



# GANNAWARRA

## Shire Council

**Tuesday, 9 June 2020**

**1:00pm**

**Northern District Community Health**

**Kerang**

## **AGENDA**

### **Council Meeting**

Council is operating in accordance with the new *COVID-19 Omnibus (Emergency Measures) Act 2020* which operates for a Prescribed Period from 1 May to 1 November.

During this Prescribed Period the following arrangements will apply until 1 November 2020:

- Ordinary Council Meetings will be closed to the public
- Meetings will be live-streamed via Council's Facebook page which can be accessed at this link ([www.facebook.com/gannawarra](http://www.facebook.com/gannawarra))

**Order Of Business**

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**Tom O’Reilly**  
**CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER**

## 1 WELCOME TO COUNTRY

I would like to acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land on which we meet today, their rich culture and connection to Country. I pay my respects to Elders past, present and emerging and acknowledge Elders from other communities who may be meeting with us today.

## 2 OPENING DECLARATION

We, the Councillors of the Shire of Gannawarra, declare that we will undertake the duties of the office of Councillor, in the best interests of our community, and faithfully, and impartially, carry out the functions, powers, authorities and discretions vested in us, to the best of our skill and judgement.

## 3 APOLOGIES AND LEAVE OF ABSENCE

## 4 DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

A Councillor, member of a special committee, or member of Council staff has a conflict of interest in a matter if he or she has a *direct interest* or an *indirect interest* in that matter.

A person has a direct interest in a matter if there is a likelihood that the benefits, obligations, opportunities or circumstances of the person would be directly altered if the matter is decided in a particular way. This includes where there is a likelihood that the person will receive a direct benefit or loss that can be measured in financial terms or that the residential amenity of the person will be directly affected if the matter is decided in a particular way.

A person has an indirect interest in a matter if the person has:

- a close association in the matter because a family member, a relative or a member of their household has a direct or indirect interest in the matter
- an indirect financial interest in the matter
- a conflicting duty – although there are circumstances where a person does not have an indirect interest because of a conflicting duty
- received an ‘applicable gift’
- become an interested party in the matter by initiating civil proceedings or becoming a party to civil proceedings in relation to the matter.
- Because their residential amenity is likely to be altered if the matter is decided in a particular way.

### ***Disclosure of conflict of interest***

If a Councillor or member of a special committee has a conflict of interest in a matter which is to be or is likely to be considered at a meeting of the Council or special committee, the Councillor or member must:

- if he or she will be present at the meeting, make a full disclosure of that interest by advising of the class and nature of the interest to either –
- the Council or special committee immediately before the matter is considered at the meeting, *or*

- in writing to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO). Where the disclosure is made to the CEO in writing, the Councillor or member need only disclose the class of interest to the meeting, immediately before the matter is considered.
- if he or she will not be present at the meeting, make a full disclosure to the CEO or Chairperson of the meeting, in writing, of the class and nature of the interest. If a Chairperson is given a written disclosure, he or she must give the written disclosure to the CEO.
- The CEO must keep written disclosures in a secure place for three years after the date the Councillor or member of the special committee who made the disclosure ceases to be a Councillor or member, and destroy the written disclosure when the three year period expires.
- While the matter is being considered or any vote taken, the Councillor or member of a special committee with the conflict of interest must leave the room and notify the Mayor or Chairperson of the special committee he or she is doing so. The Mayor or Chairperson must notify the Councillor or member that he or she may return to the room after consideration of the matter and all votes have been cast.
- A CEO or Chairperson of a special committee must record in the minutes of the meeting the declaration of the conflict of interest, the class of the interest and, if the Councillor or member has disclosed the nature of the interest to the meeting, the nature of the interest.
- A failure by a Councillor or member to comply with Section 79 of the Act may result in a penalty of up to 120 penalty units and disqualification under Section 29(2) of the Act.

## 5 BUSINESS REPORTS FOR DECISION

### 5.1 HEARING SUBMISSIONS - PROPOSED BUDGET 2020/2021

**Author:** Phil Higgins, Director Corporate Services

**Authoriser:** Tom O'Reilly, CEO

**Attachments:** 1 2020/21 Budget Submissions Received [↓](#)

**Council will hear the submissions from those requesting to address Council in support of their submission lodged under Section 223 of the *Local Government Act 1989* in respect of the Gannawarra Shire Council Proposed Budget 2020/2021.**

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#### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Council has prepared a Proposed Budget 2020/2021 in accordance with Section 127 of the *Local Government Act 1989* (the Act). In accordance with Section 223 of the Act, Council must, if requested as part of a submission on the Proposed Budget, provide the person with the opportunity to be heard in support of the submission. Five of sixteen submissions received included requests to be heard. Council must consider all submissions and decide whether or not to amend the Proposed Budget 2020/2021 prior to adoption at the Council Meeting on 24 June 2020.

