



City of Whittlesea
ANNUAL REPORT
2024-2025
Building better, together



Building better, together

The theme of this year's report is 'Building better, together'.

As our municipality continues to grow, so too do the needs of our community. From sporting facilities, roads and community centres that help us stay active, get around and access services, through to events, open spaces and a strong local economy to support our wellbeing, connection and employment needs, we are building what is needed, now and into the future.

Through education, leadership programs and grants, we are building the capacity of our community to play an active role in helping each other grow.

We are also building an engaged and passionate workforce that is committed to delivering for our community and achieving the best outcomes for the people that call City of Whittlesea home.

Throughout this report, you will see highlights and examples of how, together with our community, partner organisations and other levels of government we are building a *place for all*.

COVER IMAGE: The City of Whittlesea is investing \$16.2 million in the new West Wollert Community Centre to support the area's fast-growing population, set to rise from 7,396 in 2023 to over 33,700 by 2041. Due for completion in early 2027, the centre will include a kindergarten, Maternal and Child Health suites, a mini-branch library, community hall and garden. Funding includes \$6.75 million from the Victorian Government's Building Blocks Fund, \$1.5 million from the Growing Suburbs Fund, and \$168,663 from Melbourne Water.

Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners

We 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.

The City of Whittlesea recognises the rich Aboriginal heritage of this country and acknowledges the Wurundjeri Willum Clan and Taungurung People as the Traditional Owners of lands within the City of Whittlesea.

For countless generations, Country offered places of living and gathering. Cultural ceremonies, trade and

important business were conducted at sacred sites – places that continue to hold deep cultural and spiritual significance today.

More than seventy of these sites remain in the City of Whittlesea, along with many scarred trees, standing as living testaments to an enduring connection to Country.

In acknowledging this heritage, we honour the knowledge, resilience and custodianship of the Traditional Owners, whose care for this land stretches back tens of thousands of years and continues today.



About our Annual Report

Welcome to the City of Whittlesea’s Annual Report 2024-2025. Council is committed to transparent reporting and accountability to the community and our stakeholders.

This report provides an overview of Council’s performance in the 2024-2025 financial year against the five goals set out in our Community Plan 2021-2025 and Annual Budget 2024-2025.

The report highlights achievements and challenges faced and includes statutory reporting and legislative information as required under the *Local Government Act 2020* and other legislation.



This document can also be viewed on our website in PDF format at whittlesea.vic.gov.au/annualreport

The report is divided into the following sections:

- **Our City** – provides a description of the City of Whittlesea, including our community, stakeholders and services
- **Year in Review** – provides a snapshot overview of our performance, including major achievements, issues and challenges against each of our key goals, highlights of events that were held throughout the year, major projects, financial summary and awards
- **Our Council** – provides information on our Council and governance
- **Our organisation** – provides details on our organisation and workforce, including the organisational structure and occupational health and safety
- **Our performance** – provides a detailed report of operations against the key projects and activities undertaken throughout 2024-2025, listed under our five key goals
- **Financial statements** – provides the audited financial statements for the 2024-2025 financial year.

Alternative formats

This document is available in alternative formats on request. You can request an alternative format by emailing info@whittlesea.vic.gov.au or calling Customer Service on 03 9217 2170.

If you need to contact us in your own language, call the free telephone interpreter service on 131 450.

If you are deaf or have a hearing or speech impairment, you can contact us through the National Relay Service on 133 677 and ask for 9217 2170.



Free telephone
interpreter service

131 450

Arabic خدمة الترجمة الشفهية الهاتفية المجانية
Chinese Simplified 免费电话传译服务
Chinese Traditional 免費電話傳譯服務
Greek Δωρεάν τηλεφωνική υπηρεσία διερμυνέων
Italian Servizio di interpretariato telefonico gratuito

Macedonian Бесплатна телефонска услуга за преведување
Persian/Farsi خدمات مترجم شفاهی تلفنی رایگان
Punjabi ਮੁਫਤ ਟੈਲੀਫੋਨ ਦੁਆਰਾ ਸੇਵਾ
Turkish Ücretsiz telefonla tercümanlık servisi
Vietnamese Dịch vụ thông dịch qua điện thoại miễn phí

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Take in sweeping city views at bunjil nganga Parkland (Quarry Hills) – 440 hectares of walking trails, native bushland and grasslands, where kangaroos roam free



OUR CITY

The following pages provide a description of the City of Whittlesea, including our community, stakeholders and services.



The City of Whittlesea is home to many iconic and significant tree species including the River Red Gum (*Eucalyptus camaldulensis*)
Photo credit: Stephen McKenzie

About the City of Whittlesea

Our history

The original Peoples and Traditional Owners of the area which now forms the City of Whittlesea, are the Wurundjeri Willum Clan and Taungurung People. They lived along the tributaries of the Yarra River, including the Merri, Edgars and Darebin Creeks and the Plenty River.

The Wurundjeri Willum and Taungurung Peoples hold a strong connection to the land. The area offered many resources, including fresh water, food and shelter; the river system offered various types of fish and birdlife. Cultural ceremonies, business and trade negotiations were conducted at sacred sites.

Over 70 of these sites still exist in the City today, as well as many sacred ‘scarred’ trees.

The first European settlers in the Whittlesea area were squatters, who began establishing sheep and cattle runs in the late 1830s. In 1853 the surveyor, Robert Mason, named Whittlesea after the Town of Whittlesey in Cambridgeshire, England. He also named Epping after another English town, but many other parts of the municipality retain their Aboriginal names, such as Bundoora, Morang, Toorourrong and Yan Yean.

Our growth

On 1 January 1875, the Whittlesea Roads Board and the Morang Riding (part of the Shire of Darebin) merged to form the Shire of Whittlesea.

In 1915, the Shire of Whittlesea absorbed the Shire of Epping to create the ‘greater’ Shire of Whittlesea. In the years following World War II the Shire enjoyed steady growth, adding the new but now well-established suburbs of Lalor and Thomastown in the 1950s and 1960s and Mill Park in the 1970s.

On 15 April 1988, the Shire of Whittlesea was proclaimed a city, becoming the City of Whittlesea. On 15 December 1994, following a review by the Minister for Local Government of the City’s boundaries, the City of Whittlesea was re-proclaimed a city. The review of the municipality resulted in a small section of Whittlesea transferred to adjoining municipalities.

More recently, the addition of thriving new residential estates in Epping North, Mernda, Doreen and Wollert have contributed to making the City of Whittlesea one of the fastest growing municipalities in Australia.



The City of Whittlesea is one of Melbourne’s largest and most diverse municipalities. The community is one of the fastest growing areas in Victoria and our population is expected to increase by almost 40% from 2025 to 2040.

Our community



253,204
estimated total population
for 2024

3%
growth (between 2023–2024)



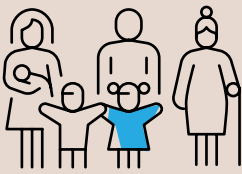
91,052
residential properties

86%
of residents live
in detached houses



34,810
Epping – suburb with the largest
population (14% of population)

2,045
Woodstock, Eden Park, Beveridge –
suburbs with the smallest population
(0.8% of population)



35
years is the median age
of residents

27%
of population
aged 0–19 years

17%
of population aged
over 60 years



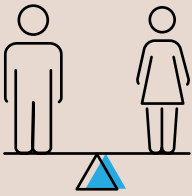
41%
of households are
couples with children

68
babies are born in the
City of Whittlesea each week



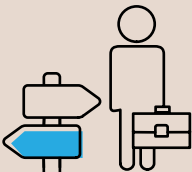
2,663
Aboriginal and Torres Strait
Islander population
(1% of population)

38%
of residents born overseas



50% 50%
Males Females

24%
of residents living with a
physical or mental chronic illness



37%
of workers who live in the
municipality work within
the City of Whittlesea

22,808
registered businesses



45%
of residents speak a language
other than English at home
The most common languages spoken
other than English include:

Punjabi	2%
Hindi	2%
Mandarin	2%
Italian	1%
Macedonian	1%

Source: Community Profile and Business trends (id.com.au), Place Info forecast 2024,
data collected by City of Whittlesea, Community Insights 2024, based on 2024 ERP population

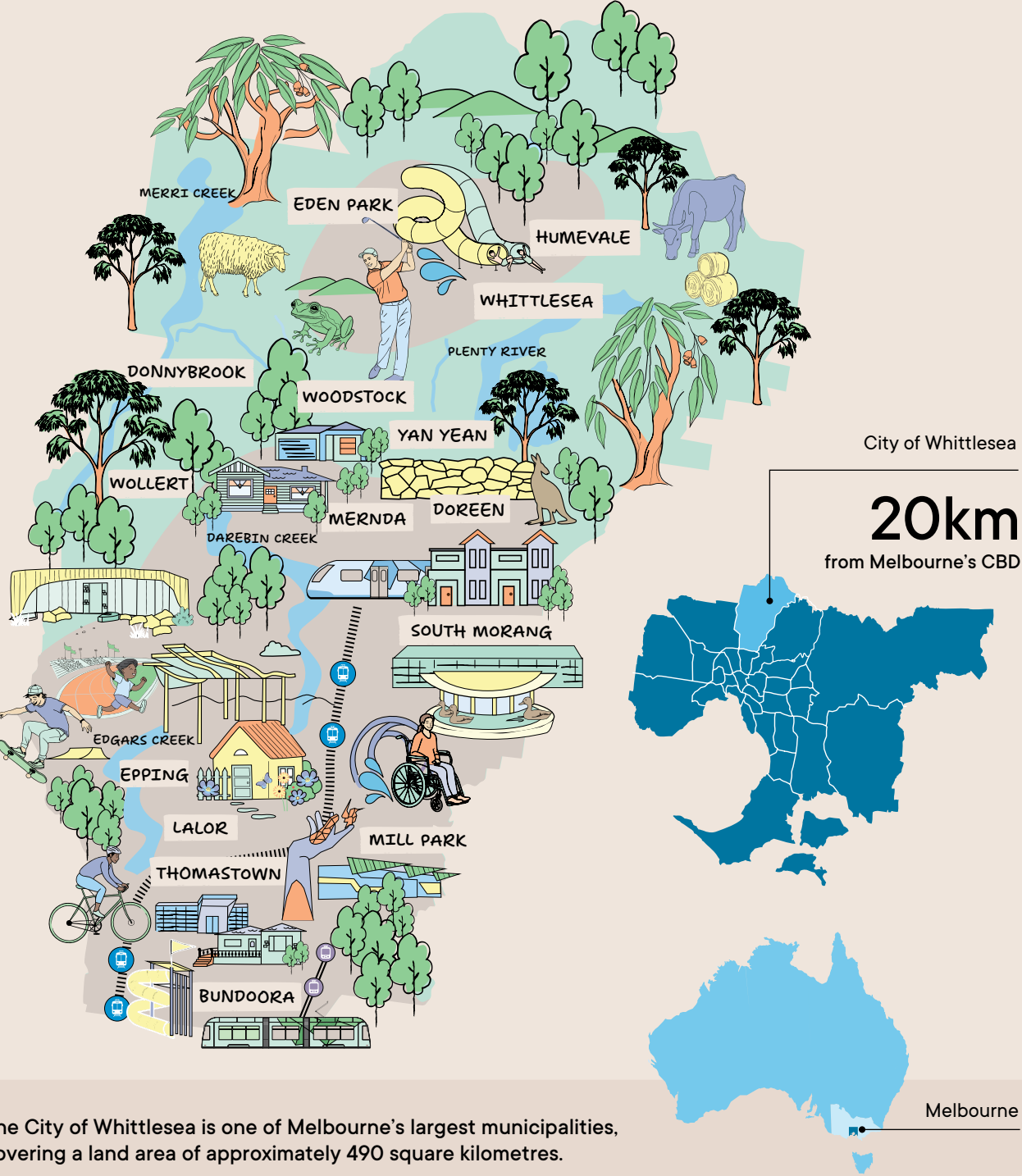
Our municipality

The City of Whittlesea is located in Melbourne’s northern suburbs, about 20 kilometres from the city centre. It is one of Melbourne’s largest municipalities, covering a land area of approximately 490 square kilometres.

The majority of the City of Whittlesea population live in urban areas. This is split across the major established suburbs of Bundoora, Epping, Lalor, Mill Park and Thomastown, the current growth areas of Mernda,

Doreen, South Morang, Epping North and Wollert, and the rural areas of Donnybrook and Whittlesea township and surrounds. Significant future growth is projected for Wollert and Donnybrook, and Epping will be a major activity centre for the municipality.

The rural areas of the municipality are characterised by farming, forested areas and historic township communities including Whittlesea.



The City of Whittlesea is one of Melbourne’s largest municipalities, covering a land area of approximately 490 square kilometres.



Sandra is one of our School Crossing Supervisors, helping keep kids safe at one of the City of Whittlesea’s 189 school crossings

Our stakeholders

Council is committed to working with our stakeholders and to keeping them informed, while also engaging with them to ensure their views are captured on significant projects and decisions through genuine engagement.

Our stakeholders include:

Residents – We work with our residents to ensure that the services we provide meet their needs. We engage with residents and listen to their feedback on the issues that matter most to them.

Ratepayers – Our ratepayers contribute financially to support the delivery of our services and capital projects and infrastructure to meet community needs.

Local businesses – From small business to industry, the City of Whittlesea is home to many businesses that provide employment and services to our community.

Community groups, clubs and organisations – We work with the many community groups, clubs and organisations that underpin community life in the City of Whittlesea.

Volunteers – Our dedicated volunteers play a vital role in shaping the heart and soul of the City of Whittlesea, making our city a vibrant and compassionate place to live, work and play.

Customers – Our customers are at the heart of everything we do. We listen to our customers and aim to make interacting with us as easy as possible.

Partner organisations – We partner with a range of organisations, not-for-profits and other councils to share knowledge, resources and to provide for our community.

Government – Council advocates to both State and Federal Governments and relies on vital funding from both for important projects within the City of Whittlesea that provide significant benefits for our community.

Council staff – Our dedicated staff provide the services, programs and events to help make the City of Whittlesea a vibrant, thriving and connected community. They provide expertise and advice to inform decisions and implement the actions outlined in our endorsed strategies and plans.

Visitors – The City of Whittlesea attracts visitors from far and wide to enjoy the attractions, businesses and natural beauty of our area.

Contractors – Council engages contractors to help support the delivery of services and programs for our community.

Our services

The City of Whittlesea is responsible for delivering more than 140 services under 26 service groups to our community, aligned to our five goals:

Connected communities

- Aboriginal reconciliation
- Ageing well
- Animal management
- Arts, culture and festivals
- Community facilities
- Community strengthening
- Customer service, communications and civic participation
- Family and children’s services
- Leisure and recreation
- Public health and safety
- Youth services.

Liveable neighbourhoods

- Parks and open space
- Planning and building
- Roads, public transport and footpaths
- Traffic management.

Strong local economy

- Investment attraction
- Libraries
- Local business support.

Sustainable environment

- Biodiversity, land management, sustainable planning and design
- Climate change
- Resource recovery and waste
- Water management.

High performing organisation

- Our finance and assets
- Our governance
- Our people
- Our systems and knowledge.



Greenbrook Community House
Volunteer Bryan

Our volunteers

Volunteers are the heart and soul of our community, making the City of Whittlesea a vibrant and compassionate place to live, work and play. Our volunteers, make a real difference in the lives of others while also enriching their own.

Volunteering offers many personal benefits beyond helping others. It improves mental wellbeing, boosts confidence, builds valuable skills and creates opportunities for people to connect with their community.

The City of Whittlesea offers several volunteering opportunities where people can connect with others while bringing their diverse skills and interest.

The Home and Community Care Program for Younger People (HACC PYP) team recruited 16 new volunteers this financial year. Volunteers contribute within HACC PYP program, including with social support programs and activities. One such example is the One-on-One Social Support Program, where participants are matched with a volunteer for social outings such as to a cafe, library or local park. This provides valuable and meaningful one-on-one social connections for participants.

Council’s Positive Ageing team is supported by 20 dedicated volunteers who actively contribute to a range of programs aimed at promoting positive ageing and social connection. These include our Social Connections Programs at the Barry Road Community Activity Centre and the Mernda Social Support Centre, which offer activities such as music, arts and crafts.

Volunteers also assist with a variety of health and wellbeing initiatives including the Seniors Park Exercise Program, Golf Program, Walking Football and Morning Melodies. Positive Ageing volunteers are also undertaking aged care training aligned with the new Aged Care Act to strengthen their understanding and capacity to support older community members effectively.

Celebrating our volunteers

Volunteers across the City of Whittlesea were celebrated for their incredible dedication and generosity during National Volunteer Week, which took place from Monday 19 May to Friday 23 May 2025.

This year’s theme, ‘Connecting Communities’ highlights the power of volunteering to bring people together. In line with this theme, a range of activities were organised to connect current and potential volunteers, offering an opportunity to share experiences and express their passion for contributing to the community. Highlights included creative workshops such as pottery and candle-diffuser making, as well as energising Zumba Gold and African drumming sessions. A special lunch was also held to honour the vital role volunteers play in the community.

Participants came from diverse cultural backgrounds, different age groups and various stages of life – from students transitioning to work, to retirees looking to contribute to the community, as well as active volunteers who have dedicated many years of their lives to volunteering. All participants enjoyed the activities and appreciated the opportunity to try something different while connecting with community members, learning about and celebrating volunteering.

In December 2024, the HACC PYP team also organised an event to celebrate International Volunteer Day and to thank volunteers for their amazing contribution to the community. Participants had the opportunity to learn more about volunteering and to connect with other volunteers in the program.

For more information on our volunteers program or opportunities to volunteer, visit whittlesea.vic.gov.au/volunteer



Volunteers are the heart of our community, making the City of Whittlesea a vibrant and compassionate place to live, work and play. The Home and Community Care Program for Younger People welcomed 16 new volunteers this year.



Home Support Worker Max from our Ageing Well Team helps senior residents stay independent, connected and living well at home

Our vision

Whittlesea 2040: A place for all

Whittlesea 2040: A place for all is the long-term vision for the City of Whittlesea. It guides all of Council’s work and future partnerships with the community and others.

Whittlesea
2040
A place for all

In 2040, compassion is at the heart of our community. A compassionate community makes sure that everyone feels cared for and supported in a deep and meaningful way. It makes our city increasingly welcoming, whether you’ve just arrived or your family has been here for generations. What that appeal feels like is different for everyone. It might be having a job you like within easy reach or knowing your neighbour’s name. Or maybe something even simpler, like hearing birds in the trees outside your window.

Our community offers a sense of place that includes everyone, where people from all walks of life are valued for who they are and the qualities they bring with them.

REVIEWING THE WHITTLESEA 2040 VISION

Following the election of the new Council in October 2024, and in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020*, Council reviewed the *Whittlesea 2040* vision.

Throughout April and May 2025, the vision was reviewed with the new Council group and the broader community. Through further community engagement, including focus groups, in-person pop-ups and via an

online survey, Council sought to understand how the *Whittlesea 2040* vision continues to resonate today.

The feedback confirmed strong ongoing support, with more than 90 per cent of respondents endorsing the vision and its five strategic goals.

Council adopted the reaffirmed vision in June 2025.

Our vision is underpinned by five goals:

Connected community

GOAL 1

Connected community
Our city opens its arms to every resident and is a place where all walks of life are celebrated and supported.

Liveable neighbourhoods

GOAL 2

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

Strong local economy

GOAL 3

Strong local economy
Our city is the smart choice for innovation, business growth and industry investment.

Sustainable environment

GOAL 4

Sustainable environment
Our city’s superb landscapes and natural environment are an enduring source of pride.

High performing organisation

GOAL 5

High performing organisation
Council delivers a range of internal functions and activities enabling the delivery of efficient and effective services and initiatives. Council’s goal is to be a high-performing organisation which delivers best value to the community.



Council holds citizenship ceremonies throughout the year to welcome new citizens to the City of Whittlesea

Our values

Deliver for our community

Our passion for our community energises our work and fuels us to create great experiences and achieve the best outcomes.

We deliver on our promises, hold ourselves to account and continuously improve.

Our decisions are informed by the genuine needs of our current and future communities.

Work as one team

Better outcomes are realised when we work together, across artificial boundaries.

When we collaborate, we build strong trusting relationships, share knowledge and benefit from diverse perspectives.

Care for each other

We want the best for each other.
We demonstrate genuine care and respect, value the unique qualities and strengths of each person and help each other grow.

We build a sense of belonging, wellbeing and compassion.



Mark tests out the play equipment at Hibiscus Park, Bundoora, one of the 256 play spaces across the City of Whittlesea

Major Council facilities

Council office locations

- Civic Centre**
25 Ferres Boulevard, South Morang
9217 2170
- Whittlesea Services Hub**
63 Church Street, Whittlesea
9217 2170
- The Edge (Youth services)**
Westfield Plenty Valley Shopping Centre
415 McDonalds Road, Mill Park
9217 2170
- Epping Depot**
68-96 Houston Street, Epping
9409 9842
- Whittlesea Depot**
15A Millennium Park Drive, Whittlesea
9217 2170

Council facilities

- wat djerring Animal Facility**
20 Companion Place, Epping
8401 6200
- Plenty Ranges Arts and Convention Centre**
35 Ferres Boulevard, South Morang
9217 2317
- Ziebell's Farmhouse Museum and Heritage Gardens**
100 Gardenia Road, Thomastown
9464 5062

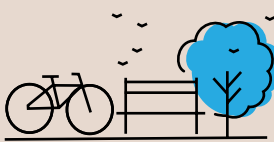
Parks and play spaces in the City of Whittlesea



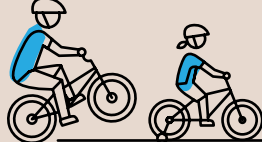
256
play spaces and
playgrounds



2
water play
facilities



2000+
parks and
open spaces



14
wheeled sports
areas, including
BMX, pump track
and learn-to-ride



12
off-leash dog parks



60
exercise areas

For a full list of parks and play spaces across the City of Whittlesea visit whittlesea.vic.gov.au/parks

Major leisure and recreation facilities

- Mill Park Leisure**
33 Morang Drive, Mill Park
8432 7600
- Thomastown Recreation and Aquatic Centre (TRAC)**
54 Main Street, Thomastown
9463 0700
- Whittlesea Swim Centre**
50 Walnut Street, Whittlesea
9716 2137
- Growling Frog Golf Course**
1910 Donnybrook Road, Yan Yean
9716 3477

City of Whittlesea is home to 44 sessional kindergartens and 20 Maternal Child Health Centres



Libraries

- Lalor Library**
2A May Road, Lalor
9465 2353
- Mernda Library**
Shop MM3,
16/180 Riverdale Boulevard,
Mernda
9117 6116
- Mill Park Library**
394 Plenty Road, Mill Park
9437 8189
- Thomastown Library**
52 Main Street, Thomastown
9464 1864
- Whittlesea Library**
57-61 Laurel Street, Whittlesea
9716 3028
- Galada Library Services Hub**
10A Forum Way, Epping
9465 2353
- Kirrip Library Services Hub**
135 De Rossi Boulevard, Wollert
9437 8189
- Mobile Library Services**
Various locations
0419 883 159

Neighbourhood Houses

- Creed’s Farm Living and Learning Centre**
2 Snugburgh Way, Epping
9023 4606
- Greenbrook Community House**
40 McFarlane Crescent, Epping
8401 6261
- Lalor Neighbourhood House**
47A French Street, Lalor
9454 6409
- Mernda Neighbourhood House**
2 Heals Road, Mernda
0475 454 133
- Mill Park Community House**
68 Mill Park Drive, Mill Park
9404 4565
- Thomastown Neighbourhood House**
Thomastown Library,
52 Main Street, Thomastown
0488 224 439
- Whittlesea Neighbourhood House**
92A Church Street, Whittlesea
9716 3361

Community Halls and Activity Centres

- BUNDOORA**
Janefield Community Centre
2 Manchester Crescent, Bundoora
- DONNYBROOK**
Olivine Community Pavilion
2A Eucalyptus Parade, Donnybrook
- DOREEN**
Brookwood Community Centre
25 Hazel Glen Drive, Doreen
- Laurimar Community Activity Centre**
110 Hazel Glen Drive, Doreen
- Painted Hills Community Pavilion**
180 Painted Hills Road, Doreen
- EPPING**
Epping Community Centre
378 Findon Road, Epping
- Epping Memorial Community Hall**
827 High Street, Epping
- Epping Views Family and Community Centre**
15 Lyndarum Drive, Epping
- Galada Community Centre**
10A Forum Way, Epping
- Harvest Home Community Pavilion**
Northfields Street, Epping
- LALOR**
French Street Hall
47A French Street, Lalor
- May Road Senior Citizens Centre**
2B May Road, Lalor
- Mosaic Community Pavilion**
1W Mosaic Drive, Lalor
- MERENDA**
Jindi Family and Community Centre
48 Breadalbane Avenue, Mernda
- Mernda Village Community Activity Centre**
70 Mernda Village Drive, Mernda
- Mernda Social Support Centre**
70 Mernda Village Drive, Mernda
- Waterview Community Pavilion**
60 Waterview Drive, Mernda
- MILL PARK**
Miller Community Centre
11 Mill Park Drive, Mill Park
- SOUTH MORANG**
Riverside Community Activity Centre
8 Doreen Rogen Way, South Morang
- Mill Park Lakes Community Pavilion**
170 The Lakes Boulevard,
South Morang

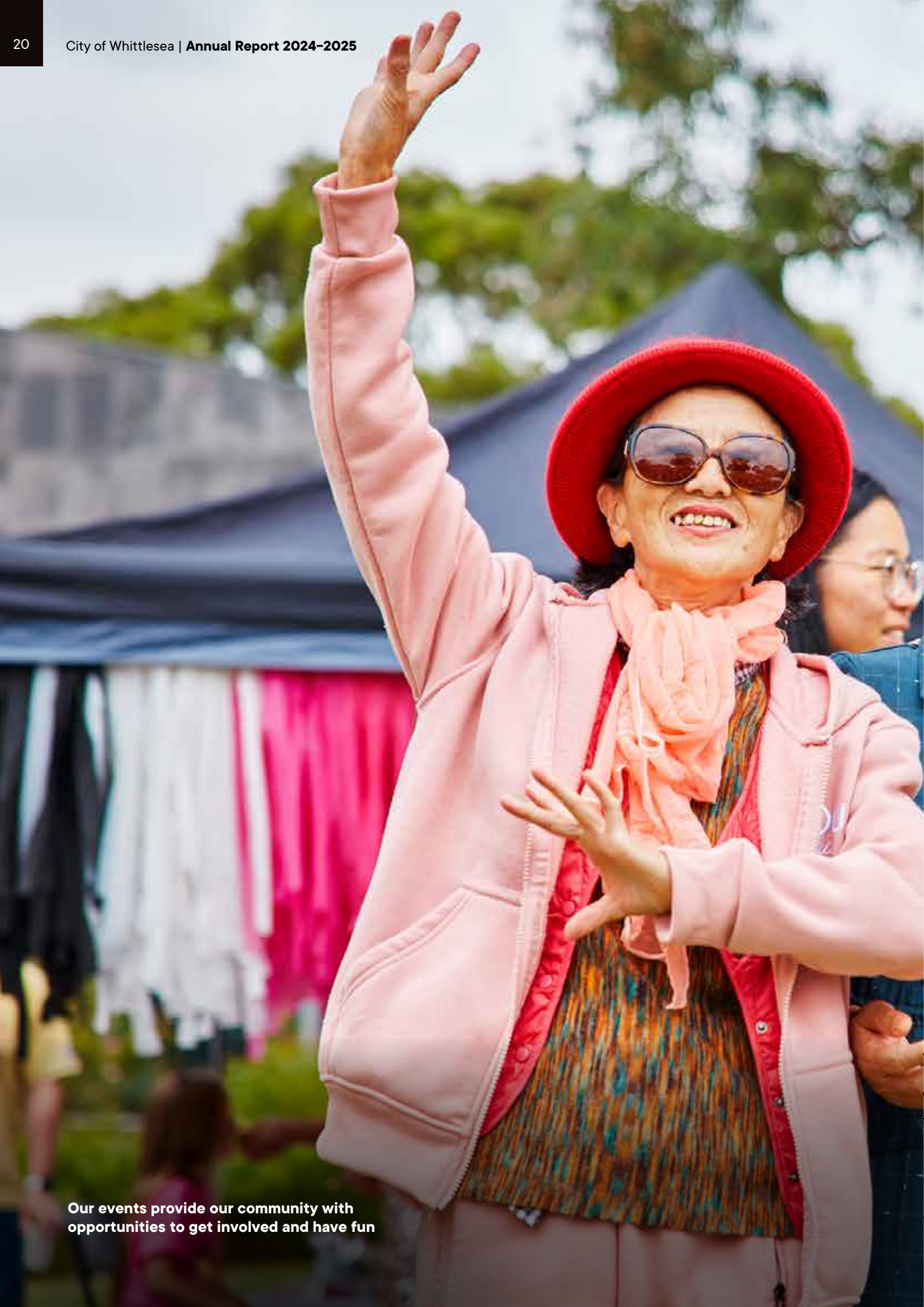
- THOMASTOWN**
Barry Road Community Activity Centre
36 Barry Road, Thomastown
- Nick Ascenzo Community Centre**
2 Boronia Street, Thomastown
- Spring Street Hall**
1 Spring Street, Thomastown
- Main Street Community Pavilion**
52 Main Street, Thomastown
- RGC Cook Community Pavilion**
4-18 Robinvale Avenue, Thomastown
- WHITTLESEA**
Whittlesea Community Activity Centre
57-61 Laurel Street, Whittlesea
- WOLLERT**
Ganbu Gulinj Community Centre
55 Macedon Parade, Wollert
- Kirrip Community Centre**
135 De Rossi Boulevard, Wollert East
- Wollert Community Centre**
525 Epping Road, Wollert

Growling Frog Golf Course, Yan Yean



Galada Community Centre, Epping





Our events provide our community with opportunities to get involved and have fun



THE YEAR IN REVIEW

The City of Whittlesea's Annual Report details our progress towards the objectives and priorities outlines in our Community Plan 2021-2025. The following pages provide a brief summary of our achievements, highlights and challenges in 2024-2025 and our future focus.

 More detailed information can be found in the Report of Operations section from page 103.



City of Whittlesea Councillors visited the site of Mernda's new regional sports precinct, which will feature an indoor stadium with four multipurpose courts and eight outdoor netball courts – a major hub for community sport



A message from our Mayor

On behalf of the City of Whittlesea, I am proud to present the 2024-2025 Annual Report.

This year's theme, *'Building Better, Together,'* reflects our shared commitment to meeting the needs of today while preparing for the opportunities and challenges of tomorrow. With a growing population and diverse community, our focus remains firmly on delivering the infrastructure, services, and programs that support every stage of life ensuring Whittlesea continues to thrive as a place people are proud to call home.

Highlights

This year marked the important return of elected representation to our Council. Eleven Councillors were sworn in to serve our community for the next four years. It has been both a privilege and a responsibility to take up this role, and together we have dedicated ourselves to listening to, engaging with, and learning from our community.

In consultation with our community, we developed our draft Community Plan, which will guide Council's strategic direction over this term and reaffirmed our shared long term vision of *Whittlesea 2040: A place for all*. We have also continued to strengthen our Community Grants Program, which provided \$2.66 million in funding to 174 local organisations, sporting clubs, and community group applicants. These grants help deliver local programs, and events that enrich daily life across our municipality.

Investing in community infrastructure

Council continues to invest in facilities that bring people together, support wellbeing, and foster a strong sense of belonging. Key milestones this year included:

- **Mernda regional sports precinct, stage two:** Construction is now underway on an indoor stadium with four multipurpose sports courts and eight outdoor netball courts an investment in health, activity, and community connection
- **Aboriginal Gathering Place:** Completed works have delivered a welcoming, inclusive, and culturally safe space in the heart of bunjil nganga Parkland (Quarry Hills), honouring the heritage and traditions of our region's First Peoples; and

- **new community centres:** Ongoing construction in Donnybrook and West Wollert will ensure growing families and residents in these areas have access to vital facilities that support community life.

Engagement with our community

Our commitment to listening and learning from residents has never been stronger. This year:

- Coffee with Council provides relaxed, informal opportunities to hear directly from residents
- Connect with Council sessions allowed Councillors and officers to meet with community groups and understand their priorities
- Council undertook consultation on 37 projects, many involving multiple phases, ensuring that residents' voices continue to shape the future of Whittlesea.

Looking ahead

We know that cost of living pressures are being felt by many across our municipality. Council will continue to focus on essential service delivery and will work closely with the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) and other councils to advocate strongly to the State Government particularly for reform of the Emergency State Volunteer Fund to better support our communities.

As we move forward, our focus remains on creating a city that offers opportunities for all providing safe, welcoming, and vibrant spaces where people can live, work, learn, and play locally.

Gratitude

I extend my sincere thanks to the community for your trust and support of the new Council. I also acknowledge the dedication and professionalism of our council staff, whose work underpins everything we deliver. Together, Councillors, businesses, staff, and residents are shaping a stronger future for the City of Whittlesea.

Cr Martin Taylor
Mayor, City of Whittlesea



City of Whittlesea Mayor Cr Martin Taylor and CEO Craig Lloyd congratulate the winner of the 2025 Innovation and Enterprise Award at this year's Business Awards



A message from our CEO

Welcome to the City of Whittlesea Annual Report 2024-2025, outlining our organisation's key achievements and financial performance over the past 12 months.

The theme of this year's report highlights our focus on building what is needed for our community to thrive. From building places and spaces across the city, to building our community's knowledge and capacity to support each other, we are delivering for our residents and businesses.

With the return of an elected Council in October, a comprehensive Councillor induction program was delivered to support the transition of our new Council group and provide them with the tools and information they need in their new roles.

Highlights

Our extensive capital works program has included more than 113 projects across our municipality.

This includes upgrades to shopping precinct streetscapes such as Gorge Road in South Morang, upgrades to sports grounds, including the new FIFA-accredited synthetic soccer pitch at Partridge Recreation Reserve in Lalor, and new walking and cycling paths, such as the stunning trails through the bunjil nganga Parkland (Quarry Hills).

We established a waste taskforce in response to the ongoing problem of managing illegally dumped rubbish in our municipality. The taskforce focused on educating the community on the best options to dispose of waste, holding offenders publicly accountable and improving services.

To ensure long-term financial sustainability, Council adopted the Financial Plan 2025-26 to 2034-35 and the Revenue and Rating Plan 2025-26 to 2028-29, providing the foundation for Council's financial management and future planning.

Customer service

The launch of our new, user-friendly website and customer portal are making it easier for our community to interact with us and find the information they need. The customer portal enables self-service for requests, meaning that more transactions can now be completed online. These platforms, as well as our continued focus on customer service, has resulted in customer satisfaction scores of 80 per cent.

Sustainability

We are continuing to focus on building a greener and more sustainable city for our residents, planting more than 8,200 trees across our municipality. We have partnered with schools, government departments and community groups to support revegetation and land management and have hosted 35 environmental events to support our community learn and do more to protect our environment.

The year ahead

We will continue to focus on our customer service, and will increase our digital offering, making it quicker and easier for our community to complete transactions with us.

With housing affordability an ongoing issue, we will work to deliver an affordable housing plan that will help offer diverse housing options for our community. In line with this, we will also commence construction of housing development projects that will provide affordable homes in our municipality. And with many major projects nearing completion or about to begin construction, we will continue to build the facilities our community wants and needs.

I would like to thank our dedicated staff for their ongoing efforts to serve our community and I look forward to the year ahead as we continue to deliver the best outcomes for our residents, businesses and visitors.

Craig Lloyd
CEO, City of Whittlesea



Council encourages active travel through events like Biketober, bike skills and maintenance sessions and improved wayfinding on shared paths

Our Community Plan 2021-2025

Council’s Community Plan 2021-2025 builds on the long-term community vision – *Whittlesea 2040: A place for all* and incorporates various other Council plans including the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan, Disability Action Plan and Pandemic Recovery Plan actions into the one overarching document.

Developed following extensive community consultation, the Community Plan focuses on public safety, festivals, events, social connection and sports facilities as well as new and upgraded parks and playgrounds, transport improvements, clean streets and road safety.

Now into the final year of the plan, Council has been working to make the City of Whittlesea a smart choice for business growth, innovation and investment, enabling opportunities for local work and education as well as focusing on making it easier for our residents to interact with us.

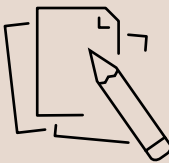
There has also been an emphasis on waste management, biodiversity and increasing the number of trees across our municipality.

 View our Community Plan 2021-2025 at whittlesea.vic.gov.au/communityplan

Community Plan 2021-2025 highlights

Over the past four years, our Community Plan has guided meaningful progress across all key initiatives, reflecting our commitment to building a stronger, more connected community.

Highlights of our achievements over the four years include:



360+
actions completed

We successfully delivered more than 360 targeted actions, each aligned with our key initiatives, all completed within the four-year timeframe.

**Whittlesea
2040**
A place for all

key initiatives
comprehensively covered

Every key initiative was addressed with at least one dedicated action, ensuring balanced progress across all focus areas.

Demonstrated impact

Trends in our *Whittlesea 2040* indicators over the past four years highlight the positive impact of this plan, reflecting improvements across social, economic, and environmental dimensions.

Key achievements by goal:



GOAL 1

98
Connected community actions completed

Established the **Aboriginal Gathering Place** and expanded our **Community Grants Program**.



GOAL 2

73
Liveable neighbourhoods actions completed

Constructed new facilities such as the **Kirrip Community Centre**, improved local streetscapes including the **Gorge Road shopping precinct** and upgraded open spaces such as the **Whittlesea Public Gardens** redevelopment.



GOAL 3

56
Strong local economy actions completed

Provided consistent **support to local businesses** throughout the challenges of the pandemic and through the recovery.



GOAL 4

69
Sustainable environment actions completed

Delivered the **Green Wedge Management Plan** and actions in our **Rethinking Waste Plan**, reinforcing our environmental stewardship.



GOAL 5

65
High-performing organisation actions completed

Developed a **Financial Hardship Plan** to support community resilience and improved customer service to make it easier for our community to interact with us.

The following pages outline some key achievements in 2024-2025, under each of our five goals.

Community Plan Action Plan

To support the implementation of the Community Plan, yearly Community Actions Plans are developed.

The action plan outlines the key actions we will focus on delivering throughout the financial year.

2024-2025 at a glance

57 of 58 actions were completed for the 2024-2025 financial year with one ongoing.

GOAL 1

Connected community

Our city opens its arms to every resident and is a place where all walks of life are celebrated and supported.



Whittlesea
2040
A place for all

Key achievements

- Completed the building works of the Aboriginal Gathering Place in bunjil nganga Parkland (Quarry Hills), creating a welcoming, inclusive and culturally safe space for the region's First Peoples.
- Commenced construction on the second stage of the regional sports precinct in Mernda. This stage will deliver an indoor stadium with four multipurpose sports courts and eight outdoor netball courts with lighting.
- Completed the redevelopment of the Epping Community Services Hub, delivering additional consultation rooms and breakout spaces to expand access to vital services including employment, disability, financial, mental health, family violence support, emergency relief and family counselling.
- Progressed construction of the new Murnong Community Centre in Donnybrook. The centre will include two kindergarten rooms, a mini-library, two meeting rooms, a community lounge and a Changing Places facility.
- Adopted the Asset Plan 2025-35, outlining how Council will strategically maintain and manage its \$4 billion portfolio of community assets over the next 10 years.
- Provided more than \$2.5 million in community grants to support community groups, sporting groups, businesses, individuals and emergency services.
- Ran a successful animal adoption campaign for wat djerring Animal Facility. The half-price adoption promotion ran from 1 April – 30 June 2025 and resulted in 969 animals rehomed during this period.
- Continued to deliver regular Whittlesea Disability Network meetings, forums and activities, providing participants with opportunities to network and provide feedback to Council on issues impacting people with a disability, carers and other stakeholders.
- Launched a creative program at PRACC, with a line-up of shows spanning multiple genres and performance styles – from music, comedy, dance and children's theatre to performance opportunities for local artists.
- Supported the rollout of increased kindergarten hours for eligible families, collaborating with sessional services to ensure 93 per cent will offer 15 hours of 3-year-old kindergarten by 2026.

- Partnered with Foodbank Vic to bring their Mobile Supermarket Bus to Thomastown, supporting up to 140 families per week to access fresh and healthy produce.
- Commenced the volunteer program within the Home and Community Care Program for Younger People, recruiting 16 new volunteers, who assist with a range of social support programs and activities.
- Developed and piloted new community programs to support local First Peoples communities, including Healthy Households, Employment Pathways and Thriving Together.

Key challenges

- Delays and changes to implementation dates proved challenging in preparing for the Commonwealth Government's Aged Care Reforms.
- Ongoing challenges of keeping pace with a rapidly growing community in the delivery of services.
- Reduction in funding for cost-sharing arrangements with other levels of government.

Future focus

- Formally open and deliver co-designed programs and activities at the Aboriginal Gathering Place.
- Deliver and facilitate expansion of programs and services that keep older residents independent, connected and supported close to home. This includes implementation of requirements under the *New Aged Care Act 2024*, scheduled to commence on 1 November 2025.
- Advocate for funding for a dedicated youth hub and increased youth friendly spaces throughout the municipality.
- Implement the Creative Plan to deliver a cohesive arts, culture and events service.

 Find out more on pages 106-121

GOAL 2

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.



Whittlesea
2040
A place for all

Key achievements

- Completed the construction of the signalised intersection at Plenty Road and Everton Drive in Mernda. The road project is the first stage of the regional sports precinct in Mernda.
- Completed construction of wetlands, boardwalk, shelter, and public toilet at Granite Hills Major Community Park, with playground and landscaping to be finished ahead of the park's late 2025 opening.
- Commenced development of the Edgars Creek Corridor Landscape Improvement Plan, a 20km long corridor running through four suburbs in Whittlesea.
- Developed the Mill Park Place Framework, which sets out the long-term initiatives and future improvements to ensure Mill Park is a welcoming and well-connected suburb.
- Adopted the Integrated Transport Plan 2024-2034, outlining actions to boost walking and cycling, advocate for safer public transport, improve road safety, support efficient freight movement and provide accessible parking for people with mobility needs.
- Adopted the VR Michael Reserve Master Plan, outlining future upgrades to improve the functionality and accessibility of the reserve and create a welcoming and enjoyable space for all.
- Completed new walking and cycling trails at bunjil nganga Parkland (Quarry Hills). The trails range from 300 metres to 1.5 kilometres, adding approximately 4.5 kilometres to the existing network.
- Commenced construction of the West Wollert Community Centre. The centre will include kindergarten rooms, maternal and child health rooms and a mini-branch library.
- Approved planning controls to guide the development of new housing and employment opportunities in the Epping Metropolitan Activity Centre.
- Consulted with the community on Lauries Field, Edgars Creek Corridor, Fortress Park, and Hill Top Park to inform the development of master plans and landscape improvement plans.
- Selected Beyond Housing as our preferred community housing organisation to deliver and manage affordable housing at Ashline Street, Wollert.

- Promoted active transport by delivering bike maintenance workshops and skills training for more than 50 community members and two schools.
- Established a Waste Taskforce to reduce illegal construction waste dumping through targeted operations, rapid response teams, surveillance and community promotion of sustainable disposal practices.
- Reconstructed over 5 kilometres of roads and 7.4 kilometres of kerb, and completed more than 9 kilometres of road resurfacing works.

Key challenges

- Significant changes to the planning system as a result of State Government Planning Reform Program.

Future focus

- Deliver an affordable housing plan which defines Council's role and identifies associated actions over the short, medium and longer term that deliver diverse housing opportunities for our community.
- Commence construction of Ashline Street Affordable Housing Project in Wollert, providing affordable homes and a community pocket park.
- Delivered the Johnson's Road, Mernda development project, comprising 37 new homes, including six affordable homes.
- Continue to deliver bicycle education programs to encourage active travel in the community.
- Commence a review of the Whittlesea Planning Scheme to ensure planning policies continue to deliver high quality design and sustainable developments.
- Continue to develop long-term master plans and landscape improvement plans for parks and reserves, including RGC Cook Recreation Reserve, and Findon Recreation Reserve.

 Find out more on pages 122-133

GOAL 3

Strong local economy

Our city is the smart choice for innovation, business growth and industry investment.



Whittlesea
2040
A place for all

Key achievements

- Delivered more than \$310,000 worth of Business Grants to support businesses wanting to expand or relocate. As part of this program, businesses are supported to relocate to the City of Whittlesea's commercial and industrial precincts, with businesses matching the funding amount received dollar-for-dollar.
- Hosted the third annual City of Whittlesea Business Awards in May 2025 to celebrate and recognise business excellence. There were 26 finalists with eight awards presented.
- Increased the Business Network membership to more than 550 members providing businesses learning and opportunities to network.
- Launched the Explore Whittlesea website, showcasing all the things to see and do within the City of Whittlesea for visitors and residents.
- Continued to support the Business Advisory Panel to enable business members to work collaborate with Council in delivering a Strong Local Economy.
- Hosted the second Food Discovery zone at Council's Community Festival, showcasing local food and beverage producers, manufacturers and suppliers.
- Facilitated 300 Business Concierge enquiries providing assistance and advice to new and existing businesses.
- Partnered with Melbourne North Food Group to deliver the Food Waste Summit in May 2025, bringing together businesses and organisations to share insights and practical examples on incorporating more circular practices into their operations.
- Ten local residents successfully completed Council's Inclusive Employment Program, providing employment opportunities for local people facing barriers to employment.

- Worked with Hume City Council, Mitchell Shire Council, Stockland and the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation to make an application for funding through the Federal Governments Urban Precincts and Partnerships Program to progress the master planning for the Cloverton Metropolitan Activity Centre.
- Held a Food and Beverage event focused on key topics such as automation, artificial intelligence and the role of technology in improving traceability and efficiency across the supply chain. The event provided valuable insights and opportunities for local businesses to engage, learn and prepare for the future of food production and distribution.

Key challenges

- Increased costs associated with operating a business
- Suitable connectivity and transport links to employment precincts and residential areas.

Future focus

- Develop the Strong Local Economy Strategy 2026-2036.
- Continue to advocate for business prosperity through improved connectivity, transport and employment land development.
- During its planning phase, advocate for community outcomes for the the Intermodal Freight Precinct in Beveridge. These include protecting the local environment, ensuring accessible open space, protecting heritage assets, ensuring upgrades to the road network and increased land for employment.

 Find out more on pages 134-144

GOAL 4

Sustainable environment

Our city’s superb landscapes and natural environment are an enduring source of pride.



Whittlesea
2040
A place for all

Key achievements

- Successfully rolled out the replacement of rubbish bin lids to red lids, in line with the Victorian Government’s new standard bin lid colours.
- Implemented an illegal dumping Waste Taskforce, focusing on reducing the impact of illegal dumping on our community through improving services, community education and enforcement activities.
- Progressed the upgrade of Peter Hopper Lake in Mill Park, which included the removal of the central island and construction of a gross pollutant trap to capture contaminants like rubbish and leaves before they enter the lake.
- Partnered with 20 schools and kinders to implement the Seedlings for Schools ‘Buzz Stop’ program.
- Supported 2,041 hectares of private land conservation and land management efforts through grants and rebates.
- Hosted 35 environmental events with the local community.
- Implemented a new kerbside waste diversion plan including supporting the community to learn about what goes in what bin.
- Continuing to partner with Melbourne Water to increase revegetation along waterways, improve outcomes from urban developments and support renewal of wetlands and water sensitive urban design assets.
- Partnered with the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA) and technical consultants to pilot new remote sensing technology to detect illegal vegetation removal.
- Commencing the bunjil nganga Releaf revegetation project.
- Transitioning Council buildings to renewable sustainable energy sources, including Whittlesea Pre-School and Blossom Park Kindergarten.
- Delivered lighting upgrades to LED lighting at Mernda Village Community Centre and several kindergartens.

- Transitioned to digital waste and recycling vouchers and expanded the service to include all residents, including those renting. The vouchers provide residents with free and discounted options to dispose of their waste.

Key challenges

- Ongoing challenges with illegal dumping in our community.
- Increases in the State Government’s Landfill Levy which results in higher cost to deliver the waste services.
- Ensuring that developments are delivered using environmental sensitive urban design, protecting waterways, plants, animals and reducing carbon emissions

Future focus

- Supporting the community to improve the energy efficiency of their homes and businesses.
- Continue to deliver improvements to the health of waterways and wetlands through the application of integrated water management in new developments.
- Continue to improve the sustainability of Council’s services through the implementation of Sustainable Service Improvement Plan.
- Continue to educate the community on the responsible use of Council waste and recycling services to reduce illegal dumping.
- Continue to deliver the annual tree planting programs for main roads, residential streets, parks, creek corridors and conservation reserves.
- Ongoing partnership with the Wurundjeri Narrap Ranger team to continue to restore the health of the bunjil nganga Parkland (Quarry Hills).

 Find out more on pages 145–153

GOAL 5

High performing organisation

Council delivers a range of internal functions and activities enabling the delivery of efficient and effective services and initiatives. Council’s goal is to be a high-performing organisation which delivers best value to the community.



Whittlesea
2040
A place for all

Key achievements

- Improved customer service performance through the launch of a new customer portal, enabling self-service for requests. This resulted in customer satisfaction scores of 80%.
- The draft Community Plan 2025-2029 and Community Action Plan 2025-2026 were developed following extensive consultation, with input from over 1,300 community members. The drafts will undergo a final round of community feedback before being presented for adoption in October 2025.
- A comprehensive Councillor induction program was delivered following the October 2025 Local Government elections.
- Launched a new multi-purpose vehicle to deliver accessible community engagement which will allow people to easily have their say on projects that impact them. The vehicle will also be used to support, emergency preparedness and Council’s vibrant community arts and events program.
- Adopted the Financial Plan 2025-26 to 2034-35, the Budget 2025-2026, and the Revenue and Rating Plan 2025-26 to 2028-29, providing the foundation for Council’s financial management and future planning.
- Adopted Council’s Pricing Policy, providing a strong and consistent framework for setting fees and charges.
- Identified and completed Gender Impact Assessments, with the most significant one being for the draft Community Plan 2025-2029.
- Establishment of three more Employee Representative Groups. Joining our Pride Working Group, there is now also the Multicultural, First Peoples and Disability groups, providing staff an opportunity to continue to foster diversity and inclusivity in the workplace.
- Conducted a comprehensive audit of Council’s security systems and delivered on high-priority action items including security enhancements at Civic Precinct and Community Activity Centres.

- Launched three accessible websites – the main City of Whittlesea site plus subsites for local tourism and the Plenty Ranges Arts and Convention Centre – improving community access to services, events and information.
- Progressed a program of alignment with ISO45001 with a review of core safety management system processes for incident management, risk, audit and corrective action.
- Successfully implemented a cyber security benchmark framework with integrated Data Loss Prevention, upgraded core network infrastructure, and modernised all server operating systems to align with Essential Eight Maturity Level 2 compliance requirements.
- Roll-out of a new platform to manage customer enquiries, enabling better oversight and tracking of requests.

Key challenges

- While there has been a slight reduction in the Lost Time Injury rate we are still seeing trends with regards to occupational violence, vehicle incidents and manual handling that will be a focus for the next improvement program. A review of our Risk Registers anticipation of the impending introduction of the Victorian Government’s Psychosocial Amendment Bill later this year will also be a priority.

Future focus

- Increase our digital offering to enable self-service and make it easier for our community to complete transactions with us online.
- Development and implementation of Asset Management Plans across all asset categories.

 Find out more on pages 154–163

Highlight of events

Our community enjoys getting together to celebrate all that the City of Whittlesea has to offer. The following are just some of the vibrant community events held throughout 2024-2025 in the City of Whittlesea.



JULY

- NAIDOC Week**
7 July – 14 July 2024
- Community members joined attendees from the Whittlesea Reconciliation Group and Whittlesea Aboriginal Gathering Place Advisory Group to celebrate the key role First Peoples Elders play in our communities.
- Australian bush comfort and confidence sessions
 - Local Government candidate information session
 - National Tree Day



AUGUST

- Walking Thomastown**
31 August 2024
- This free night-time event transformed Thomastown into a glowing wonderland of vibrant lights, celebrating the end of winter in style.
- Visitors enjoyed music from local artists, cultural performances celebrating our diverse heritage, a creative lantern-making activity and more as they meandered through local attractions.



SEPTEMBER

- Emergency Services Expo and 28th annual Blessing of the Fleet**
7 September 2024
- The event offered a heartfelt, multi-faith service for our dedicated emergency service teams as they prepared for the upcoming fire season. An Emergency Services Expo followed the service, with a free sausage sizzle, coffee carts and kids’ entertainment, including face painting. Attendees also had the opportunity to get up close to emergency services vehicles.



OCTOBER

No events were held in October due to the Election Period.



NOVEMBER

- Young at Heart Games**
12 November – 10 December 2024
- As part of the Seniors Festival, the festival featured exciting lineup of activities suitable for all abilities, including tennis, walking football, 10-pin bowling, carpet bowls, golf, pickleball and more.
- Meals for seniors cooking program
 - EnviroFest



DECEMBER

- Carols by Candlelight**
13 December 2024
- The City of Whittlesea’s annual Carols by Candlelight kicked off the festive season with an energetic performance from Team Dream, followed by classic carols from the Diamond Valley Brass Band and a 65-member community choir, along with roving entertainment, face painting, a twilight market and a visit from Santa.
- Connecting through art – International Day of People with Disability event



To view upcoming events in the City of Whittlesea, visit whittlesea.vic.gov.au/events



JANUARY

- Annual Art Exhibition**
17 January – 7 February 2025
- Showcasing the talents of 140 local artists, this exhibition presented an inspiring collection of works centred around the theme *Hope: Exploring the spectrum of possibility*. Artists of all ages and diverse backgrounds explored the concept of hope through their creations, offering the community a positive and immersive experience.
- Yarning circle
 - School holiday activities



FEBRUARY

- Circular Fashion Market**
8 February 2025
- This pre-loved clothing market offers a unique shopping experience that combines affordability, sustainability and style. Community members can get a shopping fix while helping reduce the environmental effects of fast fashion.
- Conservation walk and talk series
 - Donnybrook recycling pop-up event
 - Kindergarten open days



MARCH

- 2024 Community Festival**
16 March 2025
- Despite the rainy weather, crowds turned out for this year’s Community Festival. This free event featured fun activities for all ages, including live music, cultural performances, cooking workshops, food trucks and a community market. Animal lovers also got to explore the Pet Expo.
- Cultural Diversity Week events
 - PRACC – Silvie Paladino, Morning Melodies
 - Pop-up bush playgroup



APRIL

- Nature Discovery Walk**
6 April 2025
- Featuring a range of fun and interactive children’s activities, families were able to participate on a facilitated nature walk through a local conservation reserve and learn about the flora and fauna in the local area.
- Coffee with Council
 - PRACC – Glenn Starr, Morning Melodies
 - PRACC – Trash Test Dummies school holiday event
 - School holiday activities



MAY

- Bringing Up Kids Expo**
7 May 2025
- Local family support agencies came together to provide residents with information on services, programs, and events in the City of Whittlesea. The free, family-friendly event included face painting and entertainment for young children.
- Pottery workshop – National Volunteers Week event
 - Neighbourhood House Week
 - Olives to Oil
 - National Volunteers Week events
 - Circular Fashion Market
 - Scraps to Soil Compost Festival



JUNE

- Refugee Week event**
19 June 2025
- This fun, free community event recognised the remarkable contributions refugees have made to our community and featured music, dance, multicultural performances, a cultural fashion parade, guest speakers, community displays and more.
- PRACC – Rachel Beck, Morning Melodies
 - PRACC – CAPOW: Moments of Magic
 - Connect with Council – grant recipients celebration event



Major capital works

In the 2024-2025 financial year, the City of Whittlesea spent \$107.23 million as part of our capital works program. This included more than 113 projects to build and upgrade community centres, sporting fields, playgrounds, roads, bike paths and footpaths across our municipality, providing our community with facilities and infrastructure to enjoy now and into the future.

