

# Minutes

## Maribyrnong Community Recovery Committee

| Meeting details      |   |
|----------------------|---|
| <b>Date/Time</b>     | Wednesday 25 June 2025 6.30pm to 8.00pm                   |
| <b>Location</b>      | Maribyrnong Community Centre                              |
| Attendees            |   |
| Andrew Monteiro      | Community Representative                                  |
| Georgia Esplin       | Flood Recovery Manager, Maribyrnong City Council (MCC)    |
| Martina Holland      | Independent Chair   |
| Mary Cameron         | Community Representative                                  |
| Nicole O'Donnell     | Manager Emergency Management and Regulatory Services, MCC |
| Mike Caridi          | Community Representative                                  |
| Shweta Kawatra Dakin | GenWest Representative                                    |
| Cr Susan Yengi       | Councillor Representative                                 |
| Apologies            |   |
| Andy Chan            | A/ Coordinator Emergency Management, MCC                  |
| Debora North         | Cohealth Representative                                   |
| Melissa Eastwood     | Manager Inclusive Communities, MCC                        |
| Mike McIntosh        | Director Planning and Environment, MCC                    |
| Paul Larsen          | Community Representative                                  |
| Wennie Van Riet      | GenWest Proxy   |

| Item | Subject   |
|------|---|
| 1    | <p><b>Welcome and Acknowledgement of Country</b></p> <p>The Chair, Martina Holland opened the meeting by acknowledging the Traditional Owners of the land, the Wurundjeri and Bunurong People of the Kulin Nation.</p> <p>The Chair advised that Nazim Bayrak has resigned from the CRC. She acknowledged Nazim' commitment and efforts as one of the original members of the CRC.</p>  |
| 2    | <p><b>Conflict of interest declaration</b></p> <p>No conflicts were declared.</p>   |
| 3    | <p><b>Endorsement of previous meeting minutes</b></p> <p>Members endorsed the May 2025 meeting minutes.</p>   |
| 4    | <p><b>Action item overview</b></p> <p>Action items were not discussed in the meeting in the interest of time. See page 6 for action item updates.</p>   |
| 5    | <p><b>Items raised by members</b></p> <p>CRC project graphic (Andrew Monteiro)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Andrew shared a draft graphic that explains the key CRC projects and whether the CRC's role is in delivery or influence. For example, the CRC is involved in delivering the recovery program, while it plays a role in influencing flood mitigation projects.</li> <li>Andrew noted that community perception is important and it is useful to present a clear overview of what has been achieved and what actions are underway.</li> <li>Members suggested sharing the graphic on social media and in the next edition of the recovery newsletter.</li> </ul> <p>Art activity (item tabled by Mary Cameron and overview provided by the Flood Recovery Manager as Mary arrived during item 7).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mary had suggested having an interactive activity for participants to contribute to the development of an artwork at the children's story book launch. She had suggested this artwork could be displayed by the Council permanently.</li> <li>Members supported the idea.</li> </ul> |
| 6    | <p><b>Community Preparedness Day overview</b></p> <p>Mike Caridi and Andrew Monteiro provided an overview of the CRC table at the Community Preparedness Day on 22 June:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Most conversations were about the draft Property Flood Risk Cards as these were on the CRC table for feedback. These cards include information on the specific flood risk of each property with a 1% chance of being flooded in any given year, also known as annual exceedance probability (AEP).</li> <li>Members have observed improvements in community wellbeing, although there is still anxiety and fear in community about future flooding which is heightened when it rains.</li> <li>They met people from the community who they had not met before.</li> </ul>   |

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Discussion: feedback on Property Flood Risk Cards

- Members enquired about the flood risk information that will be provided to second story units. The Flood Recovery Manager advised she would seek this information from Melbourne Water.
- The flood levels should be displayed vertically on the card, however it needs to be made clear that this does not relate to the house depicted.
- It was noted that while this information is critical, there is potential for it to cause anxiety or stress in the community. It is important for psychosocial support to be made available when the cards are distributed.
- Members discussed whether insurance premiums may be affected by the Property Flood Risk Cards. They agreed it would be highly unlikely as the properties receiving a card are already identified as at-risk in the Melbourne Water flood model.
- The Flood Recovery Manager advised that Council staff have been meeting weekly with representatives from Melbourne Water and VICSES as a project working group to deliver this initiative. Melbourne Water have commissioned the property floor level surveying required for the cards.

Action:

- Council to ask the Insurance Council of Australia for advice on whether insurance premiums could be impacted by the Property Flood Risk Cards
  - Council to amend the card design in line with community feedback
  - Council to enquire with Melbourne Water about how the surveying will measure multi-unit dwellings
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**Recovery planning and learnings**

The Chair summarised the journey of the CRC, including:

- The induction meeting
- The process undertaken to identify CRC key priority areas and projects: (1) economic and built environment, (2) social recovery and young people, and (3) preparedness, health and safety.
- The Maribyrnong Community Strengths and Opportunities Workshop in August 2024 to identify community priorities to inform the recovery program.
- The delivery of the recovery program and activities in each of the identified priority areas.

