

This document sets out the terms under which the M9 Committee, formed and governed by a Memorandum of Understanding, will operate.

The M9 Committee is an alliance of nine inner Melbourne councils that represent the collective interests of inner Melbourne. The Committee is comprised of the following member Councils:

- City of Darebin
- Hobsons Bay City Council
- Maribyrnong City Council
- City of Melbourne
- Moonee Valley City Council
- Merri-bek City Council
- City of Port Phillip
- City of Stonnington
- City of Yarra.

### 1. Purpose and Objectives

- 1.1 M9's overarching purpose is to work cooperatively and advocate collectively on issues and projects of mutual interest that affect their local government areas, and inner Melbourne more broadly.
- 1.2 The Committee's objectives are:
  - 1.2.1 To undertake strategic, evidence-based, targeted and effective advocacy campaigns.
  - 1.2.2 To engage strategically with key decision-makers to advocate on priority areas and build genuine partnership with government representatives.
  - 1.2.3 To enable best practice to be shared across Greater Melbourne Councils.
  - 1.2.4 To undertake joint partnerships and collective action, particularly where there are market failures and/or policy gaps.

### 2. Membership

- 2.1. Membership of M9 is by invitation only.
- 2.2. Neighbouring Councils seeking membership may be admitted on the recommendation of the Committee. Membership will only be granted after unanimous approval of all existing member Councils.
- 2.3. An M9 member seeking to leave the group must advise the Committee in writing and will be required to give six months' notice.
- 2.4. If a new member joins or an existing member leaves, the Committee will continue to operate and subsequently modify this Terms of Reference to reflect the altered membership structure.

### 3. Terms of the agreement

- 3.1. This agreement will take effect for a period of four (4) years commencing 1 January 2025.

### 4. Scope and Operation

- 4.1. M9 will be governed by these Terms of Reference.
- 4.2. M9 will be run on a general consensus basis; however, if any issue requires a count of votes, then the voting rights shall be one vote per member Council.
- 4.3. Each member Council will be represented by the Mayor and the Chief Executive Officer, who will provide regular updates to, and receive feedback from, their respective Councillors.
- 4.4. Member Councils may nominate alternative delegates only when the Mayor or Chief Executive Officer are absent on approved leave, e.g. when an Acting Chief Executive Officer has been appointed.
- 4.5. Quorum for meetings of the Committee will be five mayors (or alternative elected delegates) from member councils.

### 5. Roles and responsibilities

- 5.1. M9 will nominate an Executive Officer to undertake administrative and operational functions of the group. This can be drawn from existing council resources or a new appointment.
- 5.2. The Committee will develop and consult with member bodies on the establishment of the Strategic Plan, which includes but is not limited to strategic objectives and policy matters.
- 5.3. Should external consultants be required to undertake work on behalf of or for M9, the Executive Officer will ensure that all procurement/engagement processes are carried out in accordance with statutory requirements i.e. *Local Government Act 2020*.
- 5.4. A recommendation to appoint an external consultant will then be presented to the Committee, who will be responsible for any appointment.

### 6. Chair, lead councils and Delegated Authority

#### Chair

- 6.1. The position of Chair will be filled by the Lord Mayor of the City of Melbourne. Tenure of the Chair matches the term of office of the Lord Mayor.
- 6.2. The Chair is the designated spokesperson for the Committee.

- 6.3. The Chair and respective CEO have delegated authority (subject to the M9 Strategic Plan) to:
  - 6.3.1. Approve expenditure of up to \$50,000 on individual items/projects.
  - 6.3.2. Approve written correspondence on behalf of M9.
  - 6.3.3. Approve media statements on behalf of the group.
  - 6.3.4. Nominate M9 members to attend delegations and/or political briefings.
  - 6.3.5. Instruct the Executive Officer to perform tasks in accordance with the approved M9 Strategic Plan.

### Lead councils

- 6.4. Lead councils will be appointed to align with the M9 Strategic Plan and key priorities.
- 6.5. Lead councils work with the Executive Officer to undertake advocacy activities relating to M9's strategic priorities.
- 6.6. Lead councils are responsible for managing strategically aligned Working Groups comprised of council officers who will support M9's advocacy efforts and projects.
- 6.7. The Executive Officer will report on Working Group activity as required.

## **7. Meetings**

- 7.1. The Committee will set the times and dates for its meeting, and shall meet at least quarterly, and up to six (6) times per year.
- 7.2. It will be the responsibility of the Executive Officer to ensure that appropriate meeting papers and, when required, financial reports, are presented to all M9 meetings.
- 7.3. Mayors and CEO's may meet informally between meetings of M9 to discuss ideas and share information.
- 7.4. These informal meetings will be supported by agenda's prepared by the Executive Officer.
- 7.5. Agendas, minutes and actions arising from M9 meetings will be shared with all members in a timely manner.

## **8. Financial arrangements**

- 8.1. The amount to be contributed by M9 members will be determined every two years following the development and approval by the members of a budget. Contributions will be paid annually at the commencement of the financial year.
- 8.2. The Executive Officer will handle the financial transactions of the Committee on behalf of the other Committee members, subject to approval of the Chair and/or respective CEO.

- 8.3. Quarterly financial reports will be provided to the Committee by the Executive Officer.
- 8.4. Approval of major items of expenditure will be subject to agreement of the members.
- 8.5. Should additional expenditure above the approved annual budget be required, approval will be required from a majority of M9 members in accordance with Item 4. Scope and Operation above.
- 8.6. Any additional payments will be subject to individual council approval processes.

### **9. Communication and information management**

- 9.1. The Executive Officer is responsible for preparation of communications and advocacy documents required by M9.
- 9.2. All external documents will need approval from the M9 Chair or the respective CEO before public release.
- 9.3. Ownership of communications and research materials resides with the Committee.

### **10. Review and evaluation**

- 10.1. M9's strategic plan will be reviewed annually.
- 10.2. The members will review the role of the Executive Officer every two years.
- 10.3. M9's achievements will be measured by:
  - 10.3.1. Alignment of policy announcements from Government and Opposition with the M9 Strategic Plan.
  - 10.3.2. Inclusion of M9 representatives on relevant working parties, committees or reference groups established by governments, peak bodies or other industry/sector organisations.
  - 10.3.3. Other items as deemed relevant.

### Signatories to the M9 Memorandum of Understanding



Michael Tudball  
Interim Chief Executive Officer  
City of Darebin

Date: 18/12/2024



Cathy Henderson  
Chief Executive Officer  
Merri-bek City Council

Date: 17/01/2025



Aaron van Egmond  
Chief Executive Officer  
Hobsons Bay City Council

Date: 13/12/2024



Chris Carroll  
Chief Executive Officer  
City of Port Philip

Date: 17/12/2024



Celia Haddock  
Chief Executive Officer  
Maribyrnong City Council

Date: 13- Dec-2024



Dale Dickson  
Chief Executive Officer  
City of Stonnington

Date: 28 / 01 / 2025



Alison Leighton  
Chief Executive Officer  
City of Melbourne

Date: **20 December 2024**



Sue Wilkinson  
Chief Executive Officer  
City of Yarra

Date: 18/12/2024



Helen Sui  
Chief Executive Officer  
Moonee Valley City Council

Date: 16 January 2025