



City of
Melville

MINUTES

SPECIAL MEETING OF ELECTORS

6:00 PM Tuesday, 23 June 2026

Held in the Kambarang (Conference), Melville Civic
Centre, 10 Almondbury Road, Booragoon

The City of Melville acknowledges the Bibbulmun people as the Traditional Owners and custodians of the lands on which the City stands today and pays its respect to the Whadjuk people, and Elders both past, present and emerging.

Minutes to be confirmed at the next Ordinary Council Meeting

These minutes are hereby confirmed as true and accurate

Presiding Member

Date



OFFICIAL**Vision**

Vibrant, Sustainable, Inclusive Melville

Mission

To provide good governance and quality services for the City of Melville community.

Values

In everything we do, we seek to adhere to our values that guide our behaviour.

- **Excellence** - Striving for the best possible outcomes.
- **Participation** – Involving, collaborating and partnering.
- **Integrity** - Acting with honesty, openness and with good intent.
- **Caring** – Demonstrating empathy, kindness and genuine concern.

Our Approach

To put our customer at the centre of everything we do.



Social / Community	Environment	Built Environment	Economic	Governance
Healthy, Safe and Inclusive	Clean and Green	Sustainable and Connected Development	Vibrant and Prosperous	Good Governance and Leadership
Healthy, safe and inclusive communities with a sense of belonging and wellbeing.	A clean, green and sustainable City for current and future generations.	Sustainable, connected development and transport infrastructure across our City.	Economic prosperity and vibrant resilient communities and businesses.	Leadership and good governance for the benefit of the whole community.

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The nature of the Council's decision making role in the matter:

Advocacy	<i>When the Council advocates on its own behalf or on behalf of its community to another level of government/body/agency.</i>
Executive	<i>The substantial direction setting and oversight role of the Council. e.g. adopting plans and reports, accepting tenders, directing operations, setting and amending budgets.</i>
Legislative	<i>Includes adopting local laws, town planning schemes & policies.</i>
Review	<i>When the Council operates as a review authority on decisions made by Officers for appeal purposes.</i>
Quasi-Judicial	<i>When the Council determines an application/matter that directly affects a person's right and interests. The judicial character arises from the obligation to abide by the principles of natural justice. Examples of Quasi-Judicial authority include town planning applications, building licences, applications for other permits/licences (eg under Health Act, Dog Act or Local Laws) and other decisions that may be appealable to the State Administrative Tribunal.</i>

OFFICIAL**Contents**

1	Official Opening	6
1.1	Opening	6
1.2	Notice of Special Meeting of Electors.....	6
2	Attendance and Apologies	7
2.1	In Attendance	7
2.2	Introduction of Elected Members and Officers	8
3	Disclosure of Interest	8
3.1	Financial or Proximity Interests	8
3.2	Disclosure of Interest that may cause a Conflict	8
4	Conduct of Meeting	9
5	Public Question Time	10
5.1	Questions Received Prior to the Meeting.....	10
5.1.1	Mr L Crake, Willagee.....	10
5.1.2	Mr M Mollison, Willagee	13
5.1.3	Ms T Burns, Attadale.....	13
5.1.4	Mr N Wood, Booragoon.....	19
5.1.5	Mr J Meotti, Leeming.....	20
5.1.6	Mr R Willis, Bull Creek	21
5.1.7	Ms L Seaward, Leeming.....	22
5.1.8	Ms D Jagadish, Mount Pleasant.....	23
5.1.9	Mr R Gosatti, Kardinya	24
5.2	Questions Received at the Meeting	26
5.2.1	Mr B Patterson, Palmyra	26
5.2.2	Mr N Hewson, Leeming.....	27
6	Motions.....	29
6.1	Motions with Notice	29
6.1.1	Mr J Meotti, Leeming - Pause John Connell Reserve Field Extension.....	29
6.1.2	Mr J Meotti, Leeming - Reactivate John Connell Oval Master Plan	29
6.1.3	Mr J Meotti, Leeming - Remove Budget Expense John Connell Reserve Playing Field Extension	30
6.1.4	Mr A Seaward, Leeming - Commence Clearing	30
7	Closure	31

OFFICIAL**1 OFFICIAL OPENING****1.1 Opening**

The Presiding Member welcomed those in attendance to the meeting, officially declared the meeting open at 6:15pm, and invited Mr J Coten, Acting Chief Executive Officer to read the Acknowledgement of Country. At 6:17pm, The Presiding Member advised those present of the Disclaimer, the Affirmation of Civic Duty and Responsibility, and the Audio Recording Advice.

1.2 Notice of Special Meeting of Electors

At 6:21pm, the Presiding Member advised of the notice of the meeting, which was advertised:

- on the City's website;
- on public notice boards at the Civic Centre and all the City of Melville libraries;
- in the West Australian on Saturday, 30 May;
- in Perth Now Melville on Thursday, 4 June;
- in the City's electronic Newsletter; and
- via the City's social media platforms.

The notice read:

"A Special Meeting of the Electors will be held on

Tuesday, 23 June 2026

in the Kambarang (Conference Room)

Melville Civic Centre, 10 Almondbury Road, Booragoon

commencing at 6:00pm.

The request for Special Meeting of Electors, signed by 410 electors, for the purpose of considering the John Connell Cricket Pitch Project, including the following matters:

- *The proposed clearing of approximately 209 mature native trees and 0.68 hectares of remnant native vegetation at John Connell Reserve.*
- *The absence of a clearly demonstrated strategic need for the proposed cricket pitch expansion.*
- *Reliance on potentially outdated cost estimates and the absence of secured external funding.*
- *Potential financial impacts on future rates, borrowings and capital works priorities.*
- *Insufficient assessment of alternative options that may avoid or substantially reduce environmental impacts.*
- *Concerns regarding governance processes, transparency and evidence-based decision making.*

To submit a motion or a question related to these matters, register to attend in person or access the link to watch the live-stream, visit <https://www.melvillecity.com.au/our-city/our-council/council-meetings/meeting-of-electors>."