Building a place for connection and inclusion

Construction of the Aboriginal Gathering Place in the heart of bunjil nganga Parkland (Quarry Hills) has entered its final stages and is expected to open in late 2025.

The Aboriginal Gathering Place will create a welcoming, inclusive and culturally safe space,

with activities, programs and services to First Peoples and the wider community. The centre features a range of multipurpose spaces, including large community events spaces, consulting suites and quiet rooms and an amphitheatre and yarning circle outside.

Approximate project value: \$8.5 million

The Aboriginal Gathering Place, South Morang is expected to be complete in late 2025

Completed projects

Below is a snapshot of some of the projects completed in 2024-2025, some projects that are in progress and highlights of upcoming projects.



Partridge Recreation Reserve upgrade, Lalor

The conversion of a natural grass pitch into a new FIFA-accredited synthetic soccer pitch with improved drainage, fencing and the latest in LED sports lighting was completed in June 2025. The upgrade has increased usage from about 20 hours a week to more than 40 hours a week and reduced training and match day cancellations.

This \$2.6 million project was fully funded by the City of Whittlesea.

Riverside Reserve redevelopment, South Morang

This redevelopment transformed the reserve into a modern and welcoming space for people of all ages. Completed in September 2024, the new playground includes a large play tower, swing sets, an inclusive roundabout which can accommodate wheelchairs, nature play area, basketball half-court, walking paths and a shelter, barbecue and picnic setting.

This \$898,000 project includes \$300,000 from the Victorian Government Parks Revitalisation Grants Program.



bunjil nganga Parkland (Quarry Hills) Connecting Trails, South Morang

Approximately 3.6 kilometres of walking and cycling paths were constructed through the parkland’s natural environment, allowing visitors to enjoy the landscape and views of the City of Whittlesea’s premier open space. The trails opened in late 2024.

This \$2.4 million project includes \$1 million from the Victorian Government’s Suburban Parks Program and \$322,000 from the Growing Suburbs Fund.

Gorge Road shopping precinct streetscape upgrade, South Morang

Completed in May 2025, this project delivered an expanded outdoor dining area with seating, tables, bins and bike racks, making the precinct a more attractive place to spend time. In addition, changes to the parking arrangements as well as the installation of a raised pedestrian crossing and new streetlights has improved access and safety at the site.

This \$1.2 million project includes \$425,000 from the Victorian Government’s Growing Suburbs Fund.



Doreen Dirt Jumps, Painted Hills Recreation Reserve, Doreen

The municipality’s first dirt jumps track opened in September 2024 and featured courses designed to cater to beginner, intermediate and advanced riders. The track is part of a 12-month pilot program to gauge the level of interest in dirt jumps in the community. If successful, the jumps will be made permanent.

This \$275,000 was fully funded by the City of Whittlesea.

Alexander Avenue shopping precinct upgrade, Thomastown

Improvements to this shopping precinct have made it a safer, greener and more inviting space for locals and visitors. The upgrade was completed in June 2025 and included a new shopfront footpath, raised pedestrian crossing, seating and picnic settings, garden beds, new lighting and improved pedestrian and cycling paths.

This \$1 million project included \$200,000 from the Victorian Government’s Living Local Suburban Grant.



Plenty Road and Everton Drive intersection, Mernda

The extension of Everton Drive to create a new intersection at Plenty Road will help ease congestion around Mernda and provide access to the future sports precinct. The traffic light-controlled intersection was completed in June 2025.

This \$7.9 million project includes a \$5 million contribution from the Victorian Government’s Growth Areas Infrastructure Contribution Fund delivered as part of the \$10 million Regional Sports Precinct transport infrastructure project.

Baltrum Drive extension, Wollert

This 210-meter-long two-lane road extension will help reduce traffic congestion near the newly established Wollert Central Primary and Wirrigirri Primary schools. The project, which was completed in March 2025, also includes the installation of street lighting and concrete drainage.

This \$2.7 million project includes contributions from the Victorian School Building Authority and Melbourne Water.



Hill Top Splash Park and Playground, Doreen

The new playground includes a large play unit with slides, climbing nets and trampoline, nature play, cubby and more. The park’s splash pad spans about 150 square metres and features jets, misters and water channels for interactive play.

This \$2.6 million project included \$1.5 million from the Australian Government’s Investing in our Communities Program and \$500,000 from the Victorian Government’s Open Space for Everyone – Better Parks and Playgrounds Program.

Henderson Creek Wetland Park and Playground, South Morang

A new play and recreation space was completed in mid-2025. The upgrade includes a modern playground, fitness equipment, a sheltered seating area and natural play elements. In addition, new pathways and a shared user path were also installed.

This \$500,000 project was funded by the Victorian Government’s Open Space for Everyone – Better Parks and Playgrounds Program.



Dog parks

A new off-leash dog park at Allumba Park, Wollert and an upgraded off-leash dog park at Whittlesea Public Gardens, Lalor were completed in May 2025.

The parks include a fully fenced area with a quiet zone, shelters, drinking fountains and park furniture.

The Allumba Park project received \$500,000 and the Whittlesea Public Gardens project \$340,000 from the Victorian Government’s Open Space for Everyone – New and Upgraded Dog Parks Program. The City of Whittlesea contributed \$80,000 to the Whittlesea Public Gardens dog park project

Projects in progress

Regional Sports Precinct, Mernda

Representing Council’s single largest investment in social infrastructure, the precinct will include an indoor stadium with four multipurpose sports courts, eight outdoor netball courts with lighting, as well as changerooms, reception, outdoor pavilion, car park and landscaping.

Earthworks to prepare the site for construction began in September 2024 and were completed in early 2025.

Construction of the sports court component began in June 2025 following the awarding of a \$42.14 million contract. This stage will deliver the indoor stadium and outdoor netball courts with lighting.

The Australian Government has committed \$11.5 million towards the construction of the indoor stadium and outdoor courts, while the Victorian Government has committed \$10 million towards transport infrastructure and a further \$10 million for the indoor stadium.

Granite Hills Major Community Park, South Morang

Construction on this major community park continues, with work expected to be completed in late 2025.

The new park will include an adventure playground, giant slides, lawn maze, nature and water play, walking trails, an open-air pavilion and more.

This \$8 million project includes \$2.5 million from the Victorian Government’s Growing Suburbs Fund.

Peter Hopper Lake, Mill Park

The second stage of the revitalisation project for Peter Hopper Lake commenced in January 2025 and is expected to be complete in late 2025.

This stage includes the removal of the jetties and central island, construction of a new pollutant trap, sediment basin, raingarden and floating nesting platform and installation of pumps to recirculate the water.

The work will help restore the water quality and ensure the lake can remain a place for the community and wildlife to enjoy.

This \$4.8 million project includes \$2 million from the Australian Government’s Urban Rivers and Catchments Program.

Murnong Community Centre, Donnybrook

This new community centre will cater for the rising demand for three and four-year-old kindergarten programs in the fast-growing north.

The centre will include two modern kindergarten rooms, a mini-branch library, two meeting rooms, a community lounge and a Changing Places facility.

Construction is expected to be complete by late 2025, and be open from early 2026.

This \$11.4 million project includes the following funding from the Victorian Government – \$4.5 million from the Building Blocks Program; \$2 million from the Growing Suburbs Fund; \$709,000 from the Living Libraries Infrastructure Program and \$180,000 from the Changing Places Program.

West Wollert Community Centre, Wollert

Work is continuing on this new community centre, which will provide a welcoming space for people of all ages and abilities to access vital services.

The centre will have a three-room kindergarten creating 198 new places, two Maternal and Child Health Services consulting suites, mini-branch library, as well as a community hall, kitchen, lounge activity room and garden.

Construction began in April 2025 and is expected to be finished in early 2027.

This \$16.2 million project includes \$6.75 million from the Victorian Government’s Building Blocks Fund and \$1.5 million from its Growing Suburbs Fund, and \$168,663 from Melbourne Water to deliver paving within the car park.

Reid Street Car Park upgrade, South Morang

The car park upgrade follows the recent completion of the Gorge Road streetscape upgrade and will improve safety and accessibility for people using the shopping precinct.

The project includes an expanded car park to 85 spaces, replacement of existing lights with energy efficient LEDs and the addition of new trees to provide natural shade.

The work is expected to be completed in late 2025.

This \$700,000 project is fully funded by the City of Whittlesea.

Upcoming projects

Mill Park Lakes Playspace, South Morang

Works will include an upgrade to the play space, picnic area, improving path connections, landscaping, fitness equipment.

Project value: Approximately \$1 million

Reid Street Playground, South Morang

The park upgrade completes the Gorge Road and Reid Street shopping precinct works. Improvements include upgrades to the playground, footpaths, park furniture and landscaping to create an area for social gathering and play.

Project value: \$400,000 including \$200,000 from the Victorian Government’s Living Local Suburban Grant Program

Stables Kindergarten redevelopment, Mill Park

Redevelopment work at this site will include a new two room kindergarten facility, outdoor play area, car park and accessible pathways.

Project value: \$5.58 million project includes \$4 million from the Victorian Government’s Building Blocks Program

Cerridwen Park, Epping North

The new park will feature a multi-use court, play space, lighting, seating, shelters and tree planting, creating spaces for recreation and community connection.

Project value: This \$400,000 project includes \$200,000 from the Victorian Government’s Growing Suburbs Fund

Huskisson Recreation Reserve, Lalor

This upgrade includes the construction of a new multi-purpose pavilion, new tennis courts with lighting, connecting paths and furniture, an upgraded car park, landscaping and utility upgrades.

Project value: Approximately \$8.2 million

Whittlesea Township Park, Whittlesea

Improvement works will continue in the park by creating a forecourt and pedestrian access to the new multi-use court in AF Walker Reserve, a wide walking path and seating between Beech Street and Laurel Street bridge and planting of the 70 Tree Avenue in collaboration with the Whittlesea Showgrounds Committee of Management.

Project value: Approximately \$880,000

Johnsons Road residential development, Mernda

Subdivision of land at 17-19 Johnsons Road, Mernda to create 37 new housing lots, of which six will be reserved for affordable housing, to help meet the growing need for housing in the suburb. Works will also include the urbanisation of Johnsons Road, shared pathways, public open space and preservation of mature trees.

Project value: This \$8.13 million project includes \$7.13 million from the Australian Government’s Housing Support Program

McDonalds Road bicycle path, Epping

Construction of a bicycle path and raised crossings along McDonalds Road from Scarborough Drive to improve connectivity between Epping and Plenty Valley.

Project value: Approximately \$1.5 million

Yan Yean Pipe Track, Mill Park

Continue construction of the shared path from Childs Road to Centenary Drive, Mill Park.

Project value: \$1.7 million

Darebin Creek Shared User Path, Epping

Extension to the Darebin Creek Trail from Greenbrook Drive to Epping Station creating a wide path and road crossing facilities to improve safety, connectivity and higher usage of the trail.

Project value: \$800,000 fully funded by Victorian Government’s Growth Areas Infrastructure Contribution Fund

Ferres Boulevard Active Travel Upgrades, South Morang

Upgrade of an existing footpath to a three-metre-wide shared user path between McDonalds Road and Findon Road improving connectivity and safety for cyclists.

Project value: \$800,000 Victorian Government’s Growth Areas Infrastructure Contribution Fund

 Find out more about our projects at whittlesea.vic.gov.au/majorprojects



Framed view through South Morang toward Melbourne CBD from one of the new shelters within bunjil nganga Parkland (Quarry Hills)

Awards and recognition

Council received a number of nominations and awards during 2024-2025, including:

Australasian Reporting Awards

The City of Whittlesea’s 2023-2024 Annual Report was awarded the Communications Award in the Public Sector category at the Australasia Reporting Awards.

In addition, the report received a Gold Award in the General Award category. This is the second consecutive year that the City of Whittlesea’s Annual Report has received a gold award.



Parks and Leisure Australia Awards of Excellence

The City of Whittlesea were awarded Park of the Year for the Whittlesea Public Gardens revitalisation at the Parks and Leisure Awards Victorian/Tasmania. Whittlesea Public Gardens will represent Victoria at the PLA National Awards in late 2025.

The City of Whittlesea also received a Commendation in the Playspace >\$500K category for Timbertop Park.

Economic Development Australia Awards

The City of Whittlesea’s Economic Development department were the recipients of the Economic Development Marketing and Promotion award at the Economic Development Australia conference.

These awards acknowledge Australian economic development professionals who are employing best practice innovation and creativity to improve communities across the country.

Our win highlights the multiple investment attraction marketing and communications campaigns that have been developed to create awareness about the City of Whittlesea as a strategic location for business.

Association of Consulting Surveyors Victoria

The City of Whittlesea’s Subdivision Team was named Metropolitan Subdivision Officer Team of the Year at the Biennial Council Awards of the Association of Consulting Surveyors Victoria. This award recognises service excellence of the Subdivision Team and reflects the team’s high level of customer service and strong industry relationships, all of which assist in ensuring positive outcomes for the industry and our community.

Australian Institute of Landscape Architects (AILA)

The Lalor Neighbourhood House community garden project won the 2025 AILA VIC Landscape Architecture Award for Community Contribution.

Delivered by the Lalor Neighbourhood House and supported by the City of Whittlesea, the garden was transformed into a beautiful, art-filled community space.

It provides a playful space that enables the community to gather and come together.

The project also expanded into the streetscape, providing additional greening to the neighbourhood.

Institute of Public Works Engineering Australasia

The City of Whittlesea, in partnership with Mirvac, received a commendation in the Public Works Project Award > \$5 million for Olivine Recreation Reserve at the Institute of Public Works Engineering Australasia Awards.

Designed to address a lack of structured and informal sport and recreation opportunities within the new and emerging community, the project delivered a community and sports pavilion, two AFL/cricket ovals, two netball courts, cricket nets, an off-leash dog park, fitness station and ample carparking.



The City of Whittlesea’s annual Community Awards recognise the outstanding service of residents who have made a valuable contribution to our community.

The awards highlight the volunteer spirit that is widespread across the City of Whittlesea, and recognise community champions, who come from all walks of life and make an extraordinary contribution to our municipality.

The 2024 award recipients were announced at the City of Whittlesea Community Festival in March 2025.



Citizen of the Year

The Citizen of the Year is for an individual who has made an important contribution or given outstanding service to the community during the past 12-months or over a number of years. The Award was open to all ages.

Dr Sarvesh Soni

An active member and executive of the Whittlesea Interfaith Network, Dr. Soni is a strong advocate for inclusivity and community connection, promoting interfaith dialogue and mutual understanding to help create a space where people from all backgrounds feel valued, respected, and heard.

Following his participation in the City of Whittlesea Community Leadership Program, Dr. Soni is also dedicated to empowering individuals and fostering leadership development and has established a nationwide network to help budding entrepreneurs. His ongoing efforts to collaborations and community-driven events has certainly helped strengthen social connection within the community.



Access and Inclusion Citizen of the Year

The Access and Inclusion Citizen of the Year is for an individual who has made an important contribution or given outstanding service to the community by including others whose access to participation is restricted due to physical, social or other challenges.

Zoe Brown

As the driving force behind the Free to Be Me playgroup program, Zoe has transformed the lives of countless children with additional needs by providing a safe, welcoming and engaging environment where they can thrive without barriers.

Through this program, Zoe has created a supportive community where parents can connect, share experiences and access crucial resources.

Zoe also provides support and guidance for families as they navigate services, accessing early intervention and securing appropriate school placements.



Senior Citizen of the Year

The Senior Citizen of the Year is for an individual, aged 60 years or older as of 1 November 2024, who has made an important contribution or given outstanding service to the community during the past 12-months or over a number of years.

Bill McGillivray

Bill has been a volunteer radio presenter with 88.6 Plenty Valley FM for 36 years. Bill is a role model and mentor for the newer volunteers who have joined the station over the years.

Bill is the driving force behind all of PVFM's outside broadcasts, has served on the Committee of Management as treasurer for many years, and is the emergency coordinator and liaison with local emergency response teams for PVFM. Bill's selfless contribution to PVFM and community broadcasting is to be commended.



Young Citizen of the Year

The Young Citizen of the Year is for an individual, aged between 14 and 25 years old as of 1 November 2024, who has made an important contribution or outstanding service to the community during the past 12-months or over a number of years.

Zachary Melvaine

Zachary is dedicated to creating positive change, with a strong focus on issues facing young people, including health and wellbeing, safe inclusive sport participation and educating young people on how to honour and support the legacy of our veterans.

Zachary is on the City of Whittlesea Youth Council and served as the former Youth Mayor. He is currently a Year 12 college captain at his school and a member of the Australian Army Cadets.



Sustainable Environment Citizen of the Year

The Sustainable Environment Citizen or Group of the Year is for an individual or group that has actively responded to and engaged others in an environmental issue impacting the City of Whittlesea.

Jim Bannan

Jim has been a strong advocate and participant in various conservation projects, including the Friends of Plenty River Gorge, and is a tireless volunteer with Parks Victoria.

Jim leads groups, responds to request for help from local landcare groups, and loves sharing his knowledge and deep passion for the Plenty Gorge Park. Jim also loves to promote wellness and the benefits of the great outdoors through sharing his stories with others.



Find out more about the Community Awards at whittlesea.vic.gov.au/communityawards

City of Whittlesea BUSINESS AWARDS

The third annual City of Whittlesea Business Awards took place on 29 May 2025 at the Plenty Ranges Arts and Convention Centre.

Open exclusively to members of the City of Whittlesea Business Network, the awards recognise excellence across seven categories, as well as an overall Business of the Year, which is awarded to the highest-scoring nominee across all categories.



Find out more about the Business Awards at whittlesea.vic.gov.au/businessawards

Awards were presented to the following businesses:

Business of the Year

DPV Health

Recognised as the overall Business of the Year, DPV Health impressed judges across all award categories.

Their outstanding performance, community impact and leadership make them a shining example of business excellence in the City of Whittlesea.

Community Contribution

DPV Health

DPV Health is a not-for-profit organisation that offers exceptional health care services to people of all ages. From their head office in Epping, DVP Health supports the community with over 40 services across 20 sites, leading them to live healthy, happy lives.

DPV Health is deeply invested in giving back to the local community through supporting causes, creating opportunities and making a meaningful impact. Their actions reflect a strong sense of purpose and social responsibility.



Local business DPV Health received the 2025 Business of the Year and Community Contribution awards



Start-up

Joanne's Temple Colonics & Wellness Centre

Joanne's Temple Colonics & Wellness Centre is a holistic health clinic located in Mill Park, specialising in colonic hydrotherapy and complementary wellness services.

Joanne's has quickly made its mark as a new business, showing strong growth, community engagement and a commitment to quality from day one. Their innovative approach and customer-first mindset have helped them build a loyal following in a short time.

Customer Service

Fastflex Heating & Cooling Supplies

Fastflex Heating & Cooling Supplies is a leading HVAC wholesaler based in Thomastown, dedicated to providing high-quality air conditioning and heating products at competitive prices.

With a focus on creating memorable and meaningful experiences, Fastflex Heating & Cooling Supplies goes above and beyond to understand and exceed customer expectations. Their dedication is reflected in consistently high customer feedback and repeat business.

Sustainability and Environment

Eriez Magnetics

Eriez is a global leader in separation technologies. From their Australian headquarters in Epping, the team of 60 designs and manufactures magnetic separation, flotation, metal detection and material handling equipment.

Through environmentally conscious operations and a commitment to sustainability, Eriez Magnetics is helping to create a cleaner, greener future. Their initiatives reduce waste, lower emissions and inspire others to do the same.

Workplace Diversity

NLA Logistics

NLA Trucking is proudly the only 100% Aboriginal female-owned plant hire business in Victoria and is located in the heart of Epping.

Fostering an inclusive and supportive workplace, NLA Logistics celebrates the strengths of a diverse team. Their commitment to equity, representation and belonging is at the heart of their business success.

Innovation and Enterprise

Iconyx

Based in Bundoora, Iconyx helps organisations work smarter by connecting their office and field teams through advanced mobile and mapping technologies.

Iconyx is leading the way with bold ideas, creative solutions and forward-thinking practices. From unique product development to streamlined services, they demonstrate how innovation drives business success.

Small Business

Lashes on Point Salon

Lashes On Point is a boutique beauty salon located in Mill Park offering a wide range of professional beauty treatments designed to enhance your natural beauty.

As a standout small business, Lashes On Point Salon exemplifies passion, resilience and service excellence. They balance growth with a personal touch, making them a trusted and valued part of the local economy.

Building a more connected community

Skateboarders of all ages were shredding up the local skate parks thanks to a range of free learn to skate sessions.

With the support of a City of Whittlesea Community Grant, the All Aboard Skateboarding Sessions offered locals the opportunity to learn to skate with the help of expert coaches. With skateboards and safety equipment included, participants were

able to have some fun, meet others with a similar interest and learn new skills.

Victorian Skateboard Association’s Richard Flude, said the grant enabled them to hold 35 sessions locally.

“It’s been a wonderful opportunity to bring people together and activate these great skate parks and skateable spaces across the City of Whittlesea.”



William (left) enjoyed free skate workshops with Richard and the All Aboard Skateboarding Sessions team, supported by the City of Whittlesea Community Grants program

City of Whittlesea Community Grants Program

The City of Whittlesea Community Grants program offers year-round grants to support local programs, events, projects and initiatives.

In 2024-2025, the City of Whittlesea allocated \$2.5 million in grants to 174 applicants. These include individual, small, medium and large grants that support a range of events and programs, as well as specific program driven grants that support community-based

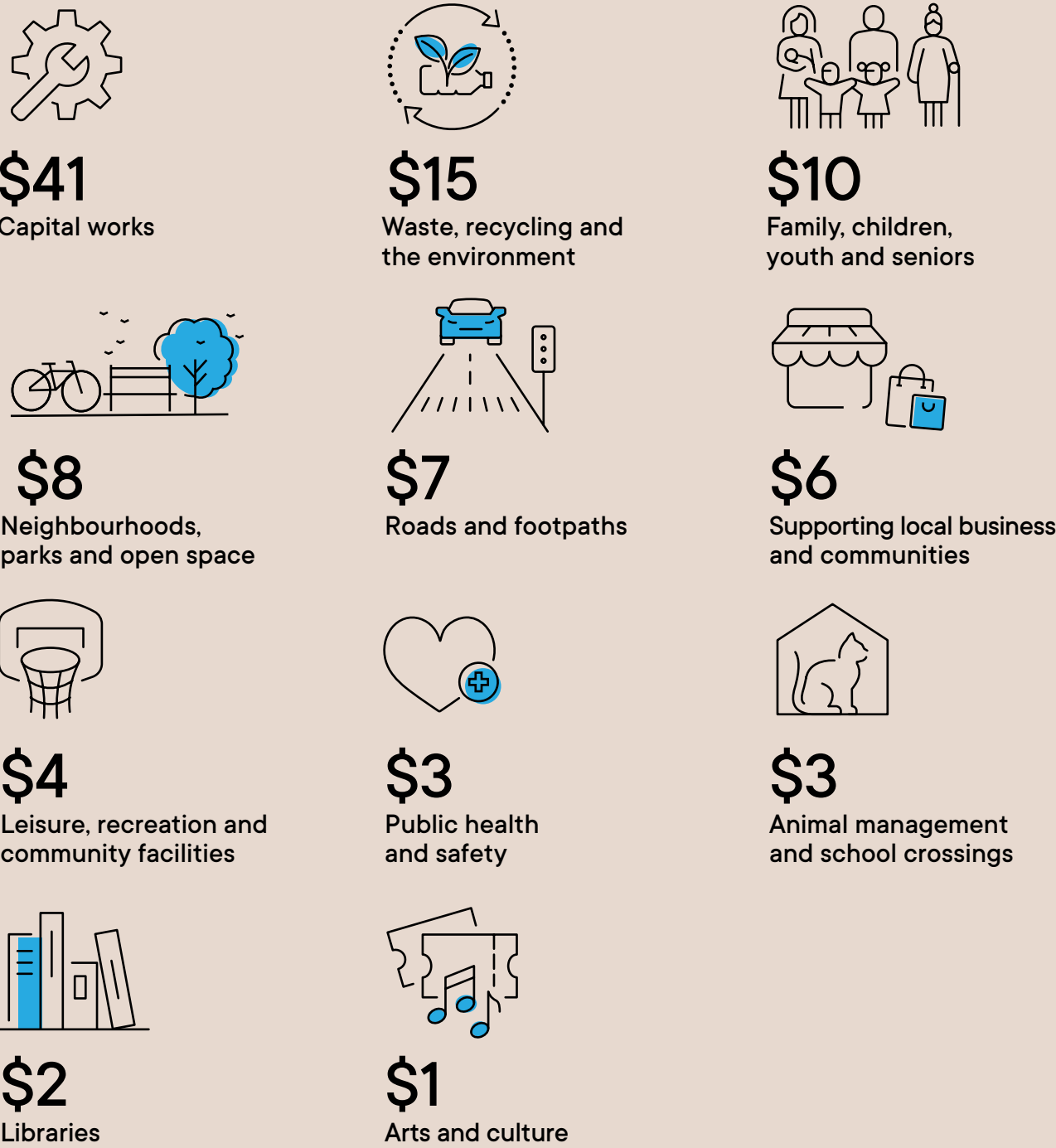
emergency services, seniors clubs and Neighbourhood Houses. Funding and service agreements are also provided to support large community events such as Diwali, Chinese New Year, and the Whittlesea Show, and local support organisations such as Hume Whittlesea Living and Learning Employment Network and Whittlesea Community Connections.

The below table provides an overview of the grants allocated in 2024-2025.

Grant Program	Amount
Community Food Relief	\$10,000
Community Relief – Supporting Community Grant	\$249,169
Community Based Emergency Services	\$119,730
Economic Development – Business Relocation Grants Program	\$312,771
Environmental Works Grant Program	\$39,008
Female Inclusion In Sport	\$13,704
Funding Agreement	\$144,055
Hume Whittlesea Local Learning and Employment Network	\$55,000
Individual Grant	\$10,409
Large Grant	\$265,129
Medium Grants	\$166,558
Neighbourhood House	\$249,146
Seniors Club Grant	\$291,699
Seniors Wellbeing Grant	\$72,994
Shopfront Improvement	\$19,145
Small Grants	\$51,404
Unincorporated Group Grants	\$2,000
Whittlesea Community Connections Service Agreement	\$480,809
Total	\$2,552,730

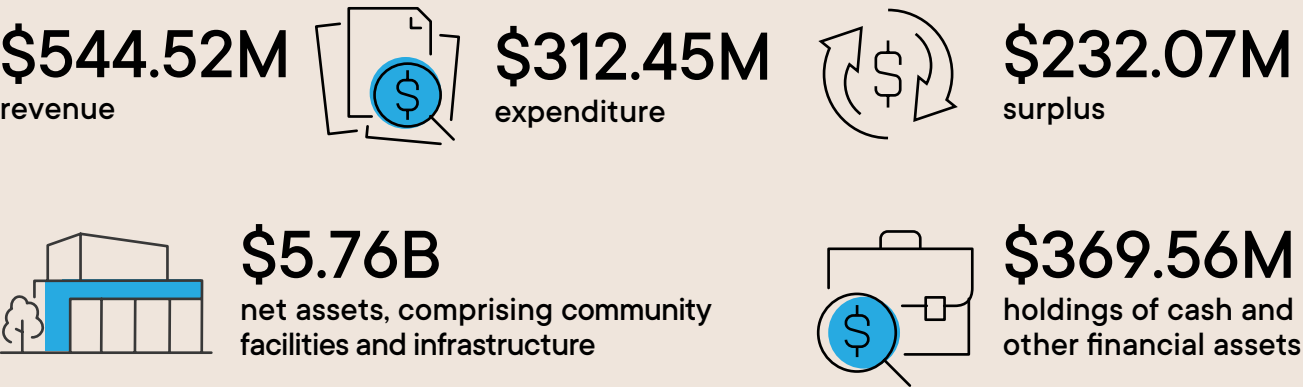
How our rates revenue was spent in 2024–2025

For every \$100 of rates and charges received, the City of Whittlesea delivered the following services:



Financial summary

Highlights



Operating position

The operating result is a key figure to assess Council’s financial performance. Although Council is a not-for-profit organisation, it should still generate a surplus to ensure future financial sustainability.

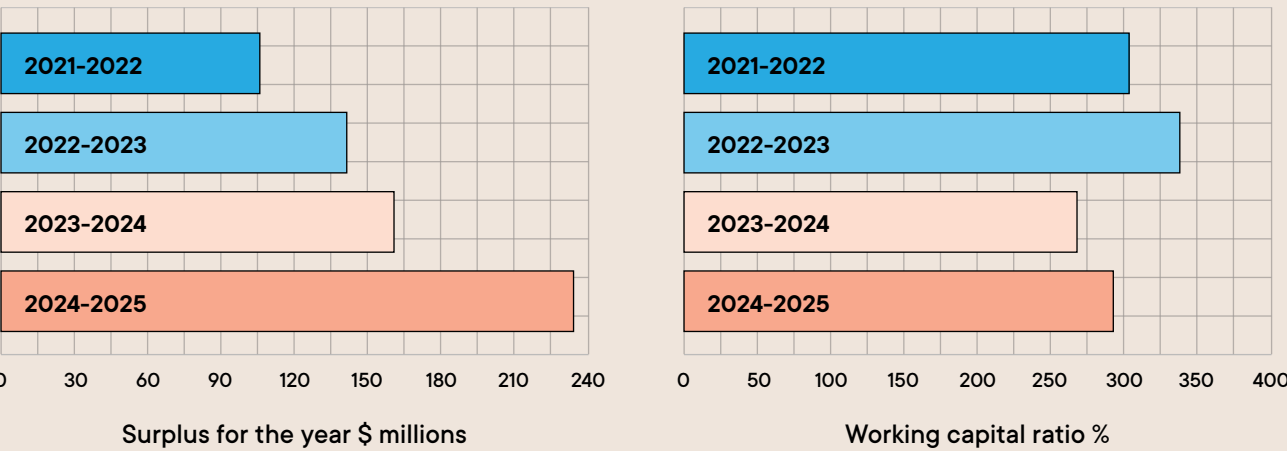
For the year ended 30 June 2025, Council achieved an operating surplus of \$232.07 million, which was a \$72.66 million increase from the 2023-24 result.

This surplus is reported based on the Australian Accounting Standards and includes all revenue received recognised in the financial period, including gifted subdivisional assets (non-monetary), developer contributions and grants towards capital works projects.

A better measure of Council’s operating performance is the adjusted underlying result. The adjusted underlying operating result removes developer contributions and non-recurrent capital grants and resulted in a surplus of \$21.39 million.

Council’s Annual Budget was adopted in June 2025 and shows that surpluses are forecast to be achieved in all years over the four-year budget period 2025-26 to 2028-29 while maintaining existing service delivery.

These surpluses are critical as they are the primary source of funding for the renewal, replacement and upgrade of community infrastructure through Council’s capital works program, which will average \$108.44 million a year over the four years to 30 June 2029.



Liquidity

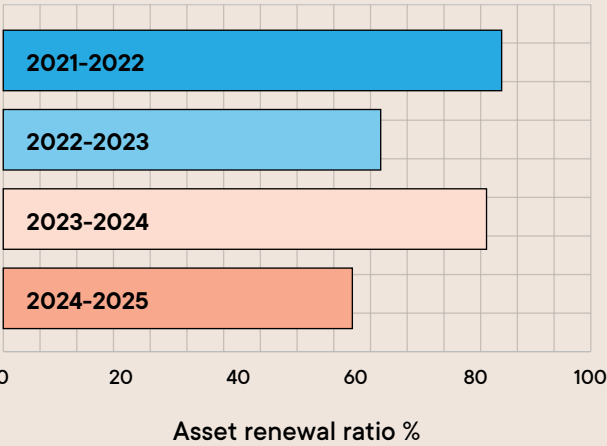
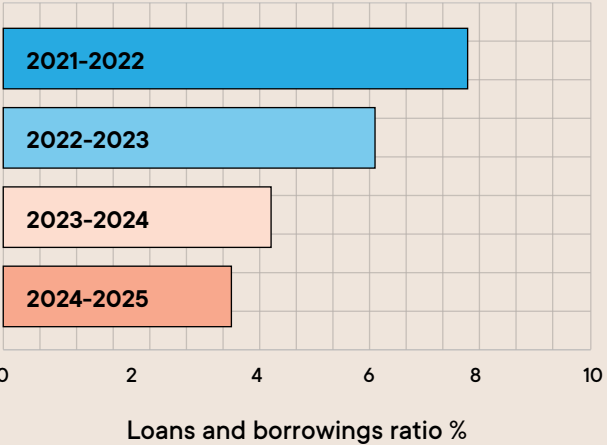
Council’s cash position has increased by \$8.48 million from the prior year, mainly due to an increase in investments relating to term deposits. The working capital ratio, which assesses Council’s ability to meet current commitments, is calculated by measuring current assets as a percentage of current liabilities.

The City of Whittlesea’s working capital ratio for 2024-2025 was 283 per cent, indicating a satisfactory financial position.

Obligations

Council aims to maintain its infrastructure assets at the expected levels, while continuing to deliver the infrastructure and services needed by the community.

At the end of the 2024-2025 financial year, Council’s debt ratio which is measured by comparing interest bearing loans and borrowings to rate revenue was 3.42 per cent.

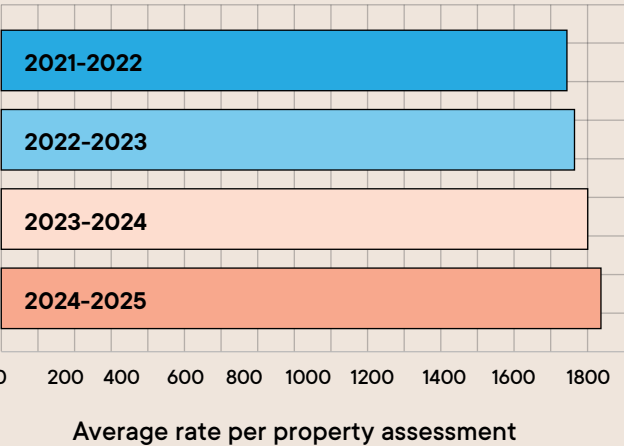
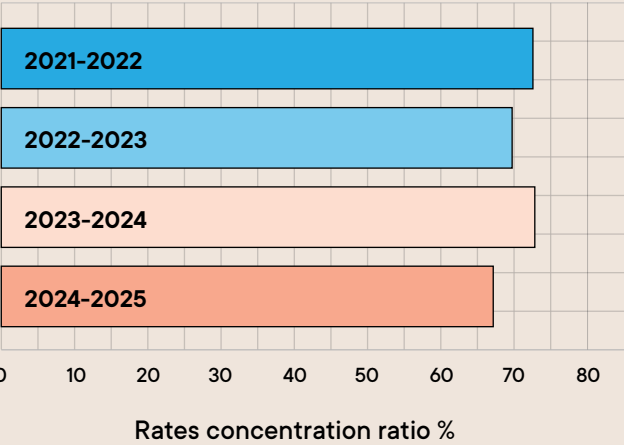


Council’s asset renewal ratio, which is measured by comparing the total of asset renewal and asset upgrade expenditure to depreciation, was 57.84 per cent. The ratio is within the expected range. We review the level of funding allocated to asset renewals and upgrades as part of the planning and budgeting process and prioritise based on asset condition.

Stability and efficiency

Council receives revenue through rates, user fees, fines, grants and contributions. Council’s rates concentration, which compares rate revenue to adjusted underlying revenue, was 66.46 per cent for the 2024-2025 financial year, which is toward the top end of the expected target band of 40-80 per cent.

Council has focused on broadening its revenue base and for the 2024-2025 year kept its rate increase to the rate cap of 2.75 per cent which resulted in an average rate per property assessment of \$1,857.



Challenges and future outlook

The City of Whittlesea faced a number of challenges during the year, which included:

- increased financial pressures being felt by both Council and the community as a result of inflation, consecutive interest rate rises and escalating costs of living
- the Victorian rate cap continues to have a significant ongoing impact on Council’s ability to keep pace with the service delivery and infrastructure requirements of our growing community
- the ability to deliver key infrastructure projects while managing the impact on supply chain and availability of labour and materials.

As we look ahead to the 2025-26 financial year, the City of Whittlesea will:

- complete new infrastructure projects, including road upgrades and community facilities for our growing population

- advocate to Federal and State governments for new infrastructure that supports our growing municipality and creates local jobs and services that protect and support the mental health and wellbeing of our community
- work closely with the MAV and other local Councils across the state to advocate to the State Government for changes to the new Emergency State Volunteer Fund (ESVF) and will continue to call on the State Government to remove the requirement for Councils to collect the new ESVF via rates notices and take on the collection for these fees
- continue to work on key priority actions in addition to our ongoing service delivery across Council’s five overarching goals of Connected Community, Strong Local Economy, Sustainable Environment, Liveable Neighbourhoods, and a High Performing Organisation which support our *Whittlesea 2040: A place for all* vision.



Murnong Community Centre in Donnybrook will open in early 2026, delivering essential services to this fast-growing community

Communications and engagement

Ensuring our communication and community engagement is representative and reaches our diverse community requires a broad mix of digital, traditional and emerging techniques and channels underpinned by accessible and inclusive communications and engagement principles.

Council utilises a wide range of communications tools, tactics and channels to ensure our messages reach our diverse audience in a format and manner that suits each target audience.

From 12pm 17 September 2024, until election day, 26 October 2024, Council entered the Election Period.

During this period, Council could not distribute any media releases, promotional material or direct mail.

In addition, no community consultation was conducted during this time.

Council is committed to actively involving the community in decision making so we can deliver better quality outcomes for all. Our community engagement adheres to our Community Engagement Policy and our approach is guided by the Engagement Institute’s (formerly IAP2) Spectrum of Engagement, which is recognised as the best practice tool for community engagement.

A new website

The City of Whittlesea’s new website went live in July 2024, making it easier for residents and customers to find the information they are looking for with a cleaner design and improved search functionality.

Councillor Communications Policy

In February 2025, the revised Councillor Communications Policy was endorsed. The policy:

- provides a framework for the Mayor and Councillors to effectively use external communications to support the delivery of clear, timely, transparent, responsive and accurate information to the community
- outlines appropriate communication activities for the Mayor and Councillors aligned to the Councillor Code of Conduct
- facilitates adherence to the Model Councillor Code of Conduct, in particular the standards of conduct required of a Councillor
- outlines the role outlines the role of the CEO, Executive, the Public Affairs Department and other Council staff.

Councillor Social Media Policy

Adopted in February 2025, the Councillor Social Media Policy outlines the benefits and risks of social media use by Councillors and provides guidance on its appropriate use and specific provisions which must be observed.



View the Councillor Communications Policy and Councillor Social Media Policy at whittlesea.vic.gov.au/plans

Community engagement

In accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020*, we authentically engage with our local community, to ensure their voices are heard and considered in decision-making that shapes the future of our city.

Throughout 2024-2025 we consulted on 37 projects, many of which had multiple phases of consultation.

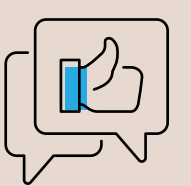
Engagement projects in 2024-2025

- Aboriginal Communities Department Programming
- Aboriginal Gathering Place
- Advocating for better telecommunication coverage
- Allumba Off Leash Dog Park
- Asset Plan 2025-26 to 2034-35
- Community Priorities – multi-phased consultation that informed:
 - Budget 2025-2026
 - Community Plan 2025-2029
 - Disability Action Plan
 - Financial Plan 2025-26 to 2034-35
 - Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan
 - Revenue and Rating Plan 2025-26 to 2028-29
- Community Vision Review
- Creative Plan
- Domestic Animal Management Plan 2026-2030
- Doreen Dirt Jumps
- Downs Road residential development
- Draft Election Period Policy amendment
- Edgars Creek Corridor Landscape Improvement Plan
- Aboriginal Communities Empowerment and Wellness
- Extreme Heat Management
- Flood Information with Melbourne Water
- Fortress Park Landscape Improvement Plan
- Gorge Road Shopping Precinct streetscape
- Hendersons Creek Park and Playground
- Kindergarten Services
- Laurie's Field Master plan
- Mill Park lakes Recreation Reserve Sports Lighting Upgrade
- Mill Park Place Framework
- National Sorry Day 2025 Attendee Survey
- Planning Scheme Amendment C249
- Planning Scheme Amendment C275
- Proposed development plan 2388 Plenty Road, Whittlesea
- Proposed discontinuation of Sarissa Street
- Public Toilet Amenity Plan Review
- Street Tree Renewal Program
- Whittlesea Public Gardens Off Leash Dog Park
- Whittlesea Reconciliation Group EOI.



Local Scoop remains Council’s key community communication channel, with 485,175 copies of the newsletter delivered to households and businesses this year.

Snapshot of our communications in 2024-2025



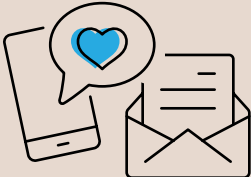
47,629

total audience across Council's social media pages including Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and LinkedIn. This is a 10% increase from 2023-24



485,175

Local Scoop newsletters, across 5 editions, were delivered to households and businesses



790,824

e-newsletter recipients including the City of Whittlesea e-news, Business e-news, PRACC e-news, Access Point, Community Grants and Rural News



73

media enquiries received



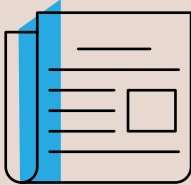
43

speeches prepared



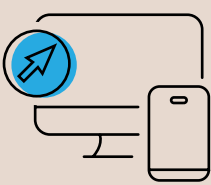
33

radio interviews



126

media releases issued



3.36M

number of website page views



254

audio visual projects

How our community engaged with us



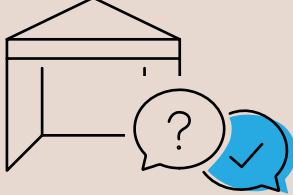
5,981

contributions made in person and online



59,547

visits to the Engage Whittlesea platform



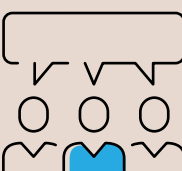
107

community-based pop-ups



11

information stalls at Citizenship Ceremonies



9

Community Focus Groups



3

Stakeholder Reference Groups



View the Community Engagement Policy 2023-2027 at whittlesea.vic.gov.au/plans

Ensuring our communication and community engagement is representative and reaches our diverse community requires a broad mix of digital, traditional and emerging techniques and channels underpinned by accessible and inclusive communication principles.



Council Offices, Civic Centre in South Morang

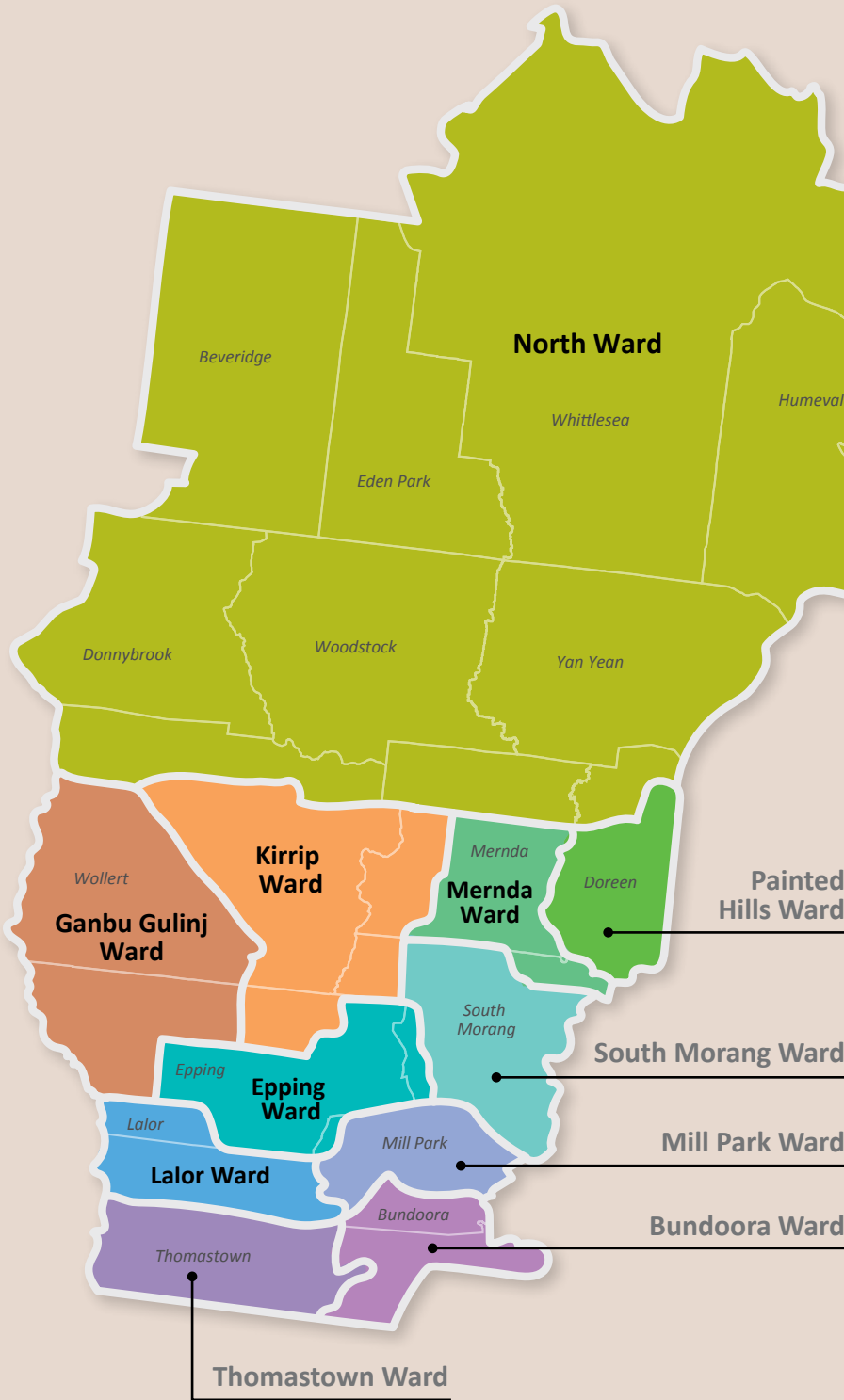


OUR COUNCIL

The following pages provide information on our Council, including our Panel of Administrators and governance.

Council wards

Prior to the Local Government elections in October 2024, a review of electoral structures by the VEC was undertaken, with the City of Whittlesea moving to 11 single Councillor wards. The new ward names and boundaries are shown below.



Local Government elections

Local Government elections were held in October 2024. The election was run and managed by the Victorian Electoral Commission (VEC). From 12pm, 17 September 2024, until election day, 26 October 2024, Council entered the Election Period.

There are a number of rules and regulations that govern what Councils can and can't do during the Election Period to ensure that the elections are fair and unbiased.

During this time, Council could not:

- hold any Council Meetings or Council briefings
- approve, amend or repeal strategies, policies or plans
- make decisions that commits Council to expenditure greater than \$1.72 million
- make major policy decisions
- hold/run any events
- conduct any community engagement or consultations
- distribute any media releases, promotional material or direct mail
- hold citizenship ceremonies.

The VEC declared the election results on 12 November 2024. On 19 November 2024, the new Council met to elect a Mayor and Deputy Mayor.

Following the suspension of the Mayor in April 2025 by the Minister for Local Government the Hon. Nick Staikos, the Council met to elect a new Mayor on Thursday 24 April 2025.

On 8 May 2025, the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) determined that the election result for the Lalor Ward was void. A by-election for the Lalor ward was held in August 2025.

Monitors

On 2 September 2024, Minister for Local Government, Melissa Horne announced Municipal Monitors would be appointed by the Victorian State Government for the first year of the return of elected Council for the City of Whittlesea.

The role of the Monitors is to guide incoming Councillors in governance practices to help them best serve their ratepayers.

In November 2024, Jude Munro and Peita Duncan were appointed as Monitors. Jude Munro has previously been CEO at four councils and a monitor at Greater Geelong. Peita Duncan, previously served as one of the Administrators at the City of Whittlesea.

The Municipal Monitors term ended in May 2025.

Council is committed to making decisions that support the achievement of the community's vision *Whittlesea 2040: A place for all.*



Our Councillors



**Mayor –
Councillor Martin Taylor**
South Morang Ward
Elected Mayor on 24 April 2025

Cr Taylor is an experienced community leader, dedicated advocate, and proud resident of South Morang. With a career spanning the law, emergency services, the military, both the private and public sectors and community development, he brings a wealth of knowledge and passion to his role as Councillor and the Representative for the South Morang Ward.

His professional background includes serving as a Barrister and Solicitor, Senior Counsel Assisting, General Counsel, with Victoria Police, the Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission, as a Major in the Army Reserve, and as a volunteer Advanced Responder with St John Ambulance. He holds extensive qualifications in law, policing, management, education, and paramedical science, reflecting my commitment to service and excellence.

Cr Taylor’s priorities include enhancing road safety, improving community facilities, and advocating for sustainable development. Known for his community first approach, he is dedicated to working towards a vibrant and inclusive future for the City of Whittlesea.



**Deputy Mayor –
Councillor Daniela Zinni**
Bundoora Ward
Elected Deputy Mayor on 19 November 2024

As a proud resident of the City of Whittlesea, Cr Zinni has had the privilege of experiencing firsthand the incredible diversity of families in the community. As a parent, she is committed to raising her children here, surrounded by the vibrant culture and strong sense of community that makes the City of Whittlesea so special.

As a passionate advocate for children and families, she believes that every child deserves to have their voice heard and valued. It is essential that Council provide services that are well resourced for them.

Cr Zinni’s vision is to see children grow and thrive in the City of Whittlesea, staying connected to their roots and giving back to the community that has raised them. By working together, Cr Zinni hopes to build a brighter future for kids, one that is full of opportunities, and a sense of belonging.



Councillor Aidan McLindon
Kirrip Ward

Cr McLindon was elected as the Councillor for Kirrip ward in October 2024 and was elected Mayor on 19 November 2024.

In April 2025, Cr McLindon was suspended by the Minister for Local Government the Hon. Nick Staikos in accordance with section 229A of the Local Government Act 2020 for a period of six months.

Mr McLindon was born in Darwin in 1980 and later raised in Eden Park before moving to Queensland and returning to Victoria in 2013.

After school he joined the Army Reserves as an infantry soldier based at 9RQR. After a work experience stint at Queensland Parliament House, Cr McLindon decided he would run for election at 18 years old against then Police Minister.

In 2004, Mr McLindon was elected to Logan City Council and in 2008 was re-elected and appointed Chair of Environment and Sustainability. In 2009, he was elected to the Queensland Parliament and appointed to the Law, Justice and Safety Committee. He later served as a National Director and commenced AMac Consultancy.

Mr McLindon taught at both primary and secondary schools over the past 10 years and specialises in Student Wellbeing and the Performing Arts. He is passionate about creating opportunities for the incoming generation and has a desire to seek natural justice for the people.



Councillor David Lenberg
Epping Ward

As a proud resident of the City of Whittlesea for the last eight years, Cr Lenberg is passionate about building a connected, inclusive community. He shares his life with his loving partner, supportive family, and two lively Labradors who keep him grounded and bring so much joy. He also loves to travel, experiencing diverse cultures and bringing fresh perspectives to his work and community engagement.

With over 25 years of experience in business, he brings a wealth of expertise in leadership, strategic planning, and delivering innovative customer-focused solutions. He’s worked with startups, small businesses and large corporations, and knows how to tackle challenges and drive meaningful outcomes.

Cr Lenberg is committed to creating a thriving City of Whittlesea through open governance, better services, and fostering cultural diversity. From expanding green spaces to tackling illegal rubbish dumping, he will work to make the City of Whittlesea a safe, vibrant, and welcoming place for all who call it home.



Councillor Lawrie Cox
Ganbu Gulinj Ward

Cr Cox moved to the Whittlesea area in 1977, initially living in Lalor before moving to Epping where he lived for almost 40 years before moving to Wollert where he lives now. This area is his home and where he married and raised his children.

Cr Cox served on the Shire of Whittlesea Council from 1979 to 1986, including a term as Shire President in 1982. He returned to the City of Whittlesea in 2016 and served as Mayor in 2018. His priority has always been representing the community where he’s chosen to live.

Professionally, Cr Cox represented Air Pilots for 28 years and, since retiring, has worked as an Industrial Relations consultant and an Independent Company Director/Trustee for Superannuation for 34 years. He also volunteers as a Justice of the Peace.

Cr Cox looks forward to engaging with and representing residents throughout his council term.



Councillor Stevan Kozmevski
Lalor Ward

Cr Kozmevski was announced as the Councillor for the Lalor ward in October 2024.

On 8 May 2025, the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) determined that the election result for this Ward was void.

A by-election for the Lalor ward was held in August 2025.

Mr Kozmevski has been a proud resident of the City of Whittlesea since 1968, living with his family in Lalor.

He began his career with the Railways in 1977 and has dedicated 47 years to this industry. As a long-time member of the Rail, Tram, and Bus Union, Mr Kozmevski served as a Divisional Secretary on the Executive until 2023.

Mr Kozmevski is a graduate of Thomastown Secondary College and since 2001, has served on the School Council at the College and has been School Council President for 22 years.

In March 1997, he was elected as an endorsed ALP Councillor for the City of Whittlesea and served for 22 years, including two terms as Mayor.

Over these years as a resident and Councillor, Mr Kozmevski has witnessed the City of Whittlesea’s remarkable growth and understands the vital services and infrastructure needed to support its expanding population.

Our Councillors



Councillor Jarrod Lappin
Mernda Ward

Cr Lappin moved to the City of Whittlesea five years ago with his family to start their lives together. The incredible diversity of the community and the beautiful surrounding environment made them feel immediately at home and welcome.

Cr Lappin’s passion for local government is driven by a commitment to making a positive impact in the community, to try and make the area truly reflect its needs.

He is committed to ensuring the community have accessible infrastructure and services for all, that the environment is protected and thriving for this and future generations and that the community is connected and supported.

As the community grows and adapts, Cr Lappin want to make sure that everyone in it can play their part and feel at home.

The City of Whittlesea has incredible opportunities going forward, and he’ll be working to ensure Council make the most of them.



Councillor Blair Colwell
Mill Park Ward

Cr Colwell has proudly lived in Mill Park and the City of Whittlesea for over 40 years, witnessing firsthand how the community has developed and flourished into the place it is today. He is beginning his first term as a Councillor bringing 25 years of experience in Local Government, primarily in community services and youth work.

