

Councillor Induction Manual 2024

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CONTENTS

1	INTRODUCTION	4
2	COUNCILLORS INDUCTION GUIDE.....	5
3	GREATER DANDENONG	6
3.1	AN OVERVIEW OF GREATER DANDENONG	6
3.2	GEOGRAPHY AND POPULATION	6
3.3	CULTURAL DIVERSITY	6
3.4	SPOKEN LANGUAGES.....	7
3.5	ENGLISH FLUENCY	7
3.6	FAMILIES	8
3.7	DISABILITY	8
3.8	EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES	8
3.9	UNEMPLOYMENT	8
3.10	UNPAID WORK	9
3.11	INCOMES	9
3.12	CRIME.....	9
4	SUMMARY OF CURRENT AND FUTURE ISSUES	11
4.1	ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE	11
4.2	CITY FUTURES.....	13
4.3	COMMUNITY STRENGTHENING.....	13
4.4	CORPORATE DEVELOPMENT	13
5	COUNCILLOR BRIEFING SESSIONS	14
5.1	WHAT IS A COUNCILLOR BRIEFING SESSION?	14
5.2	CBS AGENDAS.....	14
6	PHOTO SHOOT ATTENDANCE	15
7	FIRST COUNCIL MEETING OF NEW TERM	16
7.1	OATH OF OFFICE AND DECLARATION TO ABIDE BY THE COUNCILLOR CODE OF CONDUCT	16
8	SUPPORT RESOURCES.....	17
8.1	MAIN CONTACT TELEPHONE NUMBERS	17
8.2	ADMINISTRATION	18
8.3	SECURITY/KEYCARD	18
9	INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY RESOURCES.....	19
10	OTHER RESOURCES.....	20
10.1	INFOSUM	20
10.2	MACCS (MAYOR AND COUNCILLORS' COMMUNICATION SITE) - INTRANET.....	20
10.3	MEETING ROOMS AND COUNCILLORS' ROOMS	20
11	DEALING WITH THE MEDIA.....	21
12	GOVERNANCE AND PROCEDURES.....	22
12.1	CODE OF CONDUCT – COUNCILLORS:	22
12.2	COUNCIL EXPENSES, REIMBURSEMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY POLICY	22
12.3	COUNCILLOR'S ALLOWANCES.....	22
12.4	STATUTORY REGISTERS	22
12.5	LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1989 AND 2020	22
12.6	DELEGATIONS	23
12.7	COUNCIL AGENDA	23
12.8	CONFLICTS OF INTEREST	24
12.9	PUBLIC INTEREST DISCLOSURES ACT 2012	25
12.10	INFORMATION PRIVACY AND FREEDOM OF INFORMATION	25

13 OTHER CONTACTS..... 26
13.1 PEAK BODY ORGANISATIONS 26

1 INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Greater Dandenong City Council.

The information contained within this Induction Manual, along with an Induction Program, is intended to provide you with some basic information about your first few weeks as a Councillor, and as a starting point for questions.

It is recommended that you read this manual thoroughly as it will help you in your first few weeks. If you have previously served a term of office as a Councillor, you will already be familiar with most of the information in this manual. However, it is still recommended that you look through it just to catch up on some of the changes.

We warmly welcome you to your Councillor term. Advice, assistance and information are always available to you through the Executive Team, the Governance Business Unit and the Mayor and Councillors Office Coordinator, all who are here to help and assist you to make decisions and shape the future of this great city. Please call on any of us to help whenever you need it.



Jacqui Weatherill
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
19 March 2024

2 COUNCILLORS INDUCTION GUIDE

You will be fully trained or briefed over the next few months in many areas affecting you as a Councillor. These include:

- Meeting Procedure
- Working with the Media
- Governance Matters
- Conflicts of Interest
- Code of Conduct - Councillors
- Freedom of Information
- Information Privacy
- Confidentiality
- Information Technology
- MACCS (Mayor and Councillors' Communication Site)
- Council's Business Systems

Once we know what your schedule allows, we will design a Councillor Induction Program which highlights induction and attendance requirements for you over the next few months.

The following important documents are also provided as a resource kit within your Councillor portal in the online application Docs on Tap.

- Governance Rules
- Code of Conduct – Councillors
- Imagine 2030 Community Plan (+ 2017 Update)
- Council Plan
- Annual Plan
- Community Wellbeing Plan
- Current Budget and Long Term Financial Strategy
- Relevant Policies

NB: Provision has been made for you to **access all documentation electronically**, such as those listed above, on your IT equipment through the online application Docs on Tap. We will not provide you with hard copy documents. You will be shown how to access these documents after you pick up your IT equipment and when you make some time to sit with Governance staff.

3 GREATER DANDENONG

3.1 An Overview of Greater Dandenong

Greater Dandenong is one of the most diverse localities in Australia. It was created when all of the former City of Dandenong, approximately 70 per cent of the former City of Springvale and small parts of the former City of Berwick and Shire of Cranbourne were amalgamated on 15 December 1994.

NB: The information contained in this section is based on the initial 2016 Census findings with recent 2020 updates.

