



LESLIE HAWORTH

A mass movement

There's more to church than mass at St Silas and St Anselm's next week. Archdeacon of the Anglican church Ray McInnes invites people to bring their lunch and enjoy free daily half-hour recitals on the pipe organ. The open week culminates in a free brunch on Saturday morning, including tours exploring the imposing gothic church's 80-year history and artefacts. Performances start at 12.30pm July 13 to 17 and brunch is 9am to 11am July 18 at the church in Bridport Street.

Funds go to low priorities, councils say

BY ROSEMARY BOLGER

SHOVEL-READY projects are being promoted above much-needed improvements to services because of the Federal Government's sporadic funding, Victorian councils say.

At the second meeting of the Australian Council of Local Governments, Prime Minister Kevin Rudd announced an extra \$220 million for local infrastructure.

Port Phillip Council will receive \$135,000 and can apply for a share of \$120 million for larger projects.

This follows the \$800 million the

Government has put into community infrastructure, such as pools, town halls and parks, since last November.

The funding is designed to support jobs and stimulate the economy during the global downturn.

The Victorian Local Governance Association welcomed the extra money but argued for a more sustainable funding model.

"Obviously councils welcome any contribution to infrastructure, and the additional \$220 million was welcomed," VLGA president Rose Iser said. "In discussions with mayors ... there are ongoing concerns about the

need for recurrent funding rather than gifted occasional grants for infrastructure."

An emphasis on ready-to-go projects meant higher priorities that might take longer to reach the construction phase were pushed back.

Cr Iser also doubted the effectiveness of focusing on capital works rather than expanding or improving services in high demand.

"Construction jobs are not always local jobs," she said.

The Government will also establish a \$25 million reform fund to fast-track improvements to infrastructure.

More community projects in approved budget

BY HENRIETTA COOK

PORT Phillip Council has adopted its 2009-10 budget after months of consultation and the addition of more funding for community groups.

Gasworks Arts Park will receive an extra \$50,000 to develop a long-term strategic plan and \$20,000 to install a

semi-permanent rigging system that will reduce the need for temporary performance lighting.

South Melbourne District Sports Club was another big winner in the amended budget, receiving \$100,000 to make the club more inviting for women and juniors. The club will use the money to build improved change

room facilities, but it must provide the council with ongoing information on membership figures.

The council will also increase its contribution towards meal subsidies from \$3.15 to \$3.40 per meal.

Residents can expect a rate rise of 2.9 per cent, which is one of the lowest rate increases in the state.