As a Community Health Board Director, a member of the Northern Hospital Aboriginal Advisory Committee, and a Basketball Victoria Tribunal Member, he brings a diverse range of skills in governance.

Cr Colwell is passionate about social justice, promoting reconciliation and Aboriginal affairs, building a cohesive community for all, and supporting the health and wellbeing of children and young people. Through evidence-based approaches, he aims to ensure that the City of Whittlesea continues to have thriving, connected children, young people and families.



Councillor Christine Stow
North Ward

Cr Stow grew up in the municipality and has seen the area change from farms to the busy growth corridor it is today. She has a deep connection to the area and understanding of the issues. Three generations of her family have contributed to the community supporting The Whittlesea Show and sporting services.

Cr Stow’s background was in Forensic and Environmental Science then medical sales where she became National Sales Manager. It all changed when she had her second daughter and found out she has a muscle condition.

From there Cr Stow became involved in advocating for what is now NDIS and advocated for Carers running support and community groups. She has worked across government, community and with Council to bring service such as the satellite school in Whittlesea and support services for families.

With a background in science, she is adaptable across many areas of Council and community.



Councillor Deb Gunn
Painted Hills Ward

Cr Gunn has lived in the City of Whittlesea on and off for most of her life, living in Lalor, Mill Park, Epping and currently in Doreen. She completed secondary schooling at Lalor North High.

Cr Gunn has watched the city grow and develop and wished to be an integral part of its future. She has worked in the Disability Sector for the past 33 years, performing a number of support, leadership and management roles.

Cr Gunn is an active member of the community, volunteering with Doreen CFA and Doreen RSL, often doing community engagement amongst other activities.

With membership on a number of Committees, Cr Gunn has experience and an understanding of good governance and the desire to see the Council functioning again. She would like to see the City of Whittlesea working effectively and efficiently for the residents, making this a city of choice for people to live.



Councillor Nic Brooks
Thomastown Ward

Born and raised in the northern suburbs of Melbourne, Cr Brooks loves the area and wants to see it flourish as a thriving business district with a happy, healthy and connected community that is proud of where they live.

His current role is General Manager for a Security and Technology company. For the last seven years he has co-owned and operated a NDIS registered provider specialising in vehicle occupant safety solutions based in the City of Whittlesea.

With 20 years of diverse corporate experience, predominantly in the transport and logistics industry, he has been part of high performing teams for domestic and global businesses, with expertise in areas such as solution design, commercial analysis, project management and process improvement.

Cr Brooks’ hope for the City of Whittlesea is a Council that supports local living and employment, aiming to increase local job opportunities and promoting smart urban design for sustainable and connected communities, while understanding the ongoing cost of living and housing crisis.

Administrators

On 19 June 2020, the Acting Minister for Local Government appointed a panel of three Administrators for the City of Whittlesea. The panel undertook the duties of the Council of the City of Whittlesea until the October 2024 Local Government Election.



Chair of Administrators
Lydia Wilson

Lydia Wilson began as Administrator on Saturday 21 March 2020. She was appointed Chair of the Panel of Administrators on Friday 19 June 2020 and remained until the October 2024 elections.

Prior to this Lydia had served on multiple not for profit, public and private sector boards and advisory committees over the past 25 years.

As a former chief executive of three Victorian municipalities Lydia has a detailed understanding of the Local Government sector and brought valuable experience to support her Administrator function.



Administrator
Peita Duncan

Peita Duncan began as Administrator on 19 June 2020 and remained until the October 2024 elections.

She is a highly experienced non-executive Director working in highly complex and high risk environments.

She has worked for a number of top tier law firms, corporate organisations and not for profit in senior executive roles, and has extensive experience working across all operational areas of business with key strengths in commercial, marketing and community engagement, both within Australia and internationally.



Administrator
Christian Zahra AM

The Minister for Local Government appointed Christian Zahra AM on 4 March 2023.

The Minister for Local Government appointed Christian Zahra AM as Administrator on 4 March 2023 where he remained until the October 2024 elections.

Christian Zahra is a former member of the Federal Parliament and an accomplished executive and non-executive director with 25 years of experience in the private, government, and not-for-profit sectors.

In June 2018, Christian was made a Member of the Order of Australia (AM) for significant service to rural and regional development, to the advancement of Indigenous welfare, and to the Australian Parliament.

Council governance

Council governance

The City of Whittlesea is constituted in accordance with the *Local Government (Whittlesea City Council) Act 2020*, which must be read with the *Local Government Act 2020*, to provide good governance in and across its municipality for the benefit and wellbeing of its community.

Council, in the performance of its role gives effect to the overarching governance principles and supporting principles when:

- taking into account the diverse needs of the local community, including future generations, the economic, social and environmental sustainability, to ensure the best outcomes are achieved when making decisions
- providing leadership by establishing strategic objectives and monitoring achievements
- ensuring continuous improvement is pursued and resources are managed in a responsible and accountable manner
- ensuring the ongoing financial viability of the Council
- advocating the interests of the local community to other communities and governments
- fostering community cohesion and encouraging active participation in civic life.

Council is committed to making decisions that support the achievement of the community’s vision *Whittlesea 2040: A place for all*. Our community is encouraged to provide feedback and have input into Council’s decision-making process by:

- taking part in community consultation
- responding to surveys
- submitting petitions, joint letters or public questions to Council.

Council’s formal decision-making are conducted through Council Meetings. There are certain items that must be adopted or endorsed by Council at a Council Meeting such as the adoption of the Council Budget, endorsement of the Community Plan and the adoption of Council policies.

On 11 November 2024, the Victorian Electoral Commission (VEC) officially declared the 11 Councillors who had been elected to each Council ward for a four-year term.

Prior to this Council were under Administrators who were appointed in 2020 to fulfil the role of Council until the first formal Council meeting following the October 2024 Council elections. The former Local Government Minister appointed two Municipal Monitors to oversee Council’s transition from Administrators to Councillors. The Municipal Monitors term ended in May 2025.

On 16 April 2025, and in accordance with section 229A (1) of the *Local Government Act 2020*, Councillor Aidan McLindon was suspended for a period of six months.

On 8 May 2025, the Victorian Civil Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) declared the result for the Lalor Ward October 2024 Local Government elections to be void. As a result of the VCAT decision, the VEC undertook a by-election resulting in a newly elected representative.

Council Meetings

Scheduled Council Meetings are generally held once a month on a Tuesday evening at the Council Offices, 25 Ferres Boulevard, South Morang. Additional Council Meetings are occasionally held to consider urgent matters or matters that are unable to wait until the next scheduled Council Meeting.

In accordance with section 60 of the *Local Government Act*, a Council must develop, adopt and keep in force Governance Rules which include the procedures governing the conduct of Council Meetings. This same section allows Council to amend its Governance Rules and in June 2024, following community consultation, Council adopted an updated version of its Governance Rules.

Council Meeting dates are published on Council’s website. The agenda is available on Council’s website three days prior to the Council Meeting and the minutes are available within two weeks of the meeting.

For the period 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025, nine Scheduled Council Meetings, five Unscheduled Council Meetings and 19 Council Briefing sessions were held.

Council Briefing sessions are informal meetings where Councillors are briefed on current and proposed programs, projects and services. Councillor Briefing sessions are not open to the public.

Between November 2024 to March 2025, Councillors undertook an intensive Councillor Induction Program in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020*. In addition to the Councillor Induction Program, the former Mayor, current Mayor and Deputy Mayor undertook Mayoral training within one month of being elected to those roles.

The five Unscheduled Council Meetings considered the below items:

3 September 2024

- Audit and Risk Committee Annual Report on activity
- Certification of 2023-24 Financial Statements and Performance Statement
- adoption of the Election Period Policy

17 September 2024

- Audit and Risk Committee Minutes – 27 August and 10 September 2024
- Annual Report 2023-2024
- CEO Annual Performance Review

4 February 2025

- potential breaches of the Model Councillor Code of Conduct by the Mayor, Cr McLindon

25 February 2025

- draft Election Period Policy
- Councillor Social Media Policy
- updated Councillor Communications Policy

24 April 2025

- election of Mayor
- election of Deputy Mayor (if required)
- tabled reports:
 - Governor in Council Order
 - Election Report – Whittlesea City Council 2024 Local Government Elections.

A Hearing of Submissions Committee Meeting was held on 6 May 2025 to allow submitters to verbally present their submissions on the Proposed Budget, Proposed Financial Plan and Proposed Revenue and Rating Plan.

Commission of Inquiry

On 19 May 2025, a Commission of Inquiry into Whittlesea City Council was appointed under section 200 of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

The Commission is required to provide its report to the Minister by 19 September 2025.

The Commission was established to conduct an inquiry into the affairs of the Council, including to address potentially serious and systemic governance issues within the council and identify necessary improvements to ensure it can function effectively.

Prue Digby was appointed as a Commissioner and Chair of the Commission of Inquiry, with Jim Gifford appointed as a Commissioner.

Ms Digby brings a wealth of knowledge to the role, with more than 40 years’ experience as a senior executive and director in state, local and non-government sectors.

Mr Gifford has extensive experience in supporting councils through governance issues and implementing effective changes.

Summary of Panel of Administrator attendance for period 1 July 2024 to 30 September 2024

Administrator	Position	Number of scheduled Council Meetings attended <i>(total number held: 2)</i>	Number of additional Council Meetings attended <i>(total number held: 2)</i>	Number of Administrator Briefings attended <i>(total number held: 3)</i>
Lydia Wilson	Chair of Council	2	2	3
Peita Duncan	Administrator	2	2	2
Christian Zahra AM	Administrator	1	2	3

Summary of Councillor attendance for period 11 November 2024 to 30 June 2025

Councillor		Number of scheduled Council Meetings attended <i>(total number held: 7)</i>	Number of additional Council Meetings attended <i>(total number held: 3)</i>	Number of Council Briefings attended <i>(total number held: 14)</i>
Cr Nic Brooks	Councillor	7	3	14
Cr Blair Colwell	Councillor	7	3	14
Cr Lawrie Cox	Councillor	7	3	12
Cr Deb Gunn	Councillor	7	2	13
Cr Stevan Kozmevski*	Councillor	5	3	9
Cr Jarrod Lappin	Councillor	7	3	13
Cr David Lenberg	Councillor	7	3	14
Cr Aidan McLindon**	Councillor	4	2	5
Cr Christine Stow	Councillor	7	3	12
Cr Martin Taylor	Mayor	7	3	14
Cr Daniela Zinni	Deputy Mayor	7	3	14

* Cr Kozmevski – ceased to be a Councillor, effective 8 May 2025, as a result of a VCAT determination declaring the Lalor Ward result to be void

** Cr McLindon – effective 16 April 2025, suspended as a Councillor for 6 months

Delegated Committees

The City of Whittlesea does not have any delegated committees established.

Councillor Committee appointments

Each year Council appoints representatives to organisations and committees to ensure the City of Whittlesea participates and contributes to local and strategic issues that align to the Council achieving its goals.

At the Council Meeting on Tuesday 17 December, Councillors were appointed to the following committees, with some minor changes made to committee appointments at the Council Meeting on Tuesday 20 May 2025.

State-wide, metropolitan or regional organisation

Organisation	Appointments 2024-25
Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV)	Cr Cox Cr Stow (proxy)
Australian Local Government Women’s Association Incorporated (ALGWA)	Cr Stow
Outer Melbourne Councils	Cr Taylor Cr Colwell (Proxy)
Metropolitan Transport Forum Inc.	Cr Brooks
Northern Alliance for Greenhouse Action Executive (NAGA)	Cr Lappin
Northern Councils Alliance	Cr Taylor Cr Stow (Proxy)
Victorian Local Governance Association (VLGA)	Cr Stow Cr Zinni (Proxy)
Whittlesea Community Futures Partnership	Cr Zinni
Yarra Plenty Regional Library Board (YPRL)	Cr Taylor Cr Stow
Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee	Cr Taylor
Whittlesea Multicultural Communities Council (WMCC)	Cr Brooks Cr Lenberg (Proxy)
City of Whittlesea Community Awards Committee	Cr Gunn
Whittlesea Reconciliation Group (WRG)	Cr Cox
Whittlesea Youth Commitment Strategic Advisory Group	Cr Colwell
National Growth Areas Alliance Strategic Advisory Committee	Cr Cox (Two-year period endorsed at 22 July 2025 Council Meeting)

Council Advisory Committees

Committee	Appointments 2024-25
City of Whittlesea Disability Advisory Panel	Cr Gunn
Whittlesea Disability Network (WDN)	Cr Brooks Cr Lappin (Proxy)
City of Whittlesea Business Advisory Panel	Cr Taylor Cr Lenberg Cr Zinni (Proxy)

City of Whittlesea Standing Committees

Committee	Appointments 2024-25
Audit and Risk Committee (ARC)	Cr Taylor Cr Lenberg (Proxy)
CEO Employment Matters Advisory Committee (CEMAC) (External Independent Chairperson appointed until 28 February 2027)	Cr Taylor Cr Colwell Cr Gunn
Hearing of Submissions Committee (HoS)	Cr Stow Cr Taylor Cr Colwell Cr Lappin
Epping Cemetery Trust	Cr Stow Cr Lappin Cr Gunn (appointed for the four-year Council term)

Administrator remuneration and expenses

The appointment of Administrators by the Minister for Local Government included mandatory remuneration at a fixed rate for the Chair of Administrators and for Administrators. Council is required to pay the remuneration and reimburse out-of-pocket expenses for Administrators in accordance with Council’s *Expenses, Reimbursement and Support Policy – Administrators and members of delegated committee* adopted by Council on 4 August 2020.

The table below contains a summary of the Administrators remuneration, allowances and expenses for 2024-2025.

Administrator	Remuneration inc. superannuation	Travel	Car Mileage	Child Care	Information & Comms	Conferences & Training	Misc.	TOTAL
Peita Duncan	\$76,425	\$0.00	\$221.00	\$0.00	\$100.06	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$76,746.06
Lydia Wilson	\$145,902	\$247.48	\$496.40	\$0.00	\$140.95	\$0.00	\$220.00	\$147,006.83
Christian Zahra AM	\$76,425	\$616.59	\$1,122.00	\$0.00	\$33.44	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$78,197.03
TOTAL	\$298,752	\$864.07	\$1,839.40	\$0.00	\$274.45	\$0.00	\$220.00	\$301,949.92

The Administrators term ended in October 2024.

Councillor remuneration and expenses

The Councillors began their term in November 2024.

The table below contains a summary of Councillors allowances and expenses for 2024-2025:

Councillor	Travel	Car Mileage	Child Care	Information & Comms	Conferences & Training	Functions / Events	Councillor Allowances	Misc.	TOTAL
Cr Nic Brooks	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$592.54	\$3,057.07	\$0.00	\$25,913.41	\$482.44	\$30,045.46
Cr Blair Colwell	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$592.54	\$3,071.15	\$0.00	\$25,913.41	\$825.94	\$30,403.04
Cr Lawrie Cox	\$1,528.04	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$592.54	\$6,070.66	\$0.00	\$25,913.41	\$804.26	\$34,908.91
Cr Deb Gunn	\$750.54	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$592.54	\$3,947.09	\$0.00	\$25,913.41	\$707.75	\$31,911.33
Cr Stevan Kozmevski	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$523.45	\$3,057.11	\$0.00	\$19,881.84	\$402.54	\$23,864.94
Cr Jarrod Lappin	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$592.54	\$3,057.08	\$0.00	\$25,913.41	\$517.53	\$30,080.56
Cr David Lenberg	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$592.54	\$11,916.19	\$0.00	\$25,913.41	\$752.59	\$39,174.73
Cr Aidan McLindon	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$463.36	\$5,536.33	\$0.00	\$56,402.97	\$914.79	\$63,317.45
Cr Christine Stow	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$592.54	\$4,556.19	\$0.00	\$25,913.41	\$1,048.53	\$32,110.67
Cr Martin Taylor	\$495.30	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,785.27	\$8,329.62	\$0.00	\$44,121.96	\$2,302.82	\$57,034.97
Cr Daniela Zinni	\$1,334.12	\$528.00	\$0.00	\$592.54	\$7,281.03	\$0.00	\$43,257.25	\$1,078.25	\$54,071.19
Total	\$4,108.00	\$528.00	\$0.00	\$7,512.40	\$59,879.52	\$0.00	\$345,057.89	\$9,837.44	\$426,923.25

* Cr Kozmevski ceased to be a Councillor, effective 8 May 2025, as a result of a VCAT determination declaring the Lalor Ward election result to be void.

** Cr McLindon was suspended as a Councillor for six months, effective 16 April 2025.

Model Councillor Code of Conduct

From October 2024, all Councillors are required to observe the Model Code of Conduct. The Model Code of Conduct replaces the previous statutory requirement for each Council to develop its own Councillor Code of Conduct.

The Model Code of Conduct establishes clear standards for the behaviour and responsibilities of Councillors. It ensures that Councillors can effectively perform their duties and functions, supporting the Council in its role

to provide good governance for the benefit and wellbeing of the community.

By setting these expectations, Councillors are better equipped to perform their duties in a manner that reflects the values of integrity, transparency, respect and accountability.

A copy of the Council Code of Conduct is available on the City of Whittlesea website.

Building awareness of the dangers of vaping among young people

The City of Whittlesea Youth Council is stepping up to address the increasing use of vaping among young people aged 12-25. Alarmed by the increasing number of their peers turning to vaping, the Youth Council is determined to raise awareness about the dangerous chemicals and toxins found in vapes.

Research conducted by VicHealth revealed that only one in three young people understand what's in an e-cigarette. To address these concerns and raise awareness, the Youth Council has used social media reels to expose the 'bitter truth' behind the flavours. Their message? Get the facts before you take a puff!

"Don't be fooled by the flavours. The risks are real, and we want young people to make smart choices about their health," said Kaynat.

City of Whittlesea Youth Councillors are raising awareness about the dangers of vaping, using social media to share the 'bitter truth' behind the flavours and encourage young people to make healthier choices

Our Youth Council

The Youth Council members were appointed in 2023 and are appointed for a two-year term. They provide valuable advice to Council on matters that affect young people.



Youth Mayor
KAYNAT VIRK
(she/her)

I have joined the Youth Council to ensure the problems facing the youth are brought to the table and are discussed with the intention to encourage effective change. Issues of climate change and youth wellbeing are of high concern to me.



Deputy Youth Mayor
EMILY TRICARICO
(she/her)

My goal is to create a safe and welcome environment wherever I go, using my personal experience of overcoming various challenges to better understand and encourage those in my community who have also experienced feelings of isolation.



ANGELICA BANQUIL
(she/her)

The Youth Council allows me to involve myself in what I am most passionate about – active community involvement – and I believe it allows me to seamlessly utilise and enhance my leadership skills while engaging in hands-on initiatives to create a positive impact.



ANGELA ROLEVSKA
(she/her)

I am a keen participant in the community, and I have a strong passion for leadership and advocacy for my peers. Over the past two years, I have been lucky enough to be part of the process of developing the foundation of the Whittlesea Youth Council and I believe this advocacy body to be of utmost importance to young people.



BAVLEEN KAUR
(she/her)

I want to give back to the community where I live, study, play, and socialise. I want to do whatever I can for the youth, environment and health of the City of Whittlesea. I want to be a voice for young people in the municipality and raise and advocate for topics I am passionate about.



ELLY WATSON
(she/her)

My passion for well-being and physical fitness, and a desire for different encounters, propelled me to take this endeavour. I want to encourage participation in council-hosted events and activities, deepen engagement with the youth offerings and contribute to the council's decision-making processes.

The Youth Council is a formal advisory group made up of twelve passionate young people from across the municipality.

Find out more about the Youth Council at whittlesea.vic.gov.au/youthcouncil



MUSTAFA KHRAIM
(he/him)

I am dedicated to creating a safe space for young people in our community. With a demonstrated passion for youth empowerment in school leadership roles, I aspire to actively contribute to initiatives amplifying young voices and addressing crucial issues.



OSAMA AKKAD
(he/him)

I'm passionate about social justice, inclusion, and ensuring that all voices – especially those from underrepresented backgrounds – are heard and valued. I want to help create spaces where young people feel supported, empowered, and connected.



SANDY TRAN
(she/her)

I believe that every young person deserves a safe space where they can freely express themselves, engage in meaningful discussions and receive guidance as they pursue their passions without fear of judgement or shame.



SOPHIE WINTER
(she/her)

I was part of the Youth Advisory Committee for 2022-23. I am passionate about politics and the environment. I joined the Youth Council to develop my leadership skills, meet new people and help other young people have their voices heard.



TANYA SHARMA
(she/her)

I am committed to addressing the environmental and sustainability challenges that confront young people today. Recognising the pivotal role that the youth play in shaping the future, I am driven by a passion to creating a more sustainable and resilient community.



ZACHARY MELVAINE
(he/him)

I love leadership, collaboration, and community service. I find joy in helping others and striving to become the best version of myself. Being a Youth Councillor is the chance to continue building upon the foundations I've established during my two-year tenure with the Youth Advisory Committee.



City of Whittlesea staff member Dean, a Manual Litter Collection Officer, helps keep our open spaces clean and safe for everyone to enjoy



OUR ORGANISATION

The following pages provide details on our organisation and workforce, including the organisational structure and occupational health and safety.

The Executive Leadership Team

As at 30 June 2025

The Executive Leadership Team is led by the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and consists of four Directors, who each manage a directorate of departments and two Executive Managers.



Chief Executive Officer
Craig Lloyd

Craig commenced at the City of Whittlesea in October 2020 having spent two-and-a-half years at neighbouring Murrindindi Shire Council as CEO. Craig has built his career in a range of emergency service organisations.

Craig holds a Masters of Business Administration, a Post Graduate Certificate in Community Development (Emergency Management) and a Masters of Project Management.

He has also completed the Australian Institute of Company Directors Course and undertaken the Local Government Professionals Executive Leadership Program.

Craig has a deep commitment to grass roots community engagement and is skilled in many facets of local government such as community engagement, environment, economic development, emergency management and IT.

Outside of work Craig is an award-winning singer/songwriter, and a Board Member of Music Victoria, Rising Festival and a National Level Hockey Umpire.



Director Community Wellbeing
Agata Chmielewski

Agata joined the City of Whittlesea in 2021 with over 15 years of experience in both public and private sectors. She has led teams and projects focused on delivering community services, programs, and local infrastructure that make a real difference in people’s lives.

With a Bachelor of Environmental Biology and postgraduate studies in City Policy, Agata brings a strong understanding of how places and communities work together. She’s passionate about creating neighbourhoods where everyone feels included and has the chance to take part in community life.

Agata values strong partnerships and works closely with government, community groups, and local businesses to improve health, social and economic outcomes for all residents. She has also served on the boards of several community organisations.

In her spare time, Agata enjoys getting creative – lately, she’s been experimenting with ceramics.

This directorate oversees many service areas that impact the day-to-day living and wellbeing of City of Whittlesea residents. The directorate works collaboratively with the State and Federal Governments to provide many of these services and operates in partnership with community service organisations to meet the needs of our diverse and vibrant community.



Director Customer and Corporate Services
Sarah Renner

Sarah commenced with the City of Whittlesea in 2022 and brings extensive operational, infrastructure planning and development, corporate services and governance expertise. Sarah has a Bachelor of Aviation, a postgraduate GMP from Harvard Business School and a postgraduate in Strategic Leadership from Oxford Business School.

Sarah’s career prior to the City of Whittlesea included roles as Executive Director at Triple Zero Victoria, CEO of Hobart Airport, Executive General Manager of ISS Facility Services Australia and Executive Planning and Development at Melbourne Airport.

Sarah has a passion for growing organisational cultures that are diverse and inclusive and outside of work she enjoys travel, photography and cultivating organic fruit and vegetables.

This directorate ensures that Council has the funds available to provide safe, useful and sustainable assets and services to our community. It directs and assists the organisation to achieve its goals by providing accurate data and advice, and introduces efficiencies and enhancements that best utilise Council’s resources.

Some of the directorate’s key functions include finance, people and culture, customer experience, information technology, legal services, project governance and change management.



Director Infrastructure and Environment
Debbie Wood

Debbie joined the City of Whittlesea in 2020. Debbie has a Bachelor of Design (Landscape Architecture) and is passionate about delivering great public realm for the community.

Debbie is an authentic leader who strives to develop empowered teams, who deliver great infrastructure for current and future residents.

Prior to joining the team at the City of Whittlesea, Debbie was the Director of Presentation and Assets at the City of Greater Bendigo and has also worked at the City of Hobart and the City of Casey.

Outside of work Debbie enjoys travel, time in her garden and loves dogs (her own as well as anyone else’s).

This directorate provides a diverse range of infrastructure services to the community. With the high level of growth within the municipality and an increasing number of residents, there is a need to be responsive to community needs.

Some of the directorate’s key functions include design and construction of Council’s capital projects, managing parks and open spaces, road and footpath construction and maintenance, building maintenance, engineering services, asset management, traffic engineering, road safety and sustainability planning.



Director Planning and Development
Emma Appleton

Emma is the Director of Planning and Development, joining the City of Whittlesea in mid-2023.

Emma has held leadership roles in public agencies and design consultancies in Australia and the UK. She established the Victorian Design Review Panel at the Office of the Victorian Government Architect, led City Strategy at the City of Melbourne, and was Director of Project and Portfolio Development at Homes Victoria.

Emma has a Bachelor of Design Studies in Architecture, with postgraduate qualifications in landscape architecture and urban design. She is a Fellow of the Australian Institute of Landscape Architects, a Churchill Fellow (UK) and was recognised in the Top 50 Public Sector women in Victoria in 2019. She is a graduate of the LGPro Executive Leadership Program.

Emma is a passionate advocate for great planning, urban design and sustainable architecture. She loves travelling with her family to learn from other places, as well as walking in nature.

The directorate provides Strategic Land Use Planning, Town Planning, Building and Planning Compliance, Strategic Property, and Economic Development services to support the liveability and prosperity of the City’s growing community of residents and businesses. The directorate also helps ensure the safety and wellbeing of the community through ensuring compliance with Local Laws, Environmental Health, Animal Management and through its Emergency Management services.

The Executive Leadership Team



**Executive Manager
Office of Council and CEO**
Jacinta Stevens

Jacinta joined the City of Whittlesea in 2023 and is the Executive Manager Office of Council and CEO. Jacinta also holds statutory appointments as Council’s nominated Public Interest Disclosure Coordinator and Councillor Conduct Officer.

A qualified Australian Lawyer, Jacinta has over 25 years experience across all three tiers of government, has specialised in local government governance since 2012 and is passionate about embedding good governance practices across the organisation.

With a Graduate Certificate in Business Management, Jacinta is a strong and empathetic leader who takes pride in developing individuals and effective teams in the pursuit of organisational goals.

Outside of work Jacinta prefers to stay active outdoors, especially beach walks and taking her two Labradors on adventures.

The Office of Council and CEO is responsible for providing the highest levels of expertise in Council governance, Freedom of Information, privacy, compliance, strategic and operational risks and insurance. The department acts as the coordinator of Council’s relationships with key State Government ministerial offices, state bodies and authorities and inspectorates.

This department includes the Office of the CEO and Governance Administration teams, providing advice to Council and the organisation, supporting Council Meetings and coordinating civic events.



**Executive Manager
Public Affairs**
Janine Morgan

A creative and passionate communicator Janine joined Council in 2016, building on extensive experience in the public and private sectors including roles at BHP, the Ministry of Justice, Nillumbik Shire Council, and in media and television production.

She has a Bachelor of Public Relations majoring in psychology, an IAP2 Australasia Certificate of Engagement and is a graduate of the LGPro Executive Leadership Program.

Janine is a long-standing resident of the City of Whittlesea and is committed to ensuring local voices are considered as part of Council’s decision-making.

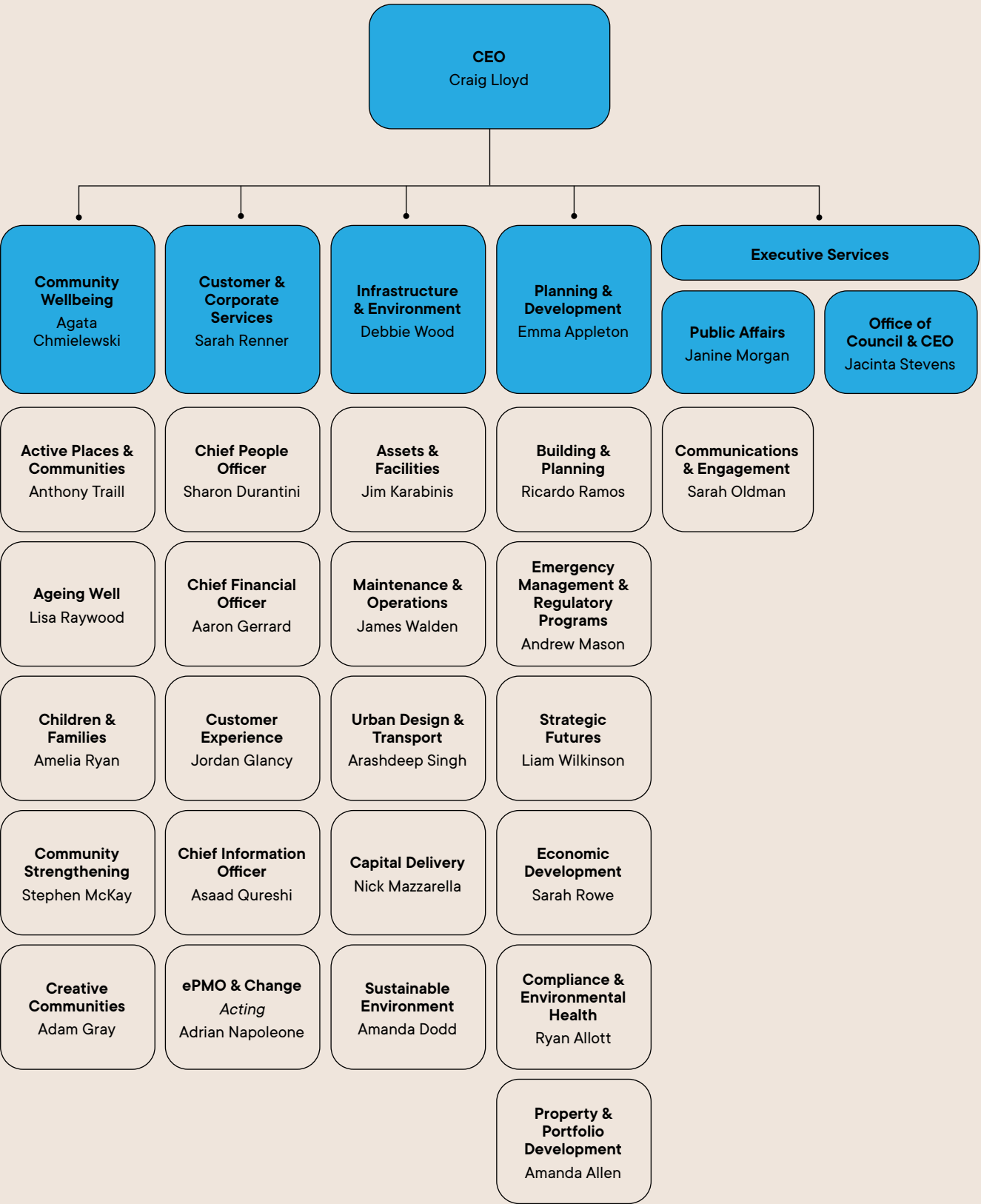
When she’s not working, you’ll find her exploring new places, soaking up the outdoors, attempting to play tennis or pickleball, and making the most of time with her favourite people and pets.

The Public Affairs Department is responsible for delivering effective an impactful communication through a variety of digital and traditional channels to the City of Whittlesea community and its staff.

The department also coordinates and delivers community engagement; seeking community feedback on projects, plans and activities to ensure community’s viewpoints are considered as part of Council’s decision-making processes.

Public Affairs manages media relations and provides strategic communications advice in addition to overseeing Council’s brand, graphic design and audiovisual services.

Organisational structure



Our Staff

Our purpose statement

Making lives better

We believe that when a group of passionate and talented people work together, they can make lives better.

This belief means we start with our own people. We’re creating a workplace where our people are valued, grow and develop, lead in their own spaces and are committed to serving our community.

This means living our values every day and working in an inclusive and respectful environment where everyone feels they belong.

Organisational profile

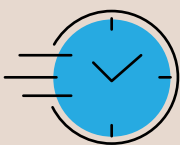


63%

of employees are women

76%

of women work part time versus 24% of men



23%

of employees have a flexible working arrangement



64%

of employees live within the municipality

25%

live in neighbouring municipalities



22%

of employees have a working from home arrangement in place



31%

were born overseas

32%

frequently speak a language other than English



1,055

Council employs 1,055 full-time equivalent staff

Our workforce

A summary of the number of full-time equivalent (FTE) Council staff by organisational structure, employment type and gender is set out below.

Employment Type	Gender	Community Wellbeing	Infrastructure & Environment	Planning & Development	Customer & Corporate Services	Executive Services	Total
Full time	Female	96.40	62.50	73.00	83.20	36.90	352.00
	Male	34.00	198.00	61.80	55.00	7.00	355.80
Part-time	Female	129.50	9.50	50.50	25.30	1.50	216.30
	Male	7.10	4.20	22.50	6.00	0.50	40.30
Casual	Female	5.35	0	2.85	0.32	0	8.52
	Male	1.52	0	0.58	0	0	2.1
Total		273.87	274.20	211.23	196.82	45.90	975.02

Employment classification and gender

Classification	Female	Male	Total
Band 1	107	96	203
Band 2	0	0	0
Band 3	112	100	212
Band 4	104	26	130
Band 5	122	49	171
Band 6	146	84	230
Band 7	90	67	157
Band 8	38	40	78
Other*	125	35	160

* includes students, maternal and child health nurses, immunisation nurses, senior officers and senior executive officers.
Note: figures do not include casuals.

Years of service awards

Each year, the City of Whittlesea recognises staff who have achieved milestones in their years of service for the organisation. In 2025, the following years of service awards were presented:

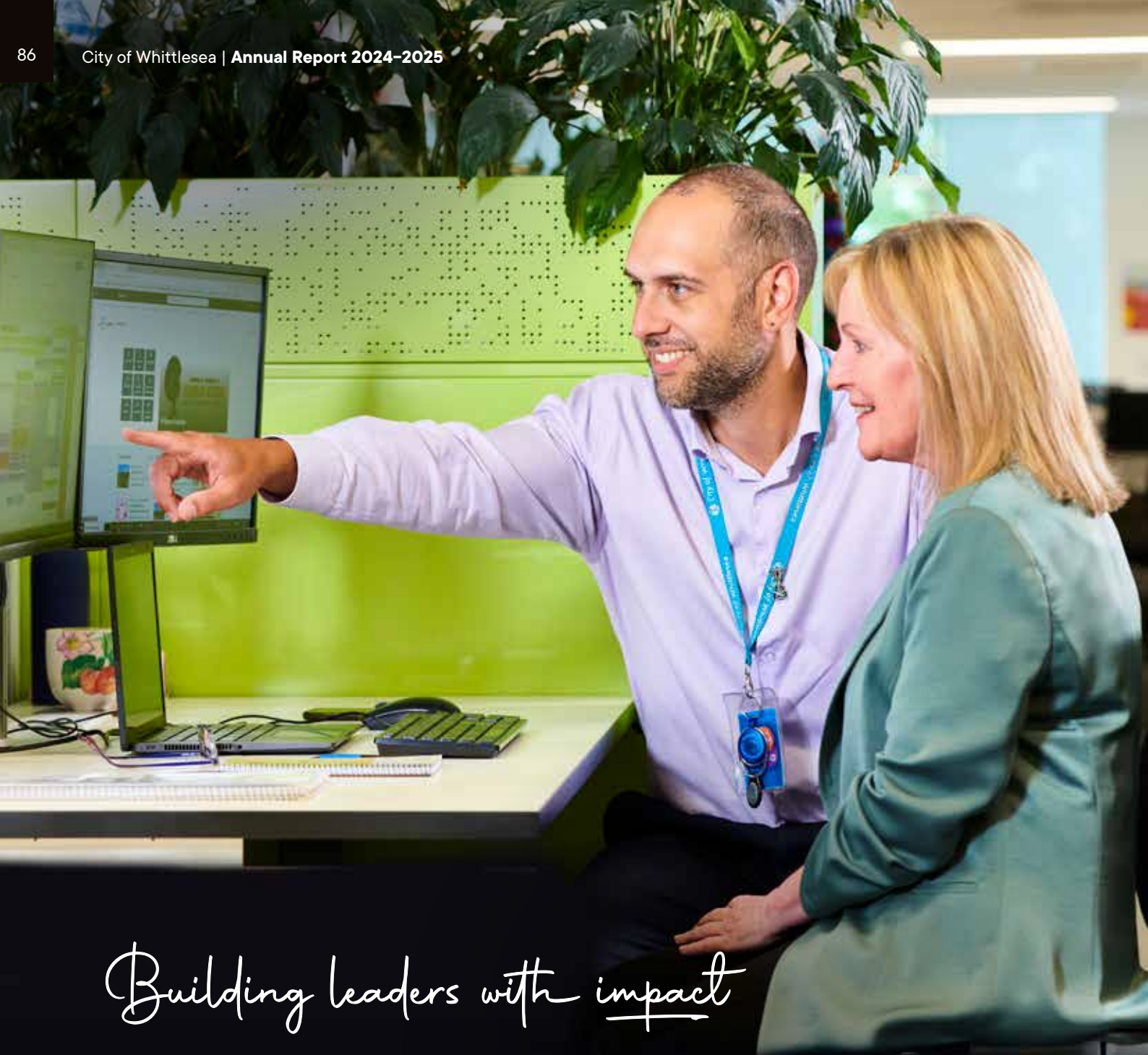
Milestone	Number of recipients
10 years of service	37
15 years of service	39
20 years of service	11
25 years of service	3
35 years of service	3
40 years of service	1

Staff turnover

Staff turnover for 2024-2025 at the City of Whittlesea was 13.17%. The industry benchmark range is 15-20 per cent.



For information on remuneration, see pages 255-257.
For information on superannuation, see page 268-271.



Building leaders with impact

To achieve our vision of *Whittlesea 2040: A place for all*, it is crucial we continue to invest in our leaders to deliver for our growing community.

In 2024 we reviewed our in-house *Emerging Leaders Program* to ensure it met participant and organisational needs. Benchmarking against best practice leadership programs in Australia and abroad, we developed a new program aligned with our vision and leadership expectations, using contemporary adult learning principles.

Our new *Leading with Impact* program consists of:

- 360-degree feedback through Human Synergistics
- one-on-one coaching and reflective practice
- a personal best leadership project; an organisational project that participants work on to apply their learning in real time

- class based sessions which are geared towards engagement, exploration and discussion
- an emphasis on relationships; building and strengthening genuine relationships built on trust and depth.

This is a six-month intensive program subject to application and selection. It is currently run twice a year and is designed to stretch participants in a safe learning environment, nurturing their potential and creating an impact on their teams, the broader organisation and the community.

"I feel so much more confident. I've learned so much, and I've formed some really great connections. I feel grateful to have been part of this program."

Supporting our community begins with investing in our people. Dario participated in the inaugural *Leading with Impact* program

Learning and development

Our comprehensive learning and development programs support our staff to continuously grow and develop, and build the capabilities required to meet community and organisational needs.

Core learning and development programs and supports include:

Professional development training

Each year, a corporate suite of professional development training is offered to all staff, featuring in-person, self-paced and online courses aligned with our capability framework and emerging learning needs. In 2024-2025, 92 in-person professional development training sessions (excluding the City of Whittlesea's core leadership development program, *Leading 2 Success* and staff induction training sessions) were held with over 980 participants. In addition, over 900 online courses were made available to staff across a range of professional development topics.

Staff induction training

All new staff attend an induction session that connects them to the organisational vision, values and purpose, introduces them to the organisational structure, and provides them with an opportunity to meet other new starters. In 2024-2025, 183 employees completed induction training.

Technical and specialist training

A wide range of job roles and disciplines are required to deliver our diverse services. Job-specific technical and specialist training is often coordinated at a local level. Where demand for technical and specialist training is significant, training may be run in-house and/or coordinated centrally.

Lead @ All Levels

Our *Lead @ All* levels program recognises the importance and impact of leadership behaviours in all roles, at any level. These elective modules focus on self-awareness, emotional intelligence, and self-management skills. In 2024-2025, three *Lead @ All* Levels sessions were held with 43 individual contributors participating.

Study Assistance

The Study Assistance offering provides eligible and approved staff with financial and non-financial support to undertake tertiary study, related to their role and/or career path at the City of Whittlesea. In 2024-2025, 35 employees received some form of study assistance to support them in their role performance and career development.

In addition, the following leadership development programs and supports build skills in our current and aspiring leaders:

Leading 2 Success – Leadership Development Program

Leading 2 Success (L2S) is City of Whittlesea's core leadership development program. Combining leadership theory and practical strategies, with an emphasis on self-reflection and peer connection, L2S helps our leaders to develop the skills, knowledge and mindset to lead with impact and authenticity. In 2024-2025, 32 L2S sessions were held with 369 participants.

Annual Leadership Summit

In March 2025, we held our third annual Leadership Summit. The Summit is a leadership development and networking event for all people leaders at the City of Whittlesea. Featuring guest speakers and thought-provoking topics, it was attended by over 200 of our leaders.

Emerging Leader's Program

Our Emerging Leaders Program accelerates the leadership impact of high-potential staff and frontline leaders. Through a competitive selection process, participants grow their skills and networks via presentations, immersive activities and a group project. In the past year, 24 staff graduated, and the program was reviewed and has been replaced by the *Leading with Impact* program.

Leading with Impact Program

Our new *Leading with Impact* Program is designed to equip leaders in the latest evidence-based leadership theory and practice, while being tailored to the vision and purpose for the City of Whittlesea. A sought-after program subject to an application and selection process, participants are challenged to grow their leadership skills and network through thought-provoking presentations, immersive activities, and a group project. Fourteen operational leaders graduated from the first round of the program in June 2025, with the second round to take place in the second half of 2025.

Women's Leadership Network

The Women's Leadership Network is a supportive group and learning space to explore and address challenges, opportunities and needs common to women in leadership positions at City of Whittlesea. In 2024-2025 two events were held to develop and connect this group's members – *#IAmRemarkable* workshops were held for International Women's Day, and the *Amplify* workshop was attended by more than 40 employees.

Enterprise Agreement

The City of Whittlesea Enterprise Agreement No.10 (2023) was approved by the Fair Work Commission and came into effect on 13 December 2023. The Agreement provides yearly salary increase, as well as a range of other benefits including flexible working, unlimited family violence leave and generous parental leave entitlements.

Organisational changes

During 2024-2025 the City of Whittlesea undertook some minor structural changes. These changes support the creation of a high-performing organisation that continues to meet the needs of the community and deliver on the *Whittlesea 2040* vision and goals.

Consistent with all organisational changes, staff were consulted with all feedback considered when making a final decision on structural changes.

Organisational challenges

Despite the recent development of an Employee Value Proposition (EVP), Council continues to face challenges in attracting and retaining talent. The EVP has had a positive impact, particularly in drawing and maintaining high-performing candidates, but talent competition still remains high.

Equal Employment Opportunity

Council is committed to providing a workplace free from all forms of discrimination, harassment and bullying, and continues to promote equality of opportunity for all employees through merit-based recruitment and selection, employment conditions, benefits, training and promotion.

All new employees receive a suite of compliance training and information on discrimination, harassment and bullying as part of the induction process while all current staff receive ongoing training on these topics. All relevant policies are accessible via Council's intranet.

The organisation also provides a range of options for staff requiring support for personal or workplace issues. The Peer Support Program has 20 volunteer employees who provide informal and confidential support to employees experiencing difficulties at work or at home who may need assistance navigating additional and more formal pathways for support.

A confidential Employee Assistance Program is also available to all staff and their immediate families to discuss and provide support with a range of workplace and personal issues.

Our employment programs

Inclusive Employment Program

Inclusive Employment Program (IEP) was introduced in 2023 with the aim of providing participants with genuine work experience to assist in overcoming the employment challenges faced by many of our diverse population.

Each IEP role offers a paid, six-month placement to people who live locally and are experiencing barriers to securing meaningful and suitable employment. Eligible participants must either identify as culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD), First Nations, a person living with disability, residents experiencing hardship or older residents unable to find work. With the experience gained from an IEP placement, participants will be better equipped to go on and find suitable employment.

Ten local residents successfully completed the IEP with Council this financial year.

The program will move to become an ongoing opportunity within the City of Whittlesea, with two 12-month opportunities available per financial year.

Work Ready Program

Work Ready is a work experience program for adult migrants and refugees, aimed at creating meaningful work experience to overcome the employment challenges and lack of Australian work experience faced by many migrants and refugees.

It is a 12-week work experience program, completed over two days per week, six hours per day, and enables participants to gain local experience, knowledge of Australian workplace culture and the necessary skills to get them ready for work.

The program is primarily directed to supporting newly arrived and disadvantaged migrants and refugees who live within the municipal boundaries.

In 2024-2025, the City of Whittlesea had three work ready placements.



Find out more about working for the City of Whittlesea at whittlesea.vic.gov.au/careersatcouncil

Continuing to build a Great Workplace for All

Our Great Workplace for All (GWA) Plan is our overarching people plan and supports our High Performing Organisation strategy. It illustrates our determination to create a workplace where our people are valued, grow, lead in their own spaces and are committed to serving our community both now and in the future. Our aspiration is to give all our people an 'irresistible employee experience' whilst they contribute to the wellbeing and service of our community.

We conducted a review of our GWA for the next two years and confirmed our key workforce priorities and initiatives across five focal areas, as follows:



1. Culture
2. Leadership
3. Employee Experience
4. Enabling Organisation
5. Wellbeing

Key GWA actions that have been delivered in 2024-2025 include:

- focusing on the psychological safety of all our people
- commencing the implementation of our leading-edge Human Capital Management System, Workday

- the implementation of our integrated talent management and succession planning approach
- the development and implementation of our Leading with Impact program
- Great Workplace for All staff awards event held in December 2024, to recognise achievements and inspire performance
- Annual Leadership Summit held in March 2025, to continue developing our leadership capabilities and align leadership thinking
- the design and implementation of a structured program of development interventions to encourage a culture of high performance, feedback and service excellence.

Future focus

Key *Great Workplace for All* actions to be delivered in 2025-26 include:

- continuing implementation of our Human Capital Management System, Workday
- strengthening our Talent Management and Succession planning
- updating, and aligning, our Workforce and Gender Equality Action Plans
- delivering an integrated program of revitalised leadership development actions to ensure our leaders have access to leading thinking and practical knowledge.



At Council's End of Year Celebration, Utility Works & Infrastructure Protection Officer Geoff was commemorated for 40 years of dedicated service to the City of Whittlesea



Lisa, General Counsel, with her puppy Frankie – part of the City of Whittlesea’s ‘Bring Your Dog to Work’ program supporting staff wellbeing

Safety, health and wellbeing

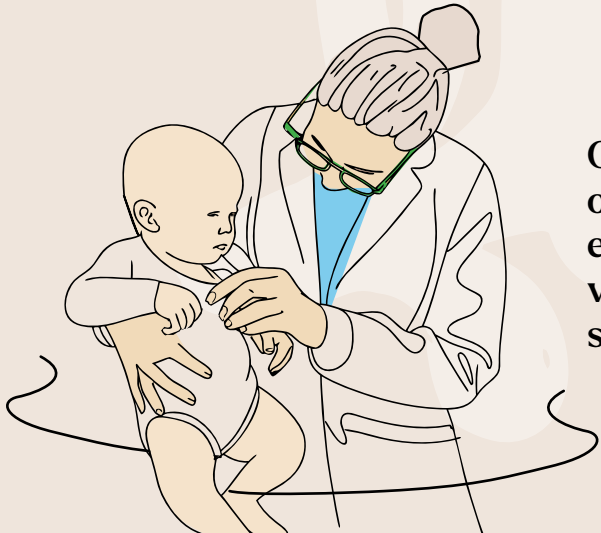
The City of Whittlesea is committed to providing a safe working environment for employees, contractors, volunteers and visitors. This is done through a focus on a strong reporting culture, the continual improvement of our safety processes, by fostering a high degree of risk vigilance and by learning from our incidents and near misses.

Wellbeing@Work program

Our Wellbeing@Work program aims to provide staff with access to a range of health and wellbeing programs and activities, focused on improving physical health and mental wellbeing.

Some of the key programs and activities provided in 2024-2025 include:

- the SiSU Health Station was placed at three locations, offering free, independent, medical-grade health checks for staff in just four minutes
- Women’s Health Week focussed on nutritional medicine and hormones during menopause
- RUOK Day activities were delivered across the organisation, including awareness initiatives and messages from the Executive Leadership Team
- we partnered with our Employer Assistance Program provider to deliver two staff wellbeing sessions: *Stress and Burnout* and *The Science of Sleep*
- two hundred staff participated in the *15-Minute Challenge*, a six-week program designed to promote physical activity for all fitness levels while having a focus on encouraging participation from staff who are typically less active
- hosted Men’s Health Week events at two locations which attracted more than 150 staff. Guest speaker Ben Alexander, a former Australian Wallaby rugby player and mental health advocate, shared insights on wellbeing, burnout and sustaining energy
- lunchtime exercise classes were offered in-person at various sites and online, including Pilates, Yoga, Boxing/Circuit training and walking groups. On-site bicycles and gym equipment were maintained and made available for staff
- an on-site physiotherapist was available to support staff with both work-related and non-work-related injuries
- a comprehensive review of the Wellbeing@Work program occurred which included a satisfaction survey, numerous workshops, participation data analysis, desktop research and benchmarking against other local government initiatives. The review generated some recommendations that have resulted in a number of strategic and operational improvements
- annual refresher training was delivered to Peer Support Officers (PSO).



Our Great Workplace for All Plan sets out our commitment to creating an ‘irresistible employee experience’ where our people feel valued, supported to grow, and inspired to serve the community.

Work health and safety incidents

The City of Whittlesea records all health and safety incidents, injuries near misses and hazards.

Reporting levels remain strong, with 516 incidents and 149 hazards recorded in 2024-2025.

The increase in hazard (35%) and near-miss (18%) reporting reflects the positive impact of our upgraded incident management system, targeted training and internal communications that have strengthened awareness and encouraged proactive reporting.

The introduction of the OHS Governance Framework, the Hazard Identification and Risk Management procedure, and the enhanced Incident Management and Corrective Action process has further strengthened our approach, ensuring clear accountabilities, effective risk control and continuous improvement.

This strong reporting culture is critical to reducing serious incidents and lost time injuries.

As a result, Lost Time Injuries (LTIs) have decreased from 26 in 2023-24 to 24 in 2024-2025, with the Lost Time Injury Frequency Rate (LTIFR) reducing from 13.8 to 13.4.

This demonstrates ongoing improvements from enhanced hazard identification, safe work procedure reviews, early intervention strategies and improved incident investigations, all of which have been supported by strong engagement from our Health and Safety Representatives (HSRs).

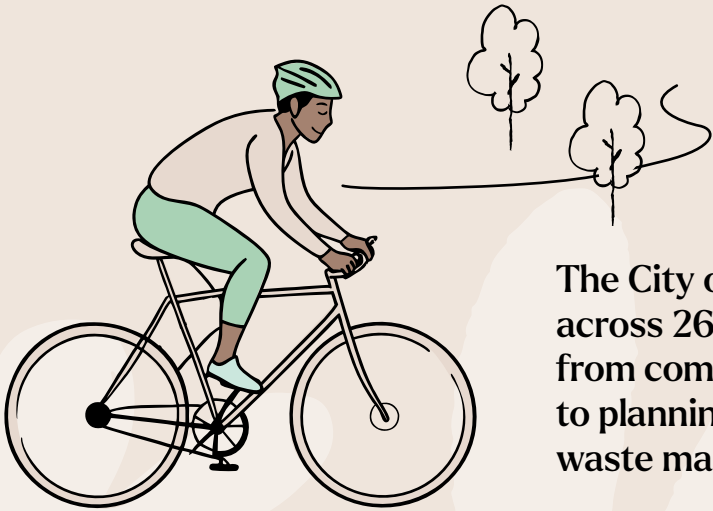
Our focus remains on continuing to reduce LTIs through proactive risk management, strengthened governance, and early intervention.

	2023-2024	Corrected 2023-2024	2024-2025	Change
Incident	574	542*	516	-26
Injury	204	196*	169	+3
Near Miss	39	39	57	+18
Hazard	112	114*	149	+35
LTI	26	26	24	-2
LTIFR	13.8	13.8	13.4	-0.4

* Five incidents reported after the end of 2023-24 financial year

* Eight injuries reported after the end of 2023-24 financial year

* In 2024-2025, Council completed a review of its safety data to ensure incidents are accurately recorded and classified under the new reporting system. This process has improved the accuracy and reliability of safety performance data, providing assurance that workplace incidents are being transparently reported, monitored and addressed in line with recognised standards.



The City of Whittlesea delivers over 140 services across 26 service groups, supporting everything from community programs and open space to planning, business development, and waste management.

Safety Management System and process enhancements

During 2024-2025 there was a focus on revising some elements of the City of Whittlesea’s safety management system in line with ISO45001 by applying a methodology of simplicity, useability and quality. This has led to a significant number of enhancements to the following processes:

- **OHS Governance Framework**
The framework sets out how the City of Whittlesea’s Occupational Health and Safety Management System (OHSMS) supports effective safety governance. It defines key governance activities, responsibilities, and oversight mechanisms to ensure due diligence and informed decision-making by Council, staff and stakeholders
- **Hazard Identification and Risk Management**
This procedure details how workplace hazards and risks are identified, assessed and controlled, with a focus on eliminating risks where possible or minimising them to the lowest practicable level
- **Incident Management and Continuous Improvement**
This process ensures timely reporting, documentation, and response to incidents, injuries and dangerous events, while promoting learning and corrective actions to drive ongoing occupational health and safety improvements.

Risk

The proactive management of the City of Whittlesea’s operational risks guides where our supervision, resources and assurance activities are directed.

In 2024-2025 the focus has been on three of our most significant risks which includes driving and the prevention of vehicle accidents; psychosocial hazards that can result in mental health injuries and reduced productivity; and musculoskeletal disorders which includes strains and sprains that can occur while performing manual activities.

In support of these programs there are number of discrete and targeted focus areas, the work of which will carry into 2025-26 and includes:

- **Psychosocial Risk Management Framework**
Aligning with the upcoming OHS (Psychological Health) Regulations which come into effect 1 December 2025, the program includes developing a psychosocial risk register, implementing risk control plans for key psychosocial hazards, and delivering targeted training programs to build capability among staff and leaders.

These initiatives strengthen Council’s approach to psychological health and safety by ensuring compliance, reducing risks, and by fostering a supportive and resilient workplace culture

- **Occupational Violence and Aggression (OVA) Framework**
The City of Whittlesea is developing an Occupational Violence and Aggression (OVA) Prevention Framework to address increasing workplace violence risks. Aligned with Victorian Department of Health guidance, the framework takes a whole-of-council approach and focuses on six key domains: Governance, Prevention, Training, Response, Reporting and Investigation.

