



**GLEN EIRA  
GLEN EIRA LEISURE  
ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING**

**MINUTES**

**The Glen Eira Leisure Advisory Committee meeting commenced at 6.00pm.**

**Thursday 26 February 2026  
6.00pm–8.00pm**

***Yarra Yarra Room,  
Glen Eira Town Hall, corner Glen Eira and Hawthorn Roads, Caulfield***

**Present:**

*Councillors:* Cr Kimberley Young (Deputy Chair) Councillor committee member  
Cr Margaret Esakoff Councillor committee member

*Community  
Representatives:* Louise Russell Community committee member  
Kathryn Watt Community committee member  
Rebecca Yien Community committee member

*Skills-Based  
Representatives:* Mick Cummins Skills-Based committee member  
Carl Partridge Skills-Based committee member  
Taya Phillips Skills-Based committee member

*Council Officers:* Niall McDonagh Director Sustainability, Assets and  
Leisure  
Peter Tillotson General Manager GEL  
Maddy Grant Customer Experience Coordinator GEL  
Natalie Mreulje Management Assistant GEL

**1. Welcome and Acknowledgement of Country** Cr Kimberley Young

Cr Kimberley Young (Deputy Chair) welcomed the committee and acknowledged Traditional Owners and Custodians.

**2. Apologies** Cr Kimberley Young

Cr Luca Ragni Councillor committee member

**3. Conflicts of Interest Declaration** Cr Kimberley Young

Members were reminded of their obligations under the Local Government Act 2020 and Council’s Governance Rules. No conflicts of interest were declared.

**4. Action Items – Updates from last committee meeting** Cr Kimberley Young

Title/Item	Action	Update	Responsible Officer	Active/Closed
GEL Strategic Plan	Amend wording of safety dot point	Update reflected in Strategic Plan draft.	Peter	Closed
GEL Strategic Plan – Structure and Components	Provide a “Strategy/Plan on a Page” and also a full document	Final GEL Strategic Plan and ‘plan on a page’ will be circulated at next Committee meeting	Peter	Active
25/26 Business Plan Overview	Rethink the list of risks	Safety Strategic Work Group appointed to review scope of risks.	Peter	Closed
Quarterly Performance Report	To investigate the reason for membership cancellations	Review completed. Presentation prepared for Advisory Committee.	Peter	Closed

**5. Summary of meeting minutes from previous meeting** Cr Kimberley Young

The previous meeting was held on Thursday, 11 December 2025 and the meeting minutes were emailed to committee members on 23 December 2025. The minutes have been accepted as read and confirmed by the committee.

Minutes were received and noted at the Ordinary Council Meeting on Tuesday, 3 February 2026.

**6. Items for Discussion:**

**6.1 GEL Q2 Quarterly Report** Peter Tillotson

Peter presented the GEL Q2 Quarterly Report, briefly summarising the report as it had been circulated for reading prior to the meeting.

**Key points:**

- Strong quarter with continued membership & attendance growth.
- Carnegie significantly contributed to increased visitation.
- Health and Fitness Membership Retention at 58% (expected to increase post Carnegie anniversary).
- Key event highlights included International Day of People with Disability and LSV Lifeguard Challenge, where GEL teams came first (for fourth year in a row) and ninth.

- SIP score improved from 75 → 80 → 85.
- Increased busyness leading to maintenance and capacity pressures.
- Competitor impact minimal to date.

**Committee Feedback and Discussion:**

- Request for clearer strategic narrative (impact, meaning, cost pressures).
- Consider future reporting improvements to reduce misinterpretation – the key takeaways to be clearer and more implicit.

The Committee requested a clearer strategic narrative in future reporting, including clearer articulation of impact, intent, and cost pressures, to reduce misinterpretation and improve clarity of key messages.

The Committee acknowledged that feedback is received regarding facility busyness, noting this as a positive indicator of demand. It was confirmed that increased usage is contributing to higher operating costs, particularly in cleaning and maintenance. The effectiveness of the off-peak membership offering was confirmed, with the program continuing to successfully shift usage away from peak times.

Management outlined additional measures to relieve peak-time pressure, including the potential removal of small group training from the gym floor during peak periods. While further movement of classes to off-peak times was suggested, it was noted that many popular programs already operate off-peak and that instructor availability limits further expansion.

Customer feedback trends were discussed, with negative feedback predominantly relating to GESAC, particularly around cleanliness, maintenance, equipment downtime, and capacity. Feedback for CMSP was reported as largely positive. Overall customer sentiment remains strong, supported by a positive Net Promoter Score and a “Happy or Not” kiosk score of 80.

**6.2 GEL Cancellations Insight**

Maddy Grant

Maddy ran through a PowerPoint presentation covering cancellation insights and trends from the last calendar year, 2025. This was broken down into two categories – Health and Fitness and Swim School memberships.

