

Minutes

Scheduled Council Meeting

Tuesday 15 April 2025 at 6pm

Council Chamber,
25 Ferres Boulevard, South Morang



City of
Whittlesea

Councillors

Cr Aidan McLindon, Mayor	Kirrip Ward
Cr Daniela Zinni, Deputy Mayor	Bundoora Ward
Cr Nic Brooks	Thomastown Ward
Cr Blair Colwell	Mill Park Ward
Cr Lawrie Cox	Ganbul Gulinj Ward
Cr Deb Gunn	Painted Hills Ward
Cr Stevan Kozmevski	Lalor Ward
Cr Jarrod Lappin	Mernda Ward
Cr David Lenberg	Epping Ward
Cr Christine Stow	North Ward
Cr Martin Taylor	South Morang Ward

Executive Leadership Team

Craig Lloyd	Chief Executive Officer
Agata Chmielewski	Director Community Wellbeing
Debbie Wood	Director Infrastructure & Environment
Sarah Rowe	Acting Director Customer & Corporate Services
Liam Wilkinson	Acting Director Planning & Development
Janine Morgan	Executive Manager Public Affairs
Jacinta Stevens	Executive Manager Office of Council & CEO

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1 Opening

1.1 Meeting Opening and Introductions

The Mayor, Cr McLindon opened the meeting at 6pm.

“Welcome to this Council Meeting of 15 April 2025 which is being held in person in the Council Chamber at Civic Centre, 25 Ferres Boulevard, South Morang and also being live streamed.

I am Mayor, Cr McLindon and I would also like welcome fellow Councillors and members of the Executive Leadership in attendance tonight.

Deputy Mayor, Cr Zinni, Cr Brooks, Cr Colwell, Cr Cox, Cr Gunn, Cr Kozmevski, Cr Lappin, Cr Lenberg, Cr Stow and Cr Taylor.

I would also like to introduce our Chief Executive Officer, Craig Lloyd and ask that he in turn introduce the members of the Executive Leadership Team in attendance today.”

“Good evening everyone, we also have with us:

Agata Chmielewski, Director Community Wellbeing;
Debbie Wood, Director Infrastructure & Environment;
Sarah Rowe, Acting Director Customer & Corporate Services;
Liam Wilkinson, Acting Director Planning & Development;
Janine Morgan, Executive Manager Public Affairs; and
Jacinta Stevens, Executive Manager Office of Council & CEO.

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

1.2 Apologies

Nil

1.3 Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners Statement

The Chair, Cr McLindon 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, Cr McLindon 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

The following acknowledgements were made:

West Wollert Community Centre

It was my (Cr McLindon) pleasure earlier in the month to attend an event celebrating the start of construction on the \$16.2 million West Wollert Community Centre.

The centre, which is expected to be finished in early 2027, will include a three-room kindergarten creating 198 new places and two Maternal and Child Health Services consulting rooms. There will be a community hall, kitchen, lounge, activity room, changing places facility and community garden, as well as a mini-branch library providing access to Yarra Plenty Regional Library’s collection.

Council is contributing \$7.7 million towards this project, with the Victorian Government providing \$6.75 million from its Building Blocks Fund and \$1.5 million from its Growing Suburbs Fund. Melbourne Water is also contributing \$168,663 towards the facility’s car park.

Dog Park

We are pleased to advise the City of Whittlesea has been awarded a \$300,000 grant from the Victorian Government’s New and Upgraded Dog Park Program. The funds will be used to build an off-leash dog park at VR Michael Reserve in Lalor. Council will develop a concept plan for the dog park at VR Michael Reserve over the coming months and the community will be invited to provide their feedback to inform the design.

Advocacy Wins

It has been pleasing to see a number of announcements from both major parties during the Federal election of funding commitments in the local area. These commitments are a direct result of our strong advocacy and our commitment to work in partnership with other levels of government to deliver the solutions our community needs.

We welcome these commitments and look forward to working with the incoming government to deliver these important projects.

Business Awards Finalists

Finalists have been announced for the 2025 City of Whittlesea Business Awards. The awards recognise excellence, innovation, and community spirit among local businesses.

Finalists have been announced for the following categories:

- Start Up Award
- Customer Service Award;
- Workplace Diversity Award;
- Community Contribution Award;
- Sustainability and Environment Award;
- Innovation and Enterprise Award; and
- Small Business Award.

For details about all the finalists and the awards night which will be a fantastic celebration of local business please visit our website.

ANZAC Day

Next week is ANZAC Day, a day to honour the 1.5 million Australians who have served in wars, conflicts and peacekeeping. We also remember the 103,000 people who sacrificed their lives in serving our country. I would encourage you to attend a local service if you can or to support the RSL's ANZAC Day appeal with a donation or by buying a pin.

