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19.8 Valley View Driving Range

Report Type	Decision
City Vision Goal/s	Places for People
Report Author	Manager Property & Building Assets, Corporate Services
Report Summary	This report provides an update on matters relating to Valley View Driving range in relation to a petition received.
Attachments	1. Item 19.2 - Ordinary Council Meeting Minutes 13 February 2024 - Confidential Redacted [19.8.1 - 1 page]

RECOMMENDATION

Council resolves that:

1. The report of the Director Corporate Services titled “Valley View Driving Range” be received and noted.
2. That the redacted minutes associated with Item 19.2 “Unsolicited Proposal” from the Ordinary Council Meeting held on 13 February 2024 be released as per attachment 1 and that the minutes in full be retained until the process is finalised.

Background

In August 2023, Council undertook a strategic review of golf driving range facilities within the City of Port Adelaide Enfield (PAE). This review aimed to guide the future development of golfing facilities, with a specific focus on the Valley View Driving Range and its relationship to the Thomas Turner Reserve Masterplan.

The review, conducted by an independent consultant, sought to build on previous strategic reviews of golf courses more broadly and provide evidence-based recommendations for the future of golf driving ranges within the City.

Report

Following on from the review outlined above, at the 13 February 2024 Ordinary Council meeting the Council confidentially resolved the following resolutions:

3. *As a result of the report recommendations, Council endorses the Valley View Driving Range be returned to Public Open Space as per one of the preferred options in the Thomas Turner Masterplan and approves Administration to commence the design process to progress the delivery of the open space outcomes.*

4. *Administration progresses discussions with the current operators of the Valley View Driving Range regarding the end of their lease.*

In response to these resolutions Council administration took the following steps:

- On 31 May 2024 Council staff met with the operators of the Valley View Driving Range to advise them of the Council's decision to close the driving range facility on 31 December 2024 and provided the reasons for this decision and the outcome that it would be returned to open space
- On 9 July 2024 Council staff wrote to the operators to confirm in writing that they intended to remain in occupation and operate the facility until 31 December 2024 and this was confirmed by them via email on 10 July 2024
- On 2 December 2024 Council staff wrote to note the end of lease was approaching and to reiterate our collaborative approach to ensure a smooth transition from the facility

Review Details:

Scope of the review:

- Conducting a strategic assessment of golf driving ranges in the City of PAE
- Providing recommendations on the future of driving ranges, including the Valley View site

Key Deliverables:

Assessment of Existing Facilities:

- Evaluate the performance of golf driving ranges in PAE against industry benchmarks

Evidence-Based Recommendations:

- Outline the commercial and community benefits of driving range facilities

Future Planning:

- Provide guidance on whether the City should invest in a driving range and, if so, recommend potential locations and operational models

Investment Analysis:

- Consider capital investment requirements, funding sources, and the return on investment

More specifically, Council sought to understand:

1. Should Council invest in driving range facilities?
2. If viable, should the Valley View Driving Range be prioritised for investment?

Strategic Review Findings

Golf Participation and Driving Ranges

The review highlighted the growing importance of driving ranges in fostering golf participation. Modern driving ranges serve as both training grounds for new golfers and entertainment destinations, offering activities combined with food, beverages, and music.

Such facilities have proven to be financially sustainable and inclusive for a diverse demographic.

In Greater Adelaide, there is an oversupply of full-size private golf courses but a notable lack of modern public-access driving ranges. Investing in such infrastructure could address this gap while generating economic, social, and environmental benefits.

Valley View Driving Range

The review however identified significant challenges at the Valley View Driving Range:

- Safety concerns due to golf balls leaving the facility boundary
- Issues with orientation and location
- Outdated amenities and inadequate customer access
- Poor condition of building assets and irrigation systems.

While minimum upgrades, such as additional netting and facility improvements, are required, the limitations of the site make it unsuitable and unlikely to generate a return on investment. The current operator has also indicated an inability to fund major capital improvements.

Review recommendations

Continued use of the Valley View site, as a driving range, is not recommended unless significant upgrades are undertaken. Council should explore alternative uses for the site as outlined in the Thomas Turner Reserve Masterplan.

Thomas Turner Reserve Masterplan

The 2018 Thomas Turner Reserve Masterplan proposed two options for the site's southwest corner:

- Maintain the driving range; or
- Transform the area into an irrigated community space with terraced lawns for recreation and events

The consultant supported the second option, recommending the site be returned to open space in the absence of substantial investment. This aligns with the Masterplan's vision to provide high-quality parkland for active and passive recreation.

Returning the Valley View Driving Range to open space offers several benefits, including enhanced community access, alignment with the Masterplan's objectives, and avoiding unsustainable investment in the current facilities.

City Vision Relationship

The decision to close the Valley View Driving Range and return the site to open space aligns with the City Vision by prioritising the creation of sustainable, accessible, and high quality public spaces. This transformation supports community wellbeing by providing opportunities for active and passive recreation while enhancing the site's environmental and social value. By aligning with the Thomas Turner Reserve Masterplan, the return to open space ensures the site contributes to the City's long-term goals of fostering inclusive and vibrant community areas.

Legislative Context and Related Policies

Council has adhered to the requirements of the *Local Government Act 1999* and its Community Engagement Policy throughout the masterplanning process for Thomas Turner Reserve, ensuring transparency and alignment with community needs. The decision to close the Valley View Driving Range also aligns with the Open Space Strategy, recognising the importance of preserving and enhancing valuable community spaces. Additionally, this decision reflects Council's commitment to responsible and strategic investment in its community facilities.

Stakeholder Engagement

Extensive engagement was undertaken as part of the draft Masterplan process with local residents, community members, golf participants, sporting clubs and groups and key stakeholders.

The proposed changes and likely closure of the driving range have been communicated to key stakeholders and impacted parties.

Risk Management

By undertaking an independent review, Council has ensured that the decision to close the Valley View Driving Range and return the area to open space is informed by expert analysis and aligned with the Thomas Turner Reserve Masterplan. This approach minimises risks associated with uninformed investment, ensures compliance with strategic objectives, and supports a transparent and evidence-based decision-making process.

Financial Management

A budget of \$200,000 to commence the design process of returning the driving range space back to open space has been included in the capital works program for 24/25.

Professional Fees and Contractor Costs

An independent consultant was engaged to undertake a comprehensive review of driving range facilities within the City of Port Adelaide Enfield.

Environmental and Social Impacts

Open space is valuable to our community. It creates places where people love to be, which not only supports health and wellbeing and promotes community connections but also protects the environment. We are committed to ensuring that there is a large amount of good quality open space across our council area.

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19.2 Unsolicited Proposal

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

■ [REDACTED]

■ [REDACTED]

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■ [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]

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