



TOWN OF
VICTORIA PARK

Special Council Meeting Minutes – 7 May 2024



WE'RE OPEN
VIC PARK

A **Special Council Meeting** was held at **6:00 PM** on **7 May 2024** in the **Council Chambers**, Administration Centre at 99 Shepperton Road, Victoria Park.

Her Worship the Mayor Karen Vernon
16 May 2024

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1 Declaration of opening

Mayor Karen Vernon opened the meeting at 6:00 pm.

Acknowledgement of the traditional owners

Ngany djerapiny Wadjak – Noongar boodja-k yaakiny, nidja bilya bardook.

I am honoured to be standing on Whadjuk - Nyungar country on the banks of the Swan River.

Ngany kaaditj Noongar moort keny kaadak nidja Wadjak Noongar boodja. Ngany kaaditj nidja Noongar birdiya – koora, ye-ye, boorda, baalapiny moorditj Noongar kaadijtin, moort, wer boodja ye-ye.

I acknowledge the traditional custodians of this land and respect past, present and emerging leaders, their continuing cultural heritage, beliefs and relationship with the land, which continues to be important today.

Ngany youngka baalapiny Noongar birdiya wer moort nidja boodja.

I thank them for the contribution made to life in the Town of Victoria Park and to this region.

2 Announcements from the Presiding Member

2.1 Recording and live streaming of proceedings

In accordance with clause 39 of the *Town of Victoria Park Meeting Procedures Local Law 2019*, as the Presiding Member, I hereby give my permission for the administration to record proceedings of this meeting.

This meeting is also being live streamed on the Town's website. By being present at this meeting, members of the public consent to the possibility that their image and voice may be live streamed to public. Recordings are also made available on the Town's website following the meeting.

2.2 Public question time and public statement time

As this is a Special Council Meeting, any public questions or statements must relate to the business of the agenda.

There are guidelines that need to be adhered to in our Council meetings and during question and statement time people speaking are not to personalise any questions, or statements about Elected Members, or staff or use any possible defamatory remarks.

In accordance with clause 40 of the *Town of Victoria Park Meeting Procedures Local Law 2019*, a person addressing the Council shall extend due courtesy and respect to the Council and the processes under which it operates and shall comply with any direction by the presiding member.

A person present at or observing a meeting shall not create a disturbance at a meeting, by interrupting or interfering with the proceedings, whether by expressing approval or dissent, by conversing or by any other means.

When the presiding member speaks during public question time or public statement time any person then speaking, is to immediately stop and every person present is to preserve strict silence so that the presiding member may be heard without interruption.

2.3 No adverse reflection

In accordance with clause 56 of the *Town of Victoria Park Meeting Procedures Local Law 2019*, both Elected Members and the public when speaking are not to reflect adversely on the character or actions of Elected Members or employees.

2.4 *Town of Victoria Park Meeting Procedures Local Law 2019*

All meetings of the Council, committees and the electors are to be conducted in accordance with the Act, the Regulations and the *Town of Victoria Park Meeting Procedures Local Law 2019*.

3 Attendance

Mayor	Ms Karen Vernon
Banksia Ward	Cr Claire Anderson Cr Peter Devereux Cr Peter Melrosa Cr Lindsay Miles
Jarraah Ward	Cr Sky Croeser Deputy Mayor Bronwyn Iffe Cr Daniel Minson
Chief Executive Officer	Mr Anthony Vuleta
Chief Operations Officer Chief Financial Officer Chief Community Planner	Ms Natalie Adams Mr Duncan Olde Ms Natalie Martin Goode
Manager Governance and Strategy	Ms Bernadine Tucker
Meeting Secretary Public Liaison	Ms Winnie Tansanguanwong Ms Alison Podmore
Public	2

3.1 Apologies

Nil.

3.2 Approved leave of absence

Jarraah Ward	Cr Jesse Hamer
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4 Declarations of interest

4.1 Declarations of financial interest

Nil.

4.2 Declarations of proximity interest

Nil.

4.3 Declarations of interest affecting impartiality

Nil.

5 Public question time

5.1 Response to previous public questions taken on notice

Nil.

5.2 Public question time

Public questions time opened at 6:03pm.

Vince Maxwell, Victoria Park

1. Mr Maxwell referred to the Audit and Risk Committee 29 April 2024 report, attachment 07.5.1 Independent Auditor's Report 2023, page 1-2 in the topic of 'Other information'. Why wasn't the other information provided to the auditor?

The Chief Financial Officer advised that the Annual Report refers to other items which are largely text-based documents. They specifically audit the annual financial report. All financial information requested for auditing the annual financial report is supplied as requested as soon as possible.