Other improvement initiatives and future focus

Other improvement initiatives that were implemented during 2024-2025 included:

- **the launch of a revised Contractor Management System**
The program focussed on aligning the City of Whittlesea’s new Safety Information Platform (BeSafe) with our existing paper-based processes to ensure that contractor safety was held to the same standard as employee safety. The system provides a structured and consistent approach to managing contractor compliance, safety documentation, inductions and risk management processes
- **Safety and Wellbeing Management Review and Assurance Program**
The City of Whittlesea is implementing a structured Safety and Wellbeing Assurance Framework and Management Review process to strengthen oversight and continuous improvement. Planned actions include establishing a risk-based assurance program to assess the effectiveness of the Occupational Health and Safety Management System (OHSMS), defining clear responsibilities for assurance activities, and conducting regular departmental and organisational reviews to monitor performance, identify trends, and enhance health and safety outcomes.
- a number of health and safety training outcomes were also delivered during 2024-2025 including:
 - Safety Due Diligence Training for the Executive and Senior Leadership Teams
 - Incident Investigation Training (including Incident Cause Analysis Method Training)
 - forklift refresher training for Maintenance Depot staff
 - trailer towing training for Maintenance Depot staff
 - Defensive Driver training for Maintenance Depot staff.



Our events provide our community with opportunities to get involved and have fun



OUR PERFORMANCE

The following pages provide a detailed report of operations against the key projects and activities undertaken throughout 2024-2025, listed under our five key goals.

Community satisfaction survey

The annual Local Government Community Satisfaction Survey provides insights into community views on areas of council service delivery. The core performance measures include:

- overall performance
- value for money
- consultation and engagement
- community decisions
- sealed local roads
- waste management
- customer service
- overall Council direction.

Vesna and Hristina explore the shelves at Mill Park Library. Our local libraries scored 84 in the 2025 Community Satisfaction Survey – the highest performing of all Council services

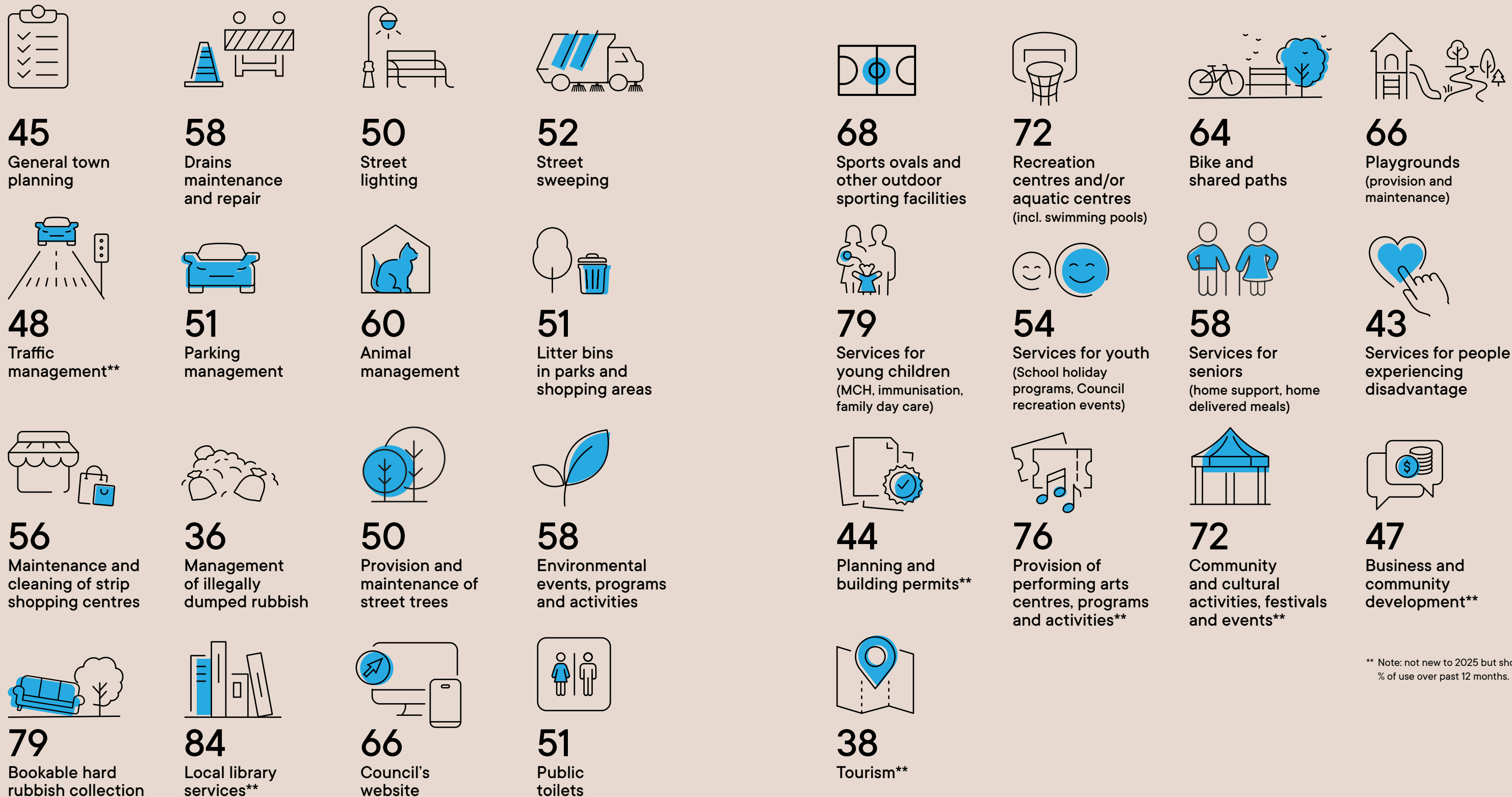
2025 Community Satisfaction Survey results

During March and April 2025, a total of 800 residents from across the municipality provided their feedback via an online survey. Each rating given is a score out of 100.



NEW TO 2025

2025 Community Satisfaction Survey results



** Note: not new to 2025 but shows % of use over past 12 months.



Peter Hopper lake
revitalisation project

Our performance

For the year ended 30 June 2025

Report of Operations

For the year ended 30 June 2025

Description of operations

The City of Whittlesea is responsible for more than 140 services across 26 service groups, from family and children’s services, traffic regulation, open space, youth programs, waste management and community building; to matters concerning business development, planning for appropriate development and ensuring accountability for Council’s budget. This broad range of community services and infrastructure for residents support the wellbeing and prosperity of our community.

Council’s vision, goals and strategies to further improve services and facilities are described in our Council Plan 2021-2025 and the associated Budget 2024-2025 and are reported on in this document. Refer to the section on Our Performance for more information about Council services.

The delivery of services, facilities, support and advocacy to achieve goals is measured by a set of service performance indicators and measures. Council also has responsibility for administering a wide range of State and Federal legislation.

Our performance

Integrated strategic planning and reporting framework

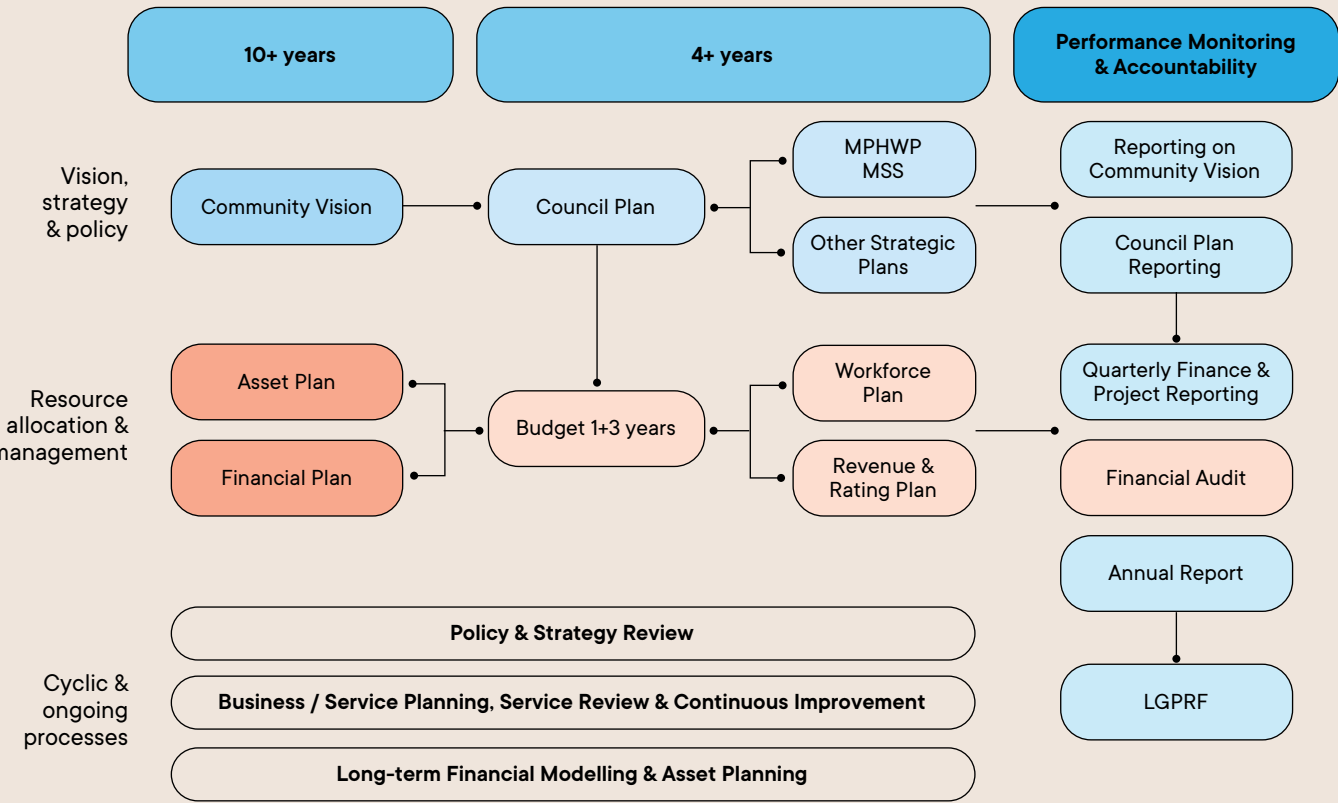
Part 4 of the *Local Government Act 2020* requires councils to prepare the following:

- **a Community Vision**
(for at least the next 10 financial years)
- **a Council Plan**
(for at least the next four financial years)
- **a Financial Plan**
(for at least the next 10 financial years)
- **an Asset Plan**
(for at least the next 10 financial years)
- **a Revenue and Rating Plan**
(for at least the next four financial years)
- **an Annual Budget**
(for the next four financial years)
- **a Quarterly Budget Report**
- **an Annual Report**
(for each financial year)
- **Financial Policies.**

The Act also requires councils to prepare:

- **a Workforce Plan**
(including projected staffing requirements for at least four years)
- **a Gender Equality Action Plan**
(four years).

The following diagram shows the relationships between the key planning and reporting documents that make up the integrated strategic planning and reporting framework for local government. It also shows that there are opportunities for community and stakeholder input and feedback.



Community Plan (Council Plan)

The Community Plan 2021-2025 includes strategic objectives, strategies for achieving these for the four-year period, strategic indicators for monitoring achievement of the strategic objectives and a strategic resource plan.

The following are the five strategic objectives as detailed in the Community Plan.

GOAL 1

Connected community

Our city opens its arms to every resident and is a place where all walks of life are celebrated and supported.

GOAL 2

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.

GOAL 3

Strong local economy

Our city is the smart choice for innovation, business growth and industry investment.

GOAL 4

Sustainable environment

Our city's superb landscapes and natural environment are an enduring source of pride.

GOAL 5

High performing organisation

Council delivers a range of internal functions and activities enabling the delivery of efficient and effective services and initiatives. Council's goal is to be a high-performing organisation which delivers best value to the community.

PERFORMANCE

Council's performance for the 2024-2025 financial year has been reported against each goal to demonstrate how Council is performing in achieving the Community Plan 2021-2025.

Performance has been measured as follows:

- results achieved in relation to the strategic indicators in the Community Plan
- progress in relation to the major initiatives identified in the Budget
- services funded in the Budget and the persons or sections of the community who are provided those services
- results against the prescribed service performance indicators and measures.

GOAL 1

Connected community

Building capacity of our future female leaders

Confidence. Connection. Leadership. These are just some of the outcomes of the Young Women's Leadership Program, run by the City of Whittlesea.

This free, 10-week program is open to young women aged 14 to 20. It helps participants build confidence, develop leadership skills, and connect with others in a safe and supportive space. The program includes workshops, group discussions and guest speakers from the local community.

Topics include women in leadership, gender equality, mental health, healthy relationships and self-confidence. You will learn useful skills, share ideas and hear from inspiring women who are making a difference.

Since 2019, 62 young women have participated, with many taking on leadership roles in City of Whittlesea programs like the Youth Council or community events.

In 2025, former participant Kaynat became City of Whittlesea Youth Mayor – a great example of what's possible.

"As Youth Mayor, I carry those lessons with me and I believe this is an experience every young woman should have," she said.

"The Young Women's Leadership Program gave me a safe space to reflect, share and learn. It opened up conversations we don't often get to have and gave me the confidence to use my voice and grow into a better version of myself."

Kaynat (left), a graduate of the City of Whittlesea's Young Women's Leadership Program, became Youth Mayor in 2025 – a powerful example of what's possible



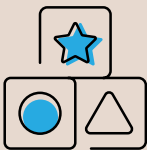
Goal 1: Connected community

GOAL 1 Highlights



28,678

hours of service and support through the Maternal & Child Health service



3,624

children attended sessional kindergarten programs delivered at Council facilities



124

performances at PRACC (Plenty Ranges Arts & Convention Centre)

9,230

vaccinations administered

34

sessions and events delivered as part of the Raising Children and Young People program

94,000+

visitors attended performances, events, conferences and creative workshops at PRACC

1397

Let Everyone Actively Participate (LEAP) members



19,001

meals delivered



1,048,291

visits to leisure centres and aquatic facilities



51%

of animals at wat djerring Animal Facility rehomed

3,115

Community Home Support clients accessed services

\$4B

in assets managed

2,103

inspections under the Food Act

GOAL 1 Key achievements

- Completed the building works of the **Aboriginal Gathering Place** in bunjil nganga Parkland (Quarry Hills).
- Commenced construction on the **second stage of the regional sports precinct** in Mernda.
- Completed the **redevelopment of the Epping Community Services Hub**.
- Progressed construction of the new **Murnong Community Centre** in Donnybrook.
- Adopted the **Asset Plan 2025–35**.
- Provided more than **\$2.5 million in community grants**.

GOAL 1

Connected community



Whittlesea
2040
A place for all

Strategic indicators

The following statement reviews the performance of Council against the Community Plan including results achieved in relation to the strategic indicators included in the Community Plan.

Strategic Indicator	Measure	2025 Result	2024
 Social cohesion	Residents average rating of social connection in the community	57% ¹	48% ²
 Physical activity	Percentage of residents who do moderate to vigorous exercise for at least 2.5 hours a week	60% ³	60% ⁴
 Mental health	Percentage of residents who report that they experience high or very high levels of psychological distress	22% ⁵	31% ⁶
 Safety in public areas	Percentage of residents who feel safe in their local neighbourhood – Daytime	85% ⁷	67% ⁹
	Percentage of residents who feel safe in their local neighbourhood – Nighttime	37% ⁸	
 Civic participation	Percentage of residents who participated in community engagement activities	36% ¹⁰	38% ¹¹

¹ Community Insights Survey Wave 1.3 2024-2025
² Community Insights Survey Wave 2 2024
³ Community Insights Survey Wave 1.3 2024-2025
⁴ Community Insights Survey Wave 2 2024
⁵ Victorian Population Health Survey 2023
⁶ Victorian Population Health Survey 2020
⁷ Community Insights Survey Wave 2.1 2024-2025
⁸ Community Insights Survey Wave 2.1 2024-2025
⁹ Community Insights Survey Wave 2 2024
¹⁰ Community Insights Survey Wave 2.2 2024-2025
¹¹ Community Insights Survey Wave 2 2024



GOAL 1

Connected community

Major initiatives

The following statement reviews the progress of Council in relation to major initiatives identified in the 2024-2025 budget for the year.



Actions	Progress
Key Initiative #01 Improve safety and perceptions of community safety in public spaces including for people with disabilities and their carers, women, girls and gender diverse people	
Continue to collaborate with partners to advocate and prevent gambling harm	✓ Council continues to attend the Victorian Local Governance Association meeting on gambling harm and actively explores collaborative opportunities with other local councils, the Municipal Association of Victoria, the Alliance for Gambling Reform, and academic institutions. This association ensures the inclusion of gambling harm prevention in municipal public health and wellbeing plans. One recent outcome included the Department of Health’s ‘Love the game’ initiative. Sport and gambling don’t have to go together, and players and fans can be encouraged to love the game, not the odds. This initiative has been promoted across sporting clubs in the City of Whittlesea. Benefits for the clubs included: - enhanced reputation by taking a stand against sports betting sponsorship - demonstrated leadership in tackling an issue of community concern - signalling that their culture is one that prioritises the wellbeing of our young people - being part of a community of elite and local sporting clubs. Council is currently collating the data on program reach, with early indicators demonstrating participation in the program has increased significantly for the City of Whittlesea.
Work with our partners to raise community awareness and focus on prevention for people who are homeless and sleeping rough in the municipality	✓ Council worked with peak bodies and partners, including Homelessness Australia, Council to Homeless Persons, and the Victorian Council of Social Service to learn more about how to prevent homelessness and establish a plan to address the growing issue of homelessness and rough sleeping in the municipality. Council has developed a pilot program to begin in August 2025 that will help identify where people are sleeping rough, understand local trends, and map out support services, while collecting real-life data to guide future actions.

Actions	Progress
Key Initiative #02 Prevent and respond to family and gender-based violence by working with local service providers and the community	
Improve access to Prevention of Violence Against Women programs, services, and resources, including among culturally and linguistically diverse community groups	✓ Council is committed to preventing gender-based violence and promoting gender equality by supporting Women’s Health in the North’s Building Respectful Communities Strategy 2022–2026. In partnership with our external stakeholders, Council developed and facilitated Family Violence Recovery Groups for Arabic and South Asian women. These groups were designed to provide a culturally safe and supportive environment for women who have experienced family violence, offering them the opportunity to connect, share their experiences, and access vital support networks. Key outcomes included increased confidence among participants in navigating support systems, understanding financial independence, and improving emotional wellbeing. The program also fostered peer support and strengthened community connections, helping to reduce isolation often faced by women from CALD backgrounds experiencing family violence.
Continue to engage men in the prevention of gender-based violence through a community of practice	✓ In partnership with DPV Health, Council is working towards creating gender equity allies in the City of Whittlesea by developing a community of practice focused on engaging men and boys from diverse backgrounds to promote gender equity and help prevent violence against women in our community. Due to commence in late 2025, the participants will engage in capacity building training that will equip them with skills in gender equity, healthy relationships and bystander action.
Key Initiative #03 Increase responsible pet ownership and reduce the adverse impact of domestic animals on wildlife	
Continue to run animal adoption campaigns to find new homes for stray animals in our municipality	✓ Council continues to run animal adoption campaigns, and this year developed a dedicated adoption pack for new pet owners at the wat djerring Animal Facility in Epping. At the Whittlesea Community Festival’s pet expo, Council promoted the facility and distributed items such as doggy waste bags and water bowls, which will now be included in the adoption packs. Council is also exploring online adoption platforms to streamline the process for both customers and staff. The half-price adoption promotion, running from 1 April to 30 June 2025, has resulted in record numbers of adoptions from wat djerring – 969 animals were rehomed during the promotion, resulting in the highest monthly total since transitioning to in-house operations in October 2022.
Key Initiative #04 Support our community to be safer, better prepared and more resilient to emergency events and disasters through increased access to information and education	
Increase community emergency resilience and preparedness, including for at-risk people and communities	✓ Council increased community emergency resilience through the successful delivery of community resilience projects for this year including developing and implementing the Adaptation Game, engaging with at risk communities, engaging with community at events and through the community sub-committee to the Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee. Council also regularly featured communications on emergency preparedness in resident newsletters and across social media channels, including the promotion of in-language videos to support our CALD community.

Actions		Progress
Key Initiative #05 Continue to work with partners to lead recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic including vaccinations and COVID-19 safe health messaging as well as early years, school, cultural and linguistically diverse communities, refugee, asylum seekers and workplace immunisation programs		
Key Initiative #06 Deliver a Connected Communities Strategy that will enhance social inclusion, civic participation, health, wellbeing and safety and reflect and celebrate the diversity of religions, cultures, heritages, abilities, ages, gender and sexual orientation which make City of Whittlesea <i>a place for all</i>		
Commence implementation of the Connected Community Strategy Action Plan 2024-2026		Council commenced implementation of the Connected Communities Action Plan, delivering key initiatives to foster inclusion and wellbeing. Highlights include the launch of a Mobile Supermarket Bus trial in Thomastown with Foodbank Victoria and the successful 2024 Seniors Festival with more than 440 attendees. Council also supported more than 800 local creatives through professional development opportunities and endorsed a Fair Access Policy to improve access to sports facilities for women and girls. Council also connected and enhanced relationships with Traditional Custodians – Wurundjeri and Taungurung, and local First Peoples community, through commemorating significant cultural dates of First Peoples and piloting community programs to inform and support the Aboriginal Gathering Place, currently in the final stages of construction.
Key Initiative #07 Strengthen community connections through a vibrant arts and events scene celebrating our diverse culture and heritage, activated open spaces and facilities and local markets		
Key Initiative #08 Establish a Gathering Place to increase connections to culture, heritage, land and healing for Aboriginal people		
Complete construction of an Aboriginal Gathering Place to foster connections to culture, heritage, land, and healing		Council has completed the building works of the Aboriginal Gathering Place building in the bunjil nganga Parkland (Quarry Hills), Mernda and is expecting the energy authority to connect power to the site in August 2025. Asphaltting of the access road and landscaping works surrounding the building will be completed late 2025.
Key Initiative #09 Implement a new community grants program to support our community and businesses, encourage festivals and events as well as helping our community and vulnerable residents recover from the pandemic		
Key Initiative #10 Deliver an inclusive leadership program to support community members to develop their leadership skills and potential		
Key Initiative #11 Advocate for more mental health services and prevention programs for our community including young people		
Key Initiative #12 Work with our community and partner organisations to support older residents to access quality local services		
Key Initiative #13 Commence construction of a leisure and wellbeing facility in Mernda		
Commence construction of the Regional Sports Precinct in Mernda including indoor courts, outdoor netball courts and associated facilities		Council awarded the contract for the second stage of works, comprising the construction of four indoor and eight outdoor sports courts along with supporting infrastructure, at its meeting on 18 March 2025. Construction officially commenced in June 2025.

Actions		Progress
Key Initiative #14 Build additional outdoor netball courts in a number of neighbourhoods including Epping, Doreen, Mill Park, Whittlesea, South Morang and Mernda		
Key Initiative #15 Improve access to physical activity and social connection by providing accessible, multi-use sports infrastructure which meets the diverse needs of our community		
Key Initiative #16 Enhance our network of vibrant and welcoming community centres at the heart of our neighbourhoods – including building new centres at Mernda, Wollert, and Donnybrook		
Progress construction of the Community Activity Centre in Patterson Drive, Donnybrook		Construction of the new Murnong Community Centre in Donnybrook is well underway. The steel frame, roof, solar panels and internal cabling are complete and work on the car park is progressing. The centre is expected to be finished by late 2025 and open in early 2026, following receipt of the Certificate of Occupancy and kindergarten licence.
Install WiFi at Miller Community Centre, Epping Community Centre, Janefield Community Centre, Olivine Pavilion, and Wollert Community Centre		Council has installed free WiFi at Miller Community Centre, Epping Community Centre, Janefield Community Centre, Olivine Pavilion and Wollert Community Centre. Council will continue to expand access to public WiFi across additional community facilities.
Key Initiative #17 Strengthen engagement with community through supporting or developing advisory groups and networks across our diverse community including young people, business, sustainability, people with a disability and Aboriginal people		
Deliver community forums, newsletters and engagement opportunities which support people with disability and carers		Council continued to deliver Whittlesea's Disability Network (WDN), including meetings each quarter. Community members have directly influenced programs and initiatives that Council is implementing; a work readiness program for youth with autism, a partnership with the NDIA addressing barriers to engagement to the scheme with our CALD community and exploration of an accessible precinct for families with complex needs. Throughout the year, 145 people attended these sessions. Council have published four newsletters during the year, providing information about services and support for people with disability.
Strengthen community engagement and bolster emergency preparedness through the use of a multi-purpose vehicle making it easier for our community to stay informed and have their say on matters that are important to them		Council now has a suitable multi-purpose vehicle to deliver innovative and accessible community engagement allowing people to easily have their say on projects and programs that impact them, bolster emergency preparedness and support Council's vibrant community events program. The vibrant colourful vehicle will travel around the municipality as part of our engagement and events programs and will be on hand for emergencies as the need arises.
Raise awareness of community needs around key health outcomes through events and activities during anti-poverty week, men's and women's health week and other days of significance		Council coordinated the delivery of a range of health promotion activities across the municipality during Men's Health Week and worked in collaboration with the Epping Services Hub and Cultural Diversity Team to deliver events for International Women's Day and Cultural Diversity Week. City of Whittlesea also launched the Anti-Racism Booklet in collaboration with Hume City Council, Merri-bek City Council and City of Darebin, a booklet designed to educate the community on racism and provide resources for anti-racism reporting and support services.
Key Initiative #18 Transition the Youth Advisory Committee to a Whittlesea Youth Council		
Key Initiative #19 Deliver a new Whittlesea Reconciliation Action Plan		

GOAL 1

Connected community

Services

The following statement provides information in relation to the services funded in the 2024-2025 budget and the persons or sections of the community who are provided the service.

Service	Description	Net Cost
		Actual Budget Variance \$000
Aboriginal reconciliation	We work with our Aboriginal residents to achieve meaningful Reconciliation and work with community to facilitate services and infrastructure which is inclusive, welcoming and pays respect to cultural identity. We seek to support the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community through building strong organisational, stakeholder and community relationships. We facilitate the Whittlesea Reconciliation Group to foster reconciliation, run programs and events that raise awareness and promote discussion.	766 552 214
Arts, heritage and festivals	Through arts and culture, we bring people together and provide great experiences, regardless of background, income, age or ability. Our strategic approach: - enables a creative sector that is vibrant and viable - delivers events that showcase and celebrate our strengths and cultural diversity - preserves and promotes our history, our living traditions and the co-creation of cultures - ensures that Aboriginal, historic cultural and natural heritage places, assets and features are retained, conserved and integrated into the urban design and neighbourhood character of our municipality.	1,553 1,850 (297)
Community facilities	We plan, construct, manage and maintain Council-owned and operated facilities to support valued community services, events, leisure activities and community-run activities and groups. Specific Council services supported include maternal and child health, early childhood and social support activities. External services supported include other allied health and community services.	3,627 4,561 (934)
Leisure and recreation	We strategically plan and manage leisure and recreation facilities within the City of Whittlesea. We support individuals and groups to participate in sport and recreation activities and organisations using Council spaces. We liaise with sports clubs to support their development, community participation and effective use of sports grounds, pavilions and other facilities.	1,128 651 477
Ageing well	We support older residents to age well by providing services, programs and activities such as delivered meals, domestic assistance, personal care, seniors’ clubs support, positive ageing programs and social connection. We help older residents to access user-directed aged care services and facilitate partnerships for services and infrastructure.	3,046 1,722 1,324

Service	Description	Net Cost
		Actual Budget Variance \$000
Animal management	We ensure people and their pets can live together harmoniously and safely in our community. We reunite lost pets with their owners, facilitate pet adoptions, operate the Epping Animal Welfare Facility, investigate animal incidents and complaints, establish and monitor measures put in place to mitigate the risks posed by dangerous and restricted breed dogs, attend to wandering livestock, and audit animal-related businesses to ensure welfare standards are upheld. We keep a register of cats and dogs that live in the City of Whittlesea and promote responsible pet ownership through a series of communication campaigns and events each year.	600 225 375
Family and children’s services	We aim to improve health, social and educational outcomes for children and families within the City of Whittlesea. We provide high quality, evidence-based services, programs and activities to strengthen family wellbeing, capacity and connection. Key services include maternal and child health and early years management and support.	5,791 7,369 (1,578)
Public health and safety	We protect and enhance community health, safety and wellbeing by: - educating the community about their responsibilities to contribute to public health and safety - enforcing state and local laws - delivering immunisation programs - working with emergency service agencies to plan and respond to emergencies - deliver evidence-based projects and programs to address major health and wellbeing issues faced by the community.	(1,309) 1,779 (3,088)
Youth services	Our Youth Services provide a range of programs, activities and events for young people aged 10-25 years and their families. Council also facilitates networks and advocates for inclusive social and physical infrastructure that support all young people, and work closely with a range of external organisations.	1,332 1,752 (420)
Community strengthening	We build inclusive, empowered and connected communities through the planning and delivery of evidence-based place-based programs and services in partnership with relevant stakeholders.	3,219 4,625 (1,406)
Customer service, communications and civic participation	We put customers and the community at the heart of how we deliver valued Council services and civic events, and how we communicate, engage and consult with our community. We continue to invest in facilities, processes, people and systems to improve our services, and advocate to all levels of government to support our community now and into the future.	12,036 9,331 2,705

GOAL 1

Connected community

Service performance indicators

The following statement provides the results of the prescribed service performance indicators and measures including explanation of material variations.

Service/ Indicator/measure	2022	Results			Comments
		2023	2024	2025	
Maternal and Child Health (MCH)					
Service standard <i>Infant enrolments in the MCH service</i> [Number of infants enrolled in the MCH service (from birth notifications received) / Number of birth notifications received] x100	101.03%	101.10%	101.12%	101.18%	This indicator is slightly higher than the last few years results and is expected to remain stable. This figure consistently shows at over 100% reflecting the high engagement of families with children born in the municipality and those that move into the municipality (where their birth notice is not captured in our data).
Service cost <i>Cost of the MCH service</i> [Cost of the MCH service / Hours worked by MCH nurses]	\$64.50	\$62.37	\$73.24	\$69.81	Council has worked hard to address previous workforce shortages and is now close to achieving a complete full-time equivalent workforce. With increased staffing levels, our team has been able to deliver more service hours throughout the year. As a result, while overall service costs have risen, the unit cost per service has decreased due to the higher volume of service delivery.
Participation <i>Participation in the MCH service</i> [Number of children who attend the MCH service at least once (in the year) / Number of children enrolled in the MCH service] x100	70.99%	72.08%	73.60%	77.72%	Council has continued to work diligently year on year to support families to remain engaged in the Maternal and Child Health Service. Strengthened service practices, including more intentional follow-up with families who miss appointments, have also contributed to improved participation rates. This measure reflects attendance across all Key Age and Stage (KAS) appointment ages. This result shows a significant improvement from the same period last year. This uplift is largely due to successful recruitment within the Universal Maternal and Child Health Team, which has increased the service’s capacity to meet Key Age and Stage (KAS) targets. The result is also higher than the interface average.

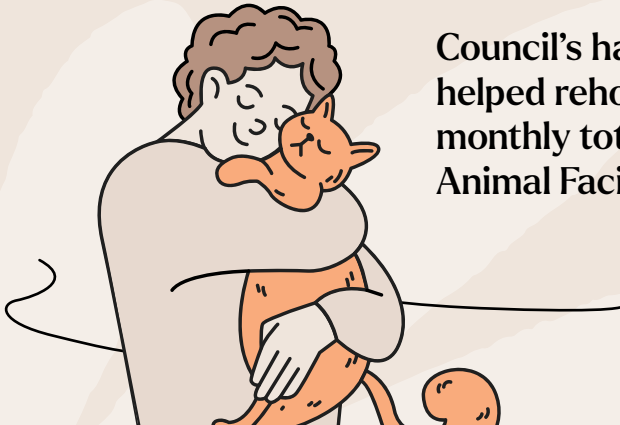
Service/ Indicator/measure	2022	Results			Comments
		2023	2024	2025	
Maternal and Child Health (MCH)					
Participation <i>Participation in the MCH service by Aboriginal children</i> [Number of aboriginal children who attend the MCH service at least once (in the year) / Number of Aboriginal children enrolled in the MCH service] x100	71.78%	77.03%	80.71%	91.80%	Council continues to support First Peoples families by providing a range of options to access the Maternal and Child Health Service. Through the Deadly Boorais, Deadly Families program, families have been able to engage with a more flexible and culturally safe model of care, tailored to their needs. This measure reflects participation in the Maternal and Child Health Service by Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander children across all Key Age and Stage (KAS) appointments. Key contributors to this improvement include increased staffing, the recruitment of Aboriginal team members, strengthened cultural connections, and ongoing investment in relationship-building with service partners and First Peoples communities. These efforts have led to stronger engagement with the Aboriginal community, fostering greater trust and increased participation in the service.
Satisfaction <i>Participation in 4-week Key Age and Stage visit</i> [Number of 4-week key age and stage visits / Number of birth notifications received] x100	97.79%	98.74%	101.12%	99.75%	This measure captures attendance at the 4-week Key Age and Stage (KAS) appointment and reflects strong engagement with families in the early stages of an infant’s life. The Q4 result is similar to the 2023-24 Q4 result and is 3% higher than the interface average. Factors that have contributed to this strong result are active follow-up and a flexible approach to service delivery. The result highlights positive community connection and trust in the service during the critical first year. Council has embedded strong practices, including varied communication methods and referral options to support Maternal and Child Health nurses in delivering high-quality care. These efforts have contributed to this measure consistently outperforming the interface average.

Service/ Indicator/measure	Results				Comments
	2022	2023	2024	2025	
Food Safety					
Timeliness <i>Time taken to action food complaints</i> [Number of days between receipt and first response action for all food complaints / Number of food complaints]	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	In 2024, Council responded to all food complaints with an average response time of one business day.
Service standard <i>Food safety assessments</i> [Number of registered class 1 food premises and class 2 food premises that receive an annual food safety assessment in accordance with the <i>Food Act 1984</i> / Number of registered class 1 food premises and class 2 food premises that require an annual food safety assessment in accordance with the <i>Food Act 1984</i>] x100	74.69%	98.65%	99.89%	100.00%	In 2024, Council assessed 100% of all Class 1 and 2 food premises. We note there was six additional food safety assessments during the reporting period as a result of investigations.
Service cost <i>Cost of food safety service</i> [Direct cost of the food safety service / Number of food premises registered or notified in accordance with the <i>Food Act 1984</i>]	\$354.19	\$361.15	\$385.09	\$370.91	As a regulator, Council is responsible for the monitoring of more than 1,600 food premises. This includes undertaking routine and targeted food sampling and responding to food related complaints throughout the municipality. Council employs a team of qualified Environmental Health Officers, who dedicate approximately 55% of their time regulating food premises.
Health and safety <i>Critical and major non-compliance outcome notifications</i> [Number of critical non-compliance outcome notifications and major non-compliance notifications about a food premises followed up / Number of critical non-compliance outcome notifications and major non-compliance notifications about food premises] x100	80.20%	97.28%	100.00%	100.00%	In 2024, Council conducted follow up inspections which were identified as having either a critical or major non-compliance. Council achieved a 100% result.

Service/ Indicator/measure	Results				Comments
	2022	2023	2024	2025	
Food Safety (cont.)					
Service standard <i>Food safety samples</i> [Number of food samples obtained / Required number of food samples] x100	New indicator	New indicator	100.00%	100.83%	In 2024, the State Government set a food sampling target of 242 for the City of Whittlesea. This target has been achieved by reaching 244 samples, exceeding the required target by two samples. A 100% result has been achieved.
Aquatic Facilities					
Service standard <i>Health inspections of aquatic facilities</i> [Number of authorised officer inspections of Council aquatic facilities / Number of Council aquatic facilities]	1.00	2.67	2.67	1.00	During the reporting period, Council conducted comprehensive inspections of its three aquatic facilities, with each site receiving a detailed assessment in line with the Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008 and the Water Quality Guidelines for Public Aquatic Facilities. In addition to these scheduled inspections, Council’s proactive monitoring program led to eight further compliance visits and the collection of 33 water samples across the facilities. All inspections and water quality analyses confirmed full compliance with regulatory standards. Facility operators were also found to be conducting water quality testing every four hours as required. Privately owned pools and spas accessible to the public were also inspected and tested to ensure community health and safety standards were upheld. Please note the change in this year’s number is due to previous year’s interpretation of the measure, being individual pools vs facilities. The 2024-2025 number accords with measure calculation, and other Interface Councils are being contacted to ensure consistency.
Service cost <i>Cost of aquatic facilities</i> [Direct cost of aquatic facilities less income received / Number of visits to aquatic facilities]	-\$1.68	-\$0.99	-\$0.48	-\$0.27	This is the first year of a new maintenance contract. There has been a slight decrease in cost to Council compared to last year’s performance due to increase in maintenance cost.

Service/ Indicator/measure	Results				Comments
	2022	2023	2024	2025	
Aquatic Facilities (cont.)					
Utilisation <i>Utilisation of aquatic facilities</i> [Number of visits to aquatic facilities / population]	2.82	3.85	4.22	4.14	The aquatic and leisure centres have experienced strong attendance figures this year. This year Mill Park Leisure, Thomastown Recreation & Aquatic Centre and Whittlesea Swim Centre have collectively had over 14,400 additional attendances. This number when divided by the population increase has resulted in a very slight drop from previous year. This positive performance reflects the community's continued support for this service.
Animal Management					
Timeliness <i>Time taken to action animal management requests</i> [Number of days between receipt and first response action for all animal management requests / Number of animal management requests]	1.00	1.00	1.32	1.25	Council officers continued to provide timely responses to animal-related requests throughout the year, with improvements in response times compared to the previous year. Council responded to animal-related requests on the same working day, the remaining requests were received after hours and were attended to on the next working day.
Service standard <i>Animals reclaimed</i> [Number of animals reclaimed / Number of animals collected] x 100	29.01%	38.02%	33.97%	28.25%	Of the animals collected in 2024-2025 (not including feral cats), 28% were reclaimed by their owners. This result is influenced by a significant increase in the number of animals impounded during the reporting period. While this presents a challenge for reclaim rates, the service has improved its overall capacity through stronger rehoming outcomes and other positive service developments. Cat overpopulation, particularly the impoundment of unowned cats, continues to place downward pressure on this indicator; a trend observed across the sector as Councils work proactively to address the issue. Council remains committed to promoting responsible pet ownership through ongoing education initiatives.

Service/ Indicator/measure	Results				Comments
	2022	2023	2024	2025	
Animal Management (cont.)					
Service standard <i>Animals rehomed</i> [Number of animals rehomed / Number of animals collected] x 100	29.01%	38.02%	33.97%	28.25%	Of the animals that were unclaimed (not including feral cats) by their owners, 51% were rehomed to new owners directly through the wat djerring Animal Facility. This result shows a favourable increase of 18.14% on the previous reporting period. This result was driven by the dedicated adoption campaigns, which boosted the visibility of adoptable animals through rescue partners and on-site efforts at wat djerring leading to record adoption numbers.
Service cost <i>Cost of animal management service per population</i> [Direct cost of the animal management service / Population]	\$9.76	\$15.13	\$11.46	\$11.47	The current cost of the Animal Management service per capita is \$11.47. The service includes returning lost animals home, investigating nuisance complaints and dog attacks, a subsidised cat desexing program and the City of Whittlesea proportion of operating the wat djerring Animal Facility. This result aligned with our projections for Q4 and minor cost increase of 0.06% as compared to the previous reporting period.
Health and safety <i>Animal management prosecutions</i> [Number of successful animal management prosecutions / Number of animal management prosecutions] x 100	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	During the 2024-2025 financial year, Council prosecuted nine animal management matters, all of which were successful.



Council’s half-price adoption campaign helped rehome 969 animals – the highest monthly total since bringing the wat djerring Animal Facility in-house in 2022.

GOAL 2

Liveable neighbourhoods

Building a regional sports precinct

The regional sports precinct in Mernda is poised to provide a welcome home-ground advantage to future generations of players.

Conveniently located off Plenty Road, the precinct will be a central hub for people from across the region to play the sports they love close to home.

Demand for quality sporting facilities, most notably for netball but also other court-based sports, has been rapidly increasing as the City's population has grown. The precinct will not only provide existing participants with facilities closer to home, but also encourage new participants, especially for women and girls, to take up a sport.

Whittlesea local and rising Melbourne Vixens star Tara Watson knows how difficult it can be to have to travel long distances simply to train and play.

"Having this just down the road for all the kids in the future will be amazing and I think it's a great, positive step for the future of netball," she said. "I think the precinct will definitely help inspire young girls, and young boys as well, to play netball."

The precinct's second stage is underway and will deliver an indoor stadium with multipurpose sports courts and outdoor netball courts with lighting. There will also be a range of supporting infrastructure for players and staff, including changerooms, reception, outdoor pavilion, car park and landscaping.



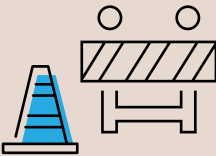
Tara (left) and sister Shanae look forward to the new Mernda regional sports precinct, which will feature an indoor stadium, outdoor netball courts with lighting, and supporting facilities to give future generations a true home-ground advantage

Goal 2: Liveable neighbourhoods

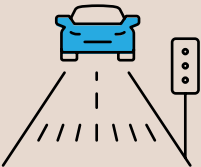
GOAL 2 Highlights



44
roads resurfaced,
totalling more than
nine kilometres
of road pavement



22
local roads reconstructed
and renewed



5
kilometres of roads upgraded

7.4
kilometres of kerb upgraded

GOAL 2 Key achievements

- Completed the construction of the signalised intersection at Plenty Road and Everton Drive in Mernda.
- Completed construction of the wetlands, boardwalk, shelter and public toilet at the Granite Hills Major Community Park.
- Commenced construction of the West Wollert Community Centre.
- Completed construction of new walking and cycling trails at bunjil nganga Parkland (Quarry Hills).
- Developed the Mill Park Place Framework.
- Adopted the *Integrated Transport Plan 2024-2034*.

GOAL 2

Liveable neighbourhoods



Whittlesea
2040
A place for all

Strategic indicators

The following statement reviews the performance of Council against the Council Plan including results achieved in relation to the strategic indicators included in the Council Plan.

Strategic Indicator	Measure	2025 Result	2024
 Commuter travel time	Percentage of workers who spent 60 minutes or more getting to work each day	30% ¹²	20% ¹³
 Walking and cycling	Percentage of community that walk or cycle to work	1% ¹⁴	N/A
 Access to open space	Percentage of households located within 400m of neighbourhood open space (less than 1 ha)	44% ¹⁵	25% ¹⁶
 Access to services and facilities	Percentage of residents satisfied with ease of travel to services	63% ¹⁷	64% ¹⁸
 Housing affordability	Percentage of housing affordable to very low and low-income households (divided into purchase and rent)	Purchase: 9% ¹⁹ Rent: 49% ²⁰	Purchase: 7.4% ²¹ Rent: 64.5% ²²

¹² Community Insights Survey Wave 2.1 2024-2025
¹³ Community Insights Survey Wave 1 2024
¹⁴ Community Insights Survey Wave 2.1 2024-2025
¹⁵ Australian Urban Observatory – Liveability index
¹⁶ Australian Urban Observatory Mapping
¹⁷ Community Insights Survey Wave 2.1 2024-2025
¹⁸ Community Insights Survey Wave 1 2024
¹⁹ .id Housing affordability index 2025
²⁰ .id Housing affordability index 2025
²¹ .id Housing affordability index 2023
²² .id Housing affordability index 2023

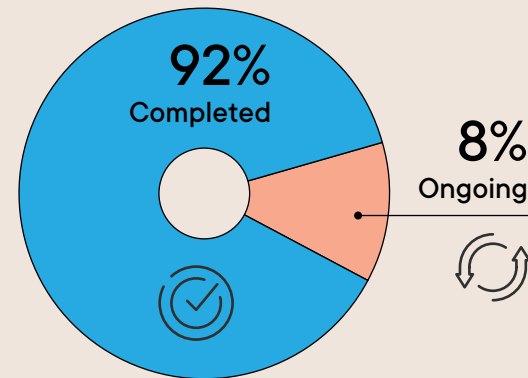


GOAL 2

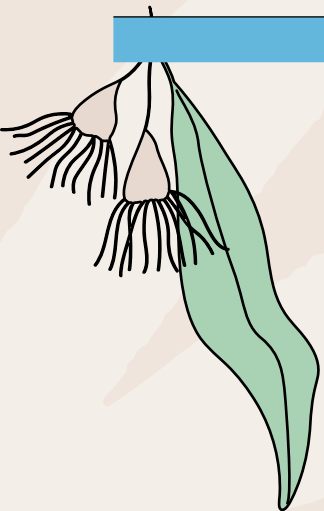
Liveable neighbourhoods

Major initiatives

The following statement reviews the progress of council in relation to major initiatives identified in the 2024-2025 budget for the year.



Actions	Progress
Key Initiative #20 Increase the quality, access, safety and amount of public open space in the municipality, including additional dog parks and a local park improvement program	
Develop the Mill Park Place Framework to enhance our investment planning and prioritise city shaping opportunities	✔ Council developed the Mill Park Place Framework, which was endorsed by Council at the 22 July 2025 Council Meeting.
Continue to upgrade Whittlesea Public Gardens	✔ Following completion of the design of the Whittlesea Public Gardens car park in Lalor, construction will commence in July 2025 with completion expected in late 2025.
Progress construction to improve access to the Whittlesea Township Park to better connect our community	✔ Council has completed construction of the Laurel Street access path and the new pedestrian bridge over the Plenty River.
Key Initiative #21 Develop and implement a plan to improve public toilets making them accessible, useable and safe	
Continue to upgrade public toilets in line with the Public Toilet Amenity Plan	✔ Council included a new public toilet as part of the Murnong Community Centre in Donnybrook currently under construction. Works are progressing well and the Murnong Community Centre is scheduled for completion in late 2025. In addition, Council is investigating the provision of a public toilet at Gumnut Park in Donnybrook in the 2025-26 financial year.
Key Initiative #22 Implement the Quarry Hills Regional Park master plan to increase accessibility, useability and activation	
Progress construction of Granite Hills Major Community Park	✔ Council has completed the early works package at Granite Hills Major Community Park in bunjil nganga Parkland (Quarry Hills), Mernda including construction of the wetlands, boardwalk, shelter and public toilet. The playground and landscaping works are nearing completion and the project is expected to be finished and open to the public in late 2025.



Actions	Progress
Key Initiative #23 Increase safety and accessibility of transport with a focus on major corridor improvements, public transport usage and safe connected cycling and walking networks	
Encourage and promote active travel through the production of maps and improved signage	✔ Council actively promoted active travel by supporting the Biketober event, community programs around cycling, developing local area maps that will be available on our website and ensuring wayfinding is incorporated in all projects that include shared or separated bike paths in our capital works program. A total of three bike maintenance courses have been held, with two bike skills sessions delivered and more sessions planned. In addition, to support National Ride2School Day, Council ran a bike safety session at a local school to help children gain confidence and ride safely.
Conduct cycling audits to enhance planning for evolving cyclist needs	✔ Council has completed the audit of Edgars Creek and Darebin Creek trails. Council has commenced work on the Mill Park Safe Streets project which includes assessment of cycle routes around the schools in Mill Park, to compliment the development of the Mill Park Place Framework.
Deliver the local road resurfacing works	✔ Council successfully resurfaced a total of 44 roads, equating to more than nine kilometres of road pavement which used more than 3,570 tonnes of recycled material. Streets resurfaced include: Bradley Drive, Mill Park; Victoria Drive, Thomastown; The Lakes Boulevard, South Morang; Graduate Road, Bundoora; German Lane, Lalor; The Pint Pot, Whittlesea; Scholar Drive, Bundoora; Brookland Grove, Thomastown; Flaxen Hills Road, Doreen; Redleap Avenue, Mill Park and Queenscliff Road, Thomastown.
Deliver the local road reconstruction works	✔ Council successfully reconstructed and renewed a total of 22 roads, which equated to more than five kilometres of roads and approximately 7.4 kilometres of kerb. These roads were renewed using more than 5,900 tonnes of recycled material, which was diverted from landfill. Key renewed roads include: Oakbank Boulevard, Whittlesea; Pinewood Drive, Thomastown; Kefford Avenue, Lalor; Bedale Court, Mill Park; Meridian Drive, South Morang; Chigwell Place, Epping; Cranley Place, Thomastown and Breadalbane Avenue, Mernda.
Finalise construction of a signalised intersection at Plenty Rd and Everton Drive, Mernda	✔ Council finalised the construction of the signalised intersection at Plenty Road and Everton Drive, Mernda. The official opening of the intersection is subject to the electrical connection works by the energy authority and activation of the traffic signals by the Department of Transport and Planning.

Actions	Progress
Key Initiative #24 Advocate for new or upgraded roads including Epping Road, Bridge Inn Road, E6, Yan Yean Road, Findon Road and Donnybrook Road	
Key Initiative #25 Improve disability access to public transport including installation of bus shelters across the municipality	
Continue to improve access, shelter, and seating for people with a disability at bus stops	Council has upgraded the south bound bus stop east of Whittlesea Yea Road/Coombs Road intersection in Humevale making it compliant with accessibility standards.
Key Initiative #26 Advocate for better public transport, including better rail, tram and bus infrastructure and services and lead the public transport strategy under the Northern Councils Alliance	
Key Initiative #27 Design and upgrade local streetscapes and shopping precincts to make it easier to move about, celebrate local culture, heritage and character, and connect people to the natural environment	
Commence construction of the streetscape around the Boulevard shops in Thomastown	The design phase of The Boulevard streetscape upgrade project in Thomastown was completed, following a delay while awaiting the outcome of grant submission announcements from the Federal Government. Council’s application for a Federal Government Grant has been successful. Once approval is received from Melbourne Water, tenders will be called for the construction of the streetscape upgrade works. A contract is planned to be awarded in late 2025 with works commencing in early 2026.
Key Initiative #28 Deliver more affordable and accessible homes in the municipality	
Partner with community housing organisations to plan and progress delivery of affordable houses in Ashline Street, Wollert	Council is partnering with Beyond Housing to deliver 27 new social and affordable housing dwellings on the Ashline street site. The planning permit has been approved and amended plans are awaiting final approval. Construction is anticipated to commence in October 2025, with completion expected by late 2026.
Key Initiative #29 Increase the number of waste and recycling bins in public spaces and parks	
Key Initiative #30 Implement the Safe Routes to Schools program to improve the safety of school children	

KEY:

Completed

Ongoing

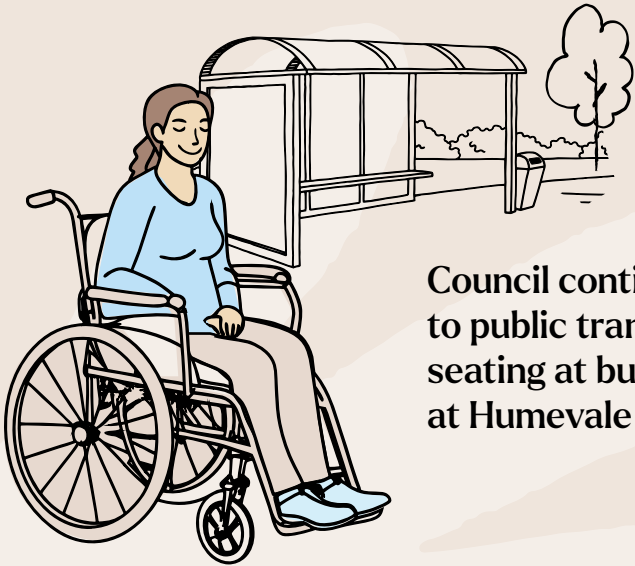
GOAL 2

Liveable neighbourhoods

Services

The following statement provides information in relation to the services funded in the 2024-2025 budget and the persons or sections of the community who are provided the service.

Service	Description	Net Cost
		Actual Budget Variance \$000
Roads, public transport and footpaths	We plan, provide and maintain accessible, functional, safe and well-connected local transport infrastructure within the municipality. We advocate with State agencies for better transport outcomes for upgrading existing and providing new transport infrastructure, and better public transport services.	11,074 11,632 (558)
Traffic management	We seek to ensure a safe and efficient road network for motorists, pedestrians and cyclists. Programs include staffing school crossings at flagged and un-flagged crossings, and running community education programs about safe traffic behaviour around schools.	1,598 1,798 (200)
Parks and open space	We provide, manage and maintain Council's parks and open space assets such as parks, playgrounds, street trees, sports fields and lawns. We also plan strategically for future parks and open space projects.	24,607 21,475 3,132
Planning and building	We administer and enforce building and planning legislation, and how land is being used and developed from a strategic and statutory perspective. This includes policy and master plan preparation and implementation, and approval of infrastructure and public spaces associated with urban development.	6,235 10,262 (4,027)



Council continues to improve disability access to public transport with better shelter and seating at bus stops, including recent upgrades at Humevale to make the stop fully accessible.

GOAL 2

Liveable neighbourhoods

Service performance indicators

The following statement provides the results of the prescribed service performance indicators and measures including explanation of material variations.

Service/ Indicator/measure	2022	Results 2023	2024	2025	Comments
Roads					
Satisfaction of use <i>Sealed local road requests</i> [Number of sealed local road requests / Kilometres of sealed local roads] x100	18.94	44.65	52.79	38.27	There has been a decrease in requests, largely due to more accurate data collection and the implementation of a new system that allows for more detailed tracking. We are continuing to improve both data collection processes and the optimisation of the system.
Condition <i>Sealed local roads maintained to condition standard</i> [Number of kilometres of sealed local roads below the renewal intervention level set by Council / Kilometres of sealed local roads] x100	91.64%	92.99%	97.24%	92.05%	This year, there has been a minor decline in the total length of sealed local roads maintained at the required condition standards. Road surfaces naturally deteriorate over time due to weather exposure and traffic loads. Council delivers a rolling program of renewal projects to maintain asset condition. To improve effectiveness and adopt a more proactive approach, Council has transitioned from an annual renewal program to a four-year renewal program, informed by the results of the periodic condition audit (conducted every four years).
Service cost <i>Cost of sealed local road resealing</i> [Direct cost of sealed local road resealing / Square metres of sealed local roads resealed]	\$50.20	\$40.17	\$46.73	\$31.41	A sustained focus on improving operational efficiency through refined resurfacing delivery practices, optimised project planning and procurement and effective use of internal engineering expertise has led to a notable reduction in unit costs compared to the 2023-24 financial year, without compromising quality or the level of service provided to the community.

Service/ Indicator/measure	2022	Results 2023	2024	2025	Comments
Roads (cont.)					
Service cost <i>Cost of sealed local road reconstruction</i> [Direct cost of sealed local road reconstruction / Square metres of sealed local roads reconstructed]	\$113.48	\$124.08	\$131.83	\$90.28	The unit rate for Council road reconstruction works has decreased significantly this year compared to the 2023-24 financial year. This reduction reflects the successful implementation of more cost-effective construction methods and improvements in project delivery strategies. A continued focus on efficient design, strategic bundling of works to achieve economies of scale, and optimised procurement scheduling have all contributed to this outcome. These efficiencies were achieved without compromising the quality of work or the level of service provided to the community.
Satisfaction <i>Satisfaction with sealed local roads</i> [Community satisfaction rating out of 100 with how Council has performed on the condition of sealed local roads]	59.00	53.00	51.00	51.00	Council continues to work through our road construction and maintenance programming to provide a satisfactory road user experience. Several arterial road projects – while beneficial in the long term – have impacted on the local road user experience this year, particularly in Council’s northern areas. Council acknowledges that community sentiment about road condition is likely negatively impacted by the state of arterial roads, and to this end Council continues to work closely with State Government to ensure our road network accommodates the rapid growth of our municipality.

