

DRAFT 2023/24 ANNUAL BUSINESS PLAN, BUDGET AND LONG TERM FINANCIAL PLAN

Register of Community Consultation Questions and Answers (Received between Sunday 14 May & Saturday 10 June 2023)

Resident Number	QUESTION	RESPONSIBLE DIVISION
Resident #1	<i>Where is option C for reduced services & belt tightening -- living within your means. Option D merging with Unley Council along with the savings that reduce public servants & all the associated costs that go with over governing.</i> <i>Your plans are well set out but will you over react to some of the left wing socialist members of our community that give little consideration to costs associated with their requests?</i> <i>If you are in a give away mood will you offer some concessions to the elderly members of our community? Maybe some recognition to those that that have served our nation & put their lives on the line? Aged Vietnam veterans?</i> <i>I repeat what measures are you taking for frugal responsibility?</i> <i>Your survey does not go far enough. Either you continue your expenditure or worse still increase it further? For Gods sake please have mercy & STOP reckless spending.</i>	Corporate Services and Innovation
City of Mitcham response: Council has a continual focus on efficiencies and cost savings whilst seeking to meet service needs and demands of the community. Both budget options include \$900,000 next year alone of efficiencies, cost savings and service reductions (ongoing savings not just one off). Notwithstanding this, Council is also grappling with rising costs in the order of 6-12% and in some cases over 20%. Recognising these challenges, we have a variety of rate relief measures in place for ratepayers who may encounter difficulties paying, including options for postponement. Further, the Cost-of-Living Concession (which replaced the council rate concession several years ago) is available to assist residents with low or fixed incomes manage their general living expenses. Council's budget deliberations ultimately come down to a balance between community support, leadership, service provision, and service demand weighed up against the capacity to pay.		
Resident Number	QUESTION	RESPONSIBLE DIVISION
Resident #2	<i>What is the breakdown of executive remuneration and the increase in this period?</i>	Corporate Services and Innovation
City of Mitcham response:		

Council maintains a salary register which is publicly available on Council's website and is updated monthly. Decisions on contracts, including any changes in remuneration for the upcoming financial period, are not yet finalised and will be appropriately reflected in the register once made, as they are on an ongoing basis.

Resident Number	QUESTION	RESPONSIBLE DIVISION
Resident #3	<i>I have scanned through the draft budget and didn't see a mention of funding for the new wombat crossing on Princes Road adjacent to Mitcham Square. Will this be going ahead as planned? Thank you.</i>	Engineering and Horticulture
City of Mitcham response:		
Yes, the pedestrian crossing along Princes Road adjacent to the Mitcham Square Shopping Centre is going ahead as planned. The project was funded as part of Council's 2022/23 Annual Business Plan. The project has progressed and is scheduled to be completed in the 2023/24 financial year in co-ordination with the asphalt reseal works along Princes Road between Belair Road and the pedestrian crossing.		
Resident Number	QUESTION	RESPONSIBLE DIVISION
Resident #4	<i>Re the solar panels + battery for the Mitcham RSL 1..Why is it listed on the budget if it is no cost to the Council 2..Why can't the RSL help with payment for this</i>	Corporate Services and Innovation
City of Mitcham response:		
The inclusion of the solar panels and battery installation on the Mitcham RSL building is in Council's budget as the installation of the infrastructure is being undertaken by Council, on Council's building asset and there is an up-front payment to undertake this work. Council expects and will benefit from a net reduction in operating costs as a result of this project (electricity savings) and these will offset and repay the initial upfront investment, hence the project will not result in any cost to Council over the project's life. In addition to this, the installation of the solar and battery system on the RSL building brings multiple benefits, including a reduction in carbon emissions and an ongoing decrease (saving) in Council's operating costs linked to the building. The project is subject to the negotiation of a satisfactory lease agreement with the RSL around the above.		
Resident Number	QUESTION	RESPONSIBLE DIVISION

