

Report to the Future Melbourne Committee

Agenda item 7.1

Post travel report by Councillor Jamal Hakim, London, Vienna and Montpellier -
July, August 2023

21 November 2023

Presenter: Councillor Jamal Hakim

Purpose and background

1. The purpose of this report is to provide the Future Melbourne Committee with information on commitments undertaken by Councillor Jamal Hakim in a number of European cities whilst on private travel in July and August 2023.
2. Just prior to travel, Councillor Hakim was granted approval to undertake opportunities to connect with city and government officials on topics relevant to Melbourne and of interest to him and his portfolio.
3. The City of Melbourne's (CoM) International Engagement Framework seeks to position Melbourne internationally by further building and consolidating the city's reputation as a leading and preferred destination.

Key issues

4. In London, Vienna and Montpellier, Councillor Hakim undertook meetings, briefings and site visits with government officials and officers. These are outlined in detail as part of Attachment 2 along with an overview of the key observations and opportunities. Some of the themes covered in the commitments included:
 - 4.1. 24-hour city activation programs
 - 4.2. Regeneration of places and urban renewal
 - 4.3. Places and programs to support creative and innovation sectors
 - 4.4. Social and affordable housing
 - 4.5. Arts and culture programs.
5. Councillor Hakim will further expand on the observations and opportunities with Council officers and Councillors in deliberations on related projects and initiatives.
6. Councillor Hakim's travel was privately funded and at no cost to Council.

Recommendation

7. That the Future Melbourne Committee notes the report by Councillor Jamal Hakim on commitments undertaken in London, Vienna and Montpellier in July and August 2023 whilst on private travel.

Attachments:

1. Supporting Attachment (Page 2 of 11)
2. Overview of key activities, observations and opportunities (Page 3 of 11)

Supporting Attachment

Finance

1. There was no cost to CoM associated with travel undertaken by Councillor Hakim.

Conflict of interest

2. No member of Council staff, or other person engaged under a contract, involved in advising on or preparing this report has declared a general or material conflict of interest in relation to the matter of the report.

Relation to Council policy

3. The Executive Officer Councillor Liaison has confirmed that the travel costs accord with the requirements of the travel guidelines outlined in the Council Expenses Policy.
4. The theme and objectives of the meetings and other commitments align with a range of CoM strategies and Major Initiatives relating to activation program, housing, creative sector and international relations.

Environmental sustainability

5. The carbon emissions resulting from air travel will be offset with the purchase of credits.

Overview of key activities, observations and opportunities

London, Vienna and Montpellier - July, August 2023

1. Context

- 1.1. Whilst on private travel Councillor Jamal Hakim took the opportunity of making connections with officials in some of the cities visited. The opportunities to do this in some cases allowed CoM to reciprocate visits and to establish new connections on issues important to Melbourne.
- 1.2. Outlined below is an overview of key meetings, observations and opportunities gained through commitments undertaken.

2. London - Themes: 24-hour city activity, reactivation programs and initiatives

2.1. 24-hour city activity

A meeting was held with London's Night Czar, Amy Lame and her team. Amy was appointed by the City of Greater London in 2016 and tasked with ensuring London thrives as a 24-hour city. The role involves championing London's nightlife in the UK and internationally including safeguarding venues across the city. The work is driven by working in partnership with the night time industries, local authorities, police and transport of officials and the community.

Amy is Chair of London's Night Time Borough Champions Network which ensures close links between the Mayor of London, the Night Czar, the London Night Time Commission and London's 33 local authorities. The champions share good practice, advice on the creation of new night time initiatives and support the development of local night time visions.

The Night Czar sets the Mayor's vision for London as a 24-hour city into action. Amy has helped to protect dozens of venues around the city, using her convening powers to bring together business owners, developers, police, residents, community groups, local authorities and customers to reach positive outcomes

The ability to connect with Amy and the team was opportune and followed her visit to Melbourne in May 2023 as part of a delegation of night time economy leaders from around the world to share and learn about programs aimed at activating and supporting 24 hour cities.

