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Whitehorse Manningham Regional Library Corporation

AGENDA

Ordinary Meeting of the Board

Wednesday 13 May 2026

Notice of meeting

Notice is hereby given that an Ordinary meeting of the Whitehorse Manningham Regional Library Board will take place on **Wednesday 13 May at 6.00pm in the Bert Lewis Room, Level 1 Box Hill Library, 1040 Whitehorse Road, Box Hill 3128.**

Sally Both

Chief Executive Officer

Required Attendance

Cr Andrew Conlon (Manningham Council) - Chair
Cr Hayley Weller (Whitehorse Council) – Deputy Chair
Cr Andrew Davenport (Whitehorse Council)
Cr Jim Grivas (Mayor, Manningham Council)
Shayne Price (Whitehorse Council)
Andrew McMaster (Manningham Council)
Nicola Nye (Whitehorse Community Representative)
Alison Low (Manningham Community Representative)

WMRLC Officers

Sally Both (Chief Executive Officer)
Tracey Olive (Manager Corporate Services)
Jonathan Gosden (Manager Library Operations)
Katie Norton (Manager Community Participation)
Pooja Sareen (Manager Finance)
Pat Wickramage (Manager Technology and Risk)

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1 Welcome and Apologies

2 Statement of Acknowledgement

Whitehorse Manningham Libraries acknowledges the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung people of the Kulin Nation as the traditional owners of the land we are meeting on and we pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders from communities who may be present today.

3 Disclosures of interest/conflicts of interest

4 Minutes of Previous Meeting

Recommendation

That the Board adopts the minutes of the ordinary meeting held on 18 March 2026.

Attachments

Attachment 1 – Minutes of the Ordinary Board Meeting 18 March 2026

5 REPORTS

5.1 COMMUNITY COHESION PROJECT

Verbal Presentation by: Manager Community Participation

5.2 DRAFT 2026/27 BUDGET (for decision)

Report Prepared by: Chief Executive Officer and Finance Manager

Summary

This report seeks the Board's endorsement of the Draft 2026/27 Budget (plus three subsequent financial years) for the purposes of community consultation in accordance with Section 129 of the *Local Government Act 1989*. Notices will be included on WML's website and in The Age newspaper. Printed copies will be available at WML's administrative office and the eight branch libraries.

The Board will consider any public submissions received in relation to the proposed Draft Budget at the Board meeting on 17 June 2026.

The Draft Budget is a four-year plan that outlines the resources that WML requires to achieve the strategic objectives described in the Library Plan 2025-2029. The Draft Budget reflects WML's commitment to delivering quality services that provide benefit while managing resources and identifying efficiencies. WML's key assets are its people, collections and information technology, enabling continued provision of community learning, connection and wellbeing benefits.

Recommendation:

That the Board:

- a) **Notes the Draft 2026/27 Budget and Strategic Resource Plan have been developed for the purposes of Section 127 of the *Local Government Act 1989*,**
- b) **Endorses the Draft 2026/27 Budget and Strategic Resource Plan for the purposes of community feedback in accordance with Section 129 of the *Local Government Act 1989*, and**
- c) **Considers for adoption, the Draft 2026/27 Budget and Strategic Resource Plan at the Board meeting on Wednesday 17 June 2026.**

Background and Discussion

Under the *Local Government Act 1989*, WMRLC is required to prepare and adopt an Annual Budget for each financial year. The Budget is required to disclose the fees and charges that WMRLC intends to levy as well as a range of other information required by the *Local Government (Finance and Reporting) Regulations 2014* which support the Act. The Draft 2026/27 Budget (plus three subsequent financial years) has been prepared in accordance with the Act and Regulations.

The Draft budget has been developed based on the best available information at the time of preparation. In preparing the Draft Budget known factors and influences included the:

- Victorian State Government rate cap of 2.75% for the 2026/27 financial year

- Recurrent State Government Public Library Funding Program grant which has remained unchanged since July 2022
- Changing demographics and evolving community expectations, requiring WML to adapt its services to meet diverse needs
- Growth in demand for digital collections alongside sustained high rates of physical collection loans
- Role of the library in supporting and enabling people to participate in an increasingly digital world

Since the time of the Budget preparation, global and economic conditions have contributed to an increase in the cost of materials and services. The impact on the Budget is being monitored, noting the extent and duration of the potential impact is still emerging at this early stage.

The Draft Budget is a four-year plan that outlines the resources that WML requires to achieve the strategic objectives described in the Library Plan 2025-2029. The Draft Budget reflects WML's commitment to delivering quality services that provide benefit while effectively managing resources and identifying efficiencies.

