



Minutes

Scheduled Council Meeting

Tuesday 21 November 2023 at 6:30 pm

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

Administrators

Lydia Wilson Chair of Council

Peita Duncan Administrator

Christian Zahra AM Administrator

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

Senior Officers

Craig Lloyd Chief Executive Officer

Emma Appleton Director Planning & Development

Agata Chmielewski Director Community Wellbeing

Sarah Renner Director Customer & Corporate Services

Debbie Wood Director Infrastructure & Environment

Frank Joyce Executive Manager Strategy & Insights

Janine Morgan Executive Manager Public Affairs

Jacinta Stevens Executive Manager Office of Council & CEO

Order of Business

The Chief Executive Officer submits the following business:

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**1 Opening**

**1.1 Meeting Opening and Introductions**

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

“Welcome to this Council Meeting of 21 November 2023 which is being held in person in the Council Chamber at Civic Centre, 25 Ferres Boulevard, South Morang and also being live streamed.

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

“Good evening everyone, we also have with us:

Emma Appleton, Director Planning & Development;

Agata Chmielewski, Director Community Wellbeing;

Sarah Renner, Director Customer & Corporate Services;

Debbie Wood, Director Infrastructure & Environment;

Frank Joyce, Executive Manager Strategy & Insight;

Janine Morgan, Executive Manager Public Affairs; and

Jacinta Stevens, Executive Manager Office of Council & CEO.

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

**1.2 Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners Statement**

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

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

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

**1.3 Diversity and Good Governance Statement**

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

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

**1.4 Acknowledgements**

Chair of Council, Lydia Wilson made the following acknowledgements:

**Whittlesea Show**

I wanted to congratulate the agricultural society on another very successful Whittlesea Show which was held earlier this month. In fact, it was the 164th show that they have held. The City of Whittlesea is very proud to be a major sponsor of what is a really wonderful community tradition, that not only attracts locals but people from far and wide. They provide family friendly activities and events.

**Passing of Jim Clements**

I would like to acknowledge the passing of Jim Clements. I was personally very saddened to hear of the passing of Jim Clements who was a past President and life member of the Whittlesea Agricultural Society. He made a very significant contribution to the Society for 77 years.

On behalf of Council, we send our heartfelt condolences to Jim’s family, friends and members of the Whittlesea Agricultural Society.

**Keep Australia Beautiful Awards**

I would like to acknowledge our community members for the Keep Australia Beautiful Awards. We would like to particularly extend congratulations to local students Hansikaa and Tanya Sharma, who were both finalists in the Youth Legend (Cities) category of the Keep Australia Beautiful Victoria Awards, with Tanya winning the award for her “No Butts about it” campaign. A really amazing achievement. The Sharma family are all true environmentalists and really fantastic community leaders.

Tanya rallied locals to create a petition which was tabled at Council at the September 2022 meeting requesting the installation of more cigarette butt bins across the municipality. As a result of her campaigning, Council installed new bins at a range of key locations including a number of shopping centres within the municipality.

Both Hansikaa and Tanya were recipients of our 2022 City of Whittlesea Community Awards in the Young Citizen and Sustainable Citizen of the Year categories respectively. On behalf of Council, we formally congratulate the Sharma’s and acknowledge their family for the work that they have undertaken in relation to environmental sustainability.

Administrator Peita Duncan made the following acknowledgements:

**Aboriginal Gathering Place**

Earlier today it was my great pleasure to join with fellow Administrators as well as leaders and local Aboriginal community and City of Whittlesea staff, in turning the first sod on the Aboriginal Gathering Place at Quarry Hills Regional Parkland.

An Aboriginal Gathering Place has been a long-held goal of Council, the Whittlesea Reconciliation Group and the Whittlesea Aboriginal Gathering Place Advisory Board and it is absolutely fantastic to see this vision start to become a reality.

