

MOONEE VALLEY

Mayor explains expenses

Reimbursement tops other councillors

Madeleine Stuchbery

MAYOR of Moonee Valley, Andrea Surace, has explained the gap of more than \$29,000 in reimbursement received between her expenses and that of other Moonee Valley councillors.

The recently published expenses reports show that over the past year, Cr Surace has racked up an expenses bill of \$33,697, with transport her greatest expense.

Cr Surace has been mayor over two years, and has the largest expenses bill of all Moonee Valley councillors.

She explained that the sheer number of conferences and community events she attended in her role as mayor over two council terms had contributed to her transportation costs.

"I can understand the community's interest in my expenses, along with those of my fellow councillors, and while on face-value my total expenses over the last year are considerably more than my colleagues, these expenses relate to the additional duties of being the mayor," Cr Surace said.

"During the last year I have attended a number of conferences on behalf of council. Given the importance of the decisions we make as councillors, it is vital that we continue to learn about topics of relevance to Moonee Valley."

Moonee Valley chief executive, Bryan Lancaster said it was common for the mayor's travel expenses to be higher than other councillors during their term as

mayor.

"It is common practice for a mayoral vehicle to be provided to the mayor during their term, and thus incur higher transport expenses than other councillors," Mr Lancaster said.

"The mayor has opted to supply her own vehicle and receive reimbursement for the costs associated with this in accordance with council's Resources, Facilities and Reimbursement of Expenses to Councillors policy."

Between March 31 and April 26, Cr Surace attended 50 events, meetings, and other community engagements throughout Moonee Valley.

The published expenses reports show councillor expenses over a 12-month period, which covers two separate council terms.

Cr Jim Cusack, who has served over two terms, accrued \$4335.

Cr Nicole Marshall's expenses for the same period totalled \$1023 while Deputy Mayor Cam Nation clocked up \$1472.

Cr Narelle Sharpe's expenses over the past 12 months tally up to \$3171 and Cr John Sipek accrued a total of \$2780.

New councillor Rebecca Gauci Maurici's expenses since October 2016 added up to \$428.

Fellow new councillor Richard Lawrence tallied up a mere \$300 in expenses during the same period, and Cr Samantha Byrne recorded a similar amount of \$340 since October 2016.



CAPTAIN IN TOP TALENT POOL

FROM the Rio Olympics to Budapest, captain of the Australian synchronised swim team Emily Rogers has seen the world from the bottom of the swimming pool.

The 19-year-old Victoria University student is

currently working hard with her club, the Golden Fish synchronised swim club, to prepare for the World Championships in Budapest this July.

Miss Rogers also swims with another Moonee Valley resident, Hannah Cross, 20,

from Essendon, who is studying Occupational Therapy at La Trobe University.

The pair have previously represented Australia at last year's Rio Olympic Games and competed in the Spanish Open in May.

Grab a grant

Leader Local Grants are back, celebrating initiatives that help our communities by giving away thousands of dollars to projects across Melbourne.

We want to hear from community groups and organisations with inspirational ideas that just need a \$1000 grant to get going. Applications can be made now and close July 14. For more information and to apply go to leaderlocalgrants.com.au

NAIDOC event

Moonee Valley Council's annual NAIDOC Week flag raising ceremony will be held on Thursday, July 6. The afternoon will include activities for children provided by Aboriginal storytelling organisation Yarn Strong Sista and Uncle Phil Ah Wang, and a performance by Tongberangi Ngargga. The NAIDOC theme for 2017 is 'Our Languages Matter' celebrating the importance of languages in relation to cultural identity. The event will take place at 1.30pm at the Clocktower Centre, Moonee Ponds.

Parking review

Moonee Valley Council will conduct a review of parking restrictions in eight streets with permit zone restrictions, as part of the council's Municipal Parking Strategy Update. Streets subject to the review are Elston Court, Niddrie, Melrose, Scotia and Montgomery streets and Newton Pde, Moonee Ponds; Ogilvie St, Essendon; and Rose Ave, Niddrie. The council will also install two-hour parking limits in the off-street carpark at the Ascot Vale Leisure Centre from 8am to 8pm.

MOONEE VALLEY

Call for gender inequity and violence strategies

Madeleine Stuchbery

A WOMEN'S health organisation is calling on the council to include more strategies to combat gender inequity and family violence in the Draft Council Plan.

Dr Robyn Gregory, from Women's Health West (WHW), has asked for eight strategies to be included.

WHW's recommendations include highlighting public health and wellbeing indicators and strategies to ensure adequate resources are allocated, embedding the World Health Organisation's Health in All Policies framework in the council plan, using VicHealth's Pair Foundations tool to guide action on health inequities, and

strengthening its commitment to sexual and reproductive health.

"By adopting a gender-equity approach to municipal public health and wellbeing planning, program and service provision, Moonee Valley City Council will support women's health, safety and wellbeing, as well as recognise and respond to men

and women's different health needs," Dr Gregory said.

Acting mayor Cam Nation said presentations by WHW and cohealth had provided additional information to ensure the Council Plan was a thorough document. Voting on the draft was expected to take place at Tuesday's council meeting.

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