#### BACKGROUND

Council has prepared a Proposed Budget 2020/2021 in accordance with Section 127 of the Act. In accordance with Section 223 of the Act a person has a right to make a submission and can request to be heard by Council in support of the submission.

Submissions must be considered by Council prior to formal adoption of the Proposed Budget 2020/2021.

Council resolved to give public notice of the preparation of the Proposed Budget 2020/2021 at its meeting on 15 April, 2020.

#### DISCUSSION

Sixteen submissions have been received on the Proposed Budget 2020/2021 and five submitters have asked to be heard in support of their submission. The exact wording of fourteen submissions submitted online are contained in the attached spreadsheet. Two submissions received by letter are attached separately.

#### POLICY CONTEXT

- *Local Government Act 1989* – Section 127 on the preparation of the Budget and Section 223 on making submissions.
- Council Plan – Good Governance and a Healthy Organisation – “achieve long term financial sustainability” and “our community is consulted”. A number of the projects funded in the Proposed Budget address key actions in the Council Plan.

**CONSULTATION**

In accordance with the Act, the Proposed Budget 2020/2021 was available for inspection between 23 April and 25 May, 2020. Council undertook a community engagement process, which included the distribution of digital information packs to contacts representing more than 200 community organisations, Progress Associations, Development Committees, schools, health providers and sporting clubs.

As this Council meeting is operating in accordance with the new *COVID-19 Omnibus (Emergency Measures) Act 2020*, Council will hear all submissions via telephone.

**CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

In accordance with Section 80B of the *Local Government Act 1989*, the Officer preparing this report declares no conflict of interest in regards to this matter.

**CONCLUSION**

The Proposed Budget 2020/2021 was available for inspection between 23 April and 25 May, 2020 and submissions were invited until 25 May, 2020. Sixteen submissions were received and five people requested to be heard by Council in support of their submission. After considering submissions, the Proposed Budget 2020/2021 will be presented to Council for adoption at the 24 June 2020 Council meeting.

Proposed Budget 2020/2021 - Public Submissions						
Date	First name	Last name	Town	Submission details	Speak @ CM 9/6/20	Time to hear submission
25/05/2020	David	Thompson	Kerang	Tree planting I recommend that the tree planting budget be increased from \$30,000 to \$100,000 pa. This should be allocated \$40,000 for Kerang, \$30,000 for Cohuna and the remainder to the other towns. There is a huge need for additional shade trees along footpaths particularly in Kerang to provide adequate summer shade for pedestrians. Cohuna caravan park upgrading I question the justification for spending \$280,000 on upgrading this caravan park when council does not own it.	Yes	1.05 pm
25/05/2020	Andrea	Otto	Koroop	Question 1 I am very concerned that there is no borrowings column on the Capital Works Program note, so I am wondering what operational items will the \$3,500,000 loan be funding? Question 2 Commitments for the repayment of borrowings set out in the cashflow budget show repayments for a full year of \$400,000 in 2021/22 blowing out to \$431,000 in 2024 FY 2019/20 2020/21 2021/22 2022/23 2023/24 (\$108,000) (\$267,000) (400,000) (413,000) (431,000) Give GSC has made a budgeted loss of (\$848,000), how will GSC service a loan of \$3,500,000, for the term of the loan, I ask: How many years will this loan be taken over? Will there be any balloon payment at the end of the loan term? How do you intend to service this loan over the next 3 years given the reducing income shown in both the cash flow and Comprehensive Income Statement? Question 3 2019/20 Budget Forecast for Executive wages was \$289,000 for 2 FTE, the budget for 2020/21 is \$332,000, an increase of \$43,000 - a 12.9% increase. How does Council justify this increase, given poor customer survey results in 2019/20 and a \$848,00 budget deficit for 2019/20 FY. I ask what are the KPI's for these positions as it would seem that financial performance and customer satisfaction are not on that list?	Yes	1.10 pm
24/05/2020	Jason	Hensley	Cohuna	Cohuna Swimming Pool is at it end of life. Cohuna users require a new pool for the next generation. Progress working with Swimming pool working group and put towards proposal (including design and costing) for new swimming in Cohuna. Cohuna and District Progress Association wishes to make a submission to the Gannawarra Shire Council in relation to the Council Budget for the year 2020/2021 and that Council includes an amount that is allocated to future capital that is to be used for the future planning, research and development of the Cohuna swimming pool renewal.	Yes	1.15 pm

