

YARRA PLENTY
REGIONAL LIBRARY

AGENDA PAPER

and
accompanying documents
for the

Ordinary Meeting of the Board
of the
Yarra Plenty Regional Library Service

Thursday 7 December 2023

at
6.00pm

Diamond Valley Library, Civic Drive,
Greensborough 3088

TO BOARD MEMBER

Yarra Plenty Regional Library Board Meeting will be held on:

DATE AND TIME:

Thursday 7 December 2023 at 6.00pm

LOCATION:

Diamond Valley Library
Civic Drive
Greensborough 3088

APOLOGIES:

If you cannot attend the meeting, please email dlamb@yprl.vic.gov.au
by **Monday 4 December 2023**

Chief Executive Officer

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A. Welcome and Apologies

B. Acknowledgement to Traditional Custodians

“YPRL acknowledges the Wurundjeri, Woi-wurrung peoples of the Kulin Nation as the Traditional Owners of this Land, paying respects to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders past, present and emerging who have resided in the area. We support the Uluru Statement from the Heart.”

C. Disclosures of Interest, declaration of Pecuniary and Conflict of Interest

D. Confirmation of the Minutes of the Meeting 26 October 2023

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E. Presentation of General Reports

SECTION E

Presentation of General Reports

Agenda Item 1: Eltham Library Branch Manager Presentation (NOTING)

Responsible Officer: Chief Executive Officer

Author: Annie Lee, Senior Manager Engagement and Operations

REPORT

SUMMARY

A verbal presentation to be delivered by Annie Lee, Senior Manager Engagement and Operations.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Board resolves to RECEIVE and NOTE the presentation.

M: _____

S: _____

Agenda Item 2: CEO Report (NOTING)

Responsible Officer:	Chief Executive Officer
Author:	Jane Cowell, Chief Executive Officer
Attachment:	2 – External Meetings Attended by CEO October 2023 to December 2023

REPORT

Board and Governance

State Government Public Library Grant Funding: This grant funding allocation remains outstanding. At an online meeting held with representatives from Local Government Victoria and the CEOs of Regional Library Corporations on 21st November, there was acknowledgement that this creates difficulties and all correspondence from our Boards have been passed onto the Minister. No update was able to be given at this time.

Knowledge and Learning

Fire Emergency Planning: Ahead of what is predicted to be a hot summer, YPRL partnered with Nillumbik Shire to support the local community with information to help with the difficult and (for some traumatic) subject of bushfires. Speakers from Red Cross, SES (State Emergency Service) and CFA (Country Fire Authority) shared their expertise about keeping stay in a comprehensive two-hour workshop. There has been interest in repeating this session in other branches.

Speechie Library Talks 2023: November is Speechie Library Talks month, where local speech pathologists visit libraries to share their knowledge about the role of speech pathologists and early language development with parents of children between 0-5 years. YPRL hosted 7 talks across all 3 LGAs. Diamond Valley had a great session with 98 participants attending the Toddler Storytime session. They enjoyed speech pathologist Emily Jackson read the Speech Pathology Australian book of the year “Snap” by Anna Walker.



Connection

Children's Week: 21-29 October YPRL supported Children's Week with family storytimes, active arvo sessions, messy play sessions, sleep and settling information sessions, reading dog sessions, gardening with children programs and an intergenerational storytime in partnership with healthAbility and Diamond Hills Preschool. Outreach sessions were also delivered at Journey Children's Centre and an Intergenerational Storytime at Whittlesea Lodge Aged Care with Whittlesea Preschool children. Nearly 3000 people engaged in YPRL children's events throughout the region during this week.



LIB-CON 2023: Lib-Con is YPRL's own Comic-Con. Comic-Con is a comic book convention - a fan convention with a primary focus on comic books and comic book culture, in which comic book fans gather to meet creators, experts and each other. Mill Park Library hosted LIB-CON on Saturday 21 October with video games, cosplay (costume) competitions sponsored by ComicsPlus, superhero meetings, face-painting, Star Wars light saber workshops, Lego displays, manga, science fiction fan clubs, comic book and merchandise stall holders and more. People of all ages and abilities came dressed up and loved the opportunity to attend this hugely popular free event that has its roots in comics and reading. Over 1800 people attended the event.



Spook-tacular Halloween: YPRL explored the world of the supernatural, unknown and spooky with its communities with Halloween craft sessions, scavenger hunts, spooky storytimes and family movie nights across the region. A particular highlight was the haunted library experience in partnership with CoW Baseline and codesigned with local teens hosted at Thomastown Library. The event included craft stations, slime making, face painter, fortune telling by Thomastown Neighbourhood House, greenscreen photos, sensory station, themed games and a storytime. There were also displays contributed by Jacaranda and Spring St Kindergartens. Almost 400 people attended the event. Ivanhoe Library and Cultural Hub (ILCH) supported local traders by participating in the annual Ivanhoe Traders Association (ITA) Halloween event. This year, traders hosted a trick or treating event on the Friday before Halloween. Families received a bucket (for treats) and a clue sheet. Traders were provided with treats. Over 1300 families took part and ILCH saw an additional 2000 people in the library on the night.



Media Mentions:

Publication		Number of Mentions
The Scoop		1
The Age		2
Star Weekly		1
ABC		1
M&N Bulletin		1
North Central Review		1
Social Media		
Followers:	Engagement	Reach
75,886	9,515	98,291

Wellbeing

Digital Literacy for Seniors: is a project funded through a grant from the Victorian Government. This grant was provided to all Victorian Libraries to support older Victorians with increased digital literacy skills and improved confidence. YPRL has delivered several sessions already, combining digital literacy with opportunities for social connections. 21 events have been delivered to date, with a further 25 events scheduled in November and December. Events range from large classes, small groups and individual tech help sessions to provide targeted support. Partner organisations include Nillumbik U3A, Retirement Villages in Epping and Mernda, three Aged-care residences in Banyule, Himilo (Somali) Community Connect and Bitola Macedonian Seniors Association. In the next stage of the project volunteer digital mentors will be recruited and trained to provide continued support.

"I really enjoyed the session & social aspect – really good"

"Very, very grateful that I can hopefully catch up to today's tech stuff"

"Excellent resources made available from skilled staff"



Healthy Bodies Healthy Minds (HBHM): YPRL received a grant from VIC Health to co-design a program with young people to support them during stressful exam periods. Sessions have been delivered regionally over the October/ November period and have provided "brain breaks" for students to learn how to look after their mental, physical and emotional health by maximising opportunities for self-care. YPRL provided 9 in-branch HBHM sessions with activities that included cooking, mindfulness, physio, clothing swaps and more. We also delivered 3 outreach opportunities with local high schools around the region, providing Blend 'n Bike smoothies to promote the sessions in branches. New partnerships have been forged and the feedback from students participating was that this provided a great respite during a stressful schooling time. With students increasingly using libraries for study, this project has provided an opportunity for YPRL to consider ways it can continue supporting them with games, jigsaws, reading dogs and relaxed spaces.



Optus Outage: last month, libraries across Australia, including YPRL, saw a surge in visitors due to the Optus outage. Some YPRL local community members discovered they could work in YPRL libraries all day, with fast WiFi, comfortable workspaces and access to power to keep them going all day.

'The Optus outage forced me (and dozens of others, by the looks of it!) to seek refuge in the library today. What a wonderful place to work -- great free wi-fi (!), comfy chairs and desks, and the urn with the cups of tea on offer. It is so good to know we have this wonderful community resource on offer for all. I am a regular library user but have never worked from there before. Today you really saved my bacon. My love for Eltham library has just gone up another dozen notches. Thanks so much!' Catherine

Organisational Strength

Monthly Visitation: YPRL achieved a record breaking 144,360 monthly visitors across its branches in October 2023 surpassing the previous record of 132,442 in October 2019; this is the highest total visitation achieved since the current methods were put in place in January 2017. This was reached due to record numbers at individual branches in all three LGAs, including Ivanhoe, Watsonia, Eltham and Mill Park, with Whittlesea Library having its second busiest month on record.

Public Holiday Substitution Pilot - Friday January 26th, 2024 : The YPRL Enterprise Agreement (18.5) allows staff to substitute the agreed Public Holidays for another leave day. With many Councils and corporate organisations responding to the groundswell surrounding the 26th January it was decided to run a pilot project to focus on this particular Public Holiday. Consultation with staff was through a series of three staff surveys over the past 12 months. Through this process, 21 staff nominated to change the January 26th Public Holiday for another leave day of their choosing.

With this opportunity, YPRL will be opening three branch libraries on the 26th January 2024, allowing the 21 staff to work and to provide a further opportunity for communities to continue to access library services across the region. The three branches chosen to open are as follows: Eltham, Watsonia, Thomastown (covering all 3 LGA's). Selection was based on the number of staff required to safely open a branch and to provide reasonable coverage across the day. Rosters for the day have been proposed for each staff member. The opening hours for the day are 10am – 4pm. Marketing for the changes will be through YPRL's Website and Social Media channels.

YPRL featured in Professional Publication: Jane Cowell had a chapter published in a new library industry leading book that looked at library marketing, branding and community engagement. *The Marketing of Academic, National and Public Libraries Worldwide* highlights the challenges facing a modern library service connecting with its community. <https://shop.elsevier.com/books/the-marketing-of-academic-national-and-public-libraries-worldwide/baker/978-0-443-13435-7> The complimentary copy provided has been catalogued as a library staff member professional resource.

Thomastown and Lalor Libraries Refurbishment Update: The workplan for both the Lalor and Thomastown Libraries has been finalised subject to furniture delivery dates. Lalor Library will be first and will need to be closed for a maximum of 6 weeks. CoW will also upgrade the HVAC system, paint the walls and replace the vinyl flooring in the staff room with carpet at the same time. This work is planned for April – May 2024. Thomastown will follow in June – July 2024. It is understood that CoW is planning to do a minor upgrade on the community kitchens in the Thomastown Library in 2024 as well. The replacement of the Thomastown Library public amenities is in the planning stages. The Thomastown and Lalor Library Refurbishment project remains within the proposed budget.

Outreach Vehicle replacement project update: YPRL have finalised the fitout design for the new vehicle with Brimarco and YPRL will deliver the van to the company on December 8th. It is expected that the fitout will be completed by May 2024. YPRL received a grant of \$150,000 from the State Government Living Library Grant for this project with YPRL contributing \$100,000. This project remains within budget despite the 12-month delay.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Board resolves to RECEIVE and NOTE the CEO Report.

M: _____
S: _____

CEO External Meetings October 2023 to December 2023

Date	Meeting Participants	Meeting/Event/Topic
23 October In person	Emily Wilson & Zola Maddison, ALIA	Tour of Ivanhoe Library and Cultural Hub
25 October Online	Pamela Trigilia, Morgan Einam & Senthil Soundarapandian, City of Whittlesea Trinh Luu, Yarra Plenty Regional Library	Design ideas for Patterson Drive Community Centre discussion.
27 October In person	Tina Bourekas, Boroondara Library Service	Tour of YPRL hubs; Hurstbridge and Galada and Diamond valley Library
28 October In person	Banyule City Council and guests	2023 Banyule Community Gala Dinner
30 October & 13 & 27 November Online	Cathie Warburton, ALIA CEO	Regular catch up meeting – ALIA President duties
1 November In person	Simon Buultjens, Georgia Byers & Sam Hill, Simbuilt Building Contractors Mat Foley and Eva Greiwe, Content Studio Architects Trinh Luu, Coralie Kouvelas & Keryn Hurley, Yarra Plenty Regional Library	Lalor Library refurbishment finalise work plans for revised quote
2 November In person	Julianne Tobin (Account Manager), Malcolm OBrien & Steve Potash (CEO), OverDrive Cherry Byford-Sibbing & Emily Butcher, Yarra Plenty Regional Library	Feedback and discussion session regarding OverDrive facilities & service; Libby & Marketplace.
3 November & 27 November Online	Corrienne Nichols, Nillumbik Shire Council	Regular partner meetings

Date	Meeting Participants	Meeting/Event/Topic
9 November Online	Public Libraries Victoria, Collections Special Interest Group (SIG) members YPRL are the lead of this SIG	Graphic novel workshop
13 November Online	Agata Chmielewski & Anthony Traill, City of Whittlesea	Regular partner meetings.
14 November In person (interstate)	ALIA South Australia Award winners - Adelaide	Presentation dinner for ALIA South Australia Library and Information Award winners. All costs covered by ALIA
15 November In person (after hours)	State Library of Victoria Panel presenter with Victorian Commissioner LGBTQIA+ communities Todd Fernando and CEO Public Libraries Victoria, Angela Savage Panel recorded for Radio National	Celebrating Libraries event Libraries thanked for their work on inclusion of LGBTQIA+ communities
16 November Online	Mitchell Zadow & Samuel Ellemor, Sharrock Pitman Lawyers Agata Chmielewski, Lisa Souquet-Wigg & Jacinta Stevens, City of Whittlesea Kath Brackett & Krysten Forte, Banyule City Council Katia Croce, Nillumbik Shire Council YPRL Executive Leadership Team	Briefing session regarding the transition to a new business model for YPRL. Member council key governance personnel and Directors provided with an update and scope of work to be undertaken for the project. Included the legal requirements of the new model.
16 November In person	West Heidelberg Working Group members Bellfield Community Hub	Working group meeting with key partners regarding the regeneration of the West Heidelberg area.
17 November Online	Ian Phillips, Consultant Robyn Ellard, YPRL	Discuss the YPRL PLV Benchmarking statistics.
20 November Online	Lisa Letic, Whitehorse Council	Discuss Regional Library requirements to transfer to new business model

Date	Meeting Participants	Meeting/Event/Topic
	Lee Robson & Leah Barker, Manningham Council	
21 November Online	Julia Keeble, Colin Morrison & Colin McDonald, Victorian Government Regional Library Corporation CEOs	Regional Library Corporation Transition to new business model meeting.
22 November Online	ALIA members and library leaders from across the country Charles Sturt University project team	ALIA Greening Libraries Conference showcasing case studies of best practice for sustainability and greening across the library sector both internationally and across Australia.
23 November In person (offsite & after hours)	Library leaders and representatives from Victoria and representatives from Raeco, Solus and James Bennet (suppliers)	End of year celebration and thank you event.
26 November In person (weekend event)	Library representatives and officials from library industry, Children's Laureate organisation and Government	Representing ALIA at the farewell event of the Australian Children's Laureate Gabrielle Wang.
27 November In person	Simon Buultjens & Georgia Byers, Simbuilt Mat Foley & Eva Greiwe, Content Studio Architects Christopher Valentine & Jarrod McQueen, Platinum FM City of Whittlesea representatives Trinh Luu, Coralie Kouvelas & Lauren Morehouse, YPRL	Working group meeting to discuss schedule and program of work for the planned refurbishment of the Lalor and Thomastown libraries.
28 November Online	Mitchell Zadow & Samuel Ellemor, Sharrock Pitman Lawyers Kate Karrasch, YPRL	YPRL Business transition discussion re draft constitution.

Agenda Item 3: State of YPRL Presentation (NOTING)

Responsible Officer:	Chief Executive Officer
Author:	Jane Cowell
Attachment:	3 – State of YPRL Presentation

REPORT

INTRODUCTION

A presentation by the CEO on the current state of YPRL organisation.

CONSULTATION

N/A.

CRITICAL DATES

N/A.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

All financial implications are included in the body of this report and presentation.

POLICY STRATEGY AND LEGISLATION

N/A.

LINKS TO LIBRARY PLAN

Outcome:

- **Organisational strength:** Investment in our staff, capacity, and governance to ensure we are capable and ready to adapt, learn and empower our communities in environmentally and socially responsible ways.

Priorities:

- People and capacity
- Governance and technology
- A resilient and thriving organisation

DECLARATIONS OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Under section 80C of the Local Government Act 1989 officers providing advice to the Library must disclose any interests, including type of interest.

The Responsible Officer reviewing this report, having made enquiries with the relevant members of staff, reports that no disclosable interests have been raised in relation to this report.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Board resolves to RECEIVE and NOTE the presentation.

