
This record is provided as a summary of the questions asked by members of the public during Public Question Time at a meeting of the Yarra City Council. This summary includes the original question, the response provided at the meeting and, where applicable, the response provided after the meeting to any question taken on notice (which is included in red text).

7.1 Ms Elizabeth Gomm - Local Area Traffic Management (LATM) Program

Question:

As Councillors will be aware, in 2015 Council officers prepared a list of Priority Precincts for a 2016/2017 LATM program. Unfortunately, Council saw fit to not budget for the LATM program in that budget and so a vital year of improving local traffic management was lost to the ratepayers and residents of Yarra. Such a delay cannot be allowed to happen a second year in a row as it would risk exponential deterioration in traffic management within the municipality.

My question relates to the most recent LATM program, as prepared and presented by Yarra Officers to Council in December 2016.

When can we expect Council to implement the LATM program following its reinstatement into the 2017/18 Yarra budget?

Response:

The Mayor responded that appropriate provision for the LATM process would be subject to a budget allocation and as such is still subject to budget consideration.

The Director City Works and Assets explained that LATM programs are subject to the annual budget process, and that the questioner is correct in noting that no budget allocation was made in the 2016/2017 year. He noted that despite this, funding for ongoing traffic improvements continued to be available through a number of other Council programs and that as a result, a range of priority projects have been progressed or completed during the current year.

7.2 Ms Kerry Echberg of YCAN - Climate Emergency Declaration

Question:

First of all, on behalf of YCAN I'd like to thank and congratulate Council and Councillors for supporting the declaration. We know that Yarra has, for a long time, been committed to reducing emissions in the city, and has taken many important actions to achieve a sustainable Yarra. We also know that we have entered a new phase in the battle for our planet, with 2016 being the hottest year on record, after several of the previous year's having had that 'honour'.

So recognition of Climate Emergency is no longer enough: Councils, along with every level of government, must develop stronger policies and actions to attempt to deal with the problem and to protect the community, particularly its most vulnerable members, from the impacts already present. Each Council policy must be based on

its effect on climate change.

My question is, how will you develop a climate emergency program based on the latest scientific research and with targets and budgets for reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, which will reduce exacerbation of the disaster and protects the municipality, for your term of office and into the future?

Response:

The Chief Executive Officer took the question on notice and undertook to provide a further response to the resident. However, she did advise that the issue is one that is being considered by Council and officers.

The Chief Executive Officer further advised that Yarra City Council takes great pride as one of the leading Councils in responding to climate change through our Council operations, and how we support our community. Some of our recent achievements include:

- The first Victorian Council to be certified Carbon Neutral (via the National Carbon Offsetting Scheme) in 2012 and ongoing annual certification;*
- The first Australian Council to become a One Planet Council in 2014;*
- The establishment of, and ongoing support for, the Yarra Energy Foundation since 2010.*

More recently, on 7 March 2017, Council resolved to join the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy. By Joining the Global Covenant Council has committed to implement all of the following actions (within 3 years) which relate strongly to your question and will help dictate our future response:

- 1. Community greenhouse emission inventory*
- 2. Hazards Assessment (Climate Change Risk Assessment)*
- 3. Greenhouse reduction targets (for both Council and community)*
- 4. Climate vulnerability assessment*
- 5. Climate Action Plan*
- 6. Climate Adaptation Plan*

Most of the necessary actions (above) to achieve Compliance with the Global Covenant are already in place, but some will require updating. We will also be guided in our response to this issue by the new Council Plan for the term of this new Council (due by June 30, 2017), and a review of the Yarra Environment Strategy (expected in 2017/18).

7.3 Ms Margaret O'Brien - Homelessness

Question:

I ask two questions about Yarra's response to the homelessness problem that appears to be escalating in our city and including in City of Yarra.

Homelessness has become more visible over recent months in the CBD, and thus has assumed high political attention. We are all very aware of the publicity and highly controversial responses and statements made on this matter of enormous social concern. The City of Melbourne has a Homelessness Advisory Committee. Does Yarra have a similar Homelessness Advisory Committee to that of the City of Melbourne?

The Melbourne Council has provided a budget of \$2 million and State Government \$4 million. The Council has announced its draft by-laws on homelessness and these

proposed by-laws are the subject of considerable debate; understandably so, because this is a problem that cuts to the heart of our civil society: It is a matter of huge public interest. I understand that there is a 28 day period for submissions. Yarra has a vested interest in being party to these discussions. Yarra's strength is its inclusiveness. This is a shared problem and therefore requires a shared solution.

Might I also ask if Yarra will consider making a submission to the Melbourne Council's by-laws proposal and also if Yarra will use its influence to get the building of a homelessness strategy as a priority onto the agenda of the Inner Melbourne Councils' Advisory Group?

Response:

The Mayor advised that Council does not have a Homelessness Advisory Committee.

