

# LEADWEST'S NEWS SUMMARY FOR MELBOURNE'S WEST

## 4<sup>th</sup> November 2011



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## BRIMBANK

### EVERY HAND CAN HELP

*Brimbank Leader—4<sup>th</sup> November 2011*

<http://brimbank-leader.whereilive.com.au/news/story/every-hand-can-help/>

For Brimbank SES volunteer Bernie Thatcher, there is no greater reward than the smiles of gratitude from those she helps in the community.

Mrs Thatcher, from Sunshine, has been a volunteer with the Brimbank SES for three years and says she hopes to remain in the role for many years to come.

“Not only do I get to put in and help the community, but I also get to learn new skills and assist with training the new recruits,” Mrs Thatcher said. “As a volunteer I guess the payment is the smile on the face or the handshake, or simply just the gratitude shown by those we help.”

Mrs Thatcher said her role included rescuing people and animals, fixing leaking roofs, attending to fallen trees and building damage, and assisting police at crime scenes.

She said winter was the busiest time for the Brimbank SES, with most calls related to storm damage.

“When most people are tucked up in their nice warm bed we are out helping those in need,” Mrs Thatcher said.

“It also involves early morning wake-ups to the piercing sound of our pager to help an unfortunate member of our community.”

But Mrs Thatcher said volunteering was not just about emergencies.

She also spends time fundraising and educating the community about emergencies.

“I visit schools, attend emergency services camps and help supervise the Blue Light discos.”

Mrs Thatcher encouraged others to volunteer and said the training provided helped people develop the skills needed.

“Not only have I made new friends but I have also built relationships with other emergency services personnel,” she said.

Brimbank SES unit controller Brad Dalgleish said the dedication and training provided by local volunteers was “terribly undervalued”.

“The SES volunteers from the Brimbank unit have provided valuable assistance to local residents of Brimbank, the state of Victoria and Queenslanders since Christmas.”

November 7-13 is National SES week. Buildings will turn orange to recognise the volunteers, including Victoria’s Parliament House and Royal Exhibition Building.

### SUN SHINES FROM SMILES

*Brimbank Leader—3<sup>rd</sup> November 2011*

<http://brimbank-leader.whereilive.com.au/news/story/sun-shines-from-smiles/>

The smiling faces of shopkeepers will greet customers at Sunshine Town Centre.

Brimbank Council has selected 10 traders to feature on its 2m banners, which carry the words, “You are my Sunshine”.

Chairman of administrators Peter Lewinsky said the 40 banners were part of works to revitalise the town centre and to create a new \$3.2 million Hampshire Square between Sunshine Plaza and Sunshine Marketplace.

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“The banners tell a contemporary story of Sunshine Town Square, particularly the fabulous food on offer - everything from Vietnamese soup at Pho Hien to spicy Indian dishes at Classic Curry,” Mr Lewinsky said.

“The different shops have so much personality and speak to Sunshine’s eclecticism.”

Joint owner of Roli Poli Cream Cake Shop and Delicatessen Karolina Grabowska features on a banner and said she thought they were “very nice”.

Works on the new square is expected to be completed next month.

Hampshire Rd will be closed for excavation works on a pedestrian crossing from 9pm on Friday, November 4, until 6am on Monday, November 7.

### **REZONING BID FOR PARK AREA ROUSES ANGER**

*Brimbank Leader—2<sup>nd</sup> November 2011*

<http://brimbank-leader.whereilive.com.au/news/story/rezoning-bid-for-park-area-rouses-anger/>

Melbourne Water plans to sell parkland along Kororoit Creek for residential developments have outraged Sunshine residents.

The authority has applied to Brimbank Council for 113 Fraser St to be subdivided and part of it rezoned from a Public Park and Recreation zone to Residential 1, enabling it to be sold to developers.

A group of residents opposing development of the 3034sq m block met in the park last Sunday with the support of Western Metropolitan state Greens MP Colleen Hartland.

Liz Dalgleish, a nearby resident, said the community was “fuming” that it could lose access to the park.

“It’s just a big, green patch of grass; it’s great for picnics, for kids to kick the ball or ride their bikes,” she said. “It’s important to save as much green space as we can.”

Ms Hartland said it was a “gorgeous piece of land” well used by residents. “The community have ownership of the land, they look after it and people mow it.”

She was also concerned that it could be prone to flooding.

Council general manager of city development Stephen Sully said it received an application in early 2010 and negotiated with Melbourne Water for several months to improve access to the creek for residents.

In July the council’s planning committee resolved to exhibit the plans and accept public submissions once an environmental assessment had taken place. It would consider these and other aspects, Mr Sully said.

Melbourne Water spokesman Nicolas McGay said the land was not needed for its operations. “It’s only right to use the funds from the sale ... for services we’re responsible for providing to ratepayers,” he said. Mr McGay said the land was not subject to flooding.

### **LOSING COOL OVER SCHOOL**

*Brimbank Star—2<sup>nd</sup> November 2011*

<http://www.starnewsgroup.com.au/star/keilor-taylors-lakes-sydenham/320/story/143435.html>

Parents of children with autism rallied together on the steps of parliament last week calling on the State Government to adhere to last year’s election promise and build a P-12 autistic school in the West.

Action for Autism Education member Danny Sorbello said parents are sick of waiting for a decision from the Minister of Education Martin Dixon as to whether the western suburbs will get its long awaited school.

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Mr Sorbello said the small but enthusiastic crowd was fed up with inaction from the Baillieu Government.

“We’ve been fobbed off,” he said.

“Are we going to get a school?”

Mr Sorbello said the group was initially ecstatic when they saw that \$4 million had been allocated in the State Budget for a P-12 school in the West.

“We’ve been getting the mixed messages since then,” he said.

“I’d like to think it was a well-considered decision because it was a good decision.”

Western Metropolitan Region MP Bernie Finn told Star there was no need for parents to be protesting.

“I wish they’d come and had a chat to me first, there is no need to protest,” he said.

“The school is going ahead.”

Despite not knowing where the school will be located or when building will start Mr Finn said it will be completed within the government’s first term.

“They (parents) don’t have to rally out the front of parliament – it was in the budget and if it’s in the budget it will happen,” he said.

“I absolutely understand their frustration; the previous government ignored them for over a decade.

“I want to reassure them the school is going to happen.

“The minister has given me a personal assurance that it will go ahead.”

### **FIGHT FOR OPEN SPACE**

*Brimbank Star—2<sup>nd</sup> November 2011*

<http://www.starnewsgroup.com.au/star/sunshne-ardeer-albion/320/story/143441.html>

Concerned Sunshine residents banded together last weekend in a bid to halt the rezoning of a patch of land close to Kororoit Creek owned by Melbourne Water.

Melbourne Water has applied to Brimbank Council to rezone the land at the end of Fraser St in Sunshine from a ‘Public Open Space/Public Use Zone’ classification to Residential 1 so it could be sold as residential development.

However residents are adamant to keep the land as public space and are calling on the council to develop the site into something which will benefit the community.

Fraser St resident Beverley Aird said the meeting last Sunday was a chance for residents to meet one another and discuss their concerns.

Ms Aird said it also gave residents who weren’t aware of the issue to become more informed.

“Everyone is horrified,” the long-time Sunshine resident said.

“We need the council to be on our side.”

She said despite what Melbourne Water and Brimbank Council believe, it is not just a piece of land that has been neglected by residents but rather a spot where children often play, where dogs are walked or where a games of cricket are played.

Residents were prepared to fight for the cause, she added.

“Some people think we don’t have a voice, but surely everyone has a voice.

“There is a united front of residents, this isn’t a political matter.”

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Local advocate Geraldine Brooks said the area should be beautified and redeveloped for local school children to utilise. And she said having to fight to save parkland wasn't something new to Brimbank residents.

"It's not new to have to fight to protect our local amenities," Ms Brooks said.

"Why not put some attractive landscaping or a playground?"

"There are a myriad of opportunities for that spot.

"It smacks of some bureaucrat sitting in an office and looking at a map and thinking this could be perfect for housing."

Green MLC Colleen Hartland said the area had very few good quality parklands and said residents were determined to fight against any potential rezoning.

"There's a lot of feeling among residents," Ms Hartland said.

"Everyone is really passionate about the issue."

On 5 July Brimbank Council's Planning Committee resolved to prepare and exhibit the amendment for Melbourne Water subject to a satisfactory environmental site assessment.

In late July, Melbourne Water advised adjoining occupants about soil sampling work to take place on the site.

Once the work is completed it is expected that an environmental site assessment report will be submitted to the council for review and then publicly exhibited.

### IT'S HISTORY ON THE TROT

*Brimbank Star*—2<sup>nd</sup> November 2011

<http://www.starnewsgroup.com.au/star/keilor-taylors-lakes-sydenham/320/story/143447.html>

Members of the Keilor District Leadership Group are inviting Brimbank residents to embrace the shared history, stories, memories and knowledge of Keilor Village at Tour De Keilor this Sunday.

Tour De Keilor will include informative walking tours led by members of the Keilor Historical Society who will share their knowledge of key historical sites within Keilor Village.

The walking tours will be followed by a barbecue lunch and family fun activities at Cliff Harvey Lagoon Reserve all at no charge.

Residents are invited to bring along photos and share their stories about the area on the day.

The tour will be held from 11am to 2pm and walking tours will depart from the Keilor Municipal Offices.

Residents wanting more information should call Trudi on 0408 131 449.

### SCHOOL'S JUST OUT

*Brimbank Star*—2<sup>nd</sup> November 2011

<http://www.starnewsgroup.com.au/star/stalbans-deer-park-caroline-springs/320/story/143444.html>

When Allison Gatt walked out of the gates of St Albans Secondary College last week, she could still recall the first time she had walked through them as an eager Year 7 student.

Six years on the Year 12 student farewelled the school that has meant so much to her for so long and has been the place where she has forged so many lasting friendships.

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Allison was among thousands of Brimbank students to say goodbye to secondary school last week and enjoy the celebrations of muck-up day ahead of a hectic and rigorous exam schedule.

The St Albans resident, who will sit her first exam this Thursday, admitted to experiencing a myriad of emotions on the last day of school.

"It was really emotional," the 18-year-old said.

"The year has gone so quick.

"I'm a bit nervous, but at the same time very excited."

However she admitted that until her final exam was complete, there will be many hours of studying before she could finally let her hair down and look back on a great year.

"I know after all the exams, it will be all over then.

"I think there will be a few tears over the next few weeks."

And the talented teenager has big plans ahead of her. She is torn between a career in teaching or hospitality but is leaning towards the former.

"I think teaching would be very rewarding. I really enjoy spending time with children."

VCE exams begin for students across the state this Thursday.

### ASSAULT DISPUTED

*Brimbank Star*—2<sup>nd</sup> November 2011

<http://www.starnewsgroup.com.au/star/keilor-taylors-lakes-sydenham/320/story/143433.html>

Police are investigating allegations of assault after an Australian Labor Party meeting in Keilor last week.

Former Keilor MP George Seitz and Gail Cholosznecki, a staff member in the office of Macedon MP Joanne Duncan, were both involved in the alleged fight, which took place at the office of current Keilor MP Natalie Hutchins last Monday night.

Sources have told Star a fight broke out after Mr Seitz refused to hand over a book containing meeting records to Ms Cholosznecki, but Mr Seitz told Star he "didn't know" how it had happened.

"She attacked me, I just ran for my life," Mr Seitz said.

"It's a court case now; the police are dealing with it."

He said his shoulder and wrist were injured in the fray, but Ms Cholosznecki supplied a different account of events.

"At no time did I or anybody else assault George," she said.

"I can confirm there was a minor incident, however the Labor Party has rules and regulations that address these matters internally.

"That's where I'm going with it."

This is not the first time the two have been embroiled in controversy.

In 2005 Ms Cholosznecki was accused of defaming Mr Seitz with her how-to-vote cards during the Brimbank council election, in which she represented Rescue Brimbank Together (2 November 2005, Star).

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The pair clashed again during the 2008 council elections when Mr Seitz sent out a letter to residents claiming that Maria Kiselis was the only female candidate for the Grasslands Ward, despite Ms Cholosznecki and five other women running for the seat. (25 November 2008, Star).

Western Metropolitan MP Bernie Finn announced on his Facebook page that he had asked Local Government Minister Jeanette Powell "to take into consideration the alleged violence between ALP members in Brimbank as a part of any review into that municipality's return to an elected council next year".

Ms Hutchins told Star she didn't witness the stoush but said the incident was "unsettling".

"I've never had anyone feel unsafe (in my office). It's just disappointing and hopefully the police pursue it)," Ms Hutchins said.

### GREEN LIGHT

#### *Brimbank Star—2<sup>nd</sup> November 2011*

<http://www.starnewsgroup.com.au/star/keilor-taylors-lakes-sydenham/320/story/143431.html>

Brimbank City Council administrators have adopted 160 of the 162 officers' recommendations before council between January and September this year, sparking debate on whether the trio are council's "yes men".

Of the 160 recommendations adopted, 10 were amended by administrators to include additional actions, while the two recommendations voted down included the sale of parks and open spaces and a permit for shops in Derrimut.

Sunshine Residents and Ratepayers Association (SunRRA) president Darlene Reilly said Administrators appeared to come to council meetings having already held a debate in private.

"It's exactly the same behaviour the council was sacked for and I wish they didn't do that. "I also wish they would question the council officers a lot more," Ms Reilly said.

Ms Reilly said Chair of Administrators Peter Lewinsky had made it "clear" he wanted to represent a "united front".

"That doesn't mean we're getting the right decisions," she said.

Albanvale Residents Association spokesperson Clare Brennan said the administrators were "not listening to the people".

"We gave up going (to council meetings) because there wasn't enough discussion, it was all rubberstamped," Ms Brennan said.

But, like SunRRA, she said Albanvale residents were sceptical about restoring politicians to council.

Keilor Residents and Ratepayers Association president Susan Jennison said she'd also prefer the administrators to councillors.

Ms Jennison said that, although the administrators had adopted 160 of the officer recommendations, she believed they had researched each of the reports.

"They get things done," she said.

Sunshine resident Sean Spencer agreed with Ms Jennison's sentiments, claiming the "issues that plagued previous councils still exist.

"I don't want to support, or play into the hands of people who intend to run in the 2012 council elections who have their own political agenda at the expense of the administrators who govern for the community," Mr Spencer said.

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Brimbank CEO Nick Foa said the administrators took into account the “quality of research and analysis” in the reports prepared by council staff.

“They are able to provide independent and informed input into strategic matters based on their involvement and participation in the consultative processes and their engagement with the community,” Mr Foa said.

He said the most recent community survey had revealed a satisfaction rating of 6.46, which he said was considered “solid” and “on par” with the metropolitan council average. Star contacted Chair of Administrators Peter Lewinsky but received no response before going to print.

### **NO CHANGE NEEDED**

*Brimbank Star—2<sup>nd</sup> November 2011*

<http://www.starnewsgroup.com.au/star/stalbans-deer-park-caroline-springs/320/story/143443.html>

A review into Brimbank City Council’s electoral structure has found the municipality’s wards and number of councillors should remain unchanged.

The Victorian Electoral Commission (VEC) released its final representation review report last week, stating the council should have four wards and be represented by 11 councillors, with three three-councillor wards and one two-councillor ward.

The report states the ward boundaries should also be unchanged as they are “clear, nearly everywhere following major roads, railways or rivers”.

Electoral Commissioner Steve Tully said a “wide variety of views” were put forward during the review process.

A number of those views were heard by VEC representatives earlier this month, with many submitters asking for the administrators to be kept on for another term (Fearing the past, 11 October, Star Sunshine).

The VEC noted that “quality of representing is more important than the number of councillors”.

“A smaller number of councillors with a good work ethic would be more effective than a large number of mediocre councillors,” the VEC stated.

“However, there is no guarantee that reducing the number of councillors would improve their quality.

“The VEC has no control over the calibre of the councillors elected; that is up to the voters.”

The report also revealed Brimbank has one of the highest informal voting rates in Victoria, with more than one in seven votes “wasted”.

The VEC began the review in June and has held two rounds of public submissions, a public information session and a public hearing during the process.

The VEC also considered the municipality’s demographics and growth potential and the electoral structure of similar municipalities in making its recommendation.

The report will now go to Local Government Minister Jeanette Powell to consider.

To read the final report contact the VEC on 131 832, visit [www.vec.vic.gov.au](http://www.vec.vic.gov.au), or pick up a copy from the Brimbank City Council municipal office at 6-18 Alexandra Ave in Sunshine.

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### **BRIMBANK PLAN REVEALS GROUNDS FOR IMPROVEMENT**

*Brimbank Weekly*— 1<sup>st</sup> November 2011

<http://www.brimbankweekly.com.au/news/local/news/general/brimbank-plan-reveals-grounds-for-improvement/2340563.aspx>

Brimbank sporting groups and residents are being given the chance to have a say on how the city's sports facilities are developed over the next 10 years.

The council's draft sports facility development plan has been released for community comment until December 2.

The plan identifies participation trends in Brimbank and needs for the future development of each sport.

It shows there is a serious shortage of facilities for soccer, netball, basketball, cricket and tennis.

The council has identified sports including rugby, table tennis, badminton and volleyball as having little or no participation base in Brimbank and has indicated a need for opportunities to be provided for residents to take part in those sports.

The plan calls for the development of a regional multi-sports complex, with Sunshine Energy Park in Albion named as the most appropriate site.

The council also plans to further develop existing sports facilities such as Green Gully Reserve and Keilor Park Recreational Reserve.

Schools have been flagged as potential training and competition venues.

As part of the plan, the council has developed a matrix that will be used on an annual basis to inform it of future funding submissions.

Each project will be set against a criteria that will determine those of a high priority.

Keilor Football Club football director Kevin O'Reilly said his club would push to get its changing rooms and toilets upgraded.

"In the document it says the tennis club on our site will get an upgrade, but there is nothing about our facilities, which are practically falling apart," he said.

"We only have one football ground to cover more than 400 players on our books and we desperately need a new ground for training and matches."

He was disappointed the council turned down an offer from the Education Department to purchase the former Calder Rise Primary School site on Green Gully Road.

"The land there would have been perfect to build some sporting grounds."