M: _____

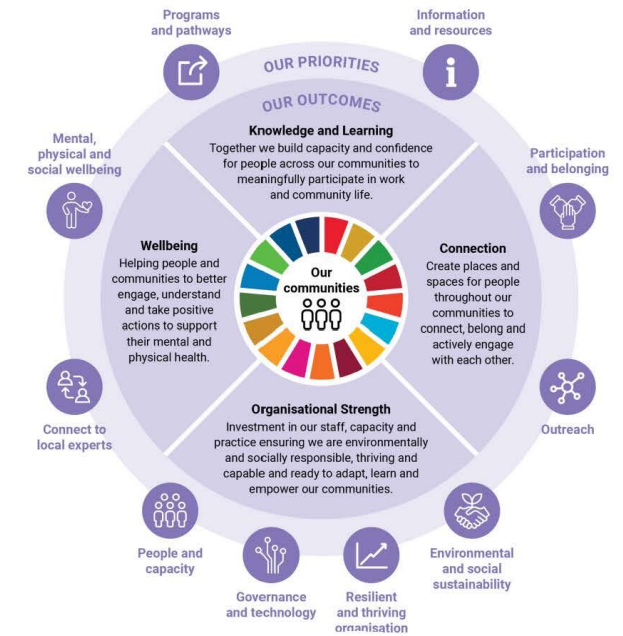
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Yarra Plenty Regional Library
Jane Cowell CEO

December 2023

- Delivers services to
- Banyule City Council
- City of Whittlesea
- Nillumbik Shire Council



Councils investing in Library infrastructure

- **Diamond Valley Library:**
Growing Suburbs Grant for new Learning Garden – June 2024
- **Rosanna Library :** new library – end of 2025
- **Mernda Community Library:**
Shopping Centre location – January 2024
- **New Hub**
Libraries in Community Access Centres: Bellfield, Kirrip 2023/2024



Regional Library Service since 1964

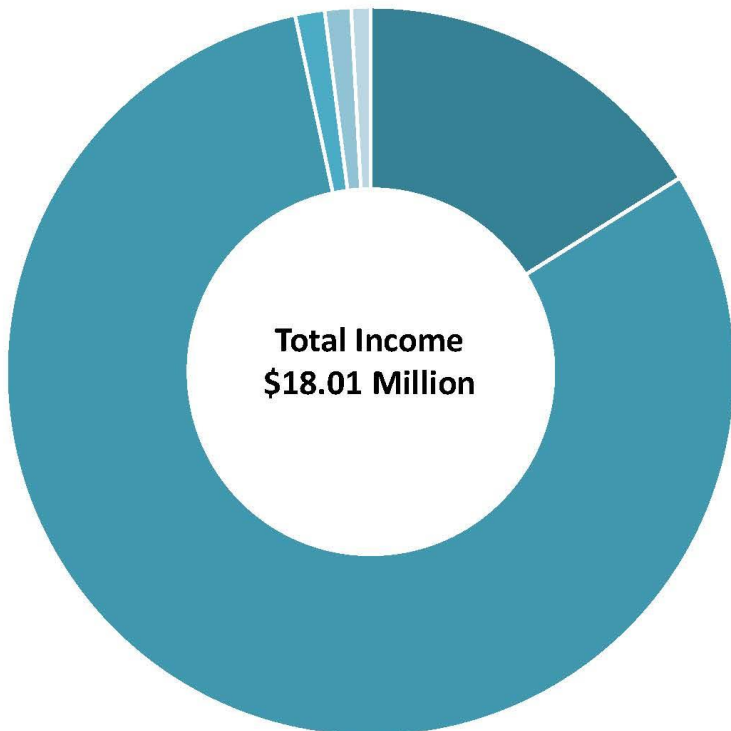
- 10 Branches
- 2 Mobile Libraries
- 2 Click & Collect Hubs



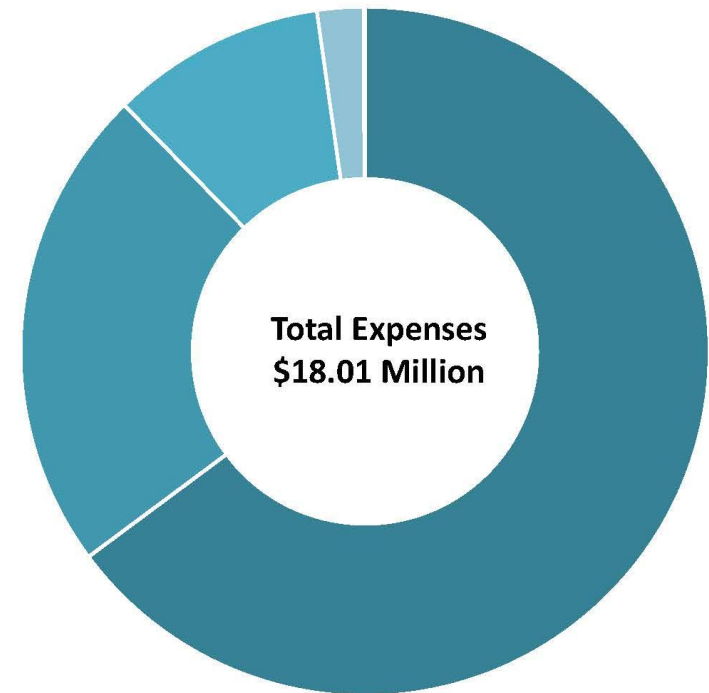
Yarra Plenty Library Financial Position

- Strong financial position and solid liquidity with a working capital ratio of 2.09.
- Asset Replacement Reserve of \$1.3 million to face important capital investment in refurbishing our branches, replacing the outreach library vehicle, and extending the life usage of our mobile library trailer.
- Balanced underlying operating result for 2023/2024.
- Continue advocating for grants to fund specific programs and capital investments.
- Enterprise bargaining negotiation will take place in 2024/2025 with an effective impact in 2025/2026.

YPRL Operating Budget 2023-2024

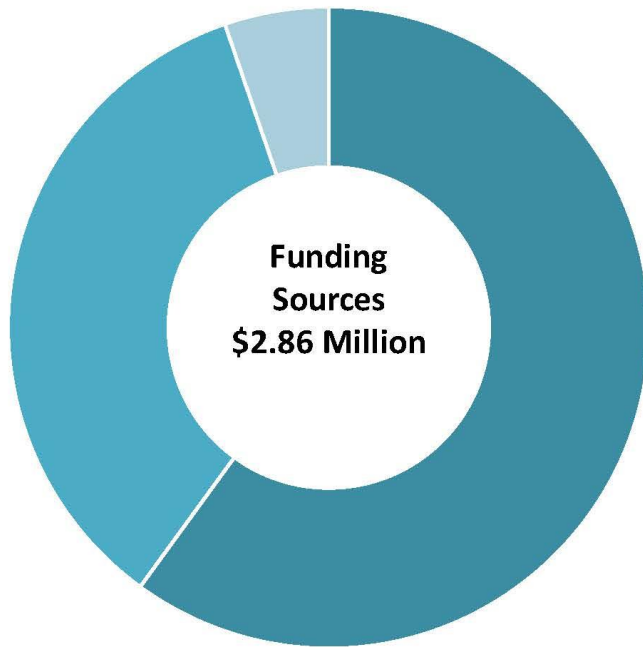


- Grants - Operating
- Contributions income
- User fees and charges
- Interest income
- Other revenue

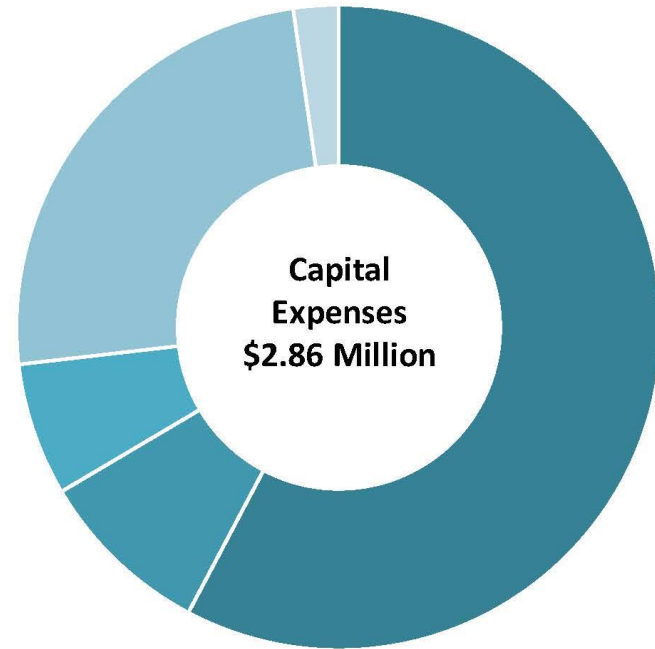


- Employee costs
- Material and services
- Depreciation/Amortisation expense
- Utility charges
- Finance costs - leases

YPRL Capital Budget 2023-2024



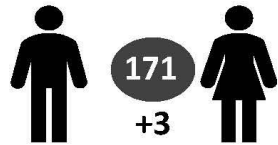
- Depreciation/Amortisation
- Reserves
- Capital Grants



- Bookstock
- New outreach vehicle
- Mobile library trailer improvement works
- Lalor and Thomastown branches upgrade
- Ongoing plant and equipment renewal plan

YPRL Workforce Profile - December 2023

Headcounts

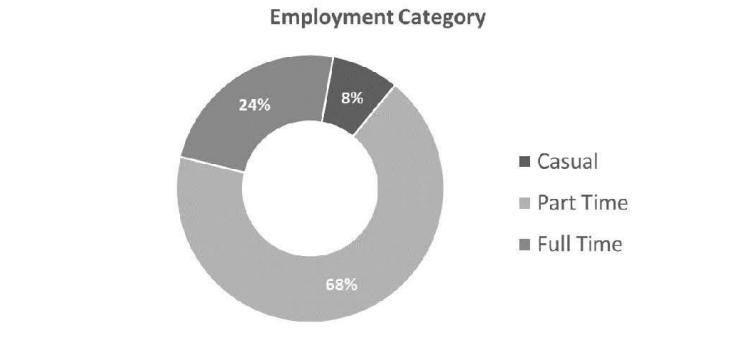


18% 82%

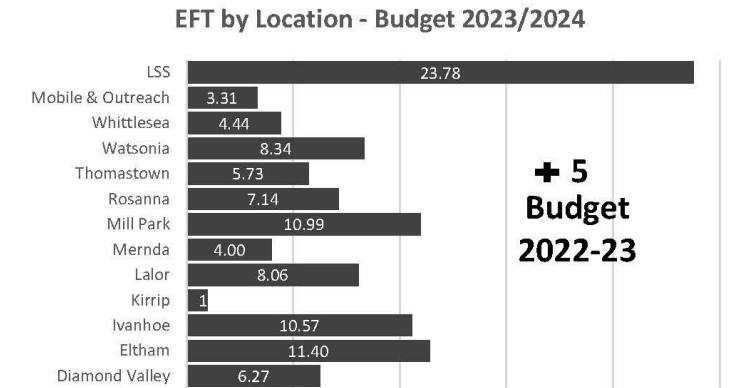
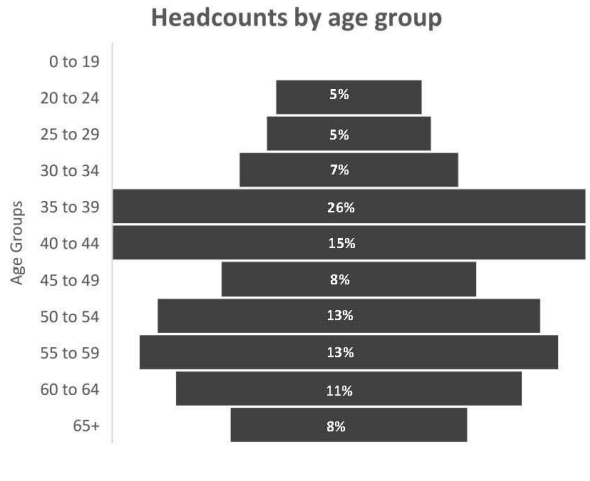
By location



84% 16%



Length of Service	%
Less than 1 Year	13%
1-5 Years	37%
5 to 10 Years	12%
10 to 15 Years	12%
15 to 20 Years	6%
20 + Years	20%



**+ 5
Budget
2022-23**

Library delivered in Innovative Ways

The Challenge:

- Community facing rising cost of living

The Solution: Relevant Programs

- Clothes Mending & Upcycling
- Car Maintenance Workshops
- Healthy Cooking Hacks on a tight budget
- How to Ditch Your Streaming Services Sessions
- Movie Events / Comedy Nights
- Budgeting Basics Sessions / Legal Assistance Sessions
- MyGov, Centrelink & Government Incentive Information Sessions
- School Holiday Program performances, workshops & experiences beyond reach of average families



Library Agreement

5 years – 2020 – 2025

Defines

- The Purpose of the Regional Library Service
- The Board makeup, proceedings, and responsibilities
- Strategic Planning, Reporting, Annual Budget, Asset allocation, Policy and other legislative requirements of the Corporation.
- Dissolution, Member Council exit requirements

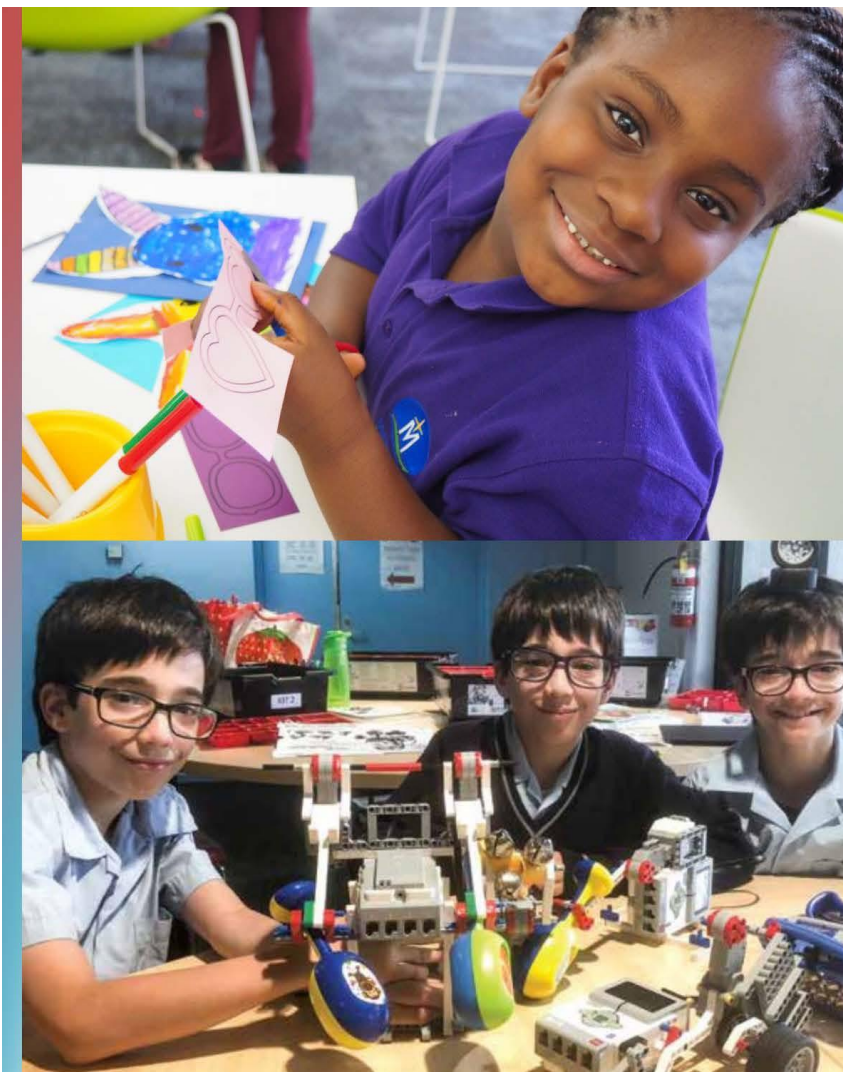
Additional schedules also define:

- The Cost Apportionment Methodology
- The Chair responsibilities on a rotating basis per member Council (City of Whittlesea 2024)
- Lists the buildings' assets allocated to YPRL for delivery of library services

Review of Library Agreement due 2025

4 Year Strategic Plan in place
- The Library Plan 2021-2025





Future YPRL Business Model

- Local Government Act 2020 requires RLC to move to a beneficial enterprise by 2030
- Preferred model - Not For Profit Corporation Ltd
- Possible Timeline for Transition – 2027 (do not underestimate the time to wind up)
- Potential to grow the new Corporation
- Member Councils own the new proposed NFP Corporation
- Preparing briefings to inform the 2024 new Councils & for decisions
- Draft new constitution & new Board makeup developed for Council consideration
- 2 RLCs have transitioned to NFP, 2 RLC have wound up & transitioned to in-house models, 6 still to transition.

[END OF PRESENTATION]

Agenda Item 4: Fire Safety Procedures 2023-2024 (DECISION)

Responsible Officer:	Chief Executive Officer
Author:	Robyn Ellard, Executive Manager Public Participation
Attachment:	4. – Fire Safety Procedure 2023-2024

REPORT

SUMMARY

This procedure is for the Board's decision.

INTRODUCTION

This report seeks to inform the Board of the YPRL Fire Safety Procedure for the 2023 – 2024 Fire season and obtain approval of the terms within for closure of YPRL branches and mobile library services.

This procedure was updated in 2022 to reflect the change of Fire Danger Ratings and now provides information for YPRL staff about 'catastrophic' and other fire danger rated days. The procedure outlines changes to standard operating procedures during those days.

REPORT

Following the introduction of the procedure, the Executive Leadership Team and the Outreach Services team monitors fire danger days through the CFA website and ongoing conditions on the Vic Emergency website.

Fire risk is assessed and decisions made by the CEO about library closures or changes to working conditions. Decisions are communicated to staff, volunteers and patrons as far in advance as possible.

The mobile library and outreach activities are likely to be the most impacted by the procedure and a risk assessment of activities has been undertaken. In most cases, for High and above Fire Danger Ratings, vehicles will be advised not to visit affected areas (see tables in procedure).

In an instance of a closure, the Planned Library Closure procedure will be followed, and the Board members will be informed. If a library is closed or activities cancelled, the relevant closure clauses of the YPRL Enterprise Agreement will be enacted. The procedure directs staff where to attend for work if their branch is closed or activities curtailed.

