

MINUTES

COUNCIL MEETING

Tuesday 24 March 2026
6:00 pm

City Hall
57 Little Malop Street, Geelong 3220

LIVE STREAMED ON THE CITY'S WEBSITE:

www.geelongaustralia.com.au/meetings

COUNCIL:

Cr S Kontelj (Kardinia Ward) - Mayor
Cr R Nelson (Barrabool Hills Ward) - Deputy Mayor
Cr E Sinclair (Charlemont Ward)
Cr M Cadwell (Cheetham Ward)
Cr E Wilkinson (Connewarre Ward)
Cr A Aitken (Corio Ward)
Cr A Katos (Deakin Ward)
Cr E Kontelj (Hamlyn Heights Ward)
Cr T Sullivan (Leopold Ward)
Cr R Story (Murradoc Ward)
Cr C Burson (You Yangs Ward)

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Present: Cr S Kontelj
Cr R Nelson
Cr T Sullivan
Cr A Aitken
Cr E Wilkinson
Cr E Sinclair
Cr A Katos
Cr E Kontelj
Cr M Cadwell
Cr R Story
Cr C Burson

Also Present: A Wastie (Chief Executive Officer), T Edwards (Executive Director Corporate Services), J Randles (Acting Executive Director Growth and Place), J Stirton (Executive Director City Infrastructure), A Basford (Executive Director City Life), A Martin (Chief Governance and Risk Officer) J Douglas (Manager Council & Corporate Governance) E Ryan (Senior Governance Advisor – Council Business) D Pangrazio (Governance Advisor – Council Business).

Opening: The Mayor declared the meeting open at 6.02pm.

1. PROCEDURAL MATTERS

1.1. Acknowledgement of Country

Council acknowledges the Wadawurrung People as the Traditional Owners of the Land, Waterways and Skies. We pay our respects to their Elders, past, present and emerging. We acknowledge all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who are part of our Greater Geelong community today.

1.2. Apologies

Nil

1.3. Leaves of Absence

RESOLUTION - Item 1.3.1

Cr A Katos moved, Cr N Nelson seconded -

That Leave of Absence be granted to Cr A Aitken from 4 April 2026 to 12 April 2026, inclusive.

Carried

1.4. Declarations of Conflicts of Interest

Nil

1.5. Confirmation of Minutes

RESOLUTION - Item 1.5.1

Cr E Kontelj moved, Cr A Aitken seconded -

That the Minutes of the Special Council Meeting held on 3 March 2026 be confirmed.

Carried

1.6. Public Question and Submission Time

Question and Submission Time is an opportunity for questions to be addressed to Council and while the minutes record the general content, they do not purport to be a transcript of what was said by individuals. Likewise, Councillor or Officer verbal responses are in summary form only. Views expressed may not be the views of Council.

The following persons submitted questions prior to the Council Meeting and presented them at the Council Meeting, on the following subjects:

- Marie Neurath – SSL Creche Services
- Jeanne Nel as Proxy for Louis De Koker – Planning / Intersection Upgrade
- Jennifer Bantow – Heritage/ Plan for Nature

The following persons submitted questions prior to the Council Meeting but were not in attendance to present them at the Council Meeting, on the following subjects:

- Dean Vella – Roads / Pakington Street
- Morgan Quick – Footpaths
- John McArther – Permit Conditions
- Pierre Debets - Drainage

SUBMITTER 1. DEAN VELLA

Subject: ROADS / PAKINGTON STREET

Question 1:

Almost 50% of income comes from ratepayers. Local streets and roads are in decay. With the expenditure placed will the Council accept we are simply not getting value and a review on costs needed?

Response:

Thank you for your question Dean.

The City recognises community concern about the condition of local roads and streets. The City manages more than 5,000 kilometres of roads and pathways under its Road Management Plan, which sets out how assets are inspected, prioritised and maintained based on safety, condition and risk.

While around half of Council's income comes from ratepayers, that revenue must fund a wide range of essential services and infrastructure across the municipality. Budget constraints mean not all roads can be renewed at once, and investment is therefore prioritised where risks and deterioration are greatest.

The City continues to review costs, delivery methods and priorities through the annual budget process to ensure value for money, while balancing affordability for ratepayers and long-term asset sustainability.

Question 2:

Geelong West has 8,000 residents. We pay contribute \$16 million in COGG revenue. \$250k was allocated to residents by state with local council yet to make any real impact on maintaining and cleaning up Pakington Street and surrounding streets in the community. Broken, bus shelters, footpaths and roads. Why hasn't the Council acted on providing a fair share on budget in fixing these issues int the latest budget proposal?

Response:

Thanks you for your second question Dean.

Following completion of Stage 1 works last financial year, further renewal works on Pakington Street are scheduled to commence just after the Easter long weekend to minimise disruption to traders and the community. These works include asphalt replacement, removal of remaining brick paving, bin replacement and refurbishment of seating where appropriate.

In addition, through the Multicultural Business Precinct Revitalisation Program, Council is progressing plans for a small pocket park within the Pakington Street precinct, incorporating new paving, seating, planting and integrated artwork to improve amenity and place.

Council investment is being delivered through a staged and coordinated program, prioritised based on asset condition, safety and funding availability across the municipality, rather than

a single-year budget allocation. Together, these projects will continue to improve the presentation, functionality and vibrancy of Pakington Street while managing construction impacts.

SUBMITTER 2. MARIE NEURATH

Subject: SSL CRECHE SERVICES

Question 1:

Can you explain how the creche closures meet council' s own commitment to delivering equitable health and wellbeing outcomes and increasing participation in sport and leisure facilities by reducing barriers, including cost and access, so physical activity is inclusive for people of all backgrounds including those on low incomes and families.

Response:

Thank you for your question Marie.

The City is currently undertaking an operational review of creche services within Swim, Sport and Leisure. We acknowledge the importance that these services provide for health and wellbeing outcomes for our members who are women, parents and families. These outcomes must be balanced against our obligation to provide sustainable services that deliver the greatest benefit across the broader community, and meet stringent regulations relating to the care of children.

Question 2:

Can you confirm if any member or public consultation was carried out prior to advising employees and users of the proposed creche service closure?

Response:

Thank you for your second question Marie.

At this stage, no formal decision has been made. A formal consultation process is underway with impacted employees, and we are carefully considering feedback received from members of the public and service users. All feedback will be reviewed before a final determination is made.

SUBMITTER 3. MORGAN QUICK

Subject: FOOTPATHS

Question 1:

I wish to ask why the footpath from Bellarine highway to bus stop in front of Leopold plaza On Melaluka road can not be completed It becomes waterlogged and the terrain is unsafe to walk on Water run off from tennis court precinct and park flows to track There are no direct paths from within new memorable car park to get to plaza Only a route thorough at back of club rooms which is unmarked unsafe and cluttered Marked pedestrian lines leads from new toilet block but ends at new path constructed that leads from Split court to bus drop off point within park it has no links Does not allow for Plaza visitation or access to bus stop.

Response:

Thank you for your question Morgan.

The Melaluka Road footpath is identified in the project listings published on Council's Have Your Say page on the Geelong Australia website, which outlines submissions and projects that have been previously submitted for consideration, 'Funding for Footpath - Melaluka Rd Leopold - Highway to bus stop' in the Budget Initiative Submissions section.

At this stage, the 2026–27 Council Budget is still in development and has not yet been finalised. All submissions, including yours, will be considered by Councillors as part of the budget deliberation process, alongside factors such as safety risk, connectivity, drainage impacts and available funding.

At present, there is no budget allocation to extend the existing footpath network in this location given the presence of a safely accessible path on the opposite side of Melaluka Road and a parallel internal path within the Leopold Sports Reserve that provides similar connectivity unlike many other areas within the municipality where we would allocate funding if made available.

Question 2:

I also ask of council as path is on missing links programme when will it get attended Have been asked to submit path for budget on two occasions The path has been recommended in the Nott reports to council for community safety and well being To link up with network for liveability and recreation activities Thank you Morgan Quick.

Response:

Thanks for your question Morgan.

The footpath missing links program recognises over 700 locations within our municipality which would benefit through the construction of a footpath. If funding were to be made available for this program investment would be directed towards locations prioritised against factors such as safety risk, connectivity, drainage impacts and available funding.