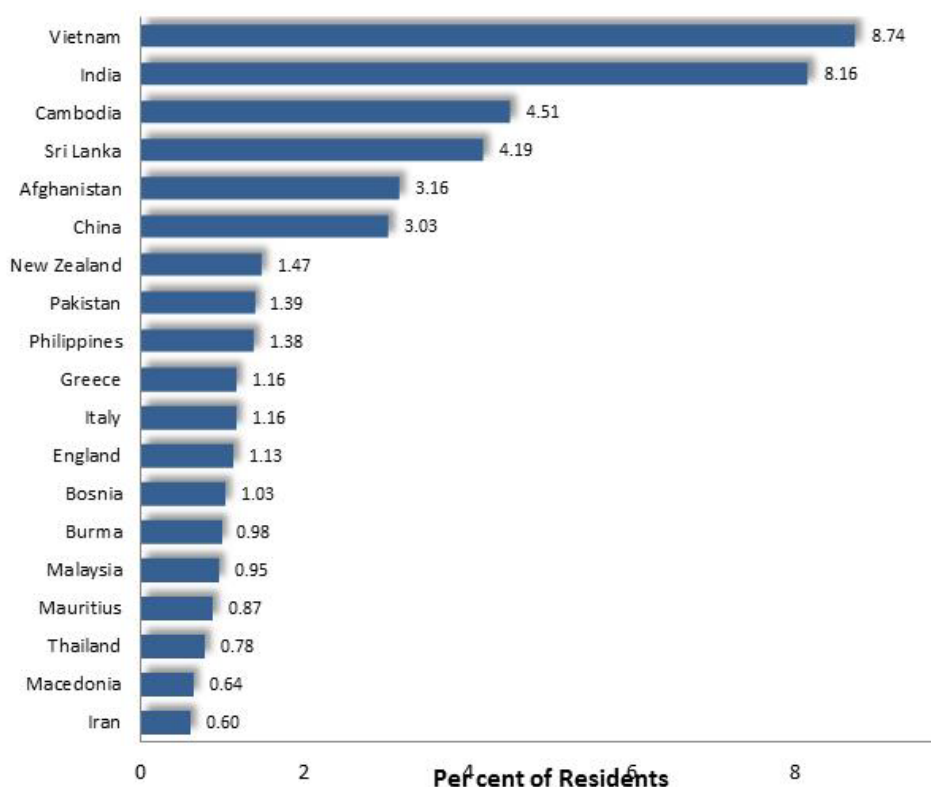
3.2 Geography and Population

Greater Dandenong encompasses an area of 129 square kilometres in Melbourne's south-east, approximately 24 km. from the Melbourne central business district (CBD). It is bounded by Police Road in the north, Dandenong Creek and South Gippsland Freeway to the east, Thompson Road in the south, and by Westall and Springvale Roads to the west.

At an estimated 172,000 people in 2020, the number of residents in Greater Dandenong has risen by 27,000 during the past two decades. It is predicted to grow by 28,000 to 200,000, during the next ten years.

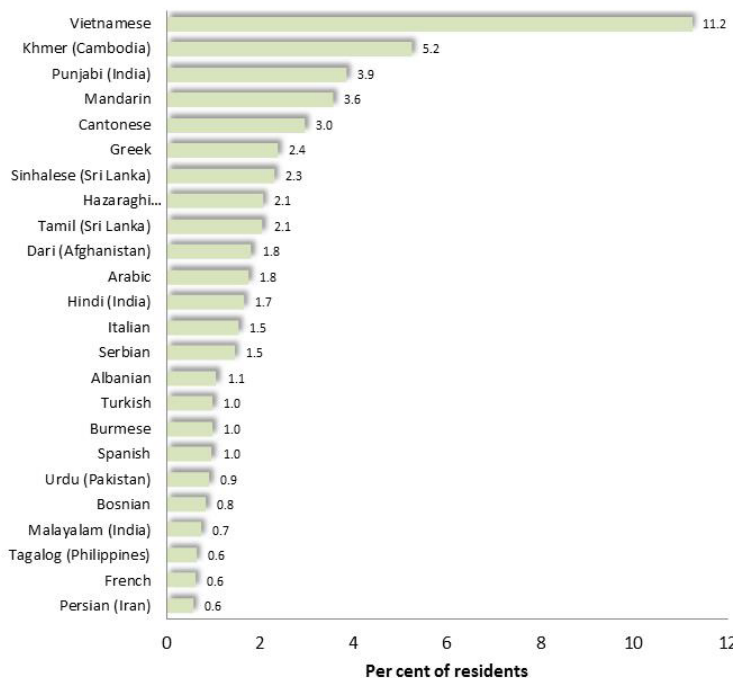
3.3 Cultural Diversity

Greater Dandenong is the most culturally diverse municipality in Australia, with residents from 167 different birthplaces. Well over half (64%) of its population is born overseas, and 61% from nations where English is not the main spoken language. Major birthplaces, aside from Australia, include India, Cambodia, Sri Lanka, Afghanistan, China, Pakistan, New Zealand and the Philippines.



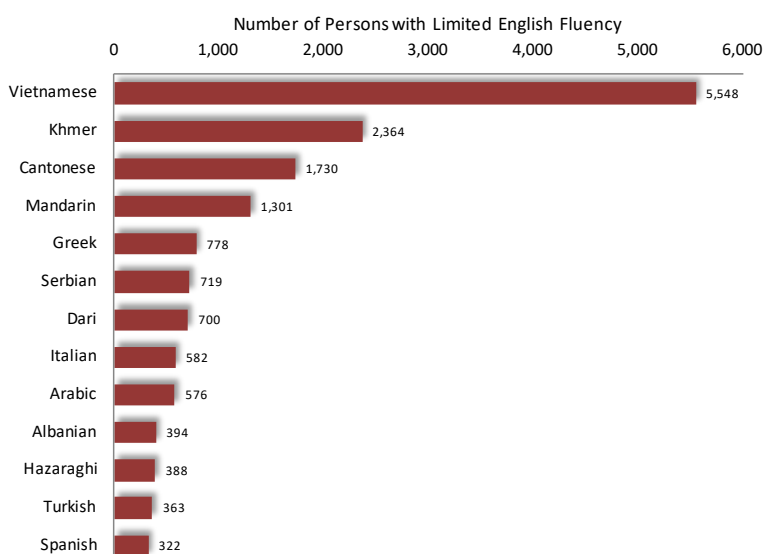
3.4 Spoken Languages

In 2016, over two-thirds (70%) of the residents of Greater Dandenong spoke languages other than English – the largest proportion in Victoria and more than twice the state-wide level of 32%. Major non-English languages included Vietnamese, Khmer, Punjabi, Chinese languages, Greek and Sinhalese.



