environment where individuals can thrive socially, culturally, and physically, leading to a healthier and more connected community.

**Economic**

The Strategies demonstrate how they contribute to building a prosperous and inclusive economy as summarised below:

* The CCS seeks to improve the economic wellbeing of communities by strengthening participation in all areas of community life and reducing the proportion of the population that experiences financial stress. The CCS supports economic participation through the provision of education, and lifelong learning, inclusion, and equity through the provision of services, programs, and facilities.
* The LNS recognises that well designed, safe, accessible, and attractive activity centres serve as hubs for economic and social participation. Housing density around activity centres, open spaces and public transport encourages people to visit, stay and enjoy these places, increasing footfall and economic activity. The LNS also recognises the need to investigate options to increase social and affordable housing options.
* The LTCIP outlines that infrastructure drives economic growth by facilitating investment, stimulating enterprise opportunities, generating employment, and providing people with access to basic services. Through the development of new community infrastructure, jobs are created for facility management, program coordination, and maintenance, thereby contributing to local employment. Additionally, community centres and sport/recreation infrastructure facilitate diverse events and activities, boosting the local economy by drawing visitors who spend on dining and retail. The development and upkeep of these facilities also stimulate demand for construction and related services, generating a cycle of economic growth.

**Legal, Resource and Strategic Risk Implications**

Implementation of each of the Strategies and their associated actions will involve significant resource from Council. In order to deliver on strategic outcomes, the planning phase for implementation of priority areas for action will require skilled personnel for project management, feasibility studies, site selection, project briefs, reporting, design, and community engagement.

The delivery phase will also require Council resource to ensure that project management is undertaken in accordance with Council’s agreed processes. In relation to the delivery of infrastructure, once operational, ongoing resourcing is required for maintenance, facility staff, and program implementation.

Without intervention, City of Whittlesea residents will experience barriers of access to critical Council services including kindergarten programs, maternal and child health services, social support services, ageing well initiatives, community sport and youth engagement activities.

In particular, timely delivery of community infrastructure, in pace with population growth and essential service demand, will improve health and wellbeing outcomes, lower instances of social isolation and increase civic participation. Similarly, implementation of the LTCIP aims to provide increased access to early childhood education and reduce early intervention for family and gender-based violence.

# Implementation Strategy

Communication

Once adopted, our new strategies will be published on Council’s website and broadly shared with the City of Whittlesea community across Council’s communication channels. We will also be closing the loop with those who participated in the consultation including key stakeholders and our Community Priorities Focus Group.

Critical Dates

Council meeting – Strategies approved 19 December 2023

# Declaration of Conflict of Interest

Under Section 130 of the *Local Government Act 2020*officers providing advice to Council are required to disclose any conflict of interest they have in a matter and explain the nature of the conflict.

The Responsible Officer reviewing this report, having made enquiries with relevant members of staff, reports that no disclosable interests have been raised in relation to this report.

# Attachments

1. FINAL Planning for a Place for All Engagement Summary Report [**5.2.1** - 20 pages]
2. Connected Community Strategy 2023 - 2033 [**5.2.2** - 36 pages]
3. Liveable Neighbourhoods Strategy 2023 – 2033 [**5.2.3** - 36 pages]
4. Long Term Community Infrastructure Plan 2024 - 2033 [**5.2.4** - 80 pages]

5.3 Contract 2023-100 Construction of Plenty Road and Everton Drive Signalise Intersection

**5.3 Contract 2023-100 Construction of Plenty Road and Everton Drive Signalise Intersection**

**Director/Executive Manager:**  Director Infrastructure & Environment

**Report Author:**  Coordinator Civil Engineering Delivery

**In Attendance:**  Manager Capital Delivery   
Unit Manager Engineering Design & Construction  
Coordinator Civil Engineering Delivery

This attachment has been designated as confidential in accordance with sections 66(5) and 3(1) of the *Local Government Act 2020* on the grounds that it contains private commercial information, being information provided by a business, commercial or financial undertaking that—  
(i) relates to trade secrets; or  
(ii) if released, would unreasonably expose the business, commercial or financial undertaking to disadvantage.

In particular the attachment contains information regarding tender amounts submitted by tenderers and tender evaluation scoring prepared by Council officers. The release of this information could reasonably be

# Executive Summary

It is proposed that contract number 2023-100 for the Construction of Plenty Road and Everton Drive Signalised Intersection, Mernda is awarded to Bild Infrastructure Pty Ltd for the lump sum price of $5,847,373.55 (excluding GST).

