1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 This report is being presented to provide information on the Elwood Beach Renourishment Program and to seek endorsement of Council’s contribution of $250,000 towards the project.

2. RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

2.1 Allocates $250,000 as Council’s contribution to the Elwood Beach Renourishment Project.

3. BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

3.1 The 30 most popular Port Phillip Bay beaches were artificially constructed through dredging by the old Port of Melbourne Authority - this includes all of the main beaches in the City of Port Phillip. Please refer to attachment one which refers to the beach renourishment establishing Elwood Beach in August 1983.

3.2 Elwood beach is highly valued by locals and visitors. In 2006 the Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE) announced $8 million to renourish a selected number of beaches around Port Phillip Bay. Out of 30 beaches Elwood was ranked in the top 3.

3.3 It is anticipated in ten years or less, depending on the frequency and severity of storm events, the beach will be lost.

3.4 According to Life Saving Victoria and Elwood Life Saving Club figures for the last four years, there has been up to a 50% increase in patronage to the beachfront space on patrol days. Beach usage is expected to continue to rise with increasing population and climate change pressures.

3.5 Designs are underway for the State Government to invest up to $2.5 million for the Elwood Beach renourishment works with the Elwood works to commence in
2

the second half of 2010. The works will create a 25 metre wide beach front (at high tide) for the next 20-25 years.

3.6 DSE requires Council to contribute up to $250,000 (equivalent to 10% of cost). This is inline with the contribution council made to the successful Middle Park beach renourishment project. This contribution can be provided through rectifying the current stormwater drainage problem that leads to erosion and pollution of the beach.

3.7 DSE is seeking best stormwater drainage practices to reflect the State Government’s investment, community values and increased patronage.

3.8 Stage 1 and 2 of Elwood Foreshore Management Plan has been delivered and stage 3 was programmed for delivery in 2009/10. During this time and since the development of the Elwood Foreshore Management Plan a number of issues have been identified that had not been included in stage 3 or 4 and required consideration. The issues include:

3.8.1 DSE beach Renourishment.

3.8.2 Boat ramp integration with beach renourishment structures. The existing Elwood Angling Club boat ramp has decayed beyond repair and needs to be removed and replaced. This work needs to be integrated into the groyne.

3.8.3 Stormwater drainage: The beach will be renourished to a width of 25m from the sea wall including an increase in the level of the height of the sand. If the stormwater flows are not changed from the current situation, the drains will continue to be blocked and the stormwater will undermine the beach renourishment works.

3.9 Work is currently being undertaken to amend the stage 3 design to address the issues of stormwater drainage and the replacement ramp.

4 CONSULTATION AND STAKEHOLDERS

4.1 DSE will start community consultation in late February with the local foreshore clubs to guide the detailed design and costings. Following the consultation with the key stakeholders there will be an information session held for the broader community. Council will work in partnership with DSE throughout the consultation process.

4. DISCUSSION

5.1 OPTIONS

5.1.1 DSE require Council to contribute $250,000 (10% of the project cost) Council has three options

- Option One: Pay DSE $250,000 as a cash contribution (equivalent to 10% of the State Government total investment)
- Option Two: Undertake the works required for the removal of untreated stormwater flows and integration of the replacement boat ramp with the rock groyne as part of the Elwood Foreshore development. Undertaking this works would be considered Council’s $250,000 contribution

- Option Three: Council could determine to not support the project. There is a high demand for state government investment in beach renourishment programs. If Council did not invest in the project it is likely that the state government would reallocate its funding to another municipal area.

5.1.2 Option Two is the preferred option as it would better satisfy the Council’s Plan and strategic priorities, by improving the stormwater flows into the Bay whilst providing the necessary Council contribution to the beach renourishment works.

5.2 ALIGNMENT TO COUNCIL PLAN

5.2.1 The renourishment of Elwood Beach and removal of beachfront stormwater disposal supports a number of Council’s key priorities including: ‘taking action on climate change’; ‘enhancing liveability’ and ‘engaging and governing the city’.

This project will also help achieve the following strategies:
- Strategy 1.1.1 Enhance council engagement with the community by maximising community feedback to ensure open and inclusive decision making;
- Strategy 1.1.2 Strengthen relationships with those who impact the Port Phillip community
- Strategy 2.1.2 Reduce Council’s potable water use (and reduce stormwater pollution);
- Strategy 2.3.1 Improve community understanding and build resilience in responding to the impacts of climate change; and
- Strategy 2.4.1 Maximise partnerships and resource sharing in mitigating the impacts of climate change on the community.

5.3 POLICY IMPLICATIONS PLAN

5.3.1 Supporting the Elwood Beach Renourishment is supported in the Foreshore Management Plan which identifies two actions in relation to beach protection for Elwood Beach:
- Council will continue to monitor the beach profile at Elwood, and reduce hazards as far as practicable in maintaining the beach environment.
- Council needs to continue to advocate to State Government the importance of Elwood beach to the community to ensure that it is properly assessed with regards to coastal processes and renourished when the opportunity arises.

5.3.2 It also supports the draft Water Plan which has targets for improving stormwater quality.
5.4 FINANCE / RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

5.4.1 The State Government will provide $2.5 million for the Elwood Beach renourishment. Council is required to contribute $250,000 (equivalent to 10% of cost).

5.4.2 The $250,000 contribution would need to be budgeted in the 2010/2011 financial year.

5.4.3 The $250,000 contribution is inline with the contribution council made to the successful Middle Park beach renourishment project

5.5 LEGAL & RISK IMPLICATIONS

6. IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

6.1 TIMELINE

6.1.1 The beach renourishment program would occur over the 2010/2011 and 2011/2012 financial years, with construction works occurring in 2010/2011 and the importation of sand to renourish the beach expected to occur in 2011/12

6.2 COMMUNICATION

6.2.1 The key messages arising from the recommendation contained in this report are

- Council recognises the high value and usage of Elwood beach by locals and the wider community.
- Addressing the stormwater drain as part of the Elwood Beach Renourishment will reduce the pollutants going into the bay.

7. OFFICER DIRECT OR INDIRECT INTEREST

7.1 No officers involved in the preparation of this report have any direct or indirect interest in the matter.