SUBMITTER 4. JOHN MCARTHUR

Subject: PERMIT CONDITIONS

Question 1:

The Barwon River Office Park at 45 Riversdale Road, Newtown is currently partially screened from the Barwon River banks by existing trees and vegetation, primarily along the escarpment on the property's southern boundary, with more limited coverage on the western boundary. Given that Significant Landscape Overlay 2, which applies to this property, seeks to protect views from the banks of the Barwon River and the Rocky Point Heritage Area: What conditions did Council impose on the developer regarding: (a) set-backs from the southern and western boundaries, and (b) tree planting along those boundaries on the development site, including funding of such planting, to ensure that significant trees, capable of reaching a mature height of 8 metres or more, are planted and maintained by the development in those areas to screen the development and also protect future views from the banks of the Barwon River and the Rocky Point Heritage Area as envisaged by the Significant Landscape Overlay 2?

Response:

Thank you for your Question John,

The Planning Permit issued for the land at 45-47 Riverview Road, did not impose any conditions for further setbacks from the southern and western boundaries.

Conditions for additional tree planting on the southern boundary were not included on the permit, however there have been endorsed landscape plans provided for 26 x additional trees on the western boundary. The species types of these trees are Eucalyptus manniferra or 'Little Spotty' and Acacia Iplexia or 'Lightwood', these trees grow to a height of approximately 7-8 metres and 6-10 metres respectively.

It is noted that the planning assessment included a number of professional reports by suitably qualified urban design, landscape, ecology, arboriculture and heritage consultants. The arboriculture assessment noted that the final design will have no foreseen impacts on trees on adjoining allotments and as part of the assessment a landscape plan was endorsed to provide additional planting. Conditions on the permit were included for vegetation protection.

SUBMITTER 5. LOUIS DE KOKER

Subject: PLANNING / INTERSECTION UPGRADES

Question 1:

Significant Landscape Overlay Schedule 2 (SLO2) applies to land along the northern bank of the Barwon River in Newtown and is intended to protect the quality of the river's green space and views from its banks. The SLO recognises the northern escarpment as "of particular visual significance from both the river banks and the higher lands on the south bank." It also recognises that the river banks have been "progressively acquired and developed for a significant open space spine over many years and the enjoyment of this space should not be compromised by inappropriate or imposing development." The current green space is the result of protection and public investment over decades. Question: When assessing development applications on land subject to SLO2 along the northern escarpment to date, what community consultation has Council undertaken to understand which views and open green space qualities the community wishes to see protected or even enhanced and which types of development the community views as "inappropriate or imposing"? Specifically, has any such consultation informed Council's decisions on these applications to date, and if so, what form did it take, and what were its findings? (Please note, Council has already shared information about consultations planned for 2026 and the 2025 West Fyans/Fyans Street Precinct Structure Plan Review consultations. These fall outside the scope of this SLO 2 query regarding Council decisions to date.)

Response:

Thank you for your question Louis and for speaking with officers earlier today to further clarify your query.

When Council assesses planning applications, we take into account the views of any submissions received to the public notice. There has been no community consultation in relation to the SLO2 area specifically.

Question 2:

Upgrades of intersections in Highton are underway with one completed (North Valley/Mount Pleasant) and another nearing completion (Roslyn/North Valley) and apparently more in planning. Will the Council make the intersection analyses and any traffic flow and transport analyses for traffic in Highton that informed this work, available to the community?

Response:

Thank you for your second question Louis.

Information regarding intersection analyses and traffic flow and transport analyses for traffic in Highton can be requested through our Freedom of Information process. When we share responses via email tomorrow we will provide you with the direct weblink. [Freedom of Information access request form - City of Greater Geelong](#)

SUBMITTER 6. PIERRE DEBETS

Subject: DRAINAGE

Question 1:

My question follows my previous questions on July 22, August 25, September 22 and December 9, in relation to the problematic Lara drain in the VicTrack TRZ1 Land. After three years of trying, Council has now formally given up attempting to gain access to the problematic Lara open drain running in the rail corridor. The last blockage caused by V-Line was only resolved by residents working through local MP Ella George to the Transport Minister. It is not clear how the council is going to deal with the next one when it inevitably occurs. 1. How is the council preparing to address the next critical blockage when it happens to the drain in the rail corridor?

Response:

Thank you for your question Pierre.

The City will manage any future drainage issues in accordance with its established maintenance and emergency management practices.

This includes ongoing monitoring and inspection of Council managed drainage assets upstream and downstream of the rail corridor, and responding to emerging risks in line with agreed intervention levels. Should a critical blockage occur that presents a safety risk or flood hazard, the matter would be managed through Council's emergency response arrangements, including liaison with the relevant land manager and other responsible authorities to coordinate an appropriate response.

The City will continue to monitor conditions as permitted, undertake maintenance where it is within Council's responsibility and control, and respond to drainage emergencies in line with its standard operational and emergency management frameworks, along with routine maintenance we also ensure that the culvert from our land behind RSL going into VicTrak land is also maintained at pressure jetted as required.

Question 2:

When will the prerequisite Cultural Heritage Study for Stage 1 of the drainage upgrade be commenced?

Response:

Thank you for your second question Pierre.

The preparation of a Cultural Heritage Management Plan (CHMP) would be progressed as part of a consolidated project bid, should the Lipson–Kyema drainage project advance through the 2026/27 budget process currently underway. This approach ensures that all enabling works, including the CHMP, are considered holistically and aligned with an approved project pathway.

If the CHMP were to be progressed ahead of any broader project advancement, this would also need to be considered through a separate budget bid, subject to Council's budget development, prioritisation and approval processes.

SUBMITTER 7. JENNIFER BANTOW

Subject: HERITAGE / PLAN FOR NATURE

Question 1:

CoGG meeting 24th March 2026, AGENDA ITEM 2.2 New Heritage Overlays Greater Geelong Outer Areas Heritage Study. Congratulations to Council for undertaking this comprehensive Study. RE a property at 70 Ghazeepore Rd Waurin Ponds. This place is listed in the O A H S but is not recommended in this Report for protection under the Heritage Overlay. This cottage was the home of Australian cricket legend Ian Redpath MBE who played 66 Test matches for Australia. QUESTION Could Council please consider reviewing this property's status under Criterion H - "Special associations with the life or works of a person of importance in our history someone" and reassess its significance for inclusion under the Heritage Overlay.

Response:

Thank you for your question Jennifer.

The Charlemont, Marshall & Waurin Ponds Heritage Study 2024 was endorsed by Council at its meeting of 27 August 2024. At that time 76-80 Ghazeepore Road, Waurin Ponds was not recommended for the heritage overlay as the integrity of the farmhouse was difficult to assess from the public domain. It was recommended that future reassessment could take place on the basis of new information.

On the basis of the farmhouse having associative significance to Australian test cricketer Ian Redpath, Council will prepare a draft heritage assessment for consideration by Council at a later date.

Question 2:

CoGG meeting 24th March 2026, AGENDA ITEM 2.3 Draft Plan for Nature 2026-36. This comprehensive Plan has considered many aspects of significant landscapes, however does not appear to reference Heritage Trees and Heritage Landscapes. QUESTION In researching the places to be included in the Draft Plan for Nature, has Council considered the entries in this municipality listed in the Significant Tree and Landscape Registers of the City of Greater Geelong, the State Government and the National Trust?

Response:

Thank you for your second question, Jennifer.

The Draft Plan for Nature 2026-36 has been developed using a landscape-scale approach to biodiversity, informed by community consultation and detailed mapping of remnant vegetation, ecological values and remnant trees across the municipality.

While heritage trees and heritage landscapes are not identified as a standalone category within the Draft Plan, many significant and remnant trees are already captured through existing planning, heritage and environmental frameworks and contribute directly to the broader natural systems addressed by the Plan. This includes trees protected through planning scheme controls, overlays, and entries on the Significant Tree and Landscape Registers.

The existing Significant Tree and Landscape Registers maintained by the Victorian Government and the National Trust continue to operate through established planning, heritage and asset management processes, ensuring that identified trees are considered during development assessment and land-use decision-making.

Council recognises the important role that significant and heritage trees play in shaping local character, supporting biodiversity, and contributing to cultural and landscape values. Feedback received during the exhibition period will help inform how the final Plan for Nature can more clearly articulate its relationship with planning controls and heritage frameworks, including opportunities to strengthen the identification and protection of significant trees through statutory and strategic planning processes.