**Key points:**

- Health & Fitness key cancellation reasons: lack of use, relocation, financial pressure.
- Swim School cancellations increased by 2% year on year.
- Significant improvement in net loss for Swim School (–66% vs previous December).
- Themes affecting retention: class accessibility, equipment downtime, parking.
- Actions underway: influencing customer behaviour, improved communication, more flexible suspension rules, addressing group exercise no-shows.

**Committee Feedback and Discussion:**

The Committee noted that Glen Eira Leisure (GEL) provides strong value for money, particularly when compared with nearby competitors charging significantly higher membership fees. Benchmarking indicated that Reformer Pilates’ pricing is below market, with demand for health and well-being services remaining strong. It was noted that 48% of

membership cancellations occur within the first 12 months, identifying this as a critical retention period.

Discussion progressed to GEL Swim School, with a focus on perceived value and retention. Flexible suspension options over December–January resulted in improved net outcomes compared with the previous year. Data was shared indicating that children typically require a substantial number of lessons to reach national swimming standards, and that parental expectations regarding progression may be unrealistic.

The Committee acknowledged increased Swim School class sizes following a quieter period in late 2025, with some parent concerns raised regarding active participation time and comparisons with competitors. It was noted that a new Swim School Team Leader has been appointed, with a focus on improving class quality and engagement as part of the Service Improvement Program. The potential introduction of a premium Swim School offering with smaller class ratios was discussed. Clarification was also provided that lane lengths vary by level, based on required swimming distances.

### 6.3 GEL Strategic Plan Draft Review

Peter Tillotson

A short power-point presentation was used alongside the updated GEL Strategic Plan Draft to run through updates and invite feedback.

#### Key points:

- Changes suggested at previous meeting were taken on board, with updates made to the key themes in the plan.
- New Mission Statement was developed.

#### Committee Feedback and Discussion:

- The committee agreed that all their feedback from the last meeting was taken on board and reflected in the changes to the updated draft.
- The new mission statement was received extremely well, noting the committee all endorse this. Commentary made on really liking the tie back to community and place, sense of belonging and teaching.
- It was suggested that some of the outcomes could be clarified and future state wording used – for example, what does ‘employer of choice’ look like when it is successful?
- The Strategic Plan will now be turned into a usable document by GECC’s Media and Communications team, including the development of a ‘plan on a page’. These will be shared at next committee meeting.

### 6.4 Caulfield Recreation Centre Review

Peter Tillotson

A short power-point presentation was used alongside the Project Brief Draft to share purpose of review, scope and invite feedback on this.

#### Key points:

- A review of CRC was always intended to occur post opening of CMSP, as CMSP may have had an impact on CRC.
- Purpose is to review what we are offering currently, to ensure we can continue offering this into the future.

- Some background given on history of CRC – has seen many eras, GECC took over operations from YMCA in 2017, alongside CMSP.
- Sits at around 500 members, heavily female dominated and older adult demographic.
- It is heavily subsidised.
- Consultant will be engaged to perform the review, with a report and recommendation to be provided to council before end of June 2026.
- Draft report will be shared with committee at next meeting in May.

**Committee Feedback and Discussion:**

- Need clarity on long-term identity of CRC in the GEL Family - be explicit in saying this in project brief.
- Scope needs to be further defined to ensure we receive clear recommendations.
- Committee emphasised that financial sustainability must be included.
- There is a strong loyalty to CRC from current users, and it is believed there is a desire to keep it how it is. A consultative approach will be adopted with members during the review to ensure their viewpoints are captured.
- CRC serves a different demographic to our other sites; however, it needs to meet accessibility requirements.
- Given the strong female attendance at CRC, it was suggested to investigate female only offerings. This is what we expect the report to investigate as options.
- The review is strategic and not remedial, taking into account financial sustainability and Council’s role to provide access for everyone.

**7. General Business:**

Cr Kimberley Young

No items raised.

**8. Meeting Schedule**

Cr Kimberley Young

Meetings of the Committee will be held quarterly in person and will be made available online also. The next meeting is scheduled for:

- Wednesday 27 May 6.00pm – 8.00pm

**9. Closure of Meeting:**

The meeting closed at 7.49pm.

Minutes to be confirmed at the next Ordinary Council Meeting on Tuesday 17 March 2026.

Title/Item	Action	Update	Responsible Officer	Active/ Closed
<b>GEL Q2 Quarterly Report</b>	Consider reporting improvements to reduce misinterpretation and present a clearer strategic narrative		Peter	Active
<b>GEL Strategic Plan</b>	Consider the use of future state wording to		Peter	Active

	better define outcomes in strategic plan			
<b>GEL Strategic Plan</b>	Strategic Plan to be finalised and turned into final copy by Media and Comms team. This includes the 'plan on a page'		Peter	Active
<b>CRC Review</b>	Be explicit in project brief that purpose is to help define what CRC's role is in GEL family post opening of CMSP		Peter	Active
<b>CRC Review</b>	Explicitly include financial modelling and user consultation in project brief		Peter	Active