



GANNAWARRA
Shire Council

Council Meeting

MINUTES

Wednesday, 17 April 2024

6:00 PM

Community Meeting Room

Cohuna

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**MINUTES OF GANNAWARRA SHIRE COUNCIL
COUNCIL MEETING
HELD AT THE COMMUNITY MEETING ROOM, COHUNA
ON WEDNESDAY, 17 APRIL 2024 AT 6:00 PM**

PRESENT:

Cr Ross Stanton (Mayor)	Murray Ward
Cr Charlie Gillingham (Deputy Mayor)	Avoca Ward
Cr Kelvin Burt	Patchell Ward
Cr Travis Collier	Patchell Ward
Cr Garner Smith	Yarran Ward
Cr Keith Link	Yarran Ward

IN ATTENDANCE:

Chief Executive Officer
Director Corporate Services
Executive Assistant to Chief Executive Officer

Gallery: 16

Media: 0

1 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

The Mayor acknowledged the Traditional Custodians of the land, and paid his respect to elders both past, present and emerging.

2 OPENING DECLARATION

The Deputy Mayor, Cr Charlie Gillingham read the Opening Declaration.

3 APOLOGIES

Cr Jane Ogden - Patchell Ward is currently on a leave of absence from 1 March, 2024 to 31 May, 2024.

4 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Charlie Gillingham

Seconded: Cr Kelvin Burt

That the minutes of the Council Meeting held on 20 March 2024 be confirmed.

CARRIED

5 DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Cr Charlie Gillingham declared a general conflict of interest in Item 7.5 – Council Policy No. 148 – Flags Review.

6 BRIEFING SESSIONS

6.1 RECORDS OF COUNCILLOR BRIEFINGS - 6TH MARCH, 2024 TO 8TH APRIL, 2024

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents to Council written records of Councillor Briefings in accordance with Clause 31 of the Gannawarra Shire Council Governance Rules.

RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Travis Collier

Seconded: Cr Kelvin Burt

That Council note the records of Councillor Briefings 6th March 2024 to 8th April 2024.

CARRIED

7 BUSINESS REPORTS FOR DECISION

7.1 PROPOSED BUDGET 2024/2025

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Budget has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the *Local Government Act 2020*. The Budget seeks to achieve the actions and activities set out in the Council Plan by balancing the demand for services and infrastructure with the community's capacity to pay.

The proposed increase in rate revenue for the 2024/2025 financial year is 2.75% in line with the order by the Minister for Local Government under the Fair Go Rates System.

Continued capital investment in assets (\$22.862m) comprising new works (\$6.016m) renewal works (\$8.762m) and upgrade works (\$8.084m) as features in the budget.

The Budget also achieves a Comprehensive Income result of (\$14.908m) surplus.

RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Charlie Gillingham

Seconded: Cr Garner Smith

That Council:

1. Approve the Proposed Budget 2024/2025 and Fees and Charges 2024/2025 as presented and attached to this report, to proceed to community consultation seeking feedback between 18 April 2024 and 16 May 2024.
2. Note that subject to changes to the Proposed Budget 2024/2025 after community feedback, the Proposed Budget 2024/2025 will be presented for adoption as Council's Budget 2024/2025, in accordance with Sections 94 and 96 of the *Local Government Act 2020*, at the Council Meeting to be held on 26 June 2024.

ALTERNATE MOTION

Moved: Cr Keith Link

Seconded:

That Council:

1. Approve the Proposed Budget 2024/2025 and Fees and Charges 2024/2025 as presented and attached to this report, to proceed to community consultation seeking feedback between 18 April 2024 and 16 May 2024.
2. Note that subject to changes to the Proposed Budget 2024/2025 after community feedback, the Proposed Budget 2024/2025 will be presented for adoption as Council's Budget 2024/2025, in accordance with Sections 94 and 96 of the *Local Government Act 2020*, at the Council Meeting to be held on 26 June 2024.
3. Remove the figure of \$2.4 million on page 57 of the Budget attachment 1.

Moved: Cr Kelvin Burt

Seconded: Cr Travis Collier

That Council suspend standing orders at 6.04pm to obtain governance advice on the alternate motion.

CARRIED

Moved: Cr Travis Collier

Seconded: Cr Kelvin Burt

That Council resume standing orders at 6.05pm to resume the Council meeting.