Insights gained through these briefings are also valuable as the City of Melbourne transitions from a Night Time Economy Advisory Committee to the recently established City Economy Advisory Committee. The Committee will advise Council on events and activations to attract workers and visitors to the city on days with lower pedestrian activity, giving traders stability in a seven-day-a-week, 24-hour thriving city. The Committee comprises experts from Melbourne's renowned retail and hospitality industries, the innovation and social enterprise sectors and one of Australia's largest employers.

The meeting held forms part of a shared and continued commitment to information sharing.



Image: Councillor Hakim with London's Night Czar, Amy Lame

2.2. **Regeneration of places, reactivation initiatives, innovation and creative spaces**

A program of briefings and site visits was provided by Tom Gill, International Creative Manager, World Cities Culture Forum. Councillor Hakim took the opportunity to reciprocate Tom's recent visit to Melbourne to connect with Council officers in the creative city area. Tom plays a leadership role in many areas including reactivation programs in London during the pandemic as well as a designer of the annual Works Cities Cultural Forum. In these roles, Tom works with and alongside the Greater London Authority.

Insights into a number of initiatives and projects were particularly valuable and included the following:

Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park – London Legacy Development Corporation

A briefing and tour of the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park was provided. The precinct is managed by the London Legacy Development Corporation (LLDC) which was established in 2012 to use the opportunity of the London Olympics and Paralympic Games to develop a dynamic and new heart for East London, creating opportunities for the local community and driving innovation and growth.

The precinct now plays host to a thriving mix of arts and culture, live performances, world class sport, housing, education and innovation. More than 45 million people have visited the Park since it reopened following the Games. The LLDC estimates that 33,000 homes will be built in the precinct by 2036 with an average of 35 per cent being affordable. It is also estimated that 40,000 jobs will be located there by mid 2030s.

The development of the surrounding areas importantly also included consideration of the vital public infrastructure that was needed by the community, including public transport, schools, housing and open space. The changes embarked on considered the lower socio-economic background and history of the area, the changes in the job market and ultimately was used as an enabler so that more locals benefit with transition opportunities right from education to jobs.

The Park is also home to the new ABBA Arena, a purpose-built arena for ABBA's never before-seen concert. This forms part of the Park's destination clout.

The work of a number of organisations located in the precinct stood out during the discussion and tour and included the following:

- **HereEast** which is an innovation and technology campus with 6,000 people working and studying onsite. It was designed from the outset to operate as a catalyst for change and a pillar of the post-Olympic East London community. It is a dedicated campus for innovators, visionaries and locals to push their professional and personal boundaries.
- **Plexal** is an innovation company and workspace seeking to solve community challenges through collaboration and technology with government, start-ups and industry. Plexal aims to close the gap between organisations – small and large, local and global, private and public – and works towards a common goal: using science and technology to deliver national security and prosperity. Plexal supports entrepreneurs, start-ups and scale-ups building emerging technologies and operates across multiple sectors including cyber, healthcare, intelligence and defence, government, public safety, financial services and telecoms.



Image: Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park (source: LLDC)

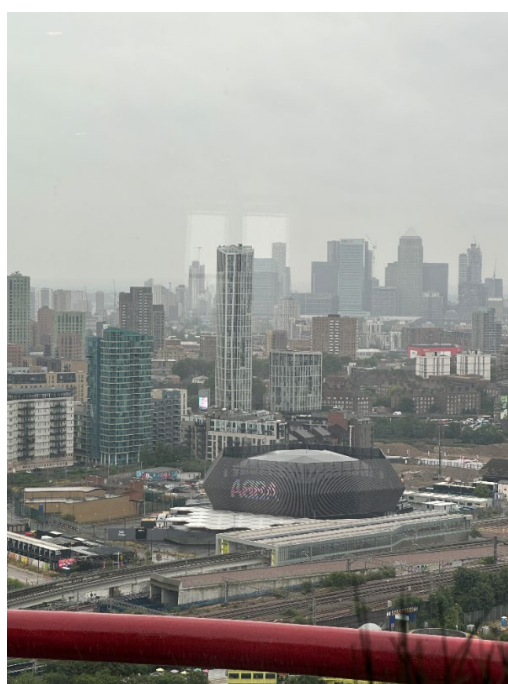


Image: ABBA Arena

Creative Enterprise Zones

An overview of Greater London Authority's Creative Enterprise Zones (CEZ) was provided. The CEZ was a Mayoral initiative to designate areas of London where artists and creative businesses can find permanent affordable space to work; are supported to start-up and grow; and where local people are educated in creative sector skills and can access pathways to employment.

