

Candidates Information Requests Register

2024 Election Period

Candidate:	Rohan Parrant
Business Area:	Inclusive Communities
Information Request:	
Requested a contact for Derrimut Weelam Gathering Place	
Council Officer Response:	
<p>It was nice to meet you last week at the Woolepe Reserve opening.</p> <p>I'll introduce my colleague, who works as the Programs Officer at Derrimut Weelam Gathering Place, and as we discussed, Isaiah might be able to assist with the support services you were seeking information on for the two young Aboriginal people you had worked with previously.</p>	

Candidate:	Hadi Saab
Business Area:	Active Kingston
Information Request:	
Waves Leisure Centre	
Council Officer Response:	
<p>Hello Cr Saab, I trust you are well. Thanks for reaching out re a customer query concerning payment options at Waves Leisure Centre.</p> <p>At Waves we provide fixed term (12 months) and monthly debited payment options for members. Over 75% of members (around 1500) prefer monthly payments. With monthly payments we process direct billing at the start of each month. Considering the volume of transactions, this process is a cost-effective approach for our members and Council.</p> <p>We have not received any requests from members for other payment terms e.g. fortnightly payments. Our benchmarking suggests that our payment arrangements are consistent with other similar centres. With monthly payments, we understand our members can work with their bank to set aside funds to meet monthly payment obligations. Some of our members are on fixed incomes and find this approach helpful. To move towards a solution, this could be an option for you to discuss with your interested community member.</p> <p>As we have entered the 'Caretaker Period', we feel it is more suitable to provide this information via email. I would be pleased for you to refer any customer enquiries regarding this matter to staff at Waves or I.</p>	

Candidate:	Tess Law
Business Area:	Governance, Risk and Integrity
Information Request:	
<p>On Monday 26 Aug evening the City of Kingston held their ordinary Council meeting. On the agenda was a petition from community members and Councillors voted unanimously in favour of the petition's request and the motion was recorded as carried. In the same Council meeting, further on the agenda during question time, that decision was declined by council staff (officers) and therefore the motion which was carried early with the same request will not be actioned.</p> <p>Can you please advise on this matter. A council meets to discuss, debate and make strategic decisions on issues which affect the community. They are elected by the community to represent their needs and under the Local Government Act. How can a council decision be made and then reversed by the staff who are expected to action decisions made by Council?</p> <p>'Voting - if the motion is carried, it becomes a resolution (decision) of the council' City of Kingston (2024) Council meeting agenda, pg 6</p> <p>In any other organisation, their Board of Directors have overarching authority over key decisions and it is then handed over to the senior leaders and managers to operationalise and progress these decisions.</p> <p>Who do I need to speak to to gain clarification on correct roles, responsibilities and process of Councillors council meeting decisions versus the council following those decisions?</p> <p>If you require the agenda items please view this _Opo and preview item numbers: Petition 4.City of Kingston Council to Replace the Epsom Wetland Boardwalks</p>	
Council Officer Response:	
<p>Thank you for your recent enquiry in relation to a petition and public question submitted to the 26 August 2024 Ordinary Council Meeting regarding replacement of the Epsom Park boardwalk. I trust the below helps to explain the proceedings of the meeting and Council's process for responding to petitions, however please contact me if you require further clarification.</p> <p>Meeting Procedure regarding petitions: Under rule 40.4 of Council's Governance Rules, a petition or joint letter addressed to Council or any member personally which requires a decision of or direction from Council must be referred to the Chief Executive Officer. Accordingly, the resolution of Council at its meeting on 26 August was "That the petition be referred to the CEO for response." Following this resolution, the CEO or a delegated officer then considers the petition and provides a written response to the petitioners. The resolution of Council to refer the petition to the CEO does not commit the Council to undertake any request referred to in a petition.</p> <p>Meeting Procedure regarding public question time: Later in the meeting, the Epsom Park boardwalk matter was further explained by the General Manager Infrastructure and Open Space in response to a public question.</p> <p>Hutchins Close rebuild costs inquiries: In relation to your additional questions about rebuild costs, these questions will be forwarded to the relevant manager and a response will be provided within 10 business days.</p>	

Transparency of candidate information requests

Please note that in accordance with Council's election period policy, all requests for information from candidates must be placed on an information request register. Your queries and the responses will be made publicly available on Council's website.

Candidate:	Tess Law
Business Area:	Open Space
Information Request:	
<p>Hi Kelly</p> <p>Hope you are keeping warm on this rainy day. Thanks for your response and I look forward to receiving the itemised cost breakdown of the boardwalks replacement and also the vendor responses to the due diligent and transparent Request For Tender process which would have been followed which and will state the alternative options which were considered and costed.</p> <p>Further to the query regarding the petition I have heard from Local Government Victoria on the same matter who have advised the following:</p> <p>“Dear Tess</p> <p>Thank you for your query regarding a petition considered at Kingston City Council’s meeting on 26 August 2024.</p> <p>Local Government Victoria (LGV) understands that the petition, containing 83 signatures, asked that Council reviews its decision not to replace the Epsom Wetlands Boardwalks. The petition was considered by Council with Cr Cochrane speaking to it and it was determined that no debate was required.</p> <p>All Victorian council’s required to adopt Governance Rules under section 60 of the <i>Local Government Act 2020</i> (the Act). The Governance Rules describe the way Council will conduct Council meetings and make decisions. The City of Kingston’s Governance Rules can be found at:https://www.kingston.vic.gov.au/council/council-documents/plans-policies-and-reports/governance-rules</p> <p>In relation to petitions, subrule 40.4 of the Kingston’s Governance Rules state that:</p> <p><i>A petition or joint letter addressed to Council or any member personally which requires a decision of or directions from Council must be referred to the Chief Executive Officer.</i></p> <p>As such, LGV considers that the Epsom Wetlands Boardwalks petitioners should expect the CEO to provide a formal response to their petition. While Council did respond to a question from a resident regarding the boardwalks, this is not considered to be the CEO’s formal response to the petitioners.”</p>	
Council Officer Response:	
<p>Hi Tess,</p> <p>I understand you have some further questions about the Epsom Boardwalk.</p>	

I know we have previously corresponded on this matter. I have also provided a response to the head petitioner.

a) the cost to upgrade the recent Hutchins Close pathway

My colleagues in the Infrastructure department have managed this project. It went through a public tender process thus I can disclose that it was \$165,663.45 (Excl GST).

b) an itemised copy of how the final figure was calculated

The estimates I've previously provided you for the replacement Epsom Boardwalk costs were based on similar projects recently completed by Council.

It is not appropriate to release details of these costings but included consideration to the style of footings required, the width of the path, amongst other things.

c) how I can request a secondary opinion on the quote with alternative, repurposed or less expensive resources utilised to bring the cost down

As I've previously explained, whilst cost was a consideration for this project, the significance of the grasses in the area where any replacement boardwalk would be located was more of a determining factor, with approval for construction unlikely to be granted.