CARRIED

The Mayor advised that as the recommendation for the Proposed Budget 2024/2025 is to go out for community consultation this can be considered as part of that and did not accept the alternate motion.

THE MAYOR PUT THE ORIGINAL MOTION TO THE VOTE AND IT WAS CARRIED

7.2 DRAFT GANNAWARRA SHIRE ONSITE WASTEWATER MANAGEMENT PLAN 2024-2029

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

An Onsite Wastewater Management Plan forms part of Council's obligations to prevent public health risk and contamination of the environment from the disposal of domestic wastewater.

Council is required by legislation to manage risk relating to the disposal of wastewater and to approve and regulate any onsite wastewater management systems (septic tanks) that generate less than 5,000 litres per day.

Council first developed an Onsite Wastewater Management Plan for the Gannawarra Shire in 2007. This plan was reviewed in 2020, with a full review due in 2023.

An Onsite Wastewater Management Plan helps guide consistent decision making when Council's authorised officers are assessing applications to install or alter onsite domestic wastewater systems. The plan also supports planning decisions to reduce or minimise future impacts and risk from domestic wastewater.

RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Charlie Gillingham

Seconded: Cr Travis Collier

That Council endorse the Draft Gannawarra Shire Onsite Wastewater Management Plan 2024-2029 to go out for community consultation seeking feedback between 18 April 2024 and 16 May 2024.

CARRIED

7.3 DRAFT COUNCIL POLICY NO. 115 - LANEWAYS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Council Policy 115 – Laneways governs the management of laneways in the Gannawarra Shire municipality. Council officers undertake regular reviews of Council policies to ensure compliance with relevant legislation and to ensure that they are reflective of current practice.

This report addresses the following policy that have been recently reviewed:

- Policy No. 115 – Laneways

RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Charlie Gillingham

Seconded: Cr Garner Smith

That Council adopt the following Council Policy No. 115 – Laneways.

CARRIED

7.4 AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE INDEPENDENT MEMBER REMUNERATION

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Gannawarra Shire Council's Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) Charter provides that the remuneration paid to each independent member be reviewed and set annually by the Council.

As part of the annual review benchmarking has been undertaken against similar sized rural Councils. It is recommended that the 2024/2025 ARC remuneration for independent members be increased, and for travel expenses to be reimbursed.

RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Garner Smith

Seconded: Cr Kelvin Burt

That Council:

1. Adopt the 2024/2025 Audit and Risk Committee remuneration to be set at \$650 per meeting for the Chairperson, and \$500 per meeting for all other Independent Members; and
2. Adopt the reimbursement of travel expenses for the independent members of the Audit and Risk Committee, paid in line with existing Council policy.

CARRIED

Cr Charlie Gillingham declared a Conflict of Interest in Item 7.5 – Flags Review and left the room at 6.25pm.

7.5 COUNCIL POLICY NO. 148 - FLAGS REVIEW

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A revised Policy No.148 Flags and Community Flag schedule addresses feedback from the Kerang and District Elders and Emerging Leaders Group regarding the flying of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island flags at half-mast outside of Council buildings. The report also addresses a flag flying request from Northern District Community Health to continue flying the Rainbow Flag on the International Day against Homophobia, Biphobia, Intersex discrimination, and Transphobia (IDAHOBIT) annually as a statement of solidarity and inclusivity towards the LGBTQIA+ community.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Adopt the reviewed Policy No. 148 – Flags and the Community Flag Schedule.
2. Fly the Rainbow Flag on 17th May 2024 for the International Day against Homophobia, Biphobia, Intersex discrimination, and Transphobia (IDAHOBIT) and review annually.

ALTERNATE MOTION

Moved: Cr Garner Smith

Seconded: Cr Keith Link

That Council:

1. Seek community consultation on the reviewed Policy No. 148 – Flags and the Community Flag Schedule, and the NDCHS request for Council to fly the Rainbow Flag annually on 'IDAHOBIT' Day from the 18 April, 2024 to 16 May, 2024 and report back to the June Council meeting.