CONSULTATION

Senior Leadership Team
Mobile Library and branch staff
Nillumbik Shire Council Emergency Service Coordinators
OH&S Committee

Links to the *Municipal Fire Management and Emergency Management Plans* for Nillumbik Shire Council, Banyule City Council and City of Whittlesea are included in the procedure.

CRITICAL DATES

December 2023 for fire season 2023 -2024

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

All financial implications are contained within the body of this report.

LINKS TO LIBRARY PLAN

Outcome:

- **Organisational strength:** Investment in our staff, capacity, and governance to ensure we are capable and ready to adapt, learn and empower our communities in environmentally and socially responsible ways.

Priorities:

- People and capacity.
- Governance and technology.

DECLARATIONS OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Under section 80C of the Local Government Act 1989 officers providing advice to the Library must disclose any interests, including type of interest.

The Responsible Officer reviewing this report, having made enquiries with the relevant members of staff, reports that no disclosable interests have been raised in relation to this report.

CONCLUSION

The Fire Safety Procedure was introduced in 2018 with a requirement to review annually. Following all consultations and reviews, the only changes were the updating of Fire Danger Ratings. The procedure will continue to be reviewed annually to ensure staff and the public's safety.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Board resolves ADOPT the YPRL Fire Safety Procedure 2023 – 2024 and APPROVE the closure of the libraries, including the Mobile Library and Outreach vehicle, under its terms.

M: _____
S: _____



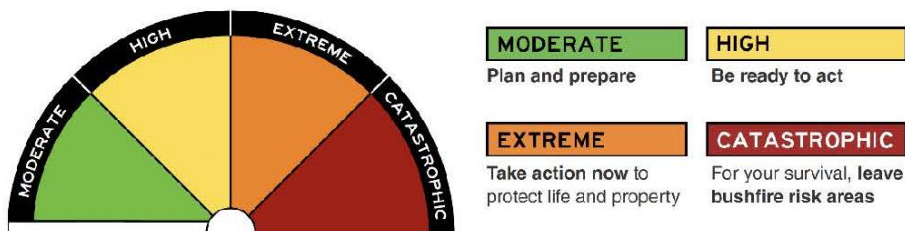
Procedure Name	Fire Safety Procedure
Version number	6.0
Procedure date	December 2023
Date to be reviewed	December 2024
Responsibility	Executive Manager Public Participation Executive Manager Technology & Assets
Related policies and procedures	OH&S Manual Operations Manual – Planned Library Closure Branch Closure Procedure

Purpose

This procedure provides information for YPRL staff about “Catastrophic” and other fire danger rated days and outlines changes to standard operating procedures during those days.

Fire Danger Ratings

The new Australian Fire Danger Rating System is now in place. The new Fire Danger Rating System will be used across Australia. YPRL is in the Central fire district (which includes Melbourne and Geelong). The Country Fire Authority (CFA) has summarised the Fire Danger Ratings:



CATASTROPHIC (was Code Red)	Catastrophic is a fire danger warning that measures days where the contributing factors represent an unprecedented fire danger risk. These are the most dangerous conditions for a fire. The safest place to be is away from bushfire areas.
EXTREME	Expect extremely hot, dry and windy conditions. If a fire starts and takes hold, it will be uncontrollable, unpredictable, and fast moving. Spot fires will start, move quickly, and come from many directions.
HIGH	Expect hot, dry and possibly windy conditions. If a fire starts and takes hold, it may be uncontrollable.
MODERATE (was High)	If a fire starts, it can most likely be controlled in these conditions and homes can provide safety. Be aware of how fires can start and minimise the risk. Stay up to date and be ready to act if there is a fire

Fire Danger Days at YPRL

The Executive Manager Public Participation and Executive Manager Technology & Assets will monitor fire danger days through [the CFA website](#) and ongoing conditions on the [Vic Emergency website](#).

The fire risk will be assessed, and a decision made by the CEO about library closures or changes to working conditions. Generally, a fire rating is known several days in advance. Decisions will be communicated to staff, volunteers and patrons as far in advance as possible.

In an instance of a closure, the Planned Library Closure procedure will be followed. Additionally, advance information about planned closures due to Fire Danger Ratings will be communicated to mobile library users across the fire season.

In the event of a fire emergency, **safety** is our **first priority** and employees, and all members of the public should evacuate first, if safe to do so, or seek refuge immediately and fire procedures implemented. As soon as it is practicable, the CEO/ELT must be informed of the situation.

As a guide, if a Fire Danger Rating affects a YPRL region, the following process will apply:

Fire Danger Rating	Procedure
CATASTROPHIC (was Code Red)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mobile Library will not visit the affected area – refer to table below. • Outreach vehicle will not visit the affected area. • All Library outreach activities will be cancelled. • Libraries in high risk fire areas will close.
EXTREME	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mobile Library will not visit the affected area – refer to table below. • Outreach vehicle may not visit the affected area. • All Library outreach activities will be cancelled. • Libraries in high risk fire areas may need to close.
HIGH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mobile Library will not visit the affected area – refer to table below. • Outreach vehicle may not visit the affected area

Working on Fire Danger Days

If a library is closed or activities cancelled, the relevant closure clauses of the YPRL Enterprise Agreement will be enacted.

On Total Fire Ban days, YPRL will follow the relevant fire danger rating procedures above.

Where staff are attending for work, the alternate Branch or Service Point will be as follows, unless otherwise agreed with their Manager:

- Mobile library staff will relocate to Diamond Valley or Library.
- Outreach vehicle staff will relocate to Ivanhoe Library.
- Staff undertaking outreach activities will report to their usual branch as per the roster.
- All other staff will relocate to the library closest to their home unless otherwise advised by their manager.

Staff should always follow the directions of the CFA and other emergency services over any YPRL procedure.

Staff who live in bushfire affected areas

Staff who live in bushfire affected areas should discuss their bushfire plans with their manager. Staff should always put their own safety first and may choose not to come into work if they are enacting their bushfire plans. In exceptional circumstances staff may be eligible for Emergency Leave (for further information on Emergency Leave see the YPRL Enterprise Agreement Emergency Leave clause).

Risk assessment: Fire danger at Mobile Library Locations

The following Mobile Library schedule is current until end of 2023

Monday	Location	Risk posed to staff and patrons	Fire Danger Rating: Closure days
Stop 1.	Epping: Mossfield Rise- Galada Community Centre	Moderate	Extreme
Stop 2.	Doreen: 40 Painted Hills Rd (at Laurimar Primary School)	Moderate	Extreme
Stop 3.	Mernda: 72 Mernda Village Drive (at Mernda Primary School)	Moderate	Extreme
Tuesday			
Stop 4.	Panton Hill: 3 Bishops Rd (at Memorial Park)	Very High	High
Stop 5.	St Andrews: 35 Caledonia St - Wadambuk Community Centre	Very High	High
Stop 6.	Hurstbridge: 989 Main Hurstbridge Rd (at Primary School)	Very High	High
Wednesday			
Stop 7.	Warrandyte North: 186 Research-Warrandyte Rd (at Yarra Warra Pre-School)	Very High	High
Stop 8.	Kangaroo Ground: 10 Graham Rd (at Primary School)	Very High	High
Stop 9.	Diamond Creek: 30 Main Hurstbridge Rd (at Community Centre)	High	High
Thursday			
Stop 10.	Arthurs Creek: 900 Arthurs Creek Rd (at Primary School)	Very High	High
Stop 11.	Yarrambat: 466 Ironbark Rd (outside General Store)	Very High	High
Stop 12.	Diamond Creek: 30 Main Hurstbridge Rd (at Community Centre)	High	High
Friday			
Stop 13.	Heidelberg West: 8 Moresby Court (at Olympic Shopping Centre)	Low	Extreme
Stop 14.	Christmas Hills: 1409 Eltham-Yarra Glen Rd (at Primary School)	Very High	High

The following Mobile Library schedule will be implemented from January 2024

			Fire Danger Rating:
Monday	Location	Risk posed to staff and patrons	Closure days
Stop 1.	Whittlesea 1: Wollert CC	Moderate	Extreme
Stop 2.	Whittlesea 2: Epping North - 2 Lindrum Drive, Epping North	Moderate	Extreme
Stop 3.	Whittlesea 3: Kirrip CC or Wollert PS. TBC	Moderate	Extreme
Tuesday			
Stop 4.	Panton Hill: 3 Bishops Rd (at Memorial Park)	Very High	High
Stop 5.	Warrandyte North: 186 Research-Warrandyte Rd, (at Yarra Warra Pre-School)	Very High	High
Stop 6.	Yarrambat: 466 Ironbark Rd (across from Post Office)	Very High	High
Stop 7.	Hurstbridge: 989 Main Hurstbridge Rd (at Primary)	Very High	High
Wednesday			
Stop 8.	St Andrews: 35 Caledonia St (at Wadambuk Community Centre)	Very High	High
Stop 9.	Kangaroo Ground: 10 Graham Rd (at Primary School)	Very High	High
Stop 10.	Diamond Creek: 28 Main Hurstbridge Rd (at Community Centre)	High	High
Thursday			
Stop 11.	Arthurs Creek: 900 Arthurs Creek Rd (at Primary School)	Very High	High
Stop 12.	Doreen (Laurimar)	Moderate	Extreme
Stop 13.	Doreen (Orchard Road)	Moderate	Extreme
Friday			
Stop 13.	Heidelberg West: 8 Moresby Court (at Olympic Shopping Centre)	Low	Extreme
Stop 14.	Christmas Hills: 1409 Eltham-Yarra Glen Rd (at Primary School)	Very High	High

Appendix A

Attached are the *Municipal Fire Management and Emergency Management Plans* for Nillumbik Shire Council, Banyule City Council and City of Whittlesea. This information provides bushfire overlays and key road infrastructure to support the Mobile Library Service.

<https://www.banyule.vic.gov.au/About-us/Policies-plans-strategies/Council-plans-and-strategies/Municipal-Emergency-Management-Plan>

<https://www.nillumbik.vic.gov.au/Council/Our-organisation/Strategies-policies-and-plans/Emergency-management-including-bushfires>

<https://www.whittlesea.vic.gov.au/media/10969/endorsed-whittlesea-municipal-fire-mgt-sp2023-2026.pdf>

[END OF FIRE SAFETY PROCEDURE]

Agenda Item 5: Staff Professional Development Conference (DECISION)

Responsible Officer: Chief Executive Officer
Author: Jane Cowell, Chief Executive Officer

REPORT

SUMMARY

This report is for the Board's decision to approve the closure of all YPRL branches and mobile library services on Friday 8 March 2024 to enable staff to attend the Staff Professional Development Conference 2024.

INTRODUCTION

YPRL holds an annual Staff Professional Development Conference to help upskill employees on topical/relevant areas within the library industry and feedback via workshops to assist with future strategy planning.

REPORT

YPRL employs approximately 171 staff across 9 branches, 2 mobile services and Head Office. An All Staff Professional Development Conference is now planned for Friday 8 March 2024 to continue investment in YPRL's future and development. The aim is to bring all staff together to:

- Be challenged by innovations, partnerships and radical collaboration in the public library sector,
- Find agreed actions for the ongoing development of YPRL's strategy in terms of partnerships, radical collaboration and co-design with and for our communities,
- Share successes, learning and innovations from existing YPRL staff, and
- Deliver a large scale action-based learning and development activity.

The outcomes and learning from the event will inform future actions within the current Library Plan, and the next Library Plan, and delivers an opportunity for strategic learning and development activities to be delivered to all staff.

To enable all staff to attend the day, all Branches (including the nine (9) static Branches and the Mobile and Outreach Vehicles) will need to be closed which will impact the community. To minimise impact on the community the event will be held on a Friday (all Branches close at 5pm/6pm on Fridays, compared to up to 9:00pm on other weekdays). In addition, sufficient warning will be provided to the public. It will include advertising the libraries will be closed via the library's website, on social media, notices in libraries and an advertisement in local papers.

All Staff Professional Development Conferences are recognised as a considerable investment in YPRL's future. They provide a valuable opportunity to continue to review progress on the current Library Plan and ensure that staff have a real opportunity to inform the development of the next Library Plan.

CONSULTATION

Senior Leadership Team.

CRITICAL DATES

31 December 2023 to enable formation of the working group and planning for the event to commence to enable the event to take place on Friday 8 March 2024.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Part of the ongoing annual P&C & CEO budget.

POLICY STRATEGY AND LEGISLATION

As part of best practice professional development and a dispersed workforce.

LINKS TO LIBRARY PLAN

Outcome:

- **Organisational strength:** Investment in our staff, capacity, and governance to ensure we are capable and ready to adapt, learn and empower our communities in environmentally and socially responsible ways.

Priorities:

- People and capacity.
- Governance and technology.

DECLARATIONS OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Under section 80C of the Local Government Act 1989 officers providing advice to the Library must disclose any interests, including type of interest.

The Responsible Officer reviewing this report, having made enquiries with the relevant members of staff, reports that no disclosable interests have been raised in relation to this report.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Board resolves to APPROVE the closure of YPRL's nine (9) static branches, the mobile library and outreach vehicle, on Friday 8 March 2024 to enable all staff to attend the All Staff Professional Development Conference 2024.

M: _____

S: _____

Agenda Item 6: YPRL Responsible Conduct Policy (DECISION)

Responsible Officer:	Chief Executive Officer
Author:	Robyn Ellard, Executive Manager Public Participation
Attachment:	6. YPRL Responsible Conduct Policy

REPORT

SUMMARY

This report is for the Board's decision.

INTRODUCTION

The Responsible Conduct Policy was developed and approved by the YPRL Board in September 2018 in response to the increase in Incident Reports involving inappropriate behaviour of the public in our libraries.

The purpose of the Responsible Conduct Policy (the Policy) is to contribute to the YPRL service being a:

- a safe place
- a welcoming place
- a respectful place, where:
 - needs and interests can be pursued freely.
 - people show due regard to the needs, sensitivities, and rights of others.
- a place where collections, services and programs are inclusive of people where we support the rights of all people regardless of age, gender, ability or background.

The policy defines the commonplace standards of behaviour on which fulfilment of this purpose depends and establishes how YPRL staff respond when these standards are not observed. It outlines Management's rights to warn about the impact of continued behaviour or to ban access to the library for a period of time and the rights of appeal for the member against a ban.

The Policy is implemented through the Responsible Conduct Procedures and associated documentation and training.

REPORT

The Policy is reviewed every three years. Public libraries internationally have been facing challenges around intellectual freedom and the freedom to read. Challenges which YPRL has increasingly faced this year in the form of intimidating protests, illegal graffiti and threats against programs such as rainbow storytimes. For these reasons, YPRL has strengthened this policy to express clearly the Library Values as a place that is safe, welcoming and respectful for all members of the diverse community. This includes linking the policy directly to the first library principle, adding a statement from the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act (VIC) 2006 about the role and function of libraries,

and the addition of prohibiting photography and filming in the library (except where it is a parent photographing their child) without prior permission to ensure the safety of staff and other community members, including children.

Associated procedures and documentation will include information on YPRL's website and posters inviting and encouraging people to respect other people, staff and spaces and a training program for staff that has an empathy-led customer service approach.

CONSULTATION

A workgroup consisting of Senior Managers, Branch Managers, Team Leaders and Officers. Consultative Committee

CRITICAL DATES

N/A

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

N/A

POLICY STRATEGY AND LEGISLATION

N/A

LINKS TO LIBRARY PLAN

Outcome:

- **Organisational strength:** Investment in our staff, capacity, and governance to ensure we are capable and ready to adapt, learn and empower our communities in environmentally and socially responsible ways.

Priorities:

- People and capacity
- Governance and technology
- A resilient and thriving organisation

DECLARATIONS OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Under section 130 2(a) of the Local Government Act 2020, officers providing advice to the Library must disclose any interests, including type of interest.

The Responsible Officer reviewing this report, having made enquiries with the relevant members of staff, reports that no disclosable interests have been raised in relation to this report.

CONCLUSION

The review of the Responsible Conduct Policy to strengthen YPRL's stance on intimidating behaviours from the public will support a safe and secure environment for those who visit YPRL libraries and those who work within the Library Service.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Board resolves to APPROVE and ADOPT the YPRL Responsible Conduct Policy (Public)

M: _____
S: _____

Policy Adopted by Board	
Policy Name	Responsible Conduct Policy - Public
Version number	4.0
Policy date	December 2023
Date to be reviewed	December 2026
Responsibility	CEO with delegation to Executive Manager Public Participation
Related YPRL Policies and Procedures	Employee Code of Conduct Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) Surveillance Policy Internet Access Policy Privacy Policy Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy Unattended Children Procedure Social Media Policy Incident Management and Reporting Procedure Responsible Conduct Procedures

Purpose

The purpose of the Responsible Conduct Policy (the Policy) is to contribute to Yarra Plenty Regional Library (YPRL) Service being:

- a safe place
- a welcoming place
- a respectful place, where:
 - needs and interests can be pursued freely.
 - people show due regard to the needs, sensitivities, and rights of others.
- a place where collections, services and programs are inclusive of people where we support the rights of all people regardless of age, gender, ability or background.

YPRL actively supports the substantive rights outlined in the [Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 \(Vic.\)](#), notably those of relevance to the role and function of public libraries including freedom of thought, conscience, religion and belief, freedom of expression, taking part in public life and cultural rights.