OFFICIAL**2 ATTENDANCE AND APOLOGIES****2.1 In Attendance**Councillors

Cr G Barber, Presiding Member
 Cr G Panayotou
 Cr S Green
 Cr C Yorke
 Cr S Hong
 Cr N Robins
 Cr C Ross
 Cr D Lim
 Cr J Spanbroek
 Cr K Wheatland
 Cr M McGoldrick

Ward

Bicton - Attadale - Alfred Cove Ward
 Bicton - Attadale - Alfred Cove Ward
 Central Ward
 Central Ward
 Bateman - Kardinya - Murdoch Ward
 Bateman - Kardinya - Murdoch Ward
 Applecross - Mount Pleasant Ward
 Applecross - Mount Pleasant Ward
 Bull Creek - Leeming Ward
 Palmyra - Melville - Willagee Ward (*electronic attendance*)
 Palmyra - Melville - Willagee Ward

Officers

Ms G Bowman Chief Executive Officer (*electronic attendance*)
 Mr J Coten Acting Chief Executive Officer
 Ms M Pickering Director Community Development
 Ms G Tuffin Director Corporate Services
 Mr P Varelis Director Planning
 Ms R Ward Acting Director Environment & Infrastructure
 Mr M Yildiz Director Legal, Governance & Risk
 Mr J Bird Manager Natural Areas and Parks
 Mr D Burton Manager Healthy Melville
 Ms C Newman Head of Governance
 Ms M Smith Poulton Lead Governance
 Mr O Pugh Governance Officer (Council Support)
 Mr J Titterton Business Support (Administration) Trainee
 Ms K Gibson-Mann Executive Assistant Corporate Services

At the commencement of the meeting:

Community in Attendance 239 (204 electors, 35 non-electors)

Apologies

Nil

On Approved Leave of Absence

Mayor K Mair Mayor
 Cr M Woodall Bull Creek - Leeming Ward

OFFICIAL**2.2 Introduction of Elected Members and Officers**

At 6:18pm, the Presiding Member introduced the Elected Members and Executive Leadership Team members, who were in attendance at the meeting.

3 DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST**3.1 Financial or Proximity Interests**

Under sections 5.60A and/or 5.60B of the *Local Government Act 1995*

Nil.

3.2 Disclosure of Interest that may cause a Conflict

Under 22 *Local Government (Model Code of Conduct) Regulations 2021* or a City of Melville Code of Conduct)

Nil.

OFFICIAL**4 CONDUCT OF MEETING**

In accordance with the *Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996*, the Presiding Member is to determine the procedure to be followed and will give regard to the *City of Melville Local Government (Meeting Procedures) Local Law 2022*.

At 6:23pm, Mr J Coten, Acting Chief Executive Officer advised of the following manner of conduct:

1. In the event of an emergency, everyone should take direction from officers who will guide you to the exit points of the building.
2. Toilets are located immediately before the entry to the Council Chambers and to the right of the customer service counter for those in the foyer overflow area.
3. All present are required to sign the attendance register at the entry to the meeting.
4. Each person who moves a motion, participates in a vote or speaks must be an Elector of the City of Melville. Non-electors may only observe the proceedings.
5. The proceedings are being recorded for the purpose of production of the Minutes and speakers are requested to use the microphones each time they speak. The Minutes will include a summary of any questions asked and a summary of the responses provided.
6. Speakers are asked to clearly give their name and address each time they speak and are required to address the Chair of the meeting.
7. Only Electors of the City of Melville may move or second a motion. Motions are to be submitted in writing prior to the commencement of the meeting.
8. All addresses are to be limited to a maximum of five (5) minutes. Extension of time is permissible only with the agreement of a simple majority of Electors present (*Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996 Regulation 17*).
9. To ensure the efficient conduct of the meeting, please participate in a concise and respectful manner.
10. All Elected Members and officers who attend this meeting are there to observe the proceedings and hear comments from Electors. All questions and comments should be directed to the Mayor who may invite a response from the Chief Executive Officer, Presiding Members of Committees or Elected Members.

OFFICIAL**5 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

At 6:26pm, the Presiding Member opened public question time.

5.1 Questions Received Prior to the Meeting**5.1.1 Mr L Crake, Willagee**Question 1:

What is the councils policy on spending unbudgeted monies like in this instance and how many times has this occurred in the last 5 years.

Response 1:

Under *Section 6.8 of the Local Government Act 1995*, the Council cannot spend money on items not included in the adopted budget unless the expenditure is approved in advance by Council (absolute majority) or in a genuine emergency.

Any additional spending must therefore be formally approved by the Council, and a funding source be identified as part of that decision. The Council has the discretion to amend the adopted budget by resolution, including approving additional expenditure where it is supported by a funding source.

No works were planned or undertaken for 2025/26 so a budget was not required. An allocation was not made within the Long-Term Financial Plan as the project was pending the outcome of the clearing permit – this is normal practice.

An amount of \$200,000 has been included in the 2026/27 Budget to undertake design and documentation works.

Question 2:

How does the clearing and removal of the significant vegetation comply with the citys tree retention policy and is it setting an example for developers.

Response 2:

At present, the City does not have a Tree Retention Policy that applies to private land. At the Ordinary Meeting of Council held 16 June 2026, the Council resolved to advertise the draft Local Planning Policy – Regulated Trees on Private Land for community feedback. The City does, however, have an Urban Forest and Green Space Policy that applies to land owned or managed by the City and guides decisions where urban forest, green space, community infrastructure and other objectives need to be balanced.

The John Connell Reserve proposal has been considered in this context. The Urban Forest and Green Space Policy recognises the social, environmental and economic benefits of trees and vegetation, while also seeking to integrate green infrastructure with the efficient provision of physical, social and community infrastructure.

OFFICIAL

In this case, Council has considered the need for additional sporting infrastructure at John Connell Reserve, the limited opportunities to increase active open space in a built-out urban environment, the regulatory clearing permit process, and measures to mitigate environmental impacts. This includes the revegetation at Ken Hurst Park in line with the approved clearing permit, and the City's investigation into the feasibility of transplanting trees and grass trees from the area proposed to be cleared.