Easter

For those celebrating Easter this weekend, we hope you have a wonderful time with your family and friends. There will be a lot of people on the roads so please stay safe and enjoy the long weekend.

2 Declarations of Conflict of Interest

No declarations.

3 Confirmation of Minutes of Previous Meeting/s

COUNCIL RESOLUTION	
Moved:	<i>Cr Zinni</i>
Seconded:	<i>Cr Cox</i>

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

- **Scheduled Meeting of Council held on 18 March 2025.**

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

4 Public Questions, Petitions and Joint Letters

4.1 Public Question Time

Question 1 from Nick Brain of Epping

Will council consider restoring the principle of 'no taxation without representation' by allowing residents and ratepayers to be able to directly read out legitimate questions they have relating to council business during Public Question Time?

Response:

Thank you for your question. Under the City of Whittlesea's Governance Rules, people can submit questions until 12 noon the day prior to a scheduled Council Meeting. Questions will be read out by the CEO's delegate and a response provided by the CEO.

Local Government Victoria are considering Model Governance Rules for all Councils. However, until these are in place, the City of Whittlesea will continue to use our current Governance Rules.

There is more detail on Council's website about Council Meeting question time.

Question 2 from Eva Moran on behalf of the Outer Northern People's Voices Group

Can Council provide an itemised account of where our rates money is being allocated?

Response:

Thank you for our question. A detailed account of Council's revenue and expenditure is available in the annual budget as well as Council's Annual Report. You will find details in the Services and Service Performance Indicators section of the Budget, and in the Annual Report on page 56 there is a section titled "How our rates revenue was spent in 2023-2024". Both of these documents are readily available on Council's website.

Later this evening Council will be discussing the draft 2025-26 Annual Budget which officers are recommending be placed out for community consultation.

Question 3 from David Hunter of Thomastown

Could Council please clarify the guidelines of what residents should expect on their footpaths in relation to real estate materials?

Response:

Thank you for your question, Council's Community Local Law requires that footpaths should be free from obstructions and hazards to ensure paths are accessible, safe, and easy to use. Any obstructions can be reported to Council by visiting the Customer Portal on our website, by calling 9217 2170 or submitting a customer request on Snap, Send, Solve.

Question 4 from Ross Lee of Doreen

Please outline the roles and responsibilities of the elected Councillors and the roles and responsibilities of the administration under the *Local Government Act 2020*.

Response:

Thank you for your question. Under section 28 of the *Local Government Act* the role of every Councillor in representing their municipality community includes participating in decision making of the Council, representing the interests of the municipal community in decision making and to contribute to the strategic direction of the Council through the development and review of key strategic documents of the Council, including the Council Plan. In addition, the Act also defines the role of the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and the Chief Executive Officer.

4.2 Petitions

4.2.1 Request for the Installation of Speed Humps in Mabel Street Doreen

A petition has been received from 57 residents requesting Council take immediate action concerning the installation of speed humps in Mabel Street Doreen due to concern of resident safety.

Recommendation

THAT Council

1. Note the petition relating to Mabel Street Doreen.
2. Refer the matter to the Chief Executive Officer for consideration.
3. Note the Chief Executive Officer will provide all Councillors with information on any action taken in relation to the concerns raised in the petition.

Cr Taylor moved the Recommendation as the motion:

COUNCIL RESOLUTION

Moved:	<i>Cr Taylor</i>
Seconded:	<i>Cr Stow</i>

THAT Council

1. Note the petition relating to Mabel Street Doreen.
2. Refer the matter to the Chief Executive Officer for consideration.
3. Note the Chief Executive Officer will provide all Councillors with information on any action taken in relation to the concerns raised in the petition.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

COUNCILLOR/S WHO SPOKE TO MOTION

Nil

VOTING		
FOR	AGAINST	ABSTAINED (vote against the motion)
<i>Cr McLindon</i> <i>Cr Zinni</i> <i>Cr Brooks</i> <i>Cr Colwell</i> <i>Cr Cox</i> <i>Cr Gunn</i> <i>Cr Kozmevski</i> <i>Cr Lappin</i> <i>Cr Lenberg</i> <i>Cr Stow</i> <i>Cr Taylor</i>	<i>Nil</i>	<i>Nil</i>

4.3 Joint Letters

No Joint Letters

5 Officers' Reports

5.1 Planning Scheme Amendment C251 - Rezoning at 307 Bridge Inn Road and 390 Masons Road, Mernda - Planning Panel Outcome and Adoption

Director/Executive Manager: Acting Director Planning & Development

Report Author: Strategic Planner

In Attendance: Strategic Planner

Executive Summary

This report relates to the rezoning of land at 307 Bridge Inn Road and 390 Masons Road, Mernda, to allow for residential development. The rezoning will apply to 21 hectares of land across two parcels to deliver 180-200 dwellings on one parcel and a retirement village and aged care facility on the other. The rezoning will also facilitate that transfer of 35 hectares of land to Council ownership for incorporation into the Quarry Hills Parkland.

