

GANNAWARRA *CONNECT*



September-October 2023

TABLE OF CONTENTS

From the Mayor	1
What's On	2
Immunisation sessions	2
Community News	2-4
Economic Development	5
Flood Recovery	6-7
Your Councillors	8
Council Meetings	8
Contacting Council	8

FROM THE MAYOR

Council continues to work to achieve the strategic priorities outlined in the *Growing Gannawarra - 2021-2025 Council Plan*.

To assist with these efforts, an annual Action Plan is developed, which lists various items Council intends to achieve during the 12-month period. Progress regarding these actions are reported in Council's Annual Report, with the 2023 edition currently being finalised.

You can learn more about the current Action Plan goals by visiting www.gsc.vic.gov.au/councilplan

Regards,
Mayor Charlie Gillingham



DO YOU KNOW WHAT CAN GO IN YOUR BINS?

Council has recently updated the waste section of its website, making it easier for residents to determine what can be placed in your red household waste and yellow household recycling bins.

The webpage, located at www.gsc.vic.gov.au/waste, also features information regarding Council's opt-in green waste service for Cohuna, Kerang and Koondrook urban residents, where residents can recycle their household glass bottles and jars, and transfer station locations.

Residents wanting to upgrade/add additional bins to their household service, report damaged or missing bins can visit the webpage and complete an application at any time.



COMMUNITY NEWS

WHAT'S ON

16 SEPTEMBER

Kerang Welcome Barbecue

23 SEPTEMBER

Kerang Community Market

24 SEPTEMBER

Cohuna Farmers & Makers Market

7 OCTOBER

Murrabit Country Market

9 OCTOBER

137th Kerang Show

21 OCTOBER

Kerang Welcome Barbecue

22 OCTOBER

Cohuna Farmers & Makers Market

27 OCTOBER

Celebrating Koondrook's Riverboat Heritage

28 OCTOBER

Kerang Community Market

4 NOVEMBER

Murrabit Country Market

5 NOVEMBER

Cohuna Farmers & Makers Market

EVERY SATURDAY

Kerang and Cohuna parkruns

EVERY SATURDAY

Grow Collective Community Garden, Kerang

Event details can be found at

www.gsc.vic.gov.au/events

NOTE: Event details were correct at time of publishing

VICTORIAN SENIORS FESTIVAL CELEBRATIONS

The Gannawarra Library Service and Gannawarra Shire Council will celebrate the Victorian Seniors Festival this October, with events planned throughout the Gannawarra.

Now in its 41st year, the 2023 theme is Learn, Love, Live.

Local highlights include an author visit, morning teas, workshops, a succulent swap and activities involving grandparents and their grandchildren, including story time and games sessions.

Information regarding planned events will be promoted via Council's website, *Gannawarra News* and Council's Facebook page, or you can contact the Gannawarra Library Service on (03) 5452 1546.

Pictured: 2021 Victorian Seniors Festival High Tea held at Kerang's Sir John Gorton library.



IMMUNISATION SESSIONS BY APPOINTMENT

SEPTEMBER 2023

Wednesday, 6 September

Kerang
(10.30am – 12 noon)

Wednesday, 20 September

Cohuna
(10.30am – 12 noon)
Kerang
(4pm – 5.30pm)

OCTOBER 2023

Wednesday, 4 October

Kerang
(10.30am - 12 noon)

Wednesday, 18 October

Cohuna
(10.30am – 12 noon)
Kerang
(4pm – 5.30pm)

NOTE: Bookings must be made prior to attending any of Council's immunisation sessions, which can be done by phoning (03) 5450 9333.

It is encouraged that only one parent/guardian attend with the child to be vaccinated.

For more details, visit www.gsc.vic.gov.au/immunisation

Gannawarra Shire Council acknowledges the Barapa Barapa, Yorta Yorta and Wamba Wamba people as the traditional Owners of the land now known as Gannawarra.

We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging and acknowledge their rich culture and connection to Country.



COMMUNITY NEWS

KERANG CBD REDEVELOPMENT - STAGE 3 WORK CONTINUES

Improvements along Victoria Street, Kerang are continuing as part of the Kerang CBD Redevelopment - Stage 3.