The approach is therefore not one of disregarding the City's urban forest objectives, but of applying the policy by balancing community sporting needs with environmental assessment, mitigation, revegetation and longer-term green infrastructure outcomes.

Question 3:

Why does the city so desperately need a cricket pitch that it can't be planed and budgeted for like all normal process.

Response 3:

The extension of this oval is not unplanned or unbudgeted.

The opportunity and initial needs were first identified in the Active Reserve Infrastructure Strategy, 2020.

Following the project securing external Federal funding and a Council decision in June 2022 to support a clearing permit application, further work had been undertaken including the City in assisting in providing required documents for the clearing permit application process and development of a Master Plan. As part of the Master Plan process (which is yet to be finalised, although scheduled to be presented to Council in 2027), community engagement had been undertaken on two options; the field extension and building an oval on the former landfill area which engagement had the community divided.

As the City was unsure of the outcome of the clearing permit application, funds had not been allocated in the Long Term Financial Plan at the time.

Following the clearing permit outcome and a decision by Council in April 2026 on the project, provisions have now been made in budgets and the Long Term Financial Plan:

An amount of \$200,000 has been allocated within the 2026/27 Budget to undertake design and documentation works. The remaining budget amount has now been added to the Long Term Financial Plan in accordance with the April 2026 Council resolution:

2027/28	\$3,184,991 - Construction
2028/29	\$ 325,000 - Revegetation
2029/30	\$ 325,000 - Revegetation
2030/31	\$ 325,000 - Revegetation
2031/32	\$ 325,000 - Revegetation

OFFICIALQuestion 4:

Has the council considered how much this will cost to maintain and has that been included in the next 5 year maintenance budget?

Response 4:

The cost to revegetate and maintain Ken Hurst Park in the five-year period as set out by the clearing permit conditions is included in the overall cost for the project. Future maintenance requirements after the 5-year project period will not be determined until the project has been completed.

With regard to the field extension, the option that the Council decided to proceed with (Option 2), estimates an increase of \$23,650 (ex GST) per annum on existing maintenance costs. Estimated costs for each option can be found on page 35 of the Business Case provided to Council and included as an attachment to the April 2026 Ordinary Meeting of Council Minutes.

Question 5:

Who has submitted the request for the expansion and would it not be better to utilise the other 12-15 cricket pitches in the City of Melville?

Response 5:

The John Connell field extension was first identified formally by the City within the *Active Reserve Infrastructure Strategy 2020* (ARIS). The ARIS identified the forecast population to meet the increased needs of soccer and cricket in the City.

In 2022, Member for Tangney Mr Sam Lim made an election commitment of \$650,000 to support the field extension and upgrade cricket infrastructure.

In June 2022, the Council agreed to allow the Leeming Spartan Cricket Club to submit a vegetation clearing application for an area of 0.65ha to the east of the existing playing fields and work with the Club to manage the project.

The endorsement of the field extension proposal supports local sporting club sustainability by providing additional sporting infrastructure to meet the needs of the Leeming Spartan Cricket Club and Leeming Striker Soccer Club to allow for more teams, training sessions and community use to occur at the recreation reserve. Both Clubs cite that membership growth could occur if it had access to further fields.

The Leeming Spartans Cricket Club main home ground is John Connell Reserve; however, the club also uses Peter Ellis Park, Leeming, Trevor Gribble Reserve, Bull Creek and Webber Reserve, Willagee for home games. All sporting reserves across the City that have cricket pitches are fully booked during the cricket season.

Extending the sporting fields aligns with the City's outcome of creating healthy, safe and inclusive communities with a sense of belonging through the provision of inclusive, multipurpose places and facilities to encourage healthy lifestyles and wellbeing.

OFFICIAL**5.1.2 Mr M Mollison, Willagee**Preamble

Fairly simple question - how can you justify reckless spending like this, which benefits only a very small portion of the community, when most of us are struggling to make ends meet and you're trying to sneak in another 5% rate rise?

Question 1:

Have you considered reducing your spending on things like this, like everybody else has, instead of raising rates?

Response 1:

The City is very conscious of the financial pressures facing our community. This budget was developed through a thorough planning process with elected members, where we carefully prioritised services and key projects that benefit the wider community.

The administration did actively look for ways to manage costs internally and improve efficiency. However, like households and businesses, the City is facing significant cost increases - construction, materials, utilities, and service delivery costs have all risen substantially.

The 4.9% rate increase is aimed at ensuring the City can continue delivering essential services, maintaining critical infrastructure and investing in asset renewal in a financially responsible manner.

5.1.3 Ms T Burns, AttadalePreamble 1:

The City has not released a transparent needs assessment. Without this, the community cannot determine whether the project is necessary or whether higher-demand facilities are being overlooked.

Question 1:

What evidence demonstrates that the John Connell redevelopment is needed to meet current and future participation demand for cricket and soccer, and how was this project prioritised ahead of other sporting and community needs across the City? Other projects have been paused awaiting a city-wide strategy why not this one?

Response 1:

The projected need for the John Connell Reserve was documented in the City's Active Reserve Infrastructure Strategy (2020). Then, within the Business Case presented to Council at the April 2026 Ordinary Meeting of Council, a Needs Analysis was conducted. In summary, the Needs Analysis identified:

Increases in population growth within the catchment area of John Connell.

OFFICIAL

Both current users of the reserve citing, membership growth is restricted by the current size of the reserve. The cricket club also utilises three other reserves in City in addition to John Connell. All reserves across the City that have cricket pitches are utilised in the summer season. There are further reserves in planning in nearby Local Government Authorities, however access cannot be guaranteed.

The City has a large number of sporting and community needs it aims to cater for. This project is not new and consideration about its progress was made by Council in June 2022 with the endorsement of applying for a clearing permit. Given the clearing permit application was approved and funding to support the project has been committed, the City needed to make a decision with regard to its progress. It is not uncommon for the City to have multiple projects occurring at one time, in varying stages and decisions in relation to their progress depending on their lifecycle need to be made.

