



SERVICES SPECIAL COMMITTEE

MINUTES

(Open to the public)

Monday 11 February 2019

Council Chamber, 8 Inglesby Road, Camberwell.

Commencement 6.34pm

Attendance

Councillor Steve Hurd (Chairperson)
Councillor Jane Addis (Mayor)
Councillor Jim Parke
Councillor Phillip Healey
Councillor Lisa Hollingsworth
Councillor Felicity Sinfield
Councillor Coral Ross
Councillor Cynthia Watson
Councillor Garry Thompson
Councillor Jack Wegman

Apologies

Nil

Officers

Phillip Storer	Chief Executive Officer
Bruce Dobson	Director Environment and Infrastructure
Carolyn McClean	Director Community Development
Shiran Wickramasinghe	Director City Planning
Carolyn Terry	Executive Manager People Culture and Development
Neva Law	Media Advisor
Sally Wansbrough	Corporate Solicitor
Andrew McHugh	Manager Family Youth and Recreation
Michael Somerville	Manager Local Laws
David Thompson	Manager Governance
Belinda Crockett	Coordinator Local Laws Projects and Strategy
Krysten Forte	Coordinator Governance
Helen Pavlidis	Governance Projects Officer

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1. Adoption and confirmation of the minutes

Moved Councillor Parke

Seconded Councillor Thompson

That the minutes of the Services Special Committee meeting held on 17 December 2018 be adopted and confirmed.

CARRIED

2. Declaration of conflict of interest of any councillor or council officer

Nil.

3. Presentation of officer reports

3.1. Designation of Smart Street Reserve as Dog Off Leash Reserve

In response to an expression of interest from local dog owners, a proposal to designate Smart Street Reserve in Hawthorn as a dog off-leash area was publically exhibited for 21 days in October 2018. A total of two hundred and sixty-eight (268) responses to an online survey and one hundred and fifteen (115) responses to an Interactive Voice Response (IVR) telephone survey were received by Council. This report presents a summary of the results from the surveys (**Attachments 1 & 2**) and gives consideration to the proposal and suitability to designate Smart Street Reserve as a dog off leash reserve.

When 'filtered' by location of residence (ie. within 500 metres of the reserve), the online survey responses demonstrate:

- 112 or 65% of the respondents were in support of Smart Street Reserve becoming off-leash (of which 32% indicated a preference for the timeshare arrangement);
- 59 or 34% of respondents were not in support of Smart Street Reserve becoming off-leash; and
- The remaining 1% indicated no preference.

The IVR survey was conducted for validation purposes, offering greater reliability of the data relating to local residents. The IVR survey ensured accuracy of survey respondents' residing within 500 metres of Smart Street Reserve whereas the online survey relied on the provision of accurate details by survey respondents.

The IVR survey results demonstrate a marginal preference overall for the reserve becoming off-leash with:

- 48% of respondents indicating support for the proposal to designate Smart Street Reserve as a dog off-leash reserve (of which 43% respondents indicated support for the reserve to be off-leash from 5pm to 8am);
- 44% of respondents were not in support of the proposal to designate Smart Street as an off-leash reserve; and
- The remaining 7% indicated no preference.

Smart Street Reserve is 10,390 square metres, comprising a grassed open space area of approximately 4,500 square metres. It is surrounded by low to medium density residential housing development, with properties adjoining the northern, western and part of the eastern boundaries. It forms a linear park extending past a playground, pre-school and child care facility through to a commercial strip shopping centre. The reserve is a well utilised space for unstructured recreational use, particularly related to the open grassed area, playground and walking paths.

The *Boroondara Open Space Strategy 2013* classifies Smart Street Reserve as a local 'neighbourhood' open space. As a general guide, the Strategy does not support dog off-leash reserves in 'neighbourhood' open space areas. Rather, it encourages pedestrian activity more broadly and thereby highlights the importance of access to open space for a wider variety of users.

When originally establishing Council's Order to support the effective management of on and off leash dog areas, an approach delivering a balanced outcome of 'on-leash' and 'off-leash' land area was adopted to accommodate all users of open space across the municipality.

Within the municipality, there are currently forty-five (45) dog off-leash reserves, representing 53% of open space land area. The area surrounding Smart Street Reserve is well-serviced by four (4) dog off-leash reserves located within 500 metres. Smart Street Reserve has never been designated as a dog off-leash area.

In giving consideration to the proposal, the report draws on relevant aspects from a Dog off-leash Site Suitability Assessment of the reserve undertaken in August 2018 by officers from Council's Environment and Sustainable Living Department. In response to the potential safety and amenity risks identified in the site assessment report (**Attachment 3**), officers do not consider Smart Street Reserve to be appropriate for designation as a dog off-leash area. However, it was noted some of the limitations could be partially mitigated by confining off-leash activities to restricted time periods (timeshare approach).

*8 speakers opposed to the officers' recommendation addressed the meeting.
2 speakers in support of the officers' recommendation addressed the meeting.*

MOTION

Moved Councillor Healey

Seconded Councillor Sinfield

That the Services Special Committee resolve to:

- 1. Receive and note the submissions on the proposal to designate Smart Street Reserve as a designated dog off-leash area either on a timeshare basis or without time restrictions.**
- 2. Refer the matter to the Council Meeting on 25 March 2019 for determination.**

CARRIED

4. General business

4.1 Signage at Smart Street Reserve – on leash / off leash

Councillor Thompson referred to the concerns raised by residents during the Item 3.1 “Designation of Smart Street Reserve as Dog Off Leash Reserve” relating to the visibility and size of signage at Smart Street Reserve.

Councillor Thompson requested Council officers to look into whether the signage at Smart Street Reserve could be improved to respond to resident concerns.

Councillor Thompson then enquired about the possibility of Council doing more to inform and educate the community about the need to ensure the effective control of dogs on leash and off leash.

The Director City Planning advised that the matters raised by Councillor Thompson would be looked into and the appropriate action taken.

4.2 10th Anniversary of 2009 Victorian Bushfires

Councillor Sinfield, on behalf of her colleagues, remembered the 173 people who lost their lives and acknowledged the countless more people impacted across the State and beyond as well as those who contributed to the response in recognition of the 10 Year Anniversary of the 2009 Victorian Bushfires.

Councillor Sinfield advised her colleagues that as a symbol of mourning and respect the Australian National Flag on various Council buildings were flown at half-mast on Monday 4 February 2019 and Thursday 7 February 2019.

4.3 Condolence - Mr Peter Scanlon

Councillor Hurd extended his sympathy and condolences to the family and friends of Mr Peter Scanlon who recently passed away.

5. Urgent business

Nil

6. Confidential business

Nil

The meeting concluded at 7.42pm

Confirmed

Chairperson _____

Date _____