Fees and Charges

Fees and charges have been reviewed with consideration given to industry comparisons, user feedback, accessibility and equity.

Strategic Link

The 2026/27 Budget supports the delivery of the Library Plan 2025 – 2029 Year 2 Action Plan priority actions.

Regulatory

Distribution of Member Council costs are in accordance with the Regional Library Agreement.

The Draft 2026/27 Budget and Strategic Resource Plan have been developed for the purposes of Section 127 of the *Local Government Act 1989*.

In accordance with Section 129 (1) of the Local Government Act 1989 and the Local Government (Planning and Reporting) Regulations 2014, the Corporation must give public notice of the preparation of the Draft Budget 2026/27 and the Board must consider any public submissions received on any proposal contained in the Draft Budget at the Board meeting on 17 June 2026.

Once approved by the Board, the Corporation must give notice of the intention to adopt the Budget and make the Budget available for public inspection for at least 28 days. The key dates for the 2026/27 Budget process are summarised below:

Action	Description	Date
1	Preliminary Budget presented to Board	18 March 2026
2	Proposed Budget presented to Board for approval	13 May 2026
3	Public notice advising intention to adopt Budget	14 May 2026
4	Budget available for inspection and comment for at least 28 days	14 May to 10 June 2026
5	Budget and submissions presented to the Board for adoption	17 June 2026

Declaration of Interests

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

Attachments

Attachment 2: Draft 2026/27 Budget

5.3 MANNINGHAM SPECIAL PROJECTS (for decision)

Report prepared by: Chief Executive Officer

Executive Summary

WML provides additional services in the Manningham municipality in accordance with the provision for Special Projects as detailed in Clause 9.7 of the *Whitehorse Manningham Regional Library Agreement*.

The Special Projects delivered by WML are Warrandyte Library, and Additional Hours at Doncaster and The Pines libraries.

In addition to the annual contributions payable to the Regional Library Corporation, Manningham City Council is responsible for the costs incurred by WML in the provision of the additional services.

WML currently invoices Manningham City Council quarterly for the recovery of the additional operating costs associated with the Special Projects.

This report seeks the Board's approval to change the invoicing frequency for recovery of Special Project operating costs from quarterly to monthly, with the change being enacted via an exchange of letters between Council and WML.

Recommendation:

That the Board:

- a) **endorse the change from quarterly to monthly invoicing by WML for the recovery of operating costs associated with the provision of additional services to Manningham City Council; and**
- b) **authorises the Chief Executive Officer to confirm the change via an exchange of letters between WML and Manningham City Council.**

Discussion

WML provides additional services in the Manningham municipality in accordance with the provision for Special Projects as detailed in Clause 9.7 of the *Whitehorse Manningham Regional Library Agreement*.

The Special Projects delivered by WML are Warrandyte Library, and Additional Hours at Doncaster and The Pines libraries.

In addition to the annual contributions payable to the Regional Library Corporation, Manningham City Council is responsible for the costs incurred by WML in the provision of the additional services.

The *Regional Library Agreement* Clauses 9.1 and 9.4 state that Councils will be invoiced quarterly for both regional library contributions and additional services.

Contributions to the regional library are received in advance at the commencement of each quarter.

Recovery of operating costs incurred by WML for the provision of the additional services are received in arrears. To support the Corporation's cash flow and monthly budget reporting to the Board, WML is seeking approval to invoice Manningham City Council monthly for the recovery of operating costs incurred in the provision of Special Projects.

Consultation

Manningham City Council has been consulted and have confirm there is no administrative objection to the change request.

Strategic/Regulatory Link

The provision of additional services designated as Special Projects is in accordance with Clause 9.7 of the *Whitehorse Manningham Regional Library Agreement*. Clauses 9.1 and 9.4 of the Agreement state that Councils will be invoiced quarterly for both regional library contributions and additional services.

The Warrandyte Special Project Agreement was endorsed by the Board on 15 March 2023
The Manningham Additional Hours Agreement was endorsed by the Board on 24 August 2022, with an amendment endorsed 28 August 2024.

It is recommended the change to monthly invoicing is confirmed via an exchange of letters between Council and WML, rather than amendment of the formal agreements.

Financial Impacts

The change in invoicing frequency from quarterly to monthly for the recovery of Special Projects outgoings will support WML cash flow.

No change is proposed to the timing of Council contributions to the regional library; contributions will continue to be received in advance at the commencement of each quarter.