This report summarises the evaluation of the six tender submissions received for the Construction of Plenty Road and Everton Drive Signalised Intersection, Mernda.

The tender evaluation panel advises that:

* Six tenders were received.
* The recommended tender is the highest ranked tenderer. The highest ranked tenderer has demonstrated the required capability, capacity, qualification and represents best value for council to deliver this project.
* Collaborative tendering was not undertaken in relation to this procurement because it is not listed in the Northern Councils Alliance consolidated contract register and this contract relates to a unique need for the City of Whittlesea.

# Recommendation

**THAT Council:**

1. **Accept the tender submitted by Bild Infrastructure Pty Ltd for the following contract:**

**Number: 2023-100**

**Title:** **Construction of Plenty Road and Everton Drive Signalised Intersection, Mernda**

**Cost:** **A lump sum of $5,847,373.55 (excluding GST) subject to the following conditions:**

1. **Tenderer to provide proof of currency of insurance cover and contract security as required in the tender documents.**
2. **Price variations to be in accordance with the provisions as set out in the tender documents.**

**2.** **Approve the funding arrangements detailed in the confidential attachment.**

**3. Delegates to the Chief Executive Officer authority to sign and execute the contract on behalf of Council.**

# Background / Key Information

The purpose of this contract is for the construction of the Plenty Road and Everton Drive Signalised Intersection, Mernda including associated public lighting, landscape and utility services works.

Tenders for the contract closed on 19 September 2023. The tendered prices and a summary of the evaluation are detailed in the confidential attachment.

No member of the Tender Evaluation Panel declared any conflict of interest in relation to this tender evaluation.

A Tender Probity and Evaluation Plan was designed specifically for this tender process and it was authorised prior to this tender being advertised. All tenders received were evaluated in accordance with that plan. The evaluation involved scoring of conforming and competitive tenders according to these pre-determined criteria and weightings:

* Price 60%
* Capability 15%
* Capacity 15%
* Sustainability 10%

The weightings reflect the relative importance of each element to this particular contract. They were determined as being most appropriate after considering numerous factors including (but not restricted to) the time, quality, risk and contract management requirements which were likely to have the most impact on the achievement of best value.

Only tenders that were conforming and competitive were fully scored. Tender submissions that were evaluated as non-conforming or not sufficiently competitive were set aside from further evaluation. In cases where this occurred the reasons for that outcome are detailed in the confidential attachment.

The evaluation outcome was as follows:

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Tenderer** | **Conforming** | **Competitive** | **Score** | **Rank** |
| Tenderer A | Yes | No | N/A | N/A |
| Tenderer B: Bild Infrastructure Pty Ltd | Yes | Yes | 94.1 | 1 |
| Tenderer C | Yes | Yes | 87.2 | 2 |
| Tenderer D | Yes | Yes | 82.7 | 3 |
| Tenderer E | Yes | Yes | 77.6 | 4 |
| Tenderer F | Yes | No | N/A | N/A |

Refer to the confidential attachment for further details of the evaluation of all tenders.

confidential.

# Alignment to Community Plan, Policies or Strategies

Alignment to Whittlesea 2040 and Community Plan 2021-2025:

**Liveable Neighbourhoods**Our City is well-planned and beautiful, and our neighbourhoods and town centres are convenient and vibrant places to live, work and play.

The delivery of this project will align with Whittlesea 2040 and Community Plan 2021-2025

# Considerations of *Local Government Act (2020)* Principles

Financial Implications

Sufficient funding for this contract is available in the budget for the Signalised intersection - Plenty Rd and Everton Drive, Mernda.

Community Consultation and Engagement

In accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020*, consideration was given as to whether there were any opportunities to collaborate with other Councils and public bodies or to use any existing collaborative procurement arrangements. However, this contract relates to a unique need for the City of Whittlesea therefore collaboration with other Councils and public bodies or the use of any existing collaborative procurement arrangements could not be considered

Community consultation and engagement was not required in relation to the subject matter of this report as it relates to commercial arrangements and contractual obligations that are

# Other Principles for Consideration as per the *Local Government Act (2020)*

**Overarching Governance Principles and Supporting Principles**

(a) Council decisions are to be made and actions taken in accordance with the relevant law.

Public Transparency Principles

(a) Council decision making processes must be transparent except when the Council is dealing with information that is confidential by virtue of the *Local Government Act* or any other Act.

# Council Policy Considerations

Environmental Sustainability Considerations (including Climate Emergency)

Environmental benefit outcomes under this project include the provision for use of sustainable construction materials such as recycled crushed concrete for road pavement base, crumbed rubber asphalt and LED light for public lighting. Travel time savings will also contribute to better environmental outcomes.

