



Agenda

Scheduled Council Meeting

Tuesday 18 April 2023 at 6:30 pm

You are advised that a Meeting of Council has been called by the Chief Executive Officer on Tuesday 18 April 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 AM who will undertake the duties of the Council of the City of Whittlesea until the October 2024 Local Government Election.

Senior Officers

Craig Lloyd Chief Executive Officer

Justin O’Meara Director Planning & Development

Sarah Renner Director Customer & Corporate Services

Debbie Wood Director Infrastructure & Environment

Anthony Traill Interim Director Community Wellbeing

Frank Joyce Executive Manager Strategy & Insights

Janine Morgan Executive Manager Public Affairs

Sarah Rowe Interim Executive Manager Office of Council & CEO

Order of Business

The Chief Executive Officer submits the following business:

[1 Opening 6](#_Toc132296048)

[1.1 Meeting Opening and Introductions 6](#_Toc132296049)

[1.2 Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners Statement 6](#_Toc132296050)

[1.3 Diversity and Good Governance Statement 6](#_Toc132296051)

[1.4 Attendance 6](#_Toc132296052)

[2 Declarations of Conflict of Interest 7](#_Toc132296053)

[3 Confirmation of Minutes of Previous Meeting/s 7](#_Toc132296054)

[4 Public Questions, Petitions and Joint Letters 8](#_Toc132296055)

[4.1 Public Question Time 8](#_Toc132296056)

[4.2 Petitions 8](#_Toc132296057)

[4.2.1 Petition - Nature Strip Trees on Incana Drive Mill Park 8](#_Toc132296058)

[4.3 Joint Letters 9](#_Toc132296059)

[5 Officers' Reports 10](#_Toc132296060)

[5.1 Connected Communities 10](#_Toc132296061)

[5.1.1 Petition - Request to remove trees on nature strips on Harrison Street, Mernda 10](#_Toc132296062)

[5.2 Liveable Neighborhoods 13](#_Toc132296063)

[5.3 Strong Local Economy 13](#_Toc132296064)

[5.4 Sustainable Environment 13](#_Toc132296065)

[5.5 High Performing Organisation 13](#_Toc132296066)

[5.5.1 Thomastown and Lalor Place Framework 13](#_Toc132296067)

[5.5.2 Proposed lease of 1F Ashline Street, Wollert for Affordable Housing 23](#_Toc132296068)

[5.5.3 Proposed Discontinuance and Sale of Road Reserve - Garrong Avenue, Wollert 45](#_Toc132296069)

[5.5.4 Appointment of Council Representation on Organisations and Committees 49](#_Toc132296070)

[6 Notices of Motion 55](#_Toc132296071)

[7 Urgent Business 55](#_Toc132296072)

[8 Reports from Council Representatives and CEO Update 55](#_Toc132296073)

[9 Confidential Business 55](#_Toc132296074)

[9.1 Confidential Connected Communities 55](#_Toc132296075)

[9.2 Confidential Liveable Neighbourhoods 55](#_Toc132296076)

[9.3 Confidential Strong Local Economy 55](#_Toc132296077)

[9.4 Confidential Sustainable Environment 55](#_Toc132296078)

[9.5 Confidential High Performing Organisation 55](#_Toc132296079)

[9.5.1 Sale of Property under Section 181 of the Local Government Act 55](#_Toc132296080)

[10 Closure 55](#_Toc132296081)

**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:**

During the meeting, the Chief Executive Officer will answer questions from residents and ratepayers. Questions are required to be submitted in writing prior to the advertised commencement time of a Scheduled Council Meeting.

Priority will be given to questions or statements that relate to Agenda items and those submitted prior to 12pm on the day of the Council Meeting. Any questions submitted after 12pm on the day may be read if there is sufficient time and otherwise, will be carried over to the next Council Meeting.

A Question Time form can be downloaded from Council’s website and copies of the form are available at the meeting. Refer: <https://www.whittlesea.vic.gov.au/about-us/council/council-meetings/>

Council will hold public question time for up to 30 minutes at each Scheduled Council Meeting to allow members of the public to present the questions they have submitted to Council.

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 AM; and

Chief Executive Officer, Craig Lloyd.

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

Director Planning and Development, Justin O’Meara;

Director Corporate and Customer Services, Sarah Renner;

Director Infrastructure and Environment, Debbie Wood;

Interim Director Community Wellbeing, Anthony Traill;

Executive Manager Strategy and Insights, Frank Joyce;

Executive Manager Public Affairs, Janine Morgan; and

Interim Executive Manager Office of Council and CEO, Sarah Rowe.

**1.2 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.”*

**1.3 Diversity and Good Governance Statement**

The Chair of Council 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.*

**1.4 Attendance**

**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 March 2023.**

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

**4.1 Public Question Time**

**4.2 Petitions**

4.2.1 Petition - Nature Strip Trees on Incana Drive Mill Park

**4.2.1 Petition - Nature Strip Trees on Incana Drive Mill Park**

A petition has been received from 49 residents requesting Council remove the nature strip trees along Incana Drive, Mill Park and replace these trees as part of Council’s Street Tree Renewal program.

**Recommendation**

**THAT Council note the petition from 49 residents requesting Council remove the nature strip trees along Incana Drive, Mill Park and replace these trees as part of its Street Tree Renewal program and write to the signatories to inform them that:**

1. **A report to Council will be prepared for the June 2023 Council Meeting, advising how the petitioners concerns have been addressed.**
2. **All signatories will be advised of Council’s decision following the June 2023 Council Meeting.**

**4.3 Joint Letters**

Nil Joint Letters

**5 Officers' Reports**

**5.1 Connected Communities**

5.1.1 Petition - Request to remove trees on nature strips on Harrison Street, Mernda

**5.1.1 Petition - Request to remove trees on nature strips on Harrison Street, Mernda**

**Responsible Officer:** Director Infrastructure & Environment

**Author:** Mark Corea, Unit Manager Parks & City Forest Management

**Purpose**

The purpose of this report is to request a slight amendment to the Council Resolution for Item 4.2.1 carried at the 21 February 2023 Council Meeting.

**Brief Overview**

A petition requesting Council remove all nature strip trees on Harrison Street and Kilpatrick Street, Mernda was tabled at the 21 February 2023 Council Meeting.

Council resolved that a meeting with the head petitioner will be organised and that a report would be prepared for the April 2023 Council Meeting, advising how the petitioners concerns will be addressed.

**Recommendation**

**THAT Council approve the amendment to the 21 February 2023 Council Resolution, Item 4.2.1, point 3, that a report to Council will be prepared for the May 2023 Council Meeting.**

**Key Information**

Council tabled a petition from 21 residents at the February 2023 Council Meeting, requesting Council remove all nature strip trees on Harrison Street and Kilpatrick Street Mernda.

On 10 March 2023, Council Officers met with head petitioner and residents. During the meeting, new concerns were raised with the key issue being the stability of some trees and the wind tunnel effects, which were reported by three residents. As a result, Council commissioned further root plate stability testing by arboricultural consultants as well as reviewing and addressing other concerns raised at the site meeting.

**Community Consultation and Engagement**

A meeting with the Head Petitioner and residents on 10 March 2023 was attended by Council Officers.

New concerns were raised by the residents at the meeting, including the stability of some of the trees and the wind tunnel effects.

**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.

**Sustainable environment**

We prioritise our environment and take action to reduce waste, preserve local biodiversity, protect waterways and green space and address climate change

**Considerations**

**Environmental**

No Implications

**Social, Cultural and Health**

No Implications

**Economic**

No Implications

**Financial Implications**

The cost is included in the current budget.

**Link to Strategic Risk**

**Strategic Risk** *Community and Stakeholder Engagement - Ineffective stakeholder engagement resulting in compromised community outcomes and/or non-achievement of Council's strategic direction*

A pro-active response to petitions enables residents to have their concerns considered and independently evaluated.

**Implementation Strategy**

**Communication**

Council Officers will advise the lead petitioner of the outcome of the Arborist assessments and when remedial actions will be undertaken to mitigate any risks

**Critical Dates**

Nil

**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.

**Conclusion**

A report will be presented at the May Council Meeting.

**5.2 Liveable Neighborhoods**

Nil reports

**5.3 Strong Local Economy**

Nil reports

**5.4 Sustainable Environment**

Nil reports

**5.5 High Performing Organisation**

5.5.1 Thomastown and Lalor Place Framework

**5.5.1 Thomastown and Lalor Place Framework**

**Responsible Officer** Director Infrastructure and Environment

**Author** Jason Cahill Senior Urban Designer

**In Attendance** Arashdeep Singh, Manager Urban Design & Transport  
Jason Cahill, Senior Urban Designer  
Tim D'Agostino, Senior Urban Designer

**Attachments**

1. Final Thomastown- Lalor Place Framework Council Meeting [**5.5.1.1** - 34 pages]
2. Phase 3 Engagement Summary Report Feb 2023 [**5.5.1.2** - 14 pages]

**Purpose**

This report is being presented to Council for endorsement and provides:

* An overview of the Final Thomastown and Lalor Place Framework (Attachment One).
* An overview of the community engagement process which occurred November 2022 (Attachment Two) where the community was able to provide feedback and prioritise opportunities.
* An overview of the 20-minute Neighbourhoods prioritisation tool Department of Transport and Planning partnership findings and recommendations that have been incorporated into the Place Framework.