Copies of the draft sports plan are available at [brimbank.vic.gov.au](http://brimbank.vic.gov.au)

### **AUTISM SCHOOL: CORE OR NON-CORE PROMISE?**

*Brimbank Weekly*— 1<sup>st</sup> November 2011

<http://www.brimbankweekly.com.au/news/local/news/general/autism-school-core-or-noncore-promise/2340543.aspx>

Parents and friends of children with autism remain furious the state government has not yet delivered a pre-election commitment to provide a prep-year 12 autism school in the west.

A rally was held on the steps of Parliament House last Thursday, with protesters calling on the government to make good on its promise.

Western Autistic School, which has campuses in Laverton and Niddrie, provides only a prep-grade 3 program.

There is no autism-specific school in the west which caters for students from prep-year 12 and children with autism are often forced to enrol in mainstream schools.

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Action for Autism Education spokesman Danny Sorbello said he was disappointed Western Metropolitan MP Bernie Finn and his government had been slow in delivering the promise.

"Bernie Finn promised us that he will personally ensure the new school is up and running as soon as is humanly possible," Mr Sorbello said.

"If he and his government go any slower they will be in reverse."

The secretary of north-west autism support group Autism Angels, Despina Havelas, said rates of autism among children were on the rise and she felt sad the government appeared to be dragging its heels.

"I still can't believe it's taking this long to get a school and it is disappointing people are still having to hold rallies for something that should have been done a long time ago," the Keilor Downs resident said.

Mr Finn told the Weekly that plans were being prepared for the new school.

He maintained the government would deliver on its promise to create a western suburbs school to provide a complete education.

"I can understand people's frustrations because they have been neglected for years, but I want to reassure people the school is coming," he said.

"We haven't decided where the school will be built, but when we do we'll know when works will start."

Keilor MP Natalie Hutchins said she had been overwhelmed by the number of parents of autistic children who visited her office with concerns about where they would send their children after grade 3.

### **BRIMBANK NEEDS 11 COUNCILLORS, SAYS VEC**

*Brimbank Weekly*— 1<sup>st</sup> November 2011

<http://www.brimbankweekly.com.au/news/local/news/general/brimbank-needs-11-councillors-says-vec/2340554.aspx>

Brimbank residents would vote for 11 councillors across four wards at next October's local government elections, under recommendations by the Victorian Electoral Commission.

The VEC released its final 'representation review' report last Wednesday, arguing the existing ward boundaries and councillor make-up should remain unchanged.

The 11 councillors would be elected from three three-councillor wards and one two-councillor ward, retaining the current boundaries of Grasslands, Harvester, Horseshoe Bend and Taylors wards.

Electoral commissioner Steve Tully said the VEC considered a variety of views in its review.

"All information, including submissions, was carefully considered by the panel of staff and local government experts to reach this recommended electoral structure."

The review was the first since 2005, when Brimbank switched from nine single-councillor wards.

The report will be sent to Local Government Minister Jeanette Powell for approval.

Mrs Powell is yet to announce whether Brimbank will return to democracy in 2012 or remain under administration.

Most of the submissions sought fewer councillors and a reduction in wards.

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But the VEC believes 11 councillors are needed because of the large population: more than 180,000.

Keilor Residents and Ratepayers Association wanted five two-councillor wards, and mayoral hopeful George Seitz also wanted fewer councillors.

Mr Seitz's submission attracted claims of "reverse racism" after he wrote that council management was unable to represent the multicultural community as it was "dominated by the Anglo-Saxon Celtic culture".

The comment was jumped on by the Sunshine Residents and Ratepayers Association whose president Darlene Reilly suggested Mr Seitz would prefer a return to "ethnic branch-stacking".

The VEC's final report is available online at [vec.vic.gov.au](http://vec.vic.gov.au) and from council's municipal office.

### **BRIMBANK COUNCIL WINS PLANNING AWARDS**

*Brimbank Weekly*– 1<sup>st</sup> November 2011

<http://www.brimbankweekly.com.au/news/local/news/general/brimbank-council-wins-planning-awards/2340545.aspx>

A system that helps plan new housing developments has earned Brimbank Council a planning award.

The 'interactive multivariate analysis tool' (IMAT) picked up the president's award at this week's Planning Institute of Australia awards.

The council's strategic planning and assets teams also won the best planning ideas award (small project category).

Administrator Peter Lewinsky said IMAT allowed town planners to measure the liveability, development capacity and suitability of sites in Brimbank.

### **COST PRESSURES LEAVE STUDENTS ON OUTER**

*Brimbank Weekly*– 1<sup>st</sup> November 2011

<http://www.brimbankweekly.com.au/news/local/news/general/cost-pressures-leave-students-on-outer/2340547.aspx>

Brimbank children from poorer families are being excluded from important social activities at school, says a financial counsellor.

Anti-Poverty Week co-ordinator for the Financial and Consumer Rights Council, Carmel Stafford, said cost-of-living pressures meant many parents were struggling to pay for food, utilities and rent and often couldn't afford to send their children to school camps or buy uniforms and books.

"In our work in the community we've seen a lot of people living in poverty, on low incomes, on Centrelink payments. It means their kids often miss out on going to camps and other social events and the parents in turn feel bad about it," she said.

A report by the St Vincent de Paul Society and Victorian Council of Social Service shows prices for essential items like food, health care, education, housing and utilities, and transport costs have skyrocketed in recent years.

According to the relative price index report, low-income households are at risk of poverty because spending on essential items takes up most of the household income.

A forum hosted by the Good Shepherd Youth and Family Services and the Financial and Consumer Rights Council on October 19 discussed ways to ensure students from poorer families did not feel excluded at school.

The forum, which coincided with Anti-Poverty Week (October 16-22), was aimed at raising awareness of the financial difficulties many parents face in Brimbank.

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It also looked at ways financial counsellors could work with staff and struggling families.

"We want to encourage social inclusion in schools, and schools can ensure this happens by having second-hand uniform shops to make things cheaper for parents and making sure camps and other activities are not too expensive," Ms Stafford said.

The forum was attended by representatives of St Albans and Stevensville primary schools and Copperfield College.

### **SOBERING TEST FOR LICENSEES**

*Brimbank Weekly—1<sup>st</sup> November 2011*

<http://www.brimbankweekly.com.au/news/local/news/general/sobering-test-for-licensees/2340546.aspx>

New laws are being drafted to suspend the licences of businesses flouting liquor laws.

It comes as figures reveal almost one in four inspected venues across Brimbank is breaching conditions.

The Justice Department's compliance directorate conducted 276 local inspections in the 12 months to June, uncovering 102 examples of non-compliance in 63 venues.

Among the breaches were supplying liquor contrary to the licence or permit and failing to produce the 'responsible service of alcohol' program register.

Overall, breaches had dropped from the 214 recorded in 105 venues during 2009-10, but the 27 infringement notices were well up on the four of the previous year.

A department spokesman said the increase reflected focus on enforcement against those found to be non-compliant.

"In the Brimbank area, the number of venues overall found to be non-compliant is dropping and when licensees are made aware of issues in their venues they are working hard to correct them."

Consumer Affairs Minister Michael O'Brien said liquor licenses caught breaching licensing laws would soon incur demerit points on top of fines.

Licences would automatically be suspended for a fixed period as demerit points accumulate.

"If licensees serve alcohol to drunks or unsupervised minors on licensed premises, they will be hit by demerit points in addition to big fines."

Incurring five demerit points in any three-year period will trigger an automatic 24-hour suspension; 10 points will lead to a seven-day suspension and 15 points will result in a 28-day suspension.

Braybrook Hotel licensee Matthew Shead said the demerit system wouldn't make a big difference as staff already took great care with meeting licence conditions.

### **RECYCLERS DITCH BAD PRACTICES**

*Brimbank Leader—1<sup>st</sup> November 2011*

<http://www.brimbankweekly.com.au/news/local/news/general/recyclers-ditch-bad-practices/2340555.aspx>

A crackdown on rogue recycling businesses in North Sunshine has led to a dramatic reduction in illegal operations.

Brimbank Council investigations over the past two years have caught 49 materials recycling operators flouting the law. General Manager of city development Stephen Sully said action against offenders over the two years had reduced the number of recycling businesses to eight; four have permits to operate; the remainder are being pursued through court action.

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A business operating on Bunnett Street and Marshall Avenue, North Sunshine, was convicted in the magistrate's court last month and fined \$2000 plus council costs of \$400.

"The conviction was stayed until November, but under the Planning and Environment Act, if the operator does not cease the use at the given date, he can be fined up to \$500 a day for each day he continues to operate illegally," Mr Sully said.

Materials recycling businesses include car wreckers or anywhere that machinery, equipment or cars are bought and broken up to be sold or recycled.

Operators typically spring up around old quarries where materials are separated before being recycled or sent to landfill.

Problems include the amount of dust operators send into neighbouring properties.

Brooklyn is another trouble spot for the council.

Both the Environment Protection Authority and council are working to have open-air materials recycling businesses minimise dust emissions from their sites.

A Bunting Road operator will appear at the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal next month over breaches of local planning rules.

### WRESTLING A WRONG NOTION

*Brimbank Leader*— 1<sup>st</sup> November 2011

<http://brimbank-leader.wherelive.com.au/news/story/wrestling-a-wrong-notion/>

Joe Zappia and Alvin Vella want to slam the stereotype that sumo wrestling is only for overweight, near-naked Japanese men.

The pair started the Victorian Sumo Association about 18 months ago and now has about 13 members, including men, women and children who travel from across the western suburbs to train at a gym in Ravenhall.

Mr Vella said people were often put-off the sport because they didn't want to wear the revealing suits, or thought they weren't fat enough to compete.

But he said amateur male wrestlers wear shorts, and women shorts and singlets, underneath their mawashi- the traditional nappy-like belts.

There are categories for women who weigh less than 65kg and men who weigh less than 85kg to allow smaller wrestlers to compete.

"When people think of sumo they think of the professional wrestlers in Japan who are predominantly of a massive size," Mr Vella said.

"We're trying to let people know that it's a healthy sport and it's not vicious at all, there's no punching or eye gouging."

The pair became involved when they tried to find some sumos for a demonstration at Brimbank Community Market, which they run.

"Then we found out no one was doing it in Victoria so we formed the association," Mr Vella said. They used YouTube videos and books to learn about sumo wrestling and began training wrestlers.

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"On YouTube there's a lot of information and demonstrations of the different moves and the New South Wales team and New Zealand team also gave us a bit of information," Mr Zappia said.

The winner of a sumo bout is the first wrestler to force their opponent to touch the ground with any part of the body other than their feet or to force their opponent out of the ring.

Mr Zappia doesn't compete but said he often takes part in bouts during training, something that has surprised his friends and family.

"They say 'you're 62 you better watch yourself'," he said.

Last month the association hosted its first competition, The Australian National Sumo Championships, at Federation Square.

More than 30 competitors from Australia and New Zealand took part and the Victorian team won three gold medals, three silver and two bronze.

The association is holding a demonstration at Bunnings Caroline Springs on November 12 from noon to 3pm.

### **BANNERS TO BRING A RAY OF SUNSHINE**

*Brimbank Weekly*— 1<sup>st</sup> November 2011

<http://www.brimbankweekly.com.au/news/local/news/general/banners-to-bring-a-ray-of-sunshine/2340551.aspx>

A Sunshine trader hopes a new set of colourful banners in Sunshine's CBD will help resurrect the suburb's image.

The 40 banners, two-metres long and 60-centimetres wide, include images of 10 local business operators and the tagline 'You are my Sunshine'.

Brimbank Council chairman Peter Lewinsky says the banners are part of ongoing work to revitalise the town centre.

This includes the creation of Hampshire Square, a \$3.2million project between Sunshine Plaza and Sunshine Market Place, which will be completed in December.

Mr Lewinsky said the banners told a contemporary story of Sunshine's town centre, particularly of the fabulous food on offer, from Vietnamese soup to spicy Indian dishes.

"The different shops have so much personality and speak to Sunshine's eclecticism."

### **AYEN CHOL: CHARGES LAID OVER DOG MAULING**

*Brimbank Weekly*— 31<sup>st</sup> October 2011

<http://www.brimbankweekly.com.au/news/local/news/general/ayen-chol-charges-laid-over-dog-mauling/2341604.aspx>

Police have laid eight charges against the owner of the dog that fatally mauled Ayen Chol in St Albans in August.

The 57-year-old St Albans man was charged over the pit bull cross attack that killed the four-year-old and hospitalised two of her relatives.

The charges included owning a dog that attacks a person causing death, attacks a person causing serious injury (2 counts) and chases/worries a person (3 counts).

He was also charged with being the owner of a dog found at large and failing to register a dog.

The charges come more than two months after Ayen was killed inside a St Albans home.

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Cousin Anglina Mayout, 31, suffered bite wounds to her hands and arms trying to fight off the dog and her daughter Nyadeng Goer, 5, was bitten on the back of the head.

The dog was put down after the attack, one of almost three dozen dog attacks on people in Brimbank in the past 12 months.

Ayen's death prompted a raft of new laws to be rushed through state parliament that make the owner of a dog accountable for any injury or death the animal may cause.

Five pit bulls and 25 pit bull-crosses have been registered in Brimbank since the attack and three restricted-breed dogs were surrendered.

This brings to 40 the number of registered pit bulls along with 52 dangerous dogs. Unregistered pit bulls and dangerous dogs may be seized and destroyed under new laws.

The St Albans man will appear at Sunshine Magistrates' Court on December 6

### **SCHOOL'S IN FOR PARENTS AT DUSK**

*Brimbank Leader— 31<sup>st</sup> October 2011*

<http://brimbank-leader.wherelive.com.au/news/story/schools-in-for-parents-at-dusk/>

Students were joined by their parents, grandparents and carers at a special twilight school at Sunshine Heights Primary School last week.

The school day ran from 1pm until 7.15pm for students on October 18, allowing special guests to join students in their classrooms.

Acting Principal Alex Artavilla said more than 170 people attended the twilight school.

"Parents and grandparents spent time with their children reading books, writing stories and participating in mathematics activities," Mr Artavilla said. "Some parents even enjoyed having dinner on the lawns with their child and their child's friends."

Mr Artavilla said the students were excited all day while they waited for their families and friends to arrive.

"Parents approached me throughout the day and commented that it was a great way for them to meet their child's teacher and spend time with their child in the classroom," Mr Artavilla said.

He said it was a great way for the students to see how their families valued their education.

### **COOKING UP A STORM OVER VCAL CUTS**

*Brimbank Leader— 29<sup>th</sup> October 2011*

<http://brimbank-leader.wherelive.com.au/news/story/cooking-up-a-storm-over-vc-al-cuts/>

Brimbank principals have joined the campaign to save the Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning program.

Mark Nugent and Tony Simpson from Copperfield College, along with St Albans Secondary College principal Kerrie Dowsley, have joined more than 120 Victorian principals and community leaders in signing an open letter to Premier Ted Baillieu urging the Government to reinstate the program after it announced a \$12 million cut for co-ordinators.

Opposition Leader Daniel Andrews and Keilor MP Natalie Hutchins toured Catholic Regional College in Sydenham last week.

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The college, which is set to lose about \$100,000 from its annual budget, has a varied and popular VCAL program, with a bakery, restaurant, kitchen, woodwork and framing options on offer for the 107 students enrolled.

Principal Brendan Watson said it had been a huge success.

“Without the funding, we won’t be able to afford to do other things,” Mr Wilson said.

Ms Hutchins insisted VCAL coordinators were essential.

A petition to save the program can be found online at [facebook.com/saveVCAL](https://www.facebook.com/saveVCAL).

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## HOBSONS BAY

### TIDE OUT FOR HOBSONS BAY VISITORS

*Hobsons Bay Leader—1<sup>st</sup> November 2011*

<http://hobsons-bay-leader.whereilive.com.au/news/story/have-your-say-tide-out-for-hobsons-bay-visitors/>

Hobsons Bay’s visitor information centre in Williamstown had almost 7000 fewer people than expected walk through its doors last year, council figures reveal.

But while Williamstown traders say they felt the impact of fewer visitors and tourists, Altona traders report business is booming.

Hobsons Bay Council’s 2010-11 annual report shows the information centre had 49,258 visitors in 2010-11 - a drop of 8 per cent from the 53,578 visitors the previous year, and 6999 less than the council’s target of 56,257.

Council planning and environment director Peter Gaschk said the Global Financial Crisis had hit tourism figures across Melbourne, which had a “flow-on” effect for Hobsons Bay.

Nelson Place Traders spokesman Sash Boseovski said Williamstown traders were actually seeing larger drops in visitor numbers than what the annual report’s figures suggested.

“If they’re reporting 8 per cent, it’s probably more like 25 per cent,” Mr Boseovski said. “Any trader will give you information about how much harder they’re working for less.”

But the Altona Village Traders’ Association says its members were reporting increased visitor numbers.

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Association spokesman Kim Walsh said the large variety of summer activities on offer in Altona attracted crowds.

"We did it hard in the winter months, as did traders throughout Victoria, but we believe more than ever people are coming down to Altona in the summer," Mr Walsh said. "We've experienced the opposite of what the figures are showing, but that could be to the detriment of other areas."

Mr Gaschk said global economic factors could not be controlled but the council would work to improve the number of visitors to the area this year. He said support of the local tourism area was a priority.

### **ONE-PERSON RACE FOR HOBSONS BAY MAYOR**

*Hobson Bay Leader* – 1<sup>st</sup> November 2011

<http://hobsons-bay-leader.whereilive.com.au/news/story/one-person-race-for-hobsons-bay-mayor/>

Four weeks out from Hobsons Bay Council's 2012 mayoral election only one of the seven councillors has said they will run for mayor.

Cr Tony Briffa told the Leader he was "likely" to make a bid for the top job at the election on December 2.

"As I am now completing my second term as deputy mayor, I am very likely to offer myself as a candidate for mayor next month," Cr Briffa said.

Mayor Michael Raffoul said while he was enjoying his stint, he hadn't yet given any thought to running again in 2012.

Cr Luba Grigorovitch has not ruled herself out of the race, maintaining it was too early to declare a position and saying she would "need to chat to the other councillors" before deciding whether to throw her hat in the ring.

But Crs Bill Tehan, John Hogg and Peter Hemphill were all emphatic that they would not be angling for the top job.

"I can tell you quite clearly I'm not running again," Cr Tehan said. "I did it last year and I need a break."