An amendment to the Whittlesea Planning Scheme (Amendment C251wsea) is required to allow for the proposed use and development.

Amendment C251 is at the Council Adoption stage of the Planning Scheme Amendment process, having already progressed through two rounds of Council Decision and public exhibition. The purpose of this report is to detail the outcomes of the independent Planning Panel held to consider this Amendment, including discussion of the Panel Report, and for Council to decide on the adoption of the Amendment.

The Amendment applies to approximately 56 hectares of land across the two sites at 307 Bridge Inn Road and 390 Masons Road, Mernda, (*refer to Attachment 1*). The sites are currently used for animal grazing and are bound by Bridge Inn Road to the south, Masons Road to the north, residential development to the east and green wedge land to the west.

The Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) runs through the sites. The UGB is the boundary placed around Metropolitan Melbourne to contain urban growth within the boundary and to protect and conserve peri-urban land outside the boundary agriculture, environmental, historic, landscape, recreational and tourism uses. The properties were brought within the UGB in 2010 through Amendment VC68. This Amendment, which was led by the Victorian Government expanded the UGB to address the identified need for 600,000 additional dwellings in metropolitan Melbourne.

Approximately 21 hectares of the subject land sit within the UGB and 35 hectares outside the UGB. The land within the UGB is currently zoned Farming Zone, and it was always intended, through its inclusion within the UGB, to be rezoned for urban development. The land outside the UGB is currently zoned Green Wedge Zone. The Amendment proposes to rezone only the Farming Zone land within the UGB for residential use. The Green Wedge land will remain in the Green Wedge Zone.

The Amendment will facilitate the development of the 'urban' land for residential purposes and apply a development plan overlay to the rezoned land to ensure this residential development is subject to the same planning controls as the adjacent residential land.

Significantly, the Amendment also facilitates the assembly of the Quarry Hills Regional Parkland (the Parkland), now known as Quarry Hills Parkland, with the GWZ land transferred to Council and incorporated into the Parklands. The Quarry Hills Parkland is a Council master-planned open space at the heart of the City of Whittlesea, providing conservation, cultural, landscape and recreation uses. The new residential community will benefit from the amenity and recreational opportunities afforded by being in close proximity to the Parkland.

Council resolved to seek authorisation from the Minister for Planning to prepare and exhibit the Amendment at its March 2023 Council Meeting. The Amendment was then exhibited to surrounding residents, landowners and government agencies, including the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) in August and September 2023.

Nine submissions were received through the exhibition process. As a number of these submissions could not be satisfactorily resolved, Council resolved at its August 2024 Council Meeting to request a Planning Panel be appointed to consider the amendment and submissions.

The report by the Panel members is strongly supportive of the Amendment (*refer to Attachment 2*). The report finds the Amendment to have strong strategic support and significant net community benefit through the contribution of 35 hectares of land for the Parkland. The Panel found that the matters raised in submissions had either been satisfactorily addressed or would be satisfactorily addressed at a later stage of the planning process, which the Amendment makes provisions for. The panel report recommends no changes are made and that the Amendment be adopted as exhibited (*refer to Attachment 3*).

The Amendment will enable the development of housing with access to existing shops, schools, community and recreation facilities.

The Amendment will also deliver a net community benefit through the incorporation of 35 hectares of public open space into the Quarry Hills Parkland. This report recommends that Council support the Panel Report recommendation and resolve to adopt the Amendment as exhibited.

Officers' Recommendation

THAT Council:

1. Note the Panel Report at Attachment 2, which supports and recommends Council adopt Amendment C251wsea - Rezoning part of land at 307 Bridge Inn Road and 390 Masons Road, Mernda.
2. Adopt Planning Scheme Amendment C251wsea to the Whittlesea Planning Scheme as exhibited and as included at Attachment 3.
3. Submit Amendment C251wsea to the Minister for Planning for approval.
4. Advise the proponent and submitters to Amendment C251wsea of the above.