The City will continue to progress projects within its available resources while the City-wide strategy is in development and a range of factors including but not limited to approval requirements and available external funding will factor into decisions on the progress of infrastructure projects.

Preamble 2:

The \$4.68m estimate is based on outdated figures. If inaccurate, the project may cost significantly more, affecting rates or delaying other projects.

Question 2:

Given that the City has stated the project cost as \$4.68 million, what analysis has been undertaken to confirm that this figure is accurate, current and complete, including post-COVID construction pricing, earthworks, lighting, environmental offsets and long-term rehabilitation obligations (concerning the subject matter experts feedback on this)? What is the City's assessment of the risk that the actual cost may exceed \$4.68 million once the project proceeds to tender and delivery?

Response 2:

The cost estimate for the project is informed by a suitably qualified Quantity Surveyor which is dated 1 April 2026. The Quantity Surveyor uses a variety of inputs to inform the cost estimate including but limited to industry benchmarking price, recent comparable tender costs and information from design consultants based on the information available at the time. This has taken into account post-COVID construction pricing.

The revegetation cost estimates for Ken Hurst Park was based on a recent quote from a suitably qualified Environmental Consulting, Land Management and Horticultural company. Additional contingencies were added given the time-period required to undertake the revegetation.

However, as with all capital projects, there remains a level of uncertainty until detailed design is finalised and the project is taken to market. The City manages this through standard risk management practices including contingencies within project budgets and staged approvals through the design process.

The Council will have oversight of any material change in scope or cost prior to proceeding to tender or construction.

OFFICIALPreamble 3:

The City's budget is finite. Funding this project means other projects may be postponed or cancelled, and the community deserves clarity on what will be affected.

Question 3:

Which other capital works or renewal projects may be delayed, reduced or unfunded if the John Connell redevelopment proceeds at its current scale and cost?

Response 3:

The City delivers its capital works program within a finite financial envelope guided by its Annual Planning and Budget process and Long-Term Financial Plan. The John Connell Reserve redevelopment is one of several projects considered through this process.

At this stage, no specific individual projects have been identified as being directly displaced solely due to this project. However, as with all capital planning, there is an inherent trade-off between competing priorities, and the timing or scope of some projects across the broader program may be adjusted over time in response to progress made, approvals obtained, budget capacity, changing priorities, or updated cost estimates.

The Council regularly reviews the capital works program to ensure it remains aligned with community needs and financial sustainability.

Preamble 4:

All three alternatives were lower cost—financially or environmentally—and would have avoided clearing critically important remnant bushland. These options do not appear to have been adequately assessed or transparently compared. If the bushland had been correctly valued for its ecological significance, the clearing option would not have been considered viable.

Question 4:

Why was a project requiring the clearing of 0.68ha of remnant bushland and endangered black-cockatoo habitat selected when several clear, practical and lower-impact alternatives existed, including:

- *constructing another pitch on the oval directly across the road*
- *rehabilitating the former tip site, retaining the bushland corridor*
- *a minor overlapping-pitch design, consistent with other clubs, still delivering the required soccer pitch*

Response 4:

A range of options have been considered over time in relation to improving sporting capacity at John Connell Reserve. These options included variations to field layout, expansion, and alternative configurations.

OFFICIAL

In assessing options, the City has sought to balance multiple factors, including functionality, safety, compliance with sporting standards, site constraints, cost, and environmental considerations. While alternative concepts may offer certain advantages, they may also present limitations such as reduced usability, non-compliance with sporting requirements, or increased complexity and cost in other areas.

The preferred option was identified as providing the most practical and functional outcome to meet sporting requirements within the constraints of the site. The environmental impacts associated with this option have been subject to relevant regulatory assessment processes, including State environmental approvals where required.

Preamble 5:

It is highly unusual for a sporting club to lodge a clearing permit for public land. This reduced transparency and limited public awareness of the clearing proposal

Question 5:

Why was the clearing permit lodged by the cricket club rather than the City, given that the City is the landowner, project proponent and responsible authority for environmental compliance?

Response 5:

The clearing permit application process referenced was undertaken in accordance with a Council resolution made in June 2022, which authorised the President of the Leeming Spartan Cricket Club to submit the application to the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation.

This approach was adopted to enable progression of the approval process at that time, noting the club's role as a key stakeholder and proponent of the project.

Notwithstanding the administrative arrangements for lodging the application, the City remains the landowner and retains responsibility for ensuring that any works undertaken comply with relevant legislation, approvals, and environmental conditions.

Preamble 6:

The whole City pays for the project and loses bushland, and may in fact lose other facilities due to this project yet only a small local area was engaged. This does not reflect the true scale of impact.

Question 6:

Why was community engagement limited primarily to residents near the reserve when the financial, environmental and opportunity-cost impacts of this project affect all ratepayers across the City?

OFFICIALResponse 6:

Community engagement for this project was not limited primarily to residents living near the reserve. Broad city-wide communication was undertaken to encourage community members from across the entire City to be involved in the engagement on this project. A community reference group, the John Connell Collective, was then established to represent a cross-section of local perspectives and test ideas as they evolved.

Further engagement included surveys, workshops, and youth activities, along with consultation with First Nations Elders to incorporate cultural knowledge and connection to Country. All feedback gathered through these activities has informed the draft Master Plan, ensuring it reflects community priorities and aspirations for the future of the reserve.

Preamble 7:

The engagement process does not reflect IAP2 standards. If these standards were not followed, the decision-making process may be procedurally flawed.

Question 7:

How did the City ensure compliance with the IAP2 international engagement standards that the City publicly states it follows, particularly regarding early engagement, transparency and inclusion of all affected stakeholders?

Response 7:

The City's community engagement practices are guided by the principles of the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2), adapted to suit local government context and project scale.

For this project, engagement was designed to inform stakeholders, gather feedback, and ensure that relevant community views were considered in the decision-making process. This included targeted engagement with directly affected parties and opportunities for broader community awareness through Melville Talks in 2023.

