

AGENDA



Meeting of Council

To be held via Zoom

On

Monday 25 October 2021 at 7:00 PM

Order of Business

- 1 Apologies And Requests For Leave Of Absence.....5
- 2 Declarations Of Conflict Of Interest.....5
- 3 Confirmation Of Minutes.....5
- 4 Presentations, Petitions And Memorials5
- 5 Reports By Councillors.....5
- 6 City Strategy And Integrity Officers’ Reports For Consideration6
 - 6.1 Report of Planning Applications Decided Under Delegation 1 September 2021 to 30
September 20216
 - 6.2 Norvel Estate S173 Agreement and Urban Design Guidelines13
 - 6.3 Endorsement of Draft Green Areas and Rural Strategy (GARS) for Community Consultation
.....86
 - 6.4 Draft 2021-2025 Domestic Animal Management Plan215
- 7 Public Question Time.....341
- 8 Infrastructure Officers’ Reports For Consideration342
- 9 Connected Communities Officers’ Reports For Consideration.....343
 - 9.1 Minor Grants Program 2021-22 Monthly Report343

- 9.2 Community Development Fund Grant Recommendations 2021-22365
- 9.3 Knox COVID-19 Household Survey Results381
- 9.4 COVID-19 Pandemic Community and Business Support453
- 9.5 Knox Hockey Update.....576
- 9.6 Contract 2790 - Management of Knox Skate and BMX Facilities at Gilbert Park.....584
- 10 Office Of The CEO Reports For Consideration589
 - 10.1 Loan Borrowings589
 - 10.2 ICT Governance Committee Terms of Reference592
 - 10.3 Adoption of the Community Plan 2021-2031, Council Plan 2021-2025 & Financial Plan
 - 2021-2031601
- 11 City Centre Reports For Consideration705
 - 11.1 State and Federal Government Advocacy Requirements705
- 12 Items For Information.....714
 - 12.1 Capital Works Program Report714
 - 12.2 ICT Capital Works Report737
- 13 Notices Of Motion742

14 Supplementary Items.....742

15 Urgent Business742

16 Questions Without Notice742

17 Confidential Items.....742

 17.1 Chief Executive Officer Performance Evaluation Committee - Engagement of Independent
 Advisor742

Bruce Dobson
Chief Executive Officer

6.4 Draft 2021-2025 Domestic Animal Management Plan

SUMMARY: Coordinator Projects and Improvement, Janet Simmonds

Council's 2017-2021 Domestic Animal Management Plan ('the current DAM Plan') is due to expire in December 2021. This report presents the draft 2021-2025 Domestic Animal Management Plan ('the draft DAM Plan') for endorsement, prior to proceeding to the final stage of community consultation. The draft DAM Plan has been developed following an extensive community consultation campaign undertaken during July - August 2021.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Endorses the draft 2021-2025 Domestic Animal Management Plan (Attachment 1) for the purposes of community consultation;
2. Notes the community feedback provided in the phase 1 consultation (Attachment 2); and
3. Notes that Phase 2 community consultation on the draft Domestic Animal Management Plan will occur from 28 October to 28 November 2021, and that feedback will be considered prior to finalising the Plan.

1. INTRODUCTION

Section 68A(1) of the Domestic Animals Act 1994 requires that every council prepare a Domestic Animal Management Plan (DAM Plan) every 4 years. The 2021-2025 DAM Plan, as in previous Plans, must address specific legislated matters with regards to the ownership of cats and dogs, and presented in line with the Plan template issued by the Victorian Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions (DJPR).

Each council's DAM Plan must outline its programs, services and strategies that:

- Promote and encourage responsible ownership of dogs and cats;
- Encourage the registration and identification of dogs and cats;
- Minimise the risk of attacks by dogs on people and animals;
- Minimise the potential for dogs and cats to create a nuisance;
- Address specific issues including over-population and high euthanasia rates of cats and dogs; and the management of dangerous, menacing and restricted breed dogs in the municipality;
- Outline programs for the training of Council's authorised officers to ensure they can properly administer and enforce the requirements of the Act; and
- Ensure the Act, the regulations and any related legislation are complied with by the community.

Council's current 2017-2021 DAM Plan received a letter of commendation from the Secretary of the former Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources in May 2019 which described the plan as "an outstanding and thorough DAMP" and specifically noting "I was very pleased to see Council's inclusion of the benefits of pet ownership and how it links to healthy communities". As Council's current DAM Plan is of a recognised high standard, the updates required to the Plan for the next 4 years are not anticipated to be extensive – subject to consultation and feedback from community, relevant stakeholders and Councillors.

2. DISCUSSION

The draft 2021-2025 Domestic Animal Management Plan (Attachment 1) has been developed following the phase 1 community engagement campaign held in July/ August 2021, to gather feedback on the current DAM Plan, and emerging issues for the next Plan. Council received a very high level of community participation in this engagement, as outlined in the following table:

Engagement activity	Responses
Community survey	3,256
Email submissions	32
One-on-one consultations (on request)	25
Domestic animal business survey	4

Attachment 2 to this report provides an Engagement Summary Report – Phase 1, which summarises the community engagement approach and the findings/analysis of the feedback provided. The report also outlines the high-level themes of community concern and suggestions of community priority for animal management services in the municipality.

The draft DAM Plan has been updated to reflect Council's current animal management services, and has also been informed following benchmarking of neighbouring council's plans and activities. As requested by Council in the Notice of Motion No. 117 resolved at the Ordinary meeting of Council on 24 May 2021, the development of the draft DAM Plan includes a review of Knox's approach to managing dogs off leash across the municipality. Attachment 3 provides information requested in the Notice of Motion No. 117, including the history of Knox's dog off lead arrangements and benchmarking of neighbouring council dog off lead arrangements. The draft DAM Plan proposes to enhance community education and signage regarding the dogs off lead arrangements in Knox, which was identified in the recent community consultation that:

- Over 80% of respondents did not know that all parks and reserves in Knox are off-leash areas for dogs, for the exception of 9 designated on-lead parks
- Only 26.3% of respondents knew what reserves are dog off-leash and on-leash areas in Knox; and
- Approx. 23% of respondents did not know that dog owners must be able to control their dog by hand or voice control when off lead in Knox.

The draft DAM Plan also plans to undertake an annual review of Council's dog in public places order, and update it as required, to ensure it continues to meet our community's needs and expectations.

The draft DAM Plan proposes to build upon the current Plan initiatives and services, to better support the community in regards to management of cats and dogs in the municipality. Some of the key new initiatives proposed in the draft plan include:

- The provision of free/ discounted cat and dog desexing to eligible vulnerable and/or disadvantaged residents in 2022
- The introduction of a 24 hour cat curfew, to keep cats safe whilst also reducing issues that wandering cats can have on neighbours and native wildlife
- Development of an annual communication plan including alternative signage options, to assist with communicating key messages around responsible pet ownership

- The annual animal registration process be improved through increased public education activities and incentives to increase the numbers of animal registrations and promote the overall value proposition of animal registration; and
- Exploring the introduction of a pet companionship program, targeted at socially isolated and lonely older persons living alone.

Subject to Council endorsement, the draft 2021-2025 DAM Plan is proposed to be released for public exhibition and feedback over a 4 week period in November – being the phase 2 community consultation on this Plan. Phase 2 consultation will be accompanied by a comprehensive communication campaign, developed in consultation with Council’s Communications department.

Following the phase 2 consultation, it is proposed that a final 2021-2025 DAM Plan will be prepared and presented to Council for consideration in late 2020/ early 2021. An extension will be sought from the Secretary of the Victorian Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions (DJPR) via Animal Welfare Victoria, due to the final 2021-2025 DAM Plan not being submitted by the 4 December 2021 deadline. A copy of the approved 2021-2025 DAM Plan is required to be sent to the Secretary of DJPR in accordance with Section 68A(3)(b) of the Domestic Animals Act 1994.

3. CONSULTATION

Consultation is an essential component of the review and creation of the new Plan, to obtain input and feedback on the effectiveness of the current animal management services, and to identify emerging community issues.

The community engagement approach for the development of Council’s 2021-2025 DAM Plan includes two rounds of engagement:

- Phase 1 – consultation to gather feedback from a broad range of stakeholders on their feedback on the current DAM Plan, and ideas for the next Plan (which was conducted in July 2021); and
- Phase 2 – consultation to gather feedback on the draft 2021-2025 DAM Plan (scheduled for November 2021 – subject to Council approval).

Phase 1 of the community consultation ran from the 2nd July to 1st August 2021 (31 days) and had a very high level of participation by our community, with over 3,300 responses provided across the range of consultation methods including community and animal business surveys, email submissions and one-on-one consultations undertaken with community members upon request. The details and outcomes from this consultation are outlined in the Engagement summary report – phase 1 report (Attachment 2).

Internal stakeholder consultation sessions were also held with various departments of Council during August 2021, and included an all-day workshop with the Community Laws and Prosecution staff, and sessions held with representatives from Council’s Leisure Services, Community Access and Support, Operations (Sportsfield, Reserves and Capital works) and Customer Service departments. A dedicated session was also held with the CEO of Animal Aid (Council’s Animal Pound provider) during June, to obtain feedback on a range of initiatives to support objectives of the DAM Plan including increased animal rehoming, microchipping and reduced euthanasia of animals.

Subject to Council approval, the draft 2021-2025 DAM Plan is proposed to be published for public exhibition and feedback from 28 October to 28 November 2021 – being the Phase 2 community consultation on this Plan. Feedback from this consultation will inform further changes ahead of the plan being finalised.

4. ENVIRONMENTAL/AMENITY ISSUES

The 2021-2025 DAM Plan will review and evaluate the current animal management services, and through consideration community engagement feedback and benchmarking, will consider amendments to Council's programs that provide safety, amenity and protection of the environment within the municipality.

Both the current and next DAM Plan are legislatively required to have objectives and initiatives that specifically relate to the:

- Reduction and management of nuisances caused by dogs and cats in the community; and
- Reducing incidents of dogs wandering at large and dogs attacks, and ensuring dogs are adequately contained.

The initiatives referenced in the draft DAM Plan support principles of the community and pets living in harmony together – where issues and nuisances caused by cats and dogs are minimised. The dogs in public spaces order also supports the sharing of Council's open spaces (reserves, parks and sports grounds) for use by both pet owners to exercise their animals, in a way that does not adversely impact the use of these public open spaces by the greater community.

5. FINANCIAL & ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS

As published on the Victorian Government Know Your Council website, Knox's animal management services for 2019-20 cost \$5.35 per person (population based), being lower than the 'Similar Council' comparison of \$6.01 and substantially lower than the 'All Council' average cost of \$12.54 per person.

Council's current animal management services are predominantly funded by animal registration fee income, and supplemented by budget through other Council income sources, primarily rates revenue. Council collected in excess of \$1.418 million in cat and dog registration fees income in 2020-21, and also collects in excess of \$100,000 per year in fine income relating to animal non-compliance and enforcement (fine amounts are set by State Government). The setting of the animal registration fees are considered and approved during the Annual Budget process, and any decision to introduce or amend registration fees to support animal management initiatives through this Plan will need to be costed and incorporated into future Annual Budget processes.

A new initiative for 2022 in the draft Plan is a discounted dog and cat desexing program for vulnerable and/or disadvantaged Knox residents, funded by a \$25,000 State Government grant recently awarded to Knox Council. Outside of this one-off grant funding, the scope of the 2021-2025 DAM Plan is to continue to provide Council's animal management services within existing resources and budget allocations. If Council recommends to expand or introduce new services through this next Plan, any proposal will be supported by a Budget and Resource Planning Business case for Council consideration as part of the next Annual Budget cycle.

The review and development of the 2021-2025 DAM Plan is being undertaken within existing budget and resources.

6. SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The draft DAM Plan seeks to increase responsible pet ownership within Knox, and compliance with legislation related to pet ownership. Currently one in every three households in Knox own a registered cat or dog, which is an underestimate of the actual level of ownership - estimated to be

50% of all households in the municipality. Cat and dog ownership provides a range of health, wellbeing and social benefits to the owners, families and friends – including the social networks and community connectedness that comes through the participation in community groups, training classes and animal organisations by cat or dog owners.

The initiatives in the draft DAM Plan are expected to encourage and support the responsible ownership of cats and dogs in the community, and provide mechanisms to address any safety and amenity issues caused by cats or dogs in the municipality. The review and development of the draft DAM Plan has considered possible social implications that could arise from the amendment or introduction of specific animal management initiatives in the municipality.

7. RELEVANCE TO KNOX COMMUNITY AND COUNCIL PLAN 2017-2021

Goal 4 - We are safe and secure

Strategy 4.4 - Protect and promote public health, safety and amenity

Goal 8 - We have confidence in decision making

Strategy 8.2 - Enable the community to participate in a wide range of engagement activities

8. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The officers contributing to and responsible for this report have no conflicts of interest requiring disclosure under Chapter 5 of the Governance Rules of Knox City Council.

9. CONCLUSION

The approval of the draft 2021-2025 Domestic Animal Management Plan for public exhibition and comment, provides the opportunity for the community to engage and inform the services and strategies regarding dog and cat ownership for the next four years. The preparation of the draft DAM Plan will ensure Council fulfills its legislative requirement to prepare a plan every four years.

10. CONFIDENTIALITY

There is no content in this report that meets the definition of confidential information from the Local Government Act 2020.

Report Prepared By: Coordinator Projects and Improvement, Janet Simmonds

Report Authorised By: Director, City Strategy and Integrity, Matt Kelleher

Attachments

1. Attachment 1 - Draft Domestic Animal Management Plan 2021-2025 [6.4.1 - 69 pages]
2. Attachment 2 - Engagement summary report - phase 1 - August 2021 [6.4.2 - 47 pages]
3. Attachment 3 - Dogs off Leash - Notice of Motion 117 [6.4.3 - 5 pages]



KNOX
your city

Knox City Council

Domestic Animal Management Plan

2021-2025



Executive summary

The Knox City Council Domestic Animal Management Plan (DAM Plan) has been developed in line with the legislative requirement that all councils develop a DAM Plan every four years. The DAM Plan details Council's strategies for the management of dogs and cats, including providing education to the community, promoting responsible pet ownership, and minimising problems generated by irresponsible pet owners.

Knox City Council has used a consultative approach to the development of this Plan to consider opinions and feedback from residents, local domestic animal businesses and other relevant stakeholders. Through the consultation process many Knox residents emphasised that dogs and cats are important members of their family.

Animal management is now a specialised industry that has evolved from merely collecting stray dogs and addressing compliance issues. Council plays a key role in promoting responsible animal ownership in the community, essential to maintaining sustainable communities and a healthy environment.

The Plan broadly outlines the following nine areas of focus:

1. Training of authorised officers;
2. Responsible Pet ownership;
3. Registration and identification;
4. Nuisances;
5. Dog attacks;
6. Dangerous, menacing and restricted breed dogs;
7. Overpopulation and high euthanasia;
8. Domestic animal businesses; and
9. Other matters (e.g. Council Orders).

In addition to many ongoing actions that are part of Knox's daily animal management activities, this Plan introduces the following key Plan actions:

- The annual animal registration process be improved through increased public education activities and incentives to increase the numbers of animal registrations and promote the overall value proposition of animal registration.
- Provide free/discounted cat and dog desexing to eligible vulnerable and/or disadvantaged residents.
- The introduction of a 24 hour cat curfew.
- Explore the introduction of a Pet Companionship program, targeted at socially isolated and lonely older persons living alone.
- Development of an annual communication plan including alternative signage options, to assist with communicating key messages around responsible pet ownership.

The Plan also considers approaches that will aim to ensure that dog attacks and dangerous, menacing and restricted breed dog matters are promptly dealt with, in line with community expectations.

This plan introduces the development of a dog attack kit, to provide greater support and transparency of the process for all those involved (including the victim and offending dog owner).

62% of homes in Australia have a pet (exceeded only by the US and New Zealand). 3.6 million Australian homes have a dog, and 2.9 million homes have a cat.

Source: Pets in Australia: a national survey of Pets and People, 2019, Animal Medicines Australia

Contents

Executive summary	2
Introduction	4
Domestic animal statistics and data	5
Domestic Animal Management Plans	7
1. Training of authorised officers	8
2. Responsible pet ownership	14
3. Registrations and identification	22
4. Nuisance	30
5. Dog attacks	38
6. Dangerous, menacing and restricted breed dogs	431
7. Overpopulation and high euthanasia	49
8. Domestic animal businesses	56
9. Other matters	59
10. Annual review of plan and annual reporting	64
11. Attachments	67

Quotes published in this document were received from the
Knox City Council Domestic Animal Management Plan Community Survey, July/August 2021

Introduction

Knox is a municipality located approximately 25kms from the Melbourne GPO. Knox is one of the most populous municipalities in Victoria with over 165,000 residents living in eleven localities.

Knox residents are proud of their city's leafy green image. They are protective of the nearby Foothills and other special places of biological significance. It is a community concerned for the welfare of others with the 2020 Municipal Survey showing that nine in ten Knox residents report that it is important that the environment is cared for, and nine in ten also reporting that it is important to support those most in need.

The Knox community is diverse, at the 2016 Census Knox was home to residents from 140 different countries who speak more than 120 different languages, with 30% (in excess of 46,000) born overseas and 25% (almost 39,000) speaking a language other than English at home.

Knox has an area spanning 114 square kilometres and includes the suburbs of Ferntree Gully, Upper Ferntree Gully, Boronia, The Basin, Rowville, Wantirna, Wantirna South, Lysterfield, Knoxfield, Scoresby and Bayswater. In 2019, an estimated 18% of the Knox population were children aged less than 15 years old and 28% were aged 55 years and older. 4.8% of the population in Knox require assistance in their day to day lives due to disability. The number of couple-only and lone person households in Knox is forecast to surpass the number of families with children in 2024, and it is forecast that the total population for the municipality will reach almost 179,000 by 2031.

As at September 2021, Knox had 18,233 dogs registered and 7,294 cats registered. For the 2020/2021 registration period, Knox had a total of 28 domestic animal businesses registered.

They included:

- 7 pet shops
- 10 dog training businesses
- 9 boarding facilities
- 1 animal shelter/ pound
- 1 animal breeding/ rearing facility.

Council's Community Laws team is part of the City Safety and Health Department and is part of the broader City Strategy & Integrity Directorate. Community Laws is aligned to the City Safety and Health values and promotes and protects the safety, health and amenity of the community so the objectives of the Knox Vision can be realised. This will be achieved through integrated planning, community education and engagement, service provision, community capacity building, regulation and enforcement.

Community Laws delivers varied departmental roles within Council, which includes the education and enforcement of state and local legislation. The department's roles include animal management, traffic enforcement, local laws and school crossing supervision.

The Community Laws Department consists of the following authorised Animal Management Officers:

- 1 Coordinator, Community Laws
- 1 Team Leader Community Laws and Animal Management
- 1 Team Leader, Parking Management
- 6 Community Laws/ Animal Management Officers.

The department is further supported by a dedicated business support and prosecutions team.



Pets add so much more to a home. 🗨️

Domestic animal statistics and data – City of Knox

The table below provides a snapshot of the domestic animal management services provided by Council in 2020-21, and as previously reported in prior Domestic Animal Management Plans:

	2012-2013	2016-2017	2020-2021
Population	>154,000	>157,000	>165,000
No. of authorised animal management officers	10	9	9
Number of Domestic Animal Businesses	22	22	28
Dogs in Knox			
No. of registered dogs (total)	18,805	18,839	18,233 at Sept 2021
No. of registered restricted breed dogs	6	3	1
No. of registered declared menacing dogs	3	1	1
No. of registered declared dangerous dogs	6	6	11
Dogs impounded at the pound	784	630	326
Dogs reclaimed from pound	579	501	275
Dogs adopted	130	71	29
Dogs reclaimed by owner or adopted %	90.4%	90.8%	93.3%
Dogs euthanised	98	39	18
Dogs euthanised %	12.5%	6.2%	5.5%
Customer requests responded to:			
• Dogs - Barking	597	394	51
• Dogs - Pick up	799	601	384
• Dogs - Wandering at large	453	266	169
• Dog - Attacks	122	95	140
• Dog - Rush	75	47	39
Cats in Knox			
No. of registered cats (total)	5,878	6,266	7,294 at Sept 2021
Cats impounded at the pound	436	402	296
Cats reclaimed from pound	59	65	61
Cats adopted	236	215	147
Cats reclaimed by owner or adopted %	67.7%	69.7%	70.3%
Cats euthanised	142	88	76
Cats euthanised %	32.6%	21.9%	26.7%
Customer requests responded to:			
• Cat cage requests	196	150	100
• Cats picked up	244	199	182

** Please note that the Knox City Council 'Council and Community Plan' is currently under development and pending finalisation and council approval. This document will be updated to ensure that it aligns with the new plan when it is finalised **

Development of this Plan

The development of this Plan was informed by community and stakeholder consultation, feedback from our Councillors, Council staff experiences, research and benchmarking. This Plan builds on the previous Plans, with the aim to deliver better animal management services for the Knox municipality for the next 4 years.

The community engagement for the development of this plan included two rounds of consultation:

- Phase 1 – consultation to gather feedback from a broad range of stakeholders on their feedback on the current 2017-2021 Plan, and ideas of the next Plan (July/ August 2021); and
- Phase 2 – consultation to gather feedback on the draft 2021-2025 Plan (scheduled for November 2021).

The Phase 1 engagement undertook consultation with the local community and domestic animal businesses, to hear our community's views on how cats and dogs are managed in the Knox municipality, including feedback on Council's animal management services and suggestions on what could be improved. A total of 3,317 responses were received from the community and businesses, through the following channels:

Engagement activity	Responses
Community survey	3,256
Email responses	32
One-on-one consultations (on request)	25
Domestic animal business survey	4

The engagement was promoted through a range of Council's communication channels including: a flyer distributed to over 53,000 homes in the municipality; SMS messages sent to registered cat and dog owners; coreflute signs installed in 50 key parks across the municipality; news articles in Council's newsletters and website; Facebook advertising; and direct emails to a range of stakeholders, inviting them to provide feedback.

Some of the key findings of the Phase 1 engagement were:

- High engagement in the survey from dog or cat owners (90%) demonstrates a high level of interest in animal management and a commitment to responsible pet ownership in Knox.
- Many community members supported that the animal management services are either 'very important' or 'important'.
- The need for a review of and/or increased compliance and community education regarding dog off leash rules and areas.
- Consideration of the range of support requested by the community, to assist with the introduction of the 24 hour cat curfew in April 2022.
- A need for solutions to address the problem of dog waste (poo) not being collected and disposed of properly.
- Provision of public education and communication campaigns to increase the community awareness of their responsibilities (including registration & microchipping, having your dog under effective control, etc) when owning a pet in Knox.

Domestic Animal Management Plans

Under Section 68A of the Domestic Animals Act, every Council must prepare a domestic animal management plan, as follows:

68A Councils to prepare domestic animal management plans

1. Every Council must, in consultation with the Secretary (of the Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions), prepare at 4 year intervals a Domestic Animal Management Plan.
2. A Domestic Animal Management Plan prepared by a Council must:
 - a. set out a method for evaluating whether the animal control services provided by the Council in its municipal district are adequate to give effect to the requirements of this Act and the regulations; and
 - b. outline programs for the training of authorised officers to ensure that they can properly administer and enforce the requirements of this Act in the Council's municipal district; and
 - c. outline programs, services and strategies which the Council intends to pursue in its municipal district:
 - i. to promote and encourage the responsible ownership of dogs and cats; and
 - ii. to ensure that people comply with this Act, the regulations and any related legislation; and
 - iii. to minimise the risk of attacks by dogs on people and animals; and
 - iv. to address any over-population and high euthanasia rates for dogs and cats; and
 - v. to encourage the registration and identification of dogs and cats; and
 - vi. to minimise the potential for dogs and cats to create a nuisance; and
 - vii. to effectively identify all dangerous dogs, menacing dogs and restricted breed dogs in that district and to ensure that those dogs are kept in compliance with this Act and the regulations; and
 - d. provide for the review of existing orders made under this Act and local laws that relate to the Council's municipal district with a view to determining whether further orders or local laws dealing with the management of dogs and cats in the municipal district are desirable; and
 - e. provide for the review of any other matters related to the management of dogs and cats in the Council's municipal district that it thinks necessary; and
 - f. provide for the periodic evaluation of any program, service, strategy or review outlined under the Plan.
3. Every Council must:
 - a. review its Domestic Animal Management Plan annually and, if appropriate, amend the Plan; and
 - b. provide the Secretary with a copy of the Plan and any amendments to the Plan; and
 - c. publish an evaluation of its implementation of the Plan in its annual report.

“ My cat means everything to me, she keeps me company when I have no one to talk to. ”



1

**Training
of authorised officers**

Section 68(A)(2)(b) of the Act requires Council to outline programs for the training of authorised officers to ensure that they can properly administer and enforce the requirements of this Act in the Council's municipal district.

The animal management staff within the Community Laws team are multi-skilled, and in addition to animal management matters, administer and enforce a range of other legislative requirements.

Knox Community Laws officers undertake regular training relevant to their role, including:

- Animal handling
- Customer service
- Conflict resolution
- Investigations
- Prosecutions.

What animal management services are important to the Knox community:

- Collect/ return stray dogs/ cats to their owners - 92.5%
- Investigation of animal cruelty matters - 98.1%
- Investigation and enforcement of dog attacks on people and other animals - 95.5%
- Investigation of illegal dog and cat breeders (ie. puppy farms) - 96.4%
- Education about responsible pet ownership - 87.6%
- Responds to reports of nuisance dogs/ cats - 85.2%
- Reduce the rate of cat and dog euthanasia through increased rehoming/ animal adoptions - 89.5%

Ref: DAMP Community Survey, 2021



Current & planned training

Knox City Council requires all authorised officers to possess adequate qualifications and skills, and ensure officers undergo appropriate training/ re-training relevant to their role. The table below highlights authorised officer training requirements for Knox Authorised Officers.

Core capabilities (required training or equivalent experience essential)

Approved Officer Training - Basic	Current Status (2021)	Planned
Certificate IV <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Animal Regulation & Management • Government (Statutory Compliance) • Government (Investigations) • Government (Court Compliance) 	Six officers either have a minimum certificate IV qualification or in excess of five years' relevant experience	Training assigned as required and determined through Performance Development Review Process
Animal Management training and information days	All officers have the opportunity to attend this training	Offered regularly by the relevant State Government agency
Municipal Association of Victoria and Local Government Professionals training and Information days	All officers have the opportunity to attend this training	Offered regularly by the relevant State Government agency
Baton training	All officers have completed this training	Refresher training done annually
Situational awareness	All officers have completed this training	Refresher training done annually
Nationally accredited first aid and CPR training	All officers have the opportunity to attend this training	Training assigned as required and determined through Performance Development Review Process
Induction program for new staff, including familiarisation with work instructions and animal management tasks	All officers have completed this training	All new staff inducted upon commencement
Australian Institute of Animal Management - Annual Conference	All officers have the opportunity to attend this training	Participation when available

Training of authorised officers

Approved Officer Training - Basic	Current Status (2021)	Planned
Industry training: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Animal handling • Animal assessment • Statement taking • Prosecution • Restricted breed dog identification • DNA collection 	Ongoing	Training assigned as required and determined through Performance Development Review Process
OH&S - dealing with aggressive customers, dealing with aggressive animals	As required	Training assigned as required and determined through Performance Development Review Process
Customer Service - including Conflict Resolution	As required	Training assigned as required and determined through Performance Development Review Process



Our plans

Training of authorised officers objectives

To ensure that all staff involved in animal management have the knowledge and skills necessary to carry out their work, and to deliver services in a manner which ensures officer and animal safety and welfare.

Current/ ongoing activities:

- Seek qualifications (or equivalent) relevant to the role when recruiting new staff.
- Attendance of relevant animal management training and information days offered by the relevant State Government agency.
- Attendance of Animal Management Officers at Municipal Association of Victoria and Local Government Professionals training and information days.
- Attendance of Animal Management Officers at the Australian Institute of Animal Management annual conference.

Planned programs and initiatives:

- Provide all staff with access to Council's Corporate Learning calendar.
- All staff to complete Council's Corporate Compliance training.
- Provide the opportunity for Animal Management Officers to attend relevant animal management training and information days offered by the relevant State Government agencies.
- Municipal Association of Victoria, Local Government Professionals, RSPCA and other relevant training sessions, workshops and seminars attended by officers.
- Enhance Animal Management Officers skills in animal behaviour – including, identifying risk behaviours and managing nuisance animals.
- Enhance Animal Management Officers mediation skills and customer service training..
- Attendance by staff and involvement in relevant industry committees.



Objective 1: Ensure all Officers involved in animal management are appropriately qualified and skilled

Activity	When	Evaluation
Develop training plans for each officer	Annually	Review annually to determine training goals and identification of skill gaps, as part of the learning and development plan for each individual officer

Objective 2: Review working arrangements for all staff and associated impact on operations

Activity	When	Evaluation
Review of current working arrangements	2021/25	Review conducted annually to ensure that service delivery meets needs
Undertake ongoing workforce planning reviews, to ensure the appropriate staffing to deliver the services in the Plan	2021/25	Review conducted annually to ensure that service delivery meets needs
Review the impacts of increased Prevention of Cruelty to Animals complaints and external agency referrals (RSPCA/ DJPR) on existing workforce capacity	2021/25	Review conducted annually to ensure that this additional responsibility is able to be delivered with the existing workforce capacity
Investigate the introduction of a permanent ongoing 'Trainee Community Laws Officer' role (or similar), including detailed cost-benefit analysis for consideration by the Executive	2022/23	Delivery of the new role, to meet the current shortfall of appropriately skilled applicants in this industry

“ My dog means protection, comfort, care and love. ”

“ A dog is a great friend for life. ”

“ My pets have helped me through the tough times in my life. ”



2

**Responsible
pet ownership**

Section 68A(2)(c)(i) of the Act requires Council to outline the programs, services and strategies to promote and encourage the responsible ownership of dogs and cats.

Current situation

The responsible ownership of dogs and cats encompasses a broad range of issues and stakeholders, to ensure the welfare needs of the animals are met, whilst ensuring that the animals do not pose any safety or nuisance concerns within the community.

Community consultation in the recent survey identified a need for improved communication and education regarding a range of issues regarding dog and cat ownership with:

- Over 73% of respondents did not know what parks and reserves are dog off and on-leash areas in Knox, and 23% of respondents did not know how dogs owners are required to have effective control of their dog whilst off lead
- 24.52% of respondents stated their cat was not registered, and over 21% admitted their cat was not microchipped - which are key identification means that assist Council in reuniting lost cats and reducing the high rates of euthanasia of cats who are unable to be rehomed
- 69% of respondents were not aware that Knox Council provides a free cat trap loan service to address cat nuisance issues; and
- 83% of respondents were not aware what animal management services are funded by pet registration fees in Knox.

Responsible Pet ownership programs for children

A portion of every animal registration is paid to the State Government each year as a state levy, with the registered pet owners of Knox contributing in excess of \$117,000 in the

2020/2021 financial year. This funding is used by Animal Welfare Victoria to provide a range of community and education programs, including responsible pet ownership programs for children in our municipality.

The Responsible Pet Ownership (RPO) program educates children from ages 4 to 12 on:

- living safely with dogs; and
- responsible pet ownership.

Since 2017, the pet educators and their dogs have delivered over 327 sessions in Knox's kindergartens and primary schools to over 8,000 children - to promote the vital safety messages through animated presentations, song and role play.

Our current education/ promotion activities

Knox City Council has a number of education and promotional activities in place.

- Responsible pet ownership is promoted through Pets in the Park; an event held annually. Note COVID19 has resulted in recent cancellation of this event, but it is planned to continue during this plan.
- Participation in information sessions about responsible animal ownership for both children and the community.
- Promotion of registration and responsible pet ownership in Council's Knox News publication.
- Website: Council's website contains a wide variety of information in relation to responsible pet ownership and annual registration.
- Patrols: Proactive and complaint based park patrols are undertaken throughout the year.
- Social media: Council promotes a number of responsible pet ownership topics via social media channels including Facebook.

Objective 1: Educate and promote responsible pet ownership messaging to pet owners

Activity	When	Evaluation
Explore ways to further increase public awareness of registration and responsible pet ownership.	Ongoing	Increased number of dog and cat registrations
Develop an annual communication plan to support animal management objectives, incorporating messaging on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The benefits of pet registration (ie. reuniting lost pets) • Containing and keeping dogs under effective control • Dogs on leash/off lead in Knox • Desexing of cats and dogs to prevent overpopulation 	2022	Annual communication plan implemented.
Introduce a 24-hour cat curfew. Including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The development of a communications plan to provide support and guidance to the community with the introduction of the curfew • Provide information on DIY cat enclosures and cat proof fencing 	2022	Reduction of cat nuisance complaints
Investigate alternative effective signage options to assist with communicating key messages around responsible pet ownership	Ongoing	Evaluation/ feedback sought from the community
Promote responsible pet ownership through increased education, awareness and enforcement of the requirement to carry waste bags and pick up after their dog, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased education and awareness campaigns directed towards dog owners and encouraging self-regulation • Explore the installation of signage/ footpath stencils and bins in problem areas. 	Ongoing	Reduction of dog waste complaints
Investigate the sourcing of a supplier of pooch pouches (or similar) to provide to dog owners. Pooch pouches are small bags that hold plastic bags and can be clipped to the dog lead.	2022	Pooch pouches provided with new registrations or on request

Objective 1: Educate and promote responsible pet ownership messaging to pet owners - continued

Activity	When	Evaluation
Actively promote the Responsible Pet Ownership program conducted by Dept. of Jobs, Precincts & Regions (DJPR) to kindergartens and primary schools within Knox	Ongoing	Increased participation by Knox kindergartens and primary schools
Partner with Council's Animal Pound provider (Animal Aid) to promote initiatives including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Seniors for Seniors" adoption program (discounted adoption of pets over 8 years of age by Senior card holders) • Free cat microchipping • Discounted desexing programs 	Ongoing	Increased participation rates in these programs Increased number of dog and cat registrations

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New dedicated dog park in Knox

In July 2021, a new second designated 'destination' off leash dog park was opened at Emerson Place Reserve in Rowville. This park delivers on the plan for the development and establishment of this additional off leash dog park, included in the 2017-2021 Plan.

This new fenced dog off-lead area at Emerson Place Reserve in Rowville provided Council with a purpose-built area for residents and their dogs to exercise, socialise and interact with other dogs and their owners. The social and physical health benefits of responsible pet ownership are widely recognised and understood, and for many dog owners, exercise undertaken with their dogs is their primary form of physical activity. This park contains the following features:

- Boundary fencing 1200mm high with a sensory buffer of vegetation.
- Four double gate entry points (two along the adjacent shared trail and two from within the reserve).
- Two vehicular/maintenance access points.
- Landscape features such as rock climbers, rock and vegetation clusters, and mature trees groves.

- A formal, concrete pathway for universal access.
- A 'main enclosure' and a 'quiet dog' enclosure to cater for quieter or smaller dogs.
- Use of existing simulated dry creek bed to provide a sensory experience with different textures to that of the general surface material.
- A timber boardwalk installed over the dry creek bed, to create access between the small dog enclosure and the main enclosure.
- Bins and signage regarding fenced off -leash area rules located at all entry/access points.
- Five park benches.
- Two drinking fountains.
- Two sculptural art pieces.

Both the two and four-legged residents of Knox and surrounds are invited to come and experience this new park.







3

Registrations & identification

Section 68A(2)(c)(v) of the Act requires Council to outline programs, services and strategies to encourage the registration and identification of dogs and cats. - also addresses *Section 68A(2)(a),(c)(i),(c)(ii),(d),(f)*

Current situation

The Domestic Animals Act 1994 requires all dogs and cats to be registered with Council at 3 months of age, with renewals due annually on 10 April. When a pet is registered with Council they are required to be microchipped and are provided with a Council identification tag. Knox makes every effort to reunite lost cats and dogs with their owners that are registered and wearing their Council tag.

Animal registration fees go toward the ongoing operational costs associated with the running of Knox's animal management services which includes:

- Animal management staff to support the collection and return of stray animals to owners.
- The costs of running both an animal pound service, and an after-hours animal collection service.
- Enforcement of the Domestic Animal's Act 1994 and Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1986.
- Investigation and prosecution of animal matters, including dog attacks, or the keeping of unregistered animals.
- Registration and inspection of domestic animal businesses (including pet shops, animal boarding, dog trainers and animal breeders).

- Investigation of animal complaints including barking dogs, trespassing complaints and animal welfare concerns.
- Knox's Pets in the Park festival - which is a free community event promoting responsible pet ownership.
- Subsidised desexing voucher scheme for concession card holders, and discount incentive schemes for new registrations.
- Individualised registration tags for each registered dog and cat within Knox.

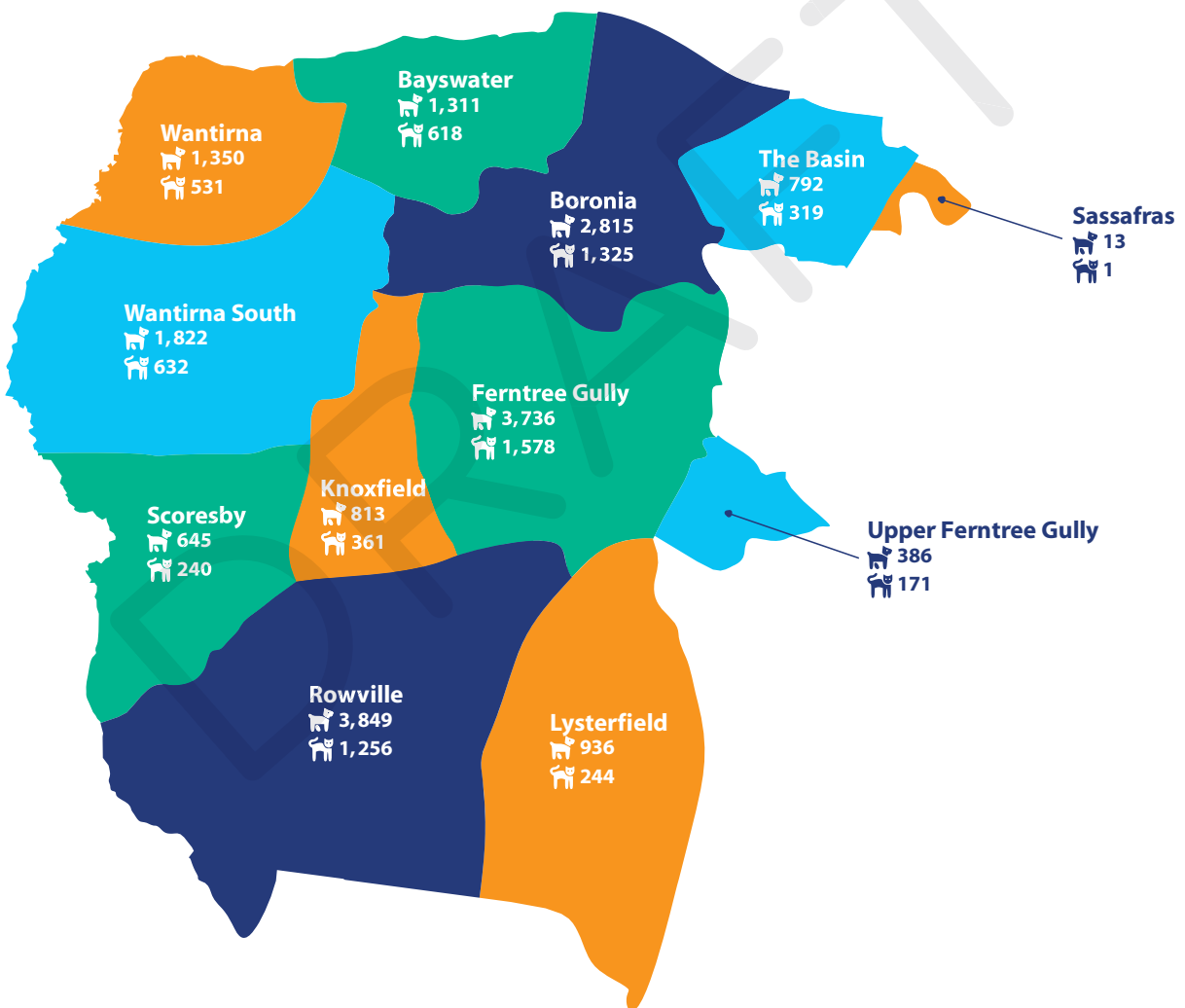
Due to COVID-19 restrictions, Councils Animal Management officers were not able to undertake the annual registration audit follow-up of unpaid registrations. The annual registration audit in previous years has been a key activity in maintaining and encouraging registration compliance.



Table 1: Animal registration comparison rates from 2016/17 to September 2021

Registrations	2016/17 registration period	2017/18 registration period	2018/19 registration period	2019/20 registration period	Registrations at September 2021
Dogs	18,839	17,576	18,312	16,765	18,233
Cats	6,266	6,164	7,309	7,402	7,294
Total	25,105	23,740	25,621	24,167	25,527

Knox dog and cat registrations by suburb



Pet registration incentive

Currently Council offers a registration incentive to encourage the registration of pets. Any dog or cat, which has been newly acquired from a registered domestic animal business, will receive free registration when registered within 28 days from the date of purchase. This program has been in place for a number of years and will continue throughout the life of this Plan.

Registration renewals

Council currently send registration renewal notices to dog and cat owners prior to their annual 10 April renewal, together with a SMS reminder and final reminder notice for those that remain unpaid.

Council has been utilising SMS messaging since 2016 as a reminder for unpaid registration renewals, in addition to posted notices to animal owners. The use of SMS messaging has resulted in a significant reduction of reminder notices being issued.

For those registration renewals that remained active in Council's database but unpaid, registration audits are undertaken and infringements are issued for any unregistered animals identified.

Our Orders, Local Laws, Council Policies and Procedures Orders

Domestic Animals Act 1994 section 10A(1) - Attachment A.

The order provides that Knox City Council will not, after 10 April 2011, accept the registration of a cat unless the cat is desexed or exempted under the Domestic Animals Act 1994 from any requirements to be desexed. Any cat that is not desexed cannot be registered. Failing to register can result in penalties under the Act.

Local laws

Knox City Council Amenity Local Law 2020

Limits on number of animals kept

4.1 An owner or occupier of private land, the area of which is less than or equal to 4,000 square metres must not, without a permit, keep or allow to be kept on that private land more than:

Type of animal	Number
Dogs	2
Cats	2

Our current education/ promotion activities

Knox City Council has a number of education and promotional activities in place.

- Responsible pet ownership is promoted through Pets in the Park; an event held annually. Other Council events are attended as required.
- Promotion of registration and responsible pet ownership in Council's Knox News publication.
- Engage with the community on responsible animal ownership.
- Provision of subsidised desexing scheme for concession card holders in association with the MAV and Australian Veterinary Association (AVA).
- Website: Council's website contains a wide variety of information in relation to responsible pet ownership and animal registration. Registration forms can also be downloaded from the website.
- Provision of a range of registration payment options.
- Microchipping: Discounted micro-chipping is available at the annual Pets in the Park event.
- Patrols: Proactive and complaint based park patrols are undertaken throughout the year.
- New animal registrations are provided with information on responsible pet ownership.

- Registration incentive scheme information along with general responsible pet ownership information.
- Council promotes a number of responsible pet ownership topics via traditional and social media channels.
- Act on referrals from State Government relating to Pet Exchange register and source number breaches in relation to the breeding and selling of cats and dogs.
- Review the registration fees annually.

Our current compliance activities include:

- Council will investigate and carry out enforcement action when identifying unregistered dogs or cats.
- Issuing of annual registration renewal notices and follow-up overdue notices.
- Sending out SMS reminder messages.
- All non-renewals are followed up and reviewed by the annual registration audit.
- The issuing of infringement notices for unregistered dogs and cats or for failing to wear their registration tag.
- Animal registration database is continually updated as the status of animals change.
- Domestic Animal Business notifications: Following up on the registration of a dog or cat after the owner has been sent their new owner letter.
- Ensure all impounded or seized dogs and cats are registered prior to being released to their owner.
- All authorised officers are provided with mobile technology enabling access to animal owner details in the field.
- Council provides significantly discounted registration fees for animals that are both microchipped and desexed.
- Ensure the correct State Government Levy is charged on the animal registrations.

Summary

Animal registration has been an area of strong focus in previous Domestic Animal Management Plans, and continues to be an area of strong focus over the life of this Plan. The promotion and public education of the benefits of animal registration will be further explored in this Plan. Further to this Council will investigate incentives to provide additional benefits to pet owners for registering their pets. Knox recognises that there is currently a significant number of unregistered animals in the municipality. To address this the Plan aims to increase the awareness of the requirement to register dogs and cats, promote the benefits of their registration, and to increase the number of registrations.

👤 My pets played an important role in teaching my children about respect, responsibility, affection and caring for others 🗨️

Our plans - registration & identification

Objective 1: Increase the number of animal registrations within the municipality

Activity	When	Evaluation
Reconcile data contained in national microchip registries with Council's registration database to identify unregistered animals, and restricted breed dogs.	Annual	All microchipped animals within Knox are registered
<p>Review the annual registration process to improve the timeliness and compliance of registration.</p> <p>This would incorporate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issuing of annual registration renewal notices and follow-up overdue notices • Promoting online notification of a change of details (ie. pet has died, lost or left Knox) or address change • Sending out SMS reminder messages • Undertake an annual registration audit of non-renewed registrations. 	Annual	Increased number of dog and cat registrations registered by 10 April
<p>Offer free initial registration for any dog or cat purchased from an animal shelter with an 84Y agreement with Council.</p> <p>Offer discounted registration fees for newly acquired animals purchased/adopted within 4 weeks.</p> <p>Consider additional initiatives such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further discounting of registration fees for those on an aged pension or on a disability pension • Further expanding the current registration incentives offered by Council. 	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>2022-2023</p>	Increased number of dog and cat registrations
Continue the current MAV and AVA desexing voucher scheme, with existing financial support of Council, to provide financial incentives to concession card holders in the desexing of their animals.	Ongoing	Monitor community uptake of scheme

Objective 1: Increase the number of animal registrations within the municipality - continued

Activity	When	Evaluation
Advocate to the State Government (DJPR) to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a further discount to annual registration if the dog is both desexed and trained by a recognised organisation • Introduction of a centralised state-wide animal registration database 	2022-2023	Provide submission to State Government
Partner with Council's Animal Pound provider (Animal Aid) to promote services including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discounted cat and dog desexing • Free cat microchipping 	2022-2024	Increased number of registrations, as microchipping and cat desexing is a requirement of registration in Knox

Objective 2: Educate and promote the benefits, value and opportunities of dog and cat registration to pet owners

Activity	When	Evaluation
Develop an annual communication plan to support animal management objectives, incorporating messaging on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The benefits of pet registration (ie. reuniting lost pets) 	2022	Annual communication plan implemented Increased number of dog and cat registrations
Develop an info-graphic depicting how registration fee income is allocated and make this available to the community through communication channels including animal registration notices	2022	Reduction in the number of enquiries regarding what the registration fee pays for
Reunite registered and identifiable (wearing Knox Council tag) impounded cats and dogs with their owners. Registered animals returned to their owner will not be issued with a fine* on the first occasion, but will be provided with an official warning.	Ongoing	Increased number of dog and cat registrations and lower the number of impounded animals * Fines may apply when negligence is established or matters are subject to further investigation, such as a dog attack.
Installation of signs at dogs parks advising that unregistered dogs will be fined.	2022	Number of fines issued.

Objective 3: Clarify Local Law policies relating to animal registrations

Activity	When	Evaluation
Develop and review policies for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unregistered animals • Registered animals not wearing a tag • Application for registration and renewal of registration for dogs and cats • Seizing and impounding of unregistered and/ or unidentified dogs and cats • Others as identified 	Ongoing	Updated standard operating procedures and protocols and annual review planned

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“They are our fur babies.”





4

Nuisance

Section 68A(2)(c)(vi) of the Act requires Council to outline programs, services and strategies to minimise the potential for dogs and cats to create a nuisance. - also addresses *68A(2)(a),(c)(i),(c)(ii),(d),(f)*

Current situation

Council has been successful in dealing with nuisance complaints and promoting responsible pet ownership for a number of years. This has seen a reduction in the number of nuisance related complaints received over the last five years, as outlined in the table below. With the expected population growth, pet numbers are also expected to increase over the life of this Plan.

Table 1: Number of nuisance related complaints per calendar year

Complaint	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Cats - Cage request	150	145	174	218	100
Cats - Cats pick up	199	223	246	277	182
Dogs - Barking	394	372	480	439	51
Dogs - Pick up	601	698	520	480	384
Dogs - Wandering at large	266	238	188	248	169

Nuisance barking

In recent years there has been a decrease in the number of complaints relating to nuisance barking. A barking dog complaint requires the complainant to submit noise log sheets, and if the matter remains unresolved statements and attendance at court is required. Council also uses noise recording equipment to assist with nuisance investigations and to establish an offence.

Barking dog investigations can be quite resource intensive taking significant time to resolve. The majority of barking dog complaints resolve simply, as in many cases the owner has not been aware that their dog was barking and then takes appropriate steps to address the issue. Ongoing barking issues that do not resolve quickly can affect the wellbeing of the individual and community.

In 2019, Council reviewed the barking dog process to move to an educative process with all parties, which has resulted in a significant reduction in the total volume of complaints and the number of matters that require enforcement.

Dog litter

The issue of dog litter and decaying pet waste can potentially pose both health and environmental risks to the community. It is a requirement under the Knox City Council Amenity Local Law 2020 to carry a plastic bag or similar to pick up after dogs and this is enforced during officer patrols. Council currently provide poo bags via dispensers at Knox's dog play parks and will continue to do so.

Further to this, the Plan proposes to provide Pooch Pouches (or similar items) for dog owners. The pouch can be attached to a dog's leash and holds plastic bags for the owner to use for the collection of dog litter.

Dog play park

Regular park users meet and socialise their dogs frequently, forming their own networks and encouraging socialisation amongst themselves. While the dog play parks have been generally well received by the community, both two and four legged, dog play park usage will continue to be monitored to ensure that the setting provides the best community outcomes.

Nuisance cats

Council regularly receives complaints from residents regarding nuisance cat issues. In response to this Council has offered a cat trap hire service to residents to assist them in the management of feral and nuisance cats.

This Plan proposes to further address the issue of feral and nuisance cats by introducing a cat curfew order, requiring all cats to be confined within their property boundary at all times. This order aims to keep cats safe and to prevent cats wandering and nuisances such as spraying and fighting, and to protect native wildlife.

Council promotes the use of cat enclosures and cat proof fencing as effective cat containment measures.

👉 Our cats
give us unconditional
love and they assist
with our mental health
& well being. 🗨️

Our Orders, Local Laws, Council Policies and Procedures Orders:

- **Compulsory desexing of cats**
(Domestic Animals Act 1994 section 10A(1) – Attachment A) This order provides that:

Knox City Council will not, after 10 April 2011, accept the registration of a cat unless the cat is desexed or exempted under the Domestic Animals Act 1994 from any requirements to be desexed.

- **Dogs in public places**
(Domestic Animals Act 1994 section 26 – Attachment B)

This order provides that dogs are permitted to be off lead, but under effective control in a public park or recreation reserve, subject to conditions.

Local laws:

Knox City Council Amenity Local Law 2020

Limits on number of animals kept

- 4.1 An owner or occupier of private land, the area of which is less than or equal to 4,000 square metres must not, without a permit, keep or allow to be kept on that private land more than:

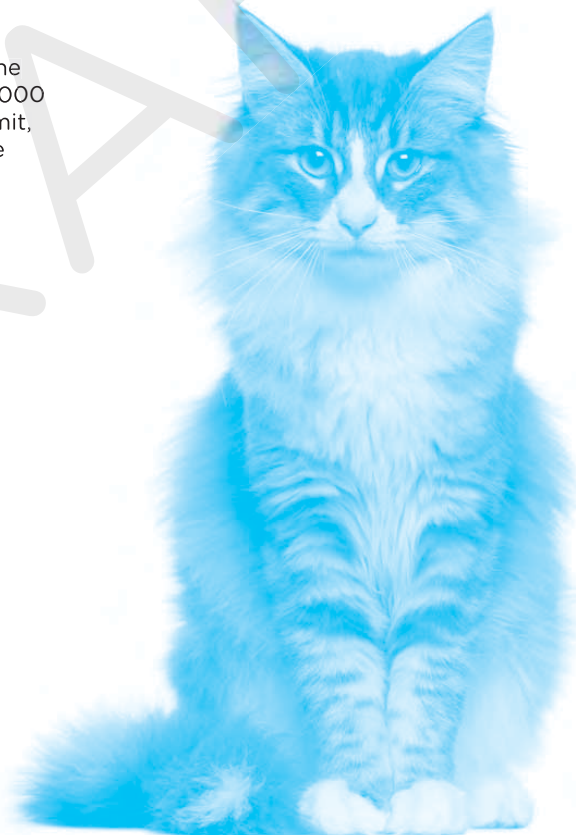
Type of animal	Number
Dogs	2
Cats	2

Removal of Animal Waste

- 4.6 A person in charge of an animal on Council land or on a road must carry a facility for the effective removal of any waste that may be deposited by that animal.
- 4.7 A person in charge of an animal on Council land or on a road must collect from the Council land or road and appropriately dispose of any waste deposited by that animal.

Animal noise and odour

- 4.8 The owner of an animal and the owner or occupier of the private land on which the animal is kept must not allow noise or odour to emanate from the animal as to interfere with the amenity of the immediate area.
- 4.9 Clause 4.8 does not apply to any class of animal where another Act or legislation applies.



Our current education/ promotion activities:

- The Community Laws team run the annual Pets in the Park event, which provides information relating to nuisance issues.
- Website: Council's website has a wide variety of information in relation to dog and cat nuisances and responsible pet ownership.
- Domestic Animal Business notifications. Council is notified of new pet owners by Domestic Animal Business's. A new owner letter is sent out providing responsible pet ownership information.
- Promote DIY cat enclosure and cat proof fencing brochures via council website and hard copies available on request.
- Provision of information in relation to barking dogs.
- Encourage desexing of pets to reduce nuisance complaints.

Our current compliance activities:

- Reactive enforcement: Addressing the issue of a nuisance dog or cat when a complaint is lodged.
- Reports of dogs wandering at large or not securely contained are investigated immediately. Fines may be issued to owners of offending dogs. If the animal is impounded the owner must also pay a reclaim fee.
- Issues of dog containment relating to inadequate fencing are investigated and the owner provided with relevant information.
- Reports of dogs off lead are investigated and the owner may be fined when they are able to be identified.
- Reports of dog owners not removing dog litter are investigated and owners may be fined when they are able to be identified.

- Noise recording devices are available for nuisance barking complaints.
- Cat traps are available to the community to assist with nuisance cat complaints.
- Issuing of a Notice to Comply to assist in resolving complaints if required and fines issued for non-compliance.
- Local Law permits required for excess animals.
- Encourage parties to seek mediation where possible to resolve nuisance issues.
- Prosecution at the Magistrates' Court for those matters that remain unresolved.
- Link all complaints to the animal's registration.

Summary

This Plan announces the introduction of a 24 hour cat curfew to assist in reducing nuisance cat problems. Council will continue to seek compliance and provide education and information to address a range of nuisance complaints.

Council is committed to supporting cat owners with the introduction of the cat curfew, through the provision of education materials and officer engagement on their specific needs.

The ongoing use of technology including noise recording devices and the regular review of processes will assist in ensuring that nuisance matters are resolved as efficiently and as soon as reasonably possible.

Council remains committed to providing more opportunities for dog play areas, as these benefit dogs and their owners, providing socialising opportunities and strengthen community connectedness.

Our plans - nuisance

Objective 1: Improved response to barking dog complaints

Activity	When	Evaluation
Review the barking assessment of barking dog complaint processes to ensure current best practice	Ongoing	Improved processes to resolve barking dog matters.
Develop an annual communication plan to support animal management objectives, incorporating messaging on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Managing dogs and barking dog complaints 	2022	Annual communication plan implemented
Use of noise recorders to assist barking dog investigations, as required	Ongoing	Increased quality of evidence gathered
Review and update information to assist owners and complainants of barking dogs	Ongoing	Review and update current material

Objective 2: Ensure dogs are adequately contained - wandering at large, not securely contained, inadequate fencing

Activity	When	Evaluation
Develop an annual communication plan to support animal management objectives, incorporating messaging on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Securely containing dogs 	2022	Annual communication plan implemented
Provide advice to pet owners on pet care during thunderstorms, fireworks and holiday periods	Ongoing	Updated information on social media and website
Impounding dogs wandering at large or not securely confined and taking enforcement action against owners	Ongoing	Number of dogs impounded and infringements issued
Identify repeat offenders for increased enforcement action	Ongoing	Increase in compliance of repeat offenders

Objective 3: Dogs off lead/ use of open spaces for dogs

Activity	When	Evaluation
Establish operational management protocols associated with Knox dog parks (for both smaller fenced dog parks and larger destination parks)	2022-2023	Criteria established for the operational management of dog parks
Develop an annual communication plan to support animal management objectives, incorporating improved messaging on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dogs on leash/ off lead in Knox Keeping dogs under effective control 	2022	Annual communication plan implemented

Objective 4: To reduce cat nuisance problems within the community

Activity	When	Evaluation
Introduce a 24 hour cat curfew. Including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The development of a communications plan to promote the introduction of the curfew Amend pet registration forms to advise of curfew requirements Update new animal letters advising of curfew requirements Provide information on DIY cat enclosures and cat proof fencing 	April 2022	Reduction of cat nuisance complaints Successful media strategy in place Registration forms updated Letters updated Information provided on website and hard copies on request
Develop an annual communication plan to support animal management objectives, incorporating messaging on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cat nuisance issues 	2022	Annual communication plan implemented
Provide residents with nuisance cat problems with loan cat traps	Ongoing	Review customer requests annually
Develop a letter for residents to advise neighbours of a cat nuisance issue	2022	Reduction of cat nuisance complaints

Objective 5: To reduce dog waste litter problems in public spaces

Activity	When	Evaluation
Promote responsible pet ownership through increased education, awareness and enforcement of the requirement to carry waste bags and pick up after their dog, through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased education and awareness campaigns directed towards dog owners and encouraging self-regulation. • Explore the installation of signage/ footpath stencils and bins in problem areas. 	Ongoing	Reduction of dog waste complaints
Investigate the sourcing of a supplier of pooch pouches (or similar) to provide to dog owners. Pooch pouches are small bags that hold plastic bags and can be clipped to the dog lead	2022	Pooch pouches provided with new registrations or on request

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5

Dog attacks

Section 68A(2)(c)(iii) of the Act requires Council to outline programs, services and strategies to minimise the risk of attacks by dogs on people and animals.
 - also addresses 68A(2)(a),(c)(i),(c)(ii),(d),(f)

Current situation

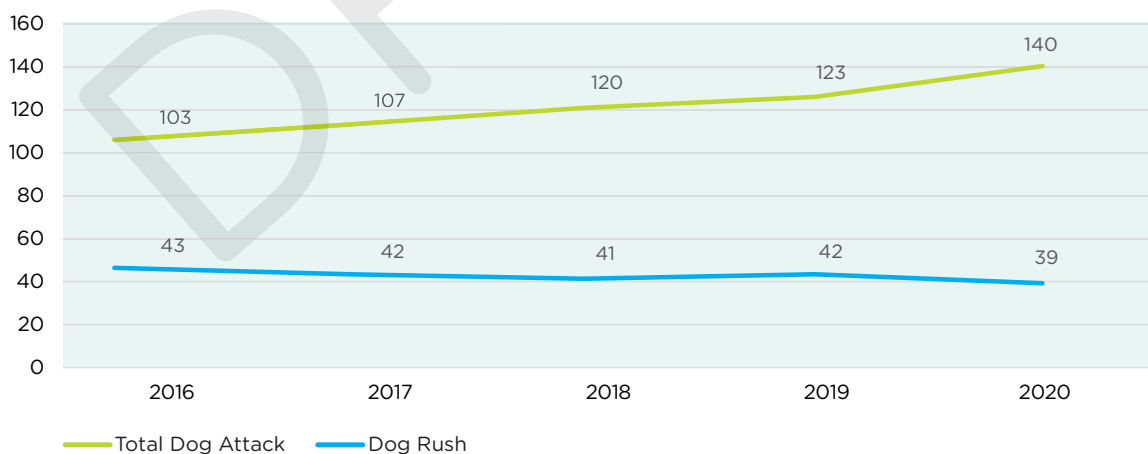
Dog attacks and dog aggression in public places represent the highest risk in animal management – both to the community, other animals and to the Animal Management Officers who must investigate and resolve these issues. Council investigates all reported dog attacks and prosecutes those of a serious nature in the Magistrates’ Court. Council may seize and impound any dog suspected of being involved in a dog attack or dog rush until the outcome of the prosecution.

The following graph outlines the number of complaints received over the last five years relating to dog attacks and dog rushes (a dog that approaches a person to a distance of less than 3 metres in an aggressive manner). The majority of attacks are associated with dogs not adequately socialised that are not contained to their owners’ property, at large, or not under effective control.

There are a range of reasons surrounding how and why dog attacks are reported to Council. Reports of dogs attacks are received from a range of sources including other Government agencies, other Councils, Veterinary clinics - in addition to the parties involved (ie. victim, dog owner, etc). The decision to report an attack is also motivated by a range of factors including, but not limited to: community safety, financial compensation for out-of-pocket expenses, responsibility to report, etc.

Whilst there is an upward trend in the number of reported dog attacks, this is contributed to by an increase awareness of the various ways to report a dog attack, and also due to an increase in the number of incidents occurring in the municipality.

Dog attack related complaints



Knox has experienced an increasing trend in the number of reported dog attacks over the past 5 years. This is a concern that Council will investigate further to identify what preventative measures can be implemented to address this trend. The increasing trend may have been contributed to by the increase number of dogs owned in the community particularly during the COVID pandemic,, together with the higher amounts of areas where dogs can exercise off-lead within the municipality (compared to other Councils).

Our Orders, Local Laws, Council Policies and Procedures Orders:

- **Dogs in public places**
(Domestic Animals Act 1994 section 26 - Attachment B)

This order provides that dogs are permitted to be off lead, but under effective control in a public park or recreation reserve, subject to conditions.

- Local Laws
Knox City Council Amenity Local Law 2020

Limits on number of animals kept

4.1 An owner or occupier of private land, the area of which is less than or equal to 4,000 square metres must not, without a permit, keep or allow to be kept on that private land more than:

Type of animal	Number
Dogs	2
Cats	2



Policies and procedures:

Dangerous dog declaration and destruction process

Council will determine at the commencement of a prosecution for a serious dog attack whether an order to destroy a dog will be sought from the Court. Any prosecution that involves the recommendation for a destruction order must be authorised by the Manager City Safety and Health or the Director City Strategy & Integrity. The dog owner will be informed of Council's position and also advised that in the event that Council is unsuccessful in obtaining a destruction order, Council will consider declaring the dog dangerous.

To determine whether a dog will be declared dangerous, the owner of the dog owner will be invited to provide written and/ or oral submissions to the decision maker (Domestic Animals Act Submissions). This will usually occur within 48 hours of the Court outcome. The submissions process is discussed with the dog owner before the Court outcome to ensure that the matter is dealt with as soon as possible and to avoid holding the dog at the pound for longer than necessary.

The decision maker on a dangerous dog declaration will be the Director, City Strategy & Integrity or the Manager Governance. The decision maker must have had no involvement with the matter during the prosecution process.

Our current education/ promotion activities:

- Provide information on dog attacks and promote responsible pet ownership at Knox Pets in the Park.
- Website: Information is available relating to the containment of dogs, the dog attack process, how to report a dog attack, investigations and potential outcomes.
- Promote dog obedience training and the importance of early socialisation of dogs.
- Promote desexing of dogs to reduce aggressive tendencies and wandering at large.

- Domestic Animal Business notifications: Council is notified of new pet owners by Domestic Animal Businesses. A new owner letter is sent out providing them with responsible pet ownership information
- Brochures/ information sheets.

Our current compliance activities:

- Reactive enforcement: Owners of dogs involved in alleged rushes or attacks are provided with information relating to the investigation process, potential outcomes and information relating to the declaration of menacing or dangerous dogs.
- Provide an immediate response to reported dog attacks or rushes.
- Reports of dogs wandering at large are addressed immediately. This includes both responses during business hours and includes after-hours reports to an on-call officer, in an attempt to reduce the number of potential attacks or rushes.
- Collect/secure dogs found wandering at large or not adequately confined to their premises.
- Seize dogs involved in a serious dog attack or has a history of being involved in an attack or a rush, pending further investigation and/ or prosecution.
- Conduct random patrols in parks and reserves where there are reported incidents or concerns about dogs off lead.

- Where appropriate request a Court Order for the destruction of offending dogs involved in a serious attack.
- Communicate with other Councils in relation to declared dogs which have moved out of or into Knox.
- Where appropriate declare offending dogs as menacing or dangerous dogs.
- Ensure the Victorian Declared Dog Registry and in house registry is kept up to date with records for all declared dogs in Knox.
- Conduct random, unannounced inspections of all properties where declared dogs are housed or where Court orders have been issued in relation to containment of offending dogs.
- Link all complaints to the animal's registration.

Summary

Dog attacks are one of the most serious matters facing the community and Animal Management Officers. As a result, Council's procedure for dealing with dog attacks is a priority and Officers respond immediately to ensure any risk or potential risk to the community is minimised. As with other key processes, the way dog attacks are investigated are regularly reviewed to ensure matters are referred for appropriate action in a timely manner.



Our plans - dog attacks

Objective 1: Reduce the incidents of dogs wandering at large and dog attacks

Activity	When	Evaluation
Develop an annual communication plan to support animal management objectives, incorporating messaging on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Containing and keeping dogs under effective control Dogs on leash/off lead in Knox 	2022	Annual communication plan implemented
Develop a dog attack kit to be provided to the relevant parties, including a clear outline of, and role in, the investigation and enforcement processes	2022-2023	Feedback sought from users of the new kit
Review dog attack investigation process to ensure timely investigation of all dog attacks	Ongoing	Process updated and reviewed annually
Investigate the benefits of referring Court outcomes to media team to prepare media releases	Ongoing	Internal process developed to publicise Court outcomes
Enforcement - increased patrols in public areas Provide 24 hour access to an animal management officer	Ongoing	Proactive patrols at off leash and on leash parks will be scheduled as part of routine work
Investigation of all reported dog attack matters and the prosecution of those serious in nature and issuing of infringements for those minor in nature	Ongoing	Numbers of infringements issued and prosecutions undertaken for all dog attack matters with adequate evidence
Officers exercising their power to seize and impound dogs suspected of being involved in a dog attack or dog rush	Ongoing	Number of animals seized
Undertake property inspections to ensure adequate containment of problem dogs and aggressive dogs	Ongoing	Reduction in repeat offending
Advocate to State Government for statewide advertising campaigns to highlight the impact of dog attacks in the community and responsible dog ownership. This includes the importance of reporting dog attacks, dog containment, dog socialisation and training	2022-2023	Provide submission to State Government



6

Dangerous, menacing & restricted breed dogs

Section 68A(2)(c)(vii) of the Act requires Council to outline programs, services and strategies to effectively identify all dangerous dogs, menacing dogs and restricted breed dogs in that district and to ensure that those dogs are kept in compliance with this Act and the regulations - also addresses *68A(2)(a),(c)(i),(c)(ii),(d),(f)*

Current situation

Council follows up all reports of dangerous, menacing and restricted breed dogs promptly to reduce risk to the community. In addition, all declared dogs on Council's database are inspected annually to ensure that they are compliant with the relevant legislation and regulations.

Dangerous dogs can be three types of dogs: **Restricted breed dog: is a dog that is any one of the following breeds:**

- A dog declared dangerous by Council due to an attack
- A dog kept as a guard dog for the purposes of guarding non residential premises
- A dog trained to attack or bite any person.

Council may also declare a dog to be a dangerous dog if the dog is a menacing dog and the owner is in breach of the associated regulations or if the dog has been declared a dangerous dog under the law of another State or Territory of the Commonwealth.

Menacing dog is a dog declared menacing by Council because:

- The dog has rushed at or chased a person
- The dog bites any person or animal causing a non-serious injury
- The dog has been declared a menacing dog under a law of another State or Territory of the Commonwealth.

- Japanese Tosa;
- Fila Brasileiro;
- Dogo Argentino;
- Perra de Presa Canario (or Presa Canario);
- American Pit Bull Terrier (or Pit Bull Terrier)

Council's authorised officers undertake the Ministerial approved Canine Anatomy Identification Training course under section 98A(4)(b) of the Act. This training assists officers in the identification of restricted breed dogs and the application of the restricted breed dog standard.

the safety of my pet and other pets in the community is of paramount importance to me.

Dangerous, menacing & restricted breed dogs

Table 7: Declared dogs in Knox

Declared dogs	2012/2013 registration period	2016/17 registration period	2020/21 registration period
Menacing dogs	3	1	1
Restricted breed dogs	6	3	1
Dangerous dogs	6	6	11



“ We love our dog very much, he’s a part of our family. ”

“ Having a dog gets people outside and meeting other people with shared interest. ”

Our Orders, Local Laws, Council Policies and Procedures

Policies and procedures

Council will determine at the commencement of a prosecution for a serious dog attack whether an order to destroy a dog will be sought from the Court. Any prosecution that involves the recommendation for a destruction order must be authorised by the Manager City Safety and Health or the Director City Strategy and Integrity. The dog owner will be informed of Council's position and also advised that in the event that Council is unsuccessful in obtaining a destruction order, Council will consider declaring the dog dangerous.

To determine whether a dog will be declared dangerous, the owner of the dog owner will be invited to provide written and/ or oral submissions to the decision maker (Domestic Animals Act Submissions). This will usually occur within 48 hours of the Court outcome. The submissions process is discussed with the dog owner and scheduled before the Court outcome to ensure that the matter is dealt with as soon as possible and to avoid holding the dog at the pound for longer than necessary.

The decision maker on a dangerous dog declaration will be the Director, City Strategy & Integrity or the Manager Governance. The decision maker must have had no involvement with the matter during the prosecution process.

Our current education/ promotion activities:

- Promote responsible pet ownership at Council's annual Pets in the Park event.
- Brochures/ information sheets.
- Ensure the owners of a declared dog are aware of their legal obligations in owning and housing the dog. They are provided with extensive information in relation to their requirements as well as information advising them of the possible outcomes should they breach the requirements.

Our current compliance activities:

- Reactive enforcement: Owners of dogs involved in alleged rushes or attacks are provided with information relating to the process involved with the investigation, potential outcomes and information relating to the declaration of menacing or dangerous dogs.
- Ensure all declared dogs are recorded on the Victorian Declared Dog Register, including any changes to details.
- All declared dogs are recorded on an in house register.
- Inspections of declared dogs are conducted on an annual basis.
- Communication with other Councils in relation to declared dogs which have moved out of or into Knox.
- Proactive inspections of industrial areas to identify undeclared guard dogs.
- Issuing of infringement notices or summons when in breach of the Domestic Animals Act or Regulations.

Summary

Authorised officers will conduct annual inspections of Council's declared and restricted breed dogs to ensure that they are kept in compliance with the relevant Regulations and to ensure community safety.

Officers will receive the Ministerial approved Canine Anatomy Identification training course when available. This training assists officers in the identification of restricted breed dogs and the application of the restricted breed dog standard.

Our plans – dangerous, menacing & restricted breed dogs

Objective 1: Identify and register all declared dogs within the municipality

Activity	When	Evaluation
Restricted breed dog identification training for all animal management officers.	Ongoing	Training completed as required
Use microchip registries to identify restricted breed dogs or potential restricted breed dogs within the municipality.	Ongoing	Ongoing review of microchip databases
Develop an annual communication plan to support animal management objectives, incorporating messaging on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Declared dogs 	2022	Annual communication plan implemented
Monitor all new registrations for potential restricted breed dogs	Ongoing	Inspections of any dogs identified as potential restricted breed dogs
Review of Council animal registration data of non-residential areas to identify non-declared guard dogs	Ongoing	Six monthly audit of industrial areas and patrols where required
Ensure all declared dogs are recorded on the Victorian Declared Dog Registry	Ongoing	Register is up to date and accurate
Information relating to declared dogs provided to owners to ensure compliance	Ongoing	Information provided

“ Our dogs are our life. I work in a stressful job and could not cope doing this job without having them to come home to. ”

“ He is my best friend, he means the world to me. ”

Objective 2: Effectively inspect and audit all declared dog premises annually to ensure they are following containment requirements

Activity	When	Evaluation
Conduct unannounced inspections of all declared dogs to ensure compliance with the Domestic Animals Act 1994 and Regulations	Annually	Audit completed and full compliance with all legislative requirements achieved
Prosecute any significant breaches of the Domestic Animals Act 1994 or Regulations when required	Ongoing	Prosecutions completed
Refresher information provided regarding obligation of owning a declared dog when required	Ongoing	Information provided





7 D R A

Overpopulation & high euthanasia

Section 68A(2)(c)(iv) of the Act requires Council to outline programs, services and strategies to address any over-population and high euthanasia rates for dogs and cats. - also addresses 68A(2)(a),(c)(i),(c)(ii),(d),(f)

Current situation

In recent years, there has been a reduction in the number of euthanised impounded cats and dogs. This can be attributed to a range of activities, including a dedicated effort by Council's animal management officers to reunite registered animals wearing their Knox Council tag with their owners, increased levels of enforcement for dogs at large, and greater community responsibility in relationship to pet ownership.

Although the number of euthanised cats has decreased, it is still considerably higher when compared to that of dogs. Of the 296 cats impounded at Council's pound in 2020-2021, only 61 (20.6%) were reclaimed by their owner - which is an improvement on the 16% reclaim rate in 2016-2017 period. A further 147 (50%) cats found new homes through adoption, and 76 (25.7%) were euthanised in the past year. In comparison dogs are more likely to be reunited with their owner, with 275 (84%) of the 326 dogs impounded in 2020-2021 being reclaimed by their owner. A further 29 (9%) dogs were adopted and only 18 (5.5%) were euthanised in the past year.

Whilst Council's pound attempts to re-home all animals that are not reclaimed it is not always possible as the Code for Shelters and Pounds prevent animals with health and temperament issues from being re-homed. Percentages do not total to 100% as some animals were held in foster care to assist in the likelihood of the animal being adopted or were awaiting adoption as at 30 June 2021. Following is a table summarising the total number of dogs and cats admitted to Council's pound over the past 3 DAM plan reporting periods of 2012-2013, 2016-2017 and for the most recent 2020-2021 period.



Table 8: Impounded animals

Dogs	2012-2013	2016-2017	2020-2021	Cats	2012-2013	2016-2017	2020-2021
Incoming dogs (brought in by Council, strays & surrenders)	784	630	326	Incoming cats (brought in by Council, strays & surrenders)	436	402	296
Adopted	130	71	29	Adopted	236	215	147
Euthanised	98	39	18	Euthanised	142	88	76
Reclaimed	579	501	275	Reclaimed	59	65	61
Total	807	611	322	Total	437	368	284

Desexing

A Council Order requiring the compulsory desexing of cats prior to registration has been in place in Knox since April 2011. Pet owners in Knox may be eligible for a MAV/ AVA (Municipal Association of Victoria and Australian Veterinary Association) desexing voucher to assist them in the desexing of their cat or dog. This scheme provides financial assistance to concession card holders with the desexing of their animals at a reduced rate. The provision of desexing vouchers will continue in this Plan.

This plan also includes an initiative in 2022 to provide free or discounted cat and dog desexing to vulnerable and/or disadvantaged residents of Knox, funded through a \$25,000 grant from the State Government.

Semi-owned cat population

The semi-owned cat is one that someone within the community will feed, provide water or shelter to it, however they are not willing to take full responsibility for that cat by way of taking on ownership of it or having it desexed and registered. Many people don't realise that by feeding the cat they are in fact contributing to the overpopulation of un-owned or semi owned cats in the community. Feeding un-owned cats keeps them healthy and strong enough to reproduce. Council's Animal Management team will help anyone who needs assistance with a semi-owned or un-owned cat in their neighbourhood. Cat traps are available to the community to assist with the trapping of feral, un-owned, semi-owned or nuisance cats.



Our Orders, Local Laws, Council Policies and Procedures Orders

Domestic Animals Act 1994 section 10A(1)
The order provides that Knox City Council will not, after 10 April 2011, accept the registration of a cat unless the cat is desexed or exempted under the Domestic Animals Act 1994 from any requirements to be desexed.

Local Laws

Knox City Council Amenity Local Law 2020 provides limits on the number of animals kept

- 4.1 An owner or occupier of private land, the area of which is less than or equal to 4,000 square metres must not, without a permit, keep or allow to be kept on that private land more than:

Type of animal	Number
Dogs	2
Cats	2

Our current education/ promotion activities

- Promote responsible pet ownership at Council's annual Pets in the Park event.
- Website -Excess animal permit forms can be downloaded from the website.
- Promote the benefits of desexing:
 - Reduction of unwanted litters
 - Fewer animals euthanised
 - Reduced aggression
 - Reduced wandering
 - Cost benefits
 - Health benefits.
- Registration audits are conducted to locate and identify unregistered pets.
- State Government initiatives at Council's Pets in the Park event and on Council's website.
- Promote impounded animals on Council's Lost Animals in Knox Facebook page.

Our current compliance activities:

- Reactive enforcement: Owners of excess numbers of pets are advised of the requirement to apply for a permit during the investigation of a complaint.
- Cat traps available from Council for residents with nuisance/ feral cat problems.
- Investigate complaints relating to excess number of animals.
- Enforcement of Local Laws in relation to numbers of animals on a property.
- Enforcement of registration and requirement to wear a registration tag.
- Significantly higher registration fees for entire animals to encourage desexing.
- Investigate reports of unauthorised backyard breeders to ensure compliance with the relevant legislation and regulations.

Summary

During the life of this Plan all cats in Knox will be required to be desexed as per the Council Order. Desexed animals with microchips will qualify for an ongoing reduction in registration fees, which is expected to provide a strong incentive for owners to have animals desexed and registered. Council works closely with its pound provider to develop business practices with an increased focus on rehoming animals and to ensure euthanasia rates are kept to a minimum. Knox also offers a desexing voucher scheme providing holders of an eligible concession card with subsidised desexing of their pet.

This plan also includes an initiative in 2022 to provide free or discounted cat and dog desexing to vulnerable and/or disadvantaged residents of Knox, funded through a \$25,000 grant from the State Government.

👤 A loyal and loving friend. I feel more secure knowing she's around. 🗨️

Our plans – overpopulation & high euthanasia

Objective 1: Increase desexing rates of registered dogs and cats

Activity	When	Evaluation
Provide free/discounted cat and dog desexing to eligible vulnerable and/or disadvantaged Knox residents	2022	Increase in number of desexed animals registered
Partner with Council's Animal Pound provider (Animal Aid) to promote services including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discounted cat and dog desexing 	Ongoing	Increase in number of desexed animals registered
Maintain Council's compulsory desexing of cats order	Ongoing	Ensure all registered cats are desexed
Reduced registration fees for desexed and microchipped animals	Ongoing	Increase in number of desexed animals registered
Promote the MAV/ AVA desexing voucher schemes	Ongoing	Audit use of vouchers
Develop an annual communication plan to support animal management objectives, incorporating messaging on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Desexing of cats and dogs to prevent overpopulation Promotion of the benefits of desexing 	2022	Annual communication plan implemented

Objective 2: Reduce euthanasia rate at Council's pound facility

Activity	When	Evaluation
Partner with Council's Animal Pound provider (Animal Aid) to promote services including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Free cat microchipping Discounted cat and dog desexing 	Ongoing	Reduction in the number of cats euthanised
Work closely with Council's pound provider to ensure a focus on rehousing animals and a reduction in euthanasia rates	2021-2025	Ensure pound provider has processes in place to minimise euthanasia rates
Promote unidentified and unclaimed impounded animals on Council's Lost Animal in Knox Facebook page	Ongoing	Facebook page updated regularly
Provide free initial registration for any dog or cat purchased from an animal shelter with an 84Y agreement with Council	Ongoing	Increased number of dogs and cats registered at adoption
Promote the adoption of animals at Council's pound through the Lost Animals in Knox Facebook page	Ongoing	Regular links on Council's Facebook
Promote the MAV/ AVA desexing voucher schemes	Ongoing	Audit use of vouchers
Develop an annual communication plan to support animal management objectives, incorporating messaging on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Desexing of cats and dogs to prevent overpopulation Promotion of the benefits of desexing 	2022	Annual communication plan implemented

Objective 3: Promote the importance of up to date microchip information

Activity	When	Evaluation
Develop an annual communication plan to support animal management objectives, incorporating messaging on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Importance of up to date microchip information 	2022	Annual communication plan implemented
Contracted pound facility to ensure microchip information is accurate and up to date upon the release of an impounded animal	Ongoing	Regular review of contract services

Objective 4: Manage and promote the awareness of semi-owned cat populations

Activity	When	Evaluation
Introduce a 24 hour cat curfew. Including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The development of a communications plan to promote the introduction of the curfew • Amend pet registration forms to advise of curfew requirements • Update new animal letters advising of curfew requirements • Provide information on DIY cat enclosures and cat proof fencing 	April 2022	Successful media strategy in place Registration forms updated Letters updated Information provided on website and hard copies on request
Support and promote State Government initiatives at Council's Pets in the Park event and on Council's website.	Ongoing	Annually review material available from State Government
Develop an annual communication plan to support animal management objectives, incorporating messaging on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Semi-owned cat populations (ie. feeding an unowned cat) 	2022	Annual communication plan implemented
Provide residents with loan cat traps to assist in the trapping of feral, un-owned, semi-owned or nuisance cats	Ongoing	Review customer requests annually
Develop a letter for residents to advise neighbours of a cat nuisance issue	2022	Reduction of cat nuisance complaints



8

DRAFT

Domestic animal businesses

Section 68A(2)(c)(ii) of the Act requires Council to outline programs, services and strategies which the Council intends to pursue in its municipal district to ensure that people comply with this Act, the regulations and any related legislation - also addresses *68A(2)(a),(c)(i),(d),(f)*

Current situation

Council ensures that all Domestic Animal Businesses (DABs) located within Knox are registered with Council. Inspections are carried out upon registration, as well as annually to ensure compliance.

Council will investigate all reports of suspected backyard breeders and follows up on all cats and dogs sold to Knox residents, ensuring that they have been microchipped and registered.

In 2021, Knox had a total of 28 domestic animal businesses registered.

They included:

- 7 pet shops
- 10 dog training businesses
- 9 boarding facilities
- 1 animal shelter/ pound
- 1 animal breeding/ rearing facility.

Our Orders, Local Laws and Council Policies and Procedures:

- Inspections of all new DABs
- Annual audits of DAB premises
- Utilisation of reporting tools provided by State Government for inspections.

Our current education/ promotion activities:

- A Community Laws officer will work with each Domestic Animal Business annually to provide education regarding their legislative responsibilities and working with those who require assistance to bring align their operations with the regulations and codes of practice.

Our current compliance activities:

- All Domestic Animal Businesses must be registered with Council.
- Annual inspections are conducted at all Domestic Animal Businesses.
- Follow up on non-compliance as required.
- Enforcement action, including issuing infringements and prosecutions for repeat non-compliance.
- Proactive monitoring of the illegal sale of pets.
- Complaints from the public relating to a Domestic Animal Business are investigated.
- Follow up of all cats and dogs sold by DABs to Knox residents, ensuring that they have been microchipped and registered.

Summary

All Domestic Animal Businesses within Knox are inspected annually. Inspections are conducted regularly to ensure compliance with the relevant Code of Practice. Council will endeavour to work with the business to achieve compliance. Where this approach fails, enforcement action will be taken.

Any proposed new DAB will need to demonstrate compliance with legislative requirements of both Council's planning department and Community Laws.

Our plans - domestic animal businesses

Objective 1: Identify and register all Domestic Animal Businesses (DABs) in the municipality

Activity	When	Evaluation
Identify all businesses that should be registered as DABs in the municipality, by reviewing all relevant information sources. Follow up will determine registration requirements	Ongoing	DABs registered and compliant
Proactive monitoring of the illegal sale of pets and ensuring those identified are compliant	Ongoing	Enforcement/ education action taken where appropriate
Investigate all reports of suspected backyard breeders	Ongoing	Enforcement/ education action taken where appropriate

Objective 2: Annually inspect and audit all registered Domestic Animal Businesses to ensure compliance with relevant Codes of Practice

Activity	When	Evaluation
Annually inspect and audit all registered DABs	Ongoing	Audits completed and enforcement action taken for non-compliance

Objective 3: Inspect residential properties where excess animals are registered to determine if they should be a registered Domestic Animal Business

Activity	When	Evaluation
Identify properties where more than two dogs or more than two cats are registered to determine if they are an animal breeder requiring registration as a DAB	Ongoing	Regular audits completed by officers



9

Other matters

Section 68A(2)(e) provides for the review of any other matters related to the management of dogs and cats in the Council's municipal district that it thinks necessary.

Benefits of pet ownership - encouraging a healthy community

Many studies have been undertaken which provide a wealth of knowledge supporting the benefits of pet ownership and their use in therapy. A number of different studies have found a link between better health, both physical and mental, and pet ownership.

Together with the Domestic Animal Management Plan it is envisaged that the Knox community will embrace the importance of pet ownership in providing a healthier and fitter community.

Animal welfare issues

Council's Animal Management Officers are authorised under the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act to deal with any animal cruelty or welfare issues. Officers work with the RSPCA for more complex matters. There are occasions where Council is called upon to assist with the collection of injured animals that are then required to be transported to seek veterinary attention. Council has a good relationship with local veterinary clinics for those injured animals requiring urgent assistance.

Animal welfare and domestic violence

Council acknowledges the impact of domestic violence in regards to pets, where the emergency accommodation is required for both the owner and the pet. Council aims to increase the community's awareness and promote services that are available for women and animals exposed to domestic violence.

Council Order - dogs in public places

The Council Order stipulates the areas in which dogs can be exercised off lead. It is also a requirement for any dog to be under effective control.

The Council order identifies 9 environmentally sensitive areas where dogs are not permitted to be off lead. Dogs are also not permitted to be off lead in children's playgrounds, in an active reserve where an organised sporting event is being conducted, at an organised public meeting, or in a permanent barbeque or picnic area.

Exercising a dog in an off leash area must only be done if the owner can maintain effective voice or hand control of the dog at all times. The dog is not allowed to bother, worry or annoy another person or a dog.

Off leash areas are shared space and it is important that dog owners are respectful of other people using that space.

The Council Order will be reviewed periodically as required to ensure it is relevant and maintains safety and amenity in shared areas in the municipality.

Current situation

Our current Council policies and procedures:

- Council Order – Dogs in Public Places Domestic Animals Act 1994 s26 (Attachment B)
- Council Order – Compulsory Desexing of Cats Domestic Animals Act 1994 s10A(1) (Attachment A)
- Eastern Metropolitan Region Emergency Animal Welfare Plan – this Plan defines the roles and responsibilities of Animal Management Officers and support staff during an emergency. The Plan is reviewed annually to be aligned with the Victorian Emergency Animal Welfare Plan to ensure Local Government responsibilities are addressed.

Our current education/ promotion activities:

- The message of responsible pet ownership is actively promoted at Council's Pets in the Park event.
- Council website and social media.

Our current compliance activities:

- All animal complaints are investigated. Serious issues such as dog attacks, rushes and injured animals are dealt with as a high priority.
- All Council's Community Laws officers are authorised under the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1986 (POCTA).
- Authorised Officers will investigate any reports of alleged animal cruelty and will enforce provisions of the Act.

Summary

While animal ownership is a benefit to the community, it is important that all animal owners are responsible and comply with relevant orders, regulations and legislation in our community.

Council is playing an increasing role in the animal welfare and prevention of animal cruelty space. This is represented in an increased number of animal cruelty matters, which have previously been handled by other agencies.

Council has a role to play with emergency planning in relation to animal management services. Council staff participate in annual training exercises in conjunction with other Council's, government and welfare agencies.

“ They my little pals. ”

“ I love my cats and give them the best care possible. ”

Our plans - other

Objective 1: Encourage responsible management of pets through Council Orders

Activity	When	Evaluation
Maintain Council's dogs in public places (off lead) order	Ongoing	Review the order as required to meet community needs
Maintain Council's compulsory desexing of cats order	Ongoing	Ensure all registered cats are desexed
Introduce a new Council Order for a 24 hour cat curfew	April 2022	Reduction of cat nuisance complaints

Objective 2: Encourage pet ownership for companionship

Activity	When	Evaluation
Explore the introduction of a Pet Companionship program, targeted at socially isolated and lonely older persons living alone	2022-2023	Participation rates in this program, with a corresponding increase in animal registrations

Objective 3: Ensure the welfare of animals in the event of an emergency

Activity	When	Evaluation
Eastern Metropolitan Region Emergency Animal Welfare Plan	Ongoing	Plan up to date
Regular emergency management training is conducted which includes Knox and neighbouring Councils as well as other government and community support agencies	Ongoing	Training completed
Community education: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council website and social media • Brochures/ handouts 	Ongoing	Audit of website to ensure up to date information on an annual basis and social media posts when required

Objective 4: Keeping abreast of animal management matters for the Knox community

Activity	When	Evaluation
Explore the feasibility and options of establishing a regional animal pound facility in collaboration with neighbouring municipalities	2022-2025	Maintain visibility and awareness of neighbouring Council's pound arrangements, to provide Council alternate options if a change to the animal pound service was required
Explore the opportunity for a Knox domestic animal business (including veterinary clinics) forum to discuss local domestic animal issues	2022-2023	Establishment and participation levels in the forum





10

**Annual review of plan
& annual reporting**

Section 68A(3) every Council must:

1. review its Domestic Animal Management Plan annually and, if appropriate, amend the plan
2. provide the Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions' Secretary with a copy of the plan and any amendments to the plan
3. publish an evaluation of its implementation of the plan in its annual report.

Council will review this Plan annually with a full review being done in year four. Action items within the plan have time lines which will be reviewed on a regular basis throughout the life of the plan.

The relevant State Government Secretary will also be advised and provided a copy of any other amendments to the Plan which may arise during the review process.

Table 9: Evaluation of implementation of Domestic Animal Management Plan (July annually - for inclusion in annual report)

	Comments
For each activity, was it completed?	Yes/ No
If no, provide an explanation for each activity not completed.	
Did you complete each objective successfully?	Yes/ No
If no, provide an explanation.	
If yes, describe level of success.	
Are any amendments required for the DAM Plan? If so, please describe.	
If DAM Plan has been amended, has a copy been provided to the Secretary?	

Annual review of plan & annual reporting

Objective 1: Comply with Section 68A(3) of the Act

Activity	When	Evaluation
Review the Plan annually and if required amend the Plan	Annually	Plan amended as required
Provide the State Secretary with a copy of the Plan and any amendments of the Plan	December 2021	Plan submitted to State Government
Publish an evaluation of the implementation of the Plan in the annual report	Annually	Evaluation published within the annual report





11

Attachments

Attachment A

Section 10 order – compulsory desexing of cats

Victoria Government Gazette - No. G 8 Thursday 24 February 2011

Domestic Animals Act 1994

Knox City Council, by resolution dated 24 August 2010, made an Order under section 10A(1) of the Domestic Animals Act 1994. The Order provides that Knox City Council will not, after 10 April 2011, accept the registration of a cat unless the cat is desexed or exempted under the Domestic Animals Act 1994 from any requirement to be desexed.

Exemptions relevant to this Order include:

1. The following cats do not have to be desexed to be registered or to have their registration renewed by a Council in accordance with section 108 of the Domestic Animals Act 1994 –
 - a. a cat that is owned by a person or body that conducts a domestic animal business under which cats are bred and the cat is used for breeding purposes in connection with that business;
 - b. a cat that is owned by a person who is a current member of an applicable organisation and the animal is registered with that organisation;
 - c. a cat that is the subject of written veterinary advice that the health of the cat is liable to be significantly prejudiced if it is desexed.
2. Renewal of an existing registration.
3. Where applicants have an objection to desexing a cat when required to be registered at three months of age, they may apply for a deferral for the first year of registration after which time proof of sterilisation must be provided to Council. Otherwise the cat will be deregistered.

This order has been made in conjunction with ongoing development and implementation of the Knox City Council Domestic Animals Management Plan.

GRAEME EMONSON
Chief Executive Officer

Attachment B

Section 26 order – dogs in public places

Victoria Government Gazette - No. G 15 Thursday 13 April 2006

Notice is hereby given that Knox City Council, at its meeting on 22nd November 2005, resolved to make the following Order under Section 26 of the Domestic (Feral and Nuisance) Animals Act 1994.

This order is effective from 10 April 2006.

1. Dogs shall be kept on lead in public places.

All dogs must be restrained by means of a chain, cord or leash within:

- a. an active reserve where an organised sporting event is being conducted
- b. a children's play equipment area
- c. an organised public meeting
- d. a permanent barbecue or picnic area

2. Public places include footpaths, shopping center's, car parks, bike tracks, walking tracks and conservation bushland areas. Conservation bushland areas include:

- a. Egan Lee Reserve
- b. Flamingo Road Reserve
- c. Gilmore Park Retarding Basin
- d. J W Manson Reserve
- e. Koolunga Native Reserve (except the lawn areas)
- f. Lakewood Reserve
- g. Wicks Reserve (east and west)
- h. W G Morris Reserve
- i. Tim Neville Arboretum

3. Dogs may be off lead but under effective control in a public park or recreation reserve, subject to the following conditions:

- a. Dog owners must carry a chain, cord or leash sufficient to restrain the dog should it behave in a threatening manner; and
- b. Dog owners must remain within effective voice or hand control distance of the dog at all times; and
- c. A person in charge of the dog must not allow the dog to worry, chase or threaten another person or animal.

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Knox City Council

Domestic Animal Management Plan

Engagement Summary Report
Phase 1 - August 2021





Contents

Executive summary	2
Preparing a Domestic Animal Management Plan	2
Community engagement approach	2
Summary of engagement findings	4
Engagement findings.....	6
Who we heard from	6
How survey respondents heard about the consultation	7
Summary of key results.....	8
Relationship with dogs and cats in the Knox municipality.....	10
Dog and/or cat ownership in Knox.....	11
What your pet means to you... ..	15
Cat Curfew – how can Council support the community to implement this.....	16
What our Domestic Animal Businesses had to say	17
Dogs in Knox – what behaviours have you seen... ..	18
About Dogs in Knox – do you know.....	19
Dogs off-leash in Knox.....	20
Dog off-leash areas in Knox – did you know... ..	21
Feedback about dogs off leash in Knox.....	22
Dogs Parks in Knox	23
State Government laws about cats and dogs – did you know.....	24
Cats in Knox – what behaviours have you seen... ..	25
Cats in Knox... did you know?	26
Feedback on the management of cats in Knox	26
Council’s Animal Management Services	27
Council’s animal management services – did you know.....	28
Improvements to Council’s animal management service.....	30
Council’s Animal Pound service	31
Appendix 1: Community survey	32



Executive summary

Preparing a Domestic Animal Management Plan

The Victorian *Domestic Animal Act 1994* requires every Victorian Council to prepare a Domestic Animal Management Plan, outlining how it will manage dogs and cats within its municipal boundaries. This Plan is renewed every four years.

The Knox City Council Domestic Animal Management Plan (DAMP) details Council’s strategies for the management of dogs and cats, including providing education to the community, promoting responsible pet ownership, and protection of the community and environment from nuisance dogs and cats. The DAMP also outlines how Council will enforce all legislative requirements and compliance with our local laws.

Community engagement approach

The community engagement approach for the development of Council’s DAMP includes two rounds of community engagement:

- Phase 1 – consultation to gather feedback from a broad range of stakeholders on their feedback on the current 2017-2021 DAMP, and ideas for the next DAMP (August 2021); and
- Phase 2 – consultation to gather feedback on the draft DAMP (scheduled for November 2021).

During the Phase 1 of engagement, we wanted to hear from our community their feedback on how dogs and cats are managed in the Knox municipality, including feedback on Council’s animal management services and suggestions on what could be improved. The feedback from this community consultation, together with feedback from other stakeholders and benchmarking of how other Council’s manage cats and dogs, will inform the preparation of the draft 2021-2025 DAMP.

The Phase 1 of engagement ran from 2nd July to 1 August 2021 (31 days), and offered the following ways to engage primarily via Council’s *Have Your Say* website, by:

- Survey – for community members/ residents (Appendix 1)
- Survey – for businesses who work with cats and dogs, including animal welfare organisations

For those unable to access Council’s online options, consultation was offered to receive feedback via:

- Request a one-on-one consultation (in lieu of drop-in sessions or community meetings – due to COVID)
- Provide a submission/ feedback – via email, mail (postage paid) or to Council’s customer service centre.





The audience for Phase 1 of the engagement was:

- Registered cat and dog owners (approximately 7,000 registered cats and 19,000 registered dogs in Knox, which is around 1/3 of Knox households)
- Unregistered cat and dog owners
- People interested in animal welfare
- People concerned about animal nuisance / people who have made complaints in the past 12 months
- Users of our public spaces which includes off-lead parks and reserves
- Non-pet owner residents
- People that engaged in the previous Domestic Animal Management Plan Consultation
- Business owners of domestic animal businesses (e.g. animal boarding) and veterinary clinics; and
- Local community groups (e.g. Knox Obedience Dog Club).

The engagement was promoted via a range of Council’s communication channels, including:

- News articles (2) on Council’s website home-page
- A flyer distributed to over 53,000 homes in the municipality (pictured)
- SMS message sent to over 95% of registered cat and dog owners in the municipality, being over 18,600 pet owners (that have provided Council with a mobile phone contact number)
- A3-sized coreflute signs installed in 50 key parks across the municipality (pictured)
- Digital screens in Council’s Civic Centre and libraries
- News article in Knox’s e-Newsletter in July 2021
- Facebook advertisement
- Direct emails to a range of stakeholders including:
 - Council’s domestic animal businesses, veterinary clinics, animal pound, animal welfare and animal training organisations/ groups
 - Previous participants who followed the previous DAMP consultation
 - Residents that have lodged a cat/dog issue to Council in the previous 12 months.



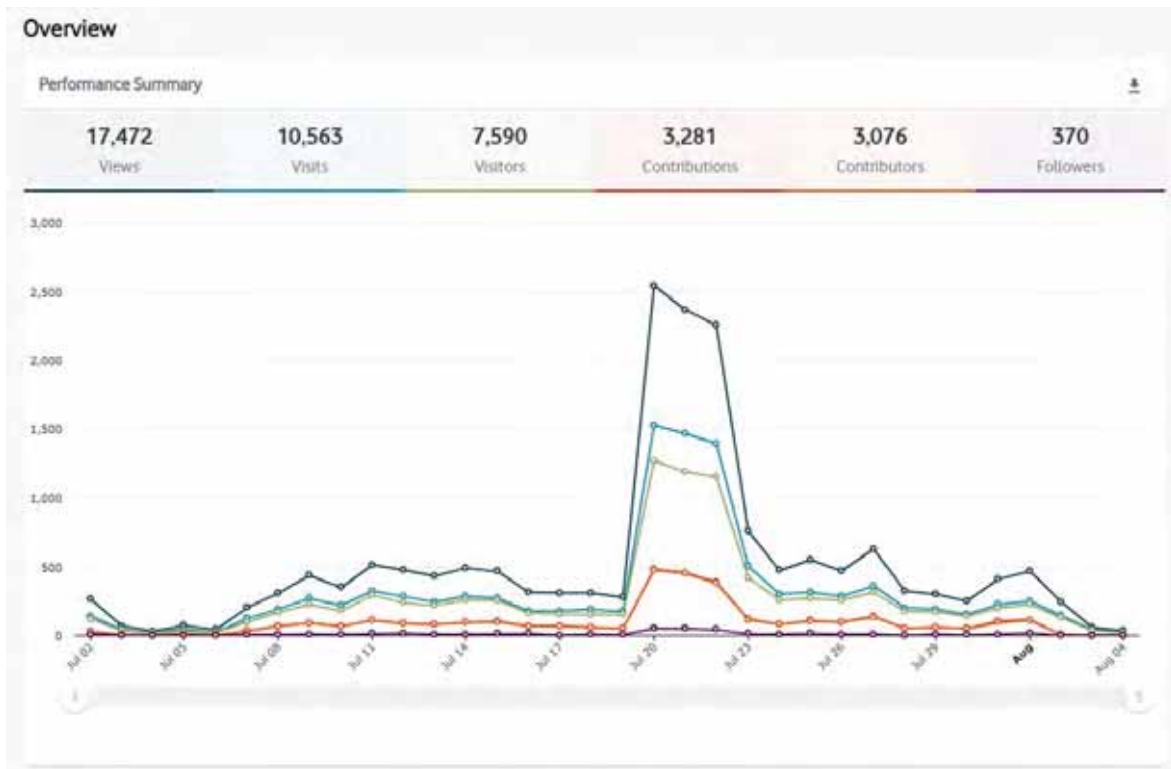


Summary of engagement findings

In July 2021, Knox City Council undertook a consultation with the local community and domestic animal businesses to inform the development of the next Domestic Animal Management Plan. A total of 3,317 responses were received from the community and businesses, through the following channels:

Engagement activity	Responses
Community survey	3,256
Email responses	32
One-on-one consultations (on request)	25
Domestic animal business survey	4

The following graph shows the number of visits/ views and contributions made on the dedicated **“Managing Cats and Dogs in Knox”** webpage on Council’s Have You Say community engagement website haveyoursay.knox.vic.gov.au/dogs-and-cats Note the peak submission spike shown in the graph corresponds with the sending of SMS messages to registered cat and dog owners – inviting their participation in this consultation.



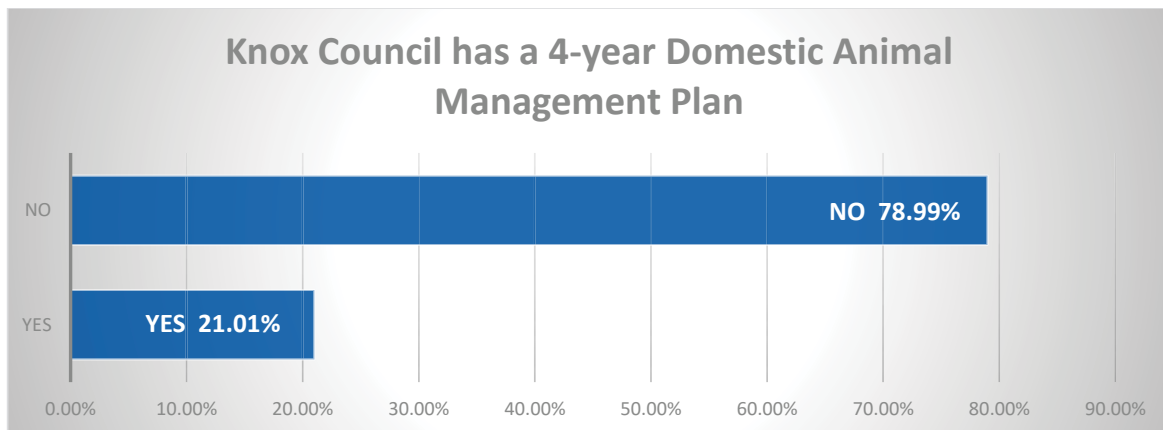


The consultation results have identified a number of key themes – regarding how our community feels about cats and dogs, and how Knox City Council can better support both pet and non-pet owners.

Some of the key findings of the engagement were:

- High engagement in the survey from dog or cat owners (90%) demonstrates a high level of interest in animal management and a commitment to responsible pet ownership in Knox.
- Many community members supported that the animal management services are either very important or important.
- The need for a review of and/or increased compliance and community education regarding dog off leash rules and areas.
- Consideration of the range of support requested by the community, to assist with the introduction of the 24 hour cat curfew in April 2022.
- A need for solutions to address the problem of dog waste (poo) not being collected and disposed of properly.
- Provision of public education and communication campaigns to increase the community awareness of their responsibilities (including registration & microchipping, having your dog under effective control, etc) when owning a cat or dog in Knox.

The survey also identified that 79% of respondents did not know that Council has a 4-year Domestic Animal Management Plan, with over 88% of respondents saying they had not read Council’s 2017-2021 DAM Plan.

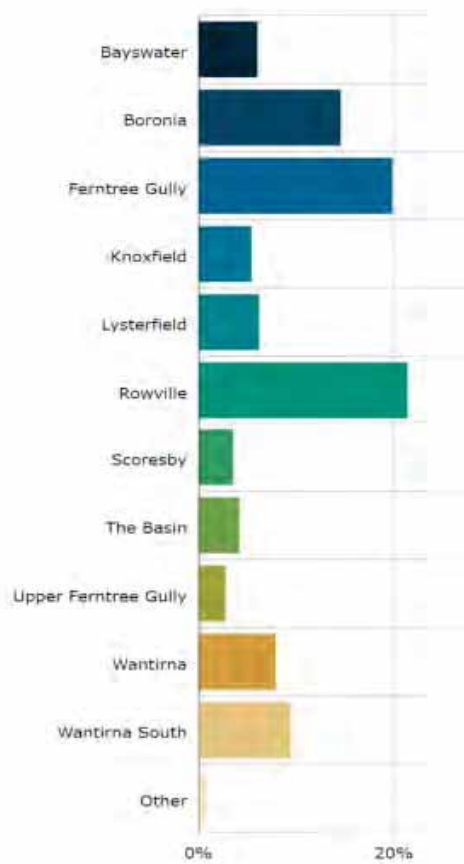




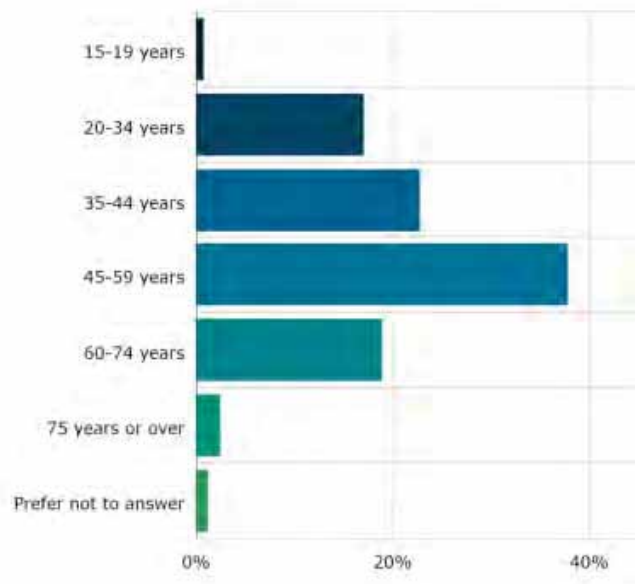
Engagement findings

Who we heard from

24. Which suburb do you live?
Select Box | Skipped: 94 | Answered: 3,162 (97.1%)



25. What is your age bracket?
Select Box | Skipped: 99 | Answered: 3,157 (97%)



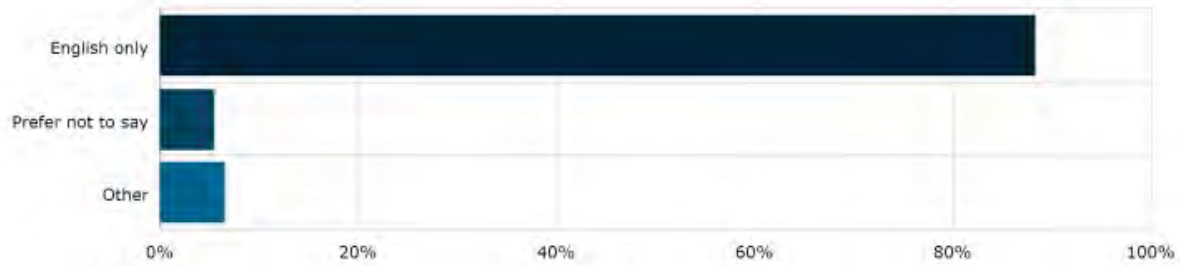
26. What best describes your household?
Select Box | Skipped: 119 | Answered: 3,137 (96.3%)

I live on my own	10.68%	335
I live with another adult, no children at home	33.25%	1,043
I live with another adult, with children in the home	46.19%	1,449
I am a single parent, with children in the home	5.93%	186
Other	3.95%	125
TOTAL	100%	3,137



27. Do any members of your household speak a language other than English at home?

Select Box | Skipped: 187 | Answered: 3,069 (94.3%)

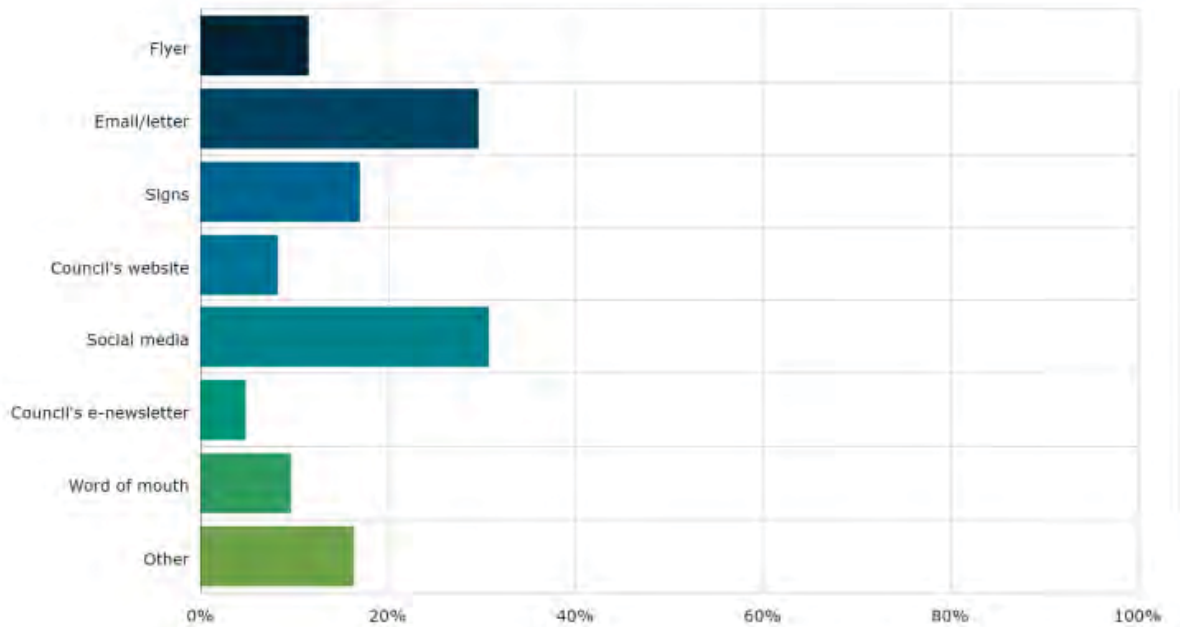


The respondents who chose “Other” identified over 30 languages other than English spoken in their home. The most common other languages were identified as Chinese (including Mandarin, Cantonese & Hokkien), Spanish, German, Greek, Polish, Sinhalese, Italian, Russian, French, Dutch and Hungarian.

How survey respondents heard about the consultation

28. How did you find out about Knox Council’s Domestic Animal Management Plan review and consultation?

Multi Choice | Skipped: 138 | Answered: 3,118 (95.8%)



The majority of respondents who answered “Other” identified receiving an SMS/ text on their mobile phone from Council – which was sent to registered animal owners. The inclusion of a QR code on the signs and flyers, together with a link in the SMS’ message that took respondents directly to the consultation webpage – enabled 72% of respondents to complete the survey from a mobile device. 23% of respondents completed the survey from a desktop device, and the remainder from a tablet.



29. Would you like to be kept informed on the progress of the 2021-2025 Plan?
 Multi Choice | Skipped: 93 | Answered: 3,163 (97.1%)



Nearly 53% of respondents to the survey have asked to be kept informed on the progress of the next DAM Plan, and have provided their email addresses for this purpose.

Summary of key results

The table below presents the questions we asked, and the total number of responses received. The results for each question are presented as a proportion of responses (percent). Note that no questions in the survey were mandatory – however the high participation rate shows very few respondents skipped questions, showing a high level of engagement.

We asked	You said
Relationship with dogs and cats in Knox (3,239 responses)	89.87% are a dog/ cat owner 9.05% does not own a cat or dog 2.93% are a member of a dog club 1.27% are a member of an animal welfare/ advocacy/ rescue group
Desexed status of pets (2,268 responses)	85.76% of dogs are desexed 80.31% of cats are desexed
Registration status of pets (2,306 responses)	89.55% of dogs are registered 75.48% of cats are registered
Microchipping status of pets (2,287 responses)	91.47% of dogs are microchipped 78.77% of cats are microchipped
New cat or dog during the COVID-19 pandemic (2,786 responses)	19.35% welcomed a new cat or dog during the COVID pandemic

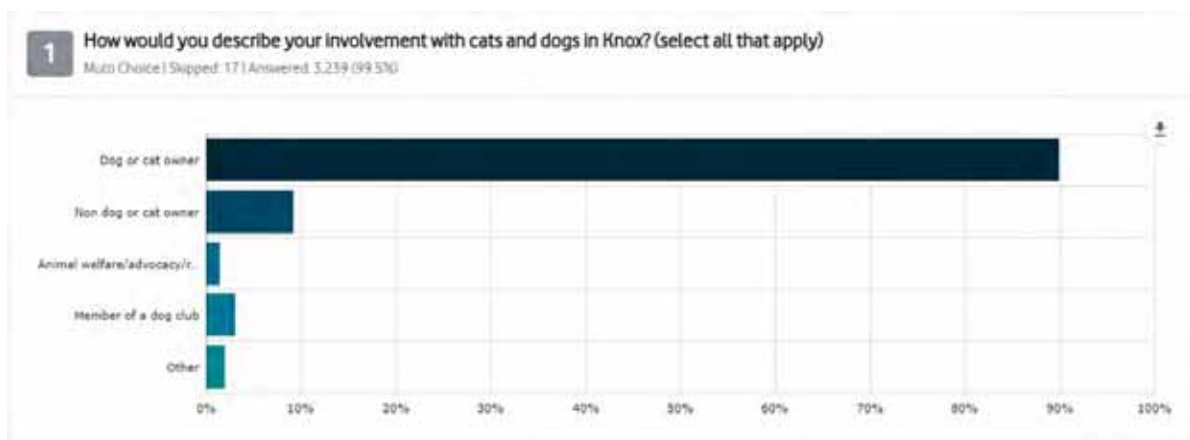


We asked	You said
Supporting the community with the introduction of the cat curfew (2,513 responses)	Top suggestions: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Free or subsidised cat enclosures or fencing 2. Clear communication with cat owners and the community 3. Guidance or help with sourcing, installing or building cat enclosures or fencing
Dogs off lead (3,224 responses)	65.55% say dogs should be required to be on-leash in all public areas unless otherwise signed Dogs should be restricted from being off-leash around children's playgrounds (83.39% agree); sporting and recreation reserves during organised event (82.33%) and environmentally sensitive areas (75.6%)
Issues related to dogs (3,226 responses)	Most frequent issues: 50.59% reported owners not picking up after their dog 20.24% reported dogs barking 'always' or 'often'
Issues related to cats (3,145 responses)	Most frequent issues: 24.93% say cats enter their property at night 'always' or 'often', with a further 20.6% 'sometimes' 13-15% reported cats causing a nuisance to their property or garden 'always' or 'often'
Awareness of State Government requirements about owning a cat or dog in Victoria (3,167 responses)	94.5% knew that cats and dogs over 3 months are required to be registered with your local Council 91.92% knew that cats and dogs must be microchipped 14.82% knew that you are deemed the legal owner of a cat if you feed a stray cat
Awareness of Knox Council's requirements about owning a cat or dog in this municipality (3,180 responses)	31.27% knew that Council provides a free cat trap loan service to address cat nuisances 19.9% knew that all parks and reserves in Knox are off-leash areas for dogs, except for 9 designated parks 61.82% knew that all cats must be desexed before being able to be registered with Council in Knox 16.56% knew what animal management services are funded by pet registration fees 62.44% knew what to do if you find/ lose a pet in Knox 37.44% knew what to do if a dog rushes at or attacks you in Knox
Improving animal management services – suggestions (3,081 responses)	Top suggestions: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 83.38% want photos of lost and found pets on Council's website/ social media 2. 77.41% want registration incentives or discounts 3. 67.02% want better signage about relevant dog restrictions in public spaces 4. 56.73% want support for companion pet ownership by seniors in our community



Relationship with dogs and cats in the Knox municipality

Survey respondents were asked about their association with cats and dogs and the Knox municipality, to gain an insight into the different groups interested in Council’s Domestic Animal Management Plan. As the plan specific relates to the keeping of cats and dogs, the majority of survey respondents (89.87% or 2,911) identified as being a dog or cat owner. Those who identified as “Other” involvement with cats and dogs primarily identified as (i) previously owning a cat or dog; (ii) a family or household member where they reside owns a cat or dog; or (iii) they work with cats or dogs, in a veterinary clinic or as an animal trainer.



Question 2 asked survey respondents to provide the name of any cat or dog organisation that you are part of. A range of dog and cat breeder clubs, training organisation/ clubs and animal welfare organisations were identified in the responses with the most number of responses identified as being members of the following:

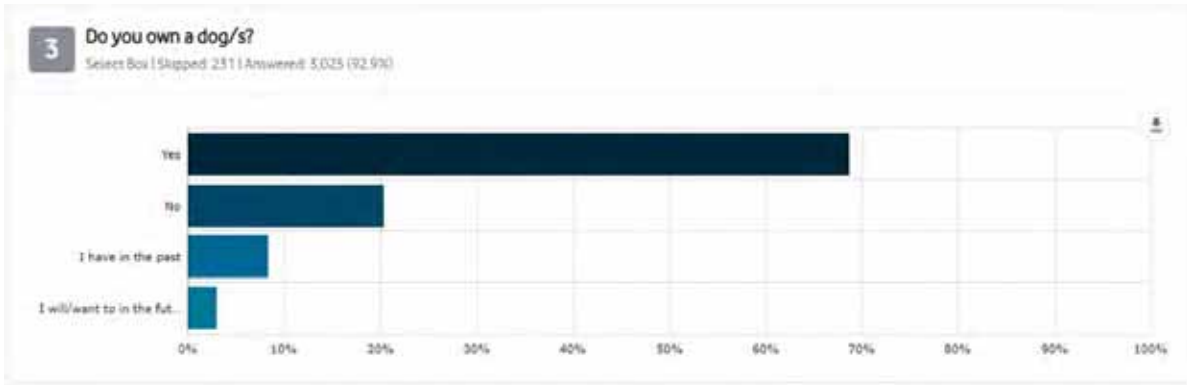
2. Please tell us the name of any cat or dog organisations that you are part of:

Short Text | Skipped: 2,562 | Answered: 694 (21.3%)

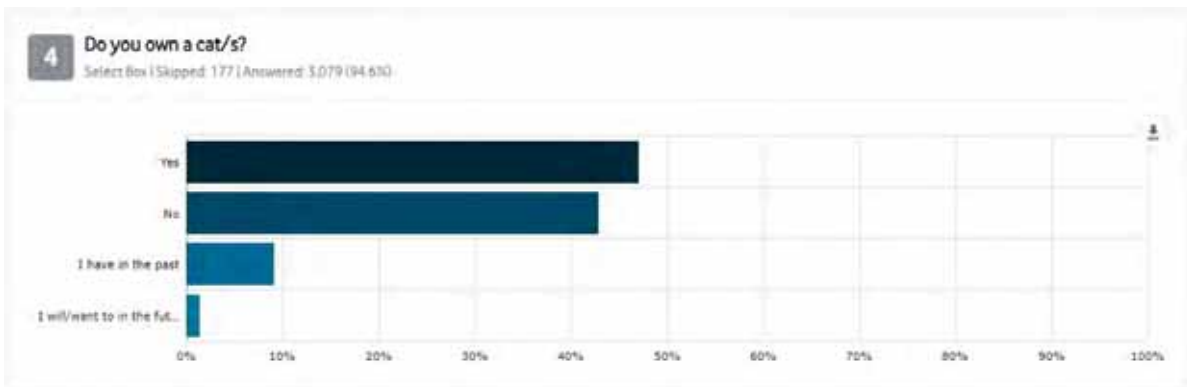
Knox Dog Obedience Club	61
Dogs Victoria	24
RSPCA	23
Alpha Dog training	22
SOS Dog Obedience Club	10
German Shepherd Dog Club	10



Dog and/or cat ownership in Knox



68.6% or 2,075 of survey respondents identified as owning a dog, with a further 8.3% (251) having owned a dog in the past. 86 respondents (2.84%) said they will or want to own a dog in the future – whilst 20.26% or 613 respondents identified as not owning a dog.

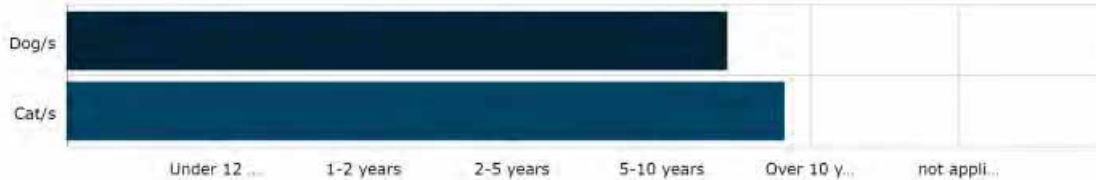


47% or 1,446 of survey respondents identified as owning a cat, with a further 9% (277) having owned a cat in the past. 40 respondents (1.3%) said they will or want to own a cat in the future – whilst 42.7% or 1,316 respondents identified as not owning a cat.



5. How long have you owned dog/s or cat/s?

Matrix | Skipped: 444 | Answered: 2,812 (86.4%)

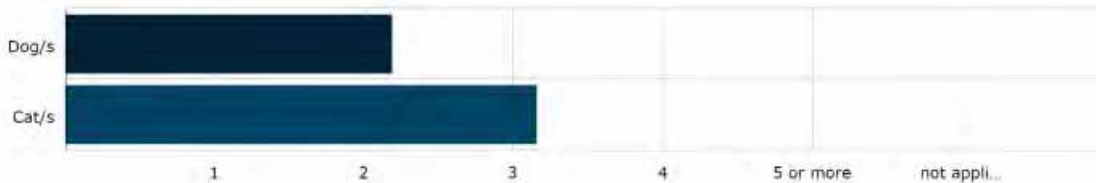


	Under 12 months	1-2 years	2-5 years	5-10 years	Over 10 years	not applicable	Count	Score
Dog/s	3.89% 103	5.33% 141	12.02% 318	14.85% 393	49.47% 1,309	14.44% 382	2,646	4.44
Cat/s	1.76% 41	3.82% 89	9.06% 211	13.05% 304	40.88% 952	31.43% 732	2,329	4.82

When it comes to owning cats or dogs, the higher proportion of respondents have owned animals for over 10 years (49.47% for dogs and 40.88% for cats). This supports a high level of interest in this engagement from a community passionate about their cat and/or dog.