**Brief Overview**

The Thomastown and Lalor Place Framework (‘Framework’) outlines a vision, themes, key focus areas and place shaping opportunities to locally translate Whittlesea 2040’s goals to Thomastown and Lalor. This will guide and support future priority projects, activities, and drive change in Thomastown and Lalor.

The Framework has undergone a series of changes including three rounds of community consultation undertaken between 2021 and 2023.

A draft Framework was endorsed by Council on 17 October 2022 and was presented to the community. The draft Framework was exhibited and presented to the community for feedback over the month of November 2022. The engagement had strong community support and provided a platform for the community to prioritise themes and opportunities. The findings are found in the Community Engagement Report Summary 2023 (Attachment Two).

Between, May 2022 to February 2023, a ’20-min Neighbourhood Prioritisation Tool’ partnership with Department of Transport Planning (DPT) investigated various Neighbourhood Activity Centres (NAC’s) across Thomastown and Lalor. Key findings from the report have been incorporated within the final Framework.

**Recommendation**

**THAT Council:**

1. **Endorse the Thomastown and Lalor Place Framework (Attachment 1).**
2. **Write to contributors thanking them for their involvement and feedback throughout the reports’ development.**
3. **Note a copy of the Thomastown and Lalor Place Framework will be provided to all local members of Parliament.**

**Key Information**

Thomastown and Lalor are centrally located along High Street, a strategic corridor located between the Epping Metropolitan Activity Centre, key transport corridors and the future Suburban Rail Loop station proposed in Reservoir. The State Government has identified the suburbs for housing renewal and a level crossing removal is currently underway at Keon Park Station.

The key drivers for the Thomastown and Lalor Place Framework are to:

* Translate the Whittlesea 2040 vision to Thomastown and Lalor by identifying local challenges and opportunities.
* Establish a local, place responsive vision that connects to community aspirations.
* Fill the gap in strategic direction for the established area and aging infrastructure and articulate a clear Council direction for place shaping priorities.
* Ensure Council planning and delivery considers the unique qualities of Thomastown and Lalor and enhances this over time.

Project History

1. Late 2020-July 2021 - a Challenges and Opportunities Report was prepared summarising background analysis and an initial phase of community engagement to inform the project. This report was released for community engagement from June to July 2021 and a Phase 2 Community Engagement Summary was released.
2. September 2021-April 2022 - An early draft of the Framework was released to internal stakeholders and State Government agencies in September 2021 and again to internal stakeholders in April 2022 for feedback.
3. July-October 2022 - The final draft of the Thomastown and Lalor Place Framework was presented to ELT on 26 July 2022, and to Council Briefing on 26 September 2022. It was endorsed for community engagement at the Council meeting on 16 October 2022.
4. November 2022 – Present - the final Phase 3 community and stakeholder engagement occurred in November to December in 2022 and was summarised via the Phase 3 Community Engagement Summary Report (Attachment Two). In this, community were asked if they supported the project to date and which of the opportunities and themes that they would like Council to prioritise.
5. May 2022 – March 2023 – include findings from the 20-minute prioritisation tool partnership with DTP have been attributed to the themes to support future need of actions to implement change.
6. Diagram

   Description automatically generatedMarch 29, 2023 – the final Framework was presented to ELT, and it was unanimously supported to go to Council briefing with some minor improvements.

Figure 1: Thomastown and Lalor Place Framework Project Timeline

The Framework aligns to the Whittlesea 2040 Goals which are translated to Thomastown and Lalor through five key themes:

1. Sustainable Environment: Greener spaces
2. Liveable Neighbourhoods: Connected places
3. Connected Community: Shared local culture
4. Strong Local Economy: Vibrant centres and industries
5. Liveable Neighbourhoods: Enhanced Character

Each theme identifies key goals and opportunities that have been identified by analysis and stakeholder feedback. The Framework illustrates sites and locations that have clear opportunities for improvement. It provides place specific guidelines to improve Thomastown and Lalor and incrementally deliver the local vision over time.

The Framework incorporates a high-level implementation plan which identifies key partners, community priorities and broad timeframes for opportunities to be undertaken by Council. Discussions have started to be supported and discussed with other departments and units within Council and abroad.

**Alignment to the Integrated Planning Framework and Place Based Approach**

The Framework is situated within Level Three of the Integrated Planning Framework (IPF) under Long Term Plans and aligns with the Place Based Approach at a Precinct level.

**20 Minute Neighbourhood – Municipal Strategic Planning Project (2022-2023)**

The 20-minute neighbourhood is all about supporting places the community use every day and giving more people the freedom of choice to do more locally. Council recognises not all people have access to private transport. The intent is to ensure that all people have the option to safely walk, cycle or use public transport to the things they need on a daily basis (ie. shops, parks, services and schools).

The differing needs of people across their lifespan, due to gender, disability and their social roles, such as caring responsibilities will impact how the features of their neighbourhood might be prioritised. For many groups, such as women and girls, being safe whilst moving around a neighbourhood is a key consideration in their decision making and impacts the use of other amenities.

In May 2022, the City of Whittlesea successfully applied to partner with the Department of Planning and Transport (DPT) on the Municipal Strategic Planning Project (the Project). The Project is partnering with five metropolitan councils, to address identified barriers in implementing 20-minute neighbourhoods and to develop frameworks for Neighbourhood Activity Centres (NAC) definition, prioritisation, and strategic planning.

The City of Whittlesea’s project scope was to pilot DTP’s NAC tool in Thomastown and Lalor. This assisted Council to identify how centres are aligning to 20 Minute Neighbourhood outcomes and benchmarks and which centres should be prioritised for support across planning, infrastructure, and service delivery.

Key findings of this have been:

* Eight NACs should be focused on for improvements in Lalor and Thomastown.
* Existing population densities are mostly too low to support smaller NACs viability in Whittlesea.
* East-West and North-South connectivity is often poor and should be improved.
* Residential zonings tend to restrain commercial use and development and should be focused on higher density mixed use zonings in and around NACs. This also applies to greenfield areas.
* Public transport, particularly the bus network, and its relationship to the PPTN and NACs could be strengthened.
* Feedback on the Prioritisation Tool was provided to DTP, this highlighted the benefits of the tool and provided recommendations for improvements.

Key findings from the report have been incorporated within the final Framework.

**Opportunities and community priorities**

There are five themes and seventeen key opportunities within the Framework for various Council departments, teams, and units to collaborate and deliver the final vision of the document. The community were asked to prioritise these themes and opportunities.

A detailed summary is presented below that demonstrate alignment with potential Council projects:

Greener Spaces (ranked first) – Naturalise Edgars Creek as a central green spine

* Improve connections between different land uses, improve biodiversity and create places for everyone within the Edgars Creek Corridor. Opportunity to develop a masterplan and seek possible funding to unlock opportunities.

Connected Places (ranked second) – High Street Spine Transformation (permeability and access)

* Apply findings from Movement and Place report, LATM’s, level crossing removal project, and shared trail connections.

Shared Local Culture (ranked third) – May Street Precinct

* Considerations to increase annual events, improve service availability (health and social), support community programs, wholistic master/place planning, integrate art into space, place making activities etc.

Vibrant, Centres and Industries (ranked fourth) – Reimagined Business Places

* Improve business accessibility and vibrancy with evidence base investigations/ reports to support changes through various projects such as master planning or development guidelines.

Enhanced Character – Design Excellence, identify controls or guidelines to influence higher quality development

* Considerations for improved advice and guidance for all development near town centres, encourage relationships with developers to engage council, apply and enhance development controls. Neighbourhood Design Manual and Residential Interface Guidelines are evidence base projects are mechanisms for change.

Please note, although these are top priorities from the community, final outcomes may vary due to other outcomes, such as existing projects, availability for funding, investigations required, budgets, etc.

**Community Consultation and Engagement**

The draft Framework was exhibited and presented to the community for feedback over the month of November 2022. There was high participation across various stakeholders which includes State and Local agencies, individual community members, and a diverse mix of targeted stakeholder groups. Findings of the engagement is detailed in the Community Engagement Summary Report (Attachment Two).

Community Engagement Summary:

1. Overwhelming support of the draft Framework with over 365 Contributions (144 in person) and 439 online webpage visitors.
2. Naturalised Edgars Creek as a green spine was identified most as important opportunity to the community.
3. In order, community priorities are Greener Spaces (1st), Connected (2nd), Shared Local Culture (3rd), Vibrant Centre’s and Industries (4th) and Enhanced Character (5th).

The engagement was undertaken by:

* Engage Whittlesea page including surveys and interactive elements.
* Interactive Place Based Workshop
* Online Information Session – Evening Session
* Pop up at Lalor Shops and Thomastown TRAC / Library
* Let’s Talk Pop Up
* Direct mail
* Community pop-ups
* Promisetown Event
* Presentations to various stakeholder groups including, Youth Advisory Committee, Business Advisory Panel, Thomastown Precinct Activation Group, Friends of Westgarthtown and more.

**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 plan strongly aligns with this theme.

**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 best deliver value.

**Strong Local Economy**

Our municipality attracts investment to provide more local jobs to match population growth.

The Thomastown and Lalor Place Framework aligns with all five of the Whittlesea 2040 goals. The project is listed as a Community Plan 2021-2025 Initiative within the High Performing Organisation goal - #53 Establish a place-based approach to Council planning, service and infrastructure delivery that is responsive to the distinct needs and aspirations of local communities.