THE MAYOR PUT THE ALTERNATE MOTION TO THE VOTE AND IT WAS CARRIED

DIVISION

FOR: Cr Garner Smith, Cr Keith Link, Cr Kelvin Burt

AGAINST: Cr Travis Collier, Cr Ross Stanton

Cr Charlie Gillingham returned to the room at 6.37pm.

8 URGENT BUSINESS

Nil

9 NOTICES OF MOTION

Nil

10 QUESTION TIME

Name	Maree Purton
Address	Cohuna
Question 1	
<p>Having suffered property damage and consequent financial loss due to flooding from a shire constructed and maintained open grated stormwater drain at least three times in the last 10 years, and having been assured (Council employee, council agenda and minutes), that it will be addressed with a pump and drain maintenance in 2024. I would like to know when this work will begin?</p>	
<p>ANSWER:</p> <p>The Golf Links estate has been surveyed and assessed, with preliminary plans developed to clear drains, install culverts where necessary and install a pump to remove storm water. Council officers will be organising a meeting with local representatives and the Golf Club in the coming weeks to review the plans and discuss options for improvements.</p>	

Name	Robin Sobey
Address	Kerang
Question 1	
<p>Regarding the allocation of \$25 million for Flood Funding Works, we as rate payers would greatly appreciate knowing exactly how these funds were spent. Please could someone give us a comprehensive breakdown detailing of how these funds have been or will be used?</p>	
<p>ANSWER:</p> <p>The \$25 million estimate resulted from a Rapid Impact Assessment following the October 2022 flood event conducted by an external engineer in the immediate aftermath of the flood and is to be funded from the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA).</p> <p>This initial assessment occurred when some roads were still underwater, and the full extent could not be determined. This damage cost has reduced to be approximately \$8.5 million after the completion of more detailed assessments of the damage in line with DRFA guidelines and tendering for repair works. The funding for these repairs is jointly provided by the Federal and State Governments, each contributing equally under the terms specifically for flood rehabilitation. These funds are not allocated for any other projects other than road assets damaged by the October 2022 flood event.</p> <p>To date, \$820,000 has been spent on immediate reconstruction efforts in the Mincha West and Macorna regions. The Council is currently awaiting state approval to commence the remaining repair works.</p>	

8 DELEGATES REPORTS

Councillors gave verbal updates on attendance at meetings to which they are appointed.

COUNCILLOR COMMITTEES 2024	
COMMITTEE	COUNCILLOR
Murray River Group of Councils (MRGC)	Cr Ross Stanton, Mayor
Loddon Campaspe Group of Councils	Cr Ross Stanton, Mayor
Community Halls Community Asset Committee	Cr Kelvin Burt
Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV)	Cr Travis Collier
Municipal Fire Management Planning Committee (MFMPC)	Cr Keith Link
Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee (MEMPC)	Cr Keith Link
Transport Committee Role including Rail Freight Alliance and Road Transport	Cr Keith Link
Central Victorian Greenhouse Alliance (CVGA)	Cr Jane Ogden
Audit and Risk Committee (x 2)	Cr Charlie Gillingham Cr Garner Smith
Rural Councils Victoria	Cr Garner Smith
Timber Towns Victoria	Cr Garner Smith

9 CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Travis Collier

Seconded: Cr Kelvin Burt

That Council moves out of Open Council into Closed Council to consider confidential items listed in the Agenda as defined in the *Local Government Act 2020* under section 66(2)(a) and section 3(1)(f).

CARRIED

RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Charlie Gillingham

Seconded: Cr Travis Collier

That Council considers the confidential report(s) listed below in a meeting closed to the public in accordance with Section 66(2)(a) of the Local Government Act 2020:

12.1 Audit and Risk Committee - Independent Member Appointment

This matter is considered to be confidential under Section 3(1)(f) of the Local Government Act, and the Council is satisfied that discussion of this matter in an open meeting would, on balance, be contrary to the public interest as it deals with personal information, being information which if released would result in the unreasonable disclosure of information about any person or their personal affairs.

CARRIED

RESOLUTION

Moved: Cr Travis Collier

Seconded: Cr Kelvin Burt

That Council moves out of Closed Council into Open Council at 7.02pm.

CARRIED

The Meeting closed at 7.03pm.

The Minutes of this Meeting were confirmed at the Meeting of the Gannawarra Shire Council held on 15 May 2024.

Mayor Ross Stanton

CHAIR