Proposed Budget 2020/2021 - Public Submissions						
Date	First name	Last name	Town	Submission details	Speak @ CM 9/6/20	Time to hear submission
24/05/2020	Jason	Hensley	Cohuna	CBD and Waterfront Plan This is a large budget item \$1.693 Million with \$846,000.00 Council Funded and \$847,000.00 Grant dependent. (From recent GSC media releases indicates this funding has been received). It would seem that with a plan such as this that there would need to be some preliminary plans and concept that would be required for the purpose of application for the grant funding. Cohuna and District Progress Association wishes make a submission to the Gannawarra Shire Council in relation to the Council Budget for the year 2020/2021 requesting more information in relation to the proposed CBD and Waterfront Plan we would like to be able to view and provide comment to concept plans in relation to this Budget item.	Yes	1.20 pm
25/05/2020	Max and Denise	Fehring	Cohuna	See attached letter for full details, items raised include Budget format, Community Wellbeing, cost shifting, Employee costs, Borrowing \$3.5 million, Superannuation liability, Kerang to Koondrook rail trail, Fees and charges, Profit and loss figures, Performance indicators, work with VicRoads, Carryover projects, GST on the cashflow, Balance sheet equity, ambitious grants program, Corporate strategies, Rates increase 2%	Yes	1.25pm
20/04/2020	Linda	Coote	Murrabit	I am opposed to the rise in shire rates, especially as the drought is still continuing and irrigation water is still financially unviable to purchase. Although there has been some rainfall it is not enough to grow much to feed hungry stock and we are still experiencing high overheads due to the drought. The shire received government money to help toward the drought and is using this for some projects that would otherwise have used shire money to fund so I think rates should remain the same and not put more financial pressure on shire residents at this current time. I also find it hard to believe that our property values have risen to the extent listed in your budget. I had a local real estate out to give me an appraisal and was told that my rate notice was over-valued and that I would not get the amount listed on my notice. I have irrigatable farmland	No	
20/04/2020	Amy	Wilson	Kerang	A dog park been built so our tresured dogs get a safe and enclosed area to excersise in	No	
24/04/2020	Glenda	Groves	Cohuna	I see a proposed bike trail for Koondrook to Kerang, why not consider bike trail from Cohuna to Koondrook? I realise it is not on a 'rail trail' but the distance is perfect for local retirees, families and tourist. The arrival at either one of these 'water' towns is beautiful and refreshing and picturesque? Please consider my proposal? Also pleased consider one hard rubbish collection every two years, many older folks cannot get to the tip. Many thanks Glenda	No	



Proposed Budget 2020/2021 - Public Submissions						
Date	First name	Last name	Town	Submission details	Speak @ CM 9/6/20	Time to hear submission
2/05/2020	James	Bartram	Cohuna	I would like to see a sealed bicycle track along Gunbower Island Rd . The benefits of cycling everyday are enormous to all ages but especially those who are near retirement. Cycling reduces inflammation to the knee and hip joints caused by arthritis without the need for anaelgesics or knee replacements . But also the track would be another attraction for tourists and visitors to our picturesque town and also make it safer than cycling on the road. The track only needs to be 3 metres wide with two lanes, one in each direction and a broken white line in the middle, with the same rules as our roads , ride in the left lane. Also the track could be used as a walking track ! With all the resources and materials close to Cohuna, I am sure this could be achieved. Regards your humble ratepayer James Bartram	No	
11/05/2020	Stacey and Scott	Worsnop	Mystic Park	We would like the budget reviewed as it states it 'was prepared prior to the Coronavirus pandemic'. Here are a few points: • CIV hasn't increased as much as it did last year, but it is still increased, when property prices are actually expected to decline by 9% from March-December 2020 according to the Victoria Department of Treasury and Finance. • Our three properties are all classed as residential, so we are particularly affected by the fact that the average rate increase is above the Fair Go Rates System of 2%, so we don't consider this to be appropriate. • Both these increases are a contradiction to the CPI. CIV was calculated following the December quarter, where the average CPI was 1.8%, furthermore Housing CPI is currently at 0.6%. This is quite a concern if our rates keep increasing but our rental income does not. • Bins also continue to go up, and are obviously not considered to be part of the Fair Go Rates System as they have increased over 2%. This is interesting considering the EPA landfill levy rates don't appear to have increased from 2019/2020 to 2020/2021. During these uncertain times, please consider cutting costs just like many households have had to due to COVID-19. It should be established as to whether it is really appropriate to spend almost \$5m (an additional 50%) more than the last proposed budget on capital works, regardless of whether they are part funded. Suggestions to postpone or cancel include but are not limited to: • Victoria Street CBD upgrade • Tate Drive Industrial Estate expansion • Kerang to Koondrook Rail Trail • Reviewing projects with ongoing costs such as Cohuna waterfront and skate park, and Quambatook recreational water	No	

