

News from our Neighbourhood

July 2025

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Future of Olympic Leisure Centre

Last month Banyule Council decided to decommission the Olympic Leisure Centre's (OLC) aquatic facilities which are at the end of their structural life.

I know that many including myself find this decision to close the pool hard to take and are grieving.

The commitment, strength, and energy of our community in advocating for our aquatic facility is truly awesome and inspires me each day.

At the same time, Council also decided to invest \$1.8 million to transform the facility into a hub with a permanent library service, community activities room and an expanded gym area and fitness services.

The staffed library service will be run by Yarra Plenty Regional Library and include computers and printers.

OLC aquatics members will have access to other facilities, including 12 months free access to Ivanhoe Aquatic Centre.

I remain committed to working alongside you to focus on how we can make the OLC a community hub that meets our needs and helps transform our area in the immediate term and into the future.

What Council decided:

Close OLC aquatic spaces (pool, spa, sauna) at end of October 2025.

\$1.8 million in the Budget to deliver:

- 30-hour-a-week library service from March 2026
- expanded gym, fitness and indoor recreation offerings and more community programming.

Council also committed to:

- 12 months free access to Ivanhoe Aquatic for OLC aquatic patrons
- exploring alternative options for women's-only programming
- a feasibility study for a water play park in West Heidelberg.



Pictured above myself and the Hon Kate Thwaites MP.

Advocating for Banyule

Last month I attended the Australian Local Government Association's *National General Assembly* in Canberra with fellow Councillors McKern and Wood.

We had the chance to meet with the Hon. Kristy McBain, Minister for Local Government and Hon. Kate Thwaites, Member for Jagajaga and discussed funding for infrastructure projects in Banyule including an integrated regional services hub in West Heidelberg.

Local government is under increasing financial pressure and it's vital that we advocate for more support from other levels of government to help provide the infrastructure and services our community needs.

Council Budget 2025/26

Council is focusing on maintaining financial sustainability while delivering services for our growing population – collecting rubbish, looking after roads, parks and sports grounds, and providing maternal and child health services and libraries. More than 80% of the \$73.1 million capital works budget is to renew and upgrade existing assets.

Supporting residents with rate relief

Help is available for ratepayers experiencing financial hardship, with partial waivers for eligible applicants. Phone **9490 4222** or visit banyule.vic.gov.au/HardshipPolicy

Initiatives in our neighbourhood:

- Road safety upgrades for Liberty Parade between Bell Street and Southern Road: \$140,000
- Self-determination plan and Barrbunin Beek activation: \$182,000
- Women and children's program at Barrbunin Beek: \$77,000
- Expanding Malahang playground: \$70,000 and upgrading Narvik Reserve playground: \$63,000
- Cleaning and maintenance at The Mall: \$30,000
- Track lighting, Ford Park: \$30,000