6. How many cats and dogs live in your household?

Matrix | Skipped: 450 | Answered: 2,806 (86.2%)



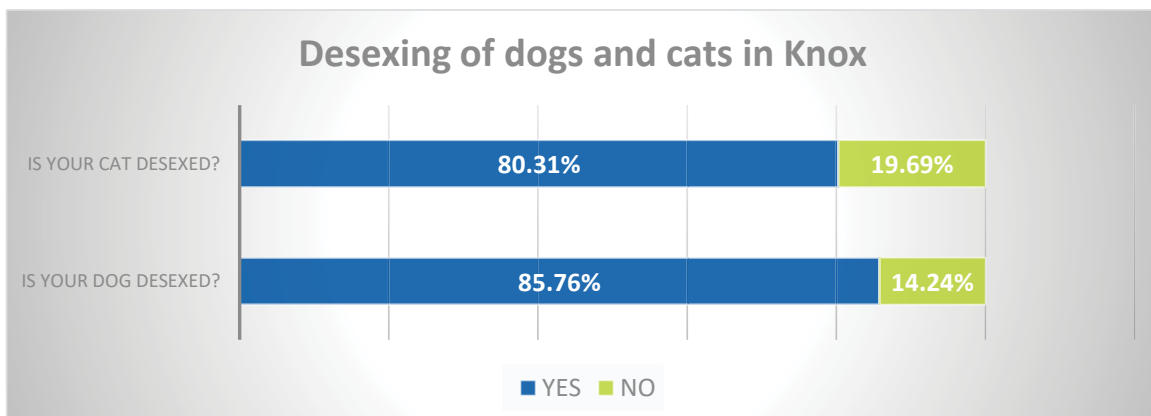
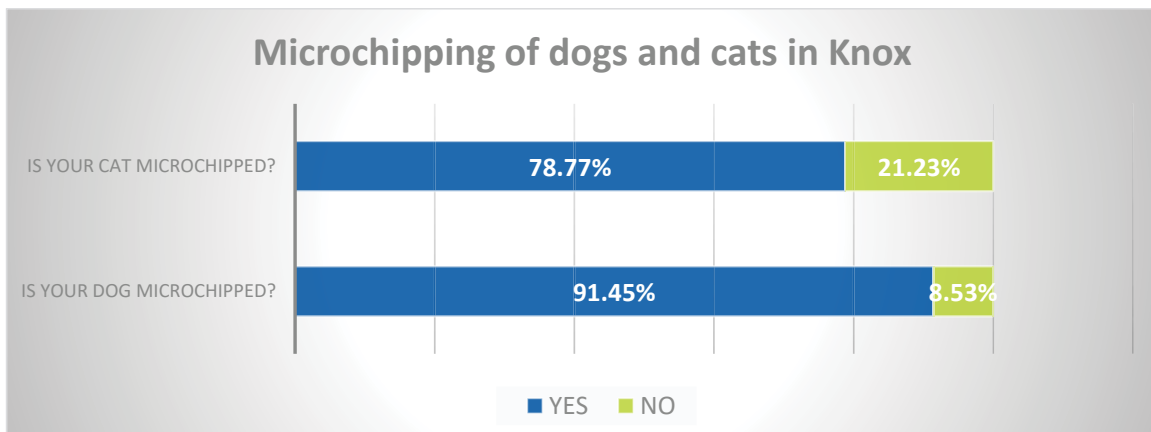
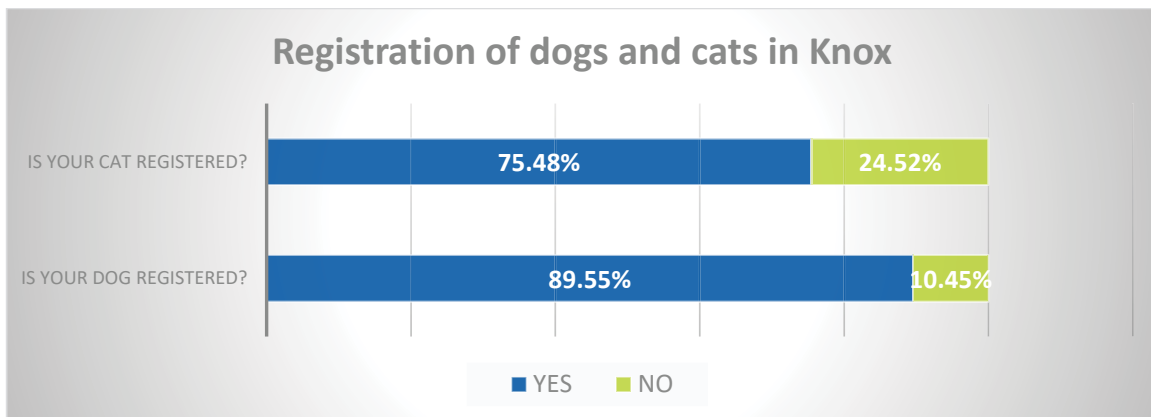
	1	2	3	4	5 or more	not applicable	Count	Score
Dog/s	58.02% 1,476	21.58% 549	1.45% 37	0.28% 7	0.24% 6	18.44% 469	2,544	2.18
Cat/s	38.35% 889	21.31% 494	2.24% 52	0.30% 7	0.22% 5	37.58% 871	2,318	3.15

When it comes to the number of cats or dogs in your household, the majority of dog (58%) and cat (38.35%) owners only own one dog or cat respectively, with a further 21.58% owning two dogs, or 21.31% owning two cats. Only a very small proportion of respondents (4%) identified as owning 3 or more cats or dogs – which would require an excess animal permit in accordance with *Council's Amenity Local Law*.



Question 7 asked survey respondents about whether:

- You welcomed a new cat or dog during the COVID pandemic
- The registration status of your cat or dog
- The microchip status of your cat or dog; and
- The desexing status of your cat or dog.





	Yes	No	Count
Have you welcomed a new cat or dog during the COVID-19 pandemic?	19.35% 539	80.65% 2,247	2,786
Is your dog/s registered?	89.55% 2,065	10.45% 241	2,306
Is your cat/s registered?	75.48% 1,413	24.52% 459	1,872
Is your dog/s microchipped?	91.47% 2,092	8.53% 195	2,287
Is your cat/s microchipped?	78.77% 1,443	21.23% 389	1,832
Is your dog/s desexed?	85.76% 1,945	14.24% 323	2,268
Is your cat/s desexed?	80.31% 1,452	19.69% 356	1,808

Despite the State Government requirement that all cats and dogs over 3 months of age be registered with their local Council, 700 survey respondents stated that their cat or dog was not registered – with nearly 1 in 4 cat owners (24.52%) admitting that their cat is not registered. 584 survey respondents also stated that their cat or dog was not microchipped – with over 21% of cat owners admitting that their cat is not microchipped. These results unfortunately support the distressing statistics provided by Council’s Animal Pound provider (Animal Aid) regarding the very low levels of reuniting of lost cats, due to not being able to identify their owner – and subsequent higher rates of euthanasia of cats who are unable to be rehomed or adopted. Both the current and next DAM Plan have dedicated chapters regarding Council’s initiatives to encourage animal registration, identification (including microchipping) and ways to reduce high euthanasia of cats and dogs.

The 75%-91% of pet owners who identified as having registered and microchipped their dogs and cats clearly show that the majority of pet owners in Knox are responsible – when it comes to these important ways to identify their animals to enable them to be reunited if they became lost, and to comply with the registration requirements required on all cat and dog owners in Victoria.

Over 19% or 539 of the survey respondents also said that they welcomed a new cat or dog during the COVID-19 pandemic. This highlights the importance that cats and dogs have to our community – and the companionship and support that having a pet provides people in challenging times.



What your pet means to you...

Question 8 provided respondents with a free-text field to write (in their own words) “*what your pet means to you*”. 81.2% or 2,644 of respondents provided their personal and heart-felt statements of what their cat and/ or dog means to them and their family. The draft DAM Plan intend to include a word diagram to showcase a range of these responses – to share with our community. Some of the common answers reference pets as a companion; friend; family member; and many responses reflect on the importance their pet is to their mental and physical wellbeing. A sample of the responses provided to this question are included below:

A companion, who gives comfort and love. An opportunity for my children to provide care to.

A great mate, entertainer and my personal fitness trainer.

A house is only a home when it has a dog in it.

A loyal and loving friend. I feel more secure knowing she's around.

A valuable part of the family, companion, helps with stress, depression & anxiety.

We consider them our children as we have not yet had any human children of our own.

Additional support and company for my mother as she gets older.

After 17 years of looking after me, he is still going strong – my buddy and companion especially since my wife passed away.

All 3 pets play a large role in the emotional development of our children. They add responsibility to our children and are great companions to all of us.

Almost the most precious thing in my life, my constant companion.

All my pets mean the world to me, they go everywhere – if it's too wet to walk, they go for a ride in the car.

Agatha (my cat) is my best friend and great companion. She helps to keep my blood pressure and anxiety under control.

Pets break down barriers, give unconditional love and help relieve feeling lonely.

Angus and Archie mean the world to me. I live by myself and they are my family and constant companions. Especially during the covid lockdowns they give me a sense of belonging and purpose. I talk with them during the day and Angus loves to sit on my lap in the evenings while I'm watching TV.

As we aren't having kids we are those people that probably spoil their dog a bit much!

Best friend, companion, unconditional love.

Both our pets are our fur babies. A very big part of our family, we have no children.

Comfort companionship friendship loyalty. Animals give back more than they receive from us and don't question our motivations.

Companionship and a reason to get up in the morning!!

Company - I'm now living alone since my wife died 3 years ago and it's been good to have some/one/thing to talk to and care for

Essential to my emotional and social well-being

My sanity as a single mid 30's male.

Love, happiness and joy!

My cat is my constant companion. I never feel lonely since I got her 3 years ago.

My pets are my life, I'm a recluse so all I have in this world are my pets...

She is part of our family so very important, especially helping us get through all the lockdowns

Cat Curfew – how can Council support the community to implement this

Survey participants were asked the question “Ahead of a cat curfew commencing, what support do you believe Council can offer to assist the community with this new initiative?”. 77.2% or 2,513 responses were provided to this question – with responses ranging from comments about the curfew, through to a range of ideas about how Council can assist the community.

A high number of respondents utilised this free-text field to provide their opinion about the introduction of the 24 hour cat curfew, as resolved by Council at the June 2021 Ordinary Meeting of Council. The sentiment of the responses provided were mixed – with a range of negative (opposition to the 24 curfew); positive (supporting the 24 hour curfew); and those in support of an alternate curfew model (ie. 12 hour or night-time curfew).

The community provided a range of suggestions of ways Council can assist with this new initiative, which include:

- Free or subsidised cat enclosures or fencing
- Clear communication with cat owners and the community
- Guidance or help with sourcing, installing or building cat enclosures or fencing
- Advice on how to manage cats indoors
- Reasonable approach to enforcement (ie. official warnings rather than fines)
- Explain the reasons and benefits of a curfew
- Reduced cat registration fees
- Assistance to residents to capture or report roaming cats
- Education/ reassurance/ stimulation for cats to be happy indoors
- Advice on how to stop cats escaping their property
- Financial assistance for other costs to owners to contain their cat (ie. Increased litter costs, vet bills)
- Animal behaviourist or pet psychology sessions
- Ways to support renters/ tenants who can not make modifications to the fencing/ property
- Assistance to those rely on their cat for their mental health (suffers of depression/ mental health)
- Provide advice on cat-friendly and cat-deterrent plants in your yard
- Provide education/ resources that show how far cats roam from home
- Invest in buying additional cat traps to support the cat trap program
- Translate the education materials about the curfew into other languages
- Ways to reduce behavioural issues with cats (ie. Cat spraying, cat meowing, etc)
- Encourage ownership of cat breeds that are more docile, better indoors, etc.

An education and communication campaign is being developed to assist cat owners with the introduction of the curfew in April 2022.



What our Domestic Animal Businesses had to say

A dedicated survey was sent to the veterinary clinics, dog boarding facilities, catteries, registered animal trainers as well as animal pounds and other animal welfare organisations as part of this consultation – to ask their views on a range of questions regarding the management of cats and dogs in Knox. 4 responses were provided to this specific survey (primarily by local veterinary clinics), however additional responses were provided in the community survey by respondents who identified themselves as working in Knox’s animal businesses as a veterinary nurse, dog trainer, business owner, etc.

The feedback and suggestions provided by the respondents to were as follows:

- Concerns about the process whereby the public can take uninjured lost animals to the veterinary clinic. This causes resourcing issues and possible legal issues once they are brought into their care.
- Community education about responsible pet ownership (ie. How to control your dog off lead, reactive dogs, management of stray cat populations ie. *“If you feed it – it’s yours”* programs)
- Allow veterinarians to scan animal microchips and reunite a lost animal with their owner.
- More timely collection arrangements (especially after business hours) of animals from the clinic by Council, to make the animal reuniting process more efficient.
- Tightening of Council’s ‘effective control’ requirements for dogs off lead, due to seeing many dogs that have been attacked both off lead and on lead – with comments including:
 - *“in practice, people have limited recall over their animals”*
 - *“Dog parks are great places but can also be scary and dangerous places for both dogs and their owners. They rely on people not only having control over the dog but also understanding their own dogs limitations when socialising. This is where most people fall short.”*
- Mixed views were provided about the cat curfew – identifying the benefits of keeping cats inside, whilst also sharing the concerns that some cats will experience anxiety if kept indoors (ie. Urine spraying indoors).
- Development of resources to help owners transition their cats to living indoors (in collaboration with vets).
- Cross-checking Council’s registration database with the microchip databases to identify dogs and cats that have not been registered.
- More Council ranger patrols to provide enforcement for dogs off lead.



Dogs in Knox – what behaviours have you seen...

Survey participants were asked a range of questions below to rate the frequency of common nuisance issues that relate to dogs in Knox. The responses below are shaded to represent the majority of responses (ie. 75% or more):

	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Dog poo left on the ground	22.36%	28.23%	31.68%	15.19%	2.55%
Dogs wandering at large (loose, or without an owner present)	2.8%	7.28%	17.39%	44.95%	27.59%
Dogs annoying/ intimidating other dogs	2.49%	6.81%	23.34%	42.75%	24.61%
Dogs annoying/ intimidating other people	1.93%	5.11%	15.84%	38.15%	38.97%
Dogs chasing/ attacking wildlife	0.97%	2.21%	7.82%	24.0%	65.0%
Dogs in playgrounds	5.02%	15.18%	31.95%	27.78%	20.07%
Dogs barking causing a nuisance	6.81%	13.43%	27.74%	37.61%	12.40%
Dog owners picking up their dog's poo	10.56%	50.93%	28.85%	8.01%	1.65%
Dog owner unable to control their dog	1.46%	8.75%	25.92%	41.93%	21.93%
Dogs in public spaces who are friendly and well behaved	19.01%	63.66%	15.12%	1.74%	0.47%

Dog waste

Dog waste (poo) that is not cleaned up by the owner was identified as a common issue (noticed 'always' or 'often') by over 50% of respondents. It was also an issue identified through the one-on-one consultations and internal stakeholder conversations throughout this consultation. A range of suggestions were offered as to how the issue might be reduced, including increased provision of dog waste bags/ bins, public awareness campaign, and greater enforcement by Council staff.

Dogs barking causing a nuisance

Dog barking causing a nuisance was identified as a common issue (noticed 'always' or 'often') by over 20% of respondents. Response to barking dog complaints is an initiative in the current Knox DAMP, and will carry-forward into the next DAMP – to address nuisances caused by dogs barking in the municipality.

Dogs annoying/ intimidating/ attacking others

The survey asked a range of questions to assess the impact of dogs displaying behavior that risks the safety of others (people, animals and wildlife). A very low number of respondents (3.18%) identified dogs chasing/ attacking wildlife as a common issue (noticed 'always' or 'often'). A small number of respondents (7.04% & 9.3%) said they had seen dogs in Knox annoying/ intimidating other people or other dogs respectively.

Dogs in playgrounds

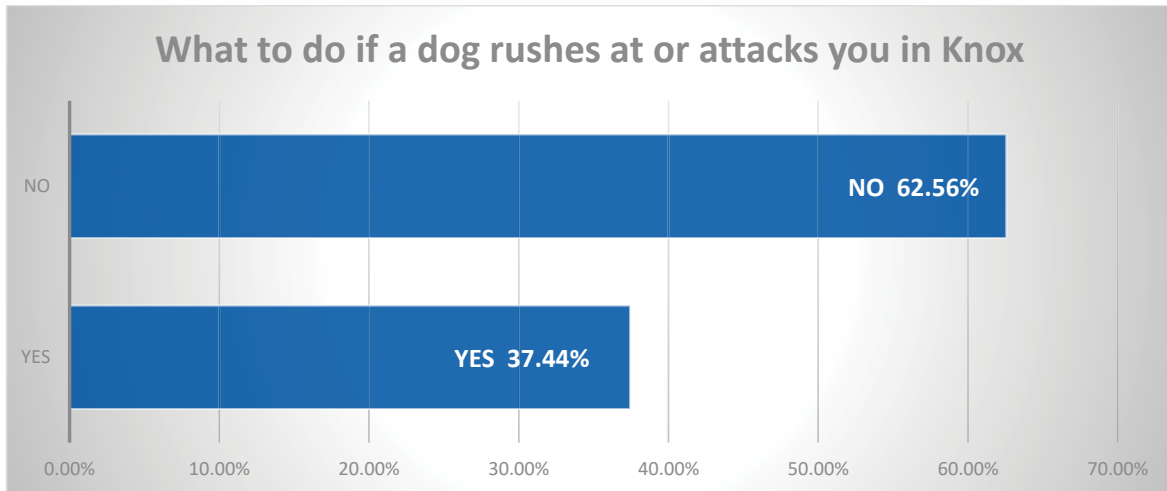
Over 20% of respondents identified that they had seen dogs in playgrounds 'always' or 'often', with a further 31.95% seeing dogs in playgrounds 'sometimes'. Council currently has an Order made under the *Domestic Animals Act* that requires dogs to be on-leash in a playground. This order will be considered as part of the greater review of dog off leash provisions as part of the review of the next DAMP.

Behaviour of dogs in public spaces

Over 82% of respondents identified that they observed dogs in public spaces who are friendly and well behaved 'always' or 'often', with only a very small proportion (2.2%) rarely or never observing this behavior in Knox.



About Dogs in Knox – do you know...





Dogs off-leash in Knox

Survey participants were asked a range of questions below to get their views to the following statements about dogs off-leash in Knox. The responses below are shaded to represent the majority of responses (ie. >60% or more):

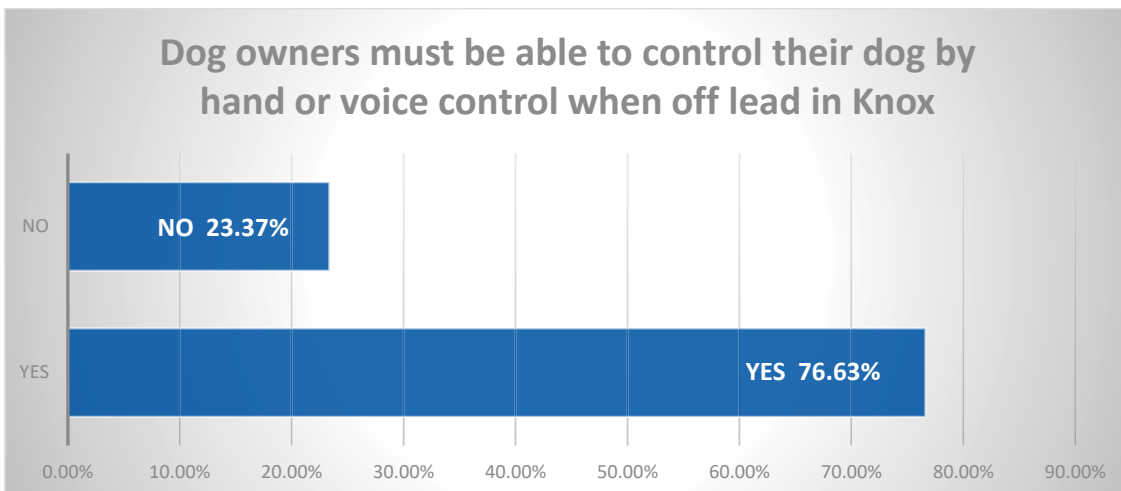
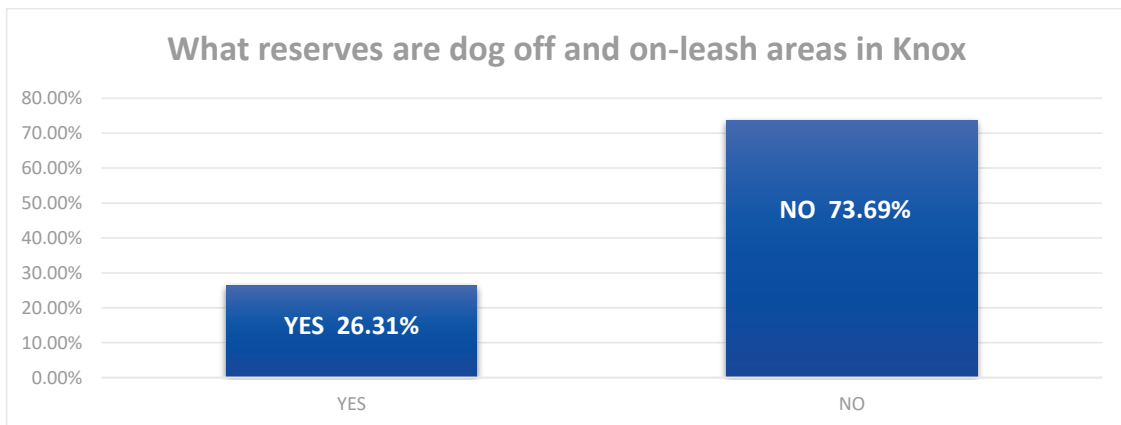
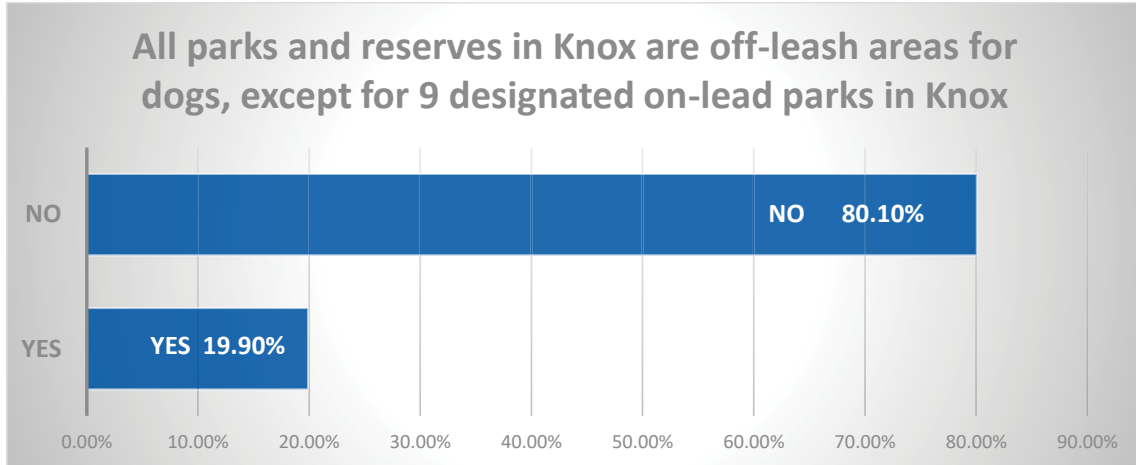
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't know/ not relevant
I have had a negative experience with a dog off-leash in Knox	13.68%	19.41%	22.22%	29.67%	15.02%
I support more areas where dogs can exercise off-leash in Knox	38.57%	34.81%	12.27%	6.38%	7.97%
I don't think dogs should be off-leash in any public place	17.37%	17.53%	30.04%	30.79%	4.27%
Dogs should be restricted from being off-leash on/ around:					
• Children's playgrounds	44.95%	38.44%	9.70%	3.73%	3.17%
• Sporting and recreation reserves (during organised sporting events)	41.10%	41.23%	9.13%	4.08%	4.46%
• Sporting and recreation reserves (anytime)	18.37%	19.93%	34.52%	21.96%	5.22%
• Barbeques and picnic areas	27.61%	36.26%	23.33%	8.74%	4.06%
• Council buildings	24.10%	35.30%	16.25%	6.34%	18.01%
• Environmentally sensitive areas	38.66%	39.94%	11.84%	4.14%	5.42%
Dogs in Knox should be required to be on-leash in all public areas unless otherwise signed	34.91%	30.64%	18.13%	12.99%	3.33%
Off-leash areas allow my dog and I to socialise and meet new friends	30.56%	31.25%	7.95%	3.76%	26.49%
I have concerns for the welfare of native wildlife due to dogs off-leash in Knox	10.66%	17.69%	35.76%	25.53%	10.35%
I exercise more because I can do this with my dog off-leash in Knox	18.62%	16.46%	19.63%	9.23%	36.06%
I am concerned for my pet and/or my own safety when dogs are off-leash in Knox	20.30%	24.75%	26.69%	17.26%	11.00%

A greater proportion of the respondents to the survey questions regarding dogs off-leash in Knox support the provision of more dog-off leash areas in Knox, whilst supporting that dogs should be restricted from being off-leash on/ around children's playgrounds, sporting and recreation reserves (during organized sporting events), barbeque and picnic areas, Council buildings and environmentally sensitive areas.

Survey respondents were mixed in their views on the restriction of dogs off lead from sporting and recreation reserves (anytime); exercising more with your dog off-leash; and regarding concern for their pet or their own safety when dogs are off-leash in Knox.



Dog off-leash areas in Knox – did you know...





Feedback about dogs off leash in Knox

Survey respondents were asked to “Please provide any comments or feedback you have regarding dogs off-leash in Knox”. 52.2% or 1,700 responses were provided to this request – which raised the following issues:

A range of negative issues caused by dogs off lead were included in the feedback, primarily relating to:

- Dog Attacks and dog rush incidents
- Dog owners not picking up after their dog while off leash
- Dogs not under effective control
- Dog owners being distracted/ ignoring what their dog is doing off lead
- Training and obedience requirements on dogs off lead
- Issues of safety in dog off lead parks
- Anxiety, stress and fear some community members have of dogs off lead
- Dogs going into the lake/ water/ creek – disturbing the wildlife
- Concerns regarding dogs off lead in/ around:
 - Playgrounds and children
 - Schools
 - Walking and bike paths
 - Open areas and sports grounds
- Behaviour of owners of dogs off lead (including aggression).

A range of positive feedback was also provided about the benefits created by dogs off lead in Knox, including:

- The socialisation and community interaction through exercising dogs with other owners
- Dogs that are well trained behave appropriately off lead.
- Benefits/ requirements of obedience training for dogs and their owners.
- Mental and physical wellbeing provided through exercising your dog – especially during COVID.
- Request for more fenced dog parks, to keep dogs contained.

Respondents also provided a range of comments about some community members preference for dogs being on-lead in Knox, for many of the reasons (safety, anxiety, etc) raised above.

In addition to the community feedback, internal stakeholder engagement sessions were held with departments across Council – where dogs off lead interact with the services/ programs being delivered. The feedback identified that dogs being able to exercise/ be off lead on Knox’s sportsgrounds/ fields is causing a range of issues including:

- Damage caused to the playing surface by dogs (including an example of one park in Knox having to have damage repaired 17 times in the last cricket season)
- Dog poo on the ground – that needs to be picked up by parents/ players/ volunteers prior to training sessions and sporting events commencing on the ground
- Issues with the ground surface after being top-dressed with sand (as dogs dig in the sand)
- Possible poisoning issues to dogs accessing the sportsgrounds after chemical spraying has occurred
- Issues with diseases (ie. Dog gastro) transmitted/ contracted by public area water-bowls for dogs at some parks and grounds.

It is acknowledged that there is a large number of responsible dog owners who are doing the right thing regarding their dog in these public areas, but a small number of dog owners not doing the right thing are contributing to the problems identified above. The ability for Council to patrol all the off-lead dog areas in Knox (in excess of 300 parks and reserves) is limited with the current resourcing levels.



Dogs Parks in Knox

Survey participants were asked the questions below to get their views to the following statements about their experiences in using Knox's dog parks. The responses below are shaded to represent the majority of responses (ie. >60% or more):

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't know/ not relevant
I have had a negative experience with a dog in a fenced off-leash park in Knox	7.01%	12.01%	21.23%	18.99%	40.75%
Fenced off-leash areas (dog parks) give me peace of mind	19.63%	38.01%	12.64%	6.21%	23.51%
There should be more parks that are designed primarily for use by dogs	28.57%	41.35%	10.71%	4.35%	15.02%
I prefer to exercise my dog in a larger open area non-fenced off-leash area	16.08%	17.67%	18.27%	10.09%	37.90%

A greater proportion of the respondents to the survey questions regarding dog parks in Knox answered that they 'don't know/ not relevant to me' to several of the questions – which may suggest that they are not users of the two dedicated dog parks in Knox.

Those who are users of Knox's dog parks, more respondents indicated that they had not had a negative experience with a dog at a Knox dog park, and there was greater support for more parks that are designed primarily for the use of dogs.

Responses were divided regarding the preference to exercise their dog is a larger open area (non fenced) off leash area, whilst nearly 58% of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that a fenced off-leash area (dog park) gives them peace of mind.

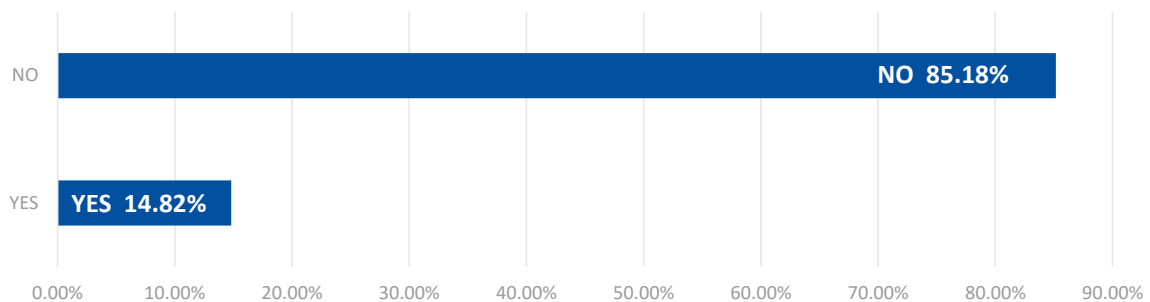


State Government laws about cats and dogs – did you know...

Victorian State law requires all cats and dogs over 3 months of age be registered with your local Council



Victorian State law deems you the legal owner of a cat if you feed a stray cat



Victorian State law requires all cats and dogs be microchipped before being able to be registered with your local Council





Cats in Knox – what behaviours have you seen...

Survey participants were asked a range of questions below to rate the frequency of common nuisance issues that relate to cats in Knox. The responses below are shaded to represent the majority of responses (ie. 75% or more):

	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Cats entering your property at night	10.67%	14.26%	20.60%	23.72%	30.75%
Cats entering your property during the day	8.35%	12.27%	22.43%	29.47%	27.49%
Cats preying on wildlife	4.32%	7.99%	15.79%	26.37%	45.52%
Cats that appear unowned	3.68%	5.98%	14.74%	24.11%	51.49%
Cats fighting or making loud noises	3.26%	6.80%	18.65%	34.62%	36.67%
Cats causing nuisance to your property	5.83%	7.55%	12.29%	18.44%	55.89%
Disturbed garden beds due to cat activity	5.66%	7.81%	11.62%	18.02%	56.90%
Cats in sensitive environmental areas or reserves	2.96%	5.22%	9.82%	16.93%	65.07%

Despite that only 47% (or 1,446) of the overall survey respondents identified as being cat owners, over 3,100 survey responses were provided each of the cat behavior questions in the table above. Therefore over 50% of the survey respondents to these questions are people who do not own a cat.

The majority of responses (shaded in blue) indicated that the respondents either only 'rarely' or 'never' experienced the cat nuisance issues that include preying on wildlife (71.89%), appear being unowned (75.6%), causing nuisance to your property (74.33%), disturbed garden beds due to cat activity (74.92%), or cats in sensitive environmental areas or reserves (82%).

Cats entering your property

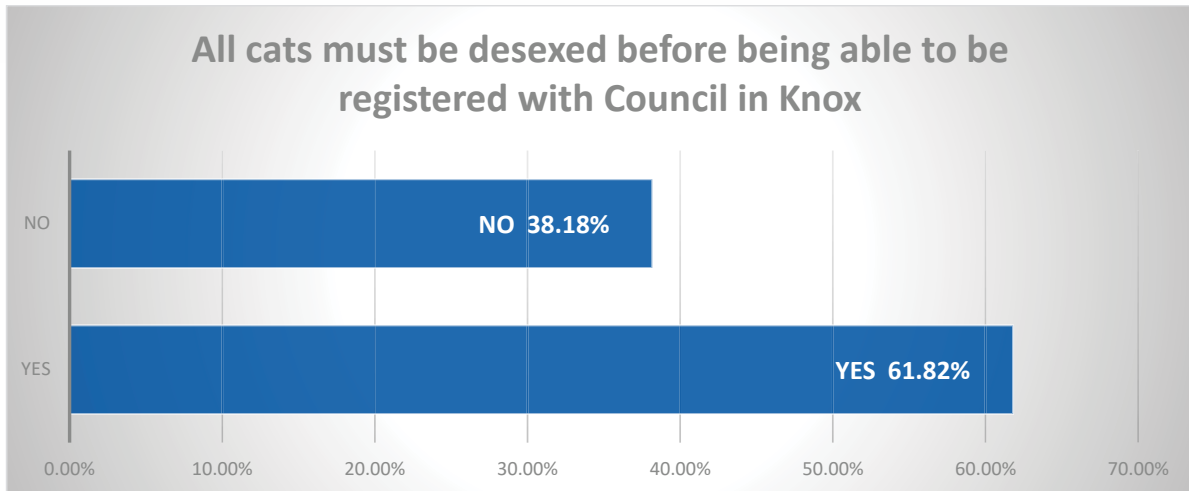
Cats entering your property (at night or during the day) was identified as an issue (noticed 'always' or 'often') by between 20-25% of respondents, with a further 20-22% experiencing this issue 'sometimes'. Therefore between 43-45% of survey respondents identified cats entering their property (either during the day or night). Conversely, 55-57% of respondents identified as having 'rarely' or 'never' experienced cats entering their property (day or night).

Cats fighting or making loud noises

Cats fighting or making loud noises was identified as an issue (noticed 'always' or 'often') by 10% of respondents, with a further 18.65% experiencing this issue 'sometimes'. The greater proportion of respondents (72%) identified as having 'rarely' or 'never' experienced cats fighting or making loud noises.



Cats in Knox... did you know?



Feedback on the management of cats in Knox

Survey respondents were provided with a free-text field to provide their comments to the question “Do you have any other suggestions that may improve the management of cats in Knox?” 44.7 or 1,455 responses were provided to this question, with the main themes being:

- Feedback on the cat curfew – positive, negative and mixed responses
- Cat ownership issues including compulsory desexing
- Containment of cats to their property
- Education on responsible cat ownership,
- Option of cats being walked on leashes
- Impact of feral and unowned cats in Knox
- Cats and their impact on wildlife and the environment; and
- Issues of cat poo in resident’s gardens.



Council's Animal Management Services

Survey participants were asked a range of questions to indicate what animal management services are important to the community. The responses below are shaded to represent the majority of responses (ie. 75% or more):

	Very Important	Important	Neutral	Not very important	Not at all important
Respond to reports of nuisance dogs/ cats	47.35%	37.81%	10.94%	2.54%	1.36%
Education about responsible pet ownership	54.48%	33.11%	9.21%	2.03%	1.17%
Collect/ return stray dogs/ cats to their owners	64.95%	27.52%	5.84%	0.98%	0.70%
Protect/ enforce dog-free nature reserves or environmentally sensitive areas	48.44%	32.78%	13.84%	3.41%	1.53%
Discounted dog/cat desexing for pensioners	56.10%	27.50%	12.62%	2.07%	1.72%
Patrols of public spaces to ensure compliance with rules	31.67%	32.37%	22.45%	8.33%	5.18%
Checking dog/ cat registration via patrols or door-knocks	15.51%	20.88%	30.96%	17.64%	15.00%
Cat trap hire for resident's use	16.09%	22.94%	33.85%	12.67%	14.46%
Annual Pets in the Park event	15.46%	22.87%	38.49%	11.31%	11.88%
Investigation and enforcement of dog attacks on people or other animals	70.14%	25.37%	3.47%	0.60%	0.41%
Investigation of animal cruelty matters	85.64%	12.48%	1.33%	0.22%	0.32%
Reduce the rate of cat and dog euthanasia through increased rehoming/ animal adoptions	64.40%	25.10%	8.05%	1.34%	1.11%
Investigation of illegal dog and cat breeders (ie. Puppy farms)	80.37%	15.98%	2.73%	0.38%	0.54%
Welfare of animals in domestic violence situations	69.99%	23.64%	5.03%	0.83%	0.51%
Welfare of animals owned by people who are homeless/ rough sleepers	54.89%	31.81%	10.60%	1.62%	1.08%

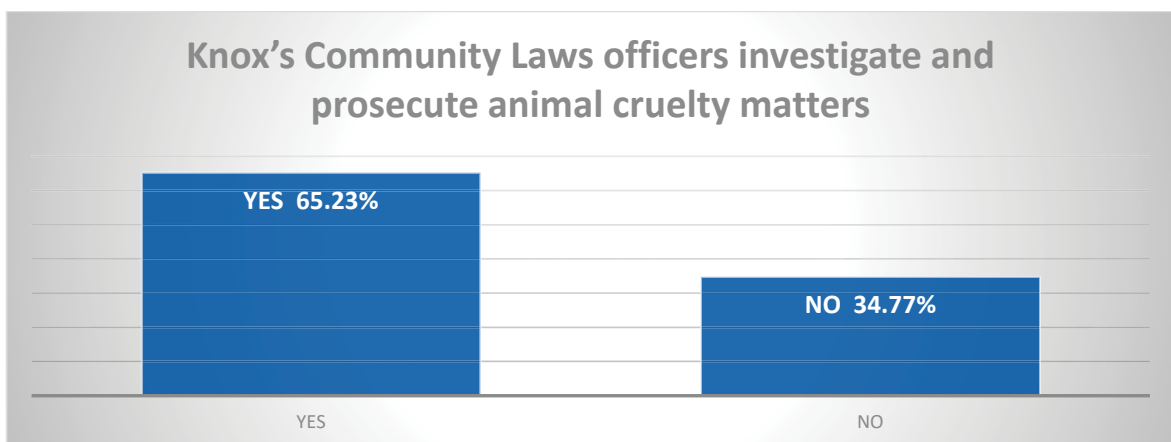
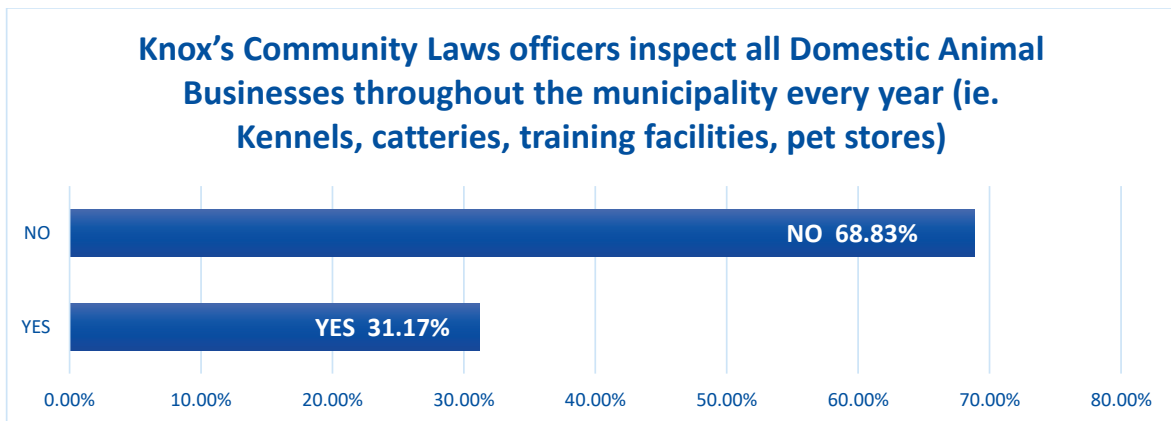
The results above support that the majority of Animal Management Service activities undertaken by Council for the community – are deemed 'very important' or 'important'.

These results will be reviewed to inform the activities and priorities in the next Domestic Animal Management Plan.



Council’s animal management services – did you know...

Survey participants were asked a range of questions below to determine their understanding of the range of Council’s animal management services, as well as a range of laws/ rules regarding the keeping of cats and dogs.





Over 97.7% or 3,180 survey respondents answered the questions below that asked “Before today, were you aware that...” to a range of questions regarding:

- The requirements for the keeping of cats and dogs in Knox
- The State Government laws regarding owning a cat or dog in Victoria; and
- Awareness of the animal management services provided by Knox City Council.

The responses to these questions are in the table below. Note: The responses below are shaded to represent the majority of responses (ie. 60% or more):

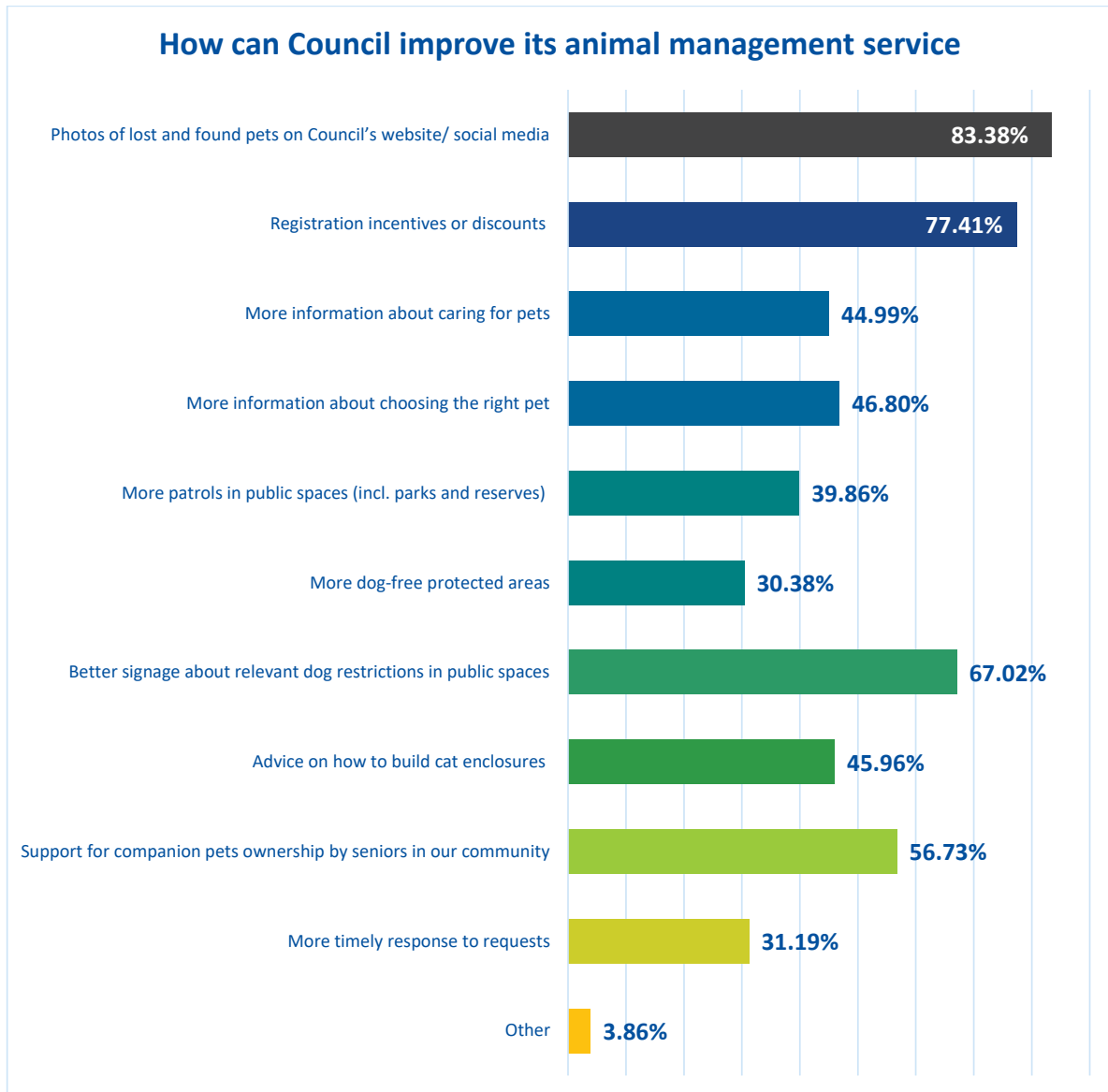
	YES	NO
Knox Council has a 4-year Domestic Animal Management Plan	21.01%	78.99%
If yes, have you read the Knox Council 2017-2021 Plan?	11.83%	88.17%
Victorian State law requires all cats and dogs over 3 months of age be registered with your local Council	94.50%	5.5%
Victorian State law requires all cats and dogs be microchipped before being able to be registered with your local Council	91.92%	8.08%
Victorian State law deems you the legal owner of a cat if you feed a stray cat	14.82%	85.18%
Council provides a free cat trap loan service to address cat nuisances	31.27%	68.73%
All parks and reserves in Knox are off-leash areas for dogs, except for 9 designated on-lead parks in Knox	19.90%	80.10%
All cats must be desexed before being able to be registered with Council in Knox	61.82%	38.18%
What animal management services are funded by pet registration fees	16.56%	83.44%
Knox’s Community Laws officers inspect all Domestic Animal Businesses throughout the municipality every year (ie. Kennels, catteries, training facilities, pet stores)	31.17%	68.83%
Knox’s Community Laws officers investigate and prosecute animal cruelty matters	65.23%	34.77%
What reserves are dog off and on-leash areas in Knox	26.31%	73.69%
Dog owners must be able to control their dog by hand or voice control when off lead in Knox	76.63%	23.37%
The requirement to carry a poo bag when walking a dog in Knox	90.65%	9.35%
What to do if you find or lose a pet in Knox	62.44%	37.56%
What to do if a dog rushes at or attacks you in Knox	37.44%	62.56%

The results highlight some areas where improved education and community messaging would assist to increase the awareness of the rules regarding owning a cat or dog, and opportunities to better promote how Council can assist the community regarding the animal management services available.



Improvements to Council’s animal management service

Survey respondents were provided with the listing below of a range of options – to select any or all that you believe Council should do more of – to improve its animal management service in Knox. 94.6% or 3,081 respondents provided their views on this response, and the results were as shown below:



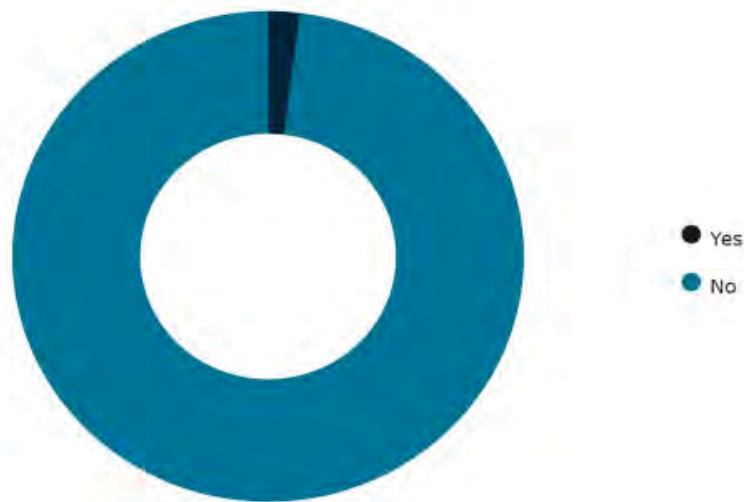
These results will be considered for new or amended activities in the next Domestic Animal Management Plan.



Council's Animal Pound service

21. Have you had your dog or cat taken to this pound in the past two years?

Multi Choice | Skipped: 110 | Answered: 3,146 (96.6%)



Survey participants were asked to provide any comments or feedback on Council's animal pound service, provided by Animal Aid at Coldstream. 14.1% or 460 respondents provided feedback on Council's animal pound services, which were (in order of most common comments):

- It is a great service
- Animal Aid Coldstream is too far away from Knox
- It is too expensive to retrieve your animal (note: this is a fee set by Council)
- The importance to locate owners or rehome animals (not euthanasia)
- Not aware of this service
- We have used the service to adopt our animal
- Council will need a bigger pound due to the cat curfew.



Appendix 1: Community survey

Open

Thank you for taking the time to provide valuable insight to help shape the way Council provides animal management services in Knox – both now and for the next four years.

You don't need to be a pet owner to participate – we value input from all members of the community.

The full survey should take 10-15 minutes to complete – but you can choose to answer only those questions you want. Thank you in advance.

1. How would you describe your involvement with cats and dogs in Knox? (select all that apply)

- Dog or cat owner
- Non dog or cat owner
- Animal welfare/advocacy/rescue group
- Member of a dog club
- Other (please specify)

2. Please tell us the name of any cat or dog organisations that you are part of:



Your pet ownership

Step 2 of 8

3. Do you own a dog/s?

4. Do you own a cat/s?

5. Please tell us what your pet means to you:

Cat curfew in Knox - Update

Following the evaluation of a cat curfew trial in 2020, Council has recently decided that from 1 October 2021, all cats in the municipality will be required to be confined to their property at all times (24 hours a day). All registered pet owners will receive a letter outlining the new curfew requirements, and resources available to assist cat owners with this new requirement.

6. Ahead of the cat curfew commencing, what support do you believe Council can offer to assist the community with this new initiative?



Dogs and your neighbourhood

Step 3 of 8

Knox Council is home to more than 18,000 registered dogs. We would like your input on what services and initiatives we can put in place to ensure the keeping of dogs does not pose a risk to the community or present a nuisance – whilst promoting good welfare outcomes for dogs.

7. In the last year, have you seen any of the following things about dogs when in Knox?

	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Dog poo left on the ground	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Dogs wandering at large (loose, or without an owner present)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Dogs annoying/intimidating other dogs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Dogs annoying/intimidating other people	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Dogs chasing/attacking wildlife	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Dogs in playgrounds	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Dogs barking causing a nuisance	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Dog owners picking up their dog's poo	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Dog owner unable to control their dog	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Dogs in public spaces who are friendly and well behaved	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



Dog off-leash and public spaces

Step 4 of 8

Knox currently has a Council Order that allows for dogs to be off-leash (but under effective control) in all public parks or recreation reserves – with the exception of the following Conservation bushland areas: Egan Lee Reserve; Flamingo Road Reserve; Gilmore Park Retarding Basin; J W Manson Reserve; Koolunga Native Reserve (except the lawn areas); Lakewood Reserve; Wicks Reserve (east and west); W G Morris Reserve; and the Tim Neville Arboretum. Dogs in Knox must also be on-leash on footpaths, at shopping centres, car parks, walking tracks and bike tracks.

8. Please tell us your views to the following statements about dogs off-leash in Knox

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know / not relevant to me
I have had a negative experience with a dog off-leash in Knox	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I support more areas where dogs can exercise off-leash in Knox	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I don't think dogs should be off-leash in any public place	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Dogs should be restricted from being off-leash on/ around: - Children's playgrounds	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



- Sporting and recreation reserves (during organised sporting events)

- Sporting and recreation reserves (anytime)

- Barbeques and picnic areas

- Council buildings

- Environmentally sensitive areas

Dogs in Knox should be required to be on-leash in all public areas unless otherwise signed

Off-leash areas allow my dog and I to socialise and meet new friends

I have concerns for the welfare of native wildlife due to dogs off-leash in Knox

I exercise more because I can do this with my dog off-leash in Knox

I am concerned for my pet and/or my own safety when dogs are off-leash in Knox



9. Please provide any comments or feedback you have regarding dogs off-leash in Knox

Dog parks in Knox

Knox has two fenced off-leash dog parks at the Knox Park Reserve (Knoxfield) and a new park at Emerson Place Reserve (Rowville).

10. Please tell us your views on the following statements:

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't know/not relevant to me
I have had a negative experience with a dog in a fenced off-leash park in Knox	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Fenced off-leash areas (dog parks) give me peace of mind	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
There should be more parks that are designed primarily for use by dogs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I prefer to exercise my dog in a larger open area non-fenced off-leash area	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



11. Do you have any other suggestions that may improve the management of dogs in Knox?



Cats and your neighbourhood

Step 5 of 8

Knox Council is home to more than 7,000 registered cats. We would like your input on what services and initiatives we can put in place to ensure the keeping of cats does not pose a risk to the environment or present a nuisance – whilst promoting good welfare outcomes for cats.

12. In the last year, have you noticed any of the following things about cats when in Knox?

	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Cats entering your property at night	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Cats entering your property during the day	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Cats preying on wildlife	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Cats that appear unowned	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Cats fighting or making loud noises	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Cats causing nuisance to your property	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Disturbed garden beds due to cat activity	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Cats in sensitive environmental areas or reserves	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



13. Do you have any other suggestions that may improve the management of cats in Knox?

Knox Council's Animal Management Services

Step 6 of 8

14. Before today were you aware that:

	Yes	No
Knox Council has a 4 year Domestic Animal Management Plan	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
If yes, have you read the Knox Council 2017-2021 Plan?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Victorian State law requires all cats and dogs over 3 months of age be registered with your local Council	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Victorian State law requires all cats and dogs be microchipped before being able to be registered with your local Council	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Victorian State law deems you the legal owner of a cat if you feed a stray cat	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Council provides a free cat trap loan service to address cat nuisances	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
All parks and reserves in Knox are off-leash areas for dogs, except for 9 designated on-lead parks in Knox	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
All cats must be desexed before being able to be registered with Council in Knox	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



What animal management services are funded by pet registration fees	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Knox's Community Laws officers inspect all Domestic Animal Businesses throughout the municipality every year (i.e. Kennels, catteries, training facilities, pet stores)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Knox's Community Laws officers investigate and prosecute animal cruelty matters	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
What reserves are dog off and on-leash areas in Knox	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Dog owners must be able to control their dog by hand or voice control when off lead in Knox	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The requirement to carry a poo bag when walking a dog in Knox	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
What to do if you find or lose a pet in Knox	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
What to do if a dog rushes at or attacks you in Knox	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



15. How important do you think it is for Council to provide the following services for the community?

	Very important	Important	Neutral	Not very important	Not at all important
Respond to reports of nuisance dogs/ cats	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Education about responsible pet ownership	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Collect/return stray dogs/cats to their owners	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Protect/ enforce dog-free nature reserves or environmentally sensitive areas	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Discounted dog/ cat desexing for pensioners	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Patrols of public spaces to ensure compliance with rules	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Checking dog/cat registration via patrols or door-knocks	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Cat trap hire for resident's use	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



Annual Pets in the Park event	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Investigation and enforcement of dog attacks on people or other animals	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Investigation of animal cruelty matters	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Reduce the rate of cat and dog euthanasia through increased rehoming /animal adoptions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Investigation of illegal dog and cat breeders (i.e. puppy farms)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Welfare of animals in domestic violence situations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Welfare of animals owned by people who are homeless/rough sleepers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



16. How can Council improve its animal management services for pet owners? (Select all that apply)

- Photos of lost and found pets on Council's website/ social media
- Registration incentives or discounts
- More information about caring for pets
- More information about choosing the right pet
- More patrols in public spaces (incl. parks and reserves)
- More dog-free protected areas
- Better signage about relevant dog restrictions in public spaces
- Advice on how to build cat enclosures
- Support for companion pets ownership by seniors in our community
- More timely response to requests
- Other (please specify)

17. Do you have any feedback you would like to provide that will assist Council in delivering Knox's Animal Management Services?



Animal Pound Services

Knox Council contracts Animal Aid in Coldstream to provide animal pound services for the municipality.

18. Have you had your dog or cat taken to this pound in the past two years?

- Yes
- No

19. Do you have any comments or feedback regarding the Animal Aid pound service?

Any further comments

Step 7 of 8

20. Do you have any further comments or suggestions of how Knox Council can improve how cats and dogs are managed in our municipality – or other considerations for inclusion in the 2021-2025 Domestic Animal Management Plan?



About you

Step 8 of 8

21. Which suburb do you live?

22. What is your age bracket?

23. What best describes your household?

24. Do any members of your household speak a language other than English at home?

Keeping you informed

25. How did you find out about Knox Council's Domestic Animal Management Plan review and consultation?

- Flyer
- Email/letter
- Signs
- Council's website
- Social media
- Council's e-newsletter
- Word of mouth
- Other (please specify)

26. Would you like to be kept informed on the progress of the 2021-2025 Plan?

- Yes please
- No thanks



Dogs off Lead/leash

Response to Notice of Motion No. 117

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide a response to the information requested by Council in the Notice of Motion No. 117 (shown below), adopted at the Ordinary Meeting of Council on 24 May 2021.

24 May 2021

Notice of Motion No.117

Dogs off lead

I hereby give notice that it is my intention to move at the Ordinary Meeting of Council on 24 May 2021 the following motion.

That Council, as part of the forthcoming review of its Domestic Animal Management Plan 2017-2021 and the preparation of the new plan, include within the scope of this work to review its approach to managing dogs being off leash across the municipality. The scope should reflect on the history of Knox Council being quite different to other municipalities, and provide any available background information on this approach, as Knox allows dogs to be off leash throughout the municipality unless otherwise signed or controlled; whereas it is common in other councils for dogs to be required to be contained on leash unless otherwise permitted to be off leash in areas such as designated dog parks. Further, the scope should include an understanding of the relevant considerations that need to be addressed before Council made such a change and any implementation considerations.

Cr Lisa Cooper
Scott Ward

24 May 2021

2. Legislative power to restrict dogs off lead

Section 26 (2) of the *Domestic Animals Act 1994* allows a Council to make an order under this section which may do all or any of the following –

- (a) Prohibit the presence of dogs and cats in any public place of the municipal district of the Council;
- (b) Impose all or any of the following conditions on the presence of dogs or cats in any public place of the municipal district of the Council –



- i. Conditions as to the means of restraint of dogs or cats;
- ii. Conditions as to the times at which the presence of dogs or cats is or is not permitted;
- iii. Any other conditions that are specified in the order.

If a dog or cat is found in a place that is in contravention to any terms or conditions of that order, the owner is guilty of an offence [Section 26(1) of the *Domestic Animals Act 1994*].

The penalty for this offence is \$181 by way of an infringement notice/ fine (1 penalty unit – currently \$181.74 for 2020-21, and amended by the State Government at 1 July each year). The maximum penalty for this offence that the Court can impose is 2 penalty units (currently \$363) for the first offence, and 4 penalty units (currently \$727) for a second or subsequent offence.

3. Dog off lead requirements in the Knox municipality

Knox City Council has the following Section 26 order – dogs in public places (Gazetted 13 April 2006)

1. Dogs shall be kept on lead in public places.

All dogs must be restrained by means of a chain, cord or leash within:

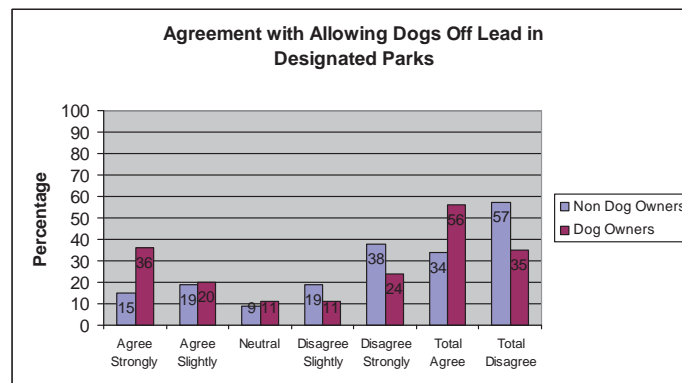
 - a. An active reserve where an organised sporting event is being conducted
 - b. A children's play equipment area
 - c. An organised public meeting
 - d. A permanent barbecue or picnic area.
2. Public places include footpaths, shopping centers, car parks, bike tracks, walking tracks and conservation bushland areas. Conservation bushland areas include:
 - a. Egan Lee Reserve
 - b. Flamingo Road Reserve
 - c. Gilmore Park Retarding Basin
 - d. J W Manson Reserve
 - e. Koolunga Native Reserve (except the lawn areas)
 - f. Lakewood Reserve
 - g. Wicks Reserve (east and west)
 - h. W G Morris Reserve
 - i. Tim Neville Arboretum
3. Dogs may be off lead but under effective control in a public park or recreation reserve, subject to the following conditions:
 - a. Dog owners must carry a chain, cord or leash sufficient to restrain the dog should it behave in a threatening manner; and
 - b. Dog owners must remain within effective voice or hand control distance of the dog at all times; and
 - c. A person in charge of the dog must not allow the dog to worry, chase or threaten another person or animal.



4. History of Knox Council's dogs off lead/leash arrangements

Knox City Council has historically required that dogs within the Knox municipality be kept on a leash and controlled by the person in custody of the dog at all times in conservation bushland area, on bicycle/ walking tracks, and in children's playgrounds.

During community consultation on the review of the *General Provisions Local Law* in 2004, feedback was provided that the majority of people prefer that dogs be kept on lead in all areas, and that Council could provide a number of parks and reserves to enable people to exercise their dogs off lead whilst still having them under effective control. Based on this feedback, Council requested that staff undertake an extensive consultative process on the issue – which was conducted from May to September 2005. A report was presented to Council in November 2005, that included the graph below. The report to Council identified that although there was a *'preference moving toward a philosophy of dogs on lead, it also demonstrates that there is a very high demand and a relatively high acceptance level of retaining open space as off lead areas'*.



The 2005 Council report provided Council with three options regarding dogs off lead in public places:

1. Retain the status quo
2. Adopt an on lead approach as a general principle but agreeing to adopt up to 30-40 reserves within the municipality as off lead areas and undertake further consultation in regards to these specific reserves.
3. Adopting an on lead approach but substantially increasing the areas that are available for off lead subject to specific controls.

Option 3 was proposed as the preferred option that would require that all dogs must be on lead whilst in public places as the general rule, whilst allowing dogs to be allowed off leash in public parks and reserves subject to specific rules to maintain effective control of the dog. The report stated this approach would *'provide a position which is supported by a majority of the Knox community (54%) but also recognise that there is high degree of acceptance that dogs should be allowed off lead under reasonable controls. This approach is not substantially different from Council's existing approach'*.

Option 3 was adopted by Council, which was accompanied by Council's approval of the Section 26 Order – Dogs in Public Places as outlined in Section 3 above. This order is current and has not been amended since being passed by Council on 22 November 2005, with an effective date of 10 April 2006.



5. Comparison of other municipalities dog off lead/leash arrangements

The table below has been prepared – comparing Knox’s dog off leash arrangements to those of the neighbouring municipal councils. The results in the table below highlight that:

- For the exception of Casey, most neighbouring councils have between 15-35 designated dog leash-free parks or reserves within their municipalities.
- All of the neighbouring council’s have distance restriction requirements in their dog off-leash orders – that require that the dog be on lead within set distances from particular locations (ie. Playgrounds or children’s play equipment; public picnic facilities and barbeques; organised sporting events; shared paths).
- Knox’s current Order for dogs off lead (2006) has not been amended in the past 15 years.

Council	Leash free Parks	Distance restrictions requirements	Order last updated
Knox	Over 300 (all except 9)	Nil	2006
Maroondah	35	15 metres	2012
Monash	31	20 metres	2015
Whitehorse	22	2.5 metres	2018
Greater Dandenong	15 (increasing to 21)	20 metres	2019
Yarra Ranges	23	2.5 metres	2013
Casey	Over 600 (all except 17)	20 metres	2017

The conditions in many other council’s dog off-lead orders are also more prescriptive regarding Council’s requirements of the owner to have their dog under ‘effective control’. For instance:

- Dogs must remain in visual and audible range of their handler to allow it to be effectively recalled at any time.
- The owner is within 25 metres and has a clear unobstructed view of the dog at all times
- The dog immediately returns to its owner upon command.

City of Casey developed a *Dog Friendly Spaces policy* in 2017 which encourages people and dogs to socialise and exercise within an open space setting. The Policy supports their Open Space Strategy’s vision ‘to deliver a connected network of quality and diverse open spaces now and into the future to improve the liveability of the City for residents and visitors’. Features of their policy include:

- Providing 1-2 dog friendly spaces in or adjacent to each of Casey’s Urban Local Areas, and to plan for dog friendly spaces in a similar ratio in Casey’s growth areas
- The open space site should be approximately 2 hectares in size, to ensure that a suitable sized dog friendly space of at least 0.5 hectares can be provided, whilst providing an appropriate buffer for other park users.
- Dog Friendly spaces located along open space corridors to improve accessibility and flexibility of the space.

Greater Dandenong Council undertook a review and published their *Dog off-leash strategy* in 2019, which will see a modest expansion of their dog off-leash parks from 15 to 21, to provide more opportunity to safely and legally exercise their dogs, whilst allowing the community time to adjust to the change in further off-leash reserves.



6. Considerations in amending the current dog off lead/leash arrangements

Dog off-leash issues in public open spaces is a contentious issue within the community due to long-standing and diverse community views and interests – particularly between dog owners (1 in 3 households in Knox) and non-dog owners. Providing open space for dogs to exercise off leash and encouraging responsible pet ownership is a balancing issue due to finite open spaces, growing population density and competing interests and priorities for limited public open space.

The positive health, wellbeing, social benefits of dog ownership (including the exercising of dogs in open spaces) support the objectives in several of Council's existing plans. The need for access to open space whilst balancing competing interests and meeting community expectations of safety and amenity is an important consideration.

The recent community survey undertaken for Phase 1 of Knox's DAM Plan review (that received over 3,200 survey responses) identified that:

- Over 80% of respondents did not know that all parks and reserves in Knox are off-leash areas for dogs, for the exception of 9 designated on-lead parks
- Only 26.3% of respondents knew what reserves are dog off-leash and on-leash areas in Knox; and
- Approx. 23% of respondents did not know that dog owners must be able to control their dog by hand or voice control when off lead in Knox.

There is a clear need for increased education and communication to inform our community regarding both the areas and rules that apply when having a dog off-lead in Knox.

Several departments across Council have involvement and/or responsibilities associated with our parks, reserves, sporting ground, etc. This includes Council's Operations, Community Infrastructure, Biodiversity and Leisure Services' departments – dealing with aspects from reserve maintenance, design, signage, environmental protection and the management of contracts for their usage by community sporting groups.

Matters for consideration as part of a future review or ongoing planning of open spaces for use by dogs off-leash in Knox could include:

- Proportionate allocation of dog off-leash areas across ward/ suburbs
- Planning for dog friendly spaces in Knox's growth areas
- Identification of suitably-sized open spaces to support the exercise of large and small dogs
- Protection of environmentally sensitive areas where dogs (and possibly cats) be prohibited from
- Ensure the review of dog off-lead areas aligns with existing Council policies regarding the use of open spaces and existing contract arrangements (ie. Exclusive use of certain reserves by sporting clubs, grass mowing/maintenance and waste collection contracts).

In accordance with Council's Community Engagement policy, any consideration of a review of, or changes to, the availability of Council's open spaces would be classified as a Level 1 community engagement – due to the:

- Expected high level of interest from the community
- High level of political interest
- Could have an impact on the health, safety and wellbeing of the broader community
- Could have an environmental change or impact; and
- Need to understand community values and priorities.

This would require a community engagement plan, which includes deliberative engagement practices – to meet Council's requirements under the *Local Government Act 2020*.

7 Public Question Time

8 Infrastructure Officers' Reports for consideration

Nil

9 Connected Communities Officers' Reports for consideration

9.1 Minor Grants Program 2021-22 Monthly Report

SUMMARY: Community Partnerships Officer, Deb Robert

This report summarises the grant applications recommended for approval in October 2021 for the 2021-22 Minor Grants Program. All applications have been assessed against the criteria set out in the Minor Grants Program Policy.

Applications under the Minor Grants Policy are limited to a maximum of \$3,000 within the current financial year.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Approve three applications for a total of \$7,610.00 as detailed below:

Applicant Name	Project Title	Amount Requested	Amount Recommended
The Food Affectionist	Hot Meals for Locals	\$2,000.00	\$2,000.00
Knox Gardens Cricket Club	Build a Female Program in the Club	\$3,000.00	\$3,000.00
Shishukunj Melbourne Inc	Diwali Care Packages	\$2,610.00	\$2,610.00
TOTAL		\$7,610.00	\$7,610.00

2. Note that inclusive of the above recommended grants, totalling \$7,610.00, a total of \$60,756.74 has been awarded to date under the 2021-22 Minor Grants Program supporting 28 community-based organisations and their programs.

1. INTRODUCTION

The Minor Grants Program provides a pool of grant funding that can respond on a monthly basis to requests for small amounts of funding to assist with short term, one-off projects or initiatives that are relatively minor in nature.

The objective of the Minor Grants Program is to be an accessible and responsive funding source to assist a wide range of community led activities across the municipality and support volunteer effort and civic participation.

It operates under the principles of other Knox Council grants programs to ensure:

- Funded projects will provide benefit to the Knox community and help meet Council objectives;
- Co-operation and collaboration between groups will be encouraged;
- The grant process will be consistent, equitable and transparent; and
- The grant process will support and strengthen community groups in developing local solutions to local needs.

Applications are assessed against criteria specified in the Minor Grants Program Policy (updated and approved in April 2020) to determine the eligibility of the applicant organisation and the eligibility of the grant application.

The Policy sets out an open and transparent grant program that meets the principles of good governance and is compliant with the requirements of the Local Government Act 2020.

In accordance with the Policy, applications for funding have been assessed by the Chief Executive Officer, or delegate, for Council's approval.

2. DISCUSSION

This report presents to Council the recommendations for recent Minor Grant applications in accordance with the Policy.

Three complete grant applications were received since the Council meeting on 27 September 2021, requesting grants totalling \$7,610. All applicant groups are eligible to apply.

One of the applicants, Shishukunj Melbourne, a locally based cultural group for Gujarati-speaking families, has requested an amount more than they are currently eligible to receive under Cl 6.21 of the Minor Grants Program Policy. The group is seeking \$2,610 to support the distribution of Diwali festival packs to local Knox families in lieu of an event they would usually host pre-pandemic. The group had received a grant for first-aid earlier this year as lockdowns appeared to be lifting, which has put them over their annual limit, so they are currently only eligible to receive \$936.00.

As this group's usual fund-raising has been impacted by COVID restrictions and the extended lockdowns have made usual Diwali celebrations impossible, it is considered an appropriate application of Cl.7 of the Minor Grants Program Policy to waive Cl.6.21 in this instance.

The other applications are summarised as follows:

- The Food Affectionist is a locally based community trainer and caterer who has been donating prepared meals for local communities in Knox and Yarra Ranges impacted by COVID and the recent damaging storm. The application, requesting \$2,000 to assist the purchase of protein foods, has been auspiced by a not-for-profit group that helps distribute the food; and
- Knox Gardens Cricket Club is seeking \$3,000 to support establishment of a women's cricket team, with purchase of equipment and uniforms to minimise participation costs.

Application details are provided in Attachment 1.

3. CONSULTATION

Consultation is undertaken with organisations in relation to their grant applications whenever possible and if necessary, to clarify details regarding their applications prior to Council's consideration.

Advice or information may be sought from officers across Council in relation to either the applying organisation or the proposed project, or both, if considered necessary.

The Policy specifies assessment can occur by the Chief Executive Officer, or delegate, and make recommendation for Council's determination.

4. ENVIRONMENTAL / AMENITY ISSUES

There are no environmental or amenity issues associated with this report.

5. FINANCIAL & ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS

The approval of Minor Grants is managed within Council's adopted budget. The 2021-22 budget provides \$193,729 for the Minor Grants Program (comprising the annual allocation of \$150,582 plus an additional \$43,147 carried forward from the 2020-21 Minor Grants Program, as per the Minor Grants Policy).

Recommended applications for the October period total \$7,610.00.

If approved as recommended, the remaining Minor Grants budget for 2021-22 will total \$135,562.90 before GST adjustments.

6. SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The Minor Grants Program allows Council to respond promptly to requests from Knox- based community groups for small amounts of funding to assist a variety of community-based programs, projects or activities. Council's Minor Grants are a simple and streamlined source of funding that can make a significant difference for local community organisations in need of short-term, specific purpose assistance.

7. RELEVANCE TO KNOX COMMUNITY AND COUNCIL PLAN 2017-2021

Goal 6 - We are healthy, happy and well

Strategy 6.1 - Mitigate lifestyle risks such as smoking, risky alcohol consumption and drug use, obesity, lack of physical activity and poor nutrition

Strategy 6.2 - Support the community to enable positive physical and mental health

Goal 7 - We are inclusive, feel a sense of belonging and value our identity

Strategy 7.1 - Protect and preserve our local cultural heritage

Strategy 7.2 - Celebrate our diverse community

Strategy 7.3 - Strengthen community connections

Strategy 7.4 - Promote and celebrate the contribution of our volunteers

8. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The officers contributing to and responsible for this report have no conflicts of interest requiring disclosure under Chapter 5 of the Governance Rules of Knox City Council.

9. CONCLUSION

This report contains the recommendation for funding through the Minor Grants program for October 2021.

10. CONFIDENTIALITY

There is no content in this report that meets the definition of confidential information from the Local Government Act 2020.

Report Prepared By: Community Partnerships Officer, Deb Robert

Report Authorised By: Director, Connected Communities, Tanya Scicluna

Attachments

1. ATTACHMENT 1 - Minor Grant Applications - October - 2021-10-25 [9.1.1 - 18 pages]

Minor Grants Program - 2021 - 2022
Minor Grants Program Application Form 2021 - 2022 (Version 2 of 2)
Application 53- MGP - 2021-22 From The Food Affectionist
 Form Submitted 7 Oct 2021, 7:48pm AEDT

MINOR GRANTS PROGRAM APPLICATION FORM

Minor Grants Information

To meet the policy requirements for funding applications under the Minor Grants Program, requests must meet the following criteria:

1. Applications must be from individuals who reside in Knox or community groups that provide services to the Knox community.
2. Applications for funding cannot be made retrospectively and must be received before the event or activity to which the funding relates is undertaken.

Application Amount	Incorporated or Auspiced?	Assessment & Determination	Acquittal
< \$500	No	Assessed and determined by the CEO or delegate.	Proof of expenditure / purchase (i.e. receipt).
\$501 to \$1,000	Yes	Assessed by the CEO or delegate. Determined by Council at the monthly ordinary meeting of Council.	Proof of expenditure / purchase (i.e. receipt).
\$1,001 to \$3,000	Yes	Assessed by the CEO or delegate. Determined by Council at the monthly ordinary meeting of Council.	Funding Agreement & Acquittal required.

Application Category

Application Amount

< \$500 \$501 to \$1,000 \$1,001 to \$3,000

APPLICANT DETAILS

*** indicates a required field**

Applicant Details

Organisation Name *

The Food Affectionist

Organisation Address *

[REDACTED]

ate/Province, Postcode, and Country are required.

Minor Grants Program - 2021 - 2022
Minor Grants Program Application Form 2021 - 2022 (Version 2 of 2)
Application 53- MGP - 2021-22 From The Food Affectionist
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Contact Name

[REDACTED]

Project Contact Address *

[REDACTED]

ate/Province, Postcode, and Country are required.

Phone Number

Must be an Australian phone number.

Mobile Phone Number *

[REDACTED]

ustralian phone number.

Email *

[REDACTED]

Please provide your ABN

51 108 838 193

Information from the Australian Business Register	
ABN	51 108 838 193
Entity name	Lillie Giang
ABN status	Active
Entity type	Individual/Sole Trader
Goods & Services Tax (GST)	Yes
DGR Endorsed	No
ATO Charity Type	Not endorsed More information
ACNC Registration	No
Tax Concessions	No tax concessions
Main business location	3152 VIC

Information retrieved at 5:51am today

Must be an ABN.

provide ABN of auspice organisation if relevant. If no ABN please complete a Statement by Supplier declaration.

Is your organisation Incorporated? * Yes No

If No please provide details of Auspice below

Auspice Details**Auspice Organisation Name ***

Outer East Foodshare Inc

Minor Grants Program - 2021 - 2022
Minor Grants Program Application Form 2021 - 2022 (Version 2 of 2)
Application 53- MGP - 2021-22 From The Food Affectionist
 Form Submitted 7 Oct 2021, 7:48pm AEDT

Auspice ABN
 96 742 344 380

Information from the Australian Business Register	
ABN	96 742 344 380
Entity name	Outer East Foodshare Inc
ABN status	Active
Entity type	Other Incorporated Entity
Goods & Services Tax (GST)	Yes
DGR Endorsed	Yes
ATO Charity Type	Charity More information
ACNC Registration	Registered
Tax Concessions	FBT Rebate, GST Concession, Income Tax Exemption
Main business location	3158 VIC

Information retrieved at 1:20am today

Must be an ABN.

Auspice Project Contact *

[REDACTED]

Auspice Position *

Chair of Board

Auspice Phone Number *

[REDACTED]

tralian phone number.

Auspice Email *

[REDACTED]

Signature of auspice representative - permission required *

Filename: Knox CouncilAuspice.docx

File size: 14.9 kB

Please upload signed declaration from auspice representative

PROJECT DETAILS

*** indicates a required field**

Request Details

Project Title *

Hot Meals for Locals

Project Start Date *

Minor Grants Program - 2021 - 2022
Minor Grants Program Application Form 2021 - 2022 (Version 2 of 2)
Application 53- MGP - 2021-22 From The Food Affectionist
 Form Submitted 7 Oct 2021, 7:48pm AEDT

25/10/2021
 Must be a date.

Project End Date *

31/12/2021
 Must be a date.

(a) Briefly describe details of the request: *

To enable the preparation of around 100 free hot meals per week for needy people in the Knox Council area. Free vegetable and fruit are sourced from SecondBite and Foodbank Victoria each week, but there is rarely any protein.

This grant will enable the purchase of protein foods to be used in this hot food program, and the purchase of new 'takeaway' size food containers for distribution to clients.

(b) What community benefit is gained from this project / activity? *

A number of community members are still struggling with the combined impact of the massive winter storms and Covid 19. Free hot meals provide people with good nutrition and the connection with community. Many of the recipients would have accessed a community hot meal program at community venues in the past. Due to Covid 19 most of these have ceased completely, some have been replaced by the distribution of frozen FareShare meals. Some of the people currently struggling would not have met local Food Relief Agency requirements if they do not hold a Health Care Card. This program will provide hot meals to anyone requesting until the end of December 2021.

How many people will directly benefit from or participate in your project / activity? *

300
 Must be a number

How many of the above are Knox residents? *

240
 Must be a number

BUDGET

*** indicates a required field**

(d) What is the total cost of the project / activity? *

\$3,000.00
 Must be a dollar amount.
 What is the total budgeted cost (dollars) of your project?

(c) What amount is being requested? *

\$2,000.00
 Must be a dollar amount.
 What is the total financial support you are requesting in this application?

Minor Grant Expenses

Minor Grants Program - 2021 - 2022
Minor Grants Program Application Form 2021 - 2022 (Version 2 of 2)
Application 53- MGP - 2021-22 From The Food Affectionist
 Form Submitted 7 Oct 2021, 7:48pm AEDT

Please detail the items you would like the Minor Grants Program to fund.

Expenditure	\$
Takeaway food containers	\$360.00
Protein foods (mince, chicken, eggs)	\$1,640.00
	Must be a dollar amount.

Minor Grant Budget Total

Total Expenditure Amount

\$2,000.00

This number/amount is calculated.

Quotes For Planned Expenses

Attach quotes for expenses here. *

Filename: containerpricing.jpeg

File size: 148.7 kB

Filename: Protein Foods to be purchased for the Hot Food Program under The Food Affection
 istv2.docx

File size: 10.7 kB

Other Grant Funding

(e) Have funds been sought / provided from other Council grants? *

Yes No

ADDITIONAL SUPPORTING INFORMATION

*** indicates a required field**

Evidence of Public Liability

Evidence of current Public Liability Insurance must be supplied *

Filename: Lillie Glang BIZPACK_InsurerCertificateOfCurrency2022.pdf

File size: 76.7 kB

Public Liability Expiry Date *

30/09/2022

Must be a date.

Minor Grants Program - 2021 - 2022
Minor Grants Program Application Form 2021 - 2022 (Version 2 of 2)
Application 53- MGP - 2021-22 From The Food Affectionist
Form Submitted 7 Oct 2021, 7:48pm AEDT

Please attach relevant supporting documentation, including:

- **A project plan**
- **Evidence of Incorporation**

Attach relevant documentation:

Filename: TFABusinessPlan2021.docx
File size: 14.3 kB

DECLARATION

*** indicates a required field**

**I declare that all information within this application is true and correct.
If successful the organisation commits to provide an acquittal of all grant funds to
Council as outlined in the Minor Grants Program Policy.**

Name *

[REDACTED]

Position (if organisation) *

Member Outer East Foodshare Inc

Declaration Date *

07/10/2021

Must be a date.

Privacy Statement

The personal information requested in this application form is for the purposes of administering the Minor Grants Program and will only be used by Council for that primary purpose or directly related purposes. Whilst information relating to groups and the specific request/project details will be published, personal information in regards to individuals will not be disclosed except as required by law.

Minor Grants Program - 2021 - 2022
Minor Grants Program Application Form 2021 - 2022
Application 54- MGP - 2021-22 From Knox Gardens Cricket Club
 Form Submitted 30 Sep 2021, 4:01pm AEST

MINOR GRANTS PROGRAM APPLICATION FORM

Minor Grants Information

To meet the policy requirements for funding applications under the Minor Grants Program, requests must meet the following criteria:

1. Applications must be from individuals who reside in Knox or community groups that provide services to the Knox community.
2. Applications for funding cannot be made retrospectively and must be received before the event or activity to which the funding relates is undertaken.

Application Amount	Incorporated or Auspiced?	Assessment & Determination	Acquittal
< \$500	No	Assessed and determined by the CEO or delegate.	Proof of expenditure / purchase (i.e. receipt).
\$501 to \$1,000	Yes	Assessed by the CEO or delegate. Determined by Council at the monthly ordinary meeting of Council.	Proof of expenditure / purchase (i.e. receipt).
\$1,001 to \$3,000	Yes	Assessed by the CEO or delegate. Determined by Council at the monthly ordinary meeting of Council.	Funding Agreement & Acquittal required.

Application Category

Application Amount

< \$500 \$501 to \$1,000 \$1,001 to \$3,000

APPLICANT DETAILS

*** indicates a required field**

Applicant Details

Organisation Name *

Knox Gardens Cricket Club

Organisation Address *

[REDACTED]

Address, Telephone, Email, Website, Postcode, and Country are required.

Minor Grants Program - 2021 - 2022
Minor Grants Program Application Form 2021 - 2022
Application 54- MGP - 2021-22 From Knox Gardens Cricket Club
 Form Submitted 30 Sep 2021, 4:01pm AEST

Contact Name

[REDACTED]

Project Contact Address *

[REDACTED]

Province, Postcode, and Country are required.

Phone Number

[REDACTED]

Australian phone number.

Mobile Phone Number *

[REDACTED]

Australian phone number.

Email *

[REDACTED]

Please provide your ABN

22 007 710 567

Information from the Australian Business Register	
ABN	22 007 710 567
Entity name	Knox Gardens Cricket Club Inc
ABN status	Active
Entity type	Other Incorporated Entity
Goods & Services Tax (GST)	No
DGR Endorsed	No
ATO Charity Type	Not endorsed More information
ACNC Registration	No
Tax Concessions	No tax concessions
Main business location	3152 VIC

Information retrieved at 12:15am today

Must be an ABN.

provide ABN of auspice organisation if relevant. If no ABN please complete a Statement by Supplier declaration.

Is your organisation Incorporated? * Yes No

If No please provide details of Auspice below

Incorporation Details**Please provide your Incorporated number**

A0018324E

Minor Grants Program - 2021 - 2022
Minor Grants Program Application Form 2021 - 2022
Application 54- MGP - 2021-22 From Knox Gardens Cricket Club
 Form Submitted 30 Sep 2021, 4:01pm AEST

PROJECT DETAILS

* indicates a required field

Request Details

Project Title *

Build a Female Program in the club by fielding our first 2 new female teams in season 2021/22

Project Start Date *

01/11/2021

Must be a date.

Project End Date *

31/03/2022

Must be a date.

(a) Briefly describe details of the request: *

Our project is overall about maximising the chances of as many females participating in active sport and our community as possible. Research has shown that there are many less females participating in sport than males and it is an objective of Governments to encourage and increase female participation in Sport by eliminating barriers such as cost, unwelcoming clubs, ability to try before registering, etc.

We would like to use the grant to support us to lower the costs of participating by purchasing kit and gear to be used by our first ever female teams that we will field this upcoming 2021/22 season. Through subsidising these essential for participation items we will be able to minimise fees and increase participation in a traditionally male-dominated sport such as cricket. This project also provides an opportunity for women to be more involved and included in the community. This strengthens social inclusion especially for females and bridges any gap that is currently present when it comes to female participation in sports. The grant will provide about half of the amount needed for us to purchase the items while the club shoulders the other half and will significantly lower the fees and expenses for the females to participate thus encouraging as many females to participate this season and many to come. Most items will last for many years.

(b) What community benefit is gained from this project / activity? *

The project / activity builds social inclusion as we engage more females to join a traditionally male dominated sport such as cricket. Most of the females we are tapping for this initiative are also financially struggling due to unemployment brought by the pandemic. It helps create an equal opportunity for all regardless of gender and socio-economic status and allows the females to influence how the sports can become more inclusive going forward. This in turn creates a well balanced community that presents equal opportunities for all and allows the benefits of physical activity, networking, and social and community engagement to be reaped by all community members and not just a select, advantaged few.

How many people will directly benefit from or participate in your project / activity? *

26

Must be a number

Minor Grants Program - 2021 - 2022
Minor Grants Program Application Form 2021 - 2022
Application 54- MGP - 2021-22 From Knox Gardens Cricket Club
 Form Submitted 30 Sep 2021, 4:01pm AEST

How many of the above are Knox residents? *

26

Must be a number

BUDGET

*** indicates a required field**

(d) What is the total cost of the project / activity? *

\$6,752.84

Must be a dollar amount.

What is the total budgeted cost (dollars) of your project?

(c) What amount is being requested? *

\$3,000.00

Must be a dollar amount.

What is the total financial support you are requesting in this application?

Minor Grant Expenses

Please detail the items you would like the Minor Grants Program to fund.

Expenditure	\$
Cricket Equipment (as per attached quote)	\$4,893.84
Cricket Playing Uniforms (as per attached quote)	\$1,859.00
	Must be a dollar amount.

Minor Grant Budget Total

Total Expenditure Amount

\$6,752.84

This number/amount is calculated.

Quotes For Planned Expenses

Attach quotes for expenses here. *

Filename: Quote Cricket Equipment.xlsx

File size: 1.6 MB

Filename: Quote Cricket Uniforms.xlsx

File size: 303.9 kB

Minor Grants Program - 2021 - 2022
Minor Grants Program Application Form 2021 - 2022
Application 54- MGP - 2021-22 From Knox Gardens Cricket Club
Form Submitted 30 Sep 2021, 4:01pm AEST

Other Grant Funding

(e) Have funds been sought / provided from other Council grants? *

Yes No

ADDITIONAL SUPPORTING INFORMATION

*** indicates a required field**

Evidence of Public Liability

Evidence of current Public Liability Insurance must be supplied *

Filename: Knox Gardens CC PLI.pdf
File size: 110.7 kB

Public Liability Expiry Date *

30/06/2022
Must be a date.

Please attach relevant supporting documentation, including:

- **A project plan**
- **Evidence of Incorporation**

Attach relevant documentation:

Filename: Knox Gardens CC Inc Cert.pdf
File size: 111.2 kB

DECLARATION

*** indicates a required field**

I declare that all information within this application is true and correct.

If successful the organisation commits to provide an acquittal of all grant funds to Council as outlined in the Minor Grants Program Policy.

Name *

[REDACTED]

Position (if organisation) *

President

Declaration Date *

30/09/2021
Must be a date.

Minor Grants Program - 2021 - 2022
Minor Grants Program Application Form 2021 - 2022
Application 54- MGP - 2021-22 From Knox Gardens Cricket Club
Form Submitted 30 Sep 2021, 4:01pm AEST

Privacy Statement

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Minor Grants Program - 2021 - 2022
Minor Grants Program Application Form 2021 - 2022 (Version 3 of 3)
Application 59- MGP - 2021-22 From Shishukunj Melbourne Incorporated
 Form Submitted 6 Oct 2021, 10:34am AEDT

MINOR GRANTS PROGRAM APPLICATION FORM

Minor Grants Information

To meet the policy requirements for funding applications under the Minor Grants Program, requests must meet the following criteria:

1. Applications must be from individuals who reside in Knox or community groups that provide services to the Knox community.
2. Applications for funding cannot be made retrospectively and must be received before the event or activity to which the funding relates is undertaken.

Application Amount	Incorporated or Auspiced?	Assessment & Determination	Acquittal
< \$500	No	Assessed and determined by the CEO or delegate.	Proof of expenditure / purchase (i.e. receipt).
\$501 to \$1,000	Yes	Assessed by the CEO or delegate. Determined by Council at the monthly ordinary meeting of Council.	Proof of expenditure / purchase (i.e. receipt).
\$1,001 to \$3,000	Yes	Assessed by the CEO or delegate. Determined by Council at the monthly ordinary meeting of Council.	Funding Agreement & Acquittal required.

Application Category

Application Amount

< \$500 \$501 to \$1,000 \$1,001 to \$3,000

APPLICANT DETAILS

*** indicates a required field**

Applicant Details

Organisation Name *

Shishukunj Melbourne Incorporated

Organisation Address *

[REDACTED]

Address, Postcode, and Country are required.

Minor Grants Program - 2021 - 2022
Minor Grants Program Application Form 2021 - 2022 (Version 3 of 3)
Application 59- MGP - 2021-22 From Shishukunj Melbourne Incorporated
 Form Submitted 6 Oct 2021, 10:34am AEDT

Contact Name

[REDACTED]

Project Contact Address *

[REDACTED]

Province, Postcode, and Country are required.

Phone Number

[REDACTED]

Australian phone number.

Mobile Phone Number *

[REDACTED]

Australian phone number.

Email *

[REDACTED]

Address.

Please provide your ABN

47 677 174 433

Information from the Australian Business Register	
ABN	47 677 174 433
Entity name	Shishukunj Melbourne Incorporated
ABN status	Active
Entity type	Other Incorporated Entity
Goods & Services Tax (GST)	No
DGR Endorsed	No
ATO Charity Type	Charity More information
ACNC Registration	Registered
Tax Concessions	GST Concession, Income Tax Exemption
Main business location	3152 VIC
<i>Information retrieved at 3:28am today</i>	

Must be an ABN.

provide ABN of auspice organisation if relevant. If no ABN please complete a Statement by Supplier declaration.

Is your organisation Incorporated? * Yes No

If No please provide details of Auspice below

Incorporation Details**Please provide your Incorporated number**

A0109307G

Minor Grants Program - 2021 - 2022
Minor Grants Program Application Form 2021 - 2022 (Version 3 of 3)
Application 59- MGP - 2021-22 From Shishukunj Melbourne Incorporated
 Form Submitted 6 Oct 2021, 10:34am AEDT

PROJECT DETAILS

* indicates a required field

Request Details

Project Title *

Diwali Care Packages

Project Start Date *

26/10/2021

Must be a date.

Project End Date *

31/12/2021

Must be a date.

(a) Briefly describe details of the request: *

We have another year with the festive season, Diwali upon us and yet the grim outlook of COVID remains. Shishukunj supports a children welfare organisation to educate and advance Indian culture. We have run our fortnightly sessions from "in person" at Kent Park Primary to online Zoom sessions. We feel the Diwali care package to 58 families will bring joy and a light of sense of belonging to the children. Some items in the hamper include activities like glass decoration, salt dough diva, Rangoli making, candle making, toran making, activity book (recipes, facts, puzzles etc) and edible sweets to celebrate the Diwali occasion.

(b) What community benefit is gained from this project / activity? *

We have 92 members (58 families). The majority of the members are of Indian culture. The suburbs coverage of this project is Ferntree Gully, Baywater, Wantirna, Boronia, Knoxfield, Scoresby and other 4 families come from Lynbrook, Hopper Crossing, Narre Warren, Glen Waverly.

The hamper will bring joy and a cultural significance to the children. The activities will provide the children an educational experience and handy craft to do while in lock down/ December Holidays. The involvement of parents and children on the online Zoom sessions, to present their handy work (from the hampers) is priceless!, the children's enthusiasm at the presentations are with quite a sense of achievement and fulfillment.

The supplier is Cakes on Cloud Nine, a local business based in Scoresby and details are attached in this application.

Shishukunj has reduced the membership fees by 50% for 2021 (COVID subsidy)- thus quite substantial reduction in Shishukunj's contributions. The grant will be of great assistance to our NFP institution to serve the local community.

How many people will directly benefit from or participate in your project / activity? *

290

Must be a number

How many of the above are Knox residents? *

275

Must be a number

Minor Grants Program - 2021 - 2022
Minor Grants Program Application Form 2021 - 2022 (Version 3 of 3)
Application 59- MGP - 2021-22 From Shishukunj Melbourne Incorporated
 Form Submitted 6 Oct 2021, 10:34am AEDT

BUDGET

*** indicates a required field**

(d) What is the total cost of the project / activity? *

\$2,610.00

Must be a dollar amount.

What is the total budgeted cost (dollars) of your project?

(c) What amount is being requested? *

\$2,610.00

Must be a dollar amount.

What is the total financial support you are requesting in this application?

Minor Grant Expenses

Please detail the items you would like the Minor Grants Program to fund.

Expenditure	\$
58 Hampers from Cakes on Cloud 9	\$2,610.00
	Must be a dollar amount.

Minor Grant Budget Total

Total Expenditure Amount

\$2,610.00

This number/amount is calculated.

Quotes For Planned Expenses

Attach quotes for expenses here. *

Filename: Invoice_30_2021-11-05.pdf

File size: 103.7 kB

Other Grant Funding

(e) Have funds been sought / provided from other Council grants? *

Yes No

ADDITIONAL SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Minor Grants Program - 2021 - 2022
Minor Grants Program Application Form 2021 - 2022 (Version 3 of 3)
Application 59- MGP - 2021-22 From Shishukunj Melbourne Incorporated
Form Submitted 6 Oct 2021, 10:34am AEDT

*** indicates a required field**

Evidence of Public Liability

Evidence of current Public Liability Insurance must be supplied *

Filename: Shishukunj Melbourne Inc. CoC PL expiry 29Jan2022.pdf
File size: 48.2 kB

Public Liability Expiry Date *

29/01/2022
Must be a date.

Please attach relevant supporting documentation, including:

- A project plan
- Evidence of Incorporation

Attach relevant documentation:

Filename: 2021 08 29 Special Committee Meeting - resolution for Diwali hamper.pdf
File size: 343.8 kB

Filename: CERT-A0109307G Shishukunj Incorporation.pdf
File size: 116.2 kB

Filename: Diwali hamper 2021.pdf
File size: 209.1 kB

Filename: Hamper Photo Distribution 2020.pdf
File size: 224.4 kB

DECLARATION

*** indicates a required field**

I declare that all information within this application is true and correct.

If successful the organisation commits to provide an acquittal of all grant funds to Council as outlined in the Minor Grants Program Policy.

Name *

[REDACTED]

Position (if organisation) *

Treasurer

Declaration Date *

05/10/2021
Must be a date.

Minor Grants Program - 2021 - 2022
Minor Grants Program Application Form 2021 - 2022 (Version 3 of 3)
Application 59- MGP - 2021-22 From Shishukunj Melbourne Incorporated
Form Submitted 6 Oct 2021, 10:34am AEDT

Privacy Statement

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9.2 Community Development Fund Grant Recommendations 2021-22

SUMMARY: Community Partnerships Officer, Deb Robert

This report presents the recommendations of the Community Development Fund (CDF) Evaluation Panel for Council's 2021-22 CDF Grants Program allocation to not-for-profit community groups operating within Knox.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Approve the recommendations of 2021-2022 Community Development Fund (CDF) Evaluation Panel to allocate 49 grants totaling \$371,917.73, as detailed in Attachment 2 of this report; and
2. Note that an on-line grants announcement will be scheduled in November 2021 to highlight the 2021-2022 approved projects and a networking event for grant recipients will be held in February/March 2022 to launch next year's grants program.

1. INTRODUCTION

The Community Development Fund (CDF) provides annual grants to locally focused, not-for-profit organisations to encourage and support community activities and initiatives of Knox residents. Over the past five years, this Council program has provided over \$1.5 million to community organisations. The CDF Program is administered in accordance with the Knox CDF Policy and CDF Evaluation Panel Terms of Reference, in line with best practice principles in local grant making.

The annual allocation of CDF grants aims to:

- Support projects that encourage residents to become involved and engaged in their local community;
- Improve the health and wellbeing of Knox residents through projects that promote healthy active lifestyles and community safety;
- Build community pride, strength, and resilience;
- Promote harmony and respect through projects promoting inclusion and social interaction;
- Improve skills of Knox residents across a range of areas; and
- Support a positive sense of place and activities that celebrate our community.

The CDF Grants Program encourages one-off or short-term projects, as well as offering support to established community events that have been held annually for over three years. The Program does not fund capital works (e.g., structural building improvements), projects which are primarily fundraising events, projects currently supported by other Council grant programs or activities that are clearly the responsibility of another level of government. Funding applications of up to \$20,000 are considered for projects that meet the CDF criteria and support the goals of the Knox Community and Council Plan 2017-2021.

This year's CDF Program introduced a category for Community Festivals and Events with grants up to \$15,000, to acknowledge the increasing cost of event planning and risk management, including COVID-19 mitigation.

The CDF Program continues to provide opportunities for local community organisations to plan their response to the impact of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and consider activities and initiatives that will help rebuild community momentum and involvement.

2. DISCUSSION

2.1 Applications for 2021-2022

Despite the ongoing uncertainties of the COVID-19 pandemic, 81 applications were received this year, with requests totaling \$698,296.85. The number of applications decreased by 27.6% from last year's record number, however this was not unexpected given the ongoing challenges of the pandemic.

There are currently 19 organisations with funding carried forward from the 2019-20 CDF round due to projects or events impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. These grants are being monitored and contact maintained with any group that has not been able to meet funding timelines. Several groups have returned funding that has not been able to be spent and two groups withdrew their grant application for this current round.

Applications were submitted by 75 organisations, with five submitting more than one application each, as allowed in the CDF Guidelines and Policy.

Council's Community Partnership team spoke with representatives from some 60 organisations to discuss potential CDF grant projects, and 64 proceeded to submit applications. There were 26 first time applicants.

Applications for the 2021-2022 period continue to reflect the broad range of community priorities seen in previous years, notably sports club equipment, community connection activities, cultural celebrations and early years support programs and play space revitalisation. There were also several significant community welfare projects building on last year's COVID-19 pandemic support programs, and others responding to mental health and family violence in Knox. Multicultural groups were well represented, as were applications for disability services. Several arts focused projects were received targeting various interest groups and there were four projects highlighting the importance of digital literacy and capacity.

2.2 Application and Assessment Process

The seven-week application period commenced on Monday, 24 May 2021 and closed on Monday, 12 June 2021.

Of the 81 applications received, two were determined to be ineligible; one being an organisation that has gaming machines and the other was not yet a not-for-profit organisation.

A further six applications withdrew for assorted reasons prior to the final assessment meeting of the Panel.

Additional details of all CDF applications, ineligible, recommended, and not recommended, are provided in Attachments 1, 2 and 3.

The assessment of the eligible grant applications was conducted by the 2021-2022 CDF Evaluation Panel (the Panel), comprising Councillor Nicole Seymour (Chair), Councillor Susan Laukens,

Councillor Yvonne Allred and community representatives, Gary Saultry, Jeff Somers and Stacey Barass.

Council officers from Council's Community Partnership Team participated in a support capacity.

The assessment process included:

1. An initial staff review of all received applications regarding basic eligibility and provision of required information;
2. A preliminary meeting of the Panel held on 27 July 2021 to confirm applications eligible for assessment and identify any conflicts of interest for Panel members with any of the received applications. Panel members with a declared conflict of interest in an application were excluded from assessment of that application and required to exclude themselves from Panel decision-making in relation to that application;
3. Consultation by CDF staff with other Council departments to confirm and/or clarify programs or strategies relevant to applications and advise of potential project duplication or any issues of concern in relation to any applications;
4. CDF Panel members had four weeks to do their individual assessment and scoring of eligible applications against criteria in the program guidelines to provide the basis for Panel discussion and deliberation; and
5. All eligible applications were then reviewed by the Panel at four meetings held over two weeks commencing on Tuesday, 31 August, at which the proposed funding allocations for each project were discussed and determined.

The Panel agreed at its preliminary meeting to not take up the option of inviting applicants for larger grants (\$15,000 and over) to make presentations to the Panel, due to the number of applications in that category and in the interests of equity across applications.

2.3 CDF Evaluation Panel Recommendations

The Panel recommends the allocation of 49 grants to a total of \$371,917.73 (GST adjusted). A table listing the recommended projects with both the amount requested and the grant amount recommended is in Attachment 2.

The community organisations recommended for funding represent a broad range of diverse needs and interests across the Knox community. The projects, programs and/activities they propose will support many different sectors of the community and enhance the contribution of many volunteers.

The Panel has recommended that 26 of these projects receive a lesser amount than requested, in response to managing the gap between the total grant amounts sought and the budget available to allocate. These recommended allocations considered priorities identified by applicants in the context of relative need and a reasonable assessment that modified project outcomes are still achievable.

The Panel considered other grant opportunities and support made available by Council and has referred six applications to the Minor Grants Program.

The potential for changing circumstances if the COVID-19 emergency continues to impact community activity was taken into account. If a project is unable to proceed in 2022 the Panel acknowledges that any reimbursed grant funds will be rolled over into next year's CDF round, in accordance with the CDF Program Policy.

Based on both the initial ranking process and subsequent discussion at the Panel meetings, 24 applications have not been recommended for funding. The Panel's recommendations considered the relative demonstration of community need, project clarity, financial capacity and the extent to which projects could be funded or supported through other avenues. The Panel also noted applications which had not adequately demonstrated local collaboration or consultation relevant to a proposed project and those which did not demonstrate a clear benefit to Knox residents.

Unsuccessful applicants will be offered feedback on their applications and given an opportunity to discuss options for alternative funding that may be available locally or from other levels of Government. A table listing the projects not recommended for funding with the amount requested is in Attachment 3.

All grants are subject to funding agreements, which outline the conditions under which the grant is offered including reporting commitments and community group obligations in relation to advertising Council's support. The funding agreements also document the circumstances in which funding may be required to be returned to Council. The potential impact of the COVID-19 pandemic will be referenced in funding agreements and Council staff will follow up on projects that may be at risk.

3. CONSULTATION

Promotion of the 2021-2022 CDF Program commenced in March 2021 with on-line Community Training sessions for Council grants and updates of the website. Promotion continued across April, May and June with Facebook posts, notification in the Community Wellbeing Department's e-bulletin to 540 community group subscribers across Knox and an email message to previous Minor Grant and CDF applicants. Council's Communications team included an article in Knox News and produced video clips interviewing previous CDF recipients.

Bulletins and reminders were also sent out to the community through other Council department external newsletters.

Council's Community Partnerships Team were proactive in calling previous grant recipients to check on how their groups were managing with the pandemic restrictions, and fielded calls from potential applicants over the seven-week period.

More than 60 community groups/organisations were engaged through either on-line sessions or one-on-one meetings with Council's Community Partnership team to promote the opportunities of the CDF.

The CDF Evaluation Panel, which met five times throughout the assessment process, supported active consultation and collaboration between Councillors, community representatives and Council staff. This approach brings a range of perspectives and skills to the application and assessment process to support positive community grants outcomes for the municipality.

4. ENVIRONMENTAL / AMENITY ISSUES

Several projects are targeted at improving the amenity of local community facilities.

5. FINANCIAL & ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS

The program costs of \$371,917.73 for the recommended allocations will be covered by the following:

- \$364,787.44 - comprising approved 2021-22 budget allocation for CDF and any carry forward of returned grants; and
- \$7,186.26 - estimated GST (as applicable).

There is a difference of \$55.97 between the program costs (excl. GST) and the program budget to allow for further GST adjustment if required.

6. SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The CDF Grant Program facilitates engagement between Council and a diverse range of community groups, strengthening existing relationships, broadening understanding and initiating new collaborations. It also enables the delivery of projects/programs to contribute to the implementation of the Knox Community and Council Plan 2017-2021.

CDF grants are a means by which Council supports not-for-profit community groups and assists them to be active, sustainable and resilient. During the current COVID-19 Pandemic the CDF and the Minor Grants Program have been a valuable connection point for Council staff to check in on community activity and wellbeing and facilitate positive planning for the future.

Grants offered through the CDF Grant Program complement the information and training support provided through Council's Community Group Training Program. Both programs contribute to the broader objective of building the capacity of local groups to be self-sustaining and viable. The recommended projects will benefit and engage a wide cross-section of the Knox community and provide opportunities for many community service organisations and residents, both as service providers and participants, to enhance community wellbeing.

7. RELEVANCE TO KNOX COMMUNITY AND COUNCIL PLAN 2017-2021

Goal 1 - We value our natural and built environment

Strategy 1.3 Ensure the Knox local character is protected and enhanced through the design and location of urban development and infrastructure

Goal 4 - We are safe and secure

Strategy 4.1 - Encourage and support the community to take responsibility for their own safety, and the safety of others

Strategy 4.2 - Enhance community connectedness opportunities to improve perceptions of safety

Strategy 4.4 - Protect and promote public health, safety and amenity

Strategy 4.5 - Support the provision of emergency services

Goal 5 - We have a strong regional economy, local employment and learning opportunities

Strategy 5.4 - Increase and strengthen local opportunities for lifelong learning, formal education pathways and skills development to improve economic capacity of the community

Goal 6 - We are healthy, happy and well

Strategy 6.1 - Mitigate lifestyle risks such as smoking, risky alcohol consumption and drug use, obesity, lack of physical activity and poor nutrition

Strategy 6.2 - Support the community to enable positive physical and mental health

Goal 7 - We are inclusive, feel a sense of belonging and value our identity

Strategy 7.1 - Protect and preserve our local cultural heritage

Strategy 7.2 - Celebrate our diverse community

Strategy 7.3 - Strengthen community connections

Strategy 7.4 - Promote and celebrate the contribution of our volunteers

Goal 8 - We have confidence in decision making

Strategy 8.1 - Build, strengthen and promote good governance practices across government and community organisations

Strategy 8.2 - Enable the community to participate in a wide range of engagement activities

8. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The officers contributing to and responsible for this report have no conflicts of interest requiring disclosure under Chapter 5 of the Governance Rules of Knox City Council.

9. CONCLUSION

The CDF Grants Program is an important Council program that assists in building and supporting local community capacity and enhancing quality of life. It also supports community initiatives that contribute to implementation of the Knox Community and Council Plan 2017-2021.

The grants are a tangible means of supporting local ideas, activities and services that benefit residents and the Knox community more broadly, as well as acknowledging the significant volunteer effort represented in many of the grant applications.

The CDF projects recommended for funding in 2021-22 represent a range of community led activities in Knox and will support a diverse cross-section of the Knox community.

Unsuccessful applicants will be offered feedback on their applications and be given an opportunity to discuss options for alternative funding that may be available locally or from other levels of government.

Successful applicants are required to sign project specific service agreements that commit them to the provision of relevant project reporting and acquittal forms.

The annual function to celebrate both the CDF and the Leisure Minor Capital Works (LMCW) Grant Programs cannot be held again this year. However, it is proposed to host an online event in November 2021 to acknowledge successful applications. A face-to-face event to enable more networking for CDF participants will be planned for early 2022, when next year's CDF program is launched.

The CDF Evaluation Panel will meet for its annual reflection meeting in late November 2021 to evaluate the assessment process of the 2021-22 CDF Program and recommend any appropriate changes to Council's Policy and Procedure.

10. CONFIDENTIALITY

There is no content in this report that meets the definition of confidential information from the Local Government Act 2020.

Report Prepared By: Community Partnerships Officer, Deb Robert

Report Authorised By: Director Connected Communities, Tanya Scicluna

Attachments

1. ATTACHMENT 1 Community Development Fund 2021 22 Projects deemed ineligible [9.2.1 - 1 page]
2. ATTACHMENT 2 Community Development Fund 2021 22 Projects Recommended [9.2.2 - 6 pages]
3. ATTACHMENT 3 Community Development Fund 2021 22 Projects Not Recommended [9.2.3 - 2 pages]

ATTACHMENT 1 – Community Development Fund 2021-22 - Applications deemed ineligible

Organisation	Project	Rationale
Eastside Recovery	"Aftercare" program	Organisation ineligible as not a not-for-profit.
Ferntree Gully Bowling Club	Update Equipment	Organisation ineligible due to Gaming clause in CDF Policy.

ATTACHMENT 2 – Community Development Fund 2021-22 Projects **Recommended**

Applicant	Project/Event	Brief description	Amount Requested	Grant Recommended
Alchester Village Pre-School	Outdoor PVC blinds for expansion of playspace	Increase the all-weather playspace at the kindergarten without impacting existing significant tree	\$7,000.00	\$6,300.00
Bayswater CFA (Country Fire Authority)	Bayswater CFA Conference Room System	Installation of conference room technology to enable off site members to participate in meetings and training sessions.	\$9,372.00	\$9,372.00
Be the Ripple Project Community Houses Association	Food with a Heart	Meals and social support to assist people with a life limiting illness to remain in their home.	\$20,000.00	\$15,000.00
Belgravia Foundation	All In Swim Program	Subsidised swimming lessons for CALD groups and people with disabilities and mentoring to upskill swim teachers.	\$12,908.40	\$6,630.00
Bipolar Life Victoria inc.	Bipolar Education and Support	Offering 5 workshop sessions with professional lecturers for local bipolar support group.	\$3,503.00	\$3,503.00
Boronia Bowls Club	Improved shelter	Upgrade shade structures to improve member protection from sunburn and skin cancer.	\$8,635.00	\$5,000.00
Boronia Hawks Football Netball Club Inc	Kitchen upgrade for Tormore Reserve Facility	Equipment replacement for improved energy efficiency, capacity and safety – fridge, freezer and bainmarie	\$14,776.00	\$7,240.00
Boronia Soccer Club	Junior portable soccer goals	Portable goals for Under 8 & Under 9 players to meet increased interest	\$3,415.00	\$3,415.00

Applicant	Project/Event	Brief description	Amount Requested	Grant Recommended
Bridges Connecting Communities	Digital Literacy Champion	Coordinate training program for seniors to support development of digital skills, safety and confidence	\$20,000.00	\$10,000.00
Community of Benedikt Reserve Incorporate Association	Mural for Benedikt Reserve Pavilion	Improve appearance of pavilion, bring community together, involve local students in design and implementation	\$19,800.00	\$6,000.00
Coonara Community House	Tight Knit Connections	An event to promote community group knitting for Salvation Army - learning new skills and meeting new people.	\$3,000.00	\$1,500.00
Coonara Community House	Social connect	Develop and co-ordinate an engagement program specifically for people over 50 with barriers to social engagement.	\$14,550.00	\$12,150.00
Different Journeys	Autism Family Swim Nights Inclusion & Connection	Consolidate successful model for people with autism and their families to participate in recreational experiences.	\$19,190.00	\$15,000.00
Eastern Area Multiple Birth Association (EAMBA)	Knox Multiple Birth Association Playgroup Trial	Provide support for multiple birth families in Knox.	\$3,942.60	\$3,942.60
Eastern Domestic Violence Service	Level Playgroup for Multicultural Families	Partnering with Migrant Information Centre to deliver culturally sensitive playgroups to promote gender equality and respectful relationships.	\$19,766.00	\$19,766.00
Fab Nobs Theatre	Keyboards, Speaker Accessories & Vacuum	Equipment to support musicians and volunteers in musical productions.	\$6,500.00	\$6,500.00
Ferntree Gully News	Supporting Gully News Volunteers	Recognition of volunteers producing and distributing the newspaper and software platform for digital version.	\$3,480.00	\$1,400.00

Applicant	Project/Event	Brief description	Amount Requested	Grant Recommended
Ferntree Gully Tennis Club	All Abilities Tennis Program	Provide opportunity for people with disabilities to access tennis in a way that is safe, fun and inclusive.	\$10,000.00	\$5,000.00
Ferntree Gully Traders Assoc	Ferntree Gully Village Food Trail	Strengthen sense of community by promoting food as a connection with Ferntree Gully businesses and to foster participation in the Traders Association.	\$11,250.00	\$11,250.00
Foothills Community Care Inc.	Foothills Community Casseroles	Meet the increased demand for the Community Casseroles service from people impacted by COVID.	\$20,000.00	\$20,000.00
Glengollan Village	Lets Get Connected	Technology stations to encourage and build residents' confidence with online services.	\$8,500.00	\$4,250.00
Heany Park Scout Group	Heater for scout hall	Split system to improve amenity in the hall and replace stolen heater.	\$3,950.00	\$3,950.00
Hindi Niketan Inc	Festival of Colors - Holi	Enhance the inter-cultural understanding and will help improve social harmony in the multicultural Australian society.	\$3,000.00	\$3,000.00
Hungarian Community Co-Op Association Ltd	Refurbishment at the Hungarian Community Centre	Replace old tables with lighter, better designed and user friendly tables.	\$7,562.50	\$4,000.00
Interchange Outer East	Better Together Conference	Build capacity of people with disability, parents and carers of young people with disability, as well as staff and volunteers of the community sector, with in-person and online sessions.	\$10,000.00	\$9,250.00

Applicant	Project/Event	Brief description	Amount Requested	Grant Recommended
Jesuit Social Services	This is Christmas! Workshop & community event	Develop community leadership skills and celebrate the talents of youth with an intellectual disability in a collaborative performance event.	\$4,158.00	\$4,158.00
Knox & District Toy Library Inc.	Inclusive Fun, Play & Learning	Improve accessibility and inclusion for children with disabilities	\$10,011.02	\$7,500.00
Knox Chinese Elderly Citizens Club	Active Healthy Ageing & Living	Equipment for social activities and community meals	\$3,989.00	\$3,989.00
Knox City Football Club	Every Little Helps	Equipment to support volunteers and members.	\$4,550.00	\$1,458.00
Knox Community Gardens Society Inc	New Raised Plots and New Garden Plots	Increase number of available plots and availability of raised plots.	\$7,928.40	\$7,928.40
Knox Community Playgroups Inc	Playgroup Support Officer Pilot	Develop an auspice model to support volunteer-run community playgroups in Knox.	\$15,388.00	\$15,388.00
Knox Environment Society	Volunteer Hub	Set up an area for volunteers to relax, socialise, host talks and meetings.	\$5,232.43	\$5,232.43
Knox Historical Society Inc.	Conservation Workshop	Workshop for general public with expert heritage conservators on conservation of paper documents and photographs, with training for Society volunteers.	\$3,822.00	\$3,822.00
Knox Infolink	Stage 2 - COVID 2IC Caseworker/Volunteer Support	Increase, train and support the volunteer team to be better equipped to meet the fluctuating demands COVID has placed on ER service	\$20,000.00	\$20,000.00

Applicant	Project/Event	Brief description	Amount Requested	Grant Recommended
Knox Learning Alliance	Festival of Food	Promote community connections through a series of 5 multicultural food events to be held throughout 2022 hosted at the 5 Knox Community Houses.	\$7,500.00	\$5,500.00
Liberty Avenue 3-year-old kindergarten and on behalf of Liberty Avenue Playgroup	The Cosy Cubby Project- Two groups, one home.	Replace existing rotting cubby and provide positive collaborative project to re-engage kinder and playgroup families	\$8,173.57	\$7,070.00
Lions club of Rowville	Buying new equipment	Purchase of new snow cone machine for festival and events	\$3,014.71	\$2,000.00
Relationships Australia Victoria	You Are Not Alone	Pilot program that aims to create a safe and supportive environment for women in Knox affected by family violence.	\$20,000.00	\$20,000.00
Rotary Club of Bayswater Inc.	The 48th Annual Knox Art Exhibition	Provide local artists and photographers the opportunity to display and sell their original work at an established and well-known exhibition.	\$8,000.00	\$5,000.00
Rowville Men's Shed Inc	New computer, printer & software	Updated computer equipment and software for club activities and administration	\$3,850.80	\$3,850.80
SLAMS Music Theatre Company	Procurement of Audio Equipment	Suite of audio equipment for ongoing use in productions and provide lower cost resource for others in community	\$14,782.00	\$14,782.00
Tamminya House Op Shop	Upgrading interior of Op Shop	Carpet replacement and painting for op shop supporting crisis accommodation units.	\$5,188.80	\$5,188.80
Templeton Tennis Club	Grooming equipment and windbreaks for courts 7 & 8	Wind reduction screens to reduce wind interference around two courts	\$6,530.70	\$4,891.70

Applicant	Project/Event	Brief description	Amount Requested	Grant Recommended
The Basin Music Festival Association Incorporated	The Basin Music Festival	Community-led music festival promoting local talent and live music.	\$15,000.00	\$15,000.00
The Haven Day Centre	Client/Carer Outings	Day trip outings for people with dementia and their carers	\$10,620.00	\$5,820.00
Upper Ferntree Gully Football Club	1.Goal Post Pad Replacement 2.Junior Club BBQ Area	Equipment for junior football club activities	\$10,672.00	\$5,385.00
Wantirna South Football Club	Upgrade of Cooling Systems & Internal Lighting	Replacement with existing equipment with more energy efficient cooling system and lighting	\$6,510.00	\$5,035.00
Zomi Melbourne East	Khuado - year end Harvest Festival	Celebration of Zomi culture and wellbeing for the refugee community from Myanmar in eastern suburbs and Knox.	\$6,000.00	\$6,000.00
Zonta International Melbourne East	Buy a Gazebo,2 banners and 8 orange lady statues	Equipment for activities to raise awareness of domestic violence and advocate for girls and women	\$4,000.00	\$3,500.00
			Total Amount Requested \$469,021.93	Total Amount Recommended \$371,917.73
Total Amount Requested by all 79 eligible applicants received \$690,366.85				

ATTACHMENT 3 -- Projects not recommended for funding through 2021-22 Community Development Fund

Applicant	Project/Event	Rationale	Amount Requested
Australian Red Cross First Aid and Mental Health	Learning to save lives on World First Aid	Insufficient demonstration of consultation/collaboration or necessary partnerships	\$18,672.73
Australian Search and Rescue K9 Inc.	Equipment for land search and rescue dog teams	Needs more clarity about the benefit to Knox and evidence of local partnerships	\$8,148.68
Bengali Puja and Cultural Society of Victoria	Durgotsov Festival 2022	Insufficient detail and relevance to Knox community	\$5,000.00
Colchester Park Pare-School	A cubbyhouse to enhance accessibility and learning	Insufficient detail provided and further consultation with Council required about proposed structure	\$14,696.00
Coonara Community House	Strengthening Families	Multiple applicant – other applications stronger	\$9,666.59
Didi Bahini Samaj Victoria	Let's Dance! Promoting community well-being	Further scoping and detail to demonstrate benefit to Knox – recommend referral to Minor Grants program	\$3,000.00
Ferntree Gully Traders Assoc	Ferntree Gully Village Fair	Insufficient financial documentation and clarity of project approach relative to other applications	\$15,000.00
Interchange Outer East	Volunteer Engagement Camp 2022	Insufficient documentation of project approach and potential risk of COVID impact	\$10,243.80
Knox City Tennis Club	Play Uniforms	Insufficient demonstration of financial need and community benefit relative to other applications	\$5,000.00
Knox Community Gardens Society Inc	New Fence Line Trees & Shrubs and New Herb Garden	Multiple applicant – other application stronger. Other funding options could be explored	\$7,372.87
Knox Gardens Tennis Club	Replace old Fridges. Replace broken T.V.	Refer project to Minor Grants Program	\$3,000.00
Life Saving Victoria	Survival Swimming for Knox Youth	Stronger grant applications demonstrated greater community need	\$17,076.00
Migrant Information Centre (Eastern Melbourne) Limited	Chinese Seniors Information Sessions Project	Refer project to Minor Grants Program	\$3,021.00

Applicant	Project/Event	Rationale	Amount Requested
Polish Community Care Services Inc	Polish Seniors Diversity Picnic	Insufficient demonstration of financial need. Refer to Minor Grants for partial assistance.	\$5,000.00
Reading Out of Poverty Inc	Books from Birth	Insufficient demonstration of consultation/collaboration or necessary partnerships	\$8,000.00
Ringwood Community Garden Inc.	Installation of Raised Vegetable Beds	Insufficient detail and demonstration of benefit to Knox Refer to Minor Grants for partial assistance.	\$3,786.09
Rotary Club of Knox	Simple Steps Solutions Mental Health Support	Insufficient demonstration of consultation/collaboration or necessary local partnerships. Further scoping and documentation to clarify proposed model.	\$15,000.00
Studfield Wantirna Community News Inc.	Volunteers are Vital at SWCN	Stronger grant applications demonstrated greater community need	\$3,120.00
Temple Society Australia	"Building better mental health"	Insufficient demonstration of consultation/collaboration or necessary partnerships. Further scoping and detail needed.	\$9,152.06
Templeton Tennis Club	Replace Seating Equipment	Multiple applicant – other application stronger.	\$9,000.00
The Links at Waterford Residents Association Inc	Workshop Extension and Fit-out	Insufficient demonstration of financial need relative to other applications. Refer to Minor Grants for partial assistance.	\$5,624.80
The Onemda Association	Partnership through Sport	Insufficient clarity of project plan or unclear on consultation/collaboration or necessary partnerships	\$19,918.00
VBRA Knox Inc.	VBRA Developmental Camp/Program	Insufficient financial documentation and clarity of project approach relative to other applications	\$11,700.00
YMCA Victoria	Knox Youth Cafe / Training Hub	Insufficient demonstration of financial need and sustainability of proposed model. Further scoping and detail of program approach required.	\$11,146.30
		Total amount not recommended	\$221,344.92

9.3 Knox COVID-19 Household Survey Results

SUMMARY: Coordinator Health Planning and Liveability, Kylie Osborne

The COVID-19 Pandemic continues to impact the health and wellbeing of our community in ever-evolving ways. As we continue to adapt to our changing circumstances, the prevalent social and health outcomes and community priorities are equally agile. To better understand the persisting health and wellbeing outcomes and concerns for the Knox community, a second iteration of the COVID-19 Household Survey was fielded in July 2021, with the first conducted in June 2020.

Whilst the results of the second survey presented new insights into the evolving concerns of the community, key health and social issues continue to impact with only minor improvement, indicating a continued need for Council to prioritise COVID-19 Pandemic recovery focused health and wellbeing initiatives. Encouragingly, the issues of concern remain in areas where Council continues to remain responsive.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council note the findings of the second wave COVID-19 Household Survey July 2021, focusing on the new priority areas and existing key health and social issues requiring continued attention.