2. In the agenda tonight is the proposal is to have the Annual Electors Meeting in the end of May which will require the report to be printed. Will there be a sufficient time for the auditor to review the annual report and for the CEO to make any changes?

The Chief Financial Officer advised that the auditor has sign and certified the Financial Report as a qualified audit. Their job is completed.

Mayor Karen Vernon asked the Chief Financial officer if he considers that there is sufficient information to present, or for the CEO to present, the draft annual report to the auditor to see if the auditor has any issues with it?

The Chief Financial Officer advised that as a requirement under the act, the Town is required to submit the annual finance report and the annual report post council endorsement tonight, to various entities, including the auditor general. If there is any material misstatement, the auditor will do what is required.

3. The audit revealed significant issue in the management of the town's IT. Is the CEO or anyone else taking responsibility for these findings?

The Chief Financial Officer advised that yes, we are forming a KPI for a number of employees. There is a big volume of work, not only the IT, but as a whole town. We are working through cyber security, procedure of onboarding and off boarding, and have the internal audit function for council.

Mayor Karen Vernon advised that Audit activity report for internal and Performance report will be in the Audit and Risk Committee council meeting.

4. The audit identified that invoices are not formally approved, and the management responded, saying the purchase order system prevents accepting invoices with significant and an unexplained variation. How does this help if purchase orders are often written after invoices are received?

The Chief Financial Officer took the question on notice.

Graham Ferstat Burswood

1. The audit has discovered that between 2022-2023, there had been 992 purchase orders issued after invoices were received that amounted to over \$10.9m. What was the total value and number of all purchase orders issue during that period 2022 – 2023?

The Chief Financial Officer took the question on notice.

2. The auditor has reported this problem on December 2023. How many purchase orders were issued after the invoices were received since December 2023?

The Chief Financial Officer took the question on notice.

3. The auditor identified the failure to comply with the Debt write-off policy with \$487,593 outstanding greater than 90 days. A few years ago, the Town wrote off more than \$750,000 because it forgot to pass the fines onto the debt collectors. Are we just repeating the same mistake?

The Chief Financial Officer advised that no, some are not intended to be written off if it can be avoided. The debt collection policy was delayed during the covid period.

Public questions time closed at 6:14pm.

6 Public statement time

Public statement time opened at 6:14pm.

Vince Maxwell, Victoria Park

1. Made a statement regarding the recent audit results which indicates a decline in financial performance despite increase cost and outsourcing. Mr Maxwell encouraged Councillors to engage an independent forensic auditor to conduct a comprehensive review.

Public statement time opened at 6:15pm.

7 Presentations

7.1 Petitions

Nil.

7.2 Presentations

Nil.

7.3 Deputations

Nil.

8 Method of dealing with agenda business

Nil.

9 Committee Reports

9.1 Independent Auditor's Report and Annual Financial Report 2022/23

Location	Town-wide
Reporting officer	{author-name}
Responsible officer	Chief Financial Officer
Voting requirement	Simple majority
Attachments	{attachment-list-do-not-remove}

Summary

As part of Council's committee structure, the Audit and Risk Committee has been established to review areas of an audit or compliance nature. The Office of the Auditor General has provided an independent auditor's report, management letters and have signed off on the Town's annual financial statements for the 2022/23 financial year.

Committee Recommendation

That the Audit and Risk Committee recommend that Council:

1. Receives the independent auditor's report and management letters for the 2022/23 audit.
2. Accepts the 2022/23 annual financial statements, as attached.

Background

1. Each year, as part of Council's audit process, an independent audit is undertaken to assess Council's Annual Financial Statements and the legitimacy and accuracy of Council's accounts. An Independent Audit Report is then produced by the Auditor. The Auditor, after completing the audit, is to forward a copy of the audit and/or management report to the;
 - (a) Mayor
 - (b) Chief Executive Officer
 - (c) Minister for Local Government, via the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries.
2. The Independent Auditor's Report is also required to be included in Council's Annual Report. Any issues arising from the Independent Audit Report are to be investigated and action taken to resolve those issues

Discussion

3. The Annual Financial Report was audited by the Office of Auditor General. It is recommended that the Audit and Risk Committee recommends Council to accept the 2022/2023 Annual Financial Report.

4. In accordance with the Local Government Act 1995 (Section 7.12A – Duties of local government with respect to audits) a representative(s) who conducted the audit, will also attend the meeting to speak to the audit and take questions from committee members.
5. The Independent Auditor’s Report notes that: “In my opinion, the financial report of the Town of Victoria Park:
 - (a) is based on proper accounts and records.
 - (b) is presents fairly, in all material respects, the results of the operations of the Town for the year ended 30 June 2022 and its financial position at the end of that period.
 - (c) Is in accordance with the Local Government Act 1995 and to the extent that they are not inconsistent with the Act, Australian Accounting Standards.