3.5 English Fluency

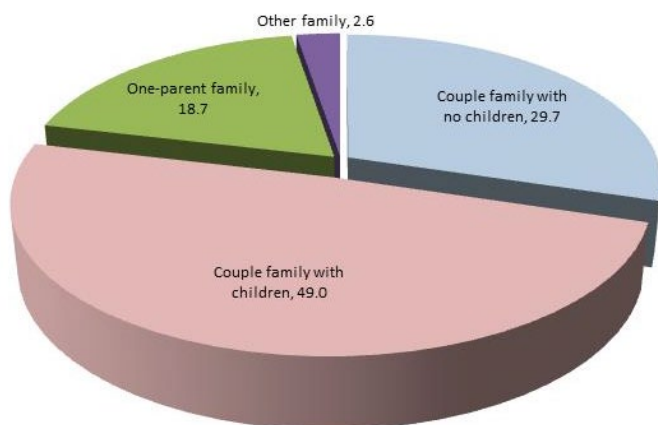
One in seven residents - accounting for 19,000 people or 13% of the population - has limited fluency in spoken English – four times the metropolitan level of 4%. Many residents who speak Vietnamese, Khmer and Chinese languages have limited English fluency.



Number of Residents with Limited English Fluency
by Spoken Language: Greater Dandenong, 2016

3.6 Families

There are 38,471 families in Greater Dandenong, with most of the balance lone person households. Nearly a third (30%) of families are couples, 49% couples with children, and 19% are headed by a single parent. Over three-quarters of families with children were headed by overseas-born parents – compared with a quarter of families across Victoria.



3.7 Disability

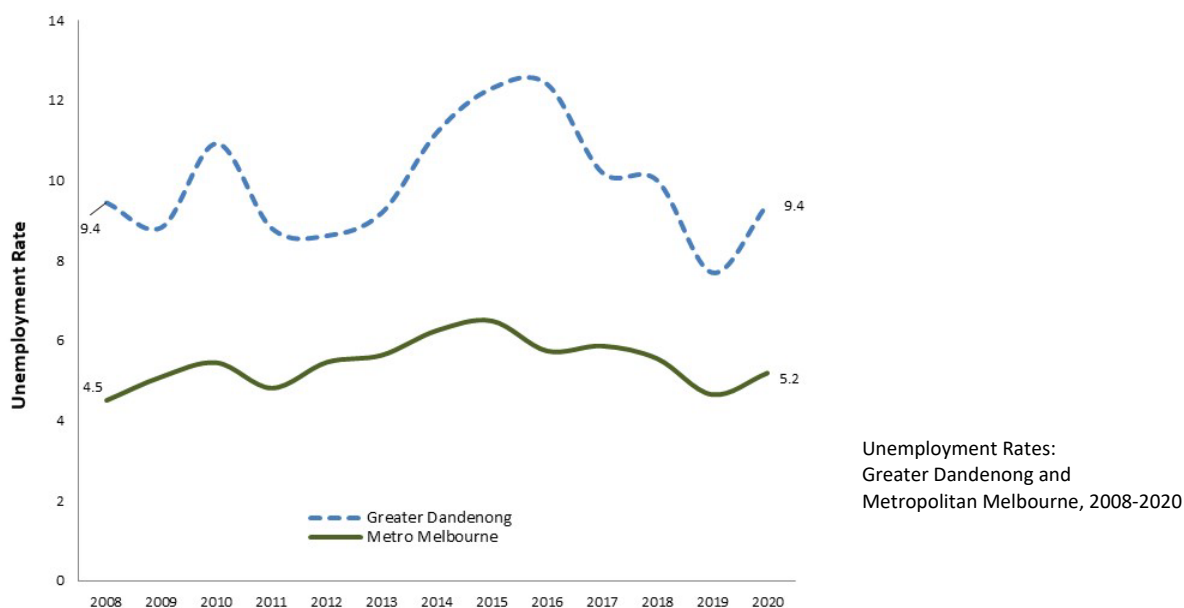
The 2016 Census found that 6.8% of people in Greater Dandenong - compared with 5.5% across metro. Melbourne - were living with a severe or profound disability, requiring daily assistance with mobility, communication or self-care. These included a 1.8% of residents aged up to 24 years, 4.6% among those aged 25-64, 13% of those aged 65-69, 40% of 80-84 year-olds and 71% of residents aged over 90.

3.8 Educational Outcomes

The 2016 Census revealed that 13% of young people aged 20-24 years in Greater Dandenong had left school before completing year eleven, compared with 8.3% across Melbourne. Eighteen per cent of 20 to 24 year-olds were neither in paid employment nor enrolled in education in 2016 – the third highest level in Melbourne, and substantially more than the corresponding metropolitan figure, of 10.7%.

3.9 Unemployment

Unemployment rates in Greater Dandenong have fluctuated in the past decade, most recently rising to 9.4% by early 2020 – the highest level in Victoria and nearly twice the metropolitan average of 5.2%. This number represents 8,100 residents and rise of 1,800 since mid-2019.



3.10 Unpaid Work

The 2016 Census found that 12% of residents volunteered in the previous year - about half the Victorian level of 21%. In addition, 12% per cent of residents were providing unpaid assistance to someone with a disability (including 9.7% of males and 13.3% of females), while 26% of residents provided unpaid care to their own, or others', children.