But he did say he would consider taking on the role of deputy mayor if asked to stand.

Cr Hogg said he was "definitely not a candidate for mayor" but may consider being deputy if it fitted in with his life outside council.

Cr Angela Altair declined to comment.

When asked about rumours of a deal between some councillors which would see him elected as mayor in 2012, Cr Briffa said no deal existed.

"I can assure the community that there are no 'deals' regarding the mayoralty and I am confident the best person for our city will be elected irrespective of political affiliation, gender, age, sexual orientation, ethnicity or other attribute," he said.

**CORRECTION:** A previous version of this article stated that Cr Altair was Hobson Bay Council's last female mayor in 2002. In fact, the municipality's last female mayor was Renee Caruana in 2005.

# LEADWEST'S NEWS SUMMARY FOR MELBOURNE'S WEST

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### **FREEMASONS OPEN UP TO THE WILLIAMSTOWN COMMUNITY**

*Hobsons Bay Leader*— 30<sup>th</sup> October 2011

<http://hobsons-bay-leader.whereilive.com.au/news/story/opening-up-to-the-williamstown-community/>

They don't drink out of skulls and they don't get drunk in the lodge.

But apart from that, author Dan Brown painted a fairly accurate picture of Freemasonry in his latest book, says Freemasons Victoria's Grand Master Vaughan Werner.

Mr Werner said the Freemasons, who opened the doors of the newly refurbished Williamstown Masonic Centre to the public earlier this month, had made a "concerted" effort to be more open with the community recently, due to the glut of false information about masons available online. "We have to open our doors if we're going to be a viable part of a community," Mr Werner, a former assistant commissioner with Victoria Police, said.

"We'll give people the truth about Freemasonry, rather than the rubbish."

Though often seen to be shrouded in mystery by those who are not members, Mr Werner said Freemasonry was not as secretive as it once was.

"The only secrets in Freemasonry are the ways we identify one another," he said, explaining that the tradition was passed down from the very first Stonemasons, who were illiterate and had no written way of identifying each other.

"We still guard those secrets of identification and what level we're at within ourselves," Mr Werner said.

But the ancient rituals and traditions will always remain a mystery to women, who are still not permitted to become members.

"Freemasonry is open to men but we embrace the support of our wives and female friends," Mr Werner said.

"There are orders for ladies, like the Order of the Eastern Star and there was an organisation in my home town called the Country Women's Association that I don't think I ever saw a man go into.

"We do need some organisations in society that are open to men only and women only."

Mr Werner has been a mason for 47 years and was elected Grand Master last year.

The first records of Masons in Hobsons Bay were in 1853 when they met in hotels, but Mr Werner said the refurbished Williamstown Masonic Centre, originally built in 1891, would become one of the Victorian Freemasons' most iconic buildings.

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## MARIBRYNONG

### GETTING DOWN TO BUSINESS

*Maribyrnong Leader—4<sup>th</sup> November 2011*

<http://maribyrnong-leader.whereilive.com.au/news/story/getting-down-to-business-1/>

Maribyrnong Council is planning to ensure there are enough jobs for 30,000 residents moving in over the next 20 years.

Only one third of Maribyrnong's usable land is commercial or industrial. The Economic Development Strategy aims to provide enough land for employment to support sustainable growth.

Mayor Sarah Carter said the EDS were about the "activation of industry and encouragement of growth in the municipality and looking at ways to partner organisations for investment attractions".

Cr Carter said council identified existing industrial areas that were under-utilised and in need of activation, as well as those that might no longer suit the industrial zoning.

The nine industrial and commercial precincts investigated as part of the study include Ashley St and Ballarat Rd, Braybrook; West Footscray; Cawley Rd, Francis St East and the Port, Yarraville; and Gordon St and Hampstead Rd, Maidstone.

Cr Carter said the Tottenham precinct, in particular, consisted of a lot of "under-utilised industrial land".

She said the next step was setting out a plan to engage industry and encourage investment attraction.

Lead West chief executive Anton Mayer said Maribyrnong had the potential to be a "major business precinct". He said it was logical to exploit opportunities to develop and utilise older industrial sites in Maribyrnong.

Mr Mayer said it was a matter of finding the right opportunities to convert land and to see what potential could be unlocked to create more jobs.

### SHOPS MAKE WAY FOR RAIL

*Maribyrnong Leader—3<sup>rd</sup> November 2011*

<http://maribyrnong-leader.whereilive.com.au/news/story/shops-make-way-for-rail/>

Demolition work on the Irving St shops in Footscray began last week to make way for the controversial Regional Rail Link.

The demolition of houses on Buckley St, Footscray will also begin this month.

### PLEA ON TRANSPORT WOES

*Maribyrnong Leader—3<sup>rd</sup> November 2011*

<http://maribyrnong-leader.whereilive.com.au/news/story/plea-on-transport-woes/>

Maribyrnong Mayor Sarah Carter wants the State Government to help ease the city's transport woes.

Cr Carter said the Maribyrnong Integrated Transport Strategy would be used as an advocate to get the State Government to help fund the city's many "needed improvements". In outlining the area's traffic and transport woes, Cr Carter said the council was unable to fund the projects on its own.

There was a need for better road networks, improved bicycle and pedestrian paths, more regular public transport services, the removal of trucks from residential streets and more tram lines.

Lead West chief executive Anton Mayer said the strategy would help the push for an alternative crossing to the West Gate Bridge.

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Mr Mayer said there was a need for “a second strategic road crossing west to basically alleviate the congestion that already exists on the West Gate, and provides future access to the port of Melbourne, because we do have a growing transport logistics industry in the west”.

He said there was a need for an extended tram network in Maribyrnong and a high-density car park in Footscray to cope with the increasing number of people travelling to and from the city.

The strategy will be available for community consultation from November 7 to December 9.

Public consultation sessions are on November 14 from 6pm-8.30pm at Footscray Town Hall and November 23 from 4pm-6.30pm at Maribyrnong Aquatic Centre.

### **REGIONAL RAIL LINK: WORK 'A TRACK TO FAILURE'**

*Maribyrnong Weekly– 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2011*

<http://www.maribyrnongweekly.com.au/news/local/news/general/regional-rail-link-work-a-track-to-failure/2344538.aspx>

Further work at Footscray railway station could end in a shambles due to a lack of co-ordination, Footscray traders warn.

Work planned as part of the \$5billion Regional Rail Link project includes two new platforms and an extension of the \$14.7million William Cooper footbridge.

Traders have been highly critical of the work already completed and warn the mistakes are doomed to be repeated.

Footscray Traders Association president Grant Miles said lessons should have been learned from the "failed footbridge project".

He called for a project manager to co-ordinate the various projects running simultaneously, given the station development's importance to the development of Footscray.

"We have a myriad of state government agencies and departments rolling out projects directly affecting Footscray station, but nobody seems to be in charge of the big picture - responsibility and accountability stops with everybody and nobody," he said.

"Just as with the footbridge, we risk being landed with a sub-standard outcome for all the money spent." Agencies with oversight for work connected or related to the station include the Transport Department and its statutory body the Regional Rail Link Authority; the Department of Planning and Community Development; VicUrban, which proposes a \$500million development on a deck over the rail line; and Maribyrnong Council.

"Managing the station development as a bunch of separate projects, as is now the approach, will fail in providing the level of co-ordination and accountability this project needs and deserves," Mr Miles said.

Maribyrnong Council Infrastructure and Engineering manager Ian Butterworth said:"Council will soon be appointing a part-time project manager, funded by the RRLA, to liaise between Council and community and trader representatives; State government agencies; contractors and the RRLA to help create a coordinated approach to the planning and construction of RRL through this city, including improving Footscray Station.

"Council has also convened a community forum, chaired by Cr Zakharov, consisting of community members, key government agencies and Council officers to meet regularly to discuss and address a range of environmental and amenity issues associated with rail emissions and noise."

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### FRIENDS LOOK TO STUDENTS

*Maribyrnong Leader* – 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2011

<http://maribyrnong-leader.whereilive.com.au/news/story/friends-look-to-students/>

Local children will soon be digging in to help the Friends of Maribyrnong Valley at Avondale Heights' Thompson St Reserve.

The organisation was one of 71 community groups to recently receive a council grant and will be putting the \$3500 towards creating a garden bed with the help of Avondale Primary School students.

Friends of Maribyrnong Valley member Ian Wheeler said having the children involved in the project would help instil the concept of being part of a community.

"That's what we try to encourage and particularly with younger children, they get it at an early age and it hopefully sticks with them," Mr Wheeler said.

A total of \$85,000 was handed to community development, arts and culture, environmental and support groups throughout Moonee Valley. Other recipients include Napier Community Orchestra, Dousta Galla Community Health, Strathmore Community Garden and Able Hearts Playgroup.

### MAJOR WARD CHANGES

*Maribyrnong Star* – 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2011

<http://www.starnewsgroup.com.au/star/footscray-yarraville/320/story/143542.html>

Maribyrnong City Council will become a three-ward municipality next year in a major restructure proposed by the Victorian Electoral Commission.

In its final report, released last week, the VEC has called for the municipality to go from seven single-councillor wards to seven councillors representing three wards.

The recommended structure calls for two wards – the Stony Creek and River wards – to be each represented by two councillors, while the third ward, dubbed the Yarraville Ward, will have three councillors.

The revamped Stony Creek ward will take in the suburbs of Braybrook, Tottenham and West Footscray; the new River Ward will cover Maribyrnong, Maidstone and part of Footscray; and the Yarraville Ward will encompass Yarraville, Kingsville, Seddon and part of Footscray.

"The issue of uneven growth across the municipality cannot be ignored; despite the VEC'S efforts to find an acceptable single ward structure it proved impossible to balance the wards and communities of interest," the report read.

"(Under the multi-councillor ward structure) the larger wards will be less susceptible to changes caused by the uneven population growth.

"As one of the smallest metropolitan councils in the area, the VEC is confident that councillors will still be accessible to residents and that local issues will not be overridden."

Councillors will be elected by proportional representation under the new structure.

Mayor Sarah Carter said the council would have preferred the ward structure to remain the same.

"Having single-councillor wards works and promotes more accountability," Cr Carter said.

"But we have to embrace that change now... it will certainly change the make-up (of the municipality and council)."

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Former Footscray Mayor Fred Maddern was happy that Kingsville was included in the same ward as Yarraville and Seddon, but said that having multi-councillor wards would lead to lazy councillors.

"I am disappointed, very disappointed, that they've chosen to go down the track of three multiple wards. If they were looking to de-politicise the council, I think they've actually made the council more political this way."

The report has been sent to Local Government Minister Jeanette Powell for consideration.

If the Minister endorses the recommendation the changes will take place for the next council election, which will be held on 27 October 2012.

### **FOOTSCRAY HOSPITAL: COUNCIL TO FREE UP PARKING**

*Maribyrnong Weekly*— 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2011

<http://www.maribyrnongweekly.com.au/news/local/news/general/footscray-hospital-council-to-free-up-parking/2344533.aspx>

Close to a decade of wrangling over expanded car parking at Footscray hospital has come to an end after Maribyrnong Council confirmed plans to shift its works depot.

The council early next year will begin moving the depot out of Southampton Street to a site at Sunshine Road in Tottenham after signing a 20-year lease.

Temporary parking will be made available within six months at Southampton Street, beside the hospital, while the council draws up long-term plans for public, paid parking.

Western Health, Western Private Hospital and the council have for years discussed buying and developing the 15,500-square-metre works depot to alleviate car-parking headaches.

The council withdrew from the expressions-of-interest process last December, saying offers for the site did not match its valuation.

Council CEO Vince Haining said the Southampton Street site was built on an old quarry and needed extensive remediation, which would have been required even if the council was to sell the site.

He predicted the car park would cost about \$2million to build and have 500 paid-parking spaces.

"Car parking is absolutely at a premium at the hospital. We can help the hospital and the people who visit it to park conveniently and easily."

Mr Haining said the issue was finally resolved after the 8725-square-metre warehouse at 95Sunshine Road became available.

Western Health acting chief executive Shaun Drummond said there was a critical shortage of car parking spaces around the hospital and the chance to develop several hundred additional spaces on the old depot site was invaluable.

"Western Health and Maribyrnong Council have been in discussion on the depot site for some time to seek solutions to the car parking demand pressures for Western Hospital," he said.

"The availability of additional spaces will be of significant benefit to Western Health patients, visitors and staff."

# LEADWEST'S NEWS SUMMARY FOR MELBOURNE'S WEST

## 4<sup>th</sup> November 2011

### FEWER WARDS, NEW SYSTEM PROPOSED FOR POLL

*Maribyrnong Weekly* – 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2011

<http://www.maribyrnongweekly.com.au/news/local/news/general/fewer-wards-new-system-proposed-for-poll/2344529.aspx>

Major changes have been recommended for Maribyrnong's electoral structure following release of the Victorian Electoral Commission's final report.

Maribyrnong will go from seven wards with one councillor in each to three, multi-councillor wards, if the recommendations put to Local Government Minister Jeanette Powell are endorsed.

Councillors will be elected based on the proportional representation system under which they win after obtaining a quota of votes. In the three-councillor ward, candidates will need 25 per cent plus one of the votes to be elected, and in the two-councillor ward it will be 33.33 per cent plus one vote.

The final VEC report follows a preliminary report. There were 23 submissions from the community and the council. Fifteen submissions favoured a system of three wards with three councillors in each.

The VEC concluded that the option submitted by the Footscray Traders Association - three wards, with two councillors in two wards and three in one - offered "the fairest and most equitable representation for Maribyrnong City Council". "The larger wards are also the most effective way of grouping large communities with similar interests together with the added advantage of offering clear and easily identifiable ward boundaries," the report said.

The VEC recommended against increasing the number of councillors from seven to nine as Maribyrnong has a ratio of 7506 voters per councillor, the second-lowest in metropolitan Melbourne. "If Maribyrnong were to increase to nine councillors it

would have a disproportionately low voter-to-councillor ratio of 5838," the report said.

The council's submission called for retaining the seven-ward system. Cr Michael Clarke, whose ward was recommended for the biggest changes in the initial report, said it wasn't an ideal change, but it managed to keep communities with similar interests and issues together.

Electoral commissioner Steve Tully said a wide variety of views were carefully considered by a panel to reach the recommended structure. If endorsed by the minister, the changes would be put in place for the next council election on October 27, 2012.

### Maribyrnong: Recommended ward structure

Existing Wards  
Bluestone Ward  
Kookaburra Ward  
River Ward  
Salween Ward  
Shoalwater Ward  
Stony Creek Ward  
Water Ward



# LEADWEST'S NEWS SUMMARY FOR MELBOURNE'S WEST

## 4<sup>th</sup> November 2011



### LEARNING AWARDS

*Maribyrnong Star* – 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2011

<http://www.starnewsgroup.com.au/star/footscray-yarraville/320/story/143546.html>

It's the little centre making a big difference.

Maribyrnong and Moonee Valley Local Learning and Employment Network's The Braybrook Family Inclusive Language and Learning Support Program took out the Minister's Award at the recent Victorian Early Years Awards Ceremony.

The program not only won the \$15,000 for its work in helping families develop English language skills and linking them with essential early childhood services, but was also a finalist in the Better Access to Child and Family Support, Health Services, Schools and Early Education and Care Services category.

The program is at the centre of a partnership between the Maribyrnong and Moonee Valley LLEN, Maribyrnong City Council and Dinjera Primary School to prevent generational disadvantage.

### VU AWARDS FOR OUTSTANDING SERVICE

*Maribyrnong Star* – 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2011

<http://www.starnewsgroup.com.au/star/footscray-yarraville/320/story/143549.html>

Maribyrnong Mayor Sarah Carter and former Citizen of the Year Wally Hopkins were the cream of the crop at the recent Victoria University Alumni Awards.

Cr Carter, who completed a Bachelor of Communications (Public Relations) in 2006, took out the Young Achiever Alumni Award.

Cr Carter was elected to Maribyrnong City Council in 2008 and became the youngest woman to become mayor when she was elected last year.

In her role, she has developed creative partnerships, particularly around issues of good governance and sustainable planning.

She is also on the boards of LeadWest, Western Melbourne Tourism, and several other organisations.

Mr Hopkins, 87, won the honorary Lifetime Alumni Service Award.

Mr Hopkins completed an engineering apprenticeship at VU's predecessor institute, Footscray Technical School, in 1939.

He has organised annual class reunions since 1988 when a group met to mark their 50th anniversary at the school.

Mr Hopkins also has a remarkable 75-year involvement with the First Footscray Scout Troop, receiving the Silver Kangaroo – the highest award in Australian Scouting.

For his community service, he received a Medal of the Order of Australia, and was named a Maribyrnong Citizen of the Year.

Mr Hopkins said the award was great and unexpected.

"Today's university is sophisticated and academic to a great extent and at the presentation I felt a little out of the picture because of all the other folk that were nominated and the academic qualifications they had and their employment, and I was just a student at the Footscray Tech in 1938 and 1939," he said.

# LEADWEST'S NEWS SUMMARY FOR MELBOURNE'S WEST

## 4<sup>th</sup> November 2011



### **FOOTSCRAY CITY PRIMARY: WE'VE BEEN DENIED JUSTICE, PARENTS SAY**

*Maribyrnong Weekly* – 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2011

<http://www.maribyrnongweekly.com.au/news/local/news/general/footscray-city-primary-weve-been-denied-justice-parents-say/2344530.aspx>

Parents of children at Footscray City Primary School have vowed to fight the Education Department's decision to axe the Steiner curriculum and sack the school council.

They say they are being "denied natural justice" after the department revealed last week it was going to shut the Steiner stream at the end of the year and sack the council, citing a failure to "build a harmonious relationship between the Steiner stream and mainstream".

Letters to school council members said the department was appointing a new principal and as the Steiner stream was axed, they were not "best suited to perform the functions of a school council in this new environment".

Angry and upset parents of children from both mainstream and Steiner classes held a rally outside the school last week, calling on Education Minister Martin Dixon to intervene.

They plan another rally at Treasury Gardens at noon this Sunday, while school council parents are considering legal options over their dismissal.

Parents acknowledged there had been issues and divisions when Steiner was started, but those had long been resolved.

School council president Tim Sharkey said the problem was not the suggested disharmony but a lack of commitment to dual-stream education.

He said parents were being denied the right of an explanation for the decision, which was made without consulting them.