1. INTRODUCTION

The 2020 Knox COVID-19 Household Survey brought into focus the real impacts of the Pandemic on the Knox community as our new health crises made its impression on how we lived our lives. Twelve months on, and with a rolling and ever-changing Pandemic environment, the updated 2021 COVID-19 Household Survey results bring a new emphasis on the issues that remain every present; those that have worsened or improved and new emerging areas of concern. The impacts of 2020 are most definitely still with our community, however, lockdowns, inability to plan and vaccination concerns dominate the long term impacts identified. This report provides an overview of the 2021 survey findings. For full results, refer to Attachment.1.

2. DISCUSSION

The 2021 iteration of the COVID-19 Household Survey replicated the 2020 approach to ensure the data collected was as closely comparable as possible. Questions were largely kept the same, with changes to reflect relevance and the inclusion of some additional measures (refer Attachment 1, pages 25-26 for Survey amendments).

The Survey was fielded between 20 May to 6 July, 2021. Notably during this time, a number of restrictions were implemented, causing ongoing changes and varying impacts on the community (refer Attachment 1, page 24 for restriction changes).

The respondents were segmented into two discrete groups: the first being a randomised sample drawn by a computer system using the rates database. The Survey was sent via email, or where no email address was identified, by mail. These two methods resulted in a combined initial reach of 7,236, with 565 failing to reach the resident (bounced emails or returned mail). The response rate for this cohort between email and mail was 10% and 9% respectively, 4% lower than the 2020

iteration. By the end of the survey period, a total of n=688 completed surveys were received from the representative sample.

The second group included those who had registered for future participation after being involved in the initial survey (n=59) and those who accessed the Survey via a link distributed through networks (n=116). This distribution approach yielded 17% of the equivalent 2020 sample size.

To ensure the sample represents the overall population, a weighting is attributed to responses.

For instance, in the representative Survey, 5% of respondents were aged 18-34, whereas in the Census 29% of the population is 18-34. Therefore, the weighting means that each 18-34 year old in the sample acts as if it is 5.8 responses in the weighted results. Conversely, 44% of the representative sample was 65+ years old, compared to 20% in the Census, so each 65+ year old in the sample acts like 0.45 responses in the weighted results. (ASDF Research 2021).

Table 1 illustrates the distribution of responses across locations comparative to Census location.

Table 1

Location	Census	Representative Sample	General Access Sample	Representative Sample	General Access Sample
Boronia/Bayswater	22%	24%	22%	27%	19%
Wantirna/Wantirna South	21%	21%	23%	20%	19%
Rowville	22%	17%	17%	17%	17%
Ferntree Gully	17%	21%	22%	20%	25%
Knoxfield & Scoresby	9%	8%	9%	9%	10%
Hills	9%	10%	8%	7%	10%

Table 2 - Responses by Ward

Ward	% Response	Ward	% Response
Dinsdale	11%	Friberg	11%
Baird	11%	Scott	10%
Collier	11%	Taylor	9%
Chandler	15%	Tirhatuan	8%
Dobson	14%		

The 2021 response sees a gender split similar to Census data, and age demographics were also similar across the 35–49 and 50-64 age groups, however, young people were notably under-represented, with people over 65 years over represented – the highest respondent group.

Respondents were heavily represented by home owners and couples with no children, with people who speak languages other than English at home under-represented.

The base survey questions covered the following topic areas:

- Salient improvements and setbacks;
- Specific Coronavirus impacts, with a focus on employment, housing, safety, physical health, parenting responsibilities, and food/groceries;
- Behaviour change since the Pandemic (specific to health and wellbeing: exercise, healthy eating, alcohol consumption, social isolation, gambling);
- Impacts on social connection and mental health;
- Financial vulnerability and employment;
- Safety;
- Parenting and caregiving;
- Resilience;
- Vaccinations; and
- Communications.

2.1 Results Snapshot

2.1.1 Overall Concerns

Four new emerging general areas of concern were raised in the 2021 survey including:

- Lockdowns (19%);
- Vaccine rollout (11%);
- Travel restrictions (8%); and
- Quarantine effectiveness (8%).

The results also bring to light six key existing areas for continued monitoring or action by Council:

- Mental Health;
- Physical Health;
- Safety;
- Financial Wellbeing;
- Social Isolation; and
- Housing.

These items align with the results from the 2020 survey and importantly are areas already prioritised by Council and detailed in the new Council and Community plans.

2.1.2 Council's Response

Following the 2020 survey iteration, renewed and focused attention was directed to the identified areas of concern. Actions undertaken include the development of the Mental Health Action Plan, establishment of the Mental Health Roundtable, settings-based action on social isolation for older people, food relief grants, business support and vaccination awareness for our culturally diverse community. Examples of concrete action and outcomes are evident across Council in response to the needs of our community and this work continues to be demonstrated and is further reinforced in Council's draft Council and Community Plans.

2.1.3 Setbacks and Improvements

The 2021 Survey was amended to capture personal “top of mind” concerns regarding perceptions of the longer term setbacks or improvements. Restrictions to travel and personal activities was the stand out setback (31%), followed by continued social isolation/inability to connect with family and friends, and employment and financial stressors. Both the inability to plan and effects on long term local business and economic impact were raised for the first time (4% each).

Long term improvements illustrated a considerable departure from the short term improvements in the 2020 results. Family time, slower pace and saving money featured in 2020, however, 2021 sees improved work environment the predominant gain, with better public hygiene practice and community connectedness also acknowledged.

2.1.4 Vaccinations

The 2021 Survey included specific questions pertaining to the COVID-19 vaccine, with 75% indicating they have either already received part or whole of the vaccine or intend to do so. This high rate is likely due to the heavy representation of older age respondents. Approximately 10% indicated that they are unlikely to get the vaccine and those who speak a language other than English show the highest level of hesitancy at 22%.

The two main concerns regarding the vaccine were either the rushed roll-out or vaccine hesitancy. Of those unlikely to have the vaccine (n=101) the primary reasons were:

- Uncertainty about the long term impacts;
- Health risks such as blood clots;
- Current health conditions; and
- Perception that they are at low risk of contracting COVID-19.

Hesitancy was most predominantly seen amongst 18-29 year olds, with willingness to have the vaccine correlating with growing age.

2.1.5 Safety

Only a minor reduction was evident in the proportion of people reporting an overall impact of the Pandemic on perceptions of safety, however, whilst overall the number is similar (71% in 2021, 79% in 2020), the reasons for feeling unsafe have altered to:

- Significant increase in people feeling unsafe due to anger and violence in the community (up to 35%, from 23%);
- Increased crime (23%, from 16%); and
- An increase from 2% to 5% reporting anger and violence in the home.

2.1.6 Housing

Whilst the overall impact on housing remains at a consistent 17%, the degree of impact has made a significant shift with almost double the number of people reporting a “big” impact – jumping from 4% to 7%, with the balance of responses indicating a slight impact.

2.1.7 Health Behaviours

Emotional, social and physical wellbeing continue to remain a concern with:

- 41% indicate they have not returned to pre-COVID-19 state for exercise;

- 23% are still not eating as healthily despite access and availability to groceries improving significantly;
- 1.9% had accessed emergency relief food; and
- Concerningly, 21% continue to consume more alcohol than pre-COVID-19 times. The rate is lowering for men, with only 18% now drinking more than before, whilst women reporting additional consumption from 18% now up to 25%, and people 18-34 increasing significantly from 22% to 34%.

2.1.8 Mental Health

Reports on various mental health measures continue to remain high with 72% indicating an impact in some way. Whilst individual levels of anxiety have fallen we still see 32% indicating an inability to relax, feeling insecure, confused or worried, with 27% reporting ongoing stress from juggling demands of work, kids, house and finances. Reports of mental health impacts and worry were more commonly reported by females. Impact on mental health was reported highest in the 18-34 year age group (82%), however, is at a similar level to 2020.

The mental health measures, however, should be considered in partnership with the health behaviours results, as we know reduced exercise, increased addictive behaviours such as alcohol consumption and gambling (increased from 1% to 3%) and poor food choices can correlate and may be responses to underlying mental health concerns.

2.1.9 Financial Vulnerability and Employment

Respondent financial vulnerability improved across all indicators, however, it still remains a persistent concern, with:

- 13% named employment or financial stress as a “top of mind” setback caused by the pandemic;
- Overall, 56% report an impact on their financial position;
- People with a language other than English, and 18-34 year olds report the highest level of impact at 62% and 65% respectively;
- 24% continue to receive less income;
- Overall, financial stress was less indicated, reducing to 9% from 17%; and
- Impact on employment was significantly higher amongst 18-34 year olds (89%).

2.1.10 Work Environment

Work environment was a new question added in the 2021 Survey, including changes in work locations:

- Moving forward, 13% expect to continue to work from home in some capacity; and
- 14% of business owners said they have fewer staff.

2.1.11 Resilience

Very little change in resilience measures was evident, with 41% of people continuing to indicate they do not have people they can rely on in an emergency. An improvement was seen in a reduction to 16% (down from 20%) now indicating they could not access \$2,000 in an emergency.

2.1.12 Parenting and Caregiving

Parents and carers increasingly bear the burden of rolling restriction changes with 72% (up from 67%) reporting an impact on their parenting responsibilities.

2.1.13 Transport

Transport concerns saw a rise, up to 50%, likely due to concerns around the inability to plan travel.

2.1.14 Communications

Encouragingly, the community is seeking COVID-19 Pandemic information from reputable sources such as the Coronavirus Helpline and GP's, a significant move away from media sources.

3. CONSULTATION

The same professional researcher from ASDF Research was engaged to conduct both iterations of the Survey.

The initiative was led by the Community Wellbeing Department. Using the 2020 Survey as a base, officers from across Council were consulted to ensure the revisions were relevant to the current context and any new measures could be captured.

4. ENVIRONMENTAL / AMENITY ISSUES

No environmental or amenity issues arose during the development of this Survey. However, Survey results may indicate implications for environment or amenity issues currently and in the future for the community.

5. FINANCIAL & ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS

This survey is a responsive initiative resulting from the COVID-19 Pandemic. This second wave COVID19 Household Survey was funded through the Community Wellbeing operational budget.

6. SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

As with the 2020 Survey, there was an understanding that some questions were personal and potentially stigmatising, such as disclosing financial status. A clear explanation of the Survey, including confidentiality, was highlighted in a letter with the paper Survey and in the electronic Survey preamble. All ethical issues follow the same concern when adopting the model in 2020 and were once again applicable and addressed by ensuring care was taken in the development, collection, storage and use of the data and Survey.

7. RELEVANCE TO KNOX COMMUNITY AND COUNCIL PLAN 2017-2021

Goal 4 - We are safe and secure

Strategy 4.4 - Protect and promote public health, safety and amenity

Goal 6 - We are healthy, happy and well

Strategy 6.2 - Support the community to enable positive physical and mental health

Goal 7 - We are inclusive, feel a sense of belonging and value our identity

Strategy 7.3 - Strengthen community connections

Goal 8- We have confidence in decision making

Strategy 8.2 Enable the community to participate in a wide range of engagement activities

8. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The officers contributing to and responsible for this report have no conflicts of interest requiring disclosure under Chapter 5 of the Governance Rules of Knox City Council.

9. CONCLUSION

The two Covid-19 Household surveys have provided Council with a rich data set and an evidence base for action and monitoring of key community health and social issues. Encouragingly, the findings reaffirm the importance and relevance of the work currently underway and prioritised across Council, but also present us with new opportunities for where we may strengthen our impact.

As the effects of the pandemic endure, the data will continue to inform and guide our direction and provide us with a baseline for our progress. Importantly, this community data will also help inform our community agencies and partners who work alongside us to progress outcomes for the Knox community.

10. CONFIDENTIALITY

There is no content in this report that meets the definition of confidential information from the Local Government Act 2020.

Report Prepared By: Coordinator Health Planning and Liveability, Kylie Osborne

Report Authorised By: Director, Connected Communities, Tanya Scicluna

Attachments

1. Attachment 1 - Draft Knox COVI D-19 Community Impact Survey Results [9.3.1 - 65 pages]

Attachment 1



KNOX
your city

**Covid-19 Community
Impact Survey**
Wave 2 survey findings
July 2021



CONTENTS



Executive Summary	3
Introduction	5
Survey coverage	6
Concerns	9
Top-of-mind Setbacks and improvements	10
Impacts of Covid-19	12
Health behaviours	13
Social isolation	14
Mental health	14
Exercise	15
Healthy eating	15
Alcohol consumption	15
Impacts on health	16
Financial vulnerability	16
Employment	17
Safety	18
Parenting and caregiving	19
Housing	19
Transport	19
Resilience	20
Vaccinations	21
Communications	23
Covid-19 restrictions during survey	24
Question alterations	25



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 19 July 2021



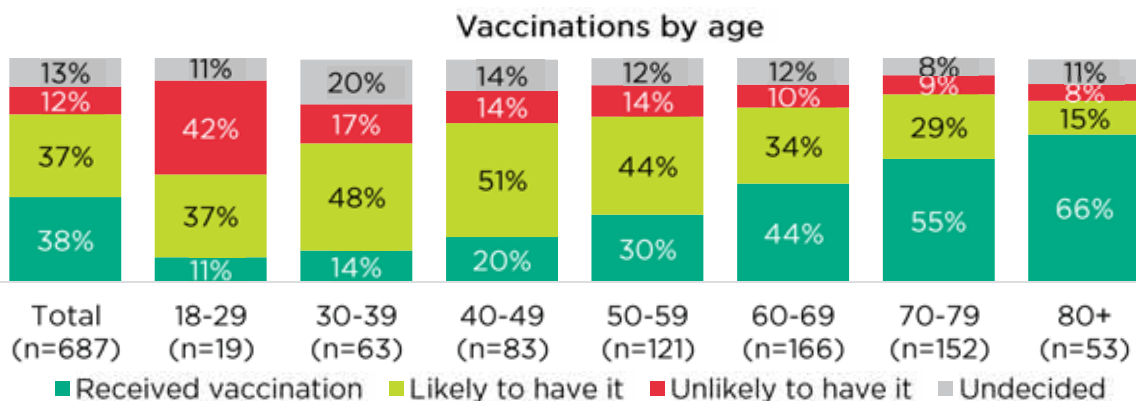
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents the findings from the second wave of Covid-19 community impacts research conducted in the City of Knox. This survey was in field from 20 May to 6 July 2021, and used representative random sampling of the rates database to achieve n=688 representative responses, alongside n=175 general community responses through distributing an online link and paper surveys through Council networks.

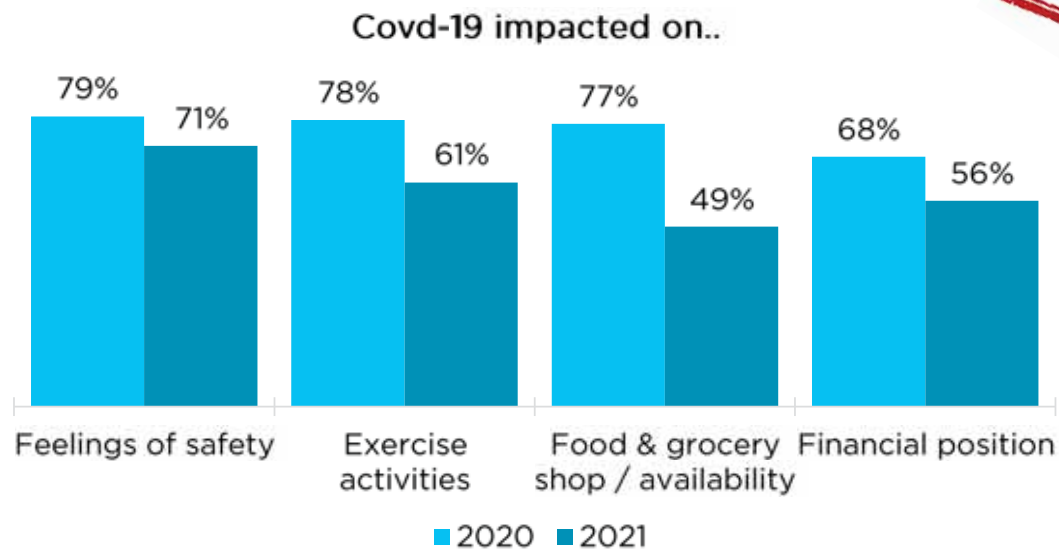
The aim of the research was to track how community experiences are changing through the pandemic. For most of the fieldwork period, metropolitan Melbourne was experiencing a lockdown due to Covid-19 cases (see [appendix](#) for details).

The main findings were:

- People are keen to **start travelling** and having holidays without the risk of getting caught in snap lockdowns. Many are concerned that restricted travel options are going to be a long-term impact of the pandemic.
- **Vaccines** are the most salient issue for the community at the moment. Many have been vaccinated already, with high vaccination rates amongst older people. However, some have concerns about the long term impact, and many, particularly those who speak a language other than English, are undecided about whether they will get the vaccine (highlighting an opportunity for better communication with this segment).



- The main recognised **opportunities for long-term improvements** from the Covid-19 experience are a shift towards more flexible work options for improved work life balance, better public hygiene practices, and social cohesion.



- Overall there is less widespread concern about getting sick when in public spaces, but there are still concerns about safety, with a shift towards perceptions of violence and crime cited as safety issues.
- While most of the community are still experiencing some impact on socialising, leisure, food availability, finances and work, fewer are experiencing a big impact in 2021 when compared to 2020.
- There are small yet growing segments experiencing big impacts on transport and housing.
- People are gradually returning to pre-Covid-19 levels in terms of exercise and talking to neighbours, but there hasn't been any shift towards healthier eating, and the incidence of people drinking more alcohol than pre-Covid-19 remains constant.
- Mental health impacts continue to be widespread, although the current survey does show some reduction in the proportion of people reporting anxiety.
- Fewer people are experiencing difficulty getting food and groceries, but that is not transferring into healthier eating.
- The extent of impact on finances and work is gradually declining, but there are still over half of the population experiencing an impact. Most of those who switched to working from home had returned to work for at least some of their working week, although 32% are reporting more flexibility (either still working from home or working from home some of the time).
- Resilience has had a slight improvement in line with a reduction in financial challenges, with fewer reporting that they couldn't access \$2,000 in a week for an emergency.
- When seeking out information, there has been a shift away from word of mouth and media sources, with more reliance on GPs.

INTRODUCTION



This report presents the findings of the second wave of community impact surveying for Knox City Council.

This document shows how things have changed compared to the 2020 findings. Please see the 2020 research report for further detail, including analysis descriptions (thematic, statistical and weighting) and questions asked.

Methodology







For this research, respondents were sourced using two methods:

1. **Random proportional representative sampling** of the rates database. Selected addresses were matched against Council's contact database to source email addresses. Where an email address was available the household was sent an email invitation to the survey. If no email address was available they were posted a paper version of the survey (with an option to complete online included in the cover letter). This sample provides insights from across the municipality, rather than just those who are engaged with Council's communication channels and services and has been weighted in line with age and gender within each locality (interlocking).
2. **General access** online survey. This was distributed through Council networks and services, and a paper form was available upon request. This sample was completed by those who are engaged with Council and interested in the topic.

Some analysis presents **combined data** showing responses across the whole sample.

Report design

Throughout this report, data has been colour-coded as follows (2021 is the darker shade):

2021	2020	
		Representative data
		General access data
		Combined data

Where statistically significant variations have been identified for 2021 when compared to 2020, this has been indicated with a ↓ to show significant reduction or ↑ to show a significant increase.



Survey timing

A lockdown was announced soon after commencement of the survey fieldwork period (survey period 20 May to 6 July, lockdown from 25 May). During the survey period the restrictions varied a number of times. Full details of dates and changes can be found [at the end of this document](#).

Weighting explained

The weight of each individual survey response towards the overall results is adjusted to balance out demographic variations in the sample. That way your results better represent the views of the overall population.

For instance, in the representative survey 5% of respondents were aged 18-34, whereas in the census 29% of the population is 18-34. Therefore the weighting means that each 18-34 year old in the sample acts as if it is 5.8 responses in the weighted results. Conversely, 44% of the representative sample was 65+ years old, compared to 20% in the census, so each 65+ year old in the sample acts like 0.45 responses in the weighted results. We applied an interlocking weighting to the representative sample covering age, gender and region.

SURVEY COVERAGE

The response rate for the representative survey was slightly lower than the first round, likely due to 'covid-fatigue' (people are sick of talking about it). This is a finding in itself as it suggests that Covid-19 is less of a critical issue for some people. The final sample size for the representative sample (n=688) is robust enough to identify how community impacts are changing.

Representative survey mode	Returned	Sent	Response rate	2020 response rate
Mail out, online	41	4,760	10%	14%
Mail-out, paper	430			
Email	217	2,476	9%	13%

Email - 2,973 sent, 497 bounced. Mail - 4,828 sent, 68 return to sender

An invite was sent to those who registered for future participation during the round 1 research, achieving n=59. These have been included in the general access sample. The general access survey, distributed through Council networks, only achieved n=116 responses in 2021, which represents only 17% of the 2020 sample size.



The following tables show a summary of the distribution of respondents across locations and demographics, compared to the 2016 Census and the 2020 survey. In these tables the Rep column shows the representative sample results, while the GA column shows the 'General access' survey results.

Distribution of the survey across both sample sources is relatively in line with population distribution across the five Knox regions. Alignment of the representative survey component is slightly better in 2021 than the initial survey in 2020.

	2021			2020	
	Census	Rep	GA	Rep	GA
Boronia and Bayswater	22%	24%	22%	27%	19%
Wantirna and Wantirna South	21%	21%	23%	20%	19%
Rowville	22%	17%	17%	17%	17%
Ferntree Gully	17%	21%	22%	20%	25%
Knoxfield and Scoresby	9%	8%	9%	9%	10%
Hills	9%	10%	8%	7%	10%

It was possible to break out the representative data by ward (matching address to ward), as outlined in the following table (not weighted). However, there were no meaningful differences in findings when analysing data by ward.

Ward	Sample	Percent	Ward	Sample	Percent
Dinsdale	76	11%	Friberg	76	11%
Baird	78	11%	Scott	66	10%
Collier	75	11%	Taylor	61	9%
Chandler	100	15%	Tirhatuan	57	8%
Dobson	98	14%			



In the 2021 wave of surveying, the gender distribution of the representative survey is almost in line with the census. There is a notable under-representation of younger people, although this is typical of social research in the sector.

The representative survey also shows a slight under-representation of those who speak a language other than English and households with children; and an over-representation of people who own their home outright and couple households with with no children at home. These are similar distributions to those experienced in the first round of surveying.

	2021			2020	
	Census	Rep	GA	Rep	GA
Male	49%	44%	25%	41%	13%
Female	51%	54%	74%	57%	86%
18-34	29%	5%	15%	11%	19%
35-49	26%	20%	24%	22%	45%
50-64	26%	31%	32%	28%	22%
65+	20%	44%	29%	37%	13%
LOE	25%	13%	11%	18%	7%
Owned outright	33%	51%	43%	46%	25%
Mortgage	41%	31%	40%	35%	54%
Renter	17%	12%	11%	12%	15%
One person	20%	21%	16%	17%	8%
Children at home	50%	33%	48%	35%	61%
Couple no children	24%	38%	27%	36%	21%
Household income <\$650 per week	15%	21%	17%	22%	14%



CONCERNS

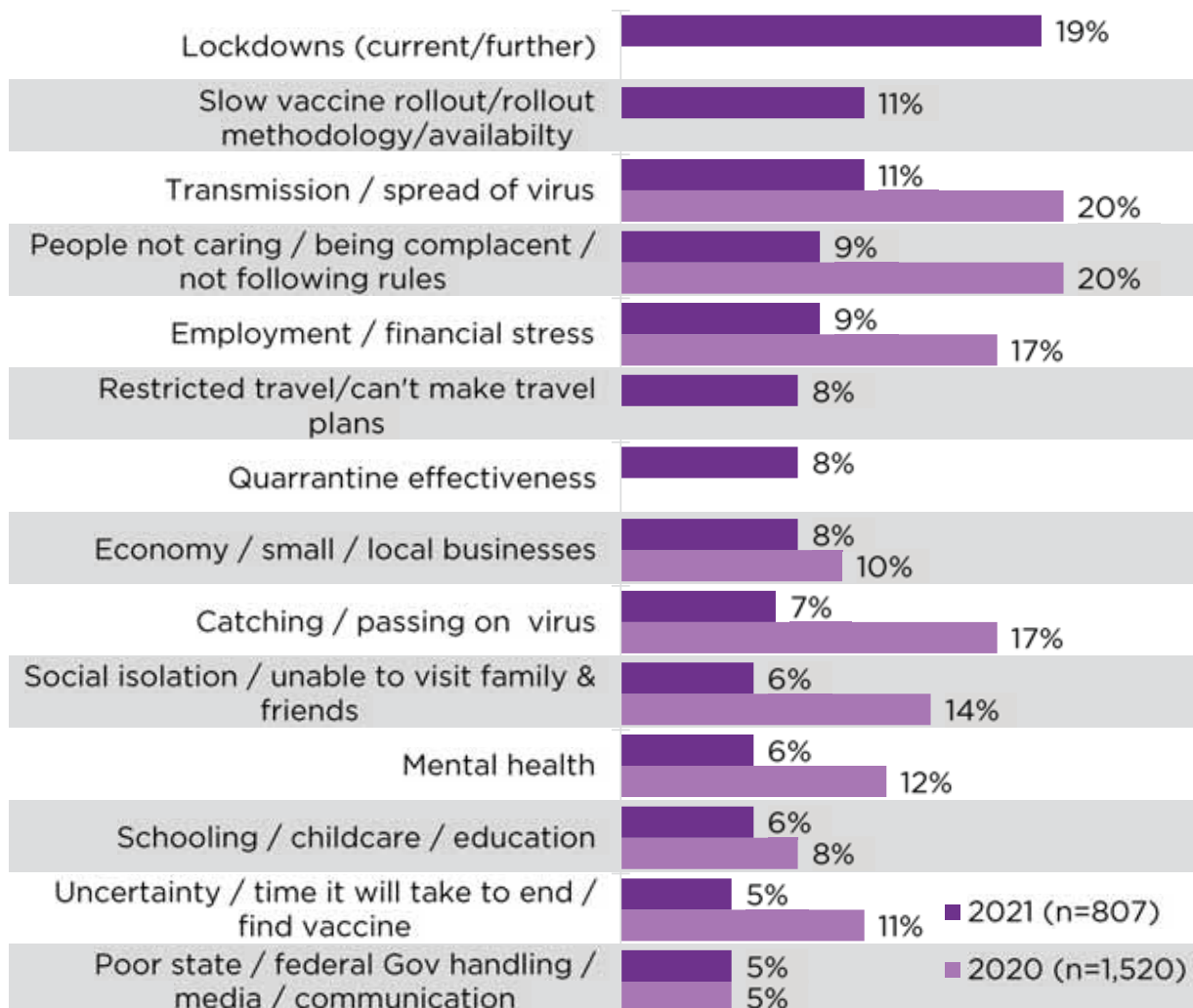
In 2020 the top two concerns being mentioned were relating to transmission of the virus and other people not following the rules. In 2021, whilst concern about the transmission of Covid-19 remains in the top 3, it is less commonly mentioned; instead there has been an emerging concern about ongoing lockdowns and their potential impact on business and the community.

In 2021 the vaccine has become one of the key concerns, specific to lack of availability, perceptions that the roll-out has been too slow, or that the methodology is flawed. A later section of this report explores [vaccines](#) in further detail.

The other key concerns to emerge in 2021 were relating to inability to make travel or holiday plans, and questioning quarantine effectiveness. Catching the virus and employment stresses were less salient in 2021.

Frequent lockdowns, restrictions to movement,, impact on business and lifestyle

Concerns



TOP-OF-MIND SETBACKS AND IMPROVEMENTS

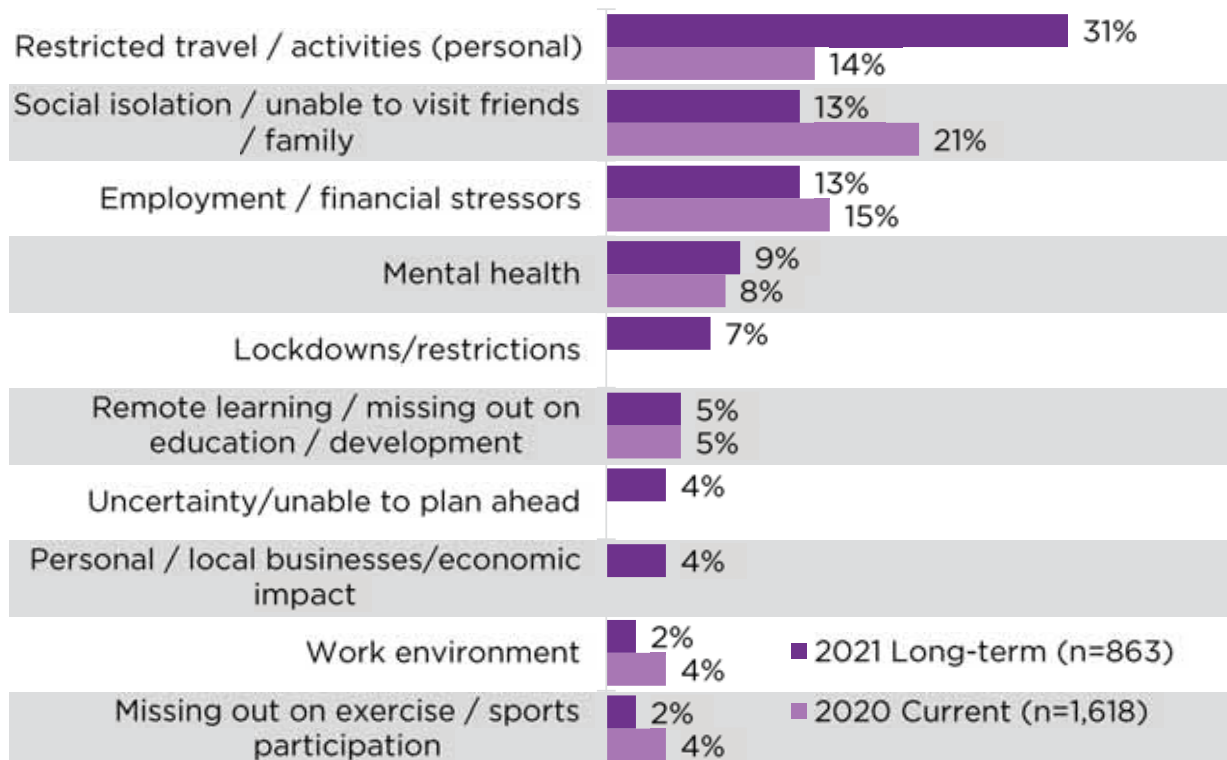
In 2020, respondents were asked to specify the current setbacks and improvements from Covid-19. In 2021, the question was revised to seek out perceived **long term impacts**. In 2021, 79% of respondents mentioned a potential long term setback and 62% suggested a long-term improvement.

Findings suggest that there is an expectation of long term setbacks relating to social isolation and employment / financial stress, factors that were also commonly being experienced in 2020. The stand out potential long term setback in 2021 relates to restricted travel due to restrictions and fear of getting stuck due to snap lockdowns; and the impacts that has on ability to see family and have holidays.

I stopped planning day trips and holidays simply because I might be cut off from returning to Melbourne if there is another unexpected lock-down.

limited travel, especially oversea traveling is the main concern from me. I can't see any possibility international travel will be back to normal in 2 years.

Setbacks





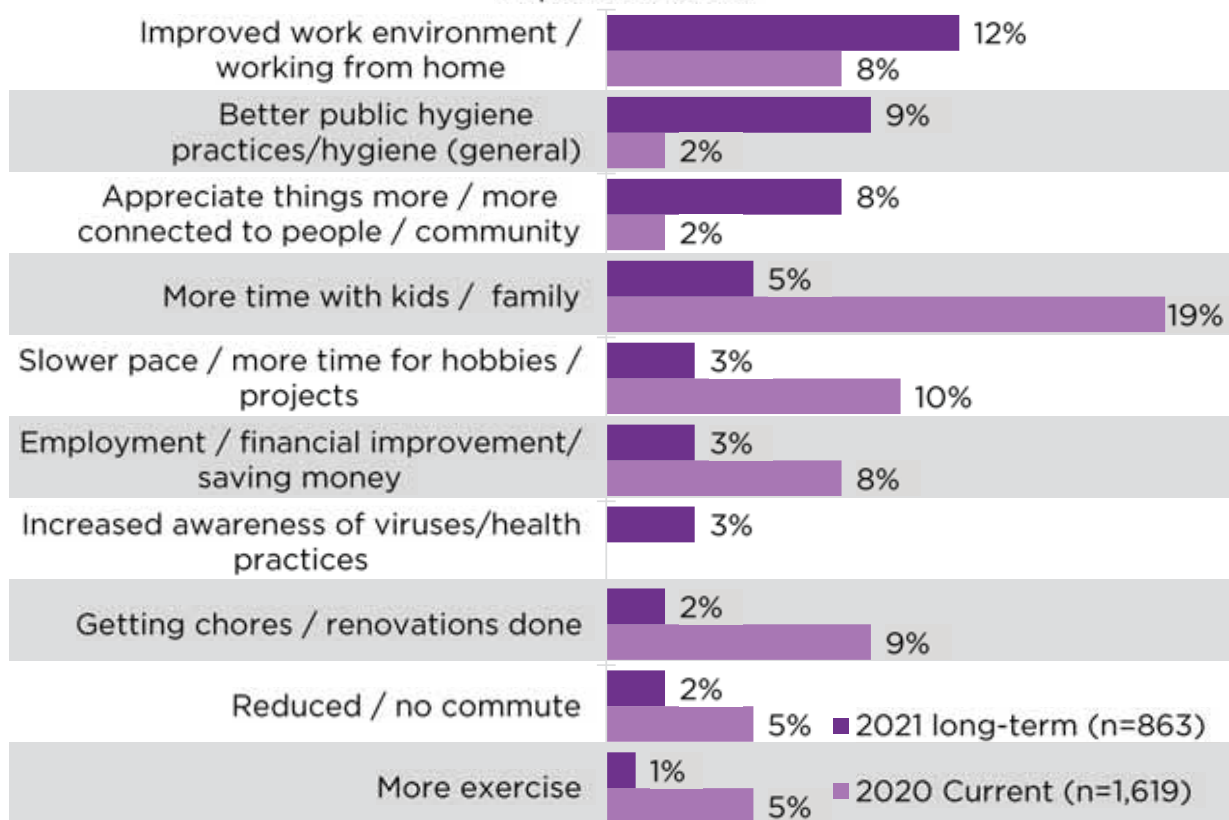
In 2020 the main immediate stated improvements were being able to spend more time with children and the family, and the slower pace. These are seldom put forth as a potential long-term improvements in 2021, as during much of the survey fieldwork period schools were back to on-site, and many had returned to their workplaces for at least some of their work hours (see [employment](#) section).

Instead, the main long-term improvements mentioned in 2021 were relating to the work environment (specifically the opportunity for more remote / flexible working), improved public hygiene and more community connections.

business - more meetings are conducted via internet - more efficient use of resources.

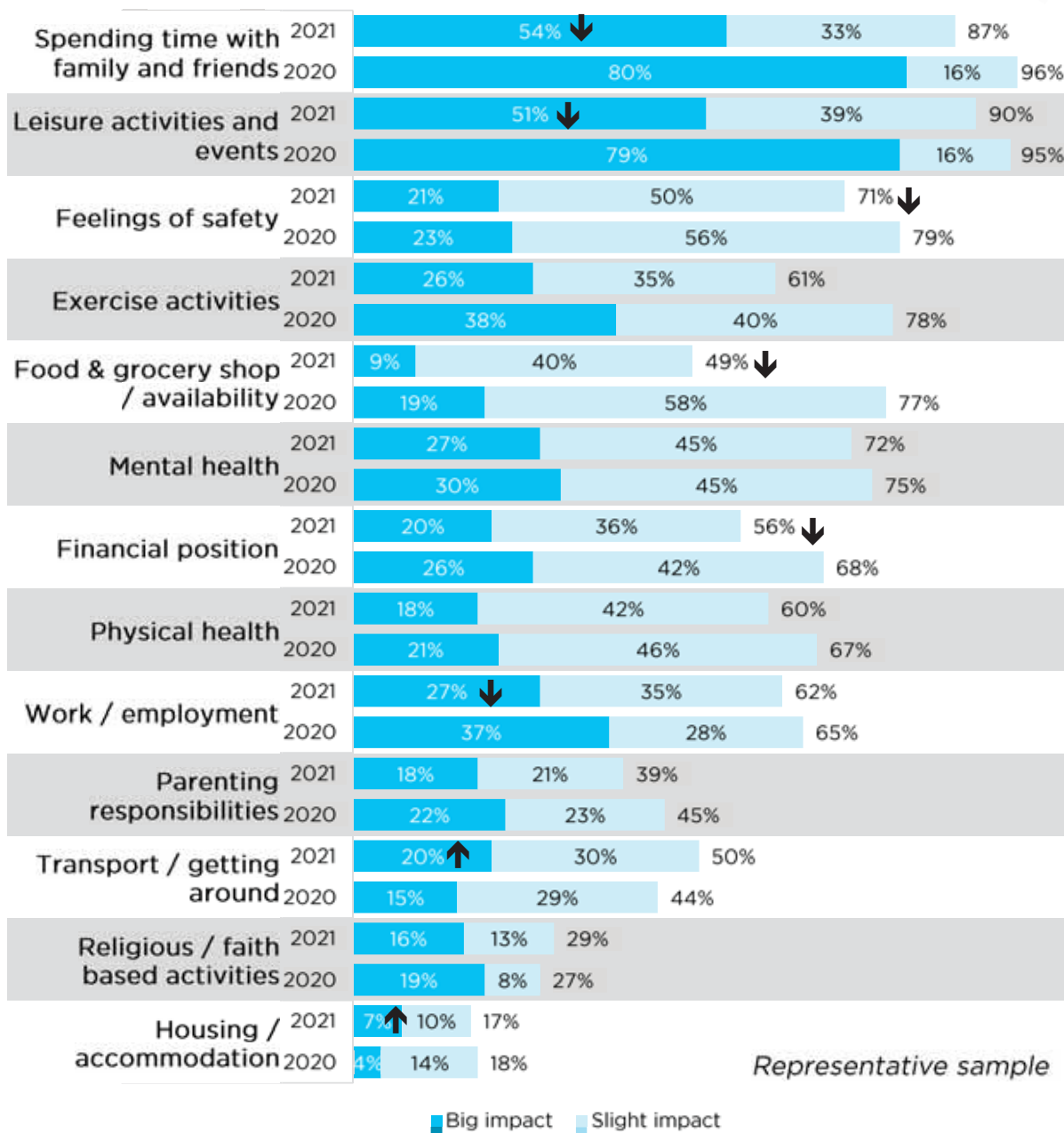
Working from home is so much safer, reducing the risk of bringing covid-19 back to the family (both the elderly and the young). In addition, more time can be put at work instead of travelling a total of about 3 hours daily. Going to the city takes approximately 50 minutes. With the daily traffic jams, travelling to work easily takes about 1.5 hours one way. All these time is now better spent.

Improvements





IMPACTS OF COVID-19

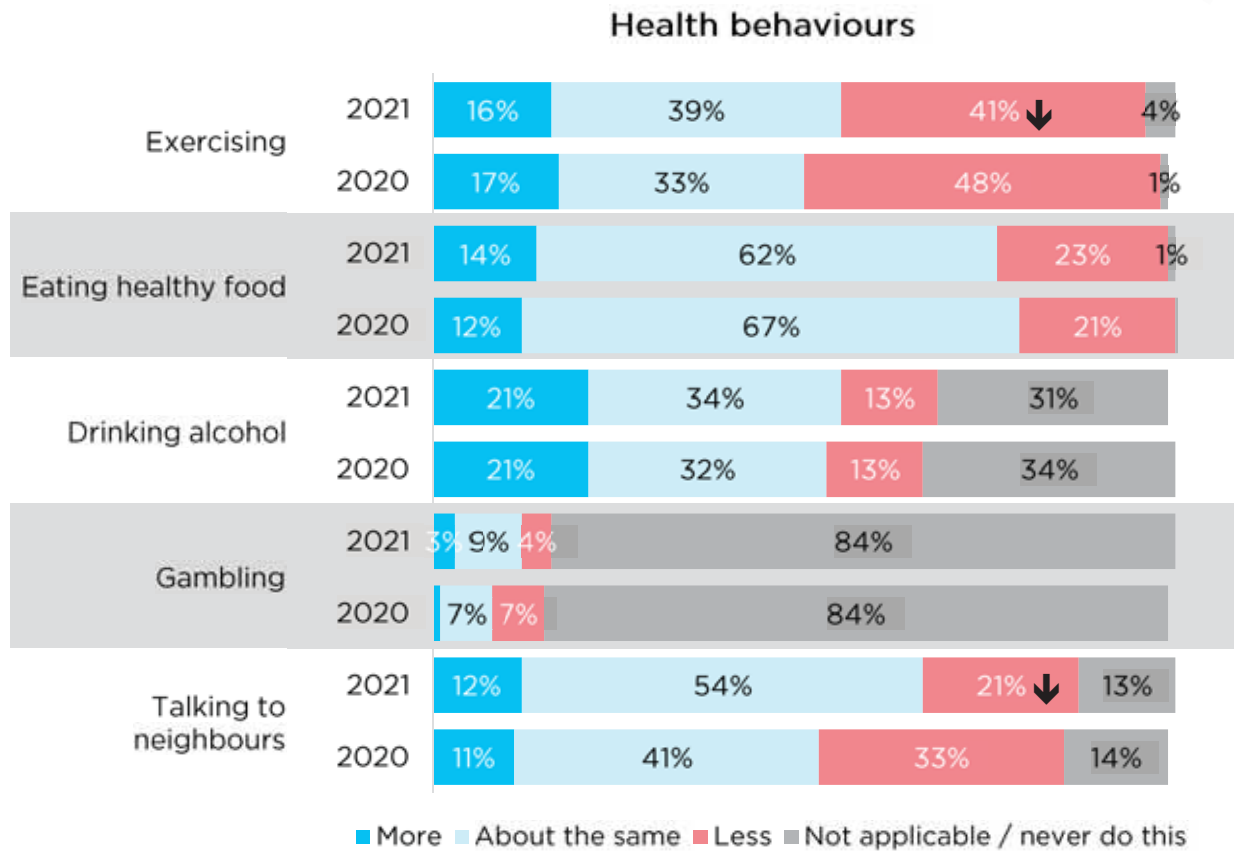


The main changes to impact measures in the last 12 months were:

- Although most are still experiencing impacts on socialising and leisure activities, the strength of these impacts has reduced.
- Far fewer residents are experiencing impacts on food and grocery availability.
- The impact of Covid-19 on financial position and work is less common now, although half are still experiencing impacts.
- Impact on mental health remains high, and has changed very little.



HEALTH BEHAVIOURS



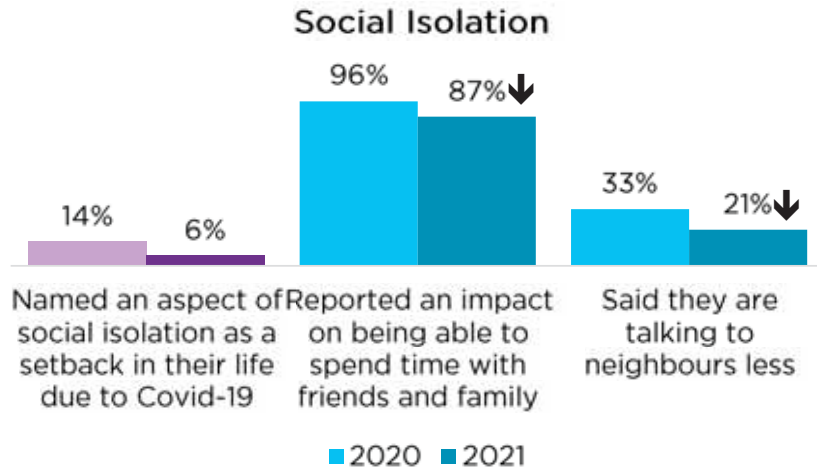
There has been a slight shift back towards pre-Covid-19 levels for exercising and talking to neighbours. However, there is still a segment of the community who is drinking more (unchanged proportion) and almost a quarter are still eating less healthy food than before Covid-19.



SOCIAL ISOLATION



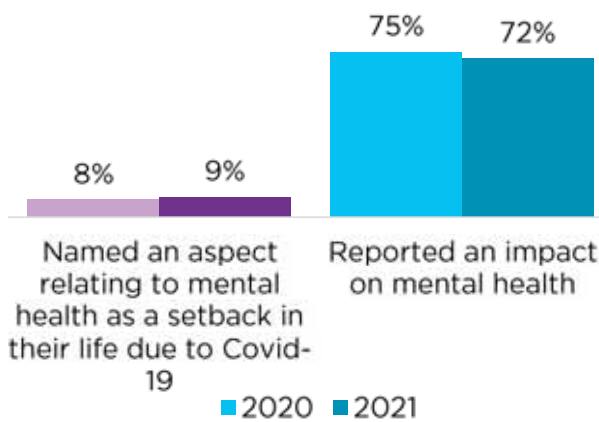
Social isolation is still the top impact being experienced by the community, although the proportion of the community being impacted by this has fallen slightly.



MENTAL HEALTH



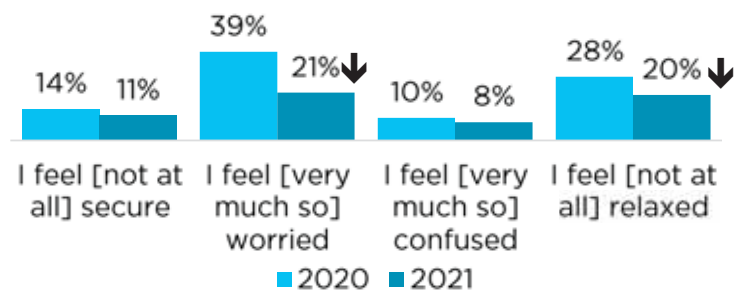
Mental Health



There has been no change in the proportion of residents reporting mental health challenges, suggesting that this is an issue that is going to persist throughout the duration of the pandemic. Males more commonly report no impact on mental health (31%, 23% females).

Anxiety

Individual anxiety levels have fallen slightly in 2021, although there are still 32% who experience one of these (a significant reduction from 49% in 2020). Males less commonly feel worried (21% not at all, 8% females).



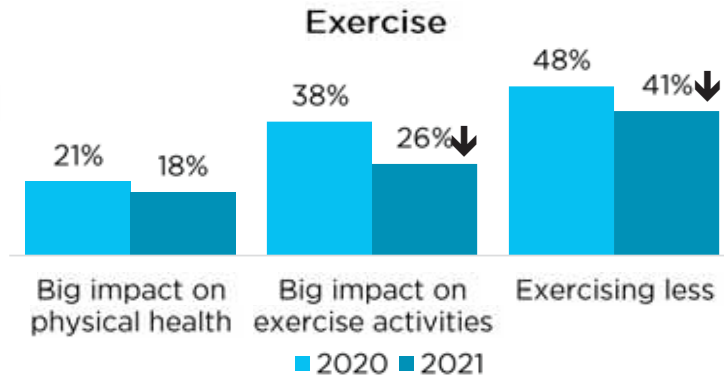


EXERCISE

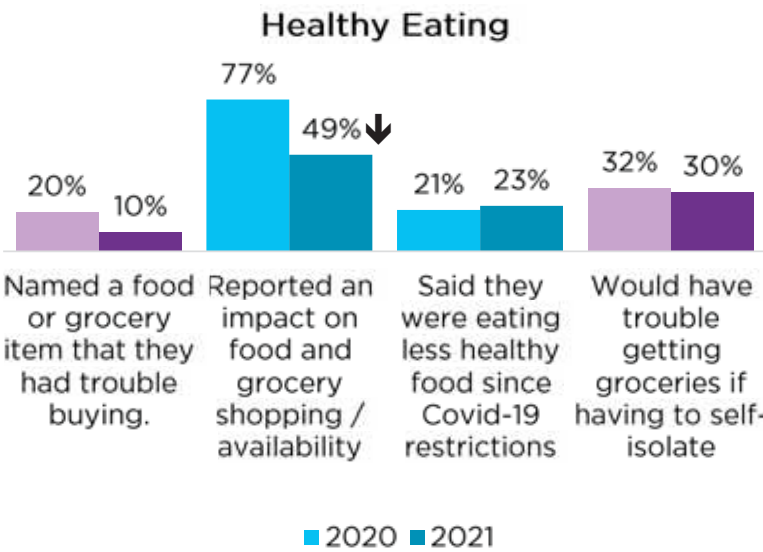


Whilst the impact of Covid-19 on exercise has reduced slightly in the past year, there are still four in ten residents who are exercising less than before Covid-19.

There was a higher level of optimism that in the future exercise would increase in 2020 (30%) than 2021 (23%).



HEALTHY EATING

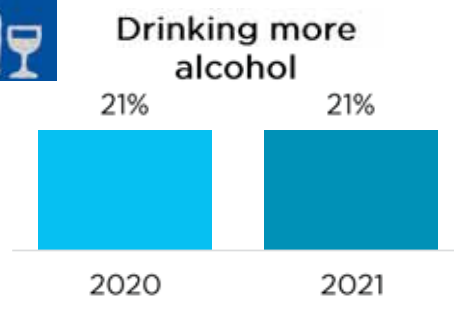


Covid-19 is having a less widespread impact on food and grocery shopping in 2021, however this has not translated to changes in healthy eating habits, with one in five continuing to eat less healthy food. 1.9% said they had accessed emergency food relief.

ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION



There has been no change in alcohol consumption behaviours in the last year.

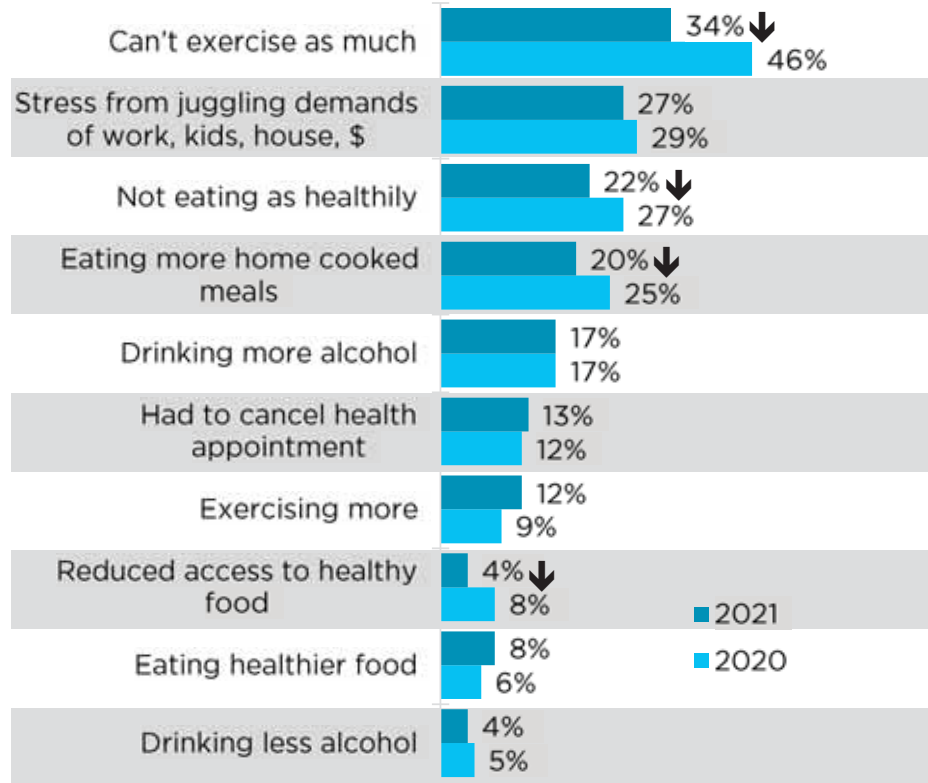




IMPACTS ON HEALTH

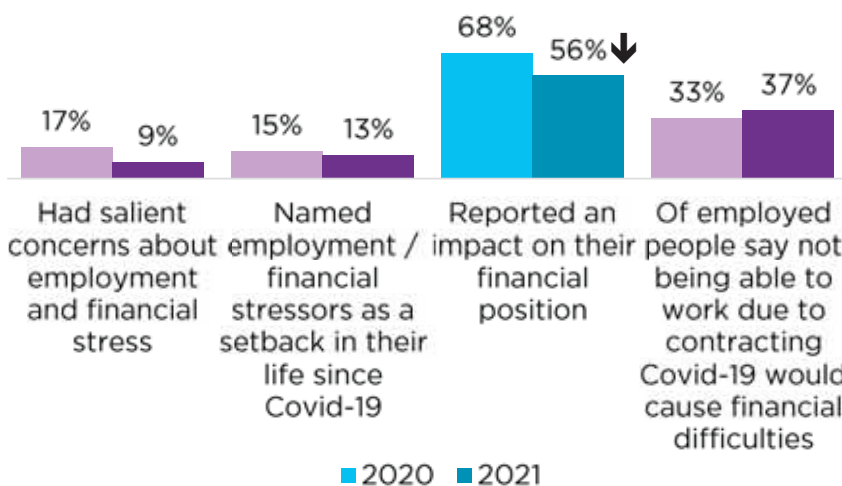
The impact of Covid-19 on individual physical health behaviours is reducing over time, although more than a third are saying that they still can't exercise as much.

Impacts on physical health



FINANCIAL VULNERABILITY \$

Financial Difficulties



The impact of Covid-19 on financial position has declined slightly in the last year, although over half still experience an impact.

19% said they were on jobseeker or jobkeeper (23% in 2020). The removal of these supports has resulted in a reduction in wages for some people, with impacts such as not being able to pay bills or housing, and business closures.

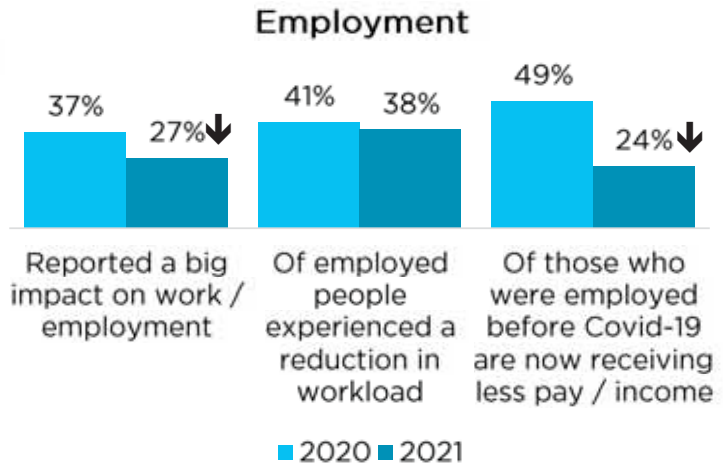


EMPLOYMENT



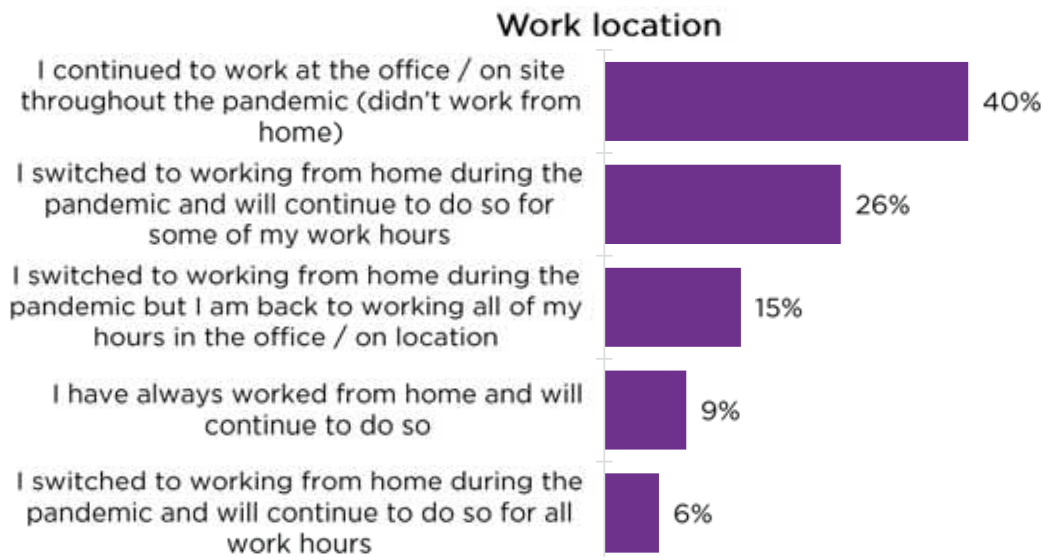
The proportion of the population experiencing a big Covid-19 impact on work and employment has reduced when compared to 2020, with fewer receiving less pay.

Whilst the proportion experiencing a reduction in workload hasn't changed, more have experienced an increase (31%, compared to 16% in 2020).



A new question was added in 2020 to understand how working environments have changed, and the rate of return to pre-Covid-19 work conditions. From the findings it is evident that:

- Almost half of workers switched to working from home during the pandemic, and most of these have returned to on-site working for at least part of their working week.
- Those with a hybrid work model are mostly working more than half their time at home (65%), with 38% working 50-69% of their time at home.



The proportion expecting to continue to work from home in the future fell to 13%, from 20% in 2020.

Of those who run a business (n=66), 12% said they have more staff than before Covid-19, whereas 14% said they have fewer. Most stated no change to staffing levels (68%).

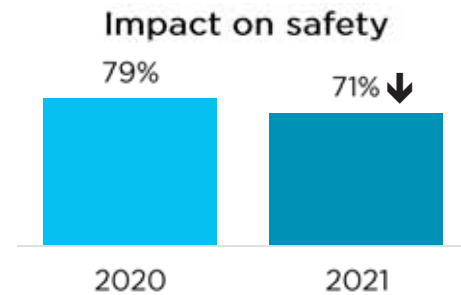
SAFETY



There has only been a minor reduction in the proportion of the community who report an impact of Covid-19 on their feeling of safety.

These perceptions of safety do seem to be shifting, however, away from fear of getting sick in public, and more so towards anger and violence in the community and crime.

Twice as many people mentioned anger and violence at home (family violence measure) in 2021 than in 2020.



Impacts on perceptions of safety

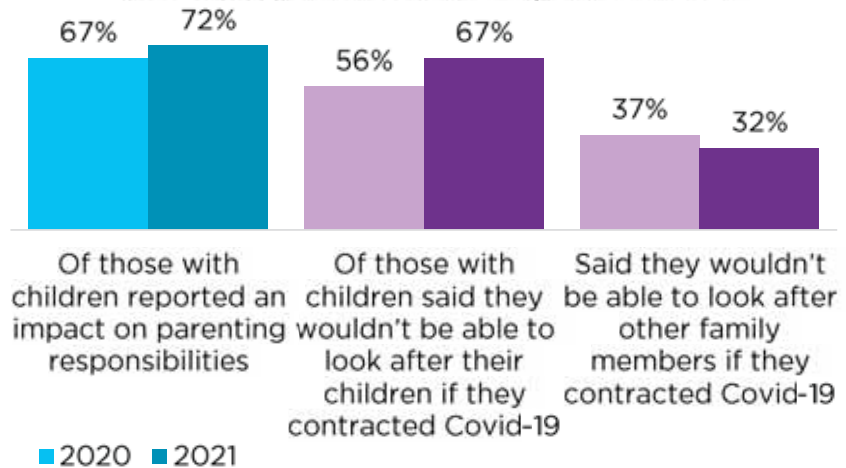




PARENTING AND CAREGIVING

Parenting and Carer Responsibilities

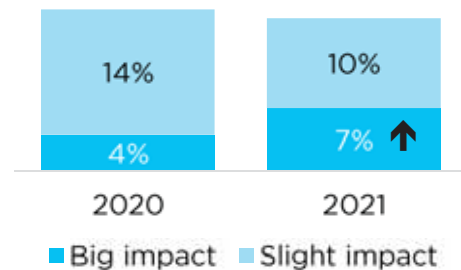
Covid-19 continues to place a significant burden on parents, with no easing of this impact when compared to this time last year.



HOUSING

The overall proportion of the population experiencing impacts to their housing remains constant, although the percentage experiencing a big impact has almost doubled. The main big impact is not being able to afford maintenance and repairs (36% of those experiencing a big impact).

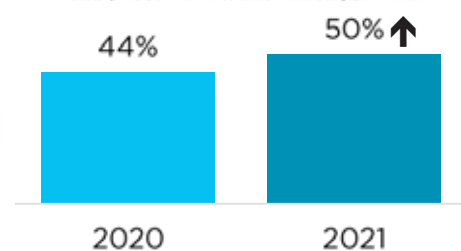
Impact on Housing



TRANSPORT

The proportion of the population experiencing an impact on transport is slightly higher in 2021 when compared to 2020. A follow-up question about transport impacts wasn't included in 2021, however based on other responses throughout the survey, it is likely this increase is due to travel restrictions (distance caps) and not being able to plan to travel for fear of not being able to return due to lockdowns.

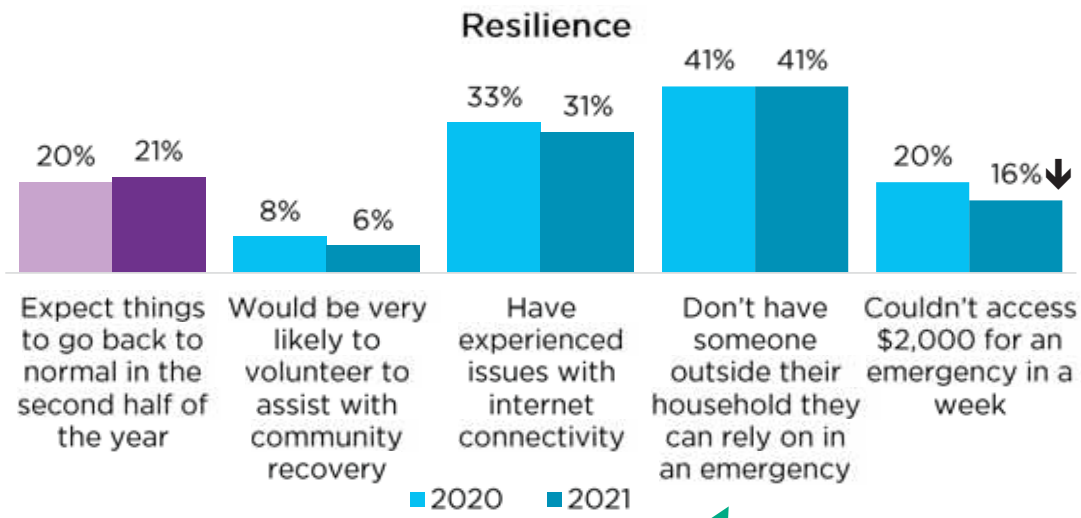
Impact on Transport





RESILIENCE

There have been no changes in most resilience measures when comparing current data to that recorded a year ago. Although, there has been a slight decline in the proportion who couldn't access \$2,000 in a week in an emergency.



In the 2017 Victorian Population Health survey 7% of respondents said that they don't have someone outside of their household they can rely on in an emergency, compared to 41% in the Covid-19 surveys. This data isn't directly comparable as it employs a different methodology, however it is a notable difference beyond what one would expect from methodology variations (the question wording was the same). It may be that the context of the survey (relying on others during a pandemic) may be different to normal times and therefore influencing how respondents interpret the question.



VACCINATIONS

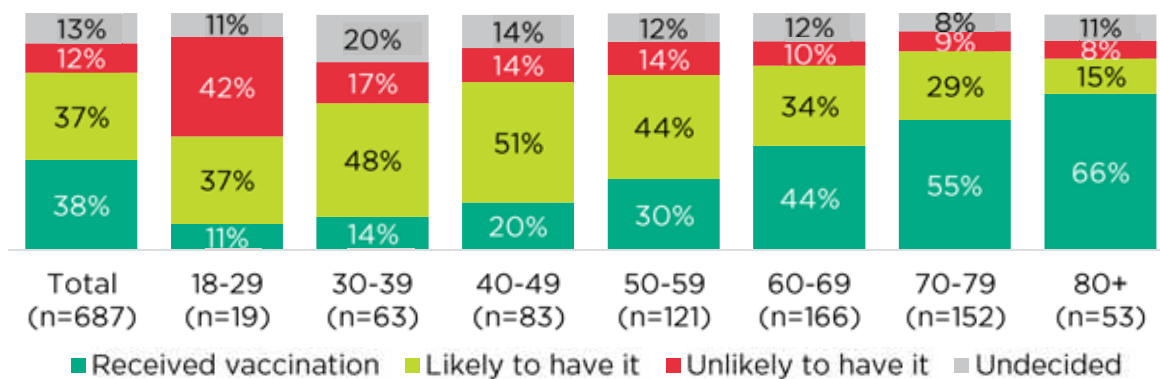


In the initial concerns question, vaccines featured prominently, with 11% mentioning the slow vaccine rollout, 4% mentioning vaccine hesitancy in the community, and 4% stating vaccine safety concerns.

Additional questions were included in 2021 to understand vaccine uptake and hesitancy, providing the following insights:

- Most of the community (75%) has either already received the vaccine (first or both doses) or intends to.
- Given the roll-out schedule focused on older adults, it is not surprising that coverage is higher amongst the older age groups.
- Around one in ten indicated they wouldn't be likely to have it, although this was mostly due to concerns about it being rushed; presumably they might be swayed further into the future, once their concerns about long-term side-effects can be addressed.

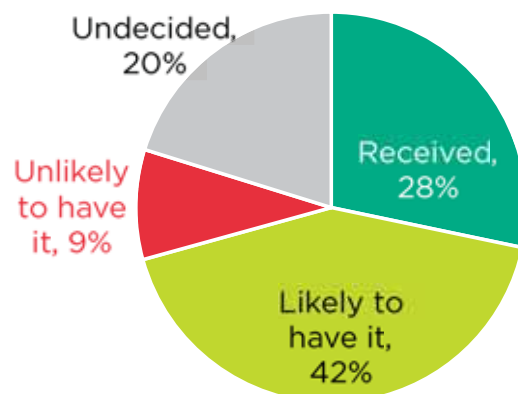
Vaccinations by age



Representative sample, unweighted

Language other than English (n=109)

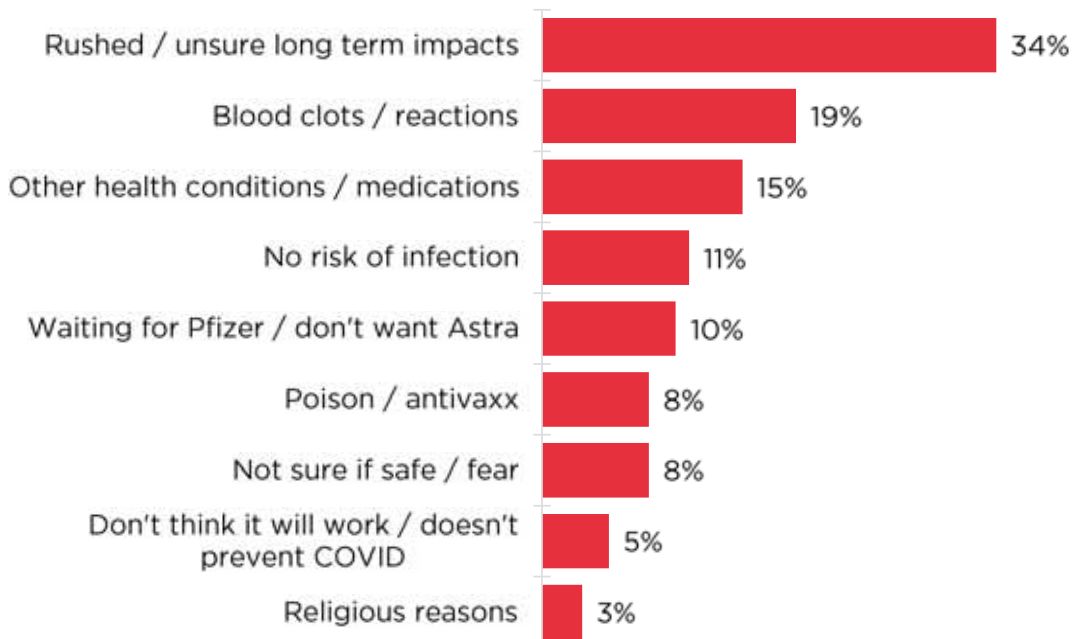
Those who speak a language other than English show a high instance of being undecided (20%, compared to 10% English only speakers)





Vaccine hesitancy was mostly due to concerns about it being rushed; presumably they might be swayed further into the future, once their concerns about long-term side-effects can be addressed.

Reasons for being unlikely to have the vaccine (n=101)



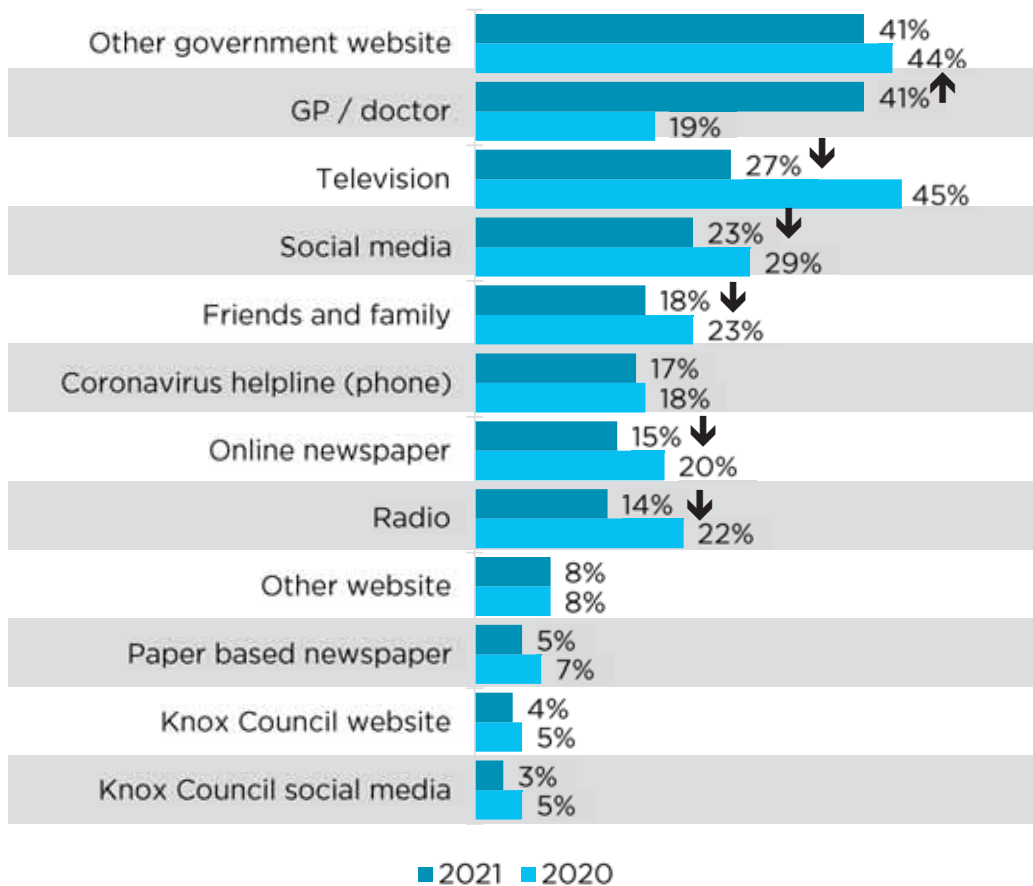
Concern that the vaccine was rushed is more prominent amongst young people (75% 19-29 year olds who are unlikely).



COMMUNICATIONS

There has been a clear decline in relying on word of mouth or media sources for Coronavirus information. Instead there has been a shift towards seeking out information from medical professionals. This is likely due to the changing nature of information being sought towards vaccine information.

Sources people use for Coronavirus information



COVID-19 RESTRICTIONS DURING SURVEY



The first wave of surveying occurred in July to August 2020, whilst restrictions required mandatory face masks, only leaving the house for 4 reasons (shopping for food, outdoor exercise, medical care and study or work if it can't be done from home), and no visitors or public gatherings.

Since then, the Greater Melbourne region has gone through a prolonged stage 4 lockdown (with curfews and travel distance limits), followed by a period in early 2021 of no cases, and brief lockdowns to control small outbreaks.

This second wave of surveying occurred between 20 May to 6 July 2021. During this period the following restrictions were in place for metropolitan Melbourne:

- 25-27 May – 5 visitors in-home per day, public gathering limit of 30 people, face masks indoors, on-site work permitted, density limits for workplaces.
- 27 May – 3 June– stay at home except for 5 reasons (food shopping, authorised work, care, exercising up to 2 hours within 5km of home, vaccination), masks outside the home, no gatherings (public or private), school closures, and essential services only open.
- 3-10 June – Travel increased to 10km, Schools open for years 11-12, and mandatory QR check-in at retail.
- 10-17 June – Removed restriction on reasons to leave the home, schools open, eateries open with limits, outdoor gatherings of 10 people, facemasks indoors (outdoors not needed), and travel limit extended to 25km.
- 17-24 June – Removal of 25km travel limit, 2 visitors a day permitted in home, public gatherings outside of 20 people.
- 24 June onwards – 15 private visitors a day allowed in-home, 50 people can gather outside, increases in capacity limits for workplaces.

The requirement for masks indoors wasn't removed until 8 July (after the end of fieldwork period).

QUESTIONNAIRE ALTERATIONS



The full questionnaire script can be found in the appendix of the 2020 survey report.

The following alterations were made in the 2021 wave of surveying.

- Q1a wording altered from **If there have been any changes due to Coronavirus that have resulted in setbacks and/or improvements in your life, please tell us about them below to What do you think are likely to be the long term changes to your life as a result of the coronavirus pandemic?**
- Removal of question asking about transport impacts (K2).
- In 2011 the employment question (Q11) was separated into 3 sections: before, Covid-19 during Covid-19, and now.
- Q12 was revised in 2021 from **As a result of the Coronavirus pandemic, has your number of working hours / workload...?** to **During the Coronavirus lockdown in 2020, did your number of working hours / workload...?**
- K3 was revised in 2021 from **Has your pay/wage changed?** to **How does your current wage compare to how much you were being paid before the Coronavirus pandemic?**
- New question added in 2021:
Which of the following best describes your work location?
 I have always worked from home and will continue to do so
 I switched to working from home during the pandemic and will continue to do so for all work hours
 I switched to working from home during the pandemic and will continue to do so for some of my work hours [IF YES] Please specify % of work hours from home
 I switched to working from home during the pandemic but I am back to working all of my hours in the office / on location
 I continued to work at the office / on site throughout the pandemic (didn't work from home)
 Other (specify)
 Don't know
- New question added in 2021:
How do your staffing levels now compare to before the Coronavirus pandemic?
 More staff now
 No change
 Fewer staff now
 Something else (specify)

QUESTIONNAIRE ALTERATIONS



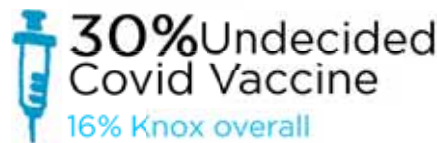
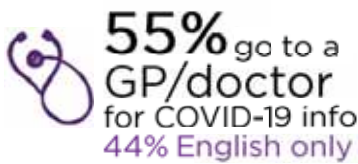
- Removed Q16 in 2021.
- K5 added row for Emergency food relief through a local organisation and then a follow-up question for those who answered yes: **Have you accessed / used emergency food relief in the last month?**
- New question added in 2021 for those who said they received jobseeker or jobkeeper:
What impact has the reduction of JobSeeker / JobKeeper ending had on you? (open ended)
- Q17, added an option for 'I received the vaccine'
- New question added in 2021 for those who hadn't received the vaccine:
How likely are you to have the Coronavirus vaccine?
Very likely
Quite likely
Neither likely nor unlikely
Quite unlikely
Very unlikely
Those who said unlikely were asked to type in why.
- Removed K7, Q26, K14 and K15.

Appendix A

LOE n=109 n=90

Covid-19 Survey 2021

Those who speak a language other than English at home (LOE) more commonly experience COVID-19 prompted challenges with exercise, fear of getting sick, mental health and not having help outside the household in an emergency. Whilst 21% indicated they had already had the COVID vaccine (compared to 29% of English only speakers), a high proportion (30%) said they were neither likely nor unlikely to get it, suggesting that further education is needed for LOE residents on the COVID vaccine.



2020

2021

	Measure	LOE	English	LOE	English	
Social isolation	Mentioned as a main concern	11%	15%	8%	6%	
	Mentioned as a setback	20%	22%	17%	13%	
	COVID-19 has impacted on time with family and friends	89%	97%	91%	89%	
	Talking to neighbours less	53%	28%	42%	17%	●
Safety	Mentioned as a main concern	53%	48%	16%	11%	
	COVID-19 has impacted safety	80%	78%	84%	70%	●
	Fear of getting sick at work	26%	25%	30%	17%	●
	Fear of getting sick in public	61%	58%	63%	47%	●
	Feel unsafe catching public transport	28%	17%	42%	26%	●
Exercise	Mentioned as a setback	3%	5%	1%	2%	
	COVID-19 has impacted on exercise	84%	76%	73%	60%	●
	Doing less exercise	53%	46%	35%	43%	

Key:

Statistically significant - Segment worse off:

● English only

● LOE

■ Whole sample

■ Representative sample



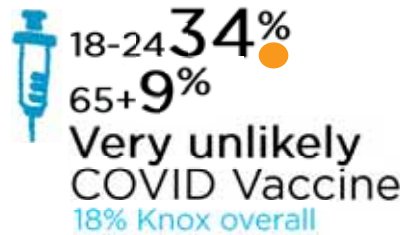
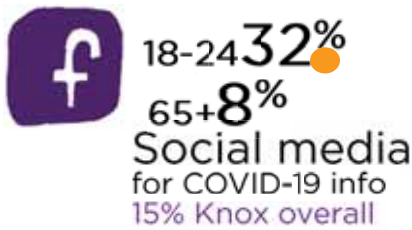
	Measure	LOE	English	LOE	English	
Financial vulnerability	Mentioned as a main concern	21%	17%	8%	10%	
	Mentioned as a setback	8%	16%	9%	13%	
	COVID-19 has impacted on financial position	72%	66%	62%	56%	
	COVID-19 has impacted on work/employment	64%	66%	71%	58%	●
	Receiving less pay due to COVID-19*	22%	30%	24%	25%	
	Experienced a reduction in workload due to COVID-19*	38%	42%	36%	36%	*Of those employed pre-COVID
Mental health	Mentioned as a main concern	6%	13%	8%	6%	
	Mentioned as a setback	7%	8%	5%	9%	
	COVID-19 has big impact on mental health	23%	31%	37%	26%	●
	Very much so worried at the moment	52%	32%	20%	22%	
Food and alcohol	Had trouble buying food or groceries	18%	20%	7%	12%	
	COVID-19 has big impact on food and grocery shopping	28%	16%	16%	7%	●
	Eating less healthy food	20%	21%	23%	23%	
	Would have trouble getting groceries if had to self-isolate	37%	30%	34%	29%	
	Drinking more alcohol	14%	24%	18%	23%	
Caregiving	COVID-19 has impacted on parenting#	60%	69%	90%	68%	●
	Couldn't care for children if caught COVID-19#	54%	56%	75%	66%	#Of those with children
	Providing unpaid care or assistance	20%	31%	22%	42%	●
Resilience	Wouldn't be able to care for others if caught COVID-19	39%	37%	36%	31%	
	Experienced internet connectivity issues	36%	31%	38%	30%	
	No one to rely on in an emergency	56%	36%	53%	36%	●
	Couldn't find \$2,000 in a week in an emergency	22%	20%	14%	17%	

Youth & Older Adults

18-34	n=37	n=62
65+	n=287	n=338

Covid-19 Survey 2021

Young people continue to more commonly experience impacts on financial vulnerability, mental health and food and alcohol consumption. Very few 65+ year olds experience any of these challenges.



		2020		2021		
Measure				18-34	65+	
Social isolation	Mentioned as a main concern	16%	19%	7%	5%	
	Mentioned as a setback	17%	28%	19%	12%	
	COVID-19 has impacted on time with family and friends	92%	99%	83%	80%	
	Talking to neighbours less	22%	35%	23%	20%	
Safety	Mentioned as a main concern	6%	4%	7%	13%	
	COVID-19 impacted on safety	78%	70%	61%	66%	
	Fear of getting sick in public	73%	42%	48%	46%	
	Feel unsafe catching public transport	23%	21%	23%	32%	●
	Fear of getting sick when shopping	54%	35%	19%	25%	
Exercise	Mentioned as a setback	12%	6%	5%	2%	
	COVID-19 impacted on exercise	82%	70%	56%	51%	
	Doing less exercise	53%	40%	43%	30%	●

Key:

Statistically significant - Gender worse off:

- 18-34
- 65+

- Whole sample
- Representative sample



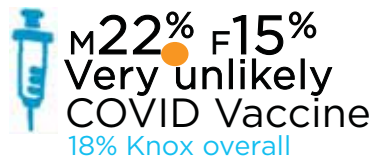
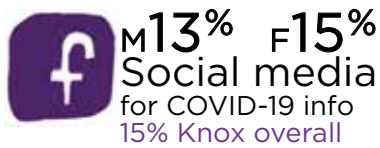
	Measure	18-34	65+	18-34	65+	
Financial vulnerability	Mentioned as a main concern	21%	8%	20%	2%	
	Mentioned as a setback	16%	5%	24%	4%	
	COVID-19 has impacted on financial position	73%	53%	65%	38%	
	COVID-19 has impacted on work/employment	85%	14%	89%	19%	
	Receiving less pay due to COVID-19*	48%	42%	30%	25%	
	Experienced a reduction in workload due to COVID-19*	52%	42%	52%	42%	*Of those employed pre-COVID
Mental health	Mentioned as a main concern	18%	6%	5%	3%	
	Mentioned as a setback	11%	2%	15%	4%	
	COVID-19 has impacted on mental health	86%	50%	82%	51%	
	Very much so worried at the moment	49%	28%	16%	20%	
Food and alcohol	Had trouble buying food or groceries	38%	19%	23%	8%	
	COVID-19 has impacted on food and grocery shopping / availability	79%	73%	53%	47%	
	Eating less healthy food	28%	9%	28%	8%	
	Would have trouble getting groceries if had to self-isolate	35%	34%	41%	32%	
	Drinking more alcohol	22%	11%	34%	5%	
Caregiving	COVID-19 has impacted on parenting [#]	41%	NA	84%	NA	[#] Of those with children
	Couldn't care for children if caught COVID-19 [#]	72%	NA	69%	NA	
	Providing unpaid care or assistance	22%	22%	25%	36%	
Resilience	Wouldn't be able to care for others if caught COVID-19	34%	26%	30%	26%	
	Experienced internet connectivity issues	51%	11%	40%	17%	
	No one to rely on in an emergency	39%	28%	46%	38%	
	Couldn't find \$2,000 in a week in an emergency	20%	14%	6%	14%	

Gender

Male	n=296	n=338
Female	n=364	n=493

Covid-19 Survey 2021

When analysing the data with a gender lens it is clear that females more often experience COVID-19 related challenges with caregiving and mental health. Males more commonly experience an impact on financial position, and have no one to rely on in an emergency. There is more vaccine hesitancy amongst males, coupled with a lower incidence of having already received it (23% males, compared to 29% females).



		2020		2021		
Measure		Male	Female	Male	Female	
Social isolation	Mentioned as a main concern	14%	14%	4%	8%	●
	Mentioned as a setback	18%	23%	10%	17%	●
	COVID-19 has impacted on time with family and friends	94%	96%	85%	88%	
	Talking to neighbours less	35%	31%	25%	17%	●
Safety	Mentioned as a main concern	43%	51%	13%	12%	
	COVID-19 impacted on safety	74%	84%	70%	71%	
	Fear of getting sick in public	56%	60%	49%	49%	
	Concern for older family members getting sick	44%	58%	38%	41%	
	Fear of getting sick when shopping	39%	46%	27%	25%	
Exercise	Mentioned as a setback	5%	4%	2%	2%	
	COVID-19 impacted on exercise	76%	81%	63%	60%	
	Doing less exercise	46%	50%	43%	39%	

Key:

Whole sample Representative sample

Statistically significant - Gender worse off:

● Males
● Females



	Measure	Male	Female	Male	Female	
Financial vulnerability	Mentioned as a main concern	19%	17%	8%	10%	
	Mentioned as a setback	11%	16%	13%	12%	
	COVID-19 has impacted on financial position	71%	65%	59%	53%	●
	COVID-19 has impacted on work/employment	71%	61%	65%	59%	●
	Receiving less pay due to COVID-19*	34%	22%	26%	21%	
	Experienced a reduction in workload due to COVID-19*	45%	37%	36%	39%	*Of those employed pre-COVID
Mental health	Mentioned as a main concern	7%	14%	5%	7%	
	Mentioned as a setback	4%	10%	4%	12%	●
	COVID-19 has impacted on mental health	71%	77%	68%	75%	
	Very much so worried at the moment	33%	41%	17%	25%	●
Food and alcohol	Had trouble buying food or groceries	18%	20%	9%	11%	
	COVID-19 has impacted on food and grocery shopping / availability	75%	78%	49%	50%	
	Eating less healthy food	20%	21%	18%	27%	●
	Would have trouble getting groceries if had to self-isolate	35%	30%	32%	28%	
	Drinking more alcohol	23%	19%	18%	25%	●
Caregiving	COVID-19 has impacted on parenting [#]	68%	65%	69%	68%	[#] Of those with children
	Couldn't care for children if caught COVID-19 [#]	42%	60%	49%	72%	●
	Providing unpaid care or assistance	26%	30%	28%	45%	●
Resilience	Wouldn't be able to care for others if caught COVID-19	30%	40%	28%	34%	●
	Experienced internet connectivity issues	31%	35%	28%	33%	
	No one to rely on in an emergency	47%	34%	44%	38%	●
	Couldn't find \$2,000 in a week in an emergency	19%	21%	12%	19%	●

Mental Health

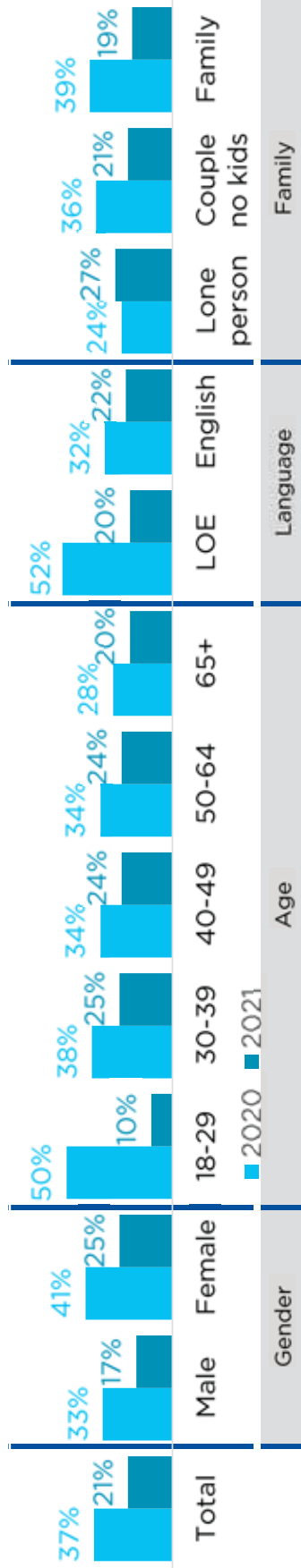
Covid-19 Survey 2021
2020 n=854 | 2021 n=626

72% of residents in 2021 say COVID-19 has impacted on their mental health... This is a similar proportion to 2020 (75%). In the last year, the proportion of 18-29 year old and renters reporting a big impact on mental health has fallen, whilst the proportion of those who speak a language other than English reporting a big impact on mental health has increased..

Big impact Slight impact No impact



Very much so worried



There has been a reduction in the proportion of residents saying they are very much so worried in 2021, particularly amongst younger people and those who speak a language other than English. The main impacts on mental health stated in 2021 were anxiety (19%), isolation (10%), and depression (8%). Also emerging in 2021 as reasons for impact on mental health were comments about dissatisfaction with government response (6%) and concerns about the vaccine (4%).

↑ Significantly higher/lower
Representative data used in this analysis

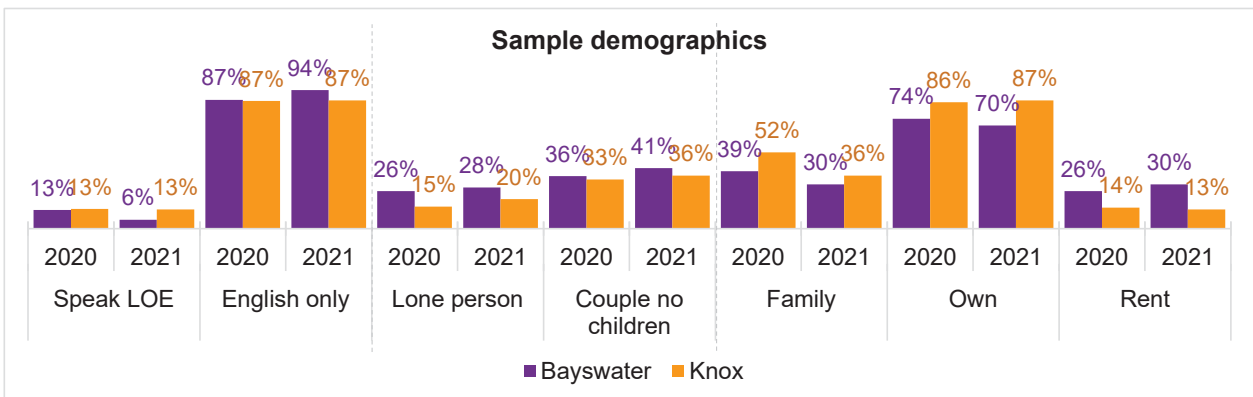
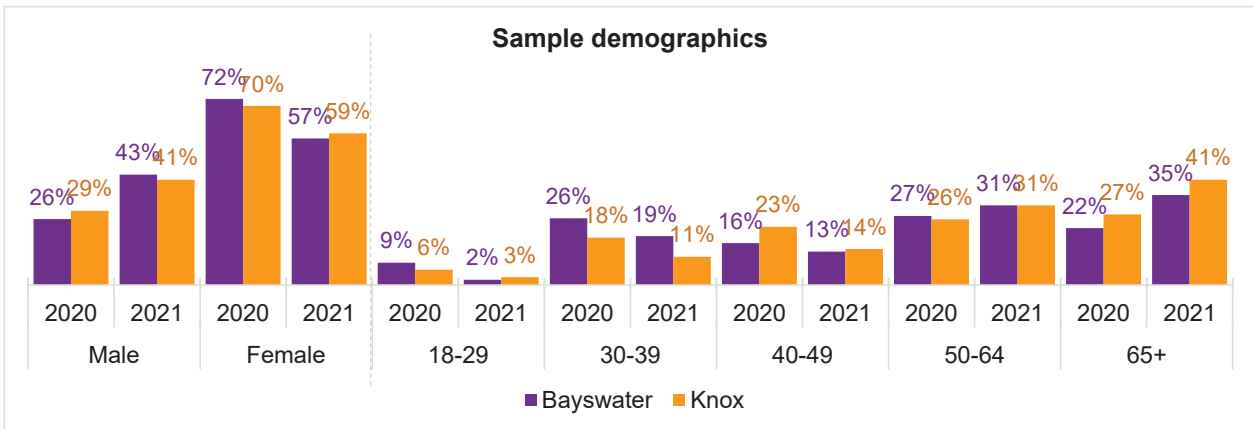


Report for Bayswater

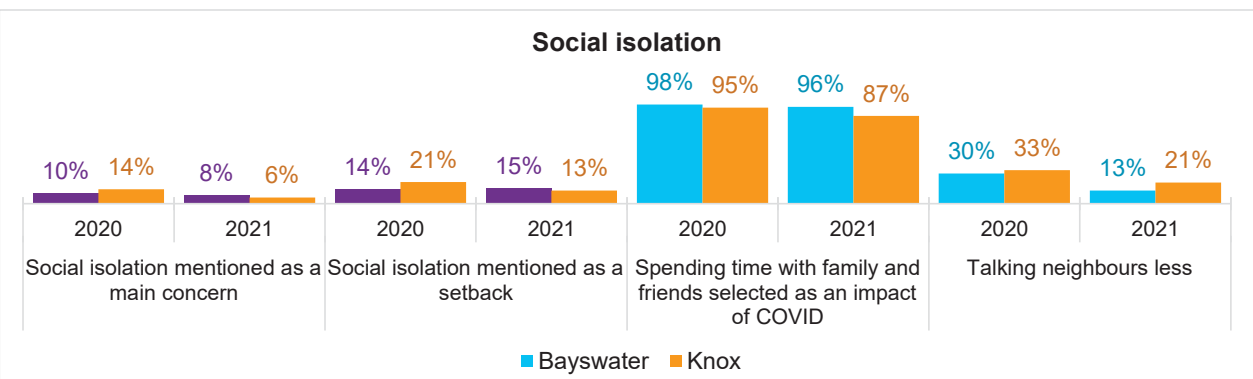
Compared to Knox

	Bayswater		Knox	
	2020	2021	2020	2021
Total sample =	105	54	1596	846
Representative sample =	59	42	865	640

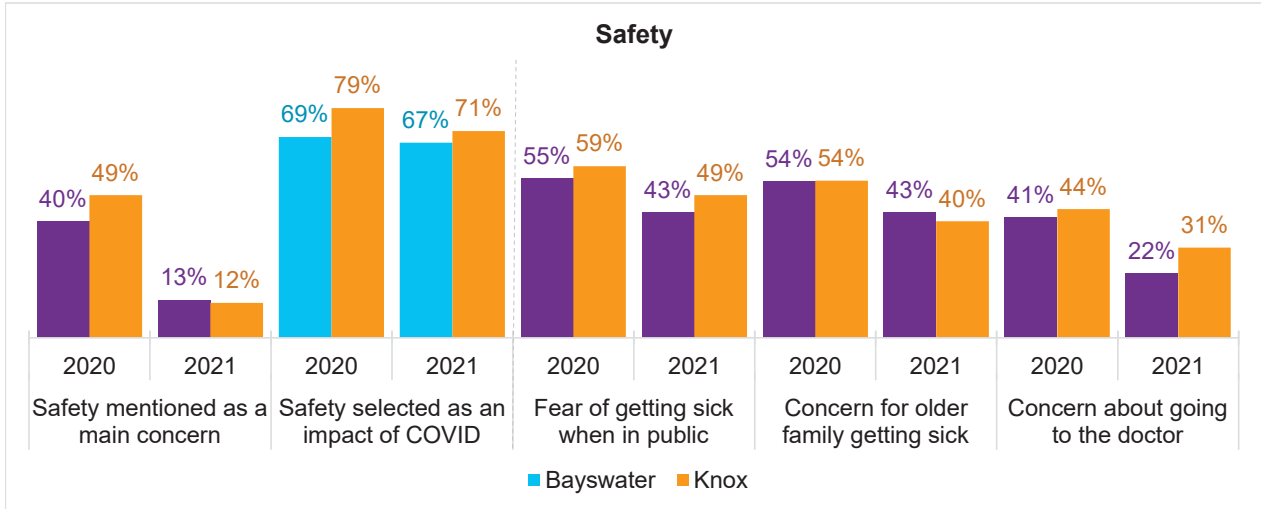
■ Overall sample
■ Representative sample



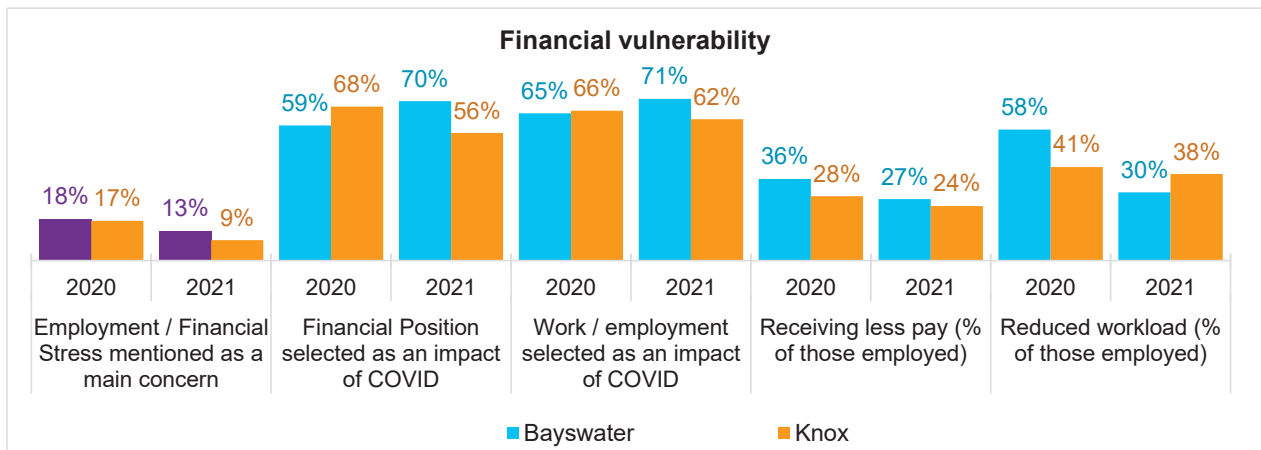
Social Isolation



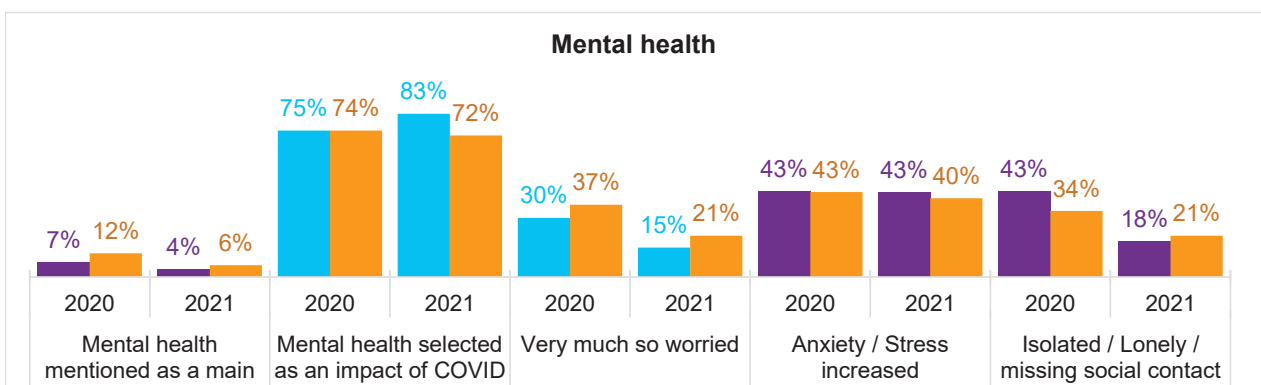
Safety



Financial vulnerability



Mental health

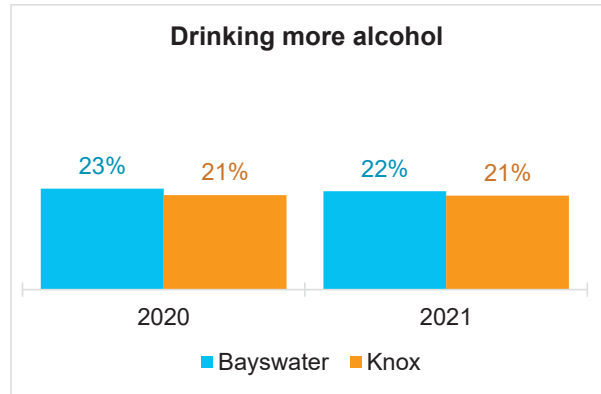
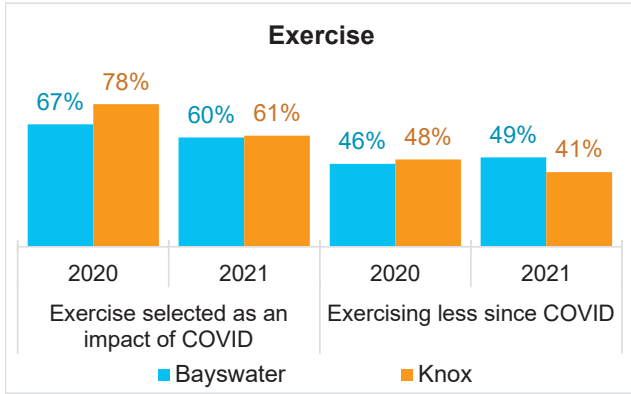


concern

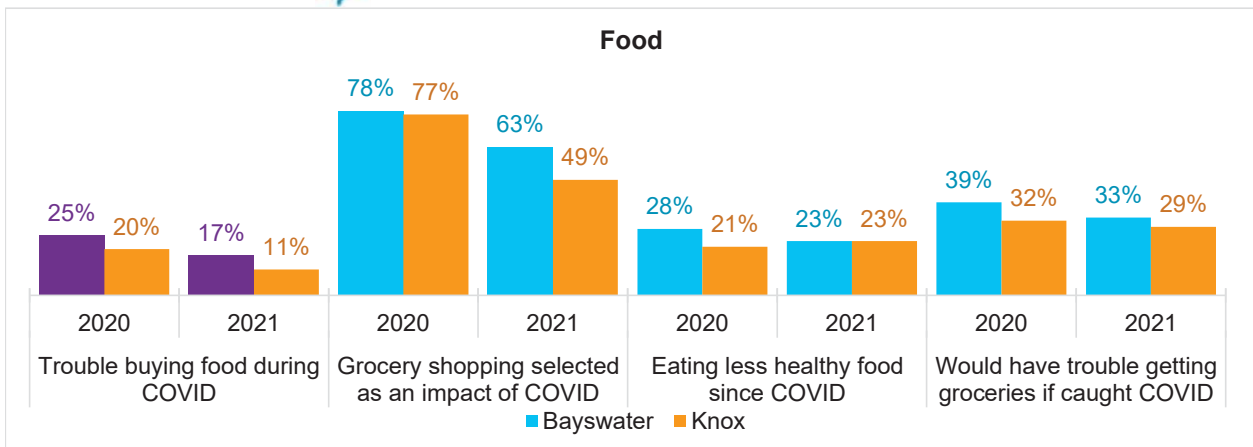
■ Bayswater

■ Knox

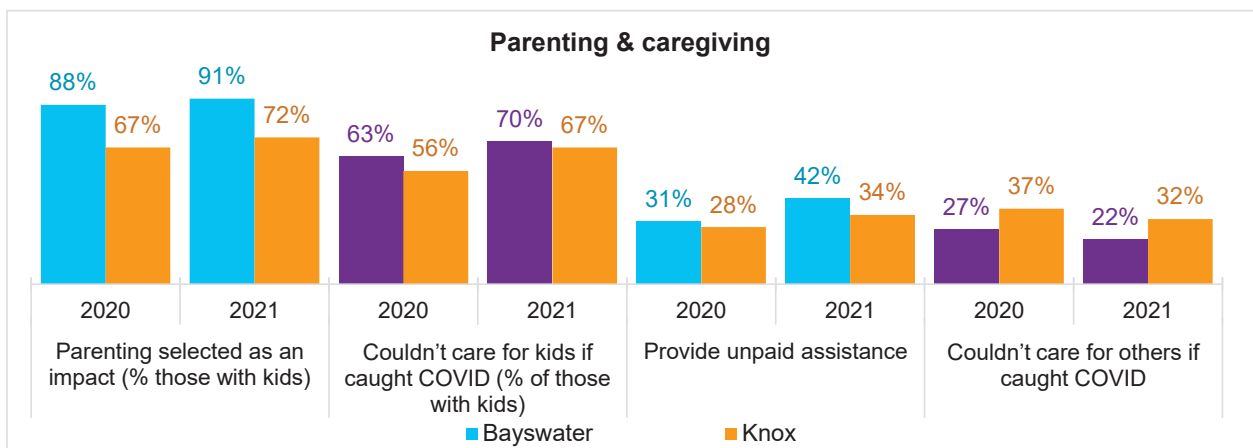
Exercise & Alcohol



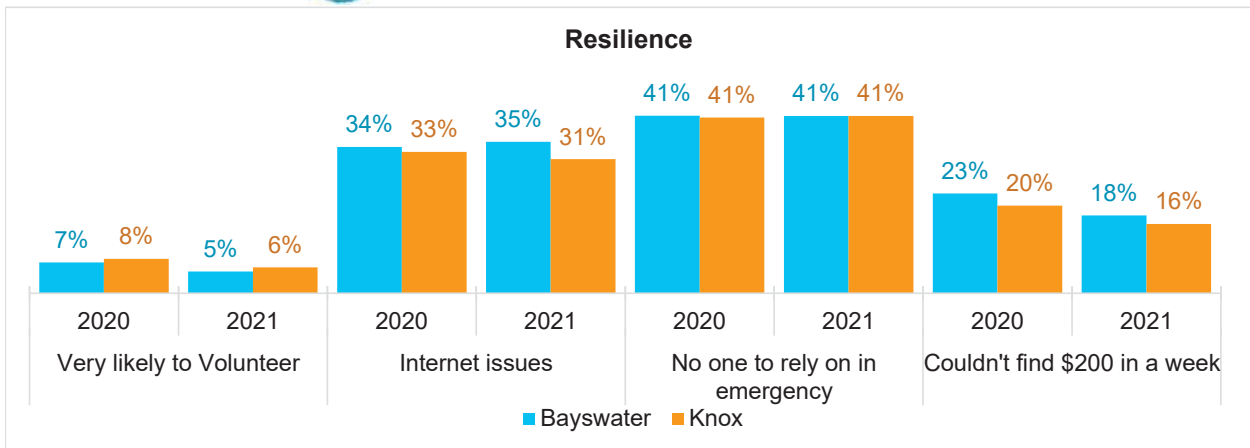
Food



Parenting & caregiving



Resilience

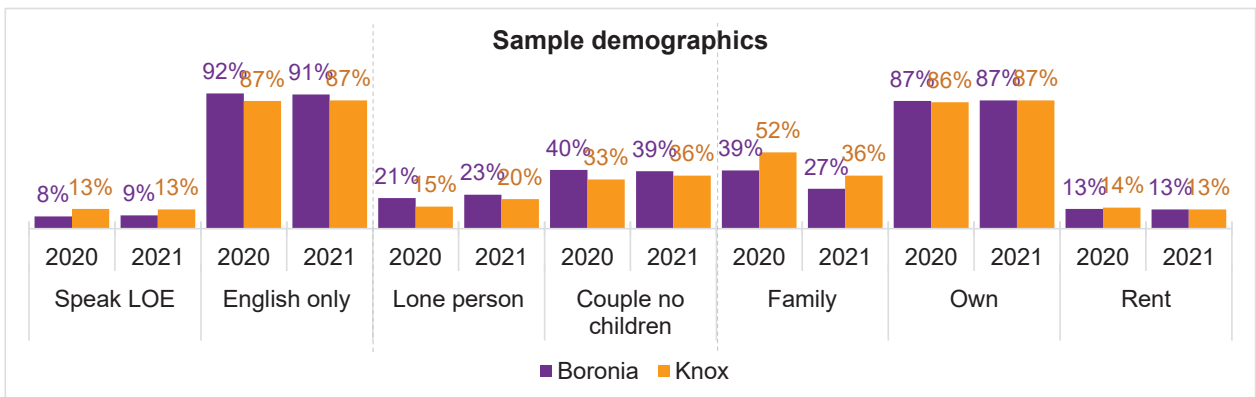
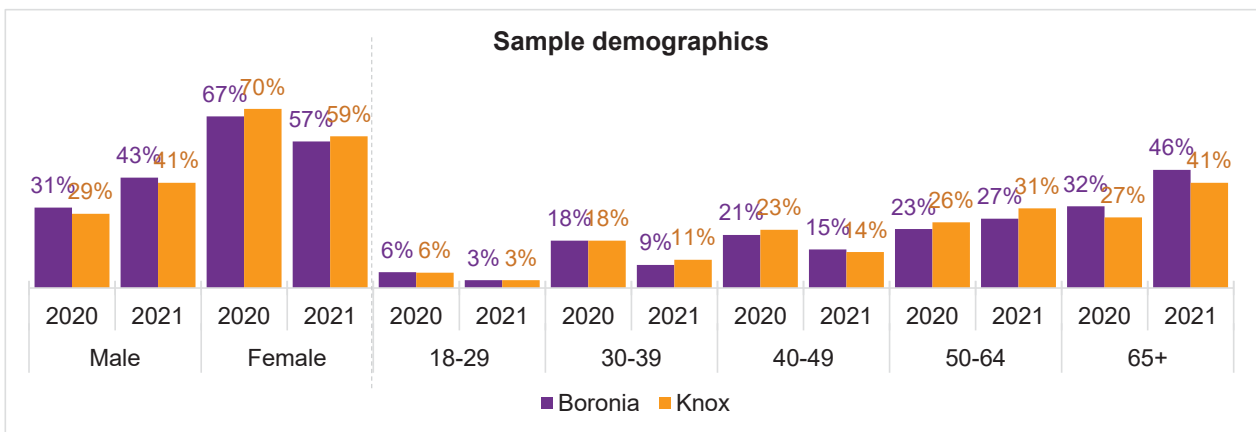


Report for Boronia

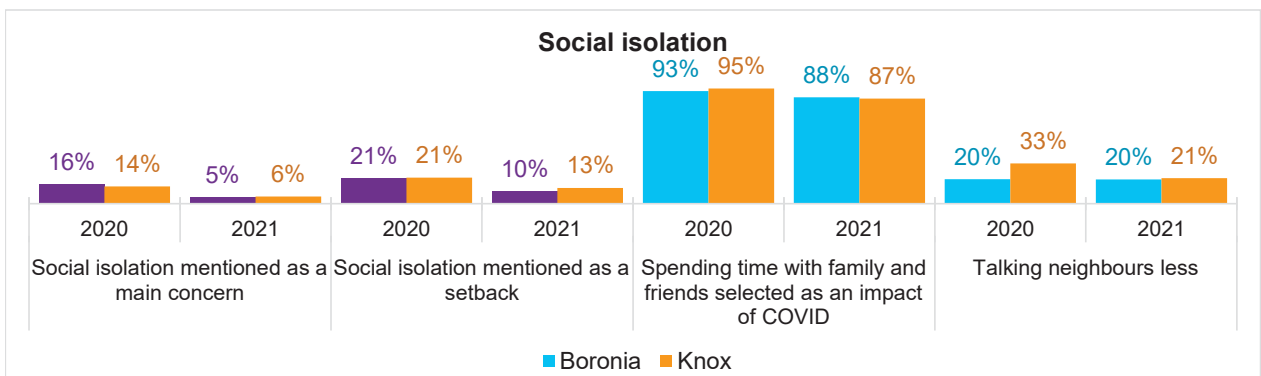
Compared to Knox

	Boronia		Knox	
	2020	2021	2020	2021
Total sample =	268	146	1596	846
Representative sample =	134	101	865	640

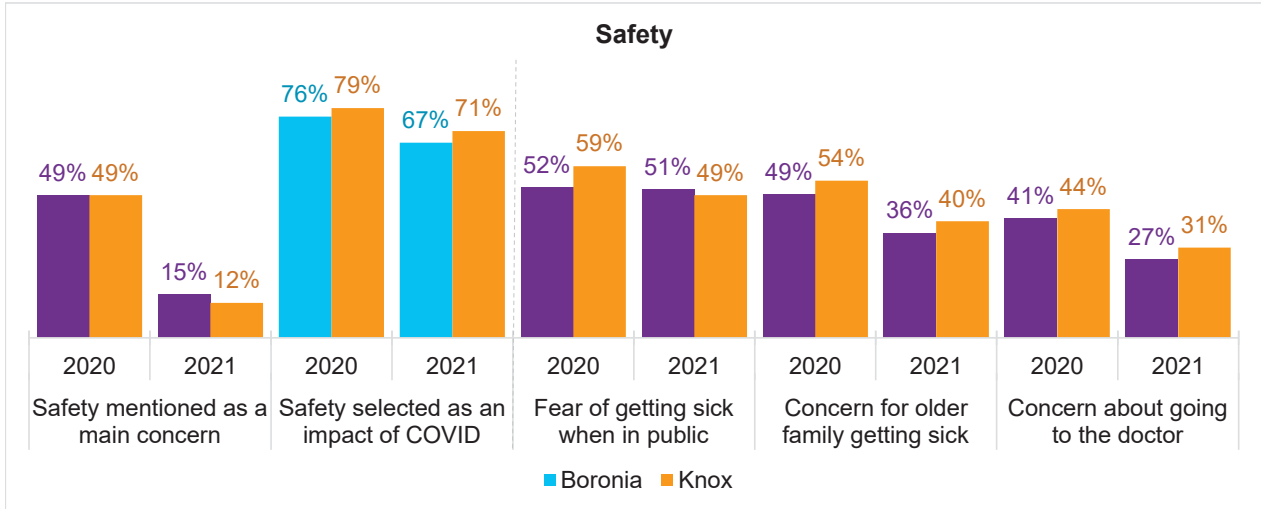
■ Overall sample
■ Representative sample



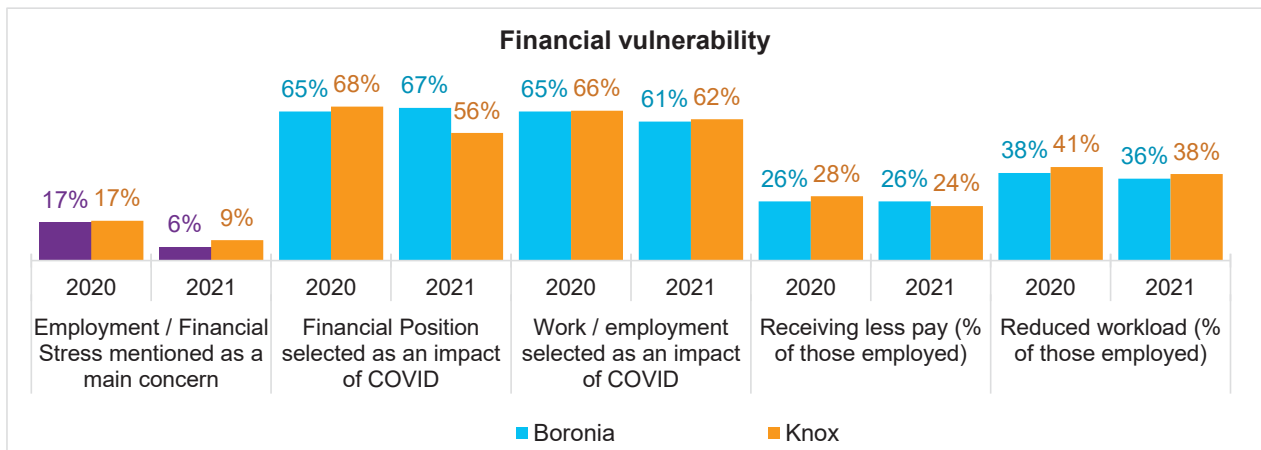
Social Isolation



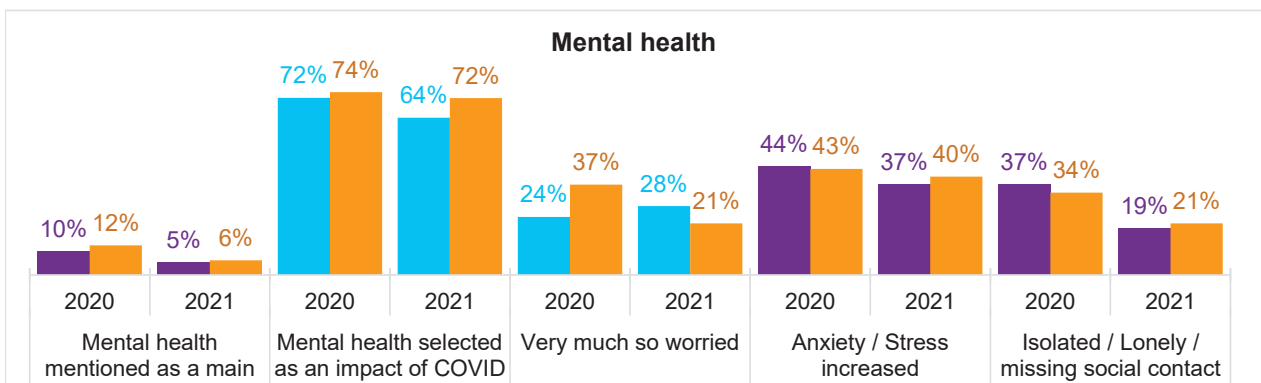
Safety



Financial vulnerability



Mental health

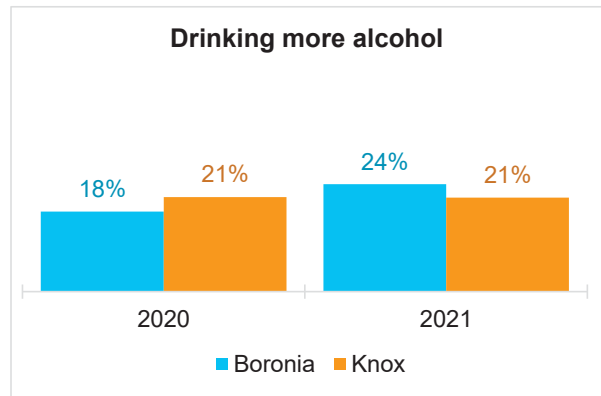
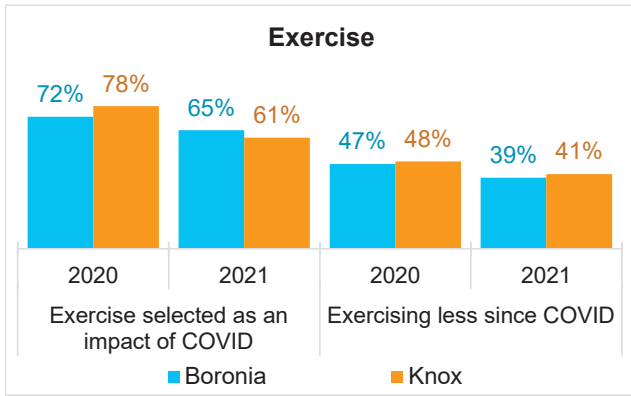


concern

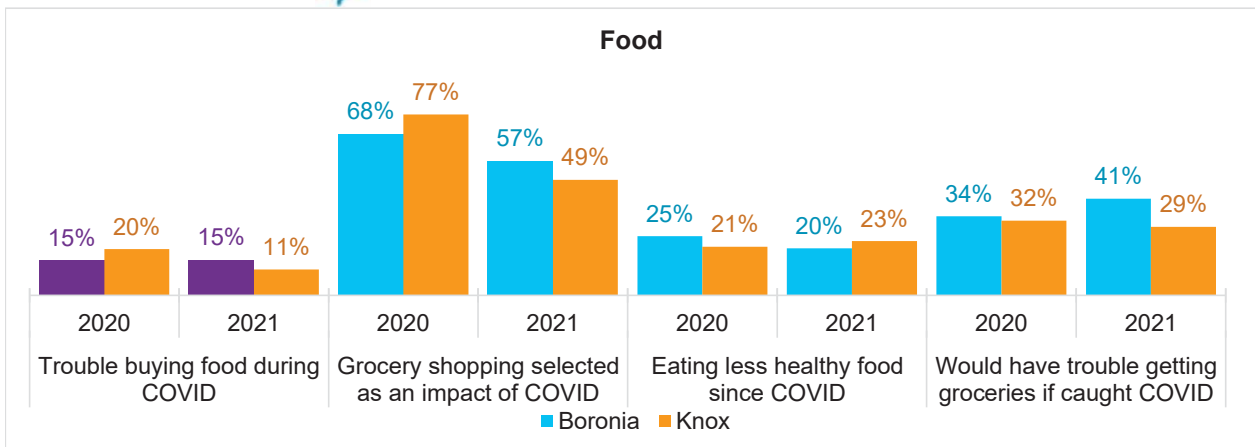
■ Boronia

■ Knox

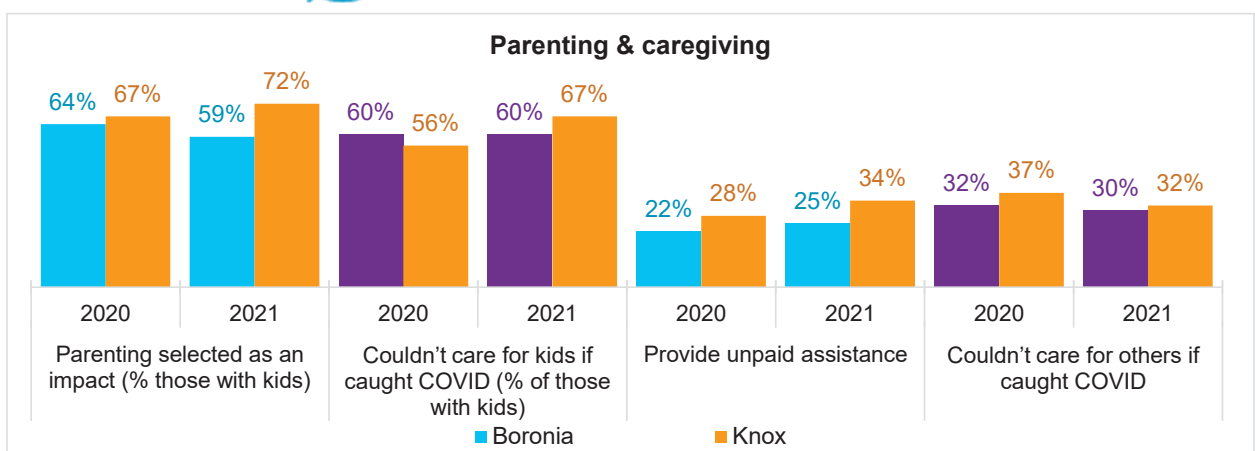
Exercise & Alcohol



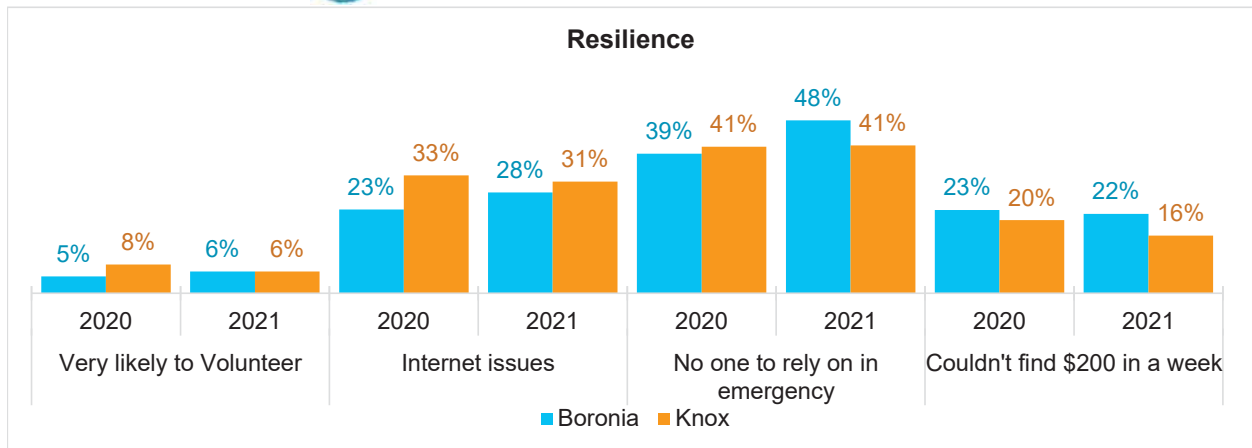
Food



Parenting & caregiving



Resilience

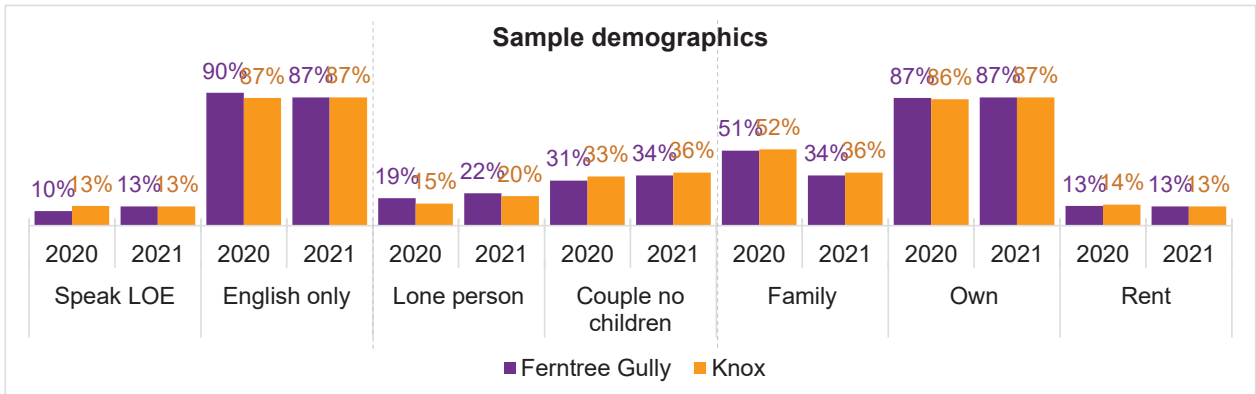
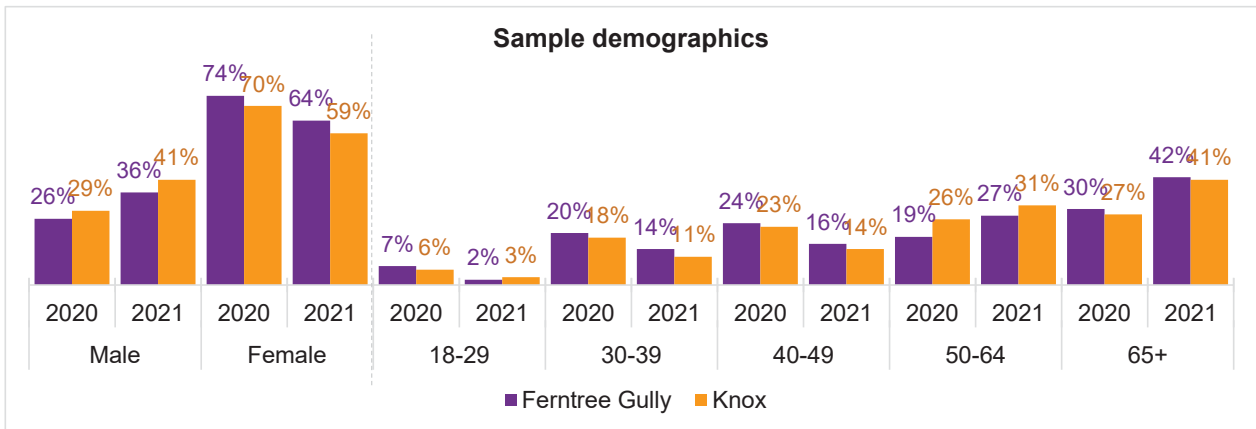