The Policy defines the commonplace standards of behaviour on which fulfilment of this purpose depends and establishes how YPRL staff respond when these standards are not observed.

YPRL staff are empowered to determine whether or not behaviour is unacceptable for the purposes of the policy.

Scope

The Policy applies to:

- Council premises assigned to YPRL to deliver library services from and anybody occupying those premises.
- YPRL Mobile Library and Outreach vehicle and anybody occupying the Mobile Library
- Communication with YPRL staff conducted from outside YPRL premises, by mail, telephone, email, other Internet service or any other means.

Related Legislation

The Policy is supported by:

- Internet Access Policy
- *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 (Vic) (PDP Act)*
- Child Safe Standards 2022
- Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities ACT 2006 (Vic)

Definitions

Term	Definition
Senior Officer in charge	Any YPRL staff member who is designated supervisor during that shift.
Inconsiderate or offensive behaviour	Behaving in a way that may cause offence to a reasonable person.
Infringement of security and safety	Events, actions, or behaviours that harm, create risk of harm or threaten harm.
Incident Report	A report that is prepared following an infringement of security or when a client refuses to cooperate with staff enforcing the Policy.
The Policy	The Responsible Conduct Policy
VPS	Victoria Police Service
Yarra Plenty Regional Library premises	Branch libraries at Greensborough, Eltham, Ivanhoe, Rosanna, Watsonia, Lalor, Mill Park, Thomastown, Mernda and Whittlesea; any transport service operated by the YPRL and any other premises or areas that YPRL has leased, hired, or otherwise contracted to use. Surrounding common areas are subject to the Policy only if the YPRL has contracted the use of those areas.

Policy

Standards of behaviour

YPRL libraries welcome and are here for everyone in our communities (*YPRL Library Plan first principle*).

This Policy reflects our values of inclusion and acceptance and is underpinned by the [Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 \(Vic.\)](#), notably the role and function of public libraries including freedom of thought, conscience, religion and belief, freedom of expression, taking part in

public life and cultural rights. This is applied through the observance of two commonplace standards of behaviour:

- that the security and safety of people or property is not infringed.
- that due regard is shown for the needs, interests and rights of others.

Failure to observe these standards is considered unacceptable.

Inappropriate conduct

Inconsiderate or offensive behaviour:

This is including, but not necessarily limited to:

- communication that causes offense or disturbance to others;
- displaying material to other members the public that is offensive, objectionable or illegal, such as pornography, expressions of racial hatred, and representations of violence;
- being noisy in designated quiet areas (including receiving and conducting telephone or online calls);
- Appropriate dress reflective of community norms and compliant with any Occupational Health and Safety (OH&S) requirements;
- canvassing or hawking;
- interference with personal property;
- abuse of YPRL property, or behaviour that puts YPRL property at risk, including misuse of furniture and eating or drinking in non-designated areas;
- abuse of YPRL systems and processes (e.g. deliberately misfiling library material, circumventing booking systems).
- refusal to comply with any government mandated regulations (such as during a state of emergency).
- YPRL is a child safe organisation and has zero tolerance for child abuse or neglect.
- Consumption of alcohol is not permitted except for an authorised program or event.

Response to inconsiderate or offensive behaviour

The initial response to inconsiderate or offensive behaviour is to encourage the person responsible to behave in a more considerate manner. Ejecting a person from YPRL premises or terminating communication with YPRL staff conducted from outside YPRL premises is a last resort, only ever warranted after conciliatory approaches have failed, or in response to infringements of security.

Initial response

With reference to the detailed description in the Responsible Conduct Procedures document, the response of YPRL staff to inconsiderate or offensive behaviour is to:

- Respectfully point out the possible adverse impacts of the client's behaviour on others;
- support the person in using the YPRL effectively.

Second response and ejection

A person on YPRL premises whose behaviour is unacceptable, and who fails to heed initial approaches by YPRL staff, will be informed by the Branch Manager or the senior officer in charge that under the Policy they will be ejected from the premises.

When a person is being ejected from YPRL, the person is told (by the Branch Manager or Senior Officer in charge) why they are being ejected, that the ejection is occurring under the Policy and that they will not be permitted to re-enter YPRL premises until the next day.

Infringing the security and safety of people or property includes:

- events, actions or behaviours that harm, create risk of harm or threaten harm, including intimidation and harassment;
- theft or malicious damage of property, including personal property and the property of YPRL
- trespass, including unauthorised entry to non-public areas and unauthorised access to YPRL information systems.

Response to infringements of security and safety

YPRL staff are required to refer all apparent infringements of security to their Manager and then complete an incident report.

Photography and filming in YPRL premises

To ensure the safety and wellbeing of other library patrons, filming and photography are prohibited in YPRL libraries without prior approval. When permission has been given, filming or photographing another person without their consent is prohibited. Any person who is found to be photographing or filming on library premises without permission will be asked to cease and if this request is refused will be ejected from the premises.

Termination of communication with YPRL staff conducted from outside YPRL premises

A person who behaves unacceptably in communicating with YPRL staff from outside YPRL premises (by being abusive, for example) will be informed that communication will be terminated unless the behaviour ceases. Communication will be immediately terminated unless the person complies.

Incident Report

An Incident Report should be completed following any of the circumstances described above.

In the case of a client leaving the premises prior to Branch Manager's involvement and ejection, staff should complete an Incident Report.

Authority

The authority to initiate the ejection of a person from YPRL premises under the Policy is delegated to the Branch Manager or most senior officer available.

Authority to terminate communication by any person from outside YPRL premises under the Policy is delegated to all staff.

Bans

Grounds

A person may be banned from entering YPRL premises or communicating with YPRL staff from outside YPRL premises ('banned'), on the following grounds:

- infringements of security or safety;
- they have been the subject of multiple Incident Reports or had communication with YPRL staff from outside YPRL premises terminated three times within a 6 month period;
- A person may be banned only on condition that their identity can be positively established.

Note that Branch Manager Reports with reference to YPRL clients may be taken into consideration by the CEO regarding the issuing of a ban.

Authority

The CEO has the authority to issue bans for any period.

YPRL Executive Leadership Team (ELT) has delegated authority to issue a ban and to determine the duration of a ban up to a maximum of six months.

Consequences

A person who has been banned may be issued with a letter on the premises or may be informed by registered letter of the ban. The letter will include a summary of incidents leading to the ban, the basis of the ban in policy, the duration of the ban and appeal rights and procedures.

The duration of a ban is at the discretion of the CEO or ELT member and is determined by circumstances leading to the ban and whether the banned person has been previously warned or banned.

A banned person who is seen on YPRL premises will be immediately asked to leave by the Branch Manager or most senior officer available.

Entering or attempting to enter YPRL premises during the term of a ban is grounds for extending the ban.

Appeals

A person who has been banned may appeal to the CEO to reduce the duration of the ban. Information regarding the appeals process will be included in the letter issued to the person who has been banned. The CEO may delegate consideration of the appeal of the ban to an ELT member but not to the ELT who originally issued the ban.

The determination of the appeal will be made by consideration of the available Incident Reports and records, and any case put forward by the person seeking the review.

The appeal should be settled within 1 week of its receipt and client informed of the outcome as soon as is practicable.

Register of bans

A register of current bans is maintained and kept at YPRL Library Support Services (LSS) offices. It may be viewed on request by library service staff. The Register may include a copy of the ban notice and other information identifying banned people, including photographs.

Protection of Yarra Plenty Regional Library Property

YPRL may seek restitution for serious damage to, or theft of YPRL property resulting from apparently intentional or reckless actions.

Information privacy

Under the State Government's *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 (Vic)* and its own Freedom of Information Statement, YPRL is committed to protecting the privacy of clients.

Formal records are made of infringements of security or a clients' refusal to cooperate with staff enforcing the Policy. These records serve the enforcement of the Policy, and inform improvement of the Policy, related Procedures and staff training.

A record made in the enforcement of the Policy is treated as confidential and subject to strict controls:

- Records are registered in YPRL's central files
- Records are made available within YPRL only for purposes related to the enforcement of the Policy and only with the sanction of the CEO or an ELT. Incident Reports are routinely distributed to:
 - Executive Leadership Team members
 - Branch Managers
 - OH&S Committee
- Records are made available outside YPRL only with the specific permission of the Yarra Plenty Regional Library CEO and only if this is required under law, is reasonably necessary for the enforcement of the criminal law, or there are reasonable grounds for believing that any person's life or health would be put at risk by not disclosing the information.
- Members of the public have access to their personal records created in the enforcement of the Policy in accordance with the Information Privacy Act 2000.

YPRL staff will discuss and disclose information about individual's conduct only when reporting incidents or debriefing with supervisors or managers.

Training and Development

This Policy will be included in the induction pack supplied to YPRL staff upon commencement. Managers will ensure staff training is offered each year about this Policy.

Responsibilities

The Responsible Conduct Policy and Procedures will be reviewed every three years, to ensure a shared understanding of the policy and procedures and to ensure most effective application of the policy at YPRL.

[END OF RESPONSIBLE CONDUCT POLICY]

Agenda Item 7: Benchmarking Survey Results (NOTING)

Responsible Officer:	Chief Executive Officer
Author:	Jane Cowell, Chief Executive Officer
Attachment:	7a – PLV Annual Survey YPRL Benchmarking Summary 7b – YPRL Benchmarking Presentation

REPORT

SUMMARY

This report is for the Board's information with a presentation from the CEO.

REPORT

PLV's annual Statistical Survey compiles data on library inputs, usage, throughputs and outputs from Victoria's 51 public libraries (including Vision Australia). Data from the annual survey is published on the PLV website (<https://www.plv.org.au/resources/>). Public Libraries Victoria's (PLV) 2022-23 annual survey was conducted in September 2023.

Each year a Benchmarking Report is produced as a complementary output from the survey. The report lists and ranks library service data for approximately 60 indicators for each library service for each of the last three to four years. This includes a mix of volume-based measures and per capita, usage, efficiency and financial ratios (see Attachment 7a). The 2022-23 report shows comparative annual data for the three years from 2020-21 to 2022-23, as well as the last pre-COVID year 2018-19.

For YPRL there are some strong indicators that, as a valued community asset, community members did and are returning to the library in ever increasing numbers over the year with some key highlights in comparison with other services.

- YPRL topped the State in the number of active borrowers – those members who borrowed a physical item from the collection, and for the total number of physical loans from our collections.
- Our physical collections are relevant, current and continue to be an important element of our service.
- YPRL were also second in the State for the number of Library visits showcasing the positive impact of our focused program of events and the increased need for work/study spaces outside of the home.
- Our digital library continued to be utilised with our total number of loans and downloads putting YPRL third in comparison with the rest of the State's library services.

YPRL performed well despite other impacts on access to our services over the past year:

- The continued roadworks on the Greensborough Bypass for the NorthEast Link, affecting access to the Watsonia Branch
- The closure of the Rosanna Branch Library and move to a smaller Pop-Up service in March 2023
- The closure of the Eltham Library for refurbishment in June 2023.

CONSULTATION

N/A

CRITICAL DATES

N/A

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Nil

POLICY STRATEGY AND LEGISLATION

N/A

LINKS TO LIBRARY PLAN

Outcomes:

- **Knowledge and learning:** Together we build capacity and confidence for people across our communities to meaningfully participate in work and community life.
- **Connection:** Create places and spaces for people throughout our communities to connect, belong and actively engage with each other.
- **Organisational strength:** Investment in our staff, capacity, and governance to ensure we are capable and ready to adapt, learn and empower our communities in environmentally and socially responsible ways.
- **Wellbeing:** Help individuals and communities to better engage in, understand and take positive actions to support their mental and physical health.

Priorities:

- Information and resources
- Participation and belonging
- Outreach
- Governance and technology
- Environmental and social sustainability
- Mental, physical and social wellbeing
- Connect to local experts

DECLARATIONS OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Under section 80C of the Local Government Act 1989 officers providing advice to the Library must disclose any interests, including type of interest.

The Responsible Officer reviewing this report, having made enquiries with the relevant members of staff, reports that no disclosable interests have been raised in relation to this report.

CONCLUSION

YPRL continues to perform well in comparison with other library services in the State with our collections, library buildings and program offerings attracting community back to the library after significant interruptions of service during the Covid years. The per capita measures indicate that YPRL is not delivering to new population areas and access to the library appears to be affected by distance. YPRL is working with member Councils on reducing barriers of distance by investing in Mini Branch and Click and Collect Library Hub models.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Board resolves to RECEIVE and NOTE the YPRL Benchmarking Presentation and Report.

M: _____
S: _____

Yarra Plenty

(from PLV's Annual Survey of Victorian Public Libraries, 2018-19 to 2022-23)

Note: Use of public libraries from 2019-20 to 2021-22 was significantly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Impacts varied between metropolitan Melbourne and regional Victoria. Councils adopted different approaches to maintenance of library services and staffing. Different population cohorts responded to the challenges of COVID in different ways. Therefore, **caution must be taken in interpreting the data contained in this report.**

Indicator	Yarra Plenty 2022-23	Ranking (no. of libraries)			
		22-23	21-22	20-21	18-19
		of 50	of 50	of 49	of 47
Service setting					
Population	427,062	2	3	3	3
Area serviced (sq. km)	985	25	26	26	24
Service provision					
Static branches (mobiles)	9 (2)	6	6	7	8
Opening hours per week (brnch+mob)	620	5	2	3	3
Staffed opening hours per week (brnch+mob)	620	4	2	3	3
Average staffed opening hours per branch	56	5	2	2	11
Collection items per capita	0.96	44	46	44	40
Physical items per capita	0.82	41	44	43	41
Digital items per capita	0.14	41	45	40	30
Devices per '000 population	0.5	25	26	26	30
Staff EFT per '000 population #	0.23	37	45	40	41
Volume measures (number of/total)Service provision					
Number of collection items	410,388	5	5	3	3
Number of physical items	349,644	4	4	3	3
Number of digital items	60,744	4	6	2	2
Members	120,789	1	1	2	1
Active borrowers	67,243	1	1	1	1
Library visits (brnch+mob)	1,277,373	2	2	3	4
Mobile library visits	23,976	1	3	1	2
Website visits	1,613,496	5	5		
Website visitors	1,422,918	1	1	3	4
Launches of library app	386,512	2			
Number of loans and downloads	2,693,546	3	3	5	2
Loans of physical items	2,289,237	1	1	5	2
Downloads of digital items	404,309	5	5	9	10
Number of program attendees	106,771	2	4	5	1
Number of public access devices	199	3	2	5	2
Total income \$M	\$17.34	2	1	1	1
Income from Council \$M	\$13.76	3	2	1	2
Total operating expenditure \$M	\$17.65	1	1	1	1
Collections expenditure \$M	\$2.73	1	1	1	1
Staff expenditure \$M	\$11.49	2	3	2	2
Total staff EFT	99.9	3	2	2	2
Use (per capita)					
Members as % of population	28%	23	21	28	22
Active borrowers as % of population	16%	11	10	14	13
Library visits per capita	3.0	24	33	31	37

Indicator	Yarra Plenty 2022-23	Ranking (no. of libraries)			
		22-23	21-22	20-21	18-19
		of 50	of 50	of 49	of 47
Website visits per capita	3.8	9	9	45	
Website visitors per capita	3.3	6	4	9	10
Loans and downloads per capita	6.3	16	18	27	14
Loans (physical items) per capita	5.4	13	11	21	10
Downloads (digital items) per capita	0.9	27	28	35	36
Program attendees per '000 population	250	25	39	25	18
Hours of technology use per '000 population	496	15	13	12	
Hours of computer use per '000 population	202	13	17	17	
Wifi hours per '000 population	294	16	12	11	
GB downloads per '000 population	172	11	15	15	
Efficiency / Productivity					
Turnover rate (physical items)	6.7	2	1	8	3
Turnover rate (digital items)	6.7	15	35	26	32
Loans (physical items) per active borrower	40	34	32	40	31
Loans (physical items) per staff EFT	22,911	5	5	11	3
Library visits per staff EFT	12,784	10	20	17	22
Library visits per staffed opening hour	41	15	20	17	18
Quality					
% of physical items purchased in last 5 years	86%	5	5	4	6
Customer satisfaction rating (out of 10)	8.8	23	25	18	23
Financials					
Library service funding per capita *	\$40.60	25	22	23	16
Income from Council per capita	\$32.22	21	24	23	31
Council income as % of total income	79%	23	22	16	31
Income from State Govt per capita	\$6.65	42	46	40	34
User fees and charges per capita	\$0.54	20	39	37	
Operating expenditure per capita *	\$41.34	24	22	19	16
Collections expenditure per capita	\$6.40	29	25	27	28
Collections expenditure as % of total exp.	15%	28	18	20	17
Staff expenditure per capita #	\$26.90	28	31	32	36
Staff expenditure as % of total expenditure	65%	30	33	30	36

* All indicators are ranked from the highest value to the lowest value, except for two cost indicators where the lowest value is ranked No. 1 (marked *).

Ranking of other indicators is contestable. For example, very high or very low levels of staff EFT per capita may represent over- or under-servicing of the municipal/regional population. An average or mid-range figure might be seen as a desirable outcome. The rankings for these indicators have the highest value ranked as No. 1 (marked #).