"If it's such a sensible decision [to remove the Steiner stream] why won't they show us the information on which it's based? This is neither transparent nor just in terms of its execution.

"The minister should intervene now and take charge of his department."

Mr Sharkey said it was clear the western region of the department did not support Steiner and wanted it removed.

He called on the department to install a principal who was "passionate and committed to dual-stream education".

Footscray City is the only school in the west offering Steiner education.

A 2008 study into problems following its introduction in 2001 led to changes in the guidelines for specialist curriculums.

School council member Murray McKeich, whose three children are mainstream pupils, said culling the Steiner program would halve the school's enrolment of 315 and threaten its viability.

"These are our neighbours and friends and this is going to gut the local community."

After hearing the news, former students including Francesca Gelsomino, who graduated from the Steiner stream in 2006, went to the school to demand answers.

"I was angry because Steiner was so family-oriented. I asked the principal if he knew what Steiner was and [he] said he didn't know. How can you be in charge of a school and not know anything about it?

"There was just no disharmony or anything wrong with the Steiner stream."

# LEADWEST'S NEWS SUMMARY FOR MELBOURNE'S WEST

## 4<sup>th</sup> November 2011



An Education Department spokeswoman said in a statement the school had failed to create a "harmonious relationship" between all members of the school community.

She said all students would be invited to continue their education at the school next year or they could seek help from the department to find another school.

The minister's office did not respond to the Weekly's questions.

### **NEW STORM WATER SYSTEMS**

*Maribyrnong Star*— 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2011

<http://www.starnewsgroup.com.au/star/footscray-yarraville/320/story/143548.html>

Maribyrnong City Council will install stormwater harvesting systems over the next year in three parks and gardens to keep them green year round.

The system will capture rainwater run-off from roofs, streets and parks and store in underground tanks at Footscray Park, Yarraville Gardens and Mclvor Reserve.

The stormwater will then be treated and used to irrigate gardens and playing fields at Footscray Park, Yarraville Gardens, Angliss Reserve and Mclvor Reserve.

The \$6.6 million project is being jointly funded by the Federal Government, Maribyrnong City Council and City West Water.

Construction is due to begin in the first half of 2012 and is expected to be completed by 2013.

Mayor Sarah Carter said harvesting stormwater that would otherwise flow out to the bay would help keep our parks and gardens green during dry years.

"Using rainwater instead of mains water also helps conserve Melbourne's drinking water supplies.

This project will benefit the community all year round," Cr Carter said.

"Footscray Park and Yarraville Gardens are heritage listed parks and additional irrigation water will help preserve them for future generations."

City West Water managing director Anne Barker added: "With climate change expected to result in lower rainfall patterns in Melbourne in the future, projects that use alternative water sources like stormwater harvesting are the future for urban irrigation.

"On top of the water saving benefits, there are also environmental benefits in using stormwater instead of discharging it into Port Phillip Bay."

The project is being planned to minimise disruption to playing fields and car parks within Footscray Park, Yarraville Gardens and Mclvor Reserve.

### **CARPARKING SPOT ON**

*Maribyrnong Leader*— 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2011

<http://maribyrnong-leader.wherelive.com.au/news/story/carparking-spot-on/>

Maribyrnong Council has given the Western Hospital some much-needed parking relief.

The council announced last week that its Footscray works centre on Southampton Rd, near the hospital, would be converted into more than 500 pay parking spaces.

The move is in response to a high demand for public parking in the area.

Maribyrnong chief executive Vince Haining said the council had entered a 20-year lease starting next month to move to Sunshine Rd, Tottenham, where its civil works, parks and gardens activities, cleansing function and fleet would be based, along with about 100 workers.

# LEADWEST'S NEWS SUMMARY FOR MELBOURNE'S WEST

## 4<sup>th</sup> November 2011



The Southampton St site sits on an old quarry and Mr Haining said remedial work at the site was estimated at \$2 million.

It would take up to two years for the remediation and building of the car park to be completed, he said, so a temporary car park would be constructed in the next three to six months.

Mr Haining said the council would protect residential street access and conduct a full traffic study before any plans were finalised or work began.

Western Health acting chief executive Shaun Drummond said there had been a critical shortage of car park spaces at and around the Western Hospital for years.

Mr Drummond said Western Health had been in discussion with the council on the depot site for some time to seek solutions to the car parking problem.

After parking six blocks away on his last visit to the hospital, Western Metropolitan Liberal MP Bernie Finn said, "Every little bit helps".

### **NOISE PROTEST HEDED**

*Maribyrnong Leader* – 1<sup>st</sup> November 2011

<http://maribyrnong-leader.whereilive.com.au/news/story/noise-protest-heeded/>

Community calls for rail noise standards appear to have been heard.

After the release of a noise analysis report, a Department of Transport spokeswoman said the State Government was preparing a policy for rail noise.

The policy, to be released next year, would provide guidance to the Regional Rail Link (RRL) and future projects.

The noise analysis report presented a strong case for noise mitigation and barriers, but Fair Go For Footscray Rail Residents spokesman Nick Fahey said it did not outline who would pay for them.

He said the cost of a noise wall for Footscray was estimated at \$21-50 million, which was a "very small element" in a project with a \$5.3 billion budget.

Mr Fahey said if noise mitigation was not implemented, residents near the rail corridor would be disturbed at night.

Footscray Traders Association president Grant Miles said the impact of the rail noise on traders would be massive.

He said loud trains going past during theatre performances or "romantic meals" at restaurants would be "bad for business".

Maribyrnong Mayor Sarah Carter said the council had been lobbying for noise treatments to be delivered as part of the regional rail project.

She was concerned the standards would be set too late for the RRL.

The Department of Transport spokeswoman said: "The Regional Rail Link Authority will ensure that any additional noise mitigation resulting from application of a new rail noise policy will be able to be incorporated into the project.

"With the project not due to be completed until 2016, and the noise policy expected to be released in 2012, there will be time for the RRL to incorporate any changes into the project."

# LEADWEST'S NEWS SUMMARY FOR MELBOURNE'S WEST

## 4<sup>th</sup> November 2011



### **LOCK IT OR LOSE IT**

*Maribyrnong Leader – 1<sup>st</sup> November 2011*

<http://maribyrnong-leader.whereilive.com.au/news/story/lock-it-or-lose-it-3/>

Car thefts in Maribyrnong are declining, but six cars are still stolen on average each week.

Despite the reduction in thefts Footscray police Sen-Sgt Damien Jones warned that new hubs for car thefts were arising.

National Motor Vehicle Theft Reduction Council figures showed a 17 per cent decrease in car thefts in the past financial year, down from 385 to 318.

Of those, 218 were short-term thefts, where thieves used cars for opportunistic reasons, while 100 were profit motivated and were not recovered.

Footscray remained the municipality's car theft capital, but the number of cars stolen has dropped from 133 to 115.

Hot spots included Maribyrnong and West Footscray (both 42 thefts), Yarraville (36), Braybrook and Maidstone (both 31).

The Toyota Camry was the most commonly stolen vehicle, with 19 reported missing.

Vehicles more than 16 years old accounted for more than half the vehicles stolen.

But with the decrease in crime in the Footscray CBD, Sen-Sgt Jones said crime was being pushed into the northern and western parts of the suburb.

He said West Footscray, between Essex and Mitchell streets, was becoming a haven for car thieves.

Police say four cars were stolen from West Footscray last week.

While Footscray police no longer had a dedicated car theft task force, Sen-Sgt Jones said there were still a number of operations including automotive number plate recognition and an analyst who studied recidivism.

Sen-Sgt Jones said most people who stole cars in Maribyrnong were not local residents.

Council executive director Ray Carroll said older cars were picked on by thieves because they were not equipped with the security features of new models.

### **MOONEE PONDS CAMERAS REACTIVATED**

*Maribyrnong Weekly – 1<sup>st</sup> November 2011*

<http://www.mooneevalleyweekly.com.au/news/local/news/general/moonee-ponds-cameras-reactivated/2341273.aspx>

Speed and red light cameras have been reactivated at the intersection of Maribyrnong and Mount Alexander roads, Moonee Ponds.

Cameras across Victoria will be progressively switched on at an additional 32 locations.

Police Minister Peter Ryan said the 32 cameras were first installed by the former government more than a year ago but the Coalition refused to activate them until the Auditor-General validated Victoria's road safety camera program.

"This exhaustive report, recently tabled in Parliament, found Victoria's road safety cameras were focused on road safety, not raising revenue, and that cameras save lives," Mr Ryan said.

# LEADWEST'S NEWS SUMMARY FOR MELBOURNE'S WEST

## 4<sup>th</sup> November 2011



### YARRAVILLE STUDENTS SHINE IN SCIENCE KNOWLEDGE

*Maribyrnong Leader*— 31<sup>st</sup> October 2011

<http://maribyrnong-leader.whereilive.com.au/news/story/yarraville-students-shine-in-science-knowledge-fbready/>

Students from Yarraville West Primary School competed in a model solar vehicle challenge at Scienceworks earlier this month.

The annual competition involved schools from across Victoria and explored the potential of solar power as an alternative energy source while testing the engineering skills of primary and secondary school students.

Teacher Heather Britton said the 20 students involved had worked on their solar boats during after-school workshops.

“They really enjoyed learning about science topics and had fun working with other students,” Ms Britton said. “The challenge is a great way for them to learn about science and technology.”

Scienceworks manager Genevieve Fahey said students displayed more initiative and creativity in their vehicle designs each year. “This kind of experimentation will have increasing relevance to the wider community as a result of the growing need for alternative energies,” she said.

Chairman of the Victorian Model Solar Vehicle Challenge organising committee Paul Wellington said the project was a display of student ingenuity. “We hope (it) will influence the potential engineers and designers of the future to consider ways in which solar energy can be utilised,” he said.

## MELTON

### YOUNG AND OLD SHARE LIFE'S LESSONS IN MELTON

*Melton Leader*—6<sup>th</sup> November 2011

<http://melton-leader.whereilive.com.au/news/story/young-and-old-share-lifes-lessons-in-melton/>

Volunteer mentors in Melton Shire are helping guide young people into becoming more self-confident adults.

Melton Council's youth mentoring program has been running since 2009 and has 15 pairs matched, including 67-year-old Christine McCall and 16-year-old Taylah Otten.

For the past six months, this dynamic duo has been working together, giving each other support and lending a friendly ear.

Ms McCall said she decided to become a mentor because she liked working with teenagers and was looking for a new challenge.

“We're slowly building a relationship and developing trust,” she said.

“I feel that if I can help Taylah in any way, that's really worthwhile.”

Miss Otten said she enjoyed her weekly meetings with Christine.

“She is someone to talk to that's not inside my family; she's someone to go places with and someone to have a laugh with,” she said.

The program regularly recruits mentors and young people (aged 12-25). Details: 9747 5384.

# LEADWEST'S NEWS SUMMARY FOR MELBOURNE'S WEST

## 4<sup>th</sup> November 2011



### **NETBALLER LENDS AN INSPIRING HAND TO MELTON STUDENTS**

*Melton Leader—4<sup>th</sup> November 2011*

<http://melton-leader.whereilive.com.au/news/story/netballer-lends-an-inspiring-hand-to-melton-students/>

Melton Secondary College students received some healthy inspiration as part of their Health and PE Week activities.

Australian champion netballer Eloise Southby-Halbish visited the school on October 18 to host a netball clinic with year 9 students.

She also spoke to year 11 students about success in life and sport.

Senior team leader David Kershaw said other activities during the week included a golf nearest-the-pin competition, a fitness challenge, a test of speed in bowling and pitching, and a staff versus students korfbal match, won by staff. Students were also able to feast on free apples throughout the week.

### **MELTON COUNCIL NOT DIVIDED: MAYOR**

*Melton Leader—4<sup>th</sup> November 2011*

<http://melton-leader.whereilive.com.au/news/story/melton-council-not-divided-mayor/>

Melton Mayor Justin Mammarella has denied councillors are always divided 4-3 when voting at council.

Ratepayer David O'Connor has lodged an official complaint with the Minister for Local Government, Jeanette Powell, claiming the four-three voting split at council meetings was a regular occurrence with Cr Mammarella, deputy Broden Borg, Cr Kathy Majdik and Cr Renata Cugliari wielding the balance of power. The out-voted councillors, Sophie Ramsey, Bob Turner and Garry Stock, last week told the Leader that the make-up of council made their jobs difficult.

The split was heightened by the fact Crs Ramsey, Turner and Stock sat on one side of the chamber facing Crs Borg, Majdik and Cugliari.

As mayor, Cr Mammarella sits in the middle and has the casting vote.

Cr Mammarella said the Local Government Act and chamber meeting procedures ensured that good governance and democracy were at the core of the council's decision making.

He claimed the 4-3 voting split did not always occur.

"Strong and healthy debate among all councillors demonstrates a healthy democracy at work and all councillors have the opportunity to seek clarification and have their opinions heard during the council debate," he said.

"An example was at last month's council meeting.

"Item eight on the agenda was a planning application for Coburns Rd, where ward councillors Cr Borg and Cr Ramsey voted against the application."

Cr Mammarella encouraged residents to attend council meetings and witness the "interaction between councillors at work".

But one of the minority councillors said the group of four only split away from the 4-3 voting pattern on less important items, with their 4-3 block maintained on important matters.

# LEADWEST'S NEWS SUMMARY FOR MELBOURNE'S WEST

## 4<sup>th</sup> November 2011



### **NO DRIP, SHE'S A WATER-WISE GIRL**

*Melton Leader—4<sup>th</sup> November 2011*

<http://melton-leader.whereilive.com.au/news/story/no-drip-shes-a-water-wise-girl/>

Budding artist Emily Steward is a water-saving warrior.

The Melton South Primary School student was recently named the winner of Western Water's National Water Week poster competition.

The grade 5/6 student created a striking poster showing a dripping tap with the water-wise message "Get together to help fight water waste".

Western Water's managing director John Wilkinson said Emily's entry was one of many high-standard pieces.

"Emily showed excellent drawing skills and a good grasp of the importance of saving water," he said..

### **HORROR ATTACK ON MELTON PET**

*Melton Leader—3<sup>rd</sup> November 2011*

<http://melton-leader.whereilive.com.au/news/story/horror-attack-on-melton-pet/>

A Kurunjang woman says she could only look on in horror as two neighbouring dogs killed her pet Chihuahua in her backyard.

Tanya Black says the two aggressive dogs broke through her Tokol Court fence on October 22 and killed her six-year-old Chihuahua cross Jessie.

Ms Black watched in shock from inside her home as the dogs mauled Jessie to death.

"I called the police but they said they didn't have anyone available to come out and the ranger was an hour away," she said.

Ms Black said her neighbour's dogs had been trying for months to break through the paling fence whenever she or Jessie was outside.

"I repaired the fence each time but this time they got through," she said.

"Jessie didn't stand a chance against these types of dogs. She was dead from her injuries by the time I could get to her.

"A (paling) fence is no protection against dogs like these."

Ms Black said when the Melton Council ranger attended, he failed to take either of the offending dogs away.

She said the dogs' owners later agreed to put down one of the dogs, a Rottweiler, but it took four days for the second dog to be removed.

The council has described the second dog as an English Staffordshire terrier.

Council's general manager of corporate services Peter Bean said it had not yet been established which dog had done the attacking.

He said a check of council's registration database indicated that neither the Rottweiler nor the Staffordshire terrier were registered.

"The owner had euthanized the dog that was believed to have caused the death of the victim's dog," he said.

"The English Staffordshire terrier has now been seized pending the completion of the investigation."

Ms Black's is the fourth vicious dog attack reported in Melton Shire so far this year.

# LEADWEST'S NEWS SUMMARY FOR MELBOURNE'S WEST

## 4<sup>th</sup> November 2011



### **MELTON SENIORS' FREE RUN AT AN END**

*Melton Leader—3<sup>rd</sup> November 2011*

<http://melton-leader.whereilive.com.au/news/story/melton-seniors-free-run-at-an-end/>

A 35-year rent-free run for Melton pensioners using the Seniors Community Centre is over after Melton Council introduced tenancy agreements for the use of all council facilities.

A post on Deputy Mayor Broden Borg's Facebook page from Sheila Ascough claimed Melton's Senior Citizens and Combined Pensioners Association had never paid rent because the land was donated to the seniors by a generous settler 35 years ago.

The post went on to ask why the council was insisting that low-earning seniors pay rent and utilities.

"Is this just a case of revenue-raising at the expense of our seniors, many of whom have lived in Melton most of their lives,?" Ms Ascough wrote.

"Come on Melton Council, show some compassion here."

Council's community care and inclusion manager Coral Crameri acknowledged that the groups had not paid to use the centre in the past.

But she said all community groups in the municipality were now required to sign a tenancy agreement when they used a council facility.

Ms Crameri said this had been introduced to keep the two clubs in line with all other community groups, including other senior groups.

"They will pay \$6 per hour to use the centre," she said.

"Council will continue to pay for the utilities, cleaning, maintenance and the replacement of furnishings, fittings and other items such as crockery and cutlery for all community groups to access when hiring."

Ms Crameri said all seniors groups in the municipality had signed off on their agreements.

### **MELTON HIGHWAY BRIDGE NEEDED: MP**

*Melton Leader—2<sup>nd</sup> November 2011*

<http://melton-leader.whereilive.com.au/news/story/melton-highway-bridge-needed-mp/>

Melton state Labor MP Don Nardella has called for a bridge to be built over Kororoit Creek to cut the horrific road toll on the Melton Highway.

Raising the highway's dreadful accident plight in State Parliament last week, Mr Nardella called on Roads Minister Terry Mulder to urgently upgrade the road before more lives are lost.

Mr Nardella told MPs the highway has witnessed 280 accidents and 13 fatalities since 1987, including five deaths in the past year. "This is a tragic cost to the people - the families and friends - who have been touched by these awful events," Mr Nardella said.

He praised Leader and Narelle Bowden, who lost her nephew on the highway in December 2010, for their work on the campaign.

"The community, through Narelle, has collected the signatures of over 2000 petitioners on this matter," he said.

Under the previous Labor government, Mr Nardella said the road was duplicated to Beattys Rd, Hillside, a large roundabout was built at Plumpton Rd and the speed limit was reduced between Galli Estate and Ryans Lane.