This commitment is further reflected in Council's broader urban forestry leadership, with the City of Greater Geelong having been recognised as a Tree City of the World for a third consecutive year, acknowledging ongoing investment in tree protection, sustainable management and canopy enhancement across the municipality.

1.7. Petitions

1. Retain the Swim, Sport and Leisure Creche Service

Marie Neurath presented a petition on behalf of the community. The petition requests that Council reconsider the proposed closure of creche services at Council's Swim, Sport and Leisure Centres.

The petition contains approximately 261 signatures.

2. Ibbotson Street Dust Issues

Cr R Story presented a petition on behalf of residents. The petition requests that Council investigate, and undertake, road sealing works on Ibbotson Street, between St Leonards Golf Club and Regal Road.

The petition contains approximately 419 signatures.

2. REPORTS

2.1. Youth Council First Report 2026

Source: City Life
Executive Director: Anthony Basford

Purpose

1. To note the first report from the 2026 Youth Council Advisory Committee.

Background

2. At the end of 2025, 11 local young people were elected by their peers to the City of Greater Geelong Youth Council Advisory Committee (Youth Council) to represent the region's youth voice throughout 2026.
3. The members, aged between 13 and 17 at the time of nomination, come from a range of local towns and suburbs, and represent the Greater Geelong area as outlined in the Youth Council Terms of Reference.
4. Youth Council provides valuable advice and updates to Council, formulated through monthly meetings, collaboration with Councillors via the Councillor Connect Mentoring Program (CCMP), and engagement with the boarder youth community.

Key Matters

5. The Youth Council is presenting its first report for 2026, introducing the new members, outlining the outcomes of the induction sessions and first meeting, and highlighting the group's priority areas and team agreement.

RESOLUTION - Item 2.1

Cr A Aitken moved, Cr E Wilkinson seconded -

That Council notes the first report provided by the Youth Council Advisory Committee 2026 as at Attachment 1.

Carried

Financial Sustainability

6. Funding for the Youth Council program and its activities is allocated in Council's annual budget. Financial implications are one factor the City must take into consideration when assessing whether any action can or will be taken in response to the advice provided by Youth Council.

Community Engagement

7. Youth Council members engage with young people and the broader community to gather essential information, feedback and input, through their monthly meetings and scheduled activities, as outlined in the Youth Council Reports presented throughout the year.

Social Equity and Sustainability

8. The Youth Council offers young people a platform to contribute to and participate in civic life, promoting inclusivity and equity. The program recognises that not all young people have equal access to civic opportunities and provides practical support to reduce participation barriers.

Gender Equality – Gender+ Impact Assessment

9. A Gender+ Impact Assessment was not required for this report.

Relevant Law/Policy/Legal Implications

10. The Youth Council's activities are conducted in accordance with the adopted Terms of Reference.

Alignment to Council Plan and Vision

11. This report aligns with the Council Plan 2025-29 strategic priority:
Governance and Integrity
Healthy and Caring Community
12. This report aligns with the Community led 30-year Vision, "Greater Geelong: A Clever and Creative Future" community aspiration:
An inclusive, diverse, healthy and socially connected community.

Conflict of Interest

13. No officer involved in the preparation of this report declared a general or material conflict of interest.

Risk Assessment and Risk Appetite Statement

14. Council aims to positively engage with the community by fostering an inclusive and safe environment that recognises the diverse needs and expectations of individuals and groups. In this context, Council has adopted a balanced risk appetite.
15. This report supports equitable and inclusive community outcomes by amplifying the voices of young people across the municipality and identifying opportunities to enhance service experiences and strengthen inclusion and belonging.

Environmental Sustainability

16. There is no environmental sustainability implications identified for the subject of this report.

Attachments

1. First Youth Council Report 2026 [2.1.1 - 7 pages]

2.2. New Heritage Overlays Greater Geelong Outer Areas Study

Source: Growth & Place
Interim Executive Director: Jacquie Randles

Purpose

1. To seek Council's adoption of the Outer Areas Heritage Assessment Study – Part 2 (**Attachment 1**), and
2. Support for the preparation and exhibition of a planning scheme amendment to apply Heritage Overlays to nine places and update one existing citation, and to request authorisation from the Minister for Planning to proceed with the Amendment.

Background

3. In September 2025, Council adopted the *Greater Geelong Outer Areas Heritage Study (2025)* and authorised preparation of a planning scheme amendment to apply Heritage Overlays to additional places identified through the study. At that time, several places were deferred to allow further consultation with Wadawurrung Traditional Owners, community stakeholders and property owners, or to enable additional assessment work.
4. This report represents the final stage of that process and addresses the remaining places not resolved in the September 2025 report.
5. Since completion of the earlier heritage study (1998–2000), national assessment standards have become more rigorous, resulting in a higher threshold for determining local heritage significance.
6. The places considered in this final stage have been assessed against the eight recognised heritage criteria to determine whether they meet the threshold for Heritage Overlay application.
7. Following assessment, consultation and comparative analysis, nine places are recommended for inclusion in the Heritage Overlay and one existing citation is recommended for update. Two additional places require further consultation with Wadawurrung Traditional Owners before any overlay is considered.
8. Further details of the individual properties and assessments are provided in the attached Outer Areas Heritage Assessment Study - Part 2 (**Attachment 1**) and the Draft Heritage Assessment (**Attachment 2**).

Key Matters

9. This report forms Part 2 and finalises Council's consideration of places arising from the *Greater Geelong Outer Areas Heritage Study (2025)* that were separated from the September 2025 report.
10. The places proposed for inclusion in the Heritage Overlay have been assessed against the eight recognised heritage criteria - historical, rarity, research potential,

representativeness, aesthetic, technical, social and associative, and are considered to meet the accepted threshold for local heritage significance.

11. Between August 2025 and January 2026 further contact was made with affected owners, who were then provided with draft assessments for informal review and comment. Four submissions expressed support and no responses were received from six owners. All feedback received has been acknowledged and responded to in writing.
12. Nine places are recommended for application of a Heritage Overlay, comprising five previously assessed places and four additional priority sites located in Bell Park, Belmont, Hamlyn Heights and Portarlington.
13. One existing Heritage Overlay place (*Craigton*, Moorabool) is recommended for a citation update to include outbuilding controls.
14. One place (Sutherlands Creek Cemetery, Moorabool) is recommended for referral to Heritage Victoria for consideration for inclusion in the Victorian Heritage Inventory, and a separate place at the same location contains significant dry-stone walls already protected under Clause 52.33 of the Planning Scheme.
15. Two places (Armstrong Creek and Highton) have identified Wadawurrung cultural landscape values and require further consultation with Traditional Owners before any overlay is considered.
16. Should Council support the proposed overlays, formal notice will be issued to affected owners as part of the planning scheme amendment exhibition process, during which further submissions may be made and refinements considered.

RESOLUTION - Item 2.2

Cr A Katos moved, Cr T Sullivan seconded -

That Council:

- 1. Adopts Outer Areas Heritage Assessment Study - Part 2 (Attachment 1);**
- 2. Supports the preparation and exhibition of an Amendment to the Greater Geelong Planning Scheme to apply Heritage Overlays to nine places and update one existing citation, as informed by the Greater Geelong Outer Areas Heritage Study – Part 2 (2025) (Attachment 1) and Heritage Assessments (Attachment 2); and**
- 3. Requests the Minister for Planning to authorise the preparation and exhibition of the Amendment.**

Carried

Financial Sustainability

17. The planning scheme amendment is Council initiated. Costs to prepare the planning scheme amendment will be met through existing recurrent planning scheme amendment budget.

Community Engagement

18. The community engagement process over the past 6 months included the following:
 - 18.1. Letter to property owners outlining the background of the Greater Geelong Outer Areas Heritage Study 2025 including the draft heritage assessment and Q&A;
 - 18.2. Consultation with the City's Heritage Advisory Committee to seek feedback on the draft Heritage Assessments;
 - 18.3. Site meetings with property owners;
 - 18.4. Consultation with property owners by letter outlining the proposed planning scheme amendment process subject to Council endorsement; and
 - 18.5. Further formal consultation will be undertaken with property owners as part of the planning scheme amendment process.

