

Ordinary Meeting of Council 18 March 2020

Public Question Time

Sam McDonald

Why has the Council allowed a Ferris wheel to be erected on St Kilda Beach (beginning 17th of March) during a pandemic when this is a time of discouraging tourism? Can the council justify this decision when this choice does not seem to prioritise the safety of local residents or the general public?

Celine Lee

What are the council thoughts of kerbside gardening? I am lucky to have my own little garden plot but given many residents live in apartments that have limited land space, I would like to know if it is possible to legalize kerbside gardening. In the long term, there will be less reliance on supermarkets and vulnerable people will have access to produce. There are already several councils across Australia that have allowed this and I was wondering if Port Philip would consider this suggestion with urgency.

Judith Klepner

My respects to the traditional owners of the land. Today the City of Port Phillip Council, the tier of government closest to the community, meets in unprecedented circumstances. While the change to meeting procedures is acknowledged, and appreciated, why is the 2nd item of business not an Urgent Business Item which outlines, even in the broadest terms, with any caveats acknowledging the volatility of the times, how the Council proposes to apply its disaster management plan to support the community, particularly those who are most vulnerable, to receive support services during the forthcoming period, including but not limited to lockdown? Limited information has only appeared on the website in recent hours after weeks of daily building concern does not begin to recognise what is going on in our midst, in all settings. Council may have been having conversations internally and with other agencies, health, community and medical but needs to communicate some of its work. Item 14.6 Question and Comment My respects to the traditional owners of the land. I call for this matter to be deferred for 12 months, if not rejected outright. How can this matter even be considered tonight, given the extraordinary circumstances which the CoVid 10 pandemic creates which are likely to ricochet through all our City and society (and the higher education sector) and transform what is required from Council to service the needs (arts and other) of our Community? I note that the report does not contain any projection of what those needs might be in 12 years, let alone 25 or 50, even before consideration of the CoVid circumstances. I am the author of the 8th last item and would like to hear a response on the consultation process, which would be extraordinary if undertaken by the proponent of a minor planning proposal, let alone a city asset of this nature. Best wishes to all Council and all staff and their families in getting through this time.

Heath Martin

Following up from a recent planning meeting regarding the development at 21 - 23 William Street, Balaclava I understand there is some consideration being given to the design and development overlay for the area. I watched a recent livestream where a similar question was asked and I understand that piece of work is being considered and possibly prioritised for consideration. This is very important given the recent sales activity on the Street immediately following the Planning meeting. Is there an update from Council?

4.1 – Joint Letter – Port Phillip Emergency Climate Action Network

Trevor White:

My submission relates to the CEO's and officers' recommendation to the joint letter from PECAN's network of community groups seeking advice on council's actions on the declared "Climate emergency" motion of Council.

Given that it is now 27 weeks since the "climate emergency" was declared on the 18 September 2019,

waiting patiently, the community has been interested to learn what actions the City has undertaken and what actions the City will undertake to comply with the Council's motion.

unChain is a co signatory to the joint letter and is keen to learn what Council has done over the last 27 weeks and what is planned for the remainder of this year and into the future.

We had hoped that there would have been enough time since the PECAN letter, which was sent to Council last week on the 11 March, for Council officers to prepare a short reply to our letter for this council meeting.

Is it possible for Council officers to prepare a response for the PECAN 's network and the wider Port Phillip community well before the next scheduled meeting planned for 1 April and have this response communicated to the community?

Council's communication to the community needs to be improved.

Waiting till a "future Council meeting "for the response is far too open ended.

Justin Halliday:

My name is Justin Halliday and I am here representing the Port Phillip chapter of Extinction Rebellion.

We commend the City of Port Phillip for declaring a Climate Emergency.

We urge Council to follow through on its declaration by laying out a concrete timeframe to implement Extinction Rebellion's three demands.

