



Minutes

Scheduled Council Meeting

Tuesday 17 February 2026 at 6pm

Council Chamber,
25 Ferres Boulevard, South Morang



**City of
Whittlesea**

Councillors

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

Executive Leadership Team

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
Jacinta Stevens	Executive Manager Office of Council & CEO
Sarah Oldman	Acting Executive Manager Public Affairs

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UNCONFIRMED

1 Opening

1.1 Meeting Opening and Introductions

The Chair opened the meeting at 6pm.

“Welcome to this Scheduled Council Meeting of 17 February 2026 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 Cr Lawrie Cox, Mayor of the City of Whittlesea and I would like to introduce our Councillors in attendance tonight.

Deputy Mayor, Cr Blair Colwell, Cr Michael Labrador, Cr Jarrod Lappin, Cr David Lenberg, Cr Aidan McLindon and Cr Daniela Zinni. We also have Cr Deb Gunn, Cr Christine Stow and Cr Martin Taylor joining us virtually.

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.”

“Good evening everyone, I would like to introduce:

Emma Appleton, Director Planning & Development;
Agata Chmielewski, Director Community Wellbeing;
Sarah Renner, Director Customer & Corporate Services;
Debbie Wood, Director Infrastructure & Environment;
Jacinta Stevens, Executive Manager Office of Council & CEO; and
Sarah Oldman, Acting Executive Manager Public Affairs.

Thank you Chair.”

1.2 Apologies

Nil

1.3 Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners Statement

The Chair 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 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:

Australia Day Honours

I would like to extend my congratulations to two members of our community who were recently awarded a Medal of Order of Australia in this year’s Australia Day honours list for their service to the community.

- Ms Mun Han Regina Leung-Huning was recognised for her outstanding service to the community of Whittlesea. She has shown exceptional dedication through leadership of the Whittlesea Chinese Association, coordination of major cultural and fundraising events, and decades of volunteer service at St Francis of Assisi Catholic Church in Mill Park.
- Barry William Richards from Mill Park was recognised for his dedicated service to the welfare of veterans. He has dedicated more than a decade to advocating for veterans through the Returned and Services League (RSL) of Australia and has provided long-standing advocacy and support as a Pensions and Military Compensation Advocate, assisting veterans and their families.
- I would also like to congratulate Whittlesea Inspector Kate O’Neill on being awarded the Australian Police Medal as part of this year’s Australia Day honours, recognising her distinguished service as a member of Victoria Police. Over a 25-year career, she has served across investigations, intelligence, training, emergency management and specialist units, and has led major operational deployments, notably during the 2019–2020 bushfires.

Response to recent fires

Over the past month, we have seen some devastating fires across the state including in our immediate neighbouring Council areas in the north.

While the fires did not directly impact the City of Whittlesea, Council supported the broader regional response, and continues to do so, through staffing Information Hubs and providing specialist support such as arborists, engineers and building surveyors, among other roles.

During this time, a total of 186 staff have been involved in our response. This includes 150 staff from the City of Whittlesea and 36 staff from the Northern Collaboration group.

I would like to sincerely thank everyone who has contributed to this response. Supporting people at their most vulnerable requires compassion, professionalism and commitment, and the way our staff have supported neighbouring communities has been outstanding.

Resignation of Mr Brooks and Thomastown Ward By-Election

On 11 January, Councillor Nic Brooks, resigned from his position as Ward Councillor for Thomastown for personal reasons.

Nic Brooks was elected to Council in the November 2024 Local Government elections and served on a number of Committees in this time. On behalf of Council, I would like to thank Mr Brooks for his service to the City of Whittlesea community.

The Victorian Electoral Commission will conduct a by-election for the Thomastown Ward vacancy in May. More information on the by-election is available on the City of Whittlesea website.

Passing of Robert (Bob) Draper

I would like to pass on my condolences to the family and friends of Robert Draper, who recently passed away.

Robert was a Past President and Life Member of the Whittlesea Agricultural Society and made a lasting contribution to our community. He was the instigator of the Pioneer Pavillion, a project of which he was extremely proud of and one that will remain part of his legacy.

We would like to acknowledge his dedication to the community. Our thoughts are with Robert's family and friends.

2 Declarations of Conflict of Interest

The Chief Executive Officer, Craig Lloyd declared a material conflict of interest in respect to Item 10.1 - CEO Employment Matters - CEO Contract.