Cr Lappin moved the Officers' Recommendation as the motion:

COUNCIL RESOLUTION

Moved:	<i>Cr Lappin</i>
Seconded:	<i>Cr Gunn</i>

THAT Council:

1. Note the Panel Report at Attachment 2, which supports and recommends Council adopt Amendment C251wsea - Rezoning part of land at 307 Bridge Inn Road and 390 Masons Road, Mernda.
2. Adopt Planning Scheme Amendment C251wsea to the Whittlesea Planning Scheme as exhibited and as included at Attachment 3.
3. Submit Amendment C251wsea to the Minister for Planning for approval.
4. Advise the proponent and submitters to Amendment C251wsea of the above.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

COUNCILLOR/S WHO SPOKE TO MOTION

Cr McLindon, Cr Colwell, Cr Gunn, Cr Lappin

VOTING		
FOR	AGAINST	ABSTAINED (vote against the motion)
<i>Cr McLindon</i> <i>Cr Zinni</i> <i>Cr Brooks</i> <i>Cr Colwell</i> <i>Cr Cox</i> <i>Cr Gunn</i> <i>Cr Kozmevski</i> <i>Cr Lappin</i> <i>Cr Lenberg</i> <i>Cr Stow</i> <i>Cr Taylor</i>	<i>Nil</i>	<i>Nil</i>

5.2 Proposed Budget 2025-26, Proposed Financial Plan 2025-26 to 2034-35 and Proposed Revenue and Rating Plan 2025-26 to 2028-29

Director/Executive Manager: Acting Director Customer & Corporate Services

Report Author: Unit Manager Financial Development & Accountability

In Attendance: Acting Chief Financial Officer

Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is for Council to consider the Proposed Budget 2025-26 (the 'Proposed Budget', Attachment 1), Proposed Financial Plan 2025-26 to 2034-35 (the 'Proposed Financial Plan', Attachment 2), and Revenue and Rating Plan 2025-26 to 2028-29 (the 'Proposed Revenue and Rating Plan' Attachment 3) which have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government Act 2020. Hereafter, these documents will collectively be referred to as the 'Proposed Financial Strategic Documents' throughout this report.

The Proposed Financial Strategic Documents have been developed to align to community priorities identified through consultation and Council's key strategic directions. It is recommended that the Proposed Financial Strategic Documents be endorsed for community consultation from Wednesday 16 April 2025 to Sunday 4 May 2025, and a Hearing of Submissions Committee of Council be established to consider submissions from the community.

Extension of Speaking Time

The Mayor exercised his discretion to extend the officer speaking time for up to 5 minutes in accordance with Governance Rule 35.5.

Officers' Recommendation

THAT Council:

1. Endorse the following proposed documents to commence public exhibition and community consultation between the period Wednesday 16 April 2025 to Sunday 4 May 2025;
 - a) Proposed Budget 2025-26, including the Proposed Fees and Charges Schedule at Attachment 1.
 - b) Proposed Financial Plan 2025-26 to 2034-35 at Attachment 2.
 - c) Proposed Revenue and Rating Plan 2025-26 to 2028-29 at Attachment 3.
2. Resolve to hold a Hearing of Submissions Committee (Committee) meeting on Tuesday 6 May 2025 at 5pm in the Council Chamber at Civic Centre, 25 Ferres Boulevard, South Morang.

Note the Committee will provide recommendations to Council at its Scheduled Council Meeting on Tuesday 17 June 2025.

Cr Zinni moved the Officers' Recommendation as the motion:

COUNCIL RESOLUTION

Moved:	<i>Cr Zinni</i>
Seconded:	<i>Cr Gunn</i>

THAT Council:

1. Endorse the following proposed documents to commence public exhibition and community consultation between the period Wednesday 16 April 2025 to Sunday 4 May 2025;
 - a) Proposed Budget 2025-26, including the Proposed Fees and Charges Schedule at Attachment 1.
 - b) Proposed Financial Plan 2025-26 to 2034-35 at Attachment 2.
 - c) Proposed Revenue and Rating Plan 2025-26 to 2028-29 at Attachment 3.
2. Resolve to hold a Hearing of Submissions Committee (Committee) meeting on Tuesday 6 May 2025 at 5pm in the Council Chamber at Civic Centre, 25 Ferres Boulevard, South Morang.
3. Note the Committee will provide recommendations to Council at its Scheduled Council Meeting on Tuesday 17 June 2025.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

COUNCILLOR/S WHO SPOKE TO MOTION

Cr McLindon, Cr Zinni, Cr Cox, Cr Gunn

VOTING		
FOR	AGAINST	ABSTAINED (vote against the motion)
<i>Cr McLindon</i> <i>Cr Zinni</i> <i>Cr Brooks</i> <i>Cr Colwell</i> <i>Cr Cox</i> <i>Cr Gunn</i> <i>Cr Kozmevski</i> <i>Cr Lappin</i> <i>Cr Lenberg</i> <i>Cr Stow</i> <i>Cr Taylor</i>	<i>Nil</i>	<i>Nil</i>

Cr Colwell left the meeting briefly at 6:30pm and returned at 6:31pm.