Annual
Public Library
Victoria
Benchmarking
Report
2022-2023





Recovery from COVID impacts has begun



How does YPRL compare?

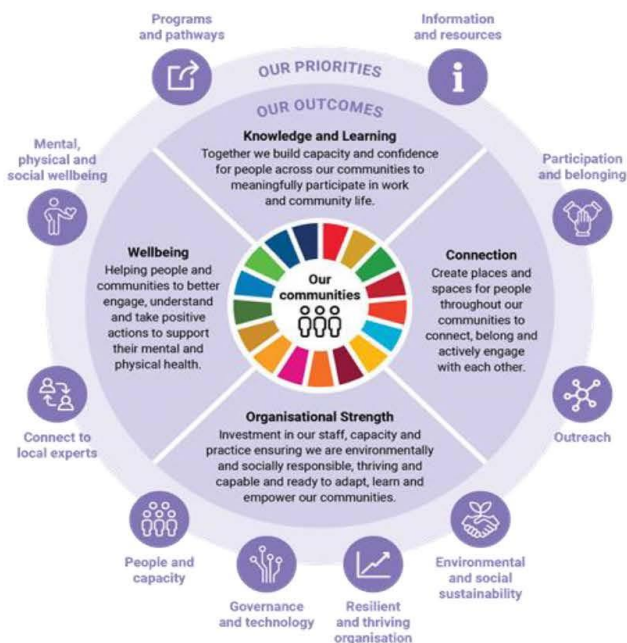
YPRL Highlights

- 1st Active Borrowers
- 1st for total physical loans
- 1st Mobile Library Visits
- 2nd for total Library Visits
- 2nd Number of program attendees
- 2nd for Population served
- 2nd for launches of library app
- 3rd Total number loans & downloads



Community Feedback

The Positive



- With so much financial hardship and disconnection, it's great to be able to connect and access resources at the library.
- When my disability leaves me trapped in my home and in bed, I can use the digital services that the library offers to enter whatever magical or wonderful world I wish.
- YPRL brings me enjoyment, a place to find a great selection of books and a space to unwind amongst friendly staff.
- Library is everything to me, always has been since primary school.
- I never would have rekindled my love of reading without the library.

Community Feedback Areas to Improve



- More eBooks and new releases
- Add a *Library of things* such as tools
- Extended weekend opening hours
- More children's programs in school holidays
- More spaces to work / study
- I'd love to be able to participate in adult programs to learn new skills and meet new people. Weekend or evening activities best suit me as they are outside work hours and when toddler can be cared for by my partner



Library Performance Indicators	YPRL 2022-23	Ranking (No of libraries)				
		2022 – 23 of 50	2021- 22 of 50	2020- 21 of 49	2018- 19 of 47	Trend
Members as % pop	28%	23	21	28	22	↓
Number of program attendees	106,771	2	4	5	1	↑
Turnover rate – physical items	6.7	2	1	8	3	↓
Turnover rate – digital items	6.7	15	35	26	32	↑
Physical quality of library collection	86%	5	5	4	5	↔
Library funding per capita*	\$40.60	25	22	23		↑
Income from Council per capita	\$32.22	21	24	23	31	↓
Staff EFT per '000 capita	0.23	37	45	40	41	↑
Operating expenditure per capita *	\$41.34	24	22	19	16	↑
Customer satisfaction rating	8.8	23	25	18	23	↑

Focus in Response

- **Expand service offerings & library access points via new hubs**
- **Continue to promote Membership at every opportunity**
- **Membership campaign with Council staff**
- **Continued focus on Co Design with community**
- **Expand access through partnerships**
- **Grant projects**
- **Market our Digital collections**



Agenda Item 8: Draft YPRL Infrastructure Development Plan 2023-2031 (NOTING)

Responsible Officer:	Chief Executive Officer
Author:	Jane Cowell, Chief Executive Officer
Attachment:	8. – Draft YPRL Infrastructure Development Plan 2023-2031

REPORT

SUMMARY

This report presents to the Board the draft *YPRL Library Infrastructure Development Plan* detailing the development of Member Councils' Library buildings and new libraries to 2031.

INTRODUCTION

This report is a forward-looking document outlining the status quo of existing library buildings and details community feedback and development opportunities for the future. The recommended development timelines used in the Plan are Short-term 0-3 years; Mid-term 3-5 years and Long Term 5-10 years. It has been drafted as a tool for consultation with Member Councils to help plan library building developments for forward planning purposes and to ensure the library buildings are developed to meet current and future community needs. Community feedback from previous community surveys, feedback forms and issues raised in the Branches have informed the recommendations. Each individual Branch Manager has also contributed to their Branch Library building recommendations.

YPRL has developed the report to ensure that library buildings, provided by our Member Councils, present as welcoming, purposeful and safe. Facilities are required to accommodate engaging library programs and events and to provide flexible spaces for learning, study, work and leisure well into the future.

The development of the plan has also involved a broad review of trends, plans and policies impacting on library services including growth demographics and Library standards and guidelines. Further consultation with Member Councils is required to finalise this Infrastructure Plan and feedback is welcomed to finalise the plan.

REPORT

This *YPRL Libraries Infrastructure Development Plan* has been developed to assist our member Councils with planning and development of libraries across the region. This Plan aims to provide:

- A framework for the development and renewal of library buildings – using the People Places best practice building design and development guidelines.

- Recommended priorities for action and time frames, based on an objective assessment of the condition of the library building, the needs of the community and population growth.
- A region-wide and strategic view of the library infrastructure renewal and development needs and opportunities for the next ten years.

The two guiding documents used to inform the recommendations are:

- People Places a guide to building libraries in NSW, 3rd edition, 2012, a framework that has been developed as a practical resource for the planning and design of a new or refurbished public library building. People Places has been used widely across Australia as a framework to ensure the development process for a new library and delivers the best possible library designed to deliver local services that meet local needs, and
- The Guidelines, Standards and Outcome Measures for Australian Public Libraries 2016, which presents evidence based national standards and guidelines for modern public libraries around Australia that complement the information within People Places.

The report also recommends a proposed Service Model Hierarchy to provide a framework in which libraries for different communities and catchments can be scaled. It has recognised the recent City of Whittlesea Library review proposed model of mini-branches and Click and Collect Library hubs.

In summary this is:

- three (3) destination libraries for each Member Council region with extended opening hours;
- Branch Libraries providing a range of community focused programs;
- Mini Branch Libraries providing a local service complimented by larger branches, and
- Click and Collect Library hubs providing a minimal staffed model and access to library collections and occasional programming
- Mobile Libraries providing services to newly developed, remote and rural areas.

An overview of the recommendation library development plan for each Member Council is contained in the Table below.

Table 2: Proposed Library Infrastructure Development Timeframe

Timeframe	Minor Refurbishment	Major Refurbishment	New Library	Planning and Design	Review
Short term 0–3 years	Lalor Thomastown	Mobile Library Outreach Vehicle	Mernda Mini Branch Rosanna Branch Kirrip Click & Collect Library Bellfield Click & Collect Library Donnybrook Mini Branch	West Wollert Mini Branch West Heidelberg Mini Branch	Galada Click & Collect Library Hurstbridge Click & Collect Library
Medium term 3–5 years		Thomastown – Public Amenities Watsonia – Public Amenities	West Wollert Mini Branch	Lalor – develop precinct concept Epping North Diamond Creek	
Long term 5–10 years			Epping North Diamond Creek West Heidelberg	Mernda – Destination Branch Cloverdale Branch Library	Mill Park Whittlesea Ivanhoe

It is recognised that this report is a starting point for further consultation with each Member Council on the development of libraries within their Council regions. YPRL has taken the lead to develop this recommendation as a Corporation to ensure our own planning, resources and future budget forecasts can be aligned with Councils Capital and Maintenance plans for community infrastructure.

CONSULTATION

Consultation was undertaken with Branch Managers regarding individual branch library needs. Directors from each Member Council have indicated future library sites which have been highlighted as needing a library in the future. Community survey feedback on current library facilities has been used to inform this report.

CRITICAL DATES

N/A.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

All financial implications are contained within the body of this report.

POLICY STRATEGY AND LEGISLATION

N/A.

LINKS TO LIBRARY PLAN

- **Knowledge and learning:** Together we build capacity and confidence for people across our communities to meaningfully participate in work and community life.
- **Connection:** Create places and spaces for people throughout our communities to connect, belong and actively engage with each other.
- **Organisational strength:** Investment in our staff, capacity, and governance to ensure we are capable and ready to adapt, learn and empower our communities in environmentally and socially responsible ways.
- **Wellbeing:** Help individuals and communities to better engage in, understand and take positive actions to support their mental and physical health.

Priorities:

- Information and resources
- Participation and belonging
- Outreach
- Governance and technology
- Environmental and social sustainability
- Mental, physical and social wellbeing
- Connect to local experts

DECLARATIONS OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Under section 80C of the Local Government Act 1989 officers providing advice to the Library must disclose any interests, including type of interest.

The Responsible Officer reviewing this report, having made enquiries with the relevant members of staff, reports that no disclosable interests have been raised in relation to this report.

CONCLUSION

The preparation of this *Library Infrastructure Development Plan* for library buildings across the region can be used as a guide for YPRL and Member Councils to inform the evolution of library facilities over the next ten (10) years. It can also assist with the co-ordination of funding applications and the allocation of resources within our organisations to ensure that library facilities are the best they can be for the communities they serve.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Board resolves to agree to SUPPORT the recommendations of this report:

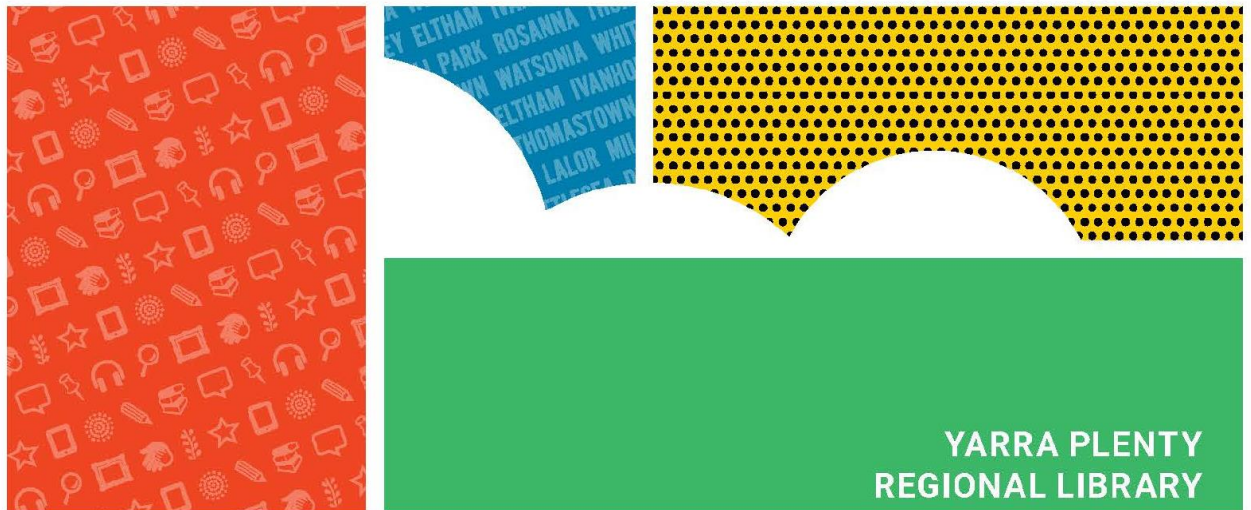
- that *People Places* be used as the guide to assist member Councils in the planning, design and development of new libraries and library refurbishments.
- that the revised service hierarchy recommended in the report be adopted.

M: _____

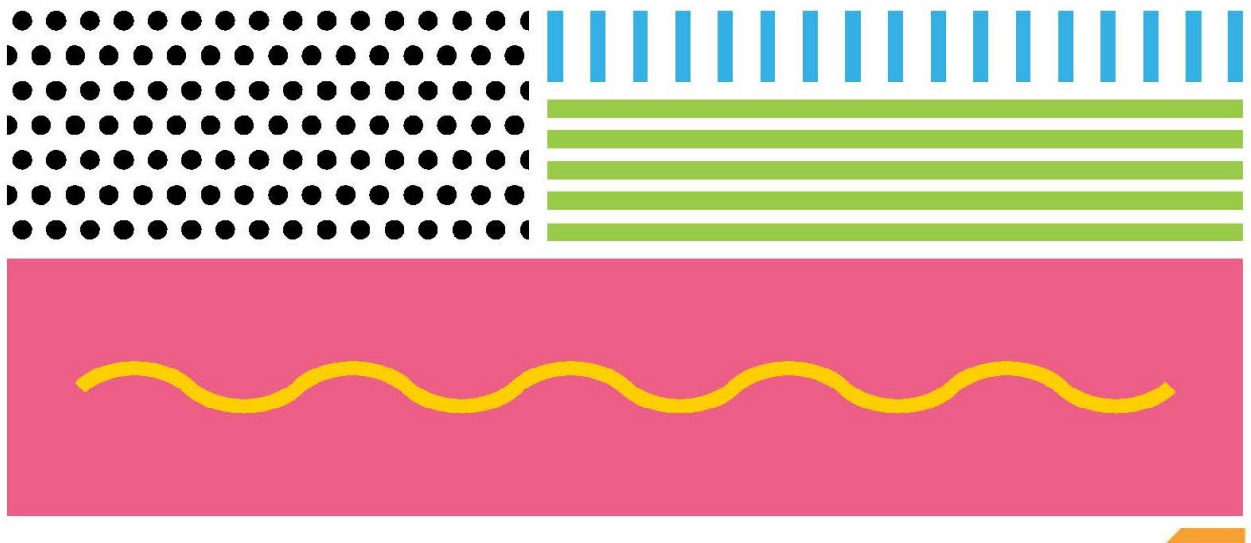
S: _____

THAT the Board resolves to further agree to RECOMMEND the report to each Member Council for discussion.

M: _____
S: _____



INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2023 - 2031



Introduction

Yarra Plenty Regional Library (YPRL) is a corporation formed to provide library services for three member Councils – Banyule City Council, City of Whittlesea and Nillumbik Shire Council. YPRL provides this region-wide shared library service via a network of ten Branch Libraries, one Mobile Library, one Mobile Outreach service, three self-service hubs and an extensive range of eServices available via the website and multiple mobile applications. The provision of library services by the member Councils fulfils obligations to provide services and facilities that contribute to community wellbeing and prosperity for every person in our communities.

This YPRL Libraries Infrastructure Development Plan has been developed to assist our member Councils with planning and development of libraries across the region. This Plan aims to provide:

- A framework for the development and renewal of library buildings – using the *People Places* best practice building design and development guidelines¹.
- Recommended priorities for action and time frames, based on an objective assessment of the condition of the library building, the needs of the community and population growth.
- A region-wide and strategic view of the library infrastructure renewal and development needs and opportunities for the next ten years.

The aims for the library buildings in the YPRL Branch Library network are to:

- Present welcoming, purposeful and safe library facilities that are at the heart of the community.
- Provide facilities that can accommodate engaging library programs, events and activities encouraging a lifelong love of reading and increase social inclusion.
- Provide spaces for learning, study, work and leisure.

Developing the Plan

The Plan has been prepared with the following inputs:

- Visual inspection of library buildings.
- Consultation with library branch managers about the condition of library buildings, furniture, equipment and opportunities to better meet users' needs.
- Consultation with member Council Officers for a broad analysis of the catchment area the library serves.
- Examination of branch data relating to visitation, service usage and membership.
- Analysis of comments in the 2023 Library User Survey about ways to improve branch libraries (as they relate to facilities).

The development of the plan has also involved a broad review of trends, plans and policies impacting on library services including review of:

- Current trends.
- Demographic information about growth and changes in population characteristics.
- Local, state and national policy and plans that relate to library service provision.
- Library standards and guidelines.

Growth in the Region

YPRL serves an area of 985km² with the 3 member Councils having a combined population of 427,062 in 2023 and is expected to grow to 548,870 by 2036². The City of Whittlesea is experiencing the fastest growth with an

¹ *People Places a guide to building libraries in NSW, 3rd edition, 2012* <https://www.sl.nsw.gov.au/public-library-services/people-places-tools>, accessed September 2019

² Data sourced from i.d.community population forecast and other statistical information available on member Council websites in October 2023.

expected average annual change of +2.24%. The region is characterised by a significant diversity in the community with high numbers of the community speaking languages other than English at home.

Outcomes for the Region: A Region of Difference

Banyule City Council (Banyule)

Banyule is located between 7 and 21 kilometres northeast of central Melbourne and is made up of 21 suburbs. The City covers an area of approximately 63km². The Yarra River runs along the City's south border while the west is defined by Darebin Creek. Banyule is renowned for its open spaces and plentiful parklands, especially along the Yarra and Plenty River valleys. Banyule has a rich cultural heritage, with more than 50 significant aboriginal sites, strong links to the Heidelberg School of artists, iconic architecture, and a dynamic artistic and cultural community.

Banyule has a diverse community of more than 127,348 residents from over 140 countries. A significant number of residents have European ancestry, and there is an increasing population of people with Asian and African ancestry.