The Chief Executive Officer advised that the organisation has six staff working on homelessness issues, including a member of staff dedicated to working on homelessness in the municipality. There are also staff in the Social Policy area who work with the State Government on relevant policy, including advocacy and facilitation of improvements for homeless persons in Yarra.

It is a matter that is engaging the organisation, but it is a growing challenge for Council.

The Mayor also advised that Council is considering making a submission to the City of Melbourne in relation to their proposed local law changes, but that a formal decision had not yet been made.

A Homelessness Strategy is included in the Action Plan of the Inner Melbourne Action Plan Committee, and the Mayor undertook to raise it at the next meeting of the Committee on Friday 24 February 2017.

Cr Jolly noted that it has been reported in the newspaper that the City of Melbourne's Homelessness Committee had not been consulted in relation to the proposed changes, and that there is little point having such a committee if it is not consulted.

He further noted that the recent closure of a number of rooming houses had created additional pressure and has exacerbated homelessness in Melbourne and surrounding municipalities including Yarra.

Cr Chen Yi Mei noted that she will be moving a motion later in the meeting in relation to the need to extend the out-of-home care age from 18 until 21 years for young people who are unable to live with their families, as this is another element leading to increased homelessness.

Cr McEvoy replied that he intends to submit a Notice of Motion in relation to the City of Melbourne's local law amendments at the next Council meeting and that Council makes a submission that opposes those amendments.

7.4 Mr Brian Joss - Security of Department of Housing Property

Question:

I am a resident of the Department of Housing in Collingwood and having asked on several occasions for security locks to be placed on our building and getting the run around from the Department saying that they had no money to fit the locks. On many occasions we've had to call housing security or the Police about the drug use and unauthorised people in our building. We've made several calls to Richard Wynne MP without results, we'd like a resolution sort it out. We'd like Council to advocate on our behalf.

Response:

The Chief Executive Officer advised that she is happy to discuss the matter with her contacts at the Department and advocate on Mr Joss's behalf.

Cr Jolly provided some further context to the question, and explained that Mr Joss is a resident of a Collingwood walk-up, and that while some of the neighbouring properties have security locks fitted, some do not, and therefore attract drug dealing and anti-social behaviour. Minister Foley has approved funding for the locks, but somehow the money has gone missing. Mr Wynne is supportive of the case, but a resolution has not yet been reached.

7.5 Mr Ian Wood - Proposed Yarra Planning Amendment C220

Question:

As Mr Wood was not in attendance, the Group Manager, Chief Executive's Office read his question to the meeting.

Can Council confirm that it discussed proposed Amendment C220 with the relevant state planning department regional office prior to applying for ministerial authorisation, and did the Minister respond to Council's request for authorisation of the amendment?

If the Minister responded, what was the response and on what date; and what (if any) conditions or further review did the Minister require? If the Minister did not respond, and given the clearly expressed desire by Councillors to proceed with the Amendment, why did Council not proceed to prepare the amendment without the Minister's authorisation once 10 business days from the Minister's receipt of Council's application had expired, as provided for under section 8A (7) of the Planning and Environment Act and in Ministerial Direction No.15?

Response:

The Director Planning and Place Making advised that:

- (a) officers have regular discussions with the Department of Environment Land Water and Planning (DELWP) about the strategic planning work being undertaken in Yarra, including the Johnston Street Local Area Plan which informs Amendment C220;*
- (b) In context of the above, there were no detailed pre-authorisation discussions with the DELWP; this occurred at the time of the authorisation request and continues to occur;*
- (c) Council submitted the request to DELWP for authorisation on 18 May 2016;*
- (d) Council received acknowledgement of receipt of the authorisation application on 27 May 2016;*
- (e) The acknowledgement advised that the application requires further review by the Department and advised that a decision would be made as soon as possible following this review;*
- (f) In further discussions with the Department and Minister's Office it would seem that the key issue with authorising the amendment is the mandatory controls being proposed by the Council;*
- (g) Council has specifically included the mandatory controls to provide more certainty to the development outcomes based on a thorough urban design analysis. Council considers that it is appropriate for the amendment to be*

authorised, even if this is conditional, to enable the amendment to be exhibited and considered by the community;

- (h) At its meeting of 22 November 2016, Council also resolved that the Mayor write to the Minister seeking immediate authorisation to exhibit Amendment C220 in relation to the Johnston Street DDO (Design & Development Overlay) — that occurred and senior Yarra City Council staff continue to urge the senior DELWP staff to 'authorise' the Amendment for exhibition to enable community input;*
- (i) Council cannot proceed with an amendment until it receives 'authorisation' from the Minister for Planning;*
- (j) In this case 'authorisation' has not been provided as the Department is still reviewing the amendment due to concerns about the proposed use of mandatory height controls in this Amendment; and*
- (k) The Minister, through the May 2016 letter extended the 10 day time frame for authorisation to allow for further consideration of the amendment, therefore the timeframes in Section 8A(7) do not apply.*