Social, Cultural and Health

The delivery of this project will provide safe and direct access from Plenty Road to existing Mernda Primary School and the future Regional Aquatic and Sport Centre, Mernda which will be a key facility for the local and regional community in promoting a healthy lifestyle also enhance social gathering to support connected community.

Economic

The delivery of this project will provide safe connection from existing Everton Drive and the future Station Lane to Plenty Everton which in general will reduce significantly the travel time and petrol cost saving for local residents in the area to access the existing Mernda Primary School, Mernda Village shopping centre and future Regional Aquatic and Sport Centre from Plenty Road.

**Legal, Resource and Strategic Risk Implications**

No implications.

# Implementation Strategy

Communication

Prior to commencement of the works and in the course of construction, notification to surrounding residents, road users and the general public will be provided in timely manner. Notification will be in the form of a letter drop to local residents, Variable Message Boards erected in the vicinity of the site and information on Council’s website and social media channels.

Critical Dates

The contract term is expected to commence in December 2023 for a duration of approximately 12 months.

# Declaration of Conflict of Interest

Under Section 130 of the *Local Government Act 2020*officers providing advice to Council are required to disclose any conflict of interest they have in a matter and explain the nature of the conflict.

The Responsible Officer reviewing this report, having made enquiries with relevant members of staff, reports that no disclosable interests have been raised in relation to this report.

# Attachments

**Attachments:**

1. CONFIDENTIAL REDACTED - Tender Contract 2023-100 Construction of Plenty Road and Everton Drive Signalise Intersection, Evaluation Summary [**5.3.1** - 5 pages]

5.4 Community Engagement Policy

**5.4 Community Engagement Policy**

**Director/Executive Manager:** Executive Manager Public Affairs

**Report Author:** Unit Manager Community Engagement

**In Attendance:** Manager Communications & Engagement  
Unit Manager Community Engagement

# Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to seek endorsement of an update to Council’s Community Engagement Policy following a four-week period of community consultation.

The City of Whittlesea is committed to ensuring the voices of its community are heard and considered in Council decision-making. This revised Community Engagement Policy will replace the previous A Voice for All Community Engagement Policy that was adopted on 1 March 2021 to adhere to the requirements of the Local Government Act 2020 (Vic).

The Policy has been updated following an internal review as well as benchmarking best practice community engagement in the public sector.

The updated Policy was shared with the community and feedback encouraged during a four-week period of community consultation from 2-29 October 2023.

# Officers’ Recommendation

**THAT Council:**

* + - 1. **Adopts the Community Engagement Policy at Attachment 1.**
      2. **Notes the Engagement Summary Report – Community Engagement Policy at Attachment 2.**

# Background / Key Information

**Community Consultation**

The draft policy was shared with the community at eight community-based pop-ups, on the Engage Whittlesea digital platform and through broad internal consultation. Feedback on the draft policy was captured from 160 people, the majority of these (139) from in-person consultation activities.

Overall, 94% of participants in the community engagement indicated their support of the draft policy with the remaining 6% indicating they weren’t sure. Additional comments provided predominately related to topics already addressed in the policy, however a few minor amendments were made to the draft following consultation including re-alphabetising the definitions lists, small language tweaks, particularly around gender diversity, rewording the child safe statement and the inclusion of a statement that indicated information collected during consultations may be used to inform other projects.

**Key differences to previously adopted Policy (A Voice For All, 2021)**

While the updated policy is not substantially different in intent to the original, it seeks to reflect the maturation of the engagement function at the City of Whittlesea in recent years including:

* a clearer focus on clarifying expectations and articulating Council’s commitment to the engagement principles as outlined in the Local Government Act 2020 (Vic)
* being clear with the community around their level of influence; community feedback is considered in decision-making but not the only deciding factor
* transparency around circumstances where engagement may be limited or not appropriate
* ensuring all relevant legislation is referred to clearly.

It also outlines Council’s focus areas for this iteration of the policy including:

* further developing our consultation practices with under-represented cohorts
* continuing to evolve our journey towards more deliberative practices.

**Applications of Policy**

This Policy applies to all City of Whittlesea Administrators/Councillors, Council Officers, contractors, external consultants, volunteers or any other persons engaged by Council to deliver community engagement activities.

This Policy does not replace statutory processes relating to permit applications and planning scheme amendments governed by the Planning and Environment Act 1987 and associated regulations. Nor does it apply to other council processes such as service requests or complaints.

**Next review of Policy**

The Policy is proposed to be reviewed in 2025 and updated in 2027.