# LEADWEST'S NEWS SUMMARY FOR MELBOURNE'S WEST

## 4<sup>th</sup> November 2011



He said work needed to continue, especially at the notorious Kororoit Creek dip.

“With Melton having the highest population growth in Australia, I seek on behalf of my community urgent action to duplicate the Melton Highway,” Mr Nardella said. “The Kororoit Creek dip is the most dangerous section of the highway and needs a bridge built over it.

“The duplication could be extended from Ryans Lane over the Kororoit Creek and onto the other side as the next stage of the duplication and upgrade.”

Mr Nardella said he has sought a meeting with Mr Mulder on behalf of campaigners.

VicRoads has said that duplication of the highway was not on its agenda, but safety improvements were being investigated.

### **MELTON MAYOR REFUSES TO RULE OUT STATE RUN**

*Melton Leader—2<sup>nd</sup> November 2011*

<http://melton-leader.whereilive.com.au/news/story/melton-mayor-refuses-to-rule-out-state-run/>

Melton Mayor Justin Mammarella has refused to rule out a move into state politics at the next election.

Cr Mammarella has another year to go on his two-year term as mayor. But with the next Victorian state election scheduled for November 29, 2014, ALP insiders say Cr Mammarella has been canvassing support for a future tilt at state politics.

Leader has been told that Cr Mammarella, who previously worked for ALP powerbroker Kim Carr, is eyeing the prized state seat of Melton, held by Don Nardella since 1999.

However, an Upper House seat remains a possibility.

Mr Nardella and Cr Mammarella both lean to the left of the ALP. Mr Nardella is a member of the Pledge faction while Cr Mammarella is a member of the Socialist Left faction.

Both men have been publicly at odds over the need for a public hospital in Melton, with Mr Nardella pushing for a day hospital as a more realistic goal.

Cr Mammarella is keen to raise his standing in Melton after he came in for criticism after presiding over the debate to change Melton Shire’s name.

The idea was eventually abandoned after strong protests, including from Mr Nardella.

When asked if his future ambitions lay in state politics, Cr Mammarella did not rule it out.

“Council elections are one year away, state elections are three years away,” he said.

“I am focussing on council business in the coming year as Mayor of Melton aiming to bring improved services and infrastructure to our residents.”

Mr Nardella said he had no intention of stepping down.

### **MUSIC STARS LINE UP FOR DJERRIWARRH**

*Melton Leader—2<sup>nd</sup> November 2011*

<http://melton-leader.whereilive.com.au/news/story/music-stars-line-up-for-djerriwarrh/>

This Saturday’s Djerriwarrh Festival is set to be bigger and better.

Rock sensation James Reyne will headline an alcohol-free day of fun and entertainment at the Melton Recreation Reserve, alongside local pop rock outfit Masketta Fall.

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The five-piece Melton band will take to the main stage at 3pm.

The soulful Josh Owen will keep the crowd entertained into the night, while children will love the Kazoos.

The main stage will also feature the amazing beats of Asiko, known for its blend of rock, funk, jazz and West African rhythms.

All the most popular festival features are back in 2011, including the street parade.

The parade will start at 11am at Station Rd, before travelling east on High St and concluding on the corner of Smith and McKenzie streets.

There will also be market stalls, Get Active Expo, Lions Club carnival, Young@Art show, activities and workshops for all ages.

A new feature this year will be the Business Exposed small business expo, showcasing a range of local businesses.

Melton Mayor Justin Mammarella said 2011 would be another big year for the festival, which this year had the theme "imagine".

"The Djerriwarrh Festival is a great opportunity for residents to come together and celebrate what makes our community great," he said.

Entertainment at the Melton Recreation Reserve starts at noon and ends at 9.15pm with the traditional fireworks display.

Performances will also take place on the community stage from noon-4pm featuring local groups, with demonstrations from sporting and recreation clubs on the main oval.

### **PUPPY FARMS: DOG LOVERS 'ELATED' BY LAW**

*Melton Weekly—1<sup>st</sup> November 2011*

<http://www.meltonweekly.com.au/news/local/news/general/puppy-farms-dog-lovers-elated-by-law/2341723.aspx>

Animal activists and Moorabool Council hope that new penalties for illegal puppy farmers can end the "appalling" industry.

The state government last week said it would fine operators of illegal puppy farms up to \$20,000, confiscate their assets and ban them from owning animals for up to 10 years.

It will also make it compulsory to microchip all dogs and cats before they're sold, and a \$1.6 million animal welfare fund will be created.

"I'm appalled by the images I've seen of abused and helpless animals and we will be establishing a \$1.6 million fund to assist organisations that provide care and treatment for these abused animals," Premier Ted Baillieu said.

He said the legislation, to be introduced soon, was in response to the terrible conditions discovered in some puppy farms, such as a Beremboke property that Moorabool Council last year fought to have shut when officers found rotting carcasses and squalid cages.

Animal activist and Oscar's Law president Deborah Tranter said she was elated that action was finally being taken and that hundreds of dogs would be saved.

But she said more legislation was needed to monitor the code of practice for "legal" or council-registered puppy farms.

"There is no difference between an illegal and a legal puppy farm. The code of practice hasn't been reviewed since 1994.

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"We visited a council-approved puppy farm in Macedon that was so crowded. I saw dirty, matted dogs and whole floors covered in rat faeces. It just stunk.

"The dogs were in complete darkness, they saw no sunlight, and under the current code that's legal."

In July, the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal granted Robert Attard permission to build a puppy farm with 50 breeding bitches in Ballan.

About 1300 people had signed a petition opposing the application, which the council rejected.

Mr Attard said he welcomed the proposed new laws.

"Our establishment will exceed the minimum requirements of the code of practice. All our dogs will be housed in large exercise yards and rooms with cooling 24 hours per day. All dogs will be health-tested. All our puppies will be well socialised."

But Ms Tranter argued that there were no minimum staff requirements, which would mean a lack of social interaction for the 100-odd dogs and puppies on site.

Ballan resident Lee, who asked that her surname not be used, is part of protest group Ballan Paws for Action and said that Mr Attard's farm had to be monitored.

Mayor Pat Griffin applauded the government's move but said the code of practice had to be improved.

On Friday, the council moved at the Municipal Association's state council for laws to be introduced preventing puppy farms having more than five breeding bitches.

### MELTON COUNCIL NEWS IN BRIEF

*Melton Leader—1<sup>st</sup> November 2011*

<http://melton-leader.whereilive.com.au/news/story/melton-council-news-in-brief-1/>

Melton Council wants feedback on its draft municipal fire management plan.

The plan provides a strategy to co-ordinate fire-prevention measures within the municipality.

It can be viewed on the council's website ([melton.vic.gov.au](http://melton.vic.gov.au)).

Melton Mayor Justin Mammarella said it was important residents provided input to ensure the plan responded to the community's needs.

Submissions close 5pm on November 18.

For information or a hard copy contact the council's emergency management officer on 9747 7248.

A RANGE of free activities has been organised in Melton Shire to celebrate National Recycling Week from November 14-18.

Activities will include meeting animals and birds at the Wild Action Zoo at shire community hall, learning about setting up a worm farm and a behind-the-scenes look at the Melton recycling facility.

For more information, or to register for sessions requiring bookings, phone the Melton Visitor Information Centre on 9747 7300 or email [visitor@melton.vic.gov.au](mailto:visitor@melton.vic.gov.au).

Caroline Springs and Eynesbury residents are being urged to attend Fire Ready Victoria meetings this week.

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The aim of the CFA meetings is to raise awareness of bushfire risk and to help people prepare.

Among local issues to be discussed are information on fire danger ratings and total fire bans, bushfire survival plans, personal survival and how you can protect yourself plus information and alert messages during a grass fire.

The Caroline Springs meeting is at 7.30pm tomorrow (Wednesday) at the Hillside Fire Station, 2-4 Gourlay Rd, Hillside.

The Eynesbury meeting is also at 7.30pm on Thursday at the Eynesbury Discovery Centre, Eynesbury Rd.

### **STORK SHORT OF LANDING SPACE**

*Melton Weekly—1<sup>st</sup> November 2011*

<http://www.meltonweekly.com.au/news/local/news/general/stork-short-of-landing-space/2341722.aspx>

Djerriwarrh Health Services' maternity ward in Bacchus Marsh will reach capacity "very soon", a medical staffer has warned.

A Bacchus Marsh and Melton Regional Hospital staff member, who did not want to be identified, has denied claims by hospital chairman and Moorabool councillor Michael Tudball that the facility could double the number of births if recurrent funding was provided.

"The infrastructure is there; we just need more funding for resources," Cr Tudball told the Weekly two weeks ago.

But the staff member, who was wary of being named because "there have been people who have been reprimanded in the Victorian medical sphere for simply commenting on the realities", said Cr Tudball's comment was "preposterous".

"[The claims] are a worry when we're in an area that is growing so quickly. When we look at Sunshine and the trouble they have been under, they're looking at directing patients our way.

"The western suburbs are undergoing a significant population growth so we do have to expect far more births."

In 2010-11, 780 babies were born at the hospital. The staff member said the hospital had only enough beds for 1100 births.

"The reality is that we'll reach capacity very soon and the infrastructure isn't in place."

Cr Tudball said his claim referred to a four-year strategic directions document, which forecast a doubling of birthing numbers to 1100.

"This was accurate at the time and I admit that I did not have the most up-to-date data when I commented last, but I still support my call for additional funding," he said.

"We would be getting to the upper limits at 1100 births."

Hospital chief executive Bruce Marshall agreed that at 1100 births the current infrastructure would be at its capacity.

He said Djerriwarrh was working with the Health Department on a master plan to redevelop the site.

"As the birthing numbers continue to rise, recruitment of the necessary nursing and medical staff will continue to occur," he said.

"The current medical and nursing staff providing services to expecting mothers are of the highest calibre and the community should be justly proud of both the medical and nursing staff providing these services to mothers."

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But the staff member said the hospital needed to be planning with urgency.

"The timeframe of the figures may be conservative, if you look at the strain on Sunshine hospital.

"It functions well and provides an excellent service, but you need proper planning to ensure it stays at this level.

"One-thousand births is fast approaching and funding takes time to come through. If we hit capacity where will [mothers] go?"

### **DJERRIWARRH FESTIVAL: MELTON BAND SEEKS FESTA FUN**

*Melton Weekly—1<sup>st</sup> November 2011*

<http://www.meltonweekly.com.au/news/local/news/general/djerriwarrh-festival-melton-band-seeks-festa-fun/2341716.aspx>

Saturday's Djerriwarrh Festival will feature the homecoming of a Melton-raised musician, a traditional street parade and the introduction of a local business expo.

Some of the area's best up-and-coming bands and winners of the shire's recent star search competition will share the stage with headline act James Reyne and Melton's Josh Owen at Melton Recreation Reserve.

The event, which last year attracted more than 35,000 people, will also feature a market village, kid's zone and environmental hub.

Melton resident Jarrod Joske says he has been overwhelmed with the response since his band, Check Your Smile, won the Melton Battle of the Bands earlier this year.

Since winning the regional finals, the band has received numerous bookings.

"We're psyched about playing at Djerriwarrh. More of our fan base is underage, so it's great that the event is all ages," Joske says.

The band will use the festival as a warm-up gig before playing in the western region finals on December 10. Hopefully, if we win the next round we'll go on to the music festival Pushover in 2012. Powderfinger have played there."

Joske says the four-piece ambient pop-rock band is looking forward to the festival, introducing it to a different kind of audience.

Melton mayor Justin Mammarella says the festival will be a chance for residents to celebrate what makes the community great.

A new addition to the festival is the 'Melton Business Exposed' exhibition, where local firms will be able to showcase their wares.

### **STEPS TO HEALTH HEAD OFF DIABETES**

*Melton Weekly—1<sup>st</sup> November 2011*

<http://www.meltonweekly.com.au/news/local/news/general/steps-to-health-head-off-diabetes/2341720.aspx>

A Melton resident will use World Diabetes Day to get others thinking about their health.

Barbara Theuma is inviting Melton residents to improve their health on November 14 with a walk down High Street before a healthy lunch.

Mrs Theuma is a convener of the Melton Bacchus Marsh support group. Members meet regularly to learn about the illness and share their experiences.

"I was living a very hectic life, looking after my children, going to work and studying," she says.

"I went to see my doctor [and] after some tests I was told I had type 2 diabetes."

That was 22 years ago. Mrs Theuma says she now watches everything she eats and exercises regularly.

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"I'm on insulin ... I do hydrotherapy once a week and attend gym three times a week. I lead a very healthy lifestyle now."

Mrs Theuma and co-convenor Jean Clarke say the group has a positive effect on members managing their diabetes.

Melton GP Alistair Stark says he has more than 1000 patients with diabetes on his books this year.

Diabetes affects 235,000 people in Victoria, with 450 new cases reported each week.

Dr Stark says Melton has a high incidence of the illness and is recognised as being a high-risk area.

"Numbers have increased for diabetes, but we have been monitoring patients more carefully compared to years ago."

He says the ideal time to see a doctor is before you have the illness.

He urges people to exercise, eat a balanced diet and manage their weight.

"Type 2 diabetes is preventable. With changes you can even reverse some of the changes in your body that predisposes you to diabetes."

### **MOORABOOL COUNCIL NOT TO BLAME FOR FLOODS**

*Melton Leader – 1<sup>st</sup> November 2011*

<http://melton-leader.whereilive.com.au/news/story/moorabool-council-not-to-blame-for-floods/>

Flood ravaged Moorabool Council has defended spending \$600,000 on maintaining its drainage network - despite ending up with a repair bill for \$13 million.

The council's annual report shows nearly \$17 million was spent on 128 capital improvement projects in 2010-11.

But only \$589,859 - or 3.5 per cent - was allocated for drainage.

In its defence, the council says the capacity of those networks to withstand five unprecedented flood events between February 2010 and February 2011 was impossible to predict.

Grants will cover all of the repair works.

The damage was severe, with 17,000sq m of sealed bitumen roads in need of repair. Also damaged was 46km of gravel shoulder, 141km of gravel roads, 20km of walking tracks and trails, 52 bridges, three public buildings and 14 recreation reserves.

Council's communications officer Phil Weir said the amount of flood damage that could be attributed to lack of drainage infrastructure or maintenance was not large.

"For example, damage to gravel roads, shoulders, bridges, walking tracks, and siltation have nothing to do with lack of drainage maintenance," he said.

"Also, the bulk of the damage was the result of an ongoing drought and associated lack of vegetation followed by a series of high intensity rainfall events.

"Moorabool is not alone in maintaining a quality infrastructure network that was overcome by five significant flood events between February 2010 and February 2011," he said.

The annual report also shows that the council's 128 completed projects represented a small percentage of its infrastructure.

Council completed 223,100sq m of road sealing works covering 5 per cent of its road network, the report says.

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It also completed 16km of shoulder resheeting works, 17km of gravel road resheeting works, 1079m of footpath replacement and 1020m of kerb and channel replacement.

The council says most of its roads, footpaths, kerbs and channels were in reasonable condition so did not require repair.

### **MOORABOOL COUNCIL PLEA ON TURBINE PLANNING**

*Melton Weekly– 1<sup>st</sup> November 2011*

<http://www.meltonweekly.com.au/news/local/news/general/moorabool-council-plea-on-turbine-planning/2341727.aspx>

Moorabool residents could face a hike in council rates if the state government does not provide extra planning staff to deal with wind farm permits, according to the opposition.

With 121 turbines slated for two wind farms around Mount Wallace and Yaloak, council claims it's under-resourced and needs an assistance program to enforce planning conditions.

The council last week moved a successful motion at the Municipal Association of Victoria's state council, calling on it to lobby the government to help with wind farm planning.

Opposition planning spokesman Brian Tee told the Weekly that planning departments at smaller councils like Moorabool would find it too difficult to deal with wind farms on their own.

"Unless the state government provides councils with the resources to help them work through the maze of red tape, many councils won't have any choice but to pass on costs to their ratepayers," he said.

New planning laws introduced in August prohibit turbines being within five kilometres of towns or two kilometres of homes without landowners' consent.

Mr Tee said wind farm planning would be a "massive regulatory burden", resulting in costly delays and permits being taken back and forth to the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal.

Mayor Pat Griffin said shires like Moorabool, Hepburn and Pyrenees had only two or three planners on their staff.

"Without extra help for wind turbines, if someone wants to put in a planning application for a garage, it might take six months," he said.

Planning Minister Matthew Guy did not respond before the Weekly went to print.

### **COAL TO SQUEEZE WATER IN BACCHUS MARSH**

*Melton Leader– 31<sup>st</sup> October 2011*

<http://melton-leader.whereilive.com.au/news/story/coal-to-squeeze-water-in-bacchus-marsh/>

The future of Bacchus Marsh's purification plant has been thrown into doubt after large coal deposits were discovered beneath it.

Mantle Mining last week released the results of early exploration drilling on its Bacchus Marsh brown coal project, saying the first four holes of a 15-hole drill program had been completed.

The total cumulative coal thickness of 146m found in the first four holes was a 25 per cent increase on the 116m expected.

The drill hole next to the purification plant in Parwan South Rd, MBM 3, had the biggest seam thickness of 52.4m.

Mantle Mining's shares surged almost 20 per cent on the news.

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Should Mantle Mining be granted a full mining licence, Moorabool Environment Group secretary Deb Porter predicted the purification plant would most likely face relocation.

"The water treatment plant, which I believe is about to be upgraded by Western Water, is where Mantle have found the larger-than-expected deposits of coal," she said. "Moving a plant of this size would be a huge cost to the taxpayer."

Western Water managing director John Wilkinson said Mantle Mining was entitled to access to Western Water land under the terms of its exploration permit.

"Western Water is not aware of any specific plans Mantle Mining has for the land upon which the Bacchus Marsh Recycled Water Plant is located," he said.

"If Western Water land is to be impacted by mining, Western Water will participate in a process to ensure that our interests as an essential services provider are protected."

Moorabool Mayor Pat Griffin said he was sceptical about the release of just four drill holes, saying the quality of coal found was poor with a high moisture and ash content.

He said councillors were keen to form a position against mining in Bacchus Marsh, but had been told forming such a view could be prejudicial to any future application.

Mantle Mining says applying for a licence could be more than five years away.