Construction is expected to begin in early to mid-2024, with a view to opening the gathering place in 2025.

I would just like to congratulate everyone who has had a role in getting the Aboriginal Gathering Place project to this point, its taken some 21 years but we are finally here. Thank you to all the staff at City of Whittlesea as well who worked tirelessly on this project.

**16 Days of Activism**

16 Days of Activism commences this Saturday, it is the International Day to stop Violence Against Women and the beginning of the 16 Days of Activism against Gender Based Violence campaign which will run until Human Rights Day on the 10th of December, which is fitting to end on that day. The 16 Days of Activism is a global campaign to end Violence Against Women and girls. Violence against Women is preventable and in the City of Whittlesea we are committed to creating a future where all women are safe, equal and respected.

There is more information about the campaign on the Whittlesea website

[www.whittlesea.vic.gov.au/genderequity](http://www.whittlesea.vic.gov.au/genderequity).

Administrator Zahra made the following acknowledgements:

**Whittlesea Walking Football**

Congratulations to the three Whittlesea U3A walking football teams that recently participated in the Australian Masters Games in Adelaide and to the Women’s team who managed to bring home a bronze medal from the event.

Thanks to all the volunteers who supported the team to attend. Walking football is a fantastic program that the City of Whittlesea is proud to support, helping those aged over 50 who love the game to keep playing as they get older.

**Youth Council Update**

I am pleased to report that we have received a total 58 applications for the Youth Council from a very diverse range of applicants with ages ranging from 12-21. It is great to see applications coming in from every local area of the municipality. Applicants have been shortlisted and interviews will take place in coming weeks and no doubt we will have more to say about this shortly after they have been completed.

**1.5 Attendance**

**Members:**

Lydia Wilson, Chair of Council

Peita Duncan, Administrator

Christian Zahra AM, Administrator

**Officers:**

Craig Lloyd, Chief Executive Officer

Emma Appleton, Director Planning & Development

Agata Chmielewski, Director Community Wellbeing

Sarah Renner, Director Customer & Corporate Services

Debbie Wood, Director Infrastructure & Environment

Frank Joyce, Executive Manager Strategy & Insights

Janine Morgan, Executive Manager Public Affairs

Jacinta Stevens, Executive Manager Office of Council & CEO

**Apology:**

Nil

**2 Declarations of Conflict of Interest**

No declarations.

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

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| **COUNCIL RESOLUTION** | |
| ***Moved:*** | *Administrator Christian Zahra* |
| ***Seconded:*** | *Administrator Peita Duncan* |

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

* **Scheduled Meeting of Council and Confidential Meeting of Council held on   
  17 October 2023.**

**CARRIED**

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

**4.1 Public Question Time**

No Public Questions received.

**4.2 Petitions**

No Petitions received.

**4.3 Joint Letters**

No Joint Letters received.

**5 Officers' Reports**

5.1 Community Local Law 2024 - Final Draft for Endorsement

**5.1 Community Local Law 2024 - Final Draft for Endorsement**

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

**Report Author:** Coordinator Regulatory Programs

**In Attendance:** Manager Emergency Management & Regulatory Programs

**Executive Summary**

Following an extensive review and development process, the final *Community Local Law 2024* has been prepared. This follows extensive community engagement on the draft *Community Local Law 2024* over two phases.

The City of Whittlesea *Community Local Law 2024* is designed to complement State and Federal Laws and aims to strike the right balance between personal freedom and community responsibility, to help people live harmoniously in their local community. All Councils in Victoria are required to have a Local Law to keep people safe, protect the natural environment, improve access and enjoyment of public places and respond to poor behaviour.

The final Local Law incorporates several regulatory improvements designed to enhance community safety, protect property and align with Governance Rules. The other notable change is with regard to the use of headings, grouping of local laws into relevant ‘parts’ and use of images for greater readability. Minor changes to grammar have improved accessibility of information for the community.