Social Equity and Sustainability

19. The amendment will have positive social effects through the protection of places of cultural heritage significance for the benefit of current and future generations. The protection of these places in the Planning Scheme will benefit the community by:
 - 19.1. Adding to the understanding of Geelong's rich cultural history;
 - 19.2. Recognising and realising the positive contribution that culturally significant places make to the City of Greater Geelong;
 - 19.3. Fostering a sense of personal, local, and national identity – a feeling that this place is different from other places;
 - 19.4. Protecting the built environment of Geelong; and
 - 19.5. Enabling the enhancement of the heritage places to be a considered process.

Relevant Law/Policy/Legal Implications

20. The creation and management of heritage overlays within the City is required by Council to satisfy its obligations in:
 - 20.1. Adopting Planning Practice Note 1: Applying the Heritage Overlay, Department of Transport, a guide to the heritage overlay, including recognised heritage criteria;
 - 20.2. Meeting the objectives of planning in Victoria as defined by the *Planning & Environment Act 1987*, including section 4 (d) to conserve and enhance those buildings, areas or other places which are of scientific, aesthetic, architectural or historical significance, otherwise of special cultural value and complying with Planning Practice Note PN01: Applying the Heritage Overlay; and

- 20.3. Implementing the Greater Geelong Planning Scheme, including clauses 02.03-5 Strategic Directions, 15.03 Built Environment and Heritage and 43.01 Heritage Overlay.

Alignment to Council Plan and Vision

21. This report aligns with the Council Plan 2025-29 strategic priority:
Heritage and Culture
22. This report aligns with the Community led 30-year Vision, “Greater Geelong: A Clever and Creative Future” community aspiration:
A destination that attracts local and international visitors.
People feel safe wherever they are.
Sustainable development that supports population growth and protects the natural environment.

Conflict of Interest

23. No officer involved in the preparation of this report declared a general or material conflict of interest

Risk Assessment

24. The risk to Council of not proceeding with applying heritage overlays through the Greater Geelong Planning Scheme is that places will not have statutory protection and part of the community’s heritage will be lost through demolition, development or other changes.

Environmental Sustainability

25. The amendment will not have any adverse effects on the environment. Protection for heritage places will retain existing infrastructure and resources. The conservation of heritage places promotes sustainable development through conserving valuable resources and economising on materials and balancing this against the demands for development.

Attachments

1. Outer Areas Heritage Assessment Study - Part 2 [**2.2.1** - 14 pages]
2. Draft Heritage Assessments [**2.2.2** - 102 pages]

2.3. Draft Plan for Nature 2026-36

Source: City Infrastructure
Executive Director: James Stirton

Purpose

1. To seek Council endorsement for the Draft Plan for Nature 2026-36 (Attachment 1) to commence a period of four weeks community consultation.

Background

2. The City has prepared a Draft Plan for Nature (the Plan) to set the future direction for biodiversity programs in Greater Geelong and is seeking Council endorsement prior to a community consultation process (Attachment 2).
3. The Plan is aligned to Council's commitment to nature as outlined in:
 - 3.1. *The 30-year community vision of the Greater Geelong: A Clever and Creative Future for the Greater Geelong region* - recognises the uniqueness and significance of our natural environments.
 - 3.2. *Our Council Plan 2025-29 - Environment and Circular Economy* - commits to protect and enhance our unique natural environment and surrounds.
 - 3.3. *Environment Strategy 2020-30* - contains multiple actions to meet the goal of protecting, enhancing, and restoring the regions biodiversity by 2030.
4. The Plan was developed collaboratively with various stakeholders through extensive engagement from 2021 to 2025.
5. The Plan will undergo four weeks of community consultation and is scheduled to go back to Council for adoption in June 2026.

Key Matters

6. The City is experiencing significant population growth, while climate change is also leading to drier conditions and a warmer future. This combined with an analysis of information about the City's state of nature collated through the planning process, determines why a more coordinated response to protecting and managing nature is required. We estimate that:
 - 6.1. Only 18% of the municipality's original remnant vegetation and wetlands are still preserved.
 - 6.2. Only 9.7% of the City's land is within a conservation estate, which is well below the national goal of protecting 30%.
 - 6.3. At least 24 of the 41 species and ecological communities listed as threatened by the federal *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC) have habitat on land managed by the City.

- 6.4. More than 90% of the Cities ecological vegetation classes (EVC's) are rare, vulnerable, or endangered.
7. The Plan provides Council with a mechanism to meet an important outcome in *Our Council Plan 2025-29*; that natural habitat and areas of important biodiversity are identified, protected, connected and restored.
8. The Plan outlines five Goals: Wadawurrung Country and Values, Protections, Connections and Restoration, Community and Partnerships, and Climate Change and Supporting Nature. Each Goal includes 10-year Strategic Objectives and Targets, plus Actions set for 2–3 years.
9. The Plan was developed through extensive collaboration with various stakeholders, including Wadawurrung Traditional Owners, the Corangamite CMA, community environment groups, local conservationists, the public, agency partners, City staff, and Councillors. For more details, see *The Plan for Nature Community Engagement Summary Report 2025* (Attachment 2).
10. Improvements made to the Plan as a result of the community engagement are as follows:
 - 10.1. Establish wildlife corridors across the landscape linking existing habitat.
 - 10.2. Greater use of land use planning controls and other regulatory tools to protect existing natural areas and biodiversity.
 - 10.3. Support for community groups and landholders to undertake nature restoration works and engage in nature projects.
 - 10.4. Managing impacts of people to parks and reserves where there are high natural values.
 - 10.5. Collaborative projects between agencies and the community for on ground nature works.
 - 10.6. Long term stewardship and protection programs aimed at land conservation, such as covenants and acquisition.
 - 10.7. Connection to Country of the Wadawurrung people.
11. The Plan uses the six landscapes defined by Corangamite CMA and Melbourne Water for targeted biodiversity planning and management. Native vegetation and habitats have been mapped in detail, with each landscape's current biodiversity status, threats, and opportunities identified.
12. The Plan used vegetation and habitat mapping, along with community input from consultations and workshops, to create a Biolinks Plan that prioritises key natural areas in each landscape.
13. The Plan will strengthen partnerships across our Caring for Environment Groups and key partners who are already actively supporting the delivery of nature-based programs across the municipality.
14. The Plan incorporates a monitoring and evaluation framework designed to formalise the systematic collection of lessons learned during implementation. This approach

facilitates continuous improvement, ensuring that insights gained will guide future actions.

RESOLUTION - Item 2.3

Cr E Wilkinson moved, Cr E Sinclair seconded -

That Council:

- 1. Endorses the Draft Plan for Nature (Attachment 1) to be released for a four-week period of community consultation; and**
- 2. Notes a further report will be presented to council following community consultation.**

Carried

Financial Sustainability

15. The financial budget implications are highlighted against each action within the Action Plan.
16. Over 80% of the recommended actions will be funded through existing business-as-usual (BAU) arrangements.
17. Applications for grants will be pursued to fund operational initiatives, expand Capital Projects, and introduce new programs. Over the past 18 months, the City's Environment Team has secured several grants amounting to more than \$1,000,000, which are designated to support the implementation of actions outlined in the draft Plan.
18. Additional resources may be needed for certain actions in the Action Table, and business cases will be prepared as needed.

Community Engagement

19. The Plan was developed through extensive collaboration with stakeholders, including Wadawurrung Traditional Owners, environmental groups, agency representatives, City staff, Councillors, and the public between 2021-2025.
20. *The Plan for Nature Community Engagement Summary Report 2025* provides further information (Attachment 2).

Social Equity and Sustainability

21. Within Goal 4: Community and Partnerships of the draft Plan, there are clearly defined strategic objectives, targets, and actions aimed at engaging a broader and more diverse demographic in environmental education and conservation initiatives. These measures include specific targets for increasing participation among culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities and younger individuals.

Gender Equality – Gender+ Impact Assessment

22. A Gender Impact Assessment was not required for this report.

Relevant Law/Policy/Legal Implications

23. The draft Plan is guided by conventions, legislation, strategies, and policies at the international, national, state, and local levels. A detailed listing is available in Table 2: Planning Hierarchy on page 18 of the draft Plan.

