

Requests to be Heard

15 August 2023
Council Meeting

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Item 10.1		For (F) Against (A)
Urban Forest Precinct Plans		
Written Statements		
1.	Mr James Campbell	(A)
Requests to Speak		
1.	Mr James Campbell	(A)
2.	Mr Geoff Leigh	(F)
3.	Mr Derek Screen	(F)

Item 10.7		For (F) Against (A)
Annual Community Grants Allocation 2023-24		
Written Statements		
1.	Mr George Reynolds	(A)
Requests to Speak		
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WRITTEN STATEMENTS

Item 10.1		For (F)
Urban Forest Precinct Plans		Against (A)

1.	Mr James Campbell	(A)
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The residents of Bayside are presented with a conundrum. We need to respond to climate change but in doing so we need to be careful not to make a bad situation worse, creating an environment that enables and enhances fires in Bayside.

Climate change has produced exceedingly hot weather and strong winds during Summer in the northern hemisphere. These conditions together with ample fuel (ground fuel and trees) have created an unholy trinity, delivering wildfires, whether started naturally or by man.

Canada, USA, Greece, Italy, Spain and Portugal have all experienced wildfires that have devastated communities with lives being lost. The conundrum is that trees and the undergrowth beneath trees create fuel for a fire but, both help to reduce the impact of climate change.

Bayside City Council, Council Plan 2021–2025 acknowledges that there will be ‘harsher and longer fire seasons.’ Right now, there is clear evidence that, given the right conditions presented by climate change and the current fuel load in some places, fires could take hold.

Beach Rd – Opposite Rickett’s Point
Beachside Café - facing North.



Coral Av – facing North.



Point Av Lookout – looking East.



Beumaris Yacht Club – Looking Southwest over Beach Rd to Port Phillip Bay



In the absence of any detail, it is possible that the implementation of the draft Urban Forest Precinct Plans will not help to protect the community from the risks posed by fire; it may even exacerbate the risks.

The stated purpose of the **draft** Urban Forest Precinct Plans is to provide detailed guidance on how urban forest outcomes will be delivered **‘on ground’ across Bayside’s suburbs in response to individual suburb needs and characteristics ...The draft Precinct Plans are not intended to provide a planting**

program or detailed tree management procedure, rather (they) will provide guidance to the preparation of the **Annual Tree Planting Program...**'

'The preparation of the draft precinct plans was guided by Council's arborists and ecological experts who identified areas for habitat corridors and linkages to improve biodiversity.' There is nothing in the draft precinct plans to indicate that Council's obligations associated with preventing the occurrence of fire have been considered.

The Fire Rescue Victoria Act, 1958, states that 'it is the duty of every municipal council and public authority to take all practicable steps (including burning) to prevent the occurrence of fires on, and minimise the danger of the spread of fires on and from—any land vested in it or under its control or management, and any road under its care and management. Further, a municipal council or public authority may—acquire any equipment; do any thing; expend from its funds any amount— that is necessary or expedient for the purpose of fulfilling its duty.'

Planning Practice Note 64 (PPN64), Local planning for bushfire protection, states that the **'State planning policy for bushfire seeks to strengthen community resilience to bushfire through planning decisions. Its overarching strategy is to prioritise the protection of human life over other policy considerations when assessing the risk from bushfire. Key strategies to guide strategic and settlement planning include ensuring that the risk from bushfire is reduced to an acceptable level.** Significantly, the planning tip associated with PPN64 is that the 'Bushfire Management Overlay dealt with in the Bushfire Mapping Methodology and Criteria, should not be used as the sole indicator of where bushfire matters need to be considered.'

However, it's not too late for Council to require action to be taken to link the detailed municipal wide Annual Tree Planting Program to each Urban Forest Precinct Plan. This would enable a detailed overlays to be produced for each precinct. Each Urban Forest Precinct Plan could show the location of existing trees on one overlay and the locations of trees proposed for planting on another overlay, enabling both to be looked at separately and together. Each Urban Forest Precinct Plan could also be accompanied by a fire risk assessment and a supporting fire management overlay. The purpose of this approach is to ensure that a bush fire prone area is not being cumulatively created over time.

Council could then consider fire holistically in its detailed planning decisions, specifically, which trees should be retained or cleared to prevent fire and which types of trees should be planted, avoiding the creation of corridors for fire to advance into and around Bayside suburbs, also avoiding the risk of localised fires on a property and neighbouring properties.