5.3 Asset Plan 2025 - 2035

Director/Executive Manager: Director Infrastructure & Environment

Report Author: Manager Assets & Facilities

In Attendance: Manager Assets & Facilities

Executive Summary

The Asset Plan 2025–35 (the Plan) is a strategic framework for managing public assets over the next decade and beyond, ensuring their sustainability for current and future generations. It aligns with the Whittlesea 2040 objectives and its vision of "A Place for All", fostering a community-friendly environment. Additionally, the Plan informs the public about how assets will be managed to support these objectives.

The Plan focuses on optimising capital and maintenance investments, balancing new assets and growth with existing infrastructure, and delivering services that adapt to evolving community needs. It promotes evidence-based decision-making, enhances community and Council engagement in asset management, and strengthens the link between costs and service levels while addressing key challenges and risks.

As a planning tool, the Asset Plan ensures the efficient allocation of resources by maintaining, improving, and replacing essential public assets such as roads, parks, buildings, and drains. It provides expenditure forecasts to guide long-term financial planning, maintenance, and capital projects, ensuring responsible budget management and asset sustainability for future generations.

Council has prepared the Plan in compliance with Section 92 of the Victorian *Local Government Act 2020*, which requires the use of deliberative engagement in its development. Engagement with the community and stakeholders resulted in the establishment of eight asset planning principles, guiding the creation of an integrated, long-term, and transparent plan to ensure the best outcomes for the community over a minimum period of 10 years.

The Plan reinforces Council's commitment to inclusive, transparent, and best-practice asset management for the benefit of current and future generations.

The final stage of the community consultation process recommends placing the Plan on public exhibition before finalising the Plan for Council consideration.

Officers' Recommendation

THAT Council:

1. Endorse the proposed Asset Plan 2025-35 at Attachment 1 to commence public exhibition and community consultation between the period Wednesday 16 April 2025 to Sunday 11 May 2025.
2. Note the finalised Asset Plan 2025-35 will be presented to Council at its Scheduled Council Meeting on Tuesday 17 June 2025.

Cr Stow moved the Officers' Recommendation as the motion:

COUNCIL RESOLUTION

Moved:	<i>Cr Stow</i>
Seconded:	<i>Cr Brooks</i>

THAT Council:

1. Endorse the proposed Asset Plan 2025-35 at Attachment 1 to commence public exhibition and community consultation between the period Wednesday 16 April 2025 to Sunday 11 May 2025.
2. Note the finalised Asset Plan 2025-35 will be presented to Council at its Scheduled Council Meeting on Tuesday 17 June 2025.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

COUNCILLOR/S WHO SPOKE TO MOTION

Nil

VOTING

FOR	AGAINST	ABSTAINED (vote against the motion)
<i>Cr McLindon</i> <i>Cr Zinni</i> <i>Cr Brooks</i> <i>Cr Colwell</i> <i>Cr Cox</i> <i>Cr Gunn</i> <i>Cr Kozmevski</i> <i>Cr Lappin</i> <i>Cr Lenberg</i> <i>Cr Stow</i> <i>Cr Taylor</i>	<i>Nil</i>	<i>Nil</i>

5.4 CT2025-12 Pruning and Maintenance of Trees for the City of Whittlesea

Director/Executive Manager: Director Infrastructure & Environment

Report Author: Coordinator Trees Management

In Attendance: Manager Maintenance & Operations

These attachments have been designated as confidential in accordance with sections 66(5) and 3(1) of the *Local Government Act 2020* on the grounds that they contain Council business information, being information that would prejudice the Council's position in commercial negotiations if prematurely released. In particular, the attachments contain information regarding commercial in-confidence rates for various services involving maintenance of Council owned trees.

Executive Summary

On 31 March 2025, Council's long-standing contract for Tree Maintenance services will expire.

Historically, tree maintenance services have been provided by a single-service provider, Citywide Service Solutions, who've held responsibility for the core tree maintenance services including tree inspections, tree pruning, tree planting, electrical line clearance, and after-hours/storm response, among others.

In recent years, a combination of macro environmental factors including an industry shortage of arborists, a shift towards subcontractor reliance, and increased operational expenses, have made that single-service provider model unsustainable for Council's incumbent, and Council alike.

As a result, Council has opted to unbundle the current tree maintenance portfolio and test the market with an unbundled service offering.

In January 2025, Council went to market for the first portion of the unbundled tree offering, the tree pruning, tree removal and stump removal package that created contract CT2025-12. The intent of that contract is to engage a single supplier to perform general tree maintenance works, specifically programmed pruning, for a period of up to twelve months.

That timeline will allow Council to test the unbundled approach, trial new service providers, and return to market mid 2025 for the long-term tree maintenance contracts.