# Alignment to Community Plan, Policies or Strategies

Alignment to Whittlesea 2040 and Community Plan 2021-2025:

**Connected Communities**  
We work to foster and inclusive, healthy, safe and welcoming community where all ways of life are celebrated and supported.

**High Performing Organisation**  
We engage effectively with the community, to deliver efficient and effective services and initiatives, and to make decisions in the best interest of our community and deliver value to our community.

# Considerations of *Local Government Act (2020)* Principles

Financial Management

The predominant cost of the delivery of the engagement program to be delivered under this policy is officer time which is covered in Council’s operational budget. The use of tailored methodology may require some equipment or hiring costs and as we move towards deliberative practice there may be further budget implications which will be included as part of project budgets.

Community Consultation and Engagement

In accordance with *the Local Government Act 2020* (Vic) Council undertook a comprehensive engagement process on the draft Community Engagement Policy to seek community feedback. The engagement program deployed a diverse range of tools and tactics including community-based pop-ups at a range of locations including citizenship ceremonies, festivals and events, libraries and community centres and an online survey. Consultation also took place with key stakeholder groups. We received feedback from 160 people with 94% of participants supportive of the draft policy.

# Other Principles for Consideration as per the *Local Government Act (2020)*

**Overarching Governance Principles and Supporting Principles**

(a) Council decisions are to be made and actions taken in accordance with the relevant law.

(b) Priority is to be given to achieving the best outcomes for the municipal community, including future generations.

(d) The municipal community is to be engaged in strategic planning and strategic decision making.

(e) Innovation and continuous improvement is to be pursued.

(i) The transparency of Council decisions, actions and information is to be ensured.

Public Transparency Principles

(a) Council decision making processes must be transparent except when the Council is dealing with information that is confidential by virtue of the *Local Government Act* or any other Act.

(b) Council information must be publicly available unless—

(i) the information is confidential by virtue of the *Local Government Act* or any other Act; or

(ii) public availability of the information would be contrary to the public interest.

(c) Council information must be understandable and accessible to members of the municipal community.

(d) Public awareness of the availability of Council information must be facilitated.

# Council Policy Considerations

Environmental Sustainability Considerations (including Climate Emergency)

No implications.

Social, Cultural and Health

No implications.

Economic

No implications.

**Legal, Resource and Strategic Risk Implications**

No implications.

# Implementation Strategy

Communication

Once adopted the updated Community Engagement Policy will be published on Council’s website and the Engage Whittlesea digital platform.

Critical Dates

N/A

# Declaration of Conflict of Interest

Under Section 130 of the *Local Government Act 2020*officers providing advice to Council are required to disclose any conflict of interest they have in a matter and explain the nature of the conflict.

The Responsible Officer reviewing this report, having made enquiries with relevant members of staff, reports that no disclosable interests have been raised in relation to this report.

# Attachments

1. Community Engagement Policy 2023-2027 [**5.4.1** - 12 pages]
2. Engagement Summary Report - Community Engagement Policy [**5.4.2** - 11 pages]

5.5 Council Policies for Rescission

**5.5 Council Policies for Rescission**

**Director/Executive Manager:** Executive Manager Strategy & Insights

**Report Author:** Unit Manager Corporate Planning & Improvement

# Executive Summary

Under the endorsed Integrated Planning Framework (IPF), Council policies, plans and strategies are consolidated to minimise Council’s policy landscape and ensure greater efficiency in service planning and delivery.

The purpose of this report is to rescind 22 Council policies which have been identified as no longer relevant to Council’s function. Upon review, they were found to be (a) reflected in the Connected Community, Liveable Neighbourhoods, Strong Local Economy, or Sustainable Environment Strategies, (b) better retained internally as corporate policies, or (c) covered by other existing Policies, Guidelines or legislation.

# Officers’ Recommendation

**THAT Council** **rescind the following policies and strategies as they are:**

1. **Reflected in the Connected Communities, Liveable Neighbourhoods, Sustainable Environment or Strong Local Economy Strategies:**

* **Arts Policy**
* **Asylum Seeker Policy**
* **Community Building Policy**
* **Community Building Strategy**
* **Community Safety Crime Prevention Policy**
* **Community Transport Policy**
* **Community Volunteering Policy**
* **Lifelong Learning Policy**
* **Positive Ageing Policy**
* **Preventing Alcohol Related Harm Policy**
* **Thriving Children, Young People & Families Strategy**

1. **Operational in nature and to be retained internally as Corporate policies or guidelines:**