The Framework has strong alignment to the Integrated Planning Framework and Place Based Approach as discussed earlier in this report. It also considers the Outcomes and Indicators Framework.

**State and Local Strategic Context**

The Framework is being prepared within the context established by State Planning Policy including *Plan Melbourne* 2017-2050, Melbourne’s *Growth Corridor Plans*, draft *Northern Land Use Framework Plan and* the *Whittlesea Planning* Scheme. In addition to these documents, four Council strategies (listed below), have specific and related actions for Thomastown and Lalor that are proposed to be implemented and were considered in the Framework development:

* The *Open Space Strategy* (2016) identified gaps in open space provision across Thomastown and Lalor which will be considered by the Framework in addition to other Strategy actions relevant to the area.
* The *Whittlesea Water for all – our water strategy* (2020-2030) includes actions to improve sections of waterway within Thomastown and Lalor.
* The *Greening Whittlesea City Forest Strategy* includes an action to ‘include increased greening (with emphasis on tree retention and planting) in all Urban Design Frameworks.
* The *Housing Diversity Strategy* 2013-2033 identifies areas in Thomastown and Lalor for housing change. The Place Framework will highlight opportunities to be considered when the Strategy is next reviewed.

The Place Framework has also considered the place-based approach in development and the following strategic documents:

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* *Whittlesea 2040: A place for all*
* *Community Plan 2021-2025*
* *Strong Local Economy Strategy and Action Plan*
* *Sustainable Environment Strategy and Action Plan*
* *Climate Change Plan*
* *Integrated Transport Strategy 2014*
* *Northern Regional Trails Strategy 2022*
* *City of Whittlesea Bicycle Plan 2016-2020*

**Considerations**

**Environmental**

The Framework highlights priorities for Thomastown and Lalor to incorporate increased tree canopy cover, consider climate change impacts and re-establish biodiversity.

**Social, Cultural and Health**

The Framework identifies place shaping opportunities to improve social, cultural and health outcomes in Thomastown and Lalor.

**Economic**

The Framework identifies place shaping opportunities to improve economic outcomes in Thomastown and Lalor.

**Financial Implications**

The Framework identifies ‘place shaping opportunities’ to deliver the vision for the area. The opportunities are intended to inform IPF Strategy Action Plans and budget processes which may have financial implications for Council in the future.

Some opportunities are the responsibility of other agencies to deliver or require more considered investigation from Council to implement.

**Link to Strategic Risk**

**Strategic Risk** *Service Delivery - Inability to plan for and provide critical community services and infrastructure impacting on community wellbeing*

The Framework identifies place shaping opportunities to prioritise infrastructure projects that will have a positive impact on community wellbeing. The Framework will also better inform a wide variety of service and infrastructure planning to consider the local place qualities of Thomastown and Lalor.

**Strategic Risk** *Life Cycle Asset Management - Failure to effectively plan for the construction, on-going maintenance and renewal of Council’s assets*

The Framework provides a coordinated approach to asset management by providing an overarching strategic direction and vision for the area. The Framework identifies key assets that should be prioritised for renewal or delivery to maximise community use such as access to path networks, open spaces and community facilities.

**Strategic Risk** *Community and Stakeholder Engagement - Ineffective stakeholder engagement resulting in compromised community outcomes and/or non-achievement of Council's strategic direction*

The Framework provides the community an opportunity to help shape the vision and priorities for their local area. Through this the community will have an improved understanding of Council’s strategic direction and how it applies to Thomastown and Lalor.

**Implementation Strategy**

**Communication**

Once the Framework has been endorsed by Council, the document will be released publicly, and community and stakeholders involved will be informed of its release. The Framework will help guide Council’s future actions, budgets and priorities.

**Critical Dates**

The Framework is a Community Plan Initiative and must be finalised and endorsed by Council by end of June 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.

**Conclusion**

The Thomastown and Lalor Place Framework (Attachment One) has undergone extensive development with community, key stakeholders and is well supported. The Framework creates a place responsive vision, identifies themes, outcomes and place shaping recommendations to locally translate Whittlesea 2040’s vision of ‘a place for all’.

5.5.2 Proposed lease of 1F Ashline Street, Wollert for Affordable Housing

**5.5.2 Proposed lease of 1F Ashline Street, Wollert for Affordable Housing**

**Responsible Officer** Director Planning & Development

**Author** William Fairweather, Social Planning & Policy Officer

**In Attendance** George Saisanas, Manager Strategic Futures  
Liam Wilkinson, Unit Manager Strategic Planning  
William Fairweather, Social Planning & Policy Officer

**Attachments**

1. Context Map -1F Ashline Street, Wollert [**5.5.2.1** - 1 page]

**Purpose**

This report provides Council with an overview of the community engagement processes and outcomes relating to the proposal to lease of land at 1F Ashline Street, Wollert, for the purpose of affordable housing.

It recommends that Council address community concern by amending the proposal and proceed with leasing the land and commences the Expression Of Interest (EOI) process to identify a suitable Registered Community Housing Organisation (CHO) to manage and develop affordable housing on the site.

**Brief Overview**

Data from the 2021 census highlighted the unmet demand (more than 3000 households) for affordable housing in the City of Whittlesea. We know the recent pattern of consecutive interest rate rises, inflation and escalating cost of living is creating even greater demand for affordable housing and the shortfall is having devastating socio-economic impacts on local families and households with rising rates of homelessness. All tiers of government need to work in partnership, along with the community housing sector to create solutions to this complex issue.

In line with the priorities our community expressed in the development of our Whittlesea 2040 community vision A Place For All, Council is committed to facilitating new social and affordable housing across the whole municipality.

On 6 September 2021, Council resolved to consider leasing the land at 1F Ashline Street, Wollert to a community housing partner, for the purpose of affordable housing and commence a process of community engagement on the proposal.

Council extensively promoted the consultation and provided a range of opportunities to provide feedback between September 2021 and July 2022, including an online survey, online information session, focus groups and community drop-in session.

Feedback from the community engagement indicated that majority of participants did not support the proposed lease of 1F Ashline Street, Wollert, for the purpose of affordable housing citing concerns about safety, amenity and impact to property value.

This report takes into consideration both local community feedback and the broader need for affordable housing in the municipality. This report proposes an approach that addresses community concern while still commencing an EOI process to lease the land to a community housing organisation for the purpose of providing affordable housing on the site.

**Recommendation**

**THAT Council:**

1. **Note the outcomes of the community engagement detailed in this report in Attachment 1.**
2. **Commence an Expression of Interest process to identify a registered housing organisation to deliver affordable housing on the site.**
3. **Include the following selection criteria requirements in the Expression of Interest based on community feedback received as part of the engagement process:**
   1. **ensure a high-quality design that is integrated with, and responds to, the surrounding neighbourhood character**
   2. **the development does not exceed two story’s and be single detached, duplex and townhouse style only**
   3. **the development uses similar design features and finishes present in the surrounding dwellings within the precinct**
   4. **establish a comprehensive community development program alongside the development of the affordable housing**
   5. **provision of a flexible community space on the site that would be managed by Council and integrated with the adjacent Community Activity Centre for the benefit of the local community**
   6. **dwellings will be preferentially allocated to local residents or people with local connections in one or more of the following cohorts; young families, older people, women, key workers and people with disabilities.**
4. **Authorise the Chief Executive Officer to select the preferred registered housing organisation from the Expression of Interest process to deliver affordable housing on the site in accordance with the selection criteria which includes the requirements outlined in Recommendation No. 3 of this report.**
5. **Having complied with Section 115(4) of the Local Government Act 2020, enters into a lease agreement up to a maximum of 50 years with a registered housing organisation identified through an Expression of Interest process (at a nominal rental) in relation to land at 1F Ashline Street Wollert, for the provision of affordable housing.**
6. **Requires the lease agreement to include the criteria outlined in Recommendation No. 3 above as enforceable conditions.**
7. **Conduct further community engagement in partnership with the successful registered housing organisation on the design of the affordable housing development and community space should Council proceed to lease the land.**
8. **Write to all participants in the engagement process to advise them of Council’s decision and next steps in the process.**

**Key Information**

**Background**

At its Council meeting on 6 September 2021, Council resolved to consider leasing the land at 1F Ashline Street, Wollert to a community housing organisation for the purpose of delivering affordable housing and to commence a process of community engagement on the proposal. The site at 1F Ashline Street, Wollert was assessed as being suitable for affordable housing based on its proximity to services and development potential.

The site is a 5000 square metre vacant block of General Residential Zoned land located at the intersection of De Rossi Boulevard and Highpark Drive in Wollert. The site is surrounded by small scale residential development and located opposite Wollert Primary School. There is no significant vegetation on the site. Utilising this site for affordable housing would help address the significant shortfall of this type of housing in the municipality.

The site was vested to Council as part of a development contribution for ‘community purposes’ and was initially envisioned as the location for the community activity centre. However, Council determined to deliver the community activity centre on the adjacent Wollert Primary School site at its Council Meeting on 17 November 2020. The decision to deliver the community activity centre on the school site was made on the basis that it would provide for a larger facility capable of accommodating a greater range of services directly integrated with the school, whilst still maintaining the facility within the immediate area. Delivering the community activity centre on this site allowed for a larger foyer space, additional kinder rooms and consulting suites to provide additional services and activities for the community. The facility is also to accommodate a new library hub in the foyer including bookshelves, adult and children’s seating, self-checkout kiosk and returns area, with collection items available in a variety of languages. The hub is expected to be delivered by the end of 2023 and responds to community feedback including in response to consultation undertaken on this project.