Report for Ferntree Gully

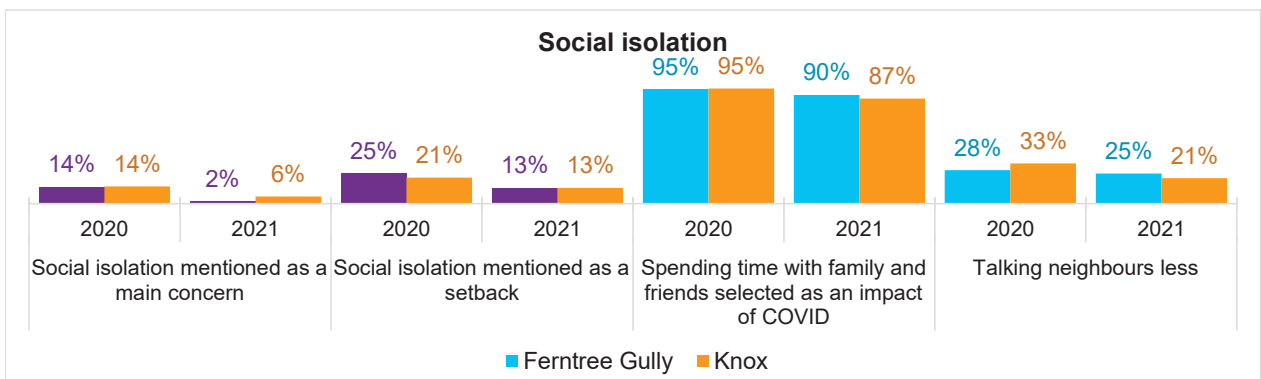
Compared to Knox

	Ferntree Gully		Knox	
	2020	2021	2020	2021
Total sample =	345	179	1596	846
Representative sample =	147	110	865	640

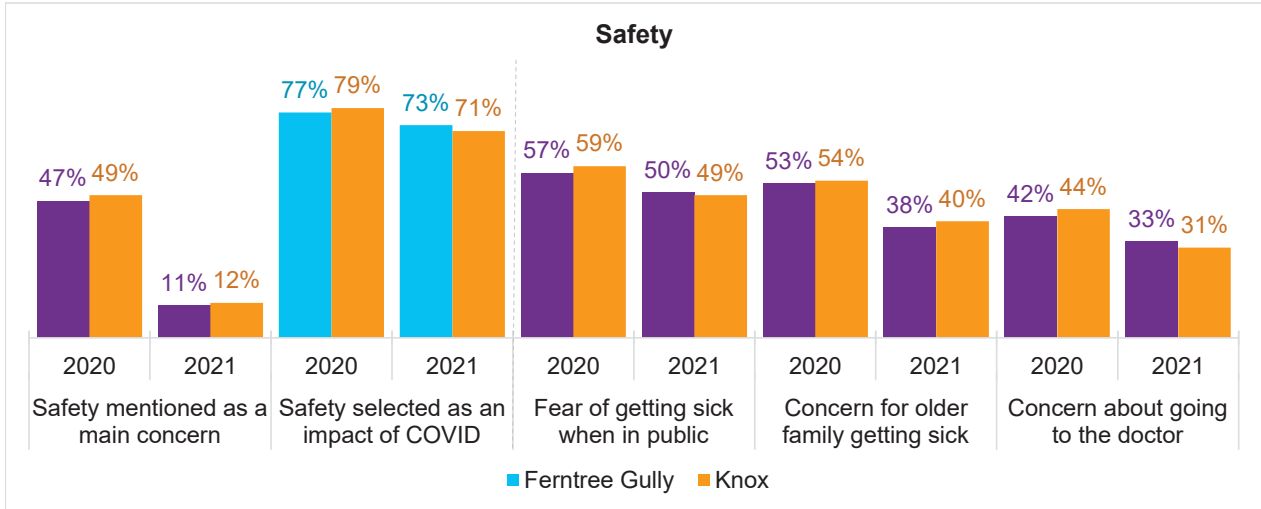
■ Overall sample
■ Representative sample



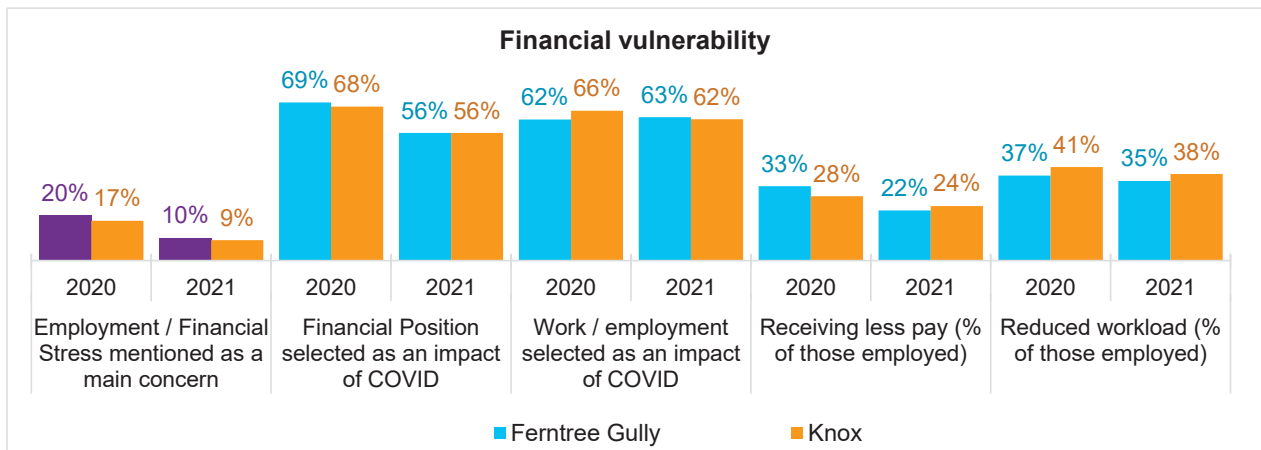
Social Isolation



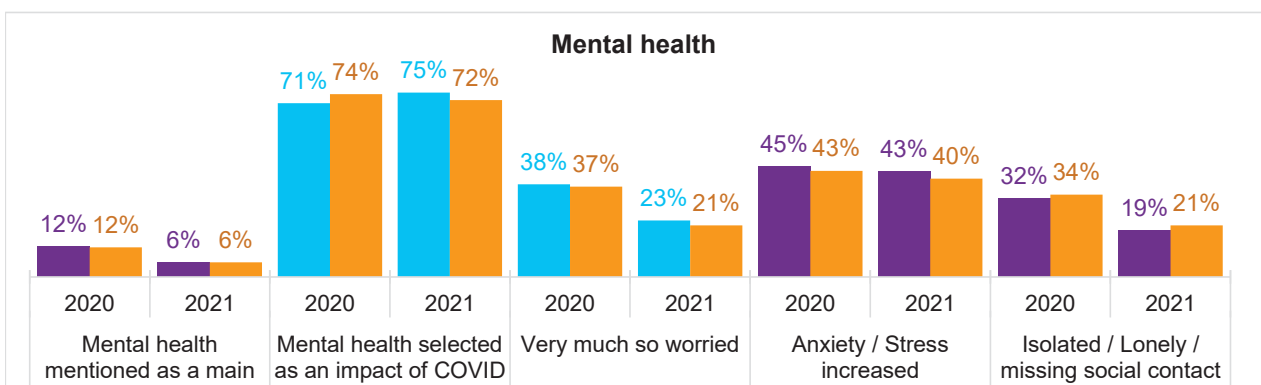
Safety



Financial vulnerability



Mental health

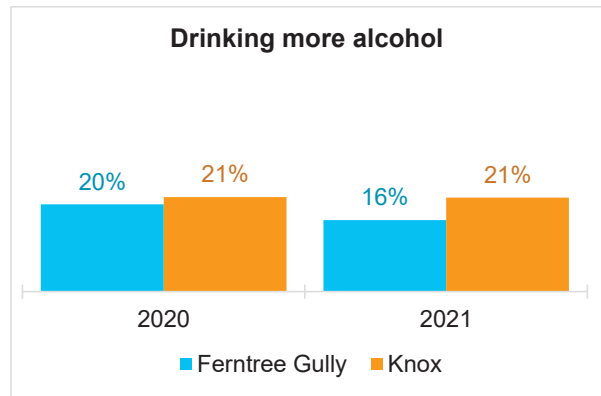
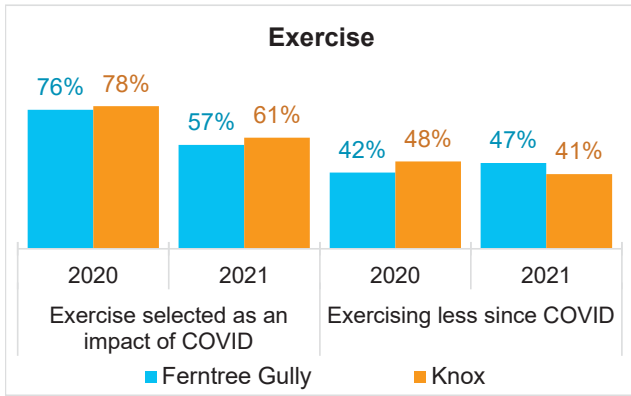


concern

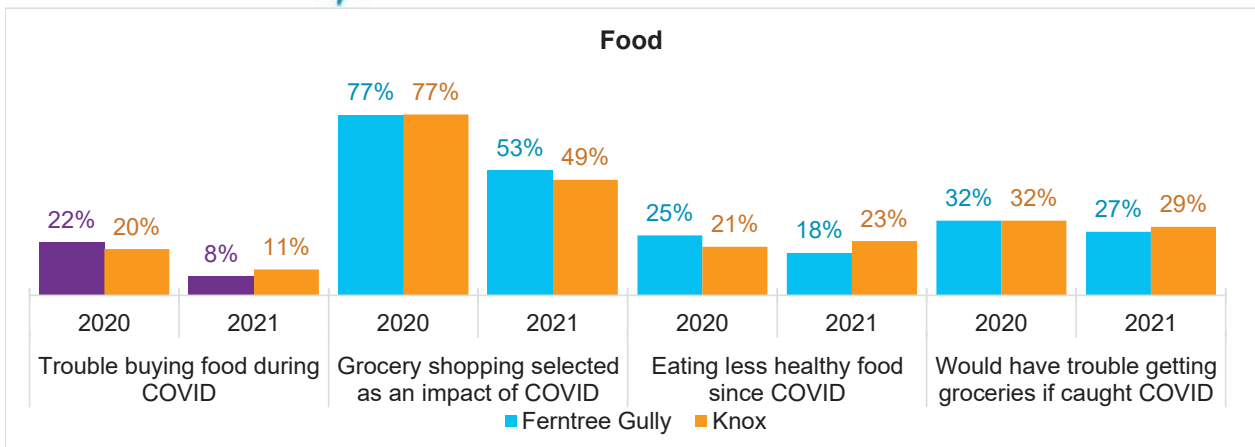
Ferntree Gully

Knox

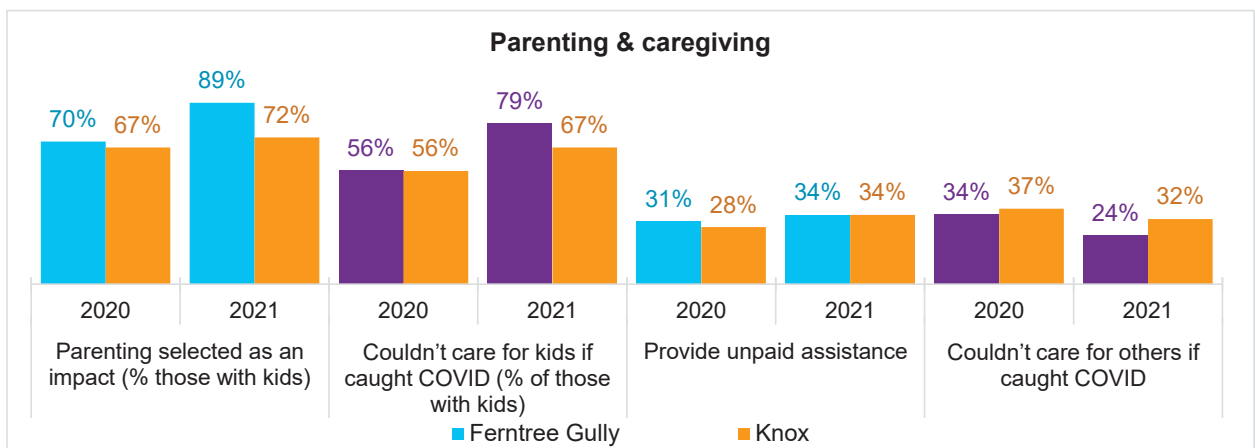
Exercise & Alcohol



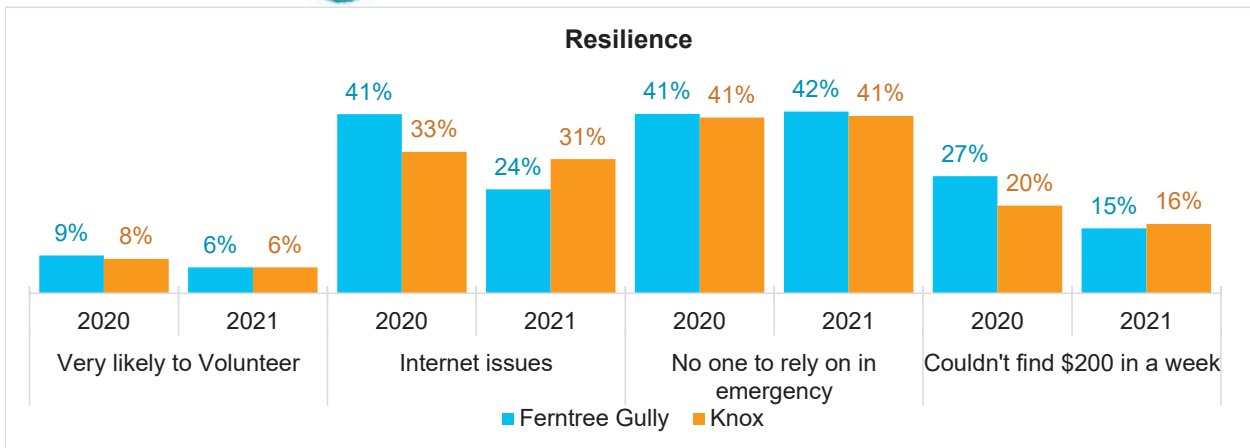
Food



Parenting & caregiving



Resilience

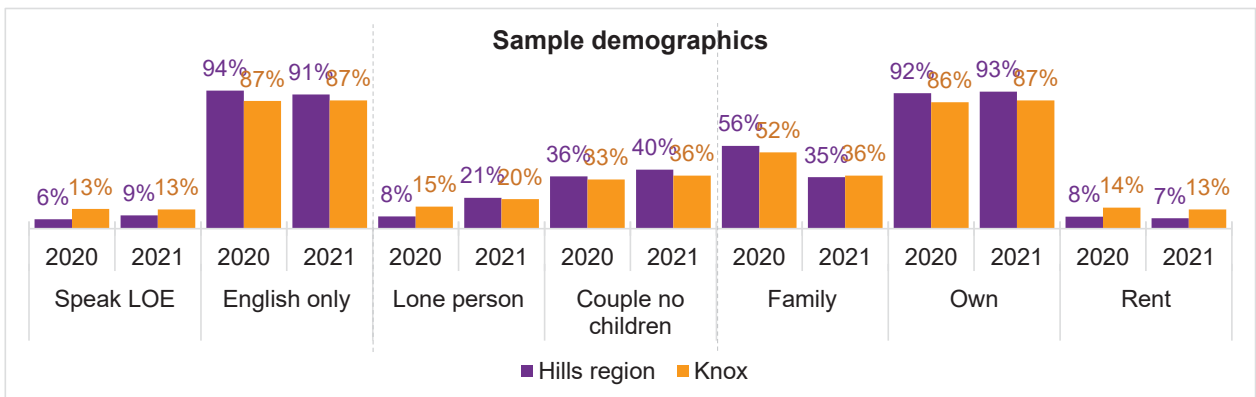
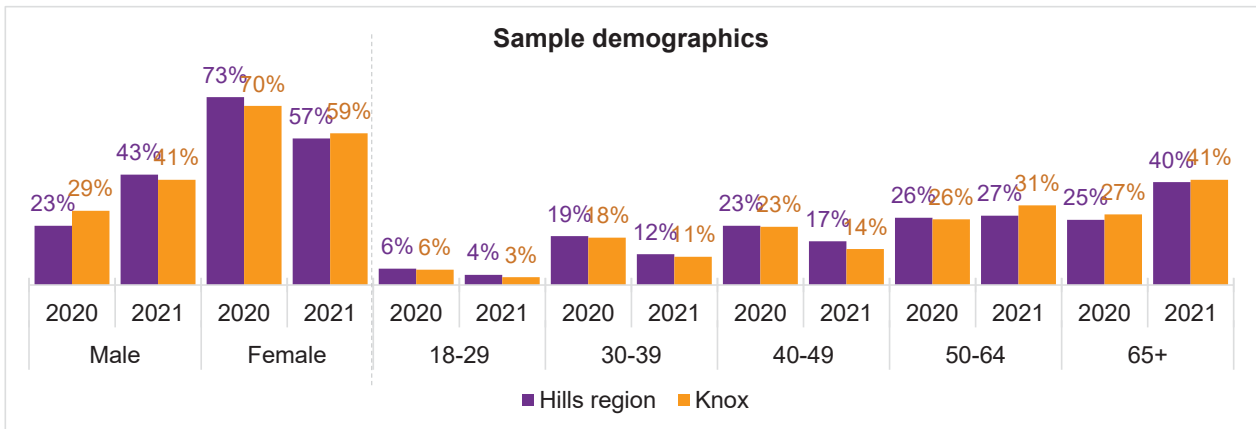


Report for Hills region

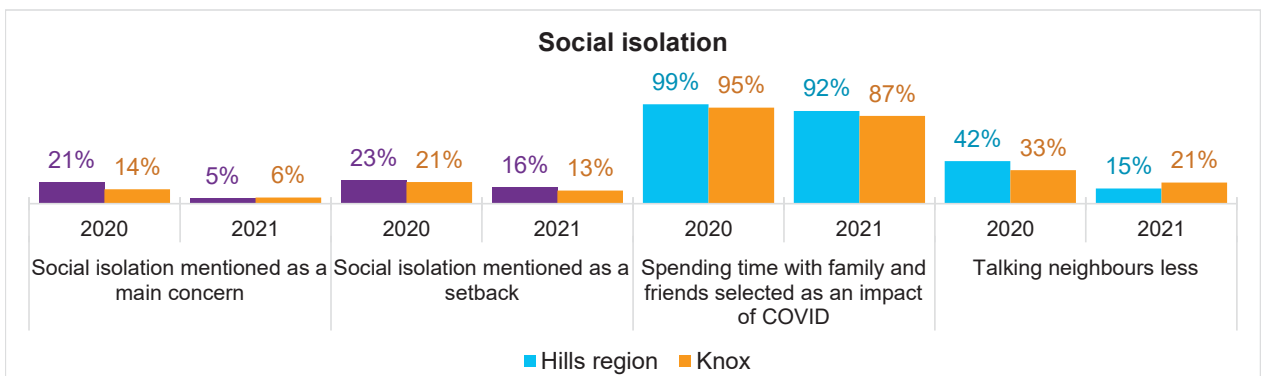
Compared to Knox

	Hills region		Knox	
	2020	2021	2020	2021
Total sample =	130	79	1596	846
Representative sample =	79	54	865	640

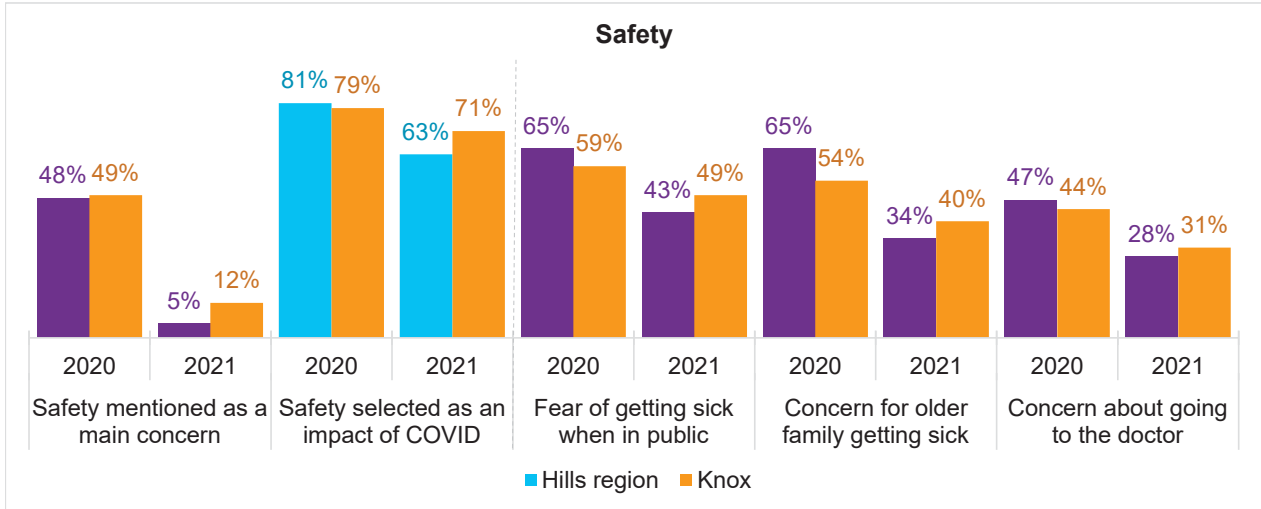
■ Overall sample
■ Representative sample




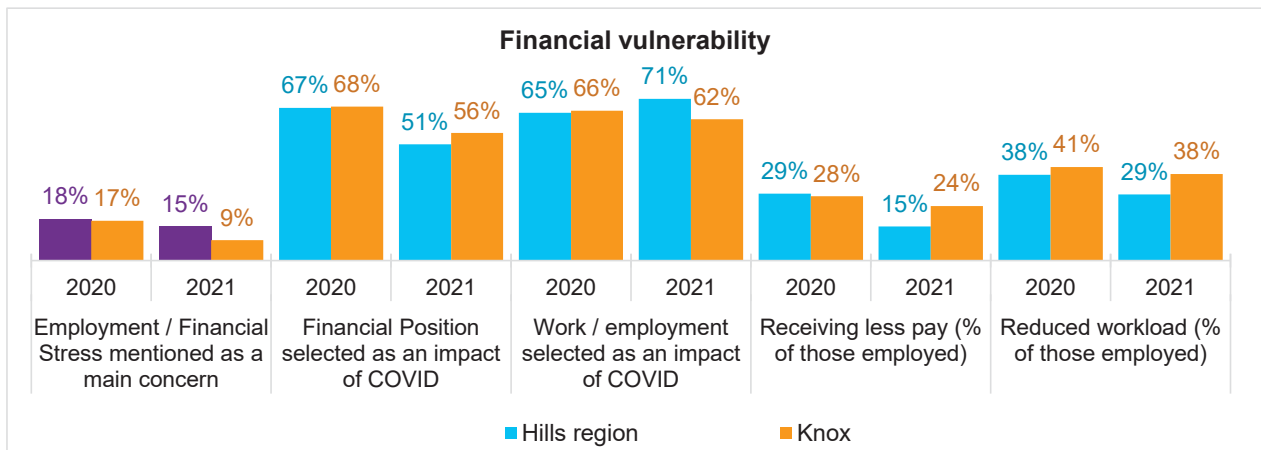
Social Isolation



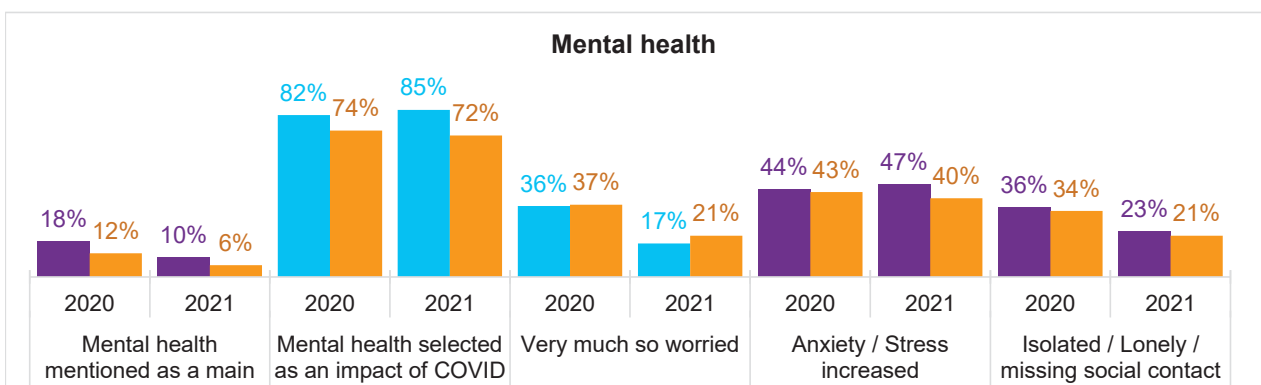
Safety 



Financial vulnerability 



Mental health 

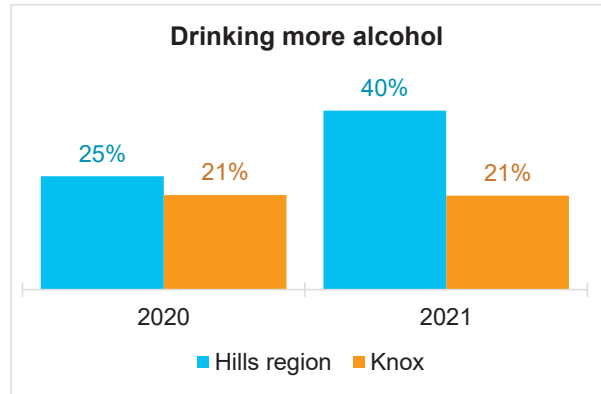
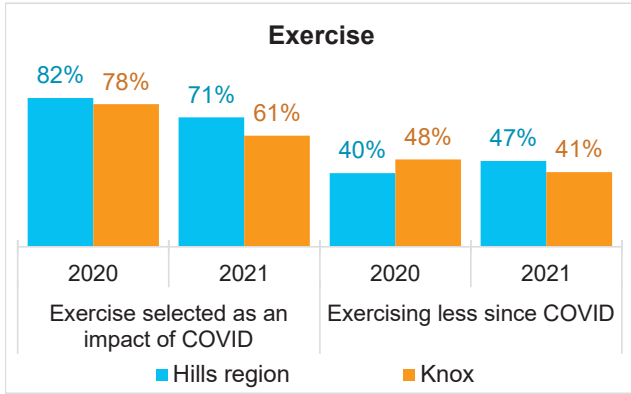


concern

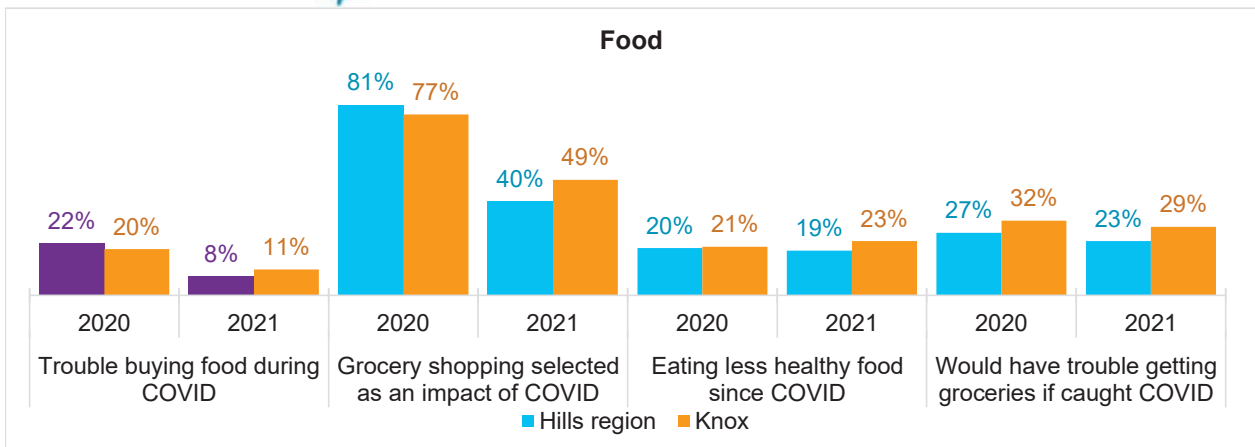
■ Hills region

■ Knox

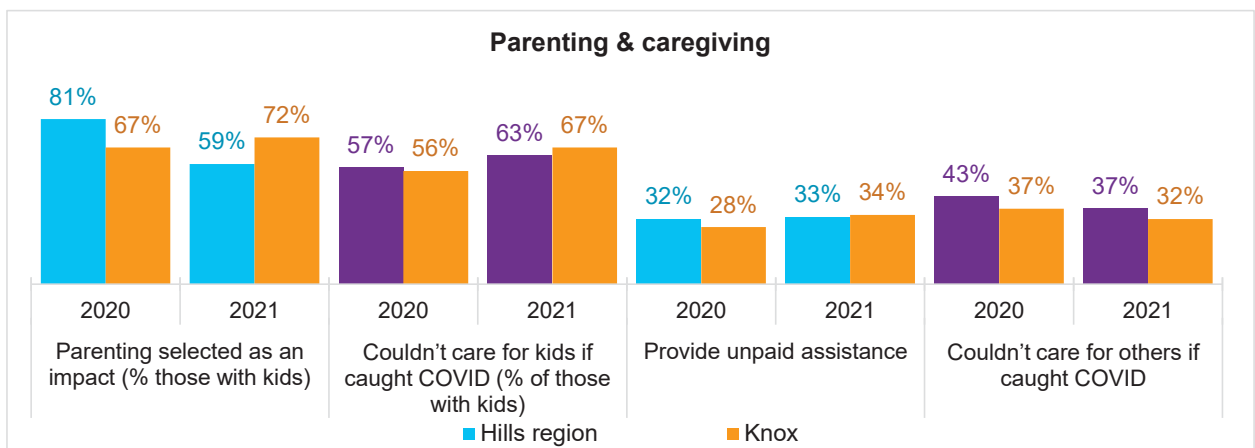
Exercise & Alcohol



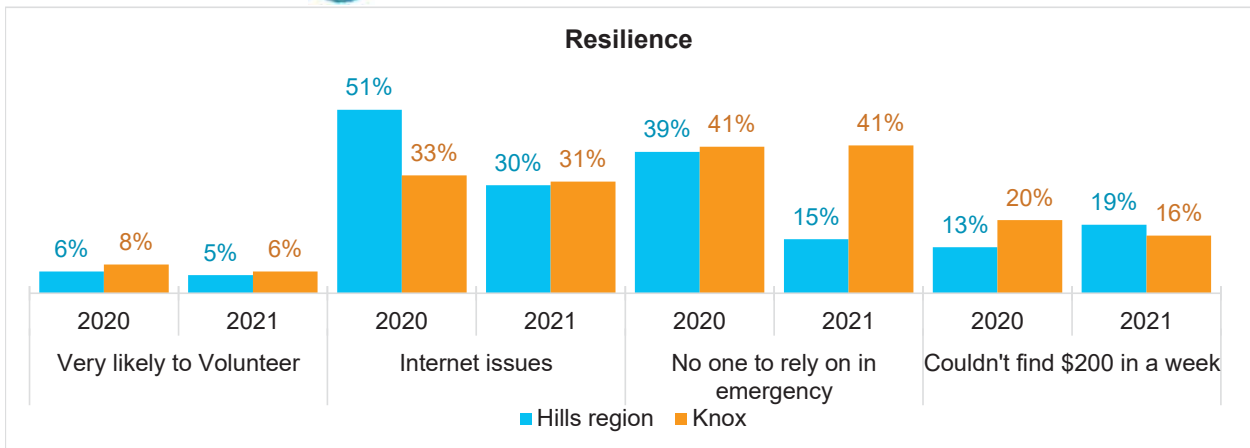
Food



Parenting & caregiving



Resilience

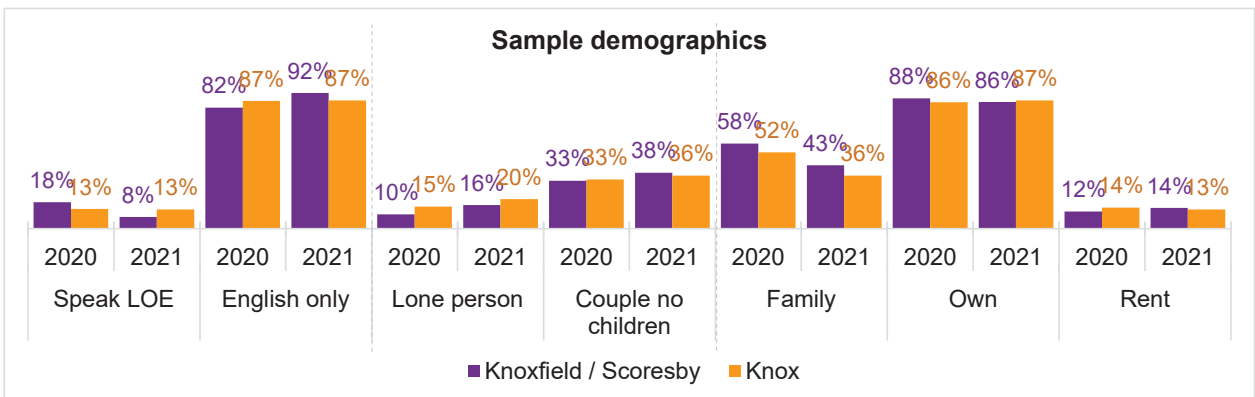
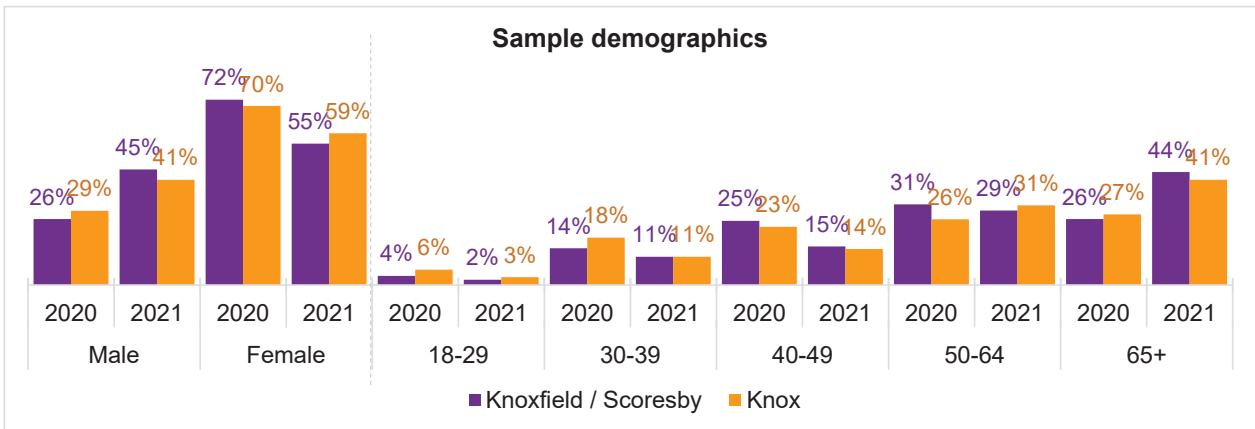


Report for Knoxfield / Scoresby

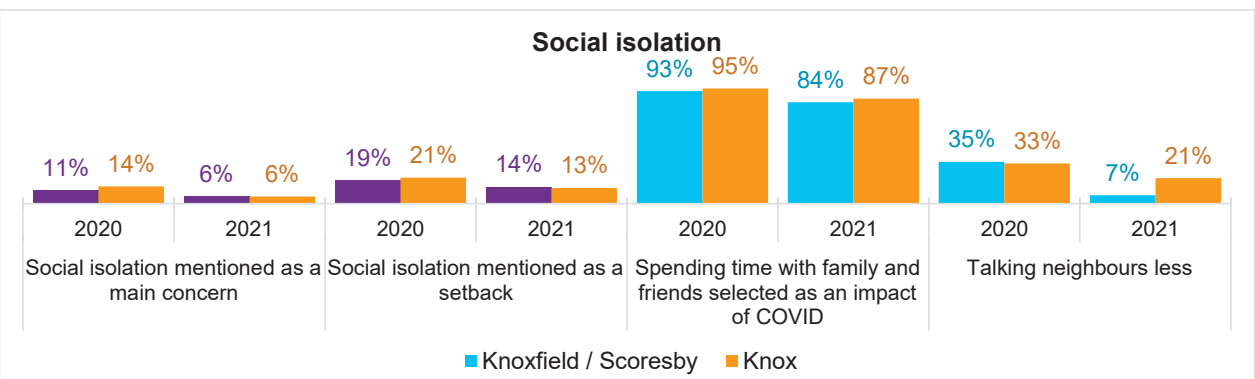
Compared to Knox

	Knoxfield / Scoresby		Knox	
	2020	2021	2020	2021
Total sample =	140	69	1596	846
Representative sample =	74	55	865	640

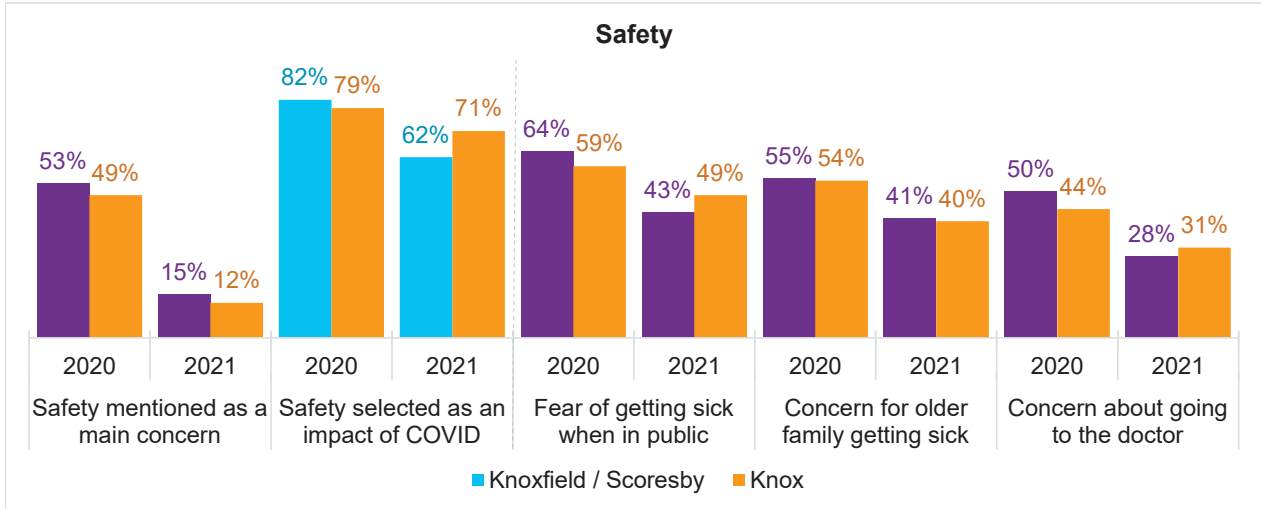
■ Overall sample
■ Representative sample



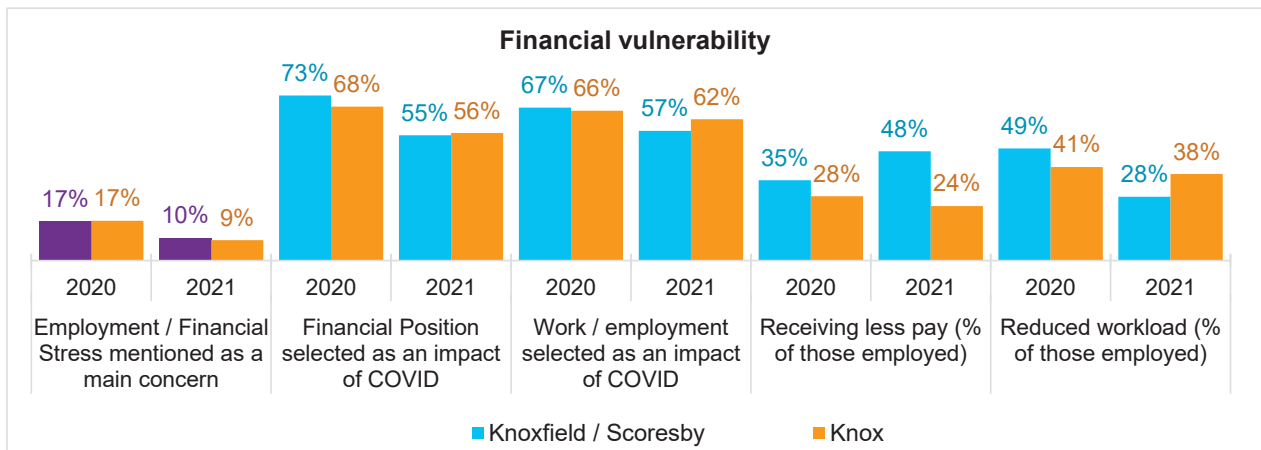
Social Isolation



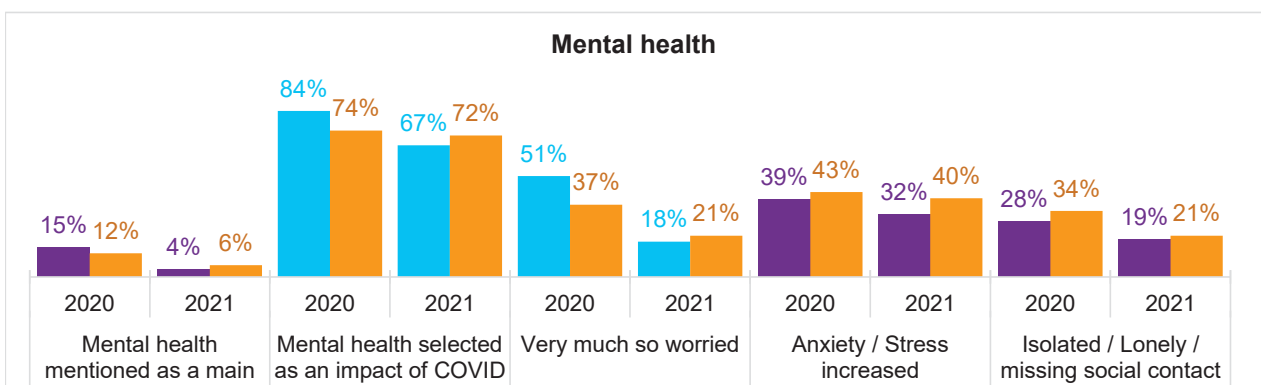
Safety



Financial vulnerability



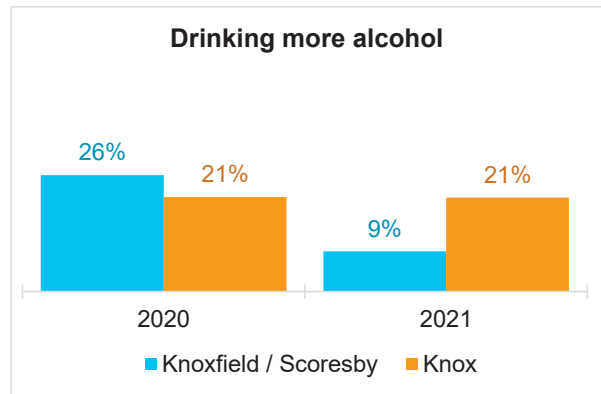
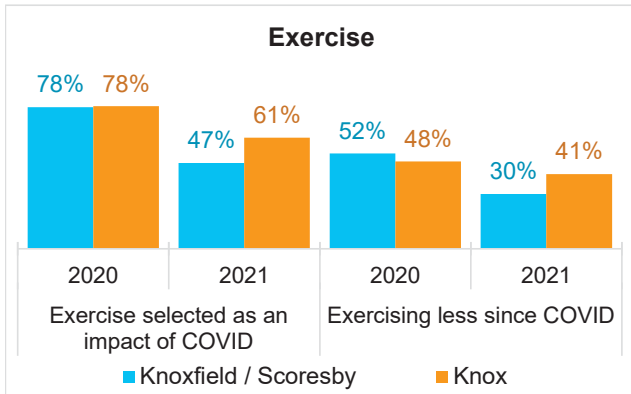
Mental health



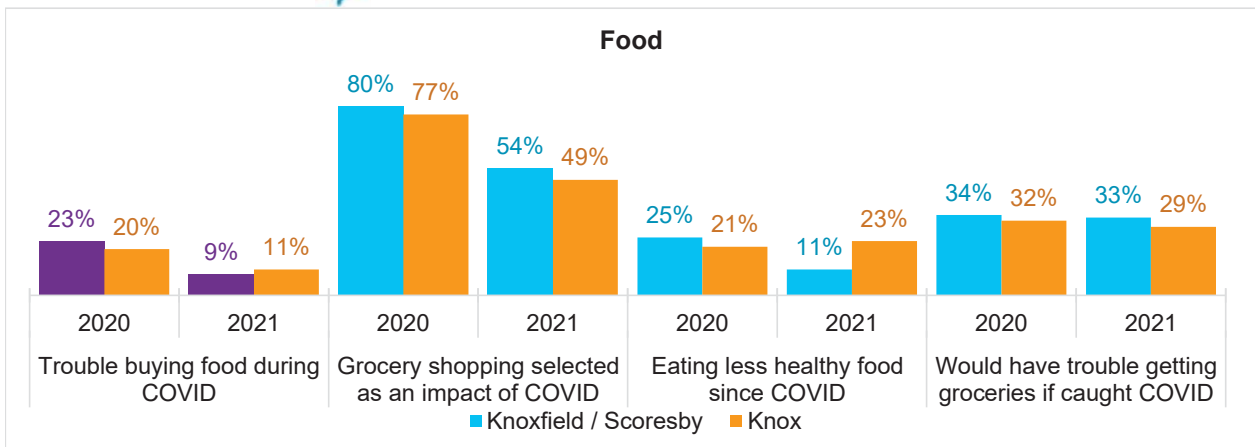
concern

■ Knoxfield / Scoresby ■ Knox

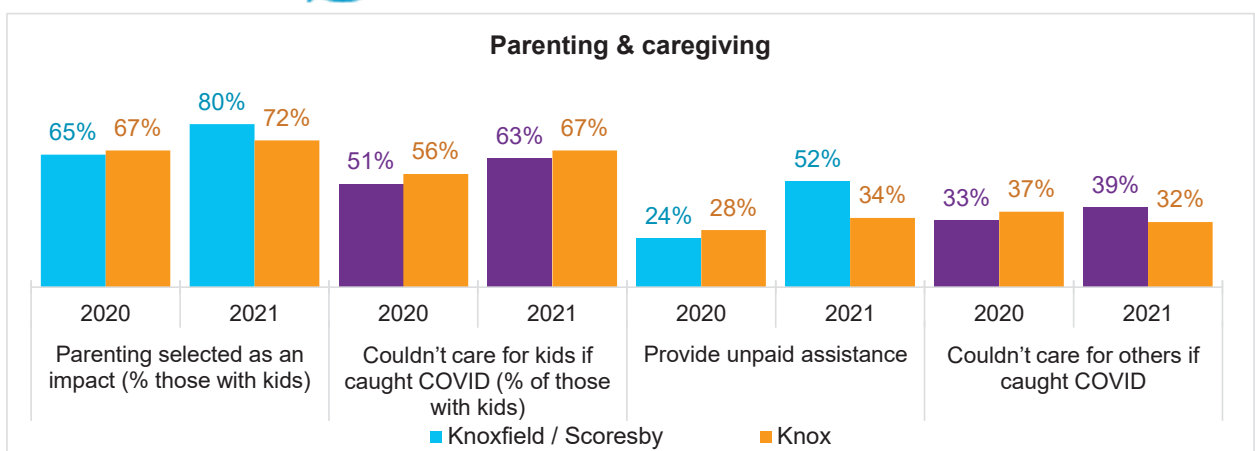
Exercise & Alcohol



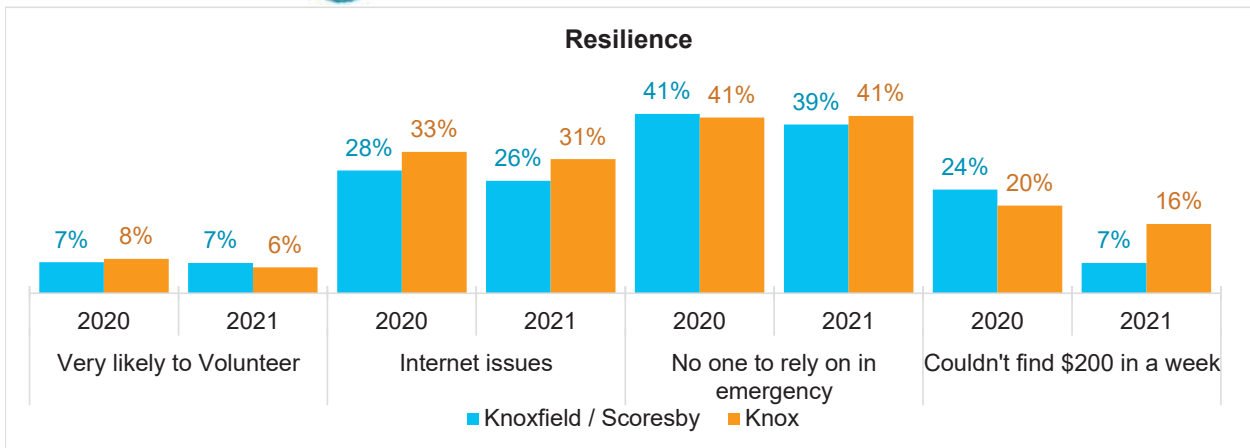
Food



Parenting & caregiving



Resilience

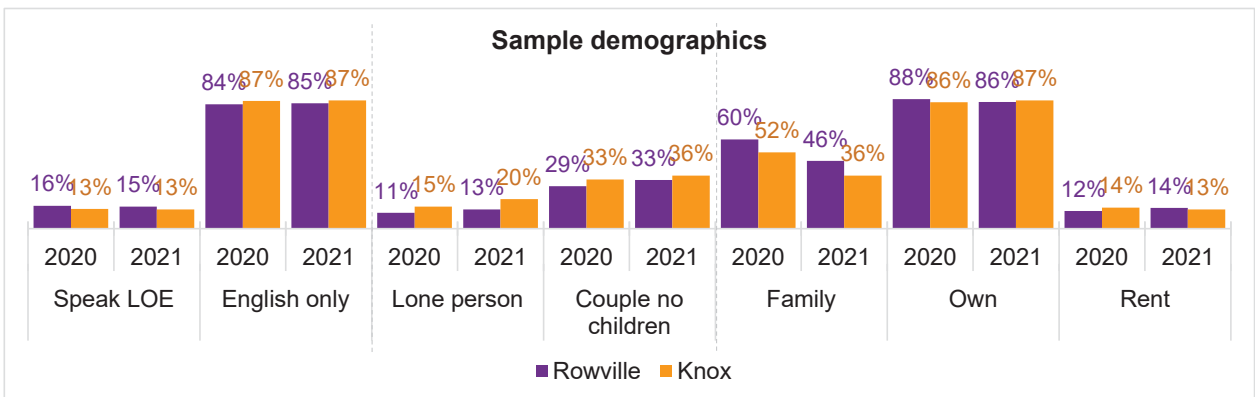
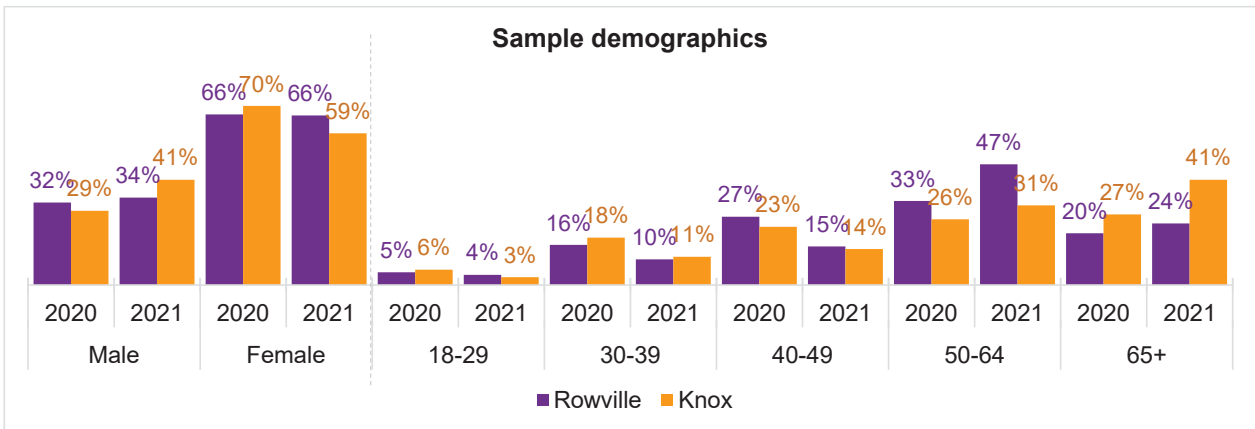


Report for Rowville

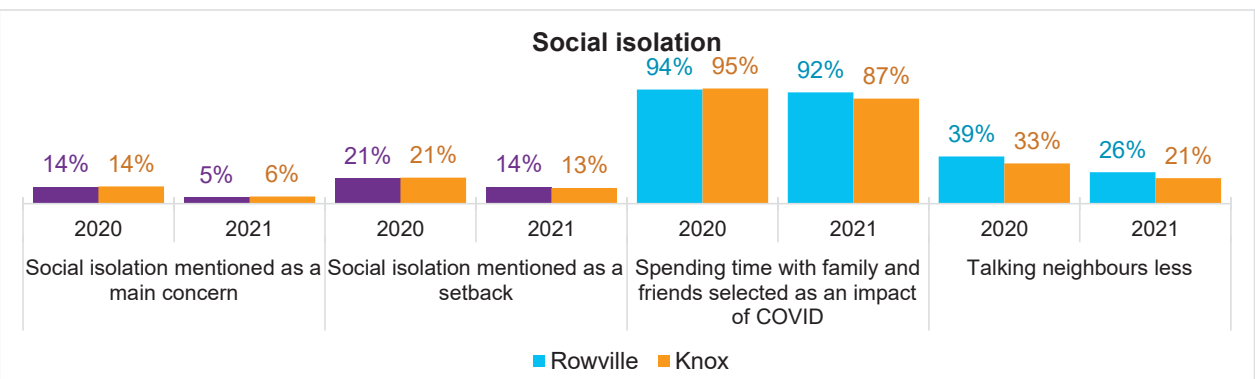
Compared to Knox

	Rowville		Knox	
	2020	2021	2020	2021
Total sample =	262	141	1596	846
Representative sample =	184	137	865	640

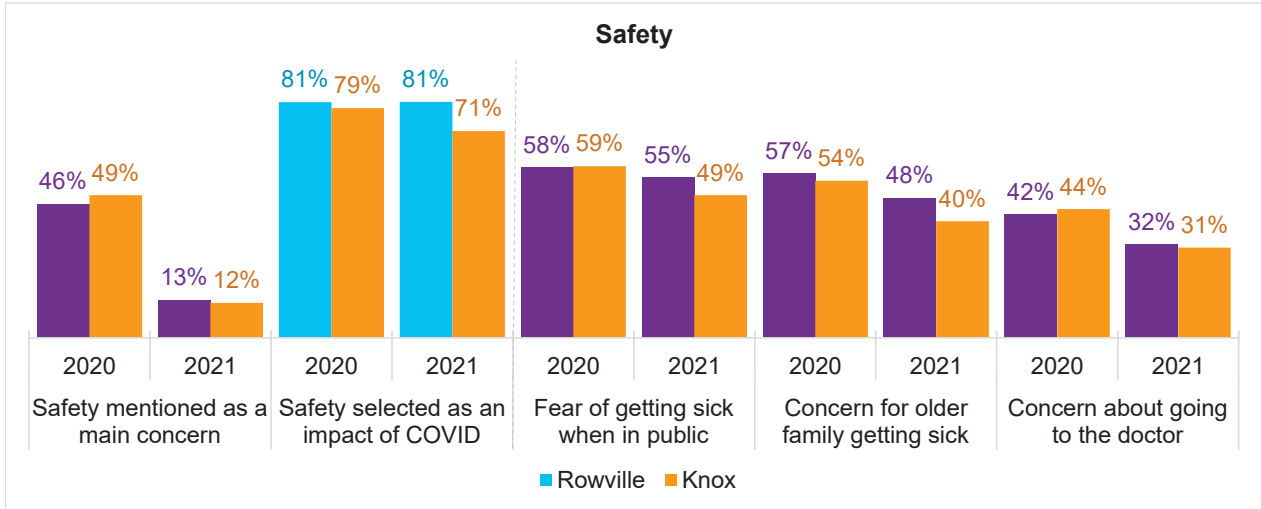
■ Overall sample
■ Representative sample



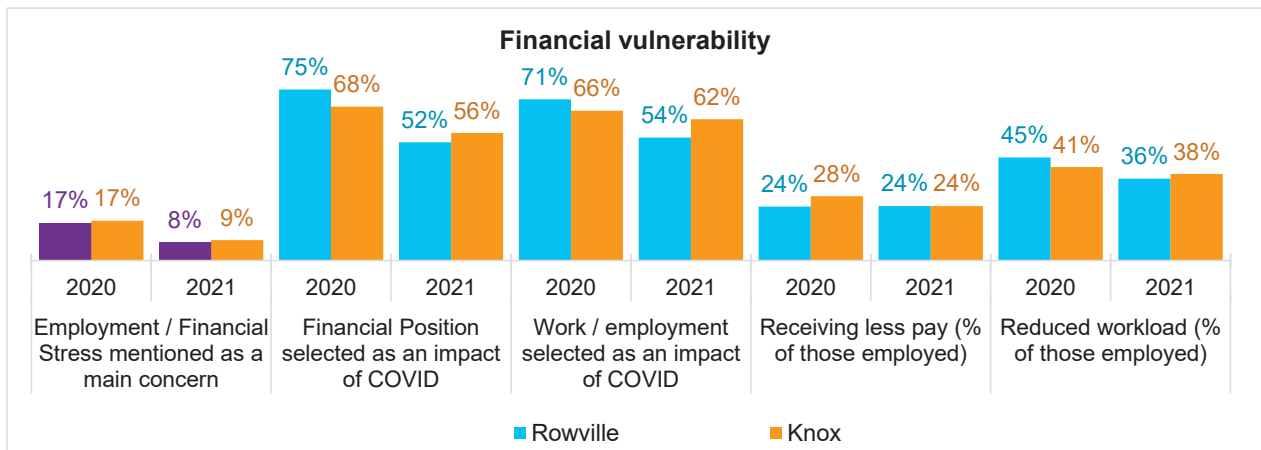
Social Isolation



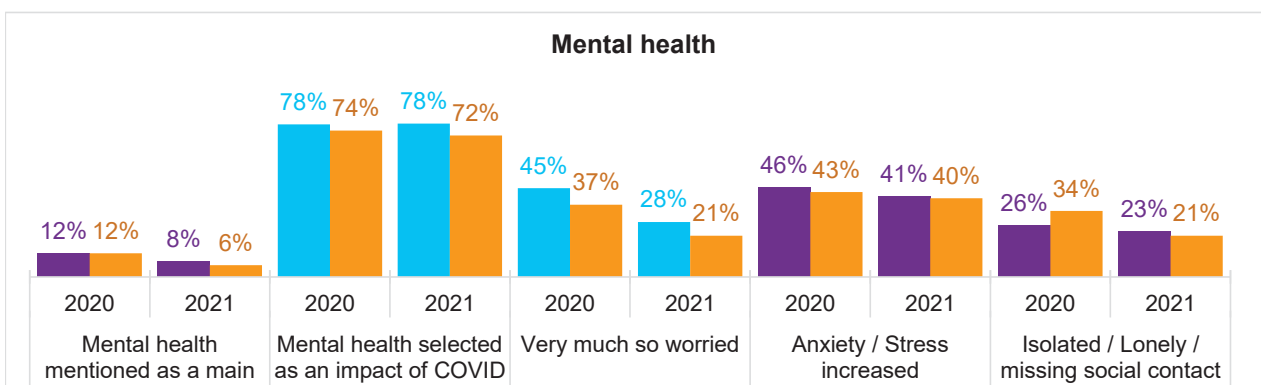
Safety



Financial vulnerability



Mental health

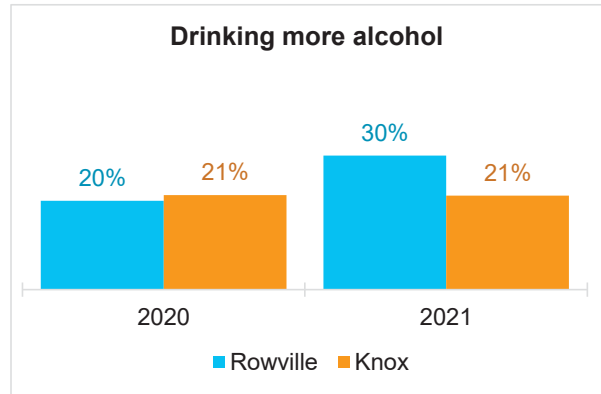
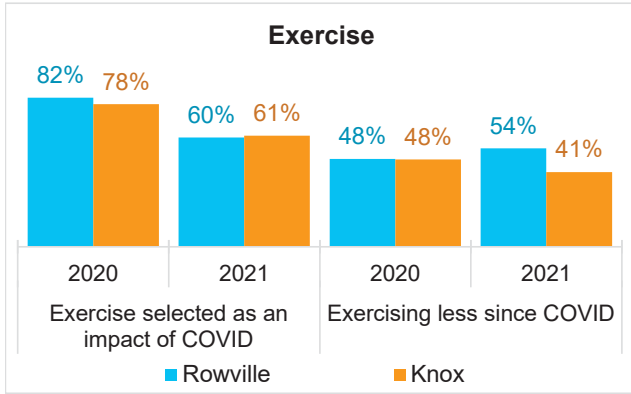


concern

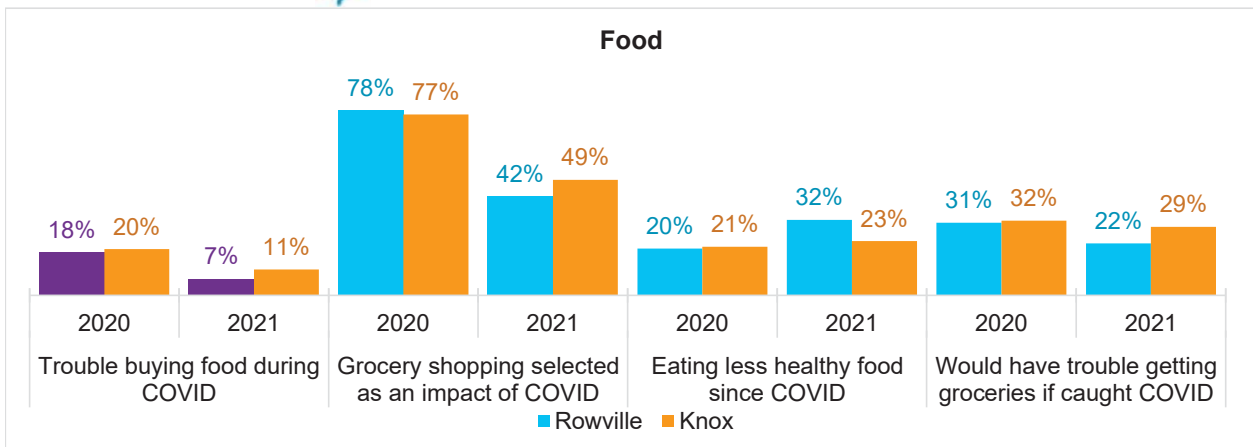
■ Rowville

■ Knox

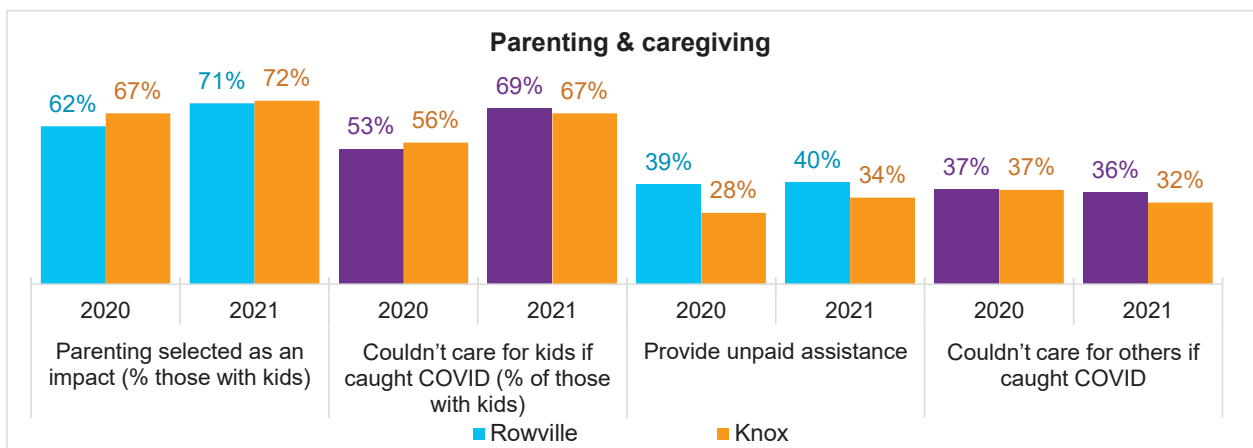
Exercise & Alcohol



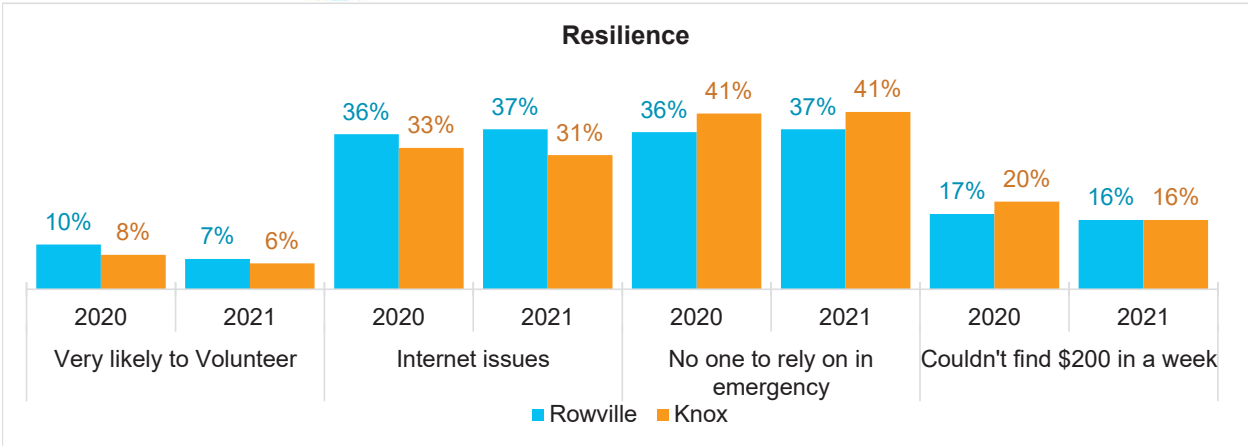
Food



Parenting & caregiving



Resilience

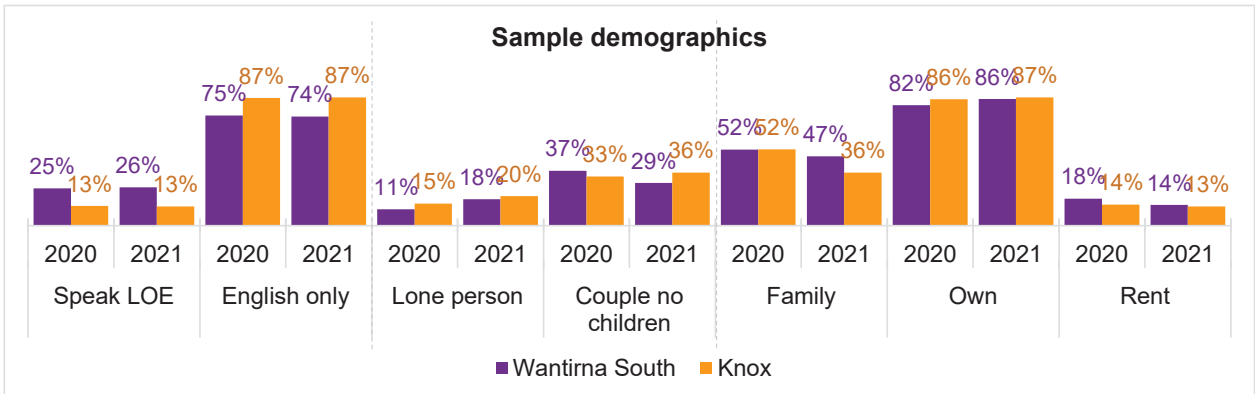
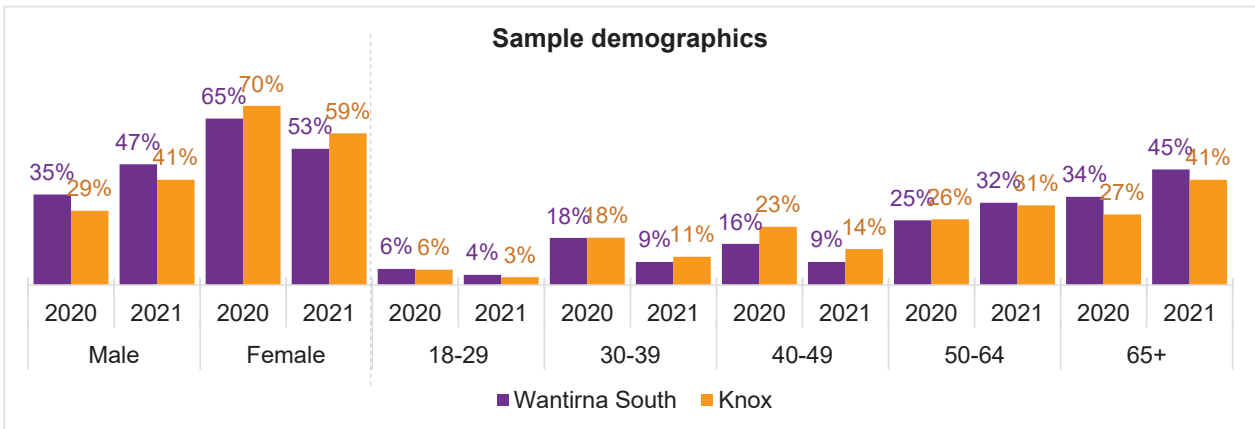


Report for Wantirna South

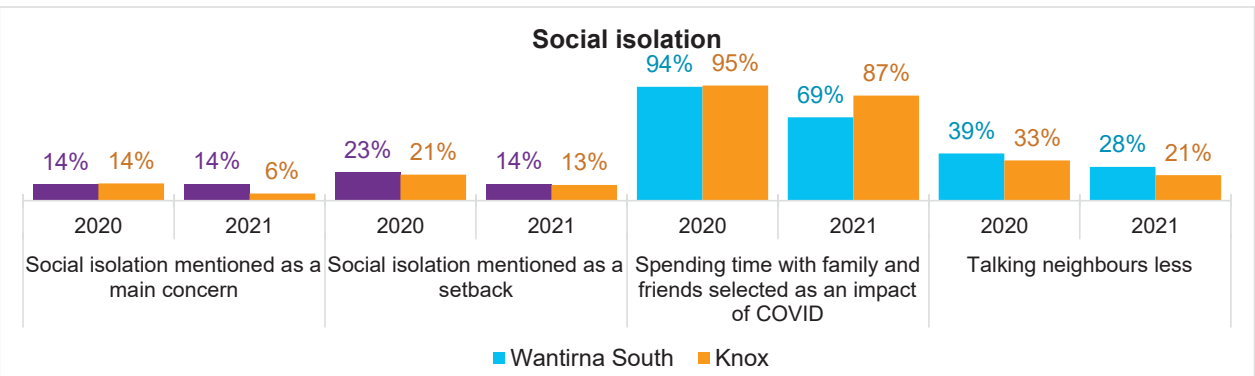
Compared to Knox

	Wantirna South		Knox	
	2020	2021	2020	2021
Total sample =	176	104	1596	846
Representative sample =	120	81	865	640

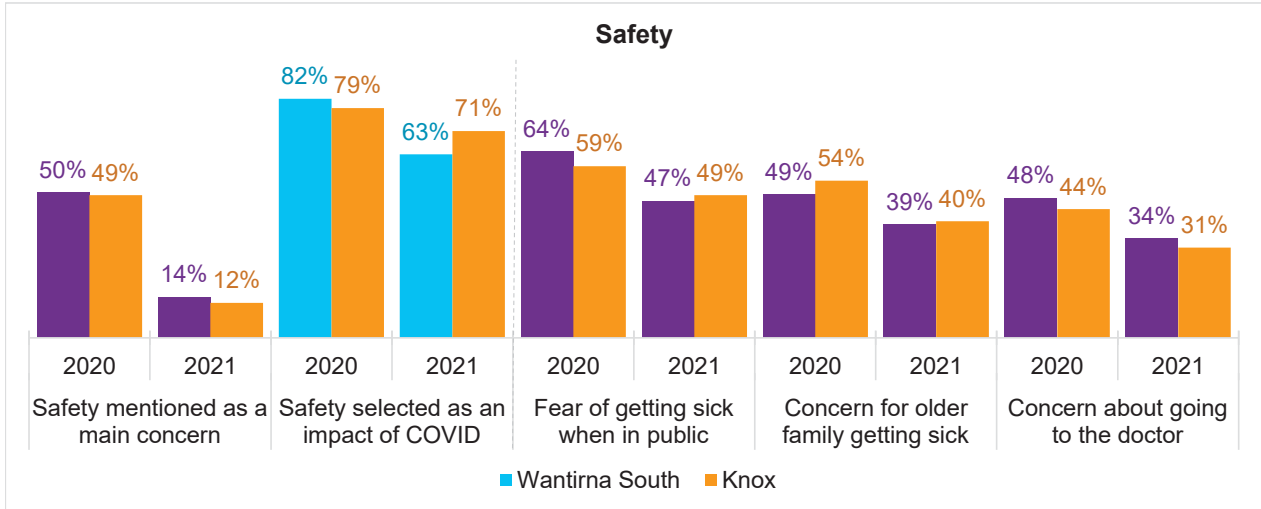
■ Overall sample
■ Representative sample



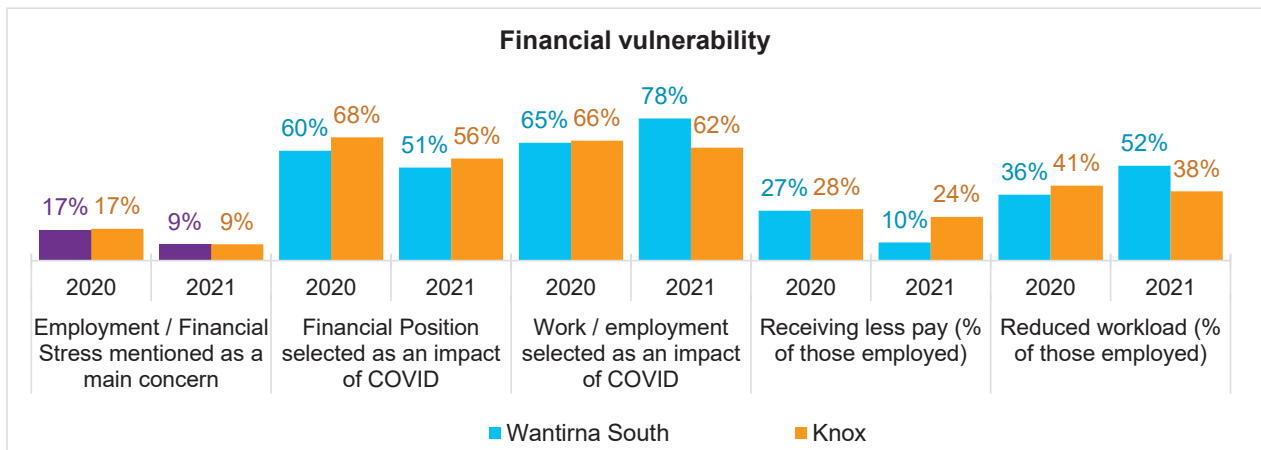
Social Isolation



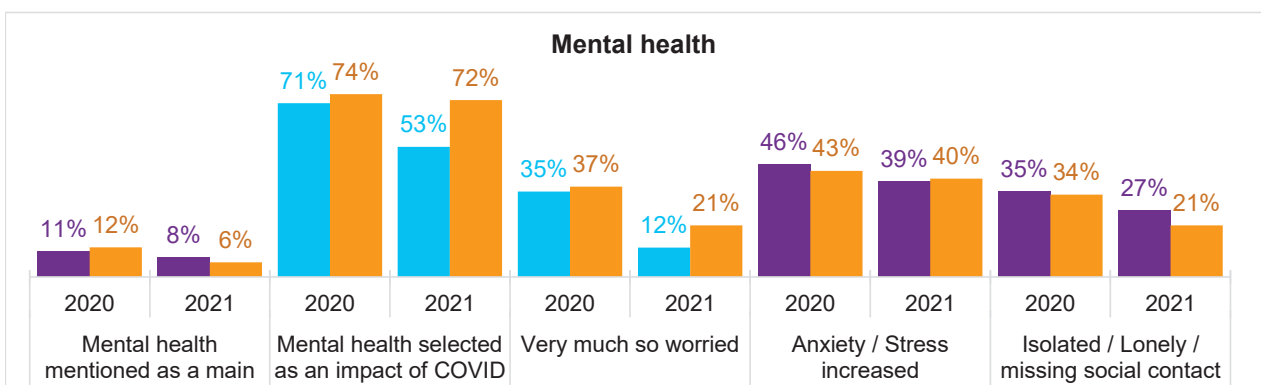
Safety 



Financial vulnerability 



Mental health 

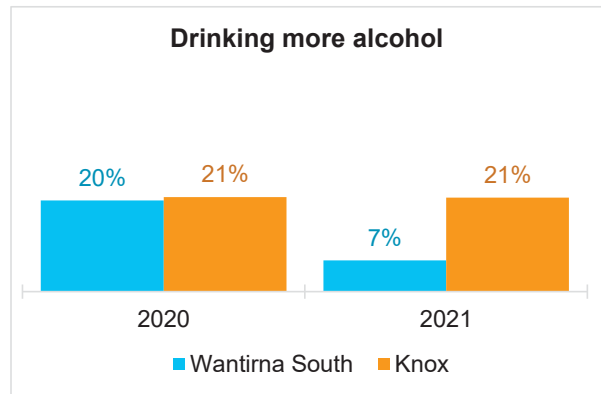
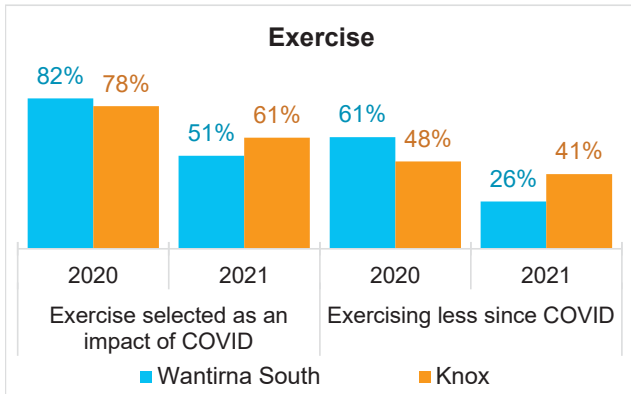


concern

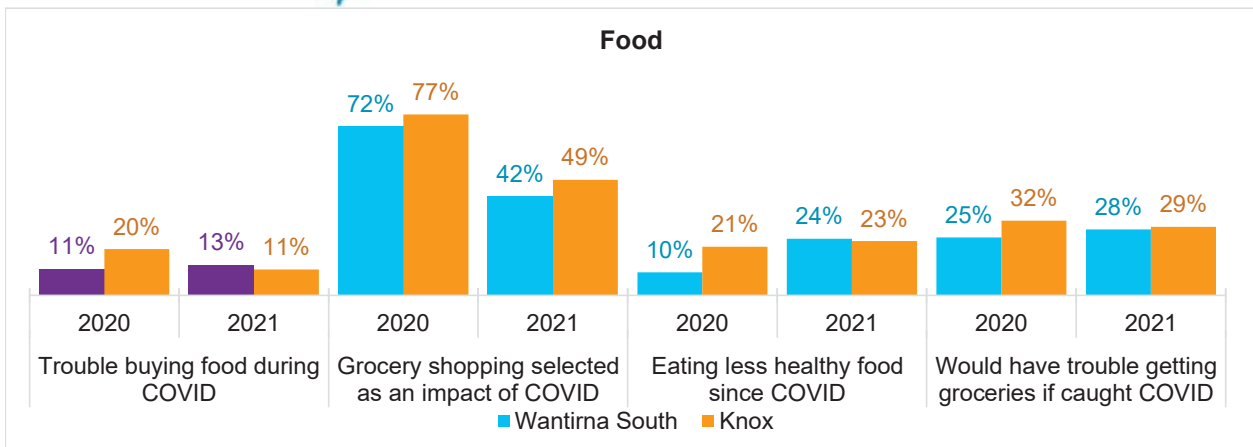
■ Wantirna South

■ Knox

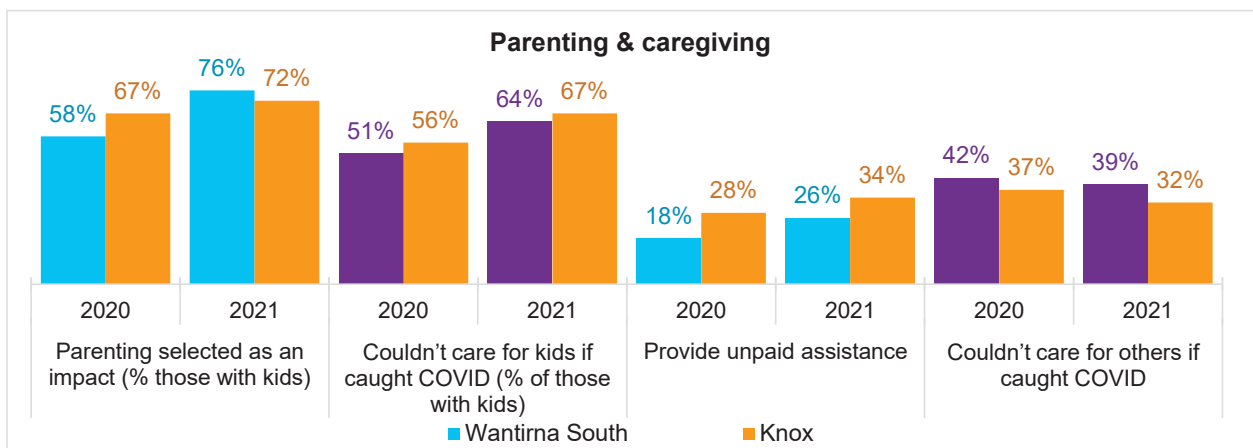
Exercise & Alcohol



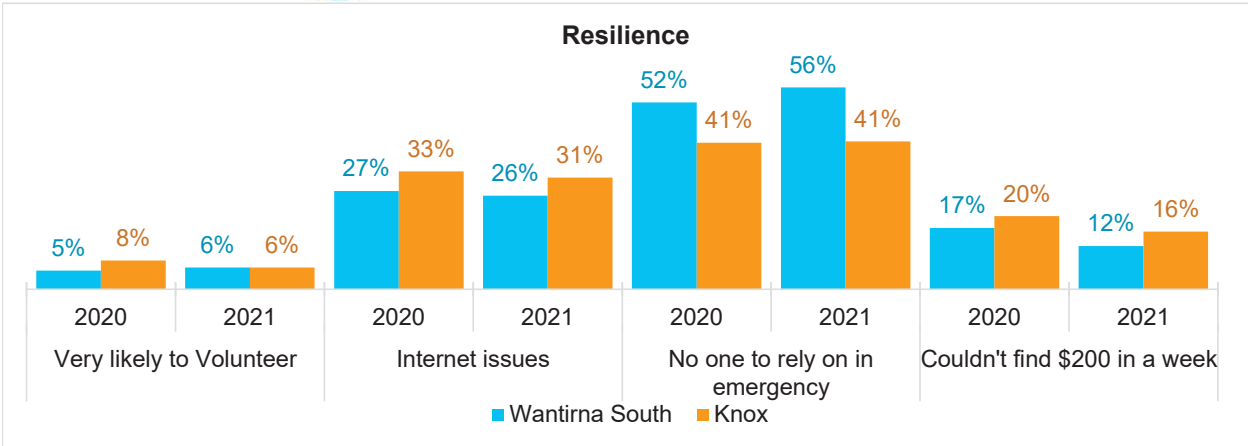
Food



Parenting & caregiving



Resilience

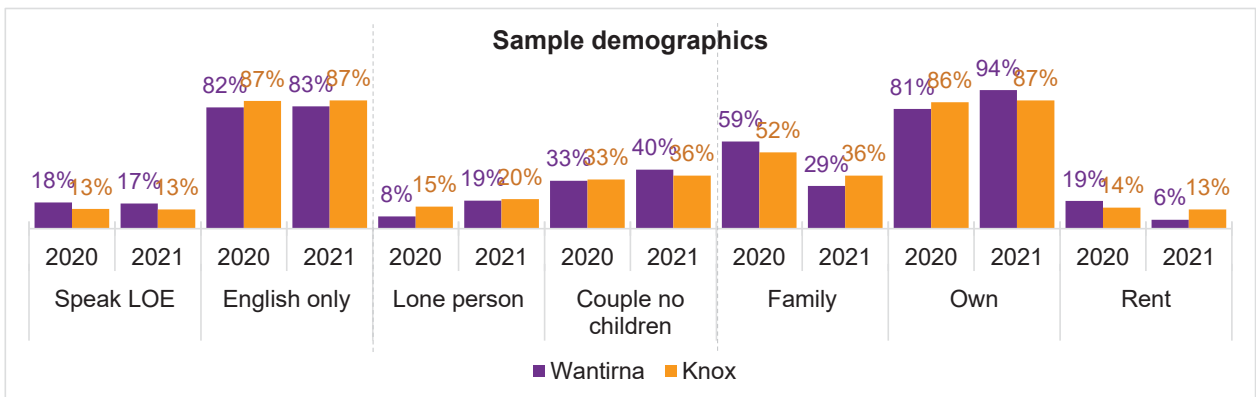
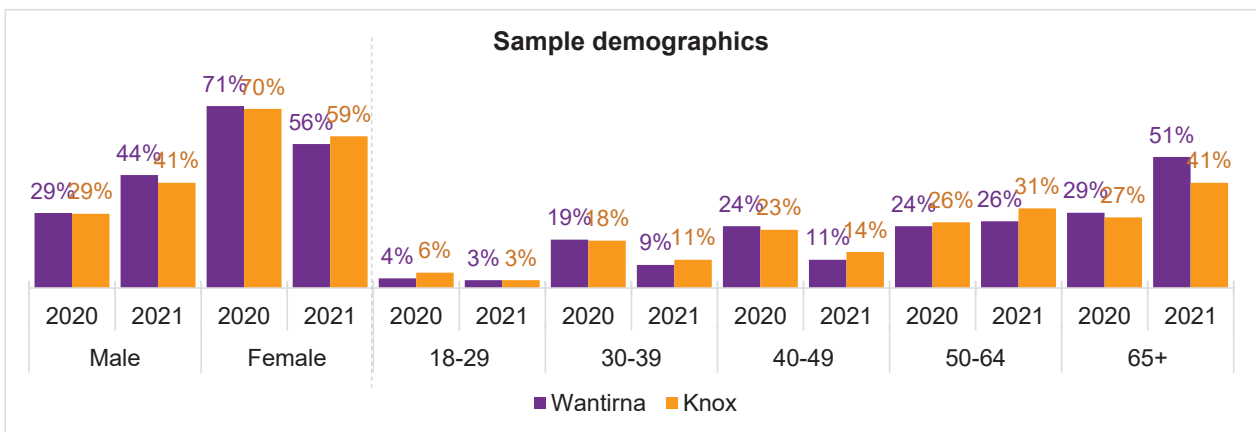


Report for Wantirna

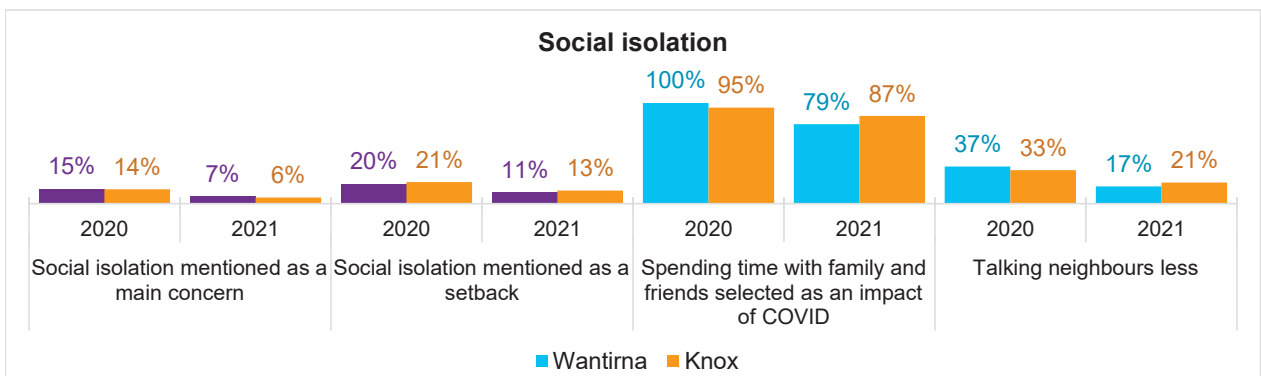
Compared to Knox

	Wantirna		Knox	
	2020	2021	2020	2021
Total sample =	137	74	1596	846
Representative sample =	69	59	865	640

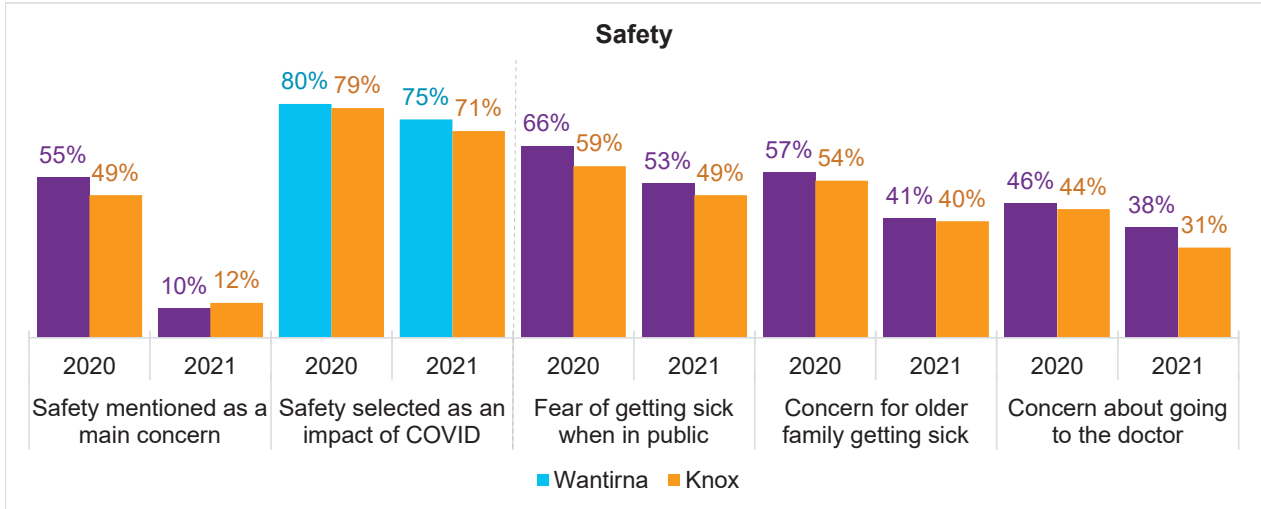
■ Overall sample
■ Representative sample



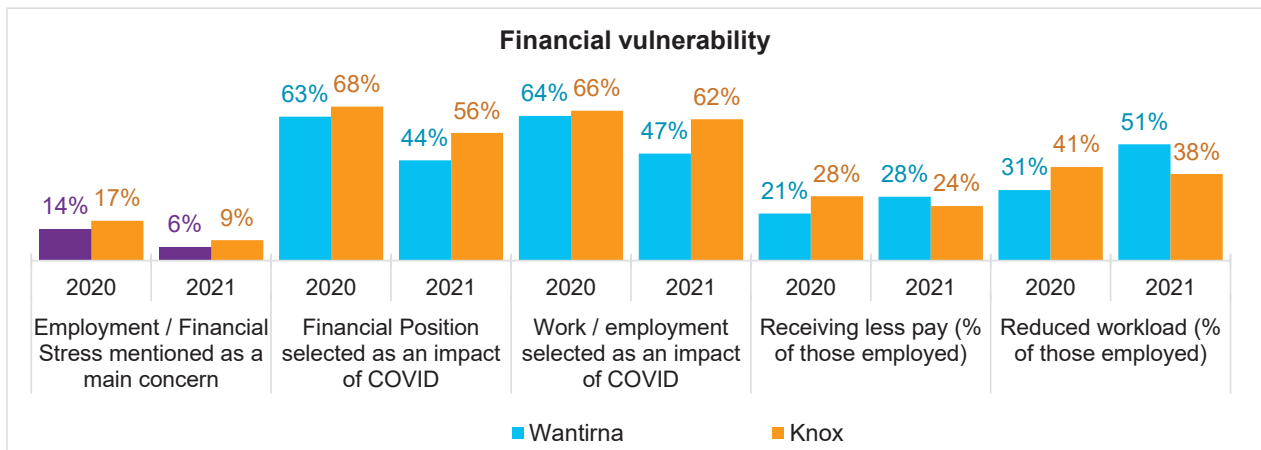
Social Isolation



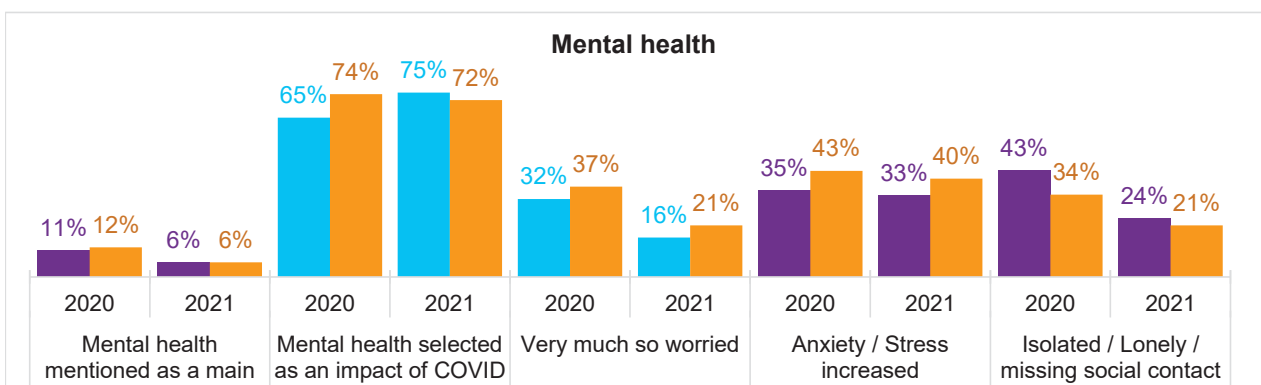
Safety



Financial vulnerability



Mental health

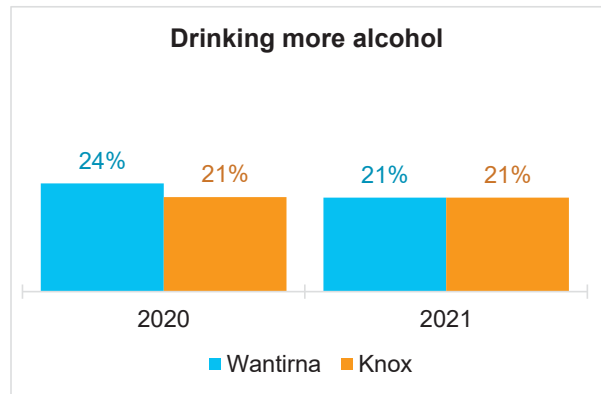
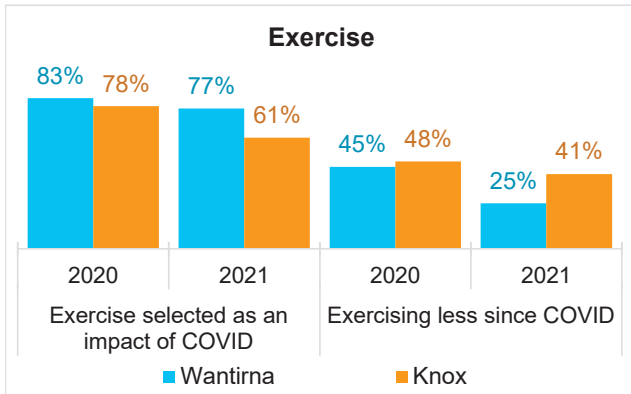


concern

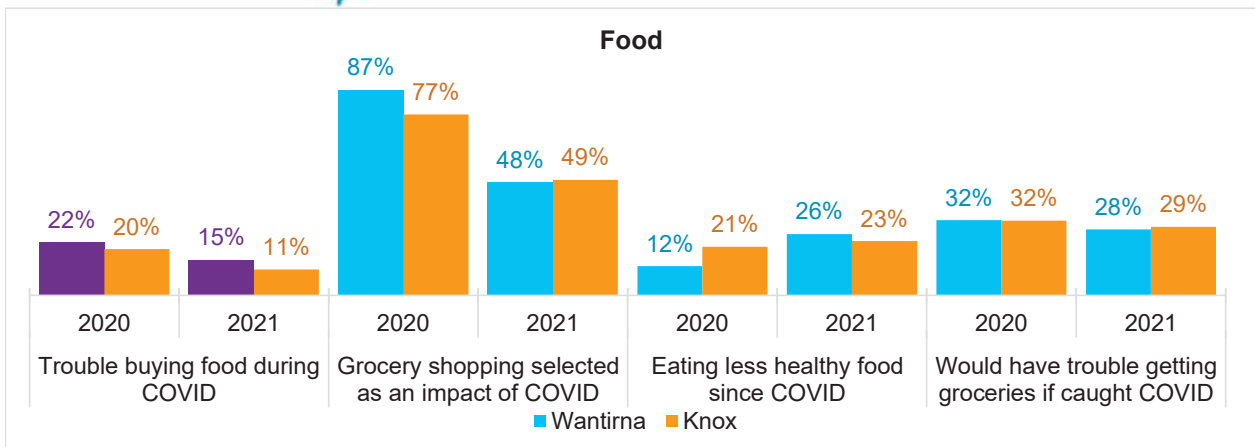
■ Wantirna

■ Knox

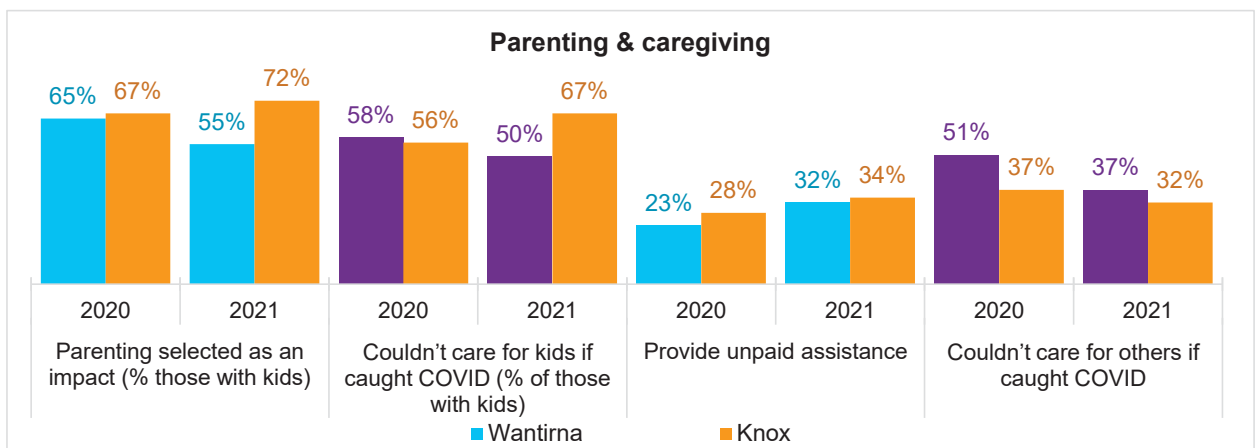
Exercise & Alcohol



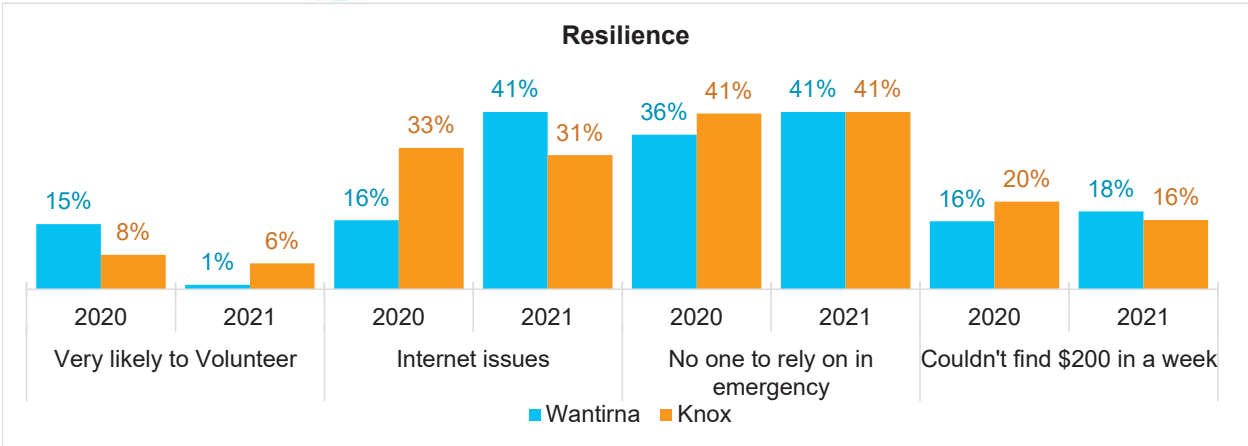
Food



Parenting & caregiving



Resilience



9.4 COVID-19 Pandemic Community and Business Support

SUMMARY: Principal Safety, Wellbeing and Pandemic Response, Catherine Dwight; Manager City Futures, Shiranthi Widan; and Manager Community Wellbeing, Petrina Dodds Buckley

In response to the COVID-19 Pandemic, Council has approved four Community and Business Support Packages to date. This report presents an overview of the restrictions impacting the Knox Community since May 2021, the current supports being delivered and facilitated by Council, and a summary of the State and Federal Government grant and relief options available to community and business. This report also recommends a further extension of some initiatives and additional targeted support.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Note the continued positive impact that Council's support initiatives and adjusted services have had so far on the Knox community and business.
2. Approve the following initiatives for inclusion in a fifth Community and Business Support Package:
 - a. Waive all not-for profit community organisation hire agreement, license and lease fees for a further period 1 October 2021 to 31 December 2021;
 - b. Note that Sporting Group tenancy agreements will be allocated a *pro-rata* charge from January 2022, pending easing of State Government restrictions which allow community sport to return both indoor and outdoor with minimum numbers, spectators and public gathering limits;
 - c. Provide funding to the value of \$20,000 for the implementation of a Digital Upskills Program for businesses; and
 - d. Provide funding to the value of \$20,000 towards the Commercial Advice and Mentoring Program.
3. Divert unexpended community-based grant funds totaling \$79k to a new Grant stream to respond to ongoing food relief supplies and/or pandemic emergency relief requests.
4. Continue to offer the second round of the Placemaking and Liveable Communities grants stream to test its relevance for the business community and take up with the remaining \$66,679 from the Business Support Grants and review the program in February 2022 and redirect remaining funds from the program towards the Knox eCommerce program.
5. Fund the above initiatives with any balance from previously allocated funding and review any additional funding required through the mid-year budget process.

1. INTRODUCTION

Since the declaration of the COVID-19 Pandemic in March 2020, Council has approved four packages of financial support in recognition of the impact on the Knox community.

These packages were adopted at the following Council Meetings:

- 30 March 2020 (refer attachment 1);
- 25 May 2020 (refer attachment 2);
- 21 September 2020 (refer attachment 3); and
- 21 March 2021 (refer attachment 4).

These packages have had a positive impact through the support provided for local businesses and service providers, community and sporting groups, ratepayers, and those who are experiencing hardship and vulnerability during and in response to the Pandemic. Additionally, some initiatives were funded to support longer-term recovery from the Pandemic, including the Be Kind Campaign and the COVID-19 Household Survey.

Metropolitan Melbourne has faced three more lockdowns since 21 May 2021; with Lockdown 4 commencing on 28 May 2021 and finishing on 10 June 2021; Lockdown 5 commencing 16 July 2021 and finishing 27 July 2021; and the current Lockdown 6, commenced 5 August 2021.

As a result of the increased restrictions since May 2021, officers have undertaken to understand the current and evolving situation associated with the COVID-19 restrictions and the impacts on the community. This has included a review of last year's COVID-19 response and recovery planning and has included liaising with the local relief providers and community service providers and groups to understand community need, as well as the latest iteration of the COVID-19 Household Impact Survey (July 2021).

On 19 September 2021, the Victorian Government announced the Road Map for Metropolitan Melbourne (refer Attachment 5). The Roadmap has been developed based on expert modelling from the Burnet Institute and is set against COVID-19 thresholds including hospitalisation rates, and the vaccination targets already set out in the *National Plan to Transition Australia's National COVID-19 Response*. As the State achieves 70 per cent and 80 per cent double dose vaccination targets, the Roadmap lists the easing of specific settings and restrictions, along with opening of certain venues and services for opening – but only on the condition that all eligible attendees to the venue are vaccinated.

1.1 Council's Approach to Community Recovery

The COVID-19 Pandemic has impacted our community in many ways and continues to do so. In 2020, Council staff spoke with a range of stakeholders to understand:

- The economic impacts on local businesses and industries;
- The impacts on the natural environment and local built infrastructure; and
- The impacts on the emotional, social, spiritual, financial and physical wellbeing of individuals in Knox and local communities in the municipality.

In addition to these conversations, we collected perspectives and experiences from the community using the *COVID-19 Household Impact Survey*. The findings of this comprehensive survey supported the learnings of our informal engagements occurring between Council and community on an ongoing basis during this period.

The cumulative impact of the pandemic over time is yet to be seen but is expected to significantly affect some areas, in particular:

- Mental health;

- Social isolation;
- Business and family/individual financial health; and
- Reinforcing existing and creating new vulnerabilities in our community.

The ongoing nature of the Pandemic requires flexibility. We are responding to the Pandemic by implementing a range of relief measures and supporting those most at risk now, while we plan for recovery.

The goal for recovery is to support our community to deal with the impacts of the Pandemic and build our resilience for the future. It is not just about getting things “back to normal”, it is about rebuilding, learning from this challenge and innovating, so we can emerge stronger.

Throughout the development of the Draft Council Plan key initiatives have been identified that will be undertaken over the next four years to support our community’s recovery and build resilience.

2. DISCUSSION

Significant support has been provided by Council to the Knox Community and Business over the past 18 months and support continues to be available. Council services have adjusted wherever possible to new and/or virtual formats to ensure services have been able to continue to provide much needed support. Council has partnered with local relief and community service providers and regional partners to deliver crucial support and assistance. While not an exhaustive list of everything Council has done to support the community during the pandemic, the following provides a summary of key support initiatives Council has delivered.

2.1 Current Knox Community Based Supports

Minor Grants

The Minor Grants stream provides a monthly opportunity for organisations to apply for funding to respond to crisis relief and recovery initiatives. The Minor Grants Policy has been amended to enable community organisations to address COVID-19 and can include items such as social media platforms, technology, social isolation, food relief, community connection, IT equipment and literacy. The 2021-2022 budget provides \$193,729 for the Minor Grants Program (comprising the annual allocation of \$150,582 plus an additional \$43,147 carried forward from the 2020-21 Minor Grants Program, as per the Minor Grants Policy). As of September 2021, the remaining Minor Grants budget for 2021-22 will total \$142,560 (GST exclusive).

CDF (Community Development Fund)

The Community Development Fund (CDF) Program offers grants for activities and projects that benefit the Knox community. CDF grants are provided to help develop, enhance and support the many different not-for-profit community groups in Knox. The annual Community Development Fund Grant Program’s purpose and guidelines has been broadened to enable community organisations to apply for funding to support the reactivation and rebuild of community momentum and initiate recovery once the current COVID-19 crisis passes.

Total funding for the program 2021-22 is \$364,787 – comprising approved 2021-2022 budget allocation and carry forward of \$5,032 returned grants. At the time of writing this report, a separate report has been prepared for Council on 25 October 2021.

Hot Food Grant Programs (Carried Forward from 2020-2021)

The impact of the COVID-19 Stage 3 restrictions saw the suspension of regular community free meal services from several Emergency Relief Services in Knox. The Hot Meals Program for Vulnerable Families Grant was a one-off allocation of funding made available to support local service providers to increase hot and frozen meals and food parcels for Knox residents during, and into the recovery period, of the COVID-19 Pandemic. The funds were allocated in an uncontested and contested stream to applicable Knox community agencies:

Uncontested Food Grant

Uncontested funding was provided to two community organisations, these being Foothills Community Care in Ferntree Gully and St. Paul's Anglican Church in Boronia, for providing hot take away meals on a weekly basis for the community. Foothills, who are a large agency were provided with \$155,800 to scale up their food operations, whilst St Paul's and partners (a much smaller operation) accepted a smaller amount, offered \$28,212 to help them maintain business as usual. In keeping with the unpredictable and changing times, the service agreements offered to these agencies were flexible allowing for budgets to be reallocated or scaled up in the case of St Paul's.

Contested Food Grant

Established food relief providers servicing Knox were invited to apply for support from the contested stream. Twelve applications were received from emergency relief providers including: Church of Christ Boronia (two applications), Temple Society, Rowville Lions Club, City Life Community Care, Hari Krishna Fries, Shree Swaminarayan Temple, Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) – Wantirna, Ferntree Gully, Rowville Lysterfield (three applications as encouraged by the COVID Supporting Local Services Panel), Wellington Care Centre and Mental Health Foundation Australia. Ten of these applications were granted. The grant applications for this stream amounted to \$48,087 in value, with a total of \$50,500 set aside for this grant stream.

Uncommitted Funding for Food Grants

Overall, there was a \$79,000 surplus in funds not expended from the Hot Meals Grant Program. It is intended to divert this funding to a new grants stream to manage unexpected food relief requests or emergency relief supplies as the uncertainty of the pandemic continues.

Feedback from Local Community Relief and Support Providers

Feedback from Local Community Relief and Support Providers generally supports the notion that overall, organisations are managing the current community demand.

Infolink have been successful in securing a grant from the DJPR to commence a community breakfast for vulnerable people living in Boronia including an additional \$22,000 from Council to support food purchase. Foothills has indicated that they will need assistance soon, however, they are still utilising the COVID-19 Hot Meals Grant funding. All other organisations appear to be managing on State Government funding or Council funding provided either from the second Community and Business Support Package or the monthly Minor Grants and annual CDF.

Community Access and Support Services

Council's Specialised Access Team had been providing additional support that was funded by the State Government's Community Activation and Social Isolation (CASI) initiative. Provision of food and practical items such as small electrical appliances, and groceries were provided to vulnerable community members, along with masks and assistance to access long term services. Community Outreach initiatives have been going ahead, with the focus on those most vulnerable and isolated.

Other initiatives were regular newsletters to isolated people with information about staying physically mentally well, and how to contact support services, along with phone "check in" to people who self-identified as being isolated and/or lonely and were able to refer on to supports as needed.

The Community transport service provides support to residents to access COVID-19 testing and vaccination hubs, along with medical appointments and shopping assistance.

Rowville Community Centre Showering Program

As services have closed, members of the community whom are already vulnerable were finding it near impossible to access appropriate facilities to continue to wash clothes and to shower. The Showers and Laundry Program which has been run out of Rowville Community Centre two days per week in partnership with Infolink, provides these facilities to local residents in need.

City Safety and Health

At the Ordinary Meeting of Council held on 21 September 2020, Council resolved to provide 100% fee relief in the 2021 calendar year for health and food premises. Since the Pandemic commenced, the team have been assisting the community with the drop off and collection of sharps containers whilst the Civic Centre is closed. In response to State Government directions, officers have only be enforcing essential parking restrictions (predominantly safety reasons and red zones) during peak lockdown periods of the COVID-19 pandemic.

At the Ordinary Meeting of Council held on Monday 23 August 2021, Council resolved to waive new trading permit fees relating to outdoor dining, display of goods and business A-frame signage received from 1 September 2021 on the basis that the application fee will be waived until the end of the 2021/2022 permit period (31 August 2022).

In order to make it easier for residents to provide evidence to support an internal review the Infringements and Compliance Officer relaxed the requirements to provide evidence in a statutory declaration. The Infringements and Compliance Officer also provided a greater number of payment plans under discretionary power. These actions were approved by the Manager City Safety and Health last year.

Financial Assistance

On 23 August 2021, Council endorsed supporting a measure from previous support packages being the continuation of the COVID-19 addendum within the Payment Assistance Policy and resolving to not charge interest on rates until 31 March 2022.

Not-for-Profit Community Group Leases/Licenses and Sporting Group Tenancy Agreements

As part of Council's 4th Community and Business Support Package approved in March 2021, Council determined to waive all not-for-profit community organisation hire agreement, license and lease fees for an additional period from **1 April 2021 to 30 September 2021**, with any advance pro-rata payments to be refunded. Fees are due to recommence from 1 October 2021, including those related to summer seasonal and annual tenancy arrangements.

In line with the State Government Roadmap, Community Facilities will not reopen for indoor activity until at least 5 November 2021 and at this stage only for fully vaccinated users with density quotas. Given the current restrictions and limitations flagged with regards to reopening of community facilities, it is reasonable to consider waiving not-for-profit community group leases and licenses to the end of December 2021 given the likely gradual scale up to opening whilst applying a pro rata fee to sporting club tenancies from January 2022.

Should Council wish to extend this period for a further three months to the end of December 2021, the full financial impact, if it includes sporting tenancy agreements, would be **\$107,693*** (*excluding KBI).

All summer and annual sporting tenancy applications have been made by clubs to Council but they will not be approved until we have confirmation of recommencement dates in line with the State Roadmap. Should sport be able to return and have access to facilities in 2022, a pro rata option may be an optimal outcome for Council's consideration so as not to create further precedent for winter clubs should 2022 be disrupted. Cricket Clubs and annual tenants are keen to return to any pre-season training as soon as practical.

Theatre Hire Fees – Sliding Scale Reduction

The arts and cultural sector are widely recognised as one of the sectors that has been impacted the most by the COVID-19 Pandemic. Many activities, services and events were unable to operate during most of 2020 and were the last to resume under the State Government's Roadmap to Recovery. Since May 2021, this group has again been significantly impacted. Additionally, smaller businesses and events may not be eligible for State Government grant funding that is targeted at larger-scale events. As a result, in March 2021, Council determined to provide a sliding scale of fee relief for casual hirers of Knox Community Arts Centre, in line with the percentage reductions of theatre seating capacity to meet COVIDSafe compliance. Dependent on restrictions easing and venues once again allowing patrons, this sliding scale should continue into the first quarter of 2022.

Financial Assistance for Knox Basketball Inc

Due to the impact of COVID-19 and the closure of the State Basketball Centre and the Knox Stadium, Council is providing \$497,019 in relief to Knox Basketball Inc, which was endorsed at its meeting of 27 September 2021. Community sport has been heavily affected with the suspension of play and programming, especially in an indoor environment.

Belgravia – Knox Leisureworks

Once again, due to COVID-19 and the closure of Knox Leisureworks, Council, at its meeting on 27 September 2021, endorsed further support for Belgravia, the details of which are commercial in-confidence.

Commercial Rent Relief

The Victorian State Government released regulations for two commercial rent relief schemes for the periods 29 March 2020 to 28 March 2021 and 28 July 2021 through to 15 January 2022. Each scheme has eligibility requirements. Where tenants are eligible, Council has an obligation to comply. The commercial tenants that have requested rent relief are in varied situations, with most having to abide by a Government forced shutdown. The Property Management team has assessed a number of these requests and secured Council support, throughout the pandemic.

Vaccination Support

Council has recently supported EACH with a no cost tenancy arrangement in a Council facility for the purpose of community vaccination. Officers also supported Interchange with access to a vacant Council facility to enable them to vaccinate their vulnerable clients, support workers and family members during June to August 2021.

The Community Connections Officer has worked with the High Risk Accommodation Response (HRAR) at EACH to rollout COVID-19 vaccinations to five older persons housing estate residents

with an in-reach model. This took place over a period of three weeks, with approximately 40 residents participating.

In conjunction with this work, there was also a collaboration with the KCC Immunisation team to rollout Flu vaccinations to seven older adults housing estate residents with an in-reach model. This took place over a four week period with around 25 people taking up the opportunity to be vaccinated.

There is planning underway to work with St Paul's, Foothills Community Care, Knox Infolink and HRAR at EACH to offer COVID-19 vaccination to people who access community meals with an in-reach model.

Weekly vaccination rates released by the Commonwealth Government at State and Local Government level show that the Knox community COVID-19 vaccination rates are above state and national levels, with the community being on track to achieve 70 per cent fully vaccinated by the week of 18 October.