* **Animal Registration and Refund Policy**
* **Early Activation of New Communities Policy**
* **Roadside Management Strategy**

1. **Superseded and covered by existing policies, plans, guidelines and or legislation:**

* **Clothing Recycling Bin Policy**
* **Domestic Animal Welfare Support Policy (effective from 30 April 2024)**
* **Early Years Policy**
* **Library Strategy for Mernda and Epping North Final Report 2015-2016**
* **Meals on Wheels Volunteers Policy**
* **Public Question Time Policy**
* **Street Activities Policy (effective from 30 June 2024)**
* **Street Numbering Policy**

# Background / Key Information

Council has embarked on a journey to consolidate its policies, strategies and plans under the IPF, a streamlined framework for planning. The aim of the IPF is to eliminate duplication of work, and focus planning on community outcomes. Additionally, the IPF seeks to maintain a smaller number of endorsed documents which more clearly articulate to the community Council’s long-term vision and short-to-medium-term priorities under its five overarching goals:

* Connected Community
* Liveable Neighbourhoods
* Strong Local Economy
* Sustainable Environment
* High Performing Organisation.

In developing five strategies (one for each goal) and several supporting plans under the IPF, Council covers many policy stances and strategies from existing policies and plans, allowing older documents to be rescinded.

In April 2023, the Executive Leadership Team resolved to review all new Council-endorsed and corporate (internal) policies every four years, except for policies:

* which are mandated by external legislation (e.g. through the *Local Government Act 2020*) to have a differing review period; or
* where Council has strong reason to review a policy more frequently e.g. pandemic response and other emergencies.

Given this direction, several older policies and strategy documents are outdated and in need of review. This has prompted a large-scale review of existing policies to determine whether they are current, need to be updated to reflect current legislation, or are obsolete and able to be rescinded. 22 Council endorsed policy and strategy documents are obsolete through this process but have not been rescinded yet. Additional policies and plans will become obsolete as the IPF continues to roll out, prompting further rescissions as upcoming strategies and plans are finalised.

Table 1 lists Council policies and strategies identified for rescission. For each policy, a rationale for rescinding the policy is stated, along with the new context where the policy position can now be found.

