

MAYORAL REPORT

Council Meeting:	22 August 2021
Report Date:	24 August 2021
Author:	Mayor
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Approval:	Mayor

We certainly live in an unpredictable environment at the moment. The Public Health message tells us how highly transmissible the Delta strain of COVID-19 is, and the inevitable (and some would say long overdue) total lockdown of our State has placed us all in challenging personal, social and business situations.

Council is aware of the considerable risk for our Council footprint given our geographical location and our exposure to three very busy major traffic corridors - the Kidman Way and the Sturt and Newell Highways.

We have been included in the Riverina Murray REOC COVID-19 briefings, which include briefs from Police, Health and many welfare stakeholders, driven and coordinated by Resilience NSW.

Our RAMJO Board meeting also included a briefing from Jill Ludford, CEO of Murrumbidgee Local Health District, and covered many areas including the vaccination rollout, COVID testing and accessibility and sewerage testing.

Our schools and day care centres are closed to the majority.

As clearly identified at our mid monthly workshop, our aged and vulnerable are very much compromised.

Council continues to provide essential services - strict protocols are in place to keep both our staff and our communities safe.

The memo delivered to all householders and ratepayers gave detail of contacts and services that are available during this time.

The substantial rains saw large volumes of water moving along the Murrumbidgee River. While the area did experience some inundation, the town of Darlington Point remained safe and dry - the newly installed Pontoon worked as designed and it was interesting to watch it operate as the river rose. The Yanco, Colombo and Billabong systems also experienced much larger flows.

It is so pleasing to see the commencement of the Bencubbin Avenue project – I am sure the most recent interventions will see an amazing end product that will service this part of Coleambally well into the future.

The State lockdowns and border closures have challenged the Coleambally Sports Precincts progress - however we are on the home stretch, and while it may be still some time until it is completed, this is beyond the control of either Council or the contractors.

The Jerilderie Early Learning Centre is progressing and the frame work is certainly giving definition to this exciting project.

During the month there have been two water meetings:

1. 11 August - Meeting of the YSAG Group, dealing with the SDL Projects in the Yanco system;
2. 29 July - The Griffith Water Forum covering all things water and detailing the staged Lake Wyangan project which has received over \$3million in funding.

Council has sought clarification regarding continuity of the Community Nurse/Early Childhood Nurse positions in Coleambally and Darlington Point. General Manager John Scarce is advocating in this space.

The Census has been conducted and a level of concern surrounds just who could and couldn't complete it - not everybody received the Census forms and not everybody had an ability to complete digitally - hopefully somebody will review this rollout - as was pointed out to me this data is used to inform all sorts of decisions eg the Financial Assistance Grant allocation to Councils.

To date the advice regarding the 4 December 2021 Local Government elections remains unchanged. We will inform as further information comes to hand.

Being locked down does limit face to face access, but please don't hesitate to contact either Council or myself if you need assistance, or you need to bring issues to our attention.

Stay safe and I encourage you all to stay at home and become vaccinated.

Below are a list of meetings attended in July/August 2021:

29 July 2021

Griffith City Water Forum, Griffith

3 August 2021

Kidman Way Promotional Committee Meeting via Zoom

6 August 2021

Audit Risk and Improvement Committee, Jerilderie

Local Emergency Management Committee - Micro Strategy for COVID

Preparedness and Resilience via Teams

10 August 2021

Newell Highway Taskforce Committee Meeting via Zoom

LHAC Meeting - Jerilderie - Review of the Jerilderie MPS Service Statement

11 August 2021

YSAG - Water Meeting Morundah – Yanco SDL Project progress

12 August 2021

Murrumbidgee Council Mid-Monthly Workshop, Darlington Point

17 August 2021
Riverina Murray REOC - COVID 19 Multi Agency Preparation Update via
Teams

20 August 2021
RAMJO Board Meeting via Zoom

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "R. K. McRae". The signature is written in a cursive style with a small dot at the end.

Ruth McRae
MAYOR