- TELL THE TRUTH: Inform all residents and businesses of the critical importance of tackling climate change
- ACT NOW: Commit to clear timelines and budgets to achieve net zero emissions
- BEYOND POLITICS: Establish a Citizens' Assembly on Climate and Ecological Justice to guide council's actions

Once again, we urge council to follow through on its declaration of a climate emergency by implementing Extinction Rebellion's three demands.

Thank you.

Peter Moraitis:

Despite the shock of the corona virus we should remain steadfast in tackling the climate emergency. We cannot ignore the climate emergency because we have another emergency. As councillors, will be aware, PECAN conducted a recent forum in Elwood where over three hundred people came to hear and question experts about the consequences of sea level rise for Port Phillip and Bayside and the effects of increasing heat. An alarming highlight – one speaker cited a paper which identified that by 2050 approximately 40 % of Port Phillip will be regularly inundated. Another speaker spoke to the dramatic effects of rising heat especially on an aging population.

These are issues that people want the Council to discuss with the community, and strategies developed and acted on.

The unanimous resolution of the forum was that

"The citizens at this forum call upon the Port Phillip and Bayside Councils and the State and Federal Governments to take the strongest possible climate action now, to address the climate crisis we all face

In our joint letter (which was prior to Corona virus restrictions being put in place) we request that Council hold a public community meeting at St Kilda Town Hall as soon as possible

- To inform the citizens of Port Phillip of the actions being taken and planned by Council as a consequence of declaring the climate emergency;
- To begin a constructive dialogue with the citizens of Port Phillip about ideas for action by Council, community groups and the community.

The Council has described its post climate change declaration action as 'embedding the declaration in relevant policies and strategies'. However, this is not about new action but about redescribing existing action.

We need much more than that.

It is crucial that the community energy and desire for climate action not be dissipated in the very slight activity of redescribing existing policies and strategies under the rubric of the Climate Emergency Declaration. We need *to build on* existing policies and strategies, and we need *new* policies, strategies and practices commensurate with the always dawning realisation of the gravity of the climate crisis we face. We also need to find ways of building those policies and strategies together as an ongoing community building project. A cultural change is needed in the relationship between Port Phillip citizens and local government.

The existence of PECAN offers a new opportunity to make this happen.

We appreciate the coronavirus pandemic has made face to face public events impossible but even given that major obstacle there are online creative ways we can cooperatively accelerate local action in the face of the climate crisis. We hope councillors you take up our request and our offer.

Bryn Jepson:

Councils have an opportunity to help develop and shape the national response to the effects of climate change. Cities like Port Phillip can make ethical choices and take decisive action and as such, can influence other levels of government, local organisations, community groups and companies to contribute to the critical social and economic shift necessary to address the climate emergency.

The campaign to stop the proposed Adani coal mine in the Galilee Basin has identified that large companies and key contractors hold enormous power in the creation and longevity of fossil fuel projects. Their decisions can make or break a project and as such, these companies can help dictate the direction Australia will move in terms of energy production, technology and lifestyle. In the Stop Adani movement, we have urged companies that may involve themselves in the Adani project through construction, operational activity or insurance to abandon Adani and other fossil fuel projects and pledge to instead prioritise projects and ideas that can adequately address the climate emergency.

Given that the council has declared a climate emergency, we urge the council to consider how it engages with contractors and companies that work on fossil fuel projects. Currently, council's procurement policy only requires the disclosure of any dealings with, support or provision of ancillary services or the funding of activities in the fossil fuel industry, including energy generation, distribution, exploration or extraction for contracts over the value of \$1 million. In line with the declaration of the climate emergency, council should strengthen the parameters of this policy to require disclosure of potential contractors' involvement with fossil fuels for all contracts by reducing or removing the procurement threshold. Further, council should refuse to award contracts to companies that actively contribute to the fossil fuel industry, as entering into such contracts contradicts council's responsibility under the

declared climate emergency to consider the impact of climate change when planning and decision making.

I ask that the council clarify its current position with respect to fossil fuel contractors, stop dealing with them and more specifically with contractors working for Adani, and add this issue as an urgent agenda item for inclusion in the proposed community meetings.