2.2 Knox Council Business Supports

Commercial Advice and Mentoring Program

The Commercial Advice and Mentoring Program was designed to provide fast, free professional advice to businesses. Two providers were engaged, one a financial services provider (Hayes Girling), and the other a small business mentor (ION Group) to support businesses in response to COVID-19. Initially, the service was provided as an open expression of interest process promoted via Council's social media channels, Knoxbiz website, eBulletin and through direct phone contact from Council officers. Less than ten businesses took part in this version of the program.

Small group mentoring programs have been delivered via Council's provider ION Group. Two programs have rolled out with 17 businesses attending. These programs consisted of a series of three online workshops, followed by three one-on-one sessions with a business mentor. The programs were targeted at businesses most directly affected by the lockdowns such as hair and beauty, retail, hospitality, gyms and yoga amongst others. The feedback on these programs has been positive with 85 per cent of attendees saying they would recommend the program to others.

Hayes Girling Financial was engaged to run a series of workshops titled Finance Essentials which covered topics including cashflow basics, pivot and adapt in business, people management, tax obligations, managing a family business and exiting business. Seventy-five businesses registered for these events, with 58 attendees across all workshops (there was some drop-off in numbers that attended). Hayes Girling Financial sought to collect feedback from attendees for these sessions but received very few responses. Council officers attended each of the sessions and there was good engagement from attendees and positive comments in the chat at the end of each session.

Following on from the Finance Essentials workshops, Hayes Girling have been delivering one-on-one financial advice and planning sessions with businesses. Each business was offered up to three sessions with a qualified accountant and business advisor to develop a business-specific recovery plan.

Thirteen businesses have accessed this service so far. Whilst not all businesses have completed their three sessions, feedback was sought to inform this process and was overwhelmingly positive.

The one-on-one format was the most expensive to deliver at \$1,500 per business. Council could consider extending this support, targeting the most severely impacted sectors. A request can be made to the provider to restructure the program to deliver it for \$1,000 per business. The

program could be opened for another 20 businesses which would total an additional \$20,000 for this program.

Business Support Grants

Three Business Support Grant programs were created with a total budget of \$335,000.

The Knox eCommerce Grant provided up to \$2,000 for businesses to implement eCommerce websites, online stores or social media strategy and delivery. Grants totaling \$96,469 were awarded to 57 applicants for projects in this grant program.

The Knox Manufacturing and Supply Chain Transition Grant provided up to \$20,000 for manufacturing businesses to adapt their operations and cater for opportunities related to COVID-19. There were six projects awarded funding in this program with a total of \$90,765.

The first round of Creative and Cultural Sector Grants awarded \$81,087 in funding to 15 applications. Eleven of these applications were via the Industry Facilitation stream which funded professional development, website and social media projects and new product development. Four projects were funded through the Placemaking and Liveable Communities stream, stimulating creative events, exhibitions and public art in Knox's retail centres.

Of the 30 grant recipients that have completed acquittals so far, 100% of the projects fully or partially met the aims set out by the businesses. There was a range of challenges identified by the grant recipients, many of which were related to delays caused by COVID-19 lockdowns. Others included issues with contractors engaged to deliver the projects going over the initial budget. There were many comments from grant recipients through the acquittal process expressing gratitude for the support provided through the business grant program.

The remaining budget of \$66,679 for the Business Support Grants has been allocated to a second round of Placemaking and Liveable Communities stream acknowledging the struggle of the creative, retail and hospitality sectors. This second round has attracted some applications, the majority of which have not met project eligibility requirements so far. Eligible projects in this program include public art exhibitions, events or partnerships with traders to deliver shopfront refurbishment or creative merchandising. Projects must be delivered in one of Knox's retail centres to encourage activation of these areas once restrictions ease. The applications received to date include events that are not planned to be delivered in a retail centre, or they are to be delivered indoors at specific venues.

The most recent rounds of lockdowns have put even more pressure on already stretched businesses and officers believe that the uncertainty around lifting of restrictions is limiting applications for this grant program. On this basis, it is recommended Council continue to offer the second round of the Placemaking and Liveable Communities grants stream to test its relevance for the business community and take up, particularly beyond the current stage of lockdown. Should the program not attract suitable applications or there are funds remaining through the program, officers propose to review the program in February 2022 and redirect the remaining funds towards the Knox eCommerce program.

Digital Upskills Program

Digital marketing skills are consistently identified as key areas of improvement for small to medium enterprise owners. The Digital Upskills Program was aimed at providing a tailored program to support better website content creation, search engine optimisation, social media and online marketing for Knox's SMEs. The program consisted of six by two-hour workshops focused on specific digital marketing topics. Workshops were recorded and made available to participants

to watch again as needed. There was a Facebook group created to encourage networking and collaboration between participants.

A total of 56 people registered for the program, 50% of these people rented commercial space for their business and 30 per cent were home-based. Feedback provided on this program from 22 participants showed that 100 per cent would have recommended the program to others.

Seventy-eight (78) per cent of participants said that as a result of the program they were working on a clear digital marketing plan and 95 per cent of participants were interested in more digital marketing training, specifically social media content, LinkedIn, Facebook for business and social media advertising. Support for providing digital marketing programs was further supported at our recent Women on the Go networking event. Feedback provided at that event suggested that digital marketing tips and workshops would be valuable to those attendees.

This program could be extended to provide support for businesses most impacted by COVID-19 lockdowns and restrictions. A consultant could be engaged to provide tailored social media strategies to businesses to support their recovery when restrictions ease. An estimated budget for this program would be to support 25 businesses at \$800 each, totaling \$20,000.

Retail Activation Strategy

Knox's Retail Activation Strategy is currently being prepared. The aim of the strategy is to create a buy local campaign to promote local businesses to residents and to create a range of activations to reinvigorate retail spaces once restrictions allow. The draft strategy will be brought to Council for consideration and endorsement for public consultation in the coming months.

Outdoor Eating and Entertainment

State Government provided \$500,000 funding to Council in October 2020 to deliver outdoor dining projects in Knox. Part of the funding was used to resource a project officer role for ten months. In that time the following outdoor dining projects were delivered:

- Seven outdoor dining "parklets" located outside existing Knox food businesses;
- Pop-up entertainment programming for the "Picnic in the Basin" event;
- Two permanent outdoor dining installations;
- Fifty hand sanitiser stands and hand sanitiser for 45 local businesses; and
- Installation of eight permanent outdoor dining pods to benefit 35 hospitality businesses in Mountain Gate Shopping Centre, Alchester Village and The Basin Triangle.

The feedback on this project was very positive with business and residents showing their appreciation for the new dining options. The outdoor dining pods delivered towards the end of the project received an overwhelmingly positive response with 600+ reactions and comments on the Facebook post about their installation.

It was noted in the State Government delivery of the Roadmap out of lockdown, that there was a strong emphasis on outdoor dining as a strategy to support struggling hospitality businesses. Whilst there has been no indication of an extension to this program via extra funding, there needs to be further discussion internally about how we might facilitate more of this activity in the next six to twelve months.

2.3 State and Federal Government Funding

Over the past six months, both the State and Federal Government have initiated further measures of support for both community and business.

Community Based Relief/Support

On 5 September 2021, the Victorian Government announced more than \$27 million for food and financial relief for our most vulnerable, a boost to family violence services, and more support for our culturally diverse communities. This is intended to build on the \$30 million announced in June and it is expected that Knox will be allocated funding to support those families required to isolate.

The funding also includes \$5.9 million to extend the **Extreme Hardship Support Program** to 31 December 2021. Delivered by the Red Cross, the program provides support to people on temporary and provisional visas and undocumented migrants facing extreme financial hardship who are ineligible for Commonwealth payments. The **CALD Communities Taskforce**, established in August 2020, will receive a \$7.2 million boost to provide tailored local support, promote vaccine uptake and deliver more emergency food relief to culturally diverse communities.

To keep women and children safe, \$2.25 million will be allocated to **specialist family violence services** to help more survivors access safe accommodation, put food on the table, and provide immediate aid. A further \$850,000 will support case work for single mothers and deliver women's mental health projects.

On 6 September 2021, the Victorian Government announced more relief for Victorians struggling to pay their rent with new grants to help them keep their tenancies. The **COVID-19 Rent Relief Grant Program** will help renters who are experiencing rental hardship due to the COVID-19 Pandemic. Grants of up to \$1,500 will provide direct financial support to renters by making a contribution towards the cost of their rent directly to their landlord on their behalf.

The one-off payment is specifically for renters paying more than 30 per cent of their income in rent who are living in a primary residence to help them maintain safe, secure, and stable accommodation. Grants will be targeted at those who have lost an income of 20 per cent or more due to the Pandemic. There is an annual income limit of \$62,860 for singles and \$94,300 for couples, and to be eligible applicants can't have more than \$2,000 in savings. The landlord and renter will also need to enter into a rent reduction agreement for a period after 27 May 2021.

DFFH funding to support vulnerable residents in mandatory isolation, has allocated \$40,000 to Knox Council (managed via the Community Access and Support Department).

During September the **Department of Job, Precincts and Regions** announced the Sporting Club Grants Program will provide grants to assist active recreation and sporting clubs that incurred financial loss during the recent lockdowns in Victoria. Victorian sport and active recreation organisations that were impacted by the recent lockdowns in Victoria can now apply for a funding lifeline courtesy of the Victorian Government's Sporting Club Grants Program.

Grants of \$2,000 for Victorian sport and active recreation organisations with a payroll of up to \$3 million, to compensate for irrecoverable costs greater than \$2,000 arising directly from the cancellation or postponement of events during lockdowns from 11.59 pm on Thursday, 15 July to 27 July 2021 and 8 pm on Thursday, 5 August to 23 September 2021.

Business Relief/Support

On 24 August 2021, the Victorian Government announced further relief for commercial tenants struggling with rent payments, with new regulations finalised as part of the **Commercial Tenancy**

Relief Scheme. The scheme will help small and medium-sized businesses with an annual turnover of less than \$50 million that have experienced a loss in turnover of more than 30 per cent during the Pandemic.

Businesses will get financial relief in the form of a proportionate reduction in rent. For example, a business with a turnover of 40 per cent of pre-Pandemic levels can only be charged 40 per cent of its rent. Of the balance, at least half must be waived, with the remainder to be deferred.

On 4 September the Victorian Government announced a jointly-funded support package from the Commonwealth and Victorian Governments to provide a critical four-week boost to small and medium-sized Victorian businesses most impacted by the current public health lockdown.

The joint package of up to \$2.34 billion is intended to deliver certainty to around 175,000 Victorian businesses.

Funding of up to \$1.6 billion will support about 132,000 businesses across multiple sectors who were recipients of the **Business Costs Assistance Program Round 2** or July Extension. Businesses throughout Victoria will receive automatic payments of \$2,800 a week (annual payroll below \$650,000), \$5,600 a week (payroll of 650,000 to \$3 million) or \$8,400 (payroll of \$3 million to \$10 million) to cover ongoing costs such as wages, rent, utilities and insurance. Businesses will remain eligible while they are unable to operate due to public health restrictions.

Licensed hospitality businesses that have previously received grants under the **Licensed Hospitality Venue Fund 2021** or July Extension Programs will receive automatic payments of \$5,000, \$10,000 and \$20,000. Payment amounts are tiered according to premises capacity: \$5,000 for a capacity of up to 99 patrons or where patron capacity is not specified, \$10,000 for a capacity of 100 to 499 patrons, and \$20,000 for a capacity of 500 or more. Up to \$289 million funding will support more than 9,300 premises impacted by lockdown. Hospitality businesses will remain eligible while they are unable to operate due to public health restrictions.

The **Small Business COVID Hardship Fund** will receive a \$448 million boost, increasing the total grant amount available to small and medium-sized businesses from \$14,000 to \$20,000 in recognition of the impact of the lockdown extension. The Fund now stands at \$700 million, providing support for up to 35,000 businesses. Some 16,000 businesses that have already received a Small Business COVID Hardship Fund grant will receive an automatic top-up payment of \$6,000. This program supports businesses that have been ineligible for Victorian Government business support programs since May but have experienced a reduction in revenue of at least 70 per cent. This includes businesses that are legally allowed to operate but are restricted in their ability to generate revenue.

3. CONSULTATION

In 2020/21, Council officers spoke with a range of stakeholders to understand:

- The economic impacts on local businesses and industries.
- The impacts on the natural environment and local built infrastructure.
- The impacts on the emotional, social, spiritual, financial and physical wellbeing of individuals in Knox and local communities in the municipality.

There continues to be ongoing consultation and engagement with residents, businesses, community relief and support partners and Council Departments during the Pandemic. These discussions have informed considerations for the proposed updates.

4. ENVIRONMENTAL / AMENITY ISSUES

The closure of Council facilities and services, and local businesses has a direct impact on the amenity of the Knox community. Support provided with the Outdoor Eating and Entertainment Package grant is assisting hospitality businesses to realise additional economic benefits and assist with the activation of Knox's local shopping strips.

5. FINANCIAL & ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS

In 2020-21, Council adopted a budget of \$3.0 million to support the community during the Pandemic. The adopted budget for 2021-2022 does not include an allocation for COVID-19 relief. Officer's proposals for consideration in this report total \$0.148 million.

6. SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The COVID-19 Pandemic is resulting in significant economic and social upheaval. The situations being faced by our community are unprecedented and whilst we have anecdotal information about the types of challenges being faced in our community, we have little understanding of the prevalence of these experiences. Whilst there is data available about the short-term impacts of the pandemic, the medium and potential longer-term impacts of the Pandemic and the restrictions imposed in Greater Melbourne at different stages since March 2020 are not yet fully understood. Ongoing conversations with the community, local businesses and non-Council organisations continue to inform recovery planning to rebuild the local economy and address social, health and wellbeing concerns.

Officers continue to work with the community, contractors and community groups to support the various transition points as the Victorian Roadmap to lift restrictions is delivered.

As part of Council's Community and Business Support Packages, which aimed to assist the community through and out of the current Pandemic, a household survey was commissioned to inform future action. The results of this survey informed strategic service planning and longer - term relief and recovery planning across Council. A further survey was undertaken in February 2021, to keep up with the changing needs of the community.

While most of the community are still experiencing an impact on food availability, finances and work; fewer are experiencing the level of impact in 2021 compared with that of 2020. The extent of impact on finances and work is gradually declining but there is still over half the population experiencing an impact.

Resilience has had a slight improvement in line with a reduction in financial challenges, with fewer reporting that they could not access \$2,000 in a week for an emergency. Far fewer residents are experiencing impacts on food and grocery availability.

People are gradually returning to pre COVID levels of exercising and talking to neighbours, but there has not been a shift towards healthier eating and the incidence of people drinking more alcohol than pre-COVID remains constant. Mental health impacts continue to be high and widespread and whilst the impact has changed very little, the survey shows some reduction in the proportion of people reporting anxiety.

7. RELEVANCE TO KNOX COMMUNITY AND COUNCIL PLAN 2017-2021

Goal 4 - We are safe and secure

Strategy 4.2 - Enhance community connectedness opportunities to improve perceptions of safety

Strategy 4.4 - Protect and promote public health, safety and amenity

Strategy 4.5 - Support the provision of emergency services

Goal 5 - We have a strong regional economy, local employment and learning opportunities

Strategy 5.1 - Attract new investment to Knox and support the development of existing local businesses, with particular focus on Advanced Manufacturing, Health, Ageing and Business Service sectors

Strategy 5.3 - Promote and improve infrastructure and technology within the municipality and enhance strategic employment places for business

Strategy 5.4 - Increase and strengthen local opportunities for lifelong learning, formal education pathways and skills development to improve economic capacity of the community

Goal 6 - We are healthy, happy and well

Strategy 6.1 - Mitigate lifestyle risks such as smoking, risky alcohol consumption and drug use, obesity, lack of physical activity and poor nutrition

Strategy 6.2 - Support the community to enable positive physical and mental health

Goal 7 - We are inclusive, feel a sense of belonging and value our identity

Strategy 7.3 - Strengthen community connections

Goal 8 - We have confidence in decision making

Strategy 8.2 - Enable the community to participate in a wide range of engagement activities

8. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The officers contributing to and responsible for this report have no conflicts of interest requiring disclosure under Chapter 5 of the Governance Rules of Knox City Council.

9. CONCLUSION

The fifth Community and Business Support Package will provide additional support in recognition of the continued impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on parts of the Knox community. Ongoing and emerging impacts are still being monitored, and recovery planning and response initiatives are being integrated with Council's ongoing service delivery, and within the draft Community Plan 2021 to 2031 and Council Plans for 2021 to 2025.

10. CONFIDENTIALITY

There is no content in this report that meets the definition of confidential information from the Local Government Act 2020.

Report Prepared By: Principal Safety, Wellbeing and Pandemic Response, Catherine Dwight; Manager City Futures, Shiranthi Widan; and Manager Community Wellbeing, Petrina Dodds Buckley

Report Authorised By: Director Connected Communities, Tanya Scicluna and
Director City Strategy and Integrity, Matt Kelleher

Attachments

1. Attachment 1 - 2020-03-30 - Ordinary Meeting of Council - Response to COVI D-19 [9.4.1 - 5 pages]
2. Attachment 2 - 2020-05-25 - Ordinary Meeting of Council - Community and Business Support Package [9.4.2 - 57 pages]
3. Attachment 3 - 2020-09-21 - Ordinary Meeting of Council - COVI D-19 Community and Business Support P [9.4.3 - 11 pages]
4. Attachment 4 - 2021-03-22 - Ordinary Meeting of Council - COVI D-19 Community and Business Support P [9.4.4 - 24 pages]
5. Attachment 5 - 2021-09-19 - Roadmap- Metro [9.4.5 - 12 pages]

2020-03-30 - Ordinary Meeting Of Council

14.1.1 Response to COVID-19

SUMMARY: Manager Governance, Phil McQue

COVID-19 is an unprecedented crisis, presenting Council with a complex and unpredictable challenge. The impact of COVID-19 on the Knox community will be significant from a health, wellbeing and economic perspective. Knox has a diverse range of industry sectors, with many businesses immediately vulnerable to the impact of COVID-19. Knox's community clubs and organisations also face an uncertain future as they typically do not have the cash reserves to sustain them in a period of declining or in some instances nil revenue.

Council has a key role to play in managing and responding to COVID-19, including supporting community health and wellbeing, delivering emergency responses, implementing stimulus projects and driving community recovery.

Council has been planning for and progressively implementing a range of measures to protect the health, wellbeing and safety of our community, Councillors and staff. Council has prioritised the ongoing delivery of critical services to support our vulnerable and elderly residents. Council has deployed its Crisis Management Plan, Pandemic Sub-Plan and various Business Continuity Plans, ensuring that essential services continue to be delivered to the community.

This report recommends that Council provide an initial round of community relief measures, targeted to support programs not presently offered by the Federal and Victorian State Government. The relief measures specifically targets the Knox community at a grass roots level, in the knowledge that further initiatives and support will be required by Council as this crisis unfolds.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Undertake an immediate review of the *Knox Payment Assistance Policy* with a view to addressing emerging consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on the livelihoods of the Knox community;
2. Resolve to not charge interest on rates from 31 March 2020 to 30 June 2020 for late payments and charges; noting that the extension of this will form part of the 2020-21 budget deliberations;
3. Waive trading fees, including outdoor dining and business A-frame signage fees for the period 30 March 2020 until 30 June 2020 as a pro-rata refund for renewal permit fees and refunding the full application fee amount for new applications received in that period; noting that the extension of this will form part of the 2020-21 budget deliberations;
4. Waive all Not-For Profit community organisation hire agreement, license and lease fees for the remainder of the 2019-20 Financial Year, with any advance pro-rata payments to be refunded;

2020-03-30 - Ordinary Meeting Of Council

5. Waive Knox Basketball Incorporated's Annual Asset Renewal Fee for the remainder of the 2019-20 Financial Year;
6. Amend the 2019-20 Budget by providing COVID-19 Emergency Funding of \$100,000, such amount to be expended by the Chief Executive Officer wholly in connection with Council's response to COVID-19 as is considered appropriate;
7. Indefinitely defer the following proposed events due to government imposed restrictions on gatherings:
 - a. Fire Fighter Recognition Function
 - b. Annual Joint Advisory Committee Meeting; and
8. Continue to formulate its Community Relief Plan, complimenting the Federal and Victorian State Governments COVID-19 response, with priority of addressing any identified gaps that particularly impact Knox community, with further reports to be presented to Council for consideration and implementation as soon as practicable.

1. INTRODUCTION

On 11 March 2020, the World Health Organisation declared Coronavirus (COVID-19) as a pandemic and the State of Victoria subsequently declared a State of Emergency on 16 March 2020.

This report responds to a number of operational matters affecting Council operations and decision-making in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.

In all responses to date, Council has considered occupational health and safety, public health concerns, community impact assessment, economic impact assessment and investigated options for alternative service delivery options.

2. DISCUSSION

Council Staff have initiated appropriate actions under Council's Crisis Management Plan and Pandemic Sub Plan and the Executive Management Team has now convened and operationalised the Knox Crisis Management Team, which is meeting daily to guide the organisation's response to the evolving pandemic. Daily meetings are held with the Chief Executive Officer, Mayor and Deputy Mayor.

Following risk based assessments, a range of measures have been implemented. These measures have not been taken lightly, particularly in relation to changes to service levels. Given the dynamic nature of this pandemic, there may be further measures required in the future. Where services to the community are impacted, there are associated communication plans in place to inform the community.

At the time of preparing this report, Council had closed the following services and facilities:

- Knox Civic Centre Customer Service Counter
- Knox Regional Netball Centre
- Knox Community Arts Centre
- Ferntree Gully Community Arts Centre
- Carrington Park Leisure Centre

2020-03-30 - Ordinary Meeting Of Council

- Rowville Community Centre, except for immunisations sessions which will continue
- Knox Libraries (as part of the Eastern Region Library Corporation approach)
- Various other sites such as Knox Athletics Track, Knox BMX Track, Waterford Valley Golf Course and the Youth Information Centre.

The recommendations in this report will contribute towards ensuring that Council is agile enough over the short to medium term, to continue to respond to unforeseen circumstances in a timely manner.

The following additional support measures are recommended for consideration by Council:

Funding to address COVID-19

This report recommends that Council authorise the expenditure of unbudgeted funds to a maximum of \$100,000, to ensure the organisation is in a position to respond to unforeseen circumstances which may arise requiring funding.

Deferral of Council Events

Council has postponed or cancelled more than 50 events from March through to May 2020. Two specific Council functions require a resolution to defer, being the Fire Fighter Recognition Function (*required to be held in April / May*) and the Annual Joint Advisory Committee Meeting (*required to be held by May 2020*).

This report notes that whilst Victoria is subject to a declared State of Emergency, the Chief Executive Officer, in discussion with the Mayor, will continue to make urgent decisions and defer and cancel meetings, events and identified matters as is considered necessary and appropriate to mitigate risks associated with COVID-19.

Assistance to Knox Council Ratepayers

Many Knox Council ratepayers will be facing immediate hardship from COVID-19. At the time of preparing this report, the four major banks have already received approximately 100,000 applications for deferral of housing loan payments.

Council is committed to protecting the livelihood and wellbeing of its residents and will be considering a range of initiatives in coming months, including a review of Council's *Knox Payment Assistance Policy*. In the interim, it is recommended that Council resolve to not charge interest from 31 March 2020 to 30 June 2020 for late rate payments.

Community Relief Package

Not-For-Profit community groups are an essential fabric of the Knox community, playing a significant role in building and maintaining social infrastructure, capital and resilience. Council has long recognised the important role that community facilities provide to the community in encouraging social and civic participation and supporting the wellbeing of residents.

Council recognises the significant impact that COVID-19 will have on community organisations with the restrictions presently in place. Currently, there are 166 Not-For-Profit community groups operating out of a Council facility, which includes pavilions and grounds, with a lease or license (including seasonal tenancy) agreement. This does not include those Not-For-Profit organisations who currently utilise a Council facility under a hire agreement.

To ensure the ongoing sustainability of these community groups, the following initiatives are recommended:

2020-03-30 - Ordinary Meeting Of Council

- Waive all Not-For-Profit hire, license and lease fees for the remainder of 2019-20 Financial Year (*valued at approximately \$1,346,612 per annum*) and refund any fees paid in advance pro-rata for this period; and
- Waive Knox Basketball Associations' Annual Asset Renewal Fee for the remainder of the 2019-20 Financial Year (*\$105,916 annual fee*)

Council are recognises the importance of small business within the Knox community and it is recommended to waive trading fees, including outdoor dining and business trading signage, as of 30 March 2020 until 30 June 2020, noting that payments made to date will receive full refunds;

3. CONSULTATION

This report has been prepared in consultation with Councillors at a Special Confidential Issues Briefing on 26 March 2020.

4. ENVIRONMENTAL/AMENITY ISSUES

The closure of Council facilities and services has a direct impact on the amenity of the Knox community.

5. FINANCIAL & ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS

The economic impact of COVID-19 is largely unknown and will be very difficult to quantify this financial year, particularly in relation to the loss of revenue, which will be to the value of millions for Knox City Council. This uncertainly makes it difficult to formulate reliable estimates that are required for prudent responsible budgeting. The potential financial and economic implications associated with the COVID-19 pandemic will be the subject of separate reports and discussions with Councillors.

Council has written to the Minister for Local Government requesting that the State Government defer the statutory requirement for councils to adopt the 2020-21 budget until October 2020, in line with the action taken by the Federal Government and Victorian State Government in the adoption of their respective 2020-21 budgets.

This will provide the required time for the economic and fiscal impacts of COVID19 to be known and understood, and the potential scale of recovery efforts, ensuring councils can adopt a responsive and responsible budget that assists Victoria in surviving this crisis and the path to economic recovery.

6. SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Council has a role to play in responding to COVID-19, particularly in supporting the limiting of the spread of the virus.

Council will also have a critical role to play in recovery activities once COVID-19 is minimised within the community.

Council acknowledges the critical role that local Not-For-Profit organisations and community groups play in supporting community access to key activities and services across all life stages, particularly access by disadvantaged and socially isolated groups. These groups significantly

2020-03-30 - Ordinary Meeting Of Council

encourage social and civic participation and engagement, supporting the health and wellbeing of the Knox community.

7. RELEVANCE TO KNOX COMMUNITY AND COUNCIL PLAN 2017-2021

Goal 4 - We are safe and secure

Strategy 4.4 - Protect and promote public health, safety and amenity

Strategy 4.5 - Support the provision of emergency services

Goal 8 - We have confidence in decision making

Strategy 8.1 - Build, strengthen and promote good governance practices across government and community organisations

8. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Under section 80c of the Local Government Act 1989 officers providing advice to Council must disclose any interests, including the type of interest.

Author – Manager Governance, Phil McQue- In providing this advice as the Author, I have no disclosable interests in this report.

Officer Responsible Director, City Development, Matt Kelleher - In providing this advice as the Officer Responsible, I have no disclosable interests in this report.

9. CONCLUSION

Council has a key role to play in managing COVID-19, including supporting community wellbeing, delivering emergency responses, implementing stimulus projects and driving community recovery. This report recommends a number of immediate initiatives to assist in appropriately responding to COVID-19.

10. CONFIDENTIALITY

Nil.

Report Prepared By: Manager Governance, Phil McQue

Report Authorised By: Director City Development, Matt Kelleher

Attachments

Nil

2020-05-25 - Ordinary Meeting Of Council

9.1 Community and Business Support Package

SUMMARY: Manager Community Wellbeing, Petrina Dodds Buckley and Manager City Futures, Anthony Petherbridge

In response to the COVID-19 Pandemic, both the Community Wellbeing and City Futures Departments have worked together to identify key initiatives that respond to community and business needs across the municipality. These initiatives have been incorporated into a Stage 2 Community and Business Support Package. Stage 1 support was endorsed by Council at its meeting of 30 March 2020, and some of the initiatives as part of the Stage 1 Package are proposed to be extended as part of the Stage 2 Package recommended in this report.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council, in response to the impact that COVID-19 has had on the Knox community and businesses resolves to:

1. Note the positive impact that Council's Stage 1 Community and Business Support Package has had on the Knox community;
2. Endorse the extension of the following Stage 1 initiatives:
 - a. Resolve to not charge interest on rates for the period 1 July 2020 to 30 September 2020 for late payments and charges;
 - b. Waive trading fees, including outdoor dining and business A-frame signage fees for the period 1 July 2020 to 31 December 2020 as a pro-rata refund for renewal permit fees and refunding the full application fee amount for new applications received in that period;
 - c. Waive all Not-For Profit community organisation hire agreement, license and lease fees for the period 1 July 2020 to 30 September 2020, with any advance pro-rata payments to be refunded; and
 - d. Waive Knox Basketball Incorporated's Annual Asset Renewal Fee for the period 1 July 2020 to 30 September 2020.
3. Approve the Stage 2 Community and Business Support Package and commence implementation of the following initiatives, effective from 25 May 2020:
 - a. Increase funding for the Council Minor Grant Program to the value of \$51,500, for the purpose of supporting community initiatives;
 - b. Increase funding for the Council Community Development Fund to the value of \$80,000, for the purpose of reactivating community connectedness and initiating recovery projects;
 - c. Establish a one-off Council 'Supporting Local Services Fund' to the value of \$200,000, for the purpose of supporting local service organisations to increase service provision;
 - d. Provide funding to the value of \$15,000 for the purpose of enabling a temporary Council facility, at the discretion of the Chief Executive Officer, for the purpose of providing shower and laundry facilities for the vulnerable in our community;

2020-05-25 - Ordinary Meeting Of Council

- e. Provide funding to the value of \$50,000 for the purpose of investigating and implementing an ongoing solution for a permanent shower and laundry facility for the vulnerable in the Knox community;
 - f. Provide funding to the value of \$315,000 for the purpose of Council partnering with local organisations to enable and support the provision of hot meals to the vulnerable in our community;
 - g. Provide funding to the value of \$200,000 to deliver a Mental Health First Aid Training and Awareness Program to local sporting clubs, for the purpose of assisting with the well-being and resilience of community members;
 - h. Provide funding to the value of \$25,000 to undertake a municipal-wide survey assessing the impact of COVID-19 on Knox households to inform strategic service planning and longer-term relief and recovery planning;
 - i. Provide funding to the value of \$160,000, for a one-off \$1,000 Facility Operating Contribution for Not-for-Profit Groups and Clubs with a lease or licence in a Council facility, to support facility operating costs such as utilities and COVID-19 related expenses;
 - j. Provide funding to the value of \$30,000, to expand Council's Mentoring Support Program, for the purpose of assisting local business to manage and response to COVID-19;
 - k. Establish a Council "Commercial Advice Program" to the value of \$30,000, for the purpose of providing leasing, tenancy, taxation and financial advice to local business;
 - l. Establish a Council "Digital Upskills Program" to the value of \$20,000, for the purpose of enhancing digital marketing skills for local business;
 - m. Establish a Business Support Grants Program, to the total value of \$335,000, that includes an "e-commerce Grant" for the purpose of enhancing e-commerce capability and functionality for local business, a "Manufacturing and Supply Transition Grant" for the purpose of assisting the pivoting of local business; and a "Creative and Cultural Sector Industry Facilitation and Place Activation Grant" for the purpose of providing assistance to Knox's creative and cultural sector; and
 - n. Prepare a Retail Activation Strategy to the value of \$50,000, for the purpose of developing a "buy-local" program to support increased trade for local businesses.
4. To receive a report at the June 2020 Ordinary Meeting of Council to consider the governance arrangements necessary for the grants and payments established under the relevant new grant initiatives;
 5. Authorise the Chief Executive Officer to execute all agreements relating to the above initiatives; and
 6. Note that further allocations from the balance of the Community and Business Support Package for the purpose of Stage 3 COVID-19 support initiatives will be considered by Council at a later stage.

2020-05-25 - Ordinary Meeting Of Council

1. INTRODUCTION

At the Ordinary Meeting of Council held on 30 March 2020, Council resolved to:

1. *Undertake an immediate review of the Knox Payment Assistance Policy with a view to addressing emerging consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on the livelihoods of the Knox community;*
2. *Resolve to not charge interest on rates from 31 March 2020 to 30 June 2020 for late payments and charges; noting that the extension of this will form part of the 2020-21 budget deliberations;*
3. *Waive trading fees, including outdoor dining and business A-frame signage fees for the period 30 March 2020 until 30 June 2020 as a pro-rata refund for renewal permit fees and refunding the full application fee amount for new applications received in that period; noting that the extension of this will form part of the 2020-21 budget deliberations;*
4. *Waive all Not-For Profit community organisation hire agreement, license and lease fees for the remainder of the 2019-20 Financial Year, with any advance pro-rata payments to be refunded;*
5. *Waive Knox Basketball Incorporated's Annual Asset Renewal Fee for the remainder of the 2019-20 Financial Year;*
6. *Amend the 2019-20 Budget by providing COVID-19 Emergency Funding of \$100,000, such amount to be expended by the Chief Executive Officer wholly in connection with Council's response to COVID-19 as is considered appropriate;*
7. *Defer the following proposed events due to government imposed restrictions on gatherings:*
 - a. *Fire Fighter Recognition Function; and*
 - b. *Annual Joint Advisory Committee Meeting; and;*
8. *Continue to formulate its Community Relief Plan, complementing the Federal and Victorian State Governments COVID-19 response, with priority of addressing any identified gaps that particularly impact Knox community, with further reports to be presented to Council for consideration and implementation as soon as practicable.*

Resolutions 2 to 5 were supported until 30 June 2020 and are identified as Stage 1 of Council's support package.

In response to the evolving impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and Resolution 8 above, a Stage 2 Community and Business Support Package (see Attachment 1) has been developed to address the social and economic ramifications of the closure of places of work and the cessation of services provided across the municipality.

The Stage 2 Package comprises of a range of initiatives identified by both the Community Wellbeing and City Futures Departments and focusses on providing relief and recovery for Local Community Organisations, Local Service Providers and Local Business Operators.

In some cases they are complementary to Federal and State Government initiatives, and in others they respond to the gaps and lack of funding at the local level and are based on feedback from local relief agencies, community groups and businesses.

2020-05-25 - Ordinary Meeting Of Council

This report provides detailed project briefs outlining the rationale behind these initiatives. It speaks to the very real crisis currently being played out in our community and the hardship it is inflicting on our residents. From a social and health perspective, residents are grappling with financial insecurity, housing stress, escalating mental health illness, family violence, social isolation and computer access and literacy. From an economic perspective, many businesses have lost customers, revenue and employees as a result of no longer being able to operate or having to substantially change their business practices.

2. DISCUSSION

2.1 Extension of Some Stage 1 Initiatives

The initiatives endorsed by Council at its Ordinary Meeting of Council held on 30 March 2020 have provided invaluable financial assistance to members of the Knox Community. It is recommended that some of these initiatives be extended to provide additional and much needed assistance, as follows.

1. Resolve to not charge interest on rates for the period 1 July 2020 to 30 September 2020 for late payments and charges;
2. Waive trading fees, including outdoor dining and business A-frame signage fees for the period 1 July 2020 to 31 December 2020 as a pro-rata refund for renewal permit fees and refunding the full application fee amount for new applications received in that period;
3. Waive all Not-For Profit community organisation hire agreement, license and lease fees for the period 1 July 2020 to 30 September 2020, with any advance pro-rata payments to be refunded; and
4. Waive Knox Basketball Incorporated's Annual Asset Renewal Fee for the period 1 July 2020 to 30 September 2020.

2.2 Community Wellbeing

Over a four-week period, around 80 organisations were contacted (some numerous times) to gather information on emerging social needs, due to outbreak of COVID19 across the city of Knox.

Themes to emerge are as follows:

- Homelessness
- Limited access to showers, hot food, laundry for vulnerable people
- Mental health services and counselling
- Housing accommodation, significant increase in demand
- Family violence reports – being widely reported by police and services
- Financial hardship
- Food insecurity
- Computer access, literacy and IT equipment
- Social isolation
- Lack of internet connection for most vulnerable
- Need for food relief and support for the Aboriginal community.

2020-05-25 - Ordinary Meeting Of Council

As unemployment and job insecurity increases so too has the emergence of “a new vulnerable”. Individuals and families facing social and economic hardship, some for the first time, are finding themselves in unfamiliar territory and unable to cope with the daily stresses.

This Community and Business Support Package has been developed to reach out to those most in need and assist them via increased funding for local service providers and increased community services for the most vulnerable. These initiatives, as detailed in Attachment 1 to this report, respond to all the identified above needs.

In summary the Community Wellbeing Initiatives are as follows:

- **Current Community Wellbeing Grants**

The Minor Grants stream provides a monthly opportunity for organisations to apply for funding to respond to crisis relief and recovery initiatives. The Minor Grants policy has been amended to enable community organisations to address COVID-19 and can include items such as social media platforms, technology, social isolation, food relief, community connection, I.T. equipment and literacy.

The annual Community Development Fund Grant Program’s purpose and guidelines has been broadened to enable community organisations to apply for funding to support the reactivation and rebuild of community momentum and initiate recovery once the current COVID-19 crisis passes.

- **New Supporting Local Services Fund**

The COVID-19 Supporting Local Services Fund is a one-off allocation of funding that aims to support local service providers, based in Knox or providing services and support to Knox residents, in the face of increased demand due to the current COVID-19 Pandemic. The Fund will assist not-for-profit community organisations to address local community priorities that have arisen as a result of COVID-19.

- **Showers and Laundry Program**

As services have closed, members of the community already vulnerable are finding it near impossible to access appropriate facilities to continue to wash clothes and to shower. The Showers and Laundry Program provides short and long term options to provide these facilities to local residents in need.

- **Hot Meals Program**

The impact of the COVID-19 Stage 3 restrictions has seen the suspension of regular community free meal services from a number of Emergency Relief Services in Knox. Currently, only two services, being Foothills Community Care in Ferntree Gully and St. Paul’s Anglican Church in Boronia, are providing hot take away meals on a weekly basis for the community. This initiative supports these services to expand and provide a higher capacity service to assist those in need.

- **Sporting Club Mental Health First Aid and Awareness Training**

As a result of the current situation, there is a significant increase in feelings of stress, anxiety, isolation and concern.

Through Mental Health Awareness Programs delivered to sporting clubs, it is apparent how this can bring significant positive change to a group. By providing clubs with sessions on mental health, resilience and wellbeing awareness, it educates and assists participants to recognise and act on signs of mental illness amongst group members, friends and families.

- **COVID-19 Research Program**

2020-05-25 - Ordinary Meeting Of Council

The COVID-19 Pandemic is resulting in significant economic and social upheaval. The situations being faced by our community are unprecedented and whilst we have anecdotal information about the types of challenges being faced in our community, we have no understanding of the prevalence of these experiences. The aim of this research is to collect information from the community to inform strategic service planning and longer-term relief and recovery planning.

- **Not-for-Profit Group Facility Operating Contribution**

Despite the closure of community and sporting facilities due to COVID19 restrictions, many costs continue to be incurred by those groups responsible for facility operations. For example, utilities to ensure security through alarms, lighting, etc. and power bills to maintain club assets such as canteen stock. The closures are having an impact on the ability of Not-for-Profit groups to cover existing and new operating costs due to limited or falling revenues. A one off contribution towards these groups will enable their ongoing operation through the pandemic. Establishing a one off Not-for-Profit Group Facility Operating Contribution of \$1000 (total \$160,000) for those Not-for-Profit Groups and Clubs with a current lease or licence operating in a Council facility, will assist with facility operating costs such as utilities and COVID related operating expenses.

2.3 City Futures (Economic Development)

The Economic Development Team within City Futures has reviewed how it can best facilitate additional programs/projects to assist local businesses during COVID-19, which are complementary to Federal and State Government initiatives.

Themes to emerge from a recent regional survey and direction conversations with businesses are as follows:

- Facilitating advice on legal matters, tax breaks and wage subsidies;
- Facilitating tailored business mentoring and coaching;
- Upskilling businesses in digital optimisation;
- Assisting businesses with eCommerce functionality;
- Assisting businesses with manufacturing and supply chain transition;
- Facilitating creative and cultural initiatives and place activation; and
- Retail activation.

The Business Support Package has been prepared to complement the existing Federal and State Government economic packages, and seeks to provide local businesses with financial and mentoring support to enhance their viability. The Business Support Package fundamentally seeks to support and encourage a prosperous local economy that will result in positive social outcomes for the local community.

In summary, the City Futures (Economic Development) initiatives are as follows:

- **Mentoring Support Program**

As businesses seek to rebound from the personal and economic challenges of this pandemic, mentoring and tailored advice to local businesses is needed to assist with managing the impacts of COVID-19.

2020-05-25 - Ordinary Meeting Of Council

- **Commercial Advice Program**

There is a lot of information available to local businesses at the moment, and together with the complicated nature of the available information, it is a challenge for some business owners and operators to fully understand the complexities, the possibilities and the implications. Legal, tax and financial advice can assist businesses to keep employees at work, improve cash flow and plan for the future.

- **Digital Upskill Program**

With social distancing requirements affecting businesses, and retail in particular through reduced foot traffic, it is important that businesses optimise their digital marketing skills in areas such as website content development, search engine optimisation, social media and online marketing and video content creation and application.

- **Business Support Grants**

The Business Support Grants will provide financial assistance in a variety of areas. Given the closure of some retail, and the reduced visitation to retail as a result of social distancing restrictions, grants to enhance eCommerce capability or functionality will be of benefit to businesses. Some manufacturing businesses are also well placed to pivot their manufacturing to align with alternative supply chains. Another grant opportunity is to assist manufacturing businesses with pivoting.

In addition to retail and manufacturing, another industry heavily impacted by social restrictions associated with COVID-19 is the creative and cultural sector. Many people working in this sector have secondary jobs in hospitality, which is also experiencing a downturn. Grants related to industry facilitation and place activation can provide assistance to Knox's creative and cultural sector.

- **Retail Activation Strategy**

Retail trade revenue has recently decreased by 26.4%, and anecdotally through conversations between retailers in Knox and members of the Economic Development team, smaller retailers of clothing, furniture, and giftware are experiencing difficulties. In order to assist local retail, a Retail Activation Strategy is proposed that encourages local residents and workers to shop local.

3. CONSULTATION

Local community and business organisations were contacted to ascertain the relief and recovery requirements of their sectors. Advice was sought from local community and not-for-profit organisations for their observations on the ground. Over 80 organisations provided feedback as to the current and perceived need across the municipality.

Engagement and discussions were also held with Council staff working across Community Services, City Development, the Executive Management Team and Senior Management Team.

The Business Support Package included in this report has been informed and guided by conversations and feedback from businesses on what they are experiencing throughout the COVID-19 Pandemic. In addition, data collected from a recent survey undertaken by the Melbourne East Regional Economic Development Group (MEREDG) has also informed the Business Support Package.

2020-05-25 - Ordinary Meeting Of Council

4. ENVIRONMENTAL/AMENITY ISSUES

There are no environmental or amenity issues pertaining to this report.

5. FINANCIAL & ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS

\$3M has been allocated for a Knox Community and Business Support Package to manage and respond to the COVID-19 Pandemic. This will enable a broad range of community wellbeing and business initiatives to be implemented across the municipality to facilitate relief and recovery.

6. SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

These recommendations speak to the social, health and wellbeing challenges currently facing our local community. It is anticipated that this need will continue to grow and worsen over the next 12 months as the enormity of this crisis peaks and plays out over time.

7. RELEVANCE TO KNOX COMMUNITY AND COUNCIL PLAN 2017-2021

Goal 4 - We are safe and secure

Strategy 4.4 - Protect and promote public health, safety and amenity.

Strategy 4.5 - Support the provision of emergency services.

Goal 5 - We have a strong regional economy, local employment and learning opportunities

Strategy 5.1 - Attract new investment to Knox and support the development of existing local businesses, with particular focus on Advanced Manufacturing, Health, Ageing and Business Service sectors.

Strategy 5.3 - Promote and improve infrastructure and technology within the municipality and enhance strategic employment places for business.

Strategy 5.4 - Increase and strengthen local opportunities for lifelong learning, formal education pathways and skills development to improve economic capacity of the community.

Goal 6 - We are healthy, happy and well

Strategy 6.2 - Support the community to enable positive physical and mental health.

Goal 7 - We are inclusive, feel a sense of belonging and value our identity

Strategy 7.3 - Strengthen community connections.

Goal 8 - We have confidence in decision making

Strategy 8.2 - Enable the community to participate in a wide range of engagement activities.

8. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Under Section 80c of the Local Government Act 1989 officers providing advice to Council must disclose any interests, including the type of interest.

Author – Manager Community Wellbeing, Petrina Dodds Buckley and Manager City Futures, Anthony Petherbridge – In providing this advice as the Authors, we have no disclosable interests in this report.

2020-05-25 - Ordinary Meeting Of Council

Officer Responsible – Director Community Services, Tanya Scicluna and Director City Development – Interim Director Finance and Governance, Matt Kelleher – In providing this advice as the Officer Responsible, we have no disclosable interests in this report.

9. CONCLUSION

The Community and Business Support Package will provide additional financial and programmed service support for those that have been most impacted by COVID-19, including the most vulnerable members of our community. It is recommended that this Package be supported by Council, and that the additional budget be allocated in the 2020-21 financial year to support the initiatives included in the Package.

Subject to the assessment, identification and need for additional initiatives, Stage 3 of a Community and Business Support Package may be presented to Council for further consideration.

10. CONFIDENTIALITY

There are no items of a confidential nature in this report.

Report Prepared By: Manager Community Wellbeing, Petrina Dodds Buckley and
Manager City Futures, Anthony Petherbridge

Report Authorised By: Director Community Services, Tanya Scicluna and Director City
Development – Interim Director Finance and Governance, Matt
Kelleher

Attachments

1. DRAFT Report - Community and Business Support Package - May 2020 [9.1.1 - 48 pages]



COVID-19 Stage 2 Community and Business Support Package

May 2020



Contents

Executive Summary	3
1. Extension to Some Stage 1 Initiatives	10
2. Community Grants	12
2.1 Minor Grants	12
2.2 Community Development Fund (CDF) Grants Program	12
2.3 COVID-19 Supporting Local Services Fund (New)	13
3. Homeless Shower and Laundry Program	16
4. Hot Meals Program for Vulnerable Families	22
5. Sporting Club Mental Health Awareness Training	28
6. COVID-19 Research	30
7. Not-for-Profit Group Facility Operating Contribution	33
8. Mentoring Support Program	34
9. Commercial Advice Program (lease arrangements, tax and wage subsidies)	36
10. Digital Upskill Program	37
11. Business Support Grants	38
11.1 Knox eCommerce Grant	38
11.2 Knox Manufacturing and Supply Chain Transition Grant	40
11.3 Knox Creative & Cultural Sector and Place Activation Grant	42
12. Retail Activation Strategy	45
13. Attachment 1 – Business Support Package background	46



COVID-19 Community and Business Support Package

Executive Summary

In response to COVID-19, a **Stage 2 Community and Business Support Package** has been developed to address the social and economic ramifications of the closure of places of work and the cessation of services provided across the municipality.

The Package includes the extension of some previously endorsed Stage 1 initiatives, and comprises of a range of additional initiatives identified by both the Community Wellbeing and City Futures Departments and focusses on providing relief and recovery for Local Community Organisations, Local Service Providers and Local Business Operators.

A further suite of initiatives are anticipated to be prepared and presented to Council for consideration at a later point in time, and will form Stage 3 of a Support Package.

Extension of Some Stage 1 Initiatives

At its meeting of 30 March 2020, Council endorsed a suite of Stage 1 initiatives to assist the Knox Community in response to COVID-19, including but not limited to:

- Resolve to not charge interest on rates from 31 March 2020 to 30 June 2020 for late payments and charges; noting that the extension of this will form part of the 2020-21 budget deliberations;
- Waive trading fees, including outdoor dining and business A-frame signage fees for the period 30 March 2020 until 30 June 2020 as a pro-rata refund for renewal permit fees and refunding the full application fee amount for new applications received in that period; noting that the extension of this will form part of the 2020-21 budget deliberations;
- Waive all Not-For Profit community organisation hire agreement, license and lease fees for the remainder of the 2019-20 Financial Year, with any advance pro-rata payments to be refunded; and
- Waive Knox Basketball Incorporated's Annual Asset Renewal Fee for the remainder of the 2019-20 Financial Year.

The above initiatives are set to expire on 30 June 2020, however there is merit in extending these to further support our Community.

In summary the proposed extension to some Stage One Initiatives are as follows:

- Resolve to not charge interest on rates for the period **1 July 2020 to 30 September 2020** for late payments and charges;
- Waive trading fees, including outdoor dining and business A-frame signage fees for the period **1 July 2020 to 31 December 2020** as a pro-rata refund for renewal permit fees and refunding the full application fee amount for new applications received in that period;
- Waive all Not-For Profit community organisation hire agreement, license and lease fees for the period **1 July 2020 to 30 September 2020**, with any advance pro-rata payments to be refunded; and
- Waive Knox Basketball Incorporated's Annual Asset Renewal Fee for the period **1 July 2020 to 30 September 2020**.



COVID-19 Community and Business Support Package

Community Wellbeing

The methodology used to collate data relied on intelligence from organisations operating in Knox and contact was made by way of email or phone. Over a four week period, around 80 organisations were contacted (some numerous times) to gather information on emerging social needs.

Themes to emerge are as follows:

- Homelessness
- Limited access to showers, hot food, laundry for vulnerable people
- Mental health services and counselling
- Housing accommodation, significant increase in demand
- Family violence reports – being widely reported by police and services
- Financial hardship
- Food insecurity
- Computer access, literacy and IT equipment
- Social isolation
- Lack of internet connection for most vulnerable
- Need for food relief and support for the Aboriginal community.

As unemployment and job insecurity increases so too has the emergence of 'a new vulnerable'. Individuals and families facing social and economic hardship, some for the first time, are finding themselves in unfamiliar territory and unable to cope with the daily stresses.

This Community Support Package has been developed to reach out to those most in need and assist them via increased funding for local service providers and increased community services for the most vulnerable. These initiatives as detailed in this report respond to all the identified above needs.

In summary the Community Wellbeing Initiatives are as follows:

Current Community Wellbeing Grants

The **Minor Grants** stream provides a monthly opportunity for organisations to apply for funding to respond to crisis relief and recovery initiatives. The Minor Grants policy has been amended to enable community organisations to address COVID-19 and can include items such as social media platforms, technology, social isolation, food relief, community connection, IT equipment and literacy.

The annual **Community Development Fund** Grant Program's purpose and guidelines has been broadened to enable community organisations to apply for funding to support the reactivation and rebuild of community momentum and initiate recovery once the current COVID-19 crisis passes.

New Supporting Local Services Fund

The COVID-19 Supporting Local Services Fund is a one-off allocation of funding that aims to support local service providers, based in Knox or providing services and support to Knox residents, in the face of increased demand due to the current COVID-19 pandemic. The Fund will assist not-for-profit community organisations to address local community priorities that have arisen as a result of COVID-19.



COVID-19 Community and Business Support Package

Showers and Laundry Program

As services have closed, members of the community already vulnerable are finding it near impossible to access appropriate facilities to continue to wash clothes and to shower. The Showers and Laundry Program provides short and long term options to provide these facilities to local residents in need.

Hot Meals Program

The impact of the COVID-19 Stage 3 restrictions has seen the suspension of regular community free meal services from a number of Emergency Relief Services in Knox. Currently, only two services, being Foothills Community Care in Ferntree Gully and St. Paul's Anglican Church in Boronia, are providing hot take away meals on a weekly basis for the community. This initiative supports these services to expand and provide a higher capacity service to assist those in need.

Sporting Club Mental Health Awareness Training

As a result of the current situation, there is a significant increase in feelings of stress, anxiety, isolation and concern. Through Mental Health Awareness Programs delivered to sporting clubs, it is apparent how this can bring significant positive change to a group and the broader community. By providing clubs with sessions on mental health, resilience and wellbeing awareness, it educates and assists participants to recognize and appropriately respond to signs of mental illness amongst others including their friends and family.

COVID -19 Research Program

The Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic is resulting in significant economic and social upheaval. The situations being faced by our community are unprecedented and whilst we have anecdotal information about the types of challenges being faced in our community, we have no understanding of the prevalence of these experiences. The aim of this research is to collect information from the community to inform strategic service planning and longer term relief and recovery planning.

Not-for-Profit Group Facility Operating Contribution

Despite the closure of community and sporting facilities due to COVID19 restrictions, many costs continue to be incurred by those groups responsible for facility operations. For example, utilities to ensure security through alarms, lighting, etc. and power bills to maintain club assets such as canteen stock. The closures are having an impact on the ability of Not-for-Profit groups operating in Council facilities to cover existing and new operating costs due to limited or falling revenues. A one off contribution towards these groups will enable their ongoing operation through the pandemic. Establishing a one off Not-for-Profit Group Facility Operating Contribution of \$1000 (up to \$160,000) for those Not-for-Profit Groups and Clubs with a current lease or licence operating in a Council facility, will assist with facility operating costs such as utilities and COVID related operating expenses.

City Futures - Economic Development

The Economic Development Team within the City Futures Department has reviewed how it can best facilitate additional programs and projects to assist local businesses during COVID-19; which are complementary to Federal and State Government initiatives.

The Business Support Package included in this report has been informed and guided by conversations and feedback from businesses on what they are experiencing throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition, data collected from a recent survey undertaken by the Melbourne East Regional Economic Development Group



COVID-19 Community and Business Support Package

(MEREDG), which included responses from Knox businesses has also informed the Business Support Package. For more information on the background to the Business Support Package, see Attachment 1.

Themes to emerge from the regional survey undertaken by MEREDG and direction conversations with businesses are as follows:

- Facilitating advice on legal matters, tax breaks and wage subsidies;
- Facilitating tailored business mentoring and coaching;
- Upskilling businesses in digital optimisation;
- Assisting businesses with eCommerce functionality;
- Assisting businesses with manufacturing and supply chain transition;
- Facilitating creative and cultural initiatives and place activation; and
- Retail activation.

The Business Support Package has been prepared to complement the existing Federal and State Government economic packages, and seeks to provide local businesses with financial and mentoring support to enhance their viability. The Business Support Package fundamentally seeks to support and encourage a prosperous local economy that will result in positive social outcomes for the local community.

In summary the City Futures/Economic Development Initiatives are as follows:

Mentoring Support Program

As businesses seek to rebound from the personal and economic challenges of this pandemic, mentoring and tailored advice to local businesses is needed to assist with managing the impacts of COVID-19.

Commercial Advice Program

There is a lot of information available to local businesses at the moment, and together with the complicated and dispersed nature of the available information, it is a challenge for some business owners and operators to fully understand the complexities, the possibilities and the implications. Legal, tax and financial advice can assist businesses to keep employees at work, improve cash flow and plan for the future.

Digital Upskill Program

With social distancing requirements affecting businesses, and retail in particular through reduced foot traffic, it's important that businesses optimise their digital marketing skills in areas such as website content development, search engine optimisation, social media, online marketing and video content creation and application.

Business Support Grants

The Business Support Grants will provide financial assistance in a variety of areas. Given the closure of some retail, and the reduced visitation to retail as a result of social distancing restrictions, grants to enhance eCommerce capability or functionality will be of benefit to businesses. Some manufacturing businesses are also well placed to pivot their manufacturing to align with alternative supply chains, with the program supporting this opportunity.

In addition to retail and manufacturing, another industry heavily impacted by social restrictions associated with COVID-19 is the creative and cultural sector. Many people working in this sector have secondary jobs in



COVID-19 Community and Business Support Package

hospitality, which is also experiencing a downturn. Grants related to industry facilitation and place activation can provide assistance to Knox's creative and cultural sector.

Retail Activation Strategy

Retail trade revenue has recently decreased by 26.4%, and anecdotally through conversations between retailers in Knox and members of the Economic Development team, smaller retailers of clothing, furniture and giftware are experiencing difficulties. In order to assist local retail, a Retail Activation Strategy is proposed that encourages local residents and workers to shop local, within the confines of applicable pandemic restrictions and their anticipated gradual easing.



COVID-19 Community and Business Support Package

Recommendations (summary of every section)

#	Recommendations	2020-21 Financial Year
Extend some Stage 1 initiatives		
1.	Waive hire, leases and licence fees until 30 September 2020 (currently waived to 30 June 2020).	\$325,000
2.	Waive penalty interest on rates to 30 September 2020 (currently waived to 30 June 2020).	\$150,000
3.	Waive business trading fees until 31 December 2020 (currently waived to 30 June 2020).	\$18,000
4.	Waive Knox Basketball Incorporated's Annual Asset Renewal Fee for the period 1 July 2020 to 30 September 2020.	\$ 26,479
Sub-total		\$519,479
Community Wellbeing		
5.	Increase funding for Minor Grants (monthly) to address current Relief stage community initiatives.	\$51,500
6.	Increase Community Development Fund (annual) grants to support organisations to reactivate community connectedness and initiate recovery stage projects.	\$80,000
7.	Establish a Supporting Local Services Fund (one off) as an opportunity for local service organisations to increase service provision.	\$200,000
8.	To open a facility to enable access to shower and laundry facilities for vulnerable people in the community.	\$15,500
9.	To consider a long term solution to the lack of shower and laundry facilities by repurposing a facility within Knox.	\$50,000
10.	Partner with local organisations to enable and support an increase in the provision of hot meals to vulnerable people.	\$315,000
11.	Deliver Mental Health First Aid training, resilience and awareness programs to all sporting clubs across the municipality over two phases.	\$200,000
12.	Undertake a municipal-wide survey to a statistical household sample to assess family impact of Covid-19, inform strategic service planning and longer term relief and recovery planning.	\$25,000
13.	Establish a one off \$1000 Facility Operating Contribution for those Not-for-Profit Groups and Clubs with a lease or licence in a Council facility, which will support these groups with facility operating costs such as utilities and COVID related operating expenses	\$160,000
Sub-total		\$1,097,000
City Futures - Economic Development		
14.	Expand the Mentoring Support Program.	\$30,000*



COVID-19 Community and Business Support Package

#	Recommendations	2020-21 Financial Year
15.	Introduce a Commercial Advice Program that specialises in lease/tenancy agreement issues and tax and wage subsidy advice.	\$30,000*
16.	Introduce a Digital Upskill Program.	\$20,000
17.	Establish an eCommerce Grant.	\$100,000**
18.	Establish a Manufacturing and Supply Chain Transition Grant.	\$100,000**
19.	Establish a Creative & Cultural Sector and Place Activation Grant.	\$135,000**
20.	Prepare a Retail Activation Strategy.	\$50,000
	Sub-total	\$435,000
	Total	\$2,051,479

* These will be managed as part of one program with an allocated value of \$60,000, and allocation will be guided by demand.

** This will be run as a combined Business Support Grants program, with a combined allocated value of \$335,000. Allocation of grants will not be determined by these estimated amounts, but guided by demand.

Next Steps

Subject to Council support, Council officers will commence planning for and implementation of the initiatives identified within the Stage 2 Community and Business Support Package in June 2020, in anticipation of budget being allocated to the Package in the 2020/21 financial year.

During this planning phase, Council officers will refine the projects and processes associated with the grants programs, and in particular will prepare funding guidelines to support the grants programs.



COVID-19 Community and Business Support Package

1. Extension to Some Stage 1 Initiatives

Background

At the Ordinary Meeting of Council held on 30 March 2020, Council resolved to:

1. *Undertake an immediate review of the Knox Payment Assistance Policy with a view to addressing emerging consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on the livelihoods of the Knox community;*
2. *Resolve to not charge interest on rates from 31 March 2020 to 30 June 2020 for late payments and charges; noting that the extension of this will form part of the 2020-21 budget deliberations;*
3. *Waive trading fees, including outdoor dining and business A-frame signage fees for the period 30 March 2020 until 30 June 2020 as a pro-rata refund for renewal permit fees and refunding the full application fee amount for new applications received in that period; noting that the extension of this will form part of the 2020-21 budget deliberations;*
4. *Waive all Not-For Profit community organisation hire agreement, license and lease fees for the remainder of the 2019-20 Financial Year, with any advance pro-rata payments to be refunded;*
5. *Waive Knox Basketball Incorporated's Annual Asset Renewal Fee for the remainder of the 2019-20 Financial Year;*
6. *Amend the 2019-20 Budget by providing COVID-19 Emergency Funding of \$100,000, such amount to be expended by the Chief Executive Officer wholly in connection with Council's response to COVID-19 as is considered appropriate;*
7. *Defer the following proposed events due to government imposed restrictions on gatherings: a. Fire Fighter Recognition Function b. Annual Joint Advisory Committee Meeting; and*
8. *Continue to formulate its Community Relief Plan, complementing the Federal and Victorian State Governments COVID-19 response, with priority of addressing any identified gaps that particularly impact Knox community, with further reports to be presented to Council for consideration and implementation as soon as practicable.*

Resolutions 2-5 were supported until 30 June 2020 and constitute Stage 1 of Council's support. This Stage 2 Community and Business Support Package responds to Resolution 8 above.

As part of Stage 2 of Council's support, it is also proposed to extend the following initiatives from the above Council resolution of 30 March 2020, until 30 September 2020:

Aims

The extension of the following initiatives that were previously presented to Council at its meeting of 30 March 2020, will provide additional and much needed assistance to members of the Knox Community that are negatively impacted by COVID-19:

1. Resolve to not charge interest on rates for the period 1 July 2020 to 30 September 2020 for late payments and charges;



COVID-19 Community and Business Support Package

2. Waive trading fees, including outdoor dining and business A-frame signage fees for the period 1 July 2020 to 31 December 2020 as a pro-rata refund for renewal permit fees and refunding the full application fee amount for new applications received in that period;
3. Waive all Not-For Profit community organisation hire agreement, license and lease fees for the period 1 July 2020 to 30 September 2020, with any advance pro-rata payments to be refunded; and
4. Waive Knox Basketball Incorporated's Annual Asset Renewal Fee for the period 1 July 2020 to 30 September 2020.

The above initiatives are summarised in the recommendations below.

Recommendations

1. It is recommended to waive hire, leases and licence fees until 30 September 2020 (currently waived to 30 June 2020).
2. It is recommended to waive penalty interest on rates to 30 September 2020 (currently waived to 30 June 2020).
3. It is recommended to waive business trading fees until 31 December 2020 (currently waived to 30 June 2020).
4. It is recommended to waive Knox Basketball Incorporated's Annual Asset Renewal Fee for the period 1 July 2020 to 30 September 2020.



COVID-19 Community and Business Support Package

2. Community Grants

2.1 Minor Grants

Background

The Minor Grants Program is a responsive funding program that provides community groups with the opportunity to apply for small grants up to \$3,000, to meet immediate or short-term needs that are relatively minor in nature.

Aims

The Minor Grants Program is offered as an accessible and responsive funding source to assist a wide range of community-led activities across the municipality and support volunteer effort and civic participation.

Applications are assessed against criteria specified in the Minor Grants Program Policy to determine the eligibility of the applicant organisation and the eligibility of the grant application.

The Minor Grants Program will be broadened to give Knox community groups and organisations the opportunity to apply for grants that respond to the COVID-19 pandemic and offer crisis relief, as well as recovery initiatives.

Recommendation

5. It is recommended that the Minor Grants Program be increased by \$51,500 for the 2020-21 financial year; bringing the total grant pool for 2020-21 to \$200,000.

2.2 Community Development Fund (CDF) Grants Program

Background

The Community Development Fund Grant Program provides funds to support a range of events, arts and cultural projects, services and activities provided by not-for-profit groups or organisations for the benefit of Knox residents.

Aims

The aim of the Community Development Fund is to develop, enhance and support the involvement of community groups in activities and projects which respond to identified needs in the Knox community.

Projects and events that involve collaboration with other organisations and services, share resources within the community, and involve volunteers, are favourably considered. The CDF grants encourage one-off or short-term projects, as well as offering support to established community events that have been held annually for over three years.

Funding applications of up to \$20,000 are considered for projects that meet the CDF criteria and support the goals of the Knox Community and Council Plan 2017-2021.

The 2020-21 grant round opened on 22 April, 2020 and will close on 22 June, 2020. This extended application period will give groups the opportunity to consider projects that will help rebuild community momentum and involvement once the current COVID-19 crisis passes.



COVID-19 Community and Business Support Package

Recommendation

6. It is recommended that the Community Development Fund Grants Program be increased by \$80,000 for the 2020-21 financial year to enable an increase in grants/financial assistance to support COVID-19 recovery initiatives; bringing the total grant pool for 2020-21 to \$437,183.

2.3 COVID-19 Supporting Local Services Fund (New)

Background

Knox City Council recognises the vital role that local service providers are playing during the COVID-19 crisis. In recognition of the increased need from the community, Council has created a new, one-off community grant, the COVID-19 Supporting Local Services Fund. Council will seek expressions of interest from local service providers who are looking to boost their services or supports to Knox residents in a time of unprecedented demand.

Aims

The COVID-19 Supporting Local Services Fund (the Fund) is a one-off allocation of funding that aims to support local service providers, based in Knox or providing services and support to Knox residents, in the face of increased demand due to the current COVID-19 pandemic. The Fund will assist not-for-profit community organisations to address local community priorities that have arisen as a result of COVID-19. Expressions of interest should identify which priority area they are addressing and how the wellbeing of recipients will be improved as a result of the Fund. The priority areas that will be addressed through this Fund include:

- Homelessness and lack of crisis accommodation;
- Housing stress;
- Mental health;
- Financial Counselling;
- Food insecurity;
- Family violence;
- Technology issues including technology literacy; and
- Social isolation.

Fund Principles

The COVID-19 Supporting Local Services Fund is underpinned by the following principles:

1. Facilitation of responsive and cost effective services and supports that meet the emerging and increased health and wellbeing needs of the Knox community during the COVID-19 pandemic;
2. A responsive and equitable process; and
3. Accountability for funding.

Eligibility

To be eligible for funding, the following requirements must be met:

1. Applicants must be able to demonstrate:



COVID-19 Community and Business Support Package

- a) An increase in demand for their services due to the COVID-19 pandemic; or
- b) A need to adapt their service delivery model to meet the needs of the community during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Service organisations unable to meet this requirement could be considered for other Council grant programs that may be more appropriate for their project idea, including projects that focus on community recovery once the crisis has ended.

2. Applicants must be an incorporated association, a co-operative, a company limited by guarantee or a trust or other organisation established under an Act passed by the State; or Commonwealth. Consideration will be given to organisations under the auspice of another organisation which meets any of these criteria.
3. Applicants must demonstrate a direct benefit to the Knox community.
4. Applicants must have satisfactorily acquitted and reported on previous Knox grants and have no outstanding debts to Knox City Council.

Application Process

Organisations can submit an expression of interest seeking Council support to cover additional costs that have arisen as a result of an increase in demand for services, or for adapting service delivery to meet the needs of the community during the COVID-19 pandemic. Such costs may include (but are not limited to):

- Additional staffing;
- Volunteer expenses;
- Food or goods for material aid provision;
- Wellbeing initiatives; and
- Equipment such as IT resources to enable organisations to address the identified social issues.

Applicants will need to give an overview of how the funding will be spent. Due to the responsive nature of this Fund, Council will be asking for estimations of costs, rather than evidence of exact costs.

Submission Period

Council is seeking expressions of interest from eligible not-for-profit community organisations. This one-off funding round will remain open until all funds have been distributed.

Assessment Process

Once an expression of interest has been received, Council's Community Partnership Team will check the eligibility of the organisation. Each expression of interest will then be assessed and determined by an Assessment Panel, on a fortnightly basis.

A recommendation will be made to Council's Chief Executive Officer, or Delegate, for determination. All funding will be allocated under the delegation of the Chief Executive Officer. Once a decision has been made, the applicant will be informed of the outcome. Officers will provide Councillors with a fortnightly update on all EOI's assessed and recommended and not recommended via a memo and a formal report will be prepared for Council on a monthly basis, advising of outcomes and the remaining quantum. This process will continue until the fund is fully expended.



COVID-19 Community and Business Support Package

Assessment Panel

A temporary panel will be formed to assess all expressions of interest. The Assessment Panel will comprise the following Council officers:

- Director Community Services (Chair);
- Manager Community Wellbeing;
- Manager Governance or delegate (Probity Officer); and
- Relevant delegates from Active Ageing and Disability Services; Youth Leisure and Cultural Services; Family and Children's Services; Emergency Management; City Futures; or Health Services depending on the specific nature of the application or expertise required for assessment.

Successful Applicants

If successful, the organisation will be asked to complete a funding agreement and electronic funds transfer form. Organisations will also be required to submit an acquittal report outlining:

- Outcomes for the Knox community including the number of residents who have benefited; and
- Financial acquittal.

Consultation

Consultation was undertaken with a number of community service providers in Knox to assess the need for a community relief fund.

Recommendation

7. It is recommended that the COVID-19 Supporting Local Services Fund is allocated \$200,000 for the 2020-21 financial year, for distribution as need arises.



COVID-19 Community and Business Support Package

3. Homeless Shower and Laundry Program

Objective

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic spreading around the State of Victoria, Knox City Council services and not-for-profit organisations around the municipality responded accordingly and closed down in accordance with State and Federal restrictions. As services have closed, members of the community already vulnerable are finding it near impossible to access appropriate facilities to continue to wash clothes and to shower. Knox City Council has recognised this issue and is responding accordingly.

With the majority of Council owned buildings becoming vacant during the social isolation period, an opportunity has become available for facilities to be re-purposed to service community members that are in need and to open as a potential essential services centre.

Purpose

This report provides a high level investigation and an analysis of current information. Council officers have contacted neighbouring Councils, existing partnerships with NFP and internal departments to get this project of the ground as soon as possible.

Methodology

- Contact existing community groups to gain partnerships to run the program;
- Investigate Council owned buildings that are vacant to determine potential use for laundry and showering facilities;
- Investigate and understand the needs of existing vulnerable people;
- Explore what is within scope;
- Create a timeframe; and
- Provide recommendations for consideration.

Existing need

The requirement for shower and laundry services has been identified as a critical need across the municipality.

Partnerships

Council sort partnerships from not-for-profit community groups located within the Knox municipality to assist in delivering this service. Council's role will be to enable and facilitate the project with the intention of having volunteers to operate the service. Table 1 shows the groups that have been contacted and the comments attached.



COVID-19 Community and Business Support Package

Table 1 – Potential partnerships

Organisation	Comments
Uniting	Assess and Assist.
Infolink	Open for partnership. Infolink already have a system set up with referrals to Knox LeisureWorks pre COVID-19 restrictions. Infolink are willing to assist with referrals, providing towels, shampoo and condition, warm clothing and blankets to hand out. Options for laundry services were discussed.
Salvation Army	Can provide additional shower amenities if required. Have 12 (young) volunteers on roster. Have packages available to assist with clothing, etc.

Model

Management

In order to get the program active, Council will require to partner with volunteers and existing active services.

Council will ensure:

- Building is available, unlocked and ready for use; and
- Building is cleaned before, during and after use.

Volunteers:

- Have the same staff on as regular as possible (discretion is important)
- Ensure social distancing measures are adhered

In talking with Council’s Leisure Team who already assist members of the community in need, it is important that Council ensures an environment that is comfortable for use. Lessons learnt suggest members don’t like to be questioned when entering the building. They prefer to have some familiarity with staff so they don’t have to introduce their situation over and over.

Covid-19 requirements (as updated at Australia Government Department of Health website)

Until the Australian Government declares otherwise, the following must be applied, and adhered to, at all times:

- Wash hands often with soap and water;
- Use alcohol-based hand sanitisers;
- Clean and disinfect frequently used surfaces such as benchtops, desks and doorknobs;
- Keep 1.5 metres away from others; and
- Social distancing principles are adhered to — 1 person per 4 square metres.



COVID-19 Community and Business Support Package

An example of precautionary measures that will be undertaken include:

- Hand sanitiser for users when they enter and exit the building;
- Cleaning schedule – regular between uses;
- Soap, shampoo and conditioner to be provided to users; and
- 30 minute showering sessions.

Laundry requirements

- Water tap connections;
- Power points;
- Drainage point; and
- Providing and laundering towels.

Shower requirements

- Multiple showers available that are in individual stalls.

Operation times

- Scheduling appropriate times is critical to maximise attendance; and
- A trial period of twice-a-week, potentially one morning and one afternoon.

Out of Scope

- Sleeping facilities; and
- Access to a hot meal (users will be connected to existing services).

Potential Facility and Selection Criteria

Potential facilities were considered using the following criteria:

- Close to public transport;
- Close to an activity centre;
- Containing a large space to cater for social distancing requirements; and
- Currently vacant or closed



COVID-19 Community and Business Support Package

Recommendation - Short term (3 months)

- 8. Based on an analysis of available facilities a temporary facility be selected to be opened twice a week, four hours at a time. Total eight hours per week.

At this stage, it is anticipated for this program to conclude when restrictions are eased and the facility is back in use.

Council's role: Make the building available, organise cleaning and ensure Council officers onsite when facility is open.

Partnerships

- Salvation Army: If required can provide volunteers to be available at the site.
- Knox Infolink:
 - Provide a Coordinator, with two volunteers as support, who will work 6 hours per week in conjunction with Council to set up, co-ordinate and facilitate the program;
 - Provide a voucher/appointment process from the Knox Infolink office to facilitate a limited number of people in the space at any one time – practicing social distancing;
 - Knox Infolink will supply towels and toiletries to each person: a freshly laundered towel with a personal mini pack of shampoo, soap toothbrush/toothpaste, deodorant, shaver or if more appropriate we can supply large bottles of shampoo and pump soap at the facility, but the other items are more personal and we will provide a supply of them for each individual; and
 - Knox Infolink will collect the wet, used towels at the end of each day and launder

Laundry

It is preferred that the selected facility has an existing washing machine and dryer. If usage is high, Council can purchase another unit of each to allow faster usage to comply with social distancing rules.

Furthermore, Council officer can explore interim measures with local laundromats. For example, tokens to be pre-purchased at Bel-Aire Dry Cleaners (located on the corner of Lupton Way and Dorset Road).

Budget

Commercial cleaner	\$80 per 2 hour session for Council contracted commercial cleaners who specialise in disease. 2 sessions per week for 6 months = \$4,160
Washing machine	Brand: Haier 9kg Front Load washer Model: HWF90BW1 Price: \$640 Source: The Good Guys



COVID-19 Community and Business Support Package

Dryer	Brand: Haier 8Kg Condenser Dryer Model: HDC80E1 Price: \$700 Source: The Good Guys
Utility bills	Approx. \$5,000 for 6 months
Miscellaneous	\$5,000 for immediate assistance over the next 6 months i.e. Sanitizer and Cleaning products
Total	\$15,500

Recommendation Medium-term (6 to 12 months)

9. Repurpose Council facility to make space for Infolink to expand and provide shower and laundry services

Council's Community Wellbeing Department have been investigating fit-for-purpose needs of both St. John's Ambulance and Knox Infolink, pre-COVID-19 restrictions. In summary, St. John's require more space in order to have access around their vehicle that is stored at 136 Boronia Road, Boronia. Officers have been investigating potential sites to relocate St. John's that better suits their need requirements. Potential locations have been sought and a resolution is close.

The space at 136 Boronia Road can be repurposed to make space for Infolink to expand services such as allowing space for collaboration with Orange Skye, portable shower instalments (see Figure 1 below), washing machine and dryer instalment and potentially other services such as lockers for homeless to access, hot meal, haircuts, etc.

Council officers would also like to explore the possibility of partnering with **Orange Sky** (mobile laundry) and **Clean as Casper** (mobile shower) to fund their services on a long term basis. This may involve buying mobile units to set up permanently in the municipality. Further work and costing is underway to determine viability.

Budget

Fit out	\$30,000
Washing machine	Brand: Haier 9kg Front Load washer Model: HWF90BW1 Price: \$645 Source: The Good Guys
Dryer	Brand: Haier 8Kg Condenser Dryer Model: HDC80E1 Price: \$779 Source: The Good Guys



COVID-19 Community and Business Support Package

Portable shower hire (if Orange Sky not available)	TBC
Miscellaneous	\$10,000
Total	Approx. \$50,000

DRAFT



COVID-19 Community and Business Support Package

4. Hot Meals Program for Vulnerable Families

Background

The Knox Emergency Relief Network is a network of agencies and organisations that provide emergency relief and material aid such as food vouchers and food parcels to people in financial crisis living in Knox

The impact of the COVID-19 Stage 3 Restrictions has seen the suspension of regular community free meal services from a number of Emergency Relief Services in Knox. Currently, only two services, (Foothills Community Care in Ferntree Gully and St. Paul's Anglican Church in Boronia) are providing hot take away meals on a weekly basis for the community. Other Emergency Relief Services in Knox are continuing to provide frozen meals and packaged non-perishable food parcels that include personal care items on a regular basis to meet community need.

The hot meal take away service is now supporting a board cohort of the community, due to the impact of businesses closing and large sections of the community now without regular income.

Objective

For Council to explore partnership opportunities with Foothills and St Paul's to support and enable increased capacity for the provision of Hot Meal services to the community.

Purpose

To discuss with the Emergency Relief Service Hot Meal Coordinators current and future community need. Explore opportunities for Council to support/enhance or expand the service as required.

Overview of organisations

- **Foothills Community Care**

The aim of the service is to provide:

- Home-cooked, nutritious meals to locals who are not able to access them regularly;
- A safe, positive, welcoming environment for people to connect with others; building positive and inclusive community; and
- A meaningful way for locals to volunteer and give back to their community, including young people from local schools.

The Foothills Community Care programs is supported by a Program Manager and over 200 volunteers.

Services provided during Stage 3 Restrictions include:

- Hot Meal Take Away Service (Wednesday evening distributed from Girl Guide Hall – Underwood Road, Ferntree Gully);
- Community Casserole Program;
- Pay Forward Food Vouchers – supporting local restaurant businesses;
- Material Aid – personal care items supplied through food programs; and



COVID-19 Community and Business Support Package

- o Support for volunteers – petrol vouchers.

Demand for these services has increased during Stage 3 Restrictions. The Program Manager indicated that new families are attending having lost income, seeking food and material aid. A snapshot of the food service demand: approximately 400 meals provided over four days.

- **St. Paul's Anglian Church**

The Hot Take Away Meal Service is coordinated by a Church volunteer from St. Paul's. The Service is supported by five local churches and volunteers on a rotating weekly basis.

Services provided during Stage 3 Restrictions include:

- o Hot Meal Take Away Service (Thursday evening distributed from St. Paul's Anglican Church – Dorset Road, Boronia);
- o Volunteers from the church community prepare, cook and package meals; and
- o St. Paul's Church have a functional commercial kitchen that supports meal preparation and distribution.

This Service is managing to meet demand at this time – approximately 30-40 meals are provided on a weekly basis.

Both Foothills and St. Paul's (in partnership with five other churches) are currently managing to provide Hot Meals two nights a week, as well as deliver community casseroles to the isolated, elderly and more vulnerable members of our community. With an increase in demand, it is anticipated that this service may need to expand to include a Saturday night as well as increase volume on the Wednesday and Thursday nights, and increase the Casserole program (frozen meals). Additional to this, Foothills offers families food vouchers to use at local restaurants, to not only supplement cooked meals but to provide 'normality' and dignity to vulnerable families.

Council has been in discussions with both Foothills and St. Paul's to explore potential for growth and to provide financial support for the purchase of raw food, restaurant vouchers, petrol vouchers (volunteers) and material aid. Additional volunteers will be required to support the programs over the coming months which Council can assist with.

As this report was being finalised more recent information pertaining to the steep increase of demand was being reported. Council will continue to work with all Emergency Relief centres to respond to this escalating situation and ensure funding is available through a formal request process to all Emergency Relief Centres providing hot meals and food packages to vulnerable people.

The following Table details areas of need with approximate costings.



COVID-19 Community and Business Support Package

Table 2 - Proposal to support Foothills Community Care & St. Paul's Anglican Church-Hot Meal Service
(The resources included in this table are approximates only)

Emergency Relief Service	Activity	Current Status	Fresh /nonperishable food	Food Vouchers/ Pay forward meal vouchers	Petrol Vouchers - Volunteers	Material Aid	Budget (12 months)
Foothills Community Care	Hot take away meal program (Wednesday night – FTG).	The program is meeting the demand. Monitor on a weekly basis.	Support ongoing purchase of food.	Supermarket vouchers to support meals program.	Meals are delivered to elderly or people in social isolation.	N/A	\$69,600
	Expand hot meals take away program to include Saturday night.	Consideration for Meals Coordinator & Volunteers to support this initiative. Training and availability.	Support ongoing purchase of food	N/A	Meals are delivered to elderly or people in social isolation.	N/A	\$19,600
	Community Casserole Program(frozen); Target group -elderly and isolated community members. Delivered by volunteers.	Ongoing. Local business has donated a large commercial freezer to support program	Support ongoing purchase of food:	N/A	Meals are delivered to elderly or people in social isolation.	N/A	\$19,600



COVID-19 Community and Business Support Package

Emergency Relief Service	Activity	Current Status	Fresh /nonperishable food	Food Vouchers/ Pay forward meal vouchers	Petrol Vouchers - Volunteers	Material Aid	Budget (12 months)
	Personal care packages provided with food program.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Purchase personal care items as required, e.g.: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Toiletries; • Feminine Hygiene; and • Baby Care products. 	\$10,000
	Pay forward meal vouchers.	Ongoing – Support for local restaurant business - 30 vouchers distributed to date.	N/A	Pay forward vouchers to compliment meals programs	N/A	N/A	\$17,500
	Special events, (e.g. Mother's Day and Father's Day) meals. Partnered with Melbourne Food Squad, Bayswater and Hygiene Business in Bayswater North.	Supplying 500 meals - take away or delivered and pamper packs. (Donated goods & meals)	N/A	Pay forward meal vouchers included in pamper packs.	Petrol vouchers	N/A	\$19,500

2020-05-25 - Ordinary Meeting Of Council

Attachment 9.1.1



COVID-19 Community and Business Support Package

Emergency Relief Service	Activity	Current Status	Fresh /nonperishable food	Food Vouchers/ Pay forward meal vouchers	Petrol Vouchers - Volunteers	Material Aid	Budget (12 months)
St. Paul's Anglican Church	Hot Meal Take Away Food program	Ongoing – meeting demand at present	Support ongoing purchase of food	Supermarket vouchers to support meals program.	N/A	Purchase personal care items as required, e.g.: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Toiletries; • Feminine Hygiene; and • Baby Care products. 	\$91,200
	Thursday night (Boronia)						
Emergency Relief Centres	Pay forward meal vouchers	Currently not providing this service.	N/A	Pay forward vouchers to compliment meals programs	N/A	N/A	\$17,500
	In anticipation of restrictions lifting and further Emergency Relief Centres re-establishing their suspended services an additional \$50,500 has been included.						
Total Budget: \$315,000							



COVID-19 Community and Business Support Package

Recommendation

10. That Council allocate \$315,000 towards the costs of supporting an increase in the provision of hot meals, food vouchers and material aid to the isolated, elderly and more vulnerable people.



COVID-19 Community and Business Support Package

5. Sporting Club Mental Health Awareness Training

Background

As a result of the changing environment in which all Victorians are now living, there is a significant increase in the causes for feelings of stress, anxiety, isolation and concern. Many people have lost employment, social connections, the ability to pursue hobbies and in some cases, loved ones. As a result, there is an expectation of increased need for support across the areas of mental health.

Evidence indicates that community groups, including sporting clubs, provide a unique opportunity for people to gather, connect and grow. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the opportunity to connect as they have traditionally done has been lost. However once restrictions are lifted, the sporting club environment will be the perfect place to provide mental health awareness training and support. It is understood that by reaching one person in a sporting club, this can have a positive impact on up to 10 people within the community.

Aim

Through previous programs delivered to, and within sporting clubs, Council has seen how mental health awareness training can bring significant positive change to a group. By providing members of clubs with sessions on mental health and wellbeing awareness, it educates large numbers of people across the Knox community on how to have real conversations about mental health. It also equips participants with the ability to 'look for the signs' among their teammates and friends. Finally, it also reduces any negative stigmas which may still linger around mental health within the community.

Purpose

The initial stage of this program is offered to provide basic mental health awareness training to all clubs (clubs that opt in) across Knox, with a second phase proposed to offer a more intensive training in Year 2.

Program Delivery

A further, more intensive training offered to those clubs who wish to extend their mental health training within their Club. This would involve an eight hour (part online, part in person) training for two people within the club to become an accredited 'Mental Health First Aider'. The Mental Health First Aid training is more intensive and teaches skills to assist people who are developing a mental health problem, experiencing a worsening of an existing mental health problem or in a mental health crisis, until appropriate professional help is received or the crisis resolves.

This would be offered as a second phase, once the initial training has been rolled out, given there is an opportunity to make more of an impact by reaching more people through Phase 1.



COVID-19 Community and Business Support Package

Table 1 – Mental Health Awareness Training Phases

Phase	Description	Costs	Total Budget
Phase 1	The Mental Health First Aid training would consist of a 90 minute Mental Health Awareness session, delivered at the Club's tenanted facility to the playing group, coaches and committee. The session works best in intimate groups of under 30, so where there are clubs with multiple teams, it is proposed that a number of sessions are offered.	The delivery costs associated with the Mental Health Awareness session is \$800 per session. 220 sessions (80 – 100 clubs) @ \$800 per session = \$176,000 inc. GST	Total program budget - \$200,000 inc. GST
Phase 2	A further, more intensive training offered to those clubs who wish to extend their mental health training within their club. This would involve an eight hour (part online, part in person) training for two people within the club to become an accredited 'Mental Health First Aider'. The Mental Health First Aid training is more intensive and teaches skills to assist people who are developing a mental health problem, experiencing a worsening of an existing mental health problem or in a mental health crisis, until appropriate professional help is received or the crisis resolves. This would be offered as a second phase, once the initial training has been rolled out, given there is an opportunity to make more of an impact by reaching more people through Phase 1.	The delivery costs associated with the Mental Health First Aid Training is \$500 per 2 club members. This will allow some further targeted training from Phase 1. 24 clubs, offering 2 people at each 48 \$500 = \$24,000 inc. GST	

Recommendation

11. Deliver Mental Health First Aid training and awareness programs to all sporting club members across the municipality.



COVID-19 Community and Business Support Package

6. COVID-19 Research

Background

The Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic is resulting in significant economic and social upheaval. The situations being faced by our community are unprecedented and whilst we have anecdotal information about the types of challenges being faced in our community, we have no understanding of the prevalence of these experiences.

Aim

The aim of this research is to collect information from the community to:

- Identify prevalence of issues, and how these occur within geographic and demographic community profiles;
- Fine-tune immediate service delivery to meet the needs of community members;
- Inform recovery planning; and
- Assist with the design of future Pandemic Response Plans.

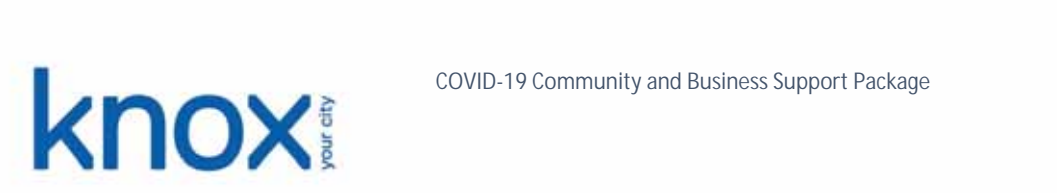
Methodology

Survey

The base survey questions cover the following topic areas:

- Anxiety (mental health measurement);
- Specific coronavirus impacts, with a focus on employment, housing, safety, physical health, parenting responsibilities, and food/groceries.
- Behaviour change since the pandemic (specific to health and wellbeing: exercise, healthy eating, alcohol consumption, social isolation, gambling);
- Business owner impacts (changes to staff);
- Coronavirus health status (whether they have been tested / infected or know anyone who has);
- Where they go for information about Coronavirus; and
- Extensive demographics (to enable cross-analysis by location, gender, age, household type, vulnerable households, culturally and linguistically diverse, health risks). Opportunities for community resilience, connectedness and strengths.

Additional questions will be developed between the consultant and key stakeholders within Council to ensure it adequately covers Council priorities, and can provide information to assist with the development of the Community and Council Plans 2021-2025.



Distribution

The survey will be distributed in two ways:

1.	Open access	<p>Through social media, internal networks, print advertisements, posters, etc.</p> <p>Anyone can access and complete this version of the survey. We generally see people with higher levels of need participating in this type of distribution, therefore it provides detailed information about these needs, but not the incidence of need across the municipality (prevalence).</p> <p>The open access link will be provided by the contractor, and Council will distribute the link through aforementioned channels.</p>
2.	Representative	<p>To understand how common these needs are across the whole community, the representative distribution will aim to speak to households across the shire, representing the variety of demographics and household types. This can then show a more accurate picture of the prevalence of need.</p> <p>The options for representative distribution have been outlined below.</p> <p>The representative survey will be wholly managed by the contractor.</p>

Representative distribution options

Type	Benefits	Limitations
<p>Telephone survey <i>(50% landline, 50% mobile)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trained telephone interviewer can convince people to participate, and talk through the question particulars and clarify if the respondent has any queries. Can better screen for a range of demographics (so that we get better demographic coverage). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social desirability bias (respondents may not be as honest when talking to a person). Under-representation of mobile only households.
<p>Letter/email invite to online survey <i>(using rates database proportional random sampling)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reach all households (not just those with a landline/listed mobile number). More honest responses as they don't have social desirability bias. Selected households where Council has an email address will receive an email invite, reducing resource use. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Low response rate (3-5%) so would need a large number of initial letters to be sent out. Self-selection, meaning people are more likely to not do the survey.
<p>Letter invite with paper form and option to complete online / email invite <i>(using rates database proportional random sampling)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reach all households (not just those with a landline/listed mobile number). Higher response rate (15-40%) as they have the survey immediately in paper form. Selected households where Council has an email address will receive an email invite, reduces resource use. More honest responses. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Self-selection Additional resource use (paper survey forms).



COVID-19 Community and Business Support Package

Representative survey parameters

For the representative survey we will aim for the following parameters, to ensure adequate coverage of the municipality:

- n=50 sample within each of the Wards, with a total of 500 plus sample;
- 50% male/ 50% female; and
- Aim for reasonable representation of key groups, as demonstrated through 2016 Census and ABS Health Survey data:



The open access survey will be left open, with no cap on the number of responses it can receive.

Timeline

A typical timeline for undertaking this work is as follows:

Activity	Duration
Survey design	1-2 weeks
Online / telephone survey programming, database sampling, and paper form design (as needed)	1 week
(if required) printing and mail-out	1 week
Undertake fieldwork	4 weeks
Analysis workshop	1 week
Report	2-3 weeks

Recommendation

12. Undertake a municipal wide survey to a statistical household sample to assess family impact of Covid-19 and inform strategic service planning, longer term relief and recovery planning as well as the new Community and Council Plans.



COVID-19 Community and Business Support Package

7. Not-for-Profit Group Facility Operating Contribution

Despite the closure of community and sporting facilities due to COVID19 restrictions, many costs continue to be incurred by those groups responsible for facility operations. For example, utilities to ensure security through alarms, lighting, etc. and power bills to maintain club assets such as canteen stock.

The closures are having an impact on the ability of Not-for-Profit groups to cover existing and new operating costs due to limited or falling revenues. A one off contribution towards these groups will enable their ongoing operation through the pandemic.

It is recommended to establish a one off Not-for-Profit Group Facility Operating Contribution of \$1000 (total \$160,000) for those Not-for-Profit Groups and Clubs with a current lease or licence operating in a Council facility, to assist with facility operating costs such as utilities and COVID related operating expenses.

Recommendation

13. It is recommended to establish a one off, \$1000 Facility Operating Contribution for those Not-for-Profit Groups and Clubs with a lease or licence in a Council facility.



8. Mentoring Support Program

Background

Mentoring is often used as a support tool to help business owners/operators implement what they are learning into their business planning. Knox City Council currently offers mentoring to those small and medium-sized enterprises/professionals that need urgent advice. The Australian Small Business Advisory Services (ASBAS) and Small Business Victoria (SBV) also continues to provide support, advice and training to businesses.

As businesses seek to rebound from the personal and economic challenges of this pandemic, a more nuanced approach to meaningful and practical business mentoring needs to be explored. Mentoring topics that are more holistic and which focus on financial management, managing relationships, personal and financial support opportunities, are some of the topics that need to be explored.

Aims

The objective is to increase the amount of mentoring and tailored advice to local businesses to assist with managing the impacts of COVID-19.

It is critical that targeted and timely guidance and advice be provided to local businesses wishing to participate in the Mentoring Support Program.

Proposal

The Economic Development team will initially triage local businesses for the Mentoring Support Program, to ensure appropriate and tailored mentoring is provided and benefits are realised.

An external consultant(s) is to be funded and appointed to provide mentoring and coaching to local businesses. The number and length of sessions with each business is to be jointly determined on a case-by-case basis by the external consultant and the Economic Development Team.

Mentoring is typically a private session between the external consultant and the business owner/operator of approximately 1-1.5 hours' duration. It is proposed that up to six mentoring sessions be offered to local businesses.

The Mentoring Program is expected to be promoted in June 2020, with the program commencing in July/August 2020.

A detailed list of topics will be planned with delivery partners when funding is finalised. A key focus will be around business mentoring that considers a more holistic approach to operating a business. Such topics might include:

- Management and leadership strategies;
- Balancing business with personal needs;
- Business growth and expansion;
- Achieving alignment with your business, your people and family/friends;
- Managing crisis, conflict and change;
- Understanding cash flow; and



COVID-19 Community and Business Support Package

- Transitioning out of your business.

Quotes will be sought from external providers to provide mentoring and coaching to local businesses, in accordance with Council's Procurement Policy.

Recommendation

14. It is recommended that the Mentoring Support Program be supported, and together with the Commercial Advice Program, be allocated \$60,000 (in total) in the 2020-21 financial year.



COVID-19 Community and Business Support Package

9. Commercial Advice Program (lease arrangements, tax and wage subsidies)

Background

COVID-19 has had unprecedented impacts on businesses in Knox. Many businesses have either closed their doors or had their operations restricted through social distancing measures. Incomes have been dramatically reduced which has flow-on effects to employees, suppliers, landlords and the local economy.

There is a lot of information available to local businesses at the moment, and together with the complicated nature of the available information, it is a challenge for some business owners and operators to know who to turn to, in order to fully understand the complexities, the possibilities and the implications. Advice relating to legal and matters can assist businesses to understand their rights and their legal obligations. Guidance on tax and finances can assist businesses to keep employees at work, improve cash flow and plan for the future.

Aims

The objective is to provide commercial and legal advice for local businesses via a series of coordinated workshops (and if needed in one-on-one follow up meetings), in relation to lease arrangements, as well as tax and wage subsidies.

As per the Mentoring Support Program, it is critical that targeted and timely guidance and advice be provided to local businesses.

Proposal

An external consultant and/ or legal firm to be funded and appointed to provide specialist commercial advice. These services can be quite costly for businesses, so this program proposes to offer this advice to Knox-based businesses at no cost.

The suitability of the business owners/ operators to receive specialist commercial and legal advice will be jointly determined on a case-by-case basis by the external consultant/ legal firm and the Economic Development team.

The Commercial Advice Program is expected to be promoted in June 2020, with the program commencing in July/ August 2020. Depending on the level of interest in this Program, an alternative events program will be considered that provides general legal and commercial advice.

Quotes will be sought from external providers to provide specialist commercial advice to local businesses, in accordance with Council's Procurement Policy.

Recommendation

15. It is recommended that the Commercial Advice Program be supported, and together with the Mentoring Support Program, be allocated \$60,000 (in total) in the 2020-21 financial year.



COVID-19 Community and Business Support Package

10. Digital Upskill Program

Background

Theoretical teaching of online business practices can be overwhelming for participants, given the amount and evolving nature of information. With current social distancing restrictions, digital optimisation of businesses is critical.

Aims

The objective is to provide local businesses with the skills and understanding of how to enhance the digital nature of their business.

Proposal

The Digital Upskill Program will include a series of practical, small-group sessions in which participants work on their own online channels in real time. This program will complement the Knox eCommerce Grant in offering businesses hands-on skills development in a range of topics related to doing business online.

A digital health check will give participants a view of their current website performance, social media presence, visual identity and comparison to competitors. This will give a clearer understanding of the online gaps the business has and to make a plan post-workshop.

The Program will include a suite of workshops, and is proposed to address:

- Digital Health Check for each participating businesses.
- Skills development and practical application of the following:
 - Website content development;
 - Search engine optimization;
 - Social media and online marketing;
 - eCommerce (online retailing); and
 - Video content creation and application.
- Collateral for participants to build an online strategy to implement post-workshop.

The number and length of workshops may vary depending on the subject matter, and will be confirmed with the external provider appointed to run the workshops.

The Digital Upskill Program is expected to be promoted in June 2020, with the program commencing in July/August 2020.

Quotes will be sought from external providers to provide the immersive workshops, in accordance with Council's Procurement Policy.

Recommendation

16. It is recommended that the Digital Upskill Program be supported, and \$20,000 be allocated in the 2020-21 financial year.



COVID-19 Community and Business Support Package

11. Business Support Grants

Extensive grants and funding are available from the Federal and State Governments. The grants described below complement existing grants and programs offered by other levels of government.

Business Support Grant Funding Guidelines will be developed to support the Program and once finalised, the grants will generally be open to businesses operating in Knox, subject to specific criterion listed below. Businesses will need to demonstrate how the grant will help support their businesses in response to the impact of COVID-19.

The Guidelines formulation and grant evaluations will draw on industry and stakeholder expertise. In addition, a grant value has not been specified for each grant type. Rather, a value has been identified for the entire Business Support Grants program, as flexibility is recommended to respond to demand and specific circumstances.

11.1 Knox eCommerce Grant

Background

Customers have moved to online retail purchasing in large numbers since COVID-19 social distancing restrictions came into place. A second wave of growth is expected due to permanent changes in shopping behaviour.

Aims

The objective of this grant is to support existing businesses in Knox to build their online eCommerce presence and capability including website, social media and other online marketing channels.

This Grant is intended to complement the Digital Upskill Program, where businesses will learn a range of digital optimisation skills in addition to eCommerce.

Providing financial support to businesses in Knox to meet the needs of their customers will not only support their shopfront operations once they reopen or return to normal, it could generally increase and widen their range of customers.

Fund Principles and Scope

The Knox eCommerce Grant is underpinned by the following principles:

1. A responsive and equitable process; and
2. Accountability for funding.

The Knox eCommerce Grant will have the following parameters:

- Businesses with up to 20 staff will be able to apply for up to \$2,000;
- Businesses with up to 50 staff will be able to apply for up to \$3,000;
- Council will reserve the right to part-fund projects; and
- Retrospective projects undertaken from 2 March 2020 can also be considered.



COVID-19 Community and Business Support Package

The application process will require businesses to justify how the eCommerce project will improve outcomes due to the impact of COVID-19, and will include activities such as:

- Website development or redevelopment with eCommerce functionality;
- Online shopping or eCommerce platform development external to the website;
- Social media and other online marketing strategy or delivery; and
- Capability development and/or training for staff to use and implement online activities.

The Knox eCommerce Grant will not be available for:

- Ongoing costs such as web and email hosting, or staff costs;
- Purchase of IT equipment such as computers, tablets or point of sale equipment; and
- Purchase or subscription costs for software or applications.

Eligibility

To be eligible for funding, the following requirements must be met:

- Operating from a commercial or industrial zoned premises in Knox LGA with up to 50 staff;
- Have had a minimum 30% reduction in turnover in their business since February 2020;
- Hold an Australian Business Number (ABN) and have been trading for at least 12 months;
- Be an Australian owned business;
- Be able to show how the project will support their business due to the impact of COVID-19; and
- Hold all relevant licences, permits and approvals necessary to be operating.

Application and Assessment Process

- Applications will be received via Council's SmartyGrants software. Applicants will need to provide proof of eligibility and either an invoice (for retrospective applications) or a quote outlining the project.
- An assessment panel of Council officers and an external member will be convened to assess applications on an ongoing basis. A recommendation will be made to Council's Chief Executive Officer, or Delegate, for determination.

Submission Period

- The submission period is expected to commence in July/ August 2020 and will be open for a six week period, with assessments taking place on a fortnightly basis.

Successful Applicants

- Successful grant recipients will need to sign a letter of offer including terms and conditions prior to funding being provided.



COVID-19 Community and Business Support Package

- Once the project has been completed, the recipient must complete a grant acquittal via SmartyGrants.

Recommendation

17. It is recommended that the Knox eCommerce Grant be supported as part of an overarching Business Support Grants Program (with a total program value of \$335,000) allocated in the 2020-21 financial year.

11.2 Knox Manufacturing and Supply Chain Transition Grant

Background

Knox is home to a number of medical, scientific and pharmaceutical manufacturing firms from global leaders, to smaller family owned businesses. A number of large health equipment wholesalers and medical supply procurement centres are also located in Knox. Future investment at the Wantirna Health Precinct will also expand the profile of health and medical industries in Knox. With such as concentration of firms and high value sub-sectors (the pharmaceutical product manufacturing sub-sector alone adds close to \$1B to the Knox economy), the municipality could have a comparative advantage in medical supplies that merits further investment and industry facilitation.

Recent industry engagement has shown that a number of local manufacturing businesses have responded to COVID-19 created gaps in supply chains, and pivoted their manufacturing using existing capital, labour and knowhow. Such new investment has been for in-demand goods such as personal protective equipment (PPE), sanitation products and fast moving consumer goods for health and nutrition. There may also be other gaps in supply chains that might benefit from manufacturers pivoting.

Manufacturers pivoting to health and medical devices/good supply chains may have to comply with regulations from agencies such as Therapeutic Goods Administration (Australia), and funding to assist with this process would also be beneficial.

The Federal Government has established a platform for the manufacturing sector. Driven by the Department of Industry, with support from respective State Government departments (i.e. DJPR), this program seeks to capture expressions of interest from Australian based manufacturers and individuals looking to assist with supply of goods, services or knowledge in tackling the current COVID-19 outbreak in Australia. This grant will complement this platform.

Aims

The objective of this grant is to support existing manufacturing businesses in Knox to transition and pivot their manufacturing to respond to medical, health and other supply chain needs that have arisen due to COVID-19. In addition, the objective is to assist with regulatory processes, maintain and create jobs, create new local business-to-business opportunities, and build on Knox's comparative advantage in the medical and health sector.



COVID-19 Community and Business Support Package

Fund Principles and Scope

The Knox Manufacturing and Supply Chain Transition Grant is underpinned by the following principles:

1. A responsive and equitable process; and
2. Accountability for funding.

The Knox Manufacturing and Supply Chain Transition Grant will have the following parameters:

- Manufacturing businesses will be able to apply for up to \$20,000; and
- Council will reserve the right to part-fund projects.

The application process will require manufacturing businesses to justify how the grant will improve outcomes due to the impact of COVID-19, and will include activities such as:

- Capital/equipment to facilitate meeting health, medical and other demonstrated supply chain opportunities;
- Obtaining expertise/specialist advice to oversee process improvements, partnership arrangements or compliance requirements;
- Accessing local research/ testing that will support businesses to pivot to new opportunities; and
- Obtaining support/advice to assist local firms that have COVID-19 export opportunities.

Eligibility

To be eligible for funding, the following requirements must be met:


- Hold an Australian Business Number (ABN) and have been trading for at least 12 months;
- Be an Australian owned business;
- Be able to show how the grant funding will support their business to transition to new supply chain opportunities arisen due to COVID-19; and
- Hold all relevant licences, permits and approvals necessary to be operating.

Application and Assessment Process

- Applications will be received via Council's SmartyGrants software. Applicants will need to provide proof of eligibility and a quote outlining the project.
- An assessment panel of Council officers and an external member will be convened to assess applications on an ongoing basis. A recommendation will be made to Council's Chief Executive Officer, or Delegate, for determination.

Submission Period

- The submission period is expected to commence in July/August 2020 and will be open for a six week period, with assessments taking place on a fortnightly basis.



COVID-19 Community and Business Support Package

Successful Applicants

- Successful grant recipients will need to sign a letter of offer including terms and conditions prior to funding being provided.
- Once the project has completed, the recipient must complete a grant acquittal via SmartyGrants.

Recommendation

18. It is recommended that the Knox Manufacturing and Supply Chain Transition Grant be supported as part of an overarching Business Support Grants Program, with a total program value of \$335,000 allocated in the 2020-21 financial year.

11.3 Knox Creative & Cultural Sector and Place Activation Grant

Background

Knox is home to a diverse mix of creative and cultural industries that have been highly impacted by the current pandemic. Analysis of data in the creative and cultural sector shows that there are well over 700 local creative and cultural businesses that are registered for GST, however there are many other smaller creative and cultural businesses that will also be significantly impacted by COVID-19.

The State Government's agency Creative Victoria undertook significant research into the sector in 2013-2015 and estimated that Victoria's creative and cultural economy contributed \$22.7 billion to Victoria in 2013 – representing 8% of the State's total economy, which was more than construction (\$19.8 billion).

The creative and cultural industries also have a much deeper role in our community and are central to expressing identity, liveability, and are linked to social practices and traditions. Many people that work in the creative and cultural sector also have secondary employment in retail trade or accommodation and food services – sectors that are also heavily impacted by COVID-19.

As a sector where there are a number of start-ups, sole traders/micro-businesses and freelancers, the cultural and creative sector is unlikely to have had business continuity and financial measures in place to meet the challenges of COVID-19.

Aims

The objective of this grant is to support cultural and creative sectors in Knox – a sector that is heavily reliant on patron numbers, events/ festivals and tourism. The funding compliments the Sustaining Creative Workers initiative issued by the State Government to support the continued work of Victoria's independent creative practitioners.

Fund Principles and Scope

The Knox Creative & Cultural Sector and Place Activation Grant is underpinned by the following principles:

1. A responsive and equitable process; and
2. Accountability for funding.



COVID-19 Community and Business Support Package

The Knox Creative & Cultural Sector and Place Activation Grant will have the following parameters:

Stream 1 – Industry Facilitation Grant

- Creative and cultural businesses will be able to apply for up to \$5,000;
- Needs to be an individual business application; and
- Council will reserve the right to part-fund projects.

Stream 1 – Industry Facilitation Grant is proposed and will include activities such as:

- Invest in training packages e.g. creative seminars/ creative classes online with skills/ social interaction;
- Innovate their marketing and communication activities such as building search engine optimisation, exploring social media strategies or other communications engagement; and
- Facilitate partnership/ network or research and development opportunities with other creative professionals across new platforms, channels, portals, etc.

Stream 2 – Placemaking and Liveable Communities Grant


- Creative and cultural businesses will be able to apply for up to \$10,000;
- Needs to demonstrate partnerships and community outcomes; and
- Council will reserve the right to part-fund projects.

Stream 2 Placemaking and Liveable Communities Grant will enhance placemaking/liveability and activity centre renewal activities, in Wantirna, Bayswater, Boronia and Ferntree Gully Village, post COVID-19 restrictions.

With COVID-19 having a deep impact on retail, hospitality and community arts and recreation services, this grant recognises the link between vibrant retail and activity centres and the creative and cultural sectors.

These initiatives could include:

- Funding neighbourhood pop-up activations, community art projects/ installations, and cultural development activities;
- Running events/performances/multimedia/digital exhibitions that are connected to the activity centres;
- Supporting partnership arrangements between artists and traders to improve visual merchandising/rejuvenation of shopfronts, activity centre beautification or marketing; and
- Footpath, trading and dining displays that compliment commercial and community activity in these centres.



COVID-19 Community and Business Support Package

Eligibility

To be eligible for funding, the following requirements must be met:

- Hold an Australian Business Number (ABN);
- Be currently operating within the cultural and creative sector, as listed by the ABS/Creative Victoria;
- Be an Australian owned business;
- Be located in or operating within Knox; and
- Hold all relevant licences, permits and approvals necessary to be operating.

Application and Assessment Process

- Applications will be received via Council's SmartyGrants software. Applicants will need to provide proof of eligibility and a quote outlining the project.
- An assessment panel of Council officers and an external member will be convened to assess applications on an ongoing basis. A recommendation will be made to Council's Chief Executive Officer, or Delegate, for determination.

Submission Period

- The submission period is expected to commence in July/August 2020 and will be open for a six week period, with assessments taking place on a fortnightly basis.

Successful Applicants

- Successful grant recipients will need to sign a letter of offer including terms and conditions prior to funding being provided.
- Once the project has completed, the recipient must complete a grant acquittal via SmartyGrants.

Recommendation

19. It is recommended that the Knox Creative & Cultural Sector and Place Activation Grant be supported as part of an overarching Business Support Grants Program (with a total program value of \$335,000) allocated in the 2020-21 financial year.



COVID-19 Community and Business Support Package

12. Retail Activation Strategy

Background

The restriction of economic activity due to COVID-19 has hit some industries harder than others. A survey conducted by REMPLAN has suggested that revenue for Arts & Recreation businesses is down 55.7% and Accommodation & Food Services is down 49.3%. Whilst the results of this survey show that Retail Trade revenue is down 26.4%, this number may be skewed by the huge increase in shopping for grocery items at the beginning of the crisis. Small retailers of clothing, furniture, giftware and others may be suffering losses closer to that of arts, food and accommodation businesses. This has been found anecdotally through conversations with retailers in Knox and members of the Economic Development team.

Aims

The objective is to prepare a Retail Activation Strategy that encourages local residents and workers to shop local.

Proposal

The Retail Activation Strategy will align with work to facilitate creative and cultural initiatives and place activation. Once social distancing measures are rolled back to an acceptable level and it is safe for people to be gathering in larger groups, the Retail Activation Strategy will be able to begin. The Strategy will primarily be based on a 'Buy & Play Local' platform to promote local businesses, places, and art and cultural events. Short to medium term, this program should encourage collaboration between businesses, artists and community organisations operating in these spaces and from a business perspective it could work to support trader organisations to form and build the profile of their local area.

Longer term, after this program has rolled out, work could continue to support traders in local strip shopping centres.

Project scoping is still to occur, however the Program could include:

- Preparation of a Retail Activation 'Buy & Play Local' Strategy; and
- Engagement with local businesses in activity centres to build capacity and support traders.

Project planning and scoping for the Retail Activation Strategy will commence in June/July 2020. A procurement process will follow this. Quotes will be sought from external consultants to prepare the Retail Activation Strategy, in accordance with Council's Procurement Policy.

Recommendation

20. It is recommended that the Retail Activation Strategy be supported, and \$50,000 be allocated in the 2020-21 financial year.



COVID-19 Community and Business Support Package

13. Attachment 1 – Business Support Package background

Over previous weeks, feedback has been received from businesses on what they are experiencing throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. Regional survey data and direct conversations with businesses has informed a Knox Business Support Package that can further complement Federal and State Government business support packages.

The Federal Government’s business support offering is far-reaching and totals \$320B, with a key component being the \$130B JobKeeper Payment scheme. The Victorian Government has established an economic survival package to support Victorian businesses. The \$1.7 billion Economic Survival Package complements the work of the Federal Government and offers a combination of eight funding streams and rebate style support mechanisms such as reimbursement of liquor licensing fees.

Melbourne East Regional Economic Development Group

Knox City Council contributes to, and participates in, the Melbourne East Regional Economic Development Group (MEREDG). A survey was made available to all businesses across the municipalities of Knox, Monash, Whitehorse, Manningham, Maroondah and Yarra Ranges, with a view to obtaining an understanding of how COVID-19 is impacting businesses. This survey closed on 6 April 2020, and a summary of this survey is provided below:

- 823 businesses participated.
- In terms of business types, ‘Accommodation and food services’ had the highest amount of responses (131), and ‘Retail trade’ was the second highest (with 119 responses). The third highest was manufacturing with 61 responses.
- The majority (89.1%) of respondents were small businesses of less than 20 employees.
- 81.1% of businesses indicated that they had been impacted by COVID-19. In terms of how the impacts of COVID-19 had been felt, 90.3% of respondents stated that revenue loss would impact them, and 77.3% believed that customer loss would impact them.
- Just over half of the respondents (423) have either a Risk Management Plan or Business Continuity Plan in place.
- When asked if their business could operate long term if some or all of the employees were unable to attend work due to self-isolation, 58.1% of respondents stated ‘No’.
- When asked how long businesses could remain viable for if they are negatively impacted by COVID-10, the highest response was three months or less (38.7%). This graph is shown below.

Value	Percent	Responses
3 months	38.7%	314
6 months	17.5%	142
9 months	1.0%	8
1 year	5.4%	44
Unsure	37.4%	303



COVID-19 Community and Business Support Package

- In terms of support from Government (across Federal, State and Local), the following was identified:
 - Tax incentives – 29.4%.
 - Loan (reduced/ interest free) – 23.3%.
 - Support services – 11.5%.
 - Listing of local suppliers/ capability – 2.2%.
- A number of other individual ideas were identified. The ideas that could be relevant to Local Government include:
 - General financial/ grant assistance – for businesses and for artists:
 - Advertising; and
 - Creation of suitable web platforms.
 - Reduction of Council rates.
 - Promote locations of 'hard-to-get' items.
 - Assist with the supply of additional cleaning and sanitising materials.
 - Guidance through the multitude/ range of information that is now available in relation to business support.

Based on the MEREDG results, providing business support and guidance, and triaging information, requests and connections, continues to be a critical focus for the Economic Development team.

Direct conversations

The Economic Development Team has engaged with businesses and had in-depth discussions regarding COVID-19 impacts. Each business engaged has requested different levels of support or assistance. Most, if not all, have had to make changes within their business, with some of the changes including standing down staff, establishing eCommerce functionality etc.

The Economic Development Team has referred businesses to State and Federal government support packages, and has provided connections to external mentoring.

Initial analysis of our direct engagement has indicated a need for the following:

- Legal advice to assist in better understanding and navigating issues relating to commercial tenancies and leases;
- Assistance and facilitation for businesses to transition and pivot their manufacturing to products that might be in greater demand, including health sector products; and
- Tax and wage subsidy advice to provide businesses with relevant government package information, including JobKeeper advice.

Information from direct conversations has reiterated the need for the Economic Development Team to continue and enhance its support services.



COVID-19 Community and Business Support Package

Current activities from the Economic Development Team

- **Communication**
 - An Electronic Direct Mail (EDM) is regularly sent to the KnoxBiz database, and is tailored to provide responsive and relevant advice.
 - Regular and relevant COVID-19 updates continue to be made to the Knox Biz website.
 - The Bayswater Business Precinct (BBP) Connect web platform has recently been created and launched. COVID-19 updates and links to government information have also been placed on this web platform.
 - The next edition of Knox Business Life will include relevant COVID-19 updates.

- **Ongoing program/ support services**
 - Ongoing support and guidance is provided to all businesses that have contacted them.
 - In discussions with relevant Council departments, planning permission will not be required during the COVID-19 shutdown period for any wholesale food businesses seeking to retail temporarily from their production site.
 - Connections have been brokered between local manufacturers with health agencies, to assist with pivoting manufacturing and deliver health related products.
 - Small business mentoring is being offered to local businesses that need urgent advice.
 - Online events and training from Australian Small Business Advisory Services (ASBAS) and Small Business Victoria (SBV) continues to be supported and regularly promoted.

- **New projects**
 - A new web platform has been created to provide our residents (and surrounding LGA residents) with information on where food and drinks premises are still open. This has been created to assist those restaurants and cafes that can no longer host patrons on site.
 - The BBP Connect web platform is a forum for businesses within the Bayswater Business Precinct to connect and share information, and to enhance supply chains. Registration for BBP Connect was previously restricted to businesses only within the Bayswater Business Precinct. This has now been opened up to allow all businesses from Knox, Maroondah and Yarra Ranges to register.

2020-09-21 - Ordinary Meeting Of Council

9.1 COVID-19 Community and Business Support Package

SUMMARY: Manager Pandemic Response and Recovery, Angela Morcos

In response to the COVID-19 Pandemic, Council approved its first Community and Business Support package on 30 March 2020, and the second on 25 May 2020. This report recommends initiatives for a third package of support.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Note the continued positive impact that Council's support initiatives have had so far on the Knox community.
2. Approves the following initiatives for inclusion in the third Community and Business Support Package:
 - a. Waive all not-for profit community organisation hire agreement, license and lease fees for the period 1 October 2020 to 31 March 2021, with any advance pro-rata payments to be refunded;
 - b. Refund existing trading permits relating to outdoor dining, display of goods and business A-frame signage with a pro-rata refund applied for permit fees paid for the period 1 January 2021 to 31 March 2021;
 - c. Waive new trading permits fees relating to outdoor dining, display of goods and business A-frame signage received between 1 January 2021 to 31 March 2021 on the basis that the application fee will be waived and only an adjusted pro-rata permit fee to cover the period of 1 April 2021 to 31 August 2021 (the remainder of the 2020/21 permit period) will be applied;
 - d. Waive new trading permits relating to outdoor dining, display of goods and business A-frame signage received after 31 March 2021 on the basis that the application fee will be waived and a pro-rata permit fee will be applied (adjusted monthly) until the end of the 2020/21 permit period (31 August 2021);
 - e. Provide financial assistance to Knox Basketball Incorporated as outlined in Section 2.3;
 - f. Provide 100% fee relief in the 2021 calendar year for health and food premises as listed in Table 1;
 - g. Provide funding to the value of \$85,000 to respond to some impacts of the Pandemic identified from the results of the COVID-19 Household Survey; and
 - h. Provide funding to the value of \$40,000 for a community campaign.
3. Funds the above initiatives with the balance from previously allocated funding and review any additional funding required through the mid-year budget process.

2020-09-21 - Ordinary Meeting Of Council

1. INTRODUCTION

Since March 2020, Council has approved two packages of financial support in recognition of the impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on the Knox community. On 25 May 2020, Council noted that further allocations from the balance of funding for the Community and Business Support Package for the purpose of Stage 3 COVID-19 support initiatives will be considered by Council at a later stage.

In accordance with that decision, this report presents a third Community and Business Support Package. Initiatives in this package can mostly be funded with the balance of funding already approved and an estimated additional \$870,000 that will be considered through the mid-year budget review.

Initiatives in the first and second packages provided support for local businesses and service providers, community and sporting groups, ratepayers, and those who are experiencing hardship and vulnerability during the Pandemic.

The detail of Council decisions for the first and second Community and Business Support Packages are provided in Attachment 1.

2. DISCUSSION

When Council approved its second Community and Business Support Package on 25 May 2020, Stage 3 restrictions imposed during March and April in Victoria were progressively being lifted. However, in response to increasing positive cases of COVID-19, Stage 3 restrictions were imposed again on 9 July 2020 and Stage 4 restrictions on 2 August 2020 in Metropolitan Melbourne.

There will continue to be economic and social impacts from this second wave and tighter restrictions under Stage 4. The Knox COVID-19 Household Survey was undertaken during this time, and the results provide useful insight into the impact on the Knox community to date.

Importantly, the results from the Household Survey confirm that Council's first and second Support Packages have been targeted to areas of need and are already demonstrating positive impact for the Knox community as noted by Council on 25 May 2020. In response to the continued impact of the Pandemic on the Knox community, the third package proposes the extension of some initiatives into the 2021 calendar year and additional items in response to some emerging issues.

2.1 Lease, License and Hire Fees

Council has supported not-for-profit community organisations using Council's facilities by waiving all hire agreement, license and lease fees from 30 March to 30 September 2020, or refunding as required. The not-for-profit community organisations continue to be severely impacted through loss of income and not being able to operate, and Council will continue to monitor and support these organisations. Extending this fee relief to 31 March 2021 is estimated at \$650,000.

2.2 Business Trading Fees

Council has also provided much needed relief and assistance to local businesses by refunding and waiving trading fees including outdoor dining and business A-frame signage fees; and not charging application fees for new permits for the period 30 March 2020 to 31 December 2020. Many of these businesses continue to have trading restricted or trading has temporarily ceased under

2020-09-21 - Ordinary Meeting Of Council

current COVID-19 restrictions. Extending this fee relief for existing permit holders and refunding permit fees and not charging application fees applicable up to 31 March 2021 is estimated at \$9,000.

These permits are valid for a 12-month period from August to August. As an incentive for local businesses to resume trading and new businesses to commence in 2021, waiving the application fee for permits and charging pro-rata fees from 1 April 2021 to 31 August 2021 is estimated at \$12,000.

2.3 Knox Basketball Incorporated

On 7 August 2020, Knox Basketball Incorporated wrote to Council requesting financial assistance because of the impacts of their shut down due to COVID-19. Further information is provided in Confidential Attachment 2 circulated under separate cover.

The following assistance is recommended for Knox Basketball Incorporated until the end of December 2020:

- Extension to the current freeze on their lease and license fees, and Capital Improvement Fund from 30 September 2020 to 31 December 2020 estimated at \$94,751.
- A fully non-repayable financial assistance package that includes a \$20,000 per calendar month payment to assist in paying ongoing monthly fixed premises costs, totaling \$100,000 from 1 August 2020 to 31 December 2020.
- Two one-off financial assistance payments to be made prior to 31 December 2020 to cover annual maintenance costs for items such as State Basketball Centre show court maintenance (\$11,319) and State Basketball Centre and Boronia court re-surfacing (\$46,970). A total cost of \$58,289.

Total assistance recommended: \$253,040

A future report may be presented to Council to consider any further assistance to be provided to Knox Basketball Incorporated beyond 31 December 2020.

2.4 Knox Payment Assistance Policy

On 24 August 2020, Council approved the Payment Assistance Policy addendum COVID-19 Pandemic Payment Relief. The initial addendum covered the period 31 March 2020 to 30 September 2020. The revised addendum is due for review by 1 March 2021 and the substantive Payment Assistance Policy is due for review February 2021.

The addendum provides details of the assistance available to those currently experiencing, or at the risk of experiencing financial hardship due to the impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic. It provides the additional assistance of:

- Zero-payment plans for the term of the addendum.
- Less stringent requirements for interest free periods during the term of the addendum.
- Interest free periods for all categories of rate payers.
- Payment plans that exceed a period of 12 months from the date of issue of a rates notes (for rates only).
- Council deferral of debt collection where payment plans are in place.

Interest waived to March 2021 is estimated at \$500,000.

2020-09-21 - Ordinary Meeting Of Council

2.5 Fee Relief for Food and Health Premises

Council registers business premises in accordance with the Food Act 1984 and Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008. There are approximately 1,400 premises across the various classes (listed in the table below). All businesses renewed their registration at the end of 2019 for the 2020 calendar year with fees ranging up to \$608.00 (except large supermarkets with fees of \$2080.00).

Health premises, restaurants and cafes were significantly impacted by Stage 3 restrictions in March 2020 that required them to close or reduce their business functions to take away or delivery only. All forms of in-house dining were prohibited, resulting in financial impact on these proprietors, some of whom have requested refunds of registration fees.

Easing of these restrictions in May 2020 allowed in-house dining with limited capacity due to density quotient requirements of 4sqm per person and a maximum of 20 persons in an enclosed area. Whilst many businesses re-opened with these controls in place, some chose to remain closed anticipating further easing of restrictions would be more economically viable.

As tighter restrictions were re-introduced in July and August, health premises were required to close and food businesses closed or modified their service to take away or delivery again where possible. These restrictions are in place until at least 13 September 2020, and no detail is currently available about potential restrictions post this date.

Information provided to the Department of Health and Human Services Regional Office demonstrates some variation in council responses to supporting food and health premises across the Eastern Region:

- Council A: 2021 fees have been reduced by 25%.
- Council B: 2020 fees 25% refunded if impacted, and 100% refund if closed until the end of the year or indefinitely.
- Council C: Fee relief not yet determined but will be provided in some form.
- Council D: No relief for 2020 and 2021 not yet determined.

