

3.3 ADOPTION OF 2012-2013 BUDGET (FIN18: DW)

Responsible Director: Marilyn Kearney

RECOMMENDATION

That Council, having prepared and given public notice of the Draft Budget for 2012-2013 in accordance with Section 129 of the Local Government Act 1989 (the Act) and having conducted a consultative process, received and considered submissions, as required under S223 of the Act, resolves:

- 1. That the 2012/2013 Budget be adopted in accordance with Section 130 of the Local Government Act 1989 with amendments (as detailed in this report) to reflect advice received regarding changes to operating grants, fees and charges, materials & contracts and capital grants since the adoption of the Draft Budget, and*
- 2. To give public notice of its decision to adopt the 2012/2013 Budget in accordance with Section 130 (2) of the Local Government Act 1989*

BACKGROUND

Council, at its meeting on Tuesday 24 April 2012, approved the Draft Budget 2012/13 for the purpose of giving public notice.

In accordance with Section 129 of the Local Government Act 1989 (The Act), public notice of the Draft Budget 2012/13 was published in 'The Age' newspaper on Friday 27 April 2012, the 'Waverley Leader' and 'Oakleigh/Monash Leader' and 'Journal' on Tuesday 1 May 2012, as well as advertised in the Council's 'Bulletin' distributed to all residences in Monash.

A copy of the Draft Budget was put on display at eight locations throughout the municipality, and made available for public inspection between Friday 27 April and Monday 28 May 2012 (both dates inclusive).

BUDGET SUBMISSIONS

Council appointed a Committee of Council, comprising all Councillors to consider submissions received under Section 223 of the Local Government Act 1989 on the Draft Budget 2012/13 and Council Plan 2009-13 (2012 update). Council received five (5) written submissions in response to the Draft Budget and Council Plan.

The summarised issues highlighted in the submissions included:

- Requesting removal of library book reservation fees,
- Requesting increased Street Sweeping,

- Requesting funding for Waverley Gymnastics Centre,
- Opposing the EGM Land Differential Rate, and
- A submission in the form of a questionnaire from Ratepayers Victoria.

The submission hearing was held on Tuesday 12 June. Representatives from Ratepayers Victoria, Mr Jack Davis, President, Ratepayers Victoria, Mr Des Olin and Ms Chen Cheah made verbal presentations to Council in support of the written submission. The key points raised by Ratepayers Victoria related to their 93 question submission and included these concerns:

- Ongoing excessive rates,
- Lack of Transparency of rate increases and cost drivers,
- Clarity of decision criteria used for rate increases and budget forecasts,
- Lacking social responsibility considerations regarding impacts on pensioners and ratepayers in difficult economic times, and
- Concerns over current debt levels

The Committee heard and gave consideration to the comprehensive questions raised by Ratepayers Victoria as part of their deliberations.

Following consideration of the written submissions and the hearings the Committee of Council resolved not to recommend that Council make any changes to the Draft Budget related to the submissions.

AMENDMENTS TO BUDGET- OPERATING

Since the Draft Budget was adopted for public exhibition external advice has been received regarding minor grant funding, Victorian Grants Commission (VGC), some contract costs, MFESB levy, insurances and infringement penalty unit rates that will be incorporated in the adopted Budget. Further changes to interest rates will have effect on interest earnings and loan servicing costs.

The net effect of these changes has resulted in minor amendments to the Budget and some minor adjustments to the long term Strategic Resource Plan (SRP), which will not have a material effect over the term of the SRP.

AMENDMENTS TO BUDGET- CAPITAL WORKS PROGRAM

The advertised Capital Works Program has been amended to reflect funding advice on capital grants regarding several existing capital projects. The amendments include revised capital grants for the following projects:

- VGC local roads allocation,
- Community Facility Funding:
 - Playgrounds equitable access,
 - Monash Open Space Policy,
- SRV - Irrigation efficiency upgrades, and
- Department of Justice – Clayton public Safety

CONCLUSION

Following consideration of the submissions received regarding the Draft Budget for 2012/13, the S.223 Committee of Council resolved not to recommend any changes to the Draft Budget as they related to the submissions.

The proposed amendments to the Budget and the amended Capital Works Program as identified in the body of the report reflect changes made to the advertised Draft Budget. It is therefore appropriate that the Budget for 2012/2013 be adopted.