Resident #5	<i>Revitalising Green Spaces in St Marys.</i> <i>Is there a reason that Thurles Street Reserve is specifically mentioned? There are many other green spaces in St Marys that could benefit. For example St Marys Reserve has been discussed (with staff, some residents, local & state EMs) as a potential urban forest if the current space is infilled with local plant species.</i>	Engineering and Horticulture
City of Mitcham response: Thurles Street was mentioned as an example of Reserve in the suburb of St Marys that has recently received some updates- tree planting and understory planting for example, but it may also be a reserve that our community wish to see some further revitalisation. However, the community consultation for the overall Revitalising St Marys project is now open and our community is welcome to provide feedback on where they believe this State funding should be spent. The link to provide feedback via our Your Say platform can be found here: https://yoursay.mitchamcouncil.sa.gov.au/		
Resident Number	QUESTION	RESPONSIBLE DIVISION
Resident #5	<i>Sustainable Living Subsidy Program for Cloth Nappies</i> <i>Could the subsidy be available for other reusable products like menstrual products and adult sized diapers.</i>	Corporate Services and Innovation
City of Mitcham response: Council will develop the details of the subsidy program including which type of products are eligible to receive a rebate once the amount of the subsidy is confirmed on the adoption of the budget. It is Council's intent for the program to allow for rebate to be applicable to both cloth nappies and other sanitary products such as menstrual products and adult sized diapers.		
Resident Number	QUESTION	RESPONSIBLE DIVISION
Resident #5	<i>City Image (Signage & Furniture) Pilot Scheme</i> <i>Could this include, given it's a pilot scheme, signs that educate community about local plant species and their benefits to wildlife. Eg the butterfly friendly plants around St Marys could signpost the plant species, the insects it attracts for food or habitat. There are good examples of</i>	Development and Community Safety

	<i>these near the Holdfast Bay Library on Jetty road, Brighton.</i>	
City of Mitcham response: It is proposed that a pilot scheme would include a number of different signage and furniture elements in a defined space, such as a park or main street. Signage in these locations will focus on wayfinding and regulatory messages in the first instance, however opportunities for interpretive signs (e.g. heritage or environmental messages) will also be explored. Examples of this type of signage can already be found across our City, including information on the benefits of Council's various water sensitive urban design initiatives.		
Resident Number	QUESTION	RESPONSIBLE DIVISION
Resident #5	<i>Open Space Volunteer Coordinator</i> <i>This seems like a good idea but also looks like it creates processes for volunteers that could hinder just getting on with grassroots initiatives. Would volunteers be expected to be signed up as official City of Mitcham volunteers. How does this role compliment existing resident groups and or outside organisations who already support grassroots community projects.</i>	Engineering and Horticulture
City of Mitcham response: The role of the Open Space Volunteer Coordinator is to ensure that existing open space volunteering projects and sites are managed safely, and that they receive the appropriate equipment, training and oversight to ensure the community receives maximum benefit from the works undertaken. There are certain sites in the City of Mitcham that are home to sensitive native vegetation, fauna and that may even cross over into private or State Government owned land. The Coordinator ensures the work is undertaken carefully and respectfully. An additional Open Space Volunteer Coordinator would essentially provide another resource to manage our growing volunteer community, as we currently are experiencing a demand that exceeds resourcing capacity. New volunteers that join us are required to become official volunteers for the City of Mitcham for the reasons listed above, and we work with existing resident groups to explain the reasons for this arrangement. Outside organisations such as Trees for Life work in our reserves and parks, but under guidance of the Open Space Volunteer Coordinator.		
Resident Number	QUESTION	RESPONSIBLE DIVISION
Resident #5	<i>Spatial Software for Weed Management</i>	Engineering and Horticulture