Alignment to Council Plan and Vision

24. This report aligns with the *Council Plan 2025-29* strategic priority: Environment and Circular Economy.
25. This report aligns with the Community led 30-year Vision, "*Greater Geelong: A Clever and Creative Future*" community aspiration: *sustainable development that supports population growth and protects the natural environment.*

Conflict of Interest

26. No officer involved in the preparation of this report declared a general or material conflict of interest.

Risk Assessment and Risk Appetite Statement

27. The Plan for Nature aligns with the objectives to sustain the natural environment while managing growth. It provides innovative solutions to limit its impact on the environment from its growth and activities, meeting a balanced appetite for risks. Those initiatives are individually costed, with funding existing through business-as-usual activities with the exploration of grants funding to expand operational initiatives and capital projects, meeting the cautious appetite for financial risks.
28. Enterprise Risk Assessment (158) - Strategic Risk: Natural Environment: The City may contribute to or fail to prevent the degradation or loss of Geelong's natural environment. The risk consequences are documented below.
 - 28.1. Damage to our natural environment or wildlife
 - 28.2. Loss of internationally significant habitats
 - 28.3. Disruption to migration corridors for species
 - 28.4. Species extinction events
 - 28.5. Impact to community enjoyment of environment
 - 28.6. Unforeseen remediation and/or offset costs
 - 28.7. Fines
 - 28.8. Unsustainable remediation/management costs for land handed to the City following development
 - 28.9. Exacerbation of climate change impacts (e.g. Habitats opportunities become more vulnerable).
29. The Plan for Nature serves as an essential instrument enabling the Council to address and reduce this strategic risk.

Environmental Sustainability

30. The Plan for Nature sets the future direction for biodiversity programs in Greater Geelong.

Attachments

1. Draft The Plan for Nature V1 09022026 [2.3.1 - 78 pages]
2. Plan For Nature Community Engagement Summary Report - November 2025 [2.3.2 - 13 pages]

2.4. Draft Place Naming Policy

Source: City Life
Executive Director: Anthony Basford

Purpose

1. To endorse the Draft Place Naming Policy (the Policy) for release for a four-week period of community consultation.

Background

2. The City of Greater Geelong has drafted a Place Naming Policy to guide the naming and renaming of public places. The policy aims to establish a process to ensure decisions are consistent, inclusive, and culturally informed, provide a clear framework that responds to legislation and community expectations. It acknowledges the symbolic power of place names and promotes fairness, transparency, and respect.
3. The Policy complies legislative requirements that Council must follow and responds to the best practice frameworks:
 - 3.1. Geographic Place Names Act 1998.
 - 3.2. Naming Rules for Places in Victoria (2022).
 - 3.3. Gender Equality Strategy (2023–2027).
 - 3.4. City of Greater Geelong’s Community Engagement Policy.
4. The Policy aims to shape a shared identity that reflects the City’s values as a clever, creative, and caring community. It supports diversity and cultural recognition through place naming, while mitigating risks such as politicised proposals, cultural insensitivity, and legal disputes.

Key Matters

5. To address historical imbalances and better represent the City’s diverse population, the Policy seeks to increase the visibility of women, First Nations people and underrepresented cultural groups through commemorative naming.
6. Broad internal engagement that included staff, stakeholder and Councillor consultation, was undertaken. Strong feedback requested that the Policy support naming decisions through a prioritisation process.
7. Councillor feedback requested clarity regarding the process of prioritisation, and the naming of spaces within a facility, which has been addressed in the Policy.
8. A Gender Impact Assessment has been completed and was used to inform the Policy.
9. In line with best practice and to comply with legislative requirements, the Policy commits to involving Traditional Owners in naming processes, as required under the Naming Rules for Places in Victoria (2022), reinforcing cultural integrity and local knowledge.

10. Victoria's path to Treaty further strengthens the expectation that Traditional Owners hold a distinct, non-competitive role in decisions affecting Country - including place naming.

RESOLUTION - Item 2.4

Cr M Cadwell moved, Cr C Burson seconded -

That Council:

1. **Endorses the draft Place Naming Policy to be released for a four-week period of community consultation; and**
2. **Notes a further report will be presented to Council following community consultation to formally adopt the final Policy.**

Carried

Financial Sustainability

11. Financial and budget implications for place naming will be assessed on a case-by-case basis and budget managed at departmental level.

Community Engagement

12. Significant cross departmental engagement has been undertaken in the development of the Policy.

Social Equity and Sustainability

13. The Social Equity Framework was used as guidance in the development of the Policy.

Gender Equality – Gender+ Impact Assessment

14. A Gender Impact Assessment was completed and used in the development of the Policy.

Relevant Law/Policy/Legal Implications

15. The Policy has been developed to comply with legislative requirements as previously stated that Council must follow.

Alignment to Community Plan and Vision

16. This report aligns with the Council Plan 2025-29 strategic priority:
Healthy and Caring Community
17. This report aligns with the Community led 30-year Vision, “Greater Geelong: A Clever and Creative Future” community aspiration:
An inclusive, diverse, healthy and socially connected community.

Conflict of Interest

18. No officer involved in the preparation of this report declared a general or material conflict of interest.

Risk Assessment and Risk Appetite Statement

19. The Policy’s development and subsequent endorsement will be a risk mitigator by providing strong guidance and rules around naming places in the City.

Environmental Sustainability

20. No risk to Environmental Sustainability.

Attachments

1. DRAFT Place Naming Policy 11Mar2026 (1) [2.4.1 - 15 pages]

2.5. Councillor Expenses Policy

Source: Corporate Services
Executive Director: Troy Edwards

Purpose

1. To provide Council with the updated Councillor Expenses Policy (**Attachment 1**) for consideration and adoption.

Background

2. In accordance with section 41 of the Local Government Act 2020 (the Act), all councils are required to adopt and maintain an expenses policy.
3. Council previously adopted the Councillor Expenses Policy at its meeting on 1 September 2020.

Key Matters

4. To facilitate good governance for the municipal community by the Council, the Model Code of Conduct requires that Councillors adhere to and comply with an expenses policy.
5. The Councillor Expenses Policy (**Attachment 1**) has been reviewed and benchmarked across Victorian councils. Changes have been proposed to ensure that the policy represents best practice governance, promoting transparency and responsible use of resources, whilst also ensuring that councillors are equipped with the training and resources required to perform their roles effectively.
6. The proposed changes also provide greater clarity for City officers responsible for applying and meeting requirements of the policy.
7. A summary of key changes are detailed for councillors below:
8. Inclusion of reference to Councillor Allowances as set by the Victorian Independent Remuneration Tribunal.
 - 8.1. Approval for councillors to undertake interstate or overseas travel (with the exception of interstate travel by the Mayor), must be subject to Council resolution. Some exceptions apply as described in the policy.
 - 8.2. The 4-star or below hotel rating requirement for booking accommodation has been removed in favour of selecting the best, fit-for-purpose option, with consideration of reasonable costs and location. Air travel will also be booked with regard to the most suitable, best value fare.
 - 8.3. The allowance for attendance at conferences, workshops and training programs has increased from \$3000 to \$3500 and applies only to the actual cost of attending the meeting, training, conference or similar event (i.e. tickets/registration). It does not include associated expenses such as travel and accommodation. This does not reflect a change in process.

- 8.4. Under 'Provision of Hospitality', the information has been updated to provide further guidelines on providing reasonable hospitality to key stakeholders. This includes clear references to alcohol not being provided and reimbursements not available to councillors for the cost of any alcohol.
- 8.5. Reimbursement claims for all expenses are to be completed on a quarterly basis, or where that quarter is at the end of the Financial Year, within seven days. This is in line with public quarterly expenses reporting.
- 8.6. Expansion of detail in areas relating to travel, car mileage, child/dependent care and resources and facilities.
- 8.7. Included new section on Community Conversations, how they may be arranged, support provided and restrictions leading up to Local Government, State and Federal elections.

RESOLUTION - Item 2.5

Cr R Nelson moved, Cr E Kontelj seconded -

That Council adopts the Councillor Expenses Policy (Attachment 1).

Carried

Financial Sustainability

9. The updates to the Councillor Expenses Policy continues to provide for the provision of equipment, training and support required by a Councillor to carry out their civic duties in line with the current budget. The policy as presented also ensures that appropriate scrutiny is applied to the applicable expenditure, ensuring good governance and transparency and demonstrating sound financial management.