The City acknowledges that differing views exist on the extent and timing of engagement and will continue to consider feedback to improve future engagement practices.

Preamble 8:

The City has not released the evidence underpinning its decision. Without transparency, the community cannot assess whether the project is justified.

Question 8:

When will the City release the full needs assessment, environmental analysis and prioritisation rationale that informed the decision to proceed with the John Connell redevelopment?

OFFICIALResponse 8:

The City has released all information available relating to the project, including reports, Council decisions, and supporting documentation, has been progressively made available through Council agendas and the City's website.

Specifically, needs analysis information was included in the Business Case in April 2026, environmental analysis included specific bushland assessments and flora and fauna surveys were made available in June 2022 and clearing permit information was made available in April 2026. Information about the City's prioritisation of this project has been previously answered through the responses to public questions.

Preamble 9:

This is not the Daintree or the Amazon—large forests with resilience and scale. Perth's remnant bushland exists in tiny, isolated fragments and is therefore arguably more important, because once a fragment is cleared, the ecological community it supports has nowhere else to go. Without adequate ecological education, councillors may unintentionally approve irreversible environmental damage and overlook viable alternatives.

Question 9:

What steps has the City taken to ensure that Elected Members and City officers are adequately educated on the ecological importance of the City's remaining remnant native bushland, noting that only approximately 186 hectares remain across Perth and that this vegetation community is listed as critically endangered?

Response 9:

The City recognises the importance of remnant native vegetation and its ecological significance within the metropolitan area. Elected Members and officers are supported through access to professional advice from qualified environmental specialists, relevant State policies, and regulatory frameworks that guide decision-making.

Where required, briefings, reports, and technical assessments are provided to ensure that environmental values are appropriately considered alongside other planning and community factors.

Question 10:

How does the City ensure that Elected Members understand that even small patches of remnant bushland represent irreplaceable ecological communities, and that the presence of weeds or rubbish reflects management issues rather than diminished ecological value?

Response 10:

The City's decision-making processes incorporate environmental assessment as a key consideration, supported by technical input from environmental professionals and relevant legislative requirements.

It is understood that ecological value is not solely determined by visual condition, and that remnant vegetation can retain significant environmental importance regardless of the presence of weeds or disturbance. These factors are considered as part of formal assessment and approval processes.

OFFICIALQuestion 11:

Given this, how can Council be confident that it has fully understood the environmental cost of the John Connell proposal and sufficiently reviewed lower-cost, lower-impact alternatives that were available but reportedly “not preferred by the cricket club”?

Response 11:

Council decisions are informed by a range of inputs, including technical assessments, stakeholder feedback, regulatory requirements, and strategic planning considerations.

In relation to this project, environmental impacts and alternative options have been considered through these processes. The final determination reflects a balance of competing factors, including community sporting needs, site constraints, environmental considerations, and feasibility.

Council acknowledges that not all stakeholders will agree with the outcome; however, it remains committed to making decisions based on the information available and within the broader context of City-wide responsibilities.

5.1.4 Mr N Wood, BooragoonPreamble:

My name is Noel Wood. I have been involved with the Leeming Spartan Cricket Club for more than 40 years and am a Life Member of the club. I can personally remember the need for more playing space at John Connell Reserve being discussed as far back as the 1990s. It was needed then and doubly so now. So, this is not a new issue. It has been a long-standing community need for decades. Sport does not just provide games on a weekend. It gives children a place to belong, gives families connection, supports mental health and wellbeing, keeps young people active and engaged, and contributes to stronger and safer communities. Local sporting clubs do an enormous amount of heavy lifting in community life, largely through volunteers, and they can only keep doing that if they have the space and facilities to meet demand.

Question 1:

So, I ask the City this very plainly: haven't the sporting clubs waited long enough? If this extension is not delivered now, what realistic, funded and deliverable alternative does the City have, right now, to meet the existing and growing demand for sporting space in our community? And, to quote the great Cat Stevens, where do the children play?

Response 1:

Thank you, Mr Wood, for your long-standing service to community sport. The need for additional playing space at John Connell Reserve has been recognised for many years and was formally identified in the City's Active Reserve Infrastructure Strategy 2020, which noted a post-2026 shortfall in cricket and soccer pitches and that Melville has “limited opportunities for increasing active open space” due to being a built-out urban environment.

OFFICIAL

At present, there is no realistic, funded or deliverable alternative that can meet existing demand. All cricket-capable reserves are fully booked, nearby future reserves in other local governments cannot be guaranteed, and it is not yet confirmed that the landfill site is viable alternative as further environmental investigations are required in addition to the availability of ground water to irrigate a reserve. Notably, based on current available information, the landfill site option is estimated to cost \$10.85M

The endorsed extension is the only option available now that can provide the space needed for children and young people to play, train and belong in their local community.

5.1.5 Mr J Meotti, LeemingQuestion 1:

Is the City of Melville aware that the Commonwealth Dept of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW) has separately written to the Leeming Spartan Cricket Club reminding it of its obligations under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act (EPBC Act) 1999. Specifically, several Matters of National Environmental Significance (MNES) identified in the Clearing Permit (CPS 10237/1) including, but not limited too: threatened species, such as Spider Orchids, and their habitat; presence of potential foraging and breeding habitat for threatened species such as Black Cockatoos and the cumulative impacts of vegetation clearing

Response 1:

The City received correspondence dated 12 June 2026 from the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water regarding vegetation clearing at John Connell Reserve. At this stage, the City has not been able to confirm whether the Leming Spartan Cricket Club received the same or similar correspondence, due to the limited timeframe available to verify this following receipt of this question.

Question 2:

Will the City take steps to ensure the Leeming Spartan Cricket Club refers these matters to DCCEEW and receives the relevant approvals before proceeding further?

Response 2:

The City has written to the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW) advising that, based on specialist ecological assessments undertaken by qualified consultants, referral under the EPBC Act is not considered necessary. These assessments informed the City's view that the proposed action would not result in a significant impact on any Matter of National Environmental Significance.