| **Policy Name** | **Date of Council endorsement** | **Rationale for rescission** | **New location** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Animal Registration and Refund Policy | 2 Apr 2019 | The Animal Registration and Refund Policy is operational. It details how Council will set its animal registration fees and when refunds will apply. It is recommended the policy be retained internally as a corporate policy. | Corporate policy of the same name |
| Arts Policy | 17 Nov 2015 | A review of the Arts Policy deemed that the policy is no longer relevant; endorsed in 2015, it has been superseded by the Whittlesea 2040 goals. High level direction regarding arts and culture are reflected in the Connected Community Strategy. | Connected Community Strategy, Key Focus Area Arts, Culture and Events |
| Arts Policy | 17 Nov 2015 | A review of the Arts Policy deemed that the policy is no longer relevant; endorsed in 2015, it has been superseded by the Whittlesea 2040 goals. High level direction regarding arts and culture are reflected in the Connected Community Strategy. | Connected Community Strategy, Key Focus Area Arts, Culture and Events |
| Clothing Recycling Bin Policy | 15 Jul 2014 | Council’s strategic direction regarding clothing recycling stations is adequately covered by the Rethinking Waste Plan, endorsed by Council in 2021.    The Clothing Recycling Bin Policy largely covers process and operational guidelines for the placement and collection of clothes recycling bins throughout the municipality. Under the IPF, operations where possible will be retained internally at directorate and/or department level.  Day to day management of these bins is managed through permit conditions. | Rethinking Waste Plan 2021-2030, Primary Theme: Recover |
| Community Building Policy  Community Building Strategy | 1 Oct 2019  1 October 2019 | Council’s policy stances regarding community building and connections are now reflected in the Connected Community Strategy as well as in Whittlesea 2040, superseding the Community Building Policy and Strategy. | Whittlesea 2040, Goal 1 Connected Community (all key directions); Connected Community Strategy (all key directions and themes) |
| Community Safety Crime Prevention Policy | 30 Aug 2016 | Council priorities to bolster community safety are reflected in the Connected Community Strategy. Future strategic directions to support community safety may be presented in additional plans supporting the Connected Community Strategy moving forward. | Connected Community Strategy, Key Focus Area Safety |
| Community Transport Policy | 19 Sep 2017 | Council priorities relevant to community transport are reflected in the Connected Community Strategy and Liveable Neighbourhoods Strategy. Future strategic directions to support community transport may be presented in additional plans supporting these two strategies moving forward. | Connected Community Strategy, Key Focus Areas Community Participation, Life Stages and Physical and Mental Health; Liveable Neighbourhoods Strategy, Key Focus Area Integrated Transport |
| Community Volunteering Policy | 6 Mar 2018 | Council priorities to bolster community volunteering and civic participation are reflected in the Connected Community Strategy. | Connected Community Strategy, Key Focus Area Community Participation |
| Domestic Animal Welfare Support Policy | 3 Sep 2019 | The Domestic Animal Welfare Support Policy details the  pet-related assistance that Whittlesea, Merri-bek and Darebin will provide to people who are experiencing or leaving family violence. A replacement policy will be prepared by the three councils which will update the existing policy given the wat djerring Animal Facility is now under Council management. This policy will be an internal corporate policy and is anticipated to be endorsed in April 2024 after consulting with Darebin and Merri-bek Councils. As a result, it is recommended that Council endorse an expiry date effective 30 April 2024 for this policy. | To be developed as a Corporate Policy (with Merri-bek and Darebin City Councils); rescission effective 30 April 2024. |
| Early Activation of New Communities Policy | 18 Jul 2018 | The Early Activation of New Communities Policy details operations in advocating for community spaces, services, and programs in new developments.  It is recommended that the policy is rescinded as it contains largely operational processes to be retained internally, with early activation assessments typically made on a case-by-case basis. | Liveable Neighbourhoods Strategy, Key Focus Area Public Space and Infrastructure |
| Early Years Policy | 18 Apr 2017 | A review of the Early Years Policy has deemed the policy obsolete following the Victorian Government’s early years reform. | Obsolete due to State Government reform |
| Library Strategy for Mernda and Epping North Final Report 2015-2016 | 7 Jun 2016 | The Library Strategy for Mernda and Epping North and associated Reports have been deemed obsolete following the development of the Library Service Review and Library Service Plan.  The Library Services Plan covers future planning for library services beyond 2023. | Library Services Plan |
| Lifelong Learning Policy | 18 Jul 2017 | The Lifelong Learning Policy details Council’s commitment to learning and development opportunities at all stages of life. Council priorities for lifelong learning are now reflected in Whittlesea 2040 as well as the previously endorsed Strong Local Economy Strategy. | Whittlesea 2040, Strong Local Economy Strategy Key Direction 3.2 Education opportunities for all |
| Meals on Wheels Volunteers Policy | 1995 | The Meals on Wheels Policy comprises a single comment regarding vehicle access for volunteers of the Meals on Wheels program. Relevant operations regarding volunteers have been maintained internally and through corporate policies for several years. | Volunteers Policy and Code of Practice - Corporate policy. |
| Positive Ageing Policy | 9 Aug 2016 | The Positive Ageing Policy provides additional policy context for plans and strategies which are no longer relevant or have since been rescinded by Council. Relevant information from the Policy is detailed in the Connected Community Strategy. | Connected Community Strategy, Key Focus Areas Life Stages, Community Safety, and Physical and Mental Health |
| Preventing Alcohol Related Harm Policy | 9 Aug 2016 | Council priorities to bolster community safety (including alcohol-related harm) are reflected in the Connected Community Strategy. | Connected Community Strategy, Key Focus Areas Community Safety and Physical and Mental Health |
| Public Question Time Policy | 2014 – Amended policy endorsed 6 Oct 2020 | The Public Question Time Policy details operational guidelines for Public Question Time during scheduled Council Meetings. Under the IPF, operations where possible will be retained internally at directorate and/or department level. Further guidance and processes regarding Public Question Time as relevant to community are detailed in the 2023 Governance Rules. | Governance Rules under Community Participation, pg.16 |
| Roadside Management Strategy | 16 Sep 2014 | The Roadside Management Strategy details processes and operations for management and protection of vegetation and other environmental heritage values on roadsides.  The substantive content outlined in the Strategy was reviewed for relevance in 2022. In alignment with the IPF, the reviewed content (now titled Roadside Environmental Guidelines) will be retained internally at a directorate level. | Retained internally as a Corporate Policy part of Roadside Environmental Guidelines |
| Street Activities Policy | 3 Mar 2020 | An internal review of the Street Activities Policy has determined that substantive content is adequately covered by City of Whittlesea’s Community Local Law (endorsed 21 November 2023). It is deemed that the Street Activities Policy is no longer required at the time the Community Local Law goes into effect, by 30 June 2024. As a result, it is recommended that Council endorse an expiry date of 30 June 2024 for this policy.  Under the IPF, operations where possible will be retained internally at directorate and/or department level. Additional guidance and processes for staff will be retained internally. | Municipal Local Law, as part of Street parties, festivals or events, pg 24 |
| Street Numbering Policy | 2009 | Review of the Street Numbering Policy has determined that the topic is covered adequately by existing legislation, noting that there is no Council discretion for street numbering. As a result, a policy is no longer required. | Regulated in <https://www.land>. vic.gov.au/ |
| Thriving Children, Young People & Families Strategy | 3 Mar 2020 | The Thriving Children, Young People & Families Strategy has been deemed obsolete as it does not incorporate the Victorian Government’s early years reform.  Officers are currently conducting investigation to inform Council's future position in the early years space. Further direction for the implementation of this reform at Council will be detailed in the inaugural Connected Community Action Plan in 2024. | Connected Community Strategy, Key Focus Area Life Stages |