Since moving the community centre adjacent to Wollert Primary School, the subject site land has therefore become available for an alternative community use, such as affordable housing. The overarching strategic planning document for the area, the Epping North East Precinct Structure Plan (May 2008) identified the need for affordable housing in the area. The plan had also earmarked the potential outcome to ‘co-locate the community activity centre with schools.

Following the Council decision at its meeting on 6 September 2021, the first phase of community engagement on the project commenced and consisted of an online survey and an online information session. Face-to-face consultation was limited due to the pandemic, so it was determined to extend the community engagement period to accommodate in-person engagement and to gain a deeper understanding of community perspectives on the proposal. This subsequent stage of engagement consisted of three focus groups and a community drop-in session.

The following timeline summarises the key dates in the process to date:

**Timeline**

* **17 November 2020** -Council resolved to deliver the community centre on the Wollert Primary School site.
* **December 2020 and March 2021** - Notice given of the decision to deliver the community centre on the school site
* **July 2021** - Consultation with the local community on the naming of the community centre.
* **6 September 2021** - Council resolved to consider leasing the land at 1F Ashline Street for affordable housing and commence community engagement.
* **September 2021** -Stage 1 Community Engagement
* **6 December 2021 –** Council resolved to extend the engagement
* **May - July 2022** -Stage 2 Community Engagement

**Strategic Context**

The City of Whittlesea has a commitment to address the affordable housing needs of our communities. Housing is a fundamental human need that contributes to individual and community safety and wellbeing. Affordable housing for very-low-, low- and moderate-income households is essential community infrastructure, important to ensure everyone has the opportunity to live in their local communities.

All levels of Government are responsible for ensuring our communities have access to appropriate and affordable housing. Each level of Government must work in partnership, along with the community housing sector and industry, to encourage and facilitate affordable housing outcomes that meet the diverse needs of our current and future population.

While the Federal Government plays an important role in funding projects and programs, State Governments have primary responsibility for managing and constructing social and affordable housing in Australia. Homes Victoria sits within the Victorian Government Department of Families, Fairness and Housing, and manages Victoria’s social and affordable housing system. This includes public housing, community housing, crisis accommodation, transitional accommodation and affordable housing, as well as having the powers to purchase, develop, lease and sell property.

In 2020 the State Government launched the $5.3 billion Big Housing Build, which will construct 12,000 new social and affordable homes in Victoria. The investment, delivered throughout metropolitan and regional Victoria, will boost total social housing supply by 10%. Some of this funding is earmarked for projects to support people living in the City of Whittlesea.

*The City of Whittlesea’s role*

Local councils play an important part in facilitating the delivery of high-quality affordable housing developments for households on very low to moderate incomes. Local governments have many roles and legislated responsibilities that influence the provision of affordable housing. These roles vary across the local governments in the method and level of intervention taken to facilitate affordable housing. This can be done through land-use planning, social and physical infrastructure planning, economic planning and development, community engagement and advocacy. Council also plays a role in partnership, brokerage and facilitation to bring stakeholders together on specific projects.

Specifically, to deliver more affordable housing the City of Whittlesea:

* Advocates to the Victorian and Federal Government and relevant stakeholders to increase the supply of affordable housing in the municipality
* Facilitates partnerships to improve provision of affordable housing to meet the needs of the community, particularly cohorts at-risk of housing insecurity
* Negotiates affordable housing agreements as part of rezonings, and planning permit applications to increase supply and diversity of affordable housing at appropriate opportunities.

The City of Whittlesea’s commitment to affordable housing is articulated in several strategic documents and plans. The City of Whittlesea’s Social and Affordable Housing Policy and Strategy expresses Council’s role in influencing and encouraging the provision of affordable housing, including targets of 5% social housing and 10% affordable housing in the planning of any established or greenfield housing development. These targets are also included in the Whittlesea Planning Scheme.

Council is committed to facilitating new social and affordable housing across the whole municipality including in new estate developments in greenfield areas as well as in established suburbs and regeneration sites.

Moreover, the local community have reaffirmed the need for Council to play a role in delivering affordable housing through the development of the Whittlesea 2040 Community Vision A Place for all. Findings from the Whittlesea 2040 consultation showed that the community want better access to affordable, quality homes for diverse households. Responses highlighted the need for a variety of housing options, including cheaper and high-quality housing and having more social housing options.

A summary of documents and corresponding actions or targets guiding the affordable housing development at 1F Ashline Street, Wollert is shown in the table below:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Document** | **Action/Targets** |
| Whittlesea 2040 | Action 2.3 Housing for diverse needs  This means:   * Quality and varied housing options * Housing that is affordable and accessible |
| Community Plan 2021 - 2025 | Goal 2: Liveable neighbourhoods  Includes the goal to deliver more affordable and accessible homes in the municipality. |
| Epping North East Precinct Structure Plan | 1.4 Objectives of the Epping North East Local Structure plan includes:   * To facilitate and promote provision of affordable housing. |
| Whittlesea Planning Scheme | Section 16.01-2L:  Achieving the inclusion of 5 per cent social housing and 10 per cent affordable housing (that is not social housing) in the structure planning of any established or new greenfield housing development. |
| Social and affordable housing - Policy and Strategy 2012-  2016 | Policy Goal: To encourage and facilitate the growth of affordable, accessible and appropriate housing for very low, low and moderate income households across the municipality. |

*Affordable housing demand*

Modelling based on the 2021 census show 3,606 households have an unmet need for affordable housing in the municipality. This is an increase of 412 households from models based on the 2016 census year[[1]](#footnote-1).

At the 2021 census, 854 people were experiencing homelessness in the municipality. This was an increase of 35% from 2016 when 630 people in Whittlesea experiencing homelessness[[2]](#footnote-2). Also in 2020-21, 1,876 people accessed specialist homelessness services in the municipality[[3]](#footnote-3).

Within the municipality, 1,138 households, or 1.3%, rent social housing. This is comprised of 658 public housing dwellings; 410 community housing dwellings and 70 crisis or transitional housing dwellings[[4]](#footnote-4). This is lower than the average for greater Melbourne (2.3% of all households) and a relative decrease from 2016 when 2.6% of households within the City of Whittlesea rented social housing[[5]](#footnote-5).

The number of private rentals affordable to people on Centrelink incomes is decreasing. In the December 2022 quarter, just 12.9% of rentals were affordable to people on Centrelink; a decrease from 13.3% in the previous quarter[[6]](#footnote-6).

This data shows that demand for social and affordable housing is outstripping supply. This gap is likely to grow as increased interest rates – ten consecutive raises since May 2022 and growing inflation place further pressure on household budgets and the ability to make mortgage repayments or pay rent. Recent newspaper articles suggest many renters and mortgagees are struggling with increased housing costs that are yet to be captured in any published data[[7]](#footnote-7).

*Recent successes*

Recently, Council has advocated to the State Government for new social and affordable housing in the municipality through the Big Housing Build. To date, the Big Housing Build has invested $134 million in the City of Whittlesea for 83 completed new homes and another 2227 currently under construction in established and growth area suburbs right across the municipality, including Wollert.

In addition to the State Government delivered housing, Council has negotiated outcomes with developers for the provision of social and affordable housing. For example, Council successfully negotiated to deliver approximately 300 affordable housing dwellings on privately-owned land as part of the New Epping development. Tenants are already moving into the first phase of development, comprising 151 affordable dwellings owned and managed by community housing organisation, Haven Home Safe. Anecdotally, this project attracted significant interest from people working in the area looking for high quality affordable housing.

This project continues Council’s work facilitating new social and affordable housing as despite these recent successes, there is still a major need for more affordable housing within the City of Whittlesea.

*Definitions*

There are several terms used to describe the different types of social and affordable housings. Confusing these can lead to misunderstanding the type of housing being delivered by a project. The definitions are included below.

* **Affordable Housing** is defined in the Planning and Environment Act 1987. It is housing (rent or purchase) that is appropriate for households on very low to moderate incomes. It includes social housing, affordable rental and affordable homeownership.
* **Social housing** is provided to households who are on the Victorian Housing Register. Rents for social housing are set to ensure the households can afford it, usually no more than 25- 30% of household income. The term social housing includes public housing and community housing.
* **Public housing** is owned and managed by the State Government and is not proposed for this project.
* **Community housing** is secure, affordable housing managed by not-for-profit organisations for people on low incomes.

**Proposal**

This proposal is to lease 1F Ashline Street, Wollert, to a Community Housing Organisation that would develop and manage the site for affordable housing. Because of their not-for profit structure, they can deliver services cost effectively and to high standards. The community housing sector delivers affordable housing options to eligible households on the Victorian Housing Register as well as direct referrals. For this project, affordable homeownership would not be provided as dwellings on the property would be leased, not sold.

In accordance with Section 115 of the *Local Government Act 2020*, the leasing arrangement of the project is proposed to be a peppercorn lease up to a maximum 50-year period to a Community Housing Organisation. The organisation would be responsible for the development and management of the site for the agreed period.

