



**GLEN EIRA
BUSINESS AND ECONOMY
ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
AGENDA**

**Thursday 21 September 2023
8:30am-10:30am
Yarra Yarra Room, Glen Eira Town Hall and online via Zoom**

Purpose:

The role of the Committee is to provide support, including identifying services and opportunities to benefit local businesses and to develop relationships and collaborate between various business sectors.

Attendees:

<i>Councillors:</i>	Cr Sam Parasol (Chair) Cr Tony Athanasopolous Cr Anne-Marie Cade	Councillor Committee Member Councillor Committee Member Councillor Committee Member
<i>Community Representatives:</i>	Ruth Lewis Jai Parasnis Bruno Karalus Chris Giouris Keith Rhodes Grahame Leonard AM Thanh Do	Community Committee Member Community Committee Member Community Committee Member Community Committee Member Community Committee Member Community Committee Member Community Committee Member
<i>Council Staff:</i>	Paul Wood Matt Slavin Tess Angarane Bianca Sharpe Josephine Nguyen	Interim Director, Planning and Place Manager, City Futures Coordinator, City Economy Glen Eira Officer Glen Eira Officer (minutes)
<i>Apologies:</i>	Steve Antunovic Deepa Mani Shai Dagan Suzette Sutton	Community Committee Member Community Committee Member Community Committee Member Glen Eira Officer

1. Welcome and Acknowledgement of Country

The Chair welcomed the Committee and Glen Eira officers to the meeting both in person and online.

Glen Eira City Council acknowledges the Boonwurrung/Bunurong and the Wurrundjeri Woi Wurrung peoples of the Eastern Kulin Nation, as the Traditional Owners and Custodians, and pays respect to their Elders past, present and emerging.

2. Declaration of any conflicts of interest in any items on the agenda

Nil.

3. Item Update from previous Committee meeting

Title/Item	Action	Update	Responsible Officer	Active/Closed
5.1 Business Survey	Action: Officers to finalise survey questions and distribute to Committee members	Survey has been conducted. Summary to be presented in item 5.2	Suzette	Closed
5.2 Business Awards	Recommendation: To scope out having one set of criteria for the judging panel and a different set of criteria for the Mayor	Business Awards completed. Summary to be presented in item 5.1	Suzette	Closed
5.5 Economic Development Plan	An update on further scope of the Economic Development Plan will be provided at the next meeting.	Scope presented at last meeting (June). Further discussion in item 5.3	Matt	Active

Note: As Item 5.5 is still active, it will be carried over to next meeting

4. Summary of minutes from previous meeting

Matt Slavin

Matt Slavin presented a brief summary of the last Committee meeting.

It was noted that the meeting held on the 8 June 2023 did not meet a quorum and therefore cannot constitute as a formal meeting. Meeting notes were attached for reference.

5. Items for Discussion

5.1 Business Awards – wrap up/learnings

Tess Angarane

56 businesses submitted entries for the *Business Excellence Awards* held on 21 June 2023. Successes include well-attended online information sessions, the judging process and the mentoring aspect. Overall, the night was a success and entertaining. However, following an internal review some points/recommendations for refinement were identified as outlined in the distributed overview. Discussion from the Committee included:

- Pre-notification for Awardees: Committee agreed that this was an opportunity for improvement with the following suggestions:
 - Encourage winners to send someone to accept in their place if they can't attend.
 - Ensure that the owner/manager is aware of their nomination. Ruth noted that she had spoken to businesses who did not know they had been nominated as it had come from another staff member.
 - Contacting the award winners directly/enhanced communication.
- Clearer categories of awards: Committee members expressed that the categories were confusing, and some submissions were placed under multiple categories.

Action: Council to consider these above recommendations for the next Business Awards in 2024.

5.2 The Business Survey – Summary

Tess Angarane

The business survey was distributed to 8000 local businesses. The open rate ranged from 43% to 55%, indicating strong engagement. 715 respondents clicked on the survey link with 143 submissions in total. The data collected is very valuable since it marks the first time Glen Eira has captured this kind of comprehensive data including home based businesses. The data will provide a valuable insight for the development of the Economic Development Plan

Key findings include:

- Businesses were 47.1 per cent home-based with 52.9 per cent commercial space-based
- Most home-based businesses have just one employee (71.7 per cent) which was anticipated while commercial-based space businesses were more widespread among the number of employees, suggesting greater variability in staff
- The three most chosen challenges for businesses were cash flow/finances, marketing, and attracting customers
- Three most chosen opportunities: Going online, partnering with someone else, and scaling up
- Only 35.6 per cent of businesses are part of a sector network or association
- Overall, most businesses were not aware of any business support programs offered by Glen Eira City Council (57.8 per cent)
- Areas for improvement were sales, marketing, digital presence, business, planning, and IT

Committee engaged in an open discussion about concerns with advertising/promotion of programs and services and getting businesses to engage.