Fully funded thanks to the Federal Government's Local Roads and Community Infrastructure Program, work completed so far as part of the \$2.31 million project includes improvements to car parking spaces between Scoresby Street and Victoria Square (right, top photo) and installing new paving along the eastern side of Victoria Street (right, bottom photo).

Work will soon begin on improving paving along the western side of Victoria Street, with shoppers to benefit from the installation of new outdoor dining areas, street furniture, and trees. Efforts will also occur to enhance the iconic Karlie McDonald Memorial Clock, located at the intersection of Wellington and Victoria streets.

For more information regarding the Kerang CBD Redevelopment, visit www.gsc.vic.gov.au/KerangCBD



2023/24 RATES NOTICES DISTRIBUTED TO RATEPAYERS

Ratepayers have started receiving their rates notices for 2023/24 in the mail or by email.

Included with this year's rates notices is a brochure outlining how your rates are calculated and a message about how your rates contribute to the Council budget.

Ratepayers may choose to pay their rates in full, with payment due by 15 February 2024. The most popular option is by instalments, with the first instalment payment due by 30 September 2023.

Ratepayers who are experiencing financial hardship are encouraged to contact Council on (03) 5450 9333 as early as possible to request a payment plan.



SIR JOHN GORTON LIBRARY'S 20TH BIRTHDAY

Celebrations will be held on Friday, 15 September to mark the 20th birthday of Kerang's Sir John Gorton Library.

Come along between 3pm-6pm for a free barbecue and learn about what occurs at your local library.

Other attractions occurring on the day include a rock climbing wall, outdoor games and a "Small Age Rampage" disco.

COMMUNITY NEWS

PROMOTE YOUR COMMUNITY GROUP IN GANNAWARRA CONNECT

As part of Council's efforts to celebrate the work our community groups undertake in the Gannawarra, a new column will feature in *Gannawarra Connect* from November 2023.

The *Our Community Champions* section will profile a randomly selected community group each edition, focusing on the work these groups undertake and how you can assist.

As part of the development of this column, a questionnaire will be sent to all community groups that are signed up to Council's community mailing list in mid-September.

Community groups can sign up to Council's community mailing list by clicking on the Community updates heading at www.gsc.vic.gov.au/communitydirectory

REUNITING LOST PETS WITH THEIR OWNERS

Council's Local Laws team strives to reunite lost cats and dogs with their owners.



If you have lost your cat or dog, please phone Council on (03) 5450 9333 during business hours and our team will record the details of your lost animal.

If Customer Service or Local Laws Officers are notified of a found animal which matches the description of your lost dog or cat, we can reunite you with your pet much sooner.

For more information, please visit www.gsc.vic.gov.au/lostanimals

Lets talk about your septic system



SEPTIC SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS

Onsite wastewater management systems, including septic tank systems, are used on residential, community and business premises in unsewered areas. They treat, recycle, or dispose of wastewater from bathrooms, kitchens, and toilets.

Poorly installed or maintained systems, especially older systems, can pollute nearby creeks and rivers, contaminate land and give off offensive odour.

If you own or use an onsite wastewater management system, there are laws that apply to you. These include:

- Operating the system correctly, such as not overloading it.
- Making sure the system does not overflow.
- Notifying Council if there is a problem with the system.
- Maintaining the system in good working order. This doesn't apply to renters.

If you're a landowner, it's recommended you get your system serviced regularly. You must also provide information to renters about how to use your system.

If you have any questions, please contact Council's Environmental Health team on (03) 5450 9333.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

THE “BACKGROUND” TO VNI WEST

With there being plenty of interest in VNI West, it's important to understand the background to this project and the role it will play in the National Electricity Market (NEM).

In November 2020 the Federal Coalition Government and Victorian State Labor Government announced they would underwrite early works to progress the Victoria to New South Wales Interconnector project - with a preferred route known as KerangLink (VNI West). The then Federal Minister for Energy and Emissions Reduction, Angus Taylor said the support for VNI West will create new jobs, put downward pressure on prices, and shore up the reliability of the grid.

In April 2022 the Federal Coalition Government reached a \$75.8 million underwriting agreement with transmission provider Transgrid to deliver early works for VNI West. The agreement is the result of the Federal Government's plans to support critical energy infrastructure to ensure continued reliability of the national energy grid.

