



THEME FIVE **INFORMED AND ENGAGED**

GLEN EIRA CITY COUNCIL
ANNUAL REPORT
2020–2021

BENTLEIGH • BENTLEIGH EAST • BRIGHTON EAST • CARNEGIE • CAULFIELD • ELSTERNWICK
GARDENVALE • GLEN HUNTLY • MCKINNON • MURRUMBEENA • ORMOND • ST KILDA EAST



GLEN EIRA
CITY COUNCIL

THEME FIVE

INFORMED AND ENGAGED

Long-term community goal:

A well governed Council that is committed to transparency and engages residents in decision-making.

We are committed to retaining our reputation for good governance and ensuring the community feels informed and engaged. We will provide access to timely and relevant information about issues which affect them and establish a range of opportunities for them to share their views, comment on our performance and actively participate in decision-making.

In 2020–2021 we:

- worked closely with the community to develop the *Glen Eira 2040 Community Vision* which was endorsed by Council on 19 May 2021. This important achievement has been promoted widely and shared across our community groups and organisations through newsletters, correspondence and presentations, acknowledging that the community's vision will be important for all of our future planning for Glen Eira;
- increased our online transactions by 13.2 per cent, with 45 per cent of all transactions received through digital channels. As more people are turning online for services, we will continue looking for improvements to our digital channels to make it easier for our community members to transact with Council through their channel of choice; and
- continued our advocacy efforts and secured \$16.53 million in grant funding from peak bodies, State and Federal Governments in the 2020–21 financial year. We have also been advocating to State and Federal Governments on a wide variety of social and local issues including; regulation of rooming houses; Caulfield to Rowville light rail; planning reform; indigenous representation; JobSeeker payments; availability of COVID-19 vaccinations; funding for Carnegie Memorial Swimming Pool redevelopment; funding for urban forest initiatives; and funding for electric vehicle infrastructure.

THE STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES OF THIS LONG-TERM COMMUNITY GOAL ARE:

1. DEVELOP CLEAR AND OPEN COMMUNICATION CHANNELS WITH THE COMMUNITY.

WE WILL:

- Keep you better informed by improving our regular newsletters, use of social media, direct mailouts and responses to your service requests.
- Enable you to provide your views more easily by increasing the range of ways that we engage and consult with you, including enhanced participation in our public meeting processes.
- Make sure that key Council information and publications are available in a range of formats that are accessible to those with a disability or who are from culturally and linguistically diverse communities.
- Take proactive steps to ensure that we are going out of our way to seek views and input from those who are hard to reach through traditional consultation methods.
- Encourage you to participate in our decision-making processes.
- Provide you with regular and transparent reports on key outcomes and on our performance.

2. ACHIEVE A REPUTATION FOR ORGANISATIONAL AND SERVICE EXCELLENCE.

WE WILL:

- Take a strategic approach to reviewing and improving Council operations.
- Build an organisational culture that is committed to customer service and continuous improvement.
- Deliver good value-for-money services to residents and continue to have the second lowest average rates charge in Metropolitan Melbourne.
- Be a role model employer, recognising that skilled and motivated staff deliver better customer service and community outcomes.
- Build strong partnerships and good working relationships with our neighbouring councils, government peak bodies and other key stakeholders.
- Ensure our Local Law supports appropriate levels of transparency and good governance.

3. INVEST IN TECHNOLOGY AND PROCESS IMPROVEMENTS THAT ENHANCE THE CUSTOMER'S EXPERIENCE OF DOING BUSINESS WITH US AND IMPROVE EFFICIENCY AND TRANSPARENCY.

WE WILL:

- Introduce new online methods and practices that enable residents to transact with us to register and track requests, update their information, and make payments at a time that suits them.
- Review customer transaction processes and digitise those processes wherever it is efficient to do so.
- Reduce unnecessary bureaucracy and streamline processes to improve turnaround timelines and responsiveness.
- Improve awareness of Council's services to ensure people can access what they need, when they need it.
- Increase the amount of information that is available and accessible to the community on Council's website.

ON BEHALF OF THE COMMUNITY, COUNCIL WILL ADVOCATE FOR:

- Community consultation on key community projects, including state and federal government projects, such as the level crossing removals.
- Additional state and federal government funding for key community projects.

HOW WILL WE KNOW IF WE HAVE BEEN SUCCESSFUL?