	<i>Verge garden application is now free and there is more community interest in establishing greener, cooler streets by planting in verges. However, some residents, even recently have experienced their verges being sprayed. Will this software stop residents efforts being destroyed. Also, does this software help staff identify potential sites that could be green corridors instead of places that require ongoing weed eradication?</i>	
City of Mitcham response: The Spatial Software for Weed Management is used to efficiently manage and record works related to fire breaks, bushcare, revegetation and land management grants across the City of Mitcham. It is not intended monitor verge planting works. However, as a separate initiative, Council maintains a 'no spray' list for residents when they advise Council that they do not want the adjoining verge to be sprayed. With the compilation of temporal data, the software can be used to identify at a high level the wider extents of weed populations in the City of Mitcham. This could then indirectly indicate where 'green corridors' exist, that may require weed treatment or sit outside of the known weed problem areas.		
Resident Number	QUESTION	RESPONSIBLE DIVISION
Resident #5	<i>Community Networker (not included in the draft budget option)</i> <i>"The role 'would' also include the coordination of volunteering expos..."</i> <i>This seems very specific and would that definitely be part of the role if it went ahead?</i> <i>I'd like this kind of role to be less specific and that perhaps the funding was divided and put towards roles like this in our community centres.</i> <i>The community consultation part of the role is often hyper local, so I think a role that is more connected to an immediate area might be useful.</i>	Organisational and Community Development
City of Mitcham response: This responsibility was provided by the Council Member as an example of the type of thing such a role would be responsible for doing / delivering.		

If the position is funded as part of the Annual Business Plan and Budget, an appropriate position description would be prepared to provide clear outcomes and objectives, without being task specific.

Resident Number	QUESTION	RESPONSIBLE DIVISION
Resident #5	<i>Community Leadership Program</i> <i>In 2019 I participated in the City of Marion Community Leadership Program. It was excellent and I was lucky as a City of Mitcham resident that I could participate at no cost. I would like to flag this for future budgets because while I definitely use a lot of the skills I gained, I missed the opportunity to learn about my own local council processes instead and to connect with City of Mitcham residents, staff & EMs, which would have been really helpful to me. I think there are lots of Community Leaders in Mitcham who would benefit from a program like this and use their skills to give back to our community. Leadership programs are often aimed at great expense to folks in the corporate world and leadership is perceived as CEOs, managers and other professionals, so it's wonderful when community leadership is valued and encouraged.</i>	Organisational and Community Development
City of Mitcham response: Suggestions for new projects and services can be discussed with Council Members, who can raise these ideas for funding consideration through the budget process each year or via Notices of Motion during the year.		
Resident Number	QUESTION	RESPONSIBLE DIVISION
Resident #6	<i>Council should be aware that the residents of Overton Ward are fed up with the hordes of rat running conga line speedsters using the side streets of Cumberland park and Daw Park as a short cut between Goodwood Road and Winston Avenue. Thus avoiding the traffic lights at Goodwood Road/Edward Street and Cross Road/Winston Avenue. This has been a problem for our street, Kyeema Avenue, for at least the 40 years that we have lived here, with the problem escalating year by year, and exacerbated by your roundabout at Winston Avenue. Our street and surrounding streets have many young and old residents, who are subjected to danger from these people every peak hour. This Ward, and Cumberland Park in particular, requires a 40 KPH SPEED LIMIT now at the very least. We note that this has been good enough for residents</i>	Engineering and Horticulture

	<i>in Mitcham suburbs east of Goodwood Road for decades, but is apparently not good enough for us who need it much more. The preferable option, including a 40 KPH Speed Limit, would be the blocking of streets as you have done in Clarence Gardens, which is obviously an effective deterrent. And please don't send the police around to set up a radar as happened after I complained about this to Council 40 years ago. The effect that had was ZERO/ZILCH/NOTHING! My question is, WILL COUNCIL TAKE URGENT ACTION TO COUNTER THIS UNACCEPTABLE SITUATION BY IMPLEMENTING A 40 KPH SPEED LIMIT AND/OR OTHER DETERRENTS NOW; NOT IN YEARS TO COME?</i>	
City of Mitcham response: Council, at its February 2023 meeting, resolved to undertake a Local Area Traffic Management (LATM) study for Daw Park and Cumberland Park. This study will include consideration of traffic, parking, access and road safety related matters throughout the area and involve engagement with the community. The existing speed limits within the local zones will be considered as part of this study. Following community engagement, recommendations would then be presented to Council for potential traffic changes as deemed suitable. Subject to Council approvals, the solutions would then be implemented. Consideration of a 40km/hr area zone would be given as part of this LATM study process.		
Resident Number	QUESTION	RESPONSIBLE DIVISION
Resident #7	<i>I have read your proposed draft plan regarding 2x options for rate rises; however I am perplexed as houses through the whole area have increased significantly over recent years which has led to what I would describe as a bonus cash injection to the council. I am therefore curious as to exactly how the council is managing this extra increase before attempting to play smoke & mirrors by double dipping the members of the electorate. At this stage I don't support either of the proposed rate rises and seek better transparency with budget numbers.</i>	Corporate Services and Innovation
City of Mitcham response: Valuation increases do not result in the City of Mitcham receiving additional rate revenue. Council has a process for budgeting and setting of rates that specifically prevents this from occurring. A common misunderstanding about rates and property valuations is that increases in valuations result in the City of Mitcham receiving what is commonly described as "windfall" revenue, this is not the case. Even though property valuations in the City of Mitcham increased by 33% on average in 2022, the City of Mitcham <u>reduced</u> the rate in the dollar accordingly		