The registration renewal process for 2021 will commence with initial documentation sent to business operators in late October, to be paid by 31 December. At this stage there are many unknowns, particularly how many businesses will survive COVID-19 and reopen. The current impacts of the Pandemic are varied across and within different categories or classes of business and future impacts are somewhat unknown. Some businesses have thrived through the Pandemic, such as chain supermarkets and some food manufacturers, but most have been severely impacted financially. No fee relief has been provided for the 2020 calendar year.

Table 1:

Class	Type of Business	Recommended Fee Relief
Class 1	Aged Care, Child Care and Hospitals	No fee relief
Class 2 and 3	Restaurants, Take-Away, Cafes, School Canteens, Chain Supermarkets Supermarkets, Service Stations (including 7-Eleven) and other premises with sealed packages	Fee relief with exception of chain supermarkets (Woolworths, Coles, Aldi), food manufacturers and large chain food premises (i.e. McDonalds, KFC etc.)

2020-09-21 - Ordinary Meeting Of Council

Class	Type of Business	Recommended Fee Relief
Class 4	Notification only – packaged confectionery, e.g., newsagents	N/A – no fee charged
Street Trader	Itinerant/temporary food sellers, markets	Fee relief
Health Premises	Beauty Parlour, Nail Salon, Tattooist, Accommodation	Fee relief (with exception of rooming houses)

100% fee relief for the businesses listed above for the 2021 calendar year is estimated at \$500,000.

2.6 Flexible Funding – Response to COVID-19 Household Survey

Data from the Household Survey is still being analysed, however, several areas have been identified where the COVID-19 Pandemic is having a concerning impact on the health and wellbeing of the Knox community.

An initial assessment has been undertaken of these concerns and impacts against work already underway and initiatives already funded from Council and external grants to identify potential gaps where funding could be targeted. Areas where there currently limited or no resources dedicated include:

- Social isolation.
- Safety (including family violence and perception of safety outside the home).
- Exercise, alcohol consumption and healthy eating, including food security for some groups.
- Financial vulnerability, resilience and parenting/caregiving, mental health.

Specific actions or initiatives to respond to these areas have not yet been determined because the survey results are still being analysed. However, \$85,000 is recommended in this support package to fund Council's response to some impacts in the areas listed above.

2.7 Community Campaign

The sudden sharp increase in COVID-19 cases in Victoria reignited community anxiety and heightened concerns about impacts on individuals and the economy. A community campaign is proposed to generate a sense of empowerment to make a difference in difficult times by supporting local business, being kind to ourselves and one another and using help available if people need it. It will support Council's response, relief and recovery effort by generating awareness of information and services available to individuals and businesses and contributing to a cohesive story that gives the community hope that we will emerge stronger together from the Pandemic. It will also set the foundations for recovery which identifies the importance of community and business led initiatives to build resilience.

The campaign will extend on the "Be Kind" campaign running in neighbouring councils Maroondah, Casey, Yarra Ranges and Manningham to support a regional response while the emphasis will be on messages that target priorities specific to Knox. It will make use of visual assets such as pavement stickers, window decals, floor stickers, bin surrounds, bus stops and billboards in high impact locations such as neighbourhood shopping precincts and shared paths to maximise reach in the community. It will use storytelling to highlight community and business led initiatives in line with the campaign objectives and activities that residents can get involved in

2020-09-21 - Ordinary Meeting Of Council

from home. A digital advertising campaign will convert online shoppers to support local businesses with ecommerce facilities, and campaign assets will be used to address key social issues emerging from the Pandemic.

Total budget for this campaign is estimated at \$75,000. \$40,000 has been included in funding sought for the third package and \$35,000 will be funded from existing budgets.

3. CONSULTATION

There is ongoing consultation and engagement with residents, businesses, partners and Council staff during the Pandemic. These discussions and data from the Household Survey have informed considerations for the third Community and Business Support Package.

4. ENVIRONMENTAL / AMENITY ISSUES

The closure of Council facilities and services, and local businesses has a direct impact on the amenity of the Knox community.

5. FINANCIAL & ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS

\$3 million has been allocated for initiatives to support the Knox community and businesses in Knox to manage and respond to the COVID-19 Pandemic from the 2020-21 adopted budget. \$1.82 million was allocated to initiatives in the second package that included a broad range of community wellbeing and business initiatives to be implemented across the municipality to facilitate relief and recovery.

In consideration of the impact of recent restrictions and data gathered from the COVID-19 Household Survey, initiatives in this report are estimated at \$2,049,040. Once the remaining \$1.82 million from the original \$3 million allocated is accounted for, it is estimated an additional \$869,040 to fund the recommended components of the third relief package may be required.

Initiative	Estimated Cost
Lease, License and Hire Fees	\$650,000
Business Trading Fees	\$21,000
Knox Basketball Incorporated	\$253,040
Penalty Interest Waived	\$500,000
Food and Health Premise Registration Fees	\$500,000
Response to Household Survey	\$85,000
Be Kind Community Campaign	\$40,000
Estimated Total	\$2,049,040

Officers are monitoring opportunities for grant funding from State and Commonwealth Governments to support Council's response to the impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic.

2020-09-21 - Ordinary Meeting Of Council

At the time of writing in early September, the Victorian Government has only just released its "Roadmap to COVID-Normal"; and has only just announced its support package that will be provided to assist the Victorian community in recognition of the impacts of the Roadmap. Details of this support package need to be investigated to understand opportunities and implications for the Knox community.

6. SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The second wave of the COVID-19 Pandemic will worsen impacts initially expected in Victoria and the local Knox community. Initiatives presented in this report will provide immediate relief in some areas where there is known impact. Support provided by Council to date has been well-received by the community and has had positive impacts as noted by Council on 25 May 2020.

7. RELEVANCE TO KNOX COMMUNITY AND COUNCIL PLAN 2017-2021

Goal 4 - We are safe and secure

Strategy 4.2 - Enhance community connectedness opportunities to improve perceptions of safety

Strategy 4.4 - Protect and promote public health, safety and amenity

Strategy 4.5 - Support the provision of emergency services

Goal 5 - We have a strong regional economy, local employment and learning opportunities

Strategy 5.1 - Attract new investment to Knox and support the development of existing local businesses, with particular focus on Advanced Manufacturing, Health, Ageing and Business Service sectors

Strategy 5.3 - Promote and improve infrastructure and technology within the municipality and enhance strategic employment places for business

Strategy 5.4 - Increase and strengthen local opportunities for lifelong learning, formal education pathways and skills development to improve economic capacity of the community

Goal 6 - We are healthy, happy and well

Strategy 6.1 - Mitigate lifestyle risks such as smoking, risky alcohol consumption and drug use, obesity, lack of physical activity and poor nutrition

Strategy 6.2 - Support the community to enable positive physical and mental health

Goal 7 - We are inclusive, feel a sense of belonging and value our identity

Strategy 7.3 - Strengthen community connections

Goal 8 - We have confidence in decision making

Strategy 8.2 - Enable the community to participate in a wide range of engagement activities

8. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Under Section 80c of the Local Government Act 1989 officers providing advice to Council must disclose any interests, including the type of interest.

2020-09-21 - Ordinary Meeting Of Council

Author – Manager Pandemic Response and Recovery, Angela Morcos – In providing this advice as the Author, I have no disclosable interests in this report.

Officer Responsible – Director, Community Services, Tanya Scicluna – In providing this advice as the Officer Responsible, I have no disclosable interests in this report.

9. CONCLUSION

The third Community and Business Support Package will provide additional support in recognition of the impact of the COVID-19 on the Knox community.

The short, medium and potential longer-term impacts of the Pandemic and the restrictions imposed since July 2020 will become clearer in the coming months, and this will inform the recovery plan to rebuild the local economy and address social, health and wellbeing concerns.

10. CONFIDENTIALITY

Attachment 2 is included in the confidential agenda, having been declared confidential information pursuant to Section 77(2)(c) of the Local Government Act 1989, as the information relates to Council business information, that will prejudice Council's position in commercial negotiations.

Report Prepared By: Manager Pandemic Response and Recovery, Angela Morcos

Report Authorised By: Director Community Services, Tanya Scicluna

Attachments

1. Attachment 1 - Council Decisions First and Second COVID-19 Support Packages - IB 2020-09-07 [9.1.1 - 3 pages]



ATTACHMENT 1

COUNCIL DECISIONS: FIRST AND SECOND COVID-19 COMMUNITY AND BUSINESS SUPPORT PACKAGES

At the Ordinary Meeting of Council held on 30 March 2020, Council resolved to:

1. Undertake an immediate review of the Knox Payment Assistance Policy with a view to addressing emerging consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on the livelihoods of the Knox community;
2. Resolve to not charge interest on rates from 31 March 2020 to 30 June 2020 for late payments and charges; noting that the extension of this will form part of the 2020-21 budget deliberations;
3. Waive trading fees, including outdoor dining and business A-frame signage fees for the period 30 March 2020 until 30 June 2020 as a pro-rata refund for renewal permit fees and refunding the full application fee amount for new applications received in that period; noting that the extension of this will form part of the 2020-21 budget deliberations;
4. Waive all Not-For Profit community organisation hire agreement, license and lease fees for the remainder of the 2019-20 Financial Year, with any advance pro-rata payments to be refunded;
5. Waive Knox Basketball Incorporated's Annual Asset Renewal Fee for the remainder of the 2019-20 Financial Year;
6. Amend the 2019-20 Budget by providing COVID-19 Emergency Funding of \$100,000, such amount to be expended by the Chief Executive Officer wholly in connection with Council's response to COVID-19 as is considered appropriate;
7. Defer the following proposed events due to government imposed restrictions on gatherings:
 - a. Fire Fighter Recognition Function; and
 - b. Annual Joint Advisory Committee Meeting; and;
8. Continue to formulate its Community Relief Plan, complementing the Federal and Victorian State Governments COVID-19 response, with priority of addressing any identified gaps that particularly impact Knox community, with further reports to be presented to Council for consideration and implementation as soon as practicable.



At the Ordinary Meeting of Council held on 25 May 2020, Council resolved to:

1. Note the positive impact that Council's Stage 1 Community and Business Support Package has had on the Knox community
2. Endorse the extension of the following Stage 1 initiatives:
 - a. Resolve to not charge interest on rates for the period 1 July 2020 to 30 September 2020 for late payments and charges;
 - b. Waive trading fees, including outdoor dining and business A-frame signage fees for the period 1 July 2020 to 31 December 2020 as a pro-rata refund for renewal permit fees and refunding the full application fee amount for new applications received in that period;
 - c. Waive all Not-For Profit community organisation hire agreement, license and lease fees for the period 1 July 2020 to 30 September 2020, with any advance pro-rata payments to be refunded; and
 - d. Waive Knox Basketball Incorporated's Annual Asset Renewal Fee for the period 1 July 2020 to 30 September 2020.
3. Approve the Stage 2 Community and Business Support Package and commence implementation of the following initiatives, effective from 25 May 2020:
 - a. Increase funding for the Council Minor Grant Program to the value of \$51,500, for the purpose of supporting community initiatives;
 - b. Increase funding for the Council Community Development Fund to the value of \$80,000, for the purpose of reactivating community connectedness and initiating recovery projects;
 - c. Establish a one-off Council 'Supporting Local Services Fund' to the value of \$200,000, for the purpose of supporting local service organisations to increase service provision;
 - d. Provide funding to the value of \$15,000 for the purpose of enabling a temporary Council facility, at the discretion of the Chief Executive Officer, for the purpose of providing shower and laundry facilities for the vulnerable in our community;
 - e. Provide funding to the value of \$50,000 for the purpose of investigating and implementing an ongoing solution for a permanent shower and laundry facility for the vulnerable in the Knox community;
 - f. Provide funding to the value of \$315,000 for the purpose of Council partnering with local organisations to enable and support the provision of hot meals to the vulnerable in our community;
 - g. Provide funding to the value of \$200,000 to deliver a Mental Health First Aid Training and Awareness Program to local sporting clubs, for the purpose of assisting with the well-being and resilience of community members;
 - h. Provide funding to the value of \$25,000 to undertake a municipal-wide survey assessing the impact of COVID-19 on Knox households to inform strategic service planning and longer-term relief and recovery planning;



- i. Provide funding to the value of \$160,000, for a one-off \$1,000 Facility Operating Contribution for Not-for-Profit Groups and Clubs with a lease or licence in a Council facility, to support facility operating costs such as utilities and COVID-19 related expenses;
 - j. Provide funding to the value of \$30,000, to expand Council's Mentoring Support Program, for the purpose of assisting local business to manage and response to COVID-19;
 - k. Establish a Council "Commercial Advice Program" to the value of \$30,000, for the purpose of providing leasing, tenancy, taxation and financial advice to local business;
 - l. Establish a Council "Digital Upskills Program" to the value of \$20,000, for the purpose of enhancing digital marketing skills for local business;
 - m. Establish a Business Support Grants Program, to the total value of \$335,000, that includes an "e-commerce Grant" for the purpose of enhancing e-commerce capability and functionality for local business, a "Manufacturing and Supply Transition Grant" for the purpose of assisting the pivoting of local business; and a "Creative and Cultural Sector Industry Facilitation and Place Activation Grant" for the purpose of providing assistance to Knox's creative and cultural sector; and
 - n. Prepare a Retail Activation Strategy to the value of \$50,000, for the purpose of developing a "buy-local" program to support increased trade for local businesses.
4. To receive a report at the June 2020 Ordinary Meeting of Council to consider the governance arrangements necessary for the grants and payments established under the relevant new grant initiatives.
 5. Authorise the Chief Executive Officer to execute all agreements relating to the above initiatives.
 6. Note that further allocations from the balance of the Community and Business Support Package for the purpose of Stage 3 COVID-19 support initiatives will be considered by Council at a later stage.

2021-03-22 - Meeting Of Council

14.1 COVID-19 Community and Business Support Package

SUMMARY: Manager Pandemic Response and Recovery, Angela Morcos

In response to the COVID-19 Pandemic, Council has approved three Community and Business Support Packages to date. This report recommends initiatives for a fourth package of support.

Further to the Community and Business Support Package, this report also provides an update on the Outdoor Eating and Entertainment Package funded by the State Government and recommends a continuation of part of the program for one year past 31 August 2021.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Note the continued positive impact that Council's support initiatives have had so far on the Knox community.
2. Note the appreciation and thanks expressed by Knox Basketball Incorporated for support provided by Council during the COVID-19 pandemic, and that no further Council financial support is sought.
3. Approves the following initiatives for inclusion in the fourth Community and Business Support Package:
 - a. Provide a sliding scale of fee relief for casual hirers of Knox Community Arts Centre as outlined in Section 2.5 of report;
 - b. Refund existing trading permits relating to the display of goods and business A-frame signage with a pro-rata refund applied for permit fees paid for the period 1 April 2021 to 31 August 2021;
 - c. Waive all new trading permits fees relating to outdoor dining, the display of goods and business A-frame signage received between 1 April 2021 and 31 August 2021;
 - d. Waive interest on rates for the period 1 April 2021 to 30 June 2021 for late payments and charges; and
 - e. Extend the review date of the substantive Payment Assistance Policy through to 30 June 2021 and adopt the updated Payment Assistance Policy provided in Attachment 2.
4. Support the retention of parklets (outdoor dining areas in car parking spaces) for a further year, between 1 September 2021 and 31 August 2022, for those hospitality businesses that have had them installed between 1 September 2020 and 31 August 2021.
5. Write to the Minister for Local Government, and request that rather than returning any unspent funds from the Local Government Outdoor Eating and Entertainment Package, which is due to be expended by 30 June 2021, that Knox Council be given the ability to utilise the grant on outdoor dining and entertainment until all the grant funding is expended.

2021-03-22 - Meeting Of Council

1. INTRODUCTION

Since the declaration of the COVID-19 Pandemic in March 2020, Council has approved three packages of financial support in recognition of the impact on the Knox community. These packages were adopted at the following Council Meetings:

- 30 March 2020
- 25 May 2020
- 21 September 2020

These packages have had a positive impact through the support provided for local businesses and service providers, community and sporting groups, ratepayers, and those who are experiencing hardship and vulnerability during and in response to the Pandemic. Additionally, some initiatives were funded to support longer-term recovery from the Pandemic, including the Be Kind campaign and the COVID-19 Household Survey.

The detail of Council decisions for the three Community and Business Support Packages are provided in Attachment 1.

In September 2020, the State Government announced the Outdoor Eating and Entertainment Package, which encourages Victorian hospitality businesses to establish outdoor dining spaces. As part of the Package, metropolitan councils were provided with a grant of \$500,000 to assist businesses with outdoor dining, with Council receiving the grant at the end of October 2020. The grant is required to be expended by June 2021, with any unspent funds returned to the State Government.

The Economic Development/Business Recovery team within City Futures is working with hospitality businesses to install outdoor dining spaces, either on footpaths or in car parking spaces, (known as "parklets"). The funding, which is available until 30 June 2021, has also supported Council to waive outdoor dining fees that are ordinarily applicable. There is an opportunity to increase the amount of outdoor dining and entertainment in Knox if Council had more time to expend the \$500,000 grant. Separate to the matter of funding, businesses that have had parklets installed could realise additional economic benefits if the installations are allowed to remain in place for a longer period of time.

2. DISCUSSION

2.1 Current Impact of Council's Relief Support

Council's Community and Business Support Packages have had a positive impact for the Knox community as noted by Council on 25 May 2020 and 21 September 2020, and the results from the Knox COVID-19 Household Survey confirmed that they have been targeted to areas of need.

A summary of the outcomes and impact to date of these packages is outlined below:

- Business Support Grants:
 - Manufacturing: six successful grants totaling \$99,842.
 - eCommerce: 57 successful grants totaling \$106,115.96.
 - Creative and Cultural Sector: 15 successful grants totaling \$87,014.

2021-03-22 - Meeting Of Council

- Outstanding: \$42,028.04 (discussions are currently underway about how to allocate the remaining budget).
- Retail Activation Strategy – in development with business engagement and place audits occurring in late February and March.
- Six workshops delivered through the Digital Upskills Program with 56 businesses registered and an average attendance of 29 per session achieving above industry average of 52% attendance. 100% of participants would recommend the program to others and 78% of participants are working on a clear digital marketing plan as a result of attending the workshops.
- Approximately 20 businesses have accessed support from Council's business mentor or financial advisory consultants through the Mentoring and Commercial Advice program. A series of workshops titled Finance Essentials are being delivered fortnightly from 23 February to 4 May 2021.
- \$50,000 allocated to ten applicants through the contested Hot Meals Program for Vulnerable Families and over \$180,000 provided through the uncontested Hot Meals Program.
- \$199,999 provided to 13 successful applications to the Supporting Local Services Grants.
- Approximately ten people per week are accessing the shower program operating from Rowville Community Centre.
- 112 recipients of additional funding through the Community Development Fund.
- Additional \$51,500 expended for recovery and relief through the monthly minor grants program.
- Second COVID Household Survey planned for April 2021.
- Multicultural and LGBTIQ+ consultation and engagement completed by March 2021.
- Be Kind campaign actively supporting and driving strategic recovery communications.

Council's Specialised Access Team is also providing support that is funded by the State Government's Community Activation and Social Isolation (CASI) initiative:

- Support provided to 115 people, including help seekers referred by the Community Support Phone Line and those who were referred from within Knox. Of these, 102 people were offered supports, including practical assistance, emergency (same-day) food parcels, masks and supported referrals as required.
- Four hundred and forty-nine (449) people over 65 years expressed feeling socially isolated during the COVID lockdown when surveyed between July to September 2020. CASI funding enabled outreach to occur through phone calls that resulted in 300 isolated people being supported with practical assistance, facilitated referrals and/or regular wellbeing phone calls.
- Local service provider networks and partnerships have been strengthened through this work.

2021-03-22 - Meeting Of Council

2.2 Current COVID-19 Context

Stage Four restrictions introduced in August 2020 in response to Victoria's second wave were progressively relaxed from mid-October 2020. Victoria transitioned to "COVIDSafe Summer" settings before the end of 2020, however, since then there have been some shorter periods of tightened restrictions and a five-day "circuit breaker" lockdown with Stage Four level restrictions in mid-February 2021 to manage specific clusters and outbreaks.

The current COVIDSafe settings allow the majority of businesses, organisations and activities to operate and function. There are some restrictions that may have an impact on some industries and sectors, such as reduced capacity for customers and the need to comply with COVIDSafe practices such as increased cleaning. However, it is important to note that the impact is varied, and some industries and sectors are experiencing positive impacts with increased patronage.

The initiatives recommended as part of a fourth package of support have been developed in consideration of the potential continued impact of the Pandemic on some parts of the Knox community.

2.3 Lease, License and Hire Fees

Not-for-profit community groups operating in Council's facilities have received relief for their fees via the previous Community and Business Support Packages. It has been noted that not-for-profit community groups are an essential fabric of the Knox community, playing a significant role in building and maintaining social infrastructure, capital and resilience. Council has long recognised the important role that community facilities provide to the community in encouraging social and civic participation and supporting the wellbeing of residents.

Currently, there are 166 not-for-profit community groups operating out of a Council facility, which includes pavilions and grounds, with a lease or license (including seasonal tenancy) agreement. This does not include not-for-profit organisations who currently utilise a Council facility under a hire agreement. \$456,099 in support has previously been provided to groups with a lease or license agreement.

As part of Council's second Community and Business Support Package, all not-for-profit groups and clubs with a lease or license in a Council facility were also provided with a one-off \$1,000 facility operating contribution to support operating costs such as utilities and COVID-19 related expenses. Most sporting clubs were also able to tap into the State Government - Community Sector Short Term Survival Package, where grants of up to \$2,000 were available for associations and leagues and grants of up to \$1,000 were available for individual clubs and community sporting and active recreation organisations. A top-up grant of \$1,000 for associations and leagues and \$500 for clubs and community sporting and active recreation organisations was provided automatically to organisations who received a grant through the first funding round of this program.

Sporting and Leisure Clubs

As a result of this previous relief and the impact of COVID19, some of the Winter Seasonal Tenants have written to Council to request that their tenancy fees for the coming 2021 season also be waived.

2021-03-22 - Meeting Of Council

Council officers are seeing some of the impacts of COVID19, such as a potential divide between the stronger and weaker clubs following the 2020 winter season where they were unable to play. Some clubs will have limitations placed on their social functions, Thursday night meals and match days as a result of the COVIDSafe density quota limitations whilst others will be less impacted. Clubs may need to get creative (i.e. outdoor options or looking to have more than one session) with how to best manage through these challenges because it is likely some COVIDSafe restrictions will be in place for some time. Several questions have also been raised regarding return of team numbers (participation), possible lack of volunteers and loss of sponsorship.

Discussions with clubs have indicated there is an expected drop in female teams in soccer by approximately 30 percent. This issue is prevalent in football as well with ages 10, 12, 14 showing a drop. The average numbers in clubs remain almost unchanged even with the drop in female and girls' participation, thus, indicating a significant growth in boys' teams.

Representatives from several winter sporting clubs have all informed officers that they have more teams than last year. Of note, Knox has a unique fee structure – there is a ground fee, a pavilion fee and a team fee. Therefore, less teams equals being charged a reduced team fee.

Volunteer retention is of concern to many clubs this coming season and hence may create additional pressure on those people who have chosen to be involved in a community club.

Sponsorship for many clubs was an area where clubs may have suffered throughout COVID19, however, many larger clubs and astutely managed clubs have had very little impact in this area. Some clubs have either retained sponsors or had an increase in sponsorship.

Reductions in members or participation have had less of an impact as first thought, and is also likely to be offset by State Government grants, and increased sponsorship for some, therefore minimising the need for further assistance from Council.

The following Eastern Region Councils have returned to charging their tenant sporting clubs:

- Whitehorse;
- Boroondara;
- Maroondah;
- Monash; and
- Yarra Ranges.

Neighbourhood Houses, Senior Citizens Groups and Other Community-Based Organisations

The impact of COVID restrictions in 2020 was varied across other not-for-profit groups operating in Council buildings. Some were unable to operate at all, some were able to deliver essential services only, and others were able to continue operating by adjusting their service delivery options to provide COVID-related services such as testing.

Summary

All groups have resumed operating under current COVIDSafe requirements and on balance, it is expected there will be limited financial impact on most groups during 2021 assuming the COVID-19 situation remains stable.

If Council considers continued fee relief for not-for-profit organisations in Council facilities, the potential cost is detailed below.

2021-03-22 - Meeting Of Council

Description	Potential Fees Waived April to June 2021	Potential Fees Waived July to September 2021
Annual Rentals, e.g., Senior Citizens and Neighbourhood Houses	\$3,237.00	\$3,237.00
EACH Commercial Rental	\$11,250.00	\$11,250.00
Leisure Annual Rentals includes Tennis Clubs	\$6,270.00	\$6,270.00
Leisure Winter Rentals – April to September	\$112,986.50	\$112,986.50
Total	\$133,743.00	\$133,743.00

2.4 Knox Basketball Incorporated

Knox Basketball Incorporated have reported that participation has decreased by approximately 20 – 30% as compared to pre-COVID. Knox Basketball Incorporated have strategies in place to address this such as enabling late entry of teams into the season. They anticipate that within the next month that the remaining teams will return to competition. As expected, junior competition has returned at a stronger rate than that of senior competition.

There have been some positive outcomes, including one new club joining the competition (moved from Dandenong Stadium). This equates to an increase of approximately 20 junior teams into the competition. There are an additional 15 teams in the adult social competition.

In practice, this equates to the peak timeslots being fully occupied. At present due to the slight decrease in team numbers, sessions are concluding earlier in the evenings. All staff have returned to work.

Additional events such as cheerleading are still impacted by COVID restrictions. Bookings have been discussed but not confirmed. For Knox Basketball Incorporated these bookings are accommodated by rescheduling games from the State Basketball Centre to an alternate stadium location. So, whilst these bookings do reflect a decrease in revenue, the booking does not impact on participation in basketball at the State Basketball Centre and Boronia Basketball Stadium.

Knox Basketball Incorporated are confident they are on a good recovery path and do not require additional assistance beyond the end of March 2021. Their CEO has expressed that they are extremely thankful of Council's support to date. It is considered appropriate that no further Council financial support be extended to Knox Basketball Incorporated.

2.5 Theatre Hire Fees – Sliding Scale Reduction

The arts and cultural sector is widely recognised as one of the sectors that has been impacted the most by the COVID-19 Pandemic. Many activities, services and events were unable to operate during most of 2020 and were the last to resume under the State Government's Roadmap to Recovery. Additionally, smaller business and events may not be eligible for State Government grant funding that is targeted at larger-scale events.

Casual hirers of Knox Community Arts Centre (KCAC) are impacted by COVIDSafe regulations, whereby the capacity of patrons within the theatre has been reduced to as low as 50% in recent times in order to meet social distancing requirements for indoor entertainment centres.

2021-03-22 - Meeting Of Council

Council officers have received feedback from several regular casual theatre hirers, including Knox-based community theatre groups and schools, that it is not viable for them to hire the space at the usual 100% full hire fee when they are unable to fill the theatre to 100% capacity. This is because each seat represents ticket sale income, so reducing the venue seating capacity also reduces the income capacity by the same amount.

Charging the usual theatre hire fees with this reduced potential income from ticket sales has made hiring KCAC financially challenging for many local groups, and some may choose to hire other local theatres where a percentage discount is offered based upon venue capacity, such as Karralyka Theatre, Knox's most similar local theatre venue.

Many Councils represented in the Victorian Association of Performing Arts Centres (VAPAC) have adopted the same framework for reduced hire fees on a sliding scale in line with the reduced seating and ticketing capacity as provided by the current Victorian COVIDSafe regulations for entertainment venues.

It is recommended that the VAPAC sliding scale discount for casual hirers of KCAC is applied, in line with the percentage reductions of theatre seating capacity to meet COVIDSafe compliance. The discount framework and financial impact to Council is as follows:

COVID Patron Capacity Restriction	Casual Entire Venue Hire Fee applied	Discount Offered	Income Based on Current April to June 2021 Booking Enquiries	Known Financial Impact (Income Loss) to Council
NONE	\$96/hour (100%)	0	\$9,408	\$0*
75% **	\$72/HOUR (75%)	25%	\$7,056	\$2,352
50%	\$48/hour (50%)	50%	\$4,704	\$4,704

* Where no discount is applied, we are likely to lose at least half of the current booking enquiries.

** 75% is the most likely scenario or venue capacity restrictions for the period of April to June 2021, which is the current COVIDSafe restrictions for entertainment venues.

2.6 Business Trading Fees

Council has provided much needed relief and assistance to local businesses by refunding and waiving street trading permit fees for businesses wish to display goods or a sign on Council Land 31 March 2021. Council also waived fees for a broad range of food premises across Knox for the 2021 calendar year, affected by the pandemic. Retail and hospitality sectors are widely recognised as two of the hardest hit sectors during COVID-19.

Extending this fee relief for existing permit holders up to 31 August 2021 is estimated at \$5,800 and can be supported by the available grant funding.

2.7 Knox Payment Assistance Policy

As of 1 March 2021, Council has 867 rate assessments currently on COVID-19 relief arrangements and a further 303 have accessed such arrangements and subsequently cleared the debt.

2021-03-22 - Meeting Of Council

Council is still receiving requests for payment assistance relating to the impact of COVID-19 from ratepayers on a daily basis while there are also a significant number of ratepayers yet to contact Council by way of payment or request for assistance. Support provided through the Commonwealth's Jobkeeper initiative is due to end at the end of March 2021. Whilst the impact of this is not yet known, the financial impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on households in suburbs in Knox ranges from ratings of medium to high, according to the Taylor Fry COVID-19 Financial Impact Index.

Other councils offering relief to ratepayers until 30 June 2021 include:

- Glen Eira;
- Monash; and
- Darebin.

Extending the interest free period for all categories of rate payers to 30 June 2021 by updating the addendum will further support those already on arrangements and those who subsequently enter arrangements. This extension would continue to provide:

- Zero-payment plans for the term of the addendum
- Less stringent requirements for interest free periods during the term of the addendum
- Interest free periods for all categories of rate payers
- Payment plans that exceed a period of 12 months from the date of issue of a rates notes (for rates only)
- Council deferral of debt collection where payment plans are in place

A draft updated Payment Assistance Policy addendum is provided in Attachment 2.

Interest that would be waived from 1 April 2021 to 30 June 2021 if this proposal proceeded is estimated at \$300,000.

Considering the ongoing need for financial rates relief demonstrated by ratepayers, it is recommended that Council support the continuation of support for ratepayers as outlined in the updated Payment Assistance Policy addendum to provide ongoing assistance to ratepayers financially impacted by COVID-19 through to 30 June 2021 (refer to Attachment 2).

Further, it is recommended that Council extend the review date of the substantive Payment Assistance Policy through to 30 June 2021 to allow for further consideration to Council's assistance if necessary.

2.8 Outdoor Eating and Entertainment Package (State Funded)

Utilising the available State Government grant, the Economic Development/Business Recovery team worked with a number of different teams and departments at Council, as well as an external contractor, to create three pilot outdoor dining spaces for five hospitality businesses in December.

The three pilot outdoor spaces included:

- Pilot 1 – Chilli and Basil Thai Restaurant and Kokoro Asian Café, Station Street, Bayswater (installed on the footpath).
- Pilot 2 – Noos Noodles, Wantirna Mall (installed on the footpath).

2021-03-22 - Meeting Of Council

- Pilot 3 – Junior Tan and 24 Spices, Mountain High Shopping Centre, Bayswater (installed as a parklet over three car parking spaces).

The Economic Development/Business Recovery team is now working with hospitality businesses to deliver parklets at the following locations:

- Paddy's Tavern and Italianissimo – Ferntree Gully Village.
- Schokolade and Studfield Charcoal Chicken – Wantirna South.
- Code 9 Café – Wantirna South.

The State Government's Local Outdoor Eating and Entertainment Grant of \$500,000 is required to be expended by 30 June 2021, with any unspent funds to be returned to the State Government.

The Economic Development/Business Recovery team is working towards expending all of the grant funding prior to the end of June, however there are some variables that may affect this – namely generating enough interest from hospitality businesses wanting to participate in the Outdoor Dining Program (and have outdoor dining spaces installed) which has had some challenges, and also whether appropriate contractors are able to be engaged within the timeframe.

Utilising all of the grant will enable Council to maximise the number of outdoor dining spaces as part of the Outdoor Dining Program and provide economic benefits to businesses and social opportunities. Given there is no certainty, at this stage, that the entire grant can be expended by 30 June 2021, it is recommended that Council write to the Minister for Local Government and request that rather than returning any unspent funds from the Local Government Outdoor Eating and Entertainment Package, which is due to be expended by 30 June 2021, that Knox Council be given the ability to utilise the grant on outdoor dining and entertainment until all the grant funding is expended.

COVID Outdoor Dining Permits have been, and will be, issued at no cost for the period between 1 September 2020 and 31 August 2021. Given that the parklets have been installed in December 2020, and the next three will be constructed in March 2021, it provides a timeframe of between five to eight months of the parklets being installed before the next round of permit renewal is required. While the installation of outdoor dining on footpaths is expected across Melbourne, the installation of parklets (and use of car parking spaces for dining) is new for the Knox community. By continuing to support parklets, at least for another year, it will ensure that hospitality businesses can realise additional economic benefits, and also assist with the activation of Knox's local shopping strips.

It is therefore recommended for Council to:

1. Support the retention of parklets (outdoor dining areas in car parking spaces) for a further year, between 1 September 2021 and 31 August 2022, for those hospitality businesses that have had them installed between 1 September 2020 and 31 August 2021.
2. Write to the Minister for Local Government, and request Council be given the opportunity to expend all of the Local Government Outdoor Eating and Entertainment Grant.

2021-03-22 - Meeting Of Council

3. CONSULTATION

There is ongoing consultation and engagement with residents, businesses, partners and Council Departments during the pandemic. These discussions have informed considerations for the fourth Community and Business Support Package.

4. ENVIRONMENTAL / AMENITY ISSUES

The closure of Council facilities and services, and local businesses has a direct impact on the amenity of the Knox community. Support provided with the Outdoor Eating and Entertainment Package grant is assisting hospitality businesses to realise additional economic benefits and assist with the activation of Knox's local shopping strips.

5. FINANCIAL & ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS

Council has provided approximately \$4million worth of support through the three Community and Business Support Packages to date. Additionally, over \$1.3million was allocated against Council's 2019-2020 operating budget to fund the continuation of Council's services in a COVIDSafe way.

Officers have been actively seeking grant funding that can support the delivery of recovery initiatives and some funding has been provided by the State and Commonwealth Governments to support the delivery of services for children and older residents. This includes approximately \$1.7million in funding received for kindergarten, child care, the Commonwealth Home Support Program, food services and the Community Activation and Social Isolation Initiative. \$500,000 has been received as part of the State's Outdoor Eating and Entertainment Package.

The financial impact of initiatives presented in this report are listed below:

Initiative	Estimated Cost to Council	Initiative End Date	Recommended/ Not Recommended
Lease, License and Hire Fees	\$133,743 \$133,743	June 2021 September 2021	Not recommended
Theatre Hire Fees – Sliding Scale Reduction	\$4,704	June 2021	Recommended
Business Trading Fees	\$5,800	August 2021	Recommended
Knox Payment Assistance Policy	\$300,000	June 2021	Recommended
Outdoor Eating and Entertainment Package	<i>N/A</i> <i>\$500,000 grant</i>	<i>Seeking to extend to August 2022</i>	Extension recommended

The estimated cost of initiatives recommended for inclusion in a fourth package of support is **\$310,504**.

The estimated cost of including fee relief for not-for-profit tenants in Council facilities to June is estimated at **\$444,247**; or to September **\$577,990**.

2021-03-22 - Meeting Of Council

By utilising the entire \$500,000 Outdoor Eating and Entertainment Package grant, additional outdoor dining and entertainment spaces can be created. This, together with the continuation of parklets (outdoor dining areas in car parking spaces), will increase the chance of economic prosperity for Knox's hospitality businesses.

6. SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Options for support presented in this report will provide some assistance in areas where there is known or anticipated impact. Support provided by Council to date has been well-received by the community and has had positive impacts as noted by Council on 25 May and 21 September 2020.

Whilst there is data available about the short-term impacts of the pandemic, the medium and potential longer-term impacts of the Pandemic and the restrictions imposed in Greater Melbourne at different stages since March 2020 are not yet fully understood. Ongoing conversations with the community, local businesses and non-Council organisations continue to inform recovery planning to rebuild the local economy and address social, health and wellbeing concerns.

7. RELEVANCE TO KNOX COMMUNITY AND COUNCIL PLAN 2017-2021

Goal 4 - We are safe and secure

Strategy 4.2 - Enhance community connectedness opportunities to improve perceptions of safety

Strategy 4.4 - Protect and promote public health, safety and amenity

Strategy 4.5 - Support the provision of emergency services

Goal 5 - We have a strong regional economy, local employment and learning opportunities

Strategy 5.1 - Attract new investment to Knox and support the development of existing local businesses, with particular focus on Advanced Manufacturing, Health, Ageing and Business Service sectors

Strategy 5.3 - Promote and improve infrastructure and technology within the municipality and enhance strategic employment places for business

Strategy 5.4 - Increase and strengthen local opportunities for lifelong learning, formal education pathways and skills development to improve economic capacity of the community

Goal 6 - We are healthy, happy and well

Strategy 6.1 - Mitigate lifestyle risks such as smoking, risky alcohol consumption and drug use, obesity, lack of physical activity and poor nutrition

Strategy 6.2 - Support the community to enable positive physical and mental health

Goal 7 - We are inclusive, feel a sense of belonging and value our identity

Strategy 7.3 - Strengthen community connections

Goal 8 - We have confidence in decision making

Strategy 8.2 - Enable the community to participate in a wide range of engagement activities

2021-03-22 - Meeting Of Council

8. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The officers contributing to and responsible for this report have no conflicts of interest requiring disclosure under Chapter 5 of the Governance Rules of Knox City Council.

9. CONCLUSION

The fourth Community and Business Support Package will provide additional support in recognition of the continued impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on parts of the Knox community. Ongoing and emerging impacts are still being monitored, and recovery planning and response initiatives are being integrated with Council's ongoing service delivery, and with the Community Plan 2021 to 2031 and Council Plans for 2021 to 2025 that are currently being developed.

10. CONFIDENTIALITY

There is no content in this report that meets the definition of confidential information from the Local Government Act 2020.

Report Prepared By: Manager, Pandemic Response and Recovery, Angela Morcos

Report Authorised By: Director, Connected Communities, Tanya Scicluna

Attachments

1. Attachment 1 - Council Decisions - First Second and Third COVID-19 Support Packages [14.1.1 - 4 pages]
2. Attachment 2 - Proposed Changes - Rates Assistance Policy Addendum - IB 2020-03-15 [14.1.2 - 8 pages]

**ATTACHMENT 1****COUNCIL DECISIONS: FIRST, SECOND AND THIRD COVID-19 COMMUNITY AND BUSINESS SUPPORT PACKAGES**

At the Ordinary Meeting of Council held on 30 March 2020, Council resolved to:

1. Undertake an immediate review of the Knox Payment Assistance Policy with a view to addressing emerging consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on the livelihoods of the Knox community;
2. Resolve to not charge interest on rates from 31 March 2020 to 30 June 2020 for late payments and charges; noting that the extension of this will form part of the 2020-21 budget deliberations;
3. Waive trading fees, including outdoor dining and business A-frame signage fees for the period 30 March 2020 until 30 June 2020 as a pro-rata refund for renewal permit fees and refunding the full application fee amount for new applications received in that period; noting that the extension of this will form part of the 2020-21 budget deliberations;
4. Waive all Not-For Profit community organisation hire agreement, license and lease fees for the remainder of the 2019-20 Financial Year, with any advance pro-rata payments to be refunded;
5. Waive Knox Basketball Incorporated's Annual Asset Renewal Fee for the remainder of the 2019-20 Financial Year;
6. Amend the 2019-20 Budget by providing COVID-19 Emergency Funding of \$100,000, such amount to be expended by the Chief Executive Officer wholly in connection with Council's response to COVID-19 as is considered appropriate;
7. Defer the following proposed events due to government imposed restrictions on gatherings:
 - a. Fire Fighter Recognition Function; and
 - b. Annual Joint Advisory Committee Meeting; and;
8. Continue to formulate its Community Relief Plan, complementing the Federal and Victorian State Governments COVID-19 response, with priority of addressing any identified gaps that particularly impact Knox community, with further reports to be presented to Council for consideration and implementation as soon as practicable.



At the Ordinary Meeting of Council held on 25 May 2020, Council resolved to:

1. Note the positive impact that Council's Stage 1 Community and Business Support Package has had on the Knox community.
2. Endorse the extension of the following Stage 1 initiatives:
 - a. Resolve to not charge interest on rates for the period 1 July 2020 to 30 September 2020 for late payments and charges;
 - b. Waive trading fees, including outdoor dining and business A-frame signage fees for the period 1 July 2020 to 31 December 2020 as a pro-rata refund for renewal permit fees and refunding the full application fee amount for new applications received in that period;
 - c. Waive all Not-For Profit community organisation hire agreement, license and lease fees for the period 1 July 2020 to 30 September 2020, with any advance pro-rata payments to be refunded; and
 - d. Waive Knox Basketball Incorporated's Annual Asset Renewal Fee for the period 1 July 2020 to 30 September 2020.
3. Approve the Stage 2 Community and Business Support Package and commence implementation of the following initiatives, effective from 25 May 2020:
 - a. Increase funding for the Council Minor Grant Program to the value of \$51,500, for the purpose of supporting community initiatives;
 - b. Increase funding for the Council Community Development Fund to the value of \$80,000, for the purpose of reactivating community connectedness and initiating recovery projects;
 - c. Establish a one-off Council 'Supporting Local Services Fund' to the value of \$200,000, for the purpose of supporting local service organisations to increase service provision;
 - d. Provide funding to the value of \$15,000 for the purpose of enabling a temporary Council facility, at the discretion of the Chief Executive Officer, for the purpose of providing shower and laundry facilities for the vulnerable in our community;
 - e. Provide funding to the value of \$50,000 for the purpose of investigating and implementing an ongoing solution for a permanent shower and laundry facility for the vulnerable in the Knox community;
 - f. Provide funding to the value of \$315,000 for the purpose of Council partnering with local organisations to enable and support the provision of hot meals to the vulnerable in our community;
 - g. Provide funding to the value of \$200,000 to deliver a Mental Health First Aid Training and Awareness Program to local sporting clubs, for the purpose of assisting with the well-being and resilience of community members;
 - h. Provide funding to the value of \$25,000 to undertake a municipal-wide survey assessing the impact of COVID-19 on Knox households to inform strategic service planning and longer-term relief and recovery planning;



- i. Provide funding to the value of \$160,000, for a one-off \$1,000 Facility Operating Contribution for Not-for-Profit Groups and Clubs with a lease or licence in a Council facility, to support facility operating costs such as utilities and COVID-19 related expenses;
 - j. Provide funding to the value of \$30,000, to expand Council's Mentoring Support Program, for the purpose of assisting local business to manage and response to COVID-19;
 - k. Establish a Council "Commercial Advice Program" to the value of \$30,000, for the purpose of providing leasing, tenancy, taxation and financial advice to local business;
 - l. Establish a Council "Digital Upskills Program" to the value of \$20,000, for the purpose of enhancing digital marketing skills for local business;
 - m. Establish a Business Support Grants Program, to the total value of \$335,000, that includes an "e-commerce Grant" for the purpose of enhancing e-commerce capability and functionality for local business, a "Manufacturing and Supply Transition Grant" for the purpose of assisting the pivoting of local business; and a "Creative and Cultural Sector Industry Facilitation and Place Activation Grant" for the purpose of providing assistance to Knox's creative and cultural sector; and
 - n. Prepare a Retail Activation Strategy to the value of \$50,000, for the purpose of developing a "buy-local" program to support increased trade for local businesses.
4. To receive a report at the June 2020 Ordinary Meeting of Council to consider the governance arrangements necessary for the grants and payments established under the relevant new grant initiatives.
 5. Authorise the Chief Executive Officer to execute all agreements relating to the above initiatives.
 6. Note that further allocations from the balance of the Community and Business Support Package for the purpose of Stage 3 COVID-19 support initiatives will be considered by Council at a later stage.

2021-03-22 - Meeting Of Council

Attachment 14.1.1



At the Ordinary Meeting of Council held on 21 September 2020, Council resolved to:

1. Note the continued positive impact that Council's support initiatives have had so far on the Knox community.
2. Approve the following initiatives for inclusion in the third Community and Business Support Package:
 - a. Waive all not-for profit community organisation hire agreement, license and lease fees for the period 1 October 2020 to 31 March 2021, with any advance pro-rata payments to be refunded;
 - b. Refund existing trading permits relating to outdoor dining, display of goods and business A-frame signage with a pro-rata refund applied for permit fees paid for the period 1 January 2021 to 31 March 2021;
 - c. Waive new trading permits fees relating to outdoor dining, display of goods and business A-frame signage received between 1 January 2021 to 31 March 2021 on the basis that the application fee will be waived and only an adjusted pro-rata permit fee to cover the period of 1 April 2021 to 31 August 2021 (the remainder of the 2020/21 permit period) will be applied;
 - d. Waive new trading permits relating to outdoor dining, display of goods and business A-frame signage received after 31 March 2021 on the basis that the application fee will be waived and a pro-rata permit fee will be applied (adjusted monthly) until the end of the 2020/21 permit period (31 August 2021);
 - e. Provide financial assistance to Knox Basketball Incorporated as outlined in Section 2.3;
 - f. Provide 100% fee relief in the 2021 calendar year for health and food premises as listed in Table 1;
 - g. Provide funding to the value of \$85,000 to respond to some impacts of the Pandemic identified from the results of the COVID-19 Household Survey; and
 - h. Provide funding to the value of \$40,000 for a community campaign.
3. Fund the above initiatives with the balance from previously allocated funding and review any additional funding required through the mid-year budget process.

21 December 2020

Financial assistance was requested by Knox Basketball Incorporated in relation to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the organisation. The relief that was granted to Knox Basketball Incorporated by virtue of the confidential report considered on 21 December 2020 is consistent with the support given to Knox Basketball Incorporated and various other groups, in September 2020. The relief granted comprised an extension to the freeze on rents, licence fees and contributions to the capital improvement fund; and financial assistance for KBI's monthly fixed premises costs; the support for the period from 1 January to 31 March 2021 has a total cost of \$154,751 (ex GST).

4



Payment Assistance Policy

ATTACHMENT 2

Policy Number:	2007/04	Directorate:	City Development - Finance and Governance
Approval by:	Council	Responsible Officer:	Manager- Business and Financial Services
Approval Date:	24 August 2020	Version Number:	8
Review Date:	12 February 2021 (Addendum to be reviewed on or before 1 March 2021)		

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide Council with a framework to make available payment assistance to individuals. This Policy provides details of the assistance available to those currently experiencing, or at the risk of experiencing, financial hardship. Council is committed to assisting the community in meeting their financial obligations to Council by providing payment support, including arrangements, for property and service based debts.

The Policy includes a special addendum (addendum 1) in response to the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic; with the purpose of establishing the policy framework to provide assistance to those in the Knox community experiencing financial hardship due to the impacts of the Coronavirus pandemic.

2. Context

Part 8 Division 1 of the Local Government Act 1989 (the Act) establishes the power of Council to declare Rates and Charges. Sections 170-172 of the Act discusses the deferment and waiver provisions when considering financial hardship.

Whilst Rates and Charges are the largest source of Council's income, payment assistance may be sought for other fees and charges including the request for payment arrangements.

3. Scope

This Policy applies to balances outstanding from ratepayers and sundry debtor customers who are currently, or are at risk of, experiencing financial hardship.

4. References

- 4.1 Community & Council Plan 2017-2021
 - Goal 8- We have confidence in decision-making
- 4.2 Relevant Legislation
 - Local Government Act 1989 – Conflict and Interest Provisions
- 4.3 Charter of Human Rights



- This policy has been assessed against and complies with the charter of Human Rights
- 4.4 Related Council Policies
- Payment Assistance Addendum COVID-19 Pandemic Payment Relief
- 4.5 Related Council Procedures
- Nil
- 4.6 Other Guidance
- Hardship Policy Guidelines (November 2013) – Municipal Association of Victoria

5. Definitions

Detail any definitions within the policy.

Council	means Knox City Council, whether constituted before or after the commencement of this Policy.
Deferment	means the postponement of payment in completely or in part and can be for a specified period and subject to any conditions. When Rates and Charges are deferred payment is not required until the Council issues a Notice requiring payment, the property is sold, there is a change in ownership or there is a change in ratepayer. Deferred Rates and Charges remain a charge on the property.
Deferment Interest Rate	means the official 180 day bank bill rate sourced from Council’s contracted banking services provider as at 1 July each year and will be the net penalty interest rate levied against overdue amounts where Rates and Charges have been deferred, rounded to 1 decimal place, plus 2.0% per annum
Waiver	means the relinquishment or the removal of the liability to pay and may include the whole or part of any Rate and Charges, interest charge, fee or other charge.

6. Council Policy

Council, in applying this policy, will ensure that wherever possible, all outstanding debts will eventually be recovered.

6.1 Rates and Charges

Rates and Charges, including interest and legal costs, are a charge on the property. Council has the power under Section 181 of the Local Government Act 1989 to sell land (the property) to recover unpaid rates and charges.

Interest and Interest Waivers

- 6.1.1 Unless otherwise specified in this Policy, penalty interest will be charged on overdue rates and charges in accordance with Section 172 of the Local Government Act 1989. Penalty interest is calculated at the annual fixed rate as declared by the Attorney General under Section 2 of the Penalty Interest Rate Act 1983.
- 6.1.2 Interest charges may be waived, in part or in full, under the following circumstances:



- 6.1.2.1 Administrative Waiver – interest charges may be waived in the event of an administrative issue, error or omission which caused or significantly contributed to the failure to pay rates and charges by the due date.
- 6.1.2.2 Waiver on Compassionate Grounds – interest charges may be waived where the ratepayer has demonstrated compassionate grounds for the late payment of rates and charges.
- 6.1.2.3 Waiver of Interest due to Financial Hardship – ratepayers experiencing financial hardship may apply to have interest charges waived subject to the following conditions:
 - a) The ratepayer must be experiencing undue financial hardship. Ratepayers who are eligible pensioners or who can prove temporary unemployment may apply for current year rates and charges to be paid within 12 months from the date of issue of the Rates Notice, interest free. Such interest free arrangements only remain in place while agreed payments are being received. Applications should be directed to the Coordinator Rates and Valuations.
 - b) All other ratepayers (not eligible ratepayers or unable to prove temporary unemployment) may apply in writing to the Manager Financial Services detailing the circumstances affecting the ratepayer's ability to pay current rates and charges by the due date. If approved, the waiver of interest in full or in part will not exceed a period of 12 months from the date of issue of the Rates Notices.

Payment of Rates and Charges by Arrangement

- 6.1.3 Any ratepayer may request to pay outstanding rates and charges by way of a payment arrangement. Payment arrangements will attract penalty interest on outstanding balances but allow ratepayers additional time to make payments. Council will not take any legal action to recover rates and charges provided conditions of the payment arrangements are honoured.

Payment arrangements generally provide support to settle current rates and charges within 12 months. Payment arrangements beyond 12 months require approval of the Coordinator Rates and Valuations.

Deferral of Rates and Charges

- 6.1.4 The deferral of rates and charges and/or interest is available to Residential and Retirement Village property owners only. Rates and charges will not be deferred for Commercial, Industrial, Vacant Land or Cultural and Recreational Land properties.
 - 6.1.4.1 Residential and Retirement Village property owners may apply to have rates and charges and/or interest in full or in part, deferred. Rates and charges including interest will continue to be levied. Applications for deferral will only be considered under the following circumstances:
 - a) The ratepayer must be experiencing, and be able to demonstrate, undue and unavoidable hardship; and



- b) The ratepayer is either an eligible pensioner or a current recipient of unemployment benefits for at least 3 consecutive months; and
- c) The ratepayer is both the legal owner of, and resides in, the property; and
- d) The total amount of rates and charges, including any interest, to be deferred should not exceed 10% of the capital improved value of the subject property.

6.1.4.2 Interest charged on overdue rates and charges, including any interest, that are deferred will be set at the Deferment Interest Rate rather than the penalty interest rate. The Deferment Interest Rate only applies after the approval of the deferment. Previous interest charges at the penalty interest rate remain.

6.1.4.3 Deferrals may be offered for a period of up to three (3) years, at which time the ratepayer may apply for a further deferral subject to the assessment of personal circumstances prior to the continuation of any deferral agreement.

6.1.4.4 All deferral agreements must be approved by the Manager Financial Services.

Waiver of Rates and Charges

6.1.5 Rates and charges will not generally be waived. This is to ensure that payment assistance offered to one ratepayer does not have a redistribution effect on Council's rate base.

The Local Government Act 1989 is specific in relation to the grounds for the consideration of waiving rates and charges under financial hardship. The Local Government Act 1989 will be the basis for the consideration of any application for waiver.

Applications for the waiver of rates and charges must be addressed to the Chief Executive Officer. Applications must be supported by evidence of necessitous circumstances causing or likely to cause financial hardship. The waiver of rates and charges must be approved by Council.

Termination of Payment Assistance

6.1.6 Payment assistance support is terminated in the event of the sale or transfer of ownership of the subject property afforded payment support provided in 6.1.1 through 6.1.5 inclusive.

6.2 Sundry Debtor

The principles of this Policy will apply to sundry debtors. Requests for the waiver of a fee or charge must be submitted to the Manager of the relevant service for consideration. Recommendations for the waiver of fees and charges in full or in part must be forwarded to the Manager Financial Services for approval and processing.

Requests for payment arrangements for Sundry Debtor accounts should be submitted to the Manager Financial Services. Payment arrangements will generally not exceed a period of 12 months from the date of



the original invoice. Penalty interest may be charged on overdue amounts during the payment arrangement period.

6.3 All information provided in accordance with this Policy will remain confidential.

7. Administrative Updates

From time to time, circumstances may change leading to the need for minor administrative changes to this policy. Where an update does not materially alter this policy, such a change may be made administratively. Examples of minor administrative changes include changes to names of Council departments or positions, change to names of Federal or State Government departments or a minor amendment to legislation that does not have material impact. Where any change or update may materially change the intent of this policy, it must be considered by Council.

Policy updated 27 April 2020.

Addendum 1 to Policy updated 24 August 2020.



Knox Payment Assistance Policy – Addendum

COVID-19 Pandemic Payment Relief

Policy Number:	2007/04	Directorate:	City Development – Finance and Governance Office of the CEO
Approval by:	Council	Responsible Officer:	Manager – Business and Financial Services Chief Financial Officer
Approval Date:	24 August 2020 xxxxxx 2021	Version Number:	23
Review Date:	1 March 2021 1 June 2021		

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy addendum is to provide Council with a framework to make available payment assistance to individuals, businesses and other community members currently experiencing, or at the risk of experiencing, financial hardship as a result of impacts from the COVID-19 pandemic

2. Context

Part 8 Division 1 of the Local Government Act 1989 (the Act) establishes the power of Council to declare Rates Council recognises that the effects of social distancing and Australia’s response to Coronavirus will, and already has, led to significant impacts on the entire community including local businesses and households. Some of these impacts include people losing their jobs, people being employed for reduced hours, businesses shutting down and businesses reducing their operations.

Part 8 Division 1 of the Local Government Act 1989 (the Act) establishes the power of Council to declare Rates and Charges. Sections 170-172 of the Act discusses the deferment and waiver provisions when considering financial hardship.

Rates and charges are a critical source of revenue that Council uses to deliver services to the community. In addition, other service charges being, fees, licensing and lease income are also an important source of revenue.

Council is constantly assessing the impact of the COVID-19 and will be reviewing its approach to how it supports the community through the pandemic regularly. This policy addendum provides the framework for how Council implements these decisions with regard to payment assistance.

3. Scope

To provide direction to Council’s Officers when collecting and providing for debts owed and ensure Council takes into consideration the financial hardship on debtors caused by COVID-19.

Council will provide assistance to those in financial hardship in accordance with the Local Government Act 1989, while ensuring it does not jeopardise the funding of its operations.



This policy addendum will be guided by the principles of transparency, efficiency, capacity to pay and equity by treating all debtors consistently and in a fair manner.

4. References

- Refer to the Knox Payment Assistance Policy above 2007/04.

5. Definitions

Review Date means on or before ~~1 March 2021~~ 30 June 2021

6. Council Policy

Council, in applying this addendum policy, will ensure that wherever possible, all outstanding debts will be recovered.

6.1 Financial Hardship – Rates and other services including, fees charges, licenses, leases

Financial hardship is a circumstance of experiencing a lack of financial means, which may be either ongoing or temporary.

This policy addendum is to address temporary financial hardship due to impacts of COVID-19.

Who can apply for hardship?

Any individual, business or community member that has or will experience a loss (or reduced income) of employment or a decrease in sales revenue because of COVID-19 can apply for a payment plan.

People must request assistance from Council **in writing**, providing full details of the circumstances preventing them from meeting their financial obligations to Council.

6.2 Payment Plans

~~All ratepayers have the option to apply to enter into a payment arrangement to pay off their outstanding rates and charges and Council will not levy interest during this period (refer 6.3 below)~~

~~If the individual, business or community member is unable to enter into a payment plan, Council will defer the debt accumulated during the COVID-19 pandemic and will hold interest on this debt from 31 March 2020 to 31 March 2021 to allow time for the debt to be paid without interest.~~

Ratepayers will have the ability to enter into zero payment plans for the period 31 March 2020 to ~~31 March~~ 30 June 2021.

If any debt is still outstanding at 1 ~~April~~ July 2021, Council's Payment Assistance Policy may apply.

6.3 Zero Interest



Interest will not be charged on overdue debts effective from Monday, 31 March 2020, until ~~31 March~~ 30 June 2021. Interest already accrued and charged prior to 31 March 2020 for overdue debts will remain.

Financial thresholds for the waiving of interest (per payment plan or arrangement) are as follows:

- a) Up to \$250.00 - Coordinator Rates and Valuations
- b) Up to \$500.00 - Manager Business and Financial Services
- c) Up to \$750.00 - Director City Development, Interim Finance and Governance
- d) Up to \$1,000.00 - CEO

6.4 Debt Recovery

Council will make a reasonable attempt to contact debtors during the term of the Addendum, to reassess COVID-19 applications for financial hardship.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Council will hold off on all legal action for the collection of debts.

7. Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

Council officers will monitor Council's cash flow position and will include this report in the monthly finance paper to Executive Management Team and Council.

In the event that the State of Emergency is extended beyond the review date, Council will reassess financial relief and this addendum updated accordingly and/or when Council's cash flow position has been compromised; whichever is the earliest event.

All personal information provided in accordance with this Policy will remain confidential.

8. Administrative Updates

Nil.

Victoria's Roadmap: Delivering the National Plan

Summary of proposed restriction levels - Metropolitan Melbourne

Note 1: The settings below are indicative only and subject to change. All changes to the Chief Health Officer's Directions are based on public health advice (including epidemiological evidence) and legal advice (including as to compatibility with the Charter for Human Rights and Responsibilities) at the relevant time, in light of the specific risks to public health and changes/measurements proposed. All directions must be reasonably necessary to protect public health and the Chief Health Officer (or delegate) must act in a way that is compatible with the Charter for Human Rights and Responsibilities.

Note 2: Cleaning, signage, record keeping, and other COVIDSafe requirements for work premises continue to apply for all venues and facilities with onsite operations as per Workplace Directions and Workplace (Additional Industry Obligations) Directions. Density quotients (DQ) apply to all venues and spaces that are accessible to the public.

Note 3: All proposed easings from 80% fully vaccinated (indicatively 5 November) are dependent on the ability for venues and employers to confirm vaccination status of patrons and employees, respectively.

Category	National Plan: Phase A 80% of 16+ with a single dose Indicative date: 26 September 2021 Subject to Public Health consideration of epidemiology at the time	Returning Students to the Classroom Indicative date: 5 October 2021 Subject to Public Health consideration of epidemiology at the time	National Plan: Phase B 70% of 16+ fully vaccinated Indicative date: 26 October 2021 Subject to Public Health consideration of epidemiology at the time	National Plan: Phase C 80% of 16+ fully vaccinated Indicative date: 5 November 2021 Subject to Public Health consideration of epidemiology at the time	National Plan: Phase D 80% of 12+ fully vaccinated Indicative date: Two weeks later Subject to Public Health consideration of epidemiology at the time
Social gatherings, leaving home and visitors	<p>Stay at home unless:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> shopping for necessary goods and services (once a day, one person per household) caregiving or compassionate reasons essential work or permitted education exercise getting COVID-19 vaccination Outdoor socialising in limited groups within exercise time limit (total 4 hours) other specified reasons (specific exemptions apply) <p>Stay at home curfew from 9.00pm - 5.00am</p>	No change	<p>Stay Safe</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No restrictions on reasons to leave home No curfew 	No change	<p>For all settings, align with National Plan to transition Australia's National COVID-19 Response</p>

Category	80% of 16+ with a single dose Indicative date: 26 September 2021 Subject to Public Health consideration of epidemiology at the time	Returning Students to the Classroom Indicative date: 5 October 2021 Subject to Public Health consideration of epidemiology at the time	70% of 16+ fully vaccinated Indicative date: 26 October 2021 Subject to Public Health consideration of epidemiology at the time	80% of 16+ fully vaccinated Indicative date: 5 November 2021 Subject to Public Health consideration of epidemiology at the time	80% of 12+ fully vaccinated Indicative date: Two weeks later Subject to Public Health consideration of epidemiology at the time
Social gatherings, leaving home and visitors	<p>Intrastate travel: Must not travel further than 15km from place of primary residence, except:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> to access necessary goods and services where those goods and services cannot be accessed closer than 15kms from home to visit an intimate partner to travel for authorised work and permitted education caregiving and compassionate reasons (specific exemptions apply) resident of metropolitan Melbourne allowed to leave the Restricted Area to receive a COVID-19 vaccination if it is in an adjacent LGA to where they reside. permit fully vaccinated Victorian residents to return from interstate provided they have a negative pre-arrival COVID test <p>Face coverings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Required indoors and outdoors <p>Private gatherings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Private gatherings not permitted. intimate partner visits and single person bubble visits are allowed. 	<p>No change</p>	<p>Intrastate travel:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Must not travel further than 25km except for permitted reasons <p>Interstate Borders:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> May introduce new reduced quarantine arrangements for vaccinated residents returning from interstate (National Plan) 	<p>Intrastate travel:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allowed <p>Interstate Borders:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> May exempt vaccinated residents from all domestic restrictions (National Plan); <p>International Travel</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revised quarantine arrangements for international arrivals (returning citizens or permanent residents) to Victoria subject to requirements of the National Plan <p>Face coverings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Required indoors only <p>Private gatherings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Private gatherings permitted for up to 10 people including dependants. 	<p>For all settings, align with National Plan to transition Australia's National COVID-19 Response</p> <p>Private gatherings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> By 25 Dec, 30 visitors to the home

Metro Melbourne

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Social gatherings, leaving home and visitors	<p>Public gatherings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public gathering allowed for personal training for up to 2 people, plus the trainer. Public gathering for social interaction allowed for 2 people. Public gathering of 5 people from 2 households if all persons aged 18 or older are fully vaccinated. 	<p>No change</p>	<p>Public gatherings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fully vaccinated up to 10 people outdoors Unknown vaccination status: up to 5 people outdoors 	<p>Public gatherings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fully vaccinated up to 30 people outdoors Unknown vaccination status: no change from previous Remove mask for alcohol permitted 	<p>For all settings, align with National Plan to transition Australia's National COVID-19 Response</p>
	<p>Work:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Must work from home Only workers on the Authorised Provider and Authorised Worker (APAW) List may leave home to work 	<p>No change</p>	<p>Work:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Must work from home 	<p>Work:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work from home if you can OR, Go to work if you are fully vaccinated DQ2 for areas non-accessible to public Masks must be worn indoors in workplaces. 	
Education and Childcare	<p>Early childhood education and care:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Open to vulnerable and children of single parents and APAW workers. DQ of 1 person per 4sqm except in spaces used by children/for the purposes of student use. Only one parent or guardian (if two parent / guardian family) is required to be on the APAW List, either working away from home or working at home but no alternative supervision. x2 weekly PCR testing for employees crossing in-out of metro/regional 	<p>No change</p>	<p>Early childhood education and care:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Open to children already attending (vulnerable children and children of parents who were APAW workers prior to 26/10) Open for children with fully vaccinated parent(s) 	<p>Early childhood education and care:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Open 	

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Education and Childcare	<p>Schools:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remote learning for most students but open to vulnerable children and the children of APAW workers. x2 weekly PCR testing for employees crossing in-out of metro/regional 	<p>Schools:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In addition to vulnerable children and children of APAW workers On 5 October, GAT students From 6 October, on-site learning for VCE Unit 3/4, final year VCAL and IB students From 18 October, on-site learning for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Years 3 & 4 (Tuesday – Wednesday) Prep (Monday – Wednesday) Year 1 & 2 (Thursday – Friday) Out of school hours care operating all days On-site learning must have safety measures in place 	<p>Schools:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vulnerable children VCE Unit 3/4, final year VCAL and IB students Prep (Monday – Wednesday) Year 1 & 2 (Thursday – Friday) From 26 October, on-site learning for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Years 3 & 4 (Tuesday – Wednesday) Years 5 & 6 (Thursday – Friday) Year 7 (full-time, five days) Years 8 & 9 (Tuesday – Wednesday) Years 10 (Thursday-Friday) Years 11 (full-time, five days) Out of school hours care operating all On-site learning must have safety measures in place 	<p>Schools:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> On site learning for all levels with safety measures in place 	<p>For all settings, align with National Plan to transition Australia's National COVID-19 Response</p>
	<p>Adult education:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Closed, remote learning only. Final exams to proceed enabled by APAW List. 	<p>No change</p>	<p>Adult education:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Must learn from home, on-site learning for hands-on, skills-based learning Final exams to proceed enabled by APAW List. 	<p>Adult education:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learn from home if you can, on-site learning for hands-on, skills-based learning AND, On-site if you are fully vaccinated, DQ4 	
Places of worship	<p>Religion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No in-person gatherings permitted. Broadcast permitted (maximum 5 people in attendance). 	<p>No change</p>	<p>Religion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fully vaccinated: Outdoor only DQ4, 50 cap Unknown vaccination status: Outdoor only DQ4, 20 cap 	<p>Religion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fully vaccinated: Indoors DQ4 and 150 cap, outdoors DQ2 500 cap Unknown vaccination status: 20 cap, DQ4 	
Funerals	<p>Funerals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Involves no more than 10 people (and those necessary to conduct the funeral) 	<p>No change</p>	<p>Funerals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fully vaccinated: allowed with up to 50 attendees, DQ4. Unknown vaccination status: 20 people per facility (and those necessary to conduct funeral), DQ4 	<p>Funerals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fully vaccinated: Indoors DQ4 and 150 cap, outdoors DQ2 and 500 cap Unknown vaccination status: 20 people per facility (and those necessary to conduct funeral), DQ4 	<p>For all settings, align with National Plan to transition Australia's National COVID-19 Response</p>

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Weddings	<p>Weddings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not permitted unless end of life or other compassionate reasons. Involves only 5 people (and marrying couple plus those necessary to conduct wedding) 	<p>No change</p>	<p>Weddings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fully vaccinated: Outdoor only, DQ4, 50 cap Unknown vaccination status: 10 people per wedding (and marrying couple plus those necessary to conduct wedding) Outdoor only DQ4 	<p>Weddings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fully vaccinated: Indoors DQ4 and 150 cap, outdoors DQ2 500 cap Unknown vaccination status: 10 people per wedding (and marrying couple plus those necessary to conduct wedding), DQ4 	
Physical recreation & sport (Includes indoor playcentres, indoor skateparks and indoor trampolines centres)	<p>Physical recreation & community sport:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outdoor facilities open for contactless recreation All others closed Fully vaccinated: Outdoor personal training up to 5 cap If not fully vaccinated: Outdoor personal training up to two people plus the trainer Five people allowed to broadcast workout instructions at a gym 	<p>No change</p>	<p>Physical recreation & community sport:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fully vaccinated: Outdoor only, DQ4, 50 cap Outdoor community sport open for training only (no competition); minimum number required, spectators public gathering limits apply Changing rooms closed 	<p>Physical recreation & community sport:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fully vaccinated: Indoors DQ4 and 150 cap, outdoors DQ2 500 cap Community sport permitted indoors and outdoors with minimum number required, spectators public gathering limits apply <p>Outdoor seated physical recreation and community sport:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fully vaccinated: Lesser of 25% or 5000 per venue State significant venues to be considered for larger crowds 	
Swimming pools, hydrotherapy pools, spas, saunas, steam rooms, springs	<p>Swimming pools, spas, saunas, steam rooms and outdoor:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Closed, exceptions for hydrotherapy for essential medical care. 	<p>No change</p>	<p>Swimming pools, spas, saunas, steam rooms and outdoor:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fully vaccinated: Outdoor only, DQ4, 50 cap Changing rooms closed Indoor pools, saunas, steam rooms closed, exceptions for hydrotherapy for essential medical care. 	<p>Swimming pools, spas, saunas, steam rooms and outdoor:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fully vaccinated: Indoors DQ4 and 150 cap, outdoors DQ2 500 cap 	<p>For all settings, align with National Plan to transition Australia's National COVID-19 Response</p>

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Outdoor playgrounds, outdoor skateparks, outdoor gym equipment	Playgrounds: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Open. Public gatherings limits apply Skateparks and communal gym equipment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Open Public gatherings limits apply 	No change	Outdoor playgrounds, outdoor skateparks, outdoor gym equipment. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Open 	Outdoor playgrounds, outdoor skateparks, outdoor gym equipment. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Open 	
Community Facilities	Community Facilities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Closed, unless hosting an essential public support service Permitted for groups of 10 for essential support. Permitted to remain open for 'click and collect' purposes to facilitate loaning, and returning books, toys, and other items from these facilities 	No change	Community Facilities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fully vaccinated: Outdoor only, DQ4 50 cap Hosting an essential public support service permitted Permitted for groups of 10 for essential support (vaccinated status does not apply). Can remain open 'click and collect' 	Community Facilities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fully vaccinated: Indoors DQ4 and 150 cap, outdoors DQ2 500 cap 	
Creative Studios	Creative Studios: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Closed 	No change	Creative Studios: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fully vaccinated: Outdoor only, DQ4, 50 cap 	Creative Studios: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fully vaccinated: Indoors DQ4 and 150 cap, outdoors DQ2 500 cap 	

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<p>Entertainment and Leisure</p> <p>When an entertainment or leisure facility hosts an activity which fulfils the definition of a public event, the Restricted Activity Directions allow for organisers to apply for their activity to be considered under the Public Events Framework (PEF)</p>	<p>Entertainment venues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Closed • Up to five people can attend an entertainment venue to broadcast a performance. 	<p>No change.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No change. 	<p>Entertainment venues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fully vaccinated: Outdoor only, DQ4, 50 cap <p>Animal facilities (zoos):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fully vaccinated: 25% capacity, indoor spaces closed 	<p>Seated indoor and non-seated indoor entertainment venues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fully vaccinated: Indoors DQ4 and 150 cap per space. <p>Outdoor seated entertainment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fully vaccinated: Lesser of 25% or 5000 per venue. Indoor spaces DQ4 and 150 cap. <p>Outdoor non-seated entertainment (for example animal facilities):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fully vaccinated: 50% capacity, indoor spaces DQ4 150 cap. <p>Significant venues to be considered for larger crowds</p>	<p>For all settings, align with National Plan to transition Australia's National COVID-19 Response</p>
	<p>Arcades, escape rooms, bingo centres:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Closed 	<p>No change</p>	<p>No change</p>	<p>Arcades, escape rooms, bingo centres:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fully vaccinated: Indoors DQ4 and 150 cap, outdoors DQ2 500 cap 	
	<p>Drive-in cinemas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Closed 	<p>No change</p>	<p>Drive-in cinemas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open patrons must remain in cars unless accessing takeaway food or toilets 	<p>Drive-in cinemas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open, hospitality limits apply 	
	<p>Amusement parks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Closed 	<p>No change</p>	<p>Amusement parks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fully vaccinated: Outdoor only, DQ4, 50 cap 	<p>Amusement parks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fully vaccinated: Indoors DQ4 and 150 cap per space, outdoors DQ2 500 cap per space 	
	<p>Casino:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Closed 	<p>No change</p>	<p>No change</p>	<p>Casino:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fully vaccinated: Indoors DQ4 and 150 cap per space 	
	<p>Retail betting venue:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Closed 	<p>No change</p>	<p>No change</p>	<p>Retail betting venue:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open with DQ4 	

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Entertainment and Leisure (cont)	Electronic gaming: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Closed 	No change	No change	Electronic gaming: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remain seated • Fully vaccinated: Indoors DQ4 and 150 cap, outdoors DQ2 500 cap • Caps are not in addition to hospitality limits 	For all settings, align with National Plan to transition Australia's National COVID-19 Response
General retail	Essential retail: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open, DQ 1 person per 4sqm Other/general retail: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Closed (contactless click and collect/delivery only). Auction houses: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Closed (open for online only). 	No change	No change	Sex on premises, brothels and sexually explicit venues: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Closed Karaoke and Nightclubs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Closed 	Sex on premises, brothels and sexually explicit venues: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fully vaccinated: Indoors DQ4 and 150 cap Karaoke and Nightclubs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In line with food and drink • Seated service only • Fully vaccinated: Indoors DQ4 and 150 cap, outdoors DQ2 500 cap
Hairdressing, beauty, personal care	Hairdressing, beauty, personal care: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Closed 	No change	Hairdressing, beauty, personal care: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indoors DQ4 and 5 patron cap (fully vaccinated) 	Hairdressing, beauty, personal care: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fully vaccinated: Indoors DQ4 and 150 cap 	

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Hospitality	Food and drink facility <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Open for take-away only, masks cannot be removed to consume food and drinks in shopping centres. 	No change	Food and drink facility <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seated service only Fully vaccinated: Outdoor only, DQ4, 50 cap 	Food and drink facility <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Open for seated service only Small venues: up to 25 people if fully vaccinated before DQ applies Fully vaccinated: Indoors DQ4 and 150 cap, outdoors DQ2 500 cap 	For all settings, align with National Plan to transition Australia's National COVID-19 Response
	Food courts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Closed Takeaway only, mask cannot be removed indoors to consume food or drink 	No change	No change	Food courts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Takeaway only, mask cannot be removed indoors to consume food or drink 	
	Accommodation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Closed, unless for permitted reasons, or shelter in place. No new bookings except for authorised reasons. An authorised worker is allowed to book accommodation if they are required to travel for their work irrespective of them being a Victorian resident or not 	No change	Accommodation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Open for household, intimate partner and bubble buddy 	Accommodation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Open in line with private gathering limits Each household can nominate another as part of their 'bubble' Members of each household can visit each other or holiday together. 	
Real Estate Services	Real Estate Services (inspections and auctions): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Auctions: Closed (remote auction only with the agent working remotely). Real estate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Single household can inspect vacated property (with agent outdoors) for end of lease or new purchase 	No change	Real estate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inspections: Single household can inspect vacated property (with agent outdoors) for end of lease or new purchase Auctions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fully vaccinated: Outdoor only, DQ4, 50 cap 	Real estate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fully vaccinated: Indoors DQ4 and 150 cap, outdoors DQ2 500 cap 	

<p>Category</p>	<p>80% of 16+ with a single dose Indicative date: 26 September 2021 Subject to Public Health consideration of epidemiology at the time</p>	<p>Returning Students to the Classroom Indicative date: 5 October 2021 Subject to Public Health consideration of epidemiology at the time</p>	<p>70% of 16+ fully vaccinated Indicative date: 26 October 2021 Subject to Public Health consideration of epidemiology at the time</p>	<p>80% of 16+ fully vaccinated Indicative date: 5 November 2021 Subject to Public Health consideration of epidemiology at the time</p>	<p>80% of 12+ fully vaccinated Indicative date: Two weeks later Subject to Public Health consideration of epidemiology at the time</p>
<p>Tours and tour transport</p>	<p>Tours (e.g. walking tours, cycling tours):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Closed <p>Tour transport (e.g. tour buses):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Closed 	<p>No change</p>	<p>Tours (e.g. walking tours, cycling tours):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fully vaccinated: Outdoor only, DQ4, 50 cap <p>Tour transport (e.g. tour buses):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Closed 	<p>Tours (e.g. walking tours, cycling tours):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open • Fully vaccinated: Indoors DQ4 and 150 cap, outdoors DQ2 500 cap <p>Tour transport (e.g. tour buses):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open • Fully vaccinated: Indoors DQ4 and 150 cap, outdoors DQ2 500 cap 	<p>For all settings, align with National Plan to transition Australia's National COVID-19 Response</p>

Category	80% of 16+ with a single dose Indicative date: 26 September 2021 Subject to Public Health consideration of epidemiology at the time	Returning Students to the Classroom Indicative date: 5 October 2021 Subject to Public Health consideration of epidemiology at the time	70% of 16+ fully vaccinated Indicative date: 26 October 2021 Subject to Public Health consideration of epidemiology at the time	80% of 16+ fully vaccinated Indicative date: 5 November 2021 Subject to Public Health consideration of epidemiology at the time	80% of 12+ fully vaccinated Indicative date: Two weeks later Subject to Public Health consideration of epidemiology at the time
Care Facilities Visitors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two visitors at a time up to two per day, except for end of life or life threatening conditions (2 visitors at a time with no total limit per day). Visits must be for a purpose which includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To provide care and support for the resident's physical and emotional wellbeing For residents under 18 years of age As a nominated person under the Mental Health Act To provide interpreter or informal language support To support the resident's care upon discharge Do not have to be from the same household. No time limits. A group may exceed the "two visitors at a time" rule if dependents of a visitor (or patient in hospital) are in the group and care for the dependents cannot be arranged. Prospective residents not permitted except as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inpatients in acute hospitals awaiting discharge to residential aged care facilities (RACFs) (noting this may need to be a nominated family member in some scenarios, not the inpatient) Residents of care facilities that are due to close and require support to find alternative accommodation prior to the closure of their current accommodation Non-essential contractors (such as hairdressers) are not permitted to enter. 	<p>No change</p>	<p>Visitor restrictions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Easing of visitor restrictions 	<p>Visitor restrictions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Easing of visitor restrictions 	<p>For all settings, align with National Plan to transition Australia's National COVID-19 Response</p>

Category	80% of 16+ with a single dose Indicative date: 26 September 2021 Subject to Public Health consideration of epidemiology at the time	Returning Students to the Classroom Indicative date: 5 October 2021 Subject to Public Health consideration of epidemiology at the time	70% of 16+ fully vaccinated Indicative date: 26 October 2021 Subject to Public Health consideration of epidemiology at the time	80% of 16+ fully vaccinated Indicative date: 5 November 2021 Subject to Public Health consideration of epidemiology at the time	80% of 12+ fully vaccinated Indicative date: Two weeks later Subject to Public Health consideration of epidemiology at the time
Hospital Visitors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two visitors at a time up to two per day, except for end of life or life-threatening conditions (2 visitors at a time with no total limit per day). Visits must be for a purpose which includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As a parent, guardian or carer of a child who is a patient in hospital To provide support that is necessary for the patient's emotional or physical wellbeing. As a nominated person under the Mental Health Act To providing interpreter or informal language support For learning to support the resident's care upon discharge As a carer of a patient with a disability Accompanying someone to the emergency department or outpatient clinic As a partner of a pregnant woman or patient in a maternity ward Do not have to be from the same household. No time limits. A group may exceed the "two visitors at a time" rule if dependents of a visitor (or patient in hospital) are in the group and care for the dependents cannot be arranged. Non-essential contractors (such as hairdressers) are not permitted to enter. 	No change	No change	Visitor restrictions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Easing of visitor restrictions 	For all settings, align with National Plan to transition Australia's National COVID-19 Response

9.5 Knox Hockey Update

SUMMARY: Strategic Planning Coordinator Active and Creative Communities, Paul Reading
Further to the Council report of 26 April 2021, this report discusses the potential development of a new hockey facility within the City of Knox. The report also presents an overview of the outcome of the community and stakeholder consultation processes and provides commentary and advice on the preferred site for a home for hockey in Knox.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Endorse the development of a new hockey pitch at Wantirna Reserve.
2. Authorise the Chief Executive Officer (or such as person as the Chief Executive Officer selects) to formalise the execution of all documents associated with the Knox School site, including the transfer of the accrued surplus to the project, which has been held in trust by the Knox School for the development of a new pitch for the Knox Hockey Club.
3. Advise the Knox Hockey Club, the Knox School and other interested parties of Council's decision.

1. INTRODUCTION

This report is provided to discuss the outcome of the feasibility studies and the community and stakeholder consultation processes that have been undertaken to date to determine a preferred site for the potential development of a new hockey facility in the City of Knox. This facility would be a new home for the Knox Hockey Club who are currently without a facility as the Knox School synthetic grass pitch will not be available from the 2022 season onwards.

The report outlines the outcomes of the feasibility studies and the community and stakeholder consultation process and as a result recommends that Council considers the development of a new facility at the Wantirna Reserve (East) site, replacing the existing football and cricket oval and utilising the existing pavilion and car parking.

2. DISCUSSION

As a result of the Knox School redeveloping the space that has accommodated the Knox Hockey Club in Wantirna for over twenty years, the Knox Hockey Club needs to find an alternative home. Council has been working with the Club since 2017, including working with the Outer East Region, in an attempt to resolve the issue and to find an alternative site that could be developed to meet the needs of the Club and the sport within the Knox municipality.

The investigations included a:

- Visual assessment.
- Detailed feature survey.
- Geotechnical investigation.
- VicPlan Assessment.

- High level assessment of ground services.
- Development of draft concept plans.
- Community amenity assessment.
- Community consultation and engagement (Wantirna Reserve and Benedikt Reserve).

Four key sites have been investigated to determine the viability to develop them as a hockey facility.

A high-level summary of the key sites that were investigated in detail is included below:

- **Wantirna Reserve (West)** – this site is well suited to the development of a new facility as it is close to transport is part of a larger sporting complex and has minimal impact on the surrounding residents or broader community amenity, however, following further technical assessment it was ruled out due to subsidence issues resulting from previous land use that would require complex and highly expensive construction techniques.
- **Wantirna Reserve (East)** – this site is well suited to the development of a new facility as it is close to transport, is part of a larger sporting complex and has minimal impact on the surrounding residents or broader community amenity. A technical assessment of the site suggests that there are no specific boundaries to development, traditional construction methods can be utilised, the site meets the needs of the Knox Hockey Club and community, and stakeholder engagement indicates strong support for the proposal.
- **Benedikt Reserve** – investigations into this site indicated that it is also well suited to the development of a hockey facility, however it has the potential to impact on the local community amenity. The proposal was not supported by the surrounding community during community consultation and as a result has been ruled out as a viable option. This site will continue to be allocated as an active reserve for other seasonal tenants into the future.
- **JW Manson Reserve** (owned by Maroondah City Council) has also been considered in consultation with Maroondah, however, has also been ruled out principally due to potential cost implications, undetermined timelines, and a strong preference by Knox Council to invest in a centrally located, Knox based and owned facility for the benefit of Knox residents.
- Several other sites, including Stud Park, Gilbert Park and Heathmont College, were also considered but were not progressed to detailed investigation as they offered less opportunity than the sites above or had other extensive limitations.

Below is a summary of the outcomes for the work undertaken in relation to Wantirna Reserve (East):

2.1 Wantirna Reserve (East) Feasibility Study

The feasibility study that has been undertaken demonstrated that whilst there are technical and administrative complexities, the project can be achieved in a timely manner that will require tight budget management.

The placement of the pitch on the existing oval will allow the utilisation of the existing pavilion and carpark and provide an opportunity for the future development of a practice area and the provision of open space for passive use.

The overall order of cost for the development of the Wantirna Reserve proposal is \$3,093,877 (excl. GST).

The table below summarises the probable opinion of the cost for the Wantirna Reserve proposal.

Table 1 - Wantirna Reserve East	
Construction Preliminaries: Cost shown preliminary pending cost of in-ground services, TBC	\$178,000
Demolition	\$261,337
Stormwater Drainage	\$116,550
In-ground Services: Electrical: install L.E.D sports lighting (incl. footings) - TBC	\$500,000
Construct synthetic field	\$1,350,047
Miscellaneous: Fencing Sports equipment and shelters:	\$160,113
Subtotal (excl. GST)	\$2,566,047
Contingency (15%)	\$384,907
Design consultancy (7%)	\$178,923
Total (excluding GST)	\$3,093,877

The feasibility study and the stakeholder consultation identified the need for future consideration of improvements to the car parking and road access in the reserve. This will be considered as part of an overarching Reserve Masterplan that is awaiting the outcome of some existing geotechnical studies on the former landfill site to better understand the opportunities available. It is hopeful this will commence in 2022.

2.2 Community and Stakeholder Consultation and Engagement – Wantirna Reserve (East)

Community and stakeholder consultation has now been undertaken regarding the concept plans for the delivery of a facility at Wantirna Reserve (East) on the existing Football and Cricket oval. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, the process involved a series of online meetings or phone conversations with the key stakeholders from the site including Wantirna South Junior Football Club, Wantirna Cricket Club, Wantirna Tennis Club, 2nd Wantirna Scouts Group, Friends of Dandenong Creek, Reveg Nursery, Jazz Archives, the Knox School and the Knox Hockey Club.

Following consultation with the key internal stakeholders, letters were also sent to all residents and businesses within a 500 metre radius (284 in total) on 20 September 2021 via priority mail. The letter referred people to Council's 'Have Your Say' page which includes the draft Wantirna Reserve Concept Plan, an aerial view for context, and a brief description of the project. The letter asked for comments on the proposal via the 'Have Your Say' page by 4 October 2021.

Data from the "Have Your Say" page indicates that there have been 144 views of the page since 22 September 2021 and that four comments have been received. Two of the comments were highly supportive, one questioned the loss of an oval and one was unclear.

Due to COVID-19 restrictions no onsite meetings have taken place nor have any signs been installed on site. Should the proposal be supported, further detailed consultation and collaboration with the impacted sporting clubs, (cricket, football and hockey) will be undertaken as well as the installation of signage to provide information to the wider public users of the site.

The primary outcomes from meetings with the key and heavily impacted stakeholders are summarised below:

Wantirna Cricket Club (WCC)

Wantirna Reserve is the Club's home ground and the Club stated they are reluctant to leave the site, however, understand the situation and are supportive of working through alternative ground options for the club should the development be approved. It is considered likely that the Club will relocate to Shultz Reserve in Wantirna.

Wantirna South Junior Football Club (WSJFC)

The Club is supportive of the development. It was indicated that Lewis Park would be the most viable option for the Club, and they saw this as a welcome opportunity to grow and to also build a more collaborative approach with the senior team. Further discussions with the Club will be required to consolidate their ground options if the proposal is approved.

Wantirna Tennis Club (WTC)

The Club were supportive of the proposal and saw opportunities for improved security at Wantirna Reserve and the prospect to develop a relationship with the Knox Hockey Club.

2nd Wantirna Scouts Group

The group are also supportive of the proposal, they would like to see improved security at the reserve and believe there are opportunities to develop a relationship with the Knox Hockey Club.

Friends of Dandenong Creek

The group are supportive of the project and felt that the development would add to the community use of the reserve. They did suggest that the design of the lighting and the pitch should be undertaken to minimise impact on biodiversity and water quality. This concern can be addressed through the detailed pitch design and specification of lighting.

Reveg Nursery

Supported the project, however, suggested that there needs to be a whole precinct approach particularly regarding the traffic infrastructure (including tree protection), runoff management and access to the playground. This will be addressed both through the Master Plan but also this project.

Jazz Archives

Are supportive of the proposal and of a Master Plan in general.

The Knox School

Council Officers have continued to keep the Knox School updated on the progress of the site options and the feasibility study through quarterly meetings. The Knox School are supportive of the proposal and have worked with the Club and Council to ensure the Club's transition to a new site since they announced their plans to develop the school site.

The Knox Hockey Club

The Club are supportive of the approach and are excited about the opportunity. The Club will be engaged in the detailed design should the project be approved.

General Comments

Overall, the stakeholder consultation was positive and collaborative. Fine tuning of any future arrangement for the cricket and football clubs will need to be undertaken sensitively but based on the discussions to date, Council officers are confident that the outcome/relocations for the existing clubs will be positive.

Groups mentioned the need to balance the environmental impact with the social outcomes but agreed that the proposal overall was a positive outcome for the reserve and the local community.

The key concerns from some of the site stakeholders were the internal road system, carparking, and amenity for the other users of the reserve such as dog walkers and cyclists. These broader reserve issues will be addressed in future consultation and planning as Council officers undertake the broader site master planning in 2022.

Thus, after undertaking the feasibility studies and the community and stakeholder engagement at Wantirna and Benedikt Reserves, the Wantirna Reserve (East) site is considered the most viable option to provide for the Knox Hockey Club and hockey more broadly in the municipality. (See Attachment 1).

2.3 Development Process

Should the project be approved, the following steps will need to occur:

Detailed Design – a concept design has already been completed which includes preliminary geotechnical studies. A detailed design and further geotechnical work will be required and can be completed by the end of 2021.

Consultation – Further detailed consultation will be required with the Knox Hockey Club and other users of the reserve. Information signs will also be erected at the reserve.

Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning - Council is the Committee of Management of the reserve; however, it remains Crown Land, thus permission to develop is required from DELWP. Initial conversations suggest that this will be supported, however, a formal request with detailed designs is required to obtain final approval.

Tender & Construction - Once a detailed design is completed and permission from DELWP (and any other authorities) is granted it is expected that a tender process and construction could be undertaken in 2022.

3. CONSULTATION

Consultation has been undertaken with the surrounding community, the reserve stakeholders, the Knox School and the Knox Hockey Club as discussed earlier in the report. Internal consultation has also been undertaken in the development of the feasibility reports and this report, with the Major Initiative Unit and the Parks and Open Space planning teams.

4. ENVIRONMENTAL / AMENITY ISSUES

The development of a synthetic hockey pitch will increase storm water runoff and will require careful design to ensure there are no other environmental impacts. Detailed engagement with the relevant internal subject matter experts will be undertaken during the design phase.

5. FINANCIAL & ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS

The estimated cost for the development of an International Hockey Federation approved synthetic hockey field, including appropriate sports field fencing and lighting, but excluding a pavilion provision or redevelopment, is \$3,093,877.

Within the current 2021/22 capital works budget there is a balance of \$125,000 for planning and detailed design and an allocation of \$3.5M (including the Knox Hockey Club's contribution of \$400,000 to the project).

There is a further provisional capital allocation to Wantirna Reserve in future years to upgrade the car park more broadly. The design and construction of these improvements are contingent on the outcomes of the overall masterplan for the reserve.

6. SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The development of a new hockey facility in the Municipality will provide the Knox Hockey Club with a permanent home and provide other aspiring hockey players an opportunity to join the club and participate. Hockey is a sport that encourages diverse participation and has a strong history of women's participation, is family orientated and encourages participation of older adults into their later years.

7. RELEVANCE TO KNOX COMMUNITY AND COUNCIL PLAN 2017-2021

Goal 1 - We value our natural and built environment

Strategy 1.3 - Ensure the Knox local character is protected and enhanced through the design and location of urban development and infrastructure

Goal 6 - We are healthy, happy and well

Strategy 6.1 - Mitigate lifestyle risks such as smoking, risky alcohol consumption and drug use, obesity, lack of physical activity and poor nutrition

Strategy 6.2 - Support the community to enable positive physical and mental health

8. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The officers contributing to and responsible for this report have no conflicts of interest requiring disclosure under Chapter 5 of the Governance Rules of Knox City Council.

9. CONCLUSION

Hockey is a sport that encourages participation by a diverse range of people of all ages, it provides a positive gender balance and creates a family friendly environment. The Knox Hockey Club has a long history in the municipality and no longer has a home ground to operate from. The Club is professionally managed, growing in numbers and can make a large financial contribution to the project.

Council officers have undertaken a comprehensive process to identify a site (Wantirna Reserve East) within the municipality that can effectively accommodate hockey now and into the future.

It is considered that the development of Wantirna Reserve as a home for hockey in Knox will not only benefit the Club and hockey in general but will add to the broader amenity and activation of Wantirna Reserve.

10. CONFIDENTIALITY

There is no content in this report that meets the definition of confidential information from the Local Government Act 2020.

Report Prepared By Strategic Planning Coordinator, Active and Creative Communities,
Paul Reading & Manager Active and Creative Communities, Nicole
Columbine

Report Authorised By Director Connected Communities, Tanya Scicluna

Attachments

1. Attachment 1 - Wantirna Reserve - Draft Design [9.5.1 - 1 page]

9.6 Contract 2790 - Management of Knox Skate and BMX Facilities at Gilbert Park

SUMMARY: Leisure Contracts and Project Officer, Rhonda Snijders

This report considers and recommends the appointment of Victoria YMCA Community Programming Pty Ltd as the successful tenderer for the Management for Programs, Services and Events for Knox Skate and BMX facilities at Gilbert Park Reserve, Knoxfield.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Accepts the tender from Victoria YMCA Community Programming Pty Ltd for contract No. 2790, Management for Programs, Services and Events for Knox Skate and BMX facilities at Gilbert Park Reserve, Knoxfield; for the initial term (1 November 2021 to 31 May 2026) at a cost of \$495,753 (ex GST)
2. Note Contract 2790 includes provision for a an extension for a further five year term (1 November 2026 to 31 May 2031) exercisable at Council's discretion.
3. Authorise the Chief Executive Officer (or such person as the Chief Executive Officer selects) to:
 - a. Negotiate and execute all documents necessary to give effect to the Council's decision; and
 - b. Negotiate and execute an extension to Contract No. 2790 to the maximum 10 year term.
4. Advise the tenderer accordingly.

1. INTRODUCTION

This contract is for the Management of Programs, Services and Events for Knox Skate and BMX Facilities at Gilbert Park Reserve, Knoxfield.

In line with Council's Procurement Policy a tender process was undertaken to engage with a suitably experienced contractor to deliver the services.

The key objectives for the Knox Skate and BMX Park services include:

- Achieve a high level of customer satisfaction and engagement.
- Increase participation among children and young people, with particular emphasis on young females, people with disabilities, and people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.
- Generate strong public awareness of the facility and its programs and services.
- Continued growth in social media engagement, to promote the programs and events provided at the Skate and BMX Park.
- Activation of the new purpose-built pavilion for youth activities.

This report considers and recommends the appointment of a tenderer to provide the Management of Programs, Services and Events for the Knox Skate and BMX facilities at Gilbert Park Reserve, Knoxfield.

2. DISCUSSION

2.1 Background

Knox Skate and BMX Park at Gilbert Park is a regional facility which provides opportunities for children and young people to be active. The facility is a community hub where young people can meet, have fun and engage. In addition to attracting high participation from children and young people, skating and BMX are legitimate forms of transport that requires innovative approaches to managing how skaters and riders safely interact with the urban environment.

Since the facility opened in January 2008, the Knox Skate and BMX facility continues to attract over 20,000 visitations annually and has created a niche in the market known for delivering quality programs and infrastructure.

The skate, scooter, inline and BMX facilities at Gilbert Park includes a mixture of street and transition elements. Bowls compliment intermediate to advanced free style riders and boarders, whilst street elements cater for beginners.

A new pavilion was completed in April 2021, providing greater opportunities to deliver programs utilising work benches, tools and equipment. The pavilion was purpose built as a space to engage with young people and to create a space where people can learn and develop new skills.

Council has previously engaged with a professional contractor to manage the programs, services and events at the Knox Skate and BMX facilities at Gilbert Park Reserve on weekends and school holidays. This contract expired in May 2021.

2.2 Proposed Management of Programs, Services and Events for Knox Skate and BMX Facilities at Gilbert Park Reserve, Knoxfield

The YMCA tender response included a focus on activation designed to create positive social change through targeted programs and service delivery to build a more active, inclusive, engaged and connected Knox community.

The deliverables include engagement and increased participation with non-traditional user groups including a strong focus on girls and women, mentoring and training of volunteers leading to local employment opportunities, and programming opportunities for people with a disability and people from diverse cultural backgrounds.

2.3 Tenders Received

The tender process commenced on 31 July 2021 and closed on 19 August 2021. Following the close of tenders, one tender submission was received from:

- Victoria YMCA Community Programming Pty Ltd.

2.4 Tender Evaluation Panel

As required under Council's contract administration procedures, a Tender Evaluation Panel (TEP) was formed to assess the tenders.

All members of the Panel signed the Tender Evaluation Panel Declaration Form indicating that they had no conflict of interest or association with the tenderer.

2.5 Evaluation Criteria and Weighting

The tender was evaluated against the criteria outlined in Table 1 as advertised in the tender conditions, with weightings established prior to the assessment of the tenders.

Table 1: Evaluation Criteria and Weighting

Criteria	Weighting
Compliance with Specification	20%
Capability	20%
Relevant experience, past performance, and category management	20%
Local, social and environmental considerations	10%
Pricing	30%

In the tender, the Victorian YMCA included a response on non-conforming items in the contract. Officers sought clarity from the Victorian YMCA and as a result all outstanding matters have been resolved.

2.6 Tender Evaluation Results

After evaluating the tender submission, the evaluation panel recommends Victoria YMCA Community Programming Pty Ltd as the successful tenderer. The proposal by the YMCA represents value for money for Council, having met all the criteria and demonstrating capability of providing, quality programs, services and events that align with the Council and Community Plan. The outcomes from the panel assessment have been presented in the Procurement Report attached separately to the report as Confidential Attachment 1.

2.7 Preferred Tenderer

The TEP recommends that Council accept the five year guaranteed lump sum initial term for \$495,753 (excluding GST) and for a further five year option at Council's discretion from the conforming tender received from Victoria YMCA Community Programming Pty Ltd.

3. CONSULTATION

Officers from Connected Communities, Infrastructure and City Strategy and Integrity have been consulted in the development of the service specification for the facility and the tender process.

4. ENVIRONMENTAL / AMENITY ISSUES

The contract specification states a number of environmental/amenity requirements that must be complied with during the term of the contract.

The evaluation methodology and criteria ensured that local, social and environmental considerations were responded to by the tender applicant and were assessed by the TEP.

There are no environmental or amenity concerns with the tender submission received.

5. FINANCIAL & ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS

The specification outlines the contract type for the Management of Programs, Services and Events for Knox Skate and BMX Facilities. The 2021/22 contract costs associated with the service delivery for the Knox Skate and BMX Park will be funded through Councils current operational budget. The tender sum is for a fixed price lump sum and includes cost escalation for 2021/22. This cost escalation will be covered by savings achieved through use of budget funds from leisure sports facilities and programs.

6. SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Council's key objectives for the Knox Skate and BMX Park have been addressed by the tenderer in their proposal.

The tenderers vision is to create a:

- Vibrant and active hub for young people in Knox.
- Place where young people can connect, learn, contribute, and impact their own lives and the lives of others.
- Place to celebrate Knox Skate and BMX culture and community
- Safe and inclusive space where everyone is welcome and encouraged to participate.

7. RELEVANCE TO KNOX COMMUNITY AND COUNCIL PLAN 2017-2021

Goal 4 - We are safe and secure

Strategy 4.2 - Enhance community connectedness opportunities to improve perceptions of safety

Goal 7 - We are inclusive, feel a sense of belonging and value our identity

Strategy 7.2 - Celebrate our diverse community

Strategy 7.3 - Strengthen community connections

Strategy 7.4 - Promote and celebrate the contribution of our volunteers

8. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The officers contributing to and responsible for this report have no conflicts of interest requiring disclosure under Chapter 5 of the Governance Rules of Knox City Council.

9. CONCLUSION

The tender submitted by Victoria YMCA Community Programming Pty Ltd represents value for money to Council for the delivery of skate and BMX services at Gilbert Park Reserve. The application provided evidence for pricing value, previous experience, and capability to deliver the contract specifications for the Management of Programs, Services and Events for Knox Skate and BMX facilities.

10. CONFIDENTIALITY

Confidential Attachment 1 is included in the confidential agenda, as it contains confidential information pursuant to Council's Governance Rules and Section 66 of the Local Government Act 2020, as it relates to private commercial information, that if released, would unreasonably expose the Victoria YMCA Community Programming Pty Ltd to disadvantage because it would release financial information about the business that is not generally available to their competitors.

Report Prepared By: Leisure Contracts and Project Officer, Rhonda Snijders

Report Authorised By: Director Connected Communities, Tanya Scicluna

Attachments

Confidential Attachment 1 is circulated under separate cover

10 Office of the CEO Reports for consideration

10.1 Loan Borrowings

SUMMARY: Chief Financial Officer, Navec Lorkin

The purpose of this report is to recommend that Council exercise its powers to borrow up to \$50.03 million to enable funding of the 2021-22 capital works program, and to authorise the Chief Executive Officer to sign documents with relevant lending institutions to execute the borrowings.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Note Council's adopted 2021-22 Revised Budget includes provision for borrowings of \$50.03 million within the 2021-22 financial year.
2. Resolve to borrow up to \$50.03 million in the 2021-22 financial year.
3. Authorise the Chief Executive Officer to:-
 - a. Determine the final value of borrowings to be procured to a maximum of \$50.03 million having regard for the latest cash flow forecast;
 - b. Identify and select a finance provider through an appropriate procurement process; and
 - c. Execute all relevant documents necessary to give effect to the above resolutions.

1. INTRODUCTION

Section 104 of the Local Government Act 2020 (the Act) gives Council the power to borrow, on the basis that borrowings are included in the Budget or Revised Budget. Council can borrow up to this amount without needing to further revise the adopted 2021-22 Revised Budget.

Council's adopted 2021-22 Revised Budget includes loan borrowings of \$50.03 million and repayments of \$3.835 million in the 2021-22 financial year. In addition, the Revised Budget also noted forecast borrowings of \$40.906 million in the 2020-21 financial year. These forecast borrowings were not ultimately be required in 2020-21 due to sufficient cash flow being available through to 30 June 2021. The total borrowings included in the Revised Budget inclusive of the 2020-21 forecast amount is \$90.936 million.

Although Council has made provision for these borrowings in the adopted budget, a resolution is required to constitute authorisation to activate these borrowings and authorise the Chief Executive Officer to draw down the borrowings when they are required and to determine an appropriate term and interest rate.

Approval is being sought to borrow \$50.03 million, to assist in funding the approved \$127.980 million capital works program. A further report will be presented to Council in the first quarter of next calendar year should the remaining borrowings be required.

2. DISCUSSION

These borrowings will be drawn over the remainder of the 2021-22 financial year as required by Council's cash flow requirements. The timings of the borrowings will be governed by the delivery of the capital program, and the loan structure.

Local Government Victoria have recently announced the Local Council Lending Framework, which gives Council access to lower interest rates financed through Treasury Corporation of Victoria (TCV). Access to these funds is not limited to works of a specific nature and can be used to fund infrastructure and general working capital requirements. Subject to meeting the credit criteria, Council will be eligible to apply for a TCV loan from January 2022 for the 2021-22 financial year.

Officers will conduct a process to seek quotations from a number of banks and/or seek funding through the TCV Lending Framework, depending on the timing of funding needs.

Officers will consider the most appropriate facility based on the timing of funding requirements and will undertake cash flow modelling to inform this.

The preferred borrowings option will be the one most favourable to Council based on the interest rate and preferred terms and conditions.

As noted above, the borrowings for which approval is sought in this report are consistent with the amount included in Council's adopted 2021-22 Revised Budget.

3. CONSULTATION

Loan borrowings have been included in the draft 2021-22 Budget which was publicly advertised and provided the opportunity for budget submissions. A hearing for budget submissions was held on 7 June 2021 and the budget adopted on the 26 June 2021 and a Revised 2021-22 Budget adopted on the 23 August 2021.

4. ENVIRONMENTAL/AMENITY ISSUES

This report does not have any environmental or amenities issues for discussion.

5. FINANCIAL & ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS

The total cost of these borrowings have been factored into Council's adopted 2021 22 Revised Budget and Council's draft Long Term Financial Plan.

Council's adopted 2021-22 Revised Budget includes loan repayments of \$3.835 million and loan interest payments of \$0.743 million. Principal repayments and borrowing costs have been factored into Council's draft Long Term Financial Plan.

6. SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct social implications arising from this report.

7. RELEVANCE TO KNOX COMMUNITY AND COUNCIL PLAN 2017-2021

Goal 8 - We have confidence in decision making

Strategy 8.1 - Build, strengthen and promote good governance practices across government and community organisations

8. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The officers contributing to and responsible for this report have no conflicts of interest requiring disclosure under Chapter 5 of the Governance Rules of Knox City Council.

9. CONCLUSION

It is proposed that Council exercise its power to borrow up to a total of \$40.906 million to help fund the capital works program and authorise the Chief Executive Officer to sign documents giving effect to the acceptance of a preferred lender.

10. CONFIDENTIALITY

There is no content in this report that meets the definition of confidential information from the Local Government Act 2020.

Report Prepared By: Chief Financial Officer, Navec Lorkin

Report Authorised By: Chief Executive Officer, Bruce Dobson

Attachments

Nil

10.2 ICT Governance Committee Terms of Reference

SUMMARY: IT Program Coordinator, Shona Richards

This report presents the Terms of Reference for the Information Communications Technology Governance Committee (ICTGC) for approval by Council. The original Terms of Reference were approved by Council on 28 August 2017 and were due for review in August 2021. The original Terms of Reference have been reviewed and no changes are proposed, save for updates to the responsible directorate and officer. It is proposed the next review of the Terms of Reference be undertaken by 31 August 2023.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council adopt the revised ICT Governance Committee Terms of Reference as set out in Attachment 1.

1. INTRODUCTION

The objectives of the Information Communications Technology Governance Committee (ICTGC) are to:

- Oversee the implementation of the Digital Strategy, the ICT Strategy and ICT Roadmap.
- Evaluate and recommend IT-enabled projects regarding future investment in changed or new IT capability, via a review of project briefs and/or business cases demonstrating strategic alignment, IT solution options, risk management plans and return on investment predictions and making recommendations to Council.
- Provide guidance and recommendations regarding strategic investment priorities, decision making responsibilities and project methodologies, provide strategic advice to project teams via their Project Steering Committee.
- Provide oversight and monitor the implementation of the approved IT program of work including key risks and dependencies and review budget, schedule and scope changes to ensure the organisation realises benefit and value from its IT investments.
- Provide oversight and support the principles of IT governance as detailed in *AS ISO/IEC 38500:2016 Information Technology - Governance of IT for the Organisation*, and the Knox City Council IT Governance Model.
- Provide recommendations to inform the decision-making process of Council (the governing body) regarding investment in IT-enabled projects.
- Report to Council all recommendations as determined by the ICTGC, and any other matter or issue considered appropriate and within the ICTGC's Terms of Reference.

The membership of the Committee shall comprise:

- Mayor
- Two Councillors
- Three Independent external members

The contracts of independent members are renewed every three years (currently renewed to August 2023).

2. DISCUSSION

A review of the currency of the Terms of Reference was conducted by the IT Program Coordinator and Chief Information Officer and were deemed to be effective for the current governance requirements.

The recommendation to retain the Terms of Reference and review them again by 31 August 2023, aligns to the date when the independent member contracts are to be reviewed – and therefore a more holistic change can be considered. This expiration date will allow time for a proposed ICT Strategy Refresh, which may result in changes in the required governance model.

This recommendation has been supported by the Chair of the ICT Governance Committee, Chief Executive Officer, Executive Manager Strategy, People & Culture and the Chief Information Officer.

No amendments were made other than of an administrative nature to the responsible directorate and officer.

3. CONSULTATION

Internal consultation occurred during September 2021 and the expiration of the Terms of Reference and recommendation to extend the current terms was an outcome of a discussion with the Chair of the ICT Governance Committee on 27 September 2021.

The recommendation was discussed with the Chief Executive Officer, Executive Manager Strategy, People & Culture and the Chief Information Officer on 4 October 2021, and all were supportive of the recommendation to retain the existing Terms of Reference.

4. ENVIRONMENTAL/AMENITY ISSUES

There are no environmental or amenity issues related to this report.

5. FINANCIAL & ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS

The resources required to service this Committee are included within the ICT Strategy budget.

6. SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The Committee will take an active role in recommending initiatives and supporting improved technology outcomes for community members across Knox City Council's services, and within our staff.

7. RELEVANCE TO KNOX COMMUNITY AND COUNCIL PLAN 2017-2021

The ICTGC provided specific advice, feedback and recommendations throughout the year against strategies and initiatives across a range of Council objectives in the Community and Council Plan.

8. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The officers contributing to and responsible for this report have no conflicts of interest requiring disclosure under Chapter 5 of the Governance Rules of Knox City Council.

9. CONCLUSION

No substantive changes are proposed to the Terms of Reference for the ICT Governance Committee and it is recommended Council adopt the updated Terms of reference for 2021-2023.

10. CONFIDENTIALITY

There are no items of a confidential nature in this report.

Report Prepared By: IT Program Coordinator, Shona Richards
Report Authorised By: Chief Information Officer, Scott Coleman

Attachments

1. Terms of Reference ICTGC Committee [10.2.1 - 6 pages]



Information Communication Technology (ICT) Governance Committee

Directorate:	Office of the CEO	Responsible Officer:	Executive Manager, Strategy People & Culture, Interim Information Technology & Transformation
Approval Date:	25 October 2021 (proposed)	Committee Group:	Advisory
Review Date:	31 August 2023		

1. Purpose

The Knox City Council ICT Governance Committee ("ICTGC") is an Advisory Committee of Knox City Council. The Committee's purpose is to evaluate, recommend and monitor IT-enabled projects regarding future investment in changed or new IT capability in accordance with AS/NZS 8016:2013 (Governance of IT-enabled Projects).

2. Objectives

The objectives of the ICTGC are to:

- Oversee the implementation of the Digital Strategy, the ICT Strategy and ICT Roadmap
- Evaluate and recommend IT-enabled projects regarding future investment in changed or new IT capability, via a review of project briefs and/or business cases demonstrating strategic alignment, IT solution options, risk management plans and return on investment predictions and making recommendations to Council.
- Provide guidance and recommendations regarding strategic investment priorities, decision making responsibilities and project methodologies, provide strategic advice to project teams via their Project Steering Committee.
- Provide oversight and monitor the implementation of the approved IT program of work including key risks and dependencies and review budget, schedule and scope changes to ensure the organisation realises benefit and value from its IT investments
- Provide oversight and support the principles of IT governance as detailed in AS ISO/IEC 38500:2016 and the Knox City Council IT Governance Model.
- Provide recommendations to inform the decision making process of Council (the governing body) regarding investment in IT-enabled projects.
- Report to Council all recommendations as determined by the ICTGC, and any other matter or issue considered appropriate and within the ICTGC's Terms of Reference.



3. Membership, Period of Membership and Method of Appointment

The membership of the Committee shall comprise:

- Mayor
- Two Councillors
- Three Independent external members

Independent external members will have a background in the ICT industry and or governance. An awareness of local government would be an advantage.

Any Councillor, not appointed to the Committee, may attend the meeting and will not have any voting entitlement.

3.1 Selection and Recruitment of Community and Professional Industry Representative Members

The process to appoint community members will be advertised in local newspapers, on Council's internet site and through local networks. Applicants must make application via an expression of interest process.

Eligible community members will have an interest in and good working knowledge of Information Technology.

The approach and method for appointing representatives will include the following:

- Community and professional/ industry members will be selected by a panel comprising a Councillor and 2 Council Officers from the relevant service unit;
- The method of appointment will be via an expression of interest process;
- Members will be appointed for a two year term;
- All members will be eligible to re-apply for appointment, however continuous membership for longer than four years will not be considered;
- Council will be responsible for appointing all Councillor, community and professional/industry representative members; and
- Casual vacancies which occur due to community members being unable to complete the full term of their appointments may be filled by co-opting suitable candidates from a previous selection process for the remainder of the previous incumbents' terms. The selection panel will make a recommendation to the CEO, who will have the authority to appoint the recommended candidate to the committee for the remainder of the previous incumbent's term.

Professional/industry representatives unable to attend a committee meeting are able to nominate a proxy or alternate member from the organisation they represent. Any proxy attendance should be notified to Council's nominated officer at least 24 hours prior to the meeting. It is expected the appointed professional/ industry representative will provide an appropriate briefing of the committee purpose and objectives and relevant meeting notes to enable active participation and contribution of the proxy representation to the meeting.

The committee may invite observers to meetings from time to time. This is at the discretion of the committee.

Guests may also be invited to attend and participate at meetings, this would generally for a specific purpose and/or specified period of time. This is at the discretion of the committee.

All elected representatives who are Council volunteers and industry representatives are required to undertake prescribed Child Safe Training and any other training required by Council within their term on an Advisory Committee. This is a legislative requirement as part of reforms from the State Government to ensure all Committee representatives are aware of child safety practices in the event a relevant issue arises. This



requirement relates to the following Committees who have volunteer and community members: Early Years Advisory Committee, Youth Advisory Committee, Active Ageing Committee, Environment Committee, Community, Safety, Health and Wellbeing Committee, City Futures Committee, Disability Committee, Multicultural Committee, Arts and Culture Committee and the Community Development Fund Panel.

3.2 Councillors

Council will appoint Councillor representation annually.

Unless otherwise appointed to the committee by Council, the Mayor is, by virtue of the Office, an ex officio member of the committee. It is important that whilst the Mayor may not chair these meetings, appropriate recognition should be given to the presence of the Mayor if in attendance.

The role of Councillors is to participate in the meetings, listen to community and stakeholder views and keep the Council informed, through reports on committees by Councillors at Council meetings, on issues of community interest being considered at meetings.

3.3 Council Officers

Council officers will be nominated to support the committee by the CEO as required to provide advice and administrative support to the committee

4. Delegated Authority and Decision Making

The committee acts in an advisory capacity only and has no delegated authority to make decisions on behalf of Council.

5. Meeting Procedures

The committee will meet on a quarterly basis and an annual schedule of meetings will be agreed upon at the first meeting of the committee in each year. The committee will also participate in the 6 monthly Group Meetings and the annual advisory committee Forum.

The committee is not required to give public notice of its meetings and its meetings are not open to the public.

At the commencement of each financial year, the committee will develop a work plan for the upcoming year. This will generally be aligned with the Community and Council Plan. The committee may also highlight any emerging issues, which will also be documented. For efficiency purposes, the business of the committee throughout the ensuing year should align with the work plan and list of emerging issues.

Meetings will follow standard meeting procedure protocols, which are in summary:

- Commence on time and conclude by the stated completion time;
- Be scheduled and confirmed in advance with all relevant papers distributed (as appropriate) to each member;
- Encourage fair and reasonable discussion, participation and respect for each other's views;
- Focus on the relevant issues at hand; and
- Provide advice to Council as far as possible on a consensus basis.

6. Chair



The members of the Committee will appoint a Chairperson annually at the commencement of the first meeting each calendar year. The Chairperson is to be an independent member of the Committee. The members of the Committee may also appoint a Deputy Chairperson who is to be an independent Committee member, to undertake the duties of the Chairperson where the elected person may not be able to undertake their duties.

When appointing the Chairperson, the Committee should consider a candidate's relevant professional and personal skills required to undertake this role.

7. Agendas and Meeting Notes

Agendas and meeting notes must be prepared for each meeting.

The Agenda must be provided to members of the committee not less than 7 days before the time fixed for the holding of the meeting in both digital and hard copy formats with the only exception being when a public holiday falls on the day agendas are due, in which case agendas are to be provided close of business 6 days in advance. Officer reports that fail to meet the timelines will only be permitted to be included in the relevant agendas of; Ordinary Council Meetings, Strategic Planning meeting, Issues Briefings or Special Committees, with the approval of the Mayor, and Council Committees with the approval of the Chair of the Committee.

The Chairperson must arrange for meeting notes of each meeting of the committee to be kept.

The meeting notes of a Council Committee must:

- a) contain details of the proceedings and recommendations made;
- b) be clearly expressed;
- c) be self-explanatory; and
- d) incorporate relevant reports or a summary of the relevant reports considered by the committee.

Draft meeting notes must be:

- a) submitted to the Committee Chairperson for confirmation within 7 days of the meeting;
- b) distributed to all Committee Members following confirmation from the Chairperson and within 14 days of the meeting; and
- c) submitted to the next meeting of the Committee for information.

In compliance with section 58 of the 2020 Act and the requirements of the Council's Public Transparency Policy the agenda and minutes of this group will be made available on Council's website unless:

- the information contained in the agenda and/or minutes is confidential by virtue of the 2020 Act or any other Act; or
- the public availability of the information has been deemed by the Chief Executive Officer or nominee to be contrary to the public interest.

8. Voting

When the ICTGC is unable to determine a matter by consensus, the matter will be determined by a vote.

- Councillor and independent members have voting rights.
- Staff provide support and advice to the Committee only and have no voting rights.
- In the event of an equality of votes the Chairperson has a second, casting vote.

9. Conflict and Interest Provisions

In performing the role of Advisory Committee member, a person must:

- Act with integrity;



- Impartially exercise his or her responsibilities in the interests of the local community;
- Not improperly seek to confer an advantage or disadvantage on any person;
- Treat all persons with respect and have due regard to the opinions, beliefs, rights and responsibilities of other persons;
- Commit to regular attendance at meetings; and
- Not make improper use of information acquired because of their position or release information that the member knows, or should reasonably know, is confidential information.

Meetings of the Panel will typically constitute a Meeting Conducted under the Auspices of Council pursuant to Council's Governance Rules and Councillors are consequently required to comply with the conflict of interest provisions as set down in section 131 of the 2020 Act and Chapter 5 of the Council's Governance Rules.

Councillors must:

- disclose that conflict of interest by explaining the nature of the conflict of interest to those present immediately before the matter is considered;
- absent themselves from any discussion of the matter; and
- as soon as practicable, provide the CEO with a written notice recording the nature of the conflict.

Where a member of staff or a community member has a conflict of interest or perceived conflict of interest in relation to a matter before the Group, they must disclose the matter to the group before the matter is considered or discussed. Disclosure must include the nature of the interest and be recorded in the meeting notes. It will be at the discretion of the Chairperson if the staff and/or community member remains or leaves the room whilst the matter is discussed, and this must also be recorded in the notes of the meeting.

All members of the Advisory Committee shall participate in training on the Conduct and Interest provisions which will be run a minimum of annually by the Governance team.

10. Reporting

The committee will prepare a formal report on an annual basis in line with their stated objectives. The report must be adopted by the committee and should directly reflect the objectives and the performance measures of the committee as set out in the Terms of Reference. Once adopted by the committee the report will be presented to Council.

11. Administration Support

Administration support will be provided by the Corporate Development Directorate.

12. Contact with the Media

Contact with the Media by Advisory Committee members will be conducted in accordance with the Councillor and Staff Media Policies. Community members should defer any media enquiries to the Chairperson in the first instance and should take care not to respond as a representative of the committee.

13. Review Date

The committee will sunset after 4 years. If the committee continues to have a relevant function, a report must be presented to Council prior to this date that includes a review of the committee's Terms of Reference and seeking endorsement from Council to continue act in an advisory capacity.



14. Meals

The provision of refreshments during the course of a committee meeting will be provided in accordance with the Meals and Beverages for Council Committees Policy.

15. Administrative Updates

From time to time, circumstances may change leading to the need for minor administrative changes to this document. Where an update does not materially alter this Terms of Reference, such a change may be made administratively. Examples of minor administrative changes include change to names of Council departments or positions, change to names of Federal or State Government departments or a minor amendment to legislation that does not have material impact. Where any change or update may materially change the intent of this Terms of Reference, it must be considered by Council at a Council or delegated Committee meeting.

10.3 Adoption of the Community Plan 2021-2031, Council Plan 2021-2025 & Financial Plan 2021-2031

SUMMARY: Corporate Planning Lead, Kathryn Holland

The Knox Community Plan 2021-2031, Council Plan 2021-2025 (incorporating the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan) and Financial Plan 2021-2031 are Council's new key strategic planning documents. They have been developed based on the community's needs and aspirations and will guide the work of Council over the coming years.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Adopt the Community Plan 2021-2031, Council Plan 2021-2025 (incorporating the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan) and the Financial Plan 2021-2031 in accordance with sections 88, 90 and 91 of the Local Government Act 2020.
2. Submit the Council Plan 2021-2025 (incorporating the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan) to the Minister for Local Government and Secretary of the Department of Health.
3. Authorise the Chief Executive Officer to make minor typographical or editorial changes if required prior to submission (as per Recommendation 2 above) and publication.

1. INTRODUCTION

The Local Government Act 2020 (s88, 90 and 91) requires Victorian councils to develop a Community Vision, Council Plan and Financial Plan in accordance with their deliberative engagement practices and adopt these plans by 31 October in the year following a general election.

Section 26 of the Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008 also requires councils to produce a Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan (MPHWP) every four years within 12 months of a general election. Knox has been granted an exemption to produce a standalone MPHWP from the Department of Health and has incorporated it into the Council Plan.

The Community Plan, which includes the Community Vision, the Council Plan 2021-2025 (incorporating the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan) and Financial Plan 2021-2031 meet Council's legislative requirements and are presented at this meeting for adoption.

2. DISCUSSION

The new Community Plan 2021-2031 and Council Plan 2021-2025 (incorporating the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan) replace the Knox Community and Council Plan 2017-2021. Based on feedback received on the 2017-2021 plan, the decision was made to create two separate plans that are designed in both context and look, to fit together.

Community Plan 2021-2031

The Community Plan 2021-2031 (see Attachment 10.3.1) was developed with and for the Knox community. It sets out their long-term aspirations and provides essential insights that have

informed the development of the Council Plan for the next four years. It also contains the Community Vision and describes the Key Directions, which provide areas of focus for Council, our partners, stakeholders and individuals in our community to achieve that vision.

Council Plan 2021-2025

The Council Plan 2021-2025 (incorporating the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan) (see Attachment 10.3.2) outlines the strategic direction of the organisation and Council's contribution towards the achievement of the Community Vision. It outlines the strategies we will use, the initiatives we will undertake, and the indicators that will measure if we are heading in the right direction.

The Council Plan also provides context and data around the health and wellbeing of our community. It ensures the priorities for supporting, protecting and improving the health and wellbeing of our community are at the forefront of everything we do and are integrated across all Council services and initiatives.

Financial Plan 2021-2031

The Financial Plan 2021-2031 (see Attachment 10.3.3) is a new requirement of the Local Government Act 2020. It provides a long-term view of the resources required by Council and the proposed use of those resources over a 10-year period. It covers all aspects of the Council's role including services and capital investment/assets, and shows the resources required to implement the Council Plan and other legislated responsibilities.

3. CONSULTATION

Development of Knox's new strategic plans began in early 2020 with a large research and community engagement project.