Tenders for contract CT2025-12 closed 18 February 2025. The tendered prices and a summary of the evaluation are detailed in the confidential attachment.

A total of nine suppliers submitted tender applications and were evaluated against weighted criteria. Across that criteria, the Tree Company Arboricultural Services Pty Ltd was selected as the preferred tenderer.

Officers' Recommendation

THAT Council:

1. Resolve to award contract 2025-12 Pruning and Maintenance of Trees for the City of Whittlesea to The Tree Company Arboricultural Services Pty Ltd, for a period of 12 months from 16 April 2025 to 31 March 2026, with a total value not exceeding \$2,700,000 excluding GST.
2. Approve the funding arrangements as detailed in the confidential attachment.
3. Authorise the Chief Executive Officer to sign and execute the contract on behalf of Council.

Cr Lappin moved the Officers' Recommendation as the motion:

COUNCIL RESOLUTION

Moved:	<i>Cr Lappin</i>
Seconded:	<i>Cr Colwell</i>

THAT Council:

1. Resolve to award contract 2025-12 Pruning and Maintenance of Trees for the City of Whittlesea to The Tree Company Arboricultural Services Pty Ltd, for a period of 12 months from 16 April 2025 to 31 March 2026, with a total value not exceeding \$2,700,000 excluding GST.
2. Approve the funding arrangements as detailed in the confidential attachment.
3. Authorise the Chief Executive Officer to sign and execute the contract on behalf of Council.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

COUNCILLOR/S WHO SPOKE TO MOTION

Cr McLindon, Cr Zinni, Cr Colwell, Cr Lappin

VOTING		
FOR	AGAINST	ABSTAINED (vote against the motion)
<i>Cr McLindon</i> <i>Cr Zinni</i> <i>Cr Brooks</i> <i>Cr Colwell</i> <i>Cr Cox</i> <i>Cr Gunn</i> <i>Cr Kozmevski</i> <i>Cr Lappin</i> <i>Cr Lenberg</i> <i>Cr Stow</i> <i>Cr Taylor</i>	<i>Nil</i>	<i>Nil</i>

6 Notices of Motion

Cr Zinni moved a Procedural Motion to move the Notice of Motion (Item 6.1) to the next Council Meeting being held on 20 May. I believe it is subject to misinterpretation by the community and this move is in the interest of procedural fairness for all parties involved.

6.1 CEO Employment Matters Advisory Committee Membership

Councillor: Cr, Martin Taylor

NoM No: 2025/03

Cr Taylor has given notice that it is their intention to move the following Motion at the Scheduled Council Meeting to be held on Tuesday 15 April at 6pm.

Motion

THAT Council:

1. Resolve Cr Aidan McLindon (Cr McLindon) be immediately removed as a councillor representative on the CEO Employment Matters Advisory Committee (CEMAC).
2. Amend the City of Whittlesea CEO Employment and Remuneration Policy to reflect that membership will comprise of three councillors, noting Councillors Colwell and Kozmevski have already been appointed to the CEMAC.
3. Appoint Cr Martin Taylor as the third councillor representative on the CEMAC.
4. Notes the reappointment of the Mayor of the day to CEMAC will form part of next annual consideration of membership to all internal and external Committees and Boards.

Prior to the motion being moved Cr Zinni proposed a procedural motion to lay the Notice of Motion on the table until the May Council meeting.

PROCEDURAL MOTION

Moved: Cr Zinni

Seconded: Cr Brooks

THAT Council resolve to lay the Notice of Motion on the table until the next Council Meeting being held on 20 May 2025.

CARRIED

VOTING		
FOR	AGAINST	ABSTAINED (vote against the motion)
<i>Cr Zinni</i> <i>Cr Brooks</i> <i>Cr Colwell</i> <i>Cr Cox</i> <i>Cr Gunn</i> <i>Cr Kozmevski</i> <i>Cr Lappin</i> <i>Cr Lenberg</i> <i>Cr Stow</i> <i>Cr Taylor</i>	<i>Nil</i>	<i>Cr McLindon</i>

7 Urgent Business

Nil

8 Reports from Councillors and CEO Update

8.1 Reports from Councillors

Cr Zinni

- Citizenship Ceremonies.
- Business Advisory Committee Meeting.
- Seniors Club Quarterly Meeting.
- Al Zahra Academy Eid Al-Fitr Festival (which is sponsored by the City of Whittlesea).
- Whittlesea Interfaith Network Committee Meeting.
- Spent time with Big Group Hug Team in Thomastown.
- BAPS in Mill Park Event.