The Australian Energy Market Operator (AEMO) has determined a preferred route for the transmission line, which will be refined to a narrow corridor that will allow further investigation and further consultation with landowners. The proposed route will be made public once AEMO has consulted all landowners in the refined route.

Transmission infrastructure is very common in the Gannawarra, with the 220 kilovolt transmission line that has been in place since the 1960s having minimal disruption to farming. This line travels through irrigation and dryland cropping country and has long been accepted as part of the local landscape.

The 550-kilovolt line proposed as part of VNI West will be larger in capacity, with taller transmission towers proposed. The extra height of these towers will mean farming will continue as usual, with AEMO employing agricultural consultants to work with landowners to minimise any on farm disruptions.

Council staff will facilitate assistance to any landowners who are seeking advice and information and will provide introductions to relevant AEMO personnel. Copies of the landowner guide are available from Council's Customer Service Centre's in Kerang and Cohuna.



WHAT IS VNI WEST?

VNI West is a proposed new high capacity 500-kilovolt double-circuit overhead transmission line that will deliver vital new transmission infrastructure to connect Victoria, New South Wales and South Australia's electricity networks.

VNI West is expected to deliver up to 1,800 megawatts of additional electricity capacity between New South Wales and Victoria, generated via wind, solar and pumped hydro sources, and will provide greater flexibility across the network to share power resources between the states.

The project is one of numerous interconnector projects underway across Australia (left) to ensure the states' electricity networks are connected and can share power resources, especially as brown coal burning electricity stations start being phased out nationally.

WHY THE GANNAWARRA?

The Gannawarra Shire is located in the Murray River Renewable Energy Zone (REZ), which boasts wind, solar and battery projects capable of producing around 3,500 megawatts of electricity.

Renewable energy companies work directly with farmers to develop projects and to undertake a wide range of due diligence including network capacity and connections, environmental issues and community consultation prior to making application to the State Government for a planning permit.

Councils have no regulatory role in approving energy installations.

FLOOD RECOVERY

APPLY FOR A LEVEE MAINTENANCE PERMIT

Landowners who would like to access and maintain existing levees on Crown Land in order to actively reduce the flood risk to their property can apply for a Levee Maintenance Permit from North Central Catchment Management Authority.

Maintenance includes fixing erosion, dealing with rabbit burrows and removing vegetation. It does not include changing the levee's original location, height and width, building a new levee, or removing an existing one, as this could impact on the effectiveness of other levees in the area.

The permit can be issued for up to five years. However, the use of machinery and the introduction of any soil or other material must take place within the first 12 months of the permit. North Central Catchment Management Authority will work with land managers to set conditions to reduce the impact of works on the Crown Land and its flora and fauna.

For more information regarding applying for a levee maintenance permit, please contact North Central Catchment Management Authority by emailing floodplain@nccma.vic.gov.au or phoning (03) 5448 7124.



EVENTS PLANNED TO PROMOTE SOCIAL RECOVERY

Thanks to flood recovery funding, Council was able to support a program of creative outreach events across the Gannawarra during July.

Partnering with local neighbourhood houses, community groups, Northern District Community Health, Women's Health Loddon Mallee and the Gannawarra Library Service, eight well attended events were held to support social connections and mental health and wellbeing.

Planning is underway to host similar gatherings over the next 12 months. For details regarding these events, please visit www.gsc.vic.gov.au/events

Pictured are participants from July's Women in the Warra - Women, Workboots and Wellness luncheon, which attracted more than 100 people. The event was held at Tree Tops Scout Camp, situated on the Gunbower Creek between Koondrook and Cohuna

COMMUNITY FLOOD SUPPORT UPDATE NEWSLETTER

Residents can keep up to date with the latest news regarding local flood recovery efforts thanks to Council's Community Flood Support Update newsletter.

Produced monthly, this document features updates regarding Council's flood recovery efforts, information from partner agencies and planned flood recovery events.

To view the latest edition of the newsletter, visit Council's Customer Service Centre's at Cohuna and Kerang or download a copy at www.gsc.vic.gov.au/floods

FLOOD RECOVERY



FLOOD ROAD REPAIRS CONTINUE ACROSS THE GANNAWARRA

Residents in Macorna, Macorna North, McMillans, Mincha West and Tragowel are benefiting from repairs to flood-damaged roads, made possible thanks to joint Commonwealth and State Government Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements funding.

