

Public Question Time

Question from Isaac Hermann:

In relation to the Elster Creek catchment advocacy paper directed to the State Government, promoting, and advocating for funding towards flood mitigation issues and in our municipality. Has there been any State support for the six proposed flood mitigation projects mentioned in this report, particularly the Shakespeare Grove main drain?

I understand that the St Kilda Town Hall is a designated relief Centre for flood victims, regardless of the fact that a boat would be required to get here. What is the alternative and why aren't places of refuge under flood conditions made public? The SES a number of years ago bought out a report encouraging community involvement in the decision process in locating safe places of refuge during flooding.

When will Council commence advocacy for flood mitigation on behalf of Shakespeare Main Drain catchment residents?

Response:

The City of Port Phillip have designated both St Kilda Town Hall and Port Melbourne Town Hall as the municipalities main Emergency Relief Centres. These facilities are considered our best options due to the buildings large size and setup. Further to that there are also some community centres located across the municipality which are designated as smaller relief centres. These facilities would be used if immediate shelter was required very close to an emergency. For example, to coordinate bus transport for displaced people to a larger relief centre setup elsewhere. Or as a small information centre in the days after an emergency to assist community members. These community centres are not large enough or setup with key services to be used as a full emergency relief centre.

Lastly, depending on the location or scale of an emergency, the City of Port Phillip and relevant emergency services might consider using other non-council facilities to activate an emergency relief centre. For example, a school gymnasium or Church facility, if the landowner was able to be contacted and willing to work with us to undertake this process. This decision would be made if the building was available, suitable, and geographically located to assist emergency relief.

Whenever a relief centre is required during an emergency, City of Port Phillip work closely with Victoria Police and the incident controller, such as VIC SES or Fire Rescue Victoria, to consider the most appropriate location for the centre. City of Port Phillip has processes in place to plan out the activation of emergency relief centres. These processes are not made public prior to an emergency because they are not set. A different emergency situation could require a different response, and this will be determined at the time of the emergency and then communicated to the public at the time of the emergency. City of Port Phillip review and exercise these processes regularly to test and consider improvements through the Port Phillip Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee

To date there has been no state support for the proposed flood mitigation projects mentioned in this report. The City of Port Phillip is committed to advocating for Shakespeare Grove Main Drain residents. In 2022, Melbourne Water completed renewal works on the drain outlet to make it safe for the public and to reduce the risk of flooding. In 2022, we completed an investigation into potential stormwater harvesting from the drain. The idea was to take stormwater from the drain, thereby reducing flow volumes conveyed in the drain and

using this water to irrigate nearby open spaces. Unfortunately, the project was deemed not feasible at this stage. However, we will continue looking for innovative solutions.

We are currently working with Melbourne Water on updated flood mapping for the entire municipality. This includes climate change and investigation into sea level rise. Once this work is completed (expected mid-2024) we will be in a better position to advocate for flood mitigation projects in the area.

**Please note: answers to any questions in Public Question Time and Councillor Question Time which were answered at the meeting are included in the minutes of that meeting.*