Service/ Indicator/measure	Results				Comments
	2022	2023	2024	2025	
Statutory Planning					
Timeliness <i>Time taken to decide planning applications</i> [The median number of days between receipt of a planning application and a decision on the application]	73.00	56.00	57.00	66.00	Council’s median processing days to determine an application is 66 days for this financial year. This is well below the Interface Council’s average result which was 104 days.
Service standard <i>Planning applications decided within required timeframes</i> [(Number of regular planning application decisions made within 60 days) + (Number of VicSmart planning application decisions made within 10 days) / Number of planning application decisions made] x100	63.52%	76.32%	67.84%	68.39%	Council delivered 68% of our decisions within the required time frame for the financial year, an increase from 2023-24. Council continues to issue permits effectively and efficiently, benchmarking well against other interface Councils.
Service cost <i>Cost of statutory planning service</i> [Direct cost of statutory planning service / Number of planning applications received]	\$3,158.80	\$3,497.22	\$4,131.27	\$4,603.86	The operational cost of the planning service has increased slightly compared to 2023-24, while the number of applications has reduced. It is noted that the number of applications contributing to the data does not include post permit applications, ministerial approval referrals and officer time spent on Department of Transport and Planning (DTP) Development Facilitation Programs, which have increased significantly this year and require significant Council resources to provide Council’s assessment to DTP.

Service/ Indicator/measure	Results				Comments
	2022	2023	2024	2025	
Statutory Planning (cont.)					
Decision-making <i>Council planning decisions upheld at VCAT</i> [Number of VCAT decisions that did not set aside Council’s decision in relation to a planning application / Number of VCAT decisions in relation to planning applications] x100	23.08%	57.89%	66.67%	100.00%	Council aims to achieve mutually beneficial outcomes with all parties to avoid tribunal hearings in the first instance. All decisions were either upheld by the Tribunal or resolved via negotiation with the applicant prior to hearing. We have a great deal of success with this approach, which indicates that the cases that do go to Tribunal are genuine cases that need independent adjudication. This result is variable each year and depends on the number and types of applications considered by VCAT. The result represents an improvement this year and Council continues to strive for effective decision-making in all planning matters.



Council successfully reconstructed and renewed a total of 22 roads, which equated to more than five kilometres of roads and approximately 7.4 kilometres of kerb.

GOAL 3

Strong local economy

Building a connected and thriving business community

Boasting 550 members, the City of Whittlesea Business Network provides local business an opportunity to connect, collaborate and build relationships with other business in the City of Whittlesea.

Free to join, the local businesses of all sizes can enjoy a range of benefits, including:

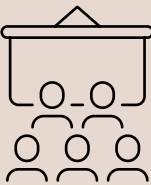
- networking events
- learning opportunities
- online business listing
- eligibility to enter City of Whittlesea Business Awards.

After attending a Business Network event, local business owner, Dua Fakhereddin from Beauty by Dua in Thomastown said, “I enjoyed my time at the event held by Whittlesea Council and had the opportunity to meet fellow business owners and make new connections. Such events are valuable for business owners.”

Local business owner Dua, from Beauty by Dua in Thomastown, valued the chance to connect with fellow business owners at Council’s July Business Networking Event

Goal 3: Strong local economy

GOAL 3 Highlights



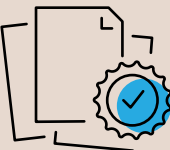
550
members in the
Business Network



300
business concierge
enquiries



More than
\$310,000
provided in
Business Grants



26
finalists in the third annual
Business Awards



22%
of residents have a
library membership

GOAL 3 Key achievements

- Delivered \$340,000 worth of Business Grants.
- Hosted the third annual City of Whittlesea Business Awards.
- Launched the Explore Whittlesea website.
- Increased the Business Network membership to more than 550 members.
- Partnered with Melbourne North Food Group to deliver the Food Waste Summit.
- Continued to support the Business Advisory Panel.

GOAL 3

Strong local economy



Whittlesea
2040
A place for all

Strategic indicators

The following statement reviews the performance of Council against the Community Plan including results achieved in relation to the strategic indicators included in the Community Plan.

Strategic Indicator	Measure	2025 Result	2024
 Local jobs	Number of local jobs as a percentage of residents in the workforce	66% ²³	N/A
 Access to education	Percentage of residents satisfied with ease of travel to place of study	76% ²⁴	48% ²⁵
 Gross regional product	Value of City of Whittlesea's local economy (\$ per capita)	\$48,234 ²⁶	\$46,321 ²⁷

²³ NIEIR.id 2023-24
²⁴ Community Insights Survey Wave 2.1 2024-2025
²⁵ Community Insights Survey Wave 1 2024
²⁶ Economy.id 2023-24
²⁷ Economy.id 2022-23





John (left) and Yamada (right) joined Royal Flair Caravans in Epping through the State Government-funded Growth Sector Jobs project, pictured with General Manager Peter (middle)

GOAL 3

Strong local economy



Major initiatives

The following statement reviews the progress of Council in relation to major initiatives identified in the 2024-2025 budget for the year.

Actions	Progress
Key Initiative #31 Strengthen the visitor and agri-tourism economies by implementing a new Destination Tourism Plan	
Key Initiative #32 As part of COVID recovery, deliver a ‘support local’ campaign and incentive program to support the community and local businesses	
Key Initiative #33 Work with partners to increase opportunities for local work, training, apprenticeships and programs with a focus on young people and groups who experience significant barriers to employment	
Continue partnership with Hume Whittlesea Local Learning Employment Network to promote local pathways to jobs and careers for young people	✓ Council continued its strong partnership with the Hume Whittlesea Local Learning and Employment Network (HWLLEN), supporting and promoting key initiatives throughout the year. In October 2024, Council supported the Real Industry Job Interviews, followed by collaboration with HWLLEN to engage new partners for the 2025 Career Networking Expo. In March 2025, Council co-hosted the Expo at PRACC, including a City of Whittlesea stall to promote local jobs and careers, with more than 950 students in attendance. In May 2025, Council attended HWLLEN’s Annual General Meeting and the Whittlesea Youth Commitment 25-Year Celebration.
Identify and work with key stakeholders to address skill shortages through targeted inclusive programs/events	✓ Council continues to collaborate with the Australian Government Jobs and Skills Taskforce to understand skills shortages and opportunities for local employment. Through this collaboration, themes include recognition of overseas qualifications, lack of support for mature aged migrants, employers requiring soft skills over technical and opportunity for volunteering to help unlock network and job opportunities were identified. A joint northern career expo was delivered within the municipality of Darebin with 550 people attending and 30 exhibitors on the day showcasing local jobs.
Continue the inclusive employment program to ensure marginalised community members can gain meaningful employment experience with Council	✓ The Inclusive Employment Program continues to deliver positive employment opportunities for local residents facing barriers to finding suitable and meaningful employment. Ten participants successfully completed the program this financial year.

KEY: ✓ Completed ↻ Ongoing

Actions	Progress
Continue to deliver a Work Ready volunteer program for qualified and newly arrived migrants	Council continues to deliver a Work Ready volunteer program for newly arrived qualified migrants.
Investigate the need for supporting businesses to undertake inclusive recruitment and employment	Council continues to support inclusive recruitment and employment practices through input into the development of the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan and the Disability Action Plan to promote greater inclusivity. Through the jobs taskforce key service improvements identified include further language support and confidence building, with a focus on practical employment skills.
Encourage collaboration between educational institutions, local business, external stakeholders and industry to understand the training needs of the future workforce	Council held a successful workshop with eight local businesses and the Victorian Skills Authority (VSA), providing a valuable platform for discussion and information sharing. The VSA will now consider the insights gathered to determine the next steps in addressing current and emerging skills needs.
Key Initiative #34 Implement the Investment Attraction Plan to attract investment, strengthen the local economy and increase the number and diversity of local jobs	
Connect and support local businesses and entrepreneurs to showcase their circular economy products and services	Council partnered with Melbourne North Food Group to deliver the Food Waste Summit in May 2025, bringing together businesses and organisations to share insights and practical examples on incorporating more circular practices into their operations. As part of the Retail and Hospitality event held in June, Council facilitated the participation of Reground, who presented innovative approaches for adopting circular business models, highlighting successful industry examples.
Key Initiative #35 Work with the Victorian Government and key stakeholders to progress planning for key employment precincts such as Epping Central, the Beveridge Intermodal Freight Terminal, the Melbourne Food Innovation and Export Hub and the Vearings Road employment precinct	
Work with the Victorian Government, National Intermodal and Mitchell Shire Council to progress master planning for the Beveridge Intermodal Precinct	The new planning controls for Stage 1A of the Beveridge Intermodal Precinct was approved by the Minister for Planning in August 2025 as part of Planning Scheme Amendment GC249. Council endorsed its submission to Planning Scheme Amendment process at its meeting on 18 February 2025 and much of its feedback was incorporated into the final planning controls including improvements to road network and management of environmental issues during and post construction. Council continues to engage with the Department of Transport and Planning and the National Intermodal Corporation regarding the planning for Stage 1b of the Beveridge Intermodal Precinct and broader Northern Freight Precinct Structure Plan area.

Actions	Progress
Partner with the Victorian Government, Hume City Council, Mitchell Shire Council and the landowner to progress master-planning and implementation of the Cloverton Metropolitan Activity Centre	After formalising the Cloverton Metropolitan Activity Centre (MAC) Partnership Agreement Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), in late 2024 , Council have continued to work with project partners including Hume City Council, Mitchell Shire Council, Stockland and the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation. The partnership has made an application for funding through the Federal Governments Urban Precincts and Partnerships Program to progress the master planning for the activity centre. Recent work has also focused on identifying areas of First Peoples significance in partnership with Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung and then exploring opportunities on how these can be incorporated into the precinct’s planning and development.
Advocate for the Melbourne Food Innovation and Export Hub (MFIx)	Council continues to advocate for the establishment of a Melbourne Food Innovation and Export (MFIx) Hub to support the development of an agri-food and innovation precinct, connecting industry, research, logistics and local jobs.
Key Initiative #36 Implement the Victorian Government-funded 3-year-old kindergarten service together with the early childhood sector and deliver infrastructure projects at key sites across the city	
Key Initiative #37 Work with the Yarra Plenty Regional Library corporation to continue improving our library services around accessibility, innovation and community learning	
Commence construction of Murnong Community Centre and library and deliver additional mobile bus library stop locations to support our growing community	Construction of the new Murnong Community Centre in Donnybrook is well underway. The Centre is expected to be finished by late 2025 and open in early 2026. Council is delivering additional mobile bus library stops at The Y Leisure City in Epping (replacing Epping Memorial Hall) and Murnong Community Centre (replacing Kirrip Community Centre). Both stops have been well-received, with the Murnong stop quickly becoming the busiest on the route.
Key Initiative #38 Advocate for improved mobile phone coverage in rural areas	
Key Initiative #39 Encourage employment pathways and sustainable land management practices at the Whittlesea Community Farm and Food Collective	
Key Initiatives #40 Support local agribusinesses to be sustainable, grow and be prepared for climate change	
Support the agri-food sector to be future ready through improved connectivity between industry, local education, and research and development	In February 2025, Council successfully held a Food and Beverage event focused on key topics such as automation, artificial intelligence and the role of technology in improving traceability and efficiency across the supply chain. The event provided valuable insights and opportunities for local businesses to engage, learn and prepare for the future of food production and distribution.

GOAL 3

Strong local economy

Services

The following statements provide information in relation to the services funded in the 2024-2025 budget and the persons or sections of the community who are provided the service.

Service	Description	Net Cost
		Actual Budget Variance \$000
Investment attraction	We encourage new and support reinvestment within the City of Whittlesea through networking, relationship management with stakeholders and promotion of the opportunities and initiatives available.	16 357 (341)
Libraries	We offer library services through Yarra Plenty Regional Library in partnership with Banyule and Nillumbik Councils. We seek to build a skilled community that has a sense of wellbeing, inclusion and belonging through free access to relevant collections, public programs and welcoming, accessible spaces for learning.	6,411 6,438 (27)
Local business support	We support our businesses by guiding and making it easy for them to engage with Council, promoting funding and employment opportunities, facilitating networking with complementary businesses, promoting business initiatives to increase customer base, coordinating special rate schemes, supporting trader associations, and case managing issues and planning applications.	1,907 1,897 10



The Inclusive Employment Program supported 10 local residents facing barriers to secure meaningful work this year.

GOAL 3

Strong local economy

Service performance indicators

The following statement provides the results of the prescribed service performance indicators and measures including explanation of material variations.

Service/ Indicator/measure	2022	Results 2023	2024	2025	Comments
Libraries					
Resource currency <i>Recently purchased library collection</i> [Number of library collection items purchased in the last five years/Number of library collection items] x100	87.49%	86.99%	78.63%	83.37%	The percentage of the library collection that has been purchased in the last five years has increased by 6% to 83% of the collection this year. City of Whittlesea is providing 16% more books that are less than five years old than the average of like Councils.
Service cost <i>Cost of library service per population</i> [Direct cost of the library service/Population]	\$19.08	\$19.67	\$21.31	\$22.53	The cost of the library service has increased to \$22.53 per person. This is due to increasing costs to run a library service and additional Library branches introduced in recent years. City of Whittlesea is still cheaper by \$2.47 per population than the average of like Councils.
Utilisation <i>Library loans per population</i> [Number of collection item loans/Population]	New indicator	New indicator	3.19	3.97	The items per population has grown this year from 3.19 items to 3.97 items due to additional library hubs in our growth suburbs and a new digital platform. City of Whittlesea is behind the average of like Councils by 1.19 items per population which will be a focus for next financial year with more promotion of our new digital platform and an additional library branch in Donnybrook from February 2026.
Participation <i>Library membership</i> [The number of registered library members/ Population] x 100	New indicator	New indicator	18.83%	22.01%	Library membership has grown to 22.01% due to the recent introduction of online membership requirement to access Wi-Fi (consistent with other libraries) and new branches. This figure is expected to continue growing.
Participation <i>Library visits per population</i> [Number of library visits/ Population]	New indicator	New indicator	2.22	2.48	Library visits have grown to 2.48 visits per head of population. This is 0.22 behind the average of like Councils which should be partially addressed with a new library branch in Donnybrook from February 2026 to service our growing population in the west of the municipality.

GOAL 4

Sustainable environment

Building community knowledge to support a cleaner, greener environment

The City of Whittlesea established a dedicated waste taskforce in response to the ongoing problem of managing illegally dumped rubbish.

The taskforce brings together key teams across Council to focus on three main goals:

- educating the community on the best options to dispose of waste,
- holding offenders publicly accountable
- reducing the cost of clean-ups.

Kerbside compliance officers have been hitting the streets to help locals ensure their waste ends up in the right place. Local resident David welcomed the opportunity to chat with one of our officers in Whittlesea.

“It was great to get some positive feedback and it’s awesome to know so many of our neighbours are doing the right thing too.”

Since February 2025, the taskforce has:

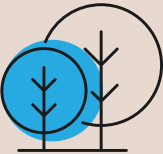
- reduced dumped rubbish collection times for completed investigations to just two days
- inspected more than 6,750 properties through targeted, unannounced compliance checks
- issued 129 notices to offenders to clean up their waste
- issued \$68,183 in extra fines for non-compliance with clean up notices.
- launched an ongoing education campaign
- updating the website to improve accessibility to waste information and services
- promoted the range of free and discounted waste services to the community.



Local resident David welcomed the chance to learn more about responsible waste disposal, helping to build a cleaner, greener community

Goal 4: Sustainable environment

GOAL 4 Highlights



8,200+

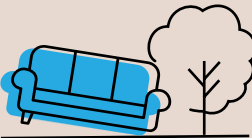
trees planted

2,237

open spaces managed

735

hectares of public conservation land managed for local flora and fauna



2,797

tonnes of hard waste collected

116,546

kilograms of e-waste collected



35

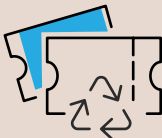
environmental events

20

schools and kinder partnerships established to implement the Seedlings for Schools program

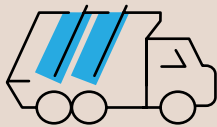
2,041

hectares of private land conservation supported through grants and rebates



15,975

waste and recycling vouchers redeemed



42%

of kerbside waste collection diverted from landfill

14,821

tonnes of recycling collected

17,581

tonnes of food and garden waste (FOGO) collected

46,902

tonnes of garbage collected

1,998

tonnes of glass collected

GOAL 4 Key achievements

- Successfully rolled out the replacement of rubbish bin lids to red lids, in line with the Victorian Government’s new standard bin lid colours.
- Implemented an illegal dumping Waste Taskforce.
- Progressed the upgrade of Peter Hopper Lake in Mill Park.
- Transitioned to digital waste and recycling vouchers and expanded the service to include all residents.
- Commencing the bunjil nganga Releaf revegetation project.
- Delivered LED lighting upgrades.

GOAL 4

Sustainable environment



Whittlesea
2040
A place for all

Strategic indicators

The following statement reviews the performance of Council against the Community Plan including results achieved in relation to the strategic indicators included in the Community Plan.

Strategic Indicator		Measure	2025 Result	2024
	Biodiversity protection	Hectares of land where Council has undertaken management actions	740 Hectares ²⁸	N/A
	Tree canopy	Percentage of tree shade (canopy cover) across the City of Whittlesea in urban and rural areas	Urban canopy cover: 7.1% ²⁹ Rural canopy cover: 37.7% ³⁰	Urban canopy cover: 7.1% ³¹ Rural canopy cover: 37.7% ³²
	Carbon emissions	Total carbon emissions produced across the City of Whittlesea and total emissions per capita	Total carbon emissions: 1,806,000 tonnes of CO ₂ ³³ Carbon emissions per capita: 7.4 tonnes of CO ₂ ³⁴	Total carbon emissions: 1,806,000 tonnes of CO ₂ ³⁵ Carbon emissions per capita: 7.4 tonnes of CO ₂ ³⁶
	Waste diversion	Percentage of kerbside collection waste diverted from landfill	45% ³⁷	45% ³⁸

²⁸ City of Whittlesea land management records
²⁹ Nearmap AI 2023-24
³⁰ Nearmap AI 2023-24
³¹ Nearmap AI 2022-23
³² Nearmap AI 2022-23
³³ Snapshotclimate.com.au as at 2023-24
³⁴ Snapshotclimate.com.au as at 2023-24
³⁵ Snapshotclimate.com.au
³⁶ Snapshotclimate.com.au
³⁷ LGPRF Indicators 2024-2025 Q4
³⁸ LGPRF Indicators 2022-2023



GOAL 4

Sustainable environment

Major initiatives

The following statement reviews the progress of Council in relation to major initiatives identified in the 2024-2025 budget for the year.

Actions	Progress
Key Initiative #41 Deliver key actions from our Rethinking Waste Plan, including introducing residential glass recycling, extending food and garden waste services, protecting the environment from litter and increasing sustainable procurement	
Continue to implement actions from the Rethinking Waste Plan	100% Completed ✔ Council continues to implement the Rethinking Waste Plan. The changeover to red bin lids for residential kerbside rubbish bins has been completed in accordance with the Victorian Government’s kerbside reform program. Monitoring is occurring with kerbside waste bins to support the community to understand how to recycle correctly. The Container Deposit Scheme (CDS) is now operational with Council observing significant reductions in this litter source and the community benefiting financially from returning containers.
Continue to enhance the hard waste collection service	✔ Council has implemented a new dashboard to proactively monitor utilisation of the hard waste booking system. New trucks have been received to improve the operation of the service. A broad community education campaign is underway to inform community members on how to use this service.
Develop and implement a waste diversion plan	✔ Council developed a Waste Diversion Plan. Community engagement on recycling correctly within the kerb side system is underway. Council has observed improvements in the contamination rate for the recycling bin and continues to have low contamination within the glass and FOGO bin. Council has also been promoting its recycling vouchers to divert material away from landfill.
Key Initiative #42 Improve the quality and activation of our water networks, source more water from alternative water supplies and use less water through water efficiency upgrades	
Key Initiative #43 Finalise and implement the new Green Wedge Management Plan and 10-year action plan in consultation with the community	
Key Initiative #44 Deliver on our Greening Whittlesea Strategy including increasing tree canopy along main road residential streets and in conservation reserves, parks and major facilities	
Continue to deliver the annual tree planting programs	✔ Council has completed the fourth year of the Conservation Reserves Tree Planting Program with more than 7000 indigenous trees planted in bunjil nganga Parkland (Quarry Hills) over winter and early spring 2024 and autumn 2025.

Actions	Progress
Key Initiative #45 Finalise and implement the Climate Change Plan, with a focus of reducing potable water use, reducing carbon emissions and transitioning to more sustainable resources	
Better protect flora and fauna through the Grassy Woodland Threatened Species Restoration Program at Growling Frog Golf Course	✔ Council has completed the fencing project to protect the Grassy Eucalypt Woodland patches within the Growling Frog Golf Course Conservation Area. The works were undertaken to enhance the protection of sensitive habitat areas and support the long-term conservation of local biodiversity.
Continue to implement a Planning Scheme Amendment to better protect biodiversity, waterways and landscapes using appropriate zones and overlays	✔ Council is continuing to progress the Planning Scheme Amendment to protect biodiversity, waterways and landscapes. The technical assessment has been completed of the landscape and biodiversity values of the municipality. A report is being prepared for a future Council Meeting in late 2025.
Invite Traditional Owners to self-determine involvement and opportunities for collaboration and partnership within our sustainable environment actions	✔ Council continues to collaborate with Traditional Owners for strategic projects in open space. The ongoing development of the Public Open Space Plan has been tabled in discussions with Traditional Owners and holistic cultural values studies are to commence for waterway planning. The bunjil nganga project working group will be re-established to enable continued collaboration for the regional parkland.
Develop and implement a Seedlings for Schools and Kinders program	✔ Council has partnered with 20 schools and kinders to implement the Seedlings for Schools 'Buzz Stop' program. The program sees students assess an area of their schoolyard and create a pollinator garden which they can continue to monitor for an increase in pollinator insects. Plantings will be taking place in Spring 2025 with a second assessment to be undertaken a year after plants are planted.
Utilise technology to prevent illegal native vegetation removal	✔ Council has partnered with the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA) and technical consultants to pilot new remote sensing technology to detect illegal vegetation removal. The aim is to develop a software platform that can be used by all Victorian Councils. Council is also progressing using AI to pick up changes in vegetation using high resolution NearMap images, complimenting the work of DEECA.
Key Initiative #46 Use less energy by investing in energy efficiency programs including energy efficient street lighting	
Continue to improve the energy efficiency of Council buildings and facilities including solar and lighting upgrades	✔ Council has installed a new solar power system and upgraded the truck wash bay hot water system to electric at the Epping Works Depot. Hot water systems at Mernda Villages and Mill Park Lakes Community Activity Centres have been assessed with upgrade works scheduled to commence in late 2025. Council continues to explore new opportunities for solar power, switching from gas to electric systems and community battery projects.
Key Initiative #47 Introduce new local recycling drop off points including a resource recovery shop	
Key Initiative #48 To protect and enhance Whittlesea’s environmental and sustainable future, we will undertake advocacy on behalf of our community, on climate change, water security and quality, vulnerable flora and fauna and waste reduction and reuse	
Key Initiative #49 Undertake analysis of extreme heat on the health and wellbeing of our community to inform future planning to protect residents and precincts most vulnerable to heatwaves	



Granite Hills Major Community
Park at bunjil nganga Parkland
(Quarry Hills) will open in late 2025

GOAL 4

Sustainable environment

Services

The following statement provides information in relation to the services funded in the 2024-2025 Budget and the persons or sections of the community who are provided the service.

Service	Description	Net Cost
		Actual Budget Variance \$000
Biodiversity, land management, sustainable planning and design	Through our role as a statutory authority, we play a crucial role in delivering an environmentally sustainable city. We facilitate sustainable land management and biodiversity conservation on public and private land across urban and rural areas. We educate and empower the community to undertake biodiversity conservation activities and sustainable land management.	5,155 4,651 504
Climate change	We provide services to support the community’s adaptation and mitigate climate change risks. We work to reduce the urban heat island effect and support urban greening, deliver walking and cycling paths supporting active travel for the community. We show leadership by avoiding, minimising and offsetting greenhouse gas emissions from our operations. We improve infrastructure, and help the community prepare for the unavoidable impacts of our changing climate, including increases in extreme weather events. We educate and empower the community to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.	58 68 (10)
Resource recovery and waste	We provide sustainable solutions for the collection, disposal and recovery of waste materials generated within the community and through our own operations. We develop strategic policy, education programs and operational maintenance activities to avoid, minimise and recover waste and keep our city clean, healthy and safe. We undertake compliance and enforcement for illegal waste dumping in our municipality. We support and empower the community transition to a circular economy.	29,532 30,610 (1,078)
Water management	We work alongside State Government agencies and utility providers to develop and deliver integrated water management services for our community, protecting and restoring our natural waterways. Council manages its water assets to ensure that they are planned, delivered, and maintained effectively. We are committed to ensuring water is used efficiently throughout our city. We support the community to understand and appreciate the water cycle and use water wisely.	1,646 1,259 387

GOAL 4

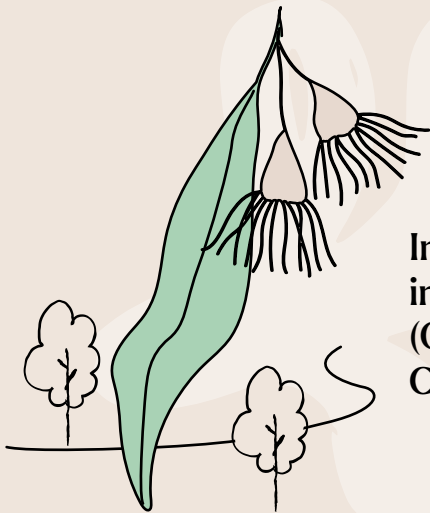
Sustainable environment

Service performance indicators

The following statement provides the results of the prescribed service performance indicators and measures including explanation of material variations.

Service/ Indicator/measure	2022	Results 2023	2024	2025	Comments
Waste Collection					
Service standard <i>Kerbside collection bins missed</i> [Number of kerbside garbage and recycling collection bins missed / Number of scheduled kerbside garbage and recycling collection bin lifts] x10,000	5.57	3.83	3.57	3.21	The number of missed bins has decreased over the 2024-2025 financial year. Council contractors continue to refine collection runs to reduce the number of missed collections and increase efficiency.
Service cost <i>Cost of kerbside garbage bin collection service</i> [Direct cost of the kerbside garbage bin collection service / Number of kerbside garbage collection bins]	\$79.69	\$90.76	\$112.01	\$114.98	The cost of the waste collection has increased slightly due to an increase in the landfill levy, rising costs of commodities and the consumer price index.
Service cost <i>Cost of kerbside recyclables collection service</i> [Direct cost of the kerbside recyclables bin collection service / Number of kerbside recyclables collection bins]	\$56.96	\$48.58	\$66.09	\$71.93	The cost of the recycling bin and glass bin collection and processing has increased from last year. This is attributed to the increasing costs of commodities and inflation. As City of Whittlesea has transitioned to a glass bin and some other Councils in the interface have not, this is reflected of the higher cost in the City of Whittlesea compared to the average of the interface. Total tonnage collected have remained relatively stable despite an increase in properties serviced to last year. This is likely due to residents returning materials to the Container Deposit Scheme.

Service/ Indicator/measure	Results				Comments
	2022	2023	2024	2025	
Waste Collection					
Waste diversion <i>Kerbside collection waste diverted from landfill</i> [Weight of recyclables and green organics collected from kerbside bins / Weight of garbage, recyclables and green organics collected from kerbside bins] x100	46.06%	44.98%	44.46%	42.31%	The total number of properties serviced in the City of Whittlesea have increased by over 3,500 from the previous year. As a result, we have seen the total volume of waste to landfill increase. The recycling and glass bin volumes have remained relatively stable, as the Container Deposit Scheme is well used within the community. The volume of Food Organics and Garden Organics (FOGO) material has decreased likely due to the mild summer growing conditions for lawns and gardens which resulted in less material being generated. As we have seen an overall decrease in the FOGO volume and the continued reduction of material from the Recycling and Glass bins due to the Container Deposit Scheme, the overall percentage of diversion has decreased.



In 2024–2025, Council planted over 7,000 indigenous trees at bunjil nganga Parkland (Quarry Hills) as part of the fourth year of the Conservation Reserves Tree Planting Program.

GOAL 5

High performing organisation

Building a better website for our residents and customers

The City of Whittlesea’s new website went live in July 2024, making it easier for residents and customers to find the information they are looking for with a cleaner design and improved search functionality.

A new online customer portal was also launched in late 2024, meaning that more transactions are able to be completed online. From requesting a bin, to booking a hard waste collection, reporting an issue or paying a bill, it’s now quick and easy via the new customer portal.

Residents and customers can easily create an account online account to sign-in and view all of their requests in the one place.

Council’s websites received 3.36 million page views, boosted by the launch of three new accessible sites for the City of Whittlesea, local tourism, and the Plenty Ranges Arts and Convention Centre



Goal 5: High performing organisation

GOAL 5 Highlights



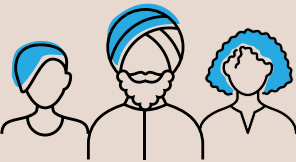
82%
customer satisfaction



47,629
total audience across Council's social media pages



17,267
Snap, Send, Solve reports received



2,000
new citizens welcomed at our citizenship ceremonies



40
projects consulted on



1055
full-time equivalent staff

GOAL 5 Key achievements

- Improved customer service performance through launching the **customer portal**, to enable self-service for requests.
- Developed the draft **Community Plan 2025-29** and draft **Community Action Plan 2025-26**.
- Delivered a comprehensive **Councillor induction program**.
- Launched a **new multi-purpose vehicle** to deliver innovative and accessible community engagement.
- Adopted the **Financial Plan 2025-26 to 2034-35**, the **Budget 2025-26, Revenue and Rating Plan 2025-26 to 2028-29** and Council's **Pricing Policy**.
- Launched **three improved and accessible websites**, including the main City of Whittlesea site.

GOAL 5

High performing organisation



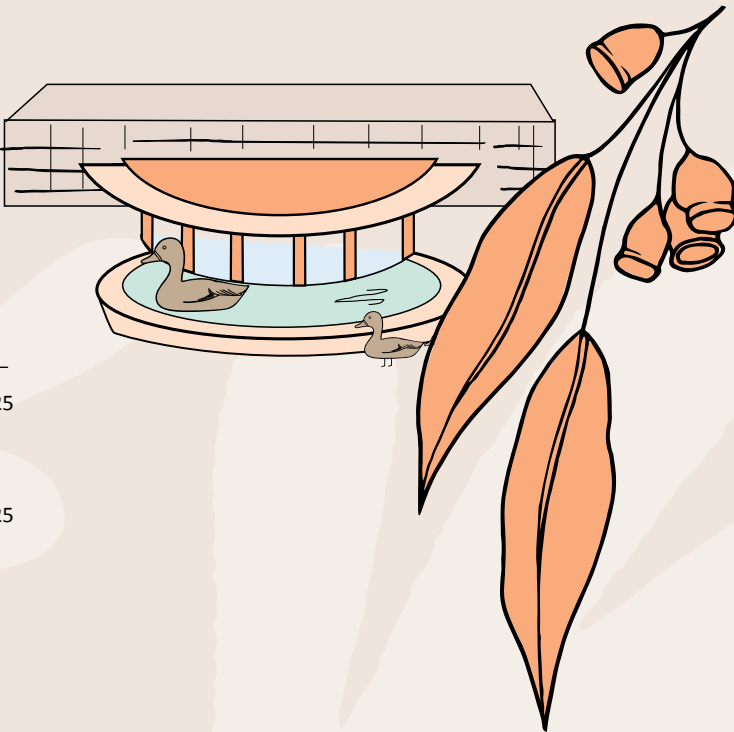
Whittlesea
2040
A place for all

Strategic indicators

The following statement reviews the performance of Council against the Community Plan including results achieved in relation to the strategic indicators included in the Community Plan.

Strategic Indicator	Measure	2025 Result	2024
 Community satisfaction with Council decision-making	Community satisfaction with Council decision-making	46% ³⁹	53% ⁴⁰
 Customer satisfaction	Percentage of customer interactions that customers rated positively	82% ⁴¹	78% ⁴²
 Community engagement	Satisfaction with community consultation and engagement	47% ⁴³	51% ⁴⁴
 Financial sustainability	Rates as a percentage of adjusted underlying revenue	66% ⁴⁵	51% ⁴⁶

³⁹ Local Government Victoria Customer Satisfaction Survey 2024-2025
⁴⁰ Local Government Victoria Customer Satisfaction Survey 2024
⁴¹ Pulse Survey 2024-2025
⁴² CSAT 2023-24
⁴³ Local Government Victoria Customer Satisfaction Survey 2024-2025
⁴⁴ Local Government Victoria Customer Satisfaction Survey 2024
⁴⁵ LGPRF indicators 2024-2025 Q4
⁴⁶ Local Government Victoria Customer Satisfaction Survey 2024



GOAL 5

High performing organisation

Major initiatives

The following statement reviews the progress of Council in relation to major initiatives identified in the 2024-2025 budget for the year.



Actions		Progress
Key Initiative #50 Improve customer service through investing in technology, systems and Council staff and make it easier for our community to interact with Council		
Continue implementing our place-based model to be responsive to the needs of our local communities	✓	Council has established Community Development Officers working in geographical place regions across our entire municipality promoting local services and responding to local needs of the community.
Improve customer service performance for our community targeting satisfaction scores of 75% or above for council services	✓	Customer Service have reviewed and invested in all customer channels to provide high quality services to all our customers across the municipality. This review has supported an enhanced and consistent approach for Council's Customer Service team when liaising with the community. Satisfaction continues to be above 80%.
Key Initiative #51 Continue to implement our Advocacy Plan for infrastructure and services to support the diverse needs of our community		
Submit Federal and State Budget submissions advocating for infrastructure funding, increased services, and reform on behalf of our community	✓	Council finalised and submitted its 2025–26 State and Federal Budget submissions advocating for key local priorities. These efforts are part of Council's ongoing commitment to securing funding and support for our community's needs.
Key Initiative #52 Continue to be an employer of choice through developing and implementing a new Workforce Plan to attract and retain high quality and skilled staff to support our community		
Continue to Implement the Gender Equality Action Plan to ensure a safe and equal workplace and progress towards becoming an Employer of Choice	✓	Council continues to progress our key actions and initiatives contained within our Gender Equality Action Plan. Some of the actions include monitoring gender pay equity, update procedures to have a human centred approach and implementing the inclusive recruitment plan.
Key Initiative #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		
Align to ISO45001 Safety Accreditation to ensure safety within our community is enhanced for our infrastructure and service delivery	✓	Council continues to make strong progress towards achieving alignment with ISO45001 and has developed and is implementing an action plan to ensure alignment is achieved by 2026.

Actions	Progress	
Key Initiative #54 Continue to implement the <i>Local Government Act 2020</i> and publicly report on an action plan to embed good governance at the Council		
Commence developing the Community Plan 2025-2029 and review the community vision <i>Whittlesea 2040</i>		The draft Community Plan 2025-29 and the Community Action Plan 2025-26 have been developed and community consultation and engagement has commenced. The adoption of both the Community Plan and the Community Action Plan is scheduled for consideration at the 21 October 2025 Council Meeting.
Identify and complete gender impact assessments on key initiatives that have a ‘direct and significant impact on community’ under the <i>Gender Equality Act 2020</i>		Council identified and completed several Gender Impact Assessments this year, with the most significant one being for the Community Plan 2025–2029. Council is also establishing a new internal framework, supported by training, communication and guidance, to ensure Gender Impact Assessments are consistently completed for all key initiatives.
Deliver a comprehensive Councillor induction program to ensure a smooth transition back to an elected Council		A comprehensive Councillor induction program was delivered within the required four-month period and in accordance with the <i>Local Government Act 2020</i> and <i>Local Government (Governance and Integrity) Regulations 2020</i> .
Key Initiative #55 Develop a long-term community infrastructure plan responding to community service and infrastructure needs for sport, leisure, recreation, arts, heritage and culture, youth, older adults, families and children and libraries		
Key Initiative #56 Continue to strengthen local community engagement in line with Council’s Community Engagement Policy to inform Council programs and decision-making		
Key Initiative #57 Maintain strong communications with our community to promote access to services including multilingual, accessible for all and mobile friendly communications and website		
Key Initiative #58 Implement, communicate and promote our Financial Hardship Policy 2021 to support our financially vulnerable residents		
Key Initiative #59 Introduce regular reporting on Council’s performance including the Community Action Plan and customer service performance		
Develop a data and insights hub to measure Council’s impact and increase transparency through public reporting		Council’s Data and Insights Hub is now operational, providing a dedicated platform to track and share progress towards our shared community outcomes. While its value in driving positive impact is already evident, this is an ongoing initiative and Council remain committed to continuous development and collaboration.
Key Initiative #60 Seek further opportunities to collaborate with surrounding municipalities and other partners including shared services and collaborative procurement		
Key Initiatives #61 Undertake service planning to drive innovation, improvement, equity, efficiency and service excellence with a focus on customer experience		

KEY: ✓ Completed ↻ Ongoing



Supporting our community starts with supporting and developing our staff – Mark and Melody, Manual Litter Collection Officers

GOAL 5

High performing organisation

Services

The following statement provides information in relation to the services funded in the 2024-2025 budget and the persons or sections of the community who are provided the service.

Service	Description	Net Cost
		Actual Budget Variance \$000
Our systems and knowledge	We ensure our users can rely on an effective working environment in terms of technology, applications, information management, research, insights and analytics. We provide the key platforms enabling service and infrastructure delivery across the organisation.	15,851
		15,519
		332
Our finance and assets	We ensure Council is managed in a financially sustainable way where resources are allocated effectively to support the delivery of the desired community outcomes. This includes rate setting and revenue generation, prudent financial planning and management, procurement of goods and services, and effective asset management.	32,904
		45,536
		(12,632)
Our people	We ensure the City of Whittlesea has adequate labour capacity (numbers) and capability (skills and knowledge) to provide services to our community now, and into the future in an efficient, effective, and sustainable manner.	7,178
		6,834
		344
Our governance	We ensure Council has adequate structures and processes in place to manage the business of local government in an effective and compliant manner. This includes key strategic planning, communications, decision-making and monitoring/reporting activities to achieve Council's purpose of achieving the best outcomes for the local community.	10,552
		9,811
		741



In 2024–2025, 37 projects were consulted on, with close to 6,000 contributions from the community and a new vehicle to help take engagement on the road.

GOAL 5

High performing organisation

Service performance indicators

The following statement provides the results of the prescribed service performance indicators and measures including explanation of material variations.

Service/ Indicator/measure	2022	Results 2023	2024	2025	Comments
Governance					
Transparency <i>Council decisions made at meetings closed to the public</i> [Number of council resolutions made at meetings of council, or at meetings of a delegated committee consisting only of councillors, closed to the public / Number of council resolutions made at meetings of council or at meetings of a delegated committee consisting only of councillors] x 100	4.08%	4.55%	9.09%	5.26%	Over the 12 months period, there were nine scheduled Council meetings and five unscheduled Council meetings held at which time 90 resolutions were made by Council in meetings open to the public. During the 14 Council Meetings, five decisions were made at meetings closed to the public.
Attendance <i>Councillor attendance at Council Meetings</i> [The sum of the number of councillors who attended each council meeting / (Number of council meetings) x (Number of councillors elected at the last council general election)] x 100	94.87%	91.67%	97.62%	92.06%	Only one absence occurred during the reporting period.
Service cost <i>Cost of elected representation</i> [Direct cost of the governance service / Number of councillors elected at the last Council general election]	\$224,192.22	\$225,472.00	\$247,585.33	\$67,084.59	Cost of elected representatives includes individual Councillor allowances, mandatory training and additional intrastate and interstate conferences/training attended for professional development.

Service/ Indicator/measure	2022	Results 2023	2024	2025	Comments
Governance (cont.)					
Consultation and engagement <i>Satisfaction with community consultation and engagement</i> [Community satisfaction rating out of 100 with how Council has performed on community consultation and engagement]	55.00	52.00	51.00	47.00	Council is committed to providing our community with opportunities to share ideas, opinions and feedback about activities, projects and issues that are important to them. In 2024-2025 Council consulted on 37 projects, receiving close to 6,000 contributions. Council sought feedback via the Engage Whittlesea platform and at 107 community-based pop-ups, 11 stalls at citizenship ceremonies, nine community focus groups, and three reference groups. No community consultation was conducted between 17 September and 26 October 2024, due to the Election Period. While community satisfaction is down across the sector for consultation and engagement, Council is committed to providing our community with more ways to engage with us, including through the use of an innovative new multi-purpose vehicle to strengthen community engagement and make it easier for our community to stay informed and have their say.
Satisfaction <i>Satisfaction with Council decisions</i> [Community satisfaction rating out of 100 with how Council has performed in making decisions in the interest of the community]	57.00	53.00	50.00	43.00	The 2024-2025 results may reflect the period of transition from Administrators to Councillors.

Governance and management information

Audit & Risk Committee

Role of the Audit & Risk Committee

The Audit and Risk Committee (the Committee) is an independent committee of Council, and its purpose is to support and advise Council in fulfilling its responsibilities related to:

- financial reporting
- risk management
- maintenance of sound systems of internal control
- assurance activities including internal and external audit, and
- Council’s performance regarding legislative and regulatory compliance.

It acts in this capacity by monitoring, reviewing, and advising on issues within its scope of responsibility.

The Committee reports to Council on the outcomes of its work program and provides advice and recommendations on matters relevant to its Charter. The Committee may also endorse key reports for the consideration of Council.

Independence

An independent Audit and Risk Committee is a fundamental component of a strong corporate governance culture. Council’s Committee is independent of management and is not involved in any operational decisions. Committee members do not have any executive powers, management functions or delegated financial responsibilities.

Reporting Period of this Report

This report covers the Committee activities for the period of 1 September 2024 to 9 September 2025.

In that period the Committee has met 5 times – 10 September 2024, 3 December 2024, 25 February 2025, 13 May 2025 and 9 September 2025.

Purpose of this Report

This report is prepared in accordance with Council’s reporting requirements under section 54(5) of the *Local Government Act 2020* (LGA), which requires the Committee to report to Council twice annually on its activities, findings, and recommendations.

Importantly, this report provides Council with a summary of matters that the Committee has addressed in the period to discharge its responsibilities under its Charter. This report has been reviewed by all Committee members.

Committee Charter

The Committee’s Charter is set by Council and was last reviewed and approved by Council at its 17 December 2024 meeting.

Committee Membership

The Committee has four independent members and two Councillor members.

The independent members collectively have skill sets and experience as mandated in s 53 of the LGA, including skills in financial management and reporting, risk management, audit and assurance programs, compliance management and internal control frameworks.

The Chair of the Committee is an independent member. The mix of independent and Councillor members enables open discussion based on best practice and gives Councillor’s insights into Council’s governance practices.

Independent member, Jen Johanson resigned from her role effective immediately following the Committee meeting held on 10 September 2024.

Meeting Attendance

Meetings	10 September 2024	3 December 2024	25 February 2025	13 May 2025	9 September 2025
Independent Members					
Geoff Harry (Chair)	Attended	Attended	Attended	Attended	Attended
Jen Johanson	Attended	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Bruce Potgieter	Attended	Attended	Attended	Attended	Attended
Marco Bini	Attended	Attended	Attended	Attended	Not Applicable
Lisa Tripodi	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Attended	Attended	Attended
Administrator Members					
Lydia Wilson	Attended	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Christian Zahra	Attended	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Councillor Members					
Cr Aidan McLindon	Not Applicable	Attended	Apology	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Cr Martin Taylor	Not Applicable	Attended	Attended	Attended	Attended
Cr David Lenberg	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Attended	Attended

To fill the resulting vacancy, and following a competitive Expression of Interest process, Council resolved at its 17 December 2024 meeting:

- to appoint Lisa Tripodi as an independent member of the Audit and Risk Committee for a three-year term, concluding 16 December 2027. Lisa’s first meeting was the 25 February 2025
- not to extend the appointment of Marco Bini beyond 30 June 2025 with his last meeting being 13 May 2025
- to appoint Suzie Thoraval as an independent member of the Audit and Risk Committee for a three-year term, commencing 1 July 2025 and concluding 30 June 2028. Suzie’s first meeting was the 9 September 2025.

Committee Support

The Committee enjoys a strong professional working relationship with Council Officers, which helps the Committee deliver insights, advice, and support to Council. Members attendance has been strong for the reporting period, and the Committee and Council Officers are always alert to opportunities for improvements.

Senior Management Team

The Committee has been strongly supported by Council’s CEO and senior management team who have attended all meetings during the year.

External Service Providers

Both the internal audit team (Aster Advisory) and the agent of the Victorian Auditor General’s Office (VAGO) have attended as required.

Committee Annual Work Plan

The agendas for the meetings are driven by the Annual Work Plan (AWP). The AWP and agendas contain the activities undertaken by the Committee to ensure it meets its Charter responsibilities.

The AWP is reviewed at every meeting to ensure that the Committee continues to discharge its responsibilities to Council on a timely basis.

The work of the Committee is summarised below in each of the key areas.

Financial and Performance Reporting

The Committee monitored the quality, content, and commentary of the financial and performance reports provided to Council, which were tracked against the approved budget and Council Plan. The Committee also received quarterly updates on the Local Government Performance Reporting Framework and Council’s performance against its LGPRF targets. The Committee was satisfied with the quality of the financial and performance reporting.

Risk Management

The Committee monitored risk management activity at all meetings, which included consideration of the following matters:

- outcomes of assessments of strategic and operational risks
- management of significant insurance activities
- outcomes of disaster recovery test plans
- emergency management and business continuity activities

Internal Audit

2024-2025 Internal Audit Reviews	Date presented
Records Management	3 December 2024
Core Financial Controls	25 February 2025
Development Contributions	13 May 2025
Events and Festivals	9 September 2025
Asset Management - Roads	9 September 2025
Cybersecurity	9 September 2025

The internal audit function is contracted to Aster Advisory (formerly Pitcher Partners) under an agreement that commenced in July 2023 for an initial term of three years.

The Committee monitored the progress of the delivery of the SIAP for 2024-2025 and was satisfied that delivery is on track.

- effectiveness of fraud and corruption systems
- outcomes of the review of the Risk Management Framework
- briefings from Council Officers on emerging risks for Council including:
 - Clinical Governance
 - Tree Management – Service Delivery and Data
 - Theft of Copper Cables
 - Body Worn Cameras
 - Debt Management
 - Artificial Intelligence.

The Committee is satisfied with the maturity of the risk management framework, program and controls, and the Business Continuity Plan.

Strategic Internal Audit Plan

The Committee monitored the Strategic Internal Audit Plan (SIAP) which was developed by our internal auditors in consultation with the Committee, the Executive Leadership Team, and the Risk and Assurance team.

The Committee approved the 2025-26 Strategic Internal Audit Plan at its 13 May 2025 meeting.

The Committee also regularly monitors management’s performance in closing out recommendations for improvement and is particularly alert to high rated actions that are not closed by the target dates.

The Committee is satisfied that there is appropriate management focus on the actions, bearing in mind that some recommendations require system changes or enhancements with long lead times.

Compliance and Integrity

The Committee monitored Council’s compliance and provided advice on:

- systems and processes for monitoring legislative compliance
- gifts, Benefits and Hospitality Register to assess fraud risk and conflict of interest compliance
- key Personal Expenses (including Councillors, CEO, and the CEO’s Executive Assistant) to assess fraud and integrity
- Internal Assurance Program
- procurement performance
- regulatory Integrity Report Review program, which screens for investigations and reports by State Integrity Agencies with officers providing briefings, recommendations, and best practice insights to be implemented where a gap exists.

Systems of Internal Control

The Committee considered several reports on the review of policies, systems, and controls during the reporting period. The key matters monitored and subject to review included the following:

- alignment of policies and procedures with Overarching Governance Principles
- the review of key internal policies
- instrument of Delegations
- internal Assurance Program
- targeted areas:
 - CX/DX Program
 - developer contributions
 - significant contracts and projects.

External Audit

The Victorian Auditor General’s Office (VAGO) appointed HLB Mann Judd as its agent to undertake the external audit of Council’s annual financial report and annual performance statement for the year ending 30 June 2025. The Committee was briefed on the draft external audit strategy for the 2024-2025 audit at the meeting on 25 February 2025, which focused on key external audit risks likely to be considered in delivery of the audit.

The Committee reviewed HLB Mann Judd’s closing report on the Annual Financial Report, and the Annual Performance Statement for 2024-2025 at its meeting on 9 September 2025, noting that there were no significant issues raised, and some improvement opportunities relating to developer non-cash

contribution and asset valuation. The Committee continues to monitor management’s implementation of the improvement initiatives.

Reporting to Council

To advance the transparency of Committee decision-making, advice and deliberations:

- all Committee meetings’ unconfirmed minutes are reported to the next ordinary Council meeting for in-principle approval
- the Committee’s Biannual Report was tabled at the 22 April 2025 Council briefing, which contained information on the Committee’s activities from September 2024 to February 2025
- the Annual Financial Report, which was audited by the appointed external auditors was tabled at Council’s 23 September 2025 meeting.

Committee Performance Assessment

The Committee endorsed the questionnaire for use in the next performance self-assessment survey at their 13 May 2025 meeting and confirmed the method for undertaking and reporting on the survey results.

The Committee agreed that the survey will be conducted between the September 2025 and December 2025 meetings, with the results to be presented at the Committee’s 9 December 2025 meeting.

The survey of the Committee’s next performance assessment will be tabled at the next Bi-Annual Activity Report to be presented to Council.

Conclusion

The Committee is satisfied that it has fully discharged its responsibilities for the reporting period as set out in its Charter. The Committee has noted indications of improving risk management performance and a strengthening of the internal control environment over the reporting period.

On behalf of all Committee members, I wish to acknowledge the support of Council’s senior officers in the preparation of agendas, minutes, reports, and presentations, all of which ensure that the Committee remains well-briefed and effective.

Bruce Potgieter
Independent Member,
on behalf of the Audit and Risk Committee

Date: 9 September 2025



Deputy Mayor Cr Zinni and Mayor Cr Taylor at a Council Meeting – elected in October 2024, the current Council meets regularly, with meetings open to the public

Governance and management checklist

For the year ended 30 June 2025

The following are the results in the prescribed form of Council’s assessment against the prescribed governance and management checklist.

Governance and management items		Assessment
1	Community engagement policy Policy outlining Council’s commitment to engaging with the community on matters of public interest	Adopted 19/09/2024
2	Community engagement guidelines Guidelines to assist staff to determine when and how to engage with the community	Adopted 19/12/2024
3	Financial Plan Plan under section 91 of the Act outlining the financial and non-financial resources required for at least the next 10 financial years	17/6/2025
4	Asset Plan Plan that sets out the asset maintenance and renewal needs for key infrastructure asset classes for at least the next 10 years	17/6/2025
5	Revenue and Rating Plan Plan setting out the rating structure of Council to levy rates and charges	17/6/2025
6	Annual Budget Plan setting out the services to be provided and initiatives to be undertaken over the next 12 months and the funding and other resources required	17/6/2025
7	Risk policy Policy outlining Council’s commitment and approach to minimising the risks to Council’s operations	13/2/2024
8	Fraud policy Policy outlining Council’s commitment and approach to minimising the risks to Council’s operations	1/11/2023
9	Municipal emergency management planning Council’s participation in meetings of the Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee (MEMPC)	Dates of MEMPC meetings attended: 1/08/2024 7/11/2024 27/02/2025 01/05/2025

Governance and management items		Assessment	
10	Procurement Policy Policy outlining the principles, processes and procedures that will apply to all purchases of goods and services by the Council	4/5/2021	
11	Business Continuity Plan Plan setting out the actions that will be undertaken to ensure that key services continue to operate in the event of a disaster	3/5/2023	
12	Disaster Recovery Plan Plan setting out the actions that will be undertaken to recover and restore business capability in the event of a disaster	2/6/2023	
13	Complaint Policy Policy under section 107 of the Act outlining Council’s commitment and approach to managing complaints	2/12/2023	
14	Workforce Plan Plan outlining Council’s commitment and approach to planning the current and future workforce requirements of the organisation	16/12/2021	
15	Payment of rates and charges hardship policy Policy outlining Council’s commitment and approach to assisting ratepayers experiencing financial hardship or difficulty paying their rates	21/5/2025	
16	Risk Management Framework Framework outlining Council’s approach to managing risks to the Councils operations	13/3/2024	
17	Audit and Risk Committee Advisory committee of Council under section 53 and 54 of the Act	During the year, Committee meetings were held on: 27/08/2024 10/09/2024 3/12/2024 25/02/2025	
18	Internal audit Independent accounting professionals engaged by the Council to provide analyses and recommendations aimed at improving Council’s governance, risk and management controls	1/7/2024	
19	Performance Reporting Framework A set of indicators measuring financial and non-financial performance, including the performance indicators referred to in section 98 of the Act	17/9/2024	
20	Council Plan Reporting Report reviewing the performance of the Council against the Council Plan, including the results in relation to the strategic indicators, for the first six months of the financial year	17/9/2024	

Governance and management items		Assessment	
21	Quarterly budget reports Quarterly reports to Council under section 97 of the Act, comparing actual and budgeted results and an explanation of any material variations	Annual Report: 17/09/2024 Q2: 18/02/2025 Q3: 20/05/2025	
22	Risk Reporting Six-monthly reports of strategic risks to Council’s operations, their likelihood and consequences of occurring and risk minimisation strategies	13/11/2024	
23	Performance Reporting Six-monthly reports of indicators measuring financial and non-financial performance, including the performance indicators referred to in section 98 of the Act 2020	Annual Report: 17/09/2024 Q2: 18/02/2025 Q3: 20/05/2025	
24	Annual Report Annual report under sections 98 and 99 of the Act containing a report of operations and audited financial and performance statements	17/9/2024	
25	Councillor Code of Conduct Code setting out the standards of conduct to be followed by Councillors and other matters. From 26 October 2024, all Councillors are required to observe the Model Code of Conduct. The Model Code of Conduct replaces the previous statutory requirement for each Council to develop its own Councillor Code of Conduct.	26/10/2024	
26	Delegations Documents setting out the powers, duties and functions of Council and the Chief Executive Officer that have been delegated to members of staff, in accordance with sections 11 and 47 of the Act	Date of review: 03/04/2025 20/05/2025	
27	Meeting Procedures Governance Rules under section 60 of the Act governing the conduct of meetings of Council and delegated committees	19/6/2024	

I certify that this information presents fairly the status of Council’s governance and management arrangements.



Martin Taylor
Mayor, City of Whittlesea
Dated: 23 September 2025



Craig Lloyd
Chief Executive Officer, City of Whittlesea
Dated: 23 September 2025



Adrian, one of our dedicated Customer Service Officers, along with his team, handled over 173,900 calls in the last financial year

Statutory information

Documents available for public inspection

Council is required to make certain types of documents available to the public. These include, but are not limited to:

- plans, strategies and reports adopted Council
- Council policies (other than those relating to internal operational matters)
- standards and guidelines
- Council Meeting agendas and minutes (excluding meetings closed to members of the public).