3.11 Incomes

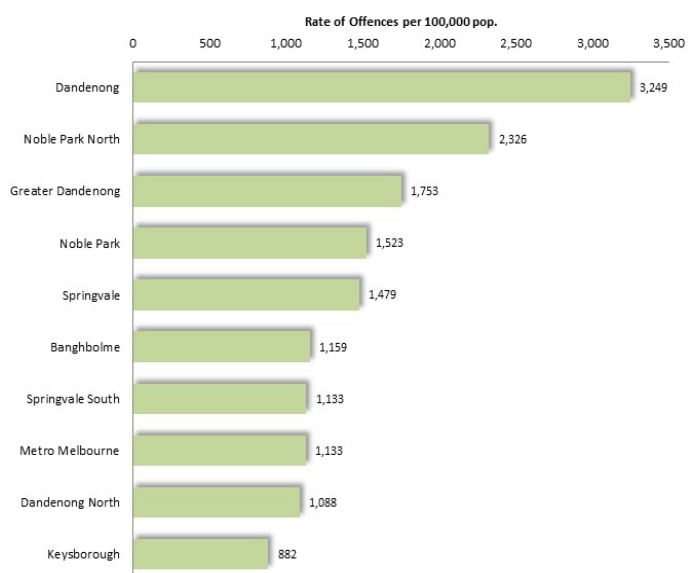
In 2016, the median weekly gross income among Greater Dandenong residents was \$476 - the lowest in Melbourne, and 73% of the metropolitan average of \$785. Median incomes in Greater Dandenong stood at \$403 among females, compared to \$616 for males. Many household incomes are further diminished by gambling losses. In 2018/19, over \$119 million was lost to electronic gambling machines in Greater Dandenong, equivalent to \$910 per adult and the highest rate of losses in Victoria.

3.12 Crime

The rate of local offences has declined 14% in the four years to 2019/20, with violent offences falling 15%, and property offences by 18%. In the same period, drug offence rates rose 3%.

Despite these declines, 2019/20 alleged offences rates in Greater Dandenong, compared with metropolitan Melbourne were: 50% higher for violent offences, 27% higher for property offences, 62% higher for drug offences and 42% higher for overall offences.

In 2019/20, the rate of police callouts to family incidents in Greater Dandenong, was the third highest in Melbourne. Crime rates vary widely within Greater Dandenong. Rates of violent offences, for example, were almost twice as high in Dandenong in 2019/20 as the municipal average (diagram below).



More information about conditions in Greater Dandenong and Victoria: www.socialstatistics.com.au

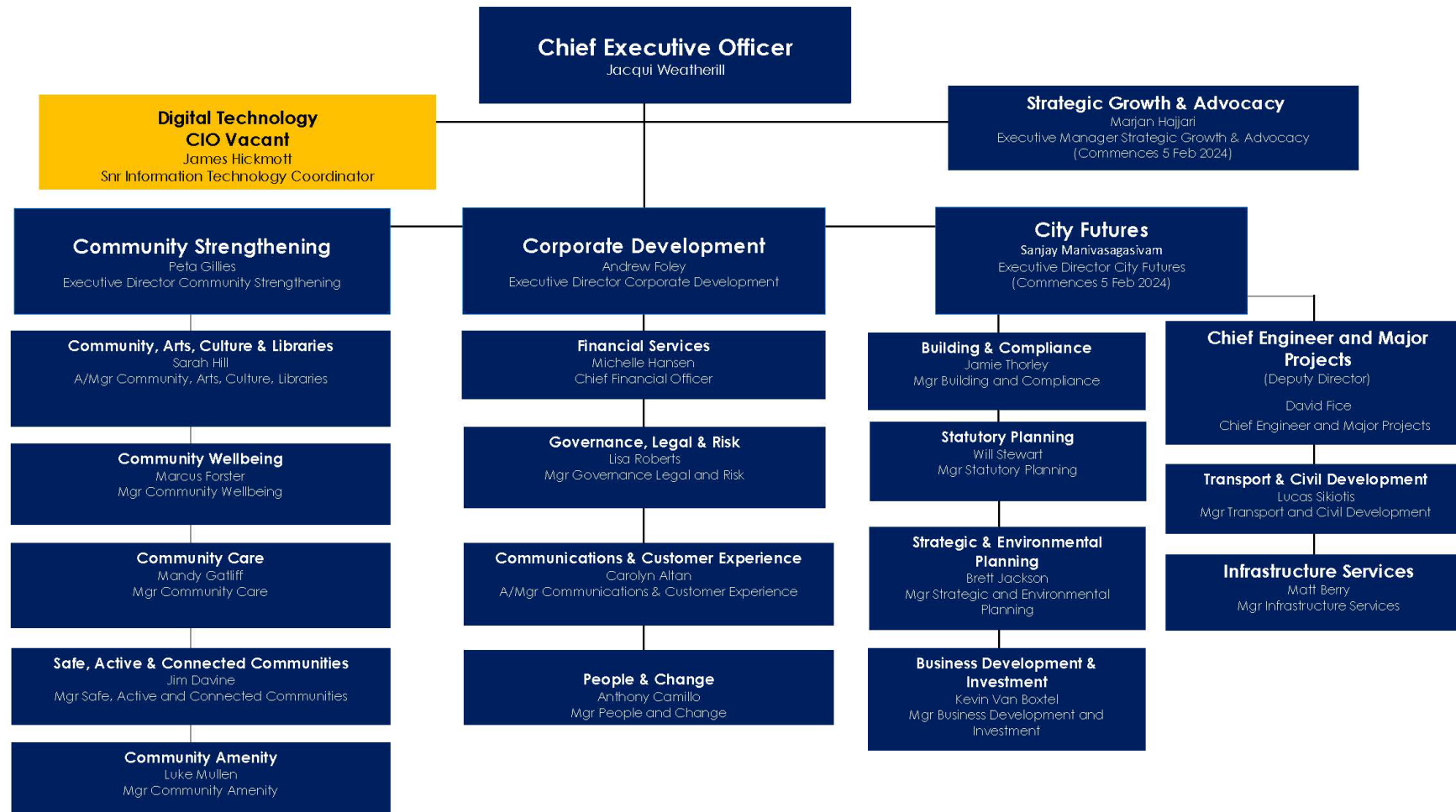
4 SUMMARY OF CURRENT AND FUTURE ISSUES

4.1 Organisational Structure

Under the *Local Government Act 2020*, the Chief Executive Officer is responsible for all staff within the organisation. The following chart reflects the current structure under which Council staff operate. A Councillor and Staff Interaction Protocol is in place and is provided in Docs on Tap.