Thank you.

Rhonda Small:

I speak as one of the signatories of the Joint Letter in my role as representing the Community Alliance of Port Phillip on the Port Phillip Emergency Climate Action Network - PECAN.

It is now six months since Council declared a climate emergency on 18 September 2020. I was in the Council Chamber that night as were many community members who supported Council in making the declaration. And a couple of weeks ago at the Heat, Fire & Flood Forum which PECAN organised, I witnessed tremendous community engagement with the need for us all to be involved in taking local action on climate change.

Council and the community face many challenges in dealing with the climate crisis and we need to work closely together to maximise the effectiveness of action. We are out here to support you in taking action as a result of the Climate Emergency Declaration, but you need to reach out and engage the community much more actively than we believe has happened in the last six months. That is why we wrote the joint letter.

And if COVID19 has now suddenly made our request for a public meeting in this Town Hall rather problematic as a first step in developing a more active dialogue with the community, it nevertheless serves to demonstrate how important it is at times of crisis to be having open and transparent (and caring) dialogue about the challenges we face and the actions we can take – whether that is climate change or the coronavirus. Fear and anxiety need to be replaced by meaningful collective action. We do not expect Council to be self-sufficient or to 'go it alone' in its response to the climate crisis. We the community must also take responsibility in addressing climate change, but you must engage us if that is to happen effectively.

Community building is an important role of Council, especially in times of crisis, and we wholeheartedly support you in taking local leadership around climate action. You are our representatives. You took the bold step of declaring a climate emergency. Please now find ways to draw on the resources of your community in shaping the actions. Communicate what has happened since last September. Partner with us. Set up a community advisory process. And develop a budgeted Plan of Action on the climate emergency that engages actively with your community.

Thank you.

Bill O'Loughlin:

Port Phillip Emergency Climate Action Network In support of PECANs joint letter, I would like to suggest a further way that Council could involve the community in its planning and actions following the Declaration of a Climate Emergency last September. As is consistent with Council policy to properly engage with the community, and as is also the practice at a number of other councils, I recommend that council establish a Climate Emergency Advisory and Monitoring Committee. The role of the Committee would include advice on the

development and implementation of Councils response to the climate emergency, monitoring the implementation of Councils climate emergency plan, and reporting to council and the community on Councils response to the climate emergency. The Committee would have the scope to make recommendations to council about all and any aspects of its response to the climate emergency. The Committee should be composed of members nominated by community networks such as PECAN. Council staff should be ex-officio members. As is appropriate for the significance of the topic, and to ensure effective implementation, monitoring and reporting, all meetings of the committee should be attended by: The Council CEO, the General Managers of the Divisions relevant to the plan, as well as the relevant council officers. Councillors could also attend. The Committee should meet monthly and provide a comprehensive progress report to Council every six months. This report would be written by council staff under the guidance of the committee.

Jack and Helen Halliday

Dear Mayor and Councillors

In the Council Document **Our Organizational Strategy** it is stated that *“There is an opportunity to channel the energy and knowledge of the community into productive partnerships and to use the fast pace of change in our service environment to radically improve customer experience”*.

The Sustainability area has not had any community advisory or consultative structures in place since 2013, and we welcome Council’s intention to develop strong linkages with the community.

It is noteworthy that Darebin, the first Council worldwide to declare a Climate Emergency, has three community consultative bodies around its Sustainability area, and a host of community members working intensively across components of its Sustainability strategy.

PECAN’s greatest concern is community emissions, which we understand now exceed 2million tonnes of CO2e annually. Council’s Sustainable City Community Action Plan is to be reviewed later this year and we hope community input is sought in this process, and that the program can be relaunched next year with more resourcing and more strategically developed objectives.