Cr Stow

- Eirez Magnet factory in Epping.
- Spoke at the Women in Energy event at Garbo Gidgell last week.
- Ricotta Festival.
- Coffee and Chat session in Doreen.
- Community Meeting of the Olivine Community Group at the Shared Cup Cafe in Donnybrook.
- Blue Sky Cleaning Facility.
- BAPS in Mill Park Event.
- Anzac Day March from the Epping Hotel to the Epping Memorial Hall followed by refreshments at the Epping RSL.

Cr Colwell

- Whittlesea Cultural Diversity Week celebrations at PRACC.
- Coffee with Councillors at Jolly Miller Café, Bundoora.
- BAPS in Mill Park Event.
- Council Briefings.

Cr Gunn

- Met with residents to discuss issues and forwarded CRM's to have issues accessed and actioned.
- Site visit to Granite Hills, South Morang and Doreen Splash Park.
- Marched with Doreen RSL at the Epping RSL annual Anzac Day march. Service held at the Epping Memorial Hall then onto Epping RSL for refreshments.
- Reminder both Epping RSL and Doreen RSL have Dawn Service on Friday 25 April commencing at 5am and Whittlesea RSL commencing at 2pm.
- Good Friday coming up this Friday which means collectors will be out rattling tins at traffic lights so please be careful on the roads.
- Wished everyone that celebrates Easter a happy and safe Easter, stay safe and have lots of fun.

Cr Lenberg

- Meeting with Francis Acquah from Positive Wellness Recovery Centre. Cr Lenberg passed on his congratulations and acknowledged Francis who was awarded Order of Australia in 2024.
- Whittlesea Cultural Diversity Week celebrations at PRACC.
- Neighbourhood House in Lalor and met with the Manager, Meredith Budge.
- Interroll Australia 31st Anniversary Event at The Langham, Melbourne.
- Wollert Waste Safari Open Day at Heidelberg Materials Wollert.
- Met with Robin Parkin, CEO Sophia Davis, Partnerships Manager from Lively.
- Business Advisory Panel, which consisted of a tour of Costa's Facility in Mernda.

Cr Kozmevski

- Attended a Community Vigil and Public Awareness Gathering at the Macedonian Community Centre.
- Yarra Plenty Regional Library All Staff Extravaganza Event at the Lalor Library.
- Yarra Plenty Regional Library Audit and Risk Committee and Yarra Plenty Regional Library Board Meeting at the Mill Park Library.
- Maltese Senior Citizens Club Easter Lunch at May Road Lalor.

Cr Brooks

- Regular Council Briefings.
- Coffee with Councillors at Jolly Miller Café, Bundoora.
- Wollert Waste Safari Open Day at Heidelberg Materials Wollert.
- Ricotta Festival at That's Amore Cheese Factory in Thomastown.
- Food bank at the Thomastown Football and Netball Club.
- Anzac Day March from the Epping Hotel to the Epping Memorial Hall followed by refreshments at the Epping RSL.
- Heart of Albania Eagles Folk Dance at PRACC

Cr Cox

- Campaign launch for the Federal Election with local member Andrew Giles.
- Community Festival and Multicultural launch.
- Epping RSL Annual General Meeting where Kevin Ind re-elected as President.
- Anzac Day March from the Epping Hotel to the Epping Memorial Hall followed by refreshments at the Epping RSL.
- Met with residents of the Sherwin Rise Retirement Village.
- Memorial service for the Macedonian Community after the tragic events in the northern Macedonian region, it's important we acknowledge this tragic event.
- Whittlesea Reconciliation Group Meeting.
- Citizenship Ceremonies.
- Site visit to Gathering Place.

Extension of Speaking Time

The Mayor exercised his discretion to extend the speaking time for a further 1 minute in accordance with Governance Rule 35.5.

- Announcements of campaign funds: It's important we look at the values of the promises that have been made, as the Mayor has said in terms of both major parties looking for Donnybrook Road and the roundabout changes at Mitchell but the bridges and the overpass of the Donnybrook Railway line and the duplication of Donnybrook Road, we would love to see that in Craigieburn Road East, but it's important to see when promises are made that they're actually valued properly because the bridges cost seems a little undervalued.
- VCAT Hearing: I have been involved in the VCAT hearing which is something that has been going on in the background in relation to the Lalor Ward. I attended the hearing earlier this week and I think it's important to say with the evidence provided it is the scheme of fraud that was attempted to occur with the tampering of votes, however it has been quite clear with the evidence provided that the tampering of votes was not Cr Kozmevski it was one of the other candidates. At the moment this has been reserved and we await the decision. The concerns I have about this, is if the VEC's intentions are that we go to a second ballot the ratepayers will be the ones paying for another ballot for this process.
- MAV business papers have arrived late this afternoon with the State Council meeting being held on 16 May, I'm sure we will have an opportunity to brief on the motions.