STRATEGIC INDICATOR	RESULT
Rates per assessment will remain at the second lowest level of all metropolitan municipalities.	In 2020–21 the average rates per assessment was \$1,427. We anticipate that we will continue to be the second lowest of 21 inner metropolitan Councils.
The level of satisfaction with the ‘advocacy’ score in the <i>Community Satisfaction Survey</i>, will be consistent with, or better than, industry benchmarks.	In the <i>2021 Local Government Community Satisfaction Survey</i> Council remained consistent in its advocacy (lobbying on behalf of community) with an index score of 56. The state-wide average advocacy index score is 55.
The level of satisfaction with the ‘customer service’ score in the <i>Community Satisfaction Survey</i>, will be consistent with, or better than, industry benchmarks.	In the <i>2021 Local Government Community Satisfaction Survey</i> Glen Eira residents continue to rate customer service levels higher than the state average with an index score of 77. The state-wide average customer service score is 70.
Every major project will have a comprehensive community engagement process.	The Community Engagement Strategy 2018–2021 endorsed by Council on 22 May 2018 requires all major projects to have an engagement plan. In 2020–21, we consulted on 31 projects receiving 9,458 responses from the community.
The community will receive regular reporting on our performance.	Council reports to the community quarterly via the <i>Quarterly Service Performance Report</i> (endorsed by Council and published on Council’s website quarterly). <i>Quarterly Service Performance Reports</i> have been introduced to provide ongoing accountability and transparency to the community on our progress against the <i>Council and Community Plan</i> . <i>Quarterly Service Performance Reports</i> were tabled at the following Ordinary Meetings of Council: 11 August 2020 — quarter year ending June 2020 24 November 2020 — quarter year ending September 2020 23 February 2021 — quarter year ending December 2020 19 May 2021 — quarter year ending March 2021


HOW WILL WE KNOW IF WE HAVE BEEN SUCCESSFUL? (continued)

STRATEGIC INDICATOR	RESULT
The level of satisfaction with the 'community engagement' score in the <i>Community Satisfaction Survey</i> , will be consistent with, or better than, industry benchmarks.	<p>In the 2021 <i>Local Government Community Satisfaction Survey</i> Glen Eira residents continue to rate customer engagement levels higher than the state-wide average with an index score of 58. The state-wide average community consultation and engagement index score is 56.</p>
Staff engagement levels will be consistent with, or better than, industry benchmarks.	<p>The <i>Employee Engagement Survey</i> is conducted every two years. The most recent survey was conducted in May 2021 by a new provider, Insync.</p> <p>The survey measured two factors that drive performance. These are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Alignment, which measures whether employees, teams, systems, processes and customer strategy are aligned to the organisation's long term goals; and — Engagement, which measures whether employees are committed to and emotionally engaged with the organisation and its goals, and they promote and act in its best interests <p>In June, the organisation was notified of its results which were extremely positive after a difficult 12 months due to the COVID-19 pandemic.</p> <p>The results indicated that Glen Eira City Council employees are highly aligned (62 per cent) and engaged (68 per cent). The results places Glen Eira in the top 25th percentile for engagement and in the top 10th percentile for alignment (both within the high-performance category) when compared to Insync's benchmark database which consists of 72 local government studies in Australia and 27,975 responses.</p>

Achieved =  Not achieved =  Deferred by Council 


Not achieved due to COVID-19 pandemic = 

Not achieved due to factors outside of Council's control = 

2020–21 COMMITMENT	PERFORMANCE MEASURE	RESULT
We will continue to advocate on behalf of the community in-line with the priorities identified in our <i>Advocacy Strategy</i> .	We will report annually to Council on the success of our advocacy efforts including the success rate of grant applications and other policy based advocacy to peak bodies, Federal and State Governments.	
Comment: As reported here and in regular financial reporting, Council secured \$16.53 million in grant funding (over and above Grants Commission funding) in the 2020–21 financial year. Council also progressed advocacy in relation to a wide variety of social and local issues, including but not limited to: regulation of rooming houses; Caulfield to Rowville light rail; planning reform; Indigenous representation; JobSeeker payments; availability of COVID-19 vaccinations; funding for Carnegie Memorial Swim Pool Centre; funding for urban forest initiatives; and funding for electric vehicle infrastructure.		
We will ensure that Council's governance processes and frameworks remain consistent with contemporary practice and <i>Local Government Act</i> requirements.	All requirements of the new <i>Local Government Act 2020</i> will be complied with in accordance with implementation timelines set by the Minister for Local Government.	
Comment: The <i>Local Government Act 2020</i> provides for phased implementation of reforms commencing in July 2020 and extending to December 2021. Council has complied with all requirements within required timeframes. Significant requirements met include the adoption of a <i>Community Engagement Policy</i> , a <i>Public Transparency Policy</i> , new Governance Rules, a new <i>Councillor Code of Conduct</i> and <i>Financial Plan</i> . Completion of future requirements is well advanced including finalisation of the <i>Community Vision</i> and <i>Council Plan</i> . This is also a major initiative of the 2020–21 Annual Budget.		
We will ensure that the community has the opportunity to influence and shape Council initiatives and programs through implementing our <i>Community Engagement Strategy 2018–2021</i> .	We will consult with the Glen Eira Community Voice on at least six occasions between July 2020 and June 2021.	
Comment: We consulted Community Voice on 17 topics including: social impacts of COVID-19; urban planning services; patronage of Glen Eira parks and paths; the <i>Reconciliation Action Plan</i> ; our plan for an environmentally sustainable Glen Eira (2021–2025); and an integrated engagement for the <i>Council Plan 2021–2025</i> and <i>Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021–2025</i> . Surveys were conducted in August, November, February, March and June while a quick poll was carried out in October.		