3 Confirmation of Minutes of Previous Meeting/s

Officers' Recommendation

THAT Council confirm the minutes of the Scheduled Council Meeting held on 16 December 2025, as circulated.

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

THAT Council confirm the minutes of the Scheduled Council Meeting held on 16 December 2025, as circulated.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

4 Public Questions, Petitions and Joint Letters

4.1 Public Question Time

Nick Brain, on behalf of Better Deal Whittlesea

Can council explain how it is balancing funding requirements for planned major regional sporting facilities and the need to modernise existing local clubs and community parks?

Chief Executive Officer, Craig Lloyd

Thank you for your question.

Council manages investment in major regional facilities through clear prioritisation and phased delivery. Major regional facilities are only progressed where there is demonstrated demand, strong participation growth and alignment with adopted strategies. These projects are assessed not just on community benefit, but also on whole-of-life costs, affordability, and impact on Council's long-term financial position.

At the same time, renewal and upgrade of local clubs, grounds, and community parks remains a core priority. No single project is funded at the expense of the broader network of community infrastructure. Investment decisions consider equity, participation levels, asset condition, and community need. This approach ensures Council can deliver regional facilities while continuing to support grassroots sport and everyday community use across the municipality.

4.2 Petitions

4.2.1 Petition - Capping of Council Rates

A petition has been received from 17 residents requesting Council consider a concept that the level of Council rates to be levied against residents be based on the cost of the services provided by Council and that the rates be capped at \$1,400 irrespective of the value of their property.

Recommendation

THAT Council note the petition.

Cr McLindon moved the Officers' Recommendation as the motion.

COUNCIL RESOLUTION	
Moved:	<i>Cr McLindon</i>
Seconded:	<i>Cr Labrador</i>

THAT Council note the petition.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

COUNCILLOR/S WHO SPOKE TO MOTION

Cr Labrador, Cr McLindon

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

4.3 Joint Letters

No Joint Letters

5 Officers' Reports

5.1 Council Grants Policy

Director/Executive Manager: Director Customer & Corporate Services

Report Author: Unit Manager Community Grants

In Attendance: Manager EPMO & Change
Unit Manager Community Grants

Executive Summary

The Council Grants Policy is intended to be a public facing document to make transparent the roles, responsibilities and decision-making process when offering Council grants. This policy is for grants offered by Council only and not grants that Council have been awarded or supplemented to deliver to the community through third party funding.

In May 2022 the Victorian Auditor General's Office (VAGO) published the *Fraud Control Over Local Government Grants*. This policy has been developed to ensure it meets the recommendations identified in this report and to ensure Council's overarching grant policy includes:

- When and why Council uses grants to achieve its strategy.
- How Council will administer grant programs across their life cycle.
- the risk-based approach Council uses to determine how it will evaluate each grant program.
- Staff and Councillors' roles in managing grants.
- Relevant Council policies and procedures, including policies and procedures for declaring conflicts of interest.

Officers' Recommendation

THAT Council resolve to adopt the Council Grants Policy at Attachment 1.

Cr Lappin moved the Officers' Recommendation as the motion.

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

THAT Council resolve to adopt the Council Grants Policy at Attachment 1.

CARRIED

COUNCILLOR/S WHO SPOKE TO MOTION

Cr Colwell, Cr Lappin

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

UNCONFIRMED

5.2 Hawkstowe Station East Development Plan

Director/Executive Manager: Director Planning & Development

Report Author: Senior Strategic Planner

In Attendance: Manager Strategic Futures
Senior Strategic Planner

Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to present the *Hawkstowe Station East Development Plan* (the Development Plan), and seek Council's approval of the Development Plan, following non-statutory exhibition.

The Development Plan has been prepared and submitted by the proponent YourLand Pty Ltd (refer *Attachment 1*). The Development Plan affects a single property; 1180 Plenty Road, South Morang. The site is approximately 2.1 hectares in size and is bound by Plenty Road to the west and south. Two local roads and a Council owned reserve are directly to the north and Hawkstowe train station is directly to the east (refer *Attachment 2*).

The Development Plan envisages a residential neighbourhood of approximately 75 to 80 dwellings located within immediate proximity to the existing Hawkstowe train station. The Development Plan proposes to deliver a connected street network, approximately six standard density lots within the northern part of the site, a large lot for an area of medium density dwellings within the central and southern parts of the site, as well as an ephemeral wetland which is critical to manage water on the site. The new housing will be located within an existing residential neighbourhood well serviced by schools, parks, amenities and public transport.