As part of your induction program, you will meet with Executive Directors who will talk to you about what each Directorate is currently working on, what decisions have been made in the past, what challenges Council is now facing and what work is coming up in future.

High-level organisation structure



12 January 2024

4.2 City Futures

City Futures is focused on the development of our built and natural environments and ensuring that Council's activities match the community's future needs for infrastructure, facilities, housing and sustainability. It oversees the functions of building and compliance Services, statutory planning, strategic and environmental planning, business development and investment, major projects, infrastructure services, asset management, transport and civil development.

Key contacts are:

- Sanjay Manivasagasivam, Executive Director City Futures, Ph 8571 5293, Mob 0475810 045
- David Fice, Chief Engineer & Major Projects, Ph 8571 5242, Mob 0484 606 438
- Julie Anlanger, Executive Support Officer City Futures, Ph 8571 1470, Mob 0403 072 298

4.3 Community Strengthening

Community Strengthening provides direct services, information and support to the community across a wide range of programs such as sport and recreation, libraries, cultural services, the DRUM theatre, youth and family services, children's services, Immunisation services, Maternal and Child Health, festivals and events, support for older people, food services, support for people with disabilities, community safety, community amenity, volunteers, community development, civic facilities, community grants funding and advocacy.

Key contacts are:

- Peta Gillies, Executive Director Community Strengthening, Ph 8571 5211, Mob 0403 710 817
- Kim Bernardo, Executive Support Officer Community Strengthening, Ph 8571 5345

4.4 Corporate Development

The Corporate Development Directorate is largely the internal support services arm of Council with some external facing services. It is comprised of around 150 staff split into four distinct departments which cover communications and customer experience, finance, governance and human resources (known as people and change).

Key contacts are:

- Nicole Rudden, Manager Governance, Legal & Risk, Ph 8571 5596, Mob 0428 393 064
- Dani Trimble, Governance Coordinator, Ph 8571 1497, Mob 0415 335 380
- Jo Thorn, Mayor and Councillors Office Coordinator, Ph 8571 5230
- Jenny Kurjan, Executive Support Officer Corporate Development, Ph 8571 5279

5 COUNCILLOR BRIEFING SESSIONS

5.1 What is a Councillor Briefing Session?

The purpose of Councillor Briefing Sessions is to ensure Councillors are fully informed on matters that they may be required to make formal decisions on, or that directly affect them in their role as an elected member. Councillor Briefing Sessions are held for Councillors on most Monday evenings. When a Council Meeting is scheduled, the Briefing Session before that is called a Pre-Council Meeting (PCM).

Dinner is supplied every Monday you are at the Council offices working.

5.2 CBS Agendas

Agendas for each Councillor Briefing Session (CBS) are prepared by the Governance Business Unit in consultation with the Executive Team and the Mayor. A forward agenda of items to be discussed at Briefing Sessions is maintained by the Governance Business Unit and can be accessed via MACCS (see later in this manual).

Matters discussed at Councillor Briefing Sessions are reported on at Council Meetings. Confidentiality generally applies to all issues discussed at Councillor Briefing Sessions as prescribed under the Councillor Code of Conduct, however some issues will be prescribed as confidential under the *Local Government Act 2020*.

NB: Provision has been made for you to **access documentation you need** electronically, such as CBS and Council Meeting Agendas, on your Council electronic devices through the application Docs on Tap (<https://app.docson tap.com.au/>). You will be shown how to access these documents after you pick up your IT equipment and when you are able to sit with Governance staff to be shown how to use the application.

6 PHOTO SHOOT ATTENDANCE

You are required to attend a photo shoot at at the Dandenong Civic Centre, Level 2 Meeting Rooms (refer also your Induction Program). The date of this will be communicated to you.

At a later stage, a group shot will be arranged when all Councillors are in attendance.

It is recommended that you wear corporate attire in dark colours for all photo shoots so that photographs are kept consistent and can be used for many purposes.

7 FIRST COUNCIL MEETING OF NEW TERM

The first Council meeting of the new term will take place in the Council Chamber at the Dandenong Civic Centre (refer also to your Induction Program).

Just prior to this meeting, you will be required to take your oath or affirmation of office and make the Code of Conduct declaration to the Chief Executive Officer.

Informal photographs will be taken during the proceedings.

The Agenda for this Council Meeting will be available to you via your Council electronic devices through the application Docs on Tap.

Please advise Governance immediately if you will be having any special guests attend this meeting so that we can welcome them accordingly and invite them to attend dinner with you.

7.1 Oath of Office and Declaration to Abide by the Councillor Code of Conduct

Under section 30 of the *Local Government Act 2020*, before being capable of acting as a Councillor, all persons must:

1. take the oath or affirmation of office in the manner prescribed by the regulations; and
2. read the Councillor Code of Conduct; and
3. make a declaration that they will abide by the Councillor Code of Conduct; and

These requirements must be fulfilled within three months of the date of the declaration of election results. Once sworn in, Councillors must also complete Councillor Induction training within 6 months after the oath or affirmation of office is taken and make a declaration that such training has been undertaken.

Under section 38 of the *Local Government Act 2020* it is an offence to act as a Councillor while being incapable of doing so.

All of these requirements will be scripted into the proceedings for the first Council Meeting that you attend.

8 SUPPORT RESOURCES

8.1 Main Contact Telephone Numbers

The following is a list of the telephone numbers of the Chief Executive Officer, Directors, Manager Communications & Customer Experience, Manager Governance, Legal & Risk, the Governance Coordinator and the Mayor and Councillors Office Coordinator.