Proposed Budget 2020/2021 - Public Submissions						
Date	First name	Last name	Town	Submission details	Speak @ CM 9/6/20	Time to hear submission
23/05/2020	Karen	Clavin	Cohuna	<p>I was dismayed that despite a proposed budget surplus, there is no reference to any forward planning for a replacement for the Cohuna pool. I have lived in the district for 21 years and for that entire time it has been well known that the pool is nearing the end of its lifespan due to its proximity to the Gunbower Creek and the damage caused by under running of the banks. There have been at least 2 independent consultants engaged advising replacement with various alternatives. Yet there has been no attempt to "manage facilities now and into the future" as stipulated in the Shire's own objective #3 re a Sustainable Natural and Built Environment. I fear that putting \$100,000 aside for an Aquatic Strategy is an attempt to delay the issue once again at great cost to the community in terms of health and wellbeing. It is not acceptable to keep spending ratepayers money asking the same questions until Council gets the answer that it wants. It would be far better to put that \$100k towards the new project. Dr Peter Barker supported by the Pool Users Group has put together realistic and innovative concept plans for a future pool complex that ticks all of the boxes of the Shires Objectives now and into the future. The Councils plan to have the Cohuna pool die a natural death through neglect contravenes their stated objectives on all fronts and is morally reckless. The Cohuna Progress Association is onboard with the well thought out and sustainable plans that can be built in stages as funding allows. Please use the \$100k to advance the concept plans to engineering plans as they request. My second comment regards the item under Capital Works of \$135,000 for a swimming pool renewal program being \$95,000 for renewal and \$40,000 for upgrade. What specifically does this entail and does it relate to the Cohuna Pool?</p>	No	

Proposed Budget 2020/2021 - Public Submissions						
Date	First name	Last name	Town	Submission details	Speak @ CM 9/6/20	Time to hear submission
24/05/2020	Adrian. & Jill	MOORE	Kerang	Given the current pandemic the council needs to rethink imposing a rate increase across the Shire. COVID-19 has affected many of us in many ways and a rate rise averaging 2% is the last thing any of us needs right now. The role of the Shire during this time has not demonstrated one of leadership rather just cutting service provision. Whilst we realise that rate money boosts the coffers, your brochure highlights the Shire's sound financial situation, which we believe further supports cancelling the proposed rate increase in the 20/21 budget. Whilst hopefully things start to return to normality soon, providing the second anticipated COVID-19 wave does not eventuate, we will all be trying to catch up in many ways including financially. To impose a rate rise at this time is just not fair when many have lost so much. Indeed a number of Melbourne councils have squashed a rate hike in their coming budgets. High time Gannawarra Shire did the same	No	
24/05/2020	Jason	Hensley	Cohuna	All Abilities park in Koondrook Cohuna & Districts Progress Association is not wanting to take any funding from any other town or district however, it has been highlighted in the GSC inclusion strategy that there is need for all abilities facilities in both in Kerang and Cohuna however it appears that the GSC Council has not used The inclusion strategy when making this decision. Cohuna and District Progress Association wishes to make a submission to the Gannawarra Shire Council in relation to the Council Budget for the year 2020/2021 requesting and explanation as to why when it has been highlighted in GSC Inclusion Strategy that there is need in both Kerang and Cohuna for all abilities facilities and how is it that the GSC has come to the decision allocated \$520,000.00 to the development of an all abilities park in Koondrook when this was not identified in the Inclusion Strategy an area where there is significant need this type of facility. These funds could be better allocated in an equitable fashion allowing all communities to have access to facilities which promote inclusion for people with varying abilities.	No	

Proposed Budget 2020/2021 - Public Submissions						
Date	First name	Last name	Town	Submission details	Speak @ CM 9/6/20	Time to hear submission
24/05/2020	Jason	Hensley	Cohuna	Memorial Park Paving Discussion in relation to the continued carrying over of funds by the GSC which has been allocated to the paving in the Memorial Park. Cohuna and District Progress Association wishes make a submission to the Gannawarra Shire Council in relation to the Council Budget for the year 2020/2021 requesting that the GSC fully fund the paving in the Memorial Park. There has been \$15,000.00 which has been carried over for the last 6 years as it has previously been dependent on obtaining a Grant for the balance of the funds required of \$15,000.00.	No	
25/05/2020	Louise	Cannon	Cohuna	Council executive and councillors wages. I would like to submit a proposal to cut the executive team and councillors wages by 20 % in the proposed budget. This has been an issue in other regions and councils have wisely seen the need to reduce wages to allow for the COVID 19 economic hardship for all rate payers. The money saved could be diverted back into local grants and small business assistance. As the annual report is not as transparent as other councils I also think that all allowances received should be outlined clearly in the annual report . Ratepayers have the right to know how much each councillor , the executive team and the mayor earn . There has to be more transparency and ratepayers have the right to be fully informed of each councillors earnings. A 20% allowance reduction is not much considering what ratepayers have had to forgo in their own jobs in the last 5 months. It would be a welcome gesture towards the financial recovery of the Gannawarra region.	No	
25/05/2020	Sandy	Foweraker	Murrabit	See separate letter regarding a "Landscaping Plan for the Murrabit Market"	No	

*Submission to the Gannawarra Council budget of 2020/21* Monday, May 25, 2020

**Preamble**

Thank you for the opportunity to make some comments on the proposed Council budget. Firstly it is a very lengthy document, yes I do understand it's written in a format that is formulated by the Local Government Act/ Office to comply with their regulations and red tape. The downside to this rigid way of reporting of proposed budget is a difficulty of understanding the pages of figures and how they relate to each other. This would be difficult for Councilor's as it is for the citizens of Gannawarra.