so that the total rate revenue received in 2022 remained the same as the budgeted increase needed to fund existing services and new services.

This holds true at the *total* budget and revenue level, however as valuation movements are never uniform across the Council area this is where the misunderstanding can occur. Because of the variation in valuation movements there are properties that will pay more than the budgeted increase and for every one of those there is a property will pay less than the budgeted increase (even though that property may have also increased in valuation). Some properties may even experience a rate reduction as a result.

Further information can be found at:

https://www.mitchamcouncil.sa.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0037/1196965/How-are-Council-rates-related-to-my-property-valuation.pdf

Resident Number	QUESTION	RESPONSIBLE DIVISION
Resident #8	<i>Can the residents and ratepayer's of Kingswood, Hawthorn, Netherby and surrounding areas be afforded a rate reduction as compensation for the loss of a cherished community open space amenity by your endorsing the land grab at Unley High School for an inappropriate private clubrooms with liquor sales, toxic 6000m2 of artificial turf, overloaded traffic and parking in residential streets and ongoing negative impacts of a private club from outside of our community and fall out from these privatized revenue generation activities(bar/canteen)?</i>	Development and Community Safety
City of Mitcham response: No rate subsidy is being offered.		
Resident Number	QUESTION	RESPONSIBLE DIVISION
Resident #8	<i>Of the 2 options for rate increases proposed where does the \$140K gift to Forrestville Hockey Club fall? • is it in option 2 (8.9%) which lists funding projects in partnership with Federal and State Government such Bailey ,Rozelles & St Mary's reserves, Mortlock Park Oval and extending the Blackwood Lions Bargain Centre • or is it in option 1 (7.84%) rate increase?</i>	Corporate Services and Innovation
City of Mitcham response: Council made the decision to provide in principle support of \$140,000 (contingent on a number of factors) in February 2022 and has budgeted for that support		

this financial year. Should the funding not be expended by the end of June 2023 it will be rolled over and re-budgeted next financial year pending a future Council decision. By virtue of this the funding is effectively in both options in terms of next year's budget.

Resident Number	QUESTION	RESPONSIBLE DIVISION
Resident #8	<i>Given that Forrestville Hockey Club through their consultants have written to Council seeking the \$140K gift as Council's contribution to Stage 1, it has not yet been paid, so should it not be listed with all the other proposed projects/services listed in this consultation as a potential budget expenditure in 2023/4? or has it been paid as a current year budget 'gift' to a private concern not in our Council Community?</i>	Corporate Services and Innovation

City of Mitcham response:

The funding has not been paid to date and should it not be paid by June 30 it will be re-budgeted and managed in accordance with the response to question 2.

Resident Number	QUESTION	RESPONSIBLE DIVISION
Resident #8	<i>Given the various constraints on funding services to Mitcham residents can Council afford to gift \$140K of ratepayer's money to a private sporting club from outside the council area, which will also involve additional costs once built for this private club?</i>	Development and Community Safety

City of Mitcham response:

The \$140,000 has not been provided to Forestville Hockey Club. Council's decision will be based on whether they believe the Club has adequately met the conditions outlined within the Council Decision, being; community consultation, an environmentally friendly artificial pitch and access to the schools carparking. The Council's resolution of 8 February 2022 also states, "In providing support for the project Council notes that Department for Education, Unley High School and Forestville Hockey Club acknowledge that given the development is on State Government Land Council will not be contributing to any ongoing operating costs associated with the project."