

President's Update (#1)

Shire of Donnybrook Balingup 21 December 2023



Welcome to my first update as President of the Shire of Donnybrook Balingup. Two months into our roles and our newly formed Council is settling into the cycle of Council and Committee meetings.

A unique aspect of this period has been the transition from the Shire's leadership by Commissioner McGowan, to a Council of nine (9) newly elected Councillors. In a normal election scenario, only half of the Councillors seats are open for new elected members, with the remaining Councillors providing continuity while new members undergo compulsory training and come up to speed. Our Shire Executive and staff have worked incredibly hard to adapt to the increased questions and requirements of 9 new Councillors. I am very grateful for the experience, training, and advice that our Interim Chief Executive Officer Garry Hunt is providing to both Councillors and staff as we continue to establish our knowledge and ways of working.

I extend my gratitude to community members for your patience shown and messages of support. Your feedback is crucial as we strive for excellence in Council leadership. Please continue to reach out to me or any Councillor with thoughts, suggestions or concerns. We are here to listen and collaborate.



For those with questions, I strongly encourage you to utilise the 'Public Question Time' link on the Shire's website. You can scan the QR code, or follow this link:

www.donnybrook-balingup.wa.gov.au/council/council-meetings/how-council-meetings-work

Following this process ensures a complete and accurate response, with your question and answer reaching all Councillors and documented in the minutes of the next Ordinary Council Meeting.

Looking ahead, attracting and securing our new Chief Executive Officer is our next priority. A CEO Recruitment Committee has been established, comprising all 9 Councillors and one (1) member of the public as voting members. The Committee will be supported by the Interim CEO as well as a specialist recruitment consultant. If you believe you can contribute to the selection process, please express your interest via one of the following methods:

IN PERSON: 1 Bentley Street, Donnybrook, WA 6239

VIA POST: PO Box 94, Donnybrook, WA 6239

VIA EMAIL: shire@donnybrook.wa.gov.au

ONLINE:



Scan this QR Code to get started, or visit this link below.

www.donnybrook-balingup.wa.gov.au



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In other news, the VC Mitchell Park (VCMP) Project has reached a key milestone, with the concrete slabs laid for Pavilion I and Pavilion II. Regular updates are being posted on the Shire's website on the VCMP Project page. Another important project, the refurbishment of Minninup Cottages, has come to practical completion, other than for minor finishes and landscaping.

Expressions of Interest were invited for the remaining Apple Fun Park equipment. Please accept my assurance that throughout the Expressions of Interest process, Council members and staff have responded to every call or message received. Every request for a meeting has been met.

Nonetheless, I have received heartfelt calls and messages that express the deep sense of community ownership and pride felt for the original Fun Park and the disappointment in seeing the equipment in its present state. This is best captured in a message I received this week:

"When Mr Fry donated the money and the idea for the Fun Park, this community came together like it never had before. The whole town stepped up to give their time and expertise to help put it all together. When it was finished, people were so proud of what they had achieved... I don't think there was anyone in town that couldn't drive past that park and say to themselves, 'I helped build that.' It was truly a magic moment for this community."

A primary outcome from the Apple Fun Park refurbishment project is that an inclusive community engagement plan is proposed, as part of all future community projects, with the aim to capture insights into local knowledge and experience, and to ensure project outcomes meet the needs of the whole community.

On behalf of the Shire staff and Councillors, I would like to thank you for your well wishes and encouragement over the past two months. We wish you all a safe and happy Christmas, filled with the company and good wishes of those you hold dear.

ENDS.

Vivienne MacCarthy
President for the Shire of Donnybrook Balingup



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