Although the number of people living in Banyule is expected to increase in the next decade (11%), the population is expected to age, with the greatest growth occurring in the 75 years and over age group. Libraries have a core role in ensuring that the community is actively involved in healthy living and has a strong and connected sense of belonging within the local place. In 2023 Library users affirm that they use the library as a place of learning, social connection, and activity³.

City of Whittlesea (CoW)

The City of Whittlesea (CoW) is located about 20 kilometres north of Melbourne. It is one of Melbourne's largest municipalities, covering a land area of approximately 490km² with 236,966 residents. It is also one of the fastest growing municipalities, welcoming approximately 5,000 new residents every year. It has a high proportion of households with children (41.2%), a high proportion of population under 25 years of age (32.2%) and high level of diversity (43.7% speak a language other than English).

CoW is also characterised with higher socio-economic disadvantage, with pockets of very high disadvantage at Thomastown and Lalor⁴. Poor health outcomes, social isolation, and high rates of disengaged youth are highlighted as key issues for CoW to address locally and to work with the State Government for increased funding for local solutions. Libraries have a core role to play in these identified areas of action and good library infrastructure is a key to delivering to these communities locally.

CoW has identified the themes of Community Connectedness, Community Voice, Social Inclusion and Local community planning as necessary to ensure an inclusive and engaged community. The Shaping Our Future Whittlesea 2030 Strategic Community Plan outlines the steps and actions CoW will undertake to make this outcome happen. Libraries in the region play a core role with Council to ensure the health and wellbeing of the local communities, especially in areas of education and lifelong learning, health and social inclusion for everyone.

³ Data sourced from Council planning documents available on the Council website: accessed October 2023

⁴ Data sourced from *Creating Liveable Communities in the Interface: City of Whittlesea report 2014*

Nillumbik Shire Council (Nillumbik)

Nillumbik is located less than 25 kilometres north–east of Melbourne and has the Yarra River as its southern boundary and is known as the Green Wedge Shire, with 91% of the shire designated as the Green Wedge. Nillumbik extends 29 kilometres to Kinglake National Park in the north and stretches approximately 20 kilometres from the Plenty River and Yan Yean Road in the west to Christmas Hills and the Yarra escarpment in the east. It covers an area of 432km² and has an estimated population of 63,041 who live in close-knit communities which range from typical urban settings to remote and tranquil bush properties. Nillumbik community also has a high rate of employment with 82.2% employed either full or part time. A commitment to lifelong learning is a key strategy for Council and community infrastructure responds to local needs, to support social inclusion, and connected communities. Libraries are a key aspect of the delivery of this strategy delivering a range of learning opportunities, community debates and opportunities to engage and volunteer.⁵

The Nillumbik community has an extremely strong sense of identity and are highly resilient, connected to their environment and heritage, and a broad commitment to and participation in the arts and cultural sectors. Nillumbik is also committed to providing leadership in the health and wellbeing of their communities. Libraries play a core role in the promotion of a healthy lifestyle with an active Garden Maker Space at Diamond Valley, the recent GeriFit program delivered at Eltham Library and a partnership with the Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Foundation.

Library Use and Key Outcomes

The 2016 *Guidelines, Standards and Outcome Measures for Australian Public Libraries*⁶ describe six key outcomes from the work of libraries. These individual and community outcomes result from libraries helping people to improve their knowledge and skills or change attitudes and behaviours. Library spaces must be suitable and sufficiently flexible to deliver these outcomes which include:

- **Literacy and lifelong learning.** For a long time, public libraries have played a valuable role in helping children to learn to read through storytime programs and children’s collections. While this continues to be a cornerstone of library programming, libraries also offer programs and resources to support adult literacy and digital literacy, as well as collections, programs and facilities that enable and encourage people of all ages and interests to pursue formal and informal study and lifelong learning.
- **Stronger and more creative communities.** The creative industries are recognised as significant to Victoria’s culture, economy and society and central to its Covid recovery plan outlined in the Creative State strategy 2025⁷ Creativity and culture influence our quality of life and the strength of our communities and provide a source of inspiration and entertainment. Public libraries have a core local role to play in strengthening communities and building social capital by providing an inclusive forum and support for expression of creativity and cultural identity. They preserve the past, celebrate the present and embrace the future by ensuring free and equitable access for all people, collecting and promoting local cultural content, celebrating diversity and promoting intercultural conversations and tolerance.
- **Digital inclusion.** The ability to access and use technology is becoming a prerequisite for effective participation in society. Today, the only way to access some information, government and / or business services, is through the internet. Closing this divide remains key to social and economic development

⁵ Council Plan 2017-2021, Nillumbik Shire Council accessed August 2019

⁶ *Guidelines, Standards and Outcome Measures for Australian Public Libraries*, Australian Public Library Alliance and Australian Library and Information Association, 2016

⁷ Creative Victoria Website; accessed November 2023 https://creative.vic.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0005/2099678/Creative-State-2025-1.pdf

priority across all levels of government and within regional businesses to ensure that its workforce is equipped with the capacities to connect and innovate for future growth needs. Specifically, the Victorian Government Digital Strategy 2021-2026⁸ outlines its objectives in working towards fairer and more accessible digital services, capability, and a thriving economy through continued investment in critical digital infrastructure in regional communities. Libraries provide free access to computers and the internet, technical support to computer users, and training to people with low levels of digital literacy. This is especially significant for CoW which includes communities with a high socio-economic disadvantage, particularly in Thomastown and Lalor, both served by Libraries, and Banyule which has pockets of disadvantage that are currently not served by a Library.

- *Personal development and wellbeing.* Everyone is welcome to use the library as they choose, be this reading for pleasure, meeting friends and people with common interests, accessing everyday information, accessing information that supports health and wellness, managing personal finances or being somewhere safe with other people. All three (3) member Councils have prioritised wellness in their community strategies. YPRL also focuses core programming on health and wellness connecting people to key services, information and activities. The recent research report *The Health and Wellbeing Benefits of Public Libraries across Victoria*⁹ commissioned by State Library of Victoria shows that Victorians who engage with public libraries enjoy better health and wellbeing than those who don't. Engaging with a public library is associated with a statistically significant and material improvement in Subjective Health & Wellbeing.
- *Economic and workforce development.* Public libraries support economic and workforce development by helping people develop literacies and skills, providing access to the internet to allow people to search and apply for jobs online and access to computers to allow people to write job applications. All three (3) member Councils recognise that local businesses require a broad range of support from low-cost access to training and skill development to networking opportunities. The potential of home-based businesses to provide new entrepreneurial opportunities is an area where Libraries can play a key role. Libraries have always provided spaces where start-ups and small businesses can work, research, communicate and collaborate with customers and business partners.

Library Funding

The Victorian State Government's Living Libraries Infrastructure Program (LLIP)¹⁰ enables Victorian councils and regional library corporations to deliver new or renewed library infrastructure for their communities. The LLIP is the only Government sponsored capital works funding program specifically for libraries. The program helps councils provide library facilities that meet the changing needs of communities through two categories: minor works, and major works. Funding of up to \$1000,000 is available for major works. In the last decade the LLIP and member Councils have invested in the development of the following:

⁸ Victorian Government Digital Strategy 2021-2026 accessed November 2023 <https://www.vic.gov.au/a-future-ready-victoria/digital-strategy-2021-2026>

⁹ The Health and Wellbeing Benefits of Public Libraries <https://sgsep.com.au/projects/the-health-and-wellbeing-benefits-of-public-libraries-across-victoria>

¹⁰ Living Libraries Infrastructure Program website accessed November 2023 <https://www.localgovernment.vic.gov.au/grants/living-libraries-infrastructure-program>

Table 1: Prior Library Funding

Council	Library	Total Amount	Date
City of Whittlesea	Mill Park Major Refurbishment Project LLIP funds \$559,493	\$8 million \$984,000	2002 May–July 2019
	Lalor Major Refurbishment Project LLIP funds \$300,000	\$837,382	2014
	Thomastown Minor Refurbishment Project LLIP funds \$115,386	\$215,374	2017
	Whittlesea Community Centre and Library New Build LLIP funds \$400,000 Other State Govt Funding \$2,806,411	\$8,511,493	2012/13
Banyule City Council	Ivanhoe Library & Gallery New Build Major Project LLIP funds	Total cost \$52 million \$750K	March 2019 – Sept 2020
	Watsonia Refurbishment Project LLIP funds	\$380,000 \$150,000	2015
	Rosanna New Build (due 2025)	\$1.5 million	2021
Nillumbik Shire Council	Eltham Major refurbishment & extension Minor refurbishment - YPRL funds	\$740,000 \$450,000	2010–2011 2023
	Diamond Valley Major Refurbishment	\$500,000 Grant \$160,00 YPRL \$320,00 Council	2020
	New Community Learning Garden project	\$450,000 Grant	2024
YPRL	Mobile Library Minor refurbishment of 2006 old trailer Replacement of Prime Mover 2018		2017
	Outreach Vehicle Replacement Vehicle Purchased 2023 Vehicle fitted out 2024	\$100,000 \$150,000 (YPRL)	2022

Library Agreement

Decisions regarding infrastructure models and the extent of library networks and building infrastructure provision sit appropriately with member Councils. It is member Councils that make decisions regarding capital improvements or when new library developments will occur within their respective municipal boundaries, and YPRL manages all aspects of the library services delivered from those buildings.

The Library Agreement of the YPRL's three member Councils details the terms and the conditions of the provision of library services and how the costs for the service will be apportioned. The Agreement has been made in accordance with Section 196 of the Victorian Local Government Act and is due for review in 2025.

Part 6 of the Library Agreement describes the responsibilities for costs associated with the Council assets used by the service. The assets of the Council to be used by the YPRL (buildings) and the assets of the YPRL (collections, ICT, Mobile Library, Outreach Vehicle), are detailed in Schedules 1 of the Agreement. Each year YPRL prepares a budget that details the costs of operating the service per member Council based on Schedule 2 which outlines the cost apportionment model.

YPRL is responsible for the maintenance, repair, replacement and operating costs of all its assets which include collections (physical and virtual), ICT equipment, and vehicles (Mobile Library / Outreach Vehicle). It is also responsible for the maintenance, repair, replacement and operating costs of all assets transferred to YPRL by the member Councils, such as furniture. Councils are responsible for providing buildings, the initial purchase of furniture and equipment in new libraries and the initial purchase of mobile libraries from which library services are provided by YPRL. The costs of providing and maintaining library buildings are the responsibility of the member Councils. Buildings provided by Council may be Council owned or leased. In preparing annual budgets for the Corporation, allowance is made for some of costed depreciation of the assets of YPRL which includes lending materials, furniture, equipment and vehicles to build the Asset Replacement Fund.

Design and Development Guidelines

*People Places*¹¹ has been developed as a practical resource for the planning and design of a new or refurbished public library building. The resource has been designed in sections, which can be used independently. It not only explores issues relating to library design and provide an established methodology for determining building size estimates based on population, services provided and library service type but also provides clear processes needed to deliver a successful library development project.

People Places has been used widely across Australia as a framework to ensure the development process for a new library and delivers the best possible library designed to deliver local services that meet local needs.

It has been proven that new library buildings and well-planned refurbishments of existing libraries increase memberships and visits. A new library's success is enhanced by good design and a relevant location. Good design of public libraries now includes:

- Inspiring design generating civic pride for citizens;
- Defined spaces for diverse user groups;
- Retailing approach to collection display;
- High quality interior design that includes comfortable welcoming furniture; appropriate lighting and signage;
- Significantly increased Information and Communications Technology embedded in all spaces; and
- Café style eating and drinking facilities.

Recent experience in Australia and overseas has demonstrated that community led, well planned, and beautifully designed libraries do increase usage and provide a range of significant community wellbeing and

¹¹ *People Places a guide to building libraries in NSW, 3rd edition, 2012* <https://www.sl.nsw.gov.au/public-library-services/people-places-tools> accessed September 2019

liveability outcomes for the communities that the libraries serve. *People Places* also emphasises new models for the provision of library services, emphasising the need to comprehensively integrate modern technology into library functions and design.

YPRL recommends to the Board that *People Places* be used as the guide to assist member Councils in the planning, design and development of new libraries and library refurbishments.

Guidelines, Standards & Measures for Australian Public Libraries

The *Guidelines, Standards and Outcome Measures for Australian Public Libraries 2016*, presents evidence based national standards and guidelines for modern public libraries around Australia that complement the information within *People Places*. The revised guidelines cover all aspects of library service delivery including;

- Governance and Finance (operational, salary and capital)
- Library collections (physical and digital resources and content)
- Staffing numbers and levels
- Library building standards
- Technology and other web-based services

It is recognised that these guidelines can be used by Councils in developing local community service levels and can also be used to inform future library development projects.

YPRL Library Development Principles

YPRL is an innovative and progressive library service and has a well-deserved reputation as a leading library service in Victoria.

Our Vision: Informed creative communities: connected, empowered and well, drives how we design and deliver library services to our diverse populations.

Our Purpose: We will provide opportunities for our diverse communities to read, learn, create, connect, and live well. Supported by equitable access to collections, technology, programs and welcoming and safe spaces. This focus determines the outcomes that we work with our partners and people to achieve.

The Guiding Principles developed for this Plan are aligned with the Vision, Mission and Values of YPRL and are broadly aligned with our member Councils community values and strategies.

1. New Libraries will meet *People Places* Building size standards
2. Equity and Fairness in Development and Renewal
3. Local Community Needs will drive design and renewal
4. Libraries will be accessible for all and feature Universal design
5. Libraries are for everyone and engender pride in local communities
6. Libraries will incorporate Environmentally Sustainable Design Principles
7. Library design will be future focused with flexibility and adaptability key aims

What our Users are Telling Us

- Open longer
- More bookable quiet rooms/study areas
- More powered desks for work and study
- Requests for additional monitors to plug personal laptops into and sit/stand options
- More activities and spaces for adults suffering social isolation

- Library of Things
- Want more opportunities to learn
- Increased programming evenings and weekends
- Want to access library services closer to where they live.

Proposed Service Model Hierarchy

A proposed Service Model Hierarchy provides a framework in which libraries for different communities and catchments can be scaled. It is in summary:

- **Three destination libraries** – one for each member Council region: Ivanhoe Library Cultural Hub; Mill Park Library; Eltham Library providing services to the wider regions with extended opening hours. These destination libraries are large libraries and are architecturally significant civic buildings.
- **Branch Libraries** – suburban and town-based libraries providing a range of community focussed services including Watsonia, Rosanna, Lalor, Thomastown, Whittlesea, and Diamond Valley. Computers, printing and public wi-fi are offered in conjunction with regular programming and weekend and evening hours on offer. Investigation of the 24/7 access model will occur for suitable Branch Libraries.
- **Mini Branch Libraries** – providing a local service that is complemented by services in larger nearby branches. Mini Branch Libraries are fully staffed for a minimum of five days per week, offer computers, printing and public wi-fi. Opening hours can vary and may not include weekend opening. Opportunities for partnered place-based events and programming will be available. Collection size will be less than 15,000 items and will be curated to be relevant to local communities. Mini Branch Libraries can be collocated within other community service centres or a leased shopfront.
- **Click and Collect Library Hubs**- integrated within community activity centres. The Click and Collect Community Library Hub provides access to collections, reservations with a place-based program delivered. Limited staff hours are allocated for the hubs to manage the collection and deliver a limited program designed for local needs. No evening or weekend hours are provided.
- **Mobile Libraries** – providing services to remote and rural communities; This includes the Mobile Library and the Outreach Library which serves retirement villages and nursing homes.
- **eLibrary Services** – website access to all online library resources 24/7.