Data was collected about the municipality through the State of Knox Report, which is a collection of data that identifies trends and changes in Knox over time. A Municipal Survey was also undertaken which asked residents and businesses about the importance of, and their satisfaction with, 16 aspects of Knox.

To validate this data and seek the opinions of our community, a variety of engagement activities were conducted. There were broad discussions about a vision for Knox, our future focus and priorities, and what role Council and stakeholders can play in responding to these. Specific engagement activities were also conducted with the community, stakeholders and Council staff to understand the health and wellbeing perspectives crucial to Knox.

Community members and stakeholders participated in online forums and focus groups. Prior to attending these sessions, participants were given background information, relevant data including the results of the COVID-19 Household Impact Survey, and findings from previous engagement activities.

Several community members participated in multiple engagement activities, allowing for progression through the process from broad to more in-depth discussions on the future of Knox.

The engagement activities were directed at people who live, work, learn and play in Knox to:

- gain an understanding of the community's aspirations for the future of Knox
- test the data gathered through research

- gain feedback on the goals in the current plan
- identify priority areas for the community and Council.

All of this information was used to create our Community Vision and Community Plan, as well as directly inform the development of our Council Plan and Financial Plan.

4. ENVIRONMENTAL/AMENITY ISSUES

Issues regarding the environment and amenity have featured throughout the engagement and have been identified as priorities through the proposed strategies and initiatives in the new Community and Council Plans.

5. FINANCIAL & ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS

The development of the Community and Council Plans has been built into Knox's budget. The resources required to implement these plans have also been considered as part of the Financial Plan 2021-2031.

6. SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The new Community and Council Plans seek to address many of the social issues that are currently impacting the Knox community, including the COVID-19 pandemic, and ensuring our community is healthy, resilient and connected, now and in the future.

7. RELEVANCE TO KNOX COMMUNITY AND COUNCIL PLAN 2017-2021

Goal 8 - We have confidence in decision making

Strategy 8.1 - Build, strengthen and promote good governance practices across government and community organisations

8. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The officers contributing to and responsible for this report have no conflicts of interest requiring disclosure under Chapter 5 of the Governance Rules of Knox City Council.

9. CONCLUSION

The Community Plan 2021-2031, Council Plan 2021-2025 (incorporating the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan) and the Financial Plan 2021-2031 meet Council's legislative requirements under the Local Government Act 2020 and the Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008. These plans articulate our Community Vision and identify the priorities we need to focus on and the resources required to achieve that vision. The plans respond to our community's changing needs and provide strategic direction to Council for the next 10 years.

10. CONFIDENTIALITY

There is no content in this report that meets the definition of confidential information from the Local Government Act 2020.

Report Prepared By: Corporate Planning Lead, Kathryn Holland

Report Authorised By: Chief Executive Officer, Bruce Dobson

Attachments

1. Attachment 1 - Community Plan 2021-2031 [10.3.1 - 30 pages]
2. Attachment 2 - Council Plan 2021-2025 [10.3.2 - 36 pages]
3. Attachment 3 - Financial Plan 2021-2031 [10.3.3 - 34 pages]



Community Plan

2021 - 2031

Acknowledgement of traditional land owners

Knox City Council acknowledges the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people and Bunurong people of the Kulin Nation as Traditional Custodians of the land. The Knox Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community come from a variety of different Nations within Australia and Torres Strait, including the Traditional Custodians and Stolen Generation. As such we pay respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders, past and present, who have resided in the area and have been an integral part of the region's history.

Located at the foot of the Dandenong Ranges, Knox has many places of historic significance to the Kulin nation. Important cultural and historical sites within Knox hold both the traditional knowledge of the First Nations People and the traumatic stories of colonisation.

The journey ahead for Knox involves the land, the traditional custodians, the local Indigenous community, the wider community and the Council itself. Walking together and listening together to create a culturally safe and culturally rich community for all.

Contents

Message from the Mayor	4
Knox Community Snapshot	5
What is a Community Plan?	7
Our Community Vision	10
Our Key Directions	11
Opportunity and innovation	12
Neighbourhoods, housing and infrastructure	15
Natural environment and sustainability	18
Connection, resilience and wellbeing	21
Civic engagement and integrity	24
Partnerships	27
Monitoring our progress	28
Keeping in touch	29



Knox Community Plan

The Knox Community Plan 2021-2031 represents the voices of our community and stakeholders. It is a guide for this council and future ones, all levels of government; community groups, organisations and businesses, ensuring we work together to make Knox a great place now and in the future.

Our Community Vision 2031:

“Knox: where we connect with our people and our environment, ensuring they are safe, supported and have every opportunity to thrive.”



Message from the Mayor

This plan represents our commitment and contribution to achieving the Community Vision:

Knox: where we connect with our people and our environment, ensuring they are safe, supported and have every opportunity to thrive.

The plan guides Council's work over the next four years to deliver on the priorities identified in the Community Plan. It also incorporates our Municipal Public Health & Wellbeing Plan, highlighting our commitment to our community's health and wellbeing.

Our community is still feeling the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and our response and recovery as a city will be a key focus over the next four years. We will continue to prioritise delivering services for those facing hardship, helping local businesses to bounce back, and working towards a healthy, happy and resilient community into the future.

We would like to acknowledge and thank all those who contributed to the development of this plan. Our community provided valuable input and feedback which helped to shape our priorities and we encourage you to continue the conversation with us as we enact this plan.

Councillor Lisa Cooper
Knox City Council Mayor, 2020-21

Our commitment to addressing climate change

Knox City Council recognises that we are in a state of climate emergency. As a community, we need to take action to reduce our impact on the environment and to prepare for the effects of a changing climate.

We are committed to managing our greenhouse gas emissions and response to climate change and on 27 September 2021, adopted the Climate Response Plan 2021-2031. The plan sets out our targets and provides a roadmap with measurable actions on how this will be achieved in partnership with the Knox community. It also provides a roadmap for Council to reach net zero emissions by 2030 and for the Knox community to reach net zero emissions by 2040.

Council's commitment to addressing the Climate Emergency is reflected in the Council Plan 2021-2025 (incorporating Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan).



Knox Community Snapshot

Who we are

Population
forecast

166,791

(2021)

Predicted by
2031 to be

178,904

(2031)



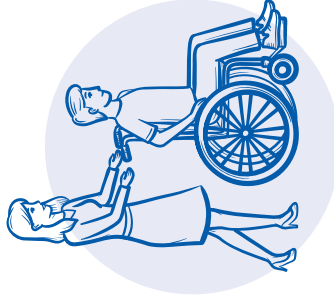
30%

of residents were
born overseas



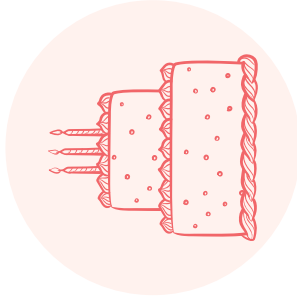
25%

of people speak a language
other than English at
home



5%

of people require assistance
in their day-to-day lives
due to disability



39 Years

is the median age

Source: 2016 Census & id. Estimated Residential population

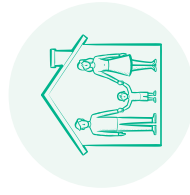
Knox Community Snapshot

How we live



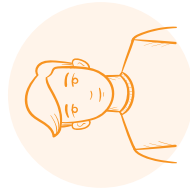
84%

of dwellings are single detached houses



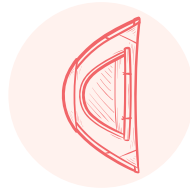
50%

Households are families with one or more children



20%

of people in Knox live by themselves



385

people identify as homeless

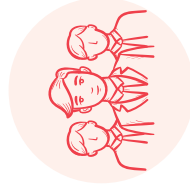
Source: 2016 Census & id. Estimated Residential population

How we work



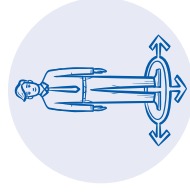
80%

of people travel to work in a private car



14,046

businesses in Knox



66,224

jobs in Knox



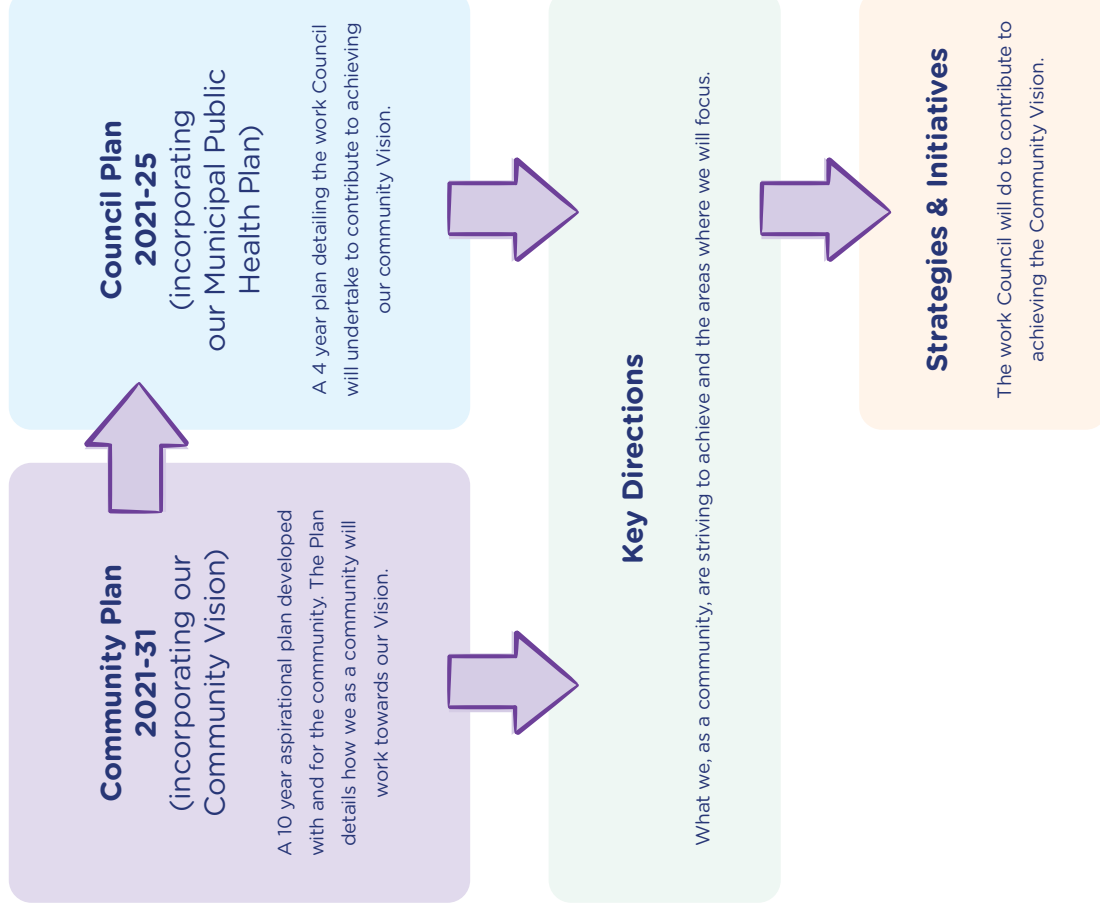
More Knox residents work in health care and social assistance than any other industry

What is a Community Plan?

The Knox Community Plan 2021-2031 is a long term document developed with and for our community. It includes our Community Vision statement, and describes what we, as a collective, will focus on to achieve that vision.

Knox City Council plays a significant role in making this plan come to life but cannot do it alone. Council will work with key stakeholders including community members and groups, businesses, agencies and other levels of government to ensure we achieve the Community Vision outlined in this plan.

The Knox Community Plan 2021-2031 is an important document that will guide Council's future planning over the next 10 years. How Council will contribute to the Community Plan and the initiatives it will undertake over the next four years, are outlined in the Council Plan 2021-2025.



How the plan was developed

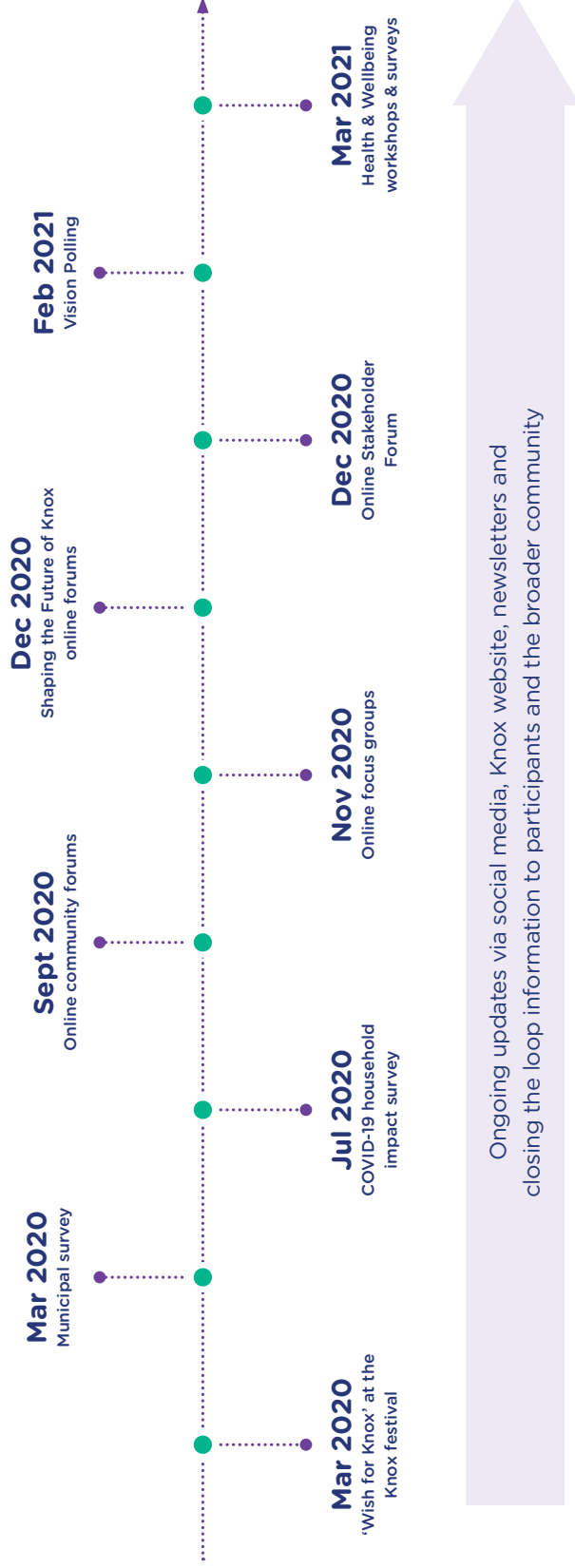
In 2020 and 2021, Knox City Council undertook an extensive research and engagement program to inform the development of the new Community Plan 2021-2031 and Council Plan 2021-2025.

To inform these pieces of work, a range of information has been collected about the municipality via research and community engagement activities.



Almost 4,500 people shared their thoughts on shaping the future of Knox. The engagement activities were directed at people who live, work, learn and play in Knox to:

- Gain an understanding of the community's aspirations for the future of Knox.
- Test the data gathered through research.
- Gain feedback on the goals in the current plan.
- Identify priority areas for the community and Council.



“Knox is home and I have been living here for over 20 years. My kids were raised here and went to kindergarten, primary school and high school all in Knox. For me Knox is a beautiful place to live and it’s all about that feeling of home.

A great community is one that supports each other to achieve a common goal and embraces our differences.

My vision for Knox over the next ten years is that it will continue to grow and evolve. I want to see people doing well and succeeding and I want people to be healthy.”

Diana, Smiles for Miles Coordinator
at EACH and mum of three.

Our Community Vision

Our Community Vision describes our long-term hopes and aspirations for Knox.

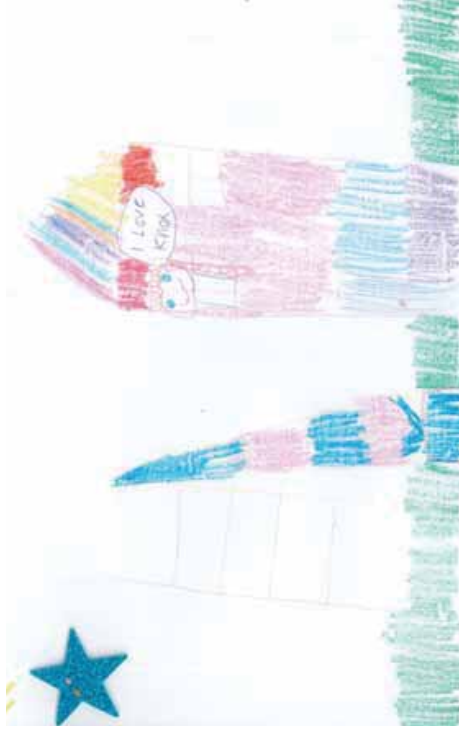
It helps to plan for the needs of our community now and into the future. It's based on the idea that by creating a picture of the future that we all agree to, we can all make a shared commitment to work together to get there.

This is our vision for the future of Knox, as developed with and voted for by the community:

Knox: where we connect with our people and our environment, ensuring they are safe, supported and have every opportunity to thrive.

During 2020, we asked you to come together to talk about what you love about our community, and what you want it to look and feel like in 10 year's time.

At the 2020 Knox Festival we asked you to make a 'wish for Knox'. Your wishes were written on postcards and placed in our 'wishing well'. Children also drew pictures which were displayed at our Festival Community Hub.



We went on to further explore what your aspirations are for the future of Knox through a series of online forums and focus groups.

Many agreed that Knox is already a great place to live, work, play and raise a family. You told us that going forward, we need to strengthen what already exists and work together to improve the things we don't have quite right. By working together towards a common goal, we can ensure we don't lose the things we value the most.

Based on what we heard, five vision statements were developed, which were put to the public for voting. The vast majority of those that voted, chose this vision statement as the one that best reflected their aspirations for the future.

"The people. The place. That feeling of community - all of these things make Knox so great."

Community forum participant (September 2020)

"A great community is about feeling like we belong not just to other people but also to the place. Animals, trees, land and the history of the land."

Community forum participant (September 2020)

Our Key Directions

The following pages describe in further detail what we will focus on over the next 10 years to achieve our Community Vision.

Based on research and community engagement, five Key Directions were developed that explain what we, as a community, are striving to achieve. They describe why we should focus on these areas, what we already know about them, what your aspirations are and how we might know when we've achieved success.

The five Key Directions are very closely linked – without one, it may be difficult to achieve the outcomes of the others. An example of this is health and wellbeing. According to our framework, our community's physical and mental health and wellbeing sits under the Connection, Resilience & Wellbeing Key Direction. However, it is very clear that our health and wellbeing relies on success in all of the other Key Directions.

Our Community Vision cannot be achieved without us all working towards each of the Key Directions. They will collectively lead us to achieving our vision.



Opportunity and innovation

Knox strives to be a city of opportunity, embracing innovation and change, and providing local learning and employment opportunities for all. It's a place where people and business can thrive.



Neighbourhoods, housing and infrastructure

Building on what's great about our city, Knox's housing and infrastructure will meet the changing needs of our community.



Natural environment and sustainability

Knox's natural environment is protected and enhanced to ensure sustainability for future generations.



Connection, resilience and wellbeing

Knox is a place to call home. Our community is strong, healthy and we support and respect each other.



Civic engagement and integrity

Knox Council is a trusted and respected leader in our community, acting appropriately and ensuring all voices are heard.

The Key Directions will also be used to guide the work of Council over the next four years. In the Council Plan 2021-2025, Council has described its contribution to these Key Directions, and ultimately the Community Vision, in the form of strategies and initiatives.

The Community Plan 2021-2031 and the Council Plan 2021-2025 are based on your needs and aspirations, and work together to inform all of our planning and decisions, guiding the future of Knox.

Opportunity and innovation



Knox strives to be a city of opportunity, embracing innovation and change, and providing local learning and employment opportunities for all. It's a place where people and business can thrive.

Why is this important?

Learning and employment are key to creating opportunity, moving away from disadvantage and are good for our mental health and social connection.

By ensuring all people in our community have access to a variety of learning opportunities, individuals in Knox will benefit from better education, increased skill development, and will enjoy a greater sense of purpose and belonging.

As our skills develop, technology advances and spaces are created for people to come together to share ideas, opportunities to innovate will increase. During the COVID-19 pandemic, many businesses and organisations were forced to do things differently. Creating opportunities for people to work together and innovate makes a place more attractive for new business and investment to the local area, which in turn makes our local economy stronger.

What we know

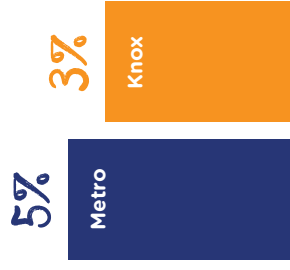
You told us that learning and employment are very important, and you want to see a focus on supporting employment programs, creating jobs, and accessible education and training.

66,244

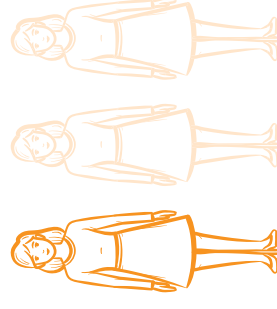
total jobs in Knox

80%

of youth are fully engaged in work or study



Unemployment is below the metropolitan Melbourne average



One third of employed residents work in Knox. This is expected to rise as an outcome of the pandemic

Opportunity and innovation



Aspirations for the future

You told us that you want Knox to be a strong business hub, making the most of our location and accessible transport and arterial connections. A place where business and organisations can establish themselves, with co-working hubs and spaces, and opportunities for networking.

You want our city to be open to new and growth industries and innovative start-ups, which in turn will create opportunities for more local employment for people of all ages and abilities. We need to look for new and smarter ways of working, having reliable internet coverage, and programs and resources available for businesses and organisations.

You have a strong desire to have learning opportunities available to all people in our community. Our learning begins with good early childhood education, schools, TAFEs and universities. Our youth will have greater opportunities for 'real life' learning through connections with business and industry. You also want life-long learning opportunities through a variety of places like libraries, community groups and neighbourhood houses.

“I think in 10 years’ time, if we saw a headline where it said something like 90% of people in Knox also work in Knox that would be pretty awesome!”

Employment and Education focus group participant (November 2020)

“I think Knox needs to be quite a strong business hub... with some vibrancy, attracting business and industry to the area.”

Employment and Education focus group participant (November 2020)

Opportunity and innovation



We can make a difference by:

- Encouraging businesses to come, stay and grow .
- Local businesses employing local people of all abilities.
- Creating spaces for start-ups to interact and network.
- Providing and supporting opportunities for education and skills development for all life stages.
- Embracing technology and supporting innovation.

We'll know we've succeeded when we see:

- More organisations and businesses coming to Knox.
- Existing business remaining in Knox.
- More people living and working in Knox.
- More people with disabilities offered gainful employment.
- An increase in the skills base of the community.



“I like that Knox is very centralized. It’s easy to get to, whether from the city or anywhere in Melbourne, by road, tram, buses or even train.

I love that people are able to come together and freely express themselves without any kind of judgement.”

**Deepak,
Financial Advisor**



Neighbourhoods, housing and infrastructure

Building on what's great about our city, Knox's housing and infrastructure will meet the changing needs of our community.

Why is this important?

Our neighbourhoods are important to us, creating a sense of belonging. Having appropriate housing and the infrastructure and amenities to support our lifestyles, ensures we feel safe, secure and valued as a member of our community.

Our community is made up of people from different walks of life, at different ages and stages, and with differing needs. Having housing that is appropriate, accessible and affordable means that all members of our community can enjoy a good quality of life.

The surrounding places and spaces in our neighbourhoods need to provide opportunities to access services, connect with others, work and enjoy leisure time. How we get to those places, is also important. We need the right transport options, and safe and accessible roads and paths that connect to each and where we need to go.

What we know

You told us that housing and infrastructure are key components to making Knox a great place to live. You want more affordable housing and adequate infrastructure. You want to see better roads and improved public transport.



The proportion of the social housing need that can be met with existing local social housing and affordable private rentals



people identified as homeless



of households are within 400m of any public transport stop compared to the metropolitan average of 69%

Sources: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census of Population & Housing (2016), Homes Victoria (2020), and Australian Urban Observatory (2018)



Neighbourhoods, housing and infrastructure

Aspirations for the future

You told us there's more that we can all be doing to protect those most vulnerable, like providing more affordable and social housing, and embracing innovations such as tiny houses and even 3D printed houses!

It's important to you that the housing in Knox is appropriate for different ages, stages and abilities. You also want to see housing developments in Knox that are sustainable and not to the detriment of the environment.

Our neighbourhoods need to be equally accessible. With the desire for us to be less reliant on cars, our footpaths and shared paths need to be adequate to ensure we can safely walk, ride, push prams and use mobility aids or wheelchairs. Our public transport also needs to be reliable and have better connections, with our train stations and bus stops being safe places to wait.

For those times we do need to use our cars, you want to see safe roads and adequate parking, particularly for seniors and those with disabilities.

You even told us that you want to see better use of technological advances in electric vehicles and driverless cars, however it's also important that these are not to the detriment of other road or path users.

“... I've got to know my neighbours in this last year more than before. So I'm hoping in the future it will be more like that and maybe more community spaces to bring people together, build that community.”

Environment and Housing focus group participant
(November 2020)

“So if you're thinking about people on the street, what you need is shelter – safe shelter – and a group or cluster of tiny houses on a piece of council land, for example, could do that.”

Environment and Housing focus group participant
(November 2020)



Neighbourhoods, housing and infrastructure

We can make a difference by:

- Supporting those who may be struggling to find affordable and appropriate housing options.
- Planning for and investing in different housing types to suit all needs.
- Creating and maintaining the network of paths that connect up and are accessible for all people.
- Providing new and innovative community transport solutions across the municipality.
- Advocating for more social and affordable housing and better public transport options.
- Making sure our buildings and community spaces are inclusive and accessible.

We'll know we've succeeded when we see:

- A greater mix of housing to meet different needs.
- Reduced homelessness.
- More public art that enhances different places and spaces.
- Less reliance on cars.
- More people walking and riding, using shared paths that are accessible and have good connections.
- Better access to and increased use of public transport.



“I’ve lived in Knox for 54 years and I think we have some of the best facilities, like the athletics track, basketball stadiums, the netball centre and libraries everywhere.

I want to be healthy and as I get older I want to be able to access all the services I need and interact with my community without having to travel too far.”

Gary, retiree and avid lawn bowls player

Natural environment and sustainability



Knox's natural environment is protected and enhanced to ensure sustainability for future generations.

Why is this important?

Connection to nature is vital to our health. Not only do we benefit from activity and the opportunity for social connection in these spaces, but spending time in nature can also have mental health benefits, like reducing anxiety and depressive symptoms.

Our trees and shrubs provide shade and protection from heat and wind. They also contribute to our local biodiversity and offer homes for our native birds and wildlife. Having good tree canopy is a key factor in improving the landscape, attractiveness, and local sense of place.

In order to protect our environment we need to combat the effects of climate change. Our average annual temperatures are rising as a direct result of climate change. With this comes increased costs of living and rising energy costs.

As our climate changes and temperatures increase, we are increasingly exposed to extreme weather events, fires, and floods. Those most vulnerable in our community – humans, wildlife and plants – are at greater risk during these events.

What we know

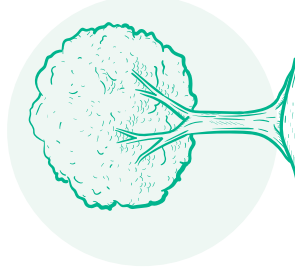
You told us that caring for the environment and our bushland and nature reserves are two of the most important aspects of Knox. You want better maintenance of public spaces, streets, and roads and better care for the environment, including addressing climate change.

69%

of dwellings in Knox are within 400m of open space



There has been a decline in waste generation of 28kg per household



18%

of Knox's total area is under tree canopy cover

14.63

Knox

EAGA

the tonnes per capita of greenhouse gas emissions in Knox are higher than the Eastern Alliance for Greenhouse Action (EAGA) average

1322

Sources: Australian Urban Observatory (2018), Sustainability Victoria (2017), RMIT Centre for Urban Research (2018), and Snapshot Community Climate Tool (2017)



Natural environment and sustainability

Aspirations for the future

You told us you value all the bushland areas, nature reserves, parks, reserves and waterways that Knox has to offer. During the COVID-19 pandemic, many people found a strong connection with nature. We need to continue to protect and enhance our waterways, bushland, nature reserves and parklands, so they will be there for generations to enjoy. We need to find the balance of being able to enjoy these spaces without damaging the natural habitat of our native bird, wildlife and plant species.

Your hope is that Knox can become a centre of excellence for energy and materials conservation, creating a circular economy. This means moving away from a cycle of 'make, use, dispose' in favour of re-using and recycling as much as possible. By doing this we can conserve the energy needed to produce goods, reduce waste to landfill and significantly reduce our carbon emissions and the impact on our climate.

“I think beauty is really important and having natural spaces, wide open spaces, where you can see the sky and enjoy gardens, parks, waterways. I think those are really important and fundamental to our well-being.”

Community forum participant (September 2020)

“I love living here because I feel like there is a lot of greenery. I hope none of it is lost and we can preserve that and build on it.”

Environment and Housing focus group participant (November 2020)

Natural environment and sustainability



We can make a difference by:

- Reducing, reusing and recycling whenever possible.
- Ensuring local businesses are energy efficient and dispose of waste correctly.
- Looking after our parks and bushland.
- Planning our city in a way that reduces the negative impacts.

We'll know we've succeeded when we see:

- Increased tree canopy cover.
- More diversity in flora and fauna.
- Reduced greenhouse gas emissions.
- Increased renewable energy use.
- A reduction in waste generation.
- More homes with access to open space.



“My vision for Knox over the next ten years is that it will continue to develop as a place that is family friendly, considers the needs of all ages and incorporates work opportunities and a healthy way of living. A place where we foster the things that we know are valuable about life and find new and better ways to do things to keep our community beautiful, spacious, family orientated, creative and loving.”

Fiona, Artist, Art Coach,
and mum to two girls

Connection, resilience and wellbeing



Knox is a place to call home. Our community is strong, healthy and we support and respect each other.

Why is this important?

Good health and wellbeing is related to almost everything we do and how we do it. Without it, our quality of life suffers.

Our health and wellbeing links to the natural environment by providing us spaces to enjoy activities, social connections and the various aspects of nature and biodiversity. The impacts of climate change can, however, have a negative effect on our health through extreme weather, loss of land, threat to food security, and air and water pollution.

Connection to the place we live in and the people around us also contributes to our health and wellbeing and helps us to feel a sense of purpose and belonging. Having appropriate facilities, services and infrastructure is critical to providing us with opportunities for the best possible health and wellbeing.

The COVID-19 pandemic shone a light on our physical and mental wellbeing in 2020, and continues to do so. Some of the already prominent health and wellbeing issues in our community were exacerbated by the pandemic and the associated restrictions. It is important that we tackle the issues and support those most affected.

What we know

You told us health, wellbeing and safety were the most important aspects of Knox and, you want better support for the vulnerable and improved community safety and security.

You told us that social isolation, anxiety, stress, depression, and loneliness were the most prominent mental health impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.



of adults rate their health as very good or excellent compared to 38% in 2014



of adults suffer from psychological distress, up from 11% in 2011. This is higher than the metropolitan average of 15%



of women say they feel safe in their neighbourhood at night compared to 71% of men

Source: Victorian Population Health Survey (2017)



Connection, resilience and wellbeing

Aspirations for the future

You told us that all people in Knox should be able to enjoy good health and wellbeing. Your hope is that everyone in our community has access to healthy food, is free from drugs and other harmful substances, enjoys physical activity that suits their age and ability, and has good emotional and social wellbeing.

When discussing what could be done to achieve good health and wellbeing, many of you connected this with other aspects of our lives. For example, having adequate shelter, access to support services for those in need, using visual art and performance to improve mental health and reduce depression, and ensuring people have access to technology so they can connect when not being able to leave home.

Another key aspect of your aspirations for the future is social connection, including spiritual and cultural. In particular, you told us that we should honour and celebrate our First Nations culture. Respect and inclusion of all of our people is critical to ensuring our community can achieve its vision.

Many of you are concerned about the issue of safety, as it relates to our homes, physical environment, crime, and prejudice or discrimination. Family violence and elder abuse were two significant and concerning issues raised. To ensure we feel safe in Knox, you told us there needs to be a focus on education, promoting respectful relationships in families, between different cultures and in the broader community, and better and more accessible services and infrastructure.

“... we could have pop-up stalls, every weekend... people can just bring in stuff they want to share with the community, and anyone can come without feeling embarrassed. That kind of sharing and caring through some small pop-up stalls, that would be good...”

Health and Wellbeing focus group participant (November 2020)

“We need balance in our lives. Not just work, work and work... we need more physical exercise, healthy eating habits, and good mental health.”

Health and Wellbeing focus group participant (November 2020)



Connection, resilience and wellbeing

We can make a difference by:

- Making time to look after ourselves, physically and mentally.
- Maintaining connections with others – social, cultural and spiritual.
- Volunteering time or joining community group.
- Showing respect, embracing differences and supporting others.
- Ensuring there are good quality support services for those most in need.
- Providing safe spaces for those most vulnerable.

We'll know we've succeeded when we see:

- Reduced alcohol consumption.
- Reduced tobacco use.
- Increased access to good quality food and reduced obesity rate.
- A more active community.
- Overall improved mental health and reduced levels of depression and anxiety.
- More gender equality and respectful cultural and intergenerational relationships.
- Increased sense of being valued and sense of empowerment.
- People feeling safe and secure in the community.



**“The people are what makes Knox!
My vision for Knox is that we
return to a village concept.
To have places where people
can meet and be together.”**

**Chris, retired and Board Member
of the 1812 Theatre Company**

 **Civic engagement and integrity**

Knox Council is a trusted and respected leader in our community, acting appropriately and ensuring all voices are heard.

Why is this important?

Civic engagement is about making a difference in our community. Having a voice in decision making and all issues affecting our lives is critical to making that difference.

Our local decision makers need to demonstrate transparency and be open to listening to all views, in order to make the best decisions for our community, based on our needs.

As the level of government closest to the community, Council needs to fulfil its leadership role by acting appropriately, using its resources effectively and efficiently, and being accountable for all its actions and decisions.

What we know

You told us that opportunities to have a say and social inclusion are key components in making Knox a great place to be. You think we need to work on building community spirit and making sure all voices are heard.



of people in Knox said they feel valued by society, compared to 50% in 2014



of adults said they feel there are opportunities to have a real say on matters that are important to them compared to 37% in 2011



of adults think Council is good or very good at keeping the community informed

Sources: Victorian Population Health Survey (2017) and Local Government Community Satisfaction Survey (2020)



Civic engagement and integrity

Aspirations for the future

You told us you want to have a say in decisions that impact you the most. All voices, not just the loudest ones, need to be heard, listened to and acted on, in an open and respectful way.

You want Council to find interesting and interactive ways for you to be involved in and contribute to decisions and plans for the future. It needs to seek out the voices of those that otherwise may not engage and ensure they have equal opportunity to participate.

Council needs to show that its decision-making processes are transparent and their actions are held to account. You want resources to be used efficiently and effectively, disclosing freely how ratepayer's money is being spent in a way that is easy to understand.

You told us you want Council to be easy to deal with and reduce 'red-tape'. You want information about Council's services and facilities, all plans and documents to be accessible and the language inclusive.

“We need to identify and train some community leaders who are going to work at building the community in Knox... Council can't do it all. We are all in this together.”

Community Engagement and Belonging
focus group participant (November 2020)

“Council needs to get out more into the community... not just shopping centres, go to day services and go to the places where the people who don't have a voice are.”

Community Engagement and Belonging
focus group participant (November 2020)



Civic engagement and integrity

We can make a difference by:

- Participating in consultation and engagement activities.
- Listening to the community and making decisions based on their needs.
- Being more open and transparent in decision making, and regularly reporting back on plans and projects.

We'll know we've succeeded when we see:

- More opportunities for the community to have a say.
- Greater transparency in Council decision making and actions.
- More information about what Council does, the services it provides and where to get help.
- An engaged community that feels part of the decision making process.



“I love that in Knox we have the ability to welcome everyone from different areas. They don’t look at your background or the way you look as a definition of how they should treat you. They treat everyone equally.

Good communication between people, and between our Council and the people is really the key to a great community.”

Susie, full time university student

Partnerships

We all worked together to develop the Community Plan and now we need collaborative partnerships to ensure its success.

Council will partner and continue to work with a range of stakeholders including community members and groups, service providers, businesses and state and federal government organisations.

Our partners will be able to work with us in a number of ways including membership on Council's advisory committees, participating in working groups, and providing feedback and submissions on specific projects through consultation and engagement opportunities. Working together will ensure both Council and our partners have access to the best available information, and can coordinate our efforts to achieve the greatest impact.



Monitoring our progress

There are many ways we monitor our progress and make sure we are on the right track.

Knox City Council collects data from numerous sources, conducts regular surveys and undertakes community engagement activities to keep track of what's happening in our community and inform future planning.

Going forward, we will look at different ways to collaborate and contribute to Knox's success over the next 10 years. We will engage with our partners and stakeholders to build on our strengths, embrace opportunities and find solutions to the challenges facing our community.

We will review the Community Plan every four years as we produce a new Council Plan. These reviews will take Knox's pulse and make sure the Community Plan is still reflective of our community's aspirations. We will check on the availability of new data, touch base with the community, and review the key directions and strategies with agencies and stakeholders to ensure they are still relevant and meeting community needs.

As a Council, we will keep you up to date on the work we are doing to contribute to achieving the Community Vision through regular reporting against our Council Plan. You can find this information in our annual reports, in various publications and on our website.

Knox Community Plan



Keeping in touch and opportunities to have your say

Knox City Council is committed to seeking feedback, making sure you are aware of issues that affect you and providing opportunities to have your say.

Visit our Have Your Say website to see how you can contribute to projects and tell us what you think of our draft plans and strategies - www.knox.vic.gov.au/haveyoursay

Knox City Council has several Advisory Committees that provide advice on the development, implementation, monitoring, and review of programs or activities. These committees are made up of community members, Council officers and current Councillors. Find out if there are opportunities available in your area of interest on our website: www.knox.vic.gov.au/our-council/about-council/council-committees

Sign up to receive Knox eNews, our monthly email newsletter which will keep you informed about the latest news, events and activities across the community: www.knox.vic.gov.au/email-newsletter

You can also contact
Council via the
following methods

Phone: 9298 8000

Email: knoxcc@knox.vic.gov.au

Website: www.knox.vic.gov.au

Social media: facebook.com/knoxCouncil
or via Twitter @knoxcc

Visit Council in person: Knox Civic Centre
511 Burwood Highway
Wantirna South 3152

knox
your city

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 [knoxccouncil](https://www.facebook.com/knoxcc)

 [knoxcc](https://twitter.com/knoxcc)

 [knoxccouncil](https://www.instagram.com/knoxccouncil)

 133 677 (ask for 03 9298 8000)

 Interpreter

131 450

Speak and Listen Users

1300 555 727 (ask for 03 9298 8000)

ABN 24 477 480 661

**For any queries please call the
Civic Centre on 9298 8000 or email
communityplan@knox.vic.gov.au**





Council Plan

2021 - 2025

Incorporating the Municipal Public Health & Wellbeing Plan

Acknowledgement of traditional land owners

Knox City Council acknowledges the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people and Bunurong people of the Kulin Nation as Traditional Custodians of the land. The Knox Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community come from a variety of different Nations within Australia and Torres Strait, including the Traditional Custodians and Stolen Generation. As such we pay respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders, past and present, who have resided in the area and have been an integral part of the region's history.

Located at the foot of the Dandenong Ranges, Knox has many places of historic significance to the Kulin nation. Important cultural and historical sites within Knox hold both the traditional knowledge of the First Nations People and the traumatic stories of colonisation.

The journey ahead for Knox involves the land, the traditional custodians, the local Indigenous community, the wider community and the Council itself. Walking together and listening together to create a culturally safe and culturally rich community for all.

In 2021 Knox City Council announced an intention to promote a "whole of business" mindset, moving forward in its acknowledgement and respect of First Nations people, ensuring cross functional collaboration as opportunities present themselves.

Contents

Message from the Mayor	3
About this plan	4
How it was developed	5
Knox City Council - who we are and what we do	6
Our community	8
Our commitment to improving Health and Wellbeing in Knox	11
Six Key Health Priorities	12
Health and Wellbeing in Knox	13
Impacts of COVID-19 on our Health & Wellbeing	14
A partnership approach	15
Our 10 year community vision	19
Our Key Directions	20
Opportunity and innovation	21
Neighbourhoods, housing and infrastructure	23
Natural environment and sustainability	25
Connection, resilience and wellbeing	27
Civic engagement and integrity	29
Our people	31
Our values	32
Monitoring our progress	34
Keeping in touch	35

Message from the Mayor



This plan represents our commitment and contribution to achieving the Community Vision:

Knox: where we connect with our people and our environment, ensuring they are safe, supported and have every opportunity to thrive.

The plan guides Council's work over the next four years to deliver on the priorities identified in the Community Plan. It also incorporates our Municipal Public Health & Wellbeing Plan, highlighting our commitment to our community's health and wellbeing.

Our community is still feeling the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and our response and recovery as a city will be a key focus over the next four years. We will continue to prioritise delivering services for those facing hardship, helping local businesses to bounce back, and working towards a healthy, happy and resilient community into the future.

We would like to acknowledge and thank all those who contributed to the development of this plan. Our community provided valuable input and feedback which helped to shape our priorities and we encourage you to continue the conversation with us as we enact this plan.

Councillor Lisa Cooper

Knox City Council Mayor, 2020-21

Our commitment to addressing climate change

Knox City Council recognises that we are in a state of climate emergency. As a community, we need to take action to reduce our impact on the environment and to prepare for the effects of a changing climate.

We are committed to managing our greenhouse gas emissions and response to climate change and on 27 September 2021, adopted the Climate Response Plan 2021-2031. The plan sets out our targets and provides a roadmap with measurable actions on how this will be achieved in partnership with the Knox community. It also provides a roadmap for Council to reach net zero emissions by 2030 and for the Knox community to reach net zero emissions by 2040.

Council's commitment to addressing the Climate Emergency is reflected in this Council Plan 2021-2025 (incorporating Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan).



About this plan

Knox's integrated strategic planning and reporting framework (on the following page) illustrates the medium and long term plans that we produce to guide and manage our city.

The Knox Community Plan 2021-2031 includes the Community Vision, describes your aspirations for the future and what we, as a collective, need to focus on to achieve that vision.

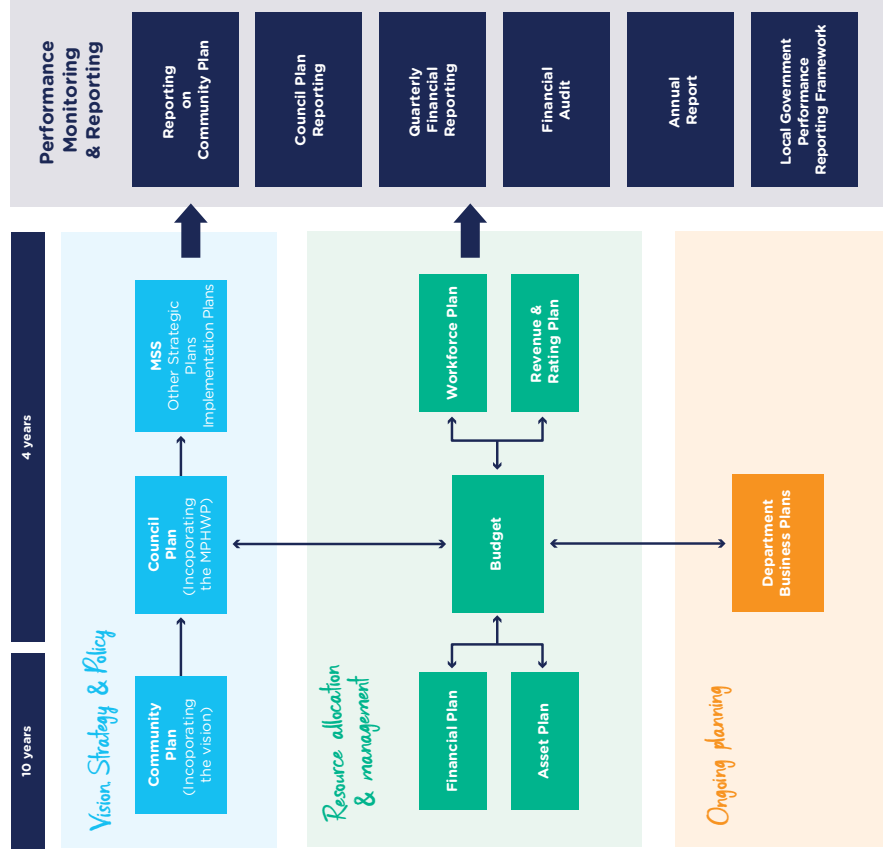
Knox's Council Plan 2021-2025 is Council's key strategic plan. It provides direction to the organisation, describes how we're going to contribute to the achievement of the Community Vision and shows how we're going to measure our success. It also demonstrates our commitment to the health and wellbeing of the community by incorporating Knox's Municipal Public Health & Wellbeing Plan (MPHWP).

There are also a number of other plans that guide our work. They include plans about how we're going to manage our financial resources (the Financial Plan, Budget and Revenue and Rating Plan), manage and maintain our assets (the Asset Plan) and make sure we have the right staff to deliver our services and initiatives (the Workforce Plan).

We will also monitor and report back to you on the progress of our plans through different mechanisms, ensuring we remain open, transparent and accountable.

The diagram opposite shows how our plans fit together, working toward achieving our Community Vision, and how we track our progress against them.

Integrated strategic planning and reporting framework



How it was developed

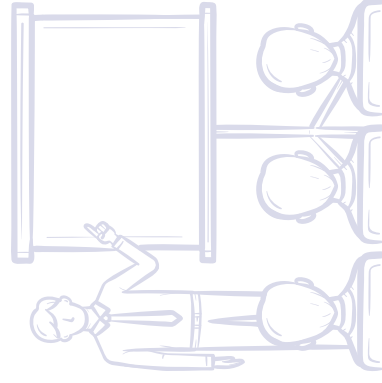
During 2020, a large research and engagement program was undertaken to inform the development of our Community Plan 2021-2031 and Council Plan 2021-2025.

The process began with a range of data being collected about the municipality via research, including:

- The State of Knox Report, which is a collection of data that identifies trends and changes in Knox over time.
- The Municipal Survey which asked residents and businesses about the importance of, and their satisfaction with, 16 aspects of Knox.

A summary of this information can be found in Knox in 2020 – a summary of the State of Knox Report 2020 and the results of the 2020 Municipal Survey, which is available on Council's website.

To validate this data and seek the opinions of our community, a variety of activities were conducted. These ranged from broad discussions about a vision for Knox, to conversations around the goals in the Community and Council Plan 2017-2021, determining priorities and considering what role Council and stakeholders can play in responding to these.



Community members and stakeholders were given pre-reading prior to participating in forums and focus groups which outlined background information, relevant data including the results of the COVID-19 Household Impact Survey, and findings from the previous engagement activities.

A number of community members participated in multiple engagement activities, allowing for progression through the process from broad to more in-depth discussions on the future of Knox.

The engagement activities were directed at people who live, work, learn and play in Knox to:

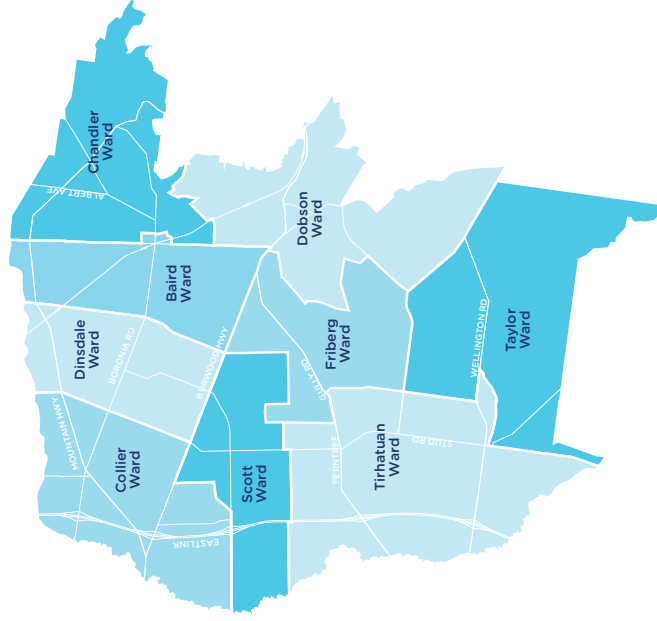
- Gain an understanding of the community's aspirations for the future of Knox.
- Test the data gathered through research.
- Gain feedback on the goals in the current plan.
- Identify priority areas for the community and Council.

All of this information was used to create our Community Vision and Community Plan, as well as directly inform the development of our Council Plan.

You can read more about our engagement in Development of the new Community and Council Plans - Community Engagement Report, January 2021, which is available on Council's website.

Knox City Council who we are and what we do

The municipality of Knox is made up of 11 suburbs, approximately 25 kilometres from the Melbourne central business district. Knox will be governed for the next four years by the nine Councillors who were elected by our community in October 2020.



Our Councillors work together to set and guide strategic direction and decisions for our community. Every decision they make is guided by the needs of the people of Knox, and they work closely with the Chief Executive Officer and the organisation to do this.



SCOTT
Cr Lisa Cooper
Mayor 2020-21



FRIBERG
Cr Susan Laukens
Deputy Mayor 2020-21



BAIRD
Cr Yvonne Allred



CHANDLER
Cr Jude Dwight



COLLIER
Cr Marcia Timmers-Leitch



DINSDALE
Cr Sorina Grasso



DOBSON
Cr Meagan Baker



TAYLOR
Cr Darren Pearce



TIRHATUAN
Cr Nicole Seymour

There are various roles that we play in leading, guiding and managing our city and community.

Advocate

We raise awareness at state and federal government level and with other stakeholders about the issues and needs of the Knox community, as well as initiating or supporting campaigns for positive change.

Partner

We develop trusting formal and informal relationships and alliances, working with others to achieve common goals.

Provide

We offer a range of services and support, preventative interventions, infrastructure and facilities to individuals and groups.

Fund

We provide grants, funding and subsidies to local groups and agencies to progress and develop services and infrastructure for individuals and groups.

Educate

We share information, raise awareness, and develop knowledge and skills to empower individuals and groups.

Plan

We pro-actively plan for services and infrastructure that respond to current and future community needs.

Regulate

We provide governance and regulatory controls such as local laws and health and building controls.

Research

We collect and analyse data to inform planning, priority setting, decision-making and evaluation.

But most of all, we are here for you – our community!

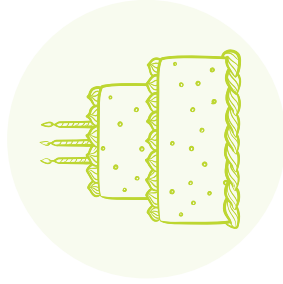
We will seek to listen to you, act in your best interests and make decisions based on your needs, now and into the future.

This plan represents our commitment to you over the four-year elected term of office.

Our community
Who we are

166,791

people call Knox home



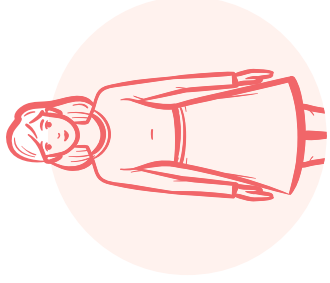
39

is the
median age



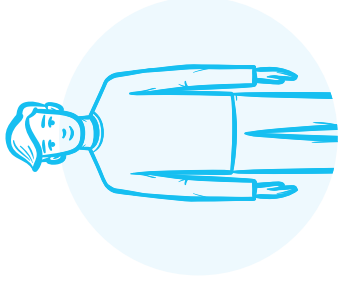
28%

are aged 55 years
and over



51%

of residents
are female



49%

of residents
are male



30%

of residents were
born overseas



25%

speak a language
other than English
at home

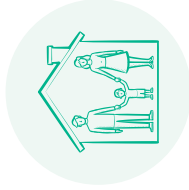
Source: 2016 Census & id. Estimated Residential population

Our community

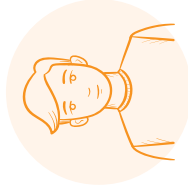
How we live



84%
of dwellings are single detached houses



15,300
Households are families with children under 15 years of age



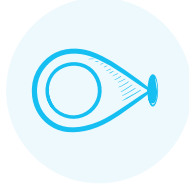
20%
of people in Knox live by themselves



385
people identify as homeless

Source: 2016 Census & id. Estimated Residential population

How we work



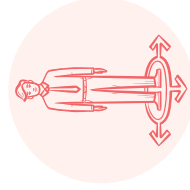
30%
of residents work in Knox



80%
of people travel to work in a private car



14,046
businesses in Knox

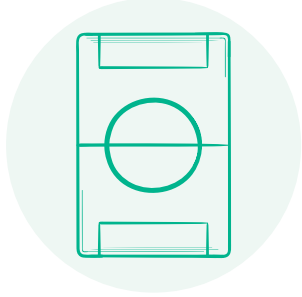


66,224
jobs in Knox



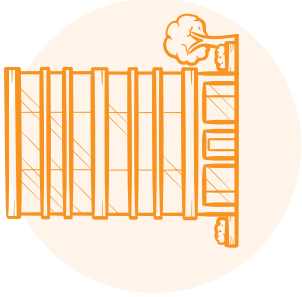
More Knox residents work in health care and social assistance than any other industry

Council maintains



57

sportsgrounds and major reserves



243

council owned buildings



38,445

drainage pits



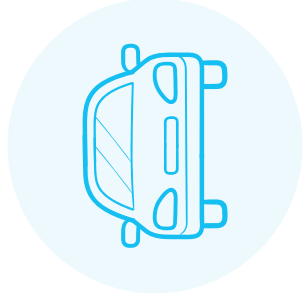
211

playgrounds



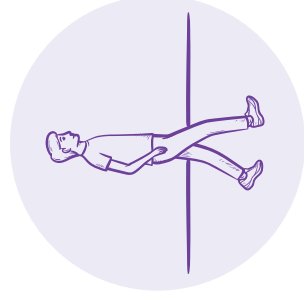
917

open space sites



724km

of local roads



1,242

footpaths

Our commitment to improving health and wellbeing in Knox

Our health and wellbeing provides the foundation for a strong, cohesive and resilient community, as well as contributing to a productive workforce and viable economy.

This Council Plan incorporates Knox's Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan. This ensures the priorities for supporting, protecting and improving the health and wellbeing of our community are at the forefront of everything we do and are integrated across all Council services and initiatives.

To improve the health and wellbeing of our community, it's important to understand the factors that contribute to good health. Social structures such as policies, organisations and even the interaction between individuals and communities, can greatly influence a person's feeling of inclusion, access to resources and opportunities for a healthy lifestyle.

The physical environment can also influence whether we lead a healthy lifestyle. Access to public open space, housing, food and transport can all have an effect on our individual choices and behaviours.



Six Key Health Priorities

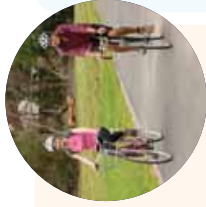
During 2020-21 we conducted youth, community, stakeholder and staff workshops and surveys specifically about the health and wellbeing of our community. Through this engagement, we established and discussed the following six key health priorities for Knox.

You can read more about these engagement activities in the Health and Wellbeing Engagement Report 2021 and the COVID-19 Household Impact Survey Report on Council's website.

 <p>Mental Health</p> <p>Although the focus of mental health differed across cohorts and engagements, there was an overarching need to improve mental health through a variety of methods with particular focus on increasing social connection.</p>	 <p>Physical Activity</p> <p>Overall, physical activity was the most prominent health and wellbeing issue (along with mental health) to emerge from the engagement activities.</p>	 <p>Healthy Eating & Food Security</p> <p>Healthy eating and food security were not as prominent as mental health and physical activity in engagement discussions but were still mentioned in all engagement activities. Generally, this was in relation to eating healthier foods with less regard to food security and its implications.</p>
 <p>Family Violence</p> <p>Family violence wasn't discussed broadly in public forums (some people can find this a difficult subject to discuss), but many at the workshops spoke of the importance of gender and culture roles in addressing family violence. It was also raised without prompting during the initial COVID-19 Household Impact Survey.</p>	 <p>Drugs & Alcohol</p> <p>Whilst many acknowledged drug and alcohol as a concern in the community, there was not a huge amount of discussion on the topic. During workshops, community members spoke about the importance of evidence-based education, whilst stakeholders took a broader approach suggesting a need to focus on the factors leading to alcohol consumption and drug use.</p>	 <p>Climate Change & Health</p> <p>Those in the community workshops were most concerned about the environment and spoke extensively about how the physical environment of Knox can be addressed to minimise the impact of climate change.</p>

Health and Wellbeing in Knox

Below is a snapshot of our community's health and wellbeing.



41%

of adults rate their health as very good or excellent.

50%

of adults undertake adequate physical activity to meet the national guidelines.

16%

of adults in Knox smoke daily or occasionally.



55%

of adults in Knox are overweight or obese.

60%

of adults are at increased lifetime risk of alcohol-related harm.

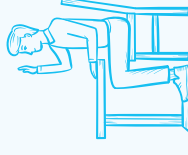


18%

of adults experienced high or very high psychological distress in their day-to-day lives. It was significantly higher in women (22%) than men (14%).

23%

of young people in Outer Eastern Melbourne have depressive symptoms.



44%

of students have good or excellent resilience.

The rate of reported family violence incidents in Knox has started an upward trend:

2016 → 1026

2017 → 975

2018 → 1,032

2019 → 1,104

2020 → 1,169

34%

of women feel safe in their neighbourhood at night compared to 71% of men.

1 in 6

adults in Knox are socially isolated.

42%

people in Knox feel valued by society.



49%

of adults definitely believe that multiculturalism makes their life better.

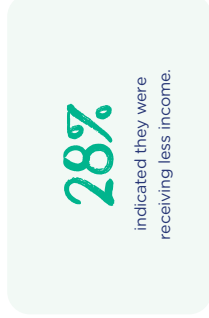
1 in 3

adults in Knox show low support for gender equality in relationships.

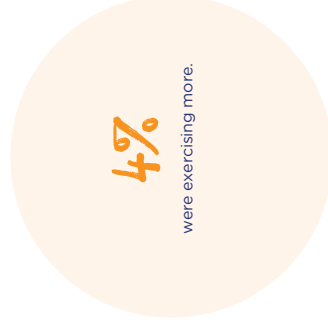
Sources:
 Victorian Population Health Survey (2017)
 Knox Student Resilience Survey (2015)
 Victorian Student Health & Wellbeing Survey (2017)
 VicHealth Survey (2015)
 Crime Statistics Agency

Impacts of COVID-19 on our Health & Wellbeing

Below is a snapshot of our community's health and wellbeing.



Some of the COVID-19 impacts were positive



A partnership approach

Our plan details our commitment to work in a collaborative and coordinated way to create and improve the physical, social, natural, cultural and economic environments that promote health and wellbeing.

However, we can't do this alone. It requires the collective effort of policy makers, service providers, community groups and individuals. Council has a role in prevention, promotion and protection, and will work together with others to achieve optimum health and wellbeing for the community.

We are committed to continuing our contribution to state, regional and local partnerships, such as the following:

The Boronia Community Network:
Bringing together organisations and service providers across Boronia to improve social and health conditions for the community of Boronia.

Knox Mental Health Roundtable:
Focuses on improving mental health and wellbeing outcomes for the community of Knox. Membership includes leading state agencies and local service providers.

Together for Equality & Respect:
A family violence and gender equality regional network to streamline practice, focus resources and build capacity.

Regional Family Violence Partnership:
An eastern collaborative of frontline and prevention services to share and improve best practice, build capacity and enhance awareness of referral pathways for victims of family violence.

Eastern Physical Activity Network: An outer-east network that identifies opportunities to collaborate on regional actions.

Eastern Affordable Housing Alliance:
A collaboration between six Councils (Knox, Manningham, Maroondah, Monash, Whitehorse and Yarra Ranges) whose aim is to advocate for improved housing affordability and to increase the supply of social and affordable housing across the region.

Regional Local Government Homelessness and Social Housing Charter:
A partnership of 13 Councils representing Melbourne's East and South East region whose purpose is to address the urgent need for increased social housing and a more effective, integrated and supported homelessness services system.

Action on Alcohol Flagship Group:
This is a partnership of eastern Councils, community health services and specialist agencies from across the East working together to reduce the harmful impacts of alcohol in our local communities.

Eastern Elder Abuse Network:
A collaboration of agencies across the east leading primary prevention practice of abuse of the older person. This network covers communications, primary prevention and response.

Knox Emergency Relief Network:
This network is a collaboration of emergency relief agencies. Their purpose is to collaborate, share expertise and identify opportunities to improve emergency relief for the community.

We will also continue to:

- Work with the State Government and its agencies to undertake public health initiatives, projects and programs.
- Support and collaborate with service providers and community groups to provide health and support services, particularly for those in need.
- Work with First Nations organisations to ensure positive health and wellbeing outcomes for Kulin country and the Knox Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community.
- Work with private business, specialised health peak bodies, neighbourhood houses and other community groups, Victoria Police, community health organisations (such as Eastern Access Community Health and Eastern Health).
- Work and collaborate with other councils.
- Ensure individuals have the right information to make informed lifestyle choices, and know where to go for help when needed.
- Work with community members through advisory committees, community engagement, grant programs, etc.

Some of our partners who participated in the engagement and contributed to our Council Plan are listed below. These organisations, and all our partners, are committed to contributing to positive health and wellbeing outcomes for our community.

- Baptistcare
- Boronia Community Church of Christ
- Community Pharmacy
- Department of Education and Training
- Department of Families, Fairness and Housing
- Department of Health
- Eastern Access Community Health
- Eastern Community Legal Centre
- Eastern Domestic Violence Service
- Eastern Health
- Ferntree Gully Arts Society Inc.
- Gamblers Help
- Knox Environment Society
- Knox InfoLink Inc.
- Migrant Information Centre
- National Disability Insurance Scheme
- Outer East Primary Care Partnership
- Regional Family Violence Partnership
- SalvoCare Eastern
- Shree Swaminarayan Temple Society Australia Melbourne
- Swinburne University of Technology
- Temple Society Australia
- Victorian Council of Churches Emergencies Ministry

Health and Wellbeing initiatives

Throughout this Council Plan, there are a number of strategies and initiatives that show how Council will contribute to our community's health and wellbeing. These were informed by:

- The Victorian public *Health and Wellbeing plan 2019-2023*.
- Research including Victorian population data, crime statistics, etc, and community engagement activities with the community, stakeholders and Council staff to identify emerging priorities and community need.
- The *Climate Change Act 2017* and the *Gender Equality Act 2020*, as well as the requirement for councils to outline ways in which they will contribute to reducing family violence.
- The actions and achievements of the *Community and Council Plan 2017-2021*.
- The results of the COVID-19 Household Impact Survey to understand the impact on health and wellbeing and to inform recovery.

We have flagged the initiatives that will contribute to the health and wellbeing of our community with a ♦ symbol. When you see this symbol you will know that these initiatives will help us become a healthier, stronger, more resilient and connected community.



Knox Council Plan

Family violence

Preventing family violence continues to be one of Council's key priorities and is evidenced by the breadth of work Council does in this space, spanning prevention through to response.

In 2020, Council endorsed a Family Violence Statement of Commitment, publicly reaffirming our role in preventing and responding to family violence. An organisational scan was conducted in 2021 which highlighted the extent of family violence initiatives including:

- **Primary prevention** - engagement with state and local campaigns on gender equality, healthy masculinities, ageism and racism, community training and health promotion initiatives.
- **Early intervention** - resource development for early identification and help seeking resources for both broader community engagement and settings-based.
- **Response** - counselling services; building capacity of our early years and emergency management teams in identifying family violence and strengthening links with our partner agencies for more effective referral.

To further focus our work a Family Violence Action Plan will be developed over the coming months.



Our First Nations People

Our First Nations People are an important part of Knox's past, present and future. In 2021, Knox City Council undertook an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Needs Analysis. It identified five areas of focus in relation to engagement with and support for our First Nations People.

- **Health and Wellbeing:** For the health and wellbeing of the Knox Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community to flourish it must include a holistic, whole of life cycle view of health that includes physical, cultural, spiritual, emotional, economic and mental health and wellbeing.
- **Recognition and Respect:** Respect and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and their cultures increases everyone's awareness and appreciation of a culture and civilisation enriching our history for at least 65,000 years.
- **Employment and Economic Development:** Employment and Economic Development is essential to start bridging the gap of inequality between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people. Adequate employment is a key to health and wellbeing in any community.
- **Civic Participation:** Effective civic participation can be achieved when all members of the community feel valued, safe and recognised.
- **Cultural Heritage:** Access to Land and Protection of Cultural Heritage. Country plays a significant role in Aboriginal culture, there are many places that tell stories of events and practices within the landscape.

We commit to working in partnership with our First Nations organisations and community to address these focus areas and implement key initiatives to ensure understanding, respect, trust and wellbeing of our First Nations People.



Helping our community recover from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic

The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted our community in many ways, and continues to do so.

In 2020, Council staff spoke with a range of stakeholders to understand:

- The economic impacts on local businesses and industries.
- The impacts on the natural environment and local built infrastructure.
- The impacts on the emotional, social, spiritual, financial and physical wellbeing of individuals in Knox and local communities in the municipality.

In addition to these conversations, we collected perspectives and experiences from the community using the COVID-19 Household Impact Survey. The findings of this comprehensive survey supported the learnings of our informal engagements occurring between Council and community on an ongoing basis during this period.

The cumulative impact of the pandemic over time is yet to be seen but is expected to significantly affect some areas, in particular:

- Mental health.
- Social isolation.
- Business and family/individual financial health.
- Reinforcing existing and creating new vulnerabilities in our community.

The ongoing nature of the pandemic requires flexibility. We are responding to the pandemic by implementing a range of relief measures and supporting those most at risk now, while we plan for recovery.

The goal for recovery is to support our community to deal with the impacts of the pandemic and build our resilience for the future. It's not just about getting things 'back to normal'; it's about rebuilding, learning from this challenge and innovating, so we can emerge stronger.

Throughout this Council Plan we have identified some key initiatives that will be undertaken over the next four years to support our community's recovery and build resilience.



Our 10-year Community Vision

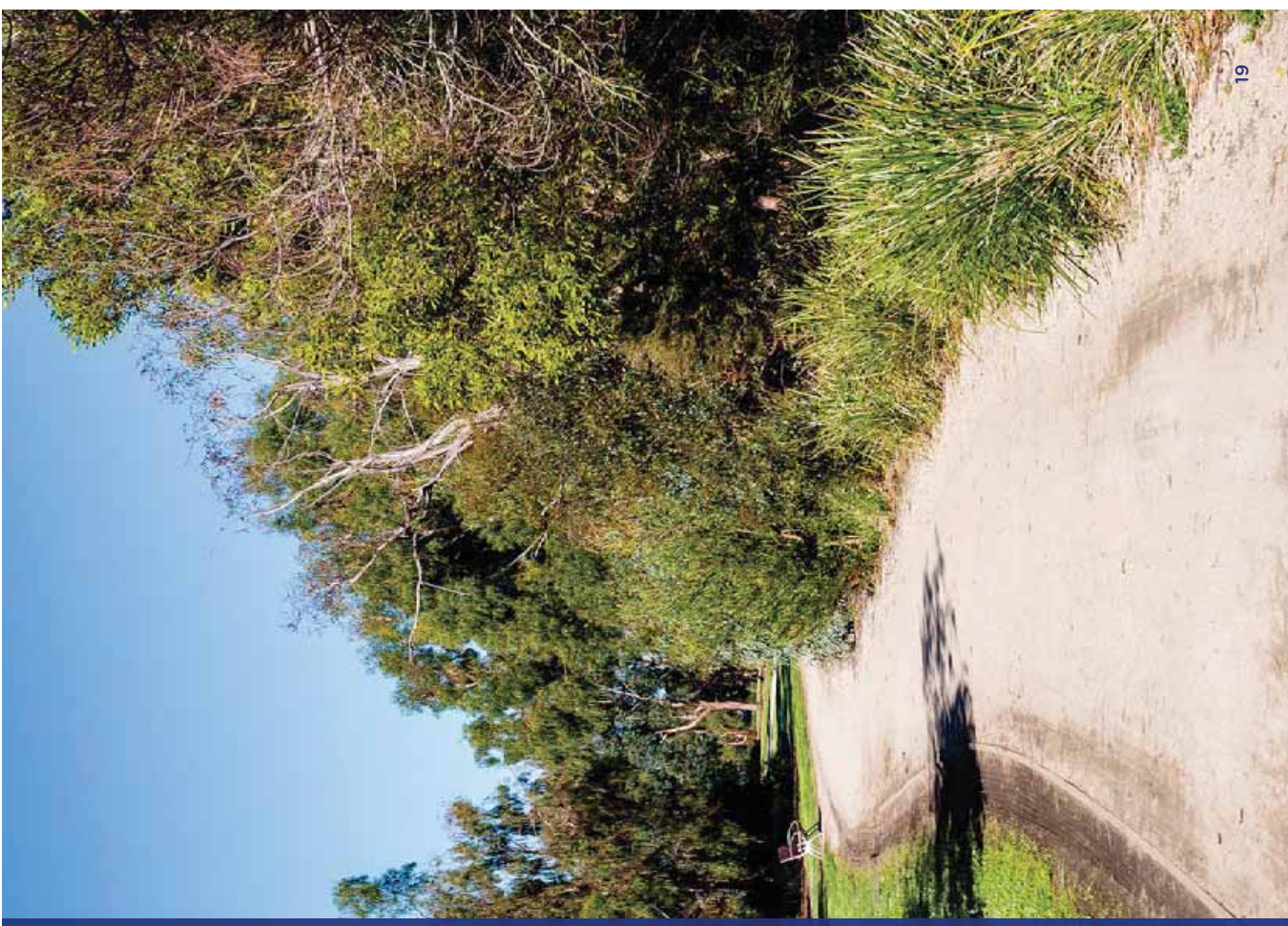
In 2020 we asked you to tell us about your aspirations for the future of Knox. Through face-to-face activities and online community forums and focus groups, people of all ages told us what they love about Knox now and what they want it to be like in 10 years.

Based on what we heard, we developed and released five vision statements for public voting. This vision statement was selected by the vast majority of those that voted as the one that best reflects our community's aspirations.

Knox: where we connect with our people and our environment, ensuring they are safe, supported and have every opportunity to thrive.

This is the future of Knox! It's what everyone in our community – individuals, community groups, organisations, and Council - will all work towards over the next 10 years.

You can read more about our Community Vision and the aspirations of our community in the Knox Community Plan 2021-2031 on Council's website.



Our Key Directions

The Community Plan is a long-term document which talks about what you want Knox to be like in the future. It contains five Key Directions which describe in further detail what we as a community are going to focus on to achieve our Community Vision.



Opportunity and innovation

Knox strives to be a city of opportunity, embracing innovation and change, and providing local learning and employment opportunities for all. It's a place where people and business can thrive.



Neighbourhoods, housing and infrastructure

Building on what's great about our city, Knox's housing and infrastructure will meet the changing needs of our community.



Natural environment and sustainability

Knox's natural environment is protected and enhanced to ensure sustainability for future generations.



Connection, resilience and wellbeing

Knox is a place to call home. Our community is strong, healthy and we support and respect each other.



Civic engagement and integrity

Knox Council is a trusted and respected leader in our community, acting appropriately and ensuring all voices are heard.

These Key Directions drive the work of Council and ensure we are working towards achieving the Community Vision. The following pages detail the work we will do under each Key Direction and how we will know if we are making a difference.

How – the strategies that Council will use.

What - the initiatives that Council will undertake.

When – the year of the Council Plan that we will deliver our initiatives.

How we'll know if we're making a difference

These are indicators that tell us if the work that we're doing is contributing to a positive change in our community. Some of these Council will have sole control over, and others it will have influence over, but there are others (eg. other levels of government, service providers etc) that will also contribute to that change.

Our ongoing work

The services we provide and the everyday work that Council does that all contribute to our success in these areas.

Other strategic documents

The various other strategies and plans that we've adopted that will contribute to these Key Directions.

It must be noted that many of the initiatives we undertake, services we provide and plans we develop may contribute to more than one Key Direction. In this plan, they have been placed under the Key Direction to which they contribute the most.



Opportunity and innovation

Knox strives to be a city of opportunity, embracing innovation and change, and providing local learning and employment opportunities for all. It's a place where people and business can thrive.

What you told us

You told us you want Knox to:

- Support businesses that have suffered from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Be recognised as a strong business hub, supporting existing businesses and attracting new investment.
- Have local employment for people of all abilities.
- Provide lifelong learning opportunities for all people.

“...I believe, our strength is that we have a highly skilled workforce that other countries don't, especially in the emerging economies”

Focus group attendee (November 2020)

How is this important for our health and wellbeing?

Having access to lifelong learning opportunities and local employment is essential for our social connection, mental health, self-expression, and financial stability and growth.

How Council will contribute to our success

We will partner with and support industries and businesses to create a strong local economy with employment and lifelong learning for all.

HOW (the strategies we'll use)	WHAT (the initiatives we'll undertake)	WHEN (Years)
Maximise the local economy by supporting existing businesses and attracting new investment.	Work with Maroondah and Yarra Ranges Councils to deliver key initiatives of the Bayswater Business Precinct Transformation Strategy. Work alongside the State Government on the implementation of the Wantirna Health Precinct Masterplan. ♦	1-4 1-2
	Research and review supply chain connectivity and networks, to enable and advance the circular economy.	2-4
	Continue to monitor the local economy to inform the strategic direction of future economic development initiatives.	2-4
Encourage and support opportunities for skills development and lifelong learning for all people in Knox.	Support the implementation of the State Government reform for the roll out of 3-year old kindergartens in the Knox municipality. Implement Council's decision regarding kindergartens expansion.	1 2-4
	Explore opportunities to increase the number and diversity of creative learning opportunities offered through Council's cultural and community venues. ♦	2
Support organisations in Knox to navigate recovery and new ways of working.	Implement business recovery programs identified through Knox recovery planning and continue to monitor the impacts of COVID-19 to inform future programs. Coordinate the implementation of Knox's Retail Activation Strategy.	1 1-3
	Support, connect and strengthen the creative industry sector through arts, cultural and economic development programs.	1

How we'll know if we're making a difference

Below are the indicators that will help us understand if we're making a difference under this Key Direction.

MUNICIPAL INDICATORS:	COUNCIL INDICATORS:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintaining the number of existing businesses in Knox. • An increase in new businesses in Knox. • More residents employed in Knox. • More people with need for assistance employed in Knox. • An increase in Knox's Gross Regional Product/capita. • Improved secondary school completion rates. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased participation in Knox's Business Education program. • More community education programs run by Knox. • Participation in funded 3-year old kindergarten. • Increased participation in funded 4-year-old kindergarten.

Our ongoing work:

The services we provide that contribute to this Key Direction include:

- Economic Development
- Investment & Partnerships
- Innovation
- Strategy, Learning and Evaluation (Family and Children's Services)

Other strategic documents:

There are other strategic documents we've adopted that help us plan in this area. These include:

- Knox Land for Business Plan
- Knox ICT Strategy





Neighbourhoods, housing and infrastructure

Building on what's great about our city, Knox's housing and infrastructure will meet the changing needs of our community.

What you told us

You told us you want Knox to:

- Have a range of appropriate, affordable and accessible housing options.
- Be a great place to live, work, connect and play.
- Have accessible paths that connect well.
- Have good public transport services.

“...what Knox can do is to bring appropriate housing into the environment in such a way that the environment is also catered for. So for example, for every new building there has to be one new tree... so that there's a balance between the two.”

Focus group attendee (November 2020)

How is this important for our health and wellbeing?

Affordable and accessible housing and infrastructure are essential to the safety and wellbeing of individuals and increase the liveability of Knox.

How Council will contribute to our success

We will provide well-planned and maintained neighbourhoods and advocate for integrated and accessible transport options.

HOW (the strategies we'll use)	WHAT (the initiatives we'll undertake)	WHEN (years)
Plan for and support diverse housing to meet changing community needs.	Develop and implement a Social and Affordable Housing Strategy and Action Plan to increase the supply of social housing and address homelessness in Knox. ♦	1-4
	Commence review of the Knox Housing Strategy 2015. ♦	3-4
	Build on regional partnerships by contributing to the work of the Eastern Affordable Housing Alliance (EAHA). ♦	2-4
Create, enhance and maintain places and spaces for people to live, work, play and connect.	Facilitate and support the implementation of the Boronia Renewal program.	1-4
	Progress implementation of the Knox Central program.	1-4
	In response to the Victorian Government's kindergarten expansion reform, continue to work with the State Government to plan for early years infrastructure in the municipality. ♦	1
	Advocate to state and federal governments for funding to implement Stage 2 of the Lewis Park Master Plan.	1
	Update Council's flood modelling across Knox.	1
	Understand community needs across the suburbs of Knox to plan for community infrastructure requirements for the next 5-20 years. ♦	2-4
	Develop an Integrated Major Infrastructure Development Plan for sport, leisure and recreation.	2

Table continued on following page

HOW (the strategies we'll use)	WHAT (the initiatives we'll undertake)	WHEN (Years)
Create, enhance and maintain places and spaces for people to live, work, play and connect.	Commence review and upgrade of Council's strategic planning documents including the Open Space Plan, Play Space Plan and Liveable Streets Plan. ♦	2-3
	Review and develop the Knox Domestic Animal Management Plan.	1 & 4
	Finalise and implement the Bayswater Renewal Strategy.	3-4
Provide, maintain and advocate for accessible and sustainable ways to move around Knox.	Advocate to State Government for improved public transport and arterial road connectivity in Knox. ♦ Enhance sustainable transport utilisation through delivery of active transport infrastructure. ♦ Implement Knox's Parking Strategy.	1-4 2-4 1-2
	Provide new and innovative community transport for the Knox community. ♦	2-4

How we'll know if we're making a difference

Below are the indicators that will help us understand if we're making a difference under this Key Direction.

MUNICIPAL INDICATORS:	COUNCIL INDICATORS:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More social and rental housing that is affordable to low income households in Knox. A reduction in the median household incomes needed to purchase a typical house. Increased public transport usage. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More one and two bedroom dwellings approved for construction in Knox. An increase in the number of cyclists recorded on a typical day at a typical site on Knox's shared path networks. Improved community satisfaction with recreation facilities, arts centres and libraries, appearance of public areas, sealed local roads, and planning for population growth.

Our ongoing work:

The services we provide that contribute to this Key Direction include:

- Asset Management
- Building
- Community Transport
- Facilities
- Major Initiatives
- Municipal Strategic Social Planning
- Open Space Management
- Operations
- Planning
- Social and Community Infrastructure
- Strategic Land Use Planning
- Traffic and Transport

Other strategic documents:

There are other strategic documents we've adopted that help us plan in this area. These include:

- Affordable Housing Action Plan
- Integrated Transport Plan
- Bicycle Plan
- Bridge Asset Management Plan
- Road Asset Management Plan
- Road Management Plan
- Carpark Asset Management Plan
- Liveable Streets Plan
- Drainage Asset Management Plan
- Building Asset Management Plan
- Open Space Plan
- Domestic Animal Management Plan
- Play Space Plan
- Playground Asset Management Plan
- Public Toilet Implementation Plan



Natural environment and sustainability

Knox's natural environment is protected and enhanced to ensure sustainability for future generations.

What you told us

You told us you want Knox to:

- Protect and enhance its biodiversity and waterways.
- Have developments that are not to the detriment of the natural environment.
- Combat the negative impacts of climate change.
- Reduce, reuse and recycle, creating less waste.

“...the lovely native flora and fauna - number one priority is that it is preserved...”

Focus group attendee (November 2020)

How is this important for our health and wellbeing?

A healthy natural environment is essential to good food supplies and clean air and water. Our reserves and parkland also provide spaces to enjoy and connect with nature, which can also reduce stress and improve our mental health.

How Council will contribute to our success

We will plan our city in a way that preserves and enhances our natural environment, identify ways to reduce waste and work with our community to respond to the impacts of climate change.

HOW (the strategies we'll use)	WHAT (the initiatives we'll undertake)	WHEN (Years)
Preserve our biodiversity and waterways, and enhance our urban landscape.	Undertake vegetation mapping analysis and habitat corridor planning to manage our urban biodiversity. Implement Knox's Biodiversity Resilience Plan. ♦	1 2-4
Prepare for, mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change.	Develop a Domestic Wastewater Management Plan for Knox. Commence implementation of the high priority Year 1 actions of the Climate Response Plan, including the development of the landfill solar farm business case. ♦ Implement the high priority actions from Years 2-4 of the Climate Response Plan. ♦	3 1 2-4
Lead by example and encourage our community to reduce waste.	Trial new and recycled materials in the construction of shared paths and as part of Council's road renewal program. ♦ Investigate electric heavy vehicle transport options to deliver Council services. Enhance Knox's Waste and Recycling Education programs to focus on reducing waste to landfill and increasing recycling. ♦ Implement Food and Green Organics (FOGO) waste service across Knox. ♦	2 1 2
	Secure long-term solutions for the treatment and disposal of residual waste streams.	2-4
	Progress planning and programming to standardise bin lids across Knox in line with Recycling Victoria policy.	2

How we'll know if we're making a difference

Below are the indicators that will help us understand if we're making a difference under this Key Direction.

MUNICIPAL INDICATORS:	COUNCIL INDICATORS:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More houses within 400m of open space. • An increase in tree canopy coverage. • A reduction in greenhouse gas emissions. • An increase in renewable energy usage. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A reduction in Council's corporate greenhouse gas emissions. • An increase in Council's corporate renewable energy usage. • A higher annual net gain of trees in Knox. • Improved community satisfaction with waste management and environmental sustainability. • An increase in kerbside collection waste diverted from landfill.

Our ongoing work:

The services we provide that contribute to this Key Direction include:

- Biodiversity
- Integrated Water Management
- Sustainable Futures
- Waste Management

Other strategic documents:

There are other strategic documents we've adopted that help us plan in this area. These include:

- Climate Change Response Plan.
- Stormwater Quality Management Plan
- Street Tree Asset Management Plan
- Waste Management Plan





Connection, resilience and wellbeing

Knox is a place to call home. Our community is strong, healthy and we support and respect each other.

What you told us

You told us you want Knox to:

- Be a community that respects, supports and values all people.
- Have good physical and mental health and wellbeing.
- Provide the right services for those in need.
- As a community, be ready to respond to all emergencies and threats to our wellbeing, and support each other to recover from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

“People who care about each other and their community comes from shared respect and shared values; build on the harmony...”

Focus group attendee (November 2020)

How is this important for our health and wellbeing?

Belonging and social inclusion are essential to mental health and general wellbeing. The ability to practice and connect with culture is also essential to all forms of health and wellbeing.

How Council will contribute to our success

We will partner with others to deliver services that are inclusive and accessible to the whole community, and that support wellbeing, healthy and safe living, connection to the community, and cultural interaction.

HOW (the strategies we'll use)	WHAT (the initiatives we'll undertake)	WHEN (years)
Support our community to improve their physical, mental and social health and wellbeing.	Respond to emerging social and health issues caused by COVID-19 pandemic. ♦	1-2
	Prioritise mental health and wellbeing initiatives by focusing on community partnerships and collective impact. ♦	1-4
Foster inclusivity, equality, belonging and safety within the community.	Progress implementation of the Children, Youth and Seniors Plan. ♦	2-4
	Develop and implement an Active Participation Plan - Beyond Structured Sport. ♦	2-4
	Review the Sports Club Development Program and usage of Council resources to support club sustainability. ♦	2-3
	Explore opportunities for active cultural tourism through creating a Public Art Trail.	2
	Support the creation of new physical activity-based programs and community infrastructure across the municipality. ♦	2-4
	Develop and implement programs to enable older and vulnerable residents to access technology. ♦	2-4
	Contribute to the collective efforts in preventing and responding to family violence. ♦	1-4
	Embed the State Government's Child Information Sharing Scheme (CISS) to support the safety and wellbeing of children. ♦	2-4
	Develop and implement the Municipal Disability Leadership Plan. ♦	2-4
	Develop and implement the Dementia Friendly Action Plan. ♦	2-4
	Work and partner with the multicultural community and key services to support our diverse communities. ♦	2-3
	Implement Council's adopted Gender Equality Action Plan. ♦	2-4

Table continued on following page

HOW (the strategies we'll use)	WHAT (the initiatives we'll undertake)	WHEN (years)
Foster inclusivity, equality, belonging and safety within the community.	Develop and implement education and advocacy programs to address ageism and increase community respect and inclusion for all ages across Knox. ♦	2-4
Honour and integrate First Nations Culture into actions and environments.	Develop and deliver a range of evidence based community training initiatives to build volunteer capacity. ♦	2-4
Support the community to identify and lead community strengthening initiatives.	Work in partnership with local First Nations people, relevant services and key networks to progress Reconciliation. ♦	1-4
	Develop and implement a Resilience Plan to support the community to cope with stresses, emergencies and disasters.	1-4
	Participate in the review of the Eastern Region Pandemic Plan.	2
	Support the review of the Knox Municipal Emergency Management Plan and associated sub plans.	2
	Develop a sustained and responsible model for supporting community-led events, particularly in a post-COVID-19 environment.	2-4

How we'll know if we're making a difference

Below are the indicators that will help us understand if we're making a difference under this Key Direction.

MUNICIPAL INDICATORS:	COUNCIL INDICATORS:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A reduction in the number of adults who report high or very high psychological distress. More residents who report their health as good, very good or excellent. An increase in the level of agreement that multiculturalism makes life better. Improved perceptions of safety. An increase in the number of adults who feel a sense of belonging. More adults in Knox who volunteer. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More infants and children in the Knox region immunised at Council run immunisation sessions. Increased participation in key ages and stages Maternal and Child Health visits. Improved satisfaction with cultural activities. An increase in the number of opportunities and avenues to include First Nations Culture within Knox. An increase in the number of meals delivered through Meals on Wheels. More clients and community members supported through Council's Community Access and Support programs. Greater sports participation rates.

Our ongoing work:

The services we provide that contribute to this Key Direction include:

- Active Communities
- Active Living
- Arts & Cultural Services
- Business Performance (Community Access & Support)
- Community Access, Equity and Safety
- Community Partnerships
- Community Safety
- Emergency Management
- Integrated Services (Family and Children's Services)
- Leisure Services
- Libraries
- Local Laws
- Occupational Therapy
- Youth Services

Other strategic documents:

There are other strategic documents we've adopted that help us plan in this area. These include:

- Key Life Stages Plan
- Community Access and Equity Implementation Plan
- Arts and Culture Plan
- Municipal Fire Management Plan



Civic engagement and integrity

Knox Council is a trusted and respected leader in our community, acting appropriately and ensuring all voices are heard.

What you told us

You told us you want Knox to:

- Have lots of opportunities to have a say on matters that affect you.
- Use our resources effectively and efficiently.
- Be led by a Council that is open, transparent and accountable.

“Community ownership and people willing to speak up about their community and speak up about what’s important to them. There is an ownership to the place and people will take pride in where we/they live.”

Community Forum attendee (September 2020)

How is this important for our health and wellbeing?

The opportunity to be heard allows people to help shape their community and in turn create a sense of belonging and being valued.

How Council will contribute to our success

We will pro-actively lead our changing community, using transparent decision-making, well-planned and effective collaboration, and ensuring all voices are heard.

HOW (the strategies we'll use)	WHAT (the initiatives we'll undertake)	WHEN (years)
Provide opportunities for all people in Knox to have their say.	Implement priority actions of the Community Engagement Framework and Action Plan.	1-4
Manage our resources effectively to ensure financial sustainability and improved customer experience.	Develop and implement a Customer Experience Strategy and Action Plan.	1-4
	Refresh and implement Council's ICT Strategy, including consideration of Smart Cities technology.	2-4
	Refresh and implement the 'THRIVE: Future Ready Knox' organisational strategy.	2-4
Ensure our processes are transparent and decisions are accountable.	Develop a procurement policy to ensure commercial and best practice outcomes.	1
	Conduct the 2024 General Election and implement a comprehensive induction program for the elected members.	4
	Implement an internal self-assessment process to monitor Council's performance in decision making.	2

How we'll know if we're making a difference

Below are some of the indicators that will help us understand if we're making a difference under this Key Direction.

COUNCIL INDICATORS:

- Community satisfaction in the areas of:
 - Decision making.
 - Customer service.
 - Overall direction.
 - Overall performance.
 - Consultation & engagement.
- More council services with a technology based self-service option.
- Meet liquidity and indebted targets from the adopted budget.

Our ongoing work:

The services we provide that contribute to this Key Direction include:

- Communications
- Customer Service
- Financial Services
- Governance
- People and Culture
- Information Technology
- Research and Mapping
- Strategy and Business Intelligence

Other strategic documents:

There are other strategic documents we've adopted that help us plan in this area. These include:

- Financial Plan 2021-2031
- Thrive: Future Ready Knox organisational strategy
- Annual Budget
- Revenue and Rating Plan
- Strategic Asset Management Plan
- Community Engagement Policy and Framework
- ICT Strategy



Our people

Our organisation is made up of over 1,000 staff members, led by our Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Bruce Dobson.

The CEO reports directly to Council and is responsible for establishing and maintaining an organisational structure that ensures the decisions of Council are implemented, the Council Plan is delivered, and ultimately our Community Vision is achieved.

The Executive Leadership Team is appointed by the CEO and assists in the overall leadership and governance of the organisation. The Executive Leadership Team is below and the organisation structure, as at October 2021, is illustrated to the right.



Bruce Dobson
Chief Executive Officer



Matt Kelleher
Director, City Strategy and Integrity



Tanya Scicluna
Director, Connected Communities



Samantha Mazer
Director, City Centre

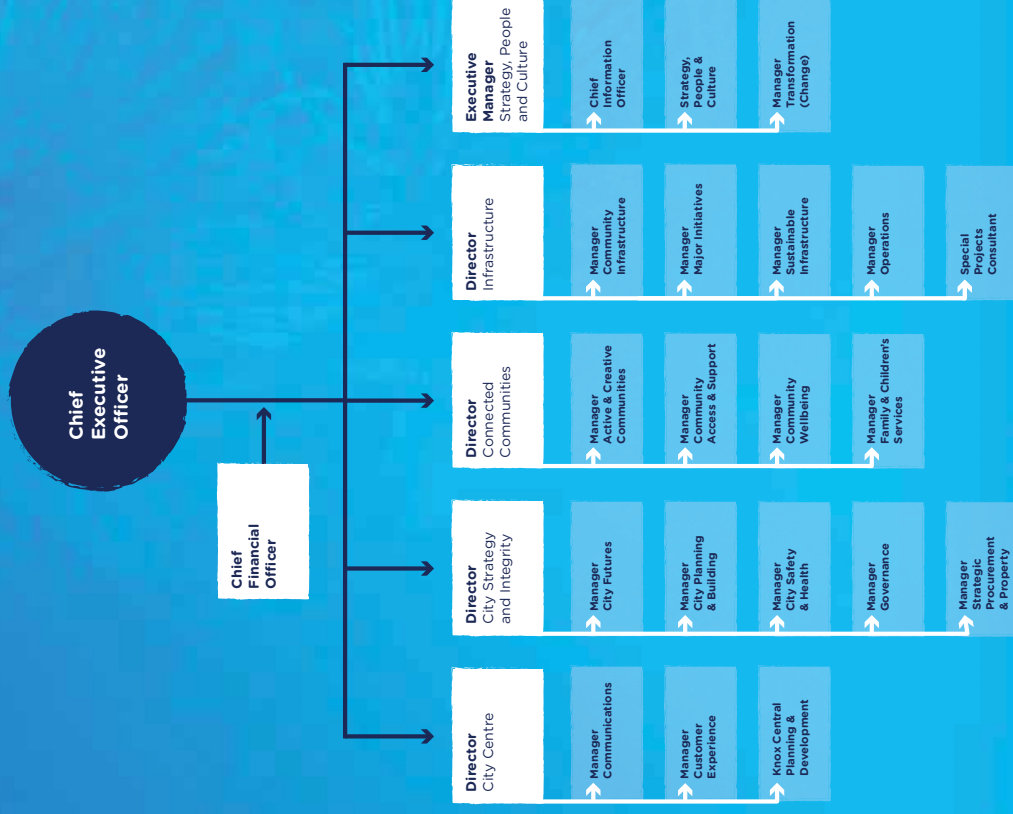


Grant Thorne
Director, Infrastructure



Sam Stanton
Executive Manager, Strategy, People & Culture

Organisation structure

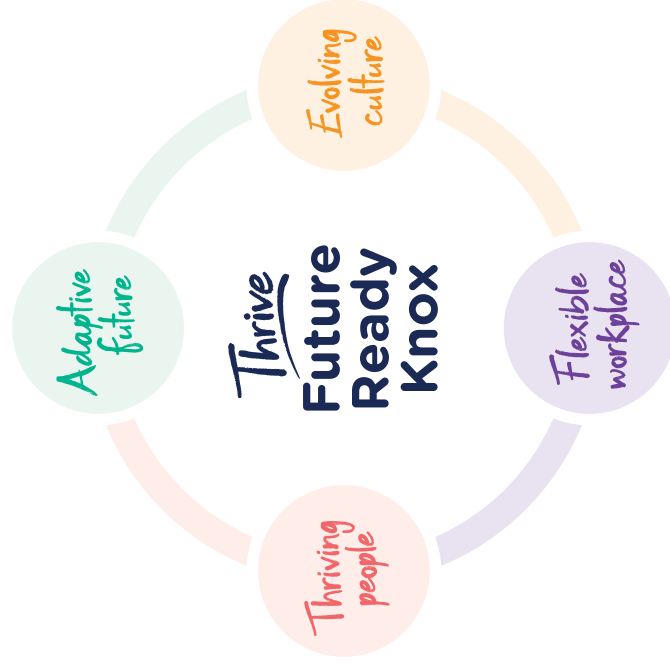


Our values

Thrive: Future Ready Knox is our organisational strategy that has been developed by Knox staff, for Knox staff.

We need to think about the future of work and adapt how we lead our changing business, so we have the right skillsets and mindsets to meet the changing needs of our community. We want to invest in our people so that everyone feels empowered to succeed for themselves and for others.

THRIVE commits us to leading our future across four inter-related priorities.



Adaptive future

We will be a resilient, adaptable and sustainable workplace, with a clear strategy of excellence and service.

Evolving culture

We strive to be an agile organisation built on a foundation of psychological safety and trust in our leaders, our teams and ourselves.

Flexible workplace

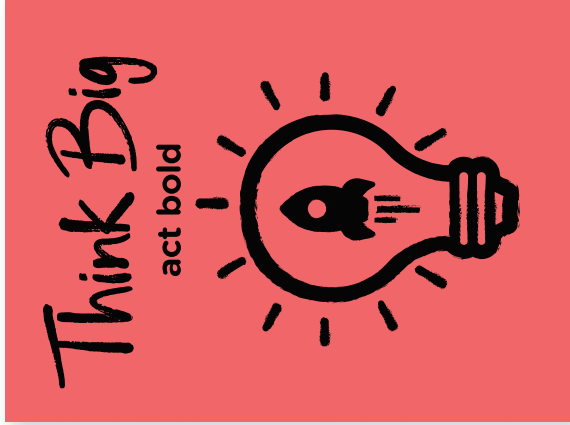
We will thrive in our inclusive and connected workplace, defined by flexible practices and spaces, and enabled by new technologies and business intelligence.

Thriving people

We will be defined by our resilient, diverse and capable people and will support them to keep growing their passions, talents and skills.

Our values

Thrive also outlines our values which are the foundation to our success and culture at Knox. They represent what we stand for, inspire us and create a shared understanding to align the way we work with our organisational purpose of **empowering our diverse community to thrive and prosper** and ultimately our Community Vision.



Monitoring our progress

There are many ways we monitor our progress and make sure we are on the right track.

Knox City Council collects data from numerous sources, conducts regular surveys and undertakes community engagement activities to keep track of and inform what's happening in our community.

Going forward, we will look at different ways to collaborate and contribute to Knox's success over the next 10 years. We will engage with our partners and stakeholders to build on our strengths, embrace opportunities and find solutions to the challenges facing our community.

We will review the Community Plan every four years as we produce a new Council Plan. These reviews will take Knox's pulse and make sure our Community Vision is still reflective of our community's aspirations. We will check on the availability of new data, touch base with the community, and review the key directions with agencies and stakeholders to ensure they are still relevant and meeting community needs.

Similarly we will conduct thorough annual reviews of our Council Plan (including the Municipal Health & Wellbeing Plan) to ensure we are still meeting the needs of the community and remain adaptive to our changing environment. We will make sure our strategies are still the right ones, and add to or change our initiatives where appropriate.

We will keep you up to date on the work we are doing to contribute to achieving the Community Vision through regular reporting against our Council Plan. You can find this information in our annual reports, in various publications and on our website.



Keeping in touch and opportunities to have your say

Knox City Council is committed to seeking feedback, making sure you are aware of issues that affect you and providing opportunities to have your say. There are a number of ways you can do this.

Visit our Have Your Say website to see how you can contribute to projects and tell us what you think of our draft plans and strategies - www.knox.vic.gov.au/haveyoursay

Knox City Council has several Advisory Committees that provide advice on the development, implementation, monitoring, and review of programs or activities. These committees are made up of community members, Council officers and current Councillors. Find out if there are opportunities available in your area of interest on our website: www.knox.vic.gov.au/our-council/about-council/council-committees

Sign up to receive Knox eNews, our monthly email newsletter which will keep you informed about the latest news, events and activities across the community: www.knox.vic.gov.au/email-newsletter

You can also
contact Council
via the following
methods

Phone: 9298 8000

Email: knoxcc@knox.vic.gov.au

Website: www.knox.vic.gov.au

Social media: facebook.com/knoxCouncil
or via Twitter @knoxcc

Visit Council in person: Knox Civic Centre
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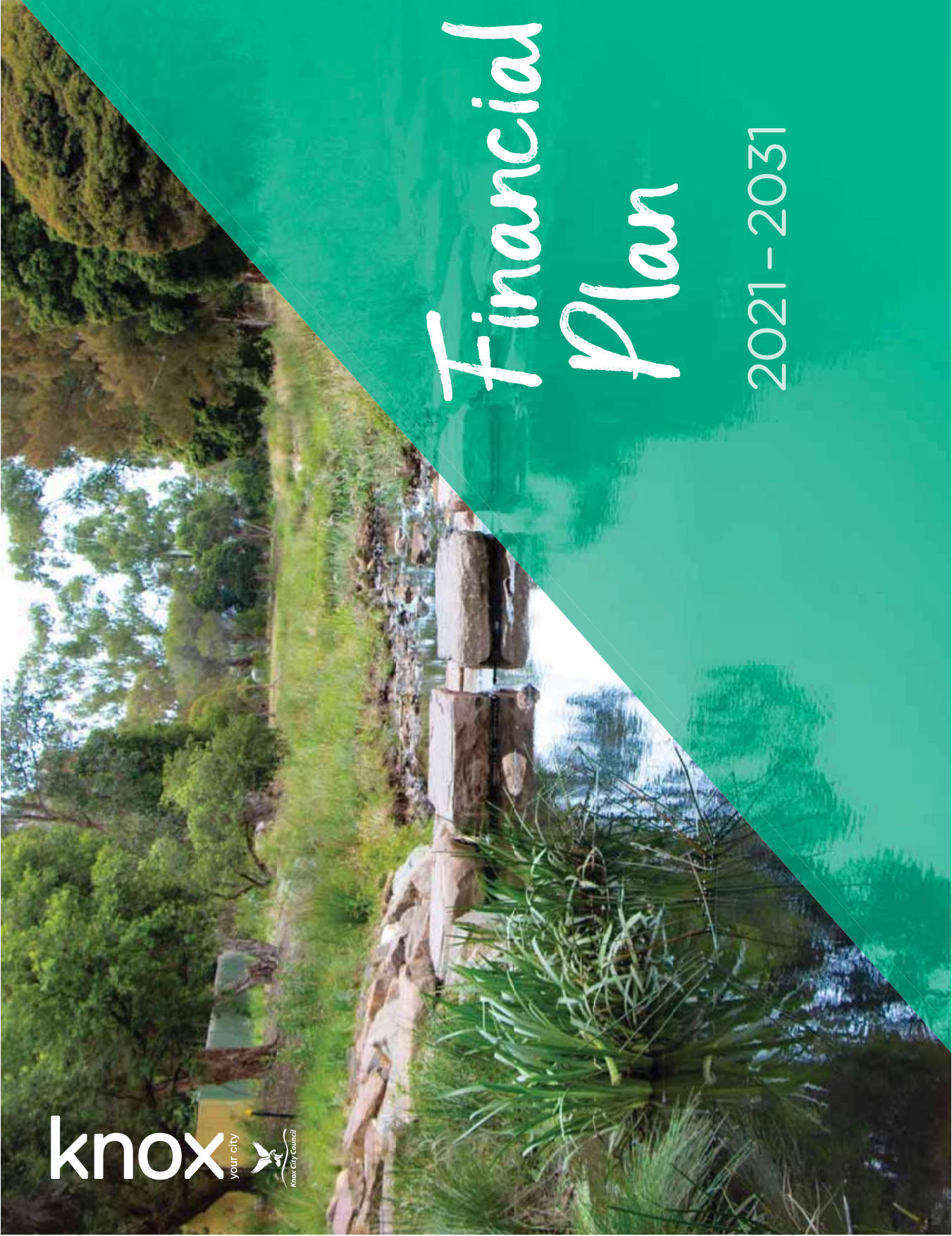
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Speak and Listen Users
1300 555 727 (ask for 03 9298 8000)

ABN 24 477 480 661

**For any queries please call the
Civic Centre on 9298 8000 or email
communityplan@knox.vic.gov.au**





Financial Plan

2021 - 2031

Contents

- 1. Legislative Requirements 3
 - 1.1. Strategic Planning Principles 4
 - 1.2. Financial Planning Principles 4
 - 1.3. Community Engagement 4
 - 1.4. Service Performance Principles 5
 - 1.5. Asset Plan Integration 5
- 2. Financial Plan Context 6
 - 2.1. Financial Policy Statements 6
 - 2.2. Strategic Actions 6
 - 2.3. Assumptions to the Financial Plan Statements 7
 - 2.4. Other Matters Impacting the 10-Year Financial Projections 10
- 3. Financial Plan Statements 11
 - 3.1. Comprehensive Income Statement 12
 - 3.2. Balance Sheet 13
 - 3.3. Statement of Changes in Equity 15
 - 3.4. Statement of Cash Flows 17
 - 3.5. Statement of Capital Works 19
 - 3.6. Statement of Human Resources 21
 - 3.7. Planned Human Resources Expenditure 22
- 4. Financial Performance Indicators 26
- 5. Strategies and Plans 29
 - 5.1. Borrowing Strategy 29
 - 5.2. Reserves Strategy 30

1. Legislative Requirements

Knox’s integrated strategic planning and reporting framework (pictured below) illustrates the medium and long term plans that guide and manage our city.

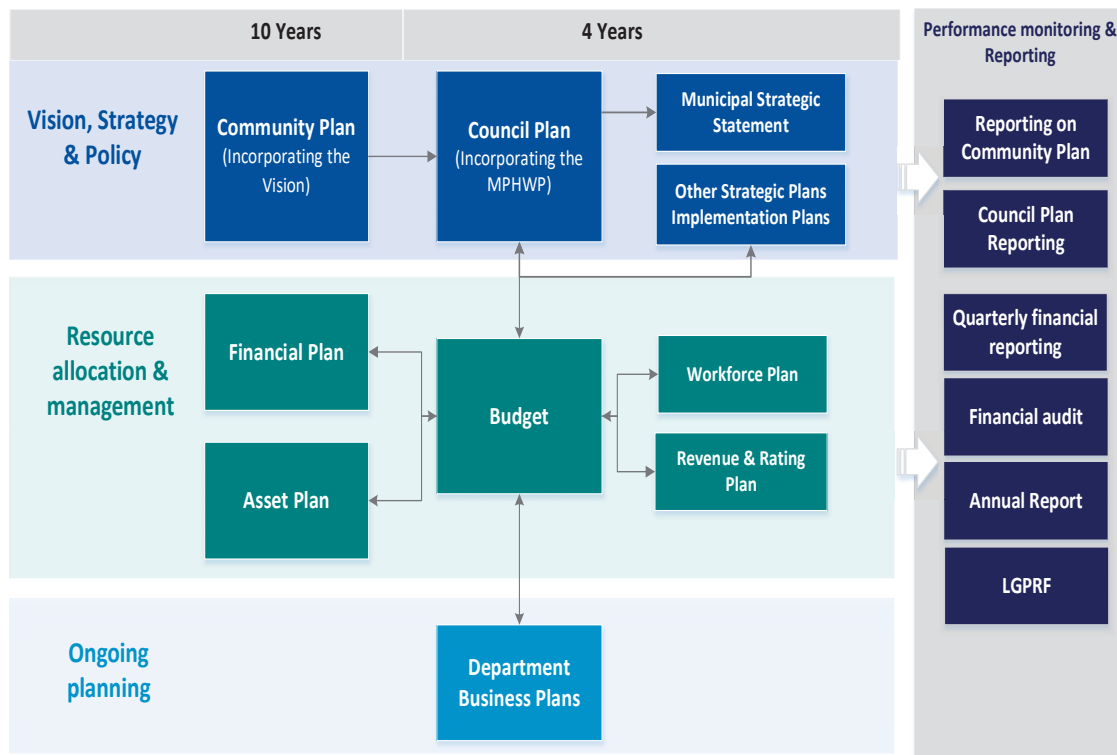
The Knox Community Plan 2021-2031 incorporates a Community Vision statement and describes our community’s aspirations for the future. It sets out Key Directions which articulate what we, as a collective, need to focus on to achieve our vision.

Knox’s Council Plan 2021-2025 provides direction to our organisation, describes how we’re going to contribute to the achievement of the Community Vision and shows how we’re going to measure our success. It also demonstrates our commitment to the health and wellbeing of our community by incorporating Knox’s Municipal Public Health & Wellbeing Plan (MPHWP).

There are also a number of other plans that guide our work. They include plans about how we’re going to manage our financial resources (the Financial Plan, Budget and Revenue and Rating Plan), how we’re going to manage and maintain our assets (the Asset Plan) and how we can make sure we have the right staff to deliver our services and initiatives (the Workforce Plan).

This plan is a new requirement of the *Local Government Act 2020*, which needs to be developed or reviewed and formally adopted by 31 October in the year following each Council election. It is an important part of Council’s integrated planning framework, all of which is created to help Council achieve its community vision:

“Knox: where we connect with our people and our environment, ensuring they are safe, supported and have every opportunity to thrive”.



1.1 Strategic Planning Principles

The Financial Plan provides a 10 year financially sustainable projection regarding how the actions of the Council Plan may be funded to achieve the Community Vision. The Financial Plan is developed in the context of the following strategic planning principles:

- a) Council has an integrated approach to planning, monitoring and performance reporting.
- b) Council financial plan addresses the Community Vision by funding the aspirations of the Council Plan. The Council Plan aspirations and actions are formulated in the context of the Community Vision.
- c) The Financial Plan statements articulate the 10-year financial resources necessary to implement the goals and aspirations of the Council Plan to achieve the Community Vision.
- d) Council's strategic planning principles identify and address the risks to effective implementation of the Financial Plan. The financial risks are included at section 1.2.2 below.
- e) The Financial Plan provides for the strategic planning principles of progress monitoring of progress and reviews to identify and adapt to changing circumstances.

1.2 Financial Planning Principles

The Financial Plan demonstrates the following financial management principles:

- 1.2.1 Revenue, expenses, assets, liabilities, investments and financial transactions are managed in accordance with Council's financial policies and strategic plans.
- 1.2.2 Management of the following financial risks:
 - a) the financial viability of the Council (refer to section 2.1 Financial Policy Statements).
 - b) the management of current and future liabilities of the Council. The estimated 10 year liabilities are disclosed in section 3.2 Balance Sheet projections.
 - c) the beneficial enterprises of Council (where appropriate).
- 1.2.3 Financial policies and strategic plans are designed to provide financial stability and predictability to the community.
- 1.2.4 Council maintains accounts and records that explain its financial operations and financial position (refer section 3 Financial Statements)

1.3 Community Engagement

During 2020-21 Council undertook a large research and engagement project to shape the future of Knox and inform the development of its new plans.

Almost 4,500 community members and organisations, businesses, stakeholders, partners and members of Council's Advisory Committees took part in various engagement activities to:

- gain an understanding of the community's aspirations for the future of Knox;
- test the data gathered through research;
- gain feedback on the goals in the current plan; and
- identify priority areas for the community and Council.

Based on the information gathered through the engagement, five Key Directions were established to provide the framework for our plans and guide the work of Council.

Council and the community will work together, focusing on these Key Directions over the next 10 years to achieve our vision:

- **Opportunity and Innovation** - Knox strives to be a city of opportunity, embracing innovation and change, and providing local learning and employment opportunities. It's a place where people and business can thrive.
- **Neighbourhoods, Housing and Innovation** - Building on what's great about our city, Knox's housing and infrastructure will meet the changing needs of our community.
- **Natural Environment and Sustainability** - Knox's natural environment is protected and enhanced to ensure sustainability for future generations.
- **Connection, Resilience and Wellbeing** - Knox is a place to call home. Our community is strong, healthy and we support and respect each other.
- **Civic Engagement and Integrity** - Knox Council is trusted and respected leader in our community, acting appropriately and ensuring all voices are heard.

1.4 Service Performance Principles

Council services are designed to be purposeful, targeted to community needs and value for money. The service performance principles are listed below:

- a) Services are provided in an equitable manner and are responsive to the diverse needs of the community. The Council Plan is designed to identify the key services and projects to be delivered to the community. The Financial Plan provides the mechanism to demonstrate how the service aspirations within the Council Plan may be funded.
- b) Services are accessible to the relevant users within the community.
- c) Council provides quality services that provide value for money to the community. The Local Government Performance Reporting Framework (LGPRF) is designed to communicate council's performance regarding the provision of quality and efficient services.
- d) Council is developing a performance monitoring framework to continuously improve its service delivery standards.
- e) Council is developing a service delivery framework that considers and responds to community feedback and complaints regarding service provision.

1.5 Asset Plan Integration

Integration to the Asset Plan is a key principle of the Council's strategic financial planning principles. The purpose of this integration is designed to ensure that future funding is allocated in a manner that supports service delivery in terms of the plans and the effective management of Council's assets into the future.

The Asset Plan identifies the operational and strategic practices which will ensure that Council manages assets across their life cycle in a financially sustainable manner. The Asset Plan, and associated asset management policies, provide council with a sound base to understand the risk associated with managing its assets for the community's benefit.

The Asset Plan is designed to inform the 10-year Financial Plan by identifying the amount of capital renewal, backlog and maintenance funding that is required over the life of each asset category. The level of funding will incorporate knowledge of asset condition, the risk assessment issues as well as the impact of reviewing and setting intervention and service levels for each asset class.

In addition to identifying the operational and strategic practices that ensure that Council manages assets across their life cycle in a financially sustainable manner, the Asset Plan quantifies the asset portfolio and the financial implications of those practices. Together the Financial Plan and Asset Plan seek to balance projected investment requirements against projected budgets.

2. Financial Plan Context

This section describes the context and external / internal environment and consideration in determining the 10-year financial projections and assumptions.

2.1 Financial Policy Statements

This section defines the policy statements, and associated measures, that demonstrates Council’s financial sustainability to fund the aspirations of the Community Vision and the Council Plan.

Policy Statement	Measure	Target	Forecast 2020-21	Budget 2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31
Consistent underlying surplus results	Adjusted underlying result greater than \$0	\$0	\$5,700	(\$54,217)	\$4,617	\$10,105	\$12,438	\$20,409	\$20,504	\$17,801	\$19,022	\$23,756	\$26,977
Ensure Council maintains sufficient working capital to meet its debt obligations as they fall due	Current Assets / Current Liabilities greater than 100%	100.00%	144.58%	123.28%	119.89%	121.37%	118.89%	127.96%	144.28%	138.37%	116.99%	121.22%	117.99%
Allocate adequate funds towards renewal capital in order to replace assets and infrastructure as they reach the end of their service life	Asset Renewal and Upgrade Expenses / Depreciation above 100%	100.00%	164.89%	362.66%	217.58%	206.55%	184.52%	152.14%	141.35%	149.36%	174.65%	143.64%	132.49%
That Council applies loan funding to new capital and maintains total borrowings in line with rate income and growth of the municipality	Total Borrowings / Rate Revenue to remain below 80%	80.00%	0.00%	69.00%	82.28%	74.31%	69.17%	57.64%	54.60%	58.11%	53.47%	40.97%	25.48%
Council maintains sufficient unrestricted cash to ensure ongoing liquidity as well as to address unforeseen cash imposts if required	Unrestricted Cash / Current Liabilities to be maintained above 60%	60.00%	60.87%	43.43%	44.52%	45.58%	51.22%	63.72%	80.93%	76.16%	57.67%	60.36%	55.65%

2.2 Strategic Actions

Following a series of community engagement activities, Council has identified the following strategic actions that will support the community’s aspirations identified in the Community Plan 2021-2031 and delivery of the Council Plan 2021-2025.

The strategic actions are included to the 10-year financial plan and, where appropriate, referenced in the commentary associated with the 10-year Comprehensive Income Statement and the 10-year Statement of Capital Works.

- That council adopt the budgeted statement of financial performance (Comprehensive Income Statement) as an integral part of the budget setting process for current and future budgets.
- That Council adopt the budgeted statement of financial position (Balance Sheet) as being an integral part of the budget setting process for current and future budgets.
- That Council adopt the budgeted statement of cash flows as being an integral part of the budget setting process for current and future budgets.
- That the working capital ratio be targeted to remain above a ratio of 1.0.
- That capital expenditure on asset renewal projects (and upgrades that have a significant renewal component) to exceed depreciation expense, and that the asset renewal gap be reduced.
- That debt funding be applied to growth infrastructure where necessary.
- That Council consider the most appropriate fees and charges strategy so that adequate funds are recovered to offset operational expenses in annual and future budgets.
- Maintain essential services at not less than current levels.

2.3 Assumptions to the Financial Plan Statements

This section presents information regarding the assumptions to the Comprehensive Income Statement for the 10 years from 2021-22 to 2030-31. The assumptions comprise the annual escalations / movement for each item of the Comprehensive Income Statement.

Escalation Factors % Movements	Budget									
	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
CPI	1.50%	1.75%	2.00%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%
Growth in Properties (number)	600	600	600	600	600	600	600	600	600	600
Rates and Charges	1.50%	1.75%	2.00%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%
Supplementary Rates (\$'000)	250	250	250	250	250	250	250	250	250	250
Statutory Fees and Fines	1.50%	1.75%	2.00%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%
User Fees	4.00%	4.00%	4.00%	4.00%	4.00%	4.00%	4.00%	4.00%	4.00%	4.00%
Grants - Operating (excluding VGC)	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%
Grants - Operating (VGC)	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%
Grants - Capital (excluding VGC)	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Grants - Capital (VGC and Roads to Recovery)	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%	1.00%
Contributions - Monetary	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%
Contributions - Non-Monetary (\$'000)	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000
Other Income	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Employee Costs	2.61%	2.61%	2.61%	2.61%	2.61%	2.20%	2.20%	2.20%	2.20%	2.20%
Materials and Services	0.50%	0.75%	1.00%	1.50%	1.50%	1.50%	1.50%	1.50%	1.50%	1.50%
Utilities	5.00%	5.00%	5.00%	5.00%	5.00%	5.00%	5.00%	5.00%	5.00%	5.00%
Contributions and Donations	1.50%	1.75%	2.00%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%
Other Expenses	1.50%	1.75%	2.00%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%	2.50%

2.3.1 Rates and Charges

Planning for future rate increases has been an important component of the Financial Plan process. The State Government has introduced the *Fair Go Rates System* which sets out the maximum amount councils may increase rates in a year. The Financial Plan assumes a rate increase of 1.5 percent in 2021-22. The rates in 2022-23 (1.75 percent) and 2023-24 (2.0 percent) have been based on the Department of Treasury and Finance CPI estimates in November 2020. Increases from 2024-25 onwards are estimated to be 2.5%.

The Financial Plan assumes an additional 600 property assessments per annum, while supplementary rates are anticipated to be \$0.250 million per annum. The average Rates per Assessment for 2021-22 is estimated at \$1,603.

Waste management charges are levied on the basis of cost recovery. This is consistent with the position of the majority of councils given that waste charges are outside the Minister's Rate Cap. The budget reflects both an increase in Waste and Recycling Charges as well as increased contractor expenses.

More information can be found in Council's *Revenue and Rating Plan 2021-22*.

2.3.2 User Fees

User fees relate mainly to the recovery of service delivery costs from Council's extensive and highly diversified range of services provided to the community. Examples of user fees include:

- Kindergarten and Childcare fees
- Waste Management fees
- Aged and Health Care service fees
- Leases, recreational reserve and facility hire fees

Council endeavours, as much as possible, to be a full cost recovery service provider.

2.3.3 Statutory Fees and Fines

Statutory fees are fees and fines levied in accordance with legislation. Examples of statutory fees and fines include:

- Planning and subdivision fees
- Building and Inspection fees
- Infringements and fines
- Land Information Certificate fees

Increases in the Financial Plan have been based on the projected CPI.

2.3.4 Grants

Council receives tied operating grant funding from State and Federal sources, with these operating grants budgeted to increase by 2 percent per annum.

Council receives untied Financial Assistance Grants via the Victorian Local Government Grants Commission. These grants are composed of an operating and capital component, and are anticipated to increase by 1 percent per annum. The Roads to Recovery grant is also anticipated to increase by 1 percent.

Council does not budget for capital grants for specific projects that have not been confirmed. However Council will pro-actively advocate to other levels of government for grant funding support to deliver important infrastructure and service outcomes for the community. Council may use its own funds to leverage higher grant funding and maximise external funding opportunities.

2.3.5 Contributions

Contributions represent funds received by council, usually from non-government sources, and are usually linked to projects. Contributions can be made to council in the form of either cash payments or asset hand-overs.

Examples of contributions include:

- Monies collected from developers under planning and development agreements;
- Monies collected under developer contribution plans and infrastructure contribution plans;
- Contributions from user groups towards the upgrade of facilities;
- Assets handed over to council from developers at the completion of a subdivision, such as roads, drainage, and streetlights.

Contributions linked to developments can be received well before any council expenditure occurs. In this situation, the funds will be identified and held separately for the specific works identified in the agreements.

Developer contributions are statutory contributions and are transferred to a restricted reserve until utilised for a specific purpose through the capital works program or delivered as works in kind by developers. Income of this nature is unpredictable and is directly contingent on developer activities in the municipality.

2.3.6 Other Income

Revenue from other income mainly comprises investment income plus the recovery of income from a variety of sources and rental income received from the hire of Council buildings.

2.3.7 Employee Costs

Increases for employee costs reflect the salary increase for all staff pursuant to Council's Enterprise Bargaining Agreement. The increase in the Superannuation Guarantee of 0.5 percent each year through to 2025-26 has been factored in to the employee cost increases. No provision or allowance has been made for any call from the Defined Benefits fund.

2.3.8 Materials and Services

Material costs include items required for the maintenance and repairs of Council buildings, roads, drains and footpaths which are governed more by market forces based on availability rather than CPI. Other associated costs included under this category are utilities, waste management, materials for the supply of community meals, and consumable items for a range of services. Council also utilises external expertise on a range of matters, including legal services and audit. Discretionary material costs are budgeted to increase by CPI, less an efficiency target of 1 percent. Non-discretionary costs such as utility costs are budgeted to increase by 5%.

2.3.9 Contributions and Donations

Contributions and donations includes Council's annual contribution to the Eastern Regional Libraries Corporation. Council also offer a range of grants and funding to community members, organisations and businesses across a range of areas.

2.3.10 Depreciation and Amortisation

Depreciation estimates have been based on the projected life of Council's existing property, infrastructure, plant and equipment, together with the projected capital spending contained in this Financial Plan.

2.3.11 Borrowing Costs

Borrowing costs comprise the interest expense to service Council's loan portfolio that is described in Section 5.1 Borrowing Plan.

2.3.12 Other Expenses

Other expenses includes administration costs such as Councillor allowances, operating lease rentals and audit expenses.

2.4 Other Matters Impacting the 10-Year Financial Projections

Due to the significant uncertainty surrounding the COVID-19 outbreak and the government's response to this, it is not possible to estimate the full impact on Council's operations, financial position and cash flows at this point in time. This being the case, Council does not consider it practicable to provide a quantitative or qualitative estimate of the potential impact of this outbreak on Council at this time.

3. Financial Plan Statements

This section presents information regarding the Financial Plan Statements for the 10 years from 2021-22 to 2030-31.