Community Engagement

10. There is no requirement for public consultation in relation to adopting the updated Councillor Expenses Policy.

Social Equity and Sustainability

11. The implementation of the Councillor Expenses Policy provides for a broad range of reimbursable expenses designed to remove barriers to carrying out Council duties, such as childcare and carer expenses. The ability to remove barriers which might otherwise prevent or hinder participation in civic life is an important way to encourage participation by any member of the community that has an interest in becoming a Councillor or Delegated Committee Member. This assists councillors and delegates of all genders and backgrounds to undertake their roles more equitably and flexibly.

Gender Equality – Gender+ Impact Assessment

12. Under the Gender Equality Act 2020 a Gender Impact Assessment (GIA) is required to be completed by defined entities (including local government) for all new and up for review policies, programs and services that have a direct and significant impact on the public. As the Councillor Expense Policy is an operational policy it does not meet this definition and therefore a GIA was not required to be completed. The primary purpose of the Councillor Expenses Policy is to outline processes for reimbursement, financial accountability, and governance obligations for elected representatives. It does not regulate public-facing services nor alter the way community members access or experience services.
13. Section 8 of the Policy actively promotes gender equality by providing dedicated support for Child Care and Dependent Care for all councillors, thereby proactively meeting the intended purpose of a GIA even though a formal GIA was not required.

Relevant Law/Policy/Legal Implications

14. This policy has been developed in accordance with section 41 of the Local Government Act 2020.
15. The Model Councillor Code of Conduct also requires that Councillors adhere to and comply with the Councillor Expenses Policy.

Alignment to Community Plan and Vision

16. This report aligns with the Council Plan 2025-2029 strategic priority:
Commit to the highest levels of integrity, financial stewardship and meaningful community engagement.
17. This report aligns with the Community led 30-year Vision, “Greater Geelong: A Clever and Creative Future” community aspiration:
An inclusive, diverse, healthy and socially connected community.

Conflict of Interest

18. No officer involved in the preparation of this report declared a general or material conflict of interest.

Risk Assessment and Risk Appetite Statement

19. The policy has been considered in line with Council's adopted risk appetite and is assessed as being within appetite.
20. Specifically, the policy establishes appropriate financial controls to manage Councillor expenses, thereby reducing the risk of excessive claims and potential budget overspend. Clearer policy guidelines ensure that expenses claimed are directly aligned with Councillor duties, and regular review of the policy supports ongoing compliance with section 41 of the *Act*.
21. Given the presence of these controls and oversight mechanisms, no additional mitigation strategies are required at this time, and the risk level is considered consistent with Council's cautious risk appetite in relation to financial governance and compliance.

Environmental Sustainability

22. The policy has been updated to reflect environmental considerations, including consideration for printed material.

Attachments

1. Draft Councillor Expenses Policy Corporate Policy 2025 V2 31 12 2025 [2.5.1 - 20 pages]

2.6. Aged Care Advisory Committee

Source: City Life
Executive Director: Anthony Basford

Purpose

1. To advise Council on new statutory obligations under the Aged Care Act 2024 relating to Responsible Persons, and to recommend the establishment of an Aged Care Advisory Committee (the Committee) to provide independent advice, transparency, oversight and assurance to Council regarding the effectiveness of legislative and regulatory compliance, governance and continuous improvement arrangements.

Background

2. The commencement of the Aged Care Act 2024 introduces significant new governance and compliance obligations for all approved Aged Care providers, including the City of Greater Geelong. The Act requires providers to formally identify Responsible Persons, being those individuals who have authority, responsibility for, or significant influence over the delivery and governance of aged care services, and to ensure these persons meet enhanced statutory duties relating to oversight, accountability, and due diligence.
3. In May 2025, Council resolved to remain a provider of Aged Care services. As part of that decision making process, Councillors were advised that the new legislation would result in greater obligations and involvement for Councillors in the governance of Council's Aged Care services, including responsibilities associated with the Responsible Person framework.
4. Recent legal and sector guidance (from the Commonwealth Government and Municipal Association of Victoria) emphasises that, to meet these obligations, providers must establish robust and transparent governance arrangements, including clear oversight mechanisms, suitability and probity checks, appropriate record keeping, and ongoing training for Responsible Persons. Failure to comply with these requirements may expose Council to regulatory action, financial penalties, loss of funding eligibility, and reputational risk.
5. The establishment of an Aged Care Advisory Committee provides a structured mechanism to support Council and Responsible Persons to discharge these obligations, support Council and Responsible Persons to meet their obligations under the Aged Care Act 2024 through structured oversight and assurance.

Key Matters

6. The *Aged Care Act 2024 (Cth)* establishes Councillors, the Chief Executive Officer and senior managers as Responsible Persons, imposing specific statutory duties and potential liabilities on those individuals. These duties are non-delegable and cannot be transferred to Officers.
7. Failure to comply with the Act may result in significant consequences, including termination of Commonwealth funding, civil penalties, and personal liability for Responsible Persons.

8. In response to these obligations, the preferred governance model is the establishment of an Aged Care Advisory Committee reporting directly to Council. The Committee's role would be to provide independent advice, transparency and assurance in relation to compliance with legislative and regulatory requirements. This governance arrangement is intended to support Responsible Persons in meeting their obligations under the Act, while maintaining appropriate separation between operational delivery and statutory accountability.
9. Officers therefore recommend the establishment of an Aged Care Advisory Committee, with Terms of Reference (Attachment 1) aligned to the requirements of the *Aged Care Act 2024 (Cth)* and contemporary best-practice governance principles.

RESOLUTION - Item 2.6

Cr E Kontelj moved, Cr C Burson seconded -

That Council:

- 1. Approves the establishment of an Aged Care Advisory Committee to provide advisory oversight and assurance to Council in relation to compliance with the Aged Care Act 2024 for the delivery of in-home care services known as Support at Home and Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP);**
- 2. Adopts the Aged Care Advisory Committee Terms of Reference as at Attachment 1. as the governance framework for the Committee;**
- 3. Appoints Councillors Rowan Story, Elise Wilkinson, Emma Sinclair and Chris Burson as the Councillor representatives to the Aged Care Advisory Committee;**
- 4. Appoints Councillor Rowan Story as the Chair of the Aged Care Advisory Committee; and**
- 5. Authorises the Chief Executive Officer to approve minor operational administrative changes to the terms of reference as required from time to time.**

Carried

Financial Sustainability

10. The establishment of the Committee will require resourcing for skills-based members, training, and administrative support. The Terms of Reference (Attachment 1) provides for the CEO to set remuneration and administrative arrangements for independent members.
11. Costs associated with the Committee will be managed within existing budgets.

Community Engagement

12. Community engagement is not required to set up the Committee as service providers must implement appropriate governance structures to meet the requirements of the Aged Care Act 2024 (Cth).
13. Stakeholder engagement will include consultation with Councillors, Executive Management, and external advisors as part of the Committee membership and ongoing governance.

Social Equity and Sustainability

14. The Committee will provide oversight and advice to support aged care governance that promotes equitable access continuous improvement, and compliance with the Statement of Rights under the Aged Care Act 2024 (Cth).

Gender Equality – Gender+ Impact Assessment

15. The Committee will be constituted to promote inclusive and balanced representation, including a balance of genders, where practicable.

Relevant Law/Policy/Legal Implications

16. Aged Care Act 2024 (Cth)
17. Local Government Act 2020 (Vic)
18. Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)
19. Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 (Vic)
20. Council Expenses Policy

Alignment to Council Plan and Vision

21. This report aligns with the Council Plan 2025-29 strategic priority:
Healthy and Caring Community
22. This report aligns with the Community led 30-year Vision, “Greater Geelong: A Clever and Creative Future” community aspiration:
An inclusive, diverse, healthy and socially connected community.

Conflict of Interest

23. No officer involved in the preparation of this report declared a general or material conflict of interest.

Risk Assessment and Risk Appetite Statement

24. Council has a cautious appetite for risks that result in material non-compliance with legislation or regulatory requirements, or for actions that compromise the integrity and good governance of Council's decision
25. It is recommended that Council is supported by the Aged Care Advisory Committee, to provide independent oversight, inquiry and assurance to assist Council to identify, understand and manage compliance, governance and quality risks. The Committee's role is advisory and does not diminish Council's accountability or statutory responsibilities.