The program was launched in 2018. The CEZ's Impact Report 2018-2021 brings together data and learnings from London's first six Creative Enterprise Zones. It draws on insights from workshops, data analysis, interviews, and case studies and highlights the broad range of economic and social benefits from the zones across the first three years of the programme's implementation. The findings show the program has achieved the following:

- Created strong local networks which allowed for agile support for artists, creatives and workspace providers through COVID-19 lockdowns.
- Developed models for diversity and inclusion to be centred in creative sector growth.
- Raised visibility of creative and cultural industries with local areas, London and globally.
- Connected local creatives and residents with the opportunities of regeneration and change.
- Strengthened local partnerships and bolstered soft power.



Creative Enterprise Zone Impact 2018-2021

30,441 m2
new creative
workspace
delivered

5,829+
residents
attended
events

3,913
residents
engaged from
minority ethnic
backgrounds

14.2%
net increase
creative sector
jobs*
*vs 7.6% in London overall

7.19%
increase
in creative
businesses*
*vs 0.4% in London overall

589
artists and
creative
businesses
supported

90
presentations
and events
about the
creative sector

80
consortium
organisations

27
traineeships
and internships

12+
schools
engaged

4
Creative
Enterprise
Zone
platforms

3
Local Plan
policies
supporting
creatives

We Made That

Creative Enterprise Zones Impact Report

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[Link to Impact Report](#)

3. Vienna – Themes: Social housing, culture and city liveability

During his visit to Vienna, Councillor Hakim met with officers and elected officials to be briefed on strategies and programs in the areas of social housing and cultural affairs.

Social housing in Vienna

The City of Vienna's approach to the provision of social housing is one of the most successful and internationally applauded. It's a model which has been in the making for over 100 years. In Vienna, around 60 per cent of its nearly 2 million residents live in some form of social housing, where they have access to low rents, secure tenure and quality accommodation.

There are various kinds of housing that are either fully owned by the City of Vienna (social housing estates) or where the city government provides funding to not-for-profit developers to build rent-controlled flats.

The Vienna model for affordable housing makes a major contribution to social cohesion and equality in the city and also brings people from different social and economic backgrounds together.

The city consistently places very high on different city rankings, including once again topping the Economist Intelligence Unit's Global Liveability Index.

Social housing project – aspern Seestadt

A briefing and tour of the urban development and social housing project at aspern Seestadt was provided by Kurt Hofstetter, Head of Strategic Projects and International, City of Vienna.

aspern Seestadt is one of the biggest urban development projects in Europe. This multi-stage development project to be completed in 2030 will result in high-quality dwellings for over 25,000 residents as well as approximately 20,000 workplaces.

About 300 companies have already decided to settle in aspern Seestadt. They include big and small enterprises, start-up companies and established players, retail outlets and industrial corporations. Currently, over 11,000 persons reside there and more than 5,000 already work in the new urban quarter.

Housing at aspern Seestadt comes in many different forms: owner-occupied or rented flats, student accommodation or serviced apartments. Majority of homes are facilitated through the City of Vienna development agency, which has built a portfolio of land and homes to support affordable housing over many decades. This latest project includes co-op developed housing and private market homes as part of a private-public investment. All homes are of high quality, most with spacious balconies, terraces or gardens. Urban gardening facilities, recreation and a variety of communal spaces provide residents with the opportunity to interact with each other.

About 50 per cent of the aspern Seestadt area is set aside for parks, green spaces, roads and the central lake. These intelligently planned and designed public spaces contribute to a good work-life balance in green surroundings, yet in the midst of a vibrant city with all the amenities of urban life.



