



**11.1** **ENDORSEMENT OF FLOOD MANAGEMENT STRATEGY  
PORT PHILLIP AND WESTERNPORT 2021-2031**

**EXECUTIVE MEMBER:** **KYLIE BENNETTS, GENERAL MANAGER, CITY GROWTH AND ORGANISATIONAL CAPABILITY**

**PREPARED BY:** **RENAE WALTON, SENIOR SUSTAINABILITY POLICY AND STRATEGY ADVISOR**  
**ZOE O'MAHONEY, COORDINATOR SUSTAINABLE POLICY**  
**KATHRYN POUND, ACTING MANAGER CITY STRATEGY, DESIGN AND SUSTAINABILITY**

**1. PURPOSE**

1.1 To present Melbourne Water's Flood Management Strategy Port Phillip and Westernport 2021-2031 and associated Action Plan for 2021-2026 for endorsement.

**2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- 2.1 Melbourne Water has released the Flood Management Strategy Port Phillip and Westernport 2021-2031 (the Strategy) and Action Plan 2021-26 (attachments 1 and 2).
- 2.2 The Strategy is a refresh of the previous Strategy, which Council endorsed in 2015. The refreshed Strategy sets the ten-year direction for flood management in the region. It focuses on Melbourne Water and agencies taking a collaborative approach to avoid and reduce flood risks while supporting emergency preparation and response to flooding.
- 2.3 The Strategy maintains a commitment to deliver the existing suite of solutions, including infrastructure works, while recognising the need to increase focus on climate change risks, flood modelling, land use planning and building community awareness and resilience to flooding.
- 2.4 The Strategy and Action Plan have a regional flood management focus and does not specify any place-based solutions to flooding problems. Place-based solutions will be developed during the implementation of the Strategy.
- 2.5 Melbourne Water has made a formal request to all partners to endorse the Strategy and Action Plan.
- 2.6 Endorsing the Strategy and Action Plan does not commit Council to funding or resourcing above existing commitments in the Council Plan and budget 2021.
- 2.7 Endorsement of the Strategy signifies:
- Council's agreement with the vision, objectives and directions of the Strategy (attachment 3).
  - A commitment from Council to participate in a co-delivery process to facilitate collaboration and alignment between partners.
  - No specific funding or financial obligations.



### 3. RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- 3.1 Endorses the Flood Management Strategy Port Phillip and Westernport 2021-2031 and associated Action Plan for 2021-2026.
- 3.2 Requests that the CEO write to Melbourne Water to inform them of Council's endorsement.

### 4. KEY POINTS/ISSUES

- 4.1 The Flood Management Strategy Port Phillip and Westernport 2021-2031 sets out a vision, objectives and focus areas to guide the ways that all agencies responsible for flood management work together to manage flooding in the region.
- 4.2 The Strategy is a refresh of the previous Strategy, which Council endorsed in 2015.
- 4.3 The Strategy is accompanied by a five-year Action Plan that outlines actions Melbourne Water and partners will take to meet the objectives of the Strategy. The majority of actions outlined in the Action Plan align with Council positions including the *Act and Adapt: Sustainable Environment Strategy* and *Elster Creek Catchment Flood Management Plan*.
- 4.4 The Strategy and Action Plan are included in attachments 1 and 2.
- 4.5 Commitments within the Strategy of particular interest to Port Phillip include:
  - Significant increase in the flood modelling program to ensure updated information can be used to inform decision-making. This includes incorporating climate change scenarios.
  - Investigating opportunities to reduce the time it takes to incorporate new flood information into planning schemes.
  - Leveraging the Integrated Water Management (IWM) Forums to reduce flood risks through other IWM projects. Council is a member of the Yarra and Dandenong Catchment forums.
  - Development of a community flood knowledge portal to empower communities by providing them the information they need to make informed decisions and to prepare for flood events. This action is already an action in the Elster Creek Catchment Flood Management Plan and the Elster Creek community will be one of the first to access this portal.
  - Exploration of planning and building controls in upstream areas to mitigate downstream flood impacts.
  - Update Guidelines for Development in Flood Affected Areas (2019) and investigate opportunities to amend the Victorian Planning System to support better design outcomes in flood hazard areas.
  - Explore planning and/or building controls in upstream areas to mitigate downstream flood impacts.
  - Development and delivery of flood and drainage infrastructure maintenance programs.



- 4.6 Melbourne Water is inviting all partner organisations who have flood management responsibilities, including state government, councils, water authorities and emergency services, to endorse the Strategy and Action Plan.
- 4.7 Endorsement of the Strategy signifies:
- Council's agreement with the vision, objectives and directions of the Strategy (attachment 3).
  - A commitment from Council to participate in a co-delivery process to facilitate collaboration and alignment between partners.
  - No specific funding or financial obligations.
- 4.8 Endorsement of the Strategy and Action Plan does not commit Council to funding or resourcing above existing commitments in the Council Plan and Budget.
- 4.9 Officers have been involved in the development of the Strategy through membership of Melbourne Water's Flood Leadership Committee.