In putting the budget together of this magnitude, it really needs each section fully work through with Councillors completely understanding what makes up each section and operations of the Council as a whole .failure to take such an approach leaves Council having not full ownership of the budget details . There is quite a bit in this budget will be taking on other activities which in general terms are not what the Gannawarra ratepayers would consider basic operational obligations of Council. There is the use of the word, **Wellbeing** appears to be referred to as a section of Council structure. If the basic services the Council are delivered well and efficiently, this is the best way to look after the welfare of the community as a whole.

The Council needs to be continually on guard to ensure that doesn't take on services on behalf the State or Federal Government , which often in a short time later leave you holding all of the costs as the original subsidy or inducement disappears .

We always need to remember that no Government has any dollars in its own right, it only has the dollars of the Australian community which are derived from rates taxes and charges and the constitutional arrangements which allow for our three tiers of government. Each of those tiers of Government particularly the two above local Council are often inclined to shift the goalposts when it suits them all when the political winds change. I find it hard in the budget to work out how much the communities paying in social welfare costs which in my view is the responsibility of State and Federal Governments. After all they are getting the money from the same source just branding it differently at times, the taxpayers of Australia.

I would like to now make some general comments,

**Employee costs**

In this year's budget there is a significant increase in wage costs which if you've look further forward in the next preceding years continues to increase.

I would like to see the Senior Management level salaries listed and appropriate on costs as well. There needs to be high level scrutiny on salaries paid, performance measurement and delivery. What is lacking throughout the document is a lack of measure of productivity or any serious attempt to ensure productivity and performance is maintained and improved where required.

In looking through the notes 4.1.7 it does not give much indication of where the extra wages are going other than there is an increase in staff numbers. With our country having to deal with COVID-19 virus along with the rest the world, we are facing some very difficult financial times. There will be financial pressures on many of our ratepayers along with other members of the community who will have to adjust their businesses and hopefully can continue. Therefore, the Council in its upcoming budgets needs to take in account the changes in the income levels of

many of our Gannawarra citizens. Yes, it is unknown what the effects will be, it simply could mean that will have to consider some slimming down of staff numbers and salaries to remain viable. Hence the need to be totally prudent in the use of all accounts, cost and resources. This is the reality of those in our community.

Also note that the employer salary costs are approximate equivalent to the rates and charges that is expected be collected in 20/21 financial year. This makes the Council a very odd business where its costs are often or near greater than the income that they receive.

The Council is proposing to borrow \$3.5 million approximately, for which appears to be supporting capital projects. From my study of the budget a lot of these projects depend on co-funding which does not seem to be confirmed within the budget itself. The Council in the past has had enough difficulty continuing to fund the unfunded liability on long service, which has been a hangover when the act was change during the late 1990s. The Council would have paid as much as \$5 to \$10 million over those years covering this unfunded liability issue. Then to turn round borrow this amount of money on a capital program that is proposed but not completely funded in all aspects of the program.

I note still included in one of those programs is a Kerang to Koondrook Rail Trail at a proposed cost of \$733,000. When I look through the list of projects this is one that should be leased considered for funding compared to many other projects now being undertaken or proposed. I have not seen enough evidence as to its value, will require a high level of maintenance coupled with in my view are steeped in depreciation figure. I would urge the Council not to consider this project for funding. It is important that all times that every project is fully consulted with the community and all aspects of the project are laid out, this should include upfront funding, ongoing cost of maintenance the benefits plus and minus to the community as a whole. It is one thing to put something in place it is another thing for it to be ongoing and maintained into the future.

One of the major roles of Council is to provide basic cost-effective services which includes roads drainage and support to allow businesses to make investments within our community and for the future. One of the issues that Gannawarra Council has it often takes too long to get a project up and going. Councils are there to provide service to the community, endeavouring wherever possible and at all times ensure that development projects or business extensions are encouraged and help wherever possible. I see in the budget there is the normal increase in fees without ever explaining whether they are required or not required. It leaves a community feeling that is just another money grab, as often no value is added to that service or at times the service becomes less valuable.

The issue of profit and loss and deficits etc, become very difficult to follow in the document. If the Council goes ahead and borrows \$3.5 approximately million, continues to increase staff costs and salaries, lacks the drive on productivity the debt that the Council will carry in the near future will be large or unsustainable. Particularly if grants dry up as other Governments try to deal with the overall debt as well, will see the incoming Council following the October elections having to deal with a reduction service.

One simply cannot have your cake and eat it too at the same time. When looking through the document I see a list of services that are going to be provided, then an indicator column and performance measures. Currently there is some measures in place for performance why were not they not listed in the document leased as a baseline of what current performance status.