Image: Artist impression of completed project (Source: City of Vienna)



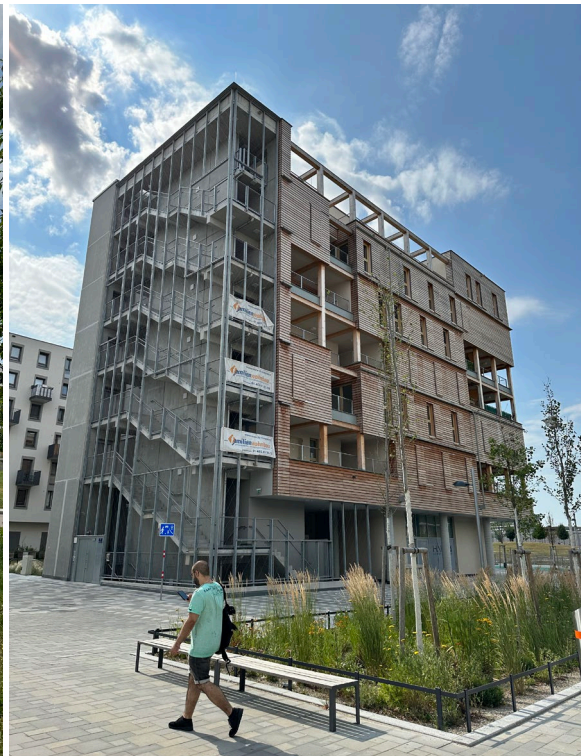
Image: View of housing development and streetscape



Image: Councillor Hakim and Kurt Hofstetter, Head of Strategic Projects and International stand at line markings showing runway co-ordinates of former airfield now used for housing.



Image: View of housing development and open space



A number of initiatives were of particular interest and highlighted as a successful measure to create stronger community ties and healthier spaces. These include:

- Most car parking is built in office blocks, requiring residents to walk from their carpark to their home, facilitating stronger community building opportunities.
- A Town Concierge was funded by the city and the development agency, allowing a curation of shops and invigorating the street from day one. This allowed the community to be part of the conversation at the street level, with many initiatives run as a result including local street greening.
- A competition to build the landscape was run before any construction commenced or was designed. This put green spaces and the community environment first and led to better engagement at the street level between the different spaces.
- Municipal housing was developed with sliding walls to be able to change apartment types to suit different living circumstances.
- A school was built early on, along with a local library. Underpasses were used alongside the school to improve the urban realm including spaces to teach kids how to navigate the road and public transport.
- City activations were part of creating interest in the area, including the Crane Ballet which attracted 14,000 visitors during early construction.

Today, the development agency has significant revenues after significant early investment. This early investment is critical for the long term sustainability of affordable housing, with loan repayments taking 35 years to start recording revenues that can be recycled into new housing. Vienna's early foresight to maintain strong public housing stock, land and investment is now paying dividends, and is a demonstration of what can be achieved in a relatively short period of time.

Cultural policies and programs

A meeting was held with Veronica Kaup-Hasler, Executive City Councillor for Cultural Affairs and Science. Councillor Kaup-Hasler shared with Councillor Hakim the City's approach to arts, culture and creative programs and highlighted Vienna's approach to cultural programs. In particular music, is deeply rooted in its historical legacy as a world-renowned centre for classical music and opera. The city invests significantly in maintaining and enhancing this heritage, while also encouraging contemporary and experimental music forms. This balanced focus aims to preserve Vienna's unique musical identity while fostering innovation and diversity in the arts. Vienna is historically celebrated as the birthplace of classical music. The city's cultural policy pays homage to this by preserving and promoting its rich musical heritage. Iconic institutions like the Vienna State Opera, the Musikverein, and the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra are integral to this effort, offering world-class performances of classical works.

Alongside its classical roots, Vienna is also a hub for contemporary arts. The city supports a variety of modern music genres, theatre productions, and visual arts. Festivals like Wien Modern are dedicated to contemporary music, showcasing avant-garde and experimental works.

