



Informal Community Forum Notes – 19 June 2018

Attendance:

Councillors:

Cr KA Hooper	President
Cr MD Willis	Deputy President
Cr BJ Anderson	
Cr LN Boehme	
Cr AR Butler	
Cr RM Crees	
Cr MA Crisafio	
Cr JR Flockart	
Cr PR Patroni	

Staff:

G Powell	CEO
R McCall	Deputy CEO
C Brown	Executive Manager Corporate Services
M Hudson	Executive Manager Engineering Services
P Zenni	Executive Manager Development Services
V Green	Executive Assistant to CEO

Members of the Public:

Megs Anderson, Lyndsay and Lillian Armstrong, Aaron Caldwell, Christine Carew-Hopkins, Emma and Ben Davis, Ross and Kaye Duffield, Meg Gethin, Luke Growden, Dave Hendricks, Michelle Hooper, Damien Hursh, Margaret Johnston, Peter and Audine McCrae, Sue Oldcorn, Malcolm and Gillian Ovans, Avril Parker, Kevin Paust, Gerrard Rennie, Esther Robartson, Dennis Scadden, Greg Shea, Grant Stainer, Glenda Starcevich, Lesley Watson, Holly Wilcox

Apologies:

Cr RM Crees

Topic:	Query / Discussion Points	Actions / Comment
Merredin District Olympic Swimming Pool	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. It was suggested that large signage be installed on the highway to advertise the pool, which may increase attendance numbers2. It was suggested that the admittance price could be decreased on weekends to attract kids to use the pool, or if rates are paid early a discount is given to access other Shire services (i.e. pool or library)3. A request was made for the pool to be open on evenings that are very hot (i.e. open to 8pm when over 40°C)4. The number of private swimming pools could be impacting on attendance numbers5. Any signage on the highway would	Will discuss opening hours options with Pool Manager prior to 2018/19 season



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	<p>require approval by Main Roads WA as it is a State road, not under Council's control</p> <p>6. Any decrease in admittance costs will need to be sourced from other Shire services, similarly with a rates discount, the additional funding to cover the shortfall would need to be identified from other Shire services</p>	
Senior's Centre	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The camber of French Avenue results in water pooling for the length of a vehicle meaning stepping out of a car results in wet feet/shoes 2. Hospital staff and/or contractors are using the car park for their own use during the redevelopment works, despite previous notices and requests for this not to occur 3. Seniors attending the Senior Centre therefore need to park on the street which is not ideal 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Contact will be made with the Hospital and Pindan as another reminder that the parking area is not to be used, and Seniors Centre users have priority 2. It may be possible for the Ranger to patrol the area
Throssell Road / Old Civic Bowling Club / Scout Hall	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Concerns were raised regarding the pooling of water at the northern end of Throssell Road due to the placement of the curb 2. It is also feared there is not enough parking area near the pool, particularly if a large carnival is held with cars having to park up the length of the street 3. It was suggested the area between where the old Civic Bowling Club and Scout Hall was should be paved or sealed so it can be parked on 4. This would also stop the area becoming a dust bowl 5. The road area has been reduced to save on maintenance costs 	The current plan is for the area to be backfilled and planted
Old South Merredin Primary School	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Concerns were raised regarding the condition of the premises with suggestions people were squatting there 2. The premises is privately owned, having been sold by the Department of Education 3. The Shire is aware of the situation having previously raised the matter 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Further correspondence will be sent to the owners seeking information on their plans for the premises 2. Contact will be made with Merredin Police with a request to increase patrols of the area



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	<p>with Police & the owners</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. There is no legislation providing Council with the powers to control the visual amenity of a premises or to stop people from trespassing on a privately owned premises 5. If a premises becomes overgrown a Fire Infringement could be issued however the Health Act and Building Act relates to illegal use or human habitation of a residence and the structural integrity of a premises respectively, which are both outside the current situation 6. If people are trespassing on the premises, causing vandalism or squatting it is a matter for the Police to address 7. A possible solution could be to keep kids engaged in other activities 	
Footpaths	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The question was asked of how the location of new footpaths is determined 2. A plan is made annually in accordance with Council's Strategic Resource Plan and in conjunction with the annual budget 3. In recent years the priority has been to install footpaths where there are none currently and where they provide links to existing services and facilities 4. While the footpaths installed now are longer lasting, they are more expensive meaning less can be done at any one time 	
Woolgar Ave / Merredin College	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A complaint was made regarding speeding vehicles around the College, particularly at drop off and collection times 2. Cabcam footage had been taken showing many near misses, with fears a student could be injured, or worse 3. Footage has been shown and complaints made to Merredin Police with little effect 4. It was requested that traffic 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A copy of the footage will be obtained and Merredin Police requested to either patrol the area or provide speed cameras 2. A social media public awareness campaign will be created to remind people to slow down around schools 3. The College will be requested to also remind parents and students of