- Comprehensive Income Statement
- Balance Sheet
- Statement of Changes in Equity
- Statement of Cash Flows
- Statement of Capital Works
- Statement of Human Resources

3.1 Comprehensive Income Statement

	Actual		Budget											
	2020-21	2021-22	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31	
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
INCOME														
Rates and charges	122,309	126,258	130,499	135,217	140,707	146,366	150,909	155,596	160,432	165,423	170,574			
User fees	13,428	16,212	17,547	20,017	21,061	21,794	22,761	23,772	25,109	25,932	27,086			
Statutory fees and fines	2,689	4,098	4,545	4,610	4,670	4,787	4,907	5,030	5,156	5,285	5,417			
Grants - operating	30,752	23,339	20,247	20,624	21,000	21,353	21,712	22,078	22,450	22,798	23,184			
Grants - capital	5,293	19,622	3,172	2,504	1,953	1,972	1,991	2,811	2,031	2,052	2,073			
Contributions - monetary	6,795	10,606	8,088	18,200	7,729	7,743	7,758	7,773	7,788	7,804	7,820			
Contributions - non-monetary	0	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000			
Share of net profits (losses) of associates	154	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0			
Other income	1,178	1,031	1,037	1,048	1,059	1,647	1,767	1,878	1,840	1,752	1,678			
TOTAL INCOME	182,598	203,166	187,135	204,220	200,179	207,662	213,805	220,938	226,806	233,046	239,832			
EXPENSES														
Employee costs	80,316	75,784	75,678	77,289	79,117	81,182	82,968	84,793	86,658	88,564	90,512			
Materials and services	58,113	82,702	69,438	70,859	70,383	68,595	70,410	72,718	74,815	73,230	74,105			
Contributions and donations	6,371	6,053	5,758	5,815	5,870	6,017	6,168	6,322	6,480	6,642	6,809			
Depreciation	22,417	24,787	26,311	27,372	28,242	29,065	29,838	30,738	31,835	32,873	33,721			
Amortisation - intangible assets	478	893	893	893	893	893	893	893	893	893	893			
Amortisation - right of use assets	645	1,311	1,346	1,390	1,403	1,403	1,403	1,403	1,403	1,403	1,403			
Borrowing costs	0	758	1,408	1,514	1,407	1,354	1,158	1,175	1,385	1,350	1,056			
Finance costs - leases	33	69	71	73	74	74	74	74	74	74	74			
Bad and doubtful debts	278	75	76	77	78	80	82	84	86	88	90			
Net loss (gain) on disposal of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	3,575	40,645	(3,280)	(4,880)	(2,380)	(4,080)	(2,380)	1,433	1,433	1,433	1,433			
Other expense	797	630	669	643	654	670	687	704	722	740	759			
TOTAL EXPENSES	173,023	233,707	178,368	181,045	185,741	185,253	191,301	200,337	205,784	207,290	210,855			
SURPLUS / (DEFICIT) FOR THE YEAR	9,575	(30,541)	8,767	23,175	14,438	22,409	22,504	20,601	21,022	25,756	28,977			
TOTAL COMPREHENSIVE RESULT	9,575	(30,541)	8,767	23,175	14,438	22,409	22,504	20,601	21,022	25,756	28,977			
LESS														
Grants - capital - non recurrent	3,400	17,711	1,250	570	0	0	0	800	0	0	0			
Contributions and donations - capital	475	3,965	900	10,500	0	0	0	0	0	0	0			
Contributions - non-monetary	0	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000			
UNDERLYING SURPLUS (DEFICIT) FOR THE YEAR	5,700	(54,217)	4,617	10,105	12,438	20,409	20,504	17,801	19,022	23,756	26,977			

3.2 Balance Sheet

	Actual		Budget											
	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31			
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
CURRENT ASSETS														
Cash and cash equivalents	45,598	34,103	36,189	37,850	38,055	43,510	54,458	54,881	44,400	42,834	41,296			
Other financial assets	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0			
Trade and other receivables	18,989	19,585	20,279	21,032	21,876	22,543	23,232	23,942	24,676	25,434	26,217			
Non-current assets classified as held for sale	2,072	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0			
Other assets	1,276	1,295	1,318	1,344	1,378	1,412	1,447	1,483	1,520	1,558	1,597			
Inventories	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11			
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS	67,946	54,994	57,797	60,237	61,320	67,476	79,148	80,317	70,607	69,837	69,121			
NON CURRENT ASSETS														
Investments in associates	5,074	5,074	5,074	5,074	5,074	5,074	5,074	5,074	5,074	5,074	5,074			
Property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	1,982,808	2,041,431	2,068,466	2,083,177	2,094,348	2,098,635	2,108,440	2,136,846	2,163,910	2,173,427	2,179,842			
Right-of-use assets	1,533	1,533	1,533	1,533	1,533	1,533	1,533	1,533	1,533	1,533	1,533			
Intangible assets	1,371	1,371	1,371	1,371	1,371	1,371	1,371	1,371	1,371	1,371	1,371			
TOTAL NON CURRENT ASSETS	1,990,786	2,049,409	2,076,444	2,091,155	2,102,326	2,106,613	2,116,418	2,144,824	2,171,888	2,181,405	2,187,820			
TOTAL ASSETS	2,058,732	2,104,403	2,134,241	2,151,392	2,163,646	2,174,089	2,195,566	2,225,141	2,242,495	2,251,242	2,256,941			
CURRENT LIABILITIES														
Trade and other payables	13,856	14,063	14,310	14,594	14,962	15,335	15,720	16,112	16,517	16,931	17,355			
Trust funds and deposits	1,857	1,885	1,918	1,956	2,005	2,055	2,106	2,159	2,213	2,268	2,325			
Unearned income	11,657	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0			
Provisions	19,019	19,505	20,004	20,516	21,041	21,580	22,046	22,522	23,009	23,507	24,016			
Interest-bearing loans and borrowings	0	8,551	11,371	11,961	12,963	13,159	14,379	16,646	18,008	14,301	14,282			
Lease liabilities	605	605	605	605	605	605	605	605	605	605	605			
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES	46,994	44,609	48,208	49,632	51,576	52,734	54,856	58,044	60,352	57,612	58,583			
NON CURRENT LIABILITIES														
Provisions	3,608	3,640	3,672	3,705	3,740	3,775	3,805	3,836	3,868	3,900	3,933			
Interest-bearing loans and borrowings	0	78,565	96,005	88,524	84,361	71,202	68,023	73,778	67,770	53,469	29,187			
Lease liabilities	934	934	934	934	934	934	934	934	934	934	934			
TOTAL NON CURRENT LIABILITIES	4,542	83,139	100,611	93,163	89,035	75,911	72,762	78,548	72,572	58,303	34,054			
TOTAL LIABILITIES	51,536	127,748	148,819	142,795	140,611	128,645	127,618	136,592	132,924	115,915	92,637			
NET ASSETS	2,007,196	1,976,655	1,985,422	2,008,597	2,023,035	2,045,444	2,067,948	2,088,549	2,109,571	2,135,327	2,164,304			

	Actual	Budget	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
EQUITY													
Accumulated surplus	706,532	696,976	705,689	728,308	746,189	770,039	791,982	812,020	834,477	861,666	890,074		
Reserves	1,300,664	1,279,679	1,279,733	1,280,289	1,276,846	1,275,405	1,275,966	1,276,529	1,275,094	1,273,661	1,274,230		
TOTAL EQUITY	2,007,196	1,976,655	1,985,422	2,008,597	2,023,035	2,045,444	2,067,948	2,088,549	2,109,571	2,135,327	2,164,304		

3.3 Statement of Changes in Equity

	Total \$'000	Accumulated Surplus \$'000	Revaluation Reserve \$'000	Other Reserves \$'000
2021 ACTUAL				
BALANCE AT BEGINNING OF THE FINANCIAL YEAR	1,991,745	697,657	1,255,640	38,448
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	9,575	9,575	0	0
Net asset revaluation increment (decrement)	5,876	0	5,876	0
Transfer to other reserves	0	(10,020)	0	10,020
Transfer from other reserves	0	9,320	0	(9,320)
BALANCE AT END OF THE FINANCIAL YEAR	2,007,196	706,532	1,261,516	39,148
2022 BUDGET				
BALANCE AT BEGINNING OF THE FINANCIAL YEAR	2,007,196	706,532	1,261,516	39,148
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	(30,541)	(30,541)	0	0
Net asset revaluation increment (decrement)	0	0	0	0
Transfer to other reserves	0	(6,054)	0	6,054
Transfer from other reserves	0	27,039	0	(27,039)
BALANCE AT END OF THE FINANCIAL YEAR	1,976,655	696,976	1,261,516	18,163
2023				
BALANCE AT BEGINNING OF THE FINANCIAL YEAR	1,976,655	696,976	1,261,516	18,163
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	8,767	8,767	0	0
Net asset revaluation increment (decrement)	0	0	0	0
Transfer to other reserves	0	(6,554)	0	6,554
Transfer from other reserves	0	6,500	0	(6,500)
BALANCE AT END OF THE FINANCIAL YEAR	1,985,422	705,689	1,261,516	18,217
2024				
BALANCE AT BEGINNING OF THE FINANCIAL YEAR	1,985,422	705,689	1,261,516	18,217
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	23,175	23,175	0	0
Net asset revaluation increment (decrement)	0	0	0	0
Transfer to other reserves	0	(7,056)	0	7,056
Transfer from other reserves	0	6,500	0	(6,500)
BALANCE AT END OF THE FINANCIAL YEAR	2,008,597	728,308	1,261,516	18,773
2025				
BALANCE AT BEGINNING OF THE FINANCIAL YEAR	2,008,597	728,308	1,261,516	18,773
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	14,438	14,438	0	0
Net asset revaluation increment (decrement)	0	0	0	0
Transfer to other reserves	0	(7,057)	0	7,057
Transfer from other reserves	0	10,500	0	(10,500)
BALANCE AT END OF THE FINANCIAL YEAR	2,023,035	746,189	1,261,516	15,330
2026				
BALANCE AT BEGINNING OF THE FINANCIAL YEAR	2,023,035	746,189	1,261,516	15,330
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	22,409	22,409	0	0
Net asset revaluation increment (decrement)	0	0	0	0
Transfer to other reserves	0	(7,059)	0	7,059
Transfer from other reserves	0	8,500	0	(8,500)
BALANCE AT END OF THE FINANCIAL YEAR	2,045,444	770,039	1,261,516	13,889

	Total \$'000	Accumulated Surplus \$'000	Revaluation Reserve \$'000	Other Reserves \$'000
2027				
BALANCE AT BEGINNING OF THE FINANCIAL YEAR	2,045,444	770,039	1,261,516	13,889
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	22,504	22,504	0	0
Net asset revaluation increment (decrement)	0	0	0	0
Transfer to other reserves	0	(7,061)	0	7,061
Transfer from other reserves	0	6,500	0	(6,500)
BALANCE AT END OF THE FINANCIAL YEAR	2,067,948	791,982	1,261,516	14,450
2028				
BALANCE AT BEGINNING OF THE FINANCIAL YEAR	2,067,948	791,982	1,261,516	14,450
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	20,601	20,601	0	0
Net asset revaluation increment (decrement)	0	0	0	0
Transfer to other reserves	0	(7,063)	0	7,063
Transfer from other reserves	0	6,500	0	(6,500)
BALANCE AT END OF THE FINANCIAL YEAR	2,088,549	812,020	1,261,516	15,013
2029				
BALANCE AT BEGINNING OF THE FINANCIAL YEAR	2,088,549	812,020	1,261,516	15,013
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	21,022	21,022	0	0
Net asset revaluation increment (decrement)	0	0	0	0
Transfer to other reserves	0	(7,065)	0	7,065
Transfer from other reserves	0	8,500	0	(8,500)
BALANCE AT END OF THE FINANCIAL YEAR	2,109,571	834,477	1,261,516	13,578
2030				
BALANCE AT BEGINNING OF THE FINANCIAL YEAR	2,109,571	834,477	1,261,516	13,578
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	25,756	25,756	0	0
Net asset revaluation increment (decrement)	0	0	0	0
Transfer to other reserves	0	(7,067)	0	7,067
Transfer from other reserves	0	8,500	0	(8,500)
BALANCE AT END OF THE FINANCIAL YEAR	2,135,327	861,666	1,261,516	12,145
2031				
BALANCE AT BEGINNING OF THE FINANCIAL YEAR	2,135,327	861,666	1,261,516	12,145
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	28,977	28,977	0	0
Net asset revaluation increment (decrement)	0	0	0	0
Transfer to other reserves	0	(7,069)	0	7,069
Transfer from other reserves	0	6,500	0	(6,500)
BALANCE AT END OF THE FINANCIAL YEAR	2,164,304	890,074	1,261,516	12,714

3.4 Statement of Cash Flows

	Actual		Budget		2020-21		2021-22		2022-23		2023-24		2024-25		2025-26		2026-27		2027-28		2028-29		2029-30		2030-31							
	Inflows	(Outflows)	Inflows	(Outflows)	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000					
CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES																																
Rates and charges	121,271		125,925		130,080	134,751	140,165	146,020	150,554	155,232	160,059	165,041	170,182																			
User fees	11,707		16,028		17,354	19,814	20,851	21,569	22,528	23,529	24,856	25,670	26,812																			
Statutory fees and fines	1,951		4,019		4,462	4,524	4,580	4,691	4,807	4,926	5,048	5,172	5,300																			
Grants - operating	30,752		21,757		20,247	20,624	21,000	21,353	21,712	22,078	22,450	22,798	23,184																			
Grants - capital	5,293		9,547		3,172	2,504	1,953	1,972	1,991	2,811	2,031	2,052	2,073																			
Contributions - monetary	6,795		10,606		8,088	18,200	7,729	7,743	7,758	7,773	7,788	7,804	7,820																			
Interest received	55		150		150	150	150	150	150	150	150	150	150																			
Other receipts	1,123		881		887	898	909	909	909	909	909	909	909																			
Net movement in trust deposits	273		28		33	38	49	50	51	53	54	55	57																			
Employee costs	(79,560)		(75,266)		(75,147)	(76,744)	(78,558)	(80,608)	(82,472)	(84,286)	(86,139)	(88,034)	(89,970)																			
Materials and services	(47,509)		(82,589)		(69,289)	(70,675)	(70,129)	(68,335)	(70,144)	(72,444)	(74,534)	(76,943)	(73,810)																			
Contributions and donations	(6,371)		(6,053)		(5,758)	(5,815)	(5,870)	(6,017)	(6,168)	(6,322)	(6,480)	(6,642)	(6,809)																			
Short-term, low value and variable lease payments	(7)		(8)		(8)	(8)	(8)	(8)	(8)	(8)	(8)	(8)	(8)																			
Other payments	(790)		(622)		(661)	(635)	(646)	(662)	(679)	(696)	(714)	(732)	(751)																			
NET CASH PROVIDED BY / (USED IN) OPERATING ACTIVITIES	44,983		24,403		33,610	47,626	42,175	49,415	51,697	54,524	56,251	61,985	65,758																			
CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES																																
Proceeds from sale of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	1,575		22,604		14,067	15,667	13,167	14,867	13,167	1,167	1,167	1,167	1,167																			
Payments for property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	(40,765)		(143,480)		(63,026)	(51,764)	(49,092)	(43,033)	(49,322)	(60,638)	(60,391)	(43,883)	(41,629)																			
Payments for investments	0		0		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0																			
Proceeds from sale of investments	9,900		0		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0																			
NET CASH PROVIDED BY / (USED IN) INVESTING ACTIVITIES	(29,290)		(120,876)		(48,959)	(36,097)	(35,925)	(28,166)	(36,155)	(59,471)	(59,224)	(42,716)	(40,462)																			

	Actual 2020-21 \$'000	Budget 2021-22 \$'000	2022-23 \$'000	2023-24 \$'000	2024-25 \$'000	2025-26 \$'000	2026-27 \$'000	2027-28 \$'000	2028-29 \$'000	2029-30 \$'000	2030-31 \$'000
	Inflows (Outflows)	Inflows (Outflows)	Inflows (Outflows)	Inflows (Outflows)	Inflows (Outflows)	Inflows (Outflows)	Inflows (Outflows)	Inflows (Outflows)	Inflows (Outflows)	Inflows (Outflows)	Inflows (Outflows)
CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES											
Finance costs	0	(758)	(1,408)	(1,514)	(1,407)	(1,354)	(1,158)	(1,175)	(1,385)	(1,350)	(1,056)
Proceeds from borrowings	0	90,936	28,811	4,480	8,800	0	11,200	22,400	12,000	0	0
Repayment of borrowings	0	(3,820)	(8,551)	(11,371)	(11,961)	(12,963)	(13,159)	(14,378)	(16,646)	(18,008)	(24,301)
Interest paid - lease liability	(33)	(69)	(71)	(73)	(74)	(74)	(74)	(74)	(74)	(74)	(74)
Repayment of lease liabilities	(646)	(1,311)	(1,346)	(1,390)	(1,403)	(1,403)	(1,403)	(1,403)	(1,403)	(1,403)	(1,403)
NET CASH PROVIDED BY / (USED IN) FINANCING ACTIVITIES	(679)	84,978	17,435	(9,868)	(6,045)	(15,794)	(4,594)	5,370	(7,508)	(20,835)	(26,834)
NET INCREASE (DECREASE) IN CASH HELD	15,014	(11,495)	2,086	1,661	205	5,455	10,948	423	(10,481)	(1,566)	(1,538)
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the financial year	30,584	45,598	34,103	36,189	37,850	38,055	43,510	54,458	54,881	44,400	42,834
CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS AT END OF YEAR	45,598	34,103	36,189	37,850	38,055	43,510	54,458	54,881	44,400	42,834	41,296

3.5 Statement of Capital Works

	Actual		Budget										
	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31		
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000		
PROPERTY													
Land and Buildings	10,457	61,026	31,463	23,967	20,910	13,847	19,986	31,687	30,519	11,261	7,819		
TOTAL PROPERTY	10,457	61,026	31,463	23,967	20,910	13,847	19,986	31,687	30,519	11,261	7,819		
PLANT AND EQUIPMENT													
Plant, machinery and equipment	1,240	2,885	2,457	2,011	2,695	2,776	2,845	2,916	2,989	3,064	3,141		
Computers and telecommunications	3,357	12,624	4,809	4,805	3,100	3,193	3,273	3,355	3,439	3,525	3,613		
Artworks	54	267	123	124	125	46	47	48	49	50	51		
TOTAL PLANT AND EQUIPMENT	4,651	15,776	7,389	6,940	5,920	6,015	6,165	6,319	6,477	6,639	6,805		
INFRASTRUCTURE													
Roads	9,054	10,260	9,794	10,409	10,913	11,643	11,934	12,232	12,538	12,852	13,174		
Bridges	1,272	715	467	425	385	381	391	401	411	421	432		
Footpaths and cycleways	5,032	5,527	5,614	5,360	5,856	5,899	6,046	6,198	6,354	6,513	6,676		
Drainage	2,619	6,158	4,545	3,184	3,381	4,160	4,264	4,370	4,479	4,591	4,705		
Recreational, leisure and community facilities	9,995	62,542	11,339	7,699	6,948	5,400	5,536	5,675	5,817	5,962	6,112		
Off street car parks	925	1,570	1,240	1,326	848	905	928	952	975	1,000	1,025		
Other infrastructure	399	557	252	259	266	269	276	283	290	297	304		
TOTAL INFRASTRUCTURE	29,296	87,329	33,251	28,662	28,597	28,657	29,375	30,111	30,864	31,636	32,428		
TOTAL CAPITAL WORKS EXPENDITURE	44,404	164,131	72,103	59,569	55,427	48,519	55,526	68,117	67,860	49,536	47,052		
REPRESENTED BY													
Asset renewal	26,218	43,475	36,688	35,053	37,324	37,828	38,775	39,745	40,740	41,758	42,803		
Asset upgrade	10,746	46,417	20,560	21,485	14,787	6,392	3,400	6,166	14,860	5,461	1,875		
Asset new	5,929	64,971	14,435	2,961	3,281	4,229	13,279	22,132	12,185	2,240	2,295		
Asset expansion	1,511	9,268	420	70	35	70	72	74	75	77	79		
TOTAL CAPITAL WORKS EXPENDITURE	44,404	164,131	72,103	59,569	55,427	48,519	55,526	68,117	67,860	49,536	47,052		

	Actual		Budget										
	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31		
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000		
CAPITAL WORKS FUNDING SOURCE													
EXTERNAL													
Loan proceeds	0	90,936	28,811	4,480	8,800	0	11,200	22,400	12,000	0	0		
Grants - capital	5,293	15,111	3,172	2,504	1,953	1,972	1,991	2,811	2,031	2,052	2,073		
Contributions - capital	475	1,685	900	10,500	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
TOTAL EXTERNAL FUNDING	5,768	107,732	32,883	17,484	10,753	1,972	13,191	25,211	14,031	2,052	2,073		
INTERNAL													
Proceeds from sale of fixed assets	1,575	20,532	14,067	15,667	13,167	14,867	13,167	1,167	1,167	1,167	1,167		
Movement in reserve funds	6,033	21,155	6,500	6,500	10,500	8,500	6,500	6,500	8,500	8,500	6,500		
Rate funding	31,028	14,712	18,653	19,918	21,007	23,180	22,668	35,239	44,162	37,817	37,312		
TOTAL INTERNAL FUNDING	38,636	56,399	39,220	42,085	44,674	46,547	42,335	42,906	53,829	47,484	44,979		
TOTAL CAPITAL WORKS FUNDING SOURCES	44,404	164,131	72,103	59,569	55,427	48,519	55,526	68,117	67,860	49,536	47,052		
LESS OPERATING PROJECTS EXPENDITURE													
Operating Projects Expenditure	4,027	20,651	9,077	7,805	6,335	5,486	6,204	7,479	7,469	5,653	5,423		
NET CAPITAL WORKS (CAPITALISED EXPENDITURE EXCLUDING OPERATING PROJECTS EXPENDITURE)	40,377	143,480	63,026	51,764	49,092	43,033	49,322	60,638	60,391	43,883	41,629		

3.6 Statement of Human Resources

	Forecast		Budget		2020-21		2021-22		2022-23		2023-24		2024-25		2025-26		2026-27		2027-28		2028-29		2029-30		2030-31		
	\$'000	FTE	\$'000	FTE	\$'000	FTE	\$'000	FTE	\$'000	FTE	\$'000	FTE	\$'000	FTE	\$'000	FTE	\$'000	FTE	\$'000	FTE	\$'000	FTE	\$'000	FTE	\$'000	FTE	
STAFF EXPENDITURE																											
Employee costs - operating	80,316		75,784		75,678		77,289		79,117		81,182		82,968		84,793		86,658		88,564		90,512						
Employee costs - capital	2,812		2,454		3,684		3,507		3,595		3,689		3,770		3,853		3,938		4,024		4,113						
TOTAL STAFF EXPENDITURE	83,128		78,238		79,362		80,796		82,712		84,871		86,738		88,646		90,596		92,588		94,625						
STAFF NUMBERS																											
Full time equivalent (FTE) employees	717.03		719.43		716.83		714.13		714.13		714.13		714.13		714.13		714.13		714.13		714.13						
TOTAL STAFF NUMBERS	717.03		719.43		716.83		714.13		714.13		714.13		714.13		714.13		714.13		714.13		714.13						

3.7 Planned Human Resource Expenditure

	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
CEO										
Permanent - Full Time	2,519	2,580	2,643	2,706	2,777	2,838	2,900	2,964	3,029	3,096
Female	1,832	1,876	1,922	1,968	2,019	2,064	2,109	2,156	2,203	2,251
Male	687	704	721	738	757	774	791	808	826	844
Self-described gender	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Permanent - Part Time	639	654	670	687	705	720	736	752	769	786
Female	639	654	670	687	705	720	736	752	769	786
Male	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Self-described gender	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL CEO	3,158	3,234	3,313	3,393	3,482	3,558	3,636	3,716	3,798	3,882
CITY CENTRE										
Permanent - Full Time	2,521	2,782	2,862	2,948	3,025	3,091	3,160	3,229	3,300	3,373
Female	2,003	2,210	2,274	2,342	2,403	2,456	2,510	2,565	2,622	2,679
Male	518	572	588	606	622	635	649	664	678	693
Self-described gender	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Permanent - Part Time	1,708	1,885	1,940	1,996	2,048	2,093	2,139	2,186	2,234	2,284
Female	1,599	1,765	1,816	1,869	1,918	1,960	2,003	2,047	2,092	2,138
Male	109	120	124	127	130	133	136	139	142	145
Self-described gender	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL CITY CENTRE	4,229	4,667	4,802	4,944	5,073	5,185	5,299	5,415	5,534	5,656
CITY STRATEGY AND INTEGRITY										
Permanent - Full Time	11,337	11,445	11,681	11,907	12,218	12,487	12,761	13,042	13,329	13,622
Female	5,393	5,411	5,522	5,629	5,776	5,903	6,033	6,166	6,301	6,440
Male	5,944	6,034	6,159	6,278	6,442	6,584	6,728	6,876	7,028	7,182
Self-described gender	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Permanent - Part Time	5,072	5,089	5,194	5,295	5,433	5,553	5,675	5,800	5,927	6,058
Female	3,765	3,778	3,856	3,931	4,034	4,122	4,213	4,306	4,400	4,497
Male	1,307	1,311	1,338	1,364	1,400	1,430	1,462	1,494	1,527	1,560
Self-described gender	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL CITY STRATEGY AND INTEGRITY	16,409	16,534	16,875	17,202	17,651	18,039	18,436	18,842	19,256	19,680

	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
CONNECTED COMMUNITIES										
Permanent - Full Time	12,796	12,563	12,845	13,162	13,506	13,803	14,106	14,417	14,734	15,058
Female	11,381	11,178	11,429	11,711	12,017	12,281	12,551	12,827	13,110	13,398
Male	1,415	1,385	1,416	1,451	1,489	1,522	1,555	1,589	1,624	1,660
Self-described gender	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Permanent - Part Time	14,137	13,836	14,148	14,498	14,876	15,204	15,538	15,880	16,229	16,586
Female	13,353	13,069	13,363	13,693	14,050	14,359	14,675	14,998	15,328	15,665
Male	784	767	785	805	826	844	863	882	901	921
Self-described gender	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL CONNECTED COMMUNITIES	26,933	26,399	26,993	27,660	28,382	29,006	29,644	30,297	30,963	31,644
INFRASTRUCTURE										
Permanent - Full Time	14,560	14,580	14,926	15,294	15,693	16,038	16,391	16,752	17,120	17,497
Female	2,903	2,907	2,976	3,049	3,129	3,197	3,268	3,340	3,413	3,488
Male	11,657	11,673	11,950	12,245	12,565	12,841	13,124	13,412	13,707	14,009
Self-described gender	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Permanent - Part Time	658	659	674	692	710	726	742	758	775	792
Female	658	659	674	692	710	726	742	758	775	792
Male	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Self-described gender	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL INFRASTRUCTURE	15,218	15,239	15,600	15,986	16,403	16,764	17,133	17,510	17,895	18,289
PEOPLE AND INNOVATION										
Permanent - Full Time	5,611	5,259	5,330	5,488	5,631	5,755	5,882	6,011	6,143	6,279
Female	3,333	3,034	3,075	3,166	3,249	3,320	3,393	3,468	3,544	3,622
Male	2,278	2,225	2,255	2,322	2,383	2,435	2,489	2,543	2,599	2,656
Self-described gender	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Permanent - Part Time	1,838	1,796	1,821	1,874	1,923	1,965	2,008	2,053	2,098	2,144
Female	1,838	1,796	1,821	1,874	1,923	1,965	2,008	2,053	2,098	2,144
Male	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Self-described gender	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL PEOPLE AND INNOVATION	7,449	7,055	7,151	7,362	7,554	7,720	7,890	8,064	8,241	8,422
Casual, temporary and other expenditure	2,388	2,550	2,555	2,570	2,637	2,695	2,754	2,813	2,876	2,938
Capitalised labour costs	2,454	3,684	3,507	3,595	3,689	3,770	3,853	3,939	4,024	4,113
TOTAL STAFF EXPENDITURE	78,238	79,362	80,796	82,712	84,871	86,738	88,646	90,595	92,588	94,624

	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31
	FTE	FTE	FTE	FTE	FTE	FTE	FTE	FTE	FTE	FTE
CEO										
Permanent - Full Time	17.00	17.00	17.00	17.00	17.00	17.00	17.00	17.00	17.00	17.00
Female	12.00	12.00	12.00	12.00	12.00	12.00	12.00	12.00	12.00	12.00
Male	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00
Self-described gender	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Permanent - Part Time	4.44	4.44	4.44	4.44	4.44	4.44	4.44	4.44	4.44	4.44
Female	4.44	4.44	4.44	4.44	4.44	4.44	4.44	4.44	4.44	4.44
Male	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Self-described gender	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL CEO	21.44	21.44	21.44	21.44	21.44	21.44	21.44	21.44	21.44	21.44
CITY CENTRE										
Permanent - Full Time	25.00	25.00	25.00	25.00	25.00	25.00	25.00	25.00	25.00	25.00
Female	20.00	20.00	20.00	20.00	20.00	20.00	20.00	20.00	20.00	20.00
Male	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00
Self-described gender	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Permanent - Part Time	17.07	17.07	17.07	17.07	17.07	17.07	17.07	17.07	17.07	17.07
Female	15.91	15.91	15.91	15.91	15.91	15.91	15.91	15.91	15.91	15.91
Male	1.16	1.16	1.16	1.16	1.16	1.16	1.16	1.16	1.16	1.16
Self-described gender	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL CITY CENTRE	42.07	42.07	42.07	42.07	42.07	42.07	42.07	42.07	42.07	42.07
CITY STRATEGY AND INTEGRITY										
Permanent - Full Time	102.00	102.00	102.00	102.00	102.00	102.00	102.00	102.00	102.00	102.00
Female	48.00	48.00	48.00	48.00	48.00	48.00	48.00	48.00	48.00	48.00
Male	54.00	54.00	54.00	54.00	54.00	54.00	54.00	54.00	54.00	54.00
Self-described gender	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Permanent - Part Time	45.86	45.86	45.86	45.86	45.86	45.86	45.86	45.86	45.86	45.86
Female	33.83	33.83	33.83	33.83	33.83	33.83	33.83	33.83	33.83	33.83
Male	12.03	12.03	12.03	12.03	12.03	12.03	12.03	12.03	12.03	12.03
Self-described gender	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL CITY STRATEGY AND INTEGRITY	147.86	147.86	147.86	147.86	147.86	147.86	147.86	147.86	147.86	147.86

	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31
	FTE	FTE	FTE	FTE	FTE	FTE	FTE	FTE	FTE	FTE
CONNECTED COMMUNITIES										
Permanent - Full Time	129.00	129.00	129.00	129.00	129.00	129.00	129.00	129.00	129.00	129.00
Female	115.00	115.00	115.00	115.00	115.00	115.00	115.00	115.00	115.00	115.00
Male	14.00	14.00	14.00	14.00	14.00	14.00	14.00	14.00	14.00	14.00
Self-described gender	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Permanent - Part Time	143.00	143.00	143.00	143.00	143.00	143.00	143.00	143.00	143.00	143.00
Female	134.65	134.65	134.65	134.65	134.65	134.65	134.65	134.65	134.65	134.65
Male	8.35	8.35	8.35	8.35	8.35	8.35	8.35	8.35	8.35	8.35
Self-described gender	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL CONNECTED COMMUNITIES	272.00	272.00	272.00	272.00	272.00	272.00	272.00	272.00	272.00	272.00
INFRASTRUCTURE										
Permanent - Full Time	151.00	151.00	151.00	151.00	151.00	151.00	151.00	151.00	151.00	151.00
Female	30.00	30.00	30.00	30.00	30.00	30.00	30.00	30.00	30.00	30.00
Male	121.00	121.00	121.00	121.00	121.00	121.00	121.00	121.00	121.00	121.00
Self-described gender	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Permanent - Part Time	7.55	7.55	7.55	7.55	7.55	7.55	7.55	7.55	7.55	7.55
Female	7.55	7.55	7.55	7.55	7.55	7.55	7.55	7.55	7.55	7.55
Male	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Self-described gender	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL INFRASTRUCTURE	158.55	158.55	158.55	158.55	158.55	158.55	158.55	158.55	158.55	158.55
PEOPLE AND INNOVATION										
Permanent - Full Time	41.00	41.00	41.00	41.00	41.00	41.00	41.00	41.00	41.00	41.00
Female	24.00	24.00	24.00	24.00	24.00	24.00	24.00	24.00	24.00	24.00
Male	17.00	17.00	17.00	17.00	17.00	17.00	17.00	17.00	17.00	17.00
Self-described gender	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Permanent - Part Time	14.03	14.03	14.03	14.03	14.03	14.03	14.03	14.03	14.03	14.03
Female	14.03	14.03	14.03	14.03	14.03	14.03	14.03	14.03	14.03	14.03
Male	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Self-described gender	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL PEOPLE AND INNOVATION	55.03	55.03	55.03	55.03	55.03	55.03	55.03	55.03	55.03	55.03
Casuals, temporary and other expenditure	22.48	19.88	17.18	17.18	17.18	17.18	17.18	17.18	17.18	17.18
Capitalised labour costs	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL STAFF NUMBERS	719.43	716.83	714.13	714.13	714.13	714.13	714.13	714.13	714.13	714.13

4. Financial Performance Indicators

The following table highlights Council's projected performance across a range of key financial performance indicators. These indicators provide an analysis of Council's 10-year financial projections and should be interpreted in the context of the organisation's objectives and financial management principles.

Indicator	Measure	Notes	Actual 2020-21	Budget 2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31	Trend + / o / -
Operating Position (measures whether a council is able to generate an underlying surplus)														
Adjusted Underlying Result	<u>Adjusted Underlying Surplus (Deficit)</u> Adjusted Underlying Revenue	1	3.19%	(30.21%)	2.52%	5.29%	6.28%	9.92%	9.68%	8.16%	8.46%	10.28%	11.34%	+
Liquidity (measures whether a council is able to generate sufficient cash to pay bills on time)														
Working Capital	<u>Current Assets</u> <u>Current Liabilities</u>	2	144.58%	123.28%	119.89%	121.37%	118.89%	127.96%	144.28%	138.37%	116.99%	121.22%	117.99%	o
Unrestricted Cash	<u>Unrestricted Cash</u> <u>Current Liabilities</u>	3	60.87%	43.43%	44.52%	45.58%	51.22%	63.72%	80.93%	76.16%	57.67%	60.36%	55.65%	+
Obligations (measures whether the level of debt and other long term obligations is appropriate to the size and nature of the Council's activities)														
Loans and Borrowings	<u>Interest Bearing Loans and Borrowings</u> Rate Revenue	4	0.00%	69.00%	82.28%	74.31%	69.17%	57.64%	54.60%	58.11%	53.47%	40.97%	25.48%	+
Loans and borrowings	<u>Interest and Principal Repayments</u> Rate Revenue	4	0.00%	3.63%	7.63%	9.53%	9.50%	9.78%	9.49%	10.00%	11.24%	11.70%	14.87%	-
Indebtedness	<u>Non Current Liabilities</u> Own Source Revenue	5	3.11%	53.90%	62.56%	55.26%	50.81%	41.63%	38.68%	40.48%	36.23%	28.28%	16.02%	+
Asset Renewal	<u>Asset Renewal and Upgrade Expenditure</u> Depreciation	6	164.89%	362.66%	217.58%	206.55%	184.52%	152.14%	141.35%	149.36%	174.65%	143.64%	132.49%	-
Stability (measures whether a council is able to generate revenue from a range of sources)														
Rates Concentration	<u>Rate Revenue</u> Adjusted Underlying Revenue	7	68.43%	70.34%	71.32%	70.74%	71.00%	71.17%	71.25%	71.33%	71.36%	71.60%	71.72%	o
Rates Effort	<u>Rate Revenue</u> Property Values (CIV)	8	0.24%	0.24%	0.25%	0.26%	0.26%	0.27%	0.28%	0.28%	0.29%	0.30%	0.30%	o
Efficiency (measures whether a council is using resources efficiently)														
Expenditure Level	<u>Total Expenditure</u> No. of Assessments		\$2,548	\$3,420	\$2,588	\$2,604	\$2,648	\$2,619	\$2,682	\$2,785	\$2,837	\$2,835	\$2,860	o
Revenue Level	<u>Residential Rate Revenue</u> No. of Residential Assessments		\$1,581	\$1,609	\$1,640	\$1,674	\$1,717	\$1,753	\$1,791	\$1,830	\$1,870	\$1,912	\$1,955	o
Workforce Turnover	<u>No. of Resignations & Terminations</u> Average No. of Staff		15.00%	10.00%	10.00%	10.00%	10.00%	10.00%	10.00%	10.00%	10.00%	10.00%	10.00%	o

Key to Forecast Trend:

- + Forecasts improvement in Council's financial performance/financial position indicator
- o Forecasts that Council's financial performance/financial position indicator will be steady
- Forecasts deterioration in Council's financial performance/financial position indicator

Notes on indicators

4.1 Adjusted underlying results

Adjusted underlying result is the net surplus or deficit for the year (per Australian Accounting Standards) adjusted for non-recurrent grants used to fund capital expenditure, non-monetary asset contributions, and contributions to fund capital expenditure other than grants and non-monetary asset contributions. It is an indicator of the sustainable operating result required to enable Council to continue to provide core services and meet its objectives. Improvement in financial performance is expected over the period. The significant decrease in 2021-22 is largely driven by the net loss anticipated on the disposal of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment, in particular the transfer of the Knox Regional Sports Park assets to the State Government. This transfer has been carried forward from the 2020-21 financial year.

4.2 Working capital

Working capital (current assets / current liabilities) is the proportion of current liabilities represented by current assets. It is a general measure of the organisation's liquidity and its ability to meet its commitments as and when they fall due. The working capital ratio is anticipated to remain around 100% for the ten year period, with the decline from the current year forecast due to a reduction of cash and cash equivalents together with the utilisation of interest-bearing loans and borrowings to fund the Capital Works Program.

4.3 Unrestricted cash

Unrestricted cash means all cash and cash equivalents other than restricted cash, including cash that will be used to fund capital expenditure from the previous financial year. Restricted cash means cash and cash equivalents, within the meaning of Accounting Standard *AASB 107 Statement of Cash Flows*, that are not available for use other than for a purpose for which it is restricted. The decline from the current year forecast demonstrates a reduction of cash and cash equivalents together with the utilisation of interest-bearing loans and borrowings to fund the Capital Works Program. Statutory reserve balances will remain steady before a decrease from 2024-25.

4.4 Debt compared to rates

Loans and borrowings means interest bearing loans and borrowings compared to rates and charges revenue. The balance of interest bearing loans and borrowings is shown as a percentage of rates revenue. Loans and borrowings also refers to interest and principal repayments compared to rate revenue. The ratio describes Council's cash flow debt repayment capacity through the inclusion of interest and principal repayments on interest bearing loans and borrowings as a percentage of rate revenue. The trend indicates an increased reliance on debt against annual rate revenue over the next two years due to borrowings to fund the Capital Works Program, with this debt substantially paid down over the ten year period.

4.5 Indebtedness

Indebtedness compares non-current liabilities to own source revenue. Own source revenue is defined as adjusted underlying revenue other than revenue that is not under the control of Council (including government grants). Interest-bearing borrowings will increase in 2021-22 to fund the Capital Works Program. There will be a further increase in 2022-23 followed by decreases for the remainder of the ten year period.

4.6 Asset renewal

Asset renewal is calculated as asset renewal expenditure as a percentage of depreciation. This indicates the extent of Council's renewal of assets against its depreciation charge (an indication of the decline in value of its existing capital assets). A percentage greater than 100 indicates Council is maintaining its existing assets, while a percentage less than 100 means its assets are deteriorating faster than they are being renewed and future capital expenditure will be required to renew assets. Council's asset renewal indicator is greater than 100% through the ten year outlook.

4.7 Rates concentration

Rates concentration is measured as rate revenue compared to adjusted underlying revenue. Adjusted underlying revenue is defined as total income excluding non-recurrent grants used to fund capital expenditure, non-monetary asset contributions, and contributions to fund capital expenditure from sources other than grants and non-monetary contributions. Rates concentration reflects the extent of reliance on rate revenues to fund all of Council's on-going services. The trend is relatively steady for rates concentration.

4.8 Rates effort

Rates effort, which is intended to examine the community's capacity to pay, presents rate revenue as a percentage of the capital improved value of rateable properties in the municipality. The trend is relatively steady for rates effort.

5. Strategies and Plans

5.1 Borrowing Strategy

5.1.1 Current Debt Position

Council has no borrowings as at 30 June 2021. The forecast borrowings for the 2020-21 financial year have been carried forward to the 2021-22 financial year.

Council has forecast to access debt funding to complete a range of major infrastructure projects including the construction of Early Years Hubs and for the Knox Central project.

5.1.2 Future Borrowing Requirements

The following table highlights Council's projected loan balance, including new loans and loan repayments for the 10 years of the Financial Plan.

	Actual	Budget									
	2020-21 \$'000	2021-22 \$'000	2022-23 \$'000	2023-24 \$'000	2024-25 \$'000	2025-26 \$'000	2026-27 \$'000	2027-28 \$'000	2028-29 \$'000	2029-30 \$'000	2030-31 \$'000
OPENING BALANCE	0	0	87,116	107,376	100,485	97,324	84,361	82,402	90,424	85,778	67,770
Plus new loans	0	90,936	28,811	4,480	8,800	0	11,200	22,400	12,000	0	0
Less principal repayment	0	(3,820)	(8,551)	(11,371)	(11,961)	(12,963)	(13,159)	(14,378)	(16,646)	(18,008)	(24,301)
CLOSING BALANCE	0	87,116	107,376	100,485	97,324	84,361	82,402	90,424	85,778	67,770	43,469
Interest payment	0	758	1,408	1,514	1,407	1,354	1,158	1,175	1,385	1,350	1,056

5.1.3 Performance Indicators

The following table highlights Council's projected performance across a range of debt management performance indicators.

Performance Indicator	Target	Forecast	Budget									
		2020-21 \$'000	2021-22 \$'000	2022-23 \$'000	2023-24 \$'000	2024-25 \$'000	2025-26 \$'000	2026-27 \$'000	2027-28 \$'000	2028-29 \$'000	2029-30 \$'000	2030-31 \$'000
Total Borrowings / Rate Revenue	Below 80%	0.00%	69.00%	82.28%	74.31%	69.17%	57.64%	54.60%	58.11%	53.47%	40.97%	25.48%
Debt Servicing / Rate Revenue	Below 5%	0.00%	0.60%	1.08%	1.12%	1.00%	0.93%	0.77%	0.76%	0.86%	0.82%	0.62%
Debt Commitment / Rate Revenue	Below 10%	0.00%	3.63%	7.63%	9.53%	9.50%	9.78%	9.49%	10.00%	11.24%	11.70%	14.87%
Indebtedness / Own Source Revenue	Below 80%	3.11%	53.90%	62.56%	55.26%	50.81%	41.63%	38.68%	40.48%	36.23%	28.28%	16.02%

Council maintains its loan borrowings within prudent and management limits as demonstrated by the following performance indicators.

Total Borrowings / Rate Revenue

This indicator compares interest bearing loans and borrowings to rates and charges revenue. The balance of interest bearing loans and borrowings is shown as a percentage of rates revenue. The trend indicates an increased reliance on debt against annual rate revenue over the next two years due to borrowings to fund the Capital Works Program, with this debt substantially paid down over the ten year period. The ratio exceeds the target ratio in 2022-23, but remains within the target range for the remainder of the outlook period.

Debt Servicing / Rate Revenue

This indicator compares interest payments on interest bearing loans to rate revenue. The trend is relatively steady over the ten year period, and remains well within the target range.

Debt Commitment / Rate Revenue

This indicator describes Council's cash flow debt repayment capacity through the inclusion of interest and principal repayments on interest bearing loans and borrowings as a percentage of rate revenue. The trend indicates an increased reliance on debt against annual rate revenue over the next two years due to borrowings to fund the Capital Works Program, with the debt commitment then remaining relatively steady for the remainder of the ten year period while debt is paid down. The ratio exceeds the target ratio from 2028-29 while the interest bearing loans are reduced.

Indebtedness / Rate Revenue

Indebtedness compares non-current liabilities to own source revenue. Own source revenue is defined as adjusted underlying revenue other than revenue that is not under the control of Council (including government grants). Interest-bearing borrowings will increase in 2021-22 to fund the Capital Works Program. There will be a further increase in 2022-23 followed by decreases for the remainder of the ten year period.

5.2 Reserves Strategy

5.2.1 Current Reserves

HACC capital grant reserve

The purpose of this reserve is to refurbish, upgrade and maintain minor capital within the Home and Community Care funded programs.

Open space reserve

The Open Space Reserve is used to provide funding for future purchases and improvements of open space. Funding is provided from developer's contributions for open space which is initially recognised in the comprehensive income statement and then transferred to the reserve from accumulated surplus to facilitate separate tracking of the total funds received but not yet spent.

Aged care reserve

The purpose of this reserve is to set aside the proceeds from the divestment of the Amaroo Gardens Aged Care Facility by Council on 2 November 2011 for aged services and infrastructure within the Knox municipality.

Basketball stadium infrastructure reserve

The purpose of this reserve is to improve basketball stadium facilities within the Knox municipality.

Blue Hills reserve

The purpose of this reserve is to construct the Early Years Hubs facilities for the benefit of the Knox Community.

City futures fund

The purpose of this reserve is to construct major facilities within the Knox municipality.

Knox Regional Sports Park - Football pitch replacement fund

The purpose of this reserve is to provide for future football pitch replacement at Knox Regional Sports Park.

Mountain Gate reserve

The purpose of this reserve is to enhance community facilities within Mountain Gate.

Revegetation net gain reserve

The purpose of this reserve is to ensure any loss of vegetation through development is re-established in a sustainable location.

Revolving energy fund

The purpose of this reserve is to re-invest savings in energy costs to be invested in further works to minimise energy consumption.

Scoresby Recreation reserve

The purpose of this reserve is to invest the income derived from lease of this site into the Scoresby Recreation Reserve.

Stamford Park reserve

The purpose of this reserve is to develop the Stamford Park site for the benefit of the Knox Community.

State basketball centre asset renewal fund

The purpose of this reserve is to provide for asset renewal works at the State Basketball Centre (Knox Regional Sports Park).

Unexpended grants reserve

The purpose of this reserve is to quarantine early payment of Victoria Grants Commission General Purpose and Local Roads Federal Grant funding for use in the following year.

5.2.2 Reserve Usage Projections

The table below discloses the balance and annual movement for each reserve over the 10-year life of the Financial Plan. Total amount of reserves, for each year, is to align with the Statement of Changes in Equity.

Restricted reserves are to be included to the disclosure of restricted cash assets.

Reserves	Statutory/ Discretionary	2021-22 \$'000	2022-23 \$'000	2023-24 \$'000	2024-25 \$'000	2025-26 \$'000	2026-27 \$'000	2027-28 \$'000	2028-29 \$'000	2029-30 \$'000	2030-31 \$'000
HACC Capital Reserve	Statutory										
Opening balance		635	635	635	635	635	635	635	635	635	635
Transfer to reserve		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Transfer from reserve		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Closing balance		635	635	635	635	635	635	635	635	635	635
Open Space Reserve	Statutory										
Opening balance		15,630	13,026	13,026	13,526	10,026	8,526	9,026	9,526	8,026	6,526
Transfer to reserve		6,000	6,500	7,000	7,000	7,000	7,000	7,000	7,000	7,000	7,000
Transfer from reserve		(8,604)	(6,500)	(6,500)	(10,500)	(8,500)	(6,500)	(6,500)	(8,500)	(8,500)	(6,500)
Closing balance		13,026	13,026	13,526	10,026	8,526	9,026	9,526	8,026	6,526	7,026
Statutory Reserves Summary	Total Statutory										
Opening balance		16,265	13,661	13,661	14,161	10,661	9,161	9,661	10,161	8,661	7,161
Transfer to reserve		6,000	6,500	7,000	7,000	7,000	7,000	7,000	7,000	7,000	7,000
Transfer from reserve		(8,604)	(6,500)	(6,500)	(10,500)	(8,500)	(6,500)	(6,500)	(8,500)	(8,500)	(6,500)
Closing balance		13,661	13,661	14,161	10,661	9,161	9,661	10,161	8,661	7,161	7,661
Aged Care Reserve	Discretionary										
Opening balance		4,891	3,317	3,317	3,317	3,317	3,317	3,317	3,317	3,317	3,317
Transfer to reserve		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Transfer from reserve		(1,574)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Closing balance		3,317	3,317	3,317	3,317	3,317	3,317	3,317	3,317	3,317	3,317
Basketball Stadium Infrastructure Reserve	Discretionary										
Opening balance		100	126	152	179	207	236	266	297	329	362
Transfer to reserve		26	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34
Transfer from reserve		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Closing balance		126	152	179	207	236	266	297	329	362	396
Blue Hills Reserve	Discretionary										
Opening balance		3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Transfer to reserve		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Transfer from reserve		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Closing balance		3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
City Futures Reserve	Discretionary										
Opening balance		2,915	247	247	247	247	247	247	247	247	247
Transfer to reserve		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Transfer from reserve		(2,668)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Closing balance		247	247	247	247	247	247	247	247	247	247
Knox Regional Sports Park - Football Renewal	Discretionary										
Opening balance		727	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Transfer to reserve		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Transfer from reserve		(727)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Closing balance		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Reserves	Statutory/ Discretionary	2021-22 \$'000	2022-23 \$'000	2023-24 \$'000	2024-25 \$'000	2025-26 \$'000	2026-27 \$'000	2027-28 \$'000	2028-29 \$'000	2029-30 \$'000	2030-31 \$'000
Mountain Gate Reserve	Discretionary										
Opening balance		140	140	140	140	140	140	140	140	140	140
Transfer to reserve		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Transfer from reserve		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Closing balance		140	140	140	140	140	140	140	140	140	140
Revegetation Net Gain Reserve	Discretionary										
Opening balance		461	461	461	461	461	461	461	461	461	461
Transfer to reserve		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Transfer from reserve		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Closing balance		461	461	461	461	461	461	461	461	461	461
Revolving Energy Fund	Discretionary										
Opening balance		60	37	37	37	37	37	37	37	37	37
Transfer to reserve		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Transfer from reserve		(23)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Closing balance		37	37	37	37	37	37	37	37	37	37
Scoresby Recreational Reserve	Discretionary										
Opening balance		144	172	200	229	258	288	319	351	384	418
Transfer to reserve		28	28	29	29	30	31	32	33	34	35
Transfer from reserve		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Closing balance		172	200	229	258	288	319	351	384	418	453
Stamford Park Reserve	Discretionary										
Opening balance		8,923	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Transfer to reserve		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Transfer from reserve		(8,923)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Closing balance		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
State Basketball Centre Asset Renewal	Discretionary										
Opening balance		597	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Transfer to reserve		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Transfer from reserve		(597)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Closing balance		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Unexpended Grants Reserve	Discretionary										
Opening balance		4,038	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Transfer to reserve		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Transfer from reserve		(4,038)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Closing balance		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Discretionary Reserves Summary	Total Discretionary										
Opening balance		22,999	4,503	4,557	4,613	4,670	4,729	4,790	4,853	4,918	4,985
Transfer to reserve		54	54	56	57	59	61	63	65	67	69
Transfer from reserve		(18,550)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Closing balance		4,503	4,557	4,613	4,670	4,729	4,790	4,853	4,918	4,985	5,054

Reserves	2021-22 Statutory / Discretionary \$'000	2022-23 \$'000	2023-24 \$'000	2024-25 \$'000	2025-26 \$'000	2026-27 \$'000	2027-28 \$'000	2028-29 \$'000	2029-30 \$'000	2030-31 \$'000
Total Reserves Summary										
Opening balance	39,264	18,164	18,218	18,774	15,331	13,890	14,451	15,014	13,579	12,146
Transfer to reserve	6,054	6,554	7,056	7,057	7,059	7,061	7,063	7,065	7,067	7,069
Transfer from reserve	(27,154)	(6,500)	(6,500)	(10,500)	(8,500)	(6,500)	(6,500)	(8,500)	(8,500)	(6,500)
Closing balance	18,164	18,218	18,774	15,331	13,890	14,451	15,014	13,579	12,146	12,715

11 City Centre Reports for Consideration

11.1 State and Federal Government Advocacy Requirements

SUMMARY: Imogen Kelly, Manager Communications

All levels of government have a role to play in ensuring our community has access to education opportunities, jobs, housing, services, facilities and transport while protecting Knox for our future generations by adapting to the changing climate and reducing our emissions. Upcoming state and federal elections present a moment in time to secure commitments from governments and opposition to support initiatives which contribute to maintaining our status as one of Melbourne's most liveable regions. Items proposed to be included in requests of government leading into the next state and federal elections have been selected for their project readiness and the likelihood of achieving funding and/or policy commitments ahead of the next elections.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council endorse the issues to be included in requests of government and opposition representatives ahead of the next federal and state elections.

1. INTRODUCTION

Council plays an important role in advocating the needs of the Knox community to other levels of government who have responsibility for policy settings, services and infrastructure that contribute to liveability. Upcoming state and federal elections present a moment in time to seek commitments from governments and opposition to support initiatives which contribute to desired community outcomes. Advocacy needs to be targeted and specific, and align with shared priorities of other levels of government. This report presents recommended requests of government assessed for their likelihood of success at this point in the electoral cycle.

2. DISCUSSION

The community's recently expressed vision for Knox is, "Knox: where we connect with our people and our environment, ensuring they are safe, supported and have every opportunity to thrive." Knox City Council contributes directly to the achievement of this aspiration through the provision of services and infrastructure and indirectly, through advocacy to other levels of government who share responsibility for delivering on this vision.

Some items identified for advocacy in the draft Community Plan 2021-2031 and draft Council Plan 2021-2025 are long term and require further evidence and planning to identify solutions. Impending state and federal elections present an opportunity to gain specific commitments for some of the initiatives Council has identified which are shared responsibilities and contribute to the achievement of desired community outcomes.

Given where we are in the electoral cycle the items proposed to be included in requests of government leading into the next state and federal elections have been assessed for their project readiness and the likelihood of achieving funding and/or policy commitments ahead of the next elections. Contributing factors include:

- Clear evidence base defining the problem
- Solution defined
- Solution easily implemented
- Level of community support
- Identified Council priority
- Aligns with state government policy priorities
- Aligns with federal government policy priorities
- Project readiness

Discussions are commencing and planned with state and federal members and election candidates. While many of the priorities are positions on which Council has formed a position previously, it is important nonetheless that Council formally endorses the list of priorities being specifically targeted at this time.

Recommended priorities are summarised below. Detailed fact sheets are being prepared for each item as part of a published advocacy pack.

2.1 Kindergarten

In the biggest reform to kindergarten services yet, the Victorian Government aims to ensure access to two years of funded kindergarten for all 3 and 4-year-old children in Victoria from 2022. Two years of universal kindergarten has wide-ranging social and educational benefits for children, particularly those considered to be vulnerable or developmentally at risk.

Infrastructure requirements to deliver the reform are a significant challenge as existing facilities cannot be easily modified to meet demand. Funding available under the Building Blocks Program only covers 9% to 16% of the costs of building projects to increase the number of kindergarten places.

Ask

Target: Victorian Government

Council seeks funding for the full cost of five priority building projects that would yield a total of 163 extra kindergarten places:

- Haering Road, Boronia (\$9.5 million)
- Knoxfield (\$15.2 million)
- Taylors Lane, Rowville (\$9.3 million)
- Talaskia, Upper Ferntree Gully (\$8.9 million)
- Alice Johnson, Ferntree Gully (\$11.4 million)

2.2 Social Housing

The Victorian Government has established the \$1 billion Victorian Social Housing Growth Fund to address increasing levels of homelessness by partnering with councils (and other sectors) to deliver additional supply of social and affordable housing.

There is a significant shortfall of housing for Knox's most vulnerable people with over 365 residents sleeping rough or deemed to be homeless as of 2016. This figure is likely to be significantly higher due to under-reporting and increased pressure since COVID. Two cohorts are most at risk, single women and children and single women over the age of 55 years, both of which are often impacted by family violence and relationship breakdown.

Knox was not considered a priority in the last round of funding. Knox City Council is willing to contribute \$4.5 million or land to partner in the Government's social housing agenda.

Ask

Target: Victorian Government

Council seeks \$9 million for a total of \$13.5 million (or equivalent land contribution from Council) to put towards two projects in partnership with housing providers.

Council also seeks legislative reform to enable mandatory developer contributions and mandatory inclusionary zoning.

2.3 Mental health

The Australian Government has invested \$114.5 million to establish an adult mental health centre in each state and territory. Knox City Council understands planning is underway for further permanent centres in Victoria and wants a permanent adult mental health centre built in Wantirna.

Adult mental health centres offer on-the-spot treatment for short and medium term episodes of care and connect people to ongoing support by integrating with other local community services including GPs, local primary health network services and state operated services. They reduce the number of emergency department presentations by providing a more accessible entry point to the mental health system.

Wantirna Health Precinct offers an ideal location for an adult mental health centre to service the needs of vulnerable and disadvantaged adults in Melbourne's east. Knox City Council has worked in partnership with state government agencies, including the Victorian Planning Authority, Department of Health and Human Services, Department of Transport and Eastern Health to prepare a visionary masterplan for an integrated, connected and comprehensive centre that promotes, patient, carer and staff wellbeing and is expected to become a nationally recognised health centre in Melbourne's eastern region.

Ask

Target: Australian Government. The Victorian Government will be requested to support advocacy to the Australian Government given its investment in this site.

Council seeks that an adult mental health service be established in the Wantirna Health Precinct.

2.4 Sporting infrastructure

Sport is an effective means of helping to reduce rising rates of obesity and chronic illness and can help achieve mental and physical health and social development. Not having access to appropriate facilities is a known barrier to participation.

2.4.1 Hockey

Knox Hockey Club has been based at the Knox School for 23 years and needs to relocate as the school is expanding. Council is exploring several locations to provide a new facility, comprising a synthetic hockey field, energy efficient sports lighting and associated infrastructure, including parking.

Ask

Target: Victorian Government

We seek a 50% contribution towards a new facility in the order of \$1.9 million.

2.4.2 Sports club facilities

Many sports facilities within Knox now fall short of contemporary facility standards and guidelines and lack the fundamental requirements to enable sporting activities to occur.

Ask

Target: Victorian and Australian governments

Council seeks \$2.4 million (based on 50% contribution towards \$1.6 million per site) for change rooms and \$1.1 million (based on 50% contribution towards \$300K per site) to upgrade sports lighting.

Change rooms:

- Park Ridge Reserve, Rowville (Lysterfield CC and Rowville Eagles Football Club and Knox United Soccer Club) 2022/23
- Milpera Reserve, Wantirna (Waverley City Soccer Club, Templeton Cricket Club) 2022/23
- Carrington Park, Knoxfield (Knoxfield Knights Cricket Club, Rowville Knights Football Club) 2023/24

Lighting:

- Kings Park Baseball, Upper Ferntree Gully (Upper Ferntree Gully Baseball Club) 2022/23.
- Guy Turner Reserve, Bayswater (Bayswater Strikers Soccer Club, Bayswater Park Cricket Club) 2022/23 – Application pending with Sport and Recreation Victoria.
- Windermere Reserve, Ferntree Gully (Lysterfield Junior Football Club, Mountain Gate Cricket Club) 2022/23.
- Wantirna Reserve, Wantirna (Wantirna South Junior Football Club, Wantirna Cricket Club) 2023/24.
- Stud Park Reserve (overflow venue cricket, football) 2023/24.
- Chandler Park (Boronia Cricket Club and Wantirna South Cricket Club) 2023/24.
- Kings Park No 3 (Ferntree Gully Cricket Club, Upper Ferntree Gully Football Club) 2023/24.

2.5 Place

2.5.1 Lewis Park

Lewis Park is a critical asset that will provide significant generational benefits for the community for years to come. The masterplan for the 40 hectare site aims to enhance the lives of future residents by providing safe, inclusive, and accessible green open space.

With a surrounding population expected to grow to 61,284 by 2041 and 14 million visitors annually to the adjacent Westfield Shopping Centre, this project is expected to deliver significant environmental and health benefits.

Ask

Target: Victorian and Australian governments

\$9 million (or 50%) contribution towards implementation of Stages 2, 3 and 4 of the masterplan.

- Stage 2 (2023/24): Sports and Play Hub. Cost \$10 million.
- Stage 3 (2023/24): Biodiversity Zone, dog park, native grasslands, and discovery trail. Cost \$1 million.

- Stage 4 (2024/25): Civic Precinct and Art, including art/cultural trail, upgraded path network and integration with future Knox Central Civic Space with terraced landscapes, shelters, picnic and barbecue facilities. Cost \$7 million.

2.5.2 Boronia Train Station

Council has a strategy to renew Boronia activity centre. The Victorian Government's Suburban Revitalisation Fund has allocated approximately \$2.5 million to improve the centre of Boronia but this funding will not be sufficient to renew the railway station at the heart of the precinct. When redeveloped, the precinct is envisaged to include better pedestrian and cycling connections, a new civic space forecourt, community facility, parkland, as well as more restaurants and street activation, and an improved intermodal public transport interchange. The Australian Government has committed to constructing additional commuter car parking. The investment from all levels of government will reactivate local businesses and accelerate recovery from the impacts of the pandemic by attracting new investment and creating new jobs alongside a new and improved heart of Boronia.

Ask

Target: Victorian and Australian governments

Rebuild Boronia Railway Station incorporating a new multideck commuter car park for up to 500 cars.

2.6 Transport

Commuters in Melbourne's east are overly reliant on cars due to limited public transport options. We have an opportunity to support economic growth by delivering a transport system that connects more people with jobs, education, health, business, retail, and entertainment precincts and help the Victorian Government achieve its aim of establishing 20-minute neighbourhoods. This includes encouraging people to consider travel modes other than the private vehicle such as walking, cycling and public transport use.

Ask

- 2.6.1 Reallocation of the committed \$475 million Monash Rail federal funding towards the development of a feasibility study, business case, and the delivery of the trackless tram. Council still supports the delivery of the Rowville Rail as a long term solution to improve public transport in Melbourne's outer east. In addition, the Suburban Rail Loop's Monash University Station should be future proofed to cater for seamless connectivity between the Rowville Rail and the Suburban Rail Loop. (Target: Victorian and Australian governments).
- 2.6.2 A feasibility and economic study to extend the Route 75 Tram from Vermont South to Upper Ferntree Gully Train Station via Burwood Highway and Bayswater Business Precinct via Mountain Highway (Target: Victorian and Australian governments).
- 2.6.3 Feasibility study and business case to extend Police Road from Churchill Park Drive to Stud Road (Target: Victorian and Australian governments).
- 2.6.4 Improve bus services by (Target: Victorian Government):
 - Modernising the frequency and services times on existing bus routes in Knox to, in the least, meet minimum service levels.

- Improving the Smart Bus 900 travel times by completing missing sections of the dedicated bus lane and median crossings at particular locations between Avalon Road, Rowville and The Close, Scoresby.
 - Upgrading the Burwood Hwy and Cathies Lane intersection with traffic lights and bus priority queue jump lanes.
 - Trialing an on-demand/flexiride bus service to better service the Bayswater Business Precinct and improve public transport connection to the Bayswater Train Station.
 - Establishing a new bus route between Bayswater Train Station and Stud Park Shopping Centre via Henderson Road.
- 2.6.5 Expand the bike path network by (Target: Australian and Victorian governments):
- Completing the northern bike path network along Mountain Highway between Wantirna Health Precinct to The Basin Triangle.
 - Extending the regionally significant Ferny Creek Trail from Acacia Road to Glenfern Valley Bushland Reserve to better support Kings Park and Gilmour Park.
 - Upgrading the Railway Trail shared path connection at the Ferntree Gully Station to provide a safer cycling connection.
 - Burwood Hwy between Scoresby Road to Ferntree Gully Road.
 - Liverpool Road between Mountain Hwy to Chandler Lane to improve the connection between Dandenong Creek Trail and The Basin's 1 in 20 ride.
- 2.6.6 Reduce congestion and improve freight access through provision of traffic signals (Target: Australian and Victorian governments):
- Ferntree Gully Road and Rushdale intersection, Knoxfield.
 - Burwood Hwy, McMahons Road and Clyde Street intersection, Ferntree Gully.
 - High Street Road and Mowbray Drive, Wantirna South.
- 2.6.7 Improve pedestrian safety by installing pedestrian operated signals (Target: Australian and Victorian governments):
- Scoresby Road near Kent Street, Knoxfield.
 - Stud Road near Rosa Street, Scoresby.

2.7 Climate Change

Councils are required to manage climate change risks by adapting to the changing climate and putting in place actions to reduce emissions. The Climate Response Plan 2021-2031 sets a goal to reduce Knox City Council's own greenhouse emissions to zero by 2030 and the Knox community's greenhouse emissions to zero by 2040. Fifty-six (56) key actions totaling \$33 million have been identified to enable Knox to meet the proposed targets and support a resilient and health community.

Two immediate term actions are upgrading 3,300 streetlights on major VicRoads roads to energy efficient LED lights and doubling our tree planting program to improve tree canopy coverage. Replacing the streetlights will slash greenhouse emissions by 20,000 tonnes over the 20-year life of the lights and result in better lighting of the roadway and footpath, improving visibility for drivers, pedestrians, and cyclists. Doubling our tree planting program on public land will stem the decline in tree canopy coverage and contribute to cooling the suburban landscape, mitigating carbon dioxide increases, improving air quality, reducing pollution, and providing enhanced biodiversity and habitat for local flora and fauna.

Ask

Target: Victorian Government

- 50% contribution towards the \$1.7 million cost of upgrading streetlights
- \$1 million per annum over three years to double our tree planting program

3. CONSULTATION

These priorities have been identified by departments across Council and informed by strategic planning and various stakeholder and community consultation programs. This includes consultation processes for the development of the Community Plan 2021-2031 and Council Plan 2021-2025, Climate Change Response Plan, COVID-19 Household Survey, and stakeholder engagement to develop COVID-19 response packages, Lewis Park Masterplan, Wantirna Health Precinct Masterplan and proposed new hockey facility.

4. ENVIRONMENTAL / AMENITY ISSUES

This work will contribute positively to the achievement of desired environmental outcomes, including reducing carbon emissions, mitigating carbon dioxide increases, improving air quality, reducing pollution, enhancing biodiversity, flood mitigation, adoption of sustainable transport choices and creating green open spaces.

5. FINANCIAL & ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS

A core challenge for Council is maintaining and upgrading its ageing infrastructure to respond to changing community needs in a financially responsible way. Local government collects only 3-6 cents of every \$1 raised in Australian taxes. The Victorian Government's rate capping legislation severely limits what funds Council can raise of its own accord and reforms imposed by other levels of government such as introducing another year of kindergarten often come unfunded or under-funded, resulting in direct cost shifting onto local government. Council does not collect enough revenue through rates, fees, fines, and charges to fund all its responsibilities and must rely on contributions from the Australian and Victorian governments.

6. SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Many of the issues canvassed here for inclusion in Council's federal and state election platform address social issues of shared importance and responsibility. As a region, we are grappling with the magnitude of social issues such as homelessness and housing stress, financial vulnerability, family violence, social isolation, gambling, and substance use. Poor mental health is both an underlying cause and effect of these social issues.

Safe, secure, and appropriate housing is essential to good health outcomes, intersecting and influencing other social challenges such as mental health and wellbeing, family violence, alcohol and drug use and financial disadvantage. Access to high quality kindergarten programs is one of the few strategies that improve outcomes for all children. This reform will have wide-ranging social and educational benefits for children, particularly those considered to be vulnerable or developmentally at risk. These advocacy items will ensure access for the Knox community to the intended benefits of statewide initiatives to improve the supply of social and affordable housing and boost educational outcomes.

Expenditure on healthcare as a proportion of total expenditure has been and is forecast to continue rising. Sport for children and adults is an effective means of helping to reduce the rising rates of obesity and chronic illness. There is an increased focus on the broader benefits derived from participation in sport, including physical and mental benefits, crime prevention and social inclusion. The broader benefits of sport are being increasingly recognised by governments. Sport can help achieve mental and physical health and social development. If managed appropriately, it can be an effective mechanism to help achieve social inclusion for marginalised groups and reduce crime rates.

While climate actions are primarily designed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and climate risks, research and evidence have shown that climate change will exacerbate existing socio-economic issues, disproportionately impacting those most vulnerable in the community, widening the social inequality gap and disrupting jobs and employment patterns.

7. RELEVANCE TO KNOX COMMUNITY AND COUNCIL PLAN 2017-2021

Goal 1 - We value our natural and built environment

Strategy 1.1 - Protect and enhance our natural environment

Strategy 1.2 - Create a greener city with more large trees, indigenous flora and fauna

Goal 2 - We have housing to meet our changing needs

Strategy 2.3 - Support the delivery of a range of housing that addresses housing and living affordability needs

Goal 3 - We can move around easily

Strategy 3.1 - Enable improved transport choices supported by integrated and sustainable transport systems and infrastructure

Strategy 3.2 - Improve bike and footpath connectivity, including identifying gaps between existing bike routes, footpaths and key places

Goal 4 - We are safe and secure

Strategy 4.3 - Maintain and manage the safety of the natural and built environment

Strategy 4.4 - Protect and promote public health, safety and amenity

Strategy 4.5 - Support the provision of emergency services

Goal 6 - We are healthy, happy and well

Strategy 6.1 - Mitigate lifestyle risks such as smoking, risky alcohol consumption and drug use, obesity, lack of physical activity and poor nutrition

Strategy 6.2 - Support the community to enable positive physical and mental health

Goal 7 - We are inclusive, feel a sense of belonging and value our identity

Strategy 7.3 - Strengthen community connections

8. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The officers contributing to and responsible for this report have no conflicts of interest requiring disclosure under Chapter 5 of the Governance Rules of Knox City Council.

9. CONCLUSION

Continued hard work and collaboration between Council and the Victorian and Australian governments is needed to maintain our status as one of Melbourne's most liveable regions. Knox offers a unique balance between urban living with access to employment, transport and services. Council has worked with the community to maintain this balance, but we can't do it alone. The Victorian and Australian governments both have a crucial role to play in ensuring the Knox community has access to education opportunities, jobs, housing, services, facilities and transport while protecting Knox for our future generations by adapting to the changing climate and reducing our emissions.

10. CONFIDENTIALITY

There is no content in this report that meets the definition of confidential information from the Local Government Act 2020.

Report Prepared By: Communications Manager, Imogen Kelly

Report Authorised By: Chief Executive Officer, Bruce Dobson

Attachments

Nil

12 Items for Information

12.1 Capital Works Program Report

SUMMARY: Coordinator, Capital Works, Gene Chiron

The Capital Works Program Report shows projects on Council's Capital Works Program and indicates the status of each project as of 6 October 2021.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council receive and note the Capital Works Program Report, as of 6 October 2021.

1. INTRODUCTION

This report summarises Council's Capital Works Program for the 2021/22 financial year.

The aim of this report is to provide a regular and succinct status summary of each project over the last month. The Capital Works Report, as of 6 October 2021, is attached as Attachment A.

Highlights of the Works Report as of 6 October 2021 include:

- Berrabri Kindergarten, Scoresby - Verandah Space Upgrade - Complete.
- Carrington Park Reserve, Knoxfield - Cricket Net Renewal - Complete.
- Eildon Park Reserve, Rowville - Tennis Courts 4-6 Renewal - Complete.
- Bayswater Bowls Club - Car Park Upgrade - Complete.
- Rowville Children and Family Centre (Childcare) Refurbishment - Contract Awarded.
- Alma Avenue, Ferntree Gully - New School Crossing - Complete.

The recent COVID restrictions have had an impact on delivery of projects across the past month, however there is a strong expectation that construction activity will rebound in the leadup to Christmas.

2. CONFIDENTIALITY

There are no items of a confidential nature in this report.

Report Prepared by: Coordinator – Capital Works, Gene Chiron

Report Authorised by: Director Infrastructure, Grant Thorne

Attachments

1. Works Report as at 6 October 2021 [KFK8] [12.1.1 - 22 pages]

Knox City Council Project Status Report

06-Oct-2021

Project Number	Project Name	Total Adjusted Budget
1	Bridges Renewal Program	\$714,225
All Wards	Contracts awarded for renewal works at Ferntree Gully Community Centre shared path bridge and Koolamura Waters pedestrian bridge. Works expected to commence after construction industry shutdown.	
4	High Risk Road Failures	\$500,000
All Wards	Works being scoped for various locations across Knox.	
7	Road Surface Renewal Program	\$5,193,000
All Wards	Road resurfacing works are programmed for various locations. Completed streets include Bridgewater Way Rowville, Rose Street Upper Ferntree Gully, Ashby Court, Ernest Street and Larne Avenue Bayswater.	
8	Drainage Pit and Pipe Renewal Program	\$3,410,000
All Wards	Drainage projects in progress at various locations including the Local Roads and Community Infrastructure Grant funded projects, including Wilhelma Ave, Bayswater, Valerie St, Boronia and Lloyd St, Knoxfield and David St Knoxfield.	
9	Footpath Renewal Program	\$2,785,943
All Wards	Footpath rehabilitation works are in progress at various locations across the municipality.	
10	Bicycle / Shared Path Renewal Program	\$516,794
All Wards	Some works have finalised and the remainder of the program will commence once the latest condition audit data has been evaluated.	
16	Building Renewal Program	\$6,532,000
All Wards	Program is approximately 10% committed/expended. Works commencing or nearing completion over October include: 100 Station Street rental - roof replacement works, Park Crescent Children's office/kitchen refits, KLW - lifeguard station refit, waterslide rectifications, pool plant replacements, Billoo Park Preschool - light fittings and ceiling fans, Billoo Park MCHC - light fittings, Alchester Village Preschool- fencing/gates, light fittings, Alchester Village Playgroup - Fencing/gates, light fittings, Bayswater Senior Citizens - light fittings and fencing/gates, Carrington Park Activities Centre - roof restoration works, Goodwin Estate Preschool - switchboard, light fittings, ceiling fans, Taylors Lane Preschool - plumbing fixtures, Kinderlea Preschool - light fittings, ceiling fans, Orana Centre - roof restoration, downpipes, Basin Preschool - light fittings, ceiling fans, Coinda Preschool - light fittings, The Basin Playgroup - light fittings.	Centre -
17	Playground Renewal Program	\$2,015,968
All Wards	Contract awarded for 2020/21 playgrounds. Construction was to commence late September but delayed to Construction shut down. Consultation for Stud Park Concept Design has commenced. Will be seeking comments on Tim Neville play space in October.	
22	Fire Hydrant Replacement Program	\$142,000
All Wards	Expenditure is not likely to be required until June 2022.	

Knox City Council Project Status Report

06-Oct-2021

Project Number	Project Name	Total Adjusted Budget
24	Carpark Renewal	\$700,000
All Wards	Carpark rehabilitation projects currently being scoped and include Wally Tew carpark, Liberty Reserve carpark and Knox Athletics Track-northern carpark.	
25	Plant & Machinery Renewal Program	\$2,885,000
All Wards	Fleet renewal program experiencing some delays due to international shipping - 20% funds committed, 10% funds expended but delays in deliveries for larger plant are expected later in the year.	
26	Street Tree Replacement Program	\$525,471
All Wards	Currently delivering infill street tree planting program.	
31	Stamford Park Redevelopment	\$10,298,748
Tirhatuan	The Lake/Ephemeral precincts are subject to final Melbourne Water approval. Final drawing amendments being completed ready for submission.	
104	Roadside Furniture Renewal Program	\$100,000
All Wards	Works yet to commence.	
147	Energy Retrofits for Community Buildings	\$164,671
All Wards	Scoping and quotes underway including lighting replacement at Dorset Square car park.	
229	Building Code Australia Compliance	\$50,000
All Wards	Program of works for 2021/22 being finalised with rollout scheduled from December.	
345	Asbestos Removal	\$100,000
All Wards	Asbestos audit scope review nearing completion with expectation that quotations will be received by end of October. Asbestos removal program will follow from the audits with rollout scheduled from January 2022.	
347	Miscellaneous Industrial Roads - Pavement Rehabilitation	\$250,000
All Wards	Program scoping in progress.	
409	Parks Furniture Renewal	\$75,000
All Wards	Installation of park benches completed at Greenbank and Juniper Reserves. Scoping of renewals continuing.	
410	Parks Signage Renewal	\$20,000
All Wards	Replacement of damaged acrylic signage at Ferntree Gully completed. Scoping of further works continuing.	

Knox City Council Project Status Report

06-Oct-2021

Project Number	Project Name	Total Adjusted Budget
412	Water Sensitive Urban Design Renewal	\$460,000
All Wards	Upgrade works at Tim Neville Arboretum completed, further works needed for optimum output.	
441	Significant Municipal Site Renewal	\$322,575
Dobson	Scoping of works being finalised.	
443	Reserves Paths Renewal	\$75,000
All Wards	Scoping of works being finalised.	
492	Food Act Compliance - Kitchen Retrofitting	\$25,000
All Wards	Program of works being finalised with quotations being sought in November for December/January installation.	
536	Parkland Asset Renewal	\$75,000
All Wards	Scoping of works being finalised.	
537	Roadside Plantings Renewal	\$120,000
All Wards	Roadside garden bed renewals underway.	
566	Artwork Renewal	\$107,169
All Wards	Contractor (Meridian) due to commence sculpture restoration project October. Continued maintenance and cleaning of Public Art collection as required. Some delay due to COVID-19 and current health restrictions.	
576	Emergency Warning Systems in Early Years Facilities	\$100,000
All Wards	Program of works finalised. Cooinda, Berrabri and Kinderlea scheduled for installations in January 2022, Scoresby West and Eildon as part of refurbishment projects in June 2022 and April 2022 respectively and Alchester Village Playgroup in April 2022.	
587	Upper Ferntree Gully Neighbourhood Activity Centre Design	\$9,343
Dobson	Consultation on new lighting closed in September. Seeking quotations in October/November.	
593	Marie Wallace Reserve, Bayswater Masterplan Implementation Stage 4	\$60,070
Dinsdale	Awaiting final approval of signage scheme.	
649	Scoresby (Exner) Reserve - Masterplan Implementation Stage 4	\$201,776
Tirhatuan	Quotations received for the supply and install of solar path lighting. Design of path links currently under review.	

Knox City Council Project Status Report

06-Oct-2021

Project Number	Project Name	Total Adjusted Budget
675	Public Art Project	\$201,655
All Wards	Public art projects are in progress and planned for delivery in 2021-22 including Lupton Way, Fairpark Reserve, Laneway Lightboxes, McCauley Place, Knox Regional Netball Centre and Beautify Boronia, plus project management contracting for major projects. Minor delays in project planning and delivery due to COVID-19 and health restrictions.	
708	Cricket Run Up and Goal Square Renewal Works	\$82,212
All Wards	Works due to commence at various locations in October.	
717	Knox Central Package	\$18,235,000
Dinsdale	Negotiations to acquire parcels for future road corridor and delivery of Knox Central Masterplan continue. Residual funding from the Operations Centre land acquisition to remain allocated to the project should additional land be required.	
724	Knox (Interim) Library	\$664,205
Dinsdale	Interim library is proceeding for delivery by mid - January 2022.	
746	Revegetation Plan	\$100,000
All Wards	Priority sites are being scoped and designed for site preparation in February 2022.	
755	Talaskia Reserve, Upper Ferntree Gully - Masterplan Implementation Stage 3	\$60,000
Dobson	Stage 2 of Masterplan implementation works are now complete. Maintenance period has come to an end.	
834	Oversowing of Sports Fields	\$60,000
All Wards	Fertilising schedule ongoing.	
837	Westfield Library (Permanent) - Design and Fitout	\$3,200,000
Dinsdale	A Request for Quotation for high level schematic design services for a Permanent Library is underway. Schematic designs produced will allow for liaison with Westfield regarding new base build design. The interim library is proceeding for delivery by mid - January 2022.	
838	Bayswater Community Hub - Scoping	\$70,000
Dinsdale	Tenders have been received and awarded.	
849	Installation of Change Tables into Kindergartens	\$48,065
All Wards	Change tables have been delivered and installed into 17 kindergartens in preparedness for the introduction of 3 year old Kindergarten in 2022.	

Knox City Council Project Status Report

06-Oct-2021

Project Number	Project Name	Total Adjusted Budget
867	Knox Regional Netball Centre Extension	\$12,531,053
Dobson	Construction progressing well. Due to construction industry lockdown, the concrete slab now due for completion mid October.	
868	H V Jones, Ferntree Gully - Masterplan Implementation Stage 3	\$873,211
Friberg	Currently seeking comments from community on netball court upgrades and additional carparking.	
869	Gilbert Park, Knoxfield - Masterplan Implementation Stage 3	\$333,529
Friberg	Stage 2 of Masterplan completed. Tender documents for stage 3 underway.	
871	Energy Performance Contract Implementation	\$553,437
All Wards	Building Management System installation at Knox Community Arts Centre and Ferntree Gully Library and Community Arts Centre have been completed. LED lighting works have also been completed at a number of sites. Construction shut down has delayed a number of projects underway at the time including solar installations at two sites - both recommenced early October.	
935	Scoresby (Exner) Reserve - Tennis Court Renewals	\$57,815
Tirhatuan	Surface Defects - negotiations underway with contractor on remedial works solution. Courts 4 & 5 - initial survey completed. Geotechnical investigation and consultation with arborists underway.	
941	Knox Regional Netball Centre - Court Renewals	\$123,594
Dobson	Scope of works has been finalised and contractor engagement to start in October.	
942	Tree Management	\$63,321
All Wards	Works undertaken as required in conjunction with Council initiatives.	
944	Knox Central (Former Operations Centre Remediation)	\$3,514,194
Dinsdale	Remediation works ongoing with soil vapour testing being undertaken. Contract for demolition and asbestos removal of additional buildings (old SES and rental property) has been awarded and works to be completed prior to Christmas.	
946	Boronia Precinct Planning	\$360,500
Baird	The revised Boronia Renewal Strategy has been adopted by Council on 23 August. Further community consultation will be undertaken in early 2022 subject to Ministerial authorisation of Amendment C192 to the Knox Planning Scheme. In the meantime, the internal Project Control Group provides directions on the implementation of a number of priority projects.	

Knox City Council Project Status Report

06-Oct-2021

Project Number	Project Name	Total Adjusted Budget
948	Modular Building Program	\$3,822,522
All Wards	Lakesfield Reserve Modular Building is nearing completion with onsite works commenced in late August. There is a delay to delivery program with site restrictions and construction industry shutdown with completion of modular component of the program scheduled for late November. Demolition of existing building and carpark works will follow to complete the project in early 2022. Marie Wallace Modular and existing pavilion refurbishment is progressing through finalisation of detailed design with expectation that tenders for will be let for November with aim to appoint Contracts by December. Gilbert Park Modular Construction Contract was awarded by Council 11 October.	
950	Family & Childrens Services Buildings & Facilities	\$278,100
All Wards	Appointment of consultants delayed due to the current COVID 19 restrictions. Scoping and detail designs expected completion by January 2022. Tender and Award by March 2022 and Construction in Term 2 (April - June 2022).	
951	Community Toilet Replacement Program	\$674,286
All Wards	Delayed due to current COVID-19 and Construction industry restrictions.	
961	Knox Regional Netball Centre Floodlight Outdoor Courts 5 to 8	\$198,130
Dobson	Works to be undertaken after completion of redevelopment project at the centre.	
995	Peregrine Reserve, Rowville - Masterplan Implementation Stage 2	\$464,905
Taylor	Design and Construct Tender currently open.	
997	Llewellyn Reserve, Wantirna South - Masterplan Implementation	\$469,595
Scott	Project has commenced and is currently in the design phase.	
999	Lewis Park, Wantirna South - Masterplan Implementation	\$1,112,743
Dinsdale	Waterways - 60% Detailed design package complete. Sport & Play - Concept design 50% complete. Community Gardens - carpark complete. Fencing the only item still to occur.	
1002	Egan Lee Reserve, Knoxfield Masterplan Implementation - Stage 2	\$365,543
Scott	Stage 2 works have commenced. Drainage phase has been completed.	
1003	Wantirna Reserve, Wantirna - Masterplan	\$30,000
Collier	Works on hold pending soil report outcome.	

Knox City Council Project Status Report

06-Oct-2021

Project Number	Project Name	Total Adjusted Budget
1054	Knox Regional Sports Park - Stages 2 and 3	\$27,045,920
Scott	The expansion of the State Basketball Centre is being managed by the State Government through Sport and Recreation Victoria (SRV) and Development Victoria (DV) on behalf of stakeholders including Council as project partner. Site establishment phase is currently progressing with contractor appointed by the State. The detailed design of the Victorian Association of Radio Model Soaring (VARMS) to establish a new clubhouse at the Rowville Recreation Reserve is being project managed by Council as a part of the overall expansion project and is progressing.	
1119	Wantirna Reserve, Wantirna - Tennis Court Renewals	\$494,086
Collier	Courts 1-5: design underway including consideration of concrete slab design in conjunction with lighting design to work around existing site limitations as well as consultation with AusNet to meet electrical safety regulatory requirements. Footprint siting dependent on interpretation of recent HV electrical survey results. Courts 6-10: Temporary remedial works for Court 9 underway. Geotechnical investigation coordinated by Waste for Wantirna Reserve overall site underway. Awaiting outcome of investigation findings to progress with appropriate design methodology.	
1121	Eildon Park, Rowville - Cricket Net Renewal	\$58,100
Taylor	A concrete platform will be laid in front of net, with linking path. Work for completion was interrupted by the recent State Government Construction lockdown. Scheduled to be completed late October.	
1123	Public Tennis / Netball / Basketball Court Renewals	\$95,000
All Wards	Priority sites currently being selected from audits.	
1124	Sportsfield Fencing Renewals	\$133,888
All Wards	Gilbert Park Fence Renewal has been awarded to TFR Construction. Lakesfield Reserve Boundary Fence Upgrade has been awarded to TFR Construction.	
1125	Stormwater Harvesting Infrastructure Renewal	\$60,000
All Wards	Carrington Park works to commence in October.	
1128	Gilbert Park Reserve, Knoxfield - New Drainage	\$36,500
Friberg	Works have been awarded to Aquatek.	
1134	Ferntree Gully Community Arts Centre Office Upgrades	\$50,000
Dobson	Scoping being undertaken with design being undertaken by end of October. Expectation that quotes/tenders will be sought in November and Contractor appointed in December.	
1136	Arts Facility Upgrades	\$134,000
All Wards	Works Program being finalised with view to tender in November and appoint Contractor in January.	

Knox City Council Project Status Report

06-Oct-2021

Project Number	Project Name	Total Adjusted Budget
1137	Knox Leisureworks - Major Redevelopment	\$154,500
Baird	List of works being collated from pool structural audit, pool plant audit and HVAC plant audit with view to progress to quotation/tender from November for individual works packages depending on prioritisation/estimated and installation over January-April.	
1145	Glenfern Road, Ferntree Gully - Footpath Construction	\$191,810
Dobson	Contract has been awarded. Contractor due to commence by mid - October.	
1148	Montana Avenue, Boronia - Footpath Construction	\$66,529
Chandler	Further consultation required with residents and school.	
1155	Kelletts Road, Rowville (973 Stud Road to Taylors Lane) - Shared Path	\$18,456
Taylor	Path construction completed. Quotations sought for line marking.	
1162	Templeton Street, Wantirna - Linemarking and Intersection Treatments	\$65,000
Collier	Line marking treatment currently being installed.	
1163	Renou Road, Wantirna South - Intersection Treatments	\$106,577
Collier	Reviewing shared path layout at intersection with Burwood Hwy.	
1165	Mowbray Drive & Argyle Way, Wantirna South - On Road Bicycle Link	\$120,000
Scott	Line marking treatment currently being installed.	
1166	Timothy Drive, Wantirna South - Intersection Treatments	\$35,000
Scott	Line marking treatment currently being installed.	
1170	Mountain Highway, Boronia (near Scoresby Rd) - Footpath Connection 4	\$80,000
Baird	In principle support from land owners. Drafting up licence agreement.	
1173	Quarry Reserve, Ferntree Gully - Masterplan Implementation Stage 3	\$689,554
Dobson	Contractor has been engaged to construct new public toilet. Delays to construction start with current Melbourne restrictions. Tender open for Design & Construct of Quarry Lookout.	
1174	Principal Avenue - Dorset Road Streetscape Upgrade	\$100,000
Chandler	Planning for future planting works.	
1176	Solar in Community Facilities	\$112,639
All Wards	Solar install at Mariemont Preschool affected by the construction shut down. Works will recommence by mid - October. Scoping for other sites underway.	

Knox City Council Project Status Report

06-Oct-2021

Project Number	Project Name	Total Adjusted Budget
1180	Forest Rd to Koolunga Reserve, FTG - Wetland Construction	\$386,056
Chandler	Community engagement, Bushland Management Plan review and Master Planning in progress while project is on hold.	
1182	Norvel Quarry Reserve Water Quality System - Design & Construction	\$40,000
Baird	Project alternatives still being investigated.	
1183	Peregrine Reserve - Wetland Construction	\$60,000
Taylor	Awaiting detailed site survey.	
1184	Egan Lee Reserve - Wetland Construction	\$550,000
Scott	Analysis for retarding basin and upstream/downstream catchment are underway. Amendment of concept design pending survey.	
1216	Carrington Park Reserve, Knoxfield - Cricket Net Renewal	\$30,669
Friberg	Nets and path completed, soil around nets to be topped up for completion.	
1225	Commercial Road, Ferntree Gully (Burwood Hwy to Wilson St) - Reconstruction	\$150,000
Baird	Project achieved Practical Completion in August and is now in a Defects Liability period.	
1226	Lewis Road, Wantirna South (Tilba PI to Kanooka Rd) - Reconstruction	\$100,000
Dinsdale	Construction works completed. Practical Completion inspection imminent.	
1227	Albert Street, UFTG (Talaskia Rd to Townley Place) - Reconstruction	\$300,000
Dobson	Construction works completed. Practical Completion inspection imminent.	
1228	Malvern Street, Bayswater (Edelmaier St to Scoresby Rd) - Reconstruction	\$460,000
Baird	Construction works, including new footpath, anticipated to commence in early October.	
1229	Sullivan Court, Wantirna (Rachelle Drive to End)- Reconstruction	\$160,000
Collier	Works anticipated to commence in April 2022.	
1230	Wanaka Close, Rowville (Erie Avenue to End) - Reconstruction	\$90,000
Tirhatuan	Works anticipated to commence in April 2022.	
1231	Winnifred Crescent, Knoxfield (Allister Close to Christie Close) - Reconstruction	\$135,000
Friberg	Construction works well underway with 30% completed.	

Knox City Council Project Status Report

06-Oct-2021

Project Number	Project Name	Total Adjusted Budget
1232	Chandler Road, Boronia (Floriston Rd to Albert Ave) - Design	\$23,936
Chandler	Design deferred until further notice - awaiting direction from Boronia Renewal Strategy Working Group.	
1237	Carrington Park - Multi Purpose Facility - Construction	\$2,381,577
Friberg	Construction works stopped due to Covid industry shutdown. Site affected by Covid restrictions (25% maximum capacity) prior to shutdown.	
1238	BAMP Facility Upgrades	\$1,320,274
All Wards	Program development progression expected to be finalised by end of November with nominated projects finalised by early December. Design/scoping are to be undertaken from January 2022, with view to have tender packages out by March 2022.	
1261	Wantirna Reserve - Car Park Upgrade (Design)	\$40,000
Collier	Consultation with Leisure & Waste underway in relation to potential hockey ground location. Design deferred until Master Plan work is completed and advice is received on project status and scope.	
1262	Cultural Facilities - Knox Pop Up Events Trailer & Kit	\$5,000
All Wards	Trailer maintenance to take place upon the return of public events in early 2022, including trailer signage and purchase of additional equipment.	
1265	Park Crescent Children and Family Centre, Boronia - Refurbishment Scoping	\$154,618
Baird	Detailed design progressing for provision by end of November with cost plan provision for planned construction in 22/23.	
1266	Rowville Children and Family Centre (Childcare) Refurbishment	\$971,988
Tirhatuan	Contract has been awarded with expected commencement by mid - October and completion in April 2022.	
1267	Early Years Facilities - Landscaping Upgrades	\$287,133
All Wards	Projects to renew the outdoor play spaces including The Basin Kindergarten and the replacement of decking at Wantirna Hub have been planned for January 2022.	
1269	Rosa Benedikt Community Centre, Scoresby - Minor Upgrade	\$37,238
Tirhatuan	On hold pending further investigation.	
1271	Wantirna Community Infrastructure Planning	\$40,000
Collier	On hold due to staffing resources.	

Knox City Council Project Status Report

06-Oct-2021

Project Number	Project Name	Total Adjusted Budget
1274	Mountain Hwy, The Basin (Wicks Road - Claremont Ave) - Footpath Design	\$11,462
Chandler	The project is currently under design review to identify key constraints to inform a cost estimate for the project. Pending this, there will be consultation with Council (through the budget process) and potentially with the community in relation to the proposal.	
1276	Liverpool Road, The Basin - Footpath Design	\$12,361
Chandler	Waiting confirmation of additional funding for the detail design.	
1281	Ferntree Gully Road, Knoxfield (O'Connor Road and Henderson Road)- Shared Path	\$110,000
Tirhatuan	Path design between O'Connor Rd and Henderson Rd to be renewed.	
1282	Ferntree Gully Road Shared Path - Scoping	\$10,000
Friberg	Requires a lease agreement. Investigating appropriate course of action.	
1297	Amesbury Avenue, Wantirna - Intersection Treatments	\$133,427
Collier	Discussed with local school assistant principal regarding shared path and works on Amesbury Ave. Site visit conducted and project planning in progress.	
1300	Parking Management Plan Implementation	\$90,000
All Wards	Arrangements made for parking signs to be updated on Floriston Rd, Dorset Sq (west side only), Dorset Rd and Erica Ave.	
1306	Dog Park Installations	\$225,809
All Wards	Emerson Place Reserve Fenced Dog-Off Lead Area completed. Maintenance period now in progress. Initial feasibility work for the construction of a car park to commence shortly. Scoping for future dog parks will follow.	
1308	Kevin Ave, FTG UFTG Flood Investigation - Scoping	\$18,115
Dobson	Scoping confirmed and Detailed Design underway and around 50% complete. Survey completed, underground service locating and proving completed.	
1309	1825 Ferntree Gully Road - Flood Mitigation Works	\$425,792
Friberg	Drainage upgrade within Commercial Rd area included within road renewal package - construction works completed. Additional area - finalising detailed design according to design review comments. Arborist consultation completed. Recommendations incorporated in the detailed design.	
1310	Flood Mitigation Reactive Complaints Upgrade Works	\$250,000
All Wards	Egan Lee upstream/downstream catchment mitigation assessment underway.	

Knox City Council Project Status Report

06-Oct-2021

Project Number	Project Name	Total Adjusted Budget
1311	Major Roads LED Streetlight Replacement	\$340,370
All Wards	Project Manager appointed to commence on-site audit of lights in Boronia. Once the audit is completed, the design will be finalised to aid the procurement and installation stages of the project.	
1312	Cathies Lane Landfill Solar Feasibility - Stage 2	\$53,314
All Wards	Work underway to prepare a report to Council presenting options for Council to switch to renewable energy including the impact of recent regulatory changes announced by the Australian Energy Market Commission.	
1315	Fairpark Reserve - Pavilion Upgrade (incorporating U3A extension)	\$5,574,861
Baird	Council officers have commenced the Detailed Design of the facility and final stage of design prior to tendering for construction.	
1316	Rowville Recreation Reserve - Car Park Upgrade	\$152,036
Taylor	Stage 1 design completed and quote received from Construction - this has highlighted funding shortfall. Stage 2 (Car park extension) design underway including geotechnical investigation. Car park to be constructed together with stage 1 works when funding is anticipated to be available for total works in 22/23.	
1318	Miller Park Reserve - Cricket Net Renewal	\$250,000
Chandler	Works have been awarded, demolition complete, delays on site due to covid restrictions.	
1319	Gilbert Park Reserve, Knoxfield - Batting Cage Renewal	\$128,819
Friberg	Quotations have been assessed and a preferred tender has been selected. Commencement of works delayed due to awaiting Melbourne Water approval.	
1320	Eildon Park Reserve, Rowville - Tennis Court Renewals	\$490,252
Taylor	Construction works including lighting installation for Courts 4-6 complete along with Practical Completion inspection. Courts 7-9: Initial survey complete. Geotechnical investigation and consultation with arborists underway.	
1321	Millers Reserve, The Basin - Tennis Court Renewals	\$425,000
Chandler	Tennis court construction works essentially complete with Practical Completion to be arranged. Additional works associated with additional hardstand area underway.	
1322	Glenfern Park (FTGTC) - Tennis Court Renewals	\$739,806
Dobson	Courts 5-6: Construction underway with works approximately 20% complete with structural re-design underway due to poor sub-grade. Anticipate concrete slab re-design proposal to be presented by Contractor mid-late October and construction to re-commence in November. Consultation with Tennis Club completed. Courts 1-4: Design 80% completed with geotechnical investigation underway to inform design detail.	

Knox City Council Project Status Report

06-Oct-2021

Project Number	Project Name	Total Adjusted Budget
1363	Lupton Way Shared Zone Construction and Public Art Lighting	\$533,220
Baird	Design pending on Metro Trains Melbourne agreement. Finalising license agreement with 255 Dorset Road. Final consultation with other private properties.	
1365	Programmed Road Renewal Works from June annual Audits	\$715,000
All Wards	Funds available to supplement funding requirements for various road renewal works as required.	
1367	Rowville Tennis Court Renewal	\$26,000
Taylor	The club has requested that the works be completed next year due to numerous lockdowns causing losses of coaching revenue and memberships.	
1386	Parks - New Tractor	\$120,000
All Wards	Plant expected to arrive in August. COVID restrictions have created a backlog.	
1389	Egan Lee Reserve Renewal - Top Oval Renewal	\$1,500,000
Scott	Project on hold until consultation has occurred.	
1390	Golf Practice Nets	\$80,000
All Wards	Contractor ASTE Tennis to commence works mid October.	
1391	Knox Hockey Facility Development	\$3,625,000
Tirhatuan	Alternative site investigations undertaken. Awaiting Council decision.	
1392	3-Year Old Kindergarten Facility Management	\$250,000
All Wards	Officers continue to plan and prepare for the introduction and expansion of 3 year old Kindergarten services to Council's early years programs, identifying facilities which will need to be considered as part of Council's capital works program over the next five years.	
1394	Knox Park Athletics - Changeroom Upgrade	\$59,460
Friberg	Design is nearing completion with view to progress to tender late October and award the works for construction from January 2022.	
1396	Gilbert Park - Floodlighting Upgrade (Diamonds 1 and 2)	\$494,975
Friberg	Contractor appointment imminent for Diamond 2. Diamond 1 Contract already let and construction commenced.	
1402	Bayswater Bowls Club - Car Park Upgrade	\$113,188
Dinsdale	Works completed.	

Knox City Council Project Status Report

06-Oct-2021

Project Number	Project Name	Total Adjusted Budget
1404	Berrabri Kindergarten, Scoresby - Verandah Space upgrade Tirhatuan Project complete.	\$105,000
1405	F W Kerr Kindergarten, Ferntree Gully - External upgrade Dobson Scope of works being assessed.	\$20,000
1406	Miller's Homestead - Upgrade Chandler Works not yet detailed due to Covid restrictions for site visits and assessments. Various structural considerations need to be further investigated (inclusive of heritage limitations) including kitchen and bathroom upgrade, accessibility compliance, repairs of water damaged areas, artwork tracking upgrades and external signage, security and lighting. The required works are currently being assessed and scoped with view to finalise by late October for preparation of specification for works package.	\$217,500
1408	St John's Ambulance Hall - Upgrade Baird On hold pending further investigation following report to Senior Management.	\$25,000
1411	Mountain Hwy, Bayswater, (Scoresby Road to Jersey Road) - Shared Path Baird In principle support from land owners. Drafting up licence agreement.	\$309,082
1412	Macauley Place, Bayswater - Shared Safety Zone Dinsdale Deferred due to current construction works at Mountain High Shopping Centre.	\$250,000
1413	Kings Park Reserve, Upper Ferntree Gully - Masterplan Implementation Dobson Request for quotation process completed and a consultant appointed.	\$464,091
1414	Cardiff Street - Flood Mitigation Works Baird Awaiting detailed survey and service proving. Scoping scheduled for October.	\$700,000
1415	Olivebank to Underwood & Alexander Reserve, FTG - Wetland Treatment -Scoping & Analysis Dobson Scoping and initial catchment analysis completed. Modelling quotation process scheduled for October.	\$400,000
1418	Wally Tew (FTG Reserve) - Stormwater Harvesting Upgrade Dobson Audit report review complete, discussing the results with Parks and Recreation, to validate the upgrade needs.	\$120,000
1419	Carrington Park Reserve - Stormwater Harvesting Upgrade Friberg Audit report review completed, discussing the results with Parks and Recreation validate the upgrade needs.	\$80,000

Knox City Council Project Status Report

06-Oct-2021

Project Number	Project Name	Total Adjusted Budget
1422	Gilbert Reserve - Wetland (Scoping & Analysis)	\$57,578
Friberg	Melbourne Water pipe realignment detailed survey and design quote obtained. Functional and detailed design for realignment anticipated to be completed in November in readiness for community consultation early 2022.	
1425	Albert Street UFTG & Chandler Road Boronia - Passive Irrigation Research & Development	\$60,000
All Wards	This project is in partnership with Melbourne University. Scoping underway during October.	
1426	The Basin Triangle Masterplan	\$60,000
Chandler	Request for quotation process completed and a consultant appointed.	
1428	Violen Street, Bayswater - Reconstruction	\$185,000
Dinsdale	Works anticipated to commence in early 2022.	
1429	Edinburgh Road, Boronia - Reconstruction	\$180,000
Baird	Construction works well underway with 40% works completed.	
1430	Wilhelma Avenue, Boronia - Reconstruction	\$250,000
Baird	Construction works underway with 40% completed - works integrated with Drainage Renewal project.	
1431	Manuka Drive, FTG - Reconstruction	\$365,000
Baird	Construction works well underway with 70% completed.	
1432	Murene Court, Boronia - Reconstruction	\$210,000
Baird	Works anticipated to commence in early 2022.	
1434	Harcrest Estate Lake & Wetland Renewal	\$0
Scott	Harcrest Estate wetland Ring Wall repair work as required.	
1437	1000 Steps Car Parking and Shared Use Path Bridge	\$300,000
Dobson	Bridge design on hold. Alternative carpark design ongoing.	
1439	Mossfield Avenue, Ferntree Gully - Design Only	\$45,000
Baird	Survey completed. Design 30% complete with Geotechnical investigation underway.	

Knox City Council Project Status Report

06-Oct-2021

Project Number	Project Name	Total Adjusted Budget
1440	Mountain Gate Drive, Ferntree Gully - Design Only	\$65,000
Friberg	Concept design completed in consultation with Traffic and Transport. Geotechnical investigation underway. Design 20% complete.	
1441	Studfield Shops, Rear Laneway, Wantirna South - Design Only	\$40,000
Dinsdale	Concept design completed in consultation with Traffic and Transport. Geotechnical investigation and title re-establishment survey underway. Design 20% complete.	
1442	Avalon Road, Rowville - Design Only	\$70,000
Tirhatuan	Survey completed. Design 10% complete with Geotechnical investigation underway.	
1443	Faraday Street Boronia - Design Only	\$45,000
Baird	Survey completed. Design 20% complete with Geotechnical investigation underway.	
1444	Adele Avenue, Ferntree Gully - Design Only	\$35,000
Friberg	Survey complete. Design 70% complete with Geotechnical investigation underway.	
1445	Marlborough Road, Bayswater - Design Only	\$30,000
Dinsdale	Survey completed with Geotechnical investigation underway. Design to commence in 2022.	
1446	Windermere Reserve, Ferntree Gully - Oval Renewal	\$1,350,000
Friberg	Tender approved.	
1447	Knox Gardens Reserve, Wantirna South - Drainage #2 Oval	\$155,645
Scott	Evaluation has recently been completed. Works to be awarded early October.	
1448	Fairpark Reserve, Ferntree Gully - Netball Court Renewals	\$300,000
Baird	Design complete. Quotation to be sought in October.	
1449	Fairpark Reserve, Ferntree Gully - Re-turfing	\$250,000
Baird	Project on hold while works under review.	
1450	Reta Matthews Reserve, Ferntree Gully - Tennis Court Renewals	\$350,000
Baird	Initial survey complete. Geotechnical investigation and consultation with arborists underway.	
1451	Carrington Park Reserve, Knoxfield - Tennis Court Renewals	\$175,000
Friberg	Initial survey completed. Geotechnical investigation underway. Awaiting advice from Leisure on project scope.	

Knox City Council Project Status Report

06-Oct-2021

Project Number	Project Name	Total Adjusted Budget
1452	Llewellyn Reserve, Wantirna South - Cricket Pitch Renewal (Oval #1)	\$20,000
Scott	Works to commence early October.	
1453	Kings Park, Upper Ferntree Gully (Oval #2) - Sportsfield Drainage	\$88,849
Dobson	Project has been withdrawn from program with funds to be redistributed to other projects. Investigation into this ground showed that a new drainage system would not be beneficial to the ground improving. An alternate proposal will be presented to the forward capital works program.	
1454	Lewis Park, Wantirna South (Oval 2) - New Irrigation	\$150,000
Dinsdale	Project has been withdrawn from program with funds to be redistributed to Carrington Park and Eildon Park cricket net lighting. There is a masterplan currently being developed at Lewis Park and oval 2 has been flagged as a full redevelopment within the next few years. The irrigation system will need to be removed when the ground is re-constructed therefore, it would be inefficient to deliver at this time.	
1455	Talaskia Reserve, Upper Ferntree Gully - Cricket Net Renewal	\$250,000
Dobson	Tenders being assessed prior to contractor appointment.	
1456	Dobson Park, Ferntree Gully - Cricket Net Renewal	\$250,000
Baird	Tender closed 24 September.	
1457	Wantirna Reserve, Wantirna - Sportsfield Renewal - Scope	\$15,000
Collier	The sportsfield to be designed is not yet identified. Audits are being finalised to assist with the discussion.	
1458	Knox Gardens Reserve, Wantirna South - Tennis Court Renewals	\$50,000
Scott	Initial survey complete. Geotechnical investigation and consultation with arborists underway.	
1459	Lewis Park, Wantirna South - Oval 1 Floodlighting	\$250,000
Dinsdale	Contractor appointment expected by mid - October.	
1460	Templeton Reserve, Wantirna - Floodlighting Upgrade	\$250,000
Collier	Contractor appointment expected by mid - October.	
1461	Kings Park, Upper Ferntree Gully - Oval 1 - Floodlighting	\$280,362
Dobson	Contractor appointment expected by mid - October.	
1462	Knox Athletics, Knoxfield - New Shade Structures	\$100,000
Friberg	Design underway for construction to commence in December.	

Knox City Council Project Status Report

06-Oct-2021

Project Number	Project Name	Total Adjusted Budget
1463	Tormore Reserve, Boronia - Safety Fencing (Behind Goals)	\$100,000
Baird	Location to be confirmed following easing of lockdown restrictions. Quotes will then be sought. Works to occur early 2022.	
1464	Schultz Reserve, Wantirna - Pavilion Refurbishment	\$75,000
Collier	Consultation with Clubs underway.	
1465	Knox Park Athletics, Knoxfield - Lighting to Track	\$300,000
Friberg	Scope confirmed. Works scheduled to commence early 2022 with completion by 30 June.	
1466	Schultz Reserve, Wantirna - Shade Structure	\$50,000
Collier	Consultation with Clubs underway.	
1467	Fairpark Reserve, Ferntree Gully - Safety Netting (Southern End)	\$50,000
Baird	Works scheduled to occur upon completion of the major pavilion redevelopment and associated carpark and landscaping works. This is likely in 2022/23.	
1468	Park Ridge Reserve, Rowville - Existing Pavilion Refurbishment	\$20,000
Taylor	Works will align with the new modular project.	
1469	Milpera Reserve, Wantirna - Existing Pavilion Refurbishment	\$20,000
Collier	Works will align with the new modular project.	
1470	Electronic Entry to Sporting Pavilions.	\$60,000
All Wards	Priority projects currently being worked through/finalised with view to commence scoping in November and seek prices in the new year for a March/April installation period.	
1471	Knox Skate & BMX Park, Knoxfield - Access Road	\$120,000
Friberg	Initial survey completed. Consultation with Leisure and Ambulance Victoria completed. Geotechnical investigation and design underway.	
1472	Wally Tew Reserve, Ferntree Gully - Car Park Upgrade	\$40,000
Dobson	Survey completed with Geotechnical investigation underway. Design to commence in 2022.	
1473	Egan Lee Reserve, Knoxfield - Car Park Extension - Design	\$35,000
Scott	Initial survey completed and concept layout options submitted and approved option selected. Geotechnical investigation underway along with consultation with arborists.	
1474	Knox Skate & BMX Park, Knoxfield - Carpark - Design	\$35,000
Friberg	Initial survey and arborist assessment completed. Geotechnical investigation and design underway.	

Knox City Council Project Status Report

06-Oct-2021

Project Number	Project Name	Total Adjusted Budget
1475	Gilmour Reserve, Upper Ferntree Gully - New Car Park - Design	\$35,000
Dobson	Majority of site is within Melbourne Water land and any proposal for development is subject to agreement with M.W. Consultation with stakeholders and coordinated by Leisure is underway.	
1476	Community Placemaking Program - Murals and Lighting - Scope	\$105,000
All Wards	Arts and Cultural Services currently scoping options for managing this project externally within the capital allocation as it is beyond existing staffing capacity.	
1477	FTG Library, Ferntree Gully - External Blinds	\$20,000
Dobson	Scoping underway.	
1478	Locker Program - Council Kindergartens	\$50,000
All Wards	Replacement program of children's lockers and make good to existing spaces with quotations being sought for January 2022 holidays and April 2022 holidays installation.	
1479	Liberty Avenue, Rowville Kindergarten - Verandah Replacement - Design	\$10,000
Tirhatuan	Scoping progressing with view for provision of design/cost plan by end of November.	
1480	Park Ridge Kindergarten, Rowville - Verandah - Design	\$10,000
Taylor	Scoping progressing with view for provision of design/cost plan by December.	
1481	Alice Johnson Children and Family Centre, Ferntree Gully - Verandah	\$65,000
Baird	Quotations currently being sought with expectation to appoint Contractor by November for a construction period of December-January 2022.	
1482	Billoo Park Kindergarten, Wantirna - Storage & Verandah Upgrade - Design	\$10,000
Collier	Scoping is progressing with view to complete detailed design/cost plan by end of November.	
1483	Update FCS signage from Preschool to Kindergarten	\$60,000
All Wards	Funds being redirected to Rowville Children's Centre Redevelopment as per Budget Variation approval.	
1484	136 Boronia Road (Knox Infolink) - Redevelopment	\$30,000
Baird	On hold pending further investigation.	
1485	The Basin Community House - Kitchen Upgrades	\$10,000
Chandler	Scoping underway with quotes expected to be sought from November for January 2022 installation.	

Knox City Council Project Status Report

06-Oct-2021

Project Number	Project Name	Total Adjusted Budget
1486	The Basin Progress Hall - Event Upgrades	\$40,000
Chandler	Scoping underway.	
1487	Knox Community Gardens, Boronia - Shed Removals	\$50,000
Dinsdale	Quotes being sought in October with expectation of Contractor being appointed to undertake the project from November.	
1488	Knox Community Gardens, Boronia - New Facility Design	\$20,000
Dinsdale	Project due to commence in October.	
1489	Public changing outlets to support vulnerable persons - Scoping	\$10,000
All Wards	Scoping underway.	
1490	Bergins Road, Rowville - Footpath Construction	\$129,998
Taylor	Site inspection conducted. Finalising quantities prior to obtaining quotes for the project.	
1491	Malvern Street, Bayswater - Footpath Construction	\$120,000
Baird	Construction works expected to commence by mid - October.	
1492	Francis Crescent, Ferntree Gully - Footpath Construction	\$43,890
Dobson	Scheduled to commence early 2022.	
1494	1726 Ferntree Gully Road, Ferntree Gully - Footpath Design	\$4,180
Friberg	Site inspection conducted.	
1495	Ferntree Gully Road, Scoresby - Footpath Construction	\$29,260
Tirhatuan	Design completed.	
1496	Short Street, Boronia - Footpath Design	\$35,000
Baird	Site inspection conducted. Quotations being sought for design for a DDA compliant path.	
1497	Cypress Avenue, Boronia - Footpath Design	\$20,000
Baird	Initial site inspection conducted.	
1498	Pleasant Road, Ferntree Gully - Footpath Scope	\$10,000
Dobson	Scheduled to commence early 2022.	
1499	Buckingham Drive, Rowville - LATM Treatment	\$120,000
Taylor	Consultation letters sent to residents.	

Knox City Council Project Status Report

06-Oct-2021

Project Number	Project Name	Total Adjusted Budget
1500	Liberty Avenue, Rowville - LATM Design	\$15,000
Tirhatuan	Consultation letters sent to residents.	
1501	Dobson Street, Ferntree Gully - Traffic device	\$10,000
Friberg	Scoping in progress.	
1502	High Street Road, Wantirna South - Shared Path	\$346,500
Scott	Feature survey completed. Working on path alignment and design.	
1503	Burwood Highway, Knoxfield - Shared Path	\$400,000
Scott	Feature survey completed. Working on path alignment and design.	
1504	Napoleon Road, Rowville - Shared Path	\$155,925
Taylor	Walk through completed. Finalising design.	
1505	Mountain Highway, Boronia - Shared Path - Design	\$80,000
Chandler	Site inspection completed which indicated further investigation for service road treatment.	
1508	Sasses Avenue, Bayswater - On Road Bicycle Lanes	\$40,000
Dinsdale	Site inspection conducted. Investigating alternative route options.	
1509	Moirra Avenue / Johnson Drive Intersection, Ferntree Gully - Traffic Island	\$15,000
Baird	Working on notification letter and design.	
1510	Kelletts Road at Lakesfield Drive, Lysterfield - Footpath link at School crossing	\$3,000
Dobson	Project scoped. Drafting brief for design.	
1511	Alma Avenue, Ferntree Gully - New School Crossing	\$30,000
Dobson	School crossing works have been completed.	
1512	Maryborough Road, Boronia - Rumble Strips	\$10,000
Baird	Project scoped. Finalising design.	
1513	Regency Terrace, Lysterfield - Connection to Napoleon Road Bus Stop	\$24,000
Taylor	Walk through completed. Finalising design.	
1514	Carrington Park, Knoxfield - Masterplan Implementation	\$300,000
Friberg	Contractor engaged for construction of new playspace. Construction to commence mid-October.	

Knox City Council Project Status Report

06-Oct-2021

Project Number	Project Name	Total Adjusted Budget
1515	Major Crescent Reserve, Lysterfield - Landscape Plan	\$25,000
Taylor	Site analysis completed. Internal consultation completed in September. Draft Landscape Plan October-December.	
1516	Lakesfield Reserve, Lysterfield - Landscape Plan	\$25,000
Dobson	Site analysis completed. Internal consultation completed in September. Draft Landscape Plan October-December.	
1517	Flamingo Reserve, Wantirna South - Landscape Plan	\$25,000
Collier	Site analysis completed. Internal consultation completed in September. Draft Landscape Plan October-December.	
1518	Schultz Reserve, Wantirna - Landscape Plan	\$25,000
Collier	Site analysis completed. Internal consultation completed in September. Draft Landscape Plan October-December.	
		Total: \$154,056,543

12.2 ICT Capital Works Report

SUMMARY: Chief Information Officer, Scott Coleman

The ICT Capital Works Report shows projects on Council's ICT Capital Works Program and indicates the monthly status of each project.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council receive and note the ICT Capital Works Report, as of 14 October 2021.

1. INTRODUCTION

This report summarises Council's ICT Capital Works Program for the 2021/2022 financial year. The aim of this report is to provide a regular and succinct status summary of each project over the last month. The Capital Works Report, as of 14 October 2021 is attached in the Confidential section of Council's agenda.

Highlights of the Capital Works Report as at 14 October 2021 include:

- The Asset Management project has re-baselined timelines following Steering Committee approval of a change request, with implementation now expected in May 2022. This change was a result of vendor acquisition impacting on delivery timelines.
- The Digital Customer Channel Transformation Program has commenced its Phase 2 which will see the replacement of Council's Intranet. Project Initiation approach has been approved by ICT Governance bodies. Project has now commenced a procurement activity to source vendor support for a Intranet design phase.
- The Early Years Project customer experience research has concluded with findings from Community consultation from "Today Strategic Design" presented back to project stakeholders. Requirements, internal process maps, and customer insights are now being reviewed by the Enterprise Architecture team, before a market procurement engagement is conducted.
- The Corporate Reporting Project will review solutions to meet our strategic risk management and corporate reporting obligations. The project approach has been approved by the ICT Governance bodies. The requirements have been handed to the Enterprise Architecture team for solution review, ahead of a market procurement engagement.

2. CONFIDENTIALITY

Confidential information is contained in Attachment 1 in the confidential agenda, in accordance with Sections 3 and 66 of the Local Government Act 2020 as the information relates to contractual matters; and the premature disclosure of the information could be prejudicial to the interests of Council or other persons.

The information also meets the definition of confidential information under the Local Government Act 2020 on the basis that the information includes:

- Council business information the disclosure of which may prejudice the Council's position in commercial negotiations; and/or

- Private commercial information that may unreasonably expose a business, commercial or financial undertaking to disadvantage if disclosed; and/or
- Information which has previously been declared as confidential information for the purposes of Section 77 of the Local Government Act 1989.

Report Prepared By: Chief Information Officer, Scott Coleman

Report Authorised By: Executive Manager Strategy, People & Culture, Interim Information Technology and Transformation (Change), Sam Stanton

Attachments

1. ICT Capital Works Report [12.2.1 - 3 pages]
Confidential Attachment 1 is circulated under separate cover.

Knox City Council Project Status Report

15-Oct-2021

Project Number Project Name

789 Facilities Booking Solution

All Wards The new Priava meeting room and fleet booking solution went live to staff on 14 Dec 2020. Additional meeting rooms for the new Operation Centre and Knox Community and Leisure Centres were made available for staff bookings.

A planned second phase will commence in May 22 to extend booking capabilities to the general public enabling booking of Knox external facilities including halls, pavilions, reserves etc.

812 Asset Management Information System

All Wards Lifecycle' system is a critical tool to manage Council Assets. This project replaces the current Asset Management Information system with contemporary, modern, well supported equivalent that meets Council's current and future needs. The project is in implementation build/test/train stage with activity presently focused on Migration of Asset and Legacy data, Configuration and Validation of Parks & Works processes and finalisation of GIS Mapping tasks for go live plan. Integration to Pathway, KX, Computron and IntraMaps is progressing, with Pathway/KX in final stages of testing. Training and integration testing with Key Stakeholders and Confirm Champions progressing well. The delivery timeline for Stage 1 Parks & Works is in November 2021. Stage 2 Facilities, Plant & Fleet in April 2022 and Stage 3 Renewals in May 2022.

827 Digital Customer Channels Transformation (DCCT) - Phase 3 Cust Portal & Integration

All Wards This phase will expand on earlier delivery of the program, with the implementation of a secure portal to Knox staff, a Knox business hub, and fully integrate with Knox systems. The phase will commence 2022.

977 Pathway Program

All Wards The ICT funding for Pathway enhancements has concluded and ongoing development is transitioning to BAU operations in August and September. IT will continue to support Pathway and ePathway development as a core application at Knox. To support the transition, a new support model to support Pathway activities will be put in place. The IT Business Engagement team are currently leading a process to identify business needs regarding long-term Pathway support and designing a plan to support this.

1031 Spatial Capability

All Wards The Spatial Capability program looks to improve processes and tools by utilising geographical information such as mapping. Spatial Capability is currently being delivered as an outcome of all ICT Projects, however remaining desired capability will be delivered near the end of the ICT Roadmap. The project is therefore on pause whilst the roadmap progresses and available GIS resources are engaged in other ICT projects. Geo Spatial Analyst is working to establish a GIS strategy and scope for the ICT Spatial Capability Project to restart.

1034 Business Intelligence

All Wards This project is now complete. The Business Intelligence (BI) Project has finalised its set objectives to enable Council teams with BI and Analytics capability by implementing a structured approach to address BI and data related requests. Through the implementation project a total of 16 use cases across 11 departments were delivered over the last 12 months. Power Users have been identified and provided with advanced training on BI tools. The Strategy and BI team will continue to support business on BI and Analytics requirements following project closure in July 21.

Knox City Council Project Status Report

15-Oct-2021

Project Number Project Name

1036 HR System

All Wards This project is now complete. New systems are in place for Recruitment, Learning, Onboarding, Time and Attendance, Performance and Succession Planning. Formal handover has occurred with Strategy, People & Culture.

1037 Project Management Office - ICT Governance

All Wards This budget allocation is to cover costs associated with ICT governance including independent members of the ICT Governance Committee.

1242 Digital Customer Channels Transformation (DCCT) - Phase 1 Website Development

All Wards Following the successful deployment of Council's new website in June the project team have continued to monitor the website and support the newly established Digital Experience Team. The project will conclude project closure in October. Once all actions are complete it will enable project resources to focus on Phase 2 of the Digital Customer Channel Transformation - KCC's staff intranet re-development.

1245 Corporate Reporting Solutions

All Wards The Corporate Reporting Project will deliver process and technical solutions for risk management and business planning. Project Initiation Document endorsed by ICT Governance in October 21. Benchmarking with other councils complete. Holistic review of requirements by Enterprise Architecture underway to inform Scope. Scoping document to be presented to ICT Steering Committee November, then ICT Governance Committee early December 2021. Procurement Plan, Communications Plan and Change Management plan commenced.

1257 Project Management Office

All Wards Project Management Office oversees quality aspects of the overall Portfolio of ICT, and the budget for this function continues to be managed according to plan.

1368 Enterprise Integration Platform

All Wards This project will deliver a new Enterprise Integration Platform which will manage integration between our disparate IT systems and reducing complexity when transferring data between them. The Enterprise Integration Platform Project Initiation Document (PID) was approved by Steering Committee on 24th August and endorsed by ICT Governance Committee on 7th October. Initial Proof of Concept (PoC) contenders have been identified and are being engaged to secure licenses and software. Scoping for PoC is in progress.

1369 Master Data Management

All Wards Master Data Management (MDM) is a cultural change program focused on the collaborative effort between service areas, people, systems and processes to form a common understanding of how the Council will maintain and support key datasets.

The project is progressing with the recruitment of a data lead, which will take the lead on forming our data management strategy. The Project Manager has resigned, so recruitment for a new PM will commence to align with the start of the new data lead. The team is concluding work on a problem statement, which will be required to complete project scoping.

Knox City Council Project Status Report

15-Oct-2021

Project Number Project Name

1371 Participation Platform

All Wards This project is now complete. The Knox Have Your Say platform went live in February 2021. The solution underpins the policy and framework for Knox's engagement with the community on decision making that affects them. Additional staff awareness sessions and on-demand training are available to support the ongoing use of the tool.

1373 Active Aging System Platform

All Wards The Active Aging Project will review service requirements, ensuring the correct solution is in place to meet process and technical requirements, whilst also delivering a better experience for our online community. The Active Ageing & Disability Services manager has requested that the ICT project is commenced later on the ICT roadmap to allow for an embedding of recent changes in service provision in the team. The current Carelink contract will expire in 2024 and the project will be established to tender for ongoing support will commence in 2022.

1374 Early Years Platform

The Early Years Project will review services requirements, ensuring the correct solution is in place to meet process and technical requirements whilst delivering a better experience for our online community. Customer experience research is complete with final showcase of findings, journey maps and moments that matter presented to the Project Team on 8th October. Expression of interest for a new kindergarten and childcare solution is being finalised. Scope document is also being finalised and will be tabled at the November ICT Steering Committee for approval.

1376 Digital Customer Channels Transformation - DCCT Ph2

All Wards The project will implement a new Intranet to replace with a new modern equivalent to support staff effectiveness in service provision to our community. In September the Project Initiation Document (PID) was approved by the ICT Steering Committee and ICT Governance Committee in October. The project team will now conduct a procurement stage to contract a specialist to lead research and to define business requirements for a new staff intranet.

1377 Cloud Solutions

All Wards Project waiting to be scheduled.

1379 Customer Relationship Management (CRM)

All Wards Customer Relationship Management refers to all strategies, techniques, tools, and technologies used by Council for effectively servicing our community-based customers. This project is due to commence in late 2021 in line with the completion of the Customer Experience Strategy.

13 Notices of Motion

14 Supplementary Items

15 Urgent Business

16 Questions Without Notice

17 Confidential Items

17.1 Chief Executive Officer Performance Evaluation Committee -
Engagement of Independent Advisor

A confidential report is circulated under separate cover.