# Alignment to Community Plan, Policies or Strategies

Alignment to Whittlesea 2040 and Community Plan 2021-2025:

**High Performing Organisation**We engage effectively with the community, to deliver efficient and effective services and initiatives, and to make decisions in the best interest of our community and deliver value to our community.

Maintaining a current portfolio of policies supports operational efficiency and transparency of Council operations.

# Considerations of *Local Government Act (2020)* Principles

Financial Management

The consolidation of Council’s policy landscape will allow policy management to be more efficient and sustainable long-term, with positive resource allocation implications. There are otherwise no direct financial implications associated with the report.

Community Consultation and Engagement

Owners of each policy and strategy internally (managers, unit managers and directors) have been consulted to ensure that rescission of the above documents is both aligned with the IPF and sustainable for Council as an organisation.

The key community-facing strategies developed under the IPF cover many of Council’s policy stances and have been informed by feedback from the City of Whittlesea community over several engagement touchpoints. These include specific consultation periods for each strategy:

* Strong Local Economy Strategy: January – February 2022
* Sustainable Environment Strategy: October 2022
* Connected Community Strategy: September - October 2023
* Liveable Neighbourhoods Strategy: September - October 2023
* Long-Term Community Infrastructure Plan: September - October 2023

# Other Principles for Consideration as per the *Local Government Act (2020)*

**Overarching Governance Principles and Supporting Principles**

(a) Council decisions are to be made and actions taken in accordance with the relevant law.

(b) Priority is to be given to achieving the best outcomes for the municipal community, including future generations.

(i) The transparency of Council decisions, actions and information is to be ensured.

Public Transparency Principles

(a) Council decision making processes must be transparent except when the Council is dealing with information that is confidential by virtue of the *Local Government Act* or any other Act.

(d) Public awareness of the availability of Council information must be facilitated.

# Council Policy Considerations

Environmental Sustainability Considerations (including Climate Emergency)

No implications.

Social, Cultural and Health

No implications.

Economic

No implications.

**Legal, Resource and Strategic Risk Implications**

No implications.

# Implementation Strategy

Communication

Updates to the Policy and Strategy list are communicated frequently with staff via several communication channels. Council-endorsed policies are made available on Council’s website. The streamlining of policies and strategies under the IPF is communicated to community through the consultation periods and endorsement processes for each strategy (and supporting plans under each strategy, where applicable).

Critical Dates

The Integrated Planning Framework will be finalised by March 2024 to allow a smooth transition to an elected Council. Additional policy reviews and rescissions may be brought to Council at future Council Meetings in alignment with IPF plans as they are developed.

# Declaration of Conflict of Interest

Under Section 130 of the *Local Government Act 2020*officers providing advice to Council are required to disclose any conflict of interest they have in a matter and explain the nature of the conflict.

The Responsible Officer reviewing this report, having made enquiries with relevant members of staff, reports that no disclosable interests have been raised in relation to this report.

# Attachments

No attachments.

5.6 Unconfirmed Minutes of the Audit and Risk Committee

**5.6 Unconfirmed Minutes of the Audit and Risk Committee**

**Director/Executive Manager:** Executive Manager Office of Council & CEO

**Report Author:** Executive Manager Office of Council & CEO

# Executive Summary

On 15 November 2023, the Audit and Risk Committee (ARC), an independent advisory committee of Council, held their quarterly scheduled meeting to consider reports relating to such matters as:

* Council’s strategic risk profile.
* Directorate risk profiles.
* Procurement and significant contracts & projects.
* Internal audit scopes and status of actions arising from audits.
* Compliance and governance matters as outlined in the ARC annual work plan.