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Members reviewed the Maribyrnong Recovery Plan to categorise the actions as keep, tweak, remove or reword. She also asked members to think about what is missing based on the work undertaken by the CRC to date.

Discussion: key learnings

Communication:

- Communication channels are key in the first weeks and months after a flood. There were several relief payments or grants available that many were not aware of.
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- The Recovery Newsletter should not be the only source of information, however there is no simple solution with community displaced.
  - A suggestion from the Social Recovery Sub-Committee was for agencies to have visibility on the ground and meet community where they are instead of expecting community to come to them. It was noted this is important, however there are still challenges reaching displaced residents so multiple channels are required.
  - It can be challenging to secure a rental property while displaced for residents who have owned their own homes for many years and do not have rental history.

Accommodation:

- Temporary accommodation was established at the Centre for National Resilience in Mickleham, however living there was not accessible for everyone given its location, distance from work/schools and lack of public transport.
- Planning for accommodation of pets is critical. The Manager Emergency Management and Regulatory Services advised that the Animal Management team at Council support this.
- Residents must be informed of accommodation options available on the first night.

Youth:

- Support for youth aged 12-24 has been a gap as it is difficult to engage this cohort in programs.

Actions:

- Council to amend the Maribyrnong Recovery Plan to include annotations and discussion from this meeting.

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**Third anniversary**

- As discussed in previous meetings, the third anniversary will be commemorated with:
  - A community event on 11 October including a launch of the public artwork at Coulson Gardens and a screening of the audio-visual project.
  - A launch event for the children's flood storybook.
- The Chair suggested an addition could be a gallery walk-through of some of the recovery program artefacts such as the thank you cards and Floods + Me youth project artwork to reflect the community's journey.

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Member discussion:

- A gallery walk-through of artefacts could take place at the Footscray Town Hall.
- A barbeque with Moonee Valley at Canning Reserve could also inform part of the commemorations.
- The Coulson Garden event should include a Welcome to Country.
- Stakeholders to invite to anniversary event include:
  - Local schools

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- Journalists involved in coverage of the Maribyrnong River Flood
  - Libraries (children's flood storybook launch)
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### **Flood Recovery Program update**

The Flood Recovery Manager provided the following Recovery Program updates:

- Public art consultation workshop is scheduled for 14 July for community to ensure the public artwork at Coulson Gardens is reflective of community stories and experiences.
- Expressions of interest are open for community members to contribute to the audio-visual storytelling project. The films created will be presented at the third anniversary and will be shared broadly to bring awareness to the community's experiences and enable the stories to live on for years to come.
- Feedback is currently being sought on the draft Property Flood Risk Cards. This can be provided to VICSES directly via email at [ust.nwmetro@ses.vic.gov.au](mailto:ust.nwmetro@ses.vic.gov.au) by 6 July.
- Navigating Insurance Webinar is scheduled for 1 July at 6.30pm. This will include a Q&A session with the Insurance Council of Australia, WestJustice and Financial Counselling Victoria. It will also feature insights from Andrew Monteiro about his experience and learnings. This session will be recorded and made available on the Council website.
- Expressions of Interest for new CRC members has opened in line with the CRC extension.
- The Draft Maribyrnong Community Flood Plan has been developed based on input at the Community Planning Day. This will be reviewed by the CRC at the next meeting.

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Discussion:

- Shweta Dakin advised that videos promoting the Flood Insurance Guide have been uploaded on the GenWest website and promoted via social media. Mary Cameron suggested cross-promoting these videos between Council and GenWest and referring people to the Council's Recovery webpage to boost engagement: <https://www.maribyrnong.vic.gov.au/Flood>.

Action:

- Council to add the Draft Maribyrnong Community Flood Plan to the agenda for the July CRC meeting.
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### **Key messages**

- Expressions of interest are open for new CRC members
  - Storytelling – get involved in shaping the public artwork at Coulson Gardens or contribute to the audio-visual film series on the Maribyrnong River Flood stories
  - Navigating Insurance Webinar scheduled for 1 July at 6.30pm – this will be recorded and available on the Council website
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### **Close meeting**

The Chair thanked members and closed the meeting.

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**Action item table**

| <b>Date</b> | <b>Action item</b>  | <b>Notes</b>  |
|-------------|---|---|
| 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 June 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 June 2025: In progress. Council has contacted Working Heritage as requested by Mary  |
| 28/05/25    | Council to reshare the Recovery Plan with members for review ahead of the July CRC meeting  | Update June 2025: Complete  |
| 28/05/25    | Council to seek information from Melbourne Water to develop a fact sheet outlining what has changed since October 2022                    | Update June 2025: In progress – Q&A sheet will include responses to questions directed at agencies during the Community Planning Day                                    |
| 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 June 2025: In progress – 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   |   |
| 25/06/25    | Council to amend the card design in line with community feedback  |   |
| 25/06/25    | Council to enquire with Melbourne Water about how the surveying will measure multi-unit dwellings   |   |
| 25/06/25    | Council to amend the Maribyrnong Recovery Plan to include annotations and discussion from the June CRC meeting                            |   |
| 25/06/25    | Council to add the Draft Maribyrnong Community Flood Plan to the agenda for the July CRC meeting  |   |