



# **SPECIAL MEETING OF THE PORT PHILLIP CITY COUNCIL**

## **MINUTES**

**23 JUNE 2025**



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# MINUTES - SPECIAL MEETING OF THE PORT PHILLIP CITY COUNCIL - 23 JUNE 2025



## MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE PORT PHILLIP CITY COUNCIL HELD 23 JUNE 2025 IN ST KILDA TOWN HALL AND VIRTUAL VIA TEAMS

The meeting opened at 6:32pm.

### IN ATTENDANCE

Cr Crawford (Chairperson), Cr Buckingham, Cr Cunsolo, Cr Halliday, Cr Hardy, Cr Jay (online), Cr Makin, Cr Mears, Cr Thomann.

Chris Carroll, Chief Executive Officer, Brian Tee, General Manager City Growth and Development, Kylie Bennetts, General Manager Community Wellbeing and Inclusion, Lachlan Johnson, General Manager, Operations and Infrastructure, Claire Stevens, General Manager Organisational Capability and Experience, Robyn Borley, Director Governance and Performance, Peter Liu, Chief Financial Officer, Spyros Karamesinis, Head of Financial Business Partnering, Analysis & Compliance, Jacky Bailey, Head of Corporate Planning, Brendan Ng, Planning and Performance Coordinator, Anastasia Warmuth, Projects and Planning Advisor, Lauren Bialkower, Executive Manager City Growth and Culture, Mitch Gillett, Acting Head of Governance, Emily Williams, Senior Council Business Advisor, Joshua Vearing, Council Business Advisor.

*The City of Port Phillip respectfully acknowledges the Traditional Owners of this land, the people of the Kulin Nations. We pay our respect to their Elders, past and present. We acknowledge and uphold their continuing relationship to this land.*

### 1. APOLOGIES

Nil.

### 2. DECLARATIONS OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Nil.

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENT - OUTGOING EXECUTIVE MANAGER CITY GROWTH AND CULTURE

Brian Tee, General Manager City Growth and Development acknowledged Lauren Bialkower and thanked them for the contribution to the organisation as the Executive Manager of City Growth and Culture for the past six years.

The Mayor thanked Lauren Bialkower for their service to the City of Port Phillip on behalf of the Council and wished them well for their future endeavors.

# MINUTES - SPECIAL MEETING OF THE PORT PHILLIP CITY COUNCIL - 23 JUNE 2025



*The meeting adjourned at 6:37pm to address a technical issue with the livestream.*

*The meeting resumed at 6:41pm.*

## **3. WELL GOVERNED PORT PHILLIP**

### **3.1 Plan for Port Phillip (Including Budget) 2025-35 and Budget 2025-26: Adoption**

#### **PURPOSE**

- 1.1 To present the Plan for Port Phillip 2025-35, which incorporates the Community Vision, four-year Council Plan, Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan, ten-year Financial Plan, Asset Plan, Revenue and Rating Plan, and the annual Budget (2025/26), recommending adoption.

*Mayor Crawford advised that there was an amendment to the Budget to include provision for the Chief Executive Officer, or their delegate, to implement a long daycare fee at North St Kilda Children's Centre, between the range of \$159.00-\$162.00 per day during the renovation period in 2025/26. This is reflected in clause 3.25.1 of the recommendation.*

#### **MOVED Crs Buckingham/Crawford**

*Councillor Buckingham moved an amended motion to the officers recommendation to include item 3.17.3.1.1 a, b, c, and d.in relation to homelessness and affordable housing.*

That Council:

- 3.17.3.1.1 That the 2025/26 funding allocation be distributed as follows:

- a) An immediate one-off allocation of \$150k for St Kilda Community Housing to repurpose a house for rough sleepers in St Kilda.

**A vote was taken and PART A of the MOTION was CARRIED.**

**Cr Halliday called for a DIVISION.**

**FOR: Crs Hardy, Makin, Mears, Halliday, Cunsolo, Crawford, Buckingham and Thomann**

**AGAINST: Cr Jay**

**PART A of the MOTION was CARRIED.**

- b) An immediate one-off allocation of \$60k for Southside Justice to provide funding for a lawyer to assist with legal issues associated with housing instability.

