



Shire Connect

Latest News and Updates from the Shire

COVID-19 UPDATE

MESSAGE FROM THE SHIRE PRESIDENT AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER BEN ROSE

Shire President Brian Piesse has urged residents in the Shire to observe the advice and requirements as issued by the Federal Health Department and to prioritise their health and safety as the Shire continues to deal with the issues evolving from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Shire President Brian Piesse said "I ask that all members of the community adhere to the social distancing advice provided by the Federal Health Department and keep the 1.5 metre distance. Despite many public organised events being cancelled, it is tempting to gather with family and friends, however the risk of transmission is still very much alive."

In response to the social and economic impacts of the coronavirus, the President said "these uncertain times are mind boggling, while we aim to support our communities and businesses for as long as possible, each day more restrictions are being announced by the National (Federal and State) Cabinet. So much so that at this point in time our Free Family Concert, the iconic Easter Apple Festival and Balingup Small Farm Field Day have all been cancelled. Our Recreation Centres, along with our Libraries and Local Clubs have all been deemed off limits. And this week the decision was made to close the iconic Apple Fun Park, prior to the directive of the Federal government to close outdoor playgrounds."

Under the proactive leadership of Chief Executive Officer Ben Rose a Shire Response Taskforce has been formed. The members of this all-embracing taskforce are regularly reviewing the obligations under the compliance guidelines and protocols issued by Federal and State Governments and continue to put measures in place to slow the spread of COVID-19.

"The health and safety of our staff, service providers and community members are our prime reasonability and priority," said CEO Ben Rose.

Brian Piesse commended Shire employees who had clearly demonstrated a willingness and preparedness to rise to the occasion, even in the face of uncertainty and unknowns relating to the global pandemic

"Evolving restrictions placed on us by the Federal Government will no doubt create a huge level of social and economic disruption." Brian Piesse said, "while the cancellation of these events is a major blow to us all, I encourage our residents to support local businesses where possible. The Shire in conjunction with the upfront support from the State Government through the Hon. Mick Murray MLA, is already working on a local business and tourism recovery plan to be ahead of the game when the current COVID-19 response plan requirements are lifted.

The State Government has also requested that local governments expedite any current capital and grant funded projects as a means of stimulating the local economy. The Shire of Donnybrook Balingup has an extensive list of significant projects that fit this category.

Residents have also raised their concerns that the Shire were not disclosing information about the location of infected persons in the community.

Mr Piesse announced at the recent Ordinary Council Meeting that "the Shire cannot disclose information that it does not have – we have no access to this information. If a person tests positive to the COVID-19 virus, public health authorities will be notified and they will provide the person with the necessary course of action."

"Challenging times lie ahead but it is critical that we as a community work together and support each other wherever possible."

The Shire has committed to delivering all services deemed "essential" and is still to decide on the State Government's request to freeze 2020-21 rates and other service charges at 2019-20 levels

The Shire will continue its service delivery during the COVID-19 pandemic, however a number of services and operations have been affected:

Council Meetings

Council Meetings which remain a designated "essential" activity, will after the March meeting be conducted on-line or through video conferencing facilities allowing elected members and the community the opportunity to participate in the ongoing decision making process of Council, although it is likely that written 'questions on notice' will become a preferred course in terms of the agenda.

Shire Administration Building

In the interest of staff and public safety, the Office will be closed for face to face enquiries. The Customer Service Team will still be available to assist via phone on **9780 4200** and email via **shire@donnybrook.wa.gov.au**
Rates payments can be made online via the Shire website or over the phone on 9780 4200. The Donnybrook Bendigo Bank will providing customers the opportunity to deposit rates payments only, direct into the Shire bank account. This service is for customers that pay via cash (cheques will also be accepted). PLEASE NOTE: Payments will only be accepted if the customer has their rates notice so that the assessment number can be referenced.

Recreation Centres

Following the Prime Minister's announcement on Sunday 22 March 2020, the Donnybrook Recreation Centre was closed to the public at 12 noon on Monday 23 March. Arrangements are being made to support staff members affected and re-deploy them to other areas of the Shire's operations where possible. Memberships have been frozen, however, members can still contact the Recreation Centre via phone on 9731 1822 or email the Centre staff at recreation.centre@donnybrook.wa.gov.au. The community managed Balingup Recreation Centre is also closed.

Libraries

The decision was made on Monday 23 March to close both the Balingup and Donnybrook Community libraries until further notice. Library card holders have been advised against returning their books as their loans have been extended until 30 June 2020. There are a number of e-resources available to library card holders including audiobooks, e-books, magazines and more. If you do not have access to a card you can contact the Donnybrook Library on 9731 0432 for your options.