Relevant documents

Not applicable.

Legal and policy compliance

[Local Government Act 1995 - Part 7](#)

Financial implications

Current budget impact	Not applicable
Future budget impact	Not applicable.

Risk management consideration

Risk impact category	Risk event description	Risk rating	Risk appetite	Risk Mitigation
Financial	Misstatement or significant error in annual financial report.	Moderate	Low	TREAT risk by conducting daily and monthly reconciliations and internal audits, external interim audits and annual report audits.
Financial	Fraud and illegal acts.	Moderate	Low	TREAT risk by strengthening internal controls, internal audits and segregation of duties.
Environmental	Not applicable		Medium	
Health and safety	Not applicable		Low	

Infrastructure/ ICT systems/ utilities	Not applicable			Medium
Legislative compliance	Annual financial report not complying with the requirements of the Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 1996.	Moderate	Low	TREAT risk by engaging external auditors to audit the annual financial statements.
Reputation	Council not accepting the Independent Auditor's Report.	Moderate	Low	TREAT risk by providing reasoning and detailed explanations to Council to enable informed decision making.
Service delivery	Not applicable			Medium

Engagement

Internal engagement	
Service Area Leaders and Senior Management	Service area leaders were consulted and engaged during the external annual audit to provide information and responses to auditor queries.

Strategic alignment

Civic Leadership	
Community Priority	Intended public value outcome or impact
CL2 - Communication and engagement with the community.	To make available timely and relevant information on the annual financial position and performance of the Town so that Council and public can make informed decisions for the future.
CL3 - Accountability and good governance.	Ensure Town meets its legislative responsibility in accordance with Part 7 of the Local Government Act 1995.

COUNCIL RESOLUTION (74/2024):

Moved: Mayor Karen Vernon

Seconded: Cr Daniel Minson

That the Audit and Risk Committee recommend that Council:

1. Receives the independent auditor's report and management letters for the 2022/23 audit.
2. Accepts the 2022/23 annual financial statements, as attached.

Carried (8 - 0)

For: Mayor Karen Vernon, Cr Claire Anderson, Cr Sky Croeser, Cr Peter Devereux, Deputy Mayor Bronwyn Ife, Cr Peter Melrosa, Cr Lindsay Miles and Cr Daniel Minson

Against: Nil

9.2 Annual Report 2022 -2023 and Annual Electors Meeting

Location	Town-wide
Reporting officer	Manager Governance and Strategy / Manager Stakeholder Relations
Responsible officer	Chief Executive Officer
Voting requirement	Absolute majority
Attachments	{attachment-list-do-not-remove}

Summary

For Council to accept the Town of Victoria Park Annual Report 2022-23 and to set the meeting date for the Annual Electors' General Meeting.

Committee Recommendation

That the Audit and Risk Committee recommends that Council:

1. Accepts the Town of Victoria Park Annual Report 2022-23 in Attachment 1.
2. Convenes the 2023 Electors' General Meeting on Monday 27 May 2024, commencing at 6.00pm in the Council Chamber, Town of Victoria Park Administration Centre, 99 Shepperton Road, Victoria Park.

Background

1. In accordance with section 5.53 of the *Local Government Act 1995*, local governments are to prepare an annual report.
2. The audited accounts for the financial year are incorporated into the annual report following the annual external audit by the Office of the Auditor General.
3. Once the annual report is accepted, it is to be presented to an Annual Elector's General Meeting.
4. The EGM must be advertised by way of 14-day public notice to the community in accordance with the public notice provisions in the *Local Government Act 1995*.

Discussion

Annual Report

5. In accordance with section 5.53 of the *Local Government Act 1995*, the Town of Victoria Park Annual Report has been prepared for the 2022-23 financial year.