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	<p>calming devices or crossings by placed around the College, however these can have impacts on emergency vehicles</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Police should be monitoring speed zones, particularly around both schools 6. During the College’s redevelopment planning into drop off and collection points was requested, however was ignored by the Department of Education, instead determining that as a Shire road the responsibility lay with Council 	<p>being safe</p>
Burracoppin Culvert	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A complaint was made regarding the time taken and quality of work to construct the culvert 2. It was advised the levy bank is full of debris so with the larger pipe with more water flow it would have nowhere to go 3. Water flow also comes from the catchment area meaning Burracoppin can flood without receiving any rain itself 4. It was believed that some land around the culvert is Council land and some is not, limiting what Council can do 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The President agreed the work should not have taken as long as it did, however the works were complete 2. Further works would be considered should the current infrastructure not be adequate to allow appropriate water flow
Cummins Theatre	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Numerous positive comments were made on the great activities and events being held at the Theatre of late, with participation and attendance rates being higher than they’ve been for many years 2. The increased events/activities bring economic benefits to the town, and arts and culture can be a great asset to the community 3. Concern was expressed over the belief there are plans to downgrade the Theatre, particularly in relation to resources 4. The President advised there were no such plans, and questioned where that belief stemmed from 5. Council supports and values the Theatre as a community asset and 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Financial data for the Theatre to be provided upon request 2. CircuitWest guide to be provided to Council



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	<p>the services it provides and has spent millions in recent years with grant funds and own resources for its refurbishment</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="464 383 1018 600">6. As with a number of Council services, the Theatre runs at an annual loss of around \$200,000 meaning grant funds are crucial to the activities and events able to be provided at the Theatre<li data-bbox="464 607 1018 734">7. The CEO advised the financial data for the Theatre could be provided should anyone wish to obtain a copy<li data-bbox="464 741 1018 920">8. Maintenance of the Theatre was questioned with the suggestion it be reviewed and reduced or efficiencies identified in an effort to contain costs<li data-bbox="464 927 1018 1182">9. Another suggestion was made that solar panels be installed on the non-Heritage portion, however as most activity occurs at night the panels would not have the same cost effectiveness as those on other Council buildings.<li data-bbox="464 1189 1018 1323">10. Should solar battery storage efficiency improve in coming years then the panels could become a viable option<li data-bbox="464 1330 1018 1547">11. As with any service delivered by Council, consideration needs to be given to the priorities of the whole community and how to best spread the funds Council has across all its services<li data-bbox="464 1554 1018 1906">12. While Council values and acknowledges the community spirit and economic benefit provided by not just the Theatre but other Council venues (i.e. Library and Visitor Centre) it is reality that monetary funds are what acquires necessary goods and services, hence why budgetary constraints are always a major consideration<li data-bbox="464 1912 1018 2024">13. The Theatre Manager advised CircuitWest had produced a guide to growing community wellbeing	



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	through the performing arts and would be able to provide a copy upon request	
Hydro Pool	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. It is believed the temperature has been dropped gradually over the last 10 years making the pool inefficient as a hydrotherapy tool 2. Venue is a multi-purpose and needs to accommodate and cater for a large number of people to be viable 	
Merredin CRC	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. State budget cuts result in the Merredin CRC's funding being reduced by \$50,000 per annum 2. CRC are seeking to meet with Council to develop options to increase their funding opportunities 3. A number of Government services are being cut now with most services migrating online 4. Existing contracts are also being made for a shorter period than was previously the case 	Staff have already had discussions with the CRC on the matter and are meeting again in July
School Bus Stop - Nangeenan	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 200-300m of Rutter Road is not listed on the School Bus Network road system and while the Network has no issues with the road being used, the operator is unable to be covered by insurance 2. MRWA have been approached however state it's a Shire issue with the Shire suggesting it's a MRWA issue being on the highway 3. 4 families are now using the bus stop on the corner of Gt Eastern Hwy and Snell Road 4. The road alignment was changed when Gt Eastern Hwy was realigned hence that area was resumed as part of the highway road reserve 5. It was also requested that the road be graded 	The matter will be investigated and actioned where possible
School Bus Stop - Burracoppin	Can a load of dirt/gravel be dumped in the area near White & Hunt Streets so the hole can be filled	The matter will be actioned
Apex Park / Roy Little Park playgrounds	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Council were asked whether there are any plans to install new 	Planned works for Apex Park to commence in the new financial