These works included maintenance grading and gravel re-sheeting, cleaning drainage structures, replacing a boxed culvert and re-instating a sealed roadway.

Work continues to gain government approval for the remaining 10 road repair packages which will enable residents to travel to and from their properties once works are completed via the quickest route possible.

Council will continue to provide updates regarding repairs to flood-damaged infrastructure via Council's website, the *Gannawarra News* and *Gannawarra Connect* publications, and Council's Facebook page.

Meanwhile, Council continues to advocate for repairs to occur along Regional Roads Victoria-managed roads in the municipality. These include the Loddon Valley Highway (B260), Murray Valley Highway (B400) and other local roads identified on maps or signage with a C2## prefix.

Pictured is Gainey Road, Mincha West following recently completed flood repair work.

FLOOD RECOVERY GRANTS PROGRAM

Thank you to community groups that submitted applications for the Gannawarra Community Flood Recovery Grants Program.

Twenty-two applications were received, valued at \$57,558.

Projects were assessed against flood recovery funding criteria, with successful projects announced at the end of August.

Not-for-profit community groups based in the Gannawarra that support Gannawarra Shire residents were eligible to apply for up to \$3,000 of funding to support projects that will assist the Gannawarra's recovery from the October-December 2022 floods.

For the latest news regarding this program, please visit www.gsc.vic.gov.au/news or follow Council's Facebook page.

Information regarding other grants available to support community initiatives can be found at www.gsc.vic.gov.au/grants

GANNAWARRA COMMUNITY RESILIENCE COMMITTEE LEADING FLOOD RECOVERY

The Gannawarra Community Resilience Committee reconvened in July and will guide the municipality's recovery from the October-December 2022 floods.

The resilience committee consists of representatives from Council and 30 other agencies and government departments who will work together to continue to implement the 48 priority actions outlined in the Gannawarra Municipal Flood Recovery Plan.

To view the Gannawarra Municipal Flood Recovery Plan, please click on the Gannawarra Shire flood recovery efforts heading at www.gsc.vic.gov.au/floods

COUNCIL INFORMATION

YOUR COUNCILLORS AVOCA WARD



Cr Charlie Gillingham
(Mayor)
0457 719 874
charlie.gillingham@gsc.vic.gov.au

MURRAY WARD



Cr Ross Stanton
0417 515 769
ross.stanton@gsc.vic.gov.au

PATCHELL WARD



Cr Kelvin Burt
0407 319 414
kelvin.burt@gsc.vic.gov.au



Cr Travis Collier
0433 269 577
travis.collier@gsc.vic.gov.au



Cr Jane Ogden
(Deputy Mayor)
0476 786 051
jane.e.ogden@gsc.vic.gov.au

YARRAN WARD



Cr Keith Link
0427 564 138
keith.link@gsc.vic.gov.au



Cr Garner Smith
0418 871 054
garner.smith@gsc.vic.gov.au



COUNCIL MEETING DETAILS

The **September 2023 Meeting of Council** will be held on Wednesday, 20 September at 6pm. The **October 2023 Meeting of Council** will be held on Wednesday, 18 October at 6pm.

Meetings are held at the Kerang Senior Citizens Centre, located at 169 Boundary Street, Kerang, with a recording available to view 24 hours after the meeting at www.gsc.vic.gov.au/meetings. Changes to meeting details and times will be promoted via *Gannawarra News* and Council's Facebook page.

Agendas for Meetings of Council are available online at www.gsc.vic.gov.au/meetings two days prior to each meeting.

If you have any questions about Council or would like to lodge a request, please refer to the *Contacting Council* section of this newsletter.

CONTACTING COUNCIL

IN PERSON

Cohuna Customer Service Centre
21-23 King Edward Street
Kerang Customer Service Centre
47 Victoria Street

BY PHONE

(03) 5450 9333 during business hours

BY EMAIL

council@gsc.vic.gov.au

BY MAIL

PO Box 287
Kerang VIC 3579

ONLINE

Lodge a request at www.gsc.vic.gov.au/request

SOCIAL MEDIA

Facebook – www.facebook.com/gannawarra

Twitter – www.twitter.com/GannawarraShire