6. The Annual Report provides a summary of the previous year's achievements and challenges, and the outlook for the year ahead. It includes specific statutory requirements and demonstrates performance against the Town's 10-Year Strategic Community Plan.
7. The Annual Report is seen as a key reporting mechanism of the Town's Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework. In accordance with guidelines from the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries, local governments are expected to outline progress towards achieving the objectives of their respective 10-Year Strategic Community Plan and the major projects and priorities of their 5-Year Corporate Business Plan.
8. The Annual Report is also seen as an essential tool to inform the community and key stakeholders about the Town's achievements, challenges and future plans, promote greater community awareness of the Town's programs and services, and illustrate the City's commitment to accountable and transparent government.
9. The Town of Victoria Park Annual Report 2022-23 is provided in Attachment 1. The Annual Report also includes the City's Annual Financial Report for 2022-23 which has been audited by the Office of the Auditor General.
10. In accordance with section 5.54 of the *Local Government Act 1995*, the Council is required to accept an Annual Report by an absolute majority and present the Annual Report to the Annual General Meeting of Electors.
11. Section 5.55 of the *Local Government Act 1995* states the Chief Executive Officer is to give local public notice of the availability of the Annual Report as soon as practicable, following its acceptance by Council. This notice is to apply for at least seven days.

Annual General Meeting of Electors

12. Section 5.27 of the *Local Government Act 1995* requires that the Annual Electors' General Meeting is to be held on a day selected by the local government, but not more than 56 days after the local government accepts the Annual Report.
13. Section 5.29 of the *Local Government Act 1995* states the Chief Executive Officer is to convene an electors' meeting by giving at least 14 days public notice.
14. The latest date the Electors General Meeting can be held is Monday 24 June 2024.
15. It is recommended that the Annual General Meeting of Electors be held on Monday 27 May 2024 commencing at 6.00pm.
16. Regulation 15 of the Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996 provides that the Annual Report for the previous financial year and any other general business be discussed at the Electors General Meeting.

Relevant documents

[Town of Victoria Park Community Strategic Plan 2022-2032](#)

Legal and policy compliance

[Division 5 of the *Local Government Act 1995*](#)

[Part 3 *Local Government \(Administration\) Regulations 1996*](#)

Financial implications

Current budget impact	Nil.
Future budget impact	Nil.

Risk management consideration

Risk impact category	Risk event description	Risk rating	Risk appetite	Risk Mitigation
Financial			Low	.
Environmental			Medium	
Health and safety			Low	
Infrastructure/ ICT systems/ utilities			Medium	
Legislative compliance	Non-compliance with legislative requirements	Medium	Low	Adopt the Annual Report and set a date for an Electors General Meeting
Reputation	Town's reputation affected	Medium	Low	Adopt the Annual Report and set a date for an Electors General Meeting
Service delivery			Medium	

Engagement

Internal engagement	
Stakeholder	Comments
Whole of organisation	The whole organisation was consulted in the preparation of the Annual Report

Strategic alignment

Civic Leadership	
Community Priority	Intended public value outcome or impact
CL1 – Effectively managing resources and performance.	The Annual Report provides a summary of the previous year’s achievements and challenges, and the outlook for the year ahead. It includes specific statutory requirements and demonstrates performance against the Town’s 10-Year Strategic Community Plan
CL2 - Communication and engagement with the community.	The Annual Report details the previous year’s achievements and challenges of the Town, and the outlook for the year ahead. It includes specific statutory requirements and demonstrates performance against the Town’s 10-Year Strategic Community Plan. The EGM provides a forum for the community to receive the Annual Report plus raise any other matters of general business.
CL3 - Accountability and good governance.	The Annual Report demonstrates accountability and good governance to the community and other stakeholders.

Further consideration

Nil.

COUNCIL RESOLUTION (75/2024):

Moved: Mayor Karen Vernon

Seconded: Cr Peter Devereux

That the Audit and Risk Committee recommends that Council:

1. Accepts the Town of Victoria Park Annual Report 2022-23 in Attachment 1.
2. Convenes the 2023 Electors’ General Meeting on Monday 27 May 2024, commencing at 6.00pm in the Council Chamber, Town of Victoria Park Administration Centre, 99 Shepperton Road, Victoria Park.

Carried (8 - 0)

For: Mayor Karen Vernon, Cr Claire Anderson, Cr Sky Croeser, Cr Peter Devereux, Deputy Mayor Bronwyn Ife, Cr Peter Melrosa, Cr Lindsay Miles and Cr Daniel Minson

Against: Nil

10 Public question time

Mayor Karen Vernon opened public question time at 6.20pm. There being no further questions from the public, public question time closed at 6:20pm.

11 Public statement time

Mayor Karen Vernon opened public statement time at 6.20pm. There being no further statements from the public, public statement time closed at 6:20pm.

12 Meeting closed to the public

Nil.

12.1 Matters for which the meeting may be closed

Nil.

12.2 Public reading of resolutions which may be made public

Nil.

13 Closure

There being no further business, Mayor Karen Vernon closed the meeting at 6:20 pm.

I confirm these minutes to be true and accurate record of the proceedings of the Council/Committee.

Signed:

Dated this:

Day of:

2024