What is written in the document is pretty general and doesn't indicate or measure any level of performance or output which one can measure as value for money or of benefit the community as a whole.

My general observation of the outside maintenance people that have operated here in Cohuna and surrounding area, have done an excellent job on most of the projects that they have undertaken. Our roads in general have been in pretty good shape, recent rains will test out how good they are, now with better grading techniques and application the right time should be able to maintain our road network quite well. There are several areas where Road intersections need some attention, much of this is due to increase for safety at these intersections. The type of traffic particularly with larger trucks have altered the requirements for such intersections. Hopefully some of the Council budget is directed towards this matter. There needs to be more effort put into working with VicRoads to improve these intersections. Good advocacy is required.

As with all Council budgets, there always seems to be a carryover of projects from one year to the other. It helps make the cash situation look a little better, but it also could indicate the ability to deliver projects is not up to standard or just far too grand to be delivered. Once again, the issue of projects proposed in the availability of grants which can be problematical when setting a budget 12 months forward. Can often give false pretences to the community, Council needs to be Open and Frank about project delivery.

I notice in the statement of cash flows a net GST refund/payment figure, nothing listed for the current budget year then I see a figure of 1,693,000 to come in if I read correctly. Why such a discrepancy is a because we have never claimed before?

When you look at the balance sheet and the total equity figure of \$220,037, it indicates is not much room for margin of error in the Gannawarra Council finances. Further deterioration in this area means that the ratepayers and the community of Gannawarra will be the ones carrying that cost. They are already carrying the cost of State and Federal governments as well.

#### **Materials and services 4.1.8**

This seems to be a large increase in corporate strategies and reviews, this is often codeword for Consultants. why is there such a large increase? Contract payments also have got a quiet an increase as well. What are the extra costs involved in this item?

4.4.2 net cash flows provided by/used in financing activities.

With such a large borrowing amount in excess of \$3 million, how well is the plan spending and value been arrived at?

Will this increase productivity of the Council as a whole, decrease maintenance activities and what has been allowed for in the depreciation figure?

#### **Conclusion**

The budget as put forward is rather ambitious in its capital program. The budget papers do not show a lot of rigor and how that program was arrived at, sometimes looks like a wish list. The Councilor's will need to be upfront with the community if the ongoing situation and the economy of Australia does not bounce back from the COVID- virus effect. I recognize as no doubt many other people will that we are in uncharted waters as to what our economy will look

like. The Gannawarra Council cannot operation in isolation to the level of welfare that is happening in the Australian economy over the next couple of years.

I would urge the Council to concentrate on its basic operations of delivering the service that currently provides efficiently and effectively as possible. Increase wherever possible to support and encouragement of existing businesses and any new ones that wish to establish in our Shire. Every step should be taken to make sure that it is a smooth transition and is welcoming approach as possible. At times that has not always been the case, if there is ever a time to take every positive step to listen and talk with the community at every opportunity it is now and in the next couple of years. I do believe there is areas within the budget that could be trimmed without affecting services and help maintain financial stability without imposing extra costs on ratepayers.

I find it interesting we talk about it is only a 2% increase, that is not quite true it's 2% on what was 2% last year so there is a compounding factor at play. There is a real need for an education program to be developed to explain to the community as a whole how the Council budget is put together , what it entails , who is paying for what and what services can be expected. Community expectations are often higher than what can be delivered, as much because as a lack of understanding of the costs to deliver such services. Also, the general community does not differentiate that much between all levels of Government other than people feel that they have their hands in their pocket most of the time.

Yours sincerely

Max Fehring AM







**Murrabit Advancement Association**

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21 May 2020

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 Chief Executive Officer  
 Gannawarra Shire Council  
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GANNAWARRA SHIRE COUNCIL	
File:	3-000171
25 MAY 2020	
Rego No.	
Referrad To:	PH
Copies To:	TCR

Dear Tom

Submission to Gannawarra Shire Budget 2020-2021

Thank you for the opportunity to provide a submission to the 2020-2021 Budget.

The Murrabit Advancement Association provided a formal submission to the 2019-2020 Budget for the following project:

1. Landscaping Plan for the Murrabit Market Site.

This followed on from correspondence in 2017 asking for Council to assist the Murrabit community to develop a Murrabit Masterplan. When no action resulted from that request despite a promising letter from the CEO at the time, the 2019 request was submitted with the thought that a small and achievable planning project might be more likely to progress.

Unfortunately, there has been no progression and correspondence received has left my committee confused as to what the correct process is for making such requests to Council. This has also been raised with the Mayor and Cr. Tasker.

Previous correspondence has been attached.

I therefore again submit to the 2020-2021 Budget that a "Landscaping Plan for the Murrabit Market Site" be included. This request relates to Council owned land. Considering the current situation, it would be even better if a plan and implementation of the plan could be included.

It would also be appreciated if Council could again consider the development of a Murrabit Masterplan as per the first request to Council in 2017.

