

Minutes

Maribyrnong Community Recovery Committee

Meeting details	
Date/Time	Wednesday 6 August 2025 6.30pm to 8.00pm
Location	Maribyrnong Community Centre
Attendees	
Georgia Esplin	Flood Recovery Manager, MCC
Martina Holland	Independent Chair
Mary Cameron	Community Representative
Mike Caridi	Community Representative
Mike McIntosh	Director Planning and Environment, MCC
Paul Larsen	Community Representative
Shweta Kawatra Dakin	GenWest Representative
Cr Susan Yengi	Councillor Representative
Apologies	
Andrew Monteiro	Community Representative
Andy Chan	A/ Coordinator Emergency Management, Maribyrnong City Council (MCC)
Melissa Eastwood	Manager Inclusive Communities, MCC
Wennie Van Riet	GenWest Proxy
Item	Subject
Welcome and Acknowledgement of Country	
1	The Chair, Martina Holland opened the meeting by acknowledging the Traditional Owners of the lands, the Wurundjeri and Bunurong People of the Kulin Nation.

The Chair also acknowledged it has been one year since the passing of Cr Sarah Carter and highlighted her impact within the community.

Conflict of interest declaration and endorsement of previous minutes

2 No conflicts were declared.

The minutes from the June 2025 CRC meeting were endorsed by members.

3 Action item overview

The Chair provided an overview of the action items. This can be found on pages 6-7.

Google Flood Hub (Paul Larsen)

Community representative, Paul Larsen, advised that a local resident built an app which tracks river gauge data and maps this in comparison to the month leading up to the 2022 flood.

4 This resident's goal is for the app to be embedded into Google Flood Hub, however permission is required from Melbourne

Water to utilise their data for this. Paul advised that Melbourne Water has declined permission for this to take place and questioned whether a representative from Melbourne Water could attend an upcoming meeting to hear from the CRC about the benefits of the app.

Action: Council to invite a Melbourne Water representative to an upcoming CRC meeting to discuss the Google Flood Hub proposal

5 CRC Project Level of Influence (Andrew Monteiro)

Community representative, Andrew Monteiro was an apology so this item was deferred for a future meeting.

Flood Recovery Program

The Chair provided the following updates on the Flood Recovery Program:

WestJustice and Community Worker pop-up clinic

• Council is trialling a weekly insurance support pop-up clinic with WestJustice at the Maribyrnong Community Centre.

This will provide support to residents with:

- Insurance (disputes about insurers' decisions, cash settlement decisions, or conduct of assessors of repairers)
- Debt, credit, or money issues
- Renting issues
- Fines and infringement issues
- Motor vehicle accidents

• Council social worker will also be available for walk-in support on a weekly basis from tomorrow for a six week trial

Property flood risk cards

- The final version of the property flood risk cards were presented to members. Feedback from the CRC and Maribyrnong Community Recovery Association has been reflected in this version.
- A doorknock will take place in the last week of August and first week of September to distribute the cards to each property as well as a fridge magnet and supporting information.
- Cr Susan Yengi asked if there will be additional opportunities to receive the cards and ask questions. The Flood Recovery Manager advised there will be an opportunity to book a 1:1 appointment or small group session to receive the cards and ask further questions for those unavailable during the door knock. A barbecue will also be held in September to officially launch the cards and ask questions.
- Cr Yengi requested a briefing on how to read the cards.

Action: Council to invite the CRC and Maribyrnong Neighbourhood Flood Network to a small group session on interpreting the property flood risk cards

Anniversary event planning

- Moonee Valley expressed interest in partnering with Maribyrnong CRC to deliver the anniversary event at Coulson Gardens scheduled for 11 October. Members indicated support for this request.
- It was noted that the event will involve a launch of the public artwork, screening of the audio-visual community stories series, as well as live performances from local musicians. It will also feature food trucks and free activities.
- The Chair asked if any members would be interested in providing guidance/advice in planning to ensure the event reflects the interests of community. Community representative, Mary Cameron advised she is happy to support this but noted she has limited availability.
- Shweta Dakin (GenWest) highlighted that a short film featuring Maribyrnong community experiences is being screened at the Melbourne International Film Festival and noted this could also be presented at the anniversary or another event.

Public art project

- On 14 July, a workshop was held to capture community perspectives and sentiment to shape the public art project and inform the concept plan.
- Feedback from this workshop was that the artwork should convey a sentiment of strength, connectedness and community that came following the flood, as opposed to focusing solely on the flood.

- A follow up meeting is scheduled for 11 August to provide final feedback on the latest version of the concept plan developed after the workshop. Members were encouraged to attend.

Audio-visual project

- Filming and recording has begun for the audio-visual project, with 9 interviews confirmed. Some have taken place already.
- The Chair asked if members are comfortable with the upcoming CRC meeting in August being filmed for the project. Members expressed support.
- Members were also asked if they would like to participate in a short interview to share their learnings as a CRC member prior to the meeting. Members were happy to support this.

Children's story building project

- The Recovery team are liaising with the families of the young authors to plan a launch event in October. This will be scheduled for 14 October at the Maribyrnong library.

Proposed exhibition

- Council's Creative Communities team have proposed an exhibition of the work of Anna Kiparis, a photographer who took images of the aftermath of the Maribyrnong River Flood. Anna submitted a proposal for the audio-visual project contract and was not successful.
- The Creative Communities team suggested a separate exhibition at the Footscray town hall to feature Anna's work. They can contribute \$5,000 but would require co-contribution through the Community Recovery Hubs Grant.
- The Chair asked the community representatives for their views on the proposal. Members discussed the idea and noted that many within the community want to look forward, not backwards. This exhibition would have the potential to conjure unwanted and painful memories for community.
- Mary Cameron was the community representative on the audio-visual project assessment panel. She highlighted that Anna's photography would make a powerful exhibition.
- Members agreed to view example images of Anna's photography before making a recommendation on whether her work is supported through the grant.
- **Action:** Council to request photos of Anna's photography to share with the CRC

Advocacy update

- Council representatives have met with seven Ministers and Shadow Ministers across a range of portfolios to discuss the advocacy asks.
- Letters have been sent to 11 additional Members of Parliament requesting a meeting.