The proposed Development Plan has been prepared in accordance with the provisions of Schedule 5 to the Development Plan Overlay (DPO) at Clause 43.04 of the Whittlesea Planning Scheme and the *Mernda Strategy Plan* (MSP).

The draft Development Plan and supporting documents were placed on non-statutory exhibition in September 2025. Neighbouring and nearby properties, and relevant agencies, were notified and provided with the opportunity to comment on the proposal.

One submission was received from an affected landowner/residents and a number of relevant agencies provided a response. In response to these submissions, officers have provided an assessment and a response in the report.

The Development Plan meets the relevant requirements of the Whittlesea Planning Scheme and satisfactorily responds to the existing site features, constraints and overarching strategic documents. It meets a community need for additional housing in an area well-served by public transportation. As such, this report recommends that Council approve the *Hawkstowe Station East Development Plan*.

Officers' Recommendation

THAT Council:

1. Approve the Hawkstowe Station East Development Plan at Attachment 1 which proposes the subject land be developed for standard and medium-density housing.
2. Note the outcomes of the non-statutory exhibition process as detailed in the report.
3. Note officers will notify the submitters and proponent of this resolution.

Cr Lappin moved the Officers' Recommendation as the motion.

COUNCIL RESOLUTION	
Moved:	<i>Cr Lappin</i>
Seconded:	<i>Cr Lenberg</i>

THAT Council:

1. Approve the Hawkstowe Station East Development Plan at Attachment 1 which proposes the subject land be developed for standard and medium-density housing.
2. Note the outcomes of the non-statutory exhibition process as detailed in the report.
3. Note officers will notify the submitters and proponent of this resolution.

CARRIED

COUNCILLOR/S WHO SPOKE TO MOTION

Cr Colwell, Cr Labrador, Cr Lappin, Cr Lenberg, Cr McLindon, Cr Stow, Cr Taylor

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

5.3 Governance Report

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

Report Author: Unit Manager Council Governance

Executive Summary

In accordance with best practice, good governance principles, transparent and accountable reporting, officers deem it appropriate to consolidate governance and administrative reports into one standing report to provide a single reporting mechanism for a range of statutory compliance, transparency and governance matters. This also ensures compliance with the requirements of the *Local Government Act 2020*, Council's Governance Rules and related regulations.

The purpose of this report is to provide information and endorsement for the following governance related matters:

- S11A Instrument of Appointment;
- Summary Minutes of December Audit and Risk Committee meeting;
- Attendance at the Australian Local Government Association (ALGA) National General Assembly 2026; and
- Summary of Informal Meetings of Council.

Further information on the above listed matters is located within the body of this report.

Officers' Recommendation

THAT Council:

1. Note the Governance Report for February 2026.
2. Appoint the Council Officer referred to in the Instrument of Appointment at Attachment 1 as an Authorised Officer under section 147(4) of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* and section 313 of the *Local Government Act 2020*.
3. Resolve to affix the common seal to the Instrument of Appointment referred to in point 2 upon signing of the Instrument by the Chief Executive Officer.
4. Note the Instrument will remain in force until Council determines to vary or revoke the Appointment.
5. Note the 9 December 2025 Audit and Risk Committee unconfirmed summary of minutes at Attachment 2.
6. Authorise the Mayor, Cr _____, Cr _____, Cr _____ to attend the ALGA National General Assembly to be held in Canberra between the period 23 to 25 June 2026, at an approximate cost per Councillor of \$3200.
7. Note the summary of Informal Meetings of Council for the period 11 December 2025 to 11 February 2026 at Attachment 3.

Cr Colwell moved the following motion.

MOTION	
Moved:	<i>Cr Colwell</i>
Seconded:	<i>Cr Stow</i>

THAT Council:

1. Note the Governance Report for February 2026.
2. Appoint the Council Officer referred to in the Instrument of Appointment at Attachment 1 as an Authorised Officer under section 147(4) of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* and section 313 of the *Local Government Act 2020*.
3. Resolve to affix the common seal to the Instrument of Appointment referred to in point 2 upon signing of the Instrument by the Chief Executive Officer.
4. Note the Instrument will remain in force until Council determines to vary or revoke the Appointment.
5. Note the 9 December 2025 Audit and Risk Committee unconfirmed summary of minutes at Attachment 2.
6. Authorise the Mayor, Cr Lenberg, Cr Lappin, Cr Stow and Cr Gunn to attend the ALGA National General Assembly to be held in Canberra between the period 23 to 25 June 2026, at an approximate cost per Councillor of \$3200.
7. Note the summary of Informal Meetings of Council for the period 11 December 2025 to 11 February 2026 at Attachment 3.