Environmental Sustainability

26. Not applicable for this report.

Attachments

1. Aged Care Advisory Committee Draft Terms of Reference [2.6.1 - 10 pages]

2.7. Proposed sale of land - 21-25 Oakden Road, Drysdale

Source: Office of the Chief Executive
Chief Executive Officer: Ali Wastie

Purpose

1. To respond to the Council resolution by assessing the feasibility of alternative future uses for 21-25 Oakden Road Drysdale, including consideration to open space, parking, and alternative housing, to inform Council's consideration of the proposed sale of the land.

Background

2. The vacant land 21-25 Oakden Road, Drysdale measures 2,962m² and is within the General Residential 1 Zone with an Aboriginal Heritage Overlay.
3. The land had previously been used by the Cemetery Trust to provide informal carparking. It is no longer suitable or required for this purpose and carparking is accommodated within the cemetery property.
4. The land was identified as surplus to the City's needs and the City undertook community engagement and convened a Submission Review Panel on the proposed sale of the land.

Key Matters

5. At the Council meeting of 28 October 2025, the Council received a report including the outcomes of the community engagement and recommending that the land be sold.
6. The resolution at the meeting was that Council:
 - 6.1. *Notes the outcomes of community engagement for the proposed sale and the attached minutes from the Submission Review Panel held on 27 August 2025 (Attachment 2);*
 - 6.2. *Requests the Chief Executive Officer to prepare a report to Council, by March 2026 outlining the feasibility of alternative future uses for 21-25 Oakden Road Drysdale, being certificate of title volume 10256 folio628 and Lot 1 PS344285L, including consideration to open space, parking, and alternative housing, to inform Council's consideration of the proposed sale of the land.*
 - 6.3. *Resolves that Attachment 3 to this report remains confidential pursuant to sections 3(1) and 66(2)(a) of the Local Government Act 2020, as it contains personal information. Disclosure of this information would be unreasonable because it includes the full names and addresses of submitters obtained through the community engagement process.*

7. Open Space

- 7.1. The assessment concludes that the land is not required for open space.

- 7.2. Residents within the local surrounding area to the property have access within 400m to functional open spaces.
- 7.3. Given the size of the land (which would be classified as Pocket Park) and that it does not provide any open space functions, Pocket Parks are generally not supported as new open space (unless in a civic setting or infill development where space is limited).
- 7.4. The land is long and narrow, with no active frontage on three sides, and no safe access. This reduces its effectiveness in supporting open space functions, efficient management, passive surveillance, and safety.
- 7.5. The assessment against the Strategy's criteria for public open space land determined the following:
 - 7.5.1. The land did not have an appropriate interface
 - 7.5.2. The size and shape are not adequate
 - 7.5.3. The land has a usable landform and characteristic
 - 7.5.4. The land has solar access and orientation
 - 7.5.5. It does not allow connection to the network
 - 7.5.6. It does not meet requirements of sustainable planning and management

8. Parking

- 8.1. The City's Transport team has completed an investigation, including a site inspection, to assess the parking requirements at this location.
- 8.2. The assessment confirms that the car park is not required to support cemetery operations. As outlined in the Geelong Cemeteries Trust's letter to the City dated 20 August 2025, the access and parking upgrades that are currently being constructed will adequately meet the cemetery's parking needs.
- 8.3. Additionally, the City does not require a public car park at this location, as there are no public facilities in the area that would require dedicated parking provision.

9. Social Housing (alternate housing)

- 9.1. In response to the resolution, the land was assessed for alternate housing based on the established criteria within the Council's Social Housing Plan 2020 – 2041.
- 9.2. From this assessment, 21-25 Oakden Road, Drysdale performs poorly against several planning, access, and yield considerations.
- 9.3. The lot dimensions and configuration, along with the existence of mature vegetation do not readily support higher-density outcomes. A limited development yield will reduce attractiveness to a Registered Housing Association.

- 9.4. Poor access to frequent public transport and rail services weakens access to jobs, supports, services, and reduces regional connectivity for residents without cars.
- 9.5. Sub-optimal access to everyday services and social infrastructure limits community participation for residents.
- 9.6. Collectively, these factors reduce both deliverability and long-term liveability outcomes for Social Housing residents, making Oakden Road a low-priority site.

RESOLUTION - Item 2.7

Cr R Story moved, Cr T Sullivan seconded -

That Council:

- 1. Notes the assessment outcomes for the feasibility of alternative uses including consideration to open space, parking, and alternative housing outlined in the Council resolution of 28 October 2025;**
- 2. Approves the sale of 21-25 Oakden Road Drysdale, being certificate of title volume 10256 folio 628 and Lot 1 PS344285L; and**
- 3. Authorises the Chief Executive Officer or delegate to sign documents to complete the sale of the land.**

Carried

Financial Sustainability

10. The sale of the property supports financial sustainability by disposing of a surplus property and contributing to the budgeted \$17m capital income for Property Sales.
11. A current market valuation will be obtained prior to the sale to comply with section 114, *Local Government Act 2020* and inform a sale price.
12. If Council resolves to sell the property, the costs associated with marketing and the sale will be offset by the sales income.

Community Engagement

13. Community engagement was undertaken from 23 June until 20 July 2025 and a Submission Review Panel was convened in August 2025. The Council received copies of the submissions and minutes of the Submission Review Panel.
14. The Council noted the outcomes of this at the 28 October 2025 Council Meeting.

Social Equity and Sustainability

15. The City is committed to contributing social housing and has adopted the Social Housing Plan 2020-2041.
16. The City has allocated land in other locations for the development of social housing and is seeking a Registered Housing Provider to deliver this.

Gender Equality – Gender+ Impact Assessment

17. An assessment was not completed on the proposed sale of the land as it does not relate to the criteria of when an assessment is required, being an existing or developing service, program or policy.

Relevant Law/Policy/Legal Implications

18. The Council will comply with *Local Government Act 2020*, section 114 for the sale of the land.

Alignment to Council Plan and Vision

19. This report aligns with the Council Plan 2025-29 strategic priority:
Governance and Integrity
20. This report aligns with the Community led 30-year Vision, “Greater Geelong: A Clever and Creative Future” community aspiration:
Sustainable development that supports population growth and protects the natural environment.

Conflict of Interest

21. No officer involved in the preparation of this report declared a general or material conflict of interest.

Risk Assessment and Risk Appetite Statement

There are no identified risks in the proposed sale of the land. If the land is sold for residential subdivision, a planning permit will assess risks associated with the proposed development.

Environmental Sustainability

22. There are a few trees on the land, however they are close to the boundary, and it would be possible to develop the land without impacting them. If the land is sold, all trees within its boundary will become the responsibility of the new landowner. Any works on the site must comply with the relevant zoning and overlay requirements, as with any other development.
23. Trees located on the nature strip will remain under Council ownership and management. If a new development is likely to impact the Council trees, they must be protected throughout the works. As part of the Planning Permit process, Parks Planning will set conditions to ensure appropriate tree protection.

Attachments

1. Site Plan - 21-25 Oakden Road, Drysdale [**2.7.1** - 1 page]

2.8. Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) - Motion

Source: Corporate Services
Executive Director: Troy Edwards

Purpose

1. To seek Council approval to support the development of a motion to the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) requesting that the MAV advocate to the Victorian State Government for legislative reform that mandates compulsory leave arrangements for councillors who nominate as candidates for State or Federal Parliament.
2. The proposed motion seeks to promote integrity, continuity of governance and public confidence in local government decision-making by ensuring appropriate leave, suspension of allowances and quorum adjustments apply when councillors' campaign for higher office.

Background

3. Councillors who nominate for State or Federal Parliament may continue to hold office and receive allowances during election campaigns unless they voluntarily take leave. This can create perceived or actual conflicts of interest, governance disruption and uncertainty for councils in maintaining effective quorum and decision-making.
4. The MAV is the peak body representing Victorian local government and is best placed to advocate on behalf of councils for consistent and state-wide legislative reform.
5. Introducing legislated, mandatory leave provisions would support transparency, fairness and consistency across all councils, while ensuring that councillors seeking election to other tiers of government do so without compromising council operations or public confidence.