Declaration of Interests

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

Attachments: Nil

5.4 FINANCE REPORT Quarter 3 FY25/26 (for decision)

Report prepared by: Manager Finance

Summary

The Quarter 3 Financial Report (Attachment 3) presents WML's year to date operating result and capital expenditure performance against Budget for the period 1 July 2025 to 31 March 2026. A smaller deficit is forecast for 30 June 2026 compared to Budget.

It is anticipated the emerging fuel crisis will increase the cost of Materials and Services in Quarter 4 as suppliers implement fuel surcharges. Where WML has been notified by suppliers of increases, this has been considered in the forecast the FY25/26 result. Officers are monitoring and assessing the impact.

Recommendation

That the Board notes the Quarter 3 Finance Report.

Discussion

At 31 March, WML forecasts a year-end deficit (before depreciation and loss on disposal) of \$217k, this compares favourably to the annual budget by \$73k. This outcome reflects careful and proactive budget management decisions. Review of all areas of expenditure continues to be undertaken to identify further opportunities to reduce the forecast funding gap.

Further detail of WML's financial performance at 31 March 2026 is provided in Attachment 3.

It is anticipated the emerging fuel crisis will increase the cost of Materials and Services in Quarter 4 as suppliers implement fuel surcharges. Where WML has been notified by suppliers of increases, this has been considered in the forecast the FY25/26 result at 30 June 2026. Officers are monitoring and assessing the impact.

Regulatory

The WML Budget 2025/26 was adopted by the Board on 18 June 2025.

Quarterly reporting on financial performance is a requirement of the *Whitehorse Manningham Regional Library Agreement* and s138 of the *Local Government Act (Vic) 1989*.

Declaration of Interests

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

Attachment

Attachment 3

5.5 WML PERFORMANCE REPORT Quarter 3 FY26/27 (for noting)

Report prepared by: Chief Executive Officer

Summary

This report provides an overview of WML's year to date performance for the first three quarters of FY25/26 being 1 July 2025 to 31 March 2026. The report includes Library Plan - Action Plan 2025/26 progress, and library activity, strategic risk and health and safety indicators.

Engagement with library services has continued to grow with year-to-date increases across most activity areas when compared to the same period in the previous year.

Bulleen Library closed on 9 February for refurbishment. Building works are anticipated to be completed at the end of April. An official opening is planned for Friday 15 May. The upgrade to the After-hours returns chutes at Nunawading Library and installation of a RFID Checkin bin are anticipated to be completed by the end of April. Both the Bulleen and Nunawading works are supported by Living Libraries Infrastructure Program grants.

YTD reported health and safety incidents are 4% less than the same period in the previous year.

Recommendation

That the Board notes the WML Quarter 3 Performance Report.

Discussion

At the end of the third quarter Whitehorse Manningham Libraries have experienced growth in most areas of library activity compared to the same period in the previous year including a:

- 9% increase in visitation to libraries (noting Bulleen Library was closed for building works from 9 February)
- 4% increase in participation in programs
- 5% increase in customer enquiries responded to by library staff
- 17% increase in Wi-Fi users and 2% increase in public computer use
- 2% increase in total collection loans
- 25% increase in use of the Library App and 4% increase in library website visits

Advocacy to the State Government for increased investment in public libraries has included letters to the Minister Local Government and other member of Parliament from the Chair of the Library Board and Council Mayors in support of Public Libraries Victoria State Budget 26/27 submission. (Refer to Attachment 3: Correspondence). A public libraries advocacy event was held at Parliament House on 17 March with the Hon Nick Staikos MP and other Members of Parliament in attendance along with representatives from Victorian public libraries.

Year to date reported health and safety incidents are 4% less than the same period in FY24/25, with the highest proportion of incidents relating to patron behaviour at Box Hill Library.

Managers, team leaders and health and safety representatives have attended *psychological health basics* training sessions delivered by Worksafe. A *Workplace Psychosocial Hazard Identification and Harm Prevention Plan* has been developed in consultation with employees.

Strategy Link

The quarterly library performance report monitors progress towards the achievement of the Library Plan 2025 – 2029 strategic goals and priorities and achievement of the 2025/26 Action Plan.

Declaration of Interests

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

Attachment

Attachment 4: Correspondence

Attachment 5: WML Quarter 3 Performance Report

6. CONFIDENTIAL REPORTS

Recommendation:

In accordance with Section 89(2) of the Local Government Act 1989, the Board resolves to go into camera and close the meeting to the public as the matter to be discussed relates to contractual and personnel matters.

Confidential reports are published separately.

7. Next Meeting

6pm Wednesday 17 June Extra-Ordinary Meeting to adopt the FY26/27 Budget

8. Closure