

## MAYORAL REPORT

Council Meeting:	24 May 2022
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Author:	Mayor
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As I write this report, I am aware that we are fast approaching the official winter season. We have been blessed with some perfect autumn weather - the country side looks amazing and the crops have had the perfect opportunity to be out of the ground.

We are experiencing a resurgence of COVID - all of our communities are affected and it is affecting all age demographics - I urge you all to be mindful of the public health messaging that has helped keep us relatively well until now - social distancing, face masks in large gatherings and large office spaces, diligent hand washing and attention to hygiene. And if you are unwell please stay at home.

Our Council area has had the opportunity to be engaged in two art exhibitions - these opportunities are afforded to Murrumbidgee Council through our membership with Western Riverina Arts:

1. Rescue of Riverina Native Birds exhibition featuring The Plains Wanderer, the Bittern and the Mallee Fowl, currently exhibited in "The Willows" Powell Street, Jerilderie
2. The " Her Story " Exhibition created by Jerilderie Artist Roslyn Lockhart which is exhibited in the Leeton Art Gallery.

Council has concluded its Business BBQ's, with the final one being conducted in Coleambally on 26 April - this initiative rolled out by Council Management, and actively supported by elected members, had mixed attendance numbers - it is hoped that this will be an annual thing and the uptake will be greater next time.

Health issues as always are a complex and slow moving conundrum. In the last four weeks I have had many briefings and updates from Murrumbidgee Local Health District (MLHD). The staffing crisis is at critical levels and the further west you reside the greater the challenge - we are aware of many initiatives in place to try to attract staff - we are assured the numbers are being trained but that does not equate to people in jobs where we live.

All areas of health service delivery are adversely impacted.

I attended a Health Forum in Griffith convened by Member for Murray, Helen Dalton, MP, which had approx 60 people in attendance. The NSW Health Minister was on Zoom, and did include the opposition Health Minister, a GP and others - positive messaging and confidence that the areas of concern are being realistically addressed was not evident in the Forum.

I attended a Clinical Services Planning Public Meeting in Finley that was seeking input to this new plan that will inform the capital build of the \$25 Million dollar development.

The Yanco Creek Modernisation Project had its 18th meeting in Morundah - this Project, while sound, is slow moving and frustrating - it is top heavy with bureaucratic stakeholders and moves at a snail's pace - with a deadline of June 2024 looming and a change of Federal Government the next months are going to be extremely challenging.

I had the pleasure of attending the Region 29 Red Cross Conference in Jerilderie and was privileged to provide a guest speaker's address on my role as a Councillor/Mayor and my community engagement over many years.

I also attended a CWA 100 year anniversary celebration hosted by the Coleambally-Argoon CWA Branch. The High Tea - in traditional CWA style - was a lovely occasion and opportunity for some long serving members to reminisce - Margaret Shepherd and Beverly Rose Wiseman received thoroughly deserved 50 year Service Recognition Pins, an outstanding achievement.

It is always an honour to be asked to be a member of the official party at a Debutante Ball. Thank you so much to the Coleambally Catholic Community that invited me to be part of their 2022 Deb Ball - the young ladies looked amazing, their partners very handsome and the flower girl and page boy completed a happy deb set that were very impressive in the dancing department. Congratulations to Helen Kelly and Darcy Mader on preparing these great kids.

Our Major Projects continue to progress - painfully slowly some of them - and as I report most months I am hopeful and confident that we are nearing completion.

The General Manager and I attended a RAMJO Board dinner and meeting in Griffith on the 12 and 13 May - the timely presentation about the difficulties experienced with the Planning Approval Process and the Portal shone a glaring light on a state developed process that is cumbersome and frustrating and time inefficient - the larger Councils, with many major developments, are seriously under the pump.

A warm welcome to our new staff members - I wont individualise as we have many new faces. We hope your time with Murrumbidgee Council is happy and rewarding.

Below are a list of meetings attended since the last meeting of Council.

28 April 2022

Murray Socio Economic Activation Taskforce MESAT - RDA Murray - via Zoom

3 May 2022

Public Forum - Finley Clinical Services Plan - \$25 million capital redevelopment - Finley

4 May 2022

Kidman Way Meeting - via Zoom

5 May 2022

NSW Independent Flood Inquiry feedback for Mayors and General Managers -  
via Microsoft Teams  
Murrumbidgee Local Health District (MLHD) CE Jill Ludford site visit to Jerilderie

7 May 2022

Official opening of touring Rescue of Riverina Native Birds Exhibition - Jerilderie

9 May 2022

Council and Local Health Advisory Committee -LHAC-update from MLHD-Jill  
Ludford - Critical staffing challenges, Covid and influenza updates

10 May 2022

Jerilderie Independent Living Limited (JILL) - Annual Reports Briefing -  
Accountants

11 May 2022

YCMP-YSAG Meeting in Morundah  
Councillor Mid Monthly Workshop, Darlington Point

12 May 2022

Zone 29 Red Cross Conference - Jerilderie  
RAMJO Board Dinner Griffith

13 May 2022

RAMJO Board Meeting Griffith  
Health Forum convened by Helen Dalton, MP, Member for Murray (Griffith)

14 May 2022

Coleambally Deb Ball - Coleambally

19 May 2022

Murray Darling Association Region 9 Meeting - via Zoom

20 May 2022

Viewing of Ros Lockhart's "My Story" Art Exhibition in Leeton  
CWA 100 year anniversary celebration - high tea hosted by Coleambally-  
Argoon CWA Branch.



Ruth McRae  
**MAYOR**