Proposed Library Infrastructure Development Timeframe

Table 2: Proposed Library Infrastructure Development Timeframe

Timeframe	Minor Refurbishment	Major Refurbishment	New Library	Planning and Design	Review
Short term 0–3 years	Lalor Thomastown	Mobile Library Outreach Vehicle	Mernda Mini Branch Rosanna Branch Kirrip Click & Collect Library Bellfield Click & Collect Library Donnybrook Mini Branch	West Wollert Mini Branch West Heidelberg Mini Branch	Galada Click & Collect Library Hurstbridge Click & Collect Library
Medium term 3–5 years		Thomastown – Public Amenities Watsonia – Public Amenities	West Wollert Mini Branch	Lalor – develop precinct concept Epping North Diamond Creek	
Long term 5–10 years			Epping North Diamond Creek West Heidelberg	Mernda – Destination Branch Cloverdale Branch Library	Mill Park Whittlesea Ivanhoe

Library Infrastructure Development Summary by Council

Table 3.1: Library Infrastructure Development Summary Banyule

Council	Location	Area m ²	Service Model	Development/ Renewal Activity to 2023	Development/Renewal Activity 2019 –2029
Banyule	Ivanhoe	2,640m ²	Destination Library	Built 2020	Long-term 5–10 years (2031) Review service offer and furniture
	Rosanna	1,300m ²	Branch Library		Short-term 0–3 years New Library
	Watsonia	1070 m ²	Branch Library	Built Major refurbishment completed	Short-term 0–3 years Community Meeting Room upgrade Mid-term 3–5 years Public Amenities Upgrade Staff Workroom upgrade Long-term 5–10 years (2031) Review of service offer
	West Heidelberg		Mini Branch Library / Co-location		Short term 0–3 years Business Plan, Planning and Design Mid-term 3–5 years New Mini Branch Library Long-term 5–10 years Review of services offered and furniture

Table 3.2: Library Infrastructure Development Summary Nillumbik

Council	Location	Area m ²	Service Model	Development/ Renewal Activity to 2023	Development/Renewal Activity 2019 –2029
Nillumbik	Diamond Creek		Mini Branch Library		Short-term 0–3 years Master Plan Mid-term 3–5 years Planning and design Long-term 5–10 years (2025) New Mini Branch Library
	Diamond Valley	1033 m ²	Branch Library	Built 1984 Planning and design major refurbishment 2019	Short-term 0–3 years Major refurbishment Long Term 5–10 years (2031) Review services and spaces offered
	Eltham	1320 m ²	Destination Library	Built 1994 Major refurbishment and extension in 2010	Short-term 0–3 years Planning and design Mid-term 3–5 years (2023) Major Refurbishment and extension

Table 3.3: Library Infrastructure Development Summary City of Whittlesea

Council	Location	Area m ²	Service Model	Development/ Renewal Activity to 2023	Development/Renewal Activity 2019 –2029
City of Whittlesea	Donnybrook	250 sq m	Mini Branch model	Planning and design of library service offer within the Patterson Drive Community Activity Centre	Short term 0–3 years Deliver a mini-branch model within the foyer of the Patterson Drive Community Activity Centre Mid-term 3–5 years Review service offer and opening hours.
	Epping North		Mobile Library stop in 2024	Review of Needs completed 2016	Short term 0–3 years Build an understanding of service needs from Mobile Library usage Mid-term 3–5 years Planning and Design for a static library service offer & explore possible options that include a library in a leased facility Long-term 5–10 years Static library offered
	Lalor	1070 m ²	Branch Library	Built 1985 Major refurbishment completed 2014 Cost \$1 million LLIP funds?	Short term 0–3 years Minor refurbishment staff area and library entrance Mid-term 3–5 years Review of service areas Long Term 5–10 years (2031) Planning and development of major refurbishment
	Mernda	250 sq m	Mini Branch	To open on 2024 in Shopfront	Short-term 0–3 years Open Mini Branch Mid-term 3–5 years Review Service Offer Long-term 5–10 years

Council	Location	Area m ²	Service Model	Development/ Renewal Activity to 2023	Development/Renewal Activity 2019 –2029
					Plan and Design larger collocated facility that includes a large library & upgrade to a destination library
	Mill Park	1800m ²	Destination Library	Built 2002 Major refurbishment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stage 1 completed 2019 • Stage 2 scheduled 2020 	Short Term 0–3 years Replace the HVAC system, refurbish the toilets, weatherproof the outdoor deck and develop an outdoor landscaped play area. Mid-term 3–5 years Design and build an extension to the Mill Park Library carpark Long Term 5–10 years (2031) Review of services offered and replacement of furniture.
	Thomastown	1700 m ²	Branch Library	Built Minor refurbishment completed 2017	Short-term 0–3 years Minor Refurbishment Mid-term 3–5 years Amenities / Community room facilities / foyer / staff area / Maternal Child Health Long Term 5–10 years (2025) Review Service offer, Partners and upgrade – replace furniture & Carpet
	Whittlesea	350m ²	Branch Library	Built 2013 Collocated with Community Centre	Short-term 0–3 years Investigate the Open Plus Library option to allow access to the Library on Sundays with no staff. Investigate, design and deliver a shared staff areas / solution. Long-term 5–10 years Review service offer
	Wollert	250 sq m	Mini Branch Library	Planning and Design of collocated Library within a Community Activity Centre	Short term 0–3 years Deliver a mini-branch model within the foyer of the Patterson Drive Community Activity Centre Mid-term 3–5 years Review service offer and opening hours.

Table 3.4: Library Infrastructure Development Summary YPRL

	Location	Development/ Renewal Activity to 2019	Development/Renewal Activity 2019 –2029
YPRL	Mobile Library	Trailer Built 2006 \$365,000 Minor facelift 2017 Replacement Prime Mover 2018 = \$297,000	Short-term 0–3 years Review Mobile Library Service. Develop Trailer specifications. Public Tender.
	Outreach Library	Built 2005 = \$220,000	Short-term 0–3 years Review Outreach Library service Develop specifications for new truck. Public Tender

Current Library Facilities¹²

BANYULE CITY COUNCIL LIBRARIES

Ivanhoe Library and Cultural Hub

Size: 2,640m² (1,035m² dedicated library space)
 Total hours open: 70 hours per week
 Visits 297,775 | Loans 239,183 | Collection Size | 54,720
 Members 16,757



Special features: The new Ivanhoe Library is collocated with Banyule Customer service, the Ivanhoe Art and Community Galleries, Maternal Child Health, and University of the Third Age. A dedicated design focussed Maker Space, community meeting rooms for hire, small auditorium, social enterprise run café, and a roof garden are also a feature of this new Library building.

Location, Ownership, Context: The new library and cultural hub is designed to meet all the requirements of its diverse and growing community. By providing space, resources, access and specialist areas for different community needs the library service can better support learning, a love of reading, and community engagement. It is conveniently sited next to the old Town Hall facing the side street, Ivanhoe Parade.

Catchment and growth: The main catchment area for Ivanhoe Library includes the suburbs of Ivanhoe, Ivanhoe East, Eaglemont, Heidelberg, Heidelberg Heights, Bellfield and Heidelberg West. The population of this area is expected to grow to 53,057 by 2031.

Usage Trends: Visits to Ivanhoe Library have continued to rise since the new building opened in March 2021. It currently averages 25,934 visitors each month, while historically it had 13,028 monthly visitors, meaning it now sees 199% of the visitation of the old building. This continued high volume of use needs to factor into Council’s forward plan for replacement of existing furnishings.

Community feedback on facility improvements: The new Library and Cultural Hub has been well-received by the community. Demand for seats and tables to work and study are at a premium at exam time and demand for the use of the community rooms continues to exceed availability.

Development Needs and Opportunities: Outreach opportunities can be increased to the communities of Heidelberg, Bellfield and West Heidelberg from the Ivanhoe Library and this could also be augmented through stronger partnerships with Council officers and community partners. Venue hire opportunities can also be increased with greater availability for the community meeting rooms if more flexible arrangements can be made with existing users. A change from group booths to single booths will also offer more seating / studying opportunities to try to meet over demand. The external deck areas could also be activated more with ensuring the existing tables and chairs are set out and the upstairs exterior section would benefit with the addition of a shade structure.

Recommendation: Ivanhoe Library and Cultural Hub

Timeframe	Outcome
Mid-Term 3-5 years	Opened in 2020. Review furniture options considering continued increase in demand and add / replace as required.
Long-term 5–10 years (2029)	Review of furniture, layout and service offer with architectural input.

¹² All figures used are from the YPRL 2018/19 Annual Report

Rosanna Library – Pop Up

Size: 120 sq m²
 Total hours open: 50.5 hours per week
 Visits 73,698 | Loans 111,506 | Collection Size 6,210
 Members 10,119



Special features: Rosanna Library is currently operating out of a 120sq metre shopfront in Beecham Parade while the new Library building is built with an expected completion date of July 2025. The new library will be co-located with the Rosanna Maternal Child Health Centre and the fee-based membership only Banyule Toy Library, 1300 sq metres of the new building will be allocated to the library service. The design will integrate all services into a seamless hub. The building design is a public / private partnership with Woolworths who will hand Council a warm building shell with the actual library fitout the responsibility of Banyule City Council. The new design will incorporate maker spaces based on recording and podcasting, community meeting rooms for hire, and bookable quiet study rooms.

Location, Ownership, Context: The new Rosanna Library is well situated on a corner block on Turnham Ave with easy access by public transport with train and bus stops outside the front door. The land is owned by Banyule City Council and the block of land immediately next to the Library is owned by Woolworths. The proposed building is a supermarket and community / library hub.

Catchment and growth: The catchment of Rosanna extends to Macleod and parts of Heidelberg serving an estimated population of 22,000. Applying the 10.79% population growth figure for Banyule City Council an expected population of 24,380 in 10 years requires a 1,400 m² library footprint to service this growth. Increasing the dedicated library parking is also required to meet the increasing demand. The catchment of Rosanna is made up predominately of families with children (18% 0–14) and a significant population 65 and over (21%).¹³

Usage Trends: It is expected that the new building will generate a 20% uplift in previous Rosanna visitor figures. Especially with the addition of study rooms and community meeting rooms for hire.

Community feedback on facility improvements: The Rosanna community has been asking for access to community meeting rooms, a maker space and increased study and seating spaces within the Rosanna Library for many years. The proposed Library Hub design provides solutions for these needs.

Development Needs and Opportunities: Rosanna Library Hub is part of the Woolworths development and there may be opportunities to explore to connect with the supermarket and marketing of programs and collections. There is an opportunity to consider an Open Plus Library model at Rosanna with an option for access to the library unstaffed, particularly for Sunday access.

Recommendation:

Timeframe	Outcome
Short-term 0–1 year	Planning and design for an extended library.
Mid-term 1-3 years	New Build completed by end of 2025
Long-term 5–10 years (2035)	Review of service offer

Watsonia Library

Size 1070 m²
 Total hours open: 60 hours per week
 Visits 134,648 | Loans 194,189 | Collection Size 39,015
 Members 12,539



Special features: The Watsonia Library has external return chutes open 24 hours, a community meeting room available for hire and has a dedicated Public Access Computer / Study space. A community garden is another well-loved feature of the Library with a dedicated number of volunteers.

Location, Ownership, Context: The Library is situated at 4–6 Ibbotson Street, Watsonia, close to the main street and local train station. The land is owned by Banyule City Council and has a Japanese garden outdoor space for the community and a community garden space. Public Parking is available though there is limited dedicated library parking assigned and on-street parking surrounding the library is competing with the train station parking which is full daily before 8am with commuters. The new Town Centre Works planned for 2024/2025 will reduce the car parking capacity by 14 spaces and impact the delivery drop-off point for our daily courier service.

Catchment and growth: The catchment of Watsonia includes Yallambie and Viewbank and serves a population of 16,17613. Applying the 10.79% population growth figure for Banyule City Council an expected population of 17,920 in 10 years a 1,156 m² library footprint is required to meet this growth. It is expected that the existing library size will provide relevant services for the next 10 years.

Usage Trends: Usage of the library has decreased since the Northeast Link works have impacted directly on the Greensborough Highway. Further capital works in the Town Centre in the 24/25 financial year may continue this downward trend as access to the library will be impacted in the short term.

Community feedback on facility improvements: Given the number of families with young babies who use the library the lack of a parent’s room for breast feeding and nappy changing is a significant issue. Access to parking is also high on library users’ agendas. It is noted that at Ivanhoe the parking limits are 3 hours yet at Watsonia these are limited to 2 hours. Increasing the Parking limit to 3 hours would go some way to alleviate this concern, especially as the library encourages a 2 hour computer use session. More powered study tables are also on our community’s agenda.

Development Needs and Opportunities: Watsonia public spaces were renovated in 2019 with a furniture refresh and the introduction of Book Express shelving. It is recommended to develop the study room as the bookable community room as it is larger and has lots of natural light which is more attractive as a community meeting facility than the existing community meeting room. This would also provide alleviation for the unmet demand for the Ivanhoe Library community meeting rooms which are fully booked during the week by U3A. The current community room could be renovated to be the overflow study space and has access to power along the walls to provide powered study tables. Improvement in the layout and storage options in the staff workspaces is seen to be a priority so that the library staff can efficiently deliver optimal services, programs and events for the community. The public amenity facilities also require an upgrade within the next 5 years.

Recommendation:

Timeframe	Outcome
Short Term 0–3 years	Upgrade the study room to a community meeting room Design new toilets, parents lounge and expand staff workroom.
Mid-term 3–5 years	Upgrade Amenities Provide a Parenting Room

¹³ ABS Quick stats Watsonia, Viewpoint & Yallambie accessed September 2019
https://quickstats.censusdata.abs.gov.au/census_services/getproduct/census/2016/quickstat/SSC22708

CITY OF WHITTLESEA LIBRARIES

Lalor Library

Size 1070m²

Total hours open: 60 hours per week

Visits 169,133 | Loans 91,524 | Collection Size | 35,658

Members 17,466



Special features: The Lalor Library offers a under 8's Toy Library and Learning STEM Library for under 12s. Lalor holds the YPRL major language collections with eleven language collections provided to serve a predominately multicultural community. A Community Room is available for hire and is operated by the City of Whittlesea. The Lalor Library offers dedicated STEM activities for children and adults in partnership with the community.

Location, Ownership, Context: The library is excellently located in the main shopping street of Lalor in a busy shopping destination for the local community. Station Street and May Road have undergone a significant safety upgrade with CCTV installed and improved street lighting in 2019. The library serves a significant multicultural population and is situated near St. Luke's Primary School, Lalor Community House and Lalor Senior Citizens' Community Hall. The building is owned and maintained by the City of Whittlesea.

Catchment and growth: The catchment for Lalor includes Epping Central with an estimated combined population at 2023 of 39,047. Over 50% of this population speak a language other than English at home. The population is expected to grow to 49,740 by 2041. Lalor has a significantly higher than average figure for Internet not available at home (24.1%) and a higher than the Victorian average for unemployment.¹⁴

Usage Trends: Lalor continues to have strong visitation numbers and attendance at programming and events. The Lalor community embrace the library as a community hub and have a heavy use of the adjacent community room which also drives visits to the library. Borrowing physical items is not a primary outcome for the library visit with loans continuing a slight downward trend. Recent co-design work with the community has given the library a deeper understanding of language collections and what the community want.

Community feedback on facility improvements: As the library is used as a community hub and meeting place more tables and chairs are required with flexibility the key. A new layout design has been developed by YPRL with the architects from Content Studio. The creation of a co-working space with increased table and chairs, improved furniture selection in the quiet study room, a relocated children's space and an expanded teen area is set to meet community feedback. This building work and new collection layout is set to be implemented in May 2024.

Development Needs and Opportunities: The major opportunity for Council is to integrate the Library and the Senior's Centre to create a learning / community precinct. Entry could be from French Street which has increased parking opportunities for library users. The Senior Citizens' Community Hall shares an internal wall with the library. The Hall facilities include meeting rooms, industrial kitchen, and rooms for hire. An MOU specifying a collaboration with the library and a connecting door that could be locked would be beneficial for both parties. The Senior Citizens find exiting their Hall at night times is quite confronting due to the lack of lighting down the side of the buildings. If they could exit from the library that would be a safer option. The library could extend its existing services from agreed use of the Hall's facilities to greatly benefit the community.

The outdoor space that currently has an unused Bocci court could also be part of this redevelopment creating a learning / sensory community food garden space for the community, especially for parents / carers and their

¹⁴ 2016 Census Quickstats Lalor https://quickstats.censusdata.abs.gov.au/census_services/getproduct/census/2016/quickstat/SSC21443 accessed August 2019

children. The front of the library is looking quite worn and is due for a refresh. There is a back wall at the back of the library near the staff carpark that is facing the main street that would be an ideal marketing opportunity for Council and the Library. There is also an opportunity for YPRL to manage the community meeting room at Lalor to bring this in line with the management of community meeting rooms within library spaces at other libraries within the YPRL network.

Recommendation:

Timeframe	Outcome
Short Term 0–3 years	Upgrade the HVAC Refresh the furniture and implement an improved layout with a co-working space Refresh the front of the library, including outdoor seating and provide a designed outdoor space, and replace children’s area shelving.
Mid-term 3–5 years	Plan and deliver an integration of Senior Citizens hall and library building.
Long Term 5–10 years (2031)	Planning and development of a major refurbishment including the toilets

Mill Park Library

Size 1800m²
 Total hours open 61.5 hours per week
 (incorporating Libraries After Dark project hours)
 Visits 173,860¹⁵ | Loans 294,322 | Collection Size | 65,759
 Members 26,088



Special features: Built in 2002, the Mill Park Library underwent a refurbishment in 2019, 2020 and new carpark works in 2022. It now houses a café, children’s cubby house and an outdoor deck and learning garden and upgraded amenities which greatly enhances the library visitor experience. Within the refurbishment a semi-private meeting space was created in direct response to community requests and is bookable and the meeting booths can also be reserved. A separate computer training room, and local history room with a specialised collection are also available for library visitors. There is a designated quiet space that is acoustically treated to absorb excess noise and has acoustically treated booths to support quiet study.

Location, Ownership, Context: The library is located off the main arterial road through Mill Park and South Morang, Plenty Road and has dedicated parking for library goers. The City of Whittlesea invested in the architecture of the library to create a signature building, visible to the community and to create a destination place for the local growing community.

Catchment and growth: The Library serves the catchment areas of Mill Park, Bundoora, and South Morang. This catchment area is a high growth area and is expected to continue to grow to over 79,000 by 2041. Significant pressure for residential expansion is driving population growth within the City of Whittlesea and while slowing during the COVID pandemic is expected to continue to grow. The current population of this catchment area is 65464¹⁶ with a high proportion of families. The catchment has a higher proportion of Internet connected to the home than the Victorian average. There is also a significant proportion of languages other than English spoken in the home with the main languages being Italian, Greek, Macedonia, Mandarin, Arabic and Punjabi.