A telephone listing of all staff is available on MACCS, an online application which you will be trained to use.

POSITION	NAME	PHONE	EMAIL
Chief Executive Officer	Jacqui Weatherill	8571 5220 0409 172 428	jacqui.weatherill@cgd.vic.gov.au
Executive Assistant to CEO	Fern Watson	8571 5177	Fern.Watson@cgd.vic.gov.au
Executive Director City Futures	Sanjay Manivasagasivam	8571 5293 0475 810 045	sanjay.manivasagasivam@cgd.vic.gov.au
Executive Support Officer	Julie Anlanger	8571 5470	julie.anlanger@cgd.vic.gov.au
Chief Engineer and Major Projects	David Fice	8571 5242 0484 606 438	david.fice@cgd.vic.gov.au
Executive Assistant	Lasie Nguyen	8571 1566	lasie.nguyen@cgd.gov.au
Director Community Strengthening	Peta Gillies	8571 5211 0403 710 817	peta.gillies@cgd.vic.gov.au
Executive Support Officer	Kim Bernardo	8571 5345	kim.bernardo@cgd.vic.gov.au
Executive Manager Strategic Growth & Advocacy	Marjan Hajjari	8571 1472 0417 395 929	andrew.foley@cgd.vic.gov.au
Personal Assistant	Jenny Kurjan	8571 5279	jenny.kurjan@cgd.vic.gov.au
Manager Communications & Customer Experience	Carolyn Altan	8571 5356 0478 281 454	carolyn.altan@cgd.vic.gov.au
Manager Governance, Legal & Risk	Nicole Rudden	8571 5596 0428 393 064	Nicole.Rudden@cgd.vic.gov.au
Governance Coordinator	Dani Trimble	8571 1497 0415 335 380	dani.trimb@cgd.vic.gov.au
Mayor & Councillors Office Coordinator	Jo Thorn	8571 5230	jo.thorn@cgd.vic.gov.au

8.2 Administration

The Mayor and Councillors have direct access to administrative support through the Mayor and Councillors Office Coordinator, Jo Thorn on 8571 5230.

8.2.1 Stationery:

Generic letterhead and stationery are available for use by all Councillors. Individual business cards will be issued to all Councillors. Discuss your complete stationery needs with Jo Thorn on 8571 5230.

Council's letterhead is to be used for all official Council business.

8.3 Security/Keycard

The Mayor and Councillors are provided with a security access card to gain access to Council offices. Council offices have a security alarm system operating after hours, so you will need to discuss the security code details with Jo Thorn and how to apply them for any after-hours access. Generally, the building activates all alarms systems between 11.59pm and 5.00am each day so you should always avoid being in the building during these times. For assistance, please contact Jo Thorn on 8571 5230.

Note that Councillors do not have access to Level 4 and 5 office areas outside of general weekly business hours.

Councillors also have designated parking areas within the Civic Centre basement on Monday nights.

9 INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY RESOURCES

Important Note: As soon as election results are declared you will need to make an appointment to meet with staff in Information Technology Services to pick up your Council mobile phone and discuss your home IT needs. This must be done between as a priority so the devices can be configured for you and you can receive basic training in their use. It will take about two hours for this to be done. **Please ensure you make the appointment with IT as soon as election results are declared or by the end of the day by calling 8571 5215.**

The following items will be made available to you for Council business use. These items will remain the property of Council and must be returned when a Councillor ceases to hold that office. If you are a new councillor, a staff member from IT Services will contact you as soon as possible to arrange for delivery and installation of your home equipment which will be as follows.

Dell Laptop which will be configured with standard Microsoft applications and will include Internet and Wifi access and the ability for Councillors to remotely access Council's network. A docking station and large screen will also be provided in the home. ADSL and/or NBN services will be provided if they are required (if you do not already have them). IT Services will discuss with you the best way to connect at your home.

All Councillors will be supplied with an email address.

Printer/Scanner/Multifunction Device (optional) – always try to refrain from using and printing hard copy documents.

Paper and toner supplies will be obtainable through Jo Thorn on 8571 5230.

iPhone with Voice/Data Plan/iPad:

An iPhone with charger will be provided to use for Council related business (Supplier is Telstra in most instances). Any costs associated with private calls must be reimbursed by Councillors (as prescribed in the Council Expenses Reimbursement and Accountability Policy). If you require a hands-free car kit installed in your vehicle then this will also need to be arranged through Jo Thorn on 8571 5230. If you already have a mobile phone and want to keep your existing number, then you will need to discuss this with IT Services when you make your appointment. **Provision of an iPad is optional** – please discuss this with IT when you meet with them.

Remember that if it is not an essential item for you to function as a Councillor, then do not spend the community's money in requesting that item. All Councillor expenses are disclosed on Council's website so that all spending is transparent to the community.

NB: Provision has been made for you to **access all hard copy documentation** electronically, such as CBS and Council Meeting Agendas, on your laptop and mobile devices through the application Docs on Tap. You will be shown how to access these documents by Governance after you have become familiar with your Council electronic devices.

10 OTHER RESOURCES

10.1 INFOSUM

The Governance Business Unit distributes Councillors Weekly Information Summary (INFOSUM) to Councillors and Executive every Wednesday. INFOSUM is the primary source of all your information and includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- planning application received
- planning appeals and hearings
- information and project updates
- press releases issued
- CEO and Executive memos, advice and information
- key diary dates and invitations
- Councillor Briefing Session Agendas
- Council Meeting Agendas.

10.2 MACCS (Mayor and Councillors' Communication Site) - Intranet

MACCS is an electronic application for daily and weekly news, views, momentous occasions, staff movements, conference opportunities and events which is specifically produced as an information source for Councillors of the Greater Dandenong City Council.

MACCS is available to search through at any time you are logged into the Council computer network.