Vienna places a strong emphasis on making culture accessible to all. This includes subsidised ticket prices for performances and events, extensive arts education programs in schools, and initiatives to bring arts into public spaces.

The city provides support for artists and creative industries through grants, residencies, and collaborative spaces. This nurtures a vibrant local arts scene, encouraging both Austrian and international artists to contribute to the city's cultural landscape.



Image: Councillor Hakim and Veronica Kaup-Hasler, Executive City Councillor for Cultural Affairs and Science wrestle for honours in liveability rankings for Melbourne and Vienna

4. Montpellier – Themes: International relations, culture and creative programs

In Montpellier, Councillor Hakim took the opportunity of making connections with Councillor Clare Hart, Vice President International Relations and Clementine Papa, Head of External Action and International Relations.

Montpellier is France's youngest city, with the average age of residents reflecting its vibrant, dynamic character. This youthful energy is evident in its innovative approaches to combining arts, culture, and technology. As a hub of education and research, Montpellier boasts world-class universities and a thriving student population, which contributes to its lively atmosphere and progressive outlook. The city's historical architecture blends seamlessly with modern developments, offering a unique urban experience that honours its rich past while embracing the future. With its Mediterranean climate, diverse cultural offerings, and a strong focus on sustainability and innovation, Montpellier stands out as a beacon of contemporary urban living in France.

The discussion covered a range of areas, highlighting Montpellier's innovative approaches in arts, culture, and technological advancements.

- **Medtech and Medical Valley:** The meeting opened with a focus on Montpellier's ambitious project to build a 'Medical Valley.' This initiative showcases the city's dedication to healthcare innovation. The potential for integrating these advancements with arts and cultural programs was discussed, exploring the synergy between medical technologies and creative sectors.
- **Creative Industries and Vulture Conservation:** Montpellier's unique investment in creative industries, particularly in projects involving vulture conservation, was highlighted. This initiative underscores the city's commitment to combining ecological conservation with artistic and cultural endeavours.
- **Radio France Festival:** The importance of the Radio France Festival in Montpellier's cultural calendar was discussed. Such festivals not only enrich the local cultural scene but also attract international audiences, thereby boosting cultural tourism.

- **Classical Concerts in Place de l'Europe and Antigone:** The role of Place de l'Europe and the Antigone district as cultural hubs was emphasized. The provision of free classical concerts in these areas was noted as a significant effort in making high culture accessible to the wider public.
- **Cultural Parks and Gaming Education:** The concept of cultural parks and the presence of world-class gaming schools in Montpellier were discussed. This approach indicates the city's progressive attitude towards blending education, technological innovation, and cultural entertainment.
- **Film Studios and Local Filmmaking:** The presence of film studios in Montpellier and the city's potential as a filming location were noted. This aspect could significantly boost Montpellier's international profile in the film industry.
- **Agronomy and Agriculture Sector:** The meeting touched upon the strong agronomy and agriculture sector in Montpellier. The possibility of integrating this sector with cultural initiatives, like agri-tourism or agricultural themes in art and festivals, was explored.
- **Tech Sector and Business Incubator:** The thriving tech sector in Montpellier and the role of the business incubator in nurturing innovation were highlighted. The intersection of technology with the arts presents new opportunities for artists and tech entrepreneurs alike.
- **Montpellier as a Gateway to Africa:** Montpellier's strategic role as a launch point for business and cultural interactions with the African continent was discussed. This presents opportunities for rich cultural exchanges and collaborations.
- **Cultural Ties with Africa:** The artwork of Ikram Ben Braham in Councillor Hart's office symbolizes the strong cultural connections between Montpellier and Africa.

The meeting concluded with a discussion on the potential for multicultural initiatives and embracing the city's diverse artistic expressions.

This meeting underscored Montpellier's dynamic approach to blending traditional culture with contemporary innovation and its commitment to inclusivity and diversity in the arts and culture sectors.



Image: Councillor Hakim meeting with Councillor Clare Hart, Montpellier