Considering all the foregoing, I respectfully request that the following things are considered by Council:

1. That Council requires a report to be produced that sets out the extent of bushfire fire risks for Bayside, with the report to be accompanied by updated and integrated plans that address the prevention of fire and the reduction of the effects of fire. **This first step** should also include an update of fire response, relief and recovery plans, testing the integrated plans (mitigation, reduction, response, relief and recovery) at desk top level, with the response, relief and recovery plans to be tested during a field exercise to make sure they'll work in practice.
2. That Council require action to be taken to link the detailed municipal wide Annual Tree Planting Program to each Urban Forest Precinct Plan, as indicated above.
3. That the Municipal Fire Prevention Officer or another suitable person, as well as the arborist, comment (including no comment) on every redevelopment planning application. This would include the intended type of trees proposed for planting, addressing issues such as combustibility, height, canopy and location, with intended setbacks to be determined from any existing building to be retained, considering the age and build state of any retained buildings.
4. That any planning application to remove a tree for whatever reason, requires comment from the Municipal Fire Prevention Officer or another suitable person as to the current fire risk posed by the tree(s), if it is recommended to be retained.
5. That if Council approves a tree for removal and requires it to be replaced that the arborist and the Municipal Fire Prevention Officer contribute to the specific determination as to the type of replacement tree(s) and the specific location(s) on a property, one aim being to mitigate the risk of fire to the property owner and the property owner's neighbours.

Finally, Councillors may be interested in reading the CFA's advice on Suburban Garden Landscaping for Bushfire: Garden Design & Plant Selection, found at the following hyperlink <https://www.cfa.vic.gov.au/plan-prepare/how-to-prepare-your-property/landscaping>

The CFA, now a part of Fire Rescue Victoria, indicates that the location, type and ongoing maintenance of vegetation within a property can significantly reduce the impact of a bushfire on any house. If this guidance is suitable for Bayside, could this please be promulgated for developers and residents to act on or included in the Bayside Planning Scheme.

Item 10.7

Annual Community Grants Allocation 2023-24

**For (F)
Against (A)**

1.

Mr George Reynolds

(A)

Bayside City Council. Have Your Say. Council Meeting 15 August 2023.

SUBMISSION TO: Agenda Item 10.7 - Annual Community Grants Allocation 2023 – 2024.

Councillors,

The attached spreadsheet shows the Comprehensive Income Statement in the recently approved budget, reformatted in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2020, and the Australia Accounting Standards.

The document shows, in the Total Expenses row: that the justifiable Rates and Chargers Levies be limited collectively to \$87.821 million – not the \$113million approve by a majority of councillors in June.

The adjusted underlying Surplus (also known as Council Cash) is planned to be in deficit of \$10.838 million.

Council has no funds available to allocate to gifts.

Council needs to prepare a revised budget, to collect, by increased charges, the 10.8 million. Additionally, Council needs to borrow a further 14.5million to carry out its programme of new capital works.

Councillors, you are urged to suspend the awards until they may be included in a revised budget.

George Reynolds, Bayside Ratepayers Group.



BAYSIDE CITY COUNCIL - BUDGET 2023 -2024.

Schedule of Comprehensive Income and Expenditure,

In \$'000

ENTRY/ Source	General Rates	Municipal Charges	Waste Charge	Total R&C Revenue	Own Source Revenue		Streamed by Function and Nature D&A paid from Own-source Revenue.			Adjusted Income
					Ex. D&A	Inc. D&A	Capital Entries	C I S. (BCC)	Check	
Rates and Charges	88,043	7,952	17,153	113,148				113,148		113,148
Fees and Fines					9,016			9,016		9,016
Grants -Operating					21,036			21,036		21,036
Grants -Capital							8,361	8,361		
Contributions - Capital							2,750	2,750		
User Fees					9,224			9,224		9,224
Contributions - non- Monetary							7,004	7,004		
Interest Income					3,391			3,391		3,391
Other Income					1,358			1,358		1,358
Contributions Operating					102			102		102
Rental Income					4,238			4,238		4,238
TOTAL INCOME	88,043	7,952	17,153	113,148	48,365		18,115	179,628		161,513
CHECK TOTAL									179,628	161,513
Expenditure/									18,115	
Source										
Employee Costs	s8(5c)E	s8(5)(h) E	s8(5m)E	NS	NS			59,757		59,757
Materials and Services	s8(5c) M	s8(5)(h)M	s8(5m)M	NS	NS			60,091		60,091
Depreciation							23,779	23,779		
Amortisation - Intangibles							793	793		
Amortisation - Right of Use Assets							1,125	1,125		
Bad & Doubtful Debts						859		859		859
Lease Financing						61		61		61
Other Expenses						519		519		519
TOTAL EXPENSES	NS	NS	NS	87,821.196	33,506	59,203	25,697	147,024		121,327
Surplus from Rates and Charges				25,326.804						
Adjusted Underlying Surplus	(Council Cash)				14,859	-10,838				
Adjusted Underlying Result					0.092					

Additional Notes. Restatement of Surplus following the Allocation of Expenditure on Depreciation and Amortisation is added and shown in Col J.