The finalisation of the Local Law review together with the adoption and implementation of the *Community Local Law 2024* will fulfil a key Council priority commitment in Council’s Community Plan Action Plan 2023-24.

**Officers’ Recommendation**

**THAT Council endorse the final *Community Local Law 2024*, which has been legally certified as meeting the requirements of the *Local Government Act 2020* with an effective date of 1 July 2024, at which point the current *General Municipal Law 2014* and any incorporated documents to that Local Law will cease to be operational.**

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| **COUNCIL RESOLUTION** | |
| ***Moved:*** | *Administrator Peita Duncan* |
| ***Seconded:*** | *Administrator Christian Zahra* |

**THAT Council adopt the officer recommendation in relation to endorsing the Community Local Law 2024.**

**CARRIED**

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| **ADMINISTRATOR/S WHO SPOKE TO MOTION** |
| *Administrator Peita Duncan*  *Administrator Christian Zahra*  *Chair of Council Lydia Wilson* |

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| **VOTING** | | | |
| **UNANIMOUS** | **FOR** | **AGAINST** | **ABSTAINED** |
| *YES* |  |  |  |

5.2 Quarterly Corporate Performance Report - Q1 ended 30/9/2023

**5.2 Quarterly Corporate Performance Report - Q1 ended 30 September 2023**

**Responsible Director/Executive Manager:** Director Customer & Corporate Services

**Report Author:** Unit Manager Financial Strategy & Performance

**In Attendance:** Chief Financial Officer

**Executive Summary**

To inform Council of the Quarterly Corporate Performance Report for the period ended 30 September 2023 (Attachment 1) including financial, capital work, good governance and Community Plan Action Plan action status.

**Officers’ Recommendation**

**THAT Council:**

**1. Note the Quarterly Corporate Performance Report for the period ended 30 September 2023 (Attachments 1 - 3).**

**2. Note the financial performance for the period ended 30 September 2023.**

**3. Approves the establishment of two new reserves, ‘Plant Replacement Reserve’ and ‘Community Grant Reserve’ to ensure Council has funds to support the replacement of Council’s plant and fleet and funding to fulfill community needs through Council driven program and initiatives.**

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| **COUNCIL RESOLUTION** | |
| ***Moved:*** | *Administrator Peita Duncan* |
| ***Seconded:*** | *Administrator Christian Zahra* |

**THAT Council adopt the officer recommendation for the Quarterly Corporate Performance Report for the period ending 30 September 2023.**

**CARRIED**

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| **ADMINISTRATOR/S WHO SPOKE TO MOTION** | | | |
| *Administrator Peita Duncan*  *Administrator Christian Zahra*  *Chair of Council Lydia Wilson* | | | |
| **VOTING** | | | |
| **UNANIMOUS** | **FOR** | **AGAINST** | **ABSTAINED** |
| *YES* |  |  |  |

5.3 Community Grants Quarterly Update

**5.3 Community Grants Quarterly Update**

**Director/Executive Manager:** Director Customer & Corporate Services

**Report Author:** Manager EPMO & Change

**In Attendance:** Manager EPMO & Change

**Executive Summary**

This report is to provide an overview of community grant funding that has been approved in Q1 FY2023-2024.

**Officers’ Recommendation**

**THAT Council:**

**1.** **Notes the groups, funding and approvals for Q1 FY2023-2024.**

**2.** **Notes the steps being taken for continuous improvement and awareness.**

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| **COUNCIL RESOLUTION** | |
| ***Moved:*** | *Administrator Christian Zahra* |
| ***Seconded:*** | *Administrator Peita Duncan* |

**THAT Council adopt the officer recommendation in relation to the Community Grants Quarterly Update for the FY 2023-2024.**

**CARRIED**

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| **ADMINISTRATOR/S WHO SPOKE TO MOTION** |
| *Administrator Christian Zahra*  *Administrator Peita Duncan*  *Chair of Council Lydia Wilson* |