Cr Lenberg proposed the following amendment to Cr Colwell, as the mover of the motion and Cr Stow, as the seconder. Cr Colwell and Cr Stow accepted the amendment which then became the substantive motion.

AMENDMENT

THAT Council:

1. Note the Governance Report for February 2026.
2. Appoint the Council Officer referred to in the Instrument of Appointment at Attachment 1 as an Authorised Officer under section 147(4) of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* and section 313 of the *Local Government Act 2020*.
3. Resolve to affix the common seal to the Instrument of Appointment referred to in point 2 upon signing of the Instrument by the Chief Executive Officer.
4. Note the Instrument will remain in force until Council determines to vary or revoke the Appointment.
5. Note the 9 December 2025 Audit and Risk Committee unconfirmed summary of minutes at Attachment 2.
6. Authorise the Mayor, ~~Cr Lenberg~~, Cr Lappin, Cr Stow and Cr Gunn to attend the ALGA National General Assembly to be held in Canberra between the period 23 to 25 June 2026, at an approximate cost per Councillor of \$3200.
7. Note the summary of Informal Meetings of Council for the period 11 December 2025 to 11 February 2026 at Attachment 3.

SUBSTANTIVE MOTION

THAT Council:

1. Note the Governance Report for February 2026.
2. Appoint the Council Officer referred to in the Instrument of Appointment at Attachment 1 as an Authorised Officer under section 147(4) of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* and section 313 of the *Local Government Act 2020*.
3. Resolve to affix the common seal to the Instrument of Appointment referred to in point 2 upon signing of the Instrument by the Chief Executive Officer.
4. Note the Instrument will remain in force until Council determines to vary or revoke the Appointment.
5. Note the 9 December 2025 Audit and Risk Committee unconfirmed summary of minutes at Attachment 2.
6. Authorise the Mayor, Cr Lappin, Cr Stow and Cr Gunn to attend the ALGA National General Assembly to be held in Canberra between the period 23 to 25 June 2026, at an approximate cost per Councillor of \$3200.
7. Note the summary of Informal Meetings of Council for the period 11 December 2025 to 11 February 2026 at Attachment 3.

COUNCILLORS WHO SPOKE TO MOTION

IN FAVOUR

*Cr Colwell, Cr Lappin, Cr McLindon,
Cr Stow, Cr Taylor, Cr Zinni*

IN OPPOSITION

Cr Labrador

RIGHT OF REPLY

Cr Colwell

COUNCIL RESOLUTION

THAT Council:

1. **Note the Governance Report for February 2026.**
2. **Appoint the Council Officer referred to in the Instrument of Appointment at Attachment 1 as an Authorised Officer under section 147(4) of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* and section 313 of the *Local Government Act 2020*.**
3. **Resolve to affix the common seal to the Instrument of Appointment referred to in point 2 upon signing of the Instrument by the Chief Executive Officer.**
4. **Note the Instrument will remain in force until Council determines to vary or revoke the Appointment.**
5. **Note the 9 December 2025 Audit and Risk Committee unconfirmed summary of minutes at Attachment 2.**
6. **Authorise the Mayor, Cr Lappin, Cr Stow and Cr Gunn to attend the ALGA National General Assembly to be held in Canberra between the period 23 to 25 June 2026, at an approximate cost per Councillor of \$3200.**
7. **Note the summary of Informal Meetings of Council for the period 11 December 2025 to 11 February 2026 at Attachment 3.**

CARRIED

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

UNCONFIRMED

6 Notices of Motion

No Notices of Motion

7 Urgent Business

No Urgent Business

8 Reports from Councillors and CEO Update

8.1 Reports from Councillors

Cr Colwell

- Attended the opening and launch of the Aboriginal Gathering Place. Cr Colwell has been interested in this project for more than 20 years. Cr Colwell personally thanked the current members of the WAGPAG (Whittlesea Aboriginal Gathering Place Advisory Group); Alister Thorpe, Karen Bryant, Andrew Morrison, Bec Lilly and Anita North for progressing the project and making it possible. Cr Colwell also thanked the previous committee members, elders, and Council staff members both past and present who contributed to the delivery of this project. *“May it be a cradle for reconciliation and community strengthening”*.