The table below contains the documents that are available to the public and details the type of access that applies to each document type in accordance with sections 57 and 58 of the *Local Government Act 2020* and Council’s Public Transparency Policy.

Documents available for inspection can be viewed on Council’s website or by appointment at Council’s Civic Centre, located at 25 Ferres Boulevard, South Morang.

Reasonable accommodations will be made where travel to the Civic Centre is not practicable.

For further information on how to access documents that are available to the public please visit Council’s website at whittlesea.vic.gov.au/publicdocuments

Legislative Provision*	Document	How to access the document
Section 41	Councillor Expense & Support Policy	Available on Council’s website
Section 140	Councillor Internal Resolution Procedure	Available on Council’s website
Section 60	Governance Rules	Available on Council’s website
Section 75	City of Whittlesea Community Local Law 2024 Common Seal and Conduct at Meetings Local Law (No. 1 of 2020)	Current local laws are published on Council’s website or for inspection at Council offices. A hard copy is available for purchase at a cost of \$10.
Section 90	Community Plan Action Plan 2024-2025	Available on Council’s website
Section 91(4)	Financial Plan 2025-26 to 2034-35	Available on Council’s website
Section 92(4)	Asset Plan	Available on Council’s website
Section 93	Revenue and Rating Plan 2025-26 to 2028-29	Available on Council’s website
Section 94	Budget 2025-2026	Available on Council’s website
Section 98	Annual Report	Available on Council’s website
Section 108	Procurement Policy	Available on Council’s website
Section 135	Summary of personal interests returns	Summary of interest returns are available on Council’s website
Section 139	Model Councillor Code of Conduct	Available on Council’s website
Section 251	Inspection of certified Voters’ Roll	Available via the VEC and are available for inspection by members of the public.
Section 307(2)	Election Campaign Donations	Available on Council’s website

*Local Government Act 2020

Food Act Ministerial Directions

In accordance with section 7E of the *Food Act 1984*, Council is required to publish a summary of any Ministerial Directions received during the financial year in its annual report.

No ministerial directions were received by Council during the 2024-2025 financial year.

Carers Recognition Act

Council is required to report annually on its compliance with the *Victorian Carers Recognition Act 2012*.

In the 2024-2025 financial year, the City of Whittlesea continued to support carers who care for someone over the age of 65 year through the following programs:

- provided in-home services including delivery of meals, personal care, domestic assistance, social support, individual and respite services
- delivered a weekly dementia friendly support program, with up to 20 participants suffering dementia, providing much-needed respite to carers
- hosted the 2024 Ageing Well Expo, providing information on the Carers Gateway, and other supports (including those listed above) to community.

Disability Action Plan

In accordance with Section 38 of the *Victorian Disability Act 2006*, Council adopted the City of Whittlesea Disability Action Plan (DAP) which is integrated into the Community Plan 2021-25.

The DAP is prepared for the purposes of:

- (a) preventing, removing and reducing barriers to persons with a disability accessing goods, services and facilities
- (b) preventing, removing and reducing barriers to persons with a disability obtaining and maintaining employment
- (c) promoting inclusion and participation in the community of persons with a disability
- (d) achieving tangible changes in attitudes and practices which discriminate against persons with a disability.

For the year 2024-2025 financial year, the following Community Plan DAP actions were progressed under the following *Whittlesea 2040* Goals.

GOAL 1

Connected Community

Commence implementation of the Connected Community Strategy Action Plan 2024-2026

Council began implementing the Connected Community Action Plan 2024-2026, delivering initiatives to improve access and inclusion, particularly for people with disability, across services, facilities, and programs. Actions will be delivered under three key directions:

A socially cohesive community

- strengthening the focus on equity, inclusion, cultural safety and accessibility in how community spaces are designed and integrated into neighbourhoods
- celebrating diversity and inclusion in our community by recognising dates of significance including International Day of People with Disability.

A healthy and safe community

- working in partnership with external businesses and services to provide inclusive spaces and places for our community
- advocating for access to community services and social and physical infrastructure that addresses disadvantage in the City of Whittlesea.

A participating community

- Developing an inclusive access communications protocol to support social connections as part of the High Performing Organisation Strategy (HPO).

A key priority of the Connected Community Strategy is equitable access and equal opportunities for all individuals, regardless of their circumstances or abilities.

Council will continue to support the planning and development of inclusive and safe spaces, services, activities and events, including through key DAP initiatives informed by Whittlesea Disability Network consultations and designed to be delivered through the Community Plan:

- **an accessible precinct project** will explore opportunities to deliver high levels of accessible design and amenity in local community settings
- a partnership with Northern School for Autism (NSA) will deliver **skills development and work experience programs** for NSA secondary students seeking employment opportunities
- a partnership with the National Disability Insurance Agency and Merriang Special Development School will **engage culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) families** seeking support through the NDIS.

GOAL 2

Liveable Neighbourhoods

Council continued to prioritise the delivery of accessible venues, facilities and amenities across the community as a central component of well-designed neighbourhoods.

In 2024-2025 major upgrades to the Meadowglen Athletics Centre delivered multiple accessible improvements, including:

- compliant wheelchair access from DDA car spaces to stadium grounds
- first-aid room doorway widened, step ramp added to meet compliance
- step ramps installed at athlete changeroom entries (step removed)
- red brick columns rendered and painted to achieve colour contrast requirements
- DDA-compliant wheelchair seating bays added
- spoon drain at stadium entrance modified to meet gradient for accessibility
- custom stainless steel heel guard covers installed on four irregular stormwater pits.

Continue to improve access, shelter, and seating for people with a disability at bus stops

Council delivered **bus shelter installations and upgrades** at the following sites, ensuring **DDA compliance** and the provision of seating:

- the south bound bus stop east of Whittlesea Yea Road/Coombs Road intersection, Humevale
- Prince of Wales Avenue/Pindari Avenue, Mill Park
- Epping Plaza/High Street, Epping
- Greenhills Road/Plenty Road, Bundoora.

Encourage and promote active travel through the production of maps and improved signage

A route was identified and signed on the **Darebin Creek Trail** to allow alternative access arrangements during times of flooding at the section where the path crosses below the M80.

Underpinning all Connected Community Strategy initiatives is the commitment to support and sustain freedom from discrimination and to ensure Council’s work contributes to our community’s understanding of what discrimination is, the impact that discriminatory behaviour can have on the health of those affected and to focus on opportunities to better address discrimination, so that all residents can feel safe and supported.

Work with our partners to raise community awareness and focus on prevention for people who are homeless and sleeping rough in the municipality

Council recognises people with disability can face significant barriers to accessing affordable housing that is appropriate to their support needs.

In 2024-2025 Council prioritised engagement and planning activities to inform and strengthen responses to reduce homelessness across the community and in priority populations, including:

- engaging **key stakeholders Homelessness Australia, Council to Homeless Persons** and the **Victorian Council of Social Service** to learn about evidence-based responses to homelessness
- engaging Insights Demographics to provide a **forecast of demand for affordable housing** across the municipality
- designing a pilot program to track local trends and data that will inform future responses to reduce homelessness.

Raise awareness of community needs around key health outcomes through events and activities during anti-poverty week, men’s and women’s health week and other days of significance

Council recognises people with disability can face additional barriers to maintaining good physical and mental health and prioritises advocacy and community engagement that both highlights risks and promotes opportunities to strengthen their health and wellbeing.

In 2024-2025 Council **participated in key regional health forums, committees and days of significance** including:

- Northern Health Board Community Advisory Committee
- Neami National Social Connection Network
- Northern Health Community Cultural Responsiveness Subcommittee
- DPV Health Community Engagement Committee
- RU OK Day Session held at the Ganbu Gulinj Community Centre
- International Day of Persons with Disability.

Conduct cycling audits to enhance planning for evolving cyclist needs

Bicycle path safety audits were conducted with consideration to pedestrian safety as per *Disability Discrimination Act* requirements and audit reports have been finalised for the following key corridors:

- Edgars Creek Shared User Path Trail – From Mahoneys Road to Aubert Way (approx. 12 km)
- Darebin Creek Shared User Path Trail – From Clough Parade to Harvest Home Road (approx. 14 km)
- South Morang Bike Path and Shared Path Network (approx. 9 km).

Continue to upgrade public toilets in line with the Public Toilet Amenity Plan

The **Meadowglen Athletics Centre** delivered a number of **public toilet and changing room upgrades to improve accessibility**:

- public toilet gates widened for compliant access
- ambulant toilet signage added near changerooms
- baby change table adjusted to meet clearance requirements
- hand dryers in DDA toilets repositioned to meet compliance
- DDA toilet pans confirmed compliant to AS 1428.1:2009.

Council also included a new Changing Places facility as part of the Murnong Community Centre in Donnybrook currently under construction and investigated the provision of accessible public toilets and Changing Places facilities at Gumnut Park in Donnybrook and Whittlesea Township.

Develop the Mill Park Place Framework to enhance our investment planning and prioritise city shaping opportunities

In 2024-2025, Council conducted community consultation to inform the **Mill Park Place Framework** which was launched in July 2025. The Framework has a strong focus on identifying community needs and responses to **improve accessibility**, including:

- improving accessibility in Mill Park’s community centres
- increasing accessibility to shops within an 800m radius
- identifying accessible paths and easy access to open spaces and parks
- improving wayfinding to key destinations
- capturing concerns about accessibility to tram bus and train station access in South Morang
- advocacy for accessible bus stops via pedestrian crossings and providing safe, comfortable areas for passengers
- improved public transport access to Mill Park Leisure, Mill Park Drive and Mill Park Library
- a need to improve access routes to the Stables Shopping Centre
- the need for safe, accessible pathways around schools.

Partner with community housing organisations to plan and progress delivery of affordable houses in Ashline Street, Wollert

Council recognises that people with disability experience housing related stress and insecurity at high rates.

In 2024-2025, the City of Whittlesea leased the land at 1F Ashline Street, Wollert to Beyond Housing to **construct 27 affordable homes**.

Council made it a project requirement that people with a disability be one of the priority tenant cohorts for the housing.

Construction is expected to commence in October 2025 and be completed by late 2026.

GOAL 3

Strong Local Economy

Continue partnership with Hume Whittlesea Local Learning Employment Network to promote local pathways to jobs and careers for young people

Council continued its strong partnership with the **Hume Whittlesea Local Learning and Employment Network** (HWLLEN), which has a demonstrated capacity for strengthening training and employment pathways for people with disability.

In 2024-2025, Council continued to work with HWLLEN to build local employment opportunities for people with disability, including focussed exploration of initiatives supporting neurodiverse residents. HWLLEN was instrumental in informing the design of a key Disability Action Plan project for 2025-26 to deliver appropriate work experience programs for students with autism.

Identify and work with key stakeholders to address skill shortages through targeted inclusive programs/events

In 2024-2025 Council reduced barriers to persons with a disability accessing services and facilities for our business event programs. This included support for businesses to complete expressions of interest forms for the Next Level Growth Program and selecting venues that are accessible. Additionally, the annual awards program criteria was updated to **recognise the initiatives businesses are undertaking to be more inclusive**.

Continue the inclusive employment program to ensure marginalised community members can gain meaningful employment experience with Council

The **Inclusive Employment Program** (IEP) continues to deliver positive employment opportunities for people facing barriers to finding suitable and meaningful employment, including people with disability.

In 2024-2025, all applicants for the IEP were residents who faced barriers to employment including people living with disability or ex-service personnel and veterans, people from Culturally or Linguistically Diverse (CALD) backgrounds and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples. The program will be an ongoing opportunity within the City of Whittlesea, with two 12-month opportunities available per financial year.

Continue to deliver a Work Ready volunteer program for qualified and newly arrived migrants

City of Whittlesea continues to prioritise volunteer initiatives that support skills development and community participation by people with disability.

In 2024-2025 key initiatives included:

- continuing to deliver the **Work Ready volunteer program** for newly arrived qualified migrants
- creating volunteer opportunities through the **Home and Community Care – Program for Young People**, promoting inclusive service delivery and community engagement
- delivery of the **Social Connections program** where participants with a range of support needs and social networking challenges are matched with a volunteer for social outings.

Investigate the need for supporting businesses to undertake inclusive recruitment and employment

In 2024-2025, City of Whittlesea participated in the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations Local Jobs and Skills Taskforce and supported local disability employment services to engage with actions and initiatives.

Encourage collaboration between educational institutions, local business, external stakeholders, and industry to understand the training needs of the future workforce

In 2024-2025, Council worked with community-based stakeholders to inform responses to barriers faced by people with disability seeking employment training and job opportunities.

Key outcomes were:

- the Whittlesea Disability Network facilitated sessions to identify local employment barriers faced by young people with disability. The sessions identified the need for more appropriate work experience programs for students with autism, leading to the design of **a pilot project** in partnership with Northern School for Autism
- Council held a successful workshop with eight local businesses and the Victorian Skills Authority (VSA), providing a valuable platform for discussion and information sharing. The VSA will now consider the insights gathered to determine the next steps in addressing current and emerging skills needs.

GOAL 5

High Performing Organisation

Continue implementing our place-based model to be responsive to the needs of our local communities

Council’s Community Development Officers are placed in regions across the municipality to respond to local needs and promote local services and opportunities supporting people with disability to participate in their communities.

In 2024-2025, Community Development Officers worked with local disability services to connect them to partnerships and health and wellbeing opportunities including:

- connection to Community Centres and programs such as Boomerang Bags and Lids4Kids
- connections to childcare centres and kindergartens for combined story times.

Greenbrook Community House delivered a program of creative programs that encourage personal development, self-esteem and artistic expression. Eight per cent of Greenbrook participants are people with a disability or requiring additional support.

Programs included:

- art and craft classes for children and adults
- all-abilities music and dance workshops
- all-abilities garden volunteers
- singing group
- yoga and wellbeing sessions
- Greenbrook book exchange.

Community Development Officers supported local communities to celebrate International Day of People with Disability 2024.

The ‘*We Are the Champions*’ celebration for the Thomastown community was delivered in partnership with **Thomastown Recreation and Aquatic Centre (TRAC)** and **Thomastown Neighbourhood house**.

The event included:

- 17 community stalls providing information about disability services and supports for families and carers
- The Revolution Choir
- Let’s Move and Bust a Move dance workshops run by a person living with a disability
- Cultural fashion parade for people with disabilities celebrating their cultures
- visually impaired Arabic percussionist.

Whittlesea International Day of People with Disability celebration at the **Whittlesea Community Centre** raised awareness and celebrated the contributions of people with a disability.

Key outcomes included:

- Whittlesea Lions Club sponsoring people with a disability to attend Lions Licola Camp
- Whittlesea Rotary spoke about volunteering opportunities for people with a disability
- Whittlesea Rotary Club invited the Special Developmental School to participate in their annual awards and scholarship program (which until now includes only mainstream schools)
- a local physiotherapist offered work to the tutor with lived experience that runs Bust-a-Move dance class
- Whittlesea Library connected DPV Health Day participants to their programs
- ABC Disability group connected with Police and CFA to create a new volunteer program together.

Develop a data and insights hub to measure Council’s impact and increase transparency through public reporting

Council’s Data and Insights Hub is now operational, providing a dedicated platform to track and share progress towards community outcomes, including for residents with disability.

Data is captured against outcome indicators for the five goals of the *Whittlesea 2040* vision:

- improved social cohesion
- improved feeling of safety in public areas
- increased life satisfaction
- decreased experience of discrimination
- decreased loneliness
- improved feeling of being valued by society
- improved sense of connection to place.

Captured data is available to be split by demographics, allowing for comparative analysis of indicators for residents with disability and the wider City of Whittlesea population.

Through the Census conducted every five years Council also monitors outcome indicators for increased labour force participation for groups experiencing disadvantage including people with a disability.

Domestic Animal Management Plan

Council’s Animal Management service provides a range of programs to ensure that people and their pets can live together harmoniously and safely in our community.

The service includes:

- operating the wat djerring Animal Facility, which reunites lost pets with their owners and pet adoptions
- undertaking proactive animal registration checks and the annual registration renewal cycle, ensuring the registration database is accurate and lost/stray animals have the best chances of being reunited with their owners
- animal-related investigations, including nuisance complaints and dog attacks
- putting measures in place to mitigate the risks posed by dangerous and menacing dogs, including annual inspections
- attending to wandering livestock
- an after-hours emergency service for dog attacks, wandering livestock and injured animals
- auditing animal-related businesses to ensure welfare standards are upheld.

Our activities are guided by the Council’s Domestic Animal Management Plan 2021-2025.

The Plan was developed based on more than 3,000 pieces of community feedback gathered through a range of surveys and pop-up stalls in 2021 and finessed during further community consultation in September 2022.

The Plan has a strong focus on improving responsible pet ownership, balancing community and environmental needs and partnering with other neighbouring councils to develop a consistent approach to managing animals across the region.

Some of the key initiatives achieved from the Plan in 2024-2025 include:

- delivered a series of targeted animal adoption campaigns, including the Mission Adoptable Blitz in February 2025 and a half-price promotion from 1 April to 30 June 2025. This initiative led to a record 969 animals being rehomed through wat djerring, the highest monthly total since transitioning to in-house operations in October 2022.

The campaign significantly reduced the average length of stay for animals in care, enabling faster rehoming and improving animal welfare. It also increased our capacity to meet growing community demand, supporting more timely and compassionate outcomes for both animals and residents

- undertook a 12-month review to assess the impact of the Council’s mandatory cat desexing and a 24-hour cat confinement orders implemented on 1 August 2023, with the orders contributing to a 70% reduction in cat related nuisance complaints
- provided a subsidised cat desexing program to help address the overpopulation of cats in conjunction with external agencies
- introduced subsidised desexing at the wat djerring Animal Facility
- established a pilot desexing program to target semi-owned and unowned cat populations, where community members who care for stray cats are eligible for free desexing, microchipping and registration
- held our third City of Whittlesea Pet Expo as part of the Whittlesea Community Festival. The Pet Expo featured:
 - animal management and wat djerring Animal Facility stalls
 - dog obedience demonstrations and agility courses
 - stalls by rescue groups, Lort Smith Animal Hospital, Second Chance Animal Rescue and starting Over Dog Rescue
- continued relationships with rescue partners to ensure that stray animals have every chance of being reunited with their owners and providing refuge for animals in need of emergency accommodation
- ongoing cross-referencing of microchip registries to ensure Council’s registration database is up-to-date, and to ensure breeders within the area are complying with registration requirements
- patrolled parks and streets to ensure compliance with off-leash laws and to ensure pets are registered
- Animal Management Officers completed required training, including managing aggressive animals and handling difficult customers
- the cities of Whittlesea, Merri-bek and Darebin held a joint training day to network and discuss current animal management issues, share resources, further develop skills and capabilities
- the City of Whittlesea actively participated in the advancement of the sector through membership with the following state and national working groups:
 - The National Local Government Cat Management Forum – Australian Institute of Animal Management
 - The State of Victoria Pet Rehoming Working Group – Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (Animal Welfare Victoria)
 - The State of Victoria Cat Management Strategy, participation in the working group for the draft strategy – Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action.

Freedom of Information

- The *Freedom of Information Act 1982 (Vic)* (FOI Act) embodies the following principles:
- members of the public have a legally enforceable right of access to certain government information
 - government departments and agencies are required to publish information detailing the documents and the types of documents they hold
 - people may ask for inaccurate, incomplete, out-of-date or misleading information contained in their personal records to be changed
 - people may appeal against a decision by a government body to deny access to information or to not amend personal records.

In accordance with the FOI Act, anyone wanting to make a Freedom of Information request must do so in writing, must provide sufficient information to enable the requested documents to be identified, and must be accompanied by payment of an application fee (which can be waived by Council on hardship grounds).

 Further information on how to make an FOI request is available on Council's website.

Freedom of Information applications by year

The following table summarises the Freedom of Information applications received by Council over the past four years:

Freedom of Information	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
Total number of requests	29	61	52	53
Access granted in full	3	9	9	11
Access granted in part	13	14	28	19
Other: such as withdrawn or lapsed	4	38	14	23
Access denied in full	2	Nil	1	Nil
Number of internal reviews sought	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Number of external reviews sought	Nil	Nil	Nil	1
Number of appeals lodged with the Victorian Civil and Administrative Appeals Tribunal	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Total fees and charges collected	\$1,056.15	\$2,520.68	\$2,821.65	\$2,284.20

Public Interest Disclosure Procedures Act

Council is committed to the aims and objectives of the *Public Interest Disclosure Act 2012* to ensure openness and accountability in government by encouraging people to disclose improper conduct within the public sector and provide protection for people who make disclosures.

Section 69 of the *Public Interest Disclosure Act 2012* requires Council to include in its annual report information about how to access the procedures established by the Council. Council is also required to provide certain information about the number and types of protected disclosures complaints investigated during the financial year.

To make a disclosure, call Council's Protected Disclosure Coordinator on 9217 2401 or email pid@whittlesea.vic.gov.au.

During 2024-2025, there was three complaints referred to the Independent Broad-based Anti-Corruption Commission (IBAC) and deemed to be Public Interest Disclosures:

- two complaints were referred by IBAC to the Local Government Inspectorate for investigation, and remain open; and
- one complaint was completed.

 Council's procedures for making or handling a disclosure are available on Council's website whittlesea.vic.gov.au/pid

Contracts

In 2024-2025, Council did not enter into any contracts valued at \$300,000 or more for goods, works or services, without first engaging in a competitive process.

Road Management Act Ministerial Direction

In accordance with Section 22 of the *Road Management Act 2004*, Council must publish a copy or summary of any ministerial direction in its annual report.

On 25 June 2024, a new Road Management (General) and (Works and Infrastructure) Amendment Regulations 2024, S.R. No. 61/2024 was introduced, replacing the Road Management (Works and Infrastructure) Regulations 2015. The Road Management (Works and Infrastructure) Regulations 2015 has a sunset date of 14 June 2026.

Other Non-Statutory Inclusions

Information Privacy

Council continues to be committed to the responsible collection and handling of personal information in accordance with the *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014* and the *Health Records Act 2001*.

Council's Privacy and Data Protection Policy clearly expresses Council's approach to the management and protection of personal and health information.

Council takes all reasonable precautions to ensure that the personal information collected, used and disclosed is accurate, complete and up-to-date and that personal information is protected from misuse or loss and from unauthorised access, modification or disclosure.

Council's policy and other documents relating to information privacy are available on Council's website.

Charter of Human Rights

The *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006* sets out the protected rights of all people in Victoria as well as the corresponding obligations on the Victorian Government.

The Charter requires Council to take human rights into account when making decisions, providing advice and delivering services.

Council staff undergo Human Rights training every four years.

Infrastructure and developer contributions

Under sections 46GZI and 46QD of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* (the Act), Council, as the development or infrastructure contributions collecting agency (or development agency) must report to the Minister for Planning on the receipt and expenditure of infrastructure levies under the Infrastructure Contributions Plan (ICP) and Development Contributions Plan (DCP) systems.

Ministerial reporting requirements for Development Contributions Plans

Requirements apply to the preparation of a report by a collecting agency or development agency under section 46GZI of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*.

Table 1 – Total DCP levies received in 2024-24 financial year

DCP name and year approved	Levies received in 2024-25 financial year (\$)
DCPO1 – Epping North Strategic Plan DCP (2002)	\$0.00
DCPO2 – Harvest Home Local Structure Plan DCP (2002)	\$160,248.84
DCPO3 – Drainage Levy (2006)	\$70,156.83
DCPO4 – Cooper Street Employment Area DCP (2007)	\$0.00
DCPO5 – 9 – Mernda Strategy Plan DCP (2004)	\$195,147.00
DCPO10 – Epping North East Local Structure Plan DCP (2008)	\$94,851.06
DCPO11 – Lockerbie DCP (2012)	\$798,327.53
DCPO12 – Lockerbie North DCP (2012)	\$0.00
DCPO14 – Epping Central DCP (2015)	\$1,532,217.63
DCPO13 – Quarry Hills DCP (2016)	\$1,929,426.23
DCPO15 – English Street DCP (2016)	\$1,209,365.37
DCPO16 – Wollert DCP (2017)	\$13,461,197.85
Total	\$19,450,938.34

Table 2 – DCP land, works, services or facilities accepted as works-in-kind in 2024-24 financial year

DCP name and year approved	Project ID	Project description	Item purpose	Project value (\$)
Works				\$9,307,946.04
DCPO16 – Wollert DCP (2017)	RD-02c	Koukoura Drive – Between northern edge of gas easement to connection with historic road reserve near northern boundary of 220 Boundary Road. Design and construction of first carriageway (interim), excluding intersections (Partial delivery)	Road Project	\$1,794,094.96
DCPO16 – Wollert DCP (2017)	BR-01	Findon Creek – West branch – Boundary Road Construction of a culvert crossing over waterway (interim treatment)	Bridge/Culvert Projects	\$958,559.35
DCPO16 – Wollert DCP (2017)	RD-06c	Boundary Road – Between Koukoura Drive and Epping Road Design and replacement of existing carriageway with boulevard connector/connector road (ultimate), excluding intersections (Partial delivery)	Road Project	\$1,572,271.12
DCPO16 – Wollert DCP (2017)	IN-26c	Boundary Road/ Andrew Road Design and construction of boulevard connector to connector – industrial/ residential interface connector 4-way signalised intersection (Partial delivery)	Intersection Projects	\$2,010,192.01
DCPO16 – Wollert DCP (2017)	IN-24c	Boundary Road/ Bodycoats Road (north) Design and construction of boulevard connector to connector signalised T-intersection (interim treatment)	Intersection Projects	\$2,972,828.60
Land				\$4,499,064.82
DCPO16 – Wollert DCP (2017)	CI-03	West Wollert Level 2 Multi-purpose community centre Purchase of land	Community Facility	\$1,410,537.78
DCPO16 – Wollert DCP (2017)	RD-02	Land for Koukoura Drive – Between northern edge of gas easement to connection with historic road reserve near northern boundary of 220 Boundary Road. (Part of)	Road Project	\$1,809,963.68
DCPO2 – Harvest Home Road DCP (2002)	RO-05	Land for Harvest home road – Epping Road to E6 extension (Part of)	Road Project	\$279,768.40
Aurora ADP	PU-01	Land for Passive Open Space – (Part of)	Open Space	\$998,794.97
Total				\$13,807,010.86

Table 3 – Total DCP contributions received and expended to date (for DCPs approved after 1 June 2016)

DCP name and year approved	Total levies received (\$)	Total levies expended (\$)	Total works-in-kind accepted (\$)	Total DCP contributions received (levies and works-in-kind) (\$)
DCPO13 – Quarry Hills DCP (2016)	\$3,949,250.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$3,949,250
DCPO15 – English Street DCP (2016)	\$1,977,230.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,977,230
DCPO16 – Wollert DCP (2017)	\$84,798,352.00	\$19,795,678.00	\$12,528,447.49	\$97,326,799
Total	\$90,724,832.00	\$19,795,678.00	\$12,528,447.49	\$103,253,279.49

Table 4 – Land, works, services or facilities delivered in 2024-2025 financial year from DCP levies collected

Project ID and description	DCP name and year approved	DCP fund expended (\$)	Works-in-kind accepted (\$)	Council's contribution (\$)	Other contributions (\$)	Total project expenditure (\$)	Percentage of item delivered
Works		\$2,389,701.17	\$9,307,946.04	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$11,697,647.21	
RD-02c	Koukoura Drive – Between northern edge of gas easement to connection with historic road reserve near northern boundary of 220 Boundary Road. Design and construction of first carriageway (interim), excluding intersections (Partial delivery)						
	DCPO16 – Wollert DCP (2017)	\$0.00	\$1,794,094.96	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,794,094.96	28%
CI-03c	West Wollert Level 2 Multi-purpose community centre – Construction of multi-purpose community centre						
	DCPO16 – Wollert DCP (2017)	\$2,389,701.17	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$2,389,701.17	19%
BR-01	Findon Creek – West branch – Boundary Road – Construction of a culvert crossing over waterway (interim treatment)						
	DCPO16 – Wollert DCP (2017)	\$0.00	\$958,559.35	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$958,559.35	100%
RD-06c	Boundary Road – Between Koukoura Drive and Epping Road – Design and replacement of existing carriageway with boulevard connector/connector road (ultimate), excluding intersections (Partial delivery)						
	DCPO16 – Wollert DCP (2017)	\$0.00	\$1,572,271.12	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,572,271.12	22%
IN-26c	Boundary Road/ Andrew Road – Design and construction of boulevard connector to connector – industrial/ residential interface connector 4-way signalised intersection (Partial delivery)						
	DCPO16 – Wollert DCP (2017)	\$0.00	\$2,010,192.01	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$2,010,192.01	31%
IN-24c	Boundary Road/ Bodycoats Road (north) Design and construction of boulevard connector to connector signalised T-intersection (interim treatment)						
	DCPO16 – Wollert DCP (2017)	\$0.00	\$2,972,828.60	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$2,972,828.60	70%

Table 4 – Land, works, services or facilities delivered in 2023-24 financial year from DCP levies collected

Project ID and description	DCP name and year approved	DCP fund expended (\$)	Works-in-kind accepted (\$)	Council's contribution (\$)	Other contributions (\$)	Total project expenditure (\$)	Percentage of item delivered
Land		\$770,000.00	\$4,499,064.82	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$5,269,064.82	
RO-05	Land for Harvest home road – Epping Road to E6 extension (Part of)						
	DCPO2 – Harvest Home Road DCP (2002)	\$0.00	\$279,768.40	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$279,768.40	17.50%
PU-01	Land for Passive Open Space – (Part of)						
	Aurora ADP	\$0.00	\$998,794.97	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$998,794.97	12.70%
CI-03	West Wollert Level 2 Multi-purpose community centre Purchase of land						
	DCPO16 – Wollert DCP (2017)	\$0.00	\$1,410,537.78	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,410,537.78	100%
RD-02	Land for Koukoura Drive – Between northern edge of gas easement to connection with historic road reserve near northern boundary of 220 Boundary Road (Part of)						
	DCPO16 – Wollert DCP (2017)	\$0.00	\$1,809,963.68	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,809,963.68	28%
IN-9	Land for Epping Road and Boundary Road intersection (compulsory acquisition of part of 30 Boundary Road, Wollert) – Epping Road/Boundary Road intersection (Part of)						
RD-06	Land for Epping Road and Boundary Road intersection (compulsory acquisition of part of 30 Boundary Road, Wollert) – Boundary Road – Between Koukoura Drive and Epping Road (Part of)						
IN-26	Land for Epping Road and Boundary Road intersection (compulsory acquisition of part of 30 Boundary Road, Wollert) – Boundary Road/Andrew Road intersection (Part of)						
	DCPO16 – Wollert DCP (2017)	\$770,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$770,000.00	6%
Total		\$3,159,701	\$13,807,011	\$0	\$0	\$16,966,712	

Ministerial reporting requirements for Infrastructure Contribution Plans (ICP)

Requirements apply to the preparation of a report by a collecting agency or development agency under section 46QD of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*.

Table 1 – Total ICP monetary component received in 2024-2025 financial year

Name of collecting agency	Name of ICP	Monetary component in levies received in 2024-25 financial year (\$)	Value of works in kind received in satisfaction of monetary component in 2024-25 financial year (\$)	Total monetary contribution received in 2024-25 financial year (\$)
City of Whittlesea	Donnybrook/Woodstock ICP	\$4,216,499.93	\$5,288,971.00	\$9,505,470.93
City of Whittlesea	Shenstone Park ICP	\$1,182,513.92	\$8,030,414.00	\$9,212,927.92
Total		\$5,399,013.85	\$13,319,385.00	\$18,718,398.85

Table 2 – Inner public purpose land received in 2024-2025 financial year

Name of collecting agency	Name of ICP	Land (or project ID)	Land (or project) description
City of Whittlesea	Donnybrook/Woodstock ICP	LP-09	Local park Provision of land
City of Whittlesea	Donnybrook/Woodstock ICP	LP-14	Local park Provision of land (Part of Land)
City of Whittlesea	Donnybrook/Woodstock ICP	LP-21	Local park Provision of land
City of Whittlesea	Donnybrook/Woodstock ICP	CI-03	Darebin Creek Community Centre Construction of a Level 2 Community Activity Centre at LTC-4
City of Whittlesea	Donnybrook/Woodstock ICP	SR-02	Patterson Drive Sports Reserve Construction of sports fields (AFL/cricket and netball) and construction of a multi-purpose pavilion (located near LTC-2)
City of Whittlesea	Shenstone Park ICP	IN-03	Donnybrook Road & Patterson Drive (N-S Boulevard Connector) Construction of the fourth leg of a primary arterial to connector road 4-way intersection (interim treatment). (Part of)
City of Whittlesea	Shenstone Park ICP	IN-04	Donnybrook Road & Connector Street (N-S Connector) Construction of a primary arterial to connector road T-intersection (interim treatment)

Table 3 – Total Land Equalisation Amount (LEA) received and Land Credit Amount (LCA) paid in 2024-2025 financial year

Name of collecting agency	Name of ICP	Total of any LEAs received in 2024-25 financial year (\$)	Total of any LCAs paid in 2024-25 financial year (\$)
City of Whittlesea	Donnybrook/Woodstock ICP	\$3,789,549.92	\$0.00
City of Whittlesea	Shenstone Park ICP	\$104,587.50	\$0.00
Total		\$3,894,137.42	\$0.00

Table 4 – ICP works, services or facilities accepted as works-in-kind in 2024-2025 financial year

Name of collecting agency	Name of ICP	Project ID	Project description	Item purpose	Project value (\$)
City of Whittlesea	Donnybrook/Woodstock ICP	IN-05	Donnybrook Road & Connector Street (Nth-Sth Connector) – Construction of an arterial to connector road 3-way intersection (interim treatment) – (Completion of signalisation)	Intersection projects	\$262,381.00
City of Whittlesea	Donnybrook/Woodstock ICP	SR-02	Patterson Drive Sports Reserve Construction of sports fields (AFL/cricket and netball) and construction of a multi-purpose pavilion (located near LTC-2) – (Construction of pavilion)	Community & recreation	\$5,026,590.00
City of Whittlesea	Shenstone Park ICP	IN-03	Donnybrook Road & Patterson Drive (N-S Boulevard Connector) Construction of the fourth leg of a primary arterial to connector road 4-way intersection (interim treatment)	Intersection projects	\$2,904,769.02
City of Whittlesea	Shenstone Park ICP	IN-04	Donnybrook Road & Connector Street (N-S Connector) Construction of a primary arterial to connector road T-intersection (interim treatment)	Intersection projects	\$5,125,645.00
Total					\$13,319,385.02

Table 5 – Total ICP monetary contributions expended by development agency in 2024-2025 financial year

Name of development agency	Name of ICP	Project ID	Project description	ICP money expended (\$)	Percentage of project delivered
City of Whittlesea	Donnybrook/ Woodstock ICP	CI-02	Patterson Drive Community Centre Construction of a Level 2 Community Activity Centre at LTC-2	\$3,387,624.00	70%
City of Whittlesea	Shenstone Park ICP	none	none	\$0.00	0
Total				\$3,387,624.00	

Table 6 – Use and development of inner public purpose land or outer public purpose land which has vested in, been acquired by or been transferred to, the development agency in 2024-2025 financial year

Name of development agency	Name of ICP	Project ID	Project description	Use and development of land
City of Whittlesea	Donnybrook/ Woodstock ICP	LP-09	Local park Provision of land	Local park
City of Whittlesea	Donnybrook/ Woodstock ICP	LP-14	Local park Provision of land (Part of)	Local park
City of Whittlesea	Donnybrook/ Woodstock ICP	LP-21	Local park Provision of land	Local park
City of Whittlesea	Donnybrook/ Woodstock ICP	CI-03	Darebin Creek Community Centre Construction of a Level 2 Community Activity Centre at LTC-4	Community & recreation
City of Whittlesea	Donnybrook/ Woodstock ICP	SR-02	Patterson Drive Sports Reserve Construction of sports fields (AFL/cricket and netball) and construction of a multi-purpose pavilion (located near LTC-2)	Community & recreation
City of Whittlesea	Shenstone Park ICP	IN-03	Donnybrook Road & Patterson Drive (N-S Boulevard Connector) Construction of the fourth leg of a primary arterial to connector road 4-way intersection (interim treatment) (Part of)	Intersection project
City of Whittlesea	Shenstone Park ICP	IN-04	Donnybrook Road & Connector Street (N-S Connector) Construction of a primary arterial to connector road T-intersection (interim treatment)	Intersection project

Table 7 – Use of works, services or facilities accepted as works-in-kind in 2024-2025 financial year

Name of development agency	Name of ICP	Project ID	Project description	Use of land
City of Whittlesea	Donnybrook/ Woodstock ICP	IN-05	Donnybrook Road & Connector Street (Nth-Sth Connector) – Construction of an arterial to connector road 3-way intersection (interim treatment) – (Completion of signalisation)	Intersection projects
City of Whittlesea	Donnybrook/ Woodstock ICP	SR-02	Patterson Drive Sports Reserve Construction of sports fields (AFL/cricket and netball) and construction of a multi-purpose pavilion (located near LTC-2) – (Construction of pavilion)	Community & recreation
City of Whittlesea	Shenstone Park ICP	IN-03	Donnybrook Road & Patterson Drive (N-S Boulevard Connector) Construction of the fourth leg of a primary arterial to connector road 4-way intersection (interim treatment)	Intersection project
City of Whittlesea	Shenstone Park ICP	IN-04	Donnybrook Road & Connector Street (N-S Connector) Construction of a primary arterial to connector road T-intersection (interim treatment)	Intersection projects

Table 8 – Expenditure of ICP land equalisation amounts in 2024-2025 financial year

Name of development agency	Name of ICP	Project ID	Project description	Land equalisation amounts expended (\$)
City of Whittlesea	Donnybrook/ Woodstock ICP	none	none	\$0.00
City of Whittlesea	Shenstone Park ICP	none	none	\$0.00
Total				\$0.00

City of Whittlesea **FINANCIAL REPORT** 2024-2025

Building better, together

Eagle Shelter lookout at bunjil nganga Parkland (Quarry Hills). The parkland is expanding to 1,100 hectares, offering more green open space for Mernda, Wollert, Epping and South Morang while protecting native plants, animals and cultural heritage

Performance Statement

For the year ended 30 June 2025

Description of municipality

The City of Whittlesea is located in Melbourne’s northern suburbs, about 20 kilometres from the city centre. It is one of Melbourne’s largest municipalities, covering a land area of approximately 490 square kilometres.

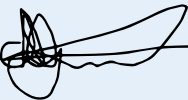
The majority of the City of Whittlesea population live in urban areas. This is split across the major established suburbs of Bundoora, Epping, Lalor, Mill Park and Thomastown, the current growth area precincts of Mernda, Doreen, South Morang, Epping North and Wollert, and the rural areas of Donnybrook and Whittlesea Township and surrounds.

Significant future growth is projected for Wollert and Donnybrook. The rural areas of the municipality are characterised by farming, forested areas and historic township communities including Whittlesea Township.

The Wurundjeri Willum people and the Taungurung people were the original inhabitants of the area and are the traditional owners of this land. Compared with other municipalities, the City of Whittlesea has the fourth largest population of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders (ATSI) by person count in Metropolitan Melbourne, with 2,663 ATSI residents.

Certification of the Performance Statement

In my opinion, the accompanying performance statement has been prepared in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020* and the *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020*.



Aaron Gerrard
Principal Accounting Officer
Dated:

In our opinion, the accompanying performance statement of the City of Whittlesea for the year ended 30 June 2025 presents fairly the results of Council’s performance in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020* and the *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020*.

The performance statement contains the relevant performance indicators, measures and results in relation to service performance, financial performance and sustainable capacity.

At the date of signing, we are not aware of any circumstances that would render any particulars in the performance statement to be misleading or inaccurate.

We have been authorised by the Council and by the *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020* to certify this performance statement in its final form.



Cr Martin Taylor
Mayor
Dated:



Cr David Lenberg
Councillor
Dated:



Debbie Wood
Acting Chief Executive Officer
Dated:



Independent Auditor’s Report

To the Councillors of Whittlesea City Council

Opinion	I have audited the accompanying performance statement of Whittlesea City Council (the council) which comprises the: - description of municipality for the year ended 30 June 2025 - service performance indicators for the year ended 30 June 2025 - financial performance indicators for the year ended 30 June 2025 - sustainable capacity indicators for the year ended 30 June 2025 - notes to the accounts - certification of the performance statement. In my opinion, the performance statement of Whittlesea City Council in respect of the year ended 30 June 2025 presents fairly, in all material respects, in accordance with the performance reporting requirements of Part 4 of the <i>Local Government Act 2020</i> and Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020.
Basis for Opinion	I have conducted my audit in accordance with the <i>Audit Act 1994</i> which incorporates the Australian Standards on Assurance Engagements. I further describe my responsibilities under that Act and those standards in the <i>Auditor’s Responsibilities for the Audit of the performance statement</i> section of my report. My independence is established by the <i>Constitution Act 1975</i>. My staff and I are independent of the council in accordance with the ethical requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board’s APES 110 <i>Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants</i> (the Code) that are relevant to my audit of the performance statement in Victoria. My staff and I have also fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code. I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion.
Councillors' responsibilities for the performance statement	The Councillors are responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the performance statement in accordance with the performance reporting requirements of the <i>Local Government Act 2020</i> and Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020 and for such internal control as the Councillors determines is necessary to enable the preparation and fair presentation of a performance statement that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

Auditor’s responsibilities for the audit of the performance statement	As required by the <i>Audit Act 1994</i>, my responsibility is to express an opinion on the performance statement based on the audit. My objectives for the audit are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the performance statement as a whole is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor’s report that includes my opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with the Australian Standards on Assurance Engagements will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the decisions of users taken on the basis of this performance statement. As part of an audit in accordance with the Australian Standards on Assurance Engagements, I exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. I also: - identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the performance statement, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control. - obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the council’s internal control - evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the performance statement, including the disclosures, and whether performance statement represents the underlying events and results in a manner that achieves fair presentation. I communicate with the Councillors regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that I identify during my audit.
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MELBOURNE
8 October 2025

Travis Derricott
as delegate for the Auditor-General of Victoria

Service Performance Indicators
For the year ended 30 June 2025

	Actual				Actual
Indicator/ measure [formula]	2021	2022	2023	2025 Target as per budget	2025
Aquatic facilities					
Utilisation <i>Utilisation of aquatic facilities</i> [Number of visits to aquatic facilities / Municipal population]	2.82	3.85	4.22	N/A	4.14
Comments: The aquatic and leisure centres have experienced strong attendance figures this year. This year Mill Park Leisure, Thomastown Recreation & Aquatic Centre and Whittlesea Swim Centre have collectively had over 14,400 additional attendances. This number when divided by the population increase has resulted in a very slight drop from previous year. This positive performance reflects the community’s continued support for this service.					
Animal management					
Health and safety <i>Animal management prosecutions</i> [Number of successful animal management prosecutions / Number of animal management prosecutions] x 100	100%	100%	100%	N/A	100.00%
Comments: During the 2024-2025 financial year, Council prosecuted nine animal management matters, all of which were successful.					
Food safety					
Health and safety <i>Critical and major non-compliance outcome notifications</i> [Number of critical non-compliance outcome notifications and major non-compliance notifications about a food premises followed up / Number of critical non-compliance outcome notifications and major non-compliance notifications about a food premises] x100	80.20%	97.28%	100.00%	N/A	100.00%
Comments: In 2024, Council conducted follow up inspections which were identified as having either a critical or major non-compliance. Council has achieved a 100% result.					
Libraries					
Participation <i>Library membership</i> [percentage of the population that are registered library members] x100	N/A	N/A	18.83%	N/A	22.01%
Comments: Library membership has grown from 18.94% to 22.01% due to the recent introduction of online membership requirement to access Wi-Fi (consistent with other libraries) and new branches. This figure is expected to continue growing reducing the 3.52% City of Whittlesea deficit to like Councils average.					

	Actual				Actual
Indicator/ measure [formula]	2021	2022	2023	2025 Target as per budget	2025
Governance					
Satisfaction <i>Satisfaction with community consultation and engagement (community satisfaction rating out of 100 with the consultation and engagement efforts of Council)</i>	55	52	51	55	47
Comments: Council is committed to providing our community with opportunities to share ideas, opinions and feedback about activities, projects and issues that are important to them. In 2024-2025 we consulted on 37 projects, receiving close to 6,000 contributions. We sought feedback via our Engage Whittlesea platform and at 107 community-based pop-ups, 11 stalls at citizenship ceremonies, nine community focus groups, and three reference groups. No community consultation was conducted between 17 September and 26 October 2024, due to the Election Period. While community satisfaction is down across the sector for consultation and engagement, we are committed to providing our community with more ways to engage with us, including through the use of an innovative new multi-purpose vehicle to strengthen community engagement and make it easier for our community to stay informed and have their say.					
Maternal and Child Health (MCH)					
Participation <i>Participation in the MCH service</i> [Number of children who attend the MCH service at least once (in the year) / Number of children enrolled in the MCH service] x100	70.99%	72.08%	73.60%	N/A	77.72%
Comments: Council has continued to work diligently year on year to support families to remain engaged in the Maternal and Child Health Service following the pandemic. Strengthened service practices, including more intentional follow-up with families who miss appointments, have also contributed to improved participation rates. This measure reflects attendance across all Key Age and Stage (KAS) appointment ages. This result shows a significant improvement from the same period last year. This uplift is largely due to successful recruitment within the Universal Maternal and Child Health Team, which has increased the service’s capacity to meet Key Age and Stage (KAS) targets. The result is also higher than the interface average.					
Participation <i>Participation in the MCH service by Aboriginal children</i> [Number of Aboriginal children who attend the MCH service at least once (in the year) / Number of Aboriginal children enrolled in the MCH service] x100	71.78%	77.03%	80.71%	N/A	91.80%
Comments: Council continues to support First Peoples families by providing a range of options to access the Maternal and Child Health Service. Through the Deadly Boorais, Deadly Families program, families have been able to engage with a more flexible and culturally safe model of care, tailored to their needs. This measure reflects participation in the Maternal and Child Health Service by Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander children across all Key Age and Stage (KAS) appointments. Key contributors to this improvement include increased staffing, the recruitment of Aboriginal team members, strengthened cultural connections, and ongoing investment in relationship-building with service partners and First Peoples communities. These efforts have led to stronger engagement with the Aboriginal community, fostering greater trust and increased participation in the service.					

Financial Performance Indicators (cont.)

For the year ended 30 June 2025

	Actual				Actual	Forecasts			
<i>Dimension/ indicator/measure</i>	2022	2023	2024	2025 Target as per budget	2024	2026	2027	2028	2029
Obligations									
<i>Loans and borrowings</i> <i>Loans and borrowings compared to rates</i> [Interest bearing loans and borrowings / Rate revenue] x100	7.84%	6.12%	4.43%	N/A	3.43%	11.20%	23.36%	30.64%	26.50%
Material variations and comments: Council did not draw down additional borrowings in the 2024-2025 financial year. This indicator is forecast to increase in future years due to planned borrowings to fund future infrastructure investment.									
<i>Loans and borrowings</i> <i>Loans and borrowings repayments compared to rates</i> [Interest and principal repayments on interest bearing loans and borrowings / Rate revenue] x100	0.98%	1.34%	1.24%	N/A	0.74%	1.88%	3.65%	4.89%	4.73%
Material variations and comments: The indicator decreased from 2023-24 primarily due to repayment of loans and borrowings, whilst rate revenue increased in line with the rate cap. The indicator is forecast to increase in future years in line with our expected borrowings to fund future infrastructure investment.									
<i>Indebtedness</i> <i>Non-current liabilities compared to own source revenue</i> [Non-current liabilities / Own source revenue] x100	6.53%	5.48%	4.70%	N/A	3.77%	9.48%	18.32%	23.48%	20.74%
Material variations and comments: Council has not drawn down on additional loans in the 2024-2025 financial year, resulting in a decrease in non-current liabilities. The indicator is forecast to increase in future years in line with our expected borrowings to fund future infrastructure investment.									
<i>Asset renewal and upgrade</i> <i>Asset renewal and upgrade compared to depreciation</i> [Asset renewal and asset upgrade expense / Asset depreciation] x100	85.56%	62.53%	82.19%	66.76%	57.84%	57.94%	86.29%	80.21%	56.90%
Material variations and comments: The indicator has decreased compared to prior year reflects a combination of an increase in depreciation and reduced renewal and upgrade expenditure. The uplift in depreciation is largely attributable to the recent revaluation of Council assets, which resulted in a significant increase in asset values and increase in valuation of asset in accordance with AASB 13. Outer years forecast more moderate levels of capital works expenditure which is driven by the level of funding allocated to asset renewals and upgrades as part of the planning and budgeting process and priorities based on asset condition.									

	Actual				Actual	Forecasts			
<i>Dimension/ indicator/measure</i>	2022	2023	2024	2025 Target as per budget	2024	2026	2027	2028	2029
Operating position									
<i>Adjusted underlying result</i> <i>Adjusted underlying surplus (or deficit)</i> [Adjusted underlying surplus (deficit)/ Adjusted underlying revenue] x100	-0.22%	-0.21%	-2.58%	N/A	6.61%	-4.63%	2.39%	0.06%	0.96%
Material variations and comments: The indicator has improved compared to the previous year primarily due to the timing of Financial Assistance grant payments. In 2024-2025, Council received 50% of the 2025-26 grant allocation in advance. By contrast, no portion of the 2024-2025 allocation was received in the 2023-24 year. This timing difference has resulted in higher grant revenue being recognised in 2024-2025, positively impacting the ratio.									
Stability									
<i>Rates concentration</i> <i>Rates compared to adjusted underlying revenue</i> [Rate revenue / Adjusted underlying revenue] x100	71.78%	69.62%	72.11%	72.60%	66.46%	72.31%	73.43%	74.12%	74.52%
Material variations and comments: This indicator is decreased primarily due to a significant uplift in grant income compared to previous year, particularly the Victorian Grant Commission funding driven by the timing of grant payments. Council continues to ensure rating levels are based on the community’s capacity to pay and within the State Government rate cap limits. This indicator is forecast to remains within the expected range.									
<i>Rates effort</i> <i>Rates compared to property values</i> [Rate revenue / Capital improved value of rateable properties in the municipality] x100	0.28%	0.27%	0.27%	N/A	0.27%	0.29%	0.30%	0.31%	0.32%
Material variations and comments: Council rates have moved in a consistent proportion to property values.									

* N/A – Has been assigned to all the indicators that are not required to provide a target for the 2024-2025 financial year

Sustainable Capacity Indicators

For the year ended 30 June 2025

Indicator/ measure [formula]	Actual			
	2022	2023	2024	2025
Population				
Population <i>Expenses per head of municipal population</i> [Total expenses / Municipal population]	\$1,047.63	\$1,155.34	\$1,203.92	\$1,233.99
Material variations and comments: This indicator has increased mainly due to increase in depreciation as a result the recent revaluation of Council assets, which resulted in a significant increase in asset values and increase in valuation of asset in accordance with AASB 13. The increase is also attributable to higher employee costs, driven by increased workcover premiums and unbudgeted redundancy payments.				
Population <i>Infrastructure per head of municipal population</i> [Value of infrastructure / Municipal population]	\$10,847.64	\$11,482.30	\$12,634.94	\$13,993.95
Material variations and comments: The indicator has increased as a result of significant increase in valuation of Council assets due to combination of revaluation of infrastructure assets and increase in valuation of assets as a result of implementation of AASB 13.				
Population <i>Population density per length of road</i> [Municipal population / Kilometres of local roads]	171.78	167.56	165.71	166.35
Material variations and comments: Council's length of roads has slightly decreased in comparison to population growth.				
Own-source revenue				
Own-source revenue <i>Own-source revenue per head of municipal population</i> [Own-source revenue / Municipal population]	\$892.08	\$980.34	\$1,089.75	\$1,130.32

Indicator/ measure [formula]	Actual			
	2022	2023	2024	2025
Material variations and comments: The indicator has increased due to higher interest income received as a result of increases in the interest rate, and higher rates income in line with the rate cap and growth of the municipality.				
Recurrent grants				
Recurrent grants <i>Recurrent grants per head of municipal population</i> [Recurrent grants / Municipal population]	\$137.52	\$155.84	\$73.20	\$182.65
Material variations and comments: Council has received more recurrent grant funding compared to previous year due to the full allocation of Financial Assistance Grants being paid within the year, along with 50% of the 2025-26 funding allocation received in advance. In contrast, this grant was not paid in the prior year, resulting in lower grant income received for the previous year.				
Disadvantage				
Disadvantage <i>Relative Socio-Economic Disadvantage</i> [Index of Relative Socio-Economic Disadvantage by decile]	5.00	4.00	4.00	4.00
Material variations and comments: Our community remains relatively disadvantaged socio-economically compared to other local government areas.				
Workforce turnover				
Workforce turnover <i>Percentage of staff turnover</i> [Number of permanent staff resignations and terminations / Average number of permanent staff for the financial year] x100	17.7%	12.4%	20.5%	12.8%
Material variations and comments: Council's workforce turnover has returned to a stable level and is now aligned with industry standards, reflecting improved retention and workforce stability.				

Notes to the accounts
For the year ended 30 June 2025

1. Basis of preparation

Council is required to prepare and include a performance statement within its annual report.

The performance statement includes the results of the prescribed, service performance, financial performance and sustainable capacity indicators and measures together with a description of the municipal district, an explanation of material variations in the results and notes to the accounts. This statement has been prepared to meet the requirements of the *Local Government Act 2020* and *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020*.

Where applicable the results in the performance statement have been prepared on accounting bases consistent with those reported in the Financial Statements. The other results are based on information drawn from council information systems or from third parties (e.g., Australian Bureau of Statistics or the Council’s satisfaction survey provider).

The performance statement presents the actual results for the current year and the previous three years, along with the current year's target, if mandated by the *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020*. Additionally, for the prescribed financial performance indicators and measures, the performance statement includes the target budget for the current year and the results forecast for the period 2025-26 to 2028-29 by the council's financial plan.

The *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020* requires explanation of any material variations in the results contained in the performance statement. Council has adopted materiality thresholds relevant to each indicator and measure and explanations have not been provided for variations below the materiality thresholds unless the variance is considered to be material because of its nature.