Since SCCAP commenced there’s been rapid development of new technologies relevant to Port Phillip. For 2 years, the Victorian government has supported trials of solar for apartments and that technology is now available commercially. In addition, solar farms now provide with the opportunity for apartment owners and renters to shift to renewable energy and take it with them when they move. Community Microgrids and virtual power plants are some of the other technologies which Council could be fostering. But progress in these areas cannot be made unless Council incorporates community energy, intelligence and initiative into its sustainability programs – when this happens Port Phillip’s emissions will start to be impacted, and that’s why we continue to press for Council partnerships with its community.

The budget shows that 2.8% of Council’s total expenditure is directed to Sustainability. Does that level or expenditure reflect a climate emergency?

Lynn Gunning:

For ACF Macnamara

I want to commend Council on their proactive response to the climate crisis and their declaration of a Climate Emergency.

As a member of Port Phillip Emergency Climate Action Network (PECAN), the Australian Conservation Foundation Macnamara Community group would like to contribute to ideas for sustainable action by council to reduce climate damage and support revegetation.

We encourage council to support the following initiatives:

- Reduce deforestation of the Central Highlands and Gippsland by advocating to end native forest logging in Victoria and only purchase wood products from sustainable and ethically sourced plantations
- Sign the Ethical Paper pledge, only use paper products from sustainable sources and encourage other Port Phillip business to sign through your Sustainable Business Network
- Encourage revegetation of native species in available space in the council area – including around Neighbourhood Houses, Community Centres or repurposed spaces such as Elster Park. Community members are interested in supporting local planting activities and this would also contribute to the council aim of a 1.9% increase in canopy cover.
- Consider funding Westgate Biodiversity to propagate plants or encourage citizen involvement in propagation for local revegetation or donation to bushfire recovery activities.

By supporting practical, grass roots initiatives and engaging with local community groups and proactive citizens to be part of the solution, Port Phillip council will place the community first and can develop and implement a comprehensive plan that ensures we have smart solutions for a sustainable future

Judy Gunson:

Dear Councillors,

My name is Judy Gunson and I am a member of Port Phillip Extinction Rebellion Our local group formed in August 2019 but already numbers close to 1,000 members from the Port Phillip community. I would like to introduce Council to our three demands in this time of Climate and Ecological Emergency and how we would like Council to respond to them.

TELL THE TRUTH: While we are heartened that Port Phillip Council has declared a Climate Emergency there is very little awareness of this fact in the community. Council needs to communicate the urgency of the Climate and Ecological emergency to all residents and businesses, including the particular issues facing residents from Heat and Flood. This information must be detailed and up to date and make clear that BUSINESS AS USUAL is not an option and that change is urgent.

ACT NOW: We need Council to act now to set clear goals with timelines, budgets and regular assessment of progress. These goals need to be as ambitious as possible. Extinction Rebellion calls for a target of net zero emissions by 2025.

BEYOND POLITICS: As we face this Climate and Ecological Emergency the challenges are big, wide-ranging and complex. And solutions are needed urgently. Extinction Rebellion believes that part of the problem is the way electoral politics works. We call on Council to establish a local consultative process, to facilitate the creation of a Citizens' Assembly on Climate and Ecological Justice. This will empower citizens to take the lead and politicians to follow with less fear of political backlash.

Citizens' Assemblies are fair and transparent. Assembly members have an equal chance of being heard. Briefing materials, experts, and other presenters are vetted by diverse stakeholders and shared publicly. This produces informed democratic decisions.

Citizens' Assemblies are especially useful when difficult trade-offs are necessary. For example, experts might propose policies for how to meet a 2025 target for net-zero greenhouse gas emissions and the Assembly could decide which they prefer. They would also consider how to mitigate the impacts of changes on the most vulnerable people.

12.1 – Trial of Gasworks Arts Park for School Use

Christine Fetterplace:

Good evening Mayor and Councillors.

My name is Christine Fetterplace. I have lived in Albert Park for 40 years and I have a long association with Gasworks Arts Park. I am a member of the Friends of Gasworks Arts Park.