Cr Zinni

- Attended Coffee with Council at Café Lucio in Bundoora Square.
- Attended Bundoora Beats Music Event.
- Attended two citizenship ceremonies, along with the Mayor and welcomed lots of new citizens to the municipality.
- Attended the Aboriginal Gathering Place Opening with the Mayor and other fellow Councillors. Cr Zinni urged the community to visit the Aboriginal Gathering Place.

Cr Lenberg

- Cr Lenberg highlighted his road trip from Melbourne to Perth over the festive break.
- Cr Lenberg described noticeable differences in road quality between Victoria and other states during the trip.

Cr Labrador

- Thanked former Cr Brooks for his time and his service at the City of Whittlesea and described his time and contribution to the City of Whittlesea as highly appreciated.
- Spoke with residents regarding concerns about roads and upcoming budget, and increased crime within our municipality. Cr Labrador stated *“There needs to be better management of finances and infrastructure. It is our duty as Councillors to push our State Members to protect our people. We all want the City of Whittlesea to be a place for all, and to be safe and comfortable about where we live”*.
- Attended a citizenship ceremony in January. *“It was a beautiful sight to see so many people choose to settle and build their family here in Victoria. Congratulations to the new citizens and I hope they can all build a life and family here and contribute to our country and proudly and unapologetically call themselves Australian.”*

Cr McLindon

- Acknowledged and thanked former Cr Brooks for his contribution to the City of Whittlesea.
- Noted Epping Road has opened further, and felt traffic is flowing well. Cr McLindon *hopes Council can work closely with the State Government in the future for road planning.*
- Acknowledged and thanked Council officers for their work with the recent bush fires.
- Cr McLindon felt there has been a significant positive impact from the new contractors in relation to grass cutting.
- Cr McLindon highlighted his hopefulness to plan for the future regarding bringing a potential business precinct to the north.

Cr Lappin

- Attended a sustainability expert speed date session held by the City of Whittlesea at Plenty Ranges Arts & Convention Centre. Cr Lappin described the event as helpful and a great initiative.
- Attended the opening of the Aboriginal Gathering Place and described the Beautifully built building in a stunning location. Encouraged the community visit. Cr Lappin described the Aboriginal Gathering Place as having a central role and large impact on the community. *“I’m very proud to be part of a Council who has delivered a project such as this”*.
- Attended a Northern Alliance Greenhouse Action Meeting pertaining to discussions around the Strategy Action Plan.

Cr Gunn

- Wished everyone a Happy Lunar New Year, a large part of our community celebrates the coming of the year of the horse.
- Attended Love Thy Neighbour on 17 December and commended the team on their work
- Attended committee meetings including CEMAC and the Community Awards.
- Attended her mother's 80th Birthday Celebration at a local restaurant.
- Attended the Aboriginal Gathering Place Opening and felt the project is something Council should be proud of.
- Cr Gunn wished everyone a happy, prosperous and healthy 2026.

Cr Taylor

- Commended the collaborative work of Councillors.
- Cr Taylor noted he has reduced the number of events attend due to a Council-related injury sustained late last year.
- Attended the Whittlesea Community Music Festival alongside the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Cr Stow.
- Met with numerous community residents.
- Spoke to many small businesses regarding various issues.
- Thanked Council for organising a specialist legal practitioner to hold discussions pertaining to social media issues and described this as both very helpful and beneficial.
- Expressed gratitude for all the work conducted by Mr Brooks.
- Looking forward to entering Budget negotiations.
- Cr Taylor stated: *"Council has a responsibility for community safety and in closing would like to say crime has no place in South Morang"*.

Cr Stow

- Echoed Cr Taylor's comments about Councillors working together.
- Acknowledged former Cr Brooks.
- Paid tribute to Robert Draper and his contribution to the Pioneer Pavilion at the Agricultural Society.
- Attended Whittlesea Country Music Festival.
- Attended the Whittlesea Christmas Carols by Candlelight.
- Attended the Australian Local Government Women's Association workshop online about developing better relationships between female Councillors and CEOs.
- Attended the Council's group of CFA and Councils who opposed the Victorian emergency services levy.
- Attended two community consultation sessions - Whittlesea and Donnybrook spoke to residents and addressed concerns about Grants Road and illegal soil dumping.
- Attended a consultation with residents relating to truck parking, duck walking and parking.