## 5. CONSULTATION AND STAKEHOLDERS

- 5.1 Melbourne Water conducted the following engagement activities to inform the Strategy refresh and development of the Action Plan:
- Facilitated regular meetings of the Flood Leadership Committee and technical reference groups.
  - Conducted three stakeholder workshops and one senior leadership workshop.
  - Completed online consultation with the community via our YourSay web platform.
- 5.2 Council officers are members of the Flood Leadership Committee and have provided input into all aspects of the Strategy refresh and Action Plan development.
- 5.3 Council officers made a formal submission to the Draft Strategy and Action Plan in March 2021. Key suggestions as part of Council's submission that led to changes in the final strategy include:
- A need for a greater level of service and increased investment in infrastructure maintenance.
  - Feedback on the need to incorporate actions to support balanced architectural solutions to building design decisions in flood hazard areas, resulted in two new actions to respond to this suggestion.
  - Specific wording changes to strengthen the influence the planning system has over decision making were adopted.

## 6. LEGAL AND RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Council Officers have not identified and legal or risk implications if Council choose to endorse the Strategy and Action Plan.
- 6.2 Delivery of the Strategy and Action Plan is intended to reduce flood risks. The objectives and outcomes of the Strategy include:
- Agency knowledge of flood risks has improved
  - Flood impacts are reduced (relative to a do-nothing scenario)



- Land use and development in flood prone areas is appropriate to the level of flood risk
- The impacts of climate change and coastal flooding are incorporated into planning and decision making
- Clear roles and responsibilities allow agencies to deliver effective flood management.

## **7. FINANCIAL IMPACT**

7.1 The Strategy does not commit Council to funding or resourcing above existing commitments in the Council Plan and budget.

## **8. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT**

8.1 Endorsing the Strategy and Action Plan does not pose any environmental issues.

8.2 Delivery of the Strategy and Action Plan is intended to reduce flood risks to the environment. The objectives and outcomes of the Strategy include:

- The impacts of climate change and coastal flooding are incorporated into planning and decision making
- Integrated Water Management and flood infrastructure achieve maximum public value.

## **9. COMMUNITY IMPACT**

9.1 Endorsing the Strategy and Action Plan will indicate to the community Council's ongoing commitment to working with partners to progress actions that reduce the impacts of flooding on the community.

9.2 The objectives and outcomes of the Strategy include:

- Communities in flood prone areas have increased awareness of flood risk
- Flood affected communities have access to clear, appropriate and timely emergency information
- Flood impacts are reduced (relative to a do-nothing scenario)
- Integrated Water Management and flood infrastructure achieve maximum public value.

## **10. ALIGNMENT TO COUNCIL PLAN AND COUNCIL POLICY**

10.1 Endorsing the Strategy and Action Plan aligns with Council's commitment to a Sustainable Port Phillip and responding to the Climate Emergency particularly with respect to water management and flood mitigation. This includes:

- We will deliver:
  - investment in water sensitive urban design and irrigation upgrades, including at key sports fields and parks to reduce contaminants in water entering Port Phillip Bay and optimise Council's potable water use
  - investment in infrastructure through regular maintenance and construction (subject to viability) to improve drainage and flood mitigation at key locations as well as scoping, and where viable, construction of stormwater harvesting infrastructure



- increased permeability of ground surfaces across public streets and in our public spaces as well as examining ways to support greater permeability on private property
- We will partner with:
  - Melbourne Water and other water stakeholders to plan and deliver Integrated Water Management projects to improve the management of water in our municipality
  - Melbourne Water and the Cities of Bayside, Glen Eira and Kingston to take a holistic approach to reducing flood risk in the Elster Creek Catchment, collaboratively implementing the Elster Creek Catchment Flood Management Plan 2019-24, subject to relevant feasibility studies and available budget from all partners
  - with other councils, Victorian Government departments and a range of other stakeholders to maximise our combined efforts to reduce environmental impacts.

## 11. IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

### 11.1 TIMELINE

- The CEO will notify Melbourne Water of Council's endorsement of the Flood Management Strategy Port Phillip and Westernport 2021-2031 (the Strategy) and Action Plan 2021-26 prior to 30 November 2021.
- Throughout the life of the Strategy Council officers will participate in a co-delivery process to facilitate collaboration and alignment between partners and advocate for improved outcomes for the Port Phillip community.

### 11.2 COMMUNICATION

- Council's website will be updated with information regarding Council's endorsement of the Strategy and Action Plan 2021-26.

## 12. OFFICER DIRECT OR INDIRECT INTEREST

- 12.1 No officers involved in the preparation of this report have any material or general interest in the matter.

### ATTACHMENTS

1. Flood Management Strategy Port Phillip and Westernport 2021-31
2. Flood Management Strategy Port Phillip and Westernport Action Plan 2021-26
3. Flood Management Strategy Port Phillip and Westernport 2021-2031 Vision and objectives