### **MELTON SHIRE TEENS ON THE OUTER**

*Melton Leader* – 31<sup>st</sup> October 2011

<http://melton-leader.wherelive.com.au/news/story/melton-shire-teens-on-the-outer/>

The future of a mentoring program for disconnected youths is in limbo.

Melton Shire says its mentoring project could be at risk after the State Government decided to cut funding for the Mentoring Capacity and Building Initiative (MCBI) after December 30.

But the Government says it will replace the service with a similar initiative called Engage.

Melton Council's manager of family, youth and housing, Matthew Wilson, said the council would apply for the new grant, but could not guarantee the future of the program in its present form.

"Council will be applying for funding through this stream to contribute to the costs of running the program," he said.

"The scope of the program is reviewed regularly in line with identified need in the community."

The program, for youths aged 12-18, has been running for two years and matches 15 youths with an adult mentor.

The Opposition's spokeswoman for children and young adults, Jenny Mikakos, said the Government was ignoring young Victorians by letting funding for 12 programs, including Melton Shire's, disappear.

"This is a low-cost program that has a high impact," she said.

"It helps hundreds of at-risk young Victorians every year, but Mr Baillieu couldn't find room for it in this year's budget. Without the targeted assistance from the

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youth mentoring program, Mr Baillieu is effectively saying to these young people 'you are on your own'."

But Youth Affairs Minister Ryan Smith said that organisations that were funded through the MCBI would be eligible to apply for grants of between \$30,000 and \$50,000 as part of the Engage program.

### **BIG BROADBAND BOOST FOR BACCHUS MARSH**

*Melton Leader – 31<sup>st</sup> October 2011*

<http://melton-leader.whereilive.com.au/news/story/big-broadband-boost-for-bacchus-marsh/>

Moorabool Mayor Pat Griffin has welcomed a 150 per cent increase in the number of Bacchus Marsh homes and businesses scheduled for connection to the new NBN high-speed broadband network.

The latest announcement brings the number of homes and businesses eligible for connection to the NBN fibre optic network by the end of 2012 up to 7500.

Cr Griffin said the large increase was "great news for Moorabool Shire and would ensure Bacchus Marsh was one of the first town's in Australia to access the NBN.

"It's a fitting result for the work done by council and the community in planning and lobbying for our future communication needs," he said..

The chairman of Central Business Bacchus Marsh, Mal Trask, believes the early roll-out will give local businesses a significant advantage.

"The capacity to quickly download large files is critical in my line of work and if the NBN can reliably do this quicker and at a cost that's competitive, it'll make a big difference to my business," he said.

"But I'm just one business; imagine what's possible for Bacchus Marsh if all the other businesses use it to their advantage too?"

Cr Griffin said the council would assist NBN Co. to regularly inform the community of the progress of work. "People will start to see activity in their neighbourhoods soon," he said.

"We, and NBN Co, are keen to let people know how the project is progressing and, at the same time, how people can ready themselves for the exciting new opportunities once it's connected."

Melton and central Ballarat were last week among 28 new locations also set for the high-speed internet roll-out over the coming year. About 2600 yet to be determined homes in Melton will be hooked up.

Melton state Labor MP Don Nardella said high-speed internet would be a welcome addition to the region.

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## MOONEE VALLEY

### **BREAKING THE CYCLE OF FAMILY VIOLENCE**

*Moonee Valley Weekly— 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2011*

<http://www.mooneevalleyweekly.com.au/news/local/news/general/breaking-the-cycle-of-family-violence/2346103.aspx>

Cases of assault, rape and other violence against family members are increasing annually across Melbourne. Goya Dmytryshchak talks to one survivor who has turned her life around.

She “took the punches for the kids”. But after 13 years, even the kids couldn’t take it.

Sahar, who does not want her family name used, survived family violence and is now an advocate for women in Melbourne’s west.

She went through an arranged marriage to the man 10 years her senior, who punched and kicked her.

The signs were evident from day one, but her family, together with clergy from her Coptic Orthodox faith, urged her to give him a chance.

“They were of the mind that you can bear your cross and not tarnish the family name,” Sahar says. “Basically, I was his prisoner and my fear was his drug, and the more and more scared I became, the more and more empowered he was.

“I didn’t understand that family violence was a crime. I thought it was a way of life because that’s all I knew for 13 years, day in, day out.

“Even though I’m educated — I’ve got a masters degree — it didn’t make a difference.”

Last year, Victoria Police family violence reports rose 14.5 per cent from 35,960 to 40,890. Assaults and rapes by family members each grew by about 25 per cent.

In Brimbank, family incident reports rose from 1411 to 1696, in Hobsons Bay from 509 to 550, Maribyrnong from 307 to 403 and Moonee Valley from 615 to 650.

Sahar, 43, says she has a lot of physical scarring from the marriage.

“Half my mouth is plastic. Victims of Crime have paid for my teeth.

“One particular day I didn’t fold the clothes properly and he didn’t like the way that I said to him, ‘Well, I’ve done the best I can.’ So, he punched my face, dragged me down the corridor and I was bleeding.

“He kept on kicking into my face and into my body and then locked us [myself and the kids] up.

“We were locked up from the morning until the following morning. We were locked in a room. We weren’t allowed to drink. The kids wet themselves.

“When I’d say to him, I’m gonna leave one day, then he would react very violently and he would say that I would never be leaving alive.”

Policy expert Maureen Smith says women are most exposed to violence when they go to leave or become pregnant.

The regional family violence co-ordinator with Women’s Health West, she says while the effect on children is evident, there’s a huge funding deficit for specialist counsellors.

Despite the spike in family violence reports, Melbourne’s west has just one government-funded counsellor, who works across seven municipalities with children affected by family violence.

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As Smith points out, the funding is for the equivalent of 1.8 full-time positions.

“We have 1.8 positions for the whole western suburbs for specialist family violence children’s counselling. And that’s a part of not only recovery, but early intervention; to work with the children who have been exposed or witnessed it.

“The research shows that children exposed to family violence can have a lot of difficulties later on in life.

“It will be interesting to see where our government comes and stands on it, because since the change of government we haven’t had a lot of direction or a lot of public statements in regards to family violence.

“However it’s been fantastic to have the Acting Police Commissioner [Ken Lay] come out and speak very strongly against the stats.

“We had quite a considerable increase in the west...and the police will tell you they know it’s grossly under-reported.”

Sergeant Di Ashwell, one of 12 police family violence advisers in the state, says the effect on children could start even before birth.

“There is so much research now. The effects are just horrible and it keeps going on from generation to generation.

“Children, right from when the mother is first pregnant, can feel the stress on the mother’s body when she’s experiencing family violence.

“Then there are behavioural problems they may find at school. They may have problems with developing relationships later on in life. So there are a number of problems that occur all throughout their life.”

She says women may have been encouraged to come forward because of the Enough! campaign, which includes posters of a distressed baby and was the subject of a major advertising push by the former government.

In 2004, the introduction of a police code of practice also resulted in a system overhaul which changed the way all agencies tackled family violence.

“I think it’s really important that if people are experiencing family violence or they know that somebody’s experiencing family violence, to try to get them help,” she says.

“Family violence is a crime and the victim is never ever to blame.”

Some readers will still be asking, why the woman doesn’t just leave.

Sahar says it isn’t that simple. “If I had left earlier, one of us would have been killed.

“What happens behind closed doors is like terrorism and no one knows what is happening.

“It’s a terrorism that is silent, that is calculated; these men are very calculating. They will make sure that outside they are so nice that no one will ever catch on.

“But once the doors were closed, then the terrorism would begin.

“Domestic violence is not just about being physically abused: it’s psychologically, it’s sexually, it’s financially, it’s emotionally.

“As a survivor, what I want other women to understand is that you can make it, you can come out the other end.

“What people don’t understand is that not only do you have your dignity stripped away from you ... you feel like you’re a mess, you don’t know where to start to pick

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up the pieces. It's like a jigsaw puzzle and there's all these pieces missing. It takes a lot of guts and effort to put back those pieces.

"I know that the pieces may never come back, like, there'll always be a crack in the image, but what they need to do is tap into services."

Eight years ago, Sahar took that step. Her two sons and daughter, now aged 14, 16 and 18, were the catalyst.

"He tried to stab one of the boys," Sahar says.

"One of the boys spilt some milk — he was a little kid who spilt some milk on the ground — and [my husband] went crazy as he used to do.

"It was the turning point in my mind to think, 'well, hang on, this man is really going to do it'.

"He'd always have knives on the table for us: 'This is one for you, one each for the children'.

"That particular day, that was it: either you're going to do something about it or you're going to lose a child."

She says her husband used to hide the phones, but that day her daughter found one and called for help. Sahar and the children hid in different rooms waiting for the police.

The police removed Sahar's husband from the family home and he was placed on a five-year-intervention order.

While her disenchantment with the court system is another story, Sahar says life now is fantastic.

Her mother is "her rock", her advocacy work has empowered others and she has regained her confidence.

"I'm very positive and my kids are doing very, very well. They have dreams.

"Psychologically, I've mended, I've healed, and I've moved on."

Half her mouth may be "plastic," but the smile is genuine.

### **MOONEE VALLEY COUNCIL BACKS PEOPLE POWER**

*Moonee Valley Weekly*— 1<sup>st</sup> November 2011

<http://www.mooneevalleyweekly.com.au/news/local/news/general/moonee-valley-council-backs-people-power/2341276.aspx>

Essendon residents fighting an application for a five-storey, 20-apartment complex on Buckley Street have been buoyed by news that Moonee Valley Council has refused the development.

The council received 96 objections to the application which would have required the demolition of an existing single-storey dwelling.

Resident Darryl Gough organised two leaflet drops in the streets surrounding Buckley Street telling residents of the application.

He said there was a strong feeling about the negative impact such a large building would have in an area of predominantly single-storey homes.

The long-time Essendon resident said 96 objections was a great result.

"I guess we [residents] had a lack of confidence in what the council decision would be, but they came back with a 'no you can't do that, tiger', so we were very pleased.

"It goes to show what can be done when a few people bandy together."

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Property developers Trisand director Elias Elia said he was unsure whether his client would appeal against the decision at the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal.

"They might appeal; they might close shop.

"They'll digest what the council has replied with."

The council refused the application on the grounds that the planned building's height, bulk and scale would unreasonably overshadow existing dwellings and it would be an overdevelopment of the site.

### **SEED OF HOPE FOR REFUGEES**

*Moonee Valley Leader— 1<sup>st</sup> November 2011*

<http://moonee-valley-leader.wherelive.com.au/news/story/seed-of-hope-for-refugees/>

A Moonee Valley project that helps young people find work has proven so successful it will be rolled out into three other municipalities.

Federal Employment Participation Minister Kate Ellis announced the \$150,000 funding for the Sustainable Employment and Economic Development (SEED) youth project last week.

The program, which started in 2009, will now be expanded to Melbourne, Hobsons Bay and Maribyrnong.

Project ambassador Ahmed Dini said the project had played a big role in giving a sense of belonging to young people from refugee backgrounds.

"Our community, when they first came to this country, faced many problems and one of the problems we faced was a lack of employment," Mr Dini said.

"But today I can guarantee you that many young African people are now facing a new era where they can look and see the wonderful work that's being done by SEED and make sure that they can keep participating in the employment scene.

"I, for one, know that it has transformed the lives of many."

Maki Issa, 19, who had gone through the program and found work with Moonee Valley Council, said the program helped him see a "light at the end of the tunnel".

The refugee from Djibouti said he has been inspired to start volunteer work and hoped to work in community development.

"Growing up, we didn't have people to help us out," Mr Issa said.

He said it was important to ensure that wasn't the case for the next generation.

Mayor John Sipek said the Melbourne, Hobsons Bay and Maribyrnong councils had committed to offering job placements within their ranks.

Young people are put in work placements and supported throughout their participation in the project.

### **DRIVERS SHOW RESTRAINTS**

*Moonee Valley Weekly— 1<sup>st</sup> November 2011*

<http://www.mooneevalleyweekly.com.au/news/local/news/general/drivers-show-restraints/2341277.aspx>

Almost 300 children under seven are injured or killed in vehicles on Victorian roads each year.

Moonee Ponds police want to give children better odds and will have a free car seat child restraint checking day at the Mount Alexander Road car park, opposite Queens Park, on November 12.

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## 4<sup>th</sup> November 2011



Moonee Valley mayor John Sipek said there had been changes to child restraint laws in recent years, but many people weren't aware of them.

Drivers who don't have the correct child restraints face a fine of \$269 and three demerit points. Penalties will not be issued at the free fitting session.

During a similar council restraint checking day in March, 87 seats were checked and only 12 were fitted correctly.

### **MOONEE VALLEY CHURCH OFFERS SOUP FOR THE SOULS**

*Moonee Valley Weekly*— 1<sup>st</sup> November 2011

<http://www.mooneevalleyweekly.com.au/news/local/news/general/moonee-valley-church-offers-soup-for-the-souls/2341278.aspx>

Demand for hot meals from the Moonee Valley Christian Church soup kitchen hasn't slowed since the weather has warmed up.

Meal program co-ordinator Jim Mangioros helps run two regular lunch days in Moonee Valley, at the Moonee Valley Christian Church in Moonee Ponds and at the Bowes Avenue Community Centre in Airport West.

Mr Mangioros says the 'soup kitchen' is more than its name suggests - the service helps residents, families and the homeless who would otherwise go hungry.

Every week hundreds of food parcels are put together to help those in need.

Mr Mangioros said as word of mouth spread more people were attending meal days.

"We are still getting lots and lots of people coming through the door which is fantastic," he said.

"Even if people are just getting a meal from us every now and again that's great we are making a difference."

The food program, called Outreach, has planned a meal day at the Bowes Avenue Community Centre from noon on November 11.

### **PARKING CURBS CONSIDERED**

*Moonee Valley Leader*— 1<sup>st</sup> November 2011

<http://moonee-valley-leader.wherelive.com.au/news/story/parking-curbs-considered/>

Several congested Essendon North streets are to get stricter parking restrictions following a council traffic study.

The Essendon North Parking Study was sparked by a petition with 112 signatures urging Moonee Valley Council to explore options that would improve traffic flow and free spaces.

As a result, one-hour parking will be introduced on the eastern side of Duffy, Renown and O'Shannassy streets by the end of the year, if supported by the residents.

The study also included Keam St, which will keep its existing unrestricted parking conditions on one side and have a no-stopping restriction on the other.

Resident Leon Morrell welcomed the move and said others would be relieved if it improved traffic during the working week.

He said the increased multi-level developments along Keilor Rd were bringing more traders and residents into side streets.

"Our streets are congested because the other side of Keilor Rd has got restrictions at the moment, so all the cars come down our street," Mr Morrell said.

Moonee Valley Mayor John Sipek said the action was in line with the draft Municipality Parking Strategy, which had been through community consultation.

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One of the ideas proposed included a hierarchical system that gives residents priority on residential streets, if there are no other competing uses.

Cr Sipek said parking inspectors would monitor the area as usual, but would not direct special attention.

Resident Matt Harvey said he felt the parking pressure would only continue as the area kept growing.

"Something needed to be done and this is better than nothing. But we'll have to see how it goes," he said.

Drivers taking up parking spots in the streets were often clients of a nearby medical clinic, car yards and tram commuters, he said.

### **VICROADS IN A POTHOLE**

*Moonee Valley Weekly*— 1<sup>st</sup> November 2011

<http://www.mooneevalleyweekly.com.au/news/local/news/general/vicroads-in-a-pothole/2341280.aspx>

Community respect for VicRoads continues to deteriorate.

Misuse of drivers' licences and internal fraudulent practices years ago and continued controversy over speed camera operations and traffic signage have kept the road safety authority in the headlines for all the wrong reasons.

An Essendon motorist who took nearly two hours to travel from Geelong to Melbourne during the Queen's visit last Wednesday was bemused to hear a VicRoads executive on radio proclaiming the Princes Highway was free of traffic issues - as he sat stalled around Laverton and Point Cook after a peak-hour bingle at 7.30am and, later, a truck breakdown.

Traffic signs reduced speed to 40km/h entering the Tullamarine Freeway. The same motorist looked for signs to signal a return to the 100km/h limit, but no

appearance your worship. Motorists simply had to guess when it was safe to increase speed back to normal.

### **MOONEE VALLEY RACECOURSE MASTER PLAN NEXT STEP**

*Moonee Valley Weekly*— 1<sup>st</sup> November 2011

<http://www.mooneevalleyweekly.com.au/news/local/news/general/moonee-valley-racecourse-master-plan-next-step/2341271.aspx>

A kindergarten, early learning centre, maternal child health services and a 3000-square-metre park feature in Moonee Valley Racing Club's master plan for the redevelopment of Moonee Valley racecourse.

As expected, the plan lodged with Moonee Valley Council last week also includes high-density residential buildings of up to 25 storeys.

The council's chief executive, Neville Smith, said council officers would look over the master plan and prepare a report for councillors to consider at a November 15 meeting.

Mr Smith said no decisions would be made about the application at that meeting.

"The report will outline the process of assessing the application and how we will inform and consult with the community," he said.

"No decisions about the draft master plan or rezoning will be made at this meeting."

Mr Smith said the council was unable to comment on the master plan until a full assessment had been completed, which would include community consultation.

He said the council needed to get authority from Planning Minister Matthew Guy to publicly exhibit the draft master plan and seek rezoning of the racecourse.

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"This initial phase before Christmas will be about providing the community with information about the process," Mr Smith said.

The racing club has come under fire from residents and politicians since it announced plans to redevelop the 40-hectare site in the heart of Moonee Ponds in April this year.

The master plan is being touted as the blueprint for development at the site for the next 20 years.

It includes relocating the grandstand to the site's northern boundary to overlook a reconfigured track.

### **TWO IN MAYOR POLL**

*Moonee Valley Leader*— 31<sup>st</sup> October 2011

<http://moonee-valley-leader.wherelive.com.au/news/story/two-in-mayor-poll/>

Next month's mayoral election is gearing up to be a two-horse race, with only councillors Jim Cusack and Ange Kenos declaring their hand.

Incumbent Mayor John Sipek was the only other councillor not to rule himself out, saying "nothing is certain until the night of the election".

"But if my colleagues came up to me and asked me to do it again, I'd say 'yes'," Cr Sipek said.

The other six councillor's highlighted work and family commitments as reasons they would not consider the job.