In the Internet Server environment just log onto the following website:

<http://maccs/>

If you ask, you can be fully trained in the use of MACCS and the various resources it provides to you.

10.3 Meeting Rooms and Councillors' Rooms

The Mayor is provided with a personal office at the Dandenong Civic Centre. A Councillors' office is also available for use at the Civic Centre and can be used during or after business hours.

There are also a number of meeting rooms available throughout Council's offices. Meeting rooms can be booked through the Mayor and Councillors Office Coordinator, Jo Thorn on 8571 5230.

11 DEALING WITH THE MEDIA

The Media & Communications Unit plays a vital role in effectively promoting the vast number of council services available to the local community. When dealing with the media, this unit operates under the principals of Council's Media Policy.

This policy is available on your MACCS site to peruse (See Section 10.2 of this document), and your Councillor Induction Program will advise of your scheduled Councillor Media Training in the near future.

In summary, the Mayor is the official spokesperson for:

- all policy matters and Council decisions;
- statewide political issues affecting local government; and
- issues affecting public perception of the City.

The Mayor may delegate authority to an appropriate councillor, staff member or the CEO to make an official comment. As the Chair or delegate of a council committee, Councillors may provide comment on matters relating to that Committee but that should be checked with the Media & Communications Unit first. Councillors are not to provide information deemed 'confidential' to the media or any third party.

The CEO is the official spokesperson for all operational matters pertaining to Greater Dandenong City Council as an organisation and corporate issues relating to strategic direction. The CEO may delegate authority to a council officer to make official comment. As a general rule of thumb or if you are at any time unsure, always contact Carolyn Altan, Manager Communications & Customer Experience on 8571 5356 or 0478 281 454.

The Council News, council's community newsletter, is produced monthly to inform residents about Council activities. Contributions are received from the community, staff and Councillors for their ward profiles. The Media & Communications Unit is responsible for producing this document and it has an eight week lead time.

Media releases are produced regularly by the Media & Communications Unit. All press releases issued on behalf of the Council are required to be approved by the Mayor and Chief Executive Officer or relevant Director.

All council information is available on council's website at www.greaterdandenong.com.

12 GOVERNANCE AND PROCEDURES

12.1 Code of Conduct – Councillors:

The Code of Conduct-Councillors outlines the manner in which Councillors must conduct themselves during their term. This document is available for viewing at any time on MACCS. The *Local Government Act 2020* requires that the Code of Conduct-Councillors be reviewed within four months of Council elections. A copy of the current Code is available in your reference documents in Docs on Tap. You must read this document before you take your oath or affirmation of office.

12.2 Council Expenses, Reimbursement and Accountability Policy

The Council Expenses, Support and Accountability Policy deals with support services and equipment available to Councillors. This document is available in your reference documents in Docs on Tap.

12.3 Councillor's Allowances

Councillor's allowances are paid monthly or fortnightly, in advance, at a rate that is determined by the Victorian Independent Remuneration Tribunal. Councillors allowances are treated as taxable income by the Australia Tax Office (ATO). Some expenses of office are tax deductible but records for substantiation are required by the ATO. If you require further information regarding this issue, please contact Council's Payroll Unit on 8571 5122.

Councillors are paid out-of-pocket expenses as per Council's policy governing the matter.

New Councillors must advise Governance whether they want their allowance payments to be made fortnightly or monthly.

12.4 Statutory Registers

Governance keeps many statutory registers as required by the *Local Government Act 2020* and is required to make the information available to the public on request: These include:

- Delegations
- Personal Interests
- Interstate and Overseas Travel
- Gifts

For more information please contact the Governance Business Unit on 8571 5216.

12.5 Local Government Act 1989 and 2020

The *Local Government Act 1989* and 2020, are the centre pieces of a large body of legislation enacted by the State Government and administered by the Minister for Local Government to empower and regulate Local Government in Victoria.

These bodies of legislation include all associated regulations relating to areas of Local Government function such as the:

- Planning and Environment Act 1987
- Environment Protection Act 1970
- Valuation of Land Act 1960
- Freedom of Information Act 1982

- Domestic (Feral and Nuisance) Animals Act 1994.

Additionally, Council currently has three Local Laws as follows:

- Meeting Procedure Local Law No. 1 (now superseded by the Governance Rules but not yet revoked)
- Greater Dandenong General Local Law No.2
- Tree Protection on Private Land Local Law

A copy of these Local Laws is available on Council's website at any time.

12.6 Delegations

An important administrative tool available to an organisation is the power to delegate. Delegation allows for the efficient and effective functioning of the organisation.

The Council is responsible for carrying out various duties, functions and powers under a range of State legislation and Council's Local Laws. Council may delegate many of these duties, functions and powers to council officers, particularly those of a purely administrative nature which do not require formal Council consideration and can quite appropriately be dealt with by council officers as part of their duties.

The process of delegating various duties, functions and powers from Council to the Chief Executive Officer is made possible through section 11 of the *Local Government Act 2020*, and other pieces of legislation relating to specific duties, functions and powers. It is a practice that has a long tradition, originating in the desire to remove the need for formal Council consideration of matters that are essentially routine, administrative or operational in nature. Other issues, however, are more substantive in nature and it is more appropriate for Council itself to consider the matter.

Instruments of delegation must be reviewed within 12 months of a general Council election or as required when legislative or organisational structure changes have occurred. All delegations approved by Council are available for public inspection by request.

12.7 Council Agenda

The Governance Business Unit produces the Agenda for each Council Meeting. The structure of a Council Meeting Agenda is outlined in the Governance Rules and is divided into the following sections:

12.7.1 Documents for Sealing

This is essentially a list of documents and contracts that require the seal of the Greater Dandenong City Council. Any legally enforceable agreement, including contracts between the Council and another party can only be executed after Council has resolved to enter into the agreement and affix the common seal of the Council to the documentation.