- Attended a meeting with the leader of the opposition Jess Wilson, Evan Mulholland and Wendy Lovell regarding issues with the development of Donnybrook Road that negatively impact Donnybrook residents.
- Attended Bundoora Beats Music Event.

Cr Cox

- Attended a number of functions in the lead up to the Christmas period, including:
 - Whittlesea Multicultural Committee meeting.
 - Greek Orthodox Women's Association.
 - Love Thy Neighbour.
 - Northern Tigers Tamil Thai Pongal Event in Thomastown
- Attended Nepalese Australia Day in Wollert
- Attended MAV Regional Meeting.
- Participated in the Pride Event with Cr Colwell and Cr Lenberg.
- UNESCO Greek Word Festival in Thomastown.
- Attended Whittlesea Country Music Festival and Bundoora Beats festival.
- Coffee with Council.
- Outer Melbourne Council's Forum in the city, attended with the CEO.
- Attended a number of citizenship ceremonies with approximately 700 people become citizens between December and January.
- Continues to conduct advocacy with local MP's. Stated *the document compiled on the Department of Transport relating to roadside lack of maintenance has been received very well by local MP's.*
- Attended the Aboriginal Gathering Place Opening event and stated it has been a *fantastic outcome for over 20 years of advocacy.* Cr Cox described the event as rewarding and emotional and stated *this was something that the City of Whittlesea has proudly delivered this project on its own, there hasn't been any state or federal funding or assistance.*
- Attended St Alphonsa Cathedral Parish Feast last Sunday.
- Meeting with the Minister and reported back on action items.
- Acknowledged Council staff efforts in relation to the fires.

8.2 Chief Executive Officer, Craig Lloyd Update

Murnong Community Centre Opening

The \$11.4 million Murnong Community Centre in Donnybrook, supported by funding from the State Government, is now complete. Located in the Olivine Estate, the new centre delivers a multipurpose facility designed to support a fast-growing community, with spaces for learning, connection and essential services.

It includes a mini library branch, kindergarten rooms, Maternal and Child Health suites, a community hall, multipurpose rooms and inclusive facilities including a Changing Places space.

An official community opening event is scheduled for Saturday 21 February, marking the transition from construction into service delivery.

Huskisson Reserve Sporting Facilities Upgrade

Council is continuing to deliver a multimillion-dollar upgrade to sporting facilities at Huskisson Reserve in Lalor. The project includes a new multipurpose pavilion, upgraded tennis and pickleball courts, car park improvements and landscaping. Work on the in-ground services for the car park and pavilion are currently underway and expected to be completed this month.

The project is funded by the City of Whittlesea, with the West Lalor Tennis Club contributing \$50,000.

Reid Street Playground Upgrade

Early works have commenced on the Reid Street playground upgrade in South Morang. This follows the recent completion of the Reid Street carpark upgrade, which improves safety and accessibility for people using the Gorge Road shopping precinct.

The upgraded playground will include new and nature-based play elements, landscaping, improved footpath connections and signage. It will be a welcoming social space for people of all ages. The works are expected to be completed in the coming months.

Community Festival

We have another special event coming up; the City of Whittlesea Community Festival is on Sunday 15 March.

Community can join us on the Civic Centre lawns between 11am and 5pm and enjoy a day of fun with local artists and performers, market stalls, entertainment, food trucks, cultural activities and a pet expo.

More details are available our website and will be posted on social media.

9 Tabled Reports

9.1 Lalor By-Election Report

The Lalor Ward Local Government By-Election conducted in 2025 report was tabled and noted by Council.

10 Confidential Business

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

10.1 CEO Employment Matters - CEO Contract

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

THAT Council adopt the recommendation to close the meeting to the public.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 7:24pm for 5 minutes to allow for preparation prior to reconvening in-camera.

The Chief Executive Officer, Craig Lloyd left the meeting prior to the commencement of the in-camera portion of the meeting.

11 Closure

There being no further business the Mayor formally closed the meeting at 9:07pm.

Confirmed this 17th day of March 2026.

Cr Lawrie Cox
Mayor

UNCONFIRMED