2020–21 COMMITMENT	PERFORMANCE MEASURE	RESULT
We will ensure that the community has the opportunity to influence and shape Council initiatives and programs through implementing our <i>Community Engagement Strategy 2018–2021</i> . Continued.	We will maintain or improve the community satisfaction rating with how Council has performed in making decisions in the interest of the community.	✓
Comment: The 2021 <i>Local Government Community Satisfaction Survey</i> reported a performance score of 59 with how Council has performed in making decisions in the interest of the community, which is up from 58 in 2020, and above the state-wide average of 56.		
	We will ensure that every major Council project and each major engagement activity has an engagement plan.	✓
Comment: Ten major engagement projects started and all had engagement plans. These projects included: the Carnegie Memorial Swim Centre Redevelopment; <i>Environmental Sustainability Strategy</i> ; proposed Classified Tree Local Law; <i>Urban Forest Strategy</i> ; <i>Glen Eira 2040 Community Vision</i> a Healthy, Connected and Thriving Glen Eira; and <i>Glen Eira Active Recreation Action Plan</i> .		
We will make it easier to transact with Council and demonstrate our commitment to transparency by enhancing our communication channels and increasing the amount of information that is publicly available.	We will implement chat functionality on our website to make it easier for the community to find information and transact with us online.	✓
Comment: Council's and Glen Eira Libraries' websites have an automated chatbot available 24/7 and live chat available during business hours. This functionality assists the community, making it easier to find information and transact with Council online.		
	We will establish a baseline measure for community satisfaction with our website and aim for minimum 10 per cent improvement across the year.	✓
Comment: The 2021 <i>Local Government Community Satisfaction Survey</i> received last quarter showed perceptions of customer service performance are highest among residents contacting Council via the website. Ratings increased significantly over the past 12 months (index score of 86 per cent, an increase of 14 per cent). Overall, feedback shows customers can generally find the information they are looking for more easily. These results will inform the next roadmap of improvements for our digital channels.		

2020–21 COMMITMENT	PERFORMANCE MEASURE	RESULT
We will make it easier to transact with Council and demonstrate our commitment to transparency by enhancing our communication channels and increasing the amount of information that is publicly available. Continued.	We will increase our social media presence by posting a minimum of 20 messages per month on a variety of platforms, informing the community on a range of Council services and events.	✓
Comment: Throughout 2020–21 we provided information and news to the community through: GECC Facebook: 226 posts total, including eight videos; GECC Instagram: 142 posts total, including three IGTV videos and 40 stories; and GECC LinkedIn: five posts. We increased the frequency and type of posts to the community across the year to ensure they are informed on the current COVID-19 situation and activities, events and information about Council operations.		
	We will achieve and sustain a minimum five per cent increase in transaction volume through Council's website from pre-COVID-19 levels.	✓
Comment: Online customer transaction volumes increased by 13.2 per cent, with 45 per cent of all transactions received through digital channels. As more people turn online for services, we will continue looking for improvements to our digital channels into the future to make it easier for our community members to transact with Council through their channel of choice.		
We will proactively involve the community in building a vision for the future of Glen Eira and in determining future Council priorities.	We will endorse a <i>Glen Eira 2040 Community Vision</i> and work with community organisations to build understanding and commitment to the vision.	✓
Comment: The <i>Glen Eira 2040 Community Vision</i> was endorsed by Council 19 May 2021. This important achievement has been promoted widely and shared across our community groups and organisations through newsletters, correspondence and presentations, acknowledging the community's vision will be important for all of our future planning for Glen Eira. The <i>Community Vision</i> will help guide Council's activities across the new four-year <i>Council Plan</i> . This is also a major initiative of the 2020–21 Annual Budget.		
	We will develop a <i>Glen Eira City Council Plan 2021–2025</i> for endorsement by June 2021.	✗
Comment: The new <i>Local Government Act 2020</i> has new provisions for the development of the <i>Council Plan</i> with a due date set at 31 October 2021. This date had not been set by the State Government when the target was set by Council in June 2020. Progression towards completion is well underway with community consultation completed on 25 June 2021. We are currently collating the engagement information with a plan to draft the report to go back to the Councillors and subsequently the community for feedback in August 2021. We plan to have the new <i>Council Plan 2021–2025</i> adopted in October 2021 in-line with the <i>Local Government Act 2020</i> requirement. This is also a major initiative of the 2020–21 Annual Budget.		

2020–21 COMMITMENT	PERFORMANCE MEASURE	RESULT
We will report regularly to the community on our performance and on our progress in delivering our promises outlined in this <i>Council and Community Plan</i> .	A <i>Quarterly Performance Report</i> will be considered by Council in August, November, February and May annually.	
Comment: The <i>Quarterly Performance Report</i> has been adopted by Council and provided to the community each quarter of 2020–21 to demonstrate the progress against our <i>Council and Community Plan</i> commitments and associated performance measures.		