12.7.2 Documents Tabled

Council receives copies of policy statements, newsletters, annual reports and other reports from a large range of organisations. At the discretion of the Governance Business Unit, those of a strategic nature are tabled at the Council meeting so that Councillors are made aware of their existence. The Governance Rules and Council policy requires any petition or joint letter (in the appropriate formats) to be listed in the Council Agenda.

12.7.3 Contracts

Comprises reports from Council's Contracts Unit.

12.7.4 Statutory Planning

Comprises reports regarding Statutory Planning Applications presented for Council's consideration.

12.7.5 Finance and Budget

Comprises reports from Council's Finance Unit and Supplementary Valuation Returns.

12.7.6 Policy and Strategy

Comprises reports regarding policy and strategy issues and proposals from all areas across Council.

12.7.7 Other

This section is for general reports.

12.7.8 Reports from Councillors and Councillors' Questions

At each Ordinary Meeting of Council all Councillors have the opportunity to speak for a limited time about any conference or events they have recently attended.

If a Councillor chooses to speak, the name of the conference/event and the Councillor will be noted in the Minutes for that meeting. If a Councillor requires additional information on the conference/event to be listed in the Minutes, they must submit it in writing to the Governance Business Unit by 9.00am the day following the meeting. This deadline is not negotiable. Councillors are also able to direct questions, with or without notice, to Council Executive staff.

Councillor also have a limited time to ask questions of Council officers.

12.7.9 Public Question Time

Member of the public are able to submit a limited number of questions for consideration and answer at a Council Meeting and can choose to ask that question in person.

12.7.10 Notices of Motion

A notice of motion is a notice setting out the text of a motion proposed to be moved at the next relevant meeting. It must be in writing, signed by a Councillor, and be lodged with the Chief Executive Officer in sufficient time for him or her to give each Councillor at least forty-eight (48) hours' notice of such notice.

The guidelines for submitting a notice of motion to a Council meeting are included in the Governance Rules. If you require any further information regarding Council Agendas and Minutes, please call Council's Governance Manager.

12.8 Conflicts of Interest

12.8.1 Conflicts of Interest

Under the *Local Government Act 2020*, a Councillor, member of a delegated committee or a nominated officer is required to disclose any conflict of interest in respect of any matter or meeting under the auspices of Council.

The purpose of conflict of interest provisions in the *Local Government Act 2020* is to protect Councillors, members of staff and the public. The actions of Councillors and members of staff must be and must be seen to be, independent, open and without concern for any personal profit or loss. Conflicts of interest must be disclosed at all meetings under the auspices of Council.

A Conflict of Interest may be either a general interest or material interest. A person may have a general conflict of interest in a matter if an impartial, fair-minded person would consider the person's private interests could result in that person acting in a manner that is contrary to their public duty. A person may have a material conflict of interest in a matter if they would gain a benefit or suffer a loss depending on the outcome of a matter.

A MANDATORY induction session which will cover Conflicts of Interest is scheduled for Monday 2 April 2024. If any clarification is required prior to this session in relation to any possible conflict of interest that you may have, please contact the Governance Business Unit on 8571 5216.

12.8.2 Personal Interest Returns

A Councillor must submit an Initial Personal Interest Return within 30 days of taking the Oath or Affirmation of Office.

Interests which a Councillor is required to register are prescribed in section 8 of the *Local Government (Governance and Integrity) Regulations 2020*.

Following submission of an Initial Personal Interest Return, a Biannual Personal Interest Return must then be submitted by a Councillor biannually as prescribed under section 9 of the *Local Government (Governance and Integrity) Regulations 2020*.

The Governance Business Unit will always provide you with the appropriate forms to complete and return.

12.9 Public Interest Disclosures Act 2012

Greater Dandenong City Council is committed to the aims and objectives of the *Public Interest Disclosures Act 2012* and its associated Regulations (the PID Act). It does not tolerate improper conduct by the organisation, its employees, staff, officers or Councillors, nor does it tolerate the taking of reprisals against those who come forward to disclose such conduct.

Greater Dandenong City Council recognises the value of transparency and accountability in its administrative and management practices and supports the making of disclosures that reveal improper conduct.

Greater Dandenong City Council will take all reasonable steps to protect people who make such disclosures from any detrimental action in reprisal for making a disclosure. It will also afford natural justice to the person or body who is the subject of the disclosure.

If you would like to discuss anything regarding the *Public Interest Disclosures Act 2012*, please contact one of the following officers:

Public Interest Disclosure Coordinator

Nicole Rudden, Manager Governance, Legal & Risk

Protected Disclosure Officers

Matthew LeCouteur, Risk Management Consultant

12.10 Information Privacy and Freedom of Information

Councillors are not exempt from being responsible for the information privacy of Councillors, staff and residents and must act in accordance with the Councillor Code of Conduct and Information Privacy legislation when handling any Council information.

All Council information generated by or provided to Councillors is also subject to Freedom of Information legislation and Councillors are asked to always consider this aspect before keeping any hard or soft copy (electronic) documents.

Council's *Privacy and Personal Information* and *Freedom of Information* policies are always available via MACCS. If you wish to have a discussion about how Information Privacy and Freedom of Information impacts you as a Councillor, please speak to the Manager Governance on 8571 5596.

13 OTHER CONTACTS

13.1 Peak Body Organisations

Municipal Association of Victoria
Level 12, 60 Collins Street
Melbourne VIC 3000
Tel: 9667 5555
Email: inquiries@mav.asn.au
Website: www.mav.asn.au

Victorian Local Governance Association
The Green Building 60L
60 Leicester Street
Carlton VIC 3053
Tel: (03) 9349 7999
Email: vlga@vlga.org.au
Website: www.vlga.org.au

Local Government Victoria
55 Collins Street
Melbourne VIC 3000
Australia
Tel: 9208 3333
Email: localgovernment@delwp.vic.gov.au
Website: <http://www.localgovernment.vic.gov.au>