Chris suggested introducing a Glen Eira app on mobile devices for notifications and news from Glen Eira. It was also recommended that users can set up their account to receive relevant news e.g. business owners will receive information about business related news and support programs.

Grahame suggested utilising the rates notice.

Action: Council officers to consider survey findings in the development of new *Economic Development Plan*. In addition, researching and reviewing the best way to reach businesses digitally.

5.3 Economic Development Plan

Matt Slavin

5.3.1 Updated scope

Matt provided an update on the *Economic Development Plan* scope. Council's role in supporting businesses and the community was discussed, emphasising the need to make the plan more concise and targeted for maximum community benefit, with the Committee focusing on efficient service delivery in line with economic conditions.

Action: Scope to be updated based on feedback from the Committee.

5.3.2 Consultant Brief

Matt Slavin

Feedback was sought on the draft Consultant Brief. Suggestions from the Committee included:

- Be clear about the type of consultant required (what skills they need)
- Ideally, they should live in or be familiar with Glen Eira
- Be more specific about the areas of focus rather than leaving it broad and up to the consultant's judgement
- Need to be realistic, be targeted with our actions and tailor our services to our audience

Discussion around the budget for implementing the *Plan* emphasised the need to understand the actions and the impact on resources. Matt noted budget details will become clearer during the planning process. The Committee agreed that Council needs to be asking specific questions to obtain valuable answers while being transparent to capture who in the community Council will be supporting.

Tess asked the Committee if anyone could suggest any consultants to send the RFQ.

Action: Consultant brief to be updated based on feedback from the Committee. Committee members to send any suggested consultants' details to Tess.

5.3.3 Activity – Review of Current Actions

Item omitted and no action required.

5.4 End of Year Networking Event

Tess Angarane

The event is scheduled for the 16 November 2023 with a focus on small and micro-businesses. Will include a mini exhibition with a range of business support services, networking opportunity, and a panel discussion.

The aim is to engage particularly with home-based businesses and get members connecting in-person again with likeminded people. Discussion from the Committee included whether this is the right time for a large event and whether it would be better to start with smaller events.

Tess confirmed that it is aimed to be a way to re-engage with businesses having not held any networking events for some time. Discussion was raised on who the target audience is, and what are the aims, goals and achievements for this event.

Action: Continue planning for the event and seek input from the Committee where relevant. In addition, officers to explore another networking event early in 2024.

5.5 Committee Achievements to Date

Matt Slavin

The Chair sought an overview of the Committee's activity to date:

- Input into Annual Business Survey
- Input into Business Excellence Awards
- Discussion of Economy.id data and how it can be used
- Recommendations from the Committee which have been actioned:
 - Updated the website to promote co-working opportunities
 - Actively featured our City in Glen Eira News, highlighting activity centres and local businesses
- Influence networking event topics
 - Small and micro-businesses (November 2023)
 - Cyber Security (early 2024)
- Discussion on the *Economic Development Plan* and key topics it should consider

Paul Wood acknowledged the time and effort from everyone in the Committee and expressed that it has been very valuable to sit in on this meeting and listen to everyone contribute their different opinions and ideas to the benefit of the community.

6. General Business:

6.1 Updated Terms of Reference

Tess Angarane

Tess noted that at the Council meeting on 5 September 2023, the Committee's new Terms of Reference was adopted. Key changes include a reduction in the number of community members required to make quorum (from five to three). Additionally, there is now a requirement for all members to have a Working with Children Check (WWCC). This is consistent across all Council committees and Council will assist Committee members in obtaining one.

Action: All members to provide a copy of their WWCC or contact Tess to assist with obtaining one.

7. Next Meeting

Chair

The next meeting is schedule for 9 November 2023.

8. Close of meeting 10:32am