Councillors Jan Chantry, Narelle Sharpe, James Rankin and Miriam Gillis have not ruled out interest in the deputy mayor's position.

The new mayor, to be elected by fellow councillors on November 29, will lead the council to next year's local government elections.

Geelong and Melbourne are the only Victorian councils where residents directly elect the mayor.

A State Government review will be conducted on their mayoral systems after next year's elections.

Local Government Minister Jeanette Powell's spokesman Greg Charter said the introduction of a directly elected mayoral system in any other municipality would not be considered until after the review.

Cr Gillis said she preferred the process of councillors electing the Moonee Valley mayor.

"I do believe in people having a say, but I think they elect us to have a say for them," she said.

Moonee Valley Council chief executive Neville Smith said the council was not considering any potential changes to their election process.

### **LINING UP AT THE VALLEY**

*Moonee Valley Weekly*— 31<sup>st</sup> October 2011

<http://moonee-valley-leader.wherelive.com.au/news/story/lining-up-at-the-valley/>

An extra 6000 people living at a redeveloped Moonee Valley Racecourse won't stretch Moonee Ponds beyond its limit, a planning document claims.

Moonee Valley Racing Club has released the final draft of its master plan, which will see 3000 apartments built at the historic racetrack over the next 15-20 years, increasing the suburb's population increase by 52 per cent.

The residential and commercial development is pivotal to the racing club financing an overhaul of its racing operations. This will include a realigned track and new state-of-the-art grandstand.

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Prospective apartment buyers will be able to snap up a one, two or three-bedroom apartment, with views across the Valley and CBD. But not all will have an allocated car parking space, with developers wanting its residents to ditch the car and use public transport.

The master plan, now in the hands of Moonee Valley Council planning experts, follows the release of a draft document in May. That raised community concerns about traffic congestion, overcrowding and the height of the proposed apartment towers, which will reach 25 storeys with a 2-3 storey interface from neighbouring homes.

The study predicts the development would create an extra 13,000 vehicle movements around the racecourse daily and up to 1500 extra public transport passengers during peak hour. This would require at least one extra train service to cope with the extra patronage.

The document also said road upgrades would be needed for surrounding streets to cope with the extra traffic, but this would be achievable. Moonee Valley Racing Club CEO Michael Browell acknowledged the plan would have its knockers, but said it was vital to the future of the racing club.

“Without these major works, the club would need to consider other alternatives and the likelihood of the club remaining in Moonee Ponds could be compromised.

“The club understands that not all of the community shares its vision for its racecourse. We wish to emphasise that development will not occur all at once, and then only as demand requires it, over time.”

### **PLANT, WEED AND MULCH TO HELP ESSENDON COMMUNITY AND WETLANDS FLOURISH**

*Moonee Valley Leader— 30<sup>th</sup> October 2011*

<http://moonee-valley-leader.whereilive.com.au/news/story/plant-weed-and-mulch-to-help-essendon-community-and-wetlands-flourish/>

Volunteers are needed to start up a friends group for Moonee Valley's first wetland.

Essendon's Afton St Conservation Park was completed in June and Moonee Valley Council will support a new community group to tend to the area. Residents are needed to help with planting, weeding, water monitoring, community education, bird surveys and mulching.

Mayor John Sipek said being part of the new community environment group could be very rewarding.

“Why not take up the opportunity to spend more time outdoors, learn new things and meet new people, all while helping the wetland to flourish?” Cr Sipek said.

Friends of Maribyrnong River Valley vice-president Peter Somerville said community groups were a great way to give back to the neighbourhood.

Mr Somerville has been a member of the group for 25 years and said the rewards were immense. “I just get the thrill of being involved and seeing the river valley change,” he said.

# LEADWEST'S NEWS SUMMARY FOR MELBOURNE'S WEST

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### ALL AGES IN FOR AN ASCOT VALE PARTY

*Moonee Valley Leader*– 29<sup>th</sup> October 2011

<http://moonee-valley-leader.whereilive.com.au/news/story/all-ages-in-for-an-ascot-vale-party/>

Just when Moonee Valley parents thought their head-banging days were behind them, the Rhymes Kids Music Festival has come to town to prove them wrong.

The festival at Melbourne Showgrounds tomorrow aims to please all ages with performances by Yo Gabba Gabba!, Peter Combe, LazyTown and the Tweenies.

Rhymes tour director Adam Coward said children's music had evolved in recent years with modern musicians becoming parents and wanting to create music they could enjoy with their own youngsters.

"Exciting new styles such as kindie rock and kid hop have emerged, bringing the musical worlds of parents and their children together," Mr Coward said.

The festival is from 8am to 4pm. Tickets, starting at \$36, are available from [rhymesfestival.com.au](http://rhymesfestival.com.au)

## WYNDHAM

### POOL'S MAKING A SPLASH FOR ITS 50TH

*Wyndham Leader*– 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2011

<http://wyndham-leader.whereilive.com.au/news/story/pools-making-a-splash-for-its-50th/>

Werribee's outdoor public pool reopens today for the summer season.

The site in Chirnside Park on Watton St includes a leisure pool with a shaded area for toddlers and a 50m pool. Both are heated.

The pool will be open until March 31 next year.

It had 50,588 visitors from last November to March this year, Wyndham Council figures show. It will open weekdays from 8.30am-6pm; Saturdays, 10am-6pm; and Sunday, 11am-6pm.

Entry for adults costs \$4.15, and for concession-card holders and children, \$3. There are also family and multi-visit passes.

The council has spent almost \$70,000 on pool equipment during the off season, in time for the pool's 50th season. It has also installed bench seats and is repairing shower walls.

As previously reported, the council now wants the State Government to help it fund better lights at the site, allowing the pool season and opening hours to be extended.

A free open day to celebrate 50 years since the pool's opening is on next January 9.

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### CHILD CARE BOOST

*Wyndham Star*– 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2011

<http://www.starnewsgroup.com.au/star/werribee-hoppers-crossing/320/story/143484.html>

Federal Minister's funds for Wyndham

Wyndham parents could be breathing a sigh of relief if the municipality benefits from almost 400 new occasional care and in-home care places for children.

Federal Minister for Child Care, Kate Ellis, was at the Hoppers Crossing Occasional Child Care Centre last Tuesday to announce 1500 new places for pre-school children, and around 390 for Victoria.

"This is due to the need in this area, and the need for these places, and we know that is something that is true right around Australia and particularly with the additional pressures in Victoria," Ms Ellis said.

"We're really delighted to be able to announce today over 1500 new places in approved occasional care and in home care right around Australia. Now in Victoria we expect that will mean almost 400 new places."

Ms Ellis told Star that childcare centres across Victoria will have to apply for extra places before an independent process determines where they will go next year.

She could not say how many Wyndham could expect to receive.

"That will be determined based on independent assessment that will determine where the greatest need is," she said.

"Once we announce positions, then people will be able to apply for them and be assessed on their area.

We expect there will be approximately 390 places in Victoria, which will have a very real impact on a huge number of families, but we can't give you a real figure on that and we can't tell you exactly where they're going to be."

Ms Ellis said she chose the Hoppers Crossing Occasional Child Care Centre to make the announcement because it is a quality centre that also has a long waiting list.

Interested child care centres can call 1300 644 603 before the opening of the application process.

### MAYORAL RACE HEATS UP

*Wyndham Star*– 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2011

<http://www.starnewsgroup.com.au/star/werribee-hoppers-crossing/320/story/143470.html>

The race for who will be Wyndham's next leader has been blown wide open with current Mayor John Menegazzo announcing he will not run for another term.

Councillor Menegazzo said he had enjoyed his time as Mayor but would be stepping aside to make more time for his family.

"Unfortunately we've all got family and business commitments and Wyndham deserves someone who can give the job 100 per cent," Cr Menegazzo told Star.

"As you know family comes before anything else and I just can't give the time that the job needs and deserves."

Cr Menegazzo said he would like the freedom to travel with his family next year.

So far it has become a three horse race for the top job, With councillors Kim McAliney, Bob Fairclough and Shane Bourke putting their hands up.

Both Cr McAliney and Cr Bourke have held the role before, with Cr Bourke holding the position a record five times.

# LEADWEST'S NEWS SUMMARY FOR MELBOURNE'S WEST

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Cr Bourke said the biggest challenge for whoever becomes Mayor is population growth and the complications it causes.

"I think I could bring stability to the job again and I really enjoy bringing the community closer to the council and the council closer to the community," Cr Bourke told Star.

"I like to think people have trust in me and I'm willing to take on whoever I need to in order to get the best result for Wyndham."

Cr Fairclough, who has held the office of Deputy Mayor this year, said greater advocacy was needed.

"We've got big challenges to manage the growth in Wyndham," Cr Fairclough said.

"We need to engage the public in how we should manage the growth."

### **COMMITTEE FOR WYNDHAM TO CANVASS ISSUES**

*Wyndham Weekly*– 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2011

<http://www.wyndhamweekly.com.au/news/local/news/general/committee-for-wyndham-to-canvass-issues/2344395.aspx>

The Committee for Wyndham will make the most of the chance to have its voice heard at a community cabinet on November 9.

Prime Minister Julia Gillard and western suburbs MPs Nicola Roxon, Brendan O'Connor and Bill Shorten will meet with other federal ministers at Werribee Primary School to discuss key local, state and national issues.

Committee for Wyndham executive director Nik Tsardakis said a delegation was busy formulating questions.

"I believe that every industry and advocacy group should be up there and making their voice heard, it's a great opportunity to have your say. It's not every day you get to discuss major issues directly with a minister," he said.

Mr Tsardakis said the committee hoped to hold talks with Sustainability Minister Tony Bourke.

"Our main areas of discussion will be liveability and the standard of roads, transport and infrastructure that is required for such a fast-growing area like Wyndham.

"We are after more responsive actions, we are hoping for an improvement in responses to our needs."

Members of the public will be able to chat informally with ministers at a separate community reception. A public forum will also be held.

"I want to encourage people to come to the community cabinet and be a part of these important and worthwhile discussions," Ms Gillard said.

### **THE COPS BEHIND THE HOONS**

*Wyndham Star*– 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2011

<http://www.starnewsgroup.com.au/star/werribee-hoppers-crossing/320/story/143476.html>

When you report a hoon driver in Wyndham, there is a dedicated team of police working to catch them and ensure the safety of all road users.

Senior Constable Laurie Carver from the Wyndham Highway Patrol spends every working day trying to stop dangerous driving in the municipality.

But while most people might think it is an impossible goal to stop hoon drivers, Sen Const Carver and his team are constantly vigilant.

"Our whole role is to reduce the road toll," Sen Const Carver told Star.

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"I want to make sure that the general public know that when they ring Crime Stoppers, it's getting actioned, we're monitoring it all the time."

Sen Const Carver said residents can ring Crime Stoppers to report hoon behaviour and whatever information they can give is then passed on to the Wyndham Highway Patrol.

If it is the first offence by the reported vehicle, a letter is then sent to the registered owner informing them that they have been reported.

If they receive a second complaint, someone from the highway patrol unit will then visit the registered address.

"Most of the time when you visit people, you're dealing with mum or dad. Most of the time the cars aren't registered to their kids," he said.

"There are obligations as the owner of the car to tell me who was driving, but the best part about that is I have a legitimate reason to tell your mum or dad what you are doing and how their car is being driven."

If a vehicle receives further complaints they will then be targeted by police.

"My whole job is dedicated to monitoring the hoon line and catching these offenders," he said.

"I've been doing it for two years and I can drive down the road and see a car registration and be able to know who the driver is and what they've done."

### RAIL LINK MOVES

*Wyndham Star* – 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2011

<http://www.starnewsgroup.com.au/star/werribee-hoppers-crossing/320/story/143479.html>

Australia's biggest public transport project is one step closer to being a reality after the Federal Government announced a shortlist of companies bidding to construct a vital section of the Regional Rail Link.

Minister for Infrastructure and Transport, Anthony Albanese, revealed a short list of three consortiums interested in delivering the Werribee West Junction.

The Werribee West Junction will connect the existing Melbourne to Geelong line to the new rail alignment through the Wyndham Vale and Tarneit growth areas to Deer Park and on to Southern Cross Station.

The short list is made up of a joint venture between Leighton Contractors and Downer Edi Works, McConnell Dowell and another joint venture between Fulton Hogan, John Holland and Coleman Rail.

Mr Albanese said the consortiums will now be invited to develop and submit fully costed proposals, with the final contract expected to be awarded in the second half of 2012.

"This is another significant work package which will be critical to the overall success of the project," Mr Albanese said.

"In partnership with the Victorian Government, we are determined to make Melbourne as well as regional centres such as Geelong, Ballarat and Bendigo even better places to live, work and raise a family, including by investing in new, modern passenger rail infrastructure.

"Without a doubt, the Regional Rail Link project ticks all the right boxes."

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Victorian Public Transport Minister, Terry Mulder, said the successful bidder will be required to build a new two track bridge over the existing railway lines and Bulban Rd as well as realign Bulban Rd to improve visibility and safety for motorists.

Demolition work has already begun in Footscray in preparation for the new rail link.

### **WYNDHAM TEACHERS HOPE FOR BETTER PAY DEAL**

*Wyndham Weekly– 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2011*

<http://www.wyndhamweekly.com.au/news/local/news/general/wyndham-teachers-hope-for-better-pay-deal/2344391.aspx>

In the wake of World Teacher's Day last Friday, Point Cook Senior College teacher Matt McLaren is hopeful some of the good sentiment will be heeded by the state government in the latest round of talks.

"It would be a perfect time for negotiations to go ahead and recognise some of the great work teachers do in the west," he said.

Mr McLaren said it had been a particularly tough year for schools across Wyndham with funding cuts to a number of vital programs.

"With the cuts to the numeracy and literacy coaches as well as the cuts to the VCAL co-ordinator's role we have effectively lost one teacher over the course of the year."

In his role as VCAL co-ordinator, Mr McLaren has been vocal in his support for the VCE alternative. "We see it as a highly successful alternative pathway that can help students into employment."

James Martin, a spokesman for Education Minister Martin Dixon, said: "The only change to VCAL funding is the special co-ordination payment which was always

intended to assist with the initial establishment of the program when it was first introduced eight years ago."

### **SWIFT ACTION ON TRUGANINA CRASH HOT SPOT**

*Wyndham Weekly– 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2011*

<http://www.wyndhamweekly.com.au/news/local/news/general/swift-action-on-truganina-crash-hot-spot/2344400.aspx>

Wyndham Council is confident of a swift resolution to traffic issues at a Truganina intersection, the site of a number of road accidents in recent weeks.

Ongoing roadworks at the intersection of Sayers and Marquands roads has altered traffic conditions and resulted in confusion for motorists and a reported 12 accidents in 10 days.

Mayor John Menegazzo said the works were being completed by the council but under the direction of VicRoads. "We have communicated with VicRoads about the issues with the intersection.

"Representatives from VicRoads came down to the site on Monday to inspect the site and I believe are currently working towards a solution."

Cr Menegazzo said the works had been in limbo due to the financial plight of a previous developer. But those issues had since been resolved with a new developer on board to fulfil the required contribution to the project.

The issue was raised at last week's council meeting by Cr Glenn Goodfellow who attended the intersection in his role as a CFA volunteer.

"When ambulance members and firefighters come up to you and say something needs to be done about this intersection then it needs to be looked at," he said.

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Cr Goodfellow said he was pleased with the swift response of council officials. "I'm happy with the outcome and that action is being taken before a death or serious injury has occurred."

### **POINT COOK OWNERS WANT NEW LEASH OF LIFE FOR DOGS**

*Wyndham Weekly– 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2011*

<http://www.wyndhamweekly.com.au/news/local/news/general/point-cook-owners-want-new-leash-of-life-for-dogs/2344394.aspx>

Wyndham Council has been asked to consider creating a new off-lead dog park in Point Cook.

Point Cook Residents Group has made a number of submissions to the council ahead of its 2012-13 budget, requesting improvements in Point Cook. Included is a call for a new, secure dog park.

Resident Suzanne Butler, who led the submission for the dog park, believes Point Cook's current off-lead area at Skeleton Creek is in an unsuitable location and unsafe for dogs.

"The current park is right next to the freeway and has no fence, no parking and no bins," she said.

"It floods in winter and is full of snakes in summer."

Ms Butler has even taken her campaign for a dog park to Facebook, creating a 'Responsible Pet Ownership Point Cook' page.

People who have joined the Facebook page have expressed concerns the park is not maintained and is a danger to themselves, their dogs and other people.

Ms Butler said that while there were many parks in Point Cook, none were a suitable place to let dogs run around off their lead.

"I take my dogs for a walk for an hour every day but sometimes I would like to be able to let them off the lead and throw a ball for them to chase. I can't do that in a park because it is not safe and some people passing by are afraid of dogs," she said.

"We need somewhere for our dogs to let off steam."

In her submission to the council, Ms Butler said a new, enclosed dog park would provide dogs with somewhere to socialise with other dogs and could help reduce attacks.

She believes dogs that are well-socialised, exercised and trained are less likely to attack other dogs and people than dogs that are not.

A council spokeswoman said all submissions would be considered at a council meeting later this year.

### **UNCLOG ARTERIES PLEA WINS SUPPORT**

*Wyndham Weekly– 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2011*

<http://www.wyndhamweekly.com.au/news/local/news/general/unclog-arteries-plea-wins-support/2344399.aspx>

The state government will be asked to provide more money to upgrade arterial roads after a Wyndham Council motion was passed by the Municipal Association state council.

The government will also be asked to try another plastic bag levy and to consider introducing energy-efficient street light bulbs.

Cr Glenn Goodfellow, who attended the state council meeting last Friday, said he was pleased all of Wyndham's motions were passed.

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The council raised the backlog of necessary upgrades to arterial roads in outer metropolitan areas, because all of Wyndham's 12 arterial roads were operating at or above capacity.

Arterial roads provided vital access to jobs, education and social needs, it said.

"We are in a catch-22 situation for growth areas. In order to reduce congestion we need local jobs, but in order to attract local jobs we need to provide certainty that businesses can use the arterial roads," Cr Goodfellow said. "In our growth areas we have become dependent on cars."

He said another plastic bag levy trial was needed because a 2008 trial was not long enough and covered only three areas.

"Council felt there was a need for a longer trial to provide more definite results about the reduction in plastic bag use."