Recovery planning and learnings

Reflect on learnings for Recovery Plan appendix

Members were asked to reflect on their learnings based on their roles as CRC members. Learnings identified include:

- What helped the CRC to be effective?
 - Independent Chair
 - Dedicated recovery staff
 - Foundation of trust
 - Time: community needs time to heal
 - Recovery funding
 - Learning who does what at Council
- What made the work harder than it needed to be?
 - Different agendas
 - Fractured start to relationship between Council and the community
 - CRC should have been more diverse
 - Pressure to make decisions without information
- What surprised you?
 - The generosity of support roles and mentoring by Chair and recovery staff
 - Commitment of community representatives
- What would you never do again?
 - Try to deliver social connection opportunities when the community still have practical needs
 - Take so much time to establish a CRC
 - Use a different model to seek CRC representatives from community, focused less on experience and more on their capacity to engage with community
- What would you do every time?
 - Provide practical support (boots on the ground) and be visible in the community
 - Coordinate volunteers and practical supports
 - Connect with existing community and social groups to build trust
 - Start a CRC quickly and resource it well
 - Involve agencies and recovery service providers

- Use a co-design and community-led model for the program
- Focus on collecting data early on to quantify the impact
- Ensure the right people are around the CRC table
- Establish clear communication channels
- Engage an Independent Chair
- Engage recovery staff and a Flood Recovery Manager
- More team building activities for the CRC
- Provide more written material for members to review at meetings
- Provide resources for community to show they live in the area when driving through road closures

Feedback on Maribyrnong Community Flood Plan

Members made additions to the draft Maribyrnong Community Flood Plan using post-it notes. The plan will be revised further with the Maribyrnong Neighbourhood Flood Network.

Learning-sharing

The Chair advised that Andrew Monteiro had participated in a panel discussion at a recent DisasterWISE meeting. She advised there are similar requests from other organisations and networks, including the Department of Premier and Cabinet in Tasmania. CRC member, Paul Larsen, advised he would be happy to support a presentation to share their learnings.

Action: Council to liaise with members to prepare a learning-sharing presentation

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General business

No items raised.

Key messages

Members identified the following key messages to share amongst their networks:

- WestJustice is trialling a pop-up clinic for insurance and tenancy support at the Maribyrnong Community Centre (weekly until end September);
- Property flood risk cards will be shared at the end of the month via a door knock and officially launched at a community barbecue in September;
- Advocacy update: the identified advocacy asks continue to be shared with relevant Ministers and their staff; and
- Community are invited to participate in an interview to share their stories and experiences to create a series of short films capturing the Maribyrnong community's experiences following the 2022 flood.

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Close meeting

The Chair closed the meeting and thanked members for their participation.

Action item table

Date	Action item	Notes
19/02/25	Council to liaise with Paul Larsen to develop a tool library project plan	Update June 2025: This item is parked as logistics are considered.
19/03/25	Council to investigate puppy play therapy for a future event and Mary to suggest options for puppy therapy providers	Update June 2025: this will be considered for future events e.g. anniversary
30/04/25	Melbourne Water to advise on the outcome of the CRC request to be represented on the Project Control Group for the Flood Mitigation Study	Update July 2025: Melbourne Water are finalising the governance structure and are looking to include an option for members to bring along a community representative
28/05/25	Council to initiate history group meetings and invite Mary Cameron	Update July 2025: In progress. Council has contacted Working Heritage as requested by Mary
28/05/25	Council to seek information from Melbourne Water to develop a fact sheet outlining what has changed since October 2022	Update July 2025: complete – Q&A responses from all agencies in attendance at the community planning day will be shared
28/05/25	Council to draft a letter to extend to various networks and groups to offer a presentation from the CRC on their learnings	Update July 2025: complete – the CRC have received offers to present at the Emergency Management Lunchbox Talks and one of the monthly DisasterWISE network meetings
25/06/25	Council ask the Insurance Council of Australia to confirm whether insurance premiums could be impacted by the Property Flood Risk Cards	Update July 2025: the ICA have committed to provide a response
25/06/25	Council to amend the card design in line with community feedback	Update July 2025: Complete
25/06/25	Council to enquire with Melbourne Water about how the surveying will measure multi-unit dwellings	Update July 2025: complete – measurement will be taken from floor level of the first floor – the cards advise where this measurement is taken
25/06/25	Council to amend the Maribyrnong Flood Recovery plan to include annotations and discussion from the June CRC meeting	Update July 2025: Complete – the recovery plan will be shared via email after this meeting once the reflection activity undertaken this meeting has been embedded into the appendix
25/06/25	Council to add the Draft Maribyrnong Community Flood Plan to the agenda for the July CRC meeting	Update July 2025: Complete

06/08/25	Council to invite a Melbourne Water representative to an upcoming CRC meeting to discuss the Google Flood Hub proposal	
06/08/25	Council to invite the CRC and Maribyrnong Neighbourhood Flood Network to a small group session on interpreting the property flood risk cards.	
06/08/25	Council to request photos of Anna's photography to share with the CRC	
06/08/25	Council to liaise with members to prepare a learning-sharing presentation	