We believe that Council should not rush into a formal arrangement with Albert Park College for student use of the Park. We consider that the process has not been sufficiently transparent or publicly discussed.

In May, last year, the Minister gave approval for Council to grant a licence for student use of part of Gasworks Arts Park. This enables a done deal to occur tonight if Council agrees with the officer's recommendation.

Gasworks Arts Park is a unique, arts based community park, in a native bushland setting, created over the last 40 years. Its purpose is for the development of art, cultural activities and passive recreation. It was initially conceived and managed by the community.

The process within Council to formalise Albert Park College use has been underway for a couple of years. All knowledge of the proposed school use has been obtained through the initiatives of a few community members, not as part of any genuine public consultation process.

The arrangement proposed has several problems and raises a number of questions that require answers:

- How was the area proposed for student use selected? It is vague and unmanageable. It runs through the central open space and requires teachers to stand there and hold out their arms to define the limit of student activity.
- It includes part of the circular pathway, which would be less likely to be used by other Park users when students are there.
- Is there any limit proposed on the number of students in the Park?
- What was the evidence provided to the Minister that student use will not be detrimental to the use and enjoyment by others?
- Who will enforce any conditions and what are the penalties for non-compliance?
- What are the school's long term plans in terms of student numbers and facility requirements?

Albert Park College has grown significantly in recent years and with a campus in Pickles St and there is an obvious student travel line through the middle of Gasworks Arts Park from the main buildings in Danks St. How is that continuous cross park movement to be managed?

Why is there a need to dedicate a portion of the Park for School use when the School grounds along Graham St and at the Pickles St campus are under-utilised?

The space proposed for use by the school will inevitably lead to a call for the redesign of the Park to more practically define and accommodate the school use.

Student use of the Park is also likely to be increased by the acquisition of the Alinta site on the north-west corner of the Arts Park for a theatre.

The licence proposed for Gasworks Arts Park should wait until there is a satisfactory public forum on the Park and community consultation for the Public Spaces Strategy.

We recommended strongly that a modified Option 2 be considered by Council. That is:

- Grant Albert Park College a trial licence to use Lemnos Square for passive recreation during school hours and subject to appropriate conditions.
- Facilitate an independently chaired community forum to discuss the potential use by Albert Park College and the potential impacts on the Park with all stakeholders, local residents and the general community invited.
- Defer a decision to licence any part of Gasworks Arts Park until the forum has been held and the proposed Public Space Strategy is available for public consideration.

In the meantime, Albert Park College should undertake to manage student activity in the Park to minimise detrimental impacts.

Gasworks Arts Park is unique. It was a new idea for the use of public space when conceived in the 1980s. Use and activities that have the potential to change that concept need careful consideration – by the community, before Council concludes any formal or even trial arrangement.

Thank you for your time.

Kay Gibson

I wish to express my dismay at the proposal to grant Albert Park College a licence over a significant part of the Gasworks Arts Park without having undertaken any meaningful consultation with the community of park users. Council is well aware of the importance of Gasworks park to the local community and its failure to consult with the community is disappointing and unacceptable. It has stoked suspicion about the underlying Council agenda for the longer term use of the licence area and has created unnecessary divisions and tensions between Albert Park College and the wider park -user community. In the interests of transparency and to keep faith with the park user community I urge Council to defer the vote on granting the licence until it has undertaken meaningful community consultation to give park users a voice on this important matter.