Should Council decide to lease the land for affordable housing, its next steps would be to identify a Community Housing Organisation through an EOI process. At this stage, there would also be an opportunity to review and negotiate the terms and details of the lease and development.

It is recommended that Council authorise the Chief Executive Officer to approve the selection of Community Housing Organisation (CHO) from the EOI process. This will ensure that the EOI process and subsequent community engagement is conducted in a timely manner. The preferred CHO will partner with Council to prepare plans for development of the site.

The draft plans and outcomes of the supporting engagement process will be ultimately presented to Council for consideration and decision. A timeline for next steps in the process, such as planning and development, will be subject to input from the selected CHO.

**Community Consultation and Engagement**

**Engagement Methodology**

The community engagement process for this proposal took place between September 2021 and July 2022.

The objectives of the community engagement for the proposal to lease land at 1F Ashline Street, Wollert included informing the surrounding community about the proposal, providing the community with an opportunity to participate in a consultation process and provide informed submissions, and providing an opportunity to improve the concept development for this site within the parameters of this early phase of the process.

The target audience for the community engagement on this proposal included surrounding residents and homeowners of 1F Ashline Street, local community groups, the Wollert community, and the broader municipal community.

A range of community engagement activities were undertaken to inform, consult and involve community members on the proposal. The engagement process was conducted in two stages, however, throughout the process the ‘Local affordable housing for Local People’ webpage was active and regularly updated. Council officers also had ongoing email correspondence and phone calls with stakeholders and community members.

The first stage of engagement was impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic which meant that the engagement was conducted online. This stage of engagement included an online survey and an online information session. Due to the level of interest and questions received about the proposal, the project time frames were revised, and the engagement period was extended to enable the community to participate in further discussion and provide feedback. Stage two of the engagement involved three online focus groups and a community drop-in session at the nearby Kirrip Community Centre.

**Engagement Outcomes**

Council used multiple methods to advertise engagement opportunities to the community. Overall, the engagement generated significant community interest. The table below shows the level of participation by engagement activity demonstrating this interest.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **How We Engaged** | **Stakeholders targeted** | **# of responses\* / participants** |
| **Phase 1** | Online Survey | Nearby properties, wider community, and key stakeholders | 1031 responses |
| Media Release | Wider community | - |
| Information session | Letter drop to nearby properties (81 properties)  Community members who registered for the event (71 registrations) | 19 participants online  478 subsequent YouTube views |
| Letter drop | Immediate neighbours (81 properties) | - |
| **Phase 2** | Focus groups | Invitation via letter drop to nearby properties (81 properties)  Project email list | 22 participants |
| Community drop-in session | Letter drop to nearby properties (81 properties)  Project email list consisting of 436 email addresses | 42 participants attended |

\*Note: This figure identifies the number of responses rather than the number of respondents or participants to each engagement activity. The number of respondents/participants were not tracked through engagement activities and the survey was not restricted by Internet Protocol which would prevent multiple submissions. It is likely that some people participated in multiple engagement activities and/or submitted more than one response to the survey. As such the figure is not an accurate representation of the number of respondents.

In addition to the engagement activities listed in the above table, the project page on Engage Whittlesea had 5788 visits and council officers received 15 phone calls and 24 emails about the proposal.

The findings from the community engagement on this proposal indicate that a majority of participants did not support the proposal due to safety concerns, the appropriateness of the location and potential impacts on property values. This was consistent across both stages of the engagement for the proposal. Many of these reasons can be mitigated through controls in the proposed leasing arrangements should Council choose to go ahead with the proposal.

While not all participants in the engagement process provided demographic information, of those who did, the vast majority were aged between 26 to 45 and indicated they owned their own home with a mortgage.

This particular cohort was overrepresented in responses, according to City of Whittlesea demographics, while those aged 16 to 25 and 46 and over were under-represented.

Comments received also indicated the main concerns voiced were around impacts to those who owned property.

Whilst the lack of support for the proposal from those that participated was clear, it is noted that the results may not accurately represent younger and older people, social housing tenants and private renters living in the City of Whittlesea.

*Engage Whittlesea Site Presence*

A project page for the proposal titled ‘Local affordable housing for Local People’ was published on the Engage Whittlesea site to provide information on the proposal and an opportunity to submit feedback. The webpage included a survey tool, frequently asked questions, detailed information about the proposal and a tool to sign up to the project email list. The website was open throughout the entire engagement period between July 2021 and October 2022 and received a total of 5788 visits.

*Email Correspondence*

Community members were invited to ask questions or contribute via email throughout the engagement period. Throughout this time more than 24 emails were received and responses provided by Council Officers. The majority of the emails received from community members were to express their opposition to the proposal.

Project updates were also sent to community members via the project email list throughout the engagement period.

Phase 1 Community Engagement

*Online Survey*

An online survey was published on the project webpage and distributed to surrounding residents via a letter box drop. The online survey was available for community members to respond in September 2021.

The online survey received a total of 1031 responses, indicating significant community interest in the proposal. Of those who responded, 87% responded that they live in the City of Whittlesea, 49% stated that they own a property in the City of Whittlesea and 13% work or study in the City of Whittlesea. Additionally, 83% of respondents stated that they live in Wollert.

A majority of responses opposed the proposal to lease land at 1F Ashline Street for an affordable housing development (89 per cent) and 10 per cent of responses supported the proposal with 1 per cent of responses being neutral.

*Information Session*

The online information session was conducted on 6 October 2021. The information session was facilitated by an external facilitator and included presentations by a Council officer, affordable housing expert and affordable housing design and built form expert.

The information session was designed for community members and stakeholders to hear about the proposal in detail and have questions answered. The information session also responded to misinformation about the proposal and general misunderstanding about affordable housing. Participants were asked to submit questions prior to the event as part of registering for participation.

The information session had 71 event registrations and 19 participants submitted 67 questions. There were 17 people who submitted questions prior to the event. A video recording of the information session was subsequently published to the Council’s YouTube page which received a total of 478 views.

Phase 2 Community Engagement

*Focus Groups*

A series of three focus groups were conducted in June 2022. Each focus group lasted between 1.5-2 hours and were led by external facilitators. An invitation and expression of interest form was distributed to the project email list and to residents within 400 metres of the proposed housing site via letter.

The purpose of the focus groups was to learn more about the community’s specific concerns about the proposal, explore any benefits that might be identified and discuss how the proposal could be altered to address any concerns and maximise opportunities.

Four session times were offered for the focus groups but due to insufficient numbers, one of the sessions was cancelled. While 37 people registered for the focus group sessions, 22 (59%) attended their session. 9 out of 13 registered participants at session one, 4 of 12 registered participants at session two and 9 of 12 registered participants at session three.

*Community Drop-In Session*

The community drop-in session took place on 16 July 2022 at the Kirrip Community Centre in Wollert, which was proximate to the Ashline Street site. The community drop in was publicised to previous engagement participants, via the project website and letterboxed to properties within 400m of the proposed housing site.

The purpose of the session was to provide an opportunity for in-person engagement and provide community members with an opportunity to ask questions, give feedback and gain information about the proposal. The session was conducted by external facilitators and Council Officers with external experts in affordable housing and affordable housing design, representatives from a community housing organisation, and people with lived experience of affordable housing in attendance.

At the session there were several ‘voting’ boards where participants could vote on whether they agreed with a statement about the project based on previous community engagement. An evaluation card was also provided to the drop-in session participants which requested demographic information as well as two questions with a scalar response.

In total, 34 adults and 8 children attended the 3-hour drop- in session. The majority of participants at the community drop-in session indicated that they were not supportive of the proposal.

**Discussion of Key Themes**

Information from the entire engagement process has been summarised into key themes and analysed by Council Officers. A response to each of the key themes is provided below.

Safety and crime

An issue raised across both stages of the engagement was the view that the proposed affordable housing would impact on safety and increase crime in the neighbourhood. There were some perceptions expressed about social housing tenants more broadly in relation to the concern that tenants of affordable housing would contribute to an increase in crime in the locality and impact on a broader sense of wellbeing and safety.

*Officer Response*

There is little evidence to support the claim that a new affordable housing development increases crime in a particular neighbourhood. Research shows that providing affordable housing can produce wider social and economic benefits to the community.

Additionally, community housing providers have obligations under the *Residential Tenancies Act 1997* to ensure the privacy, peace and quiet enjoyment of neighbouring residents are not affected by tenants. Community housing organisations provide high standards of responsiveness to the needs of community housing residents through tenancy and property management as well as often supporting the needs of community housing residents through arrangements with support agencies, education initiatives or programs.

Care needs to be taken to ensure everyone is protected from defamatory treatment and avoid the labelling of social housing tenants in a way that is disrespectful. Relating a proposal for affordable housing with concerns of crime and safety serves to further perpetuates the stigmatisation of social and affordable housing tenants.

Notwithstanding, Council is committed to supporting community cohesion and inclusivity to help facilitate positive and sustainable outcomes for all community members. Should the proposal proceed, it is recommended that Council establish a comprehensive community development program alongside the development of the affordable housing on the site.

It is recommended that the community development program confronts and addresses the stigmatisation of those living in affordable housing, work with children and young people in school settings to minimise bullying and exclusion and provide activities for multi- and cross-cultural celebration to develop more appreciative views of neighbourhood difference.