Cr Lappin

- Northern Alliance of Greenhouse Action Committee.
- Checking in with residents of Mernda regarding concerns they may have.

Cr Taylor

- Whittlesea Audit & Risk Committee Meeting.
- City of Whittlesea Advisory Panel Meeting with a tour of the facilities at the Costa Factory.
- Whittlesea Cultural Diversity Celebration event.
- Citizenship Ceremonies.
- Coffee with Councillors at Jolly Miller Café, Bundoora.
- Wollert Waste Safari Open Day at Heidelberg Materials Wollert.
- Northern Region Police Forum.
- Commenced a series of Inter Council's Liaison Meetings.
- Primary School food bank charity event.
- Met with Victoria Policy regarding crime prevention initiative discussions.
- Council Briefings.
- Continued door to door engage with residents of the South Morang Ward.
- Acknowledged Shannon Johnson, owner of Bicycle Centre in South Morang who provides a great service to the residents of the municipality. Shannon recently competed in the EMTV National Mountain Bike Championships in Victoria and won gold. Congratulations Shannon.

Cr McLindon

- Niruththa Indian Fine Arts – special mention of event that was held in memory of her sister in law.
- Opening of the Cultural Diversity Week.
- Citizenship Ceremony.
- Nepalese New Year Feast.
- Thursday's – Plenty Valley FM88 Update.
- Wollert Waste Safari Open Day at Heidelberg Materials Wollert.
- Ricotta Festival at That's Amore Cheese Factory in Thomastown.
- Gorge Road businesses are open, please support these businesses as they have had it tough for a couple of months.
- Bread Hub and visited some of the homeless people.
- As was previously mentioned by Crs Cox and Kozmevski, to the Macedonians we send our thoughts on behalf of myself and the Deputy Mayor.
- Reminder to pause for Anzac Day

8.2 Chief Executive Officer, Craig Lloyd Update

Gorge Road

I am pleased to report that the Gorge Road streetscape upgrade in South Morang is now complete and open to the public.

The project has transformed the front of the shops into a vibrant space that will help attract new customers to the existing businesses. Some of the improvements include an expanded outdoor dining area with seating, tables, bins and bike racks.

We have also improved safety by changing the parking configuration at the front of the shops, installing a raised pedestrian crossing and putting in new streetlights.

The project was funded by the City of Whittlesea and the Victorian Government via a grant from its Growing Suburbs Fund.

Our attention will now turn to the rear of the shops where in the coming months we will be extending and asphaltting the car park, installing new lighting, and planting more trees.

Everton Drive Update

Construction of the Plenty Road/Everton Drive intersection in Mernda is progressing well with work expected to finish in late 2025.

The project includes a 100 metre extension of Everton Drive and a new signalised intersection with Plenty Road that will help improve traffic flow around Mernda and provide a safe access point to the future Regional Sports Precinct.

Community Leadership Program

Expressions of interest are open now for the City of Whittlesea's next intake of Community Leadership Program and they are open until Monday 12 May 2025.

This free program is designed for anyone in the community that wants to lead community projects, establish personal and professional connections and learn more about local government.

I strongly encourage you to apply and you can do that by visiting whittlesea.vic.gov.au/leadingchange

World Immunisation Week

This month we acknowledge World Immunisation Week, and this is a good reminder with winter coming up to get your yearly flu vaccine.

Council's team of seven nurses visit 44 workplaces during the flu vaccination season, including primary and secondary schools to help prevent the spread of the flu.

We also hold a number of community sessions for members of the public – you can book a session on our website.

Explore Whittlesea – new website

We have gone live with our brand new Explore Whittlesea website is now live. It's a one-stop guide for discovering everything in the City of Whittlesea and what it has to offer.

Whether you're a local or visiting, the site is full of inspiration from natural attractions and family activities to hidden food spots and cultural experiences.

Explore Whittlesea encourages locals and tourists to support local businesses and enjoy the best of their own backyard. This is a great resource for people looking for things to do locally in the school holidays. Visit www.explore.whittlesea.vic.gov.au

Red Bin Lids

We are starting to communicate out to the community about an upcoming change to lids on rubbish bins, this is getting a lot of discussion in the community. Any dark green lids will be changed to red across the City of Whittlesea, this change is required by the State Government and will bring us into line with the standardised bin lid colours across the State.

The new red lids will be progressively rolled out through May and June. All old lids will be recycled into new lids, reducing waste going to landfill.

9 Tabled Reports

Nil

10 Confidential Business

No confidential business.

11 Closure

There being no further business the Mayor formally closed the meeting at 7:06pm.

Confirmed this 20th day of May 2025.

Cr Martin Taylor
Mayor