



THEME FIVE **INFORMED AND ENGAGED**

GLEN EIRA CITY COUNCIL
ANNUAL REPORT
2019–2020

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



GLEN EIRA
CITY COUNCIL

THEME FIVE

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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 2019–2020 we:

- began developing a Community Vision for Glen Eira and sought the views of our community on what they wanted Glen Eira to look like in 2040. The feedback was given to a Deliberative Citizens' Panel to form the Vision. COVID-19 restrictions placed the deliberation on hold and we were unable to prepare a draft of the Vision. This will be re-initiated in early 2020–21;
- in November 2019 we endorsed the new Glen Eira City Council Community Local Law. Local laws help us to maintain a safe, enjoyable, peaceful and healthy environment for the community and provide for the administration of Council's powers and functions; and
- launched our new website, enabling the community to do more business with us online. We have seen a 46 per cent increase in click-throughs to pages where transactions and bookings can be made.

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 2019–20 the average rates per assessment was \$1,404. 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>2020 Local Government Community Satisfaction Survey</i> Council remained consistent in its advocacy (lobbying on behalf of community) with an index score of 55 in 2020. The state-wide average advocacy index score is 53.
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>2020 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 <i>Community Engagement Strategy 2018–2021</i> endorsed by Council on 22 May 2018 requires all major projects to have an engagement plan. In 2019–20 we consulted on 53 projects receiving 8,403 responses.
The community will receive regular reporting on our performance.	<p>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.</p> <p><i>Quarterly Service Performance Reports</i> were tabled at the following Ordinary Meetings of Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 13 August 2019 — quarter year ending June 2019 26 November 2019 — quarter year ending September 2019 25 February 2020 — quarter year ending December 2019 19 May 2020 — quarter year ending March 2020

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.	In the <i>2020 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 60. The state-wide average community consultation and engagement index score is 55.
Staff engagement levels will be consistent with, or better than, industry benchmarks.	The <i>Employee Engagement Survey</i> is conducted every two years. Last year’s result indicated that staff engagement at Glen Eira City Council is 34 per cent above relevant industry benchmarks with 63 per cent overall engagement. Across Australia, the Local Government staff engagement average is 29 per cent. We will begin the process of preparing the next survey for distribution in 2021.

Achieved =  Not achieved =  Not achieved due to COVID-19 pandemic = 

2019–20 COMMITMENT	PERFORMANCE MEASURE	RESULT
<p>We will develop a Community Vision that represents the aspirations and priorities of our community.</p>	<p>We will have a draft Community Vision for Council endorsement by the end of June 2020. The Vision will involve engaging with the community, including co-design of the process and reaching out to capture views from diverse communities.</p> <p>This is also a major initiative of the 2019–20 Annual Budget.</p>	<p></p>
<p>Comment: Community engagement to develop the Community Vision has been completed. A Deliberative Citizens’ Panel has been put in place to develop the Vision considering the more than 3,000 responses we had to our community engagement on the Vision. The 42-member panel is unable to proceed with face to face sessions due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Currently officers are looking at potential options to resume the work of the Panel with an online approach or face-to-face (if permissible) using different timelines. Council will review options presented by officers and inform the preferred approach in July 2020.</p>		
<p>We will complete the review of our Local Law in consultation with the community.</p>	<p>Local Laws endorsed by Council by November 2019.</p> <p>This is also a major initiative of the 2019–20 Annual Budget.</p>	<p></p>
<p>Comment: Council endorsed new Local Laws in November 2019. Local Laws help us maintain a safe, enjoyable, peaceful and healthy environment for the community and provide for the administration of Council’s powers and functions.</p>		
<p>We will demonstrate our commitment to transparency by increasing the amount of information that is available to the public via various communication modes</p>	<p>Increased social media presence by posting a minimum of 20 messages per month that inform the community on a range of Council services and events via Glen Eira City Council’s Facebook and Instagram pages and an increase in the use of video.</p>	<p></p>
<p>Comment: We increased our social media presence by posting on average 57 messages per month throughout 2019–20. A total of 641 posts have been placed on Facebook and Instagram showcasing and informing the community of Council’s services and events as well as relevant State Government initiatives. Fifty three videos were streamed across Facebook and Instagram in 2019–20 compared to 23 in 2019–20.</p>		
	<p>Improvement in the Community Satisfaction Rating (index score) with how Council has performed in making decisions in the interest of the community.</p>	<p></p>
<p>Comment: Council’s performance on this measure in the <i>2020 Local Government Community Satisfaction Survey</i> was an index score of 58 as compared to 61 in 2019 but was significantly higher than the state-wide average of 53.</p>		

2019–20 COMMITMENT	PERFORMANCE MEASURE	RESULT
<p>Council will improve the ability of the community to complete transactions online outside of core business hours.</p>	<p>Five per cent increase in transaction volume outside of core business hours through Council’s website.</p>	<p></p>
<p>Comment: The total transaction volume at the end of the final quarter shows that 20 per cent of online transactions have been performed outside of Council’s business hours. This is a two per cent increase from the previous end-of-year results. Overall online transactions have increased by 11 per cent from the previous year. Previous quarters this year showed increases in after-hours transactions, with a drop seen in quarter four. It is expected that the downturn in the last quarter is partly due to the impact of COVID-19 restrictions, meaning people who are working at home are more easily able to transact during business hours and are less likely to wait until after hours to complete online transactions.</p> <p>After hours has been defined as weekends, public holidays and any time outside of regular 9am–5pm business hours during the week. A transaction is defined as a form submitted through our website, and any application or request.</p>		
	<p>Increase of activity on Council’s homepage to reflect a five per cent increase in click-throughs.</p>	<p></p>
<p>Comment: We are seeing much higher engagement with Council’s new website, compared with the old one. Where comparable services existed on the previous homepage, there has been a 46 per cent increase in click-through for those transactions. This combined with a lower site bounce rate, tells us that people are navigating through the site with more ease and are finding what they want quicker than before.</p>		
<p>We will continue to implement our <i>Community Engagement Strategy 2018–2021</i>.</p>	<p>We will consult with Glen Eira Community Voice on at least six occasions.</p>	<p></p>
<p>Comment: We exceeded our commitment with seven Community Voice activities. Five surveys and two quick polls have been undertaken with an average of 515 community members. An average of 215 (41%) Community Voice members responded to the polls and surveys.</p> <p>The most recent activities asking our Community Voice members how they are coping during the COVID-19 pandemic. Nearly three-quarters (69%) of the 200 participants indicated they were very knowledgeable about how to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Eighty two per cent of participants agreed with the statement that they were aware of mental health services and support should they require it. Eighty two per cent of respondents indicated their level of online communication had increased compared with before COVID-19, and later indicated it was due to a mix of work and social reasons Eighty six per cent of respondents agreed that they would get a vaccine if it became available and was recommended for them.</p> <p>This information will help to inform Council’s decisions and priorities for 2020–22.</p>		

2019–20 COMMITMENT	PERFORMANCE MEASURE	RESULT
<p>We will report quarterly to the community on our progress against all of our promises outlined in this <i>Council and Community Plan</i>.</p>	<p>Quarterly reporting to be considered by Council in August, November, February and May annually.</p>	
<p>Comment: The <i>Council and Community Plan</i> progress was considered by Council on the 13 August 2019, 26 November 2019, 25 February 2020, and 19 May 2020. The results are published on our community dashboard.</p>		