Selecting the appropriate site

A frequently raised issue related to the perception that the location is inappropriate for affordable housing and that it should be delivered in an alternative location. Community engagement participants raised concerns that the site is inappropriate for affordable housing due to its proximity to a school and lack of infrastructure in the area to service the development, including public transportation and other social infrastructure.

*Officer Response*

There is a significant undersupply of affordable housing in Wollert, particularly for people on low incomes. The site at 1F Ashline Street, Wollert was determined to be an appropriate site for delivering affordable housing within the municipality based on its proximity of the site to Wollert Primary School and the future secondary school. Additionally, the site is well serviced by a bus and public open space network.

Community housing providers can establish additional eligibility criteria for their properties. Many community housing providers provide housing for specific groups or “cohorts” of people, including but not limited to groups such as women, families, people with disabilities, veterans, older people, and key worker accommodation. It is a reasonable expectation that the locational context of the site will be one of the determinants that will be considered when determining the appropriateness of the site for any specific cohort.

Should Council determine to proceed with the proposal, it is recommended that additional eligibility criteria are developed for the affordable housing development that take into account the site’s locational factors, social sustainability and local community connections. It is recommended that the EOI stipulates that tenant allocation preference local residents or people with local connections, and the requirement that tenant allocation be to one or more of the following cohorts; young families, older people, women, people with disabilities and key workers.

Economic impacts

Concern that the affordable housing development would negatively impact on existing property values was a frequently raised issue throughout the community engagement process.

*Officer Response*

There is little evidence to suggest that affordable housing developments negatively impact the values of surrounding properties. A study by the Australian Housing and Research Institute found that the impact of affordable housing on property sales values can be positive or negative but is usually minimal either way and is far outweighed by other factors, including broader economic conditions.

If Council decides to proceed with the lease, the housing would be of a similar look and feel to the surrounding properties and be a high-quality development. Additionally, the houses would be managed by a community housing organisation with proven expertise in property management, tenancy management and community development.

Council process

Many community engagement participants said that they were unaware and concerned with the change in designation of the site from a Community Activity Centre to affordable housing. Some were concerned that this change occurred after they purchased their property as they did so under the assumption that the site would be used for a Community Activity Centre.

Participants expressed frustration with the community engagement process for the project. They felt they were not properly notified of the proposal and that it lacked face to face engagement opportunities.

*Officer Response*

The decision to deliver the community activity centre on the adjacent school site was made on the basis that it would provide for a larger facility capable of accommodating a greater range of services integrated with the school. This decision was taken prior to, and completely independent of, any decision on the potential use of the site for affordable housing.

The first phase of engagement took place during lock downs associated with the COVID-19 pandemic. This meant that the engagement was conducted online only and included a web-based information session and a survey. Conducting the engagement solely online was not Council officers’ preferred approach given the complexity of the project. Given these limitations, Council officers tried to inform as many people as possible through letter box drops, email and phone correspondence and newspaper articles.

Based on community feedback and Councils own assessment, the engagement was then extended into 2022 for a second phase. This allowed for more opportunities for community to get involved and included face-to-face engagement with in-depth exploration of key ideas, opportunities and concerns with the proposal.

Should Council determine to proceed with the leasing of the site, community engagement will continue on the design and layout of the development.

Traffic and car parking

Concern that the affordable housing development would negatively impact on traffic and car parking in the area was a common issue raised. Community engagement participants expressed that the project would increase traffic and congestion, present a road safety threat and would impact on car parking provision in the area.

*Officer Response*

Traffic and car parking would be a key consideration for any ultimate development for this site. Council would need to ensure that the development has sufficient car parking for future residents, safe pedestrian access and efficient local traffic connections. Any development for the site would need to provide car parking for new residents as required by the planning scheme.

Scale and appearance of the development

Many community engagement participants across both stages of the engagement were concerned that the scale, density, height, form and look of the development would not be appropriate for the area. Participants raised the specific concern that a high density development would not fit in with the existing low-scale nature of the surrounding neighbourhood and would contribute to over-population within the neighbourhood.

*Officer Response*

The current planning scheme provisions for the site would allow for between 16 and 36 homes to be built depending on the layout and design of the dwellings and for buildings to be built up to 3 storeys. The community engagement process has indicated a clear preference for the dwellings to be designed in a way that integrates with, and respects, the existing development and character of the surrounding area, and that a higher density proposal would not be supported. This is considered reasonable proposition and it is recommended that this feedback is reflected in the design of any future development.

Should the proposal proceed, Council would work closely with the community housing provider on the layout and design of any dwellings on the site. The development would need to be of a similar quality and design to the surrounding area to ensure that it is well integrated with existing neighbourhood character.

It is therefore recommended that the development does not exceed two storeys and be limited to single detached, duplex and townhouse housing only. It is also recommended that the development uses similar fittings and features to the surrounding housing.

An additional community engagement process would be undertaken at the draft plans stage on any proposed development on the site.

Alternative proposals

Some feedback received requested alternative uses for the site that they believed would better serve the existing community. Responses suggested a range of options, including a library, swimming pool, sports facility, park, community centre or private residential development.

*Officer Response*

The uses proposed by community engagement participants may not be appropriate for the site for a range of reasons, including the surrounding context and specific site constraints. The need and location of essential community infrastructure, including open space and community facilities, are identified in the strategic plans for the area in terms of number, scale and location. There are existing parks, open spaces and the Kirrip Community Centre is located adjacent to the site. There is an active recreation reserve planned for within the broader residential precinct proximate to the site and future library planned for the Wollert Town Centre.

Council have also recently committed to the delivery of a library hub at the Kirrip Community Centre in response to community feedback as part of a range of consultation processes. The hub will include bookshelves, adult and children’s seating, self-checkout kiosk and returns area, with collection items available in a variety of languages and is expected to be operation by the end of 2023.

Noting the above, it is recommended that should Council determine to proceed with the proposal, it is recommended that the EOI require that a flexible community space be included on the site that would be available for use by the broader community. This space would be managed by Council and integrate with the facilities and services provided within the adjacent Community Activity Centre. The ultimate design and use of this space would be determined at a later stage in the process.

Support for affordable housing

Those who supported the proposal raised a number of factors to support their position. These include the potential for the proposed affordable housing development to support vulnerable people who are socially and economically disadvantaged, single parents, families and people experiencing homelessness. Participants stated that affordable housing is a social right and that everyone deserves access to housing. The broad and local need for affordable housing was also cited as a reason to support the proposal.

**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 Liveable Neighbourhoods goal of Whittlesea 2040 and Community Plan 2021-2025 includes the key direction of ‘Housing for Diverse needs’, which aims to increase the amount of affordable housing in the municipality.

The City of Whittlesea’s adopted Social and affordable housing Policy and Strategy recognises that access to affordable and appropriate housing is a human right and basic need. This proposal responds to Council’s commitment under the Policy which states that Council ‘*actively encourages and facilitates the provision of affordable, accessible and appropriate housing for very low, low and moderate income households across the municipality’*.

**Considerations**

**Discussion**

The proposal to lease Council-owned land at 1F Ashline Street for affordable housing has generated significant opposition from the community which has been expressed through the two phases of engagement between September 2021 and July 2022.

Whilst a significant matter to consider, community sentiment is not the only factor that should be taken into consideration when determining whether to proceed with the proposal. The needs of those vulnerable to housing insecurity and potential future tenants of the affordable housing must also be considered when assessing the viability of the proposal.

It is important that the overall impact of the proposal is considered against the benefit it would create. If delivered, affordable housing in this location would provide secure affordable housing for those on low incomes. Affordable housing supports more diverse and robust communities through increasing social diversity, tolerance and inclusion for all household types.

There is significant strategic policy justification for the delivery of affordable housing on this site. There is support for addressing housing affordability across a range of levels of policy and law. Several of Council’s policies, plans and strategic documents encourage the provision of affordable housing within the municipality. Further, this site has been assessed as suitable for affordable housing due to its location attributes and development potential.

The City of Whittlesea has a significant need for affordable housing, especially for those on very low incomes, and there is a significant shortage of affordable housing. Currently there is around 3,606 households (4.7%) with an unmet need for affordable housing in the municipality. Should this proposal go ahead, it would be a small step in addressing this shortfall. The benefits the proposal would create in meeting the needs and rights of those vulnerable to housing insecurity are considered to outweigh perceived negative impacts.

*Actions arising from the engagement process*

There were a range of opportunities provided to the community to contribute. While the majority of the responses were not supportive of the proposal, some of the issues relating to safety, amenity and design can be addressed. In relation to these issues, it is recommended that that the following criteria are included in the EOI process and any legal agreement with the preferred CHO to help meet the needs of existing and future residents:

* Ensure a high-quality design that is integrated with and responds to the surrounding neighbourhood character.
* The development does not exceed two storeys and be single detached, duplex and townhouse style only.
* The development uses similar design features and finishes present in the surrounding dwellings within the precinct.
* Establish a comprehensive community development program alongside the development of the affordable housing.
* Provision of a flexible community space be included on the site that would be available for use by the broader community to be managed by Council as part of the adjacent Community Activity Centre.
* Preference for local residents or people with local connections.
* Tenant allocation to be prioritised on one or more of the following cohorts; young families, older people, women, key workers and people with disabilities.

**Financial Implications**

The proposal for this site is to lease the land at a peppercorn lease. The only other cost would be any ongoing community development program that Council participates in with the CHO.