**A vote was taken and PART B of the MOTION was LOST**

**Cr Halliday called for a DIVISION.**

**FOR: Crs Halliday, Crawford and Buckingham, Cunsolo**

**AGAINST: Crs Jay, Hardy, Makin, Mears, and Thomann**

**PART B of the MOTION was LOST.**

# MINUTES - SPECIAL MEETING OF THE PORT PHILLIP CITY COUNCIL - 23 JUNE 2025



- c) An immediate one-off allocation of \$15k for Bridge It to help with continuing to house and support young women who have had disadvantaged lives

**A vote was taken and PART C of the MOTION was LOST.**

**Cr Halliday called for a DIVISION.**

**FOR: Crs Halliday, Cunsolo, Crawford and Buckingham**

**AGAINST: Crs Jay, Hardy, Makin, Mears and Thomann**

**PART C of the MOTION was LOST.**

- d) That the remaining \$450,000 of 2025/26 funding be allocated following the completion of the new Homelessness and Affordable Housing Strategy.

**A vote was taken and PART D of the MOTION was CARRIED unanimously.**

That Council:

## PART 1:

- 3.1 Notes the Emergency Services and Volunteers Fund (ESVF) will replace the Fire Services Property Levy (FSPL) starting 1 July 2025. This new levy will be collected by council and included in the rates notices, but it is a State Government tax/charge, NOT a council-imposed fee.
- 3.2 For 2025/26, it is estimated that this levy will raise approximately \$37.7 million from ratepayers in the municipality, a sharp 57 percent increase from \$24 million in 2024/25.
- 3.3 Key changes of the ESVF for 2025/26 include:
  - 3.3.1 Fixed component of the ESVF to increase by 3 percent depending on property type.
  - 3.3.2 Variable component of the ESVF to increase 64 percent for industrial properties and 100 percent for residential and commercial properties.
  - 3.3.3 Majority of residential properties will see an increase between \$50 to \$150 depending on the value of their property, which is significantly greater than the rates cap increase of 3 percent.
- 3.4 Notes Council has raised significant concerns about the financial burden this legislation will impose on the community. In addition, officers will likely to be responsible for explaining and justifying the substantial taxation increase introduced by the State Government.
- 3.5 Notes that the community should direct ESVF enquiries to this email address [esvf@dtf.vic.gov.au](mailto:esvf@dtf.vic.gov.au) and refer to fact sheet from the State Government (Attachment 10).

**A vote was taken and PART 1 of the MOTION was CARRIED**

**Cr Halliday called for a DIVISION.**

**FOR: Crs Hardy, Makin, Mears, Halliday, Cunsolo, Crawford, Buckingham and Thomann**

# MINUTES - SPECIAL MEETING OF THE PORT PHILLIP CITY COUNCIL - 23 JUNE 2025



**AGAINST: Cr Jay**

**PART 1 of the MOTION was CARRIED.**

## PART 2A:

3.6 Endorses a 3.0 percent average rate increase for 2025/26 which is consistent with the rates cap set by the Victorian Government.

**A vote was taken and PART 2A of the MOTION was CARRIED**

**Cr Halliday called for a DIVISION.**

**FOR: Crs Makin, Halliday, Cunsolo, Crawford, Buckingham and Thomann**

**AGAINST: Crs Jay, Hardy and Mears**

**PART 2A of the MOTION was CARRIED.**

## PART 2B:

3.7 Declares rates for Budget 2025/26 as required by Section 94 of the Local Government Act as follows:

3.7.1 An amount of \$141,255,506 to be raised by general rates for the period 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026.

3.7.2 Differential rates in the dollar based on type or class of land on the 2025 Capital Improved Value of all rateable properties within the municipality:

Type or class of land	Rate per \$ Capital Improved Value
General rate for rateable residential land	0.001796
General rate for rateable commercial land	0.002183
General rate for rateable industrial land	0.002159
General rate for rateable vacant land	0.005388
General rate for rateable derelict land	0.007184
General rate for rateable unactivated retail land	0.007184

3.7.3 The properties on Attachment 3 to be "Recreational and Cultural Lands" and that the level of general rates for these properties be set in accordance with percentages of the general rate also shown in this attachment.

3.7.4 Grants a rebate equivalent to half the general rate for the elderly persons flats as outlined in Attachment 4, in accordance with the agreement between Council and the Ministry of Housing.

3.7.5 Subject to the consent of the Minister for Local Government, treats any person(s) who has been excused the prescribed amount of the general rate for the year ending 30 June 2025 in accordance with the State Concessions Act 2004 as being similarly eligible for 2025/26.