2. Definitions

Term	Definition
adjusted underlying revenue	means total income other than: • non-recurrent grants used to fund capital expenditure; and • non-monetary asset contributions; and • contributions to fund capital expenditure from sources other than those referred to above
adjusted underlying surplus (or deficit)	means adjusted underlying revenue less total expenditure
annual report	means an annual report prepared by a council under section 98 of the Act
asset renewal expenditure	means expenditure on an existing asset or on replacing an existing asset that returns the service capability of the asset to its original capability
asset upgrade expenditure	means expenditure that – (a) enhances an existing asset to provide a higher level of service; or (b) extends the life of the asset beyond its original life
critical non-compliance outcome notification	means a notification received by council under section 19N(3) or (4) of the <i>Food Act 1984</i> , or advice given to council by an authorized officer under that Act, of a deficiency that poses an immediate serious threat to public health
current assets	has the same meaning as in the Australian Accounting Standards
current liabilities	has the same meaning as in the Australian Accounting Standards
food premises	has the same meaning as in the <i>Food Act 1984</i>
intervention level	means the level set for the condition of a road beyond which a council will not allow the road to deteriorate and will need to intervene
local road	means a sealed or unsealed road for which the council is the responsible road authority under the <i>Road Management Act 2004</i>
major non-compliance outcome notification	means a notification received by a council under section 19N(3) or (4) of the <i>Food Act 1984</i> , or advice given to council by an authorized officer under that Act, of a deficiency that does not pose an immediate serious threat to public health but may do so if no remedial action is taken

Term	Definition
MCH	means the Maternal and Child Health Service provided by a council to support the health and development of children within the municipality from birth until school age
non-current liabilities	means all liabilities other than current liabilities
own-source revenue	means adjusted underlying revenue other than revenue that is not under the control of council (including government grants)
population	means the resident population estimated by council
rate revenue	means revenue from general rates, municipal charges, service rates and service charges
relative socio-economic disadvantage	in relation to a municipal district, means the relative socio-economic disadvantage, expressed as a decile for the relevant financial year, of the area in which the municipal district is located according to the Index of Relative Socio-Economic Disadvantage of SEIFA
restricted cash	means cash, cash equivalents and financial assets, within the meaning of the Australian Accounting Standards, not available for use other than for a purpose for which it is restricted, and includes cash to be used to fund capital works expenditure from the previous financial year
SEIFA	means the Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas published from time to time by the Australian Bureau of Statistics on its Internet site
unrestricted cash	means all cash and cash equivalents other than restricted cash

Annual Financial Report

For the year ended 30 June 2025

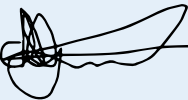
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Certification of the Financial Statements

In my opinion, the accompanying financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020*, the *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020*, the Australian Accounting Standards and other mandatory professional reporting requirements.



Aaron Gerrard CPA
Principal Accounting Officer
Dated: 23 September 2025
South Morang

In our opinion, the accompanying financial statements present fairly the financial transactions of the City of Whittlesea for the year ended 30 June 2025 and the financial position of Council as at that date.

At the date of signing, we are not aware of any circumstances that would render any particulars in the financial statements to be misleading or inaccurate.

We have been authorised by Council and by the *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020* to certify the financial statements in their final form.



Cr Martin Taylor
Mayor
Dated: 23 September 2025
South Morang



Cr David Lenberg
Councillor
Dated: 23 September 2025
South Morang



Debbie Wood
Acting Chief Executive Officer
Dated: 23 September 2025
South Morang



Independent Auditor’s Report

To the Councillors of Whittlesea City Council

Opinion	I have audited the financial report of Whittlesea City Council (the council) which comprises the: - balance sheet as at 30 June 2025 - comprehensive income statement for the year then ended - statement of changes in equity for the year then ended - statement of cash flows for the year then ended - statement of capital works for the year then ended - notes to the financial statements, including material accounting policy information - certification of the financial statements. In my opinion the financial report presents fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the council as at 30 June 2025 and their financial performance and cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with the financial reporting requirements of Part 4 of the <i>Local Government Act 2020</i>, the Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020 and applicable Australian Accounting Standards.
Basis for Opinion	I have conducted my audit in accordance with the <i>Audit Act 1994</i> which incorporates the Australian Auditing Standards. I further describe my responsibilities under that Act and those standards in the <i>Auditor’s Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report</i> section of my report. My independence is established by the <i>Constitution Act 1975</i>. My staff and I are independent of the council in accordance with the ethical requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board’s APES 110 <i>Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants</i> (the Code) that are relevant to my audit of the financial report in Victoria. My staff and I have also fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code. I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion.
Councillors' responsibilities for the financial report	The Councillors of the council are responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards, the <i>Local Government Act 2020</i> and the Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020, and for such internal control as the Councillors determine is necessary to enable the preparation and fair presentation of a financial report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error. In preparing the financial report, the Councillors are responsible for assessing the council’s ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless it is inappropriate to do so.

Auditor’s responsibilities for the audit of the financial report	As required by the <i>Audit Act 1994</i>, my responsibility is to express an opinion on the financial report based on the audit. My objectives for the audit are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial report as a whole is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor’s report that includes my opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of this financial report. As part of an audit in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards, I exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. I also: - identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control. - obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the council’s internal control - evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the Councillors - conclude on the appropriateness of the Councillors’ use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the council’s ability to continue as a going concern. If I conclude that a material uncertainty exists, I am required to draw attention in my auditor’s report to the related disclosures in the financial report or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify my opinion. My conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of my auditor’s report. However, future events or conditions may cause the council to cease to continue as a going concern. - evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial report, including the disclosures, and whether the financial report represents the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation. I communicate with the Councillors regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that I identify during my audit.
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Comprehensive Income Statement
For the year ended 30 June 2025

	Note	2025 \$'000	2024 \$'000
Income / Revenue			
Rates and charges	3.1	222,637	207,643
Statutory fees and fines	3.2	22,433	25,874
User fees	3.3	12,217	10,579
Grants – operating	3.4 (a)	45,144	18,613
Grants – capital	3.4 (b)	22,691	7,364
Contributions – monetary	3.5	34,692	53,944
Contributions – non monetary	3.5	155,792	107,465
Net gain (or loss) on disposal of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	3.6 (a)	230	945
Share of net profits (or loss) of associates and joint ventures	6.2	153	33
Other income	3.7	28,531	21,947
Total income/revenue		544,520	454,407
Expenses			
Employee costs	4.1	124,988	120,686
Materials and services	4.2	102,070	98,531
Depreciation	4.3	60,836	51,089
Amortisation – intangible assets	4.4	72	71
Depreciation – right of use assets	4.5	900	963
Allowance for impairment losses	4.6	2,477	2,709
Borrowing costs	4.7	74	118
Finance costs – leases	4.8	118	150
Net loss on write-off of property, Infrastructure, plant and equipment	3.6 (b)	1,455	4,034
Other expenses	4.9	19,461	16,644
Total expenses		312,451	294,995
Surplus for the year		232,069	159,412
Other comprehensive income			
Items that will not be reclassified to surplus or deficit in future periods			
Net asset revaluation gain	6.1, 9.1	479,242	289,335
Total other comprehensive income		479,242	289,335
Total comprehensive result		711,311	448,747

The above comprehensive income statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Balance Sheet
As at 30 June 2025

	Note	2025 \$'000	2024 \$'000
Assets			
Current assets			
Cash and cash equivalents	5.1 (a)	49,587	26,596
Other financial assets	5.1 (b)	270,000	265,000
Trade and other receivables	5.1 (c)	67,213	55,518
Inventories	5.2 (a)	48	79
Other assets	5.2 (b)	10,216	7,580
Total current assets		397,064	354,773
Non-current assets			
Other financial assets	5.1 (b)	50,000	50,000
Other non-financial assets	5.2 (c)	22	22
Intangible assets	5.2 (d)	151	208
Right-of-use assets	5.8	2,339	3,239
Property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	6.1	5,459,554	4,783,011
Investments in associates, joint arrangements and subsidiaries	6.2	3,079	2,926
Total non-current assets		5,515,145	4,839,406
Total assets		5,912,209	5,194,179
Liabilities			
Current liabilities			
Trade and other payables	5.3 (a)	32,181	35,933
Trust funds and deposits	5.3 (b)	44,681	50,600
Contract and other liabilities	5.3 (c)	37,376	20,900
Provisions	5.5 (a)	23,928	22,178
Interest-bearing liabilities	5.4	1,593	1,567
Lease liabilities	5.8	783	881
Total current liabilities		140,542	132,059
Non-current liabilities			
Provisions	5.5 (a)	3,067	2,455
Interest-bearing liabilities	5.4	6,031	7,624
Lease liabilities	5.8	1,681	2,464
Total non-current liabilities		10,779	12,543
Total liabilities		151,321	144,602
Net assets		5,760,888	5,049,577
Equity			
Accumulated surplus		3,256,092	3,047,817
Reserves	9.1	2,504,796	2,001,760
Total Equity		5,760,888	5,049,577

The above balance sheet should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Statement of Changes in Equity
For the year ended 30 June 2025

	Note	Total	Accumulated Surplus	Asset Revaluation Reserve	Asset Replacement Reserve	Asset Development Reserve
		\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
2025						
Balance at beginning of the financial year		5,049,577	3,047,817	1,744,419	75,793	181,548
Surplus for the year		232,069	232,069	–	–	–
Net asset revaluation gain	6.1	479,242		479,242	–	–
Transfers from other reserves	9.1(b)	–	55,900	–	(29,005)	(26,895)
Transfers to other reserves	9.1(b)	–	(79,694)	1,176	19,859	58,659
Balance at end of the financial year		5,760,888	3,256,092	2,224,837	66,647	213,312
2024						
Balance at beginning of the financial year		4,600,830	2,923,827	1,455,084	79,638	142,281
Surplus for the year		159,412	159,412	–	–	–
Net asset revaluation gain	6.1	289,335	–	289,335	–	–
Transfers from other reserves	9.1(b)	–	29,772	–	(7,707)	(22,065)
Transfers to other reserves	9.1(b)	–	(65,194)	–	3,862	61,332
Balance at end of the financial year		5,049,577	3,047,817	1,744,419	75,793	181,548

The above statement of changes in equity should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Statement of Cash Flows
For the year ended 30 June 2025

	Note	2025 Inflows/ (Outflows) \$'000	2024 Inflows/ (Outflows) \$'000
Cash flows from operating activities			
Rates and charges		223,676	195,004
Statutory fees and fines		18,996	18,366
User fees		855	14,252
Grants – operating		45,144	18,613
Grants – capital		22,691	7,364
Contributions – monetary		34,692	53,944
Interest received		557	13,316
Trust funds and deposits taken		8,221	25,578
Other receipts		25,035	7,678
Net GST refund/(payment)		(412)	(1,085)
Employee costs		(122,626)	(119,376)
Materials and services		(85,065)	(90,808)
Short-term, low value and variable lease payments		(687)	(624)
Trust funds and deposits repaid		(14,140)	(7,418)
Other payments		(19,461)	(16,644)
Net cash provided by/(used in) operating activities	9.2	137,476	118,160
Cash flows from investing activities			
Payments for property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	6.1	(107,234)	(75,170)
Payments for intangible asset		(15)	–
Proceeds from sale of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment		404	1,063
Payments for investments		(5,000)	(65,000)
Net cash provided by/(used in) investing activities		(111,845)	(139,107)
Cash flows from financing activities			
Finance costs		(74)	(118)
Repayment of borrowings		(1,567)	(2,449)
Interest paid – lease liability		(118)	(150)
Repayment of lease liabilities		(881)	(913)
Net cash provided by/(used in) financing activities		(2,640)	(3,630)
Net increase (decrease) in cash and cash equivalents		22,991	(24,577)
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the financial year		26,596	51,173
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the financial year		49,587	26,596
Financing arrangements	5.6		
Restrictions on cash assets	5.1		

The above statement of cash flows should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Statement of Capital Works
For the year ended 30 June 2025

	2025 \$'000	2024 \$'000
Property		
Land	782	7,096
Total land	782	7,096
Buildings	12,039	4,129
Building improvements	8,980	8,776
Total buildings	21,019	12,905
Total property	21,801	20,001
Plant and equipment		
Plant, machinery and equipment	4,093	3,274
Fixtures, fittings and furniture	269	878
Computers and telecommunications	547	1,059
Total plant and equipment	4,909	5,211
Infrastructure		
Roads	30,035	14,307
Bridges	91	1,176
Footpaths and cycleways	3,715	3,953
Drainage	716	705
Recreational, leisure and community facilities	18,744	6,767
Parks, open space and streetscapes	18,697	18,250
Off street car parks	48	828
Waste management	561	561
Other infrastructure	7,917	3,411
Total infrastructure	80,524	49,958
Total capital works expenditure	107,234	75,170
Represented by:		
New asset expenditure	72,045	33,180
Asset renewal expenditure	20,904	25,330
Asset upgrade expenditure	14,285	16,660
Total capital works expenditure	107,234	75,170
Total capital works expenditure	75,170	55,290

The above statement of capital works should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Notes to the Financial Report
For the year ended 30 June 2025

Note 1 Overview

Introduction

The City of Whittlesea was established by an Order of the Governor in Council on 15 December 1994 and is a body corporate. Council’s main office is located at 25 Ferres Boulevard, South Morang, Victoria.

Statement of compliance

These financial statements are a general purpose financial report that consists of a Comprehensive Income Statement, Balance Sheet, Statement of Changes in Equity, Statement of Cash Flows, Statement of Capital Works and Notes accompanying these financial statements. The general purpose financial report complies with the Australian Accounting Standards (AAS), other authoritative pronouncements of the Australian Accounting Standards Board, the *Local Government Act 2020*, and the *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020*.

Council is a not-for-profit entity and therefore applies the additional Australian (AUS) paragraphs applicable to a not-for-profit entity under the Australian Accounting Standards.

Accounting policy information

1.1 Basis of accounting

Accounting policies are selected and applied in a manner which ensures that the resulting financial information satisfies the concepts of relevance and reliability, thereby ensuring that the substance of the underlying transactions or other events is reported. Specific accounting policies applied are disclosed in sections where the related balance or financial statement matter is disclosed.

The accrual basis of accounting has been used in the preparation of these financial statements, except for the cash flow information, whereby assets, liabilities, equity, income and expenses are recognised in the reporting period to which they relate, regardless of when cash is received or paid.

The financial statements are based on the historical cost convention unless a different measurement basis is specifically disclosed in the notes to the financial statements.

The financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis. The financial statements are in Australian dollars. The amounts presented in the financial statements have been rounded to the nearest thousand dollars unless otherwise specified. Minor discrepancies in tables between totals and the sum of components are due to rounding.

Judgements, estimates and assumptions are required to be made about the carrying values of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and associated judgements are based on professional judgement derived from historical experience and various other factors that are believed to be reasonable under the circumstances. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised and also in future periods that are affected by the revision. Judgements and assumptions made by management in the application of AAS's that have significant effects on the financial statements and estimates relate to:

- the fair value of land, buildings, infrastructure, plant and equipment (refer to Note 6.1)
- the determination of depreciation for buildings, infrastructure, plant and equipment (refer to Note 6.1)
- the determination of employee provisions (refer to Note 5.5)
- the determination of whether performance obligations are sufficiently specific so as to determine whether an arrangement is within the scope of AASB 15 Revenue from Contracts with Customers or AASB 1058 Income of Not-for-Profit Entities (refer to Note 3)
- the determination, in accordance with AASB 16 Leases, of the lease term, the estimation of the discount rate when not implicit in the lease and whether an arrangement is in substance short-term or low value (refer to Note 5.8)
- other areas requiring judgements.

Unless otherwise stated, all accounting policies are consistent with those applied in the prior year. Where appropriate, comparative figures have been amended to accord with current presentation, and disclosure has been made of any material changes to comparatives.

Note 2 Analysis of our results

Note 2.1 Performance against budget

The performance against budget note compares Council’s financial plan, expressed through its annual budget, with actual performance.

The *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020* requires explanation of any material variances. Council has adopted a materiality threshold with explanations provided if the variance is greater than 10% or is greater than \$1m.

Explanations have not been provided for variations below the materiality threshold unless the variance is considered to be material because of its nature.

The budget figures detailed below are those adopted by Council on 21 May 2024. The Budget was based on assumptions that were relevant at the time of adoption of the Budget.

Council sets guidelines and parameters for revenue and expense targets in this budget in order to meet Council’s planning and financial performance targets for both the short and long-term.

The budget did not reflect any changes to equity resulting from asset revaluations, as their impacts were not considered predictable.

These notes are prepared to meet the requirements of the *Local Government Act 2020* and the *Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020*.

Note 2.1 Performance against budget

2.1.1 Income/Revenue and expenditure

	Budget 2025 \$’000	Actual 2025 \$’000	Variance \$’000	Variance %	Ref
Income/Revenue					
Rates and charges	219,999	222,637	2,638	1%	1
Statutory fees and fines	18,291	22,433	4,142	23%	2
User fees	11,672	12,217	545	5%	
Grants – operating	33,348	45,144	11,796	35%	3
Grants – capital	5,294	22,691	17,397	329%	4
Contributions – monetary	45,752	34,692	(11,060)	(24%)	5
Contributions – non monetary	107,204	155,792	48,588	45%	6
Net gain/(loss) on disposal of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	763	230	(533)	(70%)	7
Share of net profits/(losses) of associates and joint ventures	200	153	(47)	(24%)	8
Other income	17,029	28,531	11,502	68%	9
Total income/Revenue	459,552	544,520	84,968	18%	
Expenses					
Employee costs	123,517	124,988	(1,471)	(1%)	10
Materials and services	111,981	102,070	9,911	9%	11
Depreciation	56,118	60,836	(4,718)	(8%)	12
Amortisation – Intangible assets	71	72	(1)	(1%)	
Depreciation – right of use assets	972	900	72	7%	
Allowance for impairment losses	2,973	2,477	496	17%	13
Borrowing costs	1,269	74	1,195	94%	14
Finance costs – Leases	99	118	(19)	(19%)	15
Net loss on write-off of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	–	1,455	(1,455)	(100%)	16
Other expenses	18,191	19,461	(1,270)	(7%)	17
Total expenses	315,191	312,451	2,740	1%	
Surplus for the year	144,361	232,069	87,708	61%	

Note 2.1 Performance against budget

2.1.1 Income / Revenue and expenditure

(i) Explanation of material variations

Variance Ref	Item	Explanation
1	Rates and charges	The favourable variance to budget is primarily due to an increase in the number of new rateable properties within the municipality, which exceeded expectations. In addition, interest income from unpaid rates was higher than budget projections.
2	Statutory fees and fines	The favourable variance to budget in statutory fees and fines is attributable to increased supervision fees for roads and drainage works due to heightened development activity. Additionally, the favourable variance reflects higher than anticipated fine enforcement related to asset protection, along with increased enforcement and registration fees resulting from a greater volume of unpaid fines lodged with Fines Victoria.
3	Grants – operating	The favourable variance to budget is mainly due to the advance receipt and recognition of Financial Assistance Grant, relating to the 2025–26 financial year, in the 2024-2025 financial year in accordance with accounting standards.
4	Grants – capital	The favourable variance is attributable to various unbudgeted grant funding received after the budget was adopted. This includes funding for the Mernda Sports Hub, Granite Hills Regional Park, Peter Hopper Lake renewal, and the Donnybrook Community Centre construction projects.
5	Contributions – monetary	The unfavourable variance to budget is due to a variety of forecasted estates not achieving statement of compliance before financial year end, resulting in income being recognised in the subsequent financial year.
6	Contributions – non-monetary assets	The favourable variance to budget is primarily attributable to higher than budgeted developer contributions, driven by continued growth and an increased number of developments reaching practical completion across the municipality.
7	Net gain/(loss) on disposal of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	The unfavourable variance to budget is due to fewer vehicle disposals than anticipated. A higher number of vehicle sales had been forecast for the period, however delays in the fleet replacement program and extended vehicle retention contributed to the shortfall.
8	Share of net profits/(losses) of associates and joint ventures	The unfavourable variance to budget is due to a decrease in the share of net profits from the Yarra Plenty Regional Library, resulting from a decline in the Corporation's net asset position.
9	Other Income	The favourable variance to budget is primarily driven by higher than expected interest income from investments, along with unbudgeted utility cost reimbursements received from contractors operating Council's leisure facilities. These reimbursements partially offset Council's utility expenditure.
10	Employee costs	The unfavourable variance to budget is attributed to greater than budgeted workcover levy, unbudgeted redundancy costs, employee costs resulting from the adopted Enterprise Agreement, and higher than expected long service leave accruals due to both, an increase in the number of employees reaching entitlement and fewer staff taking long service leave during the period.

Variance Ref	Item	Explanation
11	Materials and services	The favourable variance to budget was primarily driven by the deferral of the reimbursement of land works in kind associated with a development contribution project under the Wollert North Infrastructure Consortium, which is now expected to occur in future years. These savings are partially offset by increased expenditure relating to garden bed maintenance panel contract and the implementation of the Customer and Digital Experience program (CX/DX), which is funded through the Technology Improvement Reserve.
12	Depreciation	The unfavourable variance to budget is primarily attributable to asset revaluations undertaken in accordance with fair value adjustments, which resulted in increased depreciation expenses. This was further impacted by an increase in the valuation of Council's assets and the recognition of significant gifted assets received after the adoption of the budget, both of which were not incorporated into the original depreciation projections.
13	Allowances for impairment losses	The unfavourable variance to budget is primarily due to a lower infringement provision than anticipated, driven by improved recoverability rates from Fines Victoria.
14	Borrowing costs	The favourable variance to budget is primarily attributable to lower than anticipated borrowing costs, largely due to the planned borrowings for Regional Sports Precinct not being required following a reduction in project scope. Additionally, unbudgeted grant income anticipated for various Capital Works projects after the adoption of the budget further reduced the need for borrowings.
15	Finance costs – Leases	The favourable variance to budget is primarily attributable to lower than anticipated borrowing costs, largely due to the planned borrowings for Regional Sports Precinct not being required following a reduction in project scope. Additionally, unbudgeted grant income anticipated for various Capital Works projects after the adoption of the budget further reduced the need for borrowings.
16	Net loss on write-off of property, Infrastructure, plant and equipment	Net loss on write-off of property, Infrastructure, plant and equipment occurs as a result of disposal or write-off of assets.
17	Other expenses	The unfavourable variance to budget is primarily due to unbudgeted utility costs incurred by Council for leisure centres. However, these costs are offset by reimbursements from the service provider in accordance with the agreement. Additionally, a contribution payment to Casa D'Abruzzo Club relating to a 2023-24 financial year which was delayed due to the soccer field upgrade project running behind schedule was made in the 2024-2025 financial year.

Note 2.1 Performance against budget

2.1.2 Capital works

	Budget* 2025 \$'000	Actual 2025 \$'000	Variance \$'000	Variance %	Ref
Property					
Land	–	782	(782)	(100%)	1
Total land	–	782	(782)	-100%	
Buildings	11,263	12,039	(776)	(7%)	
Building improvements	9,127	8,980	147	2%	
Total buildings	20,390	21,019	(629)	(3%)	
Total property	20,390	21,801	(1,411)	(7%)	
Plant and equipment					
Plant, machinery and equipment	2,995	4,093	(1,098)	(37%)	2
Fixtures, fittings and furniture	300	269	31	10%	3
Computers and telecommunications	780	547	233	30%	4
Total plant and equipment	4,075	4,909	(834)	-20%	
Infrastructure					
Roads	30,304	30,035	269	1%	
Bridges	100	91	9	9%	
Footpaths and cycleways	6,443	3,715	2,728	42%	5
Drainage	1,550	716	834	54%	6
Recreational, leisure and community facilities	25,615	18,744	6,871	27%	7
Parks, open space and streetscapes	22,228	18,697	3,531	16%	8
Off street car parks	2,000	48	1,952	98%	9
Waste management	661	561	100	15%	10
Other infrastructure	11,052	7,917	3,135	28%	11
Total infrastructure	99,953	80,524	19,429	19%	
Total capital works expenditure	124,418	107,234	17,184	14%	
Represented by:					
New asset expenditure	85,225	72,045	13,180	15%	
Asset renewal expenditure	25,620	20,904	4,716	18%	
Asset upgrade expenditure	13,573	14,285	(712)	(5%)	
Total capital works expenditure	124,418	107,234	17,184	14%	

* The adopted budget amount for 2024-2025 financial year includes 2023-24 carry forwards of \$16.92 million approved by Council.

Council will carry forward \$11.13 million capital works into 2025-26 financial year.

2.1.2 Capital works

(i) Explanation of material variations

Variance Ref	Item	Explanation
1	Land	The variance to budget is primarily due to completion of land acquisitions to enable future road upgrades.
2	Plant, machinery and equipment	The variance to budget is due to large fleet items received earlier than estimated.
3	Fixtures, fittings and furniture	The variance to budget is due to delays from external authorities, impacting on fit-out works commencing.
4	Computers and telecommunications	The variance to budget is due to delays in project planning activities.
5	Footpaths and cycleways	The variance to budget is primarily due to delays in external approvals and contractor availability.
6	Drainage	The variance to budget is primarily due to delays in external approvals, impacting design and construction timeframes.
7	Recreational, leisure and community facilities	The variance to budget is primarily due to tenders being awarded below estimated budget.
8	Parks, open space and streetscapes	The variance to budget is primarily due to delays in external approvals and construction commencement.
9	Off street car parks	The variance to budget is primarily due to delays in external approvals and construction commencement.
10	Waste management	The variance to budget is due to resource constraints which delayed commencement of procurement activities.
11	Other infrastructure	The variance to budget is due to budget reallocation from Other Infrastructure to Roads.

Note 2.2 Analysis of Council results by program

Council delivers its functions and activities through the following programs.

Executive

The Executive Services directorate comprising of the CEO, Office of Council and CEO and Public Affairs provides a range of professional services to internal and external customers, with an emphasis on maintaining an appropriate organisational structure, implementing Council decisions in a timely manner, ensuring good governance practices are adhered to, and engaging with our diverse community. In addition, communication plays a key role in delivering effective and impactful messaging through a variety of digital and traditional channels to the community and staff.

Community Wellbeing

Our Community Wellbeing directorate oversees many service areas that impact the day-to-day living and wellbeing of City of Whittlesea residents. The Directorate works collaboratively with the State and Federal Government to provide many of these services and operates in partnership with a variety of community service organisations to meet the needs of our diverse and vibrant community.

Planning and Development

The Planning and Development directorate is critical in taking the voice of all Whittlesea residents to Members of Federal and State Parliament and Senior Government Officers. It also ensures our residents, businesses, government authorities, strategic partners and staff are informed about important Council events, services, programs and initiatives. Another important role is to manage both Strategic Planning & Design and Development Assessment processes.

Infrastructure and Environment

The Infrastructure and Environment directorate provides a diverse range of infrastructure services to the community. With the high level of growth within the municipality and an increasing number of residents, there is a need to be responsive to community needs. Some of the Directorate’s key functions include managing parks and open spaces, road, road-related and footpath construction and maintenance, building maintenance, engineering services, traffic management, road safety and sustainability planning.

Customer and Corporate Services

Our Customer and Corporate Services directorate ensures that Council has the funds available to provide safe, useful and sustainable assets and services to our community. This directorate monitors, manages, researches, reports and provides advice to Council on all financial and organisational matters and ensures good governance. It directs and assists the organisation to achieve its goals by providing accurate data and introducing efficiencies and enhancements that best utilise Council’s resources.

2.2.1 Summary of income/revenue, expenses, assets and capital expenses by program

	Income/ Revenue \$'000	Expenses \$'000	Surplus/ (Deficit) \$'000	Grants included in income/revenue \$'000	Total assets \$'000
2025					
Executive	103	11,881	(11,778)	–	318
Community Wellbeing	21,324	48,461	(27,137)	13,080	2,068,372
Planning and Development	21,489	32,236	(10,747)	1,923	29,894
Infrastructure and Environment	65,963	105,637	(39,674)	22,983	3,304,695
Customer and Corporate Services	435,641	114,236	321,405	29,849	508,930
	544,520	312,451	232,069	67,835	5,912,209
2024					
Executive	68	10,391	(10,323)	–	46
Community Wellbeing	21,313	45,903	(24,590)	15,607	1,918,976
Planning and Development	22,030	31,101	(9,071)	1,592	25,377
Infrastructure and Environment	41,331	98,888	(57,557)	7,607	2,790,433
Customer and Corporate Services	369,665	108,712	260,953	1,171	459,347
	454,407	294,995	159,412	25,977	5,194,179

Note 3 Funding for the delivery of our services

Note 3.1 Rates and charges

Council uses Net Annual Value (NAV) as the basis of valuation of all properties within the municipal district. The NAV of a property is its imputed rental value. The valuation base used to calculate general rates for 2024-2025 year was \$4.06 billion (2023-24 \$3.82 billion).

	2025 \$'000	2024 \$'000
General rates	189,290	179,524
Waste management charge	26,485	22,217
Special rates and charges (marketing schemes)	281	269
Supplementary rates and rate adjustments	4,365	3,590
Interest on rates and charges	2,216	2,043
Total rates and charges	222,637	207,643

The date of the general revaluation of land for rating purposes within the municipal district was 1 January 2024, and the valuation was first applied in the rating year commencing 1 July 2024. Annual rates and charges are recognised as income when Council issues annual rates notices. Supplementary rates are recognised when a valuation and reassessment is completed and a supplementary rates notice is issued.

3.2 Statutory fees and fines

	2025 \$'000	2024 \$'000
Infringements and costs	9,968	13,702
Court recoveries	1,362	1,719
Permit fees	9,140	8,148
Certificates and regulatory service fees	1,963	2,305
Total statutory fees and fines	22,433	25,874

Statutory fees and fines (including parking fees and fines) are recognised as income when the service has been provided, the payment is received, or when the penalty has been applied, whichever first occurs.

3.3 User fees

	2025 \$'000	2024 \$'000
Aged and health services	1,798	1,779
Family and children services	242	205
Registrations	2,605	2,327
Leisure centre fees	2,088	814
Property leases and rentals	4,115	4,362
Waste management services	1,629	1,312
Other fees and charges	(260)	(220)
Total user fees	12,217	10,579

User fees are recognised as revenue at a point in time, or over time, when (or as) the performance obligation is satisfied. Recognition is based on the underlying contractual terms.

Note 3.4 Funding from other levels of government

Grants were received in respect of the following :

	2025 \$'000	2024 \$'000
Summary of grants		
Commonwealth funded grants	41,393	10,251
State funded grants	26,424	15,709
Other	18	17
Total grants received	67,835	25,977

In accordance with accounting standards, the advance payment for the Financial Assistance Grant relating to 2025-26 financial year was received and recognised in the 2024-2025 financial year. The same did not occur in the prior year, where the 2024-2025 Financial Assistance Grant payment was received and recognised in the 2024-2025 financial year. As a result, there is a significant difference between the 2024-2025 and 2023-24 balances.

(a) Operating Grants

Recurrent – Commonwealth Government		
Financial assistance grants	29,844	778
Home and community care	5,746	6,888
Community wellbeing	22	105
Recurrent – State Government		
Early Years	320	351
Family Day Care	565	713
Home and Community Care	692	617
Community Development	145	264
Community Wellbeing	247	208
Maternal and Child health	4,945	5,618
Resilience and Emergency Management	71	45
Youth Services	37	64
Pedestrian Crossings	1,113	1,054
Recurrent – Other		
Other grants	6	–
Best Start Partnership	–	13
Total recurrent operating grants	43,753	16,718

Note 3.4 Funding from other levels of government (cont.)

Grants were received in respect of the following :

	2025 \$'000	2024 \$'000
Non-recurrent – Commonwealth Government		
Home and community care	122	–
Community wellbeing	393	–
Non-recurrent – State Government		
Community wellbeing	260	885
Youth services	13	142
Infrastructure	101	207
Leisure and community inclusion	50	32
Economic development	162	258
Sustainability planning	154	133
Resilience and emergency management	124	50
Organisational development	–	184
Non-recurrent – Other		
Community wellbeing	–	4
Community development	12	–
Total non-recurrent operating grants	1,391	1,895
Total operating grants	45,144	18,613
(b) Capital Grants		
Recurrent – Commonwealth Government		
Roads to recovery	2,495	1,217
Total recurrent capital grants	2,495	1,217
Non-recurrent – Commonwealth Government		
Roads	293	1,041
Buildings	130	–
Parks and gardens	2,349	222
Non-recurrent – State Government		
Buildings	6,299	2,218
Parks and gardens	3,792	1,013
Roads	6,181	523
Recreational, leisure and community	1,148	1,130
Other	4	–
Total non-recurrent capital grants	20,196	6,147
Total capital grants	22,691	7,364

Note 3.4 Funding from other levels of government (cont.)

(c) Recognition of grant income

Before recognising funding from government grants as revenue Council assesses whether there is a contract that is enforceable and has sufficiently specific performance obligations in accordance with *AASB 15 Revenue from Contracts with Customers*. When both these conditions are satisfied, Council:

- identifies each performance obligation relating to revenue under the contract/agreement
- determines the transaction price
- recognises a contract liability for its obligations under the agreement
- recognises revenue as it satisfies its performance obligations, at the time or over time when services are rendered.

Where the contract is not enforceable and/or does not have sufficiently specific performance obligations, Council applies *AASB 1058 Income for Not-for-Profit Entities*.

Grant revenue with sufficiently specific performance obligations is recognised over time as the performance obligations specified in the underlying agreement are met. Where performance obligations are not sufficiently specific, grants are recognised on the earlier of receipt or when an unconditional right to receipt has been established. Grants relating to capital projects are generally recognised progressively as the capital project is completed. The following table provides a summary of the accounting framework under which grants are recognised.

Income recognised under AASB 1058 Income of Not-for-Profit Entities

	2025 \$'000	2024 \$'000
General purpose	30,956	1,816
Specific purpose grants to acquire non-financial assets	22,741	7,364
Revenue recognised under AASB 15 Revenue from Contracts with Customers		
Specific purpose grants	14,138	16,797
Total recognition of grant income	67,835	25,977

(d) Unspent grants received on condition that they be spent in a specific manner

Operating		
Balance at start of year	7,790	9,553
Received during the financial year and remained unspent at balance date	8,364	7,790
Received in prior years and spent during the financial year	(7,790)	(9,553)
Balance at year end	8,364	7,790
Capital		
Balance at start of year	10,858	10,901
Received during the financial year and remained unspent at balance date	22,825	10,858
Received in prior years and spent during the financial year	(10,858)	(10,901)
Balance at year end	22,825	10,858
Total unspent grants	31,189	18,648

Unspent grants are determined and disclosed on a cash basis.

3.5 Contributions

	2025 \$'000	2024 \$'000
Monetary	34,692	53,944
Non-monetary	155,792	107,465
Total contributions	190,484	161,409
Contributions of non monetary assets were received in relation to the following asset classes.		
Land	53,502	53,131
Roads	55,071	44,052
Other infrastructure	47,219	10,282
Total non-monetary contributions	155,792	107,465

Monetary contributions are recognised at the time Council meets its obligation following the issue of a statement of compliance (SoC) for a plan of subdivision. Non monetary contributions are recognised as income at their fair value when Council obtains control over the contributed asset. Council received an increase in contributed assets from developers in comparison to the prior year, as a result of an increase in developments throughout the municipality.

3.6 Net gain/(loss) on disposal of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment

	2025 \$'000	2024 \$'000
(a) Net gain/(loss) on disposal of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment		
Proceeds of sale	404	1,063
Written down value of assets disposed	(174)	(118)
Total net gain/(loss) on disposal of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	230	945

The profit or loss on sale of an asset is determined when control of the asset has passed to the buyer.

(b) Net loss on write-off of property, Infrastructure, plant and equipment		
Written down value of assets written-off*	(1,455)	(4,034)
Total net loss on write-off of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	(1,455)	(4,034)

* Council has written-off a number of infrastructure assets in the current and comparative period.

3.7 Other income

	2025 \$'000	2024 \$'000
Sales	801	721
Interest	17,425	15,753
Reimbursements	10,277	5,215
Other	28	258
Total other income	28,531	21,947

Interest is recognised as it is earned. Reimbursements mainly consist of WorkCover and insurance recovered, and reimbursements of capital works undertaken. Other income is measured at the fair value of the consideration received or receivable and is recognised when Council gains control over the right to receive the income.

Note 4 The cost of delivering services

4.1 (a) Employee costs

	2025 \$'000	2024 \$'000
Wages and salaries	108,115	105,794
WorkCover	4,952	3,906
Superannuation	11,763	10,826
Fringe benefits tax	153	153
Other	5	7
Total employee costs	124,988	120,686

Council has strategically invested in staffing resources into areas to support delivery of our community plan and to keep pace with our growth in population and development. Additional costs were incurred attributable to an increased workcover levy and increase in employee costs in line with the adopted Enterprise Agreement.

(b) Superannuation

Council made contributions to the following funds:

Defined benefit fund		
Employer contributions to Local Authorities Superannuation Fund (Vision Super)	92	124
	92	124
Employer contributions payable at reporting date	8	8
Accumulation funds		
Employer contributions to Local Authorities Superannuation Fund (Vision Super)	11,671	10,702
	11,671	10,702
Employer contributions payable at reporting date	527	483

Contributions made exclude amounts accrued at balance date. Refer to note 9.3 for further information relating to Council’s superannuation obligations.

4.2 Materials and services

	2025 \$'000	2024 \$'000
External works (contractors)	7,267	10,850
Maintenance and operations contractors	27,859	25,543
Sustainable environment contractors	27,499	26,626
Assets and facilities contractors	6,241	6,310
Information services contractors	585	839
Support services	10,034	7,405
Design work	42	48
Facilities management	3,055	3,337
Supplies and services	8,746	7,382
Plant and feet operations	2,033	2,062
Computer services	5,592	5,218
Communications	1,793	1,564
Catering supplies	270	283
Construction materials	860	810
Travel and accommodation	82	108
Consumable materials	112	146
Total materials and services	102,070	98,531

Expenses are recognised as they are incurred and reported in the financial year to which they relate.

4.3 Depreciation

	2025 \$'000	2024 \$'000
Property	7,532	8,534
Plant and equipment	2,693	2,447
Infrastructure	50,611	40,108
Total depreciation	60,836	51,089

Refer to note 6.1 for a more detailed breakdown of depreciation and amortisation charges and accounting policy.

4.4 Amortisation – intangible assets

	2025 \$'000	2024 \$'000
Software	72	71
Total Amortisation – intangible assets	72	71

4.5 Depreciation – right of use assets

	2025 \$'000	2024 \$'000
Property	526	554
Vehicles	308	308
Plant and equipment	66	101
Total depreciation – right of use assets	900	963

4.6 Allowance for impairment losses

	2025 \$'000	2024 \$'000
Infringements debtors	2,477	2,424
Other debtors	–	285
Total allowance for impairment losses	2,477	2,709

Movement in allowance for impairment losses in respect of debtors

Balance at the beginning of the year	(10,195)	(9,372)
New allowances recognised during the year	(2,477)	(2,709)
Amounts already allowed for and written off as uncollectible	321	1,886
Balance at end of year	(12,351)	(10,195)

An allowance for impairment losses in respect of debtors is recognised based on an expected credit loss model. This model considers both historical and forward-looking information in determining the level of impairment.

4.7 Borrowing costs

	2025 \$'000	2024 \$'000
Interest – Borrowings	74	118
Total borrowing costs	74	118

Borrowing costs are recognised as an expense in the period in which they are incurred, except where they are capitalised as part of a qualifying asset constructed by Council.

4.8 Finance costs – leases

	2025 \$'000	2024 \$'000
Interest – Lease liabilities	118	150
Total finance costs	118	150

4.9 Other expenses

	2025 \$'000	2024 \$'000
Auditors' remuneration – VAGO – audit of the financial statements, performance statement and grant acquittals	82	79
Auditors' remuneration – Internal Audit	224	181
Contributions		
Grants to community	2,346	2,420
Yarra Plenty Regional Library contributions	6,272	5,782
Councillors' allowances	345	–
Insurance premiums	2,294	2,406
Utilities	5,656	3,500
Others	2,242	2,276
Total other expenses	19,461	16,644

Note 5 Investing in and financing our operations

5.1 Financial assets

	2025 \$'000	2024 \$'000
(a) Cash and cash equivalents		
Cash on hand	4	4
Cash at bank	1,046	872
Term deposits	48,537	25,720
Total cash and cash equivalents	49,587	26,596
Cash and cash equivalents include cash on hand, deposits at call, and other highly liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less, net of outstanding bank overdrafts.		
(b) Other financial assets		
Current		
Term deposits	270,000	265,000
Total current other financial assets	270,000	265,000
Non-current		
Term deposits	50,000	50,000
Total non-current other financial assets	50,000	50,000
Total other financial assets	320,000	315,000
Total cash and cash equivalents and other financial assets	369,587	341,596

Other financial assets are valued at fair value, at balance date. Term deposits are measured at original cost. Any unrealised gains and losses on holdings at balance date are recognised as either a revenue or expense.

Other financial assets include term deposits and those with original maturity dates of 3 to 12 months are classified as current, whilst term deposits with maturity dates greater than 12 months are classified as non-current.

5.1 Financial assets (cont.)

	2025 \$'000	2024 \$'000
(c) Trade and other receivables		
Current		
Statutory receivables		
Rates debtors	39,463	40,502
Infringement debtors	16,916	13,748
Allowance for expected credit loss – infringements	(10,929)	(8,721)
Net GST receivable	4,253	3,841
	49,703	49,370
Non statutory receivables		
Other debtors	18,932	7,622
Allowance for expected credit loss – other debtors	(1,422)	(1,474)
	17,510	6,148
Total current trade and other receivables	67,213	55,518

Short term receivables are carried at invoice amount. An allowance for expected credit losses is recognised based on past experience and other objective evidence of expected losses. Long term receivables are carried at amortised cost using the effective interest rate method.

(d) Ageing of Receivables		
The ageing of Council’s trade and other receivables (excluding statutory receivables) that are not impaired was:		
Current (not yet due)	10,906	3,788
Past due by up to 30 days	4,744	855
Past due between 31 and 180 days	1,317	768
Past due between 181 and 365 days	412	737
Past due by more than 1 year	1,553	1,474
Total trade and other receivables	18,932	7,622

(e) Ageing of individually impaired Receivables		
At balance date, other debtors representing financial assets with a nominal value of \$12.3m (2024: \$10.2m) were impaired. The amount of the allowance raised against these debtors was \$2.5m (2024: \$2.7m). They individually have been impaired as a result of their doubtful collection.		
The ageing of receivables that have been individually determined as impaired at reporting date was:		
Past due between 31 and 180 days	943	943
Past due between 181 and 365 days	951	951
Past due by more than 1 year	10,457	8,301
Total trade and other receivables	12,351	10,195

5.2 Non-financial assets

	2025 \$'000	2024 \$'000
(a) Inventories		
Fuels	48	79
Total inventories	48	79
Inventories held for distribution are measured at cost, adjusted when applicable for any loss of service potential. All other inventories, including land held for sale, are measured at the lower of cost and net realisable value. Where inventories are acquired for no cost or nominal consideration, they are measured at current replacement cost at the date of acquisition.		
(b) Other assets		
Accrued interest	5,395	5,151
Prepayments	1,766	2,069
Other	3,055	360
Total other assets	10,216	7,580
(c) Other financial assets		
Shares in Procurement Australasia Ltd	22	22
Total other financial assets	22	22
(d) Intangible assets		
Software	151	208
Total intangible assets	151	208
	Software \$'000	Total \$'000
Gross carrying amount		
Balance at 1 July 2024	1,199	1,199
Other additions	15	–
Balance at 30 June 2025	1,214	1,199
Accumulated amortisation and impairment		
Balance at 1 July 2024	991	920
Amortisation expense	72	71
Balance at 30 June 2025	1,063	991
Net book value at 30 June 2024		
	151	208

Intangible assets with finite lives are amortised as an expense on a systematic basis over the asset's useful life. Amortisation is generally calculated on a straight line basis, at a rate that allocates the asset value, less any estimated residual value over its estimated useful life. Estimates of the remaining useful lives and amortisation method are reviewed at least annually, and adjustments made where appropriate.

5.3 Payables, trust funds and deposits and contract and other liabilities

	2025 \$'000	2024 \$'000
(a) Trade and other payables		
Current		
<i>Non-statutory payables</i>		
Trade payables	24,008	27,165
Accrued expenses	3,182	2,369
Other	4,991	6,399
Total current trade and other payables	32,181	35,933
(b) Trust funds and deposits		
Current		
Refundable deposits	14,024	13,420
Fire services property levy	14,567	28,958
Retention amounts	1,160	773
Other refundable deposits	14,930	7,449
Total current trust funds and deposits	44,681	50,600
(c) Contract and other liabilities		
Contract liabilities		
Current		
Grants received in advance – operating	8,364	7,790
Grants received in advance – capital	22,825	10,858
Other	6,187	2,252
Total contract liabilities	37,376	20,900

Trust funds and deposits
Amounts received as deposits and retention amounts controlled by Council are recognised as trust funds until they are returned, transferred in accordance with the purpose of the receipt, or forfeited. Trust funds that are forfeited, resulting in Council gaining control of the funds, are to be recognised as revenue at the time of forfeit.

Contract liabilities
Contract liabilities reflect consideration received in advance from customers in respect of grants received in advance and ticket sales income received in advance and deferred. Contract liabilities are derecognised and recorded as revenue when promised goods and services are transferred to the customer. Refer to Note 3.

Purpose and nature of items

Refundable deposits – Deposits and bonds are taken by Council as a form of surety in relation to building and infrastructure works or hiring transactions for Council assets. Amounts will be refunded if Council's assets are maintained in their original condition.

Fire Service Levy – Council is the collection agent for fire services levy on behalf of the State Government. Council remits amounts received on a quarterly basis. Amounts disclosed here will be remitted to the State Government in line with that process.

Retention Amounts – Council has a contractual right to retain certain amounts until a contractor has met certain requirements or a related warrant or defect period has elapsed. Subject to the satisfactory completion of the contractual obligations, or the elapsing of time, these amounts will be paid to the relevant contractor in line with Council's contractual obligations.

Other refundable deposits – Deposits are taken by Council as a form of surety in relation to leasing or hiring transactions for Council assets. Amounts will be refunded if Council's assets are maintained in their original condition.

5.4 Interest-bearing liabilities

	2025 \$'000	2024 \$'000
Current		
Treasury Corporation of Victoria borrowings – secured	1,593	1,567
	1,593	1,567
Non-current		
Treasury Corporation of Victoria borrowings – secured	6,031	7,624
	6,031	7,624
Total	7,624	9,191

Borrowings are secured by a mortgage over the general rates and charges of Council.

(a) The maturity profile for Council’s borrowings is:

Not later than one year	1,593	1,567
Later than one year and not later than five years	5,488	6,007
Later than five years	543	1,617
	7,624	9,191

Borrowings are initially measured at fair value, being the cost of the interest bearing liabilities, net of transaction costs. The measurement basis subsequent to initial recognition depends on whether Council has categorised its interest-bearing liabilities as either financial liabilities designated at fair value through the profit and loss, or financial liabilities at amortised cost. Any difference between the initial recognised amount and the redemption value is recognised in net result over the period of the borrowing using the effective interest method. The classification depends on the nature and purpose of the interest bearing liabilities. Council determines the classification of its interest bearing liabilities based on contractual repayment terms at every balance date.

In classifying borrowings as current or non-current Council considers whether at balance date it has the right to defer settlement of the liability for at least twelve months after the reporting period. Council's loan arrangements include covenants based on Council's financial performance and position at the end of the reporting period. These covenants are assessed for compliance after the reporting period based on specified financial ratios.

5.5 Provisions

	Annual leave \$'000	Long service leave \$'000	Other \$'000	Total \$'000
2025				
Balance at beginning of the financial year	8,968	14,373	1,292	24,633
Additional provisions	8,262	930	3,603	12,795
Amounts used	(7,708)	(1,953)	(3,324)	(12,985)
Change in the discounted amount arising because of time and the effect of any change in the discount rate	–	2,460	92	2,552
Balance at the end of the financial year	9,522	15,810	1,663	26,995
Provisions – current	9,522	13,180	1,226	23,928
Provisions – non-current	–	2,630	437	3,067
2024				
Balance at beginning of the financial year	8,322	13,801	1,200	23,323
Additional provisions	7,194	406	2,775	10,375
Amounts used	(6,548)	(2,192)	(2,800)	(11,540)
Change in the discounted amount arising because of time and the effect of any change in the discount rate	–	2,358	117	2,475
Balance at the end of the financial year	8,968	14,373	1,292	24,633
Provisions – current	8,968	12,306	904	22,178
Provisions – non-current	–	2,067	388	2,455

	2025 \$'000	2024 \$'000
(a) Employee provisions		
Current provisions expected to be wholly settled within 12 months		
Annual leave	6,970	6,564
Long service leave	2,212	1,903
Other	166	129
	9,348	8,596
Current provisions expected to be wholly settled after 12 months		
Annual leave	2,552	2,404
Long service leave	10,968	10,403
Other	1,060	775
	14,580	13,582
Total current employee provisions	23,928	22,178
Non-current		
Long service leave	2,630	2,067
Other	437	388
Total non-current employee provisions	3,067	2,455
Aggregate carrying amount of employee		
Current	23,928	22,178
Non-current	3,067	2,455
Total aggregate carrying amount of employee provisions	26,995	24,633

5.5 Provisions (cont.)

The calculation of employee costs and benefits includes all relevant on-costs and are calculated as follows at reporting date.

Annual leave

A liability for annual leave is recognised in the provision for employee benefits as a current liability because Council does not have an unconditional right to defer settlement of the liability. Liabilities for annual leave are measured at:

- nominal value if Council expects to wholly settle the liability within 12 months
- present value if the Council does not expect to wholly settle within 12 months.

Liabilities that are not expected to be wholly settled within 12 months of the reporting date are recognised in the provision for employee benefits as current liabilities, measured at the present value of the amounts expected to be paid when the liabilities are settled using the remuneration rate expected to apply at the time of settlement.

Long service leave

Liability for long service leave (LSL) is recognised in the provision for employee benefits. Unconditional LSL is disclosed as a current liability as Council does not have an unconditional right to defer settlement. Unconditional LSL is measured at nominal value if expected to be settled within 12 months or at present value if not expected to be settled within 12 months. Conditional LSL that has been accrued, where an employee is yet to reach a qualifying term of employment, is disclosed as a non-current liability and measured at present value.

Other

Other provisions represent the liability for both time in lieu (TIL) and sick leave (SL). A current liability for TIL is recognised because Council does not have an unconditional right to defer settlement of the liability. Liabilities for TIL are measured at nominal value because Council expects to wholly settle the liability within 12 months. Unconditional SL is disclosed as a current liability as Council does not have an unconditional right to defer settlement. Unconditional SL is measured at nominal value if expected to be settled within 12 months or at present value if not expected to be settled within 12 months. Conditional SL that has been accrued, where an employee is yet to reach a qualifying term of employment, is disclosed as a non-current liability and measured at present value.

Key assumptions:

Weighted average discount rates	4.20%	4.30%
Weighted average increase in employee costs	2.70%	2.50%

5.6 Financing arrangements

Council has the following funding arrangements in place as at 30 June 2025.

	2025 \$'000	2024 \$'000
Bank overdraft	200	200
Credit card facilities	196	251
Interest-bearing liabilities	7,624	9,191
Total facilities	8,020	9,642
Used facilities	(7,694)	(9,261)
Unused facilities	326	381
Approved borrowing limit	74,737	37,225

While Council has a borrowing limit as approved by the Treasurer of Victoria which represents the total amount that can be financed from the Treasury Corporation of Victoria (TCV). Under the *Local Government Act 2020*, Council cannot borrow money unless the proposed borrowings are included in the budget or a revised budget. The inclusion of proposed borrowings in a budget or revised budget signals the intent to borrow of which Council did not have any for 2023-24 and 2024-2025.

5.7 Commitments

Council has entered into the following commitments. Commitments are not recognised in the Balance Sheet. Commitments are disclosed at their nominal value and presented inclusive of the GST payable.

a) Commitments for expenditure

	Not later than 1 year \$'000	Later than 1 year and not later than 2 years \$'000	Later than 2 years and not later than 5 years \$'000	Later than 5 years \$'000	Total \$'000
2025					
Operating					
Building maintenance	7,889	7,738	9,672	–	25,299
Consultancy	984	214	101	–	1,299
Health	557	254	5	–	816
Information technology and systems	6,102	2,180	1,115	–	9,397
Infrastructure	204	151	171	–	526
Other	8,416	1,038	219	–	9,673
Parks maintenance	32,531	26,793	80,143	20,034	159,501
Renewable power	5,455	5,455	16,364	2,727	30,001
Roads	162	162	162	–	486
Transport and local laws	1,753	1,021	2,260	3,155	8,189
Waste and recycling	9,469	9,451	18,609	4,579	42,108
Total	73,522	54,457	128,821	30,495	287,295
Capital					
Building works	49,458	17,330	–	–	66,788
Consultancy	1,491	281	421	–	2,193
Infrastructure	1,020	–	–	–	1,020
Other	36	–	–	–	36
Parks works	1,986	–	–	–	1,986
Roads	16,309	–	–	–	16,309
Total	70,300	17,611	421	–	88,332

5.7 Commitments (cont.)

a) Commitments for expenditure

	Not later than 1 year \$'000	Later than 1 year and not later than 2 years \$'000	Later than 2 years and not later than 5 years \$'000	Later than 5 years \$'000	Total \$'000
2024					
Operating					
Building maintenance	18,218	15,019	30,468	–	63,705
Consultancy	734	544	260	–	1,538
Health	1,150	79	14	–	1,243
Information technology and systems	4,114	1,187	36	–	5,337
Other	9,201	6,432	15,635	7,460	38,728
Parks maintenance	23,875	23,506	78,100	33,063	158,544
Renewable power	3,471	3,471	11,455	2,340	20,737
Transport and local laws	7,226	1,025	202	–	8,453
Waste and recycling	11,664	11,151	25,510	4,241	52,566
Transport and local laws	79,653	62,414	161,680	47,104	350,851
Waste and recycling	15,413	13,028	29,903	14,065	72,409
Total	71,015	46,124	35,921	28,287	181,347
Capital					
Building works	22,714	9,393	1,590	–	33,697
Consultancy	341	–	–	–	341
Other	2,098	60	–	–	2,158
Parks works	11,842	–	–	–	11,842
Roads	18,980	1,691	–	–	20,671
Transport and local laws	7,852	–	–	–	7,852
Total	63,827	11,144	1,590	–	76,561

(b) Operating lease receivables

Council has entered into commercial property leases on its investment property, consisting of surplus freehold office complexes. These properties held under operating leases have remaining non-cancellable lease terms of between 1 and 10 years. All leases include a CPI based revision of the rental charge annually.

Future undiscounted minimum rentals receivable under non-cancellable operating leases are as follows:

	2025 \$'000	2024 \$'000
Not later than one year	518	390
Later than one year and not later than five years	1,760	1,350
Later than five years	450	1,001
	2,728	2,741

5.8 Leases

At inception of a contract, Council assesses whether a contract is, or contains, a lease. A contract is, or contains, a lease if the contract conveys the right to control the use of an identified asset for a period of time in exchange for consideration. To identify whether a contract conveys the right to control the use of an identified asset, it is necessary to assess whether:

- the contract involves the use of an identified asset;
- Council has the right to obtain substantially all of the economic benefits from use of the asset throughout the period of use; and
- Council has the right to direct the use of the asset.

This policy is applied to contracts entered into, or changed, on or after 1 July 2019.

As a lessee, Council recognises a right-of-use asset and a lease liability at the lease commencement date. The right-of-use asset is initially measured at cost which comprises the initial amount of the lease liability adjusted for:

- any lease payments made at or before the commencement date less any lease incentives received; plus
- any initial direct costs incurred; and
- an estimate of costs to dismantle and remove the underlying asset or to restore the underlying asset or the site on which it is located.

The right-of-use asset is subsequently depreciated using the straight-line method from the commencement date to the earlier of the end of the useful life of the right-of-use asset or the end of the lease term. The estimated useful lives of right-of-use assets are determined on the same basis as those of property, plant and equipment. In addition, the right-of-use asset is periodically reduced by impairment losses, if any, and adjusted for certain measurements of the lease liability.