Should DCCEEW provide advice indicating that a referral or approval is required prior to the clearing proceeding, the City will ensure compliance with any such requirements. At this stage, however, the City does not anticipate further enquiries from DCCEEW in relation to this project.

OFFICIAL**5.1.6 Mr R Willis, Bull Creek**Question 1:

Could the council please confirm these historical facts on John Connell Reserve:

- *1950s Used as a sand pit for and for the Kwinana Freeway Perth interchange which was opened in 1859*
- *1974-2000 (26 years) used as a land fill site for Melville's domestic and construction waste.*
- *2000-2006 Methan gas from the waste was used to produce electricity.*
- *Remediation of the land fill site is required under the contamination Sites Act*
- *1987 Leeming Bowling Club*
- *1993 Leeming Soccar Club commence*
- *1989 Leeming Sports Association for formed*
- *2000 Leeming Cricket Club commenced*
- *2003 Leeming Sports Association building was opened with a membership now of over 1300 members*
- *2003 Driving Range was established*

Response 1:

As this question was received late and with limited notice, in accordance with the City of Melville Meeting Procedures Local Law 2022, this question was be taken on notice and the questioner advised that a response would be provided in the minutes of this meeting, to be published on Friday, 26 June 2026. The response is provided below:

The following table has been provided below to confirm the historical facts as requested:

Request Fact	City Comment
<i>1950s Used as a sand pit for and for the Kwinana Freeway Perth interchange which was opened in 1859</i>	This unfortunately cannot be confirmed. Reviewing aerial photography, two images in 1953 and 1965 do not show any evidence of the site being used as a sand pit.
<i>1974-2000 (26 years) used as a land fill site for Melville's domestic and construction waste.</i>	This can be confirmed, for primarily domestic waste.
<i>2000-2006 Methan gas from the waste was used to produce electricity</i>	It's understood that from 1994 a clean energy company was contracted to extract and transfer methane to a power station in Canning Vale. Activities ceased in 2014 as insufficient flows of methane concentration were being produced.
<i>Remediation of the land fill site is required under the contamination Sites Act</i>	Yes, this is correct.
<i>1987 Leeming Bowling Club</i>	The City understands the Club was founded in 1987.
<i>1993 Leeming Soccar Club commence</i>	The City does not have any formal records available at this time to confirm.

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Request Fact	City Comment
<i>1989 Leeming Sports Association for formed</i>	Based on a previous deputation to Council, we understand the Leeming Sports Association formed in 1986
<i>2000 Leeming Cricket Club commenced</i>	We understand this correct.
<i>2003 Leeming Sports Association building was opened with a membership now of over 1300 members</i>	We understand this is correct.
<i>2003 Driving Range was established</i>	Available aerial imagery suggests between 2003 and 2006.

5.1.7 Ms L Seaward, Leeming

Preamble 1:

A great deal has been said publicly in recent months suggesting that the John Connell Reserve project is a narrow or single-club issue. However, the breadth of attendance and interest at this meeting suggests the exact opposite. Present this evening are representatives and supporters connected with the Leeming Spartan Cricket Club, Bullcreek Leeming Football Club, Bullcreek Leeming Junior Football Club, Leeming Netball Club, Leeming Bowling Club, Melville Bowling Club, Bull Creek RAAFA, Bull Creek AFA Bowls Club, Melville Community Men's Shed, Leeming Soccer Club, Willetton Football Club, Willetton Dragons Cricket Club, Willetton Bowling Club, Bateman Junior Cricket Club, CBC Cricket Club, Kardinya Lakes Cricket Club, Applecross Cricket Club, the Indian Society of WA, Chung Wah Association, Melville Glades Golf Club, East Fremantle Football Club, Perth Cricket Mentoring, Riverton RSL and Bicton RSL. These are not a loose collection of groups. They are incorporated clubs and community organisations that make up a very significant part of civic life in the City of Melville, pay substantial fees and charges to the City, have substantial membership numbers, and carry real obligations and responsibilities in serving their members and the wider community.

Question 1:

Could the City therefore please explain what it sees as the broader flow-on benefit of the John Connell Reserve extension across the City's sporting network, including the extent to which creating additional capacity at John Connell would help free up oval space for other clubs in both winter and summer, and whether delivering this project would send an important signal that the City backs the clubs and community organisations that contribute so much to local life?

Response 1:

As this question was received late and with limited notice, in accordance with the City of Melville Meeting Procedures Local Law 2022, this question was be taken on notice and the questioner advised that a response would be provided in the minutes of this meeting, to be published on Friday, 26 June 2026. The response is provided below:

In the 2025-26 summer season, all available cricket ovals across the City had been booked. Creating an additional cricket oval at John Connell will enable either further teams to play or free up space for another user to play organised sport.

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Currently the Leeming Soccer Club only use John Connell Reserve, however have determined to cap existing numbers, rather than increase membership which would require an additional reserve.

In terms of benefits to community clubs and organisations, part of the rationale for the field extension option was to enable multiple matches for both soccer and cricket to be played at the same location, rather than fragmenting competition elsewhere. If another option was pursued, its possible fragmentation would occur and members of the club would not patronise the available social facilities at John Connell Reserve creating disconnection amongst members.

5.1.8 Ms D Jagadish, Mount PleasantPreamble 1:

A great deal of rhetoric has been directed at the John Connell Reserve project on the basis that it is supposedly an unjustifiable spend on sporting land, with phrases such as “the world’s most expensive lawn” being used publicly.

At the same time, the City is also proposing to spend substantial sums on open space projects elsewhere, including the proposed Moreau Mews site in Applecross, which I understand involves a significant City landholding originally acquired for alternate revenue purposes and a projected spend in the order of millions of dollars to create a passive park space.

I live very close to Moreau Mews in the Precinct Building along Canning Highway and personally can see that the benefit of the John Connell project far outweighs the number of users of Moreau Mews.

Question 1:

My question is therefore, could the City please explain, for the benefit of electors, how it distinguishes between spending on passive parkland and spending on active sporting infrastructure, and whether the proposed Moreau Mews project would in fact represent a higher cost for land that cannot deliver the same level of organised community sport, participation and year-round use as the approved John Connell Reserve extension?