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	<p>playground equipment, particularly for older children, at either Apex Park and/or Roy Little Park</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. The CEO advised that work is anticipated for Apex Park in the new financial year 3. The extent of works would depend on the costs remaining from maintenance works required for the current equipment but it is hoped that new equipment could also be purchased 4. There are no current plans to install additional infrastructure in Roy Little Park 5. Comment was made that both Bunbury and Chidlow have exercise stations around their towns 	<p>year</p>
Community Awards and Ceremonies	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. It was queried whether Council has any plans to conduct award ceremonies for citizens i.e. Australia Day Good Citizen awards and alike 2. The President advised there are no current plans and it hadn't been considered previously 3. CRC representatives advised the CRC are investigating holding such events 	<p>In support of the CRC the matter would be left to them initially, and could be considered again should the CRC decide not to proceed</p>
Bates St Wildflower Native Garden	<p>It was suggested that the garden area be cleaned up, with community members happy to contribute however they did not want to see their efforts wasted</p>	<p>The matter will be actioned</p>
Collection of firewood from Road Reserves	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Dept Environmental Protection regulate that any flora which falls on a road reserve should stay there as it becomes habitat 2. The Shire previously issued permits each year however in recent years the Shire was advised it does not have permission to issue permits hence the system ceased 3. Process now is that any trees fallen as a result of storm damage is chopped and transferred to a nearby gravel pit for collection on a first in best dressed basis 4. The Shire's Media & 	<p>Process will continue as normal as the Shire does not have authority to issue permits and the collection of firewood from road reserves is otherwise prohibited under State legislation</p>



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	<p>Communications Officer issues notice through an sms service & the Shire's Facebook page when wood is available for collection</p>	
Bruce Rock Road entrance to town	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. It was requested that the dead hanging trees be cleaned up and the road reserve mowed 2. Road is the responsibility of MRWA, however it may be possible to spray the road reserve 	<p>The spraying program will be reviewed and the matter actioned if possible</p>
Recycling	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Rubbish goes to Perth for recycling 2. Always rumours around town that the collected recycling goes to the landfill site, which is not the case 3. All recycling is collected and taken to a facility in Perth to be sorted 4. China's recent announcement will create issues within the next 1-2 years which will impact the cost of recycling 5. As the implications will be on a Statewide basis the Government is establishing working groups to investigate various options 	
Thank you	<p>Various members of the public gallery thanked Council for conducting the forum allowing general matters to be discussed without the formality of a Council meeting</p>	<p>It is anticipated that similar forums will be held biannually with suggested months being February and October</p>
Potholes	<p>Large potholes were reported on Totadgin Hall Road and Collgar West Road</p>	<p>The matter will be actioned</p>
Snap Send Solve	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The President advised an App is available to report road and other issues to the Shire 2. App is available for Apple and Android devices with notification provided direct to staff 3. It was suggested that it's easier to advise Council/staff of an issue at the time before it becomes a larger issue 	<p>Members of the public are encouraged to download the App and use it to report road issues or other matters requiring attention</p>
Disabled Parking Bay	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. There has been no disabled bay outside Karis Medical Centre making access to the building difficult 	



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	2. It was advised that the bay had been installed Friday	
Communication	Could a study/analysis be undertaken to determine why members of the public aren't aware of what's happening in the community, and with Shire communications specifically	Members of the public are encouraged to connect with Council either through social media, the website, sign up to receive the monthly newsletter by either email or post, read the Phoenix and read the local noticeboards as they are all avenues in which Shire information is distributed