Aged Care Services

Tuia Lodge continues to follow the Communicable Diseases Network Australia guidelines as issued by the Federal Health Department and is maintaining communications with its residents and families over restrictions on entry to aged care facilities.

Waste Management

There will be no changes to the Waste Management Services and bin collection that the Shire provides. However, members of the community who are required to visit the tip are requested to exercise social distancing guidelines.

Community Events

Whilst there is much uncertainty surrounding this space, the majority of community run events and Shire events have been cancelled. The Shire has cancelled all current bookings for the community halls and will place a hold on future bookings until restrictions on community gatherings are lifted. The Community Development team is looking for ways to assist these organisations affected by the restrictions.

Emergency Services

Due to the current COVID-19 crisis, all Shire of Donnybrook Balingup Bush Fire Brigades are now 'Response Only' until further notice, in an effort to protect our volunteer firefighters. Brigades will still continue to respond to all '000' calls as normal, but have been asked to refrain from holding meetings or conducting training.

Works Program and Maintenance

The Shire's works program and maintenance schedule will continue as normal. A number of outdoor playgrounds, barbeques, drink fountains and public toilets have been closed to allow the team to focus on increasing the cleaning of public toilets with higher traffic.

Planning and Development

These services will still operate as normal, however, members of the community will need to liaise via phone or email when making enquiries and submitting applications.

Ranger Services

The Shire Rangers will continue their service to the community and will continue to be available after hours on 0419 935 600, however, the provision of cat and fox traps will no longer be available.

A State Government COVID-19 Health Information line has been established on **1800 020 080** for members of the public to obtain advice and information. For the latest updates on COVID-19, locations of specific clinics, the Coronavirus App and further information visit <http://www.healthwa.wa.gov.au>

For updates from the Shire of Donnybrook Balingup go to www.donnybrook-balingup.wa.gov.au

PLEASE NOTE: Information in this article was correct at the time of print and may have been updated.

CORONAVIRUS HEALTH INFORMATION HOTLINE 1800 020 080

COUNCIL MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

Wednesday 25 March

- Council endorsed the proposed closure of unconstructed road reserve that bisects 'Nelson Location 1731, Wilga West' for a period of no less than 35 days.
- Council approved the planning application for a single dwelling at Lot 107 (No.66) Victoria Parade located within a bushfire attack level (bal) 40 contour.
- Council approved Amendment 11 to Local Planning Scheme No. 7 - Lot 384 Marshall Road, Argyle. Amending the zoning from 'General Agricultural to 'Rural Residential'
- Council supported the ongoing appointment of the Project Officer for the South West Regional Waste Group for a further 12 months

Council Meeting Minutes are available on the Shire website www.donnybrook-balingup.wa.gov.au

NEXT AGENDA BRIEFING SESSION: Wednesday 15 April, 2pm

NEXT COUNCIL MEETING: Wednesday 22 April, 5pm

The location and format of the April meetings is to be confirmed, please check the website for details.

ADVICE OF SHIRE WORKS April 2020

The Shire of Donnybrook Balingup advises that the following works are in progress or programmed to commence in the near future. Please note all works are subject to weather conditions, therefore dates may change.

MELDENE PATHWAY PROJECT Construction of stage 1. Works have commenced and will continue throughout April 2020.

FIRE FUEL HAZARD REDUCTION WORKS Mechanical mulching. Mitigation work has commenced at various locations across the Shire and will continue until late April 2020. For more information on locations please refer to the Shire website and Facebook page.

AVENUE OF HONOUR AND FORREST STREET BALINGUP Tree pruning. Shire contractors are scheduled to undertake tree pruning on Forrest Street, Balingup and Avenue of Honour throughout April 2020. It is necessary to prune these trees to avoid interference with overhead power lines and introduce a consistent streetscape appearance.

FOOTPATH REPAIRS BALINGUP Footpath repair works along sections of the Balingup Main Street are scheduled to commence on the 1st April 2020. Signage will be in place and disruptions to pedestrians will be kept to a minimum.

LYONS ROAD BRIDGE Replace bridge with culverts. Main Roads WA is scheduled to begin bridge replacement works in late March. Traffic management will be in place and some delays may occur.

GRAVEL RE-SHEETING WORKS Atherton Road and Mailman Road. Works will be completed on various sections of these roads during April 2020.

Hours of operation are normally between 7.00 am and 5.00 pm, Monday to Friday. Works will be clearly signed and you are requested to exercise due care when travelling near or through these areas. Delays are expected to be minimal. Should you require further information, please contact the Shire Works and Services Department on 9780 4209.

UPDATE TO RESTRICTED BURNING PERIOD DATE RESTRICTED BURNING TIMES 1 APRIL 2020 TO 30 APRIL 2020

Restricted Burning. Permits Required. Dates are subject to change according to seasonal conditions. Check the website for updates.

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