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| **VOTING** | | | |
| **UNANIMOUS** | **FOR** | **AGAINST** | **ABSTAINED** |
| *YES* |  |  |  |

5.4 Endorsement of the marram baba Merri Creek Regional Parklands Future Directions Plan

**5.4 Endorsement of the marram baba Merri Creek Regional Parklands Future Directions Plan**

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

**Report Author:** Unit Manager Conservation Management

**In Attendance:** Unit Manager Conservation Management

**Executive Summary**

The purpose of this report is to seek endorsement for the marram baba Merri Creek Regional Parklands Future Directions Plan.

The marram baba Future Directions Plan (FDP) provides strategic direction for this future regional park along the Merri Creek. The proposed parkland extends over 2778 hectares from the Western Ring Road in Thomastown to Bald Hill in Beveridge.

The creation of the marram baba Merri Creek Regional Parklands was a 2018 election commitment by the Victorian State Government and would become Melbourne’s second largest regional park. This project was delivered under the Suburban Parks Program by the Department of Environment, Energy and Climate Action (DEECA). The FDP has been supported with a $1 million investment from DEECA in park works and infrastructure that includes trails, interpretive signage, and opportunities for traditional owners to deliver works on country.

The City of Whittlesea is one of seven stakeholders involved in the project control and working groups along with the Wurundjeri, Hume City Council, Mitchell Shire, Melbourne Water, Yarra Valley Water, Merri Creek Management Committee and Parks Victoria. The FDP establishes a common vision and guiding principles for the regional park and provides directions and actions for a more consistent approach by all stakeholders participating in co-management.

DEECA is now seeking endorsement from all stakeholder organisations prior to finalising the marram baba Future Directions Plan (Attachment 1).

**Officers’ Recommendation**

**THAT Council:**

1. **Endorse the marram baba Merri Creek Parklands Future Directions Plan.**
2. **Note the CEO will write to Department of Environment, Energy and Climate Action confirming Council’s endorsement of the marram baba Future Directions Plan.**
3. **Write to stakeholders involved in the marram baba Merri Creek Parklands Future Directions Plan to congratulate them on the development of the plan.**

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| **COUNCIL RESOLUTION** | |
| ***Moved:*** | *Administrator Christian Zahra* |
| ***Seconded:*** | *Administrator Peita Duncan* |

**THAT Council adopt the officer recommendation in relation to endorsement of the marram baba Merri Creek Regional Parklands Future Directions Plan.**

**CARRIED**

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| **ADMINISTRATOR/S WHO SPOKE TO MOTION** |
| *Administrator Christian Zahra* |

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| **VOTING** | | | |
| **UNANIMOUS** | **FOR** | **AGAINST** | **ABSTAINED** |
| *YES* |  |  |  |

5.5 Nick Ascenzo Reserve Master Plan

**5.5 Nick Ascenzo Reserve Master Plan**

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

**Report Author:** Open Space Planner

**In Attendance:** Coordinator Open Space Planning

**Executive Summary**

The purpose of the report is to:

* Provide an update on the outcomes of the community consultation for draft Nick Ascenzo Reserve Master Plan.
* Seek endorsement of the Nick Ascenzo Reserve Master Plan for implementation.
* As part of the Alexander Avenue Town Centre revitalisation, the need for a master plan for Nick Ascenzo Reserve was identified to meet community needs.
* Engagement with the community and key stakeholders was undertaken which identified a desire for a safer, vibrant, and activated open space.
* Consultation and engagement for the Nick Ascenzo Reserve Master Plan has now concluded, and changes have been made to the final document for endorsement.
* The master plan guides and provides direction for future upgrades and improvements to Nick Ascenzo Reserve. The master plan responds to ageing infrastructure, safety concerns, connectivity and community needs along with recommendations to improve the natural environment.