Usage Trends: The usage trends of the library have been impacted by significant road works on Plenty Road and the Covid pandemic and carpark works. Since the finalisation of the building works visitation and loans have been trending significantly upward. To continue to promote the community returning to the library, YPRL is continuing to focus on increased programming and marketing to encourage community members to return to

¹⁵ 2017/18 figures used as Mill Park Library was closed for a period of 8 weeks for refurbishment in 2018/19

¹⁶ Population ID [Population summary | City of Whittlesea | Population forecast \(id.com.au\)](#) accessed November 2023

the library, or to make their first visit. New programming such as Active Arvos is taking advantage of the beautiful new outdoor spaces to encourage healthy outdoor activities for children.

Community feedback on facility improvements: There is a recognition that the continuous growth of the catchment area that there is constant demand on all existing community infrastructure. Community meeting spaces for the area are at capacity and this demand flows onto the library spaces. The Mill Park Library opens till 10pm one night a week as an alternate safe destination venue for community members and encourages community connection and social get togethers for the surrounding suburbs. The community has been very positive about the upgrades to the facility with demand for study spaces during exam times exceeding available spaces.

Development Needs and Opportunities: There is an opportunity to link the library to the Leisure Centre with a small collection / reading hub established in the Leisure Centre foyer to encourage cross use to the library, only 2.5 kms away . The volume of returns and the fact that this library will be supporting the newly formed CoW Click and Collect Library Hubs collection management indicates there is a need to install a small, locally designed book sorter. This will mean that there is no need to grow the staff EFT to respond to the work generated by the Click and Collect Library Hubs and will reduce the risk of increased repetitive strain injuries. The Maker Space can also be revitalised as it currently has an out-of-date technology offer. Partnerships with local Universities in the areas of robotics, AI and repair culture with 3D printing are opportunities to explore.

Recommendation:

Timeframe	Outcome
Short Term 0–3 years	Install a book sorter (\$180k) New laptop tables to expand study spaces.
Mid-term 3–5 years	Create new Maker Space
Long Term 5–10 years (2031)	Review of services offered and replacement of furniture.

Thomastown Library

Size 1700m²
 Total hours open 52 hours per week
 Visits 103,241 | Loans 55,015 | Collection Size | 21,344
 Members 8,304



Special features: The Thomastown Library has three (3) flexible community meeting rooms, (maintained and managed by YPRL), a computer training room, community kitchen facilities, a Maker Space focused on textiles with sewing and craft, such as knitting and crochet, a feature. Thomastown Library is home to a Maternal Child Health Centre and partners with the Thomastown Neighbourhood House (TNH) and Ziebell’s Farmhouse to run community activities and programs. Aurora Social Links, a service for Adults with disability, is also co-located within the Library. There is a coffee cart for visitors operated by TNH. A community garden outdoor space is a delight though not widely used as minimal outdoor furniture is available. The Library provides a dedicated carpark which is shared with the Thomastown Recreation and Aquatic Centre, Bubup Willam Early Learning Centre and the Sport Pavilion. In 2022 the City of Whittlesea upgraded the offer at Thomastown with the introduction of co-working furniture to encourage community members to work from the library. This continues to be well used.

Location, Ownership, Context: The Library opened in 1993 and is located next to the Thomastown Recreation and Aquatic Centre which offers swimming pools, gym and an outdoor splash park. It is away from the main street and requires a dedicated visit by community members. The building is owned and maintained by the City of Whittlesea. The community meeting rooms were an extension added in 2005 and are managed by YPRL and have standard meeting room fees.

Catchment and growth: Thomastown Library catchment include a proportion of the surrounding townships. It is recognised that Main Road and the railway does split the areas and there is minimal cross over from the communities on the opposite side of these major arterial transport areas. Parts of Bundoora would also be in the catchment area. The population of Thomastown is 20,002 and the population is significantly below the Victorian averages in higher education attainment. Languages spoken at home include Arabic, Italian, Macedonian, Vietnamese and Greek. There is a higher than average component of the population that are unemployed and over 25% of the community do not have Internet access at home. There are a high percentage of families in the catchment area.

Usage Trends: Usage has been affected by the Covid pandemic but is now returning in 2023 to pre-pandemic levels. Some feedback on the collection offer shows that the community is unskilled at putting holds on themselves for specific items and this is evident in the low number of holds placed at Thomastown Library in comparison with other Branches. The Library offers a significant community program and children's program in partnership with groups such as Thomastown Neighbourhood House. The programming offer continues to be a main driver of use of the library.

Community feedback on facility improvements: Noise is a constant complaint at the library as the two main aims of the library, family programming and quiet study, are in constant competition. Parents love the library as a place that has lots of activities for children and spaces for parents, and easy access to the Maternal Child Health services. Negative feedback regarding the Public Toilets and parent facilities for changing babies has been received regularly.

Development Needs and Opportunities: The community kitchens and the public toilets are in serious need of replacement. Repainting has been done in these areas but there needs to be an upgrade to the kitchen equipment and sinks as well. YPRL has funded a refurbishment of the Maker Space, Public PC areas and an upgrade to the furniture to be undertaken in May 2024. YPRL is replacing the chairs and tables in the community rooms over time. The public amenities are no longer DDA compliant and require a significant upgrade as soon as possible.

There is also a need to assess and possibly replace the roof in the next few years as there is a semi-regular leak. This building is over 30 years old and does need improvements at the building level within the next 5 years and to upgrade the air-conditioning with internal controls as we receive complaints regarding the community rooms air conditioning levels.

The outdoor area could also be improved to operate as a sensory garden for under 8's and provide further community garden opportunities to grow food which would allow for young families to have guided outdoor play activities. Acoustically treated booths have been provided for community members in the co-working space and these could be expanded with the addition of increased power points for those who have their own devices and to expand the co-working offer.

Recommendation:

Timeframe	Outcome
Short Term 0–3 years	<p>Upgrade to the Community Meeting Room kitchens, including better quality exhaust fans/extractors in kitchens,</p> <p>Significant upgrade for the public toilets which will mean a redesign is required for the entry and for the spaces for the Thomastown Neighbourhood House.</p> <p>Add an external entry door onto the Community Meeting Rooms for entry/exit after hours.</p>
Mid-term 3–5 years	Assess the building roof to reduce leaks
Long Term 5–10 years (2031)	Upgrade the external areas of Thomastown Library to include a Learning Garden similar to the Mill Park Library offer and to provide an outdoor seating option facing the ovals to integrate the library more fully with the sporting facility offer.

Whittlesea Library

Size 350m²
 Total hours open 46 hours per week
 Visits 43,583 | Loans 39,121 | Collection Size | 12,885
 Members 3,551



Special features: The Whittlesea Library is housed in the Whittlesea Community Activity Centre. It has access to community meeting rooms, provides a quiet workspace in a community meeting room, a cosy reading nook with a gas log fire, public PCs and a dedicated children’s area that includes a connected, fenced outdoor play area and small garden bed. Whittlesea Township doesn’t have a local Office Works resulting in Whittlesea Library supporting many home-office needs such as printing, scanning and photocopying with a continuing demand for work from home space too due to our stable and free internet connection.

Location, Ownership, Context: At the lower end of Laurel Street the Whittlesea Community Activity Centre is situated opposite the Whittlesea Tennis Club and the AF Walker recreation reserve. The Centre is owned, maintained and managed by the City of Whittlesea and they provide staffing for the customer service desk within the Centre 3 days a week. The Library is situated at the back of the Centre and is staffed and managed by YPRL, open 6 days per week. The Centre is also a designated emergency shelter in times of disaster and there is a service level agreement with the Council which allows them to open the library if the Centre is activated as an emergency shelter.

Catchment and growth: The Whittlesea Library catchment area includes Wallan, Donnybrook, Eden Park and Upper Plenty and some parts of Mernda. The population base is 18,048¹⁹ with the community characteristics of a high proportion of the employment in the trades / industries and a below the Victorian average with higher academic qualifications. A high proportion of the community has Internet at home. Wallan in particular is

expected to have high growth in the next 10 years and the City of Whittlesea is currently planning community venues in the long term for this community. The new mini branch library at Mernda is expected to open in early 2024 in a shopfront in the Mernda Town Centre.

Usage Trends: This is a small library which provides outreach programming to the Donnybrook Click and Collect Library Hub. Joint programming with Council is also a feature of this library’s services with a close relationship with Council at the local level. The collection has an acceptable turnover rate and the staff work to ensure the small collection is regularly refreshed. A concerted membership drive is being conducted which is seeing greater numbers of new members joining. Library staff get out and about in the community to promote the library. Improved directional signage is also expected to drive more community to the library.

Community feedback on facility improvements: The Library shelves are on wheels which does mean there is flexibility with the use of the library space. There is an ongoing demand for Tech help sessions with senior members of the community.

Development Needs and Opportunities: Improved use of the Centre foyer to promote the library is needed. Storage is minimal and some innovative solutions will need to be designed. The current Librarian Office is too small and finding a shared solution with the Centre staff area could be investigated. Investigating technological solutions to allow extended access to the library with no staff is also recommended. Originally the Community meeting room 2 was set up to support students as an after-school study space. It would be excellent to re-establish that partnership and offer that space as open space for study/co-working space when the meeting room is not booked. Converting the outdoor play and garden area into a learning garden with the existing garden beds needing to be lowered so that they can be accessed by children

Recommendation:

Timeframe	Outcome
Short Term 0–3 years	Investigate the Open Plus Library option to allow access to the Library on Sundays with no staff. Investigate, design and deliver a shared staff areas / solution.
Long Term 5–10 years (2031)	Review layout and services offered, including the option of expanding the library space. Replace furniture.

NILLUMBIK SHIRE COUNCIL

Diamond Valley Library

Size 1033m²
 Total hours open 51 hours per week
 Visits 67,078 | Loans 121,025 | Collection Size | 30,047
 Members 8,317



Special features: The Diamond Valley Library has a thriving community garden which operates as a Garden Maker space and has a seed library. It features a reading dog program and messy play activities in addition to regular storytimes. A separate community room is available during opening hours for a fee and is managed by YPRL. Small meeting pods are available for bookings and are free to use. The Diamond Valley Library has a longstanding arrangement with the Diamond Valley Toy Library and supports the organisation to operate the Toy Library lending service and the storage of the toys onsite.

Location, Ownership, Context: Diamond Valley Library is nestled next to parkland in the Nillumbik Shire Council civic hub in Greensborough. The building is owned and maintained by Nillumbik Shire Council (Nillumbik) and was built in 1984. In 2021 a major refurbishment project was completed. A Learning Garden is planned for delivery in 2024 and includes an upgrade to the dedicated accessibility parking bays. This has been funded by the State Government Grant Growing Suburbs fund with YPRL contributing \$80,000 to the project.

Catchment and growth: The catchment area for the Diamond Valley Library includes the rural areas Diamond Creek, Hurstbridge and Wattle Glen as well as parts of Greensborough and Briar Hill, formerly part of the Diamond Valley Council. An approximate catchment figure of 35,706 population is used for planning purposes. This catchment area has a high proportion of families and a high take-up of Internet in the home. Micro and home-based businesses are also a feature of this catchment area.

Usage Trends
 The usage of the library is increasing and there is a close relationship with the nearby schools who regularly visit the library with a significant after school visitation by students evident during school semesters. Physical loans of books are maintaining their usage levels over the past few years. The Library storytimes are heavily frequented, and attendance is increasing at all the Early Years programs the library delivers. There is increasing demand for 'work' space for those home/micro businesses who are isolated due to the demands of the sole ownership businesses with the refurbishment including single booth seating with laptop tables and power.

Community feedback on facility improvements
 Wayfinding is difficult for the community with many comments that regarding community not being aware that the library exists. Improved wayfinding from the Leisure Centre and playground is required to make the library more visible from the road. Possible large Library sign on the building could also improve visibility of the library for those using the Council, the Leisure Centre and the new playground.

Development Needs and Opportunities: The planned improvements for the exterior of the library will significantly improve the library service and allow for an improved outdoor and community garden offer. Outdoor play and early learning education opportunities will also be improved. A change in the name of the library to the Greensborough Library may also resonate with the community more and could be considered in the future.

Recommendation:

Timeframe	Outcome
Short Term 0–3 years	Major refurbishment of the outdoor areas of the library.
Long Term 5–10 years (2031)	Review services and spaces offered.

Eltham Library

Size 1320m²

Total hours open: 60 hours per week

Visits 196,135 | Loans 258,958 | Collection Size | 46,951

Members 20,822



Special features: Nestled in a landscaped setting with access to two cafes the Eltham Library and Gallery is a signature building for the Eltham community. The building received the “Award of Merit for Outstanding Architecture in the category on Institutional new”, for the architect firm Greg Burgess PTY LTD, 19/7/1995. The Building also has a Heritage Overlay as it represents ‘a skilful and contemporary expression of the Eltham Style, with its emphasis on natural materials and forms and integration into the environment’. It is made from mud brick and its treed, natural setting attracts the whole community.

It houses the Eltham Art Gallery featuring local artists and pieces from the Nillumbik Shire Council art collection are displayed prominently in the library. A Community Meeting Room is available for hire and two cafes are built into the precinct, which is another draw for the community to visit. Note that the Community Room and Gallery are managed by Council. A fenced outdoor area in a natural garden setting for children is a special feature and the Mezzanine is designed for those who wish to study or work. Designed to promote social gathering with nooks and comfortable seating it is a well-loved and heavily used community facility.

Location, Ownership, Context: The Library is situated near the railway station and not far from the main shopping centre of Eltham. It is owned and maintained by Nillumbik Shire Council and was opened in 1995. It has been extended once in the 24 years and is in need of further extension to cater to the significant usage. Council plans to replace the carpet in 2024.

Catchment and growth: The catchment area for the Eltham Library includes St Helena, Montmorency and North Warrandyte with a catchment population of 33,153 that includes 9,272 families.¹⁷ The catchment is characterised as highly educated, higher than the Victorian average weekly incomes, higher mortgages and higher than average internet connected directly to the home. The library footprint needs to be 1700m² to deliver appropriate services to the catchment and applying the 8.8% expected growth rate to the area the catchment population will be expected to be 36,096 by 2036 the recommended library size is 1800m².

Usage Trends: Usage of the Eltham Library remains steady with upward movements seen in loans of physical items and membership. The library storytimes are heavily frequented and attendance is increasing at all the Early Years programs the library delivers as families seek learning opportunities for their young children and social connection for themselves. There is increasing demand for quiet ‘work’ and study space that has good WiFi and access to coffee.

Community feedback on facility improvements: Parking is under pressure with current free parking at capacity. Visits to libraries are averaging four hours and this is an issue when there is limited hour carparking and it is at capacity. There are competing demands between families with young children and those who wish to have areas for quiet study or quiet places to work. The community’s feedback is for an outdoor contemplation garden that is away from the children’s spaces and is a quiet place. Increased spaces for study, and group spaces for study are frequently asked for. The current nook areas that attract small groups are often filled in the busy times and more could be developed.

¹⁷ 2016 Census Quick Stats Eltham (Vic) accessed October 2019

https://quickstats.censusdata.abs.gov.au/census_services/getproduct/census/2016/quickstat/SSC20859

Development Needs and Opportunities: There is a definite expectation that the library could provide a co-working space for start-ups and small micro businesses. A large area for holding larger events of up to 120 people is required and the library’s event program could easily program into this space on a regular basis. The Community Gallery could also be expanded as there is also a demand for larger gallery exhibition. It would be highly desirable for the café to face the interior of the library to ensure our library visitors do not have to pack up their things and leave the library to get a coffee. The current children’s area is at capacity and could be expanded. There is a further opportunity to plan the entire precinct and to combine the Senior Citizens facility with the library and include an auditorium or large multi-purpose event space for both groups use.

Recommendation:

Timeframe	Outcome
Short Term 0–3 years	Monitor new layout and new furniture offer. Look to expand seating options to meet demand. Replace the carpet.
Mid-term 3–5 years	Explore options for expansion.
Long-term 5-10 yrs	Book sorter will need to be replaced by 2033.

Conclusion

YPRL has a good understanding of how building improvements could enhance library services for communities based on professional expertise and experience. While this Plan provides an overview of the status of library facilities and makes recommendations about the nature and the timing of facility improvements, it is recognised that member Councils have responsibility for planning, funding and delivering capital improvements or new library developments.

The Library Infrastructure Development Plan for libraries across the region can be used as a guide for YPRL and member Councils regarding the evolution of library facilities over the next ten years. It can also assist with the co-ordination of funding applications and the allocation of resources within our organisations to ensure that library facilities are the best they can be for the communities they serve.

The current planning processes for the new model of mini branches will be monitored in the coming years to determine future service needs for these communities and how YPRL can meet the demand for full library programming and monitor the demand for the seating available. Further planning and development of the Click and Collect Library model will also occur with member Councils as these service points increase throughout the region.

[END OF DRAFT INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2023-2031]

F. Continuation of matters lapsed from previous meetings

G. Consideration of action petitions and joint letters

H. General Business

I. Reports from delegates appointed by the Board to other bodies

J. Urgent Business

K. Confidential Meeting (meeting closed to the public as per 89 (2) of the Local Government Act 1989)

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Board resolve that the Confidential Meeting be held in camera at.....

M: _____

S: _____

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Board resolve that the Ordinary Board Meeting be reopened to the public at.....

M: _____

S: _____

[END OF YPRL ORDINARY BOARD MEETING]