3.8 Recognises the cost of living pressures, continues to provide targeted support to the community through:

# MINUTES - SPECIAL MEETING OF THE PORT PHILLIP CITY COUNCIL - 23 JUNE 2025



- 3.8.1 One-off rate waivers up to a maximum of \$750 or 50 per cent of the general rates and charges imposed on rateable land, whichever is less, in cases of extreme financial hardship, on application to the Chief Financial Officer.
- 3.8.2 Increasing the Council-funded pensioner rates rebate by 4.5 per cent to \$230 in 2025/26 – the City of Port Phillip is one of the few councils that offers this scheme in addition to the State Government rebate.
- 3.9 Declares services charges for Budget 2025/26 as required by Section 94 of the Local Government Act as follows:
- 3.9.1 An amount of \$16,997,477 of net waste service charges for the period 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026.
- 3.9.2 A default waste charge for all rateable properties of \$230.30 and a kerbside FOGO collection charge for single unit dwellings of \$77.00.
- 3.9.3 An annual garbage charge of \$500.00 per property on all non-rateable properties that receive waste management services from the City of Port Phillip. Notes additional charges may apply for multiple waste bins.
- 3.9.4 An annual garbage bin surcharge of \$290.00 for properties that are provided with an upsize 240-litre bin for the collection of non-recyclable waste.
- 3.9.5 A new fee for additional 120-litre garbage bins of \$290.00 per bin (same cost for an upsize 120-litre to 240-litre bin)
- 3.9.6 An 80-litre waste bin annual rebate of \$82.00 for properties that take up a small waste bin.
- 3.9.7 A private waste collection rebate of \$89.00 for residential properties that have private collection for waste.
- 3.10 Notes the previously declared special rate schemes for 2025/26:
- 3.10.1 Port Melbourne Business Precinct for marketing, management and business development to the maximum of \$320,000.
- 3.10.2 Carlisle Street Business Precinct for the purpose of marketing, promotion, business development and centre management expenses up to the maximum of \$200,000.
- 3.10.3 Fitzroy Street and Environs Business Precinct for marketing, management and business development to the maximum of \$200,000
- 3.10.4 Acland Street Village Business Precinct for marketing, management and business development to the maximum of \$187,320.
- 3.11 Adopts the following payment dates and due dates for rates and associated charges:
- | Payment Type | Description                | Due Date      | Interest from       |
|--------------|----------------------------|---------------|---------------------|
|              | Full Payment               | 15 Feb, 2026  | Same as instalments |
|              | 1 <sup>st</sup> Instalment | 30 Sept, 2025 | 1 Oct, 2025         |
|              | 2 <sup>nd</sup> Instalment | 30 Nov, 2025  | 1 Dec, 2025         |
|              | 3 <sup>rd</sup> Instalment | 28 Feb, 2026  | 1 Mar, 2026         |
|              | 4 <sup>th</sup> Instalment | 31 May, 2026  | 1 Jun, 2026         |
- 3.12 Authorises the Chief Financial Officer and the Coordinator Revenue and Valuations to collect all rates and charges and the Emergency Services and Volunteers Fund.

# MINUTES - SPECIAL MEETING OF THE PORT PHILLIP CITY COUNCIL - 23 JUNE 2025



- 3.13 Notes that the penalty interest rate set in accordance with the Penalty Interest Rates Act 1983 at the prescribed rate (10 percent) as at 1 July 2025 fixed by the Governor in Council for general rates and charges that remain unpaid after the payment dates prescribed by the Governor in Council.