I do not wish to speak to this request and thank you again for the opportunity to provide this submission.

Yours sincerely

Sandy Foweraker  
President

Encl.



Our Ref: 3.000537  
IN20/69F409E7  
GR:WD

4 February 2020

Sandy Foweraker  
Murrabit Advancement Association  
PO Box 3  
MURRABIT VIC 3579

Dear Sandy

**Murrabit Projects 2019/2020**

I write in response to your letter received 24 January, 2020 regarding projects for Murrabit in the current financial year and provide the following response.

- 1. Stormwater Drainage Development for Murrabit**  
The design for this project has been completed. However the construction of this project is grant dependant and a grant application was submitted December, 2019 under Building Better Regions Infrastructure Project Stream Round 4. Council is waiting for the announcement of funding.
- 2. Park Improvements for Miss Keats Park**  
This project was not identified in the 2019/2020 Council Budget. It was identified as a possible project for consideration as part of Stage 2 of the Federal Governments Drought Communities Program. All projects for Stage 2 of funding have not yet been determined.
- 3. Murrabit Market Landscaping Plan**  
This project is not a capital project and therefore also not identified in the 2019/2020 Council Budget. There may be confusion in the information you have been provided. There is currently a raw water irrigation project underway from Stage 1 of the Federal Governments Drought Communities Program for Murrabit.

I trust the above has been of assistance however should you wish to discuss this matter further please contact Council's Manager Projects and Property, Wade Williams on 5450 9333.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Geoff Rollinson".

**Geoff Rollinson**  
**DIRECTOR INFRASTRUCTURE & DEVELOPMENT**

PATCHELL PLAZA, 47 VICTORIA STREET, KERANG VIC 3579 | PO BOX 287, KERANG VIC 3579  
TEL: (03) 5450 9333 FAX: (03) 5450 3023 council@gsc.vic.gov.au | ABN 98 993 182 937



**Murrabit Advancement Association**  
 PO Box 3, MURRABIT, VIC 3579  
 Phone 5457 2205  
 Email: murrabit1@bigpond.com  
 www.murrabit.com.au  
 www.facebook.com/murrabitcountrymarket

17 January 2020

Tom O'Reilly  
 Chief Executive Officer  
 Gannawarra Shire Council  
 PO Box 287  
 KERANG VIC 3579

Dear Tom

Follow-up - Murrabit Projects 2019-2020 Council Budget

I am following up on progress towards achieving the Murrabit projects contained within the 2019/2020 Council Budget.

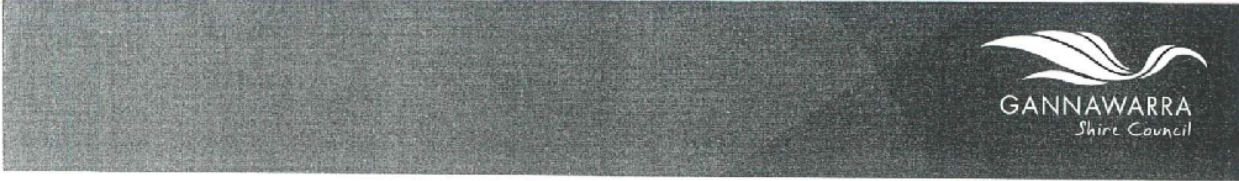
The three projects in the budget relating to our district.

1. Stormwater Drainage Development for Murrabit
2. Park Improvements at Miss Keats Picnic Park
3. Murrabit Market Landscaping Plan (successful budget submission)

As the financial year is slipping by and with no further information received by our community, it would be appreciated if you could follow up progress towards each project and provide an update prior to our next meeting scheduled for Tuesday 18 February.

Yours sincerely

Sandy Foweraker  
President



Our Ref: 3.000171  
IN19/43CFEE9A  
PH:AP  
1 July 2019

Sandy Foweraker  
President  
Murrabit Advancement Association  
PO Box 3  
MURRABIT VIC 3579

Dear Sandy

**Gannawarra Shire Proposed 2019/20 Budget submission**

Your submission to the Proposed 2019/20 Budget was considered by Council at its Ordinary Council meeting on 26 June, 2019.

Council has funding within its budget for strategic project development and planning. The beautification works at the Murrabit Market site could fit this criterion.

Some discussion will need to be undertaken to consider the scope of the project and how it will fit with the different land ownership issues and around infrastructure planning, like drainage.

We look forward to meeting with your committee to progress these issues, and Geoff Rollinson from Council will be in contact with you shortly.

Thank you for bringing this matter to Council's attention and we look forward to working with you on the beautification works at the Murrabit Market site.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Tom O'Reilly".