Ultimately the project will be dependent on the CHO securing funding to deliver the project.

**Link to Strategic Risk**

**Strategic Risk** *Service Delivery - Inability to plan for and provide critical community services and infrastructure impacting on community wellbeing*

The provision of social and affordable housing and related support services is considered critical community infrastructure and services.

Council has legislated responsibilities for housing-related matters under the *Local Government Act 2020* and *Planning and Environment Act 1987*, such as land use planning, social and physical infrastructure planning and development, building controls, community consultation and engagement, and advocacy.

**Strategic Risk** *Community and Stakeholder Engagement - Ineffective stakeholder engagement resulting in compromised community outcomes and/or non-achievement of Council's strategic direction*

Council has provided the community with multiple opportunities to engage and provide feedback on the proposal. The majority of feedback received has been opposed to the project. However, the recommendations included in this report have sought to address some of the issues raised through the community engagement process should the proposal be advanced.

**Implementation Strategy**

**Communication**

The outcomes of this decision will be community through Council’s Engage Whittlesea platform, directly to participants via email and through a variety of Council’s communication channels.

**Next Steps**

If the proposal is advanced, the next steps would include:

* Commence an EOI process to determine an appropriate CHO to develop and manage the site for affordable housing.
* Negotiation of the details and terms of the lease and development with the chosen housing organisation.
* Draft design layout for the site prepared by the community housing organisation in collaboration with Council officers.
* Community engagement process on the draft design and layout for the site.
* Council Report and Decision on the final design and layout for the site.
* Statutory permits / approvals sought for final design.

**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.

**Conclusion**

Council has undertaken a process of community engagement to consider the lease of land at 1F Ashline Street for the purpose of affordable housing. The process was extensively advertised and a range of opportunities to gain information and provide feedback on the proposal were provided, including an online website, survey, information session, and letter box drops, a media release, focus groups and a community drop-in session.

Majority of the feedback from the community engagement did not support the proposal to lease the land for affordable housing with safety, amenity and traffic concerns.

However, there is significant strategic justification and need for affordable housing in this location. Whittlesea 2040, the Community Plan 2021-2025, Epping North East Precinct Structure Plan, Whittlesea Planning Scheme and Council’s Social and affordable housing Policy and Strategy 2012-2016 all support and encourage the provision of affordable housing. Furthermore, the current economic climate is providing additional pressure on household budgets which is increasing demand for affordable housing.

The proposal seeks to address the community concerns raised through engagement while considering the broader community benefits of affordable housing. The proposal will help to address the critical undersupply of affordable housing in the municipality and help to provide additional secure housing for local people.

It is therefore recommended that Council proceed with leasing the site for affordable housing, taking into consideration community feedback and suggested mitigations, and commence an EOI process to identify a suitable CHO to develop and manage the site. It is also recommended that Council authorise the Chief Executive Officer to select a suitable CHO to partner with Council based on the requirements outlined in this report and in the recommendation.

5.5.3 Proposed Discontinuance and Sale of Road Reserve - Garrong Avenue, Wollert

**5.5.3 Proposed Discontinuance and Sale of Road Reserve - Garrong Avenue, Wollert**

**Responsible Officer** Director Customer & Corporate Services

**Author** Elly Michailidis, Property Advisor

**In Attendance** George Vassiliadis, Unit Manager Strategic Property

**Attachments**

1. Attachment 1 - Road Discontinuance Plan - Garrong [**5.5.3.1** - 1 page]
2. Attachment 2 - Aerial view [**5.5.3.2** - 1 page]

**Purpose**

The purpose of this report seeks Council’s approval to finalise the statutory procedures under the *Local Government Act 1989* and *Local Government Act 2020* for the discontinuance and sale of two road splays in Garrong Avenue, Wollert. The section of the road splays concerned for Garrong Avenue are shown hatched on the road discontinuance plan (Attachment 1) and contained in certificate of title Volume 12262 Folio 901.

**Brief Overview**

Council had received a request from the owner/developer of the land adjoining Garrong Avenue, Wollert, within the Aurora Estate, (Lendlease Communities Ltd.), for the discontinuance and sale of two redundant road splays in Garrong Avenue shown hatched on the road discontinuance plan (Attachment 1) and on the aerial view (Attachment 2). The road splays were originally created within a plan of subdivision for the Estate. The layout of the abutting lots and intersecting roads has recently been altered to provide an improved layout which required a shift to two of the intersections and resulted in two of the original splays (each being 3m2 in area) being made redundant.

Commencement of the statutory procedures for the proposed discontinuance and sale of the road reserve listed above were approved under delegation at the ELT meeting on 15 November 2022. The formal consultation was commenced on 17 January 2023 with public notice of the proposal being given in the Whittlesea Review newspaper and on Council’s website for the duration of the 28-day submission period.

The notice period ended on 14 February 2023 with no submissions received.

**Recommendation**

**THAT Council:**

1. **Note that no submissions were received in regard to Council having given public notice of a proposal to discontinue the two sections of road reserve (splays) in Garrong Avenue, Wollert, shown hatched on the road discontinuance plan (Attachment 1).**
2. **Note that the two sections of road reserve (splays) are no longer reasonably required for road purposes.**
3. **Resolve to discontinue and sell the two sections of road reserve and publish a notice in the Victoria Government Gazette, in accordance with section 206 and clause 3(a) of Schedule 10 to the Local Government Act 1989.**
4. **Resolve that the land from the two sections of road reserve (splays) be sold by private treaty to the owner/developer of the adjoining estate, pursuant to section 206 and clause 3(b) of Schedule 10 to the Local Government Act 1989 and section 114 of the Local Government Act 2020.**
5. **Authorises the Chief Executive Officer, or any such other person as the Chief Executive Officer approves, to sign all documents relating to the sale of the land from the discontinued road reserve (splays) to the owner/developer of the adjoining estate.**

**Key Information**

Council had received a request from the owner/developer of the land adjoining Garrong Avenue, Wollert, within the Aurora Estate, (Lendlease Communities Ltd.), for the discontinuance and sale of two redundant road splays in Garrong Avenue.

The road splays were originally created within a plan of subdivision for the Estate. The layout of the abutting lots and intersecting roads has recently been altered to provide an improved layout which required a shift to two of the intersections and resulted in two of the original splays being made redundant.

Accordingly, each of the 3m2 splays on the south-western side of Garrong Avenue, Wollert, shown hatched on the road discontinuance plan (Attachment 1) and on the aerial view (Attachment 2) are considered to no longer be required as roads for public use.

The statutory procedures for the proposed discontinuance and sale of the section of road reserve were approved under delegation and were commenced on 17 January 2023.

**Community Consultation and Engagement**

Public notice of the proposal was given in the Whittlesea Review newspaper and on Council’s website on 17 January 2023 with the submission period closing on 14 February 2023. No submissions were received.

**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.

As per the reasons above, the parcels of land adjoining Garrong Avenue and Girvan Place are considered to no longer be required by Council.

**Considerations**

**Environmental**

There are no Environmental implications in relation to this matter.

**Social, Cultural and Health**

There are no Social, Cultural and Health implications in relation to this matter.

**Economic**

There are no Economic implications in relation to this matter.

**Financial Implications**

Subject to the successful completion of the statutory procedures, the owner/developer of the estate adjoining Garrong Avenue, Wollert, has agreed to acquire the land from the road reserve (splays) at its current market value and to also meet all of Council’s reasonable costs associated with undertaking the discontinuance.

**Link to Strategic Risk**

**Strategic Risk** *Not linked to the risks within the Strategic Risk Register*

There are no Strategic Risks in relation to this matter. The parcel of land is redundant and are not required be Council. Relevant internal stakeholders agreed to undertake the proposed discontinuance and sale of the parcels.

**Implementation Strategy**

**Communication**

Notice of the discontinuance will be published in the Victoria Government Gazette.

**Critical Dates**

Report to Council Meeting 18 April 2023

Notice in Government Gazette to follow meeting

**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.

**Conclusion**

The discontinuance and sale of the two sections of road reserve (splays) in Garrong Avenue, Wollert, which are considered to no longer be reasonably required for public use, to the owner/developer of the adjoining estate, is considered appropriate.

5.5.4 Appointment of Council Representation on Organisations and Committees

**5.5.4 Appointment of Council Representation on Organisations and Committees**

**Responsible Officer** Interim Executive Manager Office of Council & CEO

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

**In Attendance** Sarah Rowe, Interim Executive Manager Office of Council & CEO

**Attachments**

1. Proposed representation on organisations and committees - 18 April 2023 [**5.5.4.1** - 18 pages]

**Purpose**

The purpose of the report is to review Council representatives to organisations and committees for the period 19 April 2023 to 31 October 2024. This enables ongoing Council representation, participation and contribution to local and strategic organisations.

**Brief Overview**

On 12 December 2022 Council appointed representatives to organisations and committees for the period to 31 December 2023. With the recent appointment of Administrator Zahra, this report provides Council with the opportunity to review Council representation based on the organisation’s strategic significance and its alignment with the achievement of Council’s goals.