**A vote was taken and PART 2B was CARRIED.**

**Cr Halliday called for a DIVISION.**

**FOR: Crs Makin, Mears, Halliday, Cunsolo, Crawford, Buckingham and Thomann**

**AGAINST: Crs Jay and Hardy**

**PART 2B of the MOTION was CARRIED.**

## PART 3A:

- 3.14 Notes the community consultation on the draft Plan for Port Phillip 2025-35 including Budget 2025/26 took place from 17 April to 18 May 2025, and the feedback is summarised in Section 5 of this report and detail provided in Attachment 6.
- 3.15 Directs Officers to respond in writing to thank all those that have made formal written submissions and to advise them of the outcome of Council's decision.
- 3.16 Having considered all the submissions received and those heard at the Council Meeting of 13 May 2025, and having completed its budget deliberations, agrees to include the following community requests into the Budget 2025/26 in addition to those already included as part of the draft Budget 2025/26:
- 3.16.1 Clarendon & Coventry Street Business Association – To provide total one-off funding of \$40,000 to support the establishment of a special rating scheme.
  - 3.16.2 Fishermans Bend Business Forum – To provide total one-off funding of \$15,000 to support the development of a strategic and operation plan and information sharing sessions.
  - 3.16.3 Port Melbourne Bowls Club – To provide one off funding of up to \$295,000 (funded from the Asset Renewal Fund) designated for improvements that enhance female amenities and ensure compliance with Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) standards for accessible toilets. This funding is contingent upon the club providing a matching financial contribution of an equivalent amount. The commitment aligns with Council's previous support provided to the Albert Park Bowls Club for similar pavilion upgrades.
- 3.17 In response to Community Panel recommendations and reflecting on updated Council priorities and the updated Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan, Budget 2025/26 includes provision for the following items:
- 3.17.1 Additional \$250,000 ongoing budget to fund activities addressing loneliness and isolation, social connection and combating discrimination and racism and antisemitism including:
    - 3.17.1.1 \$43,000 to increase base funding to South Port Day Links to \$100,000 from 2025/26 for two years.
    - 3.17.1.2 \$60,000 funding for a dedicated volunteer coordinator at South Port Community Centre to strengthen local volunteer organisations from 2025/26 for two years.



# MINUTES - SPECIAL MEETING OF THE PORT PHILLIP CITY COUNCIL - 23 JUNE 2025



- 3.17.1.3 \$25,000 one off allocation to fast track the delivery of the Multicultural Strategy development.
- 3.17.1.4 \$15,000 to support events and activities aligned with key cultural and community dates.
- 3.17.1.5 The remaining \$88,000 to be included in budget 2025/26 with allocations to be determined by Council resolution.
- 3.17.2 Additional \$250,000 ongoing budget to fund new actions emanating from the community safety roundtable and the community safety plan, initial allocations include:
  - 3.17.2.1 \$32,000 in 2025/26 to provide additional funding to Launch Housing to increase their existing service agreement to better contribute to overhead costs.
  - 3.17.2.2 \$60,000 in 2025/26 to fund Ngwala to partner in supporting rough sleepers and providing outreach and service coordination for the First Nations community.
  - 3.17.2.3 The remaining \$158,000 to be included in budget 2025/26 with allocations to be determined by Council resolution during 2025/26 following further development of the delegated Community Safety Round Table recommendations and/or the completion of public engagement on the Community Safety Plan and the Affordable Housing and Homelessness Strategy.

**A vote was taken and PART 3A was CARRIED unanimously.**

## PART 3B:

- 3.17.3 Provisional funding support for affordable housing within the municipality totalling \$5.3 million over the 10-years. The additional allocation is subject to the development of the new Homelessness and Affordable Housing Strategy:

**A vote was taken and PART 3B of the MOTION was CARRIED.**

**Cr Makin called for a DIVISION.**

**FOR:** Crs Hardy, Makin, Mears, Halliday, Cunsolo, Crawford, Buckingham and Thomann

**AGAINST:** Cr Jay

**PART 3B of the MOTION was CARRIED.**

## PART 3C:

- 3.17.4 Additional \$200,000 ongoing budget to uplift city amenity including increased street cleaning and pressure washing of main streets across the city.
- 3.17.5 Additional \$400,000 (\$100,000 ongoing) to improving greening throughout the city including the development of urban forest precinct plans.
- 3.17.6 Re-prioritisation of \$450,000 from the St Kilda Festival to fund greater investment in local arts and community events including the following allocations:
  - 3.17.6.1 \$105,000 for one year to increase current Cultural Development Fund – Key Art Organisations allocations by \$15,000.



# MINUTES - SPECIAL MEETING OF THE PORT PHILLIP CITY COUNCIL - 23 JUNE 2025



- 3.17.6.2 \$50,000 for one year to increase the Cultural Development Fund – Festivals and Events.
- 3.17.6.3 \$25,000 for the National Theatre for one year whilst they wait for the next competitive Cultural Development Fund – Key Organisations round.
- 3.17.6.4 The remaining \$270,000 to be included in budget 2025/26 with allocations to be determined by Council resolution.
- 3.17.7 Reinstate \$15,000 annual funding for Friends of Suai until the end of the friendship in 2030.
- 3.17.8 Provides Wild at Heart \$9,000 per annum for two years to provide a waiver for venue hire fees at Sol Green.
- 3.17.9 Provides Port Phillip Community Group a 2-year extension (expiring June 2027) for their service agreement and delivery of Share the Food Program (including warehouse rental) totalling \$739,440 per year.
- 3.17.10 Provides South Port Community Centre a 2-year extension (expiring June 2027) for their service agreement totalling \$143,040 per year.