According to Wyndham's motion, the 2008 trial, in which consumers were charged 10¢ for plastic bags, reduced their use by 79 per cent.

The state council agreed energy-efficient street lights would reduce energy bills and greenhouse gas emissions. Cr Goodfellow said most council greenhouse gas emissions came from street lights.

The association will work on the motions before they are presented to the state government.

### **POINT COOK POOL: COUNCIL ACCUSED OF AQUATIC VOTE SLIP-UP**

*Wyndham Weekly— 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2011*

<http://www.wyndhamweekly.com.au/news/local/news/general/point-cook-pool-council-accused-of-aquatic-vote-slipup/2344392.aspx>

Point Cook residents have called on Wyndham Council to include its aquatic strategy in next month's meeting agenda, claiming it was not properly adopted at last week's meeting.

Residents believe the council failed to follow its own meeting procedures when it voted on the plan.

The confusion stems from Cr Glenn Goodfellow's decision to move an amendment to a recommendation listed in the meeting's agenda.

Cr Goodfellow asked his colleagues to consider commencing a review of the aquatic strategy in 2013, instead of waiting until 2015.

Mayor John Menegazzo then asked councillors to vote on the amended motion, with the vote passing five votes to two.

But Point Cook residents believe the vote should have been to make the amendment, with another vote then taken on the motion.

According to council's meeting procedures, when any amendment is put to the vote and is declared carried by the chairperson it becomes the motion and can be further amended.

Resident Loren Bartley said she was confident the council had not followed proper procedure.

"I would have thought if you vote on an amendment and it becomes part of the motion you then have to vote on the motion," she said.

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"I don't think [the council] followed the correct procedure in adopting the motion so I don't think the motion they adopted is valid.

"It didn't seem clear to me the councillors knew what they were voting on."

Point Cook resident and former Sunshine mayor, Bernard Reilly, said there was no doubt the motion was not voted on correctly and should be returned to the next council meeting.

"They never moved the actual recommendation. It was a slip-up by the CEO," he said.

But Cr Menegazzo said the correct procedure had been followed. "As far as our governance department is concerned the amendment was conducted properly. The intention [of the vote] was clear to the councillors and it will not be coming back to another council meeting."

Cr Menegazzo defended the council's decision to adopt the strategy, despite calls from councillors Shane Bourke and Cynthia Manson for it be scrapped and carried out again. He said calls to abandon the existing policy were "silly" and such a move would be at a significant cost to council.

Cr Menegazzo said the strategy had addressed the needs of the entire community and not just Point Cook.

### **GOING JUST SWIMMINGLY, THANK YOU**

*Wyndham Weekly*— 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2011

<http://www.wyndhamweekly.com.au/news/local/news/general/going-just-swimmingly-thank-you/2344398.aspx>

Vision-impaired residents of Wyndham are getting the chance to get back in the water as part of special swimming lessons at Wyndham Leisure and Events Centre.

The six-week swimming program is a joint initiative between Blind Sports Victoria, Wyndham Leisure and Events Centre and Access for All Abilities.

Participant William Koh, who suffers from glaucoma, went swimming for the first time in 18 years at last week's lesson. He described the experience as "heavenly".

"It was absolutely beautiful to get a chance to get back in the water after I thought my chance to swim was over."

Participants are assisted in the water at all times by trained swimming instructors with the program aimed at increasing swimming technique in a friendly and welcoming environment. Lessons cost \$3 and take place every Thursday from 2pm.

### **THE NUMBER'S UP**

*Wyndham Leader*— 31<sup>st</sup> October 2011

<http://wyndham-leader.wherelive.com.au/news/story/the-numbers-up/>

The number of councillors in Wyndham could be increased to cater to the city's booming population.

An electoral representation review by the Victorian Electoral Commission (VEC) starts this month.

It will consider how many councillors the city should have, if it should be divided into wards, if so, how many wards and councillors in each, and ward names and boundaries.

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Following submissions, the VEC will make recommendations to the Local Government Minister next April, with any changes to apply at the October 2012 council election.

The VEC said voter numbers in wards changed with the population. The review was to make sure each person's vote had the same value.

Wyndham's population has grown from 110,847 in 2005 to 132,818 in 2008 and now stands at 172,107.

Wyndham was divided into an Iramoo, Chaffey and Truganina ward, each with three councillors following the last review in 2005.

Before this, the city had seven single-councillor wards. Boundaries were last altered in 2008.

Resident Lori McLean, who made a submission to the 2005 review, said that Wyndham did not need more councillors, but should go back to having single-councillor wards.

"Having three councillors per ward allows them to pass the buck," Ms McLean said.

Cr Kim McAliney said councillors' workloads were getting heavier.

A public information session on the review, including how to have a say, is on at 7pm, Tuesday, November 22, at the Heaths Road Library.

### **GORILLAS IN THE MIX**

*Wyndham Leader— 31<sup>st</sup> October 2011*

<http://wyndham-leader.wherelive.com.au/news/story/gorillas-in-the-mix-fbready/>

Gorillas have finally arrived at Werribee's zoo.

Following a medical check-up, Motaba and his sons Ganyeka and Yakini (pictured) made the journey from Melbourne Zoo to Werribee Open Range Zoo last Friday, in crates on the back of a truck.

Their new \$3.6 million bachelor pad at Werribee will be officially opened next Monday. It was to open earlier this year, but was delayed by rain and more.

As previously reported, Werribee's zoo is expecting the public to go bananas for the gorillas, predicting 30,000 to 50,000 extra visitors a year.

### **NATURE'S WATER TANKS**

*Wyndham Leader— 31<sup>st</sup> October 2011*

<http://wyndham-leader.wherelive.com.au/news/story/natures-water-tanks/>

City West Water is preparing to store recycled water in an aquifer hundreds of metres below the ground in Werribee.

Aquifers are underground layers of permeable rock or sand that can hold water.

City West Water managing director Anne Barker said most aquifers already held water and, if conditions were suitable, could be used to store more in large volumes.

The stored water was most likely to be used on sports fields in Wyndham.

Ms Barker said recycled water from Melbourne Water's Western Treatment Plant in Werribee would be injected into the most viable aquifer as a test.

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She said Melbourne Water and City West Water had carried out an extensive risk assessment and management process to ensure the aquifer was monitored and not adversely affected.

She said the trials would help indicate whether a full storage and recovery scheme was feasible at the treatment plant.

This included testing the aquifer for chemicals and trace elements.

“Recycled water demand is set to continue to grow into the future and, without storage capacity, the proposed treatment plant’s capacity has to be more than doubled to meet the future recycled water demand,” Ms Barker said.

“By operating the plant throughout the year, we can store excess production during the winter months in the aquifer for use during peak demand in summer and meet future demand.”

Bores have already been drilled to examine the composition of aquifers below the treatment plant.

The water will be treated to reduce salinity to levels suitable for use on gardens and sports fields and for toilet flushing and car washing.

### **DRAFT BACKS POOL SITE**

*Wyndham Leader– 31<sup>st</sup> October 2011*

<http://wyndham-leader.wherelive.com.au/news/story/draft-backs-pool-site-fbready/>

Tarneit is still the preferred site for Wyndham’s third public pool, despite a push for one in Point Cook.

A draft strategy to guide future development of public pools was adopted by Wyndham Council last week, with minor changes.

The draft strategy found the city’s public pools at Hoppers Crossing and Werribee had reached capacity and that the council needed to expand Hoppers Crossing’s pool by 2013-14 and build a third pool at Tarneit on Sayers Rd by 2021.

It recommended the council review the city’s pool needs by 2016.

The main change to the strategy was that the review will now start in 2013.

Point Cook residents lodged a 16-page submission on why their suburb needed a public pool, including difficulties accessing existing ones. They have vowed to continue their push.

The council has said population forecasts showed Tarneit was the best site for its next pool.

Outside the meeting, Mayor John Menegazzo said that while the council had listened to Point Cook residents’ views, it had to consider the pool needs of the whole city, and councillors would again do this when the strategy was reviewed.

He added: “I believe that the people in Wyndham Vale have got a bigger gripe than the people in Point Cook because I think they’ve got greater access issues to get into the leisure centre than the Point Cook residents have.”

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### **BIG JUBILEE SPLASH IN WERRIBEE**

*Wyndham Leader* – 29<sup>th</sup> October 2011

<http://wyndham-leader.wherelive.com.au/news/story/big-jubilee-splash-in-werribee/>

A free open day is being planned to celebrate 50 years of Werribee's outdoor public pool.

There will also be an event for past pool staff.

Organisers want to hear from locals who were involved in the pool's official opening and wish to borrow any items from the pool's past for display. The Leader is also seeking photos depicting the pool over its 50 years.

The open day will be on January 9.

Wyndham Council chief executive Kerry Thompson said Werribee Olympic Outdoor Pool opened in 1961, with pools for toddlers, children and a 50m pool with a diving board. There was also a kiosk staffed by the women's auxiliary.

She said locals paid for and built the public pool, the only one in the area until 2000, when Hoppers Crossing's public indoor pool opened.

The pool is open from November 1 to March 31.

Anyone with pool memorabilia is asked to phone Leonie Shaw on 9748 2555.

## **ACROSS THE REGION**

### **HEALTH CHAOS LOOMS OVER HOSPITAL WORKERS' PAY FIGHT**

*Weekly* – 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2011

<http://www.brimbankweekly.com.au/news/local/news/general/health-chaos-looms-over-hospital-workers-pay-fight/2346218.aspx>

Victorian hospitals could be thrown into chaos as early as next week as nurses appear set to join doctors in Melbourne's west by voting to take industrial action.

In a ballot declared yesterday, emergency doctors from the Western, Sunshine and Williamstown hospitals voted in favour of work bans, including going on ambulance bypass without management authorisation when patient numbers exceed safe limits.

The two dozen doctors will meet this week to decide whether to proceed with the authorised work bans, which could occur within days.

More than 30,000 nurses across Victoria could also take industrial action - including closing up to one in three hospital beds and cancelling some surgery - after the result of their ballot is declared tomorrow.

Nurses will meet at Festival Hall tomorrow to discuss the progress of their enterprise bargaining negotiations with government and decide on proposed work bans if their ballot is successful.

State secretary of the Australian Nursing Federation Lisa Fitzpatrick said negotiations would continue today but had been tough going, with the government insisting that any pay increases above 2.5 per cent should be offset by productivity improvements.

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Nurses are seeking an 18.5 per cent pay rise over four years, just short of the 19 per cent rise won by police.

Ms Fitzpatrick said some of the productivity gains proposed by government, including split shifts, would jeopardise hard-won nurse/patient ratios.

"We are doing our very best but it is very difficult to negotiate productivity offsets when there is no fat in the system," she said.

Ms Fitzpatrick said nurses were being treated differently from police whose work seemed to command more respect from government than that of nurses.

She said the Police Minister was directly involved in negotiations, unlike the Health Minister, and police were set to gain 1700 recruits in the government's first term while nurses fought to retain conditions.

Victorian Emergency Physicians Association secretary Allan Whitehead said emergency doctors were disappointed that Western Health management had failed to meet them as a group to address their concerns.

He said he was unaware of any other industrial action taken by doctors in Victoria over the past 20 years.

### **PORT STAYS**

*Star News Group— 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2011*

<http://www.starnewsgroup.com.au/star/footscray-yarraville/320/story/143539.html>

The Port of Melbourne will remain Victoria's main port, despite recent speculation the proposed Port of Hastings would take over operations.

A spokesperson from Ports Minister Denis Naphthine's office told Star last week that the Port of Hastings would not replace the Port of Melbourne, after a recent Herald Sun article revealed the new deep water port would be the main port.

"The (Herald Sun) article correctly stated that when completed, the plan is for Hastings to handle about two million TEUs (twenty-foot equivalent units) per year," the spokesperson said.

"However the author overlooked the fact that the Port of Melbourne's trade already exceeds this.

"Last financial year the PoM recorded 2.39 million TEU movements and forecasts suggest this figure will grow steadily by 6-8 per cent per year.

"The Coalition has consistently stated that its plan is for Hastings to be a complementary but competitive port to the Port of Melbourne."

Williamstown MP Wade Noonan said it was important the Government did not forget to cater for transport to and from the Port of Melbourne while planning and developing the Port of Hastings.

"The development of the Port of Hastings as a second major container port in Victoria makes sense, but the reality is that the development of the Port as a container port is at least 10 or 13 years away," Mr Noonan said.

"It won't replace the fact that the Port of Melbourne will continue to be the premier container port in Australia.

"Over the last financial year, the Port of Melbourne grew by seven per cent overall... there is no doubt that we will see consistent growth year on year."

Mr Noonan said it was critical the State Government did not abandon the Truck Action Plan and WestLink tunnel.

The Port of Melbourne declined to comment.

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### LIFE CHANCES

*Star News Group— 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2011*

<http://www.starnewsgroup.com.au/star/stalbans-deer-park-caroline-springs/320/story/143445.html>

Western Metropolitan MP Bernie Finn has called on the State Government to fund defibrillators for the Albion Football Club.

Mr Finn has asked Sport and Recreation Minister Hugh Delahunty to provide \$7000 for two defibrillators for the club.

Defib for Life, an organisation that fundraises with the goal to have a defibrillator in every Victorian sporting venue, recently signed a landmark agreement with Hume City Council to place 30 defibrillators across the municipality (Funding for sport club heart defibrillators, 6 October, Footscray Star).

It's a strategy more sporting clubs and councils are moving towards after a number of tragic deaths at sports fields.

Mr Finn said he had received a letter from Albion's head trainer Allan Williams, requesting the funding.

"It would be a very worthwhile purchase," Mr Finn said.

"(It would make) not just the players and staff safer on game days and at training but also any spectators who might come along, perhaps have an ale or two during the course of the afternoon and find themselves in need of such a machine."

He said Albion was "leading the pack" in trying to keep their players and spectators safe.

"One would hope that the minister will come up with the \$7000 and will kick that one right over the goal umpire's hat."

### COUNCILS WANT A 10C TAX ON BAGS

*The Herald Sun— 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2011*

<http://www.heraldsun.com.au/news/more-news/councils-want-a-10c-tax-on-bags/story-fn7x8me2-1226182945970>

Local councils want the State Government to consider a permanent 10c levy on plastic shopping bags to help the environment.

Councils say a trial conducted in parts of Victoria in 2008 was successful and should be repeated on a wider basis.

Shoppers at selected supermarkets in the Fountain Gate area, Warrnambool and Wangaratta were hit with the 10c per bag levy in the Brumby government-supported trial.

The ACT yesterday followed South Australia and Northern Territory in banning lightweight plastic bags, while several Victorian towns have held trial bans.

The Municipal Association of Victoria's state council has put the issue back on the agenda, saying that the results of the 2008 trial showed a 79 per cent cut in plastic bag use.

"It is considered a more widespread trial (more sites, and for a longer period) will provide more definitive results and generate the necessary momentum to ensure a more permanent levy," said a motion passed by the state council.

Victorians use about one billion plastic bags a year. The MAV will ask the Baillieu Government to stage another trial and consider the option of a "permanent solution".

MAV president Bill McArthur said yesterday: "In recent years there have been widespread changes in consumer behaviour, and it's timely to revisit this issue."

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University student Jacqui Escott said a 10c levy would be environmentally friendly, but annoying. "I don't have a lot of money, so the extra cost would be quite frustrating," she said.

Victorian Greens MP Colleen Hartland said a levy would encourage shoppers to use green shopping bags.

"It's a very logical thing to do because it puts a value on rubbish," she said.

But Tim Wilson, from free market think tank the Institute of Public Affairs, said people should not be forced to pay a bag levy.

"Councils should focus on their core business which is picking up bins and making sure that streets are clean, and not these sorts of ventures," he said.

A State Government spokesman said there was no plan to run another trial, and Victoria's preference was to see a nationally consistent approach to the problem of plastic bags.

### **VCAL COSTS BLOW BUDGETS**

*The Age* – 31<sup>st</sup> October 2011

<http://www.theage.com.au/national/education/vcal-costs-blow-budgets-20111030-1mqfg.html>

Schools have been forced to use funding intended for the co-ordination of the vocational equivalent of VCE into transport, TAFE fees and even clothes for students doing the program.

The Age believes the Baillieu government justified its decision to cut \$12 million a year from the Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning co-ordination budget on the grounds schools were channelling this funding into other areas.

A review of VCAL co-ordination funding, commissioned by the Education Department, found most schools allocated only about seven periods a week to the co-ordination of VCAL - about a third of a full-time teaching load.

This was despite schools receiving up to \$120,000 to co-ordinate the program.

However the report, seen by The Age, stressed this did not necessarily mean funding had been allocated away from the VCAL program. The report, which was prepared by the University of Melbourne, said principals had been "at pains" to emphasise the cost of running VCAL, because of small class sizes, individual programs for each student and the inability of disadvantaged students to meet costs.

One school told the review - which interviewed 52 schools, TAFEs and community centres - that it tried to use the funding for co-ordination of VCAL but "obviously it doesn't always work out that way".

"For many schools these are unpalatable but necessary decisions," the report said.

A metropolitan community school told the review it often had to pay TAFE fees for its students to be in the program. "Sometimes we have to clothe the kids to go to interviews. Two major costs that we do fund [are] equipment for hairdressing, tools. We just have to find it out of our funding."

Another country secondary college said extra costs included transport, chefs' uniforms and shoes for special workplaces. "They need these, especially if the students are from low SES [socio-economic status] backgrounds," the school told the review. "We need to take the costs of this from VCAL funding. It is always a struggle to budget."

The review found nearly two-thirds of government school co-ordinators felt they did not have enough time allocated in the timetable to allow them to fulfil their

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duties. "The time you put in after hours is huge," one co-ordinator said. Almost 60 per cent said funding for the program was insufficient.

Frank Sal, president of the Victorian Association of State Secondary Principals, said the report pointed to the fact VCAL was underfunded and schools were using other sources of money to help support the program. "Teachers are putting in a lot more of their own time to ensure the programs work," he said.

Education Minister Martin Dixon said the VCAL co-ordination payment was only ever intended to help establish the program. "After eight years VCAL is now well established in Victorian schools and where schools were once solely responsible for developing the VCAL curriculum and arranging workplace placements, this work

is now being supported through a range of other agencies," Mr Dixon said. He said funding for students doing VCAL had increased as enrolments grew and the government expected this to continue.

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