**Recommendation**

**THAT Council:**

1. **Nominate Administrator delegates to the organisations and committees that have been identified to be of strategic significance listed as follows for the period 19 April 2023 to 31 October 2024 (also highlighted in yellow in Attachment 1):**

* **Audit and Risk Committee (Internal) – Chair of Council, Administrator Wilson and Administrator Zahra**
* **Australian Local Government Women’s Association (ALGWA) (External) – Administrator Duncan**
* **CEO Employment Matters Advisory Committee (CEMAC) (Internal) – All Administrators**
* **Business Advisory Panel (Internal) – Chair of Council, Administrator Wilson, substitute Administrator Duncan**
* **Community Awards Committee (Internal) – Administrator Zahra**
* **Interface Councils Group (External) – Chair of Council, Administrator Wilson, substitute Administrator Duncan**
* **Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) (External) – Chair of Council, Administrator Wilson, substitute Administrator Duncan**
* **Northern Councils Alliance (External) – Chair of Council, Administrator Wilson, substitute Administrator Zahra**
* **Victorian Local Governance Association (VLGA) (External) – All Administrators**
* **Whittlesea Reconciliation Group (WRG) (Internal) – Administrator Duncan**
* **Yarra Plenty Regional Library Board (External) – Chair of Council, Administrator Wilson**

1. **Nominate Officers to the organisations and committees listed as follows for the period 19 April 2023 to 31 October 2024 (as per Attachment 1):** 
   * **Australian Local Government Women’s Association (ALGWA) (External)**
   * **Business Advisory Panel (Internal)**
   * **Community Awards Committee (Internal)**
   * **Darebin Creek Management Committee Incorporated (External)**
   * **Friends of South Morang (External)**
   * **Interface Councils Group (External)**
   * **Merri Creek Management Committee Incorporated (External)**
   * **Metropolitan Transport Forum Inc. (External)**
   * **Municipal Fire Management Planning Committee (MFMPC) (Internal)**
   * **Northern Alliance for Greenhouse Action Executive (NAGA) (External)**
   * **Northern Councils Alliance (External)**
   * **Visual Art and Civic History Collections Acquisitions Advisory Group (AAG) (Internal)**
   * **Whittlesea Aboriginal Gathering Place Advisory Group (WAGPAG) (External)**
   * **Whittlesea Community Futures Partnership (External)**
   * **Whittlesea Courthouse Association (External)**
   * **Whittlesea Disability Network (WDN) (External)**
   * **Whittlesea Multicultural Communities Council (WMCC) (External)**
   * **Whittlesea Reconciliation Group (WRG) (Internal)**
   * **Whittlesea Showground and Recreation Reserves Committee of Management (External)**
   * **Youth Advisory Committee (Internal)**
   * **Whittlesea Youth Commitment Strategic Advisory Group (WYC) (External)**
   * **Yarra Plenty Regional Library Board (External)**

**Key Information**

Council participation on organisations and committees ensures involvement, participation and contribution to matters relevant to local and strategic organisations.

Discussions were held with Council at Briefings on 4 April 2023 to inform of this report and determine recommendations for Administrator representation as outlined below.

***Administrator representation***

It is proposed that Administrators provide representation on the following internal and external organisations and committees (as highlighted in yellow in Attachment 1):

* Audit and Risk Committee (Internal) – Chair of Council, Administrator Wilson and Administrator Zahra
* Australian Local Government Women’s Association (ALGWA) (External) - Administrator Duncan
* CEO Employment Matters Advisory Committee (CEMAC) (Internal) – All Administrators
* Business Advisory Panel (Internal) – Chair of Council, Administrator Wilson, and substitute Administrator Duncan
* Community Awards Committee (Internal) - Administrator Zahra
* Interface Councils Group (External) – Chair of Council, Administrator Wilson, substitute Administrator Duncan
* Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) (External) – Chair of Council, Administrator Wilson, substitute Administrator Duncan
* Northern Councils Alliance (External) – Chair of Council, Administrator Wilson, substitute Administrator Zahra
* Victorian Local Governance Association (VLGA) (External) – All Administrators
* Whittlesea Reconciliation Group (WRG) (Internal) - Administrator Duncan
* Yarra Plenty Regional Library Board (External) – Chair of Council, Administrator Wilson

***Officer representation***

It is proposed that Officers continue to provide representation on the following internal and external organisations and committees:

* + Australian Local Government Women’s Association (ALGWA) (External)
  + Business Advisory Panel (Internal)
  + Community Awards Committee (Internal)
  + Darebin Creek Management Committee Incorporated (External)
  + Friends of South Morang (External)
  + Interface Councils Group (External)
  + Merri Creek Management Committee Incorporated (External)
  + Metropolitan Transport Forum Inc. (External)
  + Municipal Fire Management Planning Committee (MFMPC) (Internal)
  + Northern Alliance for Greenhouse Action Executive (NAGA) (External)
  + Northern Councils Alliance (External)
  + Visual Art and Civic History Collections Acquisitions Advisory Group (AAG) (Internal)
  + Whittlesea Aboriginal Gathering Place Advisory Group (WAGPAG) (Internal)
  + Whittlesea Community Futures Partnership (External)
  + Whittlesea Courthouse Association (External)
  + Whittlesea Disability Network (WDN) (External)
  + Whittlesea Multicultural Communities Council (WMCC) (External)
  + Whittlesea Reconciliation Group (WRG) (Internal)
  + Whittlesea Showground and Recreation Reserves Committee of Management (External)
  + Youth Advisory Committee (Internal)
  + Whittlesea Youth Commitment Strategic Advisory Group (WYC) (Internal)
  + Yarra Plenty Regional Library Board (External)

Further details relating to the nature of the Administrator and Officer representations are set out in attachment 1.

**Community Consultation and Engagement**

The appointment of Council representatives on organisations and committees enables Council to engage with community and for representatives to provide relevant feedback to Council at Council meetings each month.

Consultation with Council on potential appointments occurred on 4 April 2023. Council’s preferences of representatives have been included within the recommendation of this report.

**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.

Council representation on a range of internal and external organisations and committees provides an opportunity for Council to input into the decision-making processes of those organisations and committees and ensure the interest of Council and the community is represented. It also provides an opportunity for Council to be informed of the activities and priorities of key strategic and community organisations and committees.

**Considerations**

**Environmental**

The participation in numerous committees supports environmental partnerships, awareness and action and is aligned to Council’s Sustainable Environment strategy.

**Social, Cultural and Health**

The participation in numerous committees supports partnerships, awareness and actions relating to the social, cultural and health considerations impacting our community.

**Economic**

The participation in numerous committees supports economic development and partnership with local business and is aligned with Council’s strong local economy strategy and action plan.

**Financial Implications**

The cost of Council participation in organisations and committees is included in the relevant operating budgets.

**Link to Strategic Risk**

**Strategic Risk** *Community and Stakeholder Engagement - Ineffective stakeholder engagement resulting in compromised community outcomes and/or non-achievement of Council's strategic direction.*

Council participation in organisations and committees enhances Council’s ability to engage with the community and to provide the best outcomes for the community in line with Council’s strategic direction.

**Implementation Strategy**

**Communication**

Council will write to each committee and organisation to inform them of Council’s nominated representatives.

**Critical Dates**

Current appointments are made until 31 December 2023. The appointments made in this report will take effect for the period 19 April 2023 – 31 October 2024.

**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.

**Conclusion**

It is recommended that Council determine appointments to organisations and committees for the period 19 April 2023 to 31 October 2024. This enables ongoing Council representation, participation and contribution to local and strategic organisations.

**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**

**9.0.0 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 Confidential Connected Communities**

No Reports

**9.2 Confidential Liveable Neighbourhoods**

No Reports

**9.3 Confidential Strong Local Economy**

No Reports

**9.4 Confidential Sustainable Environment**

No Reports

**9.5 Confidential High Performing Organisation**

9.5.1 Sale of Property under Section 181 of the Local Government Act

**9.5.1 Sale of Property under Section 181 of the Local Government Act**

This report and attachment have 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 personal information, being information which if released would result in the unreasonable disclosure of information about any person or their personal affairs.  In particular the report and attachment contains information regarding property addresses, property ownership and outstanding property debt including rates and charges.

**10 Closure**

1. [Housing Stress & Need | City of Whittlesea | housing monitor (id.com.au)](https://housing.id.com.au/whittlesea/stress-and-need#how-many-households-are-in-need-of-affordable-housing) [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. [Estimating Homelessness: Census, 2021 | Australian Bureau of Statistics (abs.gov.au)](https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/people/housing/estimating-homelessness-census/latest-release) [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. [Specialist homelessness services annual report 2021–22, About - Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (aihw.gov.au)](https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/homelessness-services/shs-annual-report/contents/about) [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Data supplied by Homes Victoria, 2023 [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. [Housing tenure | City of Whittlesea | Community profile (id.com.au)](https://profile.id.com.au/whittlesea/tenure) [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. [Department of Families Fairness and Housing Victoria | Rental report (dffh.vic.gov.au)](https://www.dffh.vic.gov.au/publications/rental-report) [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. [Melbourne property: Suburbs where homeowners can’t make their mortgage repayments ahead of likely February interest rate rise as interest rates rise (theage.com.au)](https://www.theage.com.au/property/news/the-melbourne-suburbs-where-homeowners-can-t-pay-their-mortgage-20230203-p5chqf.html), [Australia’s renters face ‘staggering’ increases – with more to come | Renting | The Guardian](https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2023/feb/27/australias-renters-face-staggering-increases-with-more-to-come) [↑](#footnote-ref-7)