14.6 ANAM – Lease Proposal for South Melbourne Town Hall

Judith Klepner

My respects to the traditional owners of the land. I call for this matter to be deferred for 12 months, if not rejected outright. How can this matter even be considered tonight, given the extraordinary circumstances which the COVID 19 pandemic creates which are likely to ricochet through all of our City and society (and the higher education sector) and transform what is required from Council to service the needs (arts and other) of our Community. I note that the report does not contain any projection of what those needs might be in 12 years, let alone 25 or 50, even before consideration of the COVID circumstances. I am the author of the 8th last item and would like to hear a response on the consultation process, which would

be extraordinary if undertaken by the proponent of a minor planning proposal, let alone a city asset of this nature. Best wishes to all Council and all staff and their families in getting through this time

Nicholas Power:

Do the elected members of council acknowledge that the results of the 'Have Your Say' campaign may not be a truly representative of the community? Many residents did not receive notification of either the ANAM proposal or the 'Have Your Say' campaign due to its brief program of two weeks and a lack of advertising. Many only became aware of the proposal via concerned residents who raised awareness in the issue solely in objection. In section 5.3 of Agenda item 14.6, it is listed therein - 'the (Have Your Say) survey (was) completed 321 times by 295 of those visitors' (p. 97). If this is contrasted with the current results of the current online petition - 'Save the Melbourne Town Hall' (available on the website change.org). It clearly shows (at present) more than 500 unique signatures already from participants, all contributed solely in objection to the current proposal.

Jeannie Marsh:

Statement in support of the proposal: Australian National Academy of Music - Lease Proposal for South Melbourne Town Hall.

As a local resident for 22 years and professional musician for 40 years, I wish to speak in support of the lease proposal by Australian National Academy of Music – ANAM. I am a regular visitor to ANAM, attending numerous concerts and events at South Melbourne Town Hall every year.

I have worked professionally in music training organisations around Australia and internationally. Nothing comes close to the unique cultural and community treasure that is ANAM. The calibre of students, staff, and programs is simply outstanding. The visionary program run by ANAM is widely acknowledged as one of the best in the world. Current and past students and staff make a massive contribution to the arts industry in Australia and internationally.

At the local level, South Melbourne benefits from the addition of thousands of customers every year to local restaurants and businesses. Local residents have access to many free and low-cost concerts, plus community outreach projects.

I was shocked to learn of the major ceiling collapse in South Melbourne Town Hall last Summer. This was a huge wake-up call - the building urgently needs major work to bring it up to the standards needed for regular public events, plus daily classes and rehearsals.

I have looked in detail at ANAM's proposal. It provides a once-in-a-generation opportunity to properly upgrade the building for an exciting future ahead. The restored building would provide world-class facilities to match the world-class work that takes place there.

It involves two state-of-the-art performance venues: the fully-renovated and upgraded main hall, and a new studio. The new public foyer welcomes our community into this inspiring space. It will be perfect for music, public events, and community activities.

It is exciting to imagine a future life for the re-imagined Town Hall: bustling with activity during the Comedy Festival, community history events, the Writers Festival, ANAM concerts and masterclasses, local celebrations, the Fringe Festival – the possibilities are endless. Local residents and businesses will benefit from this re-energised cultural and community precinct.

I strongly recommend that you support the lease proposal from ANAM for South Melbourne Town Hall. Our local community and our arts community will be enhanced by the improved facilities, and continuing outstanding cultural stewardship provided by ANAM.

Anita Maria Hovarth:

I urge Council to support Option 2 of the Report, being the recommendation to enter into a long term lease negotiations with ANAM as set out in clause 3. Because: ANAM is COPP's only tertiary educational institution, of international significance, which helps to bring \$3.6B into the COPP economy (2013 study). This is via its over 200 annual performances, the boost to the local economy its students & staff bring. To summarise the report, continuance of ANAM at SMTH would bring Council savings and efficiencies. The recommendation accords with several of Council's strategic objectives. Since 1997, ANAM proves itself an integral part of the COPP community via memberships, ticket sales and free concerts. The magnificent acoustics of the SMTH could not be better served than by allowing eager, talented, young Australian musicians to hone their performance skills, whilst delightfully transporting & challenging listeners.

Nick Bailey:

Dear Madam Mayor and Councillors,

I speak in support of the recommendation of Council Officers to enter into negotiation with ANAM regarding our proposal to deliver the restoration and transformation of the South Melbourne Town Hall. I would like to congratulate officers on a solid piece of work, in particular the survey of Melbourne's other Town Hall facilities and their various fates.