The lease liability is initially measured at the present value of the lease payments that are not paid at the commencement date, discounted using the interest rate implicit in the lease or, if that rate cannot be readily determined, an appropriate incremental borrowing rate. Generally, Council uses an appropriate incremental borrowing rate as the discount rate.

Lease payments included in the measurement of the lease liability comprise the following:

- fixed payments
- variable lease payments that depend on an index or a rate, initially measured using the index or rate as at the commencement date;
- amounts expected to be payable under a residual value guarantee; and
- the exercise price under a purchase option that Council is reasonably certain to exercise, lease payments in an optional renewal period if Council is reasonably certain to exercise an extension option, and penalties for early termination of a lease unless Council is reasonably certain not to terminate early.

When the lease liability is remeasured in this way, a corresponding adjustment is made to the carrying amount of the right-of-use asset, or is recorded in profit or loss if the carrying amount of the right-of-use asset has been reduced to zero.

Under AASB 16 Leases, Council as a not-for-profit entity has elected not to measure right-of-use assets at initial recognition at fair value in respect of leases that have significantly below-market terms.

5.8 Leases (cont.)

	Property	Vehicle	Plant and equipment	Total
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Right-of-Use Assets				
Balance at 1 July 2024	1,942	1,230	67	3,239
Additions	–	–	–	–
Depreciation charge	(526)	(308)	(66)	(900)
Balance at 30 June 2025	1,416	922	1	2,339
			2025	2024
			\$'000	\$'000
Lease Liabilities				
Maturity analysis – contractual undiscounted cash flows				
Less than one year			869	998
One to five years			1,596	2,448
More than five years			480	498
Total undiscounted lease liabilities as at 30 June			2,945	3,944
Lease liabilities included in the Balance Sheet at 30 June				
Current			783	881
Non-current			1,681	2,464
Total lease liabilities			2,464	3,345
Short-term and low value leases				
Council has elected not to recognise right-of-use assets and lease liabilities for short-term leases of machinery that have a lease term of 12 months or less and leases of low-value assets (individual assets worth less than existing capitalisation thresholds for a like asset up to a maximum of AUD\$10,000), including IT equipment. Council recognises the lease payments associated with these leases as an expense on a straight-line basis over the lease term.				
Expenses relating to:				
Short-term leases			56	47
Total			56	47

Note 6 Assets we manage

6.1 Property, infrastructure, plant and equipment

Summary of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment

	Carrying amount 30 June 2024	Additions	Contributions	Revaluation	Depreciation	Disposal	Write off	Transfers	Carrying amount 30 June 2025
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Property	2,089,945	3,013	53,502	188,595	(7,532)	–	(1,376)	4,552	2,330,699
Plant and equipment	13,117	3,234	–	–	(2,693)	(174)	–	1,737	15,221
Infrastructure	2,612,704	12,384	102,290	290,647	(50,611)	–	(79)	17,807	2,985,142
Work in progress	67,245	88,603	–	–	–	–	–	(27,356)	128,492
Total	4,783,011	107,234	155,792	479,242	(60,836)	(174)	(1,455)	(3,260)	5,459,554

Summary of Work in Progress

	Opening WIP	Additions	Reclassification	Transfers	Closing WIP
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Property	16,070	18,887	–	(3,872)	31,085
Plant and equipment	2,740	1,450	–	(1,953)	2,237
Infrastructure	48,435	68,266		(21,531)	95,170
Total	67,245	88,603	–	(27,356)	128,492

6.1 Property, infrastructure, plant and equipment (cont.)

(a) Property

	Land – specialised \$'000	Land – non specialised \$'000	Land under roads \$'000	Total Land & Land Improvements \$'000	Buildings – specialised \$'000	Total Buildings \$'000	Work In Progress \$'000	Total Property \$'000
At fair value 1 July 2024	1,683,288	3,068	729	1,687,085	503,532	503,532	16,070	2,206,687
Accumulated depreciation at 1 July 2024	–	–	–	–	(100,672)	(100,672)	–	(100,672)
	1,683,288	3,068	729	1,687,085	402,860	402,860	16,070	2,106,015
Movements in fair value								
Additions	–	–	–	–	3,013	3,013	18,887	21,900
Contributions	53,502	–	–	53,502	–	–	–	53,502
Revaluation	7,044	–	167,545	174,589	13,895	13,895	–	188,484
Write-off	(1,275)	–	–	(1,275)	(198)	(198)	–	(1,473)
Disposal	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Transfers	2,328	–	–	2,328	2,184	2,184	(3,872)	640
	61,599	–	167,545	229,144	18,894	18,894	15,015	263,053
Movements in accumulated depreciation								
Depreciation and amortisation	–	–	–	–	(7,532)	(7,532)	–	(7,532)
Accumulated depreciation of Write offs	–	–	–	–	97	97		97
Revaluation increments/ (decrements)	–	–	–	–	111	111	–	111
Transfers	–	–	–	–	40	40	–	40
	–	–	–	–	(7,284)	(7,284)	–	(7,284)
At fair value 30 June 2025	1,744,887	3,068	168,274	1,916,229	522,426	522,426	31,085	2,469,740
Accumulated depreciation at 30 June 2025	–	–	–	–	(107,956)	(107,956)	–	(107,956)
Carrying amount	1,744,887	3,068	168,274	1,916,229	414,470	414,470	31,085	2,361,784

6.1 Property, infrastructure, plant and equipment (cont.)

(b) Plant and Equipment

	Plant machinery and equipment \$'000	Fixtures, fittings and furniture \$'000	Artworks \$'000	Work in Progress \$'000	Total plant and equipment \$'000
At fair value 1 July 2024	17,245	16,351	4,413	2,740	40,749
Accumulated depreciation at 1 July 2024	(11,479)	(13,413)	–	–	(24,892)
	5,766	2,938	4,413	2,740	15,857
Movements in fair value					
Additions	2,672	311	251	1,450	4,684
Revaluation	–	–	–	–	–
Write off	–	–	–	–	–
Disposal	(1,389)	–	–	–	(1,389)
Transfers	451	1,243	43	(1,953)	(216)
	1,734	1,554	294	(503)	3,079
Movements in accumulated depreciation					
Depreciation and amortisation	(1,660)	(1,033)	–	–	(2,693)
Accumulated depreciation of disposals	1,215	–	–	–	1,215
Revaluation increments/ (decrements)	–	–	–	–	–
Transfers	–	–	–	–	–
	(445)	(1,033)	–	–	(1,478)
At fair value 30 June 2025	18,979	17,905	4,707	2,237	43,828
Accumulated depreciation at 30 June 2025	(11,924)	(14,446)	–	–	(26,370)
Carrying amount	7,055	3,459	4,707	2,237	17,458

6.1 Property, infrastructure, plant and equipment (cont.)

(c) Infrastructure

	Roads	Car Parks	*Footpaths and cycleways *	Bridges	Telecommunication Conduits	Drainage	Public Lighting	Parks open spaces and streetscapes	*Landscape and environment	*Recreation and leisure	Work In Progress	Total Infrastructure
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000			\$'000	\$'000
At fair value 1 July 2024	1	–	–	145,411	31,642	757,017	32,264	430,654	–	–	48,435	3,567,013
Accumulated depreciation at 1 July 2024	(460,107)	–	–	(70,006)	(10,000)	(171,130)	(23,087)	(171,544)	–	–	–	(905,874)
	(460,106)	–	–	75,405	21,642	585,887	9,177	259,110	–	–	48,435	2,661,139
Movements in fair value												
Additions	4,399	1,410	3,745	143	–	425	–	–	–	2,262	68,266	80,650
Contributions	55,419	1,677	14,919	–	–	25,451	861	4,605	–	–	–	102,932
Revaluation	61,121	105,212	392,800	4,611	1,171	28,706	1,222	(5,586)	1,567	(38,317)	–	552,507
Write-off	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	(295)	–	–	–	(295)
Disposal	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Transfers	(300,188)	35,367	336,584	968	–	–	–	(244,150)	42,366	146,900	(21,531)	(3,684)
	(179,249)	143,666	748,048	5,722	1,171	54,582	2,083	(245,426)	43,933	110,845	46,735	732,110
Movements in accumulated depreciation												
Depreciation and amortisation	(18,148)	(366)	(4,107)	(1,778)	(637)	(7,737)	(1,380)	(15,178)	(367)	(913)	–	(50,611)
Accumulated Depreciation on Contributed Assets	(348)	(4)	(46)	–	–	(201)	(18)	(25)	–	–	–	(642)
Accumulated depreciation of write off	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	216	–	–	–	216
Revaluation increments/ (decrements)	(11,099)	(14,951)	(248,542)	(2,294)	(389)	(6,576)	(897)	12,619	(510)	10,779	–	(261,860)
Transfers	57,674	(987)	(64,575)	–	–	–	–	88,834	(13,796)	(67,190)	–	(40)
	28,079	(16,308)	(317,270)	(4,072)	(1,026)	(14,514)	(2,295)	86,466	(14,673)	(57,324)	–	(312,937)
At fair value 30 June 2025	(179,248)	143,666	748,048	151,133	32,813	811,599	34,347	185,228	43,933	110,845	95,170	2,177,534
Accumulated depreciation at 30 June 2025	(432,028)	(16,308)	(317,270)	(74,078)	(11,026)	(185,644)	(25,382)	(85,078)	(14,673)	(57,324)	–	(1,218,811)
Carrying amount	(611,276)	127,358	430,778	77,055	21,787	625,955	8,965	100,150	29,260	53,521	95,170	958,723

* Assets were reclassified and transferred from existing categories to new asset categories to better reflect their nature and use.

6.1 Property, infrastructure, plant and equipment (cont.)

Acquisition

The purchase method of accounting is used for all acquisitions of assets, being the fair value of assets provided as consideration at the date of acquisition plus any incidental costs attributable to the acquisition. Fair value is the price that would be received to sell an asset (or paid to transfer a liability) in an orderly transaction between market participants at the measurement date.

Where assets are constructed by Council, cost includes all materials used in construction, direct labour, borrowing costs incurred during construction, and an appropriate share of directly attributable variable and fixed overheads.

In accordance with Council’s policy, the threshold limits have applied when recognising assets within an applicable asset class and unless otherwise stated are consistent with the Council policy.

	Depreciation Period*	Threshold Limit \$’000
Asset recognition thresholds and depreciation periods		
Land & land improvements		
Land	–	–
Land improvements	100 years	–
Buildings		
Buildings	20 – 150 years	5
Building and leasehold improvements	50 years	5
Plant and Equipment		
Fixtures, fittings and furniture	5 – 10 years	5
Plant, machinery and equipment	3 – 10 years	5
Computers and telecommunications	3 years	5
Leased plant and equipment	Contract terms	10
Infrastructure		
Roads – pavements	50 – 100 years	5
Roads – surface	30 – 70 years	5
Car parks	30 – 100 years	5
Parks, open spaces and streetscapes	10 – 100 years	5
Landscape and environment	10 – 60 years	5
Recreation and leisure	5 – 80 years	5
Bridges	15 – 100 years	5
Footpaths and cycleways	10 – 100 years	5
Drainage	100 years	5
Light pole and lanterns	20 years	5
Conduits and pits	50 years	5
Intangible assets	10 years	–

* Council has conducted a thorough assessment of the depreciation period during year and adjusted depreciation period to align with asset consumption, usage patterns and benchmarked against industry standards and other comparable growth Councils in line with the current condition assessments however the impact to the current and future reporting periods is not material.

Land under roads

Council recognises land under roads it controls at fair value.

6.1 Property, infrastructure, plant and equipment (cont.)

Depreciation and amortisation

Buildings, land improvements, plant and equipment, infrastructure, and other assets having limited useful lives are systematically depreciated over their useful lives to Council in a manner which reflects consumption of the service potential embodied in those assets. Estimates of remaining useful lives and residual values are made on a regular basis with major asset classes reassessed annually. Depreciation rates and methods are reviewed annually.

Where assets have separate identifiable components that are subject to regular replacement, these components are assigned distinct useful lives and residual values and a separate depreciation rate is determined for each component. Road earthworks are not depreciated on the basis that they are assessed as not having a limited useful life. Straight line depreciation is charged based on the residual useful life as determined each year. Depreciation periods used are listed above and are consistent with the prior year unless otherwise stated.

Repairs and maintenance

Where the repair relates to the replacement of a component of an asset and the cost exceeds the capitalisation threshold the cost is capitalised and depreciated. The carrying value of the replaced asset is expensed.

Valuation of land and buildings

Valuation of land and buildings were undertaken by a qualified independent valuer, APV valuers and asset management and Westlink Consulting effective at 30 June 2024. The valuation of land and buildings is at fair value, being market value based on highest and best use permitted by relevant land planning provisions. Where land use is restricted through existing planning provisions the valuation is reduced to reflect this limitation. This adjustment is an unobservable input in the valuation. The adjustment has no impact on the comprehensive income statement.

Specialised land is valued at fair value using site values adjusted for englobo (undeveloped and/or unserviced) characteristics, access rights and private interests of other parties and entitlements of infrastructure assets and services. This adjustment is an unobservable input in the valuation. The adjustment has no impact on the comprehensive income statement.

Any significant movements in the unobservable inputs for land and land under roads will have a significant impact on the fair value of these assets. Refer to note 8.4 for further information relating to Fair value measurement.

The date and type of the current valuation is detailed in the following table. An indexed based revaluation was conducted in the current year, this valuation was based onsales analysis, median price indices provided by the REIV and VGV indices and Rawlinson's building index. Indexation occurs on the years that a full revaluation is not undertaken. A full revaluation of these assets will be conducted in 2027/28.

Details of Council’s land and buildings and information about the fair value hierarchy as at 30 June 2025 are as follows:

	Level 1 \$’000	Level 2 \$’000	Level 3 \$’000	Date of valuation	Types of valuation
Non-specialised land	–	3,068	–	Jun-25	Indexed
Specialised land and land under roads	–	–	1,744,887	Jun-25	Indexed
Land under roads	–	–	168,274	Jun-25	Full
Specialised buildings	–	–	414,470	Jun-25	Indexed
Total	–	3,068	2,327,631		

6.1 Property, infrastructure, plant and equipment (cont.)

Valuation of infrastructure

Valuation of infrastructure assets has been determined based on a combination of either a comprehensive revaluation or indexation. Indexation occurs on the years that a full revaluation is not undertaken. Indexation rates were based on the ABS indexation for the Melbourne Region.

The date and type of the current valuation is detailed in the following table. An independent condition audit was undertaken on the Recreation and Leisure, and footpaths and cycleways asset class by 'RapidMap Services' and 'Infrastructure Management Group' as at 30 June 2025. Condition audits were also undertaken by Council's Asset Management team as at 30 June 2025 for Car parks and Parks, open spaces and streetscapes.

The valuation is at fair value based on current replacement cost less accumulated depreciation as at the date of valuation. Details of Council's infrastructure and information about the fair value hierarchy as at 30 June 2025 are as follows:

	Level 1 \$'000	Level 2 \$'000	Level 3 \$'000	Date of valuation	Types of valuation	Date next full revaluation
Roads	–	–	(611,276)	Jun-25	Indexed	2027-28
Car parks	–	–	127,358	Jun-25	Full	2028-29
Footpaths and cycleways	–	–	430,778	Jun-25	Full	2028-29
Bridges	–	–	77,055	Jun-25	Indexed	2027-28
Telecommunication conduits	–	–	21,787	Jun-25	Indexed	2026-27
Drainage	–	–	625,955	Jun-25	Indexed	2025-26
Public lighting	–	–	8,965	Jun-25	Indexed	2026-27
Parks, open space and streetscapes	–	–	100,150	Jun-25	Full	2028-29
Landscape and environment	–	–	29,260	Jun-25	Indexed	2026-27
Recreation and leisure	–	–	53,521	Jun-25	Full	2028-29
Total	–	–	863,553			

6.1 Property, infrastructure, plant and equipment (cont.)

Description of significant unobservable inputs into level 3 valuations

Specialised land is valued using a market based direct comparison technique. Significant unobservable inputs include the extent and impact of restriction of use and the market cost of land per square metre. The extent and impact of restrictions on use varies and results in a reduction to surrounding land values between 5% and 95%. The market value of land varies significantly depending on the location of the land and the current market conditions. Currently land values range between \$1 and \$3,800 per square metre. Refer to note 8.4 for further information relating to Fair value measurement.

Land under roads acquired after 30 June 2008 is brought to account using a fair value basis. Council does not recognise land under roads that is controlled prior to 30 June 2008 in its financial report.

Specialised buildings are valued using a current replacement cost technique. Significant unobservable inputs include the current replacement cost and remaining useful lives of buildings. Current replacement costs are calculated on a square metre basis and ranges from \$420 to \$20,000 per square metre. The remaining useful lives of buildings are determined on the basis of the current condition of buildings and vary from 10 years to 160 years. Replacement cost is sensitive to changes in market conditions, with any increase or decrease in cost flowing through to the valuation. Useful lives of buildings are sensitive to changes in expectations or requirements that could either shorten or extend the useful lives of buildings. Refer to note 8.4 for further information relating to Fair value measurement.

Infrastructure assets are valued based on the current replacement cost. Significant unobservable inputs include the current replacement cost and remaining useful lives of infrastructure. The remaining useful lives of infrastructure assets are determined on the basis of the current condition of the asset and vary from 1 years to 120 years. Replacement cost is sensitive to changes in market conditions, with any increase or decrease in cost flowing through to the valuation. Useful lives of infrastructure are sensitive to changes in use, expectations or requirements that could either shorten or extend the useful lives of infrastructure assets. Refer to note 8.4 for further information relating to Fair value measurement.

	2025 \$'000	2024 \$'000
Reconciliation of specialised land		
Land under roads	168,274	729
Parks and reserve	1,744,887	1,722,697
Total specialised land	1,913,161	1,723,426

6.2 Investments in associates, joint arrangements and subsidiaries

Yarra Plenty Regional Library Service (Incorporated) – Background

Represents the City of Whittlesea's share in the net assets of the Yarra Plenty Regional Library Service which became an incorporated body on 12 January 1996. Council's 38.05% (2023-24 37.91%) share of the net assets from their draft financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2025 has been treated as an investment in the Balance Sheet, with an increase in the investment for the reporting period of \$0.15 million (increase of \$0.03 million for 2023-24), which is accounted for using the equity method and shown in the Comprehensive Income Statement.

	2025 \$'000	2024 \$'000
Investments in associates		
Investments in associates accounted for by the equity method are:		
Yarra Plenty Regional Library Service (Incorporated)	3,079	2,926
Fair value of Council's investment in Yarra Plenty Regional Library (Incorporated)	3,079	2,926
Council's share of accumulated surplus/(deficit)		
Council's share of accumulated surplus(deficit) at start of year	2,593	2,373
Reported surplus(deficit) for year	153	33
Transfers (to) from reserves	(337)	187
Council's share of accumulated surplus(deficit) at end of year	2,409	2,593
Movement in carrying value of specific investment		
Carrying value of investment at start of year	2,926	2,893
Share of net assets	153	33
Carrying value of investment at end of year	3,079	2,926
Council's share of expenditure commitments		
Operating commitments	2,708	844
Council's share of expenditure commitments	1,030	320

Council’s share of contingent liabilities and contingent assets

The Yarra Plenty Regional Library Service does not have any contingent liabilities as at the end of the reporting period.

Associates are all entities over which Council has significant influence but not control or joint control. Investments in associates are accounted for using the equity method of accounting, after initially being recognised at cost.

Note 7 People and relationships

7.1 Council and key management remuneration

(a) Related Parties

Parent entity

City of Whittlesea is the parent entity.

Subsidiaries and Associates

Interests in subsidiaries and associates are detailed in Note 6.2.

(b) Key Management Personnel

Key management personnel (KMP) are those people with the authority and responsibility for planning, directing and controlling the activities of Council. The Councillors, Chief Executive Officer and Directors/Executive Managers are deemed KMP. Details of persons holding the position of Councillor or other members of key management personnel at any time during the year are:

Councillors	Cr Martin Taylor – Mayor (12 November 2024)
	Cr Daniela Zinni – Deputy Mayor (12 November 2024)
	Cr David Lenberg (12 November 2024)
	Cr Lawrie Cox (12 November 2024)
	Cr Aidan McLindon (12 November 2024 – 16 April 2025)
	Cr Stevan Kozmevski (12 November 2024 – 8 May 2025)
	Cr Jarrod Lappin (12 November 2024)
	Cr Blair Colwell (12 November 2024)
	Cr Christine Stow (12 November 2024)
	Cr Deb Gunn (12 November 2024)
Administrators	Cr Nic Brooks (12 November 2024)
	Ms Lydia Wilson – Chair (1 July 2024 – Terminating on 19 November 2024)
	Ms Peita Duncan (1 July 2024 – Terminating on 19 November 2024)
CEO and Executive Leadership team	Mr Christian Zahra AM (1 July 2024 – Terminating on 19 November 2024)
	Mr Craig Lloyd – Chief Executive Officer
	Ms Sarah Renner – Director Customer and Corporate Services
	Ms Agata Chmielewski – Director Community Wellbeing
	Ms Debbie Wood – Director Infrastructure and Environment
	Ms Emma Appleton – Director Planning and Development
	Ms Janine Morgan – Executive Manager Public Affairs
	Ms Jacinta Stevens – Executive Manager Office of Council & CEO

	2025 No.	2024 No.
Total Number of Councillors	11	–
Total Number of Administrators	3	3
Total of Chief Executive Officer and other Key Management Personnel	7	8
Total Number of Key Management Personnel	21	11

7.1 Council and key management remuneration (cont.)

(c) Remuneration of Key Management Personnel

Remuneration comprises employee benefits including all forms of consideration paid, payable or provided by Council, or on behalf of Council, in exchange for services rendered. Remuneration of Key Management Personnel and Other senior staff is disclosed in the following categories.

Short-term employee benefits include amounts such as wages, salaries, annual leave or sick leave that are usually paid or payable on a regular basis, as well as non-monetary benefits such as allowances and free or subsidised goods or services.

Other long-term employee benefits include long service leave, other long service benefits or deferred compensation. Post-employment benefits include superannuation, pensions, and other retirement benefits paid or payable on a discrete basis when employment has ceased.

Termination benefits include termination of employment payments, such as severance packages.

	2025 \$'000	2024 \$'000
Total remuneration of key management personnel was as follows:		
Short-term employee benefits	2,835	2,861
Other long-term employee benefits	50	38
Post-employment benefits	269	300
Total	3,154	3,199

The numbers of key management personnel whose total remuneration from Council and any related entities, fall within the following bands:

Income Range	2025 No.	2024 No.
\$40,000 – \$49,999	9	–
\$60,000 – \$69,999	1	–
\$130,000 – \$139,999	1	–
\$170,000 – \$179,999	–	2
\$200,000 – \$209,999	2	–
\$220,000 – \$229,999	–	1
\$240,000 – \$249,999	–	2
\$280,000 – \$289,999	–	1
\$300,000 – \$309,999	2	1
\$310,000 – \$319,999	1	–
\$320,000 – \$329,999	–	2
\$340,000 – \$349,999	1	1
\$350,000 – \$359,999	1	–
\$370,000 – \$379,999	1	–
\$380,000 – \$389,999	1	–
\$390,000 – \$399,999	–	1
\$500,000 – \$509,999	1	–
	21	11

7.1 Council and key management remuneration (cont.)

(d) Remuneration of other senior staff

Other senior staff are officers of Council, other than Key Management Personnel, whose total remuneration exceeds \$170,000 and who report directly to a member of the KMP.*

	2025 \$'000	2024 \$'000
Total remuneration of other senior staff was as follows:		
Short-term employee benefits	4,571	5,139
Other long-term employee benefits	216	22
Post-employment benefits	502	530
Total	5,289	5,691

The number of other senior staff are shown below in their relevant income bands:

Income Range	2025 No.	2024 No.
\$170,000 – \$179,999	–	1
\$180,000 – \$189,999	–	2
\$190,000 – \$199,999	2	3
\$200,000 – \$209,999	1	5
\$210,000 – \$219,999	1	5
\$220,000 – \$229,999	4	2
\$230,000 – \$239,999	5	2
\$240,000 – \$249,999	2	1
\$250,000 – \$259,999	5	–
\$260,000 – \$269,999	1	–
\$270,000 – \$279,999	1	–
	22	21

	2025 \$'000	2024 \$'000
Total Remuneration for the reporting year for Senior Officers included above, amounted to:	5,289	5,691

7.2 Related party disclosure

(a) Transactions with related parties

During the period Council entered into the following transactions with related parties.

	2025 \$'000	2024 \$'000
Expenditure		
Council library contributions paid to the Yarra Plenty Regional Library	6,272	5,782
Total related party expenditure	6,272	5,782
Income		
Fees for premises used received from the Yarra Plenty Regional Library	–	10
Fuel and motor vehicles repairs	22	22
Total related party income	22	32

(b) Outstanding balances with related parties

There were no outstanding balances at the end of the reporting period in relation to transactions with related parties.

(c) Loans to/from related parties

There were no loans made, guaranteed or secured by Council to a related party during the reporting period and no loans to or from related parties outstanding as at the end of the reporting period.

(d) Commitments to/from related parties

There were no commitments in existence at balance date that were made, guaranteed or secured by Council.

Note 8 Managing uncertainties

8.1 Contingent assets and liabilities

Contingent assets and contingent liabilities are not recognised in the Balance Sheet, but are disclosed and if quantifiable, are measured at nominal value. Contingent assets and liabilities are presented inclusive of GST receivable or payable, respectively.

(a) Contingent assets

Contingent assets are possible assets that arise from past events, whose existence will be confirmed only by the occurrence or non-occurrence of one or more uncertain future events not wholly within the control of Council.

At balance date Council are not aware of any contingent assets.

(b) Contingent liabilities

Contingent liabilities are:

- possible obligations that arise from past events, whose existence will be confirmed only by the occurrence or non-occurrence of one or more uncertain future events not wholly within the control of Council; or
- present obligations that arise from past events but are not recognised because:
 - it is not probable that an outflow of resources embodying economic benefits will be required to settle the obligation; or
 - the amount of the obligation cannot be measured with sufficient reliability.

Superannuation

Council has obligations under a defined benefit superannuation scheme that may result in the need to make additional contributions to the scheme, matters relating to this potential obligation are outlined below. As a result of the volatility in financial markets the likelihood of making such contributions in future periods exists.

Future superannuation contributions

In addition to the disclosed contributions, the City of Whittlesea has not paid unfunded liability payments to Vision Super over the past two years. The expected contributions to be paid to the Defined Benefit category of Vision Super for the year ending 30 June 2025 are \$139,239.

Legal matters

There are no legal matters that could have a material impact on future operations.

Liability Mutual Insurance

Council was a participant of the MAV Liability Mutual Insurance (LMI) Scheme. The LMI scheme provides public liability and professional indemnity insurance cover.

The LMI scheme states that each participant will remain liable to make further contributions to the scheme in respect of any insurance year in which it was a participant to the extent of its participant’s share of any shortfall in the provision set aside in respect of that insurance year, and such liability will continue whether or not the participant remains a participant in future insurance years.

(c) Guarantees for loans to other entities

Council has not provided any guarantees to support the activities of any external entities.

Financial guarantee contracts are not recognised as a liability in the balance sheet unless the lender has exercised their right to call on the guarantee or Council has other reasons to believe that it is probable that the right will be exercised.

8.2 Change in accounting standards

Certain new Australian Accounting Standards and interpretations have been published that are not mandatory for the 30 June 2025 reporting period. Council assesses the impact of these new standards.

As at 30 June 2025 there were no new accounting standards or interpretations issued by the AASB which are applicable for the year ending 30 June 2025 that are expected to impact Council.

In September 2024 the Australian Accounting Standards Board (AASB) issued two Australian Sustainability Reporting Standards (ASRS). This followed Commonwealth legislation establishing Australia's sustainability reporting framework.

Relevant entities will be required to undertake mandatory reporting of climate-related disclosures in future financial years. Public sector application issues remain under consideration and Council will continue to monitor developments and potential implications for future financial years.

8.3 Financial instruments

(a) Objectives and policies

The Council's principal financial instruments comprise cash assets, term deposits, receivables (excluding statutory receivables), payables (excluding statutory payables) and bank and TCV borrowings.

Details of the material accounting policy information and methods adopted, including the criteria for recognition, the basis of measurement and the basis on which income and expenses are recognised, in respect of each class of financial asset, financial liability and equity instrument is disclosed in the notes of the financial statements.

Risk management is carried out by senior management under policies approved by the Council. These policies include identification and analysis of the risk exposure to Council and appropriate procedures, controls and risk minimisation.

(b) Market risk

Market risk is the risk that the fair value or future cash flows of Council financial instruments will fluctuate because of changes in market prices. Council's exposure to market risk is primarily through interest rate risk with only insignificant exposure to other price risks and no exposure to foreign currency risk.

(c) Interest rate risk

Interest rate risk refers to the risk that the value of a financial instrument or cash flows associated with the instrument will fluctuate due to changes in market interest rates.

Council's interest rate liability risk arises primarily from long term loans and borrowings at fixed rates which exposes Council to fair value interest rate risk.

Cash flow interest rate risk is the risk that the future cash flows of a financial instrument will fluctuate because of changes in market interest rates. Council has minimal exposure to cash flow interest rate risk through its cash and deposits that are at floating rates.

Investment of surplus funds is made with approved financial institutions under the *Local Government Act 2020*. Council manages interest rate risk by adopting an investment policy that ensures:

- diversification of investment product;
- monitoring of return on investment; and
- benchmarking of returns and comparison with budget.

There has been no significant change in Council's exposure, or its objectives, policies and processes for managing interest rate risk or the methods used to measure this risk from the previous reporting period.

Interest rate movements have not been sufficiently significant during the year to have an impact on Council's year end result.

(d) Credit risk

Credit risk is the risk that a contracting entity will not complete its obligations under a financial instrument and cause Council to make a financial loss. Council have exposure to credit risk on some financial assets included in the balance sheet. Particularly significant areas of credit risk exist in relation to outstanding fees and fines as well as loans and receivables from sporting clubs and associations. To help manage this risk:

- Council have a policy for establishing credit limits for the entities Council deal with;
- Council may require collateral where appropriate; and
- Council only invest surplus funds with financial institutions which have a recognised credit rating specified in Council's investment policy.

Receivables consist of a large number of customers, spread across the ratepayer, business and government sectors. Credit risk associated with Council's financial assets is minimal. Rates debtors are secured by a charge over the rateable property. Council has assessed that 65% of parking infringement debts owing to Council are unlikely to be collected and has raised a provision for doubtful debts over those debts based on an assessment of collectability. The collection of long overdue parking infringement debts is managed by Fines Victoria.

There are no material financial assets which are individually determined to be impaired.

Council may also be subject to credit risk for transactions which are not included in the balance sheet, such as when Council provide a guarantee for another party. Details of our contingent liabilities are disclosed in Note 8.1(b).

The maximum exposure to credit risk at the reporting date to recognised financial assets is the carrying amount, net of any allowance for impairment of those assets, as disclosed in the balance sheet and notes to the financial statements. Council does not hold any collateral.

(e) Liquidity risk

Liquidity risk includes the risk that, as a result of Council's operational liquidity requirements it will not have sufficient funds to settle a transaction when required or will be forced to sell a financial asset at below value or may be unable to settle or recover a financial asset.

To help reduce these risks Council:

- have a liquidity policy which targets a minimum and average level of cash and cash equivalents to be maintained;
- have readily accessible standby facilities and other funding arrangements in place;
- have a liquidity portfolio structure that requires surplus funds to be invested within various bands of liquid instruments;
- monitor budget to actual performance on a regular basis; and
- set limits on borrowings relating to the percentage of loans to rate revenue and percentage of loan principal repayments to rate revenue.

Council's maximum exposure to liquidity risk is the carrying amounts of financial liabilities as disclosed on the face of the balance sheet and the amounts related to financial guarantees disclosed in Note 8.1(c), and is deemed insignificant based on prior periods' data and current assessment of risk.

There has been no significant change in Council's exposure, or its objectives, policies and processes for managing liquidity risk or the methods used to measure this risk from the previous reporting period.

With the exception of borrowings, all financial liabilities are expected to be settled within normal terms of trade. Details of the maturity profile for borrowings are disclosed at Note 5.4.

Unless otherwise stated, the carrying amounts of financial instruments reflect their fair value.

(e) Sensitivity disclosure analysis

Taking into account past performance, future expectations, economic forecasts, and management's knowledge and experience of the financial markets, Council believes the following movements are 'reasonably possible' over the next 12 months:

- A parallel shift of +0% and -0.50% in market interest rates (AUD) from year-end rates of 4.35%.

These movements will not have a material impact on the valuation of Council's financial assets and liabilities, nor will they have a material impact on the results of Council's operations.

8.4 Fair value measurement

Fair value hierarchy

Council's financial assets and liabilities are not valued in accordance with the fair value hierarchy, Council's financial assets and liabilities are measured at amortised cost.

Council measures certain assets and liabilities at fair value where required or permitted by Australian Accounting Standards. AASB 13 Fair value measurement, aims to improve consistency and reduce complexity by providing a definition of fair value and a single source of fair value measurement and disclosure requirements for use across Australian Accounting Standards.

Council has considered the amendments to AASB 13 Fair Value Measurement that apply for the 2024-2025 financial year as a result of AASB 2022-10 Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards – Fair Value Measurement of Non-Financial Assets of Not-for-Profit Public Sector Entities. For assets, where Council adopts a current replacement cost approach to determine fair value, Council now considers the inclusion of site preparation costs, disruption costs and costs to restore another entity's assets in the underlying valuation. The AASB 13 amendments apply prospectively, comparative figures have not been restated.

The AASB 13 amendments have not resulted in any material impacts to Council's financial statements.

All assets and liabilities for which fair value is measured or disclosed in the financial statements are categorised within a fair value hierarchy, described as follows, based on the lowest level input that is significant to the fair value measurement as a whole:

- Level 1** – Quoted (unadjusted) market prices in active markets for identical assets or liabilities;
- Level 2** – Valuation techniques for which the lowest level input that is significant to the fair value measurement is directly or indirectly observable; and
- Level 3** – Valuation techniques for which the lowest level input that is significant to the fair value measurement is unobservable.

For the purpose of fair value disclosures, Council has determined classes of assets and liabilities on the basis of the nature, characteristics and risks of the asset or liability and the level of the fair value hierarchy as explained above.

In addition, Council determines whether transfers have occurred between levels in the hierarchy by re-assessing categorisation (based on the lowest level input that is significant to the fair value measurement as a whole) at the end of each reporting period.

8.4 Fair value measurement (cont.)

Revaluation

Subsequent to the initial recognition of assets, non-current physical assets, other than plant and equipment, are measured at their fair value, being the price that would be received to sell an asset (or paid to transfer a liability) in an orderly transaction between market participants at the measurement date. (For plant and equipment carrying amount is considered to approximate fair value given short useful lives). At balance date, Council reviewed the carrying value of the individual classes of assets measured at fair value to ensure that each asset materially approximated its fair value. Where the carrying value materially differed from the fair value at balance date, the class of asset was revalued.

Fair value valuations are determined in accordance with a valuation hierarchy. Changes to the valuation hierarchy will only occur if an external change in the restrictions or limitations of use of an asset result in changes to the permissible or practical highest and best use of the asset. In addition, Council undertakes a formal revaluation of land, buildings, and infrastructure assets every 4 years. The valuation is performed either by experienced council officers or independent experts.

The following table sets out the frequency of revaluations by asset class.

Asset class	Revaluation
Land	1 Years
Land under roads	1 Years
Buildings	1 Years
Roads	4 Years
Car parks	4 Years
Bridges	4 Years
Footpaths and cycleways	4 Years
Landscape and environment	4 Years
Recreation and leisure	4 Years
Parks and open space	4 Years
Drainage	4 Years

Where the assets are revalued, the revaluation increases are credited directly to the asset revaluation reserve except to the extent that an increase reverses a prior year decrease for that class of asset that had been recognised as an expense in which case the increase is recognised as revenue up to the amount of the expense.

Revaluation decreases are recognised as an expense except where prior increases are included in the asset revaluation reserve for that class of asset in which case the decrease is taken to the reserve to the extent of the remaining increases. Within the same class of assets, revaluation increases and decreases within the year are offset.

Impairment of assets

At each reporting date, Council reviews the carrying value of its assets to determine whether there is any indication that these assets have been impaired. If such an indication exists, the recoverable amount of the asset, being the higher of the asset's fair value less costs of disposal and value in use, is compared to the assets carrying value.

Any excess of the assets carrying value over its recoverable amount is expensed to the comprehensive income statement, unless the asset is carried at the revalued amount in which case, the impairment loss is recognised directly against the revaluation surplus in respect of the same class of asset to the extent that the impairment loss does not exceed the amount in the revaluation surplus for that same class of asset.

8.5 Events occurring after balance date

No matters have occurred after balance date that require disclosure in the financial report.

Note 9 Other matters

9.1 Reserves

Council at the end of the reporting period held the following reserve balances:

	2025 \$'000	2024 \$'000
Summary		
Asset revaluation reserves	2,224,837	1,744,419
Asset replacement reserve	66,647	75,793
Asset development reserve	213,312	181,548
	2,504,796	2,001,760

a) Asset revaluation reserves

	Balance at beginning of reporting period \$'000	Increase (decrease) \$'000	Balance at end of reporting period \$'000
2025			
Property			
Land and land improvements	963,622	174,589	1,138,211
Buildings	180,978	14,006	194,984
	1,144,600	188,595	1,333,195
Plant and equipment			
Plant machinery and equipment	(89)	89	–
Fixtures fittings and furniture	(1,087)	1,087	–
Artworks	2,979	–	2,979
	1,803	1,176	2,979
Infrastructure			
Roads	270,319	50,022	320,341
Footpaths and cycleways*	59,653	144,258	203,911
Bridges	53,542	2,317	55,859
Drainage	136,352	22,130	158,482
Telecommunication Conduits	3,401	782	4,183
Public Lighting	835	325	1,160
Parks, open space and streetscapes	32,362	7,033	39,395
Car parks*	6,212	90,261	96,473
Landscape and Environment*	7,802	1,057	8,859
Recreation and Leisure*	27,538	(27,538)	–
	598,016	290,647	888,663
Total asset revaluation reserves	1,744,419	480,418	2,224,837

* Reserves transferred from the Roads and Parks, open space and streetscapes asset categories as a result of the reclassification of financial asset classes.

9.1 Reserves (cont.)

a) Asset revaluation reserves (cont.)

	Balance at beginning of reporting period \$'000	Increase (decrease) \$'000	Balance at end of reporting period \$'000
2024			
Property			
Land and land improvements	983,608	(19,986)	963,622
Buildings	103,784	77,194	180,978
	1,087,392	57,208	1,144,600
Plant and equipment			
Plant machinery and equipment	(59)	(30)	(89)
Fixtures fittings and furniture	(1,087)	–	(1,087)
Artworks	2,979	–	2,979
	1,833	(30)	1,803
Infrastructure			
Roads	225,516	99,063	324,579
Bridges	(3,864)	57,406	53,542
Drainage	85,788	50,564	136,352
Telecommunication Conduits	1,541	1,860	3,401
Public Lighting	467	368	835
Parks, open space and streetscapes	56,411	22,896	79,307
	365,859	232,157	598,016
Total asset revaluation reserves			
	1,455,084	289,335	1,744,419

The asset revaluation reserve is used to record the increased (net) value of Council’s assets over time.

b) Other reserves

	Balance at beginning of reporting period \$'000	Transfer from accumulated surplus \$'000	Transfer to accumulated surplus \$'000	Balance at end of reporting period \$'000
2025				
Asset replacement reserve	75,793	19,859	(29,005)	66,647
Asset development reserve	181,548	58,659	(26,895)	213,312
Total Other reserves	257,341	78,518	(55,900)	279,959
2024				
Asset replacement reserve	79,638	3,862	(7,707)	75,793
Asset development reserve	142,281	61,332	(22,065)	181,548
Total Other reserves	221,919	65,194	(29,772)	257,341

9.1 Reserves (cont.)

b) Other reserves

	2025 \$'000	2024 \$'000
Asset replacement reserve		
Strategic properties reserve	4,807	4,819
Non standard street lighting contribution	4,201	3,901
Synthetic turf replacement reserve	375	1,880
Traffic lights construction	974	943
Purchase of Lutheran Church and Cemetery	380	380
Technology improvement fund reserve	3,494	946
LASF defined benefit plan liability	3,739	3,739
Strategic investment reserve	34,922	26,756
Transport infrastructure reserve	615	28
Waste reserve	3,395	3,955
Native vegetation offset site maintenance	1,070	1,317
Aboriginal Gathering Place	–	6,000
Strategic operation reserve	2,516	4,516
Regional Sports Precinct	3,739	14,283
Resilience and Emergency Management	449	449
Plant replacement	772	1,221
Community Grants reserve	660	660
Aquatic and Leisure Centre Capital Improvement Reserve	472	–
Growling Frog Golf Course Capital Improvement Reserve	67	–
	66,647	75,793
Asset development reserve		
Parklands contribution	14,571	12,832
Developer contribution plan (DCP) reserves	194,011	164,023
Planning permit drainage levy	2,431	2,361
Net gain compensation	1,522	1,562
Plenty road duplication	88	84
Street tree contributions reserve	689	686
	213,312	181,548

9.1 Reserves (cont.)

Purpose of Reserves

Asset replacement reserve	
Strategic properties reserve	Accumulate funds for land purchases and asset development as determined by Council.
Non standard street lighting contribution	Maintain non-standard lights for agreed period.
Synthetic turf replacement reserve	Enable replacement of Synthetic Turf Pitches at designated locations.
Traffic lights construction	Maintain traffic signals for agreed period.
Purchase of Lutheran Church and Cemetery	Enable funding to purchase the church site.
Technology improvement fund reserve	Enable replacement of technology hardware and software.
LASF defined benefit plan liability	Protection against future calls on employees defined benefits superannuation fund.
Strategic investment reserve	Enable funding of future infrastructure projects.
Transport infrastructure reserve	Enable funding of future transport infrastructure projects.
Waste reserve	Enable funding from waste operation to ensure legislative compliance.
Native vegetation offset site maintenance	Enable to fund native vegetation works which Council take over from developers.
Aboriginal Gathering Place	Enable to fund the delivery of an Aboriginal Gathering Place to support enhanced outcomes, increase connection to culture, and facilitate healing for Aboriginal people.
Strategic operation reserve	Enable funding for future strategies and various activities that have been identified as part of the transformation required for City of Whittlesea.
Regional Aquatic and Sports reserve	Enable to fund the delivery of a new regional state-of-the-art centre to support the community to lead healthy and active lifestyles.
Resilience and Emergency Management	Enable funding to rapidly respond to the incidents and emergency situations that may arise in our community.
Plant replacement	Enable funding to support the replacement of Council's plant and fleet
Community Grants reserve	Funding to foster community connection, well-being, vibrant events, and provide tangible support for local volunteers.
Asset development reserve	
Parklands contribution	Funding from developers for the provision of open space and associated infrastructure.
Developer contribution plan (DCP) reserves	Developer contributions received for future community facilities and assets.
Planning permit drainage levy	Funding from developers to expand drainage infrastructure to absorb extra inflow due to multi-unit developments.
Net gain compensation	Funds contributed by developers for the maintenance cost of trees/bushland areas for a 10-year period.
Plenty Road duplication	Funding from developers for Plenty Road duplication works.
Street tree contributions reserve	Contributions received from developers to maintain street trees which Council takes on responsibility for.

9.2 Reconciliation of cash flows from operating activities to surplus/(deficit)

	2025 \$'000	2024 \$'000
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	232,069	159,412
Non cash adjustments:		
(Profit)/loss on disposal of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	(230)	(945)
Share of net (profit)/loss of associate and joint ventures	(153)	(33)
Loss on write-off of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	1,455	4,034
Write-off of work in progress to operating	3,260	–
Depreciation	61,808	52,123
Contributions – Non-monetary assets	(155,792)	(107,465)
Finance costs	74	118
Finance costs – leases	118	150
Change in assets and liabilities:		
(Increase)/decrease in trade and other receivables	(13,851)	(15,672)
(Increase)/decrease in prepayments	303	(390)
Increase/(decrease) in trade and other payables	12,724	7,461
Increase/(decrease) in trust funds	(5,919)	18,160
(Increase)/decrease in inventories	31	27
Increase/(decrease) in provisions	4,518	2,133
	(2,939)	(953)
Net cash provided by/(used in) operating activities	137,476	118,160

9.3 Superannuation

Council makes the majority of its employer superannuation contributions in respect of its employees to the Local Authorities Superannuation Fund (the Fund). This Fund has two categories of membership, accumulation and defined benefit, each of which is funded differently. Obligations for contributions to the Fund are recognised as an expense in the Comprehensive Income Statement when they are made or due.

Accumulation

The Fund's accumulation category, Vision MySuper/ Vision Super Saver, receives both employer and employee contributions on a progressive basis.

Employer contributions are normally based on a fixed percentage of employee earnings (for the year ended 30 June 2025, this was 11.5% as required under Superannuation Guarantee (SG) legislation (2024: 11.0%)).

Defined Benefit

Council does not use defined benefit accounting for its defined benefit obligations under the Fund's Defined Benefit category. This is because the Fund's Defined Benefit category is a pooled multi-employer sponsored plan.

There is no proportional split of the defined benefit liabilities, assets or costs between the participating employers as the defined benefit obligation is a floating obligation between the participating employers and the only time that the aggregate obligation is allocated to specific employers is when a call is made.

As a result, the level of participation of the City of Whittlesea in the Fund cannot be measured as a percentage compared with other participating employers. Therefore, the Fund Actuary is unable to allocate benefit liabilities, assets and costs between employers for the purposes of AASB 119.

Funding arrangements

Council makes employer contributions to the Defined Benefit category of the Fund at rates determined by the Trustee on the advice of the Fund Actuary.

As at 30 June 2024, an interim actuarial investigation was held as the Fund provides lifetime pensions in the Defined Benefit category. The vested benefit index (VBI) of the Defined Benefit category as at 30 June 2024 (of which Council is a contributing employer) was 105.4%.

The financial assumptions used to calculate the VBI were:

Net investment returns	5.6% pa
Salary information	3.5% pa
Price inflation (CPI)	2.7% pa

As at 30 June 2025, an interim actuarial investigation is underway as the Fund provides lifetime pensions in the Defined Benefit category. It is expected to be completed by 31 October 2025.

Vision Super has advised that the VBI at 30 June 2025 was 110.5%. Council was notified of the 30 June 2025 VBI during August 2025 (2024: August 2024). The financial assumptions used to calculate this VBI were:

Net investment returns	5.7% pa
Salary information	3.5% pa
Price inflation (CPI)	2.6% pa

The VBI is used as the primary funding indicator. Because the VBI was above 100%, the 30 June 2024 actuarial investigation determined the Defined Benefit category was in a satisfactory financial position and that no change was necessary to the Defined Benefit category's funding arrangements from prior years.

9.3 Superannuation (cont.)

Employer contributions

(a) Regular contributions

On the basis of the results of the 2024 interim actuarial investigation conducted by the Fund Actuary, Council makes employer contributions to the Fund's Defined Benefit category at rates determined by the Fund's Trustee.

For the year ended 30 June 2025, this rate was 11.5% of members' salaries (11.0% in 2023-24). This rate is expected to increase in line with any increases in the SG contribution rate and was reviewed as part of the 30 June 2023 triennial valuation.

In addition, Council reimburses the Fund to cover the excess of the benefits paid as a consequence of retrenchment above the funded resignation or retirement benefit.

(b) Funding calls

If the Defined Benefit category is in an unsatisfactory financial position at an actuarial investigation or the Defined Benefit category's VBI is below its shortfall limit at any time other than the date of the actuarial investigation, the Defined Benefit category has a shortfall for the purposes of SPS 160 and the Fund is required to put a plan in place so that the shortfall is fully funded within three years of the shortfall occurring.

The Fund monitors its VBI on a quarterly basis and the Fund has set its shortfall limit at 98% from 26 July 2024 (previously 97%).

In the event that the Fund Actuary determines that there is a shortfall based on the above requirement, the Fund's participating employers (including Council) are required to make an employer contribution to cover the shortfall.

Using the agreed methodology, the shortfall amount is apportioned between the participating employers based on the pre 1 July 1993 and post 30 June 1993 service liabilities of the Fund's Defined Benefit category, together with the employer's payroll at 30 June 1993 and at the date the shortfall has been calculated.

Due to the nature of the contractual obligations between the participating employers and the Fund, and that the Fund includes lifetime pensioners and their reversionary beneficiaries, it is unlikely that the Fund will be wound up.

If there is a surplus in the Fund, the surplus cannot be returned to the participating employers.

In the event that a participating employer is wound-up, the defined benefit obligations of that employer will be transferred to that employer's successor.

9.3 Superannuation (cont.)

The 2024 interim actuarial investigation surplus amounts

An actuarial investigation is conducted annually for the Defined Benefit category of which Council is a contributing employer. Generally, a full actuarial investigation is conducted every three years and interim actuarial investigations are conducted for each intervening year. An interim investigation was conducted as at 30 June 2024 while a full investigation was conducted as at 30 June 2023.

The Fund’s actuarial investigation identified the following for the Defined Benefit category of which Council is a contributing employer:

	2024 (Triennial) \$m	2023 (Interim) \$m
A VBI Surplus	108.4	84.7
A total service liability surplus	141.4	123.6
A discounted accrued benefits surplus	156.7	141.9

The VBI surplus means that the market value of the fund’s assets supporting the defined benefit obligations exceed the vested benefits that the defined benefit members would have been entitled to if they had all exited on 30 June 2024.

The total service liability surplus means that the current value of the assets in the Fund’s Defined Benefit category plus expected future contributions exceeds the value of expected future benefits and expenses as at 30 June 2024.

The discounted accrued benefit surplus means that the current value of the assets in the Fund’s Defined Benefit category exceeds the value of benefits payable in the future but accrued in respect of service to 30 June 2024.

The 2025 interim actuarial investigation

An interim actuarial investigation is being conducted for the Fund's position as at 30 June 2025 as the Fund provides lifetime pensions in the Defined Benefit category. Vision Super has advised that the VBI at 30 June 2025 was 110.5%. Council was notified of the 30 June 2025 VBI during August 2025 (2024: August 2024). The financial assumptions used to calculate this VBI were:

Net investment returns	5.7% pa
Salary information	3.5% pa
Price inflation (CPI)	2.6% pa

It is anticipated that this actuarial investigation will be completed by 31 October 2025.

The 2023 triennial investigation

The last triennial actuarial investigation conducted prior to 30 June 2023 was at 30 June 2020. This actuarial investigation was completed by 31 December 2020. The financial assumptions for the purposes of that investigation was:

	2020 Triennial investigation	2023 Triennial investigation
Net investment return	5.6% pa	5.7% pa
Salary inflation	2.5% pa for two years and 2.75% pa thereafter	3.50% pa
Price inflation	2.0% pa	2.8% pa

9.3 Superannuation (cont.)

Superannuation contributions

Contributions by Council (excluding any unfunded liability payments) to the above superannuation plans for the financial year ended 30 June 2025 are detailed below:

Scheme	Type of Scheme	Rate	2025 \$’000	2024 \$’000
Vision super	Defined benefit	11.5% (2024:11.0%)	92	124
Vision super	Accumulation fund	11.5% (2024:11.0%)	11,671	10,702

There were \$527,008 in contributions outstanding to the above schemes as at 30 June 2025.

The expected contributions to be paid to the Defined Benefit category of Vision Super for the year ending 30 June 2025 is \$139,239.

Glossary

Term	Definition
Act	means the <i>Local Government Act 2020</i>
Administrators	Appointed by the Acting Minister for Local Government, Administrators take on the duties of the Council of the City of Whittlesea until the October 2024 Local Government elections
Advocacy	means the act of speaking on the behalf of or in support of another person, place or thing
Annual Report	means a report of the Council’s operations of the previous financial year and contains a report of operations, audited financial statements and an audited performance statement
Budget	means a plan setting out the services and initiatives to be funded for the financial year
Community Plan	means a strategic plan setting out the medium-term strategic objectives, strategies, strategic indicators and resources reflecting vision and aspirations of the community for the next four year. The Community Plan incorporates the Council Plan, Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan, Disability Action Plan and Pandemic Recovery Actions
Councillors	Elected representatives who make up the Council
Dog off-leash park	A designated, fenced park for dogs where they are able to run around without being on a leash
Engage Whittlesea	Council’s online community engagement website
Financial performance indicators	means a prescribed set of indicators and measures that assess the effectiveness of financial management in a Council covering operating position, liquidity, obligations, stability and efficiency
Financial plan	means a plan of the financial and non-financial resources for at least the next ten years required to achieve the strategic objectives in the Council Plan. It is also referred to as a long-term financial plan
Financial statements	means the financial statements and notes prepared in accordance with the Local Government Model Financial Report, Australian Accounting Standards and other applicable standards as they apply to the general purpose financial reports and a statement of capital works and included in the Annual Report
Financial year	means the period of 12 months ending on 30 June each year
Green Wedge	The rural or non-urban areas of metropolitan Melbourne that sit outside the Urban Growth Boundary and are currently protected from urban development
Governance and management checklist	means a prescribed checklist of policies, plans and documents that councils must report the status of in the report of operations, covering engagement, planning, monitoring, reporting and decision-making
Indicator	means what will be measured to assess performance

Term	Definition
Initiatives	means actions that are one-off in nature and/or lead to improvements in service
LGBTIQA*	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex, Queer/Questioning, Asexual and many other terms (such as non-binary and pansexual)
Local Government Act	The <i>Local Government Act 2020</i> provides a framework for the establishment and operation of councils
Major initiative	means significant initiatives that will directly contribute to the achievement of the Council Plan during the current year and have a major focus in the budget
Measure	means how an indicator will be measured and takes the form of a computation, typically including a numerator and denominator
Minister	means the Minister for Local Government
Performance statement	means a statement including the results of the prescribed service outcome indicators, financial performance indicators and sustainable capacity indicators for the financial year and included in the Annual Report
Integrated strategic planning and reporting framework	means the key statutory planning and reporting documents that are required to be prepared by councils to ensure accountability to local communities in the performance of functions and exercise of powers under the Act
Regulations	means the <i>Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020</i>
Report of operations	means a report containing a description of the operations of the Council during the financial year and included in the Annual Report
Services	means assistance, support, advice and other actions undertaken by a Council for the benefit of the local community
Service performance indicators	means a prescribed set of indicators measuring the effectiveness and efficiency of Council services covering appropriateness, quality, cost and service outcomes
Strategic objectives	means the outcomes a Council is seeking to achieve over the next four years and included in the Council Plan
Strategies	means high level actions directed at achieving the strategic objectives in the Council Plan
Sustainability	is the practice of ensuring that resources and the environment are used and maintained in a way that protects it for future generations

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COUNCIL OFFICES

Civic Centre

25 Ferres Boulevard
South Morang VIC 3752

Opening hours

Monday – Friday, 8.30am–5pm

Whittlesea Services Hub

63 Church Street
Whittlesea VIC 3752

Opening hours

Monday – Friday, 9.30am–5pm

Telephone 03 9217 2170

National Relay Service 133 677
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