Response 1:

As this question was received late and with limited notice, in accordance with the City of Melville Meeting Procedures Local Law 2022, this question was be taken on notice and the questioner advised that a response would be provided in the minutes of this meeting, to be published on Friday, 26 June 2026. The response is provided below:

It’s important to recognise that passive parklands and active sporting reserves deliver fundamentally different outcomes for the community.

Passive parklands generally provide:

- Informal recreation (e.g. walking, sitting, visual amenity) - this supports mental and physical health and overall wellbeing
- Environmental benefits – improved air quality, reduced heat and local biodiversity
- Local amenity – enhanced neighbourhood attractiveness, liveability and opportunities for informal gatherings and social interaction.

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Active sporting reserves generally provide:

- Organised sport (e.g. training, fixtures or competitions) – that supports physical health outcomes
- Multi-season utilisation – allowing various codes of winter and summer sporting activities
- Club and team-based participation – that builds community connectivity, social outcomes, leadership etc

As a result, investment decisions are typically guided by and assessed on different frameworks.

Active reserves are assessed on (including but not limited to):

- Demand and utilisation
- Participation rates and future growth
- Availability and service provision
- Functionality and compliance to standards

Passive parklands are assessed on:

- Residential density and population growth
- Accessibility and walkable catchments
- Urban heat mitigation
- Environmental benefits
- Liveability outcomes

Given these outcomes are more so about community benefit where physical and mental wellbeing is concerned and cost of projects can be impacted by a range of factors including location, ground conditions, site constraints etc, cost is not the sole factor in decision making or investment allocation.

5.1.9 Mr R Gosatti, Kardinya

Preamble 1:

Those opposed to the approved John Connell Reserve extension have repeatedly suggested that, instead of proceeding with the current project, the City should place additional playing surfaces over the former landfill area at the reserve.

That proposition has been promoted publicly as though it were a simpler, cheaper and more sensible alternative.

However, the City's own past material has identified significant issues with that concept, including former landfill constraints, potentially contaminated material, remediation requirements, water and

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irrigation limitations, wind exposure, ongoing maintenance concerns and broader safety questions associated with building sporting infrastructure over old tip land.

Some of the same campaigners now promoting that option have also, at other times, described the tip area itself as unsafe, which only adds to the inconsistency and confusion in the public debate.

For many electors, the concern is that this “alternative” is being spoken about as though it were a realistic near-term substitute, when in reality it may be vastly more expensive, far more complex, and take many years - if not decades - to make safe, fund and deliver.

Question 1:

Given that demand for community sporting exists now – not decades from now, could the City please clarify what the likely remediation, construction and delivery timeframe would be if the old landfill area were pursued instead of the approved oval extension, what the most recent cost estimate for that approach is, and whether those figures included floodlighting and other associated infrastructure?

Response 1:

As this question was received late and with limited notice, in accordance with the City of Melville Meeting Procedures Local Law 2022, this question was taken on notice and the questioner advised that a response would be provided in the minutes of this meeting, to be published on Friday, 26 June 2026. The response is provided below:

While further detailed investigation would need to be completed, a range of measures are expected as part of remediation should a multi-use oval be constructed on the former landfill. This includes (but may not be limited to):

- Additional clean fill – providing appropriate levels of capping, a level playing surface, and suitable for service installation and growing natural turf.
- Geotextile Fabric - fabric across the span of the developed area to differentiate potential contaminated soil from clean soil.
- Gas protection system for a building and any structures that have enclosed areas where it may be possible for gas to migrate and stay trapped.

It should be noted further investigation needs to occur if there is groundwater available to irrigate and other additional structural elements need to be considered.

The estimated costs identified in the report and Business Case presented to Council in April 2026 was \$10.85M. The scope of this included:

- Multi-purpose oval (including floodlighting)
- Car parking (~24 bays)
- Small changeroom and storage building
- Provisional sums for remediation actions listed above.

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Importantly, the \$10.85M focused on the proposed oval remediation only, as remediation is still required at other areas of the site. This may be a conditional requirement of DWER should this option be pursued and these costs have not been factored in.

A timeframe is not clear; however it would be anticipated following investigations that it would take approximately 4-5 years to design and seek approvals should the option of building on the former landfill be confirmed.

Preamble 2:

I note that the State Government's Community Sporting and Recreation Facilities Fund has historically provided grants of up to only \$2.5 million, and is not an unlimited funding source.

Question 2:

Could the City therefore please indicate whether pursuing the former landfill option instead of the approved oval extension would in fact be significantly more expensive for City of Melville ratepayers, particularly if remediation, delayed delivery, and associated infrastructure such as lighting were taken into account?

Response 2:

As this question was received late and with limited notice, in accordance with the City of Melville Meeting Procedures Local Law 2022, this question was be taken on notice and the questioner advised that a response would be provided in the minutes of this meeting, to be published on Friday, 26 June 2026. The response is provided below:

In response to the preamble, this is correct. In addition, the CSRFF program that is currently on hold would only fund certain aspects that generally relate to physical activity outcomes (e.g. provision of turf, irrigation, lighting, changerooms). It is not expected that it will fund the remediation and items such as storage and car parking are considered lower priorities. Furthermore, the maximum CSRFF would fund is up to 50% of costs of eligible items.

On this basis, it is expected the City would need to make a larger financial contribution to the landfill option over the field extension option, unless other levels of government were willing to make a financial contribution.

5.2 Questions Received at the Meeting

At 6:51, the Presiding Member advised that additional questions had been received from the floor, and that the questions and responses would be provided within the minutes of the of the meeting.

5.2.1 Mr B Patterson, Palmyra

Following the conclusion of the meeting, Mr B Patterson formally withdrew his questions.

OFFICIAL**5.2.2 Mr N Hewson, Leeming**Preamble 1:

A figure of 209 trees within the proposed 0.68ha clearing has been repeated publicly. I am unable to reconcile this figure as a frequenter of the location.