Key Matters

6. The proposed MAV advocacy would call on the Victorian Government to introduce legislation that:
 - 6.1. Requires councillors who formally nominate as candidates for State or Federal Parliament to take compulsory leave from council duties for the duration of the election period from the date of the issuing of writs for an election;
 - 6.2. Provides for the suspension of councillor allowances during the compulsory leave period; and
 - 6.3. Enables appropriate quorum adjustments to ensure councils can continue to operate effectively during the leave period.
7. The motion is intended to apply consistently across the local government sector with an appropriate legislative and regulatory basis, avoiding ad-hoc or discretionary arrangements that vary between councils.

Recommendation

Cr M Cadwell moved, Cr E Kontelj seconded -

That Council:

- 1. Endorses the following motion from Council to be submitted to the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV):**
 - 1.1. The MAV calls on the State Government to ensure that the legislation includes:**
 - 1.1.1. A mandatory leave of absence for councillors intending to be candidates from the issuing of the writs until the declaration of the election result;**
 - 1.1.2. Suspension of councillor allowances and reimbursements for the duration of the compulsory leave period;**
 - 1.1.3. Temporary adjustment of quorum requirements for council and delegated committee meetings to ensure continuity of governance during the compulsory leave period; and**
 - 1.1.4. Develop a model policy to guide activities during a leave of absence, including but not limited to the use of Council resources, attendance at Council functions or activities, and use of Council social media, to protect the integrity of Council decision-making, manage actual or perceived conflicts of interest, and ensure equity between candidates.**
- 2. Authorise the Chief Executive Officer to make amendments to the proposed motion, if required by the MAV, to facilitate its consideration and advocacy.**

Cr C Burson left the meeting at 7.41pm.

PROCEDURAL MOTION TO DEFER

RESOLUTION

Cr E Sinclair moved, Cr E Wilkinson seconded -

That Council defers consideration of item 2.8 Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) – Motion, to allow for further investigation and consultation.

Carried

Cr C Burson returned to the meeting at 7.45pm.

Financial Sustainability

8. There are no financial implications from this report.

Community Engagement

9. There are no community engagement considerations arising from this report.

Social Equity and Sustainability

10. There are no social equity and sustainability considerations arising from this report.

Gender Equality – Gender+ Impact Assessment

11. There are no gender equality considerations arising from this report.

Relevant Law/Policy/Legal Implications

12. Local government governance is regulated under the *Local Government Act 2020* (Vic). Any legislative reform relating to councillor leave, allowances or quorum requirements would require amendment to relevant state legislation.

Alignment to Council Plan and Vision

13. This report aligns with the Council Plan strategic priority of Governance and Integrity by promoting transparent, ethical and effective decision-making
14. It also supports the Community Vision aspiration for strong, accountable leadership that maintains public trust.

Conflict of Interest

15. No officer involved in the preparation of this report declared a general or material conflict of interest.

Risk Assessment and Risk Appetite Statement

16. The absence of mandated leave arrangements presents an ongoing governance risk for councils, including decision-making disruption, reputational risk and reduced public confidence.
17. Advocacy for clear, legislated arrangements aligns with Council's cautious risk appetite for unmanaged governance risk and supports proactive risk mitigation.

Environmental Sustainability

18. There are no environmental sustainability considerations arising from this report.

Attachments

Nil

2.9. Council Plan Bi-Annual Report – Half 1 2025-26

Source: Corporate Services
Executive Director: Troy Edwards

Purpose

1. To present the Council Plan Bi-Annual Report – Half 1 2025-26 for consideration and noting.

Background

2. The Council Plan 2025–29 is Council’s key strategic document which identifies the outcomes and objectives Council will focus its efforts on over the four years, to ensure the social, economic, and environmental sustainability of our region.
3. The Council Plan 2025–29 is supported by an annual budget and major initiatives which detail work that is critical to deliver on the Council’s objectives and outcomes.
4. This bi-annual report provides progress updates against the major initiatives for the period 1 July 2025 – 31 December 2025. This is the first bi-annual report for the Council Plan 2025–29 – Bi-Annual Report 2025–26.

Key Matters

5. There are 31 major initiatives reported upon in the Council Plan 2025–29 – Bi-Annual Report 2025–26.
6. At the end of December 2025, one initiative is ‘at risk of delay’ and 30 initiatives are ‘on track’.

RESOLUTION - Item 2.9

Cr A Aitken moved, Cr A Katos seconded -

That Council notes the Council Plan Bi-Annual Report – Half 1 2025-26 (Attachment 1).

Carried

Financial Sustainability

7. There are no financial implications arising from the subject of this report.

Community Engagement

8. The Council Plan 2025–29 bi-annual reports are prepared in consultation with Managers, Coordinators and Officers from across the organisation. The report will be made available to the community online through the City website after the Council Meeting, with the year end results appearing in the City’s annual report.

Social Equity and Sustainability

9. Our Community Plan 2025–29 recognises the importance of social equity, access and inclusion as a key priority area contributing to the long-term sustainability of the community. The quarterly reports document the work the City is undertaking to improve equity, access, and inclusion for all.

Gender Equality – Gender+ Impact Assessment

10. No Gender+ Impact Assessment was undertaken as this report is administrative in nature, providing updates on existing initiatives. No further assessment is required for the adoption of this progress report.

Relevant Law/Policy/Legal Implications

11. The City’s activities are guided by the Council Plan 2025–29 which was adopted in accordance with the Local Government Act 2020 and implementation monitored via the quarterly and annual reports.

Alignment to Council Plan and Vision

12. This report aligns with the Council Plan 2025-29 strategic priority:
 - Core and Critical Infrastructure
 - Economic Development
 - Environment and Circular Economy
 - Governance and Integrity
 - Healthy and Caring Community
 - Heritage and Culture
13. This report aligns with the Community led 30-year Vision, “Greater Geelong: A Clever and Creative Future” community aspiration:
 - A destination that attracts local and international visitors.
 - A fast, reliable and connected transport network.
 - A leader in developing and adopting technology.
 - A prosperous economy that supports jobs and education opportunities.
 - An inclusive, diverse, healthy and socially connected community.
 - Creative and diverse culture.
 - Development and implementation of sustainable solutions.
 - People feel safe wherever they are.
 - Sustainable development that supports population growth and protects the natural environment.

Conflict of Interest

14. No officer involved in the preparation of this report declared a general or material conflict of interest.

Risk Assessment and Risk Appetite Statement

15. There are no identified risks arising from this report.

Environmental Sustainability

16. As the organisation and region face considerable environmental challenges, the Council Plan 2025–29 outlines the City’s priorities in addressing the issues including climate change and waste, increasing population growth and threats to local biodiversity.

Attachments

1. Council Plan Bi- Annual Report – Half 1 2025-26 [**2.9.1** - 17 pages]

3. RECORD OF INFORMAL MEETINGS OF COUNCILLORS

Source: Corporate Services
Executive Director: Troy Edwards

Summary

1. The Governance Rules of the City of Greater Geelong require the tabling of records of informal meetings of Councillors at the next convenient Council meeting and that their record be included in the minutes of that Council meeting.
2. A summary of the informal meetings of Councillors is attached.

RESOLUTION - Item 3.1

Cr E Kontelj moved, Cr R Nelson seconded -

That Council receive the summary of the informal meetings of Councillors for the period to 24 March 2026.

Carried

4. CONFIDENTIAL

Council will close the meeting to the public in accordance with the provision of section 66(2) of the *Local Government Act 2020* to consider the following list of items.

4.1. 2025-26 Community Infrastructure Funding Recommendations - Additional (Confidential)

CONFIDENTIAL

RESOLUTION - Item 4.1

Cr E Kontelj moved, Cr A Katos seconded -

That Council consider this report at the conclusion of the meeting as it is designated confidential by the Chief Executive Officer pursuant to sections 3(1) and 66 of the Local Government Act 2020, the information contained in this report is confidential because it contains Council business information being information that would prejudice the Council's position in commercial negotiations. This section is applicable because the agenda item contains a level of detail which if released would diminish the organisation's capacity to compete in a commercial environment.

Carried

5. CLOSE OF MEETING

The meeting was closed to the public at 7.52pm.

RESOLUTION

Cr E Wilkinson moved, Cr E Kontelj seconded –

That the meeting be re-opened to the public.

Carried.

As there was no further business the meeting closed at 7.56pm on Tuesday 24 March 2026.

Signed: _____

Cr Stretch Kontelj (Mayor)

Date: _____