

OFFICERS REPORT**MULGRAVE LIBRARY FEASIBILITY STUDY OUTCOMES**

Submitting Councillors: Paul Klisaris and Shane McCluskey

MOTION

That Council:

1. *Notes the outcomes from the Mulgrave Library Feasibility Study that was funded through the 2017/8 budget;*
2. *Endorses the proposal to increase the opening hours of Mulgrave Library from 17 to 30 hours per week and to increase the range of community programs on offer in accordance with Option 3 of the Mulgrave Library Feasibility Study at a cost of \$50,000 effective from September 2018 for a twelve (12) month trial period;*
3. *Receives a further report detailing the utilisation, impact and outcomes resulting from the month trial period;*
4. *Provides in-principle support for the proposal to expand the floor space of Mulgrave Library from 30 m² to 60 m² in accordance with Option 4 of the Mulgrave Library Feasibility Study;*
5. *Notes that funding for the Mulgrave Neighbourhood Library expansion detailed in recommendation 4 above has been submitted by the Wellington Reserve Community Centre for consideration in the State Government's 'Pick My Project' initiative. If this is successful, the expansion may require additional funding support from Council; and*
6. *Considers the allocation of capital funding to progress the physical expansion of the Mulgrave Library as part of the 2019/20 Council budget process if funding via the 'Pick My Project' submission is unsuccessful.*

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

The budget implications for extension of floor space and opening hours at Mulgrave Library are as follows:

Capital Works

A submission to the State Government's Pick a Project initiative has been made to seek \$200,000 funding for the extension of Mulgrave Library from 30m² to 60 m². A decision on the submission is anticipated in September 2018. Should this submission not be successful, \$200,000 funding is sought from Council to fund the building works and fit out. While the Mulgrave Library Feasibility Study indicated a sum of up to \$500,000 for the works, this was to accommodate any unknown factors associated with the building. An internal assessment by Council's Architecture and Urban Design Department has indicated the sum of \$200,000 for design and build, furniture, equipment and fit out of the extension based on indicative cost of \$5,000 per square metre. To further ensure that project outcomes are met and allowing for any unforeseen elements in the build, it is proposed that additional funding may be required from Council.

Operational funding

The Feasibility Study recommends an increase to opening hours and programming at Mulgrave Library to ensure more equitable service delivery to Mulgrave residents. It is proposed to increase opening hours from 17 per week to 30 per week, requiring additional staffing at a cost of \$50,000 for additional library officers to staff the library and deliver further programmed activities sought by patrons. This will result in an increase to library staffing EFT by 0.44. This is comprised of 13 additional opening hours plus 3 hours for back of house duties and meeting attendance.

IMPACT ON INTERNAL RESOURCES

The current library is open 17 hours a week and lacks the feature essential to community use of public libraries: space. The study recommends that the expansion of the library is accompanied by additional opening hours to directly increase accessibility and community focused library programming and extract greater value and efficiencies by working in partnership with the Neighbourhood House.

The additional hours and programming costs have been estimated at a total annual recurrent cost of \$50,000 to cover additional staff time for longer opening hours and the delivery of programs sought by the Mulgrave community. The operating funding required is in addition to the current Monash Public Library Service Library operating budget, which does not have capacity to accommodate the opening hours staffing within its current budget.

COUNCIL PLAN AND COUNCIL POLICIES

The proposal demonstrates the vision of the *Monash Library Plan 2015-2018*:

To inspire strong, vibrant, creative and connected communities

It addresses the strategic intent of the Plan to:

- Promote the role of the library as a gathering space for residents to pursue and share literary and creative interests and activities; and to
- Ensure opportunities to build digital equity within the community and provide programs that support lifelong learning and participation

The proposal also speaks to the Healthy and Resilient Monash Integrated Plan, notably its commitment to Healthy environments in active and healthy communities and belonging to an Engaged, Confident and Connected Community.

RELEVANCE TO WORK ALREADY UNDERTAKEN BY OFFICERS OR COMMITTEES

The proposal builds on Council's support for its public library service within the above framework of Council's policy context. The Feasibility Study recommendations provide a practical way forward for the escalation of library services in the area and the opportunity to build on the collaborative work of officer and Neighbourhood House staff and groups.

FURTHER CONSIDERATIONS

This proposal provides the Mulgrave community with increased access to local public library services. Future demand for public library services in the area may require analysis of further expansion during the

coming years. It is recommended that, following implementation of this proposal, that the model is reviewed in three years for its ongoing efficacy in meeting the needs of the Mulgrave community.