**Tom O'Reilly**  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

PATCHELL PLAZA, 47 VICTORIA STREET, KERANG VIC 3579 | PO BOX 287, KERANG VIC 3579  
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**Murrabit Advancement Association**

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30 May 2019

Chief Executive Officer  
Gannawarra Shire Council  
PO Box 287  
KERANG VIC 3579

Dear Tom

Submission to Gannawarra Shire Budget 2019-2020

On behalf of the Murrabit community, thank you for the opportunity to provide a submission to the 2019-2020 Budget.

I note that there are two projects in the budget relating to our district.

1. Stormwater Drainage Development for Murrabit (\$20,000)
2. Park Improvements at Miss Keats Picnic Park (\$20,000).

There is however one other project in the Murrabit & District Community Profile we would urge you to consider as part of the budget setting process:

3. Beautify Murrabit Market Site.

As you are aware the Murrabit Market is now nearing its 42<sup>nd</sup> Anniversary. The land on which the market is held is predominately Council owned land, apart from two small parcels of Crown Land fronting Gonn Avenue – one of these parcels being the War Memorial. The Murrabit Advancement Association and the broader community has invested heavily into infrastructure on the Murrabit Market site over the past 40 plus years.

The site now needs additional landscaping in order to meet the growing demands and expectations of visitors and stallholders. Ideas include grassed areas, bitumen roadways, additional tree planting, a family friendly area with outdoor games and activities for children, updated signage, large art installations and a drinking water fountain.

We ask that Council makes funds available within the 2019/20 budget to develop a simple landscaping plan for the 'Murrabit Market Site' so that our community can seek funding towards the implementation of such a plan.

Thank you again for the opportunity to contribute and I look forward to seeing the final document takes into consideration the points raised in this submission.

Yours sincerely

Sandy Foweraker  
President

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## A BUDGET FOR EVERY DISTRICT IN THE GANNAWARRA

### KERANG

- **Regional Multi-Purpose Venue (\$65,000):** Funding for investigating function, design, features and location.
- **Loddon River fishing jetties (\$110,000):** Installation of fishing jetties along Loddon River. NOTE: Project dependent on grant funding.
- **Gannawarra Children's Centre (\$95,000):** Works including painting, air conditioning upgrades and carpet replacement.
- **Scoresby Street footpaths (\$25,000):** Installation of paths to connect the town's footpath network to Riverside Park.
- **Riverside Park clubrooms redevelopment (\$50,000):** Construction of female-friendly changerooms. NOTE: Works brought forward from 2018/2019 financial year.
- **Stormwater pumps – Wyndham Street (\$120,000):** Improvements to Kerang township's stormwater pump at Loddon River.

### COHUNA

- **Cohuna Waterfront Connection Project (\$400,000):** The installation of piers and jetties along Gunbower Creek will proceed thanks to a contribution from the Federal Government Regional Growth Fund.
- **Cohuna Skate Park (\$60,000):** Funding for investigating the design of the Cohuna Skate Park redevelopment.

### KOONDROOK

- **Koondrook Waterfront Connection Project – Stage 3 of CBD redevelopment (\$500,000):** Project proceeding thanks to a contribution from the Federal Government Regional Growth Fund.
- **Koondrook Township Flood Study (\$150,000):** Project proceeding thanks to a contribution from Emergency Management Victoria's 2017-18 Natural Disaster Resilience Grants Scheme.
- **Parks/gardens automated irrigation system upgrade (\$25,000):** Automation of irrigation systems across the town to ensure water is used efficiently.
- **Koondrook Nature Based Tourism Hub (\$425,000):** Works brought forward from the 2018/2019 financial year to complete the Glamping Tents and Pedestrian Bridge at the Nature Based Tourism Hub.
- **Koondrook Caravan Park works (\$350,000):** Works brought forward from the 2018/2019 financial year, which includes landscaping, road upgrades and stormwater improvements.

### MURRABIT

- **Township stormwater drainage development (\$20,000):** Further develop the design of the Murrabit Stormwater system.
- **Park improvements (\$20,000):** Improvement works at Ms Keats Park.





111650

Our Ref: 12.05.059  
17/00799  
EB:WD

30/08/2017

Sandy Foweraker  
President, Murrabit Advancement Association  
PO Box 3  
MURRABIT VIC 3579

Dear Sandy

**Town Design Planning Assistance for Murrabit**

I refer to your letter received 10 August seeking clarification from Council on how best to undertake a Murrabit Masterplan.

It's important to include all stakeholders of the Murrabit Community including sporting clubs, education providers, community interest groups and the like. This will enable an inclusive and precise vision for the community of Murrabit to work together to achieve.

As always projects such as this are reliant upon funding. Council is prepared to contribute some funds while also obtaining an applicable grant to enable the engagement of a consultant to undertake the creation of this future visioning document.

Your support and the Murrabit community's support is invaluable for a document such as this, paving the way with clear objectives for the community. Council will begin sourcing applicable grants for this type of project with assistance from yourselves and apply for the funding.

Should you require any further information do not hesitate to contact me on 5450 9333.

Yours sincerely

**Eric Braslis**  
**CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER**

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