With regard to Section 10 'Key Negotiating Points' of the Council Officer's report, there is nothing here that we see as being problematic, and we are certain that negotiations in good spirit will arrive at a wonderful outcome for the residents of Port Phillip.

ANAM's fully funded proposal is for a major transformation of the magnificent building into an iconic and industry standard, cultural and community venue.

I would like to emphasise a couple of points in our initial proposal (which was included with the Council papers):

1) The proposal is about access.

Its central thrust is to invest in and transform the 'outward facing' parts of the building, and open up many other spaces for greater public utilisation in order to bring the community and wider public into their building.

The ANAM/Music School-only footprint is not significantly enlarged in our proposal, and the greatest part of the investment is in securing and updating the building's services and infrastructure, and transforming the Main Hall and former Supper Room and other public gathering spaces into 'state-of-the-art' venues, rehearsal studios and foyers. The proposal will increase the number of spaces available for community and cultural use and activation: in five years' time we can see the building humming with activity, bringing audiences – and their pre and post-show hospitality spend – from across Melbourne and across the country to performances from the Comedy, Fringe, Melbourne, Jazz and Writers' festivals (to name just a few), in addition to those by ANAM.

As a cultural anchor in the precinct, a transformed South Melbourne Town Hall will lead the revitalisation and transformation of Emerald Hill into one of the city's most desirable places to visit and to live.

2) The proposal has always included a co-working space with meeting room, so that the current community groups housed here may continue (the persistently peddled misinformation on this point is very disappointing). We envisage utilising the current ASSIST space in order to enable the creation of a rehearsal studio; this will be available to the community during the 19 non-ANAM weeks of operation, and will accommodate ANAM rehearsals during ANAM term-time to free up the two performance venues for entertainment product.

3) ANAM is committed to raising \$43m to invest in this asset (which includes a contribution of \$7m from Council, largely comprised of the forecast insurance monies following the October 2018 incident). Whilst discussions with State Government and potential philanthropists have been overtaken somewhat by fires and germs, ANAM's philanthropic and government relations track-record is extremely strong, and we are confident of securing the funding necessary to realise this project.

In addition to the initial capital investment, ANAM has forecast the cost of building and asset maintenance and asset renewal for the life of the lease, and ANAM has committed to taking financial responsibility for this in its entirety. This will see ANAM bring a further \$40m into the building during this time, completely relieving rate-payers of any financial responsibility for the building during the life of the lease.

This commitment – both in terms of cash and organisational brand and energy – is not insignificant, and I believe gives powerful indication as to the level of passion and commitment that we hold for this building and for our community.

I commend this report to Councillors as the start of a tremendously exciting discussion that we cannot wait to begin: to enable a once in a generation opportunity to bring some significant funds into this beautiful building and, in transforming it into an iconic destination venue, giving it – and the Emerald Hill precinct - a dynamic and vital life well into the second half of the 21st century.

Thank you for your consideration.

Glenn Bermingham:

In regard to the future tenancy of the South Melbourne Town Hall. This is an incredibly important issue to the people of South Melbourne. However, at the moment people are struggling with the pandemic. Losing their ability to focus on what is real and important to society. It has the potential to be lost for proper consideration. The South Melbourne Town Hall is a community asset. It was taken from the people of South Melbourne by stealth. The building and the land are owned by the community of ratepayers. The major part of the building was signed away for a peppercorn rental agreement to the National Academy of Music, during the period of local councils being controlled by commissioners. Why should the ratepayers of South Melbourne (under the City of Port Phillip) fund a State/Federal program in this way. I have nothing against ANAM however the community of South Melbourne/Port Phillip should be the beneficiaries of the building. Ideally from a creative perspective a series of rooms for artists and similar groups within the community would greatly benefit from the variety of spaces within the building. I urge councillors to vote option 1, Decline the offer. This is the least worst option that they are able to consider. It is the least that councillors can do.

Thank you