**A vote was taken and PART 3C of the MOTION was CARRIED**

**Cr Halliday called for a DIVISION.**

**FOR: Crs Hardy, Makin, Mears, Halliday, Cunsolo, Crawford, Buckingham and Thomann**

**AGAINST: Cr Jay**

**PART 3C of the MOTION was CARRIED.**

*The Mayor adjourned the meeting for a break at 7:57pm.*

*The meeting resumed at 8:01pm.*

## PART 3B (2)

- 3.17.3 Provisional funding support for affordable housing within the municipality totalling \$5.3 million over the 10-years. The additional allocation is subject to the development of the new Homelessness and Affordable Housing Strategy:
  - 3.17.3.1 \$600,000 per year for 2025/26 to 2027/28 (inclusive) funded from future property sales and the 2024/25 favourable cash surplus.
  - 3.17.3.2 \$500,000 per year for the remaining seven years of the Council funded from reduced contributions to the municipal growth fund.

**A vote was taken and PART 3B of the MOTION was CARRIED unanimously.**

## PART 4

- 3.18 Notes the full year forecast for 2024/25 has improved from \$1.53 million to \$3.3 million since release of the draft Budget.
- 3.19 Notes the financial changes identified and incorporated into the proposed Budget 2025/26 in Attachment 2.

# MINUTES - SPECIAL MEETING OF THE PORT PHILLIP CITY COUNCIL - 23 JUNE 2025



- 3.20 Notes that the Budget 2025/26 proposed by Officers includes a cumulative cash surplus of \$0.54 million providing contingency reflective of the current economic operating environment.
- 3.21 Notes that Budget 2025/26 does not contain any new borrowings.
- 3.22 In accordance with section 115 of the Act, Council intends to lease the following properties on the terms listed as follows:

Property Address	Permitted Use	Commencing Rent (Excluding GST)	Lease Term
147 Liardet Street, Port Melbourne	Commercial	Market Rent	Five (5) Years
71A Acland Street, St Kilda	Commercial / Hospitality	Market Rent	Up to Twenty-One (21) Years
129 Beaconsfield Parade, Albert Park	Commercial	Market Rent	Up to Six (6) Years

**A vote was taken and PART 4 of the MOTION was CARRIED**

**Cr Halliday called for a DIVISION.**

**FOR:** Crs Hardy, Makin, Mears, Halliday, Cunsolo, Crawford, Buckingham and Thomann

**AGAINST:** Cr Jay

**PART 4 of the MOTION was CARRIED.**

## PART 5

- 3.23 Adopts the updated Rating Strategy 2025-29 (Attachment 5).
- 3.24 Notes that an exemption has been granted from the Department of Health to preparing a stand-alone Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan based on the draft Plan for Port Phillip that Council has endorsed for community engagement. This will permit the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan to be incorporated into the Plan for Port Phillip (including budget) 2025-35.
- 3.25 Adopts the Plan for Port Phillip 2025-35, inclusive of the Community Vision, Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan, Asset Plan, (10-year) Financial Plan, Revenue and Rating Plan, and the Budget 2025/26 (including the schedule of fees and charges) as set out in Attachment 1, and incorporates all changes made by resolution in this meeting.
- 3.25.1 Authorises the CEO, or their delegate to implement a long daycare fee at North St Kilda Children's Centre, between the range of \$159.00-\$162.00 per day during the renovation period in 2025/26.
- 3.26 Notes that the Plan for Port Phillip 2025-35 replaces the current Council Plan 2021-31, adopted by Council on 26 June 2024.
- 3.27 Authorises the Chief Executive Officer, or their delegate, to make amendments to the Plan for Port Phillip (including budget) 2025-35 (Attachment 1) to reflect any changes

# MINUTES - SPECIAL MEETING OF THE PORT PHILLIP CITY COUNCIL - 23 JUNE 2025



through resolutions at this meeting, and to make minor editorial adjustments and corrections to the document to prepare for publication and distribution.

**A vote was taken and PART 5 of the MOTION was CARRIED**

**Cr Halliday called for a DIVISION.**

**FOR: Crs Hardy, Makin, Mears, Halliday, Cunsolo, Crawford, Buckingham and Thomann**

**AGAINST: Cr Jay**

**PART 5 of the MOTION was CARRIED.**

As there was no further business the meeting closed at 8:08pm.

Confirmed: 2 July 2025

Chairperson \_\_\_\_\_