For transparency and in line with the ARC Charter, a copy of the 15 November 2023 unconfirmed meeting minutes is provided at **Attachment 1** for Council to note.

# Officers’ Recommendation

**THAT Council note the 15 November 2023 unconfirmed minutes of the Audit and Risk Committee at Attachment 1 to this report.**

# Background / Key Information

The Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) is established under section 53 of the *Local Government Act 2020* as an independent advisory committee with no delegated or decision-making powers, however ARC can provide advice on matters presented at its meetings.  
ARC acts in the capacity of monitoring, reviewing and advising on issues within its Charter scope of responsibility, including monitoring Council’s governance obligations to our community.

The unconfirmed minutes at Attachment A provides detailed information of the agenda items ARC members considered and provided advice on at its 15 November committee meeting.

# Alignment to Community Plan, Policies or Strategies

Alignment to Whittlesea 2040 and Community Plan 2021-2025:

**High Performing Organisation**  
We engage effectively with the community, to deliver efficient and effective services and initiatives, and to make decisions in the best interest of our community and deliver value to our community.

The establishment of the Audit and Risk Committee and the reports it receives for consideration and oversight is Council’s commitment to the implementation of good governance practices.

# Considerations of *Local Government Act (2020)* Principles

Financial Management

The cost associated with the Audit and Risk Committee external members is included in the current budget.

There are no costs associated with tabling the Audit & Risk Committee unconfirmed minutes.

Community Consultation and Engagement

No community consultation and engagement is required for the publication of the unconfirmed ARC minutes.

# Other Principles for Consideration as per the *Local Government Act (2020)*

**Overarching Governance Principles and Supporting Principles**

1. The transparency of Council decisions, actions and information is to be ensured.

Public Transparency Principles

(b) Council information must be publicly available unless— (i) the information is confidential by virtue of the *Local Government Act* or any other Act; or (ii) public availability of the information would be contrary to the public interest.

(c) Council information must be understandable and accessible to members of the municipal community.

# Council Policy Considerations

Environmental Sustainability Considerations (including Climate Emergency)

No implications.

Social, Cultural and Health

No implications.

Economic

No implications.

**Legal, Resource and Strategic Risk Implications**

The Audit and Risk Committee assists Council in the monitoring and oversight of risk, compliance and governance.

# Implementation Strategy

Communication

Not required

Critical Dates

The Audit and Risk Committee Charter specifies the unconfirmed minutes are provided to the Council as early as possible after the meeting is conducted.

# Declaration of Conflict of Interest

Under Section 130 of the *Local Government Act 2020*officers providing advice to Council are required to disclose any conflict of interest they have in a matter and explain the nature of the conflict.

The Responsible Officer reviewing this report, having made enquiries with relevant members of staff, reports that no disclosable interests have been raised in relation to this report.

# Attachments

1. Minutes ARC 15 November 2023 [**5.6.1** - 23 pages]

5.7 Informal Meetings of Administrators

**5.7 Informal Meetings of Administrators**

**Director/Executive Manager:** Executive Manager Office of Council & CEO

**Report Author:** Coordinator Governance Administration

# Executive Summary

Chapter 5 of the Council Governance Rules requires a summary of the matters discussed at a meeting of Councillors (Administrators) that:

* is scheduled or planned for the purpose of discussing the business of Council or briefing Councillors (Administrators);
* is attended by at least one member of Council staff; and
* is not a Council meeting or Delegated Committee meeting;

are tabled at the next convenient Council meeting and recorded in the minutes of that Council meeting.

The attached record of Informal Meetings of Councillors (Administrators) **(Attachment 1 & 2)** is reported to Council in accordance with this requirement.

# Officers’ Recommendation

**THAT Council resolve to receive and note the record of Informal Meetings of Administrators.**

# Attachments

1. Record of Attendance 28 November 2023 [**5.7.1** - 2 pages]
2. Record of Attendance 5 December 2023 [**5.7.2** - 2 pages]

**6 Notices of Motion**

No Notices of Motion

**7 Urgent Business**

No Urgent Business

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

**9 Confidential Business**

**9.1.0 Close Meeting to the Public**

Under section 66(2) of the *Local Government Act 2020* a meeting considering confidential information may be closed to the public. Pursuant to sections 3(1) and 66(5) of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

# Recommendation

**THAT the Chair of Council recommends that the meeting be closed to the public for the purpose of considering details relating to the following confidential matters in accordance with Section 66(2)(a) of the *Local Government Act 2020* as detailed.**

**9.1.1 Growling Frog Lease Extension**

**9.1.2 2023-1 Garden Bed Contract Variation**

**10 Closure**