Question 1:

Can the Council confirm how many of the 209 are above 1.5m?

Response 1:

As this question was received at the meeting and with limited notice, in accordance with the *City of Melville Meeting Procedures Local Law 2022*, this question was be taken on notice and the questioner advised that a response would be provided in the minutes of this meeting, to be published on Friday, 26 June 2026. The response is provided below:

In 2025, when the City inspected the area proposed for clearing at John Connell Reserve, approximately 102 trees were recorded as being above 5 metres in height. A further 107 trees were recorded as being between 0 and 5 metres in height, 46 of those being grass trees. The City did not specifically measure or categorise trees above 1.5 metres in height.

Question 2:

How many are below 1.5m?

Response 2:

As this question was received at the meeting and with limited notice, in accordance with the *City of Melville Meeting Procedures Local Law 2022*, this question was be taken on notice and the questioner advised that a response would be provided in the minutes of this meeting, to be published on Friday, 26 June 2026. The response is provided below:

In 2025, when the City inspected the area proposed for clearing at John Connell Reserve, approximately 102 trees were recorded as being above 5 metres in height. A further 107 trees were recorded as being between 0 and 5 metres in height 46 of those being grass trees.

The City did not specifically measure or categorise trees below 1.5 metres in height.

Question 3:

How many are above 5m?

Response 3:

As this question was received at the meeting and with limited notice, in accordance with the *City of Melville Meeting Procedures Local Law 2022*, this question was be taken on notice and the questioner advised that a response would be provided in the minutes of this meeting, to be published on Friday, 26 June 2026. The response is provided below:

In 2025, when the City inspected the area proposed for clearing at John Connell Reserve, approximately 102 trees were recorded as being above 5 metres in height.

OFFICIALQuestion 4:

How many are older than when the clearing permit was issued?

Response 4:

As this question was received at the meeting and with limited notice, in accordance with the *City of Melville Meeting Procedures Local Law 2022*, this question was be taken on notice and the questioner advised that a response would be provided in the minutes of this meeting, to be published on Friday, 26 June 2026. The response is provided below:

While the exact germination dates of the trees are unknown the City is confident that all the trees identified at the time of inspection are older than the date on which the Clearing Permit was issued.

At 6:52pm, the Presiding Member closed public question time.

UNCONFIRMED

OFFICIAL**6 MOTIONS****6.1 Motions with Notice****6.1.1 Mr J Meotti, Leeming - Pause John Connell Reserve Field Extension**

At 6:54pm, Mr J Meotti, Leeming moved, seconded Ms K Ribbink, Mount Pleasant

MEETING RESOLUTION (MOTION 1)

Requests that the Council resolves to pause any work being undertaken on the current John Connell Reserve Field Extension project and requests:

- a) further, comprehensive community consultation; and
- b) a review of the Business Case

The renewed consultation and analysis should be undertaken with a level of rigour consistent with projects of a similar scale and investment value (approximately \$4.7 million) and ensure that broader community expectations, project scope, financial implications, and potential impacts are fully understood and re-considered with a report to Council to consider before progressing the project.

At 7:07pm, the Presiding Member declared the motion.

LOST (87/114)

6.1.2 Mr J Meotti, Leeming - Reactivate John Connell Oval Master Plan

At 7:07pm, Mr J Meotti, Leeming moved, seconded Mr D Morley, Willagee

MEETING RESOLUTION (MOTION 2)

That Council reactivate the John Connell Reserve Master Plan and undertake comprehensive community consultation to inform an assessment of all available options for the entire 47-hectare John Connell precinct, including both the existing cleared footprint and the former landfill site. This assessment should include the feasibility of options, including staged development if necessary, and ensure that the site's full redevelopment potential and wider community use are preserved and properly considered before any further decisions are made.

At 7:23pm, the Presiding Member declared the motion.

LOST (82/116)

OFFICIAL**6.1.3 Mr J Meotti, Leeming - Remove Budget Expense John Connell Reserve Playing Field Extension**

At 7:23pm, Mr J Meotti, Leeming moved, seconded Ms S Meotti, Leeming

MEETING RESOLUTION (MOTION 3)

The residents and ratepayers of the City of Melville request the Mayor and Council to delete the \$200,000 expense included in the 2026/27 Budget for expenditure on the John Connell Reserve Playing Field Extension Proposal, Leeming or any associated matter.

At 7:37pm, the Presiding Member declared the motion.

LOST (79/118)

Reasons:

1. The proposed expenditure of \$200,000 will commit the City to over \$4 million in expenditure for future years with no guarantee that the overall expense will not exceed \$4 Million.
2. This year ratepayers are facing significant increases in rates, with average rates increases of over 6.7% to over 13% during a cost-of-living crisis, GRV increases, increased fuel prices and consequential increased food and living costs.
3. All of the above expenditure places an additional burden on ratepayers in this and future years.
4. There is no certainty that the approx. \$4,700,000 project will progress in the 2027/28 financial year, so imposing this cost on ratepayers in the 26/27 FY is unreasonable and unnecessary.

6.1.4 Mr A Seaward, Leeming - Commence Clearing

At 7:37pm, Mr A Seaward, Leeming moved, seconded Ms D Jagadish, Mount Pleasant

MEETING RESOLUTION (MOTION 4)**We request that the City of Melville:**

1. **Amend the current indicative delivery timeframe for the John Connell Reserve extension project so that clearing and associated early works commence no later than Q3 2026/27;**
2. **Prioritise all necessary design, approvals and procurement during Q1 and Q2 2026/27 to achieve that outcome and remain within the current clearing permit timeframe; and**
3. **Adopt a staged delivery approach for the John Connell Reserve project, with clearing and field extension works undertaken first as priority, with the floodlighting upgrades and other non-time-critical components delivered in a later stage, including through future grant opportunities where available.**

At 7:56pm, the Presiding Member declared the motion.

CARRIED (114/82)

OFFICIAL**7 CLOSURE**

There being no further business to discuss, the Presiding Member declared the meeting closed at 7:58pm.

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