**Officers’ Recommendation**

**THAT Council:**

1. **Endorse the Nick Ascenzo Reserve Master Plan.**
2. **Note the draft master plan has been revised to reflect the community feedback.**
3. **Note the funding for the implementation of master plan actions will be subject to Capital works program budget considerations in future years.**
4. **Thank all submitters to the master plan for their contribution.**

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| **COUNCIL RESOLUTION** | |
| ***Moved:*** | *Administrator Peita Duncan* |
| ***Seconded:*** | *Administrator Christian Zahra* |

**THAT Council adopt the officer recommendation in relation to the Nick Ascenzo Reserve Master Plan.**

**CARRIED**

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| **ADMINISTRATOR/S WHO SPOKE TO MOTION** |
| *Administrator Peita Duncan*  *Administrator Christian Zahra*  *Chair of Council Lydia Wilson* |

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| **VOTING** | | | |
| **UNANIMOUS** | **FOR** | **AGAINST** | **ABSTAINED** |
| *YES* |  |  |  |

5.6 Council Meetings Schedule for 2024

**5.6 Council Meetings Schedule for 2024**

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

**Report Author:** Coordinator Governance Administration

**In Attendance:** Executive Manager Office of Council & CEO

**Executive Summary**

The purpose of this report is for Council to adopt the proposed Council Meeting schedule for the period 1 January 2024 to 30 June 2025.

Council Meetings are conducted monthly so that Council can make formal decisions and to give the community an opportunity to participate in this decision-making process.

In accordance with the Governance Rules, Council must adopt the proposed schedule for the following year and advise the community of the meeting schedule.

It is proposed that Council Meetings are conducted on the third Tuesday of the month commencing each year in February. It is also proposed due to Council Elections in October 2024, and caretaker requirements, Council meetings will not be scheduled for September and October 2024.

**Officers’ Recommendation**

**THAT Council:**

1. **Adopt the Council meeting schedule for 1 January 2024 to 30 June 2025 as follows:**

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| **2024** | **2025** |
| **Tuesday 20 February 2024** | **Tuesday 18 February 2025** |
| **Tuesday 19 March 2024** | **Tuesday 19 March 2025** |
| **Tuesday 16 April 2024** | **Tuesday 15 April 2025** |
| **Tuesday 21 May 2024** | **Tuesday 20 May 2025** |
| **Tuesday 18 June 2024** | **Tuesday 17 June 2025** |
| **Tuesday 16 July 2024** |  |
| **Tuesday 20 August 2024** |  |
| **Tuesday 19 November 2024** |  |
| **Tuesday 17 December 2024** |  |

1. **Resolve that all Council meetings will commence at 6:30pm and be held at the Civic Centre, Ferres Boulevard South Morang.**
2. **Note officers will give public notice of the Council meeting schedule for 2024 and first six months of 2025.**

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| **COUNCIL RESOLUTION** | |
| ***Moved:*** | *Administrator Christian Zahra* |
| ***Seconded:*** | *Administrator Peita Duncan* |

**THAT Council adopt the officer recommendation adopting the Council Meeting Schedule for 1 January 2024 to 30 June 2025.**

**CARRIED**

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| **ADMINISTRATOR/S WHO SPOKE TO MOTION** |
| *Administrator Christian Zahra* |

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| **VOTING** | | | |
| **UNANIMOUS** | **FOR** | **AGAINST** | **ABSTAINED** |
| *YES* |  |  |  |

5.7 Councillor Gift Policy

**5.7 Councillor Gift Policy**

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

**Report Author:** EA to Council

**In Attendance:** Executive Manager Office of Council & CEO

**Executive Summary**

Section 138 of the *Local Government Act 2020 (*Act) requires Council to adopt a Councillor Gift Policy that includes procedures for the maintenance of a gift register and any matters prescribed by the regulations. Section 138(3) of the Act allows for Council to review and update the Councillor Gift Policy (Policy).

In preparation for the return of an elected Council, the attached Policy replaces the previously adopted Administrator Gifts and Benefits Policy 2021.

**Officers’ Recommendation**

**THAT Council adopt Councillor Gift Policy attached at Attachment 1.**

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| **COUNCIL RESOLUTION** | |
| ***Moved:*** | *Administrator Peita Duncan* |
| ***Seconded:*** | *Administrator Christian Zahra* |

**THAT Council adopt the officer recommendation in relation to the Councillor Gift Policy.**

**CARRIED**

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| **ADMINISTRATOR/S WHO SPOKE TO MOTION** |
| *Administrator Christian Zahra* |

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| **VOTING** | | | |
| **UNANIMOUS** | **FOR** | **AGAINST** | **ABSTAINED** |
| *YES* |  |  |  |

5.8 Councillor Expense, Reimbursement and Support Policy

**5.8 Councillor Expense, Reimbursement and Support Policy**

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

**Report Author:** EA to Council

**In Attendance:** Executive Manager Office of Council & CEO

**Executive Summary**

Section 41 of the Local Government Act requires Council to adopt and maintain a Policy in relation to reimbursement of out-of-pocket expenses for Councillors and members of delegated Committees.

**Officers’ Recommendation**

THAT Council endorse the Councillor Expense, Reimbursement and Support Policy at Attachment 1.

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| **COUNCIL RESOLUTION** | |
| ***Moved:*** | *Administrator Christian Zahra* |
| ***Seconded:*** | *Administrator Peita Duncan* |

**THAT Council with the removal of clause 13.1.3, endorse the Councillor Expense, Reimbursement and Support Policy at Attachment 1.**

**CARRIED**

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| **ADMINISTRATOR/S WHO SPOKE TO MOTION** |
| *Administrator Christian Zahra*  *Chair of Council Lydia Wilson* |

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| **VOTING** | | | |
| **UNANIMOUS** | **FOR** | **AGAINST** | **ABSTAINED** |
| *YES* |  |  |  |

5.9 Instrument of Appointment and Authorisation under the Planning and Environment Act 1987

**5.9 Instrument of Appointment and Authorisation under the Planning and Environment Act 1987**

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

**Report Author:** Coordinator Governance Administration

**In Attendance:** Executive Manager Office of Council & CEO

**Executive Summary**

The *Planning and Environment Act 1987* requires that Council by resolution to appoint Authorised Officers to exercise their powers under the Act. This power cannot be delegated to the CEO.

An Instrument of Appointment and Authorisation (the Instrument) in relation to the administration and enforcement of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* by various Officers across the organisation has been prepared and requires authorisation.

**Officers’ Recommendation**

**THAT Council:**

**1.** **Appoints the Council Officers referred to in the instrument attached as Authorised Officers under section 147(4) of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* and section 313 of the *Local Government Act 2020*.**

**2.** **Notes the Instrument will come into effect immediately it is signed, and the common seal affixed.**

**3.** **Notes the Instrument will remain in force until Council determines to vary or revoke it.**

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| **COUNCIL RESOLUTION** | |
| ***Moved:*** | *Administrator Christian Zahra* |
| ***Seconded:*** | *Administrator Peita Duncan* |

**THAT Council adopt the officer recommendation appointing Council Officers referred to in the instrument at Attachment 1 as Authorised Officers under the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*.**

**CARRIED**

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| **ADMINISTRATOR/S WHO SPOKE TO MOTION** |
| *N/A* |

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| **VOTING** | | | |
| **UNANIMOUS** | **FOR** | **AGAINST** | **ABSTAINED** |
| *YES* |  |  |  |

**6 Notices of Motion**

No Notices of Motion

**7 Urgent Business**

No Urgent Business

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

**8.1 Administrator, Peita Duncan Report**

* Aboriginal Gathering Place - Sod Turn on 21 November 2023

**8.2 Administrator, Christian Zahra**

* Coffee with Councill in Thomastown on 14 November 2023
* Audit & Risk Committee Meeting on 15 November 2023
* Aboriginal Gathering Place - Sod Turn on 21 November 2023

**8.3 Chair of Council, Lydia Wilson**

* Whittlesea Agricultural Show on 5 November 2023
* Mernda Social Support Facility Opening on 9 November with the CEO & Director Community Wellbeing alongside member for Yan Yean, Lauren Kathage
* Epping RSL Sub-Branch - Remembrance Day Service on 11 November 2023
* Coffee with Councill in Thomastown on 14 November 2023
* Audit & Risk Committee Meeting on 15 November 2023
* Annual Art Exhibition ‘The Webs We Weave’ Opening on 16 November 2023
* Aboriginal Gathering Place - Sod Turn on 21 November 2023

**8.4 Chief Executive Officer, Craig Lloyd**

**NGAA 2023 Parliamentary Showcase**

Last week with Council's Director Planning & Development, I attended the NGAA 2023 Parliamentary Showcase in Canberra.

The Hon Catherine King MP, Minister for Infrastructure, Transport, Local Government and Regional Development addressed NGAA members on infrastructure projects and was followed by a presentation on growth Area priorities. It was a good opportunity to connect with growth area MPs, relevant Senators, crossbenchers and advisors to discuss the challenges facing our region.

I was also pleased to hear, at that event the Federal government's commitment to building an Intermodal Freight Terminal in our municipality at Beveridge, bringing a large number of jobs to our community is proceeding as planned.

**Planning Award**

I am delighted to report that the City of Whittlesea has received two commendations at the Victorian PIA 2023 Awards for Planning Excellence recently.  The first commendation was received in the ‘Planning with Country’ category for Stony Rises Protection on the Victorian Volcanic Plain.

The second commendation was received in the ‘Strategic Planning Project’ category for the Green Wedge Management Plan. These two major and complex projects will have lasting positive cultural, social, environmental, and economic impacts for our land and community.

It is important to note the exemplar partnership with the Traditional Owners in both projects. Congratulations to all involved, a well-deserved result and great recognition to our fantastic Planning staff as well.

**Victorian Early Years Awards**

In more awards news - I would also like to congratulate the City of Whittlesea’s Best Start program for their participation in the Darebin Best Start Aboriginal Reference Group.

The Reference group was recently honoured by the Victorian Government’s Early Years Award for Outstanding Collaborative Community Partnerships, as announced by the Minister for Children on 9 November. In their commitment to ensuring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children have the best possible start at school, the Reference Group developed a series of videos for mob, by mob, specifically designed to enhance enrolment in Early Start Kindergarten for their community.

I would particularly like to express gratitude to Council Officer Aunty Sharon whose invaluable contribution in her Best Start role has been instrumental to the success of that initiative.

**Doreen Splash Park**

We are currently consulting with our community ahead of creating a concept plan for a new splash park and upgraded play space in Hilltop Park in Doreen.

In addition to a new playground and splash park, the plan also proposes new public toilets, an extended car park, landscaping and new lighting. The Information is available at engage.whittlesea.vic.gov.au.

**Community Survey**

We are currently surveying a random sample of residents to help us better understand our City of Whittlesea community. The survey asks about participation in local activities and how people go about their daily life in the City of Whittlesea. The results will help us to plan for the current and future needs of our community.

If you receive an invitation to participate via email, text message or post I would encourage you to take part if you can. You can also complete the survey in the language of your choice. There is more information available on Council’s website [www.whittlesea.vic.gov.au](http://www.whittlesea.vic.gov.au).

**9 Confidential Business**

No Confidential Business.

**10 Closure**

There being no further business the Chair of Council formally closed the meeting at 7:41 pm.